

App.No: 171171 (PPP)	Decision Due Date: 20 November 2017	Ward: Meads
Officer: Anna Clare	Site visit date: 9 October 2017	Type: Planning Permission
Site Notice(s) Expiry date: 20 October 2017 Neighbour Con Expiry: 5 December 2017 Press Notice(s): n/a		
Over 8/13 week reason: Amendments to design and capacity issues		
Location: Minster House, York Road, Eastbourne		
Proposal: Loft conversion/extension to form new dwelling, including dormer constructions and roof terraces to front and rear. Additional roof terrace to front at Third Floor level. Front elevation amended to remove part pitched roof and replaced with flat roof, with amended window configuration. Tower removed on front elevation.		
Applicant: Mr Mark Hibbert		
Recommendation: Refuse Planning Permission		

Executive Summary:-

In principle the additional flat at fourth floor level is considered acceptable and would provide good quality accommodation for future occupiers. However the addition of the terrace and dormers to the front elevation roof slope and the rear dormer and terrace are considered unacceptable in terms of their design that materially affect the character of the wider area.

Scheme is recommended for refusal

Relevant Planning Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6. Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- 7. Requiring good design
- 12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Eastbourne Core Strategy Local Plan Policies 2013

- B1 Spatial Development Strategy and Distribution
- B2 Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods
- C1 Town Centre Neighbourhood Policy
- D5 Housing
- D10 Historic Environment
- D10A Design

Eastbourne Borough Plan Saved Policies 2007

HO2 Predominantly Residential Areas

UHT1 Design of New Development

UHT4 Visual Amenity

UHT15 Protection of Conservation Areas

UHT16 Area of High Townscape Value

HO20 Residential Amenity

Site Description:

Minster House is an existing part 3, part 4 storey building on the northern side of York Road. The property is not listed, nor is it situated within a conservation area however it is within an area of high townscape value.

The existing building fills the entire site, and was previously offices at ground and first floor and self contained residential accommodation at third floor level, though the building has been vacant for some time.

Relevant Planning History:

EB/1988/0689

CHANGE OF USE OF FORMER PRINTERS TO OFFICES ON GROUND, FIRST AND SECOND FLOORS AND TWO FLATS ON THIRD FLOOR

Approved Conditional

1990 -12-01

161219

Convert B1 (Business use) ground, first, second and third floor to C3 (dwelling house)

Prior Approval under Class O, part 3, Schedule 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2016

Granted unconditionally 28 November 2016

171170

Insertion/enlargement of windows to the North-West, North-East and South-East Elevations. Patio doors to North-West elevation, leaving to Yard formed by erection of 1.8m close boarded fence Installation of smoke ventilation rooflight above existing stair core.

Planning Application under consideration

Proposed development:

The application proposes conversion of the roof space including extension in roof valley and dormer extensions to the front and rear roof slopes to form new dwelling at fourth floor level and to provide an external amenity space for flat at third floor level.

Front and rear terraces proposed to third (front) and fourth (rear) and new windows to either side elevation at fourth floor level.

The application also proposes the removal of tower on front elevation, making good the roof and raising of window at second floor level on the front elevation.

Consultations:

Southern Water

Require a formal application for a connection to the foul sewer to be made by the applicant or developer. Informative requested if consent granted.

Neighbour Representations:

5 Objections have been received and cover the following points:

- Increased sense of overlooking to properties of Bath Road
- Light and noise pollution
- Impact on amenity of surrounding properties
- Loss of privacy
- Loss of peaceful enjoyment of rear gardens of Bath Road.
- Overshadowing to neighbouring properties
- The external appearance suits the area why change it.

Appraisal:

Principle of development:

In principle the addition of one flat to the building is acceptable if the flat provides quality accommodation for future occupiers, any external changes to the building would not impact on the amenity of existing residents and were acceptable in terms of their design in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, Policies of the Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 and Saved Policies of the Borough Plan 2007.

At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and supports sustainable development unless the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposed development.

Eastbourne Borough Council accepts that Eastbourne is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land, and therefore in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), relevant policies for the supply of housing cannot be considered up-to-date. Where policies are out of date, permissions should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when taken as the NPPF as a whole, or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

Impact of proposed development on amenity of adjoining occupiers and surrounding area:

The additional flat in and of itself would have limited impacts on the amenity of surrounding residents. Prior Approval has been granted for the conversion of the building to residential, 7 flats are proposed over the ground, first, second and third floors, this proposal would bring the total number of flats to 8.

The impacts of the proposed alterations to the building on the surrounding residential properties are limited. The terraces at high level would afford views out from a high level, which may have wider ranging impacts on the amenity of surrounding properties. To the north the building forms the rear boundary of gardens of Bath Road. These properties are small single family dwellings. The impact on those immediately adjacent would be limited given the terrace to the rear roof slope is set back from the eaves of the roof slope overlooking down upon these properties would be difficult given the angle as

the rear gardens are small. The building is taller than most of its surroundings and therefore the terrace would look down upon properties, the sense of overlooking would not be significant to those immediately adjacent given they would have limited views.

The same applies to the front of the property with faces York Road. As the building is higher than the existing properties on the opposite side of York Road the sense of being overlooked would not be considered significant as it is at such a higher level.

The replacement windows at second floor level on the front elevation would increase in the size of windows and the nature of the overlooking would change towards properties opposite given the change of use. However this overlooking from properties directly opposite is considered normal in a urban environment and it is not considered that the increase in size of the window would increase the perception of overlooking significantly to warrant the refusal of the application. The removal of the tower will mean that the terrace at third floor is visible from other viewpoints but it is not considered that this would be detrimental given its location within the roofslope.

Given the height and bulk of the roof extension nor the dormers will have significant impacts on surrounding properties in terms of loss of light or outlook etc.

Impact of proposed development on amenity of future occupiers:

The proposal would create an additional 2 bed, 4 person flat 70m² in floorspace at fourth floor level by infilling the existing roof valley with a flat roof extension. The provision of dormers to the front and rear would provide additional head height and outlook for the flat. The floorspace meets the DCLG's recommendation in terms of internal floorspace for this type of accommodation and with the external alterations the quality of the accommodation provided would be good.

The proposed terrace at third floor to the front elevation would be cut out of the existing roof slope to provide 3m² of external space for the occupier of a studio flat to the front of the building on this floor. This flat is 35m² internal floorspace and agreed under the previous prior approval application for the change of use from office to residential. The provision of the amenity space to the front would improve the quality of the accommodation for the future occupiers. Without this proposal the flat would still have windows to the living accommodation to the western elevation to provide natural light and outlook.

Design issues:

The site is not situated currently within a conservation area, the site is situated within the setting of the Town Centre and Seafront Conservation Area which extends includes the Town Hall at the southern end of Grove Road and the properties of South Street to the South of the site. The boundary of the Conservation Area is currently being considered, with the presumption that the boundary will be moved to incorporate properties of Grove Road immediately adjacent this site. The site is situated within an area of high townscape value.

The design of the proposals to the front elevation has been amended through the application process to these under determination. Originally a box dormer was proposed to the front elevation with an additional terrace. This proposal with two smaller dormers does decrease the visual dominance of the dormers, especially if curved in appearance

and a high quality material is proposed. The revised proposed are considered improvements on the originally submitted.

However given the height of the existing building is significantly over the surrounding properties the visibility of the front roof slope is wide reaching. The roof slope is also long to the front increasing the visual dominance. The site forms the entry to York Road when viewed looking north along Grove Road, it also forms the boundary of the area of High Townscape Value.

Two dormers are proposed to the front roof slope, these are curved roof and separated by 0.7m to minimise the impact visually on the roof slope. These would serve a bedroom and bathroom to the front of the fourth floor flat.

The proposed terrace at third floor to the front elevation would be cut out of the existing roof slope to provide 3m² of external space for the occupier of a studio flat to the front of the building on this floor. The cutting out for head height consists of 0.8m of the roof slope being removed, the roof slope would be retained up to what would otherwise be balustrade level. Not proposing a balustrade in another material does to some extent reduce the appearance of the terrace.

Nonetheless the impacts visually on the building when viewed from Grove Road and along York Road are significant. The addition of the terrace at third floor and two dormers at fourth floor visually clutters the roof slope and introduces activity at that level which currently there is none. The visual appearance is altered such that the building appears bulkier and more visually dominant. The views specifically from Grove Road are considered detrimental to the wider street scape, area of high townscape value.

Paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that decisions should aim to ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, establish a strong sense of place, respond to local character and history and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture.

To the rear roof slope at fourth floor a box dormer is proposed to provide head height for the living and bedroom of this flat, this is 6.2m in length and marginally set down from the ridge and up from the eaves, with a 7m² terrace, set back 0.4m from the edge of the roof slope.

The rear box dormer would be visible in wider views, specifically from York Road. The dormer is bulky on the roof slope and visually dominant on the building.

Policy D10a of the Core Strategy Local Plan states that development will be expected to ensure that the layout and design of development contributes to local distinctiveness and sense of place, is appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of scale, height, massing and density.

Saved Policy UHT1 of the Borough Plan states that development proposals will be required to harmonise with the appearance and character of the local environment, and be appropriate in scale, form setting and alignment.

Given the context of the site and height of the existing building, the proposed dormer to the rear by virtue of its height and size would appear visually bulky and unsympathetic and therefore detrimental to the building and its setting.

The dormers and terrace to the front elevation visually clutter the otherwise simple roofslope detrimental to the setting and character of the dwelling in wider views.

Saved policy UHT4 states the development proposals will be judged having regard to their effect on visual amenity and effect on an important vista. Policy UHT16 states proposals within Areas of High Townscape Value will be required to generally preserve the character and appearance of the area. The site is situated on the edge of this area of high townscape value and the proposal to the front especially affect the views into the area from Grove Road.

Although it brings a sense of character to the building, the removal of the tower is considered acceptable given the structural issues. The proposed replacement windows at second floor level on the front elevation match those below and therefore respect the character of the building and are in and of themselves considered acceptable.

The parapet is raised to incorporate the windows, with the pitched roof behind replaced with a flat roof, this will largely be hidden by the parapet. These alterations are considered acceptable.

Impacts on highway network or access:

The change of use of the building to residential has already been agreed by the previous prior approval. The site does not provide any off street parking, the parking on street in the immediately surrounding area is at a premium given the limited number of spaces. However the site is located in close proximity of the Town Centre, its amenities and public transport links. The site is considered sustainable on this basis and as such the additional 1 dwelling is not considered would result in significant impacts on the demand for on street parking or highway safety to warrant the refusal of the application.

Human Rights Implications:

The impacts of the proposal have been assessed as part of the application process. Consultation with the community has been undertaken and the impact on local people is set out above. The human rights considerations have been taken into account fully in balancing the planning issues; and furthermore the proposals will not result in any breach of the Equalities Act 2010.

Conclusion:

In principle the additional flat at fourth floor level is considered acceptable and would provide good quality accommodation for future occupiers. However the addition of the terrace and dormers to the front elevation roof slope and the rear dormer and terrace are considered unacceptable in terms of their design. Given the height and context of the existing building the roofslopes are visible from wider viewpoints. The design of the rear dormer is large and visually bulky on the roof slope, unsympathetic and detrimental to the host building and its wider setting. The terrace and dormers to the front are considered to visually clutter the roof slope, and are an unsympathetic form of development, detrimental to the visual appearance and wider range views of the host building.

Recommendation: Refuse planning permission for the following reason;

Given the height and context of the existing building the roofslopes are visible from wider viewpoints.

The design of the rear dormer is large and visually bulky on the roof slope which by virtue of the height of the building and context of the site is visible in wider views therefore the development is unsympathetic and detrimental to character and appearance of the host building and its wider setting; and, the terrace and dormers to the front roof slope will visually clutter the roof slope, and are an unsympathetic form of development, detrimental to the visual appearance and wider range views of the host building contrary to Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, Policy D10a of the Core Strategy Local Plan 2013, and saved policies UHT1, UHT4 and UHT16 of the Borough Plan 2007.

Appeal:

Should the applicant appeal the decision the appropriate course of action to be followed, taking into account the criteria set by the Planning Inspectorate, is considered to be written representations.