

Report to Planning applications committee

Item

14 July 2016

Report of Head of planning services

Subject Application no 16/00227/F – Flordon House, 195
Unthank Road, Norwich

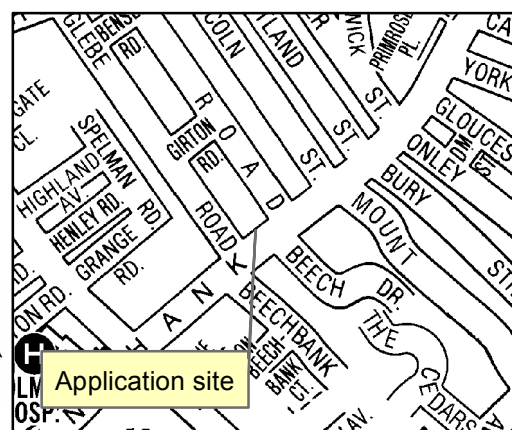
**Reason
for referral** Objections

4(a)

Ward:	Nelson
Case officer	Charlotte Hounsell – charlottehounsell@norwich.gov.uk

Development proposal		
Conversion of office and dwelling to 5 No. flats and associated alterations		
Representations		
Object	Comment	Support
14	0	0

Main issues	Key considerations
1 Principle of development / impact upon the character of the surrounding area	Provision of new housing, and suitability of the proposals within the surrounding context.
2 Amenity	Potential impacts of the proposals upon amenity of neighbouring / future occupiers.
3 Parking and traffic	Access and servicing arrangements, car parking provision and impact upon parking in the surrounding area.
Expiry date	20 July 2016
Recommendation	Approve subject to conditions



The site and surroundings

1. The subject property is located on the North East side of Unthank Road, West of the city centre. The property is a detached three-storey dwelling built circa 1900, is constructed of a cream rendered finish and clay roof tiles. The property is currently 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 from College Road and Glebe Road. The properties in the surrounding area are a mix of Victorian semi-detached or terraced houses.

Constraints

2. Located within the Unthank and Christchurch conservation area and is a locally listed building.

Relevant planning history

- 3.

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. This application was refused due to concern that the proposals would result in an over-intensive occupation of the property and would be detrimental to residential amenity.	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

The proposal

4. The proposal is for the conversion of the existing property which is currently in use as a dwelling and office on ground floor into 5 flats, with associated alterations to the parking area, front garden space, demolition of a small single storey side extension to provide access and addition of windows/doors.
5. The proposals have been revised as the bin storage area has been relocated to a more accessible location at the front of the property. The rear car park and garden area has also been reconfigured to make more efficient use of space and to provide screening between the amenity space and parking area.

Summary information

Proposal	Key facts
Scale	
Total no. of dwellings	5
No. of affordable dwellings	0
No. of storeys	3
Transport matters	
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	5
No of cycle parking spaces	6 spaces shown
Servicing arrangements	Communal bin store in front garden

Representations

6. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. Fourteen letters of representation were received. The representations cite 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.

Issues raised	Response
There are too many Houses in Multiple Occupation in the surrounding area and the proposals will lead to a further increase and erode the character of the community, and harm the character of the conservation area.	See main issue 1
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 3
Proposals should be kept as a family home or converted to two semi-detached dwellings or three apartments.	See main issue 1
Planning applications for multi occupancy have been refused previously and there has been no change since then.	See main issue 1
Loss of views	This issue is not a material planning consideration.
The rear access way is unsuitable for access by five flats and will be dangerous.	See main issue 3
Noise disturbance	See main issue 2
Overlooking of neighbouring gardens	See main issue 2.
Proposed bin storage will detract from the appearance of the area.	See main issue 3.

7.

Consultation responses

8. 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

9. No comment.

Transportation

10. No objection in principle on highway/transportation grounds but make the following suggested improvements

- That a bin store is created at the front of the property
- The cycle storage must be Sheffield stands
- Two of the parking spaces are impossible to use – need to remove the rear wall and gates entirely
- Informative: None of the new apartments would have parking permit entitlement
- Suggestion: relocate the refuse storage; create a bin store to conceal the bins
- Suggestion: reconfigure parking as show and wall and gates. Current layout as proposed can only work if gates and walls are entirely removed.

Norwich Society

11. We understand there are objections but as there are no external alterations we have no comment.

Private sector housing

12. No comment.

Assessment of planning considerations

Relevant development plan policies

13. **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
 - JCS3 Energy and water
 - JCS4 Housing delivery
 - JCS6 Access and transportation
 - JCS9 Strategy for growth in the Norwich policy area
 - JCS20 Implementation
14. **Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan adopted Dec. 2014 (DM Plan)**
 - DM1 Achieving and delivering sustainable development
 - DM2 Ensuring satisfactory living and working conditions
 - DM9 Safeguarding Norwich's Heritage
 - DM12 Ensuring well-planned housing development
 - DM13 Communal development and multiple occupation
 - DM28 Encouraging sustainable travel
 - DM29 Managing car parking demand in the city centre
 - DM30 Access and highway safety
 - DM31 Car parking and servicing
 - DM32 Encouraging car free and low car housing

Other material considerations

15. **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

Case Assessment

16. 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 / impact upon the character of the surrounding area

17. Residential: Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM12, DM13, JCS4, NPPF paragraphs 49 and 14.
18. The principle of providing housing in this area is considered acceptable. According to DM12, development is expected to maximise opportunities for conversion and reuse of existing residential premises where this is achievable and does not have a detrimental impact on amenity and the character of the surrounding area, that cannot be rectified by condition. These further assessments have been made in the following paragraphs.
19. As such the conversion of the property to flats is acceptable in principle subject to meeting the criteria within policy DM12. Concerns are noted that the proposals could represent an overly intensive use in relation to the surrounding area, which is predominantly characterised by dwellings. Officers have had regard to the character of existing building, and its previous and current uses when considering this issue.
20. It is noted the property was previously used as nursing home until 2003 when a change of use occurred to a dwelling with an estate agent office (class A2) on ground floor. The A2 use does not benefit from planning permission, but appears to have existed for a considerable period of time (since 2003) and is likely to be immune from enforcement action. As such the property has not been used as a conventional dwelling house for some period of time. The current use generates some visits by customers and staff to and from site which would be likely to be greater than that experienced by a single dwelling house.
21. The property is of considerable scale and use as very large single dwelling would not represent the most efficient use of the site as encouraged by policy DM12. Consideration has also been given to conversion to a smaller number of flats or two dwellings. The existing building is not considered suitable for conversion to two semi-detached dwellings, as this would be impractical and

require significant internal and external alterations. Conversion to a smaller number of flats would be more achievable, but is also considered to be impractical, as it would result in very large flats on upper floors with no private outdoor amenity space. In addition the current proposals provide a good standard of amenity for future occupiers as noted below.

22. When all the above factors are taken into account it is not considered that the proposals would be unduly intensive use of the building or which would detract from the character of the surrounding conservation area, in accordance with policy DM12 and DM9.
23. Concerns are also noted that the proposals would result in provision of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO). This is not correct as the current proposals are for five self-contained flats and not HMOs. Use of any of the flats as an HMO would require a separate application for planning permission. In any case it is less likely that the proposed flats would be used as an HMO (due to their smaller size) in comparison the existing use.

Main issue 2: Amenity

24. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM2, DM11, NPPF paragraphs 9 and 17.
25. Concerns were raised regarding the loss of privacy due to overlooking. The proposal includes the provision of two additional windows in the North East elevation facing onto No. 193 and serving a lounge/dining area. It is noted that these windows have the potential to result in a loss of privacy to the neighbours and therefore a condition will be included that these windows should be obscure glazed. No additional windows are proposed in the rear elevation. While it is noted that an increased occupancy increases the potential for overlooking, the windows in this elevation are extant and therefore there is unlikely to be a significant change. In addition, concerns were raised over the potential for overlooking/lights shining into houses from the raised parking area to the rear. In order to remedy this, a screen has been proposed around the parking area, details of which will be agreed by condition.
26. The proposed development does not involve the enlargement of any part of the building and therefore is not considered to have a significant impact on light received to the neighbouring properties.
27. The proposal is not considered to be of a use class that will generate any odour nuisance. Concerns were raised that there would be significant noise disturbance from the increase in comings and goings of residents in the area. However noise associated with the proposed use is what would be expected for a residential area and is not considered to be significantly different from the existing use as a dwelling and office. Concerns were also raised regarding the potential impacts on visual amenity due to the inclusion of bin storage at the front of the building. The bin storage area has been located at the front of the property at the request of Environmental Services so that they can meet requirements of collection teams. The location is considered appropriate as the bin store will be located behind the front boundary wall/fence and will therefore not impact on the street scene in the conservation area. Details as to the

precise number of bins required and exact size and design of the bin storage area are required by condition.

28. In addition subject to revision of the layout of flat 3 from a 2-bed to a 1-bed flat all the proposed flats complies with the DCLG Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard and provide an adequate amount of internal space. Sufficient communal external amenity space is provided for all flats to the front and rear. As such the conversion provides a good standard of amenity for all future occupiers The proposal is considered to provide satisfactory living conditions for both neighbours and occupiers in compliance with DM2.

Main issue 4: Parking and traffic

29. Key policies – DM28, DM31 and DM32
30. Concerns were raised over the under-provision of parking which would result in additional pressures on non-permit zones in the surrounding area. Parking standards as set out appendix 3 of the DMPP state that the appropriate parking provision is accessible sites such as this would range from 0.5 to 1.33 spaces per dwelling. As such the proposals would be in accordance with these standards. Amendments were made to the parking area as per the Transportation Officer's suggestion to allow for easier access/egress and to ensure all spaces could be properly utilised. In addition, the residential units would not qualify for parking permits in the nearby zones or in zones that may become controlled in future.
31. It should be noted that the property is located along a sustainable transport link and has the provision of cycle storage, (details to be secured by condition) and therefore the proposal promotes low car housing as per DM32.
32. Concerns were also raised regarding the use of the access alley to the rear with the potential for an increase in noise from traffic, exacerbating damage and safety concerns. While it is noted that 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 residential and A2 class premises and could accommodate the small increase in trips that could result.

Compliance with other relevant development plan policies

33. A number of development plan policies include key target for matters that have not been discussed in detail above. The table below indicated the outcome of the officer assessment in relation to these matters.

Requirement	Relevant policy	Compliance
Water efficiency	JCS 1 & 3	Yes subject to condition

Equalities and diversity issues

34. There are no significant equality or diversity issues.

Local finance considerations

35. 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.
36. 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.
37. In this case local finance considerations are not considered to be material to the case.

Conclusion

38. The proposals would make efficient use of the site and provide additional housing units and would not detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area or the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
39. Sufficient parking has been provided along with cycle storage and the sustainable transport location means the proposal is promoted as a low car housing site.
40. As such 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.

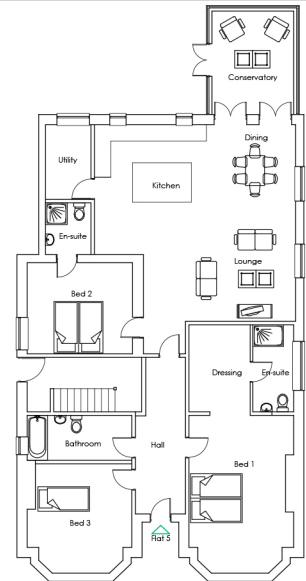
Recommendation

To approve application no. 16/00227/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. All new windows proposed in the third floor of the North Eastern side elevation shall be obscure glazed;
4. Details of refuse, cycle storage and boundary treatments shall be provided and installed prior to occupation and retained as such.
5. Water efficiency
6. Car parking to be provided prior to occupation of the development.

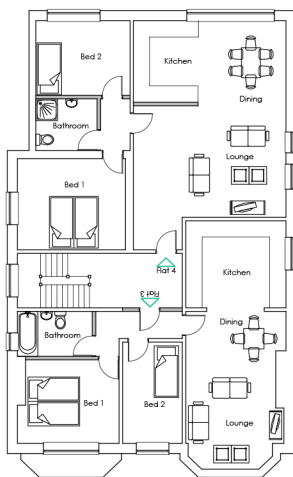
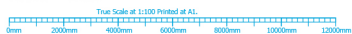
Article 35(2) statement

The local planning authority in making its decision has had due regard to paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework as well as the development plan, national planning policy and other material considerations, following negotiations with the applicant and subsequent amendments the application has been approved subject to appropriate conditions and for the reasons outlined in the officer report.



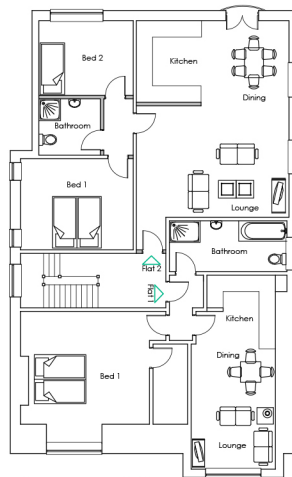
Proposed Ground Floor Plan

Scale - 1:100



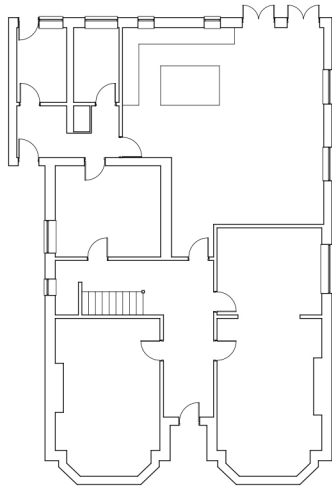
Proposed First Floor Plan

Scale - 1:100



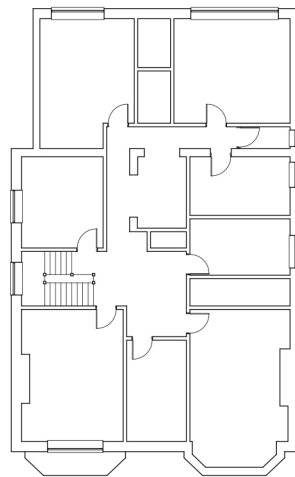
Proposed Second Floor Plan

Scale - 1:100



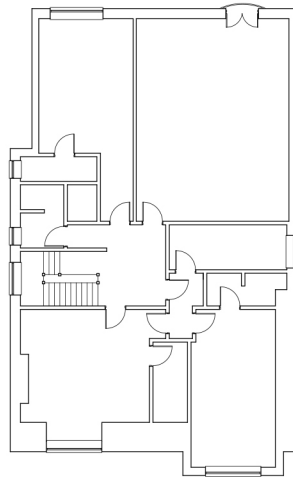
Existing Ground Floor Plan

Scale - 1:100



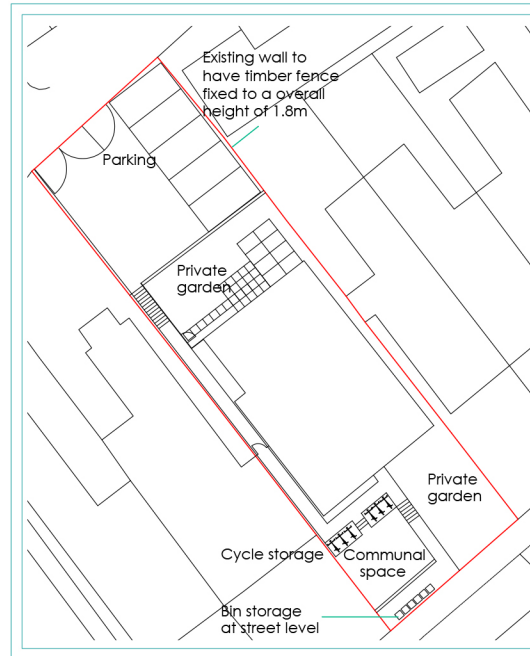
Existing First Floor Plan

Scale - 1:100



Existing Second Floor Plan

Scale - 1:100



Block Plan

Scale - 1:200



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The contractor is to include all preliminary allowances to cover the prevention of accidents and injury. All works are to be carried out to comply with manufacturers, supplier and industry guidelines, local authority regulations, good standards, fire safety recommendations, specialist subcontract recommendations and services supply and installation regulations. All manufacturers literature is to be kept on site. Provide all relevant guarantees in duplicate for presentation to the client.

Allow at necessary attendance and liaison with CA's [and CA personnel] specialist subcontractor trades. Ensure all notifications are submitted to the Local Authority. Building Control and submit materials as required to the local Authority Planning Department.

Carefully examine the drawings and notify any discrepancies to the CA for instruction prior to proceeding.

Check all dimensions on site prior to ordering materials and notify any discrepancies to the CA for instruction prior to proceeding.

This drawing and design is for use solely in connection with the project described below.

No Responsibility For Any Error Or Omission in this Specification Will Be Recognised Unless brought to the Attention Of The Client Or His Agent Prior to Signing The Contract.

C. 05.04.16 C.C. Bin storage moved, parking altered
B. 31.03.16 C.C. Planning alterations
A. 27.02.16 C.C. Planning alterations

Rev : Date : Int : Amendment :



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Proposed Change of use at:

195 Unthank Road
Norwich
NR2 2PQ
for Mr & Mrs Codling

Drawing Title:
Planning Application
Plans & Site Location

Drawn By :
Collette Codling

Job Number :
251

Date :
Jan. 2016

Scale:
As noted at A1

Drawing No :
001 C

All dimensions are in millimetres.

All dimensions to be checked on site.