

Recommendation: Conditional approval	
20181161	53 BARBARA AVENUE
Proposal:	DEMOLITION OF GARAGE AND OUTBUILDING; CONSTRUCTION OF TWO STOREY SIDE AND REAR EXTENSION WITH REAR DORMERS TO SIDE OF HOUSE; ALTERATIONS (CLASS C3)
Applicant:	MR & MRS DESAI
View application and responses	http://rcweb.leicester.gov.uk/planning/onlinequery/Details.aspx?AppNo=20181161
Expiry Date:	22 August 2018
SC	WARD: Thurncourt



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Summary

- The application is being reported to the Committee because the applicant is a City Council employee.
- There have been no representations.
- The main issues are privacy and amenity, character and appearance, parking and sustainable drainage.
- Recommended for approval.

The Site

This application relates to a two-storey, end-of-terrace dwelling, located on the west side of Barbara Avenue, roughly 230m north of the Uppingham Road (A47), and 200m west of Colchester Road (A563).

The application property has a “Dutch Barn” type design, with a front-facing gable matching one at the other end of the terrace. It sits within a site that is just over 30m deep by approximately 15m wide, and is surrounded by neighbouring dwellings with their associated gardens on both sides and at the rear. There is a change in levels across the site, with the ground rising to the south, and also to the rear of the site. The whole of the site lies within a critical drainage area.

Background

Planning permission was granted in 2007 for a single-storey extension at the rear of the house (20062105) (implemented)

Planning permission was granted in 2017 for demolition of the existing garage and outbuilding at the southern side of the house, and for the construction of a two-storey extension at the side and rear of the house, a dormer at the rear, a roof light at the side, plus changes to fenestration and internal alterations (20171088). Currently under construction.

The Proposal

This application is for construction of a two storey extension at the side and the rear of the house with dormer windows at its rear, changes to fenestration, and internal alterations.

The proposal is similar to the one previously approved under application 20171088, having a width of 6.5m, a depth of 9.65m, and a maximum height of 8m. Like the previous application the extension would replicate the “Dutch Barn” design of the existing terrace, extending it to the southern side of the existing front gable.

It incorporates the following minor changes to the proposal:

- The large triangular window at the top of the front gable is to be replaced by a small rectangular window.
- There are changes to the fenestration at ground floor level in the front elevation of the proposed extension.
- There are changes to the fenestration in the south-facing side elevation of the proposed extension.
- A new window providing light to the roof space is to be introduced to the existing rear gable.
- The glazed area at ground floor level in the rear gable of the proposed extension is to be larger.
- There are minor changes to the internal arrangement of rooms.

- Although the width, depth, and maximum height of the extension are unchanged, the plans show a minor increase in the eaves height and of the depth by which the extension projects beyond the rear dormer.
- The previous application specified a white render finish for both the gable and the extension, while Nottingham Red Brick with Rustic Red detailing has been specified here to replace the render.

The applicant has stated that the above minor changes to dimensions are responses to difficulties encountered during construction, and corrections resulting from more accurate measurements of the site made during the construction process.

The work was partially complete at the time of a site visit on 27th July 2018.

Policy Considerations

Development plan policies relevant to this application are listed at the end of this report.

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018)

Paragraph 127 states that planning should ensure that developments are visually attractive, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Paragraph 130 goes on to state that permission should be refused for development of poor design.

Paragraph 163 states that when determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

Paragraph 109 says 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 would be severe.

Supplementary Planning Documents

Leicester City Council: Residential Amenity (February 2008)

Representations

No representations received.

Consideration

The main issues in this case are: the impact of the proposal upon the privacy and amenity afforded to neighbouring dwellings; on the character and appearance of the area; parking; and sustainable drainage.

Residential Amenity

Saved Local Policy PS10 sets out a number of factors that should be taken into consideration when assessing the potential impact of developments on the amenity of existing or proposed residents.

Appendix G of the Council's Residential Amenity supplementary planning document (SPD) sets out more detailed design guidance for house extensions, and is therefore also relevant.

All of the principal rooms in the extended dwelling would receive sufficient natural light, and would have a satisfactory outlook to either the front or the rear of the house. The house would retain over 250m² of rear garden space, which is consistent with the minimum of 100m² set out in the SPD.

The extension would sit next to the blank side elevation of number 55 to the south. It would not intersect a line drawn at 45° from the middle of the nearest windows in the rear elevation of this neighbouring dwelling at either ground floor or first floor level. It therefore complies with the supplementary planning guidance in this respect.

It would be set back from the neighbouring dwelling number 51 to the north by more than 6m, and so will comply with the above guidelines here also.

A number of new windows are to be introduced as a result of the proposed work. Those in the front elevation will be more than 20m away from the houses opposite, with the public highway intervening, so their privacy will not be harmed. Similarly, the only windows in the new side elevation are to be obscure-glazed, top-opening, and will face towards the blank side elevation of number 55.

The windows in the rear elevation of the extension and the rear dormers will face out over the back garden, and will be set back from the rear boundary by approximately 19m, and from the rear windows of the houses at the rear by more than 30m. This significantly exceeds the minimum of 21m set out in the supplementary planning guidance, so I do not consider that privacy would be harmed here either.

Any overlooking of the gardens belonging to the houses at either side would be at an oblique angle and therefore of the type that is normal in this type of location.

In summary, the impact of the proposal would not be significantly different from that of the design previously considered under application number 20171088, and I do not consider that it would harm residential amenity through overbearing, loss of light or loss of privacy.

Design and Visual Amenity

Policy CS03 of the Leicester Core Strategy (2014) states that new developments are expected to contribute positively to an area's character and appearance through high quality architecture and design.

Saved Local Policy PS10 lists the visual quality of the area and its ability to assimilate development as factors that will be taken into account when determining planning applications.

The Council's Residential Amenity SPD (2018) sets out more detailed design guidance for house extensions (including advice on visual impacts) in Appendix G.

The "Dutch barn" style roof used for the design of the front elevation of the extension mirrors the design of the rest of this short terrace on the other side of the front-facing gable, and so is in keeping with the character of the existing building. The extension would be set back by more than 1m from the side boundary, allowing access to the rear of the property for bin storage and for maintenance. This would also avoid creating a "terracing effect" on the street.

As in application number 20171088, the changes to the fenestration in the front gable will result in the loss of some original features, but this work could be carried out as Permitted Development, without the need to apply for planning permission, and so I do not consider that this provides grounds for a refusal. The changes at the rear of the house would not be prominent from any public vantage point, so they would not be harmful to the character of the area.

The other 3 houses in the terrace have a finish of white painted brick, with bare brick detailing around the windows and doors. The applicant has removed the white paint from the existing front gable, and has stated their intention to retain this bare brick finish, if feasible. I note that planning permission is not needed to either add or remove paint from a dwelling, and consider that, in view of the works already carried out, a bare brick finish for the proposed extension would match the existing finish of the front gable, and be in keeping with the rest of the southern end of the terrace.

Given the important contribution made by the roof to the appearance of both the house, and also the terrace of which it forms a part, obtaining a good match of materials is crucial here. I therefore consider that a condition requiring the roof to be of matching rosemary tiles is necessary. In contrast, since at the time of the site visit the walls of the extension had largely been carried out, and since the brick used was a good match for the brickwork used in the existing house, no condition regarding the finish of the walls of the extension is required here.

Taken as a whole, as regards its visual impact, the proposal would be an appropriate addition to the existing building, matching the style of the existing house, and in keeping with the character of the area. It would comply with policies CS03 and PS10, and has regard to the design guide for house extensions in the SPD.

Parking

Core Strategy Policy 15 states that parking for residential development should be appropriate for the type of dwelling and its location, taking into account the amount of existing available off street and on street parking, and the availability of public transport.

Saved Policy AM12 of the Leicester Local Plan refers to the parking standards in Appendix 01 of the same document. These specify a maximum of 2 on-site parking spaces for a house with 3 or more bedrooms.

Although the proposal increases the size of the dwelling from 3 to 4 bedrooms, and results in the loss of a garage at the side of the house, there would still be two parking spaces on the forecourt, so it would comply with the above standards, and is acceptable as regards parking provision.

Sustainable Drainage

Policy CS02 of the Leicester Core Strategy states that all development should aim to limit surface water run-off by attenuation within the site.

Saved Local Policy BE20 states that developments that are likely to create flood risk onsite or elsewhere will only be permitted if adequate mitigation measures and/or appropriate flood defence works can be implemented to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

The site is located within a critical drainage area. However, the extension would occupy a part of the site which is already substantially hard-surfaced, and consequently the proposal would not result in any material increase in surface water run-off. In these circumstances I consider that it would not be proportionate or reasonable to require the implementation of a sustainable drainage system in this case.

Other Issues

The previous application (20171088) included a condition requiring details to be provided of the retaining wall at the southern side of the site. The majority of the walls of the extension now been constructed and are of a satisfactory appearance, so this condition is no longer necessary.

Conclusion

The proposal would have an acceptable relationship with neighbouring dwellings, and would have an acceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the area. It would retain appropriate provision of on-site car parking, and would not prejudice sustainable drainage objectives. I therefore recommend that the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

1. The development shall be begun within three years from the date of this permission. (To comply with Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.)

2. The front roof slope shall be finished using Rosemary Tiles to match the roofs over the existing house. (In the interests of visual amenity, and in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS3.)
3. This consent shall relate solely to the submitted plans received by the City Council as local planning authority on 27th June 2018, unless otherwise submitted to and approved by the City Council as local planning authority. (For the avoidance of doubt.)

Policies relating to this recommendation

- 2006_PS10 Criteria will be used to assess planning applications which concern the amenity of existing or proposed residents.
- 2006_BE20 Developments that are likely to create flood risk onsite or elsewhere will only be permitted if adequate mitigation measures can be implemented.
- 2006_AM12 Levels of car parking for residential development will be determined in accordance with the standards in Appendix 01.
- 2014_CS02 Development must mitigate and adapt to climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The policy sets out principles which provide the climate change policy context for the City.
- 2014_CS03 The Council will require high quality, well designed developments that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the local natural and built environment. The policy sets out design objectives for urban form, connections and access, public spaces, the historic environment, and 'Building for Life'.
- 2014_CS15 To meet the key aim of reducing Leicester's contribution to climate change, the policy sets out measures to help manage congestion on the City roads.