

Reference:	17/01489/FUL	
Ward:	West Leigh	
Proposal:	Erect first floor extension to north elevation and layout parking	
Address:	Highlands Surgery, 1643-1645 London Road, Leigh on Sea, Essex, SS9 2SQ	
Applicant:	Doctor Houston, Doctor Husslebee and Partners	
Agent:	APS Design Associates Limited	
Consultation Expiry:	04.01.2018	
Expiry Date:	08.02.2018	
Case Officer:	Janine Rowley	
Plan Nos:	01 Revision D; 03 Revision D	
Recommendation:	GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION	



1 The Proposal

- 1.1 Planning permission is sought to erect a first floor rear extension with a pitched roof to the north elevation of the existing Highlands Surgery. The applicant has confirmed the additional space would provide a better working environment for staff due to the current narrow office on site and provide an improved open plan office. The proposed extension is 7.8m to 10m wide, 2.5m to 6.4m in depth with an overall height of 8m. The fenestration will include new high level windows to the west and north elevation including two rooflights. The applicant has confirmed the proposal will provide an office for the existing members of staff. When originally submitted the application included a rear first floor terrace area with 1.8m privacy screens to the north elevation. This has since been deleted from the scheme. The proposal includes formation of one additional parking space to the existing forecourt.
- 1.2 The existing surgery has 7 full time and 18 part time members of staff at present. The applicant has confirmed that this proposal will not increase the numbers of staff, consulting or treatment rooms.
- 1.3 A travel plan has been submitted for consideration.

2 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The site contains a two storey doctors surgery on the north side of London Road. The adjoining property to the east is Chartwell Hospital 1629 London Road and to the west is a garage at 1647-1653 London Road. To the immediate front of the site is off street parking for the doctors surgery and a separate car park is to the east for the Chartwell Hospital. To the north of the site are residential gardens serving properties in Sydney Road to the east and Gordon Road to the west. The site is on London Road opposite the Estuary Club and a timber yard on the south side of London Road.

3 Planning Considerations

- 3.1 The main considerations are the principle of the development, design and impact on the character of the area, traffic and transportation issues, impact on residential amenity and CIL.

4 Appraisal

Principle of Development

National Planning Policy Framework (2012); Core Strategy (2007) Policies KP1, KP2, CP4 and CP6; Development Management Document (2015) Policies DM1 and DM3, Design and Townscape Guide (2009)

- 4.1 Policy CP6 of the Core Strategy confirms in principle support for improvement of existing health facilities. The proposal seeks to erect a first floor extension to the north elevation. Subject to detailed considerations, extensions and alterations to the existing doctor's surgery are considered acceptable in principle in this location.

Design and impact on the character of the area

National Planning Policy Framework (2012), Core Strategy Policies KP2 and CP4, Development Management Document (2015) Policies DM1 and DM3, and Design and Townscape Guide

- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework states *“The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people”*.
- 4.3 Policy KP2 of the Core Strategy advocates the need for all new development to respect the character and scale of the existing neighbourhood where appropriate and to secure urban improvements through quality design. Policy CP4 of the Core Strategy states that development proposals will be expected to contribute to the creation of a high quality, sustainable, urban environment which enhances and complements the natural and built assets of Southend by maintaining and enhancing the amenities, appeal and character of residential areas, securing good relationships with existing development, and respecting the scale and nature of that development.
- 4.4 Policy DM1 of the Development Management Document advocates the need for good quality design that contributes positively to the creation of successful places. All developments should respect the character of the site, its local context and surroundings in terms of its architectural approach, height, scale, form and proportions.
- 4.5 The proposed first floor extension to the north elevation of the existing building has a pitched roof and would be 7.7m to 9.9m wide, 2.1m to 6.4m deep and an overall height of 8m. The materials include a concrete tile to match the existing roof, render to match the existing building and white Upvc windows. The pitched roof design and overall scale of the extension appears subservient to the existing building and being to the rear would not be materially visible from any significant public vantage point.
- 4.6 The proposal would include additional parking space to the existing forecourt to increase the spaces from 5 to 6.
- 4.7 The design and scale relates satisfactorily to the existing building and is acceptable in terms of its roof form, detailed design and materials. The proposal therefore complies with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Core Strategy, Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Development Management Document and the Design and Townscape Guide.

Traffic and Transportation

National Planning Policy Framework; Core Strategy (2007) Policies KP2, CP4, CP3; Development Management Plan (2015) Policy DM15, and the Design and Townscape Guide (2009)

- 4.8 The site is located on London Road and served by a number of bus services. Policy DM15 of the Development Management Document allows a maximum of 1 space per full time equivalent staff plus 3 spaces per consulting room. The proposal will create additional ancillary office space for existing members of staff at first floor. 25 full and part time staff are employed and the applicant has confirmed this proposal will not increase the need for additional staff nor consulting or treatment rooms.
- 4.9 Five parking spaces exist to the front of the site, three used for doctors and two spaces for patients. The proposal seeks to increase the parking by altering the layout to create one additional space to the northwest corner of the forecourt.
- 4.10 The applicant has submitted a travel plan confirming how staff currently travel to work. This summaries that 16 staff drive or car share, 5 walk, 3 use the bus and 1 cycles. The travel plan states the surgery promotes healthy lifestyle options for all staff and encourages them to cycle to work.
- 4.11 Given that the number of staff and patients are not proposed to increase, and that the site is well served by public transport it is considered that the proposal will not compromise vehicle movements in the local highway network or highway safety, subject to a condition requiring the implementation of a travel plan, which would provide measures to encourage more people including staff and residents to walk, cycle and car share.

Impact on residential amenity

National Planning Policy Framework (2012), Core Strategy (2007) Policies KP2 and CP4, Development Management Document (2015) Policies DM1 and DM3, Design and Townscape Guide (2009)

- 4.12 Policy DM1 of the Development Management Document requires all development to be appropriate in its setting by respecting neighbouring development and existing residential amenities *"having regard to privacy, overlooking, outlook, noise and disturbance, sense of enclosure/overbearing relationship, pollution, daylight and sunlight."*
- 4.13 The first floor extension will be located adjacent to the garage to the west of the site at no. 1647-1653 London Road. Taking into account the sites commercial use it is not considered the proposal will result in any material harm to the amenity of the occupiers of this site. To the east of the property is Chartwell Hospital. The extension will be set 5.3m to 7.4m from the east flank of Chartwell Hospital. It is not considered that the extension will be overbearing nor result in any unacceptable loss of light, outlook or privacy at this site.
- 4.14 To the north of the site, the extension backs on to the rear garden of no. 1 Sydney Road (east) and 10 Gordon Road (west) together with a garage block and driveway area serving properties in Sydney Road. The extension by reason of its size, siting and height would not be overbearing nor result in material loss of light or outlook for residential occupiers to the northeast and northwest of the site. Nor is it found that the scheme would cause unacceptable sense of enclosure. In reaching this conclusion it is noted that the extension would be set 16m to 24m away from the rear elevations of these houses.

- 4.15 In order to protect the amenities of residents to the north with particular reference to No. 1 Sydney Road, a condition is recommended to ensure the windows to the east, west and north elevations of the first floor extension are obscure glazed above an internal floor height of 1.7m. Use of the remainder of the flat roof would be controlled by condition to ensure members of staff do not have access to the area unless for emergency escape purposes only. Conditions would also be used to ensure the design of that part of the extension with a more limited projection (to the east of the main projection) is such that it does not result in any unacceptable levels of overlooking or loss of privacy.
- 4.16 The proposal would not result in demonstrable harm to the amenities of nearby occupiers in terms of the development's impact on light, noise, outlook, sense of enclosure and overlooking in accordance with the objectives of the development plan.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule.

- 4.17 The proposed extension to the existing property equates to less than 100sqm of new floorspace the development benefits from a Minor Development Exemption under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) and as such no charge is payable.

Conclusion

- 4.18 Having taken all material planning considerations into account, it is found that subject to compliance with the attached conditions, the proposed development would be acceptable and compliant with the objectives of the relevant development plan policies and guidance. The proposal would have an acceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and the character and appearance of the application site and locality more widely. The applicant has demonstrated the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the highway network. This application is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

5 Planning Policy Summary

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
- 5.2 Core Strategy (2007) CP3 (Traffic and Accessibility), CP4 (The Environment and Urban Renaissance), KP1 (Spatial Strategy), KP2 (Development Principles), CP6 (Community Infrastructure)
- 5.3 Development Management Document (2015) Policies DM1 (Design Quality), DM3 (Efficient and Effective Use of Land), DM15 (Sustainable Transport Management)
- 5.4 Design & Townscape Guide (2009).
- 5.5 Community Infrastructure Charging Levy

6 Representation Summary

Design and Regeneration

6.1 No comments.

Highways

6.2 One additional parking space is provided as part of the development. The applicant has provided a travel plan showing the travel patterns of existing members of staff members and the site does benefit from being in a very sustainable location with regard to public transport. Limited waiting parking is available on London Road within the vicinity of the site which also serves local shops. It is noted that parking stress does occur in surrounding side roads; this could be attributed to commuter parking for Leigh Station.

Therefore given the above information and that contained within the travel plan there are no highway objections to this proposal.

Public Consultation

6.3 A site notice was displayed on the 21st September 2017 and 10 neighbours were notified of the proposal. Three letters of representation have been received stating:

- Harm to amenity
- The planned structure would be overwhelming and the submitted information does not accurately reflect the size or layout of the gardens of the adjacent properties **[Officer Comment: Location Plans amended and neighbours renotified]**
- Loss of light, sunlight and overshadowing
- Overlooking
- Screens proposed could be removed at a later date rather than solid walls
- The extension would dominate no. 1 Sydney Road and be bulky oppressive and overbearing
- Noise and disturbance
- Impact on air quality
- Submission misleading **[Officer Comment: Location Plan amended]**
- Air Quality and vapour clouds emanating from existing vent stacks affecting 1 Sydney Road will worsen if the extension goes ahead **[Officer Comment: The applicant has confirmed the vent stacks are situated on the Chartwell Hospital building rather than this building subject of this application at Highlands Surgery]**
- Overdevelopment
- Inadequate parking
- An application to extend Chartwell Hospital was refused planning permission due to the proximity, bulk and mass of buildings would be overbearing and severely detrimental to no. 1 Sydney Road similar objections apply to this application.

These concerns are noted, were taken into account in the assessment of the application. Where appropriate they have been addressed through subsequent amendments including the removal of the first floor rear terrace and not found to represent a reasonable basis to refuse planning permission.

- 6.4 Councillor Philips has requested this letter below be presented to committee members as follows:

"I write with reference to the Planning application from Highlands Surgery, London Road, Leigh on sea, for a rear first floor extension as administrative offices for their surgery. First, I must declare that, as half of Leigh are, I am a patient at this surgery, so declare an interest, but this also gives me an insight into how this surgery works and its value in the community.

Highlands surgery is a hub of healthcare in the town of Leigh, being one of the two major practices covering the majority of the town. Beyond treating many patients and being of huge importance to my residents, this surgery also is a trailblazer in trying new systems, for example, the Babylon service, offering Skype type consultations to patients, to cut down on visits to its surgery and give prompt care when needed.

To support the team of doctors, there is a considerable admin team needed, who work out of sight behind the scenes of the surgery. Despite being a patient for many years, it was not until recently that I had the experience of seeing the working environment behind closed doors and was quite shocked at how overcrowded the conditions were, with doctors and admin staff literally working elbow to elbow at desks. The surgery's application is to simply alleviate the dire need for office space and to have one meeting room.

I have looked at the plans submitted by the surgery and made a site visit on this occasion, seeing that the extra admin space is very much needed. It seems that the design of the extension is not at all overbearing, but rather is designed to step away from the nearest residential property, which is separated from the surgery by a rear garden and the surgery's rear path and border. The surgery is offering opaque glass and even a green wall to soften any impact the nearest resident feels. In fact, the extension seems by design to be quite modest in size compared to the space surrounding it.

It is also worth mentioning that this extension would be to accommodate existing staff only, as I am informed by the surgery doctors that no additional staff are planned at the surgery and so no extra stress on parking would be suffered. The surgery indeed has its own car park.

The surgery sits in a very mixed area on the main London Road, with its immediate neighbours being a garage and MOT centre on one side and a private hospital on the other. Opposite is also a timber yard, alongside various small retail shops, varying from convenience stores to hairdressers etc. To the rear are adjoining residential gardens and to the side of the private hospital on the east, the closest residential housing. The nearest property seems to be a couple of road widths or more away from the corner of the nearest property and is certainly not right on top of it.

Because I do not consider the design of the extension to be overbearing or to unreasonably overlook nearby properties and because of the dire need of this surgery to have more space to continue in their current method to serve our community, I am writing to ask the committee to approve this application. This surgery needs our support to continue to be able to treat our residents and also to continue with its trials for changing the way we use our GP services in years to come”.

- 6.5 Councillor Lamb has requested that this application be determined by Development Control Committee and expressed concerns about overdevelopment and overlooking of neighbouring properties.

7 Relevant Planning History

- 7.1 None.

8 Recommendation

- 8.1 Members are recommended to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:**

01 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan: 01 Revision D; 03 Revision D.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with provisions of the Development Plan.

03 All new work to the outside of the building must match existing original work in terms of the choice of materials, method of construction and finished appearance before the extension hereby approved is occupied or brought into use. This applies unless differences are shown on the drawings hereby approved or are required by conditions to this permission.

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenities of the area, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (2012), Core Strategy (2007) Policies KP2 and CP4, Development Management Document (2015) Policies DM1 and DM3 and advice contained within the Design and Townscape Guide.

04 Prior to their occupation the first floor extension hereby approved the windows to the east, west and north elevation shall be glazed in obscure glass (the glass to be obscure to at least Level 4 on the Pilkington Levels of Privacy, or such equivalent as may be agreed in writing with the local planning authority) and fixed shut and unopenable, except for any top hung light which shall be a minimum of 1.7 metres above internal floor level and shall be retained as such in perpetuity thereafter. In the case of multiple or double glazed units at least one layer of glass in the relevant units shall be glazed in obscure glass to at least Level 4.

Reason: To avoid overlooking and the resultant loss of privacy of the adjoining residential properties, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Core Strategy 2007 Policies KP2 and CP4, and Development Management Document 2015 Policy DM1 and advice contained within the Design and Townscape Guide.

05 Prior to first use of the development hereby approved a Travel Plan which seeks to encourage travel to the site by more sustainable modes of transport shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The Travel Plan shall be implemented in full accordance with the approved details from the first occupation of the development. Before the end of the first and third years operation of the development hereby approved, reports monitoring the effectiveness of the Travel Plan and setting out any proposed changes to the Plan to overcome any identified problems must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Travel Plan must thereafter be updated to address the problems identified and be immediately implemented in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of sustainability, accessibility, highways efficiency and safety, residential amenity and general environmental quality in accordance with Core Strategy (2007) Policies KP2, CP3 and CP4, Policy DM15 of Development Management Document (2015), and the Design and Townscape Guide (2009).

06 The doctor's surgery shall not be open for use outside the hours of 08:15 hours to 18:30 hours Monday to Friday and 09:00 hours to 12:00 hours on Saturdays and shall not be open for use on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers and to protect the character the area in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Core Strategy (2007) and Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Development Management Document (2015).

07 The flat roof area of the existing ground floor rear projection shall not be used as a balcony, roof garden or similar amenity area or for any other purpose without the receipt of express planning permission in writing from the local planning authority. The roof can however be used solely for the purposes of maintenance or to provide for escape in an emergency.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers and to protect the character the area in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Core Strategy (2007) and Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Development Management Document (2015).

Informative

- 1** You are advised that as the proposed extension(s) to your property equates to less than 100sqm of new floorspace the development benefits from a Minor Development Exemption under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) and as such no charge is payable. See www.southend.gov.uk/cil for further details about CIL.

- 2** In relation to condition 5 the details of a travel plan shall include:
 - 1.** General provisions- A Travel Plan is a long-term management strategy for the Site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives through action and is articulated in a document that is regularly reviewed.
 - 2.** The Travel Plan will set the general objective to a) reduce journeys to the site by single occupancy car and all car traffic and;
b) not adversely affect parking in the local area
c) encourage travel by more sustainable modes of transport

The Travel Plan must be consistent with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Local Transport Plan and Development Plan Policies (departures from this will generally be unacceptable); clearly set out the benefits of a Travel Plan including carbon reduction and the health benefits from more active travel; and demonstrate how the travel needs for all users of the new development will be met.

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the Applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework. The detailed analysis is set out in a report on the application prepared by officers.