

**NORTH PLANNING COMMITTEE - UPDATE SHEET****10 November 2020**

Item 5 – DC/20/1352/FUL - *Redevelopment and extension of the former Royal Court Hotel to provide a café (A3) at ground level and 15 residential flats, at 146 London Road South, Lowestoft, NR33 0AZ.*

Additional Consultation response From Suffolk Police Designing Out Crime Officer (received 09.11.2020):

- No objection raised but detailed advice provided to the applicant for their consideration in terms of ensuring the property is secure and safe.

Updated Report Following Receipt of Amended Plans:**1. Introduction**

1.1 Members will be familiar with this development site having considered a scheme for 16 flats and a ground floor café at the October Planning Committee North (PCN) meeting, where a decision was deferred to allow officers to negotiate with the applicant and their agent on changes to the proposed plans to address key concerns raised by members. Those concerns were around three issues: size of the proposed flats and resultant living conditions; bin provision, storage and presentation; and car parking provision. Since that the deferral, the applicant/agent have engaged positively with officers and an amended scheme has thus been brought forward for consideration.

2. The Proposed Development

2.1 The key change from the scheme considered at the October PCN meeting is that the residential part of the scheme has been reduced from 16 flats to 15 flats. This is reflected in the amended description of development as set out at the top of this page. In reducing the total number of flats, this has allowed for the first-floor units of accommodation to be significantly increased, in terms of floor area. For ease of reference, the comparative floor areas between the scheme considered at October PCN, and as now proposed, are tabled below:

LEGAL ADDRESS East Suffolk House, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1RT
DX: 41400 Woodbridge

POSTAL ADDRESS Riverside, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft NR33 0EQ
DX: 41220 Lowestoft

Floor Area of the Proposed Flats (GIA in square metres)		
Flat/Unit Number	October PCN Scheme	Amended Scheme for November PCN
1	50sqm	50sqm
2	61sqm	61sqm
3	70sqm	70sqm
4	50sqm	50sqm
5	37sqm	45sqm
6	37sqm	45sqm
7	37sqm	45sqm
8	37sqm	45sqm
9	37sqm	50sqm
10	37sqm	45sqm
11	37sqm	50sqm
12	37sqm	40sqm
13	40sqm	40sqm
14	40sqm	70sqm
15	70sqm	70sqm
16	70sqm	N/A

- 2.2 This is a significant change, with all the first-floor units being enlarged by at least 20%. These 1-bedroom (1-person) flats now range from 45 to 50 sqm. Officers consider that the proposed accommodation is wholly acceptable, in terms of occupier living conditions, in accordance with the objectives of Local Plan Policy WLP8.29 (Design). The minor fenestration changes required to allow for this re-configured internal layout are immaterial and will not cause harm to the conservation area. In terms of design, external appearance, and impact on the historic environment, the amended scheme is deemed, again, to be acceptable in accordance with Historic Environment policies of the Local Plan and NPPF.
- 2.3 To provide members with comfort that the standard of accommodation will be to a high level, the applicant has provided details of an interiors concept design (carried out by Hemingway Design) that shows a materiality concept and apartment aesthetic. Whilst indicative, this demonstrates a potentially high-quality internal specification to the accommodation, and a level of thought from the developer about the kind of accommodation that will be enjoyable and attractive to future residents.
3. Waste/Recycling Bins – Storage and Presentation
- 3.1 In addition to working with Planning Officers, the applicant has also been in discussion with the Council's Operations Team, and colleagues at East Suffolk Norse, in regard to waste management at the site. At the October PCN meeting, members expressed concern that the waste bin provision was inadequate and could also lead to unsightly presentation on collection days.
- 3.2 East Suffolk Norse have advised that the mixed development proposed would require 4no. 1100L bins. The applicant is proposing 5no. 1100L bins, to ensure any unlikely overflow capacity is met. This storage area is shown on the proposed (amended) site plan to be located to rear of the site, away from the public realm. In terms of collection, the applicant has entered into a waste management agreement with East Suffolk Norse, meaning that all of the

waste bins will be collected on a weekly basis under a Norse commercial trade waste agreement. Thus, there will not be the usual weekly/fortnightly presentation of domestic wheelie bins on London Road South. There is potential for collection to be via the gated entrance at the rear of the site, adjacent the surface level car park. This is a significant improvement from the scheme previously considered by members, and officers consider that the matter has been addressed.

4. Car Parking Provision

- 4.1 Whilst noting that the County Highways Authority raised no objection to the proposed development considered at the October PCN meeting, members did express some concern over the limited amount of car parking on site and the potential for parking to be displaced to the local highway network.
- 4.2 To address this, the applicant has again worked with Planning Officers and the Council's Operations Team. The applicant has signed up to a corporate subscription to the Council's digital parking app, 'Ringo'. What this means, is that the applicant now has a corporate parking account for additional parking at the following ESC car parks: Clifton Road Car Park; Claremont Pier Car Park; Royal Green Car park; Kirkley Cliff Car Park; Britten Centre Car Park; and Clapham Road Car Park. Officers will show the relationship of these car parks to the development site in the PCN presentation, but the applicant's agent has indicated that these car parks, in total, provide around 1100+ parking spaces. The applicant would therefore be able to offer all-year-round parking permits to future residents, if required, in addition to the eight parking spaces that would be provided on site. This is also in addition to the 32 bicycle parking spaces to be provided in the secure/covered area to the rear of the site.
- 4.3 Officers consider this to be an excellent solution to the concern raised by members and will ensure that the proposed development has access to excellent parking provision for both future residents, visitors, and patrons of the ground floor café. The proposal is acceptable in highways safety and parking terms, in accordance with Local Plan Policy WLP8.21 (Sustainable Transport).

5. Affordable Housing Provision and Suffolk (Coast) RAMS Contribution

- 5.1 As set out the in the October PCN report, the building benefits from the VBC and thus the affordable housing requirement for the proposed development is an off-site financial contribution. Despite the scheme being amended/reduced from 16 flats to 15 flats, the applicant is proposing the same off-site financial contribution as before (an equivalence to 1 unit of affordable housing) and has entered into a signed unilateral undertaking to provide that contribution (completed 06.11.2020). This is a policy compliant provision of a commuted sum to fund off-site affordable housing.
- 5.2 The completed unilateral undertaking also provides for the per-dwelling financial contribution to the Suffolk (Coast) RAMS, meaning that the impact of development on European (Habitats) Sites will be mitigated, and the development can proceed in accordance with the Habitats Regulations (2017) and Policy WLP8.34 of the Local Plan.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 In reading this update report, members will also need to consider the more detailed appraisal of the development set out in the main PCN report, which was also considered at the October meeting. That being said, the proposed development has been significantly amended in response to member feedback. The matters of waste management and car parking provision

have been comprehensively addressed. The tangible increase in floor area of the first-floor flats will provide a better standard of living for future residents. The further details of the interior design concept indicate the potential for this scheme to be a high-quality mixed-use development.

- 6.2 Officers consider that the scheme represents a sustainable form of development and delivers significant public benefits, most notably through the policy compliant regeneration of a key site within the Conservation Area and Heritage Action Zone.
7. Recommendation
- 7.1 Approve with conditions, including (but not limited to) those detailed on pages 40-42 of committee report.

Item 7 – DC/20/2737/FUL – New two storey, 8-bedroom house, with up to four of the rooms let for Bed & Breakfast accommodation, with studio and carport, and associated landscaping works, at Mill Road, Peasenhall, Suffolk.

Representation from Ward Member (Cllr Stephen Burroughes):

*“Regarding **item 7** on your agenda tomorrow and the application for erection of one 8-bedroom dwelling on Mill Road, Peasenhall, part of which for let as B&B. As the ward councillor, I concur with the Parish Council and have no objection or issues to raise. Therefore, happy for the application to be determined as indicated within the report”.*