

Application Number:	25/00006/HOUS
Location:	33 Heights Avenue Rochdale Rochdale OL12 6JL
Proposal:	Installation of mechanical wheelchair/step lift including associated engineering works
Applicant:	Sahiq Hussain
Case Officer:	Hamish Rigg
RECOMMENDATION:	Grant subject to conditions

DELEGATION	Applicant a Council Member or officer?	N
	Contrary to previous decision?	N
	Called in or Planning Panel objection?	N

COMMENTS	Planning Panel comments received?	N
	Neighbour comments received?	N

CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	N
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	n/a

Location

The application relates to the front driveway of no. 33 Heights Avenue; a detached two-storey dormer bungalow in Rochdale. Heights Avenue forms part of a wider residential estate comprising houses of varying design and materiality. The area is typically suburban, with medium density housing, quiet streets, and a semi-verdant character.

No. 33 faces northwards, overlooking a driveway and the public highway. It sits adjacent to no. 31 to the east, and the rear gardens of nos. 37, 39, and 41 to the west.

Description of Proposal

Permission is sought for the installation of a disabled access lift in the front driveway, together with associated engineering works and a new front door.

The driveway is split over two levels, and therefore the proposed lift would provide access from the pavement level to the lower front door level. The proposed lift comprises a metal landing platform able to move between levels, and a black steel balustrade at pavement level.

The engineering works include removing part of the existing patio to accommodate the lift and the erection of a concrete landing pad at lower ground level.

The replacement door would be composite, with a mobility threshold for level access entry.

Relevant History

None

Township/Member comments

None

Consultee responses

Not applicable

Representations

Letters of notification were sent to surrounding properties; no objections were raised.

Policy

National

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

Sub-Regional

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE)

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan was adopted and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the 9 authorities covered by the plan on 21st March 2024. The following policies are relevant:

JP-P1 Sustainable places

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
T2 Improving Accessibility
Appendix 5 Schedule of Parking Standards

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

Amendments

None Applicable

Assessment

Principle for Development:

Paragraph 9.9 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan states that it is vital to design neighbourhoods which enable residents to live healthier, happier and more fulfilling lives, with the barriers to doing so minimised as far as possible. This must include recognising and responding to the difficulties that people may face due to age, disability, illness or financial circumstances. Similarly Core Strategy 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.

The proposed lift is to support the needs of a disabled resident, offering them safe and convenient access to the applicant property. In the interests of promoting occupier welfare and meeting the requirement of the Places for Everyone and the Core Strategy, the principle for development is established.

Design: DM1 and P3

When read collectively, the NPPF, policies P3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy, and policy JP-P1 of Places for Everyone seek to achieve development of high quality design, 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. Development should function well and add to the overall quality of an area by being visually attractive as a result of effective architecture, layout and landscaping. Paragraph 5.1 of the SPD also states that housing extensions should be in keeping with the host property and generally should be subservient to it.

It is recognised that the proposed lift would be a relatively visible and incongruous feature. However, given its modest scale and that it would regularly be screened by the patio wall, it would not be considered inherently detrimental to the street scene. Furthermore, the proposed lift would not necessarily be a permanent feature, so although there would be moderate visual harm, this could easily be remedied in the future. Seeing as the visual harm would be considered both temporary and moderate, the security and health benefits for occupants of the dwelling are considered sufficient justification for the proposed development. The design of the proposal is therefore acceptable and accords 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.

Owing to its siting and scale, the proposed lift would not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring occupants. The development is therefore acceptable in accordance with policies DM1, the SPD and the NPPF.

Highways and Parking: DM1 and T2, Appendix 5

Whilst the proposed development would result in the loss of one parking space on the existing patio, the property would retain the maximum standard of two off-street parking spaces, taking into account the slope adjacent to the patio. The proposed parking arrangements are therefore acceptable in accordance with policies T2 and DM1.

Recommendation:

Grant subject to the following conditions:

1. The development must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason. Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. This permission relates to the following plans:

- Proposed plans: DL883
- Classic 1m Steplift (Pollock Lifts)
- Location plan: PP-13502077v1

and the development shall be carried out in accordance with these drawings hereby approved.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the policies contained within the saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan, the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Article 35 Statement

The proposal complies with the development plan and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. It therefore comprises sustainable development and the Local Planning Authority worked proactively to issue the decision without delay.

	Date	Officer
Report Completed	17/02/2025	Signed: Hamish Rigg

Report Author Hamish Rigg