

Proposed front and rear extensions, raising of existing eaves and ridge height. Single storey rear extension, new garage with studio over, new dormer windows to front and rear of property
2 The Toft Mill Lane Belton Loughborough Leicestershire
LE12 9UL

Report Item No
A2

Application Reference
22/00311/FUL

Grid Reference (E) 444760
Grid Reference (N) 320929

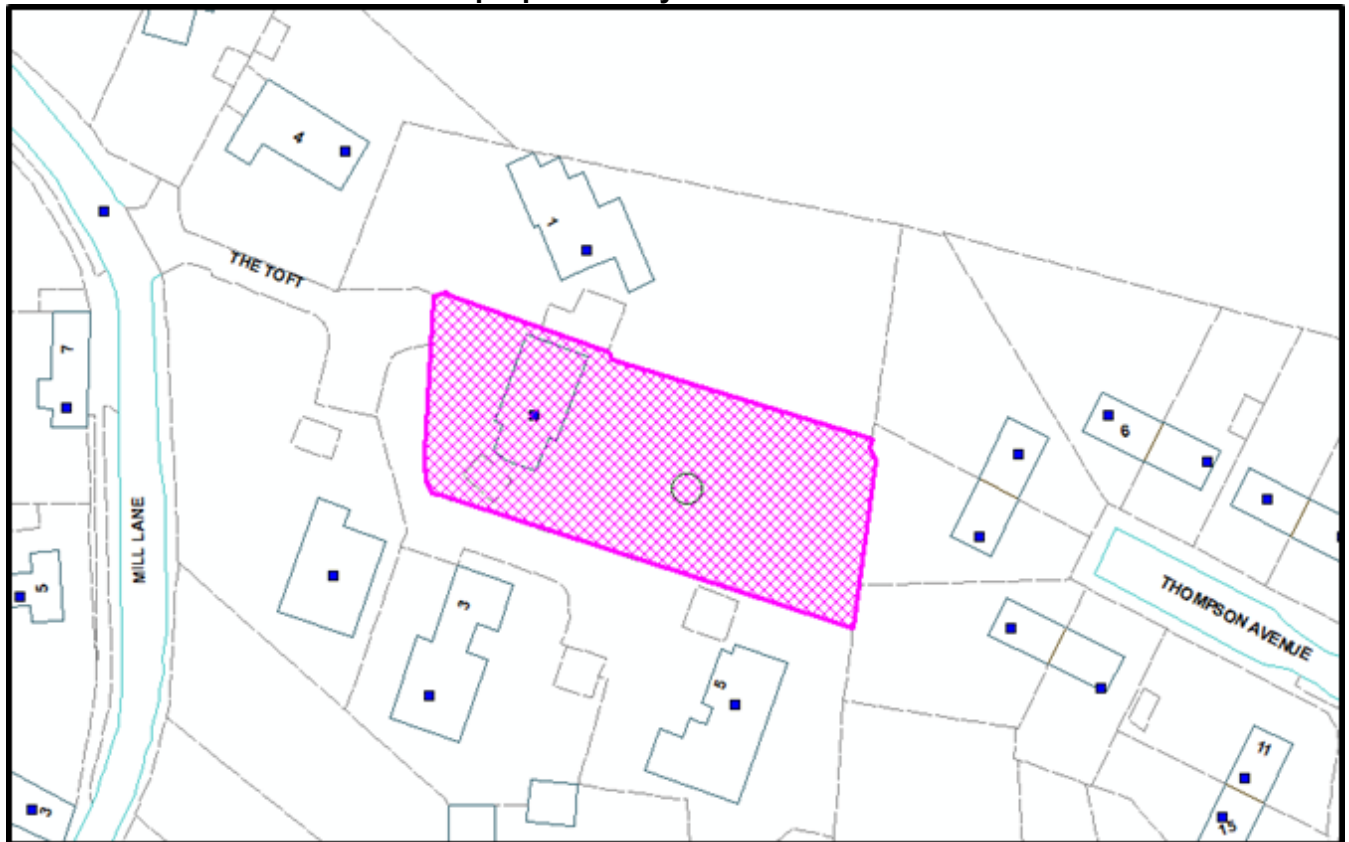
Date Registered:
22 February 2022
Consultation Expiry:
6 July 2022
8 Week Date:
19 April 2022
Extension of Time:
4 August 2022

Applicant:
Mr And Mrs A And E Thomas

Case Officer:
Robin Forrester

Recommendation:
PERMIT

Site Location - Plan for indicative purposes only



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RECOMMENDATION- PERMIT, subject to the following condition(s):

- 1 Time
- 2 Plans
- 3 Materials
- 4 Parking / turning
- 5 Studio ancillary use
- 6 No balcony use

MAIN REPORT

1. Proposals and Background

The Toft, off Mill Lane, Belton, is a private drive serving a small cul-de-sac of modern bungalows, each set within substantial grounds. It is situated on the north side of Belton, and The Toft rises slightly from Mill Lane, the drive having been purchased recently from the Crown and upgraded.

The application site - No. 2 The Toft - is visible from Mill Lane. The dwelling currently has bedrooms located within the roof, which are served by a range of rooflights, although there is limited headroom and the applicant wishes to increase the headroom on the upper floor. There is a detached garage to the side.

The proposal is to amend the roof structure to allow full height accommodation within the roof, and the dwelling is to be re-profiled and extended. The dwelling would be rendered - with brick elements to the new extensions - and there would be extensive use of glazing with a feature entrance/staircase. There would be a modest extension to the front of the dwelling and dormers within the roof, and to the rear a further dormer and a covered balcony area, with a flat roof ground floor extension with roof-lantern.

A new garage is to be attached to the side elevation that contains further accommodation / study and is to be attached to the dwelling with a glazed link.

There were initial concerns regarding overlooking from the walk-out balcony, however this has been omitted from the amended plans which now show privacy screens to the sides of the roof structure that covers the glazed doors, and the doors would be fitted with 'Juliet' type balconies to allow light in, but preventing egress on the flat roof extension below.

The application is referred to Committee at the request of Cllr Rushton.

Planning History

There is no relevant planning history.

2. Publicity

9 neighbours notified.

3. Summary of Consultations and Representations Received

Belton Parish Council

Object, Councillors have raised concerns that the application is not subservient to the existing dwelling and that concerns have also been expressed about access during the construction. It has been noted that the design is not in keeping with the character of other dwellings on the site. The plans show an extensive balcony at the rear of the property and there are concerns regarding privacy for the neighbouring properties.

7 letters of objection have been received from local residents and the Beltoft Residents Association Co Ltd in relation to the original submission, which make the following points:-

- The access road is in joint ownership (residents association) and was in a poor state when purchased from the Crown. It is maintained by residents
- Applicant only has a right of way across the first part of the drive, and no request has been made to use the turning head - the applicant has indicated that construction vehicles can reverse up the drive
- Concerned at safety issues associated with delivery and construction parking - 18 vehicles currently use the Toft along with pedestrians and this constitutes a genuine danger
- Conditions on the new bungalows in The Toft required turning such that vehicles did not have to reverse for highway safety reasons
- Site is not flat and a retaining wall for the garage would be needed - it is too close to the association's fence
- Services run in the drive and any subsidence could impact on services and inconvenience for residents
- The Toft is a small cul-de-sac of similar modern bungalows, and the proposal would significantly change this with increased ridge height, steeper pitch, garage with greater accommodation, introduction of front and rear dormers, atrium-style glazing, rear glazing and balcony, and render and zinc cladding materials that differ
- The dwelling would be out of character and not of sympathetic style and scale to other bungalows, and is the first property in The Toft and visible from Mill Lane
- It would dominate the other bungalows
- Contrary to Local Plan policies
- Construction would be a danger and would damage the road surface
- Glazed upper floor doors and balcony would allow views in to neighbouring property home and garden and cause severe overlooking and loss of privacy
- 2-storey glazed link to the garage would allow views of other property and further loss of privacy
- The changed position of the garage is near a bend in the road, and would obstruct the view of vehicles leaving a neighbouring drive
- Development would dominate the Toft and impact on the street-scene
- Planning permission in 2005 on Nos. 5 and 6 The Toft were not allowed roof accommodation due to impact on the neighbours
- Materials out of keeping

One comment has been received in relation to the amended plans, which states:-

- No material difference from the initial application that address original concerns. Remain of the same opinion that there would be loss of privacy and the extension would have an overbearing impact on the street

All responses from statutory consultees and third parties are available to view in full on the Council's website.

4. Relevant Planning Policy

National Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan (2021)

The following policies of the adopted Local Plan are consistent with the policies in the NPPF and should be afforded weight in the determination of this application:

S2 - Settlement Hierarchy
D1 - Design of new development
D2 - Amenity
IF4 - Transport Infrastructure and new development
IF7 - Parking provision and new development

Other

Good Design for North West Leicestershire Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

5. Assessment

Principle of Development

The site is located within Limits to Development as defined by the adopted Local Plan where the principle of extensions to existing dwellings are acceptable, subject to all other planning matters being addressed.

The key issues will be the design, the impact on the neighbours and highway safety.

Scale and Design

The Good Design for North West Leicestershire SPD states that extensions should be subservient additions to the main dwellinghouse that are narrower in width, shorter in depth and lower in height. It also states that the proposed materials should be similar to the existing materials.

The above is however only guidance and whilst a subservient extension can be useful - where it is essential that the host dwelling remain apparent, such as in relation to a listed building - it is not the only design solution as extension can be appropriate if they carefully match the original such that it appears as if the dwelling was always constructed in that manner, or an extension can be a complete contrast. The NPPF indicates that the Local Planning Authority should not seek to impose their views on design, nor stifle innovation. The main factor is that any extension should be visually appropriate for its surroundings and be an acceptable design.

No. 2 The Toft is a modern bungalow similar to the neighbours and is of a modern design with a shallow-pitched roof, that has no particular architectural merit, and is not of a strong character that would be desirable to retain, and therefore the proposed design, whilst different from the host building, is not unattractive, and would create a character of its own. The fact that it is a different design and materials does not necessarily mean that it is harmful.

The alterations to the dwelling would maintain the ridged/pitched roof and gable design of the host dwelling, although the roof is a more appropriate pitch that allows for full height accommodation within the roof. Whilst it will be higher than its neighbours in the cul-de-sac, the area is one that is very mixed with modern bungalows, 2-storey houses and a dormer bungalow.

When viewed from public vantage points, the proposal would not look so out of place that it would be harmful, and the area is not a sensitive site, within a Conservation area or area of other strong character, and the scale and design is considered to be visually acceptable.

Overall, the proposal is considered to have an acceptable design that would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing property and the surrounding area. Therefore, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy D1 of the adopted Local Plan, the Council's Good Design SPD and the advice contained in the NPPF.

Impact upon Residential Amenity

During the course of the application, due consideration has been given to the impacts of the proposal on neighbouring properties amenities and the introduction of a walk-out balcony above the ground-floor flat-roof addition would, officers considered, have resulted in an unacceptable loss of privacy for the adjacent dwelling.

The amended plans are considered to resolve this with the use of Juliet balconies around the glazed doors, to allow light to access the bedrooms and ventilation, but without the ability for the occupants to walk out and directly overlook the neighbours. Privacy screens are proposed to be provided to prevent side viewing from the wide glazed doors.

Whilst there are other dormer windows and a glazed link to the garage, due to the distances to other dwellings, it is not considered that any appreciable loss of privacy or overlooking would occur that would warrant a refusal of planning permission. The proposed extensions are not considered to result in any detrimental impacts on the neighbouring property.

Overall, the proposal is not considered to result in significant impacts upon surrounding residential amenity. Therefore, the proposed development is considered to be in accordance with Policy D2 of the adopted Local Plan and the Council's Good Design SPD.

Highway Considerations

The County Highway Authority is not consulted on domestic extensions due to the scale of the proposal, and the application was assessed against the Leicestershire County Council Highways Standing Advice document.

The site is served by a private drive, however an appropriate level of parking/on-site turning is provided, and the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in relation to Policies IF4 and IF7 of the adopted Local Plan as well as the Leicestershire Highway Design Guide.

Whilst some of the points made by objectors relate to potential parking/access problems during the construction, as well as pedestrian safety on The Toft (a private drive), any issues are likely to be temporary, and would be unlikely to spill out on to the public highway nearby on Mill Lane.

Whilst a construction management plan condition would sometimes be imposed on a larger development scheme, given this is a householder development, such control would not be considered proportionate and it will be the applicants' and their contractors' responsibility to manage the project safely.

Other matters

Some of the other objections have referred to private/legal matters such as legal access along The Toft, potential damage to services and structural stability of the road. However such matters are not a material planning consideration as the road is a private one, and private/legal matters are for resolution between the applicant and other road owners; no public interest is involved and protection of private rights is not the concern of the Local Planning Authority.

Conclusions

The principle of the development is acceptable. The proposal is not considered to have any significant detrimental design, residential amenity or highway impacts. There are no other relevant material planning considerations that indicate planning permission should not be granted. The proposal is deemed to comply with the relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan and the advice in the NPPF. It is therefore recommended that the application be permitted.