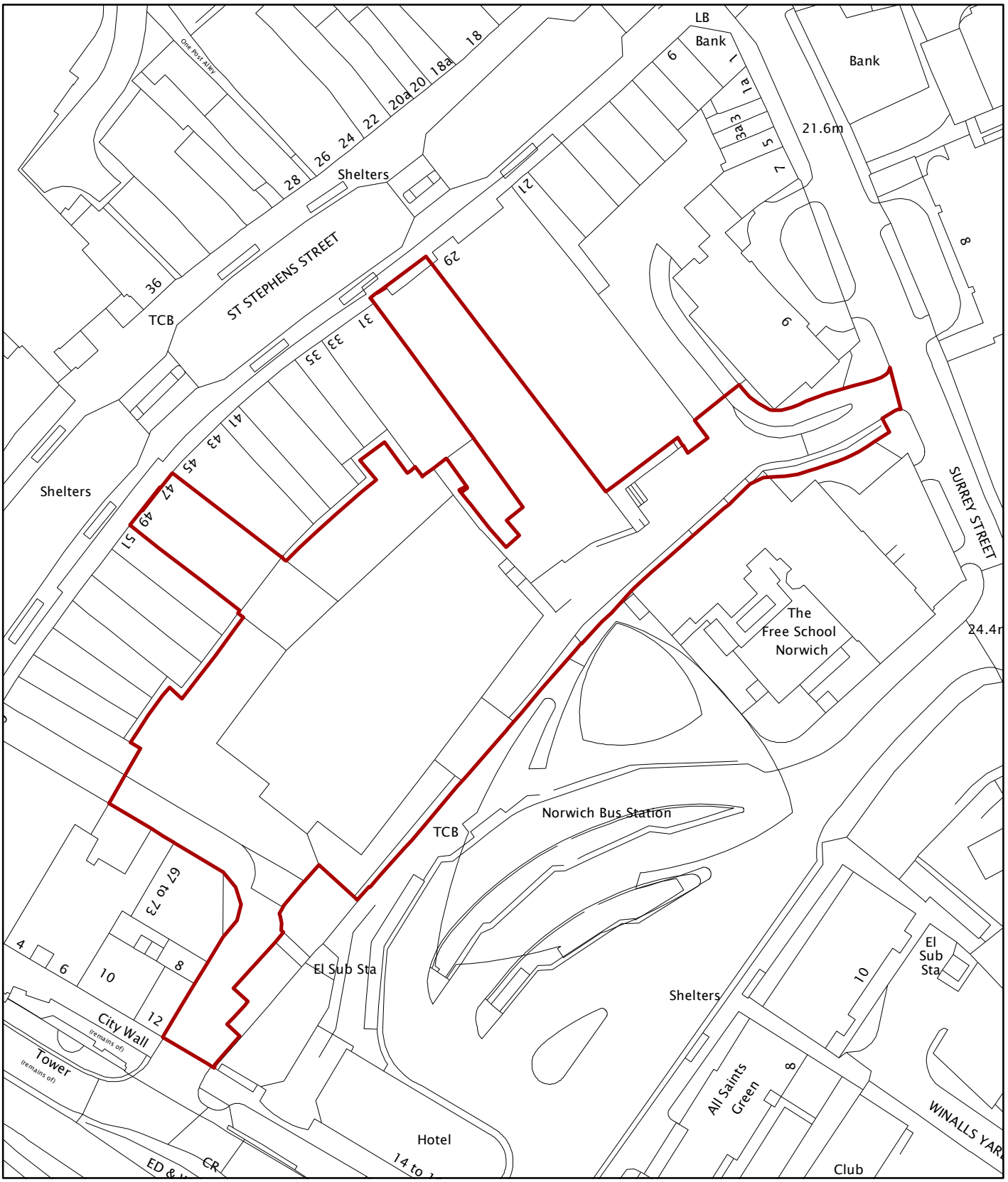
Report to	Planning applications committee 13 July 2017	**Item**
Report of	Head of planning services	4(c)
Subject	Application No 17/00357/F - St Stephens Tower, St Stephens Street, Norwich	
Reason for referral	Significant application raising issues of wider importance	

Ward:	Mancroft
Case officer	David Parkin - davidparkin@norwich.gov.uk

Development proposal		
Redevelopment of St Stephens Tower for student accommodation with vertical extensions, demolition of ancillary structures to facilitate a new link building and landscaping.		
Representations		
Object	Comment	Support
0	1	4

Main issues	**Key considerations**
1	Principle of Development
2	Heritage and Design
3	Landscape and Open Space
4	Transport
5	Amenity
Expiry date	29 May 2017
Recommendation	APPROVE



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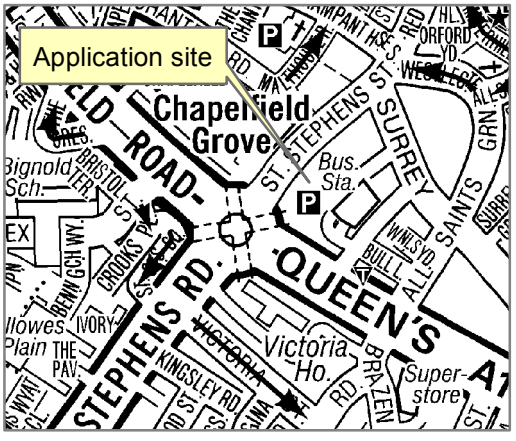
Planning Application No	17/00357/F
Site Address	St Stephen's Tower St Stephen's Street
Scale	1:1,000



NORWICH
City Council

PLANNING SERVICES

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The site and surroundings

1. The site lies to the east of St Stephen's Street in the city centre and comprises of the two existing towers (currently vacant; last used as offices) and ground floor and basement buildings connecting them and a vacant building to the south.

2. At ground and first floor level on St Stephen's Street are retail units with the entrance to Chapelfield shopping centre on the opposite side of the street.

3. The NCP car park lies to the south and is accessed off Queen's Road. The St Stephen's Street retail units are also serviced from Queen's Road with the service yard running under the two towers and adjacent to the linking buildings.

4. There is access to the site off Surrey Street. This access also provides servicing to the retail units on the corner of St Stephen's Street and Surrey Street. Bignold House (vacant offices) and 15-17 Surrey Street (in use as a free school) lie either side of this access with Surrey House (offices) on the opposite side of the street.

5. The bus station lies to the south of the site.

Constraints

6. Listed buildings (Grades I, II and II*) nearby

7. Conservation Area

Relevant planning history

8. None

The proposal

9. The application proposes the change of use of the two St Stephen's Street towers and associated ground floor and basement level buildings from offices and ancillary functions to provide 702 student bed spaces with a student centre to provide information for students in the city centre and associated ancillary uses including common rooms, laundry, gym, games rooms etc.. A combined heat and power plant is also proposed at ground floor level.

10. To facilitate the change of use amended plans show an additional storey being added to each of the two towers, which replace the existing plant structures. A three storey link building between the two towers is also provided with a roof top amenity area.

11. Two additional storeys are added to the vacant building that lies to the south of the towers. This building is 'hollowed out' to create a courtyard that will provide amenity space for residents. The linking building between the towers is also given the same treatment to create a second courtyard but this one is only accessible to those with rooms on the 2nd basement level.

12. Service access is from Surrey Street and from the retail service yard. Cycle parking is provided internally at ground floor level.

13. The main pedestrian access will be from Surrey Street, with a gate providing security for the residents. Outside of this gate an access through into the bus station is proposed as part of the development. The access would be managed but would be available to residents and members of the public alike. Indicative streetscape proposals for the link from Surrey Street to the building are included with the scheme and are inside the red line.

Summary information

Proposal	**Key facts**
Scale	
Total no. of dwellings	**702 (student bed spaces)**
No. of affordable dwellings	**None**
Total floorspace	**24,000m^2**
No. of storeys	**10 in total from St Stephen's Street (including ground and 1st floor retail)**
Max. dimensions	**33m from St Stephen's Street**
Density	**293 bed spaces/hectare**
Appearance	
Materials	**Cladding, glazing and brick work**
Construction	**Refurbishment of existing structure with modern, lighter weight construction to additional floors**
Energy and resource efficiency measures	**Combined heat and power plant**
Operation	
Opening hours	**Not relevant**
Ancillary plant and equipment	**Combined Heat and Power plant located at ground floor level. Other associated plant located at basement or ground floor level**
Transport matters	
Vehicular access	**Limited access from Surrey Street**
No of car parking spaces	**3**
No of cycle parking	**208**

Proposal	Key facts
spaces	
Servicing arrangements	**From Surrey Street & from the service yard to the rear of St Stephen's Street shops.**

Representations

14. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. 2 letters of representation have been received from the public citing the issues as summarised in the table below. All representations are available to view in full at http://planning.norwich.gov.uk/online-applications/ by entering the application number. In addition, 2 representations have been received from organisations and one from the Ward Councillo**r.**

Issues raised	Response
Will relieve pressure on other areas of the city such as the Golden Triangle	See conclusions
Will relieve pressure to expand on the UEA campus	See conclusions
Concerns raised re: proposals for access from proposal to Surrey Street & impact on servicing arrangements for existing businesses that currently use this access for servicing.	Main Issue 4

15. **Councillor Fullman** - asked for the application to be referred to Planning Applications Committee. Councillor Fullman states that he believes the proposal is a significant redevelopment and urban regeneration project in the conservation area which could have substantial economic and social benefits for the City. NOTE: Councillor Fullman's referral request was made outside the 21 day call-in period set out in the scheme of delegation.

16. **Norwich BID Board** – The Board represents the wider Norwich business community of over 650 businesses. The BID Board were supportive of the development to re-use a key site within the city centre to bring life and vibrancy back into the city with residential living. Questions were raised over the level of student accommodation now being built in the city, but welcomed bringing the building back into use. There was a loss of commercial property and space in the city centre, but this was offset by the value of the regeneration of the area and the uplift in use of the city as a living space. The design and integration with the surrounding area was well received.

17. **Intu Chapelfield** - This development is long overdue and incredibly welcome as it enhances the vitality and vibrancy of the city centre, meets a very real social need

whilst also supporting our world class further education provision, all whilst addressing what is currently a visual blight on the city skyline. As such it has our support though in my view it could be even better if the developers and Council could find a way, even if it's not a 'fully accessible' pedestrian route, of linking the Bus Station to St Stephens Street for public and student residents alike, dedicated and open 24 hours a day and not restricted to the trading hours, whim or business priorities of the future tenant to the former BHS store.

Consultation responses

18. Consultation responses are summarised below the full responses are available to view at http://planning.norwich.gov.uk/online-applications/ by entering the application number.

Design and conservation

19. **OBJECT** (to original proposals) - There is insufficient justification for the proposed increase in height, the existing towers are considered to be a negative feature and the proposed cladding is not considered to ameliorate for the increase in height.

20. The proposed increase in height and new cladding system with high number of new windows – will result in very busy and high visible elevations. The colour/texture of new cladding system does nothing to temper the disparity between the towers and their base. The resulting appearance will be an incongruous hybrid of forms which will cause harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area and setting of various listed buildings. Most importantly, the increase in height will cause the development to rise above the ridge line of Bignold House (Grade II*) spoiling the setting of this building in particular. Note that this part of the conservation area does feature a mixture of historic and larger contemporary forms, but the disparity in height and design of the existing architecture is not as great as what is proposed here. It should also be acknowledged that this disparity is identified as a negative element of the existing conservation area, something which should not therefore be repeated and could not be considered an 'improvement' or 'enhancement'.

21. Not convinced that the scheme is locally distinctive.

22. From an urban design perspective the proposals do little to improve the (east/west) pedestrian links between St Stephens and the bus station and do not there comply with the guidance provided within the St Stephens Masterplan.

23. No significant landscaping/public realm enhancements appear to be offered in the current package

24. No improvement to the street level frontage to St Stephens has been proposed.

25. Paragraph 56 of the NPPF requires development to be of a good architectural quality which is visually attractive, Paragraph 60 encourages development which promotes or reinforces local distinctiveness.

26. Paragraph 64 advises that 'permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions'. Paragraph 131 requires new

development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, Paragraph 132 acknowledges that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting and that any harm requires clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 134 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. Local Plan set out similar requirements for new developments DM1, DM3 and DM9.

27. It will be for the Council to determine whether the proposal results in adequate public benefits in accordance with paragraph 134 of the NPPF. This is questionable!

28. **OFFICER NOTE**: Comments are outstanding at the time of writing and will be summarised in the Update Report. However, in conversation the Design & Conservation Team has indicated that the changes made address the concerns raised.

Historic England

29. **COMMENT** (on original proposals) - The re-cladding and extension of St Stephen's towers could result in harm to significance of the listed buildings and conservation area at Surrey Street in terms of the NPPF, paragraph 132 while the new cladding could give the towers undue visual emphasis in the conservation area. Minimising any harmful impact on the historic environment through amendments to design should be considered before the application is determined.

30. Historic England has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds. We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the application to meet the requirements of paragraphs 6, 7, 14, 17, 132 and 134 of the NPPF. In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess and section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. Your authority should take these representations into account and seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

31. Comments are outstanding at the time of writing and will be summarised in the Updates Report. However, in conversation with your officers, Historic England has indicated that the changes made address the concerns raised.

Environmental protection

32. Noise – concerns remain over ‘impact noise’ from the service yard to the retail units on St Stephen’s Street, which could be disturbing at night. Details submitted indicate that mitigation cannot be achieved with opening windows and that either mechanical ventilation or ‘deep attenuated acoustic ventilators’ will be required. Greater clarification is needed.

33. Air Quality – Agree with proposals to provide mechanical ventilation to rooms facing the bus station to provide the option to close windows. Queries why mechanical ventilation should terminate at 1st floor level and requires further information to justify this approach.

Environment Agency

34. **NO COMMENTS RECEIVED**

Anglian Water

35. **NO OBJECTION** subject to condition requiring additional details of surface water drainage.

Highways (local)

36. **NO OBJECTION** in principle - No objection in principle. Outstanding concerns remain re: pedestrian link to bus station; and the ability of development to be serviced for refuse collection, parental drop off/pick up, cycle access.

Highways (strategic)

37. **HOLDING OBJECTION** (to original submission) – Further details required to address the following:-

- What agreements have been reached with the owners of the bus station site and also the bus operators with regard to access?

- Will the route for students between the bus station and the site be available in perpetuity?

- The design and access statement indicates part of the connecting wall between the bus station and the development site will be removed to provide a permanent link for student access. I have spoken to the operators of the bus station and they have informed me that they have previously advised this developer they are unable to agree to this for operational reasons. There are times when the link will have to be closed for health and safety. The developer needs to clarify when the access will be closed/ frequency/ and what alternative options will be available – again I would not wish to see all of the students being forced to use the delivery service access serving the retail shops on St Stephens Street.

- What alternative access arrangements will be available in the event of agreement to gain access from the bus station not being reached?

- How will the public be made aware of the existence of this [proposed route through the ex-BHS unit] - in particular from St Stephens Street given they will have to walk through a shop?

- Given the route passes through a shop – what hours will be route be available for use and what happens outside of those hours?

- How will the public be made aware of the hours for which the route is/ isn't available for use?

38. **NOTE:** Comments on the revised proposals and additional information are outstanding at the time of writing and will be reported in the Update Reports.

Landscape

39. Plan no 376-PA-053 show the repaving of the existing entrance from Surrey Street. This is a shared space between pedestrians and cars and the line of cobbles through the centre of the space draw pedestrians towards the vehicular entrance rather than highlighting the new pedestrian route to the side of the building.

40. It is disappointing that so little input seems to have been made in this space which forms a direct link to Surrey Street. There is no clear priority for pedestrians in the space and the use of the Kellen plank paving through the further pedestrian link could be employed in this area to reinforce the new link. The seating units placed alongside the bus station wall create active meeting areas The Kellen paving through the new pedestrian link appears to be effective with the darker surfacing to the edges of the site defining a route through the site.

41. The actual break through into the bus station is small and should be highlighted within the paving to encourage through use of this new connection. The inclusion of the streetlife wild fencing is interesting and allows for visual permeability into and from the site. We will need to see details of the proposed planting forming the start of the entrance path. There are no details provided of the secure gates and barriers which are intended to divide up the public realm from the private student area. Without care this could result in a 'gated community' feel and discourage pedestrians further from using the new link from the bus station.

42. Overall there is very limited space on site for use by the students and other than the roof terraces what is available will be heavily overshadowed by the mass of the proposed development. The courtyard space created associated with the building are simple in design and we would expect to see further details of the raised bed construction and other site furniture and the detailed planting for the area. The plans indicate clipped hedging but given the degree of overshadowing from the building a palette of shade tolerant natural style planting would be more appropriate.

43. The roof garden areas appear well conceived and the sections provided show the design intentions.

44. Given the increased use of the surrounding areas resulting from the density of the development the street scene immediately around the development site should be enhanced where possible. The main opportunities are the link to Surrey Street mentioned above and the intact section of the City Wall along Queens Rd. The section of wall would benefit from repairs and clearance works to enhance its presence adjacent to the development. The paving between the wall and the footprint of the site would similarly benefit from improvements given the increased footfall through the area.

45. The use of cor-ten streetlife furniture and kellen paving throughout provides a strong site identity which carries through all the areas apart from the Surrey Street approach - which will be extremely well used and is the main pedestrian link to the street scene. The landscape strategy needs to be fully detailed to fully explain the design intentions.

46. Additional information required to fully determine proposals:

- Construction sections
- Surface water drainage details
- Detailed planting plans
- Maintenance/management information

47. In summary there is very limited amount of open space available on site for the use of students which will not sustain the density of the proposed development.

Norfolk County Council (Lead Local Flood Authority)

48. **NO OBJECTION** subject to conditions to secure further details of surface water drainage.

Norfolk historic environment service

49. **NO OBJECTION** on the basis of the desk-based assessment submitted the potential for significant heritages assets with archaeological interest to survive at this site is low.

Norfolk police (architectural liaison)

50. **NO OBJECTION** Overall the layout is acceptable to Secured by Design criteria. The provision of a gated and secure access point from the bus station is a welcome proposal. Detailed comments are made re: standards of locks to be used; specifications for windows; and specifications for doors.

Norfolk Fire & Rescue

51. **COMMENT** that the development will require additional hydrants to service the risers, which can be secured by condition.

Assessment of planning considerations

Relevant development plan policies

52. **Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk adopted March 2011 amendments adopted Jan. 2014 (JCS)**
    - JCS1 Addressing climate change and protecting environmental assets
    - JCS2 Promoting good design
    - JCS3 Energy and water
    - JCS4 Housing delivery
    - JCS5 The economy
    - JCS6 Access and transportation
    - JCS9 Strategy for growth in the Norwich policy area
    - JCS11 Norwich city centre
    - JCS19 The hierarchy of centres

- JCS20 Implementation

53. **Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan adopted Dec. 2014 (DM Plan)**
    - DM1 Achieving and delivering sustainable development
    - DM2 Ensuring satisfactory living and working conditions
    - DM3 Delivering high quality design
    - DM4 Providing for renewable and low carbon energy
    - DM5 Planning effectively for flood resilience
    - DM8 Planning effectively for open space and recreation
    - DM9 Safeguarding Norwich's heritage
    - DM12 Ensuring well-planned housing development
    - DM16 Supporting the needs of business
    - DM18 Promoting and supporting centres
    - DM19 Encouraging and promoting major office growth
    - DM20 Protecting and supporting city centre shopping
    - DM28 Encouraging sustainable travel
    - DM29 Managing car parking demand in the city centre
    - DM30 Access and highway safety
    - DM31 Car parking and servicing
    - DM32 Encouraging car free and low car housing
    - DM33 Planning obligations and development viability

54. **Norwich Site Allocations Plan and Site Specific Policies Local Plan adopted December 2014 (SA Plan)**
    - CC27 St Stephen's Street

Other material considerations

55. **Relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 (NPPF):**
    - NPPF0 Achieving sustainable development
    - NPPF1 Building a strong, competitive economy
    - NPPF2 Ensuring the vitality of town centres
    - NPPF4 Promoting sustainable transport
    - NPPF6 Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
    - NPPF7 Requiring good design
    - NPPF10 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
    - NPPF12 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Case Assessment

56. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Relevant development plan polices are detailed above. Material considerations include policies in the National Planning Framework (NPPF), the Councils standing duties, other policy documents and guidance detailed above and any other matters referred to specifically in the assessment below. The following

paragraphs provide an assessment of the main planning issues in this case against relevant policies and material considerations.

Main issue 1: Principle of development

57. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM12, CC27, NPPF paragraphs 49 and 14.

58. The application site forms part of site CC27 in the Site Allocations Plan. CC27 extends along the south-eastern side of St Stephen's Street from the junction of Queen's Road to the junction with Surrey Street. The allocation includes the shops fronting St Stephen's Street, the car park on the corner of Queen's Road and the Grade II* Bignold House on Surrey Street. The bus station lies to the south of the allocation.

59. The explanatory text to the Site Allocations Plan refers to the JCS Policy 11, which states that the area will be developed in accordance with its masterplan. The masterplan in question, the *St Stephen's Street Area Outline Masterplan*, envisaged the eventual demolition of a significant part of the site, including the towers and some shops, and redevelopment of the area for 250 dwellings, 8270m^2 of offices, 470m^2 of retailing and 92 underground car parking spaces. The layout proposed a new pedestrian link connecting St Stephen's Street to the bus station to include new public open space.

60. The text of policy CC27 reflects the 'high intervention' scheme proposed in the masterplan and specifically referring to retail development at ground floor level with office and residential uses on upper floors. A minimum of 250 dwellings and a pedestrian link to the bus station are also referred to.

61. The policy goes on state that if the comprehensive re-development proves to be unviable the re-use of the existing buildings on the site will be acceptable, to allow for:-

    - The expansion of retail activities through reconfiguration of the current service yard and removal of the existing vacant building to the rear of 35-57 St Stephen's Street adjacent to the bus station;

    - The refurbishment and re-use of the two towers for a mixture of offices, residential or student accommodation, consistent with other policies of the development plan; and

    - The provision of a new pedestrian link to the bus station from St Stephen's Street subject to technical and financial viability considerations.

62. It should be noted that at the time the policy was written the whole of CC27 was in the ownership of Aviva Investors.

63. The applicant has submitted information that was put before the Local Plan Inspector in order to try and justify their view that the 'high intervention' scheme is not viable. The information has been up-dated but comes to similar conclusions, i.e. that the scheme is not viable.

64. It should be noted that the Inspector chose to retain references to the 'high intervention' scheme, notwithstanding the viability evidence presented by the applicant.

65. However, the current scheme does not provide for the comprehensive re-development of CC27. The main reason for this is that the ownership of the application site has passed from Aviva Investment to Crown Student Living, who are the applicants. It should be noted that the proposals have been subject to pre-application advice and both Aviva Investment and Crown Student Living were advised against the sub-division in ownership as it would prejudice the ability to deliver even the more limited policy objectives of CC27 set out above.

66. As it stands, the current scheme only provides for the second bullet point, i.e. the refurbishment of the towers for student accommodation.

67. The scheme does not allow for the expansion of the St Stephen's Street retail units. Indeed, it prevents this in the future as the proposal makes use of the vacant building that would need to be demolished to facilitate the expansion. CC27 is the only retail allocation for the city centre in the site allocations plan.

68. The proposal does not facilitate the creation of a link from St Stephen's Street to the bus station. At an earlier stage of negotiation securing more formal arrangements for a link through the currently vacant BHS unit were being investigated. However, the unit is not in the control of the applicant and would have required a Section 106 agreement with Aviva Investors. Aviva Investors were not willing to enter into such an agreement as, in their view, it would affect their ability to let the unit.

69. The proposal does include the creation of a link through from the rear of the development into the bus station, which would be of benefit to the occupants of the proposed student accommodation and of more limited benefit to the wider community. It should be noted that the link would not be open all the time as it would have to closed to facilitate maintenance at the bus station.

70. The scheme also includes proposals to improve the link from the rear of the building to Surrey Street, final details of which would need to be secured by condition.

71. There is also a separate application to refurbish and improve the appearance of the entrance at the rear of the BHS unit, but that is not part of the scheme before committee and consequently the weight that can be attached to it is limited.

72. Finally, the applicant has indicated that they will be submitting a unilateral undertaking under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act that will provide £80,000 towards public realm improvements on Surrey Street and on Queen's Road. This is in line with the comments from the Council's Landscape and Design Officer.

Main issue 2: Heritage & Design

73. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS2, DM3, DM9, NPPF paragraphs 9, 17, 56, 60-66 and 128-141.

74. The application site is within the city centre conservation area and close to a number of listed buildings. The two nearest such buildings are Bignold House (II*) and 15-17 Surrey Street (II), both to the north on Surrey Street. However, the Grade I Surrey House only slightly further away on the opposite side of Surrey Street.

75. The existing towers are described as negative features in the conservation area appraisal. The statutory duty placed on the Council by the Planning Acts requires that the character of the conservation area is either preserved or enhanced by it's decision and that special regard is had to the preservation of the setting of listed buildings.

76. In terms of the listed buildings, concerns were expressed by both Historic England and the Council's Conservation and Design Team that the scheme would result in unacceptable levels of harm to the setting of, in particular, Bignold House and 15-17 Surrey Street. The harm would have been caused by a combination of the increased height originally proposed and the original cladding.

77. The scheme has been amended to remove one of the two additional storeys off each tower. The cladding has also been amended to a lighter colour with a more horizontal emphasis. In light of these changes, the harm to the setting of the listed buildings has been mitigated.

78. In terms of the impact upon the conservation area and the streetscape generally, the original scheme proposed dark cladding with a horizontal emphasis. This failed to respect the horizontal design of the ground and first floor shops on St Stephens Street resulting in a jarring relationship between the existing and proposed buildings. The dark colour and vertical emphasis also exacerbated the impact of the height, making the towers a more prominent feature in the conservation area that was not justified by their existing characterisation as negative features. The original scheme neither preserved nor enhanced the character of the conservation area.

79. The amendments described above have addressed these issues. The cladding has been amended to wrap around the front of the two towers, giving them a more horizontal emphasis that is more in keeping with the existing buildings. The lighter coloured cladding and the reduction in height does not increase the prominence of the towers whilst improving their general appearance.

80. It is regrettable that the scheme does not secure any improvements to the retail facades on St Stephen's Street. Whilst Aviva Investment has indicated that they will invest in improving these frontages, no concrete proposals have been put forward and they do not form part of this application so little weight can be attached to these intentions.

Main issue 3: Landscaping and open space

81. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM3, DM8, NPPF paragraphs 9, 17 and 56.

82. There is limited open space provided within the development for the 720 occupants of the buildings, as described by the Council's Landscape and Design team. Two courtyards are proposed; one in between the two towers and one to the south of the southern tower. Only the southern courtyard is accessible to all residents, via the communal spaces on the second basement level. The northern courtyard is accessed through the 8 and 9 bed units located on the 2nd basement level.

83. The courtyard spaces will be in shadow all the time due to the depth at which they are located in relation to the buildings around them. For example, the southern tower presents an 11 storey elevation to both courtyards.

84. However, the roof top terraces are described as ‘well conceived’. The site is also close to other areas of public open space within the city centre, including Chapelfield Gardens around 530m walk west of the site and Castle Gardens around 420m to the north.

Main issue 4: Transport

85. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – JCS6, DM28, DM30, DM31, NPPF paragraphs 17 and 39.

86. The site is centrally located in relation to city centre amenities, which can be accessed easily on foot or by bicycle. It is also ideally located for public transport services and the proposed link through to the bus station will increase accessibility by public transport.

87. The building will be serviced from both Surrey Street and the service yard behind the St Stephen’s Street shops. Bins will be stored internally and collected from the service yard and plant rooms and the proposed Combined Heat and Power unit for the building will also be serviced from here.

88. Cycle parking for around 208 bicycles will be provided internally at ground floor level. On a day to day basis there are no parking spaces available for students but there are limited parking and servicing spaces accessed off Surrey Street.

89. Concerns have been expressed by both Norfolk County Council and the City Council’s Highways team about arrangements for arrival and departure at the beginning and end of term. In response, the applicant has provided a statement from CRM, the company that will manage the building on behalf of Crown Student Living. The statement sets out how students will be allocated a time slot for arrival and departure and discussions with the NCP car park adjacent to the site to block book spaces at the beginning and end of term.

90. The final responses from Norfolk County Council to this revised information have not been received at the time of writing but earlier discussions with officers indicate that the final details for managing the beginning and end of term can be secured by condition.

Main issue 5: Amenity

91. Key policies and NPPF paragraphs – DM2, DM11, NPPF paragraphs 9 and 17.

92. It is the amenity of the future occupants of the development that is the key consideration here. Impacts include outlook; lack of light; noise; and air quality.

93. Outlook and lack of light affects those rooms that look out into the courtyards whilst poor outlook affects those on the flank walls of the two towers as they face each other. As indicated under ‘Landscape and Open Space’ the courtyards are set at basement level 1, i.e. 2 floor below ground level (bus station level) and will be in shadow at all times. The spaces are also only around 28m across, which exacerbates the effect of the high buildings (up to 11 storeys) bordering the spaces. The effect of this will be felt most keenly by those in rooms on basement level 2, basement level 1 and ground floor. Above ground floor, the spaces open out more.

94. Outlook from the northern and southern flanks of the two towers as they face each other is limited by the bulk of each building. However, the towers are around 40m apart and, in this instance, the ability to convert them to residential accommodation under permitted development rights is capable of being a material consideration.

95. The residents of the towers are likely to experience the impact of relatively poor air quality from the bus station. The applicant has accepted the need for some mitigation on the south-eastern elevation and has indicated that mechanical ventilation will be provided over at least some floors. The number of floors over which the mitigation would be required is still under discussion but could be secured by condition.

96. Noise from the service yard behind the St Stephen's Street shops could also impact upon residents, particular as hours of use are not limited and the use of the yard is outside the control of the applicants. Again, the applicant has accepted the need for mitigation but the exact nature and extent remains under discussion but can be secured by condition.

Compliance with other relevant development plan policies

97. A number of development plan policies include key targets for matters such as parking provision and energy efficiency. The table below indicates the outcome of the officer assessment in relation to these matters.

Requirement	Relevant policy	Compliance
Cycle storage	DM31	**Yes subject to condition**
Car parking provision	DM31	**Yes subject to condition**
Refuse Storage/servicing	DM31	**Yes subject to condition**
Energy efficiency	JCS 1 & 3 DM3	**Yes subject to condition**
Water efficiency	JCS 1 & 3	**Yes subject to condition**
Sustainable urban drainage	DM3/5	**Yes subject to condition**

Other matters

98. The following matters have been assessed and considered satisfactory and in accordance with relevant development plan policies, subject to appropriate conditions and mitigation:

- Flood risk.

Equalities and diversity issues

99. There are no significant equality or diversity issues.

S106 Obligations

100. The applicant has indicated that they will be submitting a Unilateral Undertaking under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended). The undertaking is to provide a contribution to public realm improvements in Surrey Street. In the absence of a direct link through the development site as required under policy CC27 the contribution is required to mitigate the harm to the policy caused by the absence of the link and to mitigate the increased use of Surrey Street as a result of the proposals.

Local finance considerations

101. Under Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the council is required when determining planning applications to have regard to any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application. Local finance considerations are defined as a government grant or the Community Infrastructure Levy.

102. Whether or not a local finance consideration is material to a particular decision will depend on whether it could help to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It would not be appropriate to make a decision on the potential for the development to raise money for a local authority.

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

Conclusion

104. The scheme is recommend for approval. However, this is very much an on balance recommendation given that the development effectively prevents all but one of the policy objectives set out in CC27 from being realised. This situation has largely been brought about by the division in ownership with Aviva Investment having sold the application site to Crown Student Living.

105. Given these circumstances, your officers have sought to mitigate the harm to the conservation area and nearby listed buildings caused by the original scheme and have also sought contributions to the public realm on Surrey Street and Queen's Road in order to mitigate against the lack of a pedestrian link through from St Stephen's Street to the bus station.

106. The proposal does deliver benefits. In planning terms these are the re-use of a vacant building; alterations to the building that improve its appearance without increasing its prominence in the streetscape and conservation area; and the provision of student housing that could relieve the pressure on housing elsewhere in the city.

107. The applicant suggests other benefits –

- These students, with their huge spending power, circa £4milion per annum, will bring substantial economic benefits to the City Centre.

- The re-use of St Stephen's Towers, rather than raising the existing buildings and constructing entirely new buildings is sustainable in environmental terms.

- The building works for the refurbishment and extension of St Stephen's Towers will be carried out by local family contractors RG Carter Limited, which in turn will benefit the local economy.

- The building works will also provide employment for hundreds of men and women employed in the construction industry, the majority of whom will be based in or around Norwich.

- The building works represent a £45 million investment in the City.

- The building will provide a Student Union Hub in the City centre. The Hub has been promoted by the CEO of the Student Union at the University of East Anglia, who considers that a Student Union Hub in the City Centre with its welfare facilities will be a valuable contribution to the life of the UEA.

- Roger Bond, the UEA's Director of Estates and Facilities, states that the absence of purpose-built student housing in a city of Norwich's size is unusual and that the development will go some way to remedying that shortage and bringing Norwich into line with other major University Cities.

108. The alterations to the design of the new buildings have mitigated the harm to heritage assets to such a degree that your officers consider any residual impacts can be weighed against the benefits of the scheme in heritage terms.

109. One significant dis-benefit is that it thwarts the policy intentions of CC27 to first of all bring about a comprehensive re-development of the area and secondly, in the absence of a comprehensive re-development, to provide additional retail floor space in the city centre and a pedestrian link from St Stephen's Street to the bus station. The sub-division of ownership of the site plays a large part in this dis-benefit.

110. The absence of a five year housing land supply in the Norwich Policy Area is not considered to be a significant material consideration in the determination of this application. Student accommodation is not currently included in the objectively assessed need so the proposal does not directly contribute to housing need.

111. Given the circumstances and in the light of all material considerations, on balance it is recommended that the scheme is approved.

Recommendation

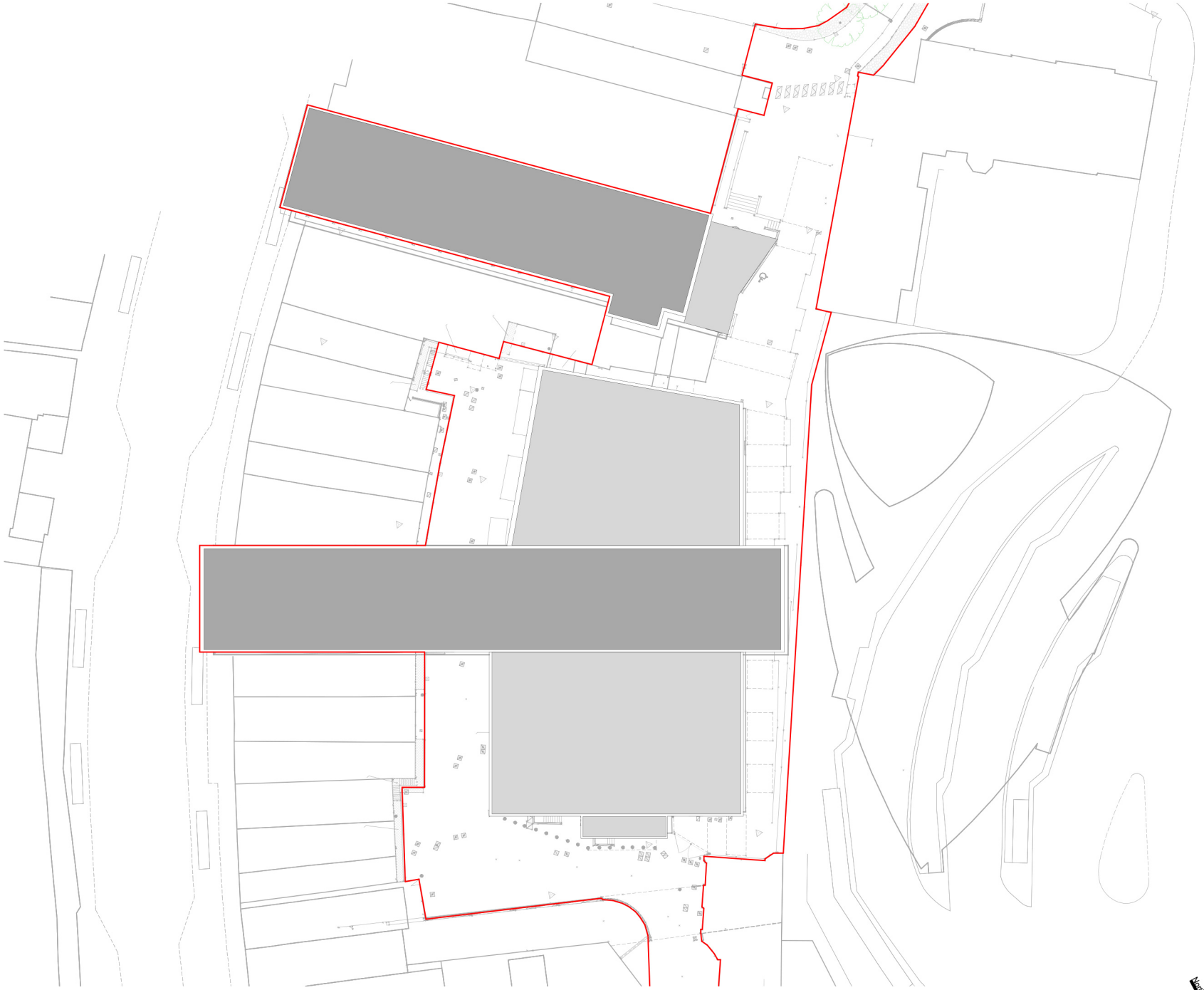
To approve application no. 17/00357/F - St Stephens Tower St Stephens Street Norwich and grant planning permission subject to either the submission of a satisfactory unilateral undertaking or the completion of a satisfactory legal agreement to include contributions towards improvements to the public realm on Surrey Street and Queens Road and subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit;
2. In accordance with plans;

3. Details of materials;
4. Details of hard and soft landscaping and management thereof;
5. Provision of cycle parking;
6. Further details of surface water drainage;
7. Arrangements for managing arrivals and departures at beginning and end of academic terms;
8. Details of a scheme to mitigate impacts of air quality on bus station side of the development upon residents;
9. Details of a scheme to mitigate the impacts upon residents of noise from the service yard;
10. Water efficiency;
11. Energy efficiency.
12. Details of and management of access through to bus station;
13. Details of and management arrangements for streetscape improvements to from building access to Surrey Street

Article 35(2) statement

The local planning authority in making its recommendation has had due regard to paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework as well as the development plan, national planning policy and other material considerations, following negotiations with the applicant and subsequent amendments at the pre-application stage the application has been approved subject to appropriate conditions and for the reasons outlined in the officer report



1 Existing Site Plan
1 : 250

1:250 @ A1 / 1:500 @ A3

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North

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Client's Name
CSL

Job Title
St Stephens Street - Norwich

Drawing Tittle
Existing Site Plan

Scale
1 : 250

Drawn	Checked	Date
JW	JW	02/16/17

Job No	Drawing No	Rev
W0263	0111	

Status
PLANNING

CAD Plot Date: 24/03/2017 10:44:13

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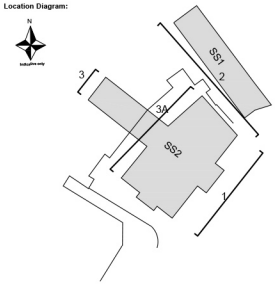
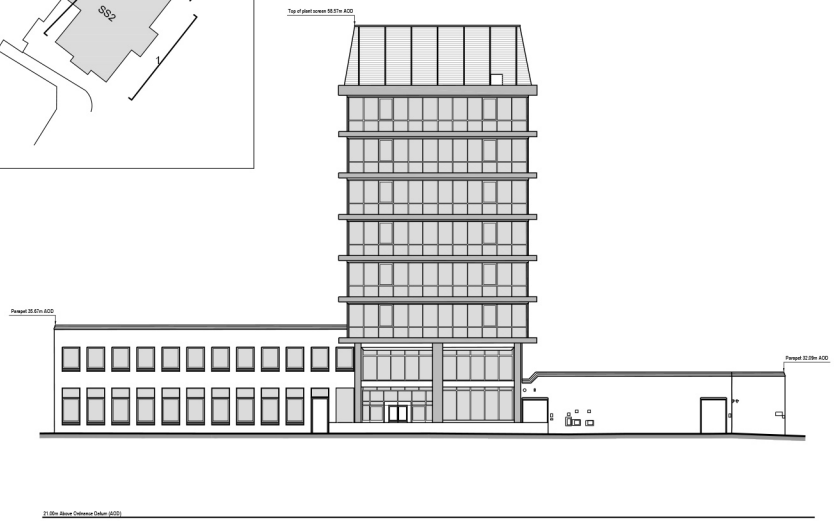
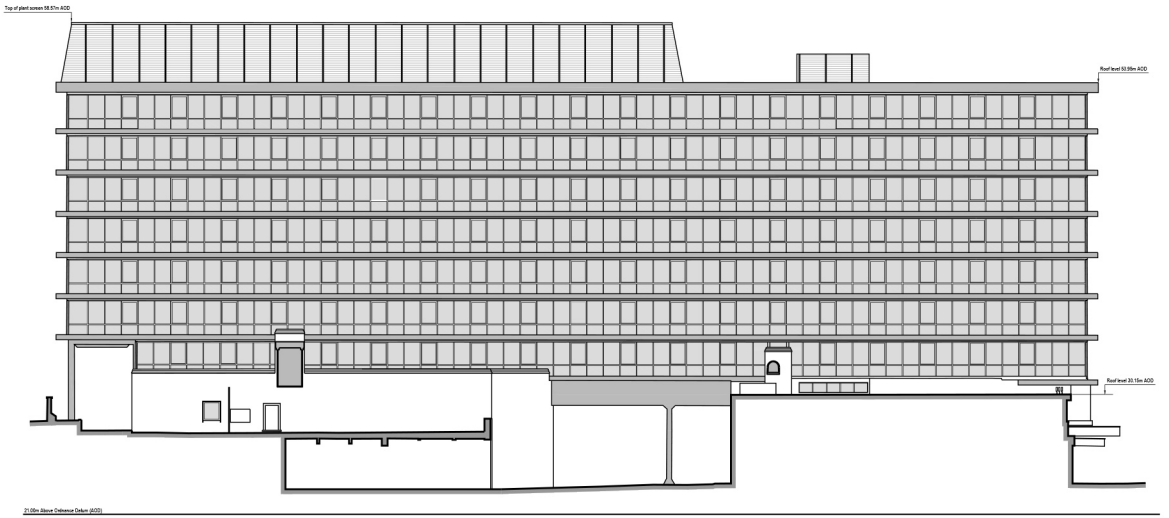




TOWER SS2 - ELEVATION 1



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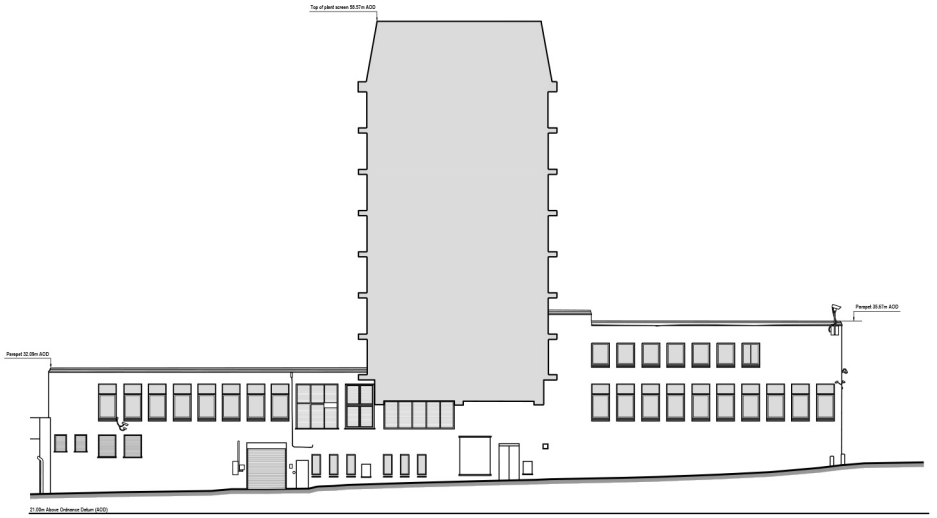

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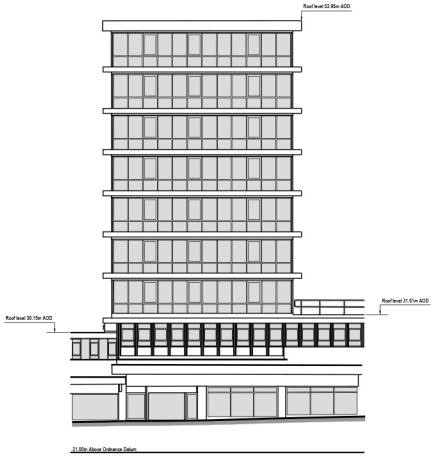

TOWER SS2 - ELEVATION 3a

Notes:
Drawing units are metres.

Stair/ slope arrows point up

Direction of floor boards

Direction of roof slope (up)

Notes:

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UNITS ARE MILLIMETRES.

ST STEPHENS TOWERS
TOWER SS2 - ELEVATIONS 1,2,3 & 3a

0 5.0 10.0 15.0 20.0 metres

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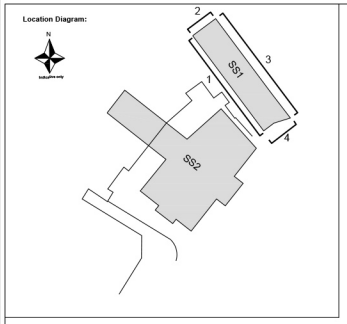
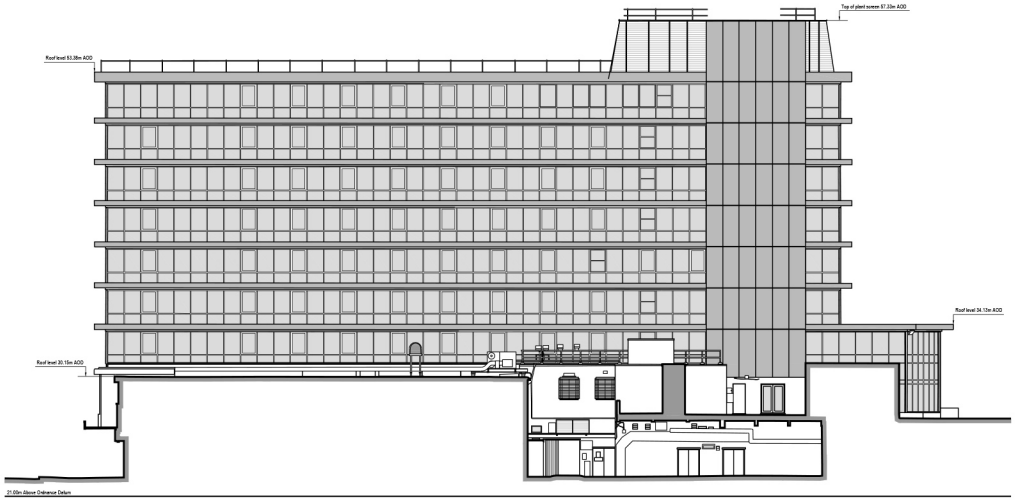
Drawing no. 16-39-EL-01

Issue date May 2016

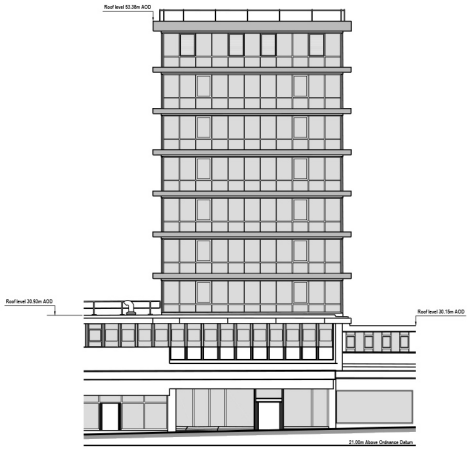
Issue status C

Scale 1:200@ A1





TOWER SS1 - ELEVATION 1



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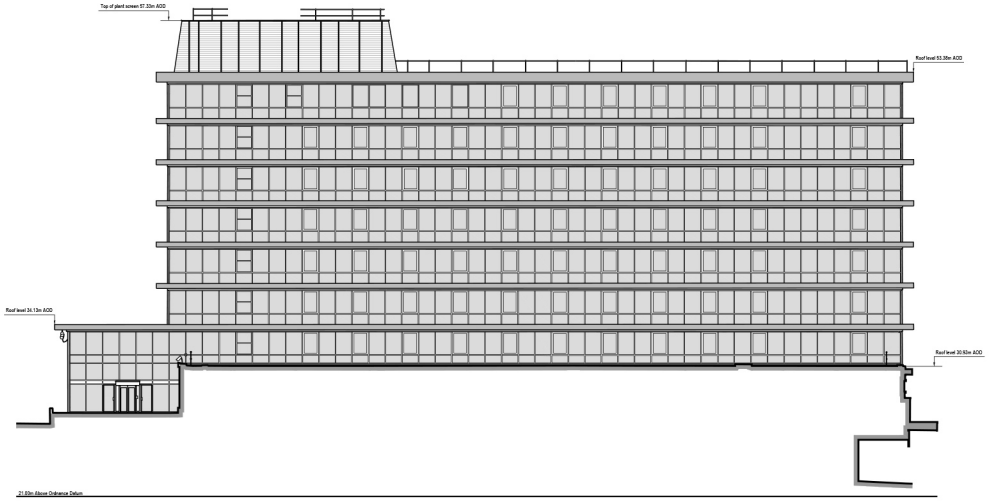
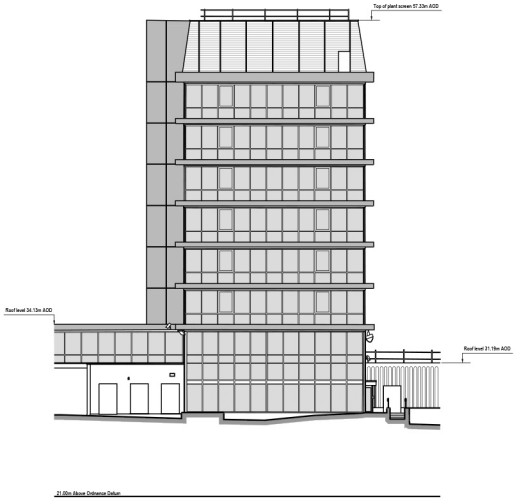


TOWER SS1 - ELEVATION 3



TOWER SS1 - ELEVATION 4

Notes:
Drawing units are metres.

Stair/ slope arrows point up
Direction of floor boards
Direction of roof slope (up)

Notes:

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UNITS ARE MILLIMETRES.

ST STEPHENS TOWERS
TOWER SS1 - ELEVATIONS 1,2,3 & 4

0 5.0 10.0 15.0 20.0 metres

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Drawing no. 16-39-EL-03
Issue date May 2016
Issue status C
Scale 1:200@ A1

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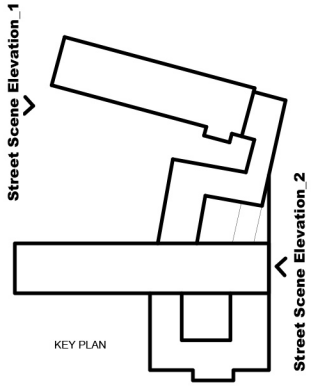
1 Street Scene Elevation 1

1 : 200



2 Elevation 4 SS2_Street Scene

1 : 200

Rev	Date	Revision Details	Dr	Ch
A	15-06-17	Updates following planning comments	JW	JW

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Client's Name	Drawing Title
CSL	Street Scene Elevations
Job Title	**Scale**
St Stephens Towers - Norwich	

Drawn	Checked	Date
TC	JW	05/31/17
Job No	**Drawing No**	**Rev**
W0263	0333	A

Status

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1:100 @ A0 / 1:200 @ A2

meters 2 4 6 8 10

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1 Courtyard Elevation 3
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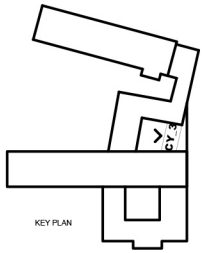

Key Plan
1 : 750

Material Key

- Metal Rainscreen Cladding Matt Grey
- Metal Rainscreen Cladding Gloss Grey
- Brickwork
- All window frames to be dark grey to match cladding
- Louvres to be dark grey to match cladding

1:100 @ A0 / 1:200 @ A2

metres 0 2 4 6 8 10

Rev	Date	Revision Details	Dr	Ch
B	15-06-17	Updates following planning comments	JW	JW
A	30-05-17	Updated to reflect planning comments	TC	JW

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Drawing Title
Courtyard Elevations 3

Scale
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Drawn	Checked	Date
TC	JW	03/11/16

Job No	Drawing No	Rev
W0263	0329	B

Status
PLANNING

CAD File Date: 15/06/2017 15:40:04

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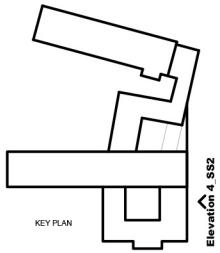

Key Plan
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Material Key

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- Metal Rainscreen Cladding Gloss Grey
- Brickwork
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1:100 @ A0 / 1:200 @ A2

metres 0 2 4 6 8 10

Rev	Date	Revision Details	Dr	Ch
B	15-06-17	Updates following planning comments	JW	JW
A	30-05-17	Updated to reflect planning comments	TC	JW

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St Stephens Towers - Norwich

Drawing Title
Elevation 4 - SS2

Scale
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Drawn	Checked	Date
TC	JW	03/11/16

Job No	Drawing No	Rev
W0263	0327	B

Status
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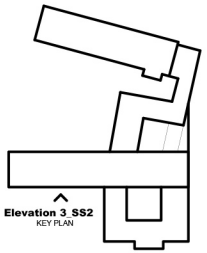

Key Plan
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Material Key

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- Brickwork
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- Louvres to be dark grey to match cladding

Materials Legend

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Rev	Date	Revision Details	Dr	Ch
B	15-06-17	Updates following planning comments	JW	JW
A	30-05-17	Updated to reflect planning comments	TC	JW

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Job Title
St Stephens Towers - Norwich

Drawing Title
Elevation 3 - SS2

Scale
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TC	JW	03/11/16

Job No	Drawing No	Rev
W0263	0326	B

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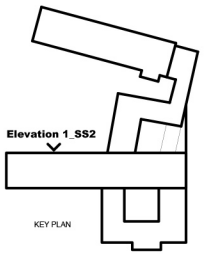

Key Plan
1 : 750

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Material Key

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metres 0 2 4 6 8 10

Rev	Date	Revision Details	Dr	Ch
B	15-06-17	Updates following planning comments	JW	JW
A	30-05-17	Updated to reflect planning comments	TC	JW

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Job Title
St Stephens Towers - Norwich

Drawing Title
Elevation 1 - SS2

Scale
As indicated

Drawn	Checked	Date
TC	JW	03/11/16

Job No	Drawing No	Rev
W0263	0324	B

Status
PLANNING

CAD File Date: 15/06/2017 10:35:03

CDM 2015 Health & Safety Information

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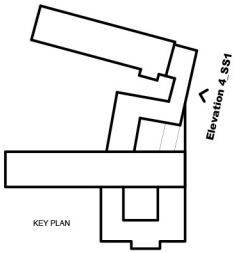
1 : 100



Key Plan
1 : 750

Material Key

- Metal Rainscreen Cladding Matt Grey
- Metal Rainscreen Cladding Gloss Grey
- Brickwork
- All window frames to be dark grey to match cladding
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metres 2 4 6 8 10

Rev	Date	Revision Details	Dr	Ch
C	15-06-17	Updates following planning comments	JW	JW
B	30-05-17	Updated to reflect planning comments	TC	JW
A	02-03-17	Radial entrance updated	TC	JW

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Job Title
St Stephens Towers - Norwich

Drawing Title
Elevation 4 - SS1

Scale
As indicated

Drawn	Checked	Date
TC	JW	03/11/16

Job No	Drawing No	Rev
W0263	0323	C

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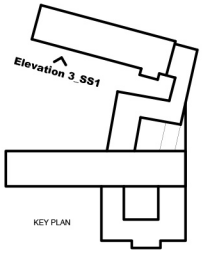
1 Elevation 3 SS1
1 : 100



Key Plan
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Material Key

- Metal Rainscreen Cladding Matt Grey
- Metal Rainscreen Cladding Gloss Grey
- Brickwork
- All window frames to be dark grey to match cladding
- Louvres to be dark grey to match cladding

1:100 @ A0 / 1:200 @ A2

metres 0 2 4 6 8 10

Rev	Date	Revision Details	Dr	Ch
B	15-06-17	Updates following planning comments	JW	JW
A	30-05-17	Updated to reflect planning comments	TC	JW

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Client's Name
CSL

Job Title
St Stephens Towers - Norwich

Drawing Title
Elevation 3 - SS1

Scale
As indicated

Drawn	Checked	Date
TC	JW	03/11/16

Job No	Drawing No	Rev
W0263	0322	B

Status
PLANNING

CAD File Date: 19/06/2017 15:30:03

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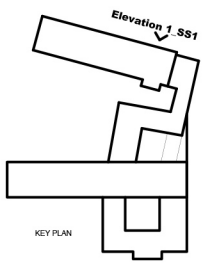
CDM 2015 Health & Safety Information

This information relates only to 'Significant Hazards' identified on this drawing and is to be read in conjunction with the Designer's Risk Assessment Register.

1 Elevation 1 SS1
1 : 100



Key Plan
1 : 750

Material Key

- Metal Rainscreen Cladding Matt Grey
- Metal Rainscreen Cladding Gloss Grey
- Brickwork
- All window frames to be dark grey to match cladding
- Louvres to be dark grey to match cladding

1:100 @ A0 / 1:200 @ A2

metres 2 4 6 8 10

Rev	Date	Revision Details	Dr	Ch
B	15-06-17	Updates following planning comments	JW	JW
A	30-05-17	Updated to reflect planning comments	TC	JW

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Client's Name
CSL

Job Title
St Stephens Towers - Norwich

Drawing Title
Elevation 1 - SS1

Scale
As indicated

Drawn	Checked	Date
TC	JW	03/11/16

Job No	Drawing No	Rev
W0263	0320	B

Status
PLANNING

CAD File/ Date: 190406017 16:17:17

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CDM 2015 Health & Safety Information

This information relates only to 'Significant Hazards' identified on this drawing and is to be read in conjunction with the Designer's Risk Assessment Register.

Rev	Date	Revision Details	Dr	Ch
B	15-06-17	Updates following planning comments	JW	JW
A	30-05-17	Updated to reflect planning comments	TC	JW

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Client's Name
CSL

Job Title
St Stephens Towers - Norwich

Drawing Title
Ground Floor Plan

Scale
1 : 200

Drawn	Checked	Date
JW	TC	07/10/16

Job No	Drawing No	Rev
W0263	0222	B

Status
PLANNING

CAD Plot Date: 15/06/2017 16:26:17

1:200 @ A0 / 1:400 @ A2

meters 4 8 12 16 20

North

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