

Planning Applications Committee

8th January 2009

Section B

Agenda Number:	B
Section/Area:	OUTER
Ward:	EATON
Officer:	Anne Napier
Valid Date:	11th October 2008
Application Number:	08/01063/F
Site Address :	216 Newmarket Road Norwich NR4 7LA
Proposal:	Demolition of existing flats, erection of 18 No. flats in two blocks of 9 with associated access, parking and site works.
Applicant:	NMR Ltd
Agent:	MMBC

THE SITE

The application site of approximately 0.443ha is located to the south side of the A11 Newmarket Road, immediately adjacent to the point where the A11 becomes a dual carriageway with a slip road leading down into Cringleford and Eaton.

The site lies within a predominantly residential area and to the north-east of the site and to the north-west on the opposite side of the A11 are large residential properties on generous plots. To the south-east and south-west of the site are smaller properties in Chestnut Hill, an estate form of development, accessed off Church Lane.

The application site is currently occupied by a large three storey property, originally one dwelling but more recently converted to three flats. The property has been unoccupied for sometime and is in a derelict state, having also been subject to vandalism.

The current vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is located on the north-west corner of the site, adjacent to the access point to the neighbouring 214. In terms of levels, the site sits approximately 1.5 metres above the level of Newmarket Road with a retaining 2 metre high wall to the site frontage.

A number of trees exist on the site and the application is supported by a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Report.

The site is outside, but close to, two neighbouring Conservation Areas.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

THE PROPOSAL

It is proposed to demolish the existing property and construct 18 flats in two blocks of 9. This would amount to a density of approximately 40 dwellings per hectare.

The layout of the site would provide for one block to be located to the north-east of the site, close to the boundary with the road frontage, with the other block set further into the site to the south-west. The access point to serve the site would be relocated, with the existing access stopped up and a new access provided to the north-west of the site. Between this new access point and the frontage block a parking area is proposed, providing 9 spaces, with a further 9 space parking area and secure cycle parking set further into the site.

The flats are proposed to be arranged in two blocks, with each block providing three floors of 2 bedroom flats, the top floor being within the roof. The scale and design of the blocks reflects the scale and design of the existing substantial properties along Newmarket Road. The facing materials proposed are red facing brickwork and black clay pantiles. The flats have been designed to be wheelchair accessible, with a lift provided to serve all floors and two parking spaces being proposed for people with disabilities.

A refuse/recycling storage and collection point is proposed adjacent to the site access. It is proposed that the refuse collection vehicles remain outside the site and the position of the store facilitates collection in this regard. The bins are proposed to be housed in a brick enclosure that, in terms of materials, would be in keeping with the main buildings.

The proposed landscaping details are indicative only but the details of this aspect could be conditioned as part of any permission. The tree survey and arboricultural assessment recommends the removal of some of the existing trees on site, in part to protect and avoid damage to other trees, but also to either facilitate the development of the site or because the trees concerned are in poor condition and of little amenity value.

CONSULTATIONS

Advertised on site, in the press and neighbours notified.

Five letters of objection have been received, together with one letter raising concerns about the boundary of the site from a landownership perspective (which is not normally a material planning consideration).

The objections raised are on the following matters:

- Loss of garden and increase in the amount of development on site, excessive density for the immediate area
- Current use of property not flats but multi-occupancy dwelling
- Impact on surface water drainage capacity and possible increased risk of flooding
- Increased visual impact and proximity to properties on Chestnut Grove
- Design of buildings is inappropriate and roof style would be institutional in appearance
- Inappropriate scale and excessive height of buildings
- Flats inappropriate
- Development would be against the spirit of the nearby Conservation Area
- Adverse impact on living conditions of neighbouring residents due to loss of sunshine, overlooking and loss of privacy, noise and disturbance, light pollution
- Future use of proposed landscaped areas
- Type of tenure and nature of future occupiers
- Loss of trees and wildlife areas
- Wish that remaining trees would be covered by a TPO
- Highway safety concerns – increased traffic at busy and dangerous junction, high speeds, blind exit, hazardous slowing down manoeuvre for vehicles entering the site, danger to cyclists, pedestrians and bus passengers
- Unsafe refuse collection arrangements
- Inadequate parking on site and potential for off-site on-street parking adjacent to the site
- Impact on neighbours during site clearance and building work
- Devaluation
- Existing building has been allowed to deteriorate since 2007
- Building should be retained and sympathetically extended

Norfolk County Council as Highway Authority:

Recommends refusal due to the adverse impact on highway safety. An increased number of properties on the site would lead to a significant increase in traffic movements into and out of the site, albeit at a slightly different access point. The proposed new access would exit directly onto the slip road in close proximity to a point where vehicles turn off the A11 Newmarket Road at speed. Due to the function of the A11, the speed of traffic and the position of the access, the proposal is considered likely to result in a high probability of a tail-end collision at this point. An accident on the slip road at this point also carries a significant propensity to overspill onto the main A11 itself, thereby causing a serious incident. The visibility splay achievable to the north-eastern (critical) direction from the repositioned access point would be 98m, which is less than the 120m required from a 2.4m setback distance as set out in central government guidance for roads subject to speeds of 40mph. Although the repositioned access point would lead to an improved level of visibility in comparison with the existing (providing an increase from 82m to 98m), there is considered to be very little improvement in terms of reducing the propensity of an accident occurring. Due to the volume of traffic, high traffic speeds and restricted visibility, any accidents occurring as a result of increased movements are likely to cause personal injury. The probability of an accident occurring is regarded as high and the severity of such an accident is also regarded as being significant. Therefore refusal is recommended.

Norwich Society:

It is a shame to lose an interesting and dignified old house. Although the access has been moved further down the slip road to Eaton away from the dangerous junction, the fact that 18 cars will use it is unacceptable considering the existing use of the slip road for parking, bus stop, pub access etc. The design of the two new blocks of flats is also unimaginative.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**Relevant National Policy Guidance:**

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
Supplement to PPS1 – Planning and Climate Change
PPS3 - Housing
PPG13 - Transport
PPG15 – Planning and the Historic Environment

Relevant East of England Plan Policies:

ENG1 – Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Energy Performance
ENV7 – Quality in the Built Environment
T6 – Strategic and Regional Road Networks

Relevant Local Plan Policies:

HOU13 – Proposals for new housing development on other sites
HBE12 – High quality of design

TRA3 – Modal shift measures
TRA5 – Approach to design for vehicle movement and special needs
TRA6 – Parking standards - maxima
TRA7 – Cycle parking standard
TRA8 – Servicing provision
TRA10 – Contribution by developers to works required for access to the site
TRA11 – Contributions for transport improvements in the wider area
TRA18 – Major road network
NE8 – Management of features of wildlife importance and biodiversity
NE9 – Landscaping scheme & tree planting
EP16 – Water conservation and sustainable drainage systems
EP18 – Energy efficiency
SR7 – Provision for child's equipped play space

Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents

Trees and Development
Transport contributions
Open space and play provision
Accessible and special needs housing
Energy efficiency and renewable energy

Assessment

In many respects the proposal is considered acceptable. The development involves the more efficient use of land, with a density of development that would be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area. The proposals are considered acceptable in terms of their impact on the setting of the nearby Conservation Areas and in relation to the scale, height and design of the buildings proposed and their visual relationship with the surrounding area. Notwithstanding the concerns expressed by local residents, the proposals are considered unlikely to cause significant detriment to their living conditions due to the design of the buildings, their siting and the distances between the proposed new buildings and the existing properties around the site. The impact of the scheme on the trees on the site has been assessed and is considered acceptable and although a detailed landscaping scheme would be required, this could be covered by condition. Similarly, concerns expressed in respect of surface water drainage and the potential for flooding could be addressed by a condition of any permission. The amount of parking proposed on site is considered acceptable for the number, size and type of properties proposed. Although the application as submitted does not demonstrate how the East of England Plan policy ENG1 requirements for 10% renewable energy use could be met, it is considered that, in this instance, due to the characteristics of the site, this element could also be covered by condition.

However, notwithstanding the above, it is considered that due to the access arrangements proposed, the development is unacceptable. The serious objection

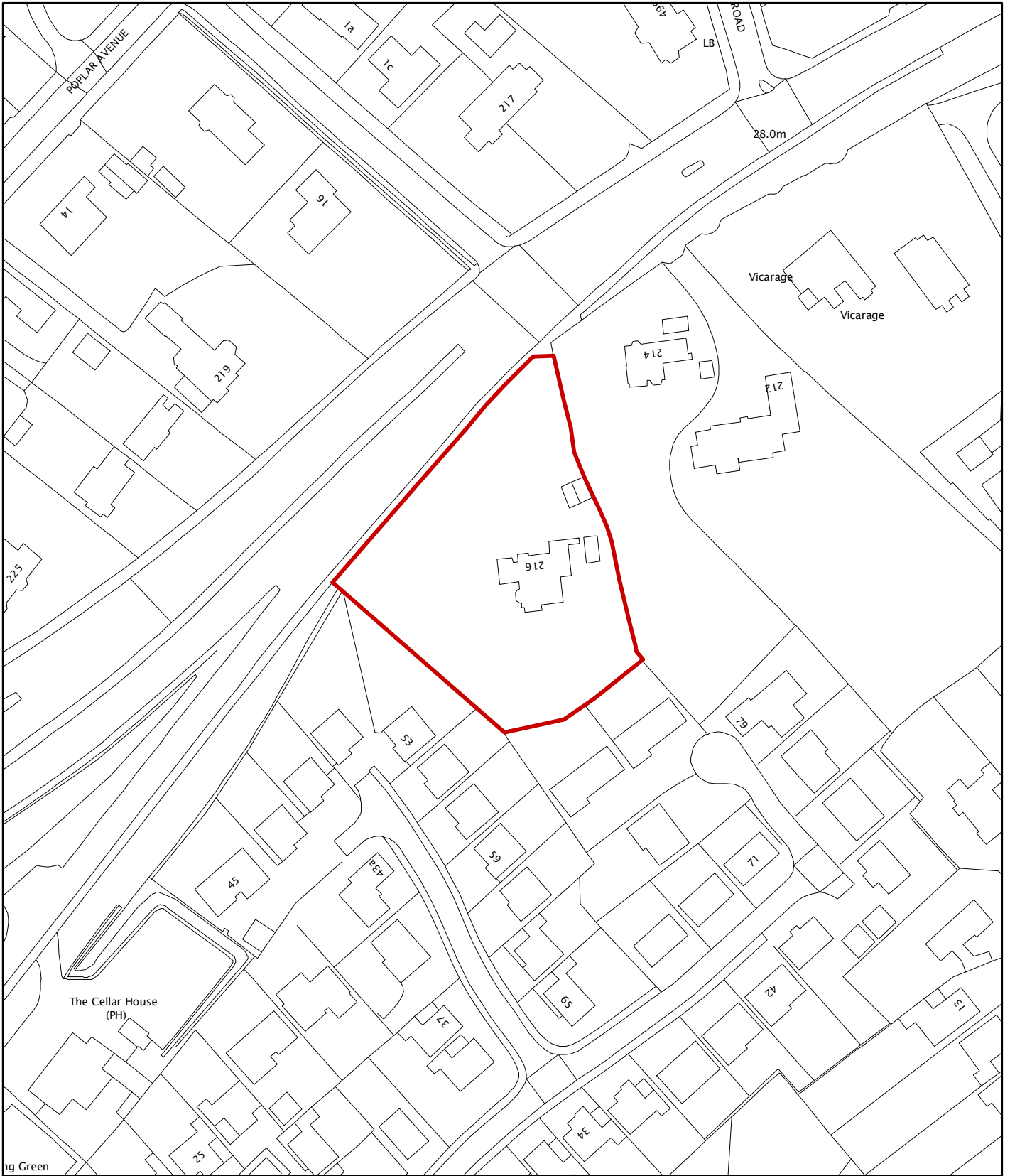
raised by the County Highway Authority is acknowledged and the concerns raised are shared. It is considered that the increased amount of traffic movements entering and leaving the site at the access point proposed would be likely to have a significant detrimental effect on highway safety and would result in a high probability of an accident occurring. The improvement in visibility that would be achieved by the repositioned access point has been taken into account but this benefit is not considered sufficient to outweigh the risk identified. Consequently the application is recommended for refusal.

In addition to this main reason for refusal, the application as submitted does not provide for either the transport contributions or child play space as required under saved policies TRA11 and SR7. Whilst this could be negotiated as part of a s106 agreement or provided for by a unilateral undertaking submitted by the developer, in the absence of such a planning obligation the proposal is contrary to policy and therefore also unacceptable for this reason.

RECOMMENDATIONS

REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION on the following grounds:

1. Detrimental to highway safety – interruption to free flow of traffic on Newmarket Road and slip road; inadequate visibility splays at junction of access to county highway causing danger and inconvenience to users of adjoining public highway – contrary to PPG13 and saved policies TRA5 and TRA18;
2. Absence of child's play space provision or transport contribution



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Site Address - 216 Newmarket Road
Scale - 1:1250



NORWICH
City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

