

Report to Planning applications committee
13 October 2016

Report of Head of planning services

Subject 16/01106/F - Land Used For Car Parking Adjacent To 69 Armes Street Norwich

Reason for referral Objections and application affecting City Council land.

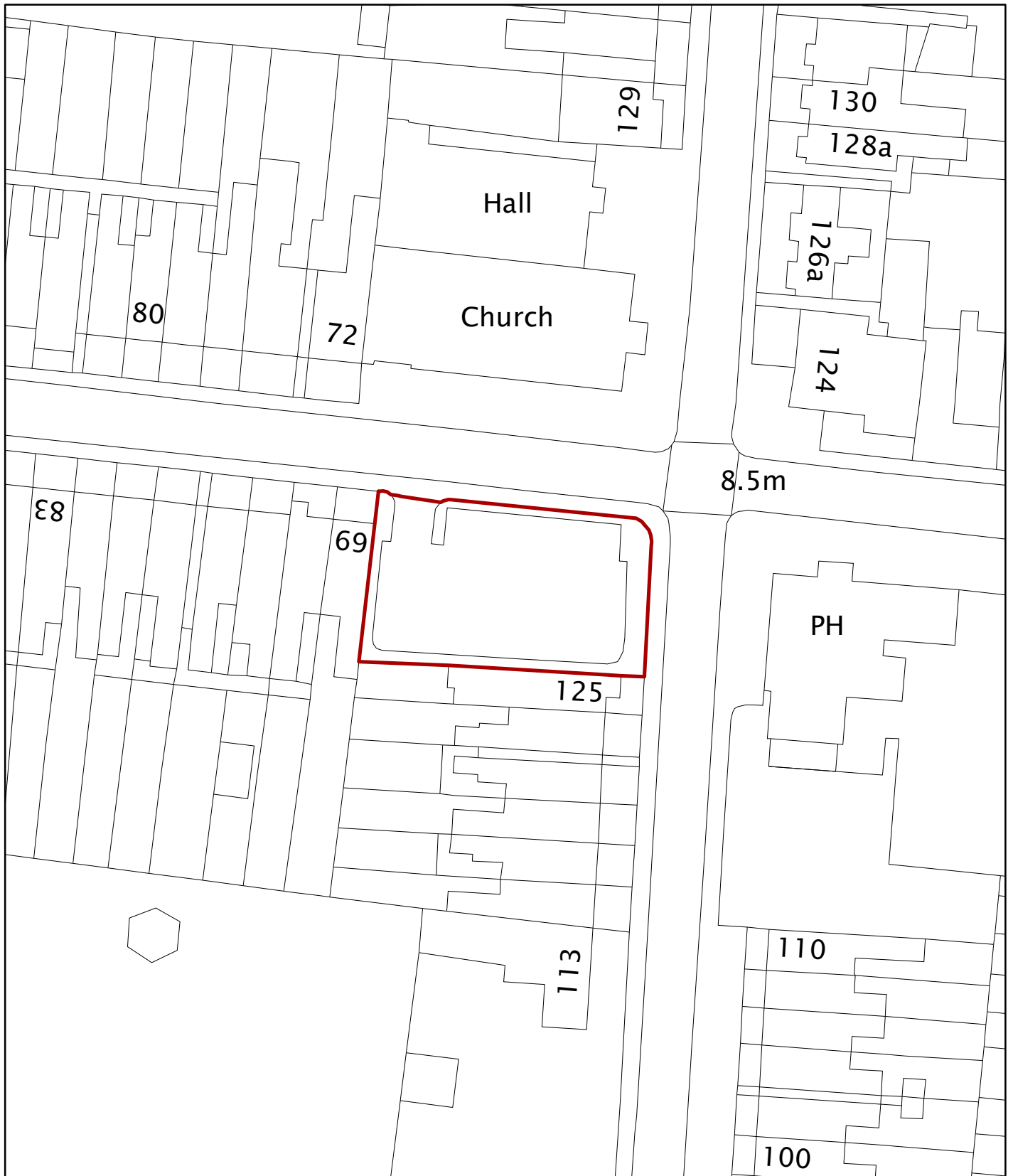
Item

4(f)

Ward:	Wensum
Case officer	Robert Webb - robertwebb@norwich.gov.uk

Development proposal		
Erection of 4 No. one bed flats with associated parking.		
Representations		
Object	Comment	Support
25+petition signed by 23	0	0

Main issues	Key considerations
1 Principle of development	Principle of redevelopment for housing
2 Design/ Heritage	Impact on character of the area, impact on the locally listed heritage asset, scale, form, massing and appearance.
3 Transport	Accessibility of site, impact on car parking, traffic, highway safety, cycle parking, servicing.
4 Amenity	Impact on neighbouring occupiers, loss of parking
Expiry date	20 October 2016
Recommendation	Approval subject to conditions.



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Planning Application No 16/01106/F

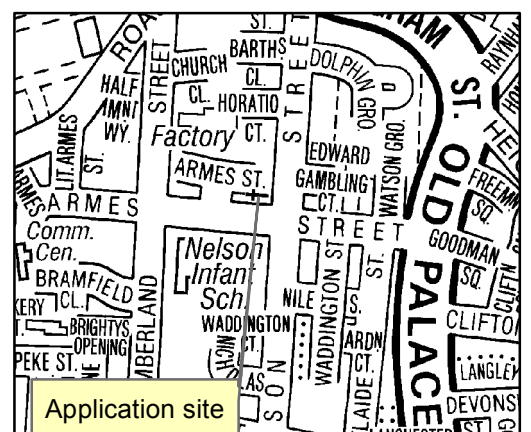
Site Address Car Park adjacent to 69 Armes Street

Scale 1:500



NORWICH
City Council

PLANNING SERVICES



The site and surroundings

1. The site is currently a surface car park within a residential area. To the north is The Vineyard Community Centre (a locally listed building), to the east is the Nelson Public House, to the south and west there are terraced houses. The existing car park provides spaces for 15 cars and is owned and managed by Norwich City Council.

Constraints

2. There are mature trees at the front of the site either side of the vehicular access.

Relevant planning history

3. There is no relevant planning history held by the City Council.

The proposal

4. The proposal is one of a number of sites identified by Norwich City Council as having the potential to accommodate new affordable housing to be developed by a registered provider, Orwell Housing Association. The Council are seeking overall to deliver 66 affordable units across the city as part of the current programme, and these would be designed to meet Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) design and quality standards. The dwellings would be available at social or affordable rent whilst meeting high environmental standards. All homes would be advertised using the City Council's choice based letting scheme.
5. The proposal is to develop the site to provide 4 no. new affordable 2 bedroom flats within a two storey building with private amenity space for the ground floor flats, a parking space for each property, a cycle store and a bin store. Solar panels would be placed on the south and west facing roof. It should be noted that the proposals have been revised in order to provide an improved design which better addresses the corner location, as well as providing improved amenity for future occupiers and less prominent car parking and refuse storage areas.

Summary information

Proposal	Key facts
Scale	
Total no. of dwellings	4
No. of affordable dwellings	4
Total floorspace	186.45 square metres (46 sq m per dwelling)
No. of storeys	2
Density	103 dwellings per hectare

Appearance	
Materials	Walls – red stock brickwork. Roof – red/orange concrete pantiles. Windows – white Upvc double glazed units. Doors – GPR/timber front entrance doors.
Energy and resource efficiency measures	Solar pv panels, low energy lighting, gas condensing combination boiler with flue gas heat recovery system.
Transport matters	
Vehicular access	From Armes Street
No of car parking spaces	4 (1 per property)
No of cycle parking spaces	4
Servicing arrangements	Bin store provided

Representations

6. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. 21 letters of representation have been received citing the issues as summarised in the table below and a petition signed by 23 people has also been received. All representations are available to view in full at <http://planning.norwich.gov.uk/online-applications/> by entering the application number.

Issues raised	Response
Loss of existing parking spaces for residents and users of the Vineyard Centre, concerns about increased parking pressure on the area, particularly during school drop-off and pick up times.	Key issue 4.
Impact on highway safety as a result of increased parking pressure.	Key issue 3.
Concerns about inadequate number of parking spaces for the new properties.	Key issue 2.
Concern about the cumulative impact of this application and the other proposals in Armes Street and Northumberland Street.	Key issue 4.

Consultation responses

7. 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.

Ward Member – Councillor Sandra Bogelein

8. On behalf of residents of Northumberland Street, Armes Street and Nelson Street I would like to raise a number of concerns with regards to the applications on Northumberland Street and Armes Street.
9. First of all I would like to raise concerns with the fact that these developments will have to be appraised independently. The problems that will arise from the developments of car parking sites are clearly amplified if all three developments are approved, which are in very close proximity to each other. I would urge members to consider this cumulative negative impact in their decision making.
10. Residents' main concern is the loss of a well-used car parking site. Residents have been advised by the council that it is expected that the cars will be "absorbed" in the local area. This will pose a problem for residents especially during school drop off and pick up times. Residents feel it is very short sighted to develop on car parking space when in a lot of other areas on street and on pavement parking places a huge problem for residents, waste collection and emergency vehicles. This creates just another problem area. Please also note that the council has recently received an application to develop the land on 120-130 Northumberland Street, which will add over 30 additional dwellings to the area. Residents are worried that this development and the loss of the car parking space will create immense parking problems in the area.
11. As a ward councillor I am particularly worried about access issues for people with disabilities and prams that rely on a free pavement. At the moment Armes Street and Northumberland Street offer accessible ways to the city and bus stops mainly because of the additional parking. Alternative streets such as Nelson Street and West End Street are often inaccessible due to on pavement parking. I am very worried that taking away car parking spaces will reduce accessibility.
12. Please also note that in 2012 residents were consulted regarding the question whether these sites should be developed and there were very strong objections from residents which is why these sites were not brought forward at the time.

NCC Environmental Protection

13. I have viewed the desk study provided for this application and agree with the recommendation that further intrusive works are required. If approval is given, I suggest that conditions are applied.
14. The UXO risk may require careful consideration by a specialist due to this information, and also the proximity of other known WWII bomb drops.

Highways (local)

15. No objection on highway/transportation grounds. The development and site layout is acceptable, parking, refuse and cycle storage are acceptable.
16. With regard to the cumulative impact of developments in this area, it is worth noting that the redevelopment of council land for housing is a corporate priority. Residents do not have rights to park on this land, and may of course park on the highway. This part of the city centre is not subject to Controlled Parking Zone restrictions, parking is unrestricted and available to all on a first come first served basis.
17. In the future we could consider a CPZ and this would help to reduce commuter parking pressure, and to a more limited extent manage parking pressures from residents themselves, but there is no timescale for such work at present, and would need popular support to do so. It is important to remember that residents may need to find parking space on roads across the wider neighbourhood, not just outside or near to their homes.
18. For these reasons, I am content that the redevelopment of these car parking areas for homes is justified in policy terms.

NCC Housing

19. With regards to the impact of the loss of the car park on the surrounding area, car park surveys have been carried out on this site and the surrounding roads to assess usage. On average, the car park is 71% occupied, but there has been sufficient space on surrounding roads to accommodate the number of cars using it (also taking account of the development proposed on the site adjacent to no. 99 Armes Street). On 30/09/16 there were 12 garages available to rent within 400metres of the site.

Assessment of planning considerations

Relevant development plan policies

20. **Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk adopted March 2011 amendments adopted Jan. 2014 (JCS)**
 - JCS2 Promoting good design
 - JCS3 Energy and water
 - JCS4 Housing delivery
 - JCS7 Supporting communities
 - JCS9 Strategy for growth in the Norwich policy area
21. **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
 - DM4 Providing for renewable and low carbon energy
 - DM5 Planning effectively for flood resilience
 - DM11 Protecting against environmental hazards
 - DM12 Ensuring well-planned housing development
 - DM28 Encouraging sustainable travel

- DM30 Access and highway safety
- DM31 Car parking and servicing

Other material considerations

22. Relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 (NPPF):

- NPPF4 Promoting sustainable transport
- NPPF6 Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- NPPF7 Requiring good design
- NPPF10 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- NPPF11 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Case Assessment

23. 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 sections provide an assessment of the main planning issues in this case in relation to the relevant policies and material considerations.

Main issue 1: Principle of development

24. Joint Core Strategy (JCS) Policy 4, supports housing delivery within the plan area, which this site falls. National policy, as set out in the Core Principles of the NPPF encourages new housing development to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable. JCS policy 4 also encourages provision of affordable housing including of social rent and affordable rent tenure types as these are recognised and being particularly important in meeting housing need in the city.
25. Policy DM12 of the Norwich Development Management Policies Plan supports new residential development within the city boundary except in specific circumstances, none of which exceptions apply to this application site.
26. The NPPF encourages 'the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed'. The site constitutes previously developed land and is in a sustainable location for new housing with good links to the City Centre. The proposed housing is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle and in this case would have the planning benefits of providing new affordable housing, subject to assessment against any other relevant policies or material considerations as outlined in the NPPF and the Development Plan. This is further set out below.

Main issue 2: Design

27. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS2, DM3, NPPF paragraphs 9, 17, 56 and 60-66.

28. The site is located in an area which is characterised by two storey residential development, but occupies a prominent position due to its corner location. The design has been revised following feedback from officers who considered that the scheme should better address the corner location of the site.
29. The revised plans show a development of a similar scale to the adjacent terraced properties, and would provide an active frontage to both Armes Street and Nelson Street. This is important given the corner nature of the site and the design and the design and scale is acceptable and in keeping with the character of the area.
30. The units would each have an internal floor area of 46 square metres and are intended as 1 bedroom 2 person houses. The floorspace is therefore below the national space standards figure of 51.5 square metres for this type of property. It is recognised however that if the dwellings were occupied by 1 person, then the minimum space standard of 40m² would be met. Notwithstanding this, whilst the failure to meet the minimum space standards based on two person occupancy is regrettable, it is not considered in itself to be a reason to warrant refusal of the application, given that the proposal is otherwise well-designed and would lead to the delivery of affordable housing in a sustainable location.
31. The ground floor units would have some private amenity space outside the front of their properties. It is not feasible to provide all of the units with private amenity space. No material harm would be caused by overlooking or overshadowing to neighbouring properties.

Main issue 3: Transport

32. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM2, DM11, NPPF chapter 4.
33. The site is located in an accessible location within walking distance of Dereham Road and Heigham Street which has bus links into the city centre. The proposal would provide 1 parking space per property which is in accordance with the Council's parking standards. Secure cycle parking would be provided for each property. No objection is raised by the Highway Officer with regard to highway safety. The proposal therefore complies with the above policies. The issue of the loss of the existing car park is dealt with in the following section.

Main issue 4: Amenity

34. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM2, DM11, NPPF paragraphs 9 and 17.
35. The main issue is the loss of the car park which is owned and managed by Norwich City Council and provides 15 parking spaces available for use by residents and visitors. A number of objections have been received to this aspect of the proposal, with concerns about increased parking pressure on local roads and the potential knock-on effects of this pressure. Concern has also been raised at the cumulative impact of the further proposals to develop another car park on Armes Street (application ref. 16/01109/F) and a car park on Northumberland Street (application ref. 16/01122/F).
36. Surveys conducted by the City Council in May and July this year indicate that the car park is well used at all times of the day and night. Information and photographs

have been provided by local residents which also indicate this to be the case. The fact that the car park is often busy or full is not disputed.

37. The Highway Officer has stated that parking is not restricted on the surrounding road network, and therefore parking is available on a first-come, first-served basis. It is acknowledged that some inconvenience may occur in that residents may have to park further afield from their property.
38. It is acknowledged that some harm would be caused to residential amenity by the loss of the existing spaces, both as result of this proposal and cumulatively with the other proposals nearby on Armes Street and Northumberland Street. However this must be weighed against the significant benefits of delivering affordable housing in a sustainable location within the city.
39. This will be a matter for Members to judge, but the advice from Officers is that in planning policy terms addressing housing need is considered to be of greater importance than providing off-road parking spaces, particularly in a location which has good links to public transport and the city centre and where there is the opportunity to use other modes of transport such as buses and cycles to travel. It is therefore recommended that the application should not be refused on the grounds of loss of parking.
40. The proposal would not cause material harm in terms of overshadowing or loss of privacy to the adjacent properties.

Other Matters

41. The proposal is acceptable in terms of its impact on flood risk, biodiversity, land contamination and the energy efficiency measures proposed.

Equalities and diversity issues

42. There are no significant equality or diversity issues.

Local finance considerations

43. 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.
44. 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.
45. In this case local finance considerations are not considered to be material to the case.

Conclusion

46. The proposal for the development of the car park adjacent to no. 69 Armes Street would provide four new affordable homes in a sustainable location and is considered to be acceptable in planning terms. There would be some harm caused in terms of

the loss of the existing car park, and clearly this is a very contentious matter for existing residents. Regard has been had to the cumulative impact of this development and other proposals in close proximity in Armes Street and Northumberland Street, currently under consideration by the Local Planning Authority. However these impacts must be balanced against the benefits of the proposal in terms of providing much needed affordable housing and this benefit is considered to outweigh the loss of the site for parking.

47. The development is in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies of the Development Plan, and there are no material considerations that indicate it should be determined otherwise.

Recommendation

To approve application 16/01109/F and grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit;
2. In accordance with plans;
3. Details of facing and roofing materials; windows; joinery; boundary treatments, walls and fences; external lighting;
4. Details of hard and soft landscaping and planting
5. Water efficiency
6. Contamination risk assessment and report to be submitted
7. Unknown contamination to be addressed
8. Control on imported materials

The local planning authority in making its decision has had due regard to paragraph 187 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 the application has been approved subject to appropriate conditions and for the reasons outlined in the officer report.

