

APPLICATION NUMBER: 25/01059/HOUS

Application Number:	25/01059/HOUS
Location:	Five Trees, Birtle Road, Heywood, BL9 6UT
Proposal:	Single storey side and rear extension and alterations to fenestration following demolition of existing garage and kitchen extensions.
Applicant:	Mr Ian Greenwood
Case Officer:	Bob Melling
DETERMINATION DATE 11.12.2025	EXT OF TIME N/A
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 'Five Trees', a large, detached bungalow situated within the Green Belt, off Birtle Road. The site is surrounded by landscaping which screens the majority of the property from view, however it is visible from Birtle Road. There are other properties located to the north and west, but open space remains to the south and east. The topography increases gradually in a northerly direction, meaning the property occupies an elevated position when viewed from the south on Birtle Road.

The application property was granted permission for a new roof including front and rear dormers in November 1995, however this permission was not implemented. Permission was then granted for single storey front and side extensions in August 2004, and these extensions were built. The case file for this application (ref: 04/D43855) suggests that the extensions comprised an approximate 30 percent increase in volume when compared to the original dwelling.

Description of Proposal

Permission is sought for a single storey side and rear extension following the demolition of the existing attached garage and kitchen extension. The extension would project approximately 5.88m from the western side elevation and 3.90m beyond the rear elevation. The proposals include various alterations to the existing fenestration. Materials for construction are proposed to match those used in the exterior of the existing dwelling.

Relevant History

95/D32514: Construction Of New Roofs To Existing Dwelling Including Formation Of Front And Rear Dormers. Granted STC November 1995

04/D43855: Single Storey Front And Side Extensions To Dwelling. Granted STC August 2004

25/00478/HOUS: Single storey side and rear extension, formation of hardstanding and alterations to rear fenestration following demolition of existing garage and kitchen extension. Refused August 2025 for the following reason:

The proposed development comprises inappropriate development in the Green Belt that is harmful by definition and furthermore, fails to preserve the openness of the Green Belt. Very special circumstances do not exist as the identified harm (by definition and other harm) is not clearly outweighed by other considerations, and the application is therefore contrary to policies PfE Policy JP-G9 (The Green Belt) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Township/Member comments

N/A

Consultee responses

N/A

Representations

Letters of notification were sent to surrounding properties. No representations were received in response to the proposed development.

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 Development
JP-G1	Landscape Character
JP-G9	The Green Belt

Local

Saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006:

G/D/1	Defined Urban Area
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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

N/A

Assessment

Principle of Development

Policy Position

Inappropriate Development

The application site is located within the Green Belt as allocated under PfE Policy JP-P9. The NPPF states that *'The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence'*.

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF establishes that:

'When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.'

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF sets out that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it meets one of the exceptions. Exception c) is relevant to the current application:

'c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.'

Therefore, the main consideration in assessing the principle of development is whether the proposed extension constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt and, if so, whether very special circumstances have been demonstrated which may outweigh the presumption against development.

Section 5.20 of the Council's 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD' states that *'normally, in principle, extensions that result in up to a 35% increase in floor space or volume over and above the original dwelling would normally be considered appropriate and not disproportionate (this calculation would include previous extensions to the original dwelling, which is defined as the dwelling as it was first built or as it stood on 1 July 1948).'* However, the guidance goes on to state that *'the characteristics of properties and proposals will vary significantly and there may be instances when a 35% increase would be considered disproportionate and other occasions when a greater than 35% increase may be considered proportionate.'*

The submitted Green Belt assessment suggests that the proposals comprise a 19.39 percent increase in volume, however this figure does not take into account the volume of the existing extensions when calculating the volume increase. Under application 04/D43855, it was noted that the proposed extensions (which have been built) comprised an approximate 30 percent increase in volume. Therefore, we can assume that the original dwelling had a volume of approximately 601.46m³. The proposals do include the removal of the existing garage and kitchen extensions; however, the overall volume increase would still stand at approximately 53 percent.

Whilst this would be above the 35 percent figure outlined in the SPD, it is acknowledged that there may be circumstances when a greater than 35 percent increase is considered proportionate.

Firstly, it should be noted that the extension proposed under the current application has been significantly reduced in scale and massing when compared with the extension refused under application reference 25/00478/HOUS,. Moreover, the internal layout has been amended so that the garage door remains on the front elevation, and it is acknowledged that this has removed the need for additional hardstanding to the side of the property.

Visually, it is not considered that the proposed extension would read as a disproportionate addition to the host property when compared with the existing extensions to be removed. Although there would be a relatively substantial increase in volume, mainly as a result of the roof design, it is noted that the overall increase in the footprint of development would be marginal at 8.65m². Therefore, it is not considered that the extension would be a disproportionate addition when considering the existing property.

While the front wall of the proposed garage would be brought closer to the principal elevation of the host dwelling, it is noted that it would still be set back with a gable-fronted design that would demonstrate subservience to the host dwelling.

As such, given the specific circumstances of the site and the proposed development, it is considered that the exceedance of the SPD guidance is acceptable on balance and the proposed development is considered to constitute a proportionate addition and would not be considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Impact on Openness

Paragraph 142 of the NPPF sets out that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Planning Practice Guidance provides further advice on what factors can be taken into account when considering the potential impact of development on openness. This guidance clarifies that assessing this impact requires a judgment based on the circumstances of the case in question. Furthermore, the guidance gives a number of examples where the courts have identified a number of matters which might need to be taken into account in making the assessment. In summary these include, but are not limited to:

- Openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects;
- The duration of the development, and its irremediability;
- The degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation or use of the land by future occupiers.

As alluded to above, openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt that has spatial as well as visual aspects.

The application property benefits from some natural screening from mature trees along the site boundaries. However, it is recognised that the effect of this screening is only possible when the trees are in full leaf. Moreover, most of the trees along the site boundaries are not protected, meaning they could be pruned or felled without permission. It should also be noted that the topography increases gradually in a northerly direction, meaning the property occupies an elevated position when viewed from the south on Birtle Road.

The proposed extension would replace the existing flat-roofed garage with a larger extension that would have a pitched roof. While the replacement garage would undoubtedly have a greater massing, it is noted that the overall increase in the footprint of the building would be limited.

When compared with the extension refused under application reference 25/00478/HOUS, the extension proposed under the current application would be more in keeping with the scale of the existing extensions to be demolished. Moreover, it is noted that the roof design has been carefully considered to reduce the massing by being detached from the main roof, set down from the main ridgeline and being hipped to the rear.

Overall, it is considered that the development would have an acceptable impact on both the visual and spatial aspects of openness, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 142 of the NPPF. The principle of development is therefore accepted.

Design

PfE Policy JP-G1 (Landscape Character) requires development to reflect and respond to special qualities and sensitivities of the key landscape characteristics of its location having regard to various features. This application is located within the Pennine Foothills as defined by Figure 8.1 of PfE.

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 135 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.

It is considered that the proposed extension would enhance the visual appearance of the property by replacing the existing flat-roofed garage extension with an extension that would be more in keeping with the design values of the main house.

The proposed extension would be a proportionate addition that would utilise an appropriate material palette with considered window placement, sizing and detailing.

Having due regard to PfE Policy JP-P1, CS Policies DM1 and P1, P2 and P3 and the NPPF, it is considered that the development would have an acceptable impact on the character of the application property and its surroundings.

Residential Amenity

The development is not considered to have an adverse impact on residential amenity as the property is located a substantial distance from neighbouring properties. Therefore, the application is in accordance with the Development Plan in this regard.

Highways

The development is not considered to have an adverse impact on highway safety and would not generate a level of additional traffic which would have a detrimental impact on the safe and efficient operation of the immediate local highway network, or strategic routes. Therefore, the application is in accordance with the Development Plan in this regard.

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. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents hereby approved unless otherwise required by the conditions below:

- Location Plan
- Existing Site Plan
- Proposed Site Plan
- Existing Floor Layouts & Elevations. Dwg no. 001. Rev A
- Proposed Floor Layouts & Elevations. Dwg no. 002. Rev A. Date: Oct' 25

Reason for the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory development in accordance with the policies within the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan, the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. The materials used in the construction of the exterior of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the construction of the exterior of the existing building in colour, form, type, size and texture.

Reason: In the interests of ensuring a satisfactory visual appearance to the development and in accordance with Policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Procedure 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.

Report Author Bob Melling