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Report of the Chief Planning Officer

PLANS PANEL SOUTH AND WEST

Date: 4th June 2015

Subject: 15/00200/FU – Two single storey extensions to front and first floor infill extension, Lofthouse Surgery, 2 Church Farm Close, Lofthouse

APPLICANT	DATE VALID	TARGET DATE
Lofthouse Surgery	15.01.15	05.06.2015 (Revised)

Electoral Wards Affected:
Ardsley & Robin Hood

Ward Members consulted
referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE planning permission for the following reason:

The proposal would increase the demand for parking which currently cannot be accommodated on site, and would lead to additional parking on-street which in turn would be detrimental to highway safety. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Core Strategy Policy T2 and the Council's Car Parking Guidelines.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

1.1 The application is for extensions to a local doctors' surgery. The application is being determined by Plans Panels at the request of Ward Member Councillor Lisa Mulherin on the grounds that the highways issues affecting the neighbouring properties need to be weighed against the GP surgery's constrained space in a practice that has seen the number of patients significantly expand in recent years. The surgery serves a large area and there are currently demands from Thorpe residents for a new surgery to be built in Thorpe/East Ardsley to serve the growing population there (where there has been significant new build).

2.0 PROPOSAL:

- 2.1 The proposal is for two single storey extensions to the front and first floor infill extension. The ground floor extensions would be to either side of the forward projection waiting room, and would provide an enlarged waiting room and enlarged office/reception room. The extensions are proposed in blockwork and timber, with mono pitch roof to match the existing front projection.
- 2.2 The first floor extension to the rear would be over the flat roofed area between the single storey front projection and the two storey main element of the building to the rear. This extension would provide an enlarged admin/office area. This extension would be in timber cladding, to match the existing.
- 2.3 The internal layout shows an increase from five surgeries to nine surgeries. The car parking layout accommodates 10-12 cars.

The applicant has made the following comments in support:

- 2.4 Our design proposals, although increasing the area of the building, will not exacerbate the parking situation. Primarily the increase in internal space is for ancillary / admin staff use with the creation of the 2No. new surgeries to allow the doctors to carry out admin duties when not seeing patients.
- 2.5 We will re-design the existing parking provisions (in conjunction with the Highways Dep't) to enable maximum usage of the site, and will also include for new cycle bays.
- 2.6 The new proposals would be an improvement over the existing Disabled Access, and will fully comply with the current requirements of the DDA. The initial layout of the surgery could be completely re-configured to increase the number of surgeries (and subsequently an increase of clinicians) without any Planning Approval. This would lead to an increase in demand for parking, but our Client does not wish to follow this route.
- 2.7 The Practice has arranged to start "electronic" prescriptions in June 2015. This means that instead of a patient coming to the surgery to put a repeat prescription into the surgery, the patient can order the prescription on-line and it will automatically go to the Chemist, so saving the patient a journey to the surgery to put the prescription in, and then coming back to the surgery to pick the prescription up. They have also increased the number of collections from Local Pharmacies – (re:- prescriptions) so this will also reduce the volume of traffic / parking at the surgery.
- 2.8 Staff will be encouraged to car-share, and clinicians will be housed at the practice's other site in Garforth, whenever possible.
- 2.9 The maximum No. of Clinical staff attending to patients, at any time at Lofthouse is 7. This will not increase, and as such the demand for parking will not increase; the proposals are essentially to ensure the practice can operate efficiently, as over the past 5 years the patient list has increased by approx. 1000 patients, which has increased the work-load on clinical staff and also the admin required to cope with the increased volume of patients.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 3.1 The application site is an existing part single storey and part two storey doctors surgery building, with pharmacy. The building is constructed in blockwork, timber, and has distinct mono pitch roofs facing front and back. The building is located off the Leeds Road A61, opposite the junction of Church Farm Close and Church Croft, two residential culs-de-sac.

- 3.2 The car park to the surgery is accessed from church Croft, and accommodated 10 – 12 cars. Double yellow lines are around the junction of A61 and Church Croft.
- 3.3 Christ Church abuts the side of the surgery, otherwise the area is predominantly residential in character.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

- 4.1 The planning history for the site is as follows.

22/361/02/FU– Porch, disabled toilet and access ramp to surgery. Approved 19.11.2002.

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

- 5.1 None

6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

- 6.1 The application was advertised by site notice on 30th January 2015.
- 6.2 Councillor Dunn objects to the proposal, as follows: It is with regret that an objection is necessary , but with the extremely confined space for parking at this location it will without doubt cause a real problem for local residents who are already having to endure disturbance and obstruction to accessing their properties due to visitors to the surgery and also the shared space for the local church hall , this extension would mean in fact something like 3 surgeries which would also create added visitors and given the amount of new build around the area the patient numbers would greatly increase, with more road traffic adding to the detrimental impact on residents of Church Farm Close. So I would respectfully ask officers to refuse the application.
- 6.3 To date, letters of objection have been received from five individual households on the street and a separate objection, stating it is on behalf of all the households on Church Farm Close. The issues raised are as follows and are dealt with in the appraisal below:
 - i) The area will be subject to increased traffic.
 - ii) 12 parking spaces is totally inadequate for the existing surgery. The expansion of the surgery will exacerbate parking difficulties in the street.
 - iii) The parking difficulties are worse when there is a function in the adjoining church building, which does not have car parking.
 - iv) Visitors even parking the lay-by on A61 which restricts visibility onto busy road.
 - v) Double yellow lines have been put down to try and address parking problems, but these are ignored by visitors.
 - vi) The height of the building will reduce daylight into the adjoining house
 - vii) As well as highways problems, visitors' parking is harmful to privacy, with parking outside residents' houses.
 - viii) Reduction in property value

7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:

Statutory

- 7.1 None

Non-Statutory

- 7.2 Highways – Objections – see appraisal below
- 7.3 Flood Risk Management – no objections

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

- 8.1 Development Plan
- 8.2 The development plan for Leeds is made up of the adopted Core Strategy (2014), saved policies from the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006) (UDP) and the Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document (DPD), adopted January 2013.
- 8.3 The site is unallocated in the Development Plan.
- 8.4 Relevant Policies from the Core Strategy are:
- SP1 – Location of development in main urban areas on previously developed land.
 - P10 – High quality design
 - T2 – Accessibility
- 8.5 Relevant Saved Policies from the UDP are:
- GP5 – General planning considerations
 - T7A – Secure cycle parking.
 - T7B –Secure motorcycle parking.
 - BD5 – General amenity issues.
 - Car Parking Guidelines
- 8.6 Relevant DPD Policies are:
- GENERAL POLICY1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 8.7 Supplementary Planning Documents
- Street Design Guide
- 8.8 National Planning Policy
- 8.9 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on 27th March 2012, and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), published March 2014, replaces previous Planning Policy Guidance/Statements in setting out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. One of the key principles at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.
- 8.10 The introduction of the NPPF has not changed the legal requirement that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The policy guidance in Annex 1 to the NPPF is that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given.

9.0 MAIN ISSUES:

1. The principle of development.
2. Highway safety considerations

3. Design and character.
4. Residential Amenity
5. Representations

10.0 APPRAISAL:

The principle of development.

10.1 The application site is an existing doctors surgery, on a brownfield site in a reasonably sustainable location. It is within a settlement, with a bus stop located on the A61, abutting the site frontage. The surgery operates out of a constrained space in a practice that has seen the number of patients significantly expand in recent years. The surgery serves a large area and there are currently demands from Thorpe residents for a new surgery to be built in Thorpe/East Ardsley to serve the growing population there (where there has been significant new build). As such, the principle of development to expand the surgery is supported, and significant weight is given to this. The desire to enhance and extend the facilities needs to be weighed against the potential adverse impact, such as impacts on highways safety and amenity.

Highway safety considerations

10.2 The proposals will increase the size of the existing surgery from five surgeries and 2 nurse rooms up to nine surgeries and 2 nurse rooms. Given that the site only has a limited amount of parking (approximately 10 -12 spaces) this level of additional development cannot be supported. Using current parking guidelines for a doctors surgery (Appendix A9A Leeds UDP) a total of 4 spaces per doctor in surgery should be provided, based on 9 surgeries this makes a total of 36 spaces required + 1 space per additional staff attending surgery.

10.3 The junction of Leeds Road (A61) and Church Croft has Yellow Lines to prevent indiscriminate parking taking place, This TRO was put in place (approximately 2006/7) to prevent patients at the surgery parking on Church Croft and forcing vehicles onto the wrong side of the road on approach to Leeds Road. With this in mind an extension to the surgery without additional parking cannot be supported. The proposal would increase the demand for parking which currently cannot be accommodated on site, and would lead to additional parking on-street which in turn would be detrimental to highway safety.

10.4 In respect of the applicant's statement in support (para 2.4 to 2.9 above), the Highways Officer has made the following comments:

10.5 The proposal will increase the number of surgeries, the application plans indicate five existing surgeries with 2 nurse rooms and nine proposed surgeries also with 2 nurse rooms. The planning justification statement states that two new surgeries will be created but no new floor plans have been submitted to back this statement up. Nevertheless, it is clear that the proposal involves an increase in the size and potential usage of Lofthouse Surgery, and as such we cannot support this proposal.

10.6 The existing day to day use of the surgery is currently generating a greater demand for parking than can be accommodated on site within the small car park of approximately 10 – 12 spaces. This situation arose a number of years ago with the implementation of a Traffic Regulation Order in 2008 to prevent indiscriminate parking around the junction of Leeds Road (A61) and Church Croft that was being generated by the existing surgery use.

10.7 No plans have been submitted regarding a re-design of the existing car park, however

given the limited size of the existing car park it is unlikely that a meaningful increase in parking provision could be achieved.

- 10.8 The electronic prescription service is welcomed, however it is difficult to assess what impact this would have on parking and traffic generation and this would be difficult to control within the planning procedure.
- 10.9 Therefore it is considered that an extension to the surgery without additional parking cannot be supported. The proposal would increase the demand for parking which currently cannot be accommodated on site, and would lead to additional parking on-street which in turn would be detrimental to highway safety.
- 10.10 Highways officers have stated that should Plans Panel be minded to approve the application, the development will require an additional Traffic Regulation Order to extend and reassess existing parking restrictions on Church Croft, These measures should be fully paid for by the applicant and would have an approximate cost of £8000.

3. Design and character

- 10.11 The extensions are modest in size. The ground floor extensions do not project beyond the forward most line of the building facing towards Leeds Road A61, and the extension would be constructed in materials to match the existing building, and with the distinctive mono pitch roof form being replicated. The front extension would be set between 6m – 8m from the back edge of Leeds Road, the intervening area being an area of landscaping. The front extension would be set in 4.6m from Church Croft, with an area of landscaping proposed adjacent to Church Croft frontage. As such, it is considered that the front extensions would not have an adverse impact on the street scene.
- 10.12 The rear first floor extension would be located between the existing two elements of the building, with the roof over being a continuation of the existing roof slope. Walling materials would also match. There would be very limited views of the extension, as it would be set in 7m from the back edge of Church Croft, and a significant element of the building already abuts the pavement along Church Croft. As such, it is considered that the rear extension would not have an adverse impact on the street scene.

4. Residential Amenity.

- 10.13 The single storey extensions would be remote from any dwellings and would not cause and dominance, overlooking or overshadowing. The rear extension is at first floor level and faces across from an existing dwelling. However, due to its set back 7m into the site, and it's limited height, below the ridge height of the existing building, and it's limited width infilling a 2.8m wide gap between structures), it is considered there would be no undue overlooking, dominance or overshadowing.

5. Representations

- 10.14 The main thrust of the representations is concerned with exacerbation of existing parking and manoeuvring difficulties in the immediate vicinity of the application site. These issues are an area of concern to Highways Officers and the issues are considered in the report. A secondary issue concerning loss of daylight is also addressed in the report. The issue of impact on house prices is not a material planning consideration.

11.0 CONCLUSION:

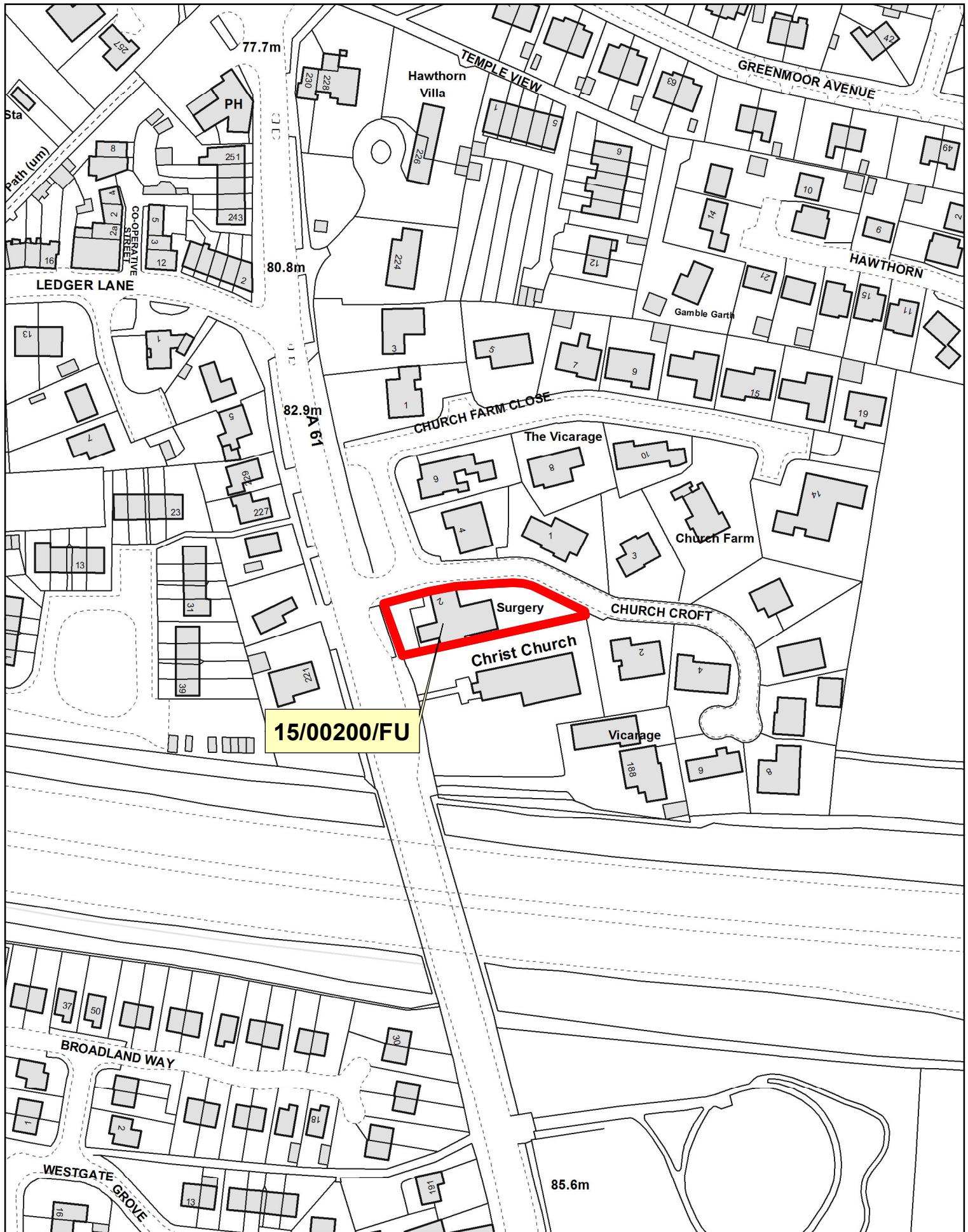
11.1 On balance, it is considered that the harm to highways safety outweighs the community benefits of the proposal, and as such it is recommended that the application be refused.

Background Papers:

Application file

Certificate of ownership:

As owner.



SOUTH AND WEST PLANS PANEL

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SCALE : 1/1500

