

Sunderland City Council
Development Control
City Hall
Plater Way
Sunderland
SR1 3AA

Our ref: 23-02471
Date: 14 November 2023

Dear Planning Department,

Re: Full Application for the erection of a ground floor rear extension to facilitate two new surgery rooms, an office, a storeroom, the reorientation of five existing surgery rooms, and other associated internal and external works at 27 Durham Road, Middle Herington, Sunderland, SR3 3NQ.

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Rapleys LLP, on behalf of MyDentist (GB) Limited ('MyDentist') and is submitted in support of a full planning application at 27 Durham Road, Middle Herington, Sunderland, SR3 3NQ.

MyDentist are Europe's largest dental care provider. They currently have network of over 600 practices and are committed to providing the latest treatments, helping the nation improve their oral health. Over 5 million people in the UK trust MyDentist with their dental care.

This application seeks full application for the erection of a ground floor rear extension to facilitate two new surgery rooms, an office, a storeroom, the reorientation of five existing surgery rooms, and other associated internal and external works.

This Statement addresses the planning issues affecting the site through the consideration and assessment of the proposal against key national and local planning policies, and material considerations.

We would be grateful if you could take into account the contents of this letter in determining the application, in addition to the following submitted drawings:

- Site Location Plan – Drg No. 23-02519-SP-001
- Existing Block Plan – Drg No. 23-02519-BP-001
- Proposed Block Plan – Drg No. 23-02519-BP-002
- Existing Floor Plans– Drg No. 435.02
- Proposed Floor Plans – Drg No. 435.02
- Existing Elevations (Sheet 1) – Drg No. 435.03
- Existing Elevations (Sheet 2) – Drg No. 435.04
- Proposed Elevations (Sheet 1) – Drg No. 435.05
- Proposed Elevations (Sheet 2) – Drg No. 435.06
- Existing Roof Plan – Drg No. 435.07
- Proposed Roof Plans – Drg No. 435.08

The planning application fee in the amount of £462.00 has been paid via the Planning Portal (PP-12575582) on 14 November 2023.

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Site and Surroundings

The subject site contains a three-storey detached building, currently occupied by My Dentist, with one-storey side and rear extensions. The building currently comprises of ten surgery rooms, of which eight are on the ground floor and two are on the first floor. In addition to the surgery rooms, the ground floor contains the main reception and waiting area, offices, store rooms, and a W/C. The second floor contains a waiting area, an office, a stockroom, two W/Cs and a shower room. A staff room, store room and boiler room occupies the roof space. The site also contains a car park to the front of the building for customers, and a rear car park area for staff.

The site is bounded to the north by a detached residential property and its associated rear garden, and to the east by Bridle Path beyond which lies further residential properties that are of similar architectural design to the existing building on site. The site is bounded to the south by Durham Road (A690) beyond which lies residential properties and St Chad's Church, and to the west by a detached bungalow and its associated gardens. In the exception of St Chad's Church, the surrounding properties are predominately residential.

The site is accessed by vehicles and pedestrians from Bridle Path.

The site is in close proximity to bus stops, with two bus stops located within 100m of the site along Durham Road (A690). The nearest train station, South Hylton, is located c. 3.3Km to the north of the site. This station facilitates the Tyne and Wear Metro's Green Line which provides services to Sunderland, Newcastle upon Tyne, and Newcastle Airport. Car parking is provided on site with 15 designated spaces for customers located at the front car park, and on-street car parking provision is provided along adjacent streets.

The site is not located in, nor adjoins a Conservation Area. The building is not listed, nor is located adjacent to any listed buildings.

There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) within or adjacent to the site.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1, which means there is a low probability of fluvial and tidal flooding. There is also a very low risk of surface water flooding according to the Environment Agency.

Planning History

A review of Sunderland City Council's online planning records has revealed the following planning applications, which are deemed to be of relevance to this planning application.

Planning Application Reference	Description of Development	Decision	Date of Decision
90/00900/10	Garage extension for private dwelling and extension to existing dentist surgery	Approved	08/11/1990
92/01581/10	Alterations to create new access and car parking	Refused	08/09/1992
92/00395/40	Construction of new access, widening of existing access and provision of 8no. car parking spaces to serve dental surgery.	Refused	03/11/1992

94/00450/10	Provision of car park and associated access.	Approved	04/05/1994
97/01360/FUL	Ground floor extension and change of use of ground floor dwelling to dental practice	Approved	28/10/1997
99/01520/FUL	Proposed ground floor extension to dental practice (play area).	Approved	01/12/1999
02/02044/FUL	External alterations to existing garage to form staff room.	Approved	14/10/2002
09/02541/FUL	Change of use from first floor flat to new surgery & treatment/waiting area and alteration of existing garden areas to form additional car parking spaces.	Approved	28/08/2009
10/0078/FUL	Replacement of UPVC windows to first floor front and rear and installation of 4no velux windows in roof to enable change of roof space from storage to office space (retrospective).	Approved	01/04/2010
10/03210/ADV	Erection of two freestanding sign boards.	Approved	23/11/2010
11/00524/ADV	Erection of two freestanding signs	Approved	20/04/2011

The Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a ground floor rear extension to facilitate two new surgery rooms, an office, a storeroom, the reorientation of five existing surgery rooms, and other associated internal and external works.

The extension will bring the total number of surgery rooms from ten to eleven. One existing surgery room (Surgery 2) will be converted into an office (TCO room). There will also be a new fire exit included in the extension which exits onto the rear car park.

The extension will have a smooth red brick finish to match the external appearance of the existing building on site and those within its vicinity. The extension will be 3.2m in height and will have a flat roof.

For full information of the proposed development, please see the submitted drawings.

National and Local Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was most recently updated in September 2023. It sets out the purpose of the planning system of achieving sustainable development and how these are expected to be applied.

Section 4 of the Framework (Decision-making) confirms that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way by working proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

Section 6 of the Framework (Building a strong, competitive economy) states that 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.

Section 8 of the Framework (Promoting healthy and safe communities) states that Local Authorities take into account and support the delivery of strategies to improve health and support the delivery of local services.

Section 12 of the Framework (Achieving well-designed places) promotes the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

Local Planning Policy

In accordance with Section 70(2) of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act and Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, the planning application must be determined in accordance with the adopted Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Applications which accord with the development plan should be approved without delay.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compensation Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan for Sunderland comprises the **Core Strategy and Development Plan 2015-2033**, which was adopted by Sunderland City Council in January 2020.

The relevant policies are outlined below.

- **Policy SP1 (Development Strategy)** – This policy supports sustainable economic growth, sustainable development and sustainable communities. It importantly emphasises the need for sufficient physical and social infrastructure to be delivered to meet identified needs.
- **Policy SP7 (Healthy and Safe Communities)** – This policy supports the protection of existing health facilities, and the provision of new or improved facilities.
- **Policy HS1 (Quality of Life and Amenity)** – Development must demonstrate that it does not result in unacceptable adverse impacts which cannot be addressed through mitigation from sources such as, but not limited to, noise, emissions, illumination and traffic.
- **Policy BH1 (Design Quality)** – To achieve high design quality, development must:
 - Be of a scale, massing, layout, appearance and setting which respects and enhances the positive qualities of nearby properties.
 - Retain acceptable levels of privacy and ensure a good standard of amenity.
 - Promote natural surveillance and active frontages.
 - Clearly distinguish between private and public spaces.
 - Create visually attractive environments through the use of high quality architecture and building materials.
 - Create safe, convenient, and visually attractive areas for parking which does not dominate the development and its surroundings.
- **Policy NE9 (Landscape Character)** – This policy states that to preserve and enhance landscape character, development should be designed to reflect the character of neighbouring buildings and landscape features.

- **Policy SP10 (Connectivity and Transport Network)** – This policy states that Durham Road (A690) will be enhanced to encourage walking and cycling and to reduce congestion. Bus corridors will also be enhanced on this road.
- **Policy ST3 (Development and Transport)** – This policy states that development should have an adequate level of car and cycle parking, and the development should not have a significant impact on traffic congestion.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

- Development Management SPD (June 2021);
- Planning Obligations SPD (June 2020).

Sunderland City Council has adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), however, health facilities are not subject to CIL charging.

Planning Assessment

From the preceding review and analysis of the planning policy, guidance and material considerations relevant to the site and the proposals, the key planning issues relevant to the determination of this application are as follows:

- Design Impact;
- Accessibility; and
- Impact on Residential Amenity.

Design and Heritage Impact

The proposed extension will have a smooth red brick finish to match the external appearance of the existing building on site and those within its immediate vicinity. The ground floor rear extension will have a height of 3.2m and will have a flat roof, reducing its visual impact.

The proposal, including the materials to be used, has been designed to ensure that it is of a high quality and is in keeping with the existing site character and that of neighbouring properties.

Given the minor nature of the development, the proposal is not considered to detrimentally harm the surrounding context and is considered complementary to the existing built form. The proposed development would not result in a material change to impact the site or the amenities of neighbouring uses.

On this basis, it is considered that the proposal is compliant with Policies BH1 and NE9 of the Core Strategy and Development Plan 2015-2033 (2020), as well as the overarching principles outlined in the National Design Guide (2019), and in the NPPF (2023).

Accessibility

One additional designated car parking space has been provided in the rear car park as part of the development proposal.

According to the Development Management SPD's (June 2021) Non-Residential Accessibility Questionnaire, the site has an accessibility score of 'medium' and is accessible via sustainable transport modes including public transport and by bicycle. In addition, Policy SP10 of the Core Strategy and Development Plan 2015-2033 (2020) states that Durham Road (A690) is going to be enhanced to further encourage walking and cycling. Bus routes are also to be improved along this road according to Policy SP10, further improving the site's accessibility.

It also must be taken into consideration that adequate parking is currently provided on site. 15 spaces are located to the front of the building, with one additional dedicated space located to the rear. On-street car parking spaces are also provided along adjacent streets without the requirement of a parking permit. Bicycles can be stored within the facility for staff members.

It also must be taken into consideration that there are also a number of residential properties within close proximity to the site. There is therefore a significant number of dwellings within walking and cycling distance. A number of customers and staff members can therefore access the site via non car transport modes, eliminating the need for car parking at the site.

For the reasons outlined, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy ST3 Core Strategy and Development Plan 2015-2033 (2020).

Impact on Residential Amenity

It must be considered how the proposed development will impact residential amenity, particularly properties situated along the site's boundaries.

MyDentist's opening hours are set below:

- Monday – 08:00 – 19:00
- Tuesday – 08:00 – 17:30
- Wednesday – 08:00 – 19:00
- Thursday – 08:00 – 17:30
- Friday – 08:00 – 17:30
- Saturday – 09:00 – 13:00
- Sunday – Closed

In this regard, all activities on site will be restricted to operational hours. In addition, MyDentist's day-to-day operations are contained within the building itself.

The application will include the addition of 3 a/c units and the reorientation of existing units attached to the existing ground floor. These units will have timers and will only operate within the practice's operational hours. As such, the proposal will not cause any noise impacts outside of these hours.

The separation distance of 1m from the north-western elevation of the extension to the neighbouring property is deemed acceptable. This elevation of the extension, where the a/c units are also located, is not facing any primary or secondary windows in the adjacent property and is instead facing a blank façade. Therefore the extension should not have a severe impact on amenity/privacy. The minimum standard separation distances for Building Regulations is 1m from the application boundary.

The ground floor extension will have a height of 3.2m and will have a flat roof. The flat roof reduces the visibility of extension from neighbouring properties.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would have no additional impact on any nearby sensitive receptors, nor would there be a material change to the impact of the site on the amenities of neighbouring uses.

On this basis, it is considered that the proposal is compliant with Policies HS1, BH1 and NE9 of the Core Strategy and Development Plan 2015-2033 (2020), as well as the overarching principles outlined in the NPPF (2023).

Conclusion

This application seeks full application for the erection of a ground floor rear extension to facilitate two new surgery rooms, an office, a storeroom, the reorientation of five existing surgery rooms, and other associated internal and external works.

This proposed development will help contribute to My Dentist's nationwide operational requirements, which would be in line with NPPF's aspiration to support economic growth.

After consideration of relevant national and local planning policies, it is considered that this application is policy compliant and will not result in an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.

The application is therefore considered acceptable in planning terms and there is a compelling case for the granting of permission without delay.

We trust that the enclosed information is sufficient to enable you to validate the application and we look forward to receiving your confirmation in due course. Rapleys will be pleased to address any matters raised through the consultation process.

Please contact the undersigned in the first instance should you require any further information.

Yours faithfully,


Jonah Carty (Nov 14, 2023 15:47 GMT)

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