



Planning applications committee

10:30 to 12:00

29 January 2015

Present: Councillors Gayton (chair), Sands (M) (vice-chair), Ackroyd, Blunt, Boswell, Bradford, Button, Herries, Jackson, Neale and Woollard

Apologies: Councillor Grahame

1. Declaration of interests

Councillor Ackroyd declared that she would vacate the room during consideration of item 5 (below), Application no 1401780F – Land adjacent to 36 Sunningdale, Norwich, because she could be perceived to have a predetermined view because two of the objectors were known to her.

Councillor Boswell declared an other interest, during discussion on Application 1401413F Emmanuel House, 2 Convent Road, Norwich, NR2 1PA (item 3 below), because he had attended functions at 20 Unthank Road.

2. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2015.

3. Application no 1401413F Emmanuel House, 2 Convent Road, Norwich, NR2 1PA

(Councillor Boswell declared an other interest in this item.)

The planner (development) presented the report with the aid of plans and slides.

A resident and the resident/proprietor of 20 Unthank Road, also known as “The Norwich Retreat”, addressed the committee with their concerns about the proposed change of use for the former office buildings. They explained that the premises at 20 Unthank Road was used for respite, healing and meditation, and provided services for vulnerable groups in a sustainable location. The garden and conservatory was an important part of the business and despite its location was quiet and peaceful. The change of use of Emmanuel House to student accommodation was considered to be detrimental to the amenity of 20 Unthank Road as the two communities had opposing needs. Councillor Little, local member for Town Close ward, also addressed the committee and said that the peace of the rear garden of 20 Unthank Road was a valued asset and its living and working conditions would be adversely affected by the proposal and therefore contrary to DM2 and the National planning policy framework (NPPF).

The planner responded to the issues raised by the speakers and referred to the aspect of the peace and tranquillity of the rear garden of 20 Unthank Road and pointed out that it was in an edge of city location and situated between two main roads. The site was an ideal location for the proposal and it was possible to mitigate potential noise. Members were advised that if this application was not approved the applicant could change the office use to residential under permitted development rights and there would be no opportunity for the local planning authority to control the use. Although students could be noisy there was nothing to say that other groups of residents would not generate noise.

Discussion ensued in which the planner and the senior planner (development) referred to the report and answered members' questions. Members expressed concern that the needs of the current occupiers of 20 Unthank Road had not been given sufficient consideration and were advised that conditions relating to landscaping and the management of the site could be amended to mitigate concerns about noise and loss of amenity, such as: boundary treatment; the provision of planters to break up the space on the car park and courtyards, to make them less accessible; and the provision of a gate on the pathway to the cathedral. Members considered that there needed to be more information on the management of the site and its tenants. Members asked questions about the arrangements for on-site warden cover and whether it would be on a 24 hour basis. They were advised it had been considered but removed as a condition given the uncertainty about whether it would be feasible. The committee requested more detail on this point for the next meeting.

Councillor Sands moved and Councillor Boswell seconded that the committee deferred consideration of this application to give the developer an opportunity to liaise with officers and the occupiers of no 20 Unthank Road to mitigate concerns about noise from the proposal.

RESOLVED, with 9 members voting in favour (Councillors Gayton, Sands, Ackroyd, Blunt, Boswell, Button, Herries, Neale and Woollard), 1 member voting against (Councillor Bradford) and 1 member abstaining (Councillor Jackson) to defer consideration Application 1401413F Emmanuel House, 2 Convent Road, Norwich, NR2 1PA to a future meeting.

4. Application no 1401881A – Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich, NR1 1RE

The planner (development) presented the report with the aid of plans and slides, and referred to the supplementary report of updates to reports circulated at the meeting.

A member of the Norwich Society addressed the committee and outlined the society's concerns about the use of neon signs in the city and that the proposed sign on the front façade was too imposing and out of keeping with the Bernard Meadows' sculpture. He said that sign 1 was too large, sign 3 intrusive and ugly and that sign 5 on Rouen Road was unnecessary. The committee was advised to defer consideration so that other solutions could be explored with the applicant.

The agent explained the rationale behind the application and said that Prospect House was the company's head office and that since it had changed its name the signs no longer represented the company and its other publications.

Discussion ensued in which members expressed some concern about an increase in neon signs in the city. The planning team leader (development) pointed out that one of the signs proposed by the applicant was outside the red line on the plan and that the committee should defer consideration to enable this error to be rectified by the applicant.

The planner and the planning team leader referred to the report and answered members' questions and members then commented on each of the proposed signs to give the applicant an indication of what could be acceptable. The committee was advised that the wording of the signage was red to reflect the company's logo and that the company could remove the existing signs at any time without permission. Some members considered that the Archant signage would be more acceptable if it were copper coloured to complement the sculpture at the front of the building. Another member said that he considered that signs 2 and 4 were acceptable but not 3 and 5.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to defer consideration of Application no 1401881A – Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich, NR1 1RE to a future meeting to allow the applicant to submit the correct site plan and for further negotiation about the proposed signs.

5. Application no 1401780F – Land adjacent to 36 Sunningdale, Norwich

(Councillor Ackroyd, having declared an interest, left the meeting for this item.)

The planner (development) presented the report with the aid of plans and slides. He referred to the supplementary report of updates to reports which was circulated at the meeting and contained a summary of additional information received from the applicant. An informative was recommended to assist the developers conduct site operations in a safe and neighbourly manner.

The planner answered members' questions about the engineering works to protect the roots of a mature tree. The council's tree protection officer would monitor the works on site during construction.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to approve application no. 14/01780/F - Land Adjacent to 36 Sunningdale, Norwich and grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit;
2. In accordance with plans
3. In accordance with the arboricultural method statement and tree protection Plan
4. Pre-commencement meeting and arboricultural supervision
5. Details of water conservation measures.

Article 31(1)(cc) 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 above.

Informative: Site operations to be conducted in a safe and neighbourly manner.

(Councillor Ackroyd was readmitted to the meeting at this point.)

6. Application no 1401757F – Land north of 2 Primrose Road, Norwich

The planner (development) presented the report with the aid of plans and slides and answered members' questions. Members were advised that the impact of the development to the rear of 27 and 29 which had been allowed on appeal had been taken into account in the officer assessment of the proposal.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to approve application no. 14/01757/F - Land North of 2 Primrose Road, Norwich and grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit;
2. In accordance with plans;
3. External materials (including samples), windows, doors, dormer, rainwater goods;
4. Landscaping scheme (to include details of access surfacing);
5. Bin and cycle store details;
6. Water conservation measures;
7. Removal of permitted development rights for extensions, outbuildings etc;
8. No site clearance between March to September;
9. Provision of a bat box.

Article 31(1)(cc) 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, following negotiations with the applicant and subsequent amendments at the pre-application stage the application has been approved subject to appropriate conditions and for the reasons outlined in the officer report.

4. Performance of the development management service: progress on appeals against planning decisions and planning enforcement action for quarter 3, 2014-15 (1 October to 31 December 2014)

The planning team leader (development) presented the report and referred to the supplementary report of updates to reports which was circulated at the meeting.

Members commented on the reports and noted that the temporary permission for the Norwich Family Life Church to use premises at Mason Road had expired and asked for further information on enforcement and whether there has been any progress in providing a new church at the Heartsease Lane site.

RESOLVED

- (1) to note the report;
- (2) ask the planning team leader to provide information to members on the use of Mason Road by the Norwich Family Life Centre.

CHAIR