

2022/0088

Mr F Nawaz

Cope Street Surgery, 2A Cope Street, Barnsley, S70 4HY

Change of use of former doctors' surgery to ground floor offices and 2no flats on the upper floors and associated extensions and alterations including two and a half storey extension to the rear, upward extension of a section of the existing roof, single storey extensions to the rear and side, replacement windows and provision of shop front

Site Description

The application relates to a part 2.5 storey, 2 storey and single storey building located within a predominantly residential area. The building is currently vacant but was most recently used as a doctor's surgery. To the front of the property is a small walkway with pedestrian access to Mount Vernon Road currently restricted due to boundary treatments. Between the front boundary and the highway are several parking spaces accessed directly from Mount Vernon Road. Adjacent to those parking spaces is a vehicular access into the site with a parking area to the side(south)/rear of the building. To the rear of the site are single storey extensions which formed the entrance and waiting rooms/reception associated with the doctor's surgery.

The site is located on a corner plot with Mount Vernon Road to the East and Highstone Road to the South. Immediately to the North is a row of 2 storey terraced dwellings and to the West, beyond the rear boundary, are bungalows with an element of underbuild which are built on a higher level than the application site. Opposite the site is a sub station and small area of Green Space which separates Mount Vernon Road with Sheffield Road (A61).

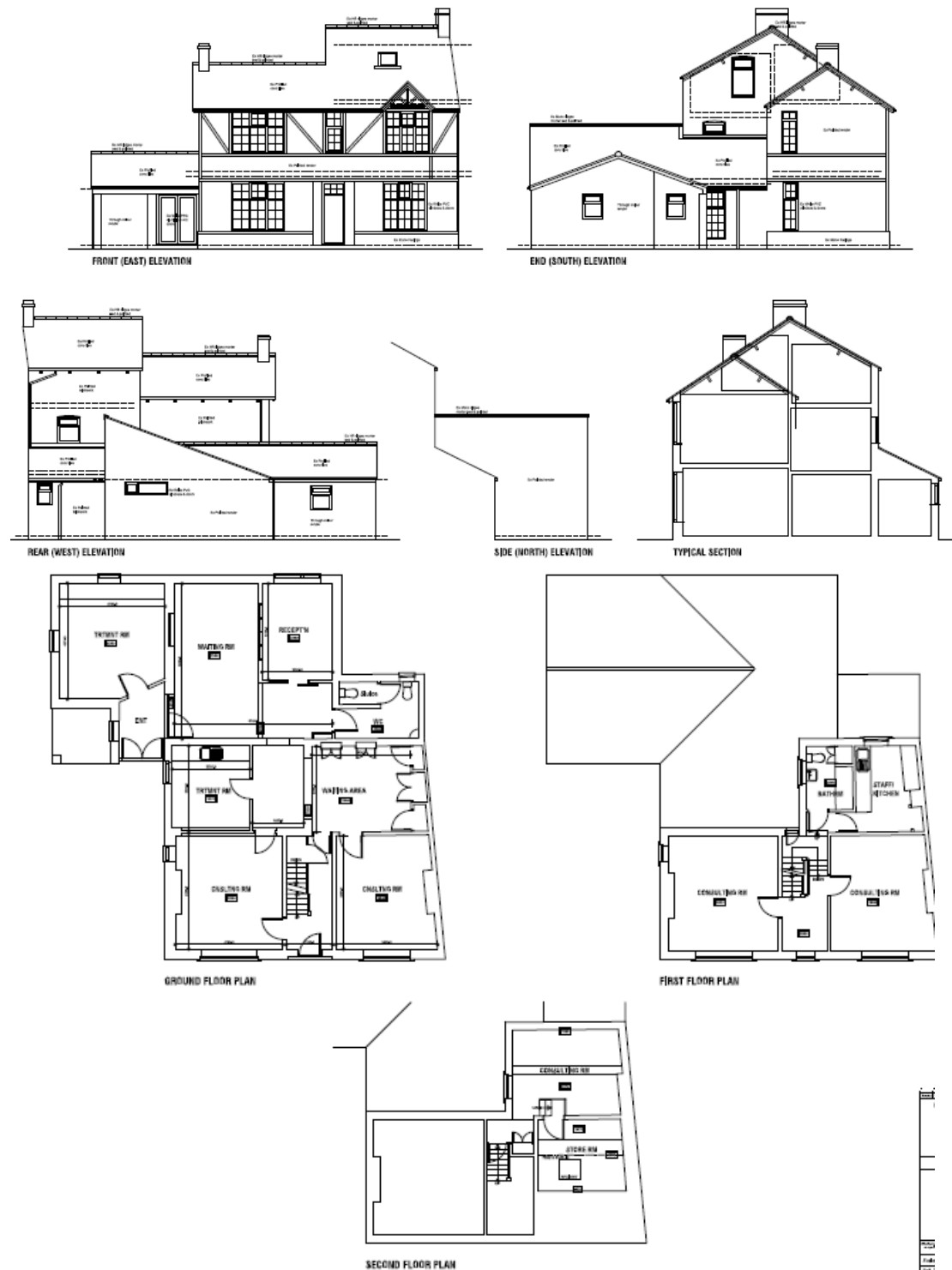


Proposed Development

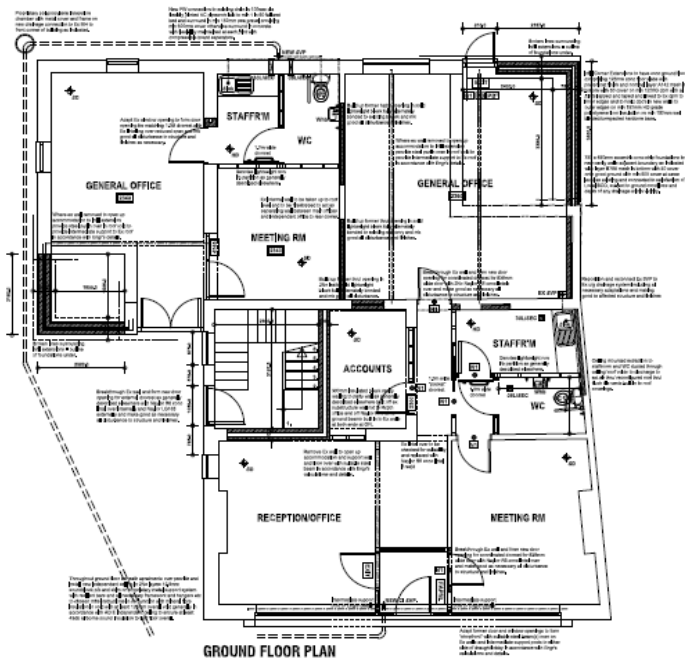
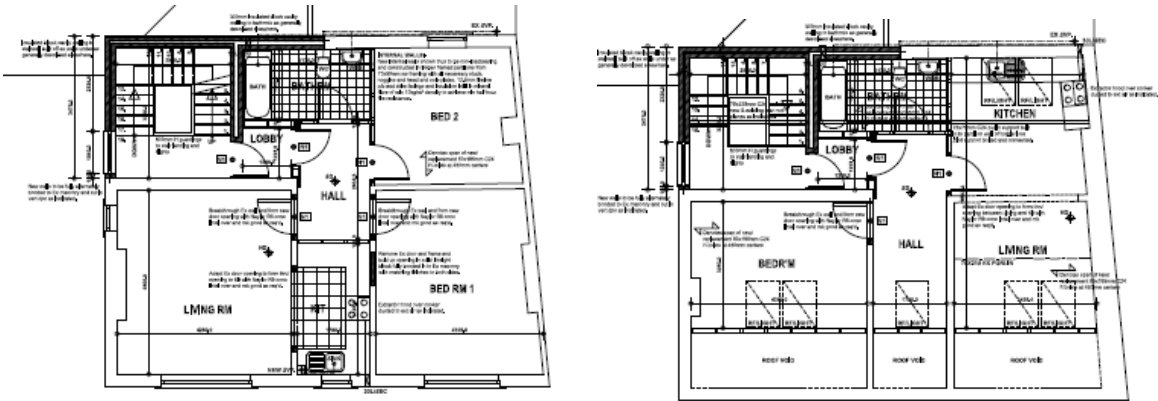
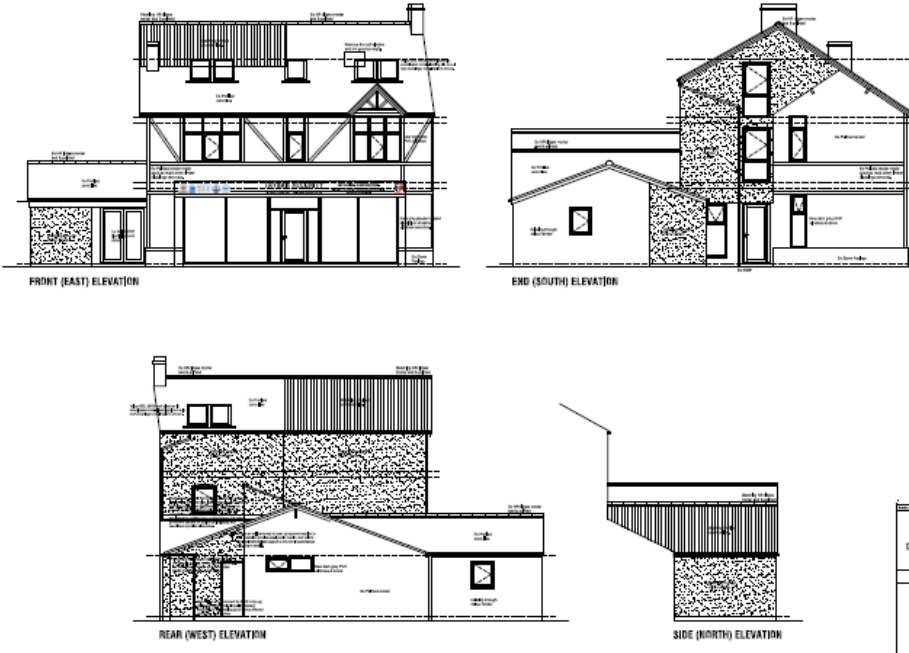
The applicant seeks permission to change the use of the former doctor's surgery to 2no ground floor offices units and 2no flats on the upper floors. The first floor flat would have 2 bedrooms and the flat within the roof space would have 1 bedroom to facilitate the proposed uses a 2.5 storey extension is proposed in the South West corner of the existing 2.5storey building and also 2no. single storey infill extensions to the North West and South East of the single storey element are proposed.

A new 'shop front' would be created on the front elevation at ground floor level with an entrance point for each of the office spaces. Parking for the flats would be to the front of the building and the offices would have 6no. spaces in the existing car park, access from Mont Vernon Road.

Existing



Proposed



therefore, the following policies are relevant:

Policy T4 New development and Transport Safety

Policy SD1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

Policy LG2 The Location of Growth

Policy GD1 General Development

Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making.

Policy Poll1 Pollution Control and Protection

Policy CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction

SPD's

Those of relevance to this application are as follows:

- Design of Housing Development
- Parking
- Sustainable Travel

Other

South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide

NPPF

The NPPF 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.

Paragraphs of particular relevance to this application include:

Para 7 - The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Para 11 – Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Para 92 - Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places

Para 111 - 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.

Para 126 - The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable

development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Consultations

Highways – No objections

Reg Services – No objections subject to condition

Ward Councillors – No objections

Representations

Neighbour notification letters were sent to 25 surrounding neighbouring properties and a site notice was erected within the immediate area. As a result 2no. letters of objections have been received and 4no. letters of support. The main objections raised are;

- Loss of light/overshadowing
- Loss of privacy/overlooking
- Additional cars will result in noise and disturbance, increased pollution and parking problems within the area
- Potential for antisocial behaviour
- Vermin, noise and mess during the construction phase
- Out of character of the area, particularly the 2.5 storey extension

The letters of support encourage brining the property back into use with some requests for external lighting and a Christmas tree bracket on the front of the building.

Assessment

Principle of development

Local Plan policy I2 'Educational and Community Facilities' states such uses will be protected from development unless it can be demonstrated that the sites and premises are no longer required by the existing or an alternative community facility. However, it should be noted that a doctor's surgery is not specifically listed within the policy as a community use. In addition, the surgery has already closed and there are surgeries within the immediate area including one on Sheffield Road and the recently constructed Burleigh Medical Centre. Furthermore, the scheme includes 2no. commercial units which could accommodate uses which would be of benefit to the community.

Given there is a commercial element to the proposal, planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

It is recognised that office accommodation is listed as a main town centre use in the NPPF and that might have meant carrying out a sequential test in some circumstances. However, it is noted that the provision of medical or health services, principally to visiting members of the public is listed as a Class E use, as such, the ground floor change of use/s to Class E uses could be carried out as a form of Permitted Development – minus the extensions and shop front alterations.

The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

All new dwellings proposed must ensure that living conditions and overall standards of residential amenity are provided or maintained to an acceptable level both for new residents and those existing, particularly in respect of the levels of mutual privacy. In addition, development will only be granted where the development would maintain visual amenity and not create traffic problems or prejudice the possible future development of a larger area of land.

Residential Amenity

The proposed use of 2no. modest flats and 2no. commercial units would not result in significant noise and disturbance over and above the previous use of the site, especially given the nature and density of the surrounding area.

It is noted that the proposal incorporates a 2.5 storey extension, however, the extension is an infill and reflects the existing 2 storey element of the building. The existing building separates this extension from the terrace row to the North and the bungalows to the West are built on a higher level, are 90 degrees to the extension and there is a separation distance over 12m, as such, the 2.5 storey extension would not significantly increase overshadowing or be an overbearing feature.

In terms of the single storey extensions they are both relatively modest and one is a small infill in the South Eastern corner of the existing single storey projection and is located between the building and car park, as such, it would not have a significant impact on residential amenity. Especially given the neighbouring properties to the West are built on a higher level.

It is noted the second single storey extension would be located immediately adjacent to the side boundary shared with No. 2, would be orientated to the South and project beyond its rear elevation. However, the extension would be an infill with the existing extensions wrapping around it. In addition, the eaves height of the extension would be relatively modest and the roof would slope away from the boundary, as such, it would not increase overshadowing significantly and would not be an overbearing feature, in accordance with Local Plan Policy GD1.

One of the representations cites overlooking and loss of privacy given the introduction of habitable room windows on the first and second floors serving the proposed flats. There are no habitable room windows proposed on the Northern elevation and the windows on the front (eastern) and side (southern) elevations face the highway and exceed the separation distances to the neighbouring dwellings. In terms of the Western elevation there are 2no. habitable room windows/rooflights proposed, one serving a bedroom on the first floor and one serving a kitchen on the second floor.

It is noted the neighbouring bungalow has windows and a conservatory on the elevation facing the site but they are on a side, not principle, elevation. In any case the windows do not directly face that elevation and are over 10m from the boundary of the neighbouring private amenity space, in accordance with the SPD. Views of the garden at number 2 to the North would be at an acute angle and partially blocked by their rear extension, in any case the situation would not be significantly different that the adjoining neighbour on the opposite side of number 2.

With regards to the future occupants of the flats, there is a small shortfall below the requirement of the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide relating to the living/dining/kitchen areas of both flats, however, the shortfall is only circa 2m² and the overall floor areas of both flats exceed the requirements. In addition, the rooms all have access to natural light and have an outlook.

There is no external amenity space proposed which is contrary to the Guidance within the SPD, however, given the size of the flats they are unlikely to appeal to families. Furthermore, there are green spaces and parks within the immediate area. The site is also relatively close to Barnsley Town Centre with all the facilities and amenities associated with it. As such, on balance, the lack of outdoor space would not be significant enough to warrant a refusal in this case.

Visual Amenity

The existing building is part 2.5 storey, part 2 storey and part single storey. The proposed 2.5 storey extension and ridge increase would infill an area adjacent to the existing 2.5 storey element and would result in the roof ridge running at the same level rather than having a step in it, as it currently the case. As such, the 2.5 storey extension harmonises and sits comfortably in terms of design and scale with the host building and arguably provides additional balance, in accordance Local Plan Policy D1.

The proposed single storey extensions act as infills to the existing single storey projection. They are of a scale and design that harmonise with the existing building and they are also set back from public vantage points and within relatively non-prominent positions.

In terms of the proposed shop frontage at ground floor level, it is proposed to replace the existing ground floor front elevation windows with larger areas of glazing and an entrance door with space for signage above. The size of the openings would differ from the existing fenestration but arguably the building would have more presence from the street and a defined entrance, plus a more modern appearance. It is also consistent with existing shop frontages within the immediate area.

There are minimal alterations around the curtilage of the building and to the car park.

As a result of the comments above, the visual amenity of the streetscene and the surrounding area would be maintained, in accordance with Local Plan Policy D1.

Highway Safety

The development proposes to utilise the existing parking areas to the side and front of the property although the frontage parking area is within the public highway, not the curtilage of the building. No changes are proposed in terms of vehicular access or with regard to the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles.

The proposals require a total of 8 off-street parking spaces (6no. for the Office use and 2no. for the residential use); a total of 6 spaces are to be provided within the site for the office use and the bank of 5 spaces to the front are annotated on the Block Plan as being the intended parking area for the flats. However, the use of these spaces by residents of this development cannot be guaranteed as they are available for use by the general public. Despite this, when taking into consideration the existing use of the site, its sustainable location within close proximity of Barnsley town centre and that the streets local to the site are free of waiting restrictions and not particularly heavily parked, the occasional displacement of parked vehicles onto the highway would be of little detriment to the free and safe flow of traffic.

It is therefore considered that the proposals do not adversely impact upon the highway and are acceptable from a highway's development control perspective.

Highways DM have raised no objections to the proposal, subject to conditions

Conclusion

Taking into account the relevant development plan policies and other material considerations, it is not considered that there are any significant and demonstrable adverse impacts that would outweigh the benefits associated with the granting of planning permission for the revised scheme. The proposal therefore complies with the development plan as a whole and the advice in the NPPF.

As such the scheme is considered to accord with policies and guidelines and is recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Grant planning permission subject to conditions