

Planning Statement

51 Birchfield Drive, Rochdale

SITE

No. 51 Birchfield Drive is a detached 5-bedroom residential property located within the built up area of Rochdale. The application site does not lie within the Green Belt, is not listed, does not lie within a Conservation Area, and does not have an Article 4 direction imposed upon it.

PROPOSAL

This application seeks a change of use to a children's residential institution (Use Class C2) with no external changes proposed.

Four full time residents would occupy the property. The development would create a number of staffing opportunities, with staff at the property at all times.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SD1 Delivering sustainable development
DM1 General development requirements
SO2 Creating successful and healthy communities
C1 Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places
C3 Delivering the right type of housing
C6 Improving health and well being
SO4 Promoting a greener environment
G6 Enhancing green infrastructure
G7 Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity
G8 Managing water resources and flood risk
G9 Reducing the impact of pollution
SO5 Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport
T2 Improving accessibility

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

A number of policies contained within the Unitary Development Plan have been saved following the adoption of the Core Strategy.

The following saved policies are relevant:

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Supplementary Planning Guidance note 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (June 2016).

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

No relevant site history.

ANALYSIS

The main issues to consider are:

1. Whether the principle of the development is acceptable.
2. The impact on residential amenity;
3. Highway safety.

Principle

The application seeks to change the use of the building to a C2 residential care facility. This use would provide accommodation for four occupants.

Policy C3 notes that the Council will seek to ensure that new development provides housing types that take account of local needs and support the provision of housing on appropriate sites to meet the needs of specific groups including older people and other vulnerable groups. Paragraph 93 of the NPPF sets out that planning decisions should ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

Whilst the development would not comprise an ordinary residential use under Class C3 of the Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended), the proposals would provide a residential use with clear social benefits in respect of the provision of supported living accommodation which would assist in the provision of an essential residential use at a highly sustainable location close to local amenities and public transport. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal would meet with the objectives of the Core Strategy and would play an important role in facilitating the development of an inclusive community comprising an integrated approach to the location of housing, community facilities and services in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

Core Strategy policy DM1 requires all development proposals to demonstrate that they will not have a negative impact upon the amenity of future residents and occupiers. Policy G9 requires that sensitive new developments such as housing are not adversely affected by existing sources of pollution, including noise, from certain types of industry. Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that planning decisions should result in places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (2016) contains a number of guidelines and requirements for the design and layout of new housing in order to preserve the amenity standards for surrounding residents.

Given the proposals relate to a change of use of the building only, the considerations in respect of amenity relate to the impact of the development on privacy, where rooms would become 'habitable' and through noise and disturbance by virtue of the amounts and comings and goings which would be associated with the proposed use.

In assessing this application, the proposed use presents similar characteristics to a C3 Use Class in that four bedrooms would be permanently occupied as the sole residence of the individuals living in the accommodation.

In respect of the noise and disturbance generated, whilst the proposals would likely result in a fewer number of occupants than the lawful use, and the intensification of use at the site can be considered to be equal to, or less.

Furthermore, the proposed use would be predominantly residential, and is not considered to be of such intensity that it would unduly threaten the amenity of surrounding occupiers by way of noise and disturbance.

In light of the above, it is considered that the proposals would not unduly impact the amenity of surrounding occupiers and the proposals would accord with the requirements of Policies DM1 and G9 of the adopted Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways

Policy T2 of the adopted Core Strategy relates to accessibility and Policy DM1 requires all development to provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking and manoeuvring arrangements provided.

The proposal would be situated in a highly sustainable location that is well located close to services and amenities. It is acknowledged that the site would receive visits from support workers, however these are likely to be sporadic events that are would have an unnoticeable effect on the surrounding highway network.

It is also noted that four car parking spaces are available on site to the front of the property.

As such, it is considered the proposals would not have an unacceptable impact on highway or public safety and the proposals would accord with the requirements of Policies DM1 and T2 of the adopted Core Strategy.

Conclusion

Altogether, it is considered that the benefits of the development outweigh any harm caused and the development accords with the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework. As such, it is respectfully requested that the application is approved.