

APPLICATION REPORT – FUL/355703/26
Planning Committee – 19th August 2026

Registration Date: 12th February 2026
Ward: St James

Application Reference: FUL/355703/26
Type of Application: Full

Proposal: 1) Conversion of lower ground (storage) and ground floors into Class E (office). 2) Alterations to existing store frontages. 3) Conversion of first floor (residential) into a 5 bed house in multiple occupation. 4) New rear access staircase.

Location: 45 - 49 Ripponden Road, Oldham, OL1 4EW

Case Officer: Sophie Leech
Applicant: Mrs Faiza Mushtaq
Agent: Gamble King and Noone Limited

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application has been referred to Planning Committee for determination in accordance with the Council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegation because the Applicant has declared they are a relative of Councillor Kamran Ghafoor.
- 1.2 Members will recall that this application was deferred at the previous committee meeting that took place on 8 July 2026. This was because members asked for additional information and clarity to be provided in respect of other known HMOs in the vicinity of the application site to better inform the consideration of the application. This information is now set out in Section 10 of the report.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the application be approved subject to the conditions set out in this report, and that the Assistant Director Planning, Transport & Housing Delivery shall be authorised to issue the decision.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The site relates to 3no commercial units located at 45-49 Ripponden Road, Oldham. The site is located within a predominant mixed-use commercial/industrial area and is not within but sited directly adjacent to Business Employment Area 10 (Greenacres). In addition, there are also some residential properties nearby at Ripponden Road, Shrewsbury Street and Vulcan Street. Opposite the site also lies Littlemoor House residential tower block.
- 3.2 The site is unallocated by the Local Plan Proposals Map.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The application seeks planning permission for the conversion of the lower ground (storage) and ground floors into Class E (office), alterations to existing store frontages, conversion of the first floor (residential) into a 5-bed House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), and a new rear access staircase.
- 4.2 The schedule of HMO accommodation is as follows:
- Bedroom 1: 11.99m² (single room)
Bedroom 2: 14.21m² (single room)
Bedroom 3: 11.27m² (single room)
Bedroom 4: 12.50m² (single room)
Bedroom 5: 13.49m² (single room)
- 4.3 The Class E (office use) is proposed at ground floor and basement level. This will provide 7 offices, along with a meeting room and kitchen and WC facilities. Units 45 and 47 benefit from existing front roller shutters which will be retained and unit 49 will benefit from new roller shutters.

5. PLANNING HISTORY

- 5.1 PA/055951/08 - Proposed alterations to shop and living accommodation – Approved 20.02.2009

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

- 6.1 The adopted Development Plan is the Joint Development Plan Document (Local Plan) which forms part of the Local Development Framework for Oldham. In addition, the Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Plan which was adopted in March 2024 forms a material consideration in the assessment of planning proposals.
- 6.2 The following policies are considered relevant to the determination of this application:
- Local Plan Policy 1 - Climate Change and Sustainable Development;
 - Local Plan Policy 3 – An Address of Choice;
 - Local Plan Policy 9 - Local Environment;
 - Local Plan Policy 11 – Housing;
 - Places for Everyone Policy JP-S2 - Carbon and Energy;
 - Places for Everyone Policy JP-P1 - Sustainable Places;
 - Places for Everyone Policy JP-G8 - A Net Gain to Biodiversity and Geodiversity;

7. CONSULTATIONS

CONSULTEE	FORMAL RESPONSE
Environmental Health	Formal response received. Raise no objection subject to conditions relating to soundproofing.
Highways	Formal response received. Raise no objection subject to cycle storage condition.

8. PUBLICITY AND THIRD-PARTY REPRESENTATIONS

- 8.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement, the application has been advertised by neighbour notification letters.
- 8.2 In response, no comments have been received.

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL

9. PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 9.1 The existing ground floor units have operated within Class E uses for over 10 years (including a bicycle shop and offices for a dog-grooming and care company). The continued Class E use at ground-floor level is therefore considered acceptable.
- 9.2 The introduction of a new Class E office use at basement level is also acceptable given the site's accessible location and the provision of pedestrian access to the rear. The existing plans show that the first floor has been used for residential purposes, possibly as a single flat, however there is no recorded planning history for this.
- 9.3 The site is sustainably located in close proximity to key services and public transport options and is considered to be acceptable in principle having regard to the requirements of Local Plan policies 3 and 5, and PfE Policy JP-P1.
- 9.4 Overall, the proposed development is considered acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with all relevant local and national planning policies which are addressed in the later sections of the report.

10. HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 Policy 11 of the Oldham Local Plan (2011) states that Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on:
- the character of the local area;
 - the residential amenity of existing and future occupants, or the amenity of nearby workplaces; and
 - traffic levels or highway safety.
- 10.2 The policy further requires all residential development to be appropriate to its surroundings, accessible to public transport and key services, and aligned with the Council's wider objectives for the area.
- 10.3 In assessing whether the introduction of an additional HMO would harm the character of the area, it is useful to utilise the policy tool proposed within the draft policy within the Publication version of the council's new Oldham Local Plan (approved by the council for submission for examination in March 2026). The draft policy supports HMOs where they do not result in an undue concentration of such uses and advises that planning permission may be resisted where HMOs would account for 10% or more of properties within a 50m radius of the application site, measured from its centre point. Whilst no material weight can currently be attributed to the emerging policy (as it has

not yet been subject to examination) the 50m radius assessment is a useful indicator when considering whether the proposal would contribute to an unacceptable concentration of HMOs in the immediate locality under the current adopted policy.

- 10.4 Council monitoring data (baseline May 2025) identifies one existing HMO within the 50m radius of the application site. Therefore, based on the nine properties captured within this radius, HMOs currently represent approximately 11% of the housing stock. However, this figure should be treated with caution given the small sample size. Furthermore, the nearby residential tower block at Littlemoor, located on the opposite side of Ripponden Road, falls only partially within the radius, with the vast majority of the building outside the radius, including the entrances to the building. It therefore has not been included as within the radius.
- 10.5 Expanding the assessment area to a 75m radius provides a more representative picture, including capturing Littlemoor tower block. Within this wider area there are 83 properties, including the application site, with the existing HMO stock in that radius accounting for only 1% of properties.
- 10.6 Having regard to the above, the proposed HMO would not materially alter the character of the surrounding area, which is on a main road frontage with many different types of residential and commercial accommodation nearby. The development would therefore not result in an over-concentration of HMOs, with the proposal representing only the second such use within a 50m radius of the site.
- 10.7 The proposed layout and accommodation would provide an acceptable standard of living for future residents. There is no substantive evidence to suggest that the use would give rise to unacceptable levels of noise, disturbance, traffic generation, or other impacts detrimental to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would also make effective use of the existing building stock and contribute towards meeting local housing needs through the provision of flexible and affordable accommodation.
- 10.8 Consideration of residential amenity and highway safety is set out further below.

11. DESIGN AND APPEARANCE

- 11.1 Policy JP-P1 Sustainable Places of the Places for Everyone Plan (2024) states that all development, wherever appropriate, should conserve and enhance the natural environment, landscape features, historic environment and local history and culture; enable a clear understanding of how the place has developed; and respect and acknowledge the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used.
- 11.2 The proposed alterations to the shop frontages will enhance the appearance of the site, as the existing frontages do not positively contribute to the street scene. The three units will be provided with matching glazed shopfront designs, creating a more visually consistent frontage. No roller shutters are proposed, which further supports an active and attractive street presence.
- 11.3 Minor alterations are proposed to the windows and doors at the rear of the building. The existing basement openings, which currently contain roller shutters will be removed. These changes are minimal in nature and are considered acceptable.
- 11.4 Two of the units currently benefit from existing roller shutters on the front elevation facing Ripponden Road. It is proposed to replace these shutters and install new

shutters to the third unit. However, no details have been provided regarding the design or siting of the shutters, and therefore the imposition of a condition requiring this information to be submitted and approved prior to installation is considered appropriate.

- 11.5 A new external metal staircase will be installed to provide access to the HMO. This will be positioned toward the rear of the building and will not be readily visible from public viewpoints. Its simple metal design ensures that it will not significantly detract from the character of this mixed-use area. Overall, the proposed development is considered acceptable and complies with Policy JP-P1.

12. RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 12.1 Policy 9 of the DPD sets out that the Council will protect and improve local environmental quality and amenity by: ensuring development does not cause significant harm to the amenity of the occupants and future occupants; by ensuring there is no significant harm on neighbouring privacy and outlook, and lastly by ensuring there is no significant loss of light.
- 12.2 Policy 11 of the Oldham Local Plan (2011) states that houses in multiple occupancy shall not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal does not adversely affect the local character of the area, the level of residential and workplace amenity of future and neighbouring occupants, and traffic levels and the safety of road users.

HMO Standards

- 12.3 The submitted plans indicate that five bedrooms are proposed at first-floor level. The layout has been assessed against the Council's *HMO Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation* (October 2010). The proposed arrangement demonstrates that all bedrooms meet the relevant minimum space standards.
- 12.4 Matters relating to kitchen and cooking facilities fall under the requirements of the HMO licensing process administered by the Council's Licensing Team. Notwithstanding this, the proposed kitchen/dining area shown on the plans complies with the relevant standards.

Amenity of Occupiers of the Development

- 12.5 The site includes a narrow strip of land adjacent to the gable end, which will be paved to provide adequate pedestrian access to the rear of the property and the HMO entrance. This arrangement is considered acceptable, as the principal access route will run from the main road to the rear of the site. The width of the access path is sufficient to ensure it does not feel enclosed or constrained.
- 12.6 During the site visit, it appeared that this route is already used informally for pedestrian access to the rear of the buildings, likely serving existing residential uses. The ground-floor Class E use is located directly beneath the proposed HMO bedrooms.
- 12.7 Environmental Health have recommended a soundproofing condition to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers of the residential floor. However, the lawful use of the ground floor is already an unrestricted Class E use so any activities falling within this use class could operate without further planning control. As such, imposing a soundproofing condition is not considered to be justifiable in this context.

- 12.8 The basement storage area forms a new Class E use, but it is separated from the residential accommodation by one floor. Any future change of use within Class E such as to a shop or salon would therefore be unlikely to result in significant noise or disturbance to HMO residents. On this basis, the amenity of future occupiers in relation to noise and activity associated with Class E uses is considered acceptable.

Amenity of Future & Neighbouring Occupiers

- 12.9 Neighbouring uses are primarily located within the designated Business Employment Area, which is characterised by commercial and industrial activities. The existing terrace also accommodates a mix of uses. The introduction of residential accommodation in this location is considered acceptable, given the degree of separation from the wider business area and the fact that residential use already exists at first-floor level within the terrace. It is therefore considered that the proposals would not be detrimental to the character of the area.
- 12.10 There is no further reasonable mitigation that could be imposed to address potential industrial noise, as any such activity would already affect existing residential occupiers. Should any significant noise issues arise from nearby commercial or industrial premises, these would be addressed through separate regulatory channels, such as Environmental Health investigating noise complaints. Lastly, the existing commercial and industrial neighbours would not be significantly affected by the proposals, given the small-scale nature of the development and the limited level of activity associated with it.
- 12.11 The proposal includes the installation of external security lighting and CCTV to ensure that occupiers of the HMO have safe access to the rear of the site. Although the rear is already used by pedestrians accessing the back of the terraced row, the introduction of five residential bedrooms increases the intensity of use. As a result, it is considered necessary to provide appropriate safety measures to protect future occupiers.
- 12.12 A condition will therefore be imposed requiring all external lighting and CCTV to be fully installed and operational before any residents occupy the HMO bedrooms. The condition will also require that these safety measures are retained and maintained for the lifetime of the development
- 12.13 The proposed Class E use is not considered to give rise to any residential amenity issues for those occupying above bedrooms due to the existing relationship of Class E and residential use on site. The Class E uses themselves will also be adjacent to other Class E uses at ground floor which is considered acceptable.
- 12.14 Given the above assessment, the proposed development complies with Policy 9.

13. PARKING AND HIGHWAY SAFETY

- 13.1 The development site does not benefit from any off-road parking, however, is in a central location with frequent public transport links to Oldham and surrounding towns.
- 13.2 The Council's Highways Engineer has raised no objections to the scheme. A condition has been recommended for secure cycle storage to cover the proposed development, of which is accepted. The condition will apply to the commencement of the HMO as the Class E use is already lawful at ground floor. Accordingly, the proposed development is not considered to result in any severe impact on the highway network or be detrimental to highway safety, in accordance with Policy 9.

14. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

- 14.1 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF requires that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan), amongst others.
- 14.2 In addition, the effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that development may not begin unless a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and the planning authority has approved the plan. However, there are exemptions to the legislation which apply in some certain cases.
- 14.3 This development is exempt from the requirements of Biodiversity Net Gain as the proposed development consisting of the pedestrian access to the rear of the building is under 25sqm.
- 14.4 As such, it is considered that the proposal complies with Local Plan Policy 21 and PfE Policy JP-G8.

15. ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 15.1 Policy JP-S2 (Carbon and Energy) requires new development to promote the retrofitting of existing buildings with measures to improve energy efficiency and generate renewable and low carbon energy, heating and cooling. The policy states that development proposals should set out how this has been achieved in an energy statement in accordance with the energy hierarchy.
- 15.2 A condition will be included on the decision for this energy statement to be provided prior to occupation of the first apartment. This will ensure that the development has sought to maximise reductions in carbon emissions in line with relevant policy targets within the Greater Manchester Net Zero Guidance.

16. CONCLUSION

- 16.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable on the basis that it is in accordance with relevant policies contained within the Places for Everyone Plan (2024) and the Oldham Local Plan (2011) and meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 16.2 Therefore, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions listed below:

17. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

1. The development must be begun not later than the expiry of THREE years beginning with the date of this permission. REASON - To comply with the provisions of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. The development hereby approved shall be fully implemented in accordance with the Approved Details Schedule list on this decision notice. REASON - For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and specifications.
3. No roller shutters shall be installed on any part of the building until full details of their design, materials, colour/finish, method of fixing, and siting have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details. REASON - To ensure a satisfactory appearance in the interests of visual amenity and the character of the area having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.
4. No occupation of any of the HMO bedrooms shall take place until the scheme for external security lighting and CCTV covering the side and rear access and communal external areas, as shown on plan ref: P06 has been installed in full and made operational. The external lighting and CCTV shall thereafter be retained, maintained in good working order, and kept operational for the lifetime of the development. REASON - To ensure safe access for all occupiers and to protect residential amenity having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.
5. Prior to occupation of the residential development hereby approved, an Energy Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved Energy Statement. REASON: To ensure the development contributes to the reduction of carbon emissions and promotes sustainable development, in accordance with Policy JP-S2 (Carbon & Energy) of the Places for Everyone Plan (2024).
6. The use of the house in multiple occupation shall not commence until a scheme for the provision of secure cycle parking has been implemented in accordance with details which shall have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved facility shall remain available for users of the development thereafter. REASON - In order to promote sustainable means of travel having regard to Policies 5 and 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.
7. Prior to first operation of the new use, one bat or bird boxes shall be installed on each elevation of the building. REASON - To achieve a net gain to biodiversity having regard to Policy JP-G8 (A Net Gain to Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Places for Everyone Plan (2024).

SITE LOCATION PLAN (NOT TO SCALE):

