

URBAN DESIGN CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Design Officer	Azhar Kapadi
Date	24.07.26
Application Reference	PL/2026/0528
Address	Land Off Ashdene, Rochdale OL12 6DJ
Proposal	Erection of one detached dwelling with associated car parking, landscaping, boundary treatment and erection of detached garage

Reason(s) for Consultation

Building / Urban design

Assessment

This assessment has been made against:

National Guidance:

- The National Planning Policy Framework
- The ten characteristics of a well-designed place contained within the National Design Guide
- National Model Design Code
- Building for a Healthy Life design toolkit

Local Policy:

- Rochdale Core Strategy policies:
 - S03 – To improve design, image and quality of place
 - P2 – Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
 - P3 – Improving design of new development
 - DMI (General Development Requirements)
- Supplementary Planning Documents:
 - Oldham and Rochdale Urban Design Guide

The Unitary Development Plan

- G/H/1 - Housing;
- G/BE/1 - Design Quality;
- BE/2 - Design Criteria for New Development

Greater Manchester's Streets for All Design Guide

Places for Everyone (PfE) joint development plan

The plot is characterised by several mature trees which help give the site a distinctive character. The site hosts three garages which appear to have fallen into disrepair. Removal of the garages is supported. The preservation of existing trees is welcomed as part of the proposals. The applicant is advised to consider early on if tree roots are going to impact building foundations.

The principle of development remains particularly challenging in this case given that the site's former 'woodland' character, which would have been a key consideration in assessing its capacity to accommodate development, has been substantially altered through tree removal. The Tree Survey submitted in support of the current application was undertaken after these clearances had taken place and therefore assesses the site in a materially different condition to that which previously existed.

Although some areas of woodland is proposed to be retained, it would likely become perceived and managed as part of the dwelling's domestic curtilage rather than as woodland. Furthermore, the proximity of mature trees to the dwelling could result in future pressure for pruning or removal, gradually eroding their contribution to the character and setting of the site.

As such, there are fundamental concerns regarding the appropriateness of development in this location and the site's capacity to accommodate a dwelling without further erosion of its woodland character. These matters should be satisfactorily addressed before detailed design considerations are explored further.

In terms of architectural design, whilst the dwelling would not necessarily enhance the character of the site, it is not considered to materially detract from it. The street exhibits a variety of architectural styles, allowing a degree of flexibility for a bespoke dwelling that would be largely screened from public view.

The designer would certainly benefit from taking inspiration from precedents. It is disappointing the designer has not been able to draw influence from the local context. The dwellings along Ashdene and Whitworth Road for example have interesting stone door surrounds/pediments which the designer could have reinterpreted. Some of the terraced houses in the area demonstrate deep window and door recesses providing some depth and interest to elevations.



Should the application be considered acceptable in principle, I would recommend conditions relating to materials and seek improvements to certain detailing, including the use of wet verges in place of prominent fascia boards to achieve a cleaner roof edge, together with improved ridge detailing. Lighter coloured window frames would also provide a softer appearance, while rainwater goods should be positioned discreetly at building corners or recessed within vertical brickwork channels where feasible. The introduction of stone cills would add visual interest and articulation to otherwise simple elevations. The use of aluminium window frames would further enhance the overall quality and appearance of the development, although the weight afforded to these recommendations is ultimately a matter for the Case Officer.

Other

The application would really have benefitted from views / photomontages to the site to see the impact of the tree buffer.

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