

Application Number:	23/00959/HOUS
Location:	17 Chester Avenue Rochdale OL11 5LY
Proposal:	Erection of composite gates and dwarf wall/pillars with a maximum height of 1.4m to the front boundary together with side boundary fencing and the formation of new vehicular access and hardstanding to form extension of existing driveway (Retrospective)
Applicant:	Nidem Anjum
Case Officer:	Chelsea Petrillo
DETERMINATION DATE 25.01.2024	EXT OF TIME 22.03.2024
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?	NO

CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	NO
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	N/A

Location

17 Chester Avenue is a two-storey detached residence located on a mature housing estate within the Bamford ward of Rochdale. The property features a protruding two storey front gable element hosting bay windows of which it is the similar theme across this row of dwellings. The house is relatively unique in the vicinity in which it features a darker colour of brick with a distinct white pointing detail however lends itself to the contribution of greenspace within the area.

The landscape across this row of dwellings located along Chester Avenue is verdant with shrubs separating the dwellings along the common boundaries and many dwellings hosting the similar distinct feature of foliage to the front boundary. The plot itself hosts a low boundary wall to the front of the curtilage with two parcels in the front amenity space. Parking is facilitated to the side of the dwelling where a driveway is located.

Description of Proposal

Permission is sought for the erection of a 1m high brick boundary wall in place of the existing boundary wall located centrally to the front of the plot. The wall is proposed at 7.3m in total width including two 1.4m dwarf pillars either side. There is a 4.6m

gap between the front boundary wall and the eastern boundary and a 3.9m gap between the wall and the western boundary to facilitate the instillation of a 1.4m electric sliding gate either side. A further two 1.4m dwarf pillars are located on the corners of the front boundaries.

Further permission is sought for a 1m timber fence to both side boundaries spanning from the front of the plot to the rear.

A light grey expanse of permeable paving is also proposed to the front half of the plot to create hard standing to form an extended driveway.

The proposal is mainly retrospective, with the proposed gates not being installed at the time of the application being submitted.

Relevant History

PREAPP/00059/20 Two storey rear extension and new boundary treatment to front elevation
Closed July 2020

20/00332/HOUS Two and single storey rear extensions, including alterations to side elevations, following demolition of existing conservatory and outbuildings
Refuse May 2020

1. By virtue of its siting, scale and design, the proposed development would overwhelm the scale of the existing dwellinghouse, and would appear unduly prominent and overbearing. The proposal would therefore result in undue harm to the appearance and character of the existing dwelling and the wider street scene, contrary to the visual amenity aims of policies DM1 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. By virtue of the window positioning for bedroom 4, the proposed development would allow for insufficient light and outlook to this habitable room, to the detriment of the amenity of its occupiers. The proposal would therefore fail to accord with the residential amenity aims of policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the Council's *Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development* SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.

20/00934/HOUS Two storey and single storey rear extension, including alterations to side elevations following demolition of existing conservatory and outbuildings - resubmission of 20/00332/HOUS
Granted October 2020

Township/Member comments

None Applicable

Consultee responses

Highways and Engineering

The increase in the wall and gate height raises some concerns regarding the impact on visibility for drivers emerging from driveways and pedestrians on the footway which increases accident potential. To afford adequate visibility Highways would ask that walls or fences adjacent to a driveway must be limited to a maximum of 900mm in height or alternatively a visibility splay of 1000mmx 100mm within walls or fences is provided either side of the driveway entrance.

The submitted plans show a wall and gate height at 1400mm which exceeds the permitted height and proposals do not include any visibility splays, therefore it does not meet the required standards.

At this stage Highways cannot support this application.

Drainage Officer

26.01.2024

Although the 'architect plan' has a 'permeable paving' label, but there is no guarantee that a contractor would actually do this. A decent drawing would clearly specify open graded sub-base (difficult to lay properly) rather than the much more common Type 1 MOT/ DOT sub-base gravel, which is not permeable at all...From the photo, it's not possible to tell whether the householder / contractor actually installed permeable paving blocks (with nibs to give wide gaps).

Officer Note Following the above consultation response, the drainage officer carried out a site visit to which the following response was received.

05.02.2024

The Proposed Works and Materials plan has a brief note:- permeable brick paving but has no specification on sub-base nor on block type to be used.

The Officer went to look at the driveway but it's already been installed. Without knowing what sub-base was installed it is not possible for the Drainage Officer to take a view on whether the installed driveway is permeable, semi-permeable or impermeable. Normally permeable block paving will have 6mm wide gaps, but the paving installed is only 3mm but perhaps, because no gravel fits in the gap it is for the rain water to enter?

One way to establish more certainty about whether the paving is a permeable Sustainable Drainage would be for the Applicant to send a photo of the sub-base being installed and to provide evidence of the name of the type of block paving installed.

Officer Note Following comments received, it was requested for the applicant to provide the relevant details on the paving to be sent to the drainage officer for assessment on the permeability. However, although additional details were provided they were not considered sufficient in determining the permeability of the block paving.

Representations

Letters of notification were sent to surrounding properties. No letters of representation were received

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:

G7 Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

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

Further information was sought from the applicant to provide additional details on the proposed paving in order for the drainage officer to determine its permeability. Insufficient information was provided at the time of completing this report, therefore a view cannot be taken on whether the scheme incorporates an acceptable drainage scheme. In light of another application being submitted, the applicant will be expected to provide the necessary information for the drainage officer to determine if the proposed paving is acceptable.

Assessment

Design: DM1 and P3

Policy P3 of the Core Strategy requires new development to 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;

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states planning decisions should ensure new development are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

It is first noted the dwellings along this row of Chester Avenue contribute to a verdant landscape by virtue of prominent shrubbery and foliage located within the front amenity spaces. It is also noted that whilst the adjacent row of dwellings do not follow the cohesive dwelling type of those along the southern row of Chester Avenue, they do however contribute to the greenery within the area facilitated by green parcels in front amenity spaces and vegetation along the front boundary adjacent to the highway.

The alteration to the existing front boundary wall is not considered to be of concern and would follow the design of boundary walls elsewhere in the vicinity.

Much of the development as a collective is not considered sympathetic to the surrounding context and would see the loss of an attractive and softly landscaped plot amongst other dwellings of similar characteristics. The proposal is considered to present an incongruous form of development and one of which does not respect the cohesive street scene or importance of greenery within this particular setting. However, none of the trees and vegetation are protected by a TPO therefore removal can be carried out without permission and a reason for refusal is not justified on these grounds.

The addition of extended hard standing to facilitate additional driveway space to the extent that is shown in the proposed plans is considered to present undue harm to the streetscene and would contribute to diminished character of the area. It is noted

the introduction of permeable hard surfacing can be carried out under Permitted Development rights however, the permeability of proposed paving remains unknown due to the absence of justification and evidence put forward. The paving therefore warrants a reason for refusal on the basis of harm to the character of the dwelling and surrounding area.

The timber fences to either side boundaries of the plot are considered, on balance, an acceptable addition although greenery to accompany the fences is considered preferable as so to reinstate the existing landscape and character of the plot so it does not diminish local context and deter from visual attractiveness.

The addition of a 1.4m electric sliding gate is not considered the most appropriate in this setting and would seek to reduce the desirability of the street scene which is strong in a uniformed setting. The scale of the gate which would seek to match that of the dwarf pillar is considered too dominant within a relatively traditional setting. Where gates to the front boundary are present, these are mostly iron railing gates therefore alternative options which are better in keeping with the street scene should be sought. It is noted there are electric sliding gates to the front boundary of the adjacent dwelling however, the dwellings to the north of Chester Avenue significantly differ in character, scale and design than the row of dwellings to the South which are considered strong in a uniformed appearance.

In line of the above assessment, the proposal would be discordant with the verdant landscape along Chester Avenue and seek to diminish the existing landscape through unsympathetic additions. The electric sliding gate is considered out of character for this row of dwellings and the large expanse of paving would appear incongruous in this location therefore not adhering to policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the SPD and the NPPF.

Amenity: DM1 and SPD

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 and Parking: DM1 and T2, Appendix 5

Core Strategy policy DM1 notes that all development proposals will be expected to demonstrate that they mitigate against impacts due to inadequate access as well as provide satisfactory vehicular access. Paragraph 115 of the NPPF notes that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

The plans indicate the plot would be in excess of Appendix 5 Schedule of Parking Standards requirement of two spaces per dwelling for dwellings outside the town center through the provision of the extended hard standing which spans a large portion of the amenity space to the front of the dwelling therefore no concerns are raised in this regard.

However, regard has been given to pedestrian and highway safety to which the height of the sliding gate and dwarf pillars are considered to impact upon drivers visibility when emerging from the driveway, this is reflected in the highways officers comments above where it is stated the application cannot be supported at this time.

The proposed parking arrangements are therefore unacceptable and not considered to be in accordance with policies T2 and DM1.

Recommendation: Refuse

1. By virtue of its design scale and siting, the proposed electric sliding gate is considered to be discordant with the verdant character of the estate and would present visual harm to the street scene through incongruous additions.

The proposal would present an incongruous form of development with the large expanse of hard standing proposed to the front amenity space of the dwelling and is therefore unsympathetic to the character and appearance of plots within this vicinity. As such, the proposal would not accord with Policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' and the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. By virtue of its scale and siting, the proposed dwarf pillars and electric sliding gate would give rise to pedestrian and highway safety concerns and would therefore fail to accord with Policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and paragraph 115 of the NPPF.
3. By virtue of insufficient supporting evidence and details of the proposed hardstanding, the proposal is not considered sufficient in demonstrating it would be constructed in accordance with policy G8 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF in the interest of appropriate surface water management and flood risk mitigation measure

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	23.02.2024	Signed: CPetrillo
Authorisation	21.03.2024	Signed: TH

Report Author Chelsea Petrillo