

APPLICATION NUMBER: 23/00685/FUL

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
23/00685/FUL	James Hughes	23 August 2023

Address: 28 Church Stile Rochdale OL16 1QE

Proposal: Conversion of existing 2 storey workshop building to two self-contained dwellings. Alterations to fenestration to front, rear and south side elevations and formation of new external access staircase

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

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?	N
	Neighbour comments received?	N

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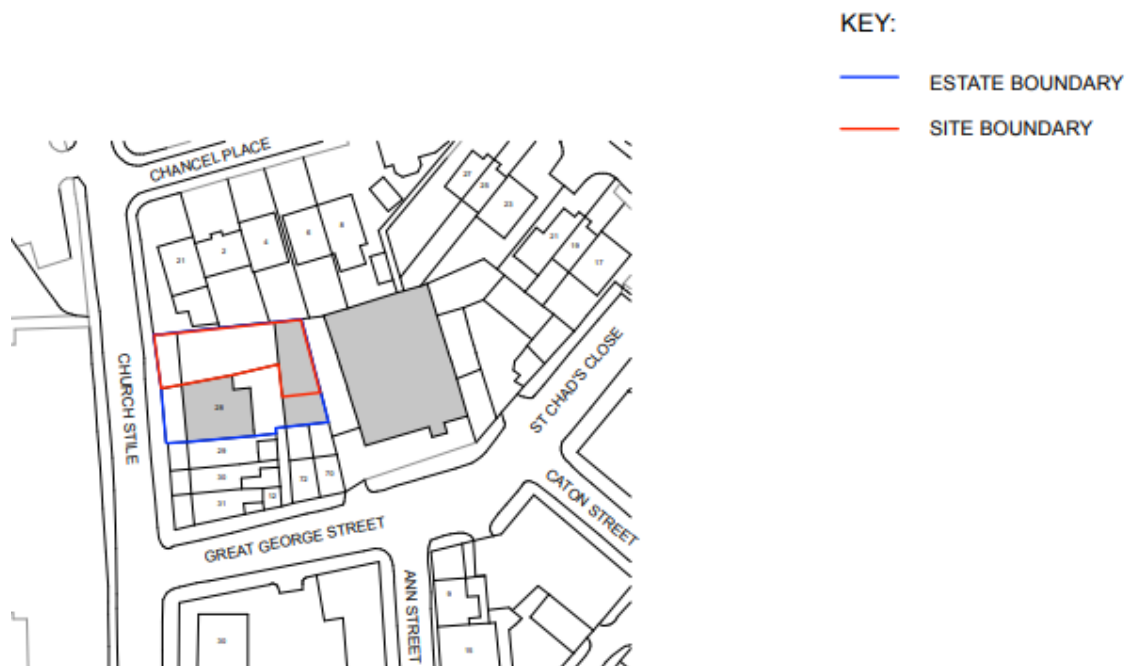
CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	N
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	N/A

RECOMMENDATION	Refuse
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: M Lewis

DATE:20.09.23

SITE



The application relates to part of the land occupied by 28 Church Stile Street. The planning unit includes land immediately to the north of 28 Church Stile Street ('the main building'), currently used as a car park, and approximately two-thirds of a two-storey outbuilding abutting the east (rear) boundary of the site. The outbuilding subject to the application is indicated in submitted documents to be a former workshop. The main building on the site is occupied by a day-care centre. The outbuilding is brick built, with render applied to front/side elevations and has a flat roof. The proposal does not include an attached single storey garage adjoined to the south of the outbuilding. However, the garage is shown on submitted plans for clarity. The outbuilding appears to be in a poor state of repair.

The rear boundary of dwellings along the south side of Chancel Place is adjacent to the north of the site, with land/buildings associated with a snooker club and sports bar. The rear boundary of dwellings to the north side of Great George Street are adjacent to the south, with the side elevation of no. 29 Church Stile adjoining the main building on the site.

The surrounding area is built up, with a variety of uses including residential and commercial uses in buildings that vary in age and appearance with little legibility in terms of urban grain.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission for a change of use of the outbuilding to create 2x residential units (1x to ground floor and 1x to first floor). The units are to be self-contained with separate accesses created. In addition, alterations to the outbuilding are proposed to facilitate the change of use, consisting of:

- Provision of external staircase rising from existing car park to first floor front elevation.

- Removal of four windows and an access door to the front (west) elevation and replacement with two windows and an access door with side window to the ground floor and three windows and an access door to the first floor.
- Replacement of 3no. first floor windows to the rear elevation.
- Provision of an additional first floor door to the side (south) elevation that will open onto the existing garage roof.
- Cleaning of external elevations (no change in materials).

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Section 2: Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4: Decision-making
- Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 11: Making effective use of land
- Section 12: Achieving well-designed places

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

- SO1 To deliver a more prosperous economy**
- SO2 To create successful and healthy communities**
- SO3 To improve design, image and quality of place**
- SO4 To promote a greener environment**
- SO5 To improve accessibility and deliver sustainable transport**

- C1 Delivering the right amount of housing in the right place**
- C3 Delivering the right type of housing**
- C6 Improving health and wellbeing**

- P1 Improving image**
- P3 Improving design of new development**

- T2 Improving accessibility**

- DM1 General Development requirements**

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Supplementary Planning Guidance note 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (June 2016).

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways And Engineering

Confirmed no objection to the proposed plans.

Lead Local Flood Authority/Drainage

No comments received to date

Env Health - Noise/Odours

No comments received to date

GM Fire Service

No comments received to date

United Utilities

No comments received to date

Conservation And Design

Confirmed no comment.

REPRESENTATIONS

- 8 neighbours consulted on 27 July 2023.
- General Site Notice displayed on 15 August 2023.

No representations received.

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development

The application site is located on land within the Defined Urban Area (as designated on the saved Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map). CS Policy C1 sets out that the Council will seek to maximise the potential of previously developed sites within the urban area to achieve a target of 80% of new housing on previously developed land. In addition, Policy C3 seeks to widen the housing choice to broaden the appeal of the Borough and support its economic growth. Amongst other things, Policy C3 states that the Council will:

- Ensure new development provides housing types that take account of local needs and aspirations;
- Promote densities that make efficient use of land whilst delivering a range of housing to widen choice in the borough and reflect local character; and
- Support the provision of housing on appropriate sites to meet the needs of specific groups including older people and other vulnerable groups

The proposal seeks permission to change the use of an existing underutilised building located in a sustainable location to 2x 1 bedroom apartments. The proposal would accord with the Core Strategy in that the proposal would lead to the net gain of two dwellings within an underutilised building in a sustainable and central location within the Borough. Therefore, subject to further assessment of the impacts of the proposed development and any other development management policies, the scheme is considered to be acceptable in principle, and would accord with the requirements of Policies C1 and C3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy in principle.

Design and Appearance

CS Policy C1 states that all new residential development will be expected to comply with the general Development Management criteria outlined in policy DM1. With regards to design and appearance, CS Policy DM1 states that all development proposals, including changes of use of buildings, will be expected to demonstrate that they:

- Are of a high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area

CS Policy P3 requires all new developments, regardless of location, to adhere to high standards of design. In particular,

- Enhance the Borough's identity and sense of place, by respecting context where it is positive and having regard to the scale, density, massing, height, layout, landscape, materials and access of surrounding buildings and areas in general.
- Incorporating design measures that design out crime and ensure spaces are safe to use and access.
- Design buildings and spaces so that quality and appearance can be maintained over time.

CS Policy DM1 requires that all development proposals, including change of use of buildings and/or alterations to existing buildings, will be expected to demonstrate amongst other things that they:

- Are of a high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area.

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that development, amongst other things, will function well and add to the overall quality of the area over the lifetime of the development and should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and layout. Proposals should also establish or maintain a strong sense of place through the appropriate use of materials to create an attractive place to live.

Whilst the proposed alterations to fenestration is acceptable and have the potential to marginally improve the appearance of the building subject to materials, the proposed erection of an external staircase to the front elevation of the building and the lack of any coherent plan to improve the materials to external walls would be unacceptable, with the resulting building, which would be effectively a small apartment building, appearing unsightly and dilapidated. The external staircase would be a highly prominent addition and would represent an inappropriate method of access to the first floor apartment, requiring future occupiers to walk up an unsafe and exposed external staircase. The staircase would furthermore detract from the appearance of the main front elevation and the appearance of the building.

The proposed change of use of the building and external alterations fails to be consistent with Policies C1, P3 and DM1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy of Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Neighbour and Occupier Amenity

Part 4.10 of the Residential SPD states that when considering applications for the change of use of building (or part of a building) for residential use, the Council will

take into account the impact of that use on the existing area and will also seek to secure a good standard of amenity for the future occupants.

CS Policy DM1 requires all developments to demonstrate, amongst other things, that they:

- Are compatible with surrounding land uses, both in terms of its impact upon those uses and the impact of the surrounding land uses upon the amenities of future residents/users.
- Do not adversely affect the amenity of residents or users through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy.

Paragraph 130(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework stipulates that planning decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users (including consideration of described space standards).

Upon consideration of the uses of surrounding land and buildings, it is not considered that a small residential development/change of use would result in any undue impact to the amenity or users of surrounding buildings, or render the change of use proposed unsuitable. It is noteworthy that there are other residential homes/apartments in close proximity to the building subject to the proposed change of use.

Internal Floor Areas

<i>Apartment</i>	<i>Minimum Standards (1B/2P)</i>	<i>Area of Apartment</i>
Ground Floor Apartment	50m ²	61m ²
First Floor Apartment	50m ²	61m ²

The proposed dwelling units would exceed the national described minimum space standards. Whilst storage is not specifically demonstrated, it is evident that the apartment floor areas would nonetheless be acceptable on balance.

The proposed ground floor apartment would consist of 1x bedroom, a bathroom and an open plan living area. The proposed bedroom is appropriate in size and be served by a window providing suitable natural light and some outlook, over a car parking area. However, the proposed living area would be served by 1 high level obscure glazed window that would be approximately 5 metres from the two-storey rear elevation of the main building on the site, occupied by a pre-school. Part 4.1 of the Rochdale Design SPD requires a minimum separation distance of 14 metres between a principal window and any directly facing two-storey elevation that does not contain a principal window to a habitable room. The living conditions of future occupiers of the ground floor apartment would thus be significantly compromised by this arrangement, with unacceptable levels of light/outlook from the living area contributing to a dark and oppressive room that would be expected to function as the main living accommodation in the ground floor apartment.

The proposed first floor apartment would also consist of 1x bedroom, a bathroom and an open plan living area. The proposed bedroom and living area are suitable in size and would, on balance, be served by windows providing adequate levels of natural light and outlook. However, the apartment would be served by an external

staircase rising from the courtyard to the west of the building. This external staircase would be open to the elements, rise steeply and be uncovered. This set up is unacceptable and would not represent safe and accessible access to the upper floor apartment and is therefore unacceptable.

It is of note that the proposal does not include the provision of any private outdoor amenity space. However, the building is directly opposite the east boundary of Broadfield Park, a large park immediately to the west of the application site. As such, the lack of outdoor amenity space whilst not ideal, is acceptable on balance.

Highways and Parking

Part 3.13 of the Rochdale Design SPD stipulates that car parking areas should be designed in such a way to prevent parked cars from dominating the street scene and to prevent cars from overhanging the public highway.

Part 'f' of CS Policy T2 requires that developments provide parking in compliance with the Council's Car Parking Standards (CS Appendix C5). Part 'e' of CS Policy DM1 goes on to state that satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring and servicing arrangements taking into account of the propose use and location should also be required.

C5 Appendix C5 stipulates that single bedroom dwellings in town centre locations should provide a maximum of 1.25 spaces per dwelling, with no standard specified for cycle space provision.

The submitted plans and documents show that there will be 1no. parking space per dwelling unit provided. This is below the maximum standard. The Local Highway Authority (LHA) were consulted on the proposal to comment on parking provision, access arrangement and servicing arrangements. The LHA confirmed no objection to the proposal, confirming that the proposed parking, access and servicing arrangements are acceptable.

The proposal is consistent with Part 3.13 of the Rochdale Design Supplementary Planning Document, Policies T2 and C5, as well as Appendix 5, of the Rochdale Core Strategy with regards to highway safety and parking provision.

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSAL

1. The proposed addition of an external staircase to the front (west) elevation and lack of any proposed treatment or repair to the external materials to external elevations of the existing outbuilding would result in a small apartment building that would appear unsightly and detrimental to the character and appearance of the street scene and group of buildings the proposed small apartment building is part of. As such, the proposed development would fail to accord with Policies C1, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the Council's 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' Supplementary Planning Document and Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. By virtue of the lack of appropriate windows serving habitable rooms to the proposed ground floor apartment and lack of appropriate, safe access to the proposed first floor apartment, the proposal would fail to provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers of the proposed dwellings (lack of suitable outlook and access to daylight to ground floor occupiers and lack of appropriate, safe access for first floor occupiers). As such, the proposed development fails to be consistent with Policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale

Core Strategy, the Council's 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' Supplementary Planning Document and Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Procedure Statement

The proposal would not improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area nor does it comply with the development plan and therefore does not comprise sustainable development. There were no amendments to the scheme, or conditions which could reasonably have been imposed, which could have made the development acceptable and it was therefore not possible to approve the application.

Notes for Applicant:

INFORMATIVE:

For the avoidance of doubt, this Decision Notice relates to the following drawings:

- Location Plan (Drawing 115 01 Revision B dated June 2023)
- Proposed Site Plan/Parking Plan (Drawing 115-200 Revision C dated June 2023)
- Proposed Parking Plan/Refuse Plan (Drawing 115-205 Revision A dated July 2023)
- Proposed Front and Rear Elevations (Drawing 115-210)
- Proposed Side Elevations (Drawing 115-211)
- Proposed Roof Plan (Drawing 115-202)
- Proposed Section (Drawing 115-220)
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan inc. Access (Drawing 115-203 Revision A)
- Proposed First Floor Plan inc. Access (Drawing 115-204)

Report Author James Hughes