



Cambridge City Council Planning

Date: Wednesday, 25 March 2026

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Market Square, Cambridge, CB2 3QJ [access the building via Peashill entrance]

Contact: democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk, tel:01223 457000

Agenda

- 1 Order of Agenda
The Planning Committee operates as a single committee meeting. Only minor items will be presented today.

There will be a forty-five minute lunch break some time between 12noon and 2pm. With possible short breaks between agenda items subject to the Chair's discretion.

If the meeting should last to 6.00pm, the Committee will vote whether or not the meeting will be adjourned.

- 2 Apologies
- 3 Declarations of Interest

Minor/Other Planning Applications

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 4 | 25/04382/FUL Market Square | (Pages 5 - 112) |
| 5 | 25/04383/LBC Market Square | (Pages 113 -
132) |
| 6 | 25/04384/FUL Guildhall | (Pages 133 -
174) |
| 7 | 25/04385/LBC Guildhall | (Pages 175 -
202) |
| 8 | 25/04386/FUL Corn Exchange | (Pages 203 -
244) |
| 9 | 25/04387/LBC Corn Exchange | (Pages 245 -
262) |

Planning Members: Smart (Chair), Thornburrow (Vice-Chair), Dryden, Flaubert, Griffin, Howard, Illingworth and Todd-Jones

Alternates: Ashton, Bennett, Lokhmotova and Porrer

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Information for Councillors

After the publication of the agenda, if any committee members have any questions, they should be sent to officers up to 12 noon 2 days in advance of the meeting – these will be responded to as part of officer presentation (together with any queries raised by Members at the committee site visit).

The site visit protocol and public speaking scheme can be found at the below link.

[Planning Committee guidance](#)

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25/04382/FUL – Market Square, Market Hill, Wheeler Street, Guildhall Street and Corn Exchange Street

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: Market

Proposal: Refurbishment of Market Square, Peas Hill and Guildhall Street, including: provision of cycle parking, erection and siting of replacement fixed and temporary market stalls, refurbishment of Grade II listed setts, works to listed fountain and railings, and additional landscaping, street furniture and associated works.

Applicant: Cambridge City Council

Presenting officer: Charlotte Spencer

Reason presented to committee: Land within the ownership of the Council

Member site visit date: 23 March 2026

- Key issues:**
1. Principle of development
 2. Design, layout and landscaping
 3. Impact on heritage assets
 4. Impact on highway safety

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

Report contents

Document section	Document heading
1	Executive summary
2	Site description and context
3	The proposal
4	Relevant site history
5	Policy
6	Consultations
7	Third party representations
8	Member representations
9	Local groups / petition
10	Assessment
11	Principle of development
12	Design, layout, scale and landscaping
13	Heritage assets
14	Carbon reduction and sustainable design
15	Biodiversity
16	Water management and flood risk
17	Highway safety and transport
18	Cycle and car parking provision
19	Amenity
20	Third party representations
21	Accessibility
22	Other matters
23	Planning balance
24	Recommendation
25	Planning conditions

Table 1 Contents of report

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The application forms part of the wider Civic Quarter project which aims to reconnect the Guildhall, Market Square, Corn Exchange and surrounding public realm. Importantly, the project aims to reimagine Market Square to create a more inclusive, pedestrian friendly environment that will enhance the civic heart of Cambridge. It includes several key interventions, including relaying listed setts to make them more accessible, introducing Yorkstone paving across a predominantly level threshold and replacing the existing market stalls with a mixture of temporary and permanent stalls in a secure area. Combined these works would visually and spatially prioritise and improve pedestrian movement and help create a more attractive, safe and welcoming space in the interests of visitors and market traders. The applicants have engaged with the Local Planning Authority through numerous pre-applications under Planning Performance Agreements

(PPAs) starting in 2024 and leading up to the formal submission of the application.

- 1.2. The site is highly constrained and includes Grade II paving setts and a listed Grade II fountain in the middle of the Market Square. It is within the setting of multiple listed buildings along with being located within the Historic Core Conservation Area. Much of the site comprises public highway and the Market Square, which is under City Council ownership, is a designated public open space. As such, the Market Square is a busy public arena, serving as a place of business for market traders, a destination place for visitors to dwell and a nexus for Cambridge City. The functional use of the space for servicing businesses set against this context is a friction that has played out within the pre-application and application processes. The scheme has sought to balance these competing needs in a manner that shifts the dial towards the visitor experience, providing less obvious space for vehicles which has in part resulted a strong objection from the Local Highway Authority (LHA).
- 1.3. Within the lens of the LHA's objection, and noting the historic and civic importance of the Market Square and its surrounds, there is no dispute that the area is no longer reflective of the square's significance as a central place in a globally renowned historic City or able to compete in terms of the quality of public realm with comparable UK and global spaces to support residents and visitors. In particular, the Market Square's listed setts are unlevel, are not easily navigable for all users and become a slip hazard in wet weather. The public realm is cluttered with fixed street furniture such as cycle stands and unfixed items such as trade bins. The existing stalls are old and, whilst sturdy, have a degraded appearance. The existing macadam carriageway around Market Square, the Market Hill loop, is excessively wide creating the appearance of a vehicle dominated area. It pushes pedestrians on to the narrower footways around the edges of the space, and because it is kerb lined and not fully level, it inhibits movement for wheeled users. There is also little planting within Market Square itself, resulting in a predominantly hard surfaced environment.
- 1.4. Improvements and significant investment into this important civic space environment are therefore acutely needed to future proof the space as a matter of civic pride, recreating and reinvigorating the Market Square and its surrounds into a more welcoming and inclusive destination.
- 1.5. The principle of investing in and improving the appearance and function of the Market Square and its immediate surrounds in favour of stallholders and visitors to the site is strongly supported. The proposed enhancements

would help increase vitality for the market area, improve the inclusivity of the space more generally and safeguard a market presence, cementing this historical use into the future. Whilst the introduction of fixed stalls would add a sense of permanency to the site, resulting in a loss of designated public open space, strong management of the demountable stalls would open-up the southern half of Market Square allowing for a more flexible public open space than the existing situation where the temporary stalls are permanently in place.

- 1.6. The fixed stalls would result in more solid and contemporary structures. Officers acknowledge the work done by the applicant to improve their design. Due to their proposed form and colours, it is considered that the design successfully references the existing colourful stalls which have been a fixture of the public realm for a considerable length of time. Where information is lacking or where there is a disagreement over design elements such as details regarding the demountable stalls, the provision of gates, along with final colour palettes and materials, officers consider this can be dealt with by way of condition.
- 1.7. The proposed works would result in a significant change to the character and appearance of the public realm with new surface treatment, additional planting, improvements to the seating provision in the form of seating cubes and a covered seating area and the rationalisation of cycle stands and bins. Whilst concerns remain regarding the final details and positioning of the hard and soft landscaping, officers consider these can be overcome through the discharge of conditions. Although officers advise that opportunities to further improve the public realm environs have not been taken, the proposed scheme successfully balances the needs of this hard-working space and the character and appearance of the area.
- 1.8. The market area is within a heritage context of the highest significance in Cambridge. The proposal seeks to lift, treat and re-lay the listed setts within Market Square. The principle of this has the potential to cause harm to the heritage asset. Because of this, considerable discussions have taken place between the applicant, the Local Planning Authority and Historic England regarding this part of the proposal and the level of work done by the applicants is acknowledged. However, some of the investigative work, namely the trials of the setts, have been undertaken at a very late stage in the application process. Whilst not fully settled, the latest trial setts demonstrate to officers their heritage significance can be adequately respected whilst simultaneously performing a better role as a more accessible surface.

- 1.9. Further trials will continue to ease the concerns of Historic England and Conservation Officers. Whilst Historic England feel they are in a position where they are unable to fully assess the level of harm, the Conservation Officer has identified a high level of 'less than substantial harm'. It is recognised that further trials could reduce the perceived harm prior to any decision being made. However, officers are confident that a solution that is more agreeable to all parties can be found through a suitably worded condition.
- 1.10. Harm has also been identified to the listed railings due to the removal of the southern set. In addition, heritage advice is that, on the basis of the sample setts and provision of a flush surface, that harm would result to the setting of the listed structures, nearby listed buildings and the conservation area. Whilst it is noted that some of the works such as the removal of clutter and landscaping would have a positive impact on the heritage assets, these benefits alone do not overcome the harm. As such, officers conclude that 'less than substantial harm' should be attributed to all identified heritage assets with the level ranging from low to high. The provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) allow for 'less than substantial harm' where public benefits outweigh the identified harm and this needs to be carefully considered within the planning balance.
- 1.11. With exception of Market Square, the site comprises public highway. The Local Highways Authority (LHA) has raised significant concerns with the proposed works. The main objection relates to the creation of a flush, shared surface on the Market Hill loop and along Peas Hill and Guildhall Street. The LHA has justified this objection by referring to a ministerial letter issued by the UK Government regarding a pause to shared spaces with level surfaces due to the risk posed to users with visual impairments.
- 1.12. The wording of the ministerial letter states that the pause is to spaces with large amounts of pedestrian and vehicle movements. The applicant argues that whilst pedestrian movements are very high, the number of vehicle movements is low for an urban environment due to the existing Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) in effect. Therefore, they state that the government guidance should not be attributed to this scheme. Officers are inclined to agree.
- 1.13. However, the LHA objection should be considered carefully by members in the appraisal of the scheme. Additional risks to highway safety are cited by the LHA to be brought about by the proposal. Whilst some elements of the risk could be mitigated by way of condition, the overall risk would be greater than the existing situation. The weighting of this risk, considering the

objection from the LHA, is an exercise in judgement for members and is dealt with by officers in the planning balance section of this report.

- 1.14. The proposal would not result in a loss of blue badge parking provision and whilst there would be a net loss of cycle spaces within the red line, the applicant is proposing additional cycle parking outside the red line which would result in a net gain of spaces.
- 1.15. Subject to conditions, it is considered that the development would have an acceptable impact upon the neighbouring properties, would not result in unacceptable environmental health impacts and has suitably addressed the issues of sustainability and water management.
- 1.16. The development is considered to significantly improve the accessibility of the Civic Quarter by way of the treatment and re-laying of the setts in Market Square and the provision of a flush surface. Whilst further accessibility methods can be improved upon to aid those with disabilities other than mobility, this can be secured by way of condition.
- 1.17. The proposal would also create other benefits including the reduction of clutter, increased visual consistency, allowing for a flexible space, a limited amount of biodiversity net gain and an improvement to facilities such as seating.
- 1.18. When taking the identified harm and the proposed benefits into account, officers consider that on balance the development is acceptable, however, this is a finely balanced recommendation.
- 1.19. Officers recommend that the Planning Committee **APPROVE** the application subject to conditions as highlighted at the end of this report.

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment	Paragraph Reference
Conservation Officer	Objection	6.1
County Archaeology	No objection	6.12

County Active Travel	Objection	6.13
County Highways Development Management	Objection	6.15
Ecology Officer	No objection	6.34
Environmental Health	No objection	6.35
Historic England	Objection	6.38
Landscape Officer	No objection	6.49
Sustainable Drainage Officer	No objection	6.56
Sustainability Officer	No objection	6.57
Urban Design Officer	Object	6.58
Waste Officer	No comment	6.65
Design Review Panel	Comment	6.66
Third Party Representations	52 representations have been received, 49 in objection and 3 raising neutral comments	7.1
Member Representations (0)		8.1

Table 2 Consultee summary

2. Site description and context

- 2.1. The application relates to the public realm around the 'Civic Quarter' redevelopment. The site includes Market Square which is a Grade II Listed surface, Market Hill which is circular carriageway which loops around Market Square, Peas Hill, Wheeler Street and Guildhall Street which run around the west, south and east sides of The Guildhall respectively, and Corn Exchange Street from the junction with Wheeler Street to the southern building line of The Corn Exchange. Market Square is under the ownership

of Cambridge City Council with the rest of the relevant public realm being adopted public highway under the control of Cambridgeshire County Council.

- 2.2. The Market Square listing includes the setts and the two sets of iron railings, in addition, the fountain in the centre has a separate grade II listing. The site is surrounded by numerous listed buildings including the Grade I Church of St Mary the Great and its Grade II fence and gates to the west of Market Square, the Grade I Listed No.5 Market Hill to the east of Market Square, the Grade II listed Guildhall to the south of Market Square and the Grade II* Listed Church of St Edward, King and Martyr to the west of Peas Hill, Three Grade II Listed Buildings lie on the western side of Peas Hill. There are also a number of Grade II Listed Buildings and Buildings of Local Interest (BLIs) surrounding the site. The below map demonstrates all of these heritage assets.

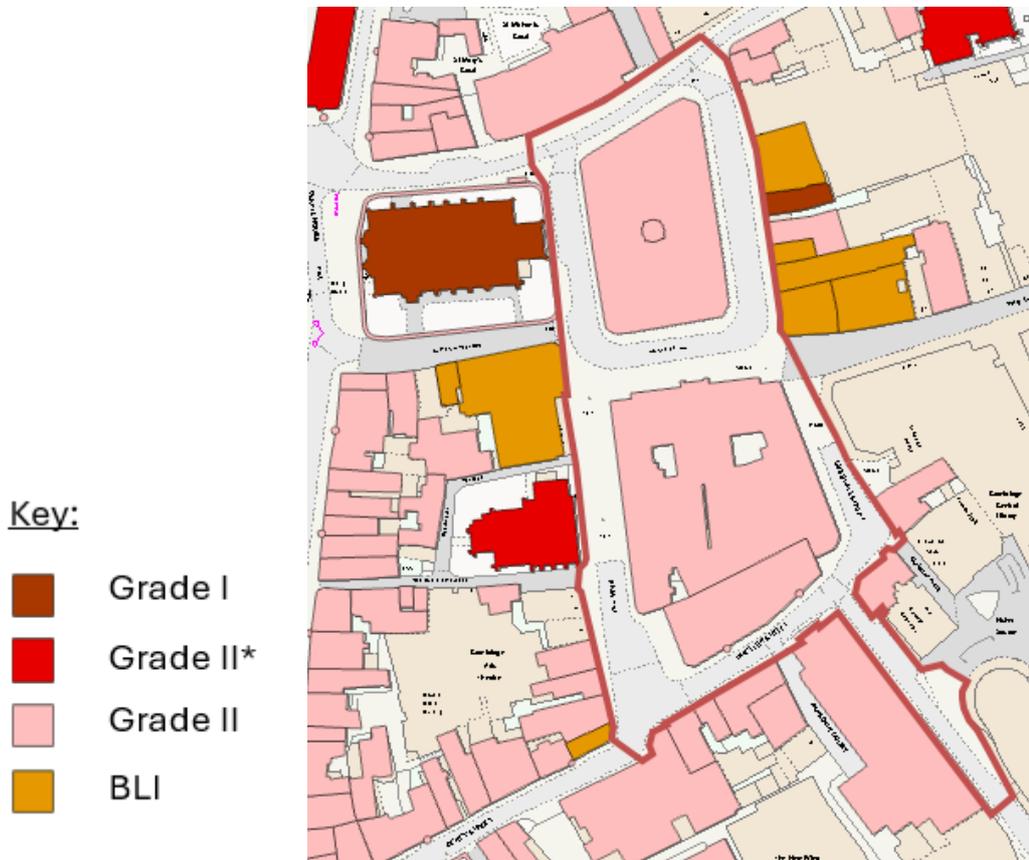


Figure 1: Map of nearby Listed Buildings and Buildings of Local Interest

- 2.3. The whole site lies within the Historic Core Conservation Area, and it lies within the Primary Shopping Area with many of the shop fronts facing the site being either a primary or secondary shopping frontage. The site lies within Flood Zone 1, however, there are areas that are at risk of surface water flooding, namely the north and north east sections of Market Hill, the

north eastern area of Market Square, Guildhall Street, Corn Exchange Street and the eastern section of Wheeler Street, and part of the southern section of Peas Hill.

3. The proposal

3.1. The application is seeking planning permission for the refurbishment of Market Square, Peas Hill and Guildhall Street, including: provision of cycle parking, erection and siting of replacement fixed and temporary market stalls, refurbishment of Grade II listed setts, works to listed fountain and railings, and additional landscaping, street furniture and associated works.

3.2. The works related to this application are as follows:

- Market Square:
 - The lifting and relaying of the setts;
 - Installation of 44 fixed market stalls, with 2 additional stalls for use as a store and basement entrance
 - Provision of 52 demountable stalls with anchors;
 - Provision of demountable seating area;
 - Installation of underground bins to the north;
 - New landscaping.
- Market Hill:
 - Repaving the carriage way and footpaths with a flush surface with exception to the northern through route which would have a kerb;
 - Provision of cycle parking along the front elevation of the Guildhall;
 - Installation of planting bed to the front of St Mary's Church;
 - Additional landscaping in the form of trees;
- Peas Hill:
 - Removal of existing landscaping, cycle parking and benches;
 - Re-paving in York stone including creating a flush surface to the southern section of the road;
 - Relocating blue badge parking to the front of Giggling Squid;
 - Provision of cycle parking to the front of Giggling Squid;
 - Creation of two planting beds to the front of St Edward King and Martyr Church;
 - Fixed seating with a mixture of seat backs and arm rests
 - Additional landscaping in the form of trees
- Wheeler Street:
 - Repaving in York stone;
 - Creation of raised table at the junction with Corn Exchange Street;
- Guildhall Street:
 - Removal of existing cycle parking

- Repaving in York stone;
- The creation of a flush surface between the Premier Inn and the junction with Wheeler Street;
- Provision of blue badge parking to the front of Honest Burger;
- Installation of cycle stands along the eastern elevation of the Guildhall;
- Corn Exchange Street:
 - Re-paving;
 - Creation of a raised table at the junction with Wheeler Street;
 - Replacement of loading bay with blue badge parking;
 - Provision of cycle stands.

3.3. The application has been amended to address representations. Further consultations have been carried out as appropriate. Additional information has been submitted in response to the Highways Officer's comments in regards to a Road Safety Audit, amended vehicle tracking with additional clarifications and explanations. The buskers' stage has been removed from the proposal along with a detailed response to the Landscape Officer's comments. The landscaping on Peas Hill has been amended and a detailed response to the Urban Design comments has been submitted. Clarification on the cycle parking outside of the red line has been provided. A trial of the relaying and works to the setts has taken place on Peas Hill with further information regarding the process being submitted. Further details to the works to the fountain has been submitted along with a detailed response to Conservation and Historic England comments. Further information regarding tree pits, bins and street furniture has been submitted. Further consultations have been carried out as appropriate.

4. Relevant site history

Reference	Description	Outcome
25/04383/LBC	Refurbishment of Market Square, Peas Hill and Guildhall Street, including: provision of cycle parking, erection and siting of replacement fixed and temporary market stalls, refurbishment of Grade II listed setts, works to listed fountain and railings, and additional landscaping, street furniture and associated works	Under determination
C/94/0547	Listed Building Consent - Demolition of fountain including granite base.	Refused 14.09.1994
C/94/0915	Removal of railings from toilet entrances and retention for future use.	Approved 04.01.1995

C/65/0094	Snack bar and car park attendant's office.	Approved 25.03.1965
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Table 2 Relevant site history

5. Policy

5.1. National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) Cycle Infrastructure Design

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

EIA Directives and Regulations - European Union legislation with regard to environmental assessment and the UK's planning regime remains unchanged despite it leaving the European Union on 31 January 2020

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Environment Act 2021

ODPM Circular 06/2005 – Protected Species

Equalities Act 2010

5.2. Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 18 Stage Consultation - December 2025 to January 2026)

- 5.2.1. The Regulation 18 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan (the draft 'Joint Local Plan' (JLP)) represents the next stage of preparing a new joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge. Once it is adopted, it will become the statutory development plan for the Greater Cambridge area, replacing the current (adopted) Local Plans for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District.
- 5.2.2. Following endorsement by Joint Cabinet in November, the draft JLP will proceed to a formal public consultation (under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012). This is currently scheduled between 1 December 2025 and 30 January 2026.
- 5.2.3. In line with paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to several factors. The draft JLP is consistent with policies in the current NPPF but represents an earlier stage of the plan making process. Therefore, at this stage, the draft JLP and its policies can only be afforded limited weight as a material consideration in decision making.

5.3. Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

- Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Policy 2: Spatial strategy for the location of employment development
- Policy 5: Strategic transport infrastructure
- Policy 10: The City Centre
- Policy 11: Development in the City Centre Primary Shopping Area
- Policy 28: Carbon reduction, community energy networks, sustainable design and construction, and water use
- Policy 29: Renewable and low carbon energy generation
- Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle
- Policy 32: Flood risk
- Policy 34: Light pollution control
- Policy 35: Protection of human health from noise and vibration
- Policy 36: Air quality, odour and dust
- Policy 55: Responding to context
- Policy 56: Creating successful places
- Policy 59: Designing landscape and the public realm
- Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment
- Policy 62: Local heritage assets
- Policy 65: Visual pollution
- Policy 67: Protection of open space
- Policy 70: Protection of priority species and habitats
- Policy 71: Trees
- Policy 80: Supporting sustainable access to development

Policy 81: Mitigating the transport impact of development
Policy 82: Parking management

5.4. Other guidance

Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (2001).

Cambridge and Milton Surface Water Management Plan (2011)

Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010)

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste

Cambridgeshire Design Guide For Streets and Public Realm (2007)

5.5. Area Guidelines

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2015)

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y – Listed Building/ Affecting Conservation Area

Conservation Officer- Object

- 6.1. For the setting of the setts, railing and fountain group the context has been defined by raised curbs and a surrounding carriage way and the space enclosed by buildings set back on the pavement. The flush surface would result in the defining boundary features being lost to the detriment of the setting of Market Square as a Listed heritage asset. A proposed definition to the area of setts would need fully detailing. In addition, the loss of this definition would have some impact on the other listed buildings in the area.
- 6.2. The indicated layout of the setts as shown on the plans received on 09 March 2026 is more satisfactory. The plan also shows that the existing

concrete slab is to receive a finish off setts over which would match the wider surface.

- 6.3. The appearance of the re-laid surface would be crucial. The submitted Setts Sample Report of a trial area on Peas Hill was useful, however, the laid appearance was not satisfactory. A further trial is intended to be carried out. Given the setts are fundamental to the listed area, this is an equally fundamental factor and ought not to be left to a condition.
- 6.4. The loss of one set of the railings would break up the relationship between the two sets.
- 6.5. The drawings now indicate the works to the fountain in its existing truncated state and it would be repaired according with the structural assessment. For clarity this does not include restoration to its original or working form.
- 6.6. The introduction of permanent stalls shows a pedestal in a pile foundation which needs to be designed to be detachable.
- 6.7. The character of Peas Hill would be harmed due to the featureless floorscape dominated by provision for car and lorry movements.
- 6.8. The Wheeler Street surfacing would be a great improvement to the existing situation.
- 6.9. Not yet seen the installed trial anchors for the removable stalls.
- 6.10. In summary the proposals would result in a high level of 'less than substantial harm' to the listed items. There would be additional 'less than substantial harm' to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.11. If minded to approve please add conditions relating to:
 - Methodology for works to setts;
 - Sample panel of setts to be approved;
 - Matching additional setts to be agreed;
 - The setts shall continue under the fixed stalls;
 - Agreement to the re-use of the railings;
 - Mechanism for removal of the fixed stalls;
 - Lighting details to be agreed;

County Archaeology- No Objection

- 6.12. Due to the archaeological potential of the site a further programme of investigation is required. This can be dealt with by way of condition,

County Council Active Travel Officer - Object

- 6.13. Object to the loss of cycle parking within the red line and lack of information regarding additional cycle parking proposed for Fisher Square. Cycle path should continue up Corn Exchange Street.
- 6.14. *Officer comment: The latest amendments have sought to address these concerns which are covered in the officer assessment. Any further comment from Active Travel will be reported on the amendment sheet or orally.*

County Highways Development Management - Object

- 6.15. The scheme layout is predicated on the reversal of the one-way system which would require the revocation of the existing and implementation of new Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs). In addition, the application is reliant on other TROs including, but not limited to, removal of blue badge parking, new loading arrangements, removal of a taxi rank, introduction of weight limits, prohibition of driving orders. No evidence has been provided that these TROs are acceptable, feasible or achievable. The TRO process is separate to the planning process and planning permission does not guarantee a positive decision. Therefore, if planning permission is granted, the permission may be unimplementable. It would not be appropriate to condition any such TROs as this would constitute negative Grampian style conditions with no certainty of resolution and these TROs would need to be approved before determination. The current situation is not acceptable to the Highway Authority.
- 6.16. Following original comments, a Road Safety Audit (RSA) Stage 1 has been submitted. However, this is incomplete and does not accord with the requirements of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges document GG119 Road Safety Audit. Without a compliant RSA process, the design cannot be considered safe or robust and the Highway Authority does not have assurance that the development would not result in harm to the travelling public.
- 6.17. The LHA objects to the removal of the kerb face due to safety and inclusivity concerns. In 2018 the UK Government issued a formal pause on new shared spaces, many of which rely on flush surfaces, so that national

guidance could be updated to better protect visually impaired users. The existing kerb line provides essential visual, tactile and behavioural cues and the removal of this distinction is known to create confusion, particularly in busy pedestrian environments.

- 6.18. The raised feature between Market Square and Rose Crescent offers no functional benefit and has not precedent elsewhere in the Historic Core and should be removed.
- 6.19. In its revised form, the scheme fails to provide clear desire lines or sufficient tactile information. The design does not address the needs of visually impaired users and does not reflect the established patterns of pedestrian movement in this location.
- 6.20. The Inclusive Mobility guidance from the Department of Transport makes clear that mixing pedestrians and cyclists should be avoided wherever possible due to the inherent risk of conflict.
- 6.21. The 900mm width shown on the swept path analysis for vehicles travelling along Market Hill (west) cannot safely accommodate a wheelchair user, people using walking aids, two pedestrians passing or pedestrians sharing space with cycles. This is unacceptable and does not accord with the established user hierarchy whereby the most vulnerable of road users have priority over motor-vehicular traffic.
- 6.22. Public authorities are increasingly exposed to successful legal challenge where they cannot demonstrate that a thorough Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was undertaken at the earliest design stage. The Highway Authority requires these for any TROs.
- 6.23. The Highway Authority has a statutory duty under the Highways Act 1980 to protect the public's lawful use of the highway and to ensure that premises retain reasonable access. Whilst there is no absolute right to maintain the same type of vehicle access, a development must not extinguish or obstruct essential servicing access or render the lawful operation impractical.
- 6.24. The current proposals may leave the properties to the eastern side of Market Hill, including Marks and Spencer, without any viable method of receiving deliveries that match their operational requirements.
- 6.25. The revised vehicle tracking is still unacceptable. The swept paths continue to overrun 'footways' including areas where there are almost 2,000 pedestrian movements per hour. The applicant's have not shown how larger vehicles including the legally operating articulated HGVs used by

retailers can access the relevant properties. Reversing manoeuvres into the market are unsafe and unacceptable. There is a lack of sufficient space to vulnerable road users around Great St Marys and outside the Guildhall due to the vehicles negotiating landscape features. The incorrect refuse vehicle has been used to track the swept path.

- 6.26. There are concerns with the proposal in regard to servicing for the Arts Theatre and Corn Exchange. The existing arrangements benefit from clear separation between pedestrians and servicing vehicles, whereas the shared surface layout on Peas Hill would remove this separation.
- 6.27. The applicant describes the pedestrian and cycle flows during certain times of the day as low and this is a misleading statement. Morning movements alone are significant and design does not account for the high daily footfall. The evidence is based on a limited period of observation and does not reflect the full range of movements typical in this location. The one reported injury on Petty Curry does not reflect overall incident levels.
- 6.28. Cycle parking is shown adjacent to the Guildhall within areas defined as footways. If the material change of footway on the flush surface is a visual cue as to where pedestrians should be then the positioning of the cycle parking that blocks the route is unacceptable.
- 6.29. The Highway Authority does not consider the servicing of underground bin stores acceptable where collection requires crane equipped vehicles to stop or operate within the public highway. All waste collection activities must be undertaken safely off street. A TRO would be required to close the highway during servicing with accompanying Temporary Traffic Management otherwise there is no legal authority to hold back users of the highway from an area where heavy apparatus is being lifted over the highway.
- 6.30. The Highway Authority re-iterates the objection to the introduction of planting within the public highway. The trees present a medium to long term maintenance liability, particularly where they extend beneath the carriageway. The current design is not considered robust enough to withstand the loading imposed by motor vehicles. Where any tree pit encroaches under the carriageway it must be engineered to fully support all legally permitted vehicles.
- 6.31. The proposed metal inlay to denote Hobsons Conduit is not supported due to poor slip resistance when wet and worn. A safer material should be used.

- 6.32. In summary the scheme in its current form is not safe, not proven deliverability and not acceptable from a highway and public safety perspective. The Highway Authority must maintain its objection.
- 6.33. In the event that the Planning Authority is minded to grant permission request the conditions relating to:
- TROs being in place prior to commencement;
 - Materials must match with the requirements of the County Council Estate Road Specification, or would be subject to the County Council Commuted Sum Policy;
 - Materials for Hobsons Conduit denotation;
 - Details of non standard materials to be submitted;
 - Permission for planting shall be received;
 - Construction vehicle restrictions;
 - Submission of a Construction Traffic Management Plan;
 - Falls and levels of Market Square.

Ecology Officer- No Objection

- 6.34. No objection subject to conditions relating to compliance with the Ecological Appraisal, ecology enhancement, lighting strategy and green roofs.

Environmental Health- No Objection

- 6.35. There are a number of nearby residential and non-residential noise sensitive receptors. It will be necessary to ensure that unacceptable significant adverse impacts on health and amenity do not arise.
- 6.36. Unexpected contamination can occur on all brownfield sites. As the applicant has the desire to re-use site worn materials a material management plan is requested.
- 6.37. No objection subject to conditions relating to:
- Construction hours;
 - Restrictions on collections/deliveries;
 - Unexpected contamination;
 - A material management plan;
 - The submission of a Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan (DCEMP);
 - Details of artificial lighting;
 - Restrictions to open air events;
 - Event noise mitigation control and management plan;

Historic England- Object

- 6.38. Historic England support the principles of enhancing and broadening the way Market Square is used to encompass a greater array of civic and communal uses; the reorientation away from vehicular traffic and the ambitions to enhance the quality of the urban realm by providing a more accessible space, declutter and rationalise services.
- 6.39. However, the trials of the setts have not conclusively demonstrated to what extent the harm arising from the loss of fabric to the listed setts would effectively contribute to the enhanced accessibility. It also remains unclear as to whether the proposed approach of bringing the mortar flush represents the least harmful alternative.
- 6.40. Following amendments there are a number of outstanding matters to aspects of design such as form and layout, the re-use of the handrails or the treatment of concrete slabs.
- 6.41. Consider the reinstatement of the fountain as a water feature is an important heritage benefit that would be difficult to achieve if not delivered as part of these interventions.
- 6.42. These matters go to the heart of the scheme and so consider they cannot be dealt with by way of condition.
- 6.43. Further information regarding the lighting is required.
- 6.44. Do not support the proposals to gate off areas of the market. This represents clear harm to the significance of the listed asset and to the wider conservation area.
- 6.45. The removal of concrete surfacing and the reinstatement of setts is welcome.
- 6.46. Whilst accept the benefits of fixed market stalls, there is a preference for a well-managed temporary stall system.
- 6.47. Remain the view that further detail and refinements and a robust justification are necessary pre-determination before the Planning Authority could be in a position to carry their weighing and balancing exercise. Feel that these matters could be worked out but more time needs to be given to these applications before they can be determined.
- 6.48. Historic England cannot support the scheme at present.

Landscape Officer- No Objection

- 6.49. The applicant has responded and amended in line with some of the comments originally made. Whilst there remains some disagreement on some elements particularly regarding deliverability and functionality around the trees to the north of the Guildhall, cycle parking, bin locations and tree pit deliverability pending underground testing.
- 6.50. In terms of the trees in front of the Guildhall these are considered to be superfluous and generally 'in the way' more than the other planting. Recommend that seating areas should be in this location due to the shade created by the Guildhall. To allow quiet seating the cycle parking should be removed from this area also.
- 6.51. The bins have been tucked away against the Guildhall which will lead to underutilisation due to poor visibility. Bins should be located along movement routes.
- 6.52. There is a general concern over the deliverability of all the trees due to the lack of underground investigation. In addition, would there be sufficient room for the trees around the underground bins.
- 6.53. Whilst the concept behind the Old Fish Market planting scheme there is concern about whether it can withstand the conditions of urban environments in Cambridge.
- 6.54. However, these issues can be dealt with under the condition release period.
- 6.55. No objection subject to conditions relating to the submission of a hard and soft landscaping plan and a maintenance and management plan.

Sustainable Drainage Officer- No Objection

- 6.56. No objection subject to conditions relating to Foul and Surface Water Drainage Schemes.

Sustainability Officer- No Objection

- 6.57. No objection subject to conditions relating to BREEAM water calculations and rainwater harvesting.

Urban Design Officer - Object

- 6.58. The proposed permanent and demountable stall designs are visually acceptable and they can be flexible in accommodating different vendor needs.
- 6.59. There is a lack of vertical delineation of carriageway, more desirable to provide a navigation edge. In addition, removal of kerbs could lead to drainage issues. However, defer to the Local Highways Authority on this matter.
- 6.60. There are gates being proposed along the north-south route through the permanent stalls. The Design and Access Statement identifies key desire lines through the area including the north-south routes. Gating this route is not supported and gating the east-west routes would be the preferred option.
- 6.61. Consider that the loss of outside seating at the Giggling Squid is a missed opportunity to provide activation and rebalance the functional character at the southern end of Peas Hill.
- 6.62. The Peas Hill landscaping would allow for a space of 2.74 metres when the bench is occupied, this is above the required 2.5 metres to allow two wheelchairs to pass and is adequate to meet the needs of potential users of the space. However, there is a narrow gap to the west of the 'island' planter which measures 1.06 metres wide when the bench is occupied, however it would require a minimum width of 1.8 metres. The width should be increased.
- 6.63. Corn Exchange Street acts more as a service street and this space could accommodate additional blue badge and service parking. If the cycle stands which are in an area with poor surveillance and vulnerable to motor vehicle strike and place additional parking here it would allow to open up the threshold of Honest Burger.
- 6.64. Drop off for the Premier Inn has not been provided.

Waste Officer- No Objection

- 6.65. No comments

Design Review Panel Meeting of 26 June 2025 (See appendix A)

- 6.66. The whole of the Civic Quarter redevelopment scheme went to the Design Review Panel (DRP) in June 2025. In regards to the Market Square and public realm, the panel felt that the public realm could be bolder in design and characterisation.
- 6.67. The accessibility specialist stated that clear, predictable, legible layouts are important for neurodivergent users. In addition, the designers should consider overstimulation. Training and education are needed to improve cyclist behaviour. Wayfinding will be critical to help everyone to use and move around the area.
- 6.68. In regards to sustainability, the growing popularity of e-scooters creates street clutter and should be designed into the plans. Traders should be provided with power to remove the need for reliance of propane gas.
- 6.69. The character specialist raised concerns about WC provision and the balance of hot food stalls in comparison to traditional traders. They felt the proposal for updated ground surfaces is very positive. There is a lot of existing clutter on Peas Hill which is off putting. A concern was raised regarding conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists and so it is important to intercept cycle routes.
- 6.70. The Landscape specialist raised that the clutter should be removed and highlighted that the Market Square should be an exemplar public open space. Designs of the stalls look heavy. There is an inherent conflict between the Square's history as the civic centre and its use as a market. The planting should respond to orientation, location and purpose. The current location of the trees does not echo the forms of the spaces or establish a clear character for the new spaces. The orientation of the stalls does not appear to be resolved. Lighting will be important.
- 6.71. The community specialist stated that the design needs to consider what a market is as a place of gathering historically. The messy, convivial nature of a market is key quality it should have a temporary feel.

7. Third party representations

- 7.1. 52 representations have been received, 49 in objection and 3 raising neutral comments.
- 7.2. Those in objection have raised the following issues:

- Principle of development
 - Loss of public open space
 - Commercialisation of the space
- Character, appearance and scale
 - Trees would be damaged by vehicles
 - Concern over the type of planting
 - Important sight lines would be blocked by the kiosks
 - Kiosks look like beach huts
 - Trees in front of shopfront
 - Fails to relate to the character and appearance of the area
 - Visual clutter;
 - Insufficient green space
- Density and overdevelopment
 - Too many kiosks
- Heritage impacts
 - Kiosks obscure the listed setts
 - Solar panels are out of character for heritage settings
 - Lack of information in regards to how kiosks would interact with setts and whether it could be fully reversible
 - Lack of a modern day Hobsons Conduit
 - Tree planters not considered the historic air raid shelter below;
 - Flexible space would impact the character and heritage;
 - Vandalism to the heritage
 - Planted would impact on the historic railings to St Marys Church and St Edwards Church
- Neighbour impact
 - Light to St Edward church
 - Construction noise to the student accommodation
- Highway safety
 - Agree with Highways' comments
 - York stone is not suitable
 - Absence of a clear traffic and access plan;
 - Banning right turn from Grand Arcade would cause traffic jams;
 - Concern about shared surfaces
 - Scheme does not reflect the reality of operational requirements of the businesses within the city centre in terms of people and vehicle movements
- Car parking and parking stress
 - Concern about the provision of blue badge parking;
 - Nothing shown how to stop market becoming a car park overnight
- Cycle parking provision
 - Loss of cycle parking
- Poor public consultation
 - Trader consultation was separate to public
- Impact on Traders

- Lack of temporary market;
- Lack of information on demountable stalls;
- Impacts on the Sunday 'farmer' markets;
- Demountable stalls are inadequate;
- Uncertainty about weekday traders not having access to a kiosk;
- Unaffordable to existing traders;
- What would happen to traders if an event were to take place
- Inadequate application detail
- Lack of justification for a flexible space
- Improvements to Market Square should not take priority
- Environmental Impacts
 - Gazebos are short life structures and environmentally unsound
 - Does not meet the requirements for ensuring a 'Healthy Greater Cambridge'
 - Smells from fast food;
 - Litter concerns
- Antisocial behaviour:
 - Block sightlines reducing passive surveillance
 - Shuttered kiosks at risk of vandalism and break ins
- Kiosks - other:
 - Fill the space with fast food outlets
 - Lack of traditional market stalls
 - Do not offer flexibility
- Financial Impact on Tax Payers
- Lack of seating
- Harm to business (other than traders)
- Issues with tourists

7.3. Those raising neutral comments have given the following reasons:

- Welcomes plans to improve the public realm;
- No dedicated provision for motorcycle food delivery drivers;
- Concern regarding construction noise for student accommodation;
- Concern about relocating traders to Kings Parade;
- Generally support but have concerns as summarised above;
- Support banning of the right turn from the Grand Arcade;
- Attractive and sympathetic design;
- Loss of cycle parking and blue badge spaces

7.4. The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations are available on the Council's website.

8. Member Representations

- 8.1. None received

9. Local Groups / Petition

- 9.1. Cambridge Present Past and Future (CPPF) has made a representation objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- Supports the revitalisation of the Civic Quarter but has some concerns;
- Lack of a comprehensive strategy for trader relocation during works;
- Absence of detailed designs for the demountable stalls
- Prioritises tourist centric takeaway food and pop-up vendors
- Not confident that application deals with issues such as bikes, bins and cleanliness;
- Concern about the loss of public toilet facilities
- Concern about the underground bins not being for public use;
- Concern about the gates on the north south route;
- Not taken proper account of the Historic Core Conservation Plan;
- Planting causes obstruction;
- Trees likely to be damaged by vehicles;
- York stone is unsuitable
- Agree with the comments from the Landscape Officer and Urban Design Officer

- 9.2. Cam Cycle has made a representation objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- Supports the ambition, however lacks sufficient clarity, certainty or safeguards;
- Concern that cycling access to the Civic Quarter will be worsened rather than improved;
- Concern about exploitation of the TROs
- Support the banning of the right turn from the Grand Arcade;
- Disagree with Highways comments in relation to the shared surface;

- 9.3. The Tourist Information Centre has made a representation objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- The works to Peas Hill would impact its enjoyment and functionality;
- Removal of benches on Peas Hill would create a barren and inhospitable zone;
- Objects to the removal of cycle racks;
- Planter would block the public highway and create a bottle neck;

- Positioning of trees has not been considered as they would block shop fronts, be located over cellars and block views of St Edward's Church;
- Proposals for Peas Hill would defeat the purpose of turning the Guildhall into a viable option;
- Incorrect land ownership as the church is owned by Trinity Hall

9.4. The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations are available on the Council's website.

10. Assessment

10.1. From the consultation responses and representations received and from an inspection of the site and the surroundings, the key issues are:

- Principle of development
- Design, layout, scale and landscaping
- Heritage assets
- Carbon reduction and sustainable design
- Biodiversity
- Water management and flood risk
- Highway safety and transport impacts
- Car and cycle parking
- Amenity
- Third party representations
- Other matters
- Planning balance
- Recommendation
- Planning conditions

11. Principle of Development

11.1. The site lies within the City Centre and Primary Shopping Area. The Market Square is a designated Protected Open Space.

11.2. Policy 10 states that any redevelopment within the City Centre should add to the vitality and viability of the city centre; achieve a suitable mix of uses; preserve or enhance heritage assets, be of the highest quality design and deliver high quality public realm and promote sustainable modes of transport.

11.3. Policy 11 states within the Primary Shopping Areas (PSA) proposal for new retail use or other centre uses would be supported.

- 11.4. Policy 67 states that development proposals will not be permitted which would harm the character of, or lead to the loss of, open space of environmental and/or recreational importance unless:
- a. The open space can be satisfactorily replaced in terms of quality, quantity and access with an equal or better standard than that which is proposed to be lost; and
 - b. The re-provision is located within a short walk (400m) of the original site
- 11.5. It is considered that the proposed principle development of the Market Square and surrounding roads would add vitality to this area of the city centre. The market would be retained albeit with new stalls and so would remain as a retail use. The finer details of impact on heritage assets, high quality design and sustainable transport will be discussed in more detail below. The proposal is considered to be compliant with Policies 10 and 11 of the Local Plan.
- 11.6. Fixed stalls would be added to the north of Market Square and would take up approximately 50% of the area. Whilst these would not be permanent as they would not have solid foundations and would have the potential to be removed, they would add a sense of permanency to the site resulting in a long term loss of designated public open space.
- 11.7. The Market Square has been historically used for a market and the existing stalls, whilst demountable, have been in place for a considerable amount of time. As such, the sense of openness on the square is already diminished. The new fixed stalls would replace the existing demountable stalls and would still be used by traders within the market. As such, it is considered that impact on the openness of the area would be limited.
- 11.8. The application proposes that demountable stalls would be used in the southern half of the site and these would be erected when required by the traders and as such would unlikely to be used everyday. When not used, the demountable stalls would be stored away and as such would result in the opening up of this half of the square. Subject to a strong management plan regarding the storing of the demountable stores when not in use, it is considered the development would allow for a greater range of activities within the southern part of the space, for example the applicant proposes that this area could be used for special events for the public.
- 11.9. Third party comments raise concerns with the scheme resulting in a more commercialised space, and conversely a less commercialised and more leisure space. Market Square has historically been used as a market which is a commercial space, and this would not change. The flexibility created by the development would allow for more activities which in turn is considered

to strengthen its connection as a civic space. Concerns have been raised regarding the impact on traders when an event is taking place, there are also concerns regarding the impact on the Sunday 'farmer' markets. These are operational and space management issues and not material planning considerations.

- 11.10. Subsequently, it is considered that the harm to the openness of the space by the installation of the fixed stalls would be limited and the development would result in an increased sense of openness within the southern part of the site. The accessibility and quality of space would be significantly improved. As such, the proposal complies with Policy 67 of the Local Plan.
- 11.11. Third party commenters have also raised concerns with the amount of 'take-away' stalls, pushing out traditional traders and impacting the surrounding cafes and restaurants. No details of future occupants have been submitted and so at this stage it is not known what products would be sold from the fixed stalls. All fixed stalls would have a ventilation chimney, however, this is to allow flexibility for future users and is not a sign that they would all be used for hot food. There are many hot food traders within the existing market that co-exist with the other market traders and businesses outside of the red line, and officers consider this would not be altered following development. The future occupiers would be for the Market Management Team to consider and not for the Local Planning Authority to arbitrate.

12. Design, layout and landscaping

- 12.1. Policies 55, 56 and 59 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) seek to ensure that development responds appropriately to its context, is of a high quality, is accessible, inclusive and safe and includes appropriate landscaping and boundary treatment. Policy 65 states that proposals for street furniture and other items that could constitute visual pollution within the public realm will be permitted where they do not have an adverse impact on the character of the area and visual setting, do not impede pedestrian and vehicle movements, have a defined purpose, in keeping with setting and consideration has been given to the cumulative impact of the proposals.
- 12.2. The application seeks to refurbish the public realm by way of new hard and soft landscaping, alterations to street furniture, refurbish the setts within the Market Square and the replacement of the existing market stalls with new fixed and demountable stalls. The proposed works would significantly alter the appearance and character of the public realm within the Civic Quarter. The works would also impact upon a number of heritage assets including the listed structures within Market Square, the Historic Core Conservation

Area and setting of a large number of listed buildings. However, the impact on these heritage assets will be considered in section 13 of the report and this section only considers the development in relation to Policies 55, 56, 59 and 65.

Market Stalls

- 12.3. The proposed market stalls within the square are broken down into both temporary and fixed structures, with the northern half of the site comprising the 44 proposed fixed market stalls and the southern side the 52 demountable stalls. Demountable seating and canopies would also be provided to create a covered seating area centrally around the fountain.

Fixed stalls

- 12.4. The fixed stalls proposed are designed to offer flexibility for the market traders dependent upon their trade and to contribute to a variation and vibrancy within the market. The stalls are designed on a fixed footprint with the ability for a variation dependent upon the traders who occupy the stalls, which can vary within any given week. There are broadly three forms of stall proposed, walk-in stalls, counter stalls and corner stalls that have openings on two sides.
- 12.5. Details of a typical fixed stall have been provided with the application. The structures are approximately 3 metres by 3 metres in footprint, with some minor variation dependent upon the type of stall. The height of the fixed stalls is approximately 3.5 metres to their ridge, with an eaves height of approximately 2.7 metres. Individually, the scale of the proposed fixed stalls is considered to be characteristic of similar market stalls, including those existing and historically used within the Market Square itself.
- 12.6. The design of the fixed stalls depends on the details and use of future traders; however they are all more contemporary than the existing stalls that have been used for a number of years. The structures retain the pitched roof of the existing, albeit with a more permanent appearance than the existing canvas canopies. The stalls are timber framed in construction with the external walls to be clad in zinc, with variation in the colour dependent upon the stall.
- 12.7. Third party comments raise concerns that the fixed stalls have a 'beach hut' appearance and so are out of keeping with the area. Officers consider that the palette of colours proposed matches that of the existing market stalls, with roofs being painted to match the existing colourful striped patterns of the existing stalls. A condition regarding the precise colours is considered necessary to ensure it is appropriate in what is a highly visible and sensitive

location. In addition to the cladding, solar PV panels are proposed on the southern roof slopes of the stalls and ventilation cowls to some, dependent upon use also contributing to a more modern market appearance. Solar panels are becoming more prevalent in the public realm including in historic areas throughout the city centre. As such, it is considered that these would not appear out of keeping.

- 12.8. Concerns have been raised by third parties in terms of the impact that the fixed stalls would have on key views by way of materials and quantity. As the stalls would be constructed with a solid material and the existing stalls are open sided, the views would be impacted to some degree. However, some of the existing stalls do have side coverings dependent on the needs of traders and such views, particularly east-west are already blocked. In addition, the stalls would be limited in height and would be laid out in a way to have sight lines from the north of the site to the dominant Guildhall. As such, it is considered that the proposed stalls would not have an unacceptable level of impact on the visual permeability of the site.
- 12.9. The heritage assessment of the stall design will be assessed later in this report. However, the modern design approach of the fixed stalls is appropriate and would better facilitate the needs for market traders. In addition to a condition relating specifically to the colour palette of the stalls, samples of the external materials should be provided via condition.
- 12.10. Gates are proposed to be located within the fixed market stalls. These would be 2.7 metre solid gates that would be coloured to match the palette of the stalls with historic maps illustrated on the front. As proposed, four gates would be installed between the central block of fixed and the east and west blocks of stalls as shown below.

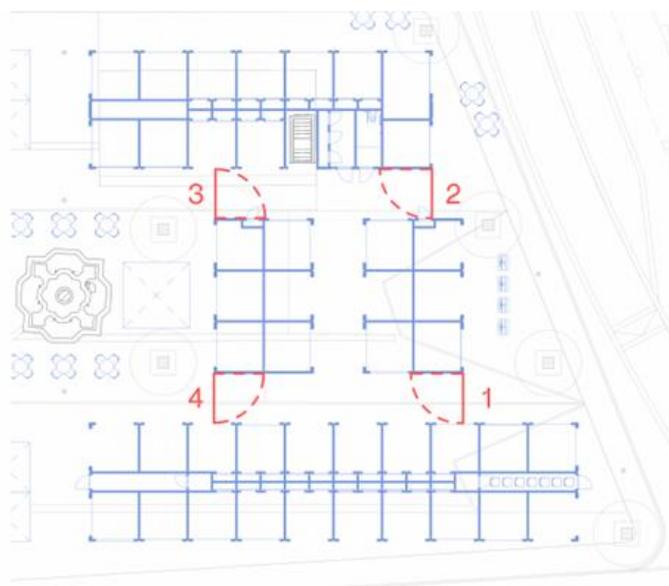


Figure 2: Location of proposed gates

- 12.11. The gates would effectively block the north-south routes through the fixed market stalls during the hours when the market is not in use. This would increase the security of some of the stalls and would attempt to reduce anti-social behaviour.
- 12.12. Whilst officers agree that gates would improve security and tackle anti-social behaviour to some degree, there are concerns about the siting of the gates. The north-south route is identified by the applicant within the Design and Access Statement as a key route and the obstruction of these routes at night would create a confusing layout, particularly for those with vision impairments. They would block key views through the square from the northern section of Market Hill through to the Guildhall. In addition, there are concerns they would significantly reduce natural surveillance from the northern corners of the seating area by gates 3 and 4 resulting in a risk of increased anti-social behaviour in areas with limited escape routes.
- 12.13. Whilst officers do not object to provision of gates in principle, these concerns have been raised throughout the pre-application process with suggestions that they are relocated to block off the east-west route through the central block of stalls effectively leaving the north-south routes open. However, this suggestion was not adopted by the applicant when submitting the application. During the determination process, the applicant has shown willingness to consider the relocation of the gates submitting a document showing them on the east-west route as requested. However, it has been requested that this amended drawing not be considered as part of the application process as this has yet to be fully agreed by the applicant's team.
- 12.14. As the applicant has shown willingness to review this element, officers are content that a suitable arrangement can be agreed and secured through condition.

Demountable stalls

- 12.15. In comparison to the fixed stalls, relatively limited information has been provided in support of the application regarding the demountable stalls to the southern side of the Market Square. It is understood that trials are still required to ensure that the traders are happy with the final product to be used. Within the Design and Access statement it is stated that these will either be 2x2 metres or 3x3 metres in footprint and designed to accommodate a range of market traders.

- 12.16. The demountable stalls would have a colour palette that would match the fixed stalls which would allow for a consistent appearance and sense of place across the market.
- 12.17. Whilst anchor points will be installed within the southern half of the market, above ground the stalls are understood to be more temporary in appearance, with fabric sliding walls and canopies. Given that no precise details have been given, a condition requiring these to be provided is deemed necessary to ensure they are appropriate in appearance.
- 12.18. Stores would be provided within the fixed stalls to allow safe and secure storage for the demountable stalls when they are not in use. The storing of the stalls would need to be well managed to ensure they are removed safely and installed securely when demand requires. Therefore, officers consider that a robust management plan is required, however this can be dealt with by way of condition.

Covered seating area

- 12.19. The plans include the provision of covered seating area around the fountain in the centre of the market. This would comprise demountable canopies and unfixed stackable chairs. It is noted that the existing market lacks adequate public seating with only the provision of 3 benches in front of the Guildhall, or seating provided by traders for their customers. This results in people using the fountain, or other small walls as ad-hoc seating. As such, the provision of seating is welcome.
- 12.20. The location of the seating would be around the fountain which is the key focal point of the site. It is considered that the positioning of the seating would improve the setting of the fountain and strengthen its position as the focal point. The plans also demonstrate how the seats can be positioned in other areas of the square.
- 12.21. Few details have been provided to demonstrate the appearance of the chairs, tables and canopies. These would need to be of a high-quality design to ensure the visual amenity is eroded, however, it is considered that this can be dealt with by way of condition. The management around the storage and setting out of the seating would need to be secured to ensure they are removed when the market is closed to help reduce anti-social behaviour and to ensure that none of the table or chairs not located by the fountain do not block the carriageway. This can be dealt by way of a management plan condition.

Basement

- 12.22. The existing basement underneath Market Square is in a dilapidated state and has suffered from water damage. The proposal seeks to make amendments to the basement to provide toilets and locker storage for the traders. The footprint would not be altered, however, one set of staircases would be removed including the existing listed railings. This will be discussed in more detail in the heritage section. The works to the basement would have a limited impact on the appearance and character of the area whilst providing upgraded facilities for the traders. This element of the proposal is supported.

Landscaping

- 12.23. The application is supported by an illustrative landscape masterplan for the Market Square which sets out the approach in the context of the entire Civic Quarter.

Hard Landscaping

- 12.24. The proposal would result in the re-paving of the whole site. The re-laying of the setts in Market Square is considered in more detail within the Heritage section of this report. Outside of the Market Square the ground would be laid in York stone which varies in size and colour to define footways and carriageways. The surface would become flush across the site with exceptions to vertical kerbs being retained along the northern section of Market Hill, Corn Exchange Street and Wheeler Street.
- 12.25. York stone is an attractive type of paving that is a commonly used material for paving particularly on footways. Concerns have been raised to it also being used for the carriageway as it is known to mark, scuff and spall under turning loads. The applicants have argued that any marks are typically surface based and tend to become less pronounced as the stones bed and develop a natural patina and state that any surface material would also be soiled. They go on to explain that treatments can be added to reduce the staining potential and that ongoing maintenance plays a key role. As such, officers consider that subject to a condition regarding the maintenance and management of these surfaces, the use of York stone is acceptable.
- 12.26. It is considered reasonable to add a condition requesting the final detailing, size and colour of the York stone to ensure that it would have a suitable appearance within the area.
- 12.27. The creation of a flush surface across the majority of the space would have an impact on the character of area as it would remove the clear definition

between carriageways and footways and differing levels would also add visual interest. This would be mitigated by the variety of colouration, texture/tactility, shapes and sizes of hard surfacing materials, which would be used to delineate between areas of the public realm. A materials condition would ensure that officers are content that sufficient definition is provided to delineate between footways and shared spaces for vehicles and pedestrians. The flush surface would significantly increase accessibility within the area and it is considered that this would outweigh the impact to the change in character of the area. The impact of the flush surface on the heritage assets and on highway safety will be discussed in more detail below.

- 12.28. New underground bins for the market traders would be provided on the northern side of Market Square. The consolidation of the bins would remove existing clutter from large bins being stored in the public realm and this is supported. The final details of the bins and their management is yet to be decided, however, this can be covered by way of condition. There are some concerns with how it is managed to ensure that the bins are for the sole use of the traders, any management plan should include this detail.
- 12.29. Public bins would be installed throughout the area. Concerns have been raised that some of these would not have high levels of visibility as they would be set against the corner of the Guildhall. No details regarding the appearance of the bins have been submitted and it would be imperative that these would be of a design suitable for prominent historical location whilst being suitable for their job. The final details of the bins can be secured by way of a landscaping condition.
- 12.30. In addition to the proposed seating within the market itself, numerous seating cubes are proposed through Market Hill along with formal seating being provided on the planters within Peas Hill and Market Hill. This is considered to significantly improve upon the existing provision of seating within the area allowing the opportunity for users to linger longer within area. The Landscape's Officers comments regarding the lack of benches to the front of Guildhall are noted. The Guildhall does provide significant shade and benches in this location would be ideal, however, the proposed seating cubes would be located underneath the proposed trees, and the central seating area offers cover. As such, it is considered that the seating arrangement is acceptable subject to the final details which can be secured by way of condition.
- 12.31. The existing banks of cycle stands currently within the centre of Peas Hill and Guildhall Street would be removed and relocated to positions against the walls of the Guildhall. Notwithstanding the provision of cycle parking

would be discussed later in this report, it is considered that moving the stands from the centre of the public realm to the edges would result in a less cluttered appearance and improvements to the ability to move through the space.

- 12.32. The proposal would involve the installation of new lighting throughout. However, few details have been submitted. Officers are content that this detail can be dealt with by way of condition.
- 12.33. The Urban Design officer has raised concerns about the loss of the seating area around the Giggling Squid and the lack of proposed outdoor seating for Honest Burger. These comments are noted and the applicants have been encouraged to include these elements throughout the pre-application process. Officers agree that the proposed public realm could be improved by including these elements, however, it is not for the Local Planning Authority to redesign the scheme during the formal application process and officers can only consider what has been submitted. The exclusion of these seating areas would have a very minor impact on the quality of the public realm and does not warrant a refusal.

Soft Landscaping

- 12.34. The proposals include new planting within and surrounding the Market Square. A total of 8No. trees are proposed in the Market Square itself, within the existing historic setts. These trees are a mixture of Silver Lime and Hornbeams set within tree pits extending beneath the ground.
- 12.35. Elsewhere, two additional trees are proposed along Market Hill at either corner with Market Street, 4 trees to the front of The Guildhall and further planting along Peas Hill and Market Hill in the form of planters.
- 12.36. Initial comments from the Council's Landscape Officer raised some potential concerns with the layout of the planting, especially along the boundary with St Mary's Church, in addition to some comments regarding the details of tree pits and planting mixes. There was however and remains no objection in principle to the planting approach proposed.
- 12.37. Concerns have been raised regarding the size of the planters, particularly in front of Great St Mary's Church and St Edward's church. This has been an ongoing point of discussion throughout pre-application discussed. Whilst it is noted that improvements have been made to the design in this regard the size of the planters does remain a concern in terms of impact on movements. However, in their response to the Urban Design Officer, the applicant has demonstrated that the total width of the existing two corridors

through Peas Hill is 5.5 metres which is reduced to 5 metres if cycles are chained to the Church's railings, and reduced further if someone is utilising the benches. The width of the proposed single route at its tightest point would be 3.74, but it would vary with a width of up to 7.38 metres. The largest gap would be at the main Peas Hill Entrance to the Guildhall to allow extra space at this busier area. Whilst the minimum width would be less than the existing, the overall width would be an improvement to the existing situation. As such, it is considered that the ease of movement through this space should not be made worse through the development. The works in this area would improve the appearance as it would remove the clutter of the cycle stands and consolidate the seating and planting. During the determination process, the second smaller oval planter has been reduced in size to provide an adequate width of passage on the western side of the street.

- 12.38. The Great St Mary's planter would be narrower and less dominant within the space. It is considered it would sit comfortably in this location. The impact of this planter on the safety of the highway will be discussed in more detail later in the report. Due to the position of the planters to the front of the church, this removes the ability to lock cycles or add posters to the railings which would reduce the visual clutter to the front of these important historic buildings.
- 12.39. Concerns have been raised regarding the positioning of the trees with the Landscape Officer considering that the trees in front of the Guildhall are unnecessary and in the way. There are also concerns about the trees impeding the operational needs of the underground bins potentially putting these trees at risk of damage. In addition, the DRP stated that the planting should respond to orientation, location, purpose and building entrances and it is not clear why the trees have been positioned as they have. Third party comments have raised concerns about trees being located in front of shop fronts. The comments are noted and it is understood that the final positioning of the trees is to be determined at a later stage once the below ground services are fully understood. Subsequently, officers consider that these issues can be overcome by way of a condition.
- 12.40. There is also some concern with the type of planting within the planters due to uncertainty regarding whether they would grow in the urban environment. However, the final planting options can be dealt with by way of condition.
- 12.41. The conditions requested by the landscape officer include a hard and soft landscaping scheme as well as a maintenance and management plan.

- 12.42. Subsequently, it is considered that the proposed landscaping works would result in a high-quality space with a reduced appearance of clutter whilst maintaining the users' needs of the space. The public realm in this area is very hard working whilst also being constrained and it is considered that the proposed scheme is a well-balanced approach in urban design terms.

Public Art

- 12.43. The existing public art namely the Snowy Farr statue near the junction of Guildhall Street and Market Hill and Talos in Guildhall Street would be retained. A condition will be added to ensure that these are removed safely and restored in their existing positions. It is proposed to add some additional art works down Guildhall Street, however the final details have not been submitted. This can be controlled by way of condition.

Conclusion

- 12.44. Overall, the proposed development is a high-quality design that would have a positive impact to its surroundings and be appropriately landscaped. The proposal is compliant with policies 55, 56, 59 and 65 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

13. Heritage assets

- 13.1. The Market Square listing includes the setts and the two sets of iron railings, in addition, the fountain in the centre has a separate grade II listing. The whole site lies within the Historic Core Conservation Area and the site is located within the setting of numerous listed buildings as highlighted in figure 1.
- 13.2. The proposal involves the lifting and relaying of the listed setts to improve the level of the surfacing. One set of the rails would be removed and re-used in an undetermined location. The fountain would be repaired from its current standard, but the proposals do not involve the re-introduction of a working water feature.
- 13.3. The market area is amongst the heritage features of the highest significance in Cambridge and it is considered the most important civic space within the city. The market place, which was developed in the 1850s, has comprised an open space with removable stalls. Market Square was listed as a Grade II structure in 2019. The surface features a combination of square and rectangular setts that do not seem to respond to any particular design pattern but rather would appear to relate to different phases of repair. The trapezoidal shape is broken down in three main

longitudinal sections forming hips, valleys and drainage points in a roof like manner. It is unclear whether this is the original layout.

- 13.4. The railings, which are a later addition, are also included in the listing and alongside the fountain form a significant ensemble of historic street furniture.
- 13.5. The fountain was listed at grade II in 1972. It was erected in 1856 and replaced the Hobson Conduit. Originally it featured a prominent canopy which was removed in 1953 due to safety concerns. Its central position, aligned with the chancel of St Mary the Great reinforces the idea of a central point in the city.
- 13.6. Despite their historic significance, the condition of the setts on Market Square is currently poor having lacked repairs over the years. The setts are uneven and slippery when wet causing inaccessibility to the market place for those with mobility impairments. There are areas which have been patched with concrete resulting in an uneven appearance across the square.
- 13.7. Regarding the character of the Conservation Area in this location, the buildings are set on the back of the footpath creating a strong definition to the square as a public space. The buildings are of different periods, materials and designs but retain a common three to four storey scale and exuberant use of ornamental detail to provide eye-catching frontages with a varied and interesting roofscape above. The Guildhall dominates the space which adds to the role of the space as the historic focus of civic administration in Cambridge.
- 13.8. However, similar to Market Square the condition of the public realm in this area of the Conservation Area is poor. The Market Hill loop carriageway is excessively wide creating the appearance of a vehicle dominated space. The quality of the streets and paving in some areas such as Wheeler Street is poor, although it is noted in other areas such as Peas Hill the condition of the surface is better. The existing cycle stores along with the use of the St Marys Church railings for locking cycles and the adhoc bin storage creates clutter. The existing stalls have a drab appearance and could be improved visually.

Direct Impact on Listed Setts

- 13.9. The lifting, treatment and re-laying of setts would result in harm to this heritage asset by way of the physical works that would need to be done to them. Despite a request for trials of how to re-lay the setts coming forward

from applicants in the pre-application discussions, trials were only in place on Monday 02 March 2026 for Conservation and Historic England Officers to review. These were conducted on a section of setts within Peas Hill (adjacent to the Giggling Squid) which do not form part of the listing.

- 13.10. Whilst the trials were useful to a degree, the laid appearance was not a wholly satisfactory outcome. It was considered that they were laid out too far apart and the mortar was too dark resulting in an appearance that is dominated by mortar distracting from the heritage asset. The applicants were in agreement with this assessment and at the time of writing, they are planning to have an additional larger trial installed by the time of the member site visit on 23 March 2026. The impact of the larger trial will be reported to members orally on the day of the committee. It is noted that the original trials were laid using a cement mortar and it is anticipated that this would be improved with the use of lime mortar.
- 13.11. Historic England have stated that due to the condition of the trials, it was not possible to form a conclusion on the level of harm caused by these works. The Council's Conservation Officer has concluded that the works would have a high level of 'less than substantial harm' and this could be mitigated by way of them being laid in an agreeable layout with suitable mortar. However, they are of the opinion that certainty of the mitigation needs to be clearer and consider that it should not be left to a condition. The Conservation Officer has confirmed that the proposed layout of the setts in terms of the laying patterns is satisfactory.
- 13.12. These comments are acknowledged. However, officers consider that the trials have demonstrated that the setts can be safely lifted, treated and re-laid whilst largely retaining the historic appearance of the individual setts. It is accepted across the round that works are required to the setts for safety reasons and as such to require even further trials to continue prior to determination would be considered onerous and officers are confident an acceptable layout and mortar can be found.
- 13.13. As such, it is recommended that conditions be added ensuring that the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Historic England approve the final details of the re-laying of the setts. As this directly impacts the listed structure, this would be added to the linked listed building consent.
- 13.14. Subsequently, without agreeable samples at this stage of the application process, the level of harm to be afforded to this element within the planning balance is regarded a high level of 'less than substantial' harm.

- 13.15. The applicant proposes to add setts to where there are currently concrete slabs such as above the basement toilets. It is considered that this would be an enhancement to the current situation and have a positive impact on the heritage assets as it would improve the consistency and legibility of the square's treatment.
- 13.16. The installation of the fixed stalls would also directly impact the listed setts. The fixed stalls would cover the setts and remove views of them currently afforded by the open nature of the existing stalls. However, the level of impact created by this is limited. The fixed stalls would be sited on a pedestal with a screw pile foundation. This design would result in an appearance of the structures floating slightly above the setts. It is important that this is designed to be detachable to mitigate the harm as it would be considered reversible. The final details of the how the fixed stalls would attach to the setts can be dealt with by way of condition. Subject to conditions, the fixing of the stalls to the setts has a neutral impact.
- 13.17. The demountable stalls would require anchors for them to be safe in incremental weather. This is proposed to be achieved by the installation of ground anchors fitted into the surface of the square. Whilst trials with above ground anchors have taken place, this has not been conducted for inground trials. A methodology has been submitted highlighting how any removed setts would be retained and replaced following the trials. It is considered that as the concrete footings required would be covered by setts and size of the anchors would not be too disruptive to the setts. This approach is acceptable. Full details of the anchors can be covered by way of condition.
- 13.18. Trees would be added to Market Square surface. Details of the tree pits have been submitted. Neither the Conservation Officer nor Historic England have raised any concerns with this. It is considered that the proposed trees would have a neutral impact on the listed setts.
- 13.19. Further information is required regarding the amount and location of lighting. This can be dealt with by way of condition.

Direct Impact on the Listed Railings

- 13.20. One set of the listed railings would be removed from the square. The applicants state that these would be stored or sensitively re-used within the new arrangement. The loss of the set of railings would result in harm to the significance of the listed structure as it would break up the relationship between the two sets. However, due to the current layout, with the clutter of the existing stalls, bins and external containers in this area the listing railings are rarely seen together as a pair. The Conservation Officer has

requested a condition requesting details of how they would be re-used and if they are successfully re-used elsewhere in the area this would mitigate the harm to some degree. As such, officers consider the harm created by the loss of the railings to be a low level of 'less than substantial harm'

Direct Impact on the Fountain

- 13.21. The application seeks to repair the fountain. The repairs are based on the submitted structural report. The repairs include repairs to the subterranean brickwork chamber the details of which will be confirmed once they are visible. Existing loose granite is to be re-bedded in traditional lime mortar, lost granite would be replaced with new granite indent and repointing would occur with lime mortar where needed. Neither the Conservation Officer nor Historic England raised any concerns with these works. However, Historic England have raised their disappointment with the lack of the reinstatement of the functionality of the fountain as a water feature. Officers are in agreement that bringing the fountain back as a water feature would result in an important heritage benefit, however, officers need to consider the application put forward. Subsequently, without this identified benefit, it is considered that the works to the fountain would have a neutral impact on the significance of the heritage asset.

Impact on the setting of the Listed Structures in Market Square

- 13.22. The proposed works would alter the setting of the listed structures in the Market Square. It is considered that in reducing the whole area to a flush surface, the defining boundary features created by the existing carriage way and vertical kerbs would be lost. This would have a significant detriment to the setting.
- 13.23. On the other hand, it is considered that the works would bring improvements to the public realm around the listed structures. The rationalising of services would remove some of the clutter currently present in the Market Square such as bins and the metal storage container.
- 13.24. The benefits in setting are considered to partially mitigate the harm. As such, officers attribute a low level of 'less than substantial harm' to the impact on the setting of the listed structures within Market Square.

Impact on the setting on other Listed Buildings

- 13.25. The raised pavement edges have been a feature of the surrounding streets in terms of the settings of the other Listed Buildings in the area. Removing this arrangement would have some impact on their settings in general.

However, the paving of the footway around the edges of the public highway would create some level of definition which would mitigate the harm.

- 13.26. The planting in front of the St Mary the Great Church and St Edward King and Martyr Church which are Grade I and II* respectively would not detract from the significance of these buildings.
- 13.27. The proposed fixed and demountable stalls would retain the appearance of a market on the Market Square with the roofs being designed to match the existing stalls. Subsequently, it is considered that the installation of the fixed stalls and demountable stalls would have a neutral impact on the setting of the listed buildings.
- 13.28. Officers attribute a low level of 'less than substantial harm' to the setting of the listed buildings that surround the application site.

Impact on the Conservation Area

- 13.29. The flushed surface would also have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area due to the loss of definition created by the vertical kerbs not only on Market Hill but also along Peas Hill and Guildhall Street. The definition created by the change in paving would mitigate this harm to some degree.
- 13.30. The Conservation Officer raises concerns that the area at the south of Peas Hill would become a featureless floorspace, dominated by provision for car and lorry movements. Officers have similar concerns, particularly as the small area of outside seating at Giggling Squid would be removed. However, the existing situation is also dominated by vehicles and due to the constraints of the city centre, it is not possible to relocate these movements elsewhere.
- 13.31. The Conservation Officer has highlighted that the improvements to Wheeler Street brings a positive impact on the conservation area as the current condition of this area is poor. In addition, the benefits of removing clutter from the area and rationalising services as well as improving the pavement in areas is also considered to result in a positive impact.
- 13.32. The proposed fixed and demountable stalls would retain the appearance of a market on the Market Square with the roofs being designed to match the existing stalls. Subsequently, the installation of the fixed stalls and demountable stalls would have a neutral impact on the conservation area.

- 13.33. The introduction of soft landscaping would add interest and greenery to a stark urban environment. This would have a positive impact on the setting of the conservation area.
- 13.34. On balance, the urban realm in this area of the conservation area would be significantly altered. Whilst taking into account the identified harm and the benefits, it is considered that there would be a low level of 'less than substantial' harm to the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area.

Summary

- 13.35. NPPF paragraph 213 states that any harm to the significance of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 219 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for development within the setting of heritage asset to enhance or better reveal their significance and proposals that better reveal its significance should be treated favourably.
- 13.36. Paragraph 215 states that where a development would lead to less than substantial harm, this should be weighed against the public benefits.
- 13.37. Section 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
- 13.38. Section 66 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 13.39. As explained above, parts of the proposal would result in harm to the heritage assets. It is important to understand the overall impact of the works on the heritage assets to consider whether paragraph 215 is triggered. Below are tables of the summary of direct impacts from the main elements of the works on the listed structures, and the impact on the setting of listed structures, listed buildings and the impact on the Conservation Area.

Proposal	Direct Impact on Listed Structures

Relaying of Setts	High level of 'less than substantial harm'
Replacement of concrete slabs with sets	Positive
Installation of fixed stalls	Subject to condition - Neutral
Demountable stalls anchors	Neutral
Installation of trees	Neutral
Removal of one set of railings	Subject to condition – low level of 'less than substantial harm'
Repairing Fountain	Neutral
Net Heritage impact	High level of 'less than substantial harm'

Table 3 Summary of direct impact on the listed structures in Market Square

Proposal	Impact on setting of Listed Structures in Market Square	Impact on setting of Listed Buildings outside the red line	Impact on character and appearance of Conservation Area
Relaying of Setts	High level of 'less than substantial harm'	Neutral	High level of 'less than substantial harm'
Flush surface	Moderate level of 'less than substantial harm'	Low level of 'less than substantial harm'	Moderate level of 'less than substantial harm'
Re-paving (excluding flush element)	Neutral	Neutral	Positive
Fixed and Demountable stalls	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Landscaping	Neutral	Neutral	Positive
Removal of clutter	Positive	Positive	Positive
Net Heritage impact	Moderate level of less than substantial harm	Low level of less than substantial harm	Moderate level of less than substantial harm

Table 4 Summary of impact on other heritage assets.

- 13.40. Paragraph 213 of the NPPF states that any harm to the significance of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.
- 13.41. Officers acknowledge the work needed to the setts is required to significantly improve the accessibility of the market in terms of levels and slip resistance. Historic England has argued that the preferred option of cutting the top off the setts has not been fully justified, nor the use of flush mortar. However, there is a high footfall within Market Square and it is considered that the space needs to be fully accessible and be safe to walk on in wet weather. The cutting of the setts would significantly improve the grip of the setts.
- 13.42. The demountable stalls are required to be anchored to ensure that they can be used year-round.
- 13.43. The railings protect the two stairways into the basement. Following development, the basement would be opened and so only one entrance staircase is required. The second set of railings would no longer have a useful purpose and would act as an unnecessary obstruction.
- 13.44. The flush surface would result in harm to the heritage assets. The flush surface has been designed in order to improve accessibility for those with mobility impairments. A flush level surface across the site is considered to significantly improve the accessibility to the market and Civic Quarter as a whole.
- 13.45. Subsequently officers consider that the harm has been justified in accordance with Paragraph 213 of the NPPF.
- 13.46. As 'less than substantial harm' has been identified, paragraph 215 of the NPPF is therefore engaged and the harm needs to be considered against the public benefits of the scheme. The net impact of harm varies between the different heritage assets. However, as the highest level of harm is a high level of 'less than substantial harm' any benefits would need to outweigh this higher identified harm.
- 13.47. The proposed works are considered to significantly improve the accessibility of the Civic Quarter. The relaying and treatment of the setts would allow for safer conditions and make it possible for those with mobility impairments or those in wheelchairs to easily access the market stalls and move across the space. In conjunction with the flush surface, it allows for improved access across the whole Civic Quarter as well as the marketplace. Due to historic nature of Cambridge, there are few spaces within the historic core for those in wheelchairs to easily move around safely

and independently. The development would be an important step in improving accessibility within the city centre. Significant weight should be attached to this benefit.

- 13.48. The relaying of the setts would allow for the removal of the patches of concrete slabs. This would improve the consistency and legibility for the square's treatment and improve its appearance. Significant weight is attached to this benefit.
- 13.49. The flush surface in conjunction with demountable stores that would be stored away would allow for an open space for public events. Whilst existing parks within the city allow for these events to take place currently, they are located closer to the edges of the city centre. The works would allow for a flexible space to be used for civic events within the heart of the city centre. Officers consider moderate weight to be attached to this benefit.
- 13.50. The works would result in additional greenery in a part of the city centre which is currently lacking in soft landscaping. This in turn would improve biodiversity within the area. Due to the constraints of the site the level of new landscaping is limited and as such moderate weight should be attached to this benefit.
- 13.51. The rationalising of services such as trader's bins being placed underground, relocating of cycle parking and other street furniture would result in a less cluttered public realm making for an improved environment for the users of the space. In addition, the new paving would improve some areas of existing paving that is currently poor. Moderate weight should be given to this benefit.
- 13.52. Officers consider that these benefits outweigh the identified harm. It is considered that the proposal is compliant with the provisions of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990, the NPPF and policy 61 of the Local Plan.

Archaeological Potential

- 13.53. The site lies in an area of archaeological potential within the historic medieval core of Cambridge. Market Hill itself is a medieval market, however, in this period it would have extended towards Peas Hill to the south. Buildings used to stand in the area of the current modern market until a fire in 1849 destroyed much of the area and it was cleared. The site is bounded by the Grade I Listed Church of St Mary the Great and archaeological monitoring during the installation of services around the perimeter of the church found evidence for inhumation burials likely associated with the church.

- 13.54. Due to the archaeological potential of the site, a further programme of investigation and recording is required to provide more information regarding the presence or absence, and condition of surviving archaeological remains within the area and to establish the need for archaeological mitigation of the development is necessary. It is considered that this can be done by way of condition.

14. Carbon reduction and sustainable design

- 14.1. The application is supported by a Design and Access Statement that includes details regarding the sustainability vision for the proposal.
- 14.2. The Market Square proposals contribute to the overall sustainability strategy for the Civic Quarter project. Specific measures proposed within the Market Square include:
- Installation of PV panels within the roofs of the fixed market stalls generating a potential 18 kWp;
 - Harvest rainwater from the market stall roofs
 - 5 BREEAM Wat01 credits sought for the sanitaryware within the toilets of the basement beneath the Market Square.
- 14.3. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Sustainability Officer. They have advised that the approach within the Market Square including integration of solar panels and rainwater harvesting is welcomed with a condition requiring details of rainwater harvesting recommended. The water efficiency upgrades proposed to the basement toilets are also welcomed by the Council's Sustainability Officer, with a condition recommended requiring details of how the full 5 Wat01 credits will be achieved.
- 14.4. Concerns have been raised by third parties that the demountable stalls would have short life structures and be environmentally unsound. The final details of these stalls have not been submitted and are reserved by condition. However, any temporary stalls, including the existing, would have a limited life span. The fixed stalls would have a greater life span and would balance out the temporary nature of the demountable stalls.
- 14.5. The applicants have suitably addressed the issue of sustainability and renewable energy and subject to conditions the proposal is compliant with policies 28 and 29 of the Local Plan and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020.

15. Biodiversity

- 15.1. The application is supported by a statutory BNG metric, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), Bat Emergence Survey (BES) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Plan.
- 15.2. The site consists of buildings and sealed surfaces. The PEA has recommended non-licensable reasonable avoidance measures to remove any risk of residual harm or disturbance to protected or priority species and the Ecology Officer agrees with the analysis.
- 15.3. Following the PEA recommendations, a PRA was conducted. The Market Square, forming this application was not noted to have any potential for roost suitability. Mitigation measures are set out within the information provided by the applicant and can be secured by way of a condition.
- 15.4. The applicant has provided a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Plan in support of the application. This suggests that the proposal is exempt from the statutory 10% BNG requirement as it would fall below the 25m² threshold for impacted habitat. Given the majority of the site comprises the existing hardstanding surrounding buildings, officers agree that the development would not impact more than 25m² of "habitat".
- 15.5. Notwithstanding that the application is exempt from BNG, a metric has been submitted for the whole Civic Quarter re-development resulting in an increase 0.3 habitat units, mainly in the form of planting within this proposal for the Market Square. This is supported.
- 15.6. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, who raises no objection to the proposal and recommends several conditions to ensure the protection of species is delivered. The condition recommended regarding compliance with reports is considered reasonable and required to ensure the protection and enhancement of ecological species. Given that the site does not offer suitable places for bird or bat boxes or hedgehog holes a condition for ecology enhancement is unreasonable. Given that no flat roofs are proposed within this application, a green roof condition is not necessary. Additionally, as the site within an urban context, a condition for ecological lighting is not reasonable. Officers are satisfied that the proposed development complies with policy 70 of the Local Plan, the Biodiversity SPD 2022, the requirements of the Environment Act 2021 and 06/2005 Circular advice.

16. Water management and flood risk

- 16.1. The application site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 with small areas surrounding the Guildhall between very low (over 1 in 1000 year) to high (1 in 30 year) surface water flood risk.
- 16.2. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) including drainage strategy has been provided in support of the application. The Flood Risk Assessment, with the site outside of any fluvial floodplain suggests mitigation against this form of flooding is not required. Officers, including the Council's Drainage Officer, agree with this view.
- 16.3. The FRA does however suggest that there other sources of flooding that do pose a risk that would need to be mitigated through the development. Specifically, this is sewer flooding, surface water flooding and ground water flooding. It is agreed, it is beyond the scope of the application to require improvements to the historic below ground drainage systems serving the site. Therefore, flood risk mitigation measures are recommended to improve the control of surface water and potential flood risk. In line with the Drainage Officer's comments, there is no objection to the provided FRA, including the mitigation measures proposed.
- 16.4. Within the drainage strategy provided it is assumed that the surface water drainage will discharge into the existing surface water sewerage system as per the current arrangement. Infiltration based drainage, as prioritised within the drainage hierarchy is not considered to be feasible due to the significant presence of made ground across the site.
- 16.5. Some details of measures to mitigate surface water runoff rates has been provided within the drainage strategy, including the Green Roofs mentioned previously, tree pits and rainwater harvesting.
- 16.6. Therefore, whilst the assumption of the continuation of the current arrangement of surface and foul water drainage is acceptable, conditions are recommended requiring the submission of schemes for surface and foul water drainage, in the case that changes to the strategy are proposed and to ensure that mitigation measures for surface water run-off are provided.
- 16.7. The applicants have suitably addressed the issues of water management and flood risk, and subject to conditions the proposal is in accordance with policies 31 and 32 of the Local Plan and NPPF advice.

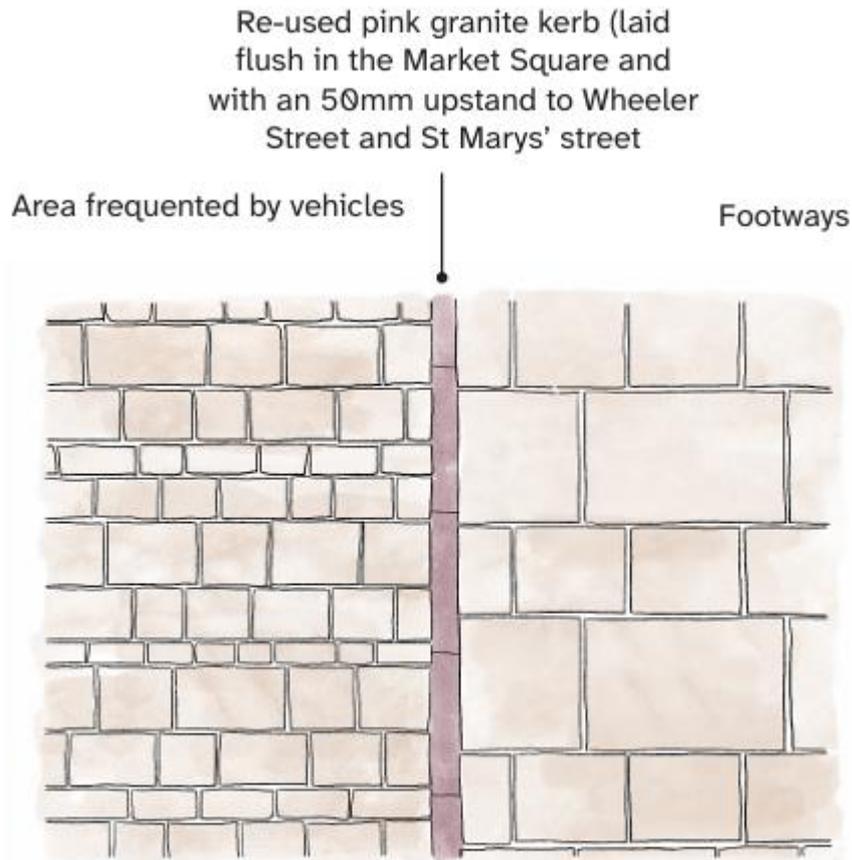
17. Highway safety and transport impacts

- 17.1. The application would result in significant changes to the public highway. The application has been subject to formal consultation with Cambridgeshire County Council's Local Highways Authority (LHA) who has raised a significant objection to the proposal. The application is supported by a Transport Assessment and followed up with detailed commentary responding to the LHA's objection. The below section takes each of the impacts on highway safety in turn.

Surface Treatment

Market Hill Flush/ Shared Surface

- 17.2. The proposals would result in a flush shared surface on the east, south and west sides of the Market Hill Loop. Motor vehicles would still have a right of way around the loop, however, there would be no vertical delineation between the footway and carriageway. Instead, the carriageway would be treated in York stone paving that would be smaller than the York stone paving used in the adjacent footway. The two elements of the highway would also be delineated by 100mm wide York stone setts that would be pink in colour, however, there would be no vertical kerb. This is demonstrated in the image below taken from drawing CCQ-LDA-PR-00-DR-L-2006:



↑ Illustrative plan showing proposed detail between carriageways (smaller setts) and footways (larger flags)

Figure 3: Proposed paving for carriageways and footways.

- 17.3. The LHA have strongly objected to the flush surface between the footway and carriageway, due to safety concerns particularly to visually impaired pedestrians. This follows advice from the UK Government and their ministerial letter requesting a pause to shared spaces with level surfaces in areas with relatively large amounts of pedestrian and vehicular movements such as high streets and town centres. Within the letter MPs stated 'The availability of formal crossings is particularly important for visually impaired people'. A copy of the letter can be found in Appendix B to this report. The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) increasingly emphasise the need for a minimum 60mm detectable upstand to ensure that people can navigate safely using either underfoot cues or a white cane. Subsequently, the LHA considers that the design does not address the needs of visually impaired users.

- 17.4. The applicant argues that the Ministerial letter is not relevant in this instance as it states that the focus of the pause is in areas ‘with relatively large amounts of pedestrian and vehicular movement such as high streets and town centres (outside of pedestrian zones)’. It is argued that Market Square is a pedestrian zone, subject to an existing Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which prohibits motor vehicle traffic at particular times of the day.
- 17.5. A transport survey was conducted by the applicant which is included within the Transport Statement. Surveys were conducted at two points within the year: Spring – between 16th and 22nd April 2025 (including Easter weekend) and Summer between 26th June and 2nd July 2025. It is noted that the LHA raised concerns regarding these periods within their original comments as they were undertaken outside of peak tourist season and University term time. As such the LHA consider that these surveys are not wholly representative. This is noted, and it is less than ideal that surveys were not taken when it is likely that pedestrian movements would be higher. However, surveys are only a snapshot in time and can only provide indicative levels of moments. Officers consider that the provided surveys do adequately provide an indicative idea of ratio of transport movements within the area which can be used to consider highway safety. However, there is an acknowledgement that numbers could be higher at certain times of the year.
- 17.6. The surveys demonstrated that the area has a significant number of pedestrians using the area. The below two images demonstrate the average and peak daily flows of pedestrians within the two survey periods. These show a peak daily flow of over 33,000 pedestrians.

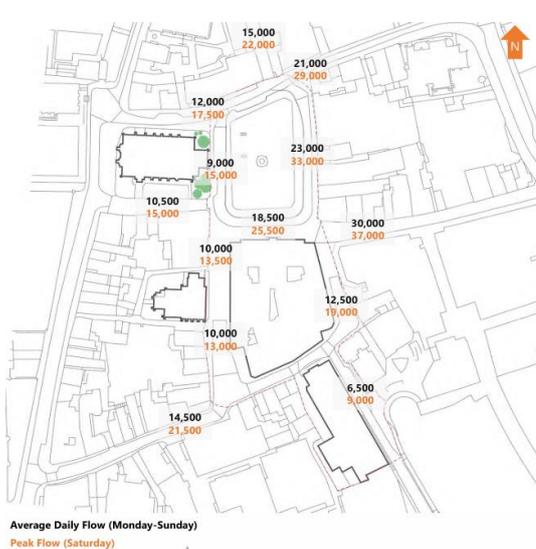


Figure 4: Spring Pedestrian Movements

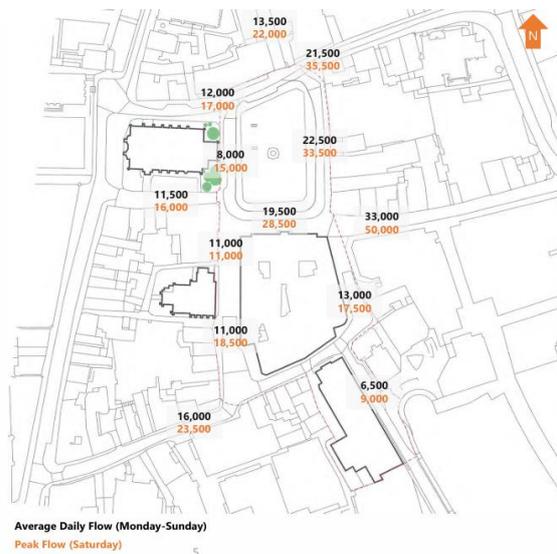


Figure 5: Summer Pedestrian Movements

17.7. The surveys also measured motor vehicles and they demonstrated that the daily flow of motor vehicles, particularly around the Market Hill Loop is very low. The below two images demonstrate the average and peak daily flows of motor vehicles within the two survey periods. The counts include cars, light goods vehicles (LGVs), ordinary goods vehicles (OGVs), motorcycles (MCCs) and public service vehicles (buses) (PSV).

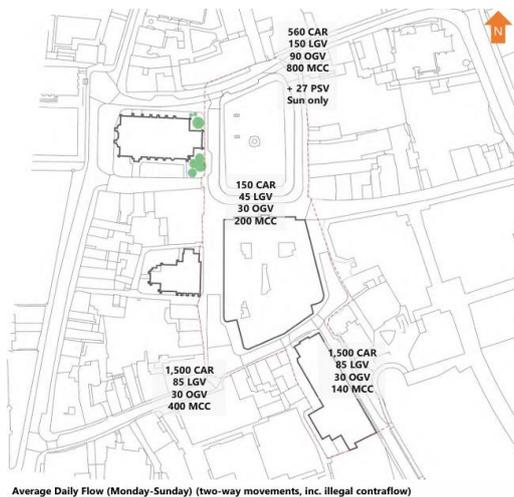


Figure 6: Spring Vehicle Movements

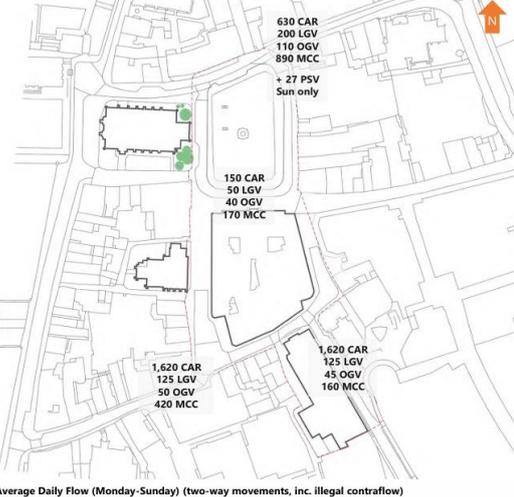


Figure 7: Summer Vehicle Movements

17.8. As such, Officers consider that there is an argument that due to the low motor vehicle movements around the Loop where it is proposed to have a flush surface, that the Ministerial letter does not apply. Where there are higher motor vehicle movements at the northern section of Market Hill and Wheeler Street a vertical kerb is proposed.

17.9. However, cyclists are also present within the area and there are no TROs to restrict cyclists within Market Hill. The below two images demonstrate the average and peak daily flows of cyclists within the two survey periods.

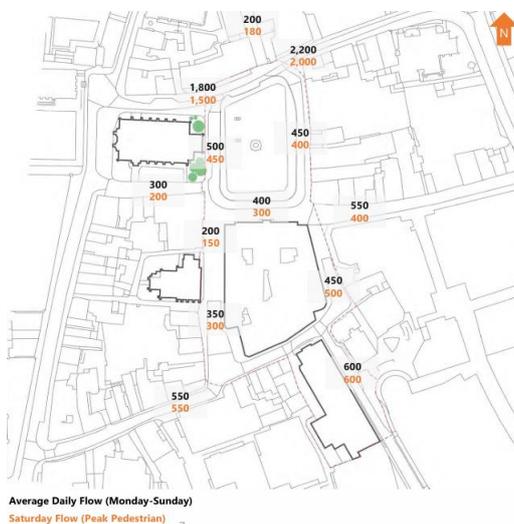


Figure 8: Spring Cycle Movements

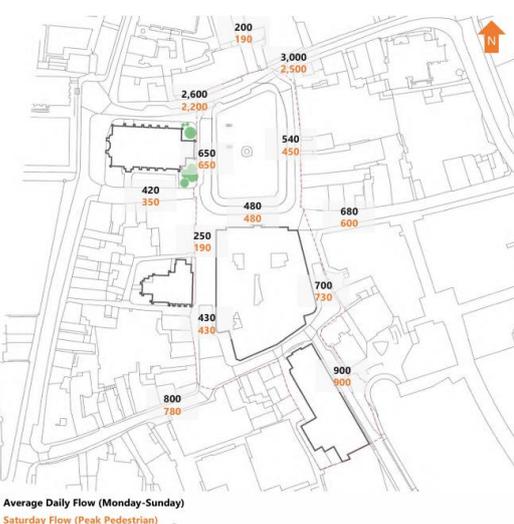


Figure 9: Summer Cycle Movements

- 17.10. The surveys demonstrate that whilst the majority of cyclists do not enter the Loop, there is still a peak daily flow of 650 cyclists moving through the area. The survey also found that there is a peak movement of 45 E-scooters within the Loop.
- 17.11. Whilst cyclists/ E-scooter users are more vulnerable than motor vehicle users, within the hierarchy they are still less vulnerable than pedestrians and have the potential to cause injury to more vulnerable users. However, as the figures above show, cyclists still cycle on pedestrian only routes such as Petty Curry and whilst this is unfortunate, it is considered that if the area were to become fully pedestrianised, it would not fully remove the cyclists. The applicant intends to intercept cyclists before they enter the area as much as possible by way of increasing cycle parking provision outside the red line and reducing the amount inside the red line.
- 17.12. The surveys also considered the times of the day of the vehicle movements with the applicant arguing the peak times of motor vehicle movements are not during the peak times of pedestrians. However, the peaks of cyclists roughly matches pedestrian patterns. The below two images show the average daily trip profiles, including and excluding pedestrians for Spring and Summer Surveys. The non-motorised elements of the survey was only undertaken between 0600 and 2200 hours during Summer, as such, this has been greyed out for consistency.

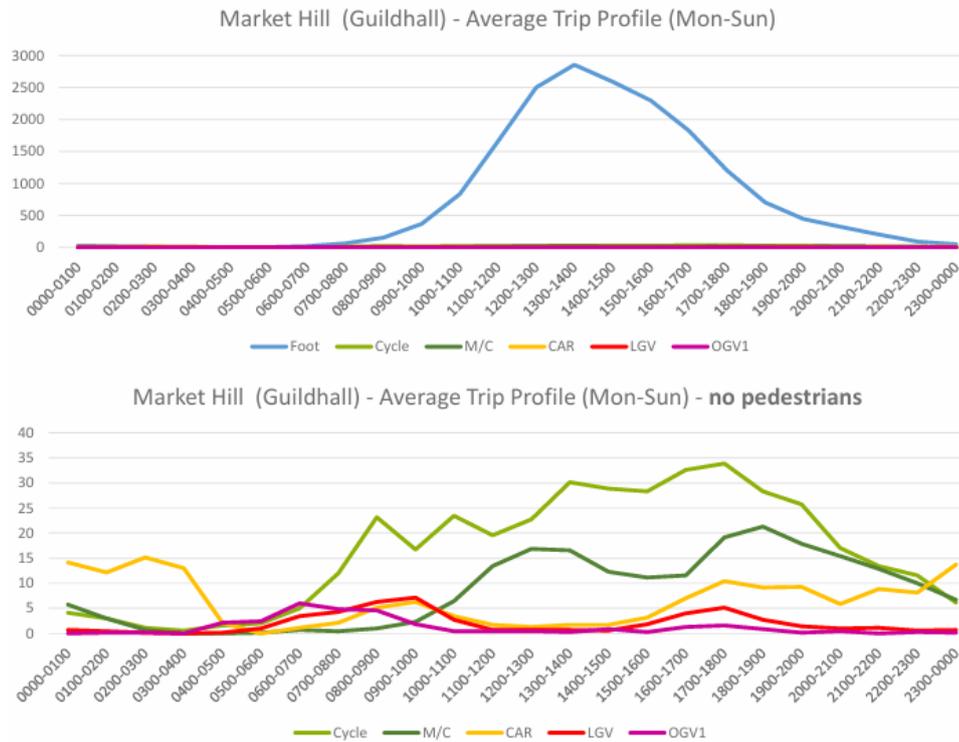


Figure 10: Spring Average Daily Trip Profile

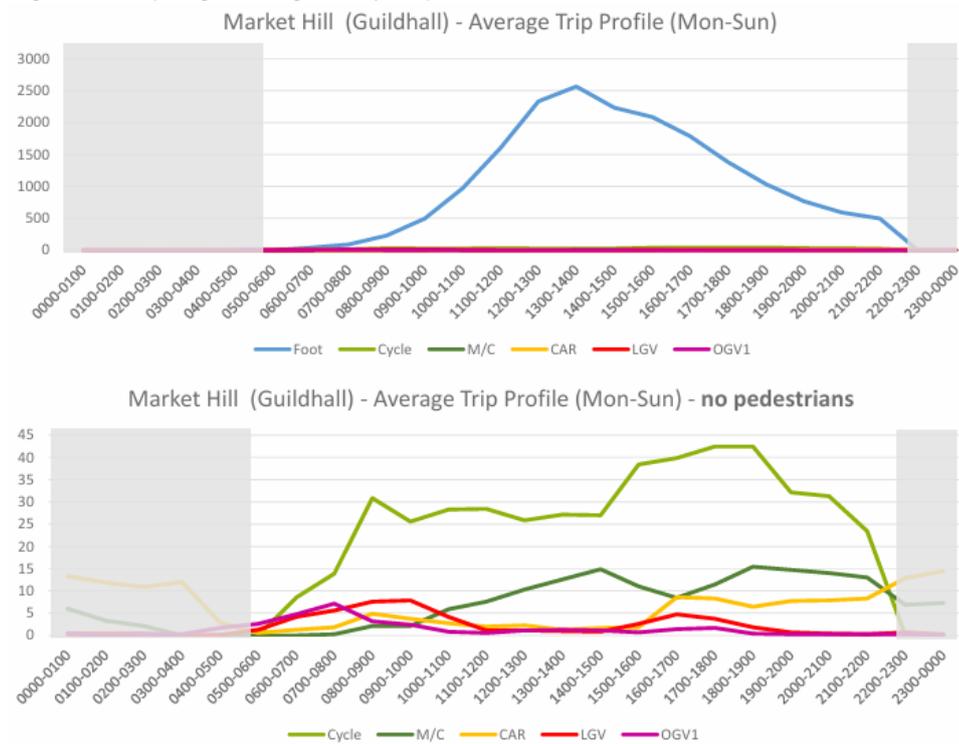


Figure 11: Summer Average Daily Trip Profile

17.13. Based on the information provided, Officers consider that the due to the existing TROs the level of conflict between pedestrians and motor vehicles is relatively low throughout the day. The potential conflict between cyclists and pedestrians would be higher, however, it is considered it would be no worse than existing along pedestrianised routes within the city centre. The

surveys demonstrate that currently between 20% and 53% of pedestrians walk within the carriageway presently, depending on which part of the Loop they are using. As such, Officers acknowledge that a conflict already exists.

- 17.14. Notwithstanding this, Officers consider that the introduction of a flush surface would result in the potential for increased conflict between highway users, which in turn would have an impact on highway safety. The lack of a vertical kerb would particularly impact upon those with visual impairments.
- 17.15. A key element of the redevelopment of the public realm within the Civic Quarter is to improve accessibility. The provision of a flush surface would allow for increased accessibility for pedestrians with mobility impairments including wheelchair users, however, in turn the level of accessibility for those with visual impairments would be diminished. On the other hand, if the vertical kerb was to remain, then the accessibility for those with mobility impairments would be remain limited. Officers acknowledge this conflict of needs between different users and accept that there is not a suitable design that can sufficiently cater to all. As such, the level of harm would need to be weighed against the benefits of the proposal.
- 17.16. Due to the reasons outline above, the proposals would result in a risk to highway safety, however, due to low levels of motor vehicle movements predominantly peaking when pedestrian levels are low, in conjunction with pedestrians already utilising the carriageway it is considered that the additional harm when compared to the existing situation is low to moderate. The level of harm could be mitigated by clearer delineation between the carriageway and the footway. Whilst officers acknowledge the different sizes of paving and the pink kerb line, it is considered that this could be improved. However, this level of detail can be dealt with by way of condition to secure the variety of colouration, texture/tactility, shapes and sizes of hard surfacing materials, which would be used to delineated between areas of the public realm.
- 17.17. The proposal to provide a shared surface in this area would significantly increase accessibility for those with mobility impairments. In addition, it would provide a more generous space for pedestrians.
- 17.18. The carriageway of the loop would be reduced to a minimum of 4.4 metres (south west corner). The existing carriageway is extremely wide and not necessary for a one-way route. As such, there are no concerns with the reduction of the carriageway width.

Market Hill Northern Route

- 17.19. The northern route would retain a kerb with an upstand of 50mm, however, a raised table with a length of 8.4 metres would be installed at the junction with Rose Crescent to create a flush connection to Market Square. The carriageway width would remain as existing. The LHA have raised objections to the raised table stating that it offers no functional benefit and there is a lack of precedent for this in the Historic Core. These comments are noted, however, the applicant has stated that this route is at a pedestrian desire line and as Rose Crescent is a pedestrianised road and shopping route, Officers have no reason to dispute this. A raised table would allow for a clear crossing point that also has the potential to act as a traffic calming measure. There would be blister tactile studs either side of the crossing to alert pedestrians with visual impairments to the carriageway.
- 17.20. Officers consider that this element of the scheme would have an acceptable level of impact on highway safety.

Peas Hill Flush/ Shared Surface

- 17.21. The proposal seeks to remove the vertical kerb from the carriageway serving the southern part of Peas Hill and install a flush, shared surface. Similar to the Market Hill works, a footway with larger paving would be installed on the western side of the road and around the corner of the Guildhall on the eastern site. There would be a pink 100mm kerb line. See image 3 above.
- 17.22. The LHA has raised concerns with a flush surface in this area as articulated lorries that service the Arts Theatre and Corn Exchange manoeuvre within this space along with other motor vehicles. These concerns are noted. However, as Peas Hill is not a through road, vehicles in this area are moving slowly. In addition, the manoeuvring for the HGVs is already complex and tight. The applicant has stated in their response to the LHA that the Arts Theatre have indicated that vehicles unload at the start of the week and pack up at the end of week following the final show and so HGV movements are not a daily occurrence.
- 17.23. Regarding cyclists, they already use Peas Hill despite the majority of this not having a formal carriageway. It is considered that the proposed changes would not increase cyclists using this thoroughfare.
- 17.24. Bollards would be put in place to restrict motor vehicles from entering the pedestrian only section of Peas Hill.

Flush/ Shared Surface Guildhall Street

- 17.25. The proposal seeks to remove the vertical kerb from the carriageway serving the southern part of Guildhall Street and install a flush, shared surface. A footway with larger paving would be installed on the western side of the road running along the side of and around the corner of the Guildhall. There would be a pink 100mm kerb line. See image 3 above.
- 17.26. The LHA did not raise any specific concerns with this element, however, their objection to flush surfaces extends across the whole site. Similar to Peas Hill, this road is not a through road and so vehicles in this area are moving slowly. Bollards would be put in place to restrict motor vehicles from entering the pedestrian only section of Peas Hill.

Materials

- 17.27. The public highway would be re-laid in York stone which would vary in size and colour as described above. In addition, there would be a metal strip running from the southern edge of Guildhall Street to the fountain in Market Square to indicatively demarcate the historic Hobson's Conduit.
- 17.28. Concerns have been raised by the LHA, other consultees and third-party objectors due to the use of the York stone. This is due to the paving not being a standard material used within the highway, particularly carriageways, lacks resilience and raises concerns with maintenance and liability. The LHA has also raised concerns with the metal strip due to slip risks.
- 17.29. These comments are noted, however, it is considered that the final details of the paving materials can be dealt by way of condition to ensure that the proposed paving is able to withstand the vehicular movements and it complies with specifications required by the LHA. The applicants should be aware that if any of the materials identified by the LHA are non-standard then they will seek a commuted sum, payable by the development in accordance with the County Council's Commuted Sum Policy (March 2023). The LHA have confirmed that any future commuted sum is dealt with outside of the planning process and it will be requested during any future Section 278 application which is required to undertake works within the local highway.

Motor Vehicle Movements

Reversal of flow of traffic on the Market Hill loop

- 17.30. The re-development scheme is not proposing to fully remove motor vehicles from the Market Hill loop, as such vehicles ranging from cars to goods vehicles would still have access in alignment with the existing Traffic

Regulation Order (TRO) to service the market and businesses on Market Hill. The existing TRO does not allow motor vehicles to access the loop between 10am and 4pm Monday – Saturday. Whilst the Transport Statement refers to a proposal to tighten these rules, no application to amend the TRO has been submitted and so the application would need to be considered under the existing circumstances.

- 17.31. Currently, the motor vehicles serving Market Square, enter the loop from the east then travel in a clockwise direction which results in vehicles moving twice along the northern section of Market Hill. The scheme proposes to reverse this traffic flow so that vehicles enter from the western section of the road and travel in an anti-clockwise direction. Officers acknowledge the benefit of this proposal as it would reduce the vehicle movements on the northern section of Market Hill. In addition, it would improve the loading and unloading of vans for the market as commercial vans usually have side doors on the left-hand side, this in turn could reduce the time needed for loading and unloading easing the time that the highway has obstacles within it.
- 17.32. However, this change would involve new TROs being in place. The LHA has confirmed that the TROs have not been applied for and at this stage they state that no evidence has been provided that these TROs are acceptable, feasible or achievable. The tracking diagrams and layout of Market Hill has been designed around the TRO being implemented and so there is a reliance of this application on non-existent TROs. Subsequently, if planning permission is granted there is a risk of it be unimplementable.
- 17.33. The TRO process is separate to the planning process and any planning permission does not influence the TRO process. As such, if granted and the subsequent TRO is refused it would be extremely likely that the design would need to be altered. This is noted and understood.
- 17.34. The LHA has advised that the TRO process, could take up to an estimated 18 months and so it would be wholly unreasonable to delay a decision on this application to allow time for the scheme to go through this process. Despite it being raised during pre-application discussions, the applicant has not moved forward on this issue.
- 17.35. Nonetheless, the Local Planning Authority needs to consider the application that has been submitted. This includes the reversal of the traffic flow. Due to this, the applicant has been advised that they are at risk of gaining an unimplementable planning permission. Officers consider that the risk lies solely with the applicant and it will be their responsibility to seek a new

planning permission if the design subsequently needs to be changed following the outcome of any future application for a new TRO.

Swept Path Analysis – Market Hill Loop

- 17.36. The applicant has submitted swept path analysis to show the tracking of motor vehicles within the Market Hill loop based on the reversing of the traffic flow. The tracking diagrams within the Transport Statement were incorrect, new tracking diagrams can be found in the response to Highways document dated 23.02.2026 and separate swept path drawings received 03.03.2026.
- 17.37. The LHA has raised that the tracking diagrams for the refuse vehicle is incorrect as it is the wrong length. The Waste Officer has confirmed that the correct vehicle length is 10.13 and new swept path diagrams were submitted accordingly and demonstrate a vehicle 10.2 metres in length. Officers consider this diagram to now be correct.
- 17.38. This new diagram was reviewed informally with a Highways Officer who raised concerns that the movement in the south western corner is awkward to manoeuvre due to the position of the trees. This is noted and Officers are in agreement that this manoeuvre is unnecessarily complex. However, the final positioning of the proposed trees would be conditioned. As such, it is considered reasonable to request updated tracking for the refuse vehicle once the final tree positions have been established to ensure that a vehicle can safely drive around this corner.
- 17.39. The Highways Officer also raised concerns that the refuse vehicle would clip what would be designated as the footway in the southern section of Market Hill. Whilst the wheels would remain in the carriageway the body would swing over the carriageway creating a risk for pedestrians. The greatest overlap would be in the south east corner close to the junction with Petty Curry. Officers accept this is not ideal and would create risk to highway safety. However, refuse vehicles movements would be significantly restricted in number and likely to take place earlier or later in the day when pedestrian movements are lower. As such, Officers consider the level of risk would be low. This risk would be considered in the planning balance.
- 17.40. The tracking diagram for the 10 metre rigid vehicle that serves Marks and Spencer show that the wheels would over run the south east corner of Market Square which would create safety issues within the public highway and is not ideal. However, due to manoeuvring required to enter the loading bay the deliveries are already highly managed by M&S. As such, the level

of risk is somewhat mitigated by the existing management occurring with vehicles of this size.

- 17.41. The tracking diagrams demonstrate that smaller vehicles required to service the market and businesses on Market Square can safely manoeuvre around the loop. No HGV tracking for the loop has been submitted. This will be discussed in more detail below.

HGV Access to the Market Hill Loop

- 17.42. HGV articulated lorries swept paths have not been tracked around the loop and as such it is assumed that these large vehicles would not be able to safely manoeuvre around the proposed layout in an anti-clockwise direction. Marks and Spencer (M&S) have a loading bay within the property and it is known that on occasion they use HGVs for deliveries. The other commercial properties on Market Hill also have right to take deliveries by HGVs.
- 17.43. Officers acknowledge that this is not ideal and could have a detrimental impact on the operations of existing businesses in the area. It is also unfortunate that the applicant has not provided any evidence that discussions have taken place between them and M&S to resolve this potential issue.
- 17.44. However, the LHA have stated that whilst they have a statutory duty under the Highways Act 1980 to protect the public's lawful use of the highway and to ensure that premises retain reasonable access, there is 'no absolute right to maintain the same type of vehicle access'. They have confirmed that there are no legal requirements for M&S and other businesses to retain HGV access to their site as long as essential servicing can still be conducted. Smaller delivery vehicles can still access M&S allowing essential servicing to take place. As such, the application cannot be refused for this reason. However, the applicant is strongly encouraged to liaise with any businesses that may be affected by the removal of HGV access to ensure that their rights of way and rights to essential service are still met prior to any works beginning on site.
- 17.45. Officers do however acknowledge that the removal of HGVs from the loop would be beneficial to highway safety.

Motor Vehicles Serving the Market

- 17.46. The submitted plans demonstrate that with the vans serving the market place would have sufficient space to load and unload off the public highway.

This is welcome. However, the LHA have raised concerns that the tracking diagrams show vans reversing on to the market onto the public highway due to highway safety concerns.

- 17.47. This objection is noted. Due to the existing TRO in place any vehicles serving the market are restricted to before 10am and after 4pm which is when pedestrian levels are lower as shown in figures 10 and 11. The existing situation currently involves manoeuvres that are likely to include reversing in order to park. However, it is considered that these movements would cause some risk to highway safety.
- 17.48. The vehicles doing this manoeuvre would be traders serving their stalls which are under the ownership of the City Council. As such, it is considered that there is a level of management that the Council could have over the actions of the traders during loading and unloading. Therefore, officers consider that the risk could be mitigated by some degree by way of a stringent management plan for the traders which could be dealt with by way of condition.
- 17.49. It is also noted that the provision of the permanent stalls which provide secure storage for some traders is likely to reduce the number of vehicles serving the site on a daily basis as it would reduce the level of loading and unloading required. This would therefore remove the number of vehicles serving the site on a daily basis reducing the conflict between motor vehicles and pedestrians. This can also go some way to mitigate the harm of the reversing movements.

Waste Collection

- 17.50. The application proposes new underground bins to the north of the Market Square. The LHA have raised concerns with the operational issues in regards to the servicing of underground bins, particularly with the safety risk of any crane equipped vehicles required to service the bins. These comments are noted, however, the applicant has confirmed within their response to LHA (dated 17.02.2026) that the bins will consist of 2no. 1100L general waste bins, 1no. 1100L recycling bin and 1no. 1000L food bin. These would be positioned on a hydraulic lift which would allow the bins to be serviced by the standard refuse vehicle and will not require specialised vehicles required for other subterranean bins. Whilst the refuse vehicles would temporarily block the carriageway this would be no different to any other standard waste collection. The existing positioning of the current bins on Market Hill and Market Square requires the refuse vehicles to drive around the loop to service them. As such, Officers consider that restricting the refuse vehicles for the trade waste pick up to the northern through route

would result in an improved situation. The final supplier of the bins is yet to be secured, however, it is considered that this can be done by way of condition.

- 17.51. Subsequently, Officers consider that the future refuse collection would have an acceptable impact on the safety of the users of the highway.

Obstacles Within the Public Highway

Cycle Parking Locations

- 17.52. The LHA have raised concerns with the location of the cycle parking being located on the land which is designated as 'footway'. The provision of cycle parking is a matter for the Local Planning Authority to consider rather than the Highway Authority and this is done so in the sections below. However, as the cycle parking is located on the public highway and would impact movement of vehicles on the public highway, the LHA comments should be considered in this instance.
- 17.53. The LHA have stated that cycle parking is shown adjacent to the Guildhall on areas which are defined, by way of materials, as 'footway'. Subsequently, the cycle parking would obstruct the footway and result in cyclists moving on the footway. These comments are noted. However, there are large numbers of cycle stand on the existing footway along Guildhall Street, Peas Hill and Market Hill in front of the Guildhall. Along Peas Hill and Guildhall Street these are located centrally within the highway causing significant obstruction. The proposal would relocate the cycle parking to be located against the walls of the Guildhall which would reduce the level of obstruction compared to the existing situation. The small area of cycle parking provided on Peas Hill would be located on land which is defined as carriageway.
- 17.54. The site is very constrained with few opportunities to provide cycle parking off the Local Highway with only the Market Square being within private ownership. Moving all cycle parking to City Council owned land would still result in obstructions to the movement of people across the area and would result in additional issues such as impact on the listed setts. Where the cycle parking takes up the whole of the designated footway is along Guildhall Street and over an area where motor vehicles cannot access due to the provision of bollards. As such, Officers consider that the objection to the positioning of the cycle parking is unreasonable. The proposed cycle parking would result in a significant improvement to the reduction of obstacles within the local highway and as such, Officers consider that the proposed location is acceptable in terms of risk to highway safety.

Planting with the Public Highway

- 17.55. A new planter would be installed on Market Hill to the front of St Mary's Church. This would span the full width of the church's ground. As explained above, it is considered that this would have some impact upon the swept paths of vehicles. In addition, the planter would limit the amount of footway on this section of the loop, reducing space for pedestrians to manoeuvre around motor vehicles using the carriageway. The plans do not show a dedicated footway on this side of the road. Officers consider that this is not ideal. However, the existing eastern path is currently cluttered with bins and cycles locked to the fence of the church. As such, this path is not highly used, with the traffic survey identifying that 53% of pedestrians use the existing carriageway to move through this part of the space. A dedicated pathway would be provided on the western side of this road and it is considered that this would be less cluttered than the existing western footpath due to the improvement in bin storage.
- 17.56. Notwithstanding this it is considered that the provision of this large planter would result in some impact on highway safety. When comparing this to the existing situation, officers consider that the level of harm would be low. The planter would introduce greenery into an environment that dominated by hardstanding and would contribute towards biodiversity net gain. In addition, it would help reduce the clutter of the area restricting cyclists from securing their bikes to the railings. The harm and these benefits would need to be considered within the planning balance.
- 17.57. A large amount of planting would be installed within Peas Hill. This would result in some obstruction of the public highway. However, the existing situation includes a significant amount of cycle stands and landscaping and this would be removed. The existing street furniture limits the width of the footway to 2.39 metres on the Guildhall side (east) and 2.56 metres on the King Edward King and Martyr Church side (west). Following the installation of the planting in front of the church the width of the accessible passage way would be 3.74 metres at a minimum. This is considered a sufficient width to allow two wheelchairs to pass each other when someone is using the bench on the side of the planter. The second smaller planter close to Anthropology would have a minimum passage way of 2.5 metres, however, there is sufficient space on the Guildhall side (4 metres) and it is considered that the proposed widths for the movement of pedestrian are a betterment than the existing situation.
- 17.58. A number of trees are proposed to be planted within the public highway. In addition to the concerns that these have on the movements of motor

vehicles the LHA have concerns regarding the tree pits and subsequent impact on the local highway. The tree pits present a medium to long term maintenance liability, particular where they extend beneath the carriage way. It is considered that the current design is not robust enough to withstand the loading imposed by the motor vehicles that service the area. These comments are noted. Officers consider that the final positioning of the trees have yet to be determined and will be covered by way of condition. However, it is considered reasonable to add a condition requiring the details of the tree pits to ensure that if any fall within the carriageway that they are suitably engineered. In regards to, maintenance the City Council can take on the maintenance of any planting, this can be dealt with by way of a legal agreement between the City and County Councils separate to the planning process. Subject to a condition regarding tree pits, it is considered that the planting of trees would not result in an unacceptable impact on the safety of the highway.

Wheeler Street/ Corn Exchange Street

- 17.59. Works are also proposed to Wheeler Street and Corn Exchange Street. This would involve the re-paving of the roads. The vertical kerb would be retained for the majority of the highway with exception to the creation of a raised table at the junction between the two roads.
- 17.60. The LHA have not raised any objections specifically to the work along these roads. Officers consider that a raised table would allow for a clear crossing point that also has the potential to act as a traffic calming measure which is likely to slow down motor vehicles at what is a blind corner due to the tight corner and position of the Corn Exchange. There would be blister tactile studs either side of the crossing to alert pedestrians with visual impairments to the carriageway.
- 17.61. The submitted Transport Statement refers to a proposal to ban the right turn out of the Grand Arcade Car Park and restricting motor vehicles movements down these roads and Bene't Street. This would require a TRO and significant transport modelling would need to be conducted in order to demonstrate this is possible. The applicants have yet to complete this work and as such have confirmed that the application is not reliant on this TRO. Subsequently, the plans have been amended to reduce the amount of flush surfacing, limiting to it a raised table only.

Other Concerns

Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)

- 17.62. The LHA have raised concerns with proposed scheme's reliance on TROs. In addition to the reversal of the traffic flow around the loop, TROs would be required for the creation of new loading arrangements, removal of a taxi rank, removal of loading bays and changes to blue badge parking. This list is not exhaustive.
- 17.63. The applicant has been made aware of this and understand that TROs would need to be sought regardless of the outcome of the planning application. If permission is granted as submitted, it would be the responsibility of the applicant to submit any variations required following the TRO process. The applicant is also advised that any planning permission does not negate the need to apply for the relevant TROs with the LHA.

Road Safety Audit

- 17.64. In the LHA's original comments it was raised that a Road Safety Audit (RSA) has not been submitted. A Stage 1 RSA was submitted with amended information, however, this is not acceptable to the LHA as the process remains incomplete and does not accord with the requirements of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges document GG119. The LHA has not approved the RSA brief and has not received the auditors CV. The LHA would be the overseeing authority, however, they have not provided any feedback. The LHA consider that without a compliant RSA process the design cannot be considered safe or robust.
- 17.65. The LHA's original comments state that an RSA is mandatory for any works to the Trunk Road Network and is only advisory for works to the local highway network. The works are to the latter and so there is no requirement for the submission of an RSA as part of a planning application despite the process being a standard practice for developments in Cambridgeshire.
- 17.66. It is regrettable that the applicants have failed to provide an acceptable RSA despite this highway issue being raised throughout the pre-application process. As it is not a mandatory requirement, it is considered to be unreasonable to refuse the application for this reason.

Summary

- 17.67. The Local Highway Authority has raised significant concerns regarding the impact of the proposal on the safety of the public highway. These concerns need to be carefully considered.
- 17.68. Whilst officers do not attribute the same amount of risk to some of the elements raised by the LHA, there is a recognition that the proposal would

result in a low-moderate risk to highway safety. However, this is mitigated by improvements to the highways environment such as reduction of obstacles, particularly by relocating the cycle parking along Guildhall Street, reduction of daily motor vehicle movements due to the fixed stalls providing secure storage for traders, and the designing out the use of HGVs within the Market Hill loop. In addition, the risk can also be mitigated by use of conditions as requested by the LHA. Some of these conditions are unreasonable or not relevant to a planning application such as reference to a commuted sum, or gaining permission from the LHA for trees, as these are dealt with separately by way of the Highways Act. This has been confirmed informally with the Highways Officer. The other conditions are considered reasonable.

- 17.69. Notwithstanding the mitigations highlighted, officers consider that there would still be a low level of risk to the safety of the public highway. This risk will be considered against any benefits within the planning balance at the end of the report.

18. Car and cycle provision

Cycle parking

- 18.1. Aside from the cycle parking provision within the Guildhall and Corn Exchange which are assessed within the other relevant applications before members today, there is significant existing cycle parking provision within and surrounding the Market Square. Current provision within the Civic Quarter as a whole is largely within pedestrianised areas such as Peas Hill and Guildhall Street which can lead to issues with accessibility and visual clutter.
- 18.2. This application seeks to relocate a number of the existing cycle parking spaces within and surrounding the Market Square to less active frontages. A complete breakdown of cycle parking proposals is found within Table 6.1 of the applicant's Transport Statement as follows:

Within CQ?	Location	Current	Proposed	Change
Yes	Market Hill	20 spaces (west side of Market Square, adjacent to Great St Mary's Church)	No spaces	- 20 spaces
Yes	Market Hill	36 spaces (along northern frontage of the Guildhall)	48 spaces	+ 12 spaces
Yes	Peas Hill	80 spaces (within middle of pedestrianised area)	No spaces	- 80 spaces
Yes	Peas Hill	16 spaces (in footway adjacent to Giggling Squid)	15 spaces, relocated further to the east	- 1 space
Yes	Guildhall Street	34 spaces (within middle of pedestrianised area)	52 spaces located along the eastern side of the Guildhall	+ 18 spaces
Yes	Within Parson's Court,	4 spaces (under fire escape – often inaccessible due to bins)	No change (4 spaces)	No change
Yes	Corn Exchange St	No spaces	14 spaces	+ 14 spaces
No	St Mary's Passage	76 spaces (adjacent to southern churchyard railings)	No change (76 spaces)	No change
No	St Mary's Street	26 spaces (north side of carriageway in bay)	10 spaces to south of current cycle parking, at end of existing loading bay	+10 spaces
No	St Edward's Passage	28 spaces (along southern side of St Edward Church churchyard)	No change (28 spaces)	No change
No	Guildhall Street	No spaces (under Lion Yard overhang)	26 spaces	+26 spaces
No	Guildhall Street	16 spaces (adjacent to Premier Inn entrance)	No change (16 spaces)	No change
No	Fisher Square	12 spaces	56 spaces	+ 44 spaces
Existing spaces within red line boundary				190
Proposed spaces within red line boundary				133
Difference within red line boundary				- 57 spaces
Difference outside of red line boundary				+ 80 spaces
Net difference				+ 23 spaces

Figure 12: Existing and proposed cycle parking provision

18.3. As set out in the above table, 81 existing cycle parking spaces are to be removed from the pedestrianised area of Peas Hill which forms a busy pedestrian thoroughfare, with the 16 existing spaces adjacent to the Giggling Squid to be re-located and reduced to 15 spaces further to the east. There is also a net reduction in spaces within Market Hill itself, with the 20 existing spaces along its western edge to be removed and 12 additional spaces provided to the northern side of The Guildhall.

18.4. 18 additional new cycle parking spaces are then proposed along Guildhall Street to complement the existing 34 spaces, in addition to an entirely new area of cycle parking along Guildhall Street, with 14 spaces in this location.

- 18.5. Overall, within the red line boundary there is a net loss of 57 cycle parking spaces, largely as a result of the removal of the large block within Peas Hill. There is additional cycle parking proposed outside of the red-line boundary of the Civic Quarter along St Mary's Street, Guildhall Street and Fisher Square. Outside of the site boundary 80 additional cycle parking spaces are proposed which would result in a net increase of 23 spaces across the application, considering both within and outside of the red line boundary.
- 18.6. Officers consider that the majority of cycle parking spaces within and surrounding the Market Square are to be used by visitors, with separate provision for staff within the Guildhall. There are various other areas of cycle parking within the city, including within the Grand Arcade Car Park which is a short walking distance from the Market Square. There is therefore no objection to the quantity of cycle parking spaces proposed within the application, reliant upon the provision of those spaces outside of the application boundary.
- 18.7. The applicant has suggested that the provision of this "off-site" cycle parking can be secured by way of a Grampian condition, given that it is entirely within the highway boundary. Officers are content, given that the land is not within third-party ownership that a Grampian condition would be acceptable in this instance.
- 18.8. Subsequently, the development would provide a quantum of cycle spaces which exceeds the minimum requirement and would include spaces for non-standard cycles. The proposed cycle parking, in number, accessibility and arrangement is compliant with policy 81 of the Local Plan.

Car parking

- 18.9. The existing site is car free with no general public car parking spaces. There are however several blue badge spaces. Within Market Hill there are no designated blue badge spaces, however, those with permits for City Centre disabled access can access the Market Square and park along Market Hill at any time of day, with other blue badge holders able to park for up to 3 hours outside of 10:00-16:00 Monday to Saturday. In addition, there are three dedicated blue badge spaces on Peas Hill and two on Guildhall Street.
- 18.10. In addition to the above, the Grand Arcade shopping centre which lies just outside of the red line to the south east, provides 35 blue badge spaces plus 8 additional accessibility spaces along with a Shopmobility Scheme. The Transport Statement explains that the Grand Arcade car park has step

free access to all areas of the Civic Quarter within 500 metres. The figure below shows the existing provision of blue badge parking.

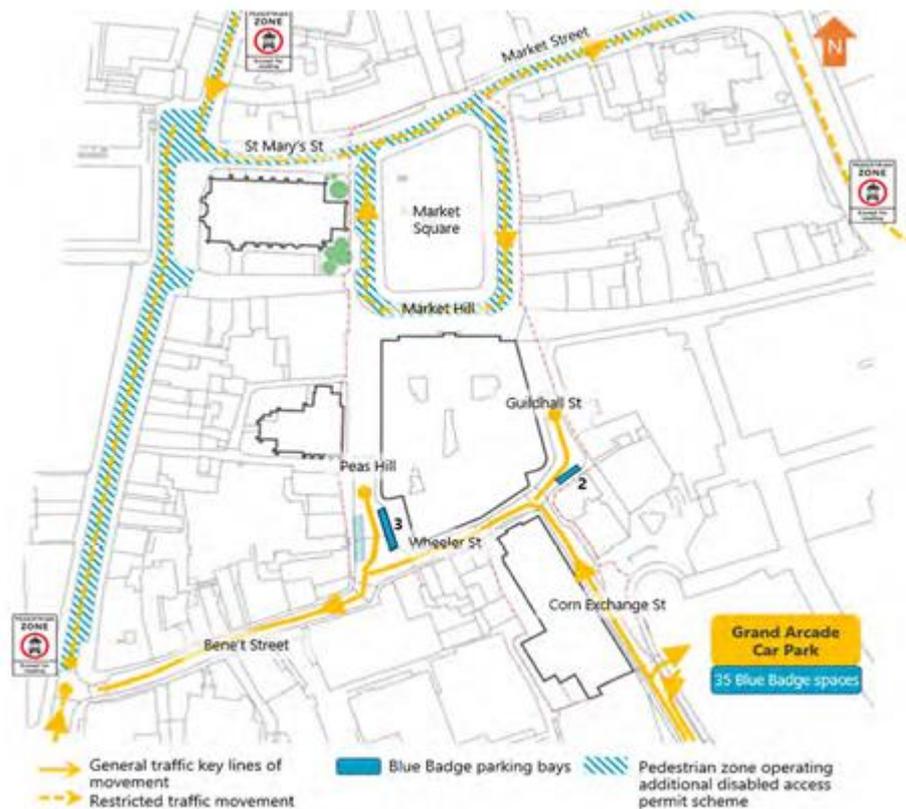


Figure 13: Existing Blue Badge Arrangements in Civic Quarter

- 18.11. The proposal does not seek to alter the arrangements for the blue badge access permitted within Market Square. The number of blue badge spaces in Peas Hill and Guildhall Street would be retained, however, they would be slightly relocated. An additional blue badge parking space would be provided in the existing loading bay opposite the Corn Exchange. With the provision of this extra space there would be a small uplift in accessible parking spaces, however, it is noted that this would be subject to a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and so this cannot be relied upon at this stage. Nonetheless, the provision of blue badge parking spaces would be retained and this is acceptable.
- 18.12. Third party concerns have been received in regards to parking on the market overnight. These concerns are noted, however, it would remain that only blue badge holders would retain the right to park within the area. The Market Square is private land and so unauthorised parking would be a civil matter and it is for the applicant to effectively manage.

19. Amenity

Neighbouring properties

- 19.1. The application site and Market Square are surrounded by a variety of differing land uses, including multiple noise sensitive receptors such as residential properties. There is a variety of differing residential premises surrounding the Market Square, including along Trinity Street, Market Hill, St Mary's Passage and Rose Crescent.
- 19.2. The nature of the proposed development within the Market Square consists of modestly sized market stalls that would not result in any notable harm through overbearing, loss of light or loss of privacy to any neighbouring residential properties.
- 19.3. Third party concerns have been received in regards to the impact on light to St Edward King and Martyr Church by way of planting. The church is not a residential property. A right to light is a civil matter between different landowners and a planning permission would not interfere with a right of light. The local planning authority has no jurisdiction in checking or enforcing a right to light. This is not a material planning consideration.
- 19.4. However, natural light to the east facing windows is already restricted by the Guildhall and so the additional planting is not considered to result in an unacceptable impact on daylight. Notwithstanding this, the final planting would be conditioned and so officers can control that the height of the planting within the planter to ensure the church windows do not become blocked.
- 19.5. Given the adjacent context, location, size, and design of the proposal it is unlikely to give rise to any significant amenity impacts in terms of overlooking, loss of daylight or enclosure.

Construction and environmental health impacts

- 19.6. The level of development proposed is such that the construction phase, including any demolition has the potential to result in adverse noise impacts and disturbance to surrounding sensitive receptors. Whilst a certain level of temporary disturbance from construction works is to be expected within a city centre location such as this, it is deemed necessary to mitigate this impact through suitable conditions. The Council's Environmental Health officer has reviewed the proposals and requested conditions relating to construction/ demolition hours, demolition/ construction deliveries/ collections and a Demolition and Construction Environmental Management

Plan (DCEMP). Given the number and proximity of surrounding sensitive receptors, including residential dwellings, all of these conditions are necessary to protect the amenity of neighbouring residential occupants.

Outdoor entertainment

19.7. Included within the proposed development of the Market Square is an open air events/ entertainment space, to the southern end at the front of The Guildhall. The following existing, noise sensitive receptors are within close proximity to this space:

- Wardens Flat, Market Hostel, 4-5 St Marys Passage
- Flat 4-21A St Marys Passage
- Flat 401, Market Hostel, 4-5 St Marys Passage
- Market Hostel, St Marys Passage

19.8. The noise generated by future outdoor entertainment within the site has the potential to give rise to adverse noise impacts or effects on health and quality of life. Differing forms of outdoor entertainment can also be challenging to control due to its variability, dynamic nature and low frequency context. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has reviewed the proposals within this space and recommends two conditions to ensure that the impact arising from potential future uses is successfully mitigated. The conditions relating to hours of use of the entertainment space and a noise mitigation, control and management plan are deemed necessary and recommended to be attached to any permission.

Odours

19.9. Third party concerns have been raised in regards to smells and odours from 'fast food' stalls. These comments are noted, however, there are already hot food traders located within the market. Specific ventilation chimneys would be added to the stalls to ensure odours would travel upwards which is an improvement on the existing situation. As such, it is considered that the odours within the market would be no worse than the current situation.

Plant

19.10. There is not understood to be any substantive fixed plant, ventilation or similar mechanical services within the proposed development. As such, in line with the comments of the Environmental Health officer, there is no concern regarding the noise and disturbance impacts from such sources.

Artificial lighting

- 19.11. The proposals include the provision of a variety of artificial lighting across the site partly with the aim of reducing anti-social behaviour, enhancing sight lines and increasing natural surveillance as well as ensuring that the space is welcoming for traders and visitors.
- 19.12. Consideration must be given to artificial lighting where it is likely to have an increased impact through light pollution. As there is potential for artificial lighting within the application site to result in harm to residential amenity, as recommended by the Environmental Health Officer a condition is suggested requiring submission of an artificial lighting impact assessment and mitigation scheme. This would allow for a full assessment of the proposed lighting and ensure that any impacts arising from it are suitably mitigated.

Contaminated Land

- 19.13. The application site itself is not of any known potentially contaminative history. It is however considered a brownfield site given its historic use. Therefore, in order to ensure that the proposed development would be protected from potential contamination, conditions are recommended regarding unexpected contamination found during construction works and a material management plan. Unexpected contamination is considered reasonable, however, the material management plan is considered to be onerous as it would be subject to separate licencing.

Summary

- 19.14. The proposal adequately respects the amenity of its neighbours and of future occupants. Subject to conditions, the proposal is compliant with policies 33, 34, 35, 55, 56, and 59 of the Local Plan.

20. Third party representations

- 20.1. The remaining third-party representations not addressed in the preceding paragraphs are summarised and responded to in the table below:

Third party comment	Officer response
Poor Consultation	Many third-party comments have raised that there has been poor public consultation with the traders and public. This is in regard to pre-application consultation by the applicant rather

	<p>than the statutory consultation carried out by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Sections 3.1 and 3.6 of the Design and Access Statement outlines the public and trader engagement respectively that the applicant completed.</p> <p>Whilst robust public engagement is encouraged within the planning process, it is not a reason to refuse a planning application.</p>
Relocation of traders during works	<p>Concerns have been raised regarding any future relocation of the traders whilst the work is being conducted. As the works would be temporary officers do not consider this to be a matter for this application.</p> <p>Any temporary market may require separate planning permission which would be considered by the Local Planning Authority.</p>
Financial Impact on Tax Payers	<p>This is a matter for the City Council to consider and it is not a matter for the Local Planning Authority.</p>
Insufficient Information	<p>Concerns have been raised regarding the level of information. Officers consider that sufficient information has been submitted to make a decision.</p>
Too many tourists	<p>It is not for the Planning Authority to manage or restrict tourists within the public realm of Cambridge.</p>
Ownership	<p>No conclusive evidence has been put to the Council to demonstrate that not all owners have been given the requisite notice as per the Certificate of Ownership B.</p>

Table 3 Officer response to third party representations

21. Accessibility

- 21.1. As explained above, the proposed works would significantly increase the accessibility of this important city centre public realm, especially in relation to those with mobility impairments including wheelchair users. This has been considered as a significant benefit. However, there are some concerns that in making the space more physically accessible, there is

some detriment to people with other disabilities such as those with visual impairment or those who are neurodivergent. The concerns in regard to blind or partially sighted people has been discussed at length within the highway safety team. The Design Review Panel highlighted that clear, predictable, legible layouts are important for neurodivergent users and the flush surface diminishes the legibility. Whilst it is accepted that it is extremely difficult to create public spaces that are fully accessible to all potential users, officers consider that it is imperative that sufficient wayfinding is included within the design to help mitigate the impact on people with disabilities. Whilst the scheme currently includes some wayfinding methods such as tactile paving, officers consider that this can be improved upon. As such, it is considered reasonable to add a condition requiring a scheme for wayfinding methods to be used to be approved by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Local Highway Authority.

22. Other matters

22.1. Waste

22.2. The Waste Officer has been consulted and has made no comments in relation to the scheme. Refuse vehicles would still be able to access the Market Hill loop as explained in the highway section above. The management of waste would be the same as the existing.

23. Planning balance

23.1. Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

23.2. Summary of harm

23.3. The proposed development would significantly alter the character of the public realm within the site and whilst there is some level of subjectivity to this, harm has been identified in relation to the heritage assets. The level of harm varies between each of the heritage assets, however, due to the lack of successful trials of setts to demonstrate exactly how much harm can be mitigated, a high level of 'less than substantial harm' to the listed setts within Market Square needs to be assumed. In addition, a moderate level of 'less than substantial harm' has been attached to the setting of the listed structures within Market Square and to the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area, with a low level of 'less than

substantial harm' to the setting of the nearby listed buildings that lie outside the site. The harm has been summarised within table 4 of the report. Officers consider this should be given significant weight in the planning balance.

- 23.4. The Local Highways Authority has raised significant concerns with the proposal in relation to its impact on highway safety. Whilst officers are not in full agreement with all elements of their comments, these concerns should be afforded significant weight in the planning balance. Due to the issues that can arise with a flush, shared surface along with some concerns with the movement of larger vehicles within the space, officers conclude that the development would result in a low additional risk to the safety of the public highway.
- 23.5. The development would result in a net loss of cycle parking spaces within the red line. However, as additional cycle stands would be provided outside of the application boundary resulting in a net gain within the surrounding area only low weight should be afforded to this.
- 23.6. Summary of benefits
- 23.7. The proposed works are considered to significantly improve the accessibility of the Civic Quarter, particularly for users with mobility impairments. The re-laying and treatment of the setts would allow for a more level, safer surface for the market area which benefits from a high footfall. The flush surface would remove the raised kerbs which results in barriers for those who use wheelchairs or other mobility aids. Due to the historic nature of Cambridge city centre there are large areas that are difficult to traverse for those with mobility disabilities and the development would introduce an inclusive space in a central location. It is considered that this should be given significant weight.
- 23.8. The proposal would result in a successful rationalisation of street furniture which would reduce the level of visual clutter within the street scene making for a more inviting public realm. The consistent paving across the space along with the removal of the concrete slabs on the listed surface of Market Square would allow for an increased legibility of the area. These visual improvements are considered to have significant weight.
- 23.9. Subject to sufficient management, the use of demountable stalls within the southern half of Market Square would result in a more flexible and open space which is beneficial to the designated public open space. As, the northern half of the site would contain more permanent fixed stalls, it is considered that this should be given moderate weight.

- 23.10. The works would result in additional greenery which in turn would create 0.3 habitat units which results in a limited biodiversity net gain. As it is considered that some limited planting could be achieved without the full development taking place, it is considered this should be given low-moderate weight.
- 23.11. Facilities within the site would be improved with increased surveillance and seating allowing for a more inviting space and creating an improved space to gather. As these works could be done without the whole redevelopment, officers attribute low weight to this benefit.

Overall

- 23.12. The proposal forms part of the wider Civic Quarter project, which aims to transform Cambridge's Market Square and surrounding civic spaces into a more inclusive, pedestrian-friendly environment. Key elements include relaying the listed paving setts to improve accessibility, introducing predominantly level Yorkstone surfacing, and replacing the existing market stalls with a combination of permanent and demountable structures. Although the site is heritage-rich and operationally complex, the scheme seeks to balance the needs of traders, visitors and servicing vehicles while creating a safer, more attractive civic space. Extensive pre-application discussions have taken place with the Local Planning Authority, Historic England and other stakeholders and recommended conditions would ensure the quality gap between the expectation of heritage experts and the outcome of current trial setts is lessened.
- 23.13. The project would significantly change the appearance and function of Market Square, introducing new surfacing, planting, rationalised street furniture and improved seating. While this would bring clear placemaking and accessibility benefits, it would also result in less than substantial harm to several heritage assets, including the listed setts, railings, and the setting of nearby listed buildings. Both Historic England and the Conservation Officer recognise harm but officers advise that ongoing trials and conditions could reduce this further.
- 23.14. The Local Highways Authority has raised strong objections relating to the proposed flush, shared-surface design, but officers consider that low vehicle volumes lessen the relevance of government guidance on shared space creation, particularly in the circumstance where vehicular traffic and pedestrian movements peak at different points in the day.

- 23.15. Despite some unresolved issues and the finely balanced nature of the proposal, officers conclude that the public benefits—including enhanced accessibility, improved market vitality, reduced clutter, increased flexibility of the space, and better overall public realm—outweigh the identified harms. The scheme is judged to improve the Civic Quarter’s functionality, inclusivity and long-term sustainability.
- 23.16. Taking all of the above into account, including the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, the statutory requirements of section 66(1) and section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, officers conclude that the proposal, whilst finely balanced, is acceptable and as such it is recommended for **APPROVAL**.

24. Recommendation

- 24.1. **Approve** subject to:

-The planning conditions as set out below with minor amendments to the conditions as drafted delegated to officers.

25. Planning conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as listed on this decision notice.

Reason: In the interests of good planning, for the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3. Prior to the commencement of development, details of the cycle parking outside of the red line of development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle stands shall be installed prior to any removal of the existing cycle stands within the application site.

Reason: To ensure appropriate provision for the storage of cycles (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 82).

4. No demolition/development shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has implemented a programme of archaeological work, commencing with the evaluation of the application area, that has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than under the provisions of the agreed WSI, which shall include:
 - a. The statement of significance and research objectives;
 - b. The programme and methodology of investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works;
 - c. The timetable for the field investigation as part of the development programme;
 - d. The programme and timetable for the analysis, publication & dissemination, and deposition of resulting material and digital archives.

REASON: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any demolitions or groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely preservation and/or investigation, recording, reporting, archiving and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with national policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (DLUHC 2023).

5. No works, including preparatory works, shall commence on site until a traffic management plan has been agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. The principal areas of concern that should be addressed are:
 - i. Movements and control of muck away lorries
 - ii. Contractor parking
 - iii. Movements and control of all deliveries
 - iv. Control of dust, mud and debris, please note it is an offence under the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or debris onto the adopted public highway.

Reason: in the interests of highway safety in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF.

6. Prior to the commencement of development, a Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan (DCEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

It shall include/ adhere to the following:

- a) A phasing and co-ordination programme, relative to other Civic Quarter works
- b) Contractor's parking and access arrangements for vehicles, plant and personnel including the location of construction traffic routes to and from the site, their signing, monitoring and enforcement measures.
- c) Control of dust, mud and debris on the highway.
- d) Construction and demolition (except for loading and unloading) shall be carried out only between 0800 hours to 1800 hours Monday to Friday, and 0800 hours to 1300 hours on Saturday and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless in accordance with agreed emergency procedures for deviation.
- e) Delivery hours for muck away, demolition and construction purposes. The hours submitted for approval shall include an assessment of the daily number and type of vehicles required and an assessment as to how vehicles would safely access / exit the site include tracking / swept path analysis. The submission should include a highway safety audit / assessment to support the proposed times and include provision for banks person(s). The delivery times shall be carried out only within the agreed hours and shall at no time should any deliveries take place after 1300 hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority in advance.
- f) Prior notice and agreement procedures for works outside agreed limits and hours.
- i) Site artificial lighting during construction and demolition including hours of operation, position and impact on neighbouring properties.
- j) Screening and hoarding details.
- k) Consideration of sensitive receptors.
- l) A Community Liaison Plan to inform the community in respect of:
 - the construction required to facilitate the development
 - contractor point of contact, complaints procedures, including complaints response procedures
- m) Membership of the Considerate Contractor's Scheme.

The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the agreed plan.

Reason: To safeguard the safety, health and quality of life of existing residential occupiers and users of the City centre in accordance with policies 35, 36 and 56 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

7. No development within any part of the public highway shall commence until any necessary Traffic Regulation Order relative to that part of the public highway subject to the planning permission has been made and is in force. This shall include but not be limited to Traffic Regulation Orders in respect of:
 - Reversal of the direction of the one-way vehicle movements on Market Hill;
 - Removal of taxi rank on Market Hill;
 - Removal and/or relocation of loading bays on Guildhall Street, Peas Hill, Corn Exchange Street and Market Hill;
 - Removal and/or relocation of blue badge parking on Guildhall Street and Peas Hill

Reason: in the interests of maintaining highway efficiency and safety in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF.

8. No development above ground level shall commence until a scheme for the provision and implementation of foul water drainage has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in full in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with an implementation program agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To reduce the risk of pollution to the water environment and to ensure a satisfactory method of foul water drainage (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policies 32 and 33).

9. No development above ground level, shall commence until a surface water drainage scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in full in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the implementation program agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure appropriate surface water drainage and prevent the increased risk of flooding (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policies 31 and 32)

10. No development above ground level shall take place until a Wayfinding Strategy for the public realm within the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Strategy shall include details of the location, design, content, materials and implementation of wayfinding signage and markers within the site, including measures to support inclusive access and navigation and its integration with surrounding pedestrian routes and public transport connections.

The approved Wayfinding Strategy shall be implemented prior to the first use of the public space and retained thereafter in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the provision of clear, legible and inclusive navigation within the public realm and the creation of a high-quality, accessible public space, in accordance with Policy 56 (Creating Successful Places) and Policy 59 (Designing landscape and the public realm) of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

11. No development above ground level, other than demolition, shall commence until a hard and soft landscaping scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the following:

- a) proposed finished levels or contours; car parking layouts, other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas;
- b) hard surfacing materials, including size, shape, texture/tactility, durability and colour,
- c) Street furniture and artifacts (including refuse and cycle storage);
- d) planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;
- e) an implementation programme.

The development shall be fully carried out in accordance with the approved details. If within a period of 5 years from the date of planting of any trees or shrubs, or 5 years from the commencement of development in respect of any retained trees and shrubs, they are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die or become seriously damaged or

diseased, replacement trees and shrubs of the same size and species as originally planted shall be planted at the same place in the next available planting season, or in accordance with any variation agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 57, 59 and 69).

12. No development, other than demolition and enabling/ utility diversion works shall take place until a detailed scheme for the approved rainwater harvesting and recycling strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include relevant drawings showing the location of the necessary infrastructure required to facilitate the water reuse. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To respond to the serious water stress facing the area and ensure that development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

13. No development, other than demolition and enabling/ utility diversion works shall take place on Market Square shall take place until details of the underground bins shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the above ground appearance and operational specification including estimated timings needed for servicing. The bins shall use a hydraulic lift system and shall not require the use of cranes. The bins shall be installed in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: To protect the character and appearance of the area, protect or enhance the heritage assets and ensure that collection of the bins would not impact the safety of the public highway (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 55, 56, 59 and 61 and paragraph 116 of the NPPF 2024)

14. No fixed market stall shall be installed until details of the external materials to be used in the construction of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include the proposed materials, colour palette, details of solar panels and details of ventilation chimney. Development shall be

carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development does not detract from the character and appearance of the area. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 57 and 61).

15. Notwithstanding the approved plans, no security gates shall be installed until details of the proposed gates have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the location of the gates, materials, design and colour. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development does not detract from the character and appearance of the area. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 57 and 61).

16. No demountable stalls, canopies or other furniture shall be used until details of the proposed have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development does not detract from the character and appearance of the area. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 57 and 61).

17. Prior to the installation of any new artificial lighting, a proposed lighting plan shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the local planning authority. The plan shall include:
- a. Details of the types of lighting including their appearance;
 - b. The location of new lighting;
 - c. The method of lighting (including luminaire type / profiles, mounting location / height, aiming angles / orientation, angle of glare, operational controls, horizontal / vertical isolux contour light levels and calculated glare levels to off-site receptors)
 - d. The extent/levels of illumination over the site and on adjacent land;
 - e. The predicted lighting levels at the nearest light sensitive receptors.

All artificial lighting must meet the 'Recommended Maximum Values of Light Parameters for the Control of Obtrusive Light', contained within the '*Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) - Guidance Note 01/21: the Reduction of Obtrusive Light - GN01/21*', (or as superseded).

The lighting and any mitigation scheme shall be carried out as approved and shall be retained as such.

Reason: To ensure that the lighting would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area and protect or enhance the heritage assets and to minimise the effects of light pollution on the surrounding area (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 34, 55, 56, 59 and 61)

18. Prior to the commencement of use of the outdoor external open to air events / entertainment space to the front of the Guildhall a noise impact assessment and an Outdoor Event / Entertainment Space Noise Mitigation, Control and Management Plan / Strategy for the said events / entertainment space shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any such Noise Mitigation, Control and Management Plan / Strategy shall have regard to but not exhaustively the following:
- a. Details about and the purpose of any Mitigation, Control and Management Plan / Strategy Noise Management Strategy
 - b. Management Arrangements for Events
 - c. Preliminary Site Feasibility Study – Event Boundary Area
 - d. Nature / type of uses and events to be held
 - e. Typical Events Outline / Programming – Hours of Use
 - f. Premises Licences – any relevant conditions under the Licensing Act 2003
 - g. Sources of Noise (Sound Systems / Plant Equipment & Machinery)
 - h. Setting Up, Dismantling of Events Stalls / Furniture / Stages etc Typical Hours
 - i. the general permitted times for the Build (set-up) and Strike (de-installation) periods for structures
 - j. Vehicle movements and timings
 - k. An event specific Noise Risk Assessment is expected for all external concerts / film events and similar outdoor events
 - l. Permitted Noise Levels at Noise Sensitive Receptors (NSRs) – based on frequency of events etc Predicted Receiver Levels - guidance contained within The Noise Council: 'Code of Practice on Environmental Noise Control at Concerts- Code of Practice for Concerts 1995 or similar
 - m. Low Frequency Noise Considerations e.g. bass beats
 - n. Sound System Design, Layout and Setup – noise mitigation / control generally

- o. Wider Sound Management – including third party amplification equipment and percussion instruments such as drum kits and use of independent generators
- p. Sound Checks and Rehearsals
- q. Noise Control Monitoring (Receptor Locations and Expected Noise Monitoring Positions)
- r. Is a sound engineer / noise consultant required
- s. Procedure for Responding to and Dealing with Complaints – dedicated point of contact
- t. Local Authority and Local Resident Liaison Arrangements
- u. People / Crowd Noise
- v. Post Event Reporting
- w. Periodic Review Provisions for any Noise Mitigation, Control and Management Plan / Strategy

The approved Outdoor Event / Entertainment Space Noise Mitigation, Control and Management Plan / Strategy shall be carried out and implemented as approved and retained as such. Any approved Plan / Strategy shall also be reviewed periodically in writing and at the request of the Local Planning Authority.

The use of the area for events/ entertainment including setting up and dismantling shall only be permitted between the hours of 07:00 and 23:00 hours.

Reason: To protect / safeguard the health and quality of life (amenity) at existing premises in accordance with Policies 35 (noise and vibration) of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

19. Prior to the completion of the proposed development, or as soon as reasonably practicable after completion, evidence in the form of the BREEAM Wat01 water efficiency calculator shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such evidence shall demonstrate the achievement of no less than 5 Wat01 credits. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained strictly in accordance with the agreed details set out within the BREEAM Wat01 water efficiency calculator.

Reason: To respond to the serious water stress facing the area and ensure that development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020)

20. Prior to any part of the proposal being opened to the public, a Public Realm and Market Management and Maintenance plan shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: to ensure the site is well managed and does not give rise to significant risks to the users public highway (Cambridge Local Plan policies 55, 56 and 61 and paragraph 116 of the NPPF)

21. No works to existing public art shall occur until a plan detailing how the statues would be removed, stored and returned to their existing locations has been submitted to and agreed in writing with Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: To protect the existing pieces of public art and ensure they are incorporated back into the development (Cambridge Local Plan policies 55 and 56).

22. No additional pieces of public art shall be installed until details of the proposed art work have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the details of the art, location within the site and the management and maintenance. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure any public art enhances the development (Cambridge Local Plan policies 55 and 56).

23. Before the development is first occupied or brought into use a landscape maintenance and management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: To ensure that before any development commences an appropriate landscape and ecological management plan has been agreed (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 57, 59 and 70).

24. If unexpected contamination is encountered during the development works which has not previously been identified, all works shall cease immediately until the Local Planning Authority has been notified in

writing. Thereafter, works shall only restart with the written approval of the Local Planning Authority following the submission and approval of a Phase 2 Intrusive Site Investigation Report and a Phase 3 Remediation Strategy specific to the newly discovered contamination.

The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved Intrusive Site Investigation Report and Remediation Strategy.

Reason: To ensure that any unexpected contamination is rendered harmless in the interests of environmental and public safety (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 33)

25. All paved areas within the Market Square that abut the public highway shall be constructed with levels and falls designed to ensure that no surface water from private land drains onto or across the public highway. Where such levels cannot be achieved, appropriate physical measures shall be installed to prevent surface water discharging onto the public highway. The arrangements shall thereafter be retained and maintained.

Reason: in the interests of highway safety in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF (2024).

26. The ecological mitigation shall be carried out in full in accordance with the details contained in Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Version 2.0 dated 23 October 2025 by MKA Ecology. The ecological measures shall thereafter be retained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To conserve and enhance ecological interests. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 57, 59 and 70)

Informatives

1. As the Market Square includes uses that are intended to be run as or includes food type businesses, the applicant is reminded that under the Food Safety Act 1990 (as amended) the premises / uses will need to register with Cambridge City Council, as required by law. In order to avoid additional costs, it is recommended that the applicant ensure that

the kitchen, food preparation and foods storage areas comply with food hygiene legislation, before construction starts. The applicant is advised to contact the Commercial Team, Environmental Health & Public Safety, Communities at Cambridge City Council on telephone number (01223) 457890 or email commercial@cambridge.gov.uk for further information / advice etc

2. A premises licence may be required for parts of this development (External Open to Air Events / Entertainment Space) in addition to any planning permission. The applicant is advised to contact The Licensing Team, Environmental Health & Public Safety, Communities at Cambridge City Council on telephone number (01223) 457890 or email licensing@cambridge.gov.uk for further information / advice etc.
3. To satisfy and discharge Environmental Health conditions relating to artificial lighting, contaminated land, noise / sound, air quality and odours / fumes, any assessment and mitigation shall be in accordance with the scope, methodologies and requirements of relevant sections of the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, (Adopted January 2020) <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/greater-cambridge-sustainable-design-and-construction-spd> and in particular section 3.6 - Pollution and the following associated appendices:
 - 6: Requirements for Specific Lighting Schemes
 - 7: The Development of Potentially Contaminated Sites in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire: A Developers Guide
 - 8: Further technical guidance related to noise pollution
4. In the event that the Planning Authority is so minded as to grant permission for the proposals, please add an informative to the effect that the granting of a planning permission does not constitute a permission or licence to a developer to carry out any works within, or disturbance of, or interference with the Public Highway, and that a separate permission must be sought from the Highway Authority for such works.
5. Where the Highway Authority identifies any element as nonstandard, a commuted sum shall be payable by the developer in accordance with the Cambridgeshire County Councils Commuted Sums Policy, adopted on 7th March 2023. The commuted sum must be agreed and paid in full prior to the completion of the relevant highway works
6. No planting shall take place within the limits of the public highway unless the prior written consent of the Highway Authority has been obtained. Where the Cambridge City Council undertakes or arranges

any such planting, it shall be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of that planting in accordance with the requirements of Section 96 of the Highways Act 1980.



The Greater Cambridge Design Review Panel

Pre-application ref: PPA/25/0005

Cambridge Civic Quarter

Thursday 26 June 2025, In-person meeting

Confidential

The [Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth](#) sets out the core principles for the level of quality to be expected in new development across Cambridgeshire. The [Greater Cambridge Design Review Panel](#) provides independent, expert advice to developers and local planning authorities against the four core principles of the Charter: connectivity, character, climate, and community.

Attendees

Panel Members:

Russell Brown (Chair) – Architect and Founding Partner at Hawkins Brown Architects - Character

Fiona Heron – Founder at Fiona Heron Limited - Character – Landscape

Helen Goodwin - Head of Programmes at Design Southeast – Community

Joel Gustafsson - Director at JG Consulting – Climate

Anne Cooper - Director at AC Architects – Character Conservation

Teri Okoro – Director and chartered architect – Inclusive Design

Applicant and Design Team

In-Person Attendance:

David Roberts, Director Cartwright Pickard Architects

Richard Griffiths, Associate, Cartwright Pickard Architects

James Pickard, Director, Cartwright Pickard Architects

John Mason, Associate, Carter Jonas

Paul Belton, Head of Planning and Development East – Carter Jonas

Jon Burgess, Director, Planning and Heritage, Turley

Sarah Potter, Associate LDA

Kirsty McMullen, Director, KMC

Nadya Lokhmotova, Senior Passivhaus Consultant, Max Fordham

Benedict Binns, Assistant Director | Housing & Regeneration Leader, Cambridge City Council

Online attendance:

Tom Conlon, Client – Cambridge City Council

Louise Bradley – Practice Director – ECF

LPA Officers:

Tom Davies – Senior Urban Designer and DRP Manager

Bana Elzein – Principal Landscape Architect - online

Maxine Ross – DRP/Business Support Officer

Egle Packauskaite – Urban Designer

Mary Collins - Senior Planner

Mark Taylor – Access Officer - online

Christian Brady - Historic Environment Team Leader - online

Rosa Teira Paz - Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas, Historic England

Declarations of Interest

The DRP manager asked if there were any Declarations of Interest for DRP members. Russell Brown informed members that Hawkins Brown had bid for the feasibility study, and then the further design work for the Civic Quarter. Joel Gustafsson informed members that he had worked for Max Fordham for several years. The panel agreed that these declarations by the panel members were not conflicts of interest.

Inclusive Design / Accessibility

The panel member specialist agreed that the inclusive vision is welcomed; access should be a holistic aim, for everybody, not only disabled people. Everyone should be able to access the toilets at the Guildhall, this needs to be carefully thought through. Decluttering the circulation routes by introducing shared surfaces is supported. The treatment of the ground plain is important for people with visual impairments; colour contrasts can help the identification of different areas of use. It is important to design seats for people of all abilities, preferably including seats with backs and arm rests.

Clear, predictable, legible layouts are important for neurodivergent users. The designers need to be to consider overstimulation, in what will be a busy market area, and to provide options for quiet & calm zones.

Training and education are needed to improve cyclist behaviour, which will take time to be implemented. Sound and noise are important considerations around the design of large-scale public spaces. Wayfinding will be critical, to help everyone to use and move around the transformed, civic buildings. Colour could be used to support this.

Sustainability

The panel member specialist was pleased for the proposals for the Guildhall. In the short time allocated he could only raise some technical issues, such as the use of vapour closed walls for preventing moisture damage in buildings.

For the Guildhall roof, he raised queries about visual and noise impact from enclosed ASHPs. He has previously raised concerns about the availability of free air around enclosed equipment. Could some of the equipment be moved to the basements to reduce impact on the skyline?

He is concerned about underfloor cooling for the Corn Exchange spaces. The hot air in crowded spaces, coming against cold surfaces, could cause moisture and safety issues.

Customisation of the permanent / temporary market stalls is important. At Camden market, for instance, the stalls are too uniform.

The growing popularity of E-scooters creates street clutter and are a nuisance; they are as important to consider as cyclists. Operators will find ways of introducing these around the market square and so they need to be designed into the plans.

Energy considerations for the market operations. This is an opportunity to remove the trader's need for the use of propane gas. Provide traders could be with power and there is the opportunity for installing a microgrid. This is a cost-effective solution for the Council.

The fountain could be celebrated as a congregation meeting point. It is currently sad looking. Running water is needed for this to make it truly operational again. This is an issue given the water scarcity in Cambridge. Could potable mains water from a starting point at the fountain to provide drinking water and be recycled as greywater?

Nadya Lokhmotova explained that the Guildhall has been thermally modelled and that there are areas where the cavity is bridged so that a consistent wall build up is not possible.

Character

The panel member specialist was concerned about the proposal for permanent structures on public open space, and in terms of the market proximity to prime retail estate in the City Centre. What is the view of shop owners and landlords around the changes to the market? Would people going to the Market Square be using the toilets in the shops? Given the increased number of food stalls in the market, will the Guildhall have enough WCs provision? She had concerns about the balance of the number of hot food stalls in comparison to more traditional traders.

The applicant team explained that the current proposals retain the current balance of traders, so that no more hot food stalls are planned. The Council has been talking extensively to the major landowner around the square and the proposals are welcomed and not seen as reducing rental values.

The panel member specialist felt the proposal for updated ground surfaces is very positive. She agrees that there is a lot of clutter (cycle racks) and street furniture and kerbs on Peas Hill and around the Guildhall, which is off putting. The sequence of spaces created on Peas Hill is still unclear. Could the Guildhall entrance and existing café (located on Peas Hill) be opened up more to the public realm at Peas Hill? At the moment, these spaces feel closed off. Could this entrance area relate more to the built context of Peas Hill? There needs to be a better connection through from the Market Square to the Corn Exchange.

Conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists are of concern, as cyclists follow desire lines and use short cuts to go from Trinity Street/Kings Parade to Peas Hill. Intercepting these cycle routes is sensible. Currently, there is a problem of lack of enforcement for poor cycling behaviour. The provision of cycle parking (short/long stay) needs to be integrated across Cambridge.

The proposals for the Guildhall are supported. The panel understands that the building needs to be revitalised to come back into viable use, both as office space for the council, and to become a fully functioning community space. The roof extension on the 4th floor is in a logical location and is an appropriate design. There are still concerns about the design and extent of the plant screening. Its impact needs to be modelled and reviewed, in the long views across the Square, and the screening reduced in height and extent. and pushed back from the main façade as far as possible.

The panel member specialist agrees that being radical in the transformation of the Guildhall will be critical to its future success. She understands the need to re-invigorate the spaces and for the whole building to work together. The addition of PV panels is supported, and the panel understands the need for mechanical ventilation and cooling in a changing climate.

The proposals for the Corn Exchange are welcomed. The proposals to remove the refuse store and introduce a new bar in Parsons Court are strongly supported. Could some of the courtyard be covered with a canopy to extend its use in winter?

The proposals are seen as broadly sympathetic. It is important to provide accessibility in as much of the venue as possible. There remains a concern that exiting out (at the end of an event) on to the narrow pavement of Corn Exchange Street can be dangerous, without the proposed traffic calming in this street.

James Pickard responded that there had been extensive discussions about both buildings with Historic England. Adapting the furniture in the main council chamber was difficult, in order to achieve full accessibility. The key views from the Market Square were being modelled. The building will need to have cooling, and this requires extensive mechanical ventilation at roof level. This is also required to deliver the net zero targets in operation. There are also lift overruns for the new lifts to be considered on the roofline.

He further explained that lightwells/atria can be really beautiful additions to a building, helping a building to become welcoming and friendly, replacing corridors, and aiding wayfinding. A good example is Lambeth City Offices.

Landscape character

The panel member specialist commented that the relationship between inside and outside will be key – e.g. between the Guildhall café and the public realm. It could be interesting to look at the fountain as a meeting point; it is important to give places a function.

Consolidating and removing the clutter is strongly supported; a lot of the cycle racks are not being used or are broken; stripping away disused material internally and externally would be a major benefit.

How do the outdoor stalls and the spaces around the Square relate to the existing context of the neighbouring buildings? The Market Square's character does not come across yet. It should be an exemplar public open space; providing a strong vision for what this will feel like is key. What is the character of the market stalls; are they all different, are they customisable? Do they possess a unity yet individuality eg; like the beach huts at Brighton? At the moment, the designs look heavy and permanent. Holding onto the spirit of what exists currently could help!

There is an inherent conflict between the Square's history as the civic centre of Cambridge, and its use as a market. Bringing out the market character is crucial; a lightness of touch is key. The stalls should not compete with the surrounding buildings. It is important for the stalls to celebrate the context and not create something new and ubiquitous, that dominates the market square rather than being sympathetic to the buildings.

What is the tree strategy? The planting should respond to orientation, location, purpose, proximity to the church and building entrances? Why are trees where they are? The current location of trees does not echo the forms of the spaces or establish a clear character for the new spaces. The bike stands need to be designed as an element of the landscape, not as an obstacle.

The panel member specialist raised the issue with the setts. Is there a strategy as to how they go back? Should they reinforce the axis or reflect a pattern? Could they be

used to create new routes and support wayfinding and did they need to echo a certain drainage pattern?

A cycling strategy is important, perhaps a linear approach is best to have one simple cycle route.

At the moment, the fountain is innocuous/almost hidden. Perhaps the covered seating could embrace the fountain. Should the covered dining area relate to the fountain? Why is the dining area where it is? Should it be the focal point?

The orientation of the stalls does not appear to be resolved. How do they link with the other spaces? There needs to be an exploration of the context, and where shapes/forms of spaces come from. Why are things where they are? Could there be any reference to historical precedents? The market stalls need to be lightweight and relate to the routes.

The design of the lighting will be important, both for the market and the surrounding buildings. Currently the proposals are somewhat generic and potentially feel like 'anywhere'; there needs to be more of a focus on the characterisation of the new spaces and place making and how they relate uniquely to this important and individual and unique Cambridge open space.

Community

The panel member specialist spoke about what will be the 'life of the place'. The design needs to consider what a market is as a place of gathering historically? The design team should do a drawing of the market square as a node in the city centre with a focus on people's movements and activities. Who is coming here and how do you draw tourists here from King's Parade to the Market Square? A market is historically a place of exchange. This is an important project for the whole of the city centre. How can you make the market and the two cultural venues a 'honey pot', and a catalyst for activity at the heart of the city?

There is a great opportunity to give the Guildhall a renewed presence, be a gem and become, like London's Festival Hall, Cambridge's 'living room' that is not part of the University ownership. It would be great if the Cambridge Museum moved here to provide an added attraction, so that visitors could see the bigger picture of Cambridge's development.

The messy, convivial nature of a market is a key quality. It is the one place in Cambridge that does not need curating, it should have a temporary feel. It will be a challenge to incorporate permanent stalls while holding onto the everydayness and provisional feel of a market. St Albans Town Hall which has a museum, gallery and café is a useful precedent for the transformation of the Guildhall.

James Pickard agreed that the market needed to become the "honeypot" in the City Centre. The project was looking to halt the spiral of decline, sorting out the bike parks, the bins, the illegal parking and the uneven surfaces. The aim is to make the market much more accessible, to give it back to the locals, encourage families to visit with new events and to extend the timetable and uses of a new public realm.

The panel member specialist added that she understands that the Council wants to "clean up" the market but its messiness and conviviality can be an asset, and it must not get too sterile. It needs to maintain its distinct nature; it should be the one place in Cambridge that does not need curating. It needs to feel like a market and hold on to its sense of impermanence. The panel member specialist made an additional suggestion that Barking Town Square incorporates an arboretum, with 40 native trees, and that this helps define a separate character from the open marketplace.

Chair's Summary

Where the proposals reduce the impact of the traffic, cyclists, and the (illegal) parking around the Corn Exchange they are to be welcomed. The proposals to dramatically improve circulation in the foyers and access to the bars, will really transform the visitor experience. The proposals to clear the refuse storage out of

Parsons Court and introduce a new bar, and better access, will be a really positive improvement.

The proposal to extend the Guildhall at 4th floor are logical and a positive step. The panel is still concerned about the loss of the Council Chamber use (and furniture). This would seem to lose some of the building's civic value and its meaning as a focus of democracy. The applicant is urged to look at this again and to perhaps find clearer, more focused uses that support the business plan for each of the large spaces in the Guildhall.

There is an inherent conflict between the nature of a civic space as rational, permanent, open and the attractive impermanence, unpredictability that characterises a marketplace. This conflict is crystalised around the retention and re-use of the fountain. Although it has historic value, the applicant could look to relocate the fountain outside of the market, where it could become a happier focus of a calmer, greener public space. The drawings showing the empty space around the fountain, and the placing of the covered dining area away from the fountain are evidence of this mismatch.

The design of the permanent (and impermanent) market stalls is crucial, they need to touch the ground 'lightly' and retain the feel of impermanence, adaption, variety that are the nature of markets.

The cycling routes, cycle parking, vehicle access and parking all need careful and visible management in the future. This will require proper funding and political support for the day-to-day management of these spaces,

The panel feel the public realm around the Guildhall could be bolder in design and characterisation. The clutter needs to be removed to create clearer spaces, the parking needs to be included and managed but the design is not 'exemplar' yet. The spaces could be better defined by more planting (including more trees) and landscaping could be used to 'intercept' the speeding cyclists. Responding to the surrounding buildings could help this process.



Existing birds eye view of the Cambridge Civic Quarter – extracted from Cambridge Civic Quarter DRP presentation (June 2025)



Location Plan – extracted from Cambridge Civic Quarter DRP presentation (June 2025)





The Guild Hall, Market Place and the Corn Exchange – extracted from Cambridge Civic Quarter DRP presentation (June 2025)

3.8 4th Floor Extension and Roof Plant Screen

4th Floor Extension

- The proposed fourth floor extension will extend the office provision from the existing stair core on Peas Hill and connect to a second core (south Peas Hill) by extending the stair from third floor.
- In reference to the existing fourth floor, the proposed massing will be recessed behind the existing parapet across each elevation, turning at the south corner as it does on the lower levels.

Roof Plant Screen

- Panels are a repeated modular design using bronze effect metal finish to match the existing metalwork.
- Articulation in the panels are created from framing around an inset panel, in the same metal finish.

4th Floor Bay Study

Peas Hill Elevation

3D view - Roof plant screen and 4th floor extension

The Guild Hall proposals – extracted from Cambridge Civic Quarter DRP presentation (June 2025)

4.7 Climate - 3rd Floor Extension



The Corn Exchange proposals – extracted from Cambridge Civic Quarter DRP presentation (June 2025)

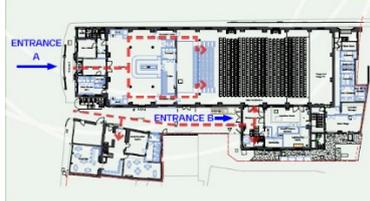
4.8 Community - Creating a destination

Parson's Court

Utilising the Parson's Court as an alternative 'Entrance B' for ticket holders to alleviate the pressure from the main 'Entrance A'.

We're creating an outdoor social space by relocating the current refuse bins and upgrading the ground surface. Evacuation modelling shows the space can also accommodate a food truck to supplement the F&B offer.

Users of the Corn Exchange will be able to use this space before, during and after shows.



Ground floor plan circulation



Parson's Court

The Corn Exchange proposals – Parson's Court - extracted from Cambridge Civic Quarter DRP presentation (June 2025)

5.3 Existing Public Realm



*The Market Square – existing public realm - extracted from Cambridge Civic Quarter
DRP presentation (June 2025)*

5.7 Market Square Layout

Market Stalls (x44)

- Lockable stalls with integrated canopy and signage

Demountable stalls (x50)

- 3x3m stalls to be fixed to sockets embedded into the setts
- 2x2m stalls located within the highway for additional capacity on the busiest days

Canopy

- Lightweight structure with seating and secure gate to be closed at night

Fountain

- To be restored and brought back into use, subject to survey

Storage

- Integrated storage units for demountable stalls located between Market Stalls

Welfare facilities

- Accessible WC and storage on the ground floor for traders.
- Basement storage, WC's and teapoint for traders



*The Market Square layout proposals – layout - extracted from Cambridge Civic
Quarter DRP presentation (June 2025)*



*The Market Square layout proposals – CGI - extracted from Cambridge Civic Quarter
DRP presentation (June 2025)*

1.2 Cambridge Civic Quarter Vision

Create a civic heart

- An inclusive space for everyone
- Reinforces a civic heart of Cambridge
- Links the Market Square, Guildhall and The Corn Exchange
- Broadens the use and appeal of the civic quarter
- Embrace & enhance the historic setting

Adding value

- Rejuvenate the Guildhall embedding CCC, Civic & democratic functions
- Revitalise and support a thriving Market
- Widen use & appeal of Market Square
- Expand Corn Exchange use
- Commercially viable
- Reduce operational costs

Net Zero Carbon

- Sustainable and Net Zero in operation

Cambridge Civic Quarter - Design Review Panel

*The Cambridge Civic Quarter Vision - extracted from Cambridge Civic Quarter
DRP presentation (June 2025)*

Disclaimer

The above comments represent the views of the Greater Cambridge Design Review Panel and are made without prejudice to the determination of any planning application should one be submitted. Furthermore, the views expressed will not bind the decision of Elected Members, should a planning application be submitted, nor prejudice the formal decision-making process of the council.



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



Department
for Transport

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28th September 2018

Dear Chief Executive

Shared space schemes

We are writing to clarify the approach that should be taken to shared space schemes following the publication of the Department for Transport's Inclusive Transport Strategy and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's National Planning Policy Framework in July.

Creating places that are attractive and work well for everyone should be a central goal of street design, whether as part of new developments or through improving existing areas. As part of this, we need to secure a step-change in how we design streets and communities that are accessible and inclusive for all.

The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises the importance of prioritising walking and cycling, and addressing the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility. The Inclusive Transport Strategy covers a number of issues, including the design, function and use of shared space, which is one approach which has been used to create attractive places and reduce the dominance of motor traffic.

In response to concerns raised about shared space and navigability, the Inclusive Transport Strategy asked local authorities to pause the introduction of new shared space schemes that feature a level surface, and which are at the design stage. This therefore does not apply to

development schemes that are currently at the planning application stage or beyond. For the avoidance of doubt, a level surface is a design feature in which the level difference between the footway and the carriageway is removed. The request to pause such schemes has led to a number of enquiries from developers, practitioners and planning authorities.

While authorities need to ensure that all schemes are designed with the needs of different users in mind, and satisfy their obligations under the equalities legislation, the focus of the pause is on level-surface schemes in areas with relatively large amounts of pedestrian and vehicular movement, such as high streets and town centres (outside of pedestrian zones). The pause does not apply to streets within new residential areas, or the redesign of existing residential streets with very low levels of traffic, such as appropriately designed mews and cul-de-sacs, which take into account the relevant aspects of the National Planning Policy Framework and associated guidance.

Features often included in a shared space scheme, such as the minimal use of traffic signs and other traffic management related street furniture, removing traffic signals, removing/modifying formal and informal crossings, raised side road entry treatments, continuous footways, table junctions and shared use routes for pedestrians and cyclists are often integral parts of other traffic management schemes. The use of these features in traffic management schemes is not included in the request to pause level surface shared space schemes. The availability of formal crossings is particularly important for visually impaired people. Local authorities should consider how this need can be met in all schemes, including shared space.

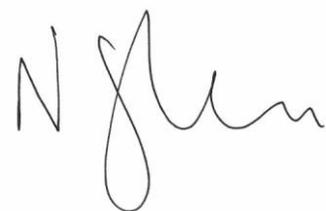
Applying the National Planning Policy Framework

A proportionate approach should also be taken in applying related aspects of the National Planning Policy Framework, so that the nature of each site, its surroundings and its users are taken properly into account. Giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists, and addressing the needs of people with disabilities or reduced mobility, does not mean that segregated footways or cycle paths are always required. This is especially the case where traffic volume and speed will be low, such as within small housing schemes, or those parts of larger schemes designed as mews or cul-de-sac.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government intend to review national planning practice guidance to sit alongside the revised National Planning Policy Framework, which will be published in due course. The Department for Transport, with the Scottish Government and Transport Scotland, will commission research on inclusive design which will also inform further advice on creating places that are accessible, inclusive and well-designed.



KIT MALTHOUSE MP



NUSRAT GHANI MP



25/04383/LBC – Market Square, Market Hill, Wheeler Street, Guildhall Street and Corn Exchange Street

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: Market

Proposal: Refurbishment of Market Square, Peas Hill and Guildhall Street, including: provision of cycle parking, erection and siting of replacement fixed and temporary market stalls, refurbishment of Grade II listed setts, works to listed fountain and railings, and additional landscaping, street furniture and associated works

Applicant: Cambridge City Council

Presenting officer: Charlotte Spencer

Reason presented to committee: Land within the ownership of the Council

Member site visit date: 23 March 2026

Key issues: 1. Impact on heritage assets

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

Report contents

Document section	Document heading
1	Executive summary
2	Site description and context
3	The proposal
4	Relevant site history
5	Policy
6	Consultations
7	Third party representations
8	Member representations
9	Local groups / petition
10	Heritage assets
11	Planning balance
12	Recommendation
13	Planning conditions

Table 1 Contents of report

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The application forms part of the wider Civic Quarter project which aims to reconnect the Guildhall, Market Square, Corn Exchange and surrounding public realm. Importantly, the project aims to reimagine Market Square to create a more inclusive, pedestrian friendly environment that will enhance the civic heart of Cambridge. It includes several key interventions, including relaying listed setts to make them more accessible, the removal of one set of railings and repair works the fountain. In addition, works are required to facilitate the installation of fixed and demountable stalls. The Market Square surfacing and the two sets of railings are Grade II Listed. The fountain is also Grade II Listed under a separate listing.
- 1.2. There is no dispute that the area is run down and is a poor reflection on the City and role of the Market Square as a focal point for its residents and visitors. In particular, the Market Square's listed setts are unlevel, are not easily navigable for all users and become a slip hazard in wet weather. There is also little planting within Market Square itself, resulting in a predominantly hard surfaced environment.
- 1.3. Improvements and significant investment into this important civic space environment are therefore acutely needed to future proof the space as a matter of civic pride, recreating and reinvigorating the Market Square and its surrounds into a more welcoming and inclusive destination.

- 1.4. The market area is within a heritage context of the highest significance in Cambridge. The proposal seeks to lift, treat and re-lay the listed setts within Market Square. The principle of this alone would result in harm to the heritage asset. Because of this, considerable discussions have taken place between the applicant, the Local Planning Authority and Historic England regarding this part of the proposal and the level of work done by the applicants is acknowledged. However, some of the investigative work, namely the trials of the setts, have been undertaken at a very late stage in the application process. Whilst not fully settled, the latest trial setts demonstrate to officers their heritage significance can be adequately respected whilst simultaneously performing a better role as a more accessible surface.
- 1.5. Further trials will continue to ease the concerns of Historic England and Conservation Officers. Whilst Historic England feel they are in a position where they are unable to fully assess the level of harm, the Conservation Officer has identified a high level of 'less than substantial harm'. It is recognised that further trials could reduce the perceived harm prior to any decision being made. However, officers are confident that a solution that is more agreeable to all parties can be found through a suitably worded condition.
- 1.6. Harm has also been identified to the listed railings due to the removal of the southern set, however there would be neutral impact due to the repairs to the fountain.
- 1.7. Officers conclude that 'less than substantial harm' should be attributed to all identified heritage assets with the level ranging from low to high. The provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) allow for 'less than substantial harm' where public benefits outweigh the identified harm and this needs to be carefully considered within the planning balance.
- 1.8. The proposal would also create other benefits including the reduction of clutter, increased visual consistency, allowing for a flexible space, a limited amount of biodiversity net gain and an improvement to facilities such as seating.
- 1.9. When taking the identified harm and the proposed benefits into account, officers consider that on balance the development is acceptable. Officers would like to make it clear however that this is finely balanced recommendation.

- 1.10. Officers recommend that the Planning Committee **APPROVE** the application subject to conditions as highlighted at the end of this report.

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment	Paragraph Reference
Conservation Officer	Objection	6.1
Historic England	Objection	6.12
Third Party Representations	52 representations have been received, 49 in objection and 3 raising neutral comments	7.1
Member Representations (0)		8.1

Table 2 Consultee summary

2. Site description and context

- 2.1. The application relates to the public realm around the ‘Civic Quarter’ redevelopment. The site includes Market Square which is a Grade II Listed surface, Market Hill which is circular carriageway which loops around Market Square, Peas Hill, Wheeler Street and Guildhall Street which run around the west, south and east sides of The Guildhall respectively, and Corn Exchange Street from the junction with Wheeler Street to the southern building line of The Corn Exchange. Market Square is under the ownership of Cambridge City Council with the rest of the relevant public realm being adopted public highway under the control of Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 2.2. The Market Square listing includes the setts and the two sets of iron railings, in addition, the fountain in the centre has a separate grade II listing.

3. The proposal

- 3.1. The application is seeking listed building consent for the refurbishment of Market Square, Peas Hill and Guildhall Street, including: provision of cycle

parking, erection and siting of replacement fixed and temporary market stalls, refurbishment of Grade II listed setts, works to listed fountain and railings, and additional landscaping, street furniture and associated works.

3.2. The works related to this application are as follows:

- Market Square:
 - The lifting, treatment and relaying of the setts;
 - Replacement of concrete slabs with setts
 - Repair works to fountain
 - Removal of one set of railings
 - Installation of 44 fixed market stalls, with 2 additional stalls for use as a store and basement entrance
 - Provision of 52 demountable stalls with anchors;
 - Provision of demountable seating area;
 - Installation of underground bins to the north;
 - New landscaping.

3.3. The application has been amended to address representations. Further consultations have been carried out as appropriate. A trial of the relaying of and works to the setts has taken place on Peas Hill with further information regarding the process being submitted, further details in regard to the works to the fountain has been submitted along with a detailed response to Conservation and Historic England comments. Further consultations have been carried out as appropriate.

4. Relevant site history

Reference	Description	Outcome
25/04382/FUL	Refurbishment of Market Square, Peas Hill and Guildhall Street, including: provision of cycle parking, erection and siting of replacement fixed and temporary market stalls, refurbishment of Grade II listed setts, works to listed fountain and railings, and additional landscaping, street furniture and associated works	Under determination
C/94/0547	Listed Building Consent - Demolition of fountain including granite base.	Refused 14.09.1994
C/94/0915	Removal of railings from toilet entrances and retention for future use.	Approved 04.01.1995
C/65/0094	Snack bar and car park attendant's office.	Approved 25.03.1965

Table 2 Relevant site history

5. Policy

5.1. National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

5.2. Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 18 Stage Consultation - December 2025 to January 2026)

5.2.1. The Regulation 18 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan (the draft 'Joint Local Plan' (JLP)) represents the next stage of preparing a new joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge. Once it is adopted, it will become the statutory development plan for the Greater Cambridge area, replacing the current (adopted) Local Plans for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District.

5.2.2. Following endorsement by Joint Cabinet in November, the draft JLP will proceed to a formal public consultation (under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012). This is currently scheduled between 1 December 2025 and 30 January 2026.

5.2.3. In line with paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to several factors. The draft JLP is consistent with policies in the current NPPF but represents an earlier stage of the plan making process. Therefore, at this stage, the draft JLP and its policies can only be afforded limited weight as a material consideration in decision making.

5.3. Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment

5.4. Area Guidelines

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2015)

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y – Listed Building/ Affecting Conservation Area

Conservation Officer- Object

- 6.1. For the setting of the setts, railing and fountain group the context has been defined by raised curbs and a surrounding carriage way and the space enclosed by buildings set back on the pavement. The flush surface would result in the defining boundary features being lost to the detriment of the setting of Market Square as a Listed heritage asset. A proposed definition to the area of setts would need fully detailing. In addition, the loss of this definition would have some impact on the other listed buildings in the area.
- 6.2. The indicated layout of the setts as shown on the plans received on 09 March 2026 is more satisfactory. The plan also shows that the existing concrete slab is to receive a finish off setts over which would match the wider surface.
- 6.3. The appearance of the re-laid surface would be crucial. The submitted Setts Sample Report of a trial area on Peas Hill was useful, however, the laid appearance was not satisfactory. A further trial is intended to be carried out. Given the setts are fundamental to the listed area, this is an equally fundamental factor and ought not to be left to a condition.
- 6.4. The loss of one set of the railings would break up the relationship between the two sets.
- 6.5. The drawings now indicate the works to the fountain in its existing truncated state and it would be repaired according with the structural assessment. For clarity this does not include restoration to its original or working form.
- 6.6. The introduction of permanent stalls shows a pedestal in a pile foundation which needs to be designed to be detachable.
- 6.7. The character of Peas Hill would be harmed due to the featureless floorscape dominated by provision for car and lorry movements.

- 6.8. The Wheeler Street surfacing would be a great improvement to the existing situation.
- 6.9. Not yet seen the installed trial anchors for the removable stalls.
- 6.10. In summary the proposals would result in a high level of 'less than substantial harm' to the listed items. There would be additional 'less than substantial harm' to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.11. If minded to approve please add conditions relating to:
- Methodology for works to setts;
 - Sample panel of setts to be approved;
 - Matching additional setts to be agreed;
 - The setts shall continue under the fixed stalls;
 - Agreement to the re-use of the railings;
 - Mechanism for removal of the fixed stalls;
 - Lighting details to be agreed;

Historic England- Object

- 6.12. Historic England support the principles of enhancing and broadening the way Market Square is used to encompass a greater array of civic and communal uses; the reorientation away from vehicular traffic and the ambitions to enhance the quality of the urban realm by providing a more accessible space, declutter and rationalise services.
- 6.13. However, the trials of the setts have not conclusively demonstrated to what extent the harm arising from the loss of fabric to the listed setts would effectively contribute to the enhanced accessibility. It also remains unclear as to whether the proposed approach of bringing the mortar flush represents the least harmful alternative.
- 6.14. Following amendments there are a number of outstanding matters to aspects of design such as form and layout, the re-use of the handrails or the treatment of concrete slabs.
- 6.15. Consider the reinstatement of the fountain as a water feature is an important heritage benefit that would be difficult to achieve if not delivered as part of these interventions.
- 6.16. These matters go to the heart of the scheme and so consider they cannot be dealt with by way of condition.

- 6.17. Further information regarding the lighting is required.
- 6.18. Do not support the proposals to gate off areas of the market. This represents clear harm to the significance of the listed asset and to the wider conservation area.
- 6.19. The removal of concrete surfacing and the reinstatement of setts is welcome.
- 6.20. Whilst accept the benefits of fixed market stalls, there is a preference for a well managed temporary stall system.
- 6.21. Remain the view that further detail and refinements and a robust justification are necessary pre-determination before the Planning Authority could be in a position to carry their weighing and balancing exercise. Feel that these matters could be worked out but more time needs to be given to these applications before they can be determined.
- 6.22. Historic England are not able to support this scheme at present.

7. Third party representations

- 7.1. 10 representations in objection have been received.
- 7.2. Those in objection have raised the following issues:
- Character, appearance and scale
 - Important sight lines would be blocked by the kiosks
 - Kiosks look like beach huts
 - Erosion of a local market
 - Kiosks conflicts with the historical and cultural development of the stalls
 - Kiosks out of character for heritage settings
 - Flexible space would impact the character and heritage;
 - Vandalism to the heritage
 - Parking/Transport provision
 - Loss of cycle parking
 - Lack of public transport
 - Poor public consultation
 - Traders were not listened too
 - Separate consultations for traders and public
 - Impact on Traders
 - Lack of temporary market information;

- Loss of trading time for the works;
- Lack of information on demountable stalls;
- Demountable stalls are inadequate;
- Fixed stalls not workable for existing traders;
- Issues with tourists

7.3. The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations are available on the Council's website.

8. Member Representations

8.1. None received.

9. Local Groups / Petition

9.1. None received

10. Heritage assets

10.1. The Market Square listing includes the setts and the two sets of iron railings, in addition, the fountain in the centre has a separate grade II listing.

10.2. The proposal involves the lifting and relaying of the listed setts to improve the level of the surfacing. One set of the rails would be removed and re-used in an undetermined location. The fountain would be repaired from its current standard but the proposals do not involve the re-introduction of it as a water feature.

10.3. The market area is amongst the heritage features of the highest significance in Cambridge and it is considered the most important civic space within the city. The market place, which was developed in the 1850s, has comprised an open space with removable stalls. Market Square was listed as a Grade II structure in 2019. The surface features a combination of square and rectangular setts that do not seem to respond to any particular design pattern but rather would appear to relate to different phases of repair. The trapezoidal shape is broken down in three main longitudinal sections forming hips valleys and drainage points in a roof like manner. It is unclear whether this is the original layout,

- 10.4. The railings, which are a later addition, are also included in the listing and alongside the fountain form a significant ensemble of historic street furniture.
- 10.5. The fountain was listed at grade II in 1972. It was erected in 1856 and replaced the Hobson Conduit. Originally it featured a prominent canopy which was removed in 1953 due to safety concerns. Its central position, aligned with the chancel of St Mary the Great reinforces the idea of a central point in the city.
- 10.6. Despite their historic significance the condition of the setts on Market Square is currently poor having lacked repairs over the years. The setts are uneven and slippery when wet causing inaccessibility to the market place for those with mobility impairments. There are areas which have been patched with concrete resulting in an uneven appearance across the square.

Setts

- 10.7. The lifting, treatment and re-laying of setts would result in harm to this heritage asset by way of the physical works that would need to be done to them. Despite a request for trials of how to re-lay the setts coming forward from applicants in the pre-application discussions, trials were only in place on Monday 02 March 2026 for Conservation and Historic England Officers to review. These were conducted on a section of setts within Peas Hill (adjacent to the Giggling Squid) which do not form part of the listing.
- 10.8. Whilst the trials were useful to a degree, the laid appearance was not a wholly satisfactory outcome. It was considered that they were laid out too far apart and the mortar was too dark resulting in an appearance that is dominated by mortar distracting from the heritage asset. The applicants were in agreement with this assessment and at the time of writing, they are planning to have an additional larger trial installed by the time of the member site visit on 23 March 2026. The impact of the larger trial will be reported to members orally on the day of the committee. It is noted that the original trials were laid using a cement mortar and it is anticipated that this would be improved with the use of lime mortar.
- 10.9. Historic England have stated that due to the condition of the trials, it was not possible to form a conclusion on the level of harm caused by these works. The Council's Conservation Officer has concluded that the works would have a high level of 'less than substantial harm' and this could be mitigated by way of them being laid in an agreeable layout with suitable mortar. However, they are of the opinion that certainty of the mitigation

needs to be clearer and consider that it should not be left to a condition. The Conservation Officer has confirmed that the proposed layout of the setts in terms of the laying patterns is satisfactory.

- 10.10. These comments are acknowledged. However, officers consider that the trials have demonstrated that the setts can be safely lifted, treated and re-laid whilst largely retaining the historic appearance of the individual setts. It is accepted across the round that works are required to the setts for safety reasons and as such to require even further trials to continue prior to determination would be considered onerous and officers are confident an acceptable layout and mortar can be found.
- 10.11. As such, it is recommended that conditions be added ensuring that the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Historic England approve the final details of the re-laying of the setts.
- 10.12. Subsequently, without agreeable samples at this stage of the application process the level of harm to be afforded to this element within the planning balance would be a high level of 'less than substantial' harm.
- 10.13. The applicant proposes to add setts to where there are currently concrete slabs such as above the basement toilets. It is considered that this would be an enhancement to the current situation and have a positive impact on the heritage assets as it would improve the consistency and legibility of the square's treatment.
- 10.14. The installation of the fixed stalls would also directly impact the listed setts. The fixed stalls would cover the setts and remove views of them currently afforded by the open nature of the existing stalls. However, the level of impact created by this is limited. The fixed stalls would be sited on a pedestal with a screw pile foundation. This design would result in an appearance of the structures floating slightly above the setts. It is important that this is designed to be detachable to mitigate the harm as it would be considered reversible. The final details of the how the fixed stalls would attach to the setts can be dealt with by way of condition. Subject to conditions, the fixing of the stalls to the setts has a neutral impact.
- 10.15. The demountable stalls would require anchors in order for them to be safe in incremental weather. This is proposed to be achieved by the installation of ground anchors fitted into the surface of the square. Whilst trials with above ground anchors have taken place, this has not been conducted for inground trials. A methodology has been submitted highlighting how any removed setts would be retained and replaced following the trials. It is considered that as the concrete footings required would be covered by setts

and size of the anchors would not be too disruptive to the setts. This approach is acceptable. Full details of the anchors can be covered by way of condition.

- 10.16. Trees would be added to Market Square surface. Details of the tree pits have been submitted. Neither the Conservation Officer nor Historic England have raised any concerns with this. It is considered that the proposed trees would have a neutral impact on the listed setts.
- 10.17. Further information is required regarding the amount and location of lighting. This can be dealt with by way of condition.

Railings

- 10.18. One set of the listed railings would be removed from the square. The applicants state that these would be stored or sensitively re-used within the new arrangement. The loss of the set of railings would result in harm to the significance of the listed structure as it would break up the relationship between the two sets. However, due to the current layout, with the clutter of the existing stalls, bins and external containers in this area the listing railings are rarely seen together as a pair. The Conservation Officer has requested a condition requesting details of how they would be re-used and if they are successfully re-used elsewhere in the area this would mitigate the harm to some degree. As such, officers consider the harm created by the loss of the railings to be a low level of 'less than substantial harm'

Fountain

- 10.19. The application seeks to repair the fountain. The repairs are based on the submitted structural report. The repairs include repairs to the subterranean brickwork chamber the details of which will be confirmed once they are visible. Existing loose granite is to be re-bedded in traditional lime mortar, lost granite would be replaced with new granite indent and repointing would occur with lime mortar where needed. Neither the Conservation Officer nor Historic England raised any concerns with these works. However, Historic England have raised their disappointment with the lack of the reinstatement of the functionality of the fountain as a water feature. Officers are in agreement that bringing the fountain back as a water feature would result in an important heritage benefit, however, officers need to consider the application put forward. Subsequently, without this identified benefit, it is considered that the works to the fountain would have a neutral impact on the significance of the heritage asset.

Summary

- 10.20. NPPF paragraph 213 states that any harm to the significance of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 219 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for development within the setting of heritage asset to enhance or better reveal their significance and proposals that better reveal its significance should be treated favourably.
- 10.21. Paragraph 215 states that where a development would lead to less than substantial harm, this should be weighed against the public benefits.
- 10.22. Section 16 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 mandates that local planning authorities must have special regard to preserving the building, its setting, and its historic/architectural features when deciding to grant or refuse listed building consent.
- 10.23. As explained above, parts of the proposal would result in harm to the heritage assets. It is important to understand the overall impact of the works on the Listed Buildings to consider whether paragraph 215 is triggered. Below are tables of the summary of direct impacts from the main elements of the works on the listed structures.

Proposal	Direct Impact on Listed Structures
Relaying of Setts	High level of 'less than substantial harm'
Replacement of concrete slabs with setts	Positive
Installation of fixed stalls	Subject to condition - Neutral
Demountable stalls anchors	Neutral
Installation of trees	Neutral
Removal of one set of railings	Subject to condition – low level of 'less than substantial harm'
Repairing Fountain	Neutral
Net Heritage impact	High level of 'less than substantial harm'

Table 3 Summary of direct impact on the listed structures in Market Square

- 10.24. Paragraph 213 of the NPPF states that any harm to the significance of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

- 10.25. Officers acknowledge the work needed to the setts is required to significantly improve the accessibility of the market in terms of levels and slip resistance. Historic England have argued that the preferred option of cutting the top off the setts has not been fully justified, nor the use of flush mortar. However, there is a high footfall within Market Square and it is considered that the space needs to be fully accessible and be safe to walk on in wet weather. The cutting of the setts would significantly improve the grip of the setts.
- 10.26. The demountable stalls are required to be anchored to ensure that they can be used year-round.
- 10.27. The railings protect the two stairways into the basement. Following development, the basement would be opened and so only one entrance staircase is required. The second set of railings would no longer have a useful purpose and would act as an unnecessary obstruction.
- 10.28. Subsequently officers consider that the harm has been justified in accordance with Paragraph 213 of the NPPF.
- 10.29. As 'less than substantial harm' has been identified, paragraph 215 of the NPPF is therefore engaged and the harm needs to be considered against the public benefits of the scheme.
- 10.30. The proposed works are considered to significantly improve the accessibility of the Civic Quarter. The relaying and treatment of the setts would allow for safer conditions and make it possible for those with mobility impairments or those in wheelchairs to easily access the market stalls and move across the space. In conjunction with the flush surface it allows for improved access across the whole Civic Quarter as well as the market place. Due to historic nature of Cambridge, there are few spaces within the historic core for those in wheelchairs to easily move around safely and independently. The development would be an important step in improving accessibility within the city centre. Significant weight should be attached to this benefit.
- 10.31. The relaying of the setts would allow for the removal of the patches of concrete slabs. This would improve the consistency and legibility for the square's treatment and improve its appearance. Significant weight is attached to this benefit.
- 10.32. The works would result in additional greenery in a part of the city centre which is currently lacking in soft landscaping. This in turn would improve biodiversity within the area. Due to the constraints of the site the level of

new landscaping is somewhat limited and as such moderate weight should be attached to this benefit.

10.33. The rationalising of services such as trader’s bins being placed underground would result in a less cluttered public realm making for an improved environment for the users of the space. In addition, the new paving would improve some areas of existing paving that is currently poor. Moderate weight should be given to this benefit.

10.34. Officers consider that these benefits outweigh the identified harm. It is considered that the proposal is compliant with the provisions of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990, the NPPF and policy 61 of the Local Plan.

11. Third party representations

11.1. The remaining third-party representations not addressed in the preceding paragraphs are summarised and responded to in the table below:

Third party comment	Officer response
Poor Consultation	<p>Many third-party comments have raised that there has been poor public consultation with the traders and public. This is in regard to pre-application consultation by the applicant rather than the statutory consultation carried out by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Sections 3.1 and 3.6 of the Design and Access Statement outlines the public and trader engagement respectively that the applicant completed.</p> <p>Whilst robust public engagement is encouraged within the planning process, it is not a reason to refuse a planning application</p>
Comments regarding any elements not directly related to the listed structures	<p>Many comments relate to elements of the scheme which have been considered under 25/04382/FUL which is the linked full planning application for the scheme. This listed building consent only deals with matters relating to elements directly affecting the listed structures.</p>

Table 3 Officer response to third party representations

12. Planning balance

- 12.1. Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 12.2. Summary of harm
- 12.3. Harm has been identified in relation to the heritage assets. The level of harm varies between each of the heritage assets, however, due to the lack of successful trials of setts at this to demonstrate exactly how much harm can be mitigated, officers have no choice to attach a high level of 'less than substantial harm' to the listed surface within Market Square. The harm has been summarised within table 4 of the report. Officers consider this should be given significant weight in the planning balance.
- 12.4. Summary of benefits
- 12.5. The proposed works are considered to significantly improve the accessibility of the Civic Quarter, particularly for users with mobility impairments. The re-laying and treatment of the setts would allow for a more level, safer surface for the market area which benefits from a high footfall. Due to the historic nature of Cambridge city centre there are large areas that are difficult to traverse for those with mobility disabilities, and the development would introduce an inclusive space in a central location. It is considered that this should be given significant weight.
- 12.6. The consistent paving across the space along with the removal of the concrete slabs on the listed surface of Market Square would allow for an increased legibility of the area. These visual improvements are considered to have significant weight.
- 12.7. Subject to sufficient management, the use of demountable stalls within the southern half of Market Square would result in a more flexible and open space which is beneficial to the designated public open space. As, the northern half of the site would contain more permanent fixed stalls, it is considered that this should be given moderate weight.
- 12.8. Taking all of the above into account, officers conclude that the development, on balance is acceptable. Officers iterate that this conclusion is finely balance and is reliant on further details which can be secured by conditions.

- 12.9. Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, the statutory requirements of section 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for **approval**.

13. Recommendation

- 13.1. **Approve** subject to:

-The planning conditions as set out below with minor amendments to the conditions as drafted delegated to officers.

14. Planning conditions

1. The works hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as listed on this decision notice.

Reason: In the interests of good planning, for the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 19 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

3. Prior to the removal of any of the setts within Market Square, a methodology for the works to the historic setts shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The methodology shall include details of how the setts shall be lifted, carefully stored, treated and re-laid. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure appropriate treatment methods are used and to ensure that the setts will not be unduly damaged to ensure important features of the listed structure are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

4. Prior to the removal of any of the setts within Market Square, a sample panel of reused setts, mortar mix and joint widths (including as a guide, 12 lines of setts per linear meter, joint widths of 10-20mm, in a lime based mortar recessed from the sett tops) to be approved by the Local Planning Authority and retained in-situ as a reference area. The re-laying works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved sample.

Reason: to ensure important features of the listed surface are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

5. Any additional setts which may be needed to make up shortfalls in the surface shall be agreed to in writing with the Conservation Officer. No additional setts shall be used without this prior agreement.

Reason: to ensure important features of the listed surface are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

6. Prior to the installation of any fixed stalls, the final details of the mechanism for the foundations shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The pedestal interface with the Listed setts shall be designed to be detachable at surface level. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid permanent damage to the market surface should the stalls need to be renewed / altered in future in accordance with Policy 61 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

7. Prior to the installation of any in ground anchors for the demountable stalls, final details of the anchors shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure important features of the listed surface are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

8. The setts shall continue underneath any fixed market stall positions.

Reason: So that the original extents of the finish of the market square are retained in accordance with Policy 61 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.



25/04384/FUL – The Guildhall and Large Hall, Market Hill, Cambridge

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: Market

Proposal: Installation of roof plant and screen, refurbishment and enhancement of internal and external fabric including installation of PV panels, alterations to internal fabric, rooms and wall positions, and fourth floor and basement extensions of the Guildhall

Applicant: Cambridge City Council

Presenting officer: Charlotte Spencer

Reason presented to committee: Land within the ownership of the Council

Member site visit date: 23 March 2026

Key issues: 1. Principle of Development

2. Impact on Character and Appearance and Heritage Assets

3. Sustainability

4. Highway Safety and Parking

5. Residential Amenity

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

Report contents

Document section	Document heading
1	Executive summary
2	Site description and context
3	The proposal
4	Relevant site history
5	Policy
6	Consultations
7	Third party representations
8	Member representations
9	Local groups / petition
10	Assessment
11	Principle of development
12	Design, layout, scale and impact on heritage assets
13	Carbon reduction and sustainable design
14	Biodiversity
15	Water management and flood risk
16	Highway safety and transport
17	Car and cycle parking
18	Amenity
19	Third party representations
20	Other matters
21	Planning balance
22	Recommendation
23	Planning conditions

Table 1 Contents of report

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The application forms part of the wider Civic Quarter project which aims to reconnect the Guildhall, Market Square, Corn Exchange and surrounding public realm. The project aims to create an inclusive, attractive destination that enhances the civic heart of Cambridge. The applicants have engaged with the Local Planning Authority through numerous pre-applications under Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) starting in 2024 and leading up to the formal submission of the application.
- 1.2 The application aims to reinstate the Guildhall as the main civic and office space for Cambridge City Council whilst also future proofing the building in light of the Local Government Reform and proposed Unitary Authorities.

The proposals aim to make the Guildhall an exemplar of sustainability with a Net Zero aspiration; to provide sufficient modern office desk space; to ensure the core civic functions can be met; and aim to provide a range of commercial income generating uses.

- 1.3 The application seeks planning permission for installation of roof plant and screen, refurbishment and enhancement of internal and external fabric including installation of PV panels, and fourth floor and basement extensions of the Guildhall.
- 1.4 Additional information has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority during the course of the application. Amendments include: the removal of the ramp to the rear entrance, points of clarification added to the plans, alterations to the cycle access and End of Journey facilities and detailed responses to the consultees. Following the amendments, the scheme is broadly supported by consultee responses, however, there remains concern from Historic England in relation to the roof top plant and screening, particularly in regard to a lack of justification for the harm created by this element.
- 1.5 The proposal would not constitute a change of use and the redevelopment of the building is acceptable in principle.
- 1.6 The Guildhall comprises two Grade II Listed Buildings and it lies within the Historic Core Conservation Area, and within the setting of numerous listed buildings. It is considered that the proposal would have an acceptable level of impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, however, less than substantial harm to the heritage assets has been identified by reason of the proposed rooftop plant and screening. Notwithstanding, the Historic England objection, Officers consider that this harm has been sufficiently justified.
- 1.7 The proposal would result in public benefits. The development would follow EnerPhit principles and would aim to be a pilot project for UK Net Zero Carbon Standard which would result in a 65% reduction of energy use and an improvement to water efficiency aiming to reach 5Wat01 credits. The development would bring the building back into comprehensive use as Council offices and would result in improvements to the accessibility. It is considered that these benefits outweigh the identified harm.
- 1.8 It is considered that the development would have an acceptable impact on the local highway and would provide sufficient cycle parking spaces.

1.9 Due to the site's location in the city centre there are few neighbouring residential units. However, a Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted as part of the application and subject to conditions, the impact on residential amenity is considered to be acceptable.

1.10 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee **approve** the application subject to conditions as outlined at the end of this report.

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment	Paragraph Reference
Conservation Officer	No Objection	6.1
County Council - Active Travel	No objection	6.7
County Highways Development Management	No objection	6.9
Ecology Officer	No objection	6.13
Environmental Health	No objection	6.14
Historic England	Objection	6.15
Landscape Officer	No objection	6.21
Sustainable Drainage Officer	No objection	6.22
Sustainability Officer	No objection	6.23
Urban Design Officer	No objection	6.25
Waste Officer	No objection	6.29
Design Review Panel	Comments	6.31
Third Party Representations	5 representations have been received, 1 in support, 3 in objection and 1 raising neutral comments	7.1
Member Representations (1)		8.1

Local Interest Groups and Organisations / Petition (2)		9.1
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Table 2 Consultee summary

2. Site description and context

- 2.1 The application relates to the Guildhall which is a Grade II Listed Building located to the south of Market Hill. It is surrounded on all sides by public highways of Market Hill, Guildhall Street, Wheeler Street and Peas Hill to the north, east, south and west respectively. The current Listing description is from 1996 and joined with the Guildhall is the separately and earlier Grade II Listed Victorian former Public Library and Town/Assembly Hall ('the Large Hall').
- 2.2 The Guildhall is particularly significant as the civic building of the city and is one of the smaller number of Town Halls from the 1930s by architect Charles Cowles Voysey. Presently, the Chamber and Committee Rooms remain in Council use, the ground floor offices are in use by Allia Future Business Centre and the Large and Small Halls are used for events. The upper floor offices have mostly been vacated, however, are used by a small number of Council Staff. There is an existing Tourist Information Centre which is accessed from Peas Hill.
- 2.3 The site lies within the City Centre, Primary Shopping Area and the Historic Core Conservation Area. It lies within the setting of numerous listed buildings including the Grade II* Church of St Edward and the Grade I Church of St Mary the Great and No.5 Market Hill. The site lies within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and is not at risk of surface water flooding.

3. The proposal

- 3.1 The application is seeking planning permission for the installation of roof plant and screen, refurbishment and enhancement of internal and external fabric including installation of PV panels, alterations to internal fabric, rooms and wall positions, and fourth floor and basement extensions of the Guildhall
- 3.2 This application is for full planning permission and so only relates to the external alterations. There are numerous internal alterations proposed as part of the proposals, however, these would be considered in the listed

building application (25/04385/LBC). For clarification the works related to this application are as follows:

- Fourth floor extension on the western wing;
- Existing plant and telecoms equipment removed from roof and replaced with new rooftop plant and screening;
- Installation of solar PV panels on the large hall roof;
- Installation of roofs over each of the proposed atriums at third floor level;
- Small extension at basement level under Peas Hill for a substation;
- Insulation to sloped roofs and retiling;
- New rooflight to chamber

3.3 The application has been amended to address representations and further consultations have been carried out as appropriate. Amendments include, the removal of the ramp to the rear entrance, points of clarification added to the plans, alterations to the cycle access and End of Journey facilities and detailed responses to the consultees.

4. Relevant site history

Reference	Description	Outcome
25/04385/LBC	Installation of roof plant and screen, refurbishment and enhancement of internal and external fabric including installation of PV panels, alterations to internal fabric, rooms and wall positions, and fourth floor and basement extensions of the Guildhall	Under determination
21/00483/FUL and 21/00484/LBC	Installation of 6 No. antennas on 3 No. on new offset brackets & support poles installed on new climbable tripod support, mounted on new steel grillage frames, Installation of ancillary equipment - 5 No. RRU's to be installed on 2 No. sloping pole brackets, fixed to brace poles at each antenna location, Installation of radio equipment within existing equipment cabin, Existing 6 No. antennas to be removed and replaced with 6 No. antennas fixed to wall and braced back to upper roof level Existing and new ancillary	Permitted

	equipment to be installed on 5No. new MAFI freestanding frames.	
18/0422/FUL and 18/0423/LBC	Installation of solar PV and edge protection on the roof of the Guildhall.	Permitted
08/1258/FUL	Change of use of 74 sqm to cafe (A3) and change of use of 32sqm to shop (A1)	Permitted

Table 2 Relevant site history

- 4.1 The have been multiple alterations to the building, the majority of which are not listed here. The existing cafe and Tourist Information Centre on the Peas Hill Side were approved in 2008. The solar panels on the roof of the Guildhall were approved in 2018 and the most recent applications for the telecommunication equipment were approved in 2021.

5. Policy

5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) Cycle Infrastructure Design

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

EIA Directives and Regulations - European Union legislation with regard to environmental assessment and the UK's planning regime remains unchanged despite it leaving the European Union on 31 January 2020

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Environment Act 2021

ODPM Circular 06/2005 – Protected Species

Equalities Act 2010

5.2 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 18 Stage Consultation - December 2025 to January 2026)

- 5.2.1 The Regulation 18 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan (the draft 'Joint Local Plan' (JLP)) represents the next stage of preparing a new joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge. Once it is adopted, it will become the statutory development plan for the Greater Cambridge area, replacing the current (adopted) Local Plans for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District.
- 5.2.2 Following endorsement by Joint Cabinet in November, the draft JLP will proceed to a formal public consultation (under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012). This is currently scheduled between 1 December 2025 and 30 January 2026.
- 5.2.3 In line with paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to several factors. The draft JLP is consistent with policies in the current NPPF but represents an earlier stage of the plan making process. Therefore, at this stage, the draft JLP and its policies can only be afforded limited weight as a material consideration in decision making.

5.3 Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

- Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Policy 2: Spatial strategy for the location of employment development
- Policy 8: Setting of the city
- Policy 10: The City Centre
- Policy 11: Development in the City Centre Primary Shopping Area
- Policy 28: Carbon reduction, community energy networks, sustainable design and construction, and water use
- Policy 29: Renewable and low carbon energy generation
- Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle
- Policy 32: Flood risk
- Policy 35: Protection of human health from noise and vibration
- Policy 36: Air quality, odour and dust
- Policy 40: Development and expansion of business space
- Policy 41: Protection of business space
- Policy 55: Responding to context
- Policy 56: Creating successful places
- Policy 58: Altering and extending existing buildings
- Policy 59: Designing landscape and the public realm
- Policy 60: Tall buildings and the skyline in Cambridge
- Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment
- Policy 63: Works to a heritage asset to address climate change

Policy 70: Protection of priority species and habitats
Policy 73: Community, sports and leisure facilities
Policy 80: Supporting sustainable access to development
Policy 81: Mitigating the transport impact of development
Policy 82: Parking management
Policy 84: Telecommunications

5.4 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Biodiversity SPD – Adopted February 2022

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020

5.5 Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted November 2016

5.6 Other guidance

Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (2001).

Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010)

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste

5.7 Area Guidelines

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2015)

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y – Affects a Listed Building and Conservation Area

Conservation Officer- No Objection

6.1 Works for the atria would not be visible.

- 6.2 The louvred screen on the rooftop may affect the 'lightweight' appearance as seen within pre-application discussions, however, the current collection of antennae would be removed which is a benefit. Provided the height does not increase and the colour and materials are toned with the building, the impact on the listed building as seen within the conservation area would not be significantly adverse.
- 6.3 The form and scale of the fourth floor extension conforms to the established building form. The extension would be sympathetic and would not impact the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.4 Considered that the PV panels would maintain the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.5 No objection subject to a condition relating to the roof top plant.
- 6.6 *Officer comment: Members are reminded that these comments are applicable to the full element of the scheme only and any internal changes to the historic fabric would be dealt with under the listed building application.*

Cambridgeshire County Council - Active Travel – Object

- 6.7 Difficult access to the cycle parking which appears to require negotiating steps and multiple doors
- 6.8 Officer comment: The latest amendments have sought to address these concerns which are covered in the officer assessment. Any further comment from Active Travel will be reported on the amendment sheet or orally.

County Highways Development Management – No Objection

- 6.9 The Highway Authority welcomes the removal of the ramp to the rear entrance. It maintains the position that any door should be recessed so that they do not open outwards over the public highway.
- 6.10 Notwithstanding this, the Highway Act does allow a Public Building Exception and for public buildings this rule can be bypassed if the City Council and Highway Authority provide specific consent for the doors to open outwards.

- 6.11 Requests that any detailed/hard landscaping/paving that fall outside of the application site be specifically excluded from any permission that the planning authority is minded to grant as these works are subject to a separate planning application to which the Highway Authority has raised an objection to.
- 6.12 Requests conditions relating to construction vehicles time restriction, and the submission of a traffic management plan.

Ecology Officer - No Objection

- 6.13 No objection subject to conditions relating to ecological enhancement, lighting, green roofs and compliance with the submitted reports.

Environmental Health - No Objection

- 6.14 No objection subject to conditions relating to construction hours and deliveries, amplified music restrictions, compliance with the noise impact assessment, details of the plant.

Historic England - Object

- 6.15 Welcome the amended plans with the identification of key rooms and the approach to the treatment of different areas. Welcome the retention of the original furniture in some key rooms such as Committee Rooms and the Szeged Room. Happy that our queries have been addressed.
- 6.16 Comfortable with the fourth floor extension and could represent an acceptable addition to the building.
- 6.17 However, the bulk of the plant and screening would detract from the building's architectural composition and proportions resulting in harm to its architectural interest as the most important civic building. Remain unconvinced that a robust justification for the plant layout as consider that if it were to be spread across a wider area it would likely result on a less visually disruptive alternative. However, it is noted that this would result in the loss of the extension.
- 6.18 Could not support the relocation of Council Chamber seating in the Small and Large Halls as it would detract from the architectural character on these rooms. However, no concerns with the relocation to the Police Court or 'Heart Space'.

- 6.19 In regards to the Strong Room there are concerns with the differential treatment proposed on this room, with a stark division across separating meeting rooms and spaces associated with the Wellness Space would strongly affect its legibility eroding the overall plan form. It is not clear why the nature of the split between Council staff and commercial area needs to be in this particular form.
- 6.20 In conclusion, broadly support the principles and ambitions behind the scheme and much of what is proposed. However, remain unconvinced and unable to support the proposed roof plant and strong room arrangement.

Landscape Officer - No Objection

- 6.21 No material considerations

Sustainable Drainage Officer - No Objection

- 6.22 Supported

Sustainability Officer - No Objection

- 6.23 The EnerPhit principles, the aim to be a pilot project for UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard and the proposed measures to improve sustainability are welcome. The scheme is targeting 5 Wat01 credits. No objection subject to conditions relating to the implementation of Sustainability and Energy Strategies, Water Calculator, Rainwater Harvesting and water metering.
- 6.24 The proposed amendments do not materially alter the sustainability aspirations of the proposals.

Urban Design Officer - No Objection

- 6.25 The proposed extension is considered acceptable. It has been clarified that the PV panels on the roof of the extension would not be visible above the 0.3 metre high parapet and so would not have visual impact from street level or local viewpoints. Amended information does clarify concern regarding safety barriers, a wire based safety restraint system would provide the most visually unobtrusive solution to working at height. Details of the PV panels, support frames and safety restraint system can be covered by way of condition.
- 6.26 Proposed screen to the plant is acceptable as it would read as a subordinate and recessive element that does not detract from the building's architectural presence.

- 6.27 The revisions made to the cycle parking access and reconfiguration of the changing rooms improve their overall usability and are acceptable.
- 6.28 Welcome the removal of the Council Chamber furniture from the first floor landing as it would allow to be used more flexibly.
- 6.29 Raised concerns that the office spaces are undersized, however understands that it will be for future occupiers to configure rooms to meet accommodation needs.

Waste Officer – No Objection

- 6.30 The refuse strategy is as existing and so is acceptable. The bins must be presented at the designated collection point on Parsons Court and this must be formally incorporated into the building's management strategy.

Design Review Panel Meeting of 26 June 2025 (Appendix A of application 25/04382/FUL for full comments)

- 6.31 The whole of the Civic Quarter redevelopment scheme went to the Design Review Panel (DRP) in June 2025. In regards to the Guildhall the DRP agreed that the inclusive vision is welcome. Everyone should be able to access the toilets at the Guildhall and this needs to be carefully thought through.
- 6.32 The sustainability specialist was pleased for the proposals for the Guildhall. However, queries were raised about visual and noise impact from the enclosed air source heat pumps.
- 6.33 The character specialist was generally supportive of the scheme. However, they queried whether the Guildhall entrance be opened up more as the space feels closed off and there were concerns about the design and extent of the plant screening.
- 6.34 The panel was concerned about the loss of the Council Chamber use including its furniture. The works to the chamber would seem to lose some of the building's civic value and its meaning as a focus of democracy.

7. Third party representations

- 7.1 5 representations have been received, 1 in support and 3 in objection and 1 raising neutral comments.

- 7.2 Those in objection have raised the following issues:
- Character, appearance and scale
 - Plant screen
 - Seems to ignore Policy 60 (Tall buildings)
 - Does not enhance the character of the city
 - Heritage impacts
 - Raked seating is very important and redesigning chamber floor is unnecessary expense
 - Construction impacts
 - Concern about the closure during the works and impact on city centre
 - Accessibility
 - Guildhall is considered an impenetrable hard to access building and design does not alter this
 - Loss of Tourist Information Centre
 - Removing it is contrary to Policy 8 (Services and Local Facilities) as it is contrary to the intent to safeguard and enhance a broad range of services
 - Contrary to Policy 7 (River Cam) as allows for accurate information and wayfinding for river related visitor attractions
 - Poor public consultation

7.3 Those in support have given the following reasons:

- Support redevelopment of the Guildhall

7.4 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations are available on the Council's website.

8. Member Representations

8.1 None received.

9. Local Groups / Petition

9.1 Cambridge Past, Present and Future (CPPF) has made a representation objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- Support the revitalisation of the Civic Quarter but have concerns over some of the design and functional elements of the Guildhall;
- Lack of room by room assessments nor reference to the 2003 Conservation Plan;
- Concern regarding the visual impact of the plant screen as it will be seen in shadow views from the Market Square;

- Screen is a heavy discordant volume that disrupts the buildings original silhouette and balanced geometry;
- Concern that the application fails to revitalise the buildings historic civic role notably by not realising the full potential of the Large and Small Halls and omission of welcoming accessible entrance;
- Loss of tourist centre from the Guildhall;
- Heart space layout appears formal and inflexible;

9.2 The Tourist Information Centre has made a representation objecting to the application, in addition to providing separate third party comments, which are summarised below:

- Contrary to the loss of ground floor premises into offices;
- Loss of Orelene's Café;
- When the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) closed in 2020 it was apparent that the city was not providing the best possible visitor engagement and resulting in unmanaged overspill of tourists asking questions in shops;
- Reopened in 2023 and has become a valuable asset;
- Data shows 172 people per day use the TIC

9.3 As part of the objection document, the TIC have provided a petition with 89 separate responses listed. The petition objects to the loss of the Tourist Information Centre.

9.4 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations are available on the Council's website.

10. Assessment

10.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from an inspection of the site and the surroundings, the key issues are:

- Principle of development
- Design, layout, scale and impact on heritage assets
- Heritage assets
- Carbon reduction and sustainable design
- Biodiversity
- Water management and flood risk
- Highway safety and transport impacts
- Car and cycle parking
- Amenity
- Third party representations
- Other matters

- Planning balance
- Recommendation
- Planning conditions

11. Principle of Development

- 11.1 The existing building comprises Council office space, Council rooms, commercial office space (Allia Future Business Centre), event space in the form of the Large and Small Halls, a Tourist Information and café. As of September 2020 all of these elements fall under Use Class E (Commercial Business or Service)
- 11.2 The uses following development would largely remain as existing with exception to the loss of the café and Tourist Information Centre and introduction of a 'wellness space' within the basement. This space has been explained within the Planning Statement as 'currently undefined and will be subject to agreement with future occupiers, but could include a gym or spa for use of the commercial tenants. It is not assumed to be open to the public and would be considered ancillary to the offices.' On this basis, the applicants are seeking that this area be considered as Use Class E. However, the applicants are advised that as soon as it is determined how the space will be used they should speak to the Local Planning Authority to consider whether a change of use application should be sought. They are also advised to ensure that they make clear to any future tenants.
- 11.3 Subsequently, following development the building would remain as Class E and the application does not seek consent for any material change of use
- 11.4 Third party objections have been received in relation to the loss of the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) and these are noted. The objections refer to policies 7, 8 and 11. Policy 7 refers only to development proposals along the River Cam corridor, which this site does not lie within. In regards to Policy 8, it is believed that the third party incorrectly refers to Policy 8 which is 'Setting of the city' and instead should have referred to Section 8 which includes a number of policies on 'Services and Local Facilities'. Officers cannot find any relevant policy within Section 8 that would need to be addressed.
- 11.5 As explained above, the proposal would not represent a material change of use in planning terms and so Policy 11 is not triggered. It is also noted that since the adoption of the Local Plan in 2018, the Planning Use Classes have changed and many of the acceptable city centre uses now fall under the same use class. Both the existing TIC and the proposed office meeting

room to replace the TIC fall under Class E and so planning permission is not required for this use change. Regardless of the outcome of this application, the tenants of the unit can be altered within Use Class E without permission from with the Local Planning Authority.

- 11.6 Subsequently, whilst the concerns regarding the loss of the TIC are noted, its loss is considered to be a commercial decision rather than a material planning consideration. As such, it is not for the Local Planning Authority to arbitrate.
- 11.7 The principle of uses is not under consideration as part of the proposed scheme. The main issues are whether the physical works to the building which require express planning permission are acceptable. These works are the subject of the officer assessment for planning permission below.

12. Design, layout, scale and impact on heritage assets

- 12.1 The proposal is seeking planning permission for the installation of roof plant and screen, refurbishment and enhancement of internal and external fabric including installation of PV panels, alterations to internal fabric, rooms and wall positions, and fourth floor and basement extensions of the Guildhall.
- 12.2 Policies 55, 56, 58 and 59 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) seek to ensure that development responds appropriately to its context, is of a high quality, reflects or successfully contrasts with existing building forms and materials.
- 12.3 The site comprises two Grade II listed buildings the Guildhall and the Victorian former Public Library and Town/Assembly Hall and it lies within the Historic Core Conservation Area.
- 12.4 Section 66 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 12.5 Section 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
- 12.6 Para. 212 of the NPPF set out that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset,

great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'. Para. 213 states that 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Para.215 states 'where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use'.

12.7 Policy 61 aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.

12.8 The application is for full planning permission and so only relates to the external alterations. There are numerous internal alterations proposed as part of the proposed scheme, however, these will be considered in more detail within the consideration of the listed building application. For clarification the works related to this application are as follows:

- Fourth floor extension on the western wing;
- Existing plant and telecoms equipment removed from roof and replaced with new plant and plant screen;
- Installation of solar PV panels on the large hall roof;
- Installation of roofs over each of the proposed atriums at third floor level
- Small extension at basement level under Peas Hill for a substation;

Fourth Floor Extension

12.9 A fourth floor extension is proposed to the rear of the western wing of the Guildhall. It would span for a maximum depth of 30 metres and would have a width of 7.6 metres. It would be set in from the west and northern existing elevations by 1.4 metres. It would have a height of 4.2 metres which would measure 21 metres above ground level. The form of the extension would follow the existing built form of this wing including a curved wall in the south western corner. It would clad in bronzed aluminium cladding.

12.10 It is considered that the extension is well judged in scale and massing with the set back allowing it to sit comfortably within the established roofline and wider townscape. The use of materials would provide a high-quality contemporary material that works well with the tones of the materials on the existing building reading as a well-proportioned and refined addition. The

DRP considered this element to a logical and positive step. The roof would be biodiverse and so would be compliant with Policy 31 of the Local Plan.

- 12.11 Solar panels would be installed on the roof of the extension. It is understood that the panels would not be visible above the 0.3 metre high parapet and so these would not have a visual impact from street level of local viewpoints. A condition can be added to secure the final details of these panels to ensure they would not be visible.
- 12.12 In terms of impact on the heritage assets, the extension is located in a part of the building that was originally intended to be built out, however, this was never constructed, with exception to the stairway up to it. In addition, it is noted it would replace an existing array of service equipment. Historic England and the Council's Conservation Officer consider that the extension would be sympathetic to the listed building and would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Roof Plant and Screen

- 12.13 The rooftop plant would be located on the front part of the existing main roof replacing the existing solar panels and telecoms equipment. The screening would run along the edge of the building facing Market Hill, Peas Hill and Guildhall Street and partially along south facing area of the plant. It would be set back from the inside edge of the parapet by 0.7 metres. The screen would have a maximum height of 2.4 metres projecting 2 metres above the existing parapet. It would result in a maximum height of 23.2 metres above ground level. The screen would be an anodised aluminium and louvred.
- 12.14 The proposed plant would replace existing antenna and associated telecoms equipment. The existing equipment is considered to have a detrimental impact on the building and the heritage assets. As such, it is considered that the removal of the existing equipment would have a positive impact.
- 12.15 It is considered that the proposed screen would read as a subordinate and recessive element. The use of bronze coloured cladding would match that of the extension and is considered to be sympathetic to the existing building. Whilst the solid board located behind the louvre may affect the screen's light weight appearance, the profiles and other detailing would allow the screen to blend into the roofscape rather than appear dominant and bulky.

- 12.16 In terms of heritage impact, both Historic England and the DRP raised concerns with this element regarding the impact on the appreciation of the building, particularly facing Market Square affecting the building's proportions and detracting from key views concluding that it would introduce considerable levels of harm to the listed building and conservation area. This advice is contrary to the Council's Conservation Officer, who has considered that there would be some impact particularly with the level of 'light weightiness' to the screening, however, they considered that the removal of the existing array of antenna would balance out the impact of the new screen. The net impact on the heritage assets is considered below.
- 12.17 Discussions have been held with the applicant's design team and officers of the Local Planning Authority prior to the submission of the proposal and officers consider that the final proposed scheme successfully balances the requirements of the screening, including noise insulation and ventilation and its visual impact. It is considered that it has been well designed to follow the appearance and form of the existing building. Notwithstanding this, officers accept there will be a harmful impact, particularly to the front elevation, which is afforded longer views from across Market Square. The harm would be of a medium level of 'less than substantial harm' to the Listed Building and setting of the Conservation Area. The harm could be partly mitigated by the final design of the louvre which can be secured by way of condition.
- 12.18 A third-party objector has raised an issue that the proposed plant screen does not comply with Policy 60 of the local plan. Policy 60 relates to tall buildings and states that any proposal for a structure that breaks the existing skyline and/or is significantly taller than the surrounding building form will be considered against a number of criteria. Appendix F goes on to define the skyline of the historic core and any proposals of six or more storeys (excluding roof top plant) and a height of 19 metres above ground level would automatically trigger the need to address the criteria, however dependent on the exact location within the historic core, buildings of four to six storeys may need to be evaluated. Whilst the total height of the Guildhall following development would be over 19 metres, the building is only 5 storeys in height and whilst this would be increased, the additional height above the parapet would be limited to 2 metres, and it would be only marginally taller than the existing roof line of the large hall. In addition, the Guildhall is surrounded by tall buildings ranging from 4 to 5 storeys and as such, Officers do not consider that the Guildhall would be significantly taller than the existing built form and Policy 60 is not engaged.

Solar Panels to Large Hall Roof

- 12.19 The scheme proposes solar panels to the roof of the large hall. These would be located on the eastern, northern and western roof slopes, however, none would be located on the curved section to the south. The panels would be fixed to a raised mounting frame which would sit slightly above the roof slopes.
- 12.20 The northern and eastern facing panels would not be visible from the public realm immediately around the site, however, the western facing panels would be visible from longer views along Bene't Street. This western slope would not be seen against other key buildings and solar panels are becoming more common in the city centre including on listed buildings. As such, it is considered that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be maintained.
- 12.21 In terms of the significance of the listed building, the placing of PV panels on the prominent curved roof slope to the south would be avoided and this is welcomed. The use of a mounting frame would minimise the unnecessary loss of historic roof slates and allows for the work to have a level of 'reversibility'. Subsequently, it is considered that the proposal would have a neutral impact on the significance of the building.

Other external elements

- 12.22 The other elements such as the roofing to the atria and small basement extension would not be visible from the public realm. It is considered that these are minor alterations with limited impact. As such, it is considered that they would not have an adverse impact on the existing building and surrounding area and would not have an adverse impact on the significance of the heritage assets.
- 12.23 The roofs of the small and large halls, the chamber and the Police/Sessions court would be insulated. This would involve the lifting of the existing tiles and the relaying of the tiles once insulated. It is considered that this would have a limited visual impact. New roof lights would be added to the chamber and courts in the same position as the existing. It is considered that these are minor alterations with limited impact.
- 12.24 The DRP and a third-party objector raised that spaces within the Guildhall feel closed off and impenetrable, suggesting that Guildhall entrance could be opened up more to Market Square to improve permeability between the spaces. These comments are noted, however, officers have to review the scheme that has been put forward within an application. Notwithstanding this, the building is highly constrained and is a listed building so any

additional openings to the front façade of the building could have a detrimental impact on the heritage asset.

Summary

12.25 Overall, the proposed development is a high-quality design that would contribute positively to its surroundings. The proposal is compliant with policies of the Local Plan policies 55,56,58 and 59 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

12.26 In terms of the impact on the heritage assets, the below table summarises the impact on the Listed Building and Conservation Area.

Proposal	Impact on Conservation Area	Impact on Listed Building
Fourth Floor Extension	Neutral	Neutral
Plant and Screen	Medium level of 'less than substantial harm'	Medium level of 'less than substantial harm'
Removal of telecoms	Positive	Positive
PV Panels	Neutral	Neutral
Atria roofs	Neutral	Neutral
Basement extension	Neutral	Neutral
Re-roofing of small/large halls	Neutral	Neutral
<i>Net Heritage impact</i>	<i>Low – medium level of less than substantial harm</i>	<i>Low – medium level of less than substantial harm</i>

Table 3 Summary of heritage impact

12.27 Subsequently, the proposals would result in less than substantial harm to both the Conservation Area and Listed Building. The identified harm is created by the proposed plant and screening on the roof. This has been

adequately justified, primarily on the basis that, as a result of the works, the sustainability of the building would be significantly improved.

- 12.28 As per paragraph 213 of the NPPF, any harm to a designated heritage assets should require clear and convincing justification.
- 12.29 In regard to the roof plant and screening, Historic England have stated that the bulk and layout of the plant has not been sufficiently justified as they consider that the plant could be spread over a large area reducing the harm. The plant is required to reduce the energy use of the building. It has been laid out over the existing flat roof space and under the current proposals there is no further adequate roof space available and in order to spread the plant out further the extension would need to be removed. The extension is proposed to increase the lettable area of the Guildhall and as explained above, would complete the believed, unbuilt element of the original building. The applicant has stated within the planning statement that the extension would bring in an estimated £103,100 in rent per annum as per table 3 within the Planning Statement. If this was not included it would result in the reduction of a potential surplus revenue by 20% which in turn would have a negative impact on the cashflow to support the front line services and make improvements to the existing building. If the plant was to be spread to a wider roof area, this would not negate the need for screening and may result in additional screening on areas of the roof where there is currently non proposed. As such, officers consider that the plant and screening has been adequately justified.
- 12.30 As less than substantial harm has been identified, paragraph 215 of the NPPF is therefore engaged and the harm needs to be considered against the public benefits of the scheme.
- 12.31 The scheme would result in a 65% reduction in energy use reducing its carbon footprint, more details of this are explained in the section below. This is considered to be a significant environmental public benefit. The works would also improve accessibility to the building and would create more public spaces internally. The fourth floor extension would bring in an additional revenue stream for the Council, however, this is a private benefit and so would carry no weight in this instance.
- 12.32 Officers consider that these benefits outweigh the identified heritage harm.
- 12.33 The site lies within the setting of numerous listed buildings including the Grade II* Church of St Edward, King and Martyr located on Peas Hill opposite the Guildhall. It is considered that the proposals would not have an undue impact on the setting of the nearby listed buildings.

12.34 The proposal is compliant with Policy 61 of the Local Plan and the provisions of the NPPF.

13. Carbon reduction and sustainable design

13.1 The application is supported by a Sustainability Statement, Energy and Carbon Reductions Statement and a Sustainability Section within the Design and Access Statement.

13.2 From the outset of the pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority, the applicants had been working with the EnerPHit principles, however Officers identified the potential for the scheme to be pilot project for UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard Pilot Programme (UKNZCBS) which has since been adopted by the applicant's project team and carried through to application stage.

13.3 In order to achieve the requirements of UKNZCBS and EnerPHit the following approach has been integrated into the design:

- Targets being sought:
 - Embodied carbon - Upfront carbon of 549.4 KgCO₂e/m² GIA baseline target with an aspirational target of 458 KgCO₂e/m² GIA;
 - Operational Energy – 96.8 kWh/m² GIA/year with an aspirational target of 87.5 kWh/m² GIA/year;
 - Achievement of 5 BREEAM Wat01 credits for water efficiency.
- At the time of submission modelling shows that the project is on target for:
 - 65% less energy consumed than the existing building;
 - Primary Energy Renewable is 139 kWh/m² of TFA which is within the EnerPHit limit of 147;
 - Predicted heating demand of 67.6 kWh/m² of TFA

13.4 These energy targets are achieved by integrating a range of measures including:

- Extensive fabric upgrades;
- Provision of Mechanical Extraction Plant (MEP);
- Existing secondary glazing to be upgraded to new triple glazed; secondary glazing with more slender options being explored for the more historic rooms;

- Installation of solar PV panels which are calculated to generate 78,7000kWh/year
- 13.5 In regards to overheating the scheme proposes the following:
- Stack effect ventilation through the provision of motorise openings at the top of atria;
 - Opening up the layout to increase cross ventilation where possible;
 - Night time purge ventilation.
- 13.6 The project aims to achieve 5 Wat01 credits which represents a 55% reduction in water use using the current BREEAM methodology. This will be achieved by:
- Using water efficient fixtures and fittings
 - Rainwater harvesting to provide toilet flushing.
- 13.7 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Sustainability Officer. They have advised that the approach of using EnerPhit principles and the aim to be a pilot project for UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standard (UKNZCBS) would help test and refine the retrofit requirements and welcome the water efficiency targets. They are in agreement with the current modelling.
- 13.8 Due to the buildings constraints there would be some shortfalls. For example the Solar panels would generate 78,7000kWh/year, which falls slightly short of the required 85,050kWh/year for UKNZCBS, however, there may be an allowance due to the constraints of the building. In addition, some comfort cooling would be required for example in the basement rooms or heritage spaces where natural ventilation would be limited. Regardless of the constraints the sustainability measures and targets are ambitious and would result in a significant reduction in energy and water consumption.
- 13.9 The applicant is committed to connect into the City Heat Network when this project comes forward. Whilst benefiting from the Heat Network the Guildhall would also be able to contribute to it.
- 13.10 The measures in regard to sustainability are exemplary and would greatly reduce the carbon footprint of a civically important building. There is no policy obligation for the applicant to achieve these standards and the applicants have gone above and beyond in terms of sustainability and renewable energy. Subject to conditions regarding the implementation of these strategies and details regarding water calculations, rainwater

harvesting and water metering which are considered to ensure the redevelopment reaches the high standards, the proposal is compliant with policies 28 and 29 of the Local Plan and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020.

14. Biodiversity

- 14.1 The application is supported by a statutory BNG metric, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), Bat Emergence Survey (BES) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Plan.
- 14.2 The site consists of buildings and sealed surfaces. The PEA has recommended non-licensable reasonable avoidance measures to remove any risk of residual harm or disturbance to protected or priority species and the Ecology Officer agrees with the analysis.
- 14.3 Following the PEA recommendations, a PRA was conducted and the Guildhall was assessed as having low and moderate roost suitability which required emergence surveys to be done. The BES found no evidence of bats using the building. However, precautionary and mitigation measures can be secured by way of condition.
- 14.4 A mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain as per the Environment Act is not required as the amount of habitat impact would be de-minimis as so the application is exempt. Notwithstanding that the application is exempt from BNG, a metric has been submitted for the whole Civic Quarter redevelopment resulting in an increase 0.3 habitat units, mainly in the form of planting within the Market Square application (25/04382/FUL).
- 14.5 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, who raises no objection to the proposal and recommends several conditions to ensure the protection of species is delivered. The conditions regarding compliance with the reports and ecological enhancement are considered reasonable and required to ensure the protection and enhancement of ecological species. A green roof is being proposed over the fourth floor extension and so details of this are required to ensure it would be suitable. In terms of a ecological lighting report officers consider that this would be unreasonable as the site is located in an urban area which lights are prevalent. Officers are satisfied that the proposed development complies with policy 70 of the Local Plan, the Biodiversity SPD 2022, the requirements of the Environment Act 2021 and 06/2005 Circular advice.

15. Water management and flood risk

- 15.1 The site is in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore considered at low risk of flooding. It is not at risk of surface water flooding.
- 15.2 The Council's Sustainable Drainage Engineer has advised that the surface water and foul water would connect to the existing drainage systems and has no objections to the scheme. The proposal is in accordance with policies 31 and 32 of the Local Plan and NPPF advice.

16. Highway safety and transport impacts

- 16.1 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment which covers all elements of the Civic Quarter redevelopment.
- 16.2 The Guildhall was last used regularly by all staff in early 2020 at which point a maximum of about 300 staff worked there. Currently circa 40-50 people work in the Guildhall on a daily basis which can vary dependent on needs. The Transport Statement explains that the maximum capacity of the Guildhall following redevelopment would be 370 which would be 70 more than the previous capacity.
- 16.3 There are no staff car parking spaces and whilst there are some public car parks nearby these are unlikely to be used by staff working at the office due to the costs. As such, the vast majority of users will arrive at the Guildhall on foot or cycle, whether for the whole or partial journey. Subsequently, it is considered that the increase of 70 staff members would not impact on the wider transport network.
- 16.4 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Cambridgeshire County Council's Local Highways Authority. They have raised concerns with external doors opening onto the public highway. The doors that open outwards are as existing and not being proposed to be changed under this application. In addition, the Local Highways Authority has confirmed that the Highway Act does allow for a Public Building Exception and this rule can be bypassed if Cambridge City Council and the Highway Authority (Cambridgeshire County Council) provide specific consent. This is done outside of the planning process and an informative can be added to remind the applicant of the requirement to gain consent should it be necessary.
- 16.5 The Highways Authority have requested conditions relating to the submission of a Traffic Management Plan and restrictions to construction

vehicles. These are considered reasonable. It is noted that they also request any works outside of the site, such as the works to Guildhall Street, Corn Exchange Street and Wheeler Street be specifically excluded from any permission. The proposed plans do not show works outside of the red line.

- 16.6 Subject to conditions the proposal accords with the objectives of Policies 80 and 81 of the Local Plan and is compliant with the NPPF advice.

17. Car and cycle provision

- 17.1 Policy 82 states that planning permission will not be granted for developments that would be contrary to the parking standards as set out in Appendix L. For offices inside a controlled parking zone Appendix L states that should be a maximum of 1 car parking space per 100sqm plus disabled parking and 2 cycle spaces for every 5 members of staff or 1 per 30 sqm Gross Floor Area (whichever is greater) with some visitor parking on merit.

Cycle parking

- 17.2 The development would provide 166 cycle spaces the majority of which would be located within the basement. Within the basement there would be 102 cycle spaces in the form of double stacking cycle racks and 59 Sheffield stands. Five cycle parking spaces on the ground floor would be provided for non-standard cycles. Paragraph L.19 states that two-tier/double stacked racks will be considered for non-residential developments, however, a minimum of 20% should be Sheffield stands.
- 17.3 The Transport Statement states that maximum capacity of the Guildhall following development would be 370 people which would require 148 spaces and so the proposal exceeds the minimum requirement in compliance with Policy 82. 38% of the proposed cycle spaces would be Sheffield stands.
- 17.4 Those reaching the Guildhall by cycle would enter at the rear entrance close to the Wheeler Street/ Guildhall Street junction. A wheel ramp would be added to existing small steps to allow those who are able to reach the lift lobby where there is a cycle lift and stairs with a wheel ramp. The cycle lift has been designed so that the cycles can be enter and exit the lift in forward motion. There is a second route for those that are able with a new set of steps with wheel ramp within the service corridor. For those unable to manoeuvre the cycle on the steps and for those with non standard cycles, a ramp with a gradient of 1:13 would replace the existing 1:5 gradient ramp which would lead to the 5 larger spaces within the service corridor. Where

there are doors separating corridors, these would have buttons for automatic door openings.

- 17.5 A cycle repair station and pump would be provided within the entrance lobby. End of Journey facilities such as showers would be provided on the ground floor immediately adjacent to the cycle lift/lobby.
- 17.6 The comments from the County Council's Active Travel Team are noted. Whilst Officers accept that the access to the proposed cycle parking is not ideal, the constraints of the listed building need to be considered. The proposed cycle parking provision would be an improvement on the existing arrangement as the access ramp would be shallower in gradient and additional cycle parking would be provided.
- 17.7 In terms of visitor cycle parking there are many cycle spaces in the public realm around the Guildhall and there is a large cycle park within the Grand Arcade Car Park which is approximately 150m from the Guildhall.
- 17.8 Subsequently, the development would provide a quantum of cycle spaces which exceeds the minimum requirement and would include spaces for non-standard cycles. The proposed cycle parking, in number, accessibility and arrangement is compliant with policy 81 of the Local Plan.

Car parking

- 17.9 The Guildhall is and would be car free. Whilst Appendix L does provide information on recommended car parking spaces this is a maximum figure and there is not a policy requirement to meet these.
- 17.10 The Guildhall is located within the city centre and so it is in a sustainable location with access to good public transport links. The nearest public car park is the Grand Arcade which is approximately 150 metres from the Guildhall. There are 5 existing on street Blue Badge spaces on Peas Hill and Guildhall Street with a further 35 within the Grand Arcade Car Park.
- 17.11 Subsequently, there are no objections to the Guildhall remaining a car free building and it is compliant with policy 81 of the Local Plan.

18. Amenity

- 18.1 The nearest residential properties are located above Cath Kidson/ Hugo Boss/ Anthropologie at the corner of Market Hill, Peas Hill and St Marys Passage. The units are either residential units or student accommodation.

The majority of the neighbouring buildings are commercial. Given the adjacent context, location, size, and design of the proposal it is unlikely to give rise to any significant amenity impacts in terms of overlooking, loss of daylight, or enclosure.

- 18.2 In terms of noise sensitive receptors in addition to the residential units the Premier Inn on Guildhall Street and the Cambridge University Catholic Chaplaincy at Fisher House on Guildhall Street also need to be considered.
- 18.3 A Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted and reviewed by the Council's Environmental Health Officer. The proposed use of the building is similar to the existing. However, the new plant on the rooftop has the potential to cause additional noise nuisance.
- 18.4 The Noise Impact Assessment primarily addresses the impact on the new plant. The plant/ equipment noise emission has been designed to be equal to or below the existing background noise levels at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors. Mitigation to achieve this includes a combination of in-duct attenuation to the Air Handling Units and a solid noise barrier to screen the air source heat pumps. The plant screen would extend 2.4 metres above the roof level and is recommended to be solid.
- 18.5 The Environmental Health Officer is in agreement with the Noise Impact Assessment's conclusion that the operational noise impact due to mechanical plant/ equipment operating at the site is likely to result in a 'No observed adverse effect level' or at worst a very low adverse impact. The final details of the plant and screening would need to be conditioned to ensure that this is achieved.
- 18.6 Other conditions relating to construction hours and deliveries, and amplified music/voice within the Small and Large Halls are recommended to limit noise disturbance to the noise sensitive receptors and neighbouring residential properties. The halls currently do not have any restrictions, so it would be unreasonable to secure this. In regards to construction hours and deliveries, access to the city centre is already restricted and so Officers consider that using a Construction Environmental Management Plan would be better suited.
- 18.7 Subsequently, subject to conditions, the proposal adequately respects the amenity of its neighbours. Subject to conditions, the proposal is compliant with policies 35 and 58 of the Local plan.

Future users

20.9 The Urban Design Officer raised concerns about the size of some of the proposed office spaces in that they appear to be undersized in relation to the intended level of occupancy. This issue is not a material planning consideration. The applicant has pointed out that there is a range of work settings including touch down and meeting spaces and informal working areas. The final layout of the workspaces is for the future occupiers to configure to meet their accommodation needs and not for the Local Planning Authority to consider as part of this application.

It is known that there is asbestos within the building. Exposure to asbestos in buildings is regulated outside of development control by the Health and Safety Executive. An informative shall be added to remind the applicant of the legislation.

19. Third party representations

19.1 The remaining third-party representations not addressed in the preceding paragraphs are summarised and responded to in the table below:

Third party comment	Officer response
Closure during the works	<p>Concerns have been raised regarding the closure of the building during the construction works and subsequent disruption.</p> <p>As this is a temporary impact this is not a planning matter. However, the majority of the Guildhall is currently vacant with Council staff working mostly at Mandela House. Whilst the Guildhall is still used for Council committees/meetings, this is for the City Council to consider and not the LPA.</p>
Poor Consultation	<p>Concerns have been raised in regards to poor public consultation. This is in regard to pre-application consultation by the applicant rather than the statutory consultation carried out by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Section 3.3 of the Design and Access Statement outlines the public engagement that the applicant completed.</p> <p>Whilst robust public engagement is encouraged within the planning process, it is not a reason to refuse a planning application.</p>

Table 4 Officer response to third party representations

20. Other matters

Accessibility

- 20.1 The existing building has many accessibility constraints and there are limited step free routes through the building. There are level accesses from Peas Hill and these are to remain. However, these entrances are often seen as the 'side' entrances. At the front there is a small external step up to the entrance and internally there are 3 steps from the doorway to the lobby.
- 20.2 The scheme indicates a level table to the entrance would be created externally and that this would be delivered through the application to redevelop the Market Square and public realm (reference 25/04382/FUL).
- 20.3 Internally, a platform lift is proposed and it is designed to be concealed within the stairway when not in use. A similar lift is proposed at the Guildhall Street entrance. Platform lifts are also proposed to serve the dais within the Council Chamber and the stage within the large hall.
- 20.4 The existing lifts which are not Part M compliant would be replaced with full accessible lifts in the same location.
- 20.5 Accessible toilets, showers, changing places and a breastfeeding room would be provided.
- 20.6 It is considered that whilst there are still obstacles to being fully accessible, Officers note the constraints of the building and the need to protect the historic fabric against the need to improve accessibility. The proposed improvements are suitable for a building for this type and does make an improvement from the current situation.

Bins

- 20.7 The bin store would be relocated internally to provide an increased space for the storage of bins. Sufficient bins would be provided for the Guildhall and the two commercial buildings (Giggling Squid and Sticks N Sushi). The management of the waste is to remain similar to the existing situation.

21. Planning Balance

- 21.1 Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Summary of harm

- 21.2 The proposed rooftop plant and screen would read as a subordinate and recessive element that would match the design of the proposed extension. Notwithstanding this it is considered that it would affect the building's proportions and detract from key views particularly from Market Square. However, the final scheme balances the requirements of the screening to the large amount of plant required to meet the high sustainability targets and its visual impact. The removal of the existing telecommunications antennae would also mitigate the harm to some degree as this is seen as a positive outcome
- 21.3 Notwithstanding the above, the net impact would subsequently be a low-medium level 'less than substantial harm' to the Listed Building and Conservation Area. Officers consider that the harm has been sufficiently justified by reason of the need for the amount of plant and the sustainability improvements facilitated by it.

Summary of benefits

- 21.4 The scheme by reason of the addition of the plant, solar panels and extensive fabric upgrades would result in a 65% reduction in energy use coupled with 5 Wat01 credits which represents a 55% reduction in water use. If achieved this would be an exemplar in sustainability with a Net Zero aspiration and this would be of significant environmental public benefit. The works would also improve accessibility to the building and would create more public spaces internally.
- 21.5 Additional cycle parking would be provided with an improved accessibility when compared to the existing. The scheme would have an acceptable impact on highway safety. In addition, the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on neighbouring residential properties, would adequately protect protected species and enhance the ecology of the building.

21.6 On balance, it is considered that the benefits of the scheme outweigh the limited harm created by the roof top plant and screen.

21.7 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, the statutory requirements of section 66(1) and section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval.

22. Recommendation

22.1 **Approve** subject to:

-The planning conditions as set out below with minor amendments to the conditions as drafted delegated to officers.

23. Planning Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as listed on this decision notice.

Reason: In the interests of good planning, for the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3. Prior to the commencement of development, a Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan (DCEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

It shall include/ adhere to the following:

- a) A phasing and co-ordination programme, relative to other Civic Quarter works
- b) Contractor's parking and access arrangements for vehicles, plant and personnel including the location of construction traffic routes to and from the site, their signing, monitoring and enforcement measures.

- c) Control of dust, mud and debris on the highway.
- d) Construction and demolition (except for loading and unloading) shall be carried out only between 0800 hours to 1800 hours Monday to Friday, and 0800 hours to 1300 hours on Saturday and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless in accordance with agreed emergency procedures for deviation.
- e) Delivery hours for muck away, demolition and construction purposes. The hours submitted for approval shall include an assessment of the daily number and type of vehicles required and an assessment as to how vehicles would safely access / exit the site include tracking / swept path analysis. The submission should include a highway safety audit / assessment to support the proposed times and include provision for banks person(s). The delivery times shall be carried out only within the agreed hours and shall at no time should any deliveries take place after 1300 hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority in advance.
- f) Prior notice and agreement procedures for works outside agreed limits and hours.
- i) Site artificial lighting during construction and demolition including hours of operation, position and impact on neighbouring properties.
- j) Screening and hoarding details.
- k) Consideration of sensitive receptors.
- l) A Community Liaison Plan to inform the community in respect of:
 - the construction required to facilitate the development
 - contractor point of contact, complaints procedures, including complaints response procedures
- m) Membership of the Considerate Contractor's Scheme.

The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the agreed plan.

Reason: To safeguard the safety, health and quality of life of existing residential occupiers and users of the City centre in accordance with policies 35, 36 and 56 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

4. No works, including preparatory works, shall commence on site until a traffic management plan has been agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. The principal areas of concern that should be addressed are:
 - i. Movements and control of muck away lorries
 - ii. Contractor parking

- iii. Movements and control of all deliveries
- iv. Control of dust, mud and debris, please note it is an offence under the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or debris onto the adopted public highway.

Reason: in the interests of highway safety in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF.

- 5. No development, other than demolition and enabling/ utility diversion works shall take place until a detailed scheme for the approved rainwater harvesting and recycling strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include relevant drawings showing the location of the necessary infrastructure required to facilitate the water reuse. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To respond to the serious water stress facing the area and ensure that development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

- 6. Prior to the mechanical services equipment / plant and associated acoustic screening on the roof as approved being installed, the details / specifications of all plant / equipment selection (to include operational sound power noise data) and the acoustic solid screening (screen / partial enclosure - to include confirmation of height / length and acoustic performance / sound reduction index - Rw), all as referenced in the submitted 'Cambridge Guildhall: Noise Impact Assessment - P01, 17th September 2025', by Max Fordham LLP (MFLLP) Acoustics Team shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing.

The details and specifications shall demonstrate compliance in accordance with the assumptions / recommendations and operational noise levels within the said Max Fordham LLP (MFLLP) Acoustics Team report.

The details / specifications as approved shall be installed and retained / maintained thereafter.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 - Policy 35: Protection of human health and quality of life from noise and vibration).

7. No development shall take place above ground level, other than demolition, until details of the external materials to be used in the construction of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development does not detract from the character and appearance of the area. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 58 and 61).

8. Prior to the commencement of the fourth floor extension, details of the solar PV panels and support frames shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development does not detract from the character and appearance of the area. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 58 and 61).

9. Prior to the commencement of the fourth floor extension, details of the safety restraint system for safe working at height shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development does not detract from the character and appearance of the area. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 58 and 61).

10. Prior to the installation of the plant screen, full details of the roof top plant screen shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the listed building and conservation area and to be in accordance with Policy 61 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

11. The building shall not be occupied until the approved sustainability strategy, including energy, carbon and water efficiency, as set out in the Sustainability Statement, Max Fordham, Issue 02 27th October

2025 and Energy and Carbon Reduction Statement, Max Fordham, 27 October 2025 Revision P01 has been implemented in full. Any associated renewable and/or low carbon technology shall thereafter be retained and remain fully operational in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of reducing carbon emissions and to make efficient use of water (Cambridge Local Plan policy 28 and Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

12. Prior to the occupation of the proposed development, or as soon as reasonably practicable after occupation, evidence in the form of the BREEAM Wat01 water efficiency calculator shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such evidence shall demonstrate the achievement of no less than 5 Wat01 credits. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained strictly in accordance with the agreed details set out within the BREEAM Wat01 water efficiency calculator.

Reason: To respond to the serious water stress facing the area and ensure that development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020)

13. Prior to first occupation a comprehensive water metering and monitoring system shall be commissioned and installed within the building to quantify at least daily: the total volume of mains water used, the total volume of greywater reclaimed, and the total volume of rainwater used. No occupation shall occur until such time as the local planning authority has been notified through an independent verification report that the water metering and monitoring system has been installed and is fully functional. The metering and monitoring system shall be retained in a fully functioning operational use at all times and for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that the development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction in accordance with Policy 28 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020, the Written Ministerial Statement on Addressing water scarcity in Greater Cambridge: update on government measures (March 2024) Joint Ministerial Statement on addressing Water Scarcity in Greater Cambridge.

14. No development above ground level shall take place until an ecological enhancement scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include details of bat and bird box installation, and other ecological enhancements. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to first occupation or in accordance with a timescale agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To conserve and enhance ecological interests in accordance with Cambridge Local Plan policies 57, 59 and 70 and the Greater Cambridge Planning Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (2022).

15. No construction of the biodiverse (green) roof(s) shall commence until the following details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
 - a. The means of access for maintenance
 - b. Plans and sections showing the make-up of the sub-base to be used which may vary in depth from between 80-150mm
 - c. Planting/seeding with an agreed mix of species (the seed mix shall be focused on wildflower planting indigenous to the local area and shall contain no more than a maximum of 25% sedum)
 - d. Where solar panels are proposed, biosolar roofs should be incorporated under and in-between the panels. An array layout will be required incorporating a minimum of 0.75m between rows of panels for access and to ensure establishment of vegetation
 - e. A management/maintenance plan for the roof(s)

The roof(s) shall be constructed and laid out in accordance with the approved details and planting/seeding shall be carried out within the first planting season following the practical completion of the roof. The roof(s) shall be maintained as such in accordance with the approved management/maintenance plan.

The roof(s) shall not be used as an amenity or sitting out space of any kind whatsoever and shall only be used in the case of essential maintenance/repair or escape in case of emergency.

Reason: To ensure the development provides the maximum possible provision towards water management and the creation of habitats and valuable areas for biodiversity. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 31).

16. Prior to the occupation of the development, the ecological mitigation shall be carried out in full in accordance with the details contained in Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Version 2.0 dated 23 October 2025 by MKA Ecology and the Preliminary Roost Assessment Version 2.0 dated 28 October 2025 by MKA Ecology. The ecological measures shall thereafter be retained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To conserve and enhance ecological interests. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 57, 59 and 70)

Informatives

1. The applicant is advised that asbestos-containing materials are most likely to be present within the fabric of the building. As such, the provisions of the Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012, as regulated by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), will apply. The granting of planning permission does not override any obligation arising from this or other legislation relating to the disturbance of asbestos. Further guidance is available from the HSE <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l143.htm>
2. It is recommended that the applicant seek a Public Building Exception to gain specific consent for the existing doors that open outwards over the public highway to regularise them.
3. A premises licence may be required for this or parts of this development (Small and Large Halls) in addition to any planning permission. A premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 may be required to authorise:

The applicant is advised to contact The Licensing Team, Environmental Health & Public Safety, Communities at Cambridge City Council on telephone number (01223) 457890 or email licensing@cambridge.gov.uk for further information / advice etc.

4. As the premises / approved use is intended to be run as or includes a food type business, the applicant is reminded that under the Food

Safety Act 1990 (as amended) the premises / use will need to register with Cambridge City Council, as required by law. The applicant is advised to contact the Commercial Team, Environmental Health & Public Safety, Communities at Cambridge City Council on telephone number (01223) 457890 or email commercial@cambridge.gov.uk for further information / advice etc.

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25/04385/LBC – The Guildhall and Large Hall, Market Hill, Cambridge

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: Market

Proposal: Installation of roof plant and screen, refurbishment and enhancement of internal and external fabric including installation of PV panels, alterations to internal fabric, rooms and wall positions, and fourth floor and basement extensions of the Guildhall

Applicant: Cambridge City Council

Presenting officer: Charlotte Spencer

Reason presented to committee: Land within the ownership of the Council

Member site visit date: 23 March 2026

Key issues: 1. Impact on Heritage Assets

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions.

Report contents

Document section	Document heading
1	Executive summary
2	Site description and context

3	The proposal
4	Relevant site history
5	Policy
6	Consultations
7	Third party representations
8	Member representations
9	Local groups / petition
10	Heritage assets
11	Planning balance
12	Recommendation
13	Planning conditions

Table 1 Contents of report

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The application forms part of the wider Civic Quarter project which aims to reconnect the Guildhall, Market Square, Corn Exchange and surrounding public realm. The project aims to create an inclusive, attractive destination that enhances the civic heart of Cambridge. The applicants have engaged with the Local Planning Authority through numerous pre-applications under Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) starting in 2024 and leading up to the formal submission of the application.
- 1.2 The application aims to reinstate the Guildhall as the main civic and office space for Cambridge City Council whilst also future proofing the building in light of the Local Government Reform and proposed Unitary Authorities. The proposals aim to make the Guildhall an exemplar in sustainability with a Net Zero aspiration; to provide sufficient modern office desk space; to ensure the core civic functions can be met; and aim to provide a range of commercial income generating uses.
- 1.3 The application seeks listed building consent for installation of roof plant and screen, refurbishment and enhancement of internal and external fabric including installation of PV panels, alterations to internal fabric, rooms and wall positions, and fourth floor and basement extensions of the Guildhall.
- 1.4 Additional information has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority during the course of the application, including the removal of the ramp to the rear entrance, points of clarification added to the plans, alterations to the cycle access and End of Journey facilities and detailed responses to the consultees. Following the amendments, the scheme is broadly supported by consultee responses, however, there remains concern from Historic England in relation to the roof top plant and screening and alterations to the Strong Room, particularly in regard to a lack of justification for the harm created by these elements.

- 1.5 The Guildhall comprises two separate listed buildings, The Guildhall and the Victorian former Public Library and Town/Assembly Hall ('the Large Hall'), both are Grade II listed. The proposals would result in a moderate level of less than substantial harm due to the roof top plant and screening, alterations to the Chamber, alterations to the strong room and removal of internal walls. Notwithstanding, the Historic England objection, Officers considered that this harm has been sufficiently justified.
- 1.6 The proposal would result in public benefits. The development would follow EnerPhit principles and would aim to be a pilot project for UK Net Zero Carbon Standard which would result in a 65% reduction of energy use and an improvement to water efficiency aiming to reach 5Wat01 credits. The development would bring the building back into comprehensive use as Council offices and would result in improvements to the accessibility It is considered that these benefits outweigh the identified harm.
- 1.7 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee **approve** subject to conditions.

Table 2 Consultee summary

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment	Paragraph Reference
Conservation	No Objection	6.1
Historic England	Objection	6.10
Third Party Representations		7.1
Member Representations		8.1
Local Interest Groups and Organisations / Petition		9.1

2. Site description and context

- 2.1 The application relates to the Guildhall which is a Grade II Listed Building located to the south of Market Hill. It is surrounded on all sides by public highways of Guildhall Street, Wheeler Street and Peas Hill to the east,

south and west respectively. The current Listing description is from 1996 and joined with the Guildhall is the separately and earlier Grade II Listed Victorian former Public Library and Town/Assembly Hall ('the Large Hall').

2.2 The Guildhall is particularly significant as the civic building of the city and is one of the smaller number of Town Halls from the 1930s by architect Charles Cowles Voysey. Presently, the Chamber and Committee Rooms remain in Council use, the ground floor offices are in use by Allia Future Business Centre and the Large and Small Halls are used for events. The upper floor offices have mostly been vacated, however, are used by a small number of Council Staff. There is an existing Tourist Information Centre which is accessed from Peas Hill.

2.3 The site lies within the City Centre, Primary Shopping Area and the Historic Core Conservation Area. It lies within the setting of numerous listed buildings including the Grade II* Church of St Edward and the Grade I Church of St Mary the Great and No.5 Market Hill.

3. The proposal

3.1 Installation of roof plant and screen, refurbishment and enhancement of internal and external fabric including installation of PV panels, alterations to internal fabric, rooms and wall positions, and fourth floor and basement extensions of the Guildhall.

3.2 The general works can be summarised as follows:

- External Works:
 - Fourth floor extension on the western wing;
 - Existing plant and telecoms equipment removed from roof and replaced with new rooftop plant and screening;
 - Installation of solar PV panels on the large hall roof;
 - Installation of roofs over each of the proposed atriums at third floor level;
 - Small extension at basement level under Peas Hill for a substation;
 - Insulation to sloped roofs and retiled;
 - New rooflight to chamber;
- Internal – Basement:
 - Removal of some internal walls;
 - Installation of new internal walls and openings to create cycle store and meeting rooms for the Council Offices and Wellness Space with changing rooms for commercial offices;

- Addition of floor slab and wall insulation;
- Alterations to police cells under the Court Rooms.
- Internal – Ground Floor:
 - Removal of floor over atria;
 - Removal of some internal walls;
 - Removal of existing floor coverings;
 - Installation of a platform lift at the Market Hill entrance hall;
 - New internal walls to create a café area, council workspaces, council contact centre and end of journey facilities along with a reception for the commercial offices.
 - Addition of wall insulation on some external walls;
- Internal – First Floor:
 - Removal of existing floor coverings;
 - Removal of some doorways;
 - Removal of some W/C fixtures and fittings
 - New fixtures and fittings to create office facilities for council staff;
 - Some floor slab and wall insulation
- Internal – Second Floor:
 - Removal of some internal walls;
 - Removal of existing flooring;
 - Removal of W/C fixtures and fittings;
 - Installation of new walls to create office facilities for council staff;
 - Addition of some floor slab and wall insulation
- Internal – Third and Fourth Floors:
 - Removal of some internal walls;
 - Removal of existing flooring;
 - Removal of W/C fixtures and fittings;
 - Installation of new walls to create office facilities for commercial offices
 - Addition of floor slab and wall insulation
- Throughout:
 - Replacement secondary glazing;
 - New lifts installed.

3.3 The specific works to key rooms can be summarised as follows:

- Sessions Court, Ground Floor:
 - Adjustable writing tables added to existing seating;
 - Replacement floor covering;
 - Existing furniture and fittings to be made good;
- Council Chamber, First Floor:
 - Removal of furniture (which is to be retained and repurposed);
 - Replacement with bespoke furniture;
 - Addition of a height adjustable floor to the centre of the room;

- Addition of a glazed balustrade to the balcony;
- Improve AV provision;
- Installation of a platform lift to the dais
- Addition of insulation to the roof and re-tiling with existing tiles;
- Existing fittings to be made good;
- Large Hall, First Floor:
 - New plant in roof space above hall;
 - Black out blinds installed;
 - New stage curtains;
 - Wall fans removed and replaced with extract duct;
 - New floor covering to balcony;
 - New platform lift to stage;
 - Existing fittings to be made good;
- Small Hall, First Floor:
 - Installation of new freestanding bar;
 - Acoustic panels wall panelling installed;
- Committee Rooms, First Floor:
 - Thermal lining added behind the panelling;
 - Replacement floor coverings;
 - Existing furniture and fittings to be made good;
- Szeged Room, First Floor:
 - Thermal lining added behind the panelling;
 - Replacement floor coverings;
 - Existing furniture and fittings to be made good;
- Mayors Parlour, First Floor:
 - Thermal lining added behind the panelling;
 - Existing furniture and fittings to be made good;
- CEO Office, First Floor:
 - Thermal lining added behind the panelling;
 - Existing fittings to be made good;
 - Replacement furniture

3.4 The application has been amended to address representations, and further consultations have been carried out as appropriate. Amendments include: the removal of the ramp to the rear entrance, points of clarification added to the plans, alterations to the cycle access and End of Journey facilities and detailed responses to the consultees

4. Relevant site history

Reference	Description	Outcome
21/00483/FUL and 21/00484/LBC	Installation of 6 No. antennas on 3 No. on new offset brackets & support poles installed on new climbable tripod support, mounted on new steel grillage frames, Installation of ancillary equipment - 5 No. RRU's to be installed on 2 No. sloping pole brackets, fixed to brace poles at each antenna location, Installation of radio equipment within existing equipment cabin, Existing 6 No. antennas to be removed and replaced with 6 No. antennas fixed to wall and braced back to upper roof level Existing and new ancillary equipment to be installed on 5No. new MAFI freestanding frames.	Permitted
18/0422/FUL and 18/0423/LBC	Installation of solar PV and edge protection on the roof of the Guildhall.	Permitted
08/1258/FUL	Change of use of 74 sqm to cafe (A3) and change of use of 32sqm to shop (A1)	Permitted

Table 2 Relevant site history

- 4.1 The have been multiple alterations to the building, the majority of which are not listed here. The existing cafe and Tourist Information Centre on the Peas Hill Side were approved in 2008. The solar panels on the roof of the Guildhall was approved in 2018 and the most recent applications for the telecommunication equipment was approved in 2021.

5. Policy

5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) Cycle Infrastructure Design

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

EIA Directives and Regulations - European Union legislation with regard to environmental assessment and the UK's planning regime remains unchanged despite it leaving the European Union on 31 January 2020

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Environment Act 2021

ODPM Circular 06/2005 – Protected Species

Equalities Act 2010

5.2 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 18 Stage Consultation - December 2025 to January 2026)

- 5.2.1 The Regulation 18 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan (the draft 'Joint Local Plan' (JLP)) represents the next stage of preparing a new joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge. Once it is adopted, it will become the statutory development plan for the Greater Cambridge area, replacing the current (adopted) Local Plans for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District.
- 5.2.2 Following endorsement by Joint Cabinet in November, the draft JLP will proceed to a formal public consultation (under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012). This is currently scheduled between 1 December 2025 and 30 January 2026.
- 5.2.3 In line with paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to several factors. The draft JLP is consistent with policies in the current NPPF but represents an earlier stage of the plan making process. Therefore, at this stage, the draft JLP and its policies can only be afforded limited weight as a material consideration in decision making

5.3 Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy 55: Responding to context

Policy 56: Creating successful places

Policy 58: Altering and extending existing buildings

Policy 59: Designing landscape and the public realm

Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment

Policy 63: Works to a heritage asset to address climate change

5.4 Area Guidelines

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2015)

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – N

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y – Affects a Listed Building and Conservation Area

Conservation Officer- No Objection

External

6.1 Works for the atria would not be visible.

6.2 The louvred screen on the rooftop may affect the 'lightweight' appearance as seen within pre-application discussions, however, the current collection of antenna would be removed which is a benefit. Provided the height does not increase and the colour and materials are toned with the building, the impact on the listed building as seen within the conservation area would not be significantly adverse.

6.3 The form and scale of the fourth floor extension conforms to the established building form. The extension would be sympathetic and would not impact the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

6.4 Considered that the PV panels would maintain the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Internal

Chamber

6.5 Works, particularly the removal of the fixed seating, will have a negative impact on the high significance of the chamber and building. Bespoke replacement seating is proposed and this now been shown on a plan.

6.6 The existing seating in the committee rooms and existing iron swing-stair in the boiler room are now shown as being retained and this is acceptable.

- 6.7 Following the amendments, the weight of the proposed works is now better secured and help towards mitigating some of the impacts on the overall proposals.
- 6.8 The harm to the character or significance of the listed buildings remains adverse (low-moderate level of harm). However, it remains the case that the application is made in the expectation of the continuance of the established, historic, local government use which is a key aspect of this proposal.
- 6.9 No objection subject to conditions relating to:
- the securing of contractors,
 - recordings of the building,
 - information of the proposed cleaning techniques,
 - details of external works,
 - details of the MEP plant in the large hall,
 - details of furnishings and lighting and AV equipment in the chamber,
 - method statement for wall panels,
 - details of secondary glazing,
 - details of the small hall bar,
 - platform lift details, and
 - details of the roof top plant screen.

Historic England- Object (22/12)

- 6.10 Welcome the amended plans with the identification of key rooms and the approach the treatment of different areas. Welcome the retention of the original furniture in some key rooms such as Committee Rooms and the Szeged Room. Happy that our queries have been addressed.
- 6.11 Comfortable with the fourth floor extension and could represent an acceptable addition to the building.
- 6.12 However, the bulk of the plant and screening would detract from the building's architectural composition and proportions resulting in harm to its architectural interest as the most important civic building. Remain unconvinced that a robust justification for the plant layout as consider that if it were to be spread across a wider area it would likely result on a less visually disruptive alternative. However, it is noted that this would result in the loss of the extension.

- 6.13 Could not support the relocation of Council Chamber seating in the Small and Large Halls as it would detract from the architectural character on these rooms. However, no concerns with the relocation to the Police Court or 'Heart Space'.
- 6.14 In regards to the Strong Room there are concerns with the differential treatment proposed on this room, with a stark division across separating meeting rooms and spaces associated with the Wellness Space would strongly affect its legibility eroding the overall plan form. It is not clear why the nature of the split between Council staff and commercial area needs to be in this particular form.
- 6.15 In conclusion broadly support the principles and ambitions behind the scheme and much of what is proposed. However, remain unconvinced and unable to support the proposed roof plant and strong room arrangement.

7. Third party representations

- 7.1 No representations have been received.
- 7.2 Members may wish to review the third party comments for the full planning application element of this proposal. Full details of which are available on the Council's website under 25/04384/FUL.

8. Member Representations

- 8.1 None received

9. Local Groups / Petition

- 9.1 None received. However, Members may wish to review the responses from Cambridge Past, Present and Future (CPPF) and the Tourist Information Centre for the full planning application element of this proposal. Full details of which are available on the Council's website under 25/04384/FUL.

10. Heritage assets

- 10.1 Section 16 (2) of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant listed building consent the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

10.2 Para. 212 of the NPPF set out that ‘When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance’. Para. 213 states that ‘Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Para.215 states ‘where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use’.

10.3 Policy 61 aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.

Fourth Floor Extension

10.4 A fourth floor extension is proposed to the rear of the western wing of the Guildhall. It would span for a maximum depth of 30 metres and would have a width of 7.6 metres. It would be set in from the west and northern existing elevations by 1.4 metres. It would have a height of 4.2 metres which would measure 21 metres above ground level. The form of the extension would follow the existing built form of this wing including a curved wall in the south western corner. It would be clad bronzed aluminium cladding.

10.5 It is considered that the extension is well judged in scale and massing with the set back allowing it to sit comfortably within the established roofline and wider townscape. The use of materials provides a high-quality contemporary material that works well with the tones of the materials on the existing building reading as a well-proportioned and refined addition.

10.6 Solar panels would be installed on the roof of the extension. It is understood that the panels would not be visible above the 0.3 metre high parapet and so these would not have a visual impact from street level of local viewpoints.

10.7 The extension is located in a part of the building that would have been occupied by built form, however, this element was not constructed. In addition, it is noted it would replace an existing array of service equipment. It is considered that the extension would be sympathetic to the listed building.

Roof Plant and Screen

- 10.8 The rooftop plant would be located on the front part of the existing main roof replacing the existing solar panels and telecoms equipment. The screening would run along the edge of the building facing Market Hill, Peas Hill and Guildhall Street and partially along south facing area of the plant. It would be set back from the inside edge of the parapet by 0.7 metres. The screen would have a maximum height of 2.4 metres projecting 2 metres above the existing parapet. It would result in a maximum height of 23.2 metres above ground level. The screen would be an anodised aluminium louvre screen.
- 10.9 The proposed plant would replace existing antenna and associated telecoms equipment. The existing equipment is considered to have a detrimental impact on the listed building. As such, it is considered that the removal of the existing equipment would have a positive impact.
- 10.10 It is considered that the proposed screen would read as a subordinate and recessive element. The use of bronze coloured cladding would match that of the extension and is considered to be sympathetic to the existing building. Whilst the solid board located behind the louvre may affect the screens light weight appearance, the profiles and other detailing would allow the screen to blend into the roofscape rather than appear dominant and bulky.
- 10.11 It is noted that Historic England have objected to this element with concerns about the impact on the appreciation of the building, particularly facing Market Square affecting the buildings proportions and detracting from key views concluding that it would introduce considerable levels of harm to the listed building. This advice is contrary to the Council's Conservation Officer, who whilst raising that there would be some impact particularly with the level of 'light weightness' to the screening, however, they considered that the removal of the existing array of antenna which is considered to have a detrimental impact on the listed building and conservation area would balance out the impact of the new screen. The net impact on the heritage assets is considered below.
- 10.12 Historic England have stated that bulk and layout of the plant has not been sufficiently justified as they consider that the plant could be spread over a large area reducing the harm. The plant is required to reduce the energy use of the building. It has been laid out over the existing flat roof space and under the current proposals there is no further adequate roof space available and in order to spread the plant out further the extension

would need to be removed. The extension is proposed to increase the lettable area of the Guildhall and as explained above, would complete the unbuilt element of the original building. The applicant has stated within the planning statement that the extension would bring in an estimated £103,100 in rent per annum as per table 3 within the Planning Statement. If this was not included it would result in the reduction of a potential surplus revenue by 20% which in turn would have a negative impact on the cashflow to support the front line services and make improvements to the existing building. If the plant was to be spread to a wider roof area, this would not negate the need for screening and may result in additional screening on areas of the roof where there is currently non proposed. As such, officers consider that the plant and screening has been adequately justified.

- 10.13 Discussions have been held with the applicant's design team and the Local Planning Authority prior to the submission of the application and officers consider that the final proposed scheme successfully balances the requirements of the screening, including noise insulation and ventilation and its visual impact. It is considered that it has been well designed to follow the appearance and form of the existing building. Notwithstanding this, officers accept there will be an impact, particularly to the front elevation which is afforded longer views from across Market Square, however, would limit the harm to a medium level of 'less than substantial harm' to the Listed Building. The harm could be mitigated to some degree by the final design of the louvre which can be secured by way of condition.

Solar Panels to Large Hall Roof

- 10.14 The scheme proposes solar panels to the roof of the large hall. These would be located on the eastern, northern and western roof slopes, however, none would be located on the curved section to the south. The panels would be fixed to a raised mounting frame which would sit slightly above the roof slopes.
- 10.15 The northern and eastern facing panels would not be visible from the public realm immediately around the site, however, the western facing panels would be visible from longer views along Bene't Street. However, this slope would not be seen against other key buildings and solar panels are becoming more common in the city centre including on listed buildings.
- 10.16 The placing of PV panels on the prominent curved roof slope to the south would be avoided and this is welcomed. The use of a mounting frame would minimise the unnecessary loss of historic roof slates and allows for

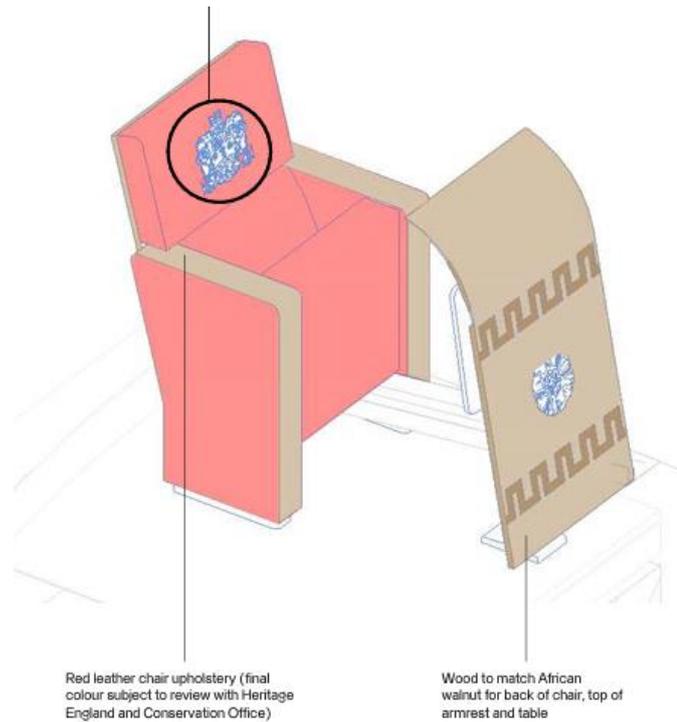
the work to have a level of 'reversibility'. Subsequently, it is considered that the proposal would have a neutral impact effect on the significance of the building.

Other external elements

- 10.17 The other elements such as the roofing to the atria and small basement extension would not be visible from the public realm. It is considered that these are minor alterations with limited impact. As such, it is considered that they would not have an adverse impact on the existing building and surrounding area and would not have an adverse impact on the significance of the heritage assets.
- 10.18 The roofs of the small and large halls, the chamber and the Police/Sessions court would be insulated. This would involve the lifting of the existing tiles and the relaying of the tiles once insulated. It is considered that this would have a limited visual impact. New roof lights would be added to the chamber and courts in the same position as the existing. It is considered that these are minor alterations with limited impact.

Council Chamber

- 10.19 The Council Chamber is currently one of the least altered and most significant rooms in heritage and function terms. The furniture is original, and the floor level tiered. The largely unaltered character and features of the room mean it possesses a gravitas appropriate to its civic function.
- 10.20 The interventions, particularly the removal and relocation of the fixed seating to other rooms of the Guildhall would have a negative impact on the high significance of this chamber due to the physical removal and by affecting the understanding arrangement/plan form and legibility. It is considered that the relocation of the furniture would not mitigate the harm as the significance would be lost due to them being scattered throughout the building and adapted. The installation of appropriate and high-quality bespoke replacement seating which would retain the horseshoe layout would minimise the overall impact within the chamber. Plans have been submitted showing the proposed seating at the time of the application. The seating would be retractable they would fold up when not in use to maximise space and ease movement. They would be connected to a table suitable for a laptop with electrical ports and lighting. A curved piece of wood would be attached to the front of the table allowing for privacy. See image below:



- 10.21 The final customised proposals are still being developed. As such, it is considered reasonable to add a condition for the final details to be approved.
- 10.22 The alteration to the floor would remove the tiered feature of the room and so would result in some harm. However, the plans make it clear that this would be adaptable and so the original tiered floor could be retained and an accessible floor could be used when required. In addition, a platform lift would be added to the dais to allow step free access. A condition can be added to for the final details of the floor and lift to be approved.
- 10.23 New AV equipment would be added to the room and the plans clearly state that 'no fixing to be made through existing timber panelling or leather wall panelling' and that 'All fixings and fittings interventions are to be reversible'. This is acceptable; however, the final details would need to be secured by way of condition.
- 10.24 Notwithstanding these substantial changes, the remaining features would be kept and made good. Subsequently, the interventions to the Council Chamber would result in a moderate level of less than substantial harm.

Small Hall

- 10.25 The proposed freestanding bar and cellar room is proposed to be introduced at the far end of the Small Hall. This would affect the perception of the volume of this simple room. However, the impact would be mitigated as the bar would be freestanding and not attached and so could be carefully removed without long term impact to the existing historic fabric.
- 10.26 The relocation of the chamber furniture into this room is not supported. The chamber furniture is part of a wider joinery fitting in curved sections of wooden chairs and so would take up a large amount of the room. However, it is considered that the furniture would not be fixed and as such, a condition can be added to ensure a final plan for the chamber furniture can be agreed.

Large Hall

- 10.27 There would be limited interventions within the large hall. The largest of which would be the addition of MEP plant within the roof space, however, this would not be visible and so it would not result in harm. Details of the plant and other interventions such as the platform lift to the stage can be dealt with by way of condition.

Other Key Rooms

- 10.28 There would be limited interventions within the other key rooms and it has now been confirmed that the existing furniture would be retained within the Committee Rooms and Members Rooms and made good which is acceptable. Details of limited interventions such as the timber wall panelling and secondary glazing can be secured by way of condition.

Basement Works

- 10.29 The works to the basement would result in the existing layout being completely changed. The basement is generally of low significance, however there are some elements of significance to the buildings earlier functioning such as the strong room. The strong room door/ safe door would be retained, however, the form would be lost due to the new partition wall creating meetings rooms to the Council offices on one side, and a wellness space on the other side.
- 10.30 The applicant has stated that the structural openings within the Strong Room walls would not be full, clear storey openings but include down stands and piers of masonry to create a clear reading of the extents and a relating scale that can be read between floors. The applicant also

considered that the opening up of the atriums will be a visual link between the chamber, heart space and Strong Room.

- 10.31 It is considered that the loss of this form and legibility would result in a low level of 'less than substantial harm'.

Ground Floor Works

- 10.32 The existing reception desk area and the minor rooms behind it are of low significance. The proposals create an open reception area and apart from removing part of the strongroom walls, is positive.
- 10.33 The platform lift would cause a degree of impact to the historic fabric, however, it is considered that this option would be the least harmful approach to providing improved access.
- 10.34 The opening of the atria would be within the existing open lightwell areas in hidden positions of the building. They are of low heritage significance and the proposed interventions would enable the basement remodelling.

Upper Floors

- 10.35 The existing office room divisions are generally proposed to be removed on the second floor as is the corridor wall on the Market Square side. On the second floor new partitions would be added to create rooms, whereas on the third and fourth floor the rooms and corridors would be removed. These partitions are plain. However, the works would result in a loss of definition of the original floor layouts and will cause a degree of 'harm' in heritage terms.

Other Internal Alterations

- 10.36 The Secondary Glazing Visual Impact Study illustrates the proposed inward opening triple glazed window systems. The external glazing would remain as existing and the existing internal secondary glazing replaced with triple glazing. The new glazing would be inward opening vacuum glass window system. A more slender secondary glazing would be used in the more historically rooms. This approach is considered to be acceptable within the low significant, office rooms of the upper floors.
- 10.37 No concerns have been raised by the Conservation Officer or Historic England in regards to the other interventions to the building.

Summary

- 10.38 NPPF paragraph 213 states that any harm to the significance of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 219 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for development within the setting of heritage asset to enhance or better reveal their significance and proposals that better reveal its significance should be treated favourably.
- 10.39 Paragraph 215 states that where a development would lead to less than substantial harm, this should be weighed against the public benefits.
- 10.40 As explained above, parts of the proposal would result in harm to the listed building. It is important to understand the overall impact of the works on the Listed Buildings to consider whether paragraph 215 is triggered. Below is a table of the summary of impacts from the main elements of the works.

Proposal	Impact on Listed Building
Fourth Floor Extension	Neutral
Plant and Screen	Moderate level of 'less than substantial harm'
Removal of telecomms	Positive
PV Panels	Neutral
Atria roofs	Neutral
Basement extension	Neutral
Re-roofing of small/large halls	Neutral
Alterations to Council Chamber	Moderate levels of less than substantial harm
Alterations to Strong Room	Low level of less than substantial harm.

Upper Floors	Low level of less than substantial harm
All other internal alterations	Neutral
Net Heritage impact	Moderate level of less than substantial harm

Table 3 Summary of heritage impact

- 10.41 Subsequently the proposals would result in less than substantial harm to the Listed Building. The identified harm is created by the proposed plant and screening on the roof, alterations to the Council Chamber, alterations to the Strong Room and the removal of the internal walls to the upper floors. This has been adequately justified in order to improve the sustainability of the building.
- 10.42 As per paragraph 213 of the NPPF, any harm to a designated heritage assets should require clear and convincing justification.
- 10.43 In regards to the roof plant and screening, Historic England have stated that bulk and layout of the plant has not been sufficiently justified as they consider that the plant could be spread over a large area reducing the harm. The plant is required to reduce the energy use of the building. It has been laid out over the existing flat roof space and under the current proposals there is no further adequate roof space available and in order to spread the plant out further the extension would need to be removed. The extension is proposed to increase the lettable area of the Guildhall and as explained above, would complete the believed, unbuilt element of the original building. The applicant has stated within the planning statement that the extension would bring in an estimated £103,100 in rent per annum as per table 3 within the Planning Statement. If this was not included it would result in the reduction of a potential surplus revenue by 20% which in turn would have a negative impact on the cashflow to support the front line services and make improvements to the existing building. If the plant was to be spread to a wider roof area, this would not negate the need for screening and may result in additional screening on areas of the roof where there is currently non proposed. As such, officers consider that the plant and screening has been adequately justified.
- 10.44 The greatest level of harm created would be within the Council Chamber. The existing chamber is currently not fit for modern purposes due to its limited electricity and audio/visual equipment which are unreliable for

hybrid meetings which are often the norm in today's Councils. The existing tiered floor results in poor accessibility within the room, with those with mobility issues or those in wheelchair cannot access the full room of the dais. The current layout also prevents users of the room to charge electronic equipment including laptops needed for meetings. There is a clear justification for these alterations.

- 10.45 The greatest harm is from the loss of the fixed chairs and tables in a horseshoe shape within the chamber. The Government is currently undertaking a Local Government Review which would unify existing District and/or City Councils with County Councils and this would directly impact Cambridge City Council. Based on preferred options the applicant has estimated that there a capacity of 70 members would be required within the chamber which this exceeds the existing capacity of the chamber. Therefore, it is considered that without alterations to the furniture, it would not be possible for the Guildhall to have the flexibility which would be needed to become the home of the new council. The Guildhall has historically been the civic centre of the city and the chamber plays an important part in its significance. The works would allow the continuance of the established, historic, local government use of the buildings. If the building was not being re-used for this purpose it would be at risk deterioration.
- 10.46 The alteration to the floor would also cause harm to the heritage asset. The adaptable floor within the centre room would allow for a level surface improving the accessibility of the room. It would also allow for a more flexible space when the room is not needed for Council meetings which can help towards the viability of the building.
- 10.47 In terms of the alterations to the Strong Room Historic England have stated that these works to the strong room have not be sufficiently justified and why not a more sympathetic solution that better relates to the strong room and legibility of the building section could not be found. The division is required due to the nature of the split between the Council and commercial offices. Officers consider that whilst this is not ideal, currently the Strong Room is not visible to users of the building and the proposed works would allow this to be a useable space by both council and commercial staff.
- 10.48 The removal of the internal walls on the upper floor would result in some, albeit limited harm. This is required to allow the floors to be rented out to a commercial operator that is currently unknown and so the final layout is yet to be determined. The applicants are reminded that any future internal

works required by the commercial leasees would require listed building consent.

- 10.49 Other works are needed to improve the energy efficiency and accessibility of the building and bring it up to modern standards.
- 10.50 Subsequently, Officers consider that the harm has been justified.
- 10.51 As less than substantial harm has been identified, paragraph 215 of the NPPF is therefore engaged and the harm needs to be considered against the public benefits of the scheme.
- 10.52 The scheme would result in a 65% reduction in energy use reducing its carbon footprint, more details of this are explained in the section below. This is considered to be a significant environmental public benefit. The building is currently partially vacant and not currently being used as offices for the majority of Council staff. The proposed works would bring the building partially back in council use and it would allow for the building to continue with its established, historic, local government use and this is a significant benefit. It is considered that the improvements would help modernise the building and secure its use in the long term. The accessibility of the building would be improved allowing for a step free access from the main front door which fronts Market Hill. In addition, the works to create a café would improve general public access to the building. The fourth floor extension would bring in an additional revenue stream for the Council, however, this is a private benefit and so would carry no weight in this instance.
- 10.53 It is considered that these public benefits outweigh the identified heritage harm.
- 10.54 In order to secure the benefits the Conservation Officer has requested a condition be added to any permission to ensure no demolition work shall take place until the fitting out contracts have been awarded with a start date set close to the demolition works. This is to ensure that the part of heritage is not lost without confirmation that the proposed works would be carried out and to avoid the building becoming unusable. This is considered reasonable.

11. Planning balance

- 11.1 Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise

(section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Summary of harm

- 11.2 The proposals would result in harm to the heritage asset and this has been summarised in table 3 of the report. The net harm of all the elements is considered to be a moderate level of 'less than substantial harm'.

Summary of benefits

- 11.3 The scheme by reason of the addition of the plant, solar panels and extensive fabric upgrades would result in a 65% reduction in energy use coupled with 5 Wat01 credits which represents a 55% reduction in water use. If achieved this would be an exemplar in sustainability with a Net Zero aspiration and is considered to be a significant environmental public benefit. The proposed works would allow for the building to continue with its established, historic, local government use and this is a significant benefit. It is considered that the improvements would help modernise the building and secure its use in the long term. The accessibility of the building would be improved. In addition, it would create more public spaces internally.
- 11.4 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, the statutory requirements of section 16(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval.

12. Recommendation

- 12.1 **Approve** subject to:
- 12.2 The planning conditions as set out below with minor amendments to the conditions as drafted delegated to officers.

13. Planning conditions

1. The works hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as listed on this decision notice.

Reason: In the interests of good planning, for the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 19 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

3. No demolition or wall removals shall take place until evidence of a contract(s) for the construction works and fitting-out hereby consented have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: to ensure that the Listed buildings are not left striped out or with partly demolished interiors if the remainder of the consented scheme were not to be implemented and in accordance with Policy 61: "Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment", of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

4. Prior to the commencement of the works hereby approved, a room by room photographic building recording (including of the graffiti in the basement court cells) with reference to existing floor plans, shall be undertaken and the record provided to the Local Planning Authority and County Records Office.

Reason: to provide a record of the interior features and condition before the commencement of approved works to ensure important features of the listed building are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

5. Prior to the commencement of any external works, details of the external works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include:
 - Repairs to stone windows surrounds, balustrades and other stone detailing;
 - Any structural or remedial works to balconies and bronze balustrades;
 - Replacement roof gutters

- Any structural works to existing bronze doors, balustrades, sculptures/features.

The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure important features of the listed building are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

6. Prior to any cleaning of the external stone surfaces, the cleaning technique proposed shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure an appropriate, non-damaging, cleaning method/materials are used to ensure important features of the listed building are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

7. Prior to the installation of the MEP plant within the large hall, details of plant, equipment, locations and any proposed roof structure alterations shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The existing roof covering is to be carefully removed and reinstalled once thermal upgrades and membranes are in place.

Reason: to ensure important features of the listed building are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

8. Prior to the installation of the external lantern rooflight within the Council Chamber, full details and drawings of the proposed rooflight shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure important features of the listed building are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

9. Notwithstanding the approved plans, prior to the removal of the existing furniture within the Council Chamber, a plan for the relocation and repurposing of the furniture shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure important features of the listed building are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

10. Notwithstanding the approved plans, prior to the installation of replacement seating/furniture shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure acceptable appearance in relation to architectural and decorative features of the Council Chamber in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

11. Prior to the installation of the new floor within the Council Chamber, full details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure acceptable appearance in relation to architectural and decorative features of the Council Chamber in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

12. Prior to the installation of any AV equipment full details of size, position, appearance and wiring runs of the equipment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure important features of the listed building are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

13. Where timber panelling is to be removed and replaced after the installation of thermal wall lining, or refreshed and polished, a method statement for these works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by Local Planning Authority prior to these works commencing. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure important features of the listed building are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

14. Prior to the installation of secondary glazing to the Szeged Room, Members Room or Committee Rooms 1 and 2, Mayors Parlour, Chief Executives Office and the Tourist Information Office , details of the glazing shall be submitted to and approved in writing by Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure important features of the listed building are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

15. Prior to the installation of the bar/store within the Small Hall, details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the bar installation is free standing, retains the timber floor below, and can be removed in the future with no long-term impact to the existing historic fabric in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018

16. Prior to the installation of any of the platform lifts, details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure important features of the listed building are conserved and to be in accordance with Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment, of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

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25/04386/FUL – Corn Exchange, 2 Wheeler Street, 3 and 3A Parsons Court, Cambridge

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: Market

Proposal: Refurbishment and extension of the Corn Exchange including addition of PV panels, changes to public realm, and alterations and extension to 3 Parsons Court and 2 Wheeler Street including change of use to drinking establishment

Applicant: Cambridge City Council

Presenting officer: Charlotte Spencer

Reason presented to committee: Land within the ownership of the Council

Member site visit date: 23 March 2026

Key issues: 1. Principle of Development

2. Impact on Character and Appearance and Heritage Assets

3. Sustainability

4. Highway Safety

5. Residential Amenity

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

Report contents

Document section	Document heading
1	Executive summary
2	Site description and context
3	The proposal
4	Relevant site history
5	Policy
6	Consultations
7	Third party representations
8	Member representations
9	Local groups / petition
10	Planning background
11	Assessment
12	Principle of development
13	Design, layout, scale and landscaping and impact on heritage assets
14	Carbon reduction and sustainable design
15	Biodiversity
16	Water management and flood risk
17	Highway safety and transport
18	Cycle and car parking provision
19	Amenity
20	Third party representations
21	Other matters
22	Planning balance
23	Recommendation
24	Planning conditions

Table 1 Contents of report

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The application forms part of the wider Civic Quarter project which aims to reconnect the Guildhall, Market Square, Corn Exchange and surrounding public realm. The project aims to create an inclusive, attractive destination that enhances the civic heart of Cambridge. The applicants have engaged with the Local Planning Authority through numerous pre-applications under Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) starting in 2024 and leading up to the formal submission of the application.
- 1.2 The applicant aims to strengthen the Corn Exchange's competitiveness, accessibility and sustainability. The development aims to upgrade acoustic performance and enhance food and beverage facilities within

Parsons Court, improving the customer experience whilst aligning with the Council's net zero and water neutrality ambitions.

- 1.3 The application seeks planning permission for refurbishment and extension of the Corn Exchange including addition of PV panels, changes to public realm, and alterations and extension to 3 Parsons Court and 2 Wheeler Street including change of use to drinking establishment.
- 1.4 Additional information has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority during the course of the application. Amendments include the submission of a site specific Flood Risk Assessment, points of clarifications made on the plans and responses to the consultee comments.
- 1.5 The principle of the change of use of, extensions and alterations to 2 Wheeler Street and 3/3A Parsons Court, and extensions and alterations to the Corn Exchange is supported.
- 1.6 All buildings within the site are Grade II Listed and the site lies within the Historic Core Conservation Area. Most elements of the proposal would have a neutral impact on these heritage assets, but a few discrete elements of the proposal, including plant extract detailing, would have a low level of less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area, Listed Building and setting of the neighbouring Listed Buildings.
- 1.7 The proposal would result in public benefits such as a large reduction in energy use, improved accessibility, internal improvements to the historic fabric, slight uplift in standing room capacity and improved acoustics to a concert venue. It is considered that these benefits outweigh the identified harm to the heritage assets.
- 1.8 The proposal seeks to make amendments to Parsons Court which is currently adopted highway. The intention to stop up this road is supported, however, this would be dealt with outside of the planning process. The buildings would remain as car free and it is considered that the level of cycle parking is acceptable in this instance. Subject to condition, it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable in highway safety terms.
- 1.9 Due to the site's location in the city centre, there are few neighbouring residential units. However, a Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted as part of the application and subject to conditions, the impact on residential amenity is acceptable.

1.10 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee **approve** the application subject to conditions as outlined at the end of this report.

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment	Paragraph Reference
Conservation Officer	No objection	6.1
Cadent Gas	No objection	6.7
County Highways Development Management	No objection	6.8
Ecology Officer	No objection	6.14
Environmental Health	No objection	6.15
Historic England	No objection	6.16
Landscape Officer	No objection	6.17
Sustainable Drainage Officer	No objection	6.18
Sustainability Officer	No objection	6.19
Urban Design Officer	No objection	6.21
Waste	No objection	6.25
Third Party Representations (24)	0 in support 21 in objection 3 neutral	7.1
Member Representations (0)		8.1

Local Interest Groups and Organisations / Petition (0)		9.1
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2. Site description and context

- 2.1 The application relates to the Corn Exchange, 2 Wheeler Street and 3 and 3A Parsons Court which are all Grade II listed buildings. The Corn Exchange is an existing concert venue that originally functioned as a trading hall for grain merchants. It is separated from the other buildings by Parsons Court which is a small dead-end highway. No.2 Wheeler Street is a two and a half storey terraced building that forms part of a group of listed buildings namely Nos.1-2 Wheeler Street and No. 1 Parsons Court. Nos.3 and 3A is a three storey building that forms part of a separate listing but is attached to the Wheeler Street properties. The upper floor of No.2 Wheeler Street does not form part of this application and is used by the restaurant next door (Pho) These buildings are currently used as the Corn Exchange Box Office and offices.
- 2.2 The site lies within the City Centre, Primary Shopping Area and the frontage of No.2 Wheeler Street is a Secondary Shopping Frontage. The site lies within the Historic Core Conservation Area and it lies within the setting of numerous Grade II listed buildings.
- 2.3 The building fronts Wheeler Street to the north and Corn Exchange Street and Parsons Court flank the side elevations. To the rear lies the Babbage Lecture Theatre, and the Grand Arcade Shopping Centre is located to the east.

3. The proposal

- 3.1 The application seeks planning permission for refurbishment and extension of the Corn Exchange including addition of PV panels, changes to public realm, and alterations and extension to 3 Parsons Court and 2 Wheeler Street including change of use to drinking establishment.
- 3.2 This application is for full planning permission and so only relates to the external alterations and change of use. There are numerous internal alterations proposed as part of the proposals, however, these will be considered in more detail within the consideration of the listed building application (25/04387/LBC). For clarification, the works related to the Corn Exchange are as follows:
- External New roof to main section and installation of PV panels;

- New window lanterns;
- Extension to rear (south) to create plant room with plant space above with roof screening and top mounted acoustic louvres and installation of MEP ducting;
- Reconfigure pitch and extension to hide plant on the roof over Parsons Court section and installation of attenuator louvres to Parsons Court and Wheeler Street elevations;
- New window lanterns;
- New entrance onto Parsons Court;
- Remove infill brick and reinstate three first floor windows to St Johns Bar;
- Existing surface within Parson's Court to be removed and replaced - primary material Yorkstone.

3.3 The application has been amended to address representations and further consultations have been carried out as appropriate. Amendments include clarification on the floor plans, provision of a Flood Risk Assessment and a provision of a plan showing the proposed area to be stopped up.

4. Relevant site history

Reference	Description	Outcome
25/04387/LBC	Refurbishment and extension of the Corn Exchange including addition of PV panels, changes to public realm, and alterations and extension to 3 Parsons Court and 2 Wheeler Street including change of use to drinking establishment	Under determination
25/03648/LBC	Installation of two LG LG49XE4F 49 inch Black Outdoor Display screens on the front elevation.	Under determination
C/83/0971	LBC for Conversion of Corn Exchange to multi-purpose hall - (Phase II)	Permitted
C/83/0970	Conversion of Corn Exchange to multi-purpose hall - (Phase II)	Permitted
C/82/0522	Conversion of multi-purpose hall (Phase I)	Permitted
C/81/0868	LBC for Conversion of Corn Exchange to multipurpose hall (Phase I)	Allowed at appeal
C/81/0119	Conversion of Corn Exchange to multipurpose hall and erection of annex	Permitted

Table 2 Relevant site history – **Corn Exchange**

Reference	Description	Outcome
09/0766/LBC	Installation of signage (Grade II Listed Building).	Permitted
09/0767/ADV	Installation of stainless steel letters with internal halo illumination to fascia and installation of one hanging sign (non-illuminated).	Permitted
07/0416/FUL	Redevelopment of Telephone Shop and former Age Concern day centre to provide new box office.	Permitted
07/0415/LBC	Redevelopment of Telephone Shop and former Age Concern day centre to provide new Box Office.	Permitted

Table 3 Relevant site history – **No.2 Wheeler Street and 3 Parsons Court**

5. Policy

5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) Cycle Infrastructure Design

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Environment Act 2021

ODPM Circular 06/2005 – Protected Species

Equalities Act 2010

5.2 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 18 Stage Consultation - December 2025 to January 2026)

- 5.2.1 The Regulation 18 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan (the draft 'Joint Local Plan' (JLP)) represents the next stage of preparing a new joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge. Once it is adopted, it will become the statutory development plan for the Greater Cambridge area, replacing the current (adopted) Local Plans for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District.
- 5.2.2 Following endorsement by Joint Cabinet in November, the draft JLP will proceed to a formal public consultation (under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012). This is currently scheduled between 1 December 2025 and 30 January 2026.
- 5.2.3 In line with paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to several factors. The draft JLP is consistent with policies in the current NPPF but represents an earlier stage of the plan making process. Therefore, at this stage, the draft JLP and its policies can only be afforded limited weight as a material consideration in decision making

5.3 Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

- Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Policy 8: Setting of the city
- Policy 10: The City Centre
- Policy 11: Development in the City Centre Primary Shopping Area
- Policy 28: Carbon reduction, community energy networks, sustainable design and construction, and water use
- Policy 29: Renewable and low carbon energy generation
- Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle
- Policy 32: Flood risk
- Policy 34: Light pollution control
- Policy 35: Protection of human health from noise and vibration
- Policy 36: Air quality, odour and dust
- Policy 55: Responding to context
- Policy 56: Creating successful places
- Policy 58: Altering and extending existing buildings
- Policy 59: Designing landscape and the public realm
- Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment
- Policy 63: Works to a heritage asset to address climate change
- Policy 69: Protection of sites of biodiversity and geodiversity importance
- Policy 70: Protection of priority species and habitats
- Policy 73: Community, sports and leisure facilities
- Policy 79: Visitor attractions

Policy 80: Supporting sustainable access to development
Policy 81: Mitigating the transport impact of development
Policy 82: Parking management

5.4 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Biodiversity SPD – Adopted February 2022

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted November 2016

5.5 Other guidance

Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (2001).

Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010)

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste

Cambridgeshire Design Guide For Streets and Public Realm (2007)

5.6 Area Guidelines

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2015)

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y – Affects a Listed Building and Conservation Area

Conservation Officer- No Objection

6.1 The proposed extension would be set back on Corn Exchange Street. Although visible from the raised walkway along the Grand Arcade car park, it would be seen in a context that includes the architecture of the

neighbouring David Attenborough Building. It is considered appropriate and sensitive.

- 6.2 The boxy ducting for Mechanical Extraction Plant (MEP) is also particularly apparent at the southern end of the building and it is regrettable that a less impactful solution could not be found. There would be some adverse impacts on the Conservation Area, however, the extensions would not have a wider impact due to its context.
- 6.3 It is considered that the replacement of the main roof and inclusions of PV panels would not harm the Conservation Area. The alteration to the roof on Parson's Court would have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area.
- 6.4 The low adverse impact of the proposed extension and ducting is balanced by the benefits such as the better revealing of the historic fabric internally. The MEP ducting is a high level and would be reversible.
- 6.5 No objections subject to conditions relating to details of MEP ducting and shop front alterations.
- 6.6 Officer comment: Members are reminded that these comments are applicable to the full element of the scheme only and any internal changes to the historic fabric would be dealt with under the listed building application.

Cadent Gas- No Objection

- 6.7 Request an informative as development is in close proximity to medium and low pressure assets.

County Highways Development Management - No Objection

Final Comments dated 23.02.2026

- 6.8 The Highway Authority maintains the position that any door should be recessed so that they do not open outwards over the public highway. However, it is noted that if the proposed stopping up of Parsons Court is successful this objection falls away.
- 6.9 Notwithstanding this, the Highway Act does allow a Public Building Exception and for public buildings this rule can be bypassed if the City Council and Highway Authority provide specific consent for the doors to open outwards.

- 6.10 Requests that any detail/hard landscaping/paving that fall outside of the application site be specifically excluded from any permission that the planning authority is minded to grant as these works are subject to a separate planning application to which the Highway Authority has raised an objection to.
- 6.11 Confirms that there are no objections to the proposed stopping up of Parsons Court. The applicant will need to determine the most appropriate legal mechanism to complete this process.
- 6.12 The original objection is withdrawn. This withdrawal is strictly subject to the caveats mentioned, specifically the successful legal stopping up of Parsons Court; the separate procurement of form consent for any outward opening doors and; the explicit exclusion of the landscaping works on Guildhall Street, Corn Exchange Street and Wheeler Street from this permission.
- 6.13 Requests a condition requiring the submission of a Traffic Management Plan.

Ecology Officer - No Objection

- 6.14 No objection subject to conditions relating to compliance, enhancement, lighting and green roofs.

Environmental Health- No Objection

- 6.15 No objection subject to conditions relating to construction hours, construction deliveries, amplified music, compliance with the noise impact assessment, acoustic screens, noise insulation scheme and banning of amplified music in outdoor areas.

Historic England- No Objection

- 6.16 No objections subject to finer details of the scheme which can be dealt with by condition.

Landscape Officer - No Objection

- 6.17 No comments but recommends that a hard landscaping condition is sought.

Sustainable Drainage Officer- No Objection

Final Comments dated 18.02.2026

- 6.18 Site is in an area at risk of surface water flooding which ranges from very low to high risk across the site. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment is acceptable. It is considered that the submission of a full Surface Water Drainage Strategy for the proposed drainage channels can be addressed by way of condition.

Sustainability Officer - No Objection

- 6.19 The proposed approach would deliver a significant improvement on the existing energy and carbon performance of the building. The reduction would be achieved by changing to an all-electric air source heat pump heating system, the addition of insulation to the roof, floor and back of house spaces, the installation of a new ventilation system and the installation of solar PV panels. The scheme will target 5 BREEAM Wat01 credits, however, it is noted that there is limited space for rainwater harvesting tanks. If 5 Wa01 credits are not possible than 4 credits will be achieved which is acceptable.
- 6.20 No objection subject to conditions relating to compliance with sustainability strategy and water credits.

Urban Design Officer - No Objection

- 6.21 Proposed changes refine it as an external social and pedestrian friendly courtyard that improves connectivity to the Corn Exchange and associated bar. This will activate the space. Should use high quality materials.
- 6.22 The changes to the roof above Parsons Court are acceptable and non-obtrusive terminated to the view looking south down Parsons Court.
- 6.23 Extension is an obvious and contemporary addition and is supported.
- 6.24 High level Mechanical Extraction Plant (MEP) ducting is identified on the submitted drawings and illustrated within the views. The ducting on the south east corner appears overly bulky and does not integrate well. However, the additional information provided adequately justifies the need for insulation and ducting. As such, this is acceptable in Urban Design terms.

Waste – Comment

- 6.25 A complete Waste Management Plan should evidence that sufficient consideration has been given to frequent HGV access, parking restrictions, bin store requirements. Can be controlled by way of condition.

Design Review Panel Meeting of 26 June 2025 (Appendix A of application 25/04382/FUL for full comments)

- 6.26 The whole of the Civic Quarter redevelopment scheme went to the Design Review Panel (DRP) in June 2025. In regard to the Corn Exchange, the DRP considered that the proposals to dramatically improve circulation in the foyers and access to the bars will really transform the visitor experience and the works to Parsons Court would be positive.
- 6.27 The sustainability specialist raised concerns about the underfloor cooling for the Corn Exchange as this could cause moisture and safety issues.
- 6.28 It was raised as to whether a canopy could be added to Parsons Court to extend its use within the winter months.

7. Third party representations

- 7.1 24 representations have been received, 0 in support, 21 in objection and 3 raising neutral comments.
- 7.2 Those in objection have raised the following issues:
- Principle of development
 - ‘Member Club’ not being compatible with Local Authority Values
 - Heritage impacts
 - Does not reflect the Corn Exchange character
 - Undermines the historic and social significance
 - Parson’s Court is a vital emergency exit and unloading area;
 - Concern about HGV movements and lack of disabled spaces;
 - Highway safety
 - Traffic and access management plan required;
 - Shared surfaces must avoid creating conflict;
 - Cycle parking provision
 - Lack of covered cycle spaces
 - Internal layout
 - Redesign does not reflect the Corn Exchange’s operational need;

- Would lead to a reduction in capacity
- Bar would cause congestion
- Inadequate provision of staff welfare/ offices/ storage
- Box office location would cause crowding at entrance
- Consultation:
 - Poor consultation with staff
- Safety:
 - Failed to consider fire safety regulations and upcoming Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act requirements
- Economic Harm
 - Closure of 14-18 months would create economic harm
 - 'Members club' unrealistic

- 7.3 Those raising neutral comments have given the following reasons:
- Presents an essential opportunity to secure long-term future but have concerns as has been summarised above;
 - Support sensitive approach to heritage assets;
 - Welcome improvements to accessibility

7.4 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations are available on the Council's website.

8. Member Representations

8.1 None received.

9. Local Groups / Petition

9.1 None received.

10. Planning background

10.1 The Corn Exchange was converted into its current use as a concert venue in the 1980s (C/83/0790 and C/83/0971). Since then, there have been numerous alterations to the building, however, these have not all been listed within table 2. There is a current application for the installation of outdoor display screens under determination, this is separate to the current application and would not impact the decision of this application.

- 10.2 No. 2 Wheeler Street and No.3 Parsons Court was converted into the box office following permission granted in 2007 (07/0416/FUL and 07/0415/LBC).

11. Assessment

- 11.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from an inspection of the site and the surroundings, the key issues are:
- Principle of development
 - Design, layout, scale and landscaping and impact on heritage assets
 - Carbon reduction and sustainable design
 - Biodiversity
 - Highway safety and transport impacts
 - Car and cycle parking
 - Amenity
 - Third party representations
 - Other matters
 - Planning balance
 - Recommendation
 - Planning conditions

12. Principle of Development

- 12.1 The application site comprises a concert venue, box office and public highway which lies within the City Centre. No.2 Wheeler Street lies within the Primary Shopping Area and is identified as a Secondary Shopping Frontage, however, the rest of the site lies outside it.
- 12.2 Policy 10 of the Local Plan states that the city centre will be the primary focus for developments attracting a large number of people and for meeting retail, leisure, cultural and other needs appropriate to its role as a multi-functional regional centre.
- 12.3 Policy 11 refers to Primary Shopping Areas where changes of use to another centre use will be supported provided:
- a. The proposal complements the retail function and makes a positive contribution to the vitality, viability and diversity of the city centre;
 - b. Provision is made for active function;
 - c. It would not give rise to a detrimental effect on the character or amenity of the area through smell, litter, noise or traffic problems.
- 12.4 The proposed works to the Corn Exchange would not result in a material change of use.

- 12.5 No.2 Wheeler Street and Nos.3 and 3A Parsons Court are currently in use as a box office with associated offices which is stated by the applicant as being Class E. The proposal would result in the conversion of these buildings to a drinking establishment which is Sui Generis, as such a change of use is proposed. Within the Planning Statement the applicant has confirmed that this establishment would operate independently of the Corn Exchange and so it would not be considered ancillary to the venue.
- 12.6 Table 3.1 in the Local Plan identifies a drinking establishment as a centre use that is suitable on all floors in a Primary Shopping Area. Wheeler Street and nearby Bene't Street comprise a mixture of restaurants, shops and a number of established public houses. It is considered that a drinking establishment would complement the retail and other uses which function in this area as it would add to the night-time economy. It would also help support the Corn Exchange when events are on, offering audiences an additional bar in close proximity. The new drinking establishment would have an active frontage. The impact on the amenity of the area through smell, litter, noise or traffic problems are considered in more detail below.
- 12.7 It is noted that Policy 11 also states that on Secondary Shopping Frontages that retail (A1) uses should remain the predominant use. However, this was adopted prior to the changes to the new Use Class Order and A1 use class no longer exists. The other restaurants on Wheeler Street are Class E and so can be converted to retail without planning permission. Class E is the predominant use in the immediate area.
- 12.8 Concerns have been raised in regard to the 'Members Lounges' on the upper floors. They were labelled as 'Members Lounges' on the plans, however, within the Design and Access Statement they are referred to VIP spaces details of which will be developed. Officers have sought clarification and the plan room labels have been altered to 'VIP Experience Room'. The cover letter attached with amendments (dated 05 February 2026) clarified that this is for the Corn Exchange to be able to diversify the ticket offer and add a potential revenue stream by offering VIP tickets, holders of those would have access to these rooms. Officers are content that these rooms are not for a private members club, do not represent a separate planning unit and as such the proposed use falls within and is ancillary to the proposed drinking establishment use. This is a business / commercial matter and not one for the Local Planning Authority to consider.

- 12.9 Parson's Court is currently an adopted public highway. The proposal if approved, would necessitate a separate application to 'stop up' the road which the Local Highway Authority has confirmed they would be agreeable to, however, this is a process that is to be done outside of the planning process and not a matter for this application. The issues surrounding the stopping up of Parson's Court would be considered within the Highway Safety element of the report.
- 12.10 Subsequently, subject to all other material considerations, the proposal is acceptable in principle.

13. Design, layout, scale and landscaping and impact on heritage assets

- 13.1 The proposal seeks permission for the refurbishment and extension of the Corn Exchange, including the addition of PV panels, alterations to the public realm and alterations and extensions to No.3 Parsons Court and 2 Wheeler street to allow a conversion to a drinking establishment.
- 13.2 Policies 55, 56, 58 and 59 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) seek to ensure that development responds appropriately to its context, is of a high quality and reflects or successfully contrasts with existing building forms and materials
- 13.3 The Corn Exchange, 2 Wheeler Street and 3/3A Parsons Court are all Grade II Listed Buildings. The site lies within the Historic Core Conservation Area. There are a number of Grade II Listed Buildings in close proximity to the application site including the Old Library and the Guildhall to the north, Honest Burger (The former Red Cow Public House) to the east, 1 Parsons Court, 1 Wheeler Street, 10 and 11 Peas Hill and 16 Bene't Street (Zizzi) which form part of the row of buildings in which the box office lies.
- 13.4 Section 66 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 13.5 Section 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

- 13.6 Para. 212 of the NPPF set out that ‘When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance’. Para. 213 states that ‘Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification...’ Para.215 states ‘where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use’.
- 13.7 Policy 61 of the Local Plan aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.
- 13.8 This application is for full planning permission and so only relates to the external alterations and change of use. There are numerous internal alterations proposed as part of the proposals, however, these will be considered in more detail within the consideration of the listed building application (25/04387/LBC).

Corn Exchange – Rear Extension with Plant and Mechanical Extraction Plant (MEP) Ducting

- 13.9 The proposal includes a first floor and second floor extension to the rear of the Corn Exchange. The extension would infill the area between the south porch on Corn Exchange Street and the projecting element on Parsons Court. It would have a maximum depth of 7.7 metres and would follow the footprint established on the ground floor. It would be characterised by a flat roof with a maximum height of 12 metres above the street level. It would be clad with rainscreen aluminium which would benefit from patterns to match the features from the existing elevation realised through perforations, embossing and debossing to create texture.
- 13.10 Plant and associated screening would be installed on the roof of the extension. The screen would be set slightly back from the wall of the extension and would have a height of 2.9 metres resulting in a total height of 14.9 metres above street level. The screening would comprise acoustic louvres with perforated aluminium panels.
- 13.11 Next to the plant screen there would be MEP ducting atop the roof of the main hall. The ducting would be slightly higher than the plant screen and

would be 15.6 metres above street level. It would be clad in aluminium rainscreen cladding.

- 13.12 Due to the height of the extension and plant screen, this element of the proposal would be visible from Corn Exchange Street. However, it would be set back behind the porch and as such minimises its visibility from street level. However, it would be more visible from the raised walkway which runs alongside the Grand Arcade car park. However, due to the set back from Corn Exchange Street along with the use of modern materials it is considered that the extension and plant screen would read clearly as a contemporary addition, distinct from the Listed Building and it is considered to be an appropriate and subservient addition.
- 13.13 It is acknowledged that the MEP ducting is boxy and would be noticeable and Officers consider that this is not ideal. Within the Cover Letter attached within the amendment pack, the architect has responded to the Urban Design Officer's concerns explaining that the size of the unit is necessary for the required airflow to be delivered from a compact plant location. It is also confirmed that the cladding and insulation would be installed as tightly as possible to the ductwork. The Urban Design Officer considered this response and is content that the ducting has been justified.
- 13.14 Whilst noting the MEP ducting appearance is not ideal, it is soundly justified. Officers note that this element would be read in conjunction with the existing David Attenborough building to the south which is a large box-like building, and it would be in the setting of the eastern elevation of the University Student Services building and the Grand Arcade car park which are modern dominant buildings within the area. Subsequently, the level of harm is lessened due to its location.
- 13.15 Subsequently, it is considered that the proposed extension and associated plant including ducting would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the existing building and surrounding area. It would result in a low level of 'less than substantial harm' to the character and appearance of the conservation area and to the setting of the listed building.

Corn Exchange – Main Hall Roof and PV Panels

- 13.16 The roof over the main building of the Corn Exchange is zinc and it is understood to have been introduced as part of the 1980s conversion works. The proposed replacement would be aluminium standing seam covering would be of similar appearance to the existing.

- 13.17 As the existing roof is a modern intervention there are no concerns with replacing its materials. The proposed roof would be of a similar appearance to the existing roof. The repeated vertical seams offer a pattern that can accept PV panels to be arranged to avoid a visually distracting or ad-hoc pattern on the roof. Subsequently, it is considered that these works would not impact the building's significance.
- 13.18 The main roof of the Corn Exchange would not be seen in short or medium views with other sensitive roofscapes. Solar panels are a common feature within the Historic Core even on historically important buildings such as on the Kings College Chapel. Subsequently, it is considered that the addition of the PVs in this case would not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Corn Exchange – Parsons Court Roof Re-profiling

- 13.19 The proposals involve an alteration to plant on the roof that faces Parsons Court and as such, alterations to the roof are required.
- 13.20 The roof would be raised by approximately 1.5 metres, the north facing pitch would be made steeper and the west facing hipped roof would be altered to be a gable end. Louvres would be added to the roof plane. The new roof would be finished in the previously removed slates to maintain a similar overall visual appearance.
- 13.21 It is considered that this approach successfully screens the plant and creates an acceptable solution and non-obtrusive termination to the view looking south down Parsons Court. The Council's Conservation Officer has confirmed that this element of the proposal would have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area and as this is a less sensitive part of the building, the alteration would have little impact on the significance of the listed building.

Corn Exchange – New entrance

- 13.22 A new entrance door would be installed on the western elevation facing Parsons Court. This would create a step free access to the Foyer and an additional fire escape. It would be installed in an existing opening and would not have an impact on the character and appearance of the existing building, would not impact the significance of the listed building and would not impact upon the wider Conservation Area.

2 Wheeler Street and 3/3A Parsons Court – Change of use

13.23 The proposals would result in a change of use from a box office and offices (Class E) to a drinking establishment (Sui Generis). Wheeler Street comprises restaurants and bars and so it is considered that this use would be in keeping with the character of the immediate area. The change of use would not have an impact on the heritage assets.

2 Wheeler Street and 3/3A Parsons Court – New shopfront

13.24 The change of use would result in a minor change to the shop front resulting in the reduction of the size of the windows and a relocation of the entrance door from a central position to one side. It would be similar in appearance to the Vietnamese restaurant (Pho) next door and be subject to final details which can be secured by way of condition. The alteration would have a neutral impact on the character, appearance and significance of the conservation area and listed buildings.

2 Wheeler Street and 3/3A Parsons Court – Ground floor extension

13.25 The proposal involves the erection of an extension within the courtyard of these buildings, to the rear of the buildings. This would involve the removal of the existing pitched roof located between Nos.3 and 4 Parsons Court and it would be replaced with a flat roof. This would involve the minor increase of the eaves level by 0.2 metres. The existing door would be replaced with a new one.

13.26 Due to the existing wall and roof of this area, and its location within the closed courtyard of the buildings, the extension would not be overly visible within the public realm. There would be no wide or medium views of it, and it would have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of the listed building.

Parsons Court – Public Realm

13.27 The proposal assumes the stopping up of Parsons Court (a separate process under the Highways Act 1980) which is currently a public highway and proposes alterations to the public realm in this area.

13.28 The existing concrete block paving in a herringbone pattern would be replaced with York Stone Paving, with resin bound gravel around the western side of the Corn Exchange.

13.29 Parsons Court is currently a service lane for the Corn Exchange as well as providing access to Nos. 3 and 4 and egress from the Corn Exchange after events or in the case of a fire. The street is currently used to store

refuse bins and adhoc car parking and as such, it is considered that the quality of the area is diminished. Waste containers located in Parson's Court currently serve the Corn Exchange, Giggling Squid and Sticks 'n' Sushi. Waste generated by the Corn Exchange will be stored externally in a newly created storage area which is located to the side of the Parson's Court element of the Corn Exchange. The waste for the other commercial buildings is proposed to be moved to the Guildhall.

- 13.30 It is considered that the proposed changes have the potential to create a high quality, pedestrian courtyard which would provide a connection between the Corn Exchange and new bar within the Wheeler Street/ Parsons Court buildings. Officers considered that this would help to re-establish Parson's Court as a 'Cambridge Yard' and would create a small and adaptable working space connected to surrounding uses. The final detailing of the landscaping can be secured by way of condition.
- 13.31 Officers considered that the changes to Parsons Court would result in an enhancement to the Conservation Area.

Summary

- 13.32 Overall, the proposed development is a high-quality design that would contribute positively to its surroundings and be appropriately landscaped. The proposal is compliant with policies 55, 56, 58, 59 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.
- 13.33 In terms of impact on the heritage assets, the below table summarises the impact on the listed buildings and conservation area.

Area	Proposal	Impact on Conservation Area	Impact on Listed Building
Corn Exchange	Extension and MEP plant and ducting	Low end of less than substantial harm	Low end of less than substantial harm
	Replacement roof and PV panels	Neutral	Neutral
	Parsons Court Roof Extension	Neutral	Neutral
2 Wheeler Street/ 3/3A Parsons Court	Change to shop front	Neutral	Neutral

	W/C Extension in courtyard	Neutral	Neutral
Net Heritage Impact		Low end of less than substantial harm	Low end of less than substantial harm

Table 4 Summary of heritage impact

- 13.34 Subsequently, proposals would result in a low level of less of substantial harm to both the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings. It is noted that the Conservation Officer refers to a bettering of the internal fabric from the scheme, however, internal works cannot be considered under this application so cannot be considered as part of the 'net' or 'internal' heritage balance and will be considered under the listed building consent.
- 13.35 It is considered that the limited harm to the heritage assets has been fully justified as there are clear and convincing reasons for the work. With regards to the setting of listed buildings in close proximity to the application site, it is considered that due to the position of the extension and ducting to the rear of the building, the experience of the frontage of these buildings would not be detrimentally impacted by the proposed changes.
- 13.36 As less than substantial harm to the Listed Buildings within the site and the Conservation Area has been identified, paragraph 215 of the NPPF is therefore engaged and the harm needs to be considered against the public benefits of the scheme. Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 state that special regard shall be placed on preserving or enhancing the special interest of a listed building or the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 13.37 The Corn Exchange is a public building, although it is noted that it is not open to the general public to walk in and is restricted to ticket holders. The scheme would result in a 61-79% reduction in energy use reducing the carbon footprint, more details of this are explained in the section below. This is considered to be a significant environmental public benefit. Accessibility of the building would also be improved with a new step free door from Parsons Court. It is considered that these improvements would help to modernise the building and secure its use as a concert venue long term.
- 13.38 It is considered that these public benefits should be given significant weight and Officers consider that these benefits outweigh the identified heritage harm.

13.39 It is considered reasonable to add a condition requesting the details of the external materials. It is noted that the Conservation Officer has requested conditions requiring more information. These have been added to the linked listed building consent application and so there is no need to repeat them under this application.

13.40 The proposal is compliant with Policy 61 of the Local Plan and the provisions of the NPPF. It is considered that these public benefits should be given significant weight and Officers consider that these benefits outweigh the identified heritage harm.

14 Carbon reduction and sustainable design

14.1 The application is supported by a Sustainability Section with the Design and Access Statement (Part 6). The proposed approach to sustainability and energy reduction includes the installation of an all-electric air source heat pump, insulation to the roof, auditorium floor and back of house spaces, the installation of a new ventilation system and the installation of 206 PV panels.

14.2 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Sustainability Officer. They have advised that whilst the listed status of the building does limit the measures that can be implemented, the proposed approach will deliver a significant improvement on the existing energy and carbon performance of the building. It is considered the proposed works would have a potential for 61-79% reduction in energy use and solar panels would generate 56,240kWh/year resulting in a reduction of 9,995kgCO₂e.

14.3 In addition, the proposals include undertaking embodied carbon optioneering studies to inform plant choices in relation to the choice of air source heat pumps and domestic hot water strategy. Consideration is also being given to reusing materials already within the Corn Exchange, including flooring within the main hall, bar equipment, lighting, the accessible lift and theatre equipment where possible.

14.4 The proposed approach to carbon reduction is welcomed and the final details can be secured by way of condition.

14.5 In terms of water efficiency, the current water use of the Corn Exchange is 7000 cubic metres/year and 430 cubic metres/year for Parsons Court. The upgrades to the existing fabric include replacement of water fittings with water efficiency fittings in line with BREEAM Wat01 5/5 credits to reduce water

consumption. Due to the increase in intensity there would be an increase in potable water, however the project aims to reduce the potable water usage as much as possible but is not aiming to achieve water neutrality. The option of using recycled condensate water is being investigated as an alternative to rainwater re-use due to the space constraints limiting the integration of large rainwater harvesting tanks. If 5 Wat01 credits are not achieved, then 4 Wat01 will be achieved and example specifications have been provided for both options. This is considered acceptable and can be secured by way of condition.

- 14.6 The applicants have suitably addressed the issue of sustainability and renewable energy and subject to conditions the proposal is compliant with policies 28 and 29 of the Local Plan and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020.

15 Biodiversity

- 15.14 The application is supported by a statutory BNG metric, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), Bat Emergence Survey and Biodiversity Net Gain Plan.
- 15.15 The site consists of buildings and sealed surfaces. The PEA found no evidence to suggest a protected specified licence will be required; however, it has recommended non-licensable reasonable avoidance measures to remove any residential risk of harm or disturbance to protected or priority species.
- 15.16 The Corn Exchange and 3 Parsons Court were assessed as having the potential to support roosting bats and as such a PRA and emergence survey was undertaken. No evidence of bats was found using either building but these surveys recommended precautionary measures and mitigation that can be secured by way of condition.
- 15.17 The proposal would not meet the criteria to provide a 10% biodiversity net gain as the amount of habitat impacted would be de-minimis. Notwithstanding that the application is exempt from BNG, a metric has been submitted across the whole Civic Quarter re-development resulting in an increase of 0.3 habitat units, mainly in the form of planting within the Market Square application (25/04382/FUL). Whilst this is welcome it is not a requirement and so there is no reason to link the applications to ensure that the BNG on another application is provided.
- 15.18 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, who raises no objection to the proposal and recommends

several conditions to ensure the protection and enhancement of species is delivered. All conditions are considered reasonable with exception to the submission of the lighting report. The site is located in an urban area where lights are prevalent. This condition is considered to be unreasonable. Officers are satisfied that the proposed development complies with policy 70 of the Local Plan, the Biodiversity SPD 2022, the requirements of the Environment Act 2021 and 06/2005 Circular advice.

16 Water management and flood risk

- 16.14 The site is in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore considered at low risk of fluvial flooding, however, it is at a low to high risk of surface water flooding.
- 16.15 The applicants have submitted a Flood Risk Assessment which has been reviewed by the Council's Sustainable Drainage Engineer. They have confirmed that the surface and foul water will connect to existing surface and foul water drainage systems. The site proposes new drainage channels along Corn Exchange Street and Parsons Court. This is considered to be acceptable, and the submission of a full Surface Water Drainage Strategy can be secured by way of condition.
- 16.16 The applicants have suitably addressed the issues of water management and flood risk, and subject to conditions the proposal is in accordance with policies 31 and 32 of the Local Plan and NPPF advice.

17 Highway safety and transport impacts

- 17.14 The proposal involves alterations to Parsons Court which is currently an adopted highway. The scheme, if approved, would be subject to a separate process under the Highways Act 1980 to stop up the highway and use it for an external outdoor space.
- 17.15 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment which covers all elements of the Civic Quarter redevelopment.
- 17.16 Whilst the proposal would result in an increase in the maximum capacity of the venue from 1,586 to 1,628. It is stated within the Transport Statement that this would only result in an increase of approximately 42 people or up to 192 for a limited number of shows. Due to the low increase of maximum attendees compared to the maximum capacity of the venue, it is considered that the small uplift in trips can be accommodated by the existing transport infrastructure.

- 17.17 The Local Highways Authority have been consulted on the application. Whilst they have significant concerns regarding the wider Civic Quarter redevelopment, they have stated that they would have no objection to the stopping up of Parsons Court. This will be dealt with by way of a S247 of the TCPA or 116 of the Highways Act and will be separate to this planning permission.
- 17.18 However, concerns have been raised regarding the doors that open onto Parsons Court as they open outwards over the public highway. Whilst the Highways Authority agree to the stopping up of this land, at present it still is considered to be public highway and so the opening of doors over the highway would constitute a dangerous obstacle and so it is unacceptable to the Highways Authority. However, they have confirmed that the Highway Act does allow for a Public Building Exception and this rule can be bypassed if Cambridge City Council and Highway Authority provide specific consent. This is done outside of the planning process and an informative can be added to remind the applicant of the requirement to gain consent.
- 17.19 One of the doors in question is existing and currently open outwards onto the highway and it is not for this application to overcome this. There is a new set of doors on the side of the Corn Exchange to enter into the foyer and a new set of doors on the eastern elevation of 3 Parsons Court for access into the proposed toilets.
- 17.20 The applicant has confirmed that the need for the doors to open outwards is for fire regulations. Parsons Court is not a through road and so has few pedestrians within the area. At present there are multiple bins, bollards and at times parked cars which already add obstacles. As such, Officers consider that the new doors opening outwards onto the space would not worsen the highway safety of Parsons Court. In addition, as the road is proposed to be stopped up, any safety issues in regards to public highway safety would be temporary in nature. Notwithstanding this, there would be a potential conflict of the doors opening outwards with pedestrians in Parsons Court regardless of whether it remains highway land or becomes private land. As such, it is considered reasonable to add a condition requiring details of how the doors would be able to be opened safely by way of barriers or signage.
- 17.21 Notwithstanding the concerns regarding the doors, the Local Highways Authority have no objection subject to the submission of Traffic Management Plan which can be dealt with by condition. It is noted that they also request that any works outside of the site, such as the works to Guildhall Street, Corn Exchange Street and Wheeler Street be specifically excluded from any permission. The proposals for the public realm have been shown on some of the plans, albeit in a paler colour. As these works are outside the red line,

Officers are satisfied that any permission for this application does not include any works outside the red line and the plans are illustrative only. Notwithstanding this, an informative will be added to ensure that this is made clear to the applicant.

- 17.22 Concerns have been raised by third parties regarding Parsons Court being used as part of the social realm as it is used for emergency vehicle access and is a main fire escape route. These concerns are noted and the submitted images do suggest table and chairs being located within this area. As such, it would be considered reasonable to request a management plan by way of condition to ensure that the emergency route can be effectively managed when needed, especially when an event is on at the Corn Exchange.
- 17.23 Concerns have been raised by third parties regarding the movement of HGVs. How larger vehicles service the site is not being changed under the proposals and so this is not a material planning consideration.
- 17.24 Subject to conditions Officers consider that the proposal accords with the objectives of Policy 80 and 81 of the Local Plan and is compliant with NPPF advice.

18 Car and cycle provision

- 18.14 Policy 82 states that planning permission will not be granted for developments that would be contrary to the parking standards as set out in Appendix L. For concert halls inside the parking zone there should be disabled car parking and 1 space for every 2 staff and 2 cycle spaces for every 5 members of staff with 1 short stay space for every 4 seats.

Cycle parking

- 18.15 The transport statement states that the number of staff at the Corn Exchange is likely to vary but it is estimated 48 staff in a 'worst case' scenario. This would equate to a requirement of 20 cycle spaces. Currently, there are 3 Sheffield stands beneath the external staircase with which provide space for 6 cycle spaces. The proposal plans show that these stands would remain. The Transport Statement refers to staff using the proposed cycle parking provision in the Guildhall as the need for the Corn Exchange would be at different times for the need for the Guildhall. However, this application is separate to the application for the Guildhall and it is not possible to rely on a provision that may not be brought forward. However, the site is highly constrained and paragraph L.18 states that some flexibility is applied to the standards for constrained sites within the Historic Core There would be no reduction in

cycle parking on site, and due to its city centre location, there are plenty of public cycle stores within easy walking distance of the site including a large cycle park at the Grand Arcade subsequently officers considered that the staff cycle parking provision would be acceptable.

- 18.16 In terms of visitor spaces, a 2024/2025 survey as outlined within the Transport Statement shows that only 2% travel to the venue by cycling. This is very low and it is considered that the existing cycle parking in close proximity to the site – which is highly constrained - would accommodate these visitors.

Car parking

- 18.17 The submitted Transport Statement shows that in 2024/2025 the majority travel to Corn Exchange do so by car (78%). There is no car parking on site and as such, the 'last' mile of the journey is undertaken by foot.
- 18.18 Whilst there is evidence that on some occasions cars park along Parsons Court, this is ad hoc, informal and would block the public highway. The nearest car park is at the Grand Arcade which has 950 spaces and is at most 300m from the venue. There are 5 existing Blue Badge spaces along Peas Hill and Guildhall Street in very close proximity and there are 35 spaces in the Grand Arcade.
- 18.19 Subsequently, as the car parking provision would remain as existing and that the uplift in capacity being limited, it is considered that this is acceptable.

19 Amenity

- 19.14 The closest residential unit is at the Cambridge University Catholic Chaplaincy, Fisher House, Guildhall Street. Given the adjacent context, location, size, and design of the proposal it is unlikely to give rise to any significant additional amenity impacts in terms of overlooking, loss of daylight, or enclosure.
- 19.15 The nearest Noise Sensitive Receptors (NSR) are the David Attenborough Building and Cambridge University Admissions Office to the south and south west respectively. Neither are residential properties.
- 19.16 A Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted and reviewed by the Council's Environmental Health Officer. They have raised no objections subject to conditions relating to construction hours/ deliveries, closing of doors where amplified music/voice is used at both buildings, further details of plant/equipment, noise assessment and mitigation scheme for the Corn Exchange Foyer and Auditorium and the prohibition of amplified music/voice

in Parsons Court. These conditions are considered to be reasonable to protect neighbouring noise sensitive receptors from undue disturbance.

19.17 Subsequently, the proposal adequately respects the amenity of its neighbours. Subject to conditions, the proposal is compliant with policies 35 and 58 of the Local plan.

20. Third party representations

20.1 The remaining third-party representations not addressed in the preceding paragraphs are summarised and responded to in the table below:

Third party comment	Officer response
Internal Layout	<p>There have been many third-party comments regarding the internal layout not being fit for purpose with concerns around congestion at the bars, inadequate provision for staff welfare and offices and that it does not represent the operational need.</p> <p>These comments relate to the internal layout of the Corn Exchange which are not considered under the full planning element of the scheme. Notwithstanding this, the concerns relate to the management of building, and it is not for the Local Planning Authority to comment.</p>
Poor Consultation	<p>Many third-party comments have raised that there has been poor public consultation with the staff. This is in regard to pre-application consultation by the applicant rather than the statutory consultation carried out by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Section 3.3 of the Design and Access Statement outlines the public engagement that the applicant completed.</p> <p>Whilst robust public engagement is encouraged within the planning process, it is not a reason to refuse a planning application.</p>
Economic Harm	<p>Concerns have been raised regarding the closure during the construction works and the impact on the economy and the profitability of the Corn Exchange.</p>

	It is not for the Local Planning Authority to consider the viability of a business unless it is specifically stated within a policy, which in this case is not relevant. It is a matter for the applicants to consider their business model.
Fire Regulations/ Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025	Fire regulations would fall under the remit of Building Control and fire regulations, and Terrorism Act requirements would fall under the operational procedures.

Table 3 Officer response to third party representations

21. Other matters

Waste

- 21.1 The Shared Waste Services have commented on the application requesting a Waste Management plan. Further informal discussions have been had with the waste team and it is considered that as the waste management is to continue as existing this is considered to be unreasonable. Whilst the refuse storage would be moved to the side of the Parsons Court projection of the Corn Exchange, it would be down to the buildings management to move these to an acceptable pick-up point agreed with the Waste Services.

22. Planning balance

- 22.1 Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Summary of harm

- 22.2 By reason of the rear extension, roof plant and MEP boxing there would be a low level of less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area. Officers consider that this harm has been justified due to the need to increase energy efficiency.

Summary of benefits

22.3 The proposal would result in a 61-79% reduction in energy use which is considered to be a significant public benefit. The proposal would result in improved acoustic performance and there would be a minor uplift in standing capacity from 1586-1628. Accessibility of the building would also be improved with a new step free door to Parson's Court. It is considered that these improvements would help to modernise the building and secure its use as a concert venue long term.

22.4 Subsequently, Officers consider that the benefits outweigh the identified low level of harm.

22.5 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, the statutory requirements of section 66(1) and section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval

23. Recommendation

Approve subject to:

-The planning conditions as set out below with minor amendments to the conditions as drafted delegated to officers.

24. Planning conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as listed on this decision notice.

Reason: In the interests of good planning, for the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3. No demolition or construction works shall commence on site until a traffic management plan has been agreed in writing with the Planning

Authority. The principal areas of concern that should be addressed are:

- i. Movements and control of muck away lorries (wherever possible all loading and unloading should be undertaken off the adopted public highway)
- ii. Contractor parking (wherever possible all such parking should be within the curtilage of the site and not on street).
- iii. Movements and control of all deliveries (wherever possible all loading and unloading should be undertaken off the adopted public highway)
- iv. Control of dust, mud and debris, please note it is an offence under the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or debris onto the adopted public highway.

Reason: in the interests of highway safety in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF.

4. Prior to the commencement of development, a Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan (DCEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

It shall include/ adhere to the following:

- a) A phasing and co-ordination programme, relative to other Civic Quarter works
- b) Contractor's parking and access arrangements for vehicles, plant and personnel including the location of construction traffic routes to and from the site, their signing, monitoring and enforcement measures.
- c) Control of dust, mud and debris on the highway.
- d) Construction and demolition (except for loading and unloading) shall be carried out only between 0800 hours to 1800 hours Monday to Friday, and 0800 hours to 1300 hours on Saturday and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless in accordance with agreed emergency procedures for deviation.
- e) Delivery hours for muck away, demolition and construction purposes. The hours submitted for approval shall include an assessment of the daily number and type of vehicles required and an assessment as to how vehicles would safely access / exit the site include tracking / swept path analysis. The submission should include a highway safety audit / assessment to support the proposed times and include provision for banks person(s). The delivery times shall be carried out only within the agreed hours and shall at no time should any deliveries take place after 1300 hours on Saturdays and at no time

on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority in advance.

f) Prior notice and agreement procedures for works outside agreed limits and hours.

i) Site artificial lighting during construction and demolition including hours of operation, position and impact on neighbouring properties.

j) Screening and hoarding details.

k) Consideration of sensitive receptors.

l) A Community Liaison Plan to inform the community in respect of:

- the construction required to facilitate the development
- contractor point of contact, complaints procedures, including complaints response procedures

m) Membership of the Considerate Contractor's Scheme.

The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the agreed plan.

Reason: To safeguard the safety, health and quality of life of existing residential occupiers and users of the City centre in accordance with policies 35, 36 and 56 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

5. Prior to any works commencing on site, a detailed noise impact assessment of the Corn Exchange - Foyer and Main Auditorium uses on neighbouring premises and a noise insulation scheme or other noise control measures as appropriate, in order to minimise the level of noise emanating from the said Foyer and Main Auditorium shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any such noise insulation scheme shall have regard to but not exhaustively the following:
 - Nature / type of uses and events to be held.
 - Sound system setup - incorporating noise limiting control / device set to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
 - All in-house sound system speakers to be resiliently mounted / isolated to reduce structural transmission and re-radiation of noise externally.
 - Noise egress, airborne, structural and flanking sound via building structural elements.
 - Building Façade Design - Building fabric, glazing, openings and ventilation systems acoustic performance.
 - Adequate alternative ventilation should be provided to ensure external doors and windows remain closed.
 - Premises entrances / exits and any associated external spaces and patron noise.

- There should be a cut-out device fitted to external entrance / exit doors, so that if they are opened, the electrical supply to amplified music and the in-house fixed sound system is terminated / ceased.

Any required noise insulation/mitigation scheme shall be carried out as approved prior to the first use of the building, following development and retained..

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 - Policy 35: Protection of human health and quality of life from noise and vibration).

6. Prior to the mechanical services equipment / plant and associated acoustic screening / enclosures on the roof as approved being installed, the details / specifications of all plant / equipment selection (to include operational sound power noise data), the acoustic solid screening (screen / partial or full enclosure - to include confirmation of height / length and acoustic performance / sound reduction index - Rw) and any in-duct attenuators (fresh air intake and exhaust with the acoustic insertion losses), all as referenced in the submitted 'Cambridge Corn Exchange: Noise Impact Assessment - P01, 15th September 2025', by Max Fordham LLP (MFLLP) Acoustics Team shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing.

The details and specifications shall demonstrate compliance in accordance with the assumptions / recommendations and operational noise levels within the said Max Fordham LLP (MFLLP) Acoustics Team report.

The details / specifications as approved shall be installed and retained / maintained thereafter.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 - Policy 35: Protection of human health and quality of life from noise and vibration).

7. No development to hard landscaping works on Parson's Court, other than demolition, shall commence until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The scheme shall include where appropriate:

- a. Full calculations detailing the existing surface water runoff rates for the QBAR, 3.3% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) (1 in 30) and 1% AEP (1 in 100) storm events;
- b. Full results of the proposed drainage system modelling in the above-referenced storm events (as well as 1% AEP plus climate change) , inclusive of all collection, conveyance, storage, flow control and disposal elements and including an allowance for urban creep, together with an assessment of system performance;
- c. Detailed drawings of the entire proposed surface water drainage system, including levels, gradients, dimensions and pipe reference numbers;
- d. Details of the proposed attenuation and flow control measures;
- e. Site Investigation and test results to confirm infiltration rates;
- f. Temporary storage facilities if the development is to be phased;
- g. A timetable for implementation if the development is to be phased;
- h. Details of overland flood flow routes in the event of system exceedance, with demonstration that such flows can be appropriately managed on site without increasing flood risk to occupants;
- i. Details of the maintenance/adoption of the surface water drainage system;
- j. Measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface water

The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in full in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the implementation program agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure appropriate surface water drainage and prevent the increased risk of flooding (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policies 31 and 32)

8. No development shall take place above ground level, other than demolition, until details of the external materials to be used in the construction of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development

does not detract from the character and appearance of the area.
(Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 58 and 61).

9. No occupation shall take place until an ecological enhancement scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include details of bat and bird box installation, and other ecological enhancements. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to first occupation or in accordance with a timescale agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To conserve and enhance ecological interests in accordance with Cambridge Local Plan policies 57, 59 and 70 and the Greater Cambridge Planning Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (2022).

10. No construction of the biodiverse (green) roof(s) shall commence until the following details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
 - a) The means of access for maintenance
 - b) Plans and sections showing the make-up of the sub-base to be used which may vary in depth from between 80-150mm
 - c) Planting/seeding with an agreed mix of species (the seed mix shall be focused on wildflower planting indigenous to the local area and shall contain no more than a maximum of 25% sedum)
 - d) Where solar panels are proposed, biosolar roofs should be incorporated under and in-between the panels. An array layout will be required incorporating a minimum of 0.75m between rows of panels for access and to ensure establishment of vegetation
 - e) A management/maintenance plan for the roof(s)

The roof(s) shall be constructed and laid out in accordance with the approved details and planting/seeding shall be carried out within the first planting season following the practical completion of the roof. The roof(s) shall be maintained as such in accordance with the approved management/maintenance plan.

The roof(s) shall not be used as an amenity or sitting out space of any kind whatsoever and shall only be used in the case of essential maintenance/repair or escape in case of emergency.

Reason: To ensure the development provides the maximum possible provision towards water management and the creation of habitats and valuable areas for biodiversity. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 31).

11. No development to hard landscaping works on Parson's Court, shall commence until a hard and soft landscaping scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the following:

- a) proposed finished levels or contours; car parking layouts, other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas;
- b) hard surfacing materials;
- c) Street furniture and artifacts (including refuse and cycle storage);
- d) planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;
- e) boundary treatments indicating the type, positions, design, and materials of boundary treatments to be erected (including gaps for hedgehogs);
- f) an implementation programme;
- g) A scheme for pedestrian safety in relation to the doors that open outwards over Parsons Court (including methods to make the public aware of potential obstacles caused by the doors such as but not limited to barriers, or signage)

The development shall be fully carried out in accordance with the approved details. If within a period of 5 years from the date of planting of any trees or shrubs, or 5 years from the commencement of development in respect of any retained trees and shrubs, they are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die or become seriously damaged or diseased, replacement trees and shrubs of the same size and species as originally planted shall be planted at the same place in the next available planting season, or in accordance with any variation agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 57, 59 and 69).

12. The Corn Exchange shall not be brought back into use as a concert venue following its closure to enable the hereby approved improvement and extension works to be carried out, until a Public

Realm Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The Management Plan shall:

1. Set out the arrangements for the day-to-day management and maintenance of the public space;
2. Include details of how emergency access to and from the Corn Exchange will be safeguarded and maintained at all times;
3. Identify the body or organisation responsible for the long-term management and maintenance of the area; and
4. Include mechanisms for monitoring, review, and ongoing compliance.

The development shall thereafter be carried out and maintained in accordance with the approved Management Plan.

Reason: In the interests of public safety and to ensure that an emergency route can be effectively managed when needed in accordance with Policies 56 and 59 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

13. Prior to the occupation of the proposed development, or as soon as reasonably practicable after occupation, evidence in the form of the BREEAM Wat01 water efficiency calculator shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such evidence shall demonstrate the achievement of between 4 and 5 Wat01 credits. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained strictly in accordance with the agreed details set out within the BREEAM Wat01 water efficiency calculator.

Reason: To respond to the serious water stress facing the area and ensure that development makes efficient use of water and promotes the principles of sustainable construction (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020)

14. The development hereby approved shall not be used as a concert venue until the approved sustainability strategy, including energy, carbon and water efficiency, as set out in the Design and Access Statement, Cartwright Pickard, October 2025, Revision P01 has been implemented in full. Any associated renewable and/or low carbon technology shall thereafter be retained and remain fully operational in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of reducing carbon emissions and to make efficient use of water (Cambridge Local Plan policy 28 and Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

15. Prior to the use of the concert venue, the ecological mitigation shall be carried out in full in accordance with the details contained in Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Version 2.0 dated 23 October 2025 by MKA Ecology and the Preliminary Roost Assessment Version 2.0 dated 28 October 2025 by MKA Ecology. The ecological measures shall thereafter be retained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To conserve and enhance ecological interests. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 57, 59 and 70)

16. When amplified music / voice is used and played within the Corn Exchange - Foyer and Main Auditorium, all external windows and doors directly to these areas and apart from the main Corn Exchange external entrance doors shall be kept closed at all times.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 - Policy 35: Protection of human health and quality of life from noise and vibration).

17. When amplified music / voice is used and played within 2 Wheeler Street / 3 Parson's Court bar areas, all external windows and doors directly to these areas and apart from the main external entrance doors shall be kept closed at all times.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 - Policy 35: Protection of human health and quality of life from noise and vibration).

18. Amplified music / voice is not permitted in and shall not be transmitted into any external open-air areas.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 - Policy 35: Protection of human health and quality of life from noise and vibration).

Informatives

1. The granting of a planning permission does not constitute a permission or licence to a developer to carry out any works within, or disturbance of, or interference with, the Public Highway, and that a separate permission must be sought from the Highway Authority for such works
2. The applicant should seek a Public Building Exception to gain specific consent for the existing and proposed doors that open outwards over the public highway to regularise them.
3. Notwithstanding the approved plans the permission granted only relates to the works located within the red line as per the location plan. Any works shown on the plan outside the red line relate to a separate application and do not have permission under this application.
4. A premises licence may be required for this or parts of this development (Small and Large Halls) in addition to any planning permission. A premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 may be required to authorise:
 - The supply of alcohol
 - Regulated entertainment e.g.
 - Music (Including bands, DJ's and juke boxes)
 - Dancing
 - The performing of plays
 - Boxing or wrestling
 - The showing of films
 - Late Night Refreshment (The supply of hot food or drink between 23:00-05:00)

A separate licence may also be required for activities involving gambling including poker and gaming machines.

The applicant is advised to contact The Licensing Team, Environmental Health & Public Safety, Communities at Cambridge City Council on telephone number (01223) 457890 or email licensing@cambridge.gov.uk for further information / advice etc.

5. As the premises / approved use is intended to be run as or includes a food type business, the applicant is reminded that under the Food Safety Act 1990 (as amended) the premises / use will need to register with Cambridge City Council, as required by law. In order to avoid additional costs, it is recommended that the applicant ensure that the kitchen, food preparation and foods storage areas comply with food hygiene legislation, before construction starts. The applicant is advised to contact the Commercial Team, Environmental Health & Public

Safety, Communities at Cambridge City Council on telephone number (01223) 457890 or email commercial@cambridge.gov.uk for further information / advice etc.



25/04387/LBC– Corn Exchange, 2 Wheeler Street, 3 and 3A Parsons Court, Cambridge

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: Market

Proposal: Refurbishment and extension of the Corn Exchange including addition of PV panels, changes to public realm, and alterations and extension to 3 Parsons Court and 2 Wheeler Street including change of use to drinking establishment

Applicant: Cambridge City Council

Presenting officer: Charlotte Spencer

Reason presented to committee: Land within the ownership of the Council

Member site visit date: 23 March 2026

Key issues: 1. Impact on Heritage Assets

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

Report contents

Document section	Document heading
1	Executive summary
2	Site description and context
3	The proposal

4	Relevant site history
5	Policy
6	Consultations
7	Third party representations
8	Member representations
9	Local groups / petition
10	Planning background
11	Assessment
12	Heritage assets
13	Planning balance
14	Recommendation
15	Planning conditions

Table 1 Contents of report

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The application seeks listed building consent for refurbishment and extension of the Corn Exchange including addition of PV panels, changes to public realm, and alterations and extension to 3 Parsons Court and 2 Wheeler Street including change of use to drinking establishment.
- 1.2 Additional information has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority during the course of the application including points of clarifications made on the plans and responses to the consultee comments.
- 1.3 All buildings within the site are Grade II Listed. A low level of less than substantial harm to the Corn Exchange has been identified due to the rear extension and MEP ducting.
- 1.4 The proposal would result in public benefits such as a large reduction in energy use, improved accessibility, internal improvements to the historic fabric, slight uplift in standing room capacity and improved acoustics to a concert venue. It is considered that these benefits outweigh the identified harm to the heritage assets.
- 1.5 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee **approve** the application.

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment	Paragraph Reference

Conservation Officer	No objection	6.1
Historic England	No objection	6.9
Third Party Representations (3)	Objection	7.1
Member Representations		8.1
Local Interest Groups and Organisations / Petition		9.1

Table 2 Consultee summary

2. Site description and context

- 2.1 The application relates to the Corn Exchange, 2 Wheeler Street and 3 and 3A Parsons Court which are all Grade II listed buildings. The Corn Exchange is an existing concert venue that originally functioned as a trading hall for grain merchants. It is separated from the other buildings by Parsons Court which is a small dead-end highway. No.2 Wheeler Street is a two and a half storey terraced building that forms part of a group of listed buildings namely Nos.1-2 Wheeler Street and No. 1 Parsons Court. Nos.3 and 3A is a three storey building that forms part of a separate listing but is attached to the Wheeler Street properties. The upper floor of No.2 Wheeler Street does not form part of this application and is used by the restaurant next door (Pho) These buildings are currently used as the Corn Exchange Box Office and offices.
- 2.2 The site lies within the City Centre, Primary Shopping Area and frontage of No.2 Wheeler Street is a Secondary Shopping Frontage. The site lies within the Historic Core Conservation Area and it lies within the setting of numerous Grade II listed buildings.
- 2.3 The building fronts Wheeler Street to the north and Corn Exchange Street and Parsons Court flank the side elevations. To the rear lies the Babbage Lecture Theatre, and the Grand Arcade Shopping Centre is located to the east.

3. The proposal

3.1 The application seeks listed building consent for the refurbishment and extension of the Corn Exchange including addition of PV panels, changes to public realm, and alterations and extension to 3 Parsons Court and 2 Wheeler Street including change of use to drinking establishment.

3.2 The works can be summarised as follows:

- Corn Exchange:

External

- New roof to main section and installation of PV panels;
- New window lanterns and thermal improvement to roof;
- Extension to rear (south) to create plant room with plant space above with roof and screening and top mounted acoustic louvres and installation of MEP ducting;
- Reconfigure pitch and extension to hide plant on the roof over Parsons Court section and installation of attenuator louvres to Parsons Court and Wheeler Street elevations;
- New window lanterns and thermal improvement to roof
- New entrance onto Parsons Court;
- Remove infill brick and reinstate three first floor windows to St Johns Bar;
- Existing surface within Parson's Court to be removed and replaced - primary material Yorkstone.

Internal

- Works to foyer/lobby:
- Upgrade existing entrance foyer/lobby and bars area including
 - Removal of partitions;
 - Addition of new partitions to create lobbies;
 - New lift to front of house
 - Removal of existing bars and creation of centralised replacement bar;
 - Provision of toilets and box office in existing rooms;
 - Replacement of Mezzanine including new stairs;
 - New bar at Mezzanine level;
 - Reconfiguration of first floor toilets;
- Auditorium:
 - New retractable seating to section of ground floor seating area
 - MEP ducting at high level
- Changes to walls/ partitions the back of house/ back stage area to create improved dressing rooms and Green room;
- Renovate the St Johns Bar including a replacement bar;

- Installation of MEP plant to the Kings Room;
 - Replacement secondary glazing throughout;
 - Renovate ceilings/ flooring throughout.
 - Underfloor heating to auditorium
- 2 Wheeler Street/ 3/3A Parsons Court:
- External*
- New shop front with new entrance location to Wheeler Street;
 - Demolition of section to rear and erection of ground floor extension to nos.3 and 3A Parsons Court to create entrance lobby from Parsons Court;
 - Use of courtyard as bar area;
- Internal*
- Internal changes to create three bars at ground floor (front, middle and back bars);
 - Internal changes to create VIP lounges at first and second floors;
 - Replacement roof to 3/3A Parsons Court.

3.3 The application has been amended to address representations and further consultations have been carried out as appropriate. The plans have been amended to improve the clarification.

4. Relevant site history

Reference	Description	Outcome
25/04386/FUL	Refurbishment and extension of the Corn Exchange including addition of PV panels, changes to public realm, and alterations and extension to 3 Parsons Court and 2 Wheeler Street including change of use to drinking establishment	Under determination
25/03648/LBC	Installation of two LG LG49XE4F 49 inch Black Outdoor Display screens on the front elevation.	Under determination
C/83/0971	LBC for Conversion of Corn Exchange to multi-purpose hall - (Phase II)	Permitted
C/83/0970	Conversion of Corn Exchange to multi-purpose hall - (Phase II)	Permitted
C/82/0522	Conversion of multi-purpose hall (Phase I)	Permitted
C/81/0868	LBC for Conversion of Corn Exchange to multipurpose hall (Phase I)	Allowed at appeal

C/81/0119	Conversion of Corn Exchange to multipurpose hall and erection of annex	Permitted
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Table 2 Relevant site history – **Corn Exchange**

Reference	Description	Outcome
09/0766/LBC	Installation of signage (Grade II Listed Building).	Permitted
09/0767/ADV	Installation of stainless steel letters with internal halo illumination to fascia and installation of one hanging sign (non-illuminated).	Permitted
07/0416/FUL	Redevelopment of Telephone Shop and former Age Concern day centre to provide new box office.	Permitted
07/0415/LBC	Redevelopment of Telephone Shop and former Age Concern day centre to provide new Box Office.	Permitted

Table 3 Relevant site history – **No.2 Wheeler Street and 3 Parsons Court**

5. Policy

5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

Equalities Act 2010

5.2 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 18 Stage Consultation - December 2025 to January 2026)

- 5.2.1 The Regulation 18 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan (the draft 'Joint Local Plan' (JLP)) represents the next stage of preparing a new joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge. Once it is adopted, it will become the statutory development plan for the Greater Cambridge area, replacing the current (adopted) Local Plans for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District.
- 5.2.2 Following endorsement by Joint Cabinet in November, the draft JLP will proceed to a formal public consultation (under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012). This is currently scheduled between 1 December 2025 and 30 January 2026.
- 5.2.3 In line with paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to several factors. The draft JLP is consistent with policies in the current NPPF but represents an earlier stage of the plan making process. Therefore, at this stage, the draft JLP and its policies can only be afforded limited weight as a material consideration in decision making

5.3 Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy 58: Altering and extending existing buildings

Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment

Policy 63: Works to a heritage asset to address climate change

5.4 Area Guidelines

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2015)

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – N

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y – Affects a Listed Building and Conservation Area

Conservation Officer- No Objection

- 6.1 The proposed extension would be set back on Corn Exchange Street. Although visible from the raised walkway along the Grand Arcade car park, it would be seen in a context that includes the architecture of the neighbouring David Attenborough Building. It is considered appropriate and sensitive.
- 6.2 The boxy ducting for MEP is also particularly apparent at the southern end of the building and it is regrettable that a less impactful solution could be found. There would be some adverse impacts on the Conservation Area, however, the extensions would not have a wider impact due to its context.
- 6.3 It is considered that the replacement of the main roof and inclusions of PV panels would not harm the Conservation Area. The alteration to the roof on Parson's Court would have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area.
- 6.4 The low adverse impact of the proposed extension and ducting is balanced by the benefits such as the better revealing of the historic fabric internally. The MEP ducting is a high level and would be reversible.
- 6.5 The main internal changes to the Corn Exchange are to the entrance foyer/lobby and bars area which have been altered by the 1980s conversion works and are plan and of low significance. Removal of later partitions and replacement of the mezzanine is intended to also reveal more of the original internal brickwork.
- 6.6 Little of the internal character survives in 3 Parsons Court and 2 Wheeler Street. The proposals to these buildings would have little impact on the heritage significance.
- 6.7 There are clear and convincing reasons given to justify the works. The low adverse impact of interventions such as the extension and ducting is balanced by the benefits such as the better revealing of historic fabric internally and enhancement via improved internal quality of the spaces visually.
- 6.8 No objections subject to conditions relating to details of MEP ducting and shop front alterations.

Historic England- No Objection

- 6.9 No objection subject to finer details of the scheme which can be dealt with by way of condition.

Design Review Panel Meeting of 26 June 2025 (see Appendix A of FUL)

- 6.10 The whole of the Civic Quarter redevelopment scheme went to the Design Review Panel (DRP) in June 2025. In regards to the Corn Exchange the DRP considered that the proposals to dramatically improve circulation in the foyers and access to the bars will really transform the visitor experience and the works to Parsons Court would be positive.
- 6.11 The sustainability specialist raised concerns about the underfloor cooling for the Corn Exchange as this could cause moisture and safety issues.
- 6.12 It was raised as to whether a canopy could be added to Parsons Court to extend its use within the winter months.

7. Third party representations

- 7.1 3 representations in objection have been received, 0 in support.
- 7.2 Those in objection have raised the following issues:
- Internal layout
 - Redesign does not reflect the Corn Exchange's operational need;
 - Would lead to a reduction in capacity
 - Bar would cause congestion
 - Inadequate provision of staff welfare/ offices/ storage
 - Box office location would cause crowding at entrance
 - Economic Harm
 - Closure of 14-18 months would create economic harm
 - Multi-use space
 - Concern of operational elements of this and lack of information
 - Concern about wheelchair positions
- 7.3 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations are available on the Council's website.
- 7.4 Members may wish to review the third-party comments for the full planning application element of this proposal. Full details of which are available on the Council's website under 25/04386/FUL.

8. Member Representations

8.1 None received.

9. Local Groups / Petition

9.1 None received.

9.2 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations are available on the Council's website.

10. Planning background

10.1 The Corn Exchange was converted into its current use as a concert venue in the 1980s (C/83/0790 and C/83/0971). Since then, there have been numerous alterations to the building, however, these have not all been listed within table 2. There is a current application for the installation of outdoor display screens under determination, this is separate to the current application and would not impact the decision of this application.

10.2 No.2 Wheeler Street and No.3 Parsons Court was converted into the box office following permission granted in 2007 (07/0416/FUL and 07/0415/LBC).

11. Heritage assets

11.1 The Corn Exchange, 2 Wheeler Street and 3/3A Parsons Court are all Grade II Listed Buildings. The site lies within the Historic Core Conservation Area.

11.2 Section 16(2) of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant listed building consent for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

11.3 Para. 212 of the NPPF set out that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'. Para. 213 states that 'Any

harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification...’ Para.215 states ‘where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use’.

- 11.4 Policy 61 of the Local Plan aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.

Corn Exchange – Rear Extension with Plant and MEP Ducting

- 11.5 The proposal includes a first floor and second floor extension to the rear of the Corn Exchange. The extension would infill the area between the south porch on Corn Exchange Street and the projecting element on Parsons Court. It would have a maximum depth of 7.7 metres and would follow the footprint established on the ground floor. It would be characterised by a flat roof with a maximum height of 12 metres above the street level. It would be clad with rainscreen aluminium which would have faint patterns using features from the existing elevation.
- 11.6 Plant and associated screening would be installed on the roof of the extension. The screen would be set slightly back from the wall of the extension and would have a height of 2.9 metres resulting in a total height of 14.9 metres above street level. The screening would comprise acoustic louvres with perforated aluminium panels.
- 11.7 Next to the plant screen there would be MEP ducting atop the roof of the main hall. The ducting would be slightly higher than the plant screen and would be 15.6 metres above street level. It would be clad in rainscreen cladding.
- 11.8 Due to the height of the extension and plant screen, this element of the proposal would be visible from Corn Exchange Street. However, it would be set back behind the porch and as such minimises its visibility from street level. However, it would be more visible from the raised walkway which runs along the Grand Arcade car park. However, due to the set back from Corn Exchange Street along with the use of modern materials it is considered that the extension and plant screen would read clearly as a contemporary addition, distinct from the Listed Building and it is considered to be appropriate and subservient addition.

- 11.9 It is acknowledged that the MEP ducting is boxy and would be noticeable and Officers consider that this is not ideal. Within the Cover Letter attached within amendment pack, the architect has clarified that the size of the unit is necessary for the required airflow to be delivered from a compact plant location. Officers have considered this response and are content that the ducting has been justified. Notwithstanding this, the ducting does create a lower level of 'less than substantial harm' to the listed building.

Corn Exchange – Main Hall Roof and PV Panels

- 11.10 The roof over the main building of the Corn Exchange is zinc and it is understood to have been introduced as part of the 1980s conversion works. The proposed replacement would be aluminium standing seam covering would be of similar appearance to the existing.
- 11.11 As the existing roof is a modern intervention there are no concerns with replacing the materials of the roof. The proposed roof would be of a similar appearance to the existing roof. The repeated vertical seams offer a pattern that can accept PV panels to be arranged to avoid a visually distracting or ad-hoc pattern on the roof. Subsequently, it is considered that these works would not impact the building's significance.

Corn Exchange – Parsons Court Roof Re-profiling

- 11.12 The proposals involve an alteration to plant on the roof that faces Parsons Court and as such, alterations to the roof are required.
- 11.13 The roof would be raised by approximately 1.5 metres, the north facing pitch would be made steeper and the west facing hipped roof would be altered to be a gable end. Louvres would be added to the roof plane. The new roof would be finished in the previously removed slates to maintain a similar overall visual appearance.
- 11.14 It is considered that this approach successfully screens the plant and creates an acceptable solution and non-obtrusive termination to the view looking south down Parsons Court. The Council's Conservation Officer has confirmed that this element of the proposal would have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area and as this is a less sensitive part of the building, the alteration would have little impact on the significance of the listed building.

Corn Exchange – New entrance

- 11.15 A new entrance door would be installed on the western elevation facing Parsons Court. This would create a step free access to the Foyer and an additional fire escape. It would be installed in an existing opening and would not have an impact on the character and appearance of the existing building or its significance.

Corn Exchange – Internal

- 11.16 The most substantial changes to the internal fabric involve the alterations to the lobby/foyer/bar area. This area had already been altered by the 1980's conversion works and are considered to be plain and have a low level of significance. Subsequently, there are no objections to the removal of these modern elements. It is considered that the removal would allow to reveal more of the original internal fair-faced polychromatic brickwork and this is considered to be an improvement to the existing condition.
- 11.17 MEP ducting would be installed within the internal roof area of the auditorium and Bass traps would be suspended from the trusses. This is considered to result in some visual intrusion within the auditorium. However, these elements would be located up high and would be seen in the context of other equipment required for the running of the concert venue such as lights and speakers. The ducting would run through the existing trusses which are considered to be a key feature of the building. However, it is considered that there would be no structural changes to the roof trusses and the interventions are considered to be reversible. Details of the ducting both internally and externally can be secured by way of conditions. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that the ducting would result in a low level of 'less than substantial harm'.
- 11.18 No concerns have been raised by the Conservation Officer or Historic England in relation to the other internal works. Subject to details regarding the secondary glazing which can be secured by way of condition, these elements are supported.

2 Wheeler Street and 3/3A Parsons Court – New shopfront

- 11.19 The change of use would result in a minor change to the shop front resulting in the reduction of the size of the windows and a relocation of the entrance door from a central position to one side. It would be similar in appearance to the Vietnamese restaurant (Pho) next door and subject to final details which can be secured by way of condition, the alteration would have a neutral impact on the character, appearance and significance of listed buildings.

2 Wheeler Street and 3/3A Parsons Court – Ground floor extension

- 11.20 The proposal involves the erection of an extension within the courtyard of these buildings, to the rear of the buildings. This would involve the removal of the existing pitched roof located between Nos.3 and 4 Parsons Court and it would be replaced with a flat roof. This would involve the minor increase of the eaves by 0.2 metres. The existing door would be replaced with a new one.
- 11.21 Due to the existing wall and roof of this area, and its location within the closed courtyard of the buildings and so would not impact the external form when viewed from the public realm. Therefore, it is considered that this would have little impact on the heritage significance.

2 Wheeler Street and 3/3A Parsons Court – Internal

- 11.22 Internal changes would be made to these buildings to create a bar at ground floor level and lounge seating areas at first and second floor levels. There would be an alteration to the existing layout internally, however, as existing, little of the internal character survive it is considered that the proposal would have little impact on the heritage significance.

Conclusion

- 11.23 In regard to harm, paragraph 213 states that any harm to the significance of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 219 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for development within the setting of heritage asset to enhance or better reveal their significance and proposals that better reveal its significance should be treated favourably.
- 11.24 Paragraph 215 states that where a development would lead to less than substantial harm, this should be weighed against the public benefits.
- 11.25 As explained above, part of the proposal would result in some low levels of less than substantial harm such as the MEP ducting, and the auditorium ducting, however, parts of the proposal such as the internal changes to the Corn Exchange Lobby would enhance the reveal of its significance. As such, it is important to understand the overall impact of the works on the Listed Buildings as a whole prior to considering whether paragraph 215 is triggered. Below is a table of the summary of impacts from the main elements of the works.

Area	Proposal	Impact on Listed Building
Corn Exchange – External	Extension and MEP plant and ducting	Low end of ‘less than substantial harm’
	Replacement Roof	Neutral
	Parsons Court Roof Extension	Neutral
Corn Exchange Internal	Refurbishment of lobby/foyer bars	Positive impact to heritage asset
	MEP ducting in auditorium	Low end of ‘less than substantial harm’
	Replacement secondary glazing	Neutral
	All other internal alterations	Neutral
Wheeler Street/Parsons Court External	Change to shop front	Neutral
	W/C extension in courtyard	Neutral
	Replacement roof to Parsons Court	Neutral
Wheeler Street/Parsons Court Internal	Internal alterations to create a bar and lounge rooms	Neutral
<i>Net Heritage Impact</i>		<i>Low end of ‘less than substantial harm’</i>

- 11.26 It is considered that whilst there are some positive impacts to the heritage assets, there is a low adverse impact of interventions. Subsequently, the net heritage balance is the low end of ‘less than substantial harm’.
- 11.27 As less than substantial harm has been identified, paragraph 215 of the NPPF is therefore engaged and the harm needs to be considered against the public benefits of the scheme.

- 11.28 The Corn Exchange is a public building, although it is noted that it is not open to the general public to walk in and is restricted to ticket holders. The proposed works would result in a betterment of the internal historic fabric which can be viewed by the public. The scheme would result in a 61-79% reduction in energy use reducing the carbon footprint, more details of this are explained in the associated application for full planning permission. This is considered to a significant environmental public benefit. The proposal would result in improved acoustic performance and there would be a minor uplift in standing capacity from 1586-1628. Accessibility of the building would also be improved with new lifts, increase in accessible WC provision, accessible access to the back of house and wheelchair positions improved. It is considered that these improvements would help to modernise the building and secure its use as a concert venue long term.
- 11.29 It is considered that these public benefits should be given significant weight and Officers consider that these benefits outweigh the identified heritage harm.
- 11.30 The proposal is compliant with Policy 61 of the Local Plan and the provisions of the NPPF.

12. Planning balance

- 12.1 Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 12.2 Summary of harm
- 12.3 The proposed rear extension and MEP boxing and the auditorium ducting is considered to result in of 'less than substantial harm'. Whilst some of the works are considered to have a positive impact, the overall net impact would be a low level of 'less than substantial harm'.
- 12.4 Summary of benefits
- 12.5 The proposal would result in a 61-79% reduction in energy use which is considered to be a significant benefit. The proposal would result in improved acoustic performance and there would be a minor uplift in standing capacity from 1586-1628. Accessibility of the building would also be improved with new lifts, increase in accessible WC provision,

accessible access to the back of house and wheelchair positions improved. It is considered that these improvements would help to modernise the building and secure its use as a concert venue long term.

12.6 Subsequently, Officers consider that the benefits outweigh the identified low level of harm.

12.7 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, the statutory requirements of section 16 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval.

13. Recommendation

13.1 **Approve** subject to:

-The planning conditions as set out below with minor amendments to the conditions as drafted delegated to officers.

14. Planning conditions

1. The works hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as listed on this decision notice.

Reason: In the interests of good planning, for the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 19 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

3. Prior to the mechanical services equipment/ plant being installed, the details of external high level MEP ducting into the auditorium with rainscreen cladding (ref Dwg CCQ-CPA-CE-ZZ-DR-A-0301 P01 South Rear Infill Bay Study) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by

the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure appearance and materials are appropriate to the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

4. The mechanical services equipment/ plant shall not be installed and no structural alteration to the existing roof trusses shall be made until the details of the MEP ducting through the auditorium roof trusses are to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include any proposed changes to the no structural alteration to the existing roof trusses.

The development shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

5. Prior to the installation of any secondary glazing, the details of the new replacement glazing are to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

6. Prior to any works commencing on the shopfront at No.2 Wheeler Street, full details of the proposed replacement shopfront to No. 2 Wheeler Street are to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure appearance and materials are appropriate to the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).