

Report to Planning applications committee

13 October 2016

Report of Head of planning services

Subject Application no 16/00563/F - Kingdom Hall Of Jehovah's
Witnesses Clarke Road Norwich NR3 1JL

**Reason
for referral** Objections

Item

4(j)

Ward:	Sewell
Case officer	Mr Steve Fraser-Lim - stevefraser-lim@norwich.gov.uk

Development proposal		
Demolition of existing building and erection of 3 No. dwellings (revised plans).		
Representations		
Object	Comment	Support
8	0	0

Main issues	Key considerations
1 Principle of Development	Principle of loss of Hall and redevelopment for housing
2 Design and Heritage	Impact on character of surrounding area and site
3 Transport	Access and egress to the site / cycle / bin storage
4 Amenity	Internal and external amenity space for future occupiers and the impact of development on neighbouring properties
Expiry date	14 July 2016
Recommendation	Approve



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Planning Application No 16/00563/F

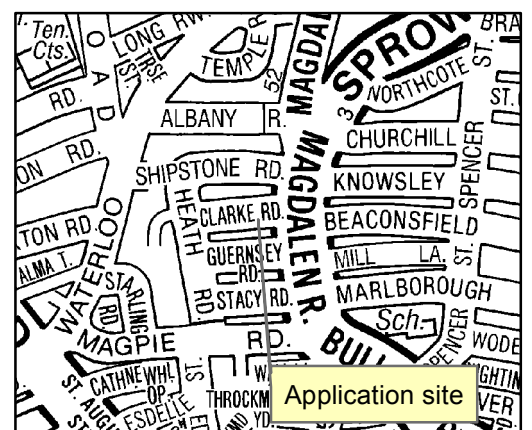
Site Address Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Wtnesses
Clark Road

Scale 1:1,000



NORWICH
City Council

PLANNING SERVICES



The site and surroundings

1. The application seeks full permission for the demolition of the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses and the subsequent erection of three terraced dwellings. The Hall occupies most of the site, being built up against the southern boundary.
2. The proposed dwellings are sited 2.4m back from the road, with the principal elevations facing towards Clarke Road. They are 2 ½ stories high, with accommodation in the roof space. Private amenity areas are provided to the rear, and parking for one car per dwelling is provided via integral garages accessed from the principal elevation.
3. The immediate neighbours are largely residential, however a convenience store (Tesco Express), with an attached maisonette, is located to the east of the site.

Constraints

4. The site is located within an Area of Main Archaeological Interest and a Critical Drainage Area. The convenience store forms part of a Local Retail Centre. Clarke Road and the immediate area lies within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ).
5. Clarke Road slopes down to the west. The site borders the rear boundaries of dwellings along Guernsey Road to the rear (south), which is sat at a lower level.

Relevant planning history

6.

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
4/1997/0675	Erection of pitched roof on existing flat roof and internal alterations	APCON	17/11/1997

The proposal

7. The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of Kingdom Hall and the erection of three terraced dwellings. The Hall was last used as a place of worship.
8. The dwellings would be 2½ storeys, with dormers to the rear serving master bedrooms in the roof space. A single integral garage is located on the ground floor in all the dwellings. A total of three bedrooms per dwelling are proposed. It is noted that the plans indicate an attic room per dwelling within the roof space, which could in principle be converted into additional living accommodation. However due to the shallow roof pitch this room would be restricted in use as a result of the roof height.
9. The plans have been amended following discussions with the agent. The amended plans represent a reduction in terms of scale and height from those originally submitted. The proposal has been reduced from 3 storeys to 2½ storeys, and rear balconies have been removed. The design has also been altered to include a dual

pitched roof rather than a curved roof. Representations were received following the advertisement of both the original plans and amended plans, and are split out accordingly below.

Summary information

Proposal	Key facts
Scale	
Total no. of dwellings	3
No. of affordable dwellings	0
Total floor space	379sqm
No. of storeys	2.5
Max. dimensions	Terrace block 15.5m wide and maximum 11m deep (staggered principal elevation). Height to eaves 5.1m and height to roof ridge 8.9m.
Density	97 dwellings per hectare
Appearance	
Materials	Ground floor red facing bricks, first floor buttermilk render and red pantiles to the roof. Fenestration to be white uPVC.
Transport matters	
Vehicular access	Single integral garage per dwelling. No permits to be issued.
No of car parking spaces	Total of 3 spaces within the garages, one per dwelling.
No of cycle parking spaces	4 per dwelling (2 adult and 2 children sized bikes)
Servicing arrangements	Individual bin storages to rear within private gardens

Representations

- Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. 9 letters of representation have been received from 8 individuals, 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 from Original Plans	Response
There is already too little parking in the area, with the spaces outside the Hall used in the evening by residents (which would be lost). Concerns regarding the safety of accessing the garages and possible conflict with pedestrians. Exacerbated by the vicinity of Tesco Express.	See main issue 3
History of subsidence on the road and concerns that the works would impact the stability of existing properties. Will a wall become a shared boundary wall?	This would be covered under Building Regulations, and potentially the Party Wall Act 1996.
Properties would be overbearing at 3 stories and create overshadowing and overlooking for both the neighbouring dwellings and their gardens. Exacerbated by an increase in the level of land to the east.	See main issue 4
Concerns regarding the removal of asbestos.	Applicant will be advised of appropriate precautions to take, which are covered under other regulations.
Design is not sympathetic to the area; it is out of scale and looks like a hospital/hotel. It is not an ambitious contemporary design or traditional in nature. Could be more like the development opposite.	See main issue 2
Very limited amenity space.	See main issue 4
Issues raised from Amended Plans	Response
Concerns remain regarding traffic – understood that new dwellings were required to provide more parking than shown.	See main issue 3
Concerns that the garages would be converted into habitable space, losing the only parking. Or not used for parking at all. Would permits also be issued? Does not automatically mean that there is space to park.	See main issue 3
Concerns regarding construction traffic.	Given the small scale of the development construction impacts considered are not considered significant that further mitigation measures are required.
Uncertainty regarding the location of the new	Block plan has now been provided.

dwellings as no block plan has been provided. Drawings lack detail in terms of measurements.	Drawings are to scale; measurements are not a requirement.
Dormer windows are not found locally – inappropriate and would create more overlooking than the skylights found elsewhere.	See main issue 4
4 th bedroom/attic room is ambiguous – it can clearly be converted into a 4 th bedroom once built.	See main issue 4
Result in both overshadowing and overlooking for neighbouring properties. Although welcome the removal of the balconies.	See main issue 4
Design could be far more aesthetically pleasing. Still represents overdevelopment of the site.	See main issue 2

Consultation responses

11. 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.

Highways (local)

12. No objection. The properties would not be entitled to parking permits so integral garages are sensible. A Traffic Regulation Order amendment will be required to create double yellow lines across the frontage. The kerb will also need to be dropped and the pavement strengthened. Consideration also needs to be given to cycle parking and bin storage.

Norfolk Historic Environment Service

13. No archaeological implications.

Natural Areas Officer

14. No comments received

Norwich Society

15. (Original plans) The design is over complicated and gives no consideration to the context. The proposal is poor architecture and is out of scale.

Assessment of planning considerations

Relevant development plan policies

16. **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
 - JCS9 Strategy for growth in the Norwich policy area
 - JCS12 The remainder of the Norwich urban area including the fringe parishes
17. **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
 - DM6 Protecting and enhancing the natural environment
 - DM9 Safeguarding Norwich's heritage
 - DM12 Ensuring well-planned housing development
 - DM22 Planning for and safeguarding community facilities
 - DM28 Encouraging sustainable travel
 - DM30 Access and highway safety
 - DM31 Car parking and servicing
 - DM32 Encouraging car free and low car housing

Other material considerations

18. **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
 - NPPF8 Promoting healthy communities
 - NPPF10 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 - NPPF11 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
 - NPPF12 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Case Assessment

19. 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

20. The principle policies relating to new housing development are Joint Core Strategy (JCS) Policy 4, which supports housing delivery within the plan area, which this site falls, and policy DM12 of the Norwich Local Plan Development Management Policies which deals with new housing development in the city. DM12 supports new housing development subject to the following criteria below, which would all be met in this case:
 - The site is not designated for other purposes;
 - No objection has been received from the Health and Safety Executive;
 - The site is not in the late night activity zone;
 - It does not involve the conversion of high quality office space; and
 - It is not in the primary or secondary retail area or in a district or local centre.
21. The site currently contains a disused place of worship. Whilst the principle of housing within this area is acceptable, for the proposed development to be considered acceptable the loss of this community facility must also be acceptable.
22. The agent has submitted a supporting statement which states that The Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses was placed on the market for sale in 2015. The applicants then purchased the property in March 2016, after it had been on the market for approximately 12 months. The current owners have since advertised the building for hire on; social media, online classified advertisement site, and a board on the front of the building. This has not resulted in any bookings. The statement also highlights that an alternative community hall is available nearby (Silver Road Community Centre). It is located approximately 650m walking distance away. DM 22 serves to protect the loss of community facilities, such as community centres and places of worship. Their loss will only be permitted where adequate alternative provision exists within 800m walking distance, or reasonable efforts have been made to preserve the facility and the property has been marketed with no realistic interest received. With alternative provision close by the loss of the Hall is considered to comply with DM 22. Furthermore the supporting statement provides evidence that the current owners have been unsuccessful in their advertising.
23. The Hall is constructed from a mixture of metal sheeting, stained cladding, render, concrete roof tiles and buff bricks. The building is at odds with the prevailing character of the area, and its loss does not raise any historic or local character concerns.

Main issue 2: Design and Heritage

24. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS2, DM3, NPPF paragraphs 9, 17, 56 and 60-66. Heritage key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM9, NPPF paragraphs 128-141.
25. The amended plans are for a block of 3 terraced houses, which responds to the neighbouring Victorian terraces in terms of form. The ridge line runs east to west, as do the neighbouring properties, and the terraced block would be sited at a

similar distance from the road. However the roof ridge would be higher and the width of the gables wider.

26. The elevations could perhaps be improved in terms of proportions and placement of fenestration. However the design does include a staggered frontage which is considered to add some interest and depth to the principal elevation, and the fenestration does respond to some extent to the neighbouring dwellings.
27. The use of dormer windows, whilst not prevalent in the immediate area, is considered to be acceptable. Sited to the rear the impact upon the wider character would be relatively small, and they are considered to be suitable for the style of dwellings proposed.
28. At 97 dwellings per hectare the density of the proposal is relatively high. DM 3 advises that density should be in keeping with the existing character of the area. Given that the adjacent 3 terraces to the west represent a density of 127 dwellings per hectare, this level is however considered to be acceptable.
29. The external finish is proposed to be a mixture of red facing bricks and cream render, with red pantiles. Minimal details have been given. The fenestration appears to replicate the top hung sash effect uPVC windows found elsewhere within the road. Whilst this is not a form of fenestration particularly encouraged, given its current use they are considered to be acceptable. All these materials are found within the immediate vicinity; however a condition would be added to request further details before their use.
30. The site is within an identified Area of Main Archaeological Interest. Although no report was submitted, the Norfolk Historic Environment Service has advised that there are no concerns with the proposed development in terms of any impact upon Archaeological remains. The site does not fall within a Conservation Area and there are no listed buildings in the immediate vicinity. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with both DM 9 and NPPF para 128-141.

Main issue 3: Transport

31. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS6, DM28, DM30, DM31, NPPF paragraphs 17 and 39.
32. The site is located within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), with permit parking available for some existing residents. However, as advised by Highways the new dwellings would not be eligible for permits. Appendix 3 in the Norwich Local Plan provides guidelines on the parking and cycle requirements for new developments. This development can be car free, given that it is considered to be located within an accessible area by virtue of being within a CPZ. Furthermore there is currently access to a car club in the adjacent road (Shipstone Road). As such a garage is not considered to be essential, but is considered acceptable; a maximum of 1.33 spaces per dwelling is permitted.
33. Cycle storage is included within the rear gardens, meeting the minimum storage set out in Appendix 3 in the Norwich Local Plan.
34. With no objection from Highways the garages are considered to be acceptable.

Main issue 4: Amenities

35. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM2, DM11, NPPF paragraphs 9 and 17.
36. As described above the proposed terrace block responds to the existing terraces in terms of siting and form. The dwellings would be taller than the adjacent neighbours, with the neighbour to the east 8.6m to the roof ridge and to the west 8.3m (compared to the proposed 8.9m). However as the proposal is largely in line with the neighbouring dwellings, the impact from overshadowing here would be restricted to the windows facing the site.
37. The dwelling to the west has one window in this elevation which appears to serve a landing, and is sited 2m from the current Hall. The proposal will result in a blank wall sited 1.6m away. Whilst this will lead to some additional overshadowing, given the existing arrangement and type of window this is considered to be acceptable on balance. The neighbouring maisonette to the east has one window facing the site, sited 5.8m from the current Hall. The proposal will result in a blank wall sited 4.5m away. Given the existing arrangement and orientation this is also considered to be acceptable.
38. To the rear the dwellings are terraced too, with two storey protruding rear sections extending towards the site. The majority of dwellings along both Clarke Road and Guernsey are of a similar design, and have first floor bedroom windows in the rear of two storey sections. As such there is a degree of overlooking between these dwellings; with first floor windows sited approx. 14m away from each other. The proposal would arguably replicate this relationship; with the dormer windows sited approx. 14.8m away from the existing first floor windows in the dwellings to the south. Whilst it is acknowledged that this would increase the level of overlooking for these properties, given the layout elsewhere in this vicinity it is considered to be acceptable. Due to the orientation the level of overshadowing does not cause significant concern. Although the bulk of the building will appear larger due to the orientation of the roof running east to west instead of north to south, the building will be placed further away from the southern boundary than the current Kingdom Hall.
39. Due to the size constraints of the site it is considered appropriate to remove permitted development rights to prevent the site becoming overdeveloped and creating a significant impact upon any neighbour's amenity. Furthermore this would prevent the addition of any windows within the side elevations which could cause undue overlooking.

Compliance with other relevant development plan policies

40. 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
Cycle storage	DM31	Yes subject to condition
Car parking provision	DM31	Yes, one space per dwelling provided via the garages

Refuse Storage/servicing	DM31	Yes subject to condition
Water efficiency	JCS 1 & 3	Yes subject to condition
Sustainable urban drainage	DM3/5	Yes. The reduction in the size of the building on the site will in itself enable less run off if some of the remainder of the site is left permeable. Whilst the applicant has indicated that the surface water run-off will be disposed of via a soakaway no details have been given of any other measures such as a permeable driveway. However these details can be requested via a condition. With a suitable condition the impact upon the drainage is considered acceptable as it should improve the existing arrangement.

Equalities and diversity issues

41. There are no significant equality or diversity issues.

Local finance considerations

42. 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.
43. 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.
44. In this case local finance considerations are not considered to be material to the case.

Conclusion

45. The loss of the Hall and redevelopment of the site for housing is considered to be acceptable for the reasons given above. The amended design of the terrace dwellings reflects the existing dwellings within the immediate vicinity and would not detract from the character and appearance of the area.
46. Whilst it is acknowledged that there will be some increase in the level of overlooking and overshadowing for some neighbours, the levels are considered to be acceptable in this relatively densely built area as they are comparable to existing relationships.

47. The level of parking provided accords with DM 31 and DM 32. With no objection from Highways the proposed garages are considered acceptable.
48. As such 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. 16/00563/F - Kingdom Hall Of Jehovah's Witnesses Clarke Road Norwich NR3 1JL and grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit;
2. In accordance with plans;
3. Landscaping Details
4. External Materials
5. Removal of Permitted Development rights
6. Water efficiency
7. Submission cycle/ bin storage details

Article 35(2) statement

AT2 Approved following amendments

