

Application Number:	25/00084/HOUS
Location:	143 Syke Road Rochdale OL12 9TE
Proposal:	Conversion of garage into ancillary living accommodation, together with alterations to fenestration
Applicant:	Ms Louise Taylor
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?	Y

CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	Y
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	Y

Location

The application relates to no. 143 Syke Road; a traditional stone terraced house in Syke, Rochdale. The house forms part of a short terrace which looks overlooks Syke Pond and Cronkeyshaw Common and backs on to Syke Woods. The character of the area is semi-rural, with open countryside to east and north. The main residential settlement lies off Dewhirst Road, approximately 100m to the west. The site falls within Green Belt land, the boundaries of which were recently revised under the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan.

No. 143 faces west, fronting the pavement and overlooking the adopted public highway and Cronkeyshaw Common. It adjoins no. 142 to the south and borders Syke Woods to the east. To the north of no. 143 is a row of older 'weaver' style cottages, separated by a single storey garage attached to no. 143.

Historical maps indicate that nos. 141-143 Syke Road were built around 1881, whilst nos. 144-154 date back to around 1832. Due to their age and traditional 'weaver' style, nos. 144-154 Syke Road are Grade II listed.

Whilst the site does not fall within a conservation area, there has been recent public consultation by the Council for a new Syke Conservation Area, which would include no. 143 Syke Road.

Description of Proposal

The application seeks to convert the attached single-storey garage into ancillary living accommodation with 1no. bedroom, a shower room and a kitchen/living area. External alterations include:

- the replacement of the garage door with a new window, front door and reclaimed natural stone;
- reconfiguration of the roof to provide additional headroom with a hipped roof and parapet to separate the roof levels;
- replacement slate roof tiles and 3no. roof lights;
- a side access door;
- the infilling of existing rear window opening; a natural stone parapet wall between the garage conversion and main dwelling.

The plans also indicate replacement sash windows to the front of the main dwelling, and patio doors to the rear of the main dwelling.

Relevant History

25/0084/FUL:

This application was originally a full application for the conversion of the garage into a self-contained flat. The applicant was advised that this would be refused on the basis that a self-contained flat would fail to provide sufficient privacy levels for future occupants, given the proximity and relationship to the main dwelling and its rear garden. As such, the application was changed to the current householder application for ancillary living accommodation to the main dwelling.

Township/Member comments

None

Consultee responses

Conservation 29/04/2025

In assessing the application, it is considered that the level of harm to the setting of the Grade II listed group of cottages at Polly Green would be less than substantial as the conversion relates to more contemporary structures. There would a change in appearance to the host building, but subject to appropriate design detailing and construction quality, this is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the character and appearance of the area. The loss of the contemporary garage door with a new pedestrian opening and window light cannot be considered as unduly harmful to the appearance of the area or be detrimental to the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed cottages. Changes to the row of buildings at Polly Green overtime have not significantly altered their visual appearance, but internal alterations have almost certainly been made, not least the likely merging of presumed former back-to-back cottages.

Should the application be approved, full materials details, section drawings for new installations including windows & doors with appropriate reveal depths and product specifications would need to be secured via condition.

Representations

Letters of notification were sent to surrounding properties 19/06/2025.

Objections have been raised, mainly in relation to the potential for the garage conversion to be advertised in the future as separate accommodation for market rent or sale, especially given the previous application for a self-contained flat.

Officer's response:

This decision is based solely on the proposed use as ancillary living accommodation. Should there be any future attempt to advertise the proposed garage conversion as a self-contained flat for market sale or rent, this would be a breach a planning legislation and would be dealt accordingly. However, hypothetical scenarios do not a warrant a material planning consideration. The officer is satisfied that the plans demonstrate the proposed ancillary use.

Further objections state that a separate front door and bin store are unnecessary for ancillary living accommodation. The objection highlights that the proposed front door would be out of keeping with the appearance of the rest of the terrace and has the potential to create confusion when identifying properties, particularly for delivery drivers.

Officer's response:

Amendments have been made to remove the separate bin store and front door from the proposal.

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:

Policy JP-G9 The Green Belt
Policy JP-P1 Sustainable Places
Policy JP-P2 Heritage

Local

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS) 2016:

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

P2 Protecting and Enhancing Character, Landscape and Heritage
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

Removal of separate bin store and replacement of front door with second window.

Assessment

Principle for Development – Green Belt

The application site is allocated as Green Belt under Policy JP-G9 of the recently adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, which establishes a revised Green Belt in the Borough and supersedes Policy G/D/2 of the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and Policy G4 of the Rochdale Core Strategy. Policy JP-G9 does not set out specific requirements for development proposals within the Green Belt and as such the provisions of the NPPF apply.

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 their permanence.”

Paragraph 152 of the NPPF establishes that “inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances”. Paragraph 153 adds “local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘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 establishes that “*a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt.*” The following exception is relevant:

- 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;*

The proposed alterations would not increase the volume or footprint of no. 143 Syke Road and would therefore meet exemption ‘C’ of Paragraph 154. The principle for development is therefore established by virtue of its accordance with the NPPF in terms of its impact on the Green Belt.

Design: DM1 and P3

When read collectively, the NPPF, policies P3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy, and 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.

In addition, paragraph 205 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 206 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. A balanced judgement should be had, having regard to the significance of the asset and the scale of any harm or loss (NPPF paragraph 209). Policy JP-P1 of Places for Everyone states that Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings will be considered having regard to national planning policy. Policy P2 of the Core Strategy promotes the protection and enhancement of key heritage assets and their visual amenity.

The host dwelling is a 19th Century terraced cottage constructed from natural stone and slate in a traditional style. The adjoining garage is a more recent addition which uses a blend of traditional and contemporary materials. Whilst no. 143 Syke Road is not listed, it sits adjacent to a row of Grade II listed 'weavers' cottages, and therefore the proposed alterations could impact on their setting or significance. The external alterations include: the replacement of the front windows on the main dwelling; the replacement of the garage door with 2no. windows; and the reconfiguration of the roof into a hipped form with a parapet wall.

The Council's Conservation Officer was consulted on application 25/0084/FUL, for the conversion of the dwelling into a self-contained flat. The Officer determined that the proposed use as a self-contained flat would result in no harm to the historical significance of the adjacent listed cottages. However, the Officer considered the external alterations to cause 'less than substantial harm' to the visual amenity of the listed cottages. The formerly proposed front access door created the impression of a squat single-storey dwelling which did not sit comfortably with the proportions and fenestration of the wider terrace. Ultimately however, this harm was not considered substantial enough that it would be detrimental to the setting and significance of the adjacent Grade II listed cottages.

Notwithstanding the above, paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that "where development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal". In relation to application 25/0084/FUL, the public benefit was considered to be the provision of a single dwelling, and therefore paragraph 215 was satisfied. However, under this application – 25/0084/HOUS-, without the provision of a separate dwelling, the public benefits are limited. As a result, it was decided through discussions with the Conservation Officer that the front access door should be removed from the proposal and replaced by an additional front window. This amendment is considered to improve the overall design and remove any harm to the historical significance and setting of the listed cottages.

Following the amendments, the design is now considered to be visually coherent and in keeping with the fenestration and materiality of the host dwelling and adjacent terraces. Nonetheless, in order to ensure an acceptable build quality, a condition will be attached to any permission requiring a full specification of the proposed materials and windows, to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Subject to condition, the proposed design is considered to be acceptable. In turn, the proposed development would have a neutral impact on the historical significance of

the adjacent listed cottages, in accordance with the NPPF, PfE policies JP-P1 and JP-P2, Core Strategy policies P2 and P3, and the SPD.

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.

Ancillary living accommodation is additional living space that can operate separately from the main dwelling, but is ultimately dependent on it, and part of the same 'planning unit'. Ancillary living accommodation, whilst being linked to the main dwelling, should therefore provide a similar standard of amenity for occupants as if it were self-contained.

The proposed conversion includes 2no. front windows serving the kitchen/ living area and 1no. rear window serving the bedroom. These windows would allow plentiful access to natural light and offer sufficient outlook.

The Nationally Described Space Standards is a technical document that sets out requirements for minimum internal floor areas and bedroom spaces. The standard requires a single storey dwelling for 1no. person to have a floor space of at least 39m² and for a double room to have a floor space of at least 11.5m². The proposed garage conversion would have a gross internal floor area of 40.6m², whilst the bedroom would measure 11.55m². By virtue of its compliance with the NDSS, the proposed ancillary living accommodation would be big enough to support the needs of 1no. person.

The proposed works would result in no harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupants, through overshadowing, reduced privacy or oppressiveness, as the proposal includes no overlooking windows and minimal increase to the volume/footprint of the existing garage.

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

Highways and Parking: DM1 and T2, Appendix 5

The proposed development would have no bearing on the existing parking arrangements and is 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 elevations, site plan, floor plans: T263-02-F
- Planning statement and green belt assessment (A.J. Cocker Associates)
- Heritage Impact Assessment (Storah Architecture, 3rd April 2025)
- Existing plans and location plan: T263-01-B

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.

3. Notwithstanding any description of materials in the application no above ground construction works shall take place until samples and/or full specifications of the natural stone to be used externally on the building have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall include the type, colour and texture of the materials. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and in compliance with policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. Notwithstanding any description in the application, no above ground works shall take place until full product specifications for the windows and external doors, at a scale of not less than 1:50, to be used on the development hereby approved, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The windows and doors shall be installed in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the protection of heritage, in accordance with policies P3 and DM1 of 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	30/07/2025	Signed: Hamish Rigg
Authorisation	05/08/2025	Signed: TH

Report Author Hamish Rigg