

Motion to: Council

12 March 2024

Subject: The future of Anglia Square

Proposer: Councillor Schmierer

Seconder: Councillor Osborn

The decision by Weston Homes to pull out of the proposed Anglia Square development has reopened the debate around the future of this key site in the north city centre.

Anglia Square, sitting alongside Magdalen Street, is a vital part of the local community in the north city centre and NR3, providing a place for people to meet and affordable cafes and shops, including many independent businesses. It has also provided a home for the city's artists.

Unfortunately, since Weston Homes had said that they were planning to demolish existing buildings and businesses would need to relocate, many businesses in Anglia Square have already closed their doors.

The process that the council has gone through with Weston Homes since 2017 has meant that other options for Anglia Square have not been sufficiently proactively explored.

Council notes:

- 1) That many people wish to see Anglia Square redeveloped, but the nearly 800 objections to the original 2018 Weston Homes plans show that they want a development that respects the city's heritage.
- 2) That people also want to see a development that will not result in local people being priced out of the area, and that retains the community aspect of the Square.
- 3) That provision of social and affordable housing is of the highest priority and every effort should be made to ensure that at least 33% of housing at Anglia Square should be available for social rent or at affordable rates.
- 4) That certainty is essential to the confidence of businesses in the area and that the risks involved in private company-led development have not been conducive to that essential certainty.

- 5) That large parts of the Anglia Square site have remained unutilised for many years.
- 6) That areas surrounding Anglia Square, for example the St Saviours Lane carpark, offer opportunities for further brownfield redevelopment.

Council **RESOLVES** to:

- 7) Ask Cabinet to immediately produce a plan to support businesses in Anglia Square, who have suffered due to the uncertainty around the development.
- 8) Ask Cabinet to bring forward a report within six months exploring options for future ownership of the site, including the potential for the city council to purchase the site.
- 9) Ask Cabinet to consider a report setting out potential models for redevelopment of the site and identifying partners with whom the Council could work to develop it within twelve months.
- 10) Support the Norwich Over The Wensum neighbourhood forum in producing planning policy that is specific to the area surrounding Anglia Square.