

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
NOT/2026/0432	Claire Ringwood	9 th June 2026

Address: Lakeside Centre, Bowness Road, Middleton, M24 4NU

Proposal: Prior approval application for the demolition of Middleton Gymnastics Club at Lakeside Centre

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

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

COMMENTS	Planning Panel comments received?	N/A
	Neighbour comments received?	N

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

RECOMMENDATION	PRIOR APPROVAL IS REQUIRED AND IS GRANTED
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 10 June 2026

SITE

The application site relates to a single storey brick building that was previously occupied by Middleton Gymnastics Club. The building has a flat roof and is located within a wider recreational area which includes a sports facility, community centre and offices. The site is accessed from Bowness Road and the recreation ground is surrounded by residential properties on all sides. Middleton Gymnastics Club is located to the south west side of the recreational ground.

The site is within the Defined Urban Area (G/D/1) and Physical Regeneration Area (G/R/1) and a SSSI Impact Risk Zone.

PROPOSAL

The application gives prior notification, pursuant to the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 11, Class B of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), of the proposed demolition of the Middleton Gymnastics Club building. Relevant matters are the method of demolition and the proposed restoration of the site.

PLANS AND DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED

Drawing No: A2/200****/01 – Location Plan

Inspection & Assessment in relation to Bats & Breeding Birds by Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd, Ref: PR-26-0085, Issue No: 1.0, Date of Issue: 12/05/2026

Refurbishment/Demolition Asbestos Survey by Rochdale Borough Council, Issue Date: 20th March 2026

Copy of statutory site notice

Photograph of displayed site notice

Received 13th May 2026

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Legislation

Part 11 of The Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

None.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Environmental Health – Noise

No comments have been received at the time of writing.

Highways

Summary: No objections.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit

No comments have been received at the time of writing.

REPRESENTATIONS

No direct notifications have been issued by the Local Planning Authority. A site notice has been displayed at the site by the applicant, as is a requirement under Part 11 of the GPDO.

ANALYSIS

Permitted Development

Schedule 2, Part 11, Class B of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) permits any building operation consisting of the demolition of a building, subject to the exclusions set out in paragraph B.1. In relation to this paragraph it is noted that the proposal does not fall within criteria (a) to (e).

Class B.2 of the same, states development is permitted by Class B subject to relevant conditions:

(a) where demolition is urgently necessary in the interests of safety or health and the measures immediately necessary in such interests are the demolition of the building the developer must, as soon as reasonably practicable, give the local planning authority a written justification of the demolition;

(b) where the demolition does not fall within paragraph (a) and is not excluded demolition –

(i) the developer must, before beginning the development, apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the method of demolition and any proposed restoration of the site

The submitted application form states the area is to be developed for domestic properties to help meet government targets however, the applicant has advised that this is a long-term plan and there is no masterplan or proposed scheme that has yet been brought forward. The building is vacant as Middleton Gymnastics Club have relocated to other premises. The building appears to be in relatively good condition, where the demolition cannot be considered to be urgently necessary in the interests of safety or health within the meaning of the GPDO and therefore the proposal does not fall within paragraph (a) and does not represent 'excluded demolition'. Therefore, the applicant has correctly applied to the Council for determination as to whether prior approval is required in respect of the method of demolition and the proposed restoration of the site.

Class B.2 (b) continues under (iv) that:

(iv) the applicant must display a site notice by site display on or near the land on which the building to be demolished is sited and must leave the notice in place for not less than 21 days in the period of 28 days beginning with the date on which the application was submitted to the local planning authority;

The applicant has provided photographic evidence of the site notice placed at the site and as such has satisfied the site notice requirements.

Therefore, in view of the above, the application constitutes permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 11 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended).

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Environmental Impact Assessment Guidance states that the process of EIA in the context of town and country planning in England is governed by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

Under EIA regulations it is important to understand in relevant cases how a development project should be defined. In this instance the applicant has noted that the site is expected to be brought forward for redevelopment in the future. In considering this factor officers have requested any information in respect of such redevelopment proposals but have been advised this is only a longer-term ambition for which no proposals currently exist. The site has not been subject to any application, nor is it included within any planning policies or allocations with regards to redevelopment. As such, whilst there may be some future ambition for redevelopment of the site, the demolition is clearly not part a cohesively defined project. Given the vacancy of the building and its location within an existing public space the proposed demolition would still be brought forward regardless of whether a future redevelopment was progressed, and they can be reasonably treated as discreet works that are not dependent on each other. Furthermore given the small scale of the site, the redevelopment of any future proposals is not considered likely to be of such a scale that it would be screened in for EIA purposes and there are not expected to be any significant environmental effects.

With all of the above in mind, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the demolition of the Middleton Gymnastics Club building does not fall under the requirements of EIA development as set out under Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

Prior Approval of Details

As detailed under Class B.2 (b), the developer must apply for determination as to whether prior approval is required as to the method of demolition and any proposed restoration of the site.

The applicant has advised in the application form that service disconnection will be carried out by the utility companies, soft internal strip-out will be carried out by hand and external walls and the roof will be taken down mechanically. A full method statement will be provided once a contractor has been appointed. The principle of this is accepted and the detailed matters can be dealt with by way of condition.

The applicant has also submitted a Refurbishment/Demolition Asbestos Survey. This element of work will be covered by a separate Plan of Work and will be carried out in accordance with Control of Asbestos Regulations 2021.

There are existing residential properties surrounding the recreation ground some of whom may be impacted by noise and disturbance during the demolition process. However this temporary disturbance is not considered to be a significant harm and would be sufficiently mitigated by an appropriate method statement.

The Council's Highways Officer has raised no objection to the application. The site is located to the west of the recreation ground and can be cordoned off from the rest of the area.

The application form states the site will be fully cleared and left safe.

In addition to the above an Inspection & Assessment in Relation to Bats & Breeding Birds has been submitted. This assessment advised that a daytime preliminary roost assessment was carried out in relation to bats with an inclusive inspection for breeding birds. The assessment concluded that no further dusk emergence or dawn re-entry surveys are required at the site during the active season of bats and that the site is also absent of classic and non-classic hibernation suitability. No trees are present on site and the site provides low value foraging habitat. However, the unoccupied nature of the building indicates that the grassland is likely dimly lit and could form part of a network of commuting pathways facilitating the movement of bats through the landscape. The assessment also concluded that no further surveys are required in relation to specially protected birds and that in relation to wider breeding bird species, the building is absent of any viable nesting platforms which could be utilised within the nesting bird season of March-August. The assessment states the scheme could consider enhancements in the way of erecting suitable nest boxes however, as the site is being cleared and not redeveloped, enhancements are not considered necessary at this stage.

Further to the above, the demolition and restoration of the site is acceptable and the recommendation is that prior approval be granted.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a person's rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the Convention of the same Act which sets out their rights in respect for private and family life and for the home. These articles are qualified and are not "absolute" which means a public authority can sometimes interfere with such a right if it is in the interest of the wider community or to protect other people's rights. Officers consider that the proposed development would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles in respect of the human rights of surrounding residents/occupiers.

The application has been considered in accordance with the Rochdale Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy – 'Embracing All Voices (2024-2026)', which seeks to promote a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion that benefits the community as a whole.

Equality Act 2010, Section 149

The above provision requires authorities to consider how their policies and decisions affect people protected under the Equality Act. Its purpose is to ensure that public authorities promote equality and improve society in their day-to-day operations. This duty is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty ("PSED") and requires public authorities to have due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. In writing this report due regard has been given to these matters and the PSED.

There are neighbouring properties surrounding the recreation ground with the closest approximately 30m away on Bowness Road. Officers do not consider these residents

would be affected by the demolition work. The site is surrounded by trees and the conditions detailed below will help mitigate against any noise and disturbance.

RECOMMENDATION

PRIOR APPROVAL GRANTED

1. No demolition works shall be carried out until a Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The Method Statement shall include, but not limited to, the following: details of parking for site operatives and visitors, the loading and unloading of plant and materials, storage of plant and materials, vehicle movements (outline traffic management plan) including wheel washing, soft stripping of the site, removal of asbestos, machine and manual demolition of the building, removal of materials and recycling/waste, noise mitigation, site security, site access and welfare facilities for the contactors.

The demolition of the building shall be in complete accordance with the approved Method Statement, and the site shall thereafter be restored and maintained in accordance with this approved document.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and highway safety in accordance with Policies P3, G9, DM1 and T2 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: As insufficient information has been provided to ensure the interests of neighbouring amenity and highway safety can be adequately met.

2. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the Refurbishment/Demolition Asbestos Survey by Rochdale Borough Council, Issue Date: 20th March 2026, received by the Local Planning Authority on 13th May 2026.

Reason: In the interests of amenity in accordance with Policies P3, G9 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. No works shall take place until details of the restoration of the site have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: to ensure the site is restored following the demolition in the interests of amenity in accordance with Policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: As insufficient information has been provided to ensure the site is restored appropriately.

Notes for Applicant:

1. For the avoidance of doubt, this decision relates to the following list of plans and documents:

Drawing No: A2/200****/01 – Location Plan

Inspection & Assessment in relation to Bats & Breeding Birds by Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd, Ref: PR-26-0085, Issue No: 1.0, Date of Issue: 12/05/2026

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2. Whilst the building to be demolished has been assessed as low risk for bats, the applicant is reminded that under Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 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.