

Report for Resolution

Report to Planning Applications Committee
Date: 03 December 2009

Report of Head of Planning Services

Subject 09/00929/U Former Eastern Electricity Board Site Duke Street Norwich

Item
5(1)

SUMMARY

Description: Temporary use of former staff parking areas (150 spaces) at the former Eastern Electricity offices as a shoppers' car park over the Christmas period.

Reason for consideration at Committee: Objection

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

Ward: Mancroft

Contact Officer: Mark Brown Senior Planner

Date of validation: 29 September 2009

Applicant: RCP Parking Ltd

Agent: Targetfollow Group Ltd

INTRODUCTION

The Site

Location and Content

1. The application site is located immediately to the north of the city centre retail areas on land located between Duke Street and Westwick Street. The site is occupied by buildings which front on to the river and Duke Street. The southern boundary adjoins properties that front Charing Cross. The western boundary of the site abuts the boundaries of residential properties at Anchor Quay. The main point of access into the site is from Westwick Street with another point of egress onto Duke Street.
2. The centre of the site was a parking area associated with the previous use of the site by the Eastern Electricity Board. The buildings on the site have now been empty for some time and it is the central part of the site to which the application relates.
3. The site is located within the City Centre Conservation Area.
4. It should be noted that the site is currently being used for contract car parking not for public parking as per the current application; the application is therefore not retrospective. The current use of the site is therefore unauthorised and appropriate enforcement action is being pursued.

Planning History

4/2000/0546 - Temporary use of site as short stay public car park (150 spaces) – Approved, 12 October 2000.

4/2000/0545 - Conversion and part rebuilding of former office buildings to provide 82 residential flats, 12 town houses, change of use from offices to leisure club and restaurant, with associated access, car parking and landscaping (revised scheme) – Approved 04 September 2001.

4/2001/0855 - Continued use of site as temporary short stay public car park – Approved 19 November 2001.

4/2002/0941 - Continued use of site as temporary short stay public car park – Approved 10 October 2002)

07/01226/F - Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a mixed use development comprising Class A2/B1 offices, Class A3 Restaurants/Cafes, Class A4 Wine Bar, Class A1 retail floorspace, Class D1 Art Gallery, sculpture park and 24 residential dwellings together with underground car and cycle parking – Withdrawn 25 June 2008)

08/00743/F - Demolition of buildings and structures at Duke Street (excluding elements of Boardman buildings) and construction of A2/B1A offices, A3 restaurant/cafes, A1 retail floorspace, D1 Art Gallery and 16 residential dwellings comprising 5 No Townhouses and 11 No. Apartments with underground car and cycle parking – Approved 16 July 2009)

The Proposal

5. The proposal is for the use of the site as a car park providing 150 spaces. The applicant is seeking consent until 28 February 2009 to cover the Christmas and winter sales period.
6. The hours of use proposed are 7am till 10pm Monday to Saturday and 8am to 6pm on Sundays.

Representations Received

7. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. Four letters of representation have been received citing the issues as summarised in the table below.

Issues Raised	Response
Concerns over noise and disturbance.	See paragraph 14
Would result in further congestion in Westwick Street and therefore have an impact on air quality.	See paragraph 13
Concern that opening hours are aimed at workers and not shoppers.	See paragraph 11 and 15
Concerns over security and to assist security, the site should only be operational between dawn and dusk which would also remove the need for lighting generators.	See paragraph 16 and 17
Additional parking will assist local businesses.	See paragraph 11

ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Planning Policies

Relevant National Planning Policies

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS1 Annex – Planning and Climate Change
PPS6 – Planning for Town Centres
PPG13 – Transport
PPG15 – Planning and the Historic Environment
PPG24 – Planning and Noise

Relevant Strategic Regional Planning Policies

ENV7 – Quality in the Built Environment
T1 – Regional Transport Strategy Objectives and Outcomes
T2 – Changing Travel Behaviour
T4 – Urban Transport
T14 – Parking

Relevant Local Plan Policies

HBE8 – Development in Conservation Areas
EP22 – Amenity
HOU10 A21 – Sites for conversion of buildings to housing use or redevelopment
TRA3 – Modal shift measures in support of Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS)
TRA21 – Public off street parking and tariff levels
TRA24 – City Centre Strategy

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

Norwich City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (September 2007)
The Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (October 2004)

Assessment

Parking Policy

8. 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 by car.
9. 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 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.

10. This is consistent with saved policies TRA3, TRA21 and TRA24 of the Local Plan and policy T2 of the East of England Plan which seek a modal shift away from the car.
11. With reference to the level of existing public parking provision, saved local plan policy TRA21 restricts public parking to 1995 levels, more specifically 10,002 spaces. The recent closure of two levels of Anglia Square car park for safety reasons has led to public parking dropping below this level to 9,838 spaces. As such the granting of consent for 150 spaces at Dukes Wharf would not result in an increase in public parking provision within the City Centre over 1995 levels.
12. In terms of tariff levels, it is proposed that these be conditioned to be consistent with saved local plan policy TRA21 and policy T14 of the East of England plan to favour short stay shoppers parking. 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 areas through the provision of long-stay parking at 'Park and Ride' sites. A short stay tariff level will also ensure that the parking favours shoppers and should assist the City Centre retail economy over the Christmas and sales period.
13. Congestion has been raised as a concern by one objector, whilst the proposal has the potential to increase traffic numbers in this part of the City it is not considered that the level of movements would be so significant so as to merit refusal on these grounds alone. The applicant suggests that the proposal may ease congestion by providing further parking in this area, particularly to people queuing for the nearby St Andrews car park when it is full.

Site Specific Policy

14. The site is an allocated site under saved local plan policy HOU10. The site also has consent for mixed use redevelopment, granted earlier this year. The granting of consent for a car park on a permanent basis would be considered contrary to the allocation of the site for mixed use development and would be considered to prejudice the redevelopment of the site. In this case a temporary consent is sought until 28 February 2009, given the relatively short period involved it is not considered that this would be prejudicial to the redevelopment of the site.

Amenity

15. Residents have raised concern over noise from diesel generators at the site used to run lighting. These structures are mobile and as such do not require planning permission in themselves. Most of the lighting columns are located some distance from properties at Anchor Quay, however one is located at the access to the site within relatively close proximity to numbers 10-15 Anchor Quay. Should members be minded to grant consent it is recommended that details of the means of lighting be conditioned with the intention of seeking an alternative method of lighting the access to the site, or alternatively relocating the generator to a location which provides more acoustic screening.
16. The proposed opening hours are 7am till 10pm Monday to Saturday and 8am to 6pm on Sundays. These hours are not considered to be excessive and are

considered to relate appropriately to retail and leisure activities in the City Centre whilst allowing some time for people to leave the site. It is recommended that these hours be conditioned.

17. There have been concerns raised about site security, most of these appear to be more general, relating to previous anti-social use of the site and not necessarily relating to the specific use of the site as a car park. In relation to the use of the site as a car park, it is not considered that this is likely to result in further significant security issues in its self. It is quite possible that public use of the site would aid surveillance and prevent anti-social behaviour within the site. As the concerns are not specific to the current application it is not considered appropriate to attempt to control this via the application, however the more general concerns will be relayed to the applicant through this report.

Impact on Conservation Area

18. The site is located within the City Centre Conservation Area. The site is however very well screened by buildings on all sides. The proposed car park can only be glimpsed from certain points at the sites access. It is therefore not considered that the proposals would have a negative impact on the City Centre Conservation Area.

Conclusions

19. There have been a number of applications recently for temporary car parks on disused brownfield sites within the City Centre all of which have been refused. Given the recent loss of 121 spaces at Anglia Square multi-storey car park, subject to conditions relating to tariff levels, the proposals are considered to be consistent with city centre parking policy. This site being located immediately adjacent to the City Centre Retail area is considered to be sequentially preferable as a shoppers car park to other potential sites. The site also is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the City Centre Conservation Area, due to its enclosed nature. In terms of amenity, subject to restrictions on opening hours and lighting the proposals are considered acceptable. The recommendation is therefore to approve subject to conditions.

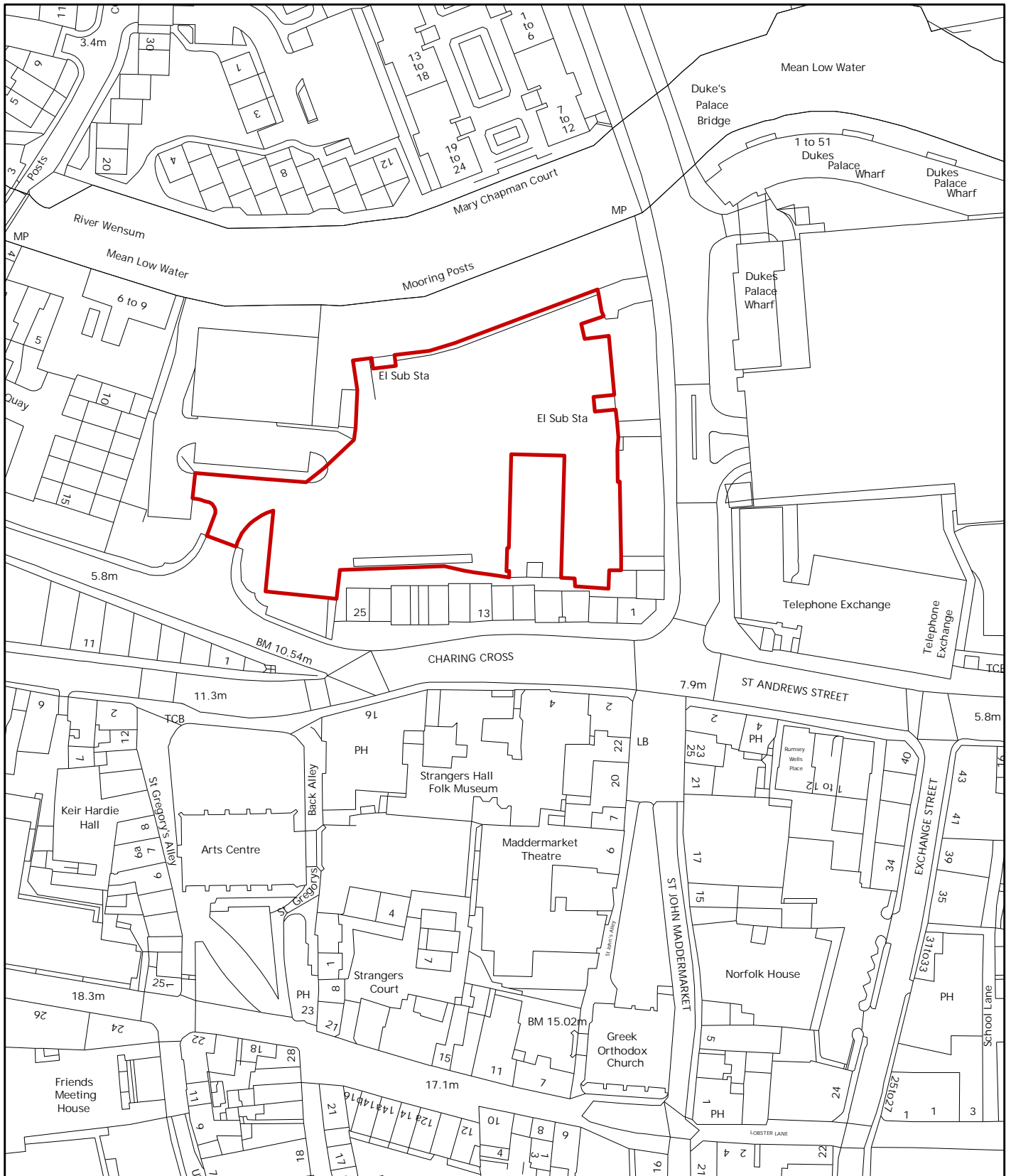
RECOMMENDATIONS

To approve Application No (09/00929/U) and grant planning permission, subject to the following conditions:-

1. The permission shall expire on 28 February 2009 and unless on or before that date application is made for an extension of the period of permission and such application is approved by the Local Planning Authority the use hereby permitted shall be discontinued;
2. Details for the method, location and direction of lighting;
3. Hours of use restricted to 7am till 10pm Monday to Saturday and 8am to 6pm on Sundays.
4. Details of tariff levels to favour short-medium stay parking.

(Reasons for approval: The decision has been made with regard to policies ENV7, T1, T2, T4 and T14 of the adopted East of England Plan, saved policies HBE8, EP22, HOU10, TRA3, TRA21 and TRA24 of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan, PPS1, PPS6, PPG13, PPG15, PPG24 and other material considerations.

Given the loss of 121 spaces at Anglia Square multi-storey, subject to conditions relating to tariff levels, the proposals are considered to be consistent with city centre parking policy. In terms of amenity subject to restrictions on opening hours and lighting the proposals are considered acceptable. The proposals are not considered to have a detrimental impact on the city centre conservation area.)



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence No. 100019747 2009

Planning Application No - 09/00929/U

Site Address - Former Eastern Electricity Board Site Duke Street

Scale - 1:1250



NORWICH
City Council
PLANNING SERVICES

