
2021/1657

Applicant: Steve Clarke

Change to use to 1 no. residential dwelling

139 Doncaster Road, Barnsley, S70 1UF

Site Description

The site is in relation to no. 139 Doncaster Road which is located approximately 1 Mile to East of the Town Centre with Doncaster Road serving as a key artery connecting the Eastern wards of Barnsley and the surrounding area to the Town Centre. Doncaster road eventually leads Stairfoot roundabout which is 1.3 miles to the East. The surrounding area is primarily residential, largely characterised by stone/stone-fronted terraced or semi-detached properties. However, Doncaster Road also serves several commercial uses with a convenience store (retail), a hairdressers, a gym and a Working Mens' Club all on Doncaster Road and within walking distance from the site.

The building itself has formerly, and historically, been used as a shop (retail). It is slightly raised up from the road with 4 stone steps at the front leading up to a stone platform adjacent to the frontage of the building. Off-street parking provision is limited on this section of Doncaster Road with the site not comprising of any formalised parking provision. To the rear is a grassed garden with several small scattered trees, with a high red brick wall on the Western boundary line.

The site has planning history with the most recent application being decided last year – app ref 2021/0554 for the change of use of the building to 3 x apartments.





Site History

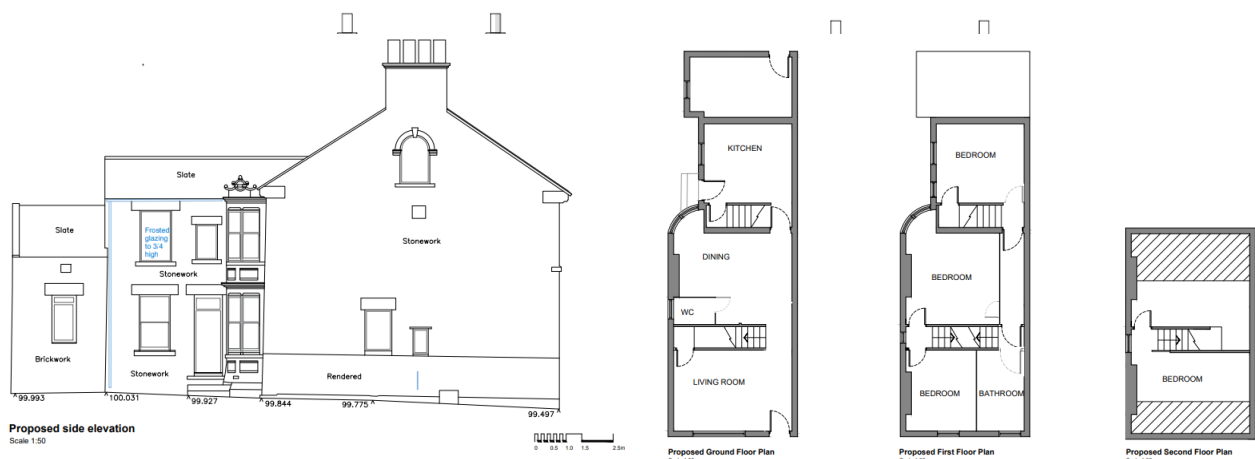
2020/01305 – Change of use to 6 person House of Multiple Occupation (Refused)

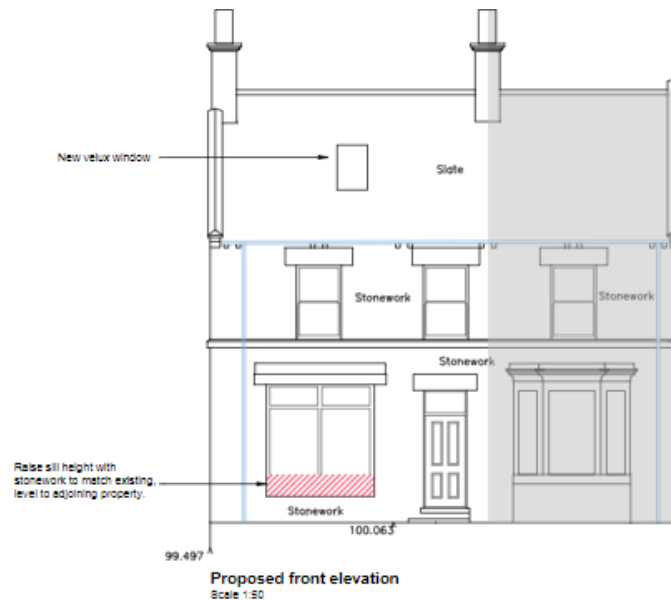
2021/0554 – Conversion of building into 3 no. flats (1no., 2 bed on the ground floor, and 2 x 1 beds on the first floor/roofspace) including first floor extension to rear (Approved with conditions)

Proposed Development

The applicant is seeking permission to change the use of the building from a shop (retail) into a residential dwelling. The application can be seen a variation to the previously approved scheme (2021/0554) for the change of use into 3 x apartments with a rear extension. The proposed scheme does not seek to extend the building, but the application is similar in its character to the extant approval. The proposed change of use will turn the building into a 4-bedroomed house with 3 x bedrooms on the first floor and one in the roof space. The first floor will also contain a bathroom, with the ground floor being split between a living room, dining room, kitchen and downstairs toilet. To the rear of the kitchen is a single storey rear extension which is currently used for outdoor storage.

The application has been slightly amended to show a 3-quarters frosted glass window will be added to one of the side elevation bedroom windows on the first floor. Other external changes include the addition of a roof light to the front and rear roof slopes of the existing building with the windowsill under the existing window on the ground floor front elevation being raised with matching stonework. The site has also been amended to show that a 2m high close-boarded fence is to be installed on the Eastern boundary of the rear garden/curtilage, providing physical and visual separation between the site and neighbouring property (no. 141).





Policy Context

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The development plan consists of the adopted Local Plan and Joint Waste Plan. The Council has also adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Planning Guidance Documents, which are other material considerations

Local Plan

The Local Plan (adopted January 2019), alongside the Joint Waste Plan and relevant neighbourhood plans, form the statutory development plan for Barnsley. It establishes policies and proposals for the development and use of land up to the year 2033 and will be used when considering planning applications and to coordinate investment decisions that affect the towns, villages and countryside of Barnsley. The Local Plan supersedes the remaining saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (adopted in the year 2000) and the Core Strategy (adopted in 2011). In reference to this application, the following policies are relevant:

Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development – sets out principles when considering development proposals.

Policy GD1: General Development – sets out appropriate proposals for development.

Policy D1: High quality design and place making – sets overarching design principles for the borough to ensure that development is appropriate to its context, and improves what needs improving, whilst protecting what is good about what we have.

T3: New Development and Sustainable Travel – New Development will be expected to:

- Be located and designed to reduce the need to travel, be accessible to public transport and meet the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.
- Provide at least the minimum levels of parking for cycles, motorbikes, scooters, mopeds and disabled people set out in the relevant Supplementary Planning Document.

Policy T4: New Development and Highway Improvement - New development will be expected to be designed and built to provide all transport users within and surrounding the development with safe, secure and convenient access and movement.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- Design of housing development

- Parking
- Sustainable Travel

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In respect of this application, the policies above are considered to reflect the 4th Core Principle in the NPPF, which relates to high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. They also reflect the advice in paragraph 124 (general design considerations) and paragraph 130, which state that 'permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions'.

Other material considerations

South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide - 2011

Consultations

Highways DC – 139 Doncaster Road has no off-street parking provision and within the vicinity of the site there are waiting restrictions in place for Monday to Saturday AM and PM peak times. The site currently has a retail use and also has extant permission (2021/0554) for conversion to 3no. flats; permission is now sought for the change of use to a single four bedroom property. Given that the site is in a sustainable location within close proximity of Barnsley town centre and that the majority of other properties within the vicinity of the site are residential dwellings without off-street parking provision and also taking into account the existing use and recently permitted conversion to flats, there would be no substantial grounds for refusal in terms of lack of parking provision. As such, the proposals are considered to have minimal highway implications and are therefore considered acceptable from a highways perspective.

Ward Councillors – No comments

Representations

Neighbour consultation letters were sent to neighbouring residents with a site notice placed nearby; no comments were received.

Assessment

Principle of development

The site is located within the Urban Fabric of Barnsley where no specific site allocation has been made. The site lies on Doncaster Road on the South-west outskirts of Barnsley Town Centre, with the road acting as a key artery into the Town Centre from the East of the borough, eventually leading to Stairfoot roundabout. The surrounding area primarily being made up of residential dwellings but there is a mix of commercial uses including a convenience store, retail, a gym and a working men's club which are all on Doncaster Road and are within walking distance. The site itself was formerly a shop/retail use. The application seeks of change the use of the building from the former retail use into a residential dwelling which in keeping with the surrounding area and is considered to be in compliance with Local Plan Policy GD1: General Development.

Residential Amenity

The application follows on from the extant planning permission (2021/0554) with the site still having permission for the change of use of the building into 3 x apartments including a first-floor rear extension. However, given the change from apartments to a singular dwelling, there has been some alterations to the

internal layout of the building. Most notably, part of the first floor has been approved as an open plan living, kitchen and dining room and a separate shower room under 2021/0554 but is now proposed as two separate bedrooms. One of the windows previously served the approved first floor bathroom and was obscure glazed but is now proposed as serving one of the bedrooms. This would marginally increase the overlooking impact to the neighbouring property at no. 141 and its rear garden as it would now create an extra habitable room window on the Eastern elevation. All windows on the Eastern elevation face onto the rear elevation of no. 141 and its rear garden at a very close distance (c.4m), but clearly the precedent for first floor habitable room windows on the side elevation has been set through the previous application. Nonetheless, the additional window will further impact on the privacy enjoyed by the neighbouring property. For this reason, concerns were raised with the agent who then submitted an amended plan showing frosted glass on three-quarters of the window to slightly reduce this. This has ensured that the proposed development has a similar impact on the neighbouring property as the extant approved would have. The window is a secondary window for the bedroom with the other one providing some outlook for future residents.

There are no extensions planned for the property and therefore there will be no increased impact to neighbouring properties, however a 2m high closeboarded fence is planned on the Eastern boundary of the rear garden/curtilage. This has the significant benefit that it allows for adequate levels of privacy between the applicant's property and the neighbouring properties but will lead to a slight increase in overshadowing to the neighbouring properties – alongside being close to the ground floor rear elevation windows of no. 141. That being said, the fence is limited to 2m in height and the applicant would benefit from permitted developments which allows for boundary treatments up to 2m in height on boundary lines when it is not adjacent to a highway. As such, this is considered acceptable with a small impact on no.141 in term of additional overshadowing and slight loss of outlook to the closest habitable room window on the rear elevation.

The internal room sizes of the individual rooms and the total of the entire house are up to the minimum standards expected within the SYRDG for 4-bedroomed properties, with the rear garden area measuring 100sqm which is greater than the minimum 60sqm expected for properties of this size.

The proposed development now has a very similar impact on neighbouring residential amenity as the extant approval with the obscure glazing to one of the first floor windows on the side elevation which now serves a bedroom, rather than the previously approved bathroom. This is now considered to have a neutral impact on the proposal's impact on the neighbouring property compared to the extant approval. The proposed development is in compliance with Local Plan Policy GD1: General Development and the SPD for Design of Housing Development and is acceptable in terms of residential amenity.

Visual Amenity

The development is primarily for the change of use to the building but does include some smaller extant alterations including alterations to the front ground floor window to increase the height of the windowsill with matching stonework, the addition of a three-quarters obscure glazed window to the side-facing window at first floor level and the addition of a rooflight to both the front and rear roof slopes of the existing building. The site plan has also been amended to show that a 2m high closeboarded fence will be situated on the Eastern boundary line of the rear garden/curtilage.

The aforementioned changes to the building are all minor and do not significantly change the character of the building. The applicant proposes to increase the windowsill below the front window on the ground floor which is acceptable given the matching stonework will be used – which will also be conditioned should the application be approved. The addition of the 2m close boarded fence to the rear is welcomed as currently there is no physical separation between the site's rear garden and the neighbouring rear garden, which at the time of the Site Visit (March 2022) was untidy. This will be a new feature but is a typical feature for boundary treatments for domestic properties.

Overall, the majority of the changes to building will be internal with the small number of external changes having no significant detrimental impact on the character of the building, which will be retained. The proposed development is in compliance with Local Plan Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making and is acceptable in terms of visual amenity.

Highways

No off-street parking spaces are proposed for the dwelling which is not in compliance with the Council's SPD for Parking and Design of Housing Development which require 2 off-street parking spaces for properties with 3+ bedrooms. However, consideration has to be given the sustainable location of the site on the outskirts of the Town Centre, which good access to regular public transport, as well as a number of facilities and services within walking distance of the site. Furthermore, the building previously accommodated a commercial use at ground floor and a residential use above, which arguably could have generated more vehicle trips and demand for parking than the current proposal. The SPD under 'Conversions of building to residential accommodation' states that conversions of buildings to flats will be allowed where satisfactory provision is made for off-street parking or the development is considered unlikely to give rise to unacceptable conditions of congestion or safety on the adjoining public highway.

Additionally, the site has extant approval for the change of use of the building into 3 x apartments which would have generated a requirement for at least 1 parking space per unit – three in this instance, which is greater than the 2 parking spaces required for the proposed development.

On balance, whilst not ideal, given the sustainable location of the site, the previous and proposed uses as well as the extant planning permission, a refusal on the lack of parking alone could not be justified in this instance.

Sustainable Travel

The Council's SPD for Sustainable Travel and Local Plan Policy T3: New Development and Sustainable Travel requires one EV charging point for new dwellings but the site can not accommodate any parking spaces on the site – which has been covered in the above section. The site is in sustainable location on the outskirts of Barnsley Town Centre with numerous public transport links in close proximity, and services nearby. As such, whilst it is not ideal, the lack of the required EV charging point is acceptable in this case given that no parking spaces are planned.

Conclusion

The application is for the change of use of a former retail unit into a 4-bedroomed residential dwelling. The site has planning history, most recently 2021/0554 which is for the change of use into 3 x apartments which is similar in character to the proposed development. However, given the change to a singular dwelling, the internal layout has been altered which has resulted in an additional habitable room window on the Eastern elevation facing onto the neighbouring property at no. 141 and its rear garden at a close proximity (4m). This is slightly concerning as it makes the overlooking impact marginally worse, but clearly the precedent has already been set by the extant permission. That being said, in the interest of neutrality and ensuring the proposed development does not have a greater overlooking impact on no. 141 than the extant approval, the agent as submitted a plan which shows that the window which previously served a bathroom (under 2021/0554) to be three-quarters obscure glazed.

The development is primarily for the change of use of the building, which is acceptable in principle in this location, but there are other smaller external alterations planned. These are minor and include the aforementioned obscure glazing to a first-floor side elevation window, the addition of a roof light to the existing front and rear roof slopes, and an alteration to the shop window on the frontage including increasing the height of the windowsill below the window with matching stonework. A site plan has also been submitted which shows the addition of a 2m high blackboarded fence on the Eastern boundary line of the rear garden/curtilage. This is a new feature to the site but it is a common boundary treatment for domestic properties and would fall under permitted development rights in any case. There is no off-street parking spaces planned for the dwelling which is not in compliance with the Council's Parking SPD which requires at least 2 for 4+ bedroomed properties. However, the site resides on the outskirts of Barnsley Town Centre, on a main road with numerous public transport links nearby and several services within walking distance. The existing/former use of a retail would also have generated some vehicular movements within the area/to the site and the proposed is not considered to generate a significant increase to the amount of movements expected.

All things considered, the proposed development is very similar in terms of its character to the extant approval (2021/0554) and the agent has worked with the LPA to make changes which improve the privacy to the neighbouring property at no. 141. The proposed development is considered to be acceptable and is recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Approve subject to conditions