



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2020

by K Savage BA MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/X2410/D/20/3253458

4 Ratcliffe Road, Sileby LE12 7PZ

- 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 Mr & Mrs Freer against the decision of Charnwood Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/20/0616/2, dated 24 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 26 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side extension at 4 Ratcliffe Road, Sileby LE12 7PZ, in accordance with the terms of application Ref P/20/0616/2, dated 24 March 2020, and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 4RR/2020/1/3; 4RR/2020/1/2; 4RR/2020/3/3.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The extension hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until three parking spaces which measure a minimum of 5.5 metres by 2.4 metres, have been laid out, hard surfaced and made available for use. Those areas shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles and for servicing.

Main Issue

2. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a semi-detached dwelling forming a pair with 6 Ratcliffe Road which stands close to the junction with The Banks/Highgate Road near the centre of Sileby. The pair largely retain their symmetrical design, with prominent front gables which extend down to the ground floor eaves level on the outer side and a hipped roof design to the sides.

4. Ratcliffe Road is primarily residential in character. The detached 2 Ratcliffe Road stands by itself to one side of the appeal site, whilst beyond No 6 are terraced dwellings standing at an angle fronting Cemetery Road. I saw a variety of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings, and purpose built apartment blocks along Ratcliffe Road, mainly two storeys but with the exception of a few bungalows and one three storey building. Red brick predominates, but I saw several properties partially or fully rendered or painted. Overall, there is significant variety to the built form in terms of design, scale, layout and pattern of development. Nos 4 and 6 stand somewhat by themselves in this respect, and I did not see that the existing design of the pair was replicated elsewhere in the street.
5. The Council's concerns relate to the extension 'unbalancing' the pair and to a lack of subservience in the scale and design of the extension relative to the existing dwelling. I am referred to the Council's Design Supplementary Planning Document (January 2020) (the SPD) which states that it is important that any extension respects the basic shape, proportions and size of the existing property. It further sets out that extensions should be designed so that the main property is still the dominant building, and that the roof and eaves lines should be lower than the existing house.
6. The proposal would see the existing single storey garage to the side of the dwelling replaced by a two storey extension that would continue the existing roof line across, enlarging the existing catslide roof and replicating the existing hipped roof feature to the side elevation, which would follow the angled side boundary line of the site. The design would not strictly accord with the SPD in that the roof ridge and eaves would not be set lower than that of the main dwelling; however, the catslide roof is a prominent element of the dwelling's design which would be maintained by extending across along the existing roof plane, an outcome which the Council acknowledged in its officer report. Moreover, introducing a lower ridge or recessed roof plane would appear awkward given the particular shape of the roof and its continuation down to the ground floor eaves.
7. I recognise that the extension would be large. At some 6.57 metres wide to the rear, it would nearly double the width of the dwelling. The extension would be narrower to the front, but the angled side elevation would allow the massing to the rear to be partially visible from the front. However, the deep catslide roof to the front would come down to the ground floor eaves and would not present a two storey frontage to the extension, which would moderate its apparent scale when viewed from the street, and along with the hipped element to the site would provide a degree of subservience relative to the original dwelling.
8. The extension would clearly unbalance the pair of dwellings; however, that is the case whenever the first dwelling is extended. The replication of the hipped roof and catslide design would provide consistency to the overall appearance of the pair. On a wider scale, due to the significant variety to the surrounding built form, the proposed extension would not disrupt a homogenous street scene, and given its recessed position in its plot, it would not appear excessively large or dominant within the street scene.
9. I accept that the scale of the resulting dwelling would appear greatest when viewed from The Banks at the rear; however, these views are from a backland area where there is a varied built form of both residential and commercial

- properties. The dwelling would not extend any closer to the road at the rear and within this context would not appear incongruous within its surroundings.
10. Therefore, whilst the proposal would not accord wholly with the SPD, it would comprise an acceptable design which would maintain the existing design features of the dwelling and the pair of which it forms part, and which would not appear excessive in scale or incongruous in the wider street scene given the varied built form which exists.
 11. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area, and would not conflict with Policy CS2 of the Charnwood Local Plan Core Strategy (November 2015) or Saved Policies EV/1 and H/17 of the adopted Borough of Charnwood Local Plan (January 2004), or Policy G2 of the Sileby Neighbourhood Plan (January 2020), which together seek high quality design in new developments which respects and enhances the character of the area, having regard to factors including scale, massing, height, layout and materials; and which in the case of extensions requires compatibility in these respects with the original building, and that the extension not appear intrusive or incongruous in the street scene.
 12. I have had regard to comments from interested parties raising concern over loss of light to the neighbouring property at 2 Ratcliffe Road. No finding of harm was made by the Council in this respect. I saw that the side elevation of No 2, facing the appeal site, had four small windows, two at ground floor, which I infer from the representation serve a dining room and kitchen, and two windows on the first floor which I understand serve a landing. The lower windows are obscurely glazed as they face onto a public footpath. The light reaching them is influenced by their position opposite the existing single storey garage, and would not be significantly altered by the proposal. The upper windows serve a non-habitable room and therefore I am satisfied that any loss of light to these windows would not adversely affect occupants' living conditions. No loss of privacy would occur as no side facing windows are proposed.
 13. No other harm was identified by the Council with respect to neighbours' living conditions or with respect to parking provision, and on the evidence before me, I have no reasons to disagree.

Conditions

14. To provide certainty, a condition is required specifying the relevant drawings. It is also necessary to impose a condition requiring external surface materials to match the existing dwelling in order to secure a satisfactory appearance.
15. A condition is also required to ensure sufficient parking spaces are provided in line with the enlarged size of the dwelling. I have amended the wording to ensure precision in the time for compliance.

Conclusion

16. For these reasons, the appeal is allowed.

K Savage

INSPECTOR