

Application Number:	22/01332/HOUS
Location:	Hillcrest, Shaw Road, Whitfield Bottoms, Milnrow, Rochdale, OL16 4LX
Proposal:	Front and rear dormer with canopy and levelling of banking to the front for parking provision within a new front car port with single storey extension to outbuilding and render to all elevations following demolition of existing front and rear dormer
Applicant:	Mr & Mrs Khan
Case Officer:	Hamish Rigg
Recommendation:	Refuse

DELEGATION	Applicant a Council Member or officer?	No
	Contrary to previous decision?	No
	Called in or Planning Panel objection?	No

COMMENTS	Planning Panel comments received?	No
	Neighbour comments received?	Yes

CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	No
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	No

Location

The subject property is a detached dormer bungalow which sits on an elevated plot approx. 25m south of Shaw Road in Newhay. The principle elevation faces north west, overlooking Rivermead highway and no.1 Rivermead. A short land bank separates the driveway from Rivermead Highway, at the bottom of which is a low-lying brick wall and metal railing. The adjacent property, situated north-east, is Belvedere house. At the rear, the southern boundary is shared with the rear gardens of no.3 and no.4 The Mews, as well as Whitfield House. The site is in a semi-rural, residential area, comprising a variety of housing types and public amenities, surrounded by open farmland.

Description of Proposal

The application seeks consent for the following works to the dwelling:

1. A front dormer extension measuring approx. 16.7m in width, spanning the entire width of the property. The dormer measures approx. 3.9m in depth, 2.4m in height to eaves, and 2.7m in maximum height. 5 windows are proposed across the front of the dormer to match the ground floor fenestration, including a set of floor to ceiling windows serving the stairway. The proposed dormer will be flat roofed and comprised of red brick, with the front elevation clad with grey composite panels. It will allow for increased use of the roof space for four bedrooms, two dressing rooms, two bathrooms and a storage room. The proposed dormer would replace the existing smaller front dormer extension.
2. A rear dormer extension measuring approx. 16.7m in width, spanning the entire width of the property. The dormer measures approx. 2.2m in depth, 2.4m in height to eaves, and 2.7m in maximum height. 1 obscure glazed window is proposed on the rear dormer serving a bathroom. The proposed dormer will be flat roofed and comprised of red brick, with the rear elevation clad with grey composite panels. The proposed dormer would replace the existing smaller rear dormer extension.
3. Front canopy across the façade of the house set below the new dormer extension.
4. Levelling of banking to the front of the property, including the erection of a stone built retaining wall with a maximum height of 2.8m and a width of approx. 27m. Railings to match the existing are proposed atop the retaining wall. The levelled bank will allow a larger front driveway projecting from the front of the house by approx. 8.3m.
5. Single-storey side extension connecting the host property to the existing outbuilding. The adjoining structure will contain a sauna and shower room serving the existing swimming pool. It would be flat roofed and include a set of double doors on the front elevation to replace the existing windows on the outbuilding. The height to eaves would measure 2.5m, and the maximum height 2.8m, to match the existing outbuilding. The side extension, including the existing outbuilding would measure approx. 15.9m from the side elevation of the host. This would mark an increase of approx. 2.2m from the south west elevation of the existing outbuilding, to the side elevation of the host.
6. The connecting extension would be comprised of stone to match the host dwelling and outbuilding.
7. At ground floor level, all elevations to the front of the property would be built from stone to match the existing. All elevations at first floor level would be built from red brick, and where a dormer is proposed, these would be clad in dark grey composite panels. At ground floor level, the rear elevation of the

host property would be built from red brick. All elevations on the outbuilding and proposed adjoining extension would be finished in stone to match the existing. UPVC windows and doors and proposed throughout.

Relevant History

The current plans are a resubmission of invalidated plans submitted under the same application in 2022. The current plans include amendments to the 2022 proposal which are listed later in the report.

Township/Member comments

None.

Consultee responses

Network Rail 30/10/2022 - "No comments to make".

Highways and engineering 11/10/2023:

"The proposed widening of the driveway would not affect the existing driveway access onto Rivermead and would appear to follow the existing driveway gradient so in terms of overall access we would raise no concerns. We would ask that the extended driveway is provided with a SUDs compliant surface and that no water is discharged onto the surrounding highways.

Rivermead is not an adopted highway, however it is a public right of way and does carry private vehicular access rights. We would therefore need assurances that the retaining wall directly adjacent to this route is structurally sound. We would therefore need to approve its design and would ask that the applicant submits a drawing of the proposed retaining wall for approval.

The current servicing arrangements would appear to be unaffected by the proposed development.

If approved the development should not have any impact on road safety or highways capacity. Subject to the submission and approval of structural details of the retaining wall and driveway surfacing detail Highways would raise no objection to this application."

Representations

Letters of notification were sent to surrounding neighbours 07/11/2022 and then again 12/10/2023.

The following objections have been raised:

1. Concern that the proposed window to the rear dormer would undermine the privacy of occupiers to adjacent properties along 'The Mews', particularly in

relation to feeling overlooked in their rear garden. Additionally, concern was raised that alterations to the roof (i.e. the dormer extension) could block light.

Officer response: the impact on privacy and overshadowing are addressed in the report's 'amenity' section.

2. Concern from occupants of opposing properties in relation to the single storey side extension potentially encroaching on their property. Furthermore, issue was raised with the existing boundary wall and bin store on River Mead being unsightly.

Officer response: the boundary treatment and bin storage in question are not part of the proposed development and are therefore not material planning consideration. Alterations to the outbuilding are addressed later in the report.

3. Concern from occupants of neighbouring properties to the rear that the development will affect their view of the surroundings, and impact enjoyment of their gardens.

Officer response: the impact on outlook is addressed in the reports 'amenity' section

4. Concern in relation to the development being oversized and therefore impacting on exposure to daylight from the east of Rivermead. Issue was also raised with the proposed boundary wall appearing overbearing, out of scale and out of character. Lastly, complaint was made over the lack of clarity surrounding the proposed materials.

Officer response: concerns relating to scale and overshadowing are addressed later in the report, as well as issues with the retaining wall. The proposed materials have since been clarified to the satisfaction of the officer.

Policy

National

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Local

Saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006:

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS) 2016:

The Rochdale Core Strategy was adopted on 19th October 2016. The following policies are relevant:

P3 Improving Design of New Development

DM1 General Development Requirements

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD): Supplementary Planning Document 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (2016).

Amendments

Amendments have been made since the original 2022 proposal. These include:

- Increase in scale of the proposed rear dormer and the removal of 3 of its windows to habitable rooms;
- Increase in scale of the proposed front dormer,
- Dark composite cladding applied to dormers rather than timber cladding;
- Removal of proposed car port at the front of the property;
- Red brick/stone rather than proposed render;
- Reduction in scale to alterations of the outbuilding;
- Stone on outbuilding rather than dark composite cladding;
- Additional side extension to connect host dwelling to outbuilding.

Assessment

Design: DM1 and P3

Policies P1, P3 and DM3 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy requires development proposals to adhere to high quality design and enhance the borough's identity and sense of place, by respecting context where it is positive and having regard to the scale, density, massing, height, layout, landscape, materials and access of surrounding buildings and areas in general. In addition, paragraphs 126 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) state that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 130 goes on to state that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change. Paragraph 134 states that development that is not well designed should be refused.

Concerning dormers, section 5.16 of the SPD states that they should be "carefully designed and sited" as they can be "visually prominent, particularly where they can be seen from the public highway". As the applicant property is on an elevated plot it is visually prominent from vantage points along the Rivermead, and to an extent, Shaw Road in addition to many surrounding properties. Therefore it is important that the proposed dormers adhere to the following requirements laid out in section 5.16 and 5.17 of the SPD:

- Modest in size and not occupy a disproportionate portion of the roof;
- Should not exceed the height of the ridge, and where possible should be set lower;
- Set back from the eaves line;
- Set in from the party walls of the house;
- Where possible, avoid using a flat roof;
- Where possible, vertically align with existing ground floor windows;
- Use materials to match the host dwelling.

Both the proposed front and rear dormers fail to adhere to the above guidance in a number of respects, being constructed with a flat roof and spanning from each gable

wall. Furthermore, the front dormer would not set back from the eaves of the roof and both dormers would be clad with dark composite paneling which would contrast the materiality of the host property in both texture and colour and increase the visual prominence of these features. Taken individually or cumulatively, the proposed dormers would fail to comply with the guidance set out in section 5.16 and 5.17 of the SPD and clearly comprise obtrusive and incongruous features set in a highly prominent location and thus inflict undue harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The design of the proposed retaining wall is also considered to be unacceptable. The maximum height of the wall would measure approx. 2.8m from ground level and sit flush with the pavement. Owing to its height and position, and the use of stone, the proposed wall would be an obtrusive and oppressive feature which would present a hard edge to the public realm, thus undermining the verdant and open character of Rivermead.

The irregularity of the retaining wall as a feature is clear when the surrounding context is considered. Boundary treatments along Rivermead are typically vegetation, or where they are constructed from masonry, are considerably lower than the proposals.

Finally, the proposed alterations to the outbuilding, including plans to integrate it with the host dwelling also raise design issues. The scale and form of the design are considered acceptable as it wouldn't differ significantly from the existing structure. Furthermore, the use of York Stone would complement the host dwelling and go towards improving the design of the outbuilding. However, concern relates to the removal of windows along the front elevation of the outbuilding which results in a continuous mass of stone. The front elevation of the outbuilding would therefore appear as an imposing and distracting feature, particularly due to its elevated position. The design would be significantly improved with the addition of some windows.

Due to the issues laid out above, the design of the proposal is unacceptable and does not accord with policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the SPD and the NPPF.

Amenity: DM1 and SPD

The Council's adopted Core Strategy policy DM1 states that proposals need to demonstrate that they do not adversely affect the amenity of residents or users through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy. Furthermore, policy DM1 of the Core Strategy requires development proposals to demonstrate that they will not have a negative impact upon the amenities of future residents and occupiers. Paragraph 5.1 of the SPD states that extensions 'should be carefully designed to protect the amenity of the occupants of adjoining properties.' Additionally, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

To "avoid causing a significant loss of privacy and/or light for occupiers of new neighbouring dwellings and existing dwellings" paragraph 4.1 of the SPD sets out maximum space standards to all new residential development. The proposed

development complies with paragraph 4.1 relating to both the front and rear dormers, and concerns in relation to a loss of privacy are further disregarded where the relationship would not be directly facing towards the habitable room windows of neighbouring properties. Furthermore, at the rear, there would be no principle windows to habitable rooms, thus protecting occupier and neighbor privacy and addressing concerns raised by residents along 'The Mews'. By virtue of its compliance with paragraph 4.1, the proposed development would not undermine the privacy of neighbouring occupants, or result in an undue loss of sunlight.

Regarding the impact on outlook from neighbouring properties, the proposed development would not be unduly harmful. Concern was raised from neighbours to the rear regarding the development's potential to block their views. However, the additional built form, including the proposed rear dormer would not significantly alter the massing or scale of the existing dwelling. Therefore, the impact on neighbor outlook compared with the existing structure would be negligible.

No concerns are had in respect of the impact of the proposed retaining wall on the outlook of nearby occupiers as there are no principle windows on to the facing elevation of no.1 Rivermead and no.3 already has a relatively substantial boundary treatment which would already have a greater impact than the proposed structure.

Overall, the proposal would not unduly impact on the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties in accordance with policies DM1, the SPD and the NPPF.

Highways: DM1

DM1 (e) of the Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy states that development proposals should *"provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring, and servicing arrangements taking into account of the proposed use and location."*

As per the comments from the highways authority, the current servicing arrangements would not be undermined by the proposed development, whilst the property would retain the council's maximum standard of two off-street parking spaces. However, the highways authority would need assurances by condition, of the structural integrity of the retaining wall, in the form of a report by a suitably qualified expert.

The proposed parking arrangements are therefore acceptable in accordance with policies T2 and DM1.

Recommendation: Refuse for the following design-based reasons:

1. By reason of its elevated siting, excessive scale and poor quality design, the proposed dormers would comprise a conspicuous and incongruous addition to the host dwelling which would be unduly harmful to the character and appearance of the street scene. Furthermore, the proposed retaining wall would introduce an unduly dominant and overbearing over-engineered feature into the street scene which would sit uncomfortably in an otherwise verdant and relatively spacious street scene and would subsequently cause undue harm to the character and appearance to the area as a whole. Taken individually or cumulatively, the proposals would fall well-short of being considered well-designed and therefore fail to comply with the requirements

of Policy P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

INFORMATIVE:

This Decision Notice relates to the following drawings:-

- Proposed block plan: (20)003
- Proposed elevations: (20) 002
- Site levels B: (20) 003
- Site levels A: (20) 003
- Location plan: (EX) 002
- Driveway plan: (20) 004
- Proposed floor plans: (20) 001

Article 35 Statement

The proposal would not improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area nor does it comply with the development plan and therefore does not comprise sustainable development. There were no amendments to the scheme, or conditions which could reasonably have been imposed, which could have made the development acceptable and it was therefore not possible to approve the application.

	Date	Officer
Report Completed	07/12/2023	Signed: Hamish Rigg
Authorisation	13/12/2023	Signed: Ryan Killeen

Report Author Hamish Rigg