

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Full Planning Application for External Refurbishment, Recladding and Roof Rationalisation Works

Vestacare Offices & Unit 1 Westcroft Industrial Estate Manchester Old Road, Middleton, Rochdale, M24 4GL

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application relating to Vestacare Offices and Unit 1 at Westcroft Industrial Estate, Manchester Old Road, Middleton, Rochdale. The proposal seeks consent for the refurbishment and rationalisation of the existing industrial building including the removal of aging asbestos cement roof sheeting and external cladding materials together with the installation of a new insulated roof and external wall cladding system. The development also includes the rationalisation of the existing fragmented roof arrangement through the extension of a new coordinated roof structure over parts of the existing office and storage accommodation. The proposal does not seek any significant increase in the operational footprint of the building and there is no material change in the established lawful use of the premises.

2. Site Context

The application site forms part of the established Westcroft Industrial Estate and is occupied by Vestacare for office, storage and operational distribution purposes associated with the company's wider care home operations. The building currently comprises a mixture of older industrial construction forms including two-storey office accommodation and single-storey storage areas with aging asbestos roof sheeting and associated external cladding. The existing roof forms are fragmented and visually inconsistent. The surrounding industrial estate contains a range of commercial and industrial buildings of varying ages and appearances. A number of adjacent units within the estate have already undergone refurbishment works involving replacement cladding and modern metal roof systems. The proposal therefore reflects the ongoing regeneration and modernisation of the wider industrial estate environment.

3. Proposed Development

The proposed works comprise:

- Removal of existing asbestos cement roof sheeting and sections of external wall cladding.

- Construction of a new rationalised insulated roof structure across the storage and office areas.
- Installation of modern insulated composite roof and wall cladding systems.
- Introduction of improved internal storage arrangements including vertical pallet and rack storage systems.
- Potential incorporation of photovoltaic (PV) solar panels within the new roof design.
- General upgrading of the appearance and operational efficiency of the premises. The proposal has been carefully designed to modernise the building whilst maintaining the established operational use of the site.

4. Operational Improvements

The improved roof structure and increased internal clearance heights will facilitate a more efficient internal storage and distribution arrangement for Vestacare's wider care home operations. The building functions as a central operational support and distribution facility serving a number of care homes within the wider region. Stored materials include clean bed linen, towels, soaps, hygiene products, cleaning materials and associated operational equipment. The proposed vertical pallet and rack storage systems will significantly improve stock organisation, operational efficiency, health and safety and internal logistics when compared to the existing fragmented low-level storage arrangements. Importantly, these improvements are achieved without any significant increase in the building footprint or any material intensification of the lawful use of the site.

5. Sustainability & Energy Efficiency

The proposal represents a substantial environmental improvement to the existing building. The removal of aging asbestos cement materials together with the installation of modern insulated roof and wall systems will significantly improve the thermal efficiency and long-term performance of the building. The scheme will provide improvements in energy efficiency, weather resistance and internal environmental conditions. The reroofing works also create opportunities for the incorporation of photovoltaic solar panels within the new roof design, assisting in reducing operational energy demand and supporting wider sustainability objectives. The development therefore contributes positively toward reduced energy consumption, lower operational carbon emissions and the sustainable reuse of an existing employment building. Visually, the proposal will significantly improve the appearance of the premises through the replacement of dated asbestos sheeting and inconsistent roof forms with a coordinated modern industrial design more reflective of contemporary industrial developments within the surrounding estate.

6. Planning Policy Context

The proposal has been prepared having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the adopted Places for Everyone Plan (2024), Rochdale Core Strategy policies and relevant saved UDP policies. The development supports national and local planning objectives relating to:

- Sustainable economic growth.

- Retention and improvement of employment premises.
- Environmental enhancement and regeneration.
- Improved energy efficiency and climate resilience.
- Sustainable reuse and upgrading of existing buildings.
- Enhancement of the visual appearance of industrial areas. The proposal does not materially impact upon neighbouring occupiers, highway safety, drainage infrastructure or wider residential amenity.

7. Conclusion

The proposed refurbishment and roof rationalisation works at Vestacare Offices and Unit 1 represent a positive investment into an existing employment site within Westcroft Industrial Estate. The proposal will improve the appearance, energy efficiency, operational functionality and long-term sustainability of the building whilst supporting the continued operation of an established local care provider and associated employment opportunities. The development is considered appropriate within its industrial context and accords with the objectives of national and local planning policy. Accordingly, the application is respectfully recommended for approval.

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