

URBAN DESIGN CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Design Officer	Azhar Kapadi
Date	24.07.24 16.04.25 Comments Set 2
Application Reference	24/00522/HOUS
Address	Dean Cottage , Dean Bank Drive, Rochdale, OL16 4RW
Proposal	Conversion of existing rear outbuilding together with two storey extension with juliet balcony to form additional living space, including single storey link to host dwelling following demolition of existing detached garage. Resurfacing of existing driveway and alteration to fenestration on rear elevation

Introduction

The [National Design Guide](#) sets out the ten characteristics of a well-designed place. Well-designed places have individual characteristics which work together to create its physical **Character**. The ten characteristics help to nurture and sustain a sense of **Community**. They work to positively address environmental issues affecting **Climate**. They all contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#).

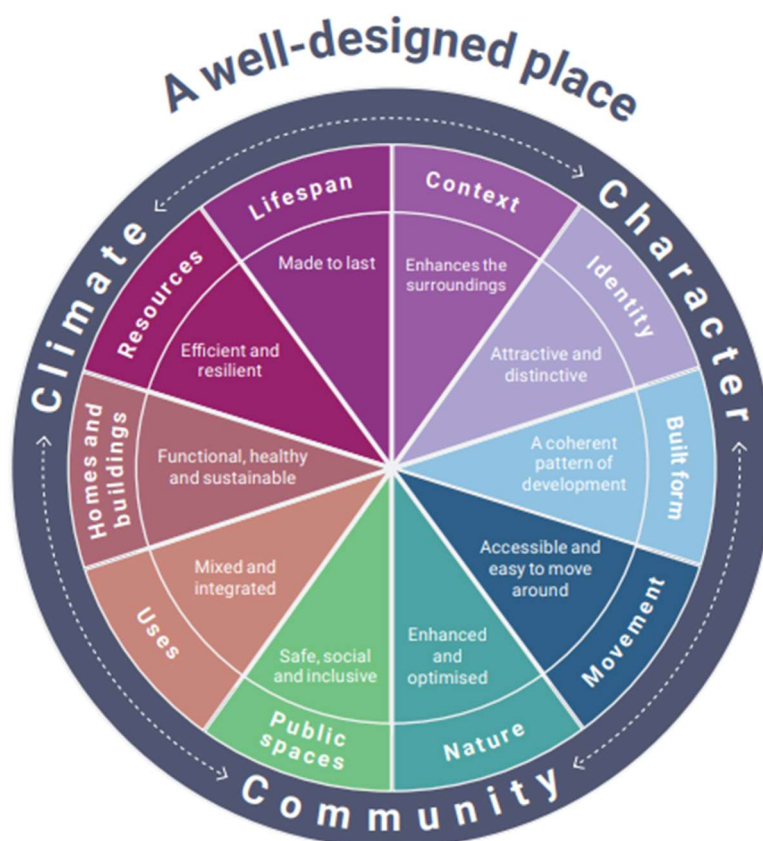


Figure: The ten characteristics of a well-designed place

Source: National Design Guide, 2021
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Reason(s) for Consultation

Building / Urban design

Scheme Image(s)



Source: Application submission

Assessment

This assessment has been made against:

National Guidance:

- The National Planning Policy Framework
- The ten characteristics of a well-designed place contained within the National Design Guide
- National Model Design Code
- Building for a Healthy Life design toolkit

Local Policy:

- Rochdale Core Strategy policies:
 - S03 – To improve design, image and quality of place
 - P2 – Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
 - DMI (General Development Requirements)
- Supplementary Planning Documents:
 - Oldham and Rochdale Urban Design Guide

The Unitary Development Plan

- G/H/I - Housing;
- G/BE/I - Design Quality;

ORIGINAL CONSULTATION - Original Comments for superseded scheme kept in for reference.

SUMMARY

Concerns made in the previous consultation persist. The extension is disproportionately large, detracting from the character and appearance of the original Dean Cottage. Its excessive scale and lack of architectural quality undermine the integrity of the Victorian property. The design of the extension falls significantly short of the architectural standard set by the original building, further emphasizing its unsympathetic nature. To address these issues, the extension should be reduced in size, and it would be preferable to carry through the original building's floor-to-ceiling height into the extension. This would enhance both the proportions and placement of the windows. I am unsupportive of the proposal that has been submitted.

Incomplete application

The proposed front elevation appears to be included in the heritage statement but not provided separately. This is a fundamental drawing that needs to be reviewed. Show the extension accurately as it has been greyed out to suggest it is set back much further than it really is.

Scale / Massing

The width of the extension on the southwest elevation exceeds that of the original dwelling. Extensions should be subservient to the existing building, especially when the property holds significant architectural merit and character. The development must be of an appropriate scale and design to ensure it does not compete with or overpower the original structure—something the current proposal fails to achieve.

Policy

Please refer to previous comments on policy. Context is further emphasised in the Local Authority Residential Design Guide SPD; the scale of new development should be appropriate and sensitive to its context.

Design

The proportions of the windows and the architectural detailing are inconsistent with those of the original building. The garage, in particular, dominates the extension and draws attention away from the character of the existing dwelling. It will be challenging to incorporate materials and architectural details in this part of the design in a way that remains sympathetic to the original structure. I recommend reducing the overall width of the extension, including the garage, and lowering the height of the two-storey element to one or one-and-a-half storeys. Continuing the generous floor-to-ceiling heights from the original house into the extension would allow for more appropriately scaled fenestration, helping the new design better reflect the character of the existing building. At present, the proposed windows are noticeably undersized in comparison to those of the original cottage.

The proposed southeast side elevation demonstrates weak design, with clashing architectural styles. The single-storey link could be greatly improved and has the potential to become a striking glazed feature that sensitively connects the two larger building elements—taking cues from successful modern additions to historic buildings. This could serve as a strong architectural transition between the two volumes.



Many of the concerns raised during the previous consultation regarding materials and detailing remain relevant. Please refer back to those comments as they continue to apply.

ORIGINAL CONSULTATION 24.07.24

SUMMARY

The proposal seeks to create a scale and form of development that contravenes the existing built form. The appearance and character of the Victorian property is undermined by an extension that is excessive in scale and wanting in architectural quality. Without showing the front elevation drawing, it is assumed the south west wing creates an inharmonious visual relationship to the host property.

Further consultation is required concerning materials as there are concerns that this will be incongruent to the older brickwork of the original property.

I am unsupportive of this application as it stands.

Site

The application relates to a substantial Victorian property set in its own grounds off Dean Bank Drive, accessed from Oldham Road. Originally this would have been one building but over time this has been divided into two separate dwellings (North Dean and Dean Cottage).

Over time, North Dean has had a series of extensions, the latest in 2000 and 2009 respectively, which have affected the character of the building. It has also inadvertently influenced the type of additional works that could take place in the future for Dean Cottage.

Building Character

Despite the alterations made to the original building, the property is an asset to the urban character of the area. Along with the Victorian property of Dean Bank, there is a strong case that these two properties are recommended for NDHA classification.

Dean Cottage is a building demonstrating positive architectural character and we must strive to ensure that the heritage of this building is not further lost with unsympathetic extension works. The conservation officer is able to advise further on this, but my first instinct was how we protect the best features of the building in any future development. The next step would be to getting a development that is the correct scale and design, as to not compete or dominate the original building.

Policy

Regardless of whether this building is listed, planning policy still requires developments to be well designed; the NPPF Paragraph 135 requires developments to function well and add to the overall quality of the area, over the lifetime of the development. In order for any extension works to be compliant they should be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history. Similarly P2 of the Rochdale Core Strategy underscores the need to 'protect and enhance the borough's character'. P3 requires buildings to contribute positively to the townscape, and to be well proportioned. Buildings and spaces should be designed 'so that quality and appearance can be maintained over time.' Context is further emphasised in the Local Authority Residential Design Guide SPD; the scale of new development should be appropriate and sensitive to its context.

Spatial Organisation

Whilst acknowledging the needs of the applicant for further space in difficult personal circumstances, the proposal should still be assessed against policy and with longevity in mind. I am unconvinced that an extension of this size is justified not only through design but also through the area footprint. Excluding the second floor plan, the new extension adds four bedrooms to the original dwelling. The small existing kitchen

is justified increasing in size with a direct connection to the utility and new dining area. The additional sitting room and enlarged workshop are optional extras that have meant increasing the footprint of the building outwards to the right considerably. Similarly the habitable spaces on the floor above can be rationalised and still provide a generous number of bedrooms to the property. The numerous extensions and changes to North Dean and Dean Cottage are gradually declining the character of the site.

DESIGN

Scale / Massing

The proposal seeks to create a scale and form of development that does not relate to the existing built form. In the first instance, the designer must provide a drawing of the front elevation of the existing building. I would recommend this includes both Dean Cottage and North Dean. The proposed south west elevation should then include the existing building at the forefront. Not being able to see the south west elevation in context is misleading. This will demonstrate if the scale/massing of the two storey element is suitable and if the character of the original building is being compromised.

My concern is that by virtue of scale and massing, the extension is excessive and over dominant. The two storey building is competing with the original dwelling. The length of the building exceeds the original dwelling distorting the character of the original property. Despite being set back from the front façade, the building may be read as a continuous block owing to the scale. I feel to overcome this, the building requires an interval to cease this extensive run of construction. The extension to the right hand side needs reducing.

The issue of materials could also further clash with the original building. There is a significant likelihood that this development will negatively impact the existing building and the character of the area. I am unconvinced this will be a sympathetic or sensitive addition, even if subservient.

Further landscaping to the front of the should be considered to try mitigating this concern.



Kitchen Link

The single storey kitchen link is simpler to tackle. Roof windows facing North Dean should be omitted as this will prevent overlooking. Sufficient light will still reach the kitchen area from the windows and the roof windows on the opposite orientation.

Preserving the large, arched window to the rear is welcomed as this is an important feature in preserving the character of the building.

Design detailing

The design undermines the local character / distinctiveness of the Victorian properties in the area. The designer would benefit from studying the original property further and taking stronger design cues into the new proposed works. Whilst some features are not possible to replicate or reinterpret, the design can certainly improve to reference architectural features i.e. arched windows are a prominent feature in the existing building but there are only a handful in the extension, segmented return quoins could be referenced further, cornice detailing is essentially a painted timber fascia and this is a quite poor interpretation of the stone corbel cornices.

Timber framed windows are proposed in the extension and this is welcomed.

The brickwork detailing will be extremely difficult to match and further risks relegating the architectural quality of the scheme. Please consult this further with myself and the conservation officer. Please specify what the feature brickwork will be.

The elevations are too busy and could benefit from some relief. An example of this is the south east elevation which is populated with windows and a balcony. There is a good example of recessed brickwork in a window outline to the existing rear elevation. The workshop and bedroom no.1 will still benefit from natural light and views and there is potential to use the money saved here on other parts of the development i.e. better architectural detailing.

I have significant concerns that the scheme going forward could be further delegated in design quality. Conditions should be carefully worded and managed to ensure details and build quality are not further downgraded.

