

**Report to** Planning applications committee

**Item**

8 February 2018

**Report of** Head of planning services

**Subject** Application no 17/01791/F - Flordon House,  
195 Unthank Road, Norwich, NR2 2PQ

4(e)

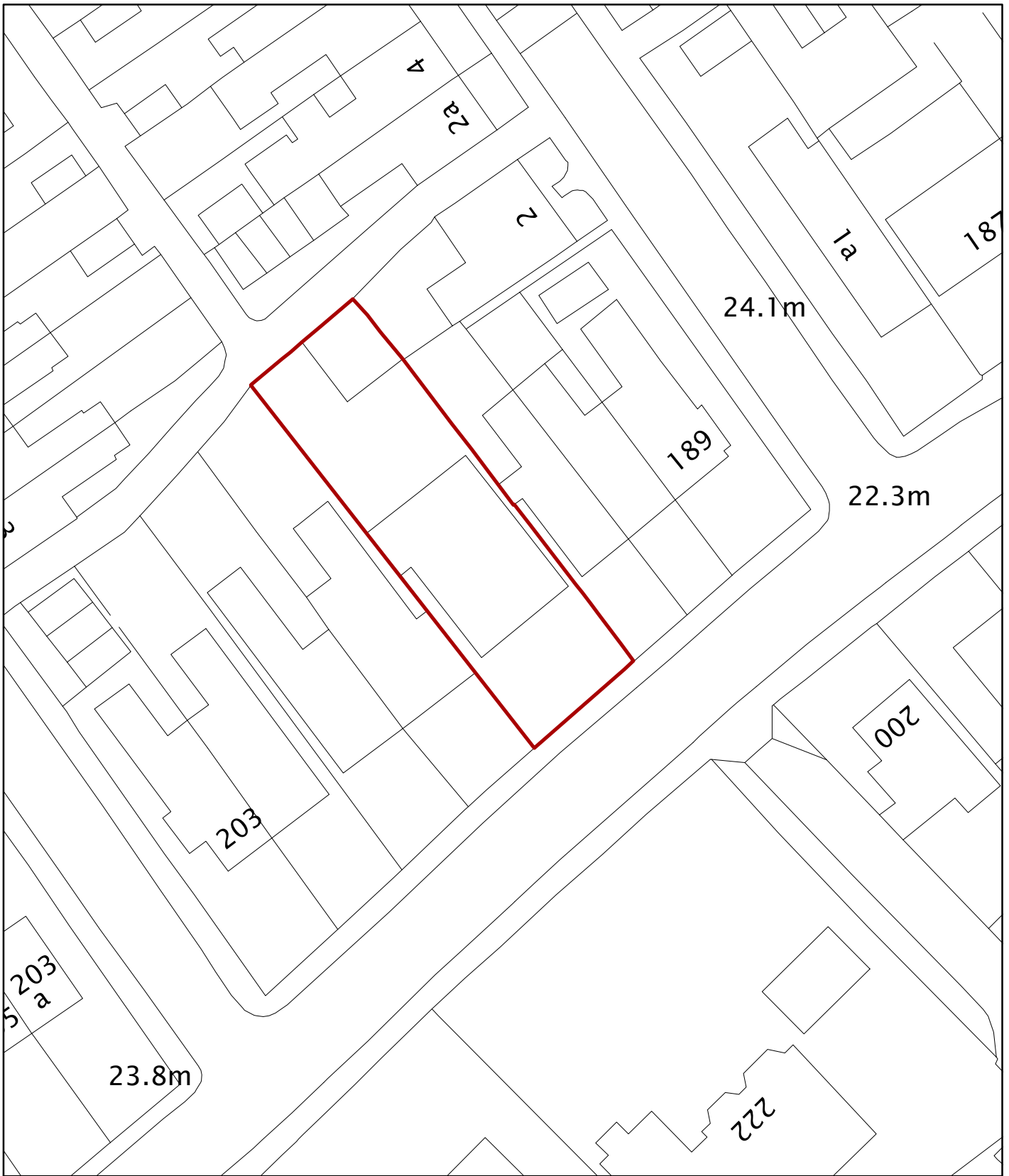
**Reason  
for referral** Objections

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<b>Ward:</b>	Nelson
<b>Case officer</b>	Charlotte Hounsell - <a href="mailto:charlottehounsell@norwich.gov.uk">charlottehounsell@norwich.gov.uk</a>

<b>Development proposal</b>		
Conversion and extension to create 5 No. apartments and demolition of rear garage.		
<b>Representations</b>		
Object	Comment	Support
4	1	0

<b>Main issues</b>	<b>Key considerations</b>
1 Principle of development / impact on character of surrounding area	Previous consents / provision of new housing and suitability of the proposals within the surrounding contexts
2 Amenity	Potential impacts of the proposal on the amenity of neighbouring / future occupiers
3 Parking and traffic	Access and servicing arrangements, car parking provision and impact on parking in the surrounding area
<b>Expiry date</b>	3 January 2018
<b>Recommendation</b>	Approve subject to conditions

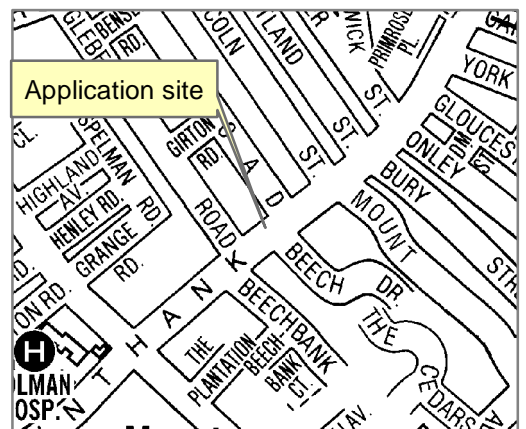


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Planning Application No 17/01791/F  
 Site Address Flordon House  
 195 Unthank Road  
 Scale 1:500



**NORWICH**  
 City Council  
 PLANNING SERVICES



## The site and surroundings

1. The subject property is located on the North East side of Unthank Rad, West of the City Centre. The property is a detached three-storey dwelling built circa 1900 and is constructed of cream rendered finish and clay roof tiles. The property is currently vacant but was previously used as a dwelling with an office on the ground floor (class A2). At the front of the property is a garden space separated from the highway by a boundary wall. Access to the main property is via a front door and a side access on the South West elevation. At the rear of the property is a small garden with steps up to an existing parking area and garage which can also be accessed via an alley/road from College Road and Glebe Road. The garage and rear parking area are at a significantly higher ground level than the garden space. The properties in the surrounding area are a mix of Victorian semi-detached or terraced houses.

## Constraints

2. The property is located within the Unthank and Christchurch Conservation Area.
3. The property is locally listed.
4. The property is located in a critical drainage area.

## Relevant planning history

- 5.

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
4/2003/0392	Extension and conversion of nursing home into 12 flats.	WDA	23/05/2003
03/00017/F	Conversion from nursing home into 16 student bed-sits.	REF	19/09/2003
03/00022/F	Conversion of nursing home into 6 bedsits and 6 flats.	REF	19/09/2003
04/00109/U	Change of use from care home to private dwelling.	APPR	10/03/2004
04/00520/F	Construction of pitched roofs & external alterations at rear, and alterations to car port/garage.	APPR	27/07/2004
07/00791/C	Demolition of existing gate brick piers and replacement with new brick piers.	APPRET	23/08/2007
16/00227/F	Conversion of office and dwelling to 5 No. flats and associated alterations.	APPR	19/07/2016

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
16/01402/NM A	Non-material amendments to previous permission 16/00227/F to allow internal layout alterations to facilitate load bearing walls. 2 No. roof lights to front elevation and 2 No. windows to side elevation.	REF	17/11/2016

## The proposal

6. The proposal is for the conversion of the existing property which was last used as a dwelling with office space on the ground floor into 5 flats.
7. The proposal involves an extension into the rear garden and creation of subterranean living space beneath the raised parking area.
8. The proposal involves alterations to the parking area, front garden space, demolition of the existing single storey side extension and changes to windows and doors.

## Summary information

Proposal	Key facts
<b>Scale</b>	
Total no. of dwellings	<b>5</b>
No. of affordable dwellings	<b>0</b>
No. of storeys	<b>3</b>
<b>Appearance</b>	
Materials	Red brick, grey steel crittal-style windows Lead roof and sedum roof
<b>Transport matters</b>	
Vehicular access	Via a small access alleyway that links College Road and Glebe Road behind the houses on Unthank Road.
No of car parking spaces	4 spaces provided on site
No of cycle parking spaces	General bike store position shown – details required by condition

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Key facts</b>
Servicing arrangements	Bin store in front garden and in rear parking area.

## Representations

9. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. 5 letters of representation have been received citing the issues as summarised in the table below. All representations are available to view in full at <http://planning.norwich.gov.uk/online-applications/> by entering the application number.

<b>Issues raised</b>	<b>Response</b>
The conversion would be better as three family apartments so as not to erode the character of the area	See Main Issue 1
Loss of elderly residences	See Main Issue 1
Plans are much improved compared with the last version	See Main Issue 1
Loss of light and outlook	See Main Issue 2
Overlooking	See Main Issue 2
Noise disturbance from additional flat within the rear garden and along passage adjacent to neighbouring dwelling	See Main Issue 2
Noise and light disturbance from additional traffic	See Main Issues 2 and 4
There is insufficient parking to meet the needs of the development and the proposals will result in increased parking pressure in the surrounding area	See Main Issue 4
Servicing difficulties relating to the number of bins to be presented on street/collected from the rear	See Main Issue 4
Detrimental impact upon neighbouring property values	Other matters
Concern over potential for external fire escapes	Other matters
Concerns over exacerbation of drug usage in the area	Other matters

## Consultation responses

10. Consultation responses are summarised below the full responses are available to view at <http://planning.norwich.gov.uk/online-applications/> by entering the application number.

### Design and conservation

11. This is not an application that I intend to provide conservation and design officer comments on because it does not appear on the basis of the application description to require our specialist conservation and design expertise. This should not be interpreted as a judgement about the acceptability or otherwise of the proposal.

### Highways (local)

12. No objection on highway/transportation grounds in principle. Careful consideration needed for the management of traffic during the construction phase. Recommend construction management plan/considerate construction informative. The apartments would not receive parking permits. Bins at the rear may need to be wheeled to the nearest street for collection.

### Private sector housing

13. Layout shows access through risk rooms. Possibility to install egress windows and a Grade D LD3 detection system. There should be no furniture/storage on landings/stairwells.

## Assessment of planning considerations

### Relevant development plan policies

14. **Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk adopted March 2011 amendments adopted Jan. 2014 (JCS)**
- JCS1 Addressing climate change and protecting environmental assets
  - JCS2 Promoting good design
  - JCS3 Energy and water
  - JCS4 Housing delivery
  - JCS6 Access and transportation
15. **Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan adopted Dec. 2014 (DM Plan)**
- DM1 Achieving and delivering sustainable development
  - DM2 Ensuring satisfactory living and working conditions
  - DM3 Delivering high quality design
  - DM5 Planning effectively for flood resilience
  - DM9 Safeguarding Norwich's heritage
  - DM12 Ensuring well-planned housing development
  - DM13 Flats, bedsits and larger houses in multiple occupation
  - DM28 Encouraging sustainable travel
  - DM30 Access and highway safety

- DM31 Car parking and servicing
- DM32 Encouraging car free and low car housing

### **Other material considerations**

#### **16. Relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 (NPPF):**

- NPPF0 Achieving sustainable development
- NPPF4 Promoting sustainable transport
- NPPF6 Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- NPPF7 Requiring good design
- NPPF8 Promoting healthy communities
- NPPF10 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- NPPF12 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### **Case Assessment**

17. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Relevant development plan policies are detailed above. Material considerations include policies in the National Planning Framework (NPPF), the Councils standing duties, other policy documents and guidance detailed above and any other matters referred to specifically in the assessment below. The following paragraphs provide an assessment of the main planning issues in this case against relevant policies and material considerations.

#### **Main issue 1: Principle of development**

18. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM12, DM13, NPPF paragraphs 49 and 14.
19. The principle of converting the existing building into five flats has already been accepted through the granting of previous permission 16/00227/F. Therefore the number of units and loss of the previous uses is deemed acceptable. The previous application considered that the scheme maximises opportunity for the conversion and reuse of an existing building, in accordance with DM12. That application also considered that the building is of considerable scale and use as a very large single dwelling or fewer flats would not represent the most efficient use of the site.
20. Therefore the purpose of this application is to assess the acceptability of the changes/differences compared with that previous scheme.
21. In addition to DM12, DM13 requires proposals for flatted development to deliver a high standard of amenity for future occupiers, not result in an unacceptable impact on the living/working conditions of neighbouring occupiers and demonstrate that satisfactory servicing, parking and external amenity space can be provided. These matters are considered further in the sections of this report below.
22. This scheme proposes the construction of a small extension to the rear which would provide access to new subterranean accommodation as well as alterations to the internal layout and the external appearance of the building. The design and amenity implications of these changes are detailed below. As the principle of conversion to five residential units has been accepted, and this proposal does not include

additional units of accommodation, the principle of the proposal is considered to be acceptable subject to further assessment below.

### **Main issue 2: Amenity**

23. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM2, DM11, NPPF paragraphs 9 and 17.
24. Concerns were raised regarding loss of privacy due to overlooking. No additional windows are included within the side elevation of the existing building. The windows within the rear elevation of the building would be altered to be larger than the existing windows, however no additional windows have been proposed. The rear elevation windows are set into the building to reduce visibility splay and the green wall should offer additional privacy. Whilst it is noted that increased occupancy increases opportunity for overlooking, the larger rear windows are not considered to result in a significant change to the levels of overlooking.
25. Concerns relating to overlooking from the parking area are the same as the last application. The proposal includes planting along the boundary of the parking area to mitigate overlooking from the raised position. The planting is also intended to minimise light pollution from vehicles.
26. As the proposed extension is single storey, the scheme is not considered to have a significantly detrimental impact on outlook or result in a significant loss of light. The proposal involves the removal of an unsightly garage building on the rear parking area which is considered to improve the appearance of the rear of the site.
27. This proposal includes an extension and creation of subterranean living accommodation beneath the existing parking area. The living accommodation in this part of the site would comprise bedrooms. The rooflights above the bedrooms are not considered to result in a loss of privacy for future occupiers or neighbours. The bedrooms also have large proportions of glazing facing the courtyard area to allow for adequate daylighting of internal spaces. However, these windows are set back from the courtyard by the corridor space and therefore overlooking impact is reduced.
28. The additional subterranean accommodation would increase the amount of activity in this part of the site. However, noise associated with the flat is what would be expected in a residential area.
29. The proposal includes 5 flats that meet or exceed the standards within the DCLG Technical Housing Standards – nationally prescribed space standards. The rear flat would have sole use of the rear courtyard garden. The front garden space would be available to be used by the remaining flats. Whilst it is noted that there are several flats included within the proposal that would not benefit from sole use of private outdoor amenity space, this is considered to be acceptable in this instance given that occupants would benefit generally from a good standard of amenity in terms of internal space and outlook.

### **Main issue 3: Design and Heritage**

30. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS2, DM3, DM9 NPPF paragraphs 9, 17, 56 and 60-66 and 128-141.



31. The existing building has an attractive front elevation, however a large extension was erected at the rear of the building in approx. the early 2000's.
32. The proposal includes the replacement of windows at the rear and installation of new windows within the extension with grey steel windows. The extension would also be constructed of red brick and lead roofing. A section of sedum roof is also proposed for the rear portion of the development. There are no proposed alterations to the front elevation of the building. These materials are considered to be appropriate and protect the character of the conservation area.
33. The single storey rear extension to accommodate the corridor to the subterranean living space would be approximately 3.00m in height. It is acknowledged that this extension would result in a change to the amount of light received to the neighbouring rear ground floor windows. However, the extension would be set back from the boundary and is not considered to be significantly detrimental given the presence of the existing boundary wall.

#### **Main issue 4: Transport**

34. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS6, DM28, DM30, DM31, NPPF paragraphs 17 and 39.
35. Concerns were raised regarding the potential for noise disturbance from additional traffic at the rear of the site. The principle of using the road to the rear as an access to the parking area has already been established. Whilst there will likely be an increase in the number of vehicles using this alleyway, this is an extant access that currently accommodates traffic to the site and could accommodate the small increase in trips that could result.
36. Insufficient on-site parking was also raised as a concern as well as creating additional pressure on the parking situation of the surrounding area. Parking standards as set out in appendix 3 of the Local Plan indicate that new dwellings in this location would be expected to provide 0.33-1.33 spaces per dwelling. As such the provision of 4 on site spaces is in accordance with this standard. The residential units would also not qualify for parking permits in the surrounding areas.
37. The property is also located along a sustainable transport link and the provision of cycle storage on site (details to be secured by condition) encourages more sustainable modes of transport.
38. Concerns were also raised regarding servicing difficulties including the large number of bins to be presented to the street for collection. A bin store area at the front of the site was approved under the previous application. The same arrangement is proposed for this application as well as an additional bin store area at the rear of the site to service the rear ground floor flat. These servicing facilities are considered to be appropriate.

#### **Main issue 5: Landscaping and flood risk**

39. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS1, DM3, DM5, DM8, NPPF paragraphs 9, 17, 56, 100 and 103.

40. As the property is located within a critical drainage area and includes the addition of a sensitive residential use to the rear of the site, the proposal is expected to demonstrate how it would deal with surface water.
41. The proposal includes the use of permeable surfacing within the courtyard area, parking area and paths. The courtyard garden also includes an infiltration trench, tree box filter and rain garden. Landscaping includes planting a new tree, the installation of a green wall on the rear elevation and a sedum roof. Although a new extension will be constructed, there would be a net reduction in roofspace on site due to the demolition of the garage.
42. Full details of landscaping and management should be secured by condition, however the details currently submitted sufficiently demonstrate that the scheme would likely have a positive impact upon the drainage situation of the site.

### **Compliance with other relevant development plan policies**

43. A number of development plan policies include key targets for matters such as parking provision and energy efficiency. The table below indicates the outcome of the officer assessment in relation to these matters.

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Relevant policy</b>	<b>Compliance</b>
Cycle storage	DM31	Yes – secured and covered store provided at the rear of the site. Details to be secured by condition.
Car parking provision	DM31	Yes - policy compliant 4 spaces provided on site
Refuse Storage/servicing	DM31	Bin stores provided and the front and rear of the site. Details to be secured by condition.
Water efficiency	JCS 1 & 3	Yes subject to condition
Sustainable urban drainage	DM3/5	Yes – included within proposed landscaping scheme.

### **Other matters**

44. Comments from the Private Sector Housing team indicated several areas where improvements could be made surrounding fire safety. Satisfactory fire safety systems would be covered under Building Regulations and is not a planning matter in this instance.
45. Concerns were raised that the scheme would have a negative impact on property values in the surrounding area, however this is not a planning matter and is not considered further.
46. Concerns were raised regarding the presence of drug usage in the alleys. The proposal does not result in any alterations to the alleys in the surrounding area, other than the increased usage by residents. The issues surrounding alleged drug

problems are not a planning matter and are not material to the consideration of this proposal.

### **Equalities and diversity issues**

47. There are no significant equality or diversity issues.

### **Local finance considerations**

48. Under Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the council is required when determining planning applications to have regard to any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application. Local finance considerations are defined as a government grant or the Community Infrastructure Levy. Whether or not a local finance consideration is material to a particular decision will depend on whether it could help to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It would not be appropriate to make a decision on the potential for the development to raise money for a local authority.

49. In this case local finance considerations are not considered to be material to the case.

### **Conclusion**

50. The principle of residential conversion on the site has previously been accepted. The construction of the subterranean living accommodation is considered to provide an acceptable standard of amenity and is of an interesting design. The proposal is not considered to result in a significantly detrimental impact on future occupiers or neighbouring amenity. The scheme represents a positive impact upon the drainage situation of the site. The scheme can provide the required level of on-site parking and is located in a sustainable location. The site can be serviced sufficiently.

51. The development is in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Development Plan, and it has been concluded that there are no material considerations that indicate it should be determined otherwise.

### **Recommendation**

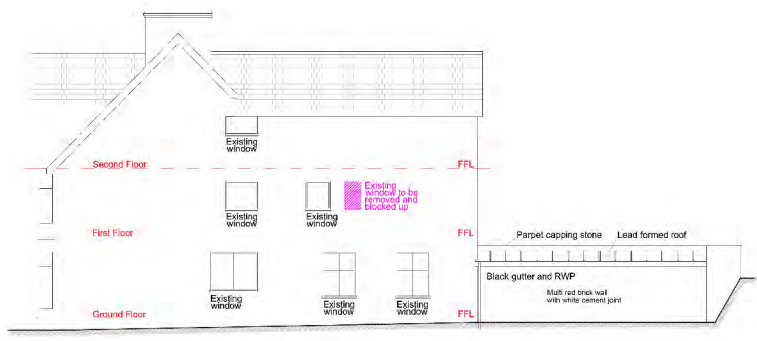
To approve application no. 17/01791/F - Flordon House 195 Unthank Road Norwich NR2 2PQ and grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit;
2. In accordance with plans;
3. Landscaping scheme (including boundary treatments) prior to occupation
4. Management responsibilities of outside garden areas
5. Drainage scheme (and any associated landscaping hereby approved or approved under condition 3) to be implemented prior to occupation
6. Details of cycle store and bin store prior to occupation
7. Water efficiency
8. Car parking to be provided prior to occupation

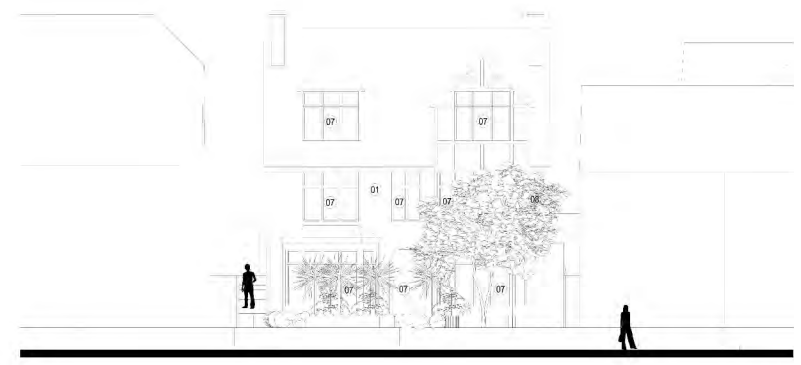
#### **Informative**

1. Considerate construction.

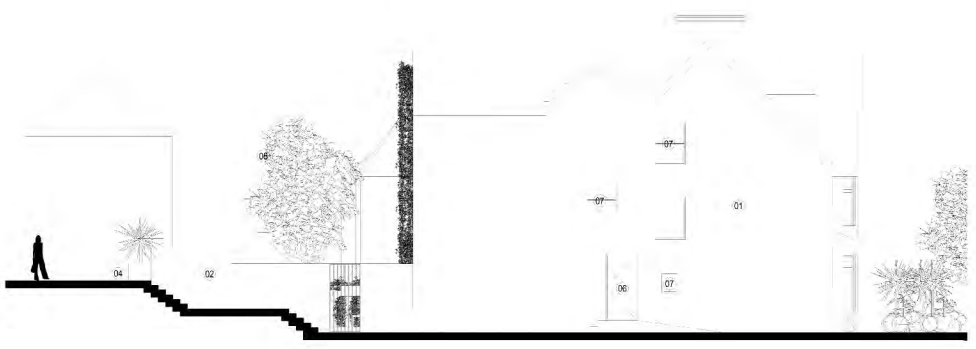
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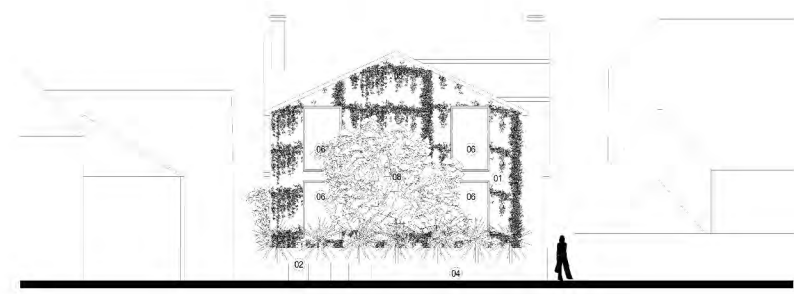
ELEVATION NE



ELEVATION SE



ELEVATION SW



ELEVATION NW

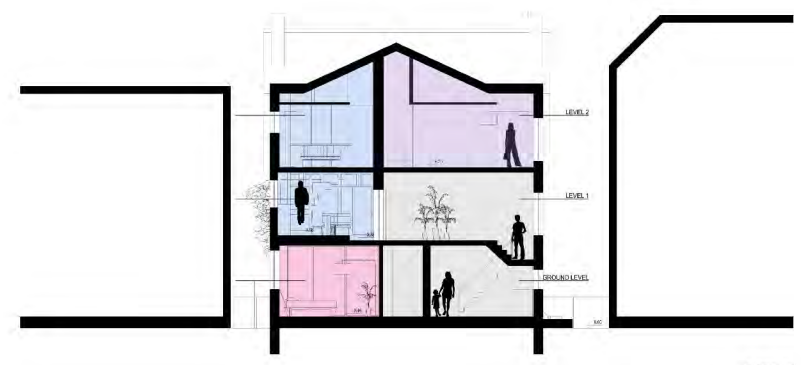
PROPOSED ELEVATIONS & SECTIONS  
 1:100 on A1

- 01 Existing painted walls to be painted with heritage approved pigment (French gray)
- 02 Multi-red brick
- 03 Green roof sedum blanket
- 04 Breton aggregate
- 05 Stainless steel wired trellis with evergreen climbers
- 06 New windows / doors with steel frame orbital style with polyester coating deep gray
- 07 Existing windows / doors with new joinery hardwick white
- 08 New Silver Birch (Betula Pendula)

- FLAT 01 - 3 BED - 112 m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 02 - 2 BED - 81 m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 03 - 2 BEDROOMS - 81 m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 04 - 2 BEDROOMS - 77 m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 05 - 2 BEDROOMS - 94 m<sup>2</sup>

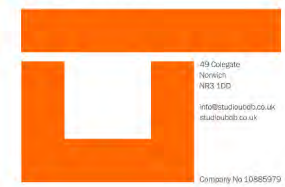


SECTION AA



SECTION BB

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 Design + Build Ltd



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Company No 10885979

05  
 REVISION 03 5/18

4m

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FIRST FLOOR

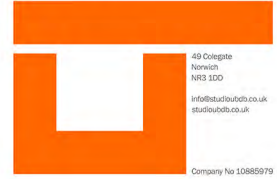
PROPOSED PLANS  
 1:100 on A1



GROUND FLOOR

- FLAT 01 - 3 BED - 112 m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 02 - 2 BED - 81 m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 03 - 2 BEDROOMS - 81 m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 04 - 2 BEDROOMS - 77 m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 05 - 2 BEDROOMS - 94 m<sup>2</sup>

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PROPOSED PLANS  
1:100 on A1

- FLAT 01 - 3 BED - 112 m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 02 - 2 BED - 81 m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 03 - 2 BEDROOMS - 81 m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 04 - 2 BEDROOMS - 77 m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 05 - 2 BEDROOMS - 94 m<sup>2</sup>

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ROOF LEVEL

SECOND FLOOR

DRAWING NUMBER **04**  
REVISION 00

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