

Report to Planning applications committee

Item

12 April 2018

Report of Head of planning services

Subject Application no 18/00319/L - Norwich City Council, City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH

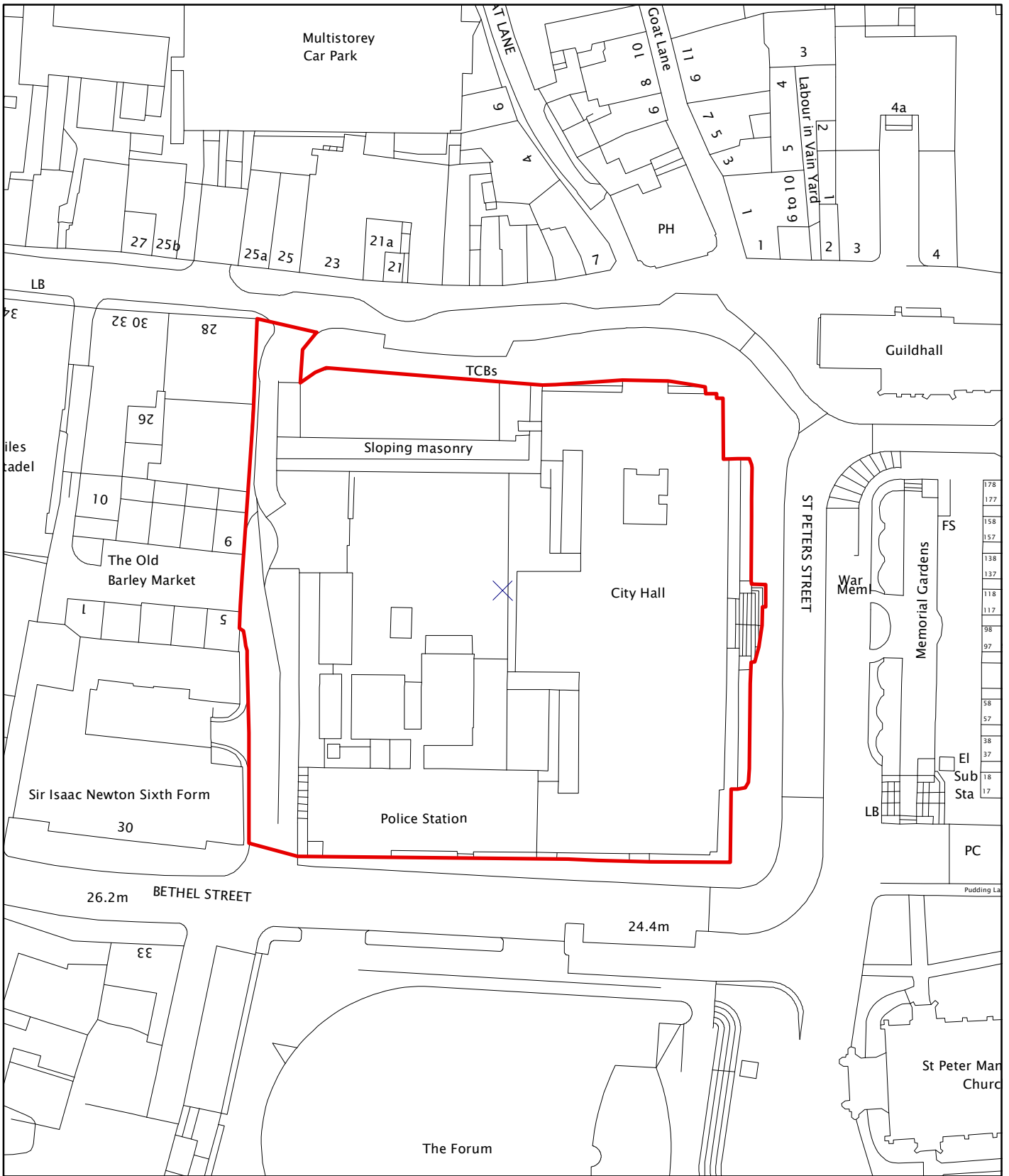
4(h)

Reason for referral Objection / Significant departure from development plan / City council application or site / Member or Staff application / Called in by an elected member

Ward:	Mancroft
Case officer	Sophia Bix - sophiabix@norwich.gov.uk

Development proposal		
Internal alterations to the Customer Contact Centre area of City Hall including the removal of existing counters, alterations to internal wall layouts and general refurbishment.		
Representations		
Object	Comment	Support
0	1	0

Main issues	Key considerations
1	Design and heritage
Expiry date	25 April 2018
Recommendation	APPROVAL



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Planning Application No 18/00319/L

Site Address Customer Contact Centre

City Hall

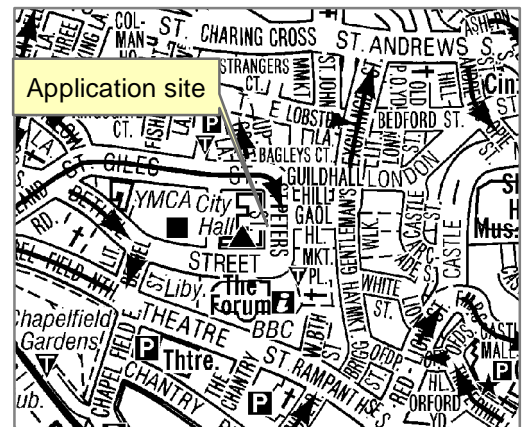
Scale

1:1,000



NORWICH
City Council

PLANNING SERVICES



The site and surroundings

1. Norwich City Hall is a Listed Grade II* building (designated in 1971) and is situated within the Civic Character Area of the wider City Centre Conservation Area. The site occupies a prominent position elevated above the City's historic market place the fronting St Peters Street with St Giles to the north and Bethel Street to the south. The principal entrance to the building is situated on its eastern elevation and accessed via a sweep of stone steps from St Peters Street. Access to the buildings main customer service centre (the original Rates Hall) is via an entrance on its south elevation fronting Bethel Street.
2. The building rises three storeys over basement level and is built in brick and stone in the Art Deco style with metal windows and bronze doors to the principal entrance. The clock tower is identified in the conservation area appraisal as one of the city's 3 landmark buildings visible from various locations within the conservation area.
3. The building remains in its original use, which contributes greatly to its special interest and the wider character and appearance of the conservation area.
4. Norwich City Hall was built in 1932-38 to the designs of CH James and SR Pierce. It is an imposing building and is a major example of interwar civic architecture with important formal interiors including the main lobby and stair hall, the Council Chamber and a series of committee rooms. It is listed at grade II* on account of its particularly high level of historic and architectural interest.

Constraints

5. The building and adjacent boundary treatments are grade II* listed. As such, works to both the interior and exterior of the building and its boundary treatments that would affect its special architectural and historic interest will require listed building consent.
6. The building lies within the Civic Character Area of the wider City Centre Conservation Area. Any proposed works should serve to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Relevant planning history

7. There is a lengthy planning history relating to the site, however those most relevant to the current pre-application are listed below: -

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
4/1996/0259	Internal alterations to rates hall on ground floor, including removal of part of wall and erection of new external sign on Bethel Street elevation	Approved	23.05.1996.
07/00704/L	Alterations to facilitate enlarging existing interview rooms	Approved	16.08.2007.

Ref	Proposal	Decision	Date
07/01396/L	Improvements to ramped access into building off Bethel Street'	Approved	08.02.2008

The proposal

8. The application seeks consent for internal and minor external alterations to the building in association with the refurbishment of the existing customer service centre at Ground floor level.
9. The proposed internal works involve: -
 - (a) The removal of some latter date fixtures (counters, doors and partition work) to allow for an altered layout and the creation of an 'open plan' space within the historic Rates Hall accessed via Bethel Street;
 - (b) The installation of new fixed furnishings, floor coverings and the general redecoration of the interior of the within the historic Rates Hall accessed via Bethel Street; and
 - (c) The removal of the existing reception counter within the principal entrance hallway accessed via the principal entrance steps off St Peters Street.
10. The proposed external work involves:

The erection of a new external sign to replace the existing signage board outside the entrance to the customer service centre accessed via St Peters Street.

Representations

11. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. No letters of representation have been received.

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.

Historic England

13. A letter was received from the Historic England Buildings Inspector on the 20 March 2018. This letter confirmed that they make no objection to the application providing conditions are placed on any consent issued to ensure the quality and minimal impact of new work and protection of historic features. Historic England has recommended conditions requiring the detailed design of all new internal doors & door furnishings, specification and location of any new surface mounted conduit, new fixed furniture and signage, new surface finishes and detailed design of the

raised level timber floor in the principal entrance hallway. They have also recommended that measures are taken to protect historic features including tiled flooring, original light fixtures and the marble end wall, sculptures and clock in the historic rates hall.

14. Suitable conditions have been recommended by the council's conservation officer to ensure that the requirements of Historic England are met.

Norfolk historic environment service

15. No response received

Norwich society

16. No response received

Assessment of planning considerations

Relevant development plan policies

17. **Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk adopted March 2011 amendments adopted Jan. 2014 (JCS)**
 - JCS2 Promoting good design
18. **Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan adopted Dec. 2014 (DM Plan)**
 - DM9 Safeguarding Norwich's heritage

Other material considerations

19. **Relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 (NPPF):**
 - NPPF0 Achieving sustainable development
 - NPPF12 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Case Assessment

20. 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 and Heritage

21. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs - DM9, NPPF paragraphs 128-141.

Proposed internal alterations

Works to the Customer Service Centre via Bethel Street

22. The existing customer service centre (accessed via Bethel Street) is housed within what was the original Rates Hall, the plan form of which largely survives. However, its internal appearance has been altered through the insertion of new lighting, flooring and modern counters. Some features of special interest survive which include the steel doors with roundels to Bethel Street, the entrance lobby to Bethel Street, the top lit ceiling, original light fittings, the tessellated tile floor and the marble end wall. All of these elements will be retained as a result of the current proposals.
23. Policy 10.10 of the Conservation Management Plan for City Hall states: - 'The form of the Rates Hall should not be significantly altered and the tessellated floor should be retained and restored. The counters are modern and more sympathetically designed counters could be installed. Ideally, the suspended ceiling should be removed and the top light uncovered and restored. At pre-application stage, the applicants were encouraged to reveal the historic flooring and top light, however, due to the location of services and modern day requirements, this has posed too costly and difficult to achieve at this time.
24. Consent is sought for the removal of the existing marble clad counters. These counters were inserted into the space in the 1980's and are not considered to contribute to the special architectural and historic interest of the building. Whilst they are of some nominal interest, in that they define the shape and form of the original rates hall and are reflective of the changing styles and functions of the Council, their loss is not opposed as the shape and form of the original room will still be evident from the surviving ceiling layout.
25. The features identified as of special interest in the Conservation Management Plan, the steel doors with roundels to Bethel Street, the entrance lobby to Bethel Street, the top lit ceiling, original light fittings, the tessellated tile floor and the marble end wall will all be retained insitu as part of the current proposals. A condition will be added to the consent to ensure that these will be protected during the course of construction works.
26. New services are to be installed within carefully obscured wall-mounted service routes. It is impossible for the services to be housed within the floor or ceiling zones in this area, so the proposed service routes are considered to have the least impact upon the surviving period fabric and appearance of the interior.
27. New finishes (carpeting and painting etc.) are proposed, as well as new fixed furniture. The detailed design of these elements will be controlled by way of condition.
28. The proposed alterations to the internal layout will not result in the loss of any historic form or fabric of significance and will allow for the building to remain in its original use as a functional civic building.

Principal entrance hallway

29. The conservation management plan for the building sets out that the ground floor entrance hall retains most of its original form, which should be retained. However,

it does not object to the removal of the latter date receptionists' desk which it suggests is not a well-designed addition to the space.

30. Whilst the existing reception desk within the principal entrance hallway is now a familiar feature, it is a relatively new insertion. Originally, the area housed a lightwell to the principal stair which extended down to the basement (that has been since been infilled).
31. The proposed removal of the desk will not therefore cause harm to the special architectural or historic interest of the building. However, care must be taken to ensure that any damage to neighbouring finishes as a result of its removal are carried out in the correct manner.
32. Behind the existing reception desk, there is a timber step which houses an internal heating system with grilles. This step is rather unsightly and it is important that this be either removed or tidied up or its appearance improved following the removal of the counter in order to preserve the existing period aesthetic. A condition will be added to the consent to ensure that both the repair works and works to the timber step are carried out in a sympathetic manner.
33. Some new directional signage may be required to ensure that visitors will find their way to the new customer service area. A condition will be added to the consent to ensure that the new signage will be of a quality and design to harmonise with the existing art deco character of the interior and placed in a suitable location.

Proposed external alterations

34. The only works proposed to exterior of the building is the replacement of an existing wall mounted sign to the entrance way on Bethel Street. No details of the proposed replacement signage have been provided at this stage. A condition will be added to the consent to ensure that the new signage will be of a quality and design to harmonise with the existing context and will be placed in a suitable location.

Compliance with other relevant development plan policies

35. 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.

Requirement	Relevant policy	Compliance
Cycle storage	DM31	Not applicable
Car parking provision	DM31	Not applicable
Refuse Storage/servicing	DM31	Not applicable
Energy efficiency	JCS 1 & 3 DM3	Not applicable

Requirement	Relevant policy	Compliance
Water efficiency	JCS 1 & 3	Not applicable
Sustainable urban drainage	DM3/5	Not applicable

Equalities and diversity issues

36. There are significant/There are no significant equality or diversity issues.

Local finance considerations

37. 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.

38. 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.

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

Conclusion

40. The proposed works will not result in harm to the surviving special architectural and historic interest of the building. The removal of non-original fabric will alter the internal appearance of the interior, however conditions have been added to ensure that the resulting appearance will preserve the surviving period character and appearance. All items of special architectural and historic interest will be retained. Therefore, subject to compliance with the suggested conditions, the works are considered to comply with the requirements of relevant national and local planning policy and guidance including Chapter 12 of the NPPF and Local Plan policy DM9.

41. For these reasons it is recommended that listed building consent is granted, subject to conditions.

Recommendation

To approve application no. 18/00319/L - Norwich City Council City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH and grant listed building consent subject to the following conditions:-
Standard time limit;

1. In accordance with plans;
2. Details to be submitted including:-

- (a) Any new internal doors and door furniture,
 - (b) New fire alarm system, emergency lighting and CCTV and any associated surface mounted conduit/wiring,
 - (c) Any new or relocated services in the principal entrance hallway
 - (d) Any new fixed furniture;
 - (e) Any new internal or external signage,
 - (f) All new internal finishes (partition work, paintwork and floor coverings),
 - (g) Detailed design of works to the raised level timber floor beside the existing customer service counter in principal entrance hallway
3. Before any work is undertaken in pursuance of this consent to demolish any part of the building, such steps shall be taken and such works carried out as shall, during the progress of works permitted by this consent, secure the safety and stability of all parts of the building to be retained.
4. No works shall take place on the site in pursuance of this consent until a detailed scheme of work outlining the proposed measures of protection for the following features, which shall enable them to remain undisturbed in their existing position and fully protected during the course of the work on the site, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority:
- (a) Tiled floor in rates hall (area 2A)
 - (b) Original lighting x 3 in rates hall (area 2A)
 - (c) Marble wall, emblem sculptures and clock (area 2A)
 - (d) Decorative plasterwork (area 2A)
 - (e) Top light (area 2A and beyond)
5. Any damage caused to the building by the works hereby approved shall be made good in accordance with a scheme first submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority and the making good in accordance with the scheme as agreed shall take place within 12 months of the approval of the scheme.

Reason for approval:

The proposed works will not result in harm to the surviving special architectural and historic interest of the building. The removal of non-original fabric will alter the internal appearance of the interior, however conditions have been added to ensure that the resulting appearance will preserve the surviving period character and appearance. All items of special architectural and historic interest will be retained. Therefore, subject to compliance with the suggested conditions, the works are considered to comply with the requirements of relevant national and local planning policy and guidance including Chapter 12 of the NPPF and Local Plan policy DM9.

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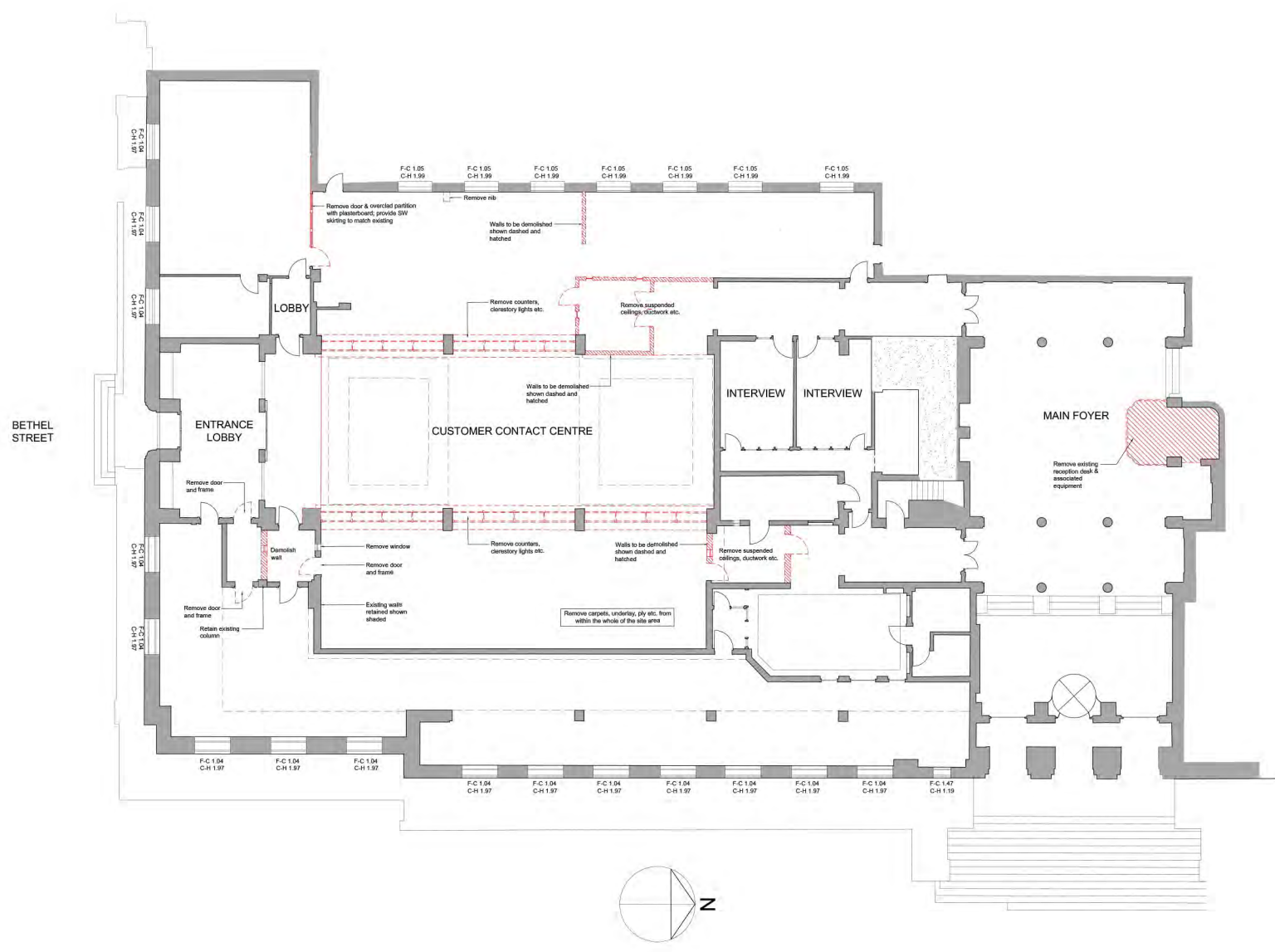
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Notes:



FIRST ISSUE							
PO	REV	DRAWN	DATE	CHECKED	DATE	APPROVED	DATE



CLIENT
NORWICH CITY COUNCIL

PROJECT
CITY HALL CUSTOMER CARE CENTRE
REFURBISHMENT

TITLE
DEMOLITION PLAN & DETAILS

SCALES	DISCIPLINE	PROJECT NUMBER
1:100	ARCHITECT	18-1-1070

DRAWING NUMBER	REV CODE
NPS-DR-A-(00)-001	P 1

STATUS CODE	PURPOSE OF ISSUE	DRAWN BY
S2	PLANNING APPROVAL	GT

