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191 Wardle Road
Wardle
Rochdale

PLANNING STATEMENT & GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

PROPOSED TWO STOREY SIDE & SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION

Introduction

This planning statement and green belt assessment has been written to support the associated Planning application for the above property.

The assessment will look to provide an overview of the site, its location and significance within the allocated green belt space as well as assess the proposal and any impact on the area and green belt while referencing relevant Planning Policy set forth by the Local Authority.

Site Analysis

The site is located along Wardle Road in Wardle, Rochdale. The site consists of a semidetached property sited >2m above road level and set back from Wardle Road by >8m. The property faces a wooded area densely populated by trees and shrubs bounded by an old dry stone wall. The site forms one of two semidetached properties located between 2 large detached properties of significantly altering design with a considerable space either side of the semidetached block. The proposal site is in line with material aesthetics in the area with the overall design of the semidetached block being somewhat in contrast with the detached property line the proposal site belongs to. The site offers a car parking area surrounded by brick retaining walls inset into the front yard area which previously provided a single garage structure.

Planning Policy

RMBC provides guidance to developments within the Green Belt. A number of Local and National policy aids in the design of developments in the green belt as well as provides guidance to restrict inappropriate development on sites belonging to the green belt.

As per RMBC Unitary Development Plan (2016), policy G/D/2 outlines that the Green Belt will be protected from inappropriate development in order to maintain the framework of open land separating and surrounding the urban areas of the borough.

Additionally, Core Strategy policy G4 seeks to restrict development within the Green Belt to the limited types of development which are deemed appropriate by national planning policies unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Paragraphs 143 and 144 of the NPPF state that, as with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 145 of the NPPF indicates that "a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt", subject to the following exceptions:

- *a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;*
- *b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;*
- ***c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;***
- *d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;*
- *e) limited infilling in villages;*

- *f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and*
- *g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:*
 - *– not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or*
 - *– not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.*

Therefore, the main consideration in assessing the principle of development is whether the proposed scheme constitutes inappropriate development within the Green Belt and, if so, whether very special circumstances have been demonstrated which may outweigh the presumption against development.

In respect of the above policy guidance, Section 5.20 of the of the Council's adopted 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development '(2016) Supplementary Planning Document states that normally, in principle, extensions that result in up to a 35% increase in floor space or volume over and above the original dwelling would normally be considered appropriate and not disproportionate (this calculation would include previous extensions to the original dwelling, which is defined as the dwelling as it was first built or as it stood on 1 July 1948). However, the guidance goes on to state that the characteristics of properties and proposals will vary significantly and there may be instances when a 35% increase would be considered disproportionate and other occasions when a greater than 35% increase may be considered proportionate.

Paragraph 79 of the NPPF also states that "the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence".

Proposal

The proposal looks to provide a two-storey side extension to the host dwelling to form new living space to the property. The proposal looks to maintain a significant gap between the host dwelling and 189 Wardle Road. In addition to extensions, the existing old retaining wall facing Wardle Road would be removed to allow for a graded driveway to the side of the dwelling similar to that of 189 Wardle Road.

The existing dwelling has been left dormant for a number of years and as such is in desperate need of development including internal refurbishment in order to reestablish a comfortable living environment. The inclusion of extensions enables improved internal arrangement of the dwelling as well as providing a 4th bedroom which is desperately needed for the new owners.

Pre Application Meeting

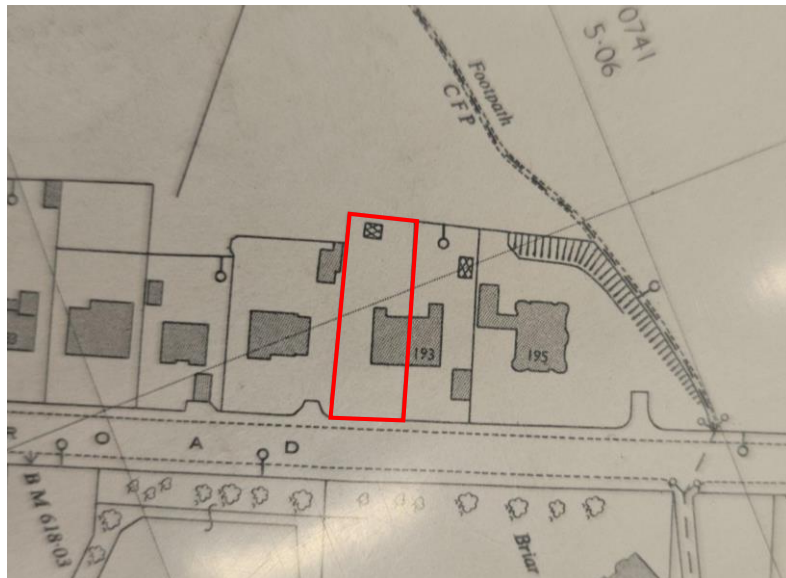
During September 2023, a meeting was held between Planning Officers at RMBC, the client and agent (JCA) which aimed to rectify previous refused proposals and provide solutions that would enable a successful resubmission moving forward.

During the meeting, it was acknowledged that other applications within the area had been submitted and approved that proposed greater than 35% volume and floor space increases and that any new application should work towards being in line with the 35% policy as close as possible.

Lastly, during the meeting a discussion took place to establish the 'original' areas of the dwelling. As evidenced by the below historic image and the historic site plan, the current kitchen outrigger forms part of the original dwelling.



1967 Site Image



1956 Site Plan

On site photographs indicate that the outrigger has previously been refaced and that the side of the outrigger had been extended slightly to be in line with the original side bay window. On site investigation indicates that the rear face of the existing outrigger has not been extended from the original outrigger, this is evidenced by existing drainage runs below the existing patio not being altered or diverted which would be required where the rear of the original outrigger extended. During the September meeting, the above was put forward to RMBC Planning Officers whom confirmed they would accept the rear of the outrigger as it stands would be considered original. With the above in mind, the below diagram illustrates the existing original areas of the dwelling which are to be

Assessment

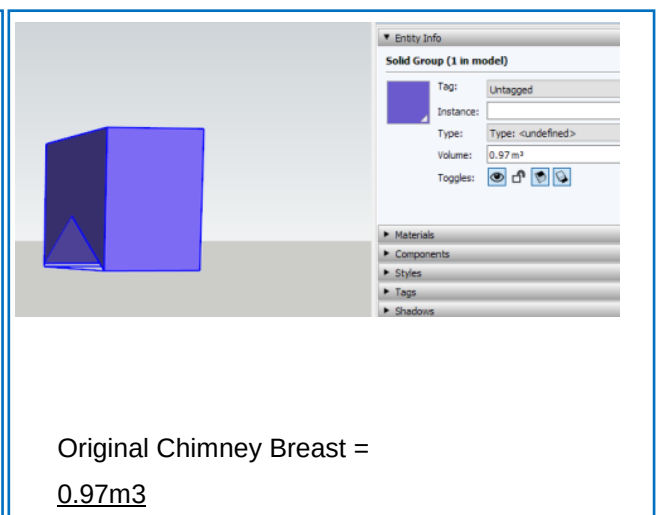
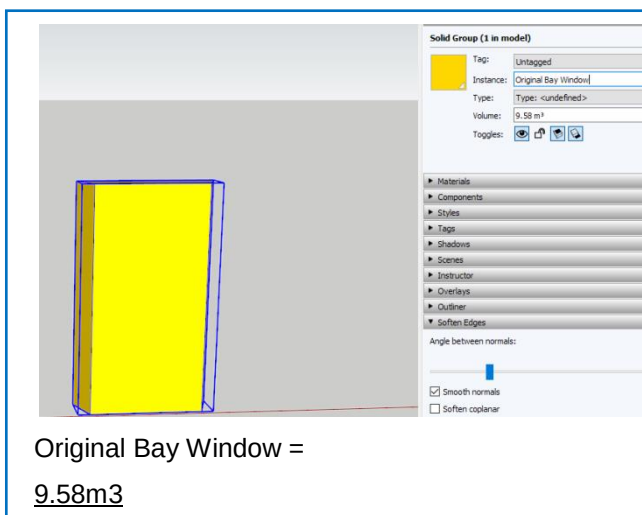
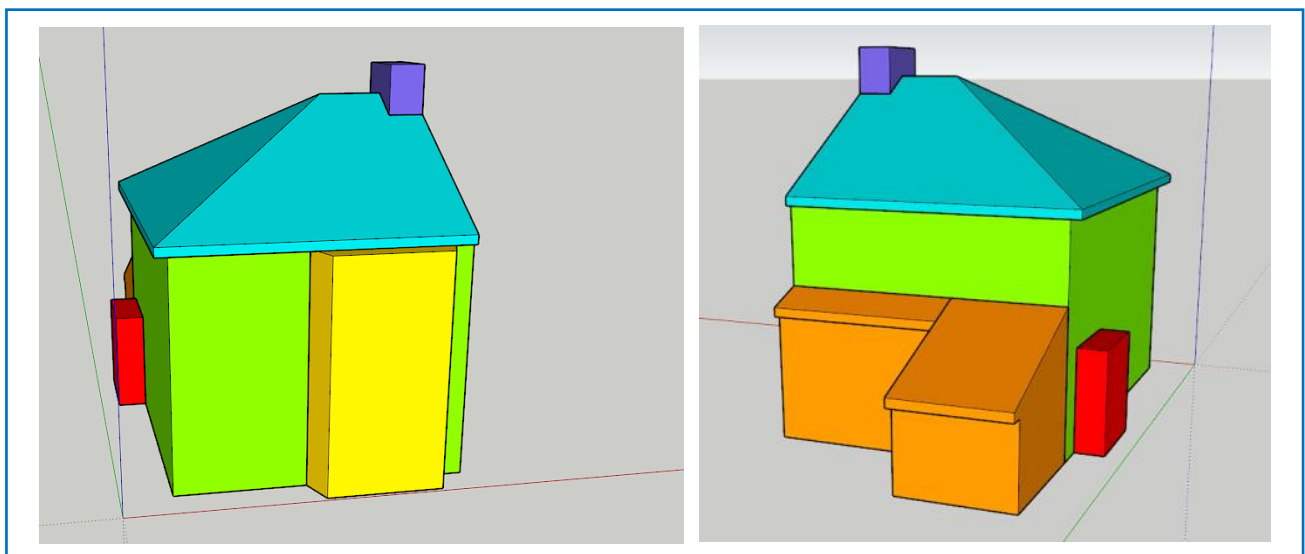
When applying Planning Policy to the proposal, it is key to first understand the nature of the proposal largely matches that of developments to houses in the immediate area, this would indicate that the proposed development is considered appropriate in principle.

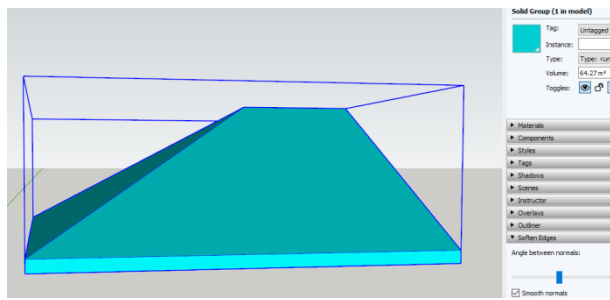
With regards to the nature of the proposal being a two storey side extension, the current property owners acquired the building after extensive research into the local area and approved planning applications. The local research indicated that a larger two storey extension would be permissible in the area evidenced by Planning Application approvals such as 189 Wardle Road, this enforced the decision to purchase the property in 2021 / 2022. With this in mind and based on other approved applications in the area, it is considered that a two storey side extension would be considered acceptable in principle.

As per NPPF green belt guidance, the proposal development must not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building; this is achieved by assessing original existing and proposed development volumes in conjunction with floor space calculations and assessing the overall proposal in relation to its impact on the openness of the green belt. As previously discussed, the 'original' dwelling has been established and confirmed by RMBC, the following section of this report outlines the original dwelling and proposed extension / resulting dwelling volumes using a 3D scale model for reference:

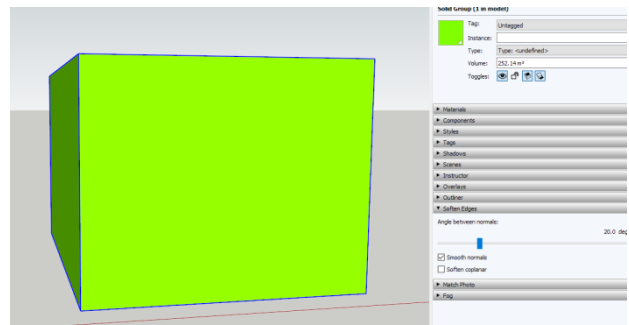
Volumes

Original Dwelling Volume = 357.26m³

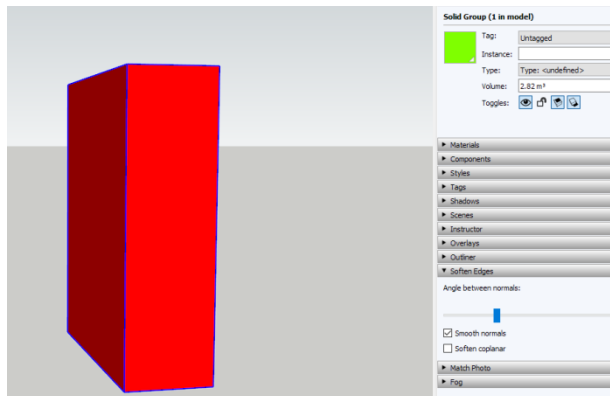




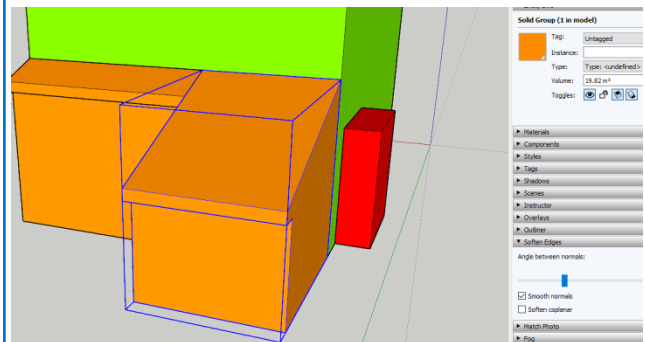
Original Roof =
64.27m³



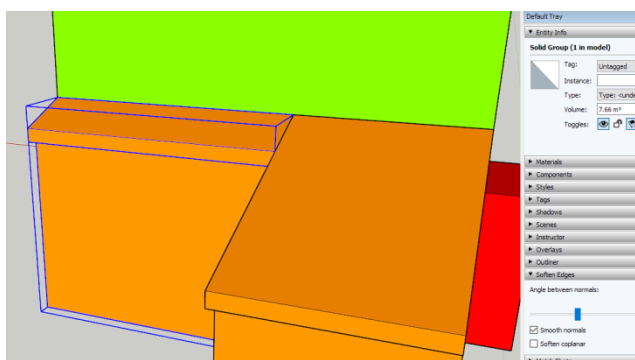
Original Main Dwelling =
252.14m³



Original Side Bay Window =
2.82m³



Original Rear Outrigger =
19.82m³



Original Lean Too Area = 7.66m³

ORIGINAL VOLUME TOTAL & FLOOR AREA

ORIGINAL DWELLING VOLUME: 357.26m³

ORIGINAL DWELLING FLOOR AREA: 62.5m²

VOLUME TO BE REMOVED

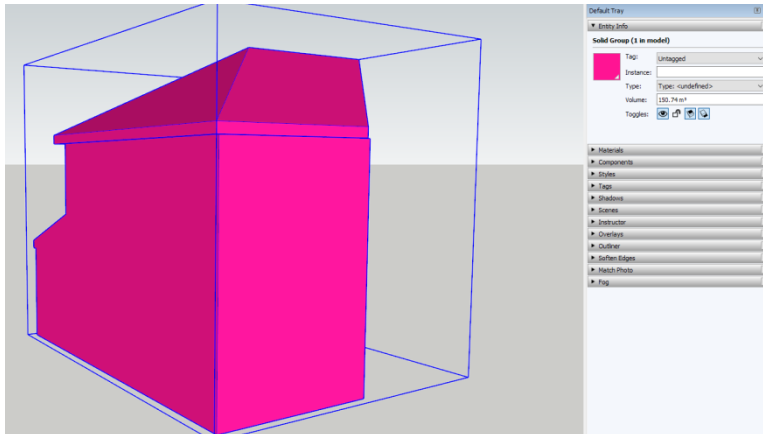
Original Side Bay Window = 2.82m³

Original Lean Too Area = 7.66m³

1m reduction of rear projection = 5.74m³

Total = 16.22m³ to be removed.

PROPOSED EXTENSION VOLUME = 150.74m³



PROPOSED VOLUME CALCULATIONS AND FLOOR AREAS

PROPOSED TOTAL RESULTING DWELLING VOLUME: 491.78m³

(Original Volume – Removed Volumes + Extension)

TOTAL PROPOSED DWELLING FLOOR AREA: 84.8m²

PROPOSED VOLUME INCREASE = 37.6%

PROPOSED FLOOR AREA INCREASE = 35.6%

The above calculations illustrate the overall volumes and floor areas of the original and proposed dwelling.

When considering Planning Policy in relation to 35% volume or floor space increases, the policy does **not** differentiate which of the floor space or volume calculations provide more weight when considering any proposal and therefore where either calculation is over 35% it is unclear which calculation should be prioritised; as an example where this proposal altered to a single storey extension the proposed volume would be considerably below the 35% increase whereas the overall floor space would remain the same at 45% increase. It is considered that volume calculation are more accurate in determining a proposals overall scale and therefor more emphasis should be applied to volume calculations.

Firstly it is important to outline the previous refusal proposals and this submission have all been in line with RMBC's guidance for two storey side extensions. Where the proposal site

located outside of the green belt area, the proposal would meet all requirements set out by RMBC and would likely have been approved during the original Planning Application.

Following previous submissions, the proposal has been reduced to be more in line with 35% volume increase, recent approvals along Wardle Road saw 38%+ increases in volume (e.g. 167 Wardle Road 23/00054/HOUS) with the recent 189 Wardle Road approval estimated to be 46% increases based on 3D models. This signifies that, while proposals within the area should aim to be in line with the 35% ruling, that there is availability for greater than 35% increases.

As referenced within RMBC's 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (2016) Supplementary Planning Document:

However, the guidance goes on to state that the characteristics of properties and proposals will vary significantly and there may be instances when a 35% increase would be considered disproportionate and other occasions when a greater than 35% increase may be considered proportionate.

When considering the local architectural character, Wardle Road is populated by large detached and semidetached properties with majority incorporating brick facades. The proposal site is however unique in that the semidetached block that the proposal forms part of is located between two distinctly uniquely design properties, the proposed two storey side extension would alter the appearance of the host dwelling to appear more unique in appearance and therefore be more in line with the buildings surrounding the site while maintaining key characteristics such as a large gap between the neighbouring site. The increased width of the resulting dwelling would also bring the dwelling more in line with local character given the width and scale of surrounding dwellings.

The proposal also includes the removal of the existing garage structure to form a driveway; this is key to the proposal when considering openness. Currently there is no fundamental definition for openness whether spatial or visual. Spatial openness, relating to the spaces between boroughs which the green belt area as a whole looks to maintain and visual openness, relating to the visual impact to the openness to street scenes and sites within the green belt. When considering spatial openness, the site is confined to the curtilage of the dwelling; therefore no proposal could be conceived that would adversely impact the overall spatial openness of the green belt, locally or otherwise. Visual openness is significant to smaller domestic sites however and something that is lacking within the area surrounding the site given the densely populated trees opposite the site coupled with the fact each of the

dwelling is set min. 2m above road level. As previously mentioned, the site is relatively wide when considering other sites comprising of similar size dwellings, this enables a large gap to be maintained between the proposal dwelling and the adjacent dwelling maintaining openness in its current state. In an effort to significantly increase the openness of the site and the immediate area along Wardle Road, the proposal looks to remove the existing garage and retaining wall currently located along Wardle Road in order to provide a graded driveway to the site; this inclusion coupled with the removal of some vegetation to the front yard of the site would greatly increase the openness of the site visually and importantly benefit the openness of the green belt in the area.

Conclusion

Based on the above assessment, it is the opinion of this report that despite the volume increase of 2.6% over the generally permissible 35% increase as identified within RMBC's supplementary Planning Document, the proposal would be in line with current local approvals and extensions within the green belt and the 35.6% increase in floor space is not indicative of disproportionate development. Furthermore improvements to the site following the development including increased openness and revitalization of a deteriorating site would greatly benefit not only the site but green belt as a whole offsetting any impact from the 2.6% increase to the 35% policy guidance. Overall the proposal would result in a dwelling that offers greatly improved living space for the building owner while also improving the visual openness of the green belt and bringing an otherwise out of character dwelling in line with the local architectural vernacular.