

Application Ref: 15/00019/FUL

Proposal: Single storey flat roof extension to rear of doctor's surgery

Site: 32 Main Street, Ailsworth, Peterborough, PE5 7AF

Applicant: Dr Laliwala

Agent: Janice Kendrick Design Services Ltd

Referred by: Cllr Holdich

Reason: Objects and considers level of objection to be of wider interest

Site visit: 07.02.2015

Case officer: Mr S Falco

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Recommendation: **REFUSE**

1 Description of the site and surroundings and Summary of the proposal

Site Description:

The site is host to Ailsworth Medical Centre located on Main Street. The property looks to be a former single storey dwelling, constructed of painted brick elevations, a concrete tiled roof and white upvc windows. Access to the Medical Centre is located to the right hand side of the front elevation, via an undercover area facing onto Main Street. To the rear of the building, large monopitch single storey extensions have been added as the facilities on offer have grown over the years. Beyond the rear extensions is a small paved yard that appears to be largely unused.

Proposal:

The proposal is for a single storey, flat roof rear extension to the rear of the existing extensions to provide 2no. additional consulting rooms, a treatment room, a phlebotomy room and a small store. The extension is proposed with a footprint measuring 8100mm (projection) x 12100mm (width) at its largest. The height of the proposal is 3100mm from ground level to the highest point of its parapet roof.

It should be noted that the site sits approximately 500mm lower than the adjacent properties to the East (rear) and the North (side).

2 Planning History

Reference	Proposal	Decision	Date
02/01465/FUL	Single storey extensions to provide enlarged waiting room and other internal alterations	Permitted	12/12/2002
03/01404/CTR	Reduce Crataegus, thin Betula by 15 per cent and thin and maintain mixed shrubs and trees on rear boundary with possible reduction in height	Permitted	23/10/2003

3 Planning Policy

Decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan policies below, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 72 - General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.

The Local Planning Authority has a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the Conservation Area or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Section 1 - Economic Growth

Planning should encourage sustainable growth and significant weight should be given to supporting economic development.

Section 6 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Housing applications should be considered in this context. Policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if a 5 year supply of sites cannot be demonstrated.

Section 7 - Good Design

Development should add to the overall quality of the area; establish a strong sense of place; optimise the site potential; create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses; support local facilities and transport networks; respond to local character and history while not discouraging appropriate innovation; create safe and accessible environments which are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. Planning permission should be refused for development of poor design.

Section 8 - Safe and Accessible Environments

Development should aim to promote mixed use developments, the creation of strong neighbouring centres and active frontages; provide safe and accessible environments with clear and legible pedestrian routes and high quality public space.

Section 11 - Noise

New development giving rise to unacceptable adverse noise impacts should be resisted; development should mitigate and reduce to a minimum other adverse impacts on health and quality of life arising. Development often creates some noise and existing businesses wanting to expand should not be unreasonably restricted because of changes in nearby land uses.

Section 12 - Conservation of Heritage Assets

Account should be taken of the desirability of sustaining/enhancing heritage assets; the positive contribution that they can make to sustainable communities including economic viability; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. When considering the impact of a new development great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

Planning permission should be refused for development which would lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance unless this is necessary to achieve public benefits that outweigh the harm/loss. In such cases all reasonable steps should be taken to ensure the new development will proceed after the harm/ loss has occurred.

Section 13 - Unacceptable Adverse Impacts

Should be avoided on the natural and historic environment, human health and aviation safety. The cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or from a number of sites in a locality must be taken into account.

Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011)

CS16 - Urban Design and the Public Realm

Design should be of high quality, appropriate to the site and area, improve the public realm, address vulnerability to crime, be accessible to all users and not result in any unacceptable impact upon the amenities of neighbouring residents.

CS17 - The Historic Environment

Development should protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment including non scheduled nationally important features and buildings of local importance.

Peterborough Planning Policies DPD (2012)

PP01 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Applications which accord with policies in the Local Plan and other Development Plan Documents will be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no relevant policies, the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

PP02 - Design Quality

Permission will only be granted for development which makes a positive contribution to the built and natural environment; does not have a detrimental effect on the character of the area; is sufficiently robust to withstand/adapt to climate change; and is designed for longevity.

PP03 - Impacts of New Development

Permission will not be granted for development which would result in an unacceptable loss of privacy, public and/or private green space or natural daylight; be overbearing or cause noise or other disturbance, odour or other pollution; fail to minimise opportunities for crime and disorder.

PP12 - The Transport Implications of Development

Permission will only be granted if appropriate provision has been made for safe access by all user groups and there would not be any unacceptable impact on the transportation network including highway safety.

PP13 - Parking Standards

Permission will only be granted if appropriate parking provision for all modes of transport is made in accordance with standards.

PP17 - Heritage Assets

Development which would affect a heritage asset will be required to preserve and enhance the significance of the asset or its setting. Development which would have detrimental impact will be refused unless there are overriding public benefits.

4 Consultations/Representations

Ailsworth Parish Council (26.02.15) – No Objection, but observations made.

Ailsworth Parish Council has considered the planning application in conjunction with talking to neighbours, local residents and Dr Laliwala. We support the development and continuation of the medical practice, and support the application to extend the existing accommodation. However, we do have some concerns as follows. We would like to see as much landscaping as possible, and the need for careful material colour choice for the rear wall of the extension included in the application/conditions, to minimise the visual impact on neighbouring properties. Also, we have a concern about a possible increase in street parking, with a growth in patient numbers, where parking spaces are restricted in numbers in this small, rural, conservation village street.

In addition, we would like to see a reasonable restriction placed on the opening hours of the practice, in order that out of hours opening in the evenings and weekends will not add to the congestion in this area.

PCC Conservation Officer (01.03.15) – No Objection.

The property is located in the Ailsworth Conservation Area. The proposed rear single storey extension will not be visible from Main Street or other public vantage points in the conservation area. From a heritage consideration the proposed extension can be supported.

PCC Tree Officer (17.02.15) – No Objection.

The main vegetation loss to facilitate the proposal would be an early mature Silver birch on the rear boundary. This tree can be seen from both Main Street and Helpston Road. Although it breaks the skyline it is not a prominent tree. Unfortunately it is not of sufficient quality to merit a Tree preservation Order due to its form and long term potential.

I have no objections to the proposal. However, any mitigation planting to the rear of the development would be welcomed due to the loss of screening.

PCC Transport & Engineering Services (19.02.15) Objects.

The current medical centre does not benefit from any off street parking for staff or visitors and therefore all vehicles would need to park on Main Street.

Vehicles appear to park on both sides of the road at present and in some areas this means that 2 vehicles cannot pass. Vehicles also appear to park on verges.

The increase in traffic associated with the proposal would exacerbate the issue of parking along Main Street.

Additional information was submitted by the applicant's agent. The LHA have considered this and still maintain their objection, on the grounds set out above.

Local Residents/Interested Parties

Initial consultations: 6

Total number of responses: 6

Total number of objections: 6

Total number in support: 0

Representation 1:

Objection: The proposed extension will cover the whole width of the rear garden of 32 Main Street and will come within 1 metre with our residential boundary wall. It will project above the shared boundary wall by approximately 450mm which will face the rear of our house.

The impact will be significantly increased by the removal of the trees and shrubs, as at present there is a line of trees which shield our view from the existing building.

Our garden is 15m long and the proposals will have a major impact on the outlook from all the rooms at the rear of the house and result in an overbearing impact.

The availability of parking is not sufficient to support increase the numbers of patients.

Why is such a large extension required when a smaller extension could still achieve improved facilities, whilst not encroaching on the amenities of neighbouring properties? Little thought appears to have been given to layout.

Representation 2:

Objection: With all trees and shrubs removed the proposed building will be overbearing and allow other houses to overlook my property.

Representation 3:

Objection: The proposal will result in an overall negative impact on the village and especially the neighbouring properties.

Of particular concern is the increase in traffic that would result. There is already a significant undersupply of parking.

Representation 4:

Objection: There is already noise and disturbance resulting from cars visiting the medical centre.

The proposal will result in increased traffic with no parking provision. Cars parked on both sides of the road will compromise safety in terms of pedestrians and emergency vehicles. There are also a number of delivery vehicles that access the surgery.

The design of the proposed extension is ugly and out of character with the surrounding buildings. The extension projects to the extremes of the site and is overdevelopment and will have a negative impact on the rear gardens surrounding the site.

Cllr Holdich:

Objection: Strongly object the planning application for an extension to the above surgery, normally you would welcome such an extension to a local service, but my post bag is full of complaints about this surgery with regard to parking, patients and indeed doctors parked across and on peoples drives, it is no good saying it is for local people as it is not so long ago I was sent his web site as he was advertising for new patients from across the city. I am told that this practice now has several doctors which proves it is not a local practice any more. Perhaps you could ask for a list of the areas his patients come from. I also believe this extension is out of keeping with the character with the surrounding area .The parish council have pictures of the parking problem which I will ask they submit to you in there objection although they can only take pictures in daylight and are worse at night when many of the surrounding properties which do not have off street parking are at home. I would therefore ask if you are mindful to approve this application that it goes to committee Cllr John Holdich OBE

5 Assessment of the planning issues

a) Background of Development:

The proposal as stated above is for the expansion of the Ailsworth Medical Centre. A supporting statement submitted during the application process outlines the reasons for this application. It is stated that the surgery needs to expand its services as dictated by recent changes to NHS contracts. The current practice has 2250 patients on its books and the equivalent of 3.5 full time doctors, 1 nurse and 1.5 administration staff. The proposed extension is hoped to raise the patient numbers by 250 to 2500 for the foreseeable future, thus increasing the staff team by 1 no. trainee doctor, the equivalent of 0.25 increase in full time nursing staff and an additional 0.5 of a post in administration.

b) Character Appearance:

The proposal is located within the Ailsworth Conservation Area and therefore special consideration must be given to this during assessment. The Conservation Officer has considered the proposal and deems the works unlikely to result in any significant detriment to the Conservation Area as it is largely unseen from the public realm. The Case Officer would concur, in that no significant material change will be visible from the public realm of the Conservation Area.

The proposal is of basic architectural appearance, however, so are the existing extensions to the rear of the building. Whilst it is accepted that the surgery is under pressure to expand, this development will effectively result in the whole of the site being developed, which is at odds with the residential character of houses with rear gardens of the surrounding area.

It should be noted however, that the proposed extensions are single storey and flat roofed, and therefore the development of the whole site will only be perceptible to the immediately adjoining neighbours. Impact on neighbour amenity will be discussed in the section below.

In light of the above assessment, it is considered that the proposal will not result in significant detrimental impact to the wider character and appearance of the Ailsworth Conservation Area. The proposed development will however, be at odds with the built form of its surroundings and will result in detriment to the character and appearance of the area when viewed from the immediately adjacent residential gardens. After weighing up the advantages and disadvantages to the proposal, it is deemed that on balance, the

proposal does not unacceptably detract from the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policy CS16 of the Peterborough Core Strategy DPD 2011 and PP03 of the Peterborough Planning Policies DPD 2012.

c) Area Amenity:

In terms of the amenity of the area, the proposal will provide an improved service to the users of the Medical Centre which is considered to be an amenity benefit to the village as a whole. It is considered that the impact on the amenity of the wider area will be limited to the residential dwellings sharing a boundary with the property, resulting in detriment to the outlook of the immediate properties by way of an increase in development that is unsympathetic to the surrounding residential character.

Whilst this is the case, it can be argued that only approximately 500mm of the extension will project above the boundary walls with the neighbours with the building projecting almost to the boundary of no.34 Main Street to the north and within 1m of the boundary of no.15 Helpston Road to the rear (east). The property that the proposed extension will be most visible from, is considered by the Case Officer, to be that of 15 Helpston Road, for which the extension shall span across approximately 70% of the rear of their garden. The occupants of both no.15 Helpston Road and 34 Main Street have objected on the grounds of a detrimental impact on their amenity. With regards to impact on no.30 Main Street, located to the south, objections have not been received relating specifically to the built form of the proposal having a detrimental impact on amenity. Having considered the impact on no.30, there will be an increase in the built form at the boundary. It is however the case that no.30 forms an L-shape and the rearward projection faces south and therefore little additional impact on amenity is considered likely to ensue.

Having visited the site and viewed the proposal from neighbouring residential gardens, it is considered that there will certainly be an impact as outlined above. However, it must be noted that the impact is considered largely confined to outlook, for which there is already an expanse of featureless brickwork at the back of the surgery, albeit a greater distance from the boundary, but on the other hand, taller than the proposed extension. The impact is deemed largely related to outlook rather than a significant overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing impact.

It is the opinion of Officers that whilst inevitable visual detriment will ensue to the neighbours, it could not be argued that the proposal will result in significant overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing impact, that would warrant the refusal of this application on its own. After considering the advantages and disadvantages of this development, an on balance decision has led to the consideration that proposal will not result in undue detriment to neighbour amenity, in accordance with Policy CS16 of the Peterborough Core Strategy DPD 2011 and PP03 of the Peterborough Planning Policies DPD 2012.

d) Highways:

The Local Highways Authority have assessed the proposal and have raised objections and ultimately recommend refusal on highway grounds. It is a fact that the site does not benefit from any off street parking and therefore all staff and visitors arriving by car, have to park on Main Street.

Main Street, Ailsworth is a narrow residential village street with no central line markings. It is apparent that most of the properties have some form of on-site parking, but it is apparent that there is not enough for the number of cars at each household. For this reason, the road is often heavily used for on street parking which is argued by residents to be at or beyond capacity, with cars parked along both sides of the carriageway. The application form states that there will be no net increase in the number of staff working at the surgery, however the later information states that there will be a small increase as referred to above and also the proposed additional increase of patients by 250, will in the view of the LHA increase the need for parking beyond an acceptable standard. The

proposal also gives rise to the concern that the site could take on more than the stated 250 patients as well as additional staff, without restriction, exacerbating the problem further.

The Parish Council have commented on the parking issue stating that they would be comfortable with an opening hours condition so that the surgery opening hours do not conflict with the times when many of the neighbouring residents return home. This option has been considered, however as the existing site has no restriction on opening hours, it would not be possible to place this on an extension.

A supporting statement was submitted by the applicant's agent to counter some of the LHA's concerns which stated that the surgery was intending to expand its patient numbers from 2250 to 2500. It is stated that the facility has the equivalent of 3.5 Doctors, 1 nurse and 1.5 administration staff. The proposed extension is considered likely to increase the patient numbers by 250 as outlined above and an increase in staff of 1 trainee Doctor, an additional 0.25 full time nursing staff and 0.5 full time administration staff. With regards to parking, the statement surmises that the increase in staff and patients will increase the number of parking for staff from between 3-5 to 3-6 at any one time and an increase of parking for patients from 2-3 to 3-4 at any one time. It should be detailed however, that this was stated for the 'foreseeable future' and does not take into consideration any increase in patients and staffing thereafter.

The LHA reviewed the revised supporting information submitted and the LHA are still of the view that the proposed extension would cause parking issues along Main Street. The submitted information does not accord with information submitted or experience in respect of other surgery extensions in the Peterborough area. Generally surgeries will expand to fill all available space therefore even if at present all rooms will not be used, this would change in the future. It is also noted that this surgery is currently advertising for patients outside the local catchment area.

This leads the LHA to conclude that there will be an increase in parking on Main Street as a result of this proposal. This increase would cause highway safety issues narrowing a large part of Main Street so that vehicles cannot pass. In addition vehicles parking on verges will block visibility from residential accesses. The LHA would therefore be mindful to recommend that the application is refused on the basis that the increase of vehicles generated by the proposal will, because of a lack of off road parking cause detriment to the safety of the users of the adjoining public highway contrary to Policy PP12 of the adopted Peterborough Planning Policies DPD

On the basis of the above statement, the LHA object to the proposal on the grounds of lack of sufficient parking which would in turn result in detriment to the safety of the Main Street highway and therefore contrary to Policy PP12 and PP13 of the Peterborough Planning Policies DPD 2012.

e) Trees:

The works will result in the loss of some onsite trees and vegetation. The City Council Tree Officer has assessed the proposal and considers that the main vegetation loss to facilitate the proposal would be an early mature Silver birch on the rear boundary. The tree officer goes on to state that the tree can be seen from both Main Street and Helpston Road. Although it breaks the skyline, it is not a prominent tree and is not of sufficient quality to merit a Tree Preservation Order due to its form and long term potential. For the above reasons, there is no objections to the works, however the Tree Officer stated that any mitigation planting to the rear of the development would be welcomed due to the loss of screening.

Having considered the Tree Officers consideration that mitigation planting would be ideal, it is deemed that there is insufficient space on the plot, post development, to accommodate any level of screening or planting other than potted plants and or climbing

plants on the rear elevation.

It is considered that the loss of the on-site landscaping as part of the proposal would not result in significant detriment to the wider area, in accordance with CS20 of the Peterborough Core Strategy DPD 2011 and PP16 of the Peterborough Planning Policies DPD 2012.

6 Conclusions

The proposal is unacceptable having been assessed in light of all material considerations, including weighing against relevant policies of the development plan and for the specific reasons given below.

7 Recommendation

The case officer recommends that Planning Permission is **REFUSED**

- R 1 The proposed increase in development and the services offered at Ailsworth Medical Centre as part of this proposed extension are considered likely to exacerbate the parking problems currently experienced in the vicinity of the site, specifically on Main Street, to the detriment of highway safety and therefore contrary to Policy PP12 and PP13 of the Peterborough Planning Policies DPD 2012.

Copies to Councillors: J Holdich OBE, D Lamb