

Officer Report

Case Reference: PL/2026/0141
Location: Land at Queens Drive, Rochdale, OL11 2NP
Proposal: Erection of 3-storey apartment building consisting of 23no. units, erection of 5no. 3-storey dwelling houses, erection of a new sub-station with associated access, car parking, landscaping and boundary treatment
Recommendation: Approve with Conditions
Officer: Nick Brookman

SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The application site lies within the designated Urban Area and relates to the former Kirkholt Medical Centre which has recently been demolished. It is 0.39ha in size and owned by Rochdale Council.

The Proposed development site is located in Kirkholt, approximately 1 mile southwest of Rochdale town centre. The site is accessible via Manchester Road to the north and the Rochdale bypass (A664) to the west. These roads link Kirkholt to the surrounding areas of Rochdale as well as the wider motorway network via the A627 and M62. The M62 runs to the south of the site giving access to Manchester to the southwest and the rest of the Greater Manchester regions

The land has since been partially cleared and its use has been split; the land to the east has remained vacant, with the footprint of the former medical centre still visible in hardstanding and the parking court blocked off. The land to the west is now partially occupied by 'Q-Gardens' Community Gardens.

The site at present is generally flat, with a shallow gradient rising towards the south of the site, and comprises cleared land and footings associated with the former medical centre structure. There are a number of trees planted along the perimeter and around the site.

There are a range of architectural typologies found within the surrounding housing stock and in the wider Kirkholt area, although it is predominantly comprised of traditional 'Post-War' housing, typically featuring robust brick facades with minimal robust detailing and regular massing and fenestration arrangements.

Directly adjacent to the site is the series of 3 storey apartment buildings, these are a repeating typology found within the local area, including a row of 4 on Daventry Road to the south. There are also sporadic modern housing developments on small infill sites across the area, including 6 dwellings on the eastern edge of Queens Drive. The

residential housing stock is typified by consistent residential built form and massing, predominantly 2-storey with the occasional single-storey and 3-storey buildings. The apartments directly surrounding the site are 3-storey.

Beyond the traditional residential typologies, there are a number of commercial and industrial buildings within the immediate vicinity of the site, most prominently the Williams BWM Building on the opposite side of Queensway, with an approximate 2 storey equivalent overall massing. Many of the surrounding industrial buildings retain the character of the area through the use of traditional brick facades and robust detailing.

PROPOSAL

The proposed scheme consists of new build residential development (Use Class C3) consisting of 28 no. total units – this comprises a 23-unit 3-storey apartment building and 5 no. 4-bed dwellings, all for social rent, with associated landscaping, private amenity space, access and parking.

The site layout consists of two accommodation blocks encompassing a public central landscaped courtyard. The dwelling block is aligned to provide continuity with the neighbouring apartment buildings adjacent to site, while the apartment block is rotated to clearly define the public amenity space. Car parking is split between the blocks and ushered towards the edges of the site in order to maximise the natural landscaped provision within the centre of the site, enhance overall visual amenity and reduce public facing hardstanding.

Two access points are proposed from Queens drive with a larger parking area to the west of the site for the apartment block, and a parking area to the east for the townhouses.

The proposed elevations have been developed to reflect the traditional built forms and massing of the local vernacular and offer continuity with the traditional pitched roof aesthetic of the surrounding dwellings. ‘Double gables’ are proposed on the gable ends of the apartment block, helping to reduce the overall massing and create focal points to the proposals, while a series of gables are proposed to the dwelling block to offer visual coherence and subtle distinction between dwellings. The proposed elevations include the use of facing brick with brickwork detailing, a pitched roof form and meaningful proportions are combined with floor to ceiling height windows to form the detailed elevation. The scheme is to be faced with red brick predominantly, with a contrasting brickwork to ground floors, referencing the typical apartment block typology in the local area, but with a unique contemporary approach. Brick detailing and setbacks to add interest to the overall masonry massing; the elevations have been designed to provide gentle carefully crafted facades that complement the strong, robust built form.

The proposed soft landscaping incorporates species-rich Wildflower Meadows and Native Tree & Shrub planting. A total of 30 no. new trees are proposed across the site, providing a tree-lined frontage to Queens Drive and offering soft visual separation between the development site and the QGardens Community Gardens site. Shrub planting to key areas, including at low-level around the apartment block, adjacent to

the Community Gardens and against the bin store will aid in softening the visual amenity across the site. Existing trees have been aimed to be retained where possible and practical – the scheme will require a number of existing trees to be removed; however it has looked to retain significant trees on site where possible inclusive of the mature Maple (Arb ref. T9) to the north-east of the development site.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- National Design Guide
- National Model Design Code
- Building for a Healthy Life Toolkit

Local

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SD1 Delivering sustainable development

DM1 General development requirements

SO2 Creating successful and healthy communities

C1 Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places

C3 Delivering the right type of housing

SO3 Improving Design, image and quality of place

P1 Improving Image

P3 Improving design of new development

SO4 Promoting a greener environment

G1 Tackling and adapting to climate change

G2 Energy and new development

G7 Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

G8 Managing water resources and flood risk

G9 Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability

SO5 Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport

T2 Improving Accessibility

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Supplementary Planning Guidance note 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (June 2016).

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:

JP-S1	Sustainable Development
JP-S2	Carbon and Energy
JP-S4	Flood Risk and the Water Environment
JP-H1	Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Housing Development
JP-H3	Type, Size and Design and New Housing
JP-H4	Density of New Housing
JP-G6	Urban Green Space
JP-G7	Trees and Woodland
JP-G8	A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
JP-P1	Sustainable Places
JP-C1	An Integrated Network
JP-C2	Digital Connectivity
JP-C5	Streets for All
JP-C6	Walking and Cycling
JP-C8	Transport Requirements of New Development

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

23/00898/DEM – Prior Approval to demolish the medical centre – Granted October 2023.

10/D52917 – Change Use Of Land To Form Allotments Including Erection Of 2.4M High Fencing To Perimeter, Access Gates To Queens Drive And Installation Of Three Cabins And Two Greenhouses – Approved April 2010.

09/D52501 - Erection Of 5 No. 6M High Lighting Columns To Illuminate Medical Practice Car Park (Retrospective) – Approved November 2009.

09/D51972 - Erection Of Single Storey Doctors Surgery – Approved with conditions June 2009.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Environmental Health – Air Quality

No comments received.

Tree Officer

No comments received.

Strategic Housing

No objection.

Q Gardens Committee

No comments received.

Highways and Engineering

No objection.

Environmental Health – Noise

No comments received.

United Utilities

No objection subject to condition.

Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM)

No objection.

Environmental Management

Comments provided and addressed in the analysis below.

Urban Design

Comments provided and addressed in the analysis below.

Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

No objection.

Land Contamination Officer

No objection subject to condition.

The Coal Mining Authority

No objection.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU)

No objection subject to conditions.

Greater Manchester Police

No objection.

Greater Manchester Fire Service

No comments received.

Street Lighting

No comments received.

Schools Service

No comments received but matter is addressed in the analysis below.

REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of notification were originally sent to the occupiers of surrounding buildings on 17th March 2026.

In addition, a site notice was displayed adjacent to the application site on the 23rd March 2026. An advertisement was published in the local press on the 25th March 2026.

No comments were received.

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development

The site lies within the Defined Urban Area (as designated on the saved Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map). Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy Policy C1 sets out that the Council will seek to maximise the potential of previously developed sites within the urban area to achieve a target of 80% of new housing on Previously Developed Land. Policy C1 also emphasises that new housing sites must be sustainable, with good access to local services, facilities, green infrastructure, shops, jobs, schools and public transport. Core Strategy Policy C1 also sets out that all new residential development will be expected to comply with the general Development Management criteria outlined in Policy DM1.

In this regard, the application site is a brownfield site, and the application site is located within an accessible and sustainable location in Rochdale.

Places for Everyone establishes the need for at least 616 net additional dwellings per year in Rochdale to meet the housing needs of the borough.

CS Policy C3 goes on to state, amongst other things, that higher density development (residential) should be focused around Rochdale, Middleton and Heywood town centres. Policy C3 recognises that higher density development should be focused in areas that can sustain higher densities, and this includes accessible sites in and around town centres, sites on or close to high frequency bus routes and sites close to railway stations or Metrolink stops.

Paragraph 124 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that *“Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses”*. Paragraph 125 of the NPPF advises that *“Planning policies and decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land”*. Under sub paragraph (d) of Paragraph 125 of the NPPF, *“Planning policies and decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing..”*.

Further to those relevant policies as identified in the Rochdale Core Strategy, relevant policies in Places for Everyone (PfE) have been identified. PfE Policy JP-S 1 sets out that development should seek to maximise economic, social and environmental benefits. Preference should be given to previously developed (brownfield) land. Furthermore, as set out in PfE Policy JP-H4, new housing should be delivered at a density appropriate for the location and taking into account the site's accessibility.

In addition, PfE Policy JP-H2 states that there should be a significant increase in the supply of new housing, including, specifically, the supply of low-cost market housing. PfE Policy JP-H2 makes it clear that support will be given which increase the provision of affordable housing as part of new developments and the delivery of additional affordable homes will be maximised. It is notable that this scheme is a 100% affordable housing scheme which is in excess of policy requirements.

Accordingly, in this instance, it is considered that the proposal would lead to the provision of much needed and sought after affordable housing accommodation in a highly sustainable location. The apartment units and new dwellings hereby proposed would assist the Borough in meeting its housing requirements on a brownfield site, with the existing dilapidated land beginning to have a negative impact on the character of the local area.

As such, the proposal is acceptable in principle and strongly supports the aspirations of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy Policies SP3/H, C1 and C3 Places for Everyone Policies JP-S1, JP-H2 and JP-H4, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design and Appearance

The NPPF makes it very clear that significant weight should be attributed to development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design. In support of this, the Government have produced a suite of guidance documents including Building for a Healthy Life (BHL), the National Model Design Code (NMDC) and the National Design Guide (NDG) which form a material consideration in the assessment of the design of development proposals, and aid Local Authorities and developers alike in understanding if development proposals are well-designed.

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that *“the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve”*. Paragraph 135 goes on to state that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

Additionally, paragraph 139 sets out that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

The National Design Guide (NDG) states that *“The long-standing, fundamental principles for good design are that it is fit for purpose; durable; and brings delight”*. The NDG advises that scale, appearance materiality and detailing of buildings are key components for well-designed places. The Building for a Healthy Life guidance document states that building forms and materials should be used to reflect local character.

The above considerations are largely reflected within Policies DM1 and P3 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy which ultimately require development proposals to demonstrate high quality design.

CS Policy P1 sets out that high quality design will be required in all new developments, requiring that under-used land and buildings are re-used and creating people-friendly and safe environments. CS Policy C3 requires new development to adhere to high standards of design, respecting context (scale, density, massing, height, layout) and contributing positively to the townscape. CS Policy DM1 states that all development proposals should be of a high-quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area.

It is well established across the design guidance that well-designed development should demonstrate a sound understanding of the features of the site and surrounding context, and that well-designed places and buildings are influenced positively by the history and heritage of the site and its surroundings. A design and access statement has been submitted to support the application and informs the various typologies, form, detailing and materiality used across the proposals, citing local domestic and industrial buildings as inspiration.

The Council's Urban Design team were consulted on this application, and they have confirmed that the submitted scheme demonstrates a clear and coherent design intent and the overarching design strategy is broadly supported. Whilst design refinements were strongly encouraged it is the Planning Officers view that some of these matters can be addressed by condition, some of those matters have since been addressed, such as softening the arrival experience through soft landscaping around the proposed substation and by understanding there is a need to balance affordability and viability whilst ensuring a high-quality scheme can still be delivered.

In addressing each design component, Planning Officers can comment as follows:

Massing and Scale

The proposed 3-storey height is considered appropriate within its context, having regard to the scale of surrounding buildings and residential dwellings, as well as the massing and layout of the previously demolished apartment buildings on the site. Three-storey forms are a common and suitable typology in the area. Previous advice highlighted that larger and deeper three-storey blocks should be carefully designed to avoid appearing overly dominant or inconsistent with adjoining development. In response, the scheme breaks down the massing, moving away from a single, typical four-sided block to achieve a more articulated form.

Layout/Orientation

The orientation of the two blocks of development has been appropriately addressed since pre-application ensuring it faces onto the proposed open green space presenting a coherent approach.

The inclusion of this central green space is welcomed, as it opens up the site and introduces active frontages, natural surveillance and activity through an improved public realm. Ultimately, this space provides an open central landscaped courtyard for communal residents' amenity space, improving activity across the site, encouraging social interaction and creating a strong sense of place to the development.

Parking is appropriately removed from primary frontages and elevations, resulting in a more visually pleasing approach and allowing for uninterrupted views across the landscaped areas.

The comments from the Urban Design team on the arrival experience and car parking areas are noted and were shared with the applicant. The northeast car parking arrival experience has since been improved through the provision of additional soft landscaping acting as a buffer to screen the substation and parking area.

Vehicular access into the site will come from 2 separate access points with one at each end of the application site. The existing access to the northeast will retain the existing access while the new access to the west will provide appropriate visibility splays. Car parking is relatively screened / designed in such a manner to reduced visual disruption to the overall street scene.

Elevations and Materials

Comments from the Urban Design team are acknowledged with regards to the apartment block drawing on aspects of the townhouse design approach. Such as the imposition of vertical niches, placement of rainwater goods and a stronger design language.

First and foremost, from an early stage it was agreed that brick would be an appropriate choice for the primary material within the development due to the building's residential use and the typical local vernacular. Consideration of the site setting within Kirkholt and Rochdale was also given, to ensure the proposal would be appropriate to the setting and surroundings.

A limited palette of sympathetic materials is proposed with simple robust detailing which has been included to create an overall modern contemporary feel to the development, which is sympathetic to, and enhances, the characteristics of its setting, creating a clear sense of place to the scheme and the site.

The elevations are characterised by the regular repetitive ordering of window and door openings to establish a strong vertical rhythm to the façade, as referenced in the traditional mills and dwellings in the surrounding areas.

Alongside initial elevations design drivers, detailing from within the local surrounding context was explored which influenced the elevational treatments used in the proposals. Features include soldier coursing, recessed banding and gable detailing, and have been enhanced to be utilised in a contemporary manner as feature details on the proposals. The proposed brickwork detailing will be set at a recess depth of 15mm and the detailing as a whole incorporates a sufficient amount of visual interest

across the scheme. The gables are used to offer a visual focal point to the scheme – the gables are all designed to front Queens Drive and Queensway in order to enhance visual connectivity with the public realm. The double gables of the apartment block are enhanced with subtle detailing alongside floor-to-ceiling windows that provide outward facing active elevations. The language established in the elevation is clear and legible, and applying a limited palette of materials to the building strengthens the scheme's robustness.

Whilst additional detailing could be implemented onto the apartment block, particularly on elevation B, the scheme as a whole and on balance provides for a high-quality contemporary approach that reflects the character of the surrounding architecture.

The proposed elevations as a whole appear to have been developed to reflect the traditional built forms and massing of the local vernacular and offer continuity with the traditional pitched roof aesthetic of the surrounding dwellings. 'Double gables' are proposed on the gable ends of the apartment block, helping to reduce the overall massing and create focal points to the proposals, while a series of gables are proposed to the dwelling block to offer visual coherence and subtle distinction between dwellings.

The proposed elevations seek a contextually driven contemporary approach to the local vernacular; facing brick with brickwork detailing, a pitched roof form and meaningful proportions are combined with floor to ceiling height windows to form the detailed elevation. The scheme is to be faced with red brick predominantly, with a contrasting brickwork to ground floors, referencing the typical apartment block typology in the local area, but with a unique contemporary approach. Brick detailing and setbacks to add interest to the overall masonry massing; the elevations have been designed to provide carefully crafted facades that complement the strong, robust built form.

UPVC windows, aluminium copings, steel balustrades are all proposed to be anthracite grey. However, in the Officers experience, anthracite dominates as being the most popular colour choice for UPVC windows at present and it is considered by Officers that this choice of colour tends to overly dominate buildings that have a larger massing. A lighter tone colour on all the aforementioned elevation treatments, such as agate grey / RAL 7038 would significantly reduce that dominance whilst also providing a much more modern and aesthetically encouraging appearance. Further detail and negotiation on materials will be secured by condition.

The development will complement the overall street scene.

Landscaping

In addition, paragraph 136 confirms that *"trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible"*.

In this instance, the proposed development is subject to a strong landscaping scheme that would effectively introduce natural screening that does not feel contrived and the landscaping would integrate well with the development as a whole.

Solar Panels and ASHPs

Details on the proposed renewable energy provision arising from the use of Solar Panels and ASHPs will be conditioned.

Summary

Subject to condition securing full details of materials and other architectural details, it is considered that the proposals would satisfy the overarching aims and objectives set out in local and national design guidance in addition to Policies P1 and P3 and DM1 of the adopted Core Strategy, Policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Occupier and Neighbour Amenity

Policy DM1 of the adopted Core Strategy requires that all development proposals are compatible with surrounding land uses, both in terms of its impact upon those uses and the impact of the surrounding land uses upon the amenities of future residents.

Development should not affect the amenity of residents or users through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy and development should mitigate against any impacts due to noise, dust, light and odour pollution.

Privacy

The SPD – Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development sets out minimum space standards that should be applied to all new residential development and development which affect existing residential properties.

The SPD advises that where these separation distances cannot be achieved, proposals should be “compatible with the density and character of surrounding development”.

Given the design and layout of the development with particular regard to its orientation, the topography of the wider area and distance from existing dwellings, the space standards here are acceptable. The proposed development would therefore not give rise to concerns with regards to impacts on neighbouring amenity from privacy or overlooking perspectives.

Occupier Amenity

In terms of occupier amenity, Officers must consider if the proposed development provides both sufficient internal and external space that is proportionate to the size of the dwellings being provided ensuring that any space provided meets the needs and requirements for future occupiers for the lifetime of the development.

The Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) is a technical standards document produced by the Government to ensure internal space within new dwellings is sufficient for future occupiers. Additionally, in accordance with PfE Policy JP-H3 (Type, Size and Design of New Housing), it is a requirement for all new dwellings to comply with the nationally described space standards and be built to the accessible and adaptable standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations unless specific site conditions make this impracticable.

The Nationally Described Space Standards state in order to provide one bed space, a single bedroom must be at least 7.5sqm in area and at least 2.15m wide. In order to provide 2 bed spaces, a double bedroom must have a floor area of at least 11.5 sqm. On review of the submitted proposed floorplans, the proposed development exceeds the minimum requirements set out within the NDSS.

All dwellings (including the communal areas) are also designed to be Approved Document M4(2) 'Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings' compliant, with the houses also incorporating Approved Document M4(3) 'Wheelchair User Dwellings' compliant ground floor bedrooms and bathrooms.

Externally, the proposed development provides for a proportion of outdoor amenity space which is welcomed and a large benefit of the scheme. In addition to the onsite provision, due to the sites highly sustainable location there are opportunities to access other outdoor public amenity spaces within close proximity of the site and further afield.

With regards to outdoor amenity space for future occupiers of the new dwellings, as defined within the Council's Residential Development SPD residential amenity is; *'The benefit enjoyed from physical external space which is part of the private home. The level of enjoyment is dependent on a number of factors, including location, size, orientation, sounds, noise, accessibility and enclosure, and general quality of space.'*

Under paragraph 7.33 of PfE, the provision of appropriate outdoor amenity space is defined as being *'vital in delivering high quality homes that support good health'*.

The above factors are considered to cover both functional and recreational requirements that are proportionate to the size of the household, taking into account the surrounding context. On reflection of the proposed layout and size of the townhouses, the proposed residential garden areas surrounding them to the rear are appropriate and would clearly provide a proportionate level of outdoor amenity space.

Accordingly, the development is not considered to impact on neighbouring or occupier amenity and the scheme is considered acceptable in accordance with CS Policy DM1 and the NPPF.

Noise

Core Strategy Policy G9 sets out the Council's requirements approach to all forms of pollution including the risk of noise, as they relate to new development.

Paragraph 198 of the NPPF also states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development.

The NPPG states that local planning authorities' decision taking should take account of the acoustic environment and in doing so consider whether or not a significant adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur; whether or not an adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur; and whether or not a good standard of amenity can be achieved.

Paragraph 135 also seeks to ensure that planning decisions create places which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Policies DM1 and G9 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy seek to ensure that new development is compatible with surrounding land uses, both in terms of its impact upon those uses and the impact of the surrounding land uses upon the amenities of future residents / users, also requiring that development does not have impacts that lead to an unacceptable increase in air, water, noise, light or other pollution.

Whilst the resulting scheme by its very nature would not cause any significant impacts in terms of noise and disturbance, two Noise Impact Assessments (NIA) were submitted with the application to cover the impact of noise disturbance across the proposed development.

The NIA's recognise that the predominant sources of noise for this site are road traffic from Queens Drive itself and the A664 for the north which runs parallel to Queens Drive set back 3m to 8m.

In regard to the proposed apartments, the façades directly facing Queens Drive would represent the most significant risk in terms of potential adverse impact. Due to the overheating risk, dwellings with elevations facing Queens Drive will require an enhanced ventilation specification that would normally be offered by opening windows, however, the noise risk assessment indicates that relying on opening windows would result in significant noise intrusion, thus disrupting normal sleep.

The NIA identified that the development generally possesses a medium to high risk of adverse noise effect and overheating as per applicable guidance documents. Following a noise modelling exercise of the proposed apartment block, mitigation measures have been proposed which include the provision of specifically designed elevation materials and sound insulation, appropriate acoustic glazing and the incorporation of appropriate ventilation measures.

The NIA in respect of the proposed townhouses was commissioned to primarily ascertain the impact of the proposed Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) proposed to the rear of each dwelling and their potential impact on the surrounding environment.

It is noted that there are no habitable rooms (within the flat block) located above the proposed ASHP positions, and the units are separated from the floor below by the balcony structure. The nearest potentially affected habitable rooms are second-floor bedrooms; however, these are located at the front of the dwellings and are separated from the proposed ASHP locations by a stairwell and corridor, with only a small non-habitable window positioned closest to the plant. Each ASHP is also separated from adjacent units by balcony screening.

A noise prediction model was carried out and the results of the assessment indicate that predicted operational noise levels from the proposed ASHPs are likely to be below the established background noise levels at all assessed on-site and off-site receptor locations. Predicted noise levels are between approximately 22 dB and 52 dB below the measured background noise levels, suggesting that the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to significant adverse noise effects when assessed in accordance with BS 4142.

Where the ASHPs operate for shorter periods or with fewer units running simultaneously, such as predominantly during daytime hours, the potential noise impact would be expected to reduce further. Based on the assessment undertaken, the proposed ASHP installation is considered unlikely to result in unacceptable noise impacts at nearby noise-sensitive receptors.

Environmental Health were consulted on this application, but their comments remain outstanding.

Nevertheless, in the absence of their comments, it is considered that subject to conditions and the undertaking of the recommendations contained within the submitted Noise Impact Assessment's, the scheme would be considered acceptable in terms of amenity in accordance with Policy G9 and DM1 and the Council's Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

Core Strategy Policy G7 requires that sites and features of biodiversity and geodiversity importance are given full and appropriate recognition and protection and that opportunities for enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity will be supported. It is expected that development proposals will protect and include existing biodiversity and take opportunities to promote biodiversity and create new habitats using landscaping and building and construction features wherever possible. Core Strategy Policy G7 requires that no development should result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity.

PfE Policy JP-G8 seeks to deliver a net enhancement of biodiversity resources through a collective of measures which are broadly aligned with the approach to BNG outlined within the Environment Act (2021), the NPPF and supporting guidance documents. The provisions of the Environment Act in respect of BNG are now a statutory requirement for planning applications and so the proposed development should achieve net gains for biodiversity via species enhancement as guided by the NPPF (paragraphs 187d and 192b) to achieve measurable net gain for biodiversity.

When determining planning applications paragraph 193 of the NPPF sets out that if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused. Opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should also be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains.

As of 2nd April 2024, BNG of 10% for minor planning applications is mandatory for development in England under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) were consulted on this application, and they have no reason to doubt the findings of the submitted Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA).

The GMEU have commented that the PEA found that the site had the potential to support reptiles, nesting birds, hedgehogs, and badger, while one tree also had potential for roosting bats. However, No further surveys were recommended.

Nevertheless, Reasonable Avoidance Measures for reptiles, hedgehog and badger, and nesting bird checks for site clearance undertaken within the nesting bird season were recommended within Section 5 and these measures must be adhered to and for that reason they will be secured by condition. The GMEU have also confirmed that a pre-commencement check for badger setts on and within 30 m of the site must be undertaken and secured via condition.

In addition, one tree was found to have bat roosting potential and as such a Precautionary Working Method Statement must be prepared to cover the felling works, as well as compensatory roosting opportunities. This will be secured via condition.

The applicant is reminded that while no evidence of protected species was identified on site, protected species can turn up in unexpected places, and the granting of planning permission does not negate the need to abide by the laws which are in place to safeguard biodiversity. An informative is therefore used so that the applicant is aware that they must seek ecological advice should they find or suspect that the proposal will impact on protected species.

Additionally, planning policy encourages enhancements and net gains for biodiversity to be delivered through the planning system. Therefore, a scheme for biodiversity enhancements will be secured by condition.

BNG

To achieve 10% net gain, the proposed development will require off-site units which will need to be purchased from an off-site provider or implemented offsite.

The proposed development results in a deficit of 0.47 habitat units. Accordingly, the submitted BNG Assessment has clarified that the applicant will pursue the use of off-site areas to achieve a 10% gain, and if this is unsuitable, units will be purchased from an off-site habitat bank and the GMEU would have no objection to this.

On-site compensation has been provided with the inclusion in the landscape proposals of ecologically valuable habitats such as wildflower grassland, mixed scrub and individual tree planting. Given the limited size of the site, it is not viable to include further green infrastructure without compromising the housing requirements and viability of the proposal. As such, compensation for the deficit in biodiversity units must be sought off site. It is understood that the applicant does not have access to additional land to provide compensatory habitat creation. Therefore, to compensate for the loss in habitat units and to achieve the mandatory 10% overall BNG the applicant/developer will acquire biodiversity units through a biodiversity unit offsetting market.

The Statutory Biodiversity Gain Condition will apply to this permission and to discharge this condition, sufficient information will be required to demonstrate that a 10% net gain will be achieved, including a Biodiversity Gain Plan, a final version of the BNG metric showing a 10% net gain in habitat units, and evidence that the correct number and type of units have been purchased and allocated to the development.

Furthermore, the on-site gains will be considered significant, as such, a 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) will be secured by condition.

Accordingly, subject to conditions, the scheme is considered to be acceptable in accordance with Core Strategy Policy G6 and G7, PfE Policy JP-G8 and the NPPF.

Trees

The NPPF recognises the important contribution of trees to the character and quality of urban environments, and their role in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Policy JP-G2 of the adopted PfE identifies trees and woodland as vital elements of the green infrastructure network and key features of urban green spaces, which Policy JP-G8 seek to protect and enhance through conserving and managing existing trees of heritage and/or aesthetic value.

CS Policy G6 requires a replacement planting ratio of at least 2:1 and also sets out provision for enhancing green infrastructure and requires regard to local landscape character and contribute to its conservation or enhancement. Developments should avoid the loss of existing urban greenspace or features e.g. trees unless suitable alternative provision is made, it has limited value and its development or change of use will help meet other sustainability or local regeneration objectives.

CS Policy G7 requires developments to protect existing biodiversity including trees and vegetation.

The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment which has identified Nine individual trees (T1-T9) and two groups (G1-G2). The trees were surveyed and mapped on a Preliminary Tree Constraints & Impact Assessment Plan Ref: 25/AIA/ROCH/15, Drawing No. 1 & 2 at Appendix 2.

There are no Tree Preservation Order's on or adjacent to the application site.

It is noted that in order to facilitate the proposed development, it will be necessary to remove Trees 1–3 and 6–8, together with Groups 1 and 2. Tree 1 is a Category B Norway maple, the removal of which is considered unavoidable to deliver the proposed layout.

The remaining individual trees proposed for removal comprise young, small specimens of limited arboricultural and landscape value. Group 1 consists predominantly of young orchard specimens, while Group 2 comprises two low-quality trees, both groups offering limited collective amenity and poor long-term potential. These trees have been assigned a Category C rating under BS5837:2012, reflecting their low quality and limited suitability for long-term retention. Tree 5 is a category U. In accordance with the Standard, such trees are not considered a material constraint to development.

In terms of mitigation, the proposed replacement planting and associated landscape enhancements will deliver a clear qualitative improvement to the site's green infrastructure, introducing a more structured, resilient and species diverse tree canopy. The ratio of replacement planting to trees lost is extensive with the provision of a very strong soft landscaping scheme. Given the significant on-site gains, the long-term security of those gains will be secured through the HMMP.

Accordingly, subject to condition, the scheme is considered to be acceptable in accordance with Core Strategy Policy G6 and G7, PfE Policy JP-G8 and the NPPF.

Drainage

CS Policy G8 requires that new development does not lead to any increased form of flooding locally or further downstream, does not impede natural water and flood risk management, is not detrimental to existing or potential flood storage areas, contributes where possible to alleviating existing flood risk and is itself well protected from flood risk and ensures prudent use of water resources.

Policy JP-S4 (Flood Risk and the Water Environment) of PfE expects developments to manage surface water runoff through sustainable drainage systems and development should achieve greenfield run-off rates unless it is demonstrated to be impracticable.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1, having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of flooding.

The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy Report which confirms that the proposed drainage design incorporates a range of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), including rainwater harvesting, permeable paving, rain gardens, and controlled discharge to the public sewer network. These measures will inevitably ensure that surface water is managed in accordance with national and local standards, protecting both the development and the surrounding area from flood risk. Finished floor levels and exceedance routes have been carefully planned to further reduce risk and ensure the safety of future residents.

The LLFA were consulted on this application and have no objection.

The LLFA have noted that infiltration has been discounted following Phase II ground investigations, which confirmed poor infiltration rates. In the absence of nearby surface water receptors, discharge to the United Utilities surface water sewer has been identified as the most appropriate solution. The applicants also engaged in pre-application correspondence with the LLFA and following pre-application discussions, it was agreed to restrict the discharge rate to a maximum of 5 l/s.

Above-ground rainwater harvesting tanks will be installed for the houses to capture roof runoff for non-potable uses, such as irrigation and external washing. Roof runoff will also be directed to individual rain gardens within the communal amenity space, providing both temporary storage and water quality treatment through natural filtration.

Due to spatial constraints, the apartment block cannot accommodate communal rainwater harvesting. As such, roof runoff will be conveyed to the wider SuDS network and attenuated beneath the apartment car park. Private car parking areas will be constructed using permeable paving, providing initial filtration and enabling storage within the sub-base during storm events.

Surface water will discharge to the United Utilities public surface water sewer located adjacent to the site. The greenfield discharge rate is estimated to be 0.9l/s. It is considered that restricting flows this low could result in blockage risks and therefore the discharge from the site will be restricted to 5l/s.

Foul and surface water drainage systems will be designed to remain fully separate prior to discharge. Foul water will connect to the existing public combined sewer, with the system designed to accommodate a peak foul flow of 6.7 l/s, which is not anticipated to exceed historical discharge rates from the previous site use. A maintenance plan for the proposed drainage system is included within the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy.

United Utilities were also consulted on this application, and they raised no objection subject to condition. However, it is apparent that their suggested condition has already been addressed in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy. The LLFA have no objection in principle to the proposed development and the suggested condition by the United Utilities is not justified. A compliance condition will be imposed to this permission and not a pre-commencement condition.

Accordingly, subject to the inclusion of an appropriately worded condition, Officers consider that the development accords with Policy G8 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-S4 of PfE and the NPPF.

Land Contamination

Core Strategy Policy G9 requires that any risks arising from contaminated land are identified and that any appropriate actions are taken.

A Stage 1 and 2 Risk Assessment have been submitted with the application, and this has been reviewed by the Council's Land Contamination Officer who agrees with their findings and conclusions.

Accordingly, it has been confirmed through consultation with the Council's Environmental Protection team that subject to condition, the proposed development is acceptable with regards to CS Policy G9 and the Framework.

Highways

The application site is in a sustainable location and is situated close to public transport routes.

Policy T2 of the CS requires development to comply with the Council's car parking standards and policy DM1 requires that development provides satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring and servicing arrangements, taking into account the proposed use and location.

Policy JP-C8 of PfE requires new development to be located and designed to enable and encourage walking, cycling and public transport use to reduce the negative effects of car dependency and help deliver high quality, attractive, liveable and sustainable environments.

Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The development is not considered to have an adverse impact on highway safety and would not generate a level of additional traffic which would have a detrimental impact on the safe and efficient operation of the immediate local highway network, or strategic routes. Highways Services have raised no objections subject to condition and the development is considered acceptable in accordance with CS Policies T1 and T2, Policy JP-C8 of PfE and the NPPF.

Energy and Sustainability

Core Strategy Policy G1 sets out measures to address climate change and emissions, whilst Policy G2 requires that new development adhere to the energy hierarchy.

Policy JP-S1 of PfE requires development to aim to maximise its economic, social and environmental benefits simultaneously, minimise its adverse impacts, utilise sustainable construction techniques and actively seek opportunities to secure net gains across each of the different objectives.

Places for Everyone Policy JP-S2 sets out expectations for developments to minimise carbon emissions, following the energy hierarchy, and incorporating renewable energy and EV charging. JP-S2 has replaced existing policies within the Rochdale Core Strategy which related to these considerations.

Greater Manchester's vision is to be at the forefront of action on climate change and to make its fair contributions to international commitments by becoming a carbon neutral city region by 2038.

In accordance with Point 5 (d) of PfE Policy JP-S2 there is an expectation that new residential development will, unless it can be demonstrated that it is not practicable or financially viable, achieve energy demand reductions in terms of space heat demand, hot water energy demand and the delivery of on-site energy generation in accordance with table 5.1.

In this instance, the application is accompanied by an Energy Strategy Statement in line with current policy objectives and in the interest of encouraging a transition to a low carbon emission and energy network in accordance with CS Policies G1 and G2 and PfE Policy JP-S2.

The submitted statement confirms that ASHP and photovoltaics present the most flexible, cost effective, energy efficient and carbon saving technologies for inclusion within the proposed development. It is understood that the proposed development intends to incorporate these renewable energy measures into the scheme and so a condition is imposed to this permission requiring the submission of a renewable energy scheme consisting of further details and specifications as to the provision of solar photo-voltaic panels and air source heat pumps including details of their siting and appearance.

Accordingly, subject to condition, the proposal would be satisfactory in terms of the objectives of PfE Policy JP-S2 and CS Policies G1 and G2.

Developer Contributions and Viability

CS Policy DM2 requires developers to provide, or contribute towards the cost of physical, environmental and social infrastructure that is needed because of proposed development; and or to mitigate the impact of development, through planning obligations and agreements, if the development would otherwise have a negative impact on the delivery of a strategic objective. However, this policy also requires consideration to be given to the need to ensure that schemes remain viable whilst taking into account the need for contributions or infrastructure required to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. In the case of residential development such as this, the Core Strategy typically requires contributions towards affordable housing (Policy C4), open space provision and maintenance (Policy G6) and education facilities (Policy C7).

In line with this, PfE Policy JP-D2 generally requires developers to provide or contribute towards the provision of mitigation measures to make a development acceptable in planning terms. It states that in the instance an applicant raises viability issues, clear evidence is required at application stage to identify the specific issues and/or changes in circumstance that are acting as barriers to delivery. A judgement should be made on the weight to be given to a viability assessment alongside other material considerations. This approach is based on paragraphs 56, 58 and 59 of the NPPF, which requires judgements to be made the acceptability of the proposals and ability to use planning controls to address impacts (paragraph 56), the appropriateness of and degree of flexibility given to the contributions sought (i.e. necessity, relevance,

fairness and reasonability) (paragraph 58), and on the overall weight to be given to the viability assessment (paragraph 59).

Paragraph 59 of the NPPF specifically states that where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable. It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at application stage. The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the viability evidence underpinning it is up to date, and any change in site circumstances since the plan was brought into force. All viability assessments should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardised inputs, and should be made publicly available.

The applicant has submitted a basic Viability Assessment which confirms that the site is currently owned by the Council and the site has been appraised on the basis that the purchase of the site is nil value.

In assessment of the scheme's viability, it is important to note that the scheme is being brought forward as a 100% affordable housing development, rather than a market sale scheme. Furthermore, the tenure type is social rent and as such, there are inherent viability constraints that necessitate a careful approach in order to achieve a well-designed and high-quality affordable housing whilst ensuring deliverability. While design quality remains a priority, the extent of any additional enhancements beyond what have already been undertaken or s106 contribution requests would need to be considered in the context of maintaining a viable and deliverable scheme, particularly in the context of delivering much-needed affordable homes.

A degree of flexibility is therefore required at this stage, but Planning Officers recognise that the delivery of affordable housing in Rochdale is a significant local strategic priority, especially at Social Rent tenure. This is a matter which is afforded significant positive weight in the planning balance.

Each typical contribution is assessed individually below:

Environmental Management

Contributions have been sought in regard to the improvement of Balderstone Park play area which is noted in the Council's Play Strategy as in need of investment and it is located within the same Ward as the proposed development (Balderstone and Kirkholt). Whilst the Council is supportive of the improvement of existing parks and play area, the provision of this development comprises 23 x 1-bedroom apartments and 5 x 4-bedroom townhouses.

On review of this and in accordance with the Council's Planning Obligations Table of Charges, the total contribution requested would be in excess of £45,000 (which includes the administrative fee).

It is the Council's position that whilst the inability to provide contributions towards the improvement of offsite play space is regrettable, the development of this brownfield site for 28 residential dwellings would inevitably on the whole have overwhelming benefits economically, socially and environmentally (notwithstanding the fact that provision of on-site amenity space is being provided).

Affordable Housing

The Council's affordable housing requirements are set out in the Affordable Housing SPD and are applicable to developments of over 15 dwellings. Where on-site provision is proposed, a total of 15% of total site capacity should be provided at an affordable level for a total discount equal to 7.5% GDV. Given the proposal seeks to provide 100% affordable provision, no commuted sum would be required.

Education

CS Policy C7 seeks developer contributions for the provision of educational facilities (including new school places) and employment skills and training in order to improve education, skills and training in the borough and raise educational achievement. The need to provide contributions towards education provision has arisen as a result of schools within the Borough reaching capacity; whilst new pupil places generated by housing developments could previously be accommodated within existing schools, this is now no longer the case.

The Schools Services team were consulted on this application, but their comments remain outstanding. Nevertheless, in the absence of those comments, the provision of this development comprises 23 x 1-bedroom apartments and 5 x 4-bedroom townhouses. Therefore, only 5 family sized dwellings are being provided, and this would not amount to a value that would necessitate the provision of improved educational facilities in the borough.

Planning Balance and Conclusions

The principle of the proposal for a 100% affordable residential scheme is supported and accords with the aspirations and expectations of both local and national policies, and the development would support the delivery of the borough and city region's strategic policies and objectives.

The proposals are deemed to be acceptable and in general accordance with the range of policies considering matters of residential development (mix, affordability, quality and density); design; sustainable construction; arboriculture, ecology and biodiversity; flooding and drainage; highways; and noise pollution.

Whilst the proposals are affected by viability challenges and thus currently incapable of providing complete financial contributions, there are clear and significant benefits associated with the delivery of this development on a vacant brownfield site. The proposals would undeniably provide a welcome contribution towards the Council's housing needs and supply over the plan period; the local and district-wide socio-economic benefits; and the creation of well-designed development. These benefits would receive significant weight in favour of the proposals.

On this basis, Officers are overall satisfied that the proposals accord with the adopted development plan taken as a whole and represent a sustainable form of development. The proposals are further supported by a range of material considerations (including the viability evidence, the NPPF, the NDG and local SPDs). There are not considered to be any material considerations present that would warrant an alternative judgement of this case.

Overall, the proposals would represent a sustainable development which has been carefully considered and well designed. The application is considered in the planning balance to be acceptable and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

Condition(s) (19)

1 Time Limit

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 Approved Plans

This permission relates to the following drawings and documents:

Drawings

- Location Plan Drawing No 01 Rev A
- Site Ownership Plan Drawing No 02
- Site Demolition Plan Drawing No 03 Rev A
- Site Topographical Survey Drawing No 04
- Proposed Site Plan Drawing No 05 A
- Proposed Roof Plan Drawing No 06
- Proposed House Type Layouts Drawing No 07
- Proposed House Block Layouts Drawing No 08
- Proposed Flat Type Layouts Drawing No 09

- Proposed Flat Block Layouts Drawing No 10
- Proposed House Block Elevations Drawing No 11
- Proposed Flat Block Elevations Drawing No 12
- Proposed Street Scene Elevations Drawing No 13
- Proposed Bin Store GA Layouts Drawing No 14
- Proposed Substation GA Layouts Drawing No 15A
- Landscape Proposals 500-01G Landscape GA
- Detailed Planting Plan 500-02B Detailed Planting Plan
- Proposed Boundary Treatments 500-03A Boundary Treatment

Documents

- Design, Access and Planning Statement Rev A
- Affordable Housing Statement v241125
- S106 / Viability Assessment 090326
- Phase 1 Site Investigation (1 of 4) 25-446 - P1 DTS - Queens Drive, Rochdale (1 of 4)
- Phase 1 Site Investigation (2 of 4) 25-446 - P1 DTS - Queens Drive, Rochdale (2 of 4)
- Phase 1 Site Investigation (3 of 4) 25-446 - P1 DTS - Queens Drive, Rochdale (3 of 4)
- Phase 1 Site Investigation (4 of 4) 25-446 - P1 DTS - Queens Drive, Rochdale (4 of 4)
- Phase 2 Remediation Statement 25-446.01L – Remediation Statement
- Phase 2 Groundwater and Ground Gas Monitoring Certificate 25-446.02L – HGGRA
- Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy Report (1 of 2) QueensDrive - FRA and Drainage Strategy Report_Body-AppJ
- Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy Report (2 of 2) QueensDrive - FRA and Drainage Strategy Report_AppK-AppT

- Arboricultural Impact Assessment Queens Drive, Kirkholt - Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Jan 2026)
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal RHE.4415 Queens Drive, Kirkholt_PEA
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment RHE.4415 Queens Drive, Kirkholt -BNG Assessment 2026 - FINAL
- Queens Drive, Kirkholt-Biodiversity Metric-June 2026
- Biodiversity Net Gain - Condition Assessment BNG - Queens Drive Kirkholt - Condition_assessments_version_1.02
- Energy & Climate Change Adaption Statement 25134-DPL-XX-XX-T-Y-9901 - Energy Strategy Statement
- External Lighting & Vehicle Charging 25134-DPL-EX-XX-D-ME-7006
- Crime Impact Statement 25-0351, Land South of Queens Drive
- Noise Impact Assessment AA0521 Queens Drive, Rochdale Residential NIA Report Final 16122025 Rev A
- Noise Impact Assessment - ASHP AA0521.1- 5no ASHPs Queens Drive Rochdale NIA ASHP Final
- Transport Statement 4548TS.03
- Phase 1 Utilities Report Desktop Utility Infrastructure Report - Queens Drive, Kirkholt Rev A

and the development shall be carried out in accordance with these details hereby approved unless otherwise required by the conditions below.

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 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3 **Management of Public and Communal Areas**

No part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until a Management and Maintenance Plan for all proposed public and communal areas has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Management and Maintenance Plan shall be adhered to for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure a ensure a satisfactory standard of visual amenity and repair for the lifetime of the development in accordance with CS policies DM1 and P3, PFE Policy JP-P1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4

Drainage

The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until such time as the Proposed Drainage Plan referenced 100.25073-ACE-ZZ-ZZ-DR-C-1000 P05 contained within the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy 100.25073-ACE-ZZ-ZZ-RP-C-0001 has been implemented in full and retained and maintained for their intended purpose thereafter.

Reason: In the interest of providing a safe environment in the event of a flood and to prevent an increased risk of flooding further downstream and in accordance with Policy G8 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-S4 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

5

Site Remediation and Verification

Following completion of the measures identified in the approved remediation scheme (The proposal for gas protection measures set out within the Arc Environmental Ltd Remediation Statement & Validation Proposal report reference 25-446 dated 4th February 2026) and prior to first use/occupation of the approved development, a verification report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in full accordance with the duly approved remediation strategy thereafter.

In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the safe development of the site in the interests of the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy G9 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-S1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Details of remediation will be required to ensure the safe development of the site during the construction and operation phases of the development.

6 **Materials**

Notwithstanding any such detail shown on previously submitted plans, no above ground works shall take place until such time as a detailed specification and samples of materials to be used externally in the construction of the development have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt these details relate to windows, doors, roof materials, balcony construction and all elevation materials. Such details shall include the type, colour and texture of the materials. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the duly approved details thereafter at all times.

A built sample panel shall be made available on site once the elevational materials have been agreed.

Reason: In the interests of ensuring a satisfactory visual appearance to the development and in accordance with Policies P3 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.

7 **Arboricultural Method Statement**

Prior to any works taking place within the root protection areas of the retained trees, in accordance with the recommendations of the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment Referenced 25/AIA/ROCH/15, an Arboricultural Method Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate how any trees proposed for retention can be suitably safeguarded. The Method Statement should also confirm the procedure for all trees to be removed and the use of geotextiles and a no-dig construction methodology where proposed hard surfaces and development may overlap with root protection areas; and how Arboricultural site supervision will be carried out where works are proposed within and immediately adjacent to root protection areas.

Reason: To safeguard the trees and vegetation to be retained.

8 **Tree Protection**

During the construction period, all trees to be retained shall be protected in accordance with British Standard BS 5837:2012 or any subsequent

amendment to the British Standard and as demonstrated in the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment Drawing No 02 Rev A.

Reason: To safeguard the trees to be retained.

9 **Reasonable Avoidance Measures**

No development shall take place (including any site clearance, demolition or preparation works) until all reasonable avoidance measures set out within Section 5 of the approved Preliminary Ecological Appraisal 2024 referenced RHE.4415 have been implemented and carried out in full for the lifetime of the construction period.

Reason: In order to minimise potential risk to protected species and in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Site clearance poses a potential threat to reptiles, nesting birds hedgehogs and badger which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and protective measures must therefore be agreed in advance.

10 **Precautionary Working Method Statement**

No tree felling shall take place until a Precautionary Working Method Statement covering the proposed felling works to T1 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved statement thereafter.

Reason: In order to minimise potential risk to protected species and in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: site clearance poses a potential threat to badger which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and protective measures must therefore be agreed in advance.

11 **Badger Check**

No development shall take place (including any site clearance, demolition or preparation works) until a site walkover and reasonable avoidance measures assessment check confirming the presence of any badger setts

on and within 30m of the site is undertaken. The results of the assessment shall then be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved statement thereafter.

Reason: In order to minimise potential risk to protected species and in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Site clearance poses a potential threat to badger which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and protective measures must therefore be agreed in advance.

12 **Invasive Species**

Prior to the commencement of any earthworks or vegetation clearance, an updated site walkover and assessment shall be completed to establish whether any non-native invasive species are present on site. The results of the assessment shall then be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. If any non-native invasive species are identified on site, a method statement detailing the eradication or avoidance measures for such invasive species shall be submitted to and agreed in writing to the Local Planning Authority. This statement should include a management plan to avoid the spread of these and include an updated distribution map of the site. The agreed method statement shall be adhered to and implemented in full.

Reason: To eradicate invasive species and protect the biodiversity of the area.

Reason for Pre-commencement Condition: Construction/clearance works on site have the potential to cause the further spread invasive species, which therefore need to be managed sensitively prior to works starting on site.

13 **Soft Landscaping**

All proposed planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details shown on Landscape GA Drawing No 01 Rev G within the first planting and seeding seasons following the final occupation of the development. Any trees, plants or shrubs which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason: To ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped having regard to its location and the nature of the proposed development and in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core, Policies JP-P1 and JP-G2 of the Places for Everyone Plan and the NPPF.

14 **Biodiversity Enhancements**

No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until a scheme of biodiversity enhancements has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such measures could include, but not be limited to, the provision of bird boxes, bird bricks, bat boxes and bat bricks to be integrated to the fabric of the buildings hereby approved, bug hotels, hibernaculum, wildflower seeding and hedgehog habitat (including provision of 'Hedgehog Highways'). The duly approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to final occupation of the phase of development to which the measures relate and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of enhancing biodiversity and habitat provision within the site in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

15 **Habitat Management Monitoring Plan**

The development shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP), prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan and including:

- (a) a non-technical summary;
- (b) the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the [HMMP];
- (c) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan;
- (d) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of development; and
- (e) the monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority,

has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of maintaining and managing the proposed biodiversity and habitat provision within the site in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

16 **Noise Levels**

The development hereby approved shall be constructed to achieve the following internal and external noise levels:

- i. 35 dB(A) Leq (1 hour) in the bedrooms with windows shut and other means of ventilation provided between 7 am and 11pm;
- ii. 30dB(A) Leq 5mins in the bedrooms with windows shut and other means of ventilation provided between 11pm and 7am;
- iii. 35 dB(A) Leq (1 hour) in the living room/s with windows shut and other means of ventilation provided between 7 am and 11pm;
- iv. 40dB(A) Leq (1 hour) in other habitable rooms with windows shut and other means of ventilation provided at all times;
- v. Noise in external amenity areas shall not exceed 58dB(A).

Prior to first occupation, a scheme of validation, identifying a representative sample of plots shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, and prior to occupation of the identified sample plots, a validation report(s) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenities of the area and to prevent nuisance arising in accordance with Places for Everyone Plan Policy JP-P1, Core Strategy Polics G9 and DM1, and the NPPF.

17 **Noise Mitigation**

The development hereby approved shall be constructed in accordance with the noise mitigation measures set out within section 5 of submitted Noise Impact Assessment AA0521 and section 4 of submitted Noise Impact Assessment AA0521.1. No part of the development shall be occupied until such time as a verification report has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to confirm that the approved ventilation and acoustic measures have been implemented to achieve the required maximum noise levels. The noise attenuation measures shall be retained as installed thereafter.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of residents in order to comply with the requirements of 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.

18 **Vehicular Parking**

No part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until all vehicle parking spaces have been provided and clearly marked out in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The parking spaces shall be kept available for parking at all times thereafter and shall not be used for any other purpose.

Reason: In order to ensure there is adequate provision for vehicles to be parked and adequate turning and servicing provision clear of the highway in order to comply with Policy T2 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

19 **Renewable Energy Details**

No above ground works (other than site clearance) shall take place until full details and specifications of the proposed renewable energy or energy saving scheme (consisting of but not limited to) solar photo-voltaic panels including large scale drawings at a scale of not less than 1:50 and / or air source heat pumps including details of their siting and appearance, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of achieving the objectives of PfE Policy JP-S2 and CS Policies G1 and G2 and in the interests of ensuring a satisfactory visual appearance to the development and in accordance with Policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policies JP-S2 and JP-P1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Approval Reason(s) (1)

21 **Procedure Statement**

The Local Planning Authority worked proactively with the applicant to identify various solutions during the application process to ensure that the proposal comprised sustainable development and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area and would accord with the development plan. These were incorporated into the scheme and/or have been secured by planning condition.

Informatives (1)

20

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

- a) A Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority,
- and;
- b) The planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be Rochdale Borough Council.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

For the purposes of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, a biodiversity gain plan is a plan which:

- (a) relates to development for which planning permission is granted, and;
- (b) specifies the matters referred to below:

The matters are:

- (a) information about the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat and any other habitat;
- (b) the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat;
- (c) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat;
- (d) any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development and the biodiversity value of that gain in relation to the development;
- (e) any biodiversity credits purchased for the development; and
- (f) any such other matters as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify.

- 22 Should any protected species or evidence of protected species be found prior to or during development, work must stop immediately and Ecological advice must be sought or Natural England contacted for further advice. This is a legal requirement under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and applies to whoever carries out the work. All contractors on site should be made aware of this requirement.