



Cambridge City Council Planning

Date: Wednesday, 7 October 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 but is organised with a four part agenda and will be considered in the following order:

- **Part One**
General Item
- **Part Two**
Major Planning Applications
- **Part Three**
Minor/Other Planning Applications
- **Part Four**
General Item

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

Part 1: General Item

4 National Scheme of Delegation (Pages 5 - 50)

Part 2: Major Planning Applications

5 26/00039/FUL Ekin Road Redevelopment (Pages 51 - 132)

6 26/02109/FUL Christs College Library (Pages 133 - 348)

Part 3: Minor/Other Planning Applications

7 26/00672/FUL 23-27 Kings Hedges Road (Pages 349 - 382)

8 26/00641/FUL 40 Barton Road (Pages 383 - 406)

Part 4: General Item

9 Appeals Information (Pages 407 - 412)

Planning Members: Porrer (Chair), Smart (Vice-Chair), Clough, Dryden, Fisher, Griffin, Illingworth and Todd-Jones

Alternates: Baigent, Bennett, Blackburn-Horgan, Nestor, Wade and Young

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

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

[Planning Committee guidance](#)



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council

**GREATER CAMBRIDGE SHARED PLANNING SERVICE
PLANNING COMMITTEE REVIEW
NATIONAL SCHEME OF DELEGATION – 31/10/2026**

Planning Committee Date October 2026

Report to Cambridge City Council Planning Committee
 South Cambridgeshire District Council Planning
 Committee
 Joint Development Management Planning
 Committee

Report By Joint Director of Planning and Economic
 Development

Ward / Parishes affected All

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 included powers for the Secretary of State to be able to set out what planning functions should be delegated to officers, to control the size and composition of planning committees and for members of planning committees to be trained and certified in key elements of planning.
- 1.2 Members will recall that at the June 2026 planning committee meetings, officers provided an update on the Planning Committee Review process. It was noted that a draft National Scheme of Delegation had been published in April 2026, and that this would come into force on 31 October 2026. This report summarises the National Scheme and the mandated changes that will come into effect from this date.
- 1.3 Implementing the National Scheme of Delegation is a legal requirement under The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026, which come into force on 31 October 2026. Non-compliance poses a high risk of judicial review for any planning committee decisions made after that date.
- 1.4 The key changes are:
- **End of Ward Call-Ins:** Powers for individual ward councillors and parish councils to "call in" applications to planning committee for determination will no longer be permissible.
 - **Representation Triggers:** The threshold for consideration by the Delegation Panel for Planning Committee referral based on the number of representations received (currently 5 representations) will be removed.
 - **Definition of Schedule 1 Applications:** These include householder applications, minor residential schemes (up to 9 dwellings), minor commercial development (Class E), discharge of conditions, certificates of lawfulness, non-material amendments and most prior approval applications. These must ordinarily be determined under delegated

powers and cannot be referred to committee. Limited exceptions apply, such as specified local authority own-interest cases.

- **Definition of Schedule 2 Applications:** These include major residential, major commercial, industrial and mixed-use development, and proposals affecting heritage assets and applications that raise significant policy, environmental or community considerations. The category also includes certain development proposals involving the local authority's own interests. The regulations presume Officer Delegation. Such applications will only be referred to committee if a nominated officer *and* a nominated member agree that the proposal meets strict significance criteria.
- **Committee Size Cap:** Capped at a maximum of 13 members.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that Cambridge City Council / South Cambridgeshire District Council Planning Committee / Joint Development Management Planning Committee notes the contents of this report, including:

- The mandatory statutory changes taking effect on 31 October 2026 relating to the National Scheme of Delegation, and the implications for planning committee delegation across Greater Cambridge.
- The cessation of the current Planning Delegation Meetings with effect from 31 October 2026; and
- The introduction of a Planning Committee Gateway Meeting, to operate from 1 November 2026, in accordance with the arrangements set out in this report.

2.2 Furthermore, it is recommended that the Cambridge City Council Planning Committee / South Cambridgeshire District Council Planning Committee / Joint Development Management Planning Committee **approves** the revised Nov 2026 Greater Cambridge Scheme of Delegation (SoD) attached at appendix 2. This updated Scheme of Delegation reflects the National Scheme of Delegation

and deals with residual applications and matters not otherwise encompassed by the new regulations.

3.0 The National Scheme of Delegation

- 3.1 In May 2025 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published a technical consultation setting out the proposed reforms and seeking views. The consultation introduced a national scheme of delegation which proposed a ‘two-tier’ system based on a presumption that no planning applications would be automatically referred to planning committee, and some application types would never be heard by planning committee. Alongside the proposed two-tier approach to the determination of applications, the consultation document set out proposals for the size of planning committees and member training.
- 3.2 A further consultation on the draft regulations and guidance was undertaken by MHCLG on 26 March 2026. The consultation emphasised the importance of planning committees in maintaining public trust and ensuring democratic oversight of the planning system but was clear that their time should be focused on the most strategic and complex schemes and that there should be consistency between authorities. It did not introduce new requirements for member training, as had been anticipated by the 2025 consultation.
- 3.3 The March 2026 draft regulations set out the national scheme of delegation and the size threshold for committees (no more than 13 members). The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 (‘the 2026 Regulations’) comes into force on 31st October 2026 and establishes a mandatory National Scheme of Delegation (NSoD) for all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in England.
- 3.4 The 2026 regulations are supported by guidance, which was published on 1 June 2026, which seeks to assist LPAs in implementing the provisions, including with regard to the NSoD of planning functions and the size of planning committees (‘the 2026 guidance’).

- 3.5 Up until now, each LPA maintains its own scheme of delegation within its constitution. In 2025 the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (GCSPS) introduced a single scheme of delegation, covering both LPAs. The introduction of the NSoD removes this local discretion for certain application types with the aim of ensuring consistency, speeding up decision-making, and modernising the planning system.
- 3.6 The 2025 GCSPS Scheme of Delegation aligns with recommendations identified by the Planning Advisory Service, following their reviews of all three planning committees. This sought to make the most efficient use of officer and member time at Committees by focusing on the most sensitive / complex applications; and to ensure that there is consistency between the three planning committees to aid understanding by users and support transparency and efficiency of decision making. The revised 2026 GCSP Scheme of Delegation incorporates the NSoD and outlines how applications and matters which sit outside of it are to be determined.
- 3.7 The mandatory NSoD aims to create a standardised national framework. It contains two schedules – with technical and minor decisions delegated to officers, allowing planning committees to focus their time and resources on major developments, complex applications and those with strategic importance.
- 3.8 The NSoD divides all planning applications into two distinct categories, and sets out how they must be handled:
- **Schedule 1 Applications (see appendix 1):** These are routine, minor, or technical developments which must be delegated to planning officers for determination. The Planning Committee no longer has the authority to decide these cases.
 - **Schedule 2 Applications (see appendix 1):** These are considered to be more complex applications. There is still a presumption that these will be determined by officers, but they may be referred to the Planning Committee, if they pass the new ‘Gateway Test’.

- **Own Interest applications** - These are applications made by officers, members or the Council and the Council itself which will be referred to Planning Committee for decision.

3.6 From 31 October 2026, all existing triggers/ clauses in individual LPAs constitutions allowing individual Ward Councillor or Parish Councils "call-ins" or automatic triggers based on the number of public representations are removed by the statutory instrument. Any committee decision made via these abolished local mechanisms after this date will be legally void and highly vulnerable to judicial review.

Greater Cambridge approach to National Scheme of Delegation (NSoD)

3.7 Officers are working to introduce processes which ensure the provisions of the 2026 Regulations regarding the NSoD of planning functions and the size of planning committees are followed. This will require amendments to the Council's constitutions, which is currently in progress.

3.8 With regard to the changes made necessary to the updated 2026 GCSP Scheme of Delegation, this includes:

- Removal of ability of individual Ward Councillors or Parish Councils to call in an application.
- Removal of automatic trigger based on the number of public representations.
- Removal of ability for Planning Committee to determine schedule 1 applications.

Outline planning applications

3.9 These are not automatically referred to Planning Committee under the NSoD. Minor outline proposals will generally be determined by officers, whilst major outline applications are likely to fall within Schedule 2 and may be considered for committee referral where they raise significant planning, economic, social or environmental issues.

- 3.10 Reserved matters applications relating to a phase of development within an approved outline permission are also treated as Schedule 1 applications unless they relate to a large outline permission (i.e. one which grants permission for development involving the provision of at least 500 dwellings or a building or buildings where the floorspace to be created by the development is 50,000 square metres or more) and then are treated as a schedule 2 application and may therefore be eligible for committee referral. Reserved matters applications that do not relate to a phased development are generally expected to be determined under delegated powers.

Variation or Modification of S106 Planning Obligations

- 3.11 With regard to the variation or modification of S106 obligations, it is proposed that these are determined in accordance with the application Schedule categorisation type to which they relate. Again, there is a presumption of officer determination but potential committee referral could be required if the prescribed referral tests are met.

Listed building consent, advertisement consent, consents for works to trees with a Tree Preservation Order or Trees in a Conservation Area

- 3.12 The supporting guidance acknowledges that listed building, advertisement consent and consents for works to protected trees do not in most cases raise issues which would merit committee scrutiny and that the presumption is that they should only be exceptionally referred to committee. Under the GCSPS June 2026 scheme of delegation these types of applications are mostly considered under delegated powers, unless related to a planning application which would trigger referral or would give rise to significant environmental, social and economic impacts. It is therefore proposed that new arrangements replicate this approach.
- 3.13 As such, advertisement consents, consents for works to trees with Tree Preservation Orders or protected trees (such as those within Conservation Areas), variation and discharge of conditions attached to listed building consent will not be referrable to committee.

3.14 Listed building consent (LBC) applications will be considered under Schedule 2 only where they are connected to a Schedule 2 planning application that has been referred to Planning Committee by the Planning Gateway Meeting, otherwise LBC applications will not be referable to Planning Committee. This approach is considered proportionate and consistent with Government guidance because these application types rarely raise strategic planning issues capable of meeting the gateway test and have historically been determined under the GCSP Scheme of Delegation.

4.0 The Gateway Test

4.1 The 2026 Regulations introduce a formal triage process whereby Schedule 2 applications are assessed against statutory criteria to determine whether they should be referred to Planning Committee. To implement these requirements, it is proposed that applications be assessed against the relevant criteria set out in the guidance and considered through a Planning Committee Gateway Meeting prior to a decision being made on the appropriate route for determination.

4.2 Under the 2026 Regulations, a Schedule 2 application can only be referred to planning committee if two nominated individuals set out in the regulations agree to this approach.

- The Nominated Officer (the Chief Planning Officer (CPO) or an equivalent officer who has extensive professional experience.)
- The Nominated Member (the Chair of the Planning Committee)

4.3 If the Nominated Officer and Nominated Member do not come to a mutual agreement to refer the application, it has to remain as an officer-delegated decision.

Planning Committee Gateway Meeting

4.4 For the purposes of the GGSPS Gateway Test, it is proposed that the Nominated Officer will be the Director of Planning and Economic Development,

with delegation to the GCSPS Delivery Managers and Team Leaders. This ensures that there is appropriate cover at all times, to avoid delays in the referral process or if the CPO or equivalent has an interest in the application.

- 4.5 With regard to the Nominated Member, the 2026 guidance states that this should be the Chair of Planning Committee, with other members to cover if that person is not available or the Chair has an interest in the application. It is proposed that the Nominated Member will be the Chair of Planning Committee, with the Vice Chair acting as a substitute.
- 4.6 The 2026 guidance states that it is for the local planning authority to put in place arrangements for how the consideration of cases for referral to committee will operate in practice. As a minimum there should be a record of the cases considered for referral, the outcome of their consideration and the reason for their decision. This will be reported to Planning Committee on an annual basis and will be made available on the website. These arrangements will be worked up over the coming weeks following the best practice advice from the Planning Officers Society and Planning Advisory Service (PAS).
- 4.7 An application can only be referred to committee for determination through the Planning Committee Gateway Meeting if it raises an issue of economic, social or environmental significance to the local area, or raises a significant planning matter.
- 4.8 The 2026 guidance sets out circumstances that are considered **unlikely** to raise a significant planning matter:
- *where the application for development broadly complies with a detailed site allocation and other relevant policies set out in a local or neighbourhood plan and national decision making policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Significant planning matters may arise if new material considerations are raised by the application*
 - *where a specific planning matter (e.g. highways or flood risk) was initially raised by a statutory consultee as a concern, but the*

development proposal has been modified to make it acceptable in the view of the statutory consultee (unless the nominated officer has compelling reasons to consider otherwise).

4.9 Examples of schemes that could be referred to committee for a decision in future include:

- *an application for outline planning permission for a large multi-phase residential development not allocated in the local plan*
- *a major application for planning permission and listed building consent for changes to a grade 1 listed building in a town centre*

Greater Cambridge Scheme of Delegation Nov 2026

4.10 The introduction of the National Scheme of Delegation establishes decision-making arrangements for applications falling within Schedules 1 and 2 of the Regulations. However, a number of planning functions and associated matters remain outside the scope of those provisions. These residual matters were previously addressed through the GCSP Scheme of Delegation approved in June 2026 and now require updating to ensure alignment with the new national framework.

4.11 The proposed amendments are principally administrative in nature and are intended to:

- remove provisions superseded by the National Scheme of Delegation;
- clarify responsibility for the determination of matters falling outside the scope of the national arrangements; and
- ensure that the Council's local Scheme operates alongside, and is consistent with, the national framework.

4.12 The proposed revised GCSP Scheme of Delegation is attached at Appendix 2. Whilst updated to reflect the National Scheme of Delegation, it is expressly intended to operate only insofar as it is consistent with the national regulations.

Where any provision of the local Scheme conflicts with the National Scheme of Delegation, the national provisions shall prevail.

- 4.13 Approval of the revised Scheme will ensure that decision-making arrangements remain compliant with the National Scheme of Delegation and provide clarity regarding the determination of matters that fall outside the scope of the national regulations

Size of Planning Committee

- 4.14 The Regulations also provide that a Planning Committee may comprise no more than 13 elected members. SCDC's Planning Committee currently consists of 11 Members, City Planning Committee currently comprises of 9 Members and JDMC currently comprises of 12 Members and therefore all 3 planning committees already comply with this requirement. No amendments are required in relation to the size of the Committee, although future appointments will need to continue to comply with the statutory limit.

5.0 Implications

Financial Implications

- 5.1 The cost of the Planning Committee meetings, reflecting the amount of Member time, but also the significant officer input to prepare, attend and administer a meeting are significant. The Councils existing staff and resources budgets cover these costs. The changes have not amended the frequency of Planning Committee meetings but reduced caseload of items at the committee meetings and made the investment of time and resources more effective. The national scheme of delegation does not introduce additional costs but indirectly supported ongoing work to increase impact and effectiveness the Councils and the Shared Planning Service.

Staffing Implications

- 5.2 There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

Equality and Poverty Implications

- 5.3 An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has not been undertaken in respect of this report, because no material changes are proposed to the fundamental operation of the Committee meetings.

Environmental Implications

- 5.4 None.

Procurement Implications

- 5.5 None.

Community Safety Implications

- 5.6 None.

Legal Implications

- 5.7 The introduction of the National Scheme of Delegation requires the Council's local Scheme of Delegation to be reviewed and updated to ensure consistency with the new legislative framework. Approval of the revised Scheme will provide clarity regarding the determination of matters that remain outside the scope of the national arrangements and help ensure decisions are taken in accordance with the appropriate delegated authority. Where any conflict arises between the local Scheme and the National Scheme of Delegation, the national provisions will prevail.

6.0 Consultation and Communication Considerations

- 6.1 No formal consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of this report.

7.0 Background Papers

- 7.1 Background papers used in the preparation of this report:
- Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service Scheme of Delegation for Planning Committee
 - SI 2026 No.854 The Town and County Planning (Discharge of Local Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026

- Statutory guidance Planning Committees and the National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions: Guidance for local planning authorities in England. Published 1 June 2026.

8.0 Report Author

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9.0 Appendixes

Appendix 1 – National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions, Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 applications

Appendix 2 – Proposed GCSP Scheme of Delegation

Appendix 1 - National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions

Schedule 1

Schedule 1 of the Regulations sets out all the functions which must be delegated to officers for a decision (unless it is an own-interest application). These include a number of categories of applications for planning permission for:

- householder development (as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015)
- minor commercial development (as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015)
- minor residential development which is defined in the Regulations as:
 - development that includes only dwellings and development for the purposes incidental to the enjoyment of dwellings, comprises at least one but not more than nine dwellings, and is to be carried out on a site having an area smaller than 0.5 hectares
 - development of a building containing flats, or development within the curtilage of such a building, for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the flats or any of them but excludes development in respect of a building containing flats, or development within the curtilage of such a building, that involves either or both of a change of use or change to the number of flats
 - an application for any consent, agreement or approval required by or under a planning permission, development order or local development order for development within paragraph (a) or (b)

It also contains a range of other planning consents:

- to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached) in respect of which the previous planning permission was a Schedule 1 planning permission (applications under section 73(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- reserved matters approval in respect of an outline planning permission other than a large outline phase permission (i.e. one which grants permission for development involving the provision of at least 500 dwellings or a building or

buildings where the floorspace to be created by the development is 50,000 square metres or more) (applications under Article 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015)

- discharge of conditions (applications under Article 27(1) of Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015)
- prior approval for permitted development rights (applications under Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015)
- permission in principle (as referred to in section 58A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- where a local planning authority considers a planning obligation is connected to a Schedule 1 application, requests to agree to modify or discharge a planning obligation (under section 106A(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- where local planning authority considers a planning obligation is connected to a Schedule 1 application, modification or discharge of a planning obligation (applications under section 106A(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- non-material changes to planning permission or permission in principle (applications under section 96A(4) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development (under section 191(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- certificates of lawfulness of proposed use or development (under section 192(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- certificates of lawfulness for proposed works to listed buildings (under section 26H of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990)
- biodiversity gain plan (duty to approve under paragraph 14 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- certificates of appropriate alternative development (applications under section 17 of the Land Compensation Act 1961)

However, applications which would otherwise fall under Schedule 1, will fall within Schedule 2 where:

- a local authority considers that the application for planning permission is connected to a Schedule 2 application for listed building consent or for the variation or discharge of a condition on a listed building consent
- the application is made under section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Schedule 2

The functions which fall within Schedule 2 of the Regulations are:

- applications for planning permission which are not householder, minor commercial or minor residential applications
- applications for planning permission which would otherwise fall into Schedule 1 but are connected to a Schedule 2 application for listed building consent or for the variation or discharge of a condition on a listed building consent
- applications to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached in respect of which the previous planning permission was a Schedule 2 planning permission (under section 73(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- applications for development which has already been carried out (under section 73A(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- where it is related to a large outline planning permission, applications for reserved matters approvals (under Article 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015)
- where a local planning authority considers a planning obligation is connected to a Schedule 2 application, requests to agree to modify or discharge a planning obligation (under section 106A(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- where a local planning authority considers a planning obligation is connected to a Schedule 2 application, application for modification or discharge of a planning obligation (under section 106A(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- applications for listed building consent (under section 10 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990)

- applications for the variation or discharge of conditions of listed building consent (under section 19 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990)
- applications for advertisement consent (under regulation 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007)
- applications for consent under tree preservation orders (under regulation 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012)

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Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service

Scheme of Delegation: Planning and Related Functions Nov 2026

General Delegation

1. The Planning Committee delegates authority to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development ("the Director") to exercise the planning, development management and related functions of the Council set out in this Scheme in accordance with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council Constitutions (as amended).
2. The Director may authorise any officer within the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service to exercise these powers on their behalf.

Defined terms

"Application" means any application, consent, notice, approval, certificate, order, notification or other matter made to, served upon or determined by the Council pursuant to the legislation listed in Schedule A.

"Council" means either South Cambridgeshire District Council or Cambridge City Council as the context requires, and "Council" and "Councils" shall be construed accordingly.

"Planning Committee Gateway Meeting" means a meeting convened for the purposes of considering whether a Schedule 2 Application, as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026, should be referred to Planning Committee in accordance with the National Scheme of Delegation and comprising:

- (a) the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, acting as the Nominated Officer (being the Chief Planning Officer or equivalent officer for the purposes of the Regulations) or another officer holding an appropriate professional planning qualification and seniority authorised by the Director to act on their behalf; and
- (b) the Chair of the relevant Planning Committee, acting as the Nominated Member for the purposes of the Regulations, or in their absence the Vice-Chair

of the relevant Planning Committee, or such other Member appointed in accordance with the Council's Constitution to act in their place

“Director” means the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, or such other Director as shall perform the functions of the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development.

“JDMC” means the Joint Development Management Committee.

“JDMC ToR” means the JDMC terms of reference dated July 2020 as amended from time to time (Appendix 1).

"National Scheme of Delegation" means the scheme established pursuant to Sections 319ZZC to 319ZZF of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and implemented through the Regulations.

"Own Interest Application" means an application falling within the definition prescribed by the Regulations.

“Planning Committee” means the Planning Committee of either South Cambridgeshire District Council or Cambridge City Council or the Joint Development Management Committee as the case may be.

“Regulations” means the Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 and any amendment or replacement thereto.

“Schedule 1”: An application prescribed in Schedule 1 to the Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 which must be determined by an authorised officer and may not be referred to Planning Committee except where expressly permitted by the Regulations.

“Schedule 2”: An application prescribed in Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 which is subject to the National Scheme of Delegation and may be referred to Planning Committee only where the statutory committee referral criteria are satisfied

National Scheme of Delegation

3. This Scheme shall be interpreted and applied in accordance with:

- Sections 319ZZC to 319ZZF of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 (Operational rules for the National Scheme of Delegation);
- Any statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State in relation to the National Scheme of Delegation;

- Any replacement legislation or guidance.

4. Where any provision of this Scheme conflicts with the National Scheme of Delegation, the requirements of the National Scheme of Delegation shall prevail.

5. Applications within Schedule 1 of the Regulations shall be determined by the Director or an authorised officer and shall not be referred to Planning Committee

6. Applications within Schedule 2 of the Regulations shall be determined in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations and the National Scheme of Delegation.

Delegated Powers

The Director shall have authority:

7. To identify and designate Local Heritage Assets.

8. To investigate and determine matters arising under the Local Land Charges Act 1975.

9. To exercise powers and duties pursuant to Part VIII of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

10. To investigate and exercise all planning enforcement functions and powers arising under the following:

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990;
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
- Hedgerows Regulations 1997; and
- Any replacement or associated legislation.

11. To discharge functions under Section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

12. To determine complaints pursuant to Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003.

13. To determine applications relating to Assets of Community Value.

14. To determine, make decisions, respond, investigate or notify on behalf of the Council in respect of any application, consent, approval, certificate, notice or planning function arising under the legislation listed in Schedule A, except where otherwise reserved for planning committee determination by paragraphs 19 to 23 of this scheme.

Applications Expressly Delegated

15. Without limitation, the Director shall determine all applications prescribed for officer determination by the National Scheme of Delegation.

16. Such delegated functions include the following categories of application:

- Householder development
- Minor residential development
- Minor commercial development
- Prior approval
- Permission in principle.
- Certificates of lawful use or development.
- Discharge of conditions.
- Non-Material Amendments: Section 96A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- Biodiversity Gain Plan approvals.
- Certificates of Appropriate Alternative Development.
- Reserved Matters applications prescribed for officer determination under the Regulations.
- Section 73 applications prescribed for officer determination under the Regulations.
- Applications for modification, discharge or variation of planning obligations relating to Schedule 1 development.

17. The Director shall determine the following applications under delegated powers unless:

- the application forms part of, is directly related to, or is required to be considered in conjunction with an undetermined Schedule 2 Application that has been referred to Planning Committee by the Planning Committee Gateway Meeting;

or

- Member determination is otherwise required by legislation or the National Scheme of Delegation.

The applications are:

- Listed Building Consent;
- Advertisement Consent;
- Applications for works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order and the making, confirmation, modification or revocation of Tree Preservation Orders;
- Notifications of proposed works to trees within Conservation Areas pursuant to Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

18. For the avoidance of doubt, the existence of public opposition, public support, petitions, representations from a Ward Member, Parish Council or Town Council, or the significance of local interest in an application shall not of itself alter whether an application is capable of determination under delegated powers.

Other Delegated Functions Prescribed to the Director

- To issue Screening and Scoping Opinions
- To undertake Habitats Regulations Assessments and Appropriate Assessments.
- To negotiate, approve and enter into Planning Performance Agreements.
- To negotiate, complete, vary, modify, enforce and discharge planning obligations.
- To exercise all Community Infrastructure Levy functions.
- To exercise functions relating to prior notifications and approvals under Development Orders.
- To undertake all operational matters associated with planning decision-making.
- To determine the Council's position in relation to appeals.
- To determine reasons for refusal in cases of non-determination appeals unless an application is considered by the Director to have otherwise been likely to have been reported to Planning Committee.
- To issue decision notices and associated legal documentation.

Applications Capable of Determination by Planning Committee

19. An application shall be referred to and determined by the Planning Committee only where under the National Scheme of Delegation:

- it falls within Schedule 2 of the Regulations; and
- following consideration at a Planning Committee Gateway Meeting, both the Nominated Officer and the Nominated Member agree that the application satisfies the relevant referral criteria prescribed by the Regulations; and
- it is capable of Member determination under the National Scheme of Delegation.

21. An application shall be referred to Planning Committee where Member determination is required by legislation or the Regulations because the application:

- is made by the Council;
- is an Own Interest Application;
- is made by an elected Member;
- is made by an officer of the Council;
- is made by a close relative or family member of any person listed above.

22. A Regulation 3 application shall be referred to Planning Committee where Member determination is required by legislation, the Regulations or the Constitution. For the avoidance of doubt, a Regulation 3 Application may also constitute an Own Interest Application

23. Any application or planning function expressly reserved to Members by legislation, regulations, Secretary of State direction or the Constitution shall be determined by Planning Committee.

Joint Development Management Committee

24. The Joint Development Management Committee shall determine applications falling within its adopted geographical remit identified in Appendix 1 only where:

- the application is capable of Committee determination under the National Scheme of Delegation; and
- legislation, the Regulations, the Constitution or the Committee's Terms of Reference require determination by Members.

25. Any application prescribed for officer determination by the National Scheme of Delegation shall be determined by the Director or an authorised officer notwithstanding any contrary provision in the JDMC Terms of Reference.

Schedule A

The following legislation as amended from time to time or any replacement legislation:

- Local Government Act 1972.
- Local land Charges Act 1975
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation areas) Act 1990
- Planning and Compensation Act 1991
- Transport and Works Act 1992
- Environment Act 1995 (including Hedgerow Regulations 1997)
- Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
- Planning Act 2008
- Localism Act 2011
- Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013
- Infrastructure Act 2015
- Housing and Planning Act 2016
- Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Environment Act 2021
- Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023
- Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025

Including the following Regulations:

- Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
- Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
- Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012
- Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010
- Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026
- And any secondary legislation, Orders, Directions and Regulations made thereunder.

Insert Appendix 1, 2, 3 relating to JDMC

Appendix 1: Terms of reference for the Joint Development Management Committee

Appendix 2: Development Control Forum

Appendix 3 – Cost Sharing Protocols for JDMC

Appendix 1 – Terms of reference for the Joint Development Management Committee

1. Parties:

Cambridge City Council

South Cambridgeshire District Council

(‘the Councils’)

2. Status:

The Joint Development Management Committee (‘the Committee’) is a joint committee formed by resolutions of the Councils pursuant to section 101(5), Local Government Act, 1972.

3. Membership:

6 Members appointed by Cambridge City Council

6 Members appointed by South Cambridgeshire District Council

4. Terms of reference:

4.1. The Committee’s remit is to discharge the functions (‘the functions’) set out in Annex 1, the exercise of which have been delegated to the Committee by the parties, subject to the limitation in paragraph 4.2.

4.2. The Committee shall discharge the functions in respect of Major Developments and related matters pursuant to such applications on land that is positively identified in the adopted Local Plans of the two Councils for any purpose and which falls wholly or substantially within the area as shown edged in [blue] on the plans forming Annex 3.

4.3. The Committee may exercise the subsidiary powers authorised pursuant to section 111, Local Government Act 1972 in connection with the discharge of the functions.

4.4. The Committee may exercise the powers of delegation contained in sections 101(2), 101(5) and 102 Local Government Act 1972.

5. Standing Orders

5.1. The Committee shall be governed by the Standing Orders set out in Annex 2, as amended from time to time.

6. Administration

6.1. The Party which is the local planning authority shall receive applications in the usual way and shall be responsible for all consequential administration.

6.2. Cambridge City Council's staff shall be responsible for all matters connected with the administration of the Committee, including the preparation and dispatch of agendas and securing premises at which the committee may meet or providing facilities to enable remote meetings to take place. Decision notices shall be signed by the Joint Director of Planning.

6.3. Costs shall be shared in accordance with the Cost Sharing Protocol set out in Appendix 3 to the Standing Orders.

Notes:

1) A major development is defined by reference to Article 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 as in force on 1 March 2010 or as subsequently amended or replaced and means development including any one or more of the following:

- a) the mining and working of minerals
- b) waste development;
- c) the provision of dwelling-houses where
 - i) the number of dwelling-houses to be provided is 10 or more; or
 - ii) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or

more and it is not known whether the development falls within paragraph (c)(i);

d) the provision of a building or buildings where the GIA floor space to be created by the development is 1,000m² square metres or more; or

e) development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more

Annex 1 – Functions of the Committee

1. The exercise of each of the Councils' powers and duties in relation to Part III (Control Over Development) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended and Chapter II and VI (as appropriate) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in respect of "Major Development" and related applications for approval of details and S106 requests to that permission plus associated Reserved Matters applications including but not limited to:
 - i) the determination of planning applications by virtue of Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.
 - ii) the power to approve authorise and direct the respective Councils to negotiate and enter into agreements regulating the development or use of land pursuant to S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
2. The review, change, amendment or modification of the scheme of delegation to Officers.
3. The review, change, amendment or modification of the Standing Orders of the Committee.
4. Any matter related to an application previously determined by the Joint Development Control Committee for Cambridge Fringes and which would continue to form a part of this Committees functions.
5. Such other functions as may be delegated to the Committee by the Councils from time to time.

Annex 2 - JDMC Standing Orders

Joint Development Management Committee Standing Orders Approved
on 21 October 2020.

1. Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

- 1.1. The Committee shall, at its first meeting, and as a minimum annually thereafter, elect a Chair and Vice-Chair. The Chair and Vice Chair shall be drawn alternately from each of the two Councils comprising the Committee.
- 1.2. In the absence from any meeting of the Chair and Vice-Chair, a Chair for that meeting shall be appointed by the meeting, but shall relinquish the chair if the Chair or Vice Chair subsequently arrives at the meeting.

2. Notice of and Summons to Meetings

- 2.1. The Administrator will give notice to the public of the time and place of any meeting in accordance with the access to information rules applicable to local authorities. At least five clear days before a meeting, the Administrator will send an agenda by post and/or electronically to every member of the Committee. The agenda will give the date, time and place of each meeting and specify the business to be transacted, and will be accompanied by such details as are available.
- 2.2. The Administrator will take reasonable steps to ensure that a copy of the agenda and accompanying papers are placed on deposit at the offices of each of the councils for public inspection at least five clear days before the meeting. The Administrator will ensure that arrangements are put in place for the inspection of background papers in accordance with section 100D, Local Government Act, 1972 and to ensure compliance with all other provisions of Part VA, of that Act.
- 2.3. Dates, times and venues for meetings shall be determined by the committee. In the absence of agreement or in cases of urgency, meetings may be called by the Administrator following consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.

3. Membership

- 3.1. Committee members shall be appointed by the councils from time to time in accordance with the terms of reference. A council may at any time replace one or more of its nominated members by notice given to the Administrator.

4. Alternate Members

- 4.1. Each council will, by resolution, appoint two alternate members in respect of each political group which represents their council on the committee, but shall not appoint an alternate member for a political group which declines to nominate an alternate member. Each council will notify the Administrator of alternate members appointed.
- 4.2. Alternate members will have all the powers and duties of any ordinary member of the committee. For the purposes of briefing meetings and circulation of papers, alternate members shall be treated in the same manner as ordinary members.
- 4.3. Alternate members may attend meetings in that capacity only to take the place of a member of the same political group who is an ordinary member of the relevant committee or sub-committee. The alternate member should withdraw from participation as a member of that committee or sub-committee in the business at that meeting during any period during which the principal member is in fact in attendance.

5. Quorum

- 5.1. The quorum of a meeting will be six with no less than: - 3
Member from South Cambridgeshire District Council and
3 Member from Cambridge City Council

6. Public speaking rights

- 6.1. Members of the public have the public speaking rights set out in Annex A.

7. Voting

- 7.1. Every question shall be decided by a show of hands or by way of a roll call when the meeting is taking place using arrangements for virtual committee meetings, and subject to Rule 7.2
- 7.2. If any member demands a vote by roll-call and is supported by two other members, the question shall be determined by a vote by roll-call and the Administrator shall record and enter in the minutes the names of each member present and whether they voted for or against or abstained.
- 7.3. Any member may, immediately after any vote is taken, require a record to be made in the minutes of whether they voted for or against or abstained.
- 7.4. If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the Chair will have a second or casting vote.

8. Minutes

- 8.1. The Chair will sign the minutes of the committee at the next suitable meeting. The Chair will move that the minutes of the previous meeting be signed as a correct record.

9. Exclusion of Public

- 9.1. Members of the public and press may only be excluded either in accordance with the Access to Information provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 (consideration of 'exempt information') or Rule 12 (Disturbance by Public).

10. Disorderly Conduct: Misconduct of A Member

- 10.1. If at any meeting of the committee any member, in the opinion of the Chair, misconducts him/herself by persistently disregarding the ruling of the chair, or by behaving irregularly, improperly or offensively, or by

wilfully obstructing the business of the committee, the Chair or any other member may move "That the member named be not further heard", and the motion if seconded shall be put and determined without discussion.

10.2. If the member named continues his/her misconduct after a motion under the foregoing Rule has been carried, the Chair shall either move "that the member named must leave the meeting" (in which case the motion shall be put and determined without seconding or discussion); or adjourn the meeting of the Council or committee for such period as s/he is in his/her discretion shall consider expedient.

10.3. In the event of a general disturbance which in the opinion of the Chair renders the due and orderly despatch of business impossible, the Chair, in addition to any other power vested in him/her, may adjourn the meeting of the committee for such period as s/he is in his/her discretion shall consider expedient.

11. Disorderly Conduct: Disturbance by members of the public

11.1. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting the Chair shall warn him/her. If s/he continues the interruption the Chair shall order his/her removal from the meeting.

11.2. In case of a general disturbance in any part of the Room open to the public the Chair shall order that part to be cleared.

12. Suspension of Standing Orders

12.1. Any of these Standing Orders may, so far as is lawful, be suspended by motion passed unanimously by those entitled to vote on the application in question. Any motion to suspend any part of these rules shall specify the purpose of their suspension. Any suspension shall only be to the extent and for the length of time necessary to achieve the stated purpose.

13. Attendance at the Committee by other members of the Councils and County Council

- 13.1. A member of Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council or Cambridgeshire County Council who is not a member of the committee or a member of a parish council (in respect of applications relating to sites in their own parish) may speak at a meeting of the committee at the request or with the permission of that committee or of its Chair made or obtained before the meeting. Such request or permission shall specify the matters in respect of which the member shall be permitted to speak;

[Explanatory note: There might be circumstances in which the Committee may wish to permit a city, district or county councillor to speak on applications even if the application does not relate to her/his ward or division. For instance an executive councillor with relevant strategic responsibility may want to address the committee.]

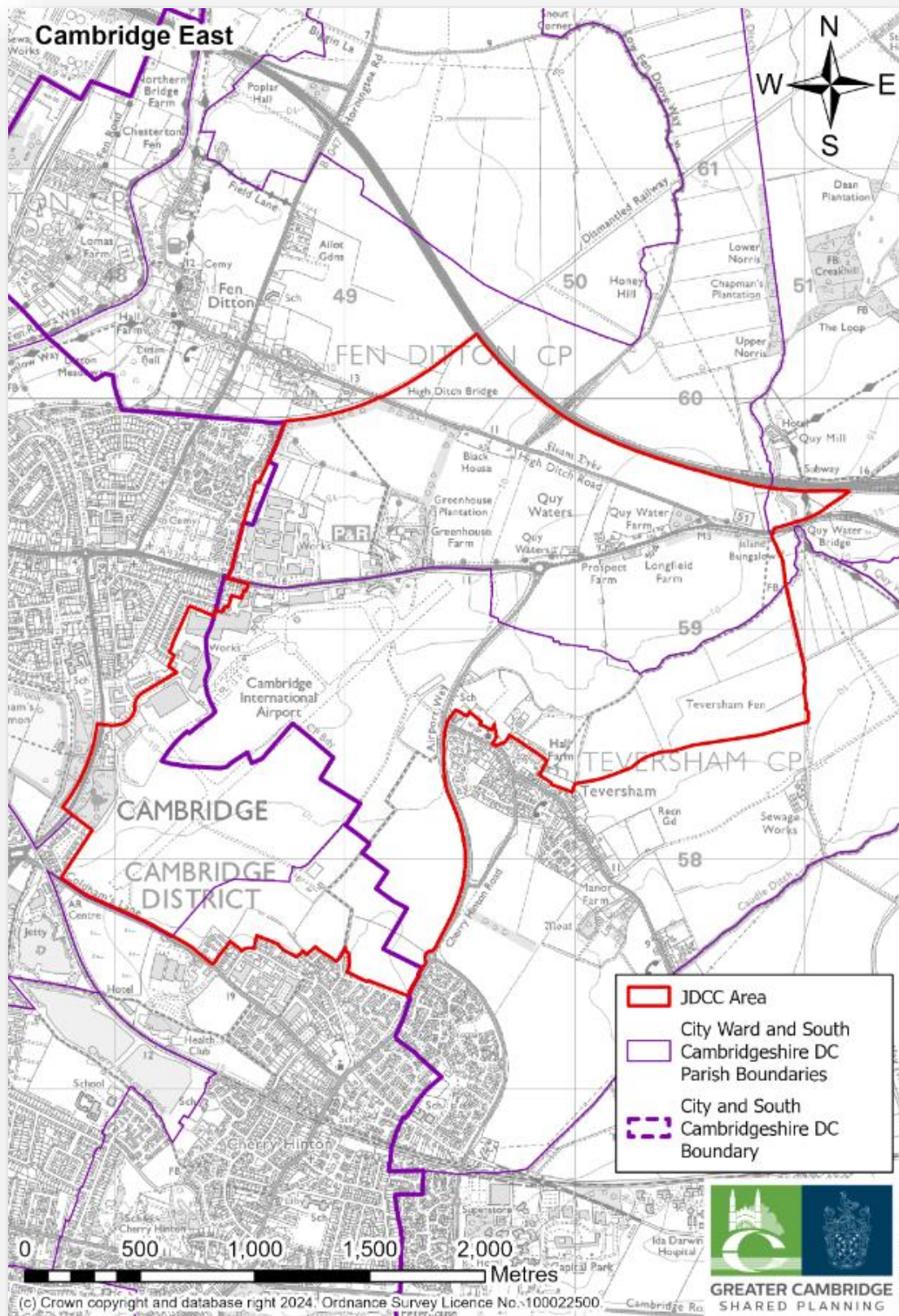
14. Development Control Forums

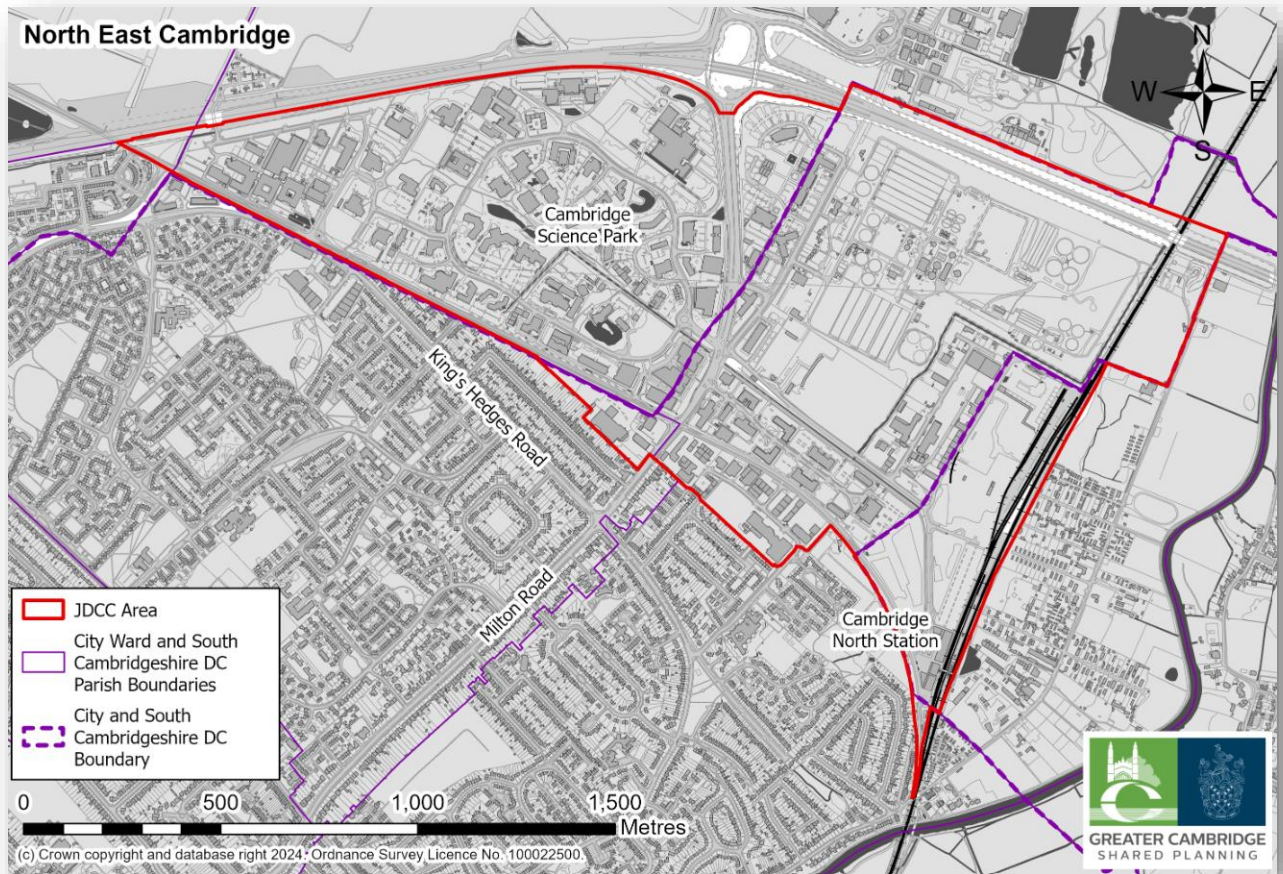
- 14.1. The Committee will operate a scheme for development control forums in accordance with Appendix 2.

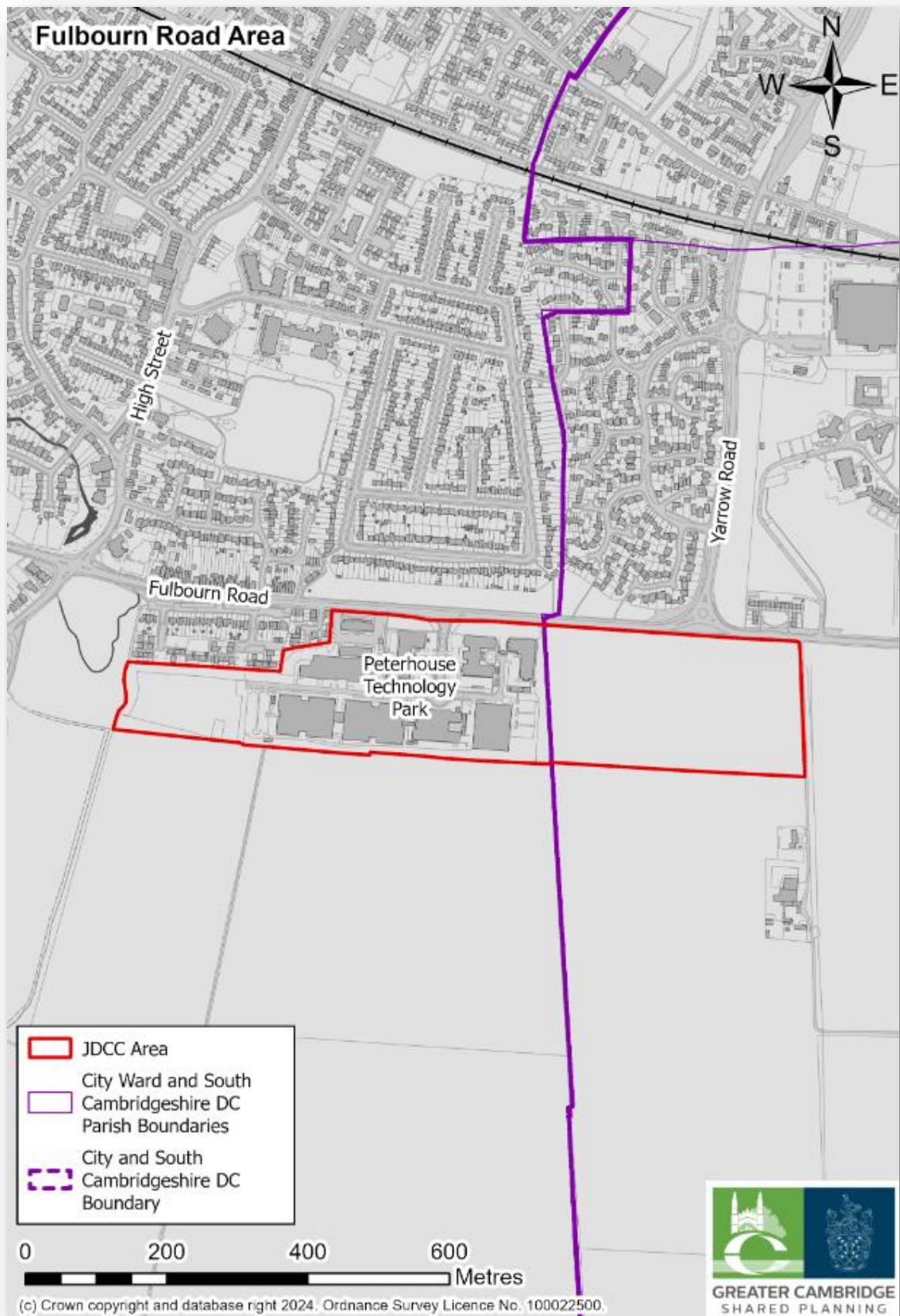
15. Statements of Community Involvement

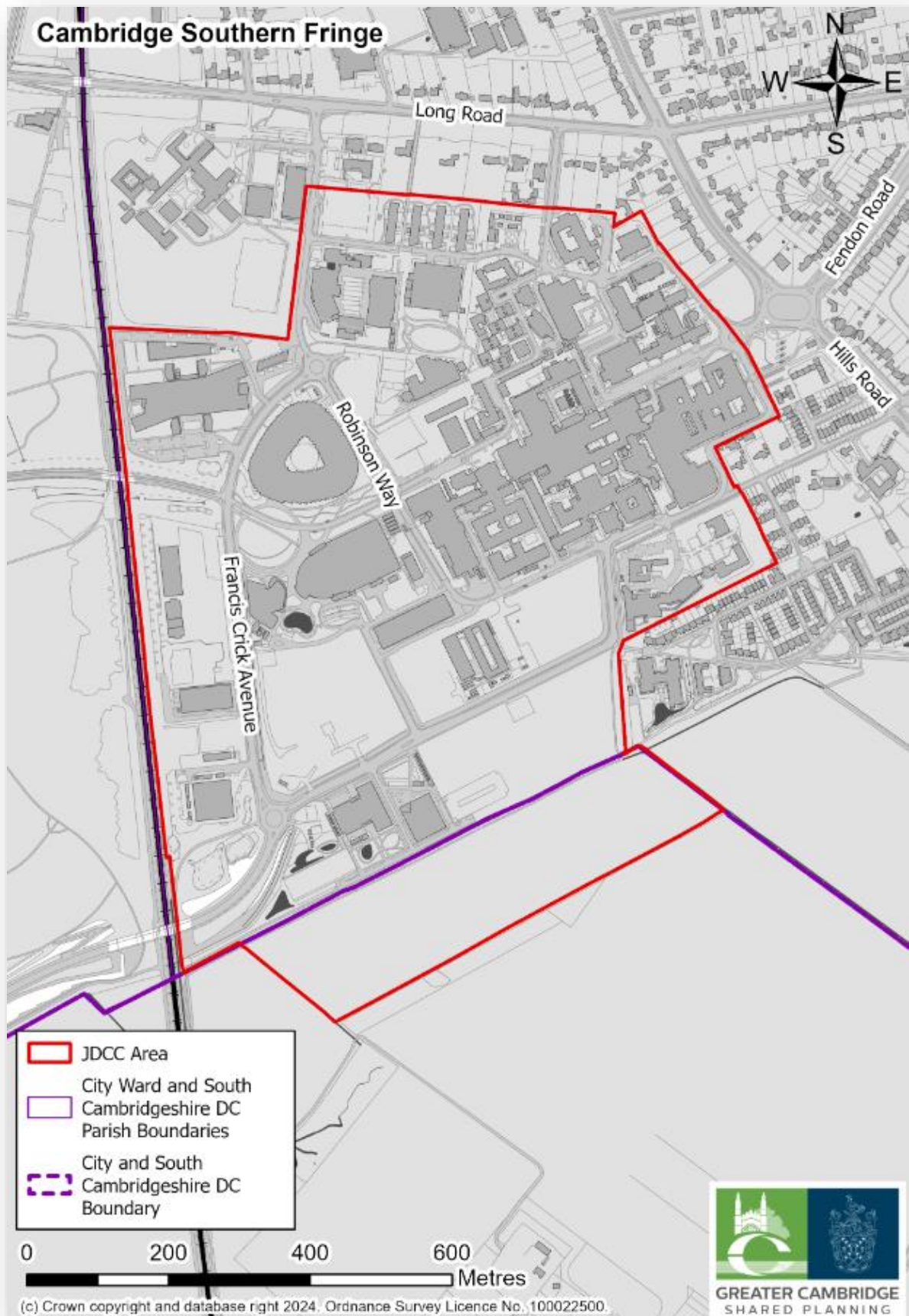
- 15.1. Public consultation in relation to pre application matters shall be dealt with in accordance with the SCI or other appropriate procedures of the Council responsible for issuing the consent.

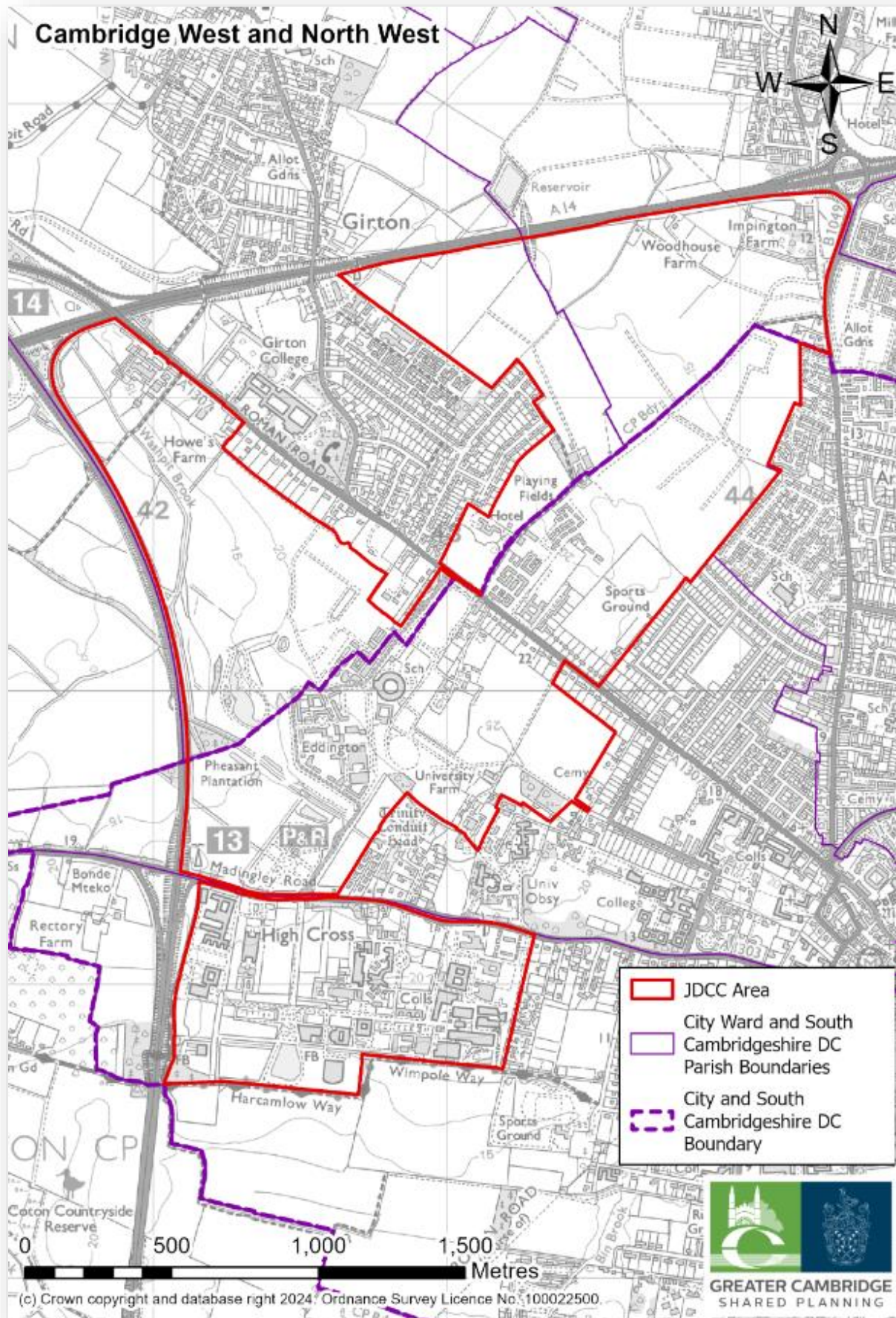
Annex 3 - JDMC plans











Appendix 2 – Development Control Forum

Development Control Forums are triggered by receipt of a qualifying petition

Receipt of Petitions and Notification of Development Control Forum

1. Neighbour consultation letters on planning applications within the remit of the committee shall include information about the scheme for development control forums and the relevant consultation period.
2. A Petition should be sent to the Administrator and should identify the matter to which it relates and the grounds of concern.
3. The Administrator will:
 - (a) Liaise with the Planning case officer to obtain the following information:
 - The expiry date of the relevant consultation period;
 - The addresses of the applicant and agent.
 - (b) Check whether the petition meets the criteria established in the scheme – i.e.:
 - It contains at least 25 signatures of residents and/or business owners in the County;
 - It includes the addresses of those who have signed it;
 - It has been received within 7 working days following the end of the relevant consultation period (in the case of petitions of objection) and no later than 6 working days before a Forum meeting (in the case of petitions of support);
 - The application is not: a householder application; an application for a certificate of lawful use; or an application for advertisement consent.

[Note:

- (i) *If any of these criteria are not met, the petitioners should be informed in writing that their petition will be reported to the committee, and that a Development Control Forum will not be held.*

- (ii) *Normally, a Forum will not be convened in the case of petitions relating to amendments to applications, or to applications which have already been the subject of a Forum. However, the Administrator, following consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, is authorised to decide whether significant new issues are raised, making a Forum appropriate.*
- (iii) *A Forum will not be held to hear a petition of support alone, except where an application, which has not already been subject to a Forum meeting, is resubmitted following an earlier refusal of planning permission.*
- (iv) *Petitions may be submitted by email subject to the following:*
 - *An e-mail petition must consist of individual e-mails, showing the sender's e-mail address.*
 - *An e-mail petition must include the sender's postal address.*
 - *The e-mails must be addressed to the organiser (rather than a council or the committee or its members) who must then let the [administrator to be appointed] have print-outs of the requisite number of supporting e-mails. [Random checks will be carried out on petitioners that have used the e-mail procedure.]*
- (c) Liaise with the Planning case officer and Chair and spokespersons about the date of the Development Control Forum and fix a date, time and venue. So far as practical at least 10 days (including weekends) notice should be given to all those attending under (d). For the avoidance of doubt dates for possible Development Control Forum meetings may be programmed in advance of receipt of petitions.
- (d) Send written invitations to:
 - The lead petitioners;
 - The applicants and agents;
 - Committee members;
 - Ward councillors;
 - Planning officers;

The press will also be informed.

The invitations to the meeting should include:

- A short summary of the application details (to be provided by the planning case officer);
- The case officer as a contact point for planning enquiries and the Administrator for queries about the petition process;
- An explanation of the fact that up to three representatives of the petitioners and up to three representatives of the applicants may attend and speak;
- Petitioners to be invited to contact the officers for a briefing on the procedures at the Forum.

(e) Inform all other councillors of both councils that the meeting is taking place.

4. If two or more petitions are received relating to the same planning application, the following procedure should be applied:
 - In the case of two or more petitions opposed to the application, or two or more petitions in support of the application, the petitioners will be encouraged to make a joint presentation. If agreement on this is not possible between the petitioners, they would share the time allocations given in paragraph 9.

Development Control Forum Meetings

5. The Press and Public are entitled to attend meetings as observers.
6. The Development Control Advisor or other A senior planning officer (other than one of the case officers involved in dealing with the application) will chair the meeting.
7. The style of the Forum will be informal, but the authority of the Chair must be recognised. The decision of the Chair on any question of procedure will be final. No votes will be taken.

8. The main purpose of Forum meetings is to enable petitioners and applicants to give their views and to provide the means by which consensus can be built between the parties.
9. The format of the Forum will be as follows for each application:

Presentation of the application by the applicant/agent (up to three representatives) - up to 20 minutes;

- Presentation of the views of the petitioners against the application (up to three representatives) - up to 20 minutes;
- Presentation of the views of the petitioners in support of the application (where applicable) (up to three representatives) - up to 20 minutes;
- Presentation by the case officer - up to 10 minutes;
- Member questions and issues arising - up to 30 minutes;
- Summing up by the applicants/agents - up to 5 minutes;
- Summing up by the petitioners against the application - up to 5 minutes;
- Summing up by the petitioners in support of the application - up to 5 minutes;
- Final comments of the Chair.

After the Meeting of the Forum

10. The Administrator will take minutes of the meeting. The minutes will be a summary of the issues raised and should not be taken to express a view or decision which is in any way binding on the committee. The minutes will be circulated in draft to the Chair of the Forum, the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee and the case officer and finalised within 5 working days of the Forum. Copies of the finalised minutes will be sent, for information, to:

- The petitioners' representatives at the meeting;
- The applicants' representatives at the meeting;
- Ward councillors;
- Committee members
- the Parish Councils of the areas to which the application relates.

The minutes, and the text of the petition, will also be appended to the report to the committee which invites it to determine the application.

11. The case officer should contact the applicants/agent after the meeting to discuss whether a meeting would be helpful to discuss the issues raised at the Forum and to discuss any changes that may be necessary to the application. The applicant will be encouraged to keep in direct contact with the petitioners and to seek their views on any amendment/s.
12. The case officer will inform the petitioners' representatives of any amendments to the application. Normally, no further Development Control Forum will be held if the planning application is amended - see paragraph 3 (b) (ii).
13. The petitioners' representatives will be informed of the date of the meeting at which the application is to be considered by the committee and will be sent copies of the committee report. The petitioners and applicants will be asked to send any further comments they may have on the report to the planning case officer as soon as possible, so that they can be circulated in good time to members of the committee.

Appendix 3 – Cost Sharing Protocols for JDMC

The ongoing costs incurred in relation to the administration of the Committee, legal support and planning service costs shall be borne by the administering authority and recharged in accordance with the shared service agreement between the two Councils.

Exceptional costs that arise in relation to, for example, appeals and legal proceedings will be borne:

- i) from the joint planning budget,
- ii) where there are insufficient funds within the joint planning budget, then the costs shall be shared proportionally by the Councils.



26/00039/FUL– Land at Ekin Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire.

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: Abbey Ward

Proposal: Demolition of existing dwellings and redevelopment to provide 134 No. new dwellings, parking, open space, landscaping and associated works.

Applicant: Cambridge Investment Partnership

Presenting officer: Aaron Coe

Reason presented to committee: The application is a Regulation 3 planning application as Cambridge City Council has a direct interest in the application as part applicant.

Key issues: 1. Affordable Housing and Viability

2. Neighbour Amenity Impacts

Recommendation: Approve application reference 26/00039/FUL subject to:

(i) The planning conditions as set out in report, with delegated authority to officers to carry through amendments to those conditions (including additional/revised conditions as appropriate and necessary)

(ii) The prior completion of a Section 106 Agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 with delegated authority to officers to negotiate, settle and complete such an Agreement as referenced in the Heads of Terms within this report, including any other planning obligations considered acceptable and necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

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	Assessment
9	Principle of development
10	Financial Viability Assessment and Affordable Housing
11	Design, layout, scale and landscaping
12	Trees
13	Carbon reduction and sustainable design
14	Biodiversity
15	Water management and flood risk
16	Highway safety and transport Impacts
17	Car and Cycle Parking
18	Amenity
19	Other matters
20	Planning obligations (s106)
21	Planning balance
22	Recommendation
23	Conditions

Table 1 Contents of report

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission for the redevelopment of the Ekin Road estate through the demolition of 108 existing dwellings and the

construction of 134 new homes, including 34 affordable homes secured through a Section 106 Agreement, together with public open space, landscaping, parking and associated infrastructure. The redevelopment forms part of the Cambridge Investment Partnership programme and aims to replace ageing housing stock that is affected by significant damp, mould and structural issues.

- 1.2 The site is located within a sustainable location and would make an important contribution towards meeting housing needs in Cambridge. The principle of redevelopment is considered acceptable and accords with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out within Policies S3 and S4 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026).
- 1.3 The proposal has been subject to extensive design development and consultation. Officers consider the scheme would make efficient use of previously developed land, deliver a high-quality residential environment with enhanced public open space, improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity, provide significant biodiversity enhancements, a 76% reduction in regulated carbon emissions compared with the Part L 2021 baseline and a 20% Biodiversity Net Gain. The development would also provide substantial social, economic and environmental benefits through the regeneration of the existing estate.
- 1.4 The proposed development has been subject to viability testing in accordance with Policy 45 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018. The independent viability assessment concludes that the provision of 40% affordable housing would render the scheme unviable due to the substantial abnormal costs associated with estate regeneration and resident decanting. Following negotiations, the scheme will secure 34 affordable homes (25%) on site through the Section 106 agreement.
- 1.5 Although the development would result in the loss of some existing trees, embodied carbon associated with demolition, temporary impacts of during construction and some impacts on neighbouring amenity officers conclude that these harms are outweighed by the public benefits arising from the regeneration of the estate, the delivery of new homes, affordable housing, enhanced public realm, biodiversity net gain and sustainable design measures. Officers therefore recommend that the application be **approved**, subject to conditions and completion of a Section 106 Agreement.

Summary of Consultee responses

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment
Active Travel England	No comment
Anglian Water	Objection
Cadent Gas	No objection
Cambridge Airport	No objection
Central East Integrated Care Board	No objection
Community Development	No comment
County Active travel	No objection
County Archaeology	No objection
County Education	No objection
County Highways Development Management	No objection
County Transport Assessment Team	No comment
Designing Out Crime	No objection
East of England Ambulance Service	No objection
Ecology Officer	No objection

Environment Agency	No comment
Environmental Health	No objection
Fire Authority	No objection
Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Waste team	No objection
Landscape Officer	No objection
Lead Local Flood Authority	No objection
Natural England	Objection
Public Art Advisory	No objection
Sustainability Officer	No objection
S106 Officer	No objection
Tree Officer	Objection
Urban Design Officer	No objection
Design Review Panel	Full response attached at Appendix A
Third Party Representations (11)	4 neutral, 7 in objection
Member Representations	0
Local Interest Groups and Organisations / Petition	1 – Save Ekin Road Community Group

Table 2 Consultee summary

2. Site description and context

- 2.1 The application site is located within the Abbey Ward in the eastern part of Cambridge and extends to approximately 2.55 hectares. The wider Ekin

Road Estate currently contains 122 dwellings. Following local consultation, 14 existing homes situated along the southern boundary have been excluded from the redevelopment area and are proposed to be retained. The total number of existing homes located within the red line site boundary that are proposed to be redeveloped is 108 dwellings.

- 2.2 The site comprises a mix of residential building types, including flat blocks, bungalows, and terraced and semi-detached houses, ranging in height from one to three storeys. The site as existing also consists of small parking courts, garage blocks, trees, and areas of soft landscaping.
- 2.3 The site is bounded by existing residential development to the north and east, with Cambridge City Cemetery located further to the east. Wadloes Road runs along the western boundary of the site and connects with Newmarket Road to the south. Along the southern edge of the site, beyond the 14 retained dwellings, are a number of commercial units.
- 2.4 In terms of planning constraints, the site is outside of all designated conservation areas and there are no listed buildings within close proximity to the site. There are a number of trees within the site boundary, none of the trees within the site are subject to tree preservation orders. The site is situated in an area of low risk of flooding from rivers and seas and the site is also an area of low surface water flood risk.

3. The Proposals

- 3.1 The proposal seeks to permission for the demolition of the existing 108 dwellings with new residential accommodation totalling 134 homes of which 34 would be secured through the planning permission as affordable, open space and associated infrastructure. The existing properties have significant damp and mould issues, ongoing water ingress, deteriorating structural issues within the non-traditional flat blocks, and shortcomings against contemporary fire safety and building standards. Assessments of the existing buildings have been submitted and concluded that the properties are approaching the end of their life and that comprehensive redevelopment offers the most effective and sustainable means of securing safe and energy efficient housing for future residents.
- 3.2 The proposed development has been the subject of extensive stakeholder consultation prior to being submitted as a planning application. A detailed account can be found in the Applicant's submitted 'Statement of Community Involvement'.

- 3.3 With regards engagement with the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) has been entered into which has facilitated a series of regular meetings between officers, the developer and their team.
- 3.4 A pre-application Members Briefing was held in July 2025 and was attended by the Applicant and their representatives, officers, ward members and Planning Committee Members.
- 3.5 The Applicant has indicated a commitment to continuing engagement with all stakeholders beyond the planning submission.

4. Relevant site history

- 4.1 No relevant planning history.

5. Policy

5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026

- 5.2 The updated NPPF, which was published on 17 August 2026, is a material consideration which must be taken into account where it is relevant to a planning application. It replaces the December 2024 with immediate effect for making decisions on planning applications. The document is intended to create a clearer, more rules -based planning system, accelerate housing delivery, support economic growth, and make planning decisions more predictable.
- 5.3 For the purposes of decision making on planning applications, the adopted local plans of the Councils remain the statutory starting point when considering planning applications. However, the updated NPPF is clear in Annex A that an existing development plan policy (or part of a policy) which is materially inconsistent with a new national decision making policy should be given **very limited** weight.
- 5.4 A review of the adopted Local Plan policies has been undertaken in the context of the updated NPPF. This has found that the majority of policies in both adopted plans remain broadly consistent with national policy and can be given weight until replaced by policies in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. A small number of policies, or parts of policies are materially inconsistent with national policy. Where appropriate, reference is made

within the relevant sections of the assessment, to the appropriate policy weight which is attributed to local plan policies.

- 5.5 NPPF (2026) introduces a suite of national Development Management decision making policies – a set of procedural policies, and a number of thematic policies, structured around the respective document chapters, which must be taken into account where it is relevant to an application. This includes applying the presumption in favour of sustainable development found in Policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF, which requires approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.
- 5.6 The NPPF lists the three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways to achieve sustainable development. These roles are considered in weighing up the benefits and dis-benefits of the development proposals, relative to all material considerations discussed in the report.
- 5.7 In following these requirements, the application proposals have been assessed against the NPPF (2026), and the relevant development plan policies.

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)

Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)

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

5.8 **Cambridge Local Plan (2018)**

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy 3: Spatial strategy for the location of residential development
Policy 8: Setting of the City
Policy 27: Site specific development opportunities
Policy 28: 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 33: Contaminated land
Policy 34: Light pollution control
Policy 35: Human health and quality of life
Policy 36: Air quality, odour and dust
Policy 45: Affordable housing and dwelling mix
Policy 50: Residential space standards
Policy 51: Accessible homes
Policy 55: Responding to context
Policy 56: Creating successful places
Policy 57: Designing new buildings
Policy 59: Designing landscape and the public realm
Policy 69: Protection of sites of biodiversity and geodiversity importance
Policy 70: Protection of priority species and habitats
Policy 71: Trees
Policy 73: Community, sports and leisure facilities
Policy 74: Education facilities
Policy 75: Healthcare facilities
Policy 80: Supporting sustainable access to development
Policy 81: Mitigating the transport impact of development
Policy 82: Parking management
Policy 85: Infrastructure delivery, planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy

5.9 **Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 19 Proposed Submission)**

5.10 The Proposed Submission Greater Cambridge Local Plan represents the latest 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.

- 5.11 The Proposed Submission Local Plan was published for public consultation (under Regulation 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) between 3 August and 25 September 2026.
- 5.12 The NPPF (2026) advises that development plan policies (or parts of those policies) which are materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies in this Framework should be given very limited weight. Policy DM4 advises that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to several factors.
- 5.13 Therefore, at this stage, the Proposed Submission Local Plan and its policies can only be afforded limited weight as a material consideration in decision making.
- 5.14 Submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State is anticipated by the end of December 2026.
- 5.15 **Neighbourhood plan**
- 5.16 None
- 5.17 **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**
- Greater Cambridge Health Impact Assessment – Adopted April 2025
 Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations SPD – Adopted April 2026
 Biodiversity SPD – Adopted February 2022
 Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020
 Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted November 2016
- 5.18 **Other guidance**
- Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029
 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)
 Cycle Parking Guide for New Residential Developments (2010)
 Cambridgeshire County Council RECAP Waste Management Design Guide (2026)

6. Consultations

6.1 Publicity

- 6.2 Neighbour letters – Yes. Over 200 neighbours notified

6.3 Site Notice – Yes. 3 Site Notices posted around the site.

6.4 Press Notice – Yes

The amended proposals were subject to re-consultation, with notification letters sent to all neighbouring properties originally consulted.

Active Travel England

6.5 No comment.

Anglian Water - Objection

6.6 Holding objection until alternative plans to increase capacity at the existing Cambridge Recycling Centre to deal with wastewater from growth are confirmed.

Cadent Gas

6.7 No objection subject to informatives.

Cambridge Airport- No Objection

6.8 No objection subject to a condition requiring a Glint and Glare assessment prior to the installation of any PV panels.

Central East Integrated Care Board- No Objection

6.9 No objection subject to financial contributions towards East Barnwell Health Centre.

City Council Community Development

6.10 No comment.

County Active Travel- No Objection

6.11 No objection in principle; supports the proposed walking, wheeling and cycling improvements. Supports upgrades to the Ekin Road-Ditton Lane active travel link. Supports the proposed cycle parking provision, including the use of Sheffield stands, as compliant with the Cambridge Cycle Parking

Guide. Supports the proposed green links through the site to improve active travel connectivity. Recommends maintaining minimum 1.5m clear gaps around bollards to accommodate adapted cycles and improving bollard layouts where access may be constrained. Recommends upgrading the north-western path connection to the Wadloes Road cycle route to a 3m-wide shared-use route to improve cycling permeability.

County Archaeology- No Objection

- 6.12 Archaeological potential. Recommend pre-commencement condition requiring a written scheme of investigation.

County Education- No Objection

- 6.13 The County Council education and Section 106 officers have assessed the proposal and requested contributions towards the following:

£44,204- Towards Early Years
£40,848- Towards Special Education Needs and Disabilities
£223,440- Towards Secondary School provision
£3835.00- Towards Library facilities
£1200.00- Monitoring fee

County Highways Development Management – No objection

- 6.14 No objection subject to conditions requiring an addendum to the submitted TMP and CMP which addresses:
- The bus stop location to be clearly defined within the TMP, with any relocated bus shelter provided during the temporary bus stop relocation. ---
 - Confirmation the temporary parking bays to be provided are a minimum size of 2.5m x 5.0m.
 - Confirmation that construction accesses to be implemented before commencement of works.
 - Confirmation the closure of the south-eastern pedestrian access will be minimised and agreed with the Local Highway Authority.
 - Clarification on the duration of proposed double yellow line restrictions on Ekin Road.
- 6.15 Further conditions relating to:
- EV charging infrastructure plan
 - Pedestrian Visibility Splays
 - Surface Water Drainage to Driveways
 - Bound Material to Driveways and Parking Areas

- 6.16 Informative advising the proposed adoption boundary plan requires slight amendments through the Section 38 process and the Section 38 process should be entered as early as possible to ensure existing residents of Ekin Road retain access to their properties via the adopted public highway.

County Transport Assessment Team

- 6.17 No comment

Definitive Map Team (Public Rights of Way)- No objection

- 6.18 No objection.

Designing out crime officer- No objection

- 6.19 Recommendations have been made regarding crime prevention measures, including the installation of appropriate lighting in key locations and the implementation of enhanced security measures and products.

East of England Ambulance Service- No objection

- 6.20 £11,251 capital contribution requested by the ambulance service is directly related to the additional demand generated by the proposed development. The funding will contribute towards:

-The relocation and expansion of the Cambridge Ambulance Hub, including associated EV charging infrastructure, to ensure sufficient operational capacity to meet the increased service demand arising from the development.

Ecology Officer- No Objection

- 6.21 Ecological details submitted are acceptable. Recommend the following conditions: statutory biodiversity net gain, construction ecological management plan, sensitive lighting strategy and ecological enhancement conditions.

Environment Agency- No comments received.

Environmental Health- No objection

- 6.22 Acceptable subject to the following conditions and informatives:

- Construction hours
- Collection during construction
- DCEMP- Construction/demolition noise/vibration & piling
- Dust
- Noise Insulation – Occupiers
- Plant noise insulation
- Phase 2 Intrusive Site Investigation & Phase 3 Remediation Strategy
- Implementation of Remediation
- Phase 4 Verification/Validation Report
- Unexpected Contamination
- Material Management Plan
- External Lighting Impact

Fire Authority – No objection

- 6.23 Condition required to secure a water scheme for the fire hydrant provision prior to commencement and an inspection of the hydrants must take place prior to occupation.

Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service- No objection

- 6.24 No objection. Contributions towards local waste and recycling services are required and should be secured through the Section 106 agreement.

Landscape Officer- No objection

- 6.25 No objection subject to conditions secured landscape maintenance plan and boundary treatment details.

Lead Local Flood Authority- No objection

- 6.26 No objection subject to conditions to secure the approved surface water drainage strategy and details of the management of surface water during construction.

Natural England

- 6.27 Further assessment required of recreational pressure impacts on SSSI(s).

Public Art Advisory Service

6.28 No objection subject to public art strategy and delivery plan condition.

Sustainability Officer- No objection

6.29 Conditions required to secure carbon reduction and water efficiency standards, energy and smart metres within each flat.

S106 Officer- No Objection subject to contributions below

Provision for children and teenagers	£87,388.32	Towards the provision and/or improvement of the children and teenage play facilities and equipment at Dudley Road Recreation Area, and/or Ditton Field Recreation Ground and/or Thorpe Way Recreation Area.
Indoor sports	£21,318.80	Towards the provision of and/or improvement of indoor sports facilities and equipment at Abbey Sports Centre, Cambridge.
Outdoor sports	£116,252.47	Towards the provision of and / or improvement of the outdoor sports facilities on Dudley Road Recreation Area, and/or Ditton Field Recreation Ground and/or Thorpe Way Recreation Area.
Informal Open Space	£109,226.82	Towards the provision of and / or improvement of and / or access to Informal Open Space facilities at Dudley Road Recreation Area, and/or Ditton Field Recreation Ground and/or Thorpe Way Recreation Area..
Community facilities	£61,372.72	Towards the provision of and / or improvement to community facilities / rooms / spaces and/or equipment at East

		Barnwell Community Centre and / or local community facilities within the Abbey ward, Cambridge.
Community Orchard and Allotment	£16,680.29	Towards the provision of and / or improvement of and / or access to Community Orchard and Allotment facilities at Margaret Wright Community Orchard and / or Co Farm, Cambridge CB1 3HG.
Swimming Space	£22,561.60	Towards the provision of and/or improvement of swimming facilities and equipment at Abbey Sports Centre, Cambridge.
Monitoring fee	£2,200 the monitoring and administration of the section 106 agreement. Plus £500 per obligation which requires written confirmation from the Local Planning Authority.	Contribution directly related to achieving the implementation of the planning obligations.

Tree Officer- No objection

- 6.30 No objection subject to a condition securing an Arboricultural Method Statement prior to the commencement of development.

Urban Design Officer- No objection

- 6.31 The Urban Design Officer raises no objection to the scheme. The officer acknowledges that amendments have been made following discussions with the applicant and considers that the majority of previous concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.

Western Block / Communal Spaces:

Amendments replacing close-board fencing with hit-and-miss fencing are welcomed and are considered to improve the character of communal spaces and reduce previous concerns regarding a "back-alley"

environment. The final agreed details will be secured by the boundary treatment condition.

Refuse Strategy:

Amendments to the refuse storage and collection arrangements are acceptable and the Urban Design Officer raises no objection to the revised strategy.

Street Character and Materiality

Whilst the proposed distribution of house types remains unchanged, amendments to brick colouring and material treatment are considered to improve coherence within the streetscape. The amendments are considered acceptable.

Flat Blocks 1 and 2:

The revised cantilevered balcony design is welcomed and the enhanced detailing around entrances provides some improvement. However, concerns remain regarding the quality of the ground floor residential environment and legibility of the northern ground floor dwelling entrance.

Maisonette Blocks 1 and 2:

Previous concerns regarding the appearance and proportions of the upper floor design have not been addressed.

Materiality

The replacement of contrasting brick panels with corduroy brick detailing is considered a positive change and is supported by the Urban Design Officer.

Viability Consultant

- 6.32 Quintic Advisory independently reviewed the Financial Viability Assessment submitted by the applicant on behalf of the Local Planning Authority and concluded that the delivery of the policy compliant requirement of 40% affordable housing would render the development unviable. This conclusion was due to the abnormal costs associated with the regeneration of the existing estate, including tenant decant costs, which materially affect the scheme's viability.

- 6.33 In undertaking its review, Quintic Advisory challenged a number of the assumptions within the applicant's appraisal, particularly in relation to private residential sales values and affordable housing revenues, concluding that higher values could reasonably be achieved. Following its independent assessment, Quintic determined that the scheme could viably support approximately 15% affordable housing, equating to 20 affordable dwellings comprising 5 Social Rent units and 15 Affordable Rent units. Whilst concluding that the full policy requirement could not be achieved, Quintic advised that a reduced level of affordable housing was justified on viability grounds and that the maximum viable provision should be secured through the Section 106 Agreement.

Design Review Panel (14th July 2022)

- 6.34 The Design Review Panel was broadly supportive of the principle of redevelopment, the delivery of new sustainable homes and the proposed landscape strategy. However, the panel considered that the scheme required further work on its architectural quality, placemaking and the layout of roads and parking were seen as dominating parts of the site. The panel also emphasised the importance of retaining mature trees, strengthening pedestrian/ cycle connections and fostering community cohesion throughout the redevelopment process.

7. Third Party Representations

- 7.1 11 representations have been received 4 neutral comments and 7 objections.

- 7.2 Those in objection have raised the following issues:

- The impacts of demolition and construction activity, including noise, dust, vibration and construction management.
- Access arrangements for existing residents, visitors, service providers and emergency services during the construction period.
- Reduced affordable housing provision from policy-compliant levels (40%)
- Potential disruption to utilities, refuse collection and day-to-day residential living conditions during construction.
- Car parking impacts
- Biodiversity and ecological impacts.
- The effect of the proposed development on neighbouring residential amenity through overlooking, loss of privacy, overshadowing and visual impact.
- The scale, massing and height of certain proposed buildings, particularly Flat Block 3 and dwellings located close to neighbouring boundaries.

Local Interest Group

7.3 Save Ekin Road Community Group

- Object to the proposed closure of the southern section of Ekin Road to vehicular traffic for approximately 57 weeks during the construction period.
- Requests that uninterrupted vehicular access to properties be maintained throughout construction, except for short periods where works are taking place directly outside individual properties.
- Raises concerns regarding the impact on residents with disabilities, access to taxis and carers, deliveries, and the security of vehicles relocated to temporary parking areas.
- Concerns regarding the maintenance of emergency service access to properties throughout the construction period.
- Suggests the use of the proposed temporary access road as a permanent construction-phase vehicle route to maintain resident and emergency access while utility and highway works are undertaken.
- Requests that any revised access arrangements be secured through amended plans and/or planning obligations or conditions.
- Request continued engagement with the applicant regarding construction management and access arrangements.

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. Assessment

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

- Principle of development
- Financial Viability and Affordable Housing provision
- Design, layout, scale and landscaping
- Trees
- Carbon reduction and sustainable design
- Biodiversity
- Water management and flood risk
- Highway safety and transport impacts
- Car and cycle parking
- Amenity

- Other matters
- Planning obligations
- Planning balance
- Recommendation
- Planning conditions

9. Principle of Development

Housing Land Supply

- 9.1 Plan Making Policy H03 (1.a.i.) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2026) requires the Council to identify a sufficient supply of specific deliverable sites to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against the Council's housing requirement figure, with an appropriate buffer.
- 9.2 The NPPF 2026, at Annex D paragraph 8, states that that five year supply requirements are assessed against the housing requirement in the development plan, or against the local housing need (calculated using the standard method) where the development plan housing requirement is more than five years old. The adopted Cambridge City Local Plan and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 are both almost 8 years old. Accordingly, the standard method is now being used to establish the housing requirement on an individual district basis.
- 9.3 Since adoption of the Local Plans in 2018, the Councils' five year housing land supply has been calculated on the basis of a joint housing trajectory, as set out in Policy 3 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and Policy S/12 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018, and captured in annual updates to the Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and Housing Land Supply Report. However, there are several factors which indicate that this approach is no longer appropriate, or consistent with national policy.
- 9.4 In order to adopt a consistent approach to the monitoring of housing delivery in Greater Cambridge, the Councils must calculate their five year housing land supply separately in accordance with Annex D of the NPPF 2026.
- 9.5 On the basis of the updated calculations (as set out in the Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and Housing Land Supply Report-Addendum- September 2026) Cambridge has 2.72 years of housing land supply for 2026-2031 and South Cambridgeshire has 7.83 years of housing land supply for 2026-2031. These figures must be applied when considering development proposals against the development plan and NPPF 2026 national decision-making policies.

Assessment

- 9.6 The City Council are currently unable to demonstrate a 5YHLS and so has an unmet need. The relevant Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 (Policy 3) can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of this planning application. This application must be determined in accordance with presumption in favour of sustainable development, as per the requirements of policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF 2026.
- 9.7 Policy S3 of the NPPF states that decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and, policy S4 should be applied to development proposals inside settlements.
- 9.8 Policy S4: Principle of development within settlements, requires development proposals within settlements to be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the Framework.
- 9.9 The proposed redevelopment of the site to provide 134 new homes in this location represents sustainable development in accordance with Policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF 2026. The site benefits from proximity to existing employment opportunities, services, facilities and sustainable transport connections, enabling residents to access day to day needs without undue reliance on the private car. The proposal would make an important contribution to housing supply, including affordable housing, while making effective and efficient use of land within the urban area. In accordance with Policy S4, the principle of development within settlements is supported unless the benefits would be substantially outweighed by adverse effects. Subject to the mitigation and measures proposed through the application, the development would not give rise to adverse effects that substantially outweigh its significant social, economic and environmental benefits. The proposal therefore accords with the presumption in favour of sustainable development established by Policy S3 and the settlement-focused approach to development set out in Policy S4 of the NPPF 2026.
- 9.10 The National Planning Policy Framework (2026) places significant emphasis on boosting housing delivery and directing growth towards sustainable locations. The Framework supports the regeneration and redevelopment of previously developed land, the efficient use of land and the delivery of well-designed, sustainable communities. In particular, the policies contained within the Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes (HO1-HO13) and Making Effective Use of Land (L1-L3) seek to optimise the use of suitable brownfield

land and support development proposals that contribute towards identified housing needs.

- 9.11 The proposed density of approximately 53 dwellings per hectare represents an efficient use of a sustainable urban site and is consistent with the objectives of NPPF 2026 Policies L1-L3, which seek to optimise the use of land to support housing delivery while securing high-quality development. The scheme therefore makes effective use of a previously developed site within the existing urban area and contributes towards national objectives to maximise housing delivery in sustainable locations.
- 9.12 Overall, the principle of a residential development on the site is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the NPPF 2026.

10. Financial Viability Assessment and Affordable Housing

- 10.1 A Financial Viability Assessment (FVA) was submitted in support of the application and independently reviewed by the viability consultant appointed by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Quintic Advisory.
- 10.2 Policy DM5 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026) advises that viability should principally be addressed through the plan-making process and that departures from policy requirements should only be justified in limited circumstances, including where developments are subject to site specific demonstrable costs. Officers consider the estate regeneration and decant costs associated with this proposal constitute exceptional site specific circumstances which justify the submission of a viability assessment.
- 10.3 The key viability constraints arise from the site being an estate regeneration project. The submitted viability reports demonstrate the redevelopment proposals incur substantial demonstrable costs associated with the demolition and replacement of the existing estate, including decanting and other associated regeneration costs. These costs were reviewed and accepted by Quintic Advisory as legitimate development costs that materially impact the viability of the development proposals. Of the 108 dwellings proposed for demolition, all but 13 have now been decanted, with the remaining 95 properties left vacant.
- 10.4 As originally submitted, the applicant's viability consultant, Savills, concluded that the redevelopment could not viably support the policy compliant provision of affordable housing and that the scheme would remain in deficit even with no affordable housing provision. In reviewing the applicant's

appraisal, Quintic Advisory challenged a number of assumptions, particularly relating to private residential sales values and affordable housing revenues, concluding that higher values could reasonably be achieved than those assumed by the applicant's viability consultant. Following an independent assessment, Quintic concluded that the development could viably deliver 15% of the scheme as affordable housing.

- 10.5 Following discussions between the applicant, the Local Planning Authority and the viability consultants, an agreed position has been reached whereby the development will secure 34 affordable homes through the Section 106 Agreement. This approach reflects the viability evidence whilst supporting Cambridge City Council's wider commitment to delivering at least 50% affordable housing across the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) portfolio. The agreed provision of 34 affordable dwellings equates to 25% affordable housing on site and exceeds the level of affordable housing identified as viable by the LPAs viability consultant, Quintic Advisory. Table 1 below sets out the affordable housing provision that would be secured through this planning permission and the associated Section 106 Agreement.

Table 1- Affordable Housing Provision Proposed to be Secured via the Section 106 Agreement

Unit Size	Number of Affordable Homes	% of affordable
1-bed	2	5.9%
2-bed	10	29.4%
3-bed	15	44.1%
4 and 5-bed	7	20.6%
Total	34	100

- 10.6 Policy 45 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 requires a scheme of this size to provide 40% affordable housing, subject to viability considerations, with a strong presumption in favour of on site delivery. Cambridge City Council, in partnership with Hill Residential, has a strong track record of delivering affordable housing across the city through the Cambridge Investment Partnership. In addition, the Council's housebuilding programme is guided by a corporate commitment that at least 50% of new homes delivered across its portfolio will be affordable. In respect of this site, the Council is committed

to delivering 58% affordable housing at the Ekin Road site if Homes England funding is secured.

- 10.7 However, it should be noted that the Homes England funding process sits outside of the planning application process. It does, however, become relevant should funding be successfully allocated to this development. This is considered further in paragraph 10.11 below.
- 10.8 Whilst the proposal does not deliver the policy compliant requirement of 40% affordable housing, this must be considered in the context of both the site's existing condition and the findings of the submitted and independently reviewed viability evidence. The existing dwellings have reached the end of their operational life and the estate is no longer considered capable of meeting modern housing standards. In the absence of comprehensive redevelopment, the condition of the estate will continue to deteriorate, resulting in increasing management, maintenance and investment costs. The independently assessed viability evidence demonstrates that the scheme cannot viably support the delivery of 40% affordable housing due principally to the significant demonstrable costs associated with the regeneration of the estate. Notwithstanding this position, the redevelopment provides an opportunity for the Council to seek and maximise external funding from Homes England towards the delivery of additional affordable housing, although any such funding would be secured outside of the planning process.
- 10.9 Cambridge City Council has recently secured a Strategic Partnership with Homes England through the Government's 2026-2036 Social and Affordable Homes Programme. This partnership provides funding to support the delivery of 803 council homes, including 723 homes at social rent, as part of a wider programme to significantly increase the supply of affordable housing across Cambridge. However, no element of this funding has been allocated to the Ekin Road redevelopment at the time of determining this application.
- 10.10 Accordingly, the viability of the development must be assessed without the benefit of grant funding. Whilst the applicant intends to seek an allocation of Homes England funding for the site should planning permission be granted, any additional affordable housing above the 34 affordable dwellings (25%) secured through the Section 106 Agreement cannot be relied upon in the assessment of the application or afforded weight in the planning balance.
- 10.11 Should grant funding subsequently be allocated to the Ekin Road redevelopment, the Section 106 Agreement will include a mechanism requiring the submission and approval of an updated affordable housing scheme by the Local Planning Authority. This would enable any additional affordable housing delivered above the 34 affordable dwellings secured through the planning permission to be agreed, including details of tenure, location and distribution.

- 10.12 Having regard to the independently reviewed viability evidence, officers are satisfied that the development cannot viably support the provision of 40% affordable housing due to the demonstrable costs associated with the regeneration of the existing estate. The provision of 34 affordable dwellings (25%), secured through the Section 106 Agreement, represents the maximum reasonable level of affordable housing that can be secured by the planning application. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy DM5 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026) and Policy 45 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

11. Design, layout, scale and landscaping

- 11.1 Policy DP3(1) of the NPPF 2026 states that development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the site layout, the use of materials and architectural features. This should not preclude innovation or change where appropriate, especially where an increased scale or density of development is justified in accordance with policies L2 and L3.
- 11.2 Policies 55, 56, 57, 58 and 59 of the Cambridge Local Plan 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 and includes appropriate landscaping and boundary treatments.
- 11.3 The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character, comprising a mix of houses, flats and areas of open space. The site is also located within close proximity to the East Barnwell local centre which is currently under construction. The site fronts onto Wadloes Road to the west. To the north and east, the site is bounded by rear gardens of houses on Keynes Road and Ditton Lane. To the south, the site is fronted by the retained houses of the Ekin Road estate, while a large industrial unit lies beyond (accessed from Newmarket Road).
- 11.4 The application proposals have evolved through numerous design iterations to achieve a comprehensively planned residential neighbourhood based around a series of clearly defined streets, urban blocks and publicly accessible green spaces. The masterplan retains and integrates the 14 existing dwellings along the southern boundary, whilst increasing housing delivery and family accommodation in a manner that makes efficient use of previously developed land. The layout has evolved through extensive testing of alternatives and is considered to achieve an appropriate balance between housing delivery, movement, landscape retention and place making.
- 11.5 Officers believe the application responds positively to the Design Review Panel's comments. Since the scheme was reviewed, the proposals evolved significantly from a predominantly flatted development to a lower-rise scheme comprising a greater proportion of houses. Through ongoing engagement with officers, the design team has refined the layout to deliver enhanced landscape spaces, improved pedestrian and cycle connectivity,

and a more balanced street environment that reduces the visual dominance of parking and vehicles. The revised proposals also retain the most significant mature trees and provide a stronger placemaking framework, resulting in a more coherent and attractive residential neighbourhood.

- 11.6 In terms of scale and massing the proposals are considered to be appropriate to their context and have been informed by a clear hierarchy of character areas across the site. The development comprises character areas; The Urban Edge, The Greenscapes and The Traditional Streetscapes, each with a slightly different architectural expression and material palette whilst maintaining a consistent design language throughout the development. This approach creates visual interest and legibility whilst ensuring a coherent overall character.
- 11.7 Building heights range from two to four storeys, with the taller elements focussed within The Urban Edge character area along the Wadloes Road frontage and within the central parts of the site. This reflects the site's more prominent position adjacent to the wider highway corridor and areas of open space where increased scale can be accommodated without resulting in unacceptable impacts on neighbouring residential properties. Buildings fronting Wadloes Road range between 2.5 and 4 storeys, helping to establish a strong frontage and sense of enclosure whilst making efficient use of the site.
- 11.8 Towards the site boundaries, particularly adjacent to existing residential development on Keynes Road, Ditton Lane and the retained Ekin Road properties, building heights reduce to predominantly two and two-and-a-half storeys. This provides an appropriate transition in scale to neighbouring development and assists in protecting the amenities of existing residents. Officers consider the height strategy successfully balances the efficient use of land with the need to respond positively to local context, creating a varied yet coherent townscape that would not appear overly dominant when viewed from surrounding streets and public spaces.
- 11.9 The architectural approach and material palette were the subject of discussion during the application process. Initial concerns were raised regarding the coherence of certain street scenes, the complexity of the material strategy and the appearance of some apartment and maisonette buildings. Following amendments, including revisions to brick detailing, material treatments and balcony design, the Urban Design Officer confirmed that the proposed changes create a more coherent and successful streetscape and considered the revised material strategy acceptable.
- 11.10 In terms of landscape design, whilst some existing trees would be lost, officers negotiated with the applicants at pre application stage to ensure the most important and highest quality trees were retained and as a result the proposals achieve an appropriate balance between tree retention and redevelopment objectives. The most significant trees are retained and incorporated into key public spaces, helping to establish character and identity throughout the development. The retained green verge along

Wadloes Road and the creation of a network of linked open spaces are particularly supported and would contribute positively to the setting of the development. The proposed landscape strategy represents a significant enhancement over the existing arrangement. The site currently contains approximately 0.3ha of fragmented amenity grassland with limited recreational value, no formal play provision and few opportunities for social interaction. The development would provide approximately 0.66ha of publicly accessible open space, more than doubling the existing provision. The proposals include a network of linked green spaces and two landscaped green links which are integrated throughout the development and provide attractive green outlooks for both existing and future residents.

- 11.11 The landscape strategy has been designed to support recreation, biodiversity and sustainable travel, with new tree planting, informal lawn areas, seating, SuDS features and high-quality pedestrian and cycle connections running through the site. Play opportunities are distributed across the development and officers consider the landscape and play strategy would create a well-used and attractive network of public spaces which significantly improves upon the existing provision and would make a positive contribution to the quality, character and sustainability of the development.
- 11.12 During the course of the application improvements have been secured to boundary treatments and interfaces with public spaces. Amendments include the repositioning of boundaries, increased use of brickwork at key corners and additional landscaping. These changes were welcomed by Officers and are considered to improve the relationship between dwellings and the public realm. The final boundary treatments are secured by planning condition along with the details of the proposed estate management arrangements. Overall, officers consider the proposals would create a well-structured and legible residential environment with a clear hierarchy of streets and spaces, appropriate building heights, strong landscape integration and a satisfactory architectural response. The scheme is considered to deliver a high-quality development which responds appropriately to its surroundings whilst making efficient use of this sustainable site.
- 11.13 The proposals are considered to be in accordance with the objectives of Policies 55, 56, 57 and 59 of the Cambridge Local Plan by successfully integrating with its surroundings, delivering an attractive public realm and appropriately scaled built form which promotes activity and natural surveillance throughout the development. The proposals are also considered to be consistent with the design objectives set out within NPPF 2026.

12. Trees

- 12.1 The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA). The report highlights that of a total of 37 individual trees would require removal to facilitate the development. None of the trees proposed to be

removed are category A trees (high quality). Only two are category B trees. Through the pre application process the scheme design was developed to ensure the retention of G10 (category B Whitebeam) and T58 (category B-Swedish Whitebeam). To mitigate against the proposed tree loss, the development proposals will deliver 97 trees as part of the landscaping and replanting strategy, including 13 large species trees and 22 medium species.

- 12.2 The Council's Tree Officer has reviewed the AIA and raises no objection to the proposed development.
- 12.3 Subject to condition 37 (Arboricultural Method Statement), the proposal would accord with policies 59 and 71 of the Cambridge Local Plan, and the NPPF (2026).

13. Carbon reduction and sustainable design

- 13.1 The Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2020) sets out a framework for proposals to demonstrate they have been designed to minimise their carbon footprint, energy and water consumption and to ensure they are capable of responding to climate change.
- 13.2 Policy 28 states development should take the available opportunities to integrate the principles of sustainable design and construction into the design of proposals, including issues such as climate change adaptation, carbon reduction and water management. The same policy requires new residential developments to achieve as a minimum water efficiency to 110 litres per person per day.
- 13.3 Policy 29 supports proposals which involve the provision of renewable and / or low carbon generation provided adverse impacts on the environment have been minimised as far as possible.
- 13.4 The application is supported by a sustainability and energy statement and an overheating assessment which assesses the proposed development and design in the context of sustainability.
- 13.5 The scheme is targeting a 76% reduction in regulated carbon emissions over the part L 2021 baseline. The proposals include the use of air source heat pumps, green roofs and photovoltaic panels. The proposed development is targeting a water consumption of 95 litres per person per day which betters the policy requirement of 110 litres per person per day. This is secured by condition 34.
- 13.6 The information submitted has been assessed by the Councils Sustainability officer and considered the development to be acceptable subject to conditions securing compliance with the submitted energy statement, water efficiency standards, green roof details, installation of smart meters and a demolition materials reuse and recycling plan (conditions 33,34,35 and 36

as recommended).

- 13.7 The development has been designed to prioritise natural ventilation and mitigate the risk of overheating. Secure louvred ventilation panels are proposed for ground floor bedrooms to ensure secure night-time ventilation is achieved. 100% of the proposed dwellings are dual aspect (72.7% dual aspect and 27.3% triple aspect), thereby providing good levels of cross-ventilation and passive cooling.
- 13.8 The applicant has submitted details of the options appraisals which considered refurbishment, partial redevelopment and full redevelopment of the Ekin Road estate. The assessment was informed by structural surveys which identified significant limitations associated with the properties, including poor thermal performance and structural deterioration. Refurbishment and retrofit measures, including insulation upgrades, heat pumps, solar PV and ventilation improvements, were assessed but were not considered capable of fully addressing the site's housing quality, accessibility, placemaking and regeneration objectives. Full redevelopment was therefore identified as the preferred option.
- 13.9 The redevelopment would result in higher embodied carbon emissions than refurbishment, reflecting the impacts associated with demolition and the construction of new homes. However, the proposed scheme would deliver substantial operational carbon savings over the 30-year appraisal assessment period and is considered justified when balanced against the wider benefits of the development, including the replacement of buildings that have reached the end of their useful life, the delivery of additional homes, improved accessibility and housing quality.
- 13.10 Condition 36 requires the submission of a Demolition Materials Reuse and Recycling Plan, this condition is recommended to maximise opportunities for material reuse and reduce embodied carbon. The applicant also proposes a load bearing masonry construction rather than a reinforced concrete frame, which is expected to reduce embodied carbon impacts of the development. Further consideration of the structural systems, material specifications and construction methods will be undertaken during the detailed design stage.
- 13.11 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Sustainability Officer who has raised no objection to the proposed development.

Having regard to the National Decision-Making Policies CC1-CC3 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change), which support the transition to a low-carbon future and climate change mitigation, officers consider that the proposal strikes an acceptable balance between embodied carbon impacts arising from redevelopment and the substantial long-term operational carbon savings, improved housing standards and regeneration benefits delivered by the development. The proposal is considered to accord with the objectives of the NPPF 2026 and Policy 28 and 29 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

14. Biodiversity

- 14.1 The Environment Act 2021 and the Councils' Biodiversity SPD (2022) require development proposals to deliver a net gain in biodiversity following a mitigation hierarchy which is focused on avoiding ecological harm over minimising, rectifying, reducing and then off-setting.
- 14.2 Policy N2(1) of the NPPF 2026 states that to contribute positively to the natural environment, and support nature's recovery, development proposals should:
- Consider the environmental qualities of land proposed for development, including habitats, landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside, and identify opportunities for those qualities to be conserved or enhanced (including through requirements for biodiversity net gain where these apply)
 - Minimise any adverse impacts on biodiversity and include features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs. -
 - Development proposals should incorporate integrated nest boxes (commonly known as swift bricks) into their construction unless there are compelling technical reasons which prevent their use, or would make them ineffective.
- 14.3 The application is accompanied by Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Plan, SSSI recreational impact assessment, Bat emergence surveys and Swift surveys.
- 14.4 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, who raises no objection to the proposal subject to the imposition of the statutory biodiversity net gain condition, a construction ecological management plan, ecological enhancements and an ecological sensitive lighting scheme.
- 14.5 The PEA has found no evidence to suggest that a protected species licence will be required prior to works commencing on site, however, non-licensable avoidance measures will be used to remove any residual harm.
- 14.6 The submitted Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment demonstrates that the proposed development would result in a net loss of 3.20 habitat units, equating to a 28.31% loss of habitat units, whilst delivering a net gain of 0.63 hedgerow units, representing a 303.35% gain in hedgerow habitat. The current statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement for developments in England is a minimum 10% net gain, as required under the Environment Act 2021. The submitted BNG Assessment shows that 5.46 off-site habitat

units are to be purchased offsite which will provide a net gain in biodiversity of 20%, in accordance with the Council's Biodiversity Net Gain target

- 14.7 Bat emergence surveys found no evidence of bat roosts within the existing buildings proposed for demolition. Bat activity recorded across the site was limited to foraging and commuting species typical of an urban environment. Subject to the sensitive lighting and the provision of bat boxes secured by condition 13, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable.
- 14.8 Swift surveys confirmed that the existing buildings provide nesting opportunities for swifts, with several nesting locations identified. The redevelopment would result in the loss of these nesting sites; however, replacement nesting opportunities are proposed through integrated swift bricks and bird boxes within the new development.
- 14.9 The proposed mitigation and enhancement measures are considered sufficient to avoid harm to protected and priority species and are consistent with Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policies 69 and 70 and the biodiversity objectives of the NPPF 2026. Condition 13 is recommended to secure the provision of bat and bird box enhancements within the completed development. In addition, condition 12 will secure temporary swift boxes to ensure continuity of nesting provision during the construction period until the permanent swift bricks are installed.
- 14.10 Officers note that Natural England identified the potential for recreational impacts and requested further assessment. Having reviewed the submitted assessment, officers are satisfied that the modest scale of the proposal, comprising a net increase of only 26 dwellings, together with the distance to the identified SSSIs and the availability of closer alternative recreational destinations, significantly reduces the likelihood of additional visitor pressure on these sites. The submitted assessment therefore adequately addresses this and demonstrates that the development would not result in significant recreational impacts on designated nature conservation sites. Accordingly, officers are satisfied that the proposal would not have an unacceptable effect on nearby SSSIs and complies with Policies 69 and 70 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the objectives of the NPPF 2026 relating to the protection and enhancement of the natural environment.
- 14.11 On this basis, officers are satisfied that the proposed development complies with policies 69 and 70 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, NPPF 2026 and the requirements of the Environment Act 2021.

15. Water management and flood risk

Flood risk

- 15.1 The site is in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore considered at low risk of fluvial flooding.
- 15.2 The application documents include a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy which demonstrates the surface water from the proposed development would be managed through the use of green roofs and tanked permeable paving before discharging via flow control at a rate of 15l/s into the existing Anglian Water sewer. The proposed discharge rate is a significant betterment over the existing brownfield discharge rates.
- 15.3 The Lead Local Flood Authority have assessed the submitted information and confirmed they have no objection to the proposals. The applicants have suitably addressed the issues of surface water management and flood risk, and subject to conditions the proposal is in accordance with Local Plan policies 31 and 32 and the NPPF 2026.

Foul Water

- 15.4 Anglian Water has advised that the Cambridge Water Recycling Centre currently has limited treatment capacity. However, the proposal relates to the redevelopment of an existing residential estate. The submitted Water Efficiency Technical Note demonstrates that the replacement dwellings will be built to modern water-efficiency standards, resulting in lower water consumption and wastewater generation per dwelling than the existing housing stock. Although the number of dwellings would increase, the redevelopment is not expected to result in a material increase in foul water flows and is expected to reduce overall outflows.
- 15.5 Given the improved water efficiency of the proposed development and the conclusions of the submitted technical evidence, it is considered that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on wastewater infrastructure.
- 15.6 The evidence demonstrates that, notwithstanding the increase in the number of dwellings and occupants, the incorporation of modern water-efficient fixtures and fittings, including dual-flush WCs, low-flow taps and showers, and efficient domestic appliances, would reduce the water consumption compared to the existing ageing housing stock. As a result, the proposed development is expected to achieve a neutral or slightly reduced foul water outflow relative to the existing baseline condition.

- 15.7 Officers are therefore satisfied that the likely effects of the development in terms of foul water flows have been appropriately assessed. On the basis of the submitted evidence, the proposed redevelopment would not materially increase foul water flows within the network and would not give rise to additional environmental harm.

16. Highway Safety and Transport Impacts

- 16.1 Policy TR6 of the NPPF 2026 states that development proposals should be refused if they would have a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts), or an unacceptable impact on highway safety; taking into account any mitigation measures proposed as well as any wider network improvements, including measures to support sustainable patterns of movement. This applies both during the construction phase and following completion.
- 16.2 Policy 80 supports developments where access via walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised and is accessible for all. Policy 81 states that developments will only be permitted where they do not have an unacceptable transport impact.
- 16.3 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment, Traffic Management and Construction Management Plan. Swept path analysis confirms that the site can safely accommodate access and manoeuvring by Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service refuse vehicles and fire appliances.
- 16.4 The Cambridgeshire County Council's Local Highway Authority has been consulted as part of the application and has confirmed the development is acceptable subject to conditions relating to an addendum to the submitted Traffic Management Plan (TMP) and Construction Management Plan (CMP) to secure details of the temporary bus stop relocation (including any replacement shelter), provision of temporary parking bays, implementation of construction accesses prior to commencement, details of the south-eastern pedestrian access closure arrangements, and clarification of the duration of proposed double yellow line restrictions on Ekin Road. Conditions are also recommended requiring an EV Charging Infrastructure Plan, pedestrian visibility splays, surface water drainage to driveways, and the use of bound materials for driveways and parking areas.
- 16.5 Subject to the recommended conditions the proposals are considered to be in accordance with the NPPF 2026 and Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 80 and 81.

17. Car and Cycle Parking

- 17.1 Policy TR4(1) of the NPPF 2026 states that to contribute to creating well-designed places, transport considerations should be integral to the design of development, proposals for which should:

e. Provide a suitable number of parking spaces for a range of transport modes where appropriate, reflecting the location and nature of the development (including its connectivity), any locally-set standards in the development plan, and including adequate provision of spaces and infrastructure that allow for the charging of electric vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

Car Parking

- 17.2 Policy 82 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 sets maximum car parking standards within Appendix L. Outside of the Controlled Parking Zone the maximum standard is no more than 1.5 spaces per dwelling for up to 2 bedrooms and no less than a mean of 0.5 spaces per dwelling up to a maximum of 2 spaces per dwelling for 3 or more bedrooms. The development proposes 88 car parking spaces for 134 dwellings, equating to approximately 0.65 spaces per dwelling. This includes accessible car parking spaces, EV charging infrastructure for all car parking spaces and a dedicated car club space.
- 17.3 The level of provision proposed is below the maximum standards set out in the Local Plan, the site occupies a sustainable location with good access to the City Centre, local services, public transport, and existing walking and cycling networks. The redevelopment also includes enhanced pedestrian and cycle connections, further reducing reliance on the private car.
- 17.4 The application proposes a significant amount of cycle parking, EV charging infrastructure and car club provision, supporting opportunities for more sustainable transport modes for future residents.
- 17.5 Four of the car parking spaces will be provided as accessible bays; two located immediately adjacent to Flat Block 1 and the remainder adjacent to Flat Block 3. These are to accommodate the four M4(3) homes to be delivered within these blocks and the spaces have been located to ensure convenient access for the future residents.
- 17.6 The amount of car parking proposed is considered acceptable as the site is located in a sustainable location, in close proximity to bus stops and local amenities. The level of parking provided is considered to adhere to the objectives of national and local planning policy which seek to minimise the use of the private motor vehicles and encourage the shift towards more sustainable transport modes. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the sustainable transport objectives of the NPPF 2026 and Policies 80, 81 and 82 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

Cycle Parking

- 17.7 Policy 82 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) requires new developments to comply with the cycle parking standards as set out within appendix L which for residential development states that one cycle space should be provided per bedroom for dwellings of up to 3 bedrooms. These spaces should be located in a purpose-built area at the front of each dwelling and be at least as convenient as car parking provision.
- 17.8 The proposal provides 438 cycle parking spaces for 134 dwellings, significantly exceeding the minimum policy requirement of 324 spaces. The cycle parking strategy delivers a high-quality mix of secure and accessible facilities, including dedicated storage for houses, purpose built and covered cycle stores serving the flats and maisonettes, provision for cargo bikes, and 40 visitor cycle spaces in the form of Sheffield stands located at convenient and well distributed points throughout the development. This level of provision is considered to support sustainable travel choices and accords with the Council's objectives for promoting cycling as a primary mode of transport.
- 17.9 The quantity and distribution of cycle parking accords with the requirements of Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 82 and reflects the emphasis within the NPPF on prioritising sustainable and active travel modes.

Amenity

- 17.10 Policies 55, 56 and 57 of the Cambridge Local Plan require the design of developments to respond positively to their context and the NPPF (2026) emphasises the importance of residential amenity in achieving sustainable development.
- 17.11 This section considers daylight, sunlight and overshadowing, as well as loss of privacy and visual enclosure.

Daylight and Sunlight Assessment

- 17.12 The application is supported by the following document which assess the daylight and sunlight impacts of the proposed development on neighbouring properties:
- Rapley LLP- BRE Daylight & Sunlight Report.
- 17.13 The information submitted demonstrates that the proposed development would have an acceptable impact on neighbouring residential amenity. All neighbouring windows meet the BRE guidance Vertical Sky Component (VSC) criteria for daylight, Daylight Distribution (No Sky Line, the Annual Probable Sunlight Hours (APSH)) criteria, and all neighbouring gardens

retain acceptable levels of sunlight with no harmful overshadowing identified.

- 17.14 Officers are therefore satisfied that the proposal would not result in any significant adverse impacts in terms of daylight, sunlight or overshadowing and complies with Policies 55, 56 and 57 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the residential amenity objectives of the NPPF 2026.

Overlooking and loss of privacy

Impact on Existing Residents of Nos. 33-59 Ekin Road Along the Southern Site Boundary

- 17.15 The relationship between the proposed development and Nos. 33-59 Ekin Road has been carefully assessed in respect of overlooking, loss of privacy and any overbearing impacts. The proposed properties positioned closest to the existing dwellings to be retained are Plots 38-40, which would be positioned to the north of the existing frontage.
- 17.16 The closest relationship would be between the front elevations of the existing and proposed dwellings, with a separation distance of approximately 19 metres. This distance a typical and acceptable separation distance within an established urban context. Given the front-to-front relationship, the presence of the public highway between the properties, it is considered that the proposals would not give rise to an unacceptable level of overlooking or loss of privacy. The proposed separation distances broadly reflect the pattern of development already experienced by residents in this part of the Ekin Road estate.
- 17.17 In terms of overbearingness, the dwellings opposite Nos. 33-59 Ekin Road would be limited to two storeys in height. Having regard to the scale, massing and separation distances involved, the proposed buildings would not appear dominant or result in an unacceptable impact on neighbouring occupiers.
- 17.18 In relation to No. 33 Ekin Road, which lies adjacent to proposed Plot 37. The existing relationship between properties in this location currently consists of a separation distance of approximately 7 metres. The proposed arrangement would increase this distance to approximately 11 metres, representing an improvement compared the existing situation. Furthermore, the height, orientation and general siting of Plot 37 would closely reflect the existing established built form on site.
- 17.19 Overall, taking account of the increased separation distances in places, the two-storey scale of development, and the established urban character of the

area, the proposals are considered to provide an acceptable neighbouring relationship with Nos. 33-59 Ekin Road. In several respects in relation to these retained properties, the development would represent a betterment when compared with the existing arrangement and would not result in significant adverse impacts on residential amenity.

Impact on properties along the northern boundary (Keynes Road properties)

- 17.20 Along the northern boundary of the site, the proposed dwellings would be positioned between approximately 29.4m and 35m from the rear elevations of existing properties. These neighbouring dwellings benefit from generously sized rear gardens, resulting in considerable separation distances between the existing and proposed buildings. The proposed relationships are comparable to, and in some instances exceed, the existing separation distances currently experienced across the estate.
- 17.21 Whilst a degree of intervisibility between residential properties is inevitable within an established urban area, the proposed development would not introduce unacceptable relationships. The separation distances are considered sufficient to maintain an acceptable level of privacy for existing and future occupants, particularly when viewed within the context of the prevailing development pattern and the relatively dense urban character of the area.

Impact on 103 Ekin Road

- 17.22 The occupier of 103 Ekin Road has raised concerns regarding the increased height and closer proximity of proposed Plots 18 and 19. Officers acknowledge that the proposed three storey dwellings would be positioned closer to the boundary than the existing two storey buildings and would therefore have a greater impact on the property.
- 17.23 However, the submitted BRE Daylight and Sunlight Assessment demonstrates that all assessed rooms within 103 Ekin Road continue to satisfy the relevant BRE guidelines, with only limited changes to daylight levels which remain well within accepted standards. This indicates that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable loss of daylight or sunlight.
- 17.24 Officers are satisfied that the degree of harm arising from the increased scale and proximity of the development would not be significant or unacceptable, and the proposal therefore complies with Policies 55, 56 and 57 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the amenity objectives of the NPPF 2026.

Impact on Ekin Close properties

- 17.25 Plot 31 is a three storey townhouse positioned approximately 21m from the front elevations of properties on Ekin Close, with the separation distance further reinforced by the intervening access road and landscaping. Given the separation distance and intervening road, officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy.

Impact on Ditton Lane properties

- 17.26 Beyond the eastern boundary of the site lie the existing properties on Ditton Lane. Along this part of the site, the proposals comprise seven three-storey townhouses and Flat Block 3. Whilst Flat Block 3 would be four storeys in height, its relationship with neighbouring properties is considered acceptable. The nearest existing dwellings to the east are located approximately 39 metres from the eastern elevation of the building and benefit from substantial separation distances, including the depth of both the application site and the neighbouring rear gardens. As a result, the scale, height and positioning of the proposed development would not give rise to an unacceptable overbearing impact or loss of amenity for neighbouring residents.
- 17.27 The design and orientation of the block have also been carefully considered to minimise impacts on neighbouring occupiers. Whilst the upper floors of the building would afford some views across parts of neighbouring rear gardens, this is considered acceptable in an urban environment. Given the separation distance of approximately 39m at the closest point and the generous depth of neighbouring gardens along Ditton Lane officers are satisfied that any perception of overlooking would be limited and would not give rise to unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.
- 17.28 Likewise, in relation to the proposed three storey townhouses (Plots 31-33) and the existing properties on Ditton Lane, the relationship is considered acceptable. The proposed dwellings would be separated from the nearest rear elevations on Ditton Lane by approximately 37m at the closest point. Whilst upper floor windows would afford some views across neighbouring gardens, such views are a common characteristic of established urban residential environments and do not, in themselves, amount to unacceptable overlooking. Officers are therefore satisfied that the proposed relationship would preserve the residential amenity of occupiers on Ditton Lane and would not result in significant harm by reason of overlooking or loss of privacy.

- 17.29 Furthermore, the submitted BRE Daylight and Sunlight Assessment demonstrates that neighbouring properties continue to comply with the relevant BRE guidelines, confirming that the scale, siting and orientation of the building would not give rise to unacceptable impacts in terms of daylight, sunlight or overshadowing.
- 17.30 During the course of the application, the applicant has confirmed that additional boundary treatment will be provided along the boundaries with 6-8 Ditton Lane, where these properties adjoin the proposed car parking area serving Flat Block 3. The design and height of the boundary treatment will be secured through Condition 31, ensuring an appropriate level of residential amenity is maintained for existing occupiers.
- 17.31 Officers are therefore satisfied that the proposals would not result in significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring residents and accords with Policies 55, 56 and 57 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the amenity objectives of the NPPF 2026.

Impact on Nursery Close properties

- 17.32 Flat Block 2 is proposed as a three storey building fronting Wadloes Road. The relationship with properties on Nursery Close located to the south has been carefully considered throughout the design process. During pre-application discussions, the separation distance between the buildings was increased from approximately 16m to 18m and balconies and windows were repositioned to minimise overlooking.
- 17.33 The properties are separated by Green Link 1, which provides a landscaped buffer between the development and existing dwellings. In addition, Flat Block 2 is located to the north of the Nursery Close properties, reducing the potential for overshadowing. The submitted BRE Daylight and Sunlight Assessment confirms that the impact on neighbouring properties is acceptable and complies with recognised BRE guidance. Taking account of the separation distance, landscaped green link, revisions secured through the design process and the BRE assessment findings, officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to the amenity of Nursery Close occupiers.
- 17.34 Officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in any significant or unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy and would preserve the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers. The development is consequently considered to accord with Policies 55, 56 and 57 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the amenity objectives of the NPPF 2026.

Future occupants

- 17.35 Policy 50 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) requires all new residential units to meet or exceed the Government's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards (2015). All of the proposed dwellings meet or exceed the nationally described space standards. The submitted internal daylight and sunlight assessment demonstrates that the proposed dwellings would provide a high standard of amenity for future occupants.
- 17.36 Policy 50 of Cambridge Local Plan (2018) states that all new residential units will be expected to have direct access to an area of private amenity space.
- 17.37 All of the proposed dwellings benefit from a private external amenity space in the form of rear gardens, balconies or terrace space.
- 17.38 The development has been assessed for compliance with Policy 51 and all dwellings comply with the requirements of Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations. A condition is recommended to secure these requirements. Four of the homes are proposed to be M4(3) wheelchair accessible dwellings in accordance with the policy 51 requirement.

Construction and environmental health impacts

- 17.39 Policy 35 guards against developments leading to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise and disturbance. The environmental impacts arising from the demolition, remediation and construction phases of the development would be controlled through a comprehensive suite of planning conditions as recommended by the Environmental Health team. These include the submission and approval of a Phase 2 and 3 Investigation/ Remediation Strategy, implementation of remediation measures, submission of a Phase 4 Verification/Validation Report, procedures for dealing with unexpected contamination, and a Material Management Plan, all of which are intended to ensure that land contamination risks are appropriately managed and that the site is made suitable for its proposed use. The submitted information confirms that heating and hot water will be provided through all electric systems, resulting in no on site combustion emissions. Electric Vehicle Charging Points will be provided for all car parking and the Transport Assessment concludes that, although the proposal increases the number of dwellings on the site, the associated increase in vehicle movements will be limited. The Councils environmental health officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in unacceptable air quality impacts.

- 17.40 In addition, a Development Construction Environmental Management Plan (DCEMP) would be required prior to commencement of development. The DCEMP would secure detailed measures relating to construction hours, contractor management, dust management/ mitigation, traffic routing, deliveries, communication procedures and the management of noise and vibration throughout the construction period. Specific conditions relating to plant, machinery and equipment noise assessments, together with requirements for noise insulation and control of artificial lighting, would ensure that noise impacts are appropriately mitigated in order to protect the amenity of surrounding residential occupiers, offices and businesses.
- 17.41 The submitted Construction Management Plan and Traffic Management Plan demonstrate that the phasing of development has been designed to allow the continued occupation of the retained properties throughout the construction period, with pedestrian and vehicular access routes maintained, temporary resident parking provided where necessary, refuse collection arrangements and emergency access maintained at all times. Residents of the retained properties will be provided with advance notice of any temporary restrictions associated with the construction programme. Officers acknowledge that construction activity will inevitably result in a degree of temporary disruption during construction; however, these impacts can be appropriately managed through the Construction Management Plan and associated planning conditions. Matters relating to party wall agreements, compensation for damage, insurance arrangements, property access rights and other private legal matters fall outside the scope of the planning system and are controlled through separate legislation and civil procedures.
- 17.42 Subject to the recommended conditions officers are satisfied that the impacts associated with remediation and construction activities can be appropriately managed and would not result in unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbouring residents and businesses during the construction phase of the development.

18. Other matters

Refuse strategy

- 18.1 Residents in the proposed flat and maisonette blocks will utilise communal refuse stores for recyclable and non-recyclable waste. The houses are proposed to have dedicated bin stores and designated collection points that residents will drag bins to on collection days.
- 18.2 Bin collection points are mostly within 30 metres for all residents as recommended by RECAP guidance, while a small number drag distances

do slightly exceed this recommended maximum distance, these are only very minor exceedances with the longest drag distance being 39m for plot 1. The applicants have worked closely with the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service to develop a refuse strategy that meets operational requirements, ensuring acceptable drag distances for collection crews and safe, efficient vehicle movements throughout the site on collection days.

- 18.3 Following consultation, the Waste Team has raised no objection to the proposed development, subject to the securing of the requested financial contributions in accordance with the adopted Planning Obligations SPD 2026.

Archaeological impacts

- 18.4 The application site is located within an area of archaeological potential. An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has been submitted. Following comments from the Archaeological Officer, a pre-commencement condition securing a written scheme of investigation will be attached to any planning consent granted in accordance with the NPPF 2026.

Airport safeguarding impacts

- 18.5 Following a formal consultation with Cambridge City Airport, to ensure that any glint and glare effects from the PV panels proposed as part of the sustainability strategy on the roof are mitigated, a glint and glare assessment will be conditioned on any planning consent granted.

Fire hydrants

- 18.6 The Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue team have recommended a condition to secure a fire hydrants scheme. Condition 27 has been imposed to secure these details prior to the occupation of the development.

Recreational impacts

- 18.7 Officers note Natural England's comments regarding the site's location within the zone of influence for publicly accessible SSSIs sensitive to recreational pressure. However, it is important to recognise that the application proposes the redevelopment of an existing residential site currently comprising 108 dwellings, such that the net increase arising from the proposal is limited to 26 additional homes. Officers are satisfied that the likely recreational impacts arising from this uplift in population have been appropriately mitigated through the provision of enhanced on site open

space and play space, which would provide improved opportunities for informal recreation within the development itself and reduce reliance on designated sites. In addition, the application would secure financial contributions towards outdoor sports provision, informal open space, allotments and related recreational infrastructure, calculated in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Planning Obligations SPD (2026).

- 18.8 Taking these measures into account, officers are satisfied that the proposal would not give rise to unacceptable adverse recreational impacts on the notified features of nearby SSSIs, either alone or in combination with other development, and that the requirements of national policy and Natural England's standing advice have therefore been adequately addressed.

Third party representations

- 18.9 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
Air Quality, Traffic, Construction Management Plan issues	Condition 7 secures an updated Traffic and Construction Management Plan. The City Council's Environmental Health Officer and County Councils Highways Engineers have reviewed the information and raise no objection subject to conditions.
Construction impacts (noise, dust, vibration and general disturbance)	Temporary impacts during demolition and construction are acknowledged, this would be appropriately mitigated through the approved DCEMP (condition 15), Construction Management Plan (7) and planning conditions controlling construction activities, working hours, dust and noise monitoring/ mitigation.
Access to properties during construction	The applicant has confirmed that access arrangements for retained properties will be maintained throughout the construction programme. The detailed implementation of access arrangements during construction will be secured by the Construction Management Plan (condition 7).
Landscaping adjacent to the rear gate boundary of No. 33 Ekin Road	The submitted landscape planting plan has been updated during the course of the application to ensure access to the side gate of number 33 Ekin Road is retained.

Party Wall Act concerns and potential structural damage

The Party Wall etc. Act 1996 is separate legislation and is not a material planning consideration.

19. Planning Obligations

Planning obligations (S106)

20.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 have introduced the requirement for all local authorities to make an assessment of any planning obligation in relation to three tests. If the planning obligation does not pass the tests then it is unlawful. The tests are that the planning obligation must be:

(a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;

(b) directly related to the development; and

(c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

20.2 The applicant has indicated their willingness to enter into a S106 planning obligation in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Local Plan and the NPPF 2026.

20.3 Policy 85 states that planning permission for new developments will only be supported/permitted where there are suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision and phasing of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.

Heads of Terms	Summary	Comments
City Council Infrastructure		
Provision for children and teenagers	£87,388.32	Towards the provision and/or improvement of the children and teenage play facilities and equipment at Dudley Road Recreation Area, and/or Ditton Field Recreation Ground and/or Thorpe Way Recreation Area.

Indoor sports	£21,318.80	Towards the provision of and/or improvement of indoor sports facilities and equipment at Abbey Sports Centre, Cambridge.
Outdoor sports	£116,252.47	Towards the provision of and / or improvement of the outdoor sports facilities on Dudley Road Recreation Area, and/or Ditton Field Recreation Ground and/or Thorpe Way Recreation Area.
Informal Open Space	£109,226.82	Towards the provision of and / or improvement of and / or access to Informal Open Space facilities at Dudley Road Recreation Area, and/or Ditton Field Recreation Ground and/or Thorpe Way Recreation Area..
Community facilities	£61,372.72	Towards the provision of and / or improvement to community facilities / rooms / spaces and/or equipment at East Barnwell Community Centre and / or local community facilities within the Abbey ward, Cambridge.
Community Orchard and Allotment	£16,680.29	Towards the provision of and / or improvement of and / or access to Community Orchard and Allotment facilities at Margaret Wright Community Orchard and / or Grow Cambridge Community Farm
Swimming Space	£22,561.60	Towards the provision of and/or improvement of swimming facilities and equipment at Abbey Sports Centre, Cambridge.

Affordable Housing	25 % (34 homes) to be secured via Section 106 agreement. 58% (78 homes) to be delivered subject to Homes England funding	To be provided on site
Monitoring fee	£2,200 the monitoring and administration of the section 106 agreement. Plus £500 per obligation which requires written confirmation from the Local Planning Authority.	Contribution directly related to achieving the implementation of the planning obligations.
Communal 1100litre bins	£8360 (£380 per 1100litre bins x 22)	
Communal food waste bins	£100 (£20 per 140l bin x 5)	
RCV contribution	£3016 (£116 per additional dwelling above existing number of homes x 26)	
County Council – Education		
Early years	£44,204	Education provision necessary to meet the needs of the new population generated by the development. On-site or off-site provision, to be agreed. Scale determined with reference to County Council guidance and multipliers and policy 85
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) contributions	£40,848.00	Education provision necessary to meet the needs of the new population generated by the development. On-site or off-site provision, to be agreed. Scale determined with reference to County Council guidance and multipliers and policy 85.

Secondary	£223,440	Education provision necessary to meet the needs of the new population generated by the development. Scale determined with reference to County Council guidance and multipliers and policy 85.
Life Long Learning (Libraries)	£3835.00	Library facilities necessary to meet the needs of the new population generated by the development in accordance with policy 85.
Monitoring	£1200.00	Contribution directly related to achieving the implementation of the planning obligations.
NHS		
GP services	£21,924.86	Towards East Barnwell Health Centre. Necessary to meet the needs of the new population generated through the development, in accordance with policy 85.
East of England Ambulance Service	£11,251.00	Towards a new Cambridge Ambulance Hub (including provision of EV charging facilities) and equipment for first responders. To mitigate the additional pressure on ambulance services as a result of the increased population arising from the development. Necessary to meet the needs of the new population generated through the development, in accordance with policy 85.

Table: Heads of terms for S106 agreement

- 20.4 The planning obligations as listed above are necessary, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably in scale and kind to the development and therefore the required planning obligation(s) passes the tests set by the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and are in accordance with Policy 85 of the Local Plan 2018.

Planning balance

- 21.1 Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as required by Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 21.2 The City Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and therefore has an identified unmet housing need. In these circumstances, Policy 3 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, insofar as it relates to the supply and distribution of housing, is considered out of date and limited weight can be afforded to it. The application must be assessed having regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out within Policies S3 and S4 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026). Policy S3 requires decision makers to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Policy S4 states that development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects when assessed against the national decision-making policies of the Framework.
- 21.3 As set out at paragraphs 9.7 to 9.12 in this report, the proposed redevelopment is considered acceptable in principle and complies with the requirements of Policies S3 and S4. The proposal would make an important contribution towards addressing the Council's housing shortfall. Significant weight is therefore afforded to the delivery of 134 dwellings, including 34 affordable homes secured through the Section 106 Agreement, in a sustainable and accessible location.

Summary of benefits

Economic Benefits

- 21.4 The proposed development would deliver substantial economic benefits through the comprehensive regeneration of an ageing housing estate. The scheme would support employment and investment during the demolition and construction phases and would contribute towards meeting housing needs through the provision of 134 new homes. The redevelopment would replace 108 existing dwellings which are affected by damp, mould, water ingress, structural deterioration and shortcomings against modern fire safety and building standards. The regeneration of the site would also support the long-term vitality and attractiveness of the area. These economic benefits are afforded significant positive weight in the planning balance.

Social Benefits

- 21.5 The proposal would deliver substantial social benefits through the replacement of existing homes that no longer meet modern standards with 134 high-quality new dwellings. All homes would meet nationally described space standards and benefit from dual or triple aspect layouts, providing a significantly enhanced standard of accommodation for future occupiers.
- 21.6 The development would also provide additional public open space, play spaces and an improved network of pedestrian and cycle routes, resulting in a more permeable, accessible and legible layout. Increased natural surveillance throughout the development would further contribute to community safety and assist in designing out opportunities for crime. These social benefits are afforded substantial positive weight in the planning balance.

Environmental Benefits

- 21.7 The proposal would deliver a range of environmental benefits through the redevelopment of a sustainable brownfield site in an accessible location. The development would provide low-carbon homes designed to meet the Council's CAM Standard and achieve a predicted 76% reduction in regulated carbon emissions when compared with the Part L 2021 baseline.
- 21.8 The scheme prioritises sustainable travel through enhanced pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, extensive cycle parking provision, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and car club provision. In addition, the development would increase publicly accessible open space, retain all Category A trees and deliver 97 new trees as part of a comprehensive landscaping strategy. The proposal would also achieve 20% Biodiversity Net Gain, significantly exceeding the statutory requirement. These environmental benefits are afforded substantial positive weight in the planning balance.

Summary of harm

- 21.9 Officers acknowledge that the redevelopment would result in the loss of several Category B and Category C trees and embodied carbon emissions associated with the demolition and temporary impacts on retained neighbouring properties during the construction phase. In addition, the development would give rise to some localised impacts on neighbouring residential amenity, as assessed within this report. Lastly, the proposal would not secure the minimum percentage of affordable housing ordinarily secured by policy 45. These harms are afforded moderate weight in the planning balance.

Conclusion

- 21.10 Having considered the Development Plan as a whole, the relevant provisions of the NPPF 2026, all consultation responses, representations received and other material considerations, officers conclude that the proposal accords with the Development Plan and is broadly consistent with the relevant national decision-making policies of the NPPF. Whilst some limited moderate adverse impacts have been identified, these are either capable of being satisfactorily mitigated through planning conditions and planning obligations or are insufficient, individually or cumulatively, to outweigh the identified benefits. This includes a shortfall in affordable housing provision against the normal policy requirements, which has been justified in viability terms.
- 21.11 Having regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out within policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF, taking all matters into account, the benefits of the proposal attract greater weight than the identified harm. The proposal therefore represents sustainable development, accords with the Development Plan when read as a whole and is consistent with the relevant policies of the NPPF 2026. Officers recommend that planning permission should be **GRANTED**, subject to the conditions set out below and the completion of a Section 106 agreement.

22 Recommendation

22.1 **Approve** subject to:

- (i) The planning conditions as set out in report, with delegated authority to officers to carry through amendments to those conditions (including additional/revised conditions as appropriate and necessary)
- (ii) The prior completion of a Section 106 Agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 with delegated authority to officers to negotiate, settle and complete such an Agreement as referenced in the Heads of Terms within this report, including any other planning obligations considered acceptable and necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

23 Conditions

Standard time

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 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Approved Plans

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.

Written scheme of investigation

3. No development (or demolition works) 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 .

M4(2) compliance

4. Notwithstanding the plans hereby approved, all dwellings shall be constructed to meet the requirements of Part M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' of the building Regulations 2010 (as amended 2016).

Reason: To secure the provision of accessible housing (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, Policies 50 and 51).

M4(3) dwellings

5. Notwithstanding the plans hereby approved, four dwellings shall be constructed to meet the requirements of Part M4(3) 'wheelchair user dwellings' of the building Regulations 2010 (as amended 2016).

Reason: To secure the provision of accessible housing (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, Policies 50 and 51).

Glint and Glare

6. Prior to installation, the details of any rooftop photovoltaic (PV) panel array shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and installed in accordance with the approved details. The submitted details shall include the manufacturer's specifications, spacing and layout, and shall be supported by a Glint and Glare Assessment to assess the impact on aircraft operations.

Reason: To ensure an appropriate arrangement for the solar panels and ensure that glint and glare would not adversely impact aircraft operations, in accordance with Policy 37 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

7. **TMP and CMP addendum**

Prior to the commencement of development, an addendum to the approved Traffic Management Plan (TMP) and Construction Management Plan (CMP), submitted and uploaded on 20 August 2026, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Local Highway Authority. The addendum shall include:

- a) Details of the location of any temporary bus stop and confirmation that any relocated bus shelter will be provided for the duration of the temporary relocation
- b) Confirmation that all temporary parking bays will be provided at minimum dimensions of 2.5 metres by 5.0 metres;
- c) Confirmation that all construction access arrangements will be implemented prior to the commencement of any works,
- d) Details demonstrating how closure of the south-eastern pedestrian access will be minimised, including arrangements for maintaining pedestrian connectivity, together with confirmation that any closure has been agreed with the Local Highway Authority;

e) Details of the proposed double yellow line restrictions on Ekin Road, including the duration of the restrictions

The development shall thereafter be carried out in full accordance with the approved Traffic Management Plan and Construction Management Plan and the approved addendum unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, the safe and efficient operation of the highway network, and to minimise disruption to pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and local residents during the construction period in accordance with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) Policies 35 and 81.

Pedestrian Visibility Splays

8. Prior to first occupation of the development, pedestrian visibility splays of 2.0m x 2.0m shall be provided on each side of all private vehicular accesses/parking bays. Such splays shall be contained within the curtilage of the respective properties and shall thereafter be maintained free from any obstruction exceeding 0.6m in height above the level of the adjacent future public highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) Policies 35 and 81.

Driveways (surface water)

9. The proposed driveways shall be constructed such that their falls and levels prevent the discharge of surface water from private land onto or across the future public highway. Details of the measures to achieve this shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their construction and shall be implemented as approved and retained thereafter.

Reason: For the safe and effective operation of the highway in accordance with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) Policies 35 and 81.

Bound material (driveways and car parking areas)

10. The proposed driveways and parking areas adjacent to the highway shall be surfaced in a bound material (including permeable block paving) and shall thereafter be retained as such. The surfacing shall be designed to prevent the migration of loose material and debris onto the adjacent highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) Policies 35 and 81.

Ecology conditions

BNG Statutory condition

11. No development shall commence, apart from below ground works and demolition, until a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The BNG Plan shall target how a minimum net gain in biodiversity will be achieved through a combination of on site and / or off-site mitigation. The BNG Plan shall include:
- i) A hierarchical approach to BNG focussing first on maximising on-site BNG, second delivering off-site BNG at a site(s) of strategic biodiversity importance, and third delivering off-site BNG locally to the application site;
 - ii) Full details of the respective on and off-site BNG requirements and proposals resulting from the loss of habitats on the development site utilising the appropriate DEFRA metric in force at the time of application for discharge;
 - iii) Identification of the existing habitats and their condition on-site and within receptor site(s);
 - iv) Habitat enhancement and creation proposals on the application site and /or receptor site(s) utilising the appropriate DEFRA metric in force at the time of application for discharge; v) An implementation, management and monitoring plan (including identified responsible bodies) for a period of 30 years for on and off-site proposals as appropriate.

The BNG Plan shall be implemented in full and subsequently managed and monitored in accordance with the approved details. Monitoring data as appropriate to criterion v) shall be submitted to the local planning authority in accordance with DEFRA guidance and the approved monitoring period / intervals.

Reason: To provide ecological enhancements in accordance with policies 59 and 69 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Biodiversity SPD 2022.

Construction Ecological Management Plan

12. No development shall commence (including demolition, ground works) and no vegetation clearance shall occur, until a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEcMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEcMP shall include the following:
- a. Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
 - b. Identification of biodiversity protection zones.
 - c. Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements). Including details of the temporary swift box provision during the construction period. The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid disturbance to breeding swifts
 - d. The location and timings of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
 - e. The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
 - f. Responsible persons and lines of communication.
 - g. The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
 - h. Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs if applicable.

The approved CEcMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that before any development commences appropriate construction ecological management plan has been agreed to fully conserve and enhance ecological interests. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 57, 59 and 70).

Biodiversity enhancements

13. 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, hedgehog provisions 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).

Ecological lighting strategy

14. Prior to the installation of any artificial lighting in any phase, an ecologically sensitive artificial lighting scheme for that phase shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the baseline condition of lighting, any existing and proposed internal and external artificial lighting of the site in that phase and an artificial lighting impact assessment with predicted lighting levels. The scheme shall:

a) include details (including luminaires, fittings and any shrouds) of any artificial lighting on the site and an artificial lighting impact assessment with predicted lighting levels at the site boundaries;

b) unless otherwise agreed, not exceed 0.4 lux level (against an agreed baseline) on the vertical plane at agreed locations;

c) detail all building design measures to minimise light spillage;

d) set out a monitoring and reporting regime for the lighting scheme.

The approved lighting scheme shall be fully installed, maintained and operated in accordance with the approved details. The scheme shall be retained as such thereafter.

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

Environmental Health Conditions

DCEMP

15. Prior to the commencement of development, or phase of, a Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan (DCEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The DCEMP shall include the following aspects of demolition and construction:
- a) Demolition and construction phasing programme.
 - b) Confirmation of demolition and construction hours (works shall be carried out 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).
 - c) Deliveries for the purposes of demolition and construction activities shall be carried out between 0800 to 1800 hours Monday to Friday, 0800 to 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.
 - d) Prior notice and agreement procedures for works outside agreed limits and hours. Variations are required to be submitted to the local authority for consideration at least 10 working days before the event. Neighbouring properties are required to be notified by the applicant of the variation 5 working days in advance of the works.
 - e) Soil Management Strategy.
 - f) Noise impact assessment methodology, mitigation measures, noise monitoring and recording statements in accordance with the provisions of *BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites – noise*.
 - g) Vibration impact assessment methodology, mitigation measures, vibration monitoring and recording statements in accordance with the provisions of *BS 5228-2:2009+A1:2014 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites – vibration*.
 - h) Dust management, monitoring and wheel washing measures in accordance with the provisions of:
 - Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction, version 2.2 (IAQM, 2024).
 - Guidance on Monitoring in the Vicinity of Demolition and Construction Sites, version 1.1 (IAQM, 2018).
 - i) Details of concrete crushers (location and noise, vibration and dust management).
 - j) Prohibition of the burning of waste on site during demolition/construction.
 - k) Site artificial lighting during construction and demolition including hours of operation, position and impact on neighbouring properties.
 - l) Screening and hoarding details.
 - m) Consideration of sensitive receptors.
 - n) Complaints procedures, including complaints response procedures.

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

To protect / safeguard the health and quality of life (amenity) at existing premises in accordance with Policies 35 (noise and vibration) and 36 (air quality) of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

Construction Hours

16. No construction or demolition work shall be carried out and no plant or power operated machinery operated other than between the following hours: 0800 hours and 1800 hours on Monday to Friday, 0800 hours and 1300 hours on Saturday and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, , unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the adjoining properties. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

Construction Deliveries

17. There should be no collections from or deliveries to the site during the demolition and construction stages outside the hours of 0800 hours and 1800 hours on Monday to Friday, 0800 hours to 1300 hours on Saturday and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the adjoining properties. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

Dust

18. No development shall commence until a scheme to minimise the spread of airborne dust from the site including subsequent dust monitoring during the period of demolition and construction, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 36).

Noise insulation

19. No development above ground level shall commence until a noise assessment and any noise insulation/mitigation scheme if required has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The noise assessment/insulation scheme shall have regard to the external and internal

noise levels recommended in British standard 8223:2014 Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings and shall include details of:

- (i) the acoustic/noise insulation performance specification of the external building envelope of the residential units having regard to the building fabric, glazing and ventilation;
 - (ii) mitigation to reduce the level of noise experienced externally and internally
- Where submitted, the scheme shall be carried out as approved before the use is commenced or the development is occupied and shall be retained as such.

Reason: To protect the amenity of future occupiers (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

Plant noise insulation

20. No operational plant, machinery or equipment shall be installed until a noise assessment and any noise insulation/mitigation as required has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any required noise insulation/mitigation shall be carried out as approved and retained as such.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 36).

MMP

21. No material for the development (or phase of) shall be imported or reused until a Materials Management Plan (MMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The MMP shall include:
- a) details of the volumes and types of material proposed to be imported or reused on site
 - b) details of the proposed source(s) of the imported or reused material
 - c) details of the chemical testing for ALL material to be undertaken before placement onto the site.
 - d) results of the chemical testing which must show the material is suitable for use on the development
 - e) confirmation of the chain of evidence to be kept during the materials movement, including material importation, reuse placement and removal from and to the development.

All works will be undertaken in accordance with the approved MMP.

Reason: To ensure that no unsuitable material is brought onto the site in the interest of environmental and public safety in accordance with (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 33).

Phase 2 and 3 investigation/ remediation

22. No development (or phase of) shall commence until the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - a. A Phase 2 Intrusive Site Investigation Report based upon the findings of the approved Phase 1 Desk Top Study.
 - b. A Phase 3 Remediation Strategy based upon the findings of the approved Phase 2 Intrusive Site Investigation Report.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination of the site is identified and appropriate remediation measures agreed in the interest of environmental and public safety (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 33).

Implementation of remediation

23. The development (or each phase of the development where phased) shall not be occupied until the approved Phase 3 Remediation Strategy has been implemented in full.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination of the site is effectively remediated in the interests of environmental and public safety (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 33).

Verification report

24. The development (or each phase of the development where phased) shall not be occupied until a Phase 4 Verification/Validation Report demonstrating full compliance with the approved Phase 3 Remediation Strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To demonstrate that the site is suitable for approved use in the interests of environmental and public safety (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 33).

Unexpected contamination

25. 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).CE05AS - Unexpected Contamination

Lighting assessment

26. The proposed scheme as detailed in the submitted 'Lighting Assessment (Ref: RN/VL/P24-3348/02 Rev A) produced by Create and dated 18th August 2025 shall be fully implemented and maintained and retained thereafter.

Reason: To minimise the effects of light pollution on the surrounding area (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 34).

Fire hydrants

27. Prior to the commencement of above ground works, a scheme for the provision of fire hydrants shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details. The approved scheme shall detail the implementation strategy for the fire hydrants (noting the hydrants may be installed in a phased manner across the site).

No dwellings shall be occupied until the fire hydrants serving that part of the site have been implemented and installed in accordance with the approved Scheme.

Reason: In the interests of residential safety (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, Policy 35).

Surface water drainage strategy

28. No laying of services, creation of hard surfaces or erection of a building shall commence until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on the agreed Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, Create, Ref:

3348, Rev: B, Dated: 20th August 2025 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in full accordance with the approved details prior to occupation of the first dwelling.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, to improve and protect water quality, and improve habitat and amenity.

Surface water management during construction

29. No development, including preparatory works, shall commence until details of measures indicating how additional surface water run-off from the site will be avoided during the construction works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The applicant may be required to provide collection, balancing and/or settlement systems for these flows. The approved measures and systems shall be brought into operation before any works to create buildings or hard surfaces commence.

Reason: To ensure surface water is managed appropriately during the construction phase of the development, so as not to increase the flood risk to adjacent land/properties or occupied properties within the development itself; recognising that initial works to prepare the site could bring about unacceptable impacts.

Landscape management and maintenance plan

30. 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).

Boundary treatments

31. No development above ground level, other than demolition, shall commence until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatments (including gaps for hedgehogs) to be erected. The

boundary treatment for each dwelling shall be completed before that dwelling is occupied in accordance with the approved details and retained as approved thereafter.

Reason: To ensure an appropriate boundary treatment is implemented in the interests of biodiversity, visual amenity and privacy (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 57, 59 and 70).

Public Art Delivery Plan

32. No development above ground level, other than enabling/ utility diversion works, shall commence until a Public Art Delivery Plan (PADP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The PADP shall include the following: a) Details of the public art and artist commission; b) Details of how the public art will be delivered, including a timetable for delivery; c) Details of the location of the proposed public art on the application site; d) The proposed consultation to be undertaken; e) Details of how the public art will be maintained; f) How the public art would be decommissioned if not permanent; g) How repairs would be carried out; The approved PADP shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details and timetabling. Once in place, the public art shall not be moved or removed otherwise than in accordance with the approved maintenance arrangements. Reason: To provide public art as a means of enhancing the development and (Cambridge Local Plan policies 55 and 56 and the Cambridge City Council Public Art SPD (2010)).

Green Roof details

33. Prior to any development above ground level of any permanent building with a flat roof, details of the biodiverse (green, blue or brown) roof(s) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details of the biodiverse roof(s) shall include the following:
- a) Confirmation of substrate depth, which shall be between 80-150mm (unless otherwise agreed).
 - b) A plant /seed mix (with wildflower planting indigenous to the local area and no more than a maximum of 25% sedum (green roofs only)).
 - c) A management / maintenance plan including means of access.

d) Where solar panels are proposed, an array layout will be required incorporating a minimum of 0.75m between rows of panels for access and to ensure establishment of vegetation.

The biodiverse 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. All works shall be carried out and maintained thereafter in accordance with the approved details.

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).

Water efficiency

34. No dwelling shall be occupied until the approved carbon reduction and water efficiency standards as set out in Energy Strategy (WhiteCode Consulting, 27 January 2026 Rev P05) have been implemented in full. Prior to the occupation of the development, final water efficiency specifications shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The specifications shall demonstrate that the development will achieve a potable water consumption rate of no more than 100 litres per person per day, with measures incorporated where reasonably practicable to achieve 95 litres per person per day. The development shall thereafter be occupied in accordance with the approved specifications. 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 2018, policy 28 and Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

Energy consumption monitors

35. Prior to first occupation, each apartment shall be fitted with a means for future occupiers to monitor all of their own electric and water consumption including the extent of the contribution made from on-site renewable energy sources.

Reason: In the interest of promoting sustainable development (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 28).

Demolition materials reuse and recycling plan

36. Prior to the commencement of demolition works, a Demolition Materials Reuse and Recycling Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include:

- a) An audit of the buildings and structures to be demolished, identifying the type and quantity of materials arising from demolition;
- b) Measures to maximise the retention, recovery, reuse and recycling of materials on-site and off-site, including the identification of materials suitable for reclamation and reuse;
- c) Details of the anticipated volumes of material to be reused, recycled, recovered and disposed of;
- d) Arrangements for the segregation, storage and handling of demolition materials;
- e) Targets for diversion of demolition waste from landfill; and
- f) Monitoring and reporting procedures to demonstrate compliance with the approved Plan.

The demolition and construction phases shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan.

Reason: To minimise waste generation, maximise the reuse and recycling of materials arising from demolition, reduce embodied carbon associated with the development and promote sustainable construction in accordance with Policies 28 and 35 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

Arboricultural Method Statement

37. Prior to commencement of development and in accordance with BS5837 2012, a phased tree protection methodology in the form of an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP) shall be submitted to the local planning authority for its written approval, before any tree works are carried and before equipment, machinery or materials are brought onto the site for the purpose of development (including demolition). In a logical sequence the AMS and TPP will consider all phases of construction in relation to the potential impact on trees and detail tree works, the specification and position of protection barriers and ground protection and all measures to be taken for the protection of any trees from damage during the course of any activity related to the development, including supervision, demolition, foundation design, storage of materials, ground works, installation of services, erection of scaffolding and landscaping.

Reason: To satisfy the Local Planning Authority that trees to be retained will be protected from damage during any construction activity, including demolition, in order to preserve arboricultural amenity in accordance with section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 71: Trees.

Tree protection

38. The approved tree protection methodology will be implemented throughout the development and the agreed means of protection shall be retained on site until all equipment, and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area protected in accordance with approved tree protection plans, and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered nor shall any excavation be made without the prior written approval of the local planning authority. If any tree shown to be retained is damaged, remedial works as may be specified in writing by the local planning authority will be carried out.

Reason: To satisfy the Local Planning Authority that trees to be retained will not be damaged during any construction activity, including demolition, in order to preserve arboricultural amenity in accordance with section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 71: Trees.

Replacement planting

39. If any tree shown to be retained on the approved tree protection methodology is removed, uprooted, destroyed or dies within five years of project completion, another tree shall be planted at the same place and that tree shall be of such size and species, and shall be planted at such time, as may be specified in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To satisfy the Local Planning Authority that arboricultural amenity will be preserved in accordance with section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 71: Trees

Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy

40. Prior to the installation of any electrical services, an electric vehicle charge point scheme shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved electric vehicle charging points shall be installed prior to first occupation of the development.

Reason: In the interests of encouraging more sustainable modes and forms of transport and to reduce the impact of development on local air quality, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2026) and policies 36 and 82 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) and Cambridge City Council's adopted Air Quality Action Plan (2018).

External materials and sample panels

41. Prior to any works above slab level full details including samples of all the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of buildings, including external features such as proposed brick patterning; windows, cills, headers and surrounds; doors and entrances; porches and canopies; external metal work, balustrades, rainwater goods, edge junction, verge and coping details; colours and surface finishes, shall be submitted to and approved in

writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Sample panels (minimum of 1.5x1.5m) of the facing materials to be used shall be erected. These should reflect the detailing of bonding, coursing, colour and type of jointing and any special brick patterning/articulation detailing (i.e. soldier course banding) as set out on the Detailed Elevation Sheets 1 and 2, Entrance and Façade Details Sheet. Drawings of the proposed sample panels and the details to be included shall be agreed in writing with the local planning authority prior to construction of the panels.

Sections of proposed fenestration material and colour need to be made available to be viewed held against the brick sample panels. The quality of finish and materials incorporated in any approved sample panels, which shall not be demolished prior to completion of development, shall be maintained throughout the development.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the external surfaces is appropriate and that the quality and colour of the detailing of the facing materials maintained throughout the development.

Letter boxes

42. All letter boxes for the proposed residential apartment blocks shall be located and externally accessible from the street.

Reason: In the interests of good design and security (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 55)

Allocated Car Club Space

43. The allocated car club parking space and associated car club vehicle shall be provided, fully implemented, and be operational prior to the occupation of the 67th dwelling. In the event that no third-party car club operator is prepared to take on the car club space, evidence demonstrating that all reasonable endeavours have been undertaken to secure a provider shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that a provider cannot be secured, details of an alternative landscaping scheme for the space shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to completion of the development. The approved landscaping scheme shall thereafter be implemented and retained.

Reason: In the interests of encouraging more sustainable modes and forms of transport, in accordance with Policy 81 and 82 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

Temporary Marketing Suite

44. Prior to the commencement of the temporary use of any part of the site hereby approved as a sales and/or marketing suite office, details of the proposed use shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the duration of the temporary use, hours of operation, arrangements for staff and visitors and measures to protect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. The temporary use shall thereafter be carried out only in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and to ensure the appropriate temporary use of the residential units (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

Cycle parking stores

45. The development shall not be occupied or the permitted use commenced, until details of facilities for the covered, secure parking of cycles within the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the means of enclosure, materials, type and layout of the cycle store. A cycle store proposed with a flat / mono-pitch roof shall include plans providing for a green roof. Any green roof shall be planted / seeded with a predominant mix of wildflowers which shall contain no more than a maximum of 25% sedum planted on a sub-base being no less than 80 millimetres thick. The cycle store and green roof as appropriate shall be provided and planted in full in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation or commencement of use and shall be retained as such.

Reason: To ensure appropriate provision for the secure storage of bicycles, to encourage biodiversity and slow surface water run-off (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 31 and 82).

Informatives

1. Cadent Gas Ltd own and operate the gas infrastructure within the area of your development. There may be a legal interest (easements and other rights) in the land that restrict activity in proximity to Cadent assets in private land. The applicant must ensure that the proposed works do not infringe on legal rights of access and or restrictive covenants that exist.

If buildings or structures are proposed directly above the apparatus the development may only take place following diversion of the apparatus. The applicant should apply online to have apparatus diverted in advance of any works, by visiting cadentgas.com/our-services/gas-diversions

Prior to carrying out works, including the construction of access points, please register on www.linesearchbeforeudig.co.uk to submit details of the planned works for review, ensuring requirements are adhered to.

2. The granting of planning permission does not constitute permission or licence to carry out any works within, disturb, interfere with, or obstruct the public highway. Any such works will require separate approval from the Highway Authority under the relevant statutory provisions, and the applicant is advised to contact the Highway Authority at the earliest opportunity to obtain the necessary consents prior to the commencement of works.
3. The applicant is advised that the proposed adoption boundary plan will require minor amendments through the Section 38 Agreement process. The applicant is strongly encouraged to enter into the Section 38 process at the earliest opportunity to ensure that residents of Ekin Road continue to benefit from uninterrupted access to their properties via an adopted public highway.
4. Sustainable Design and Construction SPD Informative
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

Pollution Control

5. Surface water and groundwater bodies are highly vulnerable to pollution and the impact of construction activities. It is essential that the risk of pollution (particularly during the construction phase) is considered and mitigated appropriately. It is important to remember that flow within the watercourse is likely to vary by season and it could be dry at certain times throughout the year. Dry watercourses should not be overlooked as these watercourses may flow or even flood following heavy rainfall.

Construction Surface Water Maintenance

6. Prior to final handover of the development, the developer must ensure that appropriate remediation of all surface water drainage infrastructure has taken place, particularly where the permanent drainage infrastructure has been installed early in the construction phase. This may include but is not limited to jetting of all pipes, silt removal and reinstating bed levels. Developers should also ensure that watercourses have been appropriately maintained and remediated, with any obstructions to flows (such as debris, litter and fallen trees) removed, ensuring the condition of the watercourse is better than initially found. This is irrespective of the proposed method of surface water disposal, particularly if an ordinary watercourse is riparian owned.

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The Greater Cambridge Design Review Panel

Pre-application 22/50099/PREAPP (PPA)

1-99 Ekin Road and 1-8 Ekin Walk, Cambridge

14 July 2022, Virtual 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; Character, Architecture) – Founding Partner of
Hawkins\Brown Architects

Parthena (Nopi) Exizidou (Character, Climate) - Senior Carbon Manager, British
Antarctic Survey

David Knight (Character, Connectivity) - Director at Cake Engineering

Steve Platt (Character, Community) - Director at Cambridge Architectural Research

Lindsey Wilkinson (Character, Landscape) – Landscape Architect

Applicant & Design Team:

Nicola Hancock, Landscape Architect, TEP

Neill Campbell, Architect, BPTW

Dido Graham, Architect, BPTW

Jennifer McIntosh, Architect, BPTW

Paul Belton, Planning Consultant – Carter Jonas

Claire Flowers, Cambridge Investment Partnership, Cambridge City Council

Molly Savino, Cambridge Investment Partnership, Cambridge City Council

LPA Officers:

Bonnie Kwok – Principal Urban Designer / Design Review Panel Manager

Katie Roberts – Executive Assistant / Design Review Panel Support Officer

Ganesh Gnanamoorthy – Principal Planner CIP

Observers:

N/A

Scheme Description and Background

122 existing homes to be redeveloped and circa 200 new homes to be provided with associated open space and amenities.

There is no relevant planning history on this site. Most historic applications relate to works to individual dwellings, rather than any site-wide developments.

In terms of pre-application engagement, early conversations were held between officers and the developer about whether partial redevelopment (just the flatted accommodation) or comprehensive redevelopment (the entire site) would be the better option. Officers considered that just redeveloping the flats would provide minimal scope for developable areas, and given modern flat sizes, floor to ceiling heights, and requirements for all dwellings to be M4(2) compliant, it would be difficult to achieve as many flats as what are currently there now – largely because of how the new built form would respond to the remaining houses.

There have been four pre-application meetings on this site in recent months. The first and second largely follow the layout presented to the Panel on the day, whilst the third was an alternative layout which caused concerns for officers – in particular around relationships between flats and houses, and the amenity impacts this presented.

Declarations of Interest

Russell Brown, Chair of the DRP meeting, declared following the design review meeting that his practice Hawkins\Brown Architects are working with the one of the development partners in this scheme, the Hills Group in London, as contractors. Russell confirmed that none of the presenters from Hills team, who are involved in this project, have any direct dealings with him. It was considered that this does not constitute any conflict of interest.

It is acknowledged that the developers of this housing scheme are Cambridge City Council and Hills Residential. This housing scheme will be determined in the same way as any other planning applications, and that the Council will ensure an open and transparent approach is adopted throughout the planning process to ensure impartiality.

Previous Panel Reviews

None

Greater Cambridge Design Review Panel Views

Introduction

The Panel welcomed the opportunity to review the proposals for the re-development of a council owned housing estate through the Cambridge City Investment Partnership. The Planning Officer, Ganesh Gnanamoorthy, had explained that there had been four pre-application meetings and the current layout had addressed the concern that the terraced houses should face onto (back-to-back), to neighbouring gardens outside the site. There had also been a decision by the Partnership to propose the wholesale re-development of the site rather than retain any of the flats or houses, due to the poor quality of the flats and the reduced opportunity to offer new homes, if any of the existing homes were retained.

The comments using the 'four C's' should be read across one to another.

Character led by Russell Brown and Graham Whitehouse

The Panel do find the servicing and vehicle access running around the whole site unconvincing. This seems to be to locate parking up against the boundary wall with the light industrial user to the South. This meant that significant pedestrian routes have to cross the single service road. There is also a housing block (Block C) with car parking on both sides (East and West) and the service road to the North. Although it is important to provide as much new housing as possible, the density is reflected in the amount of car parking (even at a relatively low provision of 0.5 per dwelling), on the extensive system of service roads and the massing up to 6 storeys. (It is assumed that parking under buildings would not be viable). The Applicant did advise that views had been modelled of the development but that the proposed massing had little impact on local views.

The Panel was concerned that the forms of the flats (only developed in outline) were over complicated that could be simpler (or bolder?) and would be difficult to detail as Passivhaus in their current form.

There was also a concern that the layout of the building forms to achieve the pedestrian link to the South-East needed more refinement to create a distinctive (perhaps hard landscaped) space, with a clear sense of enclosure and place.

At present the enclosure of Ekin Common is rather compromised by this route and a better solution could be found. There was also a question as to why the 'kink' in Blocks A, B, C stopped for F and D?

Connectivity led by David Knight (DK)

The Panel asked what sort of people would buy or rent at Ekin Road. Would they be key workers for instance? The applicant advised that although the mix had not been fixed it would include council rental, shared ownership, and open market sales.

There was a comment that the parking allocation of 0.5 per dwelling was relatively low but this had been sensibly arrived at by using the current car ownership on site. The 2011 census showed that half the households are car free, and that 40% have only one car, leaving only 10% owning two cars. When the mix of leaseholds is

fixed it will be important how the different tenancies are located around the site, and how car parking spaces are allocated. The applicant agreed that car parking spaces should be clearly allocated and tightly controlled.

The panel suggested that there could be further analysis of how the proposed connections actually worked by identifying design lines noting only frustrating dead ends etc.

The panel is generally supportive in terms of connectivity and is pleased to see a focus on active travel and routes outside the site. Care needs to be taken to avoid mistaking routes within the site, with clear signage and wayfinding, and conflicts between cars and pedestrians, and cycles and pedestrians.

The Panel supports the lower parking allocation but do note the impact of cars across the site at this density. Every effort needs to be made to promote active travel and to look at creating new (potential) routes through the existing cul-de-sacs to NE and SE.

Community led by Stephen Platt (SP)

The panel noted that the Cambridge Council Housing Scrutiny Committee had approved the comprehensive re-development of the site. The applicant had not finalised whether some tenants would remain on site until they could be decanted or whether all tenants were to be re-housed to offer a clear site for re-development.

The applicant reported that there had been a mixed reaction to the re-development proposals but 79% had voted for re-development. This engagement will continue through the planning process. East Barnwell is a deprived area, compared to the rest of Cambridge, and re-development will offer the opportunity for much, better quality flats (with lift access etc) lower energy bills, better public spaces, and new links through the site. Currently, the site has a poor frontage onto Wadlow Road, and no clear 'front door' or gateway to the site.

The panel was concerned that every effort is made to maintain or re-introduce social cohesion to the Estate and avoid issues of conflict (such as car parking). The location and mix of housing tenancies needs to be carefully considered, along with phasing to keep some existing tenants on site?

Given the strength of the existing community on the site (as witnessed in the webinar from June 2021, the Cambridge Independent on Ekin Road) could retrofitting some of the houses and/or phasing help retain community cohesion.

There is a balance to be sought between the number of new homes lost and reduction in density against the potential loss of a healthy, stable community. The panel urged the applicant to look at any measures to encourage cohesion between the public and private owners' flats and houses, families, and individuals etc. measures to encourage informal meetings solid interaction and to reduce areas of potential conflict. Can lessons be learnt from similar schemes?

Climate, led by Nopi Exizidou (EN)

The panel asked that the potential to retain and refit some of the existing houses be re-examined, even if this was a pilot study that could inform the partnerships developments elsewhere, or other developments in Cambridge. The applicants explained how this had been thoroughly investigated and that the flats were certainly not capable of refitting. The panel welcomed the current proposal to design and deliver all the homes to Passivhaus standards. There were some concerns that the 'broken' massing proposed in 3D for townscape reasons, would make it difficult to achieve efficient wall to floor ratios (see also character).

The panel asked what other sustainable features the building and landscape could offer, were the proposals to include renewable energy sources eg solar panels, or air source heat pumps or can the demolition or re-development contribute to a circular economy?

The panel would like to see more definitive targets set for sustainable performance eg for whole life carbon. Are there opportunities to contribute a circular economy, or for the use of ground source heat pumps or a 'heating network'.

The contribution of renewable energy sourcing needs to be taken into account early on, in order to achieve the Passivhaus standards and/or to net zero carbon.

DK also noted that the designers needed to consider the embodied carbon in the structural elements (and consider timber).

Landscape led by Lindsey Wilkinson (LN)

The panel asked what percentage of the existing trees were retained. The applicant responded that everything in the 'green edge' to Wadlow Road is retained and healthier trees are retained where possible. (There has been a detailed arboriculturalist survey). The layout needs to consider where tree canopies (and therefore tree roots) clash with the proposed building footprints.

Overall, the panel saw the landscaping proposals as 'pretty positive' and were "onboard" with the landscape strategy. The green infrastructure is in a good position but, can the new public spaces become a "green destination" in itself.

There are some problems with 'snickets' or narrow alley ways, care needs to be taken to encourage behaviour change (due to considerations of safety). There could be a 'two-tier' plan for these green connections with alternative routes if they are not seen as safe.

The panel would like to see as many mature trees as possible retained and for the applicant to check the layouts properly retain trees on the ground of quality and amenity value.

The landscape strategy is supported where it increases the provision of social intervention spaces of a variety of scale eg pocket parks. There needs to be an understanding of who will use the green infrastructure, who is the attracting, and how will life spaces be managed.

The panel could see that a lot of effort had gone into provision of green spaces in the centre of the scheme, they urged the applicant to look at the site boundaries; do they provide “openness” and intervisibility or are they screening, managing views, private gardens with trees, can contribute to the sense of ownership, and can contribute to the overall landscape strategy.

It is important to keep biodiversity in mind, and how it can contribute to (a slightly wilder) character and wider local initiatives.

Summary

The collective feeling of the panel was that the architecture had yet to emerge and that laying out the rooms in the flats and houses would raise questions about their relation to other homes, the road system, where their car is parked, the existing trees and communal areas.

The panel asked the applicant to look again at the highway strategy (will it be adapted) or running around the edge of the site, crossing pedestrian routes, and at how the pedestrian link to the South-East is linked to the central green space, and the built forms that enclose it.

The panel support the low provision of cars but can see that the current number of spaces does impact on the residential amenity. The parking will have to be imaginatively landscaped and well managed. The applicant needs to look outside of the site to identify the best long-term links to wider Cambridge.

The panel urged the applicant to consider phasing the development and to make every effort to retain or re-build community cohesion. In terms of sustainability some of the houses might be refurbished, as a potential case study/exemplar put forward by the council.

The introduction of the Passivhaus is strongly supported by the panel but other sustainable measures should be added to this central concept.

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.

Contact Details

Please note the following contacts for information about the Greater Cambridge Design Review Panel:

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26/02109/FUL – Christs College Library, St Andrews Street, Cambridge

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward: Market

Proposal: Demolition of 1970s library and replacement with new library, social and study spaces including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library. Alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements and alterations to wc, provision in the south east range of Second Court. Re-landscaping of Bath Court and ancillary works, installation of temporary kitchen and dining facility in Second Court for the duration of the works.

Applicant: Lord Simon McDonald

Presenting officer: Dominic Bush

Reason presented to committee: Officer referral: the application raises complex planning considerations relating to significant heritage assets.

Member site visit date: 5th October 2026

Key issues:

1. Character and Appearance
2. Heritage Impact, and grounds of challenge relating to judicially reviewed application 25/02161/FUL.
3. Residential / Public Amenity
4. 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	Planning background
11	Assessment
12	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
13	Principle of development
14	Design, layout, scale and landscaping
15	Trees
16	Heritage assets
17	Carbon reduction and sustainable design
18	Biodiversity
19	Water management and flood risk
20	Highway safety and transport
21	Cycle and car parking provision
22	Amenity
23	Other matters
24	Third party representations
25	Planning obligations (s106)
26	Planning balance
27	Recommendation
28	Planning conditions

Table 1 Contents of report

1. Executive summary

Judicial review

- 1.1 The application follows an identical application that was taken to planning committee on the 29th October 2025 and subsequently approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on 7th November 2025. Following the issuing of the decision, a judicial review was applied for by Christs Lane Action Group (CLAG), challenging the decision on four grounds.

- 1.2 As set out in an Order dated 9th March 2026, Mr Justice Kimblin granted permission for the case to be heard on all four grounds applied for by CLAG, stating that the issues raised were strongly arguable and merited consideration at a full hearing. The case was set down for a one-day substantive hearing in the Planning Court.

Following the Order, the Council, along with Christ's College (the Interested Party), invited the Court to agree to a draft consent order, agreeing to quash the decision on all four grounds and that this process be dealt with quickly, in order that the application could be re-determined in good time. The Claimant (CLAG) has written to the Court, stating that they do not agree to signing the consent order and that the grounds should be considered at a full hearing before the Court. The draft consent order has therefore not been agreed and, despite the Council asking the Courts to unilaterally determine that the planning permission be quashed, the Court has not done so. CLAG still wish to proceed to a full one-day hearing. This is currently scheduled for mid-October 2026. The planning permission still stands until such time as the Court determines otherwise.

- 1.3 In light of the delay in the judicial review proceedings, the applicant has taken the decision to re-submit the application (in identical form) to the Local Planning Authority, so that this can be determined. This is the application which is before members today.

- 1.4 The grounds for the Judicial Review relate to the previous officer report and the decision making process relating to that previous application. The application before members is identical to that previously approved by the Planning Committee but subject to a new officer report and fresh decision making process. The application is not, however, accompanied by a new Listed Building Consent application, as application 25/02162/LBC, which accompanied the previous application, was not subject to judicial review. The Listed Building Consent, which sits alongside the current planning permission, and has not been the subject of legal challenge, is a material consideration.

- 1.5 The grounds of challenge from CLAG's judicial review claim, and the Order of Mr. Justice Kimblin granting permission for it to proceed, are appended to this decision (Appendix 1). The issues raised by those grounds have been addressed in this Officer Report.

- 1.6 The grounds of challenge and how they have been addressed can be summarised as follows:

- 1.7 Ground 1 Summary: **The Committee was materially misled as to Historic England's advice.** The statutory consultee had identified harm arising from the bulk and overall massing of the proposal, and advised that this remained "unchanged" following scheme amendments. The Committee was materially misdirected as to Historic England's position by the officer's report and presentation. An incomplete and misleading summary of their advice was given, which omitted to mention that HE had identified harm arising from the proposal.
- 1.8 Ground 1 Summary Response: Comments (dated 8th July 2026) have been received from Historic England on this new application. Within these comments they refer back to previous comments that they made on the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Historic England have therefore provided 4 separate comments on the proposal. First, their substantive comments of 29 July 2025. Secondly, their follow up response of the 1 September 2025 following amendments to the proposal. Thirdly, their response to the current application referring back to their previous comments. These can be seen in full within *Appendix 2*. As set out within the heritage section of this report, Historic England, whilst raising no objection have stated that they consider the proposals would result in certain levels of harm to the significance of the Grade I listed Christ's College, primarily arising from the bulk of the proposed building, which would detract from the setting of the surrounding buildings. Fourthly, additional comments were received from Historic England following the update to the NPPF on the 17th August 2026. These comments set out that Historic England are comfortable their existing advice remains relevant and appropriate in light of the updated NPPF.
- 1.9 Ground 2 summary: **The Committee was materially misled as to the existence and/or extent of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets.** The report to committee provided confusing and inconsistent advice as to whether there was harm to the listed building that needed to be outweighed in a public benefits balance under NPPF para. 215, or whether the impact on the listed building was 'neutral' meaning that there was no 'harm' to engage para. 215. Further inconsistent advice was given during the Committee meeting itself.
- 1.10 Ground 2 Summary Response: The heritage section of this report has been amended to address the second ground of challenge. The report is clear that there would be harm (at the lower end of the scale) to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library, forming part of the College site, but that harm is outweighed by the public benefits arising from the scheme applying Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF.

- 1.11 Ground 3 summary: **The Committee took into account an irrelevant consideration – optimum viable use (OVU).** The Committee was advised that the proposal would “help to secure the listed building’s optimum viable use.” The decision was based on a misunderstanding / misapplication of the Planning Practice Guidance. The continuation of an existing, baseline, OVU cannot lawfully be elevated into a distinct public benefit capable of outweighing heritage harm.
- 1.12 Ground 3 Summary Response: To clarify, the proposal is not considered to secure the long-term re-use of a listed building so as to constitute a public benefit within the terms of Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF. This is not, therefore, relied upon in the heritage assessment of this application. The updated NPPF removes specific reference to OVU where the previous version of the NPPF stated that it was a potential public benefit that could be used to outweigh identified heritage harm.
- 1.13 Ground 4 summary: **The Committee failed to take into account a relevant consideration – the existence of less harmful alternative modes of development.** On the basis that there was harm to the setting of the listed building, the possibility of that harm being reduced or avoided through an alternative scheme or mode of development was a material consideration. CLAG considered that there were alternative schemes for the site, including the previously consented schemes on the site from 2011 and 2016 or that provided by CLAG in response to 25/02161/FUL (an alternative designed façade by Create Streets) which they considered less harmful to heritage assets, but the Committee was not advised of their relevance and they were not considered.
- 1.14 Ground 4 Summary Response: The level of consideration given to these alternative schemes can only be relative to the level of detail available. Further assessment of all the alternative schemes is provided in the heritage section of this report. In conclusion, none of the alternative schemes are deemed to be suitable or feasible alternatives which would meet the college’s needs. Whilst they are material considerations, they are not given significant weight in the assessment of the proposal before members.
- 1.15 Officers consider that the legal grounds of challenge pertaining to application 25/02161/FUL have been directly addressed through this revised report. The existence of the planning permission is a material consideration albeit the weight to be afforded to this could only be described as very limited because the Council and the Interested Party have conceded in writing to all four grounds of challenge and it is likely,

although not guaranteed, that the permission will in due course be quashed by the Court.

Application

- 1.16 The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing library and its replacement with a contemporary library including social and study space. Further internal and external alterations are proposed including a replacement bridge to the Bodley Library and a temporary kitchen dining facility during the duration of the works.
- 1.17 The application site falls within the Historic Core conservation area with the Christ's College (College) buildings surrounding the First Court being Grade I listed and the entire college grounds being a designated Historic Park and Garden. The application site is located within the city centre of Cambridge and immediately abuts the public highway of Christ's Lane to the southeast with the modern Christ's Lane redevelopment including a mix of retail and residential units on the opposite side of this footpath.
- 1.18 The main part of this scheme is the demolition and replacement of the existing 1970's library building that serves the College. This building is deemed unfit for purpose, with insufficient study spaces, poor accessibility and lack of sufficient insulation. This has led to the College wanting to improve its library facilities, including access provisions for students and visitors, and is why this planning application is coming forward.
- 1.19 This scheme follows two previous consents on the site for the replacement of the existing 1970's library, dating back to 2011 and 2016. Whilst both have since expired and differ from the current proposal, this application seeks to re-establish the principle of a replacement library in this location to meet the current day needs of the students. These historic consents are discussed in more detail in the officer assessment.
- 1.20 The proposal has been subject to extensive pre-application discussions with officers and relevant consultees, both internally and externally to evolve the design to its current proposed form. This pre-application process included a Design Review Panel (DRP) on the 13th February 2025 in which positive feedback supporting the proposal was received (Appendix 3)
- 1.21 The proposal (through the previous 2025 application) has also been subject to a member briefing on the 19th May 2025 and Development Control Forum meeting (DCF) on the 11th September 2025 of which

minutes are attached (Appendix 4). Following this DCF meeting, further information was provided regarding the public benefits of the scheme and the impact on Christ's Lane in terms of loss of light. A further DCF request on the application before members today was made by CLAG on 1 July 2026. The request was initially declined because the College were unwilling to participate but that position changed and a further DCF was convened on 29 July 2026. A minutes of that DCF are at Appendix 11.

- 1.22 What is before members is a well thought out new library scheme that follows previous permissions and has, through an extensive pre-application process evolved into a proposal which is credible and that would successfully assimilate into the street scene, its heritage setting and respect neighbouring amenity.
- 1.23 With regards to the principle of development, the site is located within the designated city centre (Policy 10 of the Local Plan) and within an area of protected open space (policy 67). Whilst within an area with a number of highly significant heritage assets, the proposed development is considered to be compliant with the criteria of Policy 10 and would meet a demonstrable educational need to justify its setting within an area of protected open space.
- 1.24 In terms of design, the application demonstrates that the proposed development can be achieved in a way that responds to the context of the site and respects its significant heritage constraints. Officers consider that the proposals provide a high-quality design that includes enhancements and benefits to the public realm along Christ's Lane. This includes the removal of the existing 1970's library building which is, itself, considered to be a negative building within the conservation area.
- 1.25 As considered by Historic England and the Council's Conservation officer the proposed replacement library would result in harm (at the lower end of the scale) to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library, forming a part of the College site. In the view of officers there is considered to be an overall harmful impact in heritage terms. This harm is considered to be outweighed by the public benefits arising from the scheme.
- 1.26 Separately, the proposed development is considered to enhance the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area. Despite the undeniable increase in scale and visibility, the improved architectural quality, especially along Christ's Lane is deemed an enhancement, including within important public views.

- 1.27 Through the development, the sustainability credentials of the College site, including the library facilities, are to be significantly improved through the integration of renewable sources of energy in combination with fabric improvements afforded by the replacement library building.
- 1.28 The accessibility of the entire College would also significantly improve as a result of the proposed works. Both within the new library building, as well as the existing kitchen dining facilities, level access is to be provided where possible including the entirety of Bath Court.
- 1.29 Included within this application, following the Development Control Forum, the College have proposed increased public access, including to the proposed library building itself and Bath Court. Access is proposed to the library outside of term times with booking required through the College website. Details of this are recommended to be secured by condition.
- 1.30 The proposed development would meet policy requirements in respect of, biodiversity, trees, drainage and flood risk, contamination and other environmental issues, public art, and all other matters.
- 1.31 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee approve the application subject to conditions.

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment	Paragraph Reference
Anglian Water	No comment received	6.1
Conservation Officer	No objection - Harm identified	6.3
Archaeology	No objection	6.10
County Highways Development Management	No objection	6.12
County Transport Assessment Team	No comment received	6.13

Designing out crime Officer	No objection	6.15
Ecology Officer	No objection	6.16
Environment Agency	No comment	6.18
Environmental Health	No objection	6.19
Gardens Trust	No comment	6.27
Historic England	No objection – Harm identified	6.31
Landscape Officer	No objection	6.48
Lead Local Flood Authority	No objection	6.49
Natural England	No comment received	6.52
Public Art Officer	No objection	6.53
Sustainable Drainage Officer	No comment received	6.54
Sustainability Officer	No objection	6.55
S106 Officer	No comment received	6.58
Tree Officer	No objection	6.59
Urban Design Officer	No objection	6.62
Victorian Society	Objects	6.65
Waste Officer	No comment	6.67
Third Party Representations (32)	62 in support and 57 in objection	7.1

Local Interest Groups and Organisations / Petition (2)	Representations received from Christ's Lane Action Group and CPPF	8.1
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Table 2 Consultee summary

2. Site description and context

- 2.1 The application site is located within the City Centre boundary and comprises the existing Christ's College Library constructed in 1976 with a connection into the historic Bodley Library that faces onto St Andrews Street. The existing library building to be demolished is a two storey structure whose SE external elevation abuts the public right of way of Christ's Lane with the NW side opening out onto Bath Court, an enclosed external courtyard within the College. This application also includes other elements associated with the delivery of essential services the College provides. This includes the kitchen and upper dining hall where alterations are proposed to improve the effectiveness and accessibility for students and staff. There is an additional area of the site within the second court, to the northeast of the Library which is the location of the proposed temporary kitchen dining facilities to be provided during the proposed works.
- 2.2 The existing library building sought to be demolished, as well as those buildings to be retained and altered, form part of the Grade I listed College buildings with the entire site located within the Historic Core conservation area. The College site is also designated as a Grade II listed Historic Park and Garden.
- 2.3 Immediately to the SE of the existing library building is the public right of way of Christ's Lane, a portion of which is adopted public highway. Christ's Lane is a heavily used thoroughfare for pedestrians within the city of Cambridge linking the shopping area of the City Centre including the Grand Arcade with Christ's Pieces, Drummer Street bus station and the Grafton Centre shopping area. Christ's Lane is approximately 8 metres in width with retail units on the ground floor on the opposite side, with residential units above at second and third floor, the north and southwestern façades of this building are identified as primary shopping frontages within the Local Plan. Christ's Lane is designated as a Primary Shopping Area, with the application site immediately adjacent, but not within, this area.

- 2.4 Access to the site is primarily through the entrance to the College along St Andrews Street although there is an access directly onto Christ's Lane between the Bodley Library and existing 1970's Library beneath the bridge connection.
- 2.5 The application site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, the hardstanding area within Bath Court is at low (1 in 1000) risk of surface water flooding with areas of Second Court at up to a high (1 in 30) risk of surface water flooding. There are two TPO protected trees within the First Court of the college with other trees within Bath Court that are not TPO protected but are protected by virtue of being within the Conservation Area. Additionally, the site lies within an area of protected open space, an Air Quality Monitoring Area and a Smoke Control Area.

3. The proposal

- 3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the demolition of 1970s library and replacement with new library, social and study spaces including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library. Alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements and alterations to wc provision in the southeast range of Second Court. Re-landscaping of Bath Court and ancillary works, installation of temporary kitchen and dining facility in Second Court for the duration of the works.
- 3.2 To facilitate the provision of a new library to meet the needs of students, the existing library building would be demolished. This existing library dating to the 1970's fails to provide the required number of study spaces for the student body, in addition to inadequate accessibility and sustainability credentials. It was therefore determined that in order to meet the current needs of the College and its students, its demolition and replacement was required.
- 3.3 The new replacement library provides a study hub, private and group study space, a main reading room, staff spaces, outdoor terrace and sky gallery over four floors and 1050m² of gross internal area. Whilst the Christ's Lane façade provides a level of privacy to the public realm, the Bath Court façade opens out onto Bath Court itself with timber framing and glazing giving a lighter weight appearance.
- 3.4 Whilst inherently more private, the Christ's Lane elevation provides a backbone to the building with a thick, inhabited wall broken up periodically with window openings and ventilation all with the proposed chimneys extending above. The chimneys provide a rhythm to the façade whilst also

noting the historic examples of college chimneys within the city. Set back from the façade, and not prominent in its scale or siting, a replacement of the existing bridge between the Bodley library and the new proposed library building is sought to reflect the improved architectural quality of this part of the college.

- 3.5 In addition to the replacement library itself, significant landscape improvements are proposed to the open space within Bath Court. This includes levelling this area of the site and providing planting that would significantly improve the quality of this space.

4. Relevant site history

Reference	Description	Outcome
11/0516/LBC	Internal and external alterations to Bodley Library and South Range (Staircase G and Guest Suite) and the South Elevation of South Range between First Court and Library Court. The demolition of the existing Grillet library (809 sq m) to grade I listed building.	Approved (05.07.2013)
11/0495/FUL	New library (1539 sq m), the enclosure of Library Court (201 sq m) and the provision of bridge access between the first floor of the new library and the South Range and Bodley Library. Demolition of the existing library (809 sq m).	Approved (05.07.2013)
16/0405/FUL	New library (1539 sq m), the enclosure of Library Court (201 sq m) and the provision of bridge access between the first floor of the new library and the South Range and Bodley Library. Internal and external alterations to Bodley Library and South Range (Staircase G and Guest Suite) and the South Elevation of South Range between First Court and Library Court. Involves the demolition of the existing library (809 sq m).	Approved (07.09.2016)
16/0406/LBC	New library (1539 sq m), the enclosure of Library Court (201 sq m) and the provision of bridge access between the first floor of the new library and the South Range and Bodley Library. Internal and	Approved (07.09.2016)

	external alterations to Bodley Library and South Range (Staircase G and Guest Suite) and the South Elevation of South Range between First Court and Library Court. Involves the demolition of the existing library (809 sq m)	
25/00673/LBC	Internal alterations to Lower Bodley Library Comprising repositioning of free-standing bookcases and installation of rolling rack shelving.	Approved (16.04.2025)
25/02161/FUL	Demolition of 1970s library and replacement with new library and social and study spaces and including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library. Alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements and alterations to WC provision in the SE range of Second Court. Re-landscaping of Bath Court and ancillary works. Installation of temporary kitchen and dining facility in Second Court for the duration of the works.	Approved (07.11.2025) Subject to ongoing judicial review
25/02162/LBC	Demolition of 1970s library and replacement with new library and social and study spaces and including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library. Alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements and alterations to WC provision in the SE range of Second Court. Re-landscaping of Bath Court and ancillary works. Installation of temporary kitchen and dining facility in Second Court for the duration of the works.	Approved (07.11.2025)
25/02161/CONDA	Submission of details required by condition 9 (Tree Protection Methodology) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL.	Discharged in full (17.02.2026)
25/02161/CONDB	Submission of details required by condition 11(Temporary Kitchen and Dining Facility) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (18.02.2026)
25/02161/CONDC	Submission of details required by condition 5 (Listed Building	Discharged in full (04.03.2026)

	Protection) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	
25/02161/CONDD	Submission of details required by condition 10 (salvage and reuse of existing materials) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (12.03.2026)
25/02161/CONDE	Submission of details required by condition 8 (surface water run-off) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (25.03.2026)
25/02161/CONDF	Submission of details required by condition 6 (airborne dust) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (25.03.2026)
25/02161/CONDG	Submission of details required by condition 7 (demolition/construction noise and vibration impact assessment) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (06.05.2026)
25/02161/CONDH	Submission of details required by condition 3 (demolition and construction environmental management plan) of planning permission 25/02161/FUL	Discharged in full (06.05.2026)
26/0818/TTCA	5 Day Notice for a removal of a dead Acacia tree within second court of the college.	No Objection
Other relevant sites		
C/04/0632/FP	Comprehensive redevelopment providing units for purposes within Classes A1 (retail) and A3 (food and drinks); 15 residential apartments; the creation of new public spaces, including the re-opening of Christ's Lane; associated highway works, servicing; and landscaping.	Approved (30.09.2025)
25/02660/S73	S73 to vary condition 5 of ref: 19/1674/S73 (S73 to vary condition 17 of planning permission ref C/04/0632 (Comprehensive redevelopment providing units for purposes within Classes A1(retail) and A3 (Food and drink), 15 residential apartments, the creation of new public spaces, including the re-opening of Christ's Lane, associated highway works, servicing, and landscaping) to extend the opening hours of Units 5 and 6) to vary condition 5 to read all servicing, delivery and collections shall be undertaken between the hours of	Approved (06.02.2026)

	0700 to 2300 Monday to Saturday and 10 to 2100 on Sundays, Bank and other public holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.	
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Table 2 Relevant site history

- 4.1 Both 11/0495/FUL and 11/0516/LBC were granted in 2013 for an alternative scheme for the redevelopment of the current library within the site. Both of these permissions lapsed in 2016, three years after the granting of the permission. Subsequently, two identical applications were submitted and approved in 2016. In addition to a replacement library, these previous applications included a glazed atrium covering Bath Court and a large basement area. Whilst all permissions on site for the replacement of the library have since lapsed, the planning history is a material consideration for members and the schemes are discussed in more detail later in this report.
- 4.2 As is set out within the above table, a total of 8 discharge of conditions applications were submitted to the council following the granting of planning permission 25/02161/FUL. These applications approved details of a total of 8 conditions. However, officers consider that these would fall away as approved conditions should the host permission (on which they are based) be quashed.

5. Policy

5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2026

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

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 National Planning Policy Framework 2026

- 5.2.1 A new version of the NPPF has been issued on 17 August 2026. In regards to this application, the changes to the heritage section (Chapter 20) are the most relevant. As relevant, paragraphs 207-211 which cover 'Proposals affecting heritage assets' and paragraphs 212-221 which cover 'Considering potential impacts' have been replaced with policies HE4 (Securing the conservation of heritage assets), HE5 (Assessing effects on heritage assets), HE6 (Proposals affecting designated heritage assets), and HE9 (Conservation areas) of the new NPPF.
- 5.2.2 Policy S3(1) of the updated NPPF sets out that decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Within settlements, Policy S4 should be applied
- 5.2.3 S4 (1) states "Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework."
- 5.2.4 S4 (2) adds that "In applying policy S4, the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include (but are not restricted to) situations where the development proposal would:
- (c) Fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances
- 5.2.5 Policy HE5(2) states 'assessments of the potential effects of the development proposals on the significance of the heritage assets (including through effects on their setting) should identify whether proposals would be likely to:
- a. Have a positive effect, which is where the significance of a heritage asset would be enhanced, or better revealed; or
 - b. Have no effect on the significance of a heritage asset; or
 - c. Result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset, either from work affecting the asset itself or from development within its setting. The degree of harm should be identified: substantial harm would

occur where the development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset's significance; or

- d. Cause the total loss of the significance of a heritage asset.

- 5.2.6 Policy HE6(1) of the NPPF sets out that “when considering the potential effect of a development proposal on the significance of a heritage asset, substantial weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be)” The proposed development, will have an impact on the setting of the highly significant Bodley Library which forms part of the single, overall Grade I listed buildings surrounding the entrance of the Christ’s College site.
- 5.2.7 HE6(3) then adds “Any harm to a designated heritage asset will be a matter of considerable importance and weight, which should be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs 4 to 6 of this policy.”
- 5.2.8 Policy HE6(4) states that ‘Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset, the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building, and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.’ HE6(5) states that where a development would cause substantial harm to, or total loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset consent should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss.
- 5.2.9 The 2026 NPPF also provides advice specifically related to Conservation Areas within HE9.

- 5.2.10 The main alteration regarding heritage assets within the new NPPF is the replacement of the phrase 'less than substantial harm' with 'harm'. However, there is still a differentiation between 'harm' and 'substantial harm'.
- 5.2.11 All consultees and third parties, including both the Council's Conservation Officer, Historic England and CLAG were invited to update their comments in light of the updated NPPF.
- 5.2.12 In addition to heritage, the NPPF's policies on highway safety are also important for this application. Policy TR3(1)(c) highlights that any significant adverse impact on highway safety should be mitigated to an acceptable degree similar to paragraph 115(d) in the previous version. In the 2024 NPPF paragraph 116 stated that 'development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety...' Policy TR6(4) replaces para 116 and whilst worded differently echoes 116 but makes it clearer that development should be refused if it would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety; taking into account any mitigation measures proposed etc.
- 5.2.13 Policy DP3 discusses the key principles of well-designed spaces. DP3(1) states that proposals should respond to their context, including but not limited to the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets. And that this should not preclude innovation or change where appropriate, especially where an increased scale or density of development is justified in accordance with policies L2 and L3.
- 5.2.14 Policy DP3(2)(f) now specifically refers to public spaces which is relevant to this application. This policy expands upon inclusivity more than its predecessor paragraph 135(f).
- 5.2.15 L3(1) states that development proposals should "make efficient use of land, taking into account the identified need for different types of housing and other development, local market conditions, the availability of infrastructure (including that supporting sustainable transport modes) and its scope for improvement, a site's connectivity and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

5.3 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 19 Proposed Submission)

- 5.3.1 The Proposed Submission Greater Cambridge Local Plan represents the latest 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.
- 5.3.2 The Proposed Submission Local Plan was published for public consultation (under Regulation 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) between 3 August and 25 September 2026.
- 5.3.3 In line with Policy DM4 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to several factors. The joint Local Plan is at a relatively early stage in the plan making process since. The Proposed Submission Local Plan is consistent with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.
- 5.3.4 At this stage, the Proposed Submission Local Plan and its policies can only be afforded very limited weight as a material consideration in decision making.
- 5.3.5 Submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State is anticipated by the end of December 2026.

5.4 Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy 6: Hierarchy of centres and retail capacity
Policy 10: The City Centre
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 43: University development
Policy 55: Responding to context
Policy 56: Creating successful places
Policy 57: Designing new buildings
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 62: Local heritage assets

Policy 63: Works to a heritage asset to address climate change
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
Policy 85: Infrastructure delivery, planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy

5.5 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

The Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations SPD – Adopted April 2026

5.6 Other guidance

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2017)

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

Buildings of Local Interest (2005)

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 Management Design Guide (2026)

Cambridgeshire Design Guide For Streets and Public Realm (2007)

5.7 Area Guidelines

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2017)

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y (Major development, impacting a conservation area and listed buildings)

Officers wish to clarify that, at CLAG's request, the deadline for receipt of comments from interested parties was extended such that all neighbours and consultees have had at least 21 days to respond to the proposal. Additional time was also given to all notified neighbours and consultees following the updated NPPF to allow comments to be updated reflecting the change in national policy, extending the deadline for comments until the 3rd September.

Whilst all consultees were re-consulted on the 18th August to allow them time to update comments in light of the NPPF update, unless stated below, their updated comments are not changed by the NPPF update.

Anglian Water – No Objection

- 6.1 The application site lies within the catchment of the Cambridge water recycling centre (WRC) which currently lacks the capacity to accommodate additional flows generated by the proposed development.
- 6.2 The proposed development does not, however, propose or initiate an increase in the number of students, researchers or academic staff located within the site nor does it constitute a change in function.
- 6.3 As such we raise no objection to the proposed development as there would be no increase in flows and therefore no additional risk to the WRC. It is recommended that the provided floor risk and drainage strategy report is listed as an approved plan in the case of approval.

Conservation Officer- No Objection

- 6.4 The replacement of the 1974 library has previously been approved and continues to be supported in principle. The building makes a generally negative contribution to the significance of the relevant heritage assets. The proposal is smaller overall than the earlier approved schemes (11/0495/FUL & 16/0405/FUL), omitting the basement and Bath Court roof and thereby avoiding these harmful impacts.
- 6.5 The proposed library is overall considered a high-quality building that would improve the current arrangement and provide numerous

advantages in terms of landscaping, accessibility and sustainability. The new building would be substantial in relation to the size of the plot, with a greater presence than the existing library both within and outside the college.

- 6.6 The four-storey stair tower is however large in relation to the adjacent Bodley Library which is of two storeys with a domestic scale. The stair's impact has been partly mitigated by a setback from Christ's Lane and through the lightness of its design and materiality. There would be an enhanced relationship between the new library and Bodley Library through the increase in space and an improved link between the buildings. However, on balance it is considered the mitigations have not fully overcome the impact of the relative scale and proximity of the stair tower, and this part of the scheme remains harmful to the listed building's setting.
- 6.7 When considered in relation to the existing poor-quality building, the proposed library would be an enhancement to the conservation area when experienced from within or outside the college. Changes to the levels and landscaping in Bath Court, which would largely affect modern features and fabric, and would provide enhancements to the space are not of concern subject to any archaeological considerations. The ramp to second court would cause minimal harm and is supported subject to further details.
- 6.8 The proposed building would have a minimal visual presence from Second Court, within the RPG, but the impact to its significance is considered neutral.
- 6.9 The proposal includes heritage benefits, namely:
- An enhancement to the setting of the grade I listed building when experienced from Bath Court or Christ's Lane due to the increased space between the Bodley Library and proposed library at the lower levels;
 - Wider enhancements to the appearance of Bath Court through the removal of redundant plant and fire escape, improved landscaping and the reopening of a blocked historic doorway to First Court;
 - An enhancement to the Central Conservation Area through the introduction of an architecturally superior building;
 - Sustaining the ongoing use and conservation of the grade I listed building by providing improved, accessible library facilities.

6.10 When considering the above heritage impacts with reference to NPPF paras 208, 212 and 213, the heritage benefits are not considered to fully outweigh the heritage harm. On balance, the harm is considered to be less than substantial at the lower end of the scale, and therefore NPPF para. 215 is engaged.

6.11 Conditions are recommended regarding:

- Details of new walls
- Joinery details
- Rainwater goods
- External material details
- Precise works
- Hard and soft landscaping

Comment following NPPF update

6.12 Updated comments received on the 26 August 2026 reflect the changes within the updated NPPF. The overall position remains, that the development would result in harm to the setting of the Grade I listed buildings.

6.13 Considering the heritage effects with reference to NPPF policies HE4 (1, 2), HE5 (1-4), HE6 (1-3) and HE9, the positive effects continue to be considered to not fully outweigh the harm identified.

6.14 On balance, the harm is considered to be at the lower end of the scale, and therefore NPPF policy HE6 (4) is engaged.

County Archaeology- No Objection

6.15 Due to the archaeological potential of the site, a further programme of investigation and recording is required in order to provide more information regarding the presence or absence, and condition, of surviving archaeological remains within the development area.

6.16 A condition is therefore recommended regarding a programme of archaeological works/ written scheme of investigation.

6.17 Updated comments received confirm that the initial comments received still align with the standards set out in the NPPF 2026.

County Highways Development Management - No Objection

- 6.18 Following a review of the documents provided to the Highway Authority, the effect of the proposed development upon the Public Highway should be mitigated subject to a condition requiring the submission of a Traffic Management Plan.

County Transport Assessment Team- No comment received

- 6.19 Whilst the County Council Transport Assessment Team have not provided comments on this application, they did provide comments on the previous application (25/02161/FUL).
- 6.20 Their position on the previous application was of no objection due to the fact that the proposal was not considered to result in any increase in trip generation.

Designing Out Crime Officer- No Objection

- 6.21 Despite the context of the site being considered an area of high risk to the vulnerability to crime, it is considered that there is no objection to the proposal subject to a condition regarding secured by design principles.

Ecology Officer- No Objection

- 6.22 The application site is located within the urban context of the centre of Cambridge, comprising predominantly buildings or developed/ sealed surfaces. The buildings themselves are assessed as having negligible suitability of bat roosting due to their condition.
- 6.23 The proposal includes ecological enhancement measures which are recommended to be secured by condition along with a further condition to secure mitigation as set out within the provided Ecological Impact Assessment.

Environment Agency- No Comment

- 6.24 The Environment Agency consider the application is not appropriate for their comment.

Environmental Health- No Objection

- 6.25 The application ref. 25/02161/FUL development was previously reviewed and supported by EQG e.g. in summary no objection subject to the

imposition of recommended conditions and informatives as per our EQG Planning Consultation Memo - dated the 23-07-2025

6.26 As no major / substantive changes or amendments are being proposed as part of this application, we maintain our support for the proposed development e.g. no objection and our previous comments etc remain relevant / valid.

6.27 It is noted that in response to certain Environmental Health / Planning Officer related conditions imposed on planning permission reference 25/02161/FUL, this application includes certain 25/02161/FUL Discharge of Condition documents that have already been relating to the following conditions:

- *Condition 3 (Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan)*
- *Condition 6 (Airborne Dust)*
- *Condition 7 (Demolition and construction noise and vibration)*

6.28 The contaminated land risk assessment referred to within comments and submitted with the previous application (25/02161/FUL) does not appear to have been provided as part of this current application. For the avoidance of doubt/ completeness it is recommended that the applicant submits this contaminated land report as part of this application.

6.29 Detailed assessment of environmental health ground has been provided in comments from the environmental health officer on the previous application (25/02161/FUL) as follows;

Environmental Quality

6.30 The Impact of the construction/ demolition phase along with plant noise from the operation of the site, ventilation of kitchen odours and artificial lighting are considered to be acceptable subject to conditions regarding:

- Construction/ demolition hours
- Demolition / construction collections / deliveries
- Plant Noise Impact Assessment
- Artificial Lighting Impact Assessment
- Hours of Deliveries/ collections (during use)
- DCEMP compliance
- Dust compliance
- Construction/demolition noise/vibration & piling compliance

Contaminated Land

- 6.31 The recommendation set out in the provided risk assessment is wholly appropriate for the proposed development and can be secured with the imposition of conditions regarding:
- Materials Management Plan
 - Unexpected Contamination

Air Quality

- 6.32 It is agreed that there will be a beneficial rather than negative impact on air quality and odour. As a result, Local Plan Policy 36 will be complied with subject to an odour compliance condition.

Updated comments

- 6.33 Further comments have been received from the Council's Environmental Health Officer clarifying an identified typographical error relating to the removal of ground to mitigate contaminated land impacts.
- 6.34 Further comments also request a change in trigger of the Material Management Plan condition to **"Prior to the placement of ground-forming materials"**

Gardens Trust - No Objection

- 6.35 It should be noted that the Garden's Trust are proposed to be removed as a statutory consultee under Government Reforms announced on the 17th August. However, given they remain a statutory consultee until secondary legislation is passed, their comments are considered as such.
- 6.36 The development is not situated in, or visible from, the main historic registered gardens of the college, although it is within the registered area that covers the entire College site. Bath Court itself is of low value to the Registered Park and Garden (RPG) and the College as a whole.
- 6.37 The proposed development would give the area of Bath Court a 'walled garden' feel which would be an improvement on its current appearance and use. Although the proposed upper floors would overhang the Court, given the Court's low value as part of the RPG, this would not cause serious harm to the RPG.
- 6.38 Arboricultural impacts of the development as set out in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment provided would be negligible.
- 6.39 Based on this assessment, we have no comments to make on the proposal.

Historic England- No Objection

6.40 Email 8 July 2026 - This application is effectively a resubmission of application 25/02161/FUL. Historic England's advice on the formal application and subsequent amended scheme was detailed in letters dated 29 July and 1 September 2025 respectively. We then stated our lack of objection to the scheme and asked the council to determine the application in accordance with national and local planning policy guidance and on the basis of your expert conservation advice.

6.41 The proposal subject of the present application remains unchanged from those previously assessed. Consequently we are comfortable to reiterate our position of no objection and do not wish to make any further comments. We refer you to our previous letters of advice for a detailed assessment of the proposals.

Comments received 29 July 2025 (to application 25/02161/FUL) (Appendix 2)

6.42 The current proposals represent a re-examination of the scheme consented in 2011 and renewed in 2016.

6.43 The strong emphasis on sustainability of the new proposals results in a scheme that t[h]reads more lightly on the site; a basement extension is no longer considered. Neither is the glazing of Bath court.

6.44 In order to meet the requirements of the brief and compensate for the loss of the basement, the buildings need to extend further above ground. Heights and relationship with surrounding buildings therefore require careful consideration. Given its position fronting what is now a public lane, the buildings contribution to the streetscape in addition to its relationship with the college as a whole and the building's own proportions need also to be considered.

6.45 The removal of the basement and glazed enclosure have removed instances of harm to the significance of the listed college. However, the resulting increased massing brings other instances of harm, as it puts considerable pressure on the surrounding buildings forming Bath Court. The building feels too big, overdominant on this space, particularly in its relationship with the south range of first court and the Bodley Library.

6.46 Similarly, the increased height towards Christ's Lane feels quite large when seen alongside the relatively modest elevations of the college. This

impact is evidenced in the visualisations presented, particularly those looking towards St Andrew's Street.

- 6.47 The introduction of a new primary building of the massing proposed within what historically was a domestic kitchen garden is challenging. Whilst we acknowledge the proposals represent a more contextual approach and the architectural quality of the scheme, we are of the view that the building is too big for its location.
- 6.48 Historic England engaged on pre-application discussions with the College alongside Council officers, where we welcomed the approach taken to revising the granted scheme and its ambitions. We highlighted the architectural quality of the project and its potential for enhancing the character of the conservation area and for delivering greater benefit to the college. We expressed our concerns however about its massing, its relationship with the Bodley library, and made some recommendations in relation to the Christ Lane elevation, which we consider would benefit from simplification.
- 6.49 The treatment to Christ's Lane has also been refined and simplified from the competition and subsequent designs discussed at pre-application stage. The wall level which initially aligned with the Bodley's stringcourse has been now lifted up to turret level. Whilst this simplifies the design and improves the building's own proportions, it feels more overbearing in its relationship with the Bodley and evidences the difficulties to accommodate a building which is too large for what is a very domestic setting.
- 6.50 In relation to the ventilation stacks/new chimneys proposed, we agree that the proportions and relationship of these elements in the historic streetscape are an important consideration and note the comparative analysis included in the Design and Access Statement. However, the role of these new elements within the college needs also to be factored in.
- 6.51 To summarise and conclude, in their present form, the proposals would result in certain levels of harm to the significance of the listed building, primarily as a result of the excessive bulk of the new building, which we consider would detract from the setting of the surrounding buildings.
- 6.52 The proposals would be bulkier than those that were previously granted consent. We also acknowledge the benefits of removing the basement and glazing from the court and the architectural merits of the current scheme. With this in mind, we do not wish to object to the application but

would strongly encourage that massing is further reduced so it sits better within this context.

Updated comments following amendments received 1 September 2025
(Appendix 2)

- 6.53 An additional set of plans has been submitted in support of this application. The overall massing of the building remains unchanged but revisions have been introduced to the chimney/ventilation stacks and the position of the wash up pod, which were raised in our letter of advice dated 29 July 2025.
- 6.54 The height of the ventilation stacks has been reduced by 90cm; further louvered slots have been added to the side and rear elevations to compensate for the loss ventilation area; this also helps to break up the mass of these elements.
- 6.55 We are of the opinion that if the height of the staircase turret could similarly be slightly reduced, this would better retain the prominence of the reduced chimney/ventilation stacks. This in turn would improve the relationship of the building with the Bodley library and its perceived bulk in views from St Andrew's Street. We would encourage this is considered.
- 6.56 Overall, Historic England welcomes the revisions introduced to the scheme and retains its position of no objection.

Comments following NPPF updates

- 6.57 Following the updates to the NPPF on the 17 August 2026, further comments were received from Historic England confirming that they are confident their existing advice remains relevant and appropriate. They concluded that they "consider that our existing responses provide a sufficient basis for the Local Planning Authority to assess the proposals in the context of the revised NPPF".

Landscape Officer- No Objection

- 6.58 We raise no objection to the proposal in landscape terms, given some detail remains outstanding, a condition is recommended regarding hard and soft landscaping.
- 6.59 Updated comments received 25 August 2026 confirm that, following the updated NPPF, the position of no objection (subject to conditions) remains.

Lead Local Flood Authority- No Objection

- 6.60 The provided information demonstrates that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use of attenuation, restricting surface water discharge to 2l/s.
- 6.61 The LLFA is supportive of the use of rain gardens and rainwater harvesting as both controlling the rate of surface water run-off and providing water quality treatment.
- 6.62 Conditions are recommended regarding a scheme for surface water drainage and measures to avoid additional surface water run-off.
- 6.63 Updated comments were received from the Lead Local Flood Authority raising an objection to the scheme on the basis that the proposed temporary kitchen/ dining facilities were proposed on non-permeable paving with no information regarding the mitigation of this.
- 6.64 Following clarification, the LLFA have confirmed, within an updated memo that their position, set out within their initial comments (18 June 2026) remains.

Natural England- No comment received

- 6.65 Whilst Natural England have not provided comments on this current application they did on the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Within this previous application they raised no objection to the proposal on the basis that it would not have any significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.

Public Art Officer – No Objection

- 6.66 Limited information has been provided with the application regarding public art within the proposal. A condition is recommended requiring submission of a Public Art Strategy and Delivery Plan.

Sustainable Drainage Officer- No Comment

- 6.67 As a major application, drainage comments are deferred to the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Sustainability Officer- No Objection

- 6.68 The sustainability approach set out within the provided sustainability statement is welcomed and looks to achieve a high standard of energy efficiency, water efficiency and carbon emissions reduction within the restrictions of the original buildings historic context.
- 6.69 The applications bespoke sustainability strategy is based upon the RIBA Sustainable Outcomes Guide. The new build element will follow Passivhaus principles with high-performing thermal fabric, good airtightness, efficient air source heat pumps, innovative clay radiant ceiling heating system, mechanical ventilation with heat recover and provision of on-site renewable technology through south facing PVs on the rooftop.
- 6.70 Supports the proposed development subject to conditions regarding a bespoke sustainability strategy, rainwater harvesting, water efficiency calculations and water metering.

S106 Officer- No comment received

- 6.71 Whilst not received on this current application, the council's Section 106 officer did provide comments on the previous application (26/02161/FUL). Within their previous comments they requested financial contributions of £20,000 (plus indexation) towards the provision of and improvement of public realm facilities within the vicinity of Christ's Lane.

Tree Officer- No Objection

- 6.72 From an arboricultural perspective there are no objections to this planning application.
- 6.73 The provided Arboricultural Impact Assessment provides sufficient information to demonstrate that the proposed demolition and construction works and installation of the temporary kitchen can be undertaken with minimal impact upon existing trees.
- 6.74 The submitted Tree Protection Scheme dated 04/02/2026 provides adequate measures to secure the protection of retained trees, including BS5837:2012 Category B trees, throughout the construction period. Subject to compliance with the provided Tree Protection Scheme there are no arboricultural constraints that would warrant refusal of the application.

Urban Design Officer - No Objection

- 6.75 The design as presented reflects a contextually sensitive response and substantial opportunity to improve the place-qualities of a re-imagined Christ's Lane. The proposal is strongly supported by urban design in its current form in terms of public realm improvement.
- 6.76 The current proposal achieves an elegant and respectful balance through a successful mediation between old and new and is strongly supported.
- 6.77 The use of pixelated brickwork that fuses with the historic fabric and subtly merges with it is supported. It provides the important Christ Lane facing façade with a tactile quality that is appropriate to a setting where people will come in close contact with it.

Victorian Society - Objection

- 6.78 Within their letter dated 06 July 2026 (Appendix 7), re-iterated their objection and advice raised on the previous application (Appendix 3) regarding the scheme, in particular with regard to its scale and massing. Urges the college to consider less-harmful alternatives and/ or minor alterations previously proposed.
- 6.79 The design as it stands gives rise to a low-to-moderate level of less than substantial harm impacting the fabric of the college's Grade-I Listing, but also the setting of the Central (Historic Core) Conservation Area.

Waste Officer – No objection

- 6.80 No objection to the proposal on the assumption that any additional waste created will be incorporated into the existing refuse arrangement for the college.

Design Review Panel Meeting – 13 February 2025

- 6.81 The final report received (Appendix 3) includes the following on the bulk, scale, massing and spatial concept: -
- 6.82 The Panel endorse the concept and strategy of the proposal. There is a pleasant interaction with the public realm, specifically Christ's Lane and views from St Andrew's Street. It is comfortable with the scale and massing. When viewed from this junction, it has a significance and a character of its own.

- 6.83 The dominant chimneys, performing an essential ventilation function are welcome. Some members of the panel expressed the view that they could be taller. That popping up above the ridge line when viewed from First Court within the college would not be a problem. Trying to keep them out of sight was inconsistent with historic precedent.
- 6.84 There are differing views on the impact of the design on Bath Court. It is a tight space and the internal cross section dimensions to accommodate a functioning library have largely determined the form. Bath Court is not a pleasant space at the moment. It is hemmed in by the vertical façade of the existing library with no shelter. The move to open up the ground level space with greater width and a degree of shelter with a cantilever overhang are positive moves that will enhance the space. The dimension between the projecting upper level of the library and the roof opposite will be in the order of 4 metres. This is a concern to some panel members.
- 6.85 There is a tricky balancing act between the needs of the library and the occupiers of the rooms opposite, although the rooms are dual aspect and so daylight is not a problem. However, the façade of the upper levels of the library will be very much in the face of occupiers of the roof top rooms. Material selection and detail are important considerations as the design team acknowledge.
- 6.86 The final report concludes: In conclusion the panel applaud the scheme as an exemplary proposal. As the details develop, the Panel believe the richness will be enhanced.
- 6.87 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. Third party representations

- 7.1 119 representations have been received, 62 in support and 57 in objection.
- 7.2 Those in objection have raised the following issues:

Planning Principles

- Lack of justification for the number of study spaces provided within the library
- Failure to fully explore the potential for previous schemes to meet the current needs of the College

- Disregard for the potential provision of library facilities within multiple buildings within the College, reducing the required scale within this site.
- The proposal would not provide sufficient public benefits to outweigh the disruption that it would cause.

Design/Character/Heritage/Townscape and Visual Impact

- The proposal is too big for its surroundings, with the site unable to accommodate a building of this size
- The scheme would negatively impact Christ's Lane as a historic public space
- The proposal would result in harm to the Grade 1 listed College buildings
- The replacement building would have a detrimental impact on the Historic Core Conservation Area
- The proposed development does not comply with Policy 61 of the Local Plan as it fails to enhance/ preserve the significance of heritage assets.
- Excessive height of the proposed building that would overwhelm the surrounding buildings of heritage significance
- The scale of the proposed building would increase and exacerbate the "canyoning" along Christ's Lane
- The proposed library would enclose Bath Court with insufficient spacing afforded to the Southern Range of First Court.
- The proposed library would severely obstruct the skyline for users of Christ's Lane
- Lack of public art provision and consideration of enjoyment for pedestrians.
- The provided views with the application do not accurately reflect the appearance of the proposed building from along Christ's Lane.
- Increased scale and massing in comparison to the previous permissions on the site.
- Dismissal of potential to build downwards to reduce the scale of the proposal above ground
- Excessively large chimneys that are out-of-keeping with the vernacular of Cambridge with insufficient justification for their height.
- Requests from statutory consultees to reduce the scale of the proposal
- Greater consideration should be given to preserving/ enhancing Bath Court as an area of open space.
- The archaeological benefits stated through the omission of the basement are highly questionable.

- The applicant has failed to accurately consider the relevance/ assessment of Policy 60 (tall buildings)

Amenity Impacts

- The proposal would block out light to Christ's Lane resulting in detrimental impacts to the businesses along this street
- Construction works and narrowing of Christ's Lane would impact the function of adjacent businesses along Christ's Lane
- the construction works would result in disturbance to those living along Christ's Lane through noise, vibration and dust
- The new building would block views from the residential properties of Christ's Lane.

Environmental

- The sustainability argument for omitting the basement is incomplete and fails to consider the social benefits of a reduced height.
- Underestimation by the college as to the amount of contamination within the site

Highways and transport

- the construction would impact Christ's Lane as a heavily used public thoroughfare including those with mobility issues
- safety impacts from construction traffic using Christ's Lane

Other

- Incomplete public consultation and failure to work constructively with local residents
- Failure of the College to take into account concerns of nearby residents

Judicial Review/ Procedural concerns

- The application should not be determined until the ongoing Judicial Review has been heard in court with the judgement considered as part of this applicaiton.
- The college has circumnavigated procedure by submitting an identical second application
- The applicant's assessment of the heritage impacts is flawed and fails to take into account the Judicial Review and conceded grounds.
- The applicant has obstructed public meeting notes from being published and refused to attend a Development Control Forum
- The applicants have been "lobbying" councillors

7.3 Those in support have given the following reasons:

- The current 1970s library no longer meets the needs of students with regards to its study spaces, accessibility and overall quality of space as raised historically by students and staff and presents a barrier for potential students
- The development would result in significantly improved accessibility for all students and staff.
- Providing a building that would meet the needs of multiple future generations, minimising the need for future disruption
- Provision of a new library building that is more sympathetic to the surrounding listed buildings of the College than the existing library
- Wider benefits including accessibility to other parts of the college including dining facilities
- Long term sustainability benefits through the use of renewable energy sources such as Air Source Heat Pumps
- Enhancements to Christ's Lane as a public frontage through the replacement of the current building which provides a negative contribution to the character of the area
- The scale of the proposed building reflects and responds to the scale and appearance of surrounding modern developments.
- Improved kitchen/ cafeteria facilities as a result of the works
- Provision of a variety of study spaces to meet the various, contemporary needs of students including quiet spaces, collaborative areas and flexible environments
- The proposal preserves and enhances the historic buildings of Christ's College
- The proposal is well-integrated into the environment, minimising any adverse impact on neighbouring properties
- Improved safety of Christ's Lane as a public thoroughfare through the introduction of large overlooking windows and increased lighting
- Improvements to the public realm along Christ's Lane through the provision of a bench and gate providing views into Bath Court
- The proposal helps to connect the public space of Christ's Lane to the College grounds
- Neurodiversity affirming design of the proposed library building.
- The development contributes towards the College's ability to provide effective education.
- The avoidance of any additional basement avoids the embodiment and excessive levels of carbon that this would require as well as removing the risk of damage to surrounding listed buildings.

- The proposal is an improvement to what is one of the City's main tourist destinations
- Substantial public benefits arising from the scheme to outweigh any identified heritage harm

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 have submitted a representation raising concerns with the application for the following reasons:
- The proposal fails to preserve or enhance relevant heritage assets as required by Policy 61 of the Local Plan. The harm identified by Historic England is such that the application fails this test.
 - Historic England have warned that the ventilation stacks/ chimneys are not proportionate with the existing chimneys within Christ's College. This would overwhelm the modest scale of the College's historic streetscape.
 - The minimal public benefits identified fail to outweigh the identified heritage harm including to the Grade 1 listed Bodley Library, Bath Court and the Historic Core Conservation area.

Christ's Lane Action Group

- 9.2 At time of writing a total of more than 70 representations received from Christ's Lane Action Group are published on the public portal for this application.
- 9.3 Included within these representations is a petition received with a total of 75 signatures requesting that a Development Control Forum be held to discuss matters that would overcome objections to the scheme.
- 9.4 Of these, more than 20 are considered to comprise formal representations on the scheme and its determination, with the remainder being either attachments/ enclosures or emails notifying of the representations sent to the following:

- Planning Case officer
- Planning Legal officer/ department
- Planning technical support team
- Historic Environment Team
- The Victorian Society
- Historic England

9.5 Full details of these representations are visible on the public portal however the contents can be summarised as follows:

Process

- Repeated request that determination of this application be deferred until the judgement of the court has been made on the Judicial Review, depriving the decision maker of guidance from the High Court.
- Confirmation sought multiple times from the Council's Legal officer that the assessment of this application identifies and corrects each conceded error raised within the Judicial Review.
- Confirmation sought repeatedly that discharge of conditions under the previous "acknowledged-unlawful" permission would not be relied upon or treated as satisfying conditions under this new application.
- Confirmation sought to clarify the consultation deadline for third parties including clarification on the public portal as to this deadline.
- Raised the failure to consult Historic England as a Statutory Consultee on the application. Including a request that the standard 21-day consultation be extended to 42 days to account for the consultation of Historic England.
- Raised the failure to obtain advice from the National Amenity Society on the application.
- Request made that the applicant provide a BRE 209 (2022) compliant daylight and sunlight assessment and Construction Management plan with an extension to the consultation period to reflect this additional information.
- Failure to notify Nos. 19, 20 and 21 Christ's Lane initially when the application was validated.
- Lack of sufficient time within the consultation period for consideration of information provided on the 18th and 24th June.
- Request that the Garden's Trust comments be logged on the portal as statutory advice rather than a public comment.
- Concerns regarding lack of sufficient time afforded between a Development Control Forum and Planning Committee. With a

repeated request that the officer report be published 14 days before any committee meeting.

- Request that the case officer clarify to a third-party, the consultation deadline in light of a previous request to extend their deadline.
- Failure to upload/ misfiling of representations received from CLAG in response to this application.
- Provided their account of the 6th July College meeting including the view provided by the applicant's representatives in relation to the heritage assessment of the scheme.
- Raised a mis-representation of the number of objections received on this application within a public article online. With a request that this be rectified to clarify the number of objections received.
- Raised concerns regarding the incorrect publication date of a letter from the agent of the application to the Victorian Society.
- Concerns raised regarding the wording of a number of conditions attached to the previous permission that should be amended as part of this application.

Legal Matters

- Concerns raised regarding lobbying of members resulting from a letter sent by the College to members with an incomplete view of the application, failing to take account of the grounds of Judicial Review. Repeated request that this letter be uploaded to the application so that it is within the public case file.
- Concerns regarding the legal position to initially decline a Development Control Forum on the basis that the College declined to attend.
- Request why pre-empting the High Court Judgement is considered lawful and prudent.
- Request for a standstill undertaking whilst ongoing matters are resolved.
- Sought a legal view as to why a record of the College's public meeting on the 6th July was withheld from the public record on this application.

Grounds of the ongoing Judicial Review

- Email sent directly to Historic England asking that, if consulted again their response be given with full knowledge of the ongoing Judicial Review. Including the way in which Historic England's comments were presented to committee within the previous application.

- That the grounds of the Judicial Review are directly relevant to the building's bulk and massing and therefore inseparable from this current application.

Heritage

- Email sent directly to the Victorian Society notifying them of the current application, the status of the Judicial Review and requesting that they clarify if their previous comments remain applicable to this current application.
- Significant concerns raised repeatedly regarding the applicant's assessment of heritage harm arising from the scheme including within their covering letter of this new application.
- Confirmation sought that Section 66 of the LBCA Act 1990 applies as the proposal would affect a listed building or its setting.
- Email sent directly to the Council's Historic Environment team notifying them of the status of the application, the Judicial Review and the statutory consultee comments received prior to the comment of the Conservation Officer.
- Concern raised regarding the correspondence between the agent, architect and the Victorian Society. Including the failure to re-consult upon the response of the Victorian Society.

Other Matters

- Email direct to the Council's Environmental Health Officer noting an error within their comments with regards to the depth of suggested contaminated land removal. In addition to query regarding trigger of the material management plan condition. Including a request to re-consult following any updated Environmental Health Officer comments.
- Failure of the applicant to provide the Site Investigation Report to assess the impact of the proposal with regards to contaminated land.
- Contradictions regarding the proposal's ability to "maintain pedestrian access" along Christ's Lane during construction works.
- The proposal fails to provide a de-minimis calculation regarding the necessity to provide statutory Biodiversity Net Gain with the application. Including assessment of the temporary facility within the Second Court.
- Additional noise assessment information is required prior to determination of this application.
- Failure to provide a standalone traffic management plan as part of this application.

- Contradicting advice from the Council's Tree officer and inconsistent information relating to the temporary kitchen.

9.6 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 As planning committee members should be aware, this application has been submitted, as an identical copy of the previous application (ref 25/02161/FUL) that is currently the subject of a Judicial Review and is due to be heard in the Planning Court in October 2026.
- 10.2 Permission has been granted by the High Court for the Judicial Review to proceed to a substantive one-day hearing on all four grounds applied for by CLAG.
- 10.3 Given the delay in the courts for the case to be heard, the applicant decided to submit this current application for determination, which allows the Council the opportunity to directly address all four grounds of legal challenge.
- 10.4 The grounds of challenge raised within the Judicial Review are covered within the executive summary of this report as follows:
- 10.5 Ground 1 Summary: **The Committee was materially misled as to Historic England's advice.** The statutory consultee had identified harm arising from the bulk and overall massing of the proposal, and advised that this remained "unchanged" following scheme amendments. The Committee was materially misdirected as to Historic England's position by the officer's report and presentation. An incomplete and misleading summary of their advice was given, which omitted to mention that HE had identified harm arising from the proposal.
- 10.6 Ground 1 Summary Response: Comments (dated 8th July 2026) have been received from Historic England on this new application. Within these comments they refer back to previous comments that they made on the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Historic England have therefore provided 4 separate comments on the proposal. First, their substantive comments of 29 July 2025. Secondly, their follow up response of the 1 September 2025 following amendments to the proposal. Thirdly, their response to the current application referring back to their previous comments. These can be seen in full within *Appendix 2*. As set out within

the heritage section of this report, Historic England, whilst raising no objection have stated that they consider the proposals would result in certain levels of harm to the significance of the Grade I listed Christ's College, primarily arising from the bulk of the proposed building, which would detract from the setting of the surrounding buildings. Fourthly, additional comments were received from Historic England following the update to the NPPF on the 17th August 2026. These comments set out that Historic England are comfortable their existing advice remains relevant and appropriate in light of the updated NPPF.

- 10.7 Ground 2 summary: **The Committee was materially misled as to the existence and/or extent of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets.** The report to committee provided confusing and inconsistent advice as to whether there was harm to the listed building that needed to be outweighed in a public benefits balance under NPPF para. 215, or whether the impact on the listed building was 'neutral' meaning that there was no 'harm' to engage para. 215. Further inconsistent advice was given during the Committee meeting itself.
- 10.8 Ground 2 Summary Response: The heritage section of this report has been amended to address the second ground of challenge. The report is clear that there would be harm (at the lower end of the scale) to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library, forming part of the College site, but that harm is outweighed by the public benefits arising from the scheme applying Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF.
- 10.9 Ground 3 summary: **The Committee took into account an irrelevant consideration – optimum viable use (OVU).** The Committee was advised that the proposal would "help to secure the listed building's optimum viable use." The decision was based on a misunderstanding / misapplication of the Planning Practice Guidance. The continuation of an existing, baseline, OVU cannot lawfully be elevated into a distinct public benefit capable of outweighing heritage harm.
- 10.10 Ground 3 Summary Response: To clarify, the proposal is not considered to secure the long-term re-use of a listed building so as to constitute a public benefit within the terms of Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF. This is not, therefore, relied upon in the heritage assessment of this application. The updated NPPF removes specific reference to OVU where the previous version of the NPPF stated that it was a potential public benefit that could be used to outweigh identified heritage harm.
- 10.11 Ground 4 summary: **The Committee failed to take into account a relevant consideration – the existence of less harmful alternative**

modes of development. On the basis that there was harm to the setting of the listed building, the possibility of that harm being reduced or avoided through an alternative scheme or mode of development was a material consideration. CLAG considered that there were alternative schemes for the site, including the previously consented schemes on the site from 2011 and 2016 or that provided by CLAG in response to 25/02161/FUL (an alternative designed façade by Create Streets) which they considered less harmful to heritage assets, but the Committee was not advised of their relevance and they were not considered.

- 10.12 Ground 4 Summary Response: The level of consideration given to these alternative schemes can only be relative to the level of detail available. Further assessment of all the alternative schemes is provided in the heritage section of this report. In conclusion, none of the alternative schemes are deemed to be suitable or feasible alternatives which would meet the college's needs. Whilst they are material considerations, they are not given significant weight in the assessment of the proposal before members.
- 10.13 Officers consider that the primary matters of legal contention have been directly addressed through this revised report. The existence of the planning permission is a material consideration albeit the weight to be afforded to this could only be described as very limited because the Council and the Interest Party have conceded in writing to all four grounds of challenge and it is likely, although not guaranteed, that the permission will in due course be quashed by a judge.

The Council's ability to determine the current application

- 10.14 As referred to above, CLAG and other third-parties have raised concerns that this application should not be determined whilst the previous application (25/02161/FUL) was under judicial review. The grant of planning permission for the previous application remains valid unless and until quashed by the court. The Council has openly indicated to the court that it would be prepared to consent to a quashing of that previous decision based on the grounds raised by CLAG. There is nothing to prevent the applicant from submitting a new (and identical) application in the interim as has been done, and for that to be considered by the Council against that backdrop. Bearing in mind the current context, it remains the case that any subsequent decision on this new application could be liable to be challenged in the normal way. This officer report addresses the grounds of challenge, to avoid any error of law and minimise the risk of further challenge.

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
- Heritage assets
- Trees
- Carbon reduction and sustainable design
- Biodiversity
- Water management and flood risk
- Highway safety and transport impacts
- Car and cycle parking
- Amenity
- Third party representations
- Planning obligations
- Other matters
- Planning balance
- Recommendation
- Planning conditions

12. Presumption in favour of sustainable development

12.1 The 2026 update to the NPPF introduced within Policy S3, the “presumption in favour of sustainable development”. Where development is located within settlements, such as this application within the settlement of Cambridge, Policy S4 of the NPPF should be applied.

12.2 Policy S4 provides that applications within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the NPPF. Paragraph 2(c) of S4 then adds that the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development are likely to be outweighed by adverse effects include where proposals would fail to comply with one of the national decision making policies that states development should be refused in specific circumstances.

12.3 The application has been assessed against the NPPF as set out in the following sections of this report. It is not considered that there is any conflict with national decision making policies that would otherwise outweigh the “presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

13. Principle of Development

- 13.1 The proposed development seeks the replacement of the existing library building with a larger, more modern facility within largely the same footprint forming part of the College site. The site falls within the Cambridge City Centre as defined within the Local Plan Policies map Policy 6. The application therefore falls to be assessed against Policy 10 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.
- 13.2 Policy 10 states that any new development or redevelopment within the City Centre should:
- a) add to the vitality and viability of the city centre;
 - b) achieve a suitable mix of uses;
 - c) preserve or enhance heritage assets and their setting, open spaces and the River Cam;
 - d) be of the highest quality design and deliver a high-quality public realm; and
 - e) promote sustainable modes of transport
- 13.3 Given that the application is seeking the demolition and replacement of the existing library within the college, the use of the site is not being altered as part of this application. For this reason, it is not considered that criteria (a) and (b) are directly applicable in this instance, and it is not reasonable to conclude that further uses are required within the site given its constrained nature and the need, first and foremost, to re-provide a new library on the site to modern standards. It is in the view of officers, unreasonable to require the provision of additional uses within the site given the needs of the College and its students for library space within the site. No alternatives have been suggested to demonstrate that a mix of uses within the site is realistically achievable.
- 13.4 As will be assessed fully within the Heritage section of this report, the proposed replacement library building is considered to result in a low level of harm to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library. Conversely, however, it is considered that the development would result in an enhancement to the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area, with a neutral impact upon the Grade II listed Christ's College RPG. The heritage balance is considered to result in overall harm to the setting of the Grade I listed buildings and therefore there is conflict with criteria (c) of Policy 10. As set out in the planning balance however, it

is considered that the harm to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library is outweighed by public benefits arising from the scheme.

- 13.5 As will also be discussed in greater detail in the following section of this report, the design of the replacement library is considered to be of the highest quality, taking key notes from relevant buildings within Cambridge. Therefore, subject to a number of conditions, the development is considered to comply with criteria (d) of Policy 10.
- 13.6 The proposed development, as with the existing site, is car free with no designated car parking for users of the library. Given the highly sustainable, central location of the site, it is considered that the development complies with criteria (e) of Policy 10.
- 13.7 Policy 43 of the Local Plan supports university development within the city centre so long as it:
- a. makes effective use of land, including a mix of uses on larger sites to meet the needs of the relevant institution, and
 - b. takes reasonable opportunities to improve circulation for pedestrians and cyclists, together with public realm improvements, reductions in car parking provision and the introduction of active frontages at ground floor level.
- 13.8 The proposed development seeks the replacement of an existing library that is considered by the college to no longer be sufficient to meet the needs of its students or meet its own sustainability and accessibility requirements. Whilst significantly larger than the existing library, the proposed replacement building is considered, in the view of officers to make effective use of the land within a highly sustainable, city centre location. Officers do not consider it feasible to provide a mix of uses on the site due to the requirement of the college for library space within a constrained site, therefore the proposal complies with criteria a. of Policy 43. As will be discussed in later sections of this report, officers also consider that the proposal is compliant with criteria b. of the Policy.
- 13.9 With the above in mind, whilst the proposal would conflict with criteria (c) of Policy 10, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Policy 43 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the overall objectives of the Development Plan. As set out in the Planning Balance, the heritage harm is considered to be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.

Protected Open Space

- 13.10 Policy 67 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 is relevant in the assessment of the application as the entire application site forms an area of protected open space (P&G33). The space is considered to be of recreational and environmental importance with a quality rating of 77.89%.
- 13.11 Policy 67 aims to protect designated open space of environmental and recreational importance. The local plan states that development proposals which would lead to the loss of protected open space will not be permitted unless 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.
- 13.12 In the case of university and college grounds, such as the application site, it is added that development may be permitted where it meets a demonstrable educational need and does not adversely affect playing fields or other formal sports provision on the site.
- 13.13 Whilst Bath Court is located within the Protected Open space, it is almost entirely paved with hardstanding and extremely limited in its size. Officers do not therefore consider that it provides open space of any significant environmental or recreational importance as set out in Policy 67. The development, which seeks to re-develop this space and provide a higher quality landscaped space, is therefore not considered to conflict with the purpose of Policy 67 with regards to Bath Court.
- 13.14 The open space within Second Court, where the temporary buildings are proposed during construction works, is acknowledged to provide a greater level of importance with regards to Policy 67. It is considered however, that the temporary nature of the structure proposed within this space is such that the development would not result in any permanent impact to, or loss of open space. Condition 9 recommended with this application would ensure that the temporary building required during the works would be removed with the site restored to its original condition.
- 13.15 Officers consider that the applicant has provided sufficient justification setting out the educational need for new and improved library space and study facilities within the college. In addition to the fact that the development would not impact any playing fields or formal sports provision, it is considered that the development would comply with Policy 67 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.
- 13.16 Having regard to the enhanced open spaces and relocated recreational facilities, the proposed development is considered to comply with the requirements of policy 67 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

Tall Buildings, Policy 60 and Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- 13.17 It is acknowledged that there has not been any assessment from the applicant with regards to Policy 60 of the Local Plan. The initial text of this policy states that “any proposal for a structure that breaks the existing skyline and/or is significantly taller than the surrounding built form will be considered against the following criteria”. Appendix F of the Local Plan then provides further guidance as to the application of this policy.
- 13.18 The site is located within the historic core, as illustrated by Figure F.1. of Appendix F. Paragraph F.10(i) states that building proposals of six storeys or more (assuming a flat roof with no rooftop plant and a height of 19m above ground level) would automatically trigger the need to address the criteria set out within the guidance. It also states that dependent on the exact location within the historic core, buildings of four to six storeys may also need to be evaluated against the assessment criteria herein, due to proximity to heritage assets and potential impacts on key views.
- 13.19 The proposed replacement library building does not, at its highest point, measure 19 metres in height above ground level. The top of the Chimneys proposed measure approximately 14.6 metres above ground level along Christ's Lane, with the top of the parapet roof measuring approximately 13 metres above the same level. Whilst the building is four storeys in height and within close proximity to heritage assets, it remains lower than the adjacent modern Christ's Lane re-development which reaches a height of approximately 15.5 metres. An assessment of the skyline impact in the context of Policy 60 and the proposal in its wider Cambridge setting including long-to-medium distance views, is not necessary in the judgement of officers. This is because of the location, comparative height and context of the proposal not giving rise to any wider skyline or City setting impacts. From such views, because nearby buildings are taller in height than the proposed library, the proposal is very unlikely to give rise to a perceptible break in the skyline.
- 13.20 Appendix F (para F.21) also provides guidance in respect of local and short distance views, which includes Jesus Green and other elevated locations close to the site, including Grand Arcade car park, Castle Mound, Park Street car park (no longer relevant as redeveloped) and the Church of St Mary the Great. Such views are important to protect, but the question as to whether Policy 60 is engaged relative to the scheme before the Council is a matter of judgement. In the view of officers, because of the location and comparative heights of buildings in the immediate context, Policy 60 is not engaged. Whilst there may be short distance

ground level views of the scheme where the built form could be seen to break the immediate skyline above the existing built form of the existing College, this does not in and of itself require a townscape and visual impact assessment to be undertaken to demonstrate compliance with Policy 60.

- 13.21 As such, Officers consider the proposal would not trigger the thresholds as stated under Policy 60 and no townscape visual impact assessment against the prescribed assessment criteria is required. This notwithstanding, the applicants have nonetheless submitted a townscape and visual impact assessment of the scheme, which covers an approximate area of 200m around the site. This is a proportionate response to the scale of the proposal within its immediate context. The assessment provides visualisations of the scheme which are important for understanding its impacts, particularly its heritage setting in the historic core and its relationship to Christ's Pieces, Christs Lane, St Andrew's Street and internally within the College itself. The key views and associated impacts are discussed below with reference to adopted policies 55, 56, 58, 59 and 61 and associated NPPF and NPPG guidance.
- 13.22 The applicant's TVIA summarises that 'the overall form and presence of the building, coupled with its urban and architectural expression, ensures the scheme will be a positive addition to the historic townscape of Cambridge and positively contribute to the visual amenity of those who inhabit and enjoy the City. As such, the proposals are found to deliver overall beneficial effects in relation to the townscape character of the area, and positive impacts to key views within the environs of the building'.

14. Design, layout, scale and landscaping

- 14.1 The application site comprises the existing library building serving the College, Bath Court which is the space between the library and First Court, in addition to Second Court which is the space proposed for the temporary facilities to be used during the construction phase.
- 14.2 The existing library building forms a part of the Grade I Listed Christ's College site, although the 1970's library itself is far more modern than the First Court buildings and Bodley Library that date back to the 16th Century and 1896 respectively. The existing library structure is considered to be negative with regards to its contribution to the relevant heritage assets and includes a large, relatively blank façade on its main, public facing elevation along Christ's Lane.

- 14.3 Limited elements of the existing site are visible to the public outside of the College grounds, with the southeastern boundary of the site abutting the public highway of Christ's Lane with additional glimpsed views either side of the existing library building. At its highest point, the existing library building measures approximately 5.7 metres in height spanning approximately 27 metres of the length of Christ's Lane. Within the length of this elevation there are a small number of windows in addition to a large, unsightly metal flue projecting out from the elevation and above the building's flat roof.
- 14.4 The current library building includes a bridge linking into the historic Bodley Library at first floor level from the existing library, although the spacing between the two buildings of approximately 1.8 metres gives the sense that the more modern library crowds the historic Bodley. Despite the height of the current library, there are only very limited views from pedestrian level along Christ's Lane of the roofs of First Court, there are however more extensive private views from the raised level residential dwellings and their accesses of the Christ's Lane apartments opposite (see below).
- 14.5 Christ's Lane is a busy public right of way which is used daily by a large number of people linking key parts of the City of Cambridge. To the opposite side of Christ's Lane of the College, is the Christ's Lane redevelopment which is a relatively modern site comprising a mixed use of retail and residential units. Whilst the total height of this adjacent building is higher (approximately 15.5 metres), approximately 10.3 metres in height of the building directly abuts Christ's Lane, with the first floor overhanging the ground floor. The upper floors are set back such that they are not immediately visible above the initial 10.3 metres above ground. The height of the existing library is therefore notably lower in height than the Christ's Lane redevelopment. For clarification, the heights of the buildings have been taken from the provided Short Section DD (003703 P03) with heights calculated from ground level along Christ's Lane.
- 14.6 Internally within the College, sandwiched between the library building and the southern edge of First Court, is Bath Court an external space at most 5 metres in width. This space is also, almost entirely paved with hardstanding, and has numerous differing levels throughout, making its accessibility very poor.
- 14.7 The proposed development seeks the demolition of the existing library building, in addition to smaller portions of the college site, including the wash-up space located at the northeastern end of Bath Court. As will be discussed in greater detail in the Heritage section of this report, there is

no objection to the demolition of this element of the listed building due to its negative contribution to both the setting of historic elements of the Listed Building and the public realm/ conservation area.

- 14.8 The proposed development has been submitted taking into account the views of students from the College and other stakeholders. The current library facilities within the College are lacking in quality and falling below standards. The College buildings, including the existing library present significant accessibility difficulties with multiple variations in floor levels, in addition to an overall lack of sufficient study space, poor installation/ sustainability performance, and an extremely underused outdoor space within Bath Court.
- 14.9 The gross internal area of the new building is proposed at 1050m², compared to 680m² existing, which would be spread out over four floors with a mix of book storage, reading and study spaces.
- 14.10 The siting of the proposed library building encompasses largely the same footprint as the existing building it seeks to replace, being located on the southeastern edge of the College site, retaining and enhancing the quality of Bath Court between it and the buildings of First Court. Indeed, the footprint of the building at ground level is slightly reduced from the existing, primarily as a result of increasing the separation between it and the northeastern elevation of the Bodley Library.
- 14.11 With regards to the proposed library building specifically, given its comparable footprint, the increase in gross internal area is a result of an increase in height above ground level in comparison to the existing building and a cantilevered design. The highest point of the proposed building being the top of the chimneys facing Christ's Lane measure approximately 14.6 metres above ground level at the southern end of Christ's Lane, with the top of the parapet roof being 13 metres above ground level. This building height is comparable to that part of the re-development on the southern side of Christ's Lane. The visual impact of this view can be seen within View A of the provided Townscape and Visual Appraisal (TVIA). As shown within existing view from Sidney Street the roof of the adjacent Christ's Lane re-development is visible above the entrance range of the College. Whilst the chimneys and stair lantern of the proposed development would project into view, the bulk of the proposed building would remain hidden from these views below the height of the Christ's Lane redevelopment beyond.
- 14.12 The total length of the proposed building measures approximately 41.5 metres, not including the bridge link to the Bodley Library, running

immediately adjacent to the side of Christ's Lane. The views from along Christ's Lane, in addition to those at either end, along St Andrews Street and Christ's Pieces are considered to be the main public viewpoints of the development, as highlighted within views B, C and D of the provided TVIA. Whilst the College is open to members of the public, the impact of the development on internal views within the college is considered to be less significant in this case.

- 14.13 Concerns regarding the scale and massing of the proposed development upon the public realm, including the impact upon Christ's Lane itself have been raised by third parties. Firstly, when assessing this impact, it is important to note that the length of the proposed building is approximately half of the total length of Christ's Lane, with the northeastern end of the street remaining at the current, lower height. As previously mentioned, the height of the proposed building, whilst a significant increase over the existing library, remains lower than the total height of the redevelopment on the southern side of Christ's Lane, albeit the top levels of the adjacent redevelopment are set back from the frontage.
- 14.14 The perceived impact of the proposed development upon Christ's Lane as a public space is reflected in Views B and E of the TVIA. Both views show the increase in height of the proposed library building. They also show, however, that this height, visually, in comparison to the southern Christ's Lane re-development would not be overly dominant upon the space. View D in particular shows the northeastern end of Christ's Lane where the plant currently visible on the roof is to be removed and the proposal is not considered to be dominant within the views. This impact is helped by the horizontal banding and articulation along the façade that draws the eye along Christ's Lane rather than upwards.
- 14.15 The 2026 updated NPPF, through Policy DP3 clearly sets out principles for development to achieve well-designed places. The Christ's Lane facade of the scheme is considered to significantly enhance the public facing element of the site. This includes introducing a significant number of openings out onto The Lane which would likely improve the safety of the space through passive surveillance, set out in NPPF Policy DP3(2)(f).
- 14.16 In addition to the design of the proposed building which will be discussed in greater detail later in this section of the report, the scale of the proposed development and its frontage onto Christ's Lane is considered appropriate. Whilst a significant increase above the existing building, the proposal is considered to optimise the site's potential and helps to delineate between public and private areas of the site. As set out in NPPF Policy DP3(2)(e).

- 14.17 The proposed library building's two primary elevations are those facing onto Christ's Lane and also facing internally into Bath Court. Owing to the nature of the college and the use of the library, the public facing elevation onto Christ's Lane is required to provide a certain level of privacy from public views. As opposed to the existing mainly blank façade, the proposed elevation fronting Christ's Lane has a greater level of articulation creating an interest that is not found in the current site. A 'base' level is established up to the second floor where the façade steps back revealing the depth of the chimneys. A combination of the chimneys and windows within this elevation attempt to take note of other historic college streets and provides a rhythm along the lane.
- 14.18 Integrated within the façade facing Christ's Lane, a bench measuring approximately 25 metres in length is proposed along Christ's Lane. This combined with the other positive features of this public façade is such that the contribution to the public realm is considered by officers to be positive.
- 14.19 Protruding above the second floor, visible behind the historic Bodley Library gable, is the proposed staircase and its glass enclosure rising above the brick façade. Views of this element are increased because of the greater spacing afforded to the Bodley Library and the new proposed bridge link which gives a more lightweight, clear view into Bath Court. In addition to this a replacement gate is proposed into Bath Court from Christ's Lane, the design of which is to be secured through the public art process within a recommended condition.
- 14.20 With regards to the Bath Court elevation, given the internal nature of this side of the site and the proposed garden within Bath Court, a more open façade can be afforded. A large, glazed façade at the lower two levels is located below an overhanging façade utilising a shingle material hung from the timber frame. The light colour of this material is key to ensuring both direct and reflected light reaches the ground level within Bath Court.
- 14.21 Atop the building, facing in the direction of First Court is the "pleated roof" providing light in through the north facing roof pitches and space for PV panels on the south-facing roof pitches. This element of the design is considered to provide an effective solution to meet the user needs of the building whilst also contributing to its sustainability targets and providing an element of architectural interest in its design.
- 14.22 In addition to the library building itself, the application seeks to demolish the existing wash-up room to the northeastern end of Bath Court as a part of improving the accessibility and connectivity of the college buildings.

This element, in combination with the levelling of Bath Court provides level access through the ground floor, including to a lift in place of the existing wash-up to the upper floors of the library and dining halls.

- 14.23 Significant landscape enhancements are proposed to take advantage of the proposed scheme to improve the quality of the space provided within Bath Court. This includes utilising the existing rainwater drainage channel to provide a rain garden and managing the rainwater runoff from the new library building. More broadly, the design of the library building, opening up onto Bath court will give the sense of a cohesive space which is considered to significantly improve the usability of Bath Court as a space for students within the site.
- 14.24 Whilst Bath Court is a relatively narrow space, proposed to be surrounded on all sides by built form, officers, in consultation with the Council's Landscape officers, are comfortable that the proposed landscape strategy is deliverable. Given the importance of this aspect of the proposal to ensuring the quality of the scheme, as recommended, a condition relating to hard & soft landscaping is suggested to be attached to any permission granted.
- 14.25 It is noted that the development includes areas of flat roof, particularly atop the library building towards the Christ's Lane façade. Whilst Policy 31 of the Local Plan requires flat roofs to be either green or brown roofs, in this case, access is required to this entire roof to serve the plant located at this level. It is not considered that, with access required, it is reasonable to require green/ brown roofs by way of condition.
- 14.26 As part of the development, it is necessary to re-locate the current kitchen/ dining facilities for the college to a proposed temporary facility located within Second Court. The extent of the site proposed for this temporary facility is displayed on the proposed site plan although no further details have been provided at this stage of the application. As is commonly the case with temporary construction compounds, it is considered that the precise details of the required facilities can be dealt with by a pre-commencement condition to ensure that its scale and appearance is appropriate and that its siting is temporary.
- 14.27 During the process of this application, views from varying design specialists have been sought including the previous application, for an almost identical proposal being taken to the Design Review Panel (DRP) The DRP response (Appendix 3) which was held during the pre-application discussions concluded that they "applauded the scheme as an exemplary proposal". Panel members also stated that they endorsed the

concept and strategy of the proposal which had a pleasant interaction with the public realm, specifically along Christ's Lane and views from St Andrew's Street. Whilst noting the increase in scale in comparison to the existing library building, the Panel was also "comfortable with the scale and massing" of the proposed library partly due to the design giving the building its own significance and character.

- 14.28 In addition to the feedback from DRP, the Council's own Urban Design Officer has been supportive of the proposed development throughout the process. Echoing the comments from DRP members, the proposed development, in the view of Urban Design officer, "presents a contextually sensitive response and a substantial opportunity to improve the place-qualities of a re-imagined Christ's Lane". More specifically as set out in their comments, the Christ's Lane façade is considered to strike a fine balance between the formality expected of a college and playful at another level with careful placement of windows and integrated seating.
- 14.29 Overall, members should feel confident that the scheme for consideration has evolved following careful consideration of the brief of the College taking into account feedback from numerous design specialists. The resulting scheme has support from both Urban Design Officers and the DRP, albeit some DRP panel members raised concerns regarding the proximity of upper levels within the proposed library to the southeastern wall of the First Court building.
- 14.30 The condition recommended by the Council's Urban Design officer relating to external material details is not considered necessary given a similar condition is recommended to be attached, as requested by the Council's Conservation officer.
- 14.31 Overall, the design of the proposed development is of the highest quality that would contribute positively to its surroundings and be appropriately landscaped. The proposal is compliant policies 55,56,57,58 and 59 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

15. Trees

- 15.1 The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and Tree Protection Scheme (TPS) outlining the impact of the proposed development on any trees within or surrounding the application site. The AIA confirms that a single category B tree is to be pruned to facilitate the proposed development, with three further category B trees that have potential to be affected by the works.

- 15.2 The TPS provided with this application was provided with the previous application (25/02161/CONDA). Given that this discharge of condition application relates to the permission that the Council has agreed to quash, the details within this document are not considered able to be relied upon through a compliance condition.
- 15.3 The two category B trees most likely to be affected by the proposed development are T6 and T10, both Acacia species in close proximity to the temporary kitchen structures proposed within the Second Court.
- 15.4 It is noted, that during the process of this application a 5-day notification was submitted to the council for the removal of T10 on the basis that the tree has died. It was stated that the condition of the tree was therefore posing a safety risk to pedestrians walking in close proximity to this tree. A formal decision notice to this notification has been issued by the Council's Tree Officers confirming no objection to the removal of the tree. The AIA states that as the temporary structures do not require foundations dug into the ground, the weight load of the structures can be spread evenly across its feet, mitigating any impact on the root protection areas of these trees.
- 15.5 In addition to the two trees within Second Court, the existing Palm tree within Bath Court would be in close proximity to both the demolition works of the existing library and construction of its replacement. It is therefore proposed to protect the stem of the tree with plastic piping and wooden hoarding.
- 15.6 The Council's Tree Officer has advised within comments on this application that there is no objection to the assessment set out within the provided Tree Protection Scheme. Comments from CLAG have raised inconsistencies with advice from the Tree Officer in relation to the advice given under 25/02161/CONDA and 25/02161/CONDB. Officers acknowledge that the Tree Officer raised concerns during the discharge of these conditions. However, this application does not seek to approve details of the temporary kitchen, these are to be secured by condition which officers are content is an achievable requirement.
- 15.7 The Tree Officer has requested a compliance condition in accordance with the provided TPS. However, in line with the Council's stance on information provided to discharge conditions on the previous permission (25/02161/FUL), it is recommended, as it was on the previous application that further details regarding the nature of the temporary kitchen and its impact upon surrounding trees and the lawns of Second Court can be

secured by way of an Arboricultural Method Statement/ Tree Protection Plan condition.

- 15.8 Subject to conditions as appropriate, the proposal would accord with policies 59 and 71 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

16. Heritage assets

Legal and Policy Framework

- 16.1 The statutory duties as set out in section 66(1) and section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, apply when considering schemes which affect listed buildings or their settings, or when determining a planning application concerning buildings or other land in a Conservation Area.
- 16.2 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the legal duty for development that affects listed buildings or their settings. In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, “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.”
- 16.3 Section 102 of the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023 requires that in considering development which affects a Registered Park and Garden, special regard must be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the asset or its setting.
- 16.4 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides the statutory duty for a local planning authority, in the exercise of its planning powers with respect to any buildings or other land within a Conservation Area, to “pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”.
- 16.5 Officers have applied the statutory duties set out above and have given considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of the affected Listed Buildings, and to preserving or enhancing, the Registered Park and Garden, and the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area.

- 16.6 Policy HE4 (1) of the NPPF states that “Heritage assets, as an irreplaceable resource, should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. To achieve this, development proposals which would affect the significance of heritage assets, including any contribution made by their setting should:
- a. Maintain or secure a use consistent with their conservation, taking into account the importance of maintaining the assets, the positive contribution they can make to sustainable communities including local economies, and the positive contribution they can make to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - b. Avoid (or if that is not possible, minimise) harm to the significance of heritage assets, and instead conserve this significance.
- 16.7 Policy HE4(2) states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting) should have a clear and convincing justification in accordance with the policies in the Heritage Chapter of NPPF 2026 (Ch. 20)
- 16.8 Policy HE6(1) of the NPPF 2026 states that when considering the potential effect of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, substantial 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 a positive effect, harm, substantial harm or total loss of its significance.
- 16.9 Policy HE6(3) states that any harm to a designated heritage asset will be a matter of considerable importance and weight, which should be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs (4) to (6) of the policy.
- 16.10 Policy HE6 (4) states that where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.
- 16.11 Policy HE7 of the NPPF separates decisions on non-designated heritage assets. It states development proposals which would have a positive effect on a non-designated heritage asset should be supported. Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal

and a balanced judgement made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

- 16.12 Policy HE9 of the NPPF states that development proposals within or affecting the significance of conservation areas should:
- a. Retain and conserve buildings and other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area where possible; and
 - b. Consider the area's special architectural or historic interest (as identified as part of the designation of the conservation area) in the design of development.
- 16.13 Policy HE9 also adds that not all elements of a conservation area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Where a development proposal would result in the loss of a building or other element which contributes to the character or appearance of a conservation area that is desirable to conserve, the assessment of impact should take into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area as a whole, and the effects of this considered in accordance with policies HE5 and HE6. Proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance) should be supported.
- 16.14 Policy 61 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 requires development to preserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets, their setting and the wider townscape, including views into, within and out of the conservation area. It also requires development to provide clear justification for any works that would lead to harm to a heritage asset yet be of substantial public benefit, through detailed analysis. This reflects the NPPF requirements in Policy HE6 to weigh harm to the significance of designated heritage assets against public benefits.
- 16.15 Reflecting the statutory duties quoted, considerable importance and weight must be attached to any heritage harm found, with the presumption that the preservation of the significance of these heritage assets is to be preferred.
- 16.16 Policy 62 seeks the retention of local heritage assets and where permission is required, proposals will be permitted where they retain the significance, appearance, character or setting of a local heritage asset. Where an application for any works would lead to harm or substantial harm to a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement will be

made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. This reflects the NPPF requirements in Policy HE7.

Impacted Heritage Assets and Significance

- 16.17 The application falls within the Historic Core Conservation Area. The proposal directly impacts the Grade I listed Christ's College buildings and the Grade II listed historic parks and garden of Christ's College as well as being within close proximity to the Grade I listed Fellows Building within the College. The application site is also within the setting of the following Grade II listed buildings and the Grade II* listed Lloyds bank: Church of St Andrew the Great, Church of St Andrew the Great War Memorial, No.4-7 St Andrews Street and the College Tutor's House.
- 16.18 Several of the above heritage assets are within proximity to the proposed development but are not considered to be impacted in any way by the proposed development and have therefore been scoped out of any significance assessment.
- 16.19 The first and potentially most directly impacted asset is the Grade I listed buildings of Christ's College surrounding the Entrance Court, southeastern range of Second Court and the Bodley Library. The Bodley Library and southeastern range of First Court are both specifically referenced in the listing description and considered of National (Very High) significance. There are however areas of lower (or no) significance including the eastern half of Bath Court, the existing 1974 library to be demolished and the wall to Christ's Lane. Specifically, the existing 1974 library is listed only by virtue of its attachment to the earlier listed buildings, it is not considered to be of any special historic interest in its own right nor would it be considered to merit listing at even a lower level.
- 16.20 As noted, the application site, including the wider College site is located within the Central Historic Core Conservation Area. Whilst the Conservation Area Appraisal 2017 is organised street-by-street, it is clear that the entrance range of the College makes a very strong contribution to the townscape and historic interest of the area. As one of the earliest colleges, and within such a prominent central location, it is not disputed that the College as a whole makes an especially strong contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 16.21 The opening up of Christ's Lane in 2008 as part of the southern side of Christ's Lane re-development increased the visual prominence of the southeastern gable of the Bodley Library when looking northwards/northwest along St Andrew's Street. This view from St Andrew's Street,

along Christ's Lane is identified as comprising a "key positive view" within the Conservation Area Appraisal.

- 16.22 The existing 1974 library building itself is not considered to provide any positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, largely due to its inactive frontage with the street, as a result of it not being built with the intention of being publicly visible. It is not disputed that the existing building is notably smaller than that proposed, however, officers consider that despite its scale, it is negative in its contribution to the character and appearance of the Historic Core Conservation Area.
- 16.23 The application site forms part of the larger Grade II Registered Park and Garden (RPG) designation of the College, however, it is considered that Bath Court, which did not exist at the time of the designation, does not itself make a significant contribution to the landscape of the College. As has been suggested by the Gardens Trust, the significance of Christ's College as a Registered Park and Garden is largely derived from the formal gardens and courts of the college, including, but not limited to the Fellows Garden, Master's Garden and First, Second and Third Courts. Indeed, the Gardens Trust state in their comments "The Bath Court space is of low value to the RPG and of the college as a whole."
- 16.24 Bath Court itself is not visible from First, Second or Third Court, or from the Fellow's or Master's Gardens. The visibility of the proposed development from the formal gardens within the college would be extremely limited with only the very highest points protruding above the surrounding historic college buildings. As acknowledged by the Gardens Trust, the proposed development is considered to result in a minor enhancement to Bath Court as an element of the RPG. And whilst the upper floors are more prominent to the space, they are not themselves considered to result in any significant harm to Bath Court's low value within the RPG.
- 16.25 Given the insignificant contribution of Bath Court to the Registered Park and Gardens, in addition to the lack of impact upon the more formal landscaped areas of the College, the development is acceptable and is not considered to result in any harm to the Grade II listed Historic Park and Gardens.
- 16.26 When considering the impact of the proposed demolition and replacement of the existing 1974 library, the principle of this in heritage terms has previously been approved (through the Rick Mather scheme(s) 2011 and 2016) and continues to be supported. The existing building makes a negative contribution to the setting of the highly significant listed buildings

such as the Bodley Library, as well as to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 16.27 In comparison to the existing library building, the proposed replacement library is substantial in its size in relation to both the plot and many of the surrounding historic parts of the College. Its presence is therefore greater, both externally and internally within the College.
- 16.28 One area of concern that has been frequently raised by third-parties is the scale and massing of the proposed library building and the relationship of this with Christ's Lane as a popular thoroughfare within the Historic Core Conservation Area. The "Drummer Street and Christ's Lane" appraisal within the Historic Core Conservation Area provides a more detailed assessment of this specific area of the Conservation Area. Overall, the area is considered to make a significant contribution to the overall significance of the Conservation Area with views down Christ's Lane in either direction being identified as "key positive views". Importance is identified within this appraisal of the Christ's Lane redevelopment and the fact that it provides a "gateway to the city centre for bus passengers".
- 16.29 The visual impact of the proposal upon Christ's Lane as an important element of the Conservation Area is in part identified within the provided TVIA. View B and D of the provided TVIA help to visualise the impact of the proposal from either end of Christ's Lane. Officers consider, as is shown within the TVIA that the scale and massing of the proposed building within what is a central location, is entirely appropriate. The Christ's Lane re-development to the south is in total taller than that proposed within this application, with the Conservation Area appraisal stating that other options for the re-development of the College Library providing overlooking and a more august frontage could help to raise the quality of the frontages.
- 16.30 One of the most visually prominent aspects of the development are the five chimneys that face towards Christ's Lane to provide ventilation and lift access for the proposed building. During the previous application, since the subject of judicial review (26/02161/FUL), revised plans were provided reducing the height of these chimneys by approximately 900mm in response to initial comments received from the Council's Conservation Officer, and this is reflected in the proposed plans of this application. No aspect of the judicially reviewed scheme is in any way different to that now before members, including the chimney heights, the very tops of which would only be visible within glimpsed views from the far side of First Court at eye level. The relationship with First Court, including the glimpsed views of the new chimneys, is acceptable.

- 16.31 The chimneys themselves are not considered to be subservient in their scale and design, rather they attempt to contribute to a 'presence' along the lane. Whilst they are a prominent feature within views along Christ's Lane, they remain lower in height than the adjacent Christ's Lane redevelopment. Historic England's latter comments on the previous application acknowledge the reduction in height of the chimneys to that proposed within this application, which helped to break up the massing of this element of the proposal.
- 16.32 This prominence of the proposed development is perhaps most visible in relation to the highly historically significant Bodley Library within views from along St Andrews Street, Christ's Lane and internally within Bath Court. The separation afforded to the Bodley is increasing as a result of the development, from approximately 1.8 metres at first floor level to approximately 3.3 metres within the proposed development, however the height and proximity of the building, particularly the proposed staircase tower is notably increased from approximately 5.7 metres currently to approximately 13 metres to the top of the staircase tower.
- 16.33 The height of the staircase tower has been raised as an issue by both the Council's Conservation Officer and Historic England, with the latter recommending that a reduction in height would improve the relationship of the proposed building to the Bodley Library.
- 16.34 The applicant, however, has chosen to retain the current height of the proposed staircase tower as an alternative means of escape forming part of the fire strategy. Within a cover letter provided with this application, the applicant has reiterated their view that the proposal results in no overall heritage harm, including this element of the scheme.
- 16.35 However, officers are of the view that the impact upon the setting of the Bodley Library from public views along St Andrews Street and Christ's Lane is, in line with the comments from the Council's Conservation officer, Historic England and the Victorian Society, harmful. Specifically, officers consider the level of harm arising from this aspect of the scheme to the setting of the Grade I Bodley Library to be low. Officers agree with the view of the consultees that this element of the proposal would appear overbearing in its relationship with the Bodley Library, contrary to the applicant's assessment.
- 16.36 This heritage harm is considered to be restricted to the setting of the Bodley Library which forms a part of the single, overall Grade I listed buildings surrounding the entrance of the Christ's College site. Other

elements of the proposed development, including the increased spacing between the Bodley and the proposed building, are considered to mitigate any further harm to the setting of the Grade I listed buildings. These elements are relevant and must be considered as part of this application. Internal works to the listed buildings that do not require planning permission but may result in enhancements have been considered within the relevant listed building consent application and do not fall for consideration here.

- 16.37 Another notable aspect is the works proposed to Bath Court, the elevation of the proposed library facing towards this space and the impact that this has upon the setting of the buildings on the southern side of First Court.
- 16.38 Whilst the proposed library would enclose Bath Court to a greater extent than the existing library, the high-quality design, combined with enhancements to the landscaping of Bath Court are considered to mitigate the impact of the increase in scale upon the other aspects of the listed buildings such that they do not result in any further harm beyond that identified to the Bodley Library. It is considered that this view is consistent with that of both Historic England and the Council's Conservation Officer.
- 16.39 Whilst the Council's Conservation Officer considers the proposal would sustain the ongoing use of the Grade I listed buildings within the College. Officers consider that the proposed development, through the provision of a modern library building would also help to sustain the ongoing use of the Grade I listed College buildings by providing improved, accessible library facilities for students, however this is a public benefit of the scheme rather than a direct heritage benefit.
- 16.40 The proposed development is also considered to provide certain other public benefits that are given weight in the planning balance as referred to in Policy HE6 of the NPPF. The development's public facing Christ's Lane façade is considered to be significantly enhanced from that of the existing 1970's library building. Whilst this point is disputed strongly within many third-party comments, both the Council's Urban Design officer and Design Review panel have endorsed this element of the proposal. The Urban Design officer has stated that the façade onto Christ's Lane strikes a fine balance between the formality of a college building and the playfulness of a public facing building, achieving an elegant and respectful balance between new and old elements of the surrounding area.
- 16.41 The Design Review Panel meanwhile reviewed the scheme as part of the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Their report on the scheme

specifically stated that the Panel acknowledged the façade onto Christ's Lane could not be an active frontage with spill out, but there was opportunity to introduce, for example, views up to the ceiling of the building. The Panel stated they were "happy with the design principles of the elevation facing Christ's Lane". Officers consider that this, within a highly visible, public space, would result a tangible public benefit. In addition to the appearance of the façade itself, the provision of a large, integrated public bench and public art in the form of the gate onto Christ's Lane are further, albeit relatively minor, public benefits arising from the scheme.

- 16.42 Policy HE9 (3) of the NPPF meanwhile adds that Proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance) should be supported."
- 16.43 There is an additional consideration that the proposed development would enhance and better reveal the significance of the College's heritage assets more favourably than at present. The proposed library facilities, in addition to an increased physical separation to the Bodley Library, would provide additional, improved facilities that would facilitate the continued use of the Bodley Library for its intended purpose and allow for glimpsed views into the reconfigured Bath Court.
- 16.44 It is fundamental to recognise that there are two separate statutory duties when considering harm to listed buildings and harm to Conservation Areas, falling under sections 66 and 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, respectively. Further, section 102 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 requires separate consideration of the effects on relevant heritage assets, including Registered Parks and Gardens. Therefore, officers consider it important to clarify that the overall impact upon the listed buildings is identified separately from any impact upon the Conservation Area, and the Registered Park and Garden.
- 16.45 As set out above, officers consider there would be a low level of harm to the setting of the Grade I Bodley Library.
- 16.46 The overall impact of the proposed new library building upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is considered to be a positive one. The current uncovered wall now facing onto Christ's Lane is replaced by a façade that balances the need for a "formal" elevation befitting of a college such as Christ's with elements that provide engagement for passers-by. Subject to the conditions requested by the Conservation Officer in their comments, it is considered on balance, that the proposed

library building, despite the increase in scale, would result in an enhancement to the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Additional conditions, not referred to within the Conservation Officer's comments, relating to the salvage/ re-use of materials and the protection and support the listed buildings are also recommended in line with the previous application.

- 16.47 In addition, the proposal is considered to result in no adverse harm to the Grade II Registered College Historic Park and Garden as set out above and considered by the Gardens Trust.
- 16.48 With regards to archaeological potential, the site is indicated to have high archaeological potential with previous investigation nearby finding medieval evidence. As such, in line with the comments from the County Council Archaeology officer, a condition is recommended regarding a programme for archaeological work.

Alternative designs

- 16.49 CLAG have contested, within Ground 4 of the Judicial Review of the previous application, that insufficient consideration was given to potential alternative designs on the site that could result in less heritage harm.
- 16.50 Firstly, as set out above, it is important to clarify that officers do not dispute the proposal would result in a level of harm to the setting of the Grade I Listed Christ's College buildings, specifically the setting of the Bodley Library.
- 16.51 Three main alternatives have been suggested by third parties as less harmful ways for the College to achieve the updated library facilities that they seek. These alternatives are: the previously consented and now expired Rick Mather scheme; a proposal from CLAG themselves that was put forward as part of the previous application that is subject to Judicial Review; and a version of the College Master Plan that presented other options for a library provision for the College.
- 16.52 Potential alternative schemes that would result in less harm to identified heritage assets are material considerations. However, the weight given to these alternatives is a matter for the decision maker. Officers consider that that is dependent upon their viability and prospect of implementation.
- 16.53 Regarding the first of the alternatives put forward, the Rick Mather scheme was granted permission in 2013 and refreshed in 2016. Despite permission having been granted twice, these schemes were never

implemented. The officer recommendation for both schemes does not appear to identify any harm from the proposal to heritage assets. The college have since decided to not proceed with the previous Mather design, the primary reason for which has been stated to be the proposed increase in the size of the basement which those schemes required. This element would have required significant below ground works in close proximity to the sensitive historic fabric of the Grade I listed buildings, as well as having significant sustainability impacts through the requirement for concrete construction.

- 16.54 Plans relating to the previous Mather Scheme are provided in Appendix 8. As explained in that section, the previous Mather scheme is smaller in height than the building proposed within this application. The previous scheme however also enclosed Bath Court within a glazed roof which had the potential to directly impact historic fabric within the walls of the Grade I listed buildings.
- 16.55 Whilst no heritage harm was identified within the officer report of the previous Mather schemes, it is noted that Historic England did raise a number of points within comments submitted that would have improved the impact of the scheme on the Grade I listed college buildings.
- 16.56 It can be noted that comments from Historic England on the 2025 application (received 29 July 2025) refer to the fact that *“the removal of the basement and glazed enclosure have removed instances of harm to the significance of the listed college.”*
- 16.57 Updated comments have not been received, nor would it be reasonable to expect them from consultees exploring the possibility of reapplying the Mather scheme. The applicant has made the case that this previous scheme is no longer viable for the College and officers consider that the previous scheme can only be given very limited weight as an alternative to this application.
- 16.58 With regards to the alternative put forward by CLAG, a façade fronting onto Christ’s Lane continues to be provided along with a survey undertaken at the time of the previous application, inviting members of the public to vote in comparison to the applicant’s scheme. The survey results provided state that 71% of those surveyed would support the CLAG alternative as opposed to that put forward by the applicant within this application.
- 16.59 It is unclear to officers if the CLAG design is an alternative that is in any way a realistic starting point for re-imagining the development of the site in

a way that would be more acceptable in planning terms. The CLAG scheme only comprises a single façade of the site and is not therefore an alternative “scheme”. It lacks reference to fulfilling any client requirements and has no evolutionary justification or detailed plans to inform a reasoned judgement as to its credibility. Like the Mather scheme, it is lower in height onto Christ’s Lane. It provides a more traditional approach to the design of the façade onto Christ’s Lane and has more openings onto Christ’s Lane. A comparison of its Christ’s Lane elevation with that proposed within this application is attached as Appendix 9.

- 16.60 However, it is not possible to give it any meaningful planning weight as a viable alternative. As opposed to the Mather scheme, which previously was put forward by the College itself, the CLAG design has never been fully considered by the College. It’s lack of development is a void and an obstacle to the LPA in assisting its fuller consideration as an alternative. As an alternative, it is unclear if it is of any realistic merit capable of meeting the needs of the College and its students.
- 16.61 Given the lack of any meaningful detail, beyond a façade, it is also not possible for officers to consider if the CLAG design would result in any other harm beyond that which can be assessed from a single elevation. For this reason, little to no material weight can be given to this as a viable alternative to the applicant’s proposal.
- 16.62 A further alternative was put forward by CLAG at the Development Control Forum meeting on the 29th July this year. This alternative relates to the College’s Master Plan dating from 2023. CLAG suggest that this masterplan was adopted by the college and itself proposed a smaller library building within the currently proposed location, in addition to additional library facilities elsewhere within the college grounds. It is therefore suggested that this is a viable alternative for the College to pursue.
- 16.63 The College have since provided a response, following the DCF meeting. This letter states that the masterplan suggested two possible sites for the library; the existing Bath Court site or on the Hobson Street carpark. The Governing Body of the College then voted (with only 1 fellow dissenting) to rebuild on the existing site to maximise the use of the historic Bodley Library.
- 16.64 Officers do not consider therefore that the existence of this master plan is evidence of the college suggesting to “break up” the library provision into multiple sites. It is however evidence that there was consideration

previously given to an alternative location for the provision of a new library.

- 16.65 Despite the fact that consideration was given to this alternative by the College previously, officers do not have any information to suggest that an alternative location, such as the Hobson Street car park would be a suitable location now. There is also no information before officers that allows any significant assessment to be made with regards to a library within this alternative location.
- 16.66 Therefore, this too is considered to be afforded very little weight as a viable alternative for the college to the current proposed application.

Overall

Heritage Balance, Benefits and Harms

- 16.67 Historic England's position in response to the application is set out in full within Appendix 2 to the application and summarised within this officer report. Whilst there is a position of no objection, it is clear that reservations remain with the scheme in terms of the scale and massing of the development and the impact of this upon the setting of the Grade I listed College buildings. Ground 1 of the Judicial Review has been addressed, insofar as this report more thoroughly and clearly sets out Historic England's position.

Heritage Benefits

- 16.68 Policy HE9 (3) of the NPPF states that Proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance) should be supported
- 16.69 The proposed development is considered, in line with the view of the Council's conservation officer to result in benefits to relevant heritage assets that fall within the heritage balance as set out in Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF.
- 16.70 One such benefit is the enhancement to the setting of the Grade I listed Christ's College buildings when experienced from within Bath Court or from along Christ's Lane, due to the increased spacing afforded to the Bodley Library at lower level.

- 16.71 The significantly improved landscaping within Bath Court is considered an enhancement to this particular area of the Historic Core Conservation Area.

Heritage Harm

- 16.72 There is however, in the view of officers, a level of heritage harm arising from the scale and massing of the proposed development. As set out above, this is identified to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library and considered of a low level.
- 16.73 Officers consider that the heritage benefits alone, arising from this scheme, are insufficient to outweigh the substantial weight that must be given to the conservation of the heritage asset arising from the harm identified to the setting of the Grade I listed building. This conclusion is consistent with the comments of Historic England and the Council's Conservation Officer and takes a different approach to that of the applicant, which concludes that the overall heritage impact is beneficial, without acknowledging any harm as part of this application. The heritage harm identified and considered by officers is also notably less than the higher level of harm claimed by CLAG and other objectors.
- 16.74 In conclusion, substantial weight should be given to the conservation of any designated heritage asset. There is a level of harm identified to the setting of the highly significant Grade I listed Bodley Library.
- 16.75 Nevertheless, given that a level of overall heritage harm is identified, the application would be in conflict with Policy 61 of the Local Plan. There is, therefore, a requirement, under Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF to weigh this harm against the public benefits of the proposal and to ensure accordance with Section 66 of the LBCA 1990 and the special regard that must be given to preserving listed buildings and their setting.
- 16.76 The detailed assessment of public benefits and the balance required under Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF is reserved for the planning balance at the end of this report. In summary however, and as dealt with in detail in the planning balance section, officers consider that taken together the economic, social and environmental benefits of the scheme are substantial. In accordance with Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF 2026, these benefits provide clear and convincing justification that outweighs the low level of harm to the setting of designated heritage asset.
- 16.77 All four grounds of judicial challenge have been directly addressed as part of this officer report.

17. Carbon reduction and sustainable design

- 17.1 The application is supported by a sustainability statement outlining the approach adopted by the application towards sustainable design.
- 17.2 Given the nature of the works proposed, mixing both a new build library with elements of refurbishing existing, historic buildings, a bespoke strategy has been proposed throughout the pre-application process through to this application.
- 17.3 The development specifically seeks to follow Passivhaus principles for the new build element with high performing thermal fabric, airtightness, efficient air source heat pumps, innovative clay radiant ceiling heating system, mechanical ventilation with heat recovery and provision of on-site renewable technology through south facing PVs on the rooftop.
- 17.4 The existing buildings are to be subject to roof insulation with glazing upgrades to the Upper Hall along with moving from gas heating to fully electric air-source heat pumps.
- 17.5 Overall, the targets set out within the provided sustainability statement are, in consultation with the Council's Sustainability Officer, considered to be appropriate. They seek to achieve high standards of energy efficiency, water efficiency and carbon reduction within the constraints of working within historic buildings.
- 17.6 It is considered that the appropriate steps have been followed, taking a hierarchical approach to improving the sustainability performance of the historic buildings within the college. A number of conditions are requested by the Council's Sustainability Officer, relating to:
- Compliance with the provided sustainability statement
 - Rainwater harvesting
 - Water efficiency calculations
 - Water metering
- 17.7 All of which are considered to be appropriate and reasonably necessary to ensure that the development provides an acceptable level of environmental sustainability enhancements
- 17.8 The applicants have suitably addressed the issue of sustainability and renewable energy and subject to conditions the proposal is compliant with policies 28, 29 and 63 of the Local Plan of the Local Plan and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020.

18. Biodiversity

- 18.1 In accordance with policy and circular 06/2005 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation', the application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment.
- 18.2 This provided assessment concludes that the Statutory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is not triggered in this case given that the permanent works proposed would not impact greater than 25m² of on-site habitat. Given that the majority of the site comprises either existing buildings or sealed surfaces, this is not disputed. It is acknowledged, as has been raised by CLAG, that the temporary facilities for use during the construction phase are proposed on the grass within Second Court and would have a footprint of greater than 25m². Given their temporary nature however, and the fact that the grass will be returned to its previous condition, this is not considered to be reasonable to trigger BNG requirement for the proposal.
- 18.3 The submitted report also states that no protected species will be affected by the development. Indeed, all of the buildings are suitably sealed and of construction that would make it unlikely for bat or bird species to use them to roost. Whilst any risk is not considered significant, mitigation measures such as work being undertaken outside of roosting seasons are set out within the provided Ecological Impact Assessment. This mitigation is suggested to be secured by way of a condition requiring compliance with the provided ecological impact assessment.
- 18.4 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, who raises no objection to the proposal and the conclusions reached within the provided Ecology Assessment. This includes the recommendation that ecological enhancements are sought within the site. Details of which can be secured by way of a condition as recommended.
- 18.5 In consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, subject to an appropriate condition, 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.

19. Water management and flood risk

- 19.1 The site is in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore considered at low risk of flooding from fluvial sources. Bath Court and parts of Second Court within the College are also at a low risk of surface water flooding.

- 19.2 The applicants have submitted a Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy in support of the application. As part of the proposed development, a new sustainable drainage system is proposed to be incorporated helping to manage surface water for storm events up to the 1in100 year level including climate change allowance. It is concluded that surface water from the proposed development can be controlled through the use of attenuation, restricting the flow of surface water to 2l/s.
- 19.3 The Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) has advised that there is no objection to the proposed development, supporting the use of rain gardens for controlling the rate of surface water drainage from the site in addition to providing water quality treatment. Conditions are recommended by the LLFA relating to a scheme of surface water drainage as well as control measures for surface water run-off during construction, both of which would help to mitigate the impact of the development on surface water management within the site.
- 19.4 It should be clarified that comments from the LLFA, received on the 19th August raised an objection following re-consultation. They have however since clarified that, given there was no material change in the application, and that the re-consultation was to allow assessment in light of the updated NPPF, that they retained their position of no-objection.
- 19.5 Anglian Water have been consulted on this application and have raised no objection due to the fact that the proposed development would not result in an increase in the number of staff or students within the site.
- 19.6 There also remains the potential for more modern appliances within the proposed building to reduce flow rates. Officers do not therefore consider that the application would result in any additional risks to the Cambridge Water Recycling Centre or subsequent environmental harm arising from exceedances.
- 19.7 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.

20. Highway safety and transport impacts

- 20.1 Within the grounds of the College there is limited vehicular access whilst the development proposed is not seeking any alterations to this existing arrangement. Access to the library by students would be from within the college grounds. There is an existing access into Bath Court from Christ's

Lane beneath the bridge linking the Bodley library to the existing library. This entrance is to be retained between the expanded opening between the historic library and that proposed.

- 20.2 The application is supported by a Transport statement and “Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan (DCEMP)” These documents confirm that the proposed development is not expected to result in any meaningful increase in the number of students or staff within the college. Which, combined with the lack of vehicular access to the library is such that the proposals are not considered likely to result in any notable change in traffic movements.
- 20.3 Deliveries to the library kitchen are proposed to remain as existing, from along either Christ’s Lane or Drummer Street between 06:30am and 09:00am. Officers do not consider that the frequency of such deliveries is likely to significantly increase as a result of the proposed development.
- 20.4 The provided DCEMP addresses concerns regarding the construction impacts of the proposed development. These concerns were centered around the safety of pedestrians using the surrounding streets, including along Christ’s Lane itself which is a busy thoroughfare between key parts of the city and the Drummer Street bus station.
- 20.5 It is acknowledged that Christ’s College & Jesus College are the head leaseholders of the land beneath Christ’s Lane, with the County Highways Authority adopting over half of the width of Christ’s Lane as public highway. The division of the path is denoted approximately by the drainage gutter running along Christ’s Lane with the land closest to the College being private land and that closest the re-development of the southern side, being adopted public highway.
- 20.6 The DCEMP sets out the envisaged demolition and construction process for the proposed development. This includes two main points of access to the site, firstly from St Andrews Street, with vehicles parking alongside the College buildings and the other from the western edge of Drummer Street bus station. Whilst the number and specific arrangement has not been finalised at this stage, each area receiving deliveries will be served by an appropriate number of staff/ banksman to ensure safety.
- 20.7 Representations received from CLAG raise contradictions and uncertainty regarding the ability to maintain pedestrian access along Christ’s Lane during construction works. It is noted that the DCEMP provided states that temporary diversions may be required during certain phases of the construction works, including during concrete deliveries.. In any case,

given it is an adopted highway, this would require a Traffic Regulation Order to be agreed with the County Council. Further details of this would also be secured through the recommended DCEMP condition within this report (Condition 3).

- 20.8 The draft schedule provided sets out that early morning deliveries between 06:30-07:00 are proposed to minimise the disruption to bus routes but not too early to inconvenience nearby residents. The full delivery window for the site is proposed from 07:00-23:00, with an attempt to restrict any deliveries after 19:00. Officers acknowledge that the construction access to the site is complex due to its proximity to nearby residential properties but also due to the highway access along St Andrews Street which is a frequently used one-way system through the centre of the city.
- 20.9 The primary point of access for the construction phase is proposed to be from Drummer Street as this would have the least impact upon the existing highway. With only certain instances, including the delivery of concrete requiring the use of the St Andrews Street access.
- 20.10 The DCEMP provided is identical to the document that was provided to discharge condition 3 of the previous permission that is currently under Judicial Review. Officers consider that it must be considered afresh for this application, with no weight able to be given to the previous discharge of condition permission.
- 20.11 Whilst, as set out above, information has been provided regarding the impact of the construction phase upon the surrounding highway and pedestrian safety, it is considered that a condition is necessary with regards to an updated Demolition and Construction Ecological Management Plan. This would ensure that the information requested by the Highways Authority within their comments is received and assessed, in addition to impacts upon neighbouring amenity. Subject to this condition as recommended, the Traffic Management Plan condition recommended by the local highway authority is not deemed necessary with this information required within any DCEMP.
- 20.12 Subject to conditions as applicable, the proposal accords with the objectives of Policies 80 and 81 of the Local Plan and is compliant with NPPF advice.

21. Car and cycle provision

- 21.1 As existing, there is no vehicular access to the site within the application boundary. There is a small area of car parking within the College along Hobson Street although this is not considered to be relevant to the proposed development given the lack of additional trips envisaged as a result of the development.
- 21.2 As with car parking, there is no existing cycle parking within the application site with none proposed as part of the application. It is understood that currently students utilise public cycle parking areas within close proximity to the site. Again, given the fact that the proposed development is not expected to result in any increase in student or staff numbers, it is not considered to be reasonable to require any additional cycle parking within the application site.
- 21.3 The proposed parking is compliant with policy 81 of the Local Plan.

22. Amenity

Impact upon the residential properties of the southern re-development

- 22.1 Whilst Christ's Lane itself is slightly wider given the overhang of the first floor level of the redevelopment on the southern side of Christ's Lane, the first and second floor of adjacent redevelopment are understood to be separated by approximately 6.5 metres from the southern elevation of the proposed library building. Having visited the residential apartments within the second and third floors of the Christ's Lane redevelopment, it was evident that the closest part of this building to the College and therefore also the proposed library is a shared access deck that runs along the length of the building. It was noted that there were some small tables and chairs set out along this area, however given the residential units all have their own private gardens, it is not considered that this area provides any significant amenity value for the residential units and is rather a means of access.
- 22.2 Having reviewed floor plans of the adjacent neighbouring properties, in addition to visiting the apartments, it is understood that for units 4-10, in addition to front doors, each property has two windows facing north towards the application site serving both a kitchen and bathroom. Each of these units appears relatively open plan at second floor level with large living spaces opening out to private gardens to the south. These properties are also all duplex units with bedrooms located the floor above

with these northern facing windows further set back from Christ's Lane and the proposed library.

- 22.3 Whilst units 4-10 of the Christ's Lane redevelopment are likely to be the most significantly impacted by the proposed development, there are additional units that do not face directly towards the proposed replacement library namely units 1 and 11 at either end of the northern elevation.
- 22.4 The provided daylight & sunlight study concludes that all of the windows assessed with a requirement for daylight pass the Vertical Sky Component (VSC) test with the exception of Window 78. This window is one of the first-floor windows that serves the open plan living space of unit 4. It is not considered that the window is the primary window serving this habitable space which would be the larger opening at the southern side of the property. It is also acknowledged that the existing VSC level of this window is significantly compromised by the overhang above the covered walkway to the north. Specifically, the existing VSC level of the window is 5.1% meaning that the reduction of only 1.7% exceeds the BRE guidance that levels should not fall below 80% of the initial level.
- 22.5 With regards to the Daylight Distribution test (No Skyline Test) this is applied to understand the daylight distribution within buildings, evaluating the areas of rooms where no part of the sky would be visible. In this instance every one of the rooms assessed passed the test meaning that there is less than 20% of the room where the sky is not visible and any existing values have not been reduced to less than 80% of their initial value.
- 22.6 Considering the above, the only window that fails the VSC test is not considered a primary window, which is highlighted by the fact that the room it serves passes the NSL test. This, taken in combination with the fact that the window is already significantly impacted by the overhang above, is such that it is considered the impact of the proposed development from loss of light is acceptable.
- 22.7 CLAG have submitted multiple representations that raise concerns regarding the fact that the provided daylight & sunlight assessment information does not accord with BRE guidance. Officers acknowledge this, however it is considered that the level of information provided is sufficient to assess the impact of the proposed development, which is considered to be acceptable in this instance.

- 22.8 Having visited the neighbouring building, there is no doubt that the proposed replacement library, owing to its height, would be visible from the neighbouring properties within the Christ's Lane re-development. The loss of a view is not a material planning consideration that carries any weight in the planning balance. Whilst the overbearing nature of a proposal is a consideration, in this instance, the distance between the habitable windows of the neighbouring properties and the height of the proposed library is such that the development is not considered to result in an overbearing impact.
- 22.9 There are a number of windows within the southern elevation of the proposed library building that would face towards the neighbouring residential properties of the Christ's Lane redevelopment. Those windows at the third floor level of the proposed library would be at a similar height to the deck access and subsequently the front windows of the neighbouring properties of the southern redevelopment.
- 22.10 The separation distance between the windows of the library and those of the neighbouring properties is approximately 9 metres, with the balustrade of the deck access providing a certain level of screening between the two. Whilst similar in level, the windows within the library do sit lower than those of the residential properties meaning that there would not be a direct line of sight between the two. Therefore, given the deck access between the two, it is not considered that there would be any direct overlooking and therefore loss of privacy as a result of the proposed development.
- 22.11 In addition to the windows of the proposed library, a garden terrace is also proposed to the eastern edge of the site between the library itself and the Upper Hall. It is noted that concerns have been received relating to the impact of the use of this terrace upon the residential properties within the Christ's Lane redevelopment.
- 22.12 The terrace itself is set back from the Christ's Lane elevation of the site by approximately 3.7 metres. Given the height of the terrace, significantly lower than that of the residential units within the Christ's Lane redevelopment, it is not considered that there would be any direct overlooking from this area towards neighbouring occupants. The potential use of the outdoor area would not be expected to result in any significant noise disturbance above that to be expected from pedestrians along Christ's Lane. Given therefore, the additional distance between the terrace and residential properties of the redevelopment on the southern side of Christ's Lane the impacts of this element of the proposal are not considered to be significant.

Impact upon the retail units of Christ's Lane

- 22.13 Within the ground and first floors of the redevelopment on the southern side of Christ's Lane there are a number of different premises along the southern side of Christ's Lane. They are all considered to fall within a form of class E use, including retail, banking, café etc.
- 22.14 BRE guidance within the "Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight" (BR209), states that the guidelines within the document "may also be applied to any existing non-domestic building where the occupants have a reasonable expectation of daylight; this would normally include schools, hospitals, hotels and hostels, small workshops, and some offices.
- 22.15 Concerns have been raised by multiple third parties with regards to the impact of the development on windows along Christ's Lane that serve these class E units and the subsequent impact that this would have upon the viability of these units.
- 22.16 In this instance, it is not considered, that within units such as those adjacent the site, users would have any significant expectation of daylight. The majority of users of shops or services such as these are likely to only visit for a short period of time before leaving. It is therefore not considered to be reasonable to apply the BRE guidelines and to assess the impact of the proposed development upon these units.

Impact upon Christ's Lane itself

- 22.17 In addition to the impact upon the class E units along Christ's Lane, concerns have also been raised by interested parties regarding the overshadowing of and impact upon the amenity of Christ's Lane.
- 22.18 Christ's Lane's primary function is as a throughfare linking important retail hubs, the city centre and the Drummer Street Bus Station. Given its importance as a means of connection within the city, it is heavily used by pedestrians throughout the day. In addition, as a means of connectivity however, it occasionally hosts pop-up stalls serving food and drink, as well as seating outside of the Starbucks café on the southern side.
- 22.19 In addition to the impact upon the character of this area as assessed previously within this report, consideration must also be given to the impact upon it as an area of amenity.

- 22.20 Whilst officers do not consider that a full assessment is required regarding the impact upon Christ's Lane, additional information has been provided by the applicant in the form of a daylight study highlighting the impact of the proposed development from overshadowing on the lane at summer solstice, spring equinox and winter solstice. It is acknowledged, as has been raised, that a BRE compliant assessment should include analysis at autumn equinox. This is not however considered necessary in this instance given the minor impact that the proposal is considered to have.
- 22.21 The development, and new library building would undoubtedly somewhat enclose part of Christ's Lane as a result of the increase in height. It is not considered however, as shown on the provided shadowing studies, that this increase in height would result in any significant, further overshadowing of Christ's Lane. The Christ's Lane redevelopment, being to the south of Christ's Lane and greater in height would be the primary building impacting the area and itself casts a shadow over the majority of Christ's Lane at ground level. It is also considered that the Lane would retain late afternoon sunlight from the western end of Christ's Lane that would remain unobstructed by the development.
- 22.22 The development proposed would increase the level of shadowing upon the Christ's Lane re-development, however as discussed above, this impact is not deemed significant.
- 22.23 Whilst the impact from overshadowing to Christ's Lane is not considered significant, it is not disputed that the increase in scale from the application would further enclose the northern side of the lane. Notwithstanding the design and appearance considerations given previously in this report, an increase in enclosure would not necessarily be considered to result in amenity harm.
- 22.24 Given the function of Christ's Lane primarily as a pedestrian thoroughfare, the impact of the development upon this space is not considered to be significant or to result in any meaningful harm.
- 22.25 The proposal is compliant with policies 35 and 58 of the Local Plan.

Accessible design

- 22.26 The Design and Access Statement as well as the Planning Access Statement set out the accessibility principles of the proposal and the steps taken to improve over the existing buildings shortcomings.

- 22.27 The existing library building, and wider College site are considered to be extremely inaccessible for a number of reasons, including the lack of level access throughout. Whilst a number of the works to improve accessibility relate to the previous listed building consent, the proposed library building itself would significantly improve accessibility of the college's library facilities.
- 22.28 The library has been designed to tie in with existing levels of its surroundings including mezzanines and split levels being fully accessible. The principal elements of sustainable design includes level landing at all access and egress points, universal and wheelchair- accessible sanitary accommodation on all floors and multi-faith prayer room with independent level access.
- 22.29 The proposed development itself does not seek any physical alterations to Christ's Lane, it would however, have an impact through the construction phase and the façade looking onto Christ's Lane. The construction impacts may result in a minor impact through exacerbating conflict of users along Christ's Lane, however this can be mitigated through the recommended conditions. The proposed design of the library, through the Christ's Lane façade would improve passive surveillance along Christ's Lane, which is considered, despite the increase in height, to improve safety and surveillance along the public thoroughfare including for those who may be more vulnerable to crime or fear of crime.
- 22.30 Overall, it is considered that careful consideration has been given to ensuring that the proposal meets the principles of inclusive design, in accordance with Policy 56 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and NPPF TR4.

Construction and environmental health impacts

- 22.31 The nature of the application site being tightly constrained with neighbouring residential properties nearby is such that the demolition and construction phases of development would have a certain level of impact on the public space of Christ's Lane, as well as the neighbouring residential properties of the southern Christ's Lane redevelopment.
- 22.32 The length of the construction period for the proposed development is not understood to be fully known at this stage. However, as set out in the draft construction management plan, the disruption from the construction works is likely to be focussed around the junction between Christ's Lane and St Andrew's Street as well as Drummer Street Bus Station.

- 22.33 The Council's Environmental Health Team have assessed the application and have raised no objection to the construction phase of the proposed development. The environmental health officer acknowledges previous discharge of conditions applications specifically relating to conditions 3 (Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan), 6 (Airbourne Dust) and 7 (Demolition and Construction noise and vibration) of permission 25/02161/FUL and recommends compliance conditions in accordance with previously accepted documents. As discussed previously, officers consider that these previous discharge of condition approvals cannot be relied upon given that they relate to an application under Judicial Review. Therefore, in line with the previous permission conditions are recommended regarding Dust and a demolition/ construction noise and vibration assessment.
- 22.34 CLAG have, within their representations suggested that a scheme demonstrating an acceptable noise impact upon the residential units to the south of Christ's Lane should be provided prior to determination of this application. Whilst noting the previous application approving a Noise and Vibration Assessment, this is to be required through a fresh condition on this application. There is not considered a requirement for this information prior to determination.
- 22.35 CLAG have also raised within multiple representations that the provided Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan document (prepared by Barnes Construction) (DCEMP) specifically states that it was provided for the purpose of discharging condition 3 of the previous permission (25/02161/FUL). And that in the view of CLAG this should not be considered within the assessment of this application, in which case there would be no information relating to the construction management phase.
- 22.36 Officers do not dispute the fact that the DCEMP cannot be relied upon as a document upon which a compliance condition could be recommended. However, the information within the document does include that provided within the "Draft Construction Management Plan" provided with the previous application (25/02161/FUL). Therefore, subject to the same DCEMP condition recommended previously, the impact of the proposal through its construction is considered acceptable.
- 22.37 In line with the comments received from the Environmental Health officer a condition is recommended regarding hours of deliveries and collections to the site relating to its use. Given the proximity of neighbouring properties this is deemed to be necessary to protect their amenity.

Plant Noise

- 22.38 The proposed development, in order to meet the proposed sustainability targets is proposed to include plant room at first, second and third floors, with the noise generating units located on the rooftop. Specifically, the noise generating units comprise 2No. Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) and 4No. Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery units (MVHR).
- 22.39 As set out in the provided noise impact assessment, the proposed ASHPs are significantly louder than the proposed MVHR units and therefore dictate the noise environment of the proposed development. It is also confirmed that both ASHPs will operate between 06:00-23:00, ASHP 2 will not operate between 23:00-06:00 whilst ASHP 1 will be operating in Super Silent Mode.
- 22.40 The provided noise impact assessment concludes that the noise levels at the site are dictated by road traffic primarily from along St Andrews Street as well as pedestrian traffic including along Christ's Lane.
- 22.41 There is no objection, in line with comments from the Environmental Health officer to the conclusion within the Noise Assessment, that the site is suitable for the development proposed, including the relevant plant.
- 22.42 A condition requiring specific noise assessment relating to proposed plant to include insulation/ mitigation to be provided prior to the installation of any plant is considered to be reasonable and necessary to protect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Odour

- 22.43 Forming part of the application is the refurbishment of the College kitchens including changes to the internal layout which will require alterations to the existing ventilation system. Additionally, during the construction phase, a temporary building to house the kitchens and dining facilities is proposed within the Second Court of the college.
- 22.44 The proposed chimneys projecting above the library building provide a route for exhaust from the proposed kitchen facilities. Whilst the reduction in the height of the chimneys is considered preferable in design terms, it is acknowledged as highlighted by the Environmental Health Officer, that this may compromise their effectiveness for ventilation.
- 22.45 Overall, however, despite the reduction in height of the chimneys, the odour impact assessment and proposed mitigation is considered to be

acceptable such that no significant odour impacts are envisaged. A condition requiring compliance with the provided odour assessment is considered to be required to ensure that the impact in this regard is acceptable.

Artificial Lighting

- 22.46 Limited information has been provided regarding the details of any artificial lighting within the application site. Given the potential sensitivity with nearby residential properties, a condition requiring an impact assessment and lighting scheme is required prior to the installation of any artificial lighting.

Contaminated Land

- 22.47 Whilst there is no specific historic use that makes the site potentially contaminated, it is a brownfield site and therefore a contaminated land risk assessment has been undertaken. As was raised by the Environmental Health Officer, this document had not initially been provided with this application. It has since been provided during the process of the application.
- 22.48 The conclusion of this assessment is that 600mm of Made Ground is removed within the landscaped areas of Bath Court and replaced with clean topsoil. It is acknowledged, as has been raised by CLAG that the Council's Environmental Health Officer referred to the removal of 60mm of Made Ground and replacement with topsoil, as opposed to the 600mm referred to in the applicant's report. However, updated comments from the Environmental Health Officer confirmed that this was a typographical error. The information within the report is correct and therefore can be relied upon to form a recommendation.
- 22.49 In line with the comments received from the council's Environmental Health Officer comments, there is no objection to this recommendation within the report. A condition relating to unexpected contamination along with another requiring provision of a materials management plan are considered to be appropriate and necessary in this instance.
- 22.50 Updated comments from the Environmental Health Officer also requested a change in the trigger of the Material Management Plan condition to "Prior to the placement of ground forming materials". This updated trigger is earlier than that previously requested and tightens the control over management of potentially contaminated land. The trigger of the condition

recommended is prior to development above ground which is considered to tighten the control afforded by the condition requirements.

Air Quality

- 22.51 An Air Quality Assessment has been provided in support of the application along with a construction dust risk assessment.
- 22.52 The operational use of the site is not considered to raise any concerns with regards to air quality. As discussed, details of Dust Management is required to be provided via a condition.

Summary

- 22.53 The proposal adequately respects the amenity of its neighbours and of future occupants. Subject to conditions, the proposal is compliant with policies 55, 56, 57, 58, 59 of the Local Plan. The associated construction and environmental impacts would be acceptable in accordance with policies 33, 34, 35 and 36 of the Local Plan.

23. Other matters

23.1 Public Art

- 23.2 As part of the proposed development a bench is incorporated into the design of the Christ's Lane façade to provide seating for members of the public using Christ's Lane. Whilst a public element of the scheme, this element is a functional output of the proposed development and its design. It is not therefore considered public art.

- 23.3 There is however, increased scope to provide a form of public art within the gate providing access from Bath Court to Christ's Lane. The gate would remain closed to the public as it is currently, however there is considered to be a design solution that could be found to allow views through into Bath Court.

- 23.4 As details of the design of this gate have not been provided at this stage, a condition is recommended requiring details of public art to be provided prior to commencement of development above ground level. Subject to this condition the proposal would comply with the requirements of the Cambridge City Public Art SPD.

23.5 Crime

- 23.6 Concerns have been raised by third parties regarding the impact that the proposed development may have upon the safety of pedestrians using Christ's Lane, especially at night. Whilst the proposal would increase the height of the façade along Christ's Lane, it is considered that the perceived surveillance would be increased by virtue of the number of windows within the façade facing onto Christ's Lane.
- 23.7 The Police liaison officer has commented on the development raising no objection, with a condition recommended regarding "secured by design". Given that officers do not consider the development would result in any notable reduction in safety, it is deemed that this condition is not required.

Waste

- 23.8 Comments have been received from the Council's Shared Waste Officer raising no objection to the proposed development. This is on the assumption that the waste disposal for the proposal can be absorbed within the existing refuse arrangement for the wider college site. Officers have no reason to dispute this with the level of waste created from the increase in floor area not deemed to significantly increase the pressure on waste storage and collection.

Public Access

- 23.9 Third-parties including Christ's Lane Action Group have continuously raised concerns regarding the potential for the proposed development to benefit the college as a private body, thereby reducing the number of public benefits arising from the scheme.
- 23.10 Following the DCF meeting on the 29 July 2026 the College have provided a letter (Appendix 10) detailing increased public access as part of this application.
- 23.11 Currently, whilst the College provides public access outside of Christmas week and exam term, there is however currently no access to Bath Court or the library. As set out in the letter from the College, the proposal includes opening up of Bath Court to the public whenever the College is currently open.
- 23.12 The College have also proposed opening up the interior of the proposed library building as part of this application. Two 30-minute tours are proposed 3 days of the week for every week outside of the College term time for members of the public with booking via the College website. In addition, the other two days of the week, outside of College term time, the

library would be open to groups of students/ pupils from Cambridgeshire schools for tours and quiet study. This access would be for groups of up to 30 children with visits lasting for up to 90 minutes, provided during school hours.

- 23.13 It is considered that sufficient information has been provided at this stage of the application to allow the public access provided as part of this application to be given weight as a public benefit. To ensure that this is provided, maintained and effectively managed a condition is recommended requiring submission of a public access management plan.

24. Third party representations

- 24.1 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
Conflicting deadlines/ lack of sufficient consultation time to consider the proposal and its additional information	Clarification has been sent to all notified neighbours clarifying the consultation deadline, including updating the expiry date on the portal. Sufficient time has also been given to consider all information, including that provided during the process of the application.
Failure to consult No.19, 20 and 21 Christ's Lane	Notification was sent to all of these properties and an additional commercial unit along St Andrew's Street on the 1 st July
Garden Trust's consultee comments are incorrectly filed on the portal	This arises from the way that the comments were received from the Garden Trust. They do now appear as a "Consultee Comment" under "Documents" on the portal.
Applicant's view of the heritage impacts including that raised at the Public meeting held by the College on the 6 th July.	The Officer assessment is set out in this report, which is acknowledged to differ from that of the applicant.
Mis-representation of officer presentation within the press	Following clarification, this public mis-representation of the number of comments received was corrected.
Lobbying of members by the applicant from a letter sent on the 11 th June.	Members should be aware of their duty when sitting on planning committee including that they must not be pre-determined prior to making a decision.
Refusal to publish CLAG record of the 6 th July public meeting.	An initial record provided by CLAG was declined to be uploaded at the request of the applicant.

	However a subsequent version of this record was received and is uploaded to the public file.
Failure to consult upon the response of the Victorian Society to the agent and architect following their email to the Victorian Society.	It is acknowledged that the agent and architect of the application contacted the Victorian Society during the application to explain their difference in opinion regarding the heritage assessment of the scheme. A response was received from the Victorian Society, and published on the website on the 23rd July. It is not considered that this response from the Victorian Society required any re-consultation and in any instance sufficient time has passed to allow review of this on the portal.
Incorrect publication dates of letters/ responses received	Officers are of the view that all representations are uploaded against dates that reflect when they were uploaded.
Incorrect/ inaccurate imagery provided within the supporting documents relating to the height of the chimneys	Whilst officers acknowledge the height of the chimneys within the Design and Access Statement, as well as the Townscape Visual Impact Assessment do not reflect the proposed height of the chimneys. The plans to be approved do accurately reflect the proposed height of the chimneys.
Failure to provide a standalone traffic management plan	There was no condition placed upon the previous application, or requirement for submission of a Traffic Management Plan. The details of this were included within the requirements under Condition 3 of 25/02161/FUL as is recommended in this instance.
Contradicting information regarding the proposed temporary kitchens	Whilst it is noted that the supporting documents show differing information relating to the temporary kitchens. No details of this are required or to be secured as part of this application. Details are recommended within condition 9 of this report.
Requested a significant number of changes to conditions attached to the previous permission (25/02161/FUL)	Condition 15 of this report has been amended to change the implementation trigger reflecting that the proposal is not residential development. All other conditions are considered by officers to meet the relevant tests as set out in the NPPF and PPG.

Table 3 Officer response to third party/ local group representations

25. Planning obligations (S106)

- 25.1 Whilst no comments have been received from the Council's Section 106 officer as part of this application, they were received on the previous application (25/02161/FUL). The comments on the previous application requested financial contributions totalling £20,000 (plus indexation) through a S106 agreement towards the provision of and/or improvement of the public realm facilities at and in the vicinity of Christ's Lane.
- 25.2 The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 have introduced the requirement for all local authorities to make an assessment of any planning obligation in relation to three tests. If the planning obligation does not pass the tests then it is unlawful. The tests are that the planning obligation must be:
- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - (b) directly related to the development; and
 - (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 25.3 Policy 85 states that planning permission for new developments will only be supported/permitted where there are suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision and phasing of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.
- 25.4 Officers acknowledge that the proposed development would result in a notable increase in the gross internal area of the library facilities within the site. However, this increase in floor area is to update the library facilities for the college and its existing number of students. It is not considered that the proposal is expected to result in any increase in the number of students or staff within the college.
- 25.5 As a result, given the number of people accessing the site is not expected to increase, financial contributions are not considered to be reasonably related to the scale of the proposal. In any instance, the proposal itself seeks certain improvements to the public realm along Christ's Lane through the façade, public bench and public art.
- 25.6 Whilst the construction phase would result in a certain level of impact upon Christ's Lane, this would be restricted to a temporary period of time and not therefore suitable justification for the requested financial contributions.

- 25.7 As will be set out in the planning balance of this report, officers consider that the requested contributions are not required in order to make the development acceptable in planning terms, as required by test a) of the CIL legislation.
- 25.8 Overall, therefore, the financial contributions requested by the S106 officer are not considered to be required as they would not meet the necessary CIL tests and as such would not be lawful and would therefore not meet the threshold of Policy 85 of the Cambridge Local Plan.

26. Planning balance

- 26.1 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).
- 26.2 Policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF relating to the “presumption in favour of sustainable development” are relevant to this application given its location within the settlement of Cambridge. S4 sets out that proposals within settlements, such as this, should be approved “unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.”
- 26.3 The proposal is not considered to conflict with any Policies within the NPPF that state that “development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances” (S4(2)(c)).
- 26.4 The proposed development would undeniably result in a degree of heritage harm, and other harm (see below). There is therefore a requirement to assess this harm against the benefits of the scheme. The following planning balance will initially set out the balance of heritage harm vs heritage benefits applying the statutory duties under Section 66 of the LBCA Act 1990. Then the planning balance addressed through the three objectives which sustainable development should seek to achieve, as set out in Chapter 1, Paragraph 17 of the NPPF (economic, social and environmental).

Heritage Balance

Harm

- 26.5 Applying the statutory duty under Section 66 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, the scale and siting of the proposed

replacement library, specifically the staircase tower, would be prominent within views and adversely affect the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library. Substantial weight should be given the conservation of this designated heritage asset. Here, the proposal would cause a low level of harm to the significance of the listed building, which forms part of the single, overall Grade I listed buildings surrounding the entrance of the Christ's College site. Even though in officers' view the harm would be of a low level, this still attracts considerable importance and weight for the decision maker in forming a view in the planning balance. It is notable that heritage harm has been identified by Historic England, the Conservation Officer, the Victorian Society, CLAG and other third parties, albeit of varying levels.

26.6 The proposed development, through an extensive pre-application process and through the previous applications themselves, has been amended to help to mitigate the level of harm that would arise to relevant heritage assets. This includes a reduction in the height of the proposed chimneys following conservation officer and Historic England comments.

26.7 Nevertheless, there is a level of harm identified to the setting of the Bodley Library. A degree of heritage harm arises from the space requirements of the College and its students in the circumstances of this application. For example, the large staircase turret that is highly visible within the setting of the Bodley provides a form of fire escape to the upper levels and therefore has a minimum height requirement.

26.8 The operational requirements for the College and its students in terms of a library and study space also provides partial explanation for the heritage harm that is identified. In order to meet the current requirements for such a facility, a building of this scale is required. This is highlighted by the previous Rick Mather schemes that were comparable in scale, albeit with a basement extension as opposed to the additional floor space above ground proposed within this scheme. In the view of officers, the choice of the applicant to no longer pursue the basement has been sufficiently justified.

Benefits

26.9 The proposed development is, in line with comments from the Council's Conservation Officer, considered to result in a number of benefits/enhancements to relevant heritage assets, namely:

26.10 The proposal is considered to result in an enhancement to the setting of the Grade I listed Christ's College building when experienced from within Bath Court or from along Christ's Lane, as a result of the increased

separation between the Bodley Library and the proposed library at its lower levels.

- 26.11 The proposal would also provide wider enhancements to Bath Court through significantly improved landscaping and removal of redundant plant. This would result in enhancements to this area of the Historic Core Conservation Area (applying s.72 of the Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act 1990) and Christ's College RPG (applying s.102 of the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023).

Overall Planning Balance

- 26.12 Considering the identified heritage harm under Policies HE4, HE5 and HE6 of the NPPF, the above heritage benefits alone are not deemed sufficient to outweigh the heritage harm. However, under Policies S4 and HE6(4) of the NPPF the wider public benefits of the proposal should be weighed against the harm arising from the scheme, including the heritage harm set out above.

Summary of harm

- 26.13 Officers have had regard to the statutory duty set out in section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and in considering this application have given considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of the affected nearby Grade I listed buildings at Christ's College. In the view of officers, the proposal would result in a low level of harm to the setting of the Grade I listed Bodley Library which forms a part of the overall Grade I listed Buildings surrounding the entrance court, within the southeast range of second court.
- 26.14 The construction phase of the proposed development would lead to a level of noise and disturbance for both occupants of nearby residential properties and Christ's Lane itself as a public thoroughfare. Officers consider that these impacts can be mitigated through the use of suitably worded conditions as recommended by the Local Highways Authority and Environmental Health Officer. These conditions will enable officers to ensure the protection of neighbouring amenity and minimise the impact upon access along Christ's Lane.
- 26.15 The increase in scale of development within the application would, as highlighted within the provided documentation, increase the visual dominance along Christ's Lane. This increased visual intrusion is not itself

considered to result in any harm however, with mitigation provided through a significantly enhanced public facing façade.

26.16 With regards to daylight impacts, officers acknowledge that the retail units along Christ's Lane would experience a reduction in daylight. However, this harm is not considered so significant to be unacceptable. BRE guidance states that guidelines within BRE209 may also be applied to non-domestic buildings where occupants have a reasonable expectation of daylight. In this case, given the use of the adjacent units is for retail, officers consider that such an expectation does not exist and therefore the harm to their occupants is limited.

26.17 The nature of the proposed development, comprising the demolition and rebuild of the existing library building would involve a level of environmental harm through the construction phase. Whilst a whole life carbon assessment will be carried out at various design stages, initial assessments have been made and provided with the application. The total upfront carbon resulting from the construction of the new building is estimated at 438 kgCO₂e/m. Whilst the demolition of the existing building increases carbon costs, significant measures have been identified by the applicant to reduce the overall environmental impact of the scheme, including where possible the re-use of existing buildings and materials.

Substantial weight is given to the overall level of harm arising from the proposal.

Summary of benefits

Economic

26.18 There would be new employment associated with the construction phase of the development which would also help to support local services and facilities in terms of the multiplier effect, together with increased spending in the area. The applicants have not robustly dealt with this aspect of the proposal and as such, the economic benefits of the proposed development are afforded limited positive weight in the planning balance.

Social

26.19 The development would represent an enhancement to its surrounding context in townscape and placemaking terms. Through an extensive pre-application process and refinements, the scheme is considered to successfully respond to the street context by improving its architectural quality and material choice in compliance with policies 55, 56, 57 and 59

of the Local Plan. This enhancement extends to the public realm along Christ's Lane, where the development is considered to improve the relationship when assessed against the existing library building, this is considered a public benefit of the scheme. The design and appearance of the proposed development would also comply with the principles for well-designed places set out in Policy DP3 of the NPPF. The proposal would not therefore conflict with this national decision-making policy.

- 26.20 The redevelopment of the site, proposed within this application, whilst enhancing its surrounding context, would also be considered to make effective use of the land as set out within Policy L3 of the NPPF. Whilst tightly constrained by significant heritage assets, the increase in density of development within the site is considered to be appropriate with the applicant providing appropriate justification of the need for additional library and study facilities for its students.
- 26.21 Following the Development Control Forum on the 29 July 2026, the College has formally proposed public accessibility within the new library building and Bath Court (appendix 10). Whilst Christ's is one of the few currently public accessible colleges within Cambridge, neither Bath Court nor the library to be demolished are open to the public. By introducing public access to both the proposed library and Bath Court, members of the public would be able to experience firsthand the proposed development and areas of the Grade I listed College. Details of times and management of public access resulting from this development are to be secured by way of condition 32 which is necessary to ensure that weight can be given to this as a public benefit.
- 26.22 The proposed development provides a tangible benefit to Christ's Lane through the provision of a public bench where there is currently no public seating available. This bench is incorporated into the physical façade of the proposed library, extending approximately 25m in length and would be a permanent feature of the lane.
- 26.23 The proposed development would significantly improve the accessibility of the library and study facilities within the College as well as the surrounding Bath Court. Step free access is proposed to all parts of the building, in addition to level access throughout Bath Court. Within the building a multi-faith prayer room and a range of study spaces helps to meet the needs of the entire student body. Given that there is proposed public access to the new library building, this is considered a public benefit of the scheme.

- 26.24 The provision of a replacement gate between Bath Court and Christ's Lane, to be secured through a public art condition would help to improve the appreciation of Bath Court from the public realm as well as contributing a positive feature to the public façade of the scheme.
- 26.25 The provision of an updated library facility for students of the College would help to support and sustain the ongoing use of the Grade I listed College buildings by providing improved, accessible library facilities.
- 26.26 The social benefits arising from the proposed development are afforded significant weight in the planning balance.
- 26.27 Environmental
- 26.28 The proposed design of the development would positively enhance the townscape by creating a high quality architectural and sustainable building.
- 26.29 Enhancements to the local environment would arise, including the use of efficient and sustainable construction methods, water conservation measures, incorporation of renewable technologies and rainwater storage. Thereby providing a highly sustainable building and reducing surface water flood risk within the site. Whilst the proposed library building is primarily a private building for use by college students, public access is now proposed at certain times of the year. Furthermore, officers consider that the proposed library enables energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed, as per Policy HE6(4) of the NPPF. In this instance that is a public benefit resulting from the proposal as supported by Policies 28, 57 and 63 of the Cambridge Local Plan.
- 26.30 The environmental benefits arising from the proposed development are afforded moderate weight in the planning balance.

Overall conclusion

- 26.31 Officers have carefully considered the development against the Cambridge Local Plan 2018, the NPPF 2026 and the statutory duties in sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and section 102 of the LURA 2023. Whilst acknowledging representations that consider the level of harm to heritage assets to be significant and wider ranging, officers consider that the scheme would result in a low level of harm to the setting of the Grade I Bodley Library, which forms part of the single, overall Grade I listed Christ's College Buildings surrounding the Entrance Court. This harm is

not considered to be outweighed by the heritage benefits arising from the scheme.

- 26.32 Weighed against this heritage harm is an array of economic, social and environmental public benefits including the creation of temporary construction jobs, townscape and public-realm enhancements, significant sustainability and accessibility improvements and increased public access into the college including the proposed library building. These benefits attract significant weight, consistent with the NPPF's emphasis on sustainable development.
- 26.33 As requested by third-parties and CLAG, consideration has been given to alternative methods for the college to provide the required library facilities claimed to result in less heritage harm. Officers do not consider however, that any of the alternatives carry any notable weight as a material consideration in forming a decision on the merits of the proposal.
- 26.34 Applying the heritage balance under NPPF Policy HE6(4) and the presumption in favour of sustainable development within Policy S3 of the NPPF, officers conclude that the public benefits clearly and convincingly outweigh the substantial weight afforded to the identified low level of harm to designated heritage assets. Ultimately, there is clear and convincing justification for the heritage and other harm identified. The proposal therefore represents sustainable development in economic, social and environmental terms.
- 26.35 Having assessed the proposal against the statutory development plan, the NPPF, NPPG guidance, and applying the statutory duties under section 66(1) and section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and section 102 of LURA 2023, and taking into account of the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval.

27. Recommendation

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

28. 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 programme.

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 and residential amenity 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.

g) Dust management and wheel washing measures in accordance with the provisions of IAQM, 2016 and 2018;

h) Use of concrete crushers and mitigation measures;

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 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 ensure that before any demolition and or development commences that an appropriate archaeological investigation of the site has been implemented before development commences. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 61).

- 5) No works shall commence until details of how the listed building is to be properly protected and supported during the carrying out of the works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved means of protection and support shall be implemented without damage to the fabric of the building and its windows and shall remain in place until the works are completed

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

- 6) No development shall commence until a scheme to minimise the spread of airborne dust from the site including subsequent dust monitoring during the period of demolition and construction, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 36).

- 7) No development (including demolition, enabling works or piling shall commence until a demolition/construction noise and vibration impact assessment

associated with the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The assessment shall be in accordance with the provisions of BS 5228:2009 Code of Practice for noise and vibration on construction and open sites and include details of any piling and mitigation/monitoring measures to be taken to protect local residents from noise or vibration. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved measures.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the adjoining properties. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

- 8) No development, including preparatory works, shall commence until details of measures indicating how additional surface water run-off from the site will be avoided during the construction works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The applicant may be required to provide collection, balancing and/or settlement systems for these flows. The approved measures and systems shall be brought into operation before any works to create buildings or hard surfaces commence.

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

- 9) Prior to commencement of development, including demolition, and in accordance with BS5837 2012, a phased tree protection methodology in the form of an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority before any tree works are carried out and before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought onto the site for the purpose of development (including demolition).

In a logical sequence the AMS and TPP will consider all phases of construction in relation to the potential impact on trees and detail tree works, the specification and position of protection barriers and ground protection and all measures to be taken for the protection of any trees from damage during the

course of any activity related to the development, including supervision, demolition, foundation design (allowing for tree root growth and accounting for heave and subsidence), storage of materials, ground works, installation of services, erection of scaffolding and landscaping.

The development shall be carried out fully in accordance with the approved AMS and TPP.

Reason: To ensure that trees to be retained will be protected from damage during any construction activity, including demolition Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 71 and Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990).

- 10) No demolition, hereby permitted, shall be undertaken, until details for the careful salvage and reuse of existing materials have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure the reuse of historic materials wherever possible (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

- 11) No development shall commence (including demolition) to the existing kitchen/ dining facilities until details of the proposed temporary kitchen/ dining facilities have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The details provided should include the timespan for which the facilities are required and how the land will be restored to its original condition.

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

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development would be acceptable with regards to its impact on relevant heritage assets and protected trees within the site, in accordance with Policies 61, 62 and 71 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

12) No development above ground level to the new library building 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, hedgehog provisions 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).

13) No development above ground level, other than demolition, (or in accordance with a timetable agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority), shall commence until a Public Art Delivery Plan (PADP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The PADP shall include the following:

- a) Details of the public art and artist commission;
- b) Details of how the public art will be delivered, including a timetable for delivery;
- c) Details of the location of the proposed public art on the application site;
- d) The proposed consultation to be undertaken;
- e) Details of how the public art will be maintained;
- f) How the public art would be decommissioned if not permanent;
- g) How repairs would be carried out;
- h) How the public art would be replaced in the event that it is destroyed;

The approved PADP shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details and timetabling. Once in place, the public art shall not be moved or removed otherwise than in accordance with the approved maintenance arrangements.

Reason: To provide public art as a means of enhancing the development and (Cambridge Local Plan policies 55 and 56 and the Cambridge City Council Public Art SPD (2010)).

- 14) No development shall take place above ground level, except for demolition, until details of all the materials for the external surfaces of buildings and ground surfaces to be used in the construction of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Samples of the materials shall be made available on site for inspection by officers. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

- 15) No development above ground level to the new library building, or to Bath Court 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;
- 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.

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).

- 16) No development above base course to the new library building (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).

- 17) No laying of services, creation of hard surfaces or erection of a building shall commence until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on the agreed Flood Risk Drainage Strategy Report Parts 1&2 prepared by Smith and Wallwork engineers (ref:0346-SAW-ZZ-ZZ-RP-C-0001) dated 16th May 2025 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in full accordance with the approved details prior to commencement of the use hereby permitted.

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

18) No new walls shall be constructed until the drawings to a scale of 1:20 providing details of the roof/wall junctions, including eaves, fascias and soffits, wall/floor junctions and wall/wall junctions have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This includes junctions between historic and new work. Construction of walls shall thereafter take place only in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

19) No new, replacement or altered joinery shall be installed, nor existing historic joinery removed, until drawings at a scale of 1:20 of all such joinery (doors and surrounds, windows and frames, sills, skirtings, dado rails, staircases and balustrades, etc.) have been 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 avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

20) No rainwater goods shall be installed until details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Rainwater goods shall thereafter be installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

21) No work shall commence on the relevant areas until details of the following items have been submitted for the prior, written approval of the Local Planning Authority:

(a) Details of first floor landing alterations including timber samples, to be inspected and agreed on site with the conservation officer, and junctions with new work and existing panelling

(b) Details of alterations to panelling

(c) Details of photovoltaic panels showing relationship to roof

- (d) Details of vents, flues and extracts
- (e) Details of signage
- (f) Details of external lighting
- (g) Details of gates and railings
- (h) Details of structural alterations to listed building

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

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 61).

- 22) Prior to the installation of any artificial lighting an artificial lighting impact assessment and scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Internal lighting within the proposed covered Library Court shall also be considered. The scheme shall include details of any artificial lighting of the site and an artificial lighting impact assessment with predicted lighting levels at proposed and existing residential properties shall be undertaken (horizontal / vertical isolux contour light levels and calculated glare levels). Artificial lighting on and off site must meet the Recommended Maximum Values of Light Parameters for the Control of Obtrusive Light contained within the 'Institute of Lighting Professionals - Guidance Note 01/21: the Reduction of Obtrusive Light - GN01/21', (or as superseded). Any mitigation measures to reduce and contain potential artificial light spill and glare as appropriate shall be detailed.

The artificial lighting scheme as approved shall be fully implemented before the use hereby permitted is commenced and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: To minimise the effects of light pollution on the surrounding area (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 34)

- 23) No operational plant, machinery or equipment shall be installed until a noise impact assessment of and any noise insulation/mitigation as required for the said plant, machinery or equipment has been submitted to and approved in

writing by the local planning authority. The noise impact assessment shall also consider any plant rooms. Any required noise insulation/mitigation shall be carried out as approved and retained as such.

Due regard shall be given to the recommendations detailed in the submitted 'Plant Noise Assessment New Library, Christ's College, Cambridge Report reference: RP01-24365-R3, Revision 3 dated the 23 May 2025', by Cass Allen.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

- 24) Prior to development above ground level, a Materials Management Plan (MMP) detailing the removal of Made Ground and its replacement with validated clean topsoil (as per the recommendations of the Site Investigation Report by Lucion, ref: 125396, dated Feb 2025) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that no unsuitable material is brought onto the site in the interest of environmental and public safety in accordance with (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 Policy 33).

- 25) The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until a post construction statement confirming that the provisions as set out in the Sustainability Statement (Skelly & Couch, 1685-SAC-RPT REV 2) have been fully implemented.

Reason: In the interests of reducing carbon dioxide emissions and promoting principles of sustainable construction and efficient use of buildings (Cambridge Local Plan Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020).

- 26) 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).

27) 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.

28) 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).

- 29) Service deliveries to and dispatches / collections from the development as approved including refuse / recycling collections during the operational phase shall only be permitted between the hours of 07:00 - 22:00 hours Monday to Friday and 09:00 - 1900 hours on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 35).

- 30) The kitchen ventilation / extraction and discharge system shall be constructed, installed, commissioned and maintained thereafter in accordance with the submitted 'CHRIST COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE, NEW LIBRARY AND KITCHENS: Odour Assessment, Revision V1, 16/05/2025', by Greenavon Ltd. The ventilation system should be cleaned and serviced at regular intervals in accordance with manufacturers / installers recommendations, to prevent a build-up of grease and other odorous substances in the system.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby properties. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 36).

- 31) Prior to the occupation of the development, the ecological mitigation shall be carried out in full in accordance with the details contained in "*Ecological Impact Assessment (SWECO, 65213378-SWE-ZZ-XX-T-J-0001)*" 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)

32) The replacement library shall not open for study use until such time as a scheme for public access to it and Bath Court has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme, based upon the following principles set out in the letter submitted by the Turley, dated 5th August 2026, shall include opening hours and details of security measures.

- 2 x 30 minute organised tours of the library, including the Bodley Library
- Bookable study/ tours for students or pupils of Cambridgeshire schools on 2 days of the week.
- Extension of open public access within The College to include Bath Court.
- No charge for public access to the site.

The approved scheme for public access shall come into operation at the same time as the replacement library's first use for study and thereafter the replacement library and Bath Court shall remain open for public access in accordance with the approved scheme.

Public access shall then be implemented in accordance with the approved management plan unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Reason: To ensure the proposed development is provided as a publicly accessible space whilst maintaining privacy for the College. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 56 and 57)

Informatives

- 1) Partial discharge of the condition can be applied for once the fieldwork at Part c) has been completed to enable the commencement of development. Part d) of the condition shall not be discharged until all elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

- 2) 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

- 3) To satisfy the plant noise insulation condition, the rating level (in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019) from all plant, equipment and vents etc (collectively) associated with this application should be less than or equal to the existing background sound level (LA90) at the boundary of the premises subject to this application and having regard to noise sensitive premises.

If noise sensitive premises are located within the site boundary, then the glazing of the premises and/or amenity areas will also be a location for the rating level of all plant not to exceed the existing background sound level (LA90).

Tonal/impulsive sounds and other sound characteristics should be eliminated or at least considered in any assessment and should carry an additional correction (rating penalty) in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019. This is to prevent unreasonable disturbance to other premises. This requirement applies both during the day (0700 to 2300 hrs over any one-hour period) and night time (2300 to 0700 hrs over any one 15 minute period).

It is recommended that the agent/applicant submits an acoustic prediction survey/report in accordance with the principles of BS4142:2014+A1:2019

“Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound” or similar, concerning the effects on amenity rather than likelihood for complaints. Noise levels shall be predicted at the application boundary having regard to neighbouring premises.

Whilst our requirements are for the rating level not to exceed the background sound level at the application site boundary, if the plant is roof mounted and nearby noise sensitive receivers are in closer proximity than the site boundary and / or the site boundary is afforded shielding from the application building parapet, the nearest noise sensitive receiver would be the required assessment location.

It is important to note that a full BS4142:2014+A1:2019 assessment is not required, only certain aspects to be incorporated into an acoustic assessment as described within this informative.

Such a survey / report should include: a large scale plan of the site in relation to neighbouring premises; sound sources and measurement / prediction points marked on plan; a list of noise sources; details of proposed noise sources / type of plant such as: number, location, sound power levels, frequency spectrums, directionality of plant, noise levels from duct intake or discharge points; details of noise mitigation measures (attenuation details of any intended enclosures, silencers or barriers); description of full acoustic calculation procedures; noise levels at a representative sample of noise sensitive locations and hours of operation.

Any report shall include raw measurement data so that conclusions may be thoroughly evaluated and calculations checked.

- 4) As the premises may have kitchens providing cooked food for staff / students / the public or facilities for food preparation or similar or the applicant is reminded that under the Food Safety Act 1990 (as amended) the premises will need to be registered with Cambridge City Council. 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. Contact the Commercial Team at Cambridge City Council on telephone number (01223) 457890, email : commercial@cambridge.gov.uk for further information and advice.

- 5) Surface water and groundwater bodies are highly vulnerable to pollution and the impact of construction activities. It is essential that the risk of pollution (particularly during the construction phase) is considered and mitigated appropriately. It is important to remember that flow within the watercourse is likely to vary by season and it could be dry at certain times throughout the year. Dry watercourses should not be overlooked as these watercourses may flow or even flood following heavy rainfall.
- 6) Prior to final handover of the development, the developer must ensure that appropriate remediation of all surface water drainage infrastructure has taken place, particularly where the permanent drainage infrastructure has been installed early in the construction phase. This may include but is not limited to jetting of all pipes, silt removal and reinstating bed levels. Developers should also ensure that watercourses have been appropriately maintained and remediated, with any obstructions to flows (such as debris, litter and fallen trees) removed, ensuring the condition of the watercourse is better than initially found. This is irrespective of the proposed method of surface water disposal, particularly if an ordinary watercourse is riparian owned.
- 7) The applicant should consider ensuring that the development meets the criteria for “secured by design”
- 8) Notification of intention to connect to the public sewer under S106 of the Water Industry Act Approval and consent will be required by Anglian Water, under the Water Industry Act 1991. Contact Development Services Team 0345 606 6087 Option 2
- 9) Protection of existing assets - A public sewer is shown on record plans within the land identified for the proposed development. It appears that development

proposals will affect existing public sewers. It is recommended that the applicant contacts Anglian Water Development Services Team for further advice on this matter. Building over existing public sewers will not be permitted (without agreement) from Anglian Water.

- 10) Building near to a public sewer - No building will be permitted within the statutory easement width of 3 metres from the pipeline without agreement from Anglian Water. Please contact Development Services Team on 0345 606 6087 Option 2
- 11) The developer should note that the site drainage details submitted have not been approved for the purposes of adoption. If the developer wishes to have the sewers included in a sewer adoption agreement with Anglian Water (under Sections 104 of the Water Industry Act 1991), they should contact our Development Services Team on 0345 606 6087 Option 2 at the earliest opportunity. Sewers intended for adoption should be designed and constructed in accordance with Sewers for Adoption guide for developers, as supplemented by Anglian Water's requirements
- 12) Due to the site being within 6km of Cambridge City Airport the crane operator is required to submit all crane details such as maximum height, operating radius, name and phone number of site manager along with installation and dismantling dates to the CAA Airspace Coordination and Obstacle Management Service (ACOMS) system.
- 13) Cadent Gas Ltd own and operate the gas infrastructure within the area of your development. There may be a legal interest (easements and other rights) in the land that restrict activity in proximity to Cadent assets in private land. The applicant must ensure that the proposed works do not infringe on legal rights of access and or restrictive covenants that exist.

If buildings or structures are proposed directly above the apparatus the development may only take place following diversion of the apparatus. The applicant should apply online to have apparatus diverted in advance of any works, by visiting cadentgas.com/diversions

Prior to carrying out works, including the construction of access points, please register on www.linesearchbeforeudig.co.uk to submit details of the planned works for review, ensuring requirements are adhered to.

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IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

AC-2025-LON-xxxx

KING’S BENCH DIVISION

PLANNING COURT

B E T W E E N :

THE KING

(on the application of CHRIST’S LANE ACTION GROUP)

Claimant

and

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

Defendant

and

CHRIST’S COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE

Interested Party

STATEMENT OF FACTS AND GROUNDS

Preliminaries

References	[CB/x] = page in the claim bundle
Essential reading (2 hours)	• Historic England’s first [CB/161] and second [CB/176] consultation responses • Officer’s report to Committee and amendment/de-brief sheet [CB/63 and 133]

INTRODUCTION

1. The Claimant seeks permission to challenge the Defendant’s decision to grant planning permission in respect of the Interested Party’s planning application 25/02161/FUL for development described as “Demolition of 1970s library and

replacement with new library and social and study spaces and including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library (and associated development)”.

2. The planning application was considered by the Defendant’s Planning Committee (‘the Committee’) on 29 October 2025. The decision notice was issued on 7 November 2025 [CB/141].
3. In determining the application, the Defendant was subject to the statutory duty in s. 66(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to “have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting”.
4. Listed Building Consent (‘LBC’) was also required for the demolition of the existing library and various internal works. The Interested Party applied for LBC under reference 25/02162/LBC. The LBC application was the subject of a separate report to Committee, a separate presentation by the case officer, and a separate resolution and decision. It was considered after the Committee had already resolved to grant planning permission. For the avoidance of doubt, the Claimant does not seek to challenge the LBC decision.
5. The Claimant is an unincorporated association of individuals, who have joined together for the common purpose of seeking to protect the amenity, heritage, and environmental interests of Christ’s Lane and the surrounding historic core of Cambridge. The Claimant has consistently objected to the Interested Party’s proposals to redevelop its library and submitted several objections to the scheme, which has now been granted planning permission and listed building consent.
6. In summary, the Claimant contends that the Defendant’s decision was legally flawed in the way it dealt with heritage matters. The Defendant’s statutory duty was not lawfully discharged. The following grounds are pursued:

Ground 1 – The Committee was materially misled as to Historic England’s (‘HE’) advice. The statutory consultee had identified harm arising from the bulk and overall massing of the proposal, and advised that

this remained “unchanged” following scheme amendments. The Committee was materially misdirected as to HE’s position by the officer’s report and presentation. An incomplete and misleading summary of their advice was given, which omitted to mention that HE had identified harm arising from the proposal.

Ground 2 - The Committee was materially misled as to the existence and/or extent of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets.

The report to committee provided confusing and inconsistent advice as to whether there was harm to the listed building that needed to be outweighed in a para 215 public benefits balance commensurate with harm to Grade I significance, or whether the impact on the listed building was ‘neutral’ – meaning that there is by definition no ‘harm’ to engage para 215. The attempt in the report to do both simultaneously is a legal misdirection that risks diluting the mandatory weight to harm. Further inconsistent advice was given during the Committee meeting itself.

Ground 3 - The Committee took into account an irrelevant consideration - optimum viable use (‘OVU’).

The Committee was advised that the proposal would “help to secure the listed building’s optimum viable use”. The NPPF identifies OVU as a particular type of public benefit and further guidance is provided in the PPG. The Defendant’s decision was based on a misunderstanding/misapplication of the PPG, was unsupported by any evidence and was based on flawed logic. The continuation of an existing, baseline, OVU cannot lawfully be elevated into a distinct public benefit capable of outweighing heritage harm.

Ground 4 - The Committee failed to take into account a relevant consideration – the existence of less harmful alternative modes of development.

The Defendant’s position is that harm to the setting of the listed building was clearly identified. That being the case, the possibility of that harm being reduced or avoided through an alternative scheme or

mode of development was a material consideration. There were realistic modes of development that could reduce/avoid harm, but the Committee was not advised of their relevance and they were not considered.

7. The Claimant complied with the pre-action protocol ('PAP'). Its PAP letter contained a detailed explanation of the relevant facts and proposed grounds of challenge [CB/307], which are now replicated below in substantially the same terms. Both parties responded to the PAP letter [CB/334 and 344], and the Claimant has sought to address their arguments within this document.

AARHUS CONVENTION CLAIM

8. The proposed claim falls within the scope of the Aarhus Convention. Both the Defendant and the Interested Party have accepted this in their PAP responses. However, they argue that because the Claimant is an unincorporated association full financial details need to be provided for each member of the association, because they would be personally liable for any debts [CB/335 and 344].
9. CPR 46.25 provides:

“(1) Subject to paragraph (2), rules 46.26 to 46.28 apply where a claimant who is a member of the public has—

(a) stated in the claim form that the claim is an Aarhus Convention claim; and

(b) filed and served with the claim form a schedule of the claimant's financial resources, which is verified by a statement of truth and provides details of—

(i) the claimant's significant assets, liabilities, income and expenditure; and

(ii) in relation to any financial support which any person has provided or is likely to provide to the claimant, the aggregate

amount which has been provided and which is likely to be provided.”

10. The Claimant is an unincorporated association. There is no doubt that an unincorporated association is entitled to bring a claim for judicial review, notwithstanding that it lacks legal personality: *Aireborough Neighbourhood Development Forum v Leeds City Council* [2020] EWHC 45 Admin. The Defendant and the Interested Party do not suggest otherwise.
11. The requirement in CPR 46.25(1)(b) is to provide details of the claimant's financial resources, along with details of financial support which any other person “has provided or is likely to provide”. The Claimant has complied with this requirement. The financial schedule sets out details of the Claimant’s assets, liabilities and expenditure and the support which has been and is likely to be provided by supporters in the form of donations [CB/58]. The schedule also confirms that the Claimant’s funds are held in a community bank account used exclusively for its activities and are ring-fenced. It demonstrates that the Claimant has sufficient funds to meet a liability of up to £10,000, commensurate with the applicable costs cap for persons who are not claiming “only as an individual”.
12. Neither the Defendant nor the Interested Party provide any authority whatsoever to support the proposition that individuals who are not the Claimant are required to provide full financial disclosure. Such a requirement is unprecedented and contrary to the underlying purpose of the Aarhus Convention and the relevant parts of the CPR.
13. For the above reasons, the Claimant seeks an order limiting its liability for costs to £10,000, and a reciprocal cap on the Defendant’s liability of £35,000.

RELEVANT FACTS

The application site and designated heritage assets

14. Christ's College is located in the historic core of the City Centre, immediately east of St. Andrew's Street. The College itself was founded in 1505 and is one of the oldest Cambridge Colleges. The existing two-storey library was built in 1976. The south-eastern elevation of the library abuts Christ's Lane, a busy pedestrian thoroughfare (and public right of way) linking St Andrew's Street with Christ's Pieces and the Drummer Street bus station. The north-western elevation of the library opens into Bath Court, a small and enclosed courtyard to the rear of the South Range of First Court. The library connects into the 19th Century Bodley Library, which stands at the end of the West Range of First Court, on the corner of Christ's Lane and St Andrew's Street. The application site is shown on the submitted site plan [CB/62].

15. Part of Christ's College is designated as a Grade I listed building. The full list description is contained in the Applicant's Heritage Statement. The listing applies to "The Buildings surrounding Entrance Court, with the South-East range of Second Court". The Bodley Library is part of the listed building. The existing 1970s library and other buildings at the eastern end of Bath Court are not within the listing. They are considered to be 'curtilage listed' (s. 1(5) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990), but are not identified as being of historic or architectural interest in their own right.

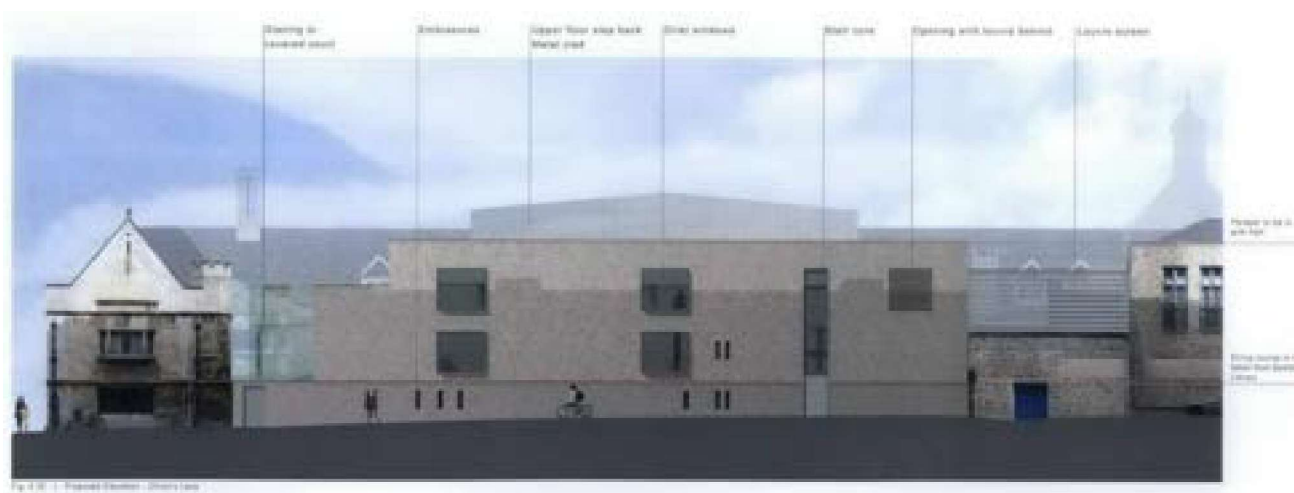
16. In addition, Christ's College is designated as a Registered Park and Garden (Grade II) and falls within the Central Conservation Area. Many surrounding buildings within and outside the College grounds are also listed.

2011 and 2016 schemes

17. In May 2011 the Interested Party applied for planning permission and listed building consent to demolish the 1970s library and replace it with a new building ("the 2011 scheme"). It was proposed that the replacement library would

included a basement level and four above-ground storeys. There was to be a new bridge link to the Bodley Library with glazed sliding doors, a glazed bridge link between the new library and the South Range of First Court, and a glazed ‘roof’ to Bath Court.

18. The Christ’s Lane elevation was illustrated as follows in the submitted Design and Access Statement (p.49):



19. English Heritage did not object to the 2011 scheme, although they raised concerns around the proposed glazed doors linking to the Bodley Library.

20. The officer’s report to Committee in respect of the 2011 scheme [CB/95] concluded that it was compliant with policy 4/10, which required amongst other things that the proposed development did not “harm any aspects of the building(s) interests or to allow these to be reversible”, and where there was harm “that this is the least damaging of the potential options and that there are clear benefits for the structure, interest or use of the building(s) or wider public benefit” [CB/259], para 8.56. The report identified English Heritage’s concerns about the glazed doors, but determined that conditions should be imposed “to control the detailed execution of these elements to seek the best available solutions” [CB/257], para 8.45. It concluded that the scale and massing of the proposed building would “not be harmful to the character and setting” of the listed buildings [CB/252], para 8.22, and that overall the scheme would “protect the special interests” of the

Grade I listed buildings [CB/265], para 9.1. Planning permission and listed building consent were granted in July 2013, but the 2011 scheme was not implemented.

21. Identical applications for planning permission and listed building consent were re-submitted in April 2016 (the 2016 scheme”). The officer’s report in respect of the 2016 scheme [CB/267] noted that the national policy context had changed with publication of the NPPF and PPG. Again, the report found that the “scale and massing” of the building would not harm the character or setting of the listed buildings [CB/290], para 8.27. The report discussed the fact that the Defendant’s Urban Design and Conservation team (but not Historic England or the Design and Conservation Panel) had described the proposed bridge between the new library and the South Range as “unacceptable” [CB/294], paras 8.43, 8.48. The officer concluded that the benefits outweighed the less than substantial harm caused by the bridge, such that the proposal was acceptable [CB/298], para 8.65. Planning permission and listed building consent were granted on 7 September 2016, but the 2016 scheme was not implemented.

2025 scheme

22. The Interested Party submitted fresh applications for planning permission and listed building consent in June 2025. These proposed an alternative design for the new library, which had followed an architectural competition in 2023/24 (“the 2025 scheme”). Section 3.2 of the Design and Access Statement described two key differences between the 2025 scheme and the earlier 2011 and 2016 schemes:

“The new library proposals no longer include a basement, as there were concerns that a basement construction in Bath Court would have a negative impact on the sensitive historic fabric of the building ranges that enclose the court on two sides. The carbon intensity of providing a new basement was also taken into account in the new design, opting for a more

sustainable option without a new basement floor ... While the originally approved plans proposed a four storey library and the new library retains this number of floors, the upper floors have extended, with a longer 37.5m elevation at this scale facing Christ's Lane. It is also planned to have Bath Court open to the air and not enclosed or with a glazed roof, as had been originally proposed in the 2011/2016 design, thereby avoiding any potentially damaging contacts with the existing historic fabric."

23. The Christ's Lane elevation was illustrated as follows in the submitted Design and Access Statement (p.14 - extract):



24. The applications were accompanied by a Heritage Statement. The concluding section of this document is provided at [CB/156]. The Heritage Statement which concluded that the proposed development would "cumulatively" cause "a small degree of adverse impact (and harm) to the significance and setting of the Grade I listed Christ's College building ranges", but also "some clear heritage benefits and enhancements resulting from the proposed development" [CB/156], para 6.4. It concluded:

"... the proposed development would result in a small amount or low level of heritage harm, but will also result in clear heritage benefits resulting from aspects of the proposals to the Grade I listed building ranges and within their setting. On balance, and taking into account the clear benefit/enhancement to the character and appearance of the

Conservation Area, it is considered identified heritage harm is outweighed by the resulting heritage benefits and enhancements. Thus, it is identified that the character, appearance and/or significance (and setting) of the designated heritage assets, which have been scoped in as relevant to the proposed development, would, in overall terms, be sustained or otherwise materially unaffected by the proposed development. This would accord with paragraphs 212 and 213 of the NPPF.

In this way, paragraphs 214-215 of the NPPF in relation to potential heritage harm do not apply ..." [CB/158], paras 6.16 - 17

25. The Defendant consulted on the 2025 scheme.

26. On 15 July 2025 the Claimant submitted a petition calling for the application to be considered at the Defendant's Development Control Forum, arguing that the proposed library design was "a tall bulky building that is vastly disproportionate to its surroundings, would lead to harm to the heritage setting, specifically the neighbouring Grade I listed buildings, in a Cambridge core conservation area", and that changes should be made.

27. Historic England responded to the consultation on 29 July 2025 [CB/161]. The letter should be read in full, but key extracts are provided here:

"New building

...

The removal of the basement and glazed enclosure have removed instances of harm to the significance of the listed college. However, the resulting increased massing brings other instances of harm, as it puts considerable pressure on the surrounding buildings forming Bath Court. The building feels too big, overdominant on this space, particularly in its relationship with the south range of first court and the Bodley Library.

Similarly, the increased height towards Christ's Lane feels quite large when seen alongside the relatively modest elevations of the college. This impact is evidenced in the visualisations presented, particularly those looking towards St Andrew's Street.

Internal Works

...

The most contentious aspect here would be the introduction of a large wash-up pod in the historic buttery, a highly significant space within the 16th century building. It would require enclosing and lining a large section of the room, alongside the introduction of ductwork and pipework. Albeit this room has been already modified to adapt it to its current use as offices, its conversion into a wash up area would strongly affect the character of this space and ability to understand its historic plan form.

...

Historic England position

The introduction of a new primary building of the massing proposed within what historically was a domestic kitchen garden is challenging. Whilst we acknowledge the proposals represent a more contextual approach and the architectural quality of the scheme, we are of the view that the building is too big for its location.

...

Changes introduced to the western end of the building (staircase, prayer room and landscaping) have improved the relationship of the building with the Bodley.

The treatment to Christ's Lane has also been refined and simplified from the competition and subsequent designs discussed at pre-application stage. The wall level which initially aligned with the Bodley's stringcourse

has been now lifted up to turret level. Whilst this simplifies the design and improves the building's own proportions, it feels more overbearing in its relationship with the Bodley and evidences the difficulties to accommodate a building which is too large for what is a very domestic setting.

...

To summarise and conclude, in their present form, the proposals would result in certain levels of harm to the significance of the listed building, primarily as a result of the excessive bulk of the new building, which we consider would detract from the setting of the surrounding buildings.

The proposals would be bulkier than those that were previously granted consent. We also acknowledge the benefits of removing the basement and glazing from the court and the architectural merits of the current scheme. With this in mind, we do not wish to object to the application but would strongly encourage that massing is further reduced so it sits better within this context.

Should the Council be minded to grant permission for the proposals in their current form, we would ask that refinements are introduced to the chimney/ventilation stacks so that their bulk is reduced as far as practicable. Clarity should also be given in relation to how their height would sit alongside the chapel turret, as we consider the prominence of the latter should remain unchallenged - and bearing in mind that the massing of these elements would be larger than traditional chimney stacks. Ideally, the combined lift and ventilation shaft would be reduced to match the adjacent shafts, if possible.

In relation to the wash-up pod. The Council should be satisfied that the proposed solution represents the least harmful option, and that other more sympathetic solutions are not possible. You should also be satisfied

that the adaptation of the space for the proposed use would not have any adverse impacts on sensitive early historic fabric.”

28. The Defendant’s Conservation Officer also responded to the consultation on 27 July 2025 [CB/166]. The officer raised concern regarding the height of the chimneys, which were described as “excessive and unjustified” due to the harm they would cause to the setting of the grade I listed building when viewed from First Court. Concern was also raised about the kitchen layout. The Conservation Officer identified that less than substantial harm at a moderate level and recommended that “amendments are made to address the above points”.

Scheme amendments

29. On 27 August 2025 the Interested Party submitted amended plans and explanatory documents. The amendments were explained in a letter from the Interested Party’s heritage consultants [CB/172]. In summary, the changes were:

- a. A reduction in the height of the proposed chimneys of c. 900mm and the introduction of vertical slots to provide additional ventilation and “break up the bulk” of the stacks. It was noted that the proposed chimney height was now “virtually identical to the heights presented at a previous pre-application meeting (considered acceptable by the Conservation Officer)”.
- b. The kitchen space was reconfigured, with the wash-up area moving into the main kitchen to allow “more benign office uses to remain in the old buttery”, although it was noted that this “has compromised some of the functional enhancements which the College were seeking”.

30. The Defendant carried out a further consultation on the proposed amendments.

31. Historic England responded to the second consultation on 1 September 2025 [CB/176]. Their letter stated:

“An additional set of plans has been submitted in support of this application. The overall massing of the building remains unchanged but revisions have been introduced to the chimney/ventilation stacks and the position of the wash up pod, which were raised in our letter of advice dated 29 July 2025.

The height of the ventilation stacks has been reduced 90cm; further louvered slots have been added to the side and rear elevations to compensate for the loss ventilation area; this also helps to break up the mass of these elements.

The wash up area has been relocated within the kitchen space, with the former buttery now accommodating the chef’s offices. This is a more benign use of the space which would require less alteration, allowing the character of the space - and legibility of plan form - to be better retained.

We fully appreciate the challenges of trying to accommodate an ambitious program within the constraints of the existing space, and welcome the additional work carried out in response to consultation feedback.

We are of the opinion that if the height of the staircase turret could similarly be slightly reduced, this would better retain the prominence of the reduced chimney/ventilation stacks. This in turn would improve the relationship of the building with the Bodley library and its perceived bulk in views from St Andrew’s Street. We would encourage this is considered.

Overall, Historic England welcomes the revisions introduced to the scheme and retains its position of no objection.”

32. The Defendant’s Conservation Officer also provided a further consultation response on 18 September 2025 [CB/178]. The officer said that the changes to the

chimneys had “satisfactorily addressed the previous concerns in relation to the setting of First Court and can therefore be supported”. The changes to the kitchen area also addressed earlier concerns. The officer identified a “degree of harm” from the “change in scale between the proposed stair tower and the southern end of the Bodley Library”, but also stated that “the principle and scale of the stair tower is accepted” and that “The overall scale of the building, including the stair tower, is not considered inappropriate or harmful in relation the college and conservation area more widely”. The Conservation Officer concluded that there would be less than substantial harm to the listed building “at the lower end of the scale”, such that “NPPF paragraph 215 is engaged”. The officer said that that harm was “clearly and convincingly justified” and that the proposal “includes public benefits in the form of heritage benefits and the works overall would help to secure the building’s optimum viable use”. The officer concluded that “the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area”.

33. The proposals were considered at the Defendant’s Development Control Forum on 11 September 2025. The Interested Party, the Claimant, supporting petitioners, a ward councillor and the case officer all addressed members of the planning committee.

34. On 26 September 2025 the Interested Party’s heritage consultants wrote to the Defendant [CB/183], summarising their responses to comments that had been raised by other parties. The letter specifically addressed comments made by objectors at the Development Control Forum about the assessment of heritage impact and weighting of harm against benefits. The consultants said that “On a scheme such as this where numerous heritage assets have the potential to be impacted in various ways, the overall heritage impacts need to be considered and only then can the ‘paragraph 215’ balance be applied” [CB/189], para 43. The letter noted that the Conservation Officer had identified a low level of less than substantial harm, although had found it to be justified, and stated that “Our assessment of heritage impact is done slightly differently as we assess whether

the works would be beneficial or harmful to each asset and we arrive at the conclusion that overall the works are beneficial” [CB/191], para 56.

35. On 21 October 2025 the Claimant submitted consultation responses formally objecting to the 2025 scheme [CB/194]. The objection letter was accompanied by a planning assessment prepared by HGH Consulting and a heritage assessment authored by Alec Forshaw IHBC, MRTPI, MA (Cantab). The Claimant also submitted a “Critical review and alternative design proposal” developed by Create Streets [CB/209]. The stated purpose of this document was “to show how a new library on the site can be a better fit for Christ’s Lane while retaining the important function of being a library”. It was noted that the proposals were “not definitive but rather seek to show a design that presents an attractive, more contextual response” and took as their starting point the “massing and scale” of the 2016 scheme.

Consideration by the planning committee

36. The 2025 scheme was considered by the Defendant’s Planning Committee on 29 October 2025. The Committee was provided with a report from the case officer, setting out the proposed development and the consultation responses that had been received and analysing and providing advice on the various planning issues [CB/63]. The officer recommended that the planning application be approved, subject to conditions.

37. Following publication of the committee report, the Claimant sent rebuttal documents to the Defendant, from CLAG itself and from Mr Forshaw, taking issue with various parts of the officer’s assessment.

38. An amendment/de-brief sheet was prepared by the case officer before the meeting, to update the report [CB/133]. This identified that “Five total further representations have been received by or on behalf of the Christs Lane Action Group (CLAG)”. The officer summarised these documents and provided brief

responses. The five documents appear to be those submitted on 21 October 2025 [CB/133]; the rebuttal documents were not mentioned.

39. During the committee meeting the case officer presented the application and advised the Committee on the planning balance to be struck. There was a lengthy discussion, during which the case officer was specifically asked to advise on the issue of public benefits, and gave further advice on balancing heritage harms and benefits. A recording of the meeting is available and a link is provided on the Defendant's website, but no transcript is available and the printed minutes do not summarise the discussion. All parties have referred to comments made by speakers during the meeting (the Defendant and Interested Party in PAP correspondence). It is not anticipated that it will prove necessary to obtain a full transcript in order to determine the claim, but that my need to be reconsidered in the event permission is granted.

RELEVANT LAW AND POLICY

Statutory duty

40. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or the Secretary of State "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"

41. The discharge of this statutory duty has been described as "a demanding duty for a decision-maker, whose rigour has been repeatedly emphasised in the case law": *East Quayside 12 LLP v Newcastle upon Tyne City Council* [2023] EWCA Civ 359.

42. Paragraph 215 NPPF provides that "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”.

43. There is no single correct approach to determining the harm to an asset. Despite not being required to do so, a decision-maker may lawfully carry out an internal balance of heritage-related benefits and heritage-related harm in order to determine whether harm exists to the asset overall (or whether harm has been ‘neutralised’): *City and Country Bramshill Ltd v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government* [2021] 1 WLR 5761 (CA). Whatever approach is used, the decision maker must attach “considerable importance and weight” to any finding of harm to a heritage asset: *East Northamptonshire DC v Secretary of State* [2015] 1 WLR 45 (CA).

Challenges based on content of officers’ reports

44. The principles to be applied when considering a challenge to a planning officer’s report were summarised in *R (Mansell) v Tonbridge & Malling BC* [2019] PTSR 1452 (CA), paragraph 42:

- a. Planning officers reports to committee are not to be read with undue rigour, but with reasonable benevolence, and bearing in mind that they are written for councillors with local knowledge.
- b. Unless there is evidence to suggest otherwise, it may reasonably be assumed that, if the members followed the officer’s recommendation, they did so on the basis of the advice that he or she gave.
- c. The question for the court will always be whether, on a fair reading of the report as a whole, the officer has materially misled the members on a matter bearing upon their decision, and the error has gone uncorrected before the decision was made.

- d. Minor or inconsequential errors may be excused. It is only if the advice in the officer's report is such as to misdirect the members in a material way – so that, but for the flawed advice it was given, the committee's decision would or might have been different – that the court will be able to conclude that the decision itself was rendered unlawful by that advice.
- e. Where the line is drawn between an officer's advice that is significantly or seriously misleading – misleading in a material way – and advice that is misleading but not significantly so will always depend on the context and circumstances in which the advice was given, and on the possible consequences of it ... But unless there is some distinct and material defect in the officer's advice, the court will not interfere.

45. A failure to provide accurate and complete information about consultation responses provided by individuals or bodies with expertise in the conservation of heritage assets may lead to a decision being quashed. The purpose of consulting such individuals and bodies is so that the local planning authority can “draw upon that expertise”, to provide assistance in discharging its duty under s.66(1): see *R (Loader) v Rother DC* [2016] EWCA Civ 795 and *R (Liverpool Open and Green Spaces CIC) v Liverpool CC* [2020] EWCA Civ 861. Although there is no requirement to repeat such advice verbatim, a summary must not materially mislead members as to the substance of the advice; it should still communicate the ‘gist’ or the ‘main points’: *R (Zins) v East Suffolk Council* [2020] EWHC 2850 (Admin).

46. In *R (Kinsey) v LB Lewisham* [2021] EWHC 1286 (Admin) a committee report had failed to mention that the Council's Senior Conservation Officer had been consulted and provided detailed comments, and a formal objection. Although the report summarised the SCO's comments, there were “some significant omissions and changes”, including the omission of several comments which identified harmful impacts and the judgement was of “moderate” harm. The omissions meant that members had an “incomplete picture”.

47. Internal inconsistency within a committee report on the existence of heritage harm can be a basis for quashing a permission. In *R (Widdington Parish Council) v Uttlesford DC* [2023] EWHC 1709 (Admin) the report had identified harm to a listed building, but later concluded that the significance of all listed buildings would be preserved. The Court found that there was no internally consistent analysis which could support the overall conclusion of no harm, such that there was “flawed logic” within the report and this was “not corrected before planning permission was granted”.

Optimum viable use

48. Paragraph 215 NPPF provides that less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal “including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”.

49. Paragraph 015 of the Historic Environment section of the PPG is as follows:

“What is the optimum viable use for a heritage asset and how is it taken into account in planning decisions?”

The vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation.

By their nature, some heritage assets have limited or even no economic end use. A scheduled monument in a rural area may preclude any use of the land other than as a pasture, whereas a listed building may potentially have a variety of alternative uses such as residential, commercial and leisure.

In a small number of cases a heritage asset may be capable of active use in theory but be so important and sensitive to change that alterations to accommodate a viable use would lead to an unacceptable loss of significance.

It is important that any use is viable, not just for the owner, but also for the future conservation of the asset: a series of failed ventures could result in a number of unnecessary harmful changes being made to the asset.

If there is only one viable use, that use is the optimum viable use. If there is a range of alternative economically viable uses, the optimum viable use is the one likely to cause the least harm to the significance of the asset, not just through necessary initial changes, but also as a result of subsequent wear and tear and likely future changes. The optimum viable use may not necessarily be the most economically viable one. Nor need it be the original use. However, if from a conservation point of view there is no real difference between alternative economically viable uses, then the choice of use is a decision for the owner, subject of course to obtaining any necessary consents.

Harmful development may sometimes be justified in the interests of realising the optimum viable use of an asset, notwithstanding the loss of significance caused, and provided the harm is minimised. The policy on addressing substantial and less than substantial harm is set out in paragraphs 193 to 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework.”

Relevance of alternative proposals

50. Although there is not general requirement to consider alternative development proposals when assessing planning applications; where a proposal would cause harm to a heritage asset then the possibility of the harm being reduced or avoided

by development on an alternative site, or through an alternative design or “mode of development”, is a material consideration: *R (Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks DC* [2015] JPL 22 para 56, *Gibson v Waverley BC* [2015] EWHC 3784 (Admin), para 70, *City and County Bramshill Ltd v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government* [2019] EWHC 3437 (Admin) para 86 (in a passage not doubted by the Court of Appeal).

GROUPS OF CHALLENGE

Ground 1 – The Committee was materially misled as to Historic England’s advice.

51. As set out above, there were two consultation responses from HE. The committee report summarised HE’s position between paras 6.19-6.21, in the following terms [CB/77]:

“Historic England - No Objection

6.19 The changes made introducing louvered slots and reducing the height of the chimneys helps to break up the massing of these elements. The re-location of the wash up area allowing better retention of a historic part of the building.

6.20 We fully appreciate the challenges of trying to accommodate an ambitious program within the constraints of the existing space, and welcome the additional work carried out in response to consultation feedback.

6.21 Overall, a position of no objection is retained, with the suggestion that the height of the staircase turret is reduced.”

52. That summary was materially misleading as to the substance of HE’s position and the expert advice it had provided. It failed to accurately communicate the ‘gist’ of the advice. In particular:

- a. It only summarized HE's second letter, which was directed towards two specific amendments to the 2025 scheme, and not the first letter which addressed the scheme as a whole;
- b. In summarising HE's second letter, the officer omitted the reference to the 'overall massing remaining unchanged' (cf. [CB/176]), which would have indicated the existence of earlier concerns about that issue that were unresolved;
- c. It failed to advise the committee that, although HE had not formally objected, they had identified harm to the listed building and setting of surrounding buildings arising from the "excessive bulk" of the building which they considered "too big"; and they had "strongly encouraged" that the massing be reduced.
- d. It repeated HE's suggestion that the height of the staircase turret could be reduced, but failed to advise that the reason for that suggestion was that it would "improve the relationship of the building with the Bodley library and its perceived bulk in views from St Andrew's Street".

53. In their PAP responses both the Defendant and the Interested Party argue that the summary of HE's position does make clear that there had been an earlier consultation response, relying in particular on the reference to the position of no objection being "retained" [CB/336, 348] and the reference to the changes 'helping' to break up the massing as indicating that an earlier issue remained unresolved [CB/349]. Even if that was adequate to alert the Committee to the existence of an earlier consultation response, they were not told anything about the substance of that response.

54. The Defendant refers to the fact that consultation responses were available on the Defendant's website and "accessible to members of the Planning Committee". This is not good enough, and notably the Interested Party does not seek to rely on

this fact. The role of the report is to advise the Committee and to pull together relevant material. It contained summaries of all consultation responses. There is no evidence that members of the Committee reviewed, or were advised that they needed to review, the underlying letters and no reason why they would do so. In the absence of such evidence, it cannot be assumed that the Committee had regard to the consultation responses themselves: see *R (Save Stonehenge World Heritage Site Ltd v Secretary of State for Transport* [2024] EWCA Civ 1227, paras 95-100. The same point applies to the content of a letter from the Claimant's heritage consultant dated October 2025 which quoted from HE's first consultation response. The Defendant suggests this was "before the Planning Committee" [CB/337] – but it was not provided in the report pack, or with the amendment/de-brief sheet, and the Committee was not advised to read it.

55. The incomplete and misleading summary of HE's position in paragraphs 6.19-21 of the report was compounded by paragraph 14.33, within the conclusion on heritage matters, where the officer said:

"In line with comments received from Historic England and the Council's Conservation officer, who raise no objection to the development, the development is not considered to result in any overall harm to the relevant heritage assets, applying paragraph 215 of the NPPF". [CB/101]

56. The reasonable reader would interpret this as a statement that HE was in agreement with the conclusion that there would be no overall heritage harm, applying para 215 NPPF. This was factually incorrect, and positively misleading. HE had identified the existence of harm, arising from the "excessive bulk" of the proposed new library and its "overbearing" relationship with the Bodley library, and had pointed out that this remained unchanged despite the scheme amendments. Furthermore, HE did not purport to 'apply paragraph 215 NPPF', and did not carry out any sort of balancing exercise of harms against benefits.

57. Overall the report was seriously misleading as to HE's position. As in *Kinsey*, members were not given a complete picture. This was not corrected by the officer either in the amendment sheet or at the meeting itself. The fact that one public speaker (Mr Hepher, on behalf of the Claimant) made one reference to the proposal being "regarded by Historic England as causing harm to designated assets" was not legally capable of correcting the error (cf. both PAP responses, [CB/338 and 349]).

58. The seriousness of the error is exacerbated by the fact that HE is a statutory consultee and the Government's expert adviser on heritage. It is well established that the views of a statutory consultee such as HE should be given great weight and a decision maker should not depart from them unless there are "cogent and compelling reasons": *Visao Ltd v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government* [2019] EWHC 276 (Admin), para 23. That makes it particularly important that decision makers are given a complete and accurate summary of the advice so that they can have regard to it in discharging their duty under s.66.

Ground 2 – The Committee was materially misled as to the existence and/or extent of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets

59. The Applicant's heritage consultants were clearly advocating an 'internal heritage balance' approach in the Heritage Statement, weighing up harm to the listed building against identified heritage benefits to reach a conclusion that overall the significance of the designated heritage assets would be sustained or materially unaffected, such that paras 214-215 NPPF were not engaged. This was further confirmed in their letter of 27 September 2025.

60. As the *Bramshill* case confirms, the officer was entitled to follow the Applicant in carrying out an internal heritage balance if he judged that to be appropriate, alternatively he could have chosen to balance the heritage harm against the benefits (including heritage benefits) under para 215. But he could not rationally apply both approaches at the same time. Whichever approach he took, it needed

to be clear and consistent to ensure that the committee was correctly advised as to the existence and degree of any harm and able to correctly weigh the benefits.

61. The committee was instead provided with inconsistent and confusing advice on this issue:

- a. In respect of the listed building, the report contains a finding of less than substantial harm at the lower end, restricted to the setting of the Bodley Library [CB/98], paras 14.14-15. The officer correctly cites para 215 NPPF and the need to weigh harm against public benefits including securing the optimum viable use [CB/99], para 14.18.
- b. The report concludes that the scheme would “help to secure the ongoing use of the listed buildings for their intended educational use” and that there would be public benefits in (i) the enhancement of façade compared to existing 1970s building and (ii) the provision of large public bench [CB/99], paras 14.19-20.
- c. The report also identifies an enhancement to the significance of College heritage assets, through facilitating the continued use of Bodley Library and allowing glimpsed views into a reconfigured Bath Court [CB/100], para 14.22.
- d. The report then refers to the overall impact on listed building as “being neutral” [CB/100], para 14.23.
- e. In conclusion on the heritage issue, the report again states that there would be lower level less than substantial harm, and that this is clearly and convincingly justified and secures the optimum viable use. It then states that the “overall impact upon the relevant listed buildings” is neutral and would “preserve their special historic and architectural interest” in accordance with s. 66 [CB/101], para 14.31. This is a clear finding of no harm. The officer then states that there will be no “overall harm to the

relevant heritage assets, applying para 215 NPPF”, and notes the public benefits of “enhancements to the Christ’s Lane façade and provision of integrated seating along Christ’s Lane [CB/101], para 14.33.

- f. In the overall planning balance the officer (i) repeats the finding of less than (ii) states that there is clear and convincing justification and the development helps secure the optimum viable use of the building (iii) finds enhancement to other elements of the listed building (iv) overall finds that the development preserves the significance and setting of the listed building (v) finds enhancements to the Conservation Area and Registered Park and Garden (vi) concludes that the impact on heritage assets is neutral with no overall harm (vii) identifies public benefits of the bench and public art, but says these are attributed “limited positive weight” [CB/118], paras 24.3-7.

62. Thus in some places the report advises that there is harm, and that this needs to be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. However in other places the report advises that there is no overall harm, and that the impact is neutral. These two conclusions are logically inconsistent.

63. The amendment sheet provided some clarification [CB/134], confirming that “the proposed development is only considered to result in heritage harm to the setting of the Bodley Library” and that “given heritage harm is identified”, para 215 NPPF applies. The officer advised that the public benefits proposed “in addition to securing the optimum viable use of the buildings are considered to be sufficient to outweigh the harm”.

64. However, confusion and inconsistency was re-introduced during the Committee meeting itself. The officer was asked to comment on public benefits and he said (timestamp 3:22) that :

“there is a balance to be made in that there is harm identified to an aspect of the overall Grade I site, that being said the overall harm is considered to be neutral, in that the harm to setting of Bodley is outweighed by other heritage benefits. Nevertheless because there is harm identified, public benefits need to be provided including securing the viable use of the site. These are the enhancements to the public realm along Christ’s Lane including provision of public bench and public art with increased public views from Christs Lane and through. Given the overall neutral heritage impact, these are considered sufficient to outweigh the harm in the planning balance”.

65. Again, the officer was saying that the overall impact was neutral, but at the same time that there was harm that needed to be outweighed. The findings of “less than substantial harm” and “neutral impact” are logically inconsistent and cannot be reconciled.

66. The cumulative effect of the inconsistent advice was to mislead the Committee on the discharge of their statutory duty under s. 66 and the policy in para 215 NPPF. If an internal heritage balance results in a conclusion of “neutral” impact (as the officer appeared to be advising), then there is no ‘harm’ to engage para 215 NPPF and no need to identify benefits to balance against it. Whereas a finding of harm to the significance of a Grade I listed building is a matter which must be given “great weight” as a matter of law and policy, and therefore requires commensurate public benefits to justify it .

67. In this case the committee report advised that the main public benefits were the bench and the public art, but that they were given “limited positive weight”. An additional benefit comprising “increased public views from Christs Lane and through” was identified during the meeting although it is not clear what this relates to or what weight the officer was placing on it. Members were advised that these benefits were sufficient to outweigh harm “given the overall neutral heritage impact”.

68. The overall effect was to minimise the existence or extent of heritage harm. Although the officer recited the statutory duties [CB/102], para 14.34, the treatment of harms vs. benefits provides a positive indication that the duties were not in substance performed. This compounds the error identified under Ground 1. Not only was the committee not told that HE had identified harm, they were also being advised that the harm/impact was ‘neutral’.
69. The committee were also incorrectly advised regarding the impact on the Registered Park and Garden (‘RPG’). The Applicant’s heritage statement had described the impact on the RPG as “neutral” [CB/157], para 6.11. At paragraph 14.24 the report concluded that there would be “no adverse harm” to the RPG (ie. a neutral impact) [CB/100]; but in paragraphs 14.32, 14.34 and 24.5 it was instead reported that there would be an “enhancement” to the RPG [CB/101-102 and 118]. The nature of this enhancement, and how it arose, was not explained. As in *Widdington* there is no internally consistent analysis which could support the overall conclusion of ‘enhancement’ and that conclusion was unsupported by any evidence.
70. The Defendant did not respond to this aspect of the claim in the PAP response, but repeated the argument that there would be enhancement of the RPG [CB/339], paras 21 and 24. The Interested Party states that “Whilst the proposals cause no impact on the RPG, at para 14.32 the OR sets out that there is an improved quality of the proposed design and materials as well as the new view into Bath Court” [CB/351], para 22. However, paragraph 14.32 of the report actually says “the proposed elevation to Christ’s Lane represents an enhancement to the conservation area due to the improved quality of the proposed design and materials as well as the new view into Bath Court” [CB/101]. The Claimant’s point stands – there is no explanation as to why the report advises both a neutral impact and an enhancement to the same asset.
71. This is particularly important in light of the Defendant’s argument in its PAP response that the report “sought to address the wider context when considering

impacts on the heritage assets taken as a whole, having acknowledged the less than substantial harm to the setting of one asset” and that “it was entirely proper and sensible for the OR to draw attention to the bigger picture when looking at the impact on designated heritage assets in the round”. This implies that harm to the listed building was weighed against enhancement to the RPG. But if there was no such enhancement, then this overall “in the round” balance was made on a flawed basis.

Ground 3 – The Committee took into account an irrelevant consideration – optimum viable use.

72. At paragraph 14.19 [CB/99] the committee report advises that:

“by proposing a significant increase and improvement in the library facilities available to students within the College site, it is bringing the library of the College up to date with the current requirements of the students. As considered through paragraph 215, officers consider that the proposed development would help to secure the ongoing use of the listed buildings for their intended, educational use.”

73. The point is repeated at paragraph 14.31 [CB/101] which provides:

“Whilst there is a level of harm identified to the highly significant Grade I listed Bodley Library, this harm, at the lower end of the less than substantial scale, is considered to have been clearly and convincingly justified. Additionally, as concluded by the Council’s Conservation Officer, the development of new increased library facilities would help to secure the listed building’s optimum viable use. The overall impact upon the relevant listed buildings is therefore considered to be neutral ...”

74. The point was again repeated in the overall conclusion at paragraph 24.4 [CB/118].

75. The Council fell into error by applying the concept of optimum viable use (“OVU”) to the 2025 scheme. This amounted to a misunderstanding or misapplication of the guidance in the PPG, for the following reasons:

- a. The buildings which are identified in the list description as being of special architectural and historic interest are those buildings surrounding the First Court, the Bodley Library and the South East range of the Second Court. These are the oldest parts of the College. They have been in their current use, as part of an educational institution, for hundreds of years. That is the use for which they were designed. There can be no question that the optimum viable use of the listed buildings as an educational institution is already secured, and that would continue to be the case regardless of whether the current library remains or is demolished and rebuilt in accordance with the 2025 scheme. It was therefore illogical and irrational to suggest that securing the OVU would be a benefit of the 2025 scheme justifying the harm that it would cause. There was no evidential basis or reasoning to explain how the new library could make any difference to the OVU of the listed building. The Interested Party did not advance a case that the scheme would secure, or even help to secure, the OVU; either in the Heritage Statement (see [CB/156] paras 6.4-6.6), or in the consultant’s letter of 27 September 2025 [CB/191] para 58 onwards. The point made in the Committee report was that the scheme would ‘bring the library up to date with the current requirements of students’; that does not provide a rational and logical basis for concluding that the 2025 scheme would deliver the benefit of securing the OVU.
- b. In its PAP response the Interested Party refers to evidence given orally by the Master of the College that the current library is “slowly falling down”, and states that this was “direct evidence from the College as to the doubtful future of the library and its use and its optimum viable use” [CB/25]. First, this is overstated and seeks to convert obvious rhetoric into evidence. The Applicant’s Heritage Assessment referred to the fact that the

current library has “not aged well” and that the “quality and condition of the existing building fabric has continued to age” since 2011 and 2016, but there was no evidence to suggest that the library structure was at risk. Second, the Interested Party’s PAP response falls into the same error as the Committee report in suggesting that the relevant issue was the OVU of the library, whereas in fact the concept of the OVU relates to the designated heritage asset – of which the existing library forms one part, and only by virtue of being curtilage listed.

- c. The NPPF identifies that “securing” the optimum viable use of a designated heritage asset is a type of public benefit. The committee report does not identify that a replacement library would secure the OVU of the listed buildings; only that it would “help” to do so. There is no explanation of how that would be the case, or why the design for the new library promoted in the 2025 scheme (or even the continued presence of the library in its current location) would be necessary or even relevant to helping secure the long term, viable use of the listed buildings.
- d. The PPG makes clear that securing the OVU is important for the “long term” and “future” conservation of heritage assets. But there was no evidence from which it could be concluded that the future conservation of the listed buildings was at risk due to the continued existence of the 1970’s library; or that the OVU of the listed buildings (ie. as part of an educational institution) might cease if permission were refused; or that the use of the listed buildings as part of the College would become unviable. As noted above, the Applicant did not advance any argument that securing the OVU was a benefit of the scheme. This point appears to derive solely from the Conservation Officer’s second consultation response of 18 September 2025 [CB/181] - but this contains no more than a bare assertion devoid of any explanation.

- e. The PPG says that “if there is only one viable use, that use is the optimum viable use”. It then suggests that it may be necessary to compare alternative viable uses to determine which is the “optimum” ie. least harmful. In this case, not only are the listed buildings already in their OVU, no alternative uses for the listed buildings was proposed or remotely on the table. Whilst there may be alternative designs for a new library, these are not alternative uses of the designated heritage asset.

76. Simply put, OVU was just not a relevant consideration in this case. The report advised the committee that this was a benefit of the 2025 scheme, but this was based on flawed logic/a misunderstanding of the concept at set out in the PPG and was unsupported by any evidence. The officer repeatedly asserted that the proposals would help to secure the OVU in the report, in the amendment sheet and during the Committee meeting itself. As a result, the committee was misled into taking account of an irrelevant consideration in applying s. 66 and para 215 NPPF, and in any event, one that was unsupported by evidence.

77. Both the Defendant and the Interested Party point out in their PAP responses that the improvements to library facilities, accessibility, sustainability and the environment of Bath Court were relevant considerations [CB/340 and 352]. That is not disputed, however (i) these were mainly private benefits for the College and (ii) they are not to be equated with the concept of securing the OVU. That concept is of particular importance because it is specifically identified as a public benefit in the NPPF, capable of outweighing harm to heritage assets.

Ground 4 – The Committee failed to take into account a relevant consideration – the existence of less harmful alternative modes of development.

78. Where a proposal would cause harm to a heritage asset then the possibility of the harm being reduced or avoided by development on an alternative site, via an alternative design or “mode of development” is a material consideration. The High Court in *City and County Bramshill Ltd v Secretary of State for Housing*,

Communities and Local Government [2019] EWHC 3437 (Admin) confirmed that it is not necessary for a specific alternative development to be “put forward in some detail or even in outline” in order for a decision maker to be entitled to have regard to such a possibility. In that case the Inspector “was not persuaded that a different scheme could not be designed which would have less harmful effects”, and the developer had argued that this “was an illegitimate approach where no alternatively designed scheme had been put before her by any party or by C&C itself”. That challenge was rejected.

79. In this case there were two alternative schemes which the Council was aware of.
80. First, the Council was well aware that an alternative scheme had been advanced, and consented, in 2011 and again in 2016. The officer’s report in 2011 did not identify any harm arising from that scheme. The 2016 report identified harm arising only from a glazed bridge linking the new library with the South Range, but found that to be outweighed by heritage enhancements. The only point of concern raised by Historic England was the glazed doors connecting the proposed new library to the Bodley Library.
81. The officer’s report said nothing whatsoever about the 2011/2016 schemes, whether in the context of OVU or generally. Although no comparative exercise was carried out, putting at its lowest it was at least possible that the 2011/2016 scheme was a less harmful alternative scheme in heritage terms. The report advised that “the planning history is a material consideration for members” (para 4.1), but contained no further guidance on how it should be considered within the heritage section of the report. The report failed to grapple with those earlier consents as a plainly relevant benchmark for whether less harmful modes of development exist.
82. Contrary to the Defendant’s PAP response, it is not suggested that it was possible to “turn the clock back” to the lapsed permissions (cf. [CB/341], para 35). That permission could not be implemented. But the point is that a less harmful scheme

for a replacement library had previously been devised and consented. That was clear evidence of a possibility that the harm caused by the current scheme could be reduced or avoided, which was a material consideration that needed to be taken into account. The Interested Party's assertion that "earlier scheme would never be revived by the College" is unevidenced and was not the stated position before the Committee: in his presentation the Master of the College told the Committee that the Interested Party had "considered dusting off the initial design by Rick Mather for which planning permission was granted in 2011 and 2016, but rejected it".

83. Second, the proposed Claimant had submitted an alternative mode of development produced on its behalf by Create Streets [CB/x]. This had also been discussed (albeit without supporting detail) in the Development Control Forum. The alternative approach was based on the form and massing of the 2011/2016 scheme. The Create Streets material was expressly advanced to illustrate a feasible approach to massing aligned with the previously consented schemes. The fact that it was not a fully worked up scheme did not absolve the Defendant from taking it into account, as was confirmed in *Bramshill*.

84. The Create Streets proposal was not addressed in the committee report, but was mentioned in the officer's amendment/de-brief sheet. Members were simply advised that "the current proposal must be assessed on its own merits" and that the proposal was "considered acceptable and is what is being put forward for consideration".

85. Members were thereby actively dissuaded from considering the material question of whether it would be possible to avoid or reduce the identified heritage harm through alternative modes of development. The Committee was not advised as to the relevance of possible less harmful alternative schemes in determining the application.

86. The Council failed to have regard to a material consideration by failing to consider the possibility that there were less harmful modes of development.

EXPEDITION

87. In its PAP response the IP said that it would apply for expedition in order to minimise disruption and because it is subject to a fixed timetable to implement works around the academic year and needs of its students. It committed “to take no further steps to implement the permission pending the outcome of this PAP process and any issued claim at first instance, before 28th February 2025, on the basis that the parties agree to support its application for an expedited hearing if permission is granted”. The Claimant is agreeable to this proposal and would support an expedited hearing.

CONCLUSION

88. For the above reasons, the Claimant has identified grounds of challenge which are at least arguable, with a realistic prospect of success. Permission should be granted on all grounds. Ultimately, the Claimant seeks an order that the planning permission be quashed.

Emma Dring

18 December 2025





Mr Dominic Bush
Greater Cambridge Shared Planning
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Direct Dial: 01223 582784

Our ref: L01594085

29 July 2025

Dear Mr Bush

**Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2021 & T&CP
(Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015 & Planning (Listed
Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**CHRIST'S COLLEGE LIBRARY, CHRIST'S COLLEGE, ST ANDREW'S STREET,
CAMBRIDGE, CB2 3BU
Application Nos. 25/02162/LBC & 25/02161/FUL**

Thank you for your letter of 19 June 2025 regarding the above application for listed building consent. We note there is a parallel planning application (25/02161/FUL) for this scheme. Please treat this letter as our advice on both applications. On the basis of this information, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Historic England Advice

Christ's College was founded by Lady Margaret Beaufort in 1505 on the site of God's House, a Grammar College established in 1448, having been moved from its original site near Clare Hall to allow the construction of King's College.

The proposals involve the demolition of the 1970s library in Bath Court and its replacement with a new library building including social and study spaces. They also include internal alterations to kitchen, Upper Hall and adjacent areas as well as alterations to WC provision in the SE range of Second Court.

The buildings surrounding the Entrance (First) Court, with the south-east range of Second Court comprise the oldest parts of the college and are listed at grade I. The college grounds are also a grade II registered park and garden and fall within the historic core of Central Conservation Area, Cambridge.

The current proposals represent a re-examination of the scheme consented in 2011 and renewed in 2016. They have been informed by a Strategic Masterplanning exercise



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commissioned by the College in 2023 and follow an architectural competition for a new library within the site.

The strong emphasis on sustainability of the new proposals results on a scheme that threads more lightly on the site; the basement extension is no longer considered, neither is the glazing of Bath Court.

In order to meet the requirements of the brief and compensate for the loss of the basement, the building needs to extend further above ground. Heights and relationship with surrounding buildings (Darwin's rooms in the south wing of First Court, the Bodley Library to the west, kitchen to the east) therefore require careful consideration. Given its position fronting what is now a public lane, the building's contribution to the streetscape, in addition to its relationship with the college as a whole and the building's own proportions need also to be considered.

New building

The architectural expression of the new building seeks inspiration from ancillary garden buildings, a library in a walled garden, however quite large in its relationship to the garden space. A wall towards Christ's Lane accommodates services and vertical communication; the building then lightens and opens up towards the shaded gardens proposed in Bath Court; the upper levels adopt a more 'silent' expression trying to avoid overdominance and visual intrusion. Ventilation stacks serve to articulate the rhythm of the street elevation and are reminiscent of some of the college's powerful chimney stacks that can be found around the historic town.

The removal of the basement and glazed enclosure have removed instances of harm to the significance of the listed college. However, the resulting increased massing brings other instances of harm, as it puts considerable pressure on the surrounding buildings forming Bath Court. The building feels too big, overdominant on this space, particularly in its relationship with the south range of first court and the Bodley Library.

Similarly, the increased height towards Christ's Lane feels quite large when seen alongside the relatively modest elevations of the college. This impact is evidenced in the visualisations presented, particularly those looking towards St Andrew's Street.

Internal Works

The changes to the kitchen area, Upper Hall and adjacent areas would considerably improve the accessibility and functionality of these spaces. They involve (but are not limited to) the introduction of a new lift to serve the kitchen and upper hall, the provision of level access to the Old Combination Room alongside a new doorway, and the reopening of windows and removal of false ceiling in the Upper Hall.



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This aspect of the proposals involves interventions within some of the oldest parts of the College. We are largely comfortable that the majority of the works proposed would largely affect fabric that has already been subject of previous alterations and therefore of less significance.

The most contentious aspect here would be the introduction of a large wash-up pod in the historic buttery, a highly significant space within the 16th century building. It would require enclosing and lining a large section of the room, alongside the introduction of ductwork and pipework. Albeit this room has been already modified to adapt it to its current use as offices, its conversion into a wash up area would strongly affect the character of this space and ability to understand its historic plan form.

Planning Policy Considerations

Paragraph 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations. Relatedly, paragraph 212 asks local authorities to look for opportunities to enhance and better reveal their significance.

When considering potential impacts on the significance of designated heritage assets, paragraph 204 requires great weight is given to their conservation, the more important the asset, the greater the weight, and irrespective of the level of harm. Paragraph 206 goes on to ask clear and convincing justification for any harm.

Historic England Position

The introduction of a new primary building of the massing proposed within what historically was a domestic kitchen garden is challenging. Whilst we acknowledge the proposals represent a more contextual approach and the architectural quality of the scheme, we are of the view that the building is too big for its location.

Historic England engaged on pre-application discussions with the College alongside Council officers, where we welcomed the approach taken to revising the granted scheme and its ambitions. We highlighted the architectural quality of the project and its potential for enhancing the character of the conservation area and for delivering greater benefit to the college. We expressed our concerns however about its massing, its relationship with the Bodley library, and made some recommendations in relation to the Christ Lane elevation, which we consider would benefit from simplification.

Changes introduced to the western end of the building (staircase, prayer room and landscaping) have improved the relationship of the building with the Bodley.

The treatment to Christ's Lane has also been refined and simplified from the competition and subsequent designs discussed at pre-application stage. The wall level which initially

aligned with the Bodley's stringcourse has been now lifted up to turret level. Whilst this simplifies the design and improves the building's own proportions, it feels more overbearing in its relationship with the Bodley and evidences the difficulties to accommodate a building which is too large for what is a very domestic setting.

In relation to the ventilation stacks/new chimneys proposed, we agree that the proportions and relationship of these elements in the historic streetscape are an important consideration and note the comparative analysis included in the Design and Access Statement. However, the role of these new elements within the college needs also to be factored in.

In that regard, it is worth noting that the chimneys at Queens College despite their massing, are proportionate to the college itself, and still remain subservient to the imposing corner and gatehouse turrets; a similar relationship exists in St John's College.

Christ's College's proportions are more modest than these latter colleges; the prominence of the gatehouse also appears to have diminished through time. Hyde's painting from 1856 shows the rear turrets being lowered; 19th century illustrations show chimney stacks being common features alongside the gatehouse front turrets.

To summarise and conclude, in their present form, the proposals would result in certain levels of harm to the significance of the listed building, primarily as a result of the excessive bulk of the new building, which we consider would detract from the setting of the surrounding buildings.

The proposals would be bulkier than those that were previously granted consent. We also acknowledge the benefits of removing the basement and glazing from the court and the architectural merits of the current scheme. With this in mind, we do not wish to object to the application but would strongly encourage that massing is further reduced so it sits better within this context.

Should the Council be minded to grant permission for the proposals in their current form, we would ask that refinements are introduced to the chimney/ventilation stacks so that their bulk is reduced as far as practicable. Clarity should also be given in relation to how their height would sit alongside the chapel turret, as we consider the prominence of the latter should remain unchallenged - and bearing in mind that the massing of these elements would be larger than traditional chimney stacks. Ideally, the combined lift and ventilation shaft would be reduced to match the adjacent shafts, if possible.

In relation to the wash-up pod. The Council should be satisfied that the proposed solution represents the least harmful option, and that other more sympathetic solutions are not possible. You should also be satisfied that the adaptation of the space for the proposed use would not have any adverse impacts on sensitive early historic fabric.



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Recommendation

We urge you to address the above issues and recommend that this application be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance and on the basis of your expert conservation advice. It is not necessary for us to be consulted again.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

In addition, section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 asks you to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Your authority should take these representations into account in determining the application. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us. Please advise us of the decision in due course.

Yours sincerely

Rosa Teira Paz

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Our ref: L01594085

1 September 2025

Dear Mr Bush

Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2021

**CHRIST'S COLLEGE LIBRARY, CHRIST'S COLLEGE, ST ANDREW'S STREET,
CAMBRIDGE, CB2 3BU**

Application No. 25/02162/LBC

Thank you for your letter of 28 August 2025 regarding further information on the above application for listed building consent. On the basis of this information, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Historic England Advice

An additional set of plans has been submitted in support of this application. The overall massing of the building remains unchanged but revisions have been introduced to the chimney/ventilation stacks and the position of the wash up pod, which were raised in our letter of advice dated 29 July 2025.

The height of the ventilation stacks has been reduced 90cm; further louvered slots have been added to the side and rear elevations to compensate for the loss ventilation area; this also helps to break up the mass of these elements.

The wash up area has been relocated within the kitchen space, with the former buttery now accommodating the chef's offices. This is a more benign use of the space which would require less alteration, allowing the character of the space - and legibility of plan form - to be better retained.

We fully appreciate the challenges of trying to accommodate an ambitious program within the constraints of the existing space, and welcome the additional work carried out in response to consultation feedback.

We are of the opinion that if the height of the staircase turret could similarly be slightly reduced, this would better retain the prominence of the reduced chimney/ventilation



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stacks. This in turn would improve the relationship of the building with the Bodley library and its perceived bulk in views from St Andrew's Street. We would encourage this is considered.

Overall, Historic England welcomes the revisions introduced to the scheme and retains its position of no objection.

Recommendation

We ask that this application is determined in accordance with national and local planning policy guidance and on the basis of your expert conservation advice. It is not necessary for us to be consulted again.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

In addition, section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 asks you to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Your authority should take these representations into account in determining the application. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us. Please advise us of the decision in due course.

Yours sincerely

Rosa Teira Paz

Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas

E-mail: rosa.teirapaz@historicengland.org.uk



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The Greater Cambridge Design Review Panel

Pre-application ref: PPA/24/0034 & 24/50331/PREPPA

Christ's College Library

Thursday 13 February 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:

Simon Carne (Chair) Architect and Urban Designer, Director at Simon Carne Architect

Vanessa Ross, Landscape, Director at arc Landscape Design and Planning Ltd.

Shikha Bhardwaj, Climate, Sustainability Associate, Hawkins \ Brown

Hero Bennett, Climate, Partner at Max Fordham

Jasmine O'Garro, Access, Senior Consultant, Arcadis Consulting (UK) Ltd

Graham Whitehouse, Character, Director at GWP Architects Ltd

Anne Cooper, Heritage, Director at AC Architects

Applicant & Design Team:

Dr Jon Burgess, Director, Planning and Heritage, Turley

Shelley McNamara - Founding Director, Grafton Architects

Ger Carty – Director, Grafton Architects

Simona Castelli - Director of Practice, Grafton Architects

Keir Dixon, Partner-Project Management from Ridge & Partners LLP

David Hawkins, Director, Skelly & Couch

LPA Officers:

Brooke Moore – DRP/Business Support Officer

Tom Davies – DRP Manager

Jane Green – Built Natural Environment Manager – observing online

Katie Christodoulides – Case Officer

Emily Jacob – Senior Landscape Officer

Paul Robertshaw – Principal Conservation Officer

Henri Comrie – Principal Urban Designer

Tracy Martin - Senior Sustainability Office

Observer(s):

Esther Kurland - Head, UDL

Robin Nicholson – Fellow, Cullinan Studio

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. There were none.

Previous Panel Reviews

None

Scheme description

Demolition of existing library and replacement with new library and social facilities including enhancements to Upper Hall and kitchens.

Site context

Christ's College is Grade I listed building located in the historic core of Cambridge City Centre. It stands immediately east of St. Andrew's Street/Hobson Street, and is bordered by King Street to the north, Christ's Pieces to the east, and the Bradwell's Court redevelopment to the south.

The application site is the existing Christ's College library, which includes the existing 1970's library (designed by Christopher Grillet), the Bodley Library (C19) and West Range, South Range (early C16) and Bath Court. The Bodley Library punctuates the corner of Christ's Lane where it meets St Andrews Street. The 1970's library abuts Christ's Lane, turning inwards and meets the lane in the form of a brick wall.

Christ's College has been placed by Historic England on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England at Grade II.

The site falls within the Central Conservation Area and within the controlled parking zone. There are tree preservation orders within the Christ's College grounds. Many

surrounding buildings, including buildings within and outside the College grounds are listed.

Planning history

16/0406/LBC -New library (1539 sq m), the enclosure of Library Court (201 sq m) and the provision of bridge access between the first floor of the new library and the South Range and Bodley Library. Internal and external alterations to Bodley Library and South Range (Staircase G and Guest Suite) and the South Elevation of South Range between First Court and Library Court. Involves the demolition of the existing library (809 sq m) -Approved.

16/0405/FUL -New library (1539 sq m), the enclosure of Library Court (201 sq m) and the provision of bridge access between the first floor of the new library and the South Range and Bodley Library. Internal and external alterations to Bodley Library and South Range (Staircase G and Guest Suite) and the South Elevation of South Range between First Court and Library Court. Involves the demolition of the existing library (809 sq m)-Approved

11/0516/LBC –Internal and external alterations to Bodley Library and South Range (Staircase G and Guest Suite) and the South Elevation of South Range between First Court and Library Court. The demolition of the existing Grillet library (809 sq m) to grade I listed building-Approved.

11/0495/FUL -New library (1539 sq m), the enclosure of Library Court (201 sq m) and the provision of bridge access between the first floor of the new library and the South Range and Bodley Library. Demolition of the existing library (809 sq m)- Approved.

Background

The Panel were briefed by a detailed notes from the design team including an earlier proposal with planning permission, an emerging masterplan for the college as a whole, the competition entry and design in progress for a new library, dining and staff accommodation on the site of existing facilities. The college Bursar also took the panel on a tour of the existing facilities and external spaces affected by the proposals which was invaluable for such a complex and challenging design project.

The redevelopment of the library is a key part of the long term future of Christ's College (Grade 1, parts of which date back to the 15th century). The brief highlights better accessibility, addressing long term sustainability and spatial flexibility to accommodate needs of the modern student. The project faces challenges of scale, massing, identity and public space provision in a tight and significant site on the edge of the college estate. All buildings are part of the Grade 1 listing but of varying age and significance. All sit within the conservation area but there are no fundamental issues over their future. The character of the public realm around the college has changed significantly with the previously private gated pedestrian Christ's Lane now open as public highway.

Grafton Architects conceive the project as a 'library in a walled garden'. The review and this report does not go into detail of the design processes that produced this. The concept, sketches and depth of analysis based on a very thorough and detailed brief has been beautifully expressed, guiding the scheme as it has developed.

The Big Picture: Bulk, scale, massing and spatial concept.

The existing library sits on the corner of what was until recently the back yard to Christ's College. Retail development opposite opened Christ's Lane into a key pedestrian thoroughfare. The redevelopment of the 1974 library and ancillary buildings, characterised by complex internal and external circulation, inaccessible parts and time expired servicing offers an opportunity to make a significant contribution to both the public realm and the life of the college.

A new library had planning permission but has not been delivered, allowing time to rethink some of the fundamental principles of the earlier scheme. The benefits are plain when the two schemes are considered alongside each other.

The Panel endorse the concept and strategy of the proposal. There is a pleasant interaction with the public realm, specifically Christ's Lane and views from St Andrew's Street. It is comfortable with the scale and massing. When viewed from this junction, it has significance and a character of its own.

The dominant chimneys, performing an essential ventilation function are welcome. Some members of the panel expressed the view that they could be taller. That popping up above the ridge line when viewed from First Court within the college would not be a problem. Trying to keep them out of sight was inconsistent with historic precedent.

There are differing views on the impact of the design on Bath Court. It is a tight space and the internal cross section dimensions to accommodate a functioning library have largely determined the form. Bath Court is not a pleasant space at the moment. It is hemmed in by the vertical façade of the existing library with no shelter. The move to open up the ground level space with greater width and a degree of shelter with a cantilever overhang are positive moves that will enhance the space. The dimension between the projecting upper level of the library and the roof opposite will be in the order of 4 metres. This is a concern to some panel members. There is a tricky balancing act between the needs of the library and the occupiers of the rooms opposite, although the rooms are dual aspect and so daylight is not a problem. However the façade of the upper levels of the library will be very much in the face of occupiers of the roof top rooms. Material selection and detail are important considerations as the design team acknowledge.

From the macro to the micro.

In considering the more detailed aspects of the emerging plans, the Panel focussed on aspects that fall within the four C's. This is a useful way of focussing on design whilst acknowledging many cross currents between each.

Character

Built character

The panel are happy with the design principles of the elevation facing Christ's Lane. A solid and void façade in brick is an appropriate response. This cannot be an active frontage with spill outs but more could be made of visual connections into the body of the library for example views up to the dramatic ceiling and on to artwork or detail to internal walls. The short length of wall and emergency escape door at the west end of the façade as well as the detail design of the bridge link require further consideration to further benefit the public realm along Christ's Lane.

External public seating is always welcome. A continuous bench, effectively a plinth to the new wall will demand careful design and detailing along with ongoing maintenance. The attempt to retain the existing brickwork was worthy but the implications would be unnecessary complications. The elevational treatment of the Bath Court facade of the library and in particular the upper storeys is a work in progress. There was no support from the Panel for the earlier heavier stone clad detail. More work is in hand, including how the elevation will be viewed obliquely. The elevation will be barely visible apart from dormer windows opposite. Opportunities to incorporate lighting and colour could be pursued.

Landscape character

Within Bath Court, there were different views of the importance of retaining the palm tree both as a practical proposition and future maintenance obligation, however it was recognised that as an existing feature, the palm tree does provide some benefit. Planting Bath Court with shade tolerant planting, ferns or similar, is welcomed though will need careful maintenance to ensure its success. Careful selection of paving, internal floor finishes and rainwater channel details were highlighted as important issues. The flow of space from inside to outside is welcome and to make this work well material selection and details will be critical. Sunpath diagrams into Bath Court are needed. There should be some sunlight penetration at the height of summer though that would tend to be outside term time. The design team acknowledge that this an issue to be addressed in more detail. Outdoor seating needs to be carefully considered as part of the design ethos to allow the quality proposed for the internal spaces to be replicated in the external spaces.

The existing drainage channel should be maintained within the scheme proposals and opportunities should be considered for the integration of the use of rainwater from the new buildings within the design of the courtyard as part of the proposed rainwater harvesting.

Climate

The Panel welcome the thorough, wide ranging and long term interrogation of future energy requirements. The proposal's flexibility to switch from air source heat pumps to other sources including ground source heat pumps and the heat network is most welcome. The college has an ongoing project of enhancing the performance of the existing fabric. Monitoring performance and communicating to staff and students is an important part of the climate agenda informed by post occupancy reporting. Services have been thoroughly assessed and incorporated within the structural proposals. For example PV panels have been integrated elegantly into the main timber roof structure with north lights over the library.

Climate implications and detail is work in progress. It could take up a large proportion of a longer design review. There is always a balance between time and the amount of information presented. In this instance the pre-review briefing comments were relatively short and lacking detail. More focus on how they will be achieved would be appreciated although the time available to discuss them is also limited. The Panel were pleased to hear that a pre-demolition materials audit was proposed. A few next steps were suggested to ensure that Net Zero goals are clearly demonstrated and achieved:

- **Material Use & Waste Reduction:** The proposed material language/ renders suggest reuse of the existing materials, which is welcome, supporting circular economy thinking. A pre-demolition audit has been proposed to assess this. The Panel advised that materials should be reused on-site first. If not feasible, they should be repurposed elsewhere and find a new home to prevent waste.
- **Net Zero Embodied Carbon:** The team would benefit from comparing different brick façade types/ build-ups and construction methods to understand their impact on embodied carbon and help achieve the upfront target. The attention should also be paid to Whole Life Carbon impact.
- **Balancing Operational & Embodied Carbon:** The use of passive design strategies to reduce energy demand is greatly appreciated. It was suggested to review the operational benefits of chimneys versus their embodied carbon impact for a more balanced approach.
- **Celebrating Sustainability:** The design has strong environmental principles. There is an opportunity to use it as a tool for sustainability awareness among staff and students. This could include sharing performance data, encouraging behavioural change, and celebrating its impact.

Connectivity

In this instance connectivity focused on movement into and around the development. Accessibility for all being a particular design aim challenged by the complexity of different levels within different parts of the college. This challenge is fully appreciated and lift access to all levels has been considered. Small changes in level and direction of travel will be particular challenges and should not be forgotten as the design develops. Refuge spaces have been considered and should be identified to explain the design intentions. Additional thought should be given to evacuation strategy with the proposed design focusing on 'egress for all' as a principle to allow people to self-evacuate where possible for example the use of evacuation capable lifts. This is also echoed when considering the wellbeing benefits that can come from design that enables community benefits.

Community

The college is a series of semi-private spaces restricted largely to members of the college. Within the college there are spaces for the different members of the community to come together. This was a key component of the brief. It was suggested that the need for informal spaces for quiet work and meetings could be described more fully on the plans in the same way that circulation routes have been added. The public face of the library and how it relates to the public realm will be an important element in the life of the City. How this can be enhanced, giving something back to the City is an opportunity not to be missed.

The detailed sectional model presented provided valuable background to assess the development. It deals with a very specific situation internally and externally and at a sensible scale. The Panel noted that some of the more complicated interactions between existing and proposed built form could be modelled to inform the scheme's development. More ambitiously it should be possible to view the proposals and any other future developments in the context of the overall college using 3D printing or similar modelling techniques.

The scheme will no doubt be subject to many detailed planning conditions. Full size mock-ups of materials and detail relationships will play an important part in getting the right solutions.

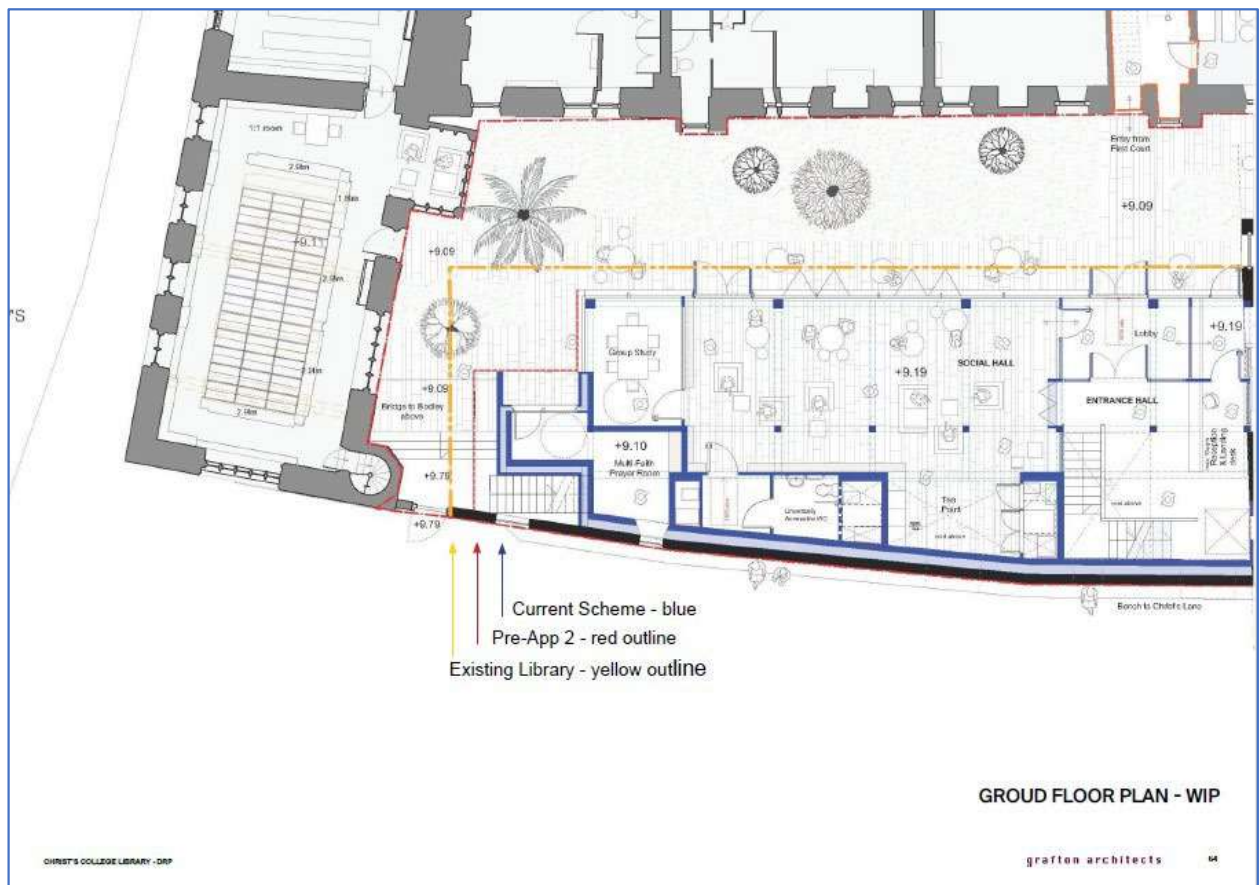
In conclusion the panel applaud the scheme as an exemplary proposal. As the details develop, the Panel believe the richness will be enhanced.



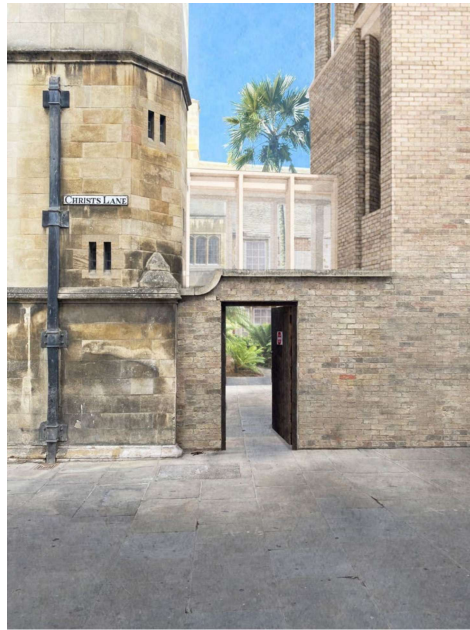
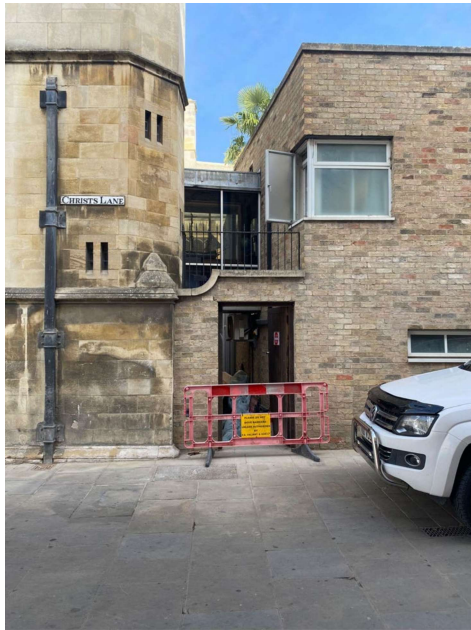
Site location plan – extracted from the applicant's DRP presentation document (13 February 2025)



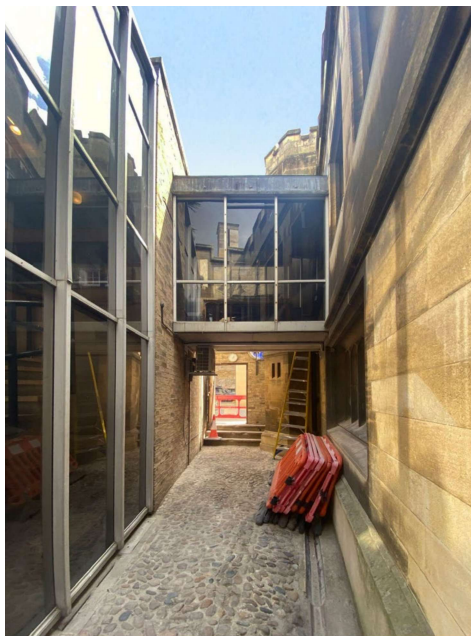
*EXISTING VIEW FROM ST ANDREWS STREET (A) - extracted from the applicant's
DRP presentation document (13 February 2025)*



GROUD FLOOR PLAN – WIP – extracted from the applicant’s DRP presentation document (13 February 2025)



*EXISTING AND PROPOSED VIEW FROM CHRIST'S LANE ENTRANCE –
extracted from the applicant's DRP presentation document (13 February 2025)*



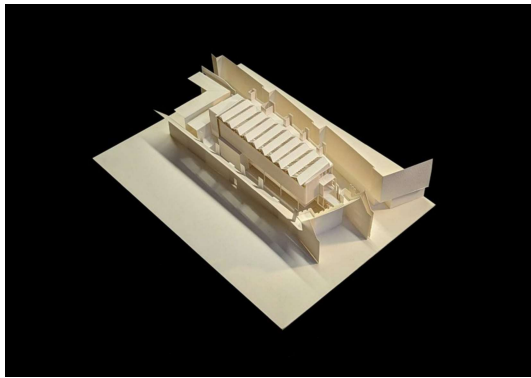
EXISTING AND PROPOSED VIEW FROM BATH COURT EXIT extracted from the
applicant's DRP presentation document (13 February 2025)



EXISTING AND PROPOSED VIEW FROM BATH COURT- extracted from the applicant's DRP presentation document (13 February 2025)



BATH COURT ELEVATION- extracted from the applicant's DRP presentation document (13 February 2025)



SECTIONAL MODEL - extracted from the applicant's DRP presentation document
(13 February 2025)

LANDSCAPE



Landscape - extracted from the applicant's DRP presentation document (13
February 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.

Development Control Forum	DCF/1	Thursday, 11 September 2025
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DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FORUM

11 September 2025
11.00 am - 1.05 pm

Present:

Planning Committee Members: Councillors Flaubert, Illingworth, Porrer, Smart and Thornburrow

Also present Councillor: Bick

Officers:

Delivery Manager: Toby Williams
Senior Planner: Dominic Bush
Committee Manager: James Goddard
Meeting Producer: Claire Tunnicliffe

For Applicant:

Applicant: Lord Simon McDonald, Master of Christ's College
Applicant's Agent: Doctor Jon Burgess, Director Turley Planning Consultants
Applicant's Architect: Shelley McNamara, Director Grafton Architects

Petitioners in Support:

Professor Tom Monie
Professor Chris Pickard
Doctor Irit Katz

Petitioners in Objection from Christ's Lane Action Group (CLAG):

Lead Petitioner: Professor Suchitra Sebastian
CLAG Heritage Consultant: Doctor Alec Foreshaw
CLAG Planning Consultant: Roger Hephher

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**25/1/DCF Opening Remarks by Chair**

The Chair outlined the role and purpose of the Development Control Forum. They stated no decisions would be taken at the meeting.

25/2/DCF Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Dryden and Todd-Jones.

25/3/DCF Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Declaration
Councillor Porrer		Personal: Was a Reserve on Planning Committee. Ward Councillor issues were dealt with by Councillors Bick and Martinelli so her discretion was unfettered.

25/4/DCF Application and Petition Details

Case by Applicant

- 1) Set out the proposed design in their presentation.
- 2) Architect Rick Mather produced a design that was submitted and given planning approval in 2011. This planning approval was extended in 2016 but lapsed in 2021. The College undertook no building work in 2016 due to lack of funds but the urgency of replacing the library had grown.
- 3) The Master commissioned a space survey of the whole of the 9-acre Christ's College site to make the best use of space and how to improve on sustainability.
- 4) The new library should be a beautiful building and the wall onto Christ's Lane plus concrete bench an attractive interface between the college and the city. The building should last many years to be sustainable.
- 5) This was not a scheme that had been rushed to submission but one which followed 12 months of careful discussion and was supported by all the necessary technical reports.
- 6) No statutory consultees objected. The Applicant's Representatives accepted that everyone had a right to their concerns about design matters. None of the professional consultees objected to the scheme. Many of them considered this to be an extremely high quality proposal and one which would be a fitting addition to the townscape.

Case by Petitioners in Objection

Made the following points:

- 7) Supported an appropriate form of development on site. The current design was better suited to college needs than the public's as it was inward facing and created a canyon effect in Christ's Lane which was a busy thoroughfare for pedestrians to get across the city.
- 8) Christ's Lane needed to be improved but the current design did not do this.
- 9) Produced an alternative vision on behalf of CLAG for how a new library could be inserted onto the site.

Expressed the following concerns:

- 10) There was less than substantial harm to a heritage asset (library).
- 11) Massing and impact on surrounding buildings and the public realm such as overbearing and overshadowing. Suggested the daylight/sunlight study was submitted late and did not conform to BRE standards.
- 12) The current proposal undid the previous work to sympathetically develop Bath Court.
- 13) The building was too high for its setting.
- 14) Harm to heritage assets outweighed any public benefit.
- 15) The new building broke the existing skyline and would go against Local Plan policy about tall buildings.
- 16) There needed to be more 'porosity' between the college and the public realm, not a wall that blocked the two. The tall blank wall had no windows or active (attractive) frontage at 'the human scale' (where people could see).
- 17) Verified views were missing from the current iteration but were included in the 2016 submission.
- 18) Discussion about the design happened behind closed doors and the public were not consulted except for a small subset of Bradwell's Court residents. This was in contrast to Bradwell's Court where consultation was undertaken.
- 19) Christ College was now parking on Christ's Lane.

Case by Petitioners in Support

Made the following points:

- 20) The development was of interest to students who were local residents.
- 21) The design would improve:
 - a. Study/work space.
 - b. Student health and wellbeing.
 - c. Building accessibility.
 - d. Facilities in the building.

- 22) The proposal had changed how the College looked at the site to design and put in a modern building that met modern sustainability and environmental standards. The design responded to challenges, was appropriate for the site (e.g. size) and would bring public benefits.
- 23) Public consultation had been undertaken.

Case Officer's Comments:

- 24) Both of the full and the listed building consent planning applications being discussed today were received on the 2nd of June 2025 and validated on the 17th of June 2025.
- 25) Neighbours and statutory consultees were notified and consulted on the 19th of June 2025.
- 26) Site notices were displayed by the application site on either end of Christ's Lane on the 26th of June and the applications were advertised by the press on the 25th of June.
- 27) The original consultation period expired on the 17th of July 2025. A total of 123 third party representations had been received up until 11th September 2025. 57 in support, 65 in objection, and a single neutral comment. Some technical objections had been received during the process of the application and the applicants had provided a package of amendments in attempt to address these issues. A re-consultation had commenced and would expire on the 25th of September 2025. An extension of time had been requested for both applications to allow for the expiry of this consultation period.
- 28) An objection had been received from Anglian Water due to lack of capacity at the Cambridge Wastewater Recycling Centre.
- 29) The Council's Conservation Officer had requested additional information and updated comments had not been received.
- 30) As heard from both the applicants, objectors and petitioners in support today; there were a number of points for discussion as part of this forum:
 - i. The scale of design and the proposed replacement library building.
 - ii. The impact on relevant heritage assets.
 - iii. Potential improvements to the frontage with Christ's Lane in the public realm.
 - iv. The impact on the residential amenity of nearby properties, plus resident and retail units along Christ's Lane and Bradwell's Court.

Case by Ward Councillors

Councillor Bick spoke as a Ward Councillor to make the following points:

- 31) Agreed with the College's wish to replace its library. There were constraints on how to do this.

- 32) There were two things to be addressed by the development.
- Replacing the college library.
 - Unfinished business in Christ's Lane which was created as a result of the redevelopment of Bradwell's Court i.e. the poor boundary on one side. Christ's Lane was a busy thoroughfare and needed to be made more attractive on the College side.
- 33) Shared people's concern about the canyon effect in Christ's Lane and asked how this could be mitigated?
- 34) Requested more than a public bench as a public benefit.
- 35) It would be helpful if a construction plan were considered at the same time as the planning application due to the impact of the development on Christ's Lane as a public thoroughfare.
- 36) Encouraged the College to engage with Objectors to overcome concerns.

Members' Questions and Comments:

Councillor Porrer left the meeting before this item started and did not return.

- 37) Sought clarification about the proposed basement/height/massing/construction.

Applicant:

- i. The basement was integral to the design in 2011 then ruled out due to sustainability concerns. The new design had sustainability at its heart.

Applicant's Architect:

- ii. Bradwell's Court would overshadow Christ's Lane not Christ's College library.
- iii. The library would be the same height as Bradwell's Court. It would not overshadow or block light into Christ's Lane.
- iv. The design would make a beautiful wall which suited the character of the city. The city had lots of walls so the design was in-keeping with other areas.

Applicant's Agent:

- v. Digging a basement could have an impact on archaeology and surrounding buildings.
- vi. A draft construction management plan was request by Planners at the pre-application stage. A final plan would be submitted when requested through planning conditions.

CLAG Planning Consultant:

- vii. The basement was ruled out due to sustainability concerns, but sustainability was more than avoiding digging holes and pouring concrete. It also covered the built and historic environment which the College had ignored.

38) Made the following observations:

- i. The Objector's petition seemed to focus on:
 - a. The balance between heritage harm versus public benefit.
 - b. Active use of Christ's Lane.
- ii. Narrow lanes could produce a cool place in hot summers.
- iii. There was a lot of interest in how open the College was to the public, so how could the public learn about the library?
- iv. Lessons would be learnt from how the design tried to reduce the environmental impact of the building e.g. degassing.
- v. The application only affected half to one third of Christ's Lane so would wait to see how the design affected the whole lane including shops opposite the college as Councillors needed to consider the impact of the design on the city.

39) Queried public access arrangements to the college now and in future?

Applicant's Architect:

- i. The college was open every day except Christmas and exam days.
- ii. Part of the scheme was to open up a bricked-up door in the wall to give access to the 'Buttery' as a café.

40) Made the following observations:

- i. Who had free/lease hold of Christ's Lane? Would this impact the library development?
- ii. Would the development produce funding to improve Christ's Lane?
- iii. Was Christ's Lane well lit?
- iv. Was the library deficient of BRE standards as mentioned earlier?
- v. How would the wall be built on Christ's Lane to mitigate a bulky design?
- vi. What happened to students/library users whilst the new building went up as they could not access the old facility?

Applicant:

- vii. The library was already being decanted into a temporary space in the third court.

- viii. People's study habits had changed since lockdown. The new design would have three times as much study space as the current library.

Applicant's Architect:

- ix. The proposed boundary wall would be traditional in style, with headers and stretchers, high lime content in the mortar, recycled bricks if possible integrated into a collage of new and old.
- x. Sunlight was adequate in Christ's Lane. Overshadowing came from Bradwell's Court. The new library would reflect light into Christ's Lane so it would not cause a dark canyon effect.
- xi. The design of the wall would create a high quality public realm.

Applicant's Agent:

- xii. Christ's College and Jesus College were the freeholders of the whole development including Bradwell's Court and Christ's Lane. Bradwell's Court was under a long lease to a lead lease holder who was responsible for lettings of the commercial units. Half of the lane was public highway even though the freeholders were the colleges.
 - xiii. A sunlight daylight assessment had been undertaken. There was no detrimental impact on residential units. BRE standards don't generally apply to commercial units, highways, streets or public spaces. So there were no material planning issues.
- 41) The sunlight assessment of shadow effect in Christ's Lane covered the summer solstice; would it cover the whole year, or was further information available?

Applicant's Agent:

- i. Would check as believed the assessment covered the whole year.
- ii. Bradwell's Court was the building on the south. So the building that existed already was the building that cast the shadow over Christ's Lane. The new building would not change the light materially.

Lead Objector:

- iii. Took issue with the Applicant's description of the height of the application. Suggested it was 15m not 11.4m. This would create a building that was taller than Bradwell's Court and bulkier.
- iv. Did not accept the chimneys had to be so high above ground for 'sustainability' reasons.
- v. A café and shops would be overshadowed by the proposed development which would affect their livelihoods.

- vi. Suggested details were missing from the sunlight study.
- vii. The boundary wall design looked pretty but did not reflect active frontage at human scale i.e. interesting to look at from eye level.

Objector's Planning Consultant:

- viii. The college got benefits from the design. Queried what were the public benefits? Private benefits outweighed public benefits of the scheme.
- 42) Queried if planting, canopies or pop-up markets could be introduced in Christ's Lane to make it more attractive and mitigate the tall building?
- 43) The chimneys appeared quite bulky. Queried if the design could be reviewed?

Applicant's Architect:

- i. The chimney design could be reviewed in future; the application was not at a detailed design stage yet. The chimneys were functional (not decorative) and 14m in height.
- ii. The new library was lower than Christ's Lane at parapet height so was not as tall as suggested by Objectors' concerns.
- iii. Was conscious of human scale. The design started with human scale, but there was also a case to be made for grandeur and presence in building design as it was a civic asset.

Summing up by the Applicant

- 44) The canyon effect in Christ's Lane was only mentioned by Objectors. The College took issue with this description.
- 45) The height of the new proposal was lower than Bradwell's Court. There was no canyon effect or negative impact on light.
- 46) Technical advice cautioned against including a basement in the design so a higher building was proposed instead. This was similar in height to adjacent buildings.
- 47) The new library would improve heritage not harm it.

Summing up by the Petitioners in Objection

- 48) The scheme benefitted the College but not the city/public realm.
- 49) The building was too tall and massive. Tall buildings policy (60) had not been applied, despite the proposed building triggering it, since the building broke a key skyline view from St Andrew's Street.

- 50) The College decided not to include a basement which led to negative comments about the design as discussed today.

Summing up by the Petitioners in Support

- 51) Asked for discussion points from today's forum to be taken into consideration when the planning application was considered by Planning Committee.
- 52) The proposal improved Christ's Lane and the design of the library.

Final Comments of the Chair

- 53) The Chair observed the following:
- i. Notes of the Development Control Forum would be made available to relevant parties, published on the council's website and appended to the Planning Officer's report.
 - ii. The Planning Case Officer should contact the Applicant/Agent after the meeting to discuss the outcome of the meeting and to follow up any further action that was necessary. The Applicant would be encouraged to keep in direct contact with the Petitioners and to seek their views on any proposed amendment/s.
 - iii. The Council would follow its normal neighbour notification procedures on any amendments to the application.
 - iv. Application to be considered at a future Planning Committee.
 - v. Along with other individuals who may have made representations on the application, the Petitioners' Representatives would be informed of the date of the meeting at which the application is to be considered by Committee and of their public speaking rights. The Committee report would be publicly available five clear days before the Committee meeting.

The meeting ended at 1.05 pm

CHAIR

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22 August 2025

Cambridge District Council
Via Email

Dominic.Bush@greatercambridgeplanning.org

Dear Mr Bush,

**RE: 207237, 25/02162/LBC 'Christ's College, St Andrews Street, Cambridge, CB2 3BU'
(Grade I)**

We appreciate your patience in awaiting our response and the College's efforts to accommodate a site visit. Our Southern Buildings Committee met and reviewed the application; the comments below reflect their feedback on the scheme.

We do not consider that the proposed internal alterations require any detailed comment from us. The work to make the upper hall accessible and bring back the Bodley Library into use will positively contribute to the College's C21 legacy, and making good historic (non-C19) openings and decluttering the modern kitchen plant apparatus will improve the setting of, and ability to appreciate, the Bodley Library.

In terms of the proposed library, whilst the building was commended for its quality of design, two cautions were raised, and advice forthcoming that is offered in the hope that the quality of the final design of the new building can be elevated and the scheme rendered genuinely admirable and successful:

- The Dominant Scale in Comparison to the Bodley Library

The prevailing point of contention was the greater scale of the proposed library in comparison to the Grade-I Listed heritage asset. Ultimately, whilst the proposed steps back the new library by approximately 1m from the existing library, it would nonetheless be a whole storey higher. Owing to the tight constraints of the available floor plan, the increased height of the proposed addition has the greater potential to be harmful to the setting of the Bodley Library than the proximity of the floor plan.

Historically, to counteract this concern, the College was granted permission in 2016 to tunnel down to accommodate the extra capacity required. The Society appreciates the concerns raised by the College regarding the departure from this plan. Although the 2016 scheme would not be overtly harmful to the Grade-I Listed Heritage Asset, as the

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The Victorian Society

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Patron: HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG, GCVO
President: Griff Rhys Jones OBE
Vice Presidents: Sir David Cannadine | The Lord
Howarth of Newport CBE | Sir Simon Jenkins
Chair: James Grierson
Director: James Hughes

newly proposed scheme has the potential to be, we acknowledge that a structure emphasising light and breathability is preferable to a concrete basement.

However, to improve the overall scale of the current proposals, the submission could benefit from being more responsive to the neighbouring Bodley Library. For example, it would not be unreasonable for the scale of the proposed to take its lead from the floor heights of the Bodley, opting to align the floors with the oriel window of the Bodley structure; thus, reducing the height by approximately half at each floor. As a result, this would ensure that the existing clear views of the Bodley gable and its turret staircase, currently seen against a clear sky, would not be overwhelmed by the proposed building.

- The Detailing of the Massing.

Whilst the verticality and the modelling of the proposed were appreciated, concerns were raised about the sheer mass of the proposed in the Sqm available for the library. At present, the proposed appears to lack the “human scale” evocative both in the Bodley Library and the C15 first court. To achieve a similar outcome, the Committee recommended that the present design depart from an overtly brutalist style, incorporating details such as a head-height string course as a means to refine the design in a way that is sympathetic to the heritage asset. Although a subtle addition, the inclusion of a string course would emulate the matching elevation of the Bodley Library. Including this in the proposed library would not only continue the work of the chimneys in creating cohesion between the new and old but would also make the new library a structure that communicates with the foot passengers of a now very popular thoroughfare.

In addition to the possibility of introducing a stringcourse, we recommend that a variety of means of adding greater relief, articulation and refinement to the front elevation of the building are explored, by means of detailing or even some form of material variation. As presented the proposed elevations appear starkly unrelieved – an effect that compounds the sense of a lack of human scale.

One other means of achieving of this would be to further recess the upper storeys, which as currently propose overly impose themselves on the front elevation, undermining the very purpose of setting them back and increasing the sense of excessive scale, and also eroding the otherwise admirable and interesting architectural effect created by the ‘chimneys’.

Despite Council feedback, the Committee was also of the opinion that the original proposed heights of the chimneys were preferable. As the existing height of the chimney helps to break up the bulk of the form, and by reducing their height, the elegance of this passive ventilation strategy is negatively impacted, especially when the chimneys are barely visible from the first court (the concern raised by the council).

Overall, we welcome the principle of the new library, and the associated conservation and thermo-efficiency works that comprise the Library + project. The proposed looks to be an exciting contribution to Cambridge's visually interesting cityscape and, with the right amendments, the Society is confident that this has the potential to be a very good scheme. With this in mind, we would be happy to continue a dialogue with the College and Council to assist in the refinement of the proposed. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any further questions.

National Planning Policy Framework:

131. The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Yours sincerely

Morgan Ellis Leah

Southern Conservation Adviser

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To Whom it May Concern,

Our sincerest apologies for the late response to this application. We have been inundated with applications in the last two weeks; we hope that these comments may still be considered.

As per our objection and advice submitted on 22 August 2025 (25/02161/FUL), we outlined the additional harm associated with the College's newly submitted scheme. This harm was attributed to the massing and scale of the proposed development compared with the previously submitted proposal, which maximised capacity by drilling down into the basement. This previous scheme still achieved the volume needed for the College's growing student body but mitigated visual harm to the Grade-I Listed heritage asset and, also the important Cambridge skyline.

We also addressed the harm to the setting of the Grade-I Listed College, though key design principles at play in the new library were evident; this was especially the case with the ill-proportioned massing and the lack of design refinement, both of which impacted the human scale when compared to the neighbouring Bodley Library. Our Southern Building's Committee - a collective of architectural, planning and heritage professionals - offered easily implemented recommendations for the design that might help mitigate some of this harm. Advice ignored.

Christ's College has now submitted a second application - understood to be the same scheme as 25/02161/FUL. In the newly submitted Covering Statement, the applicant argues that the scheme causes no relevant heritage harm. The design, as it stands does offer a low-to-moderate level of less-than-substantial harm.

The College's historic buildings (surrounding the First Court) are Grade-I listed, and the college grounds are designated as a Historic Park and Garden; the proposal has a direct bearing on the College's most significant assets. Indeed, the proposed not only directly impacts the fabric of the College's Grade-I Listing, but also the setting of the Cambridge Central (Historic Core) Conservation Area. By virtue of the building's prominent location on Christ's Lane and its view of St Andrew's Street, it is a public-facing building that will need to be balanced against public benefit.

Heritage harm has been identified, and the College has a duty to consider less harmful alternatives. As a result, we request that the council review our advice from August 2025. In particular, we urge the committee to reconsider the minor alterations we previously proposed. These changes, whilst few in number, could offer significant scope for improvement and would do so without major impact on the College's finances or the College's stipulated capacity.

We ultimately wish to encourage the applicant to continue the conversation about the design of the Library, which does set an important precedent to such a historic city.

Very Best Wishes,
Morgan



**Campaigning for
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Morgan Ellis Leah
Southern Conservation Adviser

Tel: 020 8747 5892

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1 Priory Gardens, London W4 1TT
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From: Morgan Ellis Leah <southern@victoriansociety.org.uk>
Sent: 06 July 2026 10:43
To: Planning@greatercambridgeplanning.org <Planning@greatercambridgeplanning.org>
Subject: 25/02161/FUL, Christ's College, St Andrew's Lane, Cambridge

To Whom it May Concern,

Our sincerest apologies for the late response to this application. We have been inundated with applications in the last two weeks; we hope that these comments may still be considered.

As per our objection and advice submitted on 22 August 2025 (25/02161/FUL), we outlined the additional harm associated with the College's newly submitted scheme. This harm was attributed to the massing and scale of the proposed development compared with the previously submitted proposal, which maximised capacity by drilling down into the basement. This previous scheme still achieved the volume needed for the College's growing student body but mitigated visual harm to the Grade-I Listed heritage asset and, also the important Cambridge skyline.

We also addressed the harm to the setting of the Grade-I Listed College, though key design principles at play in the new library were evident; this was especially the case with the ill-proportioned massing and the lack of design refinement, both of which impacted the human scale when compared to the neighbouring Bodley Library. Our Southern Building's Committee - a collective of architectural, planning and heritage professionals - offered easily implemented recommendations for the design that might help mitigate some of this harm. Advice ignored.

Christ's College has now submitted a second application - understood to be the same scheme as 25/02161/FUL. This application has blatantly changed the level of harm attributed to this design. In the newly submitted Covering Statement, the applicant argues that the scheme causes no relevant heritage harm. This is simply not the case, as we have previously demonstrated. This low-to-moderate level of less-than-substantial harm was also previously identified by the Conservation Officer and the officer for Historic England at Pre-App. To further insist that this scheme will produce a "minor beneficial impact" overall is both unjustified and contrary to the applicant's own previous assessment. It goes without saying that the same submitted scheme cannot improve its level of harm.

The College's historic buildings (surrounding the First Court) are Grade-I listed, and the college grounds are designated as a Historic Park and Garden; the proposal has a direct bearing on the College's most significant assets. Indeed, the proposed not only directly impacts the fabric of the College's Grade-I Listing, but also the setting of the Cambridge Central (Historic Core) Conservation Area. To ignore all of this to cite a "minor beneficial impact" and to assert that sections 66 and 72 operate positively, so that no public-benefits balance is required, is incorrect. By virtue of the building's prominent location on Christ's Lane and its view of St Andrew's Street, it is a public-facing building that will need to be balanced against public benefit.

Heritage harm has been identified, and the College has a duty to consider less harmful alternatives. As a result, we request that the council review our advice from August 2025. In particular, we urge the committee to reconsider the minor alterations we previously proposed. These changes, whilst few in number, could offer significant scope for improvement and would do so without major impact on the College's finances or the College's stipulated capacity.

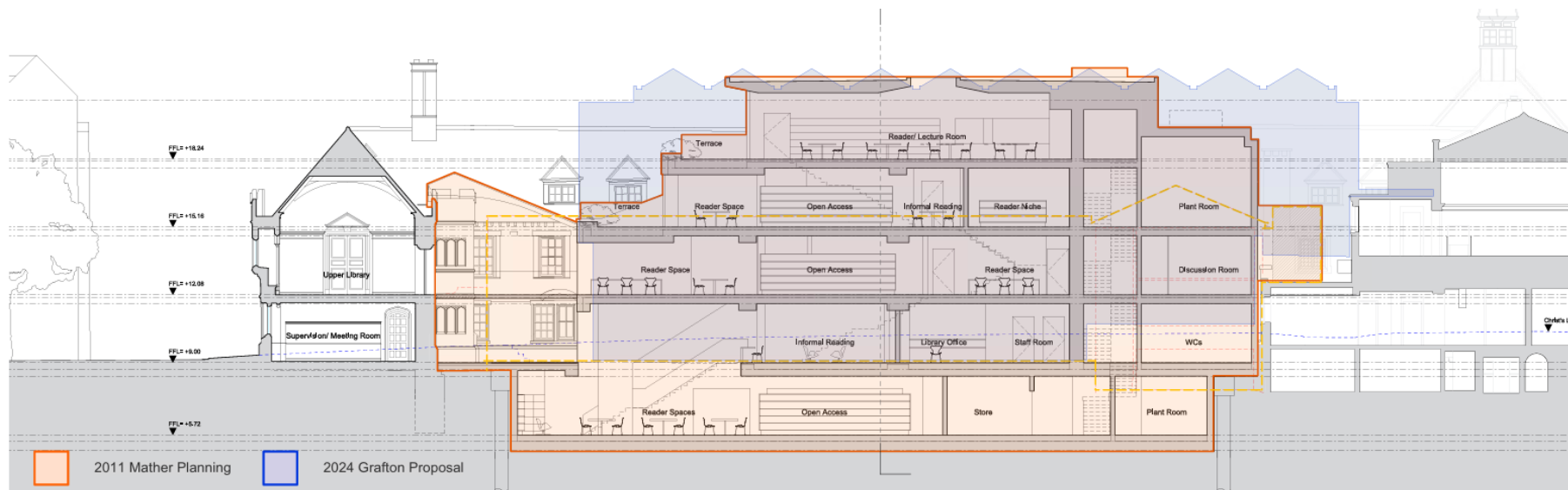
Very Best Wishes,
Morgan

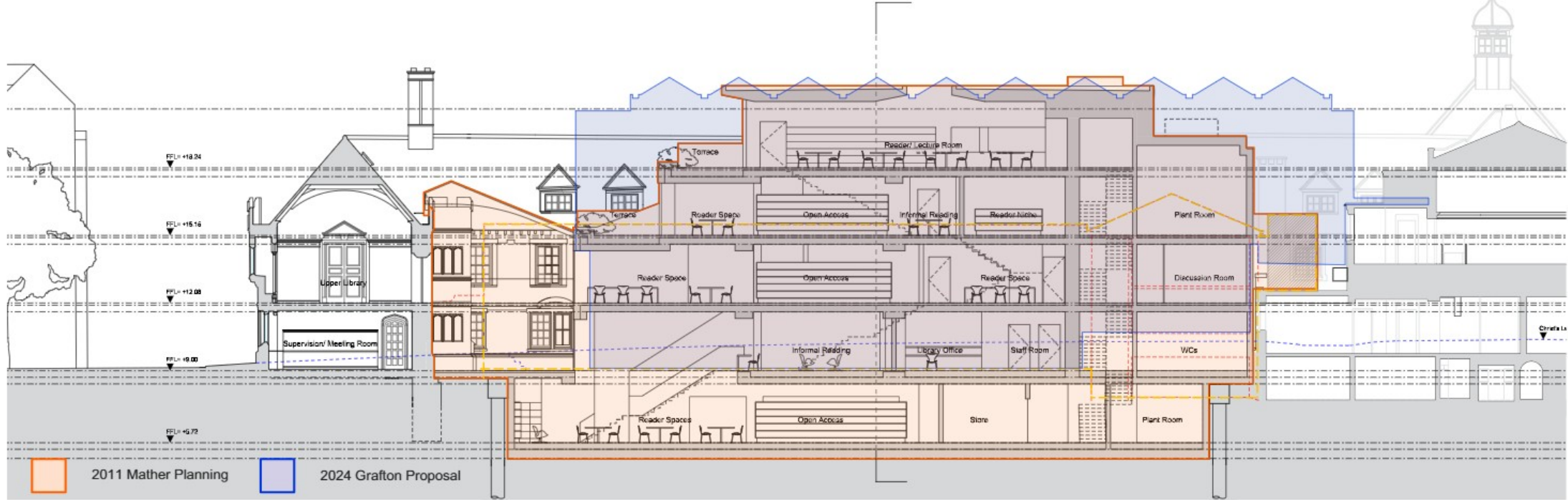


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Long Section Comparison Drawing of the Previously Approved Scheme with the Current Scheme

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5 August 2026

Dominic Bush
Senior Planner
Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Services

Dear Dominic

26/02109: CHRIST'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

Thank you for your email of 4 August in which you asked for some clarifications / further details on the proposed public access to Bath Court and the new library. I am pleased to provide these on behalf of the College.

As you know, currently Christ's College is open every morning of the year, apart from Christmas week and exam term. Bath Court is not. After the library is built, the College will open Bath Court to the public whenever the college is open.

The College is very happy to share its beautiful new library as much as possible. Of course, Christ's are erecting this building for their students and during term time, they will have exclusive use. Outside term time (and undergraduates are not in Cambridge for about half the year) the College will make the library accessible to the public.

We recognise that visitors will also want to see the interior of the library. So, on three days each week outside term time (initially Monday, Wednesday and Friday) we will arrange two, 30-minute tours of the library (at 10 and 11 o'clock). The tours will start at the Great Gate and include the new library, the Bodley and the new Exhibition Room. They will be bookable online via the College website, for up to 15 people, first come, first served. The librarian will run the tours.

In addition, on Tuesdays and Thursdays outside term time, the library will be open to groups of students/pupils from Cambridgeshire schools for tours and quiet study. Access will be for groups of up to 30 children (with the school providing appropriate supervision). The visits would last up to 90 minutes and take place during school hours. Again, visits would be bookable via the college website. The college will look for ways of publicising the offer in the city and county, including writing to all head teachers.

We recognise that this is uncharted territory for a Cambridge college. We would aim to develop the detail in light of experience but the offer will always be at least as generous as described.

As now, Christ's would not charge for any of this public access.

Turley
8 Quay Court, Stow-c-Quy
Cambridge CB25 9AU

turley.co.uk

I hope this answers your questions and you will agree that this is a very significant benefit to the wider public.

Yours sincerely



Planning and Heritage Director



DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FORUM

29 July 2026
10.00 - 11.52 am

Present: Councillors Baigent, Clough, Fisher, Griffin, Illingworth, Porrer, Smart and Todd-Jones

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

26/1/DCF Introduction by Chair to the Forum

The Chair outlined the role and purpose of the Development Control Forum. They stated no decisions would be taken at the meeting.

26/2/DCF Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Bennett and Dryden.

26/3/DCF Declarations of Interest

Name	Agenda Item	Interest
Councillor Baigent	All	Personal: Member of Acorn. Decision Unfettered.
Councillor Baigent	All	Personal: Member of Cambridge Cycling Campaign. Decision Unfettered.
Councillor Clough	All	Was against the application at the original Planning Committee but remained open minded. Decision Unfettered.
Councillor Fisher	All	Studied at Christs College, Decision unfettered.

Councillor Griffin	All	Fellow of Kings College. Discretion unfettered.
Councillor Porrer	All	Ward Councillor, Decision unfettered.

26/4/DCF Application and Petition Details

Case by Applicant

- 1) The Applicant introduced their presentation by explaining why they were here, why they wanted to replace the library and why they did not want to dig a basement.
- 2) The application was to demolish the 1970's library and replace with a new library, social and study spaces including re-provision of bridge to the Bodley Library.
- 3) There had been a lengthy consultation period including a previous Development Control Forum held last summer with Planning Permission granted in November 2025 with written confirmation received the same month.
- 4) In December 2025, the Christs Lane Action Group (CLAG) applied for a Judicial Review (JR) for which the High Court granted permission to proceed to a full hearing, in March 2026.
- 5) The Court had identified the date of 20 October 2026 for the hearing which the college felt was too long a time. It was added that the college looked at the substance of the Judicial Review which did not touch on the merits of the project but looked at the procedures and found four shortcomings.
- 6) The College had looked at those shortcomings and thought that they could all be addressed in a second application so that should a second Planning Application be granted the Council could be confident that it met the standards of the JR.
- 7) Time was of the essence for the College as students had already been using a temporary library for one year.
- 8) In regard to the existing library, Christs College was the only college in Cambridge where all six of the central elements were around the first court which included the Porters, Chapel, Masters Lodge, hall, buttery and the library.
- 9) In the 1970's the college built the structure which was shoddily built with no thought given to the impact on the city as it faced into the

loading bay of Argos at the time and therefore not publicly facing. It was an ugly building with no public realm benefit.

- 10) Over the last fifty years the building had been gradually deteriorating which had now accelerated. The original spec gave the building a life span of 50 years which had now expired and needed to be replaced.
- 11) Alternatives had been looked at on the current college site which had been rejected for both the historic reason of keeping things together on First Court and secondly, as the library connects Bodley which was a building from the 1890's and was the old library and had not been in use since the current student library was built.
- 12) The college wanted to bring Bodley back into use and have a vital connection with the undergraduate library so that both could be used simultaneously.
- 13) The College needed to replace the library and the need had been known for some time. A new library had been proposed 15 years ago when Rick Mather designed a replacement which received planning permission. However, funding was not available at the time.
- 14) Since then, the building environment had changed with sustainability and accessibility concerns being a different place with things that people did not care about 15 years ago they do now.
- 15) The key feature of the Mather design was a basement. On reconsidering the colleges needs, it was concluded that on advice this would be the least 'Green' thing that could be done for three main reasons:
 - Firstly the amount of embedded carbon. Typically, in a modern building 40% of embedded carbon was in the basement which the college wanted to avoid. The only way to ensure a basement was watertight was to use concrete which is one of the most carbon intensive building materials.
 - Secondly the site was very close to Grade 1 listed buildings. The Bodley dated from the 19th Century, but behind the student library was the 16th Century First Court which had no foundations. If a basement was dug within inches of this you would not know what you would find and were likely to have an unpleasant surprise. Heritage Harm was at the top of the colleges mind and they did not want to disturb the environment.
 - The third reason was the extra disruption. Many of the objections on the Planning Portal were about disruption, which was inevitable with a city centre site, with digging a basement would massively increase that as all of the material would need to be removed by lorry. In order to minimise any

disruption it was decided not to include a basement which made the previous design no longer fit for purpose.

- 16) The college had organised an architectural competition with six entries. The winners Grafton Architects of Dublin, one of the world's leading architectural firms who had come up with a beautiful, sustainable accessible design.
- 17) A Student in her final year in the Architectural Department in support of the application commented that she lived in Cambridge and was also bringing up her to children in the city. She informed the meeting that:
 - Students needed different areas to work in. Some needed quiet space to concentrate, whilst others needed somewhere to discuss ideas and work in groups.
 - The current library did not accommodate those needs which was why many students ended up working elsewhere such as cafes in hotels so that they could eat and spread out their work. The college could not support this way of working.
 - As a Member of the Architectural Society at Christ's College, she was invited to attend interviews and the selection process for the new library Competition.
 - The Grafton design responded to the colleges needs to provide different kinds of study spaces including a lounge, spaces for group work, social study areas, individual workstations and places where students could spend an entire day.
 - The design should engage with its surroundings. The current design was not isolated and took inspiration from the walls, windows and chimneys of the buildings around it and also the historic courts and gardens at the college.
 - The façade at Christ's Lane responded to the architectural character of Cambridge through the chimneys and its use of brick and stone.
 - Inside, the design took you on a journey through a set of rooms, the Bath Court, green and open to the sky, the social hall which created a protected hub for students and finally the library itself.
 - As a resident she walked Christs Lane almost every week with her children. Today the college side is blank brick wall with no reason for anyone to stop. The project would put windows, people and light behind the wall for the first time. It would give views into the library, a bench and an un-arched gate by day and at night light from the library windows falling gently into the lane.

- She supported the project as it would give future generations the kind of library her generation had needed but never had. A place to study, socialise and belong.
- 18) In regard to heritage harm and the advice of Historic England, although this was a repeat of the previous application approved in November 2025. The Listed Building Consent application was approved at the same time has not been challenged and still remained valid.
 - 19) Much has been made about the implied harm to the setting of the Bodley Library. This 19th Century addition to the original library is not listed in isolation but was part of the Grade One listing covering the whole of the entrance court which dated to the 16th Century and also part of Second Court.
 - 20) The college had been very clear and consistent in its assessment of the heritage impact of the proposals, which was set out in the heritage statement and carefully considered the impact of the proposals on all parts of the listed buildings themselves, not just the Bodley, and impact on their settings and the colleges historic park and gardens and conservation area.
 - 21) The design did not just focus on one part of the building as others had done and sought to draw conclusions on a partial assessment.
 - 22) The impact on the Bodley Library, other than the replacement bridge link, there was no physical attachment or alteration. In that respect, the current scheme differed significantly from the 2011 and 2016 Mather scheme which had attached a glazed roof to glaze over Bath Court which had been forgotten by the Victorian Society.
 - 23) The focus of concern about setting appeared to be in the view on Christs Lane from where the new library would appear taller than the Bodley. Historic England setting guidance and stated that the importance of setting lied in what it contributed to the significance to the setting of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance.
 - 24) The present library on the Christs Lane side was bland and utilitarian which was appropriate when it was built to face a private access lane but was now out of place since the lane was reopened to the public.
 - 25) The new library would be of high design quality and designed by one of Europe's leading architects. It had been endorsed by the design review panel. It would be further away from the Bodley, and views would be gained through the new gate into Bath Court allowing the lower level to be seen.
 - 26) Evening focusing solely on that view and ignoring the clear enhancement to Bath Court, and the improvement that would make to

the setting of the Bodley and other parts of the colleges grade one listing, it was argued that the replacement library would not detract from the significance of the Bodley or anyone's ability to appreciate that significance and would be beneficial.

- 27) Even if it was considered that there was some less than substantial harm caused to the heritage significance of the Bodley by replacing the library in its setting, this would still need to be weighed with the other heritage benefits and to the setting and to the significance of the other parts of listed buildings and conservation area in particular. This was why the college considered the heritage impact of the proposed library to be beneficial.
- 28) The statutory duty with regard to the listed building was within Section 661 in the Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act, which required that those making decisions about planning applications to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a building or its setting or any features of special architectural historic it possesses.
- 29) This special regard had to be assessed as the college had done and given great weight when considering proposals in the planning balance. When proposals did lead to less than substantial harm this needed to be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme by virtue of paragraph 215 of the Planning Policy Framework. There was no harm to be outweighed anyway quite the opposite but there were clear benefits.
- 30) Those suggesting that there was harm to the significance of the Bodley caused by the new library and its setting needed to also consider these other heritage benefits which stood to be weighed in the balance together with the other public benefits.
- 31) Historic England had been involved in other a year of discussion and were confident when they said that the college had acknowledged the benefits of removing the basement and glazing from the court and the architectural merits of the current scheme. With this in mind, they did not wish to object to the application.
- 32) Historic England also welcomed the revisions introduced to the scheme and retained its position of no objection.
- 33) It was acknowledged that Victorian Society had found some harm as they had concentrated on the 19th Century Bodley Library rather than the wider college. It was felt that they had not considered the wider heritage benefits. Clarification had been sought on some of their comments to which they replied that their committee did not consider this to be an overly contentious design, rather that small adaptations could be implemented to mitigate any outstanding harm.

- 34) The college had been consistent in that it did not identify harm to the setting of the Bodley and indeed had recognised many other heritage and public benefits from the proposal. Historic England did not object nor did the conservation officer.
- 35) If the Council concluded that there was any residual heritage harm, then that weight stood to be weighed against the other public benefits.
- 36) It must be remembered that public benefits are those that are included in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 8 which was anything which delivered economic social and environmental objectives. The enhanced design and streetscape improvements would be a definite positive, so would the sustainability benefits as well as the economic benefits of delivering the scheme and the improved accessibility to the library and the existing parts of the historic building.
- 37) The objection to optimum viable use was not mentioned in the application. However, the college contended that the new library would be better than the old one as it would be accessible in a way that the old one was not. The CLAG website talked of phantom benefits. The college thought that by allowing its students with mobility issues and neurodiversity challenges to study was a plus.
- 38) A lot had been made in regard to the massing of Christs Lane which the college disputed and that having quite high buildings with a narrow lane between them was a feature of the Cambridge vernacular. The lane would be cool and would not be narrower and light from the upper stories would increase the light in Christs Lane after construction.
- 39) The building was on the north side of Christs Lane and would not affect the light.
- 40) The last contention was that the college and officers had failed to bring to the Councils attention significant other plans including the Mather design which had been dealt with significantly. The second was to create a streets schema which was a single page that showed one elevation onto Christs Lane. The only advantage of this to the colleges opponents was that it was shorter. It also had no back elevation, so that the relationship with the Grade One listed building was absent nor did it have any floorplans. Therefore, it was not at all certain that the college could achieve what it needed inside the building and was not a serious alternative. The Council were invited to look at it and reject it as a consequence.
- 41) In respect of the Massing, if the Council allowed the college to build, it would still be the case that the more massive and taller building on

Christs Lane was already there. A new building would be smaller than the building opposite and have the incidental advantage of protecting the colleges students from the direct view from the penthouse floor of Christs Lane into their rooms.

- 42) The scheme was all about the students, it was not commercial and the college would not make money out of it. It was for the colleges 700 students over generations. It was hoped that the proposed building would last over 200 years so that many thousands of students would benefit from a beautiful, varied building.

Case by Petitioners in Objection

- 43) The Petitioners introduced their presentation.
- 44) It was highly irregular for the Council to make a decision on a subject that was still current to High court proceedings. Furthermore, it would open up the Council to further challenge on the basis that a decision to grant would give the impression of the Council bending over improperly to support the interests of a private applicant that was frankly attempting to circumvent proper process.
- 45) It was presumptuous of the college to simply resubmit the same application effectively saying to the Council you must try harder.
- 46) Whilst the Court eventual position was unknown, a judge had already found evidence of the previous recommendation for approval being defective on four accounts. It was very likely that the only way forward would be found to be with a different or amended scheme.
- 47) Informed opinion against the current scheme had hardened. Historic England had reiterated its view that the development would cause harm. The Victorian Society and the Councils own conservation officer had also hardened their positions and Cambridge, Past, Present & Future had now objected in strong terms.
- 48) This all pointed to the proper course of action to defer any decision on the resubmitted application.
- 49) The petitioners did not characterise themselves as opponents and that there wanted to collectively arrive at a solution that did not harm the city but satisfied the objection and objectives of the college. At no point were they trying to thwart the objectives of the college. They supported libraries and Christ College having a library. However, the design had been found to cause heritage harm by every single independent expert, by statutory consultants, public amenity societies, and the local civic body in Cambridge.

- 50) The petitioners wanted to reconcile what would be a possible way of moving forward that satisfied the colleges objectives whilst also not causing heritage harm.
- 51) It was important to note that there was an intermediate step that kept being skipped over every time there was a discussion. A JR was brought because it was felt that Members had not been correctly informed on the heritage aspects that needed to be taken into account. The judge gave the petitioners permission and the college, and the Council signed consenting to quash the decision which has not been mentioned as all four grounds both had agreed that there were errors and that the first permission should quashed.
- 52) It was important to note that judge at the Planning Court stated that these issues had a bearing on key planning considerations which informed the grant of consent. This meant that the errors that were made informed the permission granted. When these errors are corrected there may be a different decision and outcome.
- 53) It was noting that neither the college or the Council were defending the first permission. Therefore, CLAG found it interesting that an identical application had been submitted although the first permission had been quashed.
- 54) It was anticipated that the judge at the hearing scheduled for 20 October 2026 would explain what had gone wrong and what needed to be corrected. CLAG had made the case so that the public would benefit.
- 55) The four grounds had all been conceded by the college and the Council and that the Planning Committee had been misled. These were:
- Historic England found harm: Excessive bulk, too big for its location. Members were told the opposite.
 - The report found harm, then called “neutral”. Both cannot be true. The balance never happened.
 - The library was counted as its own benefit, securing optimum viable use erroneously. A phantom benefit as it already has a library.
 - When heritage harm was found, less harmful alternatives must be considered. Members were actively dissuaded from considering alternatives on the table.
- 56) CLAG quoted all of the heritage experts that had been consulted all of which had found harm in the application. Members had been told that the heritage benefits outweighed heritage harm.

- 57) Cambridge Past, Present & Future noted the objections from residents of Christs Lane and had found harm across multiple assets and found that the public benefits did not outweigh the heritage harm.
- 58) It was stated that the college was in opposition to every single heritage body that had been appointed nationally.
- 59) It was noted that the JR was not about the building but about the scheme with heritage harm being denied outright. The college could have adjusted the scheme, taken expert advice, waited for the High Court's reasoned judgement but instead had rushed to resubmit the scheme unchanged.
- 60) It was not clear to CLAG what the rush was to approve the application even though the judge had refused the colleges request for special expedition.
- 61) The current proposed structure did have a have a half basement which would require digging and would be half a storey below ground. The building would also be larger than those surrounding it.
- 62) A previous design from 2010 had been rejected by the college as it would compromise views from First Court and dwarf Christs Lane.
- 63) As the first application was found to be of neutral harm it was felt that members had again been misled. Members should have been asked if the public benefits outweighed any harm. Planning balance would need to be weighed differently going forward.
- 64) The basement question was one of degree as it was half a basement.
- 65) A building that deferred to the Bodley was preferred by the public.
- 66) The colleges own Master Plan from 2023 had a library in the current location which was more modest but had additional locations throughout the college. This was adopted and those locations are currently being used by students. CLAG felt that this was another alternative to the proposed application and should not be disregarded.
- 67) CLAG saw this as an opportunity. However, under the current scheme the public would only get a bench, a gate but would only get a "beautiful wall". The wall would be 14 m in height on a 6m wide lane. This represented an enclosure 2.3 to 1. The comparative streets mentioned by the college (including Trinity St) were not pedestrian streets, and did not have vehicular access, nor were they key thoroughfares in the city.
- 68) The proposal would be over 40% more enclosed than the tightest of Cambridge streets and would create a Canyon Effect.
- 69) Christs Lane was a civic space and had an ecosystem sor society, economy and culture and served a broad range of people.

- 70) The Council had done an amazing job of redeveloping Bradwell's Court which opened up the street for many people to use and the Council needed to preserve this in Christs Lane.
- 71) This was an opportunity for the Council, the College and the public. The application should be deferred and use the next twelve weeks to look at a consented design, constellation and an appropriately sized scheme and also bring all parties together in an engaged, respectful, transparent and collaborative process.

Case Officer's Comment

- 72) Copies of the consultation response from all of the relevant heritage consultees had been distributed to Members.
- 73) The application at Christs College on St. Andrews Street and proposed the demolition of the existing 1970s library, its replacement, social and study spaces including the reprovision of a bridge to the Bodley Library, alterations to the kitchen, upper hall and adjacent areas including new plant, access improvements, alterations to toilets, provisions in the south east range of Second Court, landscaping, ancillary works and the installation of a temporary kitchen and dinning facility in Second Court.
- 74) The proposed development was to the southeastern corner of Christs College site.
- 75) The primary heritage points were the entirety of the entrance court surrounding First Court which was Grade One listed.
- 76) The relevant planning history was outlined.
- 77) At the time of writing the presentation the following comments had been received; there had been a total of 108 comments of which 61 were in support and 47 in objection with approximately 19 representations received from the Christ's Lane action Group.
- 78) In regard to the consultation date, the initial notification letters were sent out on 11 June to adjoining premises, additional notification letters were sent to four further addresses along St Andrew's Street and Christ's Lane, a further update letter was sent to all notified neighbours clarifying that comments would be received up to 22 July, and that the expiry date for comments on the public portal was updated to clarify the updated end date on 22 July.
- 79) Historic England were comfortable to reiterate their position of no objection. However, their comments had been appended to the previous application where it was clearly stated that they had concerns regarding the scale and bulk of the building and would

result in a certain level of harm to the significance of the Grade One listed Christ's College buildings.

- 80) In terms of the internal Conservation Officer, they had concluded that on balance the harm to the setting of the Grade One listed building was considered to be less than substantial at the lower end of the scale in requiring paragraph 215 of the MPPF to be engaged. There were other heritage benefits considered but not sufficient to outweigh the heritage harm.
- 81) The Victorian Society had stated that the proposal would result in a low to moderate level of less than substantial harm.

Case by Ward Councillors

Cambridge City Councillor Bick spoke as a ward councillor and made the following points:

- 82) If the fundamental physical proposal was the same as previously, he would choose to focus on that and wait to see what the Planning Committee made of those changes to its decision criteria.
- 83) Given the opportunity he would return to the points that he made previously with the concern primarily being the impact on Christ's Lane as public realm.
- 84) The current frontage of the college onto Christ's Lane is extremely ugly looking like the back of an industrial estate. The proposed plans could be argued to be an improvement. However, they were taller.
- 85) In respect of the height, it sounded necessary that the light and shade analysis be presented to the Planning Committee as this had been challenged.
- 86) There was a desire for a more active frontage even more than that which had been proposed as at pedestrian level it was still just a wall and enquired what options had been considered in the context of the current scheme to improve the experience of the public realm?

Members' Questions and Comments

- 87) Enquired what other options had been considered to improve the public realm.
- 88) If no decision was to be made, what was the reason for holding this meeting.
- 89) What was the harm in Planning terms and at what level.
- 90) There had been several quotes taken out of context
- 91) The public benefit needed to be refined

- 92) The DCF could flag up any issues. However, clarity was needed on the height of the chimneys and detail of the wall and the public benefit needed to be defined.
- 93) The existing library already had a partial basement.
- 94) Has the College considered public access to the library.
- 95) What was the justification for demolition and could the existing building be revamped.
- 96) Any heritage harm evidenced had to be balanced.
- 97) Would the proposals create a canyon effect.
- 98) Is the land in the proposal in the ownership of the applicant.
- 99) Would the new basement be at the same level as the existing building.
- 100) Could the college be opened up in a more equitable way.

Summing up by the Applicant

- 101) The green credentials of the proposed building were substantial which was why the design included chimneys. The height of these was to aid ventilation and to avoid further digging into the ground. The height had also been cut back as much as possible.
- 102) The library was a private space, although certain areas of the college were open to the public who could enjoy the Courts. The college would look at how it could share its facilities in the future.
- 103) The current library was out of commission and a replacement was needed as soon as possible and was having a negative impact on students.
- 104) The proposal was a beautiful building.

Summing up by the Petitioners

- 105) Alternatives needed to be considered such as the College's own Master Plan.
- 106) CLAG were not opposed to a new library.
- 107) The proposal could be lower
- 108) Students only used the library for 26 weeks of the year.
- 109) The building was already accessible.
- 110) Better alternatives were available and the proposal did not need to have such an overwhelming mass causing a canyon effect.
- 111) Heritage will be lost.
- 112) The chimneys could start at a lower level and there were better options available for ventilation which emitted less carbon.
- 113) Christ's Lane needed to remain a diverse pedestrian street.

Summing up by the Chair

114) The Chair noted the following:

- i. Notes of the Development Control Forum would be made available to relevant parties, published on the council's website and appended to the Planning Officer's report.
- ii. The Planning Case Officer should contact the Applicant/Agent after the meeting to discuss the outcome of the meeting and to follow up any further action that was necessary.
- iii. The Applicant would be encouraged to keep in direct contact with the Petitioners and to seek their views on any proposed amendments.
- iv. The Council would follow its normal neighbour notification procedures on any amendments to the application.
- v. Application to be considered at a future Joint Development Management Committee.
- vi. Along with other individuals who may have made representations on the application, the Petitioners' Representatives would be informed of the date of the meeting at which the application is to be considered by Committee and of their public speaking rights. The Committee report would be publicly available five clear days before the Committee meeting.

The meeting ended at 11.52 am

CHAIR



**26/00672/FUL – 23 - 27 Kings Hedges Road,
Cambridge**

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: Kings Hedges

Proposal: Change of use of land to allow siting of five modular homes to provide accommodation for homeless people and an office for support staff, along with access and services.

Applicant: Cambridge Cyrenians Ltd

Presenting officer: Tom Chenery

Reason presented to committee: Third party representations

Member site visit date: N/A

Key issues: 1. Principle of Development

2. Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

3. Impact on the amenity and living conditions of neighbouring and future occupiers

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	Assessment
10	Principle of development
11	Design, layout, scale and landscaping
12	Trees
13	Carbon reduction and sustainable design
14	Biodiversity
15	Water management and flood risk
16	Highway safety and transport
17	Cycle and car parking provision
18	Amenity
19	Third party representations
20	Planning balance
21	Recommendation
22	Planning conditions

Table 1 Contents of report

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The application seeks for temporary planning permission for the erection of 5 modular homes in the rear garden space of No's 23-27 Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge.
- 1.2 The existing built form comprises three semi detached dwellings and their associated garden space.
- 1.3 In principle, the erection of the 5 modular homes is considered acceptable and would provide accommodation for specialist housing of which there is an identified need. The proposal is considered to comply with the criteria set out in Policy 47.
- 1.4 The proposal would provide built form which would not result in any undue loss of light, outlook or appear overbearing to any adjacent neighbouring property or those within the site.

- 1.5 Moreover, details have been provided through a management plan which evidences that the site would be managed so that there is no excessive noise and disturbance from the occupiers of the site to the adjacent residential properties, those within the site or to the wider area.
- 1.6 The proposal would provide acceptable living accommodation to future occupiers and would provide appropriate levels of cycle and car parking within the site.
- 1.7 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee approve the application subject to conditions.

Table 2 Consultee summary

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment	Paragraph Reference
County Highways Development Management	No Objection subject to recommended conditions	6.1 - 6.2
Drainage Officer	No Objection subject to recommended conditions	6.8
Ecology Officer	No Objection subject to recommended conditions	6.3 - 6.4
Environmental Health	No Objection	6.5 – 6.7
Third Party Representations (15)		7
Member Representations (2)		8

2. Site description and context

- 2.1 The application site comprises 3 two storey properties known as No's. 23-27 Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge and their associated garden space. No's 23 and 25 form a semi detached pair with No.27 being part of a pair with No.29 Kings Hedges Road, which is not part of the application site.
- 2.2 The three properties do not benefit from any separation between them with no boundaries, although there are three outbuildings which currently are used as cycle storage.
- 2.3 The established character consist of rows of semi detached former council properties on a definitive linear form fronting the adopted public highway. The properties within the immediate setting are set back from the public highway some with front gardens and some with hardstanding for parking spaces. The site is in a predominantly residential area with No's 21 Kings Hedges Road immediately to the south east and No.29 Kings Hedges Road to the north west. To the rear of the site are the residential gardens associated with No's 26, 28 and 32a Ramsden Square. To the north east of the site are No's. 22-28 Kings Hedges Road.
- 2.4 The site is located within the urban area of Cambridge but is not located within any designated Conservation Area or the Green Belt. The site is at low risk of fluvial flooding (flood zone 1) and a majority of the site is a low risk of surface water flooding.
- 2.5 The Kings Hedges Road Neighbourhood Centre is located approx. 38m to the east of the site.

3. The proposal

- 3.1 Change of use of land to allow siting of five modular homes to provide accommodation for homeless people and an office for support staff, along with access and services
- 3.2 The application has been amended to include all the addresses on the site. The application as originally validated did not include all of the addresses.

4. Relevant site history

- 4.1 There is no relevant site history

5. Policy

5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026

- 5.2 The updated NPPF, which was published on 17 August 2026, is a material consideration which must be taken into account where it is relevant to a planning application. It replaces the December 2024 with immediate effect for making decisions on planning applications. The document is intended to create a clearer, more rules -based planning system, accelerate housing delivery, support economic growth, and make planning decisions more predictable.
- 5.3 For the purposes of decision making on planning applications, the adopted local plans of the Councils remain the statutory starting point when considering planning applications. However, the updated NPPF is clear in Annex A that an existing development plan policy (or part of a policy) which is materially inconsistent with a new national decision-making policy should be given *very limited* weight.
- 5.4 A review of the adopted Local Plan policies has been undertaken in the context of the updated NPPF. This has found that the majority of policies in both adopted plans remain broadly consistent with national policy and can be given weight until replaced by policies in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. A small number of policies, or parts of policies are materially inconsistent with national policy. Where appropriate, reference is made within the relevant sections of the assessment, to the appropriate policy weight which is attributed to local plan policies.
- 5.5 NPPF (2026) introduces a suite of national Development Management decision making policies – a set of procedural policies, and a number of thematic policies, structured around the respective document chapters, which must be taken into account where it is relevant to an application. This includes applying the presumption in favour of sustainable development found in Policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF, which requires approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.
- 5.6 The NPPF lists the three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways to achieve sustainable

development. These roles are considered in weighing up the benefits and dis-benefits of the development proposals, relative to all material considerations discussed in the report.

- 5.7 In following these requirements, the application proposals have been assessed against the NPPF (2026), and the relevant development plan policies.

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)

Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)

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

5.8 **Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 19 Proposed Submission)**

- 5.8.1 The Proposed Submission Greater Cambridge Local Plan represents the latest 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.
- 5.8.2 The Proposed Submission Local Plan was published for public consultation (under Regulation 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) between 3 August and 25 September 2026.
- 5.8.3 In line with Policy DM4 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to several factors. The Proposed Submission Local Plan is consistent with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024. Whilst the joint Local Plan is at an advanced stage in the plan making process, the Regulation 19 consultation is yet to be completed.
- 5.8.4 Therefore, at this stage, the Proposed Submission Local Plan and its policies can only be afforded limited weight as a material consideration in decision making.
- 5.8.5 Submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State is anticipated by the end of December 2026.

5.9 **Cambridge Local Plan (2018)**

Policy 3: Spatial strategy for the location of residential development
Policy 28: Carbon reduction, community energy networks, sustainable design and construction, and water use
Policy 29: Renewable and low carbon energy generation
Policy 32: Flood risk
Policy 35: Protection of human health from noise and vibration
Policy 36: Air quality, odour and dust
Policy 45: Affordable housing and dwelling mix
Policy 47: Specialist housing
Policy 48: Housing in multiple occupation
Policy 50: Residential space standards
Policy 51: Accessible Homes
Policy 55: Responding to context
Policy 56: Creating successful places
Policy 57: Designing new buildings

Policy 64: Shopfronts, signage and shop security measures
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

5.10 **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

The Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations SPD – Adopted April 2026

5.11 **Supplementary Planning Documents** (prepared in parallel with the Local Plan preparation and shortly to be adopted by the Executive Councillor by an out of cycle decision)

Cambridge Neighbourhoods Design Code for Arbury, King's Hedges and parts of West Chesterton

5.12 **Other guidance**

Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029

6. **Consultations**

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – N

Press Notice – N

County Highways Development Management - No Objection

- 6.1 The effect of the proposed development upon the Public Highway should be mitigated if the following conditions

- 6.2 Delivery vehicles with a gross weight of 3.5 tonnes shall only service the site on certain days and hours and details of a parking plan are required.

Ecology Officer- No Objection

- 6.3 There are no non statutory protected sites within the vicinity that are likely to be impacted by the application. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has found no evidence to suggest that a protected species licence will be required prior to works commencing on site. The report has; however, recommended non-licensable reasonable avoidance measures to remove any residual risk of harm or disturbance to protected or priority species. BNG can be provided off site.
- 6.4 Conditions regarding compliance with the submitted Preliminary Ecological Assessment, details of ecological enhancement and a lighting strategy are recommended.

Environmental Health - No Objection

- 6.5 Following the details contained in the site management plan, the Management Plan is adequate and contains a series of both proactive and reactive management proposals to try to minimise impacts.
- 6.6 The primary concerns were / are the potential for an-social behaviour and nuisance, but this will depend on how the future residents behave and how effectively the Management Plan is implemented and enforced. I have been through the complaint history for the address with Officers from our Residential Team (who deal with nuisance / HMOs) and we note that the only complaint made in the last 5 years to them regarding the existing HMO was about an accumulation of rubbish back in January 2024 which was dealt with at that me.
- 6.7 Condition regarding compliance with management plan is required.

Sustainable Drainage Officer- Object / No Objection

- 6.8 Recommended conditions regarding foul water drainage, surface water drainage and compliance with details within the Flood Risk Assessment.

7. Third party representations

- 7.1 15 representations have been received in objection. These representations are summarised as follows

- Security Concerns
- Poor state of properties at present
- Antisocial Behaviour
- Properties are poorly managed
- Overdevelopment
- Impact on the character of the area.
- Privacy and Overshadowing concerns
- Traffic concerns
- Parking Pressures
- Increase Crime Rate
- Lack of Consultation

7.2 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.

8. Member Representations

8.1 Cllr Hollow and Cllr Wade has made a representation supporting the application on the following grounds:

- Provides required housing
- Good standard of living
- Updated security measures are a benefit.

9. Assessment

10. Principle of Development

Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

10.1 Plan Making Policy H03 (1.a.i.) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2026) requires the Council to identify a sufficient supply of specific deliverable sites to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against the Council's housing requirement figure, with an appropriate buffer.

10.2 The NPPF 2026, at Annex D paragraph 8, states that that five year supply requirements are assessed against the housing requirement in the development plan, or against the local housing need (calculated using the standard method) where the development plan housing requirement is more than five years old. The adopted Cambridge City Local Plan and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 are both almost 8 years old. Accordingly,

the standard method is now being used to establish the housing requirement on an individual district basis.

- 10.3 Since adoption of the Local Plans in 2018, the Councils' five year housing land supply has been calculated on the basis of a joint housing trajectory, as set out in Policy 3 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and Policy S/12 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018, and captured in annual updates to the Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and Housing Land Supply Report. However, there are several factors which indicate that this approach is no longer appropriate, or consistent with national policy.
- 10.4 In order to adopt a consistent approach to the monitoring of housing delivery in Greater Cambridge, the Councils must calculate their five year housing land supply separately in accordance with Annex D of the NPPF 2026.
- 10.5 On the basis of the updated calculations (as set out in the Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and Housing Land Supply Report-Addendum- September 2026) Cambridge has 2.72 years of housing land supply for 2026-2031 and South Cambridgeshire has 7.83 years of housing land supply for 2026-2031. These figures must be applied when considering development proposals against the development plan and NPPF 2026 national decision-making policies.

Assessment

- 10.6 The City Council are currently unable to demonstrate a 5YHLS and so has an unmet need. The relevant Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 (Policy 3) can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of this planning application. This application must be determined in accordance with presumption in favour of sustainable development, as per the requirements of policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF 2026.
- 10.7 Policy S3 of the NPPF states that decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and, policy S4 should be applied to development proposals inside settlements.
- 10.8 Policy S4: Principle of development within settlements, requires development proposals within settlements to be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the Framework.

- 10.9 The proposed development of the site seeks to provide 5 additional modular homes and, in this location, represents sustainable development in accordance with Policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF 2026. The site benefits from proximity to existing employment opportunities, services, facilities and sustainable transport connections, enabling residents to access day to day needs without undue reliance on the private car. The proposal would make an important contribution to housing supply, including housing for the homeless.
- 10.10 The proposal therefore accords with the presumption in favour of sustainable development established by Policy S3 and the settlement-focused approach to development set out in Policy S4 of the NPPF 2026.

Policies 3 and 47

- 10.11 The proposal seeks to erect 5No. modular homes within the rear garden space of No's. 23-27 Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge. The proposal also involves the erection of a modular office building within the same site.
- 10.12 The supporting planning statement indicates that occupiers of the modular homes would be those experiencing 'core homelessness' which it describes as "those who are sleeping rough, but also those staying in places not intended as residential accommodation, living in homeless hostels, refuges and shelters, placed in unsuitable temporary accommodation, and sofa surfing. (generally single people)."
- 10.13 Policy 3 of the Local Plan supports the development of residential uses within the urban areas of Cambridge.
- 10.14 Policy 47 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 states that planning permission will be granted for specialist housing subject to the development complying with a number of criteria. These are assessed in turn below.

a. supported by evidence of the demonstrable need for this form of development within Cambridge;

- 10.15 The application is supported by a planning statement which provides a number of documents which provide detail on the wider national homelessness situation (The 2025 Homeless Monitor by Crisis), as well as evidence from the City Council (Cambridge City Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2021-2028)). As part of the Greater Cambridge emerging Local Plan a Housing Needs assessment report was undertaken in August 2025.

- 10.16 The national homelessness monitor identifies that core homeless is expected to rise by 21% by 2041 and it has risen 37% since 2020.
- 10.17 The Greater Cambridge Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) identifies that an estimated 4,600 households are living in unsuitable housing and around 443 of these currently have no housing. The report also assumes that homeless and concealed households will not be able to afford to buy or rent in the market. The report also highlights that homelessness and housing demand continue to rise and that the national trends in the Private Rental Sector (PRS) indicate that landlords are exiting the PRS including Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) further exacerbating homelessness pressures.
- 10.18 More specifically, the report identifies that there is a need for 1 bedroom rented affordable housing and that typically homeless householders are more likely to be younger single people.
- 10.19 Whilst not an evidence based document, The Council's Housing Strategy aims to prioritise the need to prevent and tackle homelessness and rough sleeping within Cambridge by providing secure homes with personalised support for individual challenges. The priorities are based on meeting objectives which are:
- Support those at risk of homelessness to remain in their homes where possible or to find a new home without an intervening period of homelessness.
 - Improve access to a range of permanent accommodation.
 - Minimise the use of temporary and emergency accommodation.
 - Improve access to, and effectiveness of, support services.
 - Prevent rough sleeping.
 - Break the cycle of chronic and repeat street homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 10.20 It is acknowledged from the evidence highlighted above, that there is a lack of suitable housing available for homeless people within Cambridge. The modular homes such as the proposed development will be designed so that they are suitable for the intended occupiers by providing supported and independent living that can be easily managed by the occupant. Therefore the proposal is considered to comply with criterion a.
- b. suitable for the intended occupiers in relation to the quality and type of facilities, and the provision of support and/or care;

- 10.21 The HNA report identifies that there is a need for 1 bedroom rented affording housing and that typically homeless householders are more likely to be younger single people. The site is leased by Cambridge Cyrenians, an established charity that specialises in working to prevent and relieve homelessness in Cambridge. The planning statement indicates that the proposal also seeks to erect a modular building to be used as an office by the charity to support those on the site. It also indicates that the three properties (No's 23-27 Kings Hedges Road) have been used as HMOs by the charity for 12 people since 2011.
- 10.22 In light of this, it is considered that the proposal is suitable for the intended occupiers and would have the required quality and type of facilities, and the provision of support and/or care. The proposal is considered to comply with criterion b.
- c. accessible to local shops and services, public transport and other sustainable modes of transport, and community facilities appropriate to the needs of the intended occupiers; and
- 10.23 The application site is located within the urban area of Cambridge and is in walking distance to a number of local shops and services. There are also bus stops approx. 180m from the site which provide regular bus services to Cambridge city centre as well as locations outside of the city which also provide day to day services and community facilities.
- 10.24 In light of the above, the proposal is considered to comply with criterion c.
- d. in a location that avoids excessive concentration of such housing within any one street or small area.
- 10.25 Whilst the immediate site benefits from the 3 properties being used as a HMO to provide housing for homeless people, there are no other single modular homes in the local area. The proposal is considered to comply with this criterion.
- 10.26 Overall, the proposal is considered to comply with the criteria set out in policy 47 and is also considered to be in accordance with this policy as a whole.
- 10.27 As the proposal is seeking to develop on a site which is part of a residential curtilage or group of residential curtilages, Policy L2 (making effective use of land) Paragraph 1(d) is relevant. This permits this type of

development provided it complies with a number of criteria. This is assessed in turn below

i. Be consistent with the overall street scene, other than where: it is appropriate to have larger buildings (such as at street corners, or where building upwards would not cause substantial harm to the character of a building and its surroundings); the development would not be visible from the street frontage; or where specific changes are provided for through a design code which forms part of the development plan.

- 10.28 The proposed modular homes are located in the rear garden space set well back from the rear building line of the existing dwellings on site. There is an established pattern of development within the locale and a number of adjacent properties benefit from outbuildings and built form within their rear gardens. The development would also be temporary and as such any proposal would therefore relate acceptably to the immediate setting of the site and wider character and pattern of the area. The temporary nature of the development can be secured by an appropriately worded condition. This is assessed in more detail within the 'Impact on the character and appearance' section of this report. The proposal is considered to comply with this criterion.

ii. Maintain safe access and egress for occupiers and users, and acceptable living standards for residents and neighbours in terms of access to daylight, sunlight, privacy and external amenity space;

- 10.29 The proposed development benefits from large rear gardens with no boundary treatment between the existing properties. The submitted proposed site layout indicates that there would be a more formalised garden area which would be accessible and large enough for existing occupiers. There is also rear garden space available for the occupiers of the modular homes which is considered to be acceptable. An assessment of trees and biodiversity are assessed within the relevant sections of this report. The proposal is considered to comply with this criterion.
- 10.30 The concerns raised by third parties regarding noise and disturbance, loss of privacy and overshadowing are noted. The existing properties on site provide HMO accommodation for 12 occupiers. The proposal would allow for an increase of 5 additional occupiers on the site.
- 10.31 Due to the siting, scale and design of the proposed modular homes and the distance from neighbouring occupiers, the proposal is not considered to result in any undue loss of light, outlook or appear overbearing or result in overshadowing to any adjacent neighbouring occupier.

- 10.32 In terms of noise and disturbance the proposal would result in an intensification of the use of the site through the increase of 5 additional occupiers on the site. Whilst this is an intensification, this is considered to be modest.
- 10.33 The submitted site management plan indicates that occupiers will need to sign up to the Cambridge Cyrenians License agreement, and they must abide by 'House Rule' which are set out in the management plan. These seek to reduce noise and disturbance on the site and to existing occupiers. The management plan also indicates that there will be staff on site during the day and will benefit from CCTV in order to ensure the site does not result in any excessive noise and disturbance to adjacent properties. Furthermore, the design of the units is such that there is adequate space, including a private amenity space which would allow occupiers of the modular homes to not be wholly reliant on the external garden space for amenity.
- 10.34 The Environmental Health Officer has raised no objection to the proposal subject to compliance with the management plan. This matter is assessed in more detail within the 'Residential Amenity' section of this report.
- 10.35 The proposal is considered to provide adequate amenity space, vehicular access and parking for the existing properties. These are assessed in more detail within the residential amenity section of the report and Highways Safety/Car and Cycle Parking.
- 10.36 The proposal is considered to comply with this criterion.

iii. Where the development would involve the use of residential curtilages, not occupy more than twice the footprint of all the existing buildings on the site, and, following development, would retain at least 50% of the non-developed area within the curtilage of the existing buildings; unless additional development can be accommodated without harm to the overall character of the area, and taking into account the availability of infrastructure and the importance of locating development in sustainable locations (in accordance with policy TR3).

10.37 The development would not occupy more than twice the footprint of all the existing building sites and would retain at least 50% of the non-developed area within the curtilage of the existing buildings. Notwithstanding this, it has been explained that the additional development can be accommodated without harm to the overall character of the area and is supported by available infrastructure and in a sustainable location. The proposal is considered comply with this criterion.

10.38 Overall, the proposal is considered to comply with the criteria set out in Policy L2/1(d) of the NPPF (2026) and is also considered to be in accordance with this policy as a whole.

Conclusion

10.39 For the reasons outlined above, the proposal is considered to comply with policy 47 of the Local Plan, and Policy L2/1(d) of the NPPF and is acceptable in principle. It is therefore necessary to assess the proposals impact on the character and appearance of the area, residential amenity, ecology/biodiversity, highways, drainage and any other relevant material consideration.

11. Design, layout, scale and landscaping

11.1 Policies 55, 57 and 59 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 and includes appropriate landscaping and boundary treatment.

11.2 The site is located within the Cambridge Neighbourhoods Design Code for Arbury, King's Hedges and parts of West Chesterton SPD. The design code sets out a number of important design principles for the area including: Thriving Public Spaces, Prioritising Walking and Cycling, Increasing Sustainability, Making Space for Nature and Enhancing character.

11.3 The immediate setting of the site comprises the rear garden space of No's 23-27 Kings Hedges Road. The garden space is abundant and does not benefit from any boundary treatment between the properties at present. The boundary treatment on the south eastern and north western edges which are shared with No's 21 and 29 Kings Hedges Road respectively are 6ft high close boarded fences. The boundary treatment to the rear of the site consists of mature vegetation.

- 11.4 The wider established character of the area consists of rows of semi detached former council properties on a definitive linear form fronting the adopted public highway. This is evident on both the northern and southern side of Kings Hedges Road. The properties within the immediate setting are set back from the public highway some with front gardens and some with hardstanding for parking spaces. The site benefits from some outbuildings in the rear garden space.
- 11.5 Objections have been raised indicating that the proposal is an overdevelopment of the site and that the application site was previously dilapidated and the proposal would cause harm to the character of the area.
- 11.6 As indicative above, properties on Kings Hedges Road and this site in particular benefit from substantial rear gardens. It is common place within the rear gardens of properties within the immediate locale to have 1 or 2 single storey outbuildings on their plot and some with generous extensions to the host dwelling. The site itself currently benefits from two pre fabricated garages on the site and a small storage shed within the rear garden.
- 11.7 At present, there are glimpsed views into the rear of the site between gaps in buildings such as No's 21 to 23 and 25 to 27. The site at present does not benefit from any formal landscaping or any formal arrangement for bin and bike stores.
- 11.8 The proposed modular homes would be set back from the rear building line of the existing properties by approximately 16m. The modular homes would be single storey in height (3.2m in total) and would have the appearance of an outbuilding typical of a rear garden setting. The applicant has confirmed that the outbuildings would be for a temporary period of up to 5 years. This would also reduce the proposals impact on the area. Other similar development within the district have also been restricted to temporary periods of up to 5 years and therefore this length of permission is considered to be acceptable.
- 11.9 The proposal would also result in substantial landscaping enhancements to the front garden space as well as the rear garden space and would provide better facilities for the future occupants and existing occupants. This landscaping can be secured through an appropriately worded planning condition.

- 11.10 When viewed as separate properties, the erection of modular homes in the rear garden would equate to 2 outbuildings per property which as indicated is not dissimilar to the existing level of built form in the rear gardens of properties. Furthermore, due to the enhanced landscaping plans including more formalised boundary treatments, the modular homes would be partially visible through glimpsed views at the front of the site.
- 11.11 Whilst not detailed on the plan, a landscaping condition can secure additional boundary treatment at the front of the site between No's 25 and 27 to further restrict views and give a greater appearance of individual properties from public viewpoints.
- 11.12 Therefore, for the reasons outlined above, the proposal would relate acceptably to the immediate setting of the site as well as the wider character and appearance of the area.
- 11.13 Overall, the proposed development is a high-quality design that would contribute positively to its surroundings and be appropriately landscaped. The proposal is compliant policies 55, 56, 57 and 59 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

12. Trees

- 12.1 The site does not benefit from any trees on the site whilst there is some mature hedgerow and vegetation which do not benefit from any protection.
- 12.2 As part of the proposed landscaping enhancements, there would be a number of trees planted on the site and these are considered to be a benefit.
- 12.3 Subject to a landscape condition to secure this planting, the proposal would accord with Local Plan policies 59 and 71 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

13. Carbon reduction and sustainable design

- 13.1 Policy 28 encourages principles of sustainable construction and seeks that carbon reduction is achieved for new development. Due to the nature of the development, renewable technologies have not been incorporated in the development. The issues of budgetary constraints and the

temporary nature of the proposed development are considered reasonable exception as to not request renewable technologies to be provided.

14. Biodiversity

- 14.1 The Environment Act 2021 and the Councils' Biodiversity SPD (2022) requires development proposals to deliver a net gain in biodiversity following a mitigation hierarchy which is focused on avoiding ecological harm over minimising, rectifying, reducing and then off-setting. This approach is embedded within the strategic objectives of the Local Plan and policy 70.
- 14.2 Policy 70 states that proposals that harm or disturb populations and habitats should secure achievable mitigation and / or compensatory measures resulting in either no net loss or a net gain of priority habitat and local populations of priority species.
- 14.3 The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Metric and BNG assessment.
- 14.4 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 and the estimated biodiversity net gain is delivered.
- 14.5 In consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, subject to an appropriate condition, 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 fluvial flooding but is at low risk of surface water flooding.
- 15.2 The applicants have submitted a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and the Council's Sustainable Drainage Engineer has advised that there are no objection to the proposed development subject to conditions relating to surface and foul water drainage details as well as a condition requiring compliance with the submitted FRA.

- 15.3 Subject to these conditions, 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.

16. Highway safety and transport impacts

- 16.1 The application site benefits from three individual vehicular accesses which are demarcated by hedgerows at No's 23 and 25, whilst No.27 does not benefit from any formal demarcation.
- 16.2 The proposal does not seek to amend the existing accesses but would create a more formal arrangement of the existing parking arrangements.
- 16.3 Objections have been raised that the proposal would result in parking pressures and highways safety implications. The application site is located in a highly sustainable location and is in walking distance to a number of shops and services as well as being in cycling distance to the city centre of Cambridge. There are also regular bus services which are in walking distance from the site and provide access to the City centre. Due to the nature of the occupancy, it is unlikely that occupiers would have access to a car/vehicle and any parking would likely be occupied by staff and visitors on the site.
- 16.4 The Local Highways Authority have been consulted on the scheme and have not raised any objection subject to conditions relating to times and dates of construction/delivery vehicles over 3.5 tonnes and the submission of a contractors parking plan.
- 16.5 As the proposal would not represent an intensification of the use of the accesses, and subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal would not result in any highways safety concerns or increased parking pressures and the proposal accords with the objectives of Policies 80 and 81 of the Local Plan and is compliant with NPPF advice.

17. Car and cycle provision

Cycle parking

- 17.1 The site at present utilises existing outbuildings for informal cycle storage and has enough space for approx. seven bikes which are not secure.

- 17.2 The proposal seeks to erect more formalised and cycle parking on the site which would provide 18 cycle spaces. The submitted plans indicate that these would be covered and secure.
- 17.3 The Cambridge Local Plan (2018) supports development which encourages and prioritises sustainable transport, such as walking, cycling and public transport. Policy 82 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) requires new developments to comply with the cycle parking standards as set out within appendix L which for residential development states that one cycle space should be provided per bedroom for dwellings of up to three bedrooms. These spaces should be located in a purpose-built area at the front of each dwelling and be at least as convenient as car parking provision. To support the encourage sustainable transport, the provision for cargo and electric bikes should be provided on a proportionate basis.
- 17.4 Whilst not at the front, the proposal would provide enough cycle parking for all occupiers on the site and as such is a betterment than the existing cycle parking. The proposed cycle parking can be secured through an appropriately worded compliance condition.
- 17.5 The proposed cycle parking is complaint with policy 81 of the Local Plan.

Car parking

- 17.6 The site currently is laid out to provide three off street parking spaces. Kings Hedges Road does not have any parking restrictions.
- 17.7 The proposed amendments to the front landscaping and driveway areas would ensure the retention of these three parking spaces and fire tender access.
- 17.8 As referenced above, due to the nature of the use of the site, it is unlikely that any future occupiers would benefit from the use of a car and therefore increasing car ownership on the site.
- 17.9 Whilst the number of occupiers on the site is increasing, the proposed parking layout and amount is considered to be appropriate to the use and therefore the proposal is compliant with policy 81 of the Local Plan.

18. Residential Amenity

- 18.1 The NPPF and policy 35 of the Local Plan seek to preserve the amenity of neighbouring and / or future occupiers in terms of noise and disturbance,

overshadowing, overlooking, or overbearing and through providing high quality internal and external spaces.

- 18.2 A number of objections have been made regarding excessive noise and disturbance from antisocial behaviour and the intensification of the use of the site as well as safety concerns from antisocial behaviour.
- 18.3 Antisocial behaviour in itself is not a material planning consideration however, excessive noise and disturbance from the use of the site as well as fear of crime are material considerations.

Excessive Noise and Disturbance.

- 18.4 Third party representations have raised concerns that the proposal would result in excessive noise and disturbance from the intensification of the use of the site.
- 18.5 The supporting planning statement indicates that there are 12 residents within the existing three HMO properties at present and they have full access to the rear garden as existing. The proposal would result in an additional five units on the site for a maximum of five persons. There would also be a modular office on the site for staff, although this is not manned 24/7.
- 18.6 The application is supported by a management plan, which requires all occupiers on site to sign up to a license agreement with a number of rules to curb any noise and disturbance. This limits behaviours and visitors on the site to a maximum of two at any one time and no overnight stays. A new CCTV system will also be installed.
- 18.7 In addition to this, due to the layout of the site and properties, which includes shared internal and external amenity space for the existing HMO properties as well as shared and private amenity space for each of the modular homes, this would reduce the reliance on the rear garden area to be used by all occupiers at the same time and therefore would limit any potential excessive noise and disturbance.
- 18.8 The Council's Environmental Health Officer has been consulted on the scheme and have raised no objections to the proposal subject to a condition which required compliance with the submitted management plan.

- 18.9 It is therefore considered that whilst the proposal would result in a modest intensification of the use, due to the proposed layout of the properties and the facilities available as well as the restrictions and details contained within the management plan, the proposal is not considered to result in any excessive noise and disturbance and would comply with policy 35 and 52 of the local plan in this regard.

Crime/safety

- 18.10 Objections have been raised regarding safety concerns and the prospect of crime as a result of the proposal. The judgment in *Smith v SoS 2005* indicates that for fear of crime to be a material planning consideration, there has to be some reasonable evidential basis for that fear.
- 18.11 No evidential detail has been provided through third party representations which provide sufficient basis that crime and safety concerns on the site are current and significant.
- 18.12 The Council's Environmental Health Officer has been consulted on the proposal which particularly has also gained the advice of city councils antisocial behaviour and nuisance team and there are no recorded complaints to any Environmental Health team apart from the accumulation of rubbish in January 2024.
- 18.13 Therefore as there have been no evidenced events of crime happening as a result of the current use of the site, the proposed development is not considered to meet the necessary tests for a fear of crime to be a relevant material consideration for this application.
- 18.14 Objections have been received regarding a loss of privacy from the proposal to adjacent neighbouring occupiers and overshadowing impacts. Due to the separation distance between the proposal as well its scale and design, the proposal is not considered to result in any loss of light, privacy, outlook or appear overbearing or overshadowing to any neighbouring occupier.

Future occupants

- 18.15 Policy 50 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) requires all new residential units to meet or exceed the Government's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards (2015).

- 18.16 The gross internal floor space measurements for units in this application will be approx. 32.sqm. Officers acknowledge that the modular homes would be slightly below the internal space standard set out in policy 50. However, the proposed units fall within specialist housing for homeless people under the Housing First model. The intension of the proposed modular units is to provide suitable and independent housing for a single occupant. The standard of accommodation is therefore, considered appropriate for the intended users.

Garden Size(s)

- 18.17 Policy 50 of Cambridge Local Plan (2018) states that all new residential units will be expected to have direct access to an area of private amenity space which should be of a shape, size and location to allow effective and practical use of the intended occupiers. Each unit will have a small patio/balcony area providing outdoor private area for each occupier. Again this is considered appropriate to allow the occupants access to an area of outdoor space.

Accessible design

- 18.18 Policy 51 requires all new residential units to be of a size, configuration and internal layout to enable Building Regulations requirement part M4(2) - accessible and adaptable dwellings to be met. As these are a temporary form of accommodation, it is not considered the pods should be required to meet M4(2) standards.

Summary

- 18.19 The proposal adequately respects the amenity of its neighbours and of future occupants. Subject to conditions, the proposal is compliant with policies 55, 56, 57 and 59 of the Local plan. The associated construction and environmental impacts would be acceptable in accordance with policies 33, 34, 35 and 36 of the Local Plan.

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
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Lack of consultation	Concerns have been raised regarding a lack of consultation of the proposal. It is not evident from the submission as to whether this relates to the formal application consultation process or a public consultation from the applicant on the proposal. The application has been consulted in accordance with the requirements set out in the Development Management Procedure Order (DMPO).
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Table 2 Officer response to third party representations

20. Planning balance

- 20.1 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).
- 20.2 Summary of harm
- 20.3 The proposal would result in an intensification of the use of the site and there is the potential for an impact on the amenity and living conditions of neighbouring occupiers through excessive noise and disturbance. However, the proposal is laid out and designed to ensure there is not a reliance on the external amenity space and that the site is adequately managed in order to ensure any noise and disturbance is kept to a minimum.
- 20.4 Summary of benefits
- 20.5 The proposal will provide five modular pods for homeless people in Cambridge for which there is an acute need. Such facilities are critical for housing homeless people by providing safe and secure accommodation. The provision of such housing, albeit for a temporary period of 5 years, is afforded significant weight in the overall planning balance.
- 20.6 The proposal would result in a betterment of the existing management of the site including a management plan and additional CCTV which would limit any excessive noise and disturbance from the site. In addition to this, the proposal would ensure more robust boundary treatment and enhancement landscaping which would be a benefit to the character of the site.

- 20.7 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval.

21. Recommendation

- 21.1 **Approve** subject to:

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

22. 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 first occupation of the first unit, hereby permitted, the Local Planning Authority shall be formally notified in writing of the commencement date and five years from the date of notification the use of the proposed units shall cease, and the units together with associated car and cycle parking shall be removed from site within one month from the cessation of use and the land restored to its former state.

Reason: Due to their modular form, the structures would not be appropriate as permanent units of accommodation, and also to ensure the use does not prejudice the comprehensive redevelopment of the site for housing (policies 3, 35, 55 and 57 of the 2018 Cambridge Local Plan).

4. The proposal, as approved, shall be carried out in accordance with the document titled 'Management Plan for 23-27 Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge, CB24 2QF June 2026' for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal does not result in any excessive noise and disturbance and to protect the amenity and living conditions of any residential neighbouring occupier in accordance with Policies 35, 47, 52, 55 and 56 of the Cambridge Local Plan.

5. No development above ground level shall take place until a scheme of ecological enhancement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the features to be enhanced, recreated and managed for species of local importance both in the course of development and in the future. The details should include bee lawn, bird and bat boxes and hedgehog gaps. The scheme shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

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

6. No demolition or construction works shall commence on site until a contractors parking plan has been agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. The aim of the plan should be to demonstrate how the developer will control and regulate on street motor vehicle parking for the contractors and sub-contractors undertaking the works.

Reason: in the interests of highway safety (Policies 80 and 81 of the Cambridge Local Plan).

7. No development above ground level, shall commence until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out as approved. These details shall include proposed means of enclosure; bin and cycle storage layout, and pedestrian access and circulation areas; hard surfacing materials. Soft Landscape works shall include native hedge boundary and planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate and an implementation programme. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved

details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The maintenance shall be carried out in accordance with the approved schedule. Any trees or plants that, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable with others of species, size and number as originally approved, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure that suitable hard and soft landscape is provided as part of the development. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 55, 57 and 59).

8. The bin and bike stores associated with the proposed development, including any planting associated with a green roof, shall be provided prior to first occupation in accordance with the approved plans and shall be retained thereafter. Any store with a flat or mono-pitch roof shall incorporate, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority, a green roof planted / seeded with a predominant mix of wildflowers which shall contain no more than a maximum of 25% sedum planted on a sub-base being no less than 80 millimetres thick.

Reason: To ensure appropriate provision for the secure storage of bicycles and refuse, to encourage biodiversity and slow surface water run-off (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 31 and 82)

9. No development, other than demolition, shall commence until a scheme for the provision and implementation of surface water drainage has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be fully implemented 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 ensure appropriate surface water drainage and prevent the increased risk of flooding (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 31 and 32).

10. 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 by Arbtech dated 12th August 2025.

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)

11. No development, other than demolition, 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).

12. Prior to the installation of any artificial lighting in any phase, an ecologically sensitive artificial lighting scheme for that phase shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the baseline condition of lighting, any existing and proposed internal and external artificial lighting of the site in that phase and an artificial lighting impact assessment with predicted lighting levels. The scheme shall:

- a) include details (including luminaires, fittings and any shrouds) of any artificial lighting on the site and an artificial lighting impact assessment with predicted lighting levels at the site boundaries;

- b) unless otherwise agreed, not exceed 0.4 lux level (against an agreed baseline) on the vertical plane at agreed locations;

- c) detail all building design measures to minimise light spillage;

- d) set out a monitoring and reporting regime for the lighting scheme.

The approved lighting scheme shall be fully installed, maintained and operated in accordance with the approved details. The scheme shall be retained as such thereafter.

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

13. Demolition, construction or delivery vehicles with a gross weight in excess of 3.5 tonnes shall only service the site between the hours of 09.15hrs -16.00hrs, Monday to Friday.

Reason: in the interests of highway safety (Policy 80 and 81 of the Cambridge Local Plan).

14. Prior to the occupation of any part of the development, the mitigation and protection measures, as set out in the Drainage Statement, Land to the rear of 23-27 Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge, CB24 2QF shall be fully carried out and shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding (Cambridge Local Plan 2018, policy 32).

Biodiversity Net Gain Condition

Development may not be begun unless:

- (a) a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

Reason: To ensure compliance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021).

Biodiversity Net Gain Informative

Biodiversity net gain is a way of creating and improving biodiversity by requiring development to have a positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity.

In England, biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by [Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 \(inserted by the Environment Act 2021\)](#). This statutory framework is referred to as 'biodiversity net gain' in Planning Practice Guidance to distinguish it from other or more general biodiversity gains.

Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the Biodiversity Gain Condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits.

The biodiversity gain condition (as set out above at the end of this decision notice) is a pre-commencement condition: once planning permission has been granted, a Biodiversity Gain Plan must be submitted to and approved by Cambridge City Council (the local planning authority) before commencement of the development. There are exemptions, transitional arrangements and requirements relating to irreplaceable habitat which disapply the condition from certain planning permissions, as well as special modifications for planning permissions for phased development and the treatment of irreplaceable habitats.

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the approved development is engaged by paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, is subject to the statutory Biodiversity Gain Condition and none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

The effect of section 73D of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

If planning permission is granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (application to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached) and a Biodiversity Gain Plan was approved in relation to the previous planning permission ("the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan") there are circumstances when the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan is regarded as approved for the purpose of discharging the biodiversity gain condition subject to which the section 73 planning permission is granted.

Those circumstances are that the conditions subject to which the section 73 permission is granted:

- i. do not affect the post-development value of the onsite habitat as specified in the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan, and
- ii. in the case of planning permission for a development where all or any part of the onsite habitat is irreplaceable habitat the conditions do not change the effect of the development on the biodiversity of that onsite habitat (including any arrangements made to compensate for any such effect) as specified in the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan.

Advice on information required to discharge Biodiversity Gain Condition

A Biodiversity Gain Plan to secure at least 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the predevelopment biodiversity value of the onsite habitat as per the statutory condition as set out on this Decision Notice must be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved before the development can commence. In order to discharge the condition, the following information will be required:

-details of purchase and monitoring of the offsite biodiversity units, a biodiversity metric for the site, costings and evidence of appropriate legal agreements to guarantee delivery of ongoing habitat management requirements specifically:

- i. Identification of receptor site or sites with associated plans;
- ii. Details of the offsetting requirements of the development in accordance with current DEFRA biodiversity metric;

- iii. The provision of evidence of arrangements to secure the delivery of offsetting measures, including a timetable of delivery; and
- iv. A Management and Monitoring Plan, to include for the provision and maintenance of the offsetting measures for a period of not less than 30 years from the commencement of the scheme and itself to include:
 - a) Description of all habitat(s) to be created / restored / enhanced within the scheme including expected management condition and total area;
 - b) Review of Ecological constraints;
 - c) Current soil conditions of any areas designated for habitat creation and detailing of what conditioning must occur to the soil prior to the commencement of habitat creation works;
 - d) Detailed design and working methods (management prescriptions) to achieve proposed habitats and management conditions, including extent and location of proposed works;
 - e) Type and source of materials to be used, including species list for all proposed planting and abundance of species within any proposed seed mix;
 - f) Identification of persons responsible for implementing the works;
 - g) A timetable of ecological monitoring to assess the success of all habitats creation / enhancement.
 - h) The inclusion of a feedback mechanism to the Local Planning Authority, allowing for the alteration of working methods / management prescriptions, should the monitoring deem it necessary.
 - i) Evidence that appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure the Council is funded to monitor the proposed biodiversity gain from the site(s) proposed over a period of 30 years. This would normally be in the form of a freestanding S106 agreement with a biodiversity provider which has already secured on-going monitoring contributions for the Council.

Commencing development which is subject to the biodiversity gain condition without an approved Biodiversity Gain Plan could result in your development becoming subject to enforcement action.

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning offer pre-application guidance regarding Biodiversity Net Gain here: [Biodiversity Net Gain Advice \(greatercambridgeplanning.org\)](https://greatercambridgeplanning.org)

Background papers:

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- Cambridge Local Plan 2018
- Cambridge City SPDs



26/00641/FUL – 40 Barton Road, Cambridge

Application details

Report to: Planning Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: Newnham

Proposal: Change of use for an existing 6-bedroom house in multiple occupation (Use Class C4) into a 7 bed, 7 person large HMO (sui generis use)

Applicant: Wolfson College

Presenting officer: Mary Collins

Reason presented to committee: Called in by Cllr Hugh Clough.

Member site visit date: N/A

Key issues: 1. Principle of Development

2. Residential Amenity

3. Highway Matters

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

Report contents

Document section	Document heading
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3	The proposal
4	Relevant site history
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18	Recommendation
19	Planning conditions

Table 1 Contents of report

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The application seeks the change of use of an existing 6-bedroom house in multiple occupation under Class C4 use into a 7-bed large person House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) under sui generis use. Wolfson College has provided a detailed planning statement and accommodation needs statement outlining that the College is seeking an expansion of its student accommodation in proximity to the College. Prior efforts to convert College owned, residential properties into student accommodation have been either refused or withdrawn, as seen in planning reference 25/01172/FUL, which sought to convert the existing dwelling directly into student accommodation.
- 1.2 Multiple objections have been received, including from the South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum and the Barton Close Residents Association, with the over concentration of HMOs in the area and the resulting amenity impacts the main issues raised.

- 1.3 The proposal is not considered to result in any significant residential amenity harm or significant harm to the character and appearance of the West Cambridge Conservation Area.
- 1.4 The proposed large HMO would provide seven bedrooms all in excess of residential space standards, with adequate communal amenity space provided. No external changes are proposed and as a result no visual impacts upon the wider Conservation Area have been identified.
- 1.5 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee approve the application subject to conditions.

Table 2 Consultee summary

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment
Conservation Officer	No objection
County Highways Development Management	No objection
Environmental Health	No objection
Drainage	No objection
Third Party Representations (5 unique objectors)	Objection
South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum	Objection

2. Site description and context

- 2.1 The property is 40 Barton Road, a two-storey residential dwelling currently used as a 6-person HMO located in the West Cambridge Conservation Area.
- 2.2 Residential dwellings and their associated gardens lie to the North, South and East of the site. The car park and educational facilities of Wolfson College lie to the West.

- 2.3 The site lies within the West Cambridge Conservation Area and falls within Flood Zone 1.

3. The proposal

- 3.1 Change of use for existing 6-bedroom house in multiple occupation (Use Class C4) into a 7 bed, 7 person large HMO (sui generis use).

4. Relevant site history

Reference	Description	Outcome
26/00797/FUL (1 Barton Close)	Change of use for existing 6-bedroom house in multiple occupation (Use Class C4) into a 8 bed, 8 person large HMO (sui generis use) and minor external amendments - part retrospective.	PERM
25/03936/FUL	Installation of No.22 Solar (PV) panels, removal of double-glazed doors and infilling with brickwork and installation of cast iron railings and gate - retrospective.	PERM
25/01172/FUL	Change of use from residential dwellings (Class C3) to student accommodating (sui generis).	REFU

Table 2 Relevant site history

- 4.1 An application was submitted last year under application reference 25/01172/FUL to change the use of the existing dwelling from residential Class C3 into dedicated student accommodation under sui generis use. The application was refused on grounds that inadequate justification for the loss of housing stock had been provided.
- 4.2 Application reference 26/00797/FUL at 1 Barton Close sought planning permission for a similar change of use to a large HMO and retrospective external changes. This application was approved at the May 2026 committee meeting by members.

5. Policy

5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026

- 5.2 The updated NPPF, which was published on 17 August 2026, is a material consideration which must be taken into account where it is relevant to a planning application. It replaces the December 2024 with immediate effect for making decisions on planning applications. The document is intended to create a clearer, more rules -based planning system, accelerate housing delivery, support economic growth, and make planning decisions more predictable.
- 5.3 For the purposes of decision making on planning applications, the adopted local plans of the Councils remain the statutory starting point when considering planning applications. However, the updated NPPF is clear in Annex A that an existing development plan policy (or part of a policy) which is materially inconsistent with a new national decision making policy should be given very limited weight.
- 5.4 A review of the adopted Local Plan policies has been undertaken in the context of the updated NPPF. This has found that the majority of policies in both adopted plans remain broadly consistent with national policy and can be given weight until replaced by policies in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. A small number of policies, or parts of policies are materially inconsistent with national policy. Where appropriate, reference is made within the relevant sections of the assessment, to the appropriate policy weight which is attributed to local plan policies.
- 5.5 NPPF (2026) introduces a suite of national Development Management decision making policies – a set of procedural policies, and a number of thematic policies, structured around the respective document chapters, which must be taken into account where it is relevant to an application. This includes applying the presumption in favour of sustainable development found in Policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF, which requires approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

- 5.6 The NPPF lists the three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways to achieve sustainable development. These roles are considered in weighing up the benefits and dis-benefits of the development proposals, relative to all material considerations discussed in the report.
- 5.7 In following these requirements, the application proposals have been assessed against the NPPF (2026), and the relevant development plan policies.

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)

Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)

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 latest 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. The draft JLP was published for formal public consultation (under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) between 1 December 2025 and 30 January 2026.
- 5.2.2 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
- 5.2.3 Consultation on a Regulation 19 draft plan is anticipated in Summer/Autumn 2026.

5.3 Cambridge Local Plan (2018)

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy 3: Spatial strategy for the location of residential development
Policy 9: Review of the Local Plan
Policy 35: Protection of human health from noise and vibration
Policy 48: Housing in multiple occupation
Policy 55: Responding to context
Policy 56: Creating successful places
Policy 58: Altering and extending existing buildings
Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment
Policy 62: Local heritage assets
Policy 80: Supporting sustainable access to development
Policy 81: Transport Impact
Policy 82: Parking management

5.4 Neighbourhood plan

South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan (made 24 February 2025)

Policy SNNP8 – Conserving Additionally Identified Local Heritage Assets

Policy SNNP11 - Protecting and Enhancing Local Character Through Design-led Development

Policy SNNP12 - Protecting Residential Amenity in South Newnham

Policy SNNP13 - Converting Existing Houses into More than One Separate Housing Unit

5.5 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

Development affecting Conservation Areas SPD – Adopted 2009

5.6 Other guidance

Conservation Area Appraisal West Cambridge

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste

Cycle Parking Guide for New Residential Developments (2010)

Area Guidelines

West Cambridge Conservation Area Appraisal (2011)

6. Consultations

Publicity

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y – Site lies within the Conservation Area

Conservation Officer- No Objection

6.1 No objection received, no conditions recommended.

County Highways Development Management - No Objection

- 6.2 No objection received, parking informative recommended.

Environmental Health- No Objection

- 6.3 No objection received, Management of HMO and Licensing Conditions recommended.

Waste – No Objection

- 6.4 Additional bin storage requested, to be secured by condition.

7. Third party representations

- 7.1 9 representations have been received from adjacent neighbours, all in objection to the proposal.
- 7.2 Those in objection have raised the following issues:
- Principle of development
 - Overconcentration of HMOs
 - Loss of Housing Stock
 - Sandwiching of residential development
 - Harm to community cohesion
 - Setting undesirable precedent
 - Neighbour Amenity Impact
- 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. Local Groups / Petition

- The South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum has made a formal objection to the proposal stating that:

As Statutory Consultees, the South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum is objecting to the Wolfson College application for change of use for an existing 6-bedroom house in multiple occupation (Use Class C4) into a 7 bed, 7 person large HMO (sui generis use) as the application is incompatible with Policy 48 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018), which states that a proposal to use a property as an HMO should not create "an over-concentration of such a use in the local area, or cause harm to residential amenity". There are six properties adjoining 40 Barton

Road, which were all originally family homes and are now used as small and large HMOs for students from Wolfson College, with only one remaining as a family home. These small HMOs are not included on the licencing register on the Council's website but they are being used as HMOs. Converting no. 40 into a large HMO is adding to the existing over-concentration in a residential area. The five HMOs being used by Wolfson College, namely 1, 2, 3 Barton Close; 40, 42 Barton Road) form a cluster as they are adjoining properties which abut each other either to the side or rear. Number 38 Barton Road is a family home which is sandwiched between two HMOs (1 Barton Close and 40 Barton Road).

- 8.1 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.

9. Assessment

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

- Need and context
- Principle of development
- Housing provision
- HMO Concentration
- Neighbour Amenity Impacts

10. Need and Context of Application

- 10.1 The planning statement submitted on behalf of the College outlines the need and context of the application.
- 10.2 Wolfson College provides education for older undergraduates and post graduate students, with a student population in excess of one thousand. Despite this, the college has only four hundred and fifteen dedicated student housing units, supplemented by five residential family homes located along Barton Close: 1, 2 and 3, Barton Close, and 40 and 41 Barton Road. These properties are located in close proximity to the college.
- 10.3 As the above numbers suggest, the college has demonstrated a shortfall in student accommodation for at least the last four years, with 241 students without accommodation in the 2022/23 academic year, 231 in

23/34, and 179 in 24/25. At least 200 hundred full-time students will not be housed by the college in the 2025/26 academic year.

- 10.4 It is argued that these figures demonstrate a sustained shortage of student accommodation which should be addressed in order to meet ongoing student demand and reduce pressure on the private rental market.
- 10.5 As a result of the shortfall, the College has been forced to make reductions from previous eligibility criteria, where postgraduate students had access to housing for a greater portion of their study period. Under the current accommodation policy, postgraduate students now have fewer accommodation spaces guaranteed but often reside in Cambridge all year round. The shortage of accommodation therefore particularly affects postgraduate students, with around 25% unable to secure College housing.
- 10.6 Where students cannot be accommodated within the Wolfson College faculty, they are referred to the waiting list of other Colleges, though even this measure is a fallback position which does not guarantee a place within college owned housing, leaving private renting as a last resort for many students.
- 10.7 Wolfson College estimates that around 100-200 of its students annually use private rental properties as a necessity because they are unable to secure College owned accommodation. Whilst the city's rental market can currently meet this need, Wolfson College argues that suitable accommodation remains difficult to find for their students for a number of factors. Firstly, disabled students face significant barriers in securing accommodation that meets their individual requirements in the private sector, especially within close proximity to the college campus. Secondly, international students and those from lower income backgrounds are disproportionately susceptible to predatory rental practises, which the College's existing bursary scheme cannot wholly mitigate. Thirdly, the safety of students within private rented accommodation falls outside of the college's control and has become a repeated issue, leading to some students living in unsafe conditions and ultimately resulting in departures and financial loss. Finally, Wolfson college cites occasions where otherwise acceptable candidates have not pursued their education due to difficulties in finding suitable private rented accommodation.
- 10.8 As Wolfson College has an intake of significantly more international students than UK residents, such students are especially susceptible to the above factors, as well as predatory contracts, excessive rent

payments, social isolation, and loneliness, a significant cause of mental health issues in students living away from home. Wolfson College argues that these impacts serve as justification for an expansion of Wolfson College's student housing provisions, preferably in close proximity to the campus where health and safety issues can be addressed.

- 10.9 Wolfson College has developed a long-term master plan to address the accommodation shortfall with the provision of at least 70 new student rooms with the expansion of current buildings and addition of new ones within the existing campus footprint. However, funding for this scheme is ongoing, and when complete the works will require the benefit of planning permission prior to construction, representing a substantial investment in time before the student accommodation can be delivered.
- 10.10 In the medium-term the College has created a multifaceted plan to acquire accommodation for students in close proximity to the College. Efforts to purchase non-private properties to create student accommodation in close proximity to the College were unsuccessful; such buildings proved too expensive for the College to afford. Attempts to house Wolfson College Students in other faculties with accommodation surpluses were unsuccessful for the academic year 2025/2026. In addition, commercially owned shared student accommodation facilities were considered for Wolfson College Students, but this initiative was ultimately dropped due to distance and practicality. Wolfson College argues that the current plan of seeking to buy and convert residential homes into student accommodation, which this application forms a part of, is one of last resort for the College.
- 10.11 The College argues that the proposal site at 40 Barton Road is of suitable size and floorplan to serve as student accommodation. In addition, its close proximity to the College itself will provide safety and ease the integration of the property into the College's campus with consistent, high-quality management of the property through daily cleaning, waste removal, maintenance and pastoral care. It is also argued that students that live within the immediate setting of the campus have a better experience, quality of study and have a greater connection with the College. Those students that live further away in Cambridge have a diminished experience. The college-owned accommodation provides greater accommodation security and stability compared to the private rental market, where students may face eviction if a landlord decides to sell the property and often have no control for who else resides in a shared property. The students that are within College-owned accommodation have reduced stress and an increased sense of belonging, which contributes positively to the students' mental and

emotional well-being. This is especially so for the international students who account for 70% of the student intake.

The College also argues that the permitted development rights associated with 6 bed HMOs are already in use within the five identified properties in the area. This application would add just one additional space within the existing HMO use, and also institute a management plan secured by condition, presenting the college with greater control over the use and management of the property and demonstrating more effective use of the land.

11. Principle of Development

- 11.1 The application seeks permission for a change of use for an existing 6-bedroom house in multiple occupation (Use Class C4) into a 7 bed, 7 person large HMO (*sui generis* use).
- 11.2 Policy 48 of the Local Plan supports the development of HMOs where the proposal:
- a. does not create an over-concentration of such a use in the local area, or cause harm to residential amenity or the surrounding area;*
 - b. the building or site (including any outbuildings) is suitable for use as housing in multiple occupation, with provision made, for example, for appropriate refuse and recycling storage, cycle and car parking and drying areas; and*
 - c. will be accessible to sustainable modes of transport, shops and other local services.*
- 11.3 With regard to part (a) officers have reviewed the licensing record and planning history, and it appears that three properties in the nearby area are in current use as small HMOs of 6 beds or less. These are 2 Barton Close, and 40 and 42 Barton Road, which do not appear on the licensing register, and therefore are in HMO use under permitted development rights, outside of the LPA's controls. 1 Barton Close is now operating as an eight bed HMO, following the granting of planning permission for such a use in May. Wolfson College have confirmed that 3 Barton Close, otherwise known as Norton House, has been in use as a 10 bed Larger HMO since 1978.
- 11.4 The three existing smaller HMOs (including the application site) and the larger HMOs at number 1 Barton Close (8 Residents) and 3 Barton Close (10 Residents) in the area represent a maximum of thirty-six possible occupants, whilst the current application would add one more occupant, for a maximum possible total of thirty-seven occupants. It is considered by

officers that thirty-seven occupants would not create a significantly greater harm to neighbouring amenity than the thirty-six currently allowed under permitted development rights and extant permissions.

- 11.5 The existing property, which is the subject of this application, is already in HMO use. Its use as a larger HMO would not increase the no. of properties in HMO use in the immediate locality. It is therefore not reasonable to make a case that criteria a) of policy 48 is failed in terms of over concentration of HMO use on a property-by-property basis, as there would be no additional HMO's arising as a result of the proposal
- 11.6 In terms of intensity of use and no. of occupants, given that the proposal would only result in one additional person residing in it, and that it is detached and in relatively spacious surrounding, it also difficult to demonstrate any significant additional harm in terms of overconcentration from the uplift. On the same basis, and again in light of the spacious layout and detached nature of the property, additional harm to residential amenity arising from the increase in one occupant could not be reasonably defended as a refusal reason.
- 11.7 It is appreciated that representations raised in objection voice concerns about an intensification of the site, however the permitted development fall-back is a strong consideration, notwithstanding the clustering of HMO's already in the area.
- 11.8 Part (b) of Policy 48 requires consideration of the suitability of the building for the proposed use. The existing building is considered large enough to support eight occupants, as each room will have in excess of the 7.5 square metres of space required under residential space standards defined in Policy 50. In addition, the proposed HMO would have 33.45 square metres of communal residential amenity space, and 680 square metres of residential garden space, all in excess of space standards. Given these dimensions and the existing use of the building as a six person HMO, officers consider that the building is suitable for the proposed larger HMO use.
- 11.9 Part (c) of Policy 48 requires consideration of the sustainability of the site with access to modes of transport, shops, and other local services. Barton Road lies within a central location of Cambridge, with nearby access to ample shops, services, and bus routes. In addition, the main body of Wolfson College lies just 130 metres away. This proximity would provide safety for students occupying the property, a greater connection with the facility by proximity, and ease the management of the HMO for the

College. Given these factors, officers consider that the site location is sustainable.

- 11.10 The principle of the development is therefore acceptable and in accordance with policy 48 of the Local Plan.

12. Design, layout, scale and landscaping

- 12.1 No external changes to the existing property are proposed, with the additional room in multiple occupation created with internal alterations. Given this lack of external impacts to the property, no visual harm has been identified.
- 12.2 The proposal is therefore considered to be compliant with policies 55,56, and 58 of the Local Plan, NPPF, and Policy SNNP11 of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan.

13. Heritage assets

- 13.1 The application falls within the West Cambridge Conservation Area.
- 13.2 The Conservation officer has reviewed the proposal and not objected to the works. Given that the changes to the property would be internal rearrangements, no harm to the wider Conservation Area has been identified.
- 13.3 The proposal would not give rise to any harmful impact on the identified heritage assets and is compliant with the provisions of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF, policy 61 (62) of the Local Plan, and Policy SNNP8 of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan.

14. Highway safety and transport impacts

- 14.1 The application has been subject to formal consultation with Cambridgeshire County Council's Local Highways Authority and Transport Assessment Team, who raise no objection to the proposal.
- 14.2 The proposal accords with the objectives of Policy 80 and 81 of the Local Plan and is compliant with NPPF advice.

15. Car and cycle provision

Cycle parking

- 15.1 A cycle parking shelter is proposed to be sited to the rear of the property, and an unused garage will also be given over to cycle storage, with space for eight bikes at each location.
- 15.2 The proposed cycle parking is compliant with policy 81 of the Local Plan.

Car parking

- 15.3 The proposed car parking arrangement is compliant with policy 81 of the Local Plan.
- 15.4 Subject to conditions, the proposal is considered to accord with policies 36 and 81 of the Local Plan and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

16. Amenity

Neighbouring properties

- 16.1 No external changes to the property are proposed, with no increase to the mass or footprint of the dwelling, and no subsequent loss of light, massing, or overbearing impacts identified upon neighbouring properties.
- 16.2 Eight neighbour objections to the proposed change of use have been received in addition to objections from the representatives of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum. Principle concerns raised in objection are the impacts of HMO residents upon traditional residential occupiers, sandwiching, the damage to community cohesion, the setting of precedent harmful to neighbour amenity, and the loss of housing stock.
- 16.3 Officers acknowledge that the creation of student accommodation within a residential area can create amenity impacts for neighbours such as sandwiching of residents amongst student lodgers, and the resulting loss of community cohesion due to regular turnover of occupants in an HMO, contrary to the requirements of Policy SNNP12 of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan. However, the existing arrangement of four smaller HMO buildings along Barton Road and Barton Close lies outside of the LPA's jurisdiction, as these are implemented under permitted development rights. Given the existing fallback position, it is not

considered that the addition of one additional HMO resident would have a material impact upon nearby neighbours, either in terms of additional noise, loss of community cohesion, parking allocation, or anti-social behaviour, beyond what has already been established under permitted development and previous permissions. The existing building is large enough, and the site sustainable enough, to support the level of occupation proposed.

- 16.4 The loss of housing stock has also been raised as an issue from objecting 3rd parties. However, large HMOs are still part of the City of Cambridge's mixture of housing stock, and 40 Barton Road would remain a residential building. There is therefore no identified loss of housing stock.
- 16.5 Residents have also argued that the approval of an HMO in this location would set a dangerous precedent for other residential properties to be converted elsewhere, further harming the community cohesion of the area. However, as argued by Wolfson College, the creation of student accommodation at Barton Road is an exceptional circumstance due to identified student housing needs of the College and the proximity of the College itself. Wolfson College has considered and rejected other possible student housing solutions by virtue of distance from the College; in contrast the College lies only a hundred and thirty metres away from the proposal site, offering a way of creating safe student accommodation so close to the College itself. Officers argue that this proximity, in addition to the fallback position guaranteed by permitted development rights for at least six occupants at 40 Barton Road, addresses this concern regarding possible precedents being set.
- 16.6 One objecting neighbour also raised concerns that Wolfson College has advertised all five properties in the area as larger HMOs as part of their 2026/2027 accommodation guide, indicating an intention to use all the properties as larger HMOs. The College has assured officers that this discrepancy arose due to the passage of time between the submission of the original planning application in March 2025, which was subsequently withdrawn, and the submission of the current application in February 2026 following a pre-application process. The Accommodation Schedule had been drafted some time ago alongside the planning application preparation, but it had not picked up the current position. The College is updating the Accommodation Schedule to ensure it accurately reflects the actual accommodation provision and current occupation.

- 16.7 The proposal is compliant with policy 58 of the Local Plan of the Local Plan and Policy SNNP12 of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan.

Future occupants

- 16.8 The gross internal floor space measurements for units in this application are shown in the table below:

Unit	Number of bed spaces (persons)	Policy Size requirement (m²)	Proposed size of unit	Difference in size
1	1	7.5	14	+6.5
2	1	7.5	14	+6.5
3	1	7.5	7.7	+0.2
4	1	7.5	11.5	+4
5	1	7.5	14	+6.5
6	1	7.5	13.5	+6
7	1	7.5	9	+1.5

Table 3 Table showing size of residential units in comparison with the policy requirement

Garden size and Internal Residential Space

- 16.9 The internal residential amenity space provided with 40 Barton Road would be 33.45 square metres split between the kitchen and existing central space, which is considered sufficient for seven people.
- 16.10 The external residential garden space would be in excess of 680 square metres, which is considered to be well in excess of policy standards.
- 16.11 It is therefore considered that the property would benefit from a private garden area and communal amenity space which would meet or exceed the recommendations of the Council's District Design Guide.

Construction and environmental health impacts

- 16.12 The Environmental Health Officer has been consulted on the proposal and does not raise any objections.
- 16.13 The proposed use of the garden by up to seven persons is not considered likely to give rise to an unacceptable level of noise and disturbance. The property is located within a residential area, where the use of private gardens for domestic leisure and social activities is common. The level of

activity associated with large HMO of this size would be comparable to that of a family dwelling. Therefore, Officers consider that the use of the garden by up to seven persons would not introduce a degree of noise or intensity of use that would be out of character with the surrounding residential area or cause undue harm to the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

- 16.14 The level of occupation is not considered to be excessive for this building or location, and as such, the proposal is not considered to lead to substantial harm to surrounding occupiers.

17. Planning balance

- 17.1 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).
- 17.2 The application must be assessed having regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out within Policies S3 and S4 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026). Policy S3 requires decision makers to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Policy S4 states that development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects when assessed against the national decision-making policies of the Framework.
- 17.3 The applicants have set out a needs case for purchasing the accommodation and applying for permission for a larger HMO to operate from it, housing their students in a location that is near to the College and can easily fall within their management and which would result in students living in the property feeling part of a collegiate environment. Whilst members of the local community and the SNN Forum have raised concerns, the proposal benefits from a strong fall-back position and adopted policy for the protection of over concentration of HMO uses in the context of the application has no 'teeth' given the permitted development fall-back and existing use.
- 17.4 Each proposed bedroom is in excess of residential space standards. Adequate internal communal amenity space has been provided. Garden amenity space is generous. There is no reason to suggest the property would not be well-managed by the College but a management plan condition is recommended to be imposed to help control the management of the property in the interests of residential amenity. The marginal

increase in the number of occupants residing in the property would not give rise to any significant amenity impact over and above the existing situation.

- 17.5 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, the statutory requirements of section 38 and section 72(1) of the Regulations, the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval.

18. Recommendation

- 18.1 **Approve** subject to:

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

19. 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. The development, hereby permitted, shall not be occupied, or the use commenced, until a management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The management plan shall include provisions relating to:

- a) management of the property and how any management issues will be addressed
- b) external display of contact information for on-site management issues and emergencies for members of the public
- c) provision for refuse, cycle and car parking and drying areas etc.

d) details of guidance for tenants re acceptable standards of behaviour/use of the premises.

The development shall thereafter be managed in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: In order to ensure the occupation of the site is well managed and does not give rise to significant amenity issues for nearby residents (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 35 and 48).

4. The bin and bike stores associated with the proposed development, including any planting associated with a green roof, shall be provided prior to first occupation in accordance with the approved plans and shall be retained thereafter. The parking space retained to the front of the property shall be used only by residents with mobility or accessibility needs.

Reason: To ensure that the need for refuse, recycling, and car parking is successfully integrated into the development. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policy 57).

5. The large HMO situated at 40 Barton Road hereby approved shall have no more than 7 occupants residing at any one time.

Reason: A more intensive use would need to be reassessed in the interest of residential amenity of the occupiers. (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 56 and 48).

6. The internal communal areas as shown on the approved drawings shall be provided prior to occupation of the building for the proposed use and retained for communal uses and used for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure adequate internal communal space is provided for future occupants (Cambridge Local Plan 2018 policies 48 and 50).

Informatives:

1. The Local Highways Authority wish to notify the applicant that the new development will not qualify for residents parking permission.
2. The Housing Act 2004 introduced the Housing Health & Safety Rating System as a way to ensure that all residential premises provide a safe and healthy environment to any future occupiers or visitors. Each of the dwellings must be built to ensure that there are no unacceptable hazards for example ensuring adequate fire precautions are installed,

habitable rooms without adequate lighting or floor area etc. Further information may be found here:

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-health-and-safety-rating-system>

3. Management Regulations apply to all HMOs (whether or not they are licensable) and impose certain duties on managers and occupiers of such buildings. Persons in control of or managing an HMO must be aware of and comply with the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006. These regulations stipulate the roles and responsibilities of the manager and also the occupiers of HMOs. Further information may be found here:
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/guide-for-landlords>
4. The Housing Act 2004 introduced Mandatory Licensing for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across all of England. This applies to all HMOs with 5 or more persons forming more than one household and a person managing or controlling an HMO that should be licensed commits an offence if, without reasonable excuse, he fails to apply for a licence. It is, therefore, in your interest to apply for a licence promptly if the building requires one. Further information and how to apply for a Licence may be found here: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/licensing-of-houses-in-multiple-occupation>

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Greater Cambridge Shared Planning

Cambridge City Council - Appeals for Committee



Appendix 1: Decisions Notified By The Secretary of State

NO RESULTS

Appendix 2: Appeals received

REFERENCE	SITE ADDRESS	DETAILS	DATE LODGED
26/02550/HFUL (6015922)	4 Highworth Avenue Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB4 2BG	Two storey side and front extension with associated fenestration, single storey rear extension, and roof extension including hip to gable, raising of ridge and rooflights.	09/09/2026

Appendix 3a: Local Inquiry dates scheduled

NO RESULTS

Appendix 3b: Informal Hearing dates scheduled

NO RESULTS

Appendix 4: Appeals Awaiting Decision from Inspectorate

REFERENCE	SITE ADDRESS	DETAILS	REASON
23/00566/FUL (APP/Q0505/W/23/3324785)	Pavement Outside Y59 Grafton Centre Cambridge CB1 1PS	Installation of a modern, multifunction Hub unit featuring an integral advertisement display and defibrillator	Refusal of planning permission (Delegated Decision)
23/00567/ADV (APP/Q0505/Z/23/3324786)	Pavement Outside Y59 Grafton Centre Cambridge CB1 1PS	Installation of 1no 86 inch LCD screen capable of showing illuminated static displays in sequence.	Refusal of planning permission (Delegated Decision)
EN/00096/25 (APP/Q0505/C/25/3364436)	179 Coleridge Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 3PW	Without Planning Permission the construction of a detached one bed studio apartment	Appeal against enforcement notice

EN/00044/24 BOC (APP/Q0505/C/25/3370670)	139 Arbury Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB4 2JD	The authorised use of the property is as a single dwelling (4 beds) with a self-contained annexe (1 living/bed). I visited the site for a pre-application enquiry for the change of use of the dwelling to a guesthouse (6 beds some studios) and a separate holiday unit (2 beds) on 18 Jan 2024. The internal works had already been carried out and I then found them both on Booking.com. Related Planning Reference: Date breach occurred: 18/01/2024	Appeal against enforcement notice
25/02501/ADV (APP/Q0505/Z/25/3372839)	Pavement Outside Unit 1, 11 - 13 Rectory Terrace High Street Cherry Hinton Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 9HU	Installation of 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the Street Hub unit	Refusal of planning permission (Delegated Decision)
23/04380/FUL (6003093)	Land At Ditton Walk Cambridge Cambridgeshire	Erection of 12 dwellings, including 3 affordable dwellings, and associated works including alterations to access to the site and creation of second access.	Refusal of planning permission (Committee Decision (Area/Main))

(APP/Q0505/C/26/3378100)	66 Teversham Drift Cherry Hinton Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 3JZ	Appeal against	Appeal against enforcement notice
EN/00032/25 (APP/Q0505/C/26/3378061)	21 Earl Street Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 1JR	The change of roof design to an outbuilding in the rear garden.	Appeal against enforcement notice
25/04801/FUL (6007605)	Cambridge Rugby Union Club Grantchester Road Newnham Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB3 9ED	Construction of floodlit padel tennis facility with club hut and landscaping	Refusal of planning permission (Committee Decision (Area/Main))
26/00183/FUL (6009980)	2 Cranleigh Close Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB2 9NP	Erection of replacement self build/custom build 1no 2bed dwelling	Refusal of planning permission (Delegated Decision)
25/03901/FUL (6008906)	Land At The Rear Of 31 Neale Close Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 3LE	Erection of 1 No. dwelling.	Refusal of planning permission (Delegated Decision)
25/04186/FUL (6010726)	127 Histon Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB4 3JD	Change of use of existing detached outbuilding ancillary to main dwellinghouse for use as rental accommodation.	Refusal of planning permission (Delegated Decision)

25/02147/FUL (6007602)	Cambridge Rugby Union Club Grantchester Road Newnham Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB3 9ED	Construction of 5no floodlit padel tennis courts with canopy, club hut and landscaping	Refusal of planning permission (Committee Decision (Area/Main))
(6011649 6011650)	13 Highfield Avenue Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB4 2AJ	Appeal against - Without planning permission, the erection of an outbuilding not in accordance with the approved plans attached to planning permission ref. 25/00141/HFUL, or any other planning permission.	Appeal against enforcement notice

Appendix 5: Appeals Pending Statement from the Local Planning Authority

NO RESULTS

Data extracted at: 2026/09/24 08:12:47

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