

Appendix 1: Anglia Square, Norwich

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Planning Inquiry Reference (Norwich City Council): 19/00007/CALLIN

Councillor Denise Carlo, January 2020

Note on the Historical Development of Norwich Within the City Walls and Norwich 'Over the Water'

Qualifications

1. My name is Denise Carlo. I have been a Green Party City Councillor for Nelson the City of Norwich, since 2011. I hold a BA Hons in British History and Landscape Archaeology (UEA); PG Dip in the Conservation of Historic Landscapes, Parks and Gardens (Architectural Association), and PG Dip in Urban Planning (Oxford Brookes).
2. At UEA I studied under the late Alan Carter, Director of Landscape Archaeology at the Centre for East Anglia Studies. Mr Carter led the Norwich Survey 1971-78 which investigated the origins and development of Norwich. I established a community campaign in 1988 to oppose completion of the Norwich Inner Ring Road Phase 3 promoted by Norfolk County Council. If built, the scheme would have severed the south-east 'tail' of the medieval street plan. Behind the scenes, the campaign was advised by the late Dr Sue Margeson, Assistant Keeper of Archaeology at Norwich Castle Museum who had worked on the Norwich Survey and authored several papers. The Secretary of State for the Environment refused planning permission for the road scheme following a call in inquiry in 1992 where I represented community groups as a Rule 6 Party, along with English Heritage.
3. My work has largely been in green transport campaigning. This included the Campaign for Better Transport from 1997 to 2007 where I coordinated the National Transport Round-table. One project I led on was the CBT case against the the A303 Stonehenge Improvement. I advocated a do-minimum option involving closure of the A344 and a visitor travel plan. Although the Secretary of State backed the Inspector's recommendation in favour of a short-bored tunnel, the Minister decided that the scheme was unaffordable and adopted a do-minimum solution of closure of A344 whilst Historic England went onto develop a travel plan. A new Government in 2010 decided to resurrect the A303 Stonehenge scheme.

Purpose of Note and Summary

4. I have written a note below on the origins and growth of Norwich. It includes a detailed section on the area north of the river known as 'Norwich Over the Water'. I have drawn on the note in order to challenge, in my statement on Heritage, some of the applicant's interpretations of the evolution of the historic city. The main points I wish to draw out are:

5. The shape of modern Norwich within the line of its city walls relates to the pre-Conquest pattern of streets and individual settlements which coalesced to form Norwich in the c11th. Magdalen Street (with St Augustine's Street branching off at Stump Cross) and King Street (the latter almost a mile in length) met at Tombland, the Saxon market and formed the North-South axis of the medieval town. Streets which branched off west from Tombland remain visible in the street pattern too (eg Colegate and Fishergate). The city walls enclosed the streets and settlements and including those along King Street and Ber Street to the south-east (hence the long tail shape) and development along Magdalen Street and St Augustine's Street to the north. The Norman conquest impacted on the Anglo-Scandinavian layout of Norwich to some degree with changes to the road system east of Tombland and demolition of settlements on land occupied by the Cathedral, Castle and new market and they added to the street plan.

Relevance of above point to consideration of the proposed development.

6. The applicant has failed to recognise this important layout in the landscape which provides the backbone to the city within its walls and contributes to the special historic interest of Norwich and the city centre conservation area.

7. Habitation spread as ribbons of development along main roads/streets. The narrow streets were tightly built up along their frontages on narrow plots. One storey cottages were later replaced as 2 storey. As the population grew, buildings were extended upwards to 3 storey and later extended into the yards and courts, with multiple occupancy commonplace. Successive re-building of properties took place, but building tenements and plots can often be traced back many centuries.

Relevance of above point to consideration of proposed development:

8. The bulky high rise blocks with their massive footprints bear no relation to the historic low rise buildings on mostly narrow plots lining narrow streets. Building on courts and yards showed that population growth can be accommodated in ways other than building on open land.

9. The historical character of Norwich Over the Water is that it remains a low rise enclave punctuated by church towers as described in a rather pejorative way

by the applicant.

Relevance of above point to to consideration of proposed development:

10. the applicant's plan for a tall residential building in north Norwich as a counter-balance to landmark ecclesiastical, civic and administrative buildings in south Norwich amounts to a re-engineering of the city centre conservation area which fails to appreciate the different special qualities and historical interest of north and south Norwich. Norwich Over the Water includes some fine merchant houses and cottages which have survived partly because there was less housing pressure here than in other parts of Norwich.

11. Significant areas of open land remained in Norwich Over the Water into the c19th. Gildencroft and the green area around St Augustine's Church is a vestige of the pasture land at Gildencroft.

Relevance of above point to consideration of proposed development:

12. The proposed development does not include any meaningful green open space and only limited greenery at ground level for commercial reasons. Making green open space an integral part of redevelopment of this site would echo the historic character of this area and create a better connection with the green space in which St Augustine's and Gildencroft cottages stand, as well as providing a better quality of local environment for the residents and enhancing biodiversity.

13. Within the city walls, Norwich was busy with a large variety of trade and industries throughout its history. In the c19th and c20th, industry increased in scale and within and adjacent to the city. This also applied in Norwich Over the Water though not to the degree that the applicant's built heritage and design consultants have postulated as one of their grounds for building bulky high rise blocks on Anglia Square.

Relevance of above point to consideration of proposed development:

14. The applicant claims that the city evolved beyond its medieval prototype some time ago as exemplified by modern industrial developments moving into the city in the c19th and c20th, especially into Norwich Over the Water, such as Jarrold's printing works, shoe factories and Sovereign House. This argument contradicts the justification for city centre conservation area designation which derives from the medieval and older influences on the historic core.

Growth and Development of Norwich

Refer also to Appendix 2 (hard copy only) with plans on the evolution of Norwich:

- The Anglo-Scandinavian Borough
- Late Saxon or Anglo-Scandinavian Norwich
- The Norman Town
- Norwich Over the Water in 1789

15. Our knowledge and understanding of the city's origins and early growth has been enhanced by the Norwich Survey 1971 -78 which investigated and recorded the archaeological, architectural and documentary evidence for the city. Work included a detailed record of every pre-1830 domestic building within the city walls, re-appraisal of the surviving medieval churches and a map of land holdings in Norwich in 1300. Almost forty sites were excavated inside the city wall to record the city's buried archaeology and standing buildings threatened by redevelopment. They revealed continuous development and rebuilding of domestic houses along the streets and lanes, starting in the C14th and continuing until the present day and helped to construct a narrative about the origin and early growth of Norwich and the development of late medieval housing.

16. Much of the layout of medieval Norwich and the present city centre derives from the coalescence of four Saxon/Scandinavian settlements (Conesford, Coslany, Northwic and Westwick) in the River Wensum valley in the c11th.

17. At the centre of the developing urban area lay Tombland, site of the Saxon market, with streets fanning out to the north, south and west. Fyebridge Street (now Magdalen Street), north of the river in Northwic and King Street, south of the river at Conesford, converged at Tombland. They formed the main north-south axis and the main route from London to the market on Tombland.

18. Brian Ayers former County Archaeologist for Norfolk describes Tombland as standing,

“astride a relict pre-Conquest urban landscape. Streets to the north,south and particularly to the west can be suggested as elements within the Late Saxon or Anglo-Scandinavian town”.¹

¹ Norwich: Archaeology of a Fine City, Brian Ayers, 2009 page 41.

19. Considerable prosperity centred along the Wensum, Norfolk's main highway at the time. By 1066, Norwich was one of three or four of the most important and populous cities in England.

20. The Norman impact on the city can be seen in the Cathedral in a loop of the river floodplain, the royal Castle on an elevated position at the end of a wooded river escarpment and a new market place in its shadow, marking clearly the administrative and commercial centre. Despite Normans stamping their authority on the Saxon town and sweeping away several settlements to impose their massive structures, the basic physical street layout remained.

21. The shape of Norwich within the line of its medieval city walls relates to the pre-Conquest pattern of streets and individual settlements which coalesced to form Norwich. The distinctive pointed 'tail' shape of the southern section possibly resulted from enclosure by the walls of several scattered settlements along the river on King Street. Between the northern end of King Street and the river, south of Bishopsgate lay Conesford, after which King Street is named (from the Danish 'konungr') meaning king). Saxon occupation in the southern part of King Street centred around St Ethedreda's church, dedicated to a Saxon saint. There is evidence of Danish settlement around the southern part of Ber Street along the ridge leading from the Castle, where early names of streets had Danish elements (for example, Finklegate). The existence of settlement along Ber Street may account for the city walls having to sweep round to encompass it. To the north, the city walls enclosed open land and ribbon development along main radial streets leading out of the town that included Magdalen Street, St Augustine's Street, Oak Street.

22. The importance of Norwich in medieval England was second only to London, as witnessed by the size of the walled area, the presence of five medieval bridges and the number of medieval churches (well over 60). Today, Norwich's 32 pre-Reformation churches form the largest collection of surviving medieval churches in any European town. ²

23. Norwich's economic wealth grew up to the c18th as reflected in the large rich collection of ecclesiastical, administrative, public and quasi-public buildings which are concentrated to the immediate north and south of the river and round the market. The city walls enclosed the city until the late c18th when the gates were all pulled down between 1791 and 1810, with the exception of small suburbs at Heigham and Pockthorpe.

24. Major population growth was accommodated without much change to the city's

² The Medieval Churches of the City of Norwich, Nicholas Groves, Norwich HEART, 2010.

physical structure. This was possible as a result of extensive land enclosed within the city walls; the release of monastic holdings following the Reformation; the subdivision of properties along street frontages and the erection of cottages in courtyards which become the mainstay of housing for the labouring classes in Norwich well into the c20th. ³

25. Campbell concludes that for all the changes Norwich underwent in the 900 years before 1800, the most remarkable aspect about its history is how much was determined early on and how much before 1066. Campbell's composite map of the north-west and north-east quadrants of Norwich circa 1789 based on various original map sources, shows the medieval street plan of streets with their built up frontages extending back on the narrow plots, standing and former churches and sizeable areas of open land. ⁴

26. New streets were created within the city walls in the c19th, notably the Prince of Wales Road to Thorpe Railway Station. With new suburbs growing outside the walls, the appearance of the historic core was also changed by the growth of industry associated with traditional activities such as food and drink, textiles and leather.

27. The second quarter of the c20th saw slum clearance as the city's inhabitants were moved from the yards and courts to new suburban Council estates whilst industry moved inside the walls. In the last quarter, housing has shifted back to the city centre as industries have declined and office employment has relocated from the city centre to business parks on the city periphery. The pendulum has swung away from large-scale redevelopment historic town centres in the 1950s - 1970s in favour of urban conservation in 1980s with a recognition that development should endeavour to repair the damage and build new development in sympathy with its surroundings.

Development of Norwich 'Over the Water'

28. The administrative area of land enclosed by the city walls north of the river was called North Ward when Norwich adopted a new form of municipal government in the early c15th which lasted until 1835. A Mayor, two Sheriffs and twenty four Aldermen representing the city's four Great Wards, each divided into three Small wards ran the city. At some point the North Ward became known as "Over the Water" ("Ultra Aquam").

³ The Old Courts and Yards of Norwich, Frances and Michael Holmes, Norwich Heritage Projects, 2015.

⁴ Ibid. Map 3 Norwich in 1789 Summary Map North Sheet
http://www.historictownsatlas.org.uk/sites/historictownsatlas/files/atlas/town/maps/norwich_map_3_1789_summary_n_sheet.pdf

Pre-Conquest: Northwic

29. The area north of the river either side of Fyebridge Street is considered to be the most likely location for the emerging urban centre in the Middle Saxon period. Archaeological excavations showed the late Saxon defences of the settlement, skirting the line of St George's Street, crossing Botolph Street before turning east to Cowgate and then presumably south to the river. Stump Cross possibly marked their northern limit. Little is known about the defensive burgh called Northwic other than it supported three churches, St Clements, St Botolphs and St Edmunds at the time of the Conquest. Presence of the churches suggests that the defences may have been erected around a pre-existing ribbon development along the main road (Magdalen Street) as it ran northwards from Fyebridge towards a fork in the road at Stump Cross. Side streets branched off the main road along the north river bank – Colegate to the west and Fishergate to the east. The name of St Clement given to the church on the street corner of Colegate and Fybriggate suggests a Danish foundation. Possibly beyond the defended settlement lay undefended habitation centred on the (?) c11th St Augustine's Church, carved out of the extensive parish of St Clement, along with St Martin at Oak

30. Archaeologists postulate that Magdalen Street may preserve the approximate line of a Roman road linking Caistor with the main East-West route (later St Benedicts Street/Bishopsgate and the river crossings. In 1896, part of a massive timber causeway 100 yards in length was uncovered at Fyebridge, suggesting the existence of a crossing by the time of the construction of the later Saxon defences. Also, substantial scatters of Roman pottery and other finds in the general area of Botolph Street indicate a Romano-British occupation site such as a farm.

Normans to Middle Ages

31. Although Norwich took its name from the settlement of Northwic, the importance of this settlement diminished post-Conquest when the centre of administrative control switched to the Castle and Market.⁵ The river and its north and south banks remained important for settlement, trade and industry. Sites with access to the river were highly valued in the medieval city.

32. Settlement in North Conesford south of the river declined (the area of the Cathedral precinct, the Great Hospital and parish of St Martin at Palace) when the Bishop de Lonsinga purchased land here in 1096 for the Cathedral. The initial layout of the Cathedral precinct involved demolition of two churches (St Michael's

⁵ Norwich: Archaeology of a Fine City, Brian Ayers, 2009, p.50.

Tombland and Christ Church), dwellings and the re-routing of part of the Saxon road system.

33. Along Magdalen Street, settlement appears to have spread after 1066, towards the northern end of what later became the medieval town. This is shown by the creation of two new parishes in the area – St Margarets Fybridge and All Saints Fybridge.

34. Archaeology confirmed medieval (mid C11th to C1500) linear development along roads leading out of the city. It also revealed a pattern of development in which most of the building activity was concentrated on the immediate street frontages.

35. Much of the tenement pattern of the medieval city was established in the C13th, their boundaries established through subdivision of existing plots or new boundaries established. The layout of the tenements remained generally very stable. They could be amalgamated and undergo reorganisation whilst retaining the same basic framework. In many cases, the 1885 OS Map could be shown to accurately reflect the division of tenements stretching back as far as the c12th and c13th. Excavations on Alms Lane showed stable building plots from the c14th to c19th. ⁶

36. Habitation spread through internal ribbon development along streets and colonisation of open land. Land that became Botolph Street and Alms Street was in a peripheral area used for iron working, quarrying and other anti-social industries which lay between the main routes.

37. At the end of the c13th, the Botolph Street area remained a 'semi-rural backwater' with large tracts of pasture such as Gildencroft. Today, St Augustine's at Gildencroft is still surrounded by a greater area of green space partly because the area around it was fields and gardens until the c19th. ⁷

38. Mid c14th deeds showing cottages and shops on Botolph Street mark the expansion of domestic settlement here. Excavations at Alms Lane showed modest one storey two room dwellings in the c15th, the type of housing occupied by the majority of the Norwich population at this time. They were found side by side with more affluent buildings, for example, the c15th wing of the Bacon House stands across the road from the Alms Lane cottages, although most of the better quality houses were located in the richest parishes of St Andrew, St Giles, Peter Mancroft and St Stephen.

⁶ DH Evans and Malcolm Atkin, 2002, General Discussion on sites in north-east Norwich in 'Excavations in Norwich 1971 -78 Part 3', in East Anglia Archaeology Report 100.

⁷ The Medieval Churches of the City of Norwich, Nicholas Groves, Norwich HEART, 2010.

39. Settlement attracted the attention of more prosperous owners who bought property for investment and rented out. During the c15th and c16th, the street frontages were re-built in brick and flint rubble and as the population grew existing buildings were extended upwards into attics or out into the back yards for multiple occupation without encroaching on large tracts of open land inside the medieval city walls.

40. At the time of the Reformation, a number of churches fell out of use and not rebuilt: St Botolph on Botolph Street, St Olave on Pitt Street, All Saints on Fyfebriggate, St Margaret Combust near the city wall and St Mary Unbrent on Magdalen Street.

41. Published reports on the Norwich Survey excavations in North-East Norwich observed that one benefit of the historical lack of pressure on housing development in Norwich Over the Water was the survival of many fine post-medieval buildings; not only the better quality merchants' houses on Colegate, but also occasional smaller buildings such as the 2-storied cottages in Gildencroft.⁸

Arrival of the 'Strangers'

42. In 1565, the city authorities invited cloth manufacturers from the Low Countries to revitalise Norwich's cloth trade, laying the foundation for the city's wealth in the C17th and C18th. By 1579, the 'Strangers' numbered around 6,000 and many settled initially on the north bank of the Wensum, changing its character. Revitalisation of the textile trade created a number of affluent merchants who erected fine houses such as numbers 18 and 20 Colegate. As cloth manufacturing declined, the parish of St Augustine's became increasingly a haven for the poor. Population censuses showed a greater proportion of the poor living in 'Over the Water'.

43. Norwich had a strong non-conformist movement. A fine Congregational chapel was built on Colegate in 1693 and the Quakers built a chapel on part of Gildencroft in 1699. The tendency of non-conformist houses in the c18th to occupy low rent areas, suggests that Norwich Over the Water was an unfashionable location.⁹

Modern Period

44. Undeveloped land remained in Norwich 'Over the Water' until well into the c19th. Sussex Street was developed on part of Gildencroft between St Augustine's Street and Oak Street and Esdelle Street off St Augustine's. The largest yarn mill in

⁸ Excavations in North-East Norwich, *ibid* p154 – 157.

⁹ Excavations in North-East Norwich, *ibid* p154 – 157.

the city opened in 1836 on part of the Carmelite friary at Whitefriars, bought by Jarrold in 1903 for its printing business. Other industries which colonised open spaces included a large crape manufactory built in mid C19th behind Botolph Street. Chamberlin's clothing factory opened in 1903 at 30 to 34 Botolph Street, described in 'The Buildings of England' (1962) by Dr Nikolaus Pevsner as "the most interesting factory building in Norwich" ¹⁰ In 'Excavations in North-East Norwich', Malcolm Atkin and DH Evans write that in the c19th and c20th, this area was to see a 'certain' amount of industrial development.

45. In 'The Old Courts and Yards of Norwich', Frances and Michael Holmes observe that slum clearance in the Magdalen Street area left street frontage buildings largely intact until the inner ring road and Anglia Square changed the ambience but that even today Magdalen Street still contains a collection of historic buildings and yards which give an insight as to how housing developed and evolved in Norwich. ¹¹ In 1938, Odeon opened a cinema on a cleared site on Botolph Street which closed in 1971 to make way for Anglia Square and a new larger cinema.

46. Photographs taken by George Plunkett of 'Old Norwich' between 1931 and 1967 includes pubs, small shops, and houses of 2 to 4 storeys in height, timber-framed or brick built ranging from Tudor to Georgian on Botolph Street and Pitt Street. ¹²

47. Construction of the inner ring road across the northern part of the city centre in the 1960s cut a drastic path across the medieval street pattern, severing the historic Coslany Street, Oak Street, St George's Street, Calvert Street and Magdalen Street and cutting off Pitt Street, Botolph Street and St Augustine's Street. The Council cleared land between Pitt Street and Magdalen Street for Anglia Square and office development. Norwich Survey archaeologists report having to rapidly record timber framed buildings on Botolph Street in advance of the bulldozers. A photograph taken in 1975 of a view of the archaeological excavations looking towards St Augustine's Church, picturing an extant 3-storey timber framed building on St Botolph Street gives a sense of the urban scale in this area before demolition. ¹³ (See Appendix 2 and photograph at p5 showing general view of 1975 excavations on Botolph Street from the north-east looking towards St Augustine's Church).

48. The size of industrial buildings and the Odeon inserted into the street scene,

¹⁰ Photographs Norwich Industrial Architecture photo number 5142 on-line, taken in 1967

¹¹ Ibid. Beyond the Shops: Magdalen Street Area pages 105 – 118.

¹² <http://www.georgeplunkett.co.uk/Norwich/bot.htm#Botol>

¹³ Malcolm Atkin, Alan Carter, and DH Evans, 1985. Plate XI, General view of the 1975 excavations from the north-east looking towards St Augustine's church in, 'Excavations in Norwich 1971 -78 Part 2', East Anglia Archaeology Report 26. Sites excavated include: 44-56 Botolph Street; 49-63 Botolph Street; 178-88 St George's Street; Alms Lane.

was nothing compared to the shock of redevelopment in the 1960s and 70s. A Twentieth Century Society homily to Sovereign House, completed in 1968 to accommodate HMSO gives a flavour of the new architecture:

*“Like a space ship from a Gerry Anderson sci-fi drama, Sovereign House is still a thrilling suggestion of how Brutalist architecture could interpret the Corbusian motif of a cruise liner in the city.”*¹⁴

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¹⁴ Campaigning for Twentieth Century Building: Building of the month: Sovereign House, Norwich

James Benedict Brown, Twentieth Century Society, Jan 2013

<https://c20society.org.uk/botm/sovereign-house-norwich/>