



Title of Report:	Planning Committee Report – LA01/2024/0762/F
Committee Report Submitted To:	Planning Committee
Date of Meeting:	25th March 2026
For Decision or For Information	For Decision – Objection Item
To be discussed In Committee YES/NO	No

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership
Outcome	Council has agreed policies and procedures and decision making is consistent with them
Lead Officer	Development Management Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Nil
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	N/A

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	N/A	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:

No: LA01/2025/0762/F

Ward: Mountsandel

App Type: Full

Address: 26 Union Street, Coleraine

Proposal: Change of use from dwelling to House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) including single storey rear extension.

Con Area: N/A

Valid Date: 01/07/2024

Listed Building Grade: N/A

Agent: Create Architecture, 46 Hill Street, Belfast

Applicant: Barry O'Connor, 26 Union Street, Coleraine

Objections: 17 **Petitions of Objection:** 0

Support: 0 **Petitions of Support:** 0

Executive Summary

- This is a full application seeking a change of use from a dwelling to House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) including erection of a single storey rear extension.
- The site is located within the settlement development limit of Coleraine as identified on Map 03/01a of the Northern Area Plan 2016. The site has no other designations.
- There are 17 letters of objections from 13 different postal addresses received in relation to this application.
- The principle of development is acceptable, and the proposal will not result in unacceptable damage to the character of the surrounding area or neighbouring amenity.
- The proposal complies with all relevant planning policies including the Northern Area Plan, SPPS Edition 2 (2025), PPS3, and PPS 7 (Addendum).
- Consultation was carried out with DFI Roads, Environmental Health, and NI HMO Unit. No objections were raised by any consultee.
- The application is recommended for **APPROVAL**.

Drawings and additional information are available to view on the Planning Portal- <https://planningregister.planningssystemni.gov.uk/>

1.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Committee has taken into consideration and agrees with the reasons for the recommendation set out in section 9 and the policies and guidance in sections 7 and 8 and resolves to **APPROVE** planning permission subject to the conditions set out in section 10.

2.0 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is located at 26 Union Street, Coleraine.
- 2.2 The application dwelling is a two and a half storey mid-terrace residential dwelling. The site forms part of a Victorian style terrace with a 2-storey bay window and pitched roof dormer on the front elevation. The dwelling is finished in painted dash render on all elevations and has a pitched roof finished in grey tiles.
- 2.3 To the front (South) of the property is a small paved/ stoned amenity space. This area is bound by a dash rendered wall and provides pedestrian access to Union Street. Immediately to the rear (North) of the property is a small paved yard space which is currently used to store bins. This space is bound by a high wooden fence. There is a second yard space separated from the property via a rear laneway used by the properties on Union Street. The second yard is currently an unused stoned area.
- 2.4 The site is rectangular in shape. The site is bound by Union Street to the front (South), No. 24 and 28 Union Street to each side (West and East), and properties on Westbrook Court and Millburn Road to the rear (North).
- 2.5 The northern side of Union Street is primarily residential in character. The southern side of Union Street is mixed land use comprising of the new Northern Regional College (NRC) campus located directly opposite the application site and a community hall and resource centre, car wash, residential and a car repair garage also located on Union Street. The train and bus station are located just off Union Street.

3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 Application Number: C/1975/0498 (*Application Site*)
Decision: Permission Granted / Decision Date: 27/08/1976
Proposal: PRIVATE GARAGE
- 3.2 Application Number: C/1998/4107 (*Application Site*)
Decision: Permitted Development/ Decision Date: 13/11/1998
Proposal: Internal alterations and replacement of existing windows
- 3.3 Application Number: LA01/2025/1042/F (*54 Union Street*)
Decision: Current live application.
Proposal: House of multiple occupation (5 bedroom) also internal alterations.

4.0 THE APPLICATION

- 4.1 The application proposes the change of use of 26 Union Street, Coleraine from a five (5) bedroom residential dwelling to a seven (7) bedroom house of multiple occupancy (HMO) with single storey rear extension.
- 4.2 The single storey rear extension measures 2.7m x 2.2m. The proposed extension 'squares off' the existing ground floor footprint (W.C and kitchen area). It will have a flat roof (3m in height) and be finished to match the existing property.
- 4.3 The proposed ground floor layout will include bedroom 1, an open planned kitchen/ dining/ living space, and a utility room. The proposed first floor layout will include bedrooms 2-5 and a separate bathroom. The proposed second floor layout will include bedroom 6 and 7. All proposed bedrooms will have ensembles. There will be minor elevational changes on the ground floor rear return.
- 4.4 The immediate yard space will have bike racks, and the rear amenity space accommodates two (2) parking spaces and an area of amenity space.

5.0 PUBLICITY & CONSULTATIONS

5.1 External:

Advertising: Initially Advertised on 17th July 2024 and readvertised on 11th June 2025.

Neighbours: Seven (7) neighbours were notified.

Representations: 17 letters of objection have been received in relation to the proposal. The objections were from 13 different addresses. Objections were received from:

- Two (2) neighbouring properties.
- Six (6) other properties in Coleraine.
- One (1) property in Portstewart.
- One (1) property in Ahoghill.
- One (1) property in Crumlin.
- Two (2) properties in Belfast.

The issues raised include the following:

- Effect on property value
- Health and safety monitoring
- Increased traffic and parking issues
- Noise and disturbance
- Safety and security problems
- Anti-social behaviour
- Health and wellbeing
- Poor precedent
- Reducing the number of family housing.
- Over provision of HMO
- Impact on services and utilities
- Impact on character of area

Concerns regarding the above issues are addressed in paragraphs 8.1 to 8.31

5.2 **Internal:**

Three (3) consultations were issued in relation to this application.

- DfI Roads were consulted on three (3) occasions during the processing of this application.

- DfI Roads responded on 23rd July 2024 to state they had no issues of concern with this application and provided informatives.
 - DfI Roads were consulted for a second time to comment on a letter of objection and responded on 25th July 2024 to state that they had received and considered the letters of objections and were still of the opinion that there would be no increase in vehicular movement or parking at this location and that the consultation response provided on 23rd July 2024 was still applicable.
 - DfI Roads were consulted on the parking survey and responded on 6th May 2025, to advise they had no issues of concern with this application and provided a new informative. They also stated that parking arrangements are an amenity issue to be addressed by Planning and Council.
- Environmental Health did not raise any objection to the proposal and provided informatives.
 - NI HMO Unit were consulted on the proposal and then later regarding the content of objections and responded twice confirming that they did not raise any objection to the proposal and stated they had no further comment to make regarding this property.

6.0 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Section 45(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that all applications must have regard to the local plan, so far as material to the application, and all other material considerations. Section 6(4) states that in making any determination where regard is to be had to the local development plan, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.2 The development plan is:

- Northern Area Plan 2016 (NAP)

6.3 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is a material consideration.

- 6.4 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland Edition 2 (2025) (SPPS) is a material consideration. As set out in the SPPS Ed. 2 until such times as a new local plan strategy is adopted, councils will apply specified retained operational policies.
- 6.5 Due weight should be given to the relevant policies in the development plan.
- 6.6 All material considerations and any policy conflicts are identified in the “Considerations and Assessment” section of the report.

7.0 RELEVANT POLICIES & GUIDANCE

- 7.1 The application has been assessed against the following planning policy and guidance:
- [Regional Development Strategy 2035 \(RDS\)](#)
 - [The Northern Area Plan 2016 \(NAP\)](#)
 - [The Strategic Planning Policy Statement Edition 2 \(SPPS Ed. 2\) \(2025\)](#)
 - [Planning policy Statement \(PPS\) 3: Access, Movement, and Parking](#)
 - [Addendum to Planning Policy Statement \(APPS\) 7: Residential Extensions and Alterations](#)

8.0 CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT

The main considerations in the determination of this application relate to the principle of development, access, movement and parking, and consideration of representations.

Principle of Development

- 8.1 This application seeks the change of use from a dwelling to House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) including the erection of a single storey rear extension.
- 8.2 The application must be considered having regard to the RDS, NAP, SPPS Ed. 2 and PPS policy documents.
- 8.3 The RDS seeks to promote sustainable patterns of development and recognises the development of balanced communities should

be encouraged by promoting a mix of housing tenures and types. In addition, the creation of quality-built environments can contribute to the achievement of safe, complete and balanced communities.

- 8.4 SPPS Ed. 2 states the policy approach for housing must be to facilitate an adequate and available supply of quality housing to meet the needs for everyone; promote more sustainable housing development within existing urban areas; and the provision of mixed housing development with homes in a range of sizes and tenures. This approach to housing will support the need to maximise the use of existing infrastructure and services and the creation of more balanced sustainable communities. Paragraph 2.3 states that the basic question to be addressed is whether the development would unacceptably affect amenities and the existing use of land and buildings that ought to be protected in the public interest. Section 4 sets out the planning principles when making decisions. Paragraph 4.12 relates to safeguarding residential and work environments. This application complies with the general planning principles outlined within the SPPS Ed. 2.
- 8.5 The application site is located within the Coleraine development limit as identified on Map 3/01a of NAP. The site has no other designations or zonings.
- 8.6 NAP notes the provision of HMO properties need to be controlled to ensure that the accommodation provided for residents is of a satisfactory standard, and that the impact on neighbouring properties is not detrimental to their amenity, or to the environment or character of the area. This would include issues such as increased density, overlooking, increased traffic congestion and the loss of family sized housing. The proposal relates to a proposed change of use to a House in Multiple Occupation therefore Policy HOU 4 'use of dwellings for Multiple Occupation' applies. Policy HOU4 supports HMO development where 5 criteria are met.
- 8.7 The application is compliant with criteria 1 of Policy HOU 4 of NAP as the premises are suitable to accommodate the proposed number of occupants. There are a number of internal alterations proposed. The proposed ground floor layout will include bedroom 1, an open planned kitchen/ dining/ living space, and a utility room. The proposed first floor layout will include bedrooms 2-5 and a

separate bathroom. The proposed second floor layout will include bedroom 6 and 7. All proposed bedrooms will have ensembles. In total, there will be seven (7) bedrooms.

- 8.8 The bedrooms have been measured and evaluated under HMO guidance. All of the bedrooms exceed the minimum space standard of 6.5m² (for a single bedroom) as set out in the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (NI) 2016. The application dwelling can house a maximum of nine (9) people. The agent was asked to confirm how many residents would the property hold and they confirm that the HMO would be for seven (7) people. i.e. – one person per each annotated bedroom. Further, NI HMO unit were consulted and made no objection. The space requirements are adequate in line with the legislation therefore it has been demonstrated that the premises are suitable to accommodate the proposed number of occupants. The application complies with criteria 1 of HOU4 of NAP.
- 8.9 The application is compliant with criteria 2 of Policy HOU 4 of NAP as the proposed change of use will not result in an adverse impact on amenity of neighbouring properties and the character of the surrounding area.
- 8.10 The proposed change of use will have limited impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties as it will be converted from a five (5) bedroom residential dwelling into a seven (7) bedroom HMO. The general nature of a residential use remains. It is considered that there would be minimal adverse impact from this change of the use as it would not be unusual for a large family to reside in the dwelling with a similar number of occupants to that of the proposed HMO. As such, a change of use to HMO is not considered substantially detrimental.
- 8.11 There have been no issues raised by Environmental Health Department or NI HMO Unit in relation to adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties or the character of the area. The proposal complies with criteria 2 of HOU4 of NAP.
- 8.12 The application is compliant with criteria 3 of Policy HOU 4 of NAP as the external spaces are of a safe and secure design, providing easy and convenient access to yards, gardens, bin storage and parking. There is currently a small paved yard located immediately to the rear of the application property which is currently used to

store bins. This space is bound by a high wooden fence. There is a second yard space separated from the property via a rear laneway used by properties on Union Street. The second yard is currently an unused stoned area. The proposed plans show dedicated space for bin and bike storage in the immediate rear yard and two (2) parking spaces and a further amenity area in the second rear yard. The immediate rear yard measure 17.9sqm and the second rear yard measures 74sqm (50 sqm not including parking spaces). Both areas will be easily accessible from the application property. The quantity and quality of the proposed amenity space is in compliance with the standards discussed in the creating places design guide. The proposal complies with criteria 3 of HOU4.

- 8.13 As discussed in detail in paragraphs 8.20 and 8.24 the parking and service requirements for the proposed HMO will not result in adverse traffic impact or detract from the amenity of local residents and criteria 4 is considered to be complied with.
- 8.14 The application does not propose any changes to the landscaping of the application property. As such, this application is compliant with criteria 5 of Policy HOU 4 of NAP and criteria C of Policy EXT 1 of APPS 7. This application complies with all the criteria of Policy HOU 4 of NAP.
- 8.15 APPS 7 outlines the planning policy for achieving quality in relation to proposals for residential extensions and alterations. The proposal relates to a rear extension therefore Policy EXT 1 and guidance in Annex A applies. This application complies with all the criteria of Policy EXT 1 and guidance in Annex A.
- 8.16 The scale, massing, design and external materials of the proposed rear extension are considered acceptable as it is sympathetic with the built form and appearance of the existing property. The single storey rear extension measures 2.7m x 2.2m. The proposed extension 'squares off' the existing ground floor footprint (currently housing a W.C and kitchen area) to provide extra kitchen facilities and a utility room. It will have a flat roof (3m in height) and be finished to match the existing property. Further, it will not negatively impact the character of the area as it will be to the rear of the property and be finished to match the existing property. As such this application is compliant with Criteria A of Policy EXT 1 of APPS 7.

- 8.17 The proposed rear extension will not unduly affect the privacy or amenity of neighbouring residents. The extension will have one (1) new window which will face into the immediate rear yard. This yard is bound by a high wooden fence and will face the blank elevation of No. 28 Union Street. As such, there will be no overlooking into neighbouring properties. Further, the small extension will not result in loss of light. The extension will be positioned north of the properties on Union Street and therefore any shadow created will fall onto the shared laneway to the rear. As such this application is compliant with Criteria B of Policy EXT 1 of APPS 7
- 8.18 The proposed extension will not cause the unacceptable loss of, or damage to, trees or other landscape features. The existing space is a paved yard and therefore does not contribute significantly to local environmental quality. As such this application is compliant with Criteria C of Policy EXT 1 of APPS 7.
- 8.19 The proposed extension only requires a small section of the immediate rear yard to facilitate the works. The removal of this approximately 6 sqm section of yard will not detrimentally impact the overall space to the rear of the property. The front amenity space remains as existing. As such this application is compliant with Criteria D of Policy EXT 1 of APPS 7. The proposal complies with the PPS7A.

Access, Movement and Parking

- 8.20 PPS 3 sets out planning policies for vehicular and pedestrian access, transport assessment, the protection of transport routes and parking. Policy AMP 3 states that proposals will be required to provide adequate provision for car parking and appropriate servicing arrangements. The precise amount of car parking will be determined according to the specific characteristics. Proposals should not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic. This application complies with Policy AMP 3 of PPS 3 and criteria 4 of Policy HOU 4 of NAP as the proposed parking and service requirements will not result in adverse traffic impact or detract from amenity of local residents.
- 8.21 There are no parking standards for HMO uses within Departmental Parking Standards. DfI Roads were consulted on three (3) occasions during the processing of this application to comment on the proposal, letters of objection, and parking survey. They

provided their final response on 6th May 2025 and stated they had no objections to this proposal. They also stated that parking arrangements are an amenity issue to be addressed by the planning department.

- 8.22 There is currently no in-curtilage parking provision within the site. The proposed plans show two (2) parking spaces to be located in the second rear yard. Other properties along Union Street have partially or fully converted their rear yard into parking areas. As such, this proposed change is consistent with other development in the area.
- 8.23 A parking survey was submitted on 16th April 2025 and identified that the number of on street available parking spaces was often twice that required to accommodate the intended number of occupants. The parking survey was taken over two days (Saturday and Tuesday) at two times of the day (6:30am and 7:30pm). Taking both the in-curtilage and on street parking into consideration, it is considered that there is sufficient capacity in the area to accommodate additional demand generated by the proposed development, without adversely impacting existing parking provision. Further, shops and services are within walking distance and public transport links are also available nearby as there is Coleraine Bus and Railway Station at the top of Union Street in Railway Place. In addition, a car park dedicated to serve the patrons of the NRC has been provided on Brook Street just off Union Street. Overall, the application is compliant with this policy.
- 8.24 Increased traffic and parking issues were noted as points of objection within representations. Objections stated that the proposed HMO would result in greater demand for parking on Union Street which according to objectors is already facing parking constraints. In response to this point of objection, while the planning department acknowledge parking on Union Street is often in demand due to its proximity to the NRC and Coleraine Train Station, it is considered that there is sufficient capacity in the area to accommodate additional demand generated by the proposed development, without adversely impacting existing parking provision. The submitted parking survey identified that the number of on street available parking spaces was often twice that required to accommodate the intended number of occupants. This is in addition to the parking proposed /available in the rear yard.

Representations

- 8.25 The number and content of objections have been detailed at paragraph 5.1. Paragraph 8.24 discusses the consideration of parking and access objection points.
- 8.26 Noise and disturbance were noted as points of objection within representations. Objections stated the increased number of residents would increase noise levels which would detrimentally impact neighbours' quality of life. The proposed change of use will have limited impact on noise and overall disturbance of neighbouring residents as it will be converted from a five (5) bedroom residential dwelling into a seven (7) bedroom HMO. It is considered that there would be minimal adverse impact from this change as noted above. As such, a change of use to HMO is not considered substantially detrimental. Environmental Health was consulted and made no comment in relation to noise. Further, late night activity and noise disturbance are matters that would be regulated under environmental health and could be addressed through the management of the facility.
- 8.27 Safety and security problems were noted as a point of objection within representations. Objections stated that due to the potential high turnover of HMO residents it would increase the number of strangers to the area which would compromise the safety and security of the neighbourhood. The planning system operates in the public interest of local communities and the region as a whole, and it does not exist to protect the private interests of one person against the activities of another. As such, private interests are not a planning consideration and therefore weight cannot be given to this element of the objection. In regard to strangers to the area, it is important to note that Union Street is a public main road with footfall of those attending NRC and Coleraine Bus and Railway Station.
- 8.28 Health and safety monitoring were noted as another point of objection within representations. Objections stated that HMO properties could potentially lead to overcrowding, inadequate property maintenance, poor waste management which would negatively impact neighbouring residents. This has largely been addressed under the previous subsections of section 8. Further, HMO is one of the most heavily regulated forms of housing and

are subject to continuous compliance. NI HMO Unit and Environmental Health were consulted and raised no objection to the proposal and such matters are also dealt with under the HMO licencing procedures.

8.29 Precedent and over provision of HMOs was noted as another point of objection within representations. Objections stated that if approved, the HMO would create a bad precedent and trigger a transformation in community dynamics. Each application is assessed on its on merit and in accordance with policy. Each planning decision takes account of the potentially damaging effect of cumulative changes in a neighbourhood when considered alongside other recently approved development. Union Street currently holds zero (0) HMO properties according to the HMO register. As such, a single HMO property will not detrimentally impact the character of the area nor has it been demonstrated that there is an over provision of HMOs in this immediate area.

8.30 Effect on property value was noted as another point of objection within representations. Objections stated that if approved, the HMO would detrimentally impact the value of neighbouring properties. No evidence of any impact on property values was submitted. The perceived loss of property value is not a planning consideration and therefore weight cannot be given to this element of the objection.

8.31 Finally, impact on services and utilities was noted as another point of objection within representations. Objections stated that if approved, there would be less appointments at health care facilities and the potential for schools to be shut down due to lack of children. No demonstrable evidence of any impact on services and utilities was submitted.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 In conclusion, the application is compliant with all relevant planning policies, guidance, and material considerations. All representations have been fully considered. Further to this, no consultees (DfI Roads, NI HMO unit, Environmental Health) raised any objection in relation to this proposal.

- 9.2 Acknowledging guidance in NAP, provision of this type of housing needs to be controlled to ensure that the accommodation provided for residents is of a satisfactory standard, and that the impact on neighbouring properties is not detrimental to their amenity, or to the environment or character of the area.
- 9.3 Taking everything into consideration, this application will not unacceptably affect the amenity, environment, or character of Union Street. Union Street currently holds zero (0) HMO properties according to the HMO register. Given the site and wider area characteristics, the proposed change of use will not detrimentally impact the character of the area.
- 9.4 Therefore, this application is recommended for **APPROVAL**.

10.0 PROPOSED CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted must be begun within five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

INFORMATIVES

1. This permission does not alter or extinguish or otherwise affect any existing or valid right of way crossing, impinging or otherwise pertaining to these lands.
2. This permission does not confer title. It is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that he controls all the lands necessary to carry out the proposed development.
3. This approval does not dispense with the necessity of obtaining the permission of the owners of adjacent dwellings for the removal of or building on the party wall or boundary whether or not defined.
4. This determination relates to planning control only and does not cover any consent or approval which may be necessary to authorise the development under other prevailing legislation as may be administered by the Council or other statutory authority.

5. You should refer to any other general advice and guidance provided by consultees in the process of this planning application by reviewing all responses on the Planning Portal at <https://planningregister.planningsystemni.gov.uk/simple-search>

Site Location Plan



SITE LOCATION MAP 1:1250

 PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY



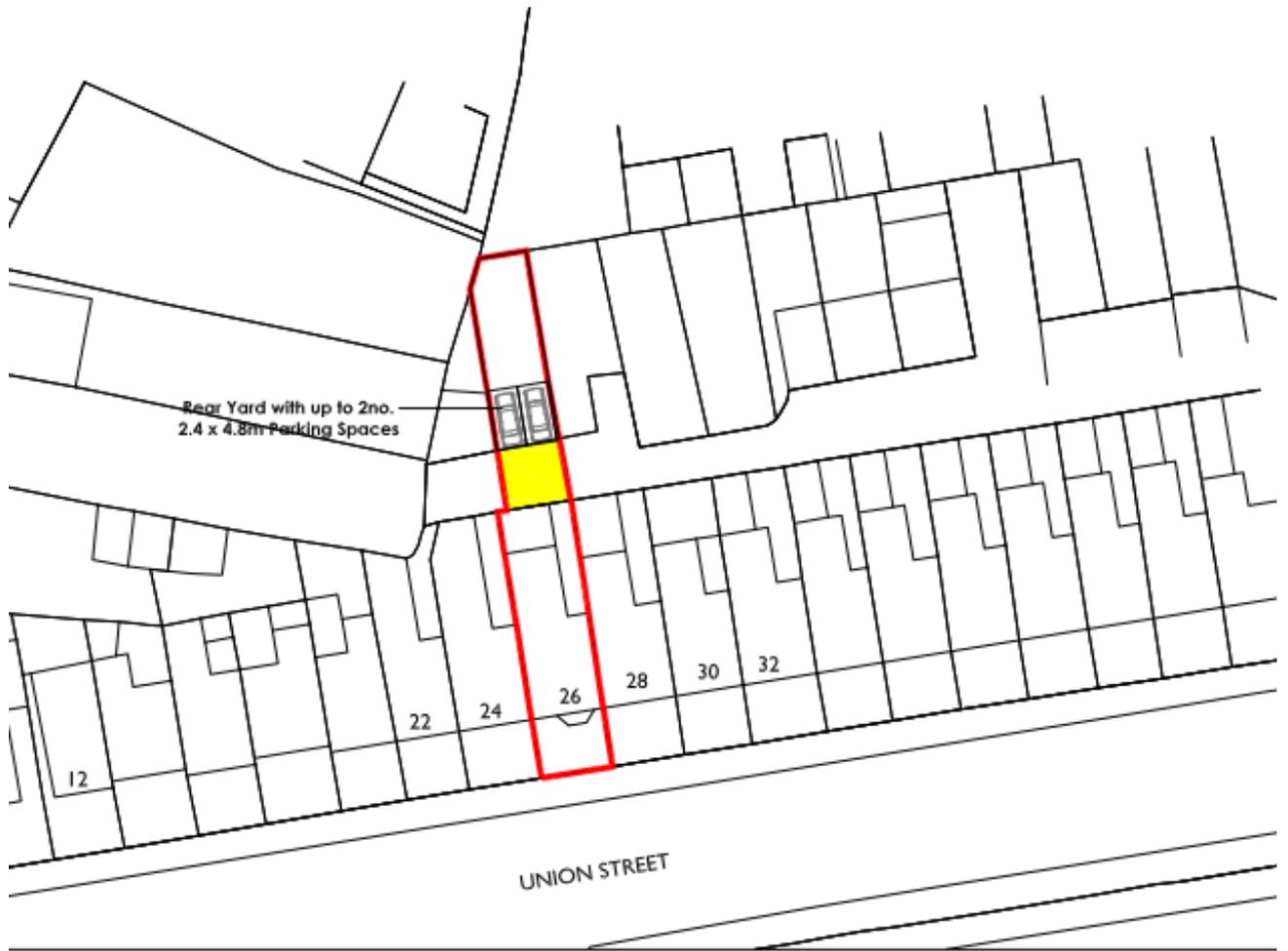
Existing Site Plan



EXISTING SITE PLAN 1:500



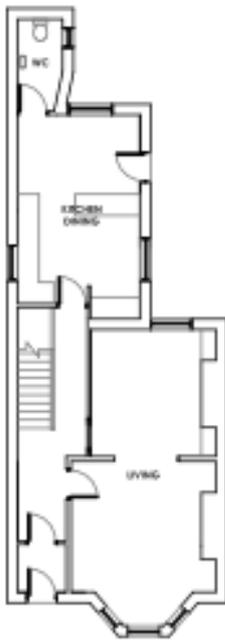
Proposed Site Plan



PROPOSED SITE PLAN 1:500



Existing and Proposed Floor Plans



EXISTING GROUND FLOOR 1:100



EXISTING FIRST FLOOR 1:100



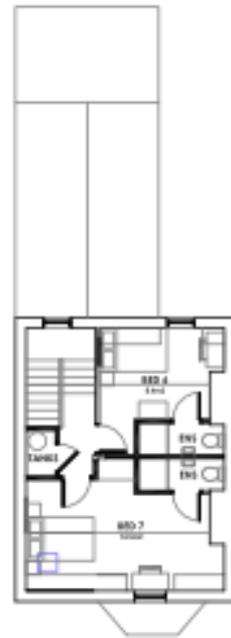
EXISTING SECOND FLOOR 1:100



PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR 1:100

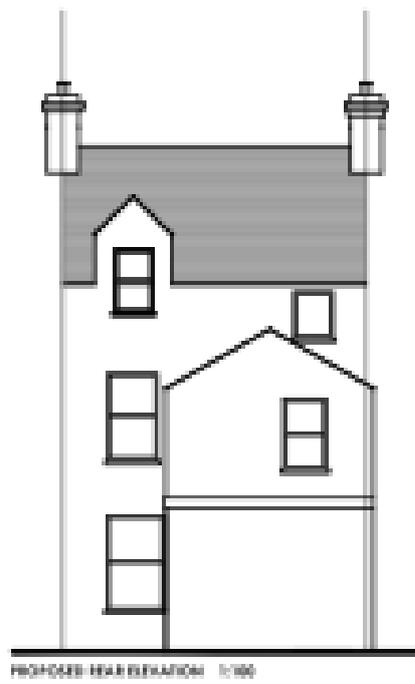
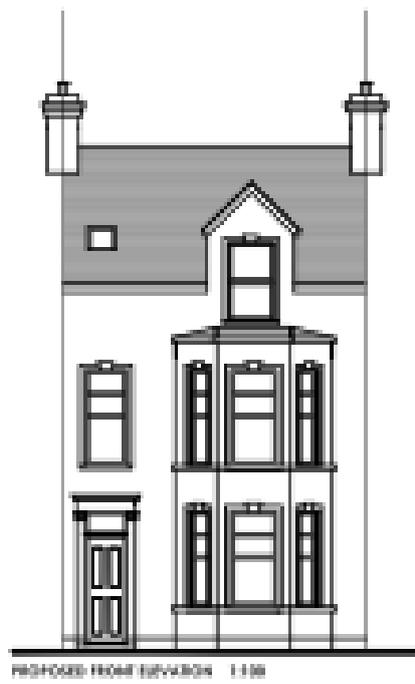
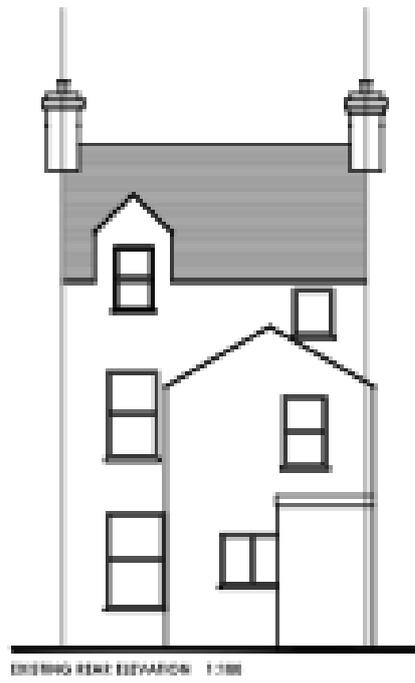
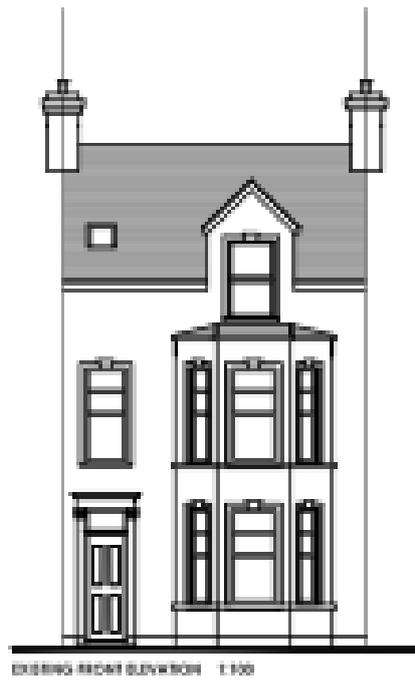


PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR 1:100



PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR 1:100

Existing and Proposed Front and Rear Elevations



Existing and Proposed Side Elevations

