

Sileby Parish Comments for Planning Application P/21/0816/2 Erection of 2.5 storey extension to care home, 38 Mountsorrel Lane, Sileby.

This planning application raises several issues concerning both detailed consideration of design and layout as well as the acceptability of the principle of further development having regard to the policies of the development plan, other local and national policies guiding development such as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), current Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) as well as other relevant material considerations.

The application site has been the subject of several previous applications for extensions for additional bedrooms to the side and rear of the existing residential home. An application to erect an additional 10 bedrooms and conservatory to the side and rear of the residential home (P/01/3131/2) was refused and dismissed at appeal (APP/X2410/A/02/1098645). The most recent application for the erection of a single storey extension to provide five bedrooms with ensuite facilities (P/14/1489/2) to facilitate the modernisation of the main building was granted planning permission which has now elapsed.

The proposal is to erect a 2.5 storey, 9m wide extension that would project 11m from the existing three storey nursing home with a link to the main building being made through an existing doorway. The site backs onto residential properties on Herrick Close and is within the Sileby Conservation Area.

The accompanying Design and Access Statement explains that an additional five bedrooms and bathrooms will be provided on the ground floor, another five bedrooms and bathrooms on the first floor and office and storage on the third floor, this will increase the facility's capacity from 27 service users to 37 service users. The site has a registration for a maximum of 27 residents, there are currently 21 single occupancy rooms and 3 double occupancy rooms. The application form confirms an additional 272m² of useable floorspace will be created should this extension be permitted. This would increase the existing development by one third. The Design and Access Statement does not provide an objective assessment of the increase in capacity on number of service users, number of employees, professional care providers or visitors. Whilst the application includes plans and elevations of the development proposals it does not include a section through the site to demonstrate how proposals relate to the property on Herrick Close or Mountsorrel Lane.

These comments are based on the information available on the Council's website on June 3rd, 2021, whilst considering the provisions of Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This requires that when dealing with an application for planning permission, local planning authorities must have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.

The development plan consists of:

- Sileby Neighbourhood Plan (made January 2020 following independent examination and Referendum) (SNP)
- The Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2028 Core Strategy (adopted 2015) (CS)
- The "saved" policies from the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan (2004)

Although the older “saved’ policies LP policies are based on an out of date strategy, they remain part of the development plan and may be accorded appropriate weight where justified.

The main considerations in the determination of this planning application are:

- The impact of the development on residential amenities of existing neighbouring occupiers
- The impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- Highway Safety
- The impact of the proposal on trees

Impact on Residential Amenities

The proposed extension is 2.5 storeys with a pitched roof sloping away from Herrick Road dwellings and includes two dormer windows facing Herrick Close and one dormer window facing Mountsorrel Lane. The overall height will be 7.88m with the dormer windows virtually in line with the third-floor windows of the existing building. This is a significant departure from the single storey extension considered in P/14/1489/2, where even then it was accepted that the existing planting would not totally screen the development. The addition of another two storeys will cause a significant loss of privacy and light to existing properties. The development thereby conflicts with the general requirements of Policy G2: Design, a) of Sileby Neighbourhood Plan and Policy EV/1 of the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan.

Residents of Herrick Close have complained about noise from alarms and the impact of lighting from the existing facilities, this proposal will add to this with windows directly facing properties on Herrick Close. The proposals are therefore in conflict with Policy CF2: New and Improved Community Facilities a).

These issues were explored in an earlier application to extend the care home facility to provide ten additional bedrooms (APP/X2410/A/02/1098645). The Inspector stated that that application would greatly increase the floor area and mass of this existing already considerably extended property resulting in over development which would be out of character with the surrounding residential area by reason of excessive scale and intensification of use, concluding that the extension would over-dominate residential properties on Herrick Close by virtue of its size and proximity to both dwellings and their rear boundaries. The Parish Council are extremely concerned that these new proposals for an even larger extension would result in even more harm, are unsympathetic in scale, mass, and layout to neighbouring properties.

The impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

The Design and Access Statement incorrectly states the development is not in a conservation area. Highbury Care home and grounds are located within Sileby conservation area. The proposed development is located to the rear of the site, it is not particularly visible from Mountsorrel Lane immediately to the south of the site by virtue of the existing wall, but it is very visible from public vantage points on Mountsorrel Lane to the west, Herrick Close to the north and public footpaths I 26 and I 49. The increased scale and mass of the development will have a significant impact on the appearance of the conservation area.

Highway Safety

The current car park is accessed via an arched access between the main house and the staff accommodation and there is currently provision for around 15 spaces. Residents have noted that emergency vehicles are frequently parked on the roadside outside when attending the care facility, this blocks the pavement. Mountsorrel Lane is a narrow road, with limited on street parking, this often results in traffic queues along the length of Mountsorrel Lane due to restricted traffic flow due to this on street parking and the waiting traffic from the Barrow Road/High Street junction which are operating well above recommended capacity.

The proposal increases the size of the facility by adding ten more bedrooms. It is currently registered for up to 27 residents, the development would increase the potential number of residents to 37. This is a significant increase in the number of service users, who will need additional medical and support carers, as well as visitors. There is no objective assessment of the parking requirements needed by an increase in size and capacity, no mention of how many spaces can be provided on the site, no objective assessment as to what would be a reasonable number of parking spaces that might be expected or be needed to accommodate emergency vehicles and no overall weighing up of the parking and highway safety issue taking these factors into account and having regard to the development plan (including SNP policies CF2 (b) & (c), E (a) & (b) and para 9 of the NPPF. A previous appeal Inspector concluded that an intensification in use of the existing access which is lacking in width and visibility would represent an increase in hazard to highway users on Mountsorrel Lane. These concerns are as valid today as they were in 2001. For these reasons alone the Parish Council are sufficiently concerned the proposal would lead to additional hazards to existing highway safety and would affect the living conditions of residents.

The impact of the proposal on trees

The applicant has provided details of the proposed protective measures to be installed to safeguard the important trees during construction but has not explained where these trees are in relation to the proposed extension. It seems that at least two of the tree's root protection zones will be compromised by the foundations of the proposed extension.

Other matters

Surface water run off and impact on flooding.

The whole of the Soar Valley, including the open countryside immediately adjacent to the Limits to Development (Sileby) is in Flood Risk Zone 3.

National regulations require the planning of new developments to apply sequential and exception tests and to avoid areas of high flood risk (Zone 3)

Sileby Neighbourhood Plan

Policy Env 10: Managing Flood Risk states that:

* The risks of all types of flooding have been considered and quantified.

* For the lifetime of the development the development itself and its occupants are safe from the effects of flooding.

* It does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

While No. 38, Mountsorrel Lane is within the Limits to Development and therefore outside Flood Zone 3, much of the main drainage system lies within the Flood Zone.

Increased incidents of flooding have overwhelmed the capacity of the drainage systems in the area, causing effluent and wastewater to overflow onto the roads and surrounding fields.

The increase of an additional 10 bedrooms at Highbury Care Home would put even more pressure on the already inadequate drainage system.

Mountsorrel Lane is impassable when flooded and can be closed for several days at a time. There is a cumulative effect with the closure of Slash Lane, Cossington Rd, Syston Rd Cossington, and at times Barrow Rd Sileby, also impassable due to flooding, thus leaving limited capacity for traffic leaving/ entering the village, including emergency vehicles.

Computer modelling of the frequency of flooding and road closures have not matched the reality in recent years

Sileby Parish Council object to this development.