

Report to Planning applications committee

Item

9 February

Report of Head of planning services

Subject Application no 16/01771/VC - Rouen House, Rouen Road
Norwich NR1 1RB

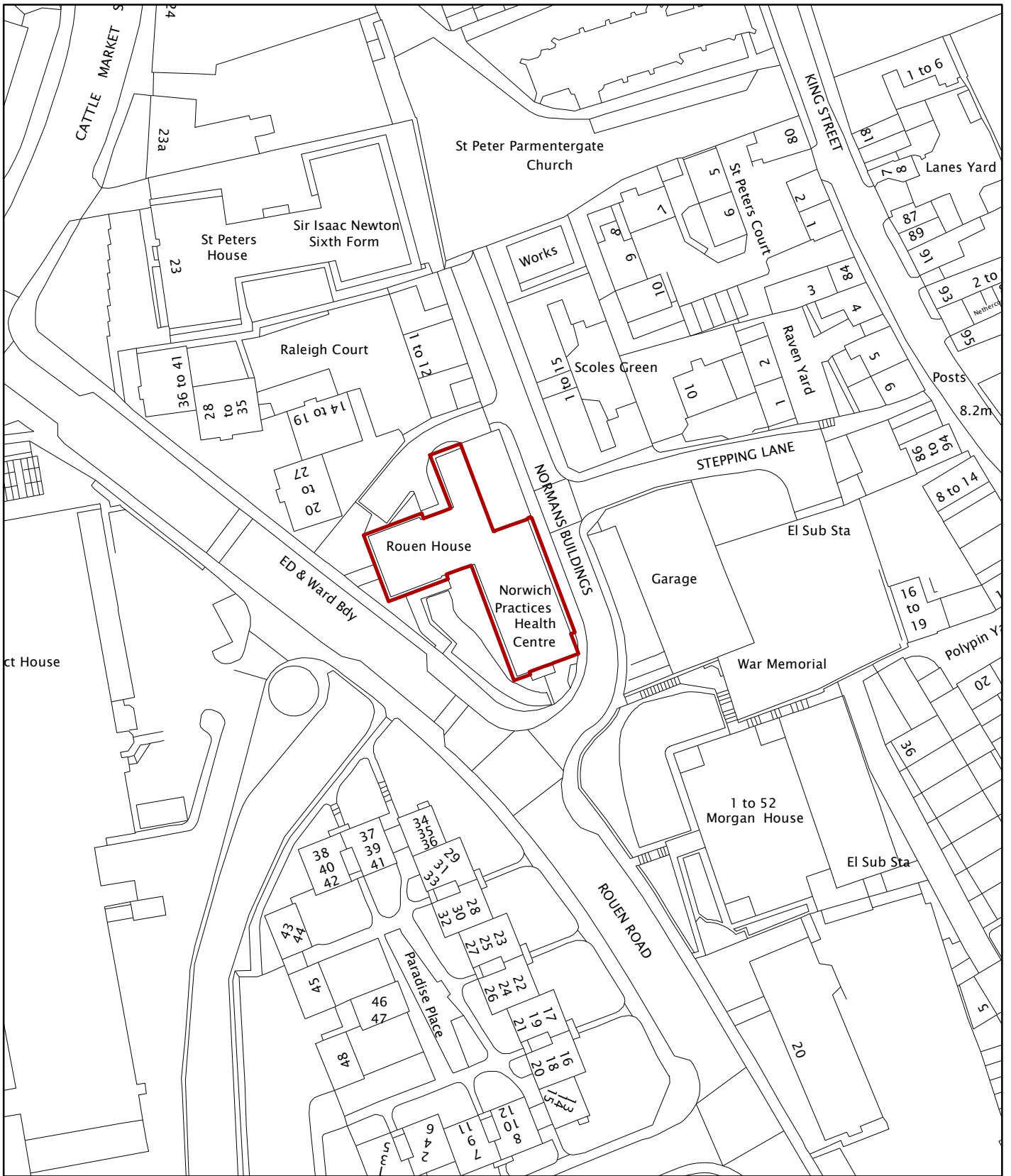
4(j)

**Reason
for referral** Objections

Ward:	Thorpe Hamlet
Case officer	Caroline Dodden - carlinedodden@norwich.gov.uk

Development proposal		
Variation of Condition 3 of previous permission 14/01108/U to allow the GP out of hours service to operate between 18:00 and 08:00.		
Representations		
Object	Comment	Support
3		

Main issues	Key considerations
1 Principle of development	Use of existing ground floor doctors surgery for GP out of hours service
2 Amenity	Potential noise disturbance from visitors, staff and operational vehicles
3 Transport and parking	Use of existing staff and visitors parking arrangements for out of hours service
Expiry date	10 February 2017
Recommendation	Approve



© Crown Copyright and database right 2017. Ordnance Survey 100019747.

Planning Application No 16/01771/VC

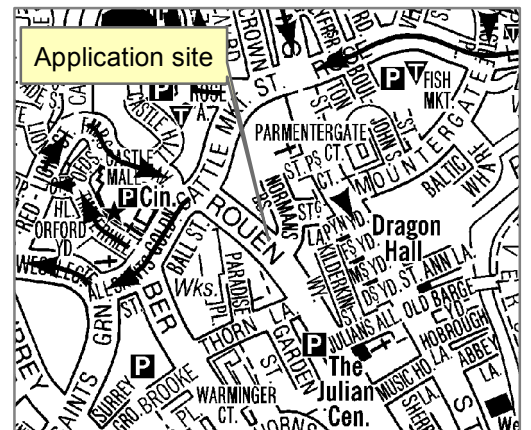
Site Address Rouen House, Rouen Road

Scale 1:1,000



NORWICH
City Council

PLANNING SERVICES



The site and surroundings

1. Rouen House is a five storey office building situated on the southeast side of Rouen road, which was built in the 1970s, at the same time as Prospect House situated to the west, on the opposite side of Rouen Road. A number of residential blocks of flats, such as Raleigh Court, Scoles Green, Morgan House and Paradise Place are located close to Rouen House.
2. The access road named Normans Buildings lies directly to the south of the building and runs along its rear boundary. This road provides access to a vehicle workshop and garage, a small commercial unit and a number of residential flats.
3. Stepping Lane forms a T-junction with Normans Buildings behind Rouen House, which provides access to a private car park, further residential dwellings and provides a pedestrian access to King Street/ Mountergate.

Constraints

4. The building falls within the city centre conservation area, an area of main archaeological interest and an office priority area.

Relevant planning history

5.

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
14/01108/U	Change of use of the lower ground and ground floors from offices (Class B1) to clinic (Class D1).	APPROVED	14/11/2014
15/00042/F	External alterations to entrances and external ramp and provision of plant enclosure.	APPROVED	24/04/2015

The proposal

6. To vary condition 3 of previous permission 14/01108/U to allow the GP Out of Hours (OOH) service to operate between 18:00 and 08:00 from the doctors surgery on the ground floor of the premises.

Summary information

Proposal	Key facts
Transport matters	
No of car parking spaces	8 spaces within and adjacent to the site, 3 additional spaces allocated within nearby private car park.

No of cycle parking spaces	10 existing cycle parking spaces
----------------------------	---

Representations

7. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. Three letters of representation have been received 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	Response
To allow 24 hour operation under this permission would also allow the existing walk-in-centre to operate in the same way, setting a precedent that could transform the Rouen Road/ King Street area from a quiet residential area into a busy 24 hour area, particularly if other businesses chose to operate 24 hours a day.	Main issue 2: Amenity
There is an existing problem with walk-in-centre customers parking in unauthorised places, obstructing and parking on business premises and residential access, which causes much disruption. The proposal will exacerbate the situation.	Main issue 3: Transport
The information provided is incomplete on details about staff, duties and mobile staff and inaccurate with regards to other business operating 24 hours a day in the locality, as this is not the case.	Main issue 2: Amenity
Concern regarding the use of a private car park for operational vehicles, which could cause significant noise nuisance throughout the night, particularly as there are many residences that overlook it on King Street and Rouen Road.	Main issue 2: Amenity Main issue 3: Transport

It is noted that three letters of support were submitted with the application, from the Norwich Clinical Commissioning Group, IC24 (who provide the out of hours service) and the One Norwich Primary Care Leadership Board. The comments state that the combined services would provide a 'health hub' that will reduce pressure on A & E attendances and allow better communication between primary health care services.

Consultation responses

8. 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)

9. No objection on highway/transportation grounds. The provision of NHS services is clearly vitally necessary and out of hours provision is entirely logical.
10. The adjacent highway network has adequate waiting restrictions that are enforceable, and any private land must take their own steps to manage their land as they see fit.
11. The quantum of in person visits to the centre according to the application will be very low and should not cause undue nuisance to local residential amenity.
12. With regard to parking of operational vehicles on site this should in principle be accommodated; the onus is on the applicant to ensure this is achievable.
13. As a city centre location, no on-street parking permits are offered. All staff or visitor parking must be accommodated on street or in adjacent car parks. As this is a mixed use part of the city centre, residents and businesses must co-exist. In such central locations there must be an understanding that activity will occur day and night.

Assessment of planning considerations

Relevant development plan policies

14. **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
 - JCS6 Access and transportation
 - JCS7 Supporting communities
 - JCS9 Strategy for growth in the Norwich policy area
 - JCS11 Norwich city centre
 - JCS20 Implementation
15. **Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan adopted Dec. 2014 (DM Plan)**
 - DM1 Achieving and delivering sustainable development
 - DM2 Ensuring satisfactory living and working conditions
 - DM11 Protecting against environmental hazards
 - DM22 Planning for and safeguarding community facilities
 - DM30 Access and highway safety
 - DM31 Car parking and servicing

Other material considerations

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

- NPPF0 Achieving sustainable development
- NPPF1 Building a strong, competitive economy
- NPPF2 Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- NPPF4 Promoting sustainable transport
- NPPF8 Promoting healthy communities

Case Assessment

17. 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

18. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS7, DM22, NPPF paragraph 70.
19. Planning permission, ref: 14/01108/U was granted at the Planning Applications Committee in November 2014 for the change of use of the lower ground floor of Rouen House to a walk-in health centre and the ground floor to a doctors' surgery. This facility was relocated from level 4 of Castle Mall shopping centre (known as the Timberhill Health Centre) and has been running for approximately 18 months.
20. The proposal seeks to vary condition 3 of the 2014 consent to allow 24 hour operation of the health centre, seven days a week. It would make use of the existing facilities within the ground floor GP surgery at Rouen House. The OOH service is having to move out of its current base at the Bowthorpe Community Hospital site on Bowthorpe Road.
21. Access to the OOH service is telephone based (111 service) and provides an out of hours non-emergency medical service to the public. The service covers Norwich and the surrounding area and overnight shares the wider county with other clinicians based at Thetford, Kings Lynn and North Walsham. After being assessed over the phone, people would either be invited to attend the surgery or alternatively booked for a home visit. The service would operate alongside the walk-in-centre between the hours of 6pm and 9pm and then operate alone through the night until 8am.
22. Normal overnight staffing of the OOH service would be by two mobile clinicians, two drivers, two base clinicians and a receptionist. At weekends and bank holidays, this may be supplemented with an additional clinician and driver and up to two base GP's at the busiest times.
23. Policy DM22 permits and encourages new or enhanced public or community facilities where they are located within or adjacent to the city centre or existing and

proposed local and district centres. The principle of locating a GP surgery and walk-in-centre was approved under the 2014 permission and the policy seeks to support the enhancement of such facilities. As such, it is considered that the principle of enhancing an existing community facility accords with local plan policy DM22.

Main issue 2: Amenity

24. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs –DM2, DM11, NPPF paragraphs 9 and 17.
25. Rouen House is situated near the western end of Rouen Road, approximately 80 metres from the junction with Cattle Market Street and Golden Ball Street. The area has a mix of uses, including offices, a car workshop and showroom and a number of blocks of flats. Whilst it is acknowledged that the background noise level in the area is likely drop at night, it should be borne in mind that the premises is located within the city centre and as such, some noise and disturbance is inevitable in such a central location.
26. Callers to the OOH service would use the main Rouen Road entrance only and entry would be gained via a call button. The service would not be publicised and as explained in paragraph 21, it would only receive callers that have been triaged through the telephone assessment. It is considered that, if members were minded to approve the application, a new condition could be added to ensure that only the Rouen Road entrance was used by visitors to the OOH service.
27. Two objectors are concerned that allowing 24 hour operation by varying condition 3 could also significantly intensify the use of the existing GP surgery and the walk-in-centre on the lower ground floor. Details of average numbers of people seen over the last year at the current Out of Hours site have been submitted and range from 1.3 per hour up to 4.6 per hour. It is stated by the Applicant that these figures are not significantly different on weekend nights. Whilst the information above, including the potential amount of people attending Rouen House, cannot be controlled, it is proposed that a condition be attached to set out the opening times of the ground floor doctors surgery and GP OOH service and that a separate condition for the daytime operating hours of the lower ground floor walk-in-centre be added. This would more accurately control the operating hours of the different services on the ground and lower ground floors.
28. The same objectors are also concerned about potential noise disturbance from the two or three operational vehicles that would be visiting those people who cannot attend the premises, particularly if the vehicles were to be located in a private car park accessed from Stepping Lane, which is overlooked by many residents on Rouen Road and King Street. The proposed parking arrangements are discussed in detail in the Transport section below.

Main issue 3: Transport and parking

29. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS6, DM28, DM30, DM31, NPPF paragraphs 17 and 39.
30. It is considered logical in terms of sustainable travel that the OOH service is located within the city centre, given the population of the city and outer suburbs. Although the service will only be accessible by car for most of its operating time, a city centre location will ensure maximum accessibility.

31. The Applicant anticipates that OOH staff would use the two parking spaces within the rear undercroft and one space at the side of the building. In particular, it is considered that the mobile clinician's vehicles would be parked in the reserved spaces within or adjacent to the building, in order to minimise any potential noise disturbance. Whilst, the use of the private car park on Stepping Lane may not be needed by OOH staff, it is considered that a parking management plan should be submitted to ensure that operational vehicles, in particular, are not parked in the Stepping Lane car park other than in the early evening. As such, a condition should be attached to require the submission of a parking management plan for the OOH service.
32. The objectors state that there is an existing daytime problem from some walk-in-centre callers, who park inconsiderately or obstruct business premises and residents dwellings at the rear, on Stepping Lane and Normans Buildings. It is considered that the on- and off-street parking available on Rouen Road overnight would be sufficient to deal with the likely demand for the OOH service. Given that the entrance to the OOH service would be from Rouen Road, the likely lower number of vehicular movements and those visitors to the OOH service would receive specific parking information before their visit, it is considered that the operation of the overnight service would not exacerbate any existing parking problems during the daytime and early evening.

Compliance with other relevant development plan policies

33. 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	As existing
Car parking provision	DM31	As existing
Refuse Storage/servicing	DM31	As existing
Energy efficiency	JCS 1 & 3 DM3	Not applicable
Water efficiency	JCS 1 & 3	Not applicable
Sustainable urban drainage	DM3/5	Not applicable

Equalities and diversity issues

34. There are no significant equality or diversity issues.

Local finance considerations

35. 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.
36. 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.
37. In this case local finance considerations are not considered to be material to the case.

Conclusion

38. The OOH service is considered to be a vitally important service that would benefit from being based within a centrally located doctors surgery. The proposal to vary condition 3 to allow 24 hour operation is considered acceptable subject to conditions being attached to take account of the different operating times of the ground floor surgery and lower ground floor walk-in-centre, the use of the Rouen Road entrance only for visitors and the submission of a parking management plan.
39. 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. 16/01771/VC - Rouen House, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1RB and grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit;
2. In accordance with plans;
3. The ground floor doctor's surgery shall not be open to the public between the hours of 21:00 and 07:00 other than to provide an Out of Hours GP service in association with the NHS 111 non-emergency service or, with the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority, such other service that may replace it;
4. The walk-in-centre on the lower ground floor of the premises shall not be open to the public between the hours of 21:00 and 07:00 on any day;
5. Members of the public visiting the Out of Hours service operating on the ground floor shall access the premises by the Rouen Road entrance only.
6. Submission of a parking management plan for the Out of Hours service;
7. The on and off-site improvements approved under Application 15/00554/D shall be permanently retained as such;
8. The Travel Information Plan approved under Application 15/00554/D shall be made available to staff and visitors to the site and be reviewed annually;
9. The pedestrian and vehicle signage approved and under Application 15/00554/D shall be permanently retained as such;
10. The off-site highway works approved under Application 15/00554/D shall be permanently retained as such;

11. The cycle storage approved under Application 15/00554/D shall be permanently retained as such;
12. Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order, with or without modification), the lower ground and ground floors of the premises, the subject of this permission, shall only be used as a walk-in health centre and doctors surgery, including GP out of hours service (Class D1) and for no other purposes including any other purpose in Class D1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order, with or without modification).

Informative

The services will not be entitled to business parking permits.

Article 35(2) statement

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 and has approved the application subject to appropriate conditions and for the reasons outlined in the officer report.