

Planning Applications Committee
2nd July, 2009

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| Agenda Number: | B2 |
| Section/Area: | Outer |
| Ward: | Bowthorpe |
| Officer: | Malcolm Dixon |
| Valid Date: | 29th May 2009 |
| Application No: | 09/00341/F |
| Site Address : | Norwich Community Hospital Bowthorpe Road Norwich NR2 3TU |
| Proposal: | Erection of 48 bed ward at Norwich Community Hospital with associated access arrangements and parking. |
| Applicant: | Anglia Support Partnership |
| Agent: | Ingleton Wood |

THE SITE

The site is located in the north east corner within the grounds of the Norwich Community Hospital, occupying 0.9hectares of an overall site of 3.1 hectares. The original main buildings on the site, identified as block 7 and 8, have been demolished and comprised a Burns Unit and Theatre. A smaller Sanitary building to the south of the main blocks has also been demolished.

It is some distance from the nearest residential properties (154-176 Bowthorpe Rd to the south and Merton Road to the east approximately 70 and 80 metres away respectively). Other than a large car park in the north east corner of the site, the majority of the hospital complex is situated to the west of the site and, on the northern boundary, there is a large wooded area known as The Woodland Park.

There are 4 trees (3no. gleditsia and 1 no. apple tree) at the southern end of the application site covered by a Tree Preservation Order no.323.

There is a recognised green link and a strategic cycleway route through the site linking Bowthorpe Road to the south with 'The Woodland Park' to the north.

(The overall site is identified for Housing and Health Facilities under saved policies HOU11 and AEC4.1 in the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004)

PLANNING HISTORY

There is an extensive site history, none of which is considered to be directly relevant to the application site. However, the most relevant previous application is:

4/1994/0893 - Extension of car park. (Approved - 23/02/1995)

THE PROPOSAL

Erection of 48 bed ward at Norwich Community Hospital with associated access arrangements and parking. The overall building will be mainly 2 storeys comprising two 24 bed wards, the ground floor to be dedicated to stroke victims and the first floor would be a replacement for the Henderson Ward on the south side of Bowthorpe Road, which caters for general rehabilitation. A smaller third storey element will accommodate staff changing and therapy rooms and housing for plant.

Ancillary uses such as day and consulting rooms together with a gymnasium will be provided. The gym will also be made available to other hospital departments on the site.

The timetable for occupation is October 2009 and to facilitate swift completion , construction is based on a Modular Building System.

52 nursing and administrative staff will be employed involving shift pattern working.

It is intended to upgrade part of the on site parking area, and cycle storage whilst access arrangements connecting to Bowthorpe Road will also be improved.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) indicates that the new build falls within the Root Protection Area and crown spread of two gleditsia and these will have to be removed. To compensate for the loss of the protected trees 6 no. heavy standards will be planted as replacements in the vicinity.

The applicants acknowledge the existing green link and the strategic cycleway route through the site which will remain unhindered by the development.

To support the application a Planning Statement has been produced which addresses:

- Regeneration
- Design and access
- Landscaping and external works
- Sustainability
- Energy efficiency
- Flood risk/drainage
- Site Waste Management Plan
- Statement of Community Involvement

and includes reports/statements covering:

- AIA
- Transport issues
- Mechanical and Electrical heating
- BREEAM pre assessment
- Demolition and Construction
- Community involvement
- Drainage

The applicants' agents have also confirmed that, although there is some loss of land within the identified housing allocation, as included in the Local Plan, the wider aims for N.H.S related use within the remainder of the site indicate that some housing provision can be made elsewhere on the site. However, they have also confirmed that the NHS has not identified any other sites within its ownership as potential housing sites at present.

There are no Section 106 requirements relating to this site.

Should planning permission be granted, then during construction, hours of external working will be restricted to 07:00-19:00 Mondays to Fridays and 08:00-13:30 Saturdays and completion is estimated to be approximately 9 months including demolition.

CONSULTATIONS

Anglian Water Services: No adverse comments

Norfolk Archaeological Unit: The site lies adjacent to the site of a roman cemetery and cremation urn therefore request a condition be imposed in

accordance with Para 30 of PPG 16 Archaeology and Planning requiring an agreed programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation as necessary.

Transportation: No adverse comments received to date

Environmental Health (Pollution and Health and Safety): The NHS have strict design guidelines covering construction, design and sound insulation and therefore no objections.

Tree Protection: Consent has been given to remove the two protected trees mentioned above subject to adequate replacement planting, which has been confirmed by the AIA.

Housing Strategy: Preference is to utilise land for housing if possible and if approved then possible precedent may be set.

Third Parties

Two Press Notices have been issued on 12th and 17th June respectively, the former covering the fact that this is a major application and the latter that it amounts to a departure from the adopted Local Plan.

Norwich Society: No adverse comments to date.

Neighbours (36 neighbouring properties have also been notified.):

To date only one response has been received. The objection received refers to the poor condition of the boundary fence between the hospital car park and the rear of Merton Road and the need for repairs or replacement. (The agents have been informed of this concern).

In accordance with the Councils Statement of Community Involvement (adopted Jan 2007), the applicants carried out their own pre-application consultation exercise by letter with local residents and businesses. This generated only one response from a Merton Rd resident who raised concerns over additional on street parking pressure during demolition.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

1) Relevant Planning Policies:

National

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| PPS1 | Delivering Sustainable Development |
| PPS1 Supplement | Planning and Climate Change |
| PPS3 | Housing |
| PPG13 | Transport |
| PPS22 | Renewable Energy |

East of England Plan

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| SS2 | Overall spatial strategy – needs of health and social services sector |
| H1 | Regional Housing Provision |
| NR1 | Norwich Key Centre for Development and Change – 33,000 new homes 2001-2021 of which 14,100 in City |
| ENV7 | Quality in the built environment |
| ENG1 | Carbon dioxide emissions and energy performance |
| ENG2 | Renewable Energy |

Local Plan (Saved Policies)

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| NE3 | Tree Protection – TPO323 |
| EP1 | Contaminated land and former landfill sites – evaluation and treatment |
| EP2 | Testing for ground stability conditions |
| AEC4 | Intermediate healthcare facilities at NCH site |
| HOU11 B17 | Housing Allocation NCH site – 75 dwellings and open space |
| HBE4 | Development in other locations of archaeological interest |
| HBE5 | Agreement with developers for archaeological investigation |
| HBE12 | Design |
| SR12 | Green Links network |
| TRA10 | Contribution by developers to works required for access to the site |
| TRA11 | Contributions for transport improvements in wider area |
| TRA15 | Cycle network and facilities |

Statement of Community Involvement (LDF –adopted Jan 2007)

2) Principle of Development

The application site is located within an area identified in the Local Plan as a housing allocation covering 2 hectares to provide at least 75 dwellings and including at least 20 affordable homes. However most of the remainder of the hospital site is allocated for health care facilities (1.5 hectares). The residual 0.8 hectares is earmarked to provide open space.

Although, strictly, a departure to the Local Plan, the assurance given by the applicants that delivery of housing on the site will not be overlooked, coupled with the fact that the use contributes towards the objective of a mixed use development including health care facilities, are considered acceptable and therefore support for the development can be given.

3) Layout, Scale, Design and Access,

The layout has been designed to maximize efficiency and patient comfort involving a central spine corridor, with bedrooms limited to 4, 2 and 1 bed spaces and lift access to the main upper floor. Ancillary day and consulting rooms and a

gymnasium are included in the development. At the northern end servicing and kitchen space will be provided restricted to staff only.

In the longer term buildings to the immediate west of the site are intended for demolition and will be replaced by landscaping which will improve the views from the western facing ward accommodation and will contribute towards the open space requirements on the overall site.

Although a structure of some bulk, the scale at part two-, part three-storeys is acceptable and comparable to existing buildings on the site. It is also helped by the design and imaginative use of varied finishing to the exterior, successfully breaking up the dominance of the facades of the building whilst also paying heed to energy efficiency measures.

The building has been designed to disguise its modular form, including a main façade comprising glazing and solar shading on the south-east corner, creating an imposing entrance and front elevation.

The Transport Statement which accompanies the application confirms that there are alternative modes of transport to the use of the motor car e.g. frequent bus services at 10 minute intervals are available on the main road and there is a defined strategic cycle way on Bowthorpe Road connecting to the A140 to the west of the site. TRICS data suggests that the proposed use will generate fewer vehicular trips than the previous use.

4) Other Material Considerations

a) Regeneration, Sustainability and Energy Efficiency

The existing facilities are largely redundant and the proposal will lead to a new health based use of more than 2600sq.m. on the site, in accordance with the spirit of saved Policy AEC4 which seeks to protect 1.5 hectares precisely for this purpose. Brickwork has been saved following demolition and this will be reused as part of the required piling to support the new development.

A BREEAM Pre Assessment indicates that the development should achieve an 'Excellent' rating in terms of sustainability. In its design the agents have partially relied on the NHS Carbon Reduction Strategy, prepared by the NHS Sustainable Development Unit 2009.

Furthermore this is a brownfield site, accessible by walking, public transport and cycling. Although the development potential of the site is constrained to a certain extent by its restricted area and orientation, nonetheless it has been designed to maximize the potential of both natural light and ventilation.

Air source heat pumps have been identified as the most effective method of heating and building materials have been chosen for their sustainability benefits in terms of reducing waste and sourcing.

b) Landscaping

Due to the restricted available space around the proposed ward, unfortunately, only a limited amount of landscaping is possible but this will include 6 no. heavy standard trees to replace 2 of the protected 4 trees in the car parking area together with low level planting at the northern end of the site. In addition, as stated above a landscaped area of open space is intended to the west of the site (dependent on the existing block 12 being demolished). Hard landscaping details will be provided in due course.

c) Flood Risk and Drainage

It has been demonstrated that there is adequate capacity in the existing Foul Water system.

The rate of surface water run off is calculated to be roughly the same as at the moment and will discharge to a positive system. Attenuation measures will be incorporated to alleviate possible future flooding events. However, the area is considered to be at low risk of flooding based on the Flood Risk information supplied by the Environment Agency. Unfortunately, the use of soakaways has been dismissed because of the restricted site area and inconsistent deep fill soil conditions.

d) Site Waste Management

Clinical waste is collected from the wards by porters and stored in a central holding area. It is then removed once a week by removed by specialist waste contractors.

Depending on its source, some domestic waste is directed to an on site compactor whilst other waste is stored in commercial waste bins and disposed directly by Norfolk Environmental Waste Services once or twice per week. Fresh laundry is delivered and soiled laundry removed 3 times per week by a Laundry contractor.

e) Ground Conditions

The Site Investigation Report accompanying the application has established that there are no material contamination issues relating to the site. However, piled foundations are required because of the possible presence of Victorian chalk mines on the site.

f) Archaeology

The sites potential is documented above in the Consultation Section and in this connection a Brief was prepared for the site by NLA. Initially manual and mechanical trenching were required and it is understood that this work is presently underway following demolition. The findings from this work will influence further required methods of investigation and mitigation.

g) Green Links

As stated above the green link and strategic cycleway route will be preserved through the overall site.

e) Section 106

Given the nature of the use, that no measures to improve access to the site are required and the associated community based benefits, it is understood that no requirements or contributions are required under saved Local Plan Policies TRA15 and 16.

5) Conclusion

Although a departure from the Local Plan, nonetheless the principle is acceptable given that delivery of housing elsewhere on the site should not be compromised. This is reinforced by the fact that the provision of health care facilities does actually deliver another policy aim contained within the Local Plan. As far as the detailed design is concerned it is considered that the scheme is acceptable given its relationship with its surroundings.

Taking into account all the above, it is considered that the scheme can be supported. However, this view comes with a word of caution as the advertised Departure Notice does not expire until Wednesday 8th July 2009 ,and therefore should any further material planning objections be received between the date of the committee meeting and the 8th July then the application will need to be returned for members consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to:

A) no material objections being received in writing to the proposal departing from the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004 by 8th July 2009, and therefore to give the Head of Planning delegated powers to approve the scheme and

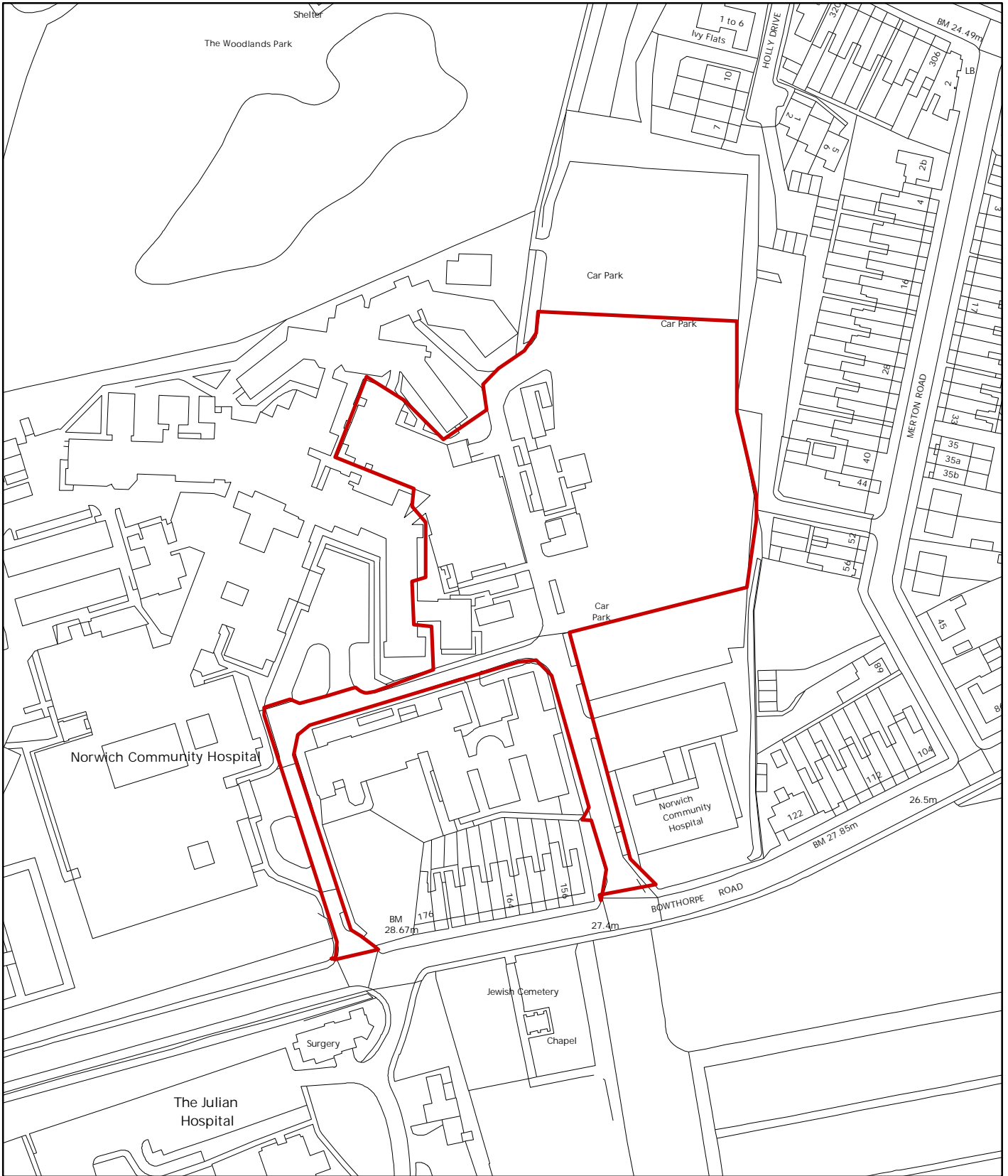
B) the inclusion of conditions covering the following:

- 1) Commencement within 3 Years
- 2) Pre commencement-External Materials
- 3) Pre commencement-Archaeological evaluation
- 4) Pre commencement Hard and soft landscaping
- 5) On going maintenance of landscaping features
- 6) Plant /machinery
- 7) To be built In accordance with approved plans and Planning Statement
- 8) Pre commencement –Surface water details
- 9) Pre commencement- Foul water details
- 10)Pre commencement -Energy efficiency details
- 11) Protecting green link /strategic cycleway paths
- 12)Pre commencement- Boundary treatment to car park area
- 13)Pre commencement -Refuse and bin storage details
- 14) Pre commencement- External lighting

Reasons for Recommendation:

Although a departure from the Local Plan, nonetheless the principle is acceptable given that delivery of housing elsewhere on the site should not be compromised. This is reinforced by the fact that the provision of health care facilities does actually deliver another policy aim contained within the Local Plan.

As far as the detailed design is concerned it is considered that the scheme is acceptable given its relationship with its surroundings. It is considered that the scheme is acceptable taking into account all material considerations and as it does not materially compromise national regional and saved Local Plan policies HOU11 (B17), TRA15 and TRA16 and furthermore conforms with the aims of saved Local plan policies NE3, EP1, EP2, AEC4, HBE4, HBE5, HBE12, SR12 and TRA15.



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Planning Application No- 09/00341/F

Site Address - Norwich community Hospital, Bowthorpe Road

Scale - 1:1500



NORWICH
City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

