

Officer Report

Case Reference: 25/01173/FUL
Location: UNIT 1, DEEN HOUSE, STATION ROAD, MILKSTONE,
ROCHDALE, OL11 1DS
Proposal: Change of use of Unit 1 to Adult Day Care Centre (Use Class E(f))
Recommendation: Approve with Conditions
Officer: Bob Melling

SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

The application relates to Unit 1 of Deen House, which is the ground floor western section of the building. The building fronts Station Road and Unit 1 is currently unoccupied although has previously been used as a teaching centre.

Deen House is a late nineteenth century building which has historical associations to the railway. The site is in a mixed use area that comprises commercial and residential properties. It is also located in close proximity to both Rochdale train station and its associated tram stop.

The site is on the edge of the Maclure Road Conservation Area.

PROPOSAL

Permission is sought to change the use of Unit 1 to an adult day centre for adults with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and/or complex needs (Use Class E(f)). No external alterations are proposed and minimal internal alterations are proposed. The facility will operate on a pre-booked basis only, with a maximum of 20 service users attending any one session. Operating hours are 08:00–20:00 Monday to Friday and 10:00–18:00 on Saturdays and Sundays.

The centre will be staffed by a Senior Support Worker and between 4 and 6 Support Workers per session, with staffing levels adjusted according to service user needs and support requirements.

Access arrangements include managed and supervised drop-off and pick-up activity, with staggered arrival and departure times to minimise congestion and avoid on-street queuing. Service users will typically travel by family transport, taxi or centre-arranged vehicles. Staff parking will be provided off-site, with employees encouraged to use nearby public transport facilities located within walking distance of the site. Limited visitor parking will be available by prior arrangement.

RELEVANT PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT HISTORY

95/D32415 – Change Of Use From Unemployment Benefits Office To Garment Manufacture – Approved.

16/01098/FUL – Change of use of parts of ground and first floors from B1(a) Office Use to D2 Light Entertainment shown as Section B on submitted plan and from B1(a) Office use to B8 Storage & Distribution as shown as Section C on submitted plan and the continued use as Light Industry B1(c) as shown as Section A of the submitted plan – Withdrawn.

17/01135/FUL – Change of use of parts of ground and first floors from B1(a) Office Use to youth centre and ancillary storage (re-submission 16/01098) – Approved.

18/00875/FUL – Change Of Use From Unemployment Benefits Office (Class B1) to Teaching Centre (Class D1) – Approved.

22/00301/FUL – Change of use of ground floor from teaching centre (Class F.1) to two separate units consisting of a Restaurant (Class E) and Light Industrial Storage and Distribution Hub (Class E) together with alterations to fenestration to front and side elevations – Approved.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Regional Guidance

Places for Everyone (PfE) 2024:

JP-S1: Sustainable Development

JP-P1: Sustainable Places

JP-P2: Heritage

JP-P5: Education, Skills and Knowledge

Saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006:

G/D/1: Defined Urban Area

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS) 2016:

C7: Delivering Education Facilities

C8: Improving community, sport, leisure and cultural facilities

P3: Improving design of new development

P2: Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage

G9: Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability

T2: Improving accessibility

DM1: General development requirements

PUBLICITY

Site Notice: 25.07.2026

Press Notice: 29.07.2026

Neighbour notification letters: 13.07.2026

Weekly List: 27.07.2026

ASSESSMENT

Principle of Use

CS Policy C7 states that ‘improving education and skills is a high priority in order to improve productivity, social and community cohesion and the overall prosperity and quality of life in the borough’.

CS Policy C8 also promotes the provision of community and cultural facilities, provided they are of a type and scale appropriate to the size of the settlement, are accessible and support the Council’s objectives. It states that the Council will support proposals for facilities outside centres providing they are highly accessible by a choice of transport, particularly sustainable modes of transport and do not harm the character or amenity of the area.

The site is located within a highly sustainable and accessible location within walking distance of Rochdale train station and the associated Metrolink stop. There are also short stay public parking bays available on Station Road. The nearest local centre of Milkstone Road is located c.75m to the west, meaning the site is within walking distance of shops and amenities along with residential settlements.

A condition is recommended restricting the use to Class E(f) only, as other uses within Class E may give rise to increased comings and goings, noise and disturbance, and additional parking demand, which could adversely affect the amenities of nearby occupiers and prejudice highway safety.

In light of the above, it is considered that the application site would be well suited to the proposed use. As such, the principle of development is supported in accordance with the Development Plan.

Heritage

The application site is located on the edge of the Maclure Road Conservation Area. The distinctive appearance of Maclure Road was established in the early twentieth century by the construction of St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church and the Fire Station complex. Together they create a unique gateway into Rochdale town centre.

Deen House itself is a late nineteenth century building which has historical associations to the railway. The proposal seeks to change the use of the building, however there would be no external alterations required to the building itself. The application property is currently vacant, so the proposals would bring it back into an active use, increasing footfall in the Conservation Area.

Overall, it is considered that the proposals would have a neutral impact on the significance of Deen House as a non-designated heritage asset and the setting of the Conservation Area. The proposals would therefore accord with CS Policies DM1, P2 and P3, PfE Policies JP-P1 and JP-P2, and the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

CS Policy DM1 states that all development proposals should be compatible with surrounding land uses and should not adversely affect the amenity of residents, in addition to requiring a number of other basic planning considerations. CS Policy G9 requires that final development does not lead to an increase in noise pollution.

The application site is located in proximity to residential properties on Fire Station Yard to the north and Richard Street to the east. In assessing the proposal, regard has been had to the nature and intensity of the proposed use and its potential effects on neighbouring residential amenity.

The proposed Adult Day Centre would provide structured, supervised day support for adults with learning disabilities, autism, physical disabilities and complex needs. The use would operate on a pre-booked basis only, with a maximum of 20 service users attending any one session and staffing levels sufficient to ensure the effective management and supervision of activities. Arrivals and departures would be managed through staggered drop-off and collection arrangements, reducing the potential for disturbance associated with concentrated comings and goings.

It is noted that the building has historically been used as a teaching centre and that the proposed use would not be materially dissimilar in its overall character to the lawful use of the premises. Both uses involve the occupation of the building by groups of people during defined periods of the day and are expected to generate similar patterns of activity.

Whilst the proposal would operate over extended hours, the submitted details indicate that activity would remain organised and supervised, with no open walk-in access and no activities likely to result in unacceptable levels of noise or disturbance. Furthermore, the hours of operation can be controlled by planning condition to ensure that the use remains compatible with the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. The proposed level of attendance, together with the submitted travel and transport arrangements, are considered appropriate for the scale of the development and its location.

Having regard to the nature of the proposed use, the historic and lawful use of the building, the controlled number of service users, and the ability to impose conditions where necessary, it is considered that the development would not result in unacceptable harm to the living conditions of neighbouring residents in terms of noise, disturbance, activity levels or general residential amenity. As such, the proposal would accord with CS Policies DM1, G9 and C8, PfE Policy JP-P1 and the NPPF.

Highway and Pedestrian Safety

CS Policy T2 relates to accessibility and Policy DM1 requires all development to provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking and manoeuvring arrangements provided.

The Council's Highways Authority has been consulted and has not raised any objections. The proposal does not provide any dedicated parking; however, the proposed development is within a highly sustainable area with a range of public transport alternatives to private vehicular travel. In addition, on street parking is heavily controlled in the area by existing traffic regulation orders.

As such, it is considered that the proposal would have an acceptable impact upon the local highway network in accordance with CS Policies DM1 and T2 and the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve with conditions

SUMMARY OF THIRD-PARTY REPRESENTATIONS

N/A

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Env. Health - Noise/Odours

No comments received at time of writing.

Highways and Engineering

No objections.

Conservation Officer

No comments received at time of writing.

PROCEDURAL STATEMENT

Article 35 Declaration

Officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application. No significant problems have arisen during the consideration of this application, and the application has been determined in a timely manner, in accordance with the policies with the Development Plan.

Human Rights and Public Sector Equality Duty

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report. In particular, Article 6 (1), of the European Convention on Human Rights in relation civil rights and a fair hearing; Article 8 of the ECHR in

relation to the right to respect for private and family life and Article 1 Protocol 1 of the ECHR in relation to the protection of property have all been taken into account.

In addition, the Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination in respect of certain protected characteristics namely: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, or beliefs and sex and sexual orientation. It places the Local Planning Authority under a legal duty to have due regard to the advancement of equality in the exercise of its powers including planning powers. Officers have taken this into account in the assessment of the application. In particular due regard has been afforded to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Officers are satisfied that the application material and Officers' assessment has taken into account these issues.

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 benefit the community as a whole.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

Condition(s) (4)

- 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 development shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents hereby approved:

- Supporting Statement
- Existing Plans. Dwg no. F01/EN/01. Rev C
- Existing Elevations. Dwg no. F01/EN/03. Rev B
- Proposed Plans. Dwg no. F01/EN/04. Rev B
- Proposed Elevations. Dwg no. F01/EN/05. Rev B
- Existing Block Plan. Dwg no. F01/EN/06. Rev A
- Proposed Block Plan. Dwg no. F01/EN/07. Rev B

- Location Plan. Dwg no. F01/EN/08

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 saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan, the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 3 The development hereby approved shall not be operated outside the hours of 08:00 to 20:00 Monday to Friday and 10:00 to 18:00 on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby occupants and in accordance with policies G9 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 4 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use classes) Order 1987, (as amended), and the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 (as amended) or any equivalent Order following the revocation and re-enactment thereof, the building hereby approved shall only be used for the purposes described within Use Class E(f) and for no other purpose including other uses within Use Class E.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and highway safety and in accordance with policies DM1 and T2 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Approval Reason(s) (1)

- 1 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.