

Report for Resolution

Report to Planning Applications Committee
22 October 2009

Report of Head of Planning Services

Subject 09/00721/VC Dowson First School And Mile Cross Middle
School Valpy Avenue Norwich

Item
5(1)

SUMMARY

Description:	Variation of Conditions 8 and 12 of previous planning permission 08/01313/F 'Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment for 47 dwellings for affordable housing and a community room with associated access parking and other works' to remove references to Air Source Heat Pumps.	
Reason for consideration at Committee:	Major Development	
Recommendation:	Approve	
Ward:	Mile Cross	
Contact Officer:	Mr Malcolm Dixon	Senior Planner - Development Telephone No: 01603 212517
Date of Validation:	8th September 2009	
Applicant:	Hill Partnerships Ltd	
Agent:	NPS Property Consultants	

INTRODUCTION

The Site

Location and Context

1. The site, approximately 0.95 hectares, is located in the Mile Cross area of Norwich between Valpy Avenue and Wheeler Road, off Drayton Road, within the Mile Cross Conservation Area. It was previously in use as the Dawson First School and Mile Cross Middle School. However, through the County Council's programme to reorganise schools in Norwich and following a public consultation exercise in 2007, it was concluded that the school was not suited for modern day requirements and that affordable housing would be the most appropriate use for the site.
2. Presently the site is being redeveloped, which has involved the demolition of the school buildings, in order to provide 47 affordable dwellings.

Planning History

3. Planning permission was granted on 14th April 2009 for the redevelopment of the site and construction of 47 affordable residential dwellings.

The Proposal

4. Two of the conditions no.'s 8 and 12 attached to the original planning permission referred to the inclusion of both air source heat pumps and solar panels to contribute towards adequate provision of renewable energy measures as required by policy ENG1 of the East of England Plan (adopted May 2008). However in reviewing these requirements, the applicants have decided to proceed with solar panels only (to be applied to all units) as there are certain benefits i.e. greater energy efficiency savings, no need for a sub-station on site and reduced noise and installation costs. This application therefore seeks to vary the relevant conditions.
5. As a result of the proposed changes, the scheme will also no longer need the 'monodraft' flues previously proposed to serve the air-source heat pumps. These flues will be replaced with traditional, albeit cosmetic, chimney stacks. This change is considered to be a minor alteration which will not have any significant impact on the appearance of the proposed dwellings and is of such a small scale that it is considered that it can be regarded as 'de minimis' and therefore accepted as a minor amendment to the original planning permission should the current application to vary the requirement to install air source heat pumps be approved.
6. The application is accompanied by an Energy Efficiency Statement, Solar Heating Study, Solar Panel Brochure (Viridian) and Design/Access Statement.
7. Assuming that permission will be granted for this scheme then a Deed of Variation is required in connection with the legal 'Section 106' agreement that forms part of the original planning permission. Subsequent to the permission being granted in April, several planning conditions have been discharged and therefore, in some respects, it would not be appropriate to re-impose all the previously imposed conditions as some of these conditions would no longer be required or the wording of them would need to be changed to reflect the work done since the permission was granted.
8. If the proposed variation of the two conditions is considered acceptable, a "revised" version of the previous permission will therefore be necessary to be imposed and linked to the Deed of Variation to render the permission both relevant to the current position and to enable the Local Planning Authority to exercise enforcement control if considered necessary. The obligations within the S106 remain unaffected i.e. provision of affordable housing and financial contributions (to be payable before first occupation) towards children's play and public open space, transportation, libraries and street trees.
9. Although, if considered acceptable, a new permission would need to be issued and new conditions imposed, the scheme is, when taken as a whole, very similar to that approved in April 2009. Consequently, the full range of consultations has not been undertaken.

Representations Received

10. The proposal has been advertised in the press, on site, and adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. No correspondence has been received at the time of writing.

Consultation Responses

11. Conservation and Design Officer: No adverse comments

12. Planning Policy: No adverse comments providing that the 10% Renewable Energy Requirements as required by Policy ENG1 in the East of England Plan are not compromised.

ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Planning Policies

Relevant National Planning Policies

PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development and Supplement on Planning and Climate Change

PPS 22 Renewable Energy

Relevant East of England Plan Policies

ENG 1 Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Energy Performance

ENV7 Quality of Built Environment

Relevant Saved City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan Policies

HBE8 Development in Conservation Areas

HBE 12 Quality of Design

EP22 Residential Amenity

EP18 Energy Efficiency

Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents

Energy Efficiency

Principle of Development

Nature of Development

13. The proposal is, in essence, an extension of a renewable energy scheme already approved in principle as part of the original permission i.e. the proposal involves increasing the number of dwellings with solar panels from 18 to all 47.

14. The supporting information submitted with the application demonstrates that the proposed variation, to remove the air source heat pumps from the development proposal and to increase the amount of solar panels, would still meet the requirements of regional policy ENG1.

15. In policy terms, the proposed variation is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle.

Design

Layout

16. The use and effectiveness of solar panels is reliant on orientation and therefore, although they are positioned on rear elevations where possible, inevitably some are located on front roof slopes to maximise southern aspect. However, only 4 plots fronting and one plot which is orientated side-on to Valpy Avenue would have solar panels located on roof slopes fronting Valpy Road

Form

17. The previously approved panels were in pairs (all located on rear roofs), whilst the new ones are single panels only and therefore, even though some front elevations will be affected, the impact will be minimal. This impact would be reduced further when it is considered that the profile of the panels is such that they would be effectively discretely flush with the profile of the main roofs.

Conservation Area – Impact on Setting

18. The removal of the air source heat pumps and monodraft flues and the replacement

of the latter with conventional chimney stacks are all beneficial in terms of improving the amenities of the development and complementing the character of the Conservation Area in which the site is located.

19. The principle of the use of solar panels has already been accepted as part of the originally approved scheme and the details supplied indicate that the design will be relatively unobtrusive as referred to above.

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

20. The scheme satisfies the energy efficiency measures advocated in the East of England Plan in that savings in the region of 11.24% against a minimum of 10% will be achieved.

Planning Obligations

Proportion of Affordable Housing , Transport Improvements, Open Space and Play Equipment Open Space and Play Equipment Community Facilities and Street Trees

21. As detailed above, it is proposed to vary the legal agreement that forms part of the previous permission to the site to enable the current proposed variations to be covered by the provisions of the existing agreement. Subject to the completion of such a Deed of Variation, in this regard the proposal is considered acceptable.

Conclusions

22. Taking into account the relevant policies and the supporting information supplied with the planning application, it is considered that the scheme is acceptable in terms of energy efficiency, and design and the alteration to the approved scheme as proposed, compared to the previous approval, would have only a limited but acceptable impact on the amenities of the Conservation Areas and neighbouring properties and can therefore be supported.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To approve Application No 09/00721/VC Dowson First School And Mile Cross Middle School Valpy Avenue Norwich and grant planning permission, subject to:

- (1) the completion of a satisfactory Deed of Variation to the S106 Agreement by 1 December 2009 to include the revised version of planning permission reference 08/01313/F and subject to the following conditions:

1. To accord with the approved plans
2. Materials
3. Landscaping
4. Historic reference
5. Surface water drainage
6. Highway/footpath surfacing
7. Provision of north/south footpath link
8. Energy efficiency
9. Availability of roads and footpaths for future residents
10. Availability of service areas and car parking for future residents
11. Availability of cycle/refuse storage for future residents
12. Provision of Solar Panels
13. Fire Hydrant provision
14. Protection of existing trees
15. Remediation Strategy

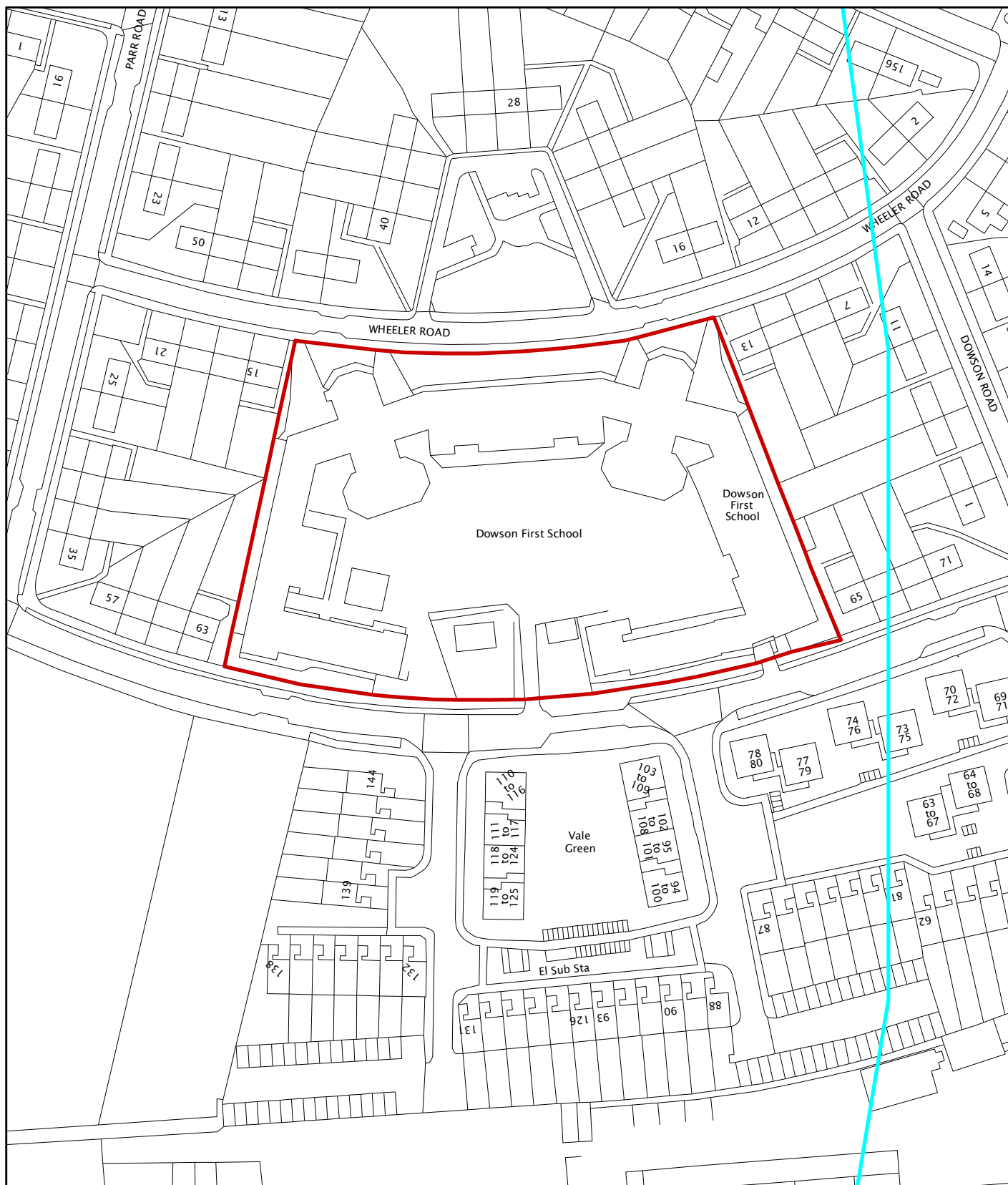
(Reasons for approval:

Taking into account PPS1, PPS22, East of England Plan policies ENG1, ENV7 and

saved policies HBE8, HBE12, EP18 and EP22 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan (adopted 2004), the supporting information supplied with the planning application and all material considerations, it is considered that the scheme is acceptable in terms of energy efficiency, and design and the alteration to the approved scheme as proposed, compared to the previous approval, would have only a limited but acceptable impact on the amenities of the Conservation Areas and neighbouring properties and can therefore be supported.)

(2) where a satisfactory S106 agreement is not completed prior to 1 December 2009 that delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Regeneration Services to refuse planning permission for Application No 09/00721/VC Dowson First School And Mile Cross Middle School Valpy Avenue Norwich for the following reason:

The development would not meet the saved policy requirements of HOU6 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan (adopted 2004) as it would not adequately contribute to the provision of community needs and facilities.



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Planning Application No - 09/00721/VC

Site Address - Dowson First School and Mile Cross Middle School, Valpy Avenue, Norwich

Scale - 1:1250



NORWICH
City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

