

Anglia Square, Norwich

Environmental Statement

Chapter 4: Proposed Development and Alternatives Considerations

Iceni Projects on behalf of Weston

Homes Plc and Columbia

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March 2018

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CHAPTER 4: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The proposals comprise a hybrid (part detail, part outline) planning application for the redevelopment of Anglia Square and associated parcels of land (the Site), for commercial, residential and other associated uses. This Chapter outlines the development proposals and provides details of the main alternatives considered by the Applicant.

Proposed Development

- 4.2 The description of development is as follows:

Hybrid (part full/part outline) application on site of 4.51 ha for demolition and clearance of all buildings and structures except Gildengate House and the phased, comprehensive redevelopment of the site with 7 buildings and refurbished Gildengate House for a maximum of 1,250 residential dwellings (Use Class C3); 11,350 sq m hotel (Use Class C1); 9,850 sq m ground floor flexible retail, services, food and drink and non-residential institution floorspace (Use Classes A1/A2/A3/A4/D1/Sui Generis (bookmakers and/or nail bars, up to 550 sqm)) within ranges specified in the Retail Strategy Report; 1,150 sq m ground floor flexible commercial floorspace (Use Classes A1/A2/A3/A4/B1/D1), service yards, cycle and refuse stores, plant rooms and other ancillary space; up to 3,400 sq m cinema (Use Class D2); 1,300 sqm place of worship (Use Class D1); and multi-storey car park (public element: 600 car spaces, 24 motorcycle spaces), with associated new and amended means of access, closure of existing means of access, widening of footways, formation of service/taxi/car club/bus stop laybys and other associated highway works on all boundaries, maximum of 950 car parking spaces for Use Classes C1 / C3 / B1 / D1, (of which maximum of 40 spaces for C1/B1/D1), hard and soft landscaping of public open spaces comprising 2 streets and 2 squares for pedestrians and cyclists, other landscaping, service infrastructure and other associated work; (all floor areas given as maximum gross external area);

comprising;

Full planning permission on 1.78 ha of the site for demolition and clearance of all buildings and structures, erection of 2 buildings for 428 residential dwellings (Use Class C3) (Blocks A and part E (tower only)), and within Block A, for 4,420 sqm ground floor flexible retail, services, food and drink and non-residential institution floorspace (Use Classes A1/A2/A3/A4/D1/Sui Generis (bookmakers and/or nail bars, up to a maximum of 550 sqm within entire scheme)) within ranges specified in the Retail Strategy Report, 380 sq m ground floor flexible commercial floorspace (Use Classes A1/A2/A3/A4/B1/D1), service yard, cycle and refuse stores, plant rooms, other ancillary space and multi-storey car park (public element: 600 car spaces, 24 motorcycle spaces), with associated new and amended means of access, closure of existing means of access, widening of footways,

formation of service/taxi/car club/bus stop laybys and other associated highway works on Magdalen Street and Edward Street, 333 covered car parking spaces for Use Class C3, hard and soft landscaping of public open spaces comprising 2 streets and 2 squares for pedestrians and cyclists, other landscaping, service infrastructure and other associated works; (all floor areas given as maximum gross external area);

And

Outline planning permission on 2.73 ha of the site, with all matters reserved, for demolition and clearance of all buildings and structures except Gildengate House, erection of 6 buildings (Blocks B – H, with Block E to incorporate tower with full planning permission) and refurbishment and change of use from Use Class B1(a) to C3 of Gildengate House ,(Block J), for a maximum of 822 residential dwellings (Use Class C3), 11,350 sq m hotel (Use Class C1), 5,430 sq m ground floor flexible retail, services, food and drink and non-residential institution floorspace (Use Classes A1/A2/A3/A4/D1/Sui Generis (bookmakers and/or nail bars, up to a maximum of 550 sqm within entire scheme)) within ranges specified in the Retail Strategy Report, 770 sq m ground floor flexible commercial floorspace (Use Classes A1/A2/A3/A4/B1/D1), service yard, cycle and refuse stores, plant rooms and other ancillary space, up to 3,400 sqm cinema (Use Class D2), with associated means of access, widening of footways, formation of service/taxi/car club laybys and other associated highway works on New Botolph Street, Pitt Street and St Crispins Road, a maximum of 617 car parking spaces for C1 / C3 / B1 / D1 , of which circa 603 covered (with a maximum of 40 for C1/B1/D1), and circa 14 open for C3 (on west side of Edward Street), landscaping, service infrastructure and other associated works; and 1,300 sqm place of worship (Use Class D1) on north side of Edward Street with associated on-site car parking and landscaping; (all means of access reserved; all floor areas given as maximum gross external area).”

- 4.3 An illustrative masterplan is enclosed at Appendix 4.1. The Site, located within the northern part of Norwich city centre, extends over an area of 4.51 hectares. The proposals seek to regenerate this important site within the centre of Norwich. It aims to create a new destination in Norwich which will sustain and enhance the existing retail uses, significantly improve the public realm and pedestrian links to the wider neighbourhood, and create a new residential heart which will form an integral part of the existing community.
- 4.4 The proposed redevelopment, containing retail units, restaurants and bars and a cinema, will deliver an improved shopping and leisure offer in Norwich’s northern Large District Centre, complementary to Magdalen Street and providing an appropriate range of facilities to serve the needs of local residents.
- 4.5 The proposed hotel would provide Norwich with high quality visitor accommodation in the city centre, which will assist in growing the tourism industry and supporting future increased visitor numbers. The

provision of roof-level facilities such as a restaurant and bar with panoramic city centre views, being open to the public, will ensure that the hotel adds to the quality of the leisure offer being generated by the Development as well as creating a wider range of employment floorspace.

4.6 The residential element of the proposals will see the construction of up to 1,250 units, ranging in size and tenure, which will help meet local housing demand, as identified in the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (January 2014), and with a mix that reflects advice from NCC officers. The provision of housing on the Site will ensure that a vibrant mixed-use development is created.

4.7 The Development will be delivered over a phased programme of construction. A phasing strategy is set out in the Design and Access Statement (DAS) which accompanies the application. It is expected that the redevelopment of the Site will comprise of four distinct phases spanning an eight-year period, as follows:

- **Phase 1** - the demolition of condemned multi-story car park, existing cinema and all shop units under both structures, followed by construction of Block A (2019-2023);
- **Phase 2** - the demolition of the buildings on Pitt St and St Crispin's Road including Surrey Chapel and the construction of the new Chapel on the north side of Edward Street, and Blocks E, F and D (2021-2025);
- **Phase 3** - the demolition of Sovereign House and the shop units under this building followed by construction of Blocks G and H (2023-2027); and
- **Phase 4** – the conversion of Gildengate House to residential use and the construction of Block B (2025-2027).

4.8 The phasing programme is illustrated on the plan enclosed at Appendix 1.2.

4.9 A full description of the Development is provided within the Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement (DAS) accompanying the application.

Description of Alternatives

4.10 Schedule 4 of the Regulations requires applicants to provide the following:

“description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of development design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects

4.11 This section of the ES outlines the alternatives considered to deliver the Development at Anglia Square, Norwich. Alternative sites or technologies were not considered. The Site is owned by the Applicant, and as such, an alternative site of similar scale and location in their ownership is not available in Norwich.

4.12 However, the following alternatives have been considered:

1. The “do nothing” alternative (were the Development is not progressed); and
2. Alternative designs.

4.13 It is considered that the proposed Development represents the most appropriate environmental option as set out below.

Option 1: Do Nothing

4.14 The Site represents an opportunity to deliver a high quality bespoke commercial and residential development.

4.15 The Development will meet an identified requirement as defined in the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (2011 amended 2014), the Norwich Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Local Plan (2014). The Joint Core Strategy, Policy 11, seeks to address years of decline by identifying the northern city centre for comprehensive redevelopment to achieve physical and social regeneration and utilise significant redevelopment opportunities. Anglia Square is identified as an area of change within the Joint Core Strategy that can achieve this.

4.16 Considering the proposed components of the Development collectively, there is potential to deliver significant employment opportunities to the benefit of the local community, whilst providing community, retail and leisure facilities as well as new homes and visitor accommodation. If the Development was not to take place on the Site, the opportunity cost in terms of environmental effects resulting from buildings and open areas of negative townscape impact and no ecological value could be significant. Potential environmental benefits would not happen and the existing physical environment would remain, i.e. derelict brownfield areas used for surface parking alongside derelict, vacant or part-used buildings over outdated retail units. The opportunity to take advantage of the sustainable brownfield location would not be realised and the scale of job creation, both during construction and operation, would not occur.

4.17 Furthermore, the ‘do nothing’ alternative would not bring about any benefits to the local and more widespread area., These benefits proposed include:

- Housing supply – significant (1,250 units) boost to the City’s housing supply (as well as the greater Norwich area). This equates to c.8% of the OAN for housing from 2015 to 2036 (or 15% of the City’s adopted housing target).
- Retail and Leisure floorspace – high quality floorspace providing a significantly enhanced shopping centre to meet the needs of local residents as well as a new leisure quarter centred on a larger replacement cinema appropriate to the area’s Large District Centre function.
- Hotel – provision of a large (200 bedroom) hotel, enhancing visitor accommodation in the city centre and introducing a wider range of employment categories on the Site
- Potential to accommodate local community uses/ affordable business space.
- Provision of new enhanced, purpose-built facility for Surrey Chapel.
- Replacement of structurally unsound multi-storey car park.
- Physical regeneration of an underutilised, largely unsuccessful part of the city centre and removal of existing derelict buildings that have a negative impact on the local area
- Opening up views of the Cathedral subject to confirmation from heritage.
- Provision of new, high quality public spaces, enhanced landscaping, pedestrian and cycle linkages and overall benefits to the public realm.
- Introduction of active frontages on Pitt Street, New Botolph Street and Edward Street to reconnect the Site with its surroundings to the west and north.
- Potential to kick-start regeneration of wider area to the north of the City Centre (including the land under the flyover on Magdalen Street).

4.18 The Development will help to regenerate the city centre and provide economic benefits as well as environmental improvements. As such, the “do nothing” approach is not considered to be an appropriate option. This brownfield site would remain in its current partly unused and partly underused form and none of the benefits outlined above would be realised.

Option 2: Alternative Design

Alternative Consented Schemes

4.19 The Site (with variations to its extent), has been subject to numerous applications for the redevelopment over the last 10 years. A full list of the planning history is included in the Planning Statement. This section only considers the history that is relevant to the consideration of alternatives. Planning permission was first granted for the comprehensive redevelopment of the Site in October

2009 (LPA Ref: 08/00974/F). This involved the provision of a large foodstore on the western part of the Site, the retention of the eastern part of Anglia Square Shopping Centre, and provision of approximately 200 residential dwellings within a number of residential blocks, up to 10 storeys in height. This permission was not implemented.

4.20 In addition, further related planning permissions were granted in March 2013 for the redevelopment of the Site (LPA Ref: 11/00160/F, 11/00161/F, 11/00162/O and 11/00163/C). These applications between them sought a more comprehensive redevelopment of the Site, including the creation of new retail and commercial uses on the eastern part of the Site, in addition to a new foodstore on the western part of the Site, the refurbishment of Gildengate House and the provision of approximately 100 residential units. The permission was implemented but only in respect of the alterations to the road network associated with the scheme, as sought by NCC as part of wider network changes in the area, thus this scheme was never fully implemented.

4.21 It is understood that these alternative scheme were not implemented due to changes in the property market which led to viability issues, and also due to the withdrawal of interest by the proposed foodstore operator. Notwithstanding, the above schemes, would not provide the benefits that the proposed Development does, as set out at paragraph 4.16. In particular, the following would not be realised:

- the long term viability of the retail offer, and acting as a catalyst for the wider economic regeneration of the northern city centre;
- provision of a far larger number of new residential homes which would meet an identified need for the population of Norwich and make effective use of this sustainable city centre location;
- regeneration of the physical environment, including open spaces and public areas, and help to preserve or enhance the historic character of the surrounding area and key views;
- creating a vibrant, sustainable community with a wide mix of uses;
- provide enhanced tourism, arts and cultural provision including hotel use, as well an enhanced evening economy that will include restaurants, cafes, bars and a cinema;
- Provide for improved public transport facilities in the immediate vicinity of the Site; and
- Enhance opportunities for pedestrian and cycle movement through the Site, linking with the wider area.

Alternative Design

4.22 The Development has been informed by extensive pre-application discussions with NCC over a two year period, as well as engagement with the relevant consultees including highways officers, and Historic England. The design of the scheme has also benefitted from the detailed feedback of Design South East who provide environmental design advice and assistance to Local Authorities, developers and communities throughout the south east of England. Further details on the design evolution of the scheme and how the proposals address the key issues raised by consultees are provided within the Design & Access Statement.

4.23 The following paragraphs describe the alternative designs that were explored as part of the design process. This iterative process has been informed by the following considerations:

- Environmental constraints and opportunities within and adjoining the Site;
- The design requirements listed in the Development Plan; and
- Feedback from the consultees, including NCC and the public consultation events.

4.24 A number of changes have occurred over the course of the design evolution, following the consultation process. These changes are detailed as follows:

First Iteration - August 2016 – Masterplan - Policy Guidance Note

4.25 The first iteration of the masterplan was prepared to illustrate the potential for redevelopment of a significant part of the Site. The Development extended to the North and West of a retained Anglia Square. The high level concept produced at this time, as part of the adopted Policy Guidance Note, illustrated the aspiration to improve connection from St George's Street in the South to Edward Street in the North and to draw the historic route of Botolph Street into Anglia Square.

4.26 In addition, the masterplan showed a scheme of active retail frontages with the potential for significant new homes above. The location for a potential building of 25 floors was explored in the north west of the site. Provision was also made to replace the currently closed shopping centre car park.

Second Iteration - March 2017 – Second Presentation to Design South East

4.27 The second iteration of the masterplan followed an initial Public Consultation event, responding to supportive comments relating to the retention of Anglia Square, increased public realm and the proposed mix of retail and leisure uses, including a new cinema.

- 4.28 The north – south route evolved to include a new square focussed around the cinema and associated café/restaurant offers and the marker building, a residential tower of 25 floors.
- 4.29 Detailed investigation of local and city wide heritage informed the distribution of height and with particular regard to Norwich Cathedral, informed the re-location and design of the marker building. Proposed materials and façade treatments were illustrated to respond to local design features.

Third Iteration - January 2018 – Pre-application discussions with Norwich City Council

- 4.30 The third and final iteration to the design responded to feedback and requests received at the second Public Consultation to include the site of the existing cinema within the Development. The redevelopment of this wider site made possible significantly improved east-west connectivity. The masterplan now delivers a legible streetscape with two squares of distinct character, each with routes focussed on views to St. Augustin's church and Norwich Cathedral. The frustrations of Pitt Street and St. Crispin's Way are overcome and the site is once again linked to and grounded in its location.
- 4.31 Buildings are of a scale which respond to their immediate locality and the marker building anchors the location in the wider context.
- 4.32 It is considered that the third iteration of the design outlined above is the most appropriate design for the Site, which provides the most environmental, social and economic benefits. On this basis, it is the most appropriate alternative for the Site.

Conclusion

- 4.33 The proposed Development is the most appropriate for the Site in terms of design, scale and uses, delivering physical, economic and environmental improvements.
- 4.34 It represents an opportunity to provide a development of a high quality design, with environmental benefits which respond to the need to rejuvenate the dilapidated Anglia Square.