

Planning Applications Committee

19 February 2009

Section

Agenda Number:	
Section/Area:	INNER
Ward:	MANCROFT
Officer:	Mark Brown
Valid Date:	26 January 2009
Application Number:	09/00012/U
Site Address:	115 - 117 Castle Mall Norwich NR1 3DD
Proposal:	Change of use from a restaurant (Class A3) to GP-led Health Centre (Class D1).
Applicant:	Mr Richard Brown
Agent:	Mr Richard Silver

THE SITE

The site is located on the fourth floor of the Mall adjacent to and on the same level as the Timber Hill entrance. The unit has a size of 720sqm and is currently in use as a restaurant.

PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant recent planning history

THE PROPOSAL

Change of use from a restaurant (Class A3) to a GP-led Health Centre (Class D1).

CONSULTATIONS

Advertised on site, in the press and adjacent neighbours notified. One letter of objection received raising the following concerns:

- The proposal would lead to a deterioration in the immediate environment for shoppers, visitors and residents and would have a detrimental impact on the areas vitality;
- The use would conflict with the adjacent retail/entertainment area;
- That the centre could be misused by people worse for wear in the vicinity;
- Concerns over adequate parking;
- That a city centre site slightly outside of the main retail/ commercial/ entertainment areas would be more appropriate.

Whilst statutory consultations and neighbour consultations expire on 17 February the press and site notice do not expire until the 25 February. The recommendation below is therefore subject to no further letters of objection being received which raise new material planning objections before the 25 February. If further letters are received which raise new material planning objections, the application will need to be reported back to Planning Committee at the March meeting.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant National Planning Policy
PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS6 – Planning for Town Centres
PPG13 – Transport

Relevant East of England Plan Policy:
Adopted East of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy
WM6 – Waste Management in Development

Relevant Local Plan Policies:
Adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan Saved Policies:
SHO10 – Changes of use in retail frontages in the Primary Retail Area
AEC2 – Local Community Facilities in Centres;
TRA6 – Parking standards – maxima
TRA7 – Cycle parking standard
TRA8 – Servicing provision
TRA11 – Contributions for transport improvements in wider area
TRA12 – Travel Plans for employers and organisations in the City
TRA24 – City Centre Strategy

Principle

The site is located within the Primary Retail Area within which there is a general presumption in favour of retail uses. Saved policy SHO10 deals with changes of use to non-retail uses although only deals with changes to class A2 (financial and

professional services) and A3 (restaurants and café's) and does not specifically restrict non-retail uses outside the defined retail frontage area. This site is not covered by defined retail frontage policy and therefore the percentage test of frontage in retail use does not apply.

PPS6 also sets a presumption in favour of retail development in the Primary Retail Area but not a presumption against non retail uses.

The proposed use falls within Class D1 as a health centre, such uses are assessed against saved policy AEC2 of the Local Plan. This policy sets out a sequential approach to the location of facilities in centres where a need exists. In this case the City Centre is certainly the most sequentially appropriate location for such a use which services the wider Norwich Area. Explanatory text policy AEC5 also welcomes such facilities to address the needs of the increased population of the City.

This is consistent with advice in both PPS6 and PPG13 to locate travel generating activities within central locations which maximise the opportunity to use means of transport other than the car. The site in question, given its location in the primary retail area, is extremely well located in terms of its proximity to public transport facilities.

The objection received to the application raises concerns over the compatibility of the proposed use with the retail and entertainment function of the area and that this incompatibility could have an adverse impact on the areas vitality. There is no evidence to suggest that this would be a problem and no policy basis for the argument. The City centre is an area where a large range of uses exist and operate together and it is to a degree this mix of uses which gives the Centre its vibrancy during all periods of the day. It is not considered that there would be any amenity implications as a result of the proposals. Furthermore, a location outside the retail and leisure areas of the City would be less sequentially appropriate in policy terms and would not have as good links to public transport facilities.

No physical alterations are proposed to any external part of the building as part of these proposals.

Transport

As detailed above the proposed use is well suited to this location and is accessible by a number of travel modes. There is also a good chance of linked trips occurring due to other city centre uses nearby.

Car parking is sufficiently catered for with the Mall multi-storey car park. It will be essential for the Farmers Avenue car park to be open at all times the health centre is open to patients or clients, this should therefore be a condition of any consent. Disabled parking is also provided for within the Mall's own car parks

and a Shopmobility scheme is in operation. On street disabled spaces are available on Ber Street and All Saints Green. Motorcycle parking is available on Farmers Avenue.

It is possible that Health Centre clients may attempt to be dropped off or park up on Timberhill. There are adequate restrictions in place to prevent this, however a Travel Plan should detail measures to discourage and actively improve enforcement of this.

A travel plan would be required under saved Local Plan Policy TRA12. The travel plan should be a condition of any consent and should encourage staff and clients to make use of sustainable transport modes and minimise private car use. The travel plan should provide details of how the following will be dealt with, reviewed and upgraded:

- staff and car parking arrangements;
- visitor cycle parking;
- signage;
- lighting upgrades (around pedestrian entrances and cycle parking areas);
- provision of information on alternative modes to staff and patients.

The data submitted with the transport assessment demonstrates a minimal increase in peak hour trip generation and therefore, subject to the provision within the travel plan, no transport contribution is required.

Servicing will be via the Mall's existing internal service facilities.

Summary

In summary, it is considered that the site is an appropriate central location for a health centre use and that the proposal is in accordance with saved adopted Development Plan Policy. In terms of transport the site is well located for access to alternative modes of transport. A condition of any consent should be the synchronised opening of the centre with the Farmers Avenue car park and the submission of a travel plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

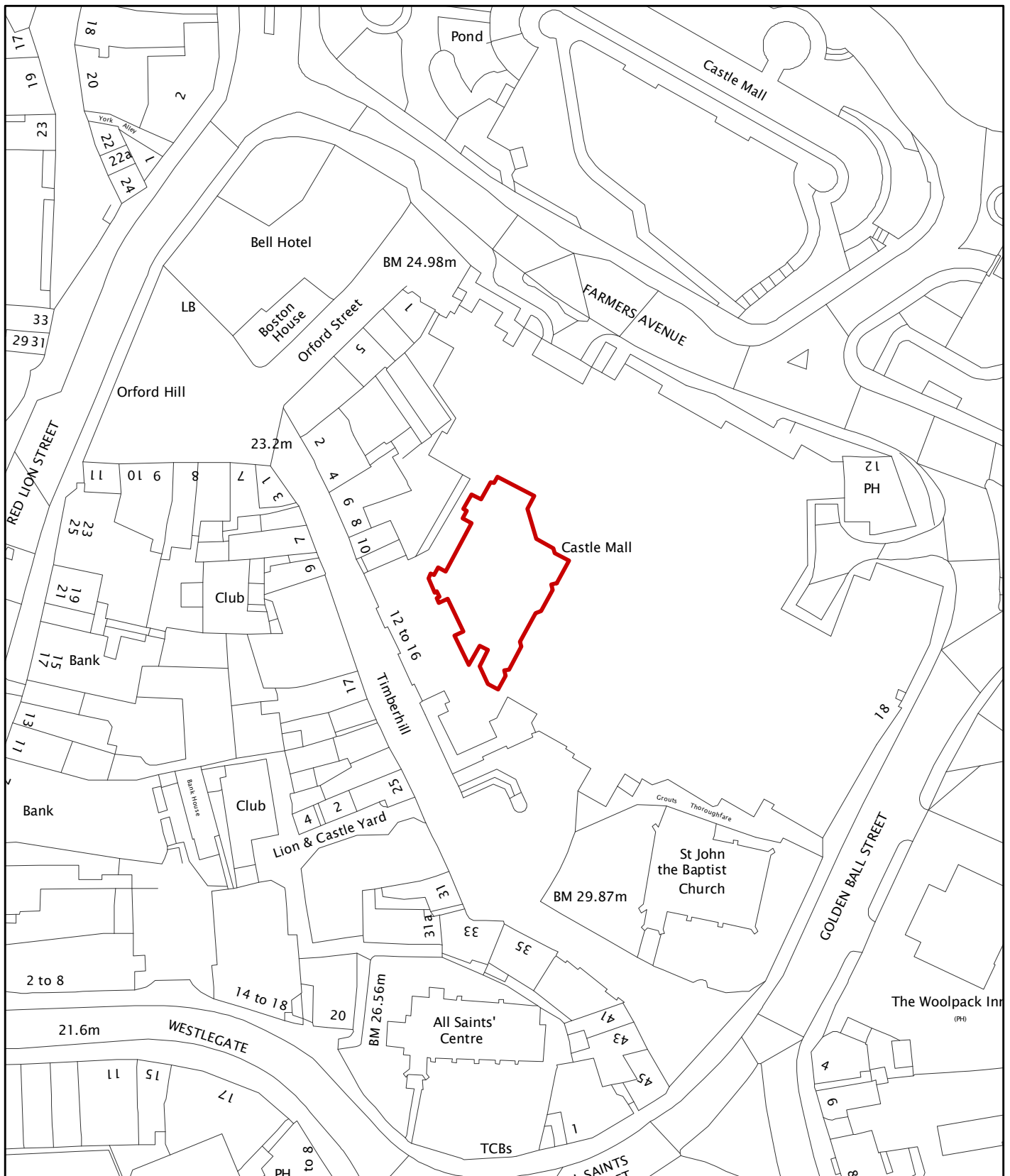
APPROVE PLANNING PERMISSION subject to no further letters of objection being received which raise new material planning objections before the 25 February and subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard Time Limit;
2. Submission of a travel plan within six months of commencement of development.
3. The health centre, hereby permitted, shall not be open to patients or clients at any time when the Farmers Avenue multi-storey car park is closed.

Reason for Recommendation

The recommendation has been made with regard to policy WM6 of the adopted East of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy, saved policies SHO10, AEC2, TRA6, TRA7, TRA8, TRA11, TRA12 and TRA24 of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan, PPS1, PPS6, PPG13 and all other material planning considerations.

It is considered that the site is an appropriate central location for a health centre use and that the proposal is in accordance with saved adopted Development Plan Policy. In terms of transport the site is well located for access to alternative modes of transport and subject to conditions is acceptable in transport terms.



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence No. 100019747 2009

Planning Application No- 09/00012/U
 Site Address - 115-117 Castle Mall, Norwich
 Scale - 1:1000



NORWICH
 City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION
 AND DEVELOPMENT

