

Application Reference Number:	2026/0092
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Application Type:	Full
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Proposal Description:	Change of use of the upper floors of the existing building from Class E to create 2x residential units (Use Class C3) with associated works including erection of external staircase to rear; installation of windows/door, and formation of car parking; and alterations to the existing ground floor commercial frontage
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Location:	Andy Longden Studio, 26 - 28 Racecommon Road, Barnsley, S70 1BH
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Applicant:	Mr Steffan Darlington
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Third-party representations:	None	Parish:	None
		Ward:	Kingstone

Summary:

This planning application seeks the change of use of the upper floors of the existing building from Class E to create 2x residential units (Use Class C3) with associated works. These include the erection of an external staircase to rear; installation of windows/door, and formation of car parking; and alterations to the existing ground floor commercial frontage.

The site falls within the Southern Fringe District of the Town Centre as allocated by the adopted Local Plan. Development comprising a change of use is considered acceptable in principle if proposals are a suitable location for the use class and would not significantly adversely affect residential and visual amenity and highway safety.

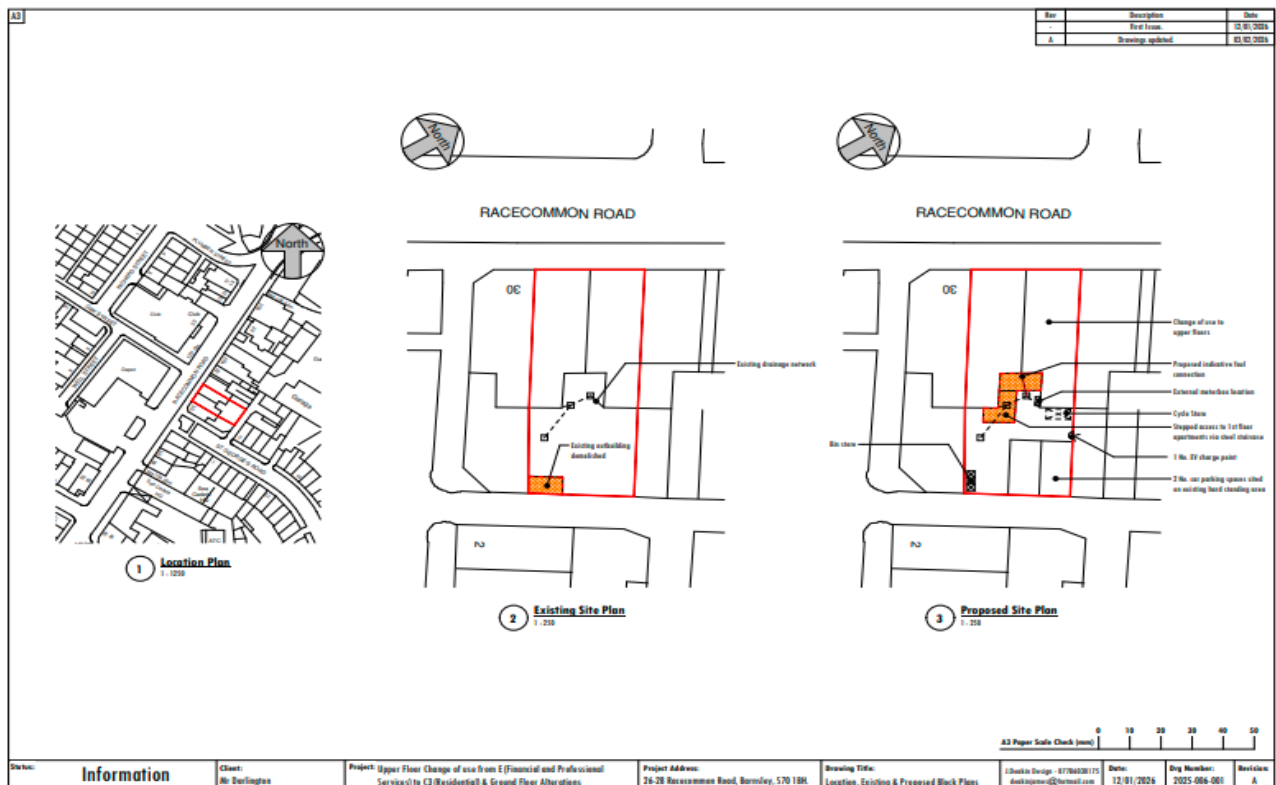
The proposal would have no adverse impact on highway safety, residential or visual amenity and is considered acceptable in policy terms. The proposal is therefore considered to be an acceptable and sustainable form of development in accordance with Section 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework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

Recommendation:

Approve subject to conditions

Site Description

The application relates to a two and a half storey mid terraced property located within a parade of retail/commercial premises on the edge of Barnsley Town Centre on Racecommon Road. The property accommodates a former salon on the ground floor and offices on the first and second floors. There are properties adjoining both sides, with a barber shop to the south and hot food takeaway to the north. There are residential properties to the rear off St Georges Road and a car repair/tyre centre opposite Racecommon Road to the west. The front of the property is directly onto the footpath serving Racecommon Road and there is a small yard area to the rear.



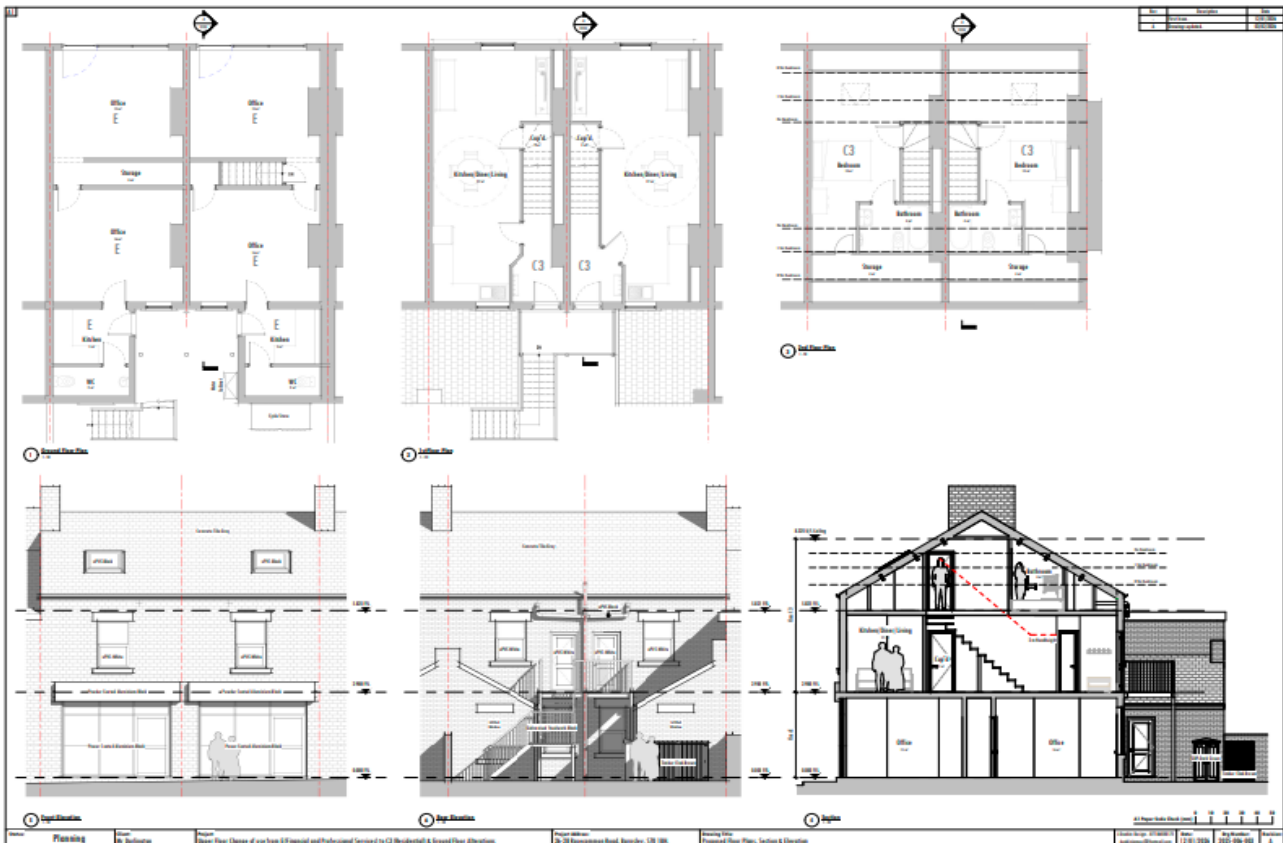
Planning History

There are various planning applications associated with the site.

Application Reference	Description	Status
B/78/1561/BA	Change of use from shop to office	Historic
B/78/4031/BA	Change of use of shop/offices to offices	Historic
2006/0560	Conversion of offices to 2 no. apartments, access stairs and parking spaces	Approved with Conditions
2016/1380	Change of use from A2 (Financial and Professional Services) to C3 (DwellingHouses) - Prior Notification	Prior Approval - Granted

Proposed Development

The proposal is for the change of use of the upper floors of the existing building from Class E to create 2x residential units (Use Class C3) with associated works. These include the erection of an external staircase to rear; installation of windows/door, and formation of car parking; and alterations to the existing ground floor commercial frontage.



Relevant Policies

The Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires 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 the full Council meeting on 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.

Local Plan Allocation – Town Centre District 7 Southern Fringe

To the extent that development plan policies are material to an application for planning permission the decision on the application must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). In reference to this application, the following policies are relevant:

Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development – States that proposals for development will be approved where there will be no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents. Development will be expected to be compatible with neighbouring land and will not significantly prejudice the current or future use of neighbouring land. Policy GD1 below will be applied to all development.

Policy 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. Development will be expected to be compatible with neighbouring land and will not significantly prejudice the current or future use of neighbouring land.

Policy 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.

Policy TC1: Town Centres – Support will be given to maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the following hierarchy of centres:

Town: Barnsley Town Centre

District: Cudworth, Hoyland, Wombwell, Goldthorpe, Penistone, Royston

Local: Athersley, Bolton on Deane (St Andrew's Square), Darfield, Darton, Dodworth, Grimethorpe, Hoyland Common, Lundwood, Mapplewell, Stairfoot, Thurnscoe (Houghton Road), Thurnscoe (Shepherd Lane)

Barnsley Town Centre is the dominant town centre in the borough. To ensure it continues to fulfill its sub regional role the majority of new retail and town centre development will be directed to Barnsley Town Centre.

Policy BTC15: Southern Fringe – Within the Southern Fringe District we will allow housing, offices, employment and commercial uses. We will allow small scale shops and services along the Dodworth Road frontage. Developments will be allowed that would support the liveliness and economic strength of the town centre.

Policy 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.

Policy 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.

Policy Poll1: Pollution Control and Protection – 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.

Policy T3: New development and Sustainable Travel – Expects new development to be located and designed to reduce the need to travel, be accessible to public transport and meet the needs of pedestrians and cycles. Also sets criteria in relation to minimum levels of parking; provision of transport statements and of travel plans.

Policy 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.

Policy BIO1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity – Development will be expected to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geological features of the borough as well as maximising biodiversity and geodiversity opportunities in and around new developments.

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

In December 2024, The Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") which is the most recent revision of the original Framework, published first in 2012 and updated a number of times, providing the overarching planning framework for England.

It 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. This 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 which is at the heart of the framework (paragraph 10) and plans and decisions should apply this presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11). The NPPF confirms that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental; each of these aspects are mutually dependent. The most relevant sections are:

- Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4 - Decision making
- 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 it into account when taking decisions.

Supplementary Planning Documents:

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 most pertinent SPD's in this case are:

- Biodiversity
- Design of housing development
- Parking
- Sustainable Travel

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

Other Guidance

- South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide

Consultations

Biodiversity - No objections subject to conditions

Highways Development Control - No objections subject to conditions

Kingstone Ward Councillors - No objections

Pollution Control - No objections subject to conditions

Yorkshire Water - No objections

Representations

The application has been advertised in accordance with Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015. Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties, and a site notice erected at the site. No comments were received.

Assessment

The main issues for consideration are as follows:

- The principle of the change of use
- The impact on the character of the area, design and visual amenity
- The impact on residential amenity
- The impact on highway safety
- The impact on biodiversity

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

The proposed development is for a straight conversion of the first floor of the building, which is structurally sound and will not require major or complete reconstruction. The development will require minor external fenestration alterations to facilitate the conversion into flats but will not require any extensions, or significant adaptation internally.

Residential uses are deemed acceptable in the Southern Fringe District of the Town Centre. The introduction of new residential units will also have a positive impact on the housing supply, albeit small. Therefore, the change of use of the first floor to flats is acceptable in principle provided that it is not detrimental to the residential amenity afforded to the host property, as well as adjacent properties, along with visual amenity and highway safety. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

Design and Visual Amenity

There will be no significantly harmful impact to visual amenity from the proposed conversion. The core materials are to be retained as existing, whilst maintaining the design of the existing building. The proposed doors to the rear and roof lights would be comparable to the residential elements associated with the adjacent residential uses. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

There is to be no significant impactful changes to the outside of the property, although changes in the form of new ground floor frontage and stairs to the rear to service the flats are proposed. However, these additions will not cause the visual amenity of the street scene to be compromised, as the most impactful feature, the stairs are located to the rear. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal. The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of visual amenity and impact upon the street scene in accordance with the SPD Design of Housing Development and Policy D1 of the Local Plan. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

Residential Amenity

In terms of noise from surrounding uses, it is noted that the proposed flats will be located on a mixed street, with existing residential uses located adjacent as well as the ground floor commercial uses.

In addition, the LPA's Pollution Control team have raised no objections to the scheme. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

The proposed internal dimensions meet the standards for one bedroomed flats within the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide. Shared private amenity space for flats should be a minimum of 50sqm plus and additional 10sqm per unit either as a balcony space or added shared private space.

The residents have access to a shared rear area which provides minimal and basic private amenity space of 75sqm however the amount of shared private space to be provided can also depend on the quality, quantity and accessibility of local public open space.

Within the surrounding area there is, Pitt Street Green Space, Plumber Street Park and York Street Green Space. The site is also located within close proximity to the Dearne Valley Green Heart, which is one of the only 12 nature improvement areas in England which is creating a healthy and attractive natural environment providing plenty of outdoor amenity space within the local area. This weighs moderately in favour of the proposal.

Given that one bed studio flats are very unlikely to appeal to families, it is considered that there is acceptable outdoor amenity space for the proposed scheme, given the nearby facilities as well as the proximity to the town centre. For the above reasons, the proposal is not expected to be detrimental to the residential amenity of the neighbours nor the future occupiers in line with the standards set within the SPD and the SYRDG. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of residential amenity.

Highways Safety

There will be no significant impact upon highway safety. The proposal would create living space within the site by creating two single-bedroomed flats in the upper floors. The rear area provides two off-street parking spaces and secure cycle storage along with a bin store.

The site is within the boundaries of Barnsley town centre, so whilst parking would normally be required for all uses rather than just reattributing the two spaces for the flats, the highly sustainable location of the site means that the present parking arrangements continue to be acceptable in scale. It is noted they should be brought up to a better standard of surfacing as part of the external works. This will be secured via condition. It is therefore considered that the proposals would not adversely impact upon the highway and are acceptable from a highway's perspective. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

Impact on Biodiversity

A Bat Survey Report, 24th March 2026 (ref: MBE/BAT/2026/030/01) submitted in support of the application details the findings of an internal and external building inspection undertaken by a qualified ecologist to the Bat Conservation Trust survey guidance (2023).

The survey found the building to have negligible potential for roosting bats; Therefore, no further survey work is required, and the proposed works can proceed without constraints relating to roosting bats. The bat survey report recommends the installation of a bat box and a sparrow box on the building where works are proposed. This is welcomed and will be secured by a condition. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

For the reasons given above, and taking all other matters into consideration, the proposal complies with the relevant plan policies and planning permission should be granted subject to necessary conditions. Under the provisions of the NPPF, the application is considered to be a sustainable form of development and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Approve subject to conditions

Justification

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH ARTICLE 35 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE ORDER 2015

In dealing with the application, the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant to find solutions to the following issues that arose whilst dealing with the planning application:

- Bat and bird boxes
- Biodiversity alterations
- Cycle store
- Highways alterations

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 objections, 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.