

**Report to** Planning applications committee

Item

13 July 2017

**Report of** Head of planning services

**Subject**

Application no 17/00737/F - Norwich High School for Girls  
95 Newmarket Road, Norwich, NR2 2HU

4(b)

**Reason**

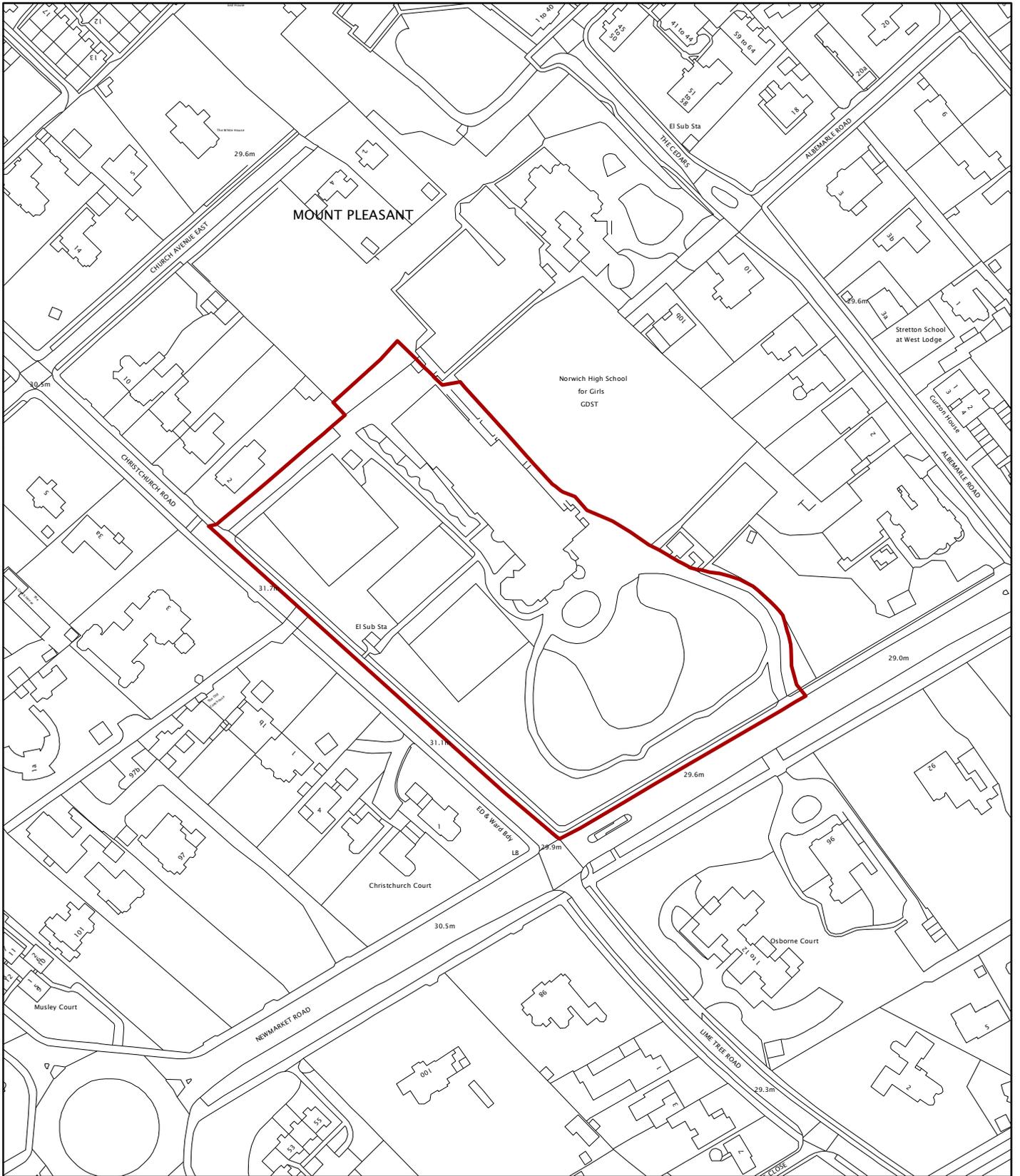
**for referral**

Objection

<b>Ward:</b>	Town Close
<b>Case officer</b>	Joy Brown - <a href="mailto:joybrown@norwich.gov.uk">joybrown@norwich.gov.uk</a>

<b>Development proposal</b>		
Reconfiguration works to improve access arrangements, internal traffic circulation and pupil safety.		
<b>Representations</b>		
Object	Comment	Support
7 (one of which is on behalf of the Christchurch Road Neighbourhood Watch Group)	0	0

<b>Main issues</b>	<b>Key considerations</b>
1 Principle of development	Objectives for sustainable development, shared use of facilities by the wider community.
2 Transport	Congestion, traffic on Christchurch Road, traffic tree pedestrian access, legibility
3 Design and heritage	Enhancing the building's setting, impact on the conservation area, alterations to the curtilage listed wall.
4 Trees	Loss of trees and provision of replacement planting
5 Landscape	Loss of trees, provision of replacement planting and landscaping details
6 Biodiversity	Impact of proposal on bats, breeding birds and reptiles and mitigation and enhancement measures.
7 Amenity	Impact on residents of Christchurch Road.
8 Flood risk	Provision of permeable surfacing materials.
<b>Expiry date</b>	27 June 2017
<b>Recommendation</b>	Approve subject to conditions



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Planning Application No 17/00737/F  
 Site Address Norwich High School for Girls  
 95 Newmarket Road

Scale 1:2,000



**NORWICH**  
 City Council  
 PLANNING SERVICES



## The site and surroundings

1. The site is located on the north side of Newmarket Road between the junctions of Albemarle Road and Christchurch Road. The site measures some 4.7 hectares. It is occupied by Norwich High School for Girls and has been for over 80 years.
2. The site is located within the Newmarket Road Conservation Area. The main school building 95 Newmarket Road is grade II listed with the listing information being as follows:

TG 2107 S NEWMARKET ROAD (north-west side) 32/557 5.6.72. No. 95 (Eaton Grove - Norwich High School for Girls). - II House, now school. Early/mid C19. Rendered; hipped slate roof. Regency style. 2 storeys, cellar and attic. 6 first-floor windows, symmetrical. Central bow-fronted bay has deeply recessed half-glazed double-leaf doors with single-light side windows. 2 steps up to 2 Ionic columns and 2 pilasters below decorative iron lamp. First floor verandah has iron balustrade. Windows have large-paned sashes with horns. Attic cupola with domed roof and weather vane. Bow-fronted bays to right and left side elevations. Later C19 extension to rear also with extensive ranges of school buildings

3. 12 Albemarle Road is a locally listed building and therefore a non-designated heritage asset. The site contains a significant number of well-established trees which are protected by virtue of their location within the Conservation Area.

## Constraints

4. Conservation Area, grade II listed building, critical drainage area, protected trees by virtue of being in the Conservation Area.

## Relevant planning history

5. There is an extensive planning history for the site the most relevant of which is set out below. It should be noted that the permission for the erection of a single storey extension to create a new entrance at Stafford House was implemented; however the permission for alterations to the car park near the 6<sup>th</sup> form block and access arrangement onto Albemarle Road has not been implemented.
6. A listed building consent application is also currently pending consideration. This includes the demolition of a section of the boundary wall on Christchurch Road and the installation of new gates, brick pillars and a small section of walling. The Listed building consent is needed to facilitate the changes proposed by this full application. Unfortunately the LBC application was submitted after the full application and as the consultation period has not yet expired it is not possible to bring the two applications to this committee together. Listed Building Consent is required as the wall is curtilage listed.

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
14/00202/F	Alterations to car park; addition of new access; changes to access and egress arrangements; provision of disabled access ramp to the school building; new external seating; relocation of existing external lighting.	APPR	28/05/2014
14/00283/F	Erection of single storey extension to create new entrance at Stafford House.	Approved	13/06/2014
16/01048/TC A	Oak (T1): reduce north east crown from 8m to 5m and raise to 2 - 3m above property.  Yew (T2): reduce south/west crown from 4m to 2m.  Holly (T3): reduce south/west crown from 4m to 2m.	Tree works approved	27/07/2016
17/00250/L	Formation of WC within an existing storage room including widening of doorway and conversion of existing WC to form new store. Installation of new student facilities at second floor level and all associated works including waste water disposal.	Approved	07/04/2017
17/00958/L	Demolition of section of boundary wall to form new access on Christchurch Road to include new gates, brick pillars and small section of walling plus installation of new gates on Newmarket Road.	Pending consideration. Consultation period does not expire until 19/07/2017.	

## The proposal

7. The application seeks full planning permission for a number of alternations on the site which aim to improve access arrangements, internal traffic circulation and pupil safety. The key changes are as follows:
- a) Formation of a new vehicular egress (including new car parking) leading from the circle at the front of Eaton Grove onto Christchurch Road in order to promote one-way traffic flow from the main entrance on Newmarket Road.
  - b) Formation of a new pedestrian footpath from Christchurch Road to the side and front of Eaton Grove and closure of the existing footpath beyond access to the electrical sub-station.

- c) Introduction of security and traffic management measures to the main site entrance and adjustable bollards to direct traffic across the Eaton Grove circle
  - d) Creation of a minibus hub for seven vehicles at the rear of the main school building with access via the existing driveway onto Christchurch Road.
  - e) Improvements to pedestrian routes in the vicinity of the new transport hub to provide safer and more efficient access.
  - f) Improvements to the existing driveway onto Christchurch Road including resurfacing and vehicular access control
8. The proposal seeks to address the following issues:
- a) Security - The Senior School has an insecure boundary that creates risk of trespass and anti-social intrusion.
  - b) Lack of segregation/ pedestrian safety – a number of the existing accesses are shared by pedestrians & vehicles, with vehicles then manoeuvring in shared spaces.
  - c) Pedestrian access and circulation – lack of legibility and inefficient layout that focuses activity on back of house areas. Some pedestrian areas also look tired or are unsurfaced and will deteriorate without improvements.
  - d) Congestion – some accesses are not designed for regular two way traffic movements that occur, particularly at peak times.
  - e) Car parking – inefficient layouts and lack of legibility lead to ad hoc parking, including around the main Eaton Grove entrance.
  - f) School transport – existing arrangements for minibuses promote undesirable manoeuvring and attract pupils to a busy area of vehicular activity in front of Eaton Grove.
9. No changes are proposed to the opening hours of the site, the number of pupils, the number of staff or the availability of the facilities on the site for community use. It is not intended that the new one-way circulation and parking arrangements will be used for pupil drop-off and pick-up.

### Summary information

Proposal	Key facts
<b>Appearance</b>	
Materials	Permeable paving, gravel surfacing with reinforced gravel grid
<b>Transport matters</b>	
Vehicular access	Existing – Access/Egress from Newmarket Road to front car park at Eaton Grove, Access/Egress to courtyard parking at front of the junior school, ungated pedestrian access to Christchurch Road, Access/Egress to informal parking area at

Proposal	Key facts
	<p>rear of the main school building from Christchurch Road, Secure gated pedestrian access to the junior school from Albemarle Road, ungated pedestrian/vehicular access to the nursery, senior school and Lanchester house car park from Albemarle Road.</p> <p>Proposed – The accesses affected by the proposed development are those on Newmarket Road and Christchurch Road. The Newmarket Road entrance will become access only and a new vehicular and pedestrian access is proposed on Christchurch Road to facilitate a one way system.</p>
No of car parking spaces	<p>Existing - 30 (informal layout)</p> <p>Proposed – 37 (formal arrangement)</p>
No of cycle parking spaces	<p>Existing - c. 56 spaces.</p> <p>No change proposed</p>

## Representations

10. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. Seven letters of representation have been received (one of which is on behalf of the Christchurch Road Neighbourhood Watch Group) citing the issues as summarised in the table below. All representations are available to view in full at <http://planning.norwich.gov.uk/online-applications/> by entering the application number.

Issues raised	Response
<p>Christchurch Road is a residential road and increasing volume from Norwich High School will not improve safety for residents and school pupils and is likely to increase the risk of accidents for cyclists and pedestrians along Christchurch Road.</p> <p>Cars currently park on the north side of Christchurch Road forcing through traffic into one lane leading to standing traffic which impedes ingress and outflow from Christchurch Road. The proposal will worsen the situation and create problems for local residents and ambulances etc.</p> <p>To create the new access, a number of car parking spaces will need to be removed which will push the parking/congestion issues</p>	<p>See main issue 2.</p>

Issues raised	Response
<p>even further down Christchurch Road.</p> <p>As part of the application consideration should be given to reviewing and enforcing parking restrictions for example zig/zag lines outside the school.</p>	
<p>The application does not refer to the proposed changes to traffic management arrangements on Newmarket Road. If a new access is created onto Christchurch Road and the traffic lights are removed at the junction of Christchurch Road/Lime Tree Avenue/Newmarket Road this will make a busy junction even more chaotic especially in conjunction with the new proposed cycle lane.</p> <p>If the lights remain then it seems questionable whether the introduction of a new access so close to the lights is sensible.</p> <p>The two matters should be dealt with together not individually.</p>	See main issue 2.
<p>Christchurch Road is a residential road that is quiet other than between the hours of 8am – 8:30 am and 3:45pm and 4:45pm. The school is a vibrant hub and as well as large vehicle deliveries, open days, evening performances, returning sports teams and school trips the school site is used by a number of other organisations such as Barracudas in the school holiday and Norwich Vineyard Church on weekends. Very little of the traffic generated by this currently affects Christchurch Road. The creation of an exit onto Christchurch Road will mean that this residential street is affected 24/7, 365 days a year.</p>	See main issue 2.
<p>The school should be encouraging students to walk and cycle to school.</p>	See main issue 2.
<p>The new entrance will harm the appearance of this part of the conservation area. It is a shame to disturb a very attractive Victorian garden and remove part of a 19<sup>th</sup> century brick and flint wall and established hedge. The Heritage Assessment submitted with the application suggests that a new opening</p>	See main issue 3.

Issues raised	Response
<p>would be acceptable as opening have already been created. However there is no reason to compound past mistakes. Consideration should be given to widening the access to Newmarket Road instead.</p>	

## Consultation responses

11. Consultation responses are summarised below, the full responses are available to view at <http://planning.norwich.gov.uk/online-applications/> by entering the application number.

### Design and conservation

12. It is considered that the proposal will cause less than substantial harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building and it is considered that the proposal will cause less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the wider setting, which is a conservation area. The design of the brick piers, new sections of wall and new gates are appropriate and matching to the existing and previous alteration.

### Highways (local)

13. No objection on highway/transportation ground. Amendments to waiting restrictions will be necessary so an informative should be attached to any future planning permission.

### Landscape and Natural areas officer

14. The main concern is the loss of existing trees which the proposals would require some of which are category A (high landscape and arboricultural value). Replacement planting does not amount to adequate mitigation in terms of either landscape or biodiversity. A landscaping scheme should include significantly more tree planting in this location and around the wider site, for example tree planting along the track leading to the rear of the building. A landscaping scheme should also include planting to create a layered structure within the woodland area.
15. The proposed roadway together with adjacent parking and footpath are a sizeable linear feature and would have a significant impact on the grounds and setting of the building. The opening in the boundary to create access to Christchurch Road would also open up new views of the building from Christchurch Road along this alignment. This impact could be mitigated by a row of tree planting in the spaces between the parking and footpath.
16. Suggestions are made including the following:
- a) the proposed vehicle crossover between the site and Christchurch Road should be designed to give priority to pedestrians using the footway and maintaining the levels of the footway across the opening.

- b) Resurfacing to the existing entrance to Christchurch Road will need to avoid damage to adjacent trees by using no-dig construction techniques and the passing place should be omitted and planted with a few trees.
  - c) Restricting vehicles from moving in front of the entrance to Eaton Grove is welcome as a means to improve pedestrian access and the setting of the building. These aims would be better met by also removing the row of 4 parking spaces.
17. With regards to biodiversity the Extended Phase1 Habitat Survey (Ecology report) submitted is fine. The main concerns relate to the removal of 0.05ha of woodland which will cause a significant loss of foraging potential for bats. The mitigation measures suggested in the report should be implemented. Lighting should be directed to the ground and turned off at night.
  18. Further surveys with regards to bats and birds will be needed. These can be conditioned as can details of the bat boxes.

### **Tree protection officer**

19. The tree survey and report state the trees that require removal are T10, 11 and 12, but a more recent drawing submitted show 4 trees removed - T9, T10, T11 and T12. By removing tree T9 in addition to the ones stated in the report will allow the necessary level changes and allow the road to be pulled further east away from significant beech trees T15 and T16 and T14 a mature lime, this is preferable from a tree protection perspective.
20. The tree protection measures have not been illustrated on plans submitted. Fencing should be situated to exclude construction within the RPA (root protection area) of retained trees. Trees on eastern side of the road in particular will require tree protection fencing, and the trees to the west of the road (T7, T8 and T6) around the new entrance will also require protection fencing, this will need to be illustrated on a tree protection plan.
21. The proposed loss of the trees is accepted in these circumstances, the developers will be required to provide at least equivalent replacement in terms of biomass. A total of 10 trees would be appropriate replacement ratio.

## **Assessment of planning considerations**

### **Relevant development plan policies**

22. **Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk adopted March 2011 amendments adopted Jan. 2014 (JCS)**
  - JCS1 Addressing climate change and protecting environmental assets
  - JCS2 Promoting good design
  - JCS7 Supporting communities
  - JCS12 The remainder of the Norwich urban area including the fringe parishes
23. **Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan adopted Dec. 2014 (DM Plan)**
  - DM1 Achieving and delivering sustainable development
  - DM2 Ensuring satisfactory living and working conditions

- DM3 Delivering high quality design
- DM5 Planning effectively for flood resilience
- DM6 Protecting and enhancing the natural environment
- DM7 Trees and development
- DM9 Safeguarding Norwich's heritage
- DM22 Planning for and safeguarding community facilities
- DM28 Encouraging sustainable travel
- DM30 Access and highway safety
- DM31 Car parking and servicing

### **Other material considerations**

#### **24. Relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 (NPPF):**

- NPPF0 Achieving sustainable development
- NPPF4 Promoting sustainable transport
- NPPF7 Requiring good design
- NPPF8 Promoting healthy communities
- NPPF10 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- NPPF11 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- NPPF12 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

#### **25. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

- Trees, development and landscape SPD adopted June 2016

### **Case Assessment**

26. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Relevant development plan policies are detailed above. Material considerations include policies in the National Planning Framework (NPPF), the Councils standing duties, other policy documents and guidance detailed above and any other matters referred to specifically in the assessment below. The following paragraphs provide an assessment of the main planning issues in this case against relevant policies and material considerations.

#### **Main issue 1: Principle of development**

27. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS7, DM1 and DM22, NPPF paragraphs 70-72.
28. Policy DM22 of the Local plan and policy 7 of the Joint Core Strategy set out the policy for the provision of and extension to educational facilities. Although the proposed development is not for the extension to the school it will alter the way the school functions.
29. Policy DM22 sets out that schools development will be accepted and permitted subject to it meeting a number of criteria. Of relevance to this case are that the proposal would not undermine the objectives for sustainable development set out in policy DM1 and that it would not give rise to significant impacts on the environment, highway safety or traffic arising from locational constraints.

30. The proposal will have a number of benefits to the school however in order to assess whether the proposed development is sustainable, consideration needs to be given to the issues which are set out in the sections below.
31. Policy DM22 refers to the shared use of schools facilities by the wider community. Parts of the building are used by community groups during evenings and weekends. Confirmation has been provided by the applicant that the provision of new gates with electronic access control will not prevent the use of the school by the wider community.

## **Main issue 2: Transport**

32. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS6, DM28, DM30, DM31, NPPF paragraphs 17 and 39.
33. The principle of creating a one way system and new pedestrian access is supported from a highway safety point of view. Congestion at school drop off and pick up time is currently an issue and although the proposal does not include the creation of vehicle pick up and drop off within the site it will help to reduce conflict between cars entering and exiting via Newmarket Road entrance. It will also help provide traffic free pedestrian access to the front of the school, improve legibility, result in a more efficient layout, improve surfaces which currently look tired, provide one way circulation and formalise car parking. The proposed arrangement of vehicles entering on Newmarket Road and exiting on Christchurch Road is logical and the relocation of the minibuses is also acceptable and should improve safety on the site.
34. A number of local residents are concerned that the proposed new exit onto Christchurch Road will result in even more traffic and congestion on a residential road which is very busy during school drop off and pick up times. The local highway officer has however suggested that the overall changes in traffic movements on Christchurch Road is likely to be relatively insignificant in terms of the impact on the highway network in capacity terms and although there will be a slight increase in traffic on Christchurch Road, the proposal will in turn result in a slight reduction in movements direct onto Newmarket Road. Furthermore the car park will predominately be used by members of staff who will be leaving the site after the main 'pick up' period. The main benefit however is that the proposal will significantly improve pedestrian access and movement throughout the site which should make the site more legible and safer for students, staff and visitors.
35. Residents on Christchurch Road also feel that the possible future removal of the traffic lights at the junction of Christchurch Road/Lime Tree Avenue/Newmarket Road will exacerbate the existing traffic problem on Christchurch Road and the combination of the works to the junction and the creation of a new exit from Norwich High School for Girls onto Christchurch Road will make a busy junction even more chaotic. Residents have suggested that this application cannot be determined in isolation to the decision as to whether the traffic lights will be removed. Members should however be reminded that Norwich City Council has a duty to determine planning applications and it is not yet know when a final decision will be made on the junction alterations and whether the traffic lights will be removed or not. Notwithstanding the above, it is the local highway officer's opinion that the new exit from the school to Christchurch Road is acceptable if the traffic lights remain or if the lights are removed. In particular the removal of the traffic light aims to remove

some traffic from Christchurch Road as currently through traffic uses Christchurch Road rather than the ring road but this is less likely to happen if the traffic lights are removed.

36. The proposals would not increase student numbers; however the applicants were asked to undertake a review of cycle parking provision for staff and students and in light of changes to access arrangements and parking, were also asked to review its travel plan to encourage travel by sustainable modes including car share, use of buses, cycling and walking. In this case it has been demonstrated that no increase in cycle parking is necessary as there is currently space capacity. A full review of the travel plan is scheduled for June 2017 to take advantage of the opportunities created by this proposed development and the cycle improvements which are to be implemented on Newmarket Road through the Pedalway scheme. The transport report does however identify some measures for further investigation which include improvements to home to school transport, more emphasis on cycling for pupils and staff and an investigation of Park and Ride options for remote drop-off points for pupils or remote parking for staff.
37. Changes will be required to waiting restrictions on Christchurch Road and there will be a requirement to create a vehicle access (dropped kerbs and strengthening footways). A condition should be attached to any future planning permission notifying the applicant that they will need to agree this with the highway authority.

### **Main issue 3: Design and heritage**

38. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS2, DM3, DM9, NPPF paragraphs 9, 17, 56, 60-66 and 128-141.
39. With regards to the design of the proposal and the impact that it will have upon the listed building and the wider conservation area, it is considered that certain elements will be beneficial to this heritage asset, others will have little or no impact whilst certain elements will result in some harm.
40. Formalising the car park arrangement and removing minibuses from the front of Eaton Grove will help enhance the building's setting and will help pedestrians move safely around the site. This element is therefore considered to have a positive impact upon the heritage asset.
41. The creation of a minibus transport hub for seven vehicles at the rear of the main school building including the re-positioning of a fence and the extension of hard surfaces will have no impact upon the setting of the listed building or the conservation area. The proposal also includes the installation of signage and traffic management measures to the front of Eaton Grove which may have some detrimental impact upon the aesthetic of the setting; however the proposal suggests that this impact will be limited to intervention in modern fabric and is reversible. Therefore the safety benefits associated with this element of the proposal are considered to outweigh any negative impact.
42. One of the main consideration with regards to the impact upon this listed building and the conservation area is the new opening that will need to be created within the curtilage listed boundary wall to Christchurch Road as this will impact upon the fabric and historic layout of the setting of a listed building. It is understood that the existing boundary wall is unlikely to be original yet the construction has not been

dated, thus its significance is more difficult to determine. Norwich City Council's conservation officer has suggested that due to the materials used and the construction methodology it would seem to indicate late C19 to early C20 construction. Regardless of the significance of the fabric, its location and existence is significant in its indication of a physical boundary of the site, therefore its alteration is considered to be harmful to the significance of the listed building and the wider setting which is a conservation area. Furthermore although there is some historic evidence to suggest an 'informal' pedestrian pathway existed in this area of the grounds, the introduction of a new 'formal' vehicle and pedestrian route (particularly one which is to be used as the official vehicle exit from the site) negatively impacts upon the historic 'circulation' of 'traffic' visiting the site.

43. Notwithstanding the above, the harm that will be caused by this element of the proposal is considered to be less than substantial and the increased safety of visitors to the site and the general public around the site is considered to outweigh this less than substantial harm and will provide for the continued beneficial use of the building. Details have been provided of the new opening including details of bricks, mortar and gates. These details are considered acceptable and will ensure that the new opening is of good quality and ties in well with the existing wall.
44. Overall therefore it is considered that the proposal will cause less than substantial harm to the special architectural and historic interest of this listed building. Furthermore the proposal will cause less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the wider setting, which is a conservation area and the benefits of the proposal outweigh this harm. The proposal therefore accords with the objectives of the NPPF, Policy 2 of the Adopted Joint Core Strategy and policies DM1, DM3 and DM9 of the Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan, together with relevant guidance within the NPPF.

#### **Main issue 4: Trees**

45. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM7, NPPF paragraphs 109 and 118.
46. The proposal will result in the loss of well-established trees and consideration needs to be given to whether the loss of trees is acceptable in this instance. Policy DM7 of the Local Plan sets out that trees and significant hedge and shrub masses should be retained and development resulting in the loss of a protected tree should only be permitted where:
  - a) The removal of a tree or hedgerow will enhance the survival or growth of other protected trees or hedgerows; or
  - b) It would allow for a substantially improved overall approach to the design and landscaping of the development that would outweigh the loss of any tree or hedgerow.
47. The tree survey and report submitted with the application stated that three trees would need removal (T10, 11 and 12); however the most recent drawing show 4 trees will be removed (T9, T10, T11 and T12). Removing tree T9 in addition to the ones stated in the report will allow the necessary level changes and allow the road to be pulled further east away from significant beech trees T15 and T16 and T14 a mature lime. This is preferable from a tree protection perspective and the tree survey information has been updated to reflect this.

48. The trees which are to be lost do add to the character of the conservation area and the setting of the listed building and it is considered that their loss would be of some harm. However Norwich City Council's tree officer has confirmed that their loss would be accepted in these circumstances subject to replacement planting. The tree officer has suggested 10 trees should be an appropriate replacement in terms of biomass. The most recent plan only shows 8 replacement trees; however details of landscaping are to be conditioned which will allow further trees to be secured.
49. Furthermore there are a number of trees on the site which are of high value which could potentially be affected by the proposal as their root protection areas enter into the proposed new access. As such a full Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan should be conditioned and a 'no dig' method of construction for the access track will be needed.

### **Main issue 5: Landscaping**

50. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM3, DM8, NPPF paragraphs 9, 17 and 56.
51. With regards to landscape the main concern is the loss of the existing trees which require removal to accommodate the new road in the wooded area along Christchurch Road. The plan as submitted only included replacement planting on a 1:1 basis but this has now been changed to include 8 trees. Although this is a significant improvement, it is considered that there is potential to include more trees in particular to soften the large area of hardstanding which will be created by the new roadway, parking area and pedestrian footpath.
52. It is also important that a layered structure is created and although the principle of what is being proposed is acceptable, Norwich City Council's landscape officer has commented that the native shrub mix would be more appropriate to be used in areas as a sub canopy layer to existing natural areas rather than being used at the new entrance. They have also suggested that a double staggered row of hedging is planted to the rear of the proposed wall.
53. Overall therefore although the principle of the landscaping is acceptable, there are a few details which need amending to enhance the aesthetics of the otherwise uniformly hard access route and parking area and to offset the loss of biomass. This can be secured by a landscaping condition.

### **Main issue 6: Biodiversity**

54. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS1, DM6, NPPF paragraph 118.
55. On site there are a number of mature trees, scrub and hedgerows which provide good habitat for breeding birds. There are also a number of mature trees on site which have some features that are suitable for roosting bats and hedgerows, scattered trees and plantation woodland which offer habitat for foraging and commuting bats. A high number of records for hedgehog exist within 2km of the site and the site offers good foraging and hibernation habitat within the wooded areas. Potential ecological impacts of the proposal include the following:
- a) Birds could be killed or injured or nests destroyed if clearance works occurs within the bird breeding season.
  - b) Reptiles, if present, could be killed/injured by clearance works.

- c) If bats are present in any of the 7 trees identified as having low bat potential within the area proposed for clearance, bats could be killed/injured by the works or roosts lost. If bats are present in any of the 4 trees identified as having low bat potential within the area proposed for car parking, bat roosts or commuting/foraging routes could be impacted by increased lighting effects. There will also be a significant loss of foraging potential for bats caused by the removal of 0.05ha [ 500m<sup>2</sup> ] of plantation woodland.
56. A number of mitigation measures are included within the habitat survey which include the following:
57. a) clearance of the plantation woodland is undertaken under a method statement to protect birds and potential bats and reptiles.
- b) Any tree and scrub clearance work should avoid the bird breeding season between 1 March to 31 August. Alternatively, a bird surveyor should visit the site prior to clearance to ensure there is no nesting and to confirm when works can take place. If nesting birds are present, the nest area should be cordoned off and left undisturbed until the birds have fledged or the nesting attempt reached a natural conclusion.
- c) Mitigation for bats is not currently required
- d) All deadwood, compost heaps and ground flora should be cleared in September to avoid impacts on potential hibernating reptiles and hedgehogs or breeding birds.
- e) Any works occurring within the root protection zones will be minimised and undertaken in accordance with BS5837:2012, and recommendations given within the arboricultural report (*EcoNorth 2017*) must be adhered to.
- f) Additional lighting should be kept to a minimum. However, if additional lighting is required this should be of low level, directed towards the ground and away from trees.
58. The following enhancement measures are also proposed:
- a) Six bat boxes of varying design such as Schwegler 2FN or 1FD placed on trees at S, SE and SW directions at a height of 3-4m away from artificial lighting.
- b) Remaining mature trees on site are protected under Tree Preservation Order.
59. A condition should be attached to any future permission to ensure that the mitigation and enhancement measures set out within the report should be adhered to.

### **Main issue 7: Amenity**

60. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM2, DM11, NPPF paragraphs 9 and 17.
61. The proposals are not likely to have any significant amenity considerations for nearby residents other than potential disturbance from noise. 2 Christchurch Road may experience a slight increase in noise from minibus traffic and the properties on Christchurch Court may experience a slight increase of noise from the new exit

from the school although this is likely to be minimal due to them being set back from the road and due to screening provided by trees and the boundary treatment.

### **Main issue 8: Flood risk**

62. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS1, DM5, NPPF paragraphs 100 and 103.
63. The site is situated within the critical drainage area and as such policy DM5 of the local plan is of particular relevance. Permeable surfacing materials are proposed where re-surfacing is being undertaken so the application should not increase surface water runoff.

### **Compliance with other relevant development plan policies**

64. A number of development plan policies include key targets for matters such as parking provision and energy efficiency. The table below indicates the outcome of the officer assessment in relation to these matters.

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Relevant policy</b>	<b>Compliance</b>
Cycle storage	DM31	<b>Yes</b>
Car parking provision	DM31	<b>Yes</b>
Refuse Storage/servicing	DM31	<b>Yes</b>
Energy efficiency	JCS 1 & 3 DM3	<b>Not applicable</b>
Water efficiency	JCS 1 & 3	<b>Not applicable</b>
Sustainable urban drainage	DM3/5	<b>Yes</b>

### **Equalities and diversity issues**

65. There are no significant equality or diversity issues. The proposal includes one designated disabled parking space.

### **Local finance considerations**

66. Under Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the council is required when determining planning applications to have regard to any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application. Local finance considerations are defined as a government grant or the Community Infrastructure Levy.
67. Whether or not a local finance consideration is material to a particular decision will depend on whether it could help to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It would not be appropriate to make a decision on the potential for the development to raise money for a local authority.

68. In this case local finance considerations are not considered to be material to the case.

## Conclusion

69. The proposed development will offer a number of benefits to the school including improving access, car parking, internal traffic circulation and pupil safety. The creation of a one way system and new pedestrian access is supported from a highway safety point of view and the proposal will reduce conflict between cars entering and exiting via the Newmarket Road entrance. Furthermore it will provide traffic free pedestrian access to the front of the school and improve legibility through the site. Although the proposal will increase traffic movement on Christchurch Road the overall impact is likely to be minimal.
70. The proposal will also help improve the setting of this listed building with the removal of minibuses and car parking from the entrance. The proposal will involve the removal of part of a curtilage listed building which will impact upon the fabric and historic layout of the setting of a listed building. This part of the proposal will cause some harm to the significance of the listed building and the wider setting; however in this instance the level of harm is considered to be less than substantial and the increased safety of visitor and pupils to the site is considered to outweigh this less than substantial harm. Furthermore it is regrettable that the proposal will result in the loss of four well established trees which will impact upon the conservation area; however subject to replacement planting their loss is acceptable.
71. Overall therefore it is considered that the benefits offered by the proposal outweigh the harm. Therefore it is considered that the development is in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Development Plan, and it has been concluded that there are no material considerations that indicate it should be determined otherwise.

## Recommendation

To approve application no. 17/00737/F - Norwich High School for Girls, 95 Newmarket Road, Norwich, NR2 2HU and grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit;
2. In accordance with plans;
3. Bricks, mortar, design of brick piers, specification/design of access gates in accordance with submitted details.
4. Demolition of wall to be carried out by hand
5. Any damage caused to the building or curtilage listed wall shall be made good
6. Stop work if unidentified features revealed
7. Traffic Regulation Order
8. Landscaping details to be approved
9. External lighting not to be used after 22:00 hours and before 06:00 hours on any day
10. Supplementary AMS to be provided
11. No-dig methods
12. Mitigatory replacement tree planting
13. Bat boxes to be installed in accordance with details submitted

14. Mitigation measures set out within section 9.3 of the ecology report and enhancement measures set out within section 9.4 of the ecology report shall be adhered to.

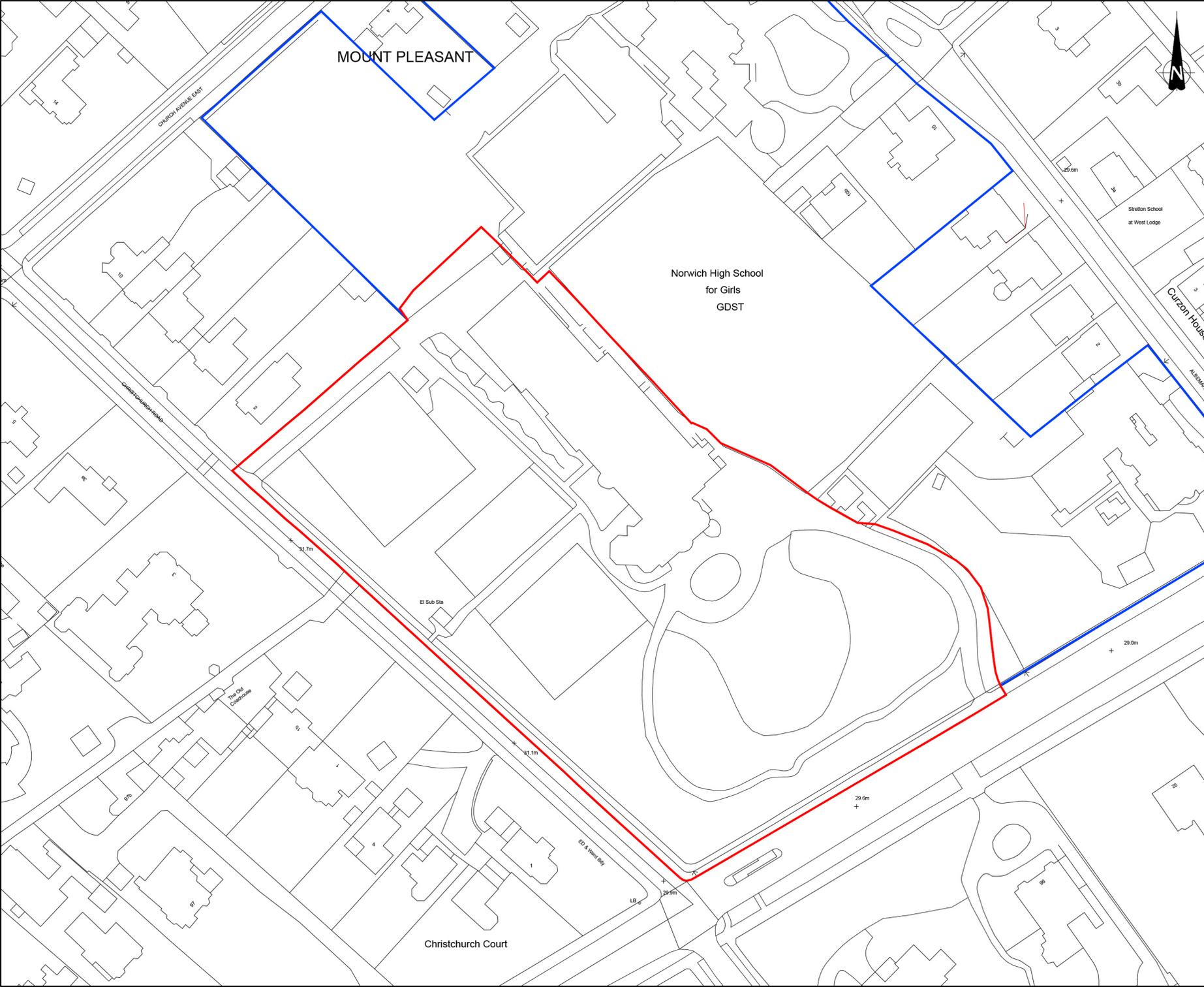
### **Suggested Informatives**

1. Listed building consent is required for works to the boundary wall.

### **Article 35(2) statement**

The local planning authority in making its recommendation has had due regard to paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework as well as the development plan, national planning policy and other material considerations, following negotiations with the applicant and subsequent amendments at the pre-application stage the application has been approved subject to appropriate conditions and for the reasons outlined in the officer report

- Application boundary
- Ownership boundary



Norwich High School  
for Girls  
GDST

MOUNT PLEASANT

Christchurch Court

Stretton School  
at West Lodge

Curzon House

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Rev. Date Description Drawn Checked by App'd

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Project Title  
**NORWICH HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS  
AMENDMENTS TO ACCESS  
ARRANGEMENTS**

Drawing Title  
**EXISTING SITE PLAN**

Scale of A1: 1:500	Status: Preliminary	Approved:
Drawn: AW	Checked: EHL	En:
Date: 18/04/17	Date: 19/04/17	Date: 19/04/17
Drawing No.:	Revision:	

