



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 May 2025

by **N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/25/3362173

64 Birchfield Drive, Rochdale, OL11 4NY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Shabnam Ahmed against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/01150/HOUS.
 - The development proposed is a 1.5 storey side extension including front and rear dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this case are the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area; and its effect on the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers of Number 62 Birchfield Drive, with regards to outlook and daylight.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a link detached bungalow that has been extended to the rear and has an attached single storey garage to the side. It is situated within a residential area characterised by the presence of largely detached bungalows, as well as a pair of semi-detached two storey dwellings and occasional link detached bungalows.
4. Dwellings tend to be set back from the road behind front gardens and/or parking areas and have gardens to the rear. The presence of gardens, trees and planting and the general absence of front boundary features other than occasional low walls or planting, results in a notably spacious and green character. This sense of spaciousness is further enhanced by the presence of gaps between dwellings and in the case of link detached dwellings, gaps at first floor level above single storey flat-roofed links.
5. Further to the above, during my site visit I observed that many dwellings in the area appear similar in built-form, with a predominance of bungalows with attached single storey garages or converted garages to the side. Occasional extensions, including dormer extensions, tend to respect gaps between dwellings and appear in keeping

with host dwellings and their surroundings. This affords an attractive sense of uniformity to the area.

6. The proposed development would incorporate a flat-roofed first floor rear extension that would extend to the appeal dwelling's shared boundary with Number 62 Birchfield. The height, width and volume of this element of the proposal would result in it appearing unduly large and box-like and when seen from the rear, out of proportion with the appearance of the host dwelling and that of its link detached neighbour, No 62.
7. Further, in extending across to the shared boundary at first floor level, the proposal would severely erode the existing gap above the single storey link between Nos 62 and 64 and I find that this would be detrimental to the area's spacious qualities.
8. In addition to the above, the proposal would, due to its scale, volume, unusual box-like form and its immediate proximity to No 62, appear unduly cramped and "squeezed onto" its plot. In this way, the proposal would appear incongruous in its surroundings and detract from the area's uniform attributes.
9. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework; to Core Strategy¹ Policies DM1 and P3; to Places for Everyone² Policy JP-P1; and to the Council's "Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development" Supplementary Planning Document (2016), which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

Living conditions

10. The proposal would project to the rear at two storey height along the shared boundary with No 62 and its height, projection and the immediacy of the proposal would result in it "looming" above the rear of No 62 to an overbearing degree.
11. The effect of this would be particularly discernible from No 62's rear garden, from where the proposed development would draw the eye as a large and dominant feature.
12. I also consider that further harm would arise as a result of the proposal, due to its height, projection and immediate proximity, inevitably reducing the amount of natural daylight reaching No 62's adjoining rear-facing window, most notably during the winter months.
13. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposal would harm the living conditions of the occupiers of Number 62 Birchfield Drive, with regards to outlook and daylight, contrary to Core Strategy Policies DM1, G9 and P1; and to Places for Everyone Policy JP-P1, which together amongst other things, seek to protect residential amenity.

¹ Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy (2016).

² Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (2024).

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR