

Planning Applications Committee
11th June 2009
Section B

Agenda Number:	B3
Section/Area:	Inner
Ward:	Mancroft
Officer:	Mark Brown
Valid Date:	01 May 2009
Application Number:	09/00296/F
Site Address:	70 - 72 Sussex Street Norwich NR3 3DE
Proposal:	Demolition of industrial units at the site of 70 - 72 Sussex Street and replace with a largely residential development of 9 town houses, 3 apartments and 5 duplex apartments, with 238 sqm commercial space at the junction of Sussex Street and Oak Street.
Applicant:	Mr Andy Leferve
Agent:	CSA Design Studio

THE SITE

The site is located on the corners of Oak Street, Sussex Street and Chatham Street within the Northern City Centre. The site is within the northern riverside character area of the City Centre Conservation Area. This particular part of the Conservation Area is characterised by a number of light industrial units along Oak Street surrounded primarily by residential uses to the north and east. The existing light industrial units on the site are identified as negative within the City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal. The listed C15 Great Hall is located directly opposite the site on Oak Street.

PLANNING HISTORY

08/01086/F - Demolition of existing industrial unit and redevelopment of site to provide 2x5-bed town houses, 2x4-bed town houses, 3x3-bed town houses 10x2-bed apartments, 2x1-bed apartments and 2 No. A2/A3 units. This application was recommended for refusal at the Planning Committee meeting of 11 December 2008 primarily due to the design and scale of the proposals.

Members resolved the application in line with the officer recommendation and the application was subsequently refused.

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is to demolish the existing industrial units on the site and construct a total of 17 residential units and a 238sqm A2 (financial and professional services) or A3 (restaurants & cafés) unit at ground floor level on Oak Street.

The Chatham Street elevation consists of three 2½ storey townhouses. Four 3½ storey townhouses are proposed to the eastern end of Sussex Street and 5 duplex apartments in a triple gable rendered block to the western end. On Oak Street and the corner of Sussex Street a 3½ storey block of 3 apartments and 2 townhouses are proposed along the commercial space at ground floor level.

Access is proposed off Sussex Street and is to the east of the existing access to the site. This leads to an internal courtyard where parking is proposed along with cycle storage and a communal open space. Above this at first floor level is a terrace providing small private gardens to the townhouses and some of the apartments. A communal bin store is provided with access onto Sussex Street.

CONSULTATIONS

Advertised on site, in the press and adjacent neighbours notified. No representations received.

Norfolk Landscape Archaeology: No objection subject to condition

Environment Agency: No response

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant National Planning Policy
PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
Supplement to PPS1 – Planning and Climate Change
PPS3 – Housing
PPG13 – Transport
PPG15 – Planning and the Historic Environment
PPG16 – Archaeology and Planning

Relevant East of England Plan Policies:
WM6 – Waste Management in Development
ENV6 – The Historic Environment
ENV7 – Quality in the Built Environment
ENG1 – Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Energy Performance

Relevant Local Plan Policies:

NE9 – Comprehensive Landscaping Scheme
HBE3 – Area of main archaeological interest
HBE8 – Development in Conservation Areas
HBE12 – High Quality Design
HBE19 – Design for Safety and Security
EP1 – Contaminated Land
EP16 – Water conservation
EP18 – Energy Efficiency
EP22 – Amenity
HOU6 – Community Needs and Facilities
HOU13 – New Housing
SR7 – Children's Equipped Playspace
TRA5 – Design for Vehicle Movement
TRA6 – Parking Standards
TRA7 – Cycle Standards
TRA8 – Servicing

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Open Space and Play SPD (adopted June 2006)
Transport Contributions SPD (draft for consultation January 2006)
Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy SPD (adopted December 2006)
Northern City Centre Area Action Plan, Preferred Options Report (November 2007)

Principle

The proposal is in line with government policy in PPS1, the overarching policy statement which aims to ensure that planning promotes sustainable development and PPS3 which promotes the sustainable location of new housing. It complies with national policy in that it is for housing development on a brownfield site at an appropriate density in an urban area with good access to public transport, local services and facilities.

The site is unallocated and therefore the principle is assessed against policy HOU13. This allows for residential redevelopment on brownfield sites subject to a number of criteria covering access and accessibility, amenity, density, character and range of housing types, these are discussed further below.

In terms of density the proposals at 79 dwellings per hectare are considered appropriate for this part of the City Centre. The proposals include a mix of dwelling sizes and types which is considered appropriate for this area.

The A2/A3 unit on Oak Street is considered to be appropriate in this location under policies EMP1 and SHO22. However, it is considered that any consent should be subject to a condition removing permitted development rights for a change of use to A1. Under policy SHO3 it is considered that a retail use would be inappropriate in this location given the proximity of the Local Centre at St Augustines.

Layout and Design

The site layout is considered appropriate facing buildings onto the street, the buildings are set back on Chatham Street and Sussex Street to follow the existing building lines on these roads. In Oak Street, 20th century, free-standing, often single storey industrial and commercial buildings are set back from the street, as a result building lines are less defined. In this case the footprint is considered to be in an appropriate location which will start to redefine the Oak Street Frontage. The provision of the terrace allows for provision of a good amount of amenity space whilst sufficient parking, cycling and bin store facilities are provided at ground floor level.

The previous application was refused due to elevational design and scale of the buildings. Following negotiations it is now considered that the revised proposals are acceptable.

The site is in the City Centre Conservation Area and is in close proximity to a number of listed buildings, including the Great Hall on Oak Street and a series of terraces on Sussex Street. It is therefore important that the design respects the setting of these buildings and enhances the character of the Conservation Area.

A number of amendments to the original (refused) application have been made, including a reduction in the building heights and changes to the roof forms. The design approach has also been changed and is now consistently contemporary. This is an improvement on the previous scheme which adopted a mixture of styles.

The elevations are now relatively simple in design and a restrained palette of materials is proposed. Through the increased use of red brick and render, which are the predominant materials in the area, and the reduction in height, the building sits well within its context. Conditions requiring more specific details of colours and finishes including samples will be required.

The design also makes reference to architectural details found elsewhere in the vicinity, for example the simple design and rhythm of fenestration on the historic terraces and the gabled element reflects that found elsewhere along Sussex Street. The scheme will increase the vitality of this area and improve its appearance by re-establishing a proper active street frontage.

It is considered that there are a number of missed opportunities such as a more defined corner block to the Chatham Street corner and more efficient space circulation especially in relation to the duplex apartments. The fenestration on the gabled block could also have been improved and perhaps set back slightly further. However, the agents are reluctant to amend these elements and on balance these issues are not considered to be so significant to warrant refusal of the application.

Residential Amenity

The main considerations in relation to amenity are considered to be overlooking to the south and overshadowing to the north. In terms of overshadowing the properties to the north on Sussex Street are between 18-22m away and whilst there would be some loss of direct sunlight particularly in the winter, it is not considered that loss of light would be significant enough to merit refusal of the application on these grounds.

To the south of the development are residential properties along Chatham Street. Any overlooking is proposed to be mitigated by screens on the terrace and significant planting within the ground floor communal area, it is considered that subject to these that the proposals would be acceptable in terms of amenity.

Given the mixed use of the site, details for the installation of plant or ventilation equipment for the A2/A3 unit should be conditioned prior to its installation to ensure that this would not have any detrimental impact on the amenities of proposed residential units.

Environmental Considerations

The proposals being located within the City Centre are within a sustainable accessible location. In terms of the particular details the proposals have been designed to take full advantage of solar gains from the southern orientation of the site. The design and access statement also details measures for significantly increased insulation levels and provision of rainwater harvesting. It is proposed to use either ground source heat pumps or biomass boilers to provide for 10% of the sites energy from renewable decentralised sources. A plant room has been incorporated into the proposals which would be able to accommodate either of these systems internally. These systems are estimated to provide in the region of 27% of the sites energy. A condition requiring exact details and a scheme for its provision and ongoing maintenance would be required.

Planning Obligations

In relation to planning obligations the proposals would trigger the following requirements which would need to be secured via a S106 prior to a decision being made:

- Child Play Space:
 - Contribution for 23 child bed spaces £25,392 as required by saved policy SR7.
- Transport Contribution:
 - Contribution for 17 units £4,796.55 as required by saved policy TRA11.

Conclusion

The site is a brownfield site in a central location within the Northern City Centre. The redevelopment of the site for residential and a small commercial unit is considered to be acceptable in principle and in line with the Development Plan and Central Government Guidance. On balance it is considered that the proposals will enhance this part of the City Centre Conservation Area. Subject to the S106 requirements listed above and the conditions listed below the proposals are considered to be acceptable and the recommendation is therefore to approve.

RECOMMENDATION

- (1) Approve planning permission subject to the completion of a satisfactory Section 106 Agreement to include provision of contributions to child play space and transportation and subject to the following conditions:
 - Standard 3 year time limit;
 - Submission of the following details:
 - i. Full details of the colour and finish of bricks, tiles, render, timber and curtain wall system including samples where required;
 - ii. Material, finish and colour of rainwater goods;
 - iii. Details including colour and sections through external joinery, including windows, doors, shopfront and curtain screening to glazed link element;
 - iv. Material colour and finish of gates to the parking area and bin stores;
 - v. Details including large scale drawings and colour of canopies and porches;
 - vi. Material scale and finish of boundary treatments including privacy screens;
 - Landscaping scheme to include hard and soft landscaping, external lighting and all boundary treatments;
 - Scheme of landscape maintenance;
 - Full details of cycle stands to be provided prior to first occupation and not to be used for any other purpose;
 - Bin stores to be provided prior to first occupation and not to be used for any other purpose;
 - Archaeological investigation, evaluation and mitigation;
 - Full details for the provision of 10% of the sites energy from renewable or low carbon sources including a scheme for the provision of water, energy and resource efficiency measures to be submitted;
 - Further land contamination details in the form of a preliminary risk assessment and site investigation scheme;
 - Details of plant and/or ventilation equipment for the A2/A3 unit to be submitted;
 - Removal of permitted development rights for the change of use of the A2/A3 unit to a retail A1 use;

(2) If a satisfactory Section 106 Agreement is not completed prior to 31 July 2009 that delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Regeneration Services to refuse planning permission for the following reason:

- In the absence of a legal agreement or undertaking relating to the provision of children's play and transportation contributions the proposal is contrary to saved policies SR7, TRA11 and HOU6 of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan.

Reason for Recommendation (1):

The recommendation has been made with regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application including policies ENV6, ENV7, ENG1 and WM6 of the adopted East of England Plan, saved policies NE9, HBE3, HBE8, HBE12, HBE19, EP1, EP16, EP18, EP22, HOU6, HOU13, SR7, TRA5, TRA6, TRA7, TRA8 of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan, PPS1, Supplement to PPS1, PPS3, PPG13, PPG15, PPG16 and other material planning considerations. The proposal is for the redevelopment of a brownfield site in a central sustainable location. The proposal accords with the development plan for the area and with Central Government Guidance. Subject to the conditions listed the proposals are considered to be acceptable.



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Site Address - 70 - 72 Sussex Street, Norwich

Scale - 1:1,250



NORWICH
City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

