

Officer Report

Case Reference: PL/2026/0485
Location: 68 CROFT HEAD DRIVE, MILNROW, ROCHDALE,
OL16 3UZ
Proposal: First floor side extension and front porch extension
Recommendation: Refuse
Officer: Rosalind Gralton

SITE

The application site consists of a 68 Croft Head Drive, a two-storey detached dwelling in Milnrow. The property has recently undergone works to render the front elevation, and a single storey rear extension is located at the rear of the property.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks planning permission for a first-floor extension atop the existing flat roof garage.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Sub-Regional Guidance

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE)

JP-P1 Sustainable Places

Local Guidance

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: In accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement, notification letters were sent to immediate neighbours.

One representation was received objecting to the proposals. Concerns raised included that the proposed first floor extension would overshadow, and appear overbearing on the neighbouring property at 68, restricting any outlook and light into a habitable room.

SUMMARY OF THIRD-PARTY REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

None received.

ASSESSMENT

Design, character and appearance

Amongst other things, at Paragraph 135, the National Planning Policy Framework (henceforth, the Framework) requires new development to be of a high standard of design which functions well and adds to the overall quality of an area; be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and landscaping; and, establish or maintain a strong sense of place.

Locally, Policies P1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy requires all new developments, including associated landscaping, regardless of location in the borough, to adhere to high standards of design and goes on to list relevant design

principles. Further to this, Policy DM1 sets out general development requirements and details a list of criteria which all development proposals will be expected to demonstrate compliance, including the need for high quality design.

Policy JP-P1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan states that development should be distinctive, with a clear identity that respects and acknowledges the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used. Furthermore, JP-P1 states that development should be visually stimulating which creates interesting and imaginative environments.

At Paragraph 139, the Framework makes clear that development, which is not well designed should be refused, especially where this fails to raise the standard of design more generally in the area.

The application proposes the construction of a first-floor side extension projecting approximately 2.8m from the western side elevation of the dwelling. The extension would be flush with the principal elevation at first-floor level 1m and would incorporate a pitched roof to match the existing main dwellinghouse roof. At ground floor, a pitched roof is proposed atop the existing flat roof, which projects slightly forward of the main dwellinghouse. This is akin to the neighbouring properties at No 70 and 72 Croft Head Drive, on the eastern side of the property. It is not considered the proposed first floor extension, in isolation, would appear an incongruous addition, or remove well established gaps within the street scene. The proposal would match the existing host dwelling and would not seek to deter from the prevailing character and appearance of the residential area.

Residential amenity

Paragraph 135 of the Framework requires development to achieve a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. This is reflected in Policy DM1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, which requires development proposals to avoid adverse impacts on neighbouring amenity through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy.

Section 4.1 of the Council's Residential Guidance SPD states the minimum space standards for principal facing windows and neighbouring properties;

'(i) 21m between directly facing principal windows of habitable rooms, at an upper floor level AND

(ii) 10.5m between a principal window at an upper floor level and a directly facing boundary of the curtilage (Figure 2);

(iii) 14m between a principal window and any directly facing two storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room (Figure 3);'

The proposed first floor side extension would be located atop the existing flat roof single storey element on the western elevation of the application dwelling. The application property shares its western boundary with a detached corner property at 66 Croft Head Drive. This detached corner property is oriented facing slightly further

northwest than the host dwelling and represents a differing relationship to that between the application site and No 70 and 72. The neighbour at No 66 Croft Head Drive has a primary bedroom window which directly faces onto the side elevation of the application site. The same bedroom concerned is served by two windows, one on the rear elevation of No 66, which appears to be above 1.6m from ground level, and the primary window which is located on the side elevation. When applying Section 4.1 of the SPD quoted above to the proposed development, (iii) applies and 14m is required between the side facing wall and the principal habitable room window. As such, the existing arrangement already falls significantly below this requirement which would only be worsened by the proposed development. The proposed first floor extension, which will extend the full width atop the existing single storey flat roof element, will undoubtedly have an overbearing impact on this bedroom, removing any sense of outlook and significantly reducing the availability of daylight into this bedroom. The secondary window that serves this bedroom from the rear elevation, would not mitigate the harm proposed to the residential amenity of the occupant of that bedroom given that it is a high-level window.

It is acknowledged that the current relationship is due to the original siting and layout of the properties which significantly pre-date the Council's Residential Standards SPD. The SPD seeks to ensure high levels of amenity are achieved for occupiers current and future, and while the arrangement of the properties as originally built does not lend to the same level of amenity prescribed within the SPD, it is not considered this is an overriding material consideration given the identified harm.

The extent to which the proposed development conflicts with this guidance indicates a form of development likely to result in an unacceptable overbearing impact and loss of outlook for the occupiers of No. 66 and the development would not adequately safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and Paragraph 135 of the Framework.

In relation to the introduction of a pitched roof to match the host dwelling at ground floor level, a small element forward of the proposed first floor extension, it is not considered this singular element would result in any unacceptable residential amenity impact.

Highways and parking

The application property would retain two off-street parking spaces and would have no unacceptable impacts upon highway safety in accordance with CS Policy T2 and CS Appendix 5.

Conclusion

The proposed development would, by reason of its siting, width and massing give rise to an unacceptable overbearing and overshadowing impact upon the occupiers of No. 66. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies P1, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, the Housing SPD, and Paragraphs 135 and 139 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Officers note that pre-application advice was sought and that concerns were raised regarding the need for a more balanced frontage and a clearly subordinate form of development. Those concerns have not been adequately addressed within the submitted scheme. Consequently, there are no material considerations that indicate a decision should be made other than in accordance with the Development Plan, and it is therefore recommended that planning permission be refused.

Recommendation: Refuse

Refusal(s) (1)

- 1 The proposed first floor side extension, by virtue of their width, depth, scale and siting, would result in an unacceptably overbearing and oppressive form of development when viewed from the neighbouring dwelling No. 66 Croft Head Drive. The proposed developments would breach the Council's guidance for space standards between principal facing windows, resulting in an unacceptable loss of outlook and loss of light to the neighbouring occupiers. The proposed developments are therefore considered to be detrimental to the amenity that neighbouring occupiers can reasonably expect to enjoy, contrary to Policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1 For the avoidance of doubt, this decision relates to the following plans/documents:
 - Application Form
 - HC-26365-(20)-03 - PROPOSED FLOORPLANS
 - HC-26365-(20)-04 - PROPOSED ELEVATIONS
 - HC-26365-(60)-01 - Location Plan
 - HC-26365-(60)-02 - EXISTING AND PROPOSED BLOCK PLANS
 - HC-26365-(20)-02 - EXISTING ELEVATIONS
 - HC-26365-(20)-01 - EXISTING FLOORPLANS
- 2 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.