

## Report for Resolution

**Report to** Planning Applications Committee  
**Date** 3 March 2011  
**Report of** Head of Planning Services  
**Subject** 10/02082/F Garages Adjacent To 53 Vale Green Norwich

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**Item**  
**5(1)**

### SUMMARY

<b>Description:</b>	Redevelopment of site to provide 2 No. houses and a block of 6 No. flats.
<b>Reason for consideration at Committee:</b>	City Council led development Objection to application
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Approve subject to conditions
<b>Ward:</b>	Mile Cross
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Mr Lee Cook Senior Planner 01603 212536
<b>Date of receipt:</b>	30th November 2010
<b>Applicant:</b>	Orwell Housing Association Limited
<b>Agent:</b>	Barefoot and Gilles Limited

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Site

##### Location and Content

1. The site lies to the north-west of the centre of Norwich within an established residential area. The area contains a mix housing types and scale of buildings from 3 and 4 storey flats to the east and north and 2 storey terrace houses to the west of the site. The area has a number of attractive green spaces and the main blocks of flats to the north and east enjoy a very attractive urban setting. Mature trees and open space are located on the north and east boundaries.
2. Vehicular access into this part of the estate is via Valpy Avenue from Drayton Road to the north. The road system divides the estate providing long main roads and parking/turning areas effectively creating cul-de-sacs. The adjacent north west roadway runs into a parking/turning head. The site currently accommodates 16 garages and potential parking area within the forecourt, although this space is not marked out as such and appears as a large open space. Other parking and garage spaces are located nearby to the north and west. Pedestrian links run along the north of the site and also through the site east to west. Access is also available to the rear of No.s 53 to 56 Vale Green at the south-west corner of the site.

## **Constraints**

3. The site lies within 250m of a recorded contaminated/landfill site and site investigation works are required under policy EP1. An allocated employment area is sited to the south of the site and the relationship of any new residential development with this site would need to be considered. There is also a sub-station located to the north of the site. An easement for pipe connections runs diagonally north to west across the site. The site is adopted highway which will require stopping up.

## **Topography**

4. The site slopes from north to south and has an existing footpath link running through the site between the housing estate and Mile Cross Road. There is also a footpath running to the north of the site linking round and through to the main road.

## **Planning History**

5. The dwellings and garages on this part of the estate were approved in 1966 and formed part of the original development for this area in the late 1960's. Discussions have taken place with Strategic Housing and recently with the applicant concerning the potential of this and other nearby garage sites for redevelopment.
6. The application is one of a series of applications by Orwell Housing for sites currently owned by Norwich City Council. NCC has entered into an agreement with the Homes and Communities Agency with an initial objective for the delivery of at least 100 new affordable dwellings with Orwell having been selected as the provider of these.
7. A pre-application Consultation Event was held on 17th November 2010 at the Norman Centre, Bignold Road, Norwich. This event was held from 2pm-4pm and 5pm-7pm with representatives from NCC Housing Dept, Orwell Housing and Barefoot and Gilles Architects.
8. Two response forms were received by the applicant as a result of this event with 1 supporting the principle of development but raising a requirement for secure gated access to the rear of their property and 1 response objecting to the principle of development. This response raised concern about the access and suitability for large vehicles to enter and the knock-on impacts to existing residents; that it is doubtful that the type and design of buildings would look right; the area would be crowded; the existing sheds will spoil the scheme; that garage space would be lost and alternative provision is not attractive as it is prone to vandalism and break-ins; and that parking space in the area is in short supply.

## **Equality and Diversity Issues**

There are no significant equality or diversity issues.

## **The Proposal**

9. This particular application is for the provision of a pair of semi-detached 2 bedroom houses and a block of 6 two bedroom flats. The scheme includes associated parking, servicing and garden areas. It also retains the footpath link to Mile Cross Road through the southern end of the adjoining housing development.

## Application Representations Received

10. Advertised on site and adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. 1 letter of representation has been received citing the issues as summarised in the table below.

Issues Raised	Response
Existing parking problems will be added to by the development. More should be done to increase parking within the proposal	Paras 13; 23; 24; 34; 35; 36 and 38
Request for additional side gate	Para 27
Concerned that they have not as yet been reallocated a new garage	Not a planning issue.

11. **The 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.

## Consultation Responses

12. **Anglian Water:** Are keen to support the spatial planning process across the region and have suggested informative statements advising that Anglian Water have assets within the development site and that their consent will be required for any future build on this area of easement..
13. **Transportation:** As the site has less than 8 units, adoption of the vehicular access is not required. The adjacent footpaths are housing owned and not adopted highway. 8 parking spaces are provided for, spaces allocated to units 7 & 8 will have a difficult turn to make to exit in a forward gear. The car parking spaces are slightly narrower than the Local Plan standards, but are adequate for most vehicles. In the interest of maintaining good neighbour relations, we would recommend that the parking spaces are marked out with the unit number, and possibly use a droppable lockable bollard to prevent fly parking. Cycle store is acceptable for the flats; the houses have sheds which are easily accessed. Refuse and recycling storage is not adequate for the flats. Required bins: 1x 1100 general waste; 3x 360 for separate forms of recycling. Compost bin is not required. Stopping up of the highway is required for most of the site and is required subsequent to planning consent. We suggest that the stopping up application covers the full extent of the application area i.e. up to and including the new speed bump. Creation of an east/west footpath across the site is welcome, it would need adequate lighting. No objections on transportation grounds. No transport contribution required. (Scheme revised to show space compliance for bin storage).
14. **Pollution Control Officer:** 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 suggested conditions for a site investigation to determine this. I have also suggested a condition for light nuisance along with informatives for the demolition and construction phases.
15. The noise survey was conducted on a Tuesday morning in November between the hours of 0530-0800. I would agree with the likelihood that this could be one of the busiest times for the primary subject for the noise assessment i.e. the neighbouring Council run depot, but it would have been useful to know that Tuesday is a typical day

and hence the data does represent worst case scenario. Assuming this is the case then the glazing spec recommended should be adequate as it conforms to BS8233. Clearly the bedrooms facing away from the NCC depot may only require a lesser spec as noise at the façade should be notably lower than the noise levels measured i.e. for those facing the depot. This has not been evaluated in the report but consideration may be advantageous.

16. **Arboricultural Officer:** There is a group of trees on land adjacent to the eastern most garages, overhanging the garage and the adjacent Mile Cross depot to the south that need to be taken account of. No trees within the site. This is achievable but will require an AMS in regard to demolition and reinstatement adjacent to the off-site group of trees.
17. **Strategic Housing:** I can confirm that the Housing Development team fully support the application for 8 new dwellings at the Vale Green garage site. This site is owned by Norwich City Council and was identified by the Housing Development Team as an excellent site for the development of affordable housing, due to the condition and under occupation of the garages and site. The current application has been put together by Orwell Housing Association in partnership with the Housing Development Team and in consultation with the planning department.
18. There is a great need for new affordable housing in Norwich with the Housing Needs and Stock Condition survey identifying a need for 677 new affordable homes to be developed in Norwich each year. The Vale Green development will go some way to help meet this need. The property mix of two bedroom houses and flats was agreed with the housing development team and meets the identified need within the strategic housing market assessment.
19. A public consultation was held on 17<sup>th</sup> November at the nearby at the Norman Centre with garage tenants and local residents prior to the application. The consultation was for three sites within the vicinity including this one and a total of 166 residents were invited. There were two feedback forms completed for this site, of which one was broadly supportive and one was against the proposal.
20. This site currently consists of 16 garages of which six are currently occupied. There are currently 37 empty garages in close proximity to this site so all of the existing tenants will be able to be relocated within a small distance. In addition once the future of the three sites with garages in this vicinity are decided the council will offer any remaining garages for rent to local residents which will hopefully alleviate any existing parking issues in the area.
21. The scheme proposed is of a high quality and will meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4. Given the need for high quality affordable homes in this area and given that this scheme has been worked up in conjunction with the Housing Development Team, we fully support this application.

# 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
PPS23	Pollution Control
PPG24	Noise

### Relevant Strategic Regional Planning Policies

ENV7	Quality in the built environment
T14	Parking
H2	Affordable Housing
WM6	Waste Management in Development

### Relevant Local Plan Policies

EP1	Contaminated Land
EP18:	High standard of energy efficiency for new development
EP20:	Sustainable use of materials
EP22:	High standard of amenity for residential occupiers
HBE12:	Design
HBE19	Design for safety and security including minimising crime
HOU13:	Proposals for new housing development on other sites
NE9:	Comprehensive landscaping scheme and tree planting
TRA5:	Approach to design for vehicle movement and special needs
TRA6:	Parking standards – maxima
TRA7:	Cycle parking standards
TRA8:	servicing standards

### Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

Trees and Development SPD – September 2007

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy SPD adopted – December 2006

Accessible and Special Needs Housing SPD – June 2006

## Principle of Development

### Policy Considerations

22. The proposals will provide 8 dwellings within a current underused brown field site. The re-use of land is encouraged under policy and the scheme provides 8 dwellings at approximately 66 dwellings to the hectare. The site is included as an area for future residential redevelopment within the sites allocation DPD currently at consultation. The scheme is laid out to respect amenity and landscape features in the area and has adequate garden space and provision for parking and servicing. As such the scheme accords with local and national policies for development and re-use of land. The scheme is for a social housing provider which will assist in adding to the stock of affordable housing in this area.
23. 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.

24. In this case the garages in question are believed to be approximately 62% void. Other garage spaces are available within the area to the north and west and it is not therefore considered that the loss of the garages and forecourt would have any significant implications in terms of highway congestion or safety.

## **Impact on Living Conditions**

### **Overshadowing, Overlooking, Loss of Privacy and Disturbance**

25. The scheme provides 2 blocks to the south of a footpath linking through the site. The blocks sit within the site and slightly out of line with each other. Impacts on amenity have been assessed and have been part of ongoing discussions with the agent to overcome any local concerns and an appropriate relationship between the 2 new blocks of dwellings.
26. The blocks are stepped in footprint and windows and openings positioned to avoid any significant overlooking of private areas to adjacent properties. Careful consideration has also been given to the relationship of the proposed buildings to the surrounding area. The proposed layout achieves appropriate distances between new and existing buildings and does not, as a result, create overshadowing or overlooking problems.
27. The scheme provides a reasonable standard of living and garden spaces which would provide an attractive living environment and which would integrate well with the character of the area. The proposed landscaping around the site should additionally provide further separation between new and existing properties. The neighbours request for a secure gate to the side of No. 53 has been put to the agent and a revised layout now provided which includes a gate to the new side path which leads to the rear of adjoining properties.

## **Design**

### **Site Layout and Building Design**

28. The proposed layout shows 2 building blocks 1 being a pair of semi detached houses and the other being a three storey block of flats. The 2 proposed blocks are each appropriate in scale and form and maintain a relatively simple type of domestic dwelling within this area. Their position within the site has, in part, been limited by the easement line for the underground pipe but despite this constraint the scheme should create an attractive and well laid out space.
29. The semi-detached houses are two storeys in height and continue the line of terrace housing which continues to the west of the site. Landscaping is proposed in front of these units as well as another area of landscape along the northern edge of the site. These elements should complete the line of existing houses and provide an attractive lead into the proposed development. Each house has a relatively large garden with additional landscape screening to the side to provide attractive private spaces.
30. The flats are provided within a three storey block which is akin to the height of development to the east. The flats front onto a central green space and parking area and together with overlooking windows and entrance points will create an active and more secure frontage onto the area. The footpath link itself is retained and adjusted slightly to make a more attractive link between the adjacent housing and Mile Cross Road. The entrance to parking bays and service areas is positioned to make best use of the space available and with the proposed additional landscaping will enhance the biodiversity of the site and will relate well to the improved street scene.
31. Amenity space is provided on the south side of the site and the building footprints have been designed to give each block a good setting and space within the street scene.

The development also seeks to retain some of the mature trees next to the site which will be enhanced by additional landscaping within the site.

32. The buildings use simple roof forms and a variety of façade treatments but with a limited range of building materials to the walls, joinery and details. It is suggested that details of materials form a condition of any consent and subject to these details the design is considered to be acceptable.
33. The development should enliven the character of the area and provide an attractive living environment and safe route for pedestrians. The development also seeks to retain trees around the site which will be enhanced by additional landscaping within the site itself. Again details are suggested covering hard and soft landscaping for the site to ensure an acceptable final finish.

## **Transport and Access**

### **Vehicular Access and Servicing**

34. One of the issues which arises from the application is the resolution of a satisfactory layout and form of access and parking which adequately serves both the existing and proposed residential units without causing highway safety or parking issues. The scheme provides a single access point which links onto the end of the adopted highway and links into the new parking area along the north edge of the site. This helps maximise site potential and creates an attractive and overlooked parking space for future residents.
35. Other on street parking can still take place within the area without detriment to safety or access. The new access, although not being to adoptable standards, is adequate for the purposes and numbers involved in the development. As it does not serve more than 8 dwellings then the scheme would equate to being a mews court. There is no requirement in design standards for the road to be to adoptable levels and is regarded as being of an acceptable design and size for the development proposed.

### **Car Parking, Servicing and Cycling Parking**

36. Proposed levels of parking are in line with the maximum suggested in Appendix 4 of the Adopted Local Plan and as such this level of provision accords with local policy and advice on encouraging sustainable modes of transport and car usage.
37. Each property has been designed with sufficient storage space to accommodate the bin requirements for the site. The block of flats is provided with a communal bin store and space provided within gardens for the houses to stand bins and additionally a standing area provided for bins on collection days. The facilities are capable of access from the adopted highway and as such make an adequate provision for servicing.
38. Adequate cycle storage has also been built into the scheme. Again the block of flats have a communal store close to the shared entrance to the flats and each house has a store within garden spaces. Each house has a rear garden gate leading to paths within the development to improve access to external storage spaces. These aspects of the development enhance the design and operation of the scheme and long term amenity value for the residents.

### **Pedestrian Links**

39. The scheme includes the retention of the footpath through to Mile Cross Road and to other facilities within the area. The housing layout improves the attractiveness of the footpath route and the safety and surveillance of this area.
40. The layout and entry point of the footpath is acceptable as now revised. However, the developers will need to liaise with the Council to arrange for the continued rights of access and it is suggested that this is controlled through the land transfer. The laying out of the parking area and its surfacing is suggested as a condition of any permission which should additionally cover the finish of the footpath and roadway to provide an

acceptable, safe and well defined final finish.

## **Environmental Issues**

### **Site Contamination and Remediation**

41. 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.

### **Noise**

42. In terms of noise impacts from commercial uses to the south of the site, these have been assessed as part of the application and a report provided showing noise category and necessary works required to reduce impacts on future tenants. The agent has confirmed that readings were taken at peak noise times and the site has been identified as being within noise exposure category B. Within this category PPG24 advises that noise should be taken into account when determining planning applications and, where it is considered that permission should be given, mitigation provided to ensure an adequate level of protection against noise.
43. In this case the main impact will be on the building rather than on garden spaces and noise can be mitigated by double glazing systems and acoustic ventilators. In this respect and to maintain an appropriate level of amenity the Pollution Control Officer has requested a condition for bedroom and living room windows to be insulated in accordance with a scheme to be approved by the Council to provide protection from commercial noise.

### **Lighting**

44. On site lighting to external spaces needs to reflect the realigned footpath and access. Such lighting and individual lights to the proposed dwellings could potentially cause amenity and design issues for the area and it is suggested that conditions are imposed requiring details to be agreed for the final scheme to ensure appropriate location and levels of illumination.

### **Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy**

45. 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.

## **Trees and Landscaping**

### **Loss of Trees or Impact on Trees**

46. The scheme is designed to take account of and seeks to retain existing B class trees which are adjacent to the site. The development sits within the area which is existing hardstanding and in position would not result in the loss of trees from adjoining areas thereby retaining the amenity and ecological value of the small amount of landscaping which exists immediately around site. It will be important however to ensure that excavation of the surface close to the retained trees and there subsequent protection takes place in an appropriate manner and conditions are suggested to cover such issues prior to and during construction.

### **Replacement Planting**

47. The scheme provides considerable potential for additional landscaping and tree planting to enhance the setting of the development and amenity of the area. The site layout is designed around a central space which provides parking and turning for the development as well as continuing a pedestrian link through to Mile Cross Road. An indication is given for trees to be provided around the site which should enhance the use of the area and existing site linkages.

48. The proposed planting would improve the street scene and add value to landscape diversity within the area and the sites linkages east to west. Conditions are therefore suggested requiring new landscaping to be provided in accordance with a scheme to be agreed to ensure that these enhancements are delivered.

### **Biodiversity**

49. Commentary provided with the application which assesses biodiversity issues and describes the site as having a negligible value for wildlife. However; there is potential to improve the site and to enhance green linkages within the area leading to Sloughbottom Park and it is suggested that it would be appropriate to take up the suggestions in the report and to impose conditions requesting enhancements of some nesting and planting conditions on and around the site.

### **Conclusions**

50. The proposed scheme provides an appropriate arrangement of 2 houses and 6 flats with associated parking and servicing. The buildings respond to the constraints and topography of the site, retains existing trees and should lead to an attractive development in accordance with local and national policy. The scheme should also enhance the use of the footpath and potentially increase security in this area.
51. The development of 8 affordable dwellings would contribute to the promotion of affordable housing in Norwich. The proposed development achieves a high standard of design and would be well integrated with the surrounding area and providing an interesting development within this part of Vale Green.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To approve Application No 10/02094/F Garages adjacent to 53 Vale Green, Norwich and grant planning permission, subject to the following conditions:-

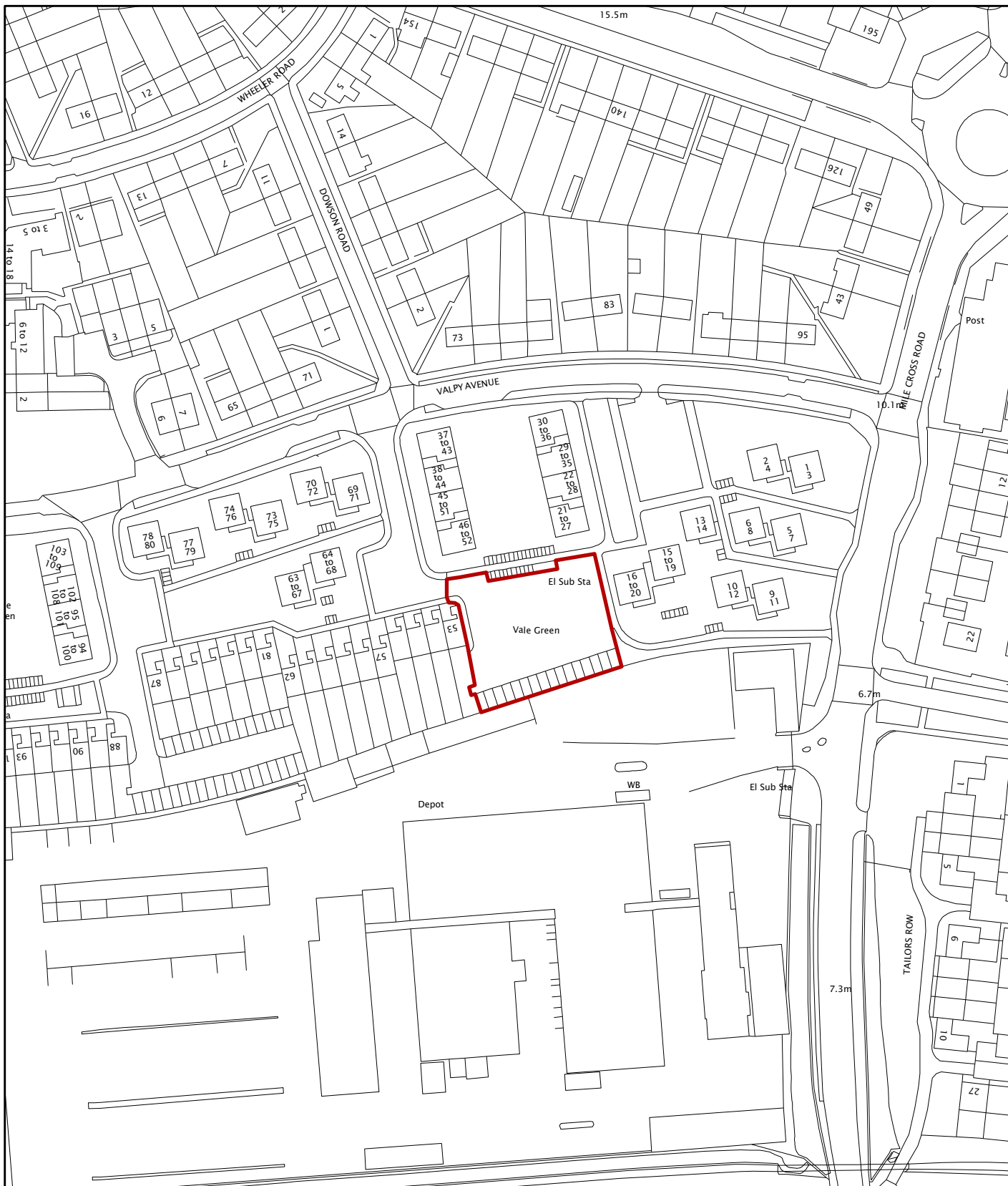
1. Commencement of development within three years
2. Details of Facing and Roofing Materials; Boundary treatment, walls and fences; external lighting; solar panels and fixings
3. Details of car parking, cycle storage, bin stores
4. Details of scheme for Arboricultural Method Statement; arboricultural site monitoring
5. Compliance with AIA and Tree Protection Scheme implemented prior to commencement
6. Retention of tree protection
7. Details of Landscaping, planting and site treatment works
8. Landscape maintenance
9. Details of noise reduction joinery/glazing
10. 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.
11. Details of biodiversity enhancements
12. Drawing numbers

Reasons for approval: The development of 8 affordable dwellings would contribute to the promotion of affordable housing in Norwich. The proposed development, subject to conditions, would be well integrated with the surrounding development in form and layout and would make good use of this brown field site. The scheme provides adequate parking and servicing space and makes proposals for rationalising footpath links in the area. The scheme is laid out to retain existing trees around the site and also allows potential for

further landscape and biodiversity enhancement to improve the amenity of the area. The decision has been made with particular regard to PPS1, PPS3, PPG13 and PPG24 policies ENV7, T14, H2 and WM6 of the adopted East of England Plan and saved policies EP1, EP18, EP22, HOU13, HBE12, HBE19, EP22, NE9, TRA5, TRA6, TRA7 and TRA8 of the City of Norwich Local Plan (Adopted Version 2004) and to all material planning considerations

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.
5. Advising on Anglian Water assets



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Planning Application No 10/02082/F  
 Site Address Garages adjacent to 53 Vale Green  
 Scale 1:1,500



**NORWICH**  
 City Council

PLANNING SERVICES



CONSTRUCTION (DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT) REGULATIONS 2007  
 Designers must provide information to the Council.  
 These rules will apply to the information shown on this drawing. Refer to Health & Safety Plan for further information.

Schedule	Beds/Person	Storey Height	Internal Fl. Area sqm
Plot 1, 2	20-40	2	76 sqm
Plot 3 to 8	20-30	Plats - 3 storey	64.9 sqm

NOTE:  
 20-30 flat  
 20-40 house  
 TOTAL  
 = 6 units  
 = 2 units

PARKING:  
 8 car parking spaces

NOTE:  
 Utility line across the site base on Survey Solutions drawing no. 6421UG401, dated 12 November 2010.  
 Topographical Survey based on Scott Wilson drawing no. D154276/VS-N018 Rev.01, dated 19 October 2010.

CORPORATE RESOURCE  
 07 FEB 2011  
 POST ROOM

Date	Rev.	Description	Drawn	Checked
04.03.2011	H	Amended to include gate and fence	CDV	IPV
07.03.2011	G	Amended to include gate and fence	MS	IPV
08.03.2011	F	Amended to include gate and fence	MS	IPV
08.03.2011	E	Amended to include gate and fence	MS	IPV
08.03.2011	D	Amended to include gate and fence	MS	IPV
08.03.2011	C	Amended to include gate and fence	MS	IPV
08.03.2011	B	Amended to include gate and fence	MS	IPV
08.03.2011	A	Amended to include gate and fence	MS	IPV

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Project	Norwich City Council Sites Vale Green, Norwich
Client	Orwell Housing Association
Drawing	Proposed Site Plan & Street Elevation
Scale & Format	1:200 @ A1
Date	04-02-2011
Revision	H
BGA Drawing No.	1745 SK10-03
Drawing Status	Planning Application

PROJECT NO.	REVISED	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1234	01	01/01/2011	Initial Design
1234	02	01/01/2011	Revised Design
1234	03	01/01/2011	Final Design

NOTES:  
 This drawing was prepared for the Client. Project & Site shown below and for the purposes set out in the Project Brief.  
 The drawing is not to be used for any other purpose than those stated.  
 The drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant drawings and specifications.  
 ALL MEASUREMENTS ARE TO BE CHECKED ON SITE AND NOT ASSUMED.

