

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.
25/00277/FULCASE OFFICER
Sam Yuen**DETERMINATION DATE** 15.10.2025 **EXT OF TIME** 18.12.2025**Address:** Land To The Rear Of 7 To 15 Lodge Street, Middleton, M24 6AA**Proposal:** Partial demolition of existing building followed by formation of hardstanding to create yard

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?	N
	Neighbour comments received?	

EIA	Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?	N
-----	--	---

CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	N
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	N/A

RECOMMENDATION	GRANT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS
----------------	-----------------------------

CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RK

DATE: 18/12/2025

SITE

The application relates to a parcel of land to the rear of nos. 7-15 Lodge Street and Pioneer Mill, approx. 500m north-east of Middleton Town Centre. It comprises a dilapidated building with gated access from a public footpath, known as Canky Ginnel, which runs adjacent to the site. The surrounding buildings are of a mix of commercial and residential use.

The building has been identified as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) due to its historic and architectural interest and is located within the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area. Other heritage assets within the wider vicinity include the Grade-II listed Providence Chapel and Brookside House, another NDHA.

PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the partial demolition of the buildings within the application site. The supporting statement notes the building is steadily degrading and in a poor state of repair and would need to be demolished on safety grounds.

The buttress wall and perimeter wall surrounding the site would be retained. The existing fencing and gate would also be retained or replaced to match existing.

There are currently no plans to redevelop the site, and the area previously occupied by the buildings would form hardstanding space.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE)

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan was adopted and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the 9 authorities covered by the plan on 21st March 2024. The following policies are relevant:

Policy JP-P1 Sustainable Places

Policy JP-P2 Heritage

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS) 2016:

The Rochdale Core Strategy was adopted on 19th October 2016. The following policies are relevant:

P2	Protecting and Enhancing Character, Landscape and Heritage
P3	Improving Design of New Development
DM1	General Development Requirements

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

88/D22099 - Re-Roofing Of Mill Premises – Grant subject to conditions

79/D08391 - Two Storey Extension To Adjoining Workshop - Grant subject to conditions

79/D08129 - Alterations To Form Light Industrial Workshop - Withdrawn

77/D05085 - Alterations To Form Offices And Car Park - Grant subject to conditions

77/D04568 - Car Park – Withdrawn

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Conservation And Design

The buildings on the site are shown on the town plan from 1848. They are of red brick construction and as shown on the mid-19th map appear to be linked with the buildings shown as the Lodge. They appear to pre-date the adjacent Pioneer Mill, which does not appear on the maps until the 20th century (although not named). The southern elevation of the building has a door at first floor level. This potentially could indicate that the building was used at some point for weaving. Both silk and cotton were produced in the town.

Due to their age, vernacular form and grouping with other buildings of a similar age they meet the criteria for assessment as a non-designated heritage asset. They also lie within Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset. It is also noted that they have previously been identified as being of local interest.

These buildings along with others along Lodge Street and Market Place provide evidence of the town's history at the start of the industrial revolution. They are of clear historic interest and while in a poor state of repair, some features of the local vernacular remain. While in their current condition, their visual contribution is detracting, they have the potential to contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

While a heritage statement has been submitted as part of this application, it does not meet the minimum requirements as set out by NPPF Paragraph 207. While there is some mention of the existing building and assessment of its original use, its significance and contribution to the Conservation Area is not explored in any detail. Furthermore, the statement appears to conflate the building's condition with its

significance. The statement also refers to a 2007 report though this has not been submitted.

An updated heritage statement is required; this should explore the building's history and its significance. It should also set out the significance of other affected heritage assets, including the Conservation Area. This is required so that its significance and contribution to the Conservation Area can be properly understood. This should be carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced heritage professional and should refer to best practice guidance.

The statement advises that the building needs to be demolished on safety grounds. A copy of the structural engineer's report should be submitted in support of this.

The proposal would result in the total loss of the non-designated heritage asset. It would also result in the loss of an early building within the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area. The level of harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset is likely to be less than substantial. It is noted that no proposals have been put forwards for the redevelopment of the site following on from demolition. The scheme would appear to neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

There is insufficient information available for the Officer to support the application. An updated heritage statement is required along with a copy of the structural engineer's report.

UPDATE:

The submitted structural engineer's report states that the buildings are in a state of advanced structural deterioration. It also states that the visible defects clearly indicate that the buildings are no longer safe to occupy or attempt to repair. The structural engineer has recommended that the building and outbuildings be carefully demolished, due to the risk of uncontrolled collapse and potential harm to pedestrians.

Given the concerns raised in relation to health and safety and the condition of the building, the previous objections can be removed. If it is safe to do so, the applicant should look to retain and securely store on site existing bricks and materials, so that they can be incorporated into any future scheme. Given the safety concerns and the comments from GMAAS, a building recording condition is not proposed in this instance.

Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service

Having checked our records the Service is satisfied that the proposed development does not threaten the known or suspected archaeological heritage. Despite its early to mid-19th century origin, the building is of negligible significance having been subject to numerous internal changes throughout its lifespan. Externally there is no architectural merit, and little knowledge could be gained from any study of the surviving form prior to partial demolition and site development. Likewise, there is very little below-ground potential.

On this basis there is no reason to seek to impose any archaeological requirements upon the applicant.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit

Bats - Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

The building was assessed to have 'negligible' roosting potential although bats may use the building opportunistically. No further surveys are required, however as bats are highly mobile creatures, the Ecology Unit advise an informative to be attached to any permission should it be granted.

The PRA (Section 8) includes recommendations including that any new external lighting should be in line with best practice guidelines for nocturnal animals, which should be secured via a condition.

Nesting Birds

No nesting bird surveys were undertaken; however, the building could support nesting birds. Work that will impact on habitats where nesting birds may be present (for example demolition works), should not be undertaken in the main bird nesting season (March – August) unless suitable checks for active bird nests have been undertaken. The Ecology Unit would suggest that a condition to this effect be placed on any permission.

Planning policy encourages enhancements and net gains for biodiversity to be delivered through the planning system. Wherever possible, measures to enhance the site for biodiversity should be secured as part of this planning application and could include integration of at least one bird box onto the buttress walls, which should be secured via condition, to provide biodiversity enhancements.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

The application is likely exempt from a BNG assessment under the de minimis rule (less than 25m² of habitat to be removed). Rochdale Council must be satisfied that this is accurate.

Environment Agency

The EA has no objection to the proposal, subject to the following condition prior to any redevelopment and informative being included in any permission granted.

The proposed demolition and potential redevelopment would introduce new receptors into an area where combustion emissions and engine noise are possible environmental factors.

Air Quality

- ☐ The plant is compliant with MCPD emission limits, but emissions from the 7m stacks may contribute to local air quality impacts under certain meteorological conditions.
- ☐ The planning site is close to residential dwellings, so dispersion modelling or a screening assessment may be needed to confirm that future sensitive receptors (if residential use is proposed) will not be at risk.

Noise and Amenity

- ☐ Combustion engines can produce operational noise and low-frequency vibration.
- ☐ The existing permit requires the operator to prevent “significant degradation of local air quality” and to operate with appropriate techniques, but no direct noise limits are imposed.

Any future development should be supported by a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) and mitigation (e.g. acoustic design) to prevent conflict between new receptors and the existing power station.

Safeguarding of the Installation

- ☐ The Whitbrook Power plant is critical infrastructure, permitted to operate up to 5,000 hours annually.
- ☐ Residential or commercial redevelopment must not lead to operational restrictions through nuisance complaints or planning conditions.

The LPA should ensure prospective residents/occupiers are informed of the proximity to the power station and that the planning decision safeguards its lawful operation.

Highways And Engineering

No objection.

Environmental Health - Noise/Odours

No comments received at the time of writing.

Environmental Health - Air Quality

No comments received at the time of writing.

GM Fire Service

No comments received at the time of writing.

REPRESENTATIONS

Neighbour notifications via letters were sent to surrounding properties and a site notice was posted within the vicinity of the site. No comments were received.

ANALYSIS

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states *“with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area... special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”*

Policy JP-P2 of the adopted Places for Everyone and Policy P2 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy strives to protect the borough’s heritage by conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets, both statutory and non-statutory, including consideration of their wider settings. Middleton Town Centre is highlighted as an outstanding conservation area.

Paragraph 210 of the NPPF states, *“in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- (a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- (b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- (c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”*

Paragraph 212 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 213 of the NPPF states *“any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.”*

Paragraph 215 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 216 of the NPPF states *“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.”*

The proposal seeks permission to partially demolish the buildings within the application site. Though little is known regarding its history and use, the buildings appear on the town plan from 1848 and contain architectural features which could

potentially indicate links to Middleton's industrial heritage. Due to their historic, architectural and group value, the buildings are identified as non-designated heritage assets. They also lie within Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset.

Following comments from the Council's Conservation Officer, an up-to-date structural report was submitted. The report states the buildings are in a state of advance structural deterioration. In particular, the significant collapse of the roof, distorted walling and structural decay clearly indicate the structures have reached the end of their usable life and are no longer safe to occupy or attempt to repair. Their unstable condition presents an ongoing risk of uncontrolled collapse and harm to pedestrians using the adjoining walking path. In light of this assessment, it would be necessary to carry out demolition as soon as practicable.

Whilst the total loss of the buildings would result in less than substantial harm to the non-designated heritage asset and the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, the severely unstable and unsafe state of the buildings and its risk to the public would outweigh any heritage harm identified and would therefore be acceptable in the interest of health and safety. No building recording condition is recommended due to the safety concerns. Form of mitigation can be secured through scheme of restoration.

The proposed demolition would therefore be acceptable in accordance with Policy P2 of the adopted Core Strategy, Policy JP-P2 of the adopted PfE and the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

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. The permission relates to the following plans:

- ☐ Location Plan and Site Plan – drawing no. 4044.10 received 12/08/2025
- ☐ Existing Floor Plans, Elevations, Section Plan and Roof Plan – drawing no. 4044.7 received 19/03/2025
- ☐ Proposed Floor Plans, Elevations, Section Plan and Roof Plan – drawing no. 4044.9 received 19/03/2025

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

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 adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Within six months from the date of this permission, details of the restoration for the site following the demolition hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Within 3 months of any subsequent approval, the restoration scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to protect the significance of the designated heritage asset, in compliance with Policies P2, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Procedure Statement

The proposal complies with the development plan and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. It therefore comprises sustainable development and the Local Planning Authority worked proactively to issue the decision without delay.

INFORMATIVES:

1. Whilst the works to the existing building has been assessed as very low risk for bats, the applicant is reminded that under the Habitat Regulation 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.

Report Author Sam Yuen