

Report for Resolution

Report to Planning Applications Committee
Date 10 February 2010
Report of Head of Planning Services
Subject 10/02112/F Garages opposite 86 - 92 Pilling Park Road,
Norwich

Item
5(3)

SUMMARY

Description:	Redevelopment of site to provide 2 No. houses.
Reason for consideration at Committee:	Objection
Recommendation:	Approve subject to conditions
Ward:	Crome
Contact Officer:	Mr Mark Brown Senior Planner 01603 212505
Date of receipt:	2nd December 2010
Applicant:	Orwell Housing Association Ltd
Agent:	Barefoot & Gilles Ltd

INTRODUCTION

The Site

Location and Content

1. The site is located to the south of Pilling Park Road at the corner where the road splits towards Mousehold House. The site is occupied by 14 garages in two rows; these are accessed from Pilling Park Road to the north of the site. To the east of the site are three storey flats at William Mear Gardens which have a drying area also used for bin storage within the southern half of the site in question. To the west of the site is a green space occupied by two oak trees and a holly. Further trees are located to the north and east of the site, including a number sycamore trees, hawthorns and a further young Oak to the southeast. Two storey terrace houses occupy the north side of Pilling Park Road opposite the site.

Planning History

2. There is no recent planning history on the site.

Equality and Diversity Issues

3. There are not considered to be any significant equality or diversity issues.

The Proposal

4. The proposal is for the demolition of the garages and erection of two three-bed semi-

detached two-storey properties. Private gardens are proposed to the rear with one parking space for each dwelling accessed from the south of the site. Following consultation with local residents the plans have been amended to re-provide a new drying area and bin store for the adjacent flats at William Mear Gardens.

Representations Received

5. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. It should be noted that for the purposes of section 5A of the Listed Building and Conservation Area Regulations 1990, as amended, it is not considered that the proposals would affect the setting of a listed building or the character or appearance of a conservation area. Five letters of representation have been received citing the issues as summarised in the table below.

Issues Raised	Response
Loss of parking/garaging storage areas.	See paragraphs 12-14
Insufficient parking.	See paragraphs 12-14
One resident has raised concerns that alternative garage provision will be too far away particularly due to disability.	See paragraphs 12-14
Highway safety concerns of increased traffic, particularly due to the sharp bend in the road at the junction of Wellesley Avenue and Pilling Park Road.	See paragraph 23
Concern that wildlife that uses the site is not mentioned such as foxes, deer, moth and birds.	See paragraphs 26-29
Buildings would detract from nearby woods.	See paragraphs 16-20
Timber cladding is not in keeping with the area.	See paragraphs 16-20
Devaluation of property.	This is not a material planning consideration.
Loss of drying and bin storage area.	This has now been re-provided in the revised proposals – see paragraph 21
Proposals would have a negative impact on trees.	See paragraphs 24-25
Loss of amenity due to loss of green space.	See paragraphs 28-29

6. Pre-application consultation has been undertaken by the applicants who have advised that, at the time of submitting the application seven responses had been received. Four responses were in support of the proposals although one suggesting the properties should face south. Three responses objected to the proposals raising concern over the loss of garaging/parking and lack of alternative parking provision.

Consultation Responses

7. **Norwich Society** – The Committee viewed the various garage sites that are to be developed for “affordable” housing. As the ratio of garages occupied is low it seems sensible to use the land for housing. As a committee, we generally approve of the designs, though they are safe without much inspiration on the whole.
8. **Environmental Health** – The residential end use is a sensitive one, and there is a possibility of contamination due to the current or previous uses. I have therefore recommended conditions for a site investigation to determine this. I have also suggested

conditions for light nuisance, along with informatives for the demolition and construction phases.

9. **Transport** – No objection to this small infill development.

10. **Conservation** – The site is in an unusual location in that it is the historic grounds of Mousehold House. The road which passes to the south was once a track, and this appears to be a key approach to the house, creating an impressive arrival vista and views through the wooded landscape towards the house with glimpses of the portico. The track to the left (now Pilling Park Road) appears to be the ‘trades’ entrance as such, passing by the farmhouse and coach sheds and arriving at the side of the house.

Although the site is some distance from the house, the rear of the proposed dwellings could be considered to affect the setting of Mousehold House as it fronts what was once an important track leading to the house and can therefore be considered to impact on views of the building. With regard to the existing site, the landscaping is of importance to west is of importance and it is good to see that this is being retained. The appearance of the existing garages is both very detrimental to landscape and views of the house along the approach road, so their demolition is welcomed.

With regard to the design of the two dwellings, the form and appearance is generally acceptable. The use of timber for the 1st floor is also appropriate for a landscape setting. I would however prefer to see more appropriate vernacular building materials for the walls and roof. Considering the location of the dwelling within the historic setting of the hall, it may be worthwhile considering whether this could be designed taking a design cue from the historic estate cottages. The house could be a red brick blend with a pantile or slate roof. Although the red brick may be considered quite striking in a wooded area...seeing houses such as these is very much a characteristic of historic estate cottage housing in the estates around Norwich. The Piling Park houses are also built in traditional forms with vernacular red brick and roughcast render materials so the building will not appear incongruous within the streetscene.

Because of the vista towards Mousehold House, it is important to consider the treatment of the rear boundary of the building and how this will impact on approach views. I think the design as it stands is appropriate, but there needs to be some care taken in terms of landscaping etc so that it does not appear too suburban, but is appropriate for a wooded drive. It would also be appropriate to have some form of hedging/shrubs in front of the timber fence to the side as this will appear quite a blunt treatment at the rear of the landscaped space. It may be preferable omitting the path running directly adjacent to the fence altogether as this could lead to antisocial behaviour...for such a small space and so little potential use I question whether the path is necessary...this could be a potential cost saving devoted to better landscaping.

Lastly, although quite a simplistic house form, the quality of such a building can be let down by poor detailing of the fenestration, eaves and verges, and I would therefore recommend that these are conditioned.

11. **Tree Protection Officer** – Of the HCA sites under consideration this is the site with the more significant arboricultural Implications due to the small development window of opportunity available in terms of tree constraints. This raises the importance of the tree protection issues in terms of a pre development site meeting, pre-emptive investigations, supervision of demolition and build phases, strict compliance with the AIA/AMS/TPP, and having an auditable system of arboricultural site-monitoring. However it should also be

noted that the resulting juxtaposition of dwellings to trees will, I anticipate, result in associated issues such as shading, leaf fall & dominance; the forecast of these issues arising should be raised as a serious consideration by Orwell housing.

Notwithstanding the above the development is achievable.

It is crucial to the future well-being of the adjacent trees that pre-emptive site investigations are carried out in order to be able to map the existing root morphology so that special engineering can be factored in to the foundation specification if the tree root growth pattern dictates that this will be necessary; in this regard ground penetrating radar is a system that has previously proved successful on development sites in Norwich. Ideally the results of such an investigation should be known before determination of the application so that a fully informed decision can be made. This is something that could be conditioned but the investigation must inform any approved foundation design and Orwell housing should be aware of this so that associated costs can be factored in.

If permission is granted there should be a pre-development site meeting in order to discuss and raise the profile of the tree protection issues. Conditions should be applied to ensure that:-

- Appropriate root investigations are carried out in order to ascertain the actual root morphology within the identified RPA [if not carried out before determination].
- Where appropriate, special engineered foundation specifications and related method statements are produced to the approval of the council.
- All demolition is carried out in full compliance with the AIA/AMS/TPP
- All construction is carried out in full compliance with the AIA/AMS/TPP and any associated supplementary method statements.
- All demolition and construction operations within RPAs to be carried out under arboricultural supervision.
- There is a system of arboricultural site supervision to be employed to the councils approval.

ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Planning Policies

Relevant National Planning Policies

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS1 Supplement Planning and Climate Change
PPS3 – Housing
PPG13 – Transport

Relevant Strategic Regional Planning Policies

ENV7 – Quality in the Built Environment
T8 – Local Roads
T14 – Parking
WM6 – Waste Management in Development

Relevant Local Plan Policies

NE2 – Woodland Protection
NE4 – Street Trees
NE7 – Other Sites of Nature Conservation Interest

NE9 – Comprehensive Landscaping Scheme
HBE8 – Conservation Areas
HBE12 – High Quality of Design
HBE19 – Design for Safety and Security
EP1 – Contaminated Land
EP18 – High Standard of Energy Efficiency
EP20 – Sustainable use of materials
EP22 – High Standard of Amenity
HOU13 – Proposals for New Housing Development
SR3 – Publically Accessible Recreational Open Space
TRA5 – Approach to Design for Vehicle Movement and Special Needs
TRA6 – Parking Standards – Maxima
TRA7 – Cycle Parking Standards
TRA8 – Servicing Provision

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

Trees and Development SPD – September 2007

Principle of Development

Policy Considerations

12. The principle policy considerations are the loss of the garaging and an assessment against saved local plan policy HOU13 for the provision of new housing. National policy in PPG13 has recently changed to remove the requirement for councils to limit the number of parking spaces allowed in new residential developments and placing the onus on councils and communities to adopt policies appropriate for their area. Currently saved and adopted local plan policies remain in place which set out maximum parking standards for the City. There are no planning policies which seek the retention of parking or garaging provision. However, it is appropriate on a case by case basis to consider whether the loss of the garaging provision would have other material or detrimental effects on the locality.
13. Based on the information submitted with the application, of the 14 garages on site 8 spaces are tenanted and 6 are void. It is suggested that alternative parking provision would be offered to existing tenants at either Mousehold House (three space garages) or William Mear Gardens (15 space garages). The former is almost directly opposite the site and the latter approximately 200m from the site. In this case it is not considered that the loss of parking would lead to any significant demonstrable harm in planning terms. Current local plan parking policies seek to minimise the reliance on the private car and whilst matters of highway safety and congestion are material planning considerations, it is not considered in this case that the proposals would have any significant detrimental impacts in these areas.
14. A neighbour has raised concern over the loss of garaging and that alternatives will be too far away. However as detailed above there is alternative garaging provision within close proximity to the site, some of which is almost immediately opposite the site.
15. In terms of policy HOU13, the site is a brownfield site located to the east of Norwich within reasonably easy walking distance of the Plumstead Road district centre. The site is in a sustainable location for new housing with good links to the City Centre along Plumstead Road. The proposals are at a density of 38 dwellings per hectare which given the constraints of the site in terms of trees is considered to be sufficient. The proposals are therefore considered to be acceptable in principle subject to assessment against the criteria in policy HOU13, other development plan policies and material considerations.

Layout and Design

16. The layout has been largely dictated by trees adjacent to the site. In particular the root protection areas of one oak tree and two sycamore trees project significantly into the site. The layout involves the positioning of two semi-detached dwellings facing north onto Pilling Park Road. Their proposed location ensures that the buildings are as far away from the adjacent trees as possible. Locating the dwellings to the south of the site as suggested by one resident would have greater implications for adjacent trees. A more detailed assessment of the impact on the proposals on adjacent trees is given below.
17. The proposals would result in the green space to the west of the site on the corner of Pelham Road being increased in size by approximately 6m. The dwellings have been proposed to the eastern side of the site to increase the adjacent green space and reduce impact on trees.
18. Private amenity space is provided to the rear of the dwellings, along with parking areas and a replacement drying area and bin store for adjacent residents.
19. The elevations are fairly simple in form, two storeys in height with pitched roofs. The area is varied in character, originally being woodland on the approach to and within the grounds of Mousehold House. Whilst the site is of historical significance within the grounds of Mousehold House, given the distance from the house and the new housing estate in between, it is not considered that the proposals affect the setting of the listed building. There has been various post war housing development in the form of three storey flats and terrace housing in the area. Following comments from the conservation officer the proposals have been amended to indicate a red brick (as opposed to buff) with pantile roof, timber cladding and timber windows. These are considered to be appropriate for the woodland setting of the site, however further specific details of external materials should form a condition of any consent. Lion Wood opposite the site is also within the Thorpe Ridge conservation area, the boundary of which is marked by the trees to the south of the site, on the opposite side of the Road. It is not considered that the proposals would affect the conservation area's character or appearance. A further assessment on the implications of the proposals for Lion Wood is given at paragraphs 28 and 29 below.
20. The size of the development is below the threshold for an energy efficiency statement, however the design and access statement submitted with the application details that the applicants are committed to achieving code for sustainable homes level 4. Part of the proposals to achieve this include solar thermal panels on the south elevation, specific details of which should be conditioned to ensure their projection from the roof slope is limited.

Access Parking and Servicing

21. Provision is made for one parking space per dwelling accessed to the rear of the site. The properties have private gardens with bin storage and a shed for cycle storage. Following consultation the proposals have been amended to re-provide a drying area and bin store for the adjacent properties, to the southeast corner of the site. Further details of the materials and provision of this space prior to first occupation of the units should form a condition of any consent.
22. The green space at the corner of Pilling Park Road and the driveway to Mousehold House is proposed to be increased in size as part of the proposals. This corner has been subject to misuse in recent years as a result of parking in the green space which could have negative implications for the trees within it. In order to help resolve this issue the

proposals include provision for timber knee rails around the corner.

23. A resident has raised concern over highway safety due to the potential increase in traffic along Pilling Park Road and the sharp turn in the corner at Wellesley Avenue and Pilling Park Road. Given that the proposals are for the removal of 14 garages and replacement with two dwellings it is not considered that the proposals would result in any significant increase in vehicular movements. The distance between the Mousehold House drive junction of Pilling Park Road and corner in question at Wellesley Avenue is approximately 60m, if driving with due care and attention this distance should not cause any problems in terms of highway safety. Neither of these junctions is being altered as part of the proposals and it is not considered that the possible small increase in traffic at these junctions would have any detrimental impact on highway safety.

Trees

24. The demolition of the garages will remove large areas of hard surfacing from within the root protection areas of the trees. This could lead to the long term enhancement of the green spaces and trees adjacent to the site.
25. As parts of the proposed dwellings are located within the root protection area of trees adjacent to the site it will be necessary to map the existing root morphology of trees to inform a foundation design which would need to be agreed via condition. The tree protection officer has advised that the proposals will be achievable without detriment to the trees, subject to detailed conditions being imposed on any consent.

Ecology

26. An ecological appraisal has been submitted with the application; this does not identify the specific presence of any protected species on site and the proposals are considered to have a neutral impact subject to the retention of adjacent trees. However the report does recommend a further survey of the mature oak tree for the presence of bats prior to the development taking place. It is recommended that such a survey is conditioned and if the presence of bats is found that mitigation measures are agreed.
27. A number of other mitigation and enhancement measures are suggested within the ecological report. In particular it is recommended that external site lighting is directed downwards and away from adjacent woodland. New and native landscaping with berry bearing species is suggested within the ecological appraisal and this can be achieved via landscaping conditions. It is also suggested that informative notes are used to provide further advice on site clearance.

Adjacent Woodland, Publically Accessible Open Space & County Wildlife Site

28. The site is adjacent to Lion Wood which is a County Wildlife Site, publically accessible open space and woodland. The site and immediately adjacent trees are outside these allocations, although the site does form part of the context to Lion Wood. The woodland would not be directly affected by the proposals and there would be no loss of open space or trees as a result of the proposals subject to arboricultural conditions. The proposals would increase the green space at the corner of Pilling Park Road and the driveway to Mousehold House and via the provision of further new landscaping it is considered that the proposals would have the potential to enhance the woodland.
29. The tree protection officer has requested that provision be made for two street trees at the site under saved policy NE4. As such a financial contribution should be sought towards the provision and maintenance of two trees at the site at a cost of £1,218. Given the relatively small amount in question it has been agreed, in this case, that the contribution can be secured via the sale of land contract should planning permission be granted. Whilst this method would not be possible on schemes with more significant obligations, it is possible in this case due to the small amount in question and would avoid the cost and time involved with drafting and completing a S106 agreement.

Amenity

30. The proposed dwellings face north towards Pilling Park Road. There are no neighbours to the south or west of the site. Properties immediately to the north are approximately 23m away (window to window) which is considered to be more than adequate in this location to avoid issues of overlooking or any significant implications of overshadowing. To the southeast are flats at William Mear Gardens which would be unaffected in terms of overshadowing and as there are no windows at first floor level in the east elevation, they would not be affected in terms of overlooking.
31. In terms of the amenity of future residents of the properties themselves, the dwellings are of a good size for three bed properties at 88m². Sufficient private external amenity space is provided via the proposed rear gardens. The adjacent trees would result in overshadowing of external amenity areas and windows particularly in the rear of the property, although this is south facing and is not considered to reduce amenity below acceptable levels.

Contamination

32. A desk based assessment has been submitted with the application which identifies potential pollutants at the site. Given the sensitive residential end use it is considered necessary to condition a site investigation and a scheme of remediation and mitigation to be carried out as appropriate.

Conclusions

33. The proposals provide for the redevelopment of an existing brownfield garage site. Of the 14 garages on site, 8 are tenanted and 6 are void. There is alternative garaging provision within close proximity to the site and as such it is not considered that the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on highway congestion. The site has good connections to nearby services and is considered to be an appropriate location for new residential development. The design and layout are considered to be acceptable and provide for the retention of adjacent trees subject to arboricultural

conditions. Landscaping can provide for the enhanced setting of the adjacent green space and woodland. It is not considered that there are any significant detrimental impacts to the amenities of adjacent properties.

The drying area and bin store for the adjacent flats has also been re-provided. As such the proposals are considered to be acceptable subject to the conditions listed in the recommendation below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To approve Application No (10/02112/F Garages opposite 86 - 92 Pilling Park Road, Norwich) and grant planning permission, subject to the following conditions:-

1. Standard time limit;
2. Development in accordance with the submitted plans;
3. Submission of details for the construction of foundations to be informed by root investigations to ascertain root morphology, compliance with the arboricultural implications assessment and method statements, all works within root protection areas to be carried out under arboricultural supervision and an audible system of arboricultural monitoring to be put in place.
4. Provision of the sheds, parking areas and refuse storage areas prior to first occupation;
5. Details for materials and boundary treatments for the new drying and bin storage area for adjacent flats, and provision of the area prior to first occupation.
6. Submission of a landscaping scheme including:
 - hard and soft landscaping details including site frontages and details of all boundary treatments;
 - details for the adjacent green space including new planting and boundary treatments;
 - details of external lighting;
 - details of the future management and maintenance of the landscaped areas;
 - provision of landscaping prior to first occupation.
7. Details of bricks, tiles, solar panels and timber cladding to be used in the development;
8. Site contamination investigation and assessment to be carried out and if contamination is found a scheme of remediation and mitigation to be agreed and carried out. Should during development, contamination not previously identified be found development is to cease pending details to deal with contamination;
9. Submission of a further bat survey to identify if there is the presence of bats within the adjacent oak tree and if so details of mitigation measures to be agreed prior to commencement.

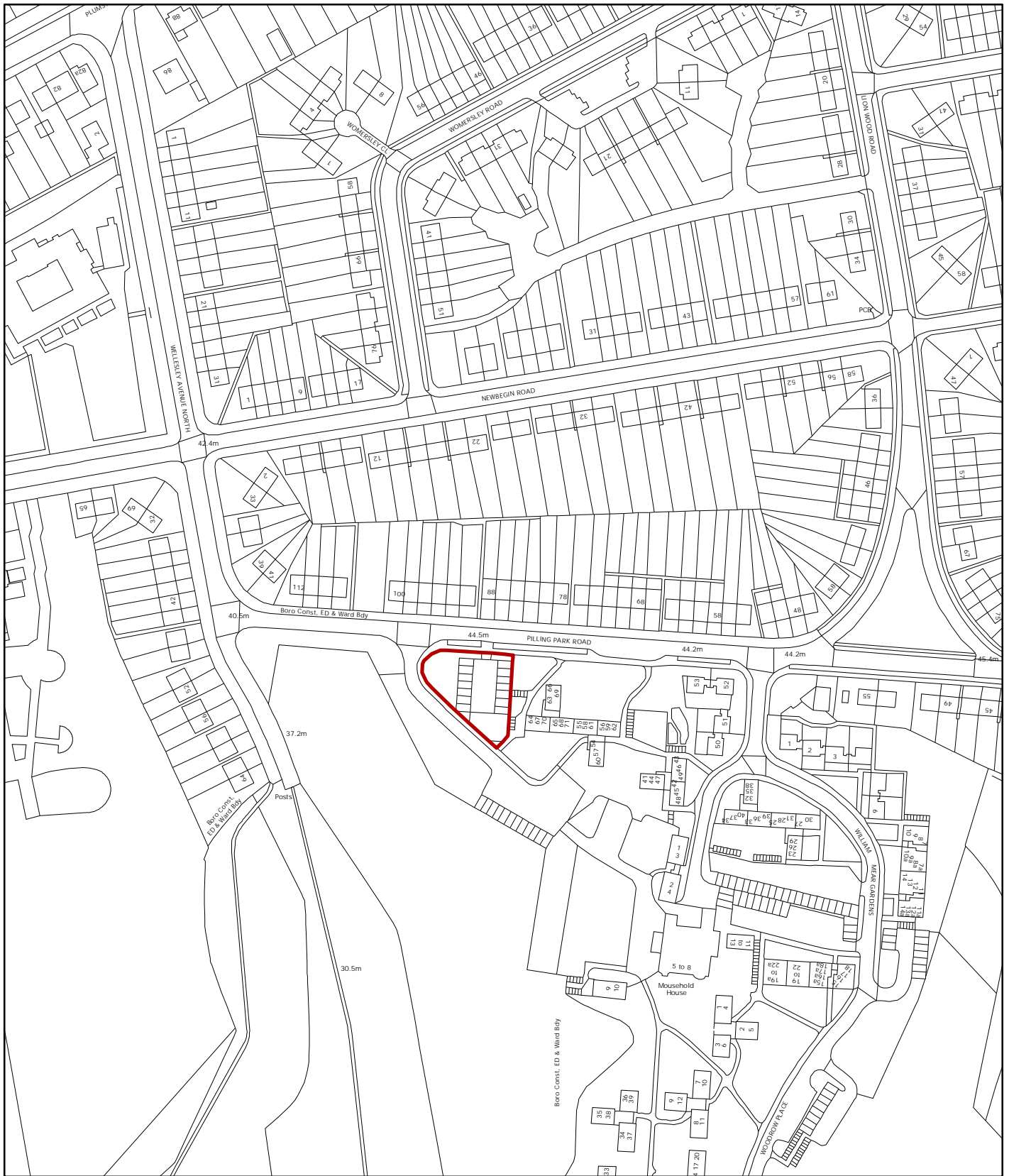
The following informative notes should be appended to any consent:

1. Considerate construction and timing to prevent nuisance;
2. An asbestos survey should be carried out;
3. Materials removed from site should be classified and disposed of at suitable licensed facilities;
4. Site clearance to have due regard to minimising the impact on wildlife.

(Reasons for approval: The decision has been made with particular regard to PPS1, PPS3, PPG13, policies ENV7, T8, T14 and WM6 of the adopted East of England Plan and saved policies NE2, NE4, NE7, NE9, HBE8, HBE12, HBE19, EP1, EP18, EP20, EP22, HOU13, SR3, TRA5, TRA6, TRA7 and TRA8 of the adopted City of Norwich

Replacement Local Plan.

The proposals provide for the redevelopment of an existing brownfield garage site. Of the 14 garages on site, 8 are tenanted and 6 are void. There is alternative garaging provision within close proximity to the site and as such it is not considered that the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on highway congestion. The site has good connections to nearby services and is considered to be an appropriate location for new residential development. The design and layout are considered to be acceptable and provide for the retention of adjacent trees subject to arboricultural conditions. Landscaping can provide for the enhanced setting of the adjacent green space and woodland. It is not considered that there are any significant detrimental impacts to the amenities of adjacent properties. The drying area and bin store for the adjacent flats has also been re-provided. As such the proposals are considered to be acceptable subject to the conditions imposed)



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Planning Application No - 10/02112/F

Site Address - Garages opposite 86-92 Pilling Park Road

Scale - 1:2,000



NORWICH
City Council

PLANNING SERVICES





