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Date: June 2025

Our ref: 23.3141

PLANNING STATEMENT

Location: Lockhouse, Canal Street, Littleborough, Rochdale, OL15 0HJ

Proposal: Single storey front extension following demolition of existing conservatory, with first floor balcony and balustrade together with alterations to fenestration.

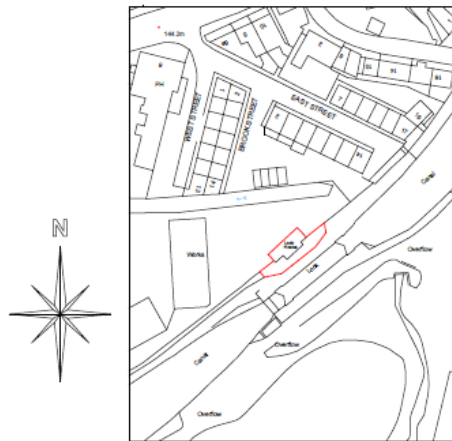


INTRODUCTION

This report along with scheme plans, details and heritage statement have been provided as part of a Householder Application submission to RMBC for the purpose of gaining Planning Permission from RMBC for the proposed single storey side extension following demolition of existing conservatory, on at Lockhouse, Canal Street, Littleborough, Rochdale, OL15 0HJ

This report looks to outline the site, give context to the area surrounding the site (including any new proposals associated with the site) and outline the design brief and theory for the proposed scheme.

SITE CONTEXT & HISTORY



Scale 1:1250

SITE LOCATION PLAN

The application property is The Lock House, which is located in the Ealees district on the eastern fringe of the town of Littleborough in the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale, Greater Manchester. The application property is, as its name suggests, was built as a lockkeeper's cottage on the Rochdale Canal, but is now a private residence. It stands on the canal towpath, adjoining Lock 48, while to the rear the ground steeply falls to the Ealees Brook and mid-19th century terraced cottages beyond, built probably for workers at the now-demolished Brookfield Cotton Mill which stood to the west of the application property.

The host dwelling and its associated lock have been identified by the Conservation Officer as non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs) alongside the Rochdale Canal due to their historic and architectural interest. The property also lies within the setting of Ealees Road Canal Bridge, a Grade-II listed building 72m north-east of the dwelling.

Relevant History

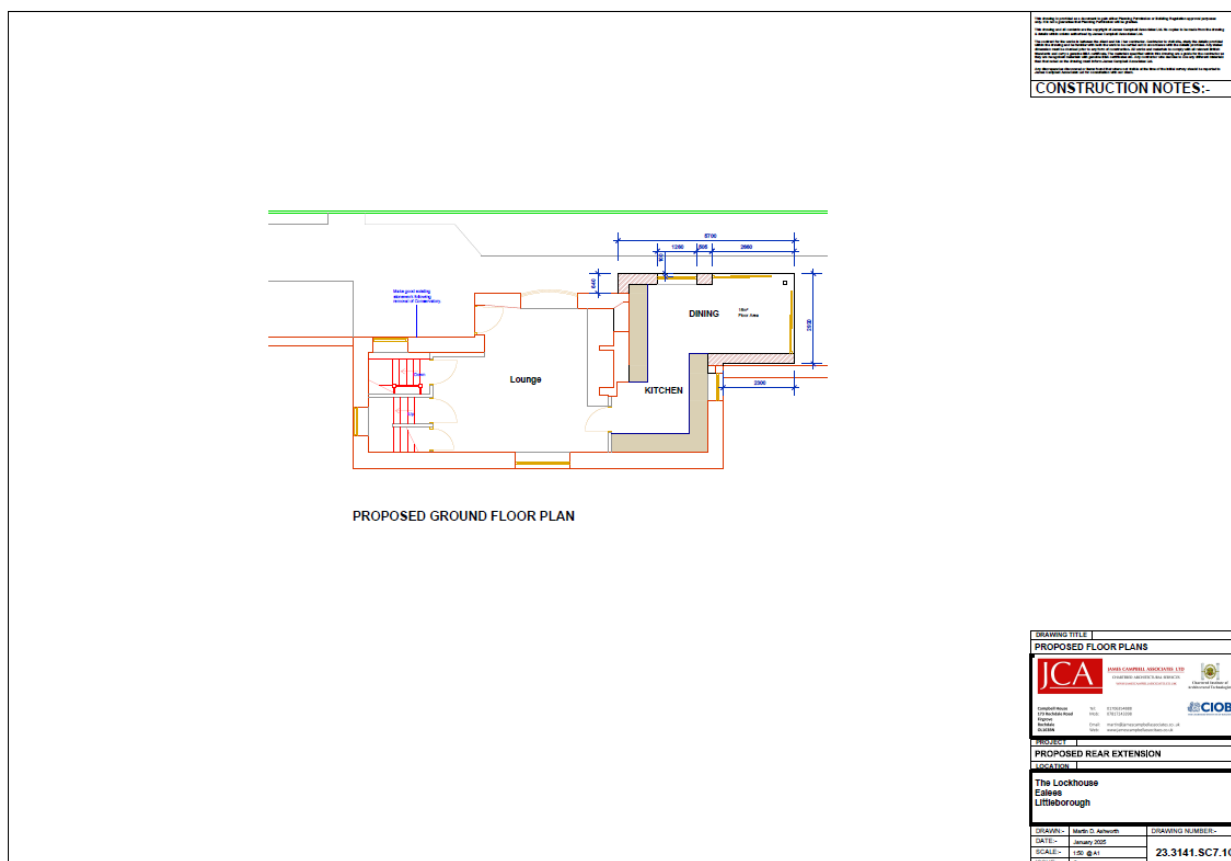
95/D32389 - Conservatory Extension To Front Of Dwelling - Grant Permission subject to condition

23/01190/HOUS - Single storey front extension following demolition of existing conservatory, with first floor balcony and balustrade together with alterations to fenestration. – Refuse

Reasons for Refusal –

1. By virtue of its siting, excessive scale, built form and design, the proposed front extension constitutes an intrusive and non-subservient addition which appears dominant and unsympathetic to the host dwelling. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the Lockhouse as a non-designated heritage asset through detracting from its appearance. The proposed development would therefore fail to accord with Policies DM1, P2 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the Council's 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. Insufficient evidence has been submitted to demonstrate the canal embankment structure would not inflict land instability risks as a result of the loading from the proposed front extension. The proposal therefore fails to accord with Policy G9 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

PROPOSAL



The proposed works are for

- The removal of the existing conservatory.
- A single-storey side extension to the South West of the building which projects 0.64m from the existing front elevation and 5.7m to the south west of the site.
- The proposal would effectively infill the recessed walls under the jettisoned first floor.
- The extension characterised by a flat roof form with stone coping parapet wall, glazing is maximised to provide a lightweight feel to the corner of the extension with stone to match existing.
- The proposals would be constructed from materials matching the host dwelling.

Changes to previously refused application –

- Total extension reduced in footprint 21m² / 44%
- Extension to North removed.
- Extension to South elevation removed
- Balconies removed. Removal of steel effect corner posts.
- Alignment of the ground and first floor window openings.
- A 100mm recess to windows and sliding doors to enhance depth and articulation.
- A simplified roof treatment, replacing the deeper fascia with a modest stone parapet detail.

As set out in the Heritage Statement, the refused application scheme was assessed as having a neutral effect on the existing building, reasons including –

- *It is concluded in this report that the significance of the application building resides primarily in its historical associations with the canal and group value with the waterway infrastructure, and these qualities will not be altered or obscured by the proposed extension.*
- *The extension will be subservient to the host building, and as regards its footprint, it has been noted in the historic mapping that extensions previously existed at either end of the building, and hence the proposal will take up some of the area they formerly occupied. The first floor balconies are glazed and thus allow views through to the mock timber-framing.*

The changes to the scheme retain existing elements such as –

- Existing eaves and gutters to the first floor where proposed flat roof coverings were proposed.
- Existing first floor window retained over existing conservatory.
- Existing plinth, post and beams currently forming the overhang outside of the kitchen are to be reused.

A pre application enquiry has been undertaken with RMBC, following feedback from an initial design the applicant Garry Miller, our retained conservation and heritage consultant, to undertake a more intrusive investigation of the property. This focused specifically on the projecting first floor to the left elevation – an element which RMBC has previously indicated may constitute a historic feature. Our intention with this additional analysis was to substantiate our initial understanding that the feature in question is not original, and to provide an evidence-based response to the heritage concerns raised.

Regrettably, no site meeting has been undertaken by RMBC's conservation officer at either the pre-application stage or during the course of the previous application, which has contributed to a degree of uncertainty around the weight being afforded to certain perceived heritage elements. It appears that the building has been classified as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA) based solely on a desktop assessment, existing features have been given weight and value without any physical investigation to support the conclusions being drawn.

To address this, we have submitted an updated Heritage Statement. This statement sets out findings that indicate the projecting jetty, along with the arched beam and brick piers, are not historic in origin. Rather, these elements were introduced as part of a significant alteration to the property in the 1960s or 1970s. As such, they should not be considered of heritage value beyond their role in evidencing the building's more recent evolution.

We hope that these revisions, alongside the supplementary heritage information, demonstrate a sensitive and proportionate approach to the proposed development.

Overcoming Design Concerns

The previous refusal stating concerns about the front extension being boxy and non-subservient, the proposed extension and changes reduce the footprint of the extension but retain the protrusion to the south and south west of the existing building.

The existing building is a three storey dwelling, when viewed from three elevations, the property is seen to be three storeys, when viewed from the tow path directly in front of the dwelling, this is the only view providing a two storey elevation.

The single storey addition to the side and front elevation is on one of the three levels of the dwelling, although footprint increases, the mass on the property and impact from three of the four elevations is minimal. The removal of the existing conservatory has a positive benefit to the front elevation.

The proposed flat roof retains the existing first floor features.

The flat roof is hidden with a stone parapet, as suggested by the planning officer during the pre application enquiry, the distance between stone coping and stone head is kept to a minimum whilst taking into account the required insulation to the flat roof and lack of ventilation available using a parapet roof construction.

With the changes introduced to the scheme we believe it accords with Policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the SPD and the NPPF.

Previous Consultee Responses –

Conservation –

The Heritage Assessment produced by a Garry Miller, a well respected and experienced heritage Consultant concludes that the impact of the previously refused extension on the application dwelling is Neutral, therefore the development causes no harm nor less than substantial harm. Further investigation by Mr Miller sets out findings that indicate the projecting jetty, along with the arched beam and brick piers, are not historic in origin. Rather, these elements were introduced as part of a significant alteration to the property in the 1960s or 1970s. As such, they should not be considered of heritage value beyond their role in evidencing the building's more recent evolution.

Canal and River Trust –

The applicant has appointed Healey Consulting Structural Engineers to produce a foundation design and land stability report in line with the requirements of the Canal and Rivers Trust to determine the proposal would not result in adverse loading that could increase the risk of a collapse of the canal embankment retaining wall. Please find the information attached within the submission.

The Canal and River stated - *We request that the Local Planning Authority, taking account of expert advice as necessary, should ensure that they are fully satisfied that the design of the extension submitted accords with relevant local policy, and does not result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the local area.*

We believe the amended design and conclusion of the submitted Heritage Assessment deals with the above.