



Committee Report

Planning Committee - 13 October 2020

Application no DC/20/1913/LBC

Location

3 Saltgate

Beccles

NR34 9AN

Expiry date 20 July 2020

Application type Listed Building Consent

Applicant Farrington Care Homes Ltd

Parish Beccles

Proposal Change of Use and Conversion of Wainford House, a class C2 care home, to nine class C3 residential flats

Case Officer Matthew Gee

01502 523021

matthew.gee@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

1. Summary

1.1. Listed Building Consent is sought for the change of use of an existing care home (C2) to nine residential flats (C3), and associated works to the Listed Building. The proposal is considered to have an acceptable impact on the Listed Building, and is deemed to constitute less than substantial harm to the heritage asset, that is outweighed by the provision of nine flats in a highly sustainable location, and safeguarding the continued of a Listed Building. Therefore, the proposal is considered compliant with local and national planning policy, and as such it is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

1.2. The application is referred to planning committee as the request of the planning referral panel due to public interest.

2. Site description

2.1. The site is situated within the Settlement Boundary and Town Centre Boundary for Beccles and comprises of an end of terrace Grade II Listed building currently in C2 use. The building

fronts Saltgate to the east, and is bounded by the Grade I Listed St Michaels Church to the south, and a B&B to the north. The sites vehicular access is off Puddingmoor to the west.

2.2. The site boundary for this application covers two Listed buildings;

2.3. List Description for Grade II Listed 1 Saltgate, Listed in 1948:

"17th century with probable 16th century base structure incorporated, and 18th century refacing of main front and one side with 19th century additions at the rear. Old deeds show that the house was once 'The Greyhound and Dog Inn'. The exterior is comparatively plain. 3 storeys with parapet. Brick distempered. 2 brick bands, 5 windows, some filled in. Modern casements, mullion transom, in flush frames with segmental arches. 6-panel door in wood case with 3/4 Doric columns and bracket pediment, arched radial bar fanlight. Interesting interior: panelled rooms, some enriched window architraves and mantels, and enriched cornices. 2 ducksnest grates, 1 contemporary, 1 imported. Oak stair with turned newels. 1 panelled room with date 1790 on door. It is said that Chateaubriand stayed in the house."

2.4. List Description for Grade II Listed 3 Saltgate, Listed in 1971:

" 17th century with 18th century front. As in No 1, the older work appears to be embedded in the rear, consisting of gabled cottages. 3 storeys. Parapet. Brick, distempered. Floor band. 2 windows, mullion transom casements, segmental arches at 1st floor, with flush frames. Pantiles. 6-panel door with flush frame, and with hood, on shaped brackets. NMR photo."

3. Proposal

3.1. Listed Building Consent is sought for the change of use of a 30 room care (use class C2) to nine residential flats (use class C3). This will comprise of five no. one bedroom flats, and four no. two bedroom flats. The work proposed includes external and internal alterations, including insertion/reinstatement of previously blocked up windows, the removal and addition of internal walls, the removal and addition of kitchen and bathroom facilities.

3.2. The application has a tandem planning application DC/20/1912/FUL.

4. Consultations/comments

4.1. Two third party representations have been received raising the following matters:

- Existing access is not suitable
- Under provision of parking and impact on existing parking provision
- Loss of trees
- Bin Storage and collection
- Impact on and ownership concerns regarding the Gazebo at rear of site
- Construction management concerns
- Incorrect land ownership
- Drawing omit garage for no.7

Consultees
Parish/Town Council

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Beccles Town Council	3 June 2020	26 June 2020
<p>Summary of comments: REFUSED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road access onto Puddingmoor and concerns on the grounds of road safety due to the steep slope in winter. • Loss of care places considered a requirement as per the ESC Waveney Local Plan Policy WLP8.31 ' Lifetime Design and within BECC9 of the Beccles Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036 Submission Stage (Regulation 16) Consultation Draft. • Loss of Walnut Tree • Effect on the gazebo listed building. 		

Statutory consultees

Non statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Design And Conservation (Internal)	3 June 2020	No response
<p>Summary of comments: Comments incorporated into officer considerations as part of the Planning Service.</p>		

Re-consultation consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Beccles Town Council	29 July 2020	14 August 2020
<p>Summary of comments: The Chair welcomed Mr & Mrs Frost who own the Gazebo, and Mr Richard Sword of 7 Saltgate, and invited both to speak.</p> <p>Mr Sword informed all that his garage had not been included, that there wasn't sufficient space for parking in accordance with the Suffolk CC Suffolk Guidance for Parking and that there wasn't sufficient space for drivers to access all the properties through the Puddingmoor entrance.</p> <p>Councillor Robinson noted that the amount of parking spaces has reduced from 9 to 6 for a development of five one-bed and four two-bed flats, but in response to sustainable transport advice from Suffolk CC, the cycle shelter had been upgraded from the original proposed shelter and moved it away from the tree as requested by the ESC Tree Officer. There is now an additional shelter for 3 bikes. In addition to this, they have added electric charging points for 2 cars. Councillor Robinson noted that the parking still did not comply with the parking guidance.</p>		

There was still no plan showing exactly who owned the areas of land for the Gazebo and Wainford House respectively. Concerns were also raised about the access rights to the gazebo.

Councillor Wheeler informed all that the gazebo is an important building and the first doctor's surgery in Beccles. She enquired if the owners have the title deeds for the gazebo.

Mr Frost bought the property on the understanding that there was a right of access from present gateway near the current car park and that there was always a 3' wide section of garden to the north of the gazebo and a 10' to the east. The gazebo garden was not currently fenced off from the rest of garden and he felt this was important with relation to the house, although it has been compromised by the current extension. Mr Frost felt it is important that the present garden is retained in its current state. Mr Frost was concerned as to the future arrangements for grounds maintenance and advised that Wainford House would no longer be a care home and it wasn't known who would be managed the grounds. He was advised to contact the developer with regard to the latter element.

Mr Frost was advised that unfortunately none of his concerns are planning considerations, so he may wish to consider fencing off the garden area. He advised that the gazebo was purchased in 1990 and will send a copy of the land registry document to Beccles TC.

Councillor Robinson considered that the land registry document may help indicate if there was a potential planning land access issue.

After a further brief discussion, the committee considered that the application should be refused on the same grounds as before.

Refused

- Road access onto Puddingmoor and concerns on the grounds of road safety due to the steep slope in winter.
- Loss of care places considered a requirement as per the ESC Waveney Local Plan Policy WLP8.31 – Lifetime Design and within BECC9 of the Beccles Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036 Submission Stage (Regulation 16) Consultation Draft.
- Loss of Walnut Tree
- Effect on the gazebo listed building.
- That inaccurate information in relation to the property boundary had been provided.

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Design And Conservation (Internal)	29 July 2020	No response
Summary of comments: Comments incorporated into officer considerations as part of the Planning Service.		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Beccles Town Council	3 July 2020	21 July 2020

Summary of comments:

The Chair outlined that the only change was the submission of a revised boundary plan and then introduced Richard Sword of No. 7 Saltgate. RSw outlined his primary objection to the revised plan as he considers it does not accurately reflect the actual property boundary, with a copy of the land registry plan submitted in support of this. RSw considers that the access and land ownership issues have not been addressed or accurately represented.

The committee were very disappointed to note the inaccurate boundary plan re-submitted, with CW enquiring as to who actually owns the gazebo land parcel. After also noting the concerns of the ESC Design & Conservation Officer, the committee resolved to refuse this application for reasons previously given and to register their grave concerns in regard to the inaccurate land boundary plan, particularly given its potential impact on the historically significant grade 2 listed gazebo.

Refused

- Road access onto Puddingmoor and concerns on the grounds of road safety due to the steep slope in winter.
- Loss of care places considered a requirement as per the ESC Waveney Local Plan Policy WLP8.31 ' Lifetime Design and within BECC9 of the Beccles Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036 Submission Stage (Regulation 16) Consultation Draft.
- Loss of Walnut Tree
- Effect on the gazebo listed building.
- That inaccurate information in relation to the property boundary had been provided

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Design And Conservation (Internal)	3 July 2020	9 July 2020
Summary of comments: Comments incorporated into officer considerations as part of the Planning Service.		

5. Publicity

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

Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Conservation Area	12 June 2020	3 July 2020	Lowestoft Journal
Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Conservation Area	12 June 2020	3 July 2020	Beccles and Bungay Journal

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, if regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”.

- 6.2. Section 66(1) of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that "In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."
- 6.3. Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 72 states that, with regard to Conservation Areas, "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".
- 6.4. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)
- 6.5. National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
- 6.6. The East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan was adopted on 20 March 2019 and the following policies are considered relevant:
 - WLP8.29 - Design
 - WLP8.37 - Historic Environment
 - WLP8.39 - Conservation Areas

7. Planning considerations

Front elevation

- 7.1. The proposal looks to install a number of new windows where the openings appear to have been blocked up in the past, as part of the conversion of the building to nine flats.
- 7.2. The heritage statement states;

"4.2.1 External The blocking up of the entire section of windows to the left of the front door has left the building with a rather unbalanced and somewhat derelict look (figure 1). Some of the windows might have been blocked up historically following the introduction of the window tax, but the wholesale blocking up of all windows on one entire side appears a rather unusual measure. Historic photographs appear to show these windows blocked up, but the 1894 photograph is not particularly clear on this (see below appendices). It is proposed to reinstate all blocked up windows."

- 7.3. It is agreed that the effect of the blocking up of the windows does give a slightly negative overall character to the building when viewed from Saltgate. From the information supplied in the heritage statement it is not clear as to the origin of this appearance, i.e. if these windows were always blank or if they have since been blocked up. The plans record several of the openings as having chamfered reveals internally. These are designed to allow more light in and so would have not been necessary if these were never openings. Looking at the external evidence from the blocking up fabric used, the openings at ground floor are of bricks which are of a larger size than that of the bricks in adjacent walling and at first and second floors the openings are rendered which again tends to indicate the material below is not original to the rest of the frontage.

- 7.4. Taking this into account officers do not object to these openings being reinstated in timber to match the existing windows in this particular case.

Extension to the rear

- 7.5. This replaces in part existing structure and is acceptable subject to detailing and materials. The materials need to be of quality, including the roof covering which can be viewed from the windows above, so the choice of material is important.
- 7.6. The use of uPVC guttering as proposed on drawing is not acceptable on Listed buildings or extensions to them. This element needs to be in cast metal, and a condition will be attached that all guttering be cast iron.

Internal works

- 7.7. The scheme appears to have been designed to minimise impact on the historic fabric identified in the heritage statement. The scheme looks to remove some of the more recent partitions and elements such as modern lowered ceilings is a positive proposal and retain historic features such as timber framed elements, existing staircases and decorative plaster finishes. There is the need to upgrade the fire and acoustic resistance of some elements to the structure. This will cause some harm but is necessary to make the units safe and of adequate standard for occupation.

External works - parking

- 7.8. The application initially had provision of the parking in the rear garden area close to the adjacent Listed building of the Gazebo in No 1/3 Saltgate which was not considered acceptable as the building was designed to be within a garden setting related to No 1. So, having a hard standing and cars closely surrounding, and the use of concrete bollards negatively impacts its setting and is not acceptable. This causing harm to its significance as a garden room historically related to No1 Saltgate. Therefore, the application has been amended to remove the parking area closest to the Grade II Listed Gazebo.
- 7.9. Some works including works to add fire and acoustic resistance will cause some harm to the significance of the building by impact on existing historic fabric however, there are positives of the scheme such as the installation of the windows.
- 7.10. Therefore, on balance, officers do not object to the physical works, and the harm caused is considered to be less than substantial as set out in clause 196 of the NPPF, which states:

"196. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."

- 7.11. The harm caused is considered to be low and against which the public benefit can be balanced. In this instance the benefit of providing nine new dwellings in a highly sustainable location and safeguarding the use of a listed building is considered to outweigh this less than substantial harm.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. In conclusion, the principle and detail of the development is considered to be acceptable and in compliance with relevant development plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1. It is recommended that Listed Building Consent be granted subject to conditions.

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:

- Site Location Plan, 2019-08 - 0110 Rev B, received 01/07/2020
- Proposed site and floor plans, 2019-08 - 1200 Rev H, received 22/07/2020
- Proposed elevations, 2019-08 - 2101 Rev A, received 26/05/2020
- Heritage Impact Assessment, received 26/05/2020

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. 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:

- (a) Large scale timber joinery details including vertical and horizontal sections, glazing bars, glazing, ironmongery and finish.
- (b) Large scale details of the eaves, brick type, bond mortar colour and joint finish, large scale details of windows and doors including material, sections sizes glazing and finish.
- (c) Any ventilation/extractor fan grills/terminals flues and external waste pipes required as part of the works, including their location and details including appearance, material and colour
- (d) Large scale joinery details of any new doors including material, ironmongery and finish.
- (e) Details of how the kitchen is to be installed within the front main room facing into Saltgate, including how the units are to be installed in front of the window and how will the services including the waste is to be accommodated

Reason: The reason for the condition to be pre-commencement is in order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the building.

4. All new external rainwater goods and soil pipes on the visible elevations shall be of metal, painted black.

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

5. All new external and internal works and finishes and works of making good to the retained fabric, shall match the existing adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to material, colour, texture and profile, unless shown otherwise on the drawings or other documentation hereby approved or required by any condition(s) attached to this consent.

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

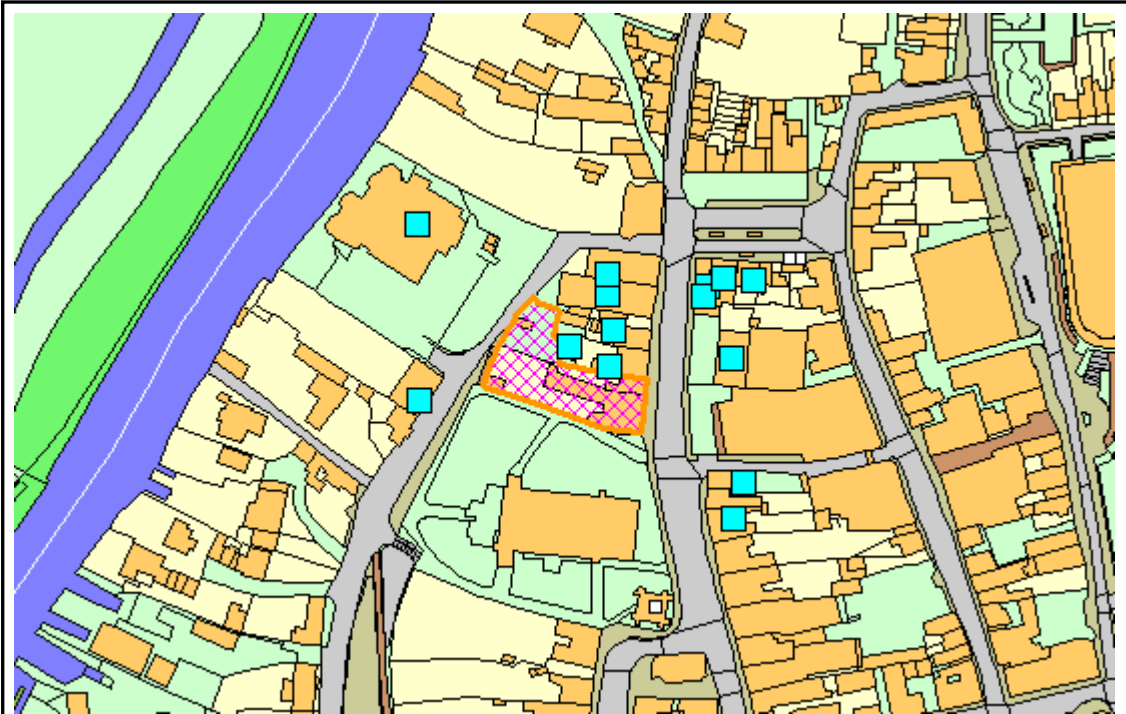
Informatives:

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/20/1913/LBC at <https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=QAY1ISQXJS500>

Map



DO NOT SCALE SLA100019684

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Key



Notified, no comments received



Objection



Representation



Support