
2023/0380

Applicant: Ms Stephanie Dunlavy

Demolition of existing bungalows and erection of a pair of semi-detached bungalows

The Bungalow, 120B St. George's Road, Barnsley, S70 1HA

Site Description and background

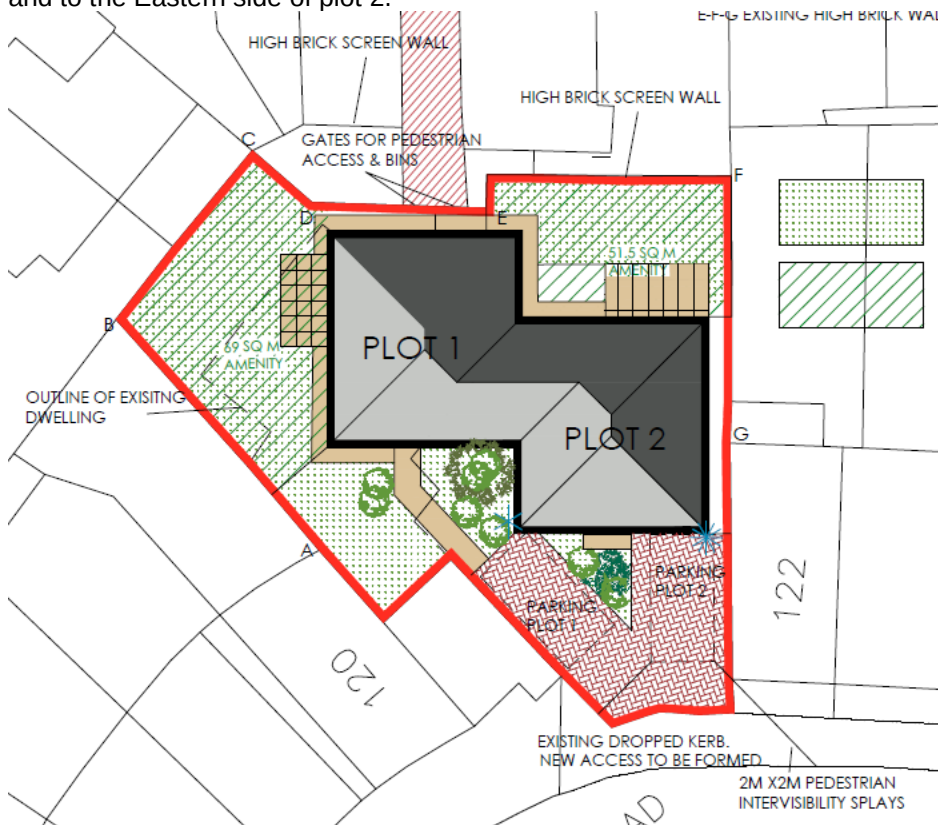
The application site is an infill plot located on St Georges Road, which is located in Urban Barnsley, in close proximity to Barnsley Town Centre – c.200 to the North. The surrounding area is predominantly residential characterised by terraced properties. The site currently comprises of a detached bungalow which is in a fairly dilapidated state, with the curtilage area overgrown. The dwelling faces North-West onto St Georges Road but there is a vehicular access into the site from Hawthorne Street to the South, under an archway connected to the neighbouring properties.

Relevant Site History

None

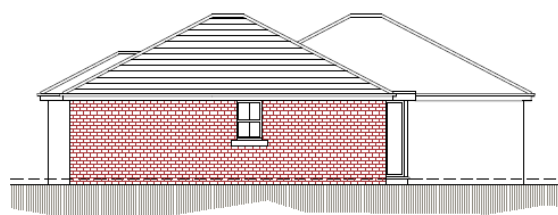
Proposed Development

The applicant is seeking approval for the demolition of the existing bungalow and redevelopment of the site including the erection of two semi-detached bungalows. The application has been amended on a couple of occasions, with the latest plans (Ref. 22-203-02 Rev. C) showing 2 x one-bedroomed bungalows with the entire living accommodation on the ground floor consisting of a bedroom, bathroom, 2 x storerooms and an open plan lounge/kitchen/dining room. Space is provided off the road for the formation of 2 x parking spaces and some limited landscaping is included within the design. Amenity space is located to the rear of plot 1 and to the Eastern side of plot 2.





NORTH ELEVATION



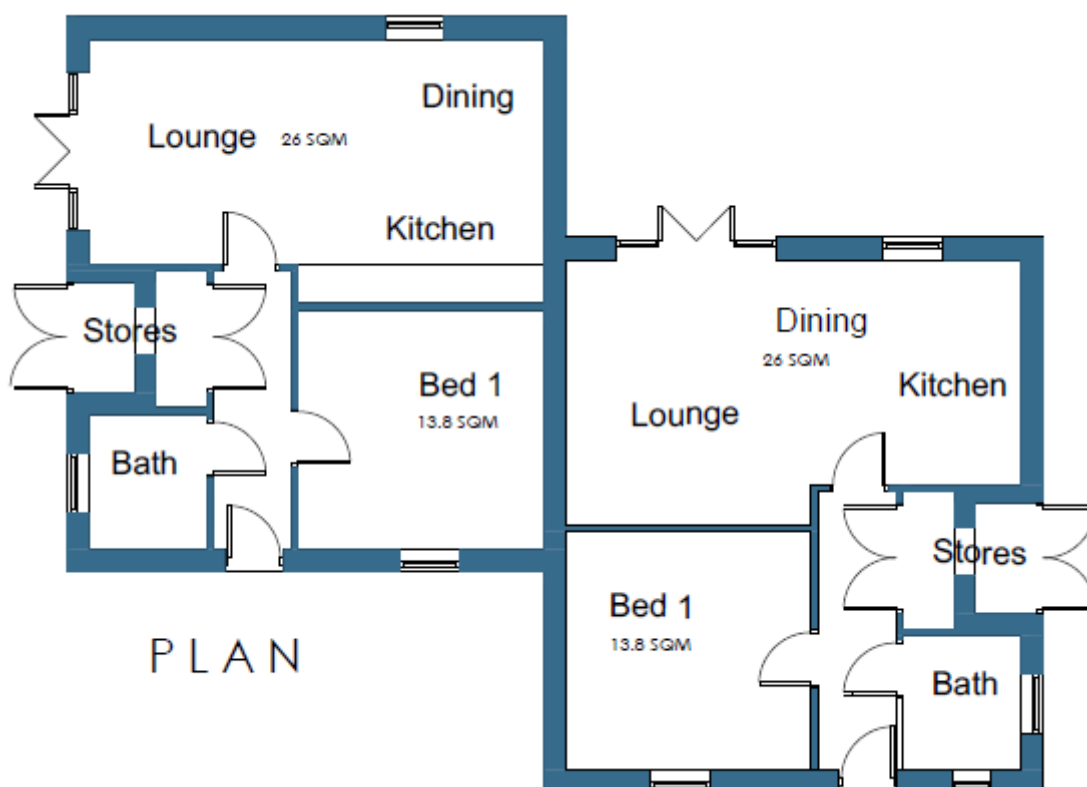
WEST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



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 Local Plan was adopted in January 2019 and is also now accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment and mixed-use sites). In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies and are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027 or earlier if circumstances, require it. The National Planning Policy

Framework represents up-to-date government planning policy and is a material consideration that must be taken into account where it is relevant to a planning application. The following policies are relevant:-

GD1 – General Development – Development will be approved if there will be no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents.

D1 – High Quality Design and Place Making – Development is expected to be of a high quality design and will be expected to respect, take advantage of and reinforce the distinctive, local character and other features of Barnsley.

SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development – When considering development proposals we will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. We will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

LG2: The Location of Growth - Priority will be given to development in the following locations:

Urban Barnsley;
Principal Towns of Cudworth, Wombwell, Hoyland, Goldthorpe (which includes Thurnscoe and Bolton on Dearne), Penistone and Royston; and
Villages.

Urban Barnsley will be expected to accommodate significantly more growth than any individual Principal Town, and the Principal Towns will be expected to accommodate significantly more growth than the villages, to accord with their place in the settlement hierarchy

H1: The Number of New Homes to be Built – The Council will seek to achieve the completion of at least 21,546 net additional homes during the period 2014 to 2033. A minimum five year supply of deliverable sites will be maintained.

H2: The Distribution of new Homes – The location of housing development accords with the settlement hierarchy and Policy LG2 regarding location of growth.

H4: Residential development on small non-allocated sites - Proposals for residential development on sites below 0.4 hectares (including conversions of existing buildings and creating dwellings above shops) will be allowed where the proposal complies with other relevant policies in the Plan.

H6: Housing Mix and Efficient use of Land – Housing proposals will be expected to include a broad mix of house size, type and tenure to help create mixed and balanced communities. Homes must be suitable for different types of households and be capable of being adapted to meet the changing needs of the population. Proposals to change the size and type of existing housing stock must maintain an appropriate mix of homes to meet local needs.

H9: Protection of Existing Larger Dwellings – Development within the curtilage of existing larger dwellings will be resisted where it will have an adverse impact on the setting of the original dwelling, and the size of the remaining garden area.

T4: New Development and Transport Safety – 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.

Poll1: Pollution Control – Development will be expected to demonstrate that it is not likely to result, directly or indirectly, in an increase in air, surface water and groundwater, noise, smell, dust, vibration, light or other pollution which would unacceptably affect or cause a nuisance to the natural and built environment or to people. Developers will be expected to minimise the effects of any possible pollution and provide mitigation measures where appropriate.

RE1: Low Carbon and Renewable Energy - All developments will be expected to seek to incorporate initially appropriate design measures, and thereafter decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy sources in order to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and should at least achieve the appropriate carbon compliance targets as defined in the Building Regulations.

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.

Other material considerations

South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide - 2011

Consultations

Biodiversity Officer – The initial bat survey recommended that two bat surveys are completed in total with an additional one therefore required for the development. Upon receipt of a second survey/amended report, ecology recommended approval of the application subject to the recommendations within the reports being strictly adhered to and conditions which require a bat and bird box scheme to be submitted and agreed by the LPA. Other informatives are recommended too.

The Coal Authority – Concurs with the recommendations of the CMRA in that coal mining legacy potentially poses a risk to the proposed development and that investigations are required, along with possible remedial measures, in order to ensure the safety and stability of the proposed development. A condition requiring intrusive investigations are recommended.

Demolition – No comments received.

Highway Drainage – No objections.

Highways DC – The site layout plan now shows that the required pedestrian visibility splays can be achieved and the refuse collection arrangements have been clarified – the plan shows that pedestrian access gates are to be provided thereby connecting each plot with the existing right of way to the north. The proposals now meet the minimum requirements in terms of vehicular and pedestrian access arrangements and no objection is raised from a highways point of view. Conditions and informatives are recommended.

Pollution Control – No comments received.

Public Rights of Way – There are no public rights of Way affected by the proposed development.

SYMAS - Concurs with the recommendations of the CMRA in that coal mining legacy potentially poses a risk to the proposed development and that investigations are required, along with possible remedial measures, in order to ensure the safety and stability of the proposed development. A condition requiring intrusive investigations are recommended.

Ward Councillors – Cllr Wright was approached by the applicant and agent and queried some elements of the development.

Representations

Neighbour consultation letters were sent to neighbouring residents with a site notice placed nearby. One comment was received raising issues with a different site that the developer has built dwellings on.

Assessment

Principle of development

The site is located in the Urban Fabric in an established residential area with the existing land use too being residential. Local Plan Policy H4 states that residential development on small non-allocated sites is acceptable subject to other Local Plan Policies being complied with. The development is therefore considered acceptable in land use policy terms subject to other local and national planning policies being complied with.

Residential Amenity

The site is a tight infill plot which is nestled in between several residential properties. There were initially concerns raised that the development would be too close to existing neighbours which the amended plans (Final Revision – Rev. C) sought to alleviate. The proposed layout of the development showed that the separation distance for plot 2 met the minimum criteria and plot 1 was equal to the existing bungalow (showed as an outline on the proposed site plan).

Local Plan Policies GD1, D1, H6 and NPPF paragraphs 8b and 134 seek for residential development to raise the design standard in the area, contribute to creating mixed and balanced communities and should foster well-designed, beautiful and safe spaces by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations.

The internal floor space is in line with the minimum internal spacing standard required for dwellings of this size as required in the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide, and the external amenity space meets the minimum criteria within the Council's SPD for Design of Housing Development.

However, the site is tight, completely enclosed on all sides by existing residential properties with limited outlook from both properties, particularly the rear elevation of plot 2 which faces onto the rear boundary brick wall at a distance of 5m, and just meets the minimum external spacing standard for amenity space (51.5sqm). Additionally, there is limited space within the site for soft landscaping with a very small area to the immediate front of the sole window serving the proposed bedrooms, which creates a conflict in the sense that there will be pressure to prune the soft landscaping. Also, the bedroom for plot 2 would be in close proximity to the parking area serving both plots and the pedestrian path serving plot 1. Likewise, the outlook from both bedroom windows is limited in that they both face onto the side elevations of neighbouring properties. The development should be assessed in that it provides limited living accommodation (1-bed properties) with very little expansion potential for a larger number of occupants.

Whilst the amended plans have increased the separation distance to neighbouring properties and the internal layout has slightly eased the concerns with outlook from plot 2, the development is still considered to result in poor-quality living accommodation for the future residents of both plots and would be much better coming forward as a proposal for a single replacement dwelling instead.

Overall the proposed development is considered to be contrary to Local Plan Policies GD1, H6 This is contrary to the Council's SPD for New Housing Development and Local Plan Policy GD1 which seeks to protect the amenity of future residents and produce residential development which is high quality and in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, is considered to be unacceptable in terms of residential amenity.

Visual Amenity

The general design characteristics of the proposed bungalows are considered to be acceptable subject to conditions regarding external materials details.

However, the application site is a very tight infill plot nestled between two established rows of terraced housing. Equally, to the rear is a separate terrace row which completely encloses the site in all directions. The site faces North-West onto St. Georges Road with a very narrow frontage (c. 6.5m in width) and generally, the site is considered to not be of a sufficient size to appropriately accommodate two dwellings. The presence of two semi-detached properties on the site will appear squeezed onto the plot, with two closely linked bungalows being at odds with the existing character of the area which is predominantly two

storey terraced properties. The SPD states that the siting of the infill dwellings should reflect the building line of the dwellings on the same side of the street. It is appreciated that two storey terraces are not achievable in this location. However, the layout of the proposed development as it currently stands is considered to appear at odds with the surrounding street scene with the existing bungalow being the sole example of such property type within the area and is largely screened from view given the presence of a high brick wall on St Georges Road and screening from existing neighbouring properties. As such, the existing bungalow has a neutral impact on the street scene.

Developments should seek to raise the design standard of the area, with the proposed dwellings squeezed onto a plot which is inherently tight. As a result, the development looks (both on a plan and from the street scene) shoehorned into the plot and at odds with the prevailing character of the streetscene. To accentuate this impact, there is minimal space for soft landscaping within the plot, with the area to the immediate front of the dwellings only being large enough to predominantly accommodate hard surfacing for parking. There is a small area of soft landscaping positioned immediately to the front of the two-bedroom windows on site. The soft landscaping doesn't meet the guidance from Building for Life of a 50:50 hard/soft landscaping balance at the front of dwellings, as referenced in the SPD (section 11.3). The positioning of which would potentially be unfeasible in the long term given that it is in very close proximity to the bedroom windows and would be a maintenance burden for future residents. In all likelihood, the area of soft landscaping would not be suitably maintained for the long term.

Both plots would appear cramped and hemmed in, particularly plot 1 which due to the staggered plot arrangement would see it pushed back deep into site in more of a backland location that would be largely hidden behind No.120 St Georges Road in very close proximity to the rear boundary of the site.

For the above reason, the proposed development is considered to be contrary to Local Plan Policy GD1, D1, the SPD for Design of Housing Development and NPPF paragraph 134 and is unacceptable in terms of design/visual amenity.

Highways Safety

The proposed plans show the creation of 2 x off-street parking provision which is in line with the Council's Parking SPD, and results in a net total of 2 off-street parking space compared to the existing residential use. Highways DC have not objected to the proposed parking layout subject to conditions.

Impact on Ecology

A bat survey has been provided to support the application, which colleagues in ecology responded to and requested a second survey, as recommended within the submitted information. Upon receipt of the amended information, no objection was raised by the council's ecologists, subject to conditions and informatives which directly relate to the recommendations within the report.

Drainage

No objection has been raised by colleagues in Drainage and the proposed development is acceptable in this regard.

Conclusion

The application is for the demolition of the existing bungalow on site and the erection of 2 x semi-detached bungalows. The site is located in the Urban Fabric in what is an established residential area, in Urban Barnsley, in close proximity to the Town Centre – c.200m to the North. The Local Planning Authority has raised concerns with the proposed development for the following reasons.

This irregular shaped development plot is too smallscale to accommodate for two semi-detached dwellings, with a very narrow frontage (c.6.5m in width) which presents design concerns as the proposed dwellings appear to be shoehorned onto the plot and a cramped form of development with plot 1 being in a poor quality backland location. There is minimal space within the site for landscaping with a small area to the frontage which is unlikely to be feasible as a long-term landscaping solution given that it is placed directly in front of both bedroom windows serving the proposed dwellings. For this reason, the proposed development is not considered to raise the standard of design in the area and appears incongruous within the street

scene, contrary to Local Plan Policy D1, the Council's SPD and NPPF paragraph 134 which states that development which is poorly designed should be refused.

The small size of the plot also generates issues in terms of residential amenity for future residents with lack of privacy and outlook from the bedroom windows of both plots, and the rear facing windows of plot 2. Both bedrooms partially face onto the side elevations of neighbouring buildings, and the rear facing windows of plot 1 face onto the rear boundary treatment at a close distance. Also, the bedroom for plot 2 would be in close proximity to the parking area serving both plots and the pedestrian path serving plot 1, with the end result being a cramped form of development in a poor quality backland location. Further, plot 2 has external amenity space which just meets the criteria for external amenity space set out in the SPD for Design of Housing Development, with very little space for future expansion. All of these things considered the proposed development is considered to be contrary to Local Plan policy GD1 and the Council's SPD for Design of Housing Development in that it will not result in high quality residential development to meet the future needs of the borough.

For the above reasons, the proposed development is recommended for refusal.

Recommendation

Refuse

Reasons:

- 1 The proposal is contrary to Local Plan Policy GD1, D1, the Council's SPD for Design of Housing Development as well as NPPF paragraph 134 which seek for residential development to raise the design standard in the area, contribute to creating mixed and balanced communities and result in high quality standards of living for existing and future communities. The two proposed dwellings are shoehorned onto a tight, completely enclosed site with a very narrow frontage, which is not considered to be of sufficient size to appropriately accommodate two dwellings. This would result in a cramped form of development with plot 1 being positioned in a poor-quality backland location with limited soft landscaping opportunities within the site and a car-dominated frontage. Consequently, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the proposal represents a substandard and incongruous form of development in the street scene, having a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the area and on the delivery of a suitable mix of new homes.
- 2 The proposed development is considered to be contrary to Local Plan Policy GD1 and H6, the SPD for Design of Housing Development and NPPF paragraph 8b in that it does not offer sufficient outlook from the habitable room windows of the proposed plots, with both plot's front facing windows looking partially onto the side elevation of neighbouring properties with an area of soft landscaping to the immediate front of these windows. Also, the bedroom for plot 2 would be in close proximity to the parking area serving both plots and the pedestrian path serving plot 1. Additionally, plot 2's rear facing elevation windows look directly onto a high brick wall at a distance of 5m, offering little outlook. Further, there is little expansion potential within the site for either property which would limit the potential use of the site, with a high likelihood that the plots would not cater for larger or expanding households over and above serving the limited needs of one bedroom households. Consequently, it is the opinion of the Local Planning Authority that the proposed development would not produce a high standard of residential development for the long term, alongside not ensuring adequate living accommodation for future residents.