

Report to Cabinet
12 June 2013
Report of Head of City Development
Subject South city centre vision and investment plan

Item

8

Purpose

This report presents the South City Centre Vision and Investment Plan and the recommendations which were considered by Strategic Board of the Norwich City Council and Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Strategic Partnership. It recommends the actions that the Council should play in implementing the findings of the plan. This report specifically seeks approval to commence work on the Mountergate West project, as the first step in taking forward the development of this area.

Recommendation

- (1) To agree to publish the South City Centre Vision and Investment Plan
- (2) To agree to progress proposals for the Mountergate West areas follows:
 - a) phase 1- prepare a business case for a decked car park for further consideration by Cabinet
 - b) phase 2- work with the Homes and Communities Agency to bring forward detailed proposals for housing and commercial development on the remainder of the site.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priorities a prosperous city and decent housing for all and the service plan priority to deliver the South City Centre vision and investment plan.

Financial implications

Ground investigation works at Mountergate West will be funded from the existing Capital Programme (up to £55,000).

Any other funds will initially be sought from the Norwich and HCA Strategic Partnership and approved through the Business Plan process (Cabinet is due to approve the Business Plan in July) or will be subject to further specific Cabinet approvals.

Ward/s: Mancroft, Thorpe Hamlet

Cabinet member: Cllr Arthur - Leader

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Background documents

None

Report

Background

1. In September 2009, the Council entered into a partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). This was based on £8M investment from HCA and the Council's land at Threescore Bowthorpe. The strategic objectives for the partnership are to:
 - (1) accelerate the delivery of affordable homes
 - (2) increase the supply of private homes
 - (3) improve the quality of existing homes
 - (4) maximise the opportunities for local employment
 - (5) deliver early outputs
 - (6) create sustainable communities
 - (7) deliver strategic regeneration projects within Norwich such as eco retrofit programme or estate renewal
2. The partnership aims to reinvest the proceeds of development at Threescore to meet these objectives in other areas of the City. The Partnership has identified the area of the City where it should initially invest future funding following a strategic analysis of priority areas for regeneration. South City area was selected due to the regeneration challenges faced in the area but also the opportunity to generate a return from development from the Council's land holdings.
3. In March 2012, The Norwich and HCA Strategic Partnership agreed to commission David Lock Associates (DLA) to produce a Vision and Investment Plan for the South City Centre (SCC). The Plan aimed to identify delivery options for key sites within the context of a vision for the whole area.

The Vision and Investment Plan

4. The agreed objectives of the SCC plan were as follows:
 - (1) To attract significant investment in housing in the area to ensure it is responsive to the needs of new and existing residents.
 - (2) To achieve economic and physical regeneration of this mixed area providing space for existing businesses to remain and expand to provide opportunities for new employment.
 - (3) To identify opportunities to improve the area's green spaces and public areas.

- (4) To maximise the potential of the area's heritage and cultural assets including its historic buildings and cultural / leisure facilities, and increasing its attractiveness as a visitor destination.
 - (5) To ensure the Plan is informed by aspirations and ideas of the people living and doing business in the SCC.
5. Community engagement took place through a series of Open Design Studio sessions, a series of public workshops and events to seek the opinions of residents and businesses on the positives, negatives and opportunities existing in the SCC area. These were held at the King's Centre during June-July 2012, proving extremely popular and identified the following priorities:
 - (1) The mixed use character of the area should be maintained, particularly around King Street.
 - (2) In planning new development, practical issues such as car parking, and the potential for noise and disturbance, must be carefully considered.
 - (3) Creative, cultural and niche activities, which make the area special, should be protected; and more should be introduced.
 - (4) Small scale employment uses and workshop space should form part of the proposals, together with some cafes and restaurants; making sure however, that it is different from the Riverside area.
 - (5) Different types of housing should be provided, particularly houses with gardens; together with supporting community facilities.
 - (6) St Anne's Wharf is the most important priority for redevelopment along with urgent restoration of Howard House.
 - (7) Access to the river should be increased wherever possible
 - (8) The layout of new development must respect the existing historic scale and character of the area, while embracing modern and innovative design.
 - (9) New open spaces should form part of the proposals, with existing spaces retained and enhanced, particularly the Wooded Ridge.
 - (10) Existing streets should be improved particularly the southern stretch of King Street, Rose Lane and Rouen Road to make them more attractive particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.
6. Building on the Open Design Studio work, DLA developed four priority investment packages for key sites, presented as Principal Development Opportunities. These were presented alongside several longer-term development opportunities which may be realised over the medium-long term. These plans were presented to the public once again during November 2012, following which they were revised further for synthesis into a detailed Vision and Investment Plan.
7. David Lock Associates have now completed their final draft report and this was presented to the Strategic Board of the Norwich and HCA Strategic Partnership on 8

April 2013. The Vision Plan is attached as Appendix 1. There is also a confidential delivery plan which includes financial site appraisal information.

Vision and Investment Plan- key proposals and recommendations

Principal development opportunities:

St Anne's Wharf

8. The St Anne's Wharf site is the most significant opportunity site within the study area. It commands a prominent spot between the River Wensum and King St and includes the historic Howard House. The area includes the landing point of the recently-constructed Lady Julian Bridge and lies adjacent to Dragon Hall, meaning the quality of development here will set the scene for the wider area.
9. DLA's proposal demonstrates potential for:
 - (1) 94 residential units including 37 apartments and 57 town houses with small gardens and dedicated parking, suitable for family occupation. This is a lower density of development than previously considered for this site.
 - (2) 2,000 square metres of commercial floorspace capable of flexible sub-division to meet the needs of a range of business occupiers (which might include offices, studios, live work spaces, small retail outlets, cafes and restaurants).
10. DLA recommendations:
 - (1) Seek to gain a much better understanding of likely development costs, evaluate the range of development options which might be of commercial interest and the degree to which these are policy compliant. This will assist Norwich City Council, in its role of Planning Authority, in negotiating any new planning consent, as well as guiding the Partnership in determining whether to seek to become directly involved in the delivery of any aspects the project.
 - (2) Should develop a Forward Plan which will define the Partnership's objectives for the future development of the site, shaped around parameters of what can be reasonably expected from a commercial developer

Mountergate West

11. Mountergate West lies adjacent to St Anne's Wharf and represents the most sustainable location in the city for high-quality office / commercial use. Since the demolition of the former Rose Lane car park it has become rather 'marginal' in character and has a planning policy allocation for mixed use. The site lies within the ownerships of the City Council and the Great Hospital.
12. Two potential schemes were put forward:

Option 1 indicates the potential for a fine-grained pattern of new and refurbished buildings, around a series of courtyards and spaces, which echoes the historic pattern of land use. The plan demonstrates capacity for:

- (1) 600 space multi-storey car park (located either on the site of the former car park or on the corner of Rose Lane / Mountergate)
- (2) 6,000 square metres (net additional) of business floorspace
- (3) 70 apartments

Option 2 indicates more intensive pattern of development including a significant headquarters office building and would be dependent upon a pre-let to a major occupier. The plan demonstrates capacity for:

- (1) 600 space multi-storey car park
- (2) 15,000 square metres (net additional) of business floorspace
- (3) 1,000 square metres community/leisure floorspace
- (4) 50 apartments

DLA recommendations:

- (1) Progress development work for a new multi-storey car park.
- (2) Explore and where appropriate pursue ways to prime the area for investment
- (3) in new office and commercial uses, in the future, which may include further freehold and leasehold acquisitions.
- (4) Pursue further dialogue with neighbouring landowners and potential investors
- (5) to facilitate joint venture delivery in the future.

Garden Street

13. This site comprises a number of commercial units and a 210 space surface car park. The site is owned by the City Council, albeit with some long-term leasehold interest held by businesses operating from the units. Norfolk County Council has shown some interest in the site as a potential location for a new primary school. Two possible development scenarios were therefore proposed:
14. Option 1 indicates the potential for residential development with capacity for 70 dwellings in the form of townhouses. This does not yield the number of units anticipated by the emerging Local Development Framework (which cites 100 units) but represents a commercially attractive prospect with houses rather than apartments and dedicated, surface car parking.
15. Option 2 indicates the scope to deliver a new primary school and a small element of residential development, making the most efficient use of the land available. The plan demonstrates capacity for:
 - (1) Primary school – (approximately 3,000 square metres of built development).
 - (2) 16 townhouses

16. DLA recommendations:

- (1) Resolve corporate priorities in terms of the future use of the site and the benefits of capital receipt and regeneration versus on-going revenue income.
- (2) Investigate ground conditions and implications for development form and cost.
- (3) With a better understanding of development costs, evaluate the range of development options which might be of commercial interest and the degree to which these are policy compliant, meet the objectives of this strategy and respond to the community ambitions, expressed here.
- (4) Depending upon the outcome of investigations and resolutions made in response to those findings, determine a way forward in terms of defining a developable site and a route to presenting a site to market or engaging in direct development.

Normandie Tower and Argyle St

17. The development opportunity is focused around two main locations: the area of land around Normandie Tower and the junction with Argyle Street and Rouen Road; and the area of decommissioned housing at the southern end of Argyle Street. Redevelopment could provide terraced houses with gardens, potentially suitable for families. However, known ground conditions in the area may render any scheme unviable.

18. The plan focuses on the area around the base of Normandie Tower, consolidating areas of grass landscape into more usable public space and redeveloping existing garage blocks to introduce up to 12 new townhouses with associated gardens and parking spaces. This would be in tandem with reprovision of equivalent parking and storage facilities for the residents of Normandie Tower.

19. DLA recommendations:

- (1) Investigate ground conditions and implications for development form and cost.
- (2) With a better understanding of development costs, evaluate the range of development options
- (3) Depending upon viability, resolve whether to bring the project forward and determine an appropriate delivery mechanism, with or without the Argyle Street project.
- (4) If to proceed, draw up a concept scheme, test impacts and consult residents.

Proposed Council actions to implement the plan

20. The HCA Strategic Board on 8 April 2013 considered the recommendations of the report and suggested that the main areas for Council/Partnership involvement in the short term.

St Anne's Wharf

21. DLA has indicated that this site is the most pivotal in terms of the regeneration of the wider area. However this site is not owned by the Council so the role that it can play directly in implementing proposals is more limited. The owner, Dunbar bank is currently seeking to sell the site. The immediate action proposed is that the Council should include information in a vendors pack relating to the quality standards that would be expected for the site. In addition prospective purchasers should be encouraged to engage with the Council so that discussions could be held about any scope for Council involvement in the delivery of affordable housing on the site. Any specific decisions on this would be brought back to Cabinet for consideration in due course.

Mountergate West

22. This is a major site, where the Council has significant land ownership and can therefore play a direct role in delivery. It is therefore proposed that the Partnership should play an active role in this project, recognising that the delivery of the car park would be the Council's responsibility. It is proposed to commence work on a design and delivery plan (to include phases 1 (car park) and 2 (wider development for housing and employment uses)).
23. The Strategic Board agreed to consider a further report in June, to approve the approach to the work and any funding required from the Partnership for the next steps. In the meantime, a draft brief for this project has been prepared so that work can commence.
24. In order to move the project forward, a business case for the car park will be presented to Cabinet later in the year. In order to determine the most appropriate location for a car park some ground investigation works need to be carried out. These would include ground conditions and archaeology evaluation work. The likely cost of these works is up to £55K. A brief for these works has been prepared and funding to carry out this work is available in the capital programme (there is a sum of £190K for vacant sites regeneration) so that this work can be commissioned.
25. The aim of the project would be to achieve planning permission for the car park so that this can be developed quickly and develop proposals for planning for the remainder of the site so this can be delivered afterwards. The project will examine a number of options for housing on the remainder of the site including affordable, housing for sale and private rented accommodation as well as considering the most appropriate scale for employment uses. There are clearly a number of key decision points throughout the project when further Cabinet approval will be required.

Garden Street

26. As it is unlikely that any proposals for this site will be viable in the foreseeable future due to high level of income generated by the existing car park use and the uncertain nature of the ground conditions, the only potential action proposed here in the short term is to commission ground investigation works alongside investigation of Mountergate West site

Area around Normandie Tower/ Argyle Street

27. Development options are being explored for the site of the decommissioned council owned dwellings on Argyle Street. As with Garden Street, the area around the base of Normandie Tower is unlikely to be viable for development in the current economic climate and does not present a very attractive proposition. However it may be prudent to commission ground investigation works alongside investigation of Mountergate West site so this information is available for the future.

Conclusion and Next steps

28. The Vision and Investment Plan provides a clear direction for the future development of the South City Centre Area. It highlights the role that the council and the Norwich and HCA Strategic partnership could play in delivering these proposals. This report has proposed where the Council can make the most impact in the short term through direct action. The main area is the Mountergate West site which is largely in its ownership. It is proposed that work on this project should commence in line with the project brief and the next steps would be:

- (1) commission ground investigation works
- (2) prepare business case for the car park- for consideration at a future meeting of cabinet.
- (3) Develop proposals for design and build of the car park
- (4) Secure funding to develop proposals for the remainder of the site and to prepare a planning application

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
City Council

The IIA should assess **the impact of the recommendation** being made by the report

Detailed guidance to help with completing the assessment can be found [here](#). Delete this row after completion

Report author to complete

Committee:	Cabinet
Committee date:	12 June 2013
Head of service:	Andy Watt
Report subject:	South City Centre Vision and Investment plan
Date assessed:	29.05.13
Description:	This report recommends the actions that the Council should play in implementing the findings of the South City Centre vision and investment plan This report specifically seeks approval to commence work on the Mountergate West project, as the first step in taking forward the development of this area

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proposals will be explored which examine the potential for income generation for the Council
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICT services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		The south City Centre plan includes proposals which will benefit the economy of the area and the City
Financial inclusion		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The plan aims to ensure that there is adequate provision of affordable housing as part of development proposals (within the limits of viability)
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Human Rights Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and well being	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Plan aims to improve the quality of the environment and improve opportunities for walking and cycling. Provision of open space.

	Impact			
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The plan will aim to ensure equality of opportunity for those living in the area
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enhanced transportation links are proposed especially for pedestrians and cyclists
Natural and built environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposals will enhance the natural and built environment
Waste minimisation & resource use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	New development will meet carbon reduction targets
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommendations from impact assessment	
Positive	
The South City Centre plan will make positive contributions especially to the quality of the natural and built environment and health and well being. It will aim to generate a financial return for the Council and seek to provide affordable housing as an integral part of the development of the area.	
Negative	
Neutral	
Issues	

A Plan for the South City Centre: Shaping the Future, Celebrating the Past



Prepared on behalf of Norwich City Council and the Homes and Communities Agency
by David Lock Associates
with Peter Brett Associates, CgMs Consulting, Gardiner & Theobald

June 2013



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01 Introduction

The Commission

David Lock Associates (DLA) has been commissioned by Norwich City Council (NCC) and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to produce a plan to promote the regeneration of the South City Centre area of Norwich. NCC and the HCA entered into a Strategic Partnership in 2009 ('the Partnership'), with the objective of facilitating long term regeneration of the city of Norwich.

The Partnership has funded the commission, and DLA have led a consultant team examining the potential of the South City Centre (the study area) with the aim of directing the delivery of its regeneration. This will:

- Define the future role and function of the area
- Develop an urban design framework for the area
- Identify suitable sites partially or wholly within NCC ownership, development of which will support the objectives of the HCA / NCC partnership
- Produce detailed site development briefs for the areas identified
- Identify delivery mechanisms for these sites
- Ensure that residents and businesses in the area are fully engaged in development of the plan

A number of high level project objectives have been identified by the Partnership and have informed the production of the master plan:

- To attract significant investment in housing in the area to ensure it is responsive to the needs of new and existing residents.
- To achieve economic and physical regeneration of this mixed area providing space for existing businesses to remain and expand, or successfully relocate; to provide opportunities for new leisure and employment.
- To identify opportunities to improve movement throughout the area and enhance green infrastructure and open spaces.
- To maximise the potential of the area's heritage and cultural assets including its historic buildings and cultural / leisure facilities, and increasing its attractiveness as a visitor destination.
- To identify and provide for the social and community needs of the area to ensure that the needs of existing and new residents are addressed as part of the area's regeneration.
- Taking into account the social / community fabric of the area, identify how best to facilitate its evolution into a 'destination' within the city centre which retains its own distinct identity and has a clear sense of place.
- To ensure the Plan is informed by aspirations and ideas of the people living and doing business in the South City Centre.

The process has involved working closely with the Partnership, stakeholders and the local community to gather ideas, understand views, opinions and aspirations, and shape a practicable and deliverable regeneration plan for the study area.

In addition, the plan will contribute towards meeting the objectives and policy requirements of the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland District, Norwich City and South Norfolk which was adopted in March 2011.

Executive Summary

The plan has been informed by a robust understanding and analysis of the context character of the South City Centre study area. This has informed the identification of key issues and has shaped the vision and regeneration plan. The analysis focused on the contextual, policy and physical attributes of the study area. The analysis was also underpinned by early stakeholder and community engagement. The main findings of the analysis and community and stakeholder engagement may be summarised as follows:

Planning Policy – there is a supportive national and local planning policy framework in place for the regeneration of an important city centre area. Proposals will help to implement policies within the adopted Joint Core Strategy (March 2011) and take account of previous planning policy and master planning work undertaken in the area.

Built form, Townscape and Landuse – the study area has a diverse character derived from the physical form of buildings and associated spaces, and the mix of uses that take place. There are distinct residential communities as well as other commercial and community activities taking place. Important streets, particularly King Street, Ber Street and Mountergate, the River Wensum corridor, and the wooded ridge each provide important structuring elements contributing towards the wider character of the study area. The plan must enhance this diverse character and pattern of land uses.

Historic Environment – given the rich historic, archaeological and architectural heritage of Norwich it is no surprise that the character of the study area is strongly shaped by the historic environment. King Street and Ber Street are important historic routes into the city, and the River Wensum has provided a focus for commercial activity. Significant listed buildings are located across the study area much of which is designated as part of three conservation areas. Archaeological remains are known to exist under a key site, St. Anne's Wharf, and the medieval origins of many areas means that there is significant potential for archaeological interest elsewhere.

Movement and Transport – the study area is part of the wider city centre and, as such, has good connections to services and facilities. The railway station adjoins the study area and cycleways and pedestrian routes cross through. There are two principal city car parks in the study area, at Rose Lane and Rouen Road. There are limited east/west routes across the study area, with topography providing a constraint particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. In addition the engineered design of Rouen Road contributes little to the character of the area and would benefit from enhancement. Severance is also caused along Rose Lane and Cattle Market Street between the study area and the rest of the city centre due to the heavily trafficked nature of the route and the limited pedestrian crossings.

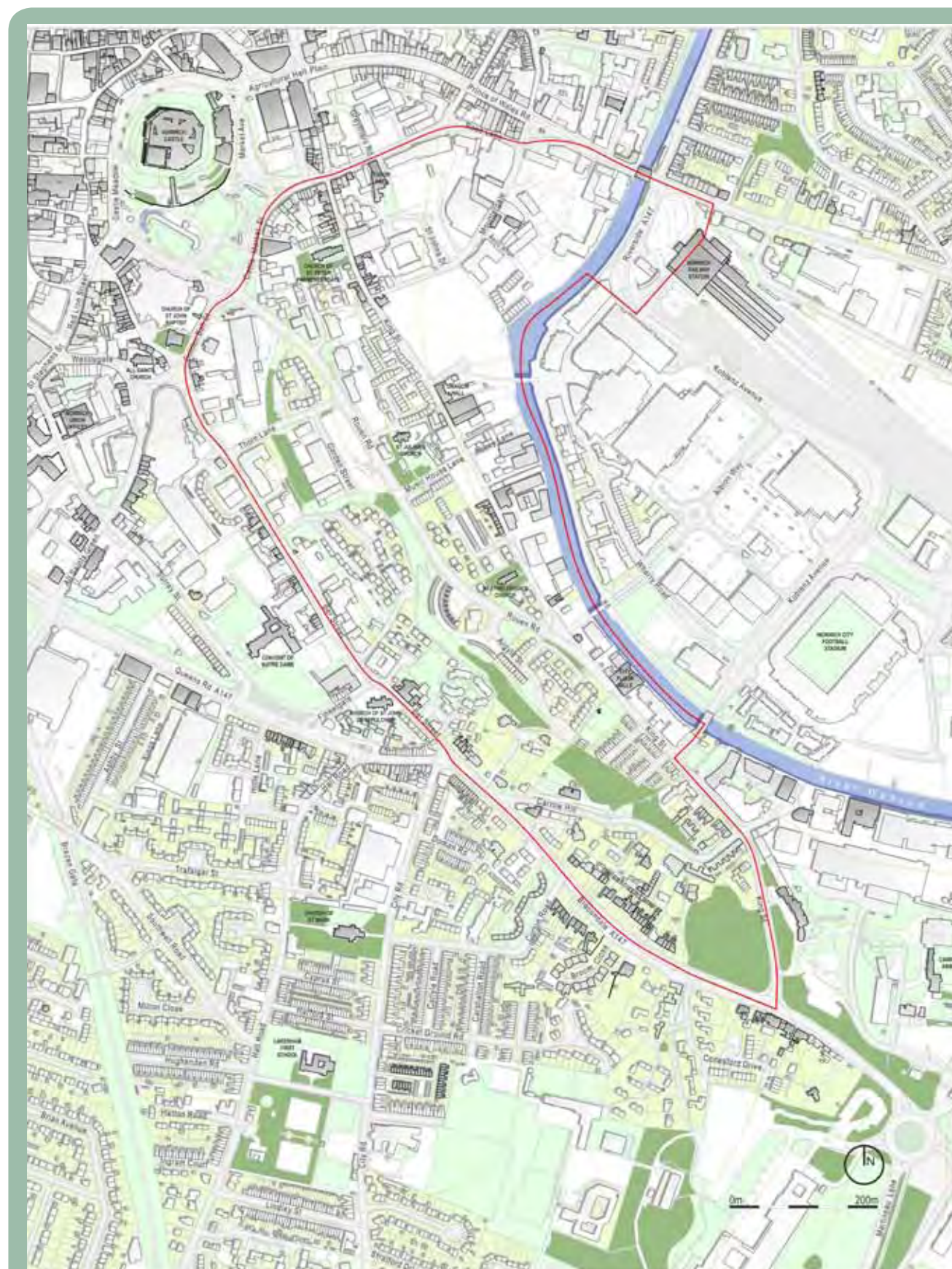
Environmental Constraints – flood risk and potentially unstable ground conditions are identified as the two principal environmental factors which may impact upon development potential. Much of the study area is in a low probability of flooding area (zone 1), with more limited areas in a medium probability (zone 2) and a small area north of Baltic Wharf in a high probability area (zone 3). Design measures and sequential test will be required for development in zone 2 and 3. Issues around ground conditions are mainly limited to the area around the wooded ridge. Local issues relating to ground instability will need to be fully investigated in the development areas to assess specific options and identify potential risks and issues.

Community and Stakeholder Inputs – a key project requirement was for proposals to be community led. The plan has therefore been informed by two major stakeholder and community events; an Open Design Studio held over a period of a month in the King's Centre; and a subsequent exhibition of draft proposals. An officer and key stakeholder surgery session was also held.

The main issues identified comprise:

- The mixed use character of the area is regarded as very important and should be maintained, particularly around King Street.
- The existing opportunities that encourage the creative, cultural and niche activities, which make the area special, should be protected; and more should be introduced.
- Small scale employment uses and workshop space should form part of the proposals, together with some cafes and restaurants; making sure, however, that the Riverside area is not replicated.
- Different types of housing should be provided, particularly houses with gardens; together with supporting community facilities.
- St Anne's Wharf is the most important priority for redevelopment along with urgent restoration of Howard House.
- Access to the river should be increased wherever possible and opportunities explored to make better use of this important asset for the area and the city as a whole.
- The layout of new development must respect the existing historic scale and character of the area, whilst embracing modern and innovative design.
- New open spaces should form part of the proposals, with existing spaces retained and enhanced, particularly the Wooded Ridge.
- Existing streets should be improved particularly the southern stretch of King Street, Rose Lane and Rouen Road to make them more attractive particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.
- In planning new development, practical issues such as access and car parking, and the potential for noise and disturbance, must be carefully considered.
- Proposals must be realistic, viable and deliverable.

A project website was established where information and ideas generated through the engagement process were posted, and where initial draft proposals were also uploaded (www.norwich.gov.uk/southcitycentre).



The Study Area

Opportunities and Studies

In developing the plan the project team has examined all aspects of the way in which the area contributes to the life of the City; the way people move around; the value of the buildings and spaces; the needs and aspirations of those who live and work within it and the opportunity and priorities for investment. From this analysis a vision emerges, with a considerable level of local support, which:

- Embraces significant new, modern development on some key sites.
- Delivers comprehensive regeneration, for a mix of uses, on the St Anne's Wharf Site as a priority.
- Supports and guides entrepreneurial activity which, although tentative and sluggish at present, is delivering incremental infill development and the restoration and refurbishment of historic buildings and tired and defunct office buildings.
- Seeks a broad land use strategy which concentrates commercial activity around the fringes of the City Centre and consolidates the residential community within the remainder, but also, crucially, protects and further embellishes the intricate mix of activities going within individual buildings and development blocks, particularly along the river and around King Street.
- Is sensitive to potential for conflict between different activities taking place in an intimate urban environment and seeks to mitigate potential disturbance.
- Works with, rather than against, the historic scale, grain and prevailing character of the area.
- Recognises potential to 'rebalance' the community with more family homes with gardens rather than apartments.
- Celebrates and protects the quirky, niche, creative and marginal activities, which add so much to the area and the community, but could so easily be squeezed out, if investment potential is exploited without appropriate checks and balances.
- Restores, enhance, reveals and exploits the very considerable environmental assets which the area offers, particularly the river.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITES

In terms of the plan proposals there are **four key development opportunity sites**: The opportunities are significant in scale and are likely to be realised over a period of maybe 10 years or so.

- 1 St Anne's Wharf** – a major opportunity for residential led development providing a mix of town houses with gardens, apartments (around 94 dwellings in total), and small scale commercial and employment space (around 2000 square metres). Development proposals must reflect the scale and character of adjoining development, particularly on King Street, with new areas of public realm focused on the River Wensum. Significant archaeological remains beneath the site, limited Zone 1 and Zone 2 flood risk on part of the site and potential for some issues around ground conditions may require some modest attenuation measures to be incorporated into the scheme.
- 2 Mountergate West** – a mixed use opportunity providing a mix of apartments (around 70 dwellings) and commercial floorspace (6000 square metres) together with a new multi-storey parking facility of circa 600 spaces. Introduces a strong built form frontage to Mountergate and the Rose Lane junction, with opportunities for an enhanced, fine grain street pattern and the retention of the community gardens. A second option for a more intensive, commercial headquarters led development could accommodate a greater amount of commercial floorspace (15,000 square metres) also with a circa 600 space car park and around 50 apartments.
- 3 Garden Street** – a residential led development providing opportunities for predominantly town houses with gardens (around 70 dwellings) taking advantage of the topography of the site. Options for the location of a 2 form entry primary school (3000 square meters) on part of the site, subject to the requirements of Norfolk County Council, and a more limited number of townhouses (16 dwellings). Redevelopment is subject to the appropriate relocation and reprovision of existing car parking spaces elsewhere. Issues around ground conditions may require some attenuation measures to be incorporated into the scheme.
- 4 Land around Normandie Tower and Argyle Street** – a smaller residential scheme comprising development of land around Normandie Tower (around 12 dwellings) and the redevelopment of decommissioned properties on Argyle Street (around 12 dwellings). Potential to be explored for refurbishment of the exterior of Normandie Tower.

PRIORITY PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS

In terms of the broad framework for environmental enhancement there are **six priority public realm projects**, some associated with built development proposals, some not. The public realm is defined as the streets, spaces and walkways that provide access for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle uses; a setting for development and places for activity to take place.

- A St Anne's Wharf**: comprising Lady Julian Square giving access to the River Wensum and St Anne's Place providing a setting for development.
- B King Street**: rolling out enhancements along the remainder of the street.
- C Rouen Road**: enhancing pedestrian footways and crossings, and introducing tree planting together with formalised on-street parking arrangements in part designed as a traffic calming measure.
- D The Wooded Ridge**: introducing a coordinated approach to the use and management of the wooded ridge focused around zones for wildlife conservation, interpretation of the city walls, and informal recreation.
- E Wensum Corridor**: examining the potential for enhancing access to and appreciation of the river environment and setting.
- F Rose Lane and Ber Street**: providing enhancements particularly to the pedestrian environment to enhance the setting of frontage buildings and reduce the impact of severance across busy vehicular routes.

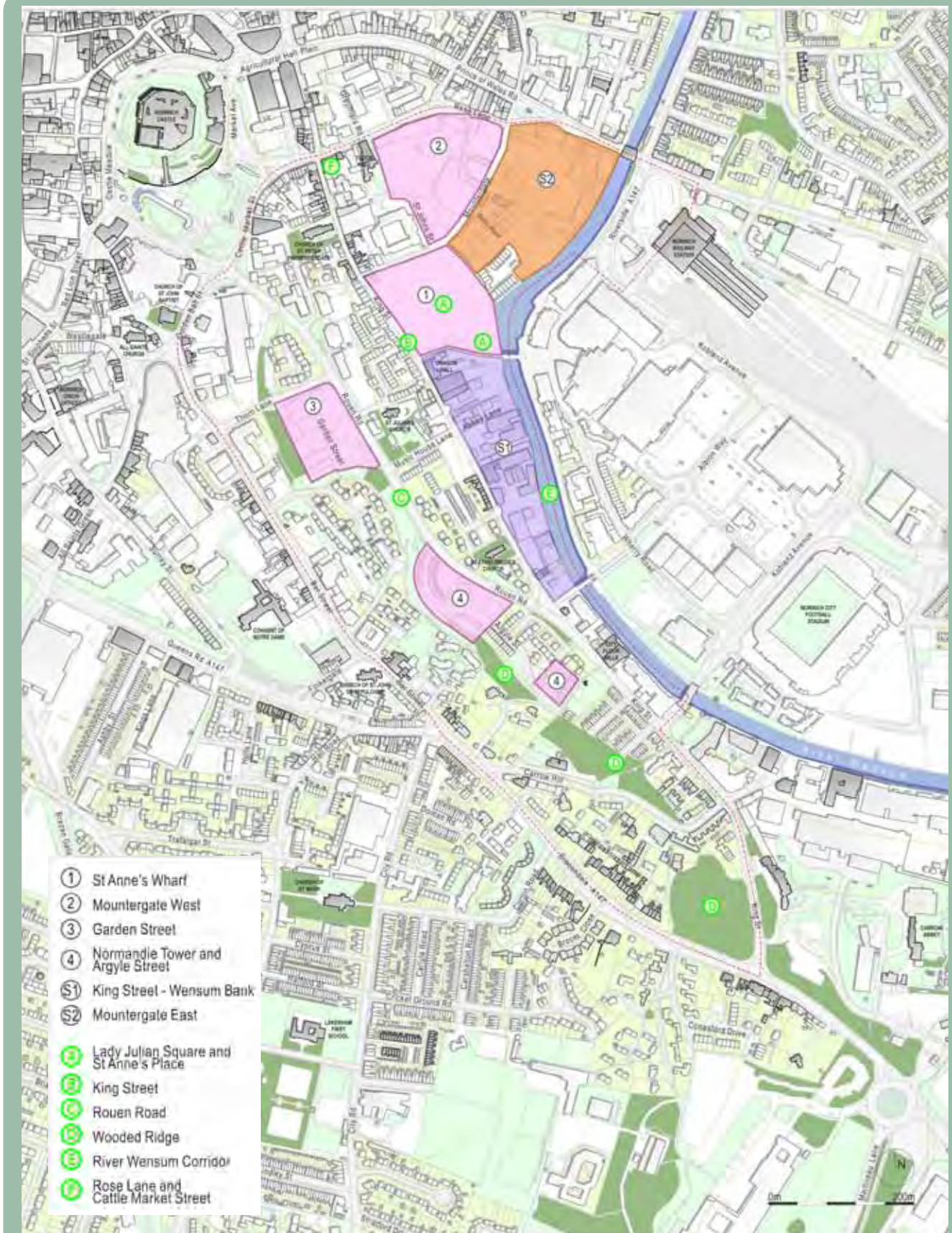
STUDY AREAS

In the longer term it is hoped that affording priority to these projects will be a catalyst for further regeneration in areas where there is no immediate prospect for change, or where small scale opportunities, some of which are already taking shape, can contribute to broader objectives or sub-area master plans. Two such areas have been identified as part of the master plan proposals.

These comprise:

Study Area 1: King Street Wensum Bank. An extremely attractive and characterful area rich in history and supporting a varied mix of small businesses, venues, community and education activities (Wensum Lodge). Small scale interventions and management must protect and enhance this character.

Study Area 2: Mountergate East. A longer term opportunity that could support a mix of city centre uses and enhanced access to the river.



Development Opportunity Sites, Public Realm Projects and Study Areas

02 Informing the Process

Context and Analysis

In order to gain a thorough understanding of the study area, and to inform the identification of key issues, an analysis of different contextual, policy and physical attributes was undertaken. The analysis was also underpinned by early stakeholder and community engagement in order to establish a complete picture of the study area informed by those who know it best. The main findings of the analysis are summarised on the following pages together with key issues from the community and stakeholder engagement process.

Planning Policy

The planning policy context for the study area is provided strategically through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF stresses the need to ensure sustainable forms of development in accessible locations that promote economic growth, support regeneration, and provide housing. Conservation and enhancement of natural and historic environments are also key policy requirements.



At a local level the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland District, Norwich City and South Norfolk was adopted in March 2011 and sets out long term development strategy and policies for the greater Norwich Area up to 2026. Strategic Objectives of the Joint Core Strategy that are of particular relevance to the study area include:

- allocation of enough land for housing, and affordable housing, in the most sustainable settlements;
- promotion of economic growth and diversity and provision a wide range of jobs;
- promoting regeneration and reducing deprivation;
- enhancing transport provision to meet the needs of existing and future populations while reducing travel need and impact.
- positively protecting and enhancing the individual character and culture of the area;
- protecting, managing and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment;
- establishing places where people feel safe in their communities; and
- involving as many people as possible in new planning policy.



Rose Lane and Market Street Junction

One of the main purposes of the plan for the South City Centre is to contribute towards the implementation of policies within the Joint Core Strategy. In addition to a number of area wide policies the Joint Core Strategy sets out specific policies in relation to the strategy for growth in the Norwich area (Policy 9) and the future role, development and regeneration aims for strengthening and enhancing Norwich City Centre (Policy 11). In particular the policy identifies the importance of the Rose Lane area, which adjoins the study area, as a focus for commercial development. A schedule of all key policies relevant to the South City Centre is appended to this master plan document.

The Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies DPD (pre-submission draft plan, August 2012) supports the Joint Core Strategy and identifies potential development sites within the city, including a number within the study area. These include St Anne's Wharf, Mountergate and Garden Street. The master plan and delivery strategy have taken account of the emerging allocations including specific policy requirements where they have been identified.

In addition there are a number of supporting supplementary planning documents, guidance notes, site briefs and strategies, prepared by and on behalf of the City Council, that have also been considered in preparing the plan. These include:

- The St Stephen's Area Outline Master Plan (2009) (properties at 4 to 24 Ber Street forming an interface between the two study areas).
- Greater Norwich Economic Strategy 2009-14 (2009)
- Greater Norwich Housing Strategy 2008-2011 (2008) and draft Housing Strategy 2013-2018 (2012)
- Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (2006)
- Norwich City Destination Strategy (2004)
- Riverside Revised Planning Guidelines (1994)
- Planning Brief for 54 King Street and 32-38 Cattle Market Street (1994)
- Planning Guidelines: Potential Development Sites in the King Street Area (1988)
- Planning Guidelines: Riverside a Strategic Opportunity (1988)
- Norwich Brewery Planning Brief (1985)

In addition in 2003, John Thompson and Partners were invited by the Norwich City Centre Residents' Forum to undertake a community planning weekend to draw together aspirations for what they describe as the Southern Quarter stretching broadly from the City Centre fringe south to the junction of King Street/ Rouen Road. A number of ideas and recommendations were translated into an exciting Urban Design Master Plan for part of the study area. This exercise did not form part of a statutory planning exercise or relate to any specific implementation strategy, but the ideas have informed the production of the South City Centre plan.

Built Form, Townscape and Land Use

The study area has a rich and diverse character that has been shaped over time by a varied pattern of land uses that have taken place in different locations, and by the gradual expansion and reshaping of the City. Ber Street, King Street and the River Wensum, as important historic thoroughfares, transportation and trading corridors, have perhaps influenced the character of the study area the most, with key land uses and businesses concentrating around them. This is emphasised through the number of significant historic and listed buildings and churches, the significant potential for archaeological remains at St Anne's Wharf for example and the city's Medieval walls, part of which stand within the study area.

The River Wensum corridor is a significant asset defining the eastern boundary of the study area. Once a focus for industry and commerce the river now has a role as a leisure and tourist route from The Broads into the city, as well as providing a setting for riverside development. Improving pedestrian access along the river is a long-standing policy aim of the City Council, and opportunities to further enhance the role and function of the river corridor as a leisure route for boats is actively promoted by a number of interest groups within the city, including the Norwich Society and the Norwich Rivers Heritage Group.

In addition, a legacy of chalk and lime extraction within the study area serves to emphasise the topography of a ridgeline located between and running parallel to Ber Street and King Street. The ridge is heavily wooded and forms a prominent landscape feature within the city, one that is distinguishable on early maps. The topography associated with the wooded ridge provides for long distance views in and out of the study area. However, extraction has had an impact on ground conditions, particularly evident around the eastern edge of the wooded ridge, including Argyle Street.

A rich pattern of land uses is one of the key defining characteristics of the study area. This includes a diverse resident community within a range of dwellings, from the splendid villas and elegant town houses characteristic of Bracondale and Carrow Hill, to the modest Victorian terraced houses off the lower part of King Street; the popular Council built homes off Rouen Road including Normandie Tower, to the modern riverside apartments and town houses at Baltic Wharf and the City Floor Mills.



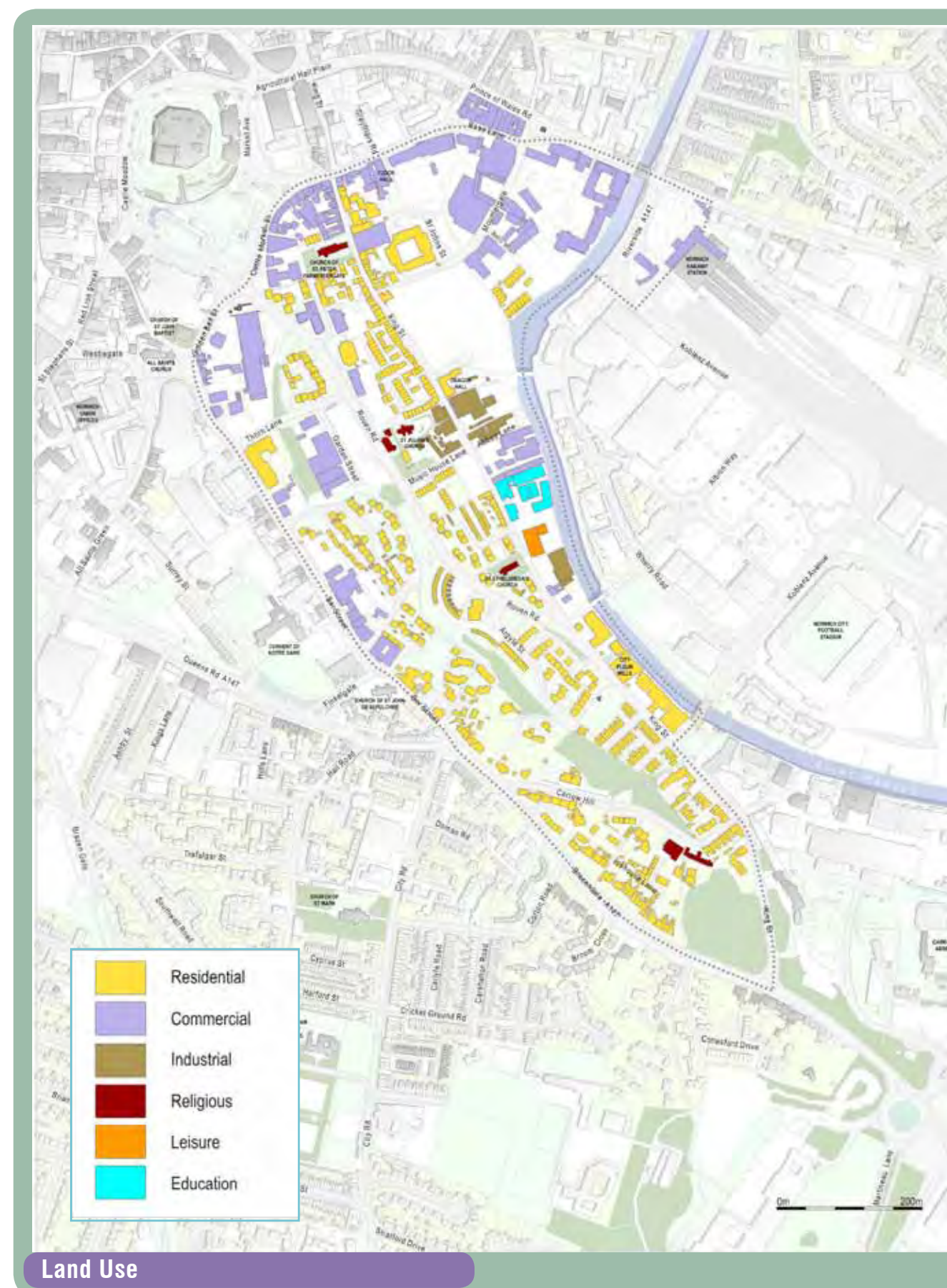
A Bracondale Villa

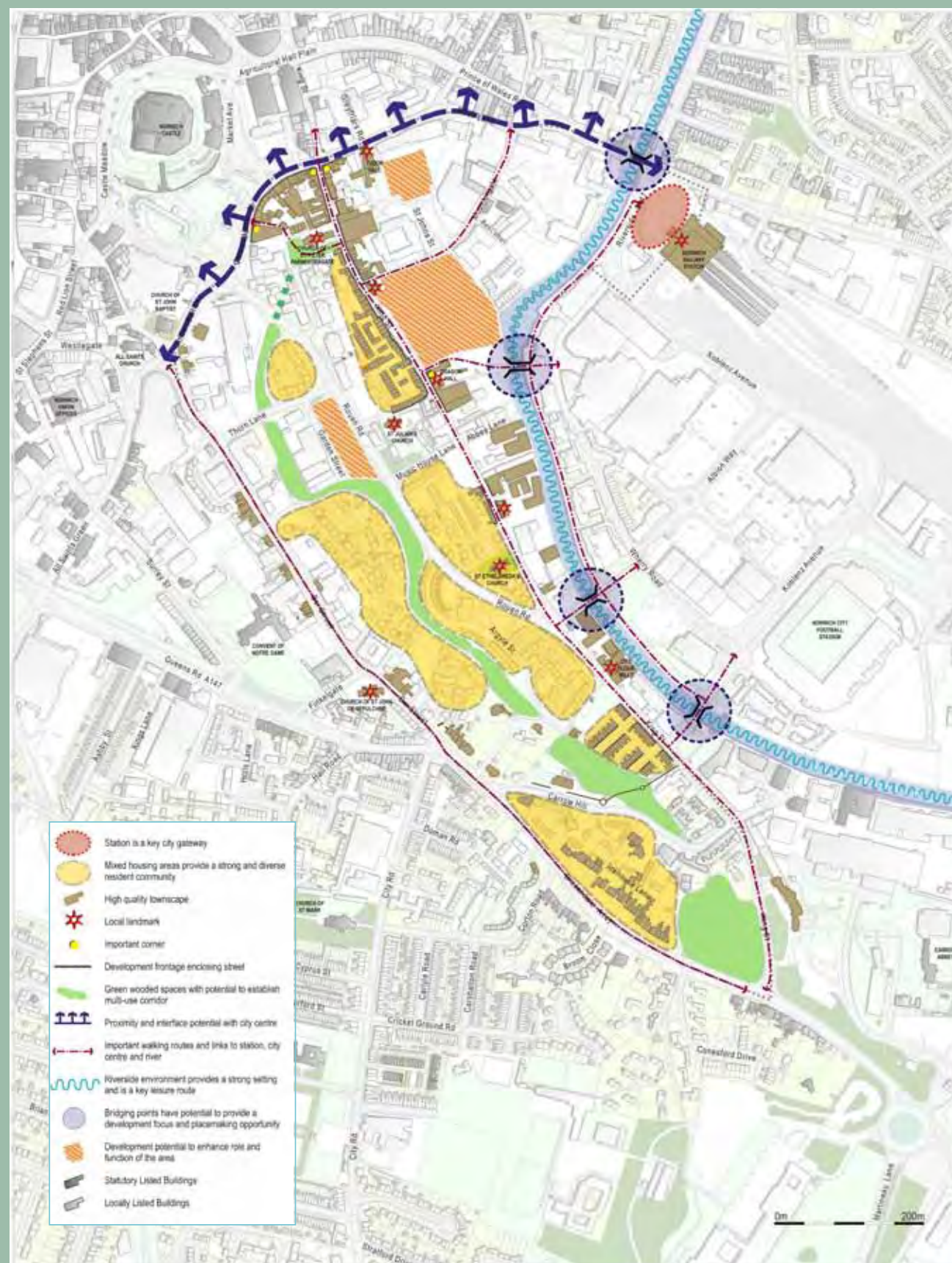
In addition there are a range of different employment uses including commercial office space of different sizes, education facilities at Wensum Lodge, community uses particularly focused around some of the former churches and at the King's Centre, and small scale, independent and niche retail. Venues including the Waterfront and Dragon Hall which host a range of cultural events and attract visitors into the area, with hotel and bed and breakfast accommodation available at Mountergate and Bracondale.

The availability of relatively low cost floorspace within the study area, notably around ABC Wharf off King Street, and the former Fish Market on Mountergate, also means that a diverse mix of small, independent businesses and venues have begun to colonise. This is an important characteristic, and one that must be supported and nurtured.

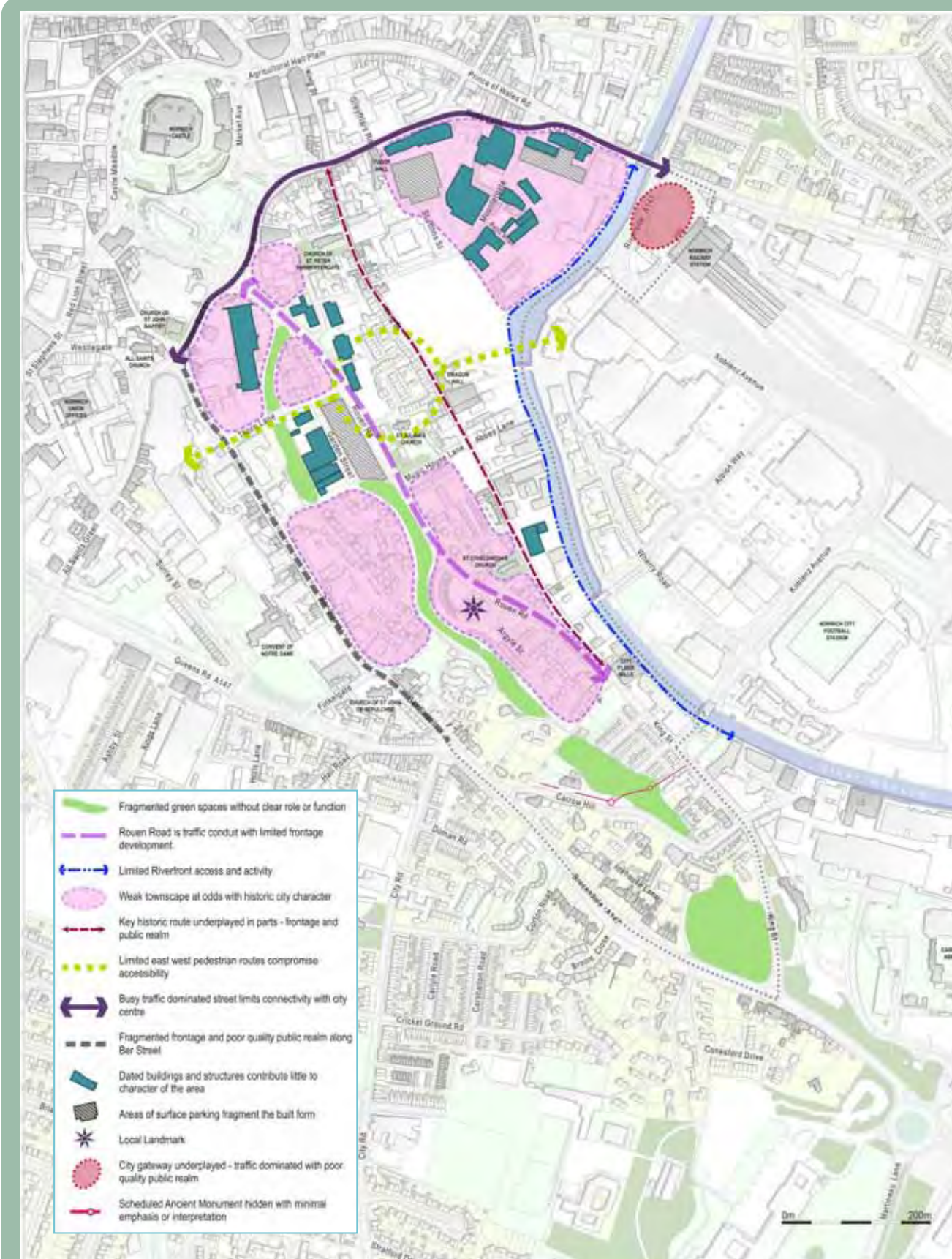


Stuart Road and Wooded Ridge





Strengths and Assets



Opportunities for Improvement



As with many locations the area also presents a few eyesores and problems. These include a legacy of now outdated commercial buildings around Mountergate, Rose Lane and Rouen Road which are representative of the age in which they were constructed and are tired in appearance. In addition the cleared but overgrown site of St Anne's Wharf and the parlous state of Howard House, a significant Grade II* listed building on King Street. The engineered environment of the Rouen Road corridor which was cut through the area in the 1960's as part of a wider, now abandoned, road improvement scheme with only the needs of the car in mind. There are also some areas of ancillary open space and public realm which have no discernable role or function and are poorly overlooked and used and there are problems with antisocial behaviour associated with late night revellers spilling into the area from adjoining parts of the city centre.



In summary, there are a number of key built form and townscape issues to be addressed through the plan:

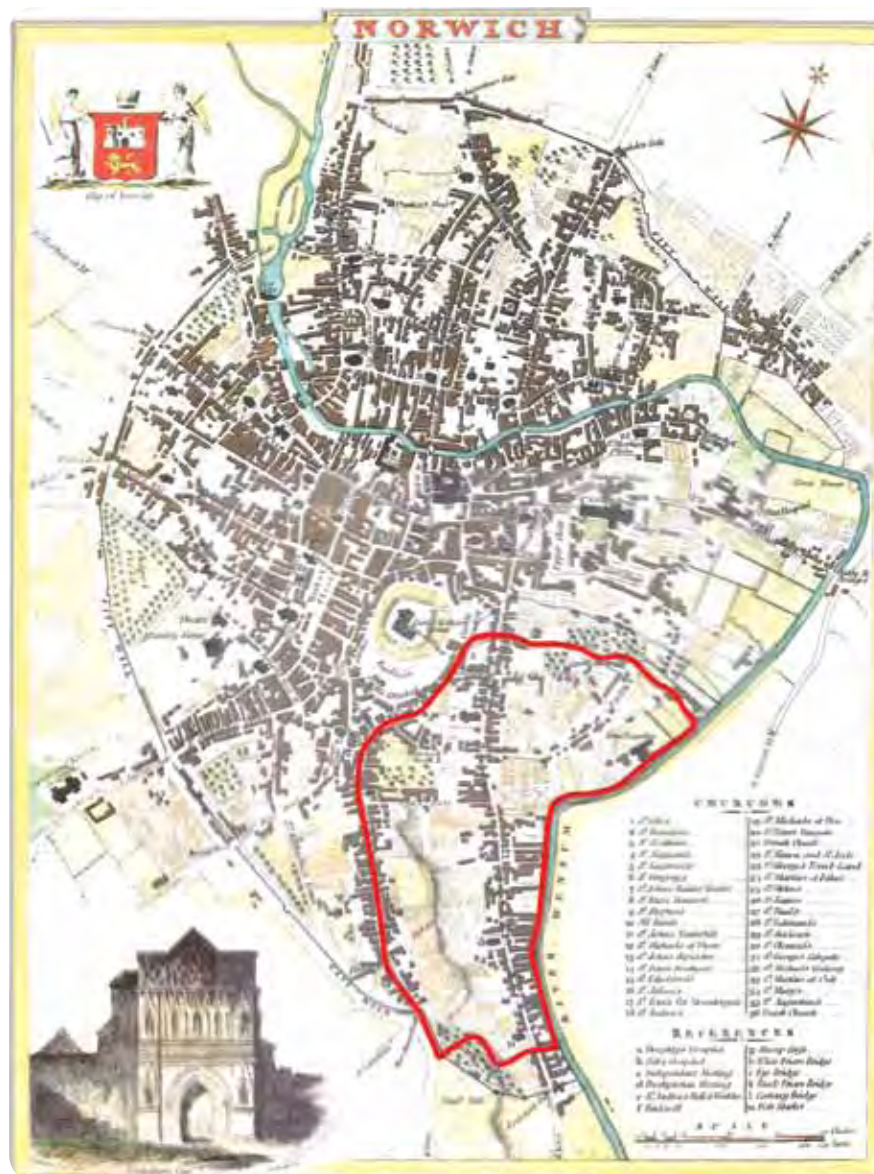
- Maintaining a rich and diverse heritage and townscape with a contextually sensitive design approach.
- Providing a comprehensive strategy for public realm, open space and the Wooded Ridge.
- Making better use of the River Wensum – at present an underexploited asset.
- Working with topography, maintaining views in to and out of the study area.
- Addressing potentially unstable ground conditions.
- Defining and enhancing the role and function of the area within a wider city context.
- Maintaining the mix and diversity – venues, businesses, residents – and identifying appropriate new uses and activities to reinforce the role and function of the area.
- Designing for a vibrant mix of uses and businesses avoiding conflicts between uses.
- Planning for supporting infrastructure including car parking and usable open space.



River Wensum and Medieval Walls

Historic Environment

The rich history of Norwich has played a significant role in shaping the character of the area. The city started to develop during the 8th century AD in the Saxon period. Initially there appear to have been two centres of occupation, one to the north of the River Wensum and the second focus to the north of the later cathedral. The northern focus of settlement was enclosed by a defensive ditch in the 9th century by the Danes. However, it was the southern area of occupation to the south of the river that became the main focus of the developing town by the mid 10th century. The northern part of the study area lies within this area of the Saxon settlement, whilst the north eastern part of the study area would have been marshland at this time.



The site superimposed on the Cole Roper historic map of Norwich



1650 Saxton & Speed Map of Norwich



1789 Hochstetter Map

During the early medieval period, Norwich developed into an important urban settlement possessing a major castle, cathedral, large marketplace and a significant number of churches. Following the transfer of the bishopric to Norwich in 1090, the cathedral began to be constructed in 1096 and was completed by 1145. The castle was built by William shortly after 1066 and the keep was constructed in 1096. The construction of both these buildings would have entailed the wholesale demolition of large tracts of the Saxon settlement.



Norwich Castle and Norwich Market today



Following the construction of the castle, the focus of the town shifted toward it, at which time King Street started to be occupied by merchants who constructed stone buildings. The earliest surviving of these buildings is the Music House at the southern end of King Street.

The city walls were built from the mid 13th century. The scheduled remains of the southern flank of the city walls cross east west across the southern portion of the study area, running along the edge of The Wilderness.



Listed Buildings at the northern end of King Street



Music House



The Church of St Etheldreda



The Church of St Peter Parmentergate

Norwich gained a significant number of churches in the medieval period. Churches (extant and demolished) within the study area are St Peter Parmentergate, St Bartholomew's, site of St John the Evangelist, site of St Michael's at Thorn, site of St Clements, site of St Martin's Church, site of St Anne's Chapel, St Julian's Church (rebuilt after WWII bomb damage); site of St Olave's Church, site of St Edward's Church, site of St Michael's Church (later part of the Augustinian Priory on King Street), site of St Peter Southgate Church and site of St Nicholas Church.

BER STREET

KING STREET.

CATTLE MARKET ST.

An Augustinian friary was established on the eastern side of King Street (the St Anne's Wharf site) in around 1290. It received its first charter in 1293 and in 1360 it acquired the church of St Michael in Conesford which was demolished and the friary precinct was expanded. A new library was built in 1457 and a hospital in 1492. Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1538, the friary was demolished in 1547. Excavations have revealed evidence of the friary, and enabled its layout to be recorded. Excavations have also revealed late Saxon to Norman riverside deposits, including a reused Saxon boat and a number of medieval road, wall and surface features.

The St Anne's Wharf area was laid out as a pleasure garden in 1662. The designer, Lord Henry Howard, also built a summerhouse in the northwest corner of the precinct and the gardens stretched from this down to the river. The area became known as the 'Lords Garden', and the summerhouse 'Howard House'. During the 19th and early 20th century it is worth noting that much of St Anne's Wharf became developed for terraced housing, particularly around the former Synagogue Street area, and as a result much of the physical remnants and above ground definition of the priory and its precinct were lost. The majority of the site was eventually redeveloped and occupied by a brewery, which itself was only recently demolished.



Howard House today



Swan Yard off King Street



Courtyard entrance from King Street

Medieval structural and occupation remains have been recorded throughout the study area. These are concentrated toward the northern end primarily along King Street, Cattle Market Street and Ber Street. However, medieval remains have been recorded along most of the length of King Street. There is evidence of lime kilns and chalk pits in the area of the city wall. The plots either side of King Street and its associated side streets, Cattle Market Street, Ber Street are considered to be of high archaeological interest for early medieval and medieval remains.

Yards and small courtyards are very much a medieval characteristic feature of both Ber Street and King Street. Many of the yards were later developed for housing in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries although much was later cleared in the mid 20th Century in slum clearance projects or following bombing. Re-establishing the continuous building lines with development hard up to pavements and the recreation of 'the yard' as more private enclosed space will be a key design consideration for development of smaller sites along the principal streets. The idea of the more public 'principal street' and the more community orientated smaller and more intimate public spaces and lanes off these streets is relevant to the larger development sites such as St Anne's Wharf.



Dragon Hall

There is a concentration of listed and locally listed buildings, many of which are medieval in origin at the northern end and along the middle of King Street, Dragon Hall and Music House being of particular note, with significant elements dating from the medieval period. Ber Street was also occupied during the medieval period. Although much of the medieval street frontage along Ber Street is now lost the area within the city walls is considered to be of high archaeological interest for medieval remains.

In the post-Medieval period new weaving and cloth finishing methods were introduced by Dutch and Flemish settlers and the city became a centre for weaving. Many of the listed buildings within the study are largely post-medieval in date ranging from a number of 17th/18th century houses towards the centre, to 18th/19th century villas on the southern end of Ber Street and a number of 19th century industrial buildings.

It was during the post-medieval period that large industrial complexes of mills, breweries and factories were built, many of them close to the river. As stated above, the site of the Augustinian Priory and the opposing side of King Street were occupied by large brewery buildings. Post-medieval features and artefacts have been recorded in various places within the area. These include a 17th century undercroft, occupation deposits, various lime kilns and brick pits, wells, pits and gravel surfaces. Evidence for early post-medieval land reclamation has been recorded in the formerly marshy area at the eastern end of Mountergate and Baltic Wharf.

Another important feature of the area comprises 'The Wilderness'; an 18th century pleasure garden. The grounds extended west of Southgate Lane until at least 1789. The area is currently overgrown but is considered to be of regional importance as it is a rare example of an 18th century pleasure garden.

The 19th and early 20th century development of the area is characterised by close streets and courtyard spaces of terraced housing, particularly between King Street and Ber Street. In addition, Synagogue Street behind Howard House had the city's main synagogue until it was bombed in World War II. Much of this area was cleared in the mid 1960s and 1970s for social housing projects and the construction of Rouen Road. It is important that the development of sites, particularly including St Anne's Wharf helps strengthen the residential community in the study area.

In terms of designated heritage assets within the area, these comprise a scheduled ancient monument, listed buildings and conservation areas. Listed buildings and scheduled monuments are significant heritage assets and should be retained as a minimum as is and if possible, enhanced. There is one scheduled monument within the area. This is the city walls and towers toward the southern end of the study area.

There are 82 listed buildings within the area. Of these there are five Grade I buildings comprising the Church of St Peter Parmentergate (LB11), St Julian's Church (LB17), the Music House (LB29), St Etheldreda Church (LB31) and Dragon Hall (LB60). There are also 9 Grade II* buildings. These all adjoin King Street, (numbers 56 - 60 (even); 168; 125, 125A & 127; 170; 91; 180; 97; 164 & 97).

Two designated Conservation Areas take in the whole area. These are Norwich City Centre and Bracondale. The majority of the study area lies within the City Centre Conservation Area. This has been the subject of a very detailed and

comprehensive conservation area appraisal which splits the area up into a number of different character areas. The study area lies in the King Street, Ber Street and Prince of Wales character areas. The southern tip of the study area lies within Bracondale Conservation Area taking in the historic villas, a small pocket of small scale 19th century buildings and two wooded areas.

The Norwich City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal uses a scoring system to establish the significance of each area. King Street is *Highly Significant*, Prince of Wales is *Significant* and Ber Street is *Low Significance*. The Conservation Area Appraisal analyses each character area in terms of the concentration of historic buildings, presence of features from historical period(s), townscape/landscape quality, and quality of detail and concentration of negative features.

The conservation area status is not an absolute constraint upon new development. However, development proposals have to be mindful of the conservation area appraisals and the relevant local plan policies.

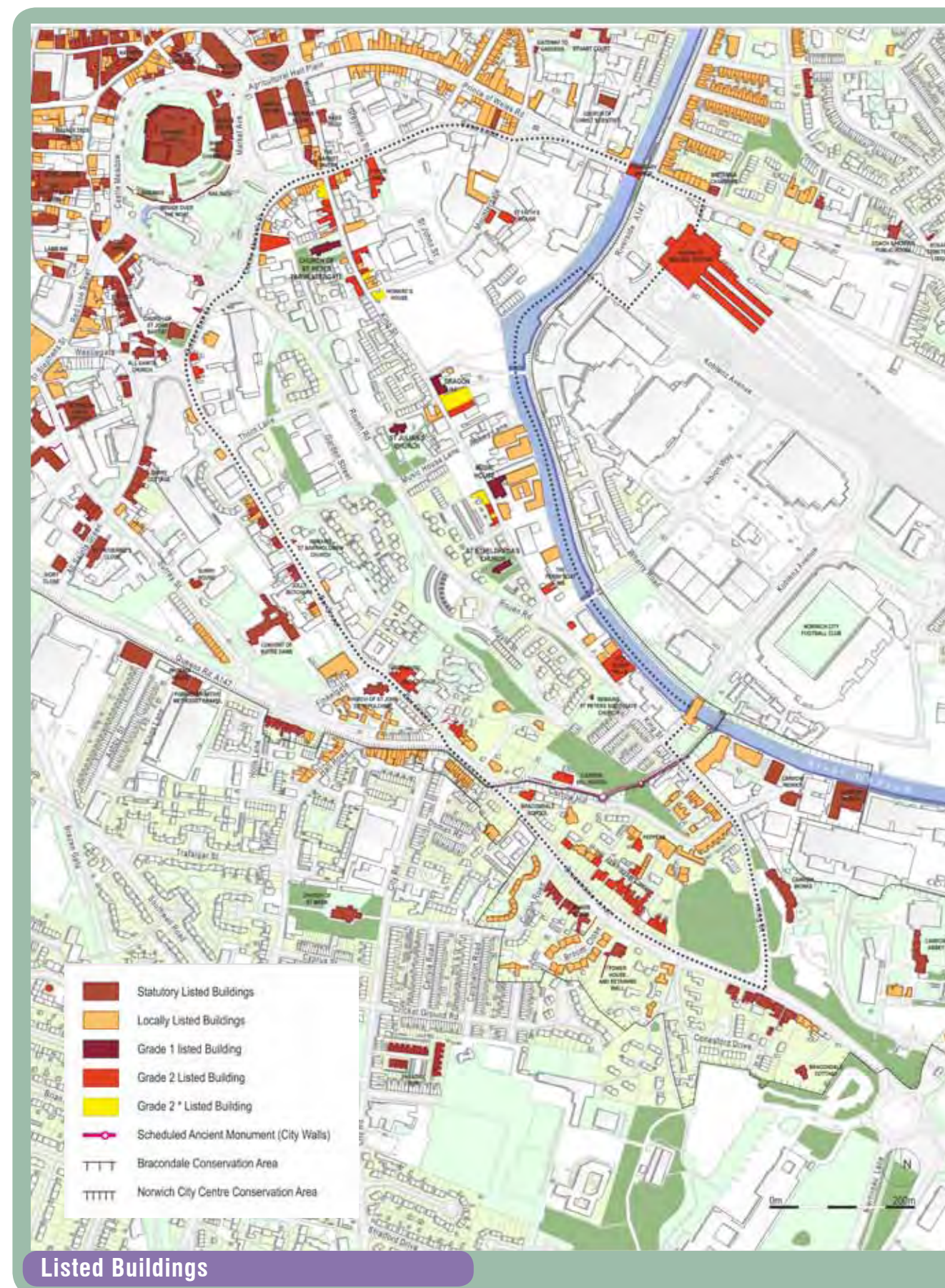
In terms of non-designated heritage assets there are 67 locally listed buildings within the area. Although these are not statutorily protected heritage assets their character and historic value is a material consideration when determining planning applications that affect them. The retention and enhancement of these buildings is the preferred option.



The Wilderness and City Walls



Historic Mills on the River Wensum





Norwich Railway Station



Pleasure Boat on the River Wensum



Northern end of Rouen Road

Movement and Transport

The area immediately adjoins the main city centre with easy access to a number of key bus routes and the strategic highway network and the city's inner ring road. National and local cycle routes also run through the area. The main railway station also adjoins the study area which is an important gateway into the city. The River Wensum supports leisure boating activities so for many visitors to Norwich their first impression of the city is informed by the character of the river corridor through the study area, as well as the area around the railway station and onward routes from it.

Although getting around by all modes is relatively straightforward, there are a number of features associated with the area that limit accessibility. These include the topography, particularly west to east, which makes pedestrian routes and streets relatively steep. This is compounded by the limited number of west to east thoroughfares crossing the area.

In addition, the character of Rouen Road, which was designed as a primarily traffic oriented route, is not particularly amenable to pedestrian crossing, particularly as the design facilitates traffic flow and speed. The large number of vehicles and relatively limited number of pedestrian crossings also impede access across Rose Lane and Cattle Market Street thereby making connections to the rest of the city centre less than ideal.

Access across the river is facilitated by modern pedestrian footbridges, and Foundry Bridge, but some of the onward routes, particularly adjoining St Anne's Wharf, are unattractive, and the fragmented riverside walkway on the western side of the river currently leads to dead ends. This can be confusing for pedestrians wishing to access the footbridges, particularly around Baltic Wharf, and issues of late night noise and disturbance cause problems for local residents as a result.



Catle Market Street / Rose Lane Junction

In terms of parking there are currently two main public car parks: at Rouen Road and Rose Lane. Metered on-street parking is available along Rouen Road with permit and visitor parking available along sections of King Street. As part of a parking strategy the City Council are aiming to maintain the current level of public parking provision across the city but enhance and consolidate facilities in key locations including the South City Centre area. A need for a modern, circa 600 space car park has been identified which would replace the existing Rose Lane and potentially Rouen Road facilities.



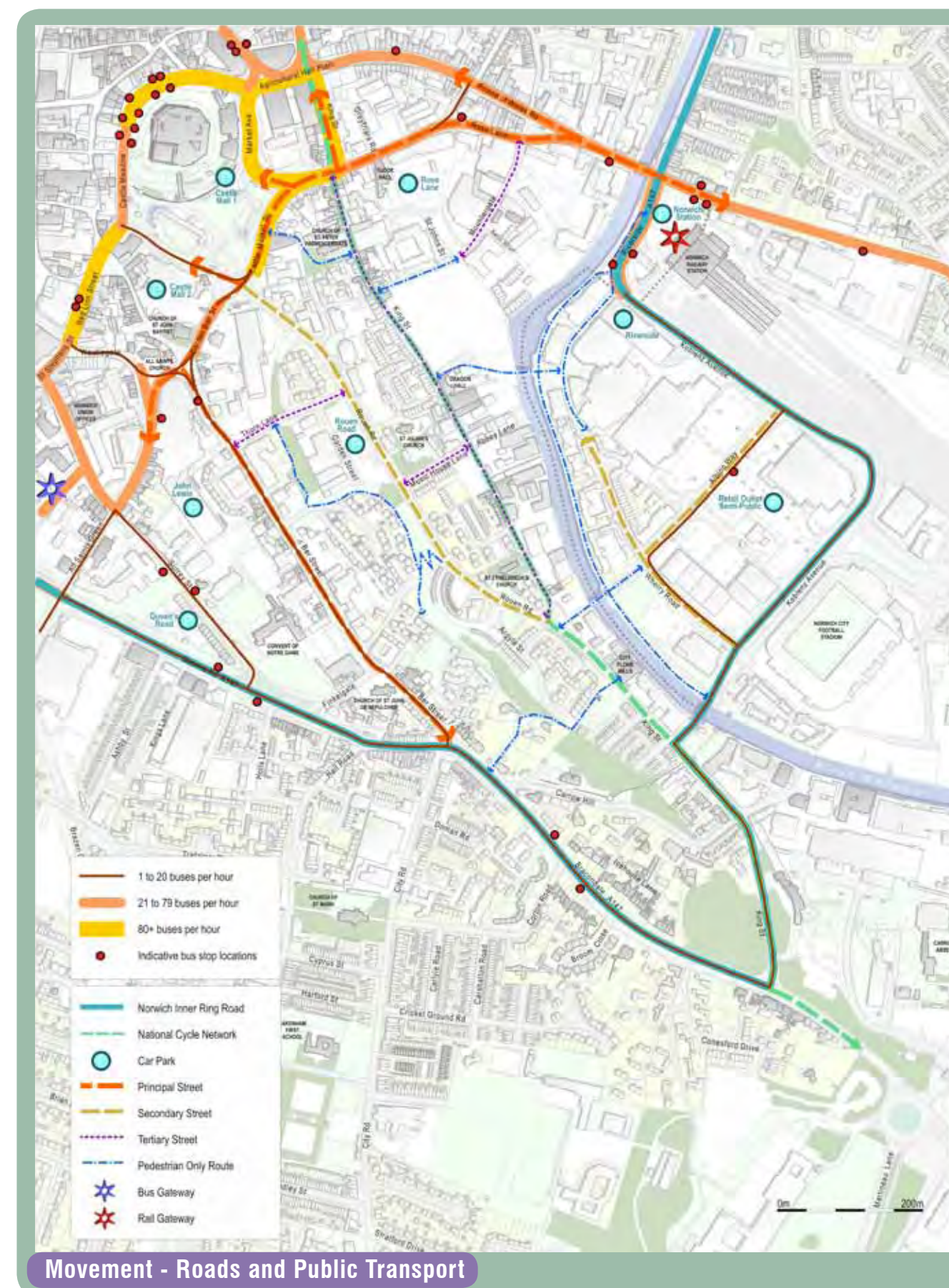
Cycle route over Lady Julian Bridge into the study area



Rouen Road Car Park

To summarise, the area benefits from a highly accessible and sustainable location, easy to access by foot as well as other modes of transport. Key issues that will need to be addressed through the master plan and delivery strategy include:

- Exploiting an accessible location and maximising connections to other parts of the city.
- Enhancing the experience of arrival within and through the study area, including around the station and onward routes.
- Exploiting the potential to accommodate strategic parking requirements for the city.
- Using bridging points as a focus for enhancement and development potential, particularly around St Anne's Wharf and the Noviad Bridge linking to the Riverside area and the football ground beyond.
- Contributing to a comprehensive public realm framework and a better signage strategy, particularly between the city centre, Prince of Wales Road and the Riverside area.
- Working with the topography and wherever possible enhancing east/west linkages.



Environmental Constraints

In terms of environmental constraints there are two key considerations for the master plan: flood risk and ground conditions. The majority of the study area is in Flood Zone 1, an area of *Low Probability of Flooding*. However, there is an area north of Baltic Wharf and south of Prince of Wales Road that is shown to be in Flood Zone 3, with a *High Probability of Flooding*. A more extensive area to the west of this, including parts of Mountergate and St Johns Street as well as some areas close to the River Wensum are shown to be in Flood Zone 2, with a Medium Probability of Flooding. The flood zones are based upon information from the Environment Agency on the probability of flooding in the absence of flood defences or mitigation.

The Environment Agency define Flood Zone 1 as comprising land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding in any year. Flood Zone 2 comprises land having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding or between a 1 in 200 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of sea flooding in any year. Flood Zone 3 comprises land having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding, or a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of flooding from the sea in any year.

The NPPF Sequential Test must be applied for development in areas within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Certain types of development may not be deemed appropriate within Flood Zones 2 or 3 or may be subject to completion of the NPPF Exception Test. Development within Flood Zones 2 and 3 will require a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) which will outline a suitable mitigation strategy.

More detailed information will be available for development areas to enable assessment of actual levels of flood risk and to inform specific measures that may be applicable to development and to outline possible options and opportunities for the development e.g. in areas where there is a High Probability of Flooding there may be options to provide the residential accommodation on upper floors with less vulnerable uses on the ground floor.

In addition, restrictions apply to development within 9m of the River Wensum subject to consultation and agreement with the Environment Agency (EA). No built development would be allowed within this area although this may be relaxed subject to agreement with the EA and successful application for a Flood Defence Consent. As a minimum the EA will require reasonable access to the river for maintenance and inspection purposes and potentially to provide a habitat corridor or other specific environmental measures depending on the nature of the location. Development to encourage a link with the River Wensum would be viewed positively by the EA and may provide opportunities for enhanced amenity.

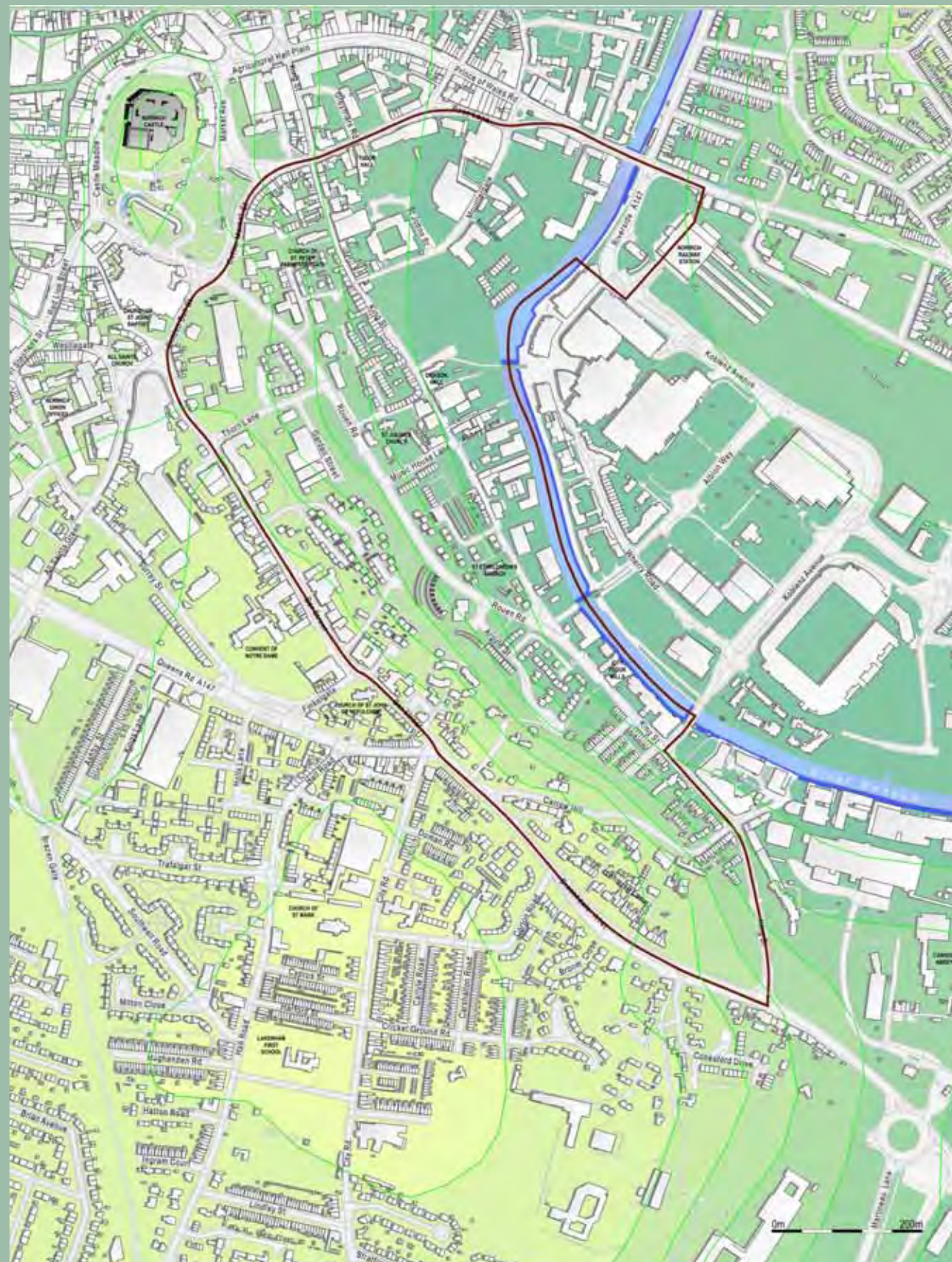
There may be opportunities to provide localised flood alleviation measures as part of a new development although the suitability of these measures would be subject to confirming no adverse impact elsewhere.

In terms of ground conditions, there are potential risks of subsidence affecting parts of the study area as a legacy of mining history and due to the incidence of natural cavities in this area. North and east of King Street chalk group deposits outcrop and are overlain by alluvium associated with the floodplain of the adjacent River Wensum. South and west of King Street ground levels rise towards Ber Street. The rising ground is formed of crag group deposits overlying the chalk group. This hillside is largely man-made being affected along its length by past quarrying where chalk has been dug for lime burning and in places particularly between Rouen Road and Ber Street where the chalk has been mined below the crag group cover deposits.

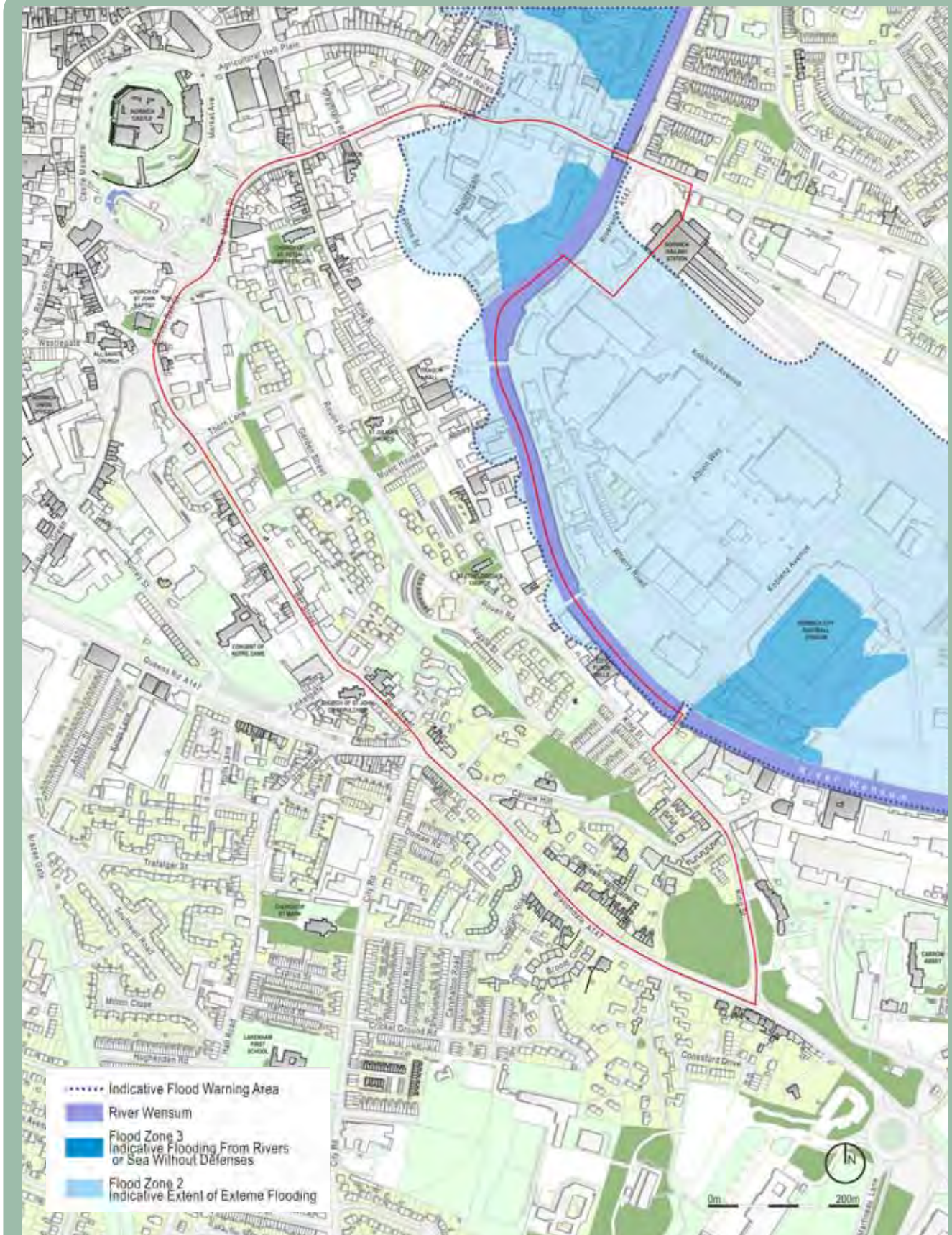
Local issues relating to ground instability will need to be fully investigated in the development areas to assess specific development options and identify potential risks and issues that may affect the viability of the options. Areas most likely to have been affected by previous mine workings include the areas south and west of Rouen Road.



River Wensum looking south, from Lady Julian Bridge, with the study area on the right



Topography

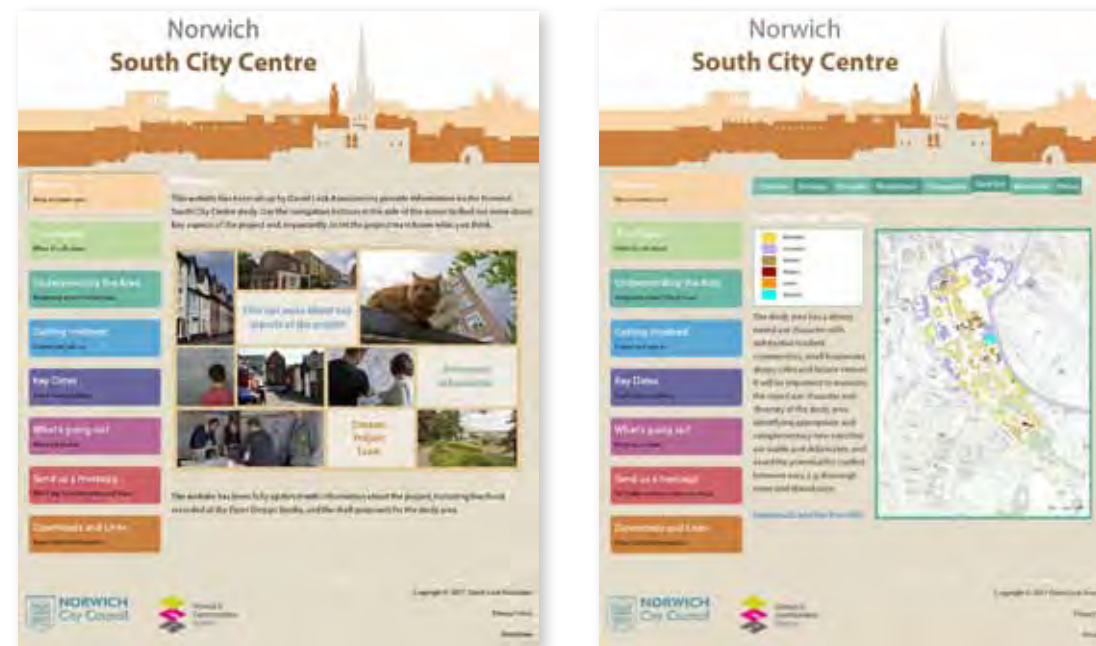


Flooding

Community and Stakeholder Inputs

An important component of the overall context for the development of the plan was the requirement that it be community led. The study area already benefits from a number of active community and stakeholder groups with a keen interest in the ongoing regeneration of the area. These include the King Street Cultural Quarter and King Street Community Voices; the Fifth Quarter; the Friends of Wensum Lodge; Dragon Hall; The King's Centre (as a venue for many activities); and a city wide forum for city council tenants. Other city wide groups, including the Norwich Society, the Norwich Historic Churches Trust, and the Norwich Rivers Heritage Group also take an active role and interest in the study area.

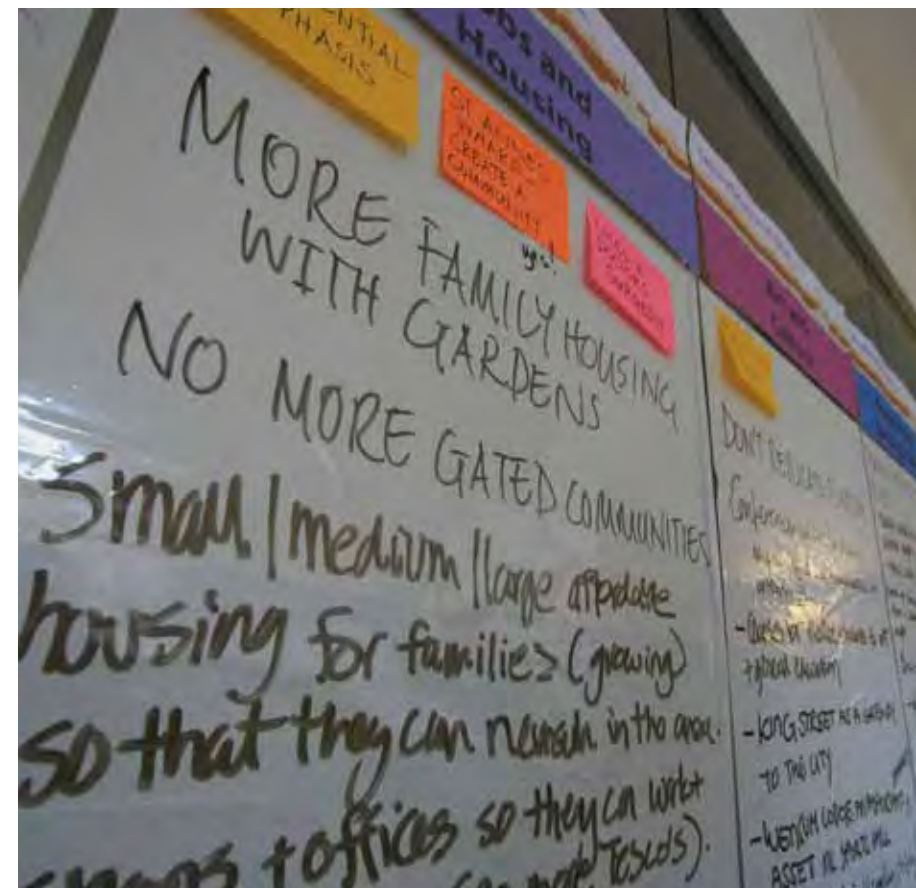
The community engagement process was front-led, with key issues and themes identified through a process of surgeries, workshops, and design-studio sessions during the summer of 2012. These were used to shape a series of draft proposals with a further round of consultation undertaken in November. A project website was established where information and ideas generated through the engagement process were posted, and where initial draft proposals were also uploaded (www.norwichsouthcityarea.co.uk).



Project Website - www.norwichsouthcityarea.co.uk



Open Design Studio 22nd June 2012



20



Exhibition November 2012

A number of key themes were explored with participants during the engagement process, particularly through the design-studio sessions. A range of opinions were expressed, although there was also a high degree of consensus around key issues. The themes are set out below together with a summary of key opinions:

Theme: What is good about South City Centre Area?

- Strategic location that is easy to move around and access the city.
- Historic and quirky character and identity.
- Significant environmental assets – river, views, city wall, green spaces.
- Successful regeneration has already taken place – strong foundation on which to build.
- Strong sense of community – diverse and passionate.

Theme: What is holding the area back?

- Economic challenges.
- Blighted areas - derelict and neglected sites and buildings.
- No clear definition of role within a wider city context.
- Conflict between uses particularly evening and night time economy activities and residents.
- Uncertainty about delivery - failed and stalled projects.
- Disconnection caused by physical barriers – Rouen Road in particular.
- Out-dated building stock in some locations.

Theme: What are the broad opportunities?

- Function: A vibrant mixed use area with potential for a more homes, businesses and commercial activities.
- Attraction: restore, enhance, reveal and exploit environmental assets.
- Community: Integrated, mixed and more 'balanced'; grow the business and residential communities.
- Character: Work with the historic scale and grain.

Theme: What action is now needed?

- Get things moving on key sites, particularly St Anne's Wharf.
- Be sensitive and responsive to the context – scale, grain and character all important.
- Manage the mix – deal with potential conflicts.
- Provide certainty, clarity and flexibility.
- Commit and deliver – a comprehensive plan needs to be championed on all fronts.

Overall the key messages taken forward and developed as part of the plan comprise:

THE COMMUNITY'S PRIORITIES

- The mixed use character of the area is regarded as very important and should be maintained, particularly around King Street.
- The existing opportunities that encourage the creative, cultural and niche activities, which make the area special, should be protected; and more should be introduced.
- Small scale employment uses and workshop space should form part of the proposals, together with some cafes and restaurants; making sure, however, that the Riverside area is not replicated.
- Different types of housing should be provided, particularly houses with gardens; together with supporting community facilities.
- St Anne's Wharf is the most important priority for redevelopment along with urgent restoration of Howard House.
- Access to the river should be increased wherever possible and opportunities explored to make better use of this important asset for the area and the city as a whole.
- The layout of new development must respect the existing historic scale and character of the area, while embracing modern and innovative design.
- New open spaces should form part of the proposals, with existing spaces retained and enhanced, particularly the Wooded Ridge.
- Existing streets should be improved particularly the southern stretch of King Street, Rose Lane and Rouen Road to make them more attractive particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.
- In planning new development, practical issues such as access and car parking, and the potential for noise and disturbance, must be carefully considered.
- Proposals must be realistic, viable and deliverable.

03 Development and Regeneration Priorities

South City Centre Opportunities and Studies

The South City Area has never had the benefit of a comprehensive plan for investment. In recent years parts of the area have benefited greatly from both public and private sector initiatives which have breathed new life into the upper reaches of King Street, saved historic buildings, created new homes and established new connections across the river. Other plans and projects have been less successful falling victim to the economic downturn or having issues associated with funding and delivery.

The area is diverse, historically very important and rich in character. The challenges are many, but it is evident that it is an area with many features in its favour and yet greater potential.

In developing this strategy the project team has examined all aspects of the way in which the area contributes to the life of the City; the way people move around; the value of the buildings and spaces; the needs and aspirations of those who live and work within it and the opportunity and priorities for investment.

From this analysis a vision emerges, with a considerable level of local support, which:

- **Embraces significant new, modern development on some key sites.**
- **Delivers comprehensive regeneration for a mix of uses, on the St Anne's Wharf Site as a priority.**
- **Supports and guides entrepreneurial activity which, although tentative and sluggish at present, is delivering incremental infill development and the restoration and refurbishment of historic buildings and tired and defunct office buildings.**
- **Seeks a broad land use strategy which concentrates commercial activity around the fringes of the City Centre and consolidates the residential community within the remainder, but also, crucially, protects and further embellishes the intricate mix of activities going within individual buildings and development blocks, particularly along the river and around King Street.**
- **Is sensitive to potential for conflict between different activities taking place in an intimate urban environment and seeks to mitigate potential disturbance.**
- **Works with, rather than against, the historic scale, grain and prevailing character of the area.**
- **Recognises potential to 'rebalance' the community with more family homes with gardens rather than apartments.**
- **Celebrates and protects the quirky, niche, creative and marginal activities, which add so much to the area and the community, but could so easily be squeezed out, if investment potential is exploited without appropriate checks and balances.**
- **Restores, enhance, reveals and exploits the very considerable environmental assets which the area offers, particularly the river.**

These essential principles have shaped a comprehensive plan for the area – an expression of what might be desirable and achievable over the next 10 years or so, if the scope for investment is realised and the community fully embrace the opportunity.

Achieving the full potential for investment will be dependent upon significant improvement in market conditions; there are positive if tentative signs. The Partnership is in a position to take advantage of the current conditions and can do far more than just give expression to the ambition for change across the area. The Partnership has expertise and financial resources to take a direct interest in key projects and kick-start the regeneration process. The Partnership's resources are, however, limited and must be targeted in those areas which offer the best prospect of:

- beginning a sustainable cycle of investment which can also deliver financial returns which can be reinvested;
- establishing a quality benchmark which embodies the principles outlined above; and
- encouraging private sector investment.

The overall plan will help shape and guide a wide range of activities which will impact upon the future of the area, but the Partnership, and the remainder of this document, will focus upon a number of projects which can best meet these three objectives. The next sections define the nature of these opportunities as well as examining possible approaches to delivery; the interrelationship between the projects; the risks; and the potential role for the Partnership.

There are four key development opportunity sites:

- 1 St Anne's Wharf
- 2 Mountergate West
- 3 Garden Street
- 4 Land around Normandie Tower and Argyle Street

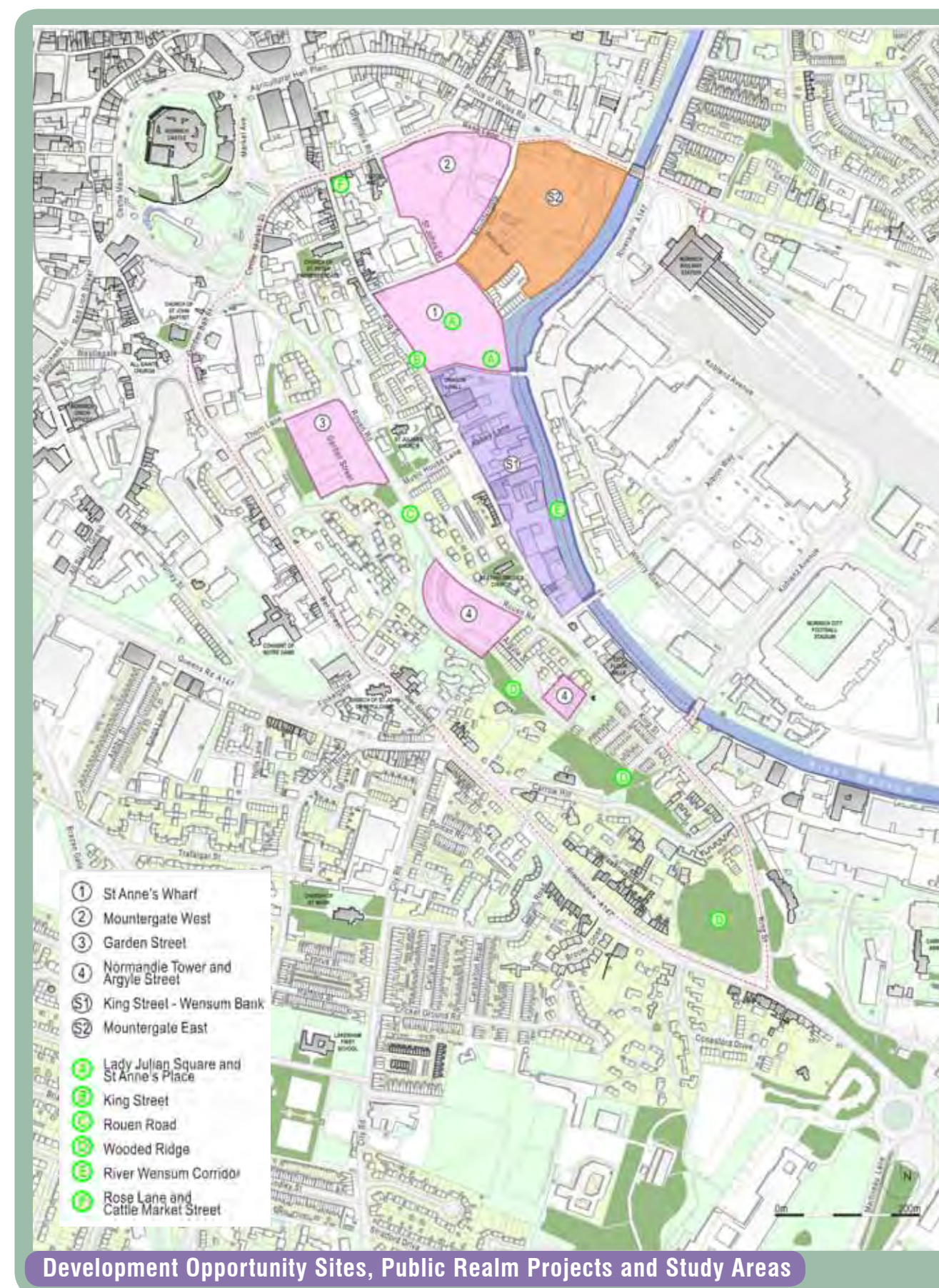
In terms of the broad framework for environmental enhancement there are six priority public realm projects, some associated with built development proposals, some not:

- A St Anne's Wharf comprising Lady Julian Square and St Anne's Place
- B King Street
- C Rouen Road
- D The Wooded Ridge
- E Wensum Corridor
- F Rose Lane and Ber Street

In the longer term it is hoped that affording priority to these projects will be a catalyst for further regeneration in areas where there is no immediate prospect for change, or where small scale opportunities, some of which are already taking shape, can contribute to broader objectives or sub-area master plans. Two such areas have been identified as part of the master plan proposals. These comprise:

- Study Area 1: King Street Wensum Bank**
Study Area 2: Mountergate East

Both areas contribute much to the overall character of the study area, particularly through the mix of uses they support and, in the case of King Street Wensum Bank, rich heritage and townscape qualities. Guidance is given as to how the study areas may be enhanced.

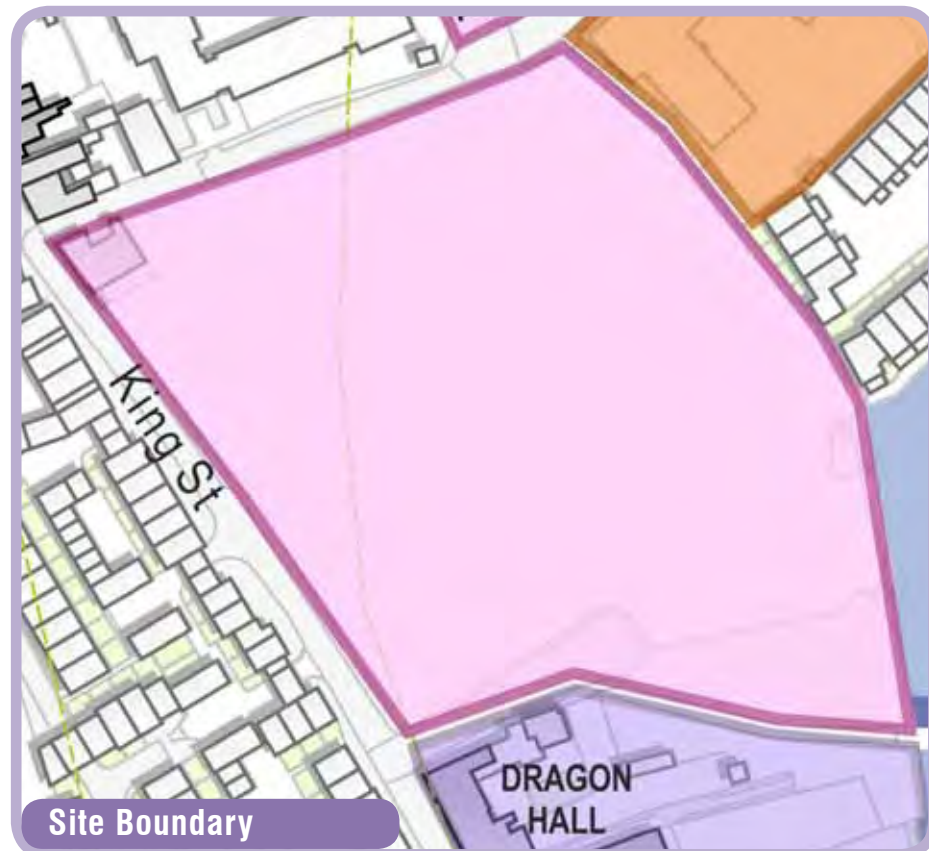


Development Opportunity Sites, Public Realm Projects and Study Areas

Site **1** St Annes Wharf



Site 1 St Annes Wharf



Site Boundary



Location

With frontages to King Street, Mountergate and the River and with the St Julian pedestrian bridge at its south-east corner, the St Anne's Wharf site is right at the heart of the South City area.

Existing Land Use

With the exception of Howard House which stands empty and in a perilous, uninhabitable condition, the site has been cleared of buildings to the slab level (a brewery depot and concrete batching plant were the most recent uses).

Land Ownership and Land Owner Objectives

Dunbar Bank owns the site including the only remaining building, Howard House; the previous owners (City Living Developments (Norwich) and sister companies City Living Homes and Anglia Projects & Developments) having gone into administration with a considerable debt owing to the bank.

The current owner has indicated that they have no interest in playing a direct role in developing the site and they intend to sell, with a view to securing best value and recouping the losses sustained.

Key Planning Policy Considerations

The St Anne's Wharf site and its immediate context lie within the Norwich City Centre Conservation Area. Howard House is a Grade II* listed building and is thus afforded national and local policy protection.

The emerging Norwich Site Allocation and Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document is seeking to allocate the St Anne's Wharf site for comprehensive mixed use development – with flexibility to accommodate mainly residential uses with offices and culture, leisure and/or food and drink, hotel and tourist uses (site reference CC7).

Relevant Planning History

In March 2006 planning permission was granted for the demolition of existing buildings to slab level and the development of the following mix of uses: 437 residential units; 2,128 square metres of A1, A2, A3 and D2 uses (maximum 2,000 square metres of A1); the provision of 305 car parking spaces; riverside walkway; public open space and hard and soft landscaping including external lighting, seating, bollards, walkways, cycle paths, steps and ramps, internal access roads, delivery bays, boundary enclosure, new vehicle and pedestrian and cycle access points, alteration of existing access points; and associated infrastructure works.

This consent has been partially implemented through completion of the demolition works.



Immediate Context

Opportunity

The St Anne's Wharf site is the most prominent and significant opportunity site within the study area. Now largely vacant, with only the crumbling Howard House standing within its northern boundary, the site is a potent symbol of the impact of recession and the considerable ongoing challenge of breathing new life into previously developed sites.

The nature and character of the site and its immediate context make it a priority for investment. The site is visually prominent, adjoining one of the principal and historically important thoroughfares into the city and a key crossing point on the River. It has a river frontage and three key street frontages. Some of the oldest and most important buildings within the city lie within and in close proximity to the site and it is underlain by very significant archaeology. The heritage interest adds character and cachet to the address. The highly successful regeneration of the northern part of King Street and the renovation of Dragon Hall have brought new uses, new residents and new businesses into the immediate area, raising expectation and setting a quality benchmark for further revitalisation.

Within the local community there is a great deal of frustration that the regeneration of the south city area has faltered and there is intense pressure for change to bring new investment to this site and to restore Howard House. Many residents came forward with thoughts and in some cases well developed ideas about the future use of the St Anne's Wharf site – these have helped to shape the strategy presented here.

The existing planning consent reflects the very buoyant market conditions which prevailed at the time it was secured. The scheme provides for an intense pattern of mixed use development including a large number of apartments in buildings ranging up to more than 40 metres in height. The scheme was ambitious even at a time when values were peaking. In current market conditions and those which can be anticipated over the next several years, a scheme of the scale, mix and form previously proposed is simply not viable.

Failure to deliver the consented scheme has given many within the local community chance to reflect upon what would best serve the city and the south city area. Though appealing, in principle, there is little prospect of realising ambitions for non-commercial uses (a botanic garden, a park, an art gallery or a concert hall were all suggested). Commercial return for landowners and investors on a privately owned site, where there are very substantial costs and constraints associated with bringing it back into use, has to be a primary consideration.

A scheme driven by the need to maximise commercial return is also likely to fall short however. It is apparent that the future of the St Anne's Wharf site is about far more than just realising significant development potential. Bringing the site back into effective use is the key to unlocking many other aspirations for the area and signalling a new phase of sensitive revitalisation. The community expect the redevelopment of St Anne's to set the standard; reinforce and complement local character; help to deliver a more diverse residential offer and new business opportunities; create a new focus for the area; and provide amenity for local residents.

For all these reasons, it is vital that the pressure for change and the priority that must be afforded to bringing the site forward, do not lead to compromise: opportunity must not be squandered for a quick result to relieve the considerable and understandable frustration in the lack of progress over recent years. An approach needs to be found that balances commercial return, delivers wider benefits and helps initiate a wider cycle of investment and regeneration.

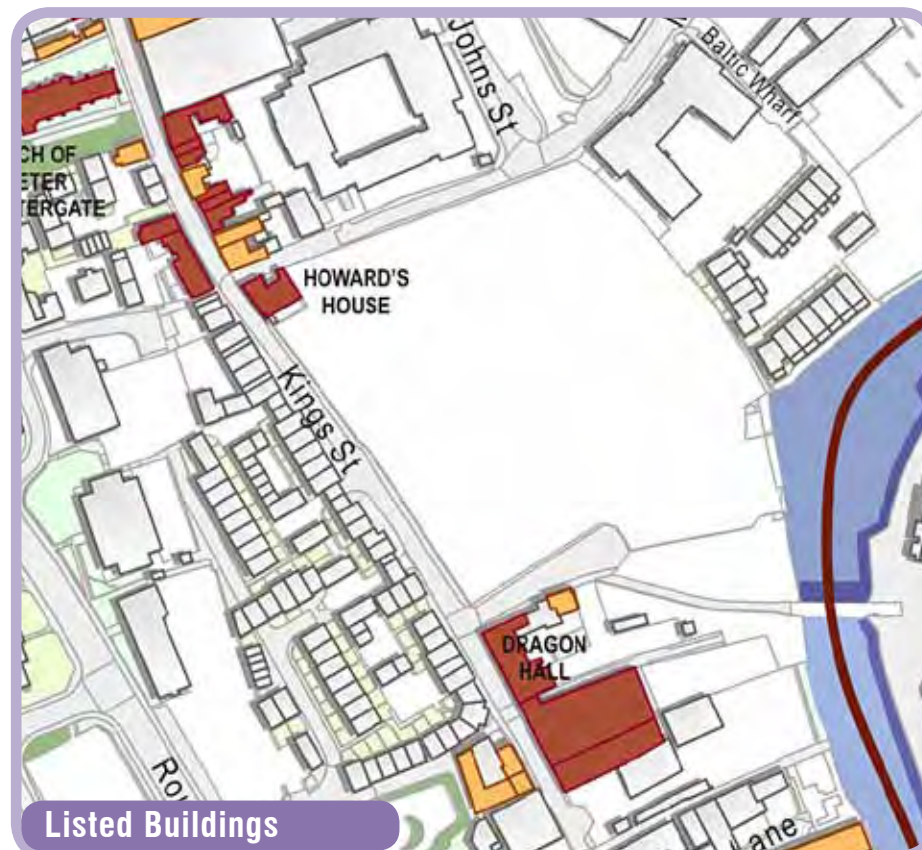
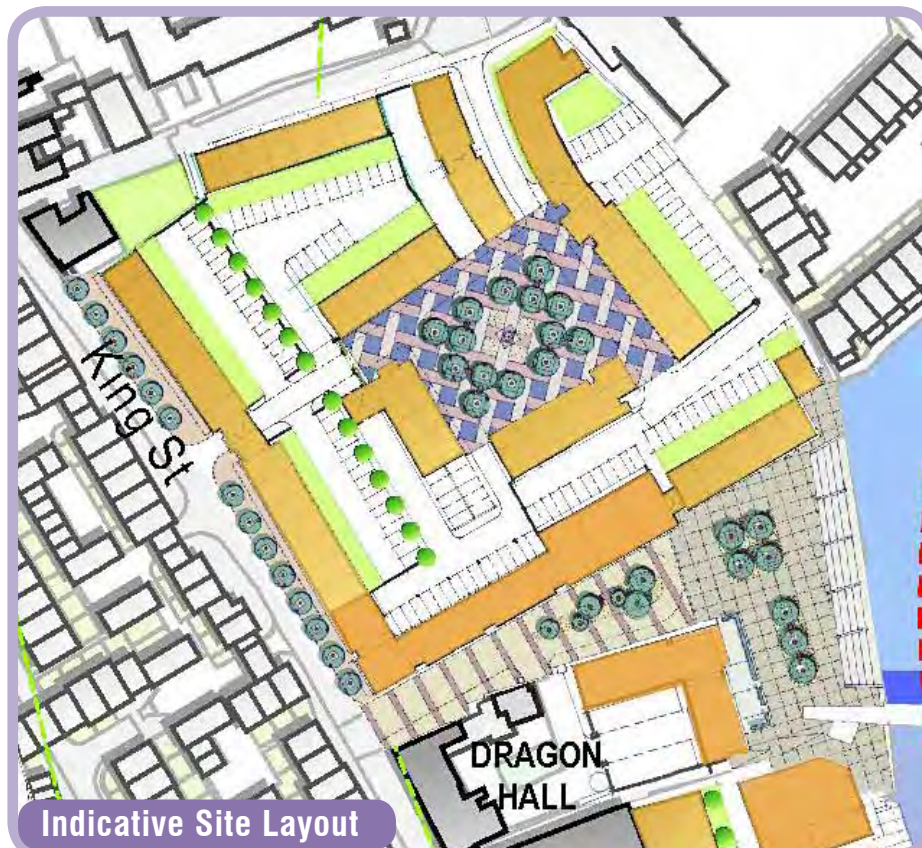


One of the Resident's Grand Designs!



The Site Today

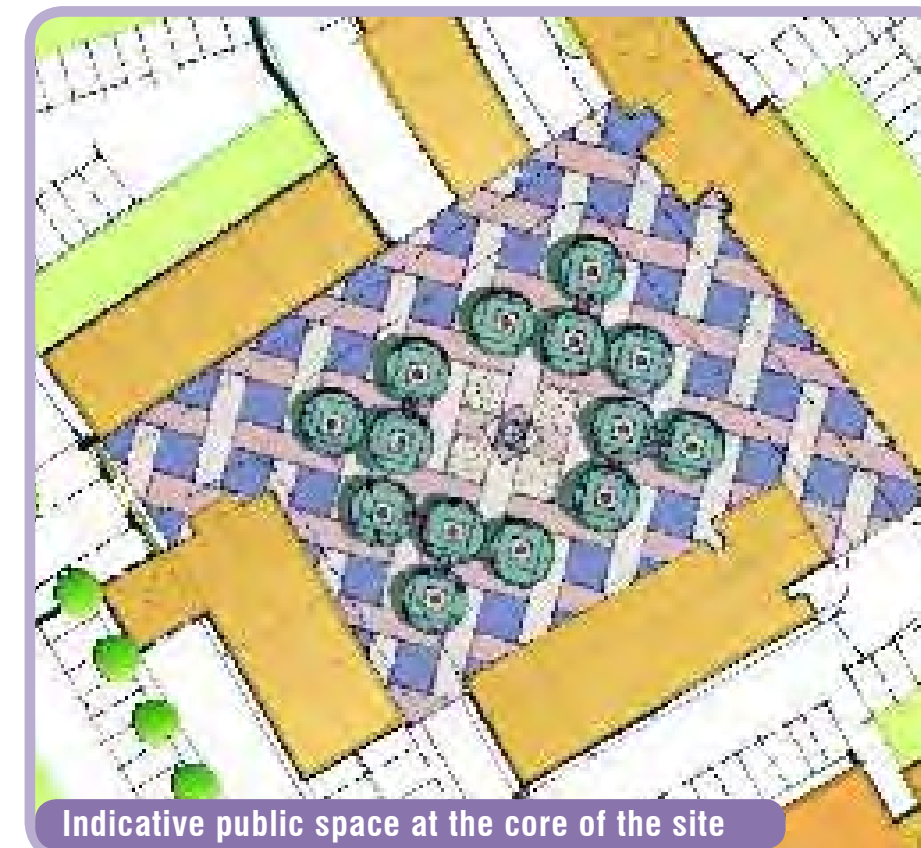
Site 1 St Annes Wharf

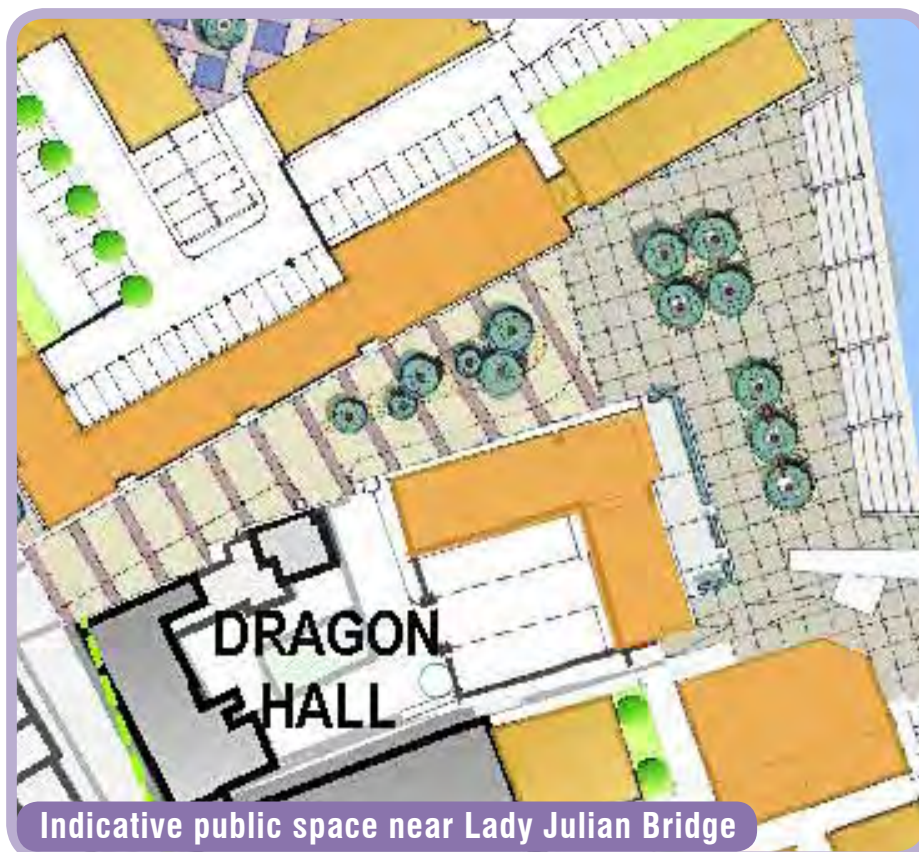


Key Development Principles

Through analysis and consultation a number of principles have been identified which should govern and guide the future development of the site. These are reflected in the illustrative master plan, but could also be achieved through a range of alternative development options.

- Vehicular access into the site should be provided principally from Mountergate. Limited local access could also be provided from King Street.
- Howard House is to be fully restored and brought back into effective use.
- Redevelopment proposals should incorporate two new public spaces:
 - One within the core of the site, the primary function of which should be to provide amenity space for adjoining residents (the space could include local play provision).
 - A second adjoining the River to provide an attractive land pointing for the Lady Julian Bridge, a public amenity space; and an opportunity for public access to, and enjoyment of, the River. The space should incorporate high quality hard and soft landscaping; channel and frame views from King Street towards the River; and enhance the setting of Dragon Hall.
- The layout and massing of development should be strongly influenced by the historic pattern of development in the immediate vicinity, respecting both the Conservation Area setting and Listing Buildings, particularly Dragon Hall.
- Careful consideration should be given to wider views into and across the site particularly from Lady Julian Bridge, elevated vantage points to the west and from the River. In addition, the importance of shorter views and glimpses through the area should also be carefully considered contributing to local character and assisting people in orientating and finding their way around.
- The proposals should establish continuous frontage development to the adjoining thoroughfares, respecting the prevailing building heights on the opposing frontages.
- Promote a mix of uses to include:
 - residential uses (including town houses with small gardens and dedicated parking, suitable for family occupation).
 - smaller scale commercial uses (which might include offices, studios, live work spaces, small retail outlets, cafes and restaurants).
- The proposals should have special regard to residential amenity within the development and at the interface with adjoining residential properties.





- Commercial activities should be focused upon the principal street frontages particularly St Ann Lane. This will help to enliven the proposed public space adjoining the River and responds to the fact that Dragon Hall provides a venue for events which can generate noise and activity throughout the day and into the evening – commercial uses oriented onto the St Ann Lane will provide a 'buffer' to the quieter residential environment within the interior of the site.



- The proposals should make generous provision for trees, of an appropriate scale, within the public realm.
- Pedestrian routes through the site (particularly from the south-east to the north and north-west) should be provided but they should be overlooked by new development, modest in scale and indirect to cultivate a quiet and intimate character within the core of the site.

Development Potential

The illustrative master plan examines the development potential of the site. It has evolved through an iterative process of design and viability assessment to arrive at a solution that delivers a return, adopting the principles set out above. The plan seeks to make efficient use of the developable area without resorting to more intensive massing which would be a radical divergence from the prevailing character of the area and involve built forms which drastically undermine viability (such as multi-deck or under-croft/under ground car parking).

The master plan demonstrates potential for:

- 94 residential units (57 town houses and 37 apartments)
- 2000 square metres of commercial floorspace capable of flexible sub-division to meet the needs of a range of business occupiers.



Trees along the Riverside Walk

Site 1 St Annes Wharf

Delivery Issues

There are a number of urban context and urban design considerations which it is recommended, should guide the redevelopment proposals for the site. Appropriate responses to these considerations are addressed under Key Development Principles above. In addition, there are three site development issues which will have a significant impact upon the likelihood of the opportunity described in this strategy being realised.

Heritage and Archaeology

Section 2 provides a more detailed account of the heritage assets within the study area and the significant archaeological and heritage interest associated with the St Anne's Wharf site and its immediate context. Previous investigations revealed that the site developed from the late Saxon period initially as an area of wharfage. By the late 14th century an extensive Augustinian Friary occupied much of the site. This survived until the mid 17th Century when Howard House was constructed and the remainder of the site was laid out as a formal garden. Although Howard House remains, the gardens were lost to industrial buildings, housing and a synagogue as the City expanded in the 19th Century. Synagogue Street (reputedly the only so named street in the UK) bisected the site, connecting Mountergate and St Ann Lane. These uses, in turn, gave way to the larger footprint industrial activities that most recently occupied the site.

Howard House was formally a city residence of the Dukes of Norfolk, thought to be a summer home. Although the house has been substantially altered over time, an ornate staircase dating from the 17th century is believed to survive within the building.

There are large parts of the site which have not been subject to archaeological investigation and it is anticipated that there is significant and well preserved archaeology surviving, associated with the Augustinian Friary and adjoining St Michael's Church.

The extant planning approval was secured on the assumption that (subject to further investigation) below ground works would be limited by leaving the existing concrete slab in situ and reusing the piling points associated with previous structures (with existing piles and beams retained) and creating a new slab in the southern part of the site. This approach would mean that surviving archaeological remains would be largely unaffected.

Further examination of both the technical issues, and the prospect of securing warranties upon any new development built upon the old slab, suggest it is extremely unlikely that this will offer a workable solution. At this point it is therefore assumed that the slab will have to be removed and extensive archaeological investigations will be necessary prior to construction.



Howard House



Dragon Hall

Listed Buildings

Howard House is a Grade II* listed building. The extant planning permission provided for the restoration of the building, but this has not come forward. The Council has stepped in to shore-up the building but it remains at substantial risk. The restoration and the need to define an appropriate curtilage to service and provide an appropriate setting for the building (which will reduce the developable area) represent a significant cost requiring enabling development or substantial public subsidy.

There are a number of other Listed buildings in close proximity to the site, most notably the Grade I listed Dragon Hall and the adjoining buildings (125-139 King Street) which are Grade II*. New development on the St Anne's Wharf site will impact upon the setting of these buildings and necessitate sensitive design and the highest quality materials.



pre 1536 (Dissolution of the Monasteries) 30



1789



1885

Geo-technical and Flood Risk

Appendix 1 contains further information on the geo-technical/flood risk conditions on the site. There is evidence of former underground storage tanks within the site and hydrocarbons within the groundwater. Prior to redevelopment of the site it will be necessary to define the extent and degree of hydrocarbon contamination (and any other significant contaminants). Remedial clean-up of the site may be necessary or the development strategy may be based around a design approach to provide hard cover and minimise infiltration potential or scope for contaminants to find new ways into groundwater or the River Wensum.

Shallow groundwater levels suggest that the chalk is saturated at this location. Therefore it is highly unlikely that chalk mining would have been undertaken. However, there may be minor dissolution cavities at the interface between the chalk and the sands and gravels above. If present, these may pose problems to piling operations. Further investigation of ground conditions will need to be determined through site investigation to inform the construction approach.

The site is primarily located within Flood Zone 1, with approximately 10% of the site area in Flood Zone 2. At this stage, the proposed development mix for the site is indicated to be residential and commercial. The site is well served in terms of access/egress routes that would be deemed 'safe' in the event of the extreme flood, with potential connections to/from King Street and Mountergate. Depending upon the detailed design and the type of residential development some modest attenuation measures may need to be incorporated into the scheme.

It is likely that the development would be deemed appropriate according to Table 3 of the Technical Guidance to the NPPF, subject to application of the Sequential Test.

Development Prospects

At present the implications; the best approach to mitigation; and the impact of the delivery issues outlined above is not fully understood: the extent to which abnormal costs impact upon the viability of development cannot be determined more accurately without further site investigation. There is, at present, a great deal of uncertainty regarding likely development costs.

The landowner has indicated an intention to sell the site. It is likely that potential purchasers/investors will either take a very cautious view on land value (because of the unquantifiable costs) or adopt a more speculative approach (with a view to either 'banking' the site until market potential and development value see a significant uplift, or seeking consent for a form of development or mix of land uses which maximises return).

Without Partnership involvement there is a risk that the site remains undeveloped for a further period of time or a form of development is pursued which will not necessarily accord with the ambitions of the local community and this strategy. As Planning Authority, Norwich City Council will have some control over the form of development and mix of uses, but this control may not be sufficient to secure development which aligns fully with this strategy and befits this exceptional opportunity.

Recommendations – Next Steps

It is recommended that the Partnership:

- Seek to gain a much better understanding of likely development costs. This will necessitate working with the current or any subsequent landowner to undertake site investigations.
- With a better understanding of development costs, evaluate the range of development options which might be of commercial interest and the degree to which these are policy compliant, meet the objectives of this strategy and respond to the community ambitions, expressed here. This will assist Norwich City Council, in its role of Planning Authority, in negotiating any new planning consent, as well as guiding the Partnership in determining if, how and when to seek to become directly involved in the delivery of the project.
- Should develop a Forward Plan which will define the Partnership's objectives for the future development of the site, shaped around parameters of what can be reasonably expected from a commercial developer (in line with planning policy and having regard to this strategy and subsequent work on viability); and ways in which the Partnership may be able to support investment in development components which have value beyond a conventional commercial return. The Forward Plan will also need to consider the options available if the market does not deliver an acceptable scheme within a reasonable time frame, including circumstances in which the Partnership may seek to purchase all or part of the site.



St Anne's Wharf from the east bank of the River Wensum

Site 1 St Annes Wharf



St Annes Wharf - Artist's Impression

The Partnership Role

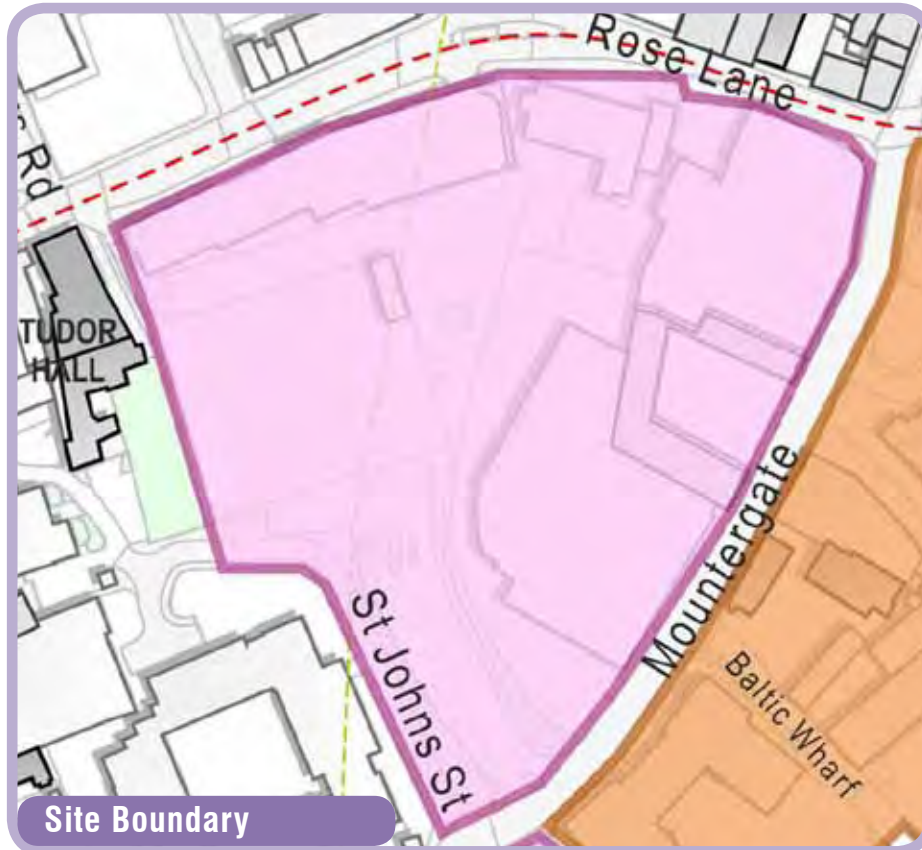
The Partnership has determined that securing the redevelopment of the St Anne's Wharf site is of the highest priority and the key to unlocking wider regeneration potential across the South City area. The Partnership is committed to overcoming the barriers to delivery.

In response to the recommendations above the Partnership has resolved to work closely with the owners of the site ensuring that when it is brought to the market a statement will be included as part of the sales information. This will set out the Partnership's high quality design aspirations for site; specific policy requirements, including those for affordable housing; and recommendations that prospective developers talk to the Council as part of the bidding process about any potential role that the Partnership may be willing to play in delivering elements of the scheme.

Site 2 Mountergate West



Site 2 Mountergate West



Location

Development Opportunity Site 2, Mountergate West, encompasses the area between Rose Lane, Mountergate, St Johns Street and Boulton Street.

Existing Land Use

The area accommodates a range of activities and buildings: the Rose Lane Car Park (which is a surface car park on the site of a demolished multi-storey car park with capacity for 180 cars) accessed from St Johns Street; a number of older commercial buildings and associated service areas and hard-standings, adjoining Mountergate and Rose Lane; and office buildings fronting Rose Lane (Rose Lane Business Centre and Imperial House).

There is a level of under occupation (notably within the Rose Lane Business Centre) but a small number of sole traders and small businesses have located within the area in recent years taking advantage of lower rents, flexible terms and flexible accommodation.

Ownership and Land Owner Objectives

The area divides into three land ownership parcels. The City Council have the westerly land parcel including the car park and Rose Lane Business Centre (of which the Council has freehold ownership) and the parcel on the Rose Lane/ Mountergate corner incorporating the former Fish Market buildings and the former UK Fire building. The Great Hospital has freehold ownership of the central area, including Imperial House and the buildings to the south/west of the Fish Market.

Agents acting for the Great Hospital have indicated that the landowner is likely to take a long term view of the investment potential and may be interested in a joint approach which maintains a reliable income stream or yields a sufficient return to support other investments.

Key Planning Policy Considerations

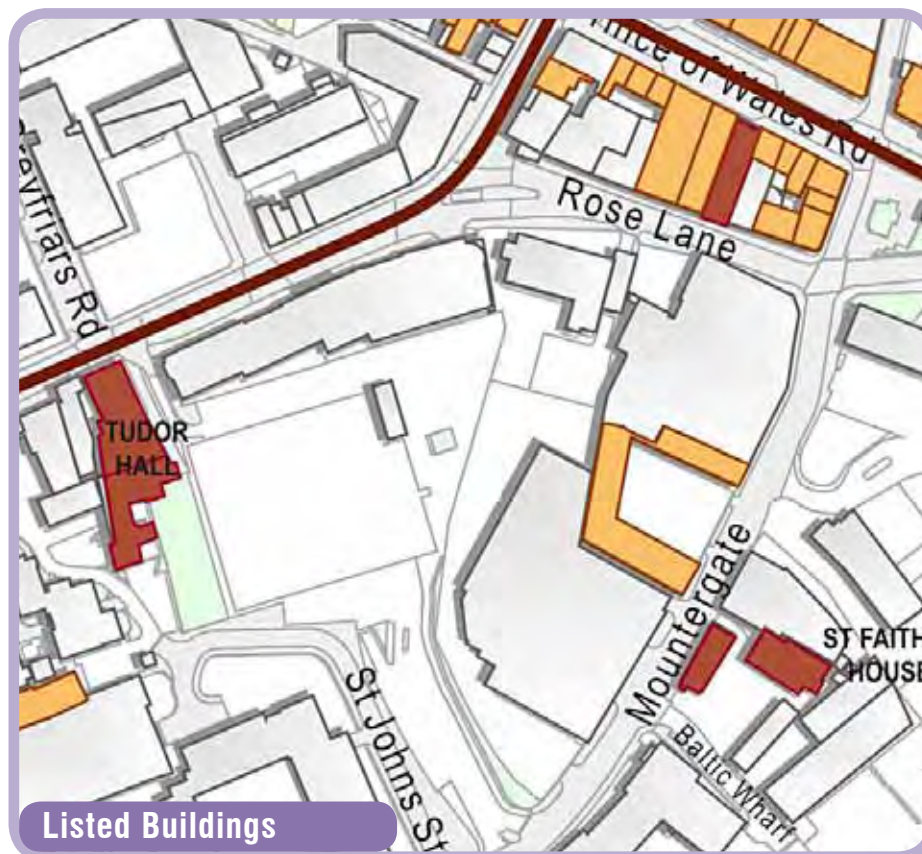
The emerging Norwich Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document is seeking to allocate the area for comprehensive office-led mixed use development integrated with residential uses and other uses such as food/ drink, small scale retail and late night leisure uses, with some replacement public car parking (part of Development Plan Allocations Site CC5).

The Development Management Policies development plan document has reached the pre-submission consultation stage and includes a policy to guide the future provision of public off street car parking which will impact upon the redevelopment proposals presented here.

The former Fish Market buildings are locally listed and thereby afforded a degree of protection.



Immediate Context



Opportunity

The Mountergate West area is a prominent and very accessible part of the South City area, well located in relation to the Station, the core of the City Centre and to the diverse mix of activities occurring on the edges of the Centre and within the South City area. In past decades Rose Lane had a primary function as an office location, but as the cluster of commercial buildings has aged, and become increasingly less attractive to prime occupiers, vacancy has increased and investment has dwindled. Demolition of the car park without replacement or proper restoration of the site means a large part of the Mountergate West area is very inefficiently used, poorly laid-out and provides a rather unattractive outlook for adjoining buildings.

Despite its central location, Mountergate West has become rather 'marginal' in character. Mountergate itself functions as a relatively minor access road to a diminishing number of commercial activities as well more recent residential development. A small number of the business occupiers in the former Fish Market buildings make a valuable contribution to the cluster of small, creative enterprises that have colonised the South City area and benefit from being in close proximity to the 'cultural quarter' around King Street. The same conditions that attract such occupiers are also, however, attractive to other business activities, such as car repair, which are misplaced in such a central location, and may detract from efforts to regenerate the area.

The challenge in moving forward is to seek to retain some of the more interesting features (buildings and occupiers) which bring character to the Mountergate area, while encouraging sensitive new development (which could be approached comprehensively, but more likely incrementally) to achieve a more diverse and intense pattern of complementary activities, adding to the critical mass of creative enterprises, in a much improved environment.

Conversion of an old office building into a hotel on the northern side of Rose Lane and redevelopment for residential uses, between St Johns Street and King Street, have signalled the potential for renewal within the locality.

The Mountergate West area is not one which the local community recognise as having a cohesive identity or having an important function, other than to provide convenient car parking to support activities across the wider area (the City Centre, Station and the football ground). This tends to reinforce the view that it is somewhere most people pass through or pass-by, without affording much attention to its current condition or unrealised potential.

With the redevelopment of the St Anne's Wharf site in prospect, the southern end of Mountergate would be enlivened by new uses and the profile and potential of the sites nearby would increase greatly. There is support for further diversification of uses, with broad consensus around the desire to protect and provide flexible workspace for small businesses coupled with a strong desire, amongst local residents, to resist the encroachment of late night pub and club activities into the area.

As a declining and degraded environment, lacking a clear function, under-utilised and under-occupied, the area is viewed as one that is 'ripening' for investment. Early intervention to provide a new public car park on land owned by the City Council is an important component of the strategy for the South City Area.

There is broad agreement that Mountergate is a good location for car parking to serve the wider area; the location works well in terms of the Council's ambitions to rationalise parking into a smaller number of strategic locations. Re-provision of a high capacity car park would be beneficial to the City Centre, South City area, Railway Station, Riverside area and is critical to unlocking the Garden Street Development Opportunity. With provision of a new, high quality, multi-storey car park at Mountergate, the surface car park on Rouen Road/Garden Street can be released for more beneficial use, without an overall reduction in car parking provision.

It is likely as market conditions improve that residential development will emerge as the most attractive proposition within the area, but the local community and the Partnership favour a mixed-use approach or one that gives high priority to protecting and creating new business opportunities. This approach aligns with the emerging planning policy framework.

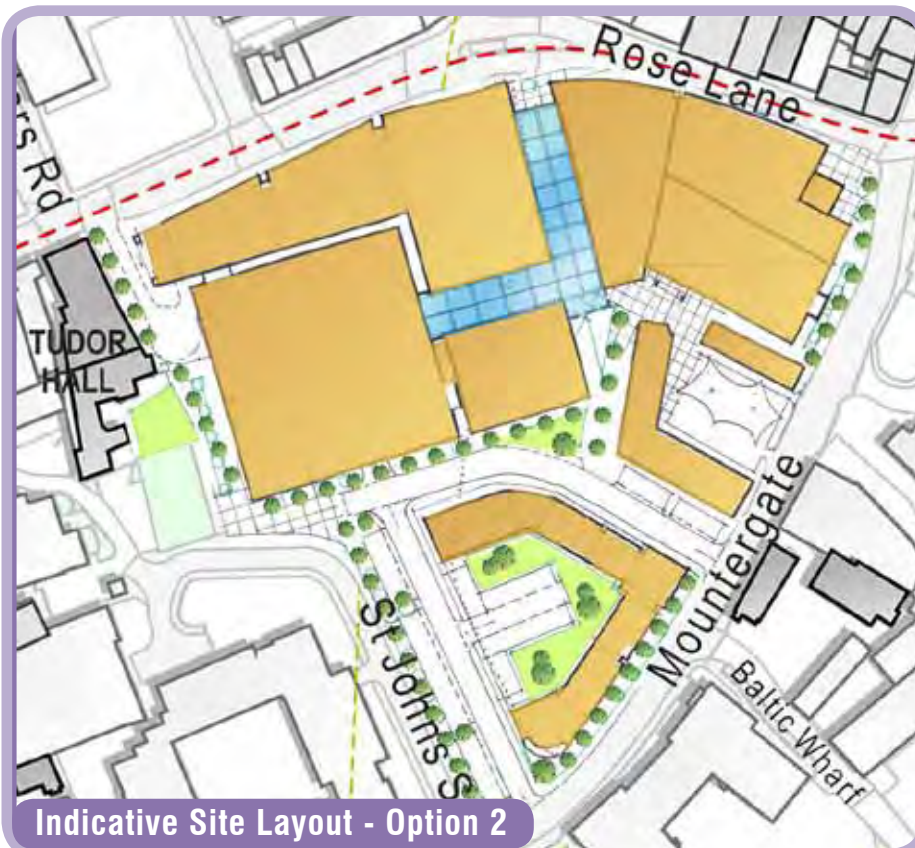
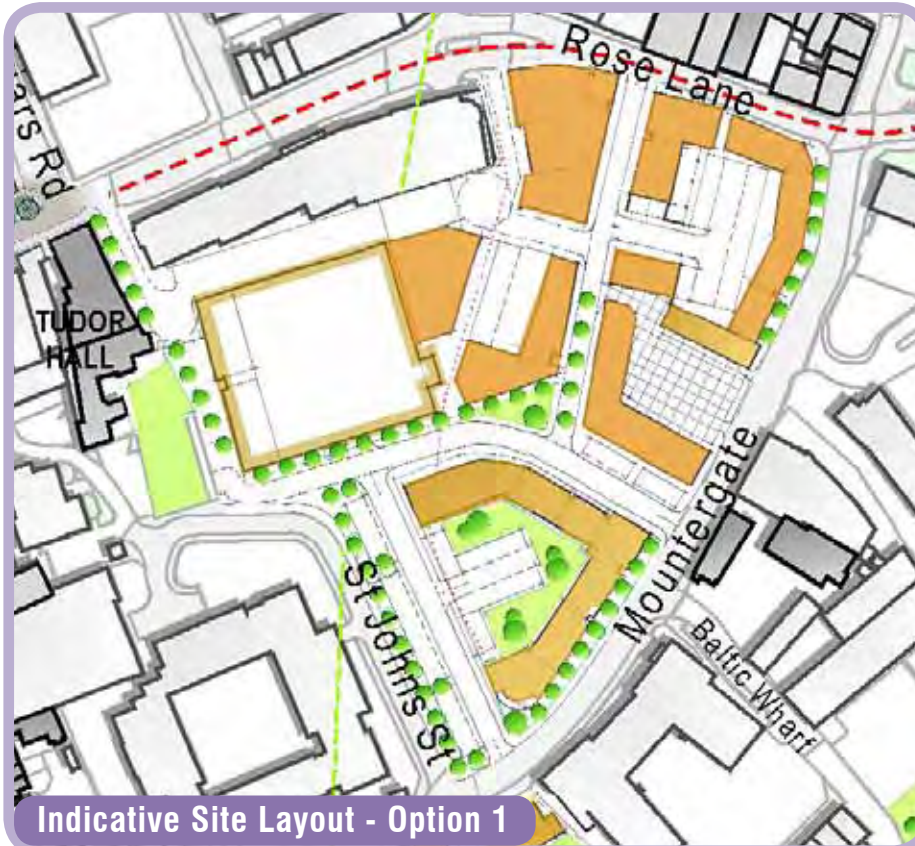
Should demand arise for a centrally located 'headquarters' building, Mountergate presents an ideal opportunity. In this circumstance a case could be made to undertake extensive demolition and achieve comprehensive redevelopment, incorporating the new car park. Other complementary uses might also be included; a new health or leisure centre would be welcomed (the latter might replace the aging facilities at Wensum Lodge).

Without identified demand from a specific major occupier, more incremental investment over time is, however, the more realistic scenario.



The Site Today

Site 2 Mountergate West



Rose Lane / Mountergate Junction

Key Development Principles

Through analysis and consultation a number of principles have been identified which should govern and guide the future development of the Mountergate area. These are reflected in the illustrative master plan, but could also be achieved through a range of alternative development options.

- Through new development or refurbishment a high quality frontage to Rose Lane and Mountergate should be established. This should include 'active', ideally commercial uses at street level, to animate and bring activity into the adjoining public realm.
- The Rose Lane/Mountergate junction is an important gateway into the South City area and key point of access to two of the four key development opportunities promoted through this strategy. Redevelopment on the corner site adjoining the junction (the former UK Fire building) should be of sufficient architectural merit to establish a local landmark.
- Cognisant of the pattern of land ownership, there are two locations where the car park could be located. The pros and cons of both approaches are addressed under the Delivery Issues section below.
- Mountergate is generously proportioned, and opportunity exists to set back buildings and introduce generous pavements and street trees.
- The former Fish Market building is locally listed, and of some historical significance, so there is a policy presumption in favour of retention. The buildings are, however, in a poor state of repair and their footprint and mass may not readily lend themselves to integration into a wider master plan for new development. If retention of the buildings proves to be uneconomic and/or proves to be a significant constraint upon plans for the wider area, relocation of the businesses currently within the Fish Market, into suitable local premises should be sought.
- If the Fish Market building is retained the associated courtyard could provide an attractive urban space linked to an improved streetscape along Mountergate.
- Residential development would be most suitably located away from the busy Rose Lane frontage.
- Tudor Hall is a listed building located immediately adjacent to Mountergate West area, on Boulton Street. Development adjoining Boulton Street should re-establish an appropriate frontage and seek to enhance the setting of the listed building.
- There is very limited, publicly accessible green space within the northern part of the South City area. The ambition to create a new community garden on the open space adjoining the Tudor Hall is supported.



Former Fish Market

Development Potential

There are a number of possible development scenarios for Mountergate West.

Master plan option 1 indicates the potential for a fine-grained pattern of new and refurbished buildings, which is of a scale that is flexible to a range of uses and can emerge incrementally, around a series of commercial premises, courtyards and spaces, which echoes the historic pattern of land use, now only evident around the former Fish Market. The plan demonstrates capacity for approximately:

- Circa 600 space multi-storey car park
- 6,000 square metres (net additional) of business floorspace
- 70 apartments

Master plan option 1a reflects a similar approach but locates the car park on the Rose Lane/Mountergate corner site and shows replacement of the Fish Market building. Flexible workshop spaces have been incorporated into the car park building at ground floor level, and would be suitable for activities displaced from the Fish Market and other small business occupiers.

Master plan option 2 indicates the scope for a more intensive pattern of development, planned and delivered comprehensively with the principal element being a significant headquarters office building. The master plan shows the Fish Market building retained; demolition and redevelopment would increase the development capacity further. The plan demonstrates capacity for approximately:

- Circa 600 space multi-storey car park
- 15,000 square metres (net additional) of business floorspace
- 1,000 square metres community/leisure floorspace
- 50 apartments

Delivery Issues

There are a number of urban context and urban design considerations which it is recommended, should guide the redevelopment proposals for the site. Appropriate responses to these considerations are addressed under Key Development Principles above. In addition, there are a number of development issues which will have a significant impact upon the likelihood of the opportunity described in this Strategy being realised.

Market Potential

The biggest challenge for new investment in Mountergate West is the current lack of market potential for commercial development. This strategy supports the emerging planning framework which promotes commercial led redevelopment. Implementation will therefore be pursued through a flexible, longer term programme which will be dependent upon improving market conditions. The Partnership can lay the foundations of a successful regeneration programme and play a direct role in kick-starting the process through early delivery of a new car park.

Re-provision of Car Parking

As outlined above, the Mountergate West area offers the best location for provision of new multi-storey car park. There are a number of issues associated with this important component of the opportunity at Mountergate West.

Delivery of the car-park is a priority within the context of the strategy of the South City Area as a whole. Ensuring that it does not in its form or location inhibit or restrict redevelopment of neighbouring sites, which may well be some time off, is an important consideration. High quality architecture is the first issue, particularly if the car park is constructed in a visually prominent location; the position of the building is the second important consideration.

The City Council is likely to construct and operate the car park. Selecting a site already in the Council's control has obvious advantages. There are two possible locations with the Mountergate West area.

The first is within the core of the site, where the existing surface car park is located, accessed from St John Street. This offers the principal advantage that the car



park could be effectively screened from the main public thoroughfares by built development, maximising opportunity for higher value uses on the main frontages. The building could be designed without significant investment in the quality of the facades to the north, south and east – indeed it could be designed to be completely 'embedded' within new built development, in due course. Depending upon the layout, the elevation to the west may impact upon the adjoining, listed Tudor Hall and will demand a sensitive design approach. There are two disadvantages to this location:

- unless an existing building on Rose Lane is demolished and provision can be made on Rose Lane for vehicles to queue on approach to the car park, a significant number of traffic movements will need to be accommodated on Mountergate/St John's Street, impacting other development opportunities.
- there would be loss of car parking capacity while the new car park is built.

The second option is on the corner of Rose Lane/Mountergate with the entrance at the upper end of Mountergate. This is likely to be preferable in access terms, but presents a challenge in urban design terms. Utilising a prominent corner, gateway site for a car park is arguably a wasted opportunity; new office/commercial uses would be preferable but there is little prospect of the site being attractive to the market for such uses in the short to medium term.

Provision of a new car park offers the best prospect of early redevelopment and immediate investment would offer the benefit of signalling the changing fortunes of the area. Given the gateway location this benefit would, however, be undermined if the building is not of the highest quality in terms of architecture. There are several good examples of car park design achieved in recent years – if the corner site is pursued a similar approach would be essential.

Achieving sufficient net increase in revenue from the enlarged car park to establish a viable project will be sensitive to the number of net additional spaces and the balance of short/medium and long term parking provisions and associated parking charges. The policy restrictions coming into force through the Local Development Framework remove a degree of flexibility. Additional work and consultation, within the context of parking strategy for the wider City Centre, will be necessary to bring forward a workable proposal.



Examples of High Quality Multi-Deck Car Parks

Site 2 Mountergate West

Potential Abnormal Costs

Redevelopment of previously developed sites invariably gives rise to some significant or abnormal costs typically associated with demolition, site clearance, ground conditions decontamination, servicing and archaeology. Desk-top analysis has revealed a number of potential issues.

Heritage and Archaeology

The north western part of the site (Rose Lane Business Centre) was observed when the area was redeveloped for offices in the 1970s. The area had been heavily disturbed by modern cellars and only 1 post-medieval pit was recorded. It is anticipated that other parts of the site may be in a similar state. Nevertheless the site does in part fall within the area of the Saxon and medieval town so there could be remains not affected by basements. The likelihood of significant archaeology will be relatively low given the distance from the historic core.

As a minimum a watching brief will be necessary in tandem with any development redevelopment. Beyond that, archaeological excavation may be necessary depending upon the nature of proposals and the construction approach (use of piles with ground beams and services set above existing ground levels will limit the risk but are likely to have cost implications).

Ground Conditions and Flood Risk

There is no specific data at this stage to indicate the presence of any contamination at the site although past land uses include an iron works and garage. Remedial clean-up of parts of the area may be necessary or the development strategy may be framed to minimise infiltration potential or the creation of new pathways for contaminants into groundwater or surface water systems.

Ground conditions will need to be determined through site investigation to inform construction advice. Asbestos surveys and any associated removal/ disposal work will be required prior to any demolition clearance of existing buildings and structures.

Shallow groundwater levels suggest that the chalk would be saturated at this location. Therefore it is highly unlikely that chalk mining would have been undertaken here. However, there may be minor dissolution features at the interface between the chalk and the sands and gravels above. If present, cavities may pose problems to piling operations.

Parts of the area are at risk of flooding and with potential for flood depths of up to 0.75m in an extreme flood event a sequential approach towards the allocation of land uses within the site boundary is advised. The more vulnerable residential development should be located either above the 1 in 1000 year (0.1% annual probability) flood level (i.e. by raising finished floor levels or locating living space above the ground floor) or be located towards those parts of the sites which are outside the extent of the 1 in 1000 year (0.1% annual probability) event.

Through the master planning exercise consideration has been given to the provision of appropriate access routes from Mountergate and Rose Lane. Plot levels across the site should be finalised with due consideration to managing surface water runoff and providing suitable overland flow routes.

Development Prospects

With significant public ownership, no established residential use, and increasing regeneration potential, the Mountergate area is pivotal to the Partnership's objectives in South City.

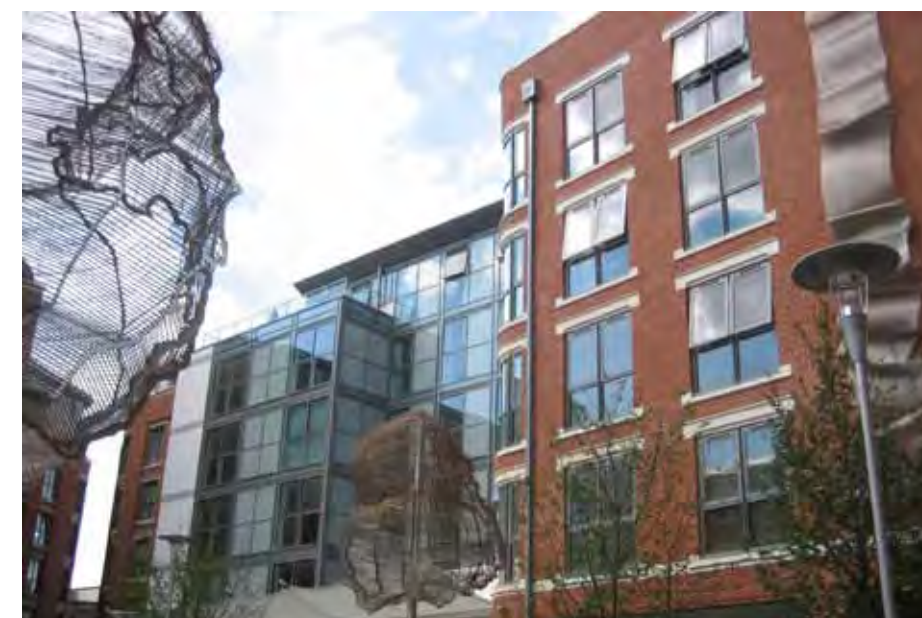
The location is suitable for a mix of commercial uses to the north, benefitting from proximity to the railway station and frontage to a relatively busy route accessing the City Centre. It also has potential for residential development, and offers the only major opportunity to increase and improve the provision of car parking. Recognising limited market potential for new office development at the present time, the master plan supports the emerging development plan and seeks to lay the foundation for mixed use redevelopment, over the longer term. Opportunity exists to work with the neighbouring landowner to realise the wider potential.

Provision of a new multi-storey car park (as a first phase of development at Mountergate) would provide a positive signal of renewal and set a quality standard, helping to improve the attractiveness of the broad location, and immediately adjoining areas, for further investment. The site of the former UK Fire Building and Fishmarket is emerging as the preferred location.

A scheme which combines a 500+ space, high quality car park and an element of commercial use (at ground floor level) should be viable and capable of meeting a range of strategy objectives. Provision of a new car park could facilitate release of the Rose Lane and Rouen Road car parks for new, probably predominantly residential, uses. The Partnership should consider whether to facilitate residential development to provide affordable homes and/or homes for private rent, in the short to medium term, or define opportunities for private housing as market conditions improve.



New apartments off Rosary Road in Norwich



Mixed use commercial space around a landscaped square

Recommendations – Next Steps

It is recommended that the Partnership:

- Progress the car park project.
- Explore and where appropriate pursue ways to prime the area for investment in new office and commercial uses, in the future, which may include further freehold and leasehold acquisitions.
- Pursue further dialogue with neighbouring landowners and potential investors to facilitate joint venture delivery in the future.

The Partnership Role

The Partnership recognise the short term opportunity to deliver a new multi-storey car park (with a commercial component at ground floor level) within the Mountergate West area and facilitate the longer term potential for new residential and commercial uses. This is likely to include intervention through the investment of public money and land in provision of the car park (securing a valuable revenue stream) and could see the Partners taking action to prepare the way for or take a direct stake in future residential and/or commercial development.

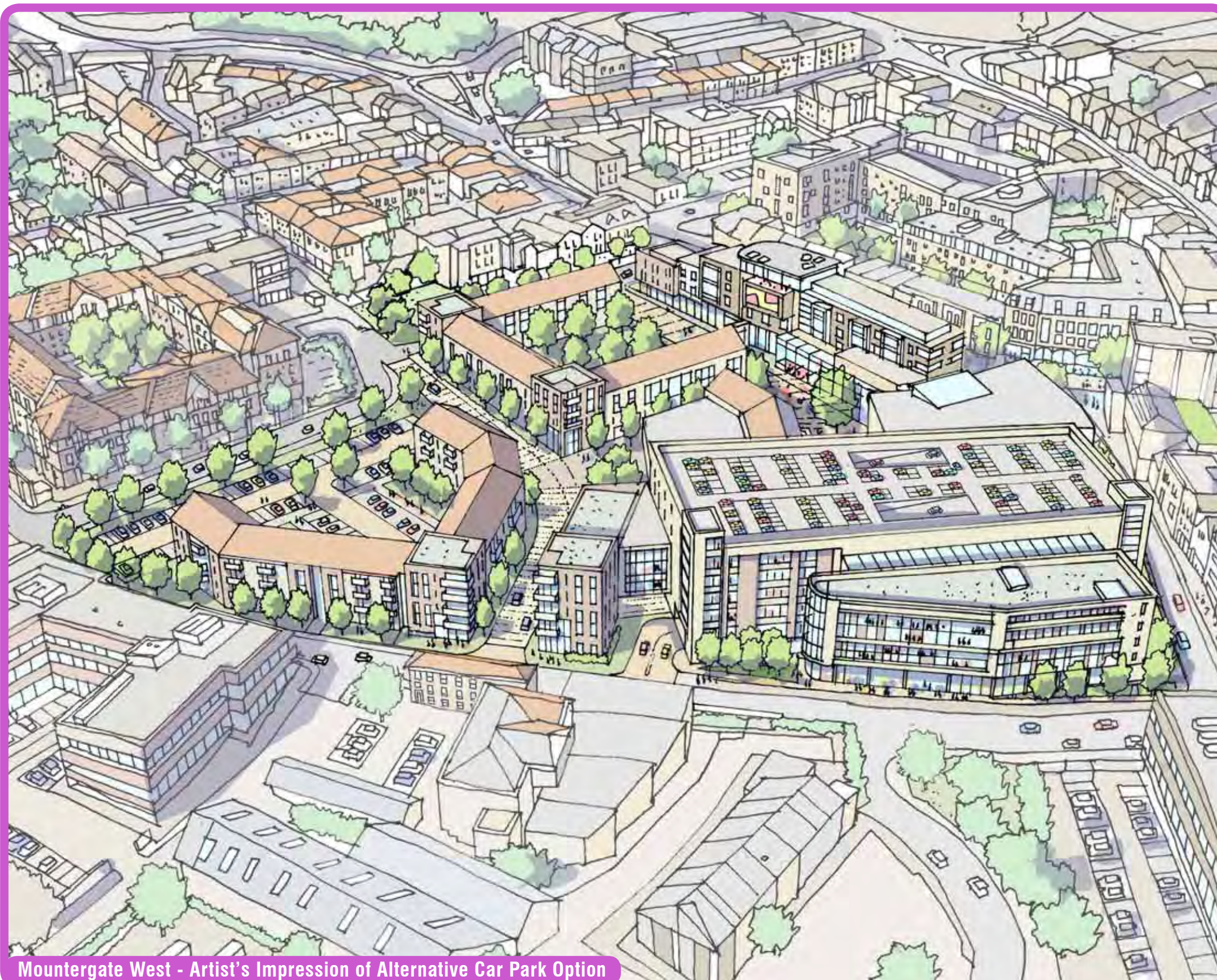
In response to the recommendations above the Partnership has resolved to play an active role in this project, recognising that the delivery of any car park would be the Council's responsibility, focused on:

- Commencing work on a design and delivery plan;
- Assessing options on a preferred layout;
- Design and other work to secure planning consent; and
- Liaison with key stakeholders and land owners, including the Great Hospital.



Mountergate West - Artist's Impression

Site 2 Mountergate West

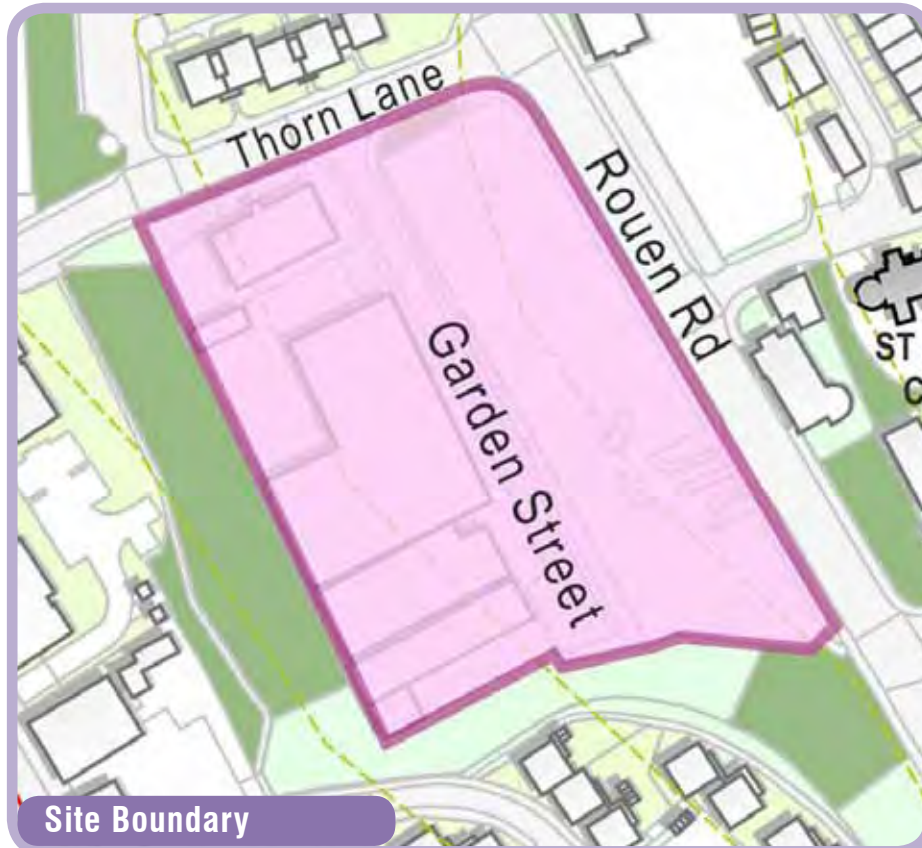


Mountergate West - Artist's Impression of Alternative Car Park Option

Site 3 Garden Street



Site 3 Garden Street



Location

Development Opportunity Site 3, Garden Street, encompasses land east and west of Garden Street, bounded by Thorn Lane (to the north) Rouen Road (to the east) and the wooded ridge (to the south and west).

Existing Land Use

The area between Rouen Road and Garden Street is used by a surface pay and display car park, operated by Norwich City Council. It provides 210 spaces. To the west of Garden Street are a number of industrial units, occupied by a number of car repair businesses.

Ownership and Land Owner Objectives

The Garden Street Opportunity Site is in the freehold ownership of the City Council. There are a variety of leasehold arrangements in place with occupiers, several having 50+ years remaining.

Key Planning Policy Considerations

The emerging Norwich Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document is seeking to allocate the site for housing led mixed use development including a minimum of 100 dwellings and an element of small scale office/business units for small businesses (Development Plan Allocations Site CC11).

The County Council has objected to the prospect of the site being used exclusively for housing. The County has identified the need for a new primary school in the southern sector of the city and have identified the Garden Street site as the potential location.



Immediate Context



Rouen House

Opportunity

Rouen Road for the large part lacks any strong sense of character. At its upper reach, close to the City Centre there is a cluster of large 1970s office buildings, including Rouen House. The recent development of a six storey block of apartments, has introduced one modern element of residential development into this otherwise rather out-dated, and under-occupied office quarter. There is evidence that landowners and developers are beginning to take an interest in the redevelopment and/or refurbishment of some of these buildings, following other good examples, nearby. There is potential for a range of uses – new homes, workspaces and commercial activities to begin to colonise and reinvigorate this area, making use of tired but by no means defunct built fabric.

Moving along Rouen Road, away from the Centre, residential uses predominate with distinct clusters of housing which vary in architectural form. There is not a strong relationship between the buildings and the street with a notable lack of frontage to the primary thoroughfare. Disjointed elements of landscape and the large expanse of the car park interrupt any sense of continuity along the route. As a result Rouen Road cuts through the area rather than providing a point of connection between the east and west.

Engagement with the local community revealed that despite the divisive impact of Rouen Road there is a broadly positive attitude towards living in the central part of the study area, particularly given the attractive landscape setting and the proximity to the City Centre. Although opinion varied on architectural approach, the majority of those members of the community who contributed to the master planning process were receptive to additional residential development in the area.



New 6 storey apartment building

A number of contributors also commented upon the need to ensure the community infrastructure is in place to support the community. Although it appears that most needs can at present be met within or adjoining the South City Area, the prospect of a new primary school, doctors surgery or other community services, delivered in tandem with new development was seen as desirable.

This strategy promotes a number of complementary measures to transform Rouen Road into a more unifying feature of the area. Small scale infill development and environmental improvements offer part of the solution. The development of the Garden Street site could however make a significant impact. It provides the single biggest opportunity to consolidate the residential community, introduce some more varied forms of housing, and for the first time establish an imposing frontage to Rouen Road.

The site is one which is likely to prove extremely attractive to residential developers. Its location, close to the City Centre and the River, but within an established residential community that has more of a quiet, suburban character, will have broad appeal. The sloping site, with an established backdrop of trees, lends itself to an interesting and potentially innovative design solution. The car parking will need to be replaced (it is proposed that it is delivered through a combination a new car park at Mountergate and additional parking along Rouen Road). The car park site is a relatively unconstrained, almost 'oven ready' development opportunity, with no need for major site clearance or business relocations.



Rouen Road Car Park



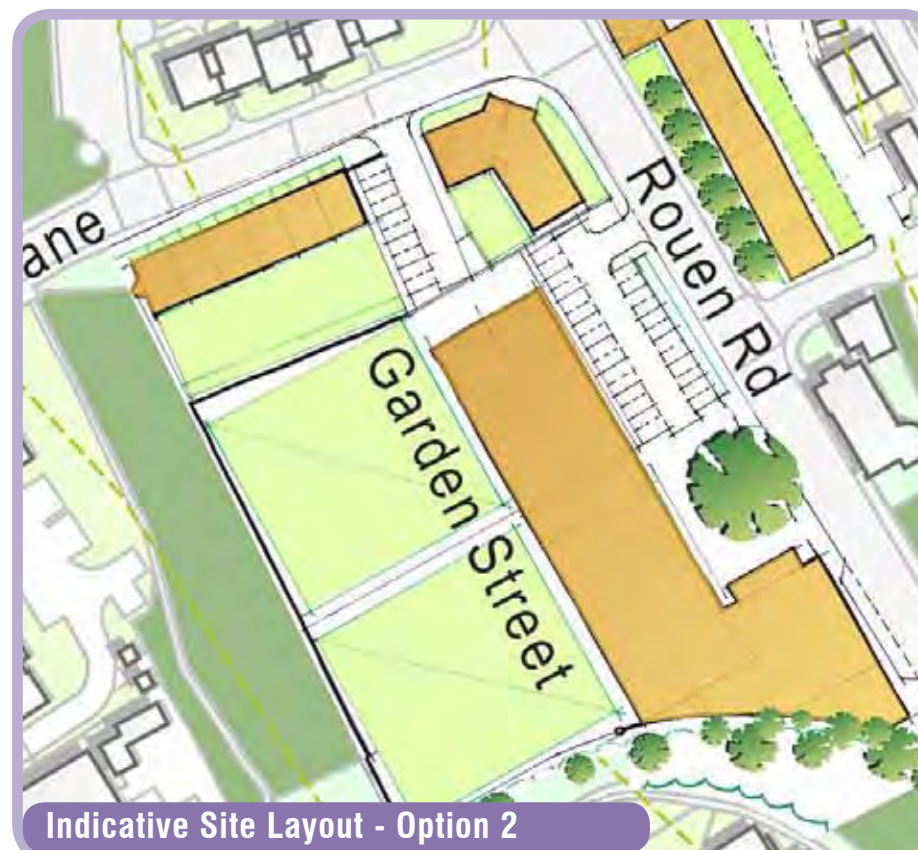
Rouen Road - Looking North



Thorn Lane

The Site Today

Site 3 Garden Street



This is likely to be a medium to longer term opportunity as some of the existing commercial buildings west of Garden Street are in active use. Redevelopment would be subject to suitable relocation of existing businesses as potential opportunities arise, and the subsequent demolition of the existing buildings. A two phased approach to redevelopment may be possible with the frontage (car park) site coming forward ahead of the Garden Street west site.

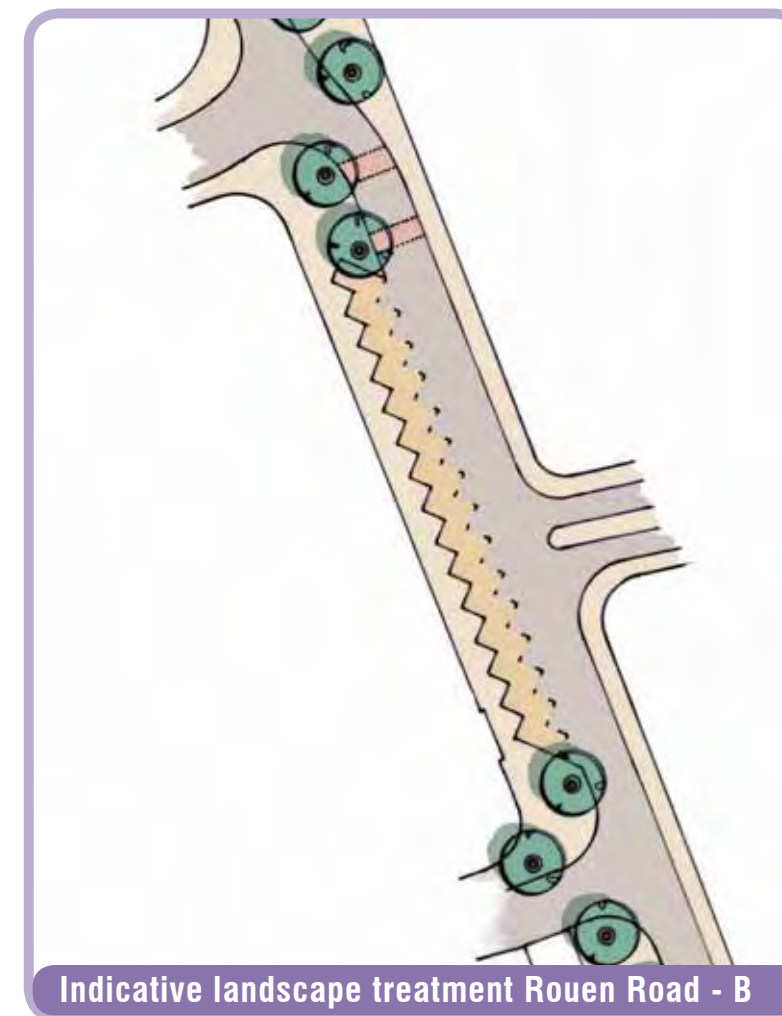
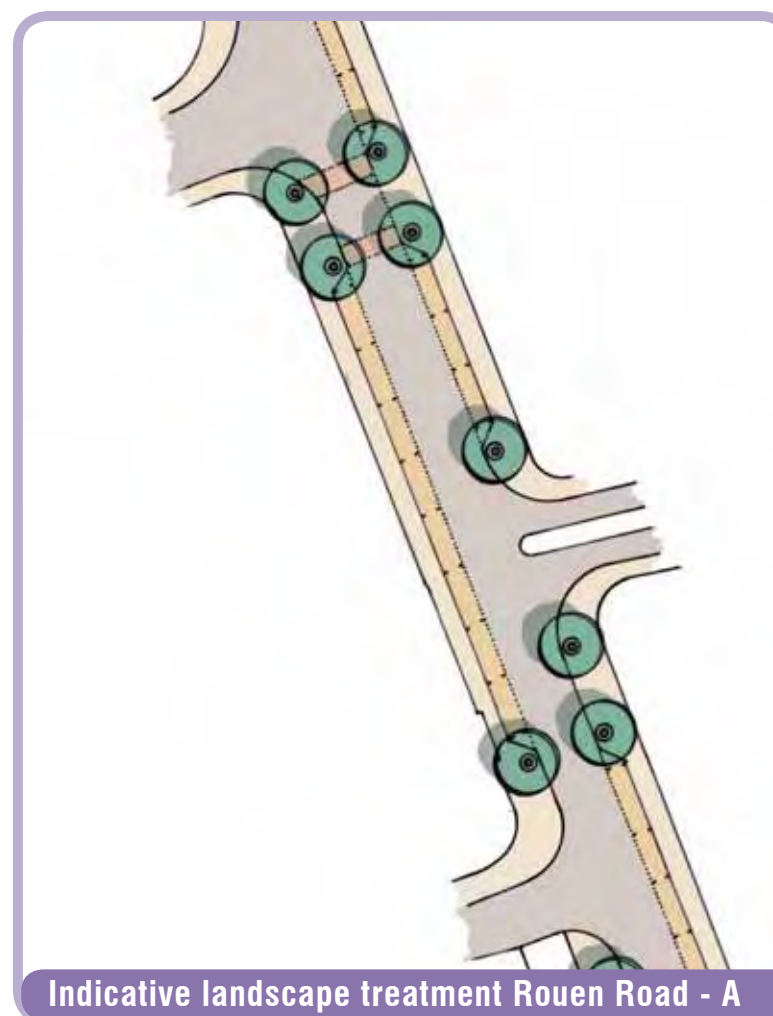
Responding to the emerging policy framework and community ambition to broaden the residential mix and strengthen the South City community, redevelopment for residential use or predominantly residential use could deliver significant private sector investment.

The site could also lend itself to provision of a primary school, should the need arise and in the absence of a suitable development site, subject to further detailed evaluation and a identification of a means of delivery.

Key Development Principles

Through analysis and consultation a number of principles have been identified which should govern and guide the future development of the Garden Street area. These are reflected in the illustrative master plan, but could also be achieved through a range of alternative development options.

- Through new development or refurbishment a high quality frontage to Rouen Road and Thorn Lane should be established.
- Enhancement of the area of the Wooded Ridge which adjoins the site should be addressed as an integrated element of the plans for the site.
- The architectural approach should take advantage of the changing levels to discreetly accommodate parking and exploit the views.
- The scheme should incorporate a mix of housing types including townhouses with small gardens.





Development Potential

There are two possible development scenarios for Garden Street.

Master plan option 1 indicates the potential for residential development and demonstrates capacity for 70 dwellings in the form of townhouses.

This approach does not yield the number of units anticipated by the emerging Local Development Framework (which cites 100 units) but represents a commercially attractive prospect with houses rather than apartments and dedicated, surface car parking.

Master plan option 2 indicates the scope to deliver a new primary school and a small element of residential development, making the most efficient use of the land available. This reflects an approach which delivers a modern, two form entry school, over two storeys, adopting an 'urban' model (incorporating associated staff parking and play space), of which there are a number of good examples across the UK. The plan demonstrates capacity for:

- Primary school – (approximately 3,000 square metres of built development).
- 16 townhouses.

Delivery Issues

There are a number of urban context and urban design considerations which it is recommended should guide the redevelopment proposals for the site. Appropriate responses to these considerations are addressed under Key Development Principles above. In addition, there are a number of development issues which will have a significant impact upon the likelihood of the opportunity described in this Strategy being realised.

Existing Businesses

A number of businesses operate from the industrial units occupying the westerly part of the site. Securing the leasehold interest is the first significant delivery issue linked to the need to protect and support existing local employment. Development of the site will be dependent upon securing the co-operation of the existing businesses and, if required, supporting their relocation to more suitable premises.

Competing Land Use Options

The County Council's ambition for a school and the translation of that ambition into a deliverable project is in direct conflict with the City Council's preferred approach, as promoted through the emerging Local Development Framework which would see the site brought forward for predominately residential use. The potential use of the site for a school has significant implications for the Partnership in terms of realising commercial potential within the South City Area, as there are only a limited number of development opportunities with potential for significant commercial return to the Partnership. The route by which a school might be delivered is at present unclear.

A school would bring benefits to the existing and enlarged community within the area and potentially serve new development at the Deal Ground. It could help to support residential land values and realise ambitions for a more diverse community. But setting aside a site for a use if there is no realistic prospect of it being achieved could have a significant negative impact on the regeneration potential of the area. It is critical to determine the priority for the site, be clear that if it is for a school it is achievable within a reasonable time frame, and then move forward with certainty.

Potential Abnormal Costs

Redevelopment of previously developed sites invariably gives rise to some significant or abnormal costs typically associated with demolition, site clearance, ground conditions decontamination, servicing and archaeology. Desk-top analysis reveals a number of potential issues.

Heritage and Archaeology

Preliminary desk top investigation suggests that despite the location of the site within the area of the old City, it is not anticipated that it will be of any great archaeological interest. An archaeological study will be necessary to confirm this position and support application proposals.

Ground Conditions and Flood Risk

There is no specific data at this stage to indicate the presence of any contamination at the site although past land uses include timber yards and a depot and there are a number of car repair uses in current occupation. Remedial clean-up of the site may be necessary or the development strategy may be framed to minimise infiltration potential or the creation of new pathways for contaminants into groundwater or surface water systems.



Examples of residential development on sloping sites



Site 3 Garden Street

Ground conditions will need to be determined through site investigation to inform construction advice. Asbestos surveys and any associated removal/ disposal work will be required prior to any demolition/clearance of the existing buildings.

Previous subsidence and conditions conducive to chalk mining, coupled with the lack of extensive investigation of previous mine workings, suggest that it is likely that further untreated mine workings are present on the site. As such, a programme of investigation, drilling and grouting may well be required to stabilise

the site in advance of redevelopment. Special consideration will also need to be given to foundation and surface water drainage design solutions.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1. The proposed development would be deemed appropriate according to Table 3 of the Technical Guidance to the NPPF, and is not subject to application of the Sequential Test.



Garden Street- Artist's Impression

Development Prospects

The Garden Street site provides the single biggest opportunity to consolidate the residential community and introduce some more varied forms of housing into the South City Area as well as establishing an imposing frontage to Rouen Road. The emerging policy framework supports redevelopment of the site; it is in a prime location and would undoubtedly be of interest to commercial house builders. Alternatively, the Partnership might wish to pursue direct development to provide homes to rent, and thereby maintain a revenue stream.

The land is in freehold ownership of the City Council but existing use value, the revenue income generated by those uses, and a range of other leasehold interests mean that realising the opportunity presented in this strategy, will have to be pursued proactively. The challenges in terms of delivery, outlined above, are significant and complex, not least because of potentially competing priorities for the future use of the site.

Recommendations – Next Steps

It is recommended that the Partnership:

- Resolve corporate priorities in terms of the future use of the site and the benefits of capital receipt and regeneration versus on-going revenue income.
- Investigate grounds conditions and implications for development form and cost.
- With a better understanding of development costs, evaluate the range of development options which might be of commercial interest and the degree to which these are policy compliant, meet the objectives of this strategy and respond to the community ambitions, expressed here.
- Depending upon the outcome of investigations and resolutions made in response to those findings, determine a way forward in terms of defining a developable site and a route to presenting a site to market or engaging in direct development.

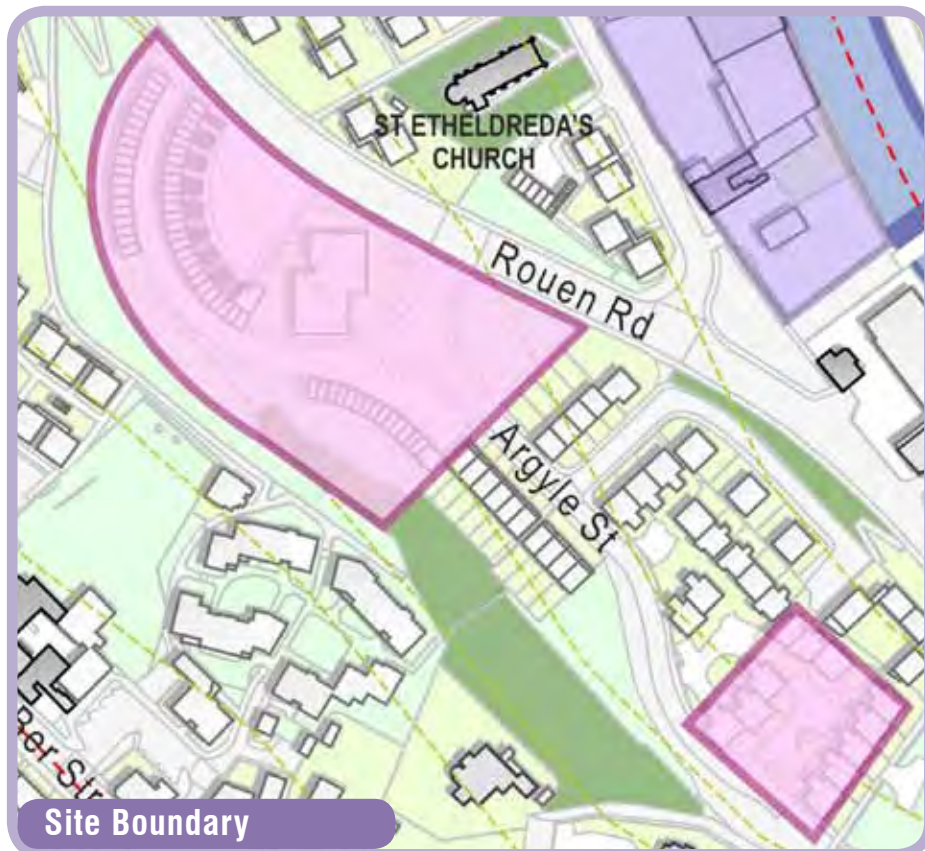
The Partnership's Role

Redevelopment of the Garden Street site is linked to the re-provision of car parking, within the context of the overall strategy presented here, and the complexities of dealing with existing leasehold interests and business relocations. If there is consensus and commitment to bring the site forward for redevelopment, there are then a number of options open to the Partnership to tackle the issues which might delay or frustrate investment.

Site **4** Normandie
Tower and
Argyle Street



Site 4 Normandie Tower and Argyle Street



Location

Normandie Tower and Argyle Street are centrally located within the study area adjoining and accessed from Rouen Road. The wooded ridge provides a backdrop to the site with housing areas adjoining to the north and east across Rouen Road. An area of public green space also adjoins the site to the south with terraced housing beyond.

Existing Land Uses

The current land use comprises residential development in the form of modern, terraced houses and purpose built flats in a point block. There are also areas of informal open space given over to grass which add little to environment, by way of amenity, as well as garage courts, parking areas and storage buildings for use by the residents of Normandie Tower. A number of the houses on Argyle Street have been decommissioned and are awaiting demolition because of subsidence; the remainder are occupied.

Land Ownership and Land Ownership Objectives

Much of the site is within the freehold ownership of the City Council. A number of the apartments have leasehold tenants and some of terraced houses have been subject to right-to-buy. The houses subject to subsidence are owned by the City Council.

Key Planning Policy Considerations

Argyle Street is in the Rouen Road/King Street area and is covered by King Street section of the City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal. The remains of St. Peter Southgate Church (grade II listed) and its former churchyard adjoin Argyle Street to the south west.

The emerging Norwich Site Allocation and Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document proposes the allocation of the part of the Argyle Street site affected by subsidence for redevelopment for a minimum of 12 dwellings (Policy CC12).

Relevant Planning History

There is no recent planning history of relevance to the development site.



Immediate Context

Opportunity

Normandie Tower and Argyle Street represent a small but significant opportunity within the wider study area. The development opportunity is focused around two main locations: the area of land around Normandie Tower and the junction with Argyle Street and Rouen Road; and the area of decommissioned housing at the southern end of Argyle Street. Both areas would be suitable for redevelopment to provide additional housing, with a focus on terraced houses with gardens, potentially suitable for families.

Any development potential should be realised in tandem with opportunities for investment in the appearance and amenity of Normandie Tower. Given the tower's prominence as a local landmark, enhancements to the external elevations of the building could be pursued, as at present it has a drab and dated appearance. Re-cladding would improve both the appearance of Normandie Tower, enhancing its identity within the wider study area, but could also increase the thermal performance and energy efficiency of the building through the provision of additional insulation material. Re-cladding options would need to be the subject of technical and structural feasibility work.

Redesigned, more functional amenity space (precisely what would need to be determined in consultation with residents) and storage provision, alongside reconfigured resident car parking, would be essential components of any refurbishment/development plans.

A small number of the Normandie Tower/Argyle Street residents engaged in the master planning exercise and were receptive to the opportunity to enhance the appearance and amenities of the area and replace the decommissioned properties, recognising that this is more likely to be achieved with some 'enabling' development.

Key Development Principles

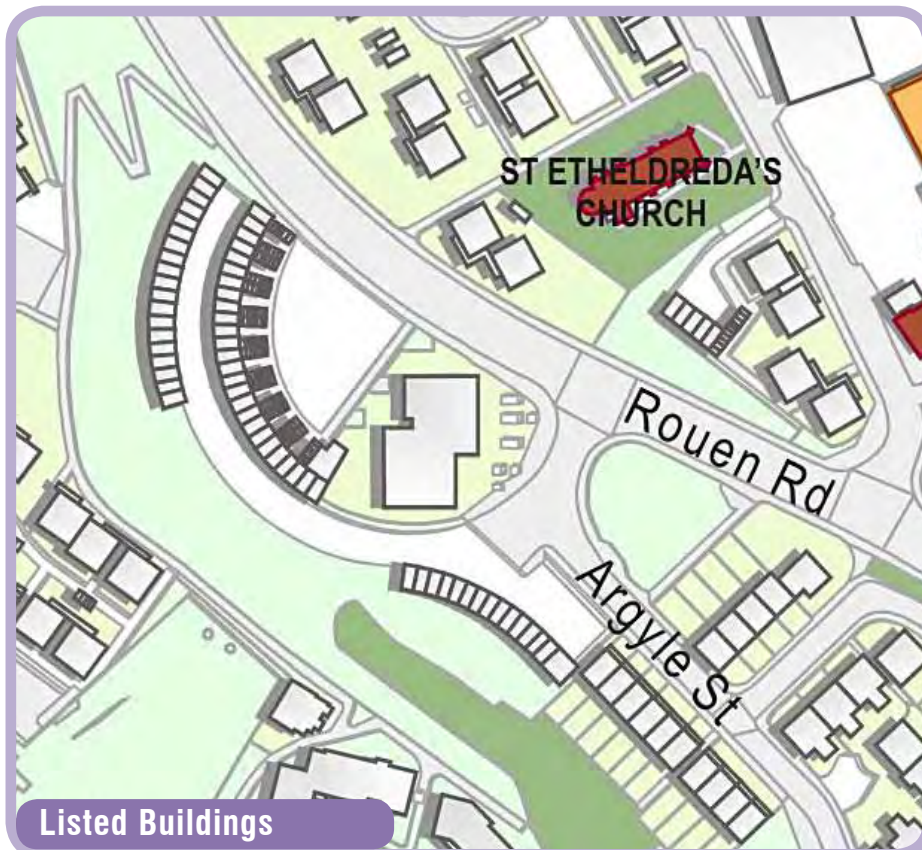
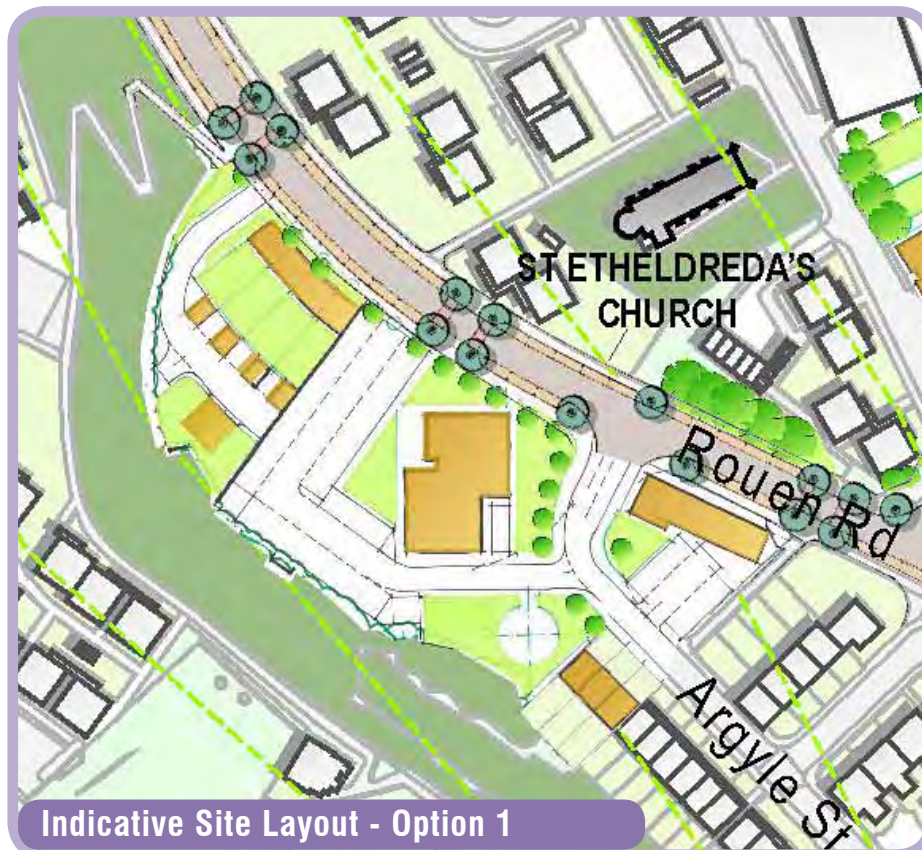
Through analysis of the site and consultation with the community a number of development principles have been identified. These will govern and guide the future development of the site. The development principles have been used in drawing up the illustrative master plan.

- Vehicular access will be maintained from Argyle Street and Rouen Road. Existing pedestrian access to Southgate Lane will be maintained.
- Residential redevelopment should comprise terraced houses with gardens, of up to three storeys in height, suitable for family occupation.
- Development will address Argyle Street, Rouen Road and proposed access streets and open spaces, to establish a robust built frontage and provide overlooking of the public realm.
- Consolidation of existing underutilised grassed areas around the base of Normandie Tower and by the junction with Argyle Street to provide higher quality and usable gardens and informal recreation space.
- Refurbishment of Normandie Tower to improve its visual appearance and thermal and energy efficiency.
- Reprovision of alternative parking, garaging and storage facilities, where required, for the existing residents of Normandie Tower.
- Assessment of the potential for overshadowing in establishing a suitable residential environment around Normandie Tower.



The Site Today

4 Normandie Tower and Argyle Street



Development Potential

The Illustrative Master Plan examines the development potential of the site. The master plan has evolved through an iterative process of design and viability assessment to arrive at a layout that has the potential to maximise return adopted the design principles set out above. Proposals for the redevelopment of decommissioned dwellings are being progressed in conjunction with the City Council, and there is potential for a comprehensive scheme to be brought forward on both areas.

The plan focuses on the area around the base of Normandie Tower, consolidating areas of grass landscape into more usable public space and redeveloping existing garage blocks to introduce up to 12 new townhouses with associated gardens and parking spaces. This would be in tandem with reprovision of equivalent parking and storage facilities for the residents of Normandie Tower.



Example of re-clad tower block

Delivery Issues

Geo-technical

Given the recent history of the site there is only one significant issue related to delivery. The subsidence associated with a long history of chalk and lime working in the area means that some of the existing buildings on Argyle Street must be demolished to make way for new development. Future development will require significant ground condition investigations to address the existing problems of subsidence. Mitigation will be required prior to redevelopment, and this is likely to place a financial burden on the site impacting on issues of viability. Normandie Tower has received extensive investment to account for issues arising from ground conditions, and suitable investigations will also need to be undertaken in relation to construction on land around the tower.

Viability

Subject to site investigations, and satisfying the requirements of the existing tenants in relation to parking and storage, the site at Normandie Tower is presently undeveloped and available to come forward for development. It is likely to be suitable for lower value residential development and should be a viable prospect. Any potential uplift could then be reinvested towards the refurbishment of Normandie Tower. The site could be packaged together with the Argyle Street site to help off-set costs associated with subsidence and ground remediation.

Development Prospects

Although viability is not fully proven, the opportunity to deliver a small number of residential units on vacant and underutilised land around Normandie Tower has scope to offer financial return. The site could be packaged together with the Argyle Street area to help off-set costs associated with subsidence/remediation and reprovision of housing there. Alternatively, if developed by the Partnership, adopting a non-conventional profit model, some value may be created to reinvest in the cladding of Normandie Tower. This approach might include accommodating off-site affordable housing requirements, associated with residential development elsewhere within the area.

Recommendations – Next Steps

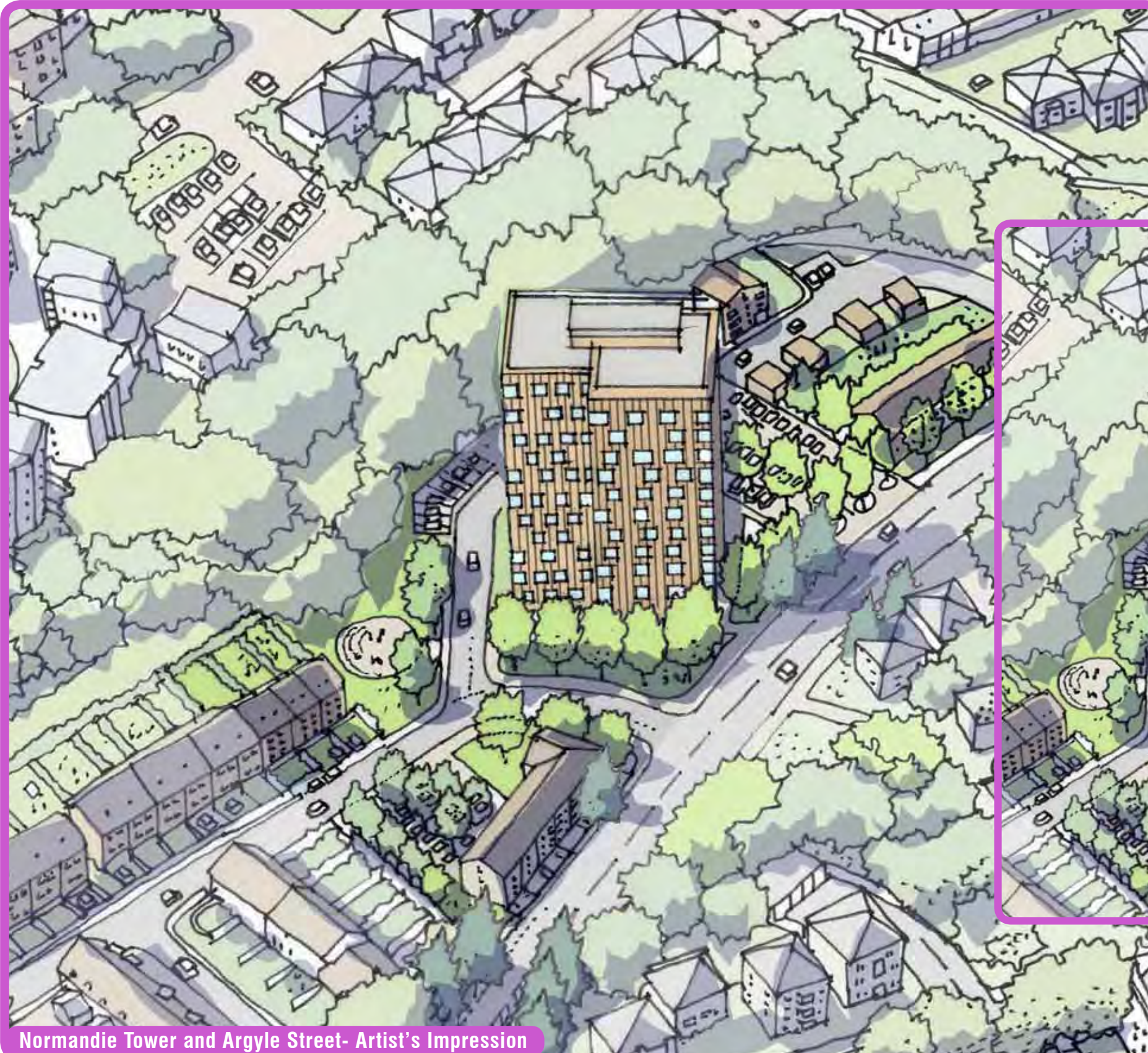
It is recommended that the Partnership:

- Investigate ground conditions and implications for development form and cost.
- With a better understanding of development costs, evaluate the range of development options.
- Depending upon viability, resolve whether to bring the project forward and determine an appropriate delivery mechanism, with or without the Argyle Street project.
- If to proceed, draw up a concept scheme, test impacts and consult residents.

The Partnership Role

The Partnership has a potentially pivotal role to play in bringing forward this opportunity, primarily as NCC is landowner but also as planning authority and landlord to existing tenants. Preliminary ground investigations and full consultation with residents will be necessary to refine the proposals, determine viability and potential return, and resolve whether the proposal should move forward. The Partnership will need to consider how the Argyle Street and Normandie Tower sites can best be progressed, independently or packaged together.

4 Normandie Tower and Argyle Street

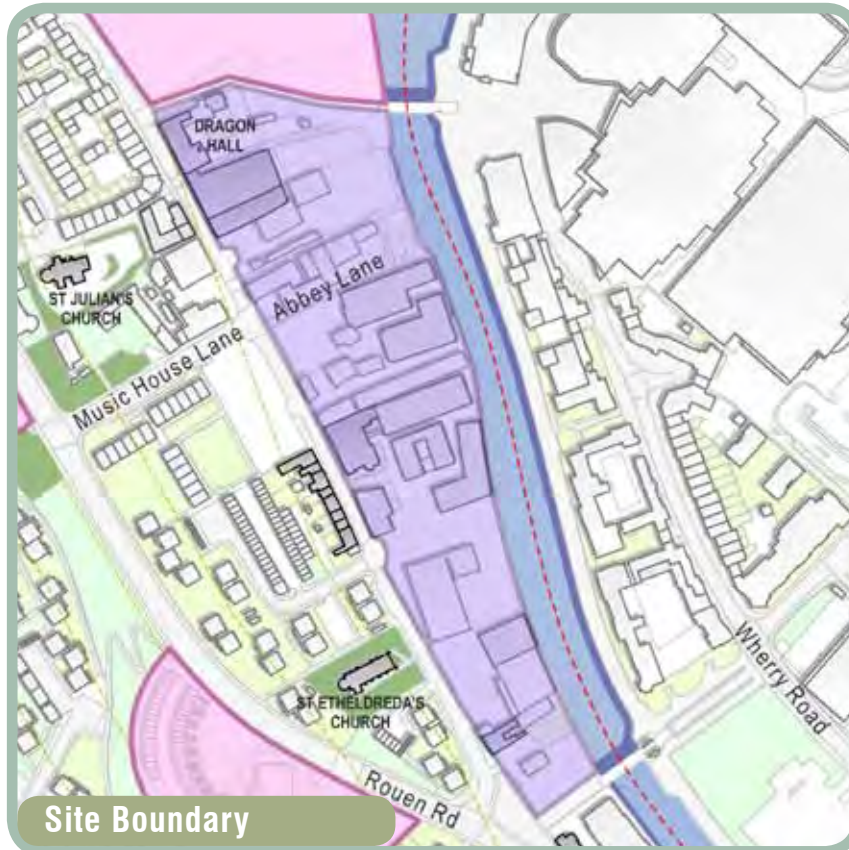


Normandie Tower and Argyle Street- Artist's Impression

Study Area **1** King Street
/ Wensum
Bank Study
Area



Site 4 King Street / Wensum Bank Study Area



The King Street Wensum Bank is an important location at the heart of the wider Study Area. It occupies the area between King Street and the River Wensum extending from St Anne's Lane to the north, to the Novi Sad footbridge to the south adjoining the junction between King Street and Rouen Road.

The area has a strong existing character and identity influenced as much by the diverse mix of uses that occur as by the buildings and spaces between them. The key characteristics of the area can be summarised as:

Built Form. For a relatively small area there is a rich diversity of different buildings and structures. These range from a number of significant listed buildings of major historic value – The Music House and Dragon Hall, to humbler but extremely attractive workshop and studio spaces – Wensum Lodge and the Waterfront for example, and more modern industrial and garage buildings. The palette of materials is equally rich and diverse ranging from timber framed buildings and horizontal timber boarding, painted render, red brick and stone to weather-boarding and corrugated metal panels

There is an informal character to the built form particularly along the river, demonstrating the organic growth and development of the area over time. This is very much part of its character as a trading port i.e. buildings being built primarily for a functional use with increasing height within existing burgage plots extending from King Street, rather than in linear form along the river. It will be important to maintain and respect the diversity of built form drawing on key design references to inform proposals.

Public Realm. The public realm is very much characterised by a number of quite intimate spaces, alleyways, lanes and courtyards that run east/west between King Street and the river. King Street is particularly notable for these narrow historic lanes leading down to the river -: some of these retain original granite setts etc. and are important characteristic of King Street being a port up until the 1980s. Spaces are principally edged and defined by the elevations of adjoining buildings, or by brick boundary walls, with a range of hard surface materials and stone kerbs. There are only small areas of garden and a limited number of trees but those that exist make a strong impact – the walnut tree adjoining the Music House for example, and the London Planes adjoining the Waterfront. This means that care should be taken to replicate the intimate nature of the public realm with a well designed approach to hard and soft landscape to complement the existing character of the area.



Immediate Context



Mix of Uses. There is an extremely varied mix of uses taking place in the Wensum Bank area. As well as residential development there are workshops, garages and small business, education uses at Wensum Lodge including a sports hall facility, cultural and museum uses at Dragon Hall, and the Waterfront live music venue. In addition there are areas of vacant land and empty premises, some with existing planning permission, but yet to come forward for development. Managing the process of change whilst retaining an eclectic mix of uses will be important in retaining the overall character of the area.

River Frontage. The River Wensum is a significant asset for the South City Centre Area, and the Wensum Bank is strongly defined both historically and in terms of its current character by the proximity to the river. Views towards the Wensum Bank are important, and there are a number of boats moored along the river, some in a better state of repair than others, which contribute to the overall identity of the area. Bridging points facilitate access, although the areas around both of the bridge landing points are currently vacant and do not contribute strongly to the character of the area.

Accessibility. Access around the Wensum Bank is principally gained via King Street, with St Anne's Lane and Abbey Lane running down to the river. There are also pedestrian alleyways between buildings, contributing to the fine-grained character of the area, although there isn't a footpath that runs along the river itself. Establishing improved access to the riverside and opportunities to walk along it is a long-term aim of the City Council.

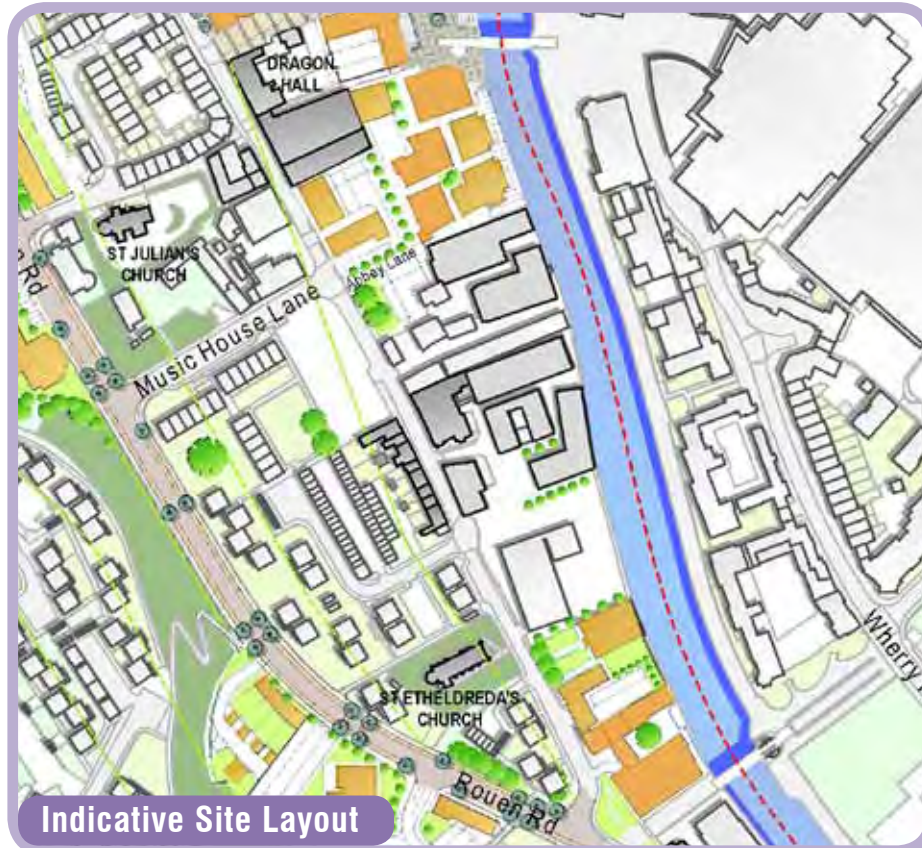
The King Street Wensum Bank also helps to define the wider character and perception of the South City Centre area despite only being a relatively small part of it. It will therefore be important to ensure that this character is maintained and enhanced through a careful and proactive approach to incremental change drawing on the fine grained, historic appearance when considering development opportunities, and maintaining the mix of small business premises, cultural venues and studio space that exist.

The upper reach of King Street has a degree of vibrancy as a result of a mix of commercial and community activities as well as residential properties. The Butterfly Café, Dragon Hall and a small convenience store manage to trade further along King Street despite the blight of the St Anne's Wharf site and fairly limited passing trade. If St Anne's Wharf can be brought back to life in the way described above, to include new, small scale commercial activities, it is possible to envisage a string of varied attractors – small shops, retail outlets, local services and small businesses – interspersed with housing, extending from the northern end of King Street, past St Anne's Wharf and through the Wensum Bank area. It is not proposed to create a centre, as such, for the South City Centre Area – but to see the mix of uses and activity along King Street persist and increase – it should gain a stronger role as the focus for the South City community.



The Site Today

Site 4 King Street / Wensum Bank Study Area



The West Bank of the River Wensum looking south

To this end a number of objectives are proposed for the King Street Wensum Bank area against which proposals can be shaped and assessed:

Maintain the King Street Wensum Bank as a mixed-use place. Proposals should be assessed on their own merits as well as the contribution, or impact, they might have on maintaining the mixed use character of the area. For example, the siting and design of residential development will need to have particular regard to proximity to venues including Dragon Hall and the Waterfront in order to ensure the viability of these businesses is protected. Careful management and enhancement of small business space will be encouraged with the aim of maintaining a mix of different premises that are flexible and available at different costs. Different character areas should be promoted along the Wensum Bank to reinforce its identity.

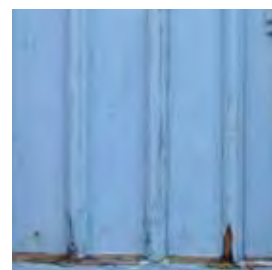
Design References that promote innovation over pastiche. It will be important to ensure modern development can be read as being 'of its time', rather than simply pastiche, while respecting traditional built forms and historic buildings, through use of complementary materials and appropriate scale, height and massing. The industrial character of many buildings and structures should inform the design aesthetic of development along



The West Bank of the River Wensum looking north

the Wensum Bank, with the City Flour Mills setting a precedent in terms of appearance and materials used, although the height and scale of these buildings is greater than those along the Wensum Bank. Here development of up to four storeys in height will reflect the prevailing character of the area. The composition of built form and public realm when viewed from the river and the walkway on the opposite bank should also be carefully considered, maintaining an informal juxtaposition of buildings, gable ends, and gaps affording glimpses along lanes, alleyways and courtyard spaces.

Enhance the River Corridor. Maintaining and enhancing the appearance of and access to the River Wensum is an important objective. A particular focus for development should be around the pedestrian bridging points establishing a stronger identity for the Wensum Bank area through the design of buildings and associated public realm. Access to the river should be enhanced wherever possible, although a feature of some existing buildings is an elevation built up directly from the river bank thereby restricting opportunities for providing a riverside walkway. Signage of a route, even one that only provides some access to the river bank, should be considered as part of a wider interpretation of the history of the area. Mooring opportunities should be formalised and maintained.



In addition to the overarching objectives that will inform proposals for the King Street Wensum Bank, there are also four discreet Character Areas that also shape the identity of the area. They provide significant opportunities for infill and localised redevelopment to reinforce the overall character and identity of the West Bank as a whole.

Dragon Hall Character Area. Dragon Hall is a significant local landmark and a key medieval, listed building in the City. It has been restored and extended to an exceptionally high standard, and benefits from a prominent location on the corner of King Street and St Ann Lane. Although the building is of a high quality the surrounding setting is less strong. It includes an area of vacant land adjoining the river, a former electrical showroom premises with partly retained historic facade that links into Dragon Hall over Old Barge Yard, and a former garage premises adjoining Hobrough Lane to the south.

Historic plans show that Dragon Hall has been part of a closely developed block defined by King Street, St Ann Lane, the River and east/west lanes and corridors including Old Barge Yard and Hobrough Lane. There is now an opportunity for contextually sensitive redevelopment schemes adjoining Dragon Hall to restore and reinforce its setting whilst still providing access to the river. Key components should include:

Key components should include:

- Development blocks that address the river and the landing point of the Lady Julian Bridge as well as King Street and Hobrough Lane.
- Respect established plots where they exist, maintaining linear east/west forms fronting King Street and the river.
- Establish courtyard spaces and gardens to accommodate small areas of car parking, servicing and amenity space. Carriage arches and brick built walls should provide enclosure.
- Provide public access to the river between the landing point of the Lady Julian Bridge and Hobrough Lane.
- Development limited to a maximum of between 2 and 3 storeys to allow Dragon Hall to remain the dominant built form element and local landmark.
- A mix of uses that do not detract from the ongoing use of Dragon Hall as a venue, minimising opportunities for noise and disturbance to occur.



The restored Dragon Hall



The Dragon Hall

The Wensum Lanes Character Area. The Wensum Lanes area is a characterful mix of small businesses focused on the ABC Wharf, Abbey Lane and Hobrough Lane. The area includes the Waterfront music venue as well as a converted warehouse providing houses. The east west orientated linear development forms along the lanes are quite distinctive, with an industrial character comprising groups of single and two storey buildings. Courtyard and forecourt spaces, particularly that outside the Waterfront with its tree planting, also contribute to the character of the area. Key development principles should include:

- Maintain the layout of lanes, courtyards and groups of linear buildings between King Street and the river.
- Continue to support a mix of primarily small business and workshop uses together with the Waterfront venue.
- In considering new infill development and proposals for conversion of existing buildings ensure that the viability of current uses are not compromised through, for example, potential for noise and disturbance.

Site 4 King Street / Wensum Bank Study Area



Disused Warehouse Buildings

Wensum Lodge Character Area. The Wensum Lodge character area is the largest along the Wensum Bank. The northern part of the site is occupied by the Norfolk County Council run education facility, comprising a range of extremely attractive and historic listed buildings and courtyard spaces. This includes the Grade I listed Music House which is located prominently adjoining King Street. In addition there is the 1970's built sports hall and an area of car parking that has an open aspect to the river. The sports hall retains a brick built boundary wall adjoining King Street that extends to the former Ferryboat Inn to the south.

At the southern part of the Wensum Lodge site are a group of large, disused warehouse buildings that are set back from King Street and have prominent elevations immediately adjoining the river's edge. The main building is brick built and has a distinctive double pitched roof of soft red clay tiles. Many of the windows have been bricked up, but the main façade overlooking the sports hall car park has a strong character. It is locally listed and shares a similar character to many of the other historic buildings in the Wensum Lodge complex. Adjoining it is a flat roof warehouse building that has a more utilitarian appearance although it does have a reasonably distinctive brick elevation fronting the river. The warehouse site is being considered by the City Council as a potential development site, for a mix of uses including housing.



Sports Hall and Car Parking

Key development components for the Wensum Lodge site should comprise:

- Retention of the historic complex of buildings at Wensum Lodge. Should the education use be reduced or cease (the County Council are reviewing the future use of the complex) priority will be given to conversion for community uses, small business, workshop and studio space.
- Conversion of the locally listed warehouse building to residential use reinstating window openings and providing courtyard gardens and parking accessed from King Street.
- Redevelopment of the remainder of the warehouse site for housing incorporating courtyard parking and gardens.
- Retention of the sports hall or reprovion of suitable, modern sports facilities close by (recognising the building is not of any great merit and will become an increasing maintenance liability) in which case residential/mixed use redevelopment of the site may be considered. A linear built form between King Street and the river, with a robust frontage to King Street and retaining public access to the riverfront would reflect the prevailing character of the area. Existing trees should be retained.



Wensum Lodge courtyard space



Locally Listed Warehouse Building



River Footpath

Ferryboat Inn, 191 King Street Character Area. The area around the former Ferryboat Inn is an important opportunity within the Wensum Bank area. It is prominently located adjoining King Street and the Novi Sad Bridge with an extensive river frontage. Proposals for the use of the site for a backpackers hostel have been approved, including the restoration of the listed Inn building, and would contribute significantly to the vitality and mixed use character of the Wensum Bank. Key development components of this scheme include:

- Retention and restoration of the listed Inn building.
- Extension of the Inn building towards the river, two storeys in height so it is subservient to the main Inn, with a carefully articulated roofline and end gable elevation addressing the river including provision of a boat house and launch area.
- Principal development block on the southern part of the site with main elevations fronting King Street, the Novi Sad Bridge and the river.
- Design character reflecting an industrial type mill building primarily four storeys in height, and five storeys adjoining the Novi Sad bridge.
- Incorporation of a central garden space with open river access.
- Single storey, lightweight reception building accessed from and fronting King Street linking the Inn and southern development block.
- Basement parking taking advantage of ground levels and incorporating appropriate flood mitigation measures.



Ferryboat Inn waterfront



Ferryboat Inn



Vacant site adjoining Novi Sad Bridge

Delivery

There is case for the Wensum Bank to be considered as a special project area, with the Partnership working closely with businesses, residents, land owners and other stakeholders to produce a detailed development strategy and business plan. It will be important for a fine grain and contextual strategy to emerge, focused on protecting the established mixed use character of the area through identifying key users and occupiers, both existing and in the future, of different parts of the area. To this end a proactive approach, which manages and promotes change and supports business development and provision of local based community facilities, should be adopted working potentially with a number of partnership organisations to implement proposals. This could include the County Council, Norwich HEART and, potentially, the King Street Quarter.



Converted warehouse buildings along the River Wensum



King Street / Wensum Bank - Artist's Impression

Study Area 2 Mountergate East Study Area



Site 2 Mountergate East Study Area



The Mountergate East study area is tightly defined by Mountergate, Rose Lane, Prince of Wales Road, the River Wensum and Baltic Wharf. It comprises a mix of different building typologies and land uses. Fronting Rose Lane and Prince of Wales Road are office, retail and hotel premises dating from the late 1960's and early 1970's, the hotel being prominently located adjoining a key bridging point across the River Wensum, close to Norwich Station. An attractive area of landscape gardens associated with the hotel occupies a stretch of the river frontage, but with only limited public access available.

To the rear of these premises are large areas of associated surface car parking and service yards, accessed from Mountergate. There are also mixed business premises towards the centre of the site accessed from Baltic Wharf and Mountergate. These include two fine Grade II listed buildings, one prominently located adjoining Mountergate. Baltic House, a 1970's built office building, also fronts Mountergate with the contemporary residential development of Baltic Wharf to the rear and fronting the river – an attractive design precedent for the area.

Overall, the different building types, some of which add little to the character of the area, in terms of their design and appearance, together with the large areas of surface parking, lead to a fragmented urban character that is relatively underdeveloped given its central and accessible city centre location. The river frontage, garden area, Baltic Wharf development and the listed buildings are all important assets, as is the visibility of the area particularly from Prince of Wales Road and the river.



Immediate Context



The Site Today

Given that many of the buildings within the study area are currently occupied and subject to valuable and restrictive lease and ownership arrangements scope for major change should be regarded as a longer term opportunity, and not a priority. The following objectives should be established against which proposals for the area can be shaped and assessed:

Prioritise redevelopment opportunities. Focus on the redevelopment potential of the existing 1960's and 1970's constructed buildings on the site particularly as they reach the end of their commercial life. Rationalising car parking space, particularly within the context of potential for a new multi-storey car park at Mountergate west, should also be considered to increase the developable potential for a more intense pattern of development.

Retain a mixed use environment. As with many locations within the study area the mixed use character of Mountergate East is important in contributing towards the overall character and vitality of the South City Centre. A mix of uses should be retained on the site as part of any redevelopment options, with a focus on residential, commercial employment, retail and leisure uses.

Improve access to the river frontage. Although there is access to the river frontage at present this is not formalised – the hotel gardens are gated and there is no river path beyond Baltic Wharf. This aggravates problems of noise and disturbance for residents, as passers-by linger, compounded by inadequate signage of the routes. Proposals should retain and enhance access together with clear signage of the most direct routes where they exist. The gardens associated with the hotel should also be retained with options for increased public access explored.

Provide a more contextual built form. Much of the existing development can best be described as dated. Should redevelopment opportunities come forward a more contextual built form should be established providing an enhanced setting for existing historic buildings and development at Baltic Wharf. This should include strengthening the character and quality of frontage development along the River Wensum, Prince of Wales Road, Rose Lane and Mountergate.



Examples of improved waterside frontage



A mix of uses



Good access to the river

There are three potential future opportunities focused around the: Rose Lane/ Prince of Wales Road Frontage; St Faith’s House Area; and Baltic House. Part of the area is within a flood risk zone and would be subject to suitable design mitigation measures. Key design considerations for each of the potential future opportunities are set out below:

Rose Lane/Prince of Wales Road Frontage

This is a prominent location adjoining the River Wensum and a bust route into the city centre. Future development potential should exploit the location with robust frontage development addressing the street and river, and an active mix of ground floors uses enlivening the adjoining public realm. Particular attention should be paid to the design of key corners at the bridging point of Prince of Wales Road and the junction of Rose Lane and Mountergate, with new frontage development provided along Mountergate. Pedestrian access to the river frontage must be provided, and the gardens adjoining the existing hotel must be retained. A mix of different uses may be supported including hotel, residential, offices, and retail/ café/bar/restaurant uses at ground floor level. Parking and servicing should be discreetly accommodated within the centre of the development block.



Prince of Wales Road frontage

St Faith’s House Area

St Faith’s House and the adjoining building fronting Mountergate are both Grade II listed. They are attractive buildings contributing significantly to the character of this part of the study area. Immediately adjoining to the north and east are a range of single storey commercial and industrial buildings supporting a number of small businesses. Should these uses decide to vacate in the future there is significant potential to redevelop some of the commercial premises carefully infilling the area around St Faith’s House and adjoining listed building. This could establish finely grained development around small courtyard gardens and parking courts, addressing the river and establishing an enhanced setting for the listed buildings. Residential development in the form of town houses would be particularly appropriate given the proximity to existing development at Baltic Wharf. Public access to the river frontage must be provided.



St Faith’s House glimpsed from Mountergate

Baltic House

Baltic House is typical of its era – an early 1970’s constructed office building that is still in active use but looks dated, particularly in relation to adjoining development in Baltic Wharf. Should the opportunity arise for the redevelopment of the building more contextually sensitive form of development should be considered for the site, respecting the scale and character of buildings in Baltic Wharf as well as proposals coming forward on St Anne’s Wharf. A mix of town houses and apartments could be accommodated on the site, with development fronting Mountergate and Baltic Wharf. If the building is converted to another use, apartments for example, this should allow for the refurbishment of the external elevations to enhance the somewhat utilitarian appearance of the building through, for example, different size window openings, cladding materials that respect the context of the area, and the inclusion of balcony space. Care must also be taken to protect the privacy and residential amenity of the existing residents in Baltic Wharf.



Baltic Wharf adjoins Baltic House

Public Realm Priorities



Public Realm Priorities

A High Quality Public Realm

The public realm is an important element of the overall South City Centre Study Area. It is defined as the streets, spaces and walkways that provide access for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle users, a setting for development and places for activity to take place. The design and appearance of the public realm also helps to inform the overall perception of an area, providing an environment that is attractive, safe and welcoming to all users.

Norwich City Centre is largely characterised by a public realm that is of a high design standard and this must be reflected throughout the South City Centre. In order to inform the design process associated with implementing major public realm projects five overarching design objectives are proposed:

1. **Ensure a connected pattern of key streets, walkways and spaces enhancing opportunities for north south and east west movement across the Study Area with clear signage and wayfinding.**
2. **Prioritise pedestrian accessibility through providing wide pavements, direct crossings in key locations and shared surfaces to calm traffic.**
3. **Utilise quality materials, coordinated street furniture and detailing of a high design standard matching those used elsewhere in the City Centre, and at the north end of King Street, but distinguishing the character and identity of the Study Area.**
4. **Make sure that new development provides a strong, animated frontage addressing the public realm providing opportunities for activity and overlooking from key windows and entrances.**
5. **Provide a clear role and function for each element of the public realm – movement, relaxation, play, amenity – eliminating areas of 'left over' space.**



High quality landscaping and street furniture



There are a number of important public realm projects that need to be considered as part of the overall regeneration of the South City Centre Study Area. They fall into three main categories:

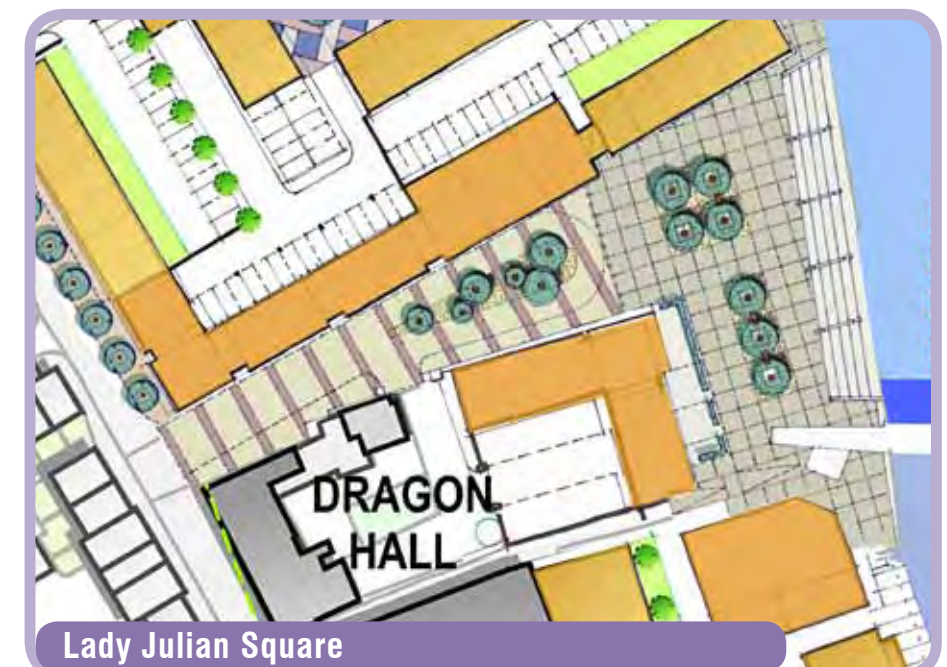
- **Key Interventions:** these are key projects where new areas of public realm are proposed or comprehensive reworking of existing streets and spaces is envisaged. They comprise new spaces at St Anne's Wharf, the revitalisation of the southern section of King Street and the redesign of Rouen Road.
- **Enhancement Priorities:** these are projects where targeted intervention and management of areas of the public realm will enhance the overall qualities of a location. They comprise strategies for the Wensum Corridor, Ber Street, Cattle Market Street and Rose Lane, and the Wooded Ridge.
- **Improved Environmental Management:** these are locations where consideration should be given to general enhancements to the public realm to make spaces more useable and attractive. They are primarily focused on existing spaces including the churchyards, the community garden off Rose Lane, and areas of informal open space particularly along Rouen Road and around Normandie Tower.

St Anne's Wharf

St Anne's Wharf is the principal development opportunity within the South City Centre Study Area. As part of the opportunity there are two elements of public realm that are proposed: referred to, for now, as Lady Julian Square and St Anne's Place.

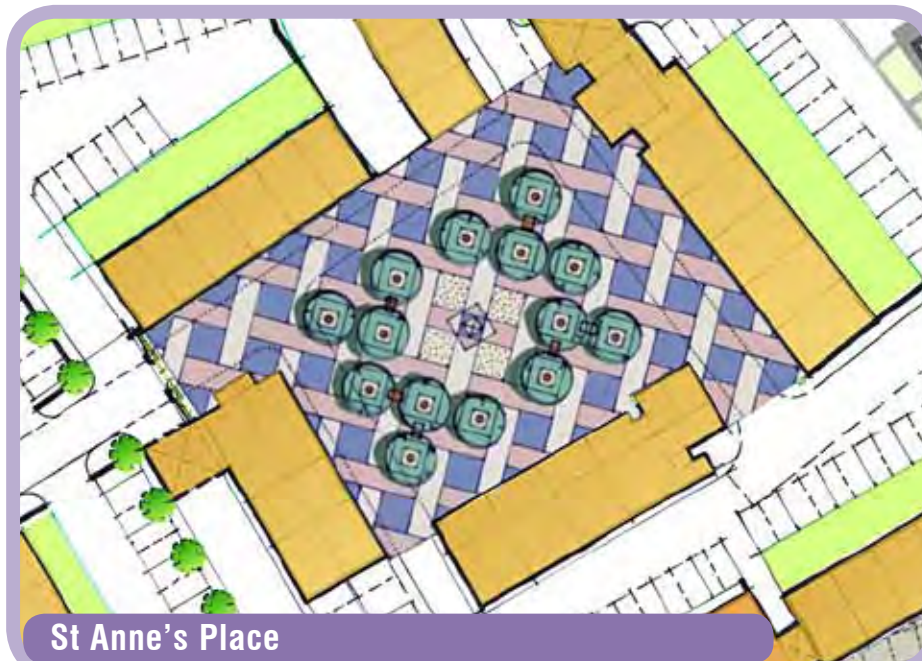
Lady Julian Square is envisaged as a key open space constructed at the termination of St Ann Lane and the landing point of the Lady Julian Bridge. The square should be gently terraced towards the River Wensum opening up this section of the river and providing areas of informal seating. There may also be the potential to incorporate short-term mooring points at the river's edge.

The square should be fronted by commercial and residential development as part of the St Anne's Wharf scheme with café spill-out space provided along the western edge. As part of the overall design St Ann Lane would also be resurfaced utilising a consistent palette of materials with opportunities for tree planting explored.

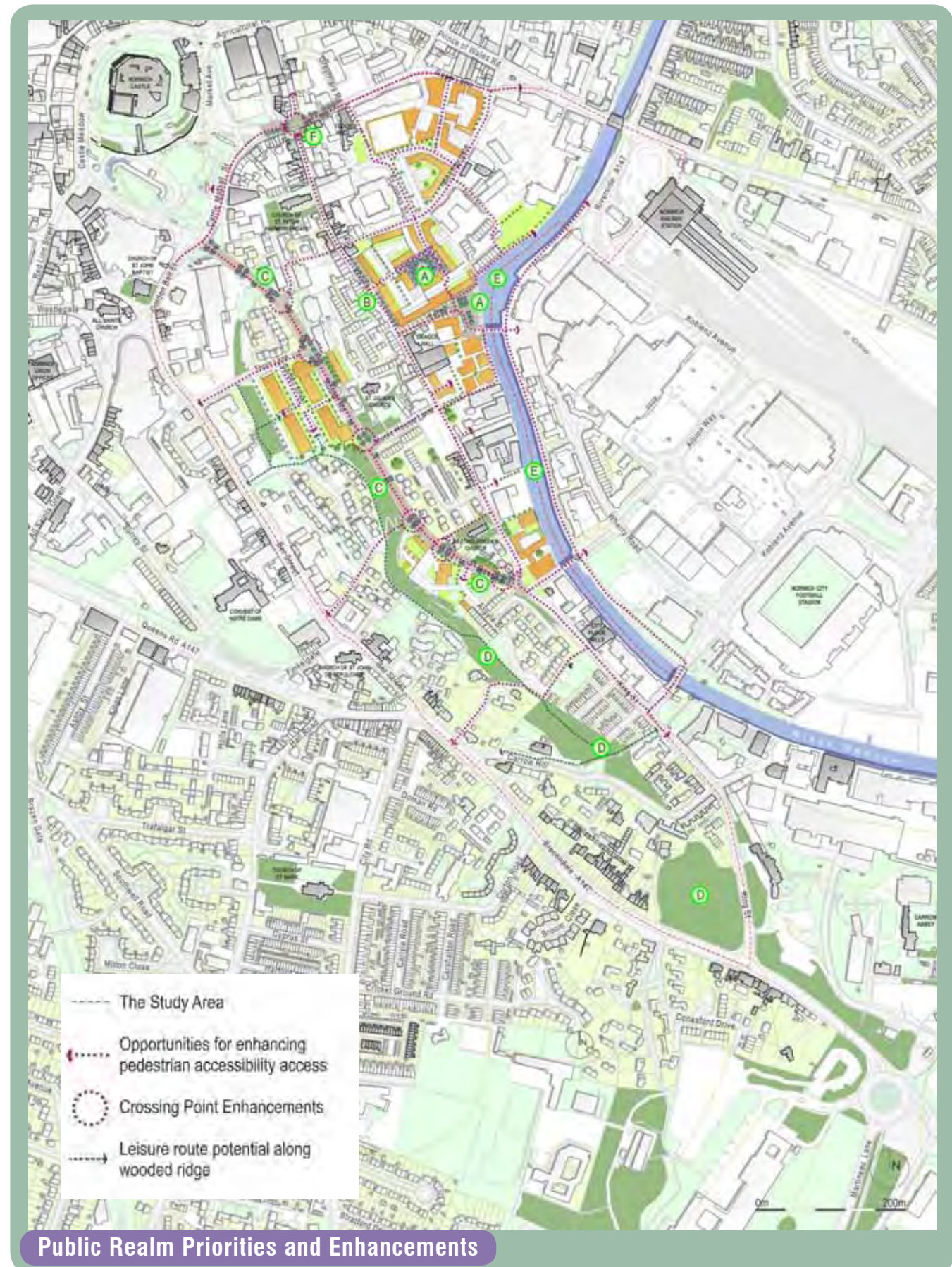


Lady Julian Square

St Anne's Place is proposed as a focus for residential development at the heart of the St Anne's Wharf scheme. It would be designed as a multi-function space incorporating tree planting, a coordinated shared surface treatment for access streets and parking spaces, as well as the potential for seating and play equipment. The space would be overlooked on all sides by residential development.



St Anne's Place



Public Realm Priorities and Enhancements

King Street

King Street is the principal and most historic street running through the study area. The northern end of the street has already benefitted from extensive and high quality surface treatment and it is proposed to extend this treatment along the remainder of the street. Initially this will be the section to St Ann Lane including the area outside Dragon Hall with delivery as part of the redevelopment of St Anne's Wharf. Materials and layout will be consistent with the existing section of King Street, with attention given to more carefully delineated parking bays to minimise the potential for conflict.

Opportunities for tree planting should be explored although the precise location will need to have regard to the location of underground servicing. A vertiginous species would be appropriate given the limited width of King Street along much of its length.



King Street Enhancements

Rouen Road

Rouen Road is very much a product of the time in which it was developed; a wide, traffic conduit with limited frontage development. Today the strategic role and function of the road is significantly reduced and it functions more as a local access street. As such there is a significant opportunity to redesign Rouen Road.

Key elements of the design should focus on giving it the character of a tree lined street with wider footways and more clearly defined crossing points at key locations, particularly facilitating east/west pedestrian movement across the Study Area. Frontage development will be introduced associated with, for example, proposals at Garden Street and adjoining Normandie Tower.

Additional on-street parking should be provided, off-setting some of the loss of car parking adjoining Garden Street, but also designed as a traffic calming measure interspersed with tree planting to reduce the visual impact of parked vehicles. Parking could take the form of either traditional parallel parking to both sides of the road, or chevron type parking, arranged in groups to either side of the road (this would provide a gentle chicane effect with the potential to reduce traffic speeds).



Indicative landscape treatment Rouen Road - A



Indicative landscape treatment Rouen Road - B

Wooded Ridge

The Wooded Ridge forms a prominent and recognisable landform that is distinguishable on some of the earliest maps of Norwich. The steep topography has been accentuated in places through chalk and lime extraction. In addition there is a significant section of the City Walls running east/west through a section of the ridge with a footpath link between Carrow Hill and King Street. Elsewhere access is more limited and regenerating woodland has added to the overall character of the ridge.

In considering an appropriate strategy for best utilising and managing the Wooded Ridge the existing character has informed an approach based on different zones. The zones focus on interpretation; wildlife management; and informal recreation. The degree of access is in turn informed by the various zones with the informal recreation and interpretation zones giving the potential for a greater degree of public accessibility over the wildlife management areas.

Some aspects of each zone will also overlap, wildlife management being an important example. Enhanced management and interpretation would help give the Wooded Ridge a more cohesive identity, whilst improved accessibility and usage would help reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour through increased surveillance.



Wooded Ridge and City Walls

Interpretation Zone. This will be focused around the City walls and towers adjoining Carrow Hill. The area is already accessible but could benefit from enhanced signage and interpretation of the considerable history associated with the Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the zone. In addition there may be scope for subtle lighting to give emphasis to the walls and towers. Discussions should be pursued with the owner of the Carrow Hill 'Wilderness' so that it might form part of the interpretation zone (elements could be restored in order to enhance overall accessibility and provide informal recreation opportunities along the Wooded Ridge).

Wildlife Management Zone. Wildlife management will form an important part of the overall regime along the Wooded Ridge. A particular focus will be the former 'Wilderness' and the Carrow Abbey lime pit which forms the southernmost part of the Wooded Ridge. The steep sided pit is difficult to access and as a result regenerating woodland has become established. Discreet interpretation of the history of this part of the Wooded Ridge should also be incorporated.

Informal Recreation Zone. The remainder of the Wooded Ridge already has limited areas of access and should be managed for informal recreation including the potential for natural play. Natural play features are designed to take advantage of existing features – trees and slopes – working with the landscape rather than introducing play equipment. A walking/recreation route between the Carrow Hill area through to Thorn Lane should also be established linking together existing walking routes between Ber Street and the river.



Bug Hunting in the Informal Recreation Zone



Better access into and information about the Wilderness and City Walls

Wensum Corridor

The River Wensum is a key asset running through the study area providing opportunities for waterside recreation and access as well as an attractive setting for development. It is a long standing policy of the City Council to seek appropriate opportunities for increasing access to the River Wensum through negotiating a river walkway as part of planning permissions adjoining the Wensum. Land ownership is clearly an issue in achieving access, as is the design of many of the existing buildings along the river which are built up directly from the bank side. At best a partial access is likely to be achieved within the Study Area.

Lady Julian Square proposed as part of the redevelopment of St Anne's Wharf will be an important element of enhancing river access. Longer term proposals coming forward as part of the Wensum West Bank area may also contribute to increased access, over time. In considering access to the river maintaining residential amenity will be an important consideration, particularly through differentiating the signage for more strategic walking routes between key city centre locations, and more local leisure routes.

In addition to the river corridor the various bridging points also have an important role and function through providing linkages to other parts of the City Centre as well as being places – the Riverside area around the Lady Julian Bridge is a good example where a mix of activities take place. Wherever possible the quality of the spaces around the bridging points and the linkages, particularly pedestrian linkages, to them must be well designed, attractive and accessible.

The principal bridging point on the edge of the Study Area, around which there is significant pedestrian activity, is the junction of Riverside and Prince of Wales Road adjoining the forecourt of Norwich Station. The junction forms part of the City's strategic highway network and has an important traffic function. It is also one of the first impressions visitors have of Norwich when arriving by train.

Although the station forecourt has an attractive hard landscape treatment, the pedestrian environment around the junction is less generous with narrow footways, guardrails and traffic light sequencing that is strongly set towards traffic flows. As such the footways around the crossing can become congested with pedestrians waiting to cross at peak times. Onward routes to the City Centre and the Study Area via the river are also relatively poorly defined, and more could be done to direct pedestrians to use other routes rather than Prince of Wales Road and Rose Lane. In order to address these issue consideration should be given to rationalising the design of the junction, widening the crossings and removing pedestrian guardrails to provide a more spacious environment.



Pleasure Boats on the River Wensum



Lady Julian Bridge



Norwich Station Forecourt



Relaxing by the waterside

Rose Lane and Ber Street

Rose Lane forms part of the northern boundary of the Study Area and is an important transport route for one way vehicular traffic and public transport through the city centre. As such the pedestrian environment is poor with a limited number of light controlled crossing points and relatively narrow footways in places. Enhancements should comprise additional or wider, direct pedestrian crossing points to better connect the Study Area to the rest of the City Centre. Traffic light phasing could be adjusted to give pedestrians and cyclists priority and reduce waiting time.

Where feasible footways should be upgraded with consideration given to upgrading surface materials, particularly at the junction of streets and walkways leading from the Study Area. This will give visual emphasis and continuity between the Study Area and the rest of the City Centre. In addition, the hard, urban form of the street could be enhanced through street tree planting, having regard to the location of underground services. A robust species such as London Plane, which is used elsewhere in the City, could be specified.

Ber Street defines the north western boundary of the Study Area. It is a mixed use, commercial and residential street with a varied character of different buildings fronting onto it. As such the street has a fragmented appearance, although a number of the buildings are historic and attractively maintained including several that are listed. In order to address the issue a unified design approach should be adopted that considers the entire street as a linear open space. Paving, street furniture and lighting should all be coordinated distinguishing shop forecourts and footways. Opportunities for tree planting should be explored where space and services permit.



Environmental Management

An important overall aspect of the public realm across the Study Area will be a proactive approach to environmental management. This encompasses the City Council through various maintenance teams, as well as other partners and landowners. The aim will be to ensure that streets and spaces, including churchyards and areas of landscape planting around Rouen Road for example, are accessible, safe and secure. Where appropriate, the community could take a lead in adopting the management of spaces, the community gardens off Boulton Street are an example of this. Elsewhere consideration should be given to how spaces are used throughout the day to minimise opportunities for anti-social behaviour through working with landowners and considering limiting access where necessary and practicable.



High quality shop fronts on Ber Street



Ber Street looking south east



Rose Lane opportunities for enhancement

04 Conclusions and Next Steps

The Partnership is committed to working towards the delivery of the projects and public realm priorities identified by the plan. The plan sets a strong framework for delivering beneficial change in the study area, change that has been informed and shaped by residents and businesses who have been fully engaged in the development of the plan.

It is hoped that the plan will assist in attracting significant investment, particularly new housing on St Anne's Wharf, in the area to ensure it is responsive to the needs new and existing residents. In addition, it will assist in achieving economic regeneration of providing space for existing businesses to remain and expand, in the area or successfully relocate, and provide opportunities for new leisure and employment particularly on the Mountergate area and Wensum Bank.

Opportunities to improve movement throughout the area and enhance the area's green infrastructure and open spaces are clearly identified as part the plan through public realm priorities. In addition, the potential of the area's heritage and cultural assets including its historic buildings and cultural/leisure facilities, have been evaluated with the aim of increasing its attractiveness as a visitor destination and integral part of the wider city centre.

In terms of immediate next steps The Partnership will:

- seek to work proactively with the present and future owners of St Anne's Wharf to bring the site forward for high quality development;
- agree a strategy to bring forward for development land within Council control. This is likely to start with provision of a replacement MSCP to unlock the Mountergate West site and demonstrating a strong commitment to investment in the area; and
- continue ongoing engagement with businesses and communities regarding the projects and public realm priorities set out in the plan.



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