

Planning Applications Committee  
2 April 2009  
Section B

<b>Agenda Number:</b>	<b>B3</b>
<b>Section/Area:</b>	OUTER
<b>Ward:</b>	MILE CROSS
<b>Officer:</b>	Anne Napier
<b>Valid Date:</b>	15 January 2009
<b>Application Numbers:</b>	08/01312/C and 08/01313/F
<b>Site Address :</b>	Dowson First School And Mile Cross Middle School Valpy Avenue Norwich
<b>Proposal:</b>	Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment for 47 dwellings for affordable housing and a community room with associated access parking and other works.
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Broadland Housing Association Limited</b>
<b>Agent:</b>	<b>Mr Richard Smith, Norfolk Property Services</b>

## THE SITE

The site is located in the Mile Cross area of Norwich between Valpy Avenue and Wheeler Road, off Drayton Road, and measures approximately 0.95 hectares in area. It consists of the former Dowson First School and Mile Cross Middle School buildings and a hard surfaced play area. There are rows of trees to the north and south boundaries and residential development exists around the site. This is a mix of two-storey terraced properties and semi-detached dwellings with large gardens. The predominant use of materials on the existing surrounding development is red brick, with panels of render, and clay pantiles to the south on Valpy Avenue and painted render with clay pantiles to the north on Wheeler Road. Nearby parts of the estate are characterized by large amounts of landscaping and green space. Access to the site is gained from the north from

Wheeler Road and from the south from Valpy Avenue. Although Valpy Avenue was originally designed as a through road, vehicular access is now restricted at a mid-point on the application site frontage.

The Mile Cross estate was the earliest first planned Council estate outside London and has an attractive design and layout, loosely based on the 'garden city' model. The quality of its design and layout led to its designation as a Conservation Area in 1987.

The original school building on the site was built in 1926 and this was added to and then replaced by later buildings as the estate expanded. An Architectural and Historic Buildings Report was submitted with the application, detailing the site history and outlining the changes made to the site and the school buildings over time.

## **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

There is no previous relevant planning history. The use of the site for educational purposes ceased in July 2008 and since then the site has remained vacant.

## **THE PROPOSAL**

The proposal to demolish the existing school buildings and redevelop the site for residential dwellings follows public consultation on the future of the site in 2007 in relation to the proposed reorganization of schools within Norwich. An assessment was carried out by the County Council of the site and it was concluded that the building is no longer suited to a modern school use and, due to its size, layout, location and construction, it was considered that it would not be appropriate for a community use. Following the consultation carried out and an expressed preference for the redevelopment of the site for affordable housing, the applicants have designed a scheme for 47 affordable dwellings of a mix of sizes (flats, two, three and four bedroom houses as well as single storey dwellings) and a community room. The mix reflects the applicant's assessment of their own requirements, planning policy and local housing need. The community room was included within the proposal following public consultation and would enable the provision of a community facility for the local area.

The applicant outlines that the scale of the development has been designed to respect the 'garden suburb' character of the estate and has been grouped in traditional building forms. The amount of housing proposed would produce a density of about 50 dwellings to the hectare.

In designing the layout for the development, the applicant indicates that account was taken of the form and character of the area and the relationship to the neighbouring properties. A number of options were proposed and considered at the pre-application stage and the layout was amended to overcome initial

concerns about the location and design of the parking areas on site. The submitted layout provides a mix of housing types with parking provided to the front, side and to the rear of properties. Cycle storage is proposed for each property. Two vehicular access points would be provided, one from each side of the road closure on Valpy Avenue. A new pedestrian link is proposed, running north-south, through the centre of the site, helping to link towards Sloughbottom Park and improving permeability through the development. The applicants have designed the scheme to provide good natural surveillance from the surrounding dwellings. Following the initial layout submitted, further amendments have taken place to resolve some concerns expressed about the location of some parking spaces, boundary treatments and the relationship between the dwellings and the likely impact on residential living conditions.

In terms of appearance, the applicant's consider that the proposal respects the character and appearance of the existing properties within the area in terms of form and materials. The properties facing Valpy Avenue have been designed as 'garden suburb' cottage style buildings with traditional building forms and symmetrical facades, whilst those facing Wheeler Road have a more modern design approach. At the entrance to the green pedestrian link through the site, the buildings have been designed to turn the corner to provide overlooking of the space.

The proposed boundary treatment would be a one metre high hedge and picket fence facing Valpy Avenue, Wheeler Road and the central footpath. Picket fences would also be provided to separate the front gardens of properties. Elsewhere, close boarded fences, trellis and walls are proposed.

The scheme has been designed to achieve a minimum of code level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. To achieve this, the proposal incorporates a reduced dwelling emission rate, water conservation measures, surface water management, the use of air source heat pumps and solar panels.

An ecological study was submitted with the application which showed that the site was currently of low ecological value, consisting mostly of buildings and hard-standing. Enhancement of the site's ecological value is proposed by planting of native trees, hedges and shrubs.

The proposal will involve the loss of some trees on the site and also some street trees to on the adjoining highway. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been prepared and this identifies that the majority of trees to be lost would be category 'C' or 'R' (which are those that need to be removed on arboricultural grounds). A landscaping scheme has been submitted for the site that shows the retention of other trees and the proposed replacement of those to be removed. The replacement of the street trees would be ensured by way of a legal agreement.

The layout of the new housing has been designed to avoid any construction within the root protection area (RPA) of the trees and where parking spaces and

paths are proposed within the RPA's of retained trees, the trees will be protected by a no dig surface.

A landscaping scheme has been developed using mainly low hedging to delineate the public and private spaces on site and to ensure that cars are parked within their allocated spaces. There is also an area of open space as a communal area for the adjacent bungalows and this is proposed to be enclosed by a low hedge and planted with trees.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

The proposal was advertised in the press, on site and neighbours were notified. Following the receipt of amended details, neighbours were re-notified.

Two representations were received raising concerns about the proposal. The matters raised can be summarised as relating to the following main issues:

- Parking – existing problems in the area may be exacerbated by the current proposals
- Potential problems of gaining access to maintain certain dwellings
- Levels of visibility achievable from proposed access points
- Potential for community room to be converted to alternative use as a flat – why was a permanent facility not proposed
- 100% social housing not in keeping with the area and will devalue homes
- Third and fourth bedrooms on 3- and 4-bedroom properties are very small
- Likely misuse of green footpath link
- Capacity of existing utilities and services to accommodate the development proposed
- Noise during demolition
- Contractors parking
- Increasing use of the road junction at Valpy Avenue/ Mile Cross Road by contractors vehicles will increase the road safety hazard of this junction
- Removal of spoil during construction
- Resurfacing/ repair to Valpy Avenue on conclusion of works

A representation was also received from Councillor Blakeway, a local ward member, in strong support of the proposals. The reasons for her support are outlined in some detail but can be summarized as covering an assessment of the proposal in relation to design, layout and appearance; numbers and mix of dwellings; provision of affordable housing; inclusion of 4-bedroom dwellings and ground floor flats and bungalows within the mix; level of parking and location of access points to the development; maintenance of the closure of Valpy Avenue; incorporation of a footway/cycleway link through the development; inclusion of a small community meeting room; and good pre-application community involvement and consultation which has been responsive to the views expressed.

**Norwich Society:** Nice scheme – pity about the cottage style design of the porches

**Norfolk County Council as Highway Authority:** No comment

**Norfolk Landscape Archaeology:** No comment

**English Heritage: (30.01.2009)** No objection to the demolition of the school buildings in view of the significant alterations made on site since the first school was constructed. Development of the site will need to comply with the PPG15 requirement to 'preserve or enhance' the conservation area. In this instance, would expect this to include the acknowledgement of the 'Garden City' principles visible in the Mile Cross Conservation Area. Concern at the lack of symmetry of proposed layout and change to the plan form of the house types in the area (proposed including narrow frontage, deep-plan semi-detached houses whereas historically the house types include terraces of wide frontage, narrow-plan depth housing). Detailed suggestions made as to alternative design of layout. Subject to detailing and materials and notwithstanding the deep-plan form, the architectural treatment could be regarded as appropriate, as is the use of picket fences and hedges for the front gardens. Concern at the use of close-boarded fencing facing the Mews Courts and to the lack of information as to boundary treatments in some locations.

**(16.03.2009 – following receipt of amended proposals for the scheme):**

Disappointed at NPS's response to earlier comments and apparent lack of interest in pursuing the suggested improvements to the layout. Further suggested revisions to the layout put forward. Note the additional information on boundary treatment which goes some way to address the concerns raised previously.

**Norfolk County Council - Strategic Planning:** No comment

**Anglian Water:** No objection

**Environment Agency: (18.02.2009)** Object to the proposal in the absence of an acceptable Flood Risk Assessment. Site potential contamination condition requested.

**(18.03.2009 – following receipt of additional details)** Use of underground storage tanks to attenuate the surface water considered acceptable in view of site characteristics. Surface water run-off into sewers will be restricted to the existing rate, or less, and this is considered acceptable. Capacity considered adequate taking into account climate change and peak rainfall intensity. Therefore, the off-site and on-site flood risk has been managed as required. Condition requiring submission & agreement & subsequent implementation of precise details of surface water drainage scheme requested.

**Norfolk County Council – Planning Obligations:** Developer contributions required in respect of fire hydrants, library provision, street trees

**Children, Young People and Play Manager:** No comments. Playspace contributions will be used in the sector either at Peterson Park, Bowers Avenue or Sloughbottom Park.

**Community Safety Manager:** Concern expressed at some of the detailed aspects of the originally submitted scheme, particularly with regard to parking provision, bin stores, use of open spaces and gardens within the site and potential for neighbour disputes.

**Environmental Health Officer: (11.02.09)** Initial concern at potential noise impact of proposed air source heat pumps. Potential contamination condition requested.

**(09.02.09 – following revisions)** Welcome the revised alterations to the location, amount and screening of the air source heat pumps. These revisions mean that the likelihood of them becoming a nuisance is minimized. However, long-term maintenance of them will be important and should be conditioned.

**Conservation & Design Officer: (10.02.09)** No objection in principle. The scheme was discussed pre-application and the submitted scheme follows the advice provided. Existing buildings have been fully recorded and evaluated and are not considered to be of sufficient merit to warrant retention, particularly as finding an alternative use for them could prove difficult. Although the design is not entirely symmetrical, this enables issues relating to parking provision within the site to be resolved and is not considered out of keeping with the remainder of the estate. The buildings reflect the traditional scale, proportions and massing of the original houses whilst incorporating a more contemporary form of fenestration. Replicating the original wide frontage and shallow plan of the houses would be likely to result in reducing the overall density of the scheme and reducing the energy efficiency of the houses. The deeper roof spans are therefore considered to be an acceptable design choice. Concerned that proposed air source heat pumps appear as an afterthought. Success of the development will rely on the quality of detailing and specification for the buildings.

Assessed in relation to the Building for Life criteria. Achieved a score of 13.

**(20.03.09 – following revisions)** The location of the solar panels on the rear roof slopes and the specification of panels that are flush fitting is appropriate. Although there is scope for the design to be further improved, the proposed scheme as it stands would still be considered to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

**Landscape Planning & Strategy Manager: (13.02.09)** Scheme generally in keeping with its surroundings. Least successful aspects about which serious reservations are expressed are: the central public access way – alignment, width, materials, planting; treatment of the community room – no clues in the landscape layout that this building has a community function, pathway and space around the room needs to signal its use; trees – several trees appear in conflict with vehicular accesses to parking spaces on southern boundary, no evident strategy for new tree planting; grassed area in west courtyard – needs to have a raised

edge and configured (via levels and planting) to ensure that it does not become a parking area or used for ball games.

**(20.03.09 – following revisions)** Despite amendments to scheme, considers this to be a lost opportunity with regard to the landscaping of the site and the contribution made by the 'green link'.

**Tree Officer: (12.02.09)** Main concerns are with the potential impact on the street trees on Valpy Avenue. Several conflicts between the proposals and the specifications in the AIA. Rather than retaining any category 'C' trees on the southern boundary, this aspect of the development could be enhanced by adopting a fresh planting approach. A similar approach could be followed on the northern boundary. Some concerns re some of the trees specified but this can be addressed by condition.

**(19.03.09 – following revisions)** Understands that the tree issues raised have been resolved through negotiation of tree losses mitigated by replacement planting. This needs to be ensured via the legal agreement. More details of landscape specification required.

**Policy: (12.02.09)** The principle of housing development is acceptable in policy terms as it is a well located brownfield site which will help to address the urgent need for affordable housing locally. Energy Statement meets our requirements for consideration of potential sources of renewable energy to supply the site. Need to ensure that 10% will be achieved on site.

**(23.03.09 – following revisions)** Revisions confirm that a combination of solar panels and a reduced number of air source heat pumps will meet the 10% requirement for the provision of energy on site from a decentralized renewable or low carbon source.

**Transportation: (13.02.09)** Issues: Number of crossovers proposed appears to be in conflict with grass verge and some bollarded sections of verge; green link - should be lit and clarification provided as to potential use as cycle path; defence of landscaped areas with hedging is welcome; location of parking is well-related to housing; Mews courts could become over-parked which could cause difficulties for bin collection- preferable for communal bin stores to be located nearer to Wheeler Road and Valpy Avenue; location of cycle storage units for the apartments is not clear; community room needs to have provision for cycle parking. Recommendations: costs of new cross-overs needs to be met by developers; details of new cross-overs need to be specified; clarification re use of green link – increased width, lighting and surfacing details; additional cycle parking for the community facility required; details of cycle parking for the apartments required; consideration of relocation of bin stores to less central locations should be considered.

**(18.03.09 – following revisions)** Taking into account the tracking details provided the provision of the bin stores in the central locations are considered adequate, although unauthorized parking could still cause problems.

**Strategic Housing:** The Housing Development team fully supports the application. Great need for affordable housing in Norwich and this will go some way to meeting that need. In particular there is a need for larger family houses, so the provision of three and four bedroom houses is welcomed. There are also a number of older residents within the immediate area who would welcome the opportunity to transfer from larger family housing to smaller bungalows or ground floor flats, both of which this scheme offers. Were actively involved in the pre-application consultation process with the applicants.

## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Relevant National Policy Guidance:**

PPS1 – Delivering sustainable development  
Supplement to PPS1 – Planning & climate change  
PPS3 – Housing  
PPS9 – Biodiversity & geological conservation  
PPG13 - Transportation  
PPG15 – Planning and the Historic Environment  
PPs22 – Renewable energy  
PPS23 – Planning & pollution control  
PPS25 – Planning and Flood Risk

### **Relevant East of England Development Plan Policies:**

ENV7 – Quality in the Built Environment  
ENG1 – Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Energy Performance  
WM6 – Waste Management in Development  
NR1 – Norwich Key Centre for Development and Change

### **Relevant Saved Local Plan Policies:**

HOU1 – Provision on new housing to meet needs  
HOU4 – Affordable housing  
HOU5 - Accessibility for wheelchair users  
HOU6 - Contribution to community needs and facilities by housing developers  
HOU13 – Housing development: other proposals  
HBE8 – Development in Conservation Areas  
HBE12 – High quality of design  
SR4 – Open space in new development  
SR7 – Children’s playspace  
SR12 – Green links network  
EP1 – Contaminated land  
EP16 - Water conservation and sustainable drainage systems  
EP17 - Protection of watercourses from pollution from stored materials, roads and car parks



EP18 – Energy efficiency  
EP22 – High standard of amenity for residential occupiers  
TRA3 – Modal shift measures in support of NATS  
TRA5 – Approach to design for vehicular movement and special needs  
TRA6 – parking standards – maxima  
TRA7 – cycle parking standards  
TRA8 – Servicing provision  
TRA10 – Contributions from developers for works required for access to site  
TRA11 – Contributions for transport improvements in wider area  
TVA8 – Heritage interpretation  
AEC3 – Loss of community facilities  
NE4 – Street trees  
NE9 – Landscaping of new development

**Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents:**

Open Space and Play  
Accessible Housing  
Green Links and Riverside Walks  
Transport Contributions from Development  
Heritage Interpretation  
Trees and Development  
Affordable Housing  
Flood Risk and Development  
Energy Efficiency

**ASSESSMENT**

**Main issues:**

The site is not an allocated development site within the Replacement Local Plan and therefore the first main issue is considered to be whether the principle of demolition and redevelopment for housing is acceptable. In addition to this, the other main issues are considered to be: the design and layout of the proposal and its impact on the Conservation Area and, in particular, whether the scheme would preserve or enhance its character or appearance; the traffic and transportation impacts of the development; the impact of the proposal on existing trees and the adequacy of the proposed landscaping scheme; and the energy efficiency measures proposed for the site and the impact of the proposals on the living conditions of future and existing residents neighbouring the site.

**Principle of demolition and the principle of redevelopment for housing:**

The application was accompanied by an Architectural and Historic Buildings Report and, taking this into account, both English Heritage and the Council's Conservation and Design Officer have concluded that the demolition of the existing buildings is acceptable in conservation terms. It is considered that the

historic importance of the buildings has been lessened by their significant rebuilding, alteration and extension over time and that the current contribution that they make to the character and appearance of the area is not a positive one.

The buildings were last used as community first and middle schools prior to the reorganization of primary education within Norwich. The assessment made by the County Council as the education authority that the buildings, due to their age, design, materials and location, are no longer suited for that use has not been challenged, nor has the view that they are not capable of a viable alternative community use. On this basis, the demolition of the buildings on the site is considered, subject to an appropriate redevelopment of the site, to meet the relevant criteria of PPG15 and saved policies HBE8 and AEC3 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004.

Accepting that the loss of the existing buildings is acceptable, it is considered that the redevelopment of the site for housing is an appropriate alternative use for this brownfield site. Residential development exists around the site and the site is well located in relation to existing facilities. The proposal would make more efficient use of previously developed land and the density proposed meets the relevant criteria and is considered appropriate in relation to that which exists in the vicinity. The development also provides for accessible and affordable housing and, subject to the satisfactory completion of a legal agreement or undertaking, would provide for additional facilities to meet the needs generated by future residents of the scheme. It is therefore considered that the use of the site for housing is an acceptable one which would meet the guidance in PPS1, PPS3 and the relevant criteria of East of England Plan policy NR1, and saved policies HOU1, HOU4, HOU5, HOU6 and HOU13 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004.

**Design and layout of the scheme and its impact on the Conservation Area:**

Concerns have been expressed by English Heritage about the details of the development proposals and in particular, the layout proposed. The scheme as submitted was the result of significant pre-application negotiations which sought to resolve a number of competing issues regarding the site. That scheme has been subsequently amended since submission to seek to further resolve outstanding issues. In particular, the applicants have sought to achieve parking provision close to each dwelling with good natural surveillance and the provision of communal bin stores in central locations within the site to serve the flats proposed. These requirements, generated by the experience of the applicant in managing housing schemes elsewhere and following public consultation, have resulted in the form of development and layout that is proposed, with two Mews courts as main vehicular accesses into the site, accessible by the refuse and recycling vehicles, and a number of individual access drives to serve individual dwellings. In addition, the central green link through the site was modified following public consultation due to concerns about the potential for anti-social behaviour to occur. Consequently, the result of these constraints is that the layout of the scheme is not symmetrical and does not as closely follow the

principles of the 'garden suburb' approach as could otherwise be achieved. However, the layout has been designed not just to reflect the character of the surrounding Conservation Area but to meet the needs of the future residents and ensure acceptable living conditions can be provided.

In terms of the design details of the dwellings proposed, the development of dwellings with a more traditional scale, proportions and appearance is considered appropriate in this location, given the size of the site, the amount of development proposed and its relationship with the remainder of the Conservation Area. Similarly, the materials proposed are considered appropriate in this context. The concerns expressed by English Heritage about the plan form of the dwellings and the move away from the traditional approach are acknowledged. However, it is considered that the use of traditional terraced dwellings with wide frontages and a shallow-plan form would have led to a development with a significantly lower density than that currently proposed. In this regard therefore, given the attempts made in other respects to reflect the character and appearance of the older development around the site and also to enable the development of the site at a density considered appropriate today, the design details of the scheme are considered appropriate.

The scheme has been assessed in relation to the twenty Building for Life criteria and has achieved a score of 13 (out of 20). For further details of the Building for Life criteria and through what process the scheme has been evaluated please visit [www.buildingforlife.org](http://www.buildingforlife.org) . Although it is disappointing that this score is not higher, the dominance of the applicant's road layout and parking provision requirements, as mentioned above, on the layout and the approach taken to the landscape treatment (considered later) have had a significant impact on the overall score for the scheme. However, the scheme is considered to have many positive aspects and this score is considered acceptable taking into account the constraints identified.

Therefore, it is considered that an acceptable compromise has been reached, in respect of both the layout of the site and the design of the scheme, and that the development as proposed would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of Mile Cross Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore considered to meet the requirements of the PPS1, PPS3, PPG15, East of England Plan policy ENV7 and saved policies HBE8, HBE12, EP22 and HOU13 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004.

**Traffic and transportation impacts of the development:**

A number of concerns about the scheme have been raised by the Council's transportation planners and by local residents. A number of these have been addressed by revisions to the originally submitted scheme and it is further considered that the other issues raised, including the details of the provision of cross-overs to provide accesses for dwellings, could be covered by condition. The need for transportation contributions to cover a wider area is proposed to be addressed by way of a legal agreement.

Local residents have expressed concern about the amount of parking proposed within the site. The applicants have proposed the maximum parking considered appropriate in relation to the Council's parking standards and in this respect the proposal is therefore considered acceptable.

The scheme also provides cycle storage facilities for each dwelling to facilitate the use of alternative modes of transport and provides a pedestrian link running north-south through the site enabling greater permeability and facilitating the enhanced linking of Sloughbottom Park with the remainder of the estate.

The scheme is therefore considered to meet the relevant criteria of PPG13, East of England Plan policy WM6 and saved policies TRA3, TRA5, TRA6, TRA7, TRA8, TRA10 and TRRA11 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004.

### **Trees/ Landscaping**

Initial concerns expressed by the Tree Officer relating to the loss of and impact to trees on or adjacent to the site have now largely been addressed through the revisions to the scheme. It is proposed that the provision for the replacement planting of street trees be covered by legal agreement. Other tree protection matters are considered to have been satisfactorily addressed, subject to conditions.

However, serious concerns still exist in relation to the landscaping proposed for the site. Whilst some issues raised have been addressed, for example the proposed treatment of the open area adjacent to the bungalows on the west of the site, other concerns remain.

In particular, it is considered that the proposed footpath link through the site could have been designed so as to provide a much greater benefit in landscape terms than that currently proposed. The provision of an asphalt surfaced path, some 2.5 metres in width, enclosed by hedges and picket fences, is not considered likely to result in a positive contribution to the setting of the development proposed or the creation of an attractive public space. Whilst lighting is proposed, it is considered that the path is too narrow and should have been designed so that greater green space is provided to either side of the path, enabling suitable planting and landscaping within this enhanced area of public space, with a compensatory reduction in the depth of the adjoining private front gardens. This would also have enabled the opportunity to be taken to create a more interesting route through the development which also signalled the use of the proposed community room.

However, it is understood that the proposals as submitted are in response to concerns expressed by the local community at the pre-application consultation stage. The provision of greater public space was considered likely to result in the greater potential for anti-social behaviour. Whilst these concerns are acknowledged, it is considered that further design input into the landscaping proposals could have resulted in a better on site treatment without leading to problems of this nature.

Nonetheless, on balance, and taking into account the other areas of compromise within the scheme and the need for the affordable housing proposed, it is considered that the scheme as proposed, whilst representing a 'lost opportunity' in landscape terms, would not justify a refusal on this ground and, subject to conditions, including one relating to the use of suitable surfacing materials for the central pathway, is acceptable. Therefore the scheme is considered to meet the relevant criteria of PPS9 and saved policies NE4 and NE9 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004.

**Energy efficiency and impact on living conditions of residents:**

The proposal demonstrates that it would meet the requirements of East of England plan policy ENG1 by ensuring the provision of at least 10% of the development's energy requirements through a decentralised renewable or low carbon source. The provision of air source heat pumps for every dwelling has been revised following initial concerns about their potential visual and noise impacts. The combination of solar panels with a reduced number of screened air source heat pumps is considered acceptable and unlikely to be detrimental to the living conditions of future or nearby residents or the visual amenities of the area.

The scheme has been designed to avoid issues of overlooking, overshadowing and loss of privacy and the initial proposals were modified to minimise potential problems of un-neighbourly behaviour caused by use of garden space, bin storage areas and parking spaces. The proposal is therefore considered to meet the requirements of saved policies HBE8, HBE12, HOU13 and EP22 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004.

**Other issues:**

In terms of the other issues raised by local residents, it is considered that the access for maintenance is covered by other non-planning provisions, the size of the dwellings proposed is acceptable and meets the requirements of the applicants, the consultation responses have not identified any shortfall in the capacity of existing utilities or services to accommodate the demands of the development and that the concerns raised in relation to construction and demolition disturbance are matters controlled by the Environmental Health legislation. The community room is proposed following public demand for the facility and it is intended that it is run by a 'village hall' style committee. However, the potential future conversion of the room to an additional flat has been designed into the scheme as an 'exit strategy'. Whilst the concerns about the impact of the proposal on the value of existing homes is noted, it is considered that this matter is not one that should outweigh consideration of the public interest merits of the scheme.

**Conclusion:**

The demolition of the existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site for housing is therefore considered acceptable in principle and the design and layout of the development is considered an appropriate one that would preserve or

enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposals are considered to have adequately addressed the traffic and transportation impacts likely to rise from the scheme and have made acceptable provision for pedestrians and cyclists. The scheme has addressed the renewable energy requirements for such developments and has satisfactorily demonstrated that it is unlikely to cause detriment to the living conditions of future or nearby residents. The concerns in relation to trees have largely been addressed, subject to conditions and, whilst the landscaping scheme is not ideal, it is considered that, on balance, the concerns about this element of the scheme are not sufficient to outweigh the conclusions reached in relation to the overall merits of the development and that, on balance, the proposal is therefore considered acceptable.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **08/01313/F**

- (1) Approve planning permission subject to the completion of a S106 agreement or satisfactorily worded undertaking by the 13 April 2009 to include the provision of affordable housing, contributions to child play space, open space, transport, libraries and street trees and subject to the following conditions:
  1. Standard three year time limit for commencement
  2. Pre-commencement details to be submitted and agreed including: external facing materials; eaves & verges; additional fittings e.g. gas boxes; external lighting.
  3. Pre-commencement hard & soft landscaping details to be submitted and agreed including: levels, means of enclosure, hard surfacing materials, minor artefacts & structures (e.g. communal garden stores, screening for air source heat pumps) , proposed & existing functional services above & below ground (e.g. drainage, power, communication cables etc), planting plans, written specifications, schedules of plants, implementation programme and maintenance/replacement.
  4. Pre-commencement details of historic interpretation & implementation to be submitted & agreed.
  5. Pre-commencement details of surface water drainage to be submitted & agreed & subsequently implemented.
  6. Pre-commencement details of roads, footways, including cross-overs and private access drives, parking and servicing areas, to be submitted & agreed
  7. Pre-commencement details of provision of north-south footpath link through the site ensuring access 24 hours per day and schedule of implementation to be submitted and agreed
  8. Pre-commencement specification details of air source heat pumps and solar panels to be submitted and agreed

9. Pre-occupation roads & footways to be constructed in accordance with agreed details
10. Pre-occupation accesses, on site parking, servicing, loading/unloading areas to be constructed in accordance with agreed details
11. Pre-occupation provision of cycle parking & bin storage & retention thereafter
12. Pre-occupation air source heat pumps & solar panels to be installed & retained
13. Pre-occupation details of provision of fire hydrants and timetable for installation to be submitted and agreed
14. Tree protection during construction
15. Contamination condition

**Informatives:**

1. Asbestos survey advised
2. Demolition/ construction hours of operation to be agreed with Environmental Health

**Reason for approval:**

The demolition of the existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site for housing is considered acceptable in principle and the design and layout of the development is considered an appropriate one that would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposals are considered to have adequately addressed the traffic and transportation impacts likely to rise from the scheme and have made acceptable provision for pedestrians and cyclists. The scheme has addressed the renewable energy requirements for such developments and has satisfactorily demonstrated that it is unlikely to cause detriment to the living conditions of future or nearby residents. The concerns in relation to trees have largely been addressed, subject to conditions and, whilst the landscaping scheme is not ideal, it is considered that, on balance, the concerns about this element of the scheme are not sufficient to outweigh the conclusions reached in relation to the overall merits of the development and that, on balance, the proposal is therefore considered acceptable. The development is considered to have met the relevant criteria of policies ENV7, ENG1, WM6 and NR1 of the East of England Plan and saved policies HOU1, HOU4, HOU5, HOU6, HOU13, HBE8, HBE12, SR4, SR7, SR12, EP1, EP16, EP17, EP18, EP22, TRA3, TRA5, TRA6, TRA7, TRA8, TRA10, TRA11, TVA8, AEC3, NE4 and NE9 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004 and all material considerations.

- (2) that if the S106 agreement or satisfactory worded undertaking is not completed prior to 13 April 2009 to delegate authority to the Head of Planning and Regeneration Services, to refuse planning permission for the following reason:-

In the absence of a legal agreement or undertaking relating to the provision of affordable housing, contributions to child play space, open

space, transport, libraries and street trees as required by the saved policies HOU4, HOU6, SR3, SR7, NE4 and TRA11 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004.

**08/01312/C**

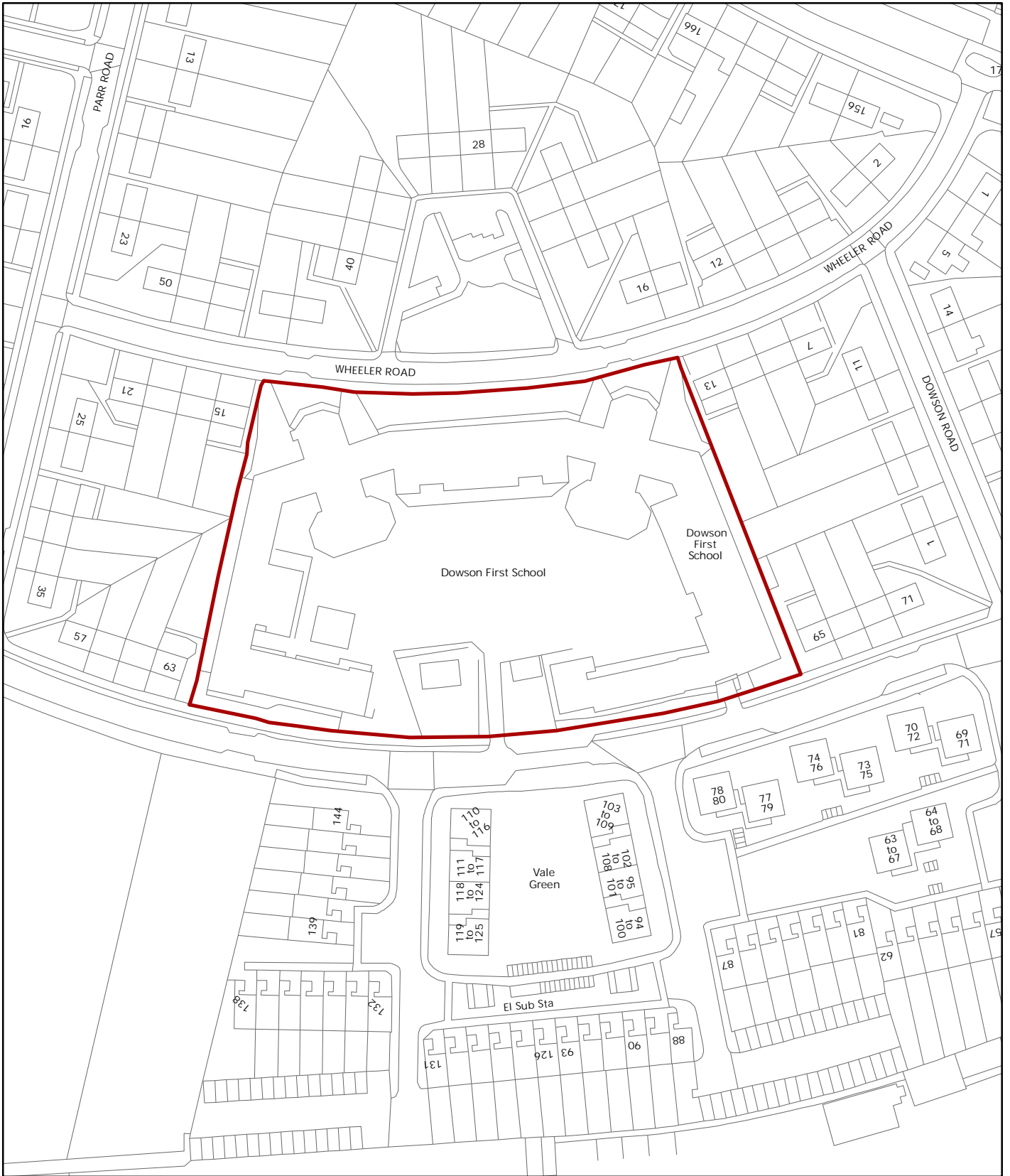
GRANT CONSENT subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard three year time limit for commencement
2. No demolition to take place until a contract has been signed for the redevelopment of the site in accordance with a valid planning permission
3. Removal of buildings under arboricultural supervision
4. Contamination requirements

**Reason for approval:**

A full assessment of the merits of the existing buildings on site has been undertaken and, in view of the alterations made to them over time, their condition and visual appearance, their demolition is considered acceptable, subject to the suitable redevelopment of the site, and would not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the Mile Cross Conservation Area, subject to conditions requiring the removal of buildings under arboricultural supervision and relating to the potential contamination of the land. The proposal is therefore considered to meet the relevant criteria of saved policies HBE8, NE9 and EP1 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004 and all material considerations.





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Planning Application No- 09/01312/C and 08/01313/F

Site Address - Dowson First School and Mile Cross Middle School, Valpy Avenue

Scale - 1:1,250



**NORWICH**  
City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION  
AND DEVELOPMENT

