

Officer Report

Case Reference: PL/2026/0196
Location: Land at Egerton Street (Former New Jerusalem Church), Middleton, M24 4QD
Proposal: Erection of seven residential dwellings (Use Class C3) with associated access works including formation of a new dropped kerb, parking, bin storage, landscaping and private amenity space.
Recommendation: Approve with Conditions
Officer: Nick Brookman

SITE

The site extends to approximately 0.082 ha (820m²) and is rectangular in shape. The site is bound by Walker Street to the north, Egerton Street to the west and Manchester Old Road to the south. The eastern boundary is shared by two residential properties fronting Manchester Old Road and Walker Street. The existing site is currently vacant but was historically occupied by a Sunday School and the New Jerusalem Church.

The site is within a dense urban environment predominantly characterised by two storey, brick-built terraced properties.

The ground levels across the site appear to be relatively even and the site is clear of any mature trees and dense vegetation. The site is currently bounded by heras fencing with an existing brick boundary wall in the south and south west corner.

The site is located within the defined urban area according to the UDP proposals map.

PROPOSAL

The scheme has been amended since original submission with the layout being entirely re-configured following concerns raised by Planning Officers. Further amendments to architectural details, elevations and boundary treatments have also been incorporated.

The scheme consists of 7no. three-bedroom dwellinghouses (2.5 storeys high). All units contain private gardens to the rear and separate car parking spaces (7 in total). Each unit has an approximate gross internal area of 93m². Bin stores to the dwellings are located within the garden area and are suitably sized to local refuse provision.

As proposed, the dwellings would be constructed of brick with slate effect roofs which would incorporate rear facing aluminium faced dormers in the rear facing roof slope as well as integrated solar panels in the south facing roof slopes.

The houses are split into two different blocks which have been positioned to repair the streetscape of Manchester Old Road, Egerton Street and Walker Street.

Access will be achieved directly from Egerton street and Walker Street with pedestrian access to the rear gardens of units gained via a gate on to a footpath which runs along the rear of each property. In terms of level access into individual units, building regulations part M4(2) have been adopted.

A dropped kerb provides vehicular access from Egerton Street to the private courtyard parking with the individual parking spaces defined by the use of permeable block paving. Within the courtyard, brick walls with metal railings create a private enclosure for the residents' gardens.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

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

Local

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SD1 Delivering sustainable development

DM1 General development requirements

SO2 Creating successful and healthy communities

C1 Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places

C3 Delivering the right type of housing

SO3 Improving Design, image and quality of place

P1 Improving Image

P2 Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage

P3 Improving design of new development

SO4 Promoting a greener environment

G1 Tackling and adapting to climate change

G2 Energy and new development

G7 Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

G8 Managing water resources and flood risk

G9 Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability

S05 Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport

T2 Improving Accessibility

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

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

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE)

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan was adopted and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the 9 authorities covered by the plan on 21st March 2024. The following policies are relevant:

JP-S1 Sustainable Development

JP-S2 Carbon and Energy

JP-S3 Heat and Energy Networks

JP-S4 Flood Risk and the Water Environment

JP-H1 Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Housing Development

JP-H3 Type, Size and Design and New Housing

JP-H4 Density of New Housing

JP-G6 Urban Green Space

JP-G7 Trees and Woodland

JP-G8 A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity

JP-P1 Sustainable Places

JP-P2 Heritage

JP-C1 An Integrated Network

JP-C2 Digital Connectivity

JP-C6 Walking and Cycling

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

PREAPP/00058/25 - Proposed mixed use development comprising of 4 residential dwellings fronting Walker Street including EV charging facility accessed from Egerton Street

24/00573/FUL – Erection of a food and beverage pod and bin store together with the installation of 20 EV car charging units and ancillary enclosed electrical substation. Refused.

06/D48382 - Outline application for the erection of one block of 8 apartments – Approved subject to conditions.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways

No objection.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU)

No objection subject to condition.

Greater Manchester Fire Service

No comments received.

Urban Design

Comments received and referred to in the assessment below.

United Utilities

No objection subject to condition.

Land Contamination Officer

No objection subject to condition.

Conservation Officer

Comments received and referred to in the assessment below.

REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of notification were originally sent to the occupiers of surrounding properties on the 29th April 2026.

In addition, two site notices were displayed adjacent to the site on the 21st May 2026.

5 objections were received which raised the following concerns:

Highway safety and traffic

The proposed development would significantly worsen traffic congestion in an area that already experiences substantial vehicle pressure.

The surrounding roads are already heavily used and the addition of further residential dwellings will inevitably increase vehicle movements creating additional congestion, reduced manoeuvrability and increased risks to pedestrians, cyclists and other road users.

Loss of parking for existing residents.

One space per dwelling is not enough.

The introduction of dropped kerbs and new access points would directly remove valuable on-street parking relied upon by current residents.

The development would shift parking burden from the developer onto neighbouring streets rather than adequately accommodating demand within the site itself.

Reduced parking availability would disproportionately affect residents who need to park close to their homes.

Overdevelopment of the site

The proposal represents clear overdevelopment of the site introducing excessive built form into an already densely developed area.

The scale and intensity of development are not appropriate for the location and would place unreasonable pressure on surrounding infrastructure, roads, services and neighbouring properties.

Loss of privacy and overlooking

The development would create an unacceptable loss of privacy for neighbouring residents through overlooking.

Overshadowing and loss of natural light

The scale, height and positioning of the proposed development would create overshadowing and loss of daylight to neighbouring homes and gardens.

Loss of green space and harm to community amenity

The continued erosion of undeveloped and green space within the local area is deeply concerning. Green spaces contribute significantly to wellbeing, biodiversity, visual amenity, and opportunities for recreation, particularly for children and families. The cumulative loss of such land materially harms the quality of the local environment and the land could be better used for the community rather than additional housing.

Trees

The trees removed from the site were subject to a Tree Preservation Order which was ignored.

Character of the area

The proposed development is out of keeping with the established character of the surrounding residential area.

If approved it would contribute to an increasingly cramped and over urbanised environment that is inconsistent with the spacing, appearance and residential character of neighbouring properties.

Pressure on local infrastructure

Additional housing would place further strain on already stretched local infrastructure including road capacity, healthcare provision, schools, drainage and community services.

Residents have seen no meaningful benefit from developer contributions or section 106 money despite continuous expansion in surrounding areas.

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development

The application site is situated within an established residential area of Middleton within the defined urban area, as designated under the UDP Proposals Map. In such locations, the Core Strategy (CS) actively encourages new housing development particularly where there is good access to existing facilities and infrastructure (Policy SP2). This is echoed in Policies C1, C2 and DM1 of the CS. Policy C3 of the Core Strategy seeks to provide a range of housing types to meet different needs, and at densities that make efficient use of land.

Places for Everyone establishes the need for at least 616 net additional dwellings per year in Rochdale to meet the housing needs of the borough. Policy C1 of The Core Strategy seeks to focus housing development on previously developed sites within the urban area, setting a target of 80% of new housing on previously developed land.

Core Strategy Policy C1 also sets out that all new residential development will be expected to comply with the general Development Management criteria outlined in Policy DM1.

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

National Planning Policy S4 sets out that development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the Framework. National Planning Policy L2 paragraph 1c sets out that Substantial weight should be given to the benefits where a development proposal would make better use of vacant and underutilized land and buildings

The application site in this instance is considered to represent previously developed land and Policy C1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy seeks to maximise the potential of previously developed land, including empty homes and buildings, to contribute to the required deliverable five-year supply of land for new homes.

Further to those relevant policies as identified in the Rochdale Core Strategy, relevant policies in Places for Everyone (PfE) have been identified. PfE Policy JP-S 1 sets out that development should seek to maximise economic, social and environmental benefits. Preference should be given to previously developed (brownfield) land. PfE Policy JP-H2 states that there should be a significant increase in the supply of new housing, including, specifically, the supply of low-cost market housing. Furthermore, as set out in PfE Policy JP-H4, new housing should be delivered at a density appropriate for the location reflecting the relative accessibility of the site by walking, cycling and public transport and the need to achieve efficient use of land and high quality design. This scheme would provide 7 new dwellings at a density

appropriate to the local area and the proposed redevelopment of the site for 7 dwellings would fit cohesively within the site context in terms of design and any technical matters.

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

Whilst Rochdale can presently demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, this does not preclude the delivery of additional housing. The need for boosting housing in urban areas is clearly set out in National Policy. Therefore, in this instance, it is considered that the proposal would lead to the provision of much needed and sought after residential accommodation in a sustainable location. The proposed dwellings would assist the Borough in meeting its housing requirements and the proposed development comprises the construction of new dwellings on a brownfield site, with the existing dilapidated land to the rear having a negative impact on the character of the local area.

As such, the proposal is acceptable in principle and in accordance with adopted Rochdale Core Strategy Policies C1 and C3, Places for Everyone Policies JP-S1, JP-H2 and JP-H4, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework. However, the application is additionally subject to an assessment of matters such as amenity, highway safety and the environment to ensure its acceptability.

Heritage

National Planning Policy HE4 sets out that that heritage assets, as an irreplaceable resource, should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

National Planning Policy HE5 requires development proposals affecting heritage assets to be accompanied by an assessment of the significance of the assets affected (including any contribution made by their setting) and of the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is necessary to understand the potential effect of the proposal on their significance.

National Planning Policy HE6 advises that when considering the potential effect of a development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, substantial weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential effect amounts to a positive effect, harm, substantial harm, or total loss of its significance.

National Planning Policy HE7 considers the implications of a development on non-designated heritage assets and confirms that development proposals which would have a positive effect on a non-designated heritage asset should be supported. Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal and a balanced judgement made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. Where a development proposal would cause substantial harm to, or the total loss of, the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, it should only be supported where the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal, having regard to the scale of the harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

In this regard a Heritage Assessment accompanies this application which considers the relationship between the application site and the Grade II listed Church of All Saints War Memorial (List Entry No. 1441215), located approximately 20 metres to the east of the site. The Church has also been identified as a Non-designated Heritage Asset due to its age, architectural interest and communal value. No other Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, or designated heritage assets are present within the immediate vicinity that would be affected by the proposed development.

PfE Policy JP-J2 (Heritage) sets out that particular consideration will be given to ensure that the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester's distinctive identity and sense of place are protected from harm. These include historic town centres, places of worship, historic transport routes including the canal network, industrial buildings and structures including textile mills, farmsteads and other sites, buildings, and areas of identified archaeological, architectural, artistic and/or historic value.

Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings will be considered having regard to national planning policy. Development proposals which will help safeguard the significance of and secure a sustainable future for Greater Manchester's heritage at risk will be supported in principle, provided they are not contrary to national policy or other policies in the development plan. Proposals should be informed, as necessary, by the findings and recommendations of the appropriate heritage assessment(s) in the development plan evidence base and/or any updated heritage assessment submitted as part of the planning application process.

Amongst other criteria, Policy P2 of the Core Strategy sets out that the Council will protect the boroughs heritage by conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets both statutory and non-statutory, including consideration of their wider settings.

In first assessing the site, the existing site makes a very limited contribution to the visual character of the area and it's dilapidated and unkempt state is a currently having a negative influence on the area and surrounding site context. The Council's Conservation Officer was consulted on this application, and they have confirmed that there are no heritage objections to the principle of new terraced housing on the site. The site is within the wider setting of the listed war memorial (although does not contribute to its significance) and the non-designated heritage asset. However, given the scale and nature of the proposal for terraced housing, it is considered that the proposal would not adversely affect the significance of these assets. The proposed development therefore is not therefore contrary to the aforementioned National Planning Policies.

Accordingly, subject to condition, the proposed development is acceptable and in accordance with Policy P2 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, PfE Policy JP-J2 and the NPPF.

Design and Appearance

The NPPF is unambiguous in its stance on the importance of design. National Planning Policy DP3 confirms that development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets.

In accordance with National Planning Policy DP3 2g, development proposals should create visually attractive, distinctive and characterful development to establish or maintain a strong sense of place and pride, including through the use of a coherent palette of materials, design features and planting.

Paragraph 3 of National Planning Policy DP3 also confirms that development proposals should be refused if, without clear justification, they conflict with paragraph 1 of this policy or relevant aspects of the principles in paragraph 2, or with any explicit design standards set out in the development plan (including those in locally specific policies, guides, codes or masterplans). Substantial weight should be given to compliance with relevant development plan policies when assessing the design quality of proposals.

CS Policy P1 sets out that high quality design will be required in all new developments, requiring that under-used land and buildings are re-used and creating people-friendly and safe environments. Policies DM1 and P3 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy require development proposals to adhere to high quality design and 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.

The character and appearance of the surrounding area is predominantly residential with terraced dwellings dominating the street scenes.

The application site is currently an unoccupied brownfield site in a deteriorated state, detracting from the character of the immediately surrounding residential area. The proposed development will inevitably create active frontages along the surrounding street network, improving sense of safety for pedestrians due to natural surveillance and the proposal will appropriately increase the density of the immediate area.

The dwellings themselves and the layout of the development has changed since initial conception of the scheme at pre-application stage. Now, the proposed development positively complements the existing character of the area through its design and appearance. The proposed elevation materials would ensure the development fits in with the character of the existing area and the height and massing of the dwellings is appropriate to its location. The development is not significantly taller or inappropriately bulkier than any of the adjacent or surrounding dwellings.

The dwellings have been re-designed to provide high-quality elevations with the introduction of mock chimneys, brick detailing, stone cills and headers with the addition of stepped horizontal brick detailing at ground floor level and the provision of proportionate fenestration and window openings. Projecting brick entrances and stone headers have been provided to all front doors introducing a high quality design feature.

As a whole, the language established in the elevations is clear and legible, and applying a limited palette of materials to the building strengthens the scheme's robustness. The same brick should be used across the elevations for all brickwork.

There is no precedent UPVC or door colour in the vicinity of the site as a mixture of colours are used. Nevertheless, grey is proposed to be incorporated into the scheme here and in the Officers experience, anthracite grey UPVC dominates as being the most popular colour choice for UPVC windows at present amongst new developments and it is considered by Officers that this choice of colour tends to overly dominate buildings. A lighter tone colour on all the aforementioned elevation treatments, such as agate grey / RAL 7038 for example would significantly reduce that dominance whilst also providing a much more modern and aesthetically encouraging appearance.

Further detail and negotiation on materials will be secured by condition but the same brick should be used across the elevations for all brickwork and slate must be used as the roof material.

It is noted that the proposed rear dormers are appropriately placed on the rear facing roof slopes of both blocks facing into the courtyard. The dormers are subservient to the roof slope and they do not dominate the roof ridges.

The proposed boundary treatments to delineate the proposed curtilages are appropriate for the proposed scheme and would not appear out of character for a development of this nature. The proposed boundary treatments appropriately define the proposed curtilages of all dwellings and their location ensures that an appropriate amount of recreational garden space remains available for each dwelling.

All proposed dwellings have a dedicated bin store provided within the rear curtilage and each property has access from the street to the rear of their property allowing the presentation of bins for collection.

Solar panels would be integrated into the south facing roof slopes.

The Council's Urban Design Officer has been consulted on the proposed development and they have been influential in how the scheme has transformed to its current proposal. Accordingly, subject to condition they have no objection.

Overall, the proposed development creates a visually attractive, distinctive and characterful development which established and creates a strong sense of place and pride through the introduction of a high quality development comprising the use of a coherent palette of materials and key design features in full accordance with NPPF Policy DP3 (g).

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

Occupier and Neighbour Amenity

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

National Planning Policy P3 confirms that development proposals should be appropriate for their location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, whether these effects are on or off-site; and whether this is as a result of the development itself or the product of preexisting conditions in its vicinity.

National Planning Policy P3 2b sets out that development proposals should not give rise to, or contribute to, an unacceptable level of access to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring residents and occupiers, or unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site. Adverse impacts of this nature should be avoided where possible, or else mitigated to an acceptable degree.

The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document '*Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development*' contain a number of guidelines and requirements for the design and layout of new housing in order to preserve the amenity standards for surrounding residents. Included within the above document are the expected space standards for new residential development:

- 21 metres between directly facing principal windows of habitable rooms, at an upper floor level and 10.5m between a principal window at an upper floor level and a directly facing boundary of the curtilage;
- 14m between a principal window and any directly facing two storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room;
- 10m between a principal window and any directly facing single storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room.

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

Objections raised concerns regarding overlooking and impacts on privacy are noted and duly considered. In an assessment against the above guidance, the front elevations of Units A-D would be located at least 10m away from the front elevations of existing properties on Walker Street whilst the rear elevations of

Units E-G in the south would be located over 21 metres from the front elevations of properties on Manchester Old Road.

Whilst the distance between Units A-D and existing dwellings on Walker Street does not meet the above stated guidance, the separation distance proposed would be similar to the existing urban grain and density of the surrounding residential environment. This in itself would be compatible with the SPD.

The distance between the two proposed terrace blocks would be approximately 21m.

It is also important to consider the existing window in the first floor side elevation of No 656 Manchester Old Road which was also referred to in the Urban Design Officers original comments. As mentioned above, the layout has been re-designed since submission and this is a result of this window as it previously would have provided a significant impact on overlooking across the rear gardens of the proposed dwellings. The layout of the site has now been amended to address those concerns but the new layout has now placed the gable elevation of Unit G approximately 4.6m away from 656 Manchester Old Road. The existing window in the side of No 656 Manchester Old Road has been in situ since at least 2008 and using Zoopla online, Planning Officers have ascertained that this window serves the first-floor bathroom and the window appears to be obscure glazed in any case.

In addition, using evidence from Google Street view in 2008, the Former New Jerusalem Church before it was demolished was much closer to the gable elevation of No 656 Manchester Old Road than proposed Unit G will be as part of the new development.

Accordingly, in this instance, owing to the benefit of the amended site layout, it is not considered that the privacy of the existing residents of future occupiers of the development would be compromised by the proposed separation distances.

Occupier Amenity

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

The Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) is a technical standards document produced by the Government to ensure internal space within new dwellings is sufficient for future occupiers. Additionally, in accordance with PfE Policy JP-H3 (Type, Size and Design of New Housing), it is a requirement for all new dwellings to comply with the nationally described space standards and be built to the accessible and adaptable standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations unless specific site conditions make this impracticable. These standards can be found here and any future development must adhere to the space standards: [Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/technical-housing-standards)

The Nationally Described Space Standards state in order to provide one bed space, a single bedroom must be at least 7.5sqm in area and at least 2.15m wide. In order to provide 2 bed spaces, a double bedroom must have a floor area of at least 11.5 sqm. On review of the submitted proposed floorplans, the proposed development complies with and exceeds the minimum requirements set out within the NDSS for overall gross internal floor area for 3 bedroom 4 person dwellings across 3 storeys. Each bedroom would also meet the prescribed space standards for bedroom size.

The dwellings would be built to the accessible and adaptable standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations.

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

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

In addition, the reasonable needs of occupiers would need to be met, and these needs are considered to cover both functional and recreational requirements proportionate to the size of the household, taking into account the surrounding context. On reflection of the proposed layout, whilst the proposed garden sizes differ between the 7 plots, the proposed residential garden areas surrounding the proposed dwellings are appropriate to the existing character of the area where terraced dwellings dominate.

In addition to the onsite provision, due to the sites sustainable location there are opportunities to access other outdoor public amenity spaces within close proximity of the site and further afield. Alkrington Woods Nature Reserve is also within walking distance of the application site.

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

Noise

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

National Planning Policy P3 confirms that development proposals should be appropriate for their location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, whether these effects are on or off-site; and whether this is as a result of the development itself or the product of preexisting conditions in its vicinity.

National Planning Policy P3 2b sets out that development proposals should not give rise to, or contribute to, an unacceptable level of access to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring residents and occupiers, or unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site. Adverse impacts of this nature should be avoided where possible, or else mitigated to an acceptable degree.

National Planning Policy P3 2d also confirms that development proposals should mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise, not result in levels of noise exposure which would have a significant observed adverse effect, and maintain the character of tranquil areas.

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

Policies DM1 and G9 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy seek to ensure that new development is compatible with surrounding land uses, both in terms of its impact upon those uses and the impact of the surrounding land uses upon the amenities of future residents / users, also requiring that development does not have impacts that lead to an unacceptable increase in air, water, noise, light or other pollution.

The resulting scheme by its very nature would not cause any significant impacts in terms of noise and disturbance and within the context of the surrounding area, it is not considered that the use of the application site 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. The proposed residential use would neatly align with the existing uses in this area.

Environmental Health were not consulted on this application but a condition is imposed requiring the development to be built to achieve internal noise limits in order to safeguard the amenities of the future

occupiers and to prevent nuisance arising in accordance with Places for Everyone Plan Policy JP-P1, Core Strategy Polics G9 and DM1, and the NPPF

Accordingly, the scheme would be considered acceptable in terms of amenity in accordance with Policy G9 and DM1 and the Council's Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

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

PfE Policy JP-G8 seeks to deliver a net enhancement of biodiversity resources through a collective of measures which are broadly aligned with the approach to BNG outlined within the Environment Act (2021), the NPPF and supporting guidance documents. The provisions of the Environment Act in respect of BNG are now a statutory requirement for planning applications and so the proposed development should achieve net gains for biodiversity in accordance with National Planning Policy N2.

National Planning Policy N2 sets out that if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for, then the development should be refused.

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

The Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) were consulted on this application and they have set out that the site lacks suitable habitat for any protected species and is not physically linked to any high value habitats. The site provides very low cover for species such as hedgehog and there are no invasive species recorded on site. Whilst a small area of bramble has now formed on site, this patch is very small. The applicant is therefore 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 birds nest is suspected work should cease immediately, and a suitably experienced ecologist employed to assess how best to safeguard the nest(s).

In regard to BNG, the GMEU have set out that:

BNG applies and a metric has been provided that only includes the baseline habitats.

- This has included some habitat degradation owing to four trees being present on the 2020 aerals. These appear to have been large lime trees that were felled prior to 2020 and then allowed to regrow before being cut back for a second time. I therefore accept that whilst originally large trees, they were better classed as four small trees when finally removed.*
- I do not however accept that the majority of the site is best described as modified grassland in good condition. The site was never actually grassland, the habitats having developed on vacant and derelict land. Whilst I accept that the site no longer would qualify as derelict land owing to the vegetation cover now exceed 70%, in terms of NVC it is better regarded as variant of one of the OV habitats that fall under other neutral grassland within BNG. As this an atypical site however it would automatically fail essential criteria A and therefore I would the best fit as other neutral grassland in poor condition. Therefore, whilst a moderate value habitat, this would reduce the actual baseline score.*

It is noted that 10% net gain cannot be achieved on site and the applicant will need to pursue the use of off-site areas to achieve a 10% gain, and if this is unsuitable, units will be purchased from an off-site habitat bank and the GMEU would have no objection to this.

As suggested by the submitted Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, the applicant will be purchasing the required habitat units from an off-site provider. The applicant will now need to provide information on where the units are being purchased and evidence that they have an agreement to purchase them. This will be required as part of the process when the applicant applies to discharge the statutory biodiversity gain condition.

No condition or legal agreement will therefore be required to control the on-site measures, with no HMMP required for on-site measures to discharge the statutory gain condition. Just the Biodiversity Gain Plan and the final version of the metric will be required.

In addition to off-site BNG, in accordance with the aforementioned policies, the provision of on-site biodiversity enhancements will be subject to condition and these enhancements could include integration of bat or bird boxes.

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

Drainage

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

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

National Planning Policy F8(1) states that development proposals which could affect drainage on or around the development site should incorporate sustainable drainage systems to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff, in ways which are proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal. The systems employed should provide multifunctional benefits where possible, facilitating improvements in water quality, biodiversity and amenity.

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

United Utilities were consulted on this application and they raised no objection subject to condition.

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

Land Contamination

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

The application is not accompanied by any Phase 1 Risk Assessment or Intrusive Site Investigation.

Nevertheless, it has been confirmed through consultation with the Council's Environmental Protection team that this matter can be dealt with by a suitably worded condition.

Therefore, subject to condition, the proposed development is acceptable with regards to CS Policy G9 and the Framework.

Highways

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

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

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

National Planning Policy TR6 paragraph 4 states that development proposals should be refused if they would have a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts), or an unacceptable impact on highway safety; taking into account any mitigation measures proposed as well as any wider network improvements, including measures to support sustainable patterns of movement. This applies both during the construction phase and following completion.

The development is not considered to have an adverse impact on highway safety and would not generate a level of additional traffic which would have a detrimental impact on the safe and efficient operation of the immediate local highway network, or strategic routes. Parking is provided at 100% which is below the maximum, and whilst it may contribute to a degree of on-street parking, this is a well-established arrangement within the vicinity of the site. Highways Services have raised no objections and the development is considered acceptable in accordance with CS Policies T1 and T2, Policy JP-C8 of PfE and the NPPF.

Crime Impact

Policy P3 of the CS requires all new developments to incorporate design measures that design out crime and ensure developments and spaces are safe to use and access. Similarly Policy DM1 requires all development proposals to minimise opportunities for crime against people or property.

The application site is currently dilapidated and unoccupied. The proposed development will not negatively impact crime and the continuing regeneration of the area to provide formal and well cared for properties will likely have a positive influence on the aesthetics of the area and the fear of crime as well as reducing opportunities for crime as a whole.

Accordingly, Planning Officers consider that the proposed development has been considered to minimise opportunities for crime and the development is appropriately designed with natural surveillance.

Energy and Sustainability

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

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

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

Greater Manchester's vision is to be at the forefront of action on climate change and to make its fair contributions to international commitments by becoming a carbon neutral city region by 2038. To meet this target, PfE endorses the following commitments:

- Be carbon neutral by 2038
- Hold cumulative carbon dioxide emissions to without the carbon budget
- Initiate a programme of mitigation to reduce emissions including by:
 - o Significantly upscaling solar photovoltaic energy;
 - o Reducing heat demand in homes;
 - o Moving away from carbon intensive gas as the primary source of heat;
 - o Reducing heating and cooling demand for public and commercial buildings;
 - o Increasing biofuel use;
 - o Enable sustainable choices for travel and decarbonise transport;
 - o Significantly upscaling building retrofit; and
 - o Increase the delivery of nature-based solutions and biodiversity net gain.

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

In this instance, the application is not accompanied by an Energy and Sustainability Statement. However, in line with current policy objectives and in the interest of encouraging a transition to a low carbon emission and energy network in accordance with CS Policies G1 and G2 and PfE Policy JP-S2, the applicant proposes to incorporate GSE integrated 'in roof' solar panels into the proposed south facing roof slopes of each dwelling as demonstrated by Drawing No 2913-URB-B2-ZZ-DR-A-208700 Rev P01.

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

Conclusion:

The application relates to a previously developed brownfield site.

The proposed development would provide 7 new terraced dwellings in a highly sustainable location which is accessible via non-car travel modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport links.

As a matter of principle, a development of this type and nature is acceptable and accords with the planning framework and wider strategies for the borough.

The proposed development would support a viable redevelopment to provide much needed housing provision to Middleton and the borough as a whole. There is a strong link between economic growth, regeneration, and the provision of residential accommodation and it is believed that the proposed development would fulfil that objective without any material harm to the character and function of the area.

As set out in this report, the form and design of the development is considered acceptable for the site given its specific context and character. Careful consideration has been given to the siting, scale and appearance of the development together with potential impacts through the construction phase on nearby residents and businesses to ensure it is high quality, sustainable and minimises any impacts.

It is therefore considered that subject to the conditions included below, the development as a whole is acceptable and in accordance with the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, PfE and the NPPF, the proposed development is recommended for approval.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

Condition(s) (11)

- 1 The development must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and documents hereby approved:
 - Location Plan as existing Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208900 Rev P00
 - Location Plan as proposed Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208901 Rev P03
 - Site Block Plan as existing Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208902 Rev P00
 - Site Block Plan as proposed Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208903 Rev P03
 - Site Plan as proposed Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208904 Rev P03
 - Floor Plans as proposed Block 1 Units A, B, C and D Drawing No 2913-URB-B1-ZZ-DR-A-208150 Rev P03
 - Elevations as proposed Block 1 Units A, B, C and D Drawing No 2913-URB-B1-ZZ-DR-A-208250 Rev P03
 - Colour Elevations as proposed Block 1 Units A, B, C and D Drawing No 2913-URB-B1-ZZ-DR-A-208251 Rev P03

- Floor Plans as proposed Block 2 Units E, F and G Drawing No 2913-URB-B2-ZZ-DR-A-208150 Rev P03
- Elevations as proposed Block 2 Units E, F and G Drawing No 2913-URB-B2-ZZ-DR-A-208250 Rev P03
- Colour Elevations as proposed Block 2 Units E, F and G Drawing No 2913-URB-B2-ZZ-DR-A-208251 Rev P03
- PV Panel Details Drawing No 2913-URB-B2-ZZ-DR-A-208700 Rev P03
- Bin Store as proposed Drawing No 2913-URB-BS-ZZ-DR-A-208701 Rev P03
- Site Elevations as proposed 1 of 2 Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208250 Rev P03
- Site Elevations as proposed 2 of 2 Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208251 Rev P03
- Boundary Treatment Elevations as proposed 1 of 2 Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208252 Rev P03
- Boundary Treatment Elevations as proposed 2 of 2 Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208253 Rev P02
- Site Sections as proposed Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208350 Rev P03
- Design and Access Statement Dated 1st September 2026 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DA-A-2A3750-P04 Rev P04
- Transport Statement Dated February 2026 Version 1
- Biodiversity Net Gain Statement Dated 24th October 2025 Issue 2.0
- Heritage Statement Dated 24th March 2026
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Dated 7th October 2025

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

- 3 No development shall take place until an investigation and risk assessment (in addition to any assessment provided with the planning application) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment shall investigate the nature and extent of any contamination on the site (whether or not it originates on the site). The assessment shall be undertaken by competent persons.

The submitted report shall include:

- i) a survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination
- ii) an assessment of the potential risks to:
 - o human health,
 - o property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland, and service lines and pipes,
 - o adjoining land,
 - o groundwaters and surface waters,
 - o ecological systems,
 - o archaeological sites and ancient monuments;
- iii) where unacceptable risks are identified, an appraisal of remedial options and proposal of the preferred option(s) to form a remediation strategy for the site.

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

No part of the development shall be occupied until a verification report demonstrating that the approved remediation has been implemented has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Further investigation will be necessary prior to commencement of any building or engineering works on site.

- 4 Prior to the commencement of development, details of a sustainable surface water drainage scheme and a foul water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage schemes must include:

- (i) An investigation of the hierarchy of drainage options in the National Planning Practice Guidance (or any subsequent amendment thereof). This investigation shall include evidence of an assessment of ground conditions and the potential for infiltration of surface water in accordance with BRE365;
- (ii) A restricted rate of discharge of surface water agreed with the local planning authority (if it is agreed that infiltration is discounted by the investigations);

(iii) Levels of the proposed drainage systems including proposed ground and finished floor levels in AOD;

(iv) Incorporate mitigation measures to manage the risk of sewer surcharge where applicable; and

(v) Foul and surface water shall drain on separate systems.

The approved schemes shall be in accordance with the National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (2025) or any subsequent replacement national standards. Prior to occupation of the proposed development, the drainage schemes shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Drainage infrastructure will need to be implemented prior to commencement of above ground works and a scheme therefore needs to be agreed in advance of the same.

- 5 Notwithstanding any description of materials in the application, no above ground works shall take place until samples and full specifications of all external facing materials to be used in the approved elevations have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works shall be undertaken strictly in accordance with the details as approved and retained as approved thereafter. For the avoidance of doubt, these details should relate to brick type, windows, doors, roof materials and all other elevation materials.

For the avoidance of any further doubt, a sample panel of the agreed brickwork (minimum size 900mm x 900mm) to be used in the proposed elevations shall also be made available to view on site.

A sample of the proposed window frame and roof tile must also be made available to view on site.

For the avoidance of doubt, the proposed roof material should be slate.

Reason: In order to ensure use of appropriate materials which are sympathetic to the character of the area and in the interests of visual amenity and to comply with the requirements of Core Strategy Policies P1 and P3 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 6 Notwithstanding any description of materials in the application, no above ground works shall take place until samples of all ground surfacing materials to be used externally within the communal areas and parking forecourt hereby approved, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure use of appropriate materials which are sympathetic to the character of the area and in the interests of visual amenity and to comply with the requirements of Core Strategy Policies P1 and P3 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 7 No part of the development shall be occupied until all corresponding boundary treatments have been erected in accordance with the approved details as set out within the approved Boundary Treatment Plans referenced:

- Boundary Treatment Elevations as proposed 1 of 2 Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208252 Rev P03
- Boundary Treatment Elevations as proposed 2 of 2 Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208253 Rev P02

For the avoidance of doubt, the proposed 1.8m high hedge as shown on Boundary Treatment Elevations as proposed 2 of 2 Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208253 Rev P02 shall be a native species.

All boundary treatments shall thereafter be retained in accordance with the approved details at all times.

Reason: To ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped and in the interests of visual amenity and to comply with the requirements of Core Strategy Policies P1 and P3 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 8 No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until a scheme of biodiversity enhancements has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such measures shall include, but not be limited to, the provision of bird boxes, bird bricks, bat boxes and bat bricks to be integrated to the fabric of the buildings hereby approved. The duly approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to final occupation of the phase of development hereby approved.

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

- 9 The development hereby approved shall be constructed to achieve the following internal noise levels:

- i. 35 dB(A) Leq (1 hour) in the bedrooms with windows shut and other means of ventilation provided between 7 am and 11pm;
- ii. 30dB(A) Leq 5mins in the bedrooms with windows shut and other means of ventilation provided between 11pm and 7am;

iii. 35 dB(A) Leq (1 hour) in the living room/s with windows shut and other means of ventilation provided between 7 am and 11pm;

iv. 40dB(A) Leq (1 hour) in other habitable rooms with windows shut and other means of ventilation provided at all times;

No part of the development shall be occupied until such time as a verification report has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to confirm that the above ventilation and acoustic measures have been implemented to achieve the required maximum noise levels. The noise attenuation measures shall be retained as installed thereafter.

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

- 10 The development shall not be fully occupied until all vehicle parking spaces as shown on Site Plan as proposed Drawing No 2913-URB-ZZ-XX-DR-A-208904 Rev P03 have been provided and clearly marked out in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The parking spaces shall be kept available for residents parking at all times thereafter and they shall not be used for any other purpose.

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

- 11 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), or any equivalent Order following the revocation and re-enactment thereof, the development hereby approved shall not be altered or extended, and no buildings or structure shall be erected within their curtilage under Schedule 2, Part 1, Classes A, AA, B, D, E, of the above Order.

Reason: To prevent overdevelopment of the approved development and undue harm to the amenity of existing and future occupiers and in the interest of visual amenity and in accordance with Policies P3 and DM1 adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and Policy JP-P1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Approval Reason(s) (1)

The proposal complies with the development plan and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. It therefore comprises sustainable development and the Local Planning Authority worked proactively to issue the decision without delay.

Informatives (1)

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

1

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

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

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

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

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

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

The matters are:

- (a) information about the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat and any other habitat;
- (b) the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat;
- (c) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat;
- (d) any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development and the biodiversity value of that gain in relation to the development;
- (e) any biodiversity credits purchased for the development; and

(f) any such other matters as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify.