

Report to Planning applications committee

Item

13 February 2020

Report of Area development manager

Subject Application no 19/01581/F - Chiswick House, 3
Christchurch Road, Norwich, NR2 2AD

4(b)

**Reason
for referral** Objections

Ward:	Eaton
Case officer	Maria Hammond - mariahammond@norwich.gov.uk

Development proposal		
Side extensions.		
Representations		
Object	Comment	Support
8	0	0

Main issues	Key considerations
1	Principle of extension
2	Design
3	Heritage
4	Trees
5	Transportation
6	Amenity
Expiry date	18 February 2020
Recommendation	Approve

The site and surroundings

1. The site is located to the south west side of Christchurch Road, close to the junction with Newmarket Road. The surrounding area is largely residential, with the High School grounds being located opposite the site. Properties vary in scale from large houses set within their own grounds to semi-detached houses and some apartment development.
2. The building is a large double fronted house that would have originally been a single dwellinghouse in spacious gardens. It is now in use as a care home and has previously been extended to the side and to the rear with single storey extensions. It is accessed by a sweeping driveway and screened from the road by protected trees and very mature hedges. A soft landscaped garden exists to the southeast side.
3. Three dwellings border the site on its northwest and southwest boundaries and further residential development extends off a private driveway along the southeast boundary. Norwich High School for Girls and neighbouring dwellings lie across Christchurch Road. The neighbouring dwellings vary in scale, form and age and many have developed as a result of sub-division of earlier, larger plots.

Constraints

4. The site is a locally listed building in the Unthank and Christchurch Conservation Area. There is a group of TPO trees to the road frontage and the area is a critical drainage catchment.

Relevant planning history

5.

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
4/2002/1067	Extension to provide 3 additional bedrooms.	APPR	22/11/2002
4/1999/0499	Single storey extension to provide two further bedrooms.	APPR	26/08/1999
08/00177/F	Extension and alteration to existing property to form new elderly care facilities.	REF	02/05/2008
08/00753/F	Extensions and alterations to rear of existing premises to form new elderly care facilities.	REF	29/08/2008
09/00954/A	Display of 1 No. non-illuminated freestanding single sided sign board.	APPR	14/01/2010
09/01452/F	Extension and alterations.	REF	24/02/2010

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
11/00698/F	Erection of extension and alterations.	REF	03/06/2011
12/00113/F	Erection of rear extension, infill extension and alterations to provide new bathroom/shower rooms, relocation of laundry and net gain of 4 additional bedrooms.	APPR	11/04/2012
12/01386/D	Details of Condition 4: Materials; Condition 5: Revised AIA and TPP; Condition 9: Mitigatory replacement tree planting and Condition 10: Water conservation measures of previous permission 12/00113/F 'Erection of rear extension, infill extension and alterations to provide new bathroom/shower rooms, relocation of laundry and net gain of 4 additional bedrooms.'	APPR	17/09/2012
13/01498/F	New side conservatory extension, addition to existing side conservatory and provision of solar panels to the rear roof slope of the rear extension permitted under 12/00113/F.	APPR	04/11/2013
13/01874/D	Details of Condition 4) materials to be used for the eaves, verges, windows, bricks, slates and mortar mix of previous planning permission 12/00113/F. 'Erection of rear extension, infill extension and alterations to provide new bathroom/shower rooms, relocation of laundry and net gain of 4 additional bedrooms'.	APPR	13/06/2014
14/00060/VC	Variation of condition 2 - approved plans and drawings of previous permission 12/00113/F 'Erection of rear extension, infill extension and alterations to provide new bathroom/shower rooms, relocation of laundry and net gain of 4 additional bedrooms.'	APPR	28/05/2014
14/01408/F	Insertion of dormer window to front elevation.	APPR	14/11/2014
19/00435/F	Insertion of dormer window to front elevation.	APPR	21/05/2019

The proposal

6. It is proposed to add two single storey side extensions to the care home. One would be along the northwest side of property and occupy much of this area. A smaller extension of approximately 13sqm is proposed on the opposite side elevation off an existing extension.
7. The larger extension on the southwest side would provide six bedrooms, however it would facilitate an internal reorganisation, so the net gain would in fact be four bedrooms and take the total number of residents to 30. The smaller extension would allow two existing bedrooms to have en suite bathrooms installed.
8. The extension to the southwest side would have a staggered arrangement with protruding bays. At the closest point it would be approximately 1.1 metres from the boundary with the neighbouring dwelling at 3a Christchurch Road. A new fence and landscaping is proposed along this boundary.

Summary information

Proposal	Key facts
Scale	
Total floorspace	165 sqm net additional (20sqm demolition)
No. of storeys	One
Max. dimensions	21.5 metres long, a maximum of 11 metres wide and 5 metres high and 6 metres by 2.2 metres and 4.4. metres high.
Appearance	
Materials	Brick and tile to match existing
Operation	
Ancillary plant and equipment	None specified
Transport matters	
Vehicular access	As existing
No of car parking spaces	At least 16
No of cycle parking spaces	Cycle shelter proposed
Servicing arrangements	As existing

Representations

9. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. 8 letters of representation have been received citing the issues as summarised in the table below. All representations are available to view in full at <http://planning.norwich.gov.uk/online-applications/> by entering the application number.

Issues raised	Response
Commercial activity in residential area	See main issues 1 and 6
Create a property out of proportion	See main issues 2 and 3
Increased traffic will add to road congestion	See main issue 5
Increase in noise for deliveries, general activity and traffic	See main issue 6
Building within 1 metre of boundary will have negative visual impact and together with noise and activity will detract from enjoyment of neighbouring property	See main issue 6
Creeping expansion over the years, further destruction of asset	See main issues 2 and 3
Christchurch Road is at maximum capacity	See main issue 6
Would create a business property out of all proportion with the surroundings, dwarfing the neighbouring residential properties	See main issues 2 and 3
Noise and traffic which would degrade the character of this peaceful residential road	See main issue 6
Unreasonable level of development in what is a residential conservation area. High-density building coverage is not in keeping with the requirements of the Unthank and Christchurch Conservation Area.	See main issues 2 and 3
Noise and light pollution has been very obvious giving reason to complain a number of times, specifically about a near-constant low hum, neon blue light and floodlight	See main issue 6
Extension proposed will produce a considerably heightened nuisance	See main issue 6
Apart from the car parking area and few remaining trees, most of the ground area will be covered in buildings after this expansion	See main issues 2 and 3

Issues raised	Response
Frequent (daily) large delivery and refuse collection vehicles have an impact on the health and welfare of local residents, mostly due to congestion, noise, air and light pollution	See main issue 6

Consultation responses

10. Consultation responses are summarised below the full responses are available to view at <http://planning.norwich.gov.uk/online-applications/> by entering the application number.

Tree protection officer

11. No objections, however, applicant should take into account, a). the requirement to replace the dead mulberry (T33 - condition 6 of 19/01385/TPO), and b). their obligation to replace the windblown beech (G1, TPO 76). Ensuring that there is adequate space for both replacement trees to thrive, and reach their full potential whilst having minimum impact on built structures.
12. The spot for the replacement beech looks ok. Regarding planting spec, I'd be looking at a heavy standard, 12-14cm girth, planted during Nov-Apr. The tree should be sourced from a domestic nursery that retains its trees for a minimum of one year within the UK before sale.

Assessment of planning considerations

Relevant development plan policies

13. **Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk adopted March 2011 amendments adopted Jan. 2014 (JCS)**
- JCS1 Addressing climate change and protecting environmental assets
 - JCS2 Promoting good design
 - JCS3 Energy and water
 - JCS7 Supporting communities
14. **Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan adopted Dec. 2014 (DM Plan)**
- DM1 Achieving and delivering sustainable development
 - DM2 Ensuring satisfactory living and working conditions
 - DM3 Delivering high quality design
 - DM5 Planning effectively for flood resilience
 - DM7 Trees and development
 - DM13 Communal development and multiple occupation
 - DM30 Access and highway safety
 - DM31 Car parking and servicing

Other material considerations

15. **Relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework February 2019 (NPPF):**
 - NPPF2 Achieving sustainable development
 - NPPF5 Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
 - NPPF9 Promoting sustainable transport
 - NPPF7 Achieving well-designed places
 - NPPF14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 - NPPF16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
16. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)
 - Trees, development and landscape SPD adopted June 2016

Case Assessment

17. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Relevant development plan policies are detailed above. Material considerations include policies in the National Planning Framework (NPPF), the Councils standing duties, other policy documents and guidance detailed above and any other matters referred to specifically in the assessment below. The following paragraphs provide an assessment of the main planning issues in this case against relevant policies and material considerations.

Main issue 1: Principle of development

18. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM13, DM9, NPPF sections 5 and 16
19. There is no objection to the extension of an existing care home in principle.
20. Objections have raised concern about having a large ‘commercial’ operation in a predominantly residential Conservation Area, however this is an established use that is not, in principle, out of character with or inappropriate for the area.

Main issue 2: Design and heritage

21. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS2, DM3, NPPF section 12
22. The original building here has been significantly extended in different phases and as noted in some of the representations, this is already a large property relative to some of the neighbouring dwellings. The proposed extensions would further increase the scale of the building and reduce the amount of open space around it.
23. The area along the southwest boundary which the larger extension would infill is largely operational space, cluttered with a collection of small outbuildings which would be removed as a result of the development. The space to be lost to the extension here does not therefore positively contribute to the setting of the building or retain the original more spacious garden setting of the house. The smaller extension on the southeast side would extend into an existing patio area.

24. The scale of the two proposed extensions would be subservient to both the original house and its current extended form. The larger southwest extension has been designed to match the rear extension approved in 2012. The hipped roofs of the both extensions and the plan form of the southwest extension with protruding bays satisfactorily breaks up their scale and mass.
25. As set out at section 4 above, some previous applications for extensions have been refused for reasons including the detrimental impact of cumulative extensions on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. A scheme refused in 2009 was not dissimilar in footprint to the cumulative scale of the existing development and the extensions proposed in this application.
26. Subsequent to these refusals, a substantial rear extension was permitted in 2012 (12/00113/F, as subsequently amended) as the detailed design of this particular proposal broke up the scale and mass and the bulk would be largely unseen from the public perspective.
27. The extensions now proposed will also be largely unseen from the public perspective due to their positions set back from the front of the original building and the dense tree screening along the road boundary. The detailed design proposed in this application matches that approved for the rear extension in 2012 and the amenity area to the southeast which provides the garden setting to the building would remain in its current form.
28. As the extensions would occupy existing developed areas, rather than the garden area, and have been designed to break up the appearance of the additional scale and mass, the scale and design are not considered unacceptable and would have a negligible impact on the locally listed building and wider Conservation Area. It is also noted the development facilitates the provision of additional care home bedrooms which is considered a public benefit weighing in favour of the development.

Main issue 3: Trees

29. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM7, NPPF paragraph 127
30. Protection measures are proposed to the group of TPO trees at the front of the site. As these will be retained, they will continue to screen the site from this public aspect.
31. A significant mature beech tree in the area of the southwest extension, which was protected by TPO, came down in a storm in 2018. In accordance with the TPO regulations, this tree should be replaced and the application proposes planting a new tree on the southeast side of the building. This is considered an appropriate position for a replacement tree within the constrained garden area and completion of the planting should be secured by condition.
32. Further individual trees in the garden area to the southeast are also protected by TPO. A mulberry tree within the lawn area has died and consent has been granted to remove it (19/01385/TPO), subject to a condition requiring it to be replaced. It is considered there is adequate space for this to be replaced in accordance with that consent without further impinging on the amenity space or existing and new trees.

Main issue 4: Transport

33. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS6, DM28, DM30, DM31, NPPF section 9
34. The application states there are at least 16 parking spaces on site. In accordance with parking standards, the site would require a total of six as a result of the proposed development. In reality, the existing car park has capacity for approximately 20 vehicles and at the time of a site visit three cars were parked in the area of the proposed southwest extension. The proposal would, therefore, reduce parking capacity from the existing level, but it would remain more than sufficient for the proposed development.
35. Six cycle spaces are also required for staff and visitors and a shelter close to the entrance is proposed. Details of the design can be agreed by condition to ensure this is appropriate to the site and Conservation Area.
36. The access arrangements for delivering and servicing would not change and there is an existing bin store with adequate capacity. It is not considered the four additional bedrooms would result in any significant additional movements to contribute to the traffic congestion reported in representations.

Main issue 5: Amenity

37. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM2, DM11, NPPF paragraphs 127 and 180 to 182.
38. Each proposed new and extended bedroom would have an en suite and at least one window. The two projecting bays on the southwest elevation would be close to the site boundary so have limited outlook and present privacy issues, so the proposal has been amended to provide obscure glazing to those windows and additional windows in the flank walls. A new closeboard fence is proposed along the inside of this boundary to supplement the existing low wall as vegetation along this boundary which provides screening between the two properties is outside the site and therefore beyond the applicant's control. One existing small bedroom with poor outlook would be replaced with a laundry.
39. Externally, the existing garden area to the southeast would need to accommodate the needs of the four additional occupants (and associated staff). This area, as the one remaining part of the original garden, is constrained in size and enclosed on two sides by mature planting. It is not insufficient to meet the needs of the additional residents, but it is considered unlikely that the site could accommodate any further extensions without becoming detrimental to the amenity of occupants of the site and neighbouring dwellings.
40. As noted above, the southwest extension would be in proximity with the boundary to the rear garden of the neighbouring dwelling. The distance from the dwelling itself and single storey form of the extension means there are not considered to be any significant adverse impacts from overbearing or overshadowing.
41. The proposal would increase occupation of the care home by four bedrooms which is not considered to be of such a scale to result in a significant intensification of use, activity or additional deliveries that would be unacceptably detrimental to the amenity of the local area.

42. The internal reorganisation would relocate the laundry and kitchen, two of the more intense activities, to more central positions within the building whereas they are both currently on the southwest elevation. It is noted that existing plant and lighting has given rise to complaints from neighbouring occupiers and this development provides an opportunity to address that by requiring any new or re-located plant and lighting to be agreed by condition.
43. It is acknowledged that the site is a large non-domestic operation that has a close relationship with neighbouring residential properties, however it is not considered the proposal would result in any unacceptable impacts on the amenity of their occupiers.

Compliance with other relevant development plan policies

44. A number of development plan policies include key targets for matters such as parking provision and energy efficiency. The table below indicates the outcome of the officer assessment in relation to these matters.

Requirement	Relevant policy	Compliance
Water efficiency	JCS 1 & 3	Yes subject to condition
Sustainable urban drainage	DM3/5	Yes subject to condition

Equalities and diversity issues

45. There are no significant equality or diversity issues.

Local finance considerations

46. Under Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the council is required when determining planning applications to have regard to any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application. Local finance considerations are defined as a government grant or the Community Infrastructure Levy.
47. Whether or not a local finance consideration is material to a particular decision will depend on whether it could help to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It would not be appropriate to make a decision on the potential for the development to raise money for a local authority.
48. In this case local finance considerations are not considered to be material to the case.

Conclusion

49. The application proposes two extensions to an existing care home. It is acknowledged that the form and setting of the original building has been significantly altered and the proposals would further contribute to this, however it is considered that they have been designed to respect the original building and are of a scale and siting that would have a negligible effect on the character and appearance of the locally listed building and surrounding Conservation Area.

50. The presence and use of the extensions in isolation and cumulatively with the existing care home are not considered to result in any unacceptable impacts on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers or contribute to any existing congestion. It is considered the development would provide an acceptable standard of amenity for occupants.
51. Approval of the application can secure replacement of a TPO beech tree and the provision of appropriate cycle parking for staff and visitors.
52. The development is in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Development Plan, and it has been concluded that there are no material considerations that indicate it should be determined otherwise.

Recommendation

To approve application no. 19/01581/F - Chiswick House 3 Christchurch Road Norwich NR2 2AD and grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit;
2. In accordance with plans;
3. Materials to match
4. Replacement tree planting
5. Landscape scheme along southwest boundary
6. Cycle storage to be agreed
7. Lighting to be agreed
8. Plant to be agreed
9. Surface water drainage to be agreed
10. Water efficiency

Article 31(1)(cc) statement

The local planning authority in making its decision has had due regard to paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework as well as the development plan, national planning policy and other material considerations, following negotiations with the applicant and subsequent amendments to openings and additional information concerning trees and amenity the application has been approved subject to appropriate conditions and for the reasons outlined in the officer report.