

Application Number:	23/00914/HOUS
Location:	8 Leighton Avenue, Middleton, M24 1PJ
Proposal:	Single-storey side extension
Applicant:	Mr Joe Pritchard
Case Officer:	Bob Melling
Recommendation:	Refuse

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

This application relates to no. 8 Leighton Avenue, a three storey, semi-detached dwelling located in East Middleton, with the third storey being accommodated within the roofspace. The property is located on a small residential estate of architecturally similar dwellings and the layout of the estate is essentially housing around the perimeter with housing on an 'island' in the middle of the site. The application property is sited on the southwest corner of the 'island' and is served by a private access road which wraps around the front and side curtilage. There is a landscaped area separating the application property from the access road and this originally comprised low-level shrubs.

Description of Proposal

Permission is sought for a single storey side extension with a stepped side wall and a lean-to roof. Fenestration for the development is proposed as a window to the front elevation to serve a bedroom and a roof light to serve the en-suite. Materials for construction are proposed to match existing.

Relevant History

10/D53491 Erection Of 37 Dwellings With Associated Works
Grant subject to conditions

Township/Member comments

N/A

Consultee responses

Highways And Engineering

Highways concerns relate to the impact and access to the surrounding dwellings.

The access and parking areas around the proposed extension are not adopted highway and are therefore serve as private access to the dwellings that front this area.

It would appear that the extension can be accommodated within the adjacent planted area and does not extend onto the access road and parking bays. It would also appear that the 6 metre reversing distances from the parking bays of 2 and 4 Leighton Gardens is maintained, if this is the case Highways would raise no objection.

We would not expect that the proposed extension would not have any impact on the current parking provision for the existing dwelling.

The current servicing arrangements for this dwelling would be unaffected by the proposed extension.

If approved the development should not have any impact on road safety or highways capacity.

Highways would raise no objection to this application, and request no specific planning conditions.

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)

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

N/A

Assessment

Design: DM1 and P3

Policy DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy require development proposals to be *“of high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area”* and 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.”* In addition, section 5.1 of the SPD states development proposals should be *“in keeping with the host property and generally should be subservient to it.”*

The host dwelling is sited on a prominent corner plot close to the entrance of Leighton Avenue. It is readily visible from the surrounding public vantage points on the highway to the northwest and the dwellings fronting the access road to the south.

The street scene is characterised by a mixture of dwelling sizes and types; all of which share a strong building style. As a result, there is a symmetry and cohesive character of development along Leighton Avenue.

Upon visiting the site and following a review of the approved plans under the proposals for the wider development (ref: 10/D53491), it was noted that the areas of soft landscaping, which are interspersed throughout the estate, make an integral contribution to the balanced form and regular rhythm of the overall development. The landscaped areas provide visual relief for users, create a soft edge to the built form and reduce the prominence of car parking.

The development proposed under this application would significantly reduce the existing area of soft landscaping to the side of the host dwelling. This would be at odds with the character and visual appearance of the host dwelling and the wider estate. The erosion of the space between the host dwelling and the side curtilage boundary would create a hard edge to the road and partially obscure the view of the properties to the southeast of the host dwelling. This harm is further exacerbated by its prominent siting within the sight lines of the road and surrounding properties, creating an obtrusive structure in the street scene.

Additionally, when viewed against the host property the extension would have a disproportionate scale that would not be in-keeping with the design values of the host dwelling. The host dwelling has a narrow frontage topped by a steeply pitched gable roof. The proposed extension would have a width of 2.7 metres, over half the width of the host dwelling, and the roof of the extension would have a much shallower pitch than the main roof.

The proposed window to the front elevation would have a brickwork header and stone cill to match the existing window detailing, however the window would be of a contrasting style and positioned slightly higher than the existing ground floor window.

Whilst the positioning and style of the window is not a substantive reason for refusal in itself, it would appear unsympathetic and would further detract from the established character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Taken as a whole, the proposed development would comprise an unsatisfactory standard of design and would result in undue visual harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding street scene.

The design of the proposal is therefore unacceptable and would not accord with Policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the SPD and the NPPF.

Amenity: DM1 and SPD

Policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy states development proposals should ensure they *“do not adversely affect the amenity of residents or users through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy.”*

In particular, Section 4.1 of the SPD states the following minimum space standards for development proposals:

- (i) 21m between directly facing principal windows of habitable rooms, at an upper floor level AND 10.5m between a principal window at an upper floor level and a directly facing boundary of the curtilage;
- (ii) 14m between a principal window and any directly facing two storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room;
- (iii) **10m between a principal window and any directly facing single storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room. [Officer’s emphasis]**

The proposed extension would measure approximately 10-12 metres to the front elevations of adjacent nos. 2-6 Leighton Avenue. Moreover, there is a 12 metre separation distance between the proposed front elevation and the facing blank gable of no. 26 Arden Avenue. As such, no concerns are had with regard to the amenity impacts of the proposal on the occupiers of nearby properties.

In respect of occupier amenity, the submitted plans confirm the provision of natural light to all habitable rooms. The proposed development would not reduce the functional amenity space to the rear and the proposed single bedroom would have a minimum floor area of 7.68 square metres and a minimum width of 2.315 metres, which marginally exceeds the minimum space standard set out in the “Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard”. On this basis, it is

considered the proposal would acceptably meet the reasonable needs of the existing and future occupiers.

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

Highways and Parking: DM1 and T2, Appendix 5

Policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy requires development proposals to *“provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring, and servicing arrangements taking into account of the proposed use and location.”*

As it stands, the parking arrangements for the host property consists of two designated off-street parking spaces which would be retained in the proposal.

The Highways Authority has been consulted on the proposals given the close proximity of the proposed extension to the access road and adjacent parking bays. No objections have been raised and it is considered that the proposals would not have an adverse impact on highways safety or parking arrangements and access to surrounding dwellings.

The proposals are therefore acceptable in accordance with policies T2 and DM1.

Recommendation: Refuse

1. By virtue of its disproportionate scale, design and siting, the proposed extension constitutes an incongruous addition that would result in the significant loss of an important landscaped area. It would not be well-designed and would inflict undue visual harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the wider street scene. The proposal therefore fails to accord with 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.

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.

INFORMATIVES

For the avoidance of doubt, this Decision Notice relates to the following submitted plans:

- Existing Site And Block Plan. Drg no. 766-01
- Existing Ground Floor Plan. Drg no. 766-02
- Existing Roof Plan. Drg no. 766-03
- Existing Elevations. Drg no. 766-04
- Existing Site And Block Plan. Drg no. 766-05A
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan. Drg no. 766-06
- Proposed Roof Plan. Drg no. 766-07
- Proposed Elevations. Drg no. 766-08

	Date	Officer
Report Completed	17/10/2023	Signed: BM
Authorisation	17/10/2023	Signed: RC

Report Author Bob Melling