



## Committee Report

### Planning Committee North - 14 December 2021

**Application no** DC/21/4253/FUL

**Location**

87 High Street  
Lowestoft  
Suffolk  
NR32 1XN

**Expiry date** 8 November 2021

**Application type** Full Application

**Applicant** Mr Ryan Taylor

**Parish** Lowestoft

**Proposal** Restoration of existing shop frontage, demolition of existing rear single storey extension and addition of new two storey extension with additional dwelling.

**Case Officer** Iain Robertson  
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#### 1. Summary

- 1.1. Planning permission is sought for the restoration of the existing shop frontage, demolition of existing rear single storey extension and addition of new two storey extension to provide an additional unit of residential accommodation whilst retaining the retail premises.
- 1.2. The property is currently in a dilapidated condition and is situated within a prominent location within the Town Centre and Lowestoft Conservation Area, which is also part of the North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone (HAZ), which seeks to promote the renovation and repair of historic buildings and public spaces to stimulate the economic revival of the area.
- 1.3. The works to restore the existing shopfront and refurbish this building would represent a considerable enhancement to the Lowestoft Conservation Area. The proposals will also provide a residential unit in a sustainable location and enable the building to be brought back into a viable use whilst retaining the commercial element of the building in the Town Centre Area.

- 1.4. The application is before members as East Suffolk Council are both the applicant and landowner.
- 1.5. The proposed development is in accordance with the Local Plan and the application is recommended for Approval.

## **2. Site description**

- 2.1. The building forms part of a terrace of buildings within The High Street adjacent to the Triangle Market Place. Malsters Score provides access to the rear of the property which joins to Spurgeon Score leading to Whapload Road.
- 2.2. The property currently has commercial use (Class E) within the ground floor frontage of the property, most recently being operated as the Triangle Butchery shop, with a single residential unit above. It is situated within a secondary shopping frontage Area with the Town Centre of Lowestoft.
- 2.3. Due to the differing levels between the front and back of the building the existing accommodation is arranged over three floors with the commercial accommodation at ground and basement level and residential situated behind and above the existing residential premises.
- 2.4. The site is also situated in an area of Heritage significance. The building is within a prominent area with the Historic High Street and Scores Area of the Town Centre within the North Lowestoft Conservation Area of which this area is also designated as a Heritage Action Zone. The building itself is not a Heritage asset as it is neither listed nor considered to be a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA).

## **3. Proposal**

- 3.1. The first part of the proposal seeks to rebuild the existing façade and timber shopfront as close as possible to its historic appearance.

This will include:

- Raising the facade and formation of a parapet, to align with neighbouring building no.88. This is to be treated in a similar fashion to other existing buildings along the High Street, and 'tidy' this portion of the streetscape.
  - Restore the historic timber shopfront back to its historic condition. This will include a combination of reuse and forming new additions where details have been lost/condition dictates. The slightly disproportionate division of this elevation will be maintained, and existing material reused where possible.
  - Replacing of the existing first floor window with a sash type, to match historic imagery. The off-centre location of this window will match the existing position.
- 3.2. The second part of this application involves the refurbishment and extension of the existing property, to provide two open market residential units (1 x 1 bed and 1 x 2 bed) arranged above and behind the retail unit. The extension would replace two outbuildings in very poor

condition, which previously served as part of the commercial premises. The form of the new rear extension sits subservient to the existing building to be constructed in brickwork and timber.

#### 4. Consultations/comments

4.1. One representation received in support of the application.

##### Consultees

##### Parish/Town Council

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Lowestoft Town Council	21 September 2021	6 October 2021
<p>Summary of comments:</p> <p><i>The Town Council's Planning Committee considered this application at a meeting on 5 October 2021. It was agreed to recommend approval of the application.</i></p> <p><i>The Town Council has declared a Climate Emergency. To support this declaration, the Planning Committee requests that when recommending approval of a planning application the following measures are taken into account:</i></p> <p><i>Consideration of biodiversity ' Support for new or improved renewable energy including the installation of solar panels, where appropriate, on all additionally created roofs. ' Support for alternatives to car use e.g., walking, cycling and public transport, and encourage efficient car use, including through appropriate car parking provision, car sharing, differential car-parking charges, and the use of electric cars including the installation of first fix wiring for car charging points at all new builds. ' Encouragement for the management of land for nature and an increase in tree cover. ' Resistance of the use of natural open space for development and encourage reuse of brownfield sites. ' Support homes which are energy efficient, nature friendly and located close to public transport and amenities.</i></p>		

##### Statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Historic England	21 September 2021	12 October 2021
<p>Summary of comments:</p> <p>The proposed shopfront would represent a considerable positive impact to the significance of the heritage asset. Historic England therefore consider that the scheme would be in compliance with paragraph 206 of the NPPF.</p> <p>Historic England has no objection to the application on heritage grounds.</p>		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
SCC County Archaeological Unit	21 September 2021	4 October 2021
Summary of comments: In our opinion there would be no significant impact on known archaeological sites or areas with archaeological potential. We have no objection to the development and do not believe any archaeological mitigation is required.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
SCC Highways Department	5 October 2021	No response
Summary of comments: No comments received.		

### Non statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
East Suffolk Design and Conservation	21 September 2021	No response
Summary of comments: No comments received		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Private Sector Housing (Internal)	21 September 2021	23 September 2021
Summary of comments: No observations or comments to make.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Economic Regeneration (Internal)	21 September 2021	No response
Summary of comments: Subject to conditions requiring additional details we would support the application and are excited to see the building restored and back in use.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
East Suffolk Economic Development	N/A	7 October 2021
Summary of comments: No comment to make.		

## 5. Publicity

The application has been the subject of the following press advertisement:

Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Conservation Area	24 September 2021	15 October 2021	Beccles and Bungay Journal

Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Conservation Area	24 September 2021	15 October 2021	Lowestoft Journal

## Site notices

General Site Notice	Reason for site notice: Conservation Area Date posted: 7 October 2021 Expiry date: 28 October 2021
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## 6. Planning policy

- 6.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that *“where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise”*.
- 6.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) are material considerations.
- 6.3. The East Suffolk Council (Waveney) Local Plan was adopted on 20 March 2019 and the following policies are considered relevant:
  - WLP1.1 - Scale and Location of Growth
  - WLP1.2 - Settlement Boundaries
  - WLP1.3 - Infrastructure
  - WLP2.9 - Historic High Street and Scores Area
  - WLP8.19 - Vitality and Viability of Town Centres
  - WLP8.29 - Design
  - WLP8.34 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
  - WLP8.37 - Historic Environment
  - WLP8.39 - Conservation Areas
- 6.4. Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document (June 2021) is also a material consideration, and its content informs the officer assessment to follow.

## **7. Planning considerations**

### Principle of Development

- 7.1. The site is situated within the Town Centre of Lowestoft within the Historic High Street and scores area.
- 7.2. Development within the Historic High Street and Scores area is controlled by Policy WLP2.9. This area forms some of the oldest parts of Lowestoft and is part of the North Lowestoft Conservation Area and exhibits numerous historic buildings, many of which are listed. However, the quality of the historic environment is under threat from insensitive development, poorly maintained buildings, and a lack of investment.
- 7.3. The area around the Triangle Market is part of Lowestoft Town Centre and provides a secondary shopping area and a leisure focus with a number of cafés, restaurants, and pubs. The Scores have a more mixed residential and employment purpose.
- 7.4. The objectives for this area are for heritage led regeneration which enhances the heritage experience of this area and supports the existing shops, cafés, and restaurants.
- 7.5. The area falls within the recently designated North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone. The key aims of the five-year scheme are to restore the old High Street's historic character for the people who live there and to boost tourism. Work will include providing quality spaces for the community, re-connecting the old town to modern Lowestoft, and bringing under-used and vacant land and property back into use for housing and retail.
- 7.6. To achieve a better mix of tenures in the area and to encourage investment which will help improve the appearance of the area, the Council will proactively support new open market residential development within the Historic High Street and Scores area.
- 7.7. Proposals for development within the area should be in accordance with Policy WLP8.39 "Conservation Areas" and have regard to the North Lowestoft Conservation Area Appraisal. Historic shop fronts are a key part of the character of the conservation area, and these should be retained and enhanced as part of development in accordance with the Historic Environment SPD.
- 7.8. The High Street frontage up to Crown Street East on the west side and Mariners Score on the east side is defined as a secondary retail frontage under Policy WLP8.19. which seeks to support the vitality and viability of the Town Centre.
- 7.9. This proposal accords with the principal aims of these policies in that it is seeking to regenerate this neglected building, reinstating historic elements of it, whilst retaining the commercial floor area and providing two units of residential accommodation.

### Heritage impact

- 7.10. Policy WLP8.37 "Historic Environment" seeks to conserve or enhance heritage assets and highlights that development proposals which have the potential to impact on Heritage Assets should be supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment. This is also a requirement of

Paragraph 194 of the NPPF. The Design, Access + Heritage Statement provided is considered to meet this requirement.

- 7.11. The proposed works to this building, particularly the restoration of the front façade and historic shopfront, will have a considerable positive impact on the Conservation Area, a Designated Heritage Asset. The extension and alterations to the rear are well designed providing a structure of traditional form with contemporary appearance. This proposal would offer a significant improvement to the visual appearance of this neglected site within the Conservation Area, both from the High Street and from Malsters Score.
- 7.12. The proposals will enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as required by Policy WLP8.39 and S72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Furthermore, the application would meet the requirements of Paragraph 206 of the NPPF which encourages Local Planning Authorities to look for opportunities which better reveal the significance of Heritage Assets.

#### Amenity

- 7.13. Policy WLP8.29 expects that development proposals will protect the amenity of the wider environment, neighbouring uses and provide a good standard of amenity for future occupiers of the proposed development.
- 7.14. The rear extension is of two storey height of a modest depth at approximately 4.4m. The extension would not impact on the properties either side in terms of loss of light or privacy and due to the enhancements to the site would generally improve the amenity of the surrounding area.
- 7.15. In terms of the amenity of future occupiers the proposals offer residential units that exceeds minimum space standards and will offer a good level of amenity in terms of natural light to rooms. Garden space is available to the ground floor unit, which is the larger of the two. Bin and cycle storage will be available for the units to the rear of the property, further details of which are to be provided by condition.

#### Highways:

- 7.16. Suffolk County Council Highways Authority have not commented on this proposal. No off-street parking is available to this property. Given the sustainable nature of this location, close to everyday services and facilities and public transport, the lack of parking provision is considered to be acceptable. As previously mentioned, covered and secure cycle storage will be provided to ensure that other more sustainable transport options are available to occupiers as is encouraged by Policy WLP8.21.
- 7.17. A bin store has been shown to the rear; however, this requires occupiers to move bins to the road from this location which involves negotiating a few small steps up from the score. This will have been an issue that has been encountered by previous occupiers of the commercial unit and the flat above. It is common that bins are left on the public highway for collection and returned to the storage areas in between collection.
- 7.18. The intensification of this use is very minimal and it is not considered that this would lead to a situation which causes a significant inconvenience for users of the public highway. The

benefits of the renovation/reuse of this building far outweigh this minor issue. It is considered that this proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety as required by Paragraph 111 of the NPPF.

### Other matters

#### Ecology:

- 7.19. Due to the demolition of outbuildings and the overgrown nature of the site, it is considered necessary for a condition to restrict demolition and clearance of vegetation to outside of the bird nesting season.

#### RAMS:

- 7.20. The site is situated within the zone of Influence (ZOI) of European protected sites. In this area increased residential development will result in likely significant effects. As set out in the strategy, evidence shows that there is a 13 km Zone of Influence (ZOI) around the relevant Habitat Sites in the Suffolk Coast area (this includes East Suffolk, Ipswich Borough and Babergh and Mid Suffolk Council areas).
- 7.21. The appropriate contribution to the RAMS project has been made which allows for a strategic approach to mitigating the in-combination effects of development on these designated areas and allows mitigation to be delivered across the project area.
- 7.22. The proposals would therefore accord with Policy WLP8.34 of the Local Plan.

## **8. Conclusion**

- 8.1. The proposed alterations and extension to this property will be of considerable benefit to the Designated Heritage Asset that is the Conservation Area providing a significant improvement to the visual appearance of this neglected site within the Conservation Area.
- 8.2. The proposal accords with the aims and objectives for the Historic High Street and Scores area as highlighted within Policy WLP2.9 which supports heritage led regeneration which enhances the heritage experience of this area, whilst enhancing the vitality and viability of the Town Centre through bringing under-used and vacant land and property back into use for housing and retail.
- 8.3. The proposals will therefore enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as required by Policy WLP8.39 and S72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

## **9. Recommendation**

- 9.1. Approve - Subject to conditions detailed below.



**10. Conditions:**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be completed in all respects strictly in accordance with drawing nos. PL-100 Rev B and PL-200 Rev C received 04 November 2021 and PL-001 Rev B received 09 September 2021 for which permission is hereby granted, or which are subsequently submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and in compliance with any conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the 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 in writing with the local planning authority.

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

4. Details in respect of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council as Local Planning Authority before the work is begun. The work shall be carried out in accordance with such approved details:

- Joinery details for the shopfront further to the reuse of existing materials where possible.
- Sectional drawings (vertical and horizontal) of the first-floor window
- Full details of all external facing and roofing materials

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the building.

5. The areas to be provided for storage of refuse/recycling bins as shown on drawing number PL-001 Rev B 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 adequate facilities for storage are provided in the interest of highway safety.

6. Details of the areas to be provided for secure, covered and lit cycle storage including electric assisted cycles 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 promote sustainable travel by ensuring the provision at an appropriate time and long-term maintenance of adequate on-site areas and infrastructure for the storage of cycles and charging of electrically assisted cycles in accordance with Suffolk Guidance for Parking 2019.

7. No removal of hedgerows, trees, shrubs, brambles, ivy and other climbing plants, or works to or demolition of buildings or structures that may be used by breeding birds shall take place between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation for active birds' nests immediately before the vegetation is cleared and provided written confirmation that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site. Any such written confirmation should be submitted to the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that nesting birds are protected.

8. Full details of both hard and soft landscape works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved.

These details shall include hard surfaced areas, new boundary treatments such as gates fences and walls. Soft landscape works shall include planting plans; written specifications, schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed number/densities where appropriate; implementation programme.

Any planting shall be completed in the autumn (October - December) planting season following completion of the development, or such other date as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants which die during the first 5 years shall be replaced during the next planting season.

Reason To ensure a satisfactory appearance within the landscape

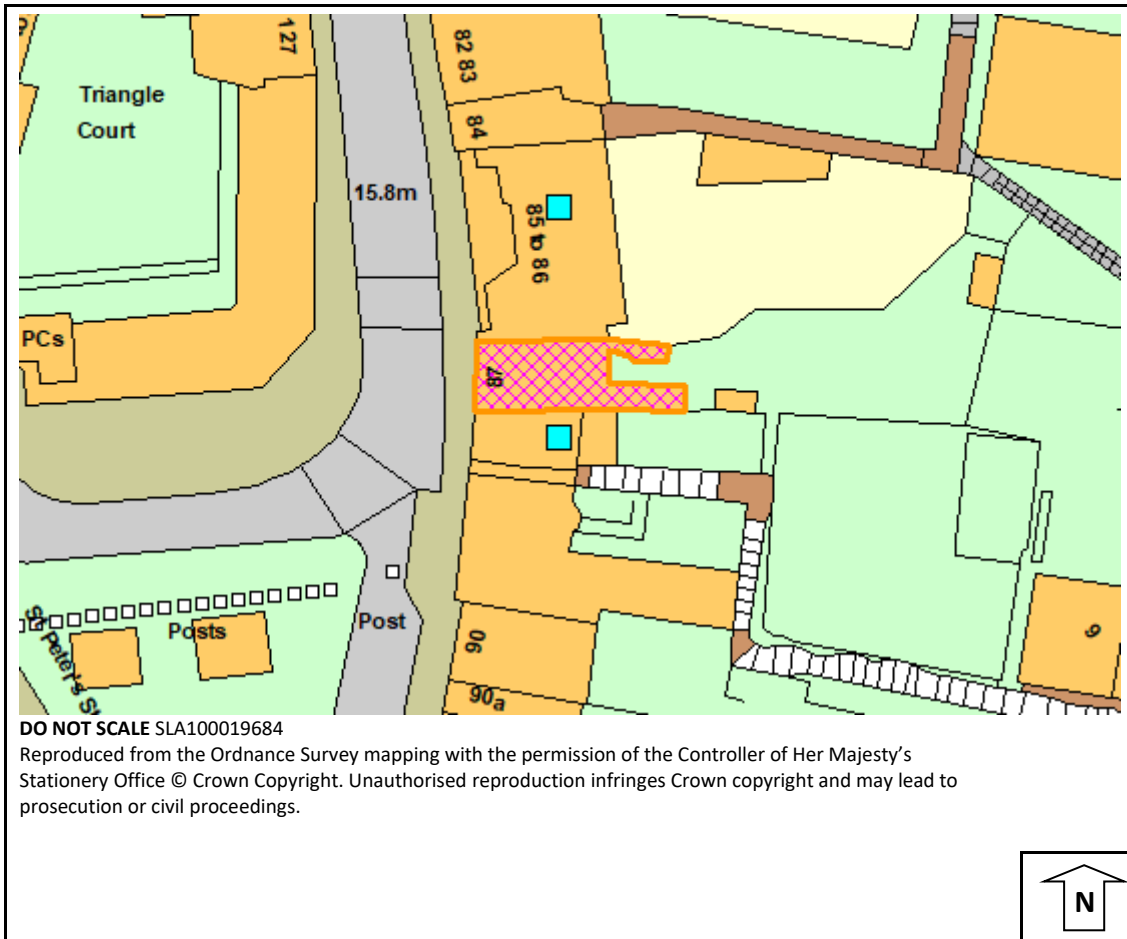
#### **Informatives:**

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.

#### **Background Papers**

See application reference DC/21/4253/FUL on [Public Access](#)

# Map



## Key



Notified, no comments received



Objection



Representation



Support