

Planning Applications Committee

11 September, 2008

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| Agenda Number: | B1 |
| Section/Area: I | INNER |
| Ward: | THORPE |
| Officer: | Anne Napier |
| Valid Date: | 7 October 2006 |
| Application Numbers: | 06/01005/F, 06/01006/L, 07/00453/L, 08/00341/C |
| Site Address : | The Great Hospital Bishopgate Norwich Norfolk NR1 4EJ |
| Proposals: | <p>06/01005/F: Erection of two-storey building to provide 18 new residential units and a staff common room, 2 three-storey extensions to Prior Court to provide 6 additional residential units, erection of building to provide community room and shop, erection of workshop and reorganisation of car park. (Revised proposals).</p> <p>06/01006/L: Demolition of laundrette and shop and erection of community room and glazed link including alterations to openings in east wall of Cloisters. (Revised proposals)</p> <p>07/00453/L: Demolition of Holme Cottages. (Revised proposals).</p> <p>08/00341/C: Demolition of 1 two bay and 1 three bay garages situated in general car park area.</p> |
| Applicant: | The Chief Executive And Trustees |
| Agent: | Cowper Griffith Associates |

These applications were considered at the meeting of the Planning Applications Committee on 21 August 2008, where the members of the Committee resolved to defer the applications for a site visit. The following report is largely unchanged from that considered at the previous Committee meeting, however the appendices attached to the report have been revised to include late representations received and the site plan accompanying this report has been amended to clarify the proposals.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS REPORT IS A COMPOSITE REPORT COVERING FOUR SEPARATE APPLICATIONS WHICH ARE INTERLINKED

THE SITE

The Great Hospital is located immediately to the north-east of the Cathedral precinct. The buildings and boundary walls of the Great Hospital enclose the site to the south, west, south-west and east with the river Wensum marking the boundary to the east and north. Very few views into the site are possible, but an exception to this is the view from Bishopgate through railings into St Helen's Square and through the access gates adjacent to St Helen's House.

The Great Hospital is an extremely important site in the historical development of Norwich and lies within both the Area of Main Archaeological Interest (HBE3) and also the Cathedral Precinct and Areas of Standing Remains (HBE2) as defined in the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004. It is an example of a provider of social care to the older citizens of Norwich which has been in existence for 759 years. It was founded in 1249 by Bishop Walter de Suffield as the Church and Hospital of St Helen and expanded over hundreds of years as further buildings were added to the complex. Much of the later medieval complex survives making it one of the best-preserved and important groups of hospital structures in the country (NLA Archaeological Brief, June 2008).

The hospital continues to the present day, with a number of distinct additions to the complex occurring over time. The more recent of these include Elaine Herbert House (on the corner of Bishopgate and Cotman Fields), Prior Court (both c1970's) and Young's Green (c1980's). Older examples of later additions to the complex include Suffield Court, Birkbeck Hall and Holme Cottages (built in 1905). Earlier single storey Victorian terraces lie between Prior Court and Elaine Herbert House with Georgian and earlier buildings surrounding St Helen's Square to the west. The oldest buildings on the site are the C14 church and C15 cloisters. Only the centre part of the church is still used as both the west and east ends were converted to an infirmary in the late C15. This use only ceased in 1970, although the old partitions are still in place.

Although Holme Cottages are not listed in their own right, they were built as ancillary buildings to the Great Hospital pre-1948, are clearly within the curtilage of the Great Hospital complex and with a use and function allied to that of the Hospital complex as a whole. Consequently, given these criteria, they are

considered to be covered by the listed status of the Great Hospital. The modern flat-roofed laundry and shop building is attached to the C15 cloisters and as such its demolition and replacement also requires listed building consent.

Seventeen buildings and structures within the complex are separately listed as Grade I, II* and II, of which 7 have Grade I listed status. 'Listed buildings are classified in grades to show their relative importance, Grade I, II* & II. Grade I is reserved for buildings of international stature and, in all, only 2.5% of buildings are so designated. Those graded II* are defined as 'outstanding' and comprise 5.5% of present listings. Most listed buildings are graded II, for their 'special' interest and national significance.' (English Heritage – Images of England) The site is also within the City Centre Conservation Area and, as such, the demolition of the modern free-standing garage block within the current car park requires Conservation Area Consent. The Great Hospital is identified as a key building group within the city Centre Conservation Area Appraisal. 'The key group on Bishopgate is the early buildings of the Great Hospital incorporating the Church of St Helen. This group, with its cloistered quadrangle, enjoys an important visual and physical relationship with the Cathedral Close. Some of the C19 additions to the Great Hospital and almshouses form a group because of the consistent materials used.' (p.67) In terms of building types, the Appraisal goes on to state that: '[...] The Great Hospital is also a rare survival of a C13 charitable foundation with several good C19 almshouse groups around it. Both the Cathedral and the Great Hospital retain cloistered walks. [...]' (p.71)

The site lies within a very low lying area of the city and the whole site is within Flood Zone 2 as shown on the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Flood Probability Maps prepared for the Council in November 2007. These SFRA maps take account of existing defences and delineate areas at risk of flooding. Land in Flood Zone 2 covers areas with medium probability of flooding (between a 1 in 100 to a 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding in any year) as defined in PPS25. In addition parts of the site (Young's Green, most of the open space to the south west of Young's Green, Suffield Court, Birkbeck Hall, the Cloisters, the Masters House, the Church, part of Elaine Herbert House) lie within Flood Zone 3a taking into account climate change. This represents land with a High Probability of flooding (a 1 in a 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding in any year). Furthermore, the car park and swan pit areas of the site lie within Flood Zone 3b taking into account climate change. These areas are land considered to be part of the functional floodplain, where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood (and is land which has an annual probability of flooding of 1 in 20 or greater in any year).

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

In addition to the applications listed below, there have been 17 other applications on the site since 1990, most of which were for relatively minor internal and external alterations and repairs, access improvements, lighting, works to doorways and the like.

The following represent the most relevant applications in respect of the current proposals and all four applications were withdrawn, the first three in 2005 following concerns expressed about the merits of the schemes submitted, and the final one to reflect the need for listing building consent for the demolition rather than conservation area consent as originally applied for.

05/00940/F - Provision of 38 space car park with associated landscaping on Hospital Meadow to the east of the existing car park.

05/00942/F - Demolition of Holme Cottages and erection of a two-storey replacement building comprising 27 new residential units and construction of community room to the east of the cloisters.

05/00944/L - Demolition of single-storey building to the east of the cloisters and the erection of a community room.

06/01004/C - Demolition of Holme Cottages.

Following the withdrawal of the earlier scheme in 2005, revised proposals were submitted in 2006. Although these now form the basis of the current scheme, two further significant amendments were made to the proposals since the original submission. The first, in September 2007 amended the form of the replacement accommodation building from the T-shape originally proposed (providing 27 units) to a more rectangular form (providing 18 units) with a footprint more akin to that of Holme Cottages which it is proposed to replace. The second significant amendment to the scheme was submitted in April 2008 which amended several design details of the proposals and also submitted much more detailed justifications for the various elements of the development via revised Design and Access Statements. In addition to the two still extant applications received in 2006, an application for Listed Building Consent for the demolition of Holme Cottages was received in 2007 and an application for Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of the modern garage block was received in 2008.

THE PROPOSAL

The four applications represent four separate areas of development proposed on the site:

- the demolition of the modern garage block within the car park and the erection of a workshop building in a similar location, provision of cycle storage and a bin store;
- the demolition of the existing modern shop and laundry building attached to the cloisters and its replacement with a community building containing a common room, shop/servery and washroom facilities;
- the six room extension of Prior Court special care unit; and
- the demolition of Holme Cottages and the erection of a new accommodation block providing 18 residential units, a staff common room and a laundry facility.

- **Garage blocks and workshop:**

It is proposed to demolish the existing 1980's garage block, to reconfigure the parking arrangements within the site, provide cycle parking within the car park area and to construct a new purpose-built workshop building with a brick plinth, hardwood board on board timber cladding and a plain tiled roof. This would enable the relocation of the existing workshop which is currently on the ground floor of the old Chancel of St Helen's Church. The applicants consider that, currently, the location of the workshop represents a fire hazard and is difficult to access. The facility provides for general repairs to fixtures and fittings throughout the site and is considered by the applicants to provide an essential part of the care for residents and for the management of the premises. The relocation of the workshop would also enable the future restoration and more appropriate re-use of this important building.

- **Laundry and community hall:**

The existing laundry and shop was constructed in the mid C20 and immediately abuts both the cloisters and the Master's House. It is constructed of rendered blockwork and a flat felted roof. It is proposed to replace this with a stand-alone building containing a community hall, disabled WCs, storage and a small shop/kitchen with entrance lobby. The building has been designed as a simple rectangular building orientated north-south, with a pitched black clay pantile roof and abutment gables, constructed with stone reveals, quoins and flint panels of traditional construction. It is proposed to site the building 1m away from the medieval east wall of the old cloisters and 2m away from the Masters house to the north. A glazed roof and glass wall panels would join the new building to the medieval cloister wall. It is also proposed to open up currently blocked openings in the cloister wall and, on the east side, the common room would open through large sliding oak doors out onto a terrace and the lower part of the south court. Stone steps would lead down to the lower level of the cloisters from the north end of the community hall, under a cantilevered glass roof. The stone edge to the level change would continue around the east end of the Masters House and beside the north ramp. A frameless glass balustrade is shown along the higher paths. The objectives for this element of the proposal are cited as including: the wish to open up routes into the cloister from the east side, and restore its central position as the 'hub' of the community's pedestrian network; to build a new social centre for the Great Hospital and create a new 'Green' to one side; and to regain access for all, by creating level access routes from the proposed residential accommodation directly to a community hall and into the medieval cloister and then on to the church and St Helens Square.

- **Extensions to Prior Court:**

The extension of the Prior Court dependency unit seeks to provide an additional six new extra care units by the addition of two new wings, each of three stories and each new wing containing one new unit on each floor. This would allow for simpler staffing arrangements and all units would be designed to disabled standards to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations. The curved

elevations of the new additions would be finished in a self-colour hardwood, with a low pitched roof finished with zinc behind a parapet eave.

- **Demolition of Holme Cottages and new accommodation building:**

The proposed new accommodation building would be constructed on the site of the existing Holme Cottages and is also arranged east-west with projecting wings to the north, framing the south side of Suffield Court. The orientation of the rooms, the need for natural lighting, the variety of room type relative to the abilities of the occupants, the provision of private 'external' space for all units through gardens, patios or balconies, the need for a high proportion of disabled special units, and the provision of flexible internal living arrangements, with regard for the needs of future residents, have all influenced the design of the new building (submitted DAS para 4.6.2).

The plan form of the new building is based upon a single aspect arrangement of self-contained flats facing south, east or west. An open cloister on the ground floor and an enclosed corridor on the first floor allow access along the north side. A laundry is also proposed in the centre of the building to replace that to be demolished adjacent to the medieval cloisters.

Modifications have been made to the design of the building following comments made in regard to previous proposals. The applicants state that the section and elevations of the building now more closely refer to the scale and detailing of the surrounding buildings on the site. The pitch of the main roof follows those of the Master's Office (White Cottages) and Suffield Court, with a steeper pitch than previously proposed being obtained through the use of a concealed flat ridge. The projecting wings to the north and the single gable to the south have a slightly steeper pitch, but with a lower ridge height and would be finished with abutment gable brickwork towards Suffield Court, following the similar treatment used with the Master's Office (White Cottages) and Suffield Court.

Careful consideration has been given to the use of materials with different types of brick bond proposed (Stack and Monks/Flemish bonds). The oriel windows introduce vertical elements into the strong horizontal nature of the south elevation of the building, with stone columns and a lime rendered first floor on the north elevation, which also contains the main entrance to the accommodation building. The predominant material of the walls of the building is red face brickwork, with the use of stone for the columns, entablature and some plinths, and vertical hardwood boarding to the back wall of the cloisters and the walls of the projecting residents' community room. Welsh slate is proposed for the main roof, with zinc for the residents community room and rainwater goods. It is proposed that the joinery would be stained or oiled hardwood with top roof lights positioned on the east and west sides of each rooftop cowl with the north and south sides in standing seam zinc.

In order to meet the requirements for energy efficiency, the applicants have submitted an assessment of available options for the site, comparing three

possible low carbon/ renewable energy sources and combinations of them. Taking into account the recommendations contained within the report and the historic environment of the complex, it is proposed that solar thermal panels will be installed on the hidden flat roof element of the accommodation building and that this will enable the requirements of policy ENG1 of the East of England Plan to be met. Over 12% of the development's calculated energy needs would be provided by the installation of the solar thermal hot water heating array of panels and this would also reduce the carbon production of the new building by approximately 8%.

Furthermore, the design of the buildings proposes a ground floor construction of all new buildings at 2.75m AOD to ensure a safe egress for residents and staff with all the proposed buildings protected, even taking into account climate change projections. Hard surfaces within the scheme have been designed with maximum permeability, with soft areas within the development area increased by some 350sq.m. Rainwater harvesting is also proposed, slowing water ingress to the sewer system and providing water for external watering and for 'grey' water within the scheme. Underground water storage tanks are therefore proposed to hold the water.

CONSULTATIONS

Advertised on site, in the press and neighbours notified.

Summaries of the representations received have been attached as an Appendix to this report. Strong views have been expressed both for and against the proposals and, as the applications for the proposals have been ongoing for some time, these views relate both to the proposals as originally submitted and also as subsequently amended.

A full summary of the consultation responses received are also attached as an Appendix to this report. However, the following brief summary is included to aid comprehension and represents the final comments received from the consultees, accepting that this very brief summary of their positions does not include all the relevant considerations outlined in the responses received and that the position held in some cases may have been one reached 'on balance':

Environmental Health: No objections subject to conditions

Norwich Society: No objections

Norfolk Landscape Archaeology: No objections subject to conditions and s106

Environment Agency: No objections subject to conditions

Central Norwich Citizen's Forum: No objections

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings: No objections

Victorian Society: No objections

Anglian Water: No objections

Ancient Monuments Society: Object

English Heritage: Strongly object

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant National Planning Policy

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development

Supplement to PPS1: Planning and Climate Change

PPS3: Housing

PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment

PPG16: Archaeology and Planning

PPG23: Planning and Pollution Control

PPG25: Development and Flood Risk

Relevant East of England Plan policies

ENG1 Carbon dioxide emissions and energy performance

ENV 7 Quality in the built environment

WM6 Waste management in development

Relevant Local Plan Policies

NE9 Comprehensive landscaping scheme and tree planting

HBE2 Protection of standing remains in Cathedral Precinct and other priority areas

HBE3 Archaeological assessment in Area of Main Archaeological Interest

HBE8 Development in Conservation Areas

HBE9 Listed Buildings and development affecting them

HBE12 High quality of design, with special attention to height, scale, massing and form of development

EP1 Contaminated land

EP12 Development in other areas at risk of flooding

EP16 Water conservation and sustainable drainage systems

EP17 Protection of watercourses from pollution from stored materials, roads and car parks

EP18 High standard of energy efficiency for new development

EP22 High standard of amenity for residential occupiers

HOU1 Provision of new housing to meet needs and monitoring

HOU5 Accessibility for wheelchair users

HOU19 Residential institutions – criteria

TRA5 approach to design for vehicle movement and special needs

TRA6 Parking standards – maxima

TRA7 Cycle parking standards

Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents

Trees and development

Heritage Interpretation

Energy efficiency and renewable energy

Flood risk and development

Accessible and special needs housing

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The site is within the City Centre Conservation Area and all aspects of the proposals can be considered to affect the setting of listed buildings. In addition, the demolition of Holme Cottages and the Laundry Block involve alterations to listed buildings.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) requires that special attention shall be paid in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Sections 16 of the Act requires authorities considering applications for works which affect a listed building to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. This reflects the great importance to society of protecting listed buildings from unnecessary demolition and from unsuitable and insensitive alteration and this should be the prime consideration for authorities in determining an application for consent. (PPG15, para 3.3) The setting of a building is often an essential part of the building's character, especially if a garden or grounds have been laid out to complement its design or function. (PPG15, para 2.16)

PPG15 provides guidance on the assessment of proposals for the alteration and extension of listed buildings in paragraphs 3.12-3.15. It also outlines a series of 'tests' that should be used to assess proposals for the demolition of listed buildings or buildings in conservation areas (paragraphs 3.16-3.19 and 4.27). Although, the demolition of Holme Cottages can be considered as an alteration to the principal listed buildings (rather than the 'demolition' of a listed building, as Holme Cottages are not listed in their own right, but are covered by the listing as 'curtilage' buildings – Annex D to Circular 01/2001 applies) Holme Cottages are also within the conservation area and as such it is considered appropriate to assess this aspect of the proposals against the tests for demolition. The general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area (PPG15, para 4.27).

THE DEMOLITION OF THE GARAGE BLOCKS, ERECTION OF THE WORKSHOP AND RECONFIGURATION OF THE CAR PARK:

Taking each of the main development proposals in turn, it is considered that the principle of the proposed demolition of the garage blocks, the erection of the proposed workshop building, the reconfiguration of car park, the provision of bicycle parking and bin storage is acceptable. The garage blocks are unsympathetic 1980s developments, the removal of which can be considered to positively enhance the overall setting of the Great Hospital complex and the character and appearance of the area. The removal of the workshop from the historic wards within St Helen's would be beneficial and the new building is considered to be well designed. Furthermore, the reconfiguration of the car park is considered acceptable in aesthetic terms and of benefit to the site as a whole. The number of spaces available would also compensate for the loss of the spaces to the south of Holme Cottages. Taken with the other spaces remaining on site, the total number of car parking spaces would increase by one and the applicants have indicated that, due to the change towards increased independent domiciliary care, amongst other things and despite the proposed increase in accommodation, there is no requirement to increase staffing levels on the site. The number of residents with their own cars is currently relatively low and likely to remain as such. There is no dedicated cycle parking facility on site currently and the proposal can therefore be considered a positive improvement in these terms. Previous schemes proposed the introduction of the barrier entrance system but this was considered too complicated to operate effectively and has now been withdrawn from the proposals. Consequently, the demolition of the garage block, the erection of the workshop building and the reconfiguration of the car park with the associated bicycle parking and bin storage areas is considered acceptable.

THE EXTENSION TO PRIOR COURT:

The extension to Prior Court is considered acceptable and is recognised to provide much needed additional accommodation. However, it is considered that a material sample for the timber cladding and the finish on the timber windows should be the subject of conditions.

THE DEMOLITION OF THE LAUNDRY BLOCK AND ERECTION OF THE NEW COMMUNITY BUILDING:

Paragraph 3.13 of PPG15 states: 'Many listed buildings can sustain some degree of sensitive alteration or extension to accommodate continuing or new uses.

Indeed, cumulative changes reflecting the history of use and ownership are themselves an aspect of the special interest of some buildings, and the merit of some new alterations or additions, especially where they are generated within a secure and committed long-term ownership should not be discounted. [...]

Paragraph 3.12 states: '[...] In judging the effect of any alteration or extension it is essential to have assessed the elements that make up the special interest of the building in question. They may comprise not only obvious visual features [...], but the spaces and layout of the building and the architectural or technological interest of the surviving structure and surfaces. [...]

The demolition of laundry block and erection of new community building is generally considered to be acceptable in principle. The existing laundry building is not of any architectural importance whilst the new community hall is considered to be of an acceptable design and a proposal that will greatly enhance the central space within the Great Hospital and provide a much needed facility for residents. It proposes the use of traditional materials found elsewhere at the Great Hospital but in a contemporary manner. In terms of scale, the building sits well with its neighbours and the steeply pitched roof echoes that of other historic buildings such as the Master's House. The glazed link will ensure that there is minimal intervention to the historic cloister wall and that it will not perform any structural function for the new extension. The building with its large sliding doors facing onto The Green will help enliven this open space without dominating it. However, there are concerns relating to the proposed new openings from the cloister. These are reflected in the views expressed by English Heritage and are summarised in the attached Appendix. These concerns have been shared with the applicants who have agreed to further amend the scheme to delete the proposed opening of the central arch and the opening of the blocked 'niches'. It is considered that these further amendments to the scheme can be satisfactorily controlled by condition.

THE DEMOLITION OF HOLME COTTAGES AND THE ERECTION OF THE NEW ACCOMMODATION BUILDING:

The demolition of Holme Cottages and erection of the new accommodation building are the most controversial elements of the proposals and strong views have been expressed both for and against the scheme.

The two elements of the development – the demolition and the new building – need to be considered separately although the two parts are clearly linked and there is some overlap in terms of the considerations of the merits of the two elements. But even if the demolition of Holme Cottages is considered to be justified it is also important to assess the quality of the replacement building. The guidance in PPG15 emphasises that the demolition of a listed building or of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area, has to be fully justified. Generally, there is a presumption in favour of retaining such buildings.

Consequently, several 'tests' are outlined within the guidance to enable an assessment to be made of the demolition proposed. These tests are outlined below:

1. Clear and convincing evidence that all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or find viable new uses and these efforts have failed
2. That preservation in some form of charitable or community ownership is not possible or suitable

3. That redevelopment would produce substantial benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition:
4. The condition of the building, the cost of repairing and maintaining it in relation to its importance and to the value derived from its continued use
5. The adequacy of efforts made to retain the building in use including the offer of the unrestricted freehold of the building on the open market at a realistic price reflecting the building's condition:
6. The merits of alternative proposals for the site. (PPG15 para 3.19(iii) states that: These are a material consideration but subjective claims for the architectural merits of proposed replacement buildings should not in themselves be held to justify the demolition of any listed building. There may very exceptionally be cases where the proposed works would bring substantial benefits for the community which have to be weighed against the arguments in favour of preservation. [...])

The Design and Access Statements submitted by the applicants in respect of the applications consider these issues and contain information and arguments to demonstrate that the 'tests' have been met.

- **The applicant's case in support of the proposals can be summarised as:**

Need, current accommodation and alternative use of the buildings:

The Great Hospital provides accommodation for 120 people in a range of housing comprising sheltered housing flats/cottages, extra care housing and a residential care home. The response of the Great Hospital to an independent report produced for the Hospital in 2002, written in the climate of changing government guidance for care for older people, identified a need to provide a greater level of care and support to be given to residents in their present accommodation, decreasing the need to move as needs change. The age and historical importance of 30 of the buildings on the complex means that it is simply not possible to adapt all units of accommodation to the required standard or to enlarge them sufficiently to allow carers to work safely. In addition to these considerations, demand for accommodation at the Hospital continues to grow, in spite of a minimum two year wait for admission. Currently there are 13 people on the waiting list with an average of 20 applications per year turned down.

Holme Cottages have very little architectural or historic merit as they have been altered significantly over time.

Retaining the cottages in the current form would require the residents to continue to live in sub-standard accommodation units which are difficult to access. Disabled access is not possible due to narrow doors and raised thresholds. The facilities provided are not considered adequate to meet modern requirements and the internal space within the cottages is too small to enable domiciliary care to be provided.

The alterations required to the cottages to bring them up to modern standards would lead to the net loss of two of the eight units, in order to provide accommodation of a size comparable with current floorspace requirements of 60sq.m. and to respect the remaining fabric of the building and subdivide between existing chimney stacks. This would further erode their historic character and would be prohibitively expensive for the Great Hospital to achieve. Because of the current internal arrangements a total refurbishment involving internal reconstruction would be required, at a cost of some £1.25m when taken with the external alterations proposed for the car parking. This reduction in the number of units from 8 to 6, would result in a loss of provision across the site and a loss of revenue from the two units concerned, in contrast with the desire of the Trustees to expand the existing provision on site to meet the continuing need for additional accommodation.

There is not considered to be a suitable alternative use for the building. Whilst the existing use could be sustained, the costs of adaptation and modernisation required to bring the cottages up to modern requirements are considered prohibitive and unlikely to meet the charitable aims of the Trust of the Great Hospital. Consequently any continued use of the existing building would, by necessity, provide a substandard form of accommodation. Non-residential uses for the cottages are not considered to be a suitable alternative re-use of the building, given both the overly domestic form and character of the building and lack of need for alternative facilities on the site. Although a new community hall is required, the use of the existing cottages for this purpose is not considered feasible due to the domestic scale of the building.

The sale of the buildings to another charity for their use or for an alternative community use is not considered feasible. For the reasons outlined above the buildings are not considered to lend themselves to anything other than a domestic residential use, the cottages are in the heart of the Great Hospital complex and are already in a charitable ownership. It is not considered that, given their location, there are any other charities that would be willing to take on the ownership of the cottages and, even if there were, severe management problems could arise both for the Great Hospital and also for the charity concerned.

In terms of community benefits, there is a need within Norwich and specifically within the Hospital complex for an increase in the amount of housing provided. This is reflected in the sustained demand for accommodation as evidenced by a lengthy waiting list and an average of twenty unsuccessful applicants per annum. In addition to this demand for units, there is also a need to ensure that the accommodation provided within the complex can meet modern requirements whilst operating within the constraints of an historic site. The provision of a purpose built accommodation building would enable a net increase in 8 units on this part of the site (14 overall when taken with the Prior Court extensions). It would also enable a greater proportion of the units within the complex to meet

modern requirements to facilitate the provision of care to residents over a longer period of time, as needs change, without the requirement to move.

There is an operational benefit, both in terms of staffing and in the provision of meals to residents, to locate any new care provision close to Prior Court, the existing extra care housing facility. The addition of individual units of extra care housing onto existing buildings or on the edge of the site, would result in the most vulnerable residents being isolated, increasing the potential for falls and loneliness.

Consideration of alternative sites:

Notwithstanding the operational and housing benefits for locating the new accommodation building as proposed, a number of potential alternative sites were looked at within the complex to assess their feasibility to meet the demand for the additional accommodation needed but, with the exception of the site of Holme Cottages, these were not considered suitable.

The site of the Hospital Meadows is an open area of land to the east of the site and represents an important area of open landscape both to the complex and to the city as a whole. It also lies within the functional floodplain.

There is a small area of undeveloped land between Young's Green and the river, but the area of land in question is restricted and it is within a part of the site with a high probability of flooding.

To the west end of the complex is a small park, surrounded by mature trees and providing both a valuable resource for the enjoyment of residents and a key open space within the site, framing views to and from the cathedral precinct, providing a visual expression of the historical links between the two sites. This open space is therefore considered crucial to both the city and the residents of the Great Hospital. Most of this part of the site also has a high probability of flooding.

The possibility of demolishing, extending or altering Suffield Court was also considered but, although an inefficient use of scarce land, this single storey range of almshouses is considered to be a charming and well-preserved group expressing a clear stage in the development of the Hospital and consequently not considered suitable for redevelopment. Again, this part of the site also has a high probability of flooding.

The car park area to the east of Suffield Court was also considered but, not only would the development of this area lead to problems of relocating the car parking within the site, the land is also within the functional floodplain.

A small site to the west of St Helen's House was considered but a free standing building was not considered possible on the constrained land between the buildings and the road on one of the main routes into the site. Given that St Helen's House is also a listed building, large scale construction was considered

inappropriate, particularly given the importance of the built form in this area expressed within the Conservation Area Appraisal.

A small site may be available to the north of the Chaplain's House, but this would necessitate the demolition of the existing 1970's accommodation and so the actual net gain in accommodation would therefore be negligible. Furthermore, as the Chaplain's House is a listed building, any large scale development is considered inappropriate.

St Helen's Square was assessed and its position in the heart of the historic and community core of the complex was recognised and it would provide sufficient space. However, it was considered that the development of this site would destroy the essential character of the site and not be in accordance with the Conservation Area Appraisal.

The central courtyard part of the site, to the immediate south of Holme Cottages, was also considered. However, although this land is within a medium probability of flooding (and so preferable in flood risk terms to other potential sites) the development of this land would completely hide the south side of Holme Cottages, obscure the east side of Birkbeck Hall and the west side of the Master's Office. Previous schemes have also led to unfavourable reactions to a proposed north-south building running through the court, considering that this element of the scheme was inappropriate. Therefore the development of this part of the site was also not considered feasible.

The redevelopment of Holme Cottages was considered as the eight almshouses provide a poor quality of accommodation in the centre of the site. The quality of the original building work was functionally adequate but of no great merit and the buildings have subsequently been much altered. Historically, buildings have been positioned along the north side of the central court and the larger scale buildings adjacent to Holme Cottages mean that a two-storey construction would be suitable. The site has a medium probability of flooding. Further consideration was given to constructing a new building to the rear of Holme Cottages, preserving them in the process. But apart from the architectural difficulties this would cause, all the rooms of the new building would face north and it would be on land with a high probability of flooding as the land level lowers immediately to the north of Holme Cottages.

This development would allow the Great Hospital to meet its operational plans and achieve its strategic objective of being a C21 best practice model of care delivery for the elderly.

Merits of the new building:

In terms of the merits of the proposed new accommodation building, the siting follows that of the existing Holme Cottages with the east-west form of the building following an historic pattern of development on this part of the site and closing off the north side of the court. Both Prior Court and Birkbeck Hall are of a large scale

and a two storey building will engage well with them, and the design of the building will create a formal space and composition with Suffield Court to the north. This form of development respects the open spaces identified as important to the Great Hospital in the City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal. The proposal would address the problems of cars accessing the centre of the site, by removing many to the east car park and reducing speeds on the access road adjacent to the proposal. It would also enable the provision of a central meeting venue for residents and visitors to the site. The location of the main entrance at the change in level to higher ground has resulted in access by both steps and ramps. Small garden courts, clipped trees and a stone paved entrance 'square' will provide a suitably formal entrance.

The plan form enables the preservation or creation of courtyards and connecting routes to the remainder of the site. The building is designed with a relatively low-pitched slate roof with a ridge height midway between the larger Birkbeck Hall and the low single storey Master's Office. The scale of the new building in relation to Suffield Court to the north is mediated by a drop in ridge height from the main part of the new building down to a lower roof of the projecting wings with the single storey residents' lounge and cloistered ground floor further reducing the scale. The south elevation is ordered and simply composed with a central gable containing the entrance to the court, setting up the route through to the Community Hall and the Chancel doorway to the south side. This court area is divided into formal and informal arrangements by the central path. The fenestration is carefully grouped to avoid a cluttered and busy elevation.

- **Officer's assessment of the justification for demolition:**

The argument expressed about the lack of historical merit of Holme Cottages is not accepted as their merit is, in part, in the positive contribution they make to the setting of the listed buildings and the character and appearance of the area. This contribution comes from their siting, scale and form and the appearance of the south elevation. That they have been significantly altered internally and externally since first constructed does not, in itself, justify their demolition as, in their current form, their contribution can clearly be viewed as a positive one. Furthermore, Holme Cottages also play a part in demonstrating the development of almshouse accommodation on the site, from the White cottages of 1822 to Suffield Court in 1937.

The applicants have provided information as to the feasibility of the continued use of the existing building, either in its present form, or through adaptation and alteration. It is considered that the continued use of the building as it currently exists would be feasible but, due to the small size of the cottages, that this would not meet the modern requirements for residential accommodation and nor would the provision of care be possible within the existing cottages, requiring residents to move as their needs changed. Additionally, the north elevation of the building would continue to detract from the conservation area. By contrast, the cottages could be adapted to meet modern standards for accommodation but this would

result in a net loss of two units whilst costing over £1m (even discounting the relocation of the car parking). It is accepted that this does not represent a viable financial proposition for the Trustees.

The location of Holme Cottages within the centre of the Great Hospital complex does present problems in considering possible alternative uses or users. It is considered that it would be difficult for a third party to successfully operate either a residential use not related to that of the Hospital complex or an alternative viable use within this institutional setting. It is difficult to conceive of a suitable alternative use in these circumstances and their plan form, scale and height would not immediately appear to lend itself to anything other than a residential use.

However, it is accepted that the buildings in their current form make a positive contribution to the setting of the listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area. Furthermore, even taking into account the substandard nature of the accommodation, a continued residential use on the current form of the building would appear to be possible if not ideal. Therefore, these assessments weigh against the case for demolition. However, it is important to also consider whether any substantial benefits for the community would result that would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition.

It is accepted that there is a need for additional accommodation within the Great Hospital, as evidenced by the waiting list for accommodation on site and the number of applicants who are unsuccessful. Furthermore, there is a general need to provide additional housing to meet existing and projected needs within the Norwich area and, given this and the demographic character of the area, there is no evidence available to indicate that the demand for housing for older people would be any less than currently experienced. It is further accepted that this demand for additional accommodation relates to both the amount of accommodation provided in total and to the change in the provision of care to reflect the current requirement to provide a greater level of care in people's own homes rather than moving as needs change.

It is also acknowledged that the historic nature of the Great Hospital complex will present a constraint in this regard. Not all the existing accommodation is likely to be able to be adapted to meet modern requirements, a great number of listed buildings exist on the site and the Hospital has existed in this location since medieval times. The fact that a continuous use of this nature has existed on the site for 759 years and provides for the continued viable use of a great many listed buildings is considered relevant. A great many alterations have been made to the buildings over this time period with, for example, wards inserted into what was previously the chancel of the church and the uses of other buildings being adapted to changing circumstances. In the same way, over time, buildings have been erected, demolished and replaced in response to changing needs and circumstances. This adaptation process has enabled the Hospital to evolve and survive and retain its function at the very heart of the city, adjacent to the

Cathedral precinct and central to the historic importance of the city. Whilst it is imperative that any changes to this highly sensitive site are carefully considered and controlled, it is also considered that the ability to adapt and respond to changing needs and demands should not be stifled unreasonably. An analysis of possible alternative sites has been undertaken. English Heritage have expressed concern that this process should have been undertaken some time ago. Nonetheless, the assessment submitted indicates a lack of suitable alternative sites for the additional accommodation required and the conclusions reached in this regard are considered to be fair. Consequently, whilst the Great Hospital have not indicated that the lack of approval would represent a threat to the continued viability of the complex, it is accepted that a refusal would limit the ability of the Hospital to provide the range and amount of accommodation required on the site to enable it to meet the standards of care it now wishes to meet. In this regard, by accepting that there is a need for the accommodation that couldn't be provided elsewhere within the site, the provision of this accommodation can be considered to represent a substantial benefit for the community that could outweigh the loss resulting from the demolition of Holme Cottages.

- **Officer's assessment of the merits of the proposed new building:**

English Heritage and the Ancient Monuments Society have both expressed reservations about these aspects of the proposals as well as the demolition of Holme Cottages and have raised objections to the proposed new building. However, whilst acknowledging their concerns, it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable in this location. The site is an extremely sensitive one, but it is not considered that the proposal, although it would change the character and appearance of the area and the setting of the listed buildings, would have a detrimental impact. The scale and height of the proposal is considered to relate well to the variety of building heights and scales within the vicinity and although English Heritage indicate that the single storey almshouses should form the reference for the new building, the proposal is considered to represent a successful addition in terms of scale, height and massing to the existing range of buildings within the complex and one which would not dominate either its historic neighbours or the large central courtyard..

The positioning of the east-west block is positive as it closes the central courtyard more effectively than Holme Cottages, due to the slight increase in height and length, but does not interfere with the positive manner in which the many historic buildings positioned around this building relate to one another. The design details are considered appropriate, as are the materials proposed. A considered approach has been adopted, taking into account the building forms and materials found in the vicinity. This can be seen in the use of gables and the choice of materials, especially the use of red brick and slate roofing. Interest will be added to the brickwork by the adoption of brick bonds such as Monks bond and Stack bond which will enhance the contemporary approach, as will the use of zinc rainwater goods and zinc-clad roof lights to the building. However, in order to be

successful, the use of high quality materials will be essential and, consequently, the submission of material samples is considered to be required for approval prior to work commencing.

The oriel windows and positioning of the adjoining doors on the south elevation provide some verticality on what is otherwise a long, horizontal building. They also effectively divide the building into units, reflecting the design of the historic almshouses on the site (which are also long buildings, with repetitive uniform elements – despite the smaller scale of these buildings traditionally). The zinc clad roof lights mirror the chimney stacks which are so dominant on buildings such as the White Cottages and also have a practical purpose in that they provide light and natural ventilation into the heart of the building.

The proposal will also rationalise parking and the open space in the central courtyard and to the south of Suffield Court. It is considered that the north elevation and landscaping works particularly well in providing an entrance to the new block and in addressing Suffield court. It would form a positive south side to Suffield Court, which Holme Cottages in its current state does not achieve. The ‘cloistered’ corridor at ground level is also considered to work well.

- **Other issues:**

Following concerns expressed about previous schemes the applicants have now submitted details concerning external lighting, the retention and replacement of trees on site and the landscaping proposed, and the proposed phasing of the development, confirming, amongst other things that it is intended to ensure the provision of a laundry and shop facility on site throughout the development process. These details are considered acceptable, subject to conditions. Furthermore, the energy efficiency measures proposed, the details of flood protection measures and contamination remediation are also considered acceptable, subject to conditions.

- **Conclusion:**

It is acknowledged that strongly held views exist both for and against the replacement of Holme Cottages. It is understandable that some residents may not wish to move and would rather the building was not demolished. It is also accepted that the arguments for and against the demolition and replacement of Holme Cottages are finely balanced. Indeed, it is extremely unusual to consider going against the advice of both English Heritage and the Ancient Monuments Society.

The arguments against the demolition of Holme Cottages reflect both their intrinsic value to the site in terms of their contribution to the historic interpretation of the development of the site, its character and appearance and to the setting of the listed buildings. Their positive contribution could be maintained by the retention of the cottages and their continued use as residential accommodation.

However, against this, it is recognised that the accommodation provided within the cottages does not meet modern standards and does not facilitate the ongoing care of residents in their own homes, contrary to the current guidance on the provision of care and supported living. It is also recognised that the costs of alteration and adaptation would be prohibitive and unlikely to be viable for the Trust. Furthermore, there is a need for additional accommodation on site and the adaptation of the cottages would not meet that need and an assessment of possible alternatives concludes that there are no suitable alternative sites within the complex.

Finally, despite the objections expressed by English Heritage and the Ancient Monuments Society, the proposed new two-storey accommodation building is considered to be an acceptable form of redevelopment for the site that would relate positively to the surrounding buildings in terms of scale, massing, height, materials and design details.

On balance, it is therefore concluded that gains to the Great Hospital and to the wider community achieved by the provision of the additional accommodation would be of a substantially beneficial nature and sufficient to justify the demolition of Holme Cottages in this exceptional case. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposed new accommodation building would allow the institution to continue into the C21 and would make a positive contribution to the complex in this sensitive location.

RECOMMENDATIONS

06/01005/F:

APPROVE PLANNING PERMISSION subject to a s106 agreement concerning provisions relating to any archaeological remains of national importance that may be found and conditions relating to the following matters:

1. Time limit (3 years)
2. Contamination
3. Flood risk
4. Landscaping
5. Archaeological matters
6. Materials – Timber cladding and finish to the windows of Prior Court
7. Lighting
8. Phasing
9. Provision of car and cycle parking and refuse storage
10. Energy efficiency measures
11. Details of rainwater harvesting storage tanks and drainage details
12. Heritage interpretation

06/01006/L:

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT subject to referral to Go-East and to the following conditions relating to the following matters:

1. Time limit (3 year)

2. Archaeological matters covering the opening or otherwise of the niches and details of any treatment thereafter
3. Preventing the opening of the central arch, notwithstanding the details shown of submitted plans
4. Material samples for agreement
5. Joinery details to be agreed
6. Details of the frameless glazing to the 'new' openings and exact positions, for agreement
7. Demolition of laundry block to be monitored by an archaeological contractor
8. Provision and agreement of a detailed method statement for the removal of the cementitious plaster on the eastern wall of the cloister and the work overseen by an archaeological contractor
9. Schedule of works agreed for any repairs that may be required to the stone reveals of the cloister arches including details of materials

07/00453/L:

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT subject to referral to Go-East and to the following conditions:

1. Time limit (3 year)
2. No demolition to take place until planning permission has been granted and a contract for the erection of the new accommodation building has been made

08/00341/C:

GRANT CONSERVATION AREA CONSENT subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit (3 years)

REASONS FOR APPROVAL for the above four applications:

1. The four aspects of the development scheme for the site are considered to have successfully addressed the constraints imposed by the location and historic nature of the site, to have proposed acceptable new buildings in terms of scale, height, massing, materials and design that will have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area and the setting of the listed buildings and, in the case of the demolition of Holme Cottages, to have demonstrated that the demolition of the building is justified in this exceptional case by virtue of the substantial community benefit that would result from the provision of new accommodation on the site and the quality of the new building.
2. Therefore, the demolition of the garage blocks and the erection of the workshop building, reconfiguration of the car park and provision of bicycle and bin storage are considered to meet the requirements of policy WM6 of the East of England Plan and saved policies HBE8, HBE12, EP17, TRA5, TRA6 and TRA7 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004. The

extension of Prior Court is considered to meet the requirements of ENG1 of the East of England Plan, and saved policies HBE2, HBE3, HBE8, HBE12, EP1, EP12, EP16, EP18, EP22, HOU1, HOU5 and HOU19 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004. The demolition of the laundry block and the erection of a new community hall are considered to meet the requirements of policy ENG1 of the East of England Plan and saved policies HBE2, HBE3, HBE8, HBE9, HBE12 and EP18 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004. The demolition of Holme Cottages and the erection of the new accommodation building is considered to meet the requirements of policy ENG1 of the East of England Plan and saved policies NE9, HBE2, HBE3, HBE8, HBE9, HBE12, EP1, EP12, EP16, EP18, EP22, HOU1, HOU5 and HOU19 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004.

Appendix 1:

06/01005/F, 06/01006/L, 07/00453/L, 08/00341/C

Letters of Representation Summary – Revised for 11.09.08

| Date | Address | Comments |
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| | Second revisions | |
| 29/08/2008 | 7 Youngs Green | Summary of concerns passed to Councillors and highlighting the historic importance of the site, the disruption to residents, the lack of consultation by the applicants with the residents, the lack of consideration given to the possibility of building on Young's Green, the petition against the hospital and the lack of notification on previous applications. |
| 21/08/2008 | 7 High Street, Little Walsingham | Photograph of block of cottages demolished in 1969 |
| 19/08/2008 | 6 Kingston Drive, Beccles | Support: Following revisions to the proposals can see no reasonable objections. |
| 18/08/2008 | Rt Hon Charles Clarke MP | Enclosed copies of correspondence received from objector and asked that these are made available to the committee members. Asked for copies of English Heritage comments to be made available to committee members. Concerned that objector and other residents have been approached by a councillor who sits on the planning committee. Asked for an acknowledgement and that the information will be made available and for comments on the involvement of the councillor. (A response was sent addressing these issues) |
| 18/08/2008 | 7 Queen Elizabeth Close | Object to demolition – possibly only such row of Edwardian almshouses in England. Council should have full regard to advice of English Heritage. Questions legality of decision making powers and the ownership of the site |
| 23/07/2008 | 7 High Street, Little Walsingham | Strong support for views of English Heritage. GH have, in addition to their primary responsibility towards |

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| | | the elderly people in their care, also have responsibility towards one of most historic complexes in Norwich, including the development throughout its history and its social as well as architectural and historical significance |
| 08/06/2008 | The Great Hospital | Letter from Chairman confirming that no pressure has been put on residents by the manager or the Trustees |
| 27/05/2008 | 18 Youngs Green | Supports revised proposals. Believes plans to be to the benefit of present occupants and will enhance the quality of care for those in the future. |
| 24/05/2008 | 7 Youngs Green | Correspondence containing article from Norwich Evening News, a copy of the Master's letter to residents and historical photographs of the Holme Cottages. Claims 1906 cottages are still in original state. |
| 22/05/2008 | Residents of Great Hospital | Petition from 57 residents in favour of the new development. Some out-dated accommodation cannot be further improved further to conform to 21 st Century standards. |
| 20/05/2008 | 5 Youngs Green | Strongly supports proposals "cannot emphasise more the need for improved facilities..." in view of the rising elderly population. |
| 20/05/2008 | 4 Suffield Court | Fully supports new plans. A former resident of Holme Cottages, stating that they are very small and cramped and unsuitable for the long term care of the elderly. |
| 18/05/2008 | 7 Youngs Green | Correspondence containing "The New Master Plan." Concern that there will not be enough accommodation to cover those transferred during construction. Objection over the construction of 21 st Century building within the 12 th Century Cloisters. Proposed temporary car park deemed hazardous in terms of |

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| | | access. |
| 11/05/2008 | 1 White Cottages | One of the garages to be demolished forms part of remuneration package with employer – the Great Hospital. No discussion has taken place concerning this or alternative provision. |
| | First Revisions | |
| 29/11/2007 | 5 Youngs Green | Acknowledges Council's letter and emphasises need for security and comfort. |
| 28/11/2007 | 9 Chaplains House | New proposals appear to represent a desirable and necessary development for residents. |
| 21/11/2007 | 10 Prior Court | First floor flat resident enquiring about whether the view of the cathedral from her window would be obscured by the new development. |
| 06/11/2007 | 7 Youngs Green | Reiterates opposition to plans, both new building work and the demolition of the Alms Houses. |
| 06/11/2007 | 7 Youngs Green | <p>Contains sketch of site and requests clarification of revised plans.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resizing of proposed laundry next to maintenance building. 2. Demolition of brick garages to provide space for maintenance area and laundry. 3. "...remove traffic to the outskirts." (statement from the Great Hospital) – plans do not show how this will be achieved. 4. Re-organisation of car park is not covered by the revised plans. 5. Vulnerability of residents who have to park in the new visitor's car park – poorly lit and open to Cotman Fields and Riverside Walk. 6. Will there be disabled parking? 7. Will trustees retain there parking spaces near Calthorpe Lodge. 8. Plans suggest Cherry Trees to rear of proposed new build will be removed. Is this correct? 9. During demolition, laundry and |

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| | | shop will be unavailable. What are the interim plans? Suggests developing Young's Green is a more suitable option, with the new build looking less out of character. |
| 23/10/2007 | 1 White Cottages | Plans indicate loss of privacy, as pathway is proposed to replace garden (8 metres from development). No Neighbour Consultation letters received for applications submitted to date and no notices on display as of 23 rd October. |
| 17/10/2007 | 7 Youngs Green | Copy of New Master's Introduction letter attached. Concern that new model of revised plans has not been made available in time to comment on at committee. |
| | Original scheme | |
| 27/07/2007 | 7 Youngs Green | 'Re-vamped' model of proposed plans is out of context showing 2 storey new build as the same height as the Suffield Court Alms Houses. Has received information from a trustee that a revised plan has been submitted – the demolition of Holme Cottages to make way for 19 new care units. Reiterates petition of 14/05/2007 are validated objections and should be considered. Requests confirmation. |
| 11/06/2007 | Leathes Prior Solicitors | Clarification of the nature of the ownership of the site, the nature of the Trust, the object of the charity and clarification that the City Council does not own any of the land concerned. |
| 25/05/2007 | 7 Youngs Green | Sketched site plan and Statement of Future Development from the Great Hospital Trustees (28/06/2005) attached. Concern over access and exit routes to the site – statement shows intention to "...remove traffic to the outskirts." Concern also over emergency |

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| | | services access. |
| 15/05/2007 | 16 Merton Road | <p>Objection to demolition of the cottages – residents would prefer to live in the cottages rather than modern accommodation.</p> <p>Some resident chose to live at the Great Hospital because of its character – quality of life for those concerned would suffer as a result of modernisation.</p> <p>Demolition would be disruptive for sick and elderly.</p> <p>Mediaeval Tenants for life indicate residents may be beneficial owners of the hospital – buildings and finances in trust. Wider consultation needed.</p> <p>Geochem Remediation Testing (05/2001) found poisonous chemicals in soil near the hospital – some consider ground should be left alone as a result.</p> <p>Great Hospital one of HEART's 12 'Great and Good' buildings in Norwich. Should public use increase, flanking by the Victorian cottages would be preferable.</p> |
| 14/05/2007 | 7 Young's Green | <p>Concern at the proposed new build, the disruption to residents and the submission of a petition of 155 signatures</p> |
| 10/05/2007 | 11 Youngs Green | <p>Historical Outline of ownership. Trustees did not ask permission or opinion prior to application. Trustees refuse to acknowledge alternatives.</p> <p>New units have a statutory short life in their intended use.</p> <p>Several questions including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the city own the Great Hospital? 2. As custodians of the Great Hospital, does the Council have any power to restrict frivolous spending of funds? 3. Are trustees acting <i>ultra-vires</i> over the lack of consent form residents etc? |
| 07/05/2007 | 7 Youngs Green | <p>Jonathan Mardle Historical article (14/03/1979) attached -</p> |

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| | | <p>Great Hospital in custody of the Council but belongs to the Citizens of Norwich.</p> <p>Cottages in good condition and should not demolished.</p> <p>Trauma caused to residents by moving unacceptable.</p> <p>Contaminated Land and outdated sewerage system could be problematic.</p> <p>Plans suggest overlooking of the Suffield Court residents and loss of light and amenity for those in White Cottages.</p> |
| 01/05/2007 | Guy Pracy via email | <p>Strong concerns at the proposed demolition of the cottages. Cottages identified by Ancient Monuments Society as Grade I listed buildings at risk of demolition. Appear in EDP video made by HEART about 'secret' Norwich. Cottages form part of the heart of the hospital.</p> <p>Demolition should not be allowed.</p> |
| 30/04/2007 | 11 Youngs Green | <p>Lack of Consultation by Council and Trustees – plans delivered as a 'fait accompli.'</p> <p>Demolition of Victorian houses would be a loss to history.</p> <p>New build out of scale and disruptive to the integrated nature of the historical site.</p> <p>Fish pond containing ornamental carp and rare trees at risk by development.</p> |
| 23/11/2006 | 17 Christchurch Road | <p>Acknowledges need for updating but hopes new build will be sympathetic to surroundings.</p> |
| 14/11/2006 | 7 Youngs Green | <p>Copy of residents' newsletter containing information on the sewerage pump at Suffield Court. – last blockage caused by 'pads.'</p> |
| 31/10/2006 | Holme Cottages (anon)- saveholmecottages via email | <p>Cottages in good repair, well maintained and inhabited</p> <p>Part of the character of a historical site.</p> <p>Within a conservation area and as such should be conserved.</p> <p>Large Mulberry tree in vicinity of new build.</p> <p>Site at significant risk of flooding</p> |

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| | | <p>according to EA – unwise to increase properties on flood plain. Contaminated soil at site. Concern over energy conservation – considerably less to refurbish and update, rather than demolish and rebuild.</p> |
| 30/10/2006 | 7 Youngs Green | <p>Explains problems with antiquated sewerage system and implores Env. Health/Planning to find out if a new system will be put in place to cope with the increase waste water. Strong Smell pollution on site.</p> |
| 28/10/2006 | Holme Cottages (anon)- saveholmecottages via email | <p>Cottages part of Great Hospital's Heritage. New block would ruin character. Great Hospital is within Conservation Area. Should Youngs Green be built upon, red brick would suffice to blend in with the surrounding properties. The proposed site requires a match with buildings spanning several centuries. Concern over waste produced by construction.</p> |
| 27/10/2006 | Snowy_Portch via email | <p>Anonymous objection to plans</p> |
| 18/10/2006 | 7 Youngs Green | <p>Letter 'Relinquishing right to strict confidentiality.' Requests a copy of her letter dated 28/09/2006 be included in correspondence involving the proposals.</p> |
| 11/10/2006 | 11 Youngs Green | <p>Number of 'ancient' trees planted within planned development area. Trustees and staff anxious to push through application before the cottages attain preservation order status. Alternatives sites are available.</p> |
| 17/10/2006 | Snowy_Portch via email | <p>Cottages in good inhabited condition. Part of the sites 'special historic atmosphere.' Trauma/distress unnecessary for elderly inhabitants to be moved whilst their homes are destroyed. Hospital at a significant risk of flooding.</p> |

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| | | <p>Contaminated soil caused problems for engineers previously – would it be wise to fully excavate in an area inhabited by frail elderly people?</p> <p>Protected trees on site.</p> <p>No Neighbour Consultation.</p> <p>Proposed building not in keeping with the site.</p> |
| 06/10/2006 | Snowy_Portch via email | <p>Objection to demolition of cottages.</p> <p>Negative impact on area.</p> <p>Other land available for development.</p> |
| 28/09/2006 | 7 Youngs Green | <p>Holme Cottages refurbished in 1998 with a kitchen unit being added to each of them.</p> <p>Riverbank to rear of Suffield Court has been shored up to prevent further erosion – it should not be further developed upon.</p> <p>New build would be a “carbuncle.”</p> <p>Suggests Youngs Green as an alternative.</p> <p>Information and pictures attached showing cottages in 1906.</p> |

Appendix 2:

06/01005/F, 06/01006/L, 07/00743/L, 08/00341/C

Summary of consultation responses received – The Great Hospital Site

Originally submitted proposals for 33 units in total, plus the new community building and alterations to the cloister, demolition of the existing laundry and shop and Holme Cottages:

| Consultee | Comments made |
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| Norwich Society | <p>13.11.2006: Concerned that the applications do not include any justification for the demolition of Holme Cottages. Include paragraph within their comments to summarise Bill Wilson's argument about the value of Holme Cottages. Recognises the concerns over the demolition of Holme Cottages but feel that the cottages have been altered so significantly in past that their historic value has been lost. Impressed by the quality of the proposals, which combine a sensitive architectural idiom with flair in the spatial planning of the new courts that will enable the Great Hospital to fulfil the demands for expansion and for the provision of improved standards of accommodation. The opening of the blocked door in the cloisters will give new access to an already attractive space. Another major bonus is the removal of cars from the centre to the new car park. This will enhance the setting of Suffield Court. The modest development of Prior Court fits well with existing buildings.</p> <p>25.05.2007: The new application [for LBC for the demolition of Holme Cottages] adds considerable detail – but no new arguments – to the earlier submission on which we commented on in October 2005 [previous scheme]. We remain in favour of allowing demolition for two reasons: (a) Bill Wilson's negative view of what remains in Holme Cottages is reinforced by the scale of the changes (b) the qualities of the new proposals – comments in favour of the replacement scheme largely following those summarised above.</p> |
| Norfolk Landscape Archaeology | <p>Note with concern the somewhat pre-emptory approach to the historic environment at this key site. Particularly concerned that the Archaeology section of the proposals document should be so brief and the Project Design for Historic Assessment remains incomplete. Have been pressing for a Conservation Plan approach for this site. Without such a Plan or Project Design, it is very difficult to assess the potential impact of the proposals either upon the historic fabric or the below-ground archaeology. More details required concerning proposed impacts.</p> |

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| Environment Agency | <p>(01.12.06) Objection on Flood Risk Grounds. Contamination – details suggest that contaminants at this site pose a significant risk to controlled waters and the site is in a sensitive area with regard to controlled waters. Comprehensive site investigation required and following this a Quantitative Risk Assessment to determine remedial targets. Likely that the free product seen at the site will also need to be remediated. Condition recommended on any permission to this effect. Recommend that Anglian Water be consulted re capacity of foul sewer. Development should incorporate principles of sustainable construction and design, including water efficiency and water saving devices.</p> <p>(22.01.07) Following planning approval and start date for flood defence works (now completed) objection to application removed, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions on flood defence, flood protection and flood evacuation matters.</p> |
| English Heritage | <p>(Full application: 06/01005/F) Proposed 27 unit residential block is set in a sensitive area. Its location and design will have an adverse impact on the setting of several listed buildings and on the conservation area. As part of previous (withdrawn) application concerns were raised at the impact on the historic environment and recommendations made that the GH consider the site as a whole and look at all options for the provision of additional accommodation in ways that would reduce this impact. This was reiterated subsequently as was the idea of adapting and enlarging Holme Cottages. It is a matter of great regret that the GH has not approached EH in the year since [the withdrawal of the previous scheme] to discuss these fundamental aspects of their proposals and look for a compromise solution. The proposed development site is very much at the heart of the Great Hospital site framed by Holme Cottages, White Cottages (Listed Grade II), the church of St Helen, cloisters and Masters House (Grade I) and Birkbeck Hall (Grade II). Since the C18th hospital buildings have come and gone on this site but purpose-built single storey almshouse style buildings have come to characterise this area, set in a series of courtyards. The almshouse style, modest and of a scale and simplicity that clearly signifies an institution for the care of the elderly, is a particularly suitable architectural language for the post-medieval history of the Great Hospital. The development site also allows unbroken views between the church, cloister and master's house and the almshouses, allowing the development of an important part of the hospital to be taken in, including the relationship between Holme Cottages and White Cottages. It is also an area of a size that befits the scale and importance of St Helens church, visually establishing it as the focus of the group and reflecting its age and status. The present character of the historic complex, marked by almshouse buildings and open space, is one that the new building should seek to preserve and enhance. Reference made to the Act and PPG15 re the 'duty [of local planning authorities] to consider the affect of proposals on the setting of listed buildings. The setting of a building is often an essential ingredient of its character.' Also reference to the</p> |

desirability to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas. Application should be considered in this context and recognised that the site is extremely sensitive. Proposed residential accommodation will destroy the historically important relationship between a unique group of historic buildings by removing Holme Cottages, dominating the open space, placing a dividing block between White Cottages and the others and introducing a form, scale and design of building discordant with the established character of the area. The consistent character of the surrounding almshouse-type buildings not given due weight in the architects design statement. Scale of the building seems to be justified by the presence of the 1970s Prior Court. Reference made to the design reflecting detailing in the adjacent historic buildings. Resultant design is over-complicated and incoherent that does not have a convincing style of its own and appears alien to its surroundings. A large part of the problem is that these buildings are far more complex in their detailing than the buildings around them. Examples provided. They do not achieve the simplicity and consistency of the historic buildings that is so suitable to the location but rather make a needlessly complex and strident intrusion into the settings of those buildings. Architects refer to the benefits of removing parking from the area to the south of Holme Cottages, but parked cars considered to create less visual impact on the historic buildings than the two-storey residential block and hospital have demonstrated they are able to remove the parking spaces without the new build. Council urged to refuse planning permission.

(Listed Building application: 06/01006/L): Present laundry building has little merit and does not form an historically significant element of this site. No objection to its demolition. Proposal to construct a community centre adjacent to the cloister is an interesting one. Building not of a scale appropriate to the original cloister range but the increase in ground level makes that impossible and would not encourage unnecessary excavation in such a sensitive site. Because of this the centre will be quite high, but pitching the roof to approximately that of the Master's house adjacent helps it blend with the group. In general, content with the proposed building, in terms of relationship to the historic buildings. Method of bringing the cloister wall into use as part of the building needs some close attention. Glazed roof, capping, and glazed screens in the unblocked openings should be conditioned and monitored on site. Alternative method should be sought if medieval stone work is in situ and of a profile that will not readily accommodate a screen. Access ramp to the Master's House may also require LBC but do not object to it in principle, but may require further detailing.

(Listed Building application: 07/00453/L): Holme Cottages make a valuable contribution to the setting of several Grade I and II listed buildings and to the conservation area. They are also of interest in their own right as part of the development of the Great Hospital complex. The applicants have failed to justify their

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| | <p>demolition, consent for which should be refused. The contribution made by Holme Cottages is outlined and the advice provided in respect of the full application is reiterated and expanded. Application fails to address the tests stated in PPG15 against which proposals for demolition should be considered and notably does not provide evidence that real efforts have been made to continue using the Cottages. In light of this signal failure to justify the proposal, EH recommends and strongly urges the Council that consent be refused.</p> |
| <p>Central Norwich Citizens' Forum</p> | <p>Object in principle to loss of Meadow for car parking (part of previous scheme and not forming part of current proposals). Plans of buildings show excellent accommodation for residents and are greatly commended. Detailed design of buildings supported for quality of life that will result. Buildings sympathetic in form and scale to existing ones. No information on materials or finishes. Objections in press to demolition of Holme Cottages. The mere fact that they are a hundred years old is no reason to retain them. They have no architectural merit and offer poor accommodation by today's standards. Is the provision of public access to the Meadow possible via planning gain?</p> |
| <p>Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)</p> | <p>09.11.06: The Society understands the wish to improve facilities and accommodation on site and considers it a laudable objective. However, not convinced of the suitability, for this exceptionally important historic site, of a number of the proposals contained within the current submission. Cottages possess some character and interest and to make a positive contribution to the site. On this basis, demolition should not be permitted unless it can be justified against the normal standards that apply in the case of listed building or conservation area demolition applications. Community Hall seems acceptable in principle, but more information needed about the detail of the structure. Strong concerns about the proximity of the T-shaped building to the surrounding listed buildings. New building would damage the historic character and planning of this important historic site and setting of nearby listed buildings. Much further thought is needed about the form and siting of this structure before any consent is given.</p> <p>15.02.07: Following a meeting on site, the Society now recognises that Holme Cottages have been drastically altered and therefore are not of the quality first thought. Now have a better understanding of the planning of the site and the need for the new unit and the wish to improve residents' facilities. Still not wholly convinced that the proposals represent the only possible option for the new building's siting. Society has concerns about developments on the site in recent decades and needs to be convinced that any further new buildings to be located on this central and historically important site will be of the highest quality of design.</p> |

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| <p>Ancient Monuments Society</p> | <p>14.11.2006: No objection to the loss of the utilitarian flat-roofed laundry building, providing that its replacement is acceptable and the archaeology of the east cloister wall is respected. Any consent should be carefully conditioned to ensure minimum intervention in the medieval fabric. Drawings suggest that the replacement design will be an improvement and the arrangement of walkways, steps and ramp seems to respect the east end of the Master's House.</p> <p>Holme Cottages are considered to be 'almost listable'. Undergone some alteration but mainly at the back or internal. Their general shape and scale are in character with their surroundings and even their back forms a not unpleasant fourth side to the Suffield Court quadrangle, while their south front has a pleasing rhythm with attractive open timber porches, gables and chimneys.; it also encloses an attractive space whose other sides are all formed by listed buildings and which extends at its south-east corner to give a view of the chancel of the church. The cottages also have considerable significance in terms of the history of the development of the hospital, from the medieval complex and its post-reformation alterations on to the early C19 east quadrangle, the early C20 Boardman contributions and the 1937 Wearing group. The loss of the building would be regrettable. Given an extremely sensitive replacement or other well-argued case for demolition the retention of the cottages would be difficult to defend in all circumstances but the information available suggests that the proposed replacement will be insufficiently sensitive to the setting, while the proposed T-shaped block cuts up a pleasing space and the obscuring of the north gable of Birkbeck Hall is unfortunate.</p> <p>The submitted design is too bulky, its profile too 'boxy' and the arrangement of external openings too strident. The stalk of the T, if included at all, should be single storey and the arm of the T shorter (not obscuring the Birkbeck Hall gable) and the profile similar in section to the proposed community hall, with a roof line both steeper and symmetrical. East-west range could be one and half storeys with accommodation in the roof.</p> <p>There are gains - for example the opportunity to construct a more attractive south range to the bowling green and the removal of parked cars from the area to the south, but the character of the existing cottages and their relationship to adjoining buildings and spaces, which would be lost, and the larger scale and greater intrusiveness of the proposed replacement, suggest that overall the loss would considerably exceed the gain. Therefore object pending reconsideration of the proposals and a revised design.</p> <p>09.05.2007: Have already submitted comments on the proposed replacement of the cottages and stands by its earlier comments. Noted that the LB application for the demolition of the cottages is accompanied by a historical analysis by Wilson Compton associates but it is unsupported by any statement of justification and need. As such it must be considered incomplete. Disputes the value placed on the building by Wilson</p> |
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| | <p>Compton in the application submission, as it considers building to be an attractive component of the GH complex and largely retains the character of its front elevation and evidence of the original plan form with its rhythm of chimneys and cross-walls. Historically important to the development of the complex and expands on this. Yet to be convinced that an acceptable proposal exists or that a sufficient case has been made to justify the demolition. Therefore, continues to oppose the demolition pending the presentation of a satisfactory sympathetic design which will enhance rather than detract from this important complex. Needs full archaeological appraisal and the necessary archaeological respect for the east wall of the medieval cloister.</p> |
| Victorian Society | <p>Following a meeting on site, continue to believe that the Edwardian Holme Cottages contribute to the overall character of the GH site but concede that alterations to the rear elevations have diminished their claims to architectural significance more than we had previously thought. Now have a better understanding of the need for the new facilities and, although we would maintain our argument that Holme Cottages demonstrate an interesting and attractive phase in the evolution of almshouse provision, we also realise the requirement for a continuing evolution in order to ensure the GH's future sustainability. On this basis we regretfully accept that demolition may be justifiable. The location and design of the proposed new blocks has implications for existing buildings on the site which lay outside our date remit. We therefore defer to SPAB in this matter.</p> |

Revised proposals for 24 units in total, plus the new community building and alterations to the cloister, demolition of the existing laundry and shop and Holme Cottages:

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| <p>Norfolk Landscape Archaeology</p> | <p>Refers to previous comments about the brevity of the archaeology section of the original application. Considers that, unfortunately, the 'archaeology' section of the revised application is similarly brief. The Project Design for Historic Assessment included with the application covers only the Laundry area whereas the proposed development comprises three main areas of disturbance: extensions to Prior Court, the demolition and redevelopment of Holme Cottages and the Laundry. Indeed, this revised application includes the construction of a basement in the area of Holme Cottages redevelopment. NLA have already stated that do not agree with Dr. Wilson's assessment that all subterranean deposits must be very shallow and already heavily disturbed (cf. letter 26.01.06 and accompanying brief for archaeological evaluation by trial trenching). Indeed, Chris Burke's investigation at the Laundry uncovered a layer of demolition rubble which may relate to the Chapter House (Birks, 2006) while evaluation North and East of Suffield House by NAU uncovered indications of medieval activity (Percival, 2007).</p> <p>Have recommended that GH adopt a Conservation Plan for this site. Without such a plan or overall project design, it is very difficult to assess the potential impact of the proposals on the historic environment and the Hospital overall.</p> <p>Hence, more details requested on the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological deposits on site, particularly in the area of the proposed basement. Existing brief would be updated as necessary and then NLA would advise on appropriate programmes of archaeological mitigation.</p> |
| <p>Norwich Society</p> | <p>Again an important revised scheme with no guidance as to the changes. We continue to support the scheme as we did in May this year on the grounds that: (a) Bill Wilson's negative view of what remains in Holme Cottages is reinforced by the scale of the changes and (b) the qualities of the new proposals (re-iterates earlier comments).</p> |
| <p>Environment Agency</p> | <p>Previous comments of 22.01.2007 and conditions requested still stand</p> |

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| English Heritage | <p>This application is a revised version of proposals for the construction of a community room and new residential building at the GH as well as the demolition of Holme Cottages. Whilst some elements have been substantially improved, the application still contains several contentious issues.</p> <p>In the past EH advice to the City Council has explored the issues raised by these proposals in detail. Objection based on two main issues: the visual impact of the new residential building on the group of listed buildings at the heart of the GH complex and the loss of Holme Cottages. The revisions chiefly relate to the extent and design detail of the residences. In addition, a new DAS has been submitted.</p> <p>By removing the north-south wing of the residential blocks the relationship between the Master's house, church and White Cottages has been re-established and we agree that this is a significant improvement. The remaining portion of the residential block has been successfully redesigned to incorporate the stairwell and entrance lobby, previously internal features, into the southern elevation. A basement has been added and appropriate archaeological mitigation needs to be put in place. The roof form has also been simplified to some degree, but our concerns remain about the principle of introducing a two storey building designed in a modern idiom into an area marked by successive ranges of traditional single storey almshouses. General criticism of the overly complicated design and its impact on the setting is also maintained.</p> <p>Previously advised the Council on the significance of Holme Cottages to the GH complex. The applicants' consultants have themselves acknowledged the Cottages' importance. Their criticisms, much repeated and overstated by the architects, largely concern the interior and rear of the range, but these do not have a bearing on the matter in question. The DAS fails to demonstrate why the Cottages could not be adapted and extended for new use, but merely asserts that this is not possible. Costs are also referred to but no details are given. We are unaware of any serious exploration of this issue by the architects, but several options have been dismissed in this DAS.</p> <p>Recommendation: The reduction of the proposed new residential building is a significant improvement in terms of impact on the listed buildings at this site. Concern maintained about the negative impact of inserting a two-storey modern building into part of an important historic complex where a different scale and style of building predominates. Applicants' assessment of the contribution of Holme Cottages to the site not accepted and maintain that the important southern aspect of the range is a significant part of the complex. The DAS fails to demonstrate the claim that the cottages could not be adapted and extended. Therefore recommend the Council refuse permission for the demolition and the new building.</p> |
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| Anglian Water | AW assets close to or crossing the site. Foul flows can be accommodated within the foul sewerage network system. Development can be accommodated within the surface water network system – condition requiring details requested. Treatment of foul drainage would be at Whitlingham STW which has capacity. |
| SPAB | Feel that the new proposals represent a greatly improved scheme for the GH. Whilst the loss of the almshouses known as Holme Cottages is regrettable – their façade adding to the setting of the hospital buildings and acting as indicator of the historical development of the site – we are pleased that the size of the new building has been reduced. Among our chief concerns about the previous proposals was the proximity of the proposed T-shaped building to the surrounding listed buildings. We feel that the location of the new building is more suitable to the planning of the historic hospital site. |
| Ancient Monuments Society | <p>Previous comments remain valid. Proposals for the community room and the treatment of the cloister now appear acceptable and revised design is welcomed.</p> <p>Remain unhappy about the proposed replacement for Holme Cottages.</p> <p>Have noted the attractive south aspect of the cottages and the need for there to be an acceptable replacement before a case for demolition is established. The present design is not acceptable although the removal of the stalk of the T-shaped block, retaining the open space between the cottages and the Master's House is an improvement. But the general form and elevational treatment of the new block is alien to the sensitive setting. We question the general bulk of the block and in particular the uneven roof pitches, the excrescences on the ridge, the large areas of glazing with lopsided balconies, and the break in the rhythm of the south façade at the position of the stair and the laundry and the awkward self-conscious wedge shaped first floor projections on the end elevations. Believe that something quieter and more self-effacing is needed, with lower eaves and steeper consistent roof pitches, more akin to the design of the proposed community room, even if this does result in the loss of some first floor space. Also question the use of slate as a roof covering; the buildings to the south, west and north have tiled roofs, largely pantiled and of steeper pitch; only the east quadrangle, which is slightly set apart from the main listed complex, has slate.</p> |

Further revised proposals for 24 units in total, plus the new community building and alterations to the cloister, demolition of the existing laundry and shop and Holme Cottages, with additional supporting information submitted:

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| Norfolk Landscape Archaeology | No objections raised in principle. Revised brief issued for archaeological evaluation by trial trenching. This would determine the presence/ absence, date, extent, state of preservation and significance of any archaeological layers or subsoil archaeological features. This evaluation may indicate a need for a further phase of archaeological excavation or an archaeological watching brief during the development if features of importance are found and these cannot be preserved <i>in situ</i> . The demolition of the Laundry block must be monitored by the Archaeological Contractor. The removal of plaster/ render from the external wall of the Cloister (the former west wall of the Laundry block) must be carried out by the Archaeological Contractor. The removal of masonry from doorways and niches within the Cloister wall must be carried out by the Archaeological Contractor (NB the complete opening of the doorways and niches to be determined by conditions on any Listed Building Consent). Trial trenching is required to recover as much information as possible on the extent, date, phasing, character, function, status and significance of the site. The states of preservation or archaeological features or deposits within the area indicated should be determined. Trial trenching is required in the location of each of the Prior Court extensions, two trenches within the area of Holme Cottages, including one in the area of the proposed basement, and on in the area of the Laundry block. The evaluation by trial trenching may indicate the necessity for a further stage of archaeological mitigatory work. |
| Environment Agency | Previous comments still apply. No additional comments to make. |
| English Heritage | <p>06/01005/F: The revisions in this application differ from the previous applications in terms of the proposed design and detailing of the residences. A revised DAS has been submitted. Despite the additional revisions proposed to the new accommodation building, the proposals remain overly complex, employing an excessive range of cladding materials and detailing, as well as incorporating elements inspired by historic buildings on the site. The character that should be secured in any new build is a simple, modest and harmonious one, reflecting key themes of the various adjacent almshouses. Most of the adjacent historic buildings are characterised by the use of traditional materials and simple, modest detailing, reflecting their function and status.</p> <p>Another key area for concern remains the principle of introducing a two-storey building, designed in a modern idiom, into an area characterised by successive ranges of traditional single storey almshouses. The DAS ignores the almshouse context and asserts that the new build ‘must compete with the large bulk of Prior Court.’ There seems to be no reason given for this imperative, to compete with a modern building which of itself, may be regarded as wholly at odds with the character of the site, other than to advance an argument for building at two storeys.</p> |

EH have previously advised the Council on the significance of Holme Cottages to the GH complex and this is referred to within the comments on the application for demolition. The qualities of any new build cannot be considered out of context and the fact that the construction of the proposed building requires the demolition of an historic building, for which, in our view, there would appear to be no compelling justification, is a key issue in determining this application. The DAS has been enhanced to include a justification as to why other sites at the Great Hospital cannot host the new building. This appears to have been produced retrospectively, apparently following a decision to propose the demolition of Holme Cottages and to build anew on that area.

Following previous negotiations in 2005 and 2006 in respect of similar proposals, EH expected and advised the applicants to conduct a thorough options appraisal, to consider various options for providing new accommodation in the context of the whole site and also, at the same time, addressing key elements of PPG15. The completion of such a study at an early stage, including liaison with the LPA and EH, should have informed the process of identifying a sustainable location for any new accommodation, in a manner which would not prejudice the special historic and architectural interest of this exceptional site. The outcome of such a study would be expected to underpin a subsequent application for statutory consent. It is a matter of regret that this did not occur. The documentation submitted with the application does not present detailed arguments for discussion, nor does it present convincing arguments as to why proposals may be considered acceptable; rather, it appears to contain broad assertions that may be perceived as justifying a decision already made.

Recommendation: Maintain concern about the negative impact of inserting a two-storey modern building into part of an important historic complex where a different style and scale of building predominates. Do not accept applicant's assessment of the contribution of Holme Cottages to the site and maintain that the important southern aspect of the range is a significant part of the complex. The DAS also fails to substantiate the claim that the Cottages are incapable of adaptation and extension and there is no evidence of adequate exploration of alternative options for the provision of new accommodation within the context of the site as a whole.

On the basis of the proposals currently under consideration, we recommend that the City Council refuse permission for the new residential building.

06/01006/L: Removal of present laundry building and its replacement with a modest community room has previously been accepted by EH but the latest amendments include further alterations to the medieval cloister wall. Part of proposal involves recreating access through the cloister wall at its northern end by unblocking a doorway. Two other blocked doorways with interesting moulded masonry surrounds are also situated on this wall. The intention to create visual connection between the community room and the cloister has not been discouraged in the past and the reopening of these doorways accepted in principle. However, the proposal to reopen two more blockings on this wall does raise some concerns. If the outer face of the cloister wall is covered in plaster it is not possible to determine if the openings in question are windows, rather than niches, although they do look like the former. It is important that any potential loss of in situ masonry is investigated by removing plaster before this is considered further. Even if they do prove to have been windows I must express some reservations about the number of openings now appearing on this wall. It seems likely from the various dates of the door jambs that not all these openings were in use at one time. There is a danger therefore that no historically meaningful interior view is being re-created. The north central door also has potentially early brick in its opening. The status of this doorway is peculiar as it would merely give views into the servery. If the object of re-opening the doorways to allow visual connection between the community room and the cloister then this opening does not achieve that. One of the qualities of the cloister is its seclusion and the creation of too many openings on one side could unbalance the appearance of the cloister and disturb the mood of the place. While I would not necessarily object to the reopening of blocked doorways on principle, I am very concerned that re-opening the windows might lead to an excess of 'visual activity' on this elevation and that neither they, or the north central door, will add a great deal to the community room.

Recommendation: The physical impact of reopening the two windows in the cloister wall has not been demonstrated by investigation. Furthermore the number of openings on this wall has become quite large and they do not appear to be recreating a historically meaningful view from inside the cloister. While the creation of some openings in this area is not opposed, the process perhaps needs to be viewed with more restraint. As the north central doorway does not contribute to the interior of the community room I would suggest it remains blocked and the windows be further considered after investigative works have been carried out.

07/00453/L: 26.06.08: Summary - Holme Cottages make a valuable contribution to the setting of several Grade I and II Listed buildings and to the Conservation Area. They are also of interest in their own right as part of the development of the GH complex. Our view is that the applicants have failed to justify the case for demolition and that consent should be refused. Concerns have been raised by EH about similar proposals in 2005 and 2006. EH recommended that the provision of new accommodation should be considered in terms of options presented by the whole site and encouraged the applicants to develop a series of options for the provision of additional

accommodation, to include the adaptation, partial demolition and extension of the Cottages. This current [revision to the] application does contain some additional material contained in the DAS. Notwithstanding the additional information, it remains a matter of regret that the applicants do not appear to have completed an options appraisal, nor have they engaged in any pre-application discussions with ourselves to discuss and identify feasible ways of achieving new accommodation whilst protecting these historic buildings.

Advice: EH already offered detailed advice and other than the inclusion of further justification in the DAS this submission offers little new on which to advise. Justification for demolition based on two chief lines of argument - that Holme Cottages have no historical significance and they cannot form part of a scheme to improve accommodation at the hospital.

Applicants address the issue of historical significance by apparently selective use of their Consultant's report and by focusing on internal alteration, whereas the key matter at issue is the contribution of the southern elevation of the cottages to the site. The report prepared by the applicant's Consultants praises Holme cottages by stating (their) "location could scarcely be happier, comfortably and convincingly closing the north side of an extremely sensitive open space" and noting their "place as part of the extraordinary history and function of the GH as a whole, which it takes by right as one of a series of structures dedicated to housing the poor for 750 years on the same site. Few buildings can claim that."

The report illustrates how Holme Cottages' prominent southern elevation appears substantially the same today as when built, however these aspects are not mentioned in the DAS. The DAS also makes no mention of other, adjacent rows of almshouse-style accommodation, which give a coherent historic character to the area. The applications does not represent the cottages' true contribution to the site as the material presented does not address these key issues.

The case for the location of the proposed new build is better addressed in our advice on the application for planning permission for that building. However, the suitability for adaptation and extension of Holme Cottages is directly relevant here. This aspect is dismissed in the DAS without any evidence given for the claimed inability to develop as scheme.

PPG15 section 3.17-3.19 sets out tests against which proposals for demolition should be considered, including a requirement to demonstrate that 'real efforts' have been made to sustain existing uses or find viable new uses for the building (including its disposal); that the condition of the building and its cost of maintenance are considered and that claims for architectural merit of replacement buildings should not be held to justify demolition. This application does not address these key tests in rigorous manner and provides no evidence that careful consideration has been given to consider how the Cottages may be adapted to suit current day requirements. A careful consideration of the above issues is an essential preliminary to determining a sustainable location for new-

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| | <p>build.</p> <p>Recommendation: Holme Cottages make a valuable contribution to the setting of several Grade I and II listed buildings and are of historic and architectural interest as part of the Great Hospital complex, for the reasons stated above, a point that the applicant's own consultants recognise. Most significantly the application does not satisfy the criteria for demolition set out in PPG15 as set out above. EH therefore strongly urges the Council to refuse LBC for their demolition. If the applicant were to withdraw the current application, or following refusal of LBC, EH would be pleased to engage in early discussions with the applicants, their consultants and the City Council, to identify and examine options for adaptation and new-build to assist in the process of addressing the issues raised by this application.</p> <p>23.07.08: Additional clarification of advice provided. Applicants not engaged in discussion about alternatives to the development despite repeated suggestions. Request for an options appraisal therefore not a new one. Consideration of alternative sites is most welcome but the series of short paragraphs summarising the reasons for rejecting other sites do not present a detailed and balanced discussion of each site and raise more questions than they answer. No maps of the sites are included, supporting policies are referred to but not cited, building on open spaces is dismissed without any assessment of the qualities of those spaces and an apparent presumption against their loss. The setting of listed buildings is cited as a reason for rejection but no analysis of the building's significance is offered to support this. No details are given as to discussions that have taken place with regard to the flood plain or mitigations considered and no consideration of replacing existing modern buildings is given. Regrettable that EH and the Council were not brought into the assessment process earlier. Costs of the refurbishment of Holme Cottages are now provided but no detail to assess them against. Prospect of extending the building does not seem to have been considered so the gain in accommodation from adapting the Cottages I seen in one particular light. Does not take the place of a detailed discussion of the options and as it stands the DAS does not mount a strong enough case for the need to build on the Holme Cottages site.</p> |
| Ancient Monuments Society | <p>03.06.08: Previously stated that do not object to the demolition of the laundry block, the design of its replacement or the treatment of the cloister.</p> <p>Concerned about the implications for the ramp (to which it does not object) on north side of Master's House and proposal to enter flats from north rather than south. Appears to imply alterations to the listed building (internal and external) which may not be appropriate and would like to see details. Whatever the disadvantages of the cloister accesses and steps, the existing entrances are sheltered and related to the cloister.</p> <p>Continue to be concerned that the design of the replacement building is too bulky and out of scale with its setting and will maintain its objection to the demolition of Holme cottages until convinced otherwise. Particularly concerned that the DAS dated March 2008 is historically inaccurate, sweeping in its judgements and</p> |

misrepresents the Society's views.

Have not commended pastiche but have suggested something more in the character of the design for the community room with lower eaves, steeper roof and more appropriate materials in keeping with rather than dominating the grade I listed complex. The statement seems to suggest that reflecting the scale of Birkbeck Hall and Prior Court is more appropriate: we disagree.

The DAS makes exaggerated references to 'an open windswept car park' south of the cottages having resulted from the demolition of a 'no name block' in c1970. The block in question was a C19 single storey terrace of cottages similar to but smaller in scale than the existing white cottages, unused because sub-standard, and known as 'the derelict white cottages'; the rest of the range consisted of rather ramshackle outbuildings. The space which resulted from the demolitions is largely dominated by listed buildings and could be softened by the removal of the cars and additional landscaping; it will not be softened by the construction of the new accommodation block and this is a false justification. Historically, prior to C19 developments it appears to have been gardens and/or orchards.

The architects express a desire to restore the previous character. To do this they would have to provide a single storey east-west range east of the Master's House, not a bland dominating two-storey block to its north.

Dispute the conclusion that there is very little left of the original Holme Cottages. There is a largely intact original south elevation, timber framed gables, roof line, porches and chimneys.

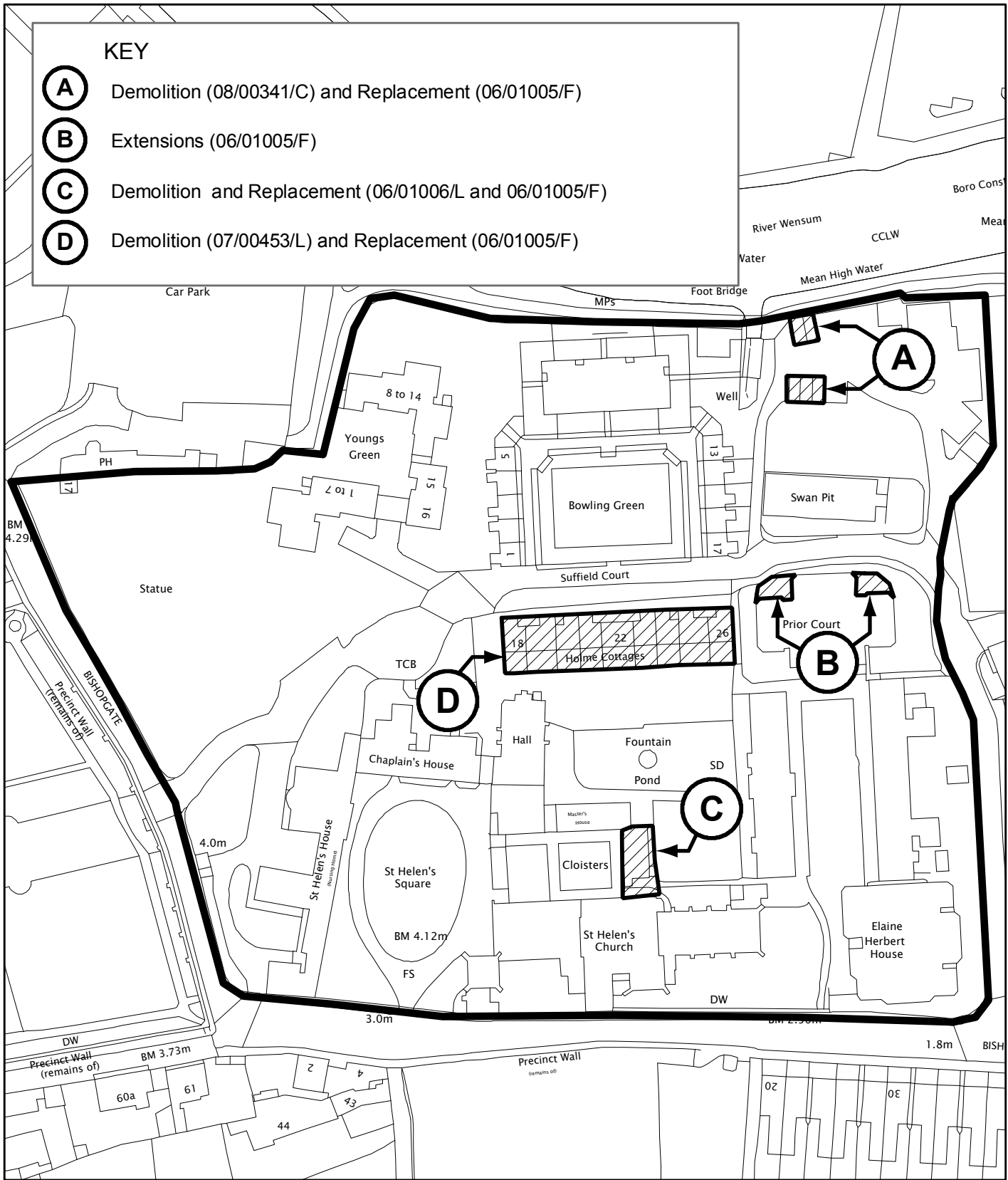
Inaccuracies in the report include references to Suffield Court as 'Edwardian', but they were erected in 1937.

Provides detailed comments on the development of the complex including the conversion of the Chaplain's house, the Master's House, Prior Court and Elaine Herbert House.

08.07.08: Observations made on the proposed ramp were cautionary: presumably any works affecting the Master's House will require further LBC.

On the basis of the information received our observations on the design must stand. Our opinion on the design is not based on one to retain Holme Cottages under all circumstances. We have made that clear from the beginning of the consultations.

On the other buildings in the complex we are glad that the further facts are illuminating. Comment further on alterations made to Elaine Herbert House and the church.



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 Site Address - The Great Hospital, Bishopgate
 Scale - 1:1250



NORWICH
City Council

**DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION
 AND DEVELOPMENT**

