

Planning Applications Committee

Section C

13 November 2008

Agenda Number:	C7
Section/Area: I	OUTER
Ward:	TOWN CLOSE
Officer:	Mr Rob Parkinson
Valid Date:	29 September 2008
Application Number:	08/01003/U
Site Address :	Globe House 34B Globe Place Norwich NR2 2SG
Proposal:	Change of use from Care Home, C2, to 21 bedsits with communal kitchen and bathroom facilities (a House of Multiple Occupation).
Applicant:	Dau Properties Ltd
Agent:	Mr Jonathan Burrell

THE SITE

The proposal concerns the change of use of part of the existing Bishop Herbert House residential care home for disabled persons at Globe Place, Norwich. This proposal relates to roughly a quarter of the footprint of the existing premises.

The facility is within an established residential area with properties fronting Globe Place. The character of the immediate area is largely made up of 4-storey flats to the north and west, single-storey garages and some maisonettes behind those to the north, and the recently permitted multi-storey apartment block immediately adjacent to the east (previously a playing field fronting Union Street). The

southern neighbour is the adjoining remaining part of the Bishop Herbert House care home complex.

Additional pedestrian and cycle access is available northwards to Manchester Place and Vauxhall Street, and eastwards to Union Street via Chapel Walk. A local district centre parade of shops is a short distance away on Rupert St, and the Unthank Road parade of shops are within a 5-10 minutes walk. The site is closely linked to the Council's Strategic Cycle Network and Green Links Network.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None.

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is for a change of use, from the previous care home operation, into a series of individual bedsits, collectively forming a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO). There are no external operations proposed. The facility is divided off from the care home, and creates a single planning unit accommodating 20 individual rooms accessed off communal corridors and from shared entrances. The western boundary of the site offers a 6m wide grassed area that will offer some amenity space. There is also an open-air internal courtyard area for use by the residents, which the applicant proposes to enhance to provide a landscaped outdoor amenity area for seating and clothes drying.

The change in levels over the site means the facility can comprise two storeys: the ground floor contains a lobby area, 7 bedrooms (four ensuite) and a shared kitchen facility. Four existing ground floor parking garages are proposed to be used instead for two bin stores and two cycle shelters housing a combined 21 storage racks. The first floor is larger with separate access, and has been arranged to house 13 bedrooms (four ensuite), shared bathroom facilities, and a shared kitchen. The kitchens are equipped with double the number of facilities to effectively be four kitchens, which allows for 5 bedsits per communal kitchen. There is no superintendent on the site.

The facility been under preparation and brought into operational use some months ago. Members are reminded that the application is solely for the change of use; the detail of the internal arrangements are covered by other legislation.

CONSULTATIONS

Neighbourhood notifications, press notices and site adverts have not resulted in any representations being submitted to the Council to date. However, Members should note that the consultation period will only end on the 12th November 2008 and submissions may be brought to the Committee's attention on the day of the Committee.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant National Planning Policy

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS3 – Housing

Relevant ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policies:

HOU1 – Provision of new housing to meet needs

HOU13 – Proposals for new housing on other sites

HOU18 – Conversion to Houses in Multiple Occupation

EP22 – Residential amenity

TRA6 – Parking standards (Maxima)

TRA7 – Cycle parking standards

TRA8 – Servicing provision

Supplementary Planning Document

Conversion and development of houses in multiple occupation; Adopted June 2006.

Principle of development

The premise of accepting new residential development for all housing needs is established in Local Plan policy HOU1. Although quite a dense development, this would also accord with the aims of national planning policy to provide residential housing at higher densities in locations with good accessibility to shops, facilities and public transport links. Further, the proposal increases local residential density in a manner consistent with the character of the surrounding neighbourhood.

Guidance within the SPD ‘Conversion and development of houses in multiple occupation’ suggests the character of an area would be affected if the HMO took up more than 10% of the immediate street frontage between nearby main road junctions. The proposal would probably affect more than 10% of the frontage, and in such instances the impacts from noise, litter, traffic, environmental damage and amenity would then be considered carefully. It is considered however, that the parking controls, refuse servicing and amenity areas provided should be sufficient to cater for this change in this instance.

Local Plan policy HOU18 deals with proposals for new bedsits and conversions to multiple occupation. Although planning policy is not concerned with the detailed internal layout of HMOs, it is important that development of this kind takes account of the effect on the surrounding residential area, both in terms of increased density of use of the area, and changes in the visual appearance. Under this proposal the nature of the building’s use will change but it is considered to be in a manner consistent with the surrounding area, having an acceptable relationship with the immediate neighbouring properties and local points of access.

Amenity

In accordance with Local Plan policies HOU18 and EP22, the proposal includes provision for improved landscaping of an existing communal courtyard accessed solely from within the building. This will offer an improved level of amenity for the occupants. Although the courtyard is adjacent to part of the care home, this is a part that is not occupied, nor including windows for living quarters. Should this bring disturbance to the amenity of care home residents and surrounding bedsit occupants, such instances would be investigated by Environmental Health nuisance prevention.

Likewise, the party walls between the two different uses will have been subject to adequate soundproofing as required by Building Regulations.

Transport and Access

This part of the residential care home has been deemed surplus to requirements by the operator. Any increase in traffic levels in the area are thought likely to be marginal given that there is less servicing and visitors to the care home and that restricted parking and the bedsit accommodation does not encourage the ownership of cars.

Whilst recognising that HMOs do not require generally as many car parking spaces as an equivalent number of houses, the SPD 'Conversion and development of houses in multiple occupation' does advise against permitted proposals without parking provision for residents or visitors. The lack of immediately available parking facilities is considered acceptable however, given the close proximity to the city centre, bus routes along principle routes, local facilities and accessible cycling and walking network, and the availability of short-stay parking areas suitable for visitors. The cycle storage areas will encourage residents to cycle instead of using cars, at a ratio of one bike per bedsit.

The site is part of a controlled parking zone and is bounded by parking restrictions. The garages within the site (proposed for conversion to bin store and cycle parking) are already subject to double yellow lines and there are other restrictions on the adjacent highways between Monday-Saturday 8:30am-6:30pm, including permit parking and limited waiting.

There is also considered to be sufficient room available for servicing arrangements and refuse collection. To avoid traffic access problems and to prevent loss of amenity for the overlooking bedsit residents, a condition to prevent parking on the landscaped areas immediately to the east and west is suggested, in line with guidance in the SPD.

Planning Obligations

Although the proposal creates over 10 dwellings and would otherwise meet thresholds for planning obligations under policy HOU6, it is not considered necessary in this instance. In transport terms, there is thought to be little difference in the impact from the previous use of the premises; play space and

child play equipment thresholds are not triggered, education demands shouldn't arise from single-bedroom dwellings, and library contributions are covered by the availability of the Norfolk & Norwich library.

Summary

This proposal brings residential use to an area of existing higher density living, and the development will benefit from close proximity and good accessibility to the city centre and local district centres, and will be in character with its surroundings. In this regard the proposal meets the general aims of sustainable development. Amenity provision for residents is considered to be acceptable and any adverse impacts on neighbouring uses should be able to be dealt with through conditions and other public enforcement processes.

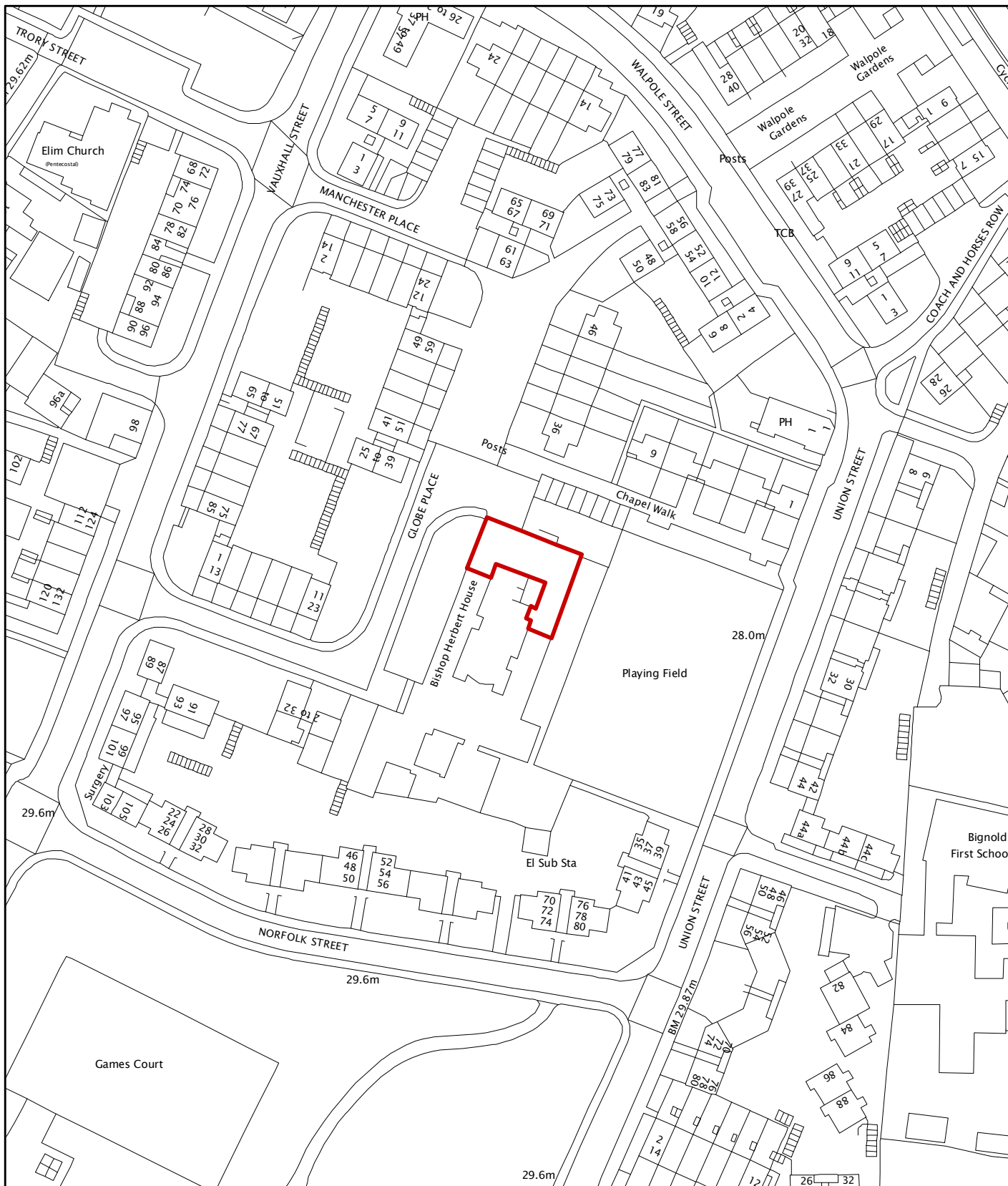
RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

- 1 – standard time limit for commencement;
- 2 – landscaping improvements to be completed within 6 months of completion;
- 3 – replacements of trees and shrubs if they die within 5 years;
- 4 – bike and bin stores to be retained in perpetuity;
- 5 – no car parking on the landscaped areas of the site adjacent the west and eastern elevations;

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with national policies PPS1 and PPS3 by locating residential development close to local facilities and at a sufficiently high density. It also complies with saved local plan policies HOU1, HOU13, HOU18, EP22, TRA6, TRA7 and TRA8 to provide a residential development with sufficient amenity, servicing and accessibility standards for occupants.



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Planning Application No - 08/01003/U

Site Address - Globe House, 34B Globe Place

Scale - 1:1250



NORWICH
City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

