

Report to Planning Applications Committee

Item

9 June 2022

Report of Head of Planning & Regulatory Services

Subject Application nos 22/00402/F and 22/00404/L – 30 Bethel Street, Norwich, NR2 1NR

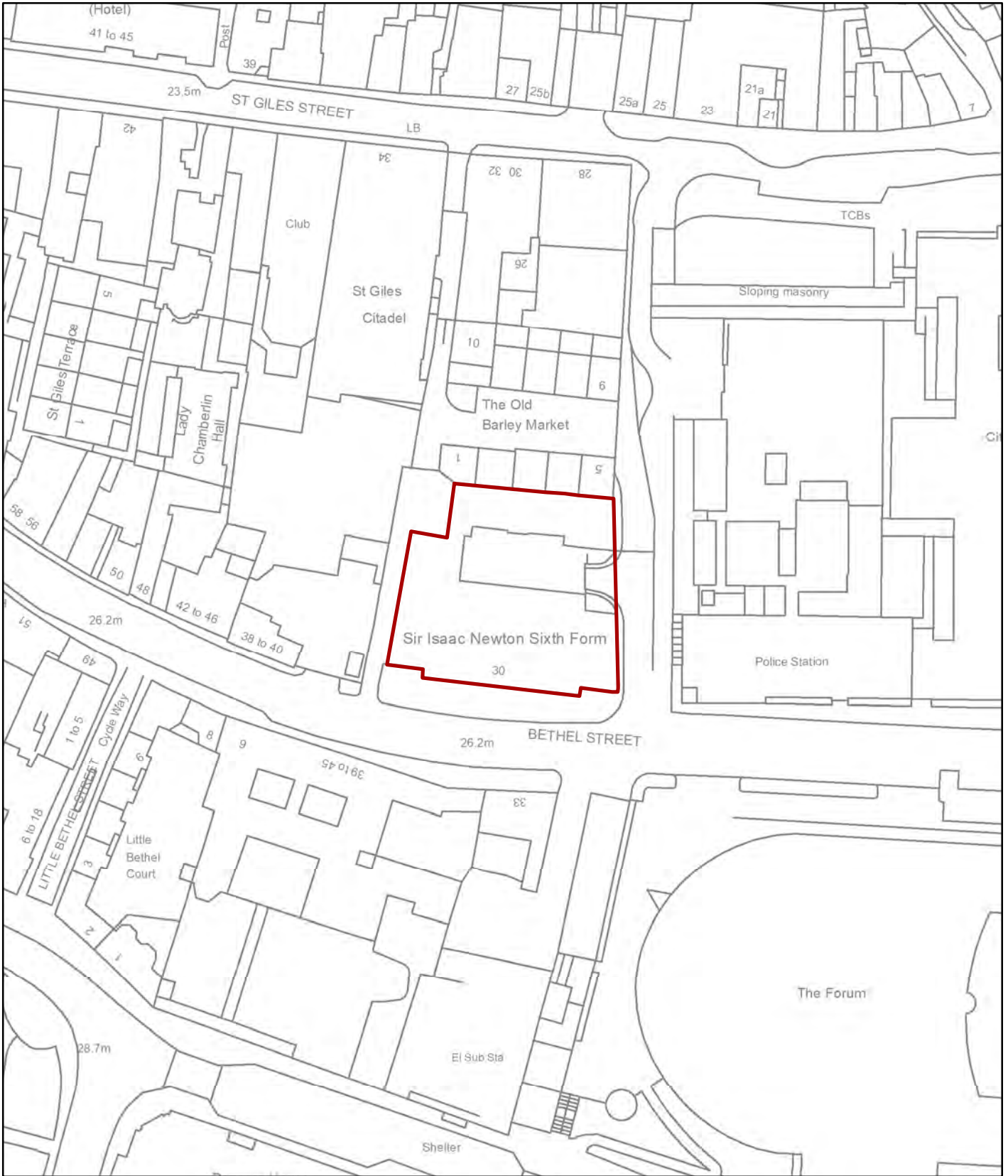
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Reason for referral Objections

Ward	Mancroft
Case officer	Danni Howard - 01603 989423 - dannihoward@norwich.gov.uk
Applicant	Inspiration Trust

Development proposal – 22/00402/F		
Installation of roof top air conditioning unit and associated pipework.		
Development proposal – 22/00404/L		
Relocation of 2 No. timber stud walls, reconfiguration of lighting and flooring and installation of air conditioning unit and associated pipework.		
Representations		
Object	Comment	Support
3	0	0

Main issues	Key considerations
1	Design & Heritage
2	Amenity
Expiry date	15 June 2022 (Extended from 9 June 2022)
Recommendation	Approve



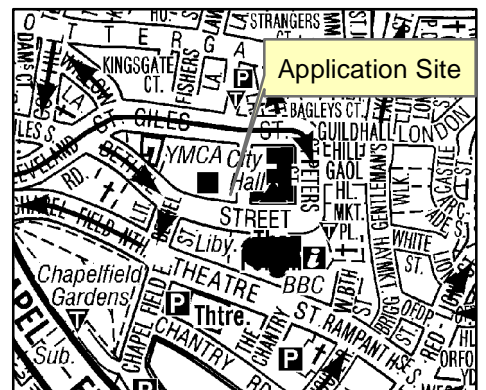
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Planning Application No 22/00402/F & 22/00404/L
 Site Address 30 Bethel Street

Scale 1:1,000



NORWICH
City Council
 PLANNING SERVICES



The site and surroundings

1. The subject site is located on the north side of Bethel Street, in the Civic Character Area of the City Centre Conservation Area. The building was formerly in use as a fire station and is now currently in use as Sir Isaac Newton Sixth Form.
2. There is existing plant and extraction units located on the roof of the main part of the building, which lies on the southern part of the site adjacent Bethel Street.
3. The site is surrounded by listed buildings to the west, south and east, having group value with the grade II* listed City Hall and Police Station to its east which were also constructed in the 1930s. The north side of the site lies adjacent residential dwellings in The Old Barley Market, with some residential properties also situated opposite the site on the south side of Bethel Street.
4. The building is Grade II listed with the following list description:

Fire Station of 1932-34, by Stanley G Livock.

MATERIALS

The station is constructed of red brick with Portland stone dressings, built on a concrete frame, with a tiled, hipped roof.

PLAN

The plan comprises a three storey front range incorporating vehicular access on ground floor, with leisure rooms and crew accommodation above and staircases and pole access at each end. Family accommodation is in the three and four storey western range, at right-angles to the front block and office accommodation and entrance to the drill yard at the east elevation. Further garaging and a practice and hose drying tower are at the rear, adjoining the former Weights and Measures Office.

EXTERIOR

The facade has eight, double-height, square panelled doors framed by stone pilasters supporting an entablature with the words 'FIRE STATION' affixed. Pedestrian access is through similarly designed doors at the west and east ends. That to the west has a simple moulded stone surround, but the east door has a square fanlight above with curvilinear glazing bars, and stone pilaster architrave. Centrally positioned above each vehicle door is a 28-light Crittall window with a square brick head, and above each pedestrian door, there is a window opening with ogee-shaped head, moulded stone surround and balcony with cast-iron balustrade. On the second floor, there are fourteen smaller 16-light Crittall windows. centrally-placed is a stone plaque with the City coat of arms and date 1934, supporting a flag pole. Both the west and east elevations have similar arrangements of fenestration; the east block is shorter to allow access to the drill yard framed by curving enclosure walls culminating in brick and stone piers adorned by 1930s lanterns. At the rear of the front block, vehicle doors lead to the drill yard on the ground floor where a later C20 partial covering has been erected. Additional garaging is accommodated at the ground floor of the western block and in the practice tower block to the rear. The latter, integrated into the former Weights and Measures office, incorporates the four storey slightly projecting practice and hose drying tower styled as a campanile, with a deeply recessed entrance door with moulded stone surround and recessed window openings with square heads at each storey until the

fourth which has an arched brick head. Above, a dentil cornice and louvred openings on each side are topped by a pyramidal roof supporting a weather vane depicting a fire engine, perhaps a unique feature. Throughout, all windows appear to have the original Crittall frames and the 1930s rainwater goods remain.

INTERIOR

There is a remarkable of original fixtures and fittings in all blocks with the exception of the former Weights and Measures office which was not part of the original station and does not contain any contemporary fittings apart from the staircase. The original doors and window furniture largely remain throughout. In the front block, the vehicle door fittings survive, as does the tiled wall surrounds in the vehicle bay, original poles and staircases. Only the two flights and the balustrade of the east staircase have been replaced. The first floor former library and snooker room have original wooden panelling. The crew rooms on the second floor largely have original basins and radiators. In the western block, individual flats for the station officers are arranged off each landing, with identical layout of rooms and most with their original simple cornices and fireplaces with tiled surrounds.

HISTORY

From the mid C19 onwards, Fire Stations began to appear all over the country, usually following the formation of a local brigade by the Police, insurance companies and local individuals. In the later C19, the Norwich municipal fire engine was kept beneath the Sheriff's office at the Guildhall, relocating to larger premises in Pottergate in 1899. Changing requirements prompted the need for additional facilities and the Bethel Street Fire Station was designed as a key building in the visionary new Civic Centre at the heart of the City, conceived during the 1920s. The layout of the centre was designed to integrate with the historic buildings of Norwich and is described by Pevsner as 'one of the best examples of municipal town planning in England.'

City Hall (James and Pierce, 1937-38) was intended to be the first of the buildings constructed, but in the event the Fire Station, by Norwich architect Stanley Livock, was built first in 1932-34. Photographic evidence of the Fire Station when it was being constructed, and after it was first opened, confirms that the building is little altered.

SOURCES

Pevsner, N 'Norfolk 1 Norwich and the North-east' 1962, revised 1997, p. 163
City of Norwich Corporation, 'City of Norwich Plan' 1945

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

The Bethel Street Fire Station is designated for listing in grade II for the following principal reasons.

- *It is substantially intact with a remarkable survival of fixtures and fittings
- *It has architectural quality of design, portraying gravitas and authority combined with successful functionality, and it forms a thoughtful and well balanced composition.
- *It has group value with the II.* listed City Hall and Police Station, and is a key building in the Civic complex in the historic Norwich city centre.

LISTING NGR: TG2277308481

Constraints

5. City Centre Conservation Area, Grade II Listed, City Centre Leisure Area, Area of Main Archaeological Interest, Areas for Increased Parking, City Centre Parking Area.

Relevant planning history

6. The records held by the city council show the following planning history for the site.

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
12/02114/L	Installation of anti-pigeon netting on balcony.	APPR	24/01/2013
13/00113/F	Change of use of Fire Station (Class Sui Generis) to 2,900 sq.m. GIA Sixth Form Free School (Class D1) with conversion works including external alterations and including new vertical external extension to provide new staircase and lift core and elevated corridors within proposed atrium and a new glazed infill extension beneath existing canopy. New landscaping to inner courtyard and building frontage on Bethel Street to include reinstating public footpath and providing street trees.	APPR	12/07/2013
13/00115/L	Conversion works including internal alterations, demolition and subdivision, and construction of vertical extension to provide new staircase, lift and corridors within proposed atrium, and glazed canopy infill extensions and curtilage landscaping, to facilitate change of use from fire station to school.	APPR	12/07/2013
13/01590/F	Installation of doors in association with new school use and designs as approved by previous planning permission 13/00113/F.	APPR	27/11/2013
13/01591/L	Installation of electricity substation and new doors to eastern external elevation, alterations to and infilling part of basement with concrete, removal of existing walls and installation of internal walls, and creation of new opening and doors within courtyard-facing elevation, in association with new school use and designs as approved by previous Listed Building consent 13/00115/L.	APPR	27/11/2013

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
14/00217/NM A	Revisions to: (i) the sustainability strategy and proposed energy generation, (ii) the internal layout and external appearance to include an internal electricity substation, and (iii) to the internal layout of the 'Weights and Measures' building to suit amended staff requirements - amendments to previous planning permission 13/00113/F 'Change of use of Fire Station (Class Sui Generis) to 2,900 sq.m. GIA Sixth Form Free School (Class D1) with conversion works including external alterations and including new vertical external extension to provide new staircase and lift core and elevated corridors within proposed atrium and a new glazed infill extension beneath existing canopy. New landscaping to inner courtyard and building frontage on Bethel Street to include reinstating public footpath and providing street trees'.	APPR	04/04/2014
14/00285/A	Display of 1 no. externally illuminated stainless steel lettered sign.	APPR	01/05/2014
14/00286/L	Revision to approved plans of listed building consent 13/00115/L (conversion of fire station to free school), comprising revisions to internal layout to accommodate internal electricity substation at ground floor of south block, changes to the internal layout of the 'Weights & Measures' building north block, additional of air source heating plant, machinery, chimney flues & revised energy generation strategy; and display of a parapet-mounted sign advertisement on the front elevation.	APPR	01/05/2014
15/01765/L	Installation of new internal glazed screen in the hall on the room side of original timber fire tender doors and alterations to ceiling to accommodate screen supports.	APPR	13/01/2016
19/00516/F	Installation of 4 no. removable octagonal heritage bollards to the entrance to the vehicle courtyard on the east elevation.	APPR	31/05/2019
20/01079/L	Wall mounted mechanical cooling and heating units. Roof mounted DX chiller	APPR	16/11/2020

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
	units.		
21/00579/L	Re-opening of bricked-up doorway, installation of external light, window bar installation, removal and installation of section of stud wall and relocation of fire door.	APPR	01/07/2021
21/01641/L	Installation of a defibrillator at the front elevation.	APPR	05/05/2022

The proposal

7. Two applications are brought before the committee. The first application is for full planning permission (22/00402/F) and the second is for listed building consent (22/00404/L).
8. The proposal included in both applications is to install 1no. Daikin air conditioning unit on the western roof area adjacent to existing rooftop plant.
9. The listed building consent 22/00404/L also includes the internal installation of 2no. stud walls and associated alterations to lighting and pipework to reconfigure the size of a classroom on the fourth floor. The proposed air conditioning unit will service the reconfigured area.
10. The work proposed is as follows : two existing timber studwork walls are to be demolished and removed with two new timber studwork walls constructed in a new position/ configuration with the existing doors retained and relocated, an extant timber cupboard/SGL worktop is to be removed to accommodate the new timber studwork walls. A new modern timber door and ironmongery is to be introduced into the newly formed opening. New sheet vinyl floor coverings are to be introduced to the Science Preparation room to match that extant in the adjacent classroom areas. The extant light fittings are to be reconfigured onto new and existing lighting circuit. A new air conditioning system is to be introduced and connected to a new cassette unit located on the roof of the Building, with a ceiling mounted duct system running up to the roof plant area.

Representations

11. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. Three letters of representation have been received 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
Additional noise and pollution generated by the proposed unit will disturb residents of The	See main issue 2 – amenity.

Consultation responses

12. 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

The internal and external modifications to the Building are considered as being acceptable in principle and are considered as offering less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II Listed Building, its setting, and the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area. The less than substantial harm offered by the proposal is considered as being mitigated by the science faculty improving its room sizes and the usability of its laboratories and therefore maintaining the Building in its existing viable use as an educational establishment and contributing to its continued conservation needs. It is therefore recommended that Listed Building Consent be granted for the proposal.

Environmental protection

13. Based on the technical data, with an assumption there are no barriers or hard surfaces in the way, the new unit is unlikely to increase noise to a level that would cause disturbance through an open window 25m away. The lip of the building will provide some attenuation which would further reduce noise escape.

Assessment of planning considerations

Relevant development plan policies

14. **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
15. **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
 - DM9 Safeguarding Norwich's heritage

Other material considerations

16. **Relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework July 2021 (NPPF):**
 - NPPF12 Achieving well-designed places
 - NPPF16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Case Assessment

17. 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: Design & Heritage

18. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS2, DM3, DM 9 NPPF paragraphs 126-136 & 189-208.
19. Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 place a statutory duty on the local authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possesses and to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. Case law (specifically *Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northamptonshire DC* [2014]) has held that this means that considerable importance and weight must be given to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings and conservation areas when carrying out the balancing exercise.
20. The new air conditioning unit is to be mounted on the roof covering of the building, connecting to the newly created central classroom area. It is proposed that the new air conditioning unit is to match those existing. The associated new service pipework is proposed to run under the existing solar panels on the roof of the building and will be routed with those existing supply runs for the existing air conditioning units.
21. The new unit will not be visible from street level but may be visible from some upper levels of neighbouring buildings, most likely to be City Hall. The minor scale of the proposed unit will remain subservient to the host property and will not impact the design or character of the building and its surroundings.
22. The increase of plant machinery to the roofs of statutorily Listed Buildings in the City Centre Conservation has the potential to result in a negative cumulative impact on the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area and the setting of the Grade II Listed Building, as well as the potential to afford harm to the aesthetic and communal heritage values contributing to its overall significance. The proposals as presented are considered to result in a minimal impact.
23. The internal proposals as presented are considered to result in little or no harm to the significance of the Grade II listed Building, with a minimal impact on the evidential and illustrative historic heritage values contributing to the building's significance overall.
24. It is recommended that the listed building consent application is granted subject to a number of standard conditions which seek to protect the fabric of the listed building.

Main issue 4: Amenity

25. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM2, DM11, NPPF paragraphs 8 and 127.
26. Concerns were raised in objections regarding disturbance to residents of The Old Barley Market from noise generated by the new unit. One objector also raised concerns that noise and pollution from the unit will disturb the outside areas of The Old Barley Market.
27. The proposed unit is for air-conditioning and will not extract odour or pollution from the classroom it serves.
28. The unit will be sited in the southwest section of the roof of the main school building, leaving a distance of at least 23m to the closest property at The Old Barley Market to the north, and approx. 30m to the closest residential property on Bethel Street to the south.
29. As confirmed by the Council's Environmental Protection Officer, the unit is sufficiently distanced from nearby residential uses so that the cumulative impact of the new unit, combined with those existing is unlikely to cause harm to residential amenity by noise disturbance. The siting of the unit within the roof will allow physical elements of the existing roofscape to offer attenuation from further noise escape. A condition is recommended which requires the air conditioning unit to be installed using anti-vibration mountings.

Other matters

30. Assessment of Impacts under the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

Site Affected: (a) Broads SAC/Broadland Ramsar
(b) River Wensum SAC

Potential effect: (a) Increased nitrogen and phosphorus loading
(b) Increased phosphorous loading

The application represents a 'proposal or project' under the above regulations. Before deciding whether approval can be granted, the council as a competent authority must undertake an appropriate assessment to determine whether or not the proposal is likely, either on its own or in combination with other projects, to have any likely significant effects upon the Broads SAC, and if so, whether or not those effects can be mitigated against.

The Council's assessment is set out below and is based on advice contained in the letter from Natural England to LPA Chief Executives and Heads of Planning dated 16 March 2022.

Broads SAC/Broadland Ramsar.

Does the plan or project create a source of water pollution or have an impact on water quality (e.g. alters dilution)? AND

Is the plan or project within the hydrological catchment of a habitats site which includes interest features that are sensitive to the water quality impacts from the plan or project?

Answer:NO

The answer to this question is based on the NE advice that development not including overnight accommodation generally does not need to be included in an assessment.

Conclusion: It is not necessary to carry out an assessment under the Habitats regs.

River Wensum SAC

Does the plan or project create a source of water pollution or have an impact on water quality (e.g. alters dilution)? AND

Is the plan or project within the hydrological catchment of a habitats site which includes interest features that are sensitive to the water quality impacts from the plan or project?

Answer:NO

The answer to this question is based on the NE advice that development not including overnight accommodation generally does not need to be included in an assessment. In addition, the discharge for WwTW is downstream of the SAC.

Conclusion: It is not necessary to carry out an assessment under the Habitats regs.

Equalities and diversity issues

31. There are no equality or diversity issues.

Local finance considerations

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

Conclusion

33. The proposed works will cause minimal impact to nearby residential amenity and will not harm the significance of the Grade II Listed Building or the surrounding Conservation Area. 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:

- (1) application 22/00402/F at 30 Bethel Street, Norwich NR2 1NR and grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:
 1. Standard time limit;
 2. In accordance with plans;
 3. Anti-vibration mountings.

- (2) application 22/00404/L at 30 Bethel Street, Norwich NR2 1NR and grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:
 1. Standard time limit;
 2. In accordance with plans;
 3. External finished restrictions;
 4. Listed Building – making good.

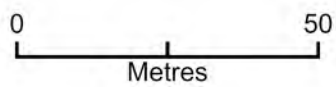
Informatives:

IN4 – Listed building consent;
IN23 – Retain original fabric of the building;
IN8A – Asbestos.

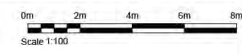
(Reason for approval:

The proposed development is beneficial to the long-term preservation of a designated heritage asset. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with the objectives of NPPF, Policy 2 of the Adopted Joint Core Strategy (March 2011) and saved policies DM1, DM3 and DM9 of the Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan (December 2014).)

Sir Isaac Newton Location Plan

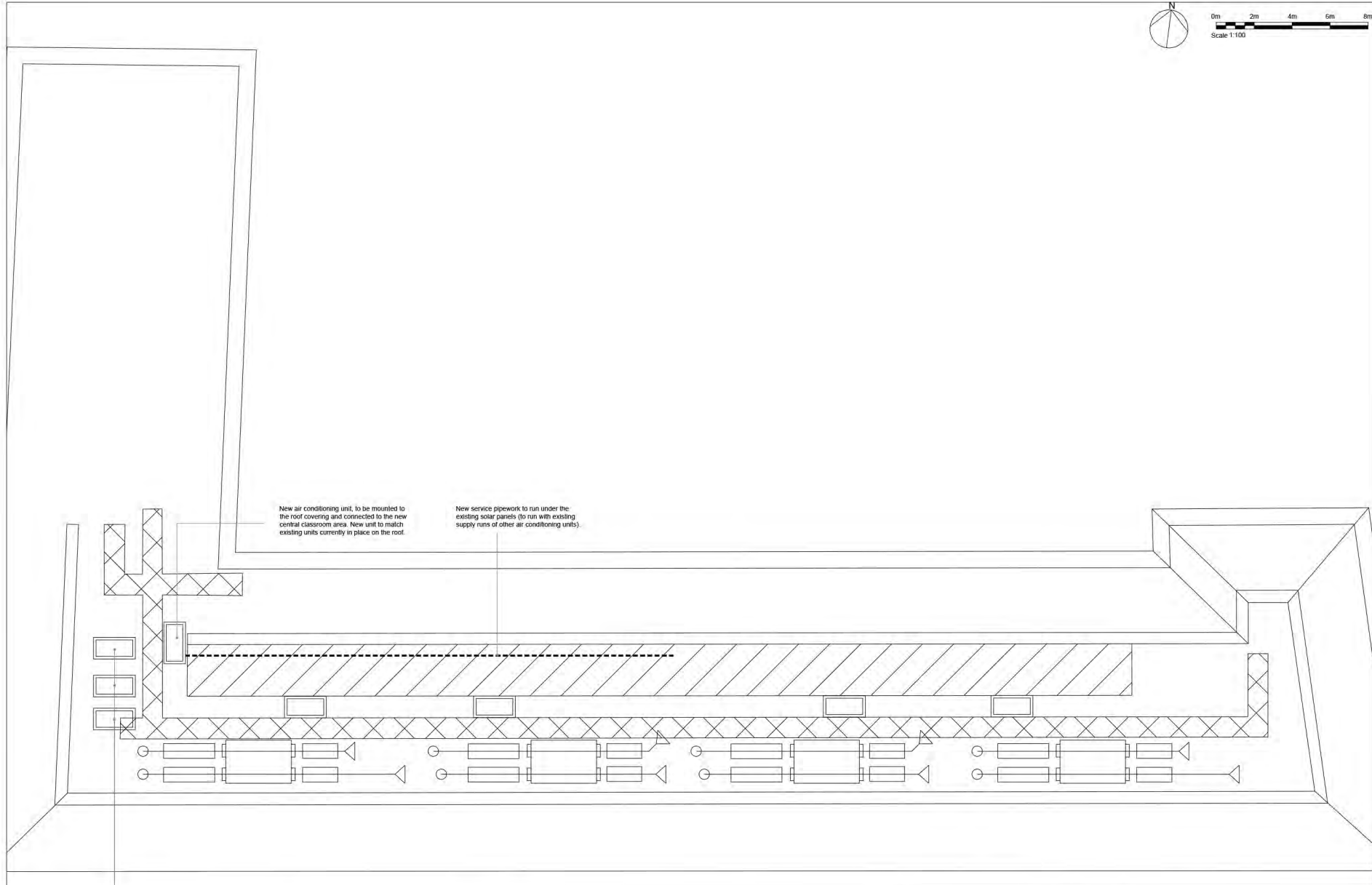


Plan Produced for: Inspiration Trust
Date Produced: 14 Apr 2022
Plan Reference Number: TQRQM22104125544877
Scale: 1:1250 @ A4



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Dis Not Scale © Ingleton Wood LLP



New air conditioning unit, to be mounted to the roof covering and connected to the new central classroom area. New unit to match existing units currently in place on the roof.

New service pipework to run under the existing solar panels (to run with existing supply runs of other air conditioning units).

Existing air conditioning units

Proposed Plan

Rev	Description	Rev	DP	AP
P01	First Issue			
Project No.	Scale @ A1:	Date:	CHK:	Appr:
305060	1:50		DP	DP



Project:
Internal Alterations
 Sir Isaac Newton Sixth Form
 Norwich
 NR2 1NR

Client:
 The Yare Education Trust

Title:
Roof Plan
 Proposed

Drawing Number:
305060-IWD-XX-XX-DR-A-2005

Sheet:
S2 Purpose of Sheet: **Information** No. of Sheets: **P01**