

Planning supporting statement for two storey and single storey side extension to 77 Birchfields Road Manchester M13 0XX

Introduction

This planning application follows the previous refusal of planning permission for a two storey and single storey side extension to 77 Birchfields Road, Manchester. The planning application (reference 130364/FH/2021) was submitted 12th May 2021 and was refused on 2nd July 2021. The planning application was refused on the following grounds:

1) The proposed development by reason of its proximity to the boundary with the properties on Meldon Road, together with the projection, size, scale, bulk and massing of the proposal, it is considered that the proposed side and rear extension together with the rear balcony would have an overbearing impact and would create an intrusive feature in the form of expanse of brickwork along this boundary, to the detriment of the residential amenity and privacy to the occupiers of properties at numbers 3 and 5 Meldon Road. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester's Core Strategy Development Plan Document and saved Unitary Development Plan policies DC1.1, DC1.2 and DC1.4 and the guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework.

2) The proposed flat roof design of the proposed first floor extension would be out of character with the pattern of development found within the area and would result in an incongruous and visually obtrusive feature on the rear elevation of the property, to the detriment of the general character of the existing property and the visual amenity of the area within which it is situated. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and saved Policies DC1.1, DC1.2 and DC1.3 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995) and the guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework.

The appellant has not had sight of the planning officer's report, as it is not published on the Council's website. Therefore, the applicant is relying purely on the reasons for refusal to overcome the Council's concerns in this revised planning application.

Site and Surroundings

The site comprises a semi-detached property located on Birchfields Road close to the junction with Meldon Road. The street has a mixed type of property comprising of terraced, detached, semi-detached and commercial properties. The property has a pitched roof gable and is of render appearance with brick features. The property is set back from the road with a parking area in front, which provides off street parking. The dwelling has an area to the side approximately two metres in width, which provides access to the rear.

Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises a part single storey and part two-storey side extension on the southern part of the elevation of the host dwelling.

The single storey extension would provide a bedroom and en-suite at the front, a utility room in the centre and a cardio room with sauna at the rear. The sauna is required as a form of heat energy and the cardio room is required to maintain movement in the muscles to support the needs of the applicant, which is discussed in more detail below. On the first floor, the proposal is for a sun room/therapy room situated towards the rear of the dwelling and would be accessed from an existing bedroom.

The following extracts show the elevations of the proposed extension.



Planning History

Planning permission was granted for a single storey extension. Planning reference: 125479/FH/2019 granted permission in April 2020 for the erection of a single storey side extension, hip to gable roof alteration and installation of a rear dormer to create additional living accommodation. This permission although not implemented remains extant.

Applicants Case

Planning permission was granted in 2020 for a single storey extension, which is still an extant permission. The previously approved single storey extension projected up to the southern boundary of the site and ran the full length of the host dwelling.

The proposed single storey extension is similar in size to the approved development plus the existing single storey extension, along the rear elevation. The only difference is a modest rear projection of approximately one metre. This projection into the rear garden is a modest addition to the previously approved plan.

The proposal also includes a first floor element, which is to be set back from the front of the dwelling. by approximately 7.5 metres. This element will align with the rear elevation of the host dwelling and has been reduced in length compared to the previous planning application.

The sun room/therapy room at the first floor level will be approximately 4 metres in length by 1.9 metres. It would have a window facing the front and the rear. The location of the sun room/therapy

room has been chosen so that the sun rises towards the back of the property and sets towards the front of the property. Therefore, this room will receive sunlight throughout the day.

The Council considered on the previous planning application that the development by reasons of its size and proximity to the boundary with the properties on Meldon Road would have an overbearing impact on these neighbouring residents. The Council referred to Policy DC1.1 b) which refers to the effect of the proposal upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

The first floor element of the proposed extension has been significantly reduced in size. The side gable of the upper floor element would have a length of about four metres. The nearest neighbours that would be affected by the proposal are No's 1, 3 & 5 Meldon Road. These three properties back onto the application site. The rear of No 1 faces the front part of the extension, which is proposed to be single storey. Given planning permission was granted in 2020 for a similar relationship, it is not considered harmful to the neighbouring property.

Turning to the impact, the proposal has on No 3 Meldon Road. No 3 comprises a shop/office with a flat above. This is evidenced by a change of use approval in 1997 to a shop with living accommodation above, planning reference 051928/FO/CENTL1/97. The neighbouring building has an outrigger, which accommodates a kitchen on the first floor (see photographs below with window marked).



This window is located approximately 6 metres from the southern boundary of the appeal site and 9.27 metres to the side wall of the host dwelling as shown in the photograph above. Notwithstanding this, the window serves a room, which is not considered a habitable room and overlooks the single storey element of the extension and not the two-storey element. Therefore, it is considered the proposed extension would not be harmful to occupants of the flat above No 3 Meldon Road when looking out of this kitchen window. Furthermore, the owner occupiers of No 3 have no objection to the proposal and has allowed the applicant to use part of their yard for scaffolding.

The neighbouring property No 3 has another window, which serves a bedroom. This window does serve a habitable room, however the distance is about 12.397 metres to the southern boundary of the application site and the two-storey element. The photograph below shows the position of the bedroom window and the distance between the window and the extension. The distance between the rear outlook from the first floor flat of No 3 and the proposed extension is considered a sufficient separation distance so that no harm is caused to the living conditions of the neighbouring residents.



With regard to No 5 this comprises a commercial unit with a flat above. The building again has an outrigger, which is approximately 8 metres from the southern boundary of the appeal site. However, the proposed two storey element would align with the rear wall of the host dwelling and therefore this part of the proposal would not abut the rear boundary of No 5. As a result, it is considered there would be no harm to the outlook of the neighbouring residents.

Overall, the proposed development is not considered to have an overbearing impact on No's 3 and 5 Meldon Road. The amended proposal has also deleted the balcony and therefore there is no issue with overlooking into neighbouring residential properties.

The Council have referred to Policy DC1.2 in the previous refusal of planning permission. Criterion b) states they do not create an undue loss of sunlight, daylight or privacy. The neighbouring properties are located to the south of the application dwelling and therefore the extension would have no impact on sunlight to these neighbouring properties.

The Council have also referred to Policy DC1.4 in their first reason for refusal of the previously refused planning permission.

The policy refers to proposals for 2-storey side extensions, subject to the following criteria.

a. the development potential of the gap between detached and semi-detached houses is capable of being shared equally by the owners or occupiers of the two properties concerned;

The application dwelling is a semi-detached property, however on the southern side, where the proposed extension is to be located, there is no immediate neighbour. The two neighbouring properties No's 1 & 3 Meldon Road are served from a different street and back onto the application site. Therefore the proposal would not 'close the gap' between neighbouring dwellings and therefore this element of the policy is not relevant to the proposal.

b. the actual or potential result of building the extension will not be the creation of a terracing effect, where this would be unsympathetic to the character of the street as a whole;

Given there is no immediate dwelling to the south of the application site the proposal would not create a terracing effect and therefore this part of the policy is not relevant to the proposal.

c. the actual or potential result of building the extension will not be the creation of a very narrow gap between the properties, or any other unsatisfactory visual relationships between elements of the buildings involved.

The proposed extension would not create a narrow gap between properties due to the orientation and location of the neighbouring properties on Meldon Road. Overall, the appellant considers that Policy DC1.4 is not relevant to this proposal given the orientation of the neighbouring properties on Meldon Road.

The appellant therefore considers the proposal would not have an overbearing impact on the neighbouring residents of No's 1, 3 & 5 Meldon Road.

The Council also refused the previous planning application in that they considered the flat roof design of the proposed first floor extension would be out of character with the area and be a visually obtrusive feature on the rear elevation of the property. The proposal has been amended to include a pitched roof, which aligns with the pitch of the roof for the host dwelling.

DC1.1 states that in determining planning applications for extensions to residential properties, the Council will have regard to a) the general character of the property;

The character of the area is relatively mixed, with residential properties along Birchfields Road and a small retail area on Meldon Road. The first floor element of the extension would be set back from the road by a significant distance and it is not considered harmful to the character of the area or the property. From the nearest public vantage point the road the proposal would not be particularly visible and would be in keeping with the roofscape of the host dwelling and therefore in keeping with the general character of the property.

Policy DC1.1 criterion d) refers to the overall appearance of the proposal in the street-scene;

The proposed extension would set back from the front of the dwelling by a significant amount. Furthermore, the front of the dwelling is set back from the road, the proposed extension would have a width of about two metres, Therefore when viewed from the road, the combination of the narrow width of the extension, and its position means that the proposal would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the street.

Policy DC1.2 states that extensions to residential properties will be allowed subject to compliance with criterion c) they are not out of character with the style of development in the area or the surrounding street scene by virtue of design, use of materials or constructional details;

The proposed development would not be particularly visible on the streetscene and therefore would not be harmful to the character of the area. The proposed extension would be constructed in matching materials to the host dwelling.

Policy DC1.3 states the Council will not normally approve as mentioned in criterion a) 2-storey extensions with a flat roof, particularly those which would be visible from the public highway;

The design of the two-storey element of the extension has been amended to include a pitched roof and therefore this policy is no longer relevant to the revised proposal.

Overall, the appellant considers the proposal would not be out of character with the area and complies with the above mentioned policies.

Personal Circumstances

The appellant referred to Policy DC1.5 in the supporting statement that accompanied the planning application. By refusing the previous planning application, the Council gave no weight to the personal circumstances of the appellant. Policy DC1.5 states the Council will consider on their merits exemptions to the above policies in the case of applications from disabled people who may require particular adaptations to their homes. There is no evidence the Council considered this policy in the previous application.

The extension is necessary for health reasons as the applicant has multiple sclerosis. This can cause a wide range of symptoms and affect any part of the body. Each person with the condition is affected differently. However, one main symptom is fatigue. To help with this condition it is necessary to provide solutions to relax the muscles and one way to achieve this is to provide sunlight. Therefore, the room is necessary for the applicant to be able to relax in an area, which is going to achieve significant levels of sunlight.

The room, will stop relapses of MS and extend life expectancy of the applicant. If this was diagnosed 10 years ago, less was known about this condition, however advances in current science and understanding has increased awareness and how to stop relapses. The applicant is also entitled to the higher rate of disability for both care and mobility and has carers to assist him.

The applicant has provided a letter from his GP, which provides more information on this matter and is attached to this statement.

Conclusion

The proposal should be considered against Policy DC1.5 and given the proposal is in accordance with the Councils policies relating to extensions to dwellings, this strengthens the merits of the scheme and means that the proposal should be approved. Overall, the proposal would have a significant benefit to the appellant's health and wellbeing and the Council is requested to approve this planning application.