

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER
25/00314/FUL	Anna Hayes

DETERMINATION DATE 23.07.2025 **EXT OF TIME** 06.10.2025

Address: 1 Drake Street Rochdale OL16 1RE

Proposal: Change of use of first and second floors from vacant commercial floorspace to 10no. residential apartments (use class C3) and external alterations including new window openings and associated ground floor cycle storage and external bin storage

PUBLICITY	Weekly list expired?	y	Site notice expired?	y
	Neighbour letters expired?	y	Press Notice expired?	y

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

COMMENTS	Planning Panel comments received?	n/a
	Neighbour comments received?	y

EIA	Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?	n/a
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CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	y
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	y

RECOMMENDATION	Grant subject to conditions
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RK

DATE: 03/10/2025

SITE

The application relates to 1 Drake Street which is a prominent 3 storey Grade II listed building located at the junction of Drake Street with Smith Street, within the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area. At the time of the Officer's site visit, the ground floor was a vacant Class E unit and the upper floors also vacant, previously being used as a night club.

1 Drake Street, formerly known as the Wellington Hotel, was first listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended on 12 February 1985 for its special architectural or historic interest (list entry number 1367054). The building was constructed between 1764 and 1795 as a town house for Thomas Smith, a wealthy woollen merchant who built fulling mills behind it. It was later a school, then from 1818 the Wellington Hotel.

The building has brick elevations with stone dressings and a slate pitched roof. Notably the ground and first floors have Victorian sashes otherwise the glazing is 20th Century. The original glazing pattern and some original brickwork is seen in the gable. Other alterations have been undertaken including the addition of a two-storey rear extension and window alterations to the rear elevation.

Situated within Rochdale's defined town centre, the immediate area is predominately commercial in nature. The adjoining buildings are occupied by offices and lying adjacent to the site, located along Smith Street, is the bus interchange, Town Centre Metrolink Stop and Number One Riverside Council offices building.

21 Butts Avenue (currently Hogarth's Gin Bar), which lies across an open area of public space to the north west of the site, is a Grade II listed building. The former Oldham Joint Stock Bank (currently HSBC UK Bank), which also lies across the same area of public space to the west of the site, is a Grade II listed building. The Regal Moon Public House which lies opposite the site, is a non-designated heritage asset.

PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the change of use of the upper floors of 1 Drake Street into 10no. self-contained residential apartments. External alterations are limited to the installation of new windows to the rear elevation at both first and second floors. New roof lights are also proposed at first floor level to the existing rear extension. Access to the proposed apartments would be via an existing entrance on Smith Street up an internal staircase, which also provides existing access to separate residential apartments on Smith Street at first and second floors.

At first floor level, the proposed accommodation would comprise of the following 6no. Apartments:

Apartment 1 – 1 bedroom – 62m²
Apartment 2 – 1 bedroom – 54m²
Apartment 3 – Studio – 38m²
Apartment 4 – Studio – 56m²
Apartment 5 – Studio – 45m²
Apartment 6 - Studio – 49m²

At second floor level a further 4no. apartments as proposed, as follows:

Apartment 7 – 1 bedroom – 41m²
Apartment 8 – Studio – 37m²
Apartment 9 – 1 bedroom – 43m²
Apartment 10 – 1 bedroom – 45m²

Bin storage is proposed at ground floor level utilising an existing outdoor store area, with service access also provided from the rear. A 2x 4 bike hanger system by Stashed Ltd is proposed to the front of the building, in an existing gated recessed opening to the front elevation. No other vehicle parking is proposed.

The application is supported with a Heritage Statement and a Design and Access Statement.

The application is accompanied by 25/00315/LBC for listed building consent.

Amendments

As originally submitted planning permission was sought for the change of use of the first and second floors to 10no. residential apartments with a 7-bedroom HMO to be provided within the loft space. Following negotiations, the plans have been amended to remove the HMO and loft space conversion from the development proposals, as well as subsequent alterations to improve the internal layout of the apartments over the first and second floors, including window configurations, to address amenity concerns.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 (as amended)

Section 72 of the above Act states that with respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Chapter 2 Achieving sustainable development

Chapter 5 Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Chapter 9 Promoting sustainable transport

Chapter 11 Making effective use of land

Chapter 12 Achieving well-designed places

Chapter 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Development Plan

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

The development plan for the proposal consists of the Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan, Rochdale Core Strategy (CS), adopted 2016, and saved Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies. The Council also has an adopted series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Guidance Notes, which are other material considerations.

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) (2024)

Sustainable and Resilient Places

JP-S1 Sustainable Development
JP-S2 Carbon and Energy
JP-S3 Heat and Energy Networks
JP-S4 Flood Risk and the Water Environment
JP-S5 Clean Air
JP-S6 Resource Efficiency

Places for Homes

JP-H1 Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Housing Development
JP-H2 Affordability of New Housing
JP-H3 Type, Size and Design of New Housing
JP-H4 Density of New Housing

Greener Places

JP-G1 Landscape Character
JP-G8 A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Places for People

JP-P1 Sustainable Places
JP-P2 Heritage

Connected Places

JP-C6 Walking and Cycling
JP-C8 Transport Requirements of New Development

Rochdale Core Strategy (CS)

SO1 Delivering a more prosperous economy

E1 Establishing thriving town, district and local centres

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
P2 Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
P3 Improving design of new development

SO4 Promoting a Greener Environment

G6 Enhancing Green Infrastructure
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

Managing delivery and monitoring progress

DM1 General Development requirements
SD1 Delivering sustainable development

Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

A number of policies contained within the Unitary Development Plan have been saved following the adoption of the Core Strategy. The following saved policies are relevant:

Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

G/S/1 Main Town Centre

BE/17 New Development Affecting Conservation Areas

R/3 Drake Street Physical Regeneration Area

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development SPD, June 2016.

Other

National Design Guide (2019) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government).

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

The site has extensive planning history, including advertisement consents. The most recent and relevant applications are as follows:

25/00315/LBC (Corresponding application) - Listed Building consent for internal alterations to first and second floors to facilitate change of use from vacant commercial floorspace to 10no. residential apartments (use class C3) together with re-instatement of window openings and creation a new window opening – pending consideration

18/00554/FUL - Change of use of part first floor to bar/restaurant/function room; formation of outdoor seating area; insertion of recessed door, iron gates, replacement double doors and replacement of existing door with window to front of building; and erection of external fire escape to rear including new openings – Approved subject to conditions 28.09.2018

18/00555/LBC - Change of use of part first floor to bar/restaurant/function room; formation of outdoor seating area; insertion of recessed door, iron gates, replacement double doors and replacement of existing door with window to front of building; and erection of external fire escape to rear including new openings – Approved subject to conditions 28.09.2018

17/00072/FUL - Change of use and conversion of existing nightclub to form 9 self contained apartments at first and second floor levels, with a restaurant/bar at ground and first floor levels, including alterations and refurbishment of external elevations – Approved subject to conditions 07.08.2017

17/00073/LBC - Listed building consent for internal alterations and refurbishment of external elevations to provide 9 self contained apartments at first and second floor levels, with a restaurant/bar at ground and first floor levels. – Approved subject to conditions 07.08.2017

14/00844/FUL - Change of use from nightclub to two retail units (use class A1) together with new shop fronts to elevation on Smith Street and installation of an Automated Teller Machine including reconstruction of boundary wall to car park elevation and alterations to the rear elevation to provide loading doors – Approved subject to conditions 29.08.2014

14/00845/LBC - Listed building consent for new shop fronts to elevation on Smith Street and installation of an Automated Teller Machine including reconstruction of boundary wall

to car park elevation and alterations to the rear elevation to provide loading doors together with internal alterations – Approved subject to conditions 29.08.2014

13/00166/FUL - Change of use of the ground floor into three retail units and a bar/restaurant/café and the conversion of the upper floors to provide 19 apartments. Four new shop fronts, first and second floor rear extensions and external alterations to the building to include the partial rebuilding of the rear outbuilding. – Approved subject to conditions 04.11.2013

13/00199/LBC - Listed Building Consent to change of use of the ground floor into three retail units and a restaurant/café and to convert the upper floors to provide 19 apartments. Four new shop fronts, first and second floor rear extensions and external alterations to the building to include the partial rebuilding of the rear outbuilding. – Approved subject to conditions 04.11.2013

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways And Engineering

No objection subject to conditions. Discussed in more detail later in the report.

Env Health - Noise/Odours

No objection subject to conditions. Discussed in more detail later in the report.

Lead Local Flood Authority/Drainage

No comments to make on the application.

Conservation And Design

No objection subject to conditions. Discussed in more detail later in the report.

Natural England (North West Planning)

No comments received to date

Gtr Manchester Ecology Unit

No objection subject to conditions. Discussed in more detail later in the report.

GMP - Design For Security

No comments received to date

Transport For Greater Manchester

No objections. Discussed in more detail later in the report.

Joint Committee Of National Amenity Societies

No comments received to date

Urban Design

No comments received to date

Environment Agency

No objections on flood risk grounds, given the proposal only applies to parts of the existing building that a first floor and above, which means they are situated above the design flood level. Recommends informative notes to be included in any permission granted.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised with a site notice, press notice and neighbour notification letters. 2 letters of objection have been received in respect of this application, 1 neutral and 1 in support.

The comments have been summarised below:

Objections

- Impact of construction works on 3-11 Drake Street and blocking of fire escape routes.
- Concerns for access over private land during construction.
- Use of RDMs car park (no parking available for residents of the new apartments) to the rear and safety concerns.
- Rochdale town centre and the surrounding areas are becoming over saturated with HMOs offering poor quality and poorly managed properties.

Neutral

- Not been consulted.

Support

- Good use of the building.

Officer comments

- Additional letter was issued to address the missed consultation. All adjoining owners have been notified.
- Applicant informed not block adjacent fire escape routes.
- The HMO aspect has been removed from the development proposals.

The agent has confirmed in response:

“The refuse arrangements will function as per the arrangements for the existing flats above Smith Street. Residents will access the bin store by walking from the Smith Street entrance via Faulkner Street. Residents will be advised of the refuse arrangements through a welcome pack / management information and it will be highlighted that the car park to the rear of the site is private land. Refuse vehicles will temporarily load on-street and will not block the vehicular access or pedestrian access.”

The agent has also confirmed rights of access over this land to the bin store.

ANALYSIS

Principle of the development

Sustainability and supply of housing

The site comprises an existing vacant building and therefore the site constitutes previously developed land.

The NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. In particular, paragraph 90 recognises that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and so the LPA should encourage residential development on appropriate sites.

Policy C1 of the adopted Core Strategy states that we will maximise the potential of previously developed sites, including empty homes and buildings, within the urban area to achieve a target of 80% of new housing on previously developed land.

With regards to the golden thread of sustainable development running through the NPPF, the site is located within the town centre within walking distance of a variety of shops and services. The site lies in very close proximity to the main bus station and Metrolink stops, providing wider travel links. The proposed development is therefore considered to be within a sustainable and accessible location with immediate access to essential amenities, public transport networks, and employment opportunities, which together foster a vibrant and inclusive living environment.

With regards to housing type, size and tenure, the proposed 10no. apartments include a mix of sizes including one-bedroom flats and studios. By diversifying the housing mix through the provision of studios and one-bedroom flats, the development would cater to varying needs, including young professionals, downsizers, and those seeking proximity to urban services, which all-in-all is complementary to the existing town centre uses.

Main town centre use

The site lies within the main town centre, and within the Defined Urban Area, as outlined within the Council's Unitary Development Plan. Policy E1 of the Core Strategy outlines that the Council will focus retail and other development to promote the viability and vitality of all the borough's town centres to maintain them as thriving and sustainable centres and the preferred shopping and leisure destinations for people living, working and visiting the borough.

The application relates only to the upper floors of 1 Drake Street so the Class E use at ground floor level would remain as existing, retaining an active frontage and activity at street level, in accordance with Policy E1. The upper floors were formally used as a nightclub (Sui Generis). Whilst the development would result in a loss of this town centre use, a residential use would, in this particular case, be more compatible with its surroundings – particularly at upper floor levels noting the adjoining residential uses and shared access.

The proposal does not conflict with Policy E1 of the adopted Core Strategy and the NPPF.

Areas of opportunity

Policy R/3 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan states that within the Drake Street Physical Regeneration Area, the Council will support, facilitate and implement, in partnership with other agencies and landowners proposals that (amongst others):

- Introduce new businesses and leisure uses and create complementary day and night time activities;
- Fall within the following use classes: food and drink outlets (A3), and housing (C3) at first/upper floor level;

Development proposals will be assessed against the following guidelines (amongst others):

- Entertainment and leisure and office uses will be appropriate on the western side of Drake Street subject to public safety considerations;

- The residential uses of upper floors will be permitted subject to amenity considerations;
- Changes of use or alterations to frontages will be expected to maintain visual interest;
- Landmark buildings should be retained and opportunities for refurbishment and re-use considered;

The proposed residential use would support the wider regeneration aspirations of the area and the above policy, bringing a vacant building back into a viable use. The application accords with Policy R/3 of the Unitary Development Plan.

Overall, the NPPF and Core Strategy are both clear that residential development within existing centres is to be encouraged, where it does not explicitly damage the viability and vitality of the centre or detract from the provision of other employment space. Having regard to this, it is considered that the proposed residential scheme is acceptable and would contribute positively and sustainably to the vitality of the town centre, reinforcing the role of the town centre as both a residential and commercial destination, whilst also allowing the sustainable use and maintenance of the Grade II Listed building.

It is further noted that planning permission has historically been granted for the change of use of first and second floors from the former nightclub to 9 self-contained flats (permission reference 17/00072/FUL) which is a strong material consideration.

Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets

One of the core planning principles of the NPPF is to always seek to secure high quality design. Section 12 of the NPPF places particular emphasis on achieving high quality design and section 16 places value on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraphs 131 and 135 of the NPPF state that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

Paragraph 208 of the NPPF states that LPAs should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal, and this assessment should be taken into account when considering impact of the proposal on a heritage asset. Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that in considering the impact of a proposed development, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration of a heritage asset and as they are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification (p.213).

Locally, Policy P3 of the adopted Core Strategy requires all new developments, regardless of location in the Borough, to adhere to high standards of design. Policy DM1 of the adopted Core Strategy states that all development proposals will be expected to demonstrate that they are of high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area, in addition to requiring a number of other basic planning considerations.

Policy P2 of the adopted Core Strategy states that the Council will protect the borough's heritage by conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets, both statutory and non-statutory, including consideration of their wider settings. This is also supported by saved UDP Policy BE/17. In this case, the site lies within the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area.

The application building is a prominent feature within Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area. The building itself is a Grade II listed building and also a locally listed building. The listing description is as follows:

'Hotel (Wellington), now restaurant and nightclub. 1810. Brick, appearing to be of various dates, the front appearing to have been re-faced, stone dressings and slate roof. 5 bays, double-pile with 3-storeys and an additional wider bay to the right with a former bar entrance. Stone plinth, continuous ground and first floor cornices and a modillion eaves cornice; steeply pitched roof. Pedimented Ionic doorcase as well as the entrance in bay 6 which has 4 Ionic pilasters and entablature. Window openings with moulded architraves, the ground floor having pulvinated friezes the first and second having sill blocks. Ground and first floors have Victorian sashes otherwise glazing is C20. The original glazing pattern and some original brickwork is seen in the gable. Between 1825 and 1839 the Commissioners of Police held their meeting at the Hotel.'

It is considered that the section of the host building of primary significance is the former Wellington Hotel, on the corner of Drake Street and Smith Street, dating back to 1810.

Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Externally, the building retains much of its original grandeur and occupies a prominent position on the corner of Drake Street. It has links to the town's woollen industry as well as being the town's main coaching inn during the 19th century. It also provided the backdrop for important political movements, including the gathering following the 1832 Reform Act. It is of high architectural and historic significance, as well as making an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The first and second floors of the building have been heavily altered, with walls removed and new partitions installed, particularly on the first floor. Some areas of the historic lath and plaster ceilings and walls survive, as well as the timber roof structure. Most of the internal decoration has been lost although there are some small areas of surviving skirting board and coving. The historic stairs to the loft are still in-situ. The loss of much of the interior detailing has negatively affected the ability to interpret its historic use as a townhouse or a hotel.

Given the level of alterations and the removal of many original walls, it is considered that the partitioning of the space into residential apartments is unlikely in principle to materially harm the significance of the listed building. As such the principle of apartment use in heritage terms is acceptable.

The plans indicate that the proposals would reinstate new windows in former window openings. These would be significantly larger than the original, nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the new windows would be along secondary elevations, which are less prominent and have been more heavily altered. While there would be some loss of historic fabric from the insertion of new windows, it is considered that the overall level of harm would be low, subject to appropriate detailing and making good. The replacement of the fire door with an appropriate window would improve the appearance of the listed building, as would the removal of the external wooden staircase structure (although the weight given to this is limited, as it does not appear to have been constructed as per the approved plans). To minimise the level of harm, the Council's Conservation Officer confirms that conditions should be imposed requiring the windows to be fabricated in

timber and for large scale details to be submitted. Stone lintels should also be instated to match the existing situation.

The installation of new rooflights would result in the loss of some historic fabric, although again as these would be on a rear slope, the harm would be limited. To reduce this harm, the new rooflights should be conservation style and set flush with the roof.

Additional works will involve installing secondary glazing at the upper levels behind the existing timber sash windows, which are to be preserved. It is recommended that full specifications be secured by condition to ensure the secondary glazing adopts a matching sliding sash design and is fitted in a manner that aligns with the original timber sash style. This approach will maintain consistent sight lines with the existing windows.

The second-floor staircase up to the loft space is one of the few surviving historic elements of the building, and so plans were revised to ensure this feature is retained as shown on the proposed floor plans.

As recommended by the Conservation Officer, a schedule of repairs and finishes should be submitted, either by condition or up front as part of the application. This should include details of new fittings such as walls, doors, joinery and secondary glazing. It should also include provisions for the retention of surviving historic fabric, including the coving, skirting boards, timber floors and lath and plaster ceilings and walls. Where elements are too damaged to be incorporated into the scheme, they should still be retained insitu. This should be done for each of the spaces. A recording of the space should also be carried out (i would suggest level 2 would be appropriate given previous interventions). The agent has agreed to provide such details by condition.

Given the evidence of historic skirting boards and covings, these provide evidence of the historic design and can be incorporated into the internal scheme for the property. This would constitute a heritage benefit which would be weighed against some of the harm identified elsewhere.

Overall, elements of the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the building. In accordance with NPPF paragraph 213, any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

Where a development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use (NPPF paragraph 215). In this instance, the proposal would bring the vacant upper floors of this building back into use. Residential apartments are a use which would secure the long-term viability of the building and prevent further decay. it would also increase footfall and activity within the Rochdale Conservation Area and would secure the future of this important building.

Subject to conditions, the proposal will accord with the requirements of Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990), which requires considerable weight and importance to be given to preserving and enhancing the setting of listed buildings and conservation areas; Policies P2, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Core Strategy; Policy BE/17 of the Council's UDP; PfE policy JP-H1 and the NPPF.

Impact upon surrounding uses and amenity of future occupiers

Policy DM1 of the adopted Core Strategy states that all development proposals will be expected to demonstrate that they are of high-quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area, in addition to requiring a number of other basic planning considerations.

Policy G9 of the Core Strategy requires that final development does not lead to an increase in noise pollution.

The SPD – Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development provides advice on the acceptability of proposed living accommodation, taking account of amenity of future occupiers and those surrounding.

Paragraph 4.1 of the SPD states that a minimum distance of 14.0m should be achieved between a principal window and any directly facing two storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room.

Existing Occupiers

The property is located within the centre of Rochdale Town Centre. It is considered that certain levels of activity, noise and disruption would reasonably be expected within an area such as this. Within the context of the surrounding area, it is not considered that the use of the building for residential purposes, particularly on a scale such as that proposed, would result in an adverse impact on the character or amenities of the area, in the knowledge of its former use as a nightclub. The proposed residential use would neatly align with the existing residential uses also located at the upper floors of this building/ that adjoining on Smith Street.

Considering the physical relationship between the proposed upper floor flats and surrounding existing and proposed development, it is considered that the building is located a sufficient distance from these developments, providing future existing and future occupiers with an acceptable standard of amenity. During the course of the application there have been amendments to floor plan layouts and window arrangements in order to protect the privacy of neighbouring occupiers and to prevent overlooking. The nearest windows to the rear of the property consist of those at a 90-degree angle to the of the adjoining building on Smith Street. These south facing windows serve a hallway (non-habitable rooms) and are therefore unaffected by the proposal.

Future Occupiers

As above, internal layout changes have been undertaken to improve the standard of living accommodation. Each of the apartments now have sufficient access to light and ventilation. Those positioned at the front of the building, namely apartments: 1, 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9, benefit from an open outlook over Drake Street and South Parade. Those to the rear of the property, specifically apartments 4, 5, 6 and 10, would experience a more reduced outlook since the outward aspect would partly be obstructed by the existing adjoining building on Smith Street (L-shaped building) and the roofscape to the rear of the building/above the ground floor extension. However, new larger windows are proposed to be installed to the rear elevation as indicated on dwg PL10 rev D and new roof lights are proposed to be installed above each of the first-floor units (4, 5 and 6) to provide additional light. Consideration has also been given to the proposed location of the residential apartments – that being within a dense urban area, within the town centre of Rochdale, where reduced separation distances are commonplace. In line with paragraph 4.3 of the SPD, an exception is made on this basis.

All apartments would achieve the minimum gross internal floor areas and storage requirements as set out by the 'Technical Standards - nationally described space standards'. Whilst some apartments would be arranged in a strong linear format, the internal spaces would still be set out in a functional and useable manner.

Whilst no formal amenity space is provided, the proposals would not comprise family units and the omission of this feature can be considered acceptable on balance where the site is well placed in respect of access to alternative forms of open space.

Consultations have been carried out with the Council's Public Protection (Noise) department who have reviewed the submitted noise assessment prepared by SBM Safety Solutions, reference E22478, dated 18 February 2025. The Noise assessment has considered the background noise levels and the noise associated from the proposed commercial use on the ground floor. The assessment concluded that the internal noise levels of BS8233 will be met. On this basis, the Environmental Protection Team have no objections to the proposal. Officers have no reason to disagree, however, to protect the amenities of the future occupiers, it is recommended that prior to the first occupation of each dwelling hereby approved, an acoustic verification report be submitted to confirm that the recommendations contained with section 9.0 have been achieved.

In light of the above assessment, it is considered that the proposal would provide a satisfactory standard of residential amenity for all future occupiers and would not unduly impact the amenity of neighbouring residents, in accordance with policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways, Access and Refuse Storage

Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios. Policy T2 of the adopted Core Strategy is also relevant, regarding improved accessibility.

The SPD – Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development provides advice on bin storage provision for residential properties.

Consultation has been undertaken with the Local Highways Authority (LHA) and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM).

The LHA have confirmed that they hold no objection to the proposal, noting that the site is within a highly sustainable location within Rochdale Town Centre with many local amenities and sustainable transport options within walking distance. The development does not provide for any off-street parking for motor vehicles however this is deemed to be acceptable since the LHA would not expect any traffic generated by this proposal nor would the LHA require any parking for private vehicles. There are no concerns relating to access and servicing and the LHA have confirmed that proposed servicing to the rear of the premises is acceptable.

The LHA have expressed a concern that damage could be caused to the highway during construction and therefore recommend that a dilapidation survey is undertaken prior to the commencement of development, with any damage apparent upon completion remedied at the expense of the developer. However, given that the scope of works is limited to internal changes with a few replacement windows, this would be considered

unreasonable by Officers. Furthermore, any damage to the highway would be a matter between the LHA and the developer, not concerning planning matters.

TfGM have confirmed no objection to the application and whilst the development proposals are unlikely to affect Metrolink operations the site does adjoin the highway in which Metrolink operates and therefore it is recommended that the applicant is referred to further information in relation to working safely near the Metrolink on the Metrolink website.

The development can safely be provided without resulting in harm to pedestrian and highway safety therefore accords with Policies T2 and DM1 of the CS, the Residential Standards SPD and the NPPF.

Flood risk

Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that *“inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere”*.

Policy G8 of the adopted Core Strategy states that we will ensure that new development (including flood mitigation measures) does not lead to any form of increased 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, is itself well protected from flood risk and ensures prudent use of water resources.

As updated on 25th March 2025, the application site falls primarily within Flood Zone 3 (edging into Flood Zone 2). Paragraph 103 of the NPPF requires applicants for planning permission to submit a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) when development is proposed in such locations.

Paragraph 176 of the NPPF specifically states that changes of use and minor proposals, which this application would fall within, are not subject to sequential and exception tests, but should still meet the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments set out in footnote 63 to manage residential risk to future occupiers, which states:

‘A site-specific flood risk assessment should be provided for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3. In Flood Zone 1, an assessment should accompany all proposals involving: sites of 1 hectare or more; land which has been identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems; land identified in a strategic flood risk assessment as being at increased flood risk in future; or land that may be subject to other sources of flooding, where its development would introduce a more vulnerable use’.

These requirements are outlined within the National Planning Practice Guidance.

The submitted FRA includes mitigation and an emergency evacuation plan, it concludes “As long as the guidance in this flood risk assessment and in particular the Emergency Evacuation Plan are followed, no other residual risks remain”.

The Environment Agency have been consulted on the proposed development and confirm that they have no objection on flood risk grounds, given that the proposal only applies to parts of the existing building that are first floor and above, which means they are situated above the design flood level. Relevant informative advice is recommended and is to be included in any permission granted.

The submitted FRA acknowledges the risks to future occupants of the proposed units as per footnote 63 of the NPPF. A relevant condition is recommended, requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the mitigation and evacuation principles set out in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment prepared by T J Booth Associates, in order to ensure the development is carried out in a manner that appropriately mitigates flood risk, safeguards future occupants, and complies with the principles of sustainable development.

On this basis Officers are satisfied that the application accords with the National Planning Policy Framework, policy G8 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and saved policy EM/7 of the Unitary Development Plan.

Ecology and protected species

Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

In England, biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met. This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits.

PfE Policy JP-G8 also states that through local planning and associated activities a net enhancement of biodiversity resources will be sought where relevant. In particular, development will be expected to achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10%.

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. CS Policy G7 requires that no development should result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity.

Being a change of use application, the development is not subject to mandatory BNG under the de minimis rule.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) have been consulted on the application who have reviewed the submitted Bat Dusk Survey. The survey confirms that there was no evidence of bats roosting, and no bat activity was recorded. No further information or measures are required on this basis as the inclusion of a bat box would be unreasonable and unlikely to attract bats. To protect nesting birds, a suitably worded informative is recommended reminding the applicant of the protections under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. In order to provide a net gain, in accordance with paragraph 187d) of the NPPF, it is recommended by GMEU that mitigation/enhancement is achieved through providing three swift bricks. Details are to be secured by condition, as agreed by the applicant.

Appropriate protections have therefore been afforded to protected species, and it is therefore considered that the application accords with Policy G7 of the adopted Core Strategy and the NPPF.

Contributions

Paragraph 98 of the NPPF states that to deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, decision takers should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. Policy DM2 of the Core Strategy sets out that the Council will require developers to provide, or contribute towards the cost of providing, any physical and social infrastructure that is needed because of proposed development. For residential development, this specifically requires contributions towards affordable housing (Policy C4), open space provision and maintenance (Policy G6) and education facilities (Policy C7), and in some cases towards highways improvements (policy T2).

Provision of recreational Public Open Space

Paragraph 96 of the NPPF emphasises the importance of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation for the health and well-being of communities. Policy G6 of the Core Strategy requires that residential development should provide or contribute financially towards recreational open space in accordance with the standards set out in the 'Provision of Recreational Open Space in New Housing' SPD. The SPD sets out that developments of more than ten dwellings with less than 100 bedrooms in total will not need to make provision for recreational open space on site, and as such, no contributions are required.

Affordable housing

A development of 10 residential units would not meet the threshold as detailed in policy C4 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the associated Affordable Housing SPD for affordable housing contributions or on-site provision.

Education

Core Strategy policy C7 seeks developer contributions for the provision of educational facilities (including new school places). However, at 10 units, the development would not meet the threshold level for contributions in this regard.

Highway Improvements

The level of traffic this development would generate would be accommodated on the existing network and so contributions would not be required.

Conclusion

No contributions are required for this development by virtue of the proposed quantum of development, as such, the application accords with the requirements of policies G6 and DM2 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the Supplementary Planning Document 'Provision of Recreational Open Space in New Housing' (2008, updated January 2017) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

The site is located within a highly sustainable urban location and the conversion of the upper floors to residential would not damage the viability and vitality of the centre. The development would lead to less than substantial harm on the significance of the Grade II listed building and bring about public benefits, including allowing the future maintenance of the designated heritage asset and providing additional housing stock within Rochdale. Subject to conditions, the development raises no significant amenity concerns or highway safety issues.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT subject to the following conditions:

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

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. This permission relates to the following plans and documents:-

Plans:

BM/0125/DRAKE/ PL5 Rev. B (Proposed Site and Ground Flood Plan/ Area Schedule)

BM/0125/DRAKE/ PL6 Rev. E (Proposed First Floor Plan)

BM/0125/DRAKE/ PL7 Rev. F (Proposed Second Floor Plan)

BM/0125/DRAKE/ PL9 Rev. A (Proposed Front and Side Elevations)

BM/0125/DRAKE/ PL10 Rev. D (Proposed Rear Elevations 2)

BM/0125/DRAKE/ PL11 Rev. C (Proposed Cross Section AA')

BM/0125/DRAKE/ PL12 Rev. D (Proposed Cross Section AA' and Roof Plan)

BM/0125/DRAKE/ PL16 (Proposed Long Section BB')

Documents:

Noise Impact Assessment prepared by SBM Safety Solutions, Reference: E22478, Dated: 18th February 2025.

Bat Dusk Emergence Survey 2025 Ref. RHE.4468 prepared by Rachel Hacking Ecology, Dated 9th June 2025.

Flood Risk Assessment prepared by T J Booth Associates, dated January 2025. Doc Ref. rep-tjba-C&F-1 drake st, rochdale-FRA-090125.docx

and the development shall be carried out in accordance with these drawings hereby approved.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the policies contained within the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan, the emerging Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans and the requirements of condition 2 of this permission, no external works shall take place until details of all new windows, doors and conservation style roof lights (including their specification, materials, finishes, recesses and opening profile) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All new

windows shall be fabricated in timber. Where existing windows are to be repaired, this shall include details of the methodology of repairing such windows. The windows, doors and roof lights shall be installed in accordance with the duly approved details and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory appearance in the interests of visual amenity and preserving the historic significance of the building in accordance with Policies DM1, P2 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P2 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. No development shall take place until full details of the works to install internal secondary glazing to the existing windows have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details before the buildings are first occupied and thereafter so maintained.

Reason: To protect the architectural and historic interest of the listed building and to protect the character and appearance of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) Policies P2, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P2 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Details are required to protect the architectural and historic interest of the building.

5. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations contained within section 9.0 of the submitted Noise Impact Assessment prepared by SBM Safety Solutions, Reference: E22478, Dated: 18th February 2025. Prior to the first occupation of each dwelling hereby approved, an acoustic verification report shall have been first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, confirming that the recommendations contained with section 9.0 have been achieved.

The approved scheme shall be maintained in good working order thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and to ensure that future residents are adequately protected from unacceptable levels of noise in accordance with policies DM1 and G9 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. Notwithstanding the details submitted, no gas or electric meters shall be fitted externally on the building until full details and specifications of any such meter boxes have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details before the first occupation of any of the units hereby permitted.

Reason: To protect the architectural and historic interest of the listed building and to protect the character and appearance of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) Policies P2, P3 and DM1 of the

adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P2 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. No part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied until the refuse recycling/bin store as indicated on drawing ref. BM/0125/DRAKE/ PL5 Rev. B (Proposed Site and Ground Floor Plan/ Area Schedule) has been provided and made available for use. The approved facility shall be retained as approved thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of ensuring the provision of satisfactory facilities for the storage of refuse and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the Council's 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.

8. The bicycle store indicated on drawing ref. BM/0125/DRAKE/ PL5 Rev. B (Proposed Site and Ground Flood Plan/ Area Schedule) shall be provided and made available for use before the first occupation of any part of the development and the approved facility retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of encouraging sustainable travel and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies T2, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with mitigation and evacuation principles set out in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment prepared by T J Booth Associates, dated January 2025. Doc Ref. rep-tjba-C&F-1 drake st, rochdale-FRA-090125.docx. The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in a manner that appropriately mitigates flood risk, safeguards future occupants, and complies with the principles of sustainable development, in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, policy G8 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and saved policy EM/7 of the Unitary Development Plan.

10. The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until such time as a scheme for three swift boxes has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The swift boxes shall be installed in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the development.

Reason: In the interest of biodiversity and in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

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.

Notes for Applicant:

INFORMATIVE:

The applicant is reminded of the need to submit and obtain formal approval of those details required by the conditions of this planning permission before development may lawfully commence on the site.

INFORMATIVE

The applicant is advised that the supply and delivery of refuse containers (including all wheelie bins and food waste caddies) for residential developments is chargeable and the responsibility for these charges rests with the applicant/developer. Please contact environmental.management@rochdale.gov.uk for a quotation for your development.

INFORMATIVE

The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended it is an offence to remove, damage, or destroy the nest of a wild bird, while the nest is in use or being built. Planning consent does not provide a defence against prosecution under this act. If a bird's nest is suspected work should cease immediately and a suitably experienced ecologist employed to assess how best to safeguard the nest(s).

INFORMATIVE

The site adjoins the highway in which Metrolink operates and therefore the applicant is advised that the details of working safely near Metrolink can be found on the Metrolink Website at:- **Working safely near Metrolink | Bee Network | Powered by TfGM** . If in doubt the Applicant should contact the Metrolink Operator and Maintainer using initial enquiry form in the aforementioned document.

INFORMATIVE

Please be aware that a FRAP may be required for any temporary construction works and/or storage of materials.

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit or exemption to be obtained for any activity which will take place:

- on or within 8 metres of a main river (16 metres if tidal)
- on or within 8 metres of a flood defence structure or culvert (16 metres if tidal)
- on or within 16 metres of a sea defence
- involving quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
- in a floodplain more than 8 metres from the river bank, culvert or flood defence structure (16 metres if it's a tidal main river) and you don't already have planning permission.

For further guidance please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-riskactivitiesenvironmental-permits> or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or by emailing enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk . The applicant should not assume that a permit will automatically be forthcoming once planning permission has been granted, and we advise them to consult with us at the earliest opportunity.