

Thoresby House

Where: Thoresby Street, N1 Who for: Arcadia University. What: 3,297sqm of student accommodation (140 bed spaces)



Thoresby House, Thoresby Street, N1

Architect: dMFK Architects

Thoresby House was built in the early 20th century to provide nurses accommodation for the then adjacent Royal Chest Hospital complex. During the Second World War the Royal Chest Hospital suffered significant bomb damage which resulted in the demolition of the main hospital buildings and the hospital site was subsequently redeveloped to create the Buxton Court housing estate. Thoresby House was the sole surviving remnant of the Royal London Chest Hospital.

Following extensive pre-application discussions with the London Borough of Hackney, CMA Planning submitted a planning application for the redevelopment of the site in February 2020. The application was submitted on behalf of Arcadia University, who had owned and housed students at the site since 1997, although the building's age, size, condition, configuration and lack of disabled access meant that it failed to meet the Arcadia's needs and replacement accommodation was therefore needed.

The planning application proposed the demolition of the existing building and erection of a new 12 storey building to provide 3,297sqm of student accommodation (Sui Generis), with 140 student bed spaces as well as communal kitchen/dining rooms, living areas and study spaces. The scheme also includes flexible teaching/community space at mezzanine level, to be made available for use by the local community in perpetuity.

Whilst the site is not located within a Conservation Area and the building was not listed, the Council had identified Thoresby House as a non-designated heritage asset and robust mitigation for its loss was required, which included the exceptional design quality of the replacement building (designed by the award winning dMFK Architects) together with the provision of new community space and the retention of some historic features, including the original foundation stone and a historic wrought iron gate.

Hackney's Planning Sub-committee approved the scheme in October 2020.