



Planning Applications Committee

09:30 to 10:45

10 August 2023

Present: Councillors Sands (M) (vice chair in the chair), Fox (substitute for Councillor Champion), Haynes (substitute for Councillor Calvert), Hoechner, Kidman (substitute for Councillor Driver), Lubbock, Peek, Sands (S), Stutely

Apologies: Councillors Driver (chair), Calvert, Champion, Price, Prinsley, Thomas (Va) and Thomas (Vi) and Young

1. Declarations of interests

There were no declarations of interests.

2. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2023.

3. Application no 22/00273/F – Land off Argyle Street, Norwich NR1 2DA

The Senior Planner (case officer) presented the report with the aid of plans and slides. Members were advised that there had been nine objections to the proposal as itemised in the report. The Senior Planner proposed that an additional condition should be added to the recommendation, requiring the applicant to submit a contamination report, as recommended by the Environmental Protection Officer.

During discussion the Senior Planner and the Development Manager answered members' questions. This included questions on the landscaping proposals and confirmation that the landscaping conditions would ensure that boundary treatments addressed the concerns raised by Norfolk Constabulary. The landscaping scheme would be managed and maintained. Members sought clarification on the location of the cycle storage and noted that it met the local plan standard for each of the units. The committee also noted the plan detailing the cross section of the wall, and that there would be railings on top of a low wall. It was noted that the scheme complied with the council's policy for the provision of electric vehicle charging. Members were advised that some bedrooms were marginally smaller than standard but considered acceptable because of the inclusion of dressing areas and large cupboard spaces.

Members asked several questions about the use of the open space and access through the site. Members noted that two trees, an Ash and Silver Birch, were to be

removed to facilitate the development. Members were advised that that tree planting scheme would provide six new trees of different species as set out in the landscaping scheme. The committee noted that the communal space was intended for the residents of the scheme. The original plans had been revised to remove a second access to avoid building too close to a retaining wall. There would be better visibility and access from the proposal site to the play area in the adjacent park. There was pedestrian access through Argyle Street between Southgate Lane and King Street. External lighting would be considered as part of the landscaping condition. There was no evidence of bats roosting on the site.

The Senior Planner answered questions on the improved outlook of the public space as a deterrent for anti-social behaviour and crime. The chair commented that greater visibility would encourage other residents to use the park and play area.

The committee also considered that the site was on former chalk workings and had a history of subsidence. The Senior Planner said that the properties built in the 1980s had shallow foundations and had subsequently developed cracks and subsidence, which required frequent repairs and caused disruption to residents. It was proposed to use deep piled foundations for the building walls and floors taken into the chalk bedrock and extended beneath all possible previous excavations, tunnels, and other unstable materials, similar to the foundations used for Normandie Tower. There were technical reports providing evidence for this approach.

A member referred to a public representation suggesting that the affordable housing would provide homes for people with drug or alcohol dependencies and other vulnerable people. The Senior Planner said that the scheme provided affordable housing at a social rent for residents on the housing register and was not targeted at specific groups.

The Development Manager referred to the report (paragraphs 96 to 112) and explained the Green Infrastructure Contribution. He also explained that this site had been included on the priority list (Cabinet, 14 December 2022) to provide mitigation for Nutrient Neutrality and bring sites forward for development under the Norwich City Council Water Usage Retrofitting Mitigation Scheme (NCC WURMS).

The chair moved and Councillor Lubbock seconded the recommendations as set out in the report and with the additional condition, requiring the applicant to submit a contamination report.

Prior to discussion, the Senior Planner answered one further question from a member about the “long drag distance for bins” to provide assurance on the location of bin stores. Infirm residents could request assistance to have bins collected from their property.

Discussion ensued in which members welcomed this scheme for 14 affordable houses for social rent. The location of the site was close to the city centre with good transport links and access to green open space. A member considered that it was not dissimilar to Goldsmith Street in that it provided terraced houses, with outdoor space for residents to socialise and safe play areas for children. A member regretted the loss of the two trees but considered on balance that it was a good scheme.

One member suggested that with 9 parking spaces to 14 units, housing services prepared future tenants so that they are aware of the parking restrictions and can review the number of cars they have in their household.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to approve application no 22/00273/F– Land off Argyle Street, Norwich NR1 2DA, and grant planning permission subject to the completion of a S106 legal agreement to secure the provision of policy compliant affordable housing, nutrient neutrality credits and GIRAMS payment and the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit
2. In accordance with plans
3. Materials
4. Landscaping
5. Ecology measures
6. Small mammal access
7. Parking and turning area
8. Refuse and cycle storage details
9. Construction Management Plan
10. Electric vehicle charging point
11. Agreement of off-site highway improvement works
12. Provision of off-site highway improvement works
13. Infiltration testing/drainage strategy
14. Unexpected contamination
15. Imported material
16. Energy efficiency
17. Water efficiency
18. Contamination report

CHAIR