

Report for Resolution

Report to Planning Applications Committee
Date 8 April 2010
Report of Head of Planning Services
Subject 10/00169/F Land And Buildings On The South East Side
Of Woodhill Rise Norwich

Item
5(2)

SUMMARY

Description:	Erection of 4 No. new affordable dwellings with associated car parking and landscaping (revised proposal).
Reason for consideration at Committee:	Objection
Recommendation:	Approve
Ward:	Wensum
Contact Officer:	Mr Lee Cook Senior Planner 01603 212536
Valid date:	17th February 2010
Applicant:	Broadland Housing
Agent:	Chaplin Farrant Limited

INTRODUCTION

The Site

Location and Context

1. The site lies to the western edge of Norwich within an established residential area. The area contains a mix of house types with flats to the north, south and east and detached bungalows and detached/terraced houses to the north and west moving from Norwich into Broadland. Opposite to the south-east is the rear of a parade of shops and a green open space. The south east roadway runs past the site down into a turning head closer to the adjacent flats.

Constraints

2. The site slopes to the north-west and is surrounded by several attractive trees and green spaces. Land to the south-west is designated as publicly accessible recreational open space.

Planning History

3. The car park has existed for a number of years and was probably formed as part of the original development for flats in this area. Discussions have taken place with the applicant concerning the potential of this and nearby sites for redevelopment. Application **09/00843/F** for the erection of 4 No. new affordable dwellings with associated car parking and landscaping was refused on 12/11/2009 due to concerns about the layout of the site

and resultant amenity spaces, impact on trees and also the overprovision of car parking spaces contrary to policy.

The Proposal

4. Revised proposal for the erection of 4 No. new affordable dwellings with associated car parking and landscaping. Two of the dwellings have been moved away from Oval Avenue and garden spaces increased. The parking area has also been rationalised as previously discussed with the applicant and buildings and services moved away from existing trees on site.

Representations Received

5. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. 5 letters of representation have been received citing the issues as summarised in the table below. Also received a petition signed by 63 persons (1 for and 62 against development).

6.

Issues Raised	Response
Loss of trees/"green lung area"	Paras 30, 31, 32
Would be better to plant more trees or green space than build houses	Paras 12, 30, 31, 32
Agree with brownfield development not green	Para 12
Concern on loss of car park and insufficient parking for local residents and community use	Paras 11 and 23,
Results in more on street parking causing hazards and obstructions	Paras 23 and 24
Car park survey is incorrect	Para 11
Design of the houses is incongruous	Paras 17, 18, 19 and 20
Loss of light and privacy	Para 14
Likely to cause anti-social behaviour by youths, more noise and litter	Paras 15 and 16
City already has underused and boarded up properties, better to modernise than build more housing	Paras 10 and 12
What happens to drainage?	Paras 27 and 28
Concern on time given to comment	The time given is in accordance with Council protocol on consultations
Scheme will reduce property values	This is not a planning consideration

7. Cllr Ruth Mackoff has also made the following Queries and comments:

I would like to ask the following questions of this application given some concerns raised by residents, which I hope will be taken into consideration by planning officers and/or the planning committee.

Overshadowing

I know that some residents on Oval Avenue are concerned about overshadowing. Although this application states that the design has been altered so as to minimise overlooking of the

houses on Oval Avenue, it is unclear from the application how much will remain. There are no drawings, for example, of the elevation of the proposed buildings in comparison to the existing properties on Oval Avenue. I believe this information would be useful to provide a better picture of how far these properties would be impacted.

Drainage and sewage problems

There has also been some concern in the area about drainage and sewage problems with the existing sewage system, and concerns that it may be full to capacity. If this application were to be granted, I seek assurances that: 1. this development would not add to any such existing problems and additional capacity would be added, and 2. existing problems will be investigated.

Tree cover/protection

Firstly, the tree survey (p9, section 3.2) suggests that silver birches T10 and 11 "might be considered for removal". Is this the case, or will the developers seek to retain them and take on board the concerns from residents in Oval Avenue? Secondly, although the Design Access Statement says that it is "*envisaged* that the existing trees surrounding the site will be retained and protected during the construction period" (emphasis added), I suggest that a stronger commitment is needed on this. The existing tree cover is extremely valuable in the area, and it is unclear whether the recommendations in the tree survey (in 3.4 and 3.5) to protect the trees are accepted by the developer. This is concerning given the possibility highlighted in both this and the pre-assessment survey for the Code for sustainable homes of the potential damage to trees in the area by construction. If possible, therefore, I would ask for conditions to be placed on the application which require these recommendations to be adopted, and that at a minimum all reasonable steps are taken to retain and protect existing tree cover and that any which are damaged are replaced. Ideally, I would hope that tree cover would be improved.

Ecological value of area

The ecological pre-assessment survey for the code for sustainable homes outlines key recommendations in 5.2.4-5.2.6 and in 6.2., which would improve the ecological value of the area. Will these be adopted by the developer?

Consultation Responses

8. Transportation: Has reviewed the scheme through informal/formal stages and has no further comments to make.
9. Tree Officer: noted that the arboricultural information supplied does not constitute a full AIA and is insufficient (conditions suggested). An AMS will be required that provides for:-
 - specialist arboricultural input in relation to the breaking and lifting of existing hard standing within RPAs and also
 - a specification and methodology for the laying of the proposed new hard standing or topsoil and grass, as appropriate. Any specification for new hard standing should specify the use of washed sand as opposed to builders sand; I would further suggest that a condition be attached that also requires that copies of the bills of quantity for the materials are sent to the council.
 - In addition there should be a TPP and AMS that details the tree protection arrangements mentioned at 3.5 and also that provides for an auditable system of arboricultural supervision throughout both the demolition [existing hard standing] and build phases. Note that one existing tree is within the site and comments assume that all others adjacent to the boundary will remain under council ownership.
10. Strategic Housing: There are currently hundreds of empty homes across the city and work is being done to ensure that where possible, action is taken and homes are opened up for

use. Due to the amount of empty properties in the city, work must be prioritised and those which cause severe detrimental impact on the local neighbourhood are addressed first. We would encourage people to notify us when they become aware of empty properties and we will look into each case where officer resources allow.

11. A total of 9 parking surveys have been carried out at this location, the results of which are in two parking surveys and one separate report. A survey has been carried out every week day and at a weekend and at different times. The results show an underuse of facility and capability for redevelopment.

ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Planning Policies

Relevant National Planning Policies

PPS1	Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS1 Supplement	Planning and Climate Change
PPS3	Housing
PPG13	Transport

Relevant Strategic Regional Planning Policies

East of England Plan 2008

ENG1	Carbon dioxide emissions and energy performance
ENV7	Quality in the built environment
T4	Urban transport
T14	Parking
H2	Affordable Housing.
WM6	Waste Management in Development

Relevant Local Plan Policies

City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004

EP16:	Water conservation and sustainable drainage systems
EP18:	High standard of energy efficiency for new development
EP20:	Sustainable use of materials
EP22:	High standard of amenity for residential occupiers
HBE12:	Design
HBE19	Design for safety and security including minimising crime
HOU13:	Proposals for new housing development on other sites
NE9:	Comprehensive landscaping scheme and tree planting
TRA5:	Approach to design for vehicle movement and special needs
TRA6:	Parking standards – maxima
TRA7:	Cycle parking standards
TRA8:	servicing standards

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

Trees and Development SPD – September 2007

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy SPD adopted – December 2006

Accessible and Special Needs Housing SPD – June 2006

Principle of Development

Policy Considerations

12. The proposals will provide 4 five person three bed houses within an area currently used as a car park. The re-use of land is encouraged under policy and the scheme provides 4 houses at approximately 47 dwellings to the hectare. The scheme is laid out to respect amenity and landscape features in the area and has adequate garden space and provision

for parking and servicing. As such the scheme accords with local and national policies for development and re-use of land. The scheme is for a social housing provider which will assist in adding to the stock of affordable housing in this area.

13. As part of the initial work for the site the land owner has undertaken several surveys to show the demand for the car park and the conclusion reached that the site is underused and therefore suitable for redevelopment.

Impact on Living Conditions

Overshadowing, Overlooking, Loss of Privacy and Disturbance

14. Local residents have raised various concerns related to layout and impact on amenity. These issues have been part of ongoing discussions with the agent to overcome concerns on layout and amenity. The scheme now provides a more linear arrangement of buildings reasonably central to the site and facing the south-east boundary and consideration of the relationship of the proposed buildings to the surrounding area. The buildings are cut into the existing site slope to additionally reduce the height of the buildings. This layout maximises the distances between the distances between new and existing buildings and does not as a result create overshadowing or overlooking.
15. Comments have been made about the potential disturbance from youths and presumably persons living at these new homes. In this regard it would be inappropriate to prejudge the behaviour of future tenants
16. The scheme provides a reasonable standard of living and garden spaces which would provide an attractive living environment and which would integrate well with the character of the area.

Design

Site Layout and Building Design

17. The proposed layout has been revised following negotiations and shows the main block fronting onto the south-east roadway linking through to the flats to the south. This is designed to take the emphasis of access away from Oval Avenue. The terrace is sited to increase the depth of gardens; to increase privacy; and make a clearer distinction between the public and the private gardens/green areas. The entrance to the houses is retained on this frontage and in doing so relates well to the street and maintains a “live” frontage along the footpath. Other parts of the site will be screened by green fencing at the back of existing planted areas.
18. There is no one distinct building style in the area or form of building which expresses interesting architectural features which should be followed in any design. The site also does not fall within any protected conservation area. The agent therefore has relatively wide opportunity in terms of design and has produced a scheme which is appropriate in scale and form. The contemporary scheme should add interest to the townscape of the area which at present is relatively dull.
19. The design is simple in form using simple pitched hipped roofs and a limited but complementary palette of building materials to the walls, joinery and details. The buildings will be two-storeys in height and would relate well to the townscape in the area. The buildings have a domestic scale and form and in design have been well thought out and would enhance the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area
20. Amenity space is provided at the rear of the site and the building footprint has been designed to give the block a good setting and space within the street scene. The development also seeks to retain some of the mature trees and hedging on the site which will be enhanced by additional landscaping.
21. The proposed scheme provides five parking spaces, cycle and bin storage accessed via the adopted roadway to the south of the site. Heights and roof levels have been designed to take into account the rising nature of the site and the proposed development would not

- have any significant impact on the amenities of adjacent properties
22. The scheme also aims to meet Housing Association quality indices and goals in guidance from secure by design, lifetime homes and building for life.

Transport and Access

Vehicular Access and Servicing

23. One of the issues which arises from the application is the resolution of a satisfactory layout and form of access and parking which adequately serves both the existing and proposed residential units without causing highway safety or parking issues. The scheme re-uses the site access and limits parking to one part of the site. Alternative access and parking along Oval Avenue is discouraged by the use of fencing and retention of landscaping and provides a satisfactory solution. On street parking can still take place within the area without detriment to safety or access.

Car Parking, Servicing and Cycling Parking

24. Levels of parking are in line with the maximum suggested in Appendix 4 of the Adopted Local Plan and as such this level of provision accords with policy and advice on encouraging sustainable modes of transport and car usage.
25. The bin store is designed to accommodate the bin requirement for the site and following discussion has been moved further away from retained trees on site. The store is within easy access of the adopted highway and as such makes an adequate provision.
26. Adequate cycle storage has also been built into the scheme with access around rather than through buildings. These aspects of the development enhance the design and operation of the scheme and long term amenity value for the residents.

Environmental Issues

Drainage

27. Issues have been raised by local residents about the capacity of existing drainage systems in the area. The scale of development is not such that formal consultation with Anglian Water or the Environment Agency would be required. Drainage of the site and adjacent capacity would therefore primarily be a matter for the applicant to agree with AWA and through the Building Regulations.
28. The scheme does however have regard to surface water drainage issues and creates garden spaces where currently there is a car park surface and incorporates the use of permeable paving to the newly created parking bays to assist with surface water disposal.

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

29. The scheme falls below the policy requirement for renewable energy technologies being built into the scheme but does propose good building standards and provision of PV's to the roofs of the buildings.

Trees and Landscaping

Loss of or Impact on Trees

30. The scheme is designed to take account of and seeks to retain existing trees. The development sits within the green edges of the site thereby retaining the significant amenity and ecological value of the landscaping around the site. The arboricultural report (prepared in 2006) identifies the individual value of trees and whilst all are shown to be retained there may be scope to agree the removal of some species (such as the silver birch which are in poor condition) and to agree further planting. It will be important however to ensure trees are retained and conditions are suggested to protect trees during construction.

Replacement Planting

31. The area around the site as well as parts of the site itself provides opportunities for additional planting and landscaping. This area would fall within the control of the Council

as land owner. As mentioned above a small number of existing trees are in poor condition and possibly would be affected by service links into the site for drains etc. Conditions are therefore suggested requiring the retention and protection of important trees and landscaping and the replacement of trees and landscaping in accordance with a scheme to be agreed. In terms of tree replacement Council policy would seek a replacement of two for one for any removed.

Biodiversity

32. Commentary has been provided with the application which assesses biodiversity issues. Whilst limited action can be taken to control the timing of development it is suggested that it would be appropriate to take up the suggestions in the report and to impose conditions request an enhancement of some nesting and planting conditions on and around the site.

Conclusions

33. The proposed scheme provides an arrangement of 4 houses with associated parking and servicing. The buildings respond to the constraints and topography of the site, retains existing trees and would lead to an attractive development in accordance with local and national policy.
34. The development of 4 affordable dwellings would contribute to the promotion of affordable housing in Norwich. The proposed development achieves a high standard of design and would be well integrated with the surrounding area.

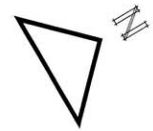
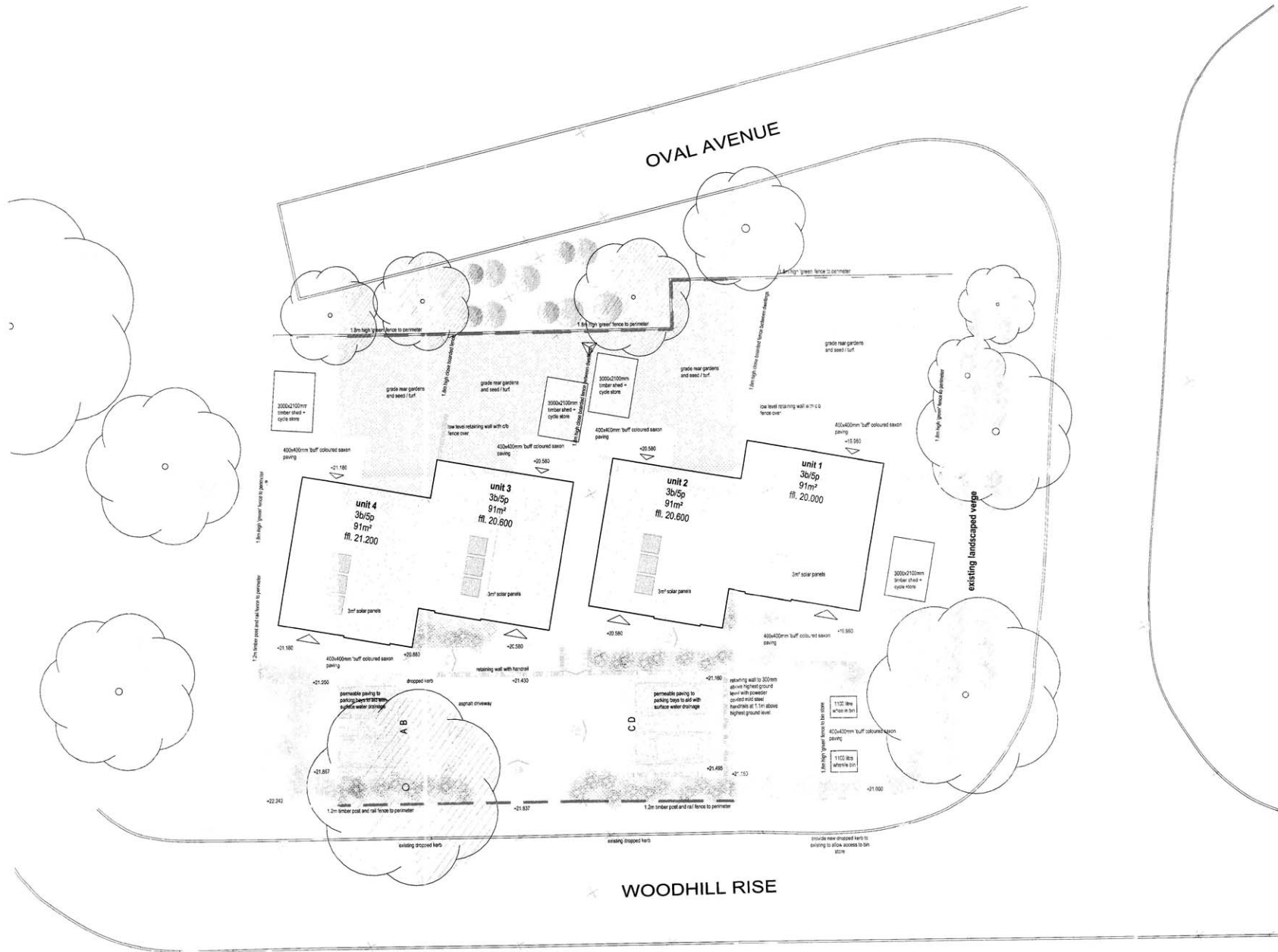
RECOMMENDATIONS

To approve Application No 10/00169/F and grant planning permission, subject to the following conditions:-

1. Commencement of development within three years
2. Details of Facing and Roofing Materials
3. Details of external lighting
4. Provision of car parking, cycle storage, bin stores
5. Provision of Boundary treatment, walls and fences
6. Details of trees and planting to be retained
7. Tree Protection Scheme prior to commencement
8. Retention of tree protection
9. Details of Landscaping, planting and site treatment works
10. Landscape maintenance
11. Details of biodiversity enhancements

Reasons for approval:

The development of 4 affordable dwellings would contribute to the promotion of affordable housing in Norwich. The proposed development, subject to conditions, would be well integrated with the surrounding development in form and layout and would make good use of this under-used site. The scheme is laid out to retain existing trees around the site and also allows potential for further landscape and biodiversity enhancement to improve the amenity of the area. The decision has been taken having regard to policies HOU13, HBE12, HBE19, EP22, NE9, TRA5, TRA6, TRA7 and TRA8 of the City of Norwich Local Plan (Adopted Version 2004) and to all material planning considerations.



REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED BY
B	18.03.18	Timber projections to front elevations & paving to rear of units reduced following comments from client. No view indicated.	krb	
A	13.01.10	Parking reduced, rear gardens increased where possible.	krb	
Revisions				
CP				

planning

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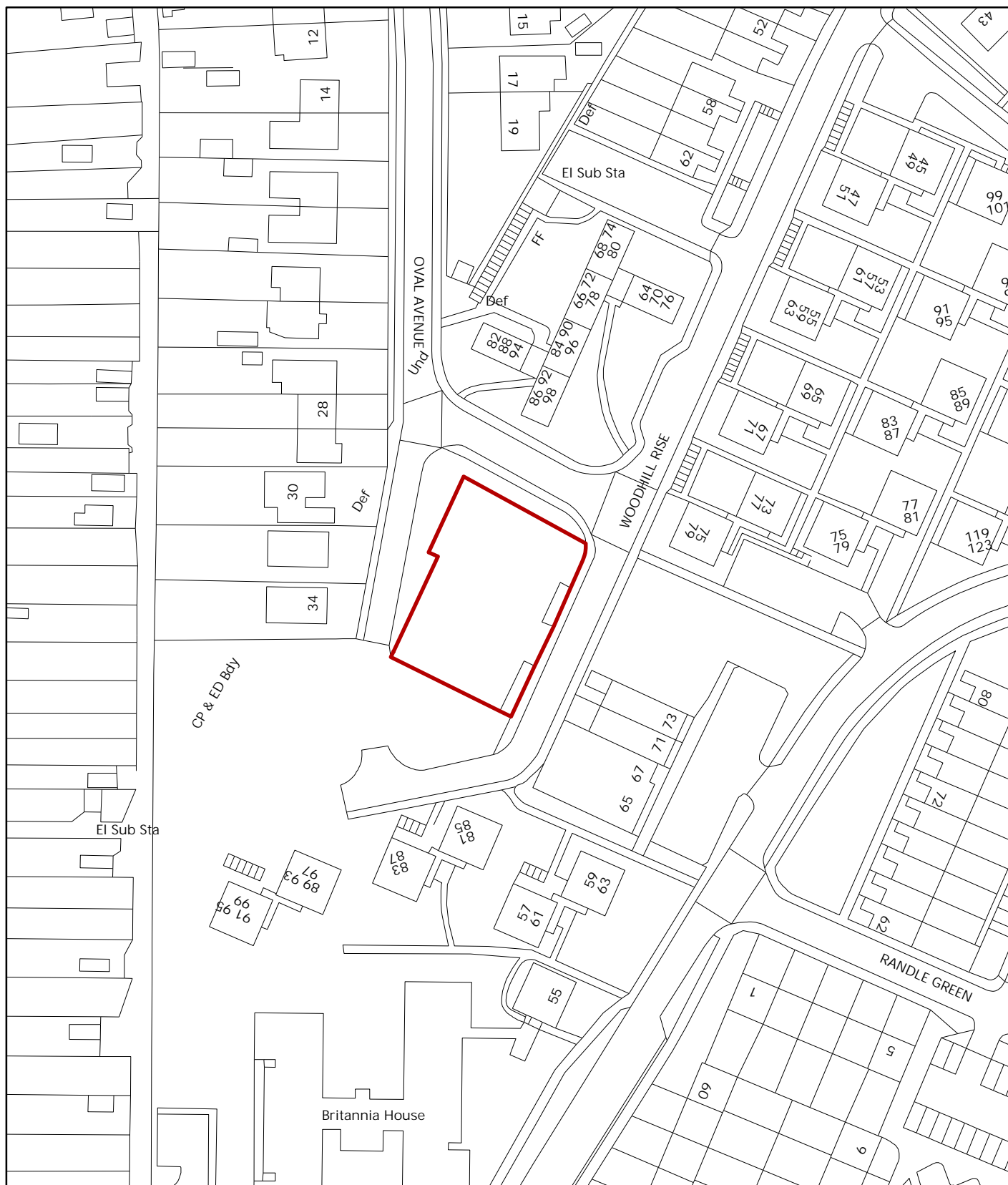
Proposed site plan

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Planning Application No - 10/00169/F
 Site Address - Land and buildings on the South East side of Woodhill Rise
 Scale - 1:1,000



NORWICH
 City Council

PLANNING SERVICES

