

Officer Report

Case Reference: PL/2026/0314
Location: 35 Milnrow Road, Littleborough, OL15 0BS
Proposal: Formation of boundary treatments including enlarged vehicular access and new pedestrian entrance
Recommendation: Approve with Conditions
Officer: Bob Melling

SITE

The application relates to no. 35 Milnrow Road, a detached bungalow located on the outskirts of Smithy Bridge, a suburb southwest of Littleborough. The property is sited on a prominent corner plot at the junction with a private access road and public right of way. The dwelling is connected via an attached garage with no. 44 Milbury Drive to the south-east and faces the highway and nos. 5 and 7 Knowl View to the west. The northern boundary of the curtilage borders the side curtilage of no. 42 Milbury Drive. To the south of the property lies open Green Belt land.

The dwelling is served by Milnrow Road/B6225, a highly trafficked classified road connecting Smithy Bridge and Milnrow.

PROPOSAL

Permission is sought for boundary treatment works. The existing dwarf wall adjacent to the pavement would be retained, with a new boundary wall comprising brick piers and infill fencing panels erected behind it. A planter bed would be formed between the existing and proposed walls.

A native purple beech hedge would be planted within the bed along the Milnrow Road boundary, with lower-level planting (Photinia 'Little Red Robin') used in the remainder of the planter. The existing hedgerow would be removed.

HISTORY

24/01151/DOC - Submission of details to comply with conditions 3 (materials) and 4

(fencing specification) on planning permission 24/00817/HOUS - Request Completed.

24/00817/HOUS - Increase roof height of existing dwelling by 1m including rear dormer and 2 no. roof light to front and two-storey side extension following demolition of existing side extension, including application of render, alterations to fenestration to all elevations and composite fencing - Resubmission of 23/01246/HOUS. Approved.

PREAPP/00037/24 - Increase roof height of existing dwelling by 1m including rear dormer and 2no rooflights to front and two storey extension following demolition of existing side extension, including application of render and alterations to fenestration to all elevations, boundary walls to a maximum height of 1.83m, gates and fencing.

23/01246/HOUS - Increase roof height of existing dwelling by 1m including rear dormer and 1 no. roof light to front and two-storey side extension following demolition of existing side extension, including application of render and alterations to fenestration to all elevations, boundary walls to a maximum height of 1.83m, gates and timber fencing – Refused.

Officer's Comments

1. *By virtue of its siting, scale, design and materiality, the cumulative impacts of the proposed dormer, fenestration and boundary treatments constitute unsympathetic and obtrusive forms of development which would inflict undue visual harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and immediate street scene. The development proposals would not be well-designed and represent an unsatisfactory standard of design and appearance, thereby failing to 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 siting, the proposed north-east dormer window would give rise to undue overlooking into the rear amenity space of no. 44 Milbury Drive and would result in detrimental loss of privacy to the neighbouring occupants. The proposal therefore fails to accord with Policy DM1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, the Council's 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.*
3. *By virtue of its excessive height and siting, the proposed 2m boundary wall would significantly reduce visibility for users of the highway and the footway, resulting in an unacceptable risk to pedestrian safety. The proposal is therefore considered to pose an unacceptable threat to highway safety, and would be contrary to Policies DM1 and T2 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the Council's 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.*

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Sub-Regional

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) 2024:

JP-P1: Sustainable Places

Local

Saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006:

G/D/1: Defined Urban Area

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS) 2016:

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).

PUBLICITY

Site Notice: N/A

Press Notice: N/A

Neighbour notification letters: 12.05.2026

Weekly List: 21.05.2026

Earliest Decision Date: 22.05.2026

ASSESSMENT

Impact on Character and Appearance

Whilst local planning policy guidance does not provide specific advice on boundary treatments, collectively, the NPPF, PfE and the CS require development proposals to be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character. Development should respect local context with regard to siting, size, scale, massing, height, landscaping and materials.

The revised proposal is considered to respond positively to the previously identified concerns regarding its impact on the character and appearance of the area. Earlier iterations were criticised for introducing an overly dominant and visually oppressive form of development along a prominent frontage, and for eroding the established verdant character derived from the combination of low brick walls and mature hedging.

In this instance, the incorporation of a layered boundary treatment, including the retention of existing wall features, the introduction of meaningful planting in front of built elements, and the set-back positioning of taller structures, ensures that the development would not appear unduly prominent within the street scene. The reintroduction of soft landscaping is particularly important in maintaining the green, transitional quality of the site and provides an appropriate response to earlier concerns regarding the loss of hedging and insufficient replacement planting.

Furthermore, the use of red brick as the primary material reflects the established palette within the locality and avoids the incongruous appearance associated with previously proposed rendered finishes. Whilst sections of acoustic fencing are proposed, these are appropriately moderated by the underlying wall and adjoining planting, such that they would not appear discordant or overly utilitarian in wider views.

Overall, the amended design is considered to achieve a more balanced and sympathetic form of development which preserves the visual amenity of the street scene and responds appropriately to the established character of this prominent corner site.

The design of the proposal is therefore acceptable and accords with CS Policies DM1 and P3, PfE Policy JP-P, the SPD and the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

Protection of residential amenity is considered under CS Policy DM1, which 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.’

No concerns are had regarding the impact of the proposed boundary treatment on the amenity of neighbouring residents. The proposed development would not have an overbearing impact on the private garden areas or habitable room windows of any neighbouring properties.

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

Highways and Parking

Paragraph 166 of the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

The Highways Authority has been consulted on the proposals and initially raised concerns around the brick piers that were within the early envelope of the visibility splay. However, the Authority removed its objection following the submission of amended plans that resolved this issue. The amended site plan demonstrates that the proposed boundary treatment would not conflict with the required visibility splay. Furthermore, no concerns are had with the widening of the existing access point, and it is noted that two off-street parking spaces would be retained.

The proposal would have no unacceptable impacts upon highway safety in accordance with CS Policy T2 and CS Appendix 5.

Conclusion

Subject to the conditions set out below and taking into account the provisions of the development plan and all other material planning considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS

Amendments were made to ensure the proposed boundary wall would achieve the required visibility splay.

SUMMARY OF THIRD-PARTY REPRESENTATIONS

N/A

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways and Engineering (Response to amended plans): *Thank you for sending this over. I can confirm we are happy with the plans as proposed. We have no further objection to this application.*

PROCEDURAL STATEMENT

Article 35 Declaration

Officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application. No significant problems have arisen during the consideration of this application, and the application has been determined in a timely manner, in accordance with the policies with the Development Plan.

Human Rights and Public Sector Equality Duty

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report. In particular, Article 6 (1), of the European Convention on Human Rights in relation civil rights and a fair hearing; Article 8 of the ECHR in relation to the right to respect for private and family life and Article 1 Protocol 1 of the ECHR in relation to the protection of property have all been taken into account.

In addition, the Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination in respect of certain protected characteristics namely: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, or beliefs and sex and sexual orientation. It places the Local Planning Authority under a legal duty to have due regard to the advancement of equality in the exercise of its powers including planning powers. Officers have taken this into account in the assessment of the application. In particular due regard has been afforded to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Officers are satisfied that the application material and Officers' assessment has taken into account these issues.

The application has been considered in accordance with the Rochdale Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy – Embracing All Voices (2024-2026), which seeks to promote a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion that benefit the community as a whole.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

Condition(s) (4)

- 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 permission relates to the following plans:

- Boundary Treatment – Doc No: 0045-RALA-REP-001. Rev. P02 dated 23.03.26
- Site Location & Block Plan – Drawing No: MNR-RALA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-(PL)-0000. Rev. P07
- Boundary Treatment – Drawing No: MNR-RALA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-(PL)-0005. Rev. P05
- Proposed Site Plan - Visibility Splay – Drawing No: MNR-RALA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-(PL)-0006. Rev. P04
- Boundary Treatment 2 – Drawing No: MNR-RALA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-(PL)-0008. Rev. P00
- Proposed Landscape Plan – Drawing No: MNR-RALA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-(PL)-0010. Rev. P00
- External Materials Schedule – Report: 0045-RALA-XX-XX-SH-A-210010. Rev. P00

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 adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 3 The development hereby approved shall be first constructed in materials contained within the approved 'External Materials Schedule' ref. 0045-RALA-XX-XX-SH-A-210010 and be retained as such thereafter..

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.

- 4 The approved landscaping details shall be implemented in full no later than the end of the first planting season after the development is substantially completed in full accordance with the duly approved details contained within the 'Proposed Landscape Plan' drawing number 'MNR-RALA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-(PL)-0010' revision 'P00'. Any shrubs or hedgerow planted or retained in accordance with this condition which are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die or become severely damaged or become severely diseased within 5 years of planting shall be replaced within the next planting season by shrubs or hedge planting of a similar size and species (or another suitable species) to those originally required to be planted.

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenity of the area in accordance with policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, policy JP-G8 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.