

Officer Report

Case Reference: PL/2026/0696
Location: 12 MARSDEN CLOSE, ROCHDALE, OL16 4SD
Proposal: Front and rear dormers, single storey rear extension, render to existing elevations, new parking area, new front boundary wall and alterations to fenestration.
Recommendation: Approve with Conditions
Officer: Bob Melling

SITE

The application property comprises a detached brick-built bungalow situated at the turning head of a cul-dac of similar dwellings in Thornham. The dwelling occupies a generous plot and benefits from off-street parking to the front together with a sizeable private rear garden. The surrounding area is characterised by a mixture of bungalows and chalet-style dwellings. A number of properties within the immediate locality have been altered through the addition of front and rear dormers, resulting in a varied street scene. The application dwelling is of simple brick construction with a pitched tiled roof.

PROPOSAL

Permission is sought for the erection of front and rear dormer extensions together with a single-storey rear extension. The plans also include the application of render to all elevations, the widening of the existing parking area and a new front boundary wall.

RELEVANT PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT HISTORY

N/A

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) 2024:

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):

Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development (2016)

PUBLICITY

Site Notice: N/A

Press Notice: N/A

Neighbour notification letters: 14.09.2026

Weekly List: 14.09.2026

SUMMARY OF THIRD-PARTY REPRESENTATIONS

Two representations were received from the same person which raised the following concerns/points:

- There are bats within the roofspace.
- Design of front dormers, particularly use of flat roofs.
- Construction vehicles should park considerately.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Ecology: Given the nature of the works we would recommend that as a minimum a preliminary bat roost assessment be undertaken on the property. Depending on the findings of this assessment further surveys may be necessary.

AMENDMENTS

Following negotiations with the Local Planning Authority, amended plans have been submitted. The amendments include:

- Reduction and redesign of the front dormers with pitched roof forms.

- Amendments to the rear dormer including setbacks from the side elevations and ridge line.
- Introduction of additional brick detailing.
- Revisions to external materials including roof tile cladding to the rear dormer.
- Reconstruction of front boundary wall.

ASSESSMENT

Design, character and appearance

CS Policies DM1 and P3 seek to ensure that development achieves a high standard of design, responds positively to local character and results in development that integrates successfully with its surroundings. Similarly, PfE Policy JP-P1 requires development to respect and acknowledge the character and identity of the locality in terms of its design, siting, size, scale and materials used. The NPPF places significant weight upon the achievement of well-designed places. In particular, Policy DP3 requires development proposals to respond to their context so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings, including through the use of materials and architectural features, and to create visually attractive, distinctive and characterful development which establishes or maintains a strong sense of place. The Council's Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD advises that dormers should be carefully designed, remain subordinate to the host dwelling and respect the character of the area.

The application has been the subject of amendments during the course of the application.

With regard to the front dormers, the originally submitted flat-roofed design was considered to be at odds with the prevailing character of dormer development within Marsden Close. The amended plans now propose pitched roof dormers which more closely reflect examples visible elsewhere within the street scene. It is considered that the amended front dormers would sit comfortably within the roof slope and would not appear unduly dominant or incongruous when viewed from the public realm. As such, they would respond appropriately to the established character of the area.

Amendments have been secured to the rear dormer to ensure that it reads as a roof addition rather than a full-width replacement upper storey. The amended rear dormer would be set in from the side walls of the dwelling by approximately 0.75m and it would be set down from the ridgeline by approximately 0.5m. The walls of the dormer have also been revised to incorporate matching roof tile cladding. These amendments result in a form of development which more closely aligns with the design principles contained within Section 5.17 of the Council's SPD and ensure that the dormer remains visually subordinate to the existing roof form. Whilst the rear dormer would have a relatively considerable depth, it is not considered that it would unduly harm the character of the street scene given its limited public visibility. Moreover, it is noted that rear dormers are an established feature of dwellings within the surrounding area. The proposal would therefore preserve the character of the locality whilst providing additional accommodation within the existing dwelling.

The single-storey rear extension would extend across the full width of the dwelling and project approximately 5m beyond the existing rear elevation. It would read as a continuation of the existing roof form, with a mono-pitched roof sloping downwards to the rear. No concerns are raised with respect to this aspect of the proposal. Whilst the use of roof tiles rather than a single-ply membrane may have been preferable from a visual perspective, the shallow pitch of the roof would limit the suitability of a number of alternative roofing materials.

The proposed development also incorporates areas of brick detailing which assist in breaking up the overall massing of the development, provide additional visual interest and maintain a stronger visual relationship with the host dwelling.

Lastly, no concerns are had with the front boundary wall, which would be constructed in materials to match the existing boundary wall.

Taking all of the above into account, it is considered that the amended scheme appropriately respects the character and identity of the locality in terms of its design, siting, size, scale and materials. The development would respond positively to the established character of Marsden Close, integrate successfully with the host dwelling and surrounding area, and would represent a visually appropriate form of development. The proposal would therefore accord with CS Policies DM1 and P3, the Council's Residential Development SPD, PfE Policy JP-P1 and NPPF Policy DP3.

Residential amenity

CS Policy DM1 seeks to ensure that development does not result in unacceptable harm to the amenities of existing or future occupiers. The Council's Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD provides detailed guidance in relation to privacy, outlook, overshadowing and the relationship between residential properties. The NPPF also requires development proposals to provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The application property occupies a relatively spacious plot and benefits from good separation distances to neighbouring dwellings. A site visit has confirmed that the principal issues for consideration relate to the potential impact upon the occupiers of Nos. 10 and 14 Marsden Close, together with the relationship to properties located to the rear on Cliftonville Road.

With regard to No. 10 Marsden Close, it is noted that the dwelling is set behind the application property and angles away from the shared boundary towards the rear. As a consequence, the proposed single-storey rear extension would not project beyond the rear elevation of No. 10 and would not result in an unacceptable overbearing impact or loss of outlook. Whilst windows are present within the side elevation of No. 10, these are secondary windows and do not serve as the principal windows to habitable rooms. The proposal would therefore not result in any significant reduction in residential amenity for the occupiers of this property.

Similarly, no unacceptable impacts are anticipated in respect of No. 14 Marsden Close. Whilst the proposed extension and dormer would be located adjacent to this neighbouring property, the site visit confirmed that No. 14 benefits from existing rear extensions and outbuildings which substantially influence the relationship between the properties. In addition, the side elevation windows facing the application site are secondary in nature rather than principal habitable room windows. Taking these circumstances into account, the proposal would not result in an unacceptable loss of outlook, overbearing impact or loss of light to the occupiers of No. 14.

The proposed rear dormer would be positioned approximately 17.4m from the rear boundary and approximately 25m from the directly facing upper floor windows serving No. 13 Cliftonville Road. These separation distances comfortably exceed those set out within the Council's SPD and are sufficient to safeguard neighbouring privacy and prevent any unacceptable overlooking. Likewise, the proposed front dormers would be located approximately 24m from the blank side gable elevation of No. 7 Marsden Close and would not give rise to any adverse amenity impacts.

The proposal has also been assessed against the guidance contained within the Residential Development SPD relating to projection limits, separation distances and relationships between neighbouring dwellings. It is considered that the proposed extensions and dormers comply with the relevant guidance and would not give rise to unacceptable levels of overshadowing, loss of outlook, loss of privacy or overbearing impact.

In terms of the living conditions of future occupants, all habitable rooms would benefit from an appropriate level of natural light and outlook. Furthermore, notwithstanding the proposed extensions, the dwelling would retain a substantial private rear garden which would continue to provide adequate outdoor amenity space for future occupiers.

Taking all of the above into account, it is considered that the proposal would provide an acceptable standard of residential amenity for both neighbouring occupiers and future residents, in accordance with CS Policy DM1, PfE Policy JP-P1, the Council's Residential Development SPD and the NPPF.

Highways and parking

The proposals would increase the number of off-street parking spaces from two to three. This would accord with the off-street parking requirements outlined in CS Appendix 5. The submitted plans confirm that the new parking area would be SuDS compliant and no concerns are had in this regard. The proposals would provide sufficient off-street parking and would have no unacceptable impacts upon highway safety in accordance with CS Policy T2 and Appendix 5.

Ecology - Bats

Policy JP-G9 of Places for Everyone and Policy N2 of the NPPF seek to conserve and enhance biodiversity and ensure that development does not result in unacceptable harm to protected species.

Following concerns raised during the course of the application regarding the potential presence of bats within the dwelling, the applicant submitted a Preliminary Roost Assessment prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist. The survey comprised an internal and external inspection of the building undertaken on 4 September 2026.

The survey identified a limited number of potential roost features, including gaps beneath soffits, gaps beneath ridge tiles and areas of missing mortar. However, no bats or evidence of bats were identified during the inspection. The loft space was found to be generally well sealed and dense cobwebs within the roof space suggested that bats had not been utilising the building recently.

The submitted report concludes that the dwelling has negligible suitability for bats and that no further survey work is required.

Notwithstanding the above, the report recommends that roof materials are removed carefully by hand and checked for the presence of bats, and that works cease immediately should any bats be encountered during construction. The report also recommends the incorporation of bat enhancement measures within the development, including the installation of integrated bat roost features or bat boxes.

Having regard to the findings of the Preliminary Roost Assessment, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in unacceptable harm to bats or their habitats. Subject to a condition requiring the implementation of the biodiversity enhancement measures recommended within the survey and the inclusion of a precautionary informative relating to protected species, the proposal would accord with Places for Everyone Policy JP-G9 and Policy N2 of the NPPF.

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.

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.[AC1]

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 development shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents hereby approved:

- Plan and elevations as existing. Dwg no. 2026-006-001
- Ground floor plan as proposed. Dwg no. 2026-006-002. Rev A. Received on 27 August 2026
- Proposed First Floor plan. Dwg no. 2026-006-003. Rev A. Received on 27 August 2026
- Proposed Front and rear elevation. Dwg no. 2026-006-004. Rev B. Received on 2 September 2026
- Proposed side elevations. Dwg no. 2026-006-005. Rev B. Received on 2 September 2026
- Proposed site and location plan. Dwg no. 2026-006-006. Rev A. Received on 27 August 2026
- Existing site plan. Dwg no. 2026-006-007. Received on 27 August 2026
- Bat Survey: Preliminary Roost Assessment by Verity Webster dated September 2026

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

- 3 The development hereby approved shall be constructed in materials contained within the approved plans (drawing numbers '2026-006-004B' and '2026-006-005B').

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 No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until a scheme of biodiversity enhancement measures which includes the provision of a minimum of two integrated bat roosting features within the fabric of the development have been installed.

The approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to first occupation of the development and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of enhancing biodiversity and habitat provision within the site in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and Policy N2 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Approval Reason(s) (1)

- 1 The Local Planning Authority worked proactively with the applicant to identify various solutions during the application process to ensure that the proposal comprised sustainable development and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area and would accord with the development plan. These were incorporated into the scheme and/or have been secured by planning condition.

Informatives (1)

INFORMATIVE:

- 1 All bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006; and by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010). Should bats or evidence of bats be found prior to or during development, work must stop immediately and Natural England contacted for further advice. This is a legal requirement under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and applies to whoever carries out the work. All contractors on site should be made aware of this requirement.