

**Planning Applications Committee**  
**30th July 2009**  
**Section B**

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|------------------------|--|
| <b>Agenda Number:</b>  | B4   |
|                        |  |
| <b>Section/Area:</b>   | Inner  |
|                        |  |
| <b>Ward:</b>           | Mancroft   |
|                        |  |
| <b>Officer:</b>        | Mr Rob Parkinson   |
|                        |  |
| <b>Valid Date:</b>     | 9th June 2009  |
|                        |  |
| <b>Application No:</b> | 09/00418/F   |
|                        |  |
| <b>Site Address :</b>  | Garages adj. to 30 Dolphin Grove<br>Norwich  |
|                        |  |
| <b>Proposal:</b>       | Redevelopment of the site for 9 no. flats and 3 no.<br>houses whilst retaining 10 garages. |
|                        |  |
| <b>Applicant:</b>      | Lovell Partnerships Limited  |
|                        |  |
| <b>Agent:</b>          | Richard Pike Associates  |
|                        |  |

**THE SITE**

The application site is located on the north side of the junction of Dolphin Grove and Nelson Street, 50m south of Heigham Street. To the north are rows of terrace houses along both sides of Nelson Street, and the Drayton Caravans Sales site on Heigham Street. To the east is a large area of 1970s-era Council-built flats within distinctive blocks along the remainder of Dolphin Grove. The area to the south of the application site is residential in nature, comprising rows of terrace housing along Nelson Street and the modern Horatio Court development. The west is also residential, but comprises larger semi-detached dwellings along either side of St Bartholomew's Court, leading to St Bartholomew's Park.

The application site is currently occupied by 56 garages rented out to local residents by the City Council. The site is owned by Norwich City Council. The various trees on site are the subject of a tree preservation order (TPO No. 2)

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

An earlier application for residential development was made in December 2008 (App. No. 08/01144/F), for redevelopment with 11 dwellings, comprising 8 flats and 3 houses whilst retaining 10 garages. This was withdrawn in March 2009 to allow further negotiations on the layout and design of the development. The current application is a new proposal that includes an additional apartment unit.

## **PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION**

The site is not allocated in the Replacement Local Plan but has been considered by the Norwich City Council Housing Development Team as being suitable for redevelopment due to the current poor condition and under-occupation of the garages on site. With this in mind the Council undertook public consultation with garage tenants, local residents and ward councillors in June 2008, which received some 40 residents in attendance. As a result of the consultation, the Council agreed to dispose of this site subject to redevelopment retaining 10 garages for local residents to use.

## **THE PROPOSAL**

The scheme involves the demolition of 46 of the existing garages on the site which have access from Dolphin Grove and the redevelopment of the wider site to provide 9 no. flats (comprising 1x 1-bed and 8x 2-bed units) and 3 no. 3-bed family houses and associated parking, whilst retaining 10 garages. The scheme has been revised to improve the relationship between car parking and dwellings, and to revise the layout of the flat block fronting Dolphin Grove, whilst amending the approach to the building design details.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

Advertised in the press, on site and neighbours have been notified.

Five letters of representation have been received from local residents and businesses objecting to the scheme on the following grounds:

- Lack of parking due to more cars being required in the area which already experiences heavy demand from residents at Dolphin Grove and Nelson Street;
- Loss of existing garages resulting in loss of parking spaces;
- Concerns over allocation of remaining garages;
- Health risks from stress and anti-social behaviour;
- Previous concerns over the scheme's designs have not been taken into account;
- Inappropriate design for the area that does not integrate into the surroundings;
- Security concerns from crime incidents at the adjacent Drayton Caravans site and Wrights Mazda garage.

(Any further letters will be reported verbally at the meeting)

**Strategic Housing:** Fully supports this application. The site was identified by the Housing Development Team as an excellent site for the development of affordable housing, due to the poor condition and under occupation of the garages on site. There is a great need for new quality affordable housing in this part of Norwich and the Housing Needs and Stock Condition survey identifying a need for 624 new affordable homes to be developed in Norwich each year. The Dolphin Grove development will go some way to help meet this need. In particular there is a need for larger family houses so the provision of 3 x three bedroom houses is welcomed.

In addition, in order to ensure that there will be no impact on parking a full parking survey was carried out in January – May 2008, prior to the original planning application. This assessment found general available spaces along Dolphin Grove, but notable congestion on Nelson Street, particularly in the evening, and recommended that any development should ensure that parking there is not exasperated. It was also suggested that overspill car parking could even be accommodated in the Dolphin Grove car park.

**Environmental Health:** The site was within the grounds of the former Heigham Hall Hospital and could be affected by contaminated land which could be problematic for residential development. Conditions are suggested for site investigation works and any mitigation measures, as well as details of external lighting to protect residential amenity.

**Anglian Water:** Confirm there is capacity in the sewer and water supply systems to serve this development and associated surface water run off.

**Norfolk Landscape Archaeology:** Despite being within the Replacement Local Plan's Area of Main Archaeological Interest, this site is not considered to require archaeological assessment nor conditions to that effect.

**Natural England:** No comments.

## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **National Planning Policies:**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| PPS1   | Delivering Sustainable Development     |
| PPS1   | Supplement Planning and Climate Change |
| PPS3   | Housing                                |
| PPG13  | Transport                              |
| PPS 22 | Renewable Energy                       |

### **Relevant East of England Plan (May 2008) Policies:**

|      |   |
|------|---|
| ENG1 | Carbon dioxide emissions and energy performance |
| ENV7 | Quality in the built environment                |
| H1   | Regional Housing Provision                      |
| H2   | Affordable Housing.                             |

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| WM6 | Waste Management in Development               |
| NR1 | Norwich Key Centre for Development and Change |

**Replacement City of Norwich Local Plan (Adopted 2004) saved policies:**

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| EP16:  | Water conservation and sustainable drainage systems               |
| EP18:  | High standard of energy efficiency                                |
| EP20:  | Sustainable use of materials                                      |
| EP22:  | Residential amenity   |
| HBE3:  | Archaeological assessment in Area of Main Archaeological Interest |
| HBE12: | High standard of design   |
| HOU6:  | Contribution to community needs and facilities                    |
| HOU13: | Proposals for new housing development on other sites              |
| NE9:   | Comprehensive landscaping scheme and tree planting                |
| SR7:   | Provision of children's equipped playspace to serve development   |
| TRA5:  | Approach to design for vehicle movement and special needs         |
| TRA6:  | Parking standards – maxima  |
| TRA7:  | Cycle parking standards   |
| TRA8:  | Servicing standards   |
| TRA11: | Contributions for transport improvements in wider area            |
| TRA14: | Enhancement of the pedestrian environment and pedestrian routes   |

**Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance (SPD and SPG):**

Open Space and Play SPD – June 2006  
 Transport Contributions from Development SPD Draft – January 2006  
 Trees and Development SPD – September 2007  
 Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy SPD adopted – December 2006

**Principle of Development**

The proposal is one of a number of social housing schemes being progressed on land within Council ownership making use of underused land and redundant garaging within existing housing estates. The scheme will help to meet the local need for affordable housing and contribute to the overall housing target for homes provision in Norwich. The site is in an accessible and sustainable brownfield location and makes more efficient use of urban land than at present, and will promote the objectives of national and regional policy on sustainable development.

**Removal of Garages**

When surveyed on 30th May 2008, of the 56 garages on Dolphin Grove, 23 were found to be void. Many of these garages have been void for over a year, which indicates that demand is falling or that the garages are becoming unfit for purpose. Of the 33 tenants who therefore will need new garages, 23 can be accommodated in vacant garages in the surrounding area within a 10 minute walk of the site. These are at Waddington Street, Browne Street, Clifton Street, Devonshire Street, Goodman Square and Langley Walk. The remaining 10 tenants can then be accommodated in the garages that will remain on site as part of the redevelopment. The remaining garages will be surveyed to assess if they

need refurbishment or complete demolition and replacement, and will be assessed by planning condition.

During construction access to the garages would not be possible and it is understood that the Council (Housing) will look to allocate those residents a new garage temporarily if they so wish. In the event of an approval of planning permission they will work with residents to allocate the garages that will be retained. These will initially be allocated to those residents that most require their cars to be close by through disability or age and if there are still vacancies, the remainder will be allocated based upon length of current tenancy. As garages should be used for the purpose of storing a vehicle only, using them for other purposes would be a breach of the tenancy agreement that can be enforced to minimise strain on public car parking areas.

### **Layout and Design**

It is considered that the development will enhance the surrounding area. At present the unsightly garaging which backs onto Nelson Street creates an unsightly gap in the regular building line of neighbouring terrace houses. A pedestrian link also passes through from Nelson Street along Dolphin Road into the Dolphin flats, which at present has little overlooking because of the garaging, so the surveillance provided by the new flats and houses will significantly improve public safety and has the potential to reduce antisocial behaviour. The proposed design integrates with the existing housing in the area in terms of scale and massing, but still achieves a sense of individuality.

The scheme is arranged within two specific areas of development, separated visually and stylistically, whilst taking account of the constraints of existing trees and public through-routes at the site at present, and making provision for retaining 10 garages. Although retaining these existing garages somewhat restricts the potential to secure an optimal layout and forces a less efficient use of space than if the site were completely vacant, the retained units as proposed are in the most suitable position where they will have less harm on public spaces. The 12 new units proposed on this 0.2 hectare site represent a density of 60 dwellings per hectare which is appropriate to this urban area.

The group of three two-storey terrace houses have been arranged to continue the terrace appearance along Nelson Street, although they are set back from the street frontage 3m further than the existing houses, in order to provide room for the group of 6 no. protected lime trees fronting Nelson Street. The revised design offers a contemporary approach to the existing street-scene along Nelson Street and retains to some extent the rhythm of the existing terraces in its fenestration and scale with traditional style pitched roofs and rear protruding gables. The plans indicate elevation treatments that use facing brick with large areas of rendered panels and some wooden weatherboarding, which are different to the surrounding area. Windows have been provided in the side elevation of the end terrace to avoid any problems from a blank gable end wall, and this is encouraged.

The flats are separated from the terrace houses by a row of retained garages, communal parking for 6 cars and the mature beech tree. The northern edge includes three retained garages and three parking spaces. The layout is felt to clearly differentiate between public and private spaces, improving the sense of identity and improved surveillance, as there is a better relationship between the flats and surrounding open space.

The block of flats uses a similar contemporary design and both the Dolphin Grove road and the rear space benefit from active frontages on both elevations. The three-storey block of 9no flats has a flat front elevation parallel to Dolphin Grove, and a curving appearance when viewed from further along Dolphin Grove. A single-storey spur to the east houses the cycle store. The way in which the flats wrap around the existing space/footpath to provide enclosure and surveillance, whilst at the same time providing an appropriate sense of enclosure to the rear, is considered successful. The design provides transition from the uniformity and rhythm of the Victorian terrace houses along Nelson Street to the later 60's and 70's grids of flats, within a landscaped setting. Fenestrations use the same principles as the new houses, including brick and render panels, and weatherboarding, but provide Juliet balconies over large windows.

There is a clear division/enclosure to provide semi-private space at the rear of the block, which will be confirmed through landscaping conditions. This area effectively forms the front entrance. The layout also has to provide an access route to the retained electrical substation in the north-east corner of the site, as well as a private outdoor drying area along the eastern boundary.

There has been concern amongst neighbours and design colleagues that current drawings indicate that both windows and doors will be uPVC, raising issues of longevity and poor appearance, including an uncomfortable appearance when uPVC is placed alongside timber cladding. It is also felt that front door canopies look out of place. Any approval should use planning conditions to require the mix of materials to be agreed prior to commencement, either through revised window and door materials or rendering treatments. Conditions should cover all materials, rainwater goods, eaves and verge detailing, window detailing, canopy or porch detailing, landscaping and surface materials.

Neighbour representations have expressed concern that the design approach is too contemporary and does not respect the street scene as other schemes along Nelson Street have done recently. These comments are valid and noted – for example, recent builds have included arched lintels and larger Victorian-style windows, but as the area is not a Conservation Area, the applicant can not be required to adopt a certain design. It is still considered that allowing a modern approach, with finishing details carefully controlled by planning condition, will enhance the area in accordance with national policy and local design ambition (PPS1, HBE12). It should be noted also that recent developments along Nelson Street have been voluntarily designed in a pastiche manner (particularly Horatio

Court) and welcomed by the Council, whereas the scheme of seven flats at the junction of Nelson Street / Heigham Street was actually allowed on appeal.

In accordance with Code for Sustainable Homes and Lifetime Homes standards, the development has been designed to include disabled access and adaptability for residents. The Building for Life assessment rating scored 15 out of 20 (average).

### **Transport, Access and Parking**

Many local facilities are available in the area within walking and cycling distance. Frequent public transport routes exist along Heigham Street, Old Palace Road and Dereham Road. A large permit-only car park is available for existing residents of Dolphin Grove, to ensure that only local residents can park in the immediate area, though it experiences periods of vacancy and peak capacity use. The entrance to Dolphin Grove and all of Nelson Street are non-permit parking, which are noted to be close to capacity.

The layout of the scheme proposes one car park space for each of the flats in a communal parking area, in accordance with policy TRA6 of the Local Plan and a space for one of the terrace houses within its own curtilage, which means that two of the terraces will need on-street parking. The parking survey described above suggests this is possible, and transportation colleagues are satisfied with the arrangement, given local public transport links.

Conditions for reinstating pavements and double yellow lines should ensure that the area becomes both more pedestrian-friendly and less hazardous when parking at peak times. Details of refuse and cycle storage will also need to be provided through conditions.

### **Trees and Landscaping**

All the trees on site are covered by a tree preservation order (TPO 2) and details of demolition will need to be carefully considered in order to avoid damage to roots and canopy. Six of the seven lime trees (which are described in the survey as being of moderate quality) along Nelson Street will be retained. Although one is lost through housing construction, the equivalent or improved level of biomass will be provided through landscaping details. The larger high quality beech tree at the centre of the site is also protected and should be able to prosper and add enhanced landscape value to the scheme following removal of the 7 no garages currently beneath the canopy. The other high quality tree, an oak at the eastern end of the site will also be retained, and protected through design of the block of flats which skirts the root protection area.

There is potential for tree shading to lead to increased requests for repeat pruning due to the proximity of new dwellings to existing trees. Any future works to trees that transfer out of Council ownership will still be controlled by TPO requirements, but any management of trees adjacent to the site, connected to

this development, may incur costs and as such some tree management funding will be required from the land sale.

A pre-development site meeting between the Council's Tree Protection Officer and the developer's site agent & consulting arborist should be included by condition. Conditions will also specify that all elements of demolition and construction should be in full compliance with the approved Arboricultural Implications Assessment, to include details of footpath designs.

Hard landscaping materials will be finalised by condition to improve permeability, and to improve pedestrian routes to the main entrance at the rear as well as a revised route to guide bikes out of the store to avoid shortcutting over the rear lawn. Soft landscaping will also include some planting at the front of the flats to define their defensible space.

A management plan for the areas of open space and the on-site trees will also need to be secured through planning conditions.

### **Environmental Issues**

The development will use photo-voltaic tiles on the flats (contributing to 10.2% of energy generation), and solar thermal panels on the houses (comprising 23.5% energy contribution). Overall, these measures will provide 14.7% on-site renewable energy, in accordance with the requirements of current local plan policy (EP18) and East of England Plan RSS policy ENG1. The scheme proposed is of a high quality and will meet both Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and the Lifetime Homes Standard, and will be about 25% more energy-efficient than current building regulation standards. The exact details of their appearance can be subject to condition. Internal fixtures, fittings and the materials used in construction will further improve the CO2-reduction performance.

The environmental improvements will enhance the landscape and ecology of the area. Details of the boundary walls and fencing will be required by conditions, which should help address problems of crime incidents at adjacent sites.

Refuse facilities indicated include adequate facilities for all dwellings, with details to be finalised by condition. Conditions are also suggested for site investigation works and any mitigation measures, as well as details of external lighting to protect residential amenity.

### **Planning Obligations**

The Strategic Director for Communities and Neighbourhoods has confirmed that, for the sites developed through the Partnership Framework, the affordable housing would be required through the conditions of sale of the site. The Housing Service will pay the financial contributions for local facilities arising from the development when the land is transferred to the Housing Association. This



undertaking applies to all of the current applications and a formal Legal Agreement would not therefore be necessary to achieve these requirements.

The development provides for areas of on-site open space to the north east corner and south east corner of the site, including an improved path through to adjacent residences in Dolphin Grove, additional tree planting and protection of the existing trees, and enhancements to the pedestrian environment of the area. These items can be secured by planning condition.

The terms of the land sale and redevelopment, the scheme will also provide:

- financial contributions for improvements to sustainable transport (£3,385) as required by Replacement Local Plan policy TRA11;
- off-site childrens playspace contributions (£15,456) based on provision of 14 child bedspaces in the scheme, as required by Replacement Local Plan policy SR7; and,
- an appropriate level of tree management funding for trees in Council ownership that may need treatment as a consequence of the new development (£ tbc).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

APPROVE PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit

### **Prior to demolition**

2. Site investigation works;
3. Any mitigation measures or further works shall be implemented prior to commencement of development, in accordance with an agreed scheme;
4. Survey of garages to be agreed;
5. Garage replacement or refurbishment plan to be agreed;
6. Finalised Arboricultural Impact Assessment to be agreed;
7. All elements of demolition and construction should be in full compliance with the approved AIA;
8. Prior to demolition, a pre-development arboricultural site meeting needed;
9. Demolition and construction management plan to be agreed;

### **Prior to commencement of development**

10. Engineering specification for footpaths in root protection areas, to be agreed;
11. Detailed landscape planting scheme to demonstrate enhanced biomass;
12. Plans to details methods to re-instate footways as necessary;
13. Details of external lighting, including security lighting, to be agreed;
14. Details of facing materials and appearance detailing to be agreed in writing, to include:
  - a. windows;

- b. doors;
  - c. cladding and/or rendering;
  - d. brickwork materials;
  - e. rainwater goods;
  - f. roofing eaves and verge detailing;
  - g. canopy or porch details for flats and terrace houses;
  - h. all roofing materials;
  - i. materials, appearance and positioning of photovoltaic tiles and solar thermal panels;
  - j. details of all walls and fences, to show improved security.
15. Details of car parking, access and hard surfacing materials;
16. Prior to development a site meeting between the Council's Tree Protection Officer and the developer's site agent & consulting arborist is needed;

### **Prior to first occupation**

17. Requirement to reinstate double-yellow lines across existing entrances;
18. Open space management plan to be agreed;
19. On-site tree management plan to be agreed;
20. All bin stores to be provided and ready for use;
21. All cycle stores to be provided and ready for use;
22. Landscaping to be provided in accordance with an agreed plan, to include following details:
- a. semi-private space at the rear of the block;
  - b. surface materials;
  - c. fencing, railings and enclosure details;
  - d. hard landscaping details;
  - e. details of improved surface permeability and soakaways;
  - f. footpath routing and open space layout;
  - g. planting around the site, to include proposals for planting along the frontage to the open space / footpath area;
23. Protection of new planting for next five years and replacement if necessary;
24. Car parking management plan, to include allocated spaces for residents.

The recommendation has been made with regard to the provisions of the development plan, including policies ENV7, ENG1, H1, H2, NR1 and WM6 of the adopted East of England Plan (May 2008), saved policies EP16, EP18, EP20, EP22, HBE3, HBE12, HOU6, HOU13, NE9, SR7, TRA5, TRA6, TRA7, TRA8, TRA11 and TRA14, national guidance PPS1 and Supplement to PPS1, PPS3 and PPG13, and all other material considerations.

On balance the scheme is not considered to cause a detrimental impact to the neighbouring residential area and the scheme is considered acceptable. The development proposes additional housing in a mix and range of styles that will improve housing supply for the City, through redevelopment of a brownfield site in a sustainable and accessible location that is considered acceptable for

residential development. Subject to the satisfactory completion of the above conditions, the development will provide a high standard of design that is appropriate to this part of the City and which will enhance the surrounding area, providing sufficient on-site facilities and amenity and making provision for necessary community facilities in the local area.



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Planning Application No- 09/00418/F

Site Address - Garages adjacent to 1-30 Dolphin Grove

Scale - 1:1250



**NORWICH**  
City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION  
AND DEVELOPMENT

