

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 October 2020

by J M Tweddle BSc(Hons) MSc(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/20/3260659

383 Albert Royds Street, Rochdale OL16 3AA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Sana Yaqoob against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00538/HOUS, dated 16 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as a "part 2 & part single storey rear extension".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants, with regard to daylight and outlook.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached dwelling with three bedrooms and enjoys an elevated position on the eastern side of Albert Royds Street. The proposed development would see the property remodelled internally and the provision of a two storey rear extension with a single storey element. This would provide a kitchen and dining area at ground floor along with a bathroom and a study/store room at first floor.
4. The Council's Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development SPD advises that habitable rooms are spaces within a home where the occupants are likely to spend significant amounts of time. It goes on to state that habitable rooms would not *normally* include functional rooms such as bathrooms, landings and kitchens or small rooms such as studies and box rooms (my emphasis). Nevertheless, this is only supplementary guidance and given the increasing prevalence of home working, particularly as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, I see no reason why a study should not be considered as a habitable room in which future residents are likely to spend considerable time. It is therefore reasonable to require that a study, which in this case also has the potential to be used as a bedroom, is afforded an acceptable level of natural light and outlook.
5. With no window to serve the proposed study/store room, the space would have no independent source of daylight and no outlook resulting in a dark, oppressive and claustrophobic environment for its future occupiers. This would provide a substandard form of accommodation that would cause significant

harm to the living conditions of future occupiers. A condition to require an obscure glazed window would not address the lack of outlook and therefore not overcome the harm I have found.

6. Consequently, the proposed development would not provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants, with regard to daylight and outlook. This is contrary to Policy DM1 of the Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy 2016 and the associated provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework which together seek to secure high standards of amenity for future residents/users.

Other Matters

7. I note the appellant's assertions that the scale, form and massing of the development would be proportionate and in keeping with the overall character of the host building and that of the immediate locality. The proposal would also provide the appellant with additional space to meet their family needs. However, these matters do not outweigh the harm I have found.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons I have set out, the appeal is dismissed.

Jeff Tweddle

INSPECTOR