

APPLICATION NUMBER: 22/01441/PSID

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
22/01441/PSID	Rosalind Gralton	28 March 2023

Address: Rochdale Sixth Form College, College Road Rochdale OL12 6HY

Proposal: Erection of 6 storey extension to create additional teaching facility including alterations to existing car park, associated landscaping and PV (Photovoltaic) panels at roof level

PUBLICITY	Weekly list expired?	Y	Site notice expired?	Y
	Neighbour letters expired?	Y	Press Notice expired?	Y

DELEGATION	Significant departure from local plan?	N	Contrary to national policy?	N
	Applicant a Council Member or officer?	N	Contrary to previous decision?	N
	Major with 10 or more objections and recommending approval?	N	Called in or Planning Panel objection?	N

COMMENTS	Planning Panel comments received?	Y
	Neighbour comments received?	N

EIA	Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?	N/A
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CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	Y
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	Y

RECOMMENDATION	APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: LA DATE: 27.04.23

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application relates to the Rochdale Sixth Form College which lies to the south of Hopwood Hall College. The River Roch runs through the site, flowing north east to south west, effectively splitting the campus site in two.

The existing college building is a modern 6 storey building and offers long distance views, given its highly visible location at the junction of St Mary's Gate. The building takes benefit of the riverside location and the irregular shape of the plot reflects the site's relationship between the ASDA site to the south, and the River Roch along its northern boundary. The building's unique orientation increases its visibility from various angles and vantage points, most prominent from those travelling north and south on St Mary's Gate, and those travelling east along College Road into the Town Centre.

The building is of a high quality design, constructed in grey and blue brick and grey cladding, with full height glazing across all elevations. Complementary coloured window film and projecting fins attracts visual interest on the central band of the west and eastern elevations, as well as tying in the design on the southern elevation, whereby the rear entrance of the college is located.

The site is located within Flood Risk Zone 3. The building is supported by steel columns at ground floor and is cantilevered to mitigate flood risk.

The Touchstones building, sited across St Mary's Gate, is a Grade II Listed Building. The brutalist building of Rochdale Police Station, a non-designated heritage asset, is also located east of the college, on Vicar's Gate.

To the west of the site is an ASDA store, with adjacent retail park. To the south is the busy junction of St Mary's Gate and Manchester Road. To the east is Rochdale Police Station and Rochdale Town Centre. The site is within the Defined Urban Area.

PROPOSAL

The proposal relates to a part 5 part 6 storey extension to the northern end of the existing college building. The proposed extension would accommodate a partial roof terrace at the 6th floor, and is tapered in shape to accommodate the narrowing of the site adjacent to the River Roch. The extension would be 24.2m long, 19.3m wide and 27.9m in height.

The proposals would be predominately glazed, at ground floor the proposal would be supported by concrete encased steel columns with a void at lower ground floor in order to support the extension, as per the existing building's flood risk mitigation.

As stated within the submitted Planning Statement '*The proposed 6 storey extension to the north of the existing college building will provide 19 teaching spaces, learning support space and staff accommodation. The proposal will create capacity for approximately 360 students and is likely to create additional teaching posts.*' The extension would comprise of 1,822sqm of floorspace.

The building is designed to complement the existing building, with blue/grey brick laid in stretcher bond, grey metal rainscreen cladding, grey opaque glazing, clear glazing with projecting fins to reflect the existing building. A glass balustrade is proposed to the sixth floor roof terrace area.

Value Added

The LPA requested amended plans to reduce the height of the proposed extension, the number and dispersion of fins proposed on the elevations, remove expanse of orange coloured metal rainscreen cladding, replaced with grey opaque glass squandrel panels, and increase glazing. These plans were amended and submitted.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SO1 – To deliver a more prosperous economy

E2 – Increasing jobs and prosperity

E3 – Focusing on economic growth corridors and areas

SO2 – Creating successful and healthy communities

C2 – Focusing on regeneration areas and economic growth corridors

C7 – Delivering education facilities

SO3 – Improving design, image and quality of place

P1 – Improving image

P2 – Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage

P3 – Improving design of new development

SO4 – Promoting a greener environment

G6 – Enhancing green infrastructure

G7 – Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

G8 – Managing water resourcing and flood risk

G9 – Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability

SO5 – Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport

T2 – Improving accessibility

DM1 – General development requirements

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 – Defined Urban Area

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

21/01401/TELE – Installation 6no. antennas, 4no. 600mm dish antennas supported on 3 separate, new rooftop 'pod' systems, installation of radio equipment cabinets and other ancillary apparatus including cable gantries and handrails on roof top with 1no. cabinet located at street level – Grant subject to conditions 18/11/2021

17/01323/FUL - Proposed extension to the main entrance of the college to provide additional internal space, increased draught lobby and relocate security barriers – Grant subject to conditions 02/02/2018

16/00824/FUL - Alterations to existing car park to create additional car parking spaces – Grant subject to conditions 21/10/2016

08/D51561 - Erection Of New Sixth Form College With Associated Landscaping And Temporary Bridge For Construction Access – Grant subject to conditions 19/02/2009

08/D51197 - Determination Of Prior Approval For The Demolition Of Former Caretakers House – Grant subject to conditions 03/09/2008

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Environment Agency

No objections. Recommended conditions attached relating to land contamination and SUDS infiltration of surface water. Recommended informatives are attached.

Highways And Engineering

The Council's Highways' Engineer was consulted on the application and their response is as follows:

'Whilst we do expect some increase of traffic on the network due to this proposal the increased vehicle numbers are insignificant in the context of the local highway Network.

The proposal sees a small decrease in parking spaces which is not ideal. This is however a sustainable location easily accessed by public transport and the proposals see an increase in bicycle parking.

Access to the site remains much the same as the existing situation and is deemed as suitable.

The layout remains much the same as the existing and is therefore satisfactory.

I identify no new road safety concerns as a result of this proposal

No objections to this development as proposed.

We do however need to review the Traffic Regulation Orders surrounding the school to ensure the reduction in parking is not detrimental to the surrounding highways and nearby residential areas.

Prior to commencement the developer shall make a contribution of J4000 towards a traffic regulation order review to ensure parking in the vicinity is safe'

Lead Local Flood Authority/Drainage

The Council's drainage officer concurs with the findings the application site is deemed suitable for development, and

'a) the development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk; and b) the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.'

No objections subject to recommended condition.

Conservation And Design

The Council's Conservation Officer has been consulted and their comments are provided below:

'The application site relates to Rochdale Sixth Form College. It is a modern, multi-storey building, which occupies a site adjacent to the River Roch and St Mary's Gate.

To the east of the site is Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area, which includes a number of designated and non-designated heritage assets. The closest of these assets to the site, includes the grade II listed Touchstones Museum and the brutalist Police Station Complex (non-designated). Further to the east, are the grade I listed Town Hall and Lutyens Cenotaph. Broadfield Park, which is a registered Park and Garden (grade II) lies to the southeast of the site.

The proposal is for the construction of a six storey extension onto the northern elevation of the building. It would have an irregular footprint, owing to the shape of the plot and the proximity of the River Roch. The building would be cantilevered, with an overhang at ground floor level. It would be the same height as the roof top extension, with a metal cladding system and metal fins, both coloured orange.

The proposed extension would be visible in some views from the Conservation Area, and would also be visible in longer range views of Touchstones, including from along College Road to the north. However, due to its positioning along the northern elevation, it would be seen largely in the context of the existing building, which is of a similar height.

That being said, I do have some concerns about the height, material choices and elevational design of the proposed extension. The use of an orange metal cladding across the front and side elevations would make the extension far more prominent within its surroundings. This would be exacerbated by the lack of set-in at sixth floor level, which would add to the bulk of the extension at upper floor levels.

If orange is proposed, it should be used as a feature colour to add emphasis rather than across the building. One way of achieving this would be to retain just the fins and use a corten steel, giving a natural rusted finish.

To improve the relationship with the existing building, the sixth floor should be set in, to match the existing building. The vertical emphasis on this building should be continued through to provide continuity between the existing and proposed extensions.

Subject to amendments, it is likely that an acceptable relationship with nearby heritage assets could be achieved.'

Canal And River Trust

No comments to make.

United Utilities

United Utilities were consulted regarding the application and their response is copied below:

'Following our review of the submitted Drainage Strategy, we can confirm the proposals are acceptable in principle to United Utilities and therefore should planning permission be granted we request the following condition is attached to any subsequent Decision Notice:

CONDITION:

The drainage for the development hereby approved, shall be carried out in accordance with principles set out in the submitted Foul & Surface Water

Drainage Design Drawing 19085-WIE-ZZ-XX-DR-D-92002, Rev P01 - Dated 03/11/2022 which was prepared by Waterman. For the avoidance of doubt no surface water will be permitted to drain directly or indirectly into the public sewer. Prior to occupation of the proposed development, the drainage schemes shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development and to prevent an undue increase in surface water run-off and to reduce the risk of flooding.'

Transport For Greater Manchester

TfGM were consulted and their response is provided below:

'Highways Overview

Colleagues from within TfGM HFAS (Highways Forecasting Analytical Services) have reviewed the Transport Statement (TS) issued in support of the proposed College extension and have provided comments in respect of the relevant sections.

Trip Generation

The TRICS assessment is acceptable, however TfGM consider that the existing trip generation could have been determined by surveying the existing college and / or users travel characteristics.

Internal Access Arrangements

The TS confirms that existing access and servicing arrangements serving the site will remain unchanged.

Traffic Regulation Orders

TfGM would also suggest that it may be beneficial for a review to be undertaken of the Traffic Regulation Orders in the vicinity of the development, with a view to introducing additional parking restrictions as appropriate, as well as ensuring adequate parking restrictions remain in place, and are refreshed accordingly. This will help to discourage pavement parking associated with the development and therefore assist in improving the quality of the surrounding public realm.

Other

A robust Construction Traffic Management Plan should be employed as part of the development to minimise disruption during the construction period.

Site Accessibility

Active Travel

The TS confirms that cycle access will be improved as part of the proposals. A cycle lane will be provided along the site access to the south of the car park towards the bridge. This is welcomed.

Cycle Parking Provision

The TS confirms that the site is served by a total of 72 cycle parking spaces, comprising 23 cycle lockers located below the undercroft to the rear of the main

RSFC building, 34 spaces in the form of Sheffield stands located along the river frontage, and 15 spaces in the form of wall mounted brackets on the river side of the existing RSFC building. This is not proposed to be increased as part of the extension proposals.

The TS reports that, 'It is understood from the Applicant that the existing on-site cycle parking spaces are not currently well utilised.' TfGM would suggest that this issue is investigated, and efforts are made to encourage site users to use cycling facilities. This could form part of the College Travel Plan.

Travel Plan

The existing College Travel Plan should be updated as necessary as part of the redevelopment proposals.'

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit was consulted on the application, and their response is copied below:

'Summary

The developer's ecological consultant identified no significant ecological issues. Issues relating to bats, otter, nesting birds, invasive species, proximity to the River Roch and biodiversity enhancement measures can be resolved via condition and or informative.'

Recommended informatives are attached.

GMP - Design For Security

Greater Manchester Police were consulted and their comments are provided below:

'... if the Local Planning Authority is minded to approve the application, I respectfully suggest the inclusion of the following condition when full permission is sought:

The development hereby approved shall, where feasible, be designed and constructed in accordance with the recommendations and specification set out in sections 3 and 4 of Crime Impact Statement, ref.2022/0513/CIS/01, Version A, dated 01.11.22, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the agreed measures shall be retained and maintained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of crime prevention and community safety, having regard to Core Strategy Policy and the National Planning policy Framework.

If permission is granted the applicant would then need to apply for the SBD accreditation and achieve either Bronze, Silver or Gold accreditation at which point we would support the discharge of said condition.'

Natural England (North West Planning)

No comments received to date

GM Fire Service

No comments received to date

Strategic Planning

No objection, so long as mitigation regarding flood risk is secured.

Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS)

'The application is supported by a Heritage Statement (HS) that forms part of the Design and Access Statement (ABW Architects, November 2022), which provides some useful historic maps and a description of the historical development of the site. Whilst the HS addresses built-heritage aspects of the development, there is no documentation to assess the impact of the development on below-ground archaeological potential.

The site was formerly occupied by Bankside Mill, depicted on mapping from at least the mid-19th century, developing and exhibiting numerous redesigns and expansions well into the 20th century. Mapping from the 1970s shows the mill was replaced by a large building, which in turn was replaced by construction of the Sixth Form College c2011. Modern satellite imagery of the site shows the area immediately north of the college building, where the extension is proposed, has been well landscaped.

Redevelopment of the area from the 1970s has likely removed, or at least severely truncated any significant remains of the former mill buildings. It is likely that only fragmentary survival of nineteenth century fabric will survive, suggesting that the area could at best offer a marginal contribution towards our understanding of the period.

On this basis there is no reason to seek to impose any archaeological requirements upon the applicant, though the Conservation Officer for Rochdale Council should be consulted concerning any impacts of the proposals on the built-heritage environment.'

Env Health - Noise/Odours

No comments received to date

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was advertised by way of site notice and neighbour notification letter. The application was also publicised in the press. No responses were received.

PLANNING PANEL COMMENTS

Members were supportive of proposals however concerns were raised regarding parking provision and the use of orange on the design.

Amended plans reduced the use of orange, and the college's travel plan is secured by condition.

ANALYSIS

The application site is allocated as Defined Urban Area under the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan. Policy G/D/1 is therefore relevant to any applications on the site and in the supporting text to this policy it is established that new development should be located in the urban area, so as to support urban regeneration and to protect the countryside. Core Strategy Policy C7 places education and skills as a high priority in order to improve productivity, social and community cohesion and the overall prosperity and quality of life in the borough, and seeks to achieve this in part by raising educational achievement skills and training in their borough by promoting growth and expansion of further and higher education at the Colleges located at St Mary's Gate. Further to this, paragraph 95 of the NPPF states that LPAs should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications.

The proposed extension would add additional capacity for 360 students, and would expand its existing facility by approximately 1,822sqm across 6 floors with a void at

the 'ground floor'. The extension cantilevers over the eastern side of the building which defines the frontage of the building and provides a covered external route to the entrance, aligning with the eastern edge of the existing building footprint.

Both the NPPF and local policy are clear that great weight should be afforded to the development of schools, as proposed in the application for consideration. The extension to the school would provide valuable increased space and the proposal would therefore benefit the wider community in line with the requirements of the NPPF and the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy.

As such, and with the above policy in mind, it is considered that subject to the appropriate assessment of development management matters as considered in detail below, the principle of the development of an extension to the school on site is acceptable.

Character and Appearance

Heritage and Design

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states *'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.'*

Paragraph 202 of the NPPF states *'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'*

Paragraph 203 continues; *'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'*

To the east of the site is Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area, which includes a number of designated and non-designated heritage assets. The closest of these assets to the site, includes the grade II listed Touchstones Museum and the brutalist Police Station Complex (non-designated). Further to the east, are the grade I listed Town Hall and Lutyens Cenotaph. Broadfield Park, which is a registered Park and Garden (grade II) lies to the southeast of the site.

It is noted Bankside Mill was depicted on mapping from 19C into the 20C. GMAAS were consulted on the application and noted it is likely only fragmentary survival of 19C fabric will survive, suggesting the area could at best offer a marginal contribution towards understanding of the period. As such it is not considered reasonable to impose a condition in this regard.

The case officer concurs with the conclusions of the Conservation Officer, that while the proposed extension would be visible in some views from the Conservation Area and designated heritage assets, the positioning of the extension on the northern elevation of the building, and given the shape of the plot, the building would be largely seen within the context of the existing building, of which is a similar height and scale. It is concluded the identified heritage assets would not be viewed within the same context as the proposed extension. The Conservation Officer raised concerns were raised regarding height and materials, of which have been addressed

within amended plans. It is now considered the proposal would result in an acceptable impact that would result in a neutral impact upon the adjacent conservation area and designated heritage assets.

The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities

Paragraphs 126 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) state that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, which is largely reflected within Policies DM1 and P3 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy, which requires development proposals to demonstrate high quality design.

The revisions to the NPPF in July 2021 are clear that development that is not well designed should be refused, and conversely, significant weight should be given to development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design. In support of this, the Government have produced a suite of guidance documents and design tools including Building for a Healthy Life (BHL), the National Model Design Code (NDMC) and the National Design Guide (NDG), which form a material consideration in the assessment of the design of development proposals, and aid Local Authorities and developers alike in understanding what a well-designed places look like.

The NDG sets out that the built form of well-designed places relates well to (*inter alia*) the site, its context and the opportunities they present and the lifestyles of occupants and other users.

Additionally, a design brief 'Further Education Output Specification: Generic Design Brief' specific to college buildings, produced by the DFE, was adopted in November 2022. This addresses much of the matters raised within the guidance documents highlighted above.

Paragraph 1.7.3.1 of the design code refers to identity. *'Colleges shall have their own identity - creating a sense of place that is connected to its local context and welcoming to the college community. The buildings and grounds are to be integrated, and the relationship between the two shall be well considered. The spaces in between buildings and access to them shall be as well considered as the buildings themselves.'*

Additionally, Paragraph 1.7.3.2 continues

'The sense of place is to be created through consideration of local character, such as:

- a) materials, building forms, and features [PM_35_10_22]*
- b) relationship to paths, routes, edges, block pattern or views [PM_35_10_22]*
- c) connection to its surrounding settlement, such as active ground and street frontage, entrances [PM_35_10_22]*
- d) relationship to building heights, building line, massing, set-back, roofline [PM_35_10_22]*
- e) particular ecological or geological characteristics [PM_35_10_22]*
- f) response and connection with local landmarks or historic events. [PM_35_10_22]'*

The proposal is an extension of the established main building, and would relate directly to the design and identity of the main building. The proposal provides a cohesive sense of place where it responds to the design principles of the existing building. It would be distinctive from its surrounding establishments and maintains the college's existing sense of place.

The college building as existing is a 6 storey building, erected using a cantilever as a result of the site's location within Flood Zone 3. The proposed extension site continues the existing building at 6 and 5 storeys on the northern elevation, and takes use of the Riverside location. As a result it is an irregular shape plot, located at a 45 degree angle to St Marys' Gate highway. The existing building therefore is viewed differently given the highly visible location and various viewpoints of the site.

In respect of the design detailing of the building, the overall materiality and distribution of materials across the elevations of the proposed teaching building is considered to achieve a good standard of design; vertical fins are proposed across the side elevations of the building to enhance the thermal properties of the building, taken from design cues of the existing building. While these may be viewed as excessive, the dispersion of the fins and the orientation of the site means the proposed extension would be viewed so as to reduce their visibility. While orange cladding is proposed, a materials condition has been attached to the decision notice, to ensure full details of materials are subject to further LPA approval.

In light of the above, the proposals are considered to be 'well-designed,' and would comply with the requirements of Policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Amenity

Core Strategy policy DM1 requires all development proposals to demonstrate that they will not have a negative impact upon the amenity of future residents and occupiers. Policy G9 requires that sensitive new developments such as housing are not adversely affected by existing sources of pollution, including noise, from certain types of industry. Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that planning decisions should result in places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The proposal is located within a mixed-use, commercial area, although it is acknowledged the seven sisters tower blocks are located 190m north of the site. While the proposal would be visible from the flats within the tower block, the proposal would not incur any unacceptable residential amenity impact upon these occupiers due to the distance.

It is noted that there is potential for the amenity of surrounding occupiers to be impacted through glare from the proposed photovoltaic panels to be sited on the roof of the building. Given the 190m distance away from adjacent residential properties, it is not considered that the glare from solar panels would unduly threaten the amenity of surrounding occupiers.

There are no concerns raised in respect of noise and disturbance. The site is located within a busy edge of town centre location which already sees a number of comings and goings. Given the proposed extension, in conjunction with the existing sixth form college, the pattern of use would be identical. While the building would increase the number of students and staff on site, the distance away from the tower blocks would not result in any unacceptable additional noise impact upon these residential properties.

The proposed development would therefore be in accordance with the requirements of Core Strategy Policies P1, P3 and DM1, and the policies within the NPPF.

Highways

Policy T2 of the adopted Core Strategy seeks to improve accessibility by locating development where good access to public transport is available or can be provided and in all circumstances, prioritises the safety, accessibility and amenity of those who live or have business in the area. Policy DM1 also states that all development proposals should provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring, and servicing arrangements taking into account of the proposed use and location. Paragraph 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The proposal would result in the loss of five car parking spaces. The site is located just outside Rochdale Town Centre and is well connected to public transport by bus and short walk from the town centre. An existing TRO (parking restrictions) covers the immediate streets of College Road, College Bank Way and Holland Street. The existing use is well established and parking is available within the site as existing. Rochdale Town Centre bus station and tram stop is a 10 and 7 minute walk from the college and provides access to the wider city region.

Given the site's sustainable location, the submitted transport statement and College's Travel Plan, the Highway Engineer's recommendations for a contribution towards a TRO do not satisfy Paragraph 55 of the NPPF, and is not necessary in this instance. Should the Highway Authority consider a TRO is required in the future, they have powers to pursue this. The College's Travel Plan, which is to encourage a modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport, reducing reliance on the onsite parking provision, is secured via condition.

Subject to the recommended conditions and informative, the proposal would preserve highway and pedestrian safety and the proposals would accord with the requirements of Policies DM1 and T2 of the adopted Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Ecology and Trees

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity, providing net gains where possible, and contributing to the Government's commitment to halt decline. Policy G6 of the adopted Core Strategy expects development proposals affecting green infrastructure to avoid the loss of existing features such as trees unless suitable alternative provision is made or they have limited value. Core Strategy policy G7 requires that no development should result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity. In accordance with NPPF paragraph 174 and the forthcoming requirements of the Environment Act (2021), new development is expected to contribute to biodiversity net gain

The application is supported by an Ecological Survey and Assessment which found that the proposals can be carried out with no adverse impact on designated sites for nature conservation valuable habitats and Priority Species. Section 5 of the report

identifies how relevant wildlife legislation will be complied with and sets out measures to achieve enhancement for biodiversity.

Subject to the attached conditions requiring submission of a landscaping scheme, Construction and Environmental Management Plan, External Lighting Design Strategy, and implementation of the ecological recommendations the proposals are considered to satisfy the requirements of the NPPF and Core Strategy in respect of the developments ecological impacts.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Paragraph 159 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). The application site abuts the southern bank of the River Roch, which is recognised as a main river by the Environment Agency. The site falls within Flood Zone 3, and the Environment Agency's flood map for planning places the site at high risk of flooding. Notwithstanding, Policy G8 of the adopted Core Strategy reflects the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework as both indicate that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. A sequential approach should be used in areas known to be at risk now or in the future from any form of flooding.

The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment based on a desktop review of the site and layout of the proposals site in addition to Environment Agency comments provided for the application. Taking into account the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) for the site, the proposed extension is to be built on cantilevers, as the existing building, with a void at ground (lower ground) floor to allow floodwater to rise if required. As stated within the FRA *'Proposed finished floor levels for the proposed development should be set above the design flood level (1:100 year + CC) and allow for an additional 300mm of freeboard'* The finished floor levels for the Site should be set at a minimum of 119.32m AOD. The proposed finished floor level for the extension is set at 120.15m AOD, providing over 1m freeboard above the design flood level for the Site (119.02m AOD).

In assessing the flood risk faced by the proposed developments, consultation has been carried out with the Environment Agency. It is considered the proposed extension will not be at an unacceptable risk of flooding or exacerbate flood risk elsewhere. However, the proposed development must proceed in strict accordance with this FRA. The LLFA are satisfied with the submitted details in respect of flood management which include the aforementioned stilts and permeable boundary treatments.

Sequential test

Paragraph 162 of the NPPF states that development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding. The strategic flood risk assessment will provide the basis for applying this test. The sequential approach should be used in areas known to be at risk now or in the future from any form of flooding.

The development plan does not set out the geographical extent of the required Sequential Test and neither does the NPPF. Planning Practice Guidance on this matter is very clear that the area to apply the Sequential Test across will be defined by local circumstances relating to the catchment area for the type of development

proposed. It also states that the developer should justify with evidence to the local planning authority what area of search has been used when making the application.

The applicant has provided a sequential test in line with the requirements of the NPPF. The submitted sequential test states it is not possible for the development to be located within an area of lower risk of flooding, due to the proposal is an extension of the existing 6 storey building, which is located within Flood Zone 3. No other sites are considered available for the proposed development. By locating elsewhere, the proposal would fail to meet wider sustainable development objectives.

The NPPF also states that 'more vulnerable' development, including educational buildings, are permitted within Flood Zone 3 but require an exception test. The development should seek to minimise the risk from flooding by avoiding areas of the Site that experience the most frequent flooding and greatest flood depth. Therefore, as far as reasonably practicable, the development should be steered towards the higher ground near the existing building from a policy perspective.

Where a development passes the sequential test, paragraphs 161 and 163 of the NPPF set out that new development should be subject to the exceptions test, the need of which should depend on the potential vulnerability of the site and of the development proposed.

Paragraph 164 states *'The application of the exception test should be informed by a strategic or site-specific flood risk assessment, depending on whether it is being applied during plan production or at the application stage. To pass the exception test it should be demonstrated that:*

- a) the development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk; and*
- b) the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall'*

Paragraph 165 confirms *'Both elements of the exception test should be satisfied for development to be allocated or permitted'*

'The risk of fluvial flooding has been mitigated through the following measures:

- Finished floor levels of the proposed extension are set at 120.15m AOD, providing >1m freeboard above the design flood level for the Site (119.02m AOD).*
- Safe access/egress is provided through the existing building and the southern end of the Asda carpark which sits outside the design flood extent and provides ramped access to Dane Street (A6060). Dane Street sits at a level of approximately 125m AOD, which is well above the design flood level of 119.02m AOD.*
- Floodplain storage will be maintained by retaining existing ground levels and the use of stilts to maintain the existing flood storage beneath the proposed extension.'*

Within Annex 3 of the NPPF, educational buildings such as that proposed are identified as more vulnerable. As previously stated, the proposal would be built in tandem with the existing building on cantilevers, with mitigation measures such as finished floor levels, safe access provided through the existing building; which sits higher than the design flood level, and floodplain storage maintained secured. The proposed developments would not lead to an increase in flooding elsewhere as it does not result restrict flows through the site or result in a loss of floodplain storage. The use of existing stilts maintains flood storage beneath the extension. Additionally,

for the expected lifetime of the development, the wider sustainability benefits proposed by the existing building's extension and provision of educational facilities in this particular location, outweigh the flood risk within this area.

It is therefore considered that the development poses no unacceptable risk in terms of flooding and the application has duly been demonstrated to comply with the requirements of Core Strategy policy G8 and the NPPF.

The drainage strategy has been reviewed by the Lead Local Flood Authority who has accepted the overall approach, and has concurred with the findings of the FRA. Subject to a pre-commencement condition regarding a surface water drainage scheme, the Council's drainage officer has no objections with the proposal.

Ground Conditions

Core Strategy Policy G9 states that the Council will ensure that any risks arising from contaminated land or land instability are identified, and that any appropriate actions to address these risks are taken, prior to development taking place.

The Environment Agency have proposed a condition relating to a Phase I Preliminary Risk Assessment and subject to this the requirements of the Core Strategy and NPPF are considered to have been met.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The development must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason. Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. This permission relates to the following plans:

Proposed GA Elevations 1 of 2 - 3940-A-2800P – Revision P5
Proposed GA Elevation 2 of 2 - 3940-A-2801P – Revision P5
Location Plan - 3940-A-1000P – Revision P2
Proposed GA Sections CC - 3940-A-2701P – Revision P2
Proposed GA Sections AA & BB - 3940-A-2700P – Revision P2
Proposed GA Roof Plan 3940-A-2004P Revision P2
Proposed GA Fifth Floor Plan - 3940-A-2003P – Revision P2
Proposed GA Typical Upper Floor Plan (Levels 01-04) - 3940-A-2002P - Revision P2
Proposed GA Ground Floor Plan - 3940-A-2001P Revision P2
Proposed GA Lower Ground Plan - 3940-A-2000P – Revision P2
Proposed Site Plan - 3940-A-1002P – Revision P2

and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the policies contained within the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. No development shall take place (including any site clearance, earth moving, machinery on site, or preparation works) until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt, this shall include the following:
- a. the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
 - b. loading and unloading of plant and materials;
 - c. storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
 - d. the erection and maintenance of security hoarding;
 - e. measures to protect surrounding sensitive receptors from fugitive dust and debris both during and after the construction phase;
 - f. hours of construction, including deliveries
 - g. protection measures to be applied to secure the River Roch from accidental spillages, dust and debris

The approved method statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the approved method statement.

Reason for Pre-Commencement: Site clearance poses a threat to the surrounding natural environment and to surrounding occupiers and a scheme therefore needs to be agreed in advance of any works taking place.

Reason: To minimise the detrimental effects to the natural environment through risks of pollution during the construction phase in accordance with Policies DM1, G7 and G9 of the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. No development shall take place until an investigation and risk assessment, in addition to any assessment provided with the planning application, has been completed to assess the nature and extent of any contamination on the site, whether or not it originates on the site. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons and a written report of the findings must be produced and shall have been first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences. The report of the findings must include:
- i) a survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination
 - ii) an assessment of the potential risks to:
 - human health,
 - property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland, and service lines and pipes,
 - adjoining land,
 - groundwaters and surface waters,
 - ecological systems,
 - archeological sites and ancient monuments;
 - iii) where unacceptable risks are identified, an appraisal of remedial options and proposal of the preferred option(s)

The development shall thereafter be carried out in full accordance with the duly approved remediation strategy and a verification report submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the building hereby approved is first occupied.

Reason: To ensure the safe development of the site in the interests of the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy G9 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Further investigation will be necessary prior to commencement of any building or engineering works on site.

5. No development shall take place until final details of a sustainable surface water drainage scheme and a foul water drainage scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The drainage scheme shall be:

- based upon the details proposed in the Flood Risk Assessment Dated November 2022 by Waterman Infrastructure & Environment Ltd, or similar with minor amendments;
- Accompanied by correspondence confirming that the EA agree with the proposals in the application with regard to flood mitigation elements.
- The approved scheme shall also be in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (March 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards.

Prior to occupation/ use of the proposed development, the drainage scheme shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution. To prevent an increased risk of flooding as a result of the development and to ensure satisfactory disposal of surface water from the site in accordance with Policy G8 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, saved Policy EM/7 of the adopted Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Drainage infrastructure will need to be implemented prior to commencement of above ground works and a scheme therefore needs to be agreed in advance of the same.

6. Piling using penetrative methods shall not be carried out other than with the prior written consent of the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed piling does not harm groundwater resources in line with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. No development other than the demolition of buildings and structures to be removed shall take place until finished floor levels for the proposed building and finished ground levels across the site relative to agreed off-site datum point(s) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and in compliance with Policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework

8. Notwithstanding any description of materials in the application, no above ground construction works shall take place until samples and/or a full specification of materials to be used externally on the buildings have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall include the type, colour and texture of the materials, and where brickwork is proposed, details of the bonding pattern. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory appearance in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies P2, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. Notwithstanding any description in the application, no above ground works shall take place until full product specifications for the windows, external doors, and detailed designs of the window and door reveals, at a scale of not less than 1:50, to be used on the development hereby approved, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The windows and doors shall be installed in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

10. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until full details of both hard and soft landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the formation of any banks, terraces or other earthworks, hard surfaced areas and materials, planting plans, specifications and schedules (including planting size, species and numbers/densities), existing plants / trees to be retained and a scheme for the timing / phasing of implementation works.

The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme for the timing / phasing of implementation or within the next planting season following final occupation of the development hereby permitted, whichever is the sooner.

Any trees or shrubs planted or retained in accordance with this condition which are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die or become severely damaged or become seriously diseased within 5 years of occupation of the building shall be replaced within the next planting season by trees or shrubs of a similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

Reason: To ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped having regard to its location and the nature of the proposed development and in accordance with policy DM1 and G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

11. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the protection measures during construction and the ecological enhancement measures contained within Section 5 of the Ecological Survey and Assessment by ERAP. The ecological enhancement measures shall be completed within 3 months of the occupation of the building hereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of enhancing biodiversity and habitat provision within the site in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

12. Prior to occupation of the building hereby approved, an external lighting design strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The strategy shall show how and where street lighting will be installed and through appropriate lighting contour plans demonstrated clearly that any additional impacts will not negatively impact on the functionality of the River Roch as wildlife and dark corridor and specify frequency and duration of use.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with agreed specifications and locations set out in the strategy.

Reason: In the interest of the natural environment in accordance with Policies G8 of the adopted Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

13. The recommendations and monitoring contained within the Revised Travel Plan (November 2022) prepared by Waterman Infrastructure & Environment Limited shall be implemented and maintained in full, from first occupation of the building hereby approved, in accordance with Section 4; Travel Plan Initiatives.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and amenity, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy T2 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

14. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations of sections 3 and 4 of the submitted Crime Impact Statement ref. *ref.2022/0513/CIS/01, Version A, dated 01.11.22*

Reason: In order to ensure that the development is safe to use and access and to reduce the risk of crime, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy C3 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Notes for Applicant: **Informatives**

1. Land contamination: risk management and good practice We recommend that developers should:

- Follow the risk management framework provided in Land Contamination: Risk Management, when dealing with land affected by contamination
- Refer to our Guiding principles for land contamination for the type of information that we require in order to assess risks to controlled waters from the site - the local authority can advise on risk to other receptors, such as human health
- Consider using the National Quality Mark Scheme for Land Contamination Management which involves the use of competent persons to ensure that land contamination risks are appropriately managed
- Refer to the contaminated land pages on gov.uk for more information

2. Waste on-site

The CL:AIRE Definition of Waste: Development Industry Code of Practice (version 2) provides operators with a framework for determining whether

excavated material arising from site during remediation and/or land development works is waste or has ceased to be waste. Under the Code of Practice:

- excavated materials that are recovered via a treatment operation can be reused on-site providing they are treated to a standard such that they are fit for purpose and unlikely to cause pollution
- treated materials can be transferred between sites as part of a hub and cluster project
- some naturally occurring clean material can be transferred directly between sites

Developers should ensure that all contaminated materials are characterised both chemically and physically, and that the permitting status of any proposed on-site operations are clear. If in doubt, the Environment Agency should be contacted for advice at an early stage to avoid any delays. We recommend that developers should refer to:

- the position statement on the Definition of Waste: Development Industry Code of Practice
- The waste management page on GOV.UK

3. Waste to be taken off-site

Contaminated soil that is (or must be) disposed of is waste. Therefore, its handling, transport, treatment, and disposal are subject to waste management legislation, which includes:

- Duty of Care Regulations 1991
- Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005
- Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016
- The Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011

Developers should ensure that all contaminated materials are characterised both chemically and physically in line with British Standard BS EN 14899:2005 'Characterization of Waste - Sampling of Waste Materials - Framework for the Preparation and Application of a Sampling Plan' and that the permitting status of any proposed treatment or disposal activity is clear. If in doubt, the Environment Agency should be contacted for advice at an early stage to avoid any delays. If the total quantity of hazardous waste material produced or taken off-site is 500kg or greater in any 12-month period, the developer will need to register with us as a hazardous waste producer. Refer to the hazardous waste pages on GOV.UK for more information.

4. Biodiversity

We welcome the Design and Access Statement (ABW Architects, Nov 2022) and with incorporation of environmental best practice measures outlined in section 5.3 and 5.4 of ecological assessment (ERAP, Nov 2022), which ensures the protection and enhancement of adjoining River Roch ecological network and main environmental receptor of riparian development site.

5. Flood Risk

We have reviewed the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), referenced WIE19085-104-R-1-1-4-FRA, produced by Waterman, dated 4/11/2022, submitted with the application and we are satisfied that it demonstrates that the proposed development will not be at an unacceptable risk of fluvial flooding or exacerbate flood risk elsewhere. The proposed development must proceed in strict accordance with this FRA and the mitigation measures identified as it will form part of any subsequent planning approval. Any proposed changes to the

approved FRA and / or the mitigation measures identified will require the submission of a revised FRA as part of an amended planning application.

6. Environmental Permitting

This development may require a permit under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 from the Environment Agency for any proposed works or structures, in, under, over or within eight metres of the bank of the River Roch which, is designated a 'main river'. Some activities are also now excluded or exempt. A permit is separate to and in addition to any planning permission granted. Further details and guidance are available on the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits>.

7. Bats

Whilst the building to be extended has been assessed as negligible risk for bats, the applicant is reminded that under the 2019 Regulations it is an offence to disturb, harm or kill bats. If a bat is found all work should cease immediately and a suitably licensed bat worker employed to assess how best to safeguard the bat(s). Natural England should also be informed.

8. Otters

Whilst there is only a low risk of otter being present, the applicant is reminded that under the 2019 Regulation it is an offence to disturb, harm or kill otters. If an otter is found during the development all work should cease immediately and a suitably licensed ecologist employed to assess how best to safeguard the otter(s). Natural England should also be informed.

9. Birds

The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended it is an offence to remove, damage, or destroy the nest of a wild bird, while the nest is in use or being built. Planning consent does not provide a defence against prosecution under this act. If a birds nest is suspected work should cease immediately and a suitably experienced ecologist employed to assess how best to safeguard the nest(s).

10. Invasive species

The applicant is reminded that it is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to cause spread of invasive species.

Report Author Rosalind Gralton