

Planning Applications Committee
19 February 2009
Section C

Agenda Number:	C4
Section/Area:	OUTER
Ward:	WENSUM
Officer:	Mark Dennett
Valid Date:	30 December 2008
Application Number:	08/01322/F
Site Address :	Vikings Venture Scout Hut Adjacent To 420 Dereham Road Norwich NR5 8QQ
Proposal:	Erection of three storey building comprising eight apartments, with new vehicular access from Dell Crescent.
Applicant:	Mr Andy Fisher
Agent:	Mr Mark Ashurst

THE SITE

The application site is vacant and approximately square, with a 34 m. frontage to Dereham Road to the north, the curtilages of flat blocks in the recently completed 'Bovis' development to the east, the flank end of a three storey flat block along with its car parking area to the west and the side boundary with the house at 1, Dell Crescent to the south. There is a drop of 1-2m. between the ground level of the latter and the application site. The site was formerly occupied by a scout hut, which has now been demolished. The site is otherwise soft-surfaced and has a number of trees on its periphery.

PLANNING HISTORY

08/00633/F - Redevelopment of site to provide a block 9 No. apartments and associated parking and access. (WITHDN - 10/09/2008)

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the erection of a three storey building comprising eight apartments, with four ground floor garages, four other car parking spaces being laid out on a hardstanding. All the flats comprise two bedrooms. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site would be from Dell Crescent, shortly before the end of this cul-de-sac. An additional pedestrian access from Dereham Road is proposed. The building line on the Dereham Road frontage would be marginally forward of the flat block to the west and slightly behind the flat block to the east.

The proposed block would have a shallow pitched roof, with a projecting gable facing Dell Crescent. The main facing material would be a red brick, with some buff brick detailing and an element of timber cladding on the north elevation. Roof tiles would be grey. Covered cycle storage is provided within the vehicular hardstanding. The parking areas will be lit by street lighting. The refuse bin enclosure abuts the Dereham Road frontage; there is a pedestrian only access on this frontage.

CONSULTATIONS

Residents- there have been 10 letters of objection, all from residents of Dell Crescent; grounds of objection raised are:

- additional traffic on Dell Crescent (prefer access to be from Dereham Rd.)
- under provision of parking on application site.
- loss of trees
- concern at structural integrity of retaining wall between 1, Dell Crescent and application site.

Norfolk Landscape Archaeology- note that there has been a previous evaluation here: condition not required; seek informative to advise applicant of possible flint workings on the site.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant National Planning Policies:

PPS3- Housing
PPG14- Development on Unstable Land.

Relevant East of England Plan 2008 policies:

ENV7- Quality in the built environment.

Relevant Local Plan Policies:

Adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan Saved Policies.

HOU1- Provision of new housing to meet needs.

HOU13- Proposals for new housing development on other sites.

AEC3- Loss of buildings for community use.

NE9- Comprehensive landscape scheme and tree planting.

EP2- Testing for ground stability conditions.

EP16- Water conservation and sustainable drainage systems.

EP18- High standard of energy efficiency for new development.

EP22- High standard of amenity for residential occupiers.

TRA5- Approach to design for vehicle movement and special needs.

TRA6- Parking standards (maxima).

TRA7- Cycle parking standard.

TRA18- Major road network.

Principle

There are no planning records for the 'scout hut' that formerly occupied a small part of the site. According to the applicants it was a 1950s building. It is assumed that it was a single storey building of lightweight construction; only a concrete base remains on site. The applicants say the building was removed some years ago. Whilst local plan policy AEC3 offers some protection to buildings in community use, that protection does not extend to seeking to retain the use, irrespective of whether or not there is a standing building. The applicants say that 'The proceeds of sale from the site will be used for the improvement of other existing Scout properties and the development of better Scouting facilities in the area.' As there is no longer a community building on site there is no objection, in principle, to the site being put to an alternative use.

The application site is now entirely surrounded by residential development, the site to the east on the Dereham Road frontage, formerly occupied by a petrol filling station, having been recently redeveloped for housing. There is not considered to be any planning reason why the site should not be used for housing purposes.

Access

The issue referred to more than any other by the residents objecting to the scheme concerns the proposal to provide vehicular access to the scheme via Dell Crescent. There is an existing set of gates on the northern frontage of the site, along with a dropped kerb, indicating that vehicular access to the 'scout hut' was from Dereham Road. In practical terms it would be possible to access the proposed development from Dereham Road, however this is a principal highway defined as being part of the major road network where local plan policy TRA18 states that new access direct to the major road network '..will not be permitted

unless there is no practical alternative.' The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the main roads work efficiently, in order to encourage or direct traffic to them rather than smaller roads. Were the existing Dereham Road access to be used the policy would not technically be breached, nevertheless the proposed development is likely to generate more traffic than the scout hut and it would be undesirable for this to go directly onto Dereham Road.

Dell Crescent is a short and not particularly wide cul-de-sac. It services 44 residential premises: 8 houses and 36 flats in two separate blocks. The proposed flat block would increase the number of residential premises serviced by the road by 18%. It is not considered an unreasonable level of increase of traffic to the road. Because the hammerhead at the end of the Dell Crescent cul-de-sac directly abuts the application site no substantive works outside the site boundaries are required to link the road and site. However, because of the difference in levels between Dell Crescent and the site (1-2M.), the access road would be ramped within the site.

Parking

Some residents are concerned that the level of car parking provision is inadequate and would give rise to parking in Dell Crescent. There are 4 garages and 4 other spaces proposed: 1 space per two bedroom flat. The provision equals the maximum allowed under the Council's adopted parking standards: any more spaces would breach the standard (set out in policy TRA6 of the adopted local plan). Any person seeking to park in Dell Crescent would find it difficult to do so other than at risk to the safety of their vehicle.

Trees & Landscaping

An Arboricultural Implications Assessment has been prepared for the site. There is one tree classed as B considered worthy of retention, on the Dereham Road frontage: this to be kept. Other trees within the site, all around the edge and probably self-seeded, are considered to be poor quality and are proposed to be removed and replaced. There are two class A beech trees on the verge between the site and Dereham Road. Conditions requiring a detailed tree planting scheme to be submitted and for tree protection measures to be undertaken during construction are recommended. A submitted landscape plan shows new planting around the site periphery and turf elsewhere, excluding footpaths and vehicle hardstanding.

Boundary treatments

Boundary treatments are not detailed in the application and approval should be subject to a condition that boundary proposals be submitted for approval. The site is currently secured on all sides by chain-link fencing. The boundary with No. 1, Dell Crescent to the south is a retaining wall. Whilst the structural integrity of the wall is not a planning matter *per se* (non-planning issues may be dealt with

under a Party Wall agreement if relevant) it would be possible, via the boundary treatment condition, to ensure that this wall was not directly affected. Dell Crescent has been subject to subsidence in the recent past, due to the mineral workings in the vicinity (see below).

Ground conditions

The area of Dereham Road/Dell Crescent is one known to have experienced subsidence due to poor ground conditions and is referred to in adopted local plan policy EP2 as a location where appropriate tests must be carried out to establish ground conditions. A comprehensive geotechnical report, including analysis of boreholes sunk on site, was submitted with the application. The report notes that chalk quarrying was carried out on the site between the late 19th c. and 1921 and that there is also evidence of a lime kiln. A subsidence event in 1990 on the highway adjoining 5 & 6, Dell Crescent is noted: this was due to a tunnel collapse which the City Engineer addressed by infilling with concrete. The report notes that the application site has been deep filled, so that there is a deep layer of made-up ground over chalk. The report recommends that the building would need very deep piled foundations; it does not favour the possible alternative of ground treatment. The report notes that the chosen construction method will need to take account of any effects on the stability of adjoining structures, including the retaining wall. All technical construction matters are subject to control under the Building Regulations.

Conclusion

The principle of the residential redevelopment of this vacant site is considered acceptable in the circumstances of the wholly residential surroundings. A three storey building is compatible with the three storey flat blocks on either side of the site on the Dereham Road frontage, in Dell Crescent and Whistlefish Court ('Bovis' development). All the three residential premises adjoining the site have flank elevations facing the proposed development and there would be no substantive loss of privacy by overlooking. The landscaping scheme would soften the visual impact of the proposed block. The vehicle, cycle and refuse storage provision meets adopted Council standards. Whilst the concern of Dell Crescent residents at additional traffic on their road is understandable, the level of additional traffic is not considered excessive, to the extent that the provision of a vehicular access to Dereham Road should be sought.

RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit.
2. Precise details of external facing and surfacing materials.
3. Details of refuse storage enclosures to be agreed & retained.

4. Details of cycle storage enclosures to be agreed & retained.
5. Landscaping to be carried out and retained.
6. Landscape maintenance.
7. Tree protection.
8. Details (plans/sections) of access road.
9. Development to be carried out in accordance with recommendations in geotechnical report.
10. Submission of a completion report to confirm ground stability issues addressed.
11. Not less than 3 months before commencement of development, applicant to submit protocol on means to protect neighbours from excessive disturbance during construction period.

Informatives

1. Advice re. previous archaeological site evaluation.
2. Contents of protocol to cover noise audible at boundary at various times, mitigation of vibration effects etc.

Reasons for Approval:

The principle of the use of the site for residential purposes is consistent with policies HOU1 and AEC3 of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Plan 2004. The detail of the proposal provides satisfactory services and amenities for future occupiers of the development and safeguards those of neighbouring occupiers consistent with policy ENV7 of the adopted East of England Plan and policies HOU13, NE9, EP2, EP16, EP18, EP22, TRA5, TRA6, TRA7 and TRA18 of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Plan 2004.



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Site Address - Scout Hut, Dereham Road, Norwich

Scale - 1:1250



NORWICH
City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

