

Report for Resolution

Report to Planning Applications Committee
Date 1 July 2010
Report of Head of Planning Services
Subject 10/00459/F - Norwich City College, 5 Ipswich Road,
Norwich NR2 2LJ

Item
5(3)

SUMMARY

Description:	Demolition and rebuilding of existing boundary walls to the Thetford Building (on Cecil Road and Ipswich Road) and to wall west of the Elmhurst Building (Ipswich Road); re-surfacing of car parking area.
Reason for consideration at Committee:	Objection
Recommendation:	Approve
Ward:	Town Close
Contact Officer:	Mr Rob Parkinson Senior Planning Officer (Development) 01603 212765
Valid date:	14th May 2010
Applicant:	Norwich City College
Agent:	Steven Crisp

INTRODUCTION

The Site

Location and Context

1. The application concerns three separate locations of the wall, fencing and access gates around the curtilage of Norwich City College: the low wall and car park area and derelict gatehouse gable on the Ipswich Road frontage of the Elmhurst building; the low wall and gate to Ipswich Road in front of the Thetford Building; and, the gate to the car park beside the Thetford Building on Cecil Road. The sites are opposite or adjoin residential houses.

Constraints

2. The Thetford Building and the curtilage wall along Cecil Road, at the southern end of the college campus, is the only part of the site within the Newmarket Road Conservation Area, defined by Local Plan policy HBE8. The Elmhurst Building part sits opposite the Conservation Area which extends along the western length of this part of Ipswich Road. The trees north of the Thetford Building, within the College grounds, are protected by Tree Preservation Order, though this does not include the trees on the south side of the Thetford Building. Ipswich Road is part of the Major Road Network. Both Ipswich Road and Cecil Road form part of the Strategic Cycle Network and Green Links Network defined by Local Plan policies TRA15 and SR12 respectively.

Relevant Planning History

4/2003/0046 - Erection of new single storey classroom block at front of site. (Approved 2003)
04/00580/F - Replacement of existing modular building to rear of Thetford building with new modular building to match existing, proposed for a duration of 5 years. (Approved 2004)
08/00255/O - Redevelopment of College Campus for Education Use with associated administrative and ancillary facilities (DI) plus additional atria space together with car parking and landscaping. (Addendum received). (Approved 2008)

The Proposal

3. To rebuild and reinstate walls and provide replacement gates in all three locations:
4. The area in front of the Elmhurst Building is currently a knee-high flint and brick wall with redbrick piers, separated from the west elevation gable end of the derelict gatehouse by a break in the wall. Behind a wall is a gravel car park. The wall is proposed to be demolished and rebuilt with a slightly repositioned and wider access gap, with new brickwork to match the existing neighbours wall with similar capping feature and new piers. This extends to the end of the car park before changing to become a replacement flint, brick and railing wall until reaching the existing wall of the gatehouse building where it integrates with the existing light brick wall. The west gable of the gatehouse building is retained in part, being shortened in height to a level just above the window recesses, which will be filled in using bricks reclaimed from the gatehouse.
5. The knee-high Ipswich Road part of the flint and brick Thetford Building wall will also be demolished, to be replaced with a low knapped flint wall with red-brick coping and taller railings above. The access will be given new tall brick piers either side of a new gate, which has an appearance of a double-width timber gate, but which is only single-width in function (due to practicalities in the use of the car park).
6. The tall modern red-brick wall and wooden gates on Cecil Road are proposed to be replaced, realigned and raised in height slightly. The current 2.7m access will be widened to 3.7m, and set back in a recess from its current position hard against the pavement edge, using a curved reveal to the wall. The timber gates would be replaced with similar timber replacements. The proposals include the removal of a lime tree to the west of the gate. The replacement wall would raise the height slightly and use Waveney Red Blend bricks to match the existing, and provide pyramid piers instead of the square-top piers at present.

Representations Received

7. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. 4 letters of representation have been received citing the issues as summarised in the table below. All the comments received concern only the proposed works to the Cecil Road wall and access gate as described at paragraph 6.

Issues Raised	Response
(a) There is no need to replace the wall – the defects in the wall are superficial and could be repaired at a fraction of the cost.	Paragraph 12 & Financial costing or justification are not a planning consideration.
(b) There is no need for a wider entrance to be provided to access the small car park and it may be to enable HGV access.	Para. 15
(c) The lime tree should not be removed.	Para. 16-17
(d) The proposed changes in appearance to the wall is less sympathetic to the adjoining wall of 2 Cecil Road.	Para. 10-14
(e) The historic brickwork should not be replaced with new materials unless absolutely necessary.	Para. 10-14
(f) The integration with the new wall could cause structural problems.	Para. 14
(g) The Norwich Society support the application, describing the works as overall improvements to the current walls.	

ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Planning Policies

Relevant National Planning Policies

PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS1 Supplement – Planning for Climate Change
PPS5 - Planning for the Historic Environment

Relevant Strategic Regional Planning Policies

East of England Plan 2008

ENV6 - The Historic Environment
ENV7 - Quality in the Built Environment

Relevant Local Plan Policies

City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004

HBE8 - Development in Conservation Areas
HBE12 - High quality of design in new developments
EP20 - Sustainable use of materials
NE3 - Tree protection, control of cutting and lopping
NE8 - Management of features of wildlife importance and biodiversity
NE9 - Comprehensive landscaping scheme and tree planting

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

Trees and Development (Adopted September 2007)
Newmarket Road Conservation Area Appraisal (

Principle of Development

Policy Considerations

8. Development should provide a high standard of design and, in Conservation Areas and in areas affecting the setting of Conservation Areas, should enhance the Conservation Area and preserve historic assets, as required by national policy PPS1 and PPS5, and Local Plan policies HBE8 and HBE12.

Impact on Living Conditions

9. There will be no affect on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

Design

Layout and Form and Impact on Setting of Conservation Area

10. The proposals along Ipswich Road are all considered appropriate restorations in sympathetic materials and designs appropriate to the setting of the Conservation Area opposite. The proposals in both locations will also improve the vehicle access and pedestrian safety when using the car parks, such as by maintaining visibility above 1m height, and will improve security and drainage of the car parks.
11. In particular, the retention and integration of the gable wall window-place features of the gatehouse building will be beneficial in retaining a reminder of the historic interest at the site. It would be preferable to be able to include the full height of the wall, but that would have proven unviable, requiring significant structural buttress support for stability.
12. The Cecil Road wall is currently being undermined by the lime tree growth directly under the foundations of the west side of the wall, and cracks and slight bowing of the wall are evident in this western section. The eastern part of the wall is seen to be suffering subsidence and large cracks are clearly evident. It is considered beneficial to replace the wall now before they worsen and present further maintenance or safety problems.
13. The Cecil Road entrance will improve the quality of development in the Conservation Area by using materials appropriate to the historic wall, and using reclaimed bricks where possible can be required by planning condition. The new piers and round-top wall coping complete a continuation of an interesting feature of the Conservation Area currently at the west side of the gate, and add 'ownership' and identity to this stretch of the curtilage wall, defining the end of the wall a lot more effectively than is currently the case where the flat-top pier sits slightly above the neighbouring pier and creates an uncomfortable and confused appearance. The increased height of the wall length will actually better integrate the wall with the adjoining north-south boundary wall at the east of the site and improve screening of the close-board and concrete post fence at the back of the site.
14. Removal of the pillar adjoining the boundary of 2 Cecil Road will need to be carefully undertaken to avoid structural problems and create a sympathetic join between the two walls. Conditions are proposed to confirm the use of materials along the length of all the walls in the application, and confirm a methodology for linking the two piers soundly.

Transport and Access

Vehicular Access and Servicing

15. There are no reasons to prevent the widening of the access gate to Cecil Road on traffic grounds, as the proposals include adequate design to allow safe egress and access. HGVs would be unlikely to use this part of the site except for very occasional deliveries,

which are unlikely to cause anything other than occasional minor effects on traffic or amenity. Widening the access gate will in fact improve safety of access and visibility, and the set-back from the pavement will ensure much improved visibility to improve safety of access and egress along this busy pedestrian and cycle route. Conditions will be used to finalise the detail of the design of the gate and materials of the drive, to enhance safety.

Trees and Landscaping

Loss of Trees or Impact on Trees

16. The removal of the mature lime tree on Cecil Road is regrettable but considered necessary as a part of the works involved in redevelopment, and to avoid the future undermining of the replacement wall. The Council's Tree Officer confirms that providing replacement trees that can fully mature elsewhere on the campus site, and enhance biomass and biodiversity would be preferable to the retention of an aged tree that requires regular pruning. The replacement scheme can be required by condition.
17. The tree is a temporary interruption in a continual row of lime trees at this end of Cecil Road, continuing after the entrance to the car park. The impact will be lessened given the presence of retained lime trees either side of that tree to be removed. The continued health of the limes to the west of the site will be preserved through compliance with the submitted Arboricultural Implications Assessment which can be required by condition.

Conclusions

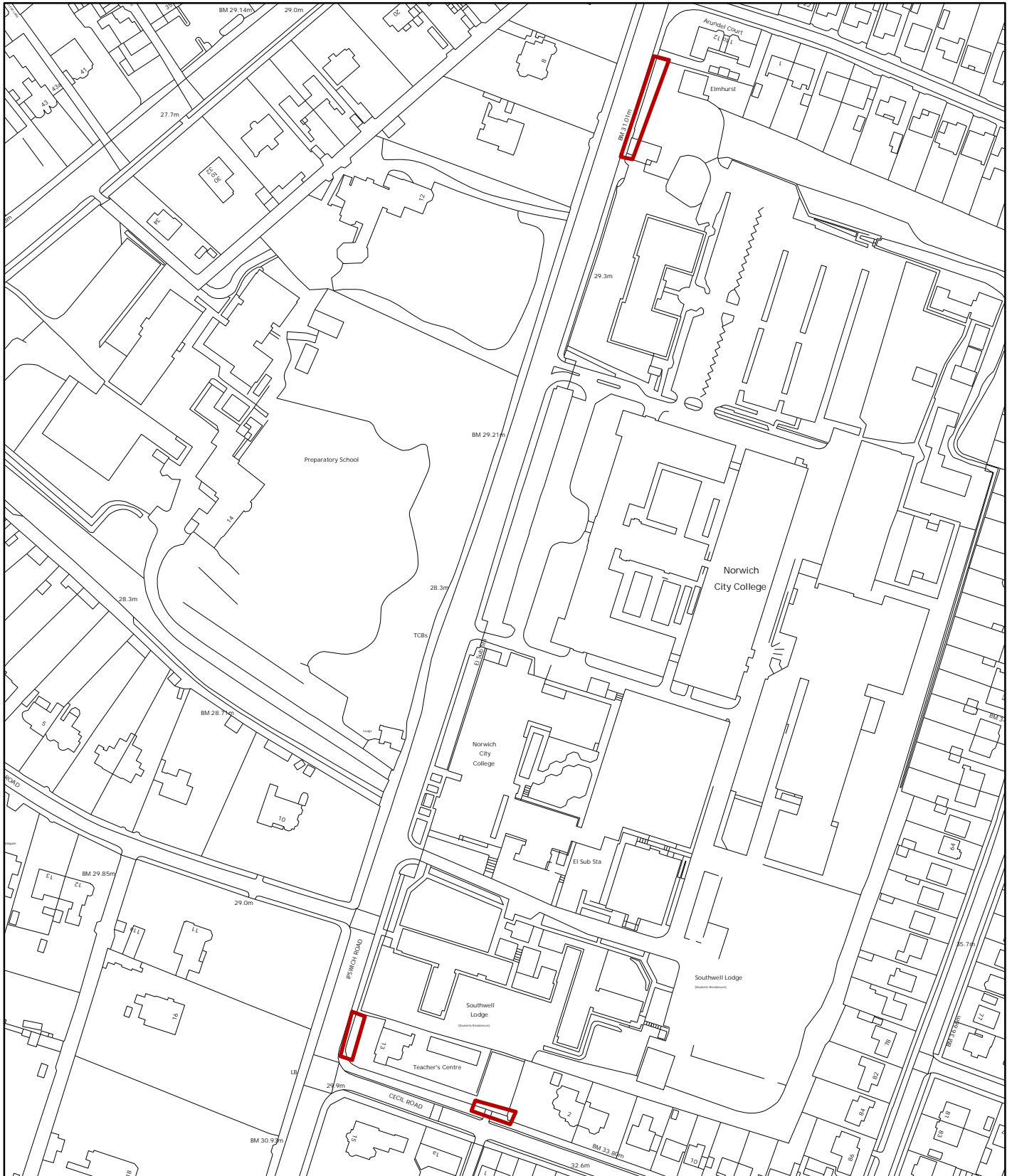
18. The development proposes a high quality of design that preserves and enhances the setting of the Conservation Area and retains the preservation of a notable historic asset in the form of the gatehouse gable wall. The measures will improve the safety and security of the college site, whilst enhancing pedestrian and cycle access around the site perimeter. It is considered acceptable that the lime tree be removed in the interests of the continued and ongoing maintenance of the replacement wall on Cecil Road. Subject to the use of conditions, the proposal will ensure appropriate replacement planting will enhance the biodiversity and the landscape quality of the college site and secure the use of appropriate materials and designs to enhance the Conservation Area.

RECOMMENDATION

To approve Application No (10/00459/F - Norwich City College, 5 Ipswich Road, Norwich NR2 2LJ) and grant planning permission, subject to the following conditions:-

- a) Standard time limit
- b) Development shall be in accordance with the approved plans
- c) Works shall be in full compliance with the submitted Arboricultural Implications Assessment
- d) Samples and/or precise details of the materials of the wall, railings, piers and copings, and design and materials of the gates shall be agreed prior to commencement
- e) The infilling of the windows of the gatehouse gable elevation shall use materials reclaimed from the gatehouse
- f) Where possible, materials shall be reclaimed from the demolition of the walls and reused in their reconstruction
- g) Prior to commencement of development a landscaping scheme shall be agreed to confirm the replacement planting of trees within the college campus of a suitable standard and quantity to compensate the loss of the lime tree in biomass and variety.

(Reasons for approval: The decision has been taken with regard to national guidance, regional and local development policy, and all material considerations. The development is of a high quality of design that preserves and enhances the setting of the Conservation Area and retains the preservation of a notable historic asset in the form of the gatehouse gable wall. The measures will improve the safety and security of the college site, whilst enhancing pedestrian and cycle access around the site perimeter. It is considered acceptable that the lime tree be removed in the interests of the continued and ongoing maintenance of the replacement wall on Cecil Road. Subject to the use of conditions, the proposal will ensure appropriate replacement planting will enhance the biodiversity and the landscape quality of the college site and secure the use of appropriate materials and designs to enhance the Conservation Area. As such the development is in accordance with national policy PPS1 and PPS5, regional policies ENV6 and ENV7 of the East of England Plan (May 2008), and saved policies HBE8, HBE12, EP20, NE3, NE8 and NE9 of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan (November 2004).



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Planning Application No - 10/00459/F
 Site Address - Norwich City College
 Scale - 1:2,250

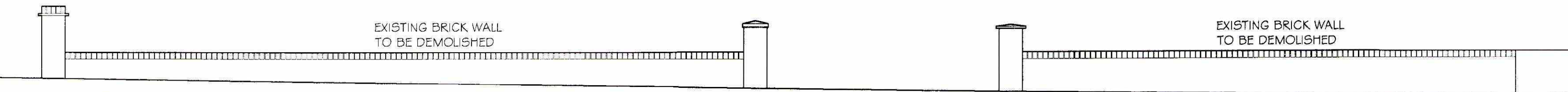


NORWICH
 City Council

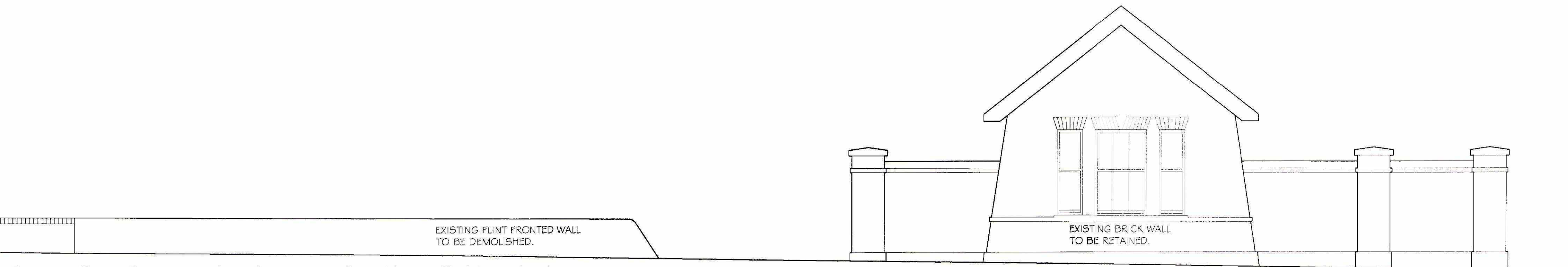
PLANNING SERVICES



Notes:



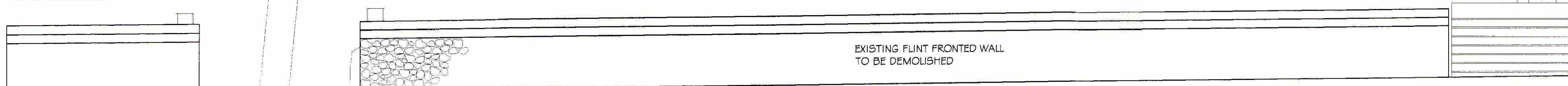
Existing Front Boundary wall Elevation - Elmhurst Building (nts)



Existing Front Boundary Wall Elevation - Gate House Building. (nts)

1000459F

EXISTING FLINT FRONTED WALL
TO BE DEMOLISHED



1000459F

Existing Front Boundary Wall Elevation - Thetford Building. (nts)



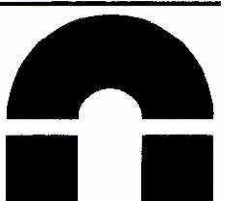
Existing Front Boundary Wall Elevation - Cecil Road - Thetford Building. (nts)

Organisational Development
04 MAR 2010
Post Room

**City College
NORWICH**

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NR2 2LJ

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Project Title:
CITY COLLEGE NORWICH
EXISTING BOUNDARY WALL
ELEVATIONS

Drawing Title:
EXISTING FRONT WALL
ELEVATIONS.

Scale: NTS

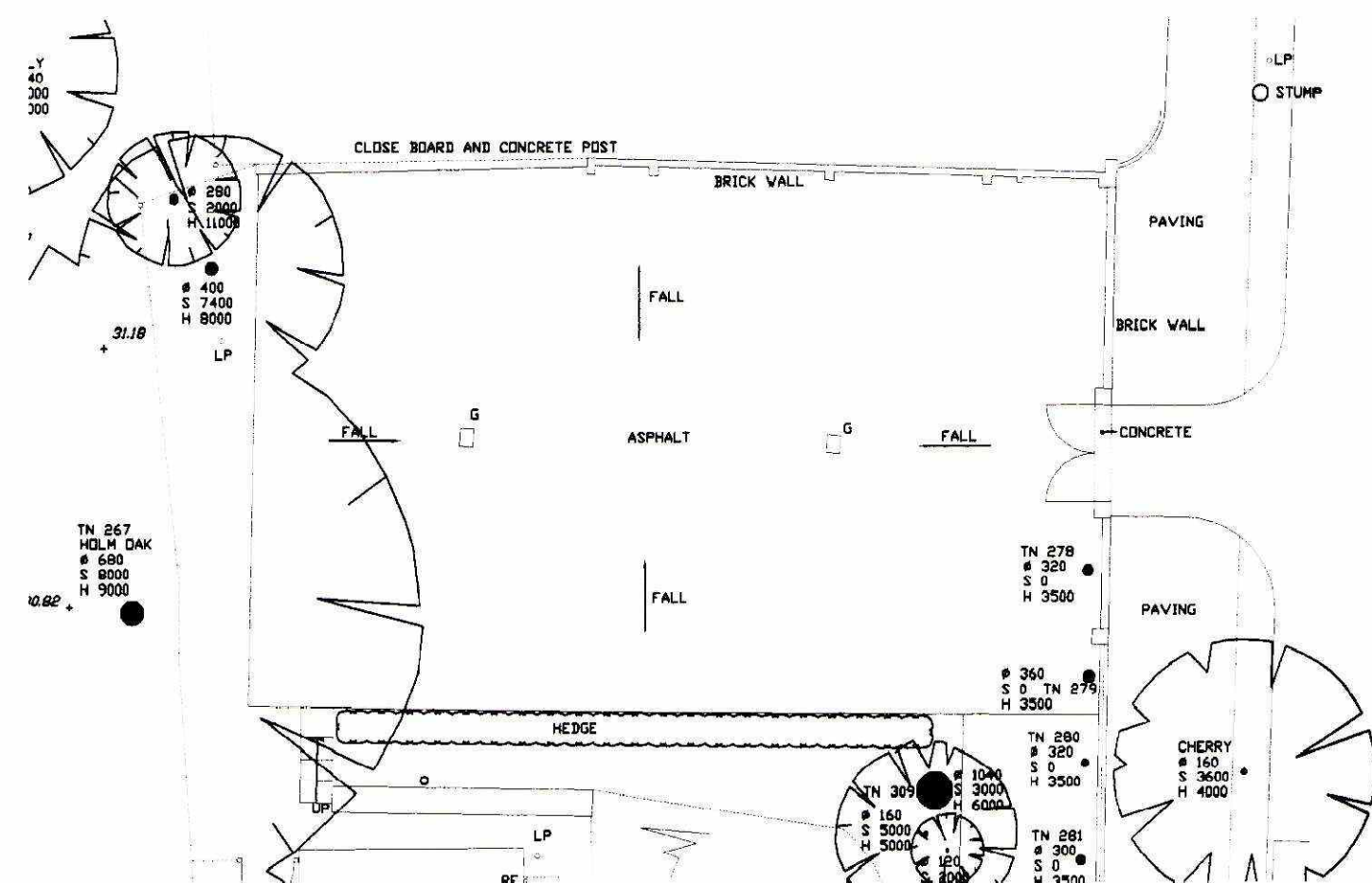
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Drawn By:
SC

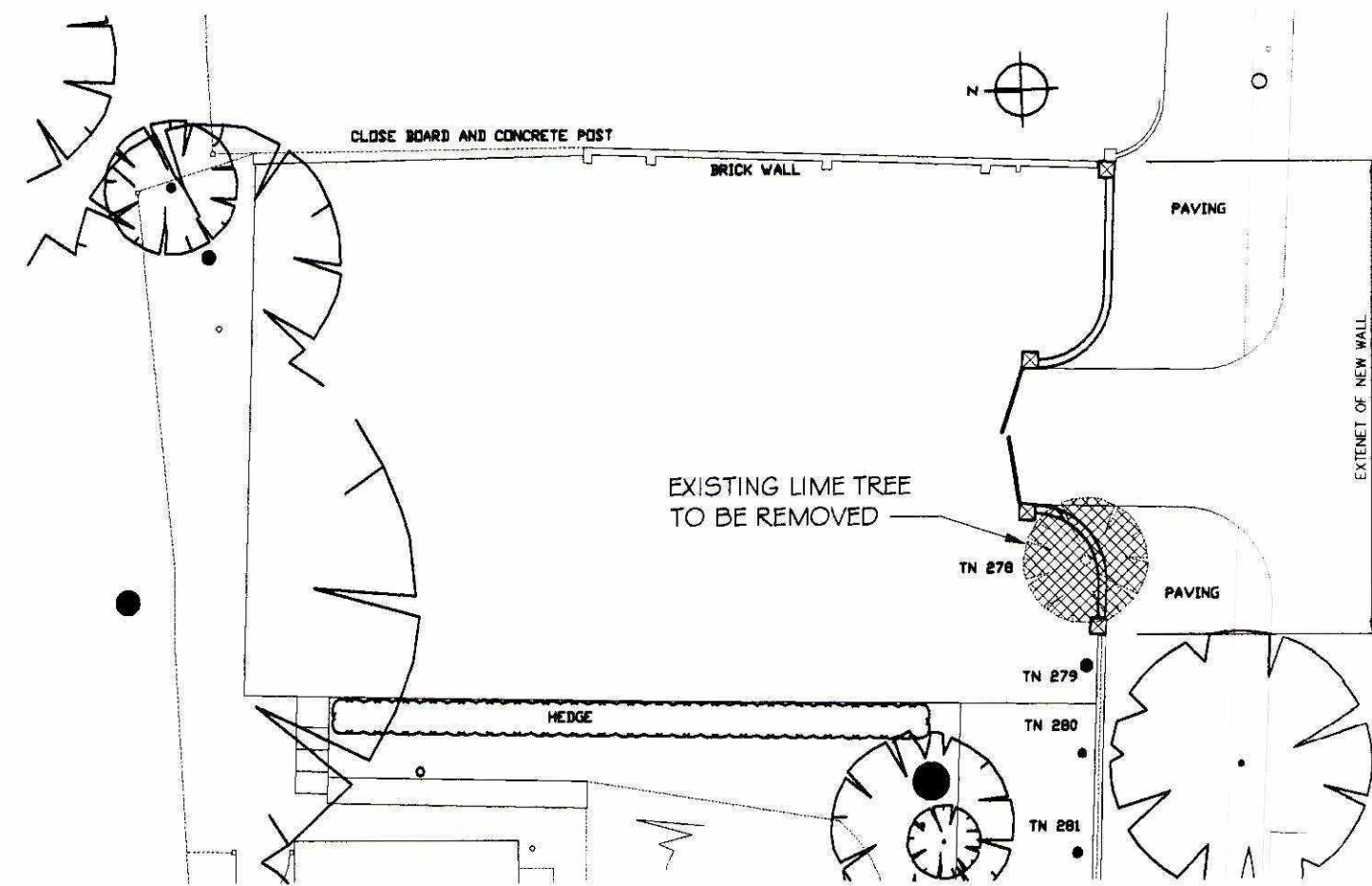
Checked By:

Drawing No.
NBW/2010/01

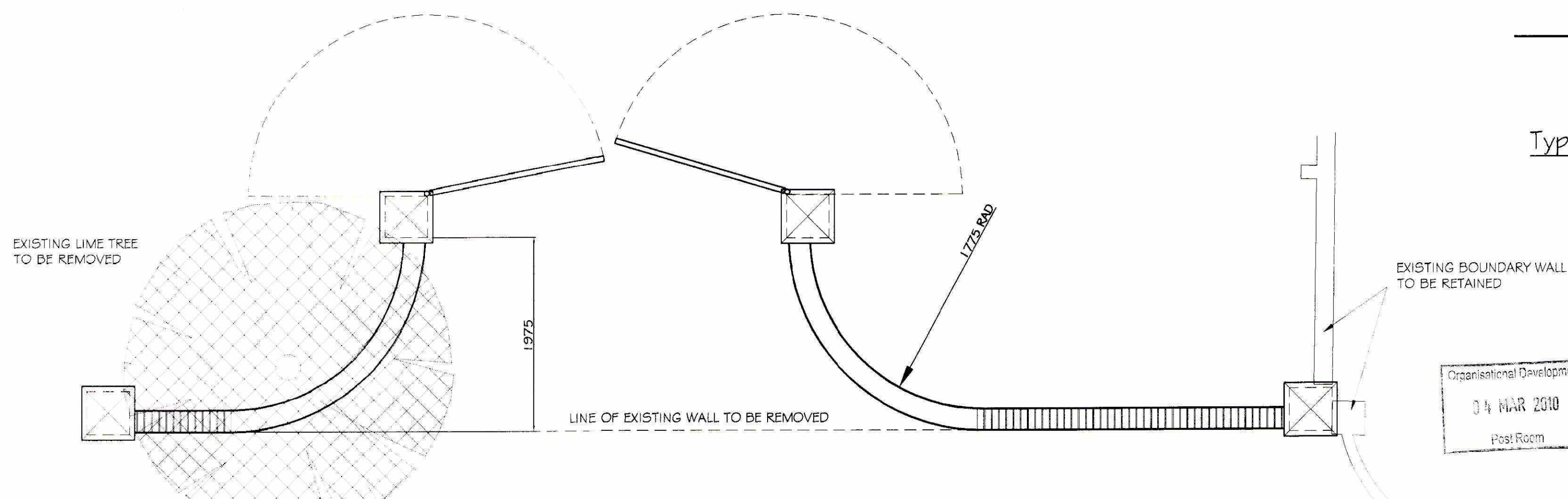
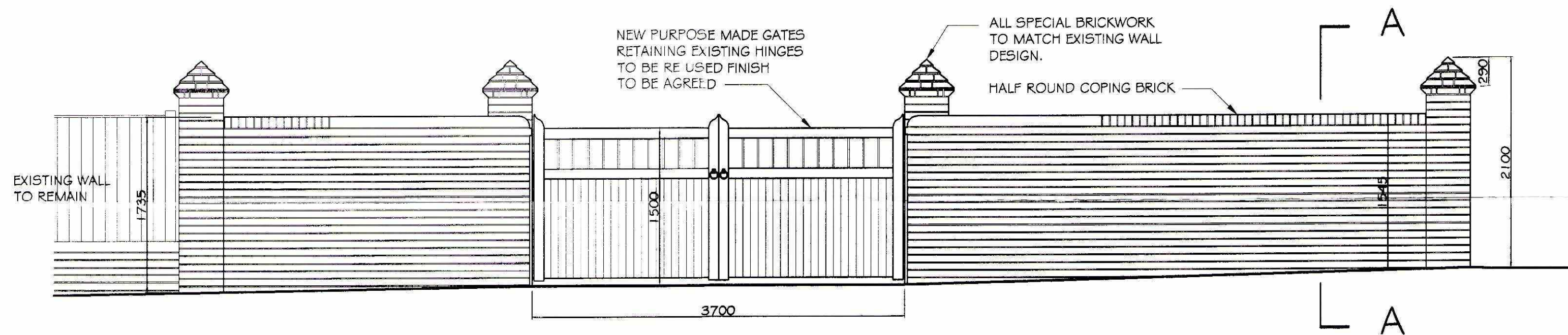
Revision:



Existing side Boundary wall - Thetford Building - Cecil Road.

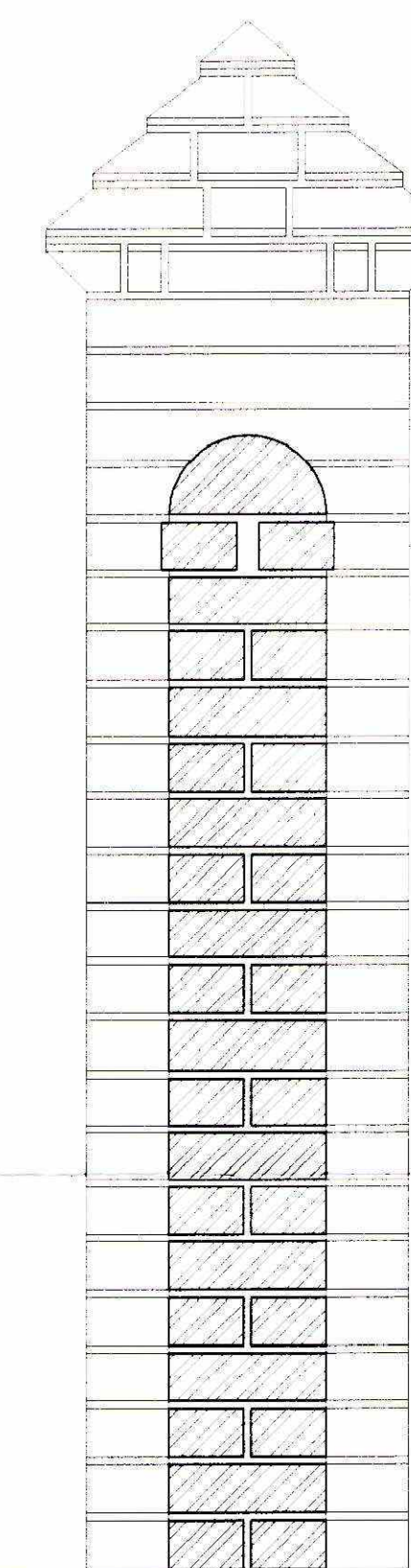


Proposed new side Boundary wall - Thetford Building - Cecil Road.




Proposed new Boundary wall Plan - Thetford Building - Cecil Road.

See drawing NBW/2010/01
for existing wall elevations



Typical Column Detail A,A (scale 1:10)

Revisions		
No.	Description	Date

<h1 style="text-align: center;">City College NORWICH</h1> <p style="text-align: center;">Ipswich Road Norwich, Norfolk NR2 2LJ</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tel: 01603 773 448 Fax: 01603 773 700</p>		
<p>Project Title:</p> <p>THETFORD BUILDING CITY COLLEGE NORWICH NORWICH</p>		
<p>Drawing Title:</p> <p>PROPOSED NEW REAR CARPARK WALL. TO CECIL ROAD.</p>		
<p>Scale: 1:10, 1:50, 1:200 Date: 14.01.10</p>		
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		<p>Checked By:</p>
		<p>Drawing No:</p> <p>NBW/2010</p>
		<p>Revision:</p> <p>-----</p>