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| Application Reference Number: | 2025/0545 | | |
| Application Type: | Change of Use. | | |
| Proposal Description: | Change of use from former Post Office to shop (Use Class E(a)) and associated alterations to exterior. | | |
| Location: | Runswick, Midland Road, Royston, Barnsley, S71 4BP. | | |
| Applicant: | Mr Benjamin Potter. | | |
| Third-party representations: | None. | Parish: | |
| | | Ward: | Royston. |

Summary:

The applicant is seeking planning permission for the change of use of a former post office to a shop (Use Class E(a)) and associated alterations to the exterior, including the installation of roller shutters. There would be no changes to the existing tradeable floor area.

A supporting statement sets out that there would be two members of staff and that the shop would operate during the following times:

- Monday – Fridays between 11:00am – 20:00pm.
- Saturdays between 09:00am – 18:00pm.
- Sundays and Bank Holidays between 10:00am – 17:00pm.

The submitted proposed elevations indicate areas for new signage. However, this work is not under consideration and would be subject to a separate application for advertisement consent.

This proposal relates to a change of use of a former post office to a shop (Class E(a)) located within a primary shopping area forming a secondary shopping frontage within Royston District Centre, and as such, the principle of development is considered acceptable in principle.

The proposal would have no adverse impact on residential or visual amenity or health and pollution control or highway safety. The proposal is therefore considered to be an acceptable and sustainable form of development in accordance with Section 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024).

Recommendation: **APPROVE subject to conditions.**

Site Description

The application relates to a modest-sized corner plot located near the crossroads junction of Midland Road, Park View, and Victoria Road, and in an area that is a mix of residential and commercial uses. Midland Road forms a commercial spine within the Royston District Centre. The development site is located on this spine. There is some on-street parking available along Midland Road and surrounding locality, but the areas to the front and side of the development site benefit from on-street restrictions. Midland Road and Park View provide bus routes within the locality and there are bus stops near the development site. The topography of the area falls north-to-south.

The property in question is a flat roof, split-level former post office constructed of brick attached to a two-storey hipped roof dwelling. The property appears as single storey from the north and two-storey from the south, and is fronted by hard surfacing, planter and bollards with vegetation to the side and vehicular access and parking to the rear off Park View. This parking area is shared with the attached dwelling and comprises hard surfacing and two domestic garages.



Planning History

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| B/77/1112/RO | Erection of private double garage. | Historic. |
| 2019/0907 | Change of use of former post office to become part of existing dwellinghouse (Notification for Prior Approval). | Prior Approval – Not Required. |

Proposed Development

The applicant is seeking planning permission for the change of use of a former post office to a shop (Use Class E(a)) and associated alterations to the exterior, including the installation of roller shutters. There would be no changes to the existing tradeable floor area.

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- Monday – Fridays between 11:00am – 20:00pm.
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Relevant Policies

The Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires development proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Barnsley consists of the Barnsley Local Plan (adopted January 2019).

The Local Plan review was approved at a full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering on 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, which is due to take place in 2027, or earlier, if circumstances require it.

The development site is allocated as urban fabric within the adopted Local Plan which has no specific allocation. The development site is identified as a primary shopping area within the Royston District centre and forms a secondary shopping frontage.

The following Local Plan policies are relevant in this case:

- *Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.*
- *Policy TC1: Town Centres.*
- *Policy TC2: Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages.*
- *Policy GD1: General Development.*
- *Policy POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection.*
- *Policy D1: High quality design and place making.*
- *Policy T3: New Development and Sustainable Travel.*
- *Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety.*

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance

In December 2024, the Government published a revised NPPF which is the most recent revision of the original Framework, first published in 2012 and updated several times, providing the overarching planning framework for England. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions. The revised document has replaced the earlier planning policy statements, planning policy guidance and various policy letters and circulars, which are now cancelled.

Central to the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 10) and plans and decisions should apply this presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11). There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental; each of these aspects are mutually dependent. The following NPPF sections are relevant in this case:

- *Section 2: Achieving sustainable development.*
- *Section 4: Decision-making.*

- Section 7: Ensuring the vitality of town centres.
- Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport.
- Section 12: Achieving well designed places.

The National Design Guidance (2019) is a material consideration and sets out ten characteristics of well-designed places based on planning policy expectations. A written ministerial statement states that local planning authorities should take this guidance into account when taking decisions.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

In line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Barnsley has adopted twenty-eight Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) following the adoption of the Local Plan in January 2019. The following SPDs are relevant in this case:

- Residential amenity and the siting of buildings (Adopted May 2019).
- Shopfront Design (Adopted May 2019).
- Parking (Adopted November 2019).

The adopted SPDs should be treated as material considerations in decision making and are afforded full weight.

Consultations

This planning application has been advertised in accordance with Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

Any neighbour sharing a boundary with the site has been sent written notification and the application has been advertised on the Council website. A site notice was utilised, expiring 1st August 2025. No representations have been received.

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| Highways Development Control | <i>No objection.</i> |
| Pollution Control | <i>No objection subject to condition(s).</i> |
| Policy | <i>No comments received.</i> |
| Local Ward Councillors | <i>No objection – Cllr. McCarthy.</i> |

Planning Assessment

For the purposes of considering the balance in this application, the following planning weight is referred to in this report using the following scale:

- Substantial
- Considerable
- Significant
- Moderate
- Modest
- Limited
- Little or no

Principle of Development

Paragraph 90(a) of the framework (NPPF) states planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation by allowing them to grow and diversify so they can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, also allowing a suitable mix of uses which reflects their distinctive characters.

Local Plan Policy TC1 states District Centres have an important role in serving localised catchments and meeting local needs. To ensure they fulfil this role and continue to complement and support the role of Barnsley Town Centre, new retail and town centre development will also be directed to the District Centres. All retail and town centre developments are expected to be appropriate to the scale, role, function and character of the centres in which they are proposed.

Paragraph 15.15 of the Plan states Royston is one of the smaller District Centres and comprises two separate centres separated by housing. Midland Road is a linear centre encircled by residential uses and the Royston District Centre is average in terms of its vitality and viability with its main strengths being the absence of floorspace outside the centre, food shopping availability, good car parking and the high frequency and range of places served by bus services. Aims for the future include increasing the range of pubs, cafes, restaurants and non-food multiple retailers, addressing high vacancy rates and encouraging linked trips to the centre.

Local Plan Policy TC2 states retail uses will be allowed on Secondary Shopping Frontages in District Centres if ground floor uses would remain predominantly retail in nature.

Development is expected to demonstrate that it would be unlikely 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 people.

This proposal relates to a change of use of a former post office to a shop (Class E(a)) located within a primary shopping area forming a secondary shopping frontage within Royston District Centre, and as such, the principle of development is considered acceptable in principle subject to consideration of matters discussed below.

Impact on Residential Amenity, Health and Pollution Control

It is not considered that the proposal would contribute to significant overshadowing, overlooking and loss of privacy, or reduced outlook impacts which may otherwise adversely affect the amenity of the occupants of the application and neighbouring properties as no extensions or external alterations to the property are proposed beyond the installation of roller shutters on the front north elevation facing onto Midland Road.

The proposed shop could have some impact upon residential amenity, especially as it is attached to an existing dwelling. However, the shop would be located within an area that is a mix of residential and commercial uses, and the operational hours would be reasonable for such a setting. It is stated that the application property was previously a post office and sorting office but has remained vacant for numerous years. It is not considered that a shop (Class E(a)) would be overly dissimilar from the post office use. Pollution Control were consulted, and no objection received subject to the control of construction hours by condition.

Whilst the application property is considered appropriate for use for a shop (Class E(a)), other Class E uses could present greater amenity impacts and may be less appropriate in this location. As such, should planning permission be granted, a condition should be used limiting the use of the property to Class E(a) without a further application being made to the LPA.

Notwithstanding the above, should the application be approved, operation hours will be conditioned.

Considering the above, this is considered to weigh moderately in favour of the proposal.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Local Plan Policy GD1: General Development and Local Plan Policy POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection and is considered acceptable regarding residential amenity.

Impact on Visual Amenity

It is not considered that the proposal would markedly alter or detract from the character of the street scene or application property as no extensions and alterations are proposed beyond the installation of roller shutters on the front north elevation facing onto Midland Road. Whilst roller shutters are not preferred, in this instance, many of the surrounding commercial premises' benefit from them and as such, the proposal would be consistent with the existing character of the area.

The submitted proposed elevations indicate areas for new signage. However, this work is not under consideration and would be subject to a separate application for advertisement consent.

Considering the above, this is considered to weigh modestly in favour of the proposal.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Local Plan Policies D1: High Quality Design and Placemaking and is acceptable regarding visual amenity.

Impact on Highways

The development site is positioned along the B6428 Midland Road which is a primary route through Royston. The former post office site occupies a prominent corner plot at the junction of Midland Road with Park View and Victoria Road and is within the vicinity of many shops and amenities. The area is well-served by public transport and there are some time-controlled on-street parking spaces along Midland Road and the surrounding streets. The Royston Park car park is also located nearby. There are parking restrictions in place to the front of the property by virtue of double yellow lines with kerb markings to prevent indiscriminate parking around the priority junction. Highways Development Control were consulted, and it was stated that the proposed retail use would likely generate a small number of vehicle trips compared with a significant proportion being existing visitors to the area. As such, no objection was raised. The LPA has no reason to disagree in this instance.

Considering the above, this is considered to weigh moderately in favour of the proposal.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Local Plan Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety and is considered acceptable regarding highway safety.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

In accordance with the provision of paragraph 11 of the NPPF (2024), the proposal is considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development and therefore, for the reasons given above, and taking all other matters into consideration, the proposal complies with the relevant local and national planning policies and guidance. Therefore, planning permission should be granted subject to necessary conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions.

Justification

Statement of compliance with Article 35 of the Town and Country Development Management Procedure Order 2015.

It has not been necessary to make contact with the applicant to request amendments to the proposal during the consideration of the application, as it was deemed acceptable.

Due regard has been given to Article 8 and Protocol 1 of Article 1 of the European Convention for Human Rights Act 1998 when considering representations, the determination of the application and the resulting recommendation. It is considered that the recommendation will not interfere with

the applicant's and/or any objector's right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.