

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION

ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT 2-STOREY  
EXTENSION TO DESIGN CENTRE BUILDING  
WITH REROOFING OF ATRIUM AND NEW  
RAMPED ACCESS

DESIGN CENTRE  
LORD MAYOR'S WALK CAMPUS  
YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY

MARCH 2024

PLANNING STATEMENT



Chartered Town Planning Consultants

## CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	York St John University – Need for Development
3.0	Site Context
4.0	Proposal Description
5.0	Planning Policy Context
6.0	Planning Appraisal
7.0	Conclusions

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Application Form
- Application Plans and Drawing Schedule
- Design and Access Statement (Tate & Co)
- Daylight and Sunlight Report (MES Building Solutions)

ysjdb2403.stat.ph  
March 2024

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of a full planning application for the erection of a 2-storey extension with reroofing of an atrium and new ramped access to the Design Centre building within the York St John University Lord Mayor's Walk campus. The extension will replace an existing 2-storey extension at the south elevation of the building.
- 1.2 The extension will have an overall floorspace of 630m<sup>2</sup>, and will contain four new teaching rooms in context of the University's identified need for additional adaptable and accessible accommodation to support delivery of its academic courses and help sustain its ongoing success and growth.
- 1.3 The proposals are being undertaken as part of a wider £3m project which includes internal refurbishment and renovation of the Design Centre required to address the present operational constraints of the building, including inefficient and inflexible teaching space, restricted accessibility, and poor thermal performance. The project is intended for completion in time for occupation for the 2025/26 academic year.
- 1.4 This planning application relates to the replacement of an existing modern and visually unappealing 2-storey extension with a new 2-storey extension of high architectural quality. The new extension will better relate to and improve the setting of the original 19<sup>th</sup> Century building at the Design Centre, and will sit comfortably between the more substantial neighbouring development of the University's Creative Centre and residences at Aldbrough House.
- 1.5 The proposed development represents sustainable development that is in accordance with policy contained in the emerging Local Plan, including Policy ED4 relating to proposals for the renewal and redevelopment of the Lord Mayor's Walk Campus. Proposals are also supported by policy contained in the NPPF which promotes the effective use of land and requires planning decisions to give substantial weight to the use of brownfield land to meet identified development needs.
- 1.6 This planning statement sets out the planning context for the proposals and provides an appraisal of the overall planning balance. The structure of the statement is as follows:
- Section 2: York St John University – Need for Development
  - Section 3: Site Context
  - Section 4: Proposals Description
  - Section 5: Planning Appraisal
  - Section 6: Conclusions

## 2.0 YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY – NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 York St John University is a higher education institution founded in 1841 which provides a range of courses from undergraduate to post-graduate level. Its main academic campus is at Lord Mayor's Walk, and it has a sports campus at Haxby Road 1.5km to the north of the city centre. The University also has a campus in London.
- 2.2 York St John is a hugely successful institution. In recent years it has been one of the fastest growing Universities in the UK and it now has over 8,500 enrolled students, of which around 7,500 are taught from York. The University is one of York's largest employers and makes a key contribution to the local and regional economy of over £70 million each year. The University's corporate strategy aims to strengthen its status as a higher education provider and envisages further growth and diversification of its teaching disciplines and research output up to 2030 and beyond.
- 2.3 The Lord Mayor's Walk Campus accommodates the University's teaching and research operations, and provides facilities for staff, student services, and business linkups. Over the past twenty years, the University has invested well over £100 million in new facilities to develop a well-resourced city centre campus that supports a high-quality teaching and learning environment.
- 2.4 The University is committed to the ongoing renewal and redevelopment of the campus, which is vital to it being able to meet its strategic objectives, maintain its commitment to academic excellence, and sustain its attractiveness in an increasingly competitive higher education environment.
- 2.5 The Campus is however compact and spatially constrained and includes many historic buildings that present significant challenges for adaptation and use as modern, accessible academic accommodation. There is very limited scope to build new facilities within the estate, and redevelopment that is feasible is often constrained by the sensitive historic context of parts of the campus, which contains six Grade II listed buildings and is part located within the Central Historic Core Conservation Area.
- 2.6 A limited availability of both specialist and generic teaching space, and the need to maximise existing floorspace, is a critical and continuing issue for the University at the campus.
- 2.7 The existing Design Centre building, which is neither listed nor within the Conservation Area, comprises a 19<sup>th</sup> Century building with later additions and is one such building where the University face severe operational challenges with respect to restricted

accessibility, inefficient thermal performance, and overall unsuitability for modern methods of teaching.

- 2.8 The University are progressing a £3m project to address these operational challenges and ensure a sustainable future use for the building in accordance with its wider objectives as a high-quality, high-value, and high-achieving institution. The project is to be delivered through a programme of internal alterations to refurbish and modernise the existing building. This includes proposals for a new extension at its south elevation to replace the existing modern extension which detracts from the setting of the original 19<sup>th</sup> Century building.
- 2.9 The new extension will assist the University in its essential need to secure additional modern and flexible teaching accommodation. It will form an attractive addition to the Design Centre building and at the same time will provide new, technologically enabled, flexible learning spaces which can be configured to meet a variety of teaching styles and learning environments. The new teaching space will be used by courses currently based at the Design Centre. In addition, the University has recently received support from the Office for Students to expand its provision of a range of specialist programmes utilising computer science, augmented reality, and virtual reality.
- 2.10 The redevelopment of this extension, alongside the internal alterations, is designed to enable these programmes to function, and is a requirement which cannot be met anywhere else on campus. It will also considerably enhance the thermal performance and sustainability of the entire building in line with improvements made throughout the rest of the University's estate.

### 3.0 SITE CONTEXT

- 3.1 Lord Mayor's Walk campus is situated to the northern edge of York city centre and is bound by Lord Mayor's Walk to the south, Clarence Street to the west, Garden Street to the north and St John Street to the east. Residential development lies immediately to the north and east of the campus, with mixed development including residential and commercial uses lying to the west and southwest. The city walls and York Minster are to the south of Lord Mayor's Walk.
- 3.2 The Design Centre building is situated within the northern part of the campus, set some 15m back from the campus boundary with Brook Street to the north and adjacent to its western boundary with residential development at Aldbrough House.

It comprises a substantial brick building extending to 3-storeys with pitched slate roof understood to have originally been constructed in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century as the Brook Street School Chapel.

- 3.3 The original Sunday school building has been subject to substantial later additions and alterations including rear extension wings of 1- and 2-storeys with pitched roofs constructed around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and modern 20<sup>th</sup> Century additions including an atrium with glazed pyramidal roof enclosed by a large 2-storey, hipped roof extension at southern elevation. The extension has an eaves height of 5.3m and an overall ridge height of 8.54m.
- 3.4 The Design Centre building is not listed and whilst the original 19<sup>th</sup> Century elements clearly have some heritage value this has been diminished by the extent of intervention that has taken place over many years to adapt and repurpose the building for use by the University.
- 3.5 The main access to the building is via a stepped access at its southern elevation, which gives on to a hard surfaced area bound by a substation and the University's St Anthony's House building to the west, the campus access road to the south, and the University Creative Centre with landscaped frontage to the east. The area was once used for car parking but now forms a general amenity area with very limited soft landscaping, and vehicular access is restricted to occasional service access to the building or substation and bin stores.
- 3.6 The Creative Centre, located circa 10m to the east of the Design Building, is a striking and sustainably built 3-storey timber framed building which houses the University's music and computer science courses. The building was designed by Tate + Co, and has won multiple design awards, including being named Building of the Year at the 2023 RIBA Yorkshire Awards.
- 3.7 The western elevation of the Design Centre is immediately adjacent to the campus boundary with Aldbrough House, a 20<sup>th</sup> Century residential development comprising 2- and 3-blocks of flats. The central, 3-storey block of Aldbrough House is set back from the Campus boundary behind a hard surfaced area serving the flats, and is approximately 16m from the western elevation of the Design Centre. The gable end of the 3-storey southern block of Aldbrough House is circa 4.5m from the side elevation of the Design Centre, and is set behind a modest area of hard and soft landscaped amenity space area to the south of the block.

3.8 Campus land between the building and Brook Street includes a small hard surfaced yard area and the University's single-storey Makers Studio workshop, which is orientated alongside the highway. Makers Studio subject of recent approval ref. 23/01943/FUL for a minor extension and refurbishment works to provide additional workshop space.

3.9 The application site is not located within the setting of any listed buildings nor is it within the Central Historic Core Conservation Area, which extends to include the University's Holgate approximately 50m to the southeast. The presence of other intervening University buildings preclude visibility from public vantage points within the Conservation Area to the application site. The entirety of the site is within the City Centre Area of Archaeological Importance

#### 4.0 PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

4.1 Proposals are for a two-storey extension at the south elevation of the Design Centre building with reroofing of the existing atrium and a new ramped access to the north entrance to the building.

4.2 The proposed development is part of a £3m project to raise the standard of accommodation of the Design Centre to modern academic requirements, involving major internal refurbishment and redevelopment work as well as landscape improvements not subject to planning control.

4.3 The proposed extension is to replace an existing modern two-storey extension and will providing essential additional flexible teaching accommodation for the delivery of University courses. Demolition works will comprise removal of the existing extension's walls and roof as identified in the submitted Demolition Axonometry plan.

4.4 It will form a rectilinear addition to the south elevation of the Design Centre building projecting beyond the footprint of the existing extension by a distance of 6m. The extension will have a flat roof with an overall height of 6.8m, set between its immediate neighbours of Aldbrough House (10.7m in height) and the University's Creative Centre (16.3m), and subservient to the host building of the Design Centre (maximum height 13.4m).

4.5 The design approach for the extension is to create a refined and contemporary addition to the Design Centre incorporating elements, such as arched windows, which reference the form and detailing of the original 19<sup>th</sup> Century building whilst also responding to

the neighbouring Creative Centre through use of similar timber cladding and fluted cladding materials.

- 4.6 The internal layout has been designed to maximise the provision of new academic accommodation connecting to and enhancing the function of the Design Centre, with two teaching rooms on each floor arranged as large open-plan spaces for optimum functionality and flexibility.
- 4.7 The proposals include new, accessible ramps at both the extension and the north elevation entrances, and the extension will include a lobby space with new lift and stairs to further improve accessibility within the building. Internal works will renew the atrium as a large, open space, and this will be enhanced by a new patinated metal roof with metal framed rooflights allowing natural light into the core of the building.
- 4.8 The proposed scheme is illustrated in the application drawings and the Design and Access Statement provides a detailed assessment of the design rationale and approach for the development.

## 5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

### **Statutory Development Plan**

- 5.1 Determination of this application is to be made under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 There is no adopted Local Plan for York. The City of York Development Control Local Plan (April 2005) has not been subject to Examination and is now out of date.
- 5.3 The Submission version of the City of York Local Plan 2018 (the emerging Plan) was submitted for examination on 25 May 2018. Phase I Hearings for the Examination were held in December 2019, and three further phases of Hearings were held in 2022. Consultation on the Council's proposed modifications to the Plan was held in February and March 2023. A further Hearing on the matter of provision for Gypsies and Travellers was held on 6 March 2024, following which the Inspectors are to set out their position and the way forward for the Examination.



- 5.4 In accordance with NPF paragraph 48, policies in the emerging Local Plan can be afforded weight according to the:
- stage of preparation (the more advanced, the greater the weight that may be given)
  - extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
  - degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to policies in the NPPF (the closer they are, the greater the weight that may be given).

The evidence base underpinning the emerging plan is also capable of being a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

- 5.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and is a material consideration in determining planning applications. Given the absence of an adopted Local Plan, it is the NPPF that will provide the main policy basis on which this application is determined, with the emerging Plan being a material consideration of only limited weight, depending on the degree to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies and the degree of consistency with policies of the NPPF.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)**

#### Achieving sustainable development

- 5.6 At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paras 11-12). The Framework states that for decision-taking, where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, this means granting permission unless:
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
  - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole.
- 5.7 Paragraph 7 of the Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 states that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental. These objectives are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.

#### Decision-making

- 5.8 Paragraph 38 requires LPAs to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

#### Building a strong, competitive economy

- 5.9 Paragraph 85 states that planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It requires that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.

#### Ensuring the vitality of town centres

- 5.10 Paragraph 90 states that planning decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.

#### Promoting healthy and safe communities

- 5.11 Paragraph 96 states that planning decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings which:
- promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other
  - are safe and accessible places, for example through the use of beautiful, well designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and
  - enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs
- 5.12 Paragraph 98 requires planning policies to consider the social, economic and environmental benefits of estate regeneration.

#### Promoting sustainable transport

- 5.13 Paragraph 114 sets out that in assessing specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:
- a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be taken up, given the type of development and its location

- b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users
  - c) the design of parking areas and other transport elements reflects current national guidance
  - d) any significant impacts on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree
- 5.14 Paragraph 115 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 5.15 Paragraph 116 states that within this context, applications for development should:
- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport
  - b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport
  - c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards
  - d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
  - e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient location

#### Making effective use of land

- 5.16 Paragraph 123 states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 5.17 Paragraph 124 requires planning decisions to give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and to promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings
- 5.18 Paragraph 128 states planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:
- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
  - b) local market conditions and viability;
  - c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services

- d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting, or of promoting regeneration and change; and
- e) the importance of securing well-designed and beautiful, attractive and healthy places.

#### Achieving well-designed and beautiful places

- 5.19 Paragraph 131 states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It notes good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 5.20 Paragraph 135 states that planning decisions should ensure that developments:
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development
  - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping
  - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change
  - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit
  - e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space)
  - f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users

#### Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

- 5.21 Paragraph 164 states that in determining planning applications, LPAs should give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic.
- 5.22 Paragraph 173 states that when determining any planning applications, LPAs should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
- 5.23 Paragraph 180 states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- 5.24 Paragraph 200 states that in determining applications, LPAs should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
- 5.25 Paragraph 209 states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 5.26 Paragraph 212 states that LPA's should look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

**City of York Council Submission Version Local Plan (May 2018) including proposed modifications**

Vision and Development Principles

- 5.27 Policy DP2 sets out the sustainable development principles which are to be applied in the consideration of all development proposals and which underpin all subsequent sections of the Plan. These are to:
- Create a Prosperous City for All
  - Provide Good Quality Homes and Opportunities
  - Conserve, Maintain and Enhance the Environment
  - Ensure Efficient and Affordable Transport Links
- 5.28 Policy DP3 relating to sustainable communities sets out overarching design principles that new development should address where appropriate, including to:
- i. respect and enhance the historic character, green spaces and landscape of York;
  - ii. deliver high quality design and appropriate density, layout and scale whilst ensuring appropriate building materials are used

- iii. create a high quality, locally distinctive place which relates well to the surrounding area and its historic character
- iv. ensure the highest standards of sustainability are embedded at all stages of the development
- v. contribute to a sustainable, balanced community through provision of an appropriate range of housing
- vii. create a people friendly environment which promotes opportunities for social and community interaction
- x. promote integration, connectivity and accessibility to, from and within the site

#### Spatial Strategy

- 5.29 Policy SS3 states that York City Centre is the economic, social and cultural heart of York, which is vital to the character and future economic success of the wider city. The policy identifies the city centre as a priority area for a range of employment uses which are considered fundamental to delivering the Plan's economic vision.

#### Education

- 5.30 Policy ED4 states that the development and redevelopment of York St John University's Lord Mayor's Walk campus will be permitted provided that it is limited to higher education and related uses and its design takes into account the sensitive location of the campus and its setting.
- 5.31 Explanatory text for Policy ED4, at paragraph 7.13 of the Plan, states that the ongoing renewal and redevelopment of the Lord Mayor's Walk Campus to meet the University's education needs will be supported. This includes providing high quality buildings, providing safe, accessible facilities, enhancing the environmental quality of the estate and ensuring optimal use of the campus.

#### Placemaking, Heritage, Design and Culture

- 5.32 Policy DI relates to placemaking and includes detailed design points on:
- i. Urban Structure and Grain
  - ii. Density and Massing
  - iii. Streets and Spaces
  - iv. Building Heights and Views
  - v. Character and Design Standards

- 5.33 Policy D6 states that development proposals that affect archaeological features and deposits will be supported where:
- i. they are accompanied by an evidence based heritage statement that describes the significance of the archaeological deposits affected and that includes a desk based assessment and, where necessary, reports on intrusive and non-intrusive surveys of the application site and its setting;
  - ii. they will not result in harm to an element which contributes to the significance or setting of a Scheduled Monument or other nationally important remains, unless that harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal.
  - iii. they are designed to enhance or better reveal the significances of an archaeological site or will help secure a sustainable future for an archaeological site at risk; and
  - iv. the impact of the proposal is acceptable in principle and detailed mitigation measures have been agreed with City of York Council
- 5.34 Policy D7 states that development proposals affecting a non-designated heritage asset or its setting will be supported where they conserve those elements which contribute to its significance. The significance of non-designated heritage assets and their settings should be assessed in development proposals against the following criteria:
- special architectural or vernacular interest
  - townscape and landscape significance
  - historic interest
  - artistic significance
  - archaeological significance
  - age and rarity
  - community significance.
- 5.35 Policy D11 states that proposals to extend, alter or add to existing buildings will be supported where the design:
- responds positively to its immediate architectural context and local character and history, in terms of the use of materials and detailing, scale, proportion, landscape design and the space between buildings;
  - sustains the significance of a heritage asset and/or its setting
  - positively contributes to the setting, wider townscape, landscape and views
  - protects the amenity of current and neighbouring occupiers, whether residential or otherwise
  - contributes to the function of the area and is safe and accessible; and
  - protects and incorporates trees that are desirable for retention

### Green Infrastructure

- 5.36 Policy GI2 relates to Biodiversity and Access to Nature and includes policy stating that development should, where appropriate, achieve net gain in biodiversity in accordance with The Environment Act 2021 (when enforced) and national policy.

### Climate Change

- 5.37 Policy CC2 states that developments should achieve high standards of sustainable design and construction by demonstrating:
- energy and carbon dioxide savings in accordance with the energy hierarchy
  - water efficiency, and
  - consideration of good practice adaptation principles for climate resilience

### Environmental Quality and Flood Risk

- 5.38 Policy ENV2 states that development will be permitted where it does not unacceptably harm the amenities of existing and future occupants on the site and in neighbouring communities.
- 5.39 Policy ENV5 states that for development on brownfield sites, surface water flow shall be restricted to 70% of the existing runoff rate, unless it can be demonstrated that it is not reasonably practicable to achieve this reduction in runoff. Sufficient attenuation and long term storage should be provided to ensure surface water flow does not exceed the restricted runoff rate, and such attenuation and storage measures must accommodate at least a 1 in 30 year storm. Proposals should also ensure that storm water resulting from a 1 in 100 year event plus the recommended additional flows from the latest climate change advice can be stored on the site without risk to people or property and without overflowing into a watercourse or adjacent areas.

## 6.0 PLANNING APPRAISAL

- 6.1 The proposed scheme is for a new extension to the York St John University Design Centre building to provide purpose-built teaching accommodation, with replacement of the existing building's atrium roof and new ramped access to its northern entrance.
- 6.2 The proposals are a key element of a £3m project for refurbishment and renovation of the entire Design Centre building which will help address the severe operational challenges caused by restricted accessibility, inadequate standards for modern methods of teaching, and inefficient thermal performance. The project is to be delivered as part



of the University's strategic objectives to maintain a high-quality student experience and ensure its continued competitiveness in the higher education market.

- 6.3 The extension has been designed to provide an open, flexible and accessible learning environment that will be responsive to modern learning and teaching practises and supported by technically enabled facilities. It will connect into and enhance the facilities in the main building, and help ensure a sustainable future use for the building.

#### **Principle of development**

- 6.4 The proposed scheme represents development by York St John University within previously developed land on its existing campus allocated for academic use in the Policies Map of the emerging Local Plan.
- 6.5 Policy ED4 of the emerging Local Plan supports the development and redevelopment of the Lord Mayor's Walk campus, provided that it is limited to higher education and related uses and its design takes into account the sensitive location of the campus and its setting. The explanatory text for Policy ED4 includes support for development that provides high quality buildings and safe, accessible facilities; enhances the environmental quality of the estate; and ensures optimal use of the campus.
- 6.6 National planning policy provide support for development that will widen the choice in education, and gives substantial weight to the value of redeveloping suitable brownfield land in sustainable locations to meet identified needs and promotes the effective use of land.
- 6.7 The development represents a sustainable and effective use of the site to meet the identified needs of the University, and is considered to be acceptable in principle subject to assessment of other planning considerations in accordance with Policy ED4 of the emerging Local Plan.

#### **Design and appearance**

- 6.8 The proposed scheme will replace the existing modern, unattractive 2-storey extension to the Design Centre building with a new 2-storey extension of high architectural quality that will better relate to the original 19<sup>th</sup> Century building and neighbouring development. Alongside the newly constructed Creative Centre, the proposed development will vastly enhance and strengthen the appearance of the northern part of the Lord Mayor's Walk Campus.

- 6.9 The proposal has been designed to sit comfortably within its surroundings in terms of both its overall massing and choice of material palette. Building elevations are designed to echo the rhythm of the Creative Centre, utilising the same textured timber cladding, whilst incorporating the existing arched detailing found on the façade of the original 19<sup>th</sup> Century building. The fenestration arrangement responds to the internal layout and ensures that classrooms will receive good levels of daylight.
- 6.10 The scale and massing has been kept to the minimum required to deliver the fundamental space requirements for the University whilst minimising impact on neighbouring properties and reducing environmental impact, costs, and construction time. The scheme has been informed by contextual analysis, including detailed building height studies, resulting in a scale of development that is appropriate to the site context. At 6.3m in height, the new extension will not relate sympathetically to the main Design Centre building (13.4m) and to the more substantial neighbouring development of the 4-storey Creative Centre (16.3m) and 3-storey Aldbrough House (10.7m). The flat roof design will allow space for roof plant to be set back from view, and provides potential for the future introduction of photovoltaic panels.
- 6.11 The separate landscaping work that is being delivered at the front (south) of the proposed extension will transform the setting for the Design Centre, which is currently somewhat stark and dominated by hardstanding, and provide a coherent transition from the recently completed landscaped frontage of the Creative Centre.
- 6.12 The Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Tate + Co to set out the design evolution and rationale for the development. It provides a comprehensive assessment of how the scheme is informed by the University's essential need to deliver adaptable and open teaching accommodation whilst respecting the existing context and neighbouring occupants, being visually attractive as a result of good architecture, and creating an attractive and welcoming place for staff and students to learn and work.
- 6.13 The Statement demonstrates that the scheme represents a high-quality design that will make an entirely positive contribution to the character and context of the campus and its surroundings.
- 6.14 As such, the development is held to be in accordance with the emerging Local Plan in relation to draft Policy ED4 specifically relating to the development and redevelopment of the Lord Mayor's Walk campus as well as general policies relating to design principles including policies D1, D7 and D11. It is also in consistent with policy contained within the NPPF on achieving well-designed and beautiful places, and with the National Design

Guide, which sets out characteristics of well-designed places and illustrates what good design means in practice.

### **Access**

- 6.15 The proposals will retain the south elevations as the primary entrance to the Design Centre building, and accessibility for mobility-impaired visitors will be improved with the replacement of existing stepped access with ramps to the main and north entrances. The internal layout is designed to ensure full and equal access to all users of the extension, with improved connectivity to the remainder of the building.
- 6.16 The scheme does not include any car parking spaces, and vehicular access to the site will be restricted to limited use by refuse collection and service vehicles. The University's cycling strategy is to provide storage facilities at campus entrances rather than at each building, and to promote walking and discourage cycling within the site. The proposed development will not result in an increase in student numbers, and the existing level of cycle parking at the campus is sufficient. As such, no cycle parking spaces are proposed for the development.

### **Sustainability**

- 6.17 Sustainability and care for the environment are key elements of the University's corporate agenda. It is progressing a range of decarbonisation projects at all its sites across York, and its current targets are to achieve a 65% carbon reduction by 2025 and an 80% cut by 2030.
- 6.18 As part of its drive toward decarbonisation, the University has produced a 'Sustainable Building Criteria' which sets out the sustainable design principals to be adopted for all its construction projects. These include to:
- design for long life, low maintenance and future adaptability/ change of use
  - use re-used, recycled, low environmental impact, non-toxic and local materials, designing out waste
  - increase energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions
  - reduce mains water usage
  - provide adequate space for re-use, recycling and composting.
  - measure, integrate, and enhance biodiversity
  - require considerate and efficient construction site practice
- 6.19 The proposed scheme is guided by the Sustainable Buildings Criteria and the University's requirements for an environmentally low impact building with reduced energy and low carbon objectives. Section 4.1 of the Design & Access Statement sets

out the strategy and the key sustainability features to be adopted by the scheme, including:

- an effective site layout in response to the neighbouring context
- a fabric first approach, using low-embodied carbon materials to maximise energy efficiency and performance, and reduce emissions and maintenance
- efficient design of the building to ensure sufficient daylight and sunlight levels
- use of roof-mounted Air Source Heat Pumps in combination with MVHR
- specification of water efficient fittings to reduce water consumption
- effective pollution management and control:
- high-quality insulation, window glazing, and low-flow water fittings

### **Neighbour Amenity**

- 6.20 A key element of the design development for the scheme has been to protect and maintain the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, both within University buildings and at the Aldbrough House residences.
- 6.21 The scale of the proposed extension has been reduced as much as possible within the parameters of the University's teaching accommodation needs, and the scheme has been developed following testing of a series of massing options to assess impacts on neighbouring buildings (ref. Section 3.3, Design & Access Statement). The final proposed scheme maintains existing separation distances to Aldborough House and represents an appropriate scale and form of development that will not have a significantly greater impact on Aldbrough House than the existing extension.
- 6.22 The planning submission is supported by a Daylight & Sunlight Report by MES Building Solutions which provides a technical assessment of the impact of the extension on neighbouring development. This demonstrates that although separation distances are relatively close as typical for a dense urban location close to the city centre, Aldbrough House will maintain a high level of compliance with daylight and sunlight guidance, with:
- all but 1 of the 104 assessed windows meeting BRE Guidance for Vertical Sky Component (VSC) daylight levels;
  - all assessed windows meeting the BRE guidance on sunlight provision; and
  - the shared amenity space to the south of Aldbrough House also comfortably meeting BRE guidance for sunlight provision and overshadowing.
- 6.23 The operation of the proposed extension as teaching accommodation will not generate any noise issues which would adversely impact on nearby buildings. Roof mounted plant equipment is anticipated to comprise two air source heat pumps and one condensing unit, which will be set back to the rear of the roof. Noise from the plant

can be controlled and limited through mitigation measures (e.g fan attenuators, acoustically attenuated enclosures, and noise barriers or louvres). Details of any necessary noise mitigation measures can be secured through planning condition as appropriate should the application be approved.

- 6.24 Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact in terms of scale, proximity, dominance, sunlight/daylight or overlooking of neighbouring properties, and therefore meets the requirements of national and local policy on the protection of residential amenity, including emerging Local Plan policies ENV2 and D1.

#### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 6.25 The application site falls within flood zone 1, and has a low risk of flooding. The proposals are for a replacement extension to the Design Centre and the increase in building footprint from the present situation will be on hard surfaced land to the south of the building. As such, the development will not result in a net increase of surface water runoff to the main sewer network, nor will it increase flood risk elsewhere. Landscaping works being undertaken to the south of the extension may offer the opportunity for betterment of the existing runoff rate, and drainage details for the scheme can be secured by planning condition should the application be approved.

#### **Archaeology**

- 6.26 The site lies within the York Area of Archaeological Importance, and is located within a wider area in which Roman, medieval and post-medieval activity have been identified. Watching briefs and borehole surveys close to the proposed development area have not identified evidence of significant settlement prior to the construction of residential buildings along Garden Street in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century, and cartographic evidence indicates the area comprised orchard and garden land from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 6.27 The University will secure a watching brief on all construction groundworks for the proposed development, and it is understood that this will be secured by planning condition should the application be approved.

## 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The application will provide essential new accommodation for the higher education use of York St John University as part of the ongoing renewal and redevelopment of its Lord Mayor's Walk Campus.
- 7.2 The proposed extension will contain essential new teaching accommodation in context of the University's identified need for additional adaptable and accessible accommodation to support delivery of its academic courses and help sustain its ongoing success and growth. It is a vital element of the wider £3m project which includes internal refurbishment and renovation of the Design Centre required to address the present operational constraints of the building, intended for completion for the 2025/26 academic year.
- 7.3 The proposed scheme represents a high-quality design that will make a wholly positive contribution to the University campus. The proposal will not impact on the setting of any designated heritage assets, nor will it result in adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring buildings.
- 7.4 The development is in accordance with policy contained in the emerging Local Plan, including Policy ED4 relating to the Lord Mayor's Walk Campus, and is also supported by NPPF policy promoting the effective use of land and giving substantial weight to the use of brownfield land to meet identified development needs.
- 7.5 The development will not give rise to any adverse impacts that would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the substantial benefits of the proposal when assessed against NPPF policies as a whole, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out in NPPF paragraph 11 is engaged for this application. As such, we conclude that planning permission should be granted for the proposals.

ysjdb2403.stat.ph  
March 2024