

Anglia Square, Norwich

An alternative masterplan

July 2022





St Augustine's Church
Rectorry
(Seats for 250)

Crape Manufactory

Malthouse

Phoenix Brewery

St Olave's Church
(Site of)

Methodist Chapel
(United Free)
Seated for 80

Doughty's
Hospital
(A.D. 1687)

St Saviour's Church
(Rectorry)
Seats for 200

Sunday School

Post Office

Schools
Play Ground

Tower in Hand
(P. 11)

Pendleton House

Ward Boundary

Church Yard

BUTCHERS' YARD

Harper's Buildings

STONEMASONS' YARD

Michael Tavern

Pumps

Hope Tavern

White Rose
(P. 20)

White Horse
(P. 20)



The Anglia Square Vision:

New concept plans by
Ash Sakula Architects
commissioned by

SAVE
BRITAIN'S HERITAGE

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Introduction

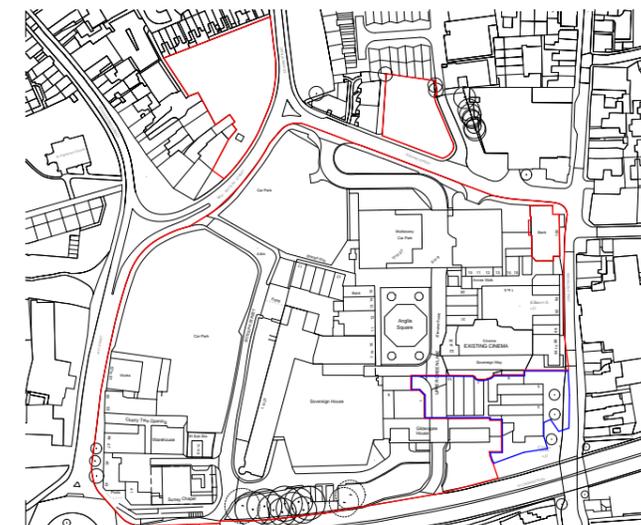
Anglia Square is a 1960s shopping and office precinct in the northern part of Norwich's city centre. The 11.5-acre site also includes derelict former government offices and vast areas of surface car parking.

In 2018 a comprehensive redevelopment of Anglia Square was proposed, featuring eight to twelve storey buildings with a twenty storey tower at its centre.

Historic England (HE) objected to the proposals, along with SAVE Britain's Heritage, the Norwich Society and many others in view of their effect both on the immediate neighbourhood of Anglia Square and on the significance of Norwich's City Centre Conservation Area and that of many of the historic buildings within it. HE commissioned Ash Sakula to develop an alternative approach, showing how Anglia Square's redevelopment could complement its neighbourhood and the historic cityscape of Norwich.

Subsequently the proposal was rejected by the Secretary of State.

The developer has now submitted a new proposal shown below - this time without the former 20 storey tower. However, the proposal remains out of scale. A total of 14 blocks are proposed, most as high as eight



Existing site plan

storeys, set against which the city centre conservation area is predominantly characterised by two, three and four-storey buildings, particularly around St Augustine's Church and the residential streets to the north, east and west of the site. The proposal remains car centric, disconnected from its wider neighbourhood. Its design is generic, avoiding reference or connection to the city around.

SAVE Britain's Heritage has commissioned the revised alternative masterplan shown in these pages, which aims to champion an urbanism embedded in Norwich.



Developer's proposal for Anglia Square - one disconnected, car-dominated precinct replaced by another.

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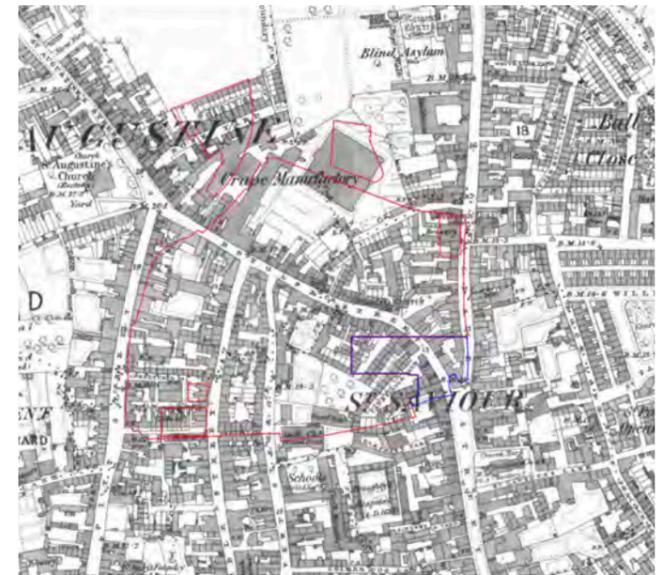


Anglia Square as is and as was: the ghost of the past overlaid on the present. Stump Cross, junction of Magdalen and Botolph Streets.

Anglia Square in history

The medieval street plan survived for centuries. Botolph Street was a main approach into the city from the north west, its junction with Magdalen Street located at Stump Cross in the south east corner of Anglia Square.

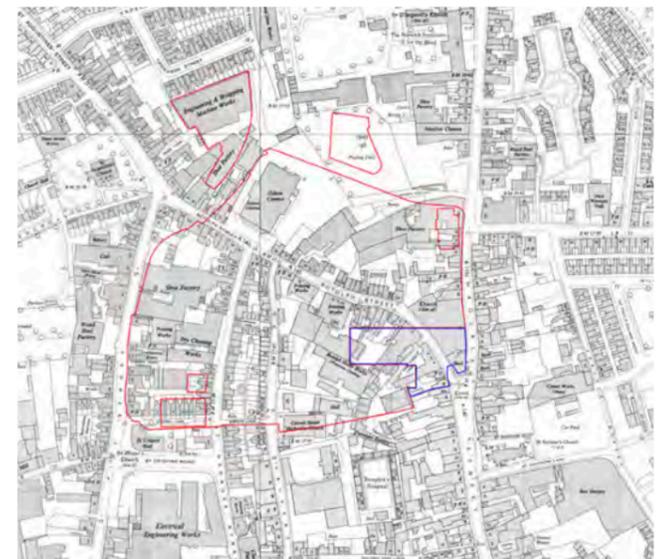
Construction in the 1960s of the ring road flyover and Anglia Square obliterated the line of Botolph Street, an important approach to Norwich from the north which ran diagonally across the site.



OS Map 1886



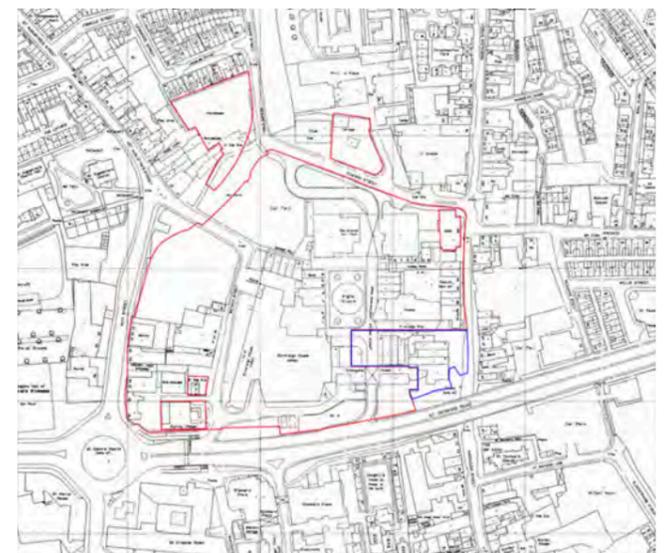
The King's Arms pub at the junction of Botolph Street and Calvert Street, photographed by George Plunkett in 1956.



OS Map 1955



Morant's Map 1873



OS Map 1994



Aerial view of Anglia Square as existing

Anglia Square today

Photographs taken at Anglia Square in May 2019.





Magdalen Street, Norwich 1935 ©George Plunkett

Urban design principles

We believe the following principles and vision should guide development of Anglia Square:

Response to existing context

- Respond to the historic character and existing scale of this part of city centre conservation area;
- Recreate earlier routes and desire lines as important parts of the townscape setting;
- Reduce the dominance of cars;
- Retain the existing historic buildings in Pitt Street and the remains of St Olave's Church
- Protect views of the cathedral spire and the City Hall tower from as many locations on the site as possible;
- Minimise the impact of the flyover; and, very importantly
- Safeguard and ensure the continued vibrancy of Anglia Square by creating an authentic neighbourhood which connects with and complements the areas around itself.

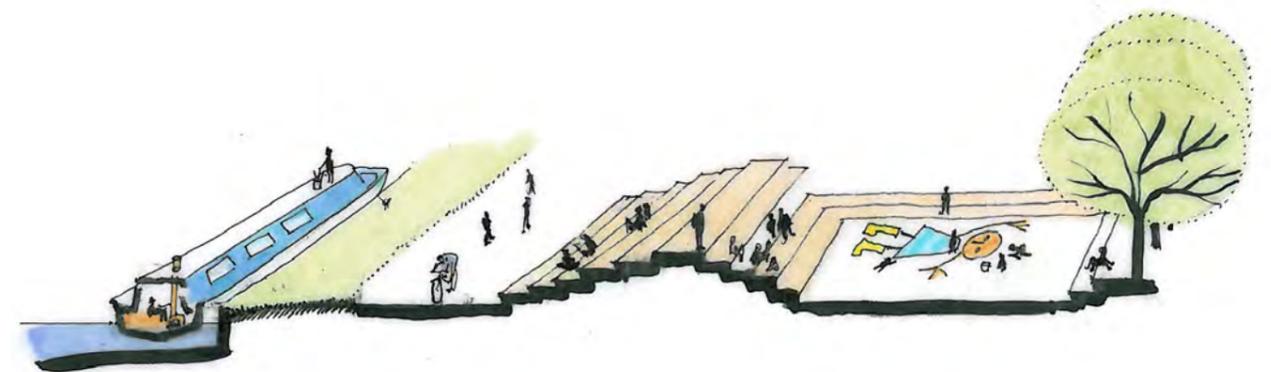
Planning

- Create a mixed use development;
- Create a safe and legible public realm to encourage walking and cycling;
- As well as dedicated play areas, make the whole public realm a playable landscape.
- Create pocket open spaces;

- Improve connections;
- Ensure new routes reflect pedestrian desire lines;
- Create good urban homes with a mix of sizes and tenures; and
- Enable a mix of large and small shops, cafés and restaurants.

Urban design

- Respond to the local character of Norwich;
- Create an informal, permeable pattern of streets that responds to how people want to move through the city;
- Create positive relationships between the site and surrounding streets by creating visual and physical links between these;
- Respond to the existing urban structure of the area, continuing its street-based urbanism;
- Ensure that development creates well defined areas of private, semi-private and public open spaces;
- Locate entrances and windows to create street level activity, active frontages and eyes on the street;
- Remove all but essential vehicular movement; and
- Develop a comprehensive programme of meanwhile uses to build interest and recognition in Anglia Square's future before and during the regeneration process.



An example of a playable public realm: Ash Sakula's Wickside, Hackney Wick, London



Simple buildings, complex public realm: Ash Sakula's Tibby's Triangle, Southwold

Key ideas

In particular, we have set down a number of key themes which we believe should be followed in the redevelopment of Anglia Square:

Cat's cradle of routes

A hierarchy of routes from large to small.
Different ways of getting from A to B.
Activity in the public realm makes everywhere safer and more interesting.

Routes follow desire lines

Traditional street layouts are a near infallible guide for where people want to go.
Traffic needs adapt to the street pattern, not the other way round.
Ease of movement encourages walking, enlivening the whole public realm.

Streets are places not corridors

Streets find reasons to widen, narrow and curve.
Trees in clumps not avenues.
Significant buildings and corners are given prominence.
Pedestrian priority throughout, with cycle and car movements tamed.

Learning from Norwich

Streets come in all shapes and sizes.
Buildings are predominantly two and three storey, with occasional higher and larger buildings.
The urban grain is intricate, syncopated and surprising.
Retaining historic buildings and working with them as part of the wider masterplan adds character, identity and continuity with the surrounding neighbourhood

Learning from other places

Amsterdam: more cycles and fewer cars makes a better city.
London: slowly discovering that two way streets are nicer than one way.
Toronto: cyclists spend more money than motorists.
Freiburg: greening and sustainability adds value.

A complex mix of uses mirroring the intricacy of the traditional city

No zoning: industrial, commercial, retail and residential uses can co-exist happily.
One building can house different uses – either simultaneously or over time.
Thoughtful design solves noise, disturbance, early morning deliveries and other issues.

Convivial urban living appropriate to an inner city location... low rise high density

Sharing common utilities: garden plots, recycling places, toolsheds, cycle stores.
In most of the development avoiding corridors, lifts and common parts, bringing people out onto the street and reducing cost.
Dual aspect homes.
Smaller gardens, more shared community space.
Less concern about 'privacy', more about 'community'.

Reducing car dependency

Fewer parking spaces.
More frequent buses with convenient bus stops.
Cycle friendly townscape, and lots of hoops.
Pedestrian priority throughout.

Public spaces and quiet corners

Some parts of the new Anglia Square should be busy and buzzy: bustling crowds, bright lights, laughter.
Other spaces should be calm, quieter, places of relaxation and repose.
A playful public realm for children of all ages from 8 months to 80.

A bit of the city

Anglia Square should not be a separated precinct, but a seamless part of the city of Norwich.
New routes should connect organically with existing streets.
The built form should generally match Norwich's existing townscape in mass, height and spatial intricacy.

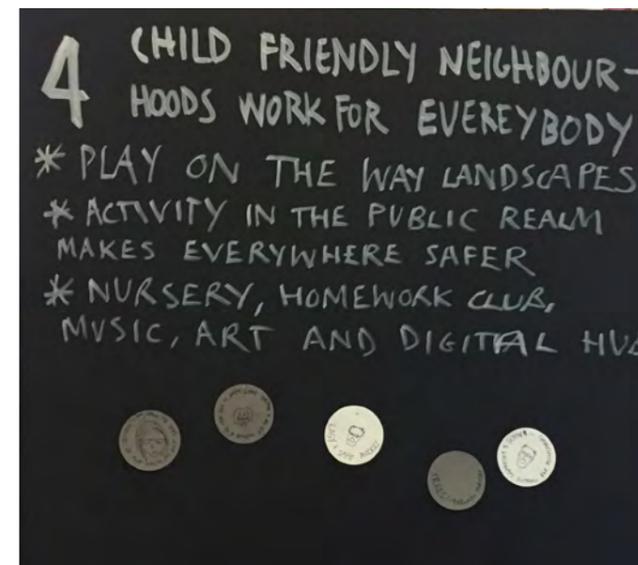
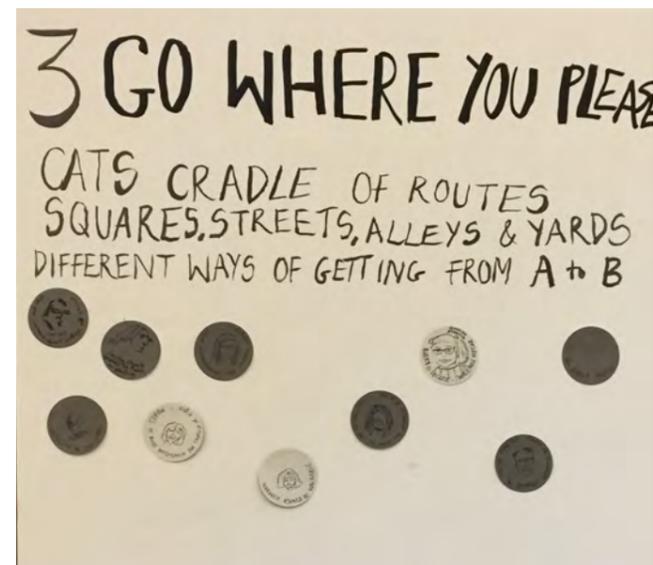


Co-design: community charrette

In 2018, before putting pencil to paper for our initial vision, we ran a day-long community charrette in St Augustine's Church Hall, adjacent to Anglia Square.

We presented our first design thoughts, precursors to the ones shown here, and invited all-comers to share their vision of what Anglia Square could become.

Their inputs have helped form this vision for its future.





1885 map overlaid with Anglia Square site boundary

A new alternative proposal

The starting point for our alternative masterplanning approach is the 1885 map of the area, displaying a medieval street pattern which remained essentially unchanged for centuries until the construction of Anglia Square and the city ring road in the 1960s.

What is clear is that the desire lines represented by the ancient alignments of Botolph Street, Middle Street, Calvert Street and the unnamed lane along the south eastern edge of the manufactory remain as valid today as when they first emerged, and they have formed the basis for our proposed layout, as shown in the plans and images over the next few pages.

Anglia Square as it exists is the result of 1960s urban renewal. In line with the precepts of the time it is a precinct, separated from and to some extent isolated from its surroundings. Rather than separating the new development from its neighbourhood, we have aimed to connect it, by means of streets which link with its surroundings, building forms that are in scale with its neighbours and, where possible, to reconnect the severances caused by the major roads around the site, particularly on its south and west sides.

The 773 homes offer a range of typologies. All are dual aspect, and every home has either a small garden or an elevated terrace or balcony. There is a small number of six storey apartment buildings as well as five storey houses, but the predominant urban form is made up of three and four storey stacked apartments and duplexes, creating streetscapes in scale with Norwich's traditional architecture.

Most homes have their own front door onto the street, avoiding common parts, lifts, shared staircases, balconies or corridors. This means that net to gross is 100%, so both the construction cost and residents' service charges are lower. It also promotes health and wellbeing: visible activity on the street rather than hidden activity in lifts and corridors encourages chance encounters with neighbours, conviviality and the growth of an authentic community.

Anglia Square is close to the centre of Norwich and well-served by buses. We are proposing to limit the amount of car parking provided. This will encourage walking, cycling and public transport, helping Norwich become less car-dependent, as befits a twenty first century city. There are 108 car parking spaces.

Anglia Square's network of streets is permeable to cars, servicing and delivery vehicles, and emergency services. You can have things dropped off at or close to your house. All streets are shared surface, with pedestrian priority, creating a safe, attractive, playable public realm.

Botolph Street and Magdalen Street are lined with shops, cafés and restaurants with homes above. Retail units are a range of sizes, and are predominantly small, to encourage independent traders. There are three large units, suitable for supermarkets, pharmacies or homestores.

On Middle Street, Calvert Street, New Street and Elephant Row are studios and workshops. Those on Elephant Row act as a buffer to the ring road flyover. Intended for artists and makers, they have large windows facing north and a communal roof terrace.

Materials: highly insulated walls clad in local brick with large, high-performance timber-framed windows. Roofs are green, brown or have photovoltaic panel arrays.

Anglia Square becomes an integral piece of the city of Norwich, a walkable neighbourhood with homes, workplaces, a community hall, supermarkets, and a range of independent shops, cafés and restaurants. Some existing buildings are retained. The Surrey Chapel and the Men's Shed in the south west corner are unaffected.

The approach we have developed is informed by both City Council policy and community voices. It provides the following accommodation.

Headline figures			
		no	minimum private amenity space
Homes		773	
Residential mix	1 bed	162	5 sq m
	2 bed	585	7 sq m
	3 bed	26	9 sqm
All dual aspect			
Total private amenity space		5,139 sq m	
Shops, cafés, restaurants		48 units, 7,220 sq m	
Workspace and studios		48 units, 2,490 sq m	
Community hall		200 sq m	
Men's Shed (unchanged)		500 sq m	
Surrey Chapel (unchanged)		300 sq m	
Car parking spaces		108	



Aerial View of Angha Square looking north



Ground Floor Plan

1:1,000 @ A3



- Residential
- Shops, cafés, restaurants
- Workshops and studios
- Community and chapel
- Retained existing buildings



First Floor Plan

1:1,000 @ A3



- Residential
- Workshops and studios
- Retained existing buildings
- First floor terraces



Upper Floor Plan

1:1,000 @ A3

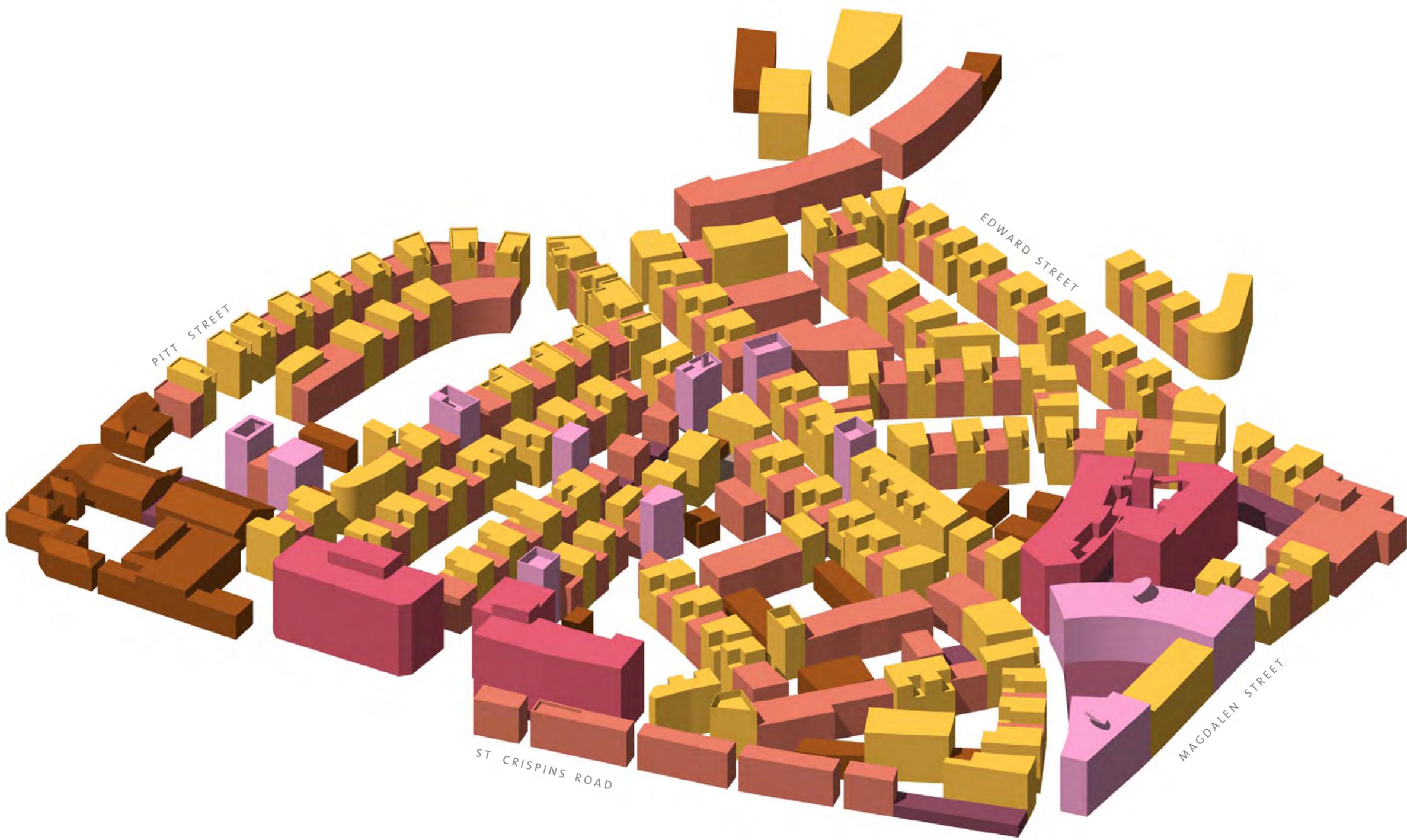


-  Residential
-  Tower house
-  Roof terrace
-  Retained existing buildings

Building heights for the new proposal



- 1 storey
- 2 storey
- 3 storey
- 4 storey
- 5 storey
- 6 storey





Roof top view of the Sky Garden looking south along Botolph Street and Magdalen Street to the city centre and cathedral



Calvert Place, looking north up Calvert Street to Botolph Street



Botolph Street looking up towards St Augustine's Street



Aerial view down onto part of Botolph Street showing townhouses, stacked duplexes and a tower house, all with rooftop terraces and PVs.



Three storey townhouses, four storey stacked duplexes with double front doors, and towerhouses at Ash Sakula's award-winning The Malings in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.



Anglia Square under construction, 15 December 1966, looking south towards the city centre with Middle Street to right

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