



Committee Report

Planning Committee	Tuesday 17 December 2019
Application number	DC/19/3650/FUL
Location	59 - 61 College Road, Framlingham, Suffolk, IP13 9EU
Expiry date	Wednesday 18 December 2019
Application type	Full application
Applicant	Mr P & M Morgan & Noe
Parish	Framlingham
Proposal	Change of use and conversion of part of existing building, formally used as offices to create a new two bedroom flat - plus minor alterations to the remaining building.
Case officer	Rachel Lambert (01394) 444574 rachel.lambert@east Suffolk.gov.uk

1. Summary

- 1.1. Planning permission is sought for the change of use and alterations to facilitate the conversion in part of an existing building formally used as an office associated with the existing residential units within the remainder of the building. The ancillary office suite was formally used by a housing association for the management of the existing residential units on site and elsewhere. It is proposed to provide a two-bedroom residential unit.
- 1.2. As the 'minded to' decision of the planning officer is contrary to the comments received (within the 21-day consultation period) from Framlingham Town Council, the above application was referred to the planning referral panel on Tuesday 19 November. The outcome of the panel was for the application to be decided at planning committee as concerns were raised regarding the departure from the car parking standards and the subsequent pressure on parking within the town.
- 1.3. The scheme would provide an additional smaller residential unit within a sustainable location and accords with all other planning policies and material planning considerations. It is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

2. Site description

- 2.1. The application site is located at the junction of College Road and Mount Pleasant Road, in the market town of Framlingham. It currently comprises a two-storey building (with elements of single storeys) located to the southern extent of the site, with a parking area to the north, and vehicle access to the north east. The site is located within the settlement boundary.
- 2.2. The immediate environment is predominately residential in nature, with dwellings bordering all aspects of the site, with those to the rear (Norfolk Crescent) located at a significantly higher ground level than the subject site. The ground floor level rooms of the properties in Norfolk Crescent are akin to the first floor levels within the building on the application site. A pedestrian access leads from the western extent of the site to Norfolk Crescent. There are no known environmental constraints on site.
- 2.3. The building is currently unoccupied and provides the following:
- Ground floor
- Office space, including kitchen, storage and WC; and
 - Three one-bedroom residential units – accessed from the rear.
- First floor
- One studio residential unit;
 - One one-bedroom unit; and
 - One two-bedroom unit.
- 2.4. It is advised that the property was last used when the building was let and managed by the previous owner, Flagship Group, for the purpose of providing sheltered and/or social housing.
- 2.5. The following planning history is deemed relevant in this instance:
- C/95/1428: Conversion of building to six secure self-contained flats and area office for Suffolk Heritage Housing Association – Permitted.
 - DC/17/5420/FUL: Demolition of existing 'Foyer' building, and erection of 3no. 2 bedroomed properties for social rental, and associated works – Permitted.
- 2.6. The office area which is proposed to be converted in to a dwelling, through the current application was granted under C/95/1428.
- 2.7. The latter of the above consents (DC/17/5420/FUL) established the principle of a redevelopment of the site for entirely residential purposes. This consent was granted 16 May 2018, and therefore remains extant.

3. Proposal

- 3.1. As detailed within the submitted design and access statement, the application seeks permission for the change of use and conversion of an office suite, which forms part of the existing building, to provide a two-bedroom flat.
- 3.2. Internal alterations are also proposed and comprise new internal partition arrangements, and reconfiguration at the first-floor level, with the studio unit becoming a one-bedroom unit and the two-bedroom becoming a one-bedroom unit.
- 3.3. Overall, the development would comprise seven units:

Ground floor

- Two two-bedroom units; and
- Two one-bedroom units.

First floor

- Three one-bedroom units.

- 3.4. External alterations and provisions include the following:

- Removal of existing ground floor windows on the front elevation – to be replaced with two windows and a painted rendered finish to the elevation, with black painted brickwork.
- New charcoal uPVC windows throughout the development.
- Removal of one large window on first floor of north west elevation and replacement with two new windows.
- Removal of one large window on first floor of elevation B – B (as shown on drawing 19152 2A) and replacement with two new windows.
- Removal of lintels on south west elevation and installation of new fenestration.
- New painted render on the south-west elevation.
- Reconfiguration of parking to comprise eight car parking spaces (including one visitor space), fenced refuse bin enclosure, and cycle storage areas.

4. Consultations/comments

- 4.1. There have been no third comments received.

Town Council

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Framlingham Town Council	20 September 2019	08 October 2019
<i>“The Town Council OBJECTS to this application as there is insufficient parking. There are 8 spaces in total for this site, but there is also a covenant on the site providing a neighbour with permanent use of one space, and thus only 7 spaces are available. The flats in this building including this proposed conversion will require a minimum of 10 spaces (9 spaces plus 1 visitor space). As a result, there is shortfall of 3 spaces. This is contrary to the Suffolk County Council parking guidelines, which are also specified in policy FRAM17 of</i>		

the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan. The streets in this vicinity (College Road and Mount Pleasant) already result in traffic obstructions and hazards from inappropriate on-street parking, and this proposal will result in increased on-street parking. Parking provision in central Framlingham is severely limited and public transport links are poor, and so the parking provision allocation, per dwelling, within the “Suffolk Guidance for Parking” need to be adhered to.”

Statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Cllr Maurice Cook (Ward Member)	20 September 2019	Not applicable.
No response received.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Suffolk County Council – Highways Authority	20 September 2019	27 October 2019
No objection subject to conditions.		

5. Publicity

- 5.1. The application has not been subject to any press advertisement.

Site notices

General site notice	Reason for site notice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General site notice Date posted: 07 October 2019 Expiry date: 28 October 2019
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6. Planning policy

- 6.1. On 1 April 2019, East Suffolk Council was created by parliamentary order, covering the former districts of Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council. The Local Government (Boundary Changes) Regulations 2018 (Part 7) state that any plans, schemes, statements or strategies prepared by the predecessor council should be treated as if it had been prepared and, if so required, published by the successor council – therefore, any policy documents listed below referring to “Suffolk Coastal District Council” continue to apply to East Suffolk Council until such time that a new document is published.
- 6.2. In addition to considering applications in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires applications to be determined in accordance with the local planning authority’s ‘development plan’, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.3. East Suffolk Council’s development plan, as relevant to this proposal, consists of:

- East Suffolk Council Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (Adopted July 2013);
- East Suffolk Council Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document (Adopted January 2017); and
- The ‘Saved’ Policies of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan incorporating the first and second alterations.

6.4. The relevant policies of the *Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (Adopted July 2013)* are:

- SP1 - Sustainable Development (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- SP1a - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- SP14 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- SP15 - Landscape and Townscape (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- SP19 - Settlement Hierarchy (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- DM10 - Protection of Employment Sites (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- DM19 - Parking Standards (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- DM21 - Design: Aesthetics (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- DM22 - Design: Function (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

- DM23 – Design: Residential Amenity (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))
- DM27 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

6.5. The relevant policies of the *East Suffolk Council Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document* are:

- SSP2 - Physical Limits Boundaries (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013)).

6.6. The new local plan (covering the former Suffolk Coastal area) was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for examination on Friday 29 March 2019, the Examination took place between 20th August and the 20th September 2019. Full details of the submission to PINS can be found through this link: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/localplanexamination .

6.7. Presently, only those emerging policies that have received little objection (or no representations) can be given more weight in decision making if required, as outlined under Paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). The following policies are now considered to have some weight in determining applications; these have been referenced where applicable.

6.8. The *Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan* was prepared by Framlingham Town Council following extensive consultation with the local community and sets out its vision for development to 2031. The plan was formally ‘made’ by Suffolk Coastal District Council on 23 March 2017 [minute ref 23/03/2017(8)], and now forms part of the local development plan for the district. The relevant policies are:

- FRAM1: Framlingham Town physical limits boundary (Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan (March 2017))
- FRAM3: Housing mix (Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan (March 2017))
- FRAM11: General employment areas (Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan (March 2017))
- FRAM14: Pedestrian walkway routes (Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan (March 2017))
- FRAM17: Parking standards (Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan (March 2017))

7. Planning considerations

7.1. This section of the report is structured in the following order:

- Principle;
- Housing mix;
- Loss of office space;
- Aesthetics;
- Residential amenity;
- Parking standards;
- Pedestrian walkway routes; and
- Biodiversity and geodiversity.

Principle

- 7.2. The site is located within the defined physical limits of Framlingham, where development is considered acceptable, subject to the provisions of respective policies – as set out below.
- 7.3. The principle of using the subject building for residential use was established under planning permission C/95/1428, where the conversion of building to six secure self-contained flats and area office for Suffolk Heritage Housing Association was permitted.
- 7.4. Planning Permission DC/17/5420/FUL, for “Demolition of existing 'Foyer' building, and erection of 3no. 2 bedroomed properties for social rental, and associated works” also remains extant and could be implemented (expires 16 May 2021).

Housing mix

- 7.5. As noted in the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan (2017), the housing mix in terms of dwelling size is an important issue in Framlingham - analysis has shown, the parish has a falling proportion of its population aged 25-44 (i.e. in the first-time buyer category for housing). This suggests that access to housing is an issue locally because of affordability. As such, provision of smaller properties is needed – a component of this the predominant demand is for for 1- and 2-bed units. The housing register (in July 2015) showed that 64 per cent of Framlingham residents on the register need one-bedroom accommodation and 85 per cent either one or two-bedroom accommodation.
- 7.6. Overall, the application for the refurbishment and provision of seven small residential units is supported by Policy FRAM3 of the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan (2017).

Loss of office space

- 7.7. The office space that is subject to change was permitted under the aforementioned planning permission (C/95/1428). Its use by the Suffolk Heritage Housing Association as an area office could be deemed ancillary to the residential use. However, there are no conditions imposed on the decision notice to restrict its use to that associated with the residential units.

- 7.8. The office space is deemed as an 'employment site', can only secure policy support where the applicant has clearly demonstrated that there is no current or long-term demand for the retention of all or part of the site for employment use. There has been no such evidence submitted in association with the application to determine whether the office is still a viable use. As such, it cannot be determined whether the site is in accordance with the respective policy – Policy DM10, which seeks to protect employment sites within the district.
- 7.9. Nonetheless, due to the formation of the building and with the office use previously being in association with the wider residential scheme, it is considered appropriate that there is greater planning benefit by converting the whole building to a residential use. Furthermore, the town of Framlingham directs and provides support for office use within the defined general employment areas (Policy FRAM11), located at Station Road Industrial Estate; Woodbridge Road Industrial Estate; and land between Fairfield Road and Station Road.
- 7.10. The loss of the ancillary office use, and redevelopment of the site for entirely residential purposes has also already been established through the granting of DC/17/5420/FUL.
- 7.11. It is on this basis that officers do not feel that marketing is appropriate, or that the principle of development could be resisted. It will though be up to the decision maker as to the weight to be attached to the other issues.

Aesthetics

- 7.12. The most obvious external change would be to the front projection on the eastern elevation of the building. This is currently dominated by unfortunate uPVC glazing. This is proposed to be altered so it would be predominantly rendered walls, with two smaller openings positioned in line with the dormer windows above. This would be a positive enhancement to the appearance of the building from public vantage points.
- 7.13. The other exterior changes would be the replacement of a wide first floor level window on the rear elevation with two smaller openings, similar alterations on the elevation facing towards the parking area, and on the elevation facing into the court yard area, and the rendering of the existing two-storey rear projection. These would have limited positive impact upon the appearance of the building; however, this would not result in visual harm to the wider amenity of the area.
- 7.14. Overall, the proposed design changes to the external elevations are minimal and are considered to result in an improvement to the overall street scene, particularly with the removal of the large areas of glazing on the ground floor of the principal elevation. The proposed internal changes are deemed acceptable in planning terms and would have no adverse visual impact upon exterior of the building. As such, the application is deemed in accordance with Policy DM21 (Design: Aesthetics) of the East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2013).

Residential amenity

- 7.15. As there are no proposed changes to the location of fenestration, and with the use established in principle, it is considered that the application would not result in adverse residential amenity impacts to neighbouring properties.
- 7.16. The internal reconfiguration at the first-floor level would result the replacement of a studio dwelling with a one-bedroom unit – this would result in a unit with greater daylight/sunlight access and outlook, a much-preferred utilisation of space within the building.
- 7.17. The alterations to the front of the building are minimal and will not alter the scale or form of the building. As a result, it is considered that there would be no impact to the residential amenity to neighbouring properties. The property to the south (57 College Road) shares a party wall, however, this relationship would not change and there are no additional windows proposed to face that property.
- 7.18. To ensure that the rear of the site and access to the walkway is accessible and safe, a condition of consent will apply requesting details of an appropriate lighting scheme to illuminate the car parking area and walkway steps.
- 7.19. Overall, the proposal would not cause adverse residential amenity effects on neighbouring properties and is, therefore, deemed in accordance with Policy DM23 (Design: Residential Amenity) of the East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2013).

Parking standards

- 7.20. The proposal provides for a revised parking layout for the provision of eight car parking spaces, bin storage area, and bicycle parking. As stated under Policy FRAM17, development proposals should be designed to meet the parking standards contained in the Suffolk Advisory Parking Guidance, or any subsequent document; this includes the provision of unallocated/visitor parking spaces and cycle parking spaces.
- 7.21. In this instance, the proposal falls short of the required minimum advisory parking standards by one space (relating to the per dwelling guide), and 1.75 spaces (relating to visitor space requirements). As noted by Framlingham Town Council, this is reduced further by a covenant that requires one space in association with a neighbouring property.
- 7.22. However, it is acknowledged that occupants living within the two-bedroom apartments may not require two spaces, and the conversion of the office space to residential is not considered to cause an increase in parking demand compared to that of the existing use. Furthermore, no concerns were raised by the highways authority, subject to conditions.
- 7.23. Although there is cycle parking areas proposed, it is unclear whether they are large enough to provide the required spaces (14 – at two per dwelling). To ensure that there is adequate space for this provision, a condition of consent will apply – unallocated cycle parking for residents to be provided in a secure and covered enclosure located in easily accessible locations throughout the development.

- 7.24. A condition of consent will also apply to ensure that the proposed parking and turning areas are provided, subject to the submission, agreement and implementation of more precise details including details demonstrating the location, size, form, surfacing, drainage for surface water run-off and any ground level changes/excavation required and any works to the associated retaining walls.

Pedestrian walkway routes

- 7.25. To help ensure that residents can walk safely to Framlingham town centre, public transport facilities, schools and other important facilities serving the community of Framlingham, 'walkway route' have been indicated on the policy map. All new developments must ensure safe pedestrian access to link up with existing pavements that directly connect with the designated routes.
- 7.26. The pedestrian access that leads across the site from Norfolk Crescent, is identified as a 'walkway route'. In this instance, the proposal will still allow for the retention of this access route and will not have any detrimental impact on the route. As such, the application is deemed to be in accordance with Policy FRAM14 of the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan (2017).

Biodiversity and geodiversity

- 7.27. The Suffolk Recreation Avoidance Mitigation Strategy ("Suffolk RAMS") identifies that new housing development within a 13km zone of influence ("ZOI") of any designated European site in Suffolk will have a likely significant effect on the interest features of those sites through increased recreational pressure, both alone and in-combination with other housing in the ZOI. To mitigate this, a per-dwelling financial contribution is required to fund the Suffolk RAMS.
- 7.28. A planning obligation has been submitted with the application to deliver this financial contribution and, therefore, the local planning authority can conclude 'no likely significant effects' from the development proposal on the designated site(s). The proposal is, therefore, in accordance with the objectives of Policy SP14 and Policy DM27 of the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2013), which seek to protect designated sites in accordance with The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017).

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. Overall, the proposal to convert the office space at the front of the site to residential use, as well as minor alterations to the fenestration and internal unit arrangement is supported in principle.
- 8.2. The provision of an additional two-bedroom unit, within the residential area of Framlingham is supported by policy and would not result in adverse effects on residential amenity, townscape aesthetics, existing walking routes or the wider environment. Moreover, the external alteration to the façade including the reduction to some of the existing fenestration would be a beneficial change to the street scene.

- 8.3. Despite the proposal not meeting the required parking standards, the development would allow for one car parking space per unit as well as sufficient on-site cycle parking, a bin store enclosure, retention of access to the walkway, and one space reserved by a covenant (noted by the Town Council). The proposed arrangements are not deemed to cause detrimental effects to highways safety.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1. Approve subject to conditions.

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is imposed in accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in complete accordance with the following drawings, received on 18 September 2019:

- Site location plan (19152 5);
- Proposed block plan (19152 4); and
- Proposed ground floor and first floor plans (19152 1D).

Reason: For avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. The materials and finishes shall be as indicated within the submitted application and thereafter retained as such, unless otherwise agreed by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in the interests of visual amenity.

4. Before the development is commenced details of the area to be provided for the secure cycle storage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety before the development is brought into use and shall be retained thereafter and used for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure that the minimum cycle storage provision outlined within Suffolk Guidance for Parking (2019) is achieved and to promote sustainable transport.

5. The use shall not commence until the area within the site shown on Drawing No. 1952 4 for the purposes of manoeuvring and parking of vehicles, and secure cycle storage, has been provided and thereafter that area shall be retained and used for no other purposes.

Reason: To ensure that sufficient space for the onsite parking of vehicles is provided and maintained in order to ensure the provision of adequate on-site space for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles where on-street parking and manoeuvring would be detrimental to highway safety to users of the highway.

6. The areas to be provided for storage of Refuse/Recycling bins as shown on Drawing No.1952 4 shall be provided in its entirety before the development is brought into use and shall be retained thereafter for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure that refuse recycling bins are not stored on the highway causing obstruction and dangers for other users.

7. Appropriate lighting should be provided to illuminate the car parking area and walkway steps, the precise details of which shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be installed within one month of occupation of the residential units.

Reason: In the interests on residential amenity and highways safety.

8. Within three month(s) of commencement of development, precise details of a scheme of landscape works (which term shall include tree and shrub planting, grass, earthworks, driveway construction, parking areas patios, hard surfaces etc, and other operations as appropriate) at a scale not less than 1:200 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that there is a well laid out landscaping scheme in the interest of visual amenity.

Informatives:

1. The Local Planning Authority has assessed the proposal against all material considerations including planning policies and any comments that may have been received. The planning application has been approved in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and local plan to promote the delivery of sustainable development and to approach decision taking in a positive way.
2. The applicant is advised that the proposed development will require approval under Building Regulations (2010). Any amendments to the hereby permitted scheme that may be necessary to comply with Building Regulations (2010) must also be approved in writing by the local planning authority in order that any planning implications arising from those amendments may be properly considered.
3. The proposed development referred to in this planning permission is a chargeable development liable to pay Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) under Part 11 of the Planning Act (2008) and the CIL Regulations (2010) (as amended).

Note: The Council will issue a Liability Notice for the development once liability has been assumed. Liability must be assumed prior to the commencement of development. Failure to comply with the correct process as detailed in the regulations may result in surcharges and enforcement action and the liable party will lose the right to pay by instalments. Full details of the process for the payment of CIL can be found at <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/community-infrastructure-levy/>

4. The development included (or appears to include) one or more of the following:

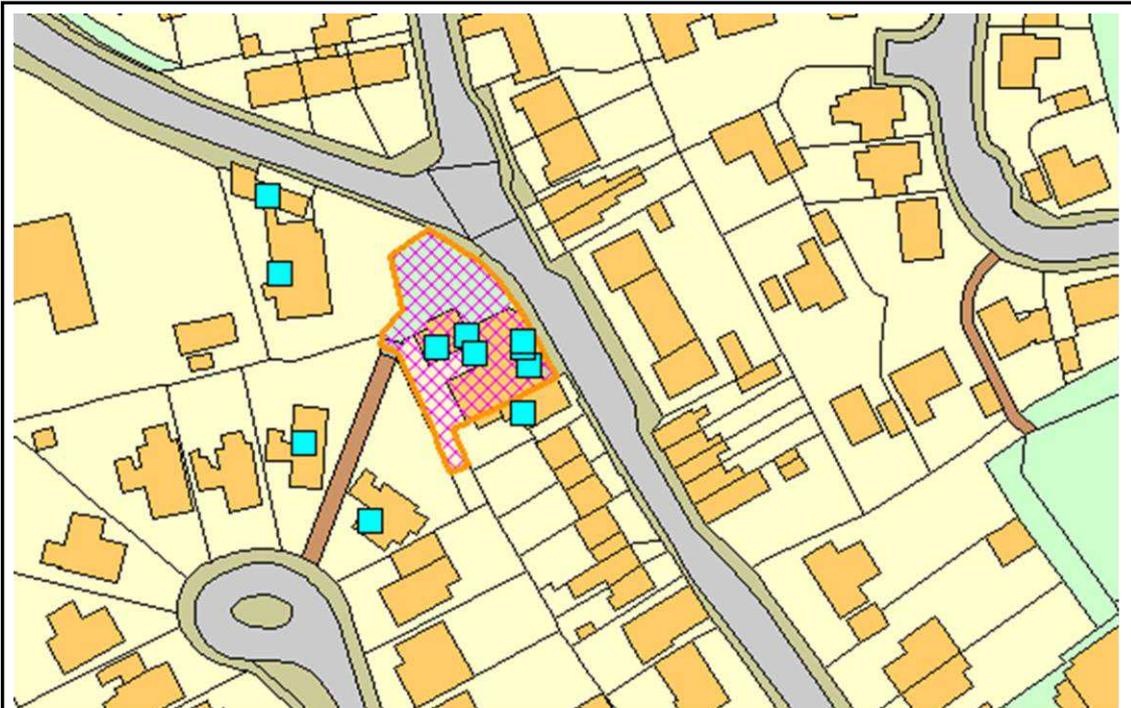
- a. Works to an existing wall or structure shared with another property;
- b. The construction of a wall or building on or close to a property boundary; and/or
- c. Excavations near a neighbouring building.

You are advised that the provision of the Party Wall Act (1996) may apply to this development. An explanatory booklet concerning the implications of this Act is available from the Department for Communities and Local Government - www.gov.uk/party-wall-etc-act-1996-guidance.

Background information

See application reference DC/19/3650/FUL at <https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=PXZEPQX0H800>

Map



DO NOT SCALE SLA100019684

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Key



Notified, no comments received



Objection



Representation



Support