

## Report for Resolution

**Report to** Planning Applications Committee  
**Date** 31 March 2011  
**Report of** Head of Planning Services  
**Subject** 10/02101/F Car Park (Corner Douro Place) Wymer Street,  
Norwich

Item  
**5(4)**

### SUMMARY

<b>Description:</b>	Redevelopment of site to provide 4 No. two bed flats.
<b>Reason for consideration at Committee:</b>	Objection Council led development
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Approve subject to conditions
<b>Ward:</b>	Mancroft
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Mark Brown Senior Planning Officer 01603 212505
<b>Date of receipt:</b>	2nd December 2010
<b>Applicant:</b>	Orwell Housing Association Ltd
<b>Agent:</b>	Barefoot & Gilles Ltd

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Site

##### Location and Content

1. The site is located at the end and to the north of Wymer Street. The site is bounded by Douro Place to the east. Wymer Street is a cul-de-sac to vehicular traffic although pedestrian and cycle access is available through to Douro Place which provides pedestrian and cycle links via West Pottergate to the City Centre. The site comprises a car park with 16 car parking spaces for Wymer Street car park permit holders only. The car park is not available to permit holders for the surrounding zone M on street controlled parking zone.
2. Wymer Street is characterised by Victorian terraces to the west and southwest of the site. To the north is the rear of a commercial property fronting onto Dereham Road currently used by Blockbuster for film hire. There is a system of pathways providing rear access to residential properties to the north of Wymer Street and south of Dereham Road. Access is from Heigham Road to the west, to the east there are links to Dereham Road and via the application site onto Wymer Street and Douro Place. The rear access from Heigham Road through to Dereham Road is adopted highway; however the two routes across the site are not.
3. To the south of the site is a private parking area accessed from Douro Place, beyond which is the gable wall of a three storey block of flats on Douro Place. To the east is Douro Place car park which is available for Douro Place permit holders only. The site itself is occupied by a number of trees along its eastern and southern boundaries comprising a

mix of ailanthus, alders, buckthorns, rowans and pyracantha.

## Planning History

4. No planning history. The site was occupied by terrace housing fronting onto both Wymer Street and Duoro Place (at the time Duoro Street) until the Second World War. After which historic plans indicate that the site was used for replacement housing, possibly temporary chalets during the 1950's and 1960's, the site was cleared in the late 1960's and subsequently used for car parking.

## Equality and Diversity Issues

5. There are considered to be some equality or diversity issues which are discussed further at paragraph 38 below.

## The Proposal

6. The proposal is for the redevelopment of the site to provide four two-bed flats in a two storey block. The proposals are arranged in an inverted L shape towards the northeast corner of the site. Communal external amenity space is provided to the north and east of the site. To the south the existing access is maintained providing access to four parking spaces, one for each flat. An enclosed communal cycle store is located to the south of the amenity space adjacent to the car park and a communal bin store is located to the northeast corner to allow refuse collection to take place from Douro Place. It is proposed to retain all trees. A pedestrian footpath is proposed along the western boundary of the site providing access to the route to the rear of Wymer Street and Dereham Road properties.

## Representations Received

7. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. 29 letters of representation have been received citing the issues as summarised in the table below.

Issues Raised	Response
The car park is heavily used during the evenings and weekends and the loss will result in displacement to the surrounding road network which already lacks parking provision and this will cause further parking congestion.	See paragraphs 18-21 & 30-31
Will result in residents having to park further from their properties which is a problem for disabled residents and can be a safety concern late in the evening.	See paragraph 38
The proposals will cause safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists using the street by virtue of the increased numbers of cars needing to turn at the end of Wymer Street.	See paragraphs 30-37
Turning without using the car park is extremely difficult by virtue of the streets limited width.	See paragraph 35
There will be a constant stream of cars turning in the access way to the new	See paragraphs 35-37

properties.	
It will not be possible for delivery or emergency vehicles to turn at the end of the road.	See paragraph 35
Cars will end up reversing onto Heigham Road.	See paragraphs 35-36
Disruption from large vehicles accessing the site during construction.	There may be some temporary disruption during construction, which is clearly an inevitable part of any development. An informative note can be placed on any consent to promote considerate construction.
Cumulative affect of the proposals along with Belvoir Street car park and the bus rapid transit proposals.	See paragraph 31
Visitors to the new properties will increase pressure for parking.	See paragraph 39
Removal of the pedestrian route to Douro Place from the access to the rear of Wymer Street.	See paragraph 25
The provision and enclosure of a narrow alley to the west of the site will lead to anti-social behaviour.	See paragraph 25
The Design is out of keeping with the Victorian terrace character of the street.	See paragraphs 24, 26 & 27
Damage to trees and affect on wildlife.	See paragraphs 41 & 42
Overlooking to properties to the west on Wymer Street.	See paragraph 44
Duoro Place car park is less used and would be a more appropriate alternative site to redevelop.	This is not considered to be material to the application submitted. It is necessary to consider the submitted proposals against development plan policy and other material considerations.
Devaluation of property.	This is not a material planning consideration.

8. A large number of the representations received have raised concerns over the applicants pre-application consultation process, primarily due to the short time period in which this was undertaken and due to the car park being defined in the consultation letters as the Duoro Place car park and as a garage site, leading residents to believe that the Wymer Street car park was unaffected. There have also been a number of separate complaints relating to this. Solely from a planning perspective there is no requirement to undertake pre-application public consultation for a scheme of this size. The planning consultation was originally undertaken in line with current procedures which are in line with statutory requirements; this is to consult adjacent and neighbouring properties within 10m of the site. However, in recognition that the pre-application consultation will have resulted in confusion to residents who received the letter, a further consultation was carried out for the planning application where all properties eligible for a parking permit on the site were written to (comprising all properties on Wymer Street and 66-100 evens on Dereham Road) as were a number of properties on Heigham Road that are not eligible for a permit but historically have held one. Properties eligible for a permit on Duoro Place car park were also written to in order to avoid confusion and also given that housing are potentially minded to amend Duoro Place car park to a Zone M car park.

9. Based on the information submitted the applicants received 19 responses to the pre-application consultation. One was in support of the scheme and 18 objected for the following reasons:
- Loss of parking within a heavily used car park and lack of parking in the vicinity;
  - Detrimental to the character of the area;
  - Wymer Street is extremely narrow and there would be no space for turning if the car park were removed;
  - Emergency and service vehicles would be unable to access and turn in the street;
  - Loss of the pedestrian accesses to the rear of Wymer Street;
  - Concerns over safety of pedestrians and cyclists at the end of Wymer Street.
10. A petition of 82 signatures has been sent to strategic housing requesting the application be withdrawn. This was subsequently forwarded to Orwell Housing Association who have advised that they do not wish to withdraw the application.
11. A letter has been received from a nearby resident (and supported by two other residents) making comments on transportations consultation response to the planning application. In summary this makes the following key comments:
- In response to comments that Duoro Place car park could offer some replacement parking provision if amended to a Zone M car park, commenting that the Duoro place car park is regularly full;
  - Car park controls cannot guarantee highway safety and the proposals would result in significant safety issues;
  - Advising that the transport comments offer no impartial assessment of the affects on the locality or on the implications for highway safety;
  - Advising that there is insufficient width to turn a vehicle in Wymer Street itself and that the car park currently offers far great scope for the turning of vehicles particularly large vehicles.
  - The loss of the car park would make turning in the road longer more laborious leading motorists to be distracted from paying full attention to pedestrians and cyclists waiting to enter Wymer Street and risks pedestrians and cyclists beginning to move whilst vehicles are still manoeuvring in their frustration of the time being taken for vehicles to complete the turn.
  - Motorist will no longer be able to enter the site in forward gear turn and exit in forward gear. They would now need to drive into the access to the flats and reverse back into Wymer Street potentially into the path of pedestrians and cyclists.
  - Vehicles will have drive the whole length of Wymer Street to ascertain if any spaces are available before turning at the end, this could lead to cars congregating at the access during peak times at the same time as pedestrians and cyclists are using the road;
  - The proposals would increase not decrease the number of traffic movements in the area;
  - Suggest that commenting on bin storage is a detraction from the comments and outside the transport officers area. (In response transport comment on all aspects of access and servicing, including waste collection and storage);
  - A no-car requirement could be imposed for the new flats in order to allow the space to be used to improve public amenity;
  - As zone M restrictions only apply during the day, residents of the proposed flats could park on the street at night further adding to the pressure for spaces.
  - All access routes to the rear of Wymer Street should be maintained given that Dereham Road residents need use of this to manoeuvre wheelie bins to the front of their properties.

- Commenting that it is not clear why this is suggested to be a sustainable location for new development.
- Advising that the transport comments do not address the many concerns raised by residents.

## Consultation Responses

12. **Environmental Health** – The residential end use is a sensitive one, and there is a possibility of contamination due to the current or previous uses. I have therefore recommended conditions for a site investigation to determine this. I have also suggested conditions for noise, light nuisance, along with informatives for the demolition and construction phases.
13. **Norfolk Constabulary** – The main concern was the planned creation of an extremely narrow, enclosed alley created by the walls of the existing properties at the end of Wymer Street and the 1.8metre communal amenity space fencing. I believe that this problem has been addressed by the creation of the 2.5metre footpath, with the boundary to the new development being formed by the installation of a 1.8metre construction. This will comprise a 0.6metre brick wall with 1.2metre bow top railings. Additionally, low level lighting units will be situated in the wall to provide illumination along the length of the footpath. Persons using this new footpath will be able to see along its length from either end before entering, with the additional width eliminating a perception of being enclosed. The installation of bow top railings on the wall will add to users' reassurance because of the additional surveillance.

At any time of day, a large number of vehicles reach the end of Wymer Street and turn around in the car park at the Cycle Access Only construction to return towards Heigham Road. The proposed entrance to the flats will not discourage this practice and there may be risk of collisions with vehicles parked by residents in their designated spaces. However I believe that the layout as proposed will not impact on the current levels of highway safety in Wymer Street.

Parking spaces for the residents of the area, the majority of which use the current site, should be planned and reallocated nearby so as not to cause problems with inappropriate on street parking in the surrounding area.

The boundary treatments and access control systems for this development should be constructed so as to address the instances of crime and anti social behaviour prevalent in the immediate area. In the last quarter of 2010 there were 315 criminal offences, amongst these were 18 Burglaries, 9 vehicle crimes and 227 reports of Anti Social Behaviour, the majority of the latter occurring within 100 metres of the site.

14. **Norwich Cycling Campaign** – Object to the application – Wymer Street is a small tight street used as part of the Norwich Cycle route network. It is especially important to those cyclists avoiding the very busy Dereham and Earlham Roads. Without the car park those residents with cars will need to park on the street on both sides. At present most if not all parking happens on one side of the road. Furthermore the loss of the car park will mean that the cars in this one way street will have no way to turn around without causing danger to other road users and pedestrians. Both of these are contrary to the city council's policy to encourage cycling.
15. **Norwich Society** – Wymer Street is a modest, narrow cul-de-sac of small Victorian terrace houses, much loved by its residents for its privacy and sense of community. A

number of houses have multiple occupancy and therefore several cars per household. Residents are not at all happy at the prospect of losing these well-used parking spaces; access and turning are already difficult. The style of the proposed flats is not at all in keeping with the street. At a recent public meeting attended by representatives of the Norwich Society residents object to the loss of parking if these plans go ahead and are not convinced that there is adequate parking elsewhere – especially late at night. They also object to the mismanagement of the proper consultation procedures: inadequate notification, mis-naming the site, hurried and poor consultation – all of which have been admitted by the housing department. We object on the same grounds.

16. **Transport** – The redevelopment of central sites such as this for new housing is supported in transport policy terms, providing new homes in a sustainable location, minimising the need for new residents to travel, or indeed to own a car. The site was cleared many years ago, and so far as I am aware, was previously developed with residential property.

The site has been used for many years as a car park, latterly as a residents permit car park operated by Housing. It is not part of the on-street permit scheme, and the site is not part of the public highway. I understand from Housing that the car park on the other side of Douro Place (to the rear of the shops) is substantially underused, particularly in the evening, and it is their intention to offer permits to residents who currently use this parking area to enable them to park there. This latter site is much less suitable for redevelopment, but this arrangement should alleviate some of the concerns of residents. In any case, Government policy is clear that issues relating to the provision of off street parking, and potential increasing pressure on on-street parking can only be considered where there are demonstrable safety issues that cannot be resolved by the introduction of on-street parking controls. This particular area is already fully covered by on-street parking controls that should deal with highway safety issues.

I also think it important to recognise that the current car park is a site owned by the Council as a housing asset, and there is no obligation on the Council to allow residents to park on it, and that decision is not for me to make. In fact, there is no obligation on the Council to provide residents parking at all. It is also important to note that a permit parking arrangement that is offered does not confer a right to park. What it does is to restrict access to what parking provision there is to a particular group of people.

Wymer Street itself was closed to through traffic in 1980. The area available within the Highway for the turning of vehicles would not be considered adequate were this street to be built today, but a small turning area, just adequate for the turning of cars is available within the Highway boundary. Whilst there is no provision for the turning of larger vehicles, I have no doubt that the benefit to the street in terms of residential amenity was considered to outweigh the need to turn the occasional large vehicle. The proposed layout does allow for vehicles to continue to partially turn within the site, which would make the turns easier, but the main issue is not the depth into this site, but the depth available on Wymer street itself. Creating a turning head adequate for turning of large vehicles would effectively require the removal of the road closure (which would render the need for it irrelevant anyway). That, in my view would be a retrograde step. It is, however, currently possible for large vehicles to turn within the site, but not when there are any more than a few vehicles parked in it.

Turning to the development itself, the access remains in the current location. This is at the end of a cul-de-sac, and consequently there is no justification for raising any safety concerns. If anything, the reduction in the number of movements up and down Wymer Street and in and out of the access, although marginal, would be an improvement. The

new flats would also provide an additional level of natural surveillance to the end of Wymer Street, and to Douro Place. This will help to make the environment in this location a little less threatening, particularly at night

The cycle store is acceptable, although I would suggest that individual 'sheds' for each of the flats would be better and offer greater flexibility to the occupiers. The bin store isn't quite right. It should be able to house 1x 660litre bin for general refuse and 3 x 240 litre bins for recyclables. The location is fine, though.

Parking levels for this development are more than adequate, considering the location. Residents of these flats will not be eligible for on-street parking permits.

The scheme retains access to the rear of the properties on Wymer Street and Dereham Road. The rear access road (which provides rear vehicular access to most of the properties on the north side of Wymer Street) and the link through to Dereham Road are both adopted highways, but the current routes across this site are not. As the access is primarily there to provide access to the rear of the adjacent properties there is no Transportation justification for requiring both of these links to be kept. However, the proposed link is less than 1.5m wide, and given that it is constrained on both sides by existing buildings and fencing, this is too narrow. I would want to see it widened to at least 1.8m, and preferably 2m [this has been amended see paragraph 25].

There is a clear and demonstrable need for new housing in the City, and this is a sustainable location for such development. Whilst I recognise that local residents are concerned about the loss of car parking, the Council is proposing to make alternative provision available to them, and I cannot see any justification for refusing this proposal on Highways or Transportation grounds, subject to the minor amendments to the rear access path and the bin store.

17. **Tree Protection Officer** – This is achievable but any planning permission should be conditioned to ensure full compliance with the arboricultural implications assessment, arboricultural method statement and tree protection plan.

## **ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Relevant Planning Policies**

#### **Relevant National Planning Policies**

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development  
PPS3 – Housing  
PPS9 – Biodiversity  
PPG13 – Transport

#### **Relevant Strategic Regional Planning Policies**

Policies of the adopted East of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy (May, 2008)  
ENV7 – Quality in the Built Environment  
T8 – Local Roads  
T14 – Parking  
WM6 – Waste Management in Development

#### **Local Development Framework**

Policies of the emerging Joint Core Strategy (JCS) as amended by the inspectors report of 27

February 2011, likely to be adopted on 24 March 2011

Policy 1 – Addressing Climate Change and Protection Environmental Assets

Policy 2 – Promoting Good Design

Policy 3 – Energy and Water

Policy 4 – Housing Delivery

Policy 20 – Implementation

### **Relevant Local Plan Policies**

Saved policies of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan (November, 2004)

NE9 – Comprehensive Landscaping Scheme

HBE12 – High Quality of Design

HBE19 – Design for Safety and Security (to be deleted on adoption of the JCS)

EP1 – Contaminated Land

EP18 – High Standard of Energy Efficiency

EP20 – Sustainable use of materials

EP22 – High Standard of Amenity

HOU13 – Proposals for New Housing Development

HOU18 – Construction of New Flats

TRA3 – Modal Shift Measures in Support of NATS

TRA5 – Approach to Design for Vehicle Movement and Special Needs

TRA6 – Parking Standards – Maxima

TRA7 – Cycle Parking Standards

TRA8 – Servicing Provision

### **Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance**

Trees and Development SPD – September 2007

### **Principle Policy Considerations**

18. The principle policy considerations are; harm from the loss of the Wymer Street controlled permit parking and an assessment against saved local plan policies HOU13 and HOU18 for the provision of new flats. National policy in PPG13 has recently changed to remove the requirement for councils to limit the number of parking spaces allowed in new residential developments and placing the onus on councils and communities to adopt policies appropriate for their area. Currently saved and adopted local plan policies remain in place which set out maximum parking standards for the City. There are no planning policies which seek the retention of parking provision.
19. The Council decision to dispose of the car park to a registered provider of affordable housing has been taken by the Executive on 27 January 2010 and therefore the disposal and loss of the car park are not matters directly for consideration by the planning committee. The relevant planning considerations are whether the loss of parking provision would have material or detrimental effects on the locality and the acceptability of housing development on the site.
20. Notwithstanding the above, where the loss of parking to be weighed against the provision of affordable housing, in planning terms the weight is very clearly in favour of the latter. On the one hand parking provision has no protection under planning policies and planning policy is generally directed towards the promotion of non car modes of transport, on the other affordable housing is promoted through national, regional and local planning policy in particular policy 4 of the emerging JCS.
21. The proposals would increase pressure for on-street parking, however it is considered that this can only be a material consideration to which any significant weight can be given,



where there are demonstrable safety issues that cannot be resolved by the introduction or enforcement of on-street parking controls. The implications for highway safety on this site are discussed further in the section below on access, parking and servicing.

22. In terms of policies HOU13 and HOU18, the site is a brownfield site located to the west of Norwich within easy walking distance of the Dereham Road local centre. As such this is in a sustainable location for new housing with good pedestrian, cycle and public transport links to the City Centre. The proposals are at a density of 64 dwellings per hectare which is considered acceptable and consistent with the surrounding residential area. The proposals are therefore considered to be acceptable in principle subject to assessment against the criteria in policies HOU13, HOU18 other development plan policies and material considerations.

### **Affordable Housing**

23. Policy 4 of the emerging JCS requires 20% affordable housing on sites of this size (between 5-9 dwellings) in this case the proposal will be 100% affordable housing which will be secured via the contract of sale to Orwell Housing Association.

### **Layout and Design**

24. The layout of the site is largely dictated by site constraints; these are: the location of the access, the routes across the site to the rear of Wymer Street properties and trees. The proposal provides for the retention of all trees on the site to the east and southern boundaries. The pedestrian routes across the site leading to the rear of Wymer Street properties are rationalised to a single route along the western boundary. The block itself is situated to the northeast corner with external amenity space to the front. This layout results in the building being set back from Wymer Street with more of a defined frontage to Douro Place. Given the site constraints, the proposed layout is considered to be acceptable, whilst slightly unconventional it provides the necessary external amenity areas, cycle and bin stores whilst providing a block of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed four flats. A car free development may have enabled an improved layout, and was suggested to the applicants, however it is not considered that this could have been insisted on under policy TRA9.
25. Concern has been raised over the loss of the route along the north of the site providing a direct link between the rear of Wymer Street properties and Douro Place. Safety and security concerns have also been raised relating to the pathway re-provided to the west of the site linking Wymer Street to the pathway to the rear of Dereham Road and Wymer Street properties. As a general rule it is considered to be desirable to maintain existing pedestrian routes across a site, however in this case the retention of both would have resulted in two enclosed routes potentially bounded by walls on both sides. Neither route is adopted highway and it is considered that the provision of one is preferable to both in terms of security particularly given the limited benefits the route provides in terms of permeability. There has been a minor amendment to the pathway to the west to increase its width to 2.5m. The boundary treatment between the pathway and the external amenity space to the flats has also been amended to a brick plinth with low level lighting and bow top railings to improve overlooking of the space. On the basis of these amendments this aspect of the proposals is considered to be acceptable.
26. The character of Wymer Street is clearly defined by Victorian terraces whilst to the east the character is far less defined with a mixture of flatted residential blocks and commercial units. The site due to its constraints does not lend itself to a pastiche layout or massing. In the circumstances the more contemporary form proposed is considered to be appropriate. The setting back of the block on the site will provide a degree of separation from the

Victorian terraces along Wymer Street which is considered to be suitable given the relationship of the flatted block to the south with Wymer Street. Subject to details of external materials the proposals are considered to be acceptable in design terms.

27. Specific details of boundary treatments along with hard and soft landscaping would be critical to the visual success of the proposals. The current proposals in terms of the landscaping indicated are considered to be acceptable in principle; however more specific details in relation to species, materials and ongoing maintenance should form a condition of any consent.
28. The size of the development is below the threshold for an energy efficiency statement; however the design and access statement submitted with the application details that the applicants are committed to achieving code for sustainable homes level 4. Part of the proposals to achieve this include solar thermal panels on the east elevation, specific details of which should be conditioned to ensure their projection from the roof slope is limited.
29. Policy 3 of the emerging JCS has a requirement for all housing developments to achieve code level 4 for water. The applicants have advised that the scheme will meet code for sustainable homes level 4 and it is recommended that a condition require code level 4 be met for water.

### **Access, Parking and Servicing**

30. The car park in question, which provides 16 parking spaces, is regularly full during evenings and weekends. Given the recent committee decision to defer the application for Belvoir Street pending further information on the car parks usage, the applicants were also asked to provide information on the usage of Wymer Street. The following information has been submitted:
  - 11:30 Thursday 03 March 2011 – 7 cars
  - 12:00 Saturday 05 March 2011 – 7 cars (officers visited the site on the same day at 10:30 in the morning and the car park was occupied by 15 cars);
  - 11:45 Tuesday 08 March 2011 – 7 cars
  - 14:00 Thursday 10 March 2011 – 7 cars
  - 20:00 Thursday 10 March 2011 – 12 cars.

The majority of the above are during the day, however the one taken in the evening and officers own count earlier on a Saturday provide a picture of the car parks use during peak times of evenings and the weekends.

31. It is likely that residents will park on the road closer to their property before parking in the car park and therefore clearly the proposals would increase pressure for on-street parking, with limited alternatives available in the near vicinity. Furthermore proposals at Belvoir Street and the Bus Rapid Transit system may have a cumulative impact. However, as detailed at paragraph 20 it is not considered that, as a matter of principle, retention of car parking can outweigh the provision of new affordable housing in planning terms unless there are demonstrable safety issues which result from the proposals.
32. In this case there are a number of matters which have been raised in relation to highway safety and which need to be considered. These are: a) inappropriate parking; b) the ability to turn a vehicle at the end of the road and the potential increase in vehicles needing to do this; and c) the safety implications for pedestrians and cyclists with a greater number of people turning at the end of the road.

33. In relation to the first, the area is full covered by on street parking controls that should deal with any highway safety issues relating to inconsiderate parking. Concern has been raised that cars would have to park on both sides of the road; however this would simply not be possible with obstruction of the highway.
34. The other two matters are more complex and largely revolve around the ability to use the car park as a turning area and the impact of the development on traffic movements along Wymer Street.
35. Wymer Street itself is narrow ranging between 4.5m-4.8m meaning that there is only practically space for parking on one side of the road. Wymer Street itself was closed to through traffic in 1980. The area available within the Highway for the turning of vehicles would not be considered adequate were this street to be built today, but a small turning area, just adequate for the turning of cars is available within the adopted highway. The highway does not provide sufficient space for the turning of larger vehicles and no doubt this would have been a consideration when Wymer Street was closed off. Clearly it is possible that when the car park is not full cars or larger vehicles may use the car park for turning. However, at peak times the car park is full and it is considered that the more likely manoeuvre would be to utilise the access to the site in order to turn a car or larger vehicle. Given that the access is unaltered, the proposals do not affect the ability to undertake such a manoeuvre. The depth into the car park is reduced however this does not limit the size of vehicle which is able to use the access to turn as this is limited to a greater extent by the proportions of Wymer Street.
36. In relation to the number of traffic movements, movements directly relating to access to and from the site would reduce as a result of the proposals. However, as raised by a number of residents, vehicles would travel down the road, find nowhere to park and subsequently need to turn to exit Wymer Street. In the short term it is thought that there may be a larger number of vehicles needing to carry out this manoeuvre. However it is questionable if this will happen in the long term as residents adjust to the reduced car parking available. It is not possible to objectively measure the impact however in the long term the correlation between parking spaces available and traffic movements would be expected to be a positive correlation (i.e. as parking spaces increase so do traffic movements) not a negative one (i.e. as parking spaces increase traffic movements decrease).
37. Although not part of the strategic cycle network (which is slightly further south and utilises the alley at the end of Stafford Street to the north of St John's School and onto Douro Place) Wymer Street is a key route for cyclists and pedestrians into the City Centre. In relation to concerns over the safety impact of an increased number of cars turning at the end of Wymer Street the above comments on turning and traffic movements are relevant and on the basis of the above it is not considered that there is a clear basis on which to refuse the application for highway safety reasons.
38. Local residents have raised concern over the potential implications of parking further from their properties, in particular raising safety concerns when parking late at night and the implications this could have for disabled drivers. Both of these concerns are considered to be material considerations which would need to be weighed against the benefits of redeveloping the site for housing and general planning objectives for the efficient use of land in sustainable locations such as this. Whilst the concerns are considered to be material, it is not considered possible to objectively measure these impacts and on balance it is not considered that refusal on these grounds could be justified.

39. In terms of on-site parking, provision is made for one car parking space per dwelling. This is consistent with the maximum parking standards set out within saved local plan policy TRA6. As detailed above the layout of the site may have been improved by a car free scheme particularly given the close proximity to the local centre however it is not considered that this could be insisted on. New residents would not be eligible for parking permits.
40. Communal stores for bin and cycle storage are provided. The bin store is slightly too small to accommodate the necessary refuse bins and as such it is suggested that further details be conditioned. Subject to this the proposals would be consistent with the requirements of policies TRA7, TRA8 and WM6.

### **Trees**

41. All trees within the site are proposed to be retained as part of the proposals and the flats have been located outside the root protection areas of trees. Method statements have been provided for tree protection during development and for no dig surfacing to areas of hard standing within the root protection areas, subject to compliance with these the proposals are considered to be acceptable.

### **Ecology**

42. An ecological appraisal has been submitted with the application; this does not identify the specific presence of any protected species. Subject to the retention of the trees around the site (as proposed), further structural planting including trees and shrubs providing a nectar source and site lighting being directed downwards the proposals are considered to have a neutral impact. These measures can be covered by landscaping conditions. It is also suggested that informative notes are used to provide further advice on site clearance.

### **Amenity**

43. Given the location of the block to the northeast corner of the site, the location of the commercial unit to the north and relationship with dwellings to the west it is considered that overshadowing to adjacent properties would be limited and not result in a significant detrimental impact on neighbour amenity.
44. In terms of overlooking the main implication would be to properties to the west. There is a single kitchen window at first floor level facing west which may result in some overlooking to the rear gardens of properties on Wymer Street. This would not result in direct overlooking of any primary (living/bedroom) window and on balance it is not considered that this would result in a significant detrimental impact to the amenities of neighbouring properties.
45. In terms of the amenity of future residents of the properties themselves, the dwellings are of a good size with sufficient private external amenity space and are considered to be consistent with saved policy EP22 of the Local Plan.
46. A noise survey has been submitted which identifies that the site is located within noise exposure category A. This is the lowest noise exposure category. PPG24 details that noise need not be considered as a determining factor in granting planning permission for sites in this category. As such it is not considered necessary to impose any specific noise mitigation measures.

### **Contamination**

47. A desk based assessment has been submitted with the application which identifies potential pollutants at the site. Given the sensitive residential end use it is considered

necessary to condition a site investigation and a scheme of remediation and mitigation to be carried out as appropriate.

## Conclusions

48. The site is a brownfield site located to the west of Norwich adjacent to Dereham Road local centre. The site is in a sustainable location for new housing with good pedestrian, cycle and public transport links to the City Centre. In principle it is considered that the provision of affordable housing far outweighs the retention of the car park. The proposals would increase pressure for on-street parking however it is considered that this can only be a material consideration to which significant weight can be given where there are demonstrable safety issues arising from the proposals. Consideration has been given to implications of inappropriate parking, the impact on traffic movements and the ability to turn in the road; however it is not considered that there is a clear basis on which the application could be refused on highway safety grounds. Given the constraints of the access, pedestrian routes across the site and trees the layout and design are considered to be acceptable and the rationalisation of access routes to the rear of Wymer Street is considered to be appropriate for design safety reasons. It is not considered that the proposals would have any significant detrimental impact on the amenities of neighbouring residents. Subject to the conditions listed within the recommendation below the proposals are considered to be acceptable and in line with development plan policy.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To approve Application No (10/02101/F Car Park (Corner Douro Place) Wymer Street, Norwich) and grant planning permission, subject to the following conditions:-

1. Standard time limit;
2. Development in accordance with the submitted plans;
3. Development to be carried out in full accordance with the submitted arboricultural implications assessment, method statement and tree protection plan
4. Provision of further details for the bin store to ensure the provision of 1x660L and 3x240L bins and provision of the sheds, parking areas and refuse storage areas prior to first occupation;
5. Submission of a landscaping scheme including:
  - hard and soft landscaping details including site frontages and communal areas including details of all boundary treatments;
  - details of site lighting;
  - details of the future management and maintenance of the landscaped areas;
  - provision of landscaping prior to first occupation.
6. Details of bricks, tiles, solar panels, a section through the eaves and details of timber cladding to be used in the development;
7. Site contamination investigation and assessment to be carried out and if contamination is found a scheme of remediation and mitigation to be agreed and carried out. Should during development, contamination not previously identified be found development is to cease pending details to deal with contamination;
8. Proposals to meet code for sustainable homes level 4 for water.

The following informative notes should be appended to any consent:

1. Residents of the new dwellings will not be eligible for parking permits;
2. Considerate construction and timing to prevent nuisance;
3. Materials removed from site should be classified and disposed of at suitable licensed facilities;

4. Site clearance to have due regard to minimising the impact on wildlife.

Reasons for approval: The decision has been made with particular regard to PPS1, PPS3, PPS9, PPG13, policies ENV7, T8, T14 and WM6 of the adopted East of England Plan, policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 20 of the emerging Joint Core Strategy and saved policies NE9, HBE12, EP1, EP18, EP20, EP22, HOU13, HOU18, TRA3, TRA5, TRA6, TRA7 and TRA8 of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan.

The site is a brownfield site located to the west of Norwich adjacent to Dereham Road local centre. The site is in a sustainable location for new housing with good pedestrian, cycle and public transport links to the City Centre. In principle it is considered that the provision of affordable housing far outweighs the retention of the car park. The proposals would increase pressure for on-street parking however it is considered that this can only be a material consideration to which significant weight can be given where there are demonstrable safety issues arising from the proposals. Consideration has been given to implications of inappropriate parking, the impact on traffic movements and the ability to turn in the road, however it is not considered that there is a clear basis on which the application could be refused on highway safety grounds. Given the constraints of the access, pedestrian routes across the site and trees the layout and design are considered to be acceptable and the rationalisation of access routes to the rear of Wymer Street is considered to be appropriate for design safety reasons. It is not considered that the proposals would have any significant detrimental impact on the amenities of neighbouring residents. Subject to the conditions imposed the proposals are considered to be acceptable and in line with development plan policy.



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Planning Application No 10/02101/F  
 Site Address Car Park (corner Douro Place) Wymer Street, Norwich  
 Scale 1:1,000



**NORWICH**  
 City Council

PLANNING SERVICES





New pedestrian footpath route.  
'Enclosed' section to be minimum  
2.5m wide and low level lighting  
provided to local authority approval.

0.6m high brick wall with recessed lighting  
and 1.2m high black finish bow top metal  
rallings above. Please refer to Detail A.

1.2m high black bow top metal  
rallings (and matching gate) with  
hedge screening behind to landscape  
designers specifications all to local  
authority approval.

Communal cycle storage (4no cycles)

Parking bays within tree root protection  
areas to achieve a 'no dig' construction in  
accordance with arboriculturalists drawings and report.

1-4  
4no 2B3P Flats

1000 Communal  
Amenity Space

1.8m high close  
boarded timber fence

Communal bin  
storage

Existing open boarded fence to be  
replaced with 900mm high black finish  
bow top metal rallings to local authority  
approval.

Existing trees  
and shrubs to be  
retained.

Existing trees to  
be retained.

Existing trees  
and shrubs to be  
retained

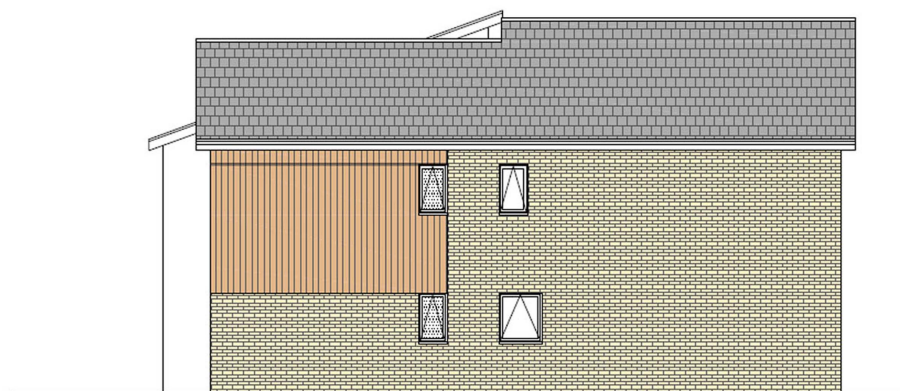




**FRONT ELEVATION**  
(SOUTH)



**SIDE ELEVATION**  
(EAST)



**REAR ELEVATION**  
(NORTH)



**SIDE ELEVATION**  
(WEST)