



2. Anglia Square

Significance	LOW
Concentration of historic buildings	LOW (1)
Presence of features from historical period(s)	LOW (1)
Townscape / Landscape quality:	LOW (1)
Quality of details:	LOW (1)
Concentration of negative features:	LOW (1)
Score	5

Character Area Overview

Summary

This area includes the Anglia Square Shopping Centre (a), St. Crispin's Road (b) and adjacent industrial units and is therefore dominated by late C20 commercial developments, industrial units and surface car parking. The area was subject to comprehensive redevelopment in the 1960s and 70s and is one of very poor townscape quality which visually severs the northern housing areas from the rest of the historic central area.

Topography & Landscape Framework

The area lies on land which rises gently to

the north from the River Wensum. It has no significant open spaces.

Town Morphology, History & Archaeology

This area was part of the Saxon settlement of Northwic defended by Anglo-Scandinavian defensive ditches running along what is now Botolph Street and Anglia Square car park. Magdalen and St. Augustine's Streets, two of the oldest streets in Norwich which date back to those times, are still major thoroughfares through the area. Botolph Street originally linked the two streets, forming an ancient junction with

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Extract from 1886 OS map

Magdalen Street. The Stump Cross which was situated at this junction (and gave it its name) was demolished in the late C15.

Until the C19, most buildings fronted the key roads with open fields in between. During the C19 a Crape Manufactory was built where Anglia Square stands whilst in 1903 a cloth factory of some architectural distinction (by A.F. Scott) stood on Botolph Street. Both were demolished in the 1960s.

The area was heavily bombed during the Baedeker raids in April 1942 and although many buildings remained standing, post-War reconstruction meant that most of these were demolished unnecessarily. Sovereign House

(c) was built for HMSO in the late 1960s and the Anglia Square shopping centre, cinema and car parks followed in the early 1970s. At a similar time, St Crispin's Road Flyover (d) was built as part of the inner ring road.

Landmarks & Views

Although Anglia Square is an important local shopping centre and it provides a significant open space, visually both it and Sovereign House (e) obscure views of prominent city landmarks due to their bulk and height. However, because the ground rises northwards, the City Hall clock tower can be seen from the St. Crispin's Road/Duke Street roundabout (f), whilst the Anglican Cathedral can be seen from

St. Crispin's Road/Charlton Road roundabout (g).

Key Building Groups

The only positive building groups within this area are those on the east side of Magdalen Street which are generally C18 or C19, of red brick with slate or pantiled roofs and up to three storeys in height. The quality of this group is rather undermined by the large modern store (h) in the middle of the group which has a particularly negative townscape impact from Willis Street. A more positive feature is Nos. 43-5 (i), at the south east end of Pitt Street, which is a former public house dating to the C19.

The Anglia Square Shopping Centre, cinema and car park together with Sovereign House form a distinctive group of buildings of similar date. These have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the wider Conservation Area (j) as do the industrial buildings either side of the northern leg of Whitefriars (k) and St Crispin's House south of the Pitt Street roundabout (l).

Current Uses

Anglia Square fulfils an important local retail and leisure need for the northern city centre. Otherwise commercial and industrial uses dominate the Character Area with large areas of surface car parking (m).

Where it crosses Magdalen Street, the flyover provides a useful shelter for bus passengers and small market stalls. Otherwise this area is unused and unattractive.



38 Pitt Street



Pitt Street



58 - 62 Botolph Street



38 Botolph Street

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Key Characteristics

Townscape Elements

Around Anglia Square are several very tall buildings with large footprints related poorly to the routes through the area. Only the buildings immediately north of the flyover give a strong edge to Magdalen Street, though these are let down by the monolithic nature of the buildings. Some building elements such as the stairtowers on Sovereign House provide some townscape interest however.

Large scale industrial units around Whitefriars, although again defining the street edges, are very large on plan and have generally blank frontages to the streets; the NCB mural on what is now Smurfits off Blackfriars Street being a rare feature enlivening the otherwise plain façade.

The large areas of surface car parking further reduce the townscape quality of the area giving no enclosure to the street and allowing localised views of the backs of properties.

With the exception of the hard-paved core of Anglia Square (o), which could potentially be a key urban space, there is no planting or formal landscaping of any note, apart from the inaccessible centres of the roundabouts.

Building Types

The building group at the south east end of Magdalen Street includes several typical C18 and C19 red brick often quite narrow

fronted properties typical of the rest of Magdalen Street. Nos. 43-5 Pitt Street are of broadly similar form. No. 102 Magdalen Street and No.20 Cowgate are both early C20 public houses.

Otherwise C20 office blocks, retail units and industrial buildings predominate (p).

Building Details

The buildings on the south east side of Magdalen Street are typical of properties elsewhere on Magdalen Street with some interesting shopfronts, sash windows and brickwork detailing.

Management & Enhancement

1. Redevelopment proposals must integrate successfully with their historic context by taking cues from the form of surviving buildings on Magdalen Street (D1, D3, E4)
2. Large scale buildings appropriate near ring-road (D2.2)
3. Reinstating historic building lines including Stump Cross (B2.4)
4. Retaining significant open space of Anglia Square in any new development (A1.3)



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