

Planning Applications Committee

19 February 2009

Section C

Agenda Number:	C9
Section/Area: I	INNER
Ward:	MANCROFT
Officer:	Steve Kenny
Valid Date:	1 January 2009
Application Number:	08/01354/U
Site Address :	Car Park On Former EEB Site Duke Street Norwich
Proposal:	Retrospective application for use of site as a temporary car park (150 cars).
Applicant:	Mr Shapoor Naghshineh
Agent:	Mr Shapoor Naghshineh

THE SITE

The application site is located behind the old Eastern Electricity Office (EEB) buildings on the corner of Duke Street and Charing Cross. The old EEB buildings are due to be demolished as part of a major redevelopment of the site.

The site is located within the City Centre Conservation Area

PLANNING HISTORY

Use of the site as a temporary car park was originally granted in October 2000 under application number 4/2000/0546/F, this permission expired 31st October 2001. Permission was subsequently renewed by 3 applications on a yearly basis until the most recently approved application, when a 2 year period was granted under application number 04/00968/F. This expired on 31 January 2006. The last application made for use as a car park on site was refused in March 2006 on the

grounds that it was contrary to Policies TRA20 and TRA21 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004, Policy N10 of the Norfolk Structure Plan and Policy 32 of the Norwich Area Transportation Study and that it would prejudice the development of the site for residential use. This decision was initially appealed but withdrawn by the appellant before determination.

There have been 2 applications to firstly convert and part rebuild the site for residential purposes, this application was approved in 2001. More recently application numbers 08/00743/F and 08/00742/C sought to demolish and develop the site with a mixture of uses including retail and residential. This application was approved, pending completion of a Section 106 agreement by this committee on 2nd October 2008.

THE PROPOSAL

Retrospective application for use of site as a temporary car park (150 cars).

CONSULTATIONS

Neighbours: Advertised on site, in the press and adjacent neighbours notified. Two letters of support for the temporary use from local businesses. Whilst 1 merely commends the application, the second supporter, a local business owner states the convenience of a surface car park that accommodates small commercial vehicles and that is located close to the city centre should along with its temporary nature should outweigh the Councils policies.

County Council Highways: Object to proposal on grounds that proposal appears to be prejudicial to the satisfactory functioning of the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Local Plan Policies:

Relevant National Planning Policy

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development

PPG13 – Transport

Relevant East of England Plan Policies:

ENV7 – Quality in the built environment

Relevant Local Plan Policies:

Adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan Saved Policies:

TRA3 – Model shift measures in support of the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS)

TRA21 – Tariffs on car parks in City centre

TRA22 – Information for drivers on car parking

TRA24 – City centre strategy

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance (SPD and SPG):

The Norwich Area Transport Strategy (October, 2004)

Principle

The Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS) was reviewed in 2004 and is a joint strategy between Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council, Broadland and South Norfolk District Councils. The strategy provides the detailed policy background to transport within the Norwich area. The strategy seeks to cater for growth in travel demand, whilst maintaining or improving the quality of the built environment and supporting the economic growth of the area by accommodating the growth in demand for trips by means other than the private car.

NATS gives considerable emphasis to measures to promote a shift of modal choice from the car to walking, cycling and public transport. NATS policies 8 and 32 are critical to the assessment of this application. These seek to improve accessibility by accommodating growth by means other than the car and state that parking provision in the City Centre will be limited to the replacement of existing provision.

This is consistent with saved policies TRA3, TRA21 and TRA24 of the Local Plan which seek a modal shift away from the car and seek reduced intrusion of the car into the City Centre and the objectives of PPG13.

City Centre parking should support its retail and leisure functions. Commuting causes peak hour traffic congestion, and should be accommodated within the urban area by public transport, walking and cycling, and outside the urban area through the provision of long-stay parking at 'Park and Ride' sites. The policies have been successful and have actually resulted in a small reduction in traffic entering the City Centre, despite the huge amounts of development that have taken place.

Furthermore, the strategy is underpinned by review of City Centre car parking, which concludes that currently there is an oversupply of parking in the City Centre (even taking account of the cap in Policy TRA21). This is demonstrated by the current competition between car park operators that is providing City Centre parking at levels substantially below 'breakeven' taking into account the cost of the land, construction and operation.

Although this site has had the benefit of temporary planning permission for car parking in the recent past, car parks such as this will only worsen the situation. They undermines not only the overall transport strategy, and increase traffic levels causing even more congestion in peak periods, but also undermine the operation of the 'Park and Ride' service.

Even if the car park were operated on a short-stay tariff it would add to the supply of parking in the City Centre, forcing further competition, and undermining the operation of legitimate, and properly managed and secure provision, whilst also encouraging a generally more car-dependant culture. This will have a knock on effect of reducing reliability of public transport and make cycling and walking less pleasant alternatives, whilst adding to calls for ever increasing vehicular capacity on the road network.

The last of the previous temporary permissions for use as a car park (04/00968/F) expired on 31st January 2006. A further application was made in January 2006 and refused in March 2006. This application was refused on grounds that the proposal

would undermine the Council strategy that long stay parking for City Centre uses will increasingly be met through the provision at Park and Ride sites and was therefore considered contrary to Policies TRA20 and TRA21 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004, Policy N10 of the Norfolk Structure Plan and Policy 32 of the Norwich Area Transportation Study, it was also felt that the proposal would prejudice the residential development of the site.

The site was used as an unauthorised car park in 2006 and 2007. An enforcement case was instigated and the use decreased to a private car park in September 07. The site was closed and the use ceased completely in January 2008.

Since early December 2008 the site has again been used as a car park and this use is therefore unauthorised. Enforcement action by way of the issue of an enforcement notice requiring cessation of use is considered essential, Should you agree, this notice will accompany the decision notice.

Conclusion

During some seasonal periods it may seem that parking in the City Centre is in short supply, in reality, there are very few days in the year when there is not an oversupply.

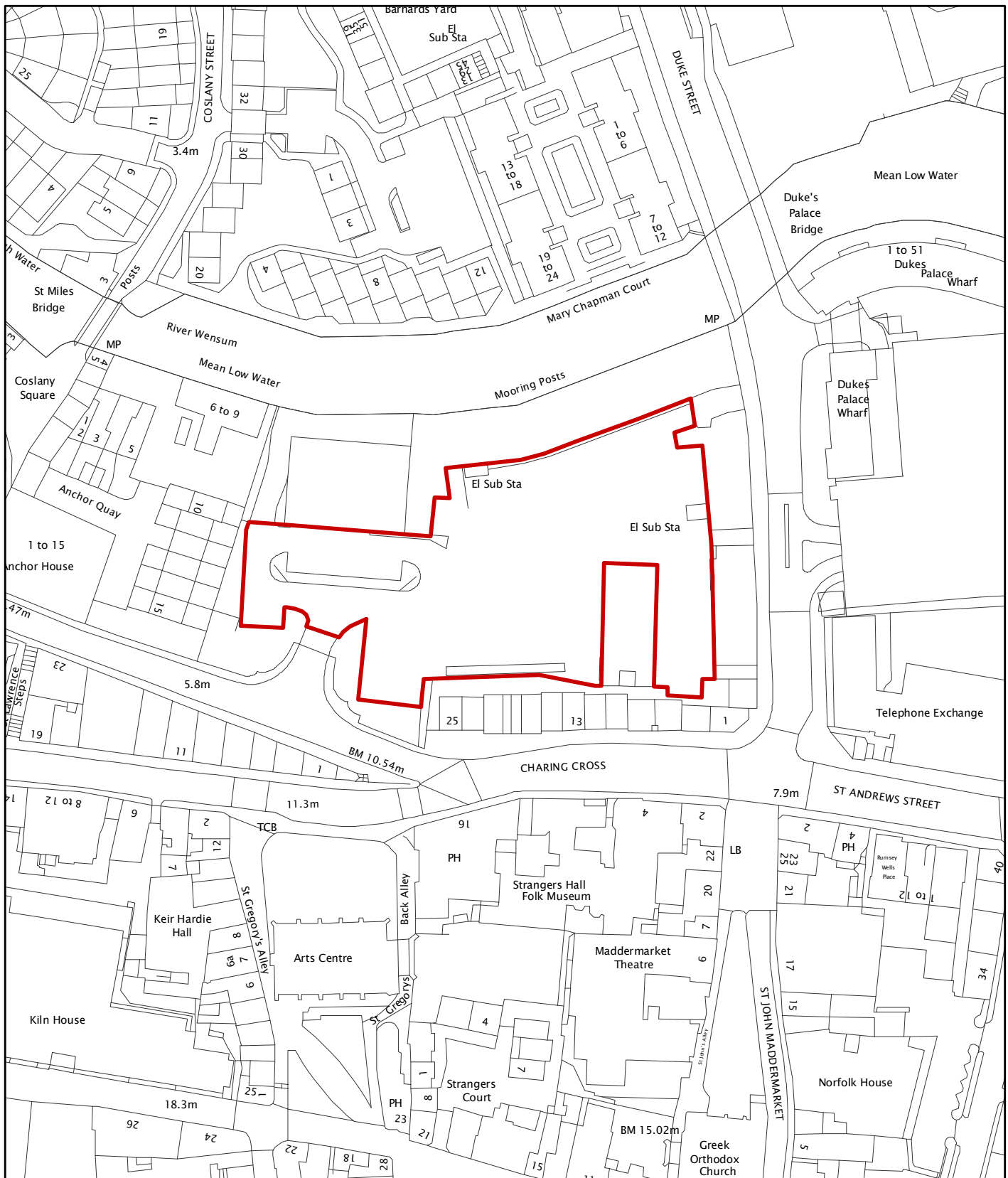
Parking Policy is a critical part of the overall transport strategy for the City. Additional temporary car parking will not only undermine the operation of legitimate, and properly run and maintained facilities (including 'Park and Ride'), but also increase congestion in a City where the opportunity to facilitate increased car use is not only undesirable, but severely restrained. The proposal is therefore contrary to saved policies TRA3, TRA21, TRA22 and TRA24 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan and the objectives of PPS1, PPG13 and the NATS to promote a shift of modal choice from the car to walking, cycling and public transport.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION on the following grounds:

1. The continued use of the site as a temporary car park would undermine the transportation strategy for Norwich to promote a shift of modal choice from the car to walking, cycling and public transport and as such would be contrary to saved policies TRA3, TRA21, TRA22 and TRA24 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan and the objectives of PPS1, PPG13 and the Norwich Area Transport Strategy.

(2) AUTHORISE enforcement action under s.172 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to secure the cessation of the unauthorised use.



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Site Address - Car Park on Former EEB Site, Duke Street, Norwich

Scale - 1:1250



NORWICH
City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

