

Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council -
Development Control
Smith Street,
Rochdale,
OL16 1XU

Reference: PA-0011180/01
Customer reference: PL/2026/0735
15 September 2026

Outline planning application (with all matters reserved other than access) for the construction of two industrial units (Use Classes B2 and B8) together with ancillary office space (Use Class E), with supporting loading bays, trailer bays, trailer park spaces, parking spaces, landscaping, infrastructure and other associated works

Land to the north east of Birch Business Park, Heywood

Dear Nick Brookman,

Thank you for consulting us on the above application, on 26 August 2026.

Environment Agency position

Whilst we have no objection to the development, we would like to draw your attention to the following informative comments.

Advice to the applicant

Environmental permit – Flood risk activities

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit or exemption to be obtained for any of the following activities:

- erecting any temporary or permanent structure in, over or under a main river, such as a culvert, outfall, weir, dam, pipe crossing, erosion protection, scaffolding or bridge
- altering, repairing or maintaining any temporary or permanent structure in, over or under a main river, where the work could affect the flow of water in the river or affect any drainage work
- building or altering any permanent or temporary structure designed to contain or divert flood waters from a main river
- dredging, raising or removing any material from a main river, including when you are intending to improve flow in the river or use the materials removed

- diverting or impounding the flow of water or changing the level of water in a main river
- quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
- any activity within 8 metres of the bank of a main river, or 16 metres if it is a tidal main river
- any activity within 8 metres of any flood defence structure or culvert on a main river, or 16 metres on a tidal river
- any activity within 16 metres of a sea defence structure
- activities carried out on the floodplain of a main river, more than 8 metres from the river bank, culvert or flood defence structure (or 16 metres if it is a tidal main river), if you do not have planning permission (you do not need permission to build agricultural hay stacks, straw stacks or manure clamps in these places)

For further guidance please visit [Flood risk activities: environmental permits - GOV.UK](#) or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or by emailing enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk.

The applicant should not assume that a permit will automatically be forthcoming once planning permission has been granted, and we advise them to consult with us at the earliest opportunity.

Advice to the applicant and Local Planning Authority

Biodiversity net gain

The application site requires the watercourse unit module to be applied. In line with Statutory Biodiversity Metric, if the red line boundary intersects with the riparian zone the watercourse module is required. The Watercourse Unit Module is applied to the following features: priority rivers; other rivers and streams; canals; ditches and culverted sections of these features.

For rivers and streams, completion of the Watercourse Unit Module is required when a watercourse is on-site, or the watercourse bank top is within 10m of the red line boundary. For ditches, the Watercourse Unit Module is applied where the bank top is located within 5m of the red line boundary. Please note, the adjacent lengths of watercourse must also be included even if the channel itself is not within the site red line boundary.

The Watercourse Unit Module should only be applied to culverts that lie within the red line boundary. The Environment Agency does not wish to be reconsulted on the Watercourse Unit Module.

Foul drainage

Foul drainage should be connected to the main sewer whenever it is feasible to do so. Where this is not possible, under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 any discharge of sewage or trade effluent made to either surface water or groundwater will need to either comply with [General Binding Rules for Small Sewage Discharges](#) or comply with a permit issued by the Environment Agency, additional to any planning permission that may be required. This applies to any discharge to ground, inland freshwaters, coastal waters or relevant territorial waters. Further information about the permitting process can be found at [Septic tanks and sewage treatment plants: what you need to do](#).

Further advice is available at: [Septic tanks and treatment plants: permits and general binding rules](#)

If you have any questions regarding our response, please contact spplanning.rfh@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Fisher,
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