



Report Title: Report to Planning Committee

Application Number	25/00621/FUL
Proposal	Erection of 74-bed care home development, including creation of new access, car parking, landscaping and other associated works following demolition of Sparth House.
Site	Sparth House, 185 Manchester Road, Rochdale OL11 3QY
Applicant	Mr Mujahid Afzal (CS Manchester Road Ltd)
Recommendation	GRANT subject to conditions
Reason for Report	The proposal is for major development and has received more than 10 objections
Background Papers	The planning application documents are background papers to the report. They are open to inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.
Ward	Milkstone & Deeplish
Township	Rochdale South

1. SITE, SURROUNDINGS AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The existing site comprises a single two-storey detached house, with a parking area at the front and a long garden to the rear, located on the A58 Manchester Road, a key route into Rochdale town centre. The site is accessed directly off Manchester Road.
- 1.2 The house is bounded at the north and south by dwellings, comprising a pair of semi-detached houses at the north, two terraces on Manchester Road and on Sparthfield Avenue to the south. The front of the property faces onto Mandale Park on the far side of Manchester Road, and the rear of the property adjoins Castleton Bowling Club.
- 1.3 Trees within the curtilage along the southern boundary are subject of individual Tree Preservation Orders. There are no designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the site which would be impacted by new development.
- 1.4 The site lies within the Defined Urban Area (as designated on the saved Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map). Saved policy G/D/1 establishes that new development should be located in the urban area, so as to support urban regeneration and to protect the countryside.
- 1.5 In terms of strategic policies of the Core Strategy, the site is located within the more southerly 'Manchester Fringe' (policy SP2) half of the borough, and within the Rochdale Township (policy SP3/R).
- 1.6 Pre-application advice (ref PREAPP/00006/23) was sought by the applicant in 2023, which in summary advised that the principle of the proposed development would be acceptable in this location. However, concerns were raised in terms of potential impacts upon neighbouring dwellings and in terms of the design of the proposal considered at that stage, and potential impacts on trees.
- 1.7 The application was considered at the Planning Committee meeting on 30th March 2026. Members were advised by officers that the proposal gives rise to concerns in terms of impacts on neighbour amenity, harm to and loss of trees, and the appropriateness of the design of the building in its context.
- 1.8 Despite these concerns, the proposal was recommended for approval as it was considered by officers that the benefits of the scheme in terms of provision of specialist care marginally outweighed the harms identified.
- 1.9 Members declined to determine the application on this basis and decided to defer the application to allow the applicant to give further consideration to these concerns.
- 1.10 Subsequently, additional information has been submitted by the applicant as follows:

- A Viability Appraisal advancing an argument that the scheme cannot be reduced in scale without making the proposed care home financially unviable. The officer's response to this is provided at paragraph 7.10 onwards.
 - Additional tree root survey relating to certain trees along the site boundary, to demonstrate that impacts upon the roots of these trees (and therefore the health and longevity of the trees) would not be significant, and an updated Arboricultural Impact Assessment reflecting this survey. The officer's response to this additional information is provided from paragraph 6.102 onwards.
 - Presentation boards responding to concerns on highways, design and trees
- 1.11 For the avoidance of doubt, the proposed scheme has not been revised to respond to the concerns set out above. The officer's recommendation for approval from the earlier report presented at the March committee meeting is unchanged.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1. The proposal is to demolish the existing dwellinghouse and to redevelop the site with a 74-bedroom four-storey residential care home. The building would occupy most of the plot, with parking provided to the front and north side of the building, with small outdoor spaces at the rear and south-west side.
- 2.2. The accommodation would provide 21 specialist dementia care beds, 48 nursing beds, and five respite rooms.
- 2.3. A new vehicular access point would be created off Manchester Road, with a total of 10 parking spaces provided, including 3 to disabled bay specifications and two with electric vehicle charging provision. Refined details of the new access were submitted during determination.
- 2.4. The building would have an articulated H-shaped footprint comprising larger volumes at the front and rear of the plot connected by a recessed central volume.
- 2.5. Viewed from the front (onto Manchester Road), the building would be characterised by two main three-storey volumes, each with two dual-pitched roofs, with a slightly recessed volume between. The front elevation of the building would be characterised by a dense pattern of windows serving bedrooms. The rear portion of the building would be simpler in form, with a mansard roof at third floor height.
- 2.6. Internally, the building would comprise the following:

Ground floor:

- 2.7. Reception, lounge, office and staff room, bin store, kitchen, laundry room, prayer/multifunction room, main dining room, plant room, medical room, hairdressers, and five respite bedrooms

First floor

- 2.8. 22 bedrooms, lounge, staff room and two terraces

Second floor

- 2.9. 24 bedrooms, lounge, assisted bathroom, medical room

Third floor

- 2.10. 24 bedrooms, lounge, assisted bathroom, medical room

- 2.11. A soft landscaping scheme submitted with the application indicates the creation of a modest landscaped strip at the rear of the building, comprising grass, meadow and wildflower, planting, shrubs, hedging, sensory planting, together with five new trees. A smaller landscaped area inset to the south side of the building would host a further four trees, and a small landscape strip at the front would host two trees.

- 2.12. Hard landscaping would comprise black bitmac to the access and parking areas, concrete block paving to entrance paths, and resin bound gravel to secondary paths, and concrete flag paving to a patio areas at the rear

- 2.13. The application is supported by the following documents:

- Air Quality Assessment
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Constraints Plan (supplemented by additional details during determination)
- Bat and Breeding Birds Inspection
- Daylight and Sunlight Assessment
- BNG Design Stage Assessment (updated during determination) and BNG metric
- Building Regs Compliance Statement
- Care Needs Assessment
- Crime Impact Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Drainage Strategy (amended during determination)
- Ecological Background
- Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan
- Heritage Statement
- Noise Assessment
- Phase I Geoenvironmental Site Assessment
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment

- Planning Statement
- Transport Statement

3. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

Development Plan

3.1. The adopted development plan for Rochdale consists of the:

- Greater Manchester Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan Document (DPD) (March 2024);
- Rochdale Core Strategy (CS) October 2016);
- Saved Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Policies (June 2006); and

3.2. Relevant policies include

Places for Everyone (PfE)

A strategic plan for Greater Manchester city region. It seeks to guide strategic housing and employment developments across the region.

Strategy

JP-Strat6	Northern Areas
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Sustainable and Resilient Places

JP-S1	Sustainable Development
JP-S2	Carbon and Energy
JP-S4	Flood Risk and the Water Environment
JP-S5	Clean Air

Places for Homes

JP-H1	Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Development
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Greener Places

JP-G7	Trees and Woodland
JP-G8	A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Places for People

JP-P1	Sustainable Places
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Connected Places

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

Rochdale Core Strategy (CS) 2016

The Core Strategy sets out local strategic and development management policies for Rochdale Borough, and should be read alongside PfE.

Spatial Strategy

SD1	Delivering sustainable development
SP1	Rochdale Borough's role in the city region
SP2	The Spatial Strategy for the borough
SP3/R	The Strategy for Middleton

Creating successful and healthy communities (SO2)

C1	Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places
C3	Delivering the right type of housing
C6	Improving health and well being

Improving design, image and quality of place (SO3)

P1	Improving image
P2	Protecting and Enhancing Character, Landscape and heritage
P3	Improving design of new development

Promoting a greener environment (SO4)

G1	Tackling and adapting to climate change
G2	Energy and new development
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

Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport (SO5)

T2	Improving accessibility
SD1	Delivering sustainable development
DM1	General development requirements
DM2	Delivering planning contributions and infrastructure

Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006 Saved Policies

A majority of the UDP's policies have been superseded by the CS and PfE, except for the following:

G/D/1	Defined Urban Area
EM/7	Development and Flood risk
EM/8	Protection of Surface and Ground Water

National Policies and Guidance

- 3.3. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) and Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) are relevant overarching material considerations.
- 3.4. The following NPPF policies are of primary relevance and are broadly aligned with adopted development plan policies:
- Chapter 2 (Achieving Sustainable Development)
 - Chapter 4 (Decision-making)
 - Chapter 5 (Delivering a sufficient supply of homes)
 - Chapter 9 (Promoting sustainable transport)
 - Chapter 12 (Achieving well-designed places)
 - Chapter 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change)
 - Chapter 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment)

Other Considerations

- 3.5. The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a persons rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the Convention of the same Act which sets out his/her rights in respect for private and family life and for the home. Officers consider that the proposed development would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles in respect of the human rights of surrounding residents/occupiers.
- 3.6. The application has been considered in accordance with the Rochdale Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy – Embracing All Voices (2024-2026), which seeks to promote a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion that benefits the community as a whole.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1. None relevant

5. PUBLICITY

Members

- 5.1. The application was be presented to a meeting of the Rochdale Townships Planning Panel on 18th March 2027.
- 5.2. Members questioned the level of parking provision in the proposed scheme in the context of concerns relating to on-street parking in the surrounding area.

5.3. Cllr Minaam Ellahi (Milkstone & Deeplish Ward):

I have reviewed the details of the scheme and have also met with the applicant's family to understand the background, the evolution of the design, and the intended community purpose. I would like to place on record my support for the application.

Over the past three years, the applicants have made substantial amendments in response to planning feedback. The reduction in overall massing, the staggered roof heights, and the 'H'-shaped layout all demonstrate clear efforts to mitigate concerns around scale and neighbour impact. From the material presented, these changes meaningfully soften the visual impact and ensure the building sits more appropriately within its context.

Importantly, the proposal has been developed in close collaboration with the Council's Adult Social Care team, who have provided full support. I understand that they have also reiterated this support directly to you. Given the specialist nature of the provision, their professional endorsement carries significant weight.

Given the finely balanced nature of the case, I believe the public, social, and health-related benefits weigh significantly in favour of approval. The proposal appears to deliver a purpose-built, patient-centred facility that responds directly to identified need, while also incorporating design changes intended to address localised impacts.

Summary of Third Party Responses

5.4. Letters of notification were issued on 25th July 2025 and a site notice was placed in the vicinity of the development site on 14th August 2025. A press notice was published on 30th July 2025.

5.5. 15 public comments were received prior to the March 2026 committee meeting, comprising 12 objections and 3 supporting letters.

5.6. The objections received are summarised below.

Principle of development

Unsuitable location for dementia care due to traffic noise, dementia patients need a calm and quiet location

Traffic and pollution

Not enough parking, will cause and exacerbate parking problems on local streets. Additional traffic will cause air pollution

Character and Appearance

Disproportionate design to surrounding houses, will dominate the streetscape

Ecology

Would result in loss of biodiversity and mature trees.

No BNG Metric or Gain plan submitted.

Neighbour impacts

Will cause loss of sunlight and impact privacy. As Muslims privacy is particularly important and this should be considered under equality legislation.

Will cause disturbance from ambulances, staff vehicle movements, refuse collection

Will harm air quality

Substation will cause noise disruption

Odour issues from personal waste

Trees on boundary will shade and cause damp

Other matters

Residential care homes are not viable due to funding constraints.

How would residents be evacuated in a fire?

Construction phase will cause dust, vibration, noise, vibration, harm to foundations.

5.7. Comments made supporting the application were received from local mosques and are summarised as follows:

- The facility is vital for the well-being of community members of Rochdale Central Mosque, considering the unique cultural context of South Asian families, within which placing family members in care homes is often surrounded by stigma. The proposal would provide a solution which respects cultural values while meeting the practical requirements of care for our elders. The location is in close proximity to the Mosque, and there is generally a lack of good quality care homes in the immediate area.
- The proposal would be a great facility that our elderly residents can go to without being isolated from friends or family in the nearby area. Having this facility close to our mosque (Jamiah Masjid Chishtiah) would keep our folks connected to their roots, faith and community activities, avoiding isolating them. The facility would be very accessible due to its location.
- Neeli Mosque – the proposal would be a vital service needed to address the needs of the ageing population. The site would be very close to our Mosque and the community that it serves. This would allow residents to continue participating in religious and community activities, essential to their well-being.

5.8. Following the March 2026 planning committee meeting, a further two objections were received from members of the public. These objections noted the following matters:

- Queries around the process for addressing concerns raised at the planning committee including amendments to the proposal
- Reiterated concerns around the scale of the scheme, highway safety and parking, neighbour impacts, and ecology considerations
- The scheme would not meet the standards of the Care Quality Commission and this suggests that the proposal is not really intended to be used to provide care.
- *“The current design suggests, that this proposal as it stands, without alteration, would ideally meet the requirements of a temporary/long term accommodation for either 74 Asylum seekers and/ or homeless persons”*

6. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

6.1. Environment Agency

No comments – proposal is outside our external consultation criteria.

6.2. Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service

The proposed development does not threaten the known or suspected archaeological heritage. It is unlikely that any significant or informative archaeological remains have survived. On this basis there is no reason to seek to impose any archaeological requirements upon the applicant.

6.3. Greater Manchester Ecology Unit

15.08.2025: *Findings of the bat roost assessments are accepted. A lighting plan should be secured by condition to control impacts on bats.*

Recommend a condition to control works during the bird nesting season, and a condition for approval of reasonable avoidance measures method statement in relation to amphibians, hedgehogs and badgers.

Existing BNG value calculations are accepted. The completed scheme will result in a deficit of 0.81 Area Habitat units and a gain of 0.36 linear hedgerow units, meaning the applicant will need to purchase the required area units off-site, which appears to be realistic. The LPA can therefore be confident the statutory BNG condition could be discharged. In addition to statutory BNG, we recommend that specified biodiversity enhancements are incorporated into the development, to be secured by condition.

13.01.2026: (following amendments to landscaping arrangements to address drainage feedback) *I'm happy with the amended metric and landscape plan. The recorded BNG deficit can be updated to 0.73 units.*

6.4. Greater Manchester Police – Design for Security

Should the Council be minded to approve the application, we would recommend the inclusion of a condition requiring the scheme is designed and constructed in accordance with Section 3.3 & 4 of the submitted Crime Impact Statement (Ref: 2023/0378/CIS/03, Version A: 17/06/2025) and/or achieves the Secured by Design (SBD) Award.

6.5. RBC Adult Social Care

The Adult Social Care commissioning team is fully supportive of the proposed Nursing & Dementia Care Home development.

This development is a strategically important addition to our local care infrastructure and aligns directly with our commissioning priorities, particularly in addressing the growing need for high-quality dementia and nursing care provision in the borough.

We support this application for the following reasons:

- *A clear commissioning need: The proposal addresses gaps identified in our Market Position Statement, including the need for additional dementia and nursing care capacity, as well as crisis and respite beds.*
- *Future-proof, flexible design: The facility has been designed to adapt to changing needs over time, with the ability to reconfigure accommodation (e.g. separate wings/floors) to support residents as their care requirements evolve.*
- *Strong collaboration with commissioners: The developers have worked closely with our commissioning team throughout the design process, incorporating feedback and making multiple adjustments to ensure the scheme meets predicted demand and future service models.*
- *Community integration and cultural sensitivity: The scheme has been developed with input from the local South Asian community, helping to address cultural barriers and stigma around care home use. The inclusion of a community hub and the central location will support accessibility and encourage earlier engagement with services.*
- *Modern, high-quality accommodation: Much of Rochdale's existing care home stock is ageing and lacks the flexibility or facilities to meet modern expectations. This new development will offer en-suite rooms and a purpose-built environment designed to support people with complex needs, including dementia.*
- *Alignment with regional priorities: The scheme supports the Enhanced Health in Care Homes (EHCH) model and complements our wider strategic objectives around prevention, early intervention, and integrated care.*

In summary, this is a well-designed, community-focused development that will significantly enhance the borough's ability to meet the needs of our ageing population. We strongly recommend that the application be approved and look forward to continuing our support as the project progresses.

6.6. RBC Conservation Officer

No objection.

6.7. RBC Contaminated Land

Geo-environmental desk study has been reviewed. From its findings, an intrusive investigation is recommended. This can be resolved by a pre-commencement condition, to also identify and secure any necessary remediation

6.8. RBC Highways

The site is not expected to generate a significant volume of traffic. Slight underprovision of parking against standards is acceptable given the sustainable location, a short walk into Rochdale town centre, with regular bus services and nearby improvements to sustainable transport planned. The access to the site should be improved. The design of the new access should incorporate the cycling improvements already planned along Manchester Road; this can be resolved by condition. No concerns about refuse collection, emergency access or servicing.

20.10.2025: *(following response from transport consultant including amended access drawing)*: The amended plans are acceptable and have satisfied our concerns.

6.9. RBC Environmental Health (Noise and Light)

Noise Assessment has been reviewed. Road noise is proposed to be mitigated by keeping windows at the front of the building closed this approach is not acceptable. Therefore, further details are required on the alternative mechanical heating extraction and ventilation (MHEV) system in the interest of the future occupants.

Details of fixed plant and equipment effecting neighbouring properties shall be provided, alongside mitigation measures.

Recommend a construction management plan alongside details of the lighting specification to be installed.

6.10. RBC Lead Local Flood Risk / Drainage Officer

Initial response: details not acceptable, alternatives to discharging to combined sewer must be considered. On-site SuDS must also be considered, and details of management and maintenance are required.

20.01.2026: *(following submission of revised drainage strategy)*: the revised details are acceptable in principle. It is not clear how the rain gardens are receiving initial run off flows but this could be clarified at a subsequent design stage.

6.11. RBC Urban Design

Significant concern is raised regarding the scale, massing and footprint of the proposed building. Of notable concern is the visual appearance of the building in relation to the lower rise properties either side of the plot, along with the impact on existing surrounding properties in respect of loss of outlook, overshadowing of private amenity space and overbearing impact.

The overall design detailing ethos of the building would not necessarily be unacceptable in terms of visual appearance, although at the scale proposed it would benefit from a larger plot with greater separation between existing buildings. However, the setback section as viewed from the front appears to split the building into two halves as a recessive feature with an incongruent roof form.

It is further noted that the application proposal would rely on the removal of trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order. It would be expected that the design response for any proposed redevelopment of the site would seek to preserve these trees to ensure their longevity as they play a crucial role in mitigating the climate crisis and restricting urban heating, along with providing ecosystem and biodiversity benefits.

The proposed quantum of development would appear to be excessive for the plot given the unacceptable neighbour amenity impacts of loss of outlook, overlooking and overbearing impact, together with the loss of protected trees, insufficient outdoor amenity space for the residents, visitors & staff and likely inadequate amount of parking provision reasonably required for a development of this size and typology.

6.12. Transport for Greater Manchester

The road safety data in the Transport Statement should be updated to the latest available data which should include 2024.

The TRICS exercise includes London and Ireland sites which should be excluded from the analysis. Notwithstanding the above, the TRICS assessment demonstrates that the development is unlikely to result in the requirement for any junction impact assessment work.

Given the use of the vehicle access point will be intensified, a more formal priority junction arrangement should be considered, with tactile paving and dropped kerbs. This would better facilitate access to the site and provide an improved situation for pedestrians.

It may be beneficial for a review of the Traffic Regulation Orders in the vicinity of the development to be undertaken.

A robust Construction Traffic Management Plan should be employed as part of the development

Cycle parking facilities should be covered and secure, located internally, with measures such as the installation of CCTV and appropriate lighting to ensure security

22.10.2025: No further comments following submission of updated collision data and amended access arrangements including tactile paving and dropped kerbs.

6.13. Tree Officer

Trees T6, T10 and T11 already appear to be under some level of stress, with signs of (multiple) previous pruning works, some dieback evident and somewhat restricted growth potential because they are constrained by adjacent development. I am not

entirely convinced by the view that due to the presence of existing boundary wall the growth of roots of T6, T10 and T11 will have been entirely restricted to growth outside of the site boundary – the trees have clearly been in the landscape for many years and are well established; the rooting systems may well rely on water and nutrient input from both sides of the wall. The photographs of the trenching works are not in my view definitive about the extent and limitations to root growth.

I am therefore concerned that –

- Construction of the new building may cause harm to the root systems of the trees and
- Pruning works may cause harm to the overall health and balance of the trees

A future risk could therefore be caused to the new building and adjacent structures, and to the local treescape, if these trees fail.

Trees T3 and T4, although apparently not included in the TPO, are also valuable trees, prominent in the landscape close to the busy roadway, and their loss would also have an impact on the wider treescape. Although re-planting is proposed as part of the scheme these proposals are limited in scope, with re-planting of large high-forest trees not recommended in this location. The treescape will therefore not be fully compensated by new planting.

6.14. United Utilities

14.08.2025: All options for the sustainable management of surface water must be thoroughly investigated before we will accept any surface water connections from new development to the public sewer. We request a pre-commencement condition relating to drainage to ensure that an appropriate, robust drainage solution is proposed and delivered. We recommend a condition relating to SuDS management and maintenance.

Advice provided on UU assets and services.

24.02.2026: The revised drainage documents do not include robust evidence that the drainage hierarchy has been thoroughly investigated. The proposals are not in line with the National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (2025). The Infiltration results and ground condition show that infiltration is viable for the site and the car park at the from appear to be large enough for a tanked infiltration system. This should be resolved by a pre-commencement condition to secure revised sustainable drainage details.

ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development – Housing Delivery and Care Provision

- 6.15. As required by Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.16. The NPPF is a key overarching material consideration, such that development plan policies should align with its policies. Chapter 2 of the NPPF confirms the principal objective of achieving sustainable development. To pursue this in a positive way, paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’. Paragraph 11(c) is most relevant and confirms that sustainable development is achieved through application of the above principle. The thrust of this is reflected in PfE Policy JP-S1 and CS Policy SD1.
- 6.17. Places for Everyone (PfE) was adopted in March 2024 and now forms part of Rochdale’s adopted development plan. It provides a long-term strategic plan for sustainable inclusive growth across the nine Greater Manchester districts including Rochdale. PfE will guide how the city region will grow up until 2039, including by:
- identifying the amount of new development that will come forward across the 9 districts;
 - supporting the delivery of key infrastructure, such as transport and utilities;
 - protecting important environmental assets across the city region; and
 - allocating sites for employment and housing outside of the existing urban area.
- 6.18. In alignment with this, Core Strategy (CS) policies SP1, SP2 and SP3/R set out Rochdale’s spatial strategy and overarching goals for development in the Borough.
- 6.19. The site lies within the Defined Urban Area (as designated on the saved Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map). Saved policy G/D/1 establishes that new development should be located in the urban area, so as to support urban regeneration and to protect the countryside. The site is located on Manchester Road, a key route into Rochdale town centre well-served by public transport services. The town centre is located approximately one mile away. For these reasons, the site is considered to be a sustainable location for a care home development.
- 6.20. PfE policy JP-P1 Sustainable Places notes that all development should, where appropriate, be resource-efficient including by making efficient use of land. Core Strategy policy P1 notes that the Council will ensure new development improves the image of the borough through measures including promoting the development and re-use of under-used land and buildings.

- 6.21. PfE policy JP-H1 Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Housing sets targets for housing delivery in each borough over the plan period, with a total expected delivery of 10,472 homes in Rochdale by 2039, equivalent to 616 dwellings per year. The revised December 2024 NPPF sets out a new housing delivery standard method, which will apply to the PfE boroughs once the transitional arrangements under PfE end, which will require delivery of 1031 homes per year.

Care home provision

- 6.22. Paragraph 63 of the NPPF indicates that housing delivery should address the needs of different groups in the community, including older people, including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care, and care homes.
- 6.23. National Planning Practice Guidance recognises a critical need to provide housing for older people, noting that people are living longer lives and older people are becoming a greater proportion of the population, and noting that offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help reduce costs to the social care and health systems.
- 6.24. Core Strategy policy *C3 Delivering the right type of housing* notes that we will deliver the right types of homes to meet the overall needs and aspirations of the borough, through means including supporting the provision of housing on appropriate sites to meet the needs of specific groups including older people and other vulnerable groups.
- 6.25. Policy C8 notes that we will support and promote the provision of better community, sport, leisure and cultural facilities following a sequential approach, provided they are of a type and scale appropriate to the size of the settlement, are accessible and support our objectives. The explanatory notes to C8 include that such community facilities includes care homes.
- 6.26. The sequential approach laid out in C8 notes that proposals for facilities will be supported provided that:
- They are of a type and scale appropriate to the size of the settlement, and;
 - Outside established town centres or local centres, they are highly accessible by a choice of transport, particularly sustainable modes of transport, and do not harm the character or amenity of the area.
- 6.27. As noted in the following sections of this analysis, the proposal will result in some harm to the character and amenity of the area, due to the scale and

layout of the proposed building relative to the established appearance of the local area.

- 6.28. Notwithstanding this, the proposal is considered to be of a type and scale appropriate to the size of the settlement, being located within the built-up area of Rochdale, near to the town centre. The site is located in a highly accessible, sustainable location in a residential area, with frequent bus services and other sustainable modes of travel along Manchester Road.
- 6.29. The high sustainability of the location means that, on balance, the proposal is considered to be satisfactory in terms of the expectations of policy C8 for development of community facilities.
- 6.30. The Council's *Ageing and Living Well Market Position Statement (2025-2030)* (MPS) sets out current and projected demand for care home provision, as well as existing provision. The MPS notes that the borough is projected to have a growing elderly population between 2024 and 2034, and that the rate of increase is projected to be greater than the Greater Manchester average.
- 6.31. At present, there are 1495 care home bed spaces, comprising 1121 beds in residential and residential dementia care homes, and 374 beds in nursing care homes, across the borough.
- 6.32. The MPS notes that the numbers of people in the borough with dementia is expected to rise from 2372 in 2024 to 3159 in 2034, and to 3946 in 2044. The MPS notes that the current market in Rochdale provides 100 dementia nursing care home beds and 450 dementia residential care home beds, and that this provision is often in short supply and will continue to reduce in future due to other authorities and care bodies being able to commission services from providers within the borough.
- 6.33. In terms of future provision, the MPS notes that the Council wants (amongst other objectives) to:
- Develop more in-borough nursing beds with the market, recognising the majority of care commissioned is funded by the Council
 - Develop more complex dementia settings with the market
- 6.34. The supporting Design and Access Statement indicates that the proposal has been carefully designed to respond directly to the needs of dementia care residents.
- 6.35. A Care Needs Assessment (CNA) submitted in support of the application sets out the increasing demand for specialist care nationally, in the borough and in Greater Manchester, noting that there is a pressing need for housing for older

people, particularly as older people continue to form a greater proportion of the population.

- 6.36. The aging population will result in an increase in the number and proportion of people with dementia, resulting in greater demand for such specialist care provision. Rochdale is expected to experience the second-highest growth in residents living with dementia by 2040 out of all Greater Manchester boroughs.
- 6.37. The CNA sets out shortfalls in care accommodation identified by Care England and Greater Manchester Combined Authority.
- 6.38. The Council's Adult Social Care (ASC) team has been consulted on the application, and their detailed comments are included above. The ASC team is fully supportive of the proposed development, noting that it would address gaps identified in the MPS, including the need for additional dementia and nursing care capacity, and crisis and respite beds. The comments further note that the scheme has been developed through working closely with the ASC commissioning team and concludes that the proposal will significantly enhance the borough's ability to meet the needs of our aging population.
- 6.39. Public comments on the internal design of the proposal and compliance with Care Quality Commission standards are noted. CQC standards are understood to be a separate regulatory regime (imposed by the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014) and are therefore not considered to be a material planning consideration. Nonetheless the close involvement of the Council's ASC team in the development of the proposed scheme, as set out above, is reiterated.
- 6.40. The MHCLG Housing Delivery Test measurement rule book indicates that communal housing (including care homes) can be counted towards housing delivery. The proposal is therefore relevant to general housing planning policy. The proposed 74 bed care home would equate to 39 dwellings for the purposes of housing delivery in the borough, which would comprise a moderate contribution to the housing targets set out above.
- 6.41. In summary, the proposal will make a significant contribution to identified growing demand for specialist care provision, for which there are shortfalls identified by the Council's own adult social care Market Position Statement, and which is recognised in national planning guidance as being a critical need.
- 6.42. The proposed development will make a significant contribution to achieving the care provision objectives of CS policies C3 and C8, as well as making an equivalent contribution to housing delivery objectives of PfE policy JP-H1.
- 6.43. For the above reasons, the proposal is considered to be appropriate in principle.

Character, Appearance and Landscaping

- 6.44. Core Strategy policy P3 states that high standards of design will be required of new development, including associated landscaping, regardless of location in the borough. P3 also outlines that all new development must “*enhance the borough’s identity and sense of place, by respecting context where it is positive and having regard to the scale, density, massing, height, layout, landscape, materials and access of surrounding buildings and areas in general.*”
- 6.45. CS policy DM1 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.
- 6.46. Places for Everyone policy JP-P1 ‘Sustainable Places’ notes that all development should be consistent with certain key sustainable design attributes, including being distinctive with a clear identity, being visually stimulating, and being socially inclusive.
- 6.47. The application is supported by a Design and Access Statement and a Crime Impact Statement. The Council’s Urban Design Officer and GMP Design for Security were consulted on the application and their comments are summarised above.
- 6.48. The proposal has been reviewed by the Urban Design Officer and their consultation comments are noted above. The proposal went through significant design evolution at pre-application stage, and whilst design improvements were secured, concerns (as with the consultation response now received) were raised about the scale of the building in relation to it’s plot and in relation to the character of the area.
- 6.49. In terms of external treatments and fenestration, the proposal is considered to be well-designed and reasonably attractive as a building in it’s own right. Elements of the design are considered to positively reflect building typologies and materials in the surrounding area. Visual interest would be added by elements including the materials patterns and relief.
- 6.50. Urban Design Officer comments regarding the design of the roof are noted and it is considered that this matter somewhat detracts from the overall building quality.
- 6.51. However, in the specific context of the development site, it remains the view of officers that the scale of building as proposed would be excessive relative to its plot and compared to typical densities in the surrounding area.

- 6.52. Whilst the site is located on a busy main road into the town centre, development in the surrounding area is generally semi-suburban in scale, with buildings generally being two or three storeys in height, and located on relatively generous plots providing a reasonable degree of spaciousness, for instance the Latter-Day Saints Church or the Polish Catholic Centre.
- 6.53. The building as proposed would occupy most of the plot and would be of a much greater overall volume and bulkier in form, particularly compared to the buildings closest to it.
- 6.54. Whilst there are other examples of taller buildings in the vicinity, those closest to the site are only two-storey in height, and in this particular close context it is considered likely that the building would appear prominent and intrusive within the street scene. Larger buildings in the vicinity are less impactful than the proposal would be due to design elements including plot spaciousness and roof articulation.
- 6.55. Whilst the proposal would incorporate some articulation to its main volume and to its roof, this would be limited relative to its overall scale, resulting in a building which would appear significantly more bulky and plain in form, compared to other larger buildings in the vicinity.
- 6.56. For the above reasons it is not considered that the building would satisfy the design expectations of the Core Strategy, of Places for Everyone, or of the NPPF and would not contribute to the improvement of the character of the local area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to local policies and national aspirations for building design and urban design.
- 6.57. Public comments on these matters are noted.

Residential Amenity

- 6.58. The NPPF advises that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land or buildings. Locally, Core Strategy policy DM1 and PfE policy JP-P6 set out planning expectations for the protection of residential amenity.
- 6.59. CS DM1 requires that developments to demonstrate that they “*Do not adversely affect the amenity of residents or users through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy.*”
- 6.60. The “Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development” SPD also sets out guidelines for reducing or omitting the impact of new development on the amenities of residential occupiers.

- 6.61. The proposed building would be a substantial structure in relatively close proximity to a number of neighbour residences, in particular the houses at 15-21 Sparthfield Avenue to the immediate south-west, and nos 181 and 183 Manchester Road to the immediate north-east.

Loss of daylight and sunlight

- 6.62. The application is supported by a Daylight and Sunlight Assessment (DSA) which indicates the extent of loss of sunlight which the adjacent dwellings would experience as a result of the proposed building. The assessment sets out these impacts in relation to Building Research Establishment good practice guidance in relation to provision of daylight and sunlight with regards the future occupants of the proposal and occupants of existing neighbouring buildings.
- 6.63. The assessment indicates that daylight at two side windows at 183 Manchester Road and two rear windows at 15 Sparthfield Avenue would reduce below the minimum level recommended in the BRE standard as a result of the proposal.
- 6.64. It also notes that sunlight at three side windows at 183 Manchester Road would be reduced below the minimum in winter months only, but that these all serve a room which is also served by windows oriented rearwards which would not be impacted.
- 6.65. The DSA also indicates that the proposal would have minimal impacts on sunlight to the outside amenity areas in terms of the BRE standard.
- 6.66. Whilst the proposal does raise concerns in terms of overshadowing and loss of daylight, it is not considered that this could be sustained as a reason to resist the proposal, in light of the proposal's overall compliance with the relevant industry standards developed by the BRE.

Overbearing effects and visual intrusion

- 6.67. In terms of the specific impacts upon the houses to the south-west (15-19 Sparthfield Avenue, odds only), the side elevation of the proposed building would be placed approximately 1.5 metres from the boundary with these properties, and around 15 metres from the rear elevations of the houses, which host windows which are understood to serve habitable rooms (living rooms at ground floor and bedrooms at first floor). The closest part of the building would be three storeys in height, measuring 9 metres to eaves, with a steep roof face pitching away to an overall height of 12 metres. The pitch of the roof would mean that the appearance of the building would be greater than that of a typical three-storey building.

- 6.68. The front section of the building would have a similar impact on the rear gardens of neighbouring houses to the south-west fronting onto Manchester Road, particularly the closest house at no 189.
- 6.69. The houses are oriented away from the site, meaning that the proposal would not have significant impacts upon the interior of these houses, with the possible exception of 189, which has a side-facing first-floor window oriented towards the application site. It has not been possible to confirm whether or not this window serves a habitable room. The building would have a harmful impact on the outlook currently enjoyed from this window, which would be of concern if the window is the sole window serving a habitable room.
- 6.70. Notwithstanding this uncertainty, the proposed arrangement would place the side elevation of the proposed building only 2m from the boundary with no 189 (and would extend along most of the length of the rear garden of no 189), and around 13m from the boundary with the next house, at no 191. Due to the scale of the building, it is considered that the proposed arrangement would result in a harmful level of overbearing to the outside spaces of these neighbouring houses.
- 6.71. In terms of the impacts on the houses to the north, the building would be set further (around 2.4 metres) from the boundary with 183 Manchester Road, with the closest portion of the building to the boundary being similar in scale to that described above. It appears likely that elements of the proposal would be visible in indirect views from windows serving rooms at the rear of no 183. No 183 also has side-facing windows oriented more directly towards the proposed position of the building, comprising three windows at first floor and a bay window at ground floor. It is understood that these windows serve a kitchen, a bathroom and a toilet.
- 6.72. Windows at the rear elevation of no 183 serve a dining room at ground floor and a bedroom at first floor.
- 6.73. In the case of principal windows serving habitable rooms facing onto a two-storey elevation without principal windows, the SPD generally expects a separation distance of at least 14 metres. Where a principal window faces onto an elevation of three storeys or more, the SPD notes that it may be necessary for this minimum distance to be increased to achieve an acceptable relationship.
- 6.74. At 15 metres, the proposed separation distance would only be marginally over the minimum distance which would be expected if the proposed building were two storeys in height. As a three-storey elevation (with a steeply pitched roof adding to the impact of the elevation, closer to that of a four-storey wall), it is considered that the proposed arrangement would not satisfactorily protect the outlook of the adjacent dwellings.

- 6.75. The proximity of the three-storey side elevation to the rear boundary of these properties would also mean that the building would be overbearing on the rear gardens of the adjacent houses. It is considered that the overbearing impact upon the gardens would be significant and harmful to the amenity of these residences.
- 6.76. Retained off-site trees on the boundary with the houses on Sparth Avenue would provide some screening but it is considered that this is likely to be of limited beneficial effect, particularly given the extensive pruning proposed to these trees.
- 6.77. The impact to the dwellings to the north would be more limited. The side elevation of the proposed building would be visible from rear windows of no 183 Manchester Road, and to a more limited degree from rear windows of no 181. It is considered that this arrangement would result in some visual intrusion to the interior of these houses, particularly no 183.
- 6.78. The greater impact upon these two dwellings would be in terms of effects on their outside spaces. The proposed arrangement would place a long three-storey elevation around as close as 2.3 metres (near the foot of the garden) from the side boundary of no 183 and would extend along the majority of the boundary, with a staggered arrangement.
- 6.79. Even taking account of the separation distance from the boundary to the position of the building, this arrangement would result in a significant overbearing effect to the private garden space of no 183. A similar effect would be experienced in the garden of no 181. The side elevation would also be quite prominent from the outside spaces of The Hollies, Hollies Lodge and Sparth Cottage, further to the north.
- 6.80. It is noted that these concerns were raised with the applicant as part of pre-application discussions and reiterated prior to completion of this report.
- 6.81. For these reasons, it is considered that the proposed development would not comply with the expectations of policies DM1 and JP-P6, and the NPPF, for the protection of residential amenity.

Overlooking and loss of privacy

- 6.82. It is noted that the south-west facing elevation has been designed with minimal windows (serving stairwells and fitted with obscure glazing) above ground floor levels facing towards the neighbouring houses, and that this design limits the impacts in terms of overlooking and loss of privacy.

- 6.83. Likewise, upper floor windows on the north-east facing elevation would mainly serve circulation spaces.
- 6.84. However, the proposal also includes the provision of external terraces at first floor height, inset within the building recesses at the north-east and south-west facing side elevations. These are oriented towards the rear gardens of the adjacent houses. The terraces would be accessed from lounge areas which include large windows facing out onto the terraces.
- 6.85. The outside edge of the north-east facing terrace would be positioned roughly 10m from the side boundary with the rear garden of the adjacent property, and the edge of the terrace at the south-west side of the building would be positioned approximately 9.5m from the rear boundary of the rear gardens of the adjacent houses.
- 6.86. The inclusion of these elements at first floor height creates potential for a harmful level of overlooking and loss of privacy at the rear gardens and rear elevations of the adjacent existing homes. It is noted that the submitted landscaping details include tree and hedge planting which could potentially achieve a degree of screening, but from the details submitted it is unclear how effective this would be.
- 6.87. Notwithstanding this, the submitted elevations indicate that both terraces would be enclosed by a tall glass barrier 2 metres in height. Whilst such a design feature is not indicated on the submitted drawings, it is considered that this overall height would allow for the overlooking towards the neighbouring gardens to be prevented by requiring the glazing to be obscured from the base upwards to average adult height, which would still allow some outlook from the adjoining lounges and from the terraces. The applicant has indicated their agreement to this approach in principle.
- 6.88. The front and rear elevations would also include multiple windows at upper levels but owing to the position and proximity of nearby dwellings, it is not considered these windows would result in any material loss of privacy or overlooking effects.
- 6.89. Subject to a condition requiring this obscure glazing of the terrace barriers and windows serving circulation spaces (or further details of the same), it is not considered that any elements of the proposal would result in a harmful level of overlooking or loss of privacy to any of the adjacent residences.
- 6.90. Neighbour comments relating to particular religious requirements for privacy are noted and are addressed at paragraph 6.149 below.

Amenity conclusions

- 6.91. Due to the proximity of the proposed building to the adjacent dwellings and the height and bulk of the proposal, it is considered that it would result in a significant level of harm to the outlook from neighbouring dwellings, and harm in terms of overbearing effects. The harm would be greatest to nos 15, 17, 19, and 21 Sparthfield Avenue and nos 183 and 189 Manchester Road.
- 6.92. For this reason, it is considered that the proposal would not support the objectives of policies DM1, PfE JP-P6, and would not comply with the guidance of the residential design SPD.

Trees

- 6.93. Paragraph 136 of the NPPF notes that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can help mitigate and adapt to climate change, and that planning decisions should ensure that existing trees are retained wherever possible.
- 6.94. CS Policies G6 and G7 set out the Council's expectations in relation to green infrastructure including trees. G6 notes that the Council will protect green infrastructure through measures including expecting development proposals to replace removed trees from development sites at a ratio of 2:1.

On-site trees

- 6.95. The site hosts a number of mature, substantial trees. These include two very prominent trees at the front corner of the site, adjacent to the street and Manchester Road. These are considered to make a contribution to the street scape and form part of the somewhat leafy character of the neighbourhood, characterised by prominent mature trees around buildings on Manchester Road.
- 6.96. The AIA notes that seven mature trees on the site, (two category B, five category C) two groups of smaller trees, and two extents of hedge would be removed to accommodate the development. These removals would comprise most of the existing trees on the development site.
- 6.97. The trees required to be removed are:
- a 17m category B sessile Oak tree and a 16m category B sycamore tree, both located at the front of the site and prominent from the surrounding area
 - four category C cypress trees of up to 11m in height, located at the rear and north-east side of the site
 - a category C rhododendron located in the centre of the rear garden

- 6.98. The taller of trees to be removed are considered to make a notable contribution to the character and amenity of the local area.
- 6.99. Other trees and hedges would also be pruned to accommodate the proposal, including the four protected trees outside the site.

Protected trees off-site

- 6.100. There are also a number of mature trees at the neighbouring properties to the immediate south-west and south-east of the site. Four of these are subject of a Tree Preservation Order.
- 6.101. The constraints plan within the AIA indicates the root protection zones of three of these trees (including T10 and T11) do not, despite their close proximity to the boundary wall, extend into the application site, suggesting that construction of the proposed building would be unlikely to result in harm to the roots of these trees, which could affect their health and longevity.
- 6.102. Despite this, concern was raised during determination about the impact of this arrangement upon the protected trees. In response, an updated AIA was received, together with supporting information describing the ground conditions and extent of roots from the protected trees into the site. An updated note from the applicant's arboriculturalist noted the following:

"It is likely that due to the presence of existing boundary walls, the growth of roots of offsite trees and tree group T6, T10, T11 and G12 into the site will have been prohibited. The RPAs of these trees have been offset from the boundary walls in the plans included in Appendix 4. Therefore, it is anticipated that the roots of these trees will not be impacted by the proposed development."

- 6.103. Following the deferral of the application from the March 2026 planning committee meeting, a detailed tree roots survey report was submitted in relation to certain trees along the south and east (rear) boundaries. The findings of this survey were summarised in an updated Arboricultural Impact Assessment.
- 6.104. The updated details appear to indicate that none of the roots of certain trees within the site boundary (and therefore impacted by the proposal) are significant to the structure or health of the retained trees.
- 6.105. This relates to T6 (off-site to the south, proposed for retention) and G12 (a line of mature trees off-site to the immediate east of the site, and proposed for retention and extensive pruning). Impacts on the roots of G12 were not previously raised as a particular concern, as the building footprint would not intrude into their root protection zone.

- 6.106. However, the updated details do not provide any additional assessment of the extent or importance of roots of the protected off-site trees T10 and T11, which appear likely to be impacted by the footprint of the proposal.
- 6.107. The Tree Officer at GMEU has been consulted on these additional details but no response has been received at the time of report completion. Any further response will be noted in an update report ahead of the committee meeting.
- 6.108. The tree removals plan indicates that a significant portion of the canopies of protected trees T11 (category B) and T10 (category C) would need to be pruned to accommodate the building, as well as a smaller portion of the canopy of protected tree T6 (category B). The AIA notes that the works are relatively minor in nature and should not materially harm the long-term health, appearance or retention value of the trees. Nonetheless, the concerns from the Tree Officer on the pruning works are noted.

Proposed tree planting

- 6.109. The proposed landscaping plan indicates the planting of 11 new trees, comprising six downy birch, two hawthorn, and three cherry trees. Details have only been provided of the maximum theoretical growing sizes of these species in ideal conditions and details of intended growing/maintenance heights have not been provided. It is noted that most of the proposed trees would be in quite constrained positions close to the building, particularly four set closely together in the outside area inset at the south-west side of the building, which might limit the fully grown height of the replacement trees.
- 6.110. In terms of numbers of trees, the proposed planting would replace those to be removed at a ratio of around 1:1.5.
- 6.111. The majority of the proposed tree planting would have limited prominence from public viewpoints (particularly Manchester Road) due to the size of the building and the layout of the site.
- 6.112. Even in terms of numbers of existing and proposed trees, the proposed replacement planting would be inadequate in terms of the 1:2 ratio. The inadequacy of the replacement planting in terms of their eventual contribution to the amenity of the local area is likely to be worsened further by their limited visibility from public viewpoints and by the likely limits to their eventual size due to the layout of the proposed development.
- 6.113. The tree officer at GMEU was consulted on the application and their comments, which address the impact of the proposal upon neighbouring protected trees and the related supporting information, as well as the adequacy

of the proposed replacement tree planting on site, are noted above. These confirm officers' concerns about these aspects of the proposal.

- 6.114. For these reasons, it appears unlikely that the proposed tree planting would adequately substitute for the tree removals in terms of their contribution to the character and public amenity of the local area.
- 6.115. It is noted that advice was provided at pre-application stage on the desirability of the retention and protection of on-site and off-site trees, and that the finalised scheme would be expected to be designed to allow for this.
- 6.116. The proposed scheme would not satisfy the general expectation that new development proposals should retain existing trees wherever possible. The application has not set out any justification for the removal of the existing trees, and the proposed tree replanting does not meet the expectations in local policy for replacing existing trees. The additional information received in relation to the roots of some trees around the scheme does not fully address these concerns raised previously and does not substantially change this conclusion.
- 6.117. For these reasons, the proposed development is considered to be contrary to NPPF paragraph 136 and Core Strategy policy G6 in relation to retention of trees and replacement of removed trees.

Transport, Highways, Access and Parking

- 6.118. NPPF paragraph 116 notes 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. Local requirements for highways safety, transport and access matters are set out in Core Strategy policies DM1, T2, and PfE policy JP-C7.
- 6.119. The application is supported by a Transport Statement (TS) and Travel Plan.
- 6.120. The Travel Plan sets out sustainable transport modes which will be available to staff, residents and visitors to the proposal, and sets out targets for different modes of transport for travel associated with it, with the main objective being to reduce, over time, the number of single occupancy car trips to 39% of trips to the site. This will be achieved through means including promoting cycling, promoting car-sharing, and provision of a travel information pack to staff.
- 6.121. The Transport Statement notes that it is expected there will be no more than 18 employees on-site most of the time, with potential increases up to 22 when cleaners and managers are on-site at the same time.
- 6.122. Adopted parking standards in the Core Strategy require a maximum of one space per four beds, a minimum of one cycle parking space per 40 beds. As

the scheme will provide 74 bedrooms, this equates to a maximum of 19 car parking spaces and a minimum of 2 cycle parking spaces.

- 6.123. The proposal will provide 13 car parking spaces and racks to accommodate 24 cycles, thereby complying with the maximum/minimum standards set out in the Core Strategy.
- 6.124. The Highways Officer and Transport for Greater Manchester were consulted on the application. In response to initial feedback, updated accident data (supplementing that in the TS) and an amended access arrangements drawing were received during determination. These were circulated to Highways and TfGM. Highway's finalised comments are noted above. No further comments were received from TfGM.
- 6.125. Neither consultee has objected to the scheme in terms of effects on highways safety, parking provision, access arrangements or the potential for sustainable travel for future occupants of the building, though advice from TfGM in relation to cycle parking is noted.
- 6.126. Public comments regarding street parking and the potential impact of the scheme are noted, but it given the compliance of the scheme with adopted standards, the sustainable location of the site, and the lack of objection from the Council's highways officer, is not considered that the scheme could be resisted on this basis. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of parking provision.
- 6.127. Further details of secure cycle storage can be secured by condition, as can a Construction Traffic Management Plan and details of the access design to incorporate the cycle improvements on Manchester Road.
- 6.128. For the above reasons, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of impacts on highways safety, access arrangements, and in terms of sustainable travel, subject to the further details to be secured by condition. The application is therefore considered to accord with policies DM1, T2 and JP-C7.

Pollution (Noise, Air Quality, Odour and Light)

- 6.129. Core Strategy policy G9 sets out the Council's requirements approach to all forms of pollution as they relate to new development, including noise, air quality and light.

Noise

- 6.130. The application is supported by a Noise Assessment (NA). The NA assesses existing conditions surrounding the building in terms of the noise environment that future occupiers will experience, noting that road noise is high at the front

of the building. The NIA recommends an upgraded glazing specification to the windows to front and rear of the building would achieve adequate internal noise levels for the habitable rooms, when these windows are closed.

- 6.131. This approach would give rise to ventilation and overheating considerations. Notwithstanding that these matters would be controlled through the building regulations regime, the assessment recommends that approval be on condition that means of preventing overheating and providing ventilation are provided.
- 6.132. The NA also considers potential noise anticipated to arise from fixed plant equipment which is expected to be associated with the proposed development, including kitchen and laundry extraction. The assessment notes that details of these elements are yet to be confirmed, but identifies an appropriate rating sound level for all plant equipment associated with the development, to be secured by planning condition, in order to the noise impact upon neighbouring properties.
- 6.133. The Environmental Health officer (EHO) has been consulted and their comments relating to the noise environment are summarised above. It is considered that the issues raised in terms of the noise environment can be appropriately addressed through the further approval of details of a MHfEV system, via a pre-commencement condition. Otherwise, the EHO's recommendations for conditions to secure details of fixed plant and equipment and mitigation, as well as a construction management plan and lighting details, are noted.
- 6.134. Public comments in relation to potential noise arising from the proposed electrical substation are noted. It is considered that this matter could be appropriately addressed and controlled through the additional details requested by the EHO, to be secured by planning condition.
- 6.135. Public comments in relation to noise arising from the development are noted. Whilst there would be an increase in comings and goings from the site, given the limited numbers of parking spaces at the development, it is not considered that vehicle noise would result in significant disruption to neighbouring residents, particularly in the context of the site location adjacent to Manchester Road.

Odours

- 6.136. Public comments in relation to potential waste odours arising from development are noted. No concerns were raised by the EHO in relation to this consideration, but in any case, it is considered appropriate and proportionate that further details of waste management arrangements should be approved and secured by planning condition.

Air Quality

- 6.137. The application site is located adjacent (and partly within) a linear Air Quality Management Area, running along Manchester Road, resulting from road traffic.
- 6.138. The application is supported by an Air Quality Assessment (AQA) which considers impacts arising from construction dust, road transport emissions, risk of occupant exposure to any existing air quality issues and identifies requirements for mitigation measures relating to the construction phase. These measures could be secured by condition, including by requiring a construction management plan confirming compliance with the recommendations.
- 6.139. The AQA notes that the proposal is not predicted to result in significant road traffic exhaust impacts due to the low numbers of vehicle trips.
- 6.140. The conclusions and recommendations of the AQA are accepted.
- 6.141. For the above reasons, and subject to the conditions set out, it is considered that the proposed development would be acceptable in terms of impacts on nearby residents in terms of nuisance arising from noise and disturbance, lighting, and air quality.

Ecology, Wildlife and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 6.142. Section 15 of the NPPF sets out requirements relating to the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment. This includes a requirement, set out in Paragraph 187, for development to minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity. Core Strategy Policies G6 and G7 set out the Council's expectations in relation to green infrastructure (including trees), ecology and biodiversity. PfE policy JP-G8 sets out similar expectations including for improving habitats.
- 6.143. Under Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021, all new development proposals (with some exemptions) must achieve a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG), to contribute towards improvements to natural habitats.
- 6.144. The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment, a BNG Design Statement Assessment, BNG metric, a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan, and bats and breeding bird surveys. It is also supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Constraints Plan, and soft landscaping proposals, the latter of which are factored into the submitted BNG calculations.
- 6.145. The BNG details, arboricultural information and landscaping proposals were amended and supplemented during determination in response to feedback.

- 6.146. Greater Manchester Ecology Unit were consulted on the application in relation to ecology and BNG, and their advice is summarised above.
- 6.147. Given the nature of the site as an existing residential property, it's development is not considered to give rise to any significant ecology considerations on-site, and the proposed development is not considered to give rise to any significant considerations in relation to off-site habitats or protected sites, both as reflected by the consultation response from GMEU.
- 6.148. The supporting BNG information takes into account the proposed tree removals from the site. The supporting BNG information indicates that off-site BNG units will need to be purchased to achieve mandatory BNG. GMEU have advised, based on the submitted details, that it is realistic that this could be met by off-site units and therefore that the statutory BNG condition could be discharged.
- 6.149. GMEU have also advised that the development should provide on-site biodiversity enhancements in addition to statutory BNG, to be secured by condition. Given the removal of mature on-site trees, it is considered that such a requirement would be reasonable. The recommendation for approval of external lighting to control impacts on bats is also accepted.
- 6.150. For the above reasons and subject to the noted conditions, it is considered that the proposed development would be acceptable in terms of local policies G6, G7 and PfE policy JP-G8 in relation to ecology, wildlife and biodiversity, except in terms of purely arboricultural considerations, as set out in the preceding section.

Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage

- 6.151. NPPF paragraph 182 notes that applications which could affect drainage on or around the site should incorporate sustainable drainage systems to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff, and which are proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal. Local requirements relating to managing surface water, flood risk and protecting water resources are set out in Core Strategy policies G8 and saved UPD policy EM/8.
- 6.152. The site is not within an area identified as being at risk of flooding, including risks arising from rivers, the sea, localised surface water or critical drainage.
- 6.153. The Council's drainage/flood risk officer and United Utilities were consulted on drainage matters and their comments are summarised above. Revised information was submitted during determination to address initial comments from both consultees.

- 6.154. Whilst both consultees had remaining concerns with the revised details, both have indicated that outstanding issues could be satisfactorily resolved through further information to be approved via planning conditions.
- 6.155. Subject to such conditions, it is therefore considered that the proposed development would be acceptable in terms of flood risk and sustainable drainage considerations.

Public Sector Equality Duty

- 6.156. The Council is obliged to have due regard has been had to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which sets out the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who do and do not share a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics include religion.
- 6.157. Comments from the occupants of no 195 Manchester Road (the adjacent house to the immediate north) include that:

The distance between the top windows and the rear elevation of adjacent buildings is well below the general privacy distance of 21m. These windows will have direct views into habitable rooms and gardens. We are Muslims it is essential that we have privacy in our gardens and rooms.

- 6.158. As noted in the amenity assessment, the proposed building will include upper-floor windows oriented towards no 195, but these will only serve hallways and stairs and not habitable rooms, and therefore while views towards no 196 will be possible, in practice it is unlikely that any significant loss of privacy will result. It is noted that the rear garden of 195 is already overlooked by rear windows at the adjoining house no 193 as well as at the existing house on the application site.
- 6.159. In general terms, planning policies seek to protect privacy of residential occupants irrespective of individual circumstances, including protected characteristics. As set out above, in this particular instance, it is considered that approval of the proposed development would protect residential privacy to a satisfactory appropriate degree in planning terms. It is not considered that the occupants of no 195 would be disadvantaged by this decision due to their protected characteristics.

Other matters

- 6.160. A number of public comments received on the application do not relate to material planning considerations. These comments cannot be taken into account in the determination of the application.

- 6.161. This includes the suggestion that the proposed is not intended to be used as a care home but may be intended for other purposes. The application proposes a care home and the application must be determined on this basis. Other potential uses of the building would require a further planning permission, and would be assessed on their own merits.

7. PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1. The proposed development would provide much-needed care facilities on a previously developed brownfield site in a highly sustainable location. The proposed care home development would be beneficial in terms of meeting the borough's needs for care provision as well as in terms of housing delivery.
- 7.2. The scheme would comprise a purpose-designed care home carefully developed, with the input of the Council's Adult Social Care staff, to meet specific care needs, which are identified as being in particular demand in the borough.
- 7.3. The development proposal would result in substantial harm to the amenity of neighbouring residential dwellings, particularly in terms of overbearing effects and visual intrusion. These effects would be most significant to a total of six neighbouring dwellings at the immediate north and south of the application site. Other neighbouring dwellings would also be affected but to a lesser and more indirect extent.
- 7.4. The scheme would potentially result in some loss of privacy to some adjacent residents, although this can be mitigated for through approval of further design details via condition. Notwithstanding this mitigation, the scheme would be contrary to local adopted policy and guidance for the protection of residential amenity.
- 7.5. The scheme would result in harm to the character of the local area due to the loss of substantial and prominent mature trees, which it is considered would not be adequately substituted for by proposed replacement tree planting. It is also considered likely that the scheme would result in harm to the appearance and longevity of protected trees on neighbouring land. The additional details of tree roots submitted following the previous planning committee meeting do not substantially alter this conclusion.
- 7.6. The proposed development would also result in harm to the character and appearance of the local area due to the design characteristics of the care home building, largely resulting from its overall scale and height, massing, and density, compared to these characteristics of existing buildings in the surrounding area. Whilst the architectural character of the building would be sympathetic to established characteristics of the local area (including in terms

of use of facing materials), the overall appearance of the building would mean that the proposal would appear obtrusive in the street scene.

- 7.7. Balancing up these design considerations and the arboricultural effects, it is considered that the harm to the character and appearance of the local area would be moderate.
- 7.8. To summarise the above points, the proposal would result in harm to residential amenity and to the appearance of the local area due to its design and the loss of attractive, prominent trees. These impacts arise mainly due to the overall scale of the development, in terms of its layout relative to neighbouring properties and within its plot, and its height and overall volume. On the matter of the size of the building, the applicant's agent had previously advised that:
- 7.9. *The current scale of the building reflects the minimum amount of development required to support the viable operational requirements of the care home. The scheme has already been through a number of design refinements during the design process which have reduced the overall scale where possible. As such, the proposals now represent a balanced response to both the site constraints and the operational needs of the operator. Any further material reductions to the scale of the building would impact deliverability of the scheme.*
- 7.10. Further to this, following the deferral of the application from the March 2026 committee meeting, the applicant has submitted a financial viability assessment (VA) of the proposed scheme. This concludes that a smaller scheme than that proposed would not be yield sufficient profit for the developer to be financially viable.
- 7.11. Whilst the assessment has not been independently reviewed, the assessment appears to have been prepared in accordance with the usual requirements for viability appraisals and has been undertaken by suitably qualified surveyors.
- 7.12. On the basis of the VA, the applicant's agent has therefore reiterated that a possible alternative scheme, reduced in scale to address concerns in terms of neighbour impacts, loss of trees and appearance, would not be deliverable.
- 7.13. The VA therefore supports the statement made by the applicant's agent set out above, which was previously accepted by officers.
- 7.14. As previously noted, officers are of the view that the extensive design development at pre-application stage indicates that the scale of the scheme has likely already been reduced (in response to feedback in neighbour and design terms) as far as possible without causing the development to be undeliverable. This is confirmed by the VA now submitted.

- 7.15. It is considered that the deliverability of any reduced scheme should be taken into account in weighing up the harms of the scheme against the benefits.
- 7.16. The proposal is considered to be acceptable, and to not result in any significant harm, in terms of highways safety, ecology and biodiversity, surface water management and flood risk, or environmental nuisances.
- 7.17. NPPF paragraph 39 requires local planning authorities to approach planning decisions in a positive and creative way, including by seeking to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. This requirement obliges the Council to weigh up the benefits of the scheme against the harms set out above, in the planning balance.
- 7.18. Cumulatively, the harms identified are substantial. Nonetheless, it is considered that the benefits of the scheme are likewise substantial, and that these marginally outweigh the harms in the planning balance. Balancing up all relevant material planning considerations, it is considered that the proposed development would represent a sustainable form of development.
- 7.19. Officers therefore recommend that planning permission should be granted, subject to a number of conditions. Notwithstanding this recommendation, members are asked to take into account that the scheme would result in clear and material harm in a number of regards, when coming to a decision on the application.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1. It is recommended that the Planning Committee resolves to **GRANT** full planning permission for the redevelopment of the site with a new build care home.

Conditions:

Standard and design

1. Commencement time limit
2. Approved plans inc amended access plan and amended drainage strategy
3. Materials and design details approval
4. Comply with Crime Impact Statement
5. Comply with tree protection details set out in submitted AIA
6. Landscaping implementation timescale

Environmental Control

7. Further contamination investigation, risk assessment and mitigation
8. Noise – alternative MHEV system prior to commencement
9. Comply with noise limit in noise assessment

10. Details of fixed plant and equipment and mitigation measures prior to above ground works
11. Construction Management Plan including noise and dust (complying with AQA) prior to commencement
12. Waste management details prior to occupation

Drainage

13. Approval of full drainage plan prior to commencement
14. SuDS management and maintenance prior to occupation

Transport

15. Transport Plan compliance
16. Construction Traffic Management Plan prior to commencement
17. Cycle parking security details prior to above ground works

Ecology

18. No lighting installed without approval of details (amenity and bats)
19. No works during bird nesting season without survey
20. RAMS for amphibians, hedgehogs and badgers prior to commencement
21. Standard BNG conditions – HMMP, notifications
22. Statutory BNG condition