

Application Number	13/1207/FUL	Agenda Item	
Date Received	23rd August 2013	Officer	Mrs Sarah Dyer
Target Date	22nd November 2013		
Ward	Market		
Site	DoubleTree By Hilton Granta Place Mill Lane Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB2 1RT		
Proposal	Proposed conversion of existing leisure centre to form 13no additional bedrooms including removal of pyramidal roof and re-cladding of existing facade. Erection of third floor extension to provide 16no additional bedrooms and associated works.		
Applicant	c/o agent		

<p>SUMMARY</p>	<p>The development does not accord with the Development Plan for the following reasons:</p> <p>The development would result in the loss of the existing Leisure Centre which does not operate as an ancillary facility to the primary use of the site as a hotel but which has become established as an independent D2 use.</p> <p>The leisure facility is neither replaced to at least the existing scale and quality within the new development nor relocated to another appropriate premises or site of similar or improved accessibility for its users contrary to policy 6/1 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006.</p> <p>The development is contrary to the Planning Obligations Strategy, the Southern Corridor Area Transport Plan and the Public Art SPD because necessary mitigation measures</p>
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	have not been agreed via a s106 Agreement or Unilateral Undertaking
RECOMMENDATION	REFUSAL

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION/AREA CONTEXT

- 1.1 The application site, which extends to 1.4 hectares lies on the eastern bank of the River Cam, between Sheep's Green to the west and Coe Fen to the east. It is accessed from Granta Place off Mill Lane.
- 1.2 The application site accommodates the Doubletree Hilton Hotel, formerly known as the Garden House Hotel. The hotel was reconstructed in the mid 1960's and then altered and extended following major fire damage in 1972. Further extensions were added in the 1980's and 1990's when a leisure club and swimming pool were incorporated. The current hotel is a bulky building of two phases; the majority of the building constructed in 1972 and the remaining elements of the pre-1972 hotel that were not destroyed in the fire. These sit uncomfortably with one another, their different architectural approaches, further disjointed by the leisure centre to the far south of the building on the site.
- 1.3 The site's linear nature, on a north to south axis, presents a significant frontage along the River Cam to the West. The building is in close proximity to the listed buildings of Peterhouse College and the Fitzwilliam Museum. The linear nature also presents issues for access, entrances and the servicing of the hotel with the car park located to the south, approximately 125 metres from the main entrance on Granta Place. Most visitors arriving by car use a secondary entrance adjacent to the car park.
- 1.4 The application site is within Conservation Area No. 1 (Central). The hotel buildings are not listed nor are they buildings of local interest (BLIs) but the location of the site is within the setting of adjacent listed buildings. Coe Fen and Sheep's Green are within the Green Belt and are designated as County Wildlife sites and Local Nature Reserves. There is a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) protecting four trees on the site and the site is within the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ).

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Full planning permission is sought for conversion of the existing leisure centre building to 13 hotel rooms and the construction of a third floor extension to the southernmost block of the hotel to accommodate a further 16 hotel rooms (total 29 additional rooms). It is also proposed to reconfigure the existing car park to reduce car parking from 174 spaces to 164 spaces and to provide additional cycle parking (increased from 34 spaces to 54 spaces). A plant room is to be added at proposed fourth floor/roof level.
- 2.2 Unlike the previous applications on the site, the leisure centre building is being retained and altered.
- 2.3 The application is accompanied by the following supporting information:
1. Design and Access Statement
 2. Planning Statement
 3. Heritage and Conservation Area Statement
 4. Energy Statement
 5. Sustainability Statement
 6. Transport Statement
- 2.4 The application has been amended/additional information provided to respond to concerns raised by the case officer, the Urban Design and Conservation (UDC) team, the Landscape Officer and the Sustainable Drainage officer. The amendments are as follows:
7. Aborigicultural Implications Assessment
 8. Tree Survey
 9. Habitat Survey
 10. Flood Risk information but not a Flood Risk Assessment
 11. Revised Plans and Supplementary Design Statement
 12. Further response to comments made by the UDC team in relation to amended plans
- 2.5 Alterations to the plans were as follows:
- o Reduction in extent of over cladding of brickwork

- o Additional light weight zinc cladding including around the western elevation of the existing block fronting the river
- o Replacement of balconies to the existing south block

3.0 SITE HISTORY

Reference	Description	Outcome
C/68/0227	Extension and improvement to Hotel - Garden House Hotel, Belle Vue	REF
C/69/0751	Extension and Improvement to Hotel	WTD
C/71/0033	Demolition of parts of existing Hotel, building extensions and face-lifting existing	A/C
C/72/1002	Erection of Additional Hotel accommodation	A/C
C/79/0765	Erection of extension to existing hotel	A/C
C/87/0575	Erection of extension to existing hotel to provide 16 additional guest bedrooms, swimming pool/leisure facility, 8 no. serviced flats, additional level of car	REF
C/88/0644	Extension and alterations to hotel to provide 12 no. additional guest bedrooms, swimming pool/leisure facilities and alterations to car park and landscaping.	A/C
C/90/0799	Erection of leisure centre	A/C
C/91/1045	Erection of leisure centre with alterations to the car park and landscaping.	A/C
C/02/0820	Construction and laying out of additional car parking.	REF
10/0103/FUL	Erection of an extension to provide 56 additional bedrooms	REF

and a new leisure club at the Cambridge Doubletree Hilton Hotel, Granta Place.

11/0988/FUL	Demolition of existing single storey leisure centre, and erection a three storey extension to provide 31 additional bedrooms and a new leisure centre	REF/Appeal Dismissed
11/0975/CAC	Demolition of existing single storey leisure centre	REF/Appeal Dismissed

3.1 The two most recent planning applications were refused by Planning Committee. The 2010 application included both an extension to the existing hotel building and an extension following demolition of the leisure centre building. This would have resulted in 56 additional rooms. The 2011 application did not include an extension to the existing hotel and comprised an extension following demolition of the leisure centre building only. This would have resulted in 31 additional rooms.

3.2 The 2010 application was refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposed extension to the hotel is unacceptable by virtue of its height, scale, mass and bulk, the material of its construction and its position on the site. The overall design of the extension is fussy and lacks coherence and it does not relate well to the existing building or the site context. The development would also have an adverse impact of the City of Cambridge Conservation Area no.1 of which the site forms part and the Cambridge Green Belt, which lies adjacent to the site.
2. The proposed development does not make appropriate provision for transport mitigation measures, public realm or public art, as detailed in the Planning Obligation Strategy 2004, Southern Corridor Area Transport Plan 2002 and Provision of Public Art as Part of New Development Schemes 2002.

- 3.3 The 2011 application was refused for the same reasons. The application for Conservation Area Consent (CAC) was refused for the following reason:

By reason of its location and scale the building makes a modest, but positive contribution to the character and appearance of the City of Cambridge Conservation Area No. 1 (Central). Since the proposed replacement development is considered to be in conflict with development plan policy and would not bring substantial benefits to the community, demolition of the building is not justified.

- 3.4 An appeal was lodged against the refusal of the 2011 planning application and CAC. The appeal was dismissed. The Inspector's decision is a significant material consideration in the determination of the current application. A copy of the Inspector's Decision is attached at Appendix 1. In my view the key issues raised by the Inspector are as follows:

- i) The openness of Sheep's Green and Coe Fen is a readily evident attribute of this quarter of the city and is among the special qualities which define this part of the Conservation Area. (para 8)
- ii) The function of Sheep's Green and Coe Fen as pleasant routes through the city and places to linger and enjoy the surrounding environment, including the views of the of the city centre, also make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. (para 9)
- iii) The presence of the single storey leisure centre and car park disrupts the openness of the two green spaces and interrupts some of the views from Sheep's Green towards the city centre. However, the single storey height helps to limit the degree to which it detracts from the general sense of openness in the locality and prevents it from impeding on views entirely. In the latter respect the degree of intrusion quite rapidly lessens with distance such that the building only marginally interferes in the longer views from many parts of Sheep's Green (para 10)
- iv) The problem with the extension as proposed is threefold – it would stand out and appear intrusive, because of the degree of change it would significantly reduce the feeling of spaciousness and it would reduce the breadth of views across Sheep's Green and would interrupt many views quite considerably. (paras 12, 13 and 14).

- v) The proposed extension would both clearly appear as an addition to the hotel but would simultaneously integrate with it. Seen in isolation its form and design would be appropriate to the existing hotel and would not detract from it. (para 17)
- vi) The leisure centre building is of no architectural or historic merit and its demolition would result in a greater degree of openness which could enhance the Conservation Area. (para 19)
- vii) However, demolition of the building without any firm plans for the function or treatment of the land would not allow an informed judgement to be made of the effect of the demolition on the Conservation Area.

4.0 PUBLICITY

4.1 Advertisement:	Yes
Adjoining Owners:	Yes
Site Notice Displayed:	Yes
Public Meeting/Exhibition:	No
DC Forum:	No

5.0 POLICY

5.1 See Appendix 1 for full details of Central Government Guidance, Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policies, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations.

5.2 Relevant Development Plan policies

PLAN	POLICY NUMBER
Cambridge Local Plan 2006	3/1 3/2 3/3 3/4 3/7 3/9 3/11 3/12 3/13 3/14 4/1 4/2 4/3 4/4 4/6 4/10 4/11 4/13 4/14 4/15 6/1 6/3 8/1 8/2 8/3 8/4 8/6 8/10 8/16 8/18 10/1

5.3 Relevant Central Government Guidance, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations

<p>Central Government Guidance</p>	<p>National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 National Planning Policy Framework – Planning Practice Guidance March 2014 Circular 11/95 Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010</p>
<p>Supplementary Planning Documents</p>	<p>Sustainable Design and Construction Waste Management Design Guide Planning Obligation Strategy Public Art</p>
<p>Material Considerations</p>	<p><u>Central Government:</u> Letter from Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (27 May 2010) Written Ministerial Statement: Planning for Growth (23 March 2011)</p>
	<p><u>Citywide:</u> Biodiversity Checklist Cambridge City Nature Conservation Strategy Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2005) Cambridge and Milton Surface Water Management Plan Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth Cambridge City Council - Guidance for the application of Policy 3/13 (Tall Buildings and the Skyline) of the Cambridge Local Plan (2006) (2012) Cambridge Walking and Cycling Strategy Cambridgeshire Design Guide For Streets</p>

	and Public Realm Air Quality in Cambridge – Developers Guide
	<u>Area Guidelines:</u> Southern Corridor Area Transport Plan Old Press/Mill Lane Supplementary Planning Document (January 2010) Conservation Plan – Coe Fen and Sheep’s Green (2001)

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

Cambridgeshire County Council (Engineering)

- 6.1 The Highway Engineer makes comments about pedestrian and cycle access to the site, facilities for public transport and the impact on the local highway network.

A traffic count of the existing car park was undertaken in February 2009 to establish the typical occupancy of the car park during the week and at the weekend. The peak mid-week occupancy of the car park was 127 vehicles and at the weekend was 131 vehicles, which equates to a surplus of approximately 44 spaces.

In terms of additional trips generated by the development, the Highway Engineer notes that no additional trips will be generated by the like for like replacement of the fitness centre. 116 additional trips will be generated by the additional hotel rooms.

In terms of transport impact the officer reports that in light of the reduced car parking on site, the ample amount of public car parks nearby, and other measures to encourage travel by alternative modes, the proposed extension is likely to have a minimal impact on the highway network.

Car Parking

Based on the Cambridge City Council car parking requirements there should be an increase of 8 additional car parking spaces on the site to support the proposed development. However there will be an overall reduction in the number of car parking spaces on the site (174 spaces to 167 spaces). In support of the reduction in car parking spaces there will be several measures proposed to encourage people to use other modes of transport:

- o Operating a parking booking system for hotel guests when making reservations
- o Informing guests before they arrive that parking on-site is limited
- o Continue to charge for parking
- o Increase cycle parking spaces to encourage staff and fitness centre visitors to travel by mode other than the car.

In the unlikely event that overspill parking does occur then there are a number of public car parks close to the hotel that can be used, no parking can take place on-street within the vicinity of the hotel due to the controlled parking zone.

Cycle Parking

Cambridge City Council cycle parking requirements indicates there should be a minimum of 34 additional cycle spaces. The existing cycle parking provision will be expanded to provide a total of 54 parking spaces. It is recommended that the number of cycle parking spaces should be in line with the City Parking standards. If this is not possible then the travel plan should include confirmation that additional cycle parking will be provided if it is shown to be required as part of the monitoring process.

Travel Plans

An outline travel plan has been provided as part of the transport assessment. The outline travel plan commits to having a travel co-ordinator to administer the travel plan and measures including personal travel planning for staff, travel information notice boards in staff areas and promotion of car share

schemes. The Travel Plan will need to be secured via the s106 Agreement.

SCATP Contributions

The proposed development is within the Southern Corridor Area Transport Plan.

The proposed development is for 29 additional rooms, each room generates 4 trips per bedroom

$29 \times 4 = 116$ new trips

$116 \text{ trips} \times \text{£}369 = \text{£}42,804$

The SCATP contribution to be secured via a S106 agreement is £42,804

Conclusions

No objection to the proposed development subject to the SCATP contribution, Travel Plan and a staff sustainable welcome pack being secured via a S106 agreement.

Head of Environment and Refuse

- 6.2 There is potential for pollution from the demolition and construction phases to affect the amenity of surrounding properties if not controlled. A condition is recommended.

Plant located on the roof will require assessment to ensure noise does not harm the local amenity. A condition is recommended.

Odour from cooking within any kitchen facilities needs to be control via stages of filtration and this information is required. A condition is recommended.

The Hotel currently has a Premises Licence including for the supply of alcohol, from the Council issues under the licensing Act 2003. Alterations to the licensed area may require a variation to the licence. A standard informative is recommended.

Alterations to areas used to prepare or serve food must conform to the requirements of food safety law. A standard informative is recommended.

Despite the reduction of parking spaces, there will be an additional 29 rooms - an intensification of use at the site. The Transport Statement indicates that this will lead to an additional 54 car trips per day, plus some extra taxi trips, so there will be an increase in air pollution as a result. However, the additional air pollution from these trips will be barely perceptible. The applicant could however strengthen their application from an air quality perspective, with the inclusion of electric vehicle charging points in the car park.

No additional information on waste and recycling has been provided other than to say they will use the existing facilities. Waste can be managed from the site however it would be prudent to add a condition to ensure that adequate recycling provision is provided.

Recommended Conditions:

- o Construction/Demolition noise, vibration and piling
- o Construction hours
- o Collection or deliveries during construction
- o Dust suppression
- o Plant Noise Insulation
- o Odour/Fume Filtration /Extraction
- o Commercial Waste

Recommended Informatives:

- o Dust informative
- o Plant noise insulation
- o Odour Informative

- o Food Safety
- o Licensing

Urban Design and Conservation Team

6.3 *Application as submitted*

Loss of Leisure Centre Building

From a design & conservation point of view the UDC team consider that this has no particular architectural or historic merit [see Appeal Inspector's report], so its loss is not an issue.

The conversion of the rear wing

The new façade treatment will include Gault brickwork, timber cladding and zinc panels. This is appropriate but the choice of materials and detailing is important.

Extension to hotel building

Looking at the photomontages compared to the photographs of the existing, the conversion does appear to be relatively low-key and of modest visual impact but it is the extension to the end of the main block that stands out in the views. This appears to be noticeably more bulky in views from the riverside despite being seen through greenery. In views from near Peterhouse boundary, it is very much more prominent although this view is already compromised by the very poor roofscape of the existing. Whilst the use of Gault brick and a flat roof does help to tie this extension into the more recent phases of expansion in some ways [palette of materials, fenestration layout], the over sail of the lower floors looks incongruous and very difficult to achieve realistically.

Conclusion

The conversion of the leisure centre is less of a problem and, if well detailed and built of decent materials, would have modest impact on the CA but the extension to the main hotel block gives it an intrusive and unwarranted scale and visual impact

The proposals for the extension to the hotel are considered contrary to Local Plan policies 3/4, 3/14 and 4/11.

Application as amended

The changes made to the southern elevation, in particular, go some way to addressing concerns about the materials and overall modulation of this part of the building however the UDC team is still concerned that the proposed 3rd floor creates an unduly bulky addition to the most sensitive end of the building adjacent to the River and Coe Fen.

The UDC team recommends that 3rd floor to the south west corner be cut back to remove one of the proposed 'bays'. In its view this would reduce the apparent bulk of the additional floor so that the proposed addition sits within the existing silhouette of the hotel building and would create a more appropriate transition between the taller element of the hotel and the proposed single storey extension. Without this additional amendment the UDC team is not able to support the proposed application.

Response to further clarification regarding alterations to third floor

Whilst the internal arrangement of the proposals is not a planning consideration, the UDC team has reviewed the position of the fire escape stair and conclude that it would indeed be 'operationally difficult' to move the top corner bedroom to create a ziggurat form. The team assume that the fire escape is an extension of that already in place on the floors below and this again limits the flexibility in terms of location.

The changes to the materials on the south elevation already go some way to breaking up the bulk of the building and the previous suggestion was purely aimed to take that further and reintroduce the stepped form supported in early incarnations of the scheme.

In conclusion, given the 'practical' internal considerations raised, the UDC team accept that their suggestion could not be implemented and therefore support the elevation as proposed. The UDC team supports the application.

Planning Policy Team

6.4 New Hotel Rooms

Policy 6/3 Tourist Accommodation

This policy supports the maintenance, strengthening and diversification of the range of short-stay accommodation in Cambridge.

The Cambridge Hotel Futures Study 2012 was endorsed in June 2012 at Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee for use as an evidence base for the review of the Local Plan and as a material consideration in planning decisions.

This study identified a need for between 979 and 2,013 new hotel bedrooms up to 2031. The Local Plan 2014 proposed submission document adopts the medium growth scenario, roughly halfway between these figures, and states the likely need is for 1,500 new hotel bedrooms. The study also noted a potential supply pipeline of 1,708 new hotel bedrooms in the area, although not all of these may be delivered.

However the study notes that:

- The firm proposals for 4 star and boutique hotels in Cambridge city centre fall short of the forecast levels of demand, combined with which there are fewer potential sites for hotel development here than in edge of city and out of centre locations. This points to action to bring further sites and schemes forward;
- There is no immediate potential for a new 3 star hotel currently in the city centre, unless one or more of the existing 3 star hotels chooses to re-position which could open up an opportunity. Beyond 2026, however, an expanded market might support a 3 star hotel. A hotel of 3 star standard has been mooted for the Red House site;
- If all the hotel proposals for 3 and 4 star hotels on the outskirts of the city go ahead, this will more than meet the requirement identified in the forecasts. They will need to generate significant levels of additional business through supply-led growth, particularly from leisure markets, and conference centre demand - which has not been factored into our calculations;

- At budget level, the two Travelodge hotels at Orchard Park and Newmarket Road meet the medium level growth rate projections for budget hotel demand through to 2031, and will be operational in 2013. If the Premier Inn at Intercell House is also to go ahead, the market would need to expand at the high growth rate to meet this requirement. A budget level hotel could also be proposed for the station area, at CB1.

The study recommended that new hotel bedrooms be located within, or on locations accessible to, the city centre.

The proposal for additional 4 star hotel bedrooms on a site adjacent to the city centre would appear to be the kind of development that the Cambridge Hotels Futures Study 2012 would indicate there is a need for in the future.

The proposal would therefore appear to meet the first line of Policy 6/3 in that it would be strengthening the range of short-stay accommodation in Cambridge, furthermore by assisting the viability of the rest of the Doubletree Hotel, it would also be helping to maintain the range of short-stay accommodation in the city centre.

Loss of Leisure Facilities

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph 9 of the NPPF states:

Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including (but not limited to): ... improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure

Paragraph 70 of the NPPF states:

To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should...guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;

Paragraph 74 of the NPPF states:

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- *an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*
- *the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*
- *the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.*

The NPPF recognises the importance of services that benefit the community; this includes buildings used for recreation and sports.

Policy 6/1 Protection of Leisure Facilities

This application differs from previous applications on this site as previous proposals 10/0103/FUL and 11/0988/FUL have intended to re-provide leisure facilities, including a swimming pool, on the site. This application involves the loss of the leisure facility including swimming pool, and does not seek to replace it to the same degree.

The demolition would result in the loss of leisure facilities:

- Swimming pool, including Jacuzzi;
- Sauna;
- Solarium;
- Gymnasium;
- Workout studio;
- Physio room; and
- Ancillary changing rooms.

The re-provision would result in new leisure facilities:

- Fitness suite (45m²).

Policy 6/1 in the Local Plan seeks to prevent development that results in the loss of leisure facilities unless the facility is being replaced to at least its existing scale and quality in the new development or the facility is to be relocated to premises of similar accessibility to its users.

The leisure facilities that would be lost as a result of this application are currently open to members of the community and used for a number of organised clubs, e.g. swimming lessons. People are able to become members in order to make

use of it. Membership of a leisure facility is a normal feature of such facilities, also note, Kelsey Kerridge, a publically owned leisure facility also allows people to become members (although does not require it).

Furthermore, the swimming pool is used by people who are not members. Elite Swimming Academy runs swimming lessons at the Double Tree six days a week. In order to register for these lessons you do need to sign up with Elite Swimming Academy, but you do not need to join Living Well Health Club. Also, there are options to "pay as you go", that do not require membership.

The swimming pool at the Double Tree Hilton is used by members of the community independently from the hotel.

The leisure facilities that are being proposed in this application are not of the same scale or variety as those existing on the site. Current users of the site will not have the same options when considering using the new leisure facilities on the site, this reduction in choice will harm the quality of the leisure offer of the site. Consequently as the proposal will harm both the scale and quality of the leisure facilities on the site, without seeking to re-provide them elsewhere, the proposal is contrary to policy 6/1 of the Local Plan 2006 and paragraphs 70 and 74 of the NPPF.

Local Plan 2014 proposed submission document

The emerging revised Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State on 28 March 2014 and can be taken into account, especially those policies where there are no or limited objections to it. However it is likely, in the vast majority of instances, that the adopted development plan and the NPPF will have considerably more weight than emerging policies in the revised Local Plan.

For the application considered in this agenda report, the following policies in the emerging Local Plan are of relevance, together with commentary on it and the degree to which it has been used to assist in formulating the recommendation.

Policy 73 in the Local Plan 2014 proposed submission document deals with the loss of leisure facilities. The draft policy states that the loss of a facility will only be permitted if the site can be replaced onsite or on an equably accessible site for its users; or if it is no longer needed.

Conclusion

While the current proposal is contrary to policy 6/1 of the Local Plan 2006, paragraphs 70 and 74 of the NPPF and draft policy 73 of the Local Plan 2014 proposed submission, it is possible that the benefits of providing new rooms, in line with policy 6/3 of the local plan and draft policy 77 in the Local Plan 2014 proposed submission, could go some way towards balancing this loss of leisure facilities.

It is currently difficult to balance the benefits of the new rooms being provided in line with policy 6/3 of the Local Plan 2006 with the loss of leisure facilities contrary to policy 6/1 as the applicant does not attempt to address this policy issue within the documents submitted as part of the planning application. The applicant needs to show why the existing scale and quality of leisure facilities cannot (or should not) be provided onsite. If this cannot be proven, the applicant should look to provide new premises of at least similar quality and accessibility to its existing users.

Cambridge City Council Senior Sustainability Officer (Design and Construction)

6.5 Comments on application as submitted

Sustainable Development

For the most part, the measures being implemented related to sustainable design and construction are supported, including:

Promotion of locally sourced materials

Retention of trees and additional planting to provide solar shading

Use of extensive green roof (details required)

However the applicant should be encourage to do more including in relation to potable water consumption.

Renewable Energy

The Energy Report does not include a feasibility assessment of a range of renewable energy technologies that could be utilised,

which is required for a full application, and the calculations have not been provided in kg/CO₂/annum as clearly required by the SPD. Furthermore, there is inconsistency between the Planning Statement and the Energy Statement as to which technology is to be utilised; the Planning Statement refers to the use of solar panels, while the Energy Statement refers to the use of air source heat pumps. While either of these technologies would be suitable for a hotel, and should be sufficient to meet the 10% requirement of a 7,693 kg/CO₂/annum reduction, this lack of clarity needs to be rectified ahead of the determination of the planning application.

Visual information also needs to be submitted to show the location of the chosen technology so that officers can be assured that it has been suitably sited to maximise efficiency (if solar panels are to be used) and to minimise visual impact given the sensitive nature of the site. It should also be noted that should air source heat pumps be utilised, information related to their noise impact will also need to be submitted for verification by colleagues in Environmental Health.

Comments in light of additional information

The revised Energy Statement, submitted on the 18th November 2013 now provides clarity as to the renewable energy strategy being employed for the scheme and the levels of carbon savings that this strategy would achieve in light of Policy 8/16 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006.

Both air source heat pumps and a ten panel solar thermal system are to be utilised, which together will lead to a carbon saving of 8,993 Kg/CO₂/annum, which equates to an 11% reduction in carbon emissions, which is supported. A roof plan showing the location of the solar thermal panels would be a helpful addition, although it is considered that this could be dealt with by way of condition. Noise impact from the air source heat pumps will need to be considered.

To conclude, the SSO supports the application but notes that the applicant could go further in relation to the implementation of water efficiency measures in the new bedrooms

Head of Streets and Open Spaces (Tree Team)

- 6.6 Although there appears to be no material change in the building footprint, the development could still impact significantly on adjacent trees. It is expected that tree works/removals will be required to allow construction. In order to fully assess the impact of the proposed on nearby trees, an arboricultural implications assessment in accordance with BS5837 is required to be submitted for approval, prior to any decision being made.

Head of Streets and Open Spaces (Landscape Team)

- 6.7 *Application as submitted*

Previous concerns have related to the scale and massing of the building and the views of the building impacting on Coe Fen and Sheep's Green. The site is highly visible and therefore very sensitive to change because of its the location adjacent to Coe Fen and Sheep's Green. The site is also a peninsula shape making it highly visible from the surrounding area. These historic, riverine landscapes are part of the Green Belt and are protected public open space and within the Central Conservation Area.

The proposal does not significantly alter the scale and massing of the building when viewed from the green belt as the third floor extension is the only part of the proposal which increases the mass of the building.

As well as changing the mass, the proposal changes the appearance of the building by replacing the existing brown shingle cladding with light buff brick. This new part of the building will be highly visible from the surrounding landscape.

The single storey part of the scheme will be a pavilion style building with buff brick and glass.

There is concern that removal of trees may be required to facilitate construction. These trees include Beech, Lime and Cherry trees alongside the Cam River, some of which are of a significant size and protected. These trees provide a critical role in mitigating the visual impact of the hotel building on the green belt by partially screening the building.

No supporting landscape plan has been submitted, which will be required. The landscape treatment is important to assess how effectively the building will blend into the natural river parklands setting.

Conclusion:

The scale and massing of the proposal is similar to the existing building. However, the new, pale coloured brick of the existing building and the cladding of the third floor extension will be visible from the surrounding area. A more recessive brick colour or cladding, similar in tone to the existing is recommended.

Because no Arboricultural Implications Plan or Landscape Plan has been submitted, there can be no assessment of whether the construction will require trees and vegetation to be removed. Removal of trees would be unacceptable as it would increase the visibility of the site from the green belt and negatively impact on views. The information must be provided in advance of the determination of the application.

Comments in light of additional information

The team remain concerned about the colour of the cladding emphasising the scale and massing of the proposed third floor extension and increasing the visibility of the extension from the greenbelt land. Because no Landscape Plan has been submitted, the team cannot fully assess what the visual impact of removing trees will have on the green corridor and conservation area

The Landscape Team generally has no objection to the removal of most of these trees (refer to comment below) for health and safety reasons; but highlight that removing trees will increase visibility of the scheme and have a negative visual impact on the surrounding greenbelt. The team would therefore find it unacceptable to remove trees without a proposed replacement strategy in the form of a landscape plan.

The team do not support the removal of a category A tree.

Head of Streets and Open Spaces (Walking and Cycling Officer)

- 6.8 Some visitor cycle parking should be installed as near to the main entrance as possible. It is not clear from the submitted documents where the existing cycle parking, to be increased, is located.

Head of Streets and Open Spaces (Sustainable Drainage Officer)

- 6.9 The proposed development is located with flood zone 2 and is proposing a change of use from less vulnerable to more vulnerable and therefore a Flood Risk Assessment is required.

It is recommended that:

Ground floor levels to be set at a minimum of whichever is the higher of:

300mm above the general ground level of the site OR
600mm above the 1 in 100 annual probability river flood (1%);
or 1 in 200 annual probability sea flood (0.5%) in any year
(including an allowance for climate change).

The applicant should indicate that flood resilience/ resistance and emergency escape measures/ procedures have been incorporated where possible.

Objects to the proposals due to the lack of provision of a Flood Risk Assessment.

Comments in light of additional information

A FRA is required but there is a good understanding of the risk and the development is acceptable in flood risk terms. A FRA could be secured by a planning condition.

Head of Streets and Open Spaces (Nature Conservation Officer)

- 6.10 Given that both Sheep's Green & Coe Fen and the River Cam are County Wildlife Sites an ecological survey is required. Sheep's Green and Coe Fen are also Local Nature Reserves. Protected species known to be on or adjacent to the site include Bat spp. Grass Snake, Otter, Kingfisher, Water Vole and

potential impacts need to be identified and mitigations proposed.

Opportunities for ecological enhancement should also be maximised including tree works (pollarding etc.), tree planting, water courses management, nest boxes, green roofs, SUDs etc.

English Heritage

6.11 Conversion of existing leisure centre

The works to the existing leisure centre include the removal of a large and visually prominent glazed pyramid and new elevational treatment to the retained single storey structure. The removal of the pyramid would be an enhancement and is welcomed. The revised elevational treatment of the single storey element would convert an existing glazed pavilion into a more solid structure, incorporating traditional materials. On balance this part of the proposals has the potential to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, albeit to a modest extent.

Proposed additional floor

The majority of the existing hotel is contained within a four storey block that is orientated north-south, parallel to the river, and with a smaller, three storey wing that runs east-west. Overall there would be no additional height to the hotel, but in some views, such as that from the northwest across the river, the additional bulk would be quite prominent. This increased bulk would result in a degree of harm.

Recommendation

The local planning authority should weigh the harm resulting from the provision of the additional floor against the enhancements that would be derived from the removal of the visually intrusive pyramid and any other wider public benefits that the proposal might deliver.

Environment Agency

6.12 No objection subject to informatives relating to a Flood Plan,

Ministry of Defence (Air Safeguarding)

6.13 No objections

Design and Conservation CB1 Sub-Panel (9 October 2013)

6.14 Following two previous application refusals and a dismissed appeal, this latest iteration proposes a significant reduction in scale. The existing leisure suite is to be converted to help deliver the required additional accommodation.

The Panel's comments are as follows:

- Photomontages. The existing building does little to enhance the character or appearance of this part of the Cambridge Central Conservation Area and the architects are faced with the difficult challenge when marrying their new proposal with the existing building. Better photomontages, with improved rendering that more effectively illustrate what is proposed would aid the understanding of the proposal.
- Additional floor. The Panel were reasonably comfortable regarding the principle of an additional floor but felt the current execution was clumsy and required additional development.
- Western elevation (staircase). The Panel felt the projecting staircase tower would be particularly prominent when walking southwards along the riverside path, and felt that the current treatment was visually clumsy and overly heavy. There were opportunities to better exploit views out over the fen from the top floor.
- Brickwork. In the Panel's view, the cantilevered brickwork to the upper floors would benefit from some enhanced detailing, particularly at the junction with the existing brickwork, while the bands of horizontality proportioned windows prompted comparisons with the bland elevational treatment seen on budget hotels. A hotel within such a sensitive location demands greater consideration.
- Conversion of leisure suite. The Panel welcome the removal of the glazed pyramid from the roof as this would enhance the longer views in the area. The Panel were broadly comfortable with the proposed treatment of this

element. It is noted that guests will not be given direct access to the river from their bedrooms.

- Landscape strategy. The Panel are aware of the past attempts to address the potentially stark views across Sheep's Green and Coe Fen with appropriate planting and the complexities relating to this issue. It is noted with some regret that current options for landscaping appear very limited.

Conclusion

The Panel does not object to the principle of the proposed development. However, as this is such an exceptional location, strong reservations were expressed as to whether the current proposal was of the quality that this location deserves, and it was seen as a missed opportunity to enhance this part of the Conservation Area.

VERDICT – AMBER (unanimous) Note: in voting Amber, Panel members took careful consideration of the definition given in the box below. (**AMBER:** in need of *significant* improvements to make it acceptable, but not a matter of starting from scratch)

Cambridge City Council Access Officer

6.15 No comments on this application.

6.16 The above responses are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the consultation responses can be inspected on the application file.

7.0 REPRESENTATIONS

7.1 Representations have been received from occupiers of the following addresses:

25 Albert Street

22 Alpha Road

Flat 3, 49 Alpha Road

27 Barrow Road

54 Bateman Street

89 Bishops Road

1 The Cenacle

The Porter's Lodge, Downing
College, 36 Regent Street

10 Rutherford Road

50 St Barnabas Road

17 St Mark's Court

St Peter's Street

32 Selwyn Gardens

16 Selwyn Road

3 The Cenacle
14 The Crescent
11 Chaucer Road
16 Chaucer Road
12 Cherwell Street
13 Chesterton Hall Crescent
7 Clare Road
47 Covent Garden
6 Dane Drive
9 Dane Drive
60 Eltisley Avenue
3 Croftgate, Fulbrooke Road
7 Croftgate, Fulbrooke Road
35 Fulbrooke Road
22 Manor Court, Grange Road
106 Grantchester Meadows

107A Grantchester Meadows
2 Grantchester Road
77 Greystoke Road

4 Hardwick Street
6 Hardwick Street
219 High Street, East
Chesterton
55 Kimberley Road
11 Latham Road
12 Latham Road
19 Leys Road
5 Little St Marys Lane
11 Little St Marys Lane
Church Rate Corner, Malting
Lane
Frostlake Cottage, Malting
Lane
Granary Yard, Malting Lane
Malting Cottage, Malting Lane
The Loft, Malting Lane
2 Marlowe Road
7 Marlowe Road
106 Marlowe Road
13 Newnham Croft Street
4 Perse Almshouses,
Newnham Road

15 Sherlock Road
Innisfree, Southgreen Road
1a Summerfield
10 Summerfield
3 Tenison Avenue
92 Tenison Road
134 Tenison Road
24 Thorleye Road
Trinity Hall, Trinity Lane
Corpus Christi College
1 Wilberforce Road
8 Wilberforce Road
60 Windsor Road
11 Wordsworth Grove
58 Victoria Park
14 Coppice Avenue, Great
Shelford
75 Broadway, Grantchester
57 Town Green Road, Orwell
77 Loompits Way, Saffron
Walden
12 Anvil Close, Stapleford
6 Courtyards, Little Shelford
7 Mill Road, Oakington
12 Chedworth Street
9 Canterbury Close
18 Wordsworth Grove
106 Mawson Road
13 Newnham Road
3 Little St Marys Lane
23 South Road, Lt Abington
Southacre, Latham and
Chaucer Road Res Assoc

18B Newton Road
83 Oxford Road
35 Panton Street
40 Queensway
8 Radcliffe Court

7.2 The following comments are made:

Principle of development

There is no need for additional hotel rooms given the plans to provide hotel accommodation elsewhere in the city. (2 comments)

There is an unsatisfied need in the city for a really good upmarket hotel. The proposals will downgrade the existing hotel by removing facilities.

Loss of leisure centre

Local Plan and Draft Local Plan recognise leisure facilities as community amenity (6 comments)

Facilities are well used by the community (65 comments)

There are 700 members of the gym.

Swimming pool is attractive (4 comments)

Accessible to local residents by foot and cycle (7 comments)

Provides service for wide age range

Leisure facilities would be beneficial to hotel guests (3 comments)

The original leisure centre extension was partly justified by the fact that it provides an amenity for local people (7 comments)

The 2010 Equality Act should be considered in relation to the loss of the leisure facility

The long term benefits of maintaining the pool and gym, as at present, are greater than the short term reward of a few more hotel bedrooms.

Proposed leisure facilities

Limitation of use by hotel guests only is unacceptable (3 comments)

The small size of the replacement facilities will not be a like for like replacement (9 comments)

Design of extension

Intensification of use will harm the area (4 comments)

Adverse impact on river and common

Unattractive design (24 comments)

The extension does not conform to planning policy.

The existing building is unattractive and could be replaced by something more beautiful (3 comments)

The existing building is attractive and will be replaced by an uglier, more obtrusive building (4 comments)

The existing building is a local landmark comparable with the pyramids at the Louvre (2 comments)

The existing pyramid roof is attractive and should be listed.

Adverse visual impact of third storey extension (8 comments)

Site is in very sensitive location and development is out of keeping with Conservation Area, Sheeps Green and Coe Fen (24 comments)

The development will be visible at some distance (2 comments)

Internal lighting will be intrusive (3 comments)

The draft Local Plan includes a policy which protects the landscape alongside the river (4 comments)

Adverse impact on Nature Reserve (2 comments)

Traffic Generation

Existing congestion will be exacerbated by additional hotel rooms (33 comments)

Adverse impact on pedestrians (5 comments)

Adverse impact on cyclists (6 comments)

Adverse impact on enjoyment of historic streets

The site is not well served by public transport

Car/Cycle Parking

There is insufficient car parking and loss of spaces is unacceptable. (5 comments)

Increased cycle parking is not necessary.

Other issues

Solar panels are indicated as being used to heat the swimming pool but no pool is proposed

More affordable hotel accommodation is needed

No site notice

Staff at leisure centre unaware of application

The Planning department should continue to work proactively with residents and the University in the best interests of the area

Repeated applications are not morally or ethically appropriate

The development should be seen as part of the proposals for the Mill Lane area

The present owners may be trying to sell the hotel with planning permission for an extension

Application could be supported if it related to replacement of pyramid building only and leisure facilities could be re-provided.

- 7.3 One letter of support has been received from the occupier of 8 Wilberforce Road on the grounds that high quality hotel accommodation is needed in the city.
- 7.4 A petition signed by 37 people has been submitted in objection to the application on the grounds that the signatories, who are all mothers who take children to the swimming pool, consider the pool is ideally suited for use by children, elderly people and disabled people.
- 7.5 The Residents Association of Old Newnham oppose the application on the following grounds:

The visual mass of the hotel will be increased by the proposed third floor extension to create a fourth storey with plant room above and the replacement ground floor brick bedroom block

The building is currently stepped down southwards which softens its impact on the Green Belt. The fourth storey extension increases the mass and the south side will appear brutal and monolithic.

The glass walls and roof to the leisure centre give it an ethereal quality but the brick, wood and metal will present as heavy and permanent.

The Inspector acknowledges the striking views and this is carried forward in the Draft Local Plan. The increased mass neither conserves nor enhances the setting.

Loss of the leisure centre which provides an important amenity for the community

The leisure centre was the Gold Award winner for the East of England and is much loved and used by local people. There are over 700 club members and approximately 34 hours of classes held at the club each week.

The applicants assert that there will be improved leisure facilities on the site but there will be no pool, studio, changing rooms or reception and the proposed fitness suite will be 45 sq. m compared with 550 sq. m existing.

The removal of leisure facilities is in conflict with planning policy and the NPPF.

Users of the facility will be forced to use cars to access alternative facilities.

Tortuous vehicular access

The proposed development would add to congestion. The Historic Core Appraisal states that reducing traffic would enhance Granta Place.

The hotel site should be redeveloped as a 5 star hotel.

The application documents are confusing and contradictory.

7.6 Julian Huppert MP considers that the new proposals will detract from the setting and should be rejected for the following reasons:

(a) The proposed extension to the fourth floor will increase the visual mass of the hotel and drops down to the first floor at the end in an unbecoming way.

(b) The proposed facade of the fourth floor and the proposed brick is very dense.

(c) The loss of the leisure centre will represent a loss of amenity for the local community.

(d) The overall increase of the size of the building is my opinion out of scale given the rural nature of the environment in which it is based.

7.7 Cambridge Past Present and Future objects to the application on the following grounds:

Adverse impact on Green Belt and Protected Open Space
Conflict with Conservation Plan – Coe Fen and Sheeps Green (2001)

Adverse impact on the Conservation Area

Adverse impact on site of Nature Conservation Importance in the absence of an Ecology Survey
Potential adverse impact on the floodplain
Loss of community facility

If approved a s106 Agreement should be required to secure improvements to nearby Green Spaces and Commons and to compensate for loss of the swimming pool in its capacity as a recreational facility.

7.8 Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce support the application on the grounds that investment of this type is the key to driving forward the local economy and the proposals are sensitive to the location and the environment. The City Council's Hotel Futures Study identifies a lack of top quality hotel rooms in the Cambridge Area.

7.9 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations can be inspected on the application file.

8.0 ASSESSMENT

8.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from my inspection of the site and the surroundings, I consider that the main issues are:

1. Principle of development and relationship with previous schemes
2. Context of site, design and external spaces and impact on the Heritage Assets
3. Lighting
4. Renewable energy
5. Disabled access
6. Amenity of nearby occupiers
7. Refuse arrangements
8. Highway safety
9. Car and cycle parking
10. Archaeological Interest
11. Outstanding matters raised by consultees
12. Third party representations
13. Planning Obligation Strategy

Principle of Development and Relationship with Previous Schemes

- 8.2 This is the third application for the expansion of Doubletree Hotel to be submitted since 2010. The principle of the expansion of the hotel has been argued as acceptable in principle in relation to both the previous applications and the refusals of planning permission have not reflected any concerns regarding the principle of the extension/expansion of the hotel use.

Loss of Leisure Centre

- 8.3 Where this proposal differs from previous applications is that in this case the existing leisure centre use will be lost through conversion of that building into hotel rooms. Only a small scale fitness suite will be re-provided. This raises a new policy issue that has not been relevant before. The way in which the Leisure Centre relates to the hotel is key in the assessment of whether there is an in principle policy objection and I have spent some time researching this issue.
- 8.4 In 1991 planning permission was granted for a leisure centre at the hotel. Condition 10 of the DN stated as follows:

The leisure centre hereby approved shall at no time from the date of this permission be hired or let for use as a separate facility (i.e. separate from the hire or occupation of the hotel bedrooms) to any person, group, firm, company or organisation.

The applicant submitted an appeal against the imposition of condition 10 and the Council subsequently agreed to its removal.

- 8.5 Clearly the Leisure Centre was built as an extension to the hotel, however since the removal of Condition 10 and the expansion of potential Leisure Centre users to include members of the public/non-residents it would be possible for the ancillary use to have so intensified as to have become a new use i.e. as a Leisure Centre D2. In order to establish whether a new use has been established it is necessary to consider how the Leisure Centre is used and by who.

8.6 A site visit was carried out which established the following in relation to the way in which the Leisure Centre operates:

- The Leisure Centre is accessible to hotel residents and private members only. There is no public use of the Leisure Centre.
- The Leisure Centre can be accessed via the hotel by using a corridor which connects to the stairs and lifts. Access via this route does not require guests to go outside.
- The Leisure Centre can also be accessed from a rear door to the hotel by walking outside and entering via the lobby of the Leisure Centre. This route would be used by hotel guests only.
- Finally the Leisure Centre can be accessed via the car park. There is a lobby which provides access to the reception area for the Leisure Centre. This access is used by members of the Leisure Centre but can also be used by hotel guests.
- During the site visit hotel guests visited the Leisure Centre. They approached via the internal corridor. They were dressed ready for the gym. They were asked to read a safety notice and sign in before being scanned in by reception staff.
- Also during the visit two club members visited the Leisure Centre. They came in from outside and were wearing outdoor coats. They scanned in using membership cards.
- Members also benefit from free car parking for 4 hours.
- The Leisure Centre comprises a fitness room, swimming pool and studio all accessed off the reception area.
- There are changing rooms which are predominately used by members because hotel guests usually come ready changed.
- There also two smaller rooms and a shower at hotel end of the corridor, which are not currently used. There are no beauty facilities on site.

8.7 In relation to the degree/frequency of use by hotel guests of the Leisure Centre and the non-guest members including conference delegates and local people/club members the hotel has advised that in the last year there were 4917 visits by hotel

guests, 5179 visits by Club Members, 310 day passes and 7000 swimming lessons. The proportion of users (based on total of 17,406 visits) is therefore 28% hotel guests, 30% club members, 2% day passes and 40% swimming lessons. This demonstrates that the majority of use of the Leisure Centre relates to use by people who are not resident in the hotel, 72% versus 28%.

- 8.8 In my view the use of the Leisure Centre has become established as a D2 Leisure facility in its own right and a new planning unit has been created. Policy 6/1 is therefore engaged because the D2 Leisure facility would be lost as a result of the development. The circumstances are complicated because the hotel control the use of the Leisure Centre and could choose to close it themselves, which may affect the way in which it is regarded in planning policy terms. However the current position is that the Leisure Centre is operational and there are no proposals to replace it like for like as part of the development or to relocate it to another place.
- 8.9 The Planning Policy team have recommended that the loss of the leisure facility needs to be set against the benefit of additional hotel rooms being provided in line with Policy 6/3. This is correct in my view and I share the opinion of the team when they say that this is difficult in the absence of an explanation from the applicants as to why the existing scale and quality of leisure facilities cannot/should not be provided on site or new premises provided. The view of the applicants appears to be that the swimming pool is in need of refurbishment but is not financially viable. This is why only a gym which will be accessible to non-residents will be provided as part of the new scheme.
- 8.10 The applicant has not demonstrated why the existing scale and quality of leisure facilities cannot (or should not) be provided onsite or new premises provided of at least similar quality and accessibility to its existing users as suggested by the Policy team. The applicants have also not demonstrated that the need for the facility could not be met elsewhere. There is no analysis of why the facility is well used, which aspects of the facility are meeting specific local needs or how these needs could be met in an alternative way.

8.11 The leisure facilities that are being proposed in this application are not of the same scale or variety as those existing on the site. Current users of the site will not have the same options when considering using the new leisure facilities on the site. This reduction in choice will harm the quality of the leisure offer of the site. Consequently the proposal will harm both the scale and quality of the leisure facilities on the site, without seeking to re-provide them elsewhere. The impact on the number of people using the facility outweighs the benefit of 13 additional hotel rooms in my view. The proposal is contrary to policy 6/1 of the Local Plan 2006 and paragraphs 70 and 74 of the NPPF.

Context of site, design and external spaces and impact on Heritage Assets

8.12 The application site sits on the eastern bank of the River Cam and is surrounded by the protected green open space of Coe Fen to the east and south, and Sheep's Green to the west. These large, open, natural spaces make the site highly visible with long views afforded of the hotel from across this surrounding fen land.

8.13 This setting allows an awareness of the composition of the hotel buildings as two obvious phases. The main building constructed in 1972, and the remaining part of the pre-1972 hotel that was destroyed in a fire. The single storey pyramid shaped leisure centre further extends the main mass of the building albeit less noticeable from longer views due to its comparatively small scale. Given the sensitivity of the site and its exposed position by virtue of the surrounding undeveloped land, this phased approach of the building is very apparent.

8.14 It is acknowledged that the wholesale redevelopment of the site would be advantageous to the enhancement of the surrounding conservation area and the heritage assets within this setting. However, this is not what has been brought forward by this application and cannot therefore be seen as a constraint or a material consideration of this application.

8.15 The previous schemes on the site were considered by the Planning Committee to be unacceptable by virtue of their height, scale, mass and bulk, external materials and position on the site. The overall design of the extensions was considered to be fussy and lacking coherence and not to relate well to the

existing building or the site. The development was therefore considered to be likely to have an adverse impact on the Conservation Area and the Green Belt. However these criticisms were aimed at the extension which replaced the Leisure Centre and not at the third floor extension to the hotel which formed part of the 2010 scheme.

8.16 Only the 2011 application went to appeal. This included an extension on the site of the Leisure Centre only and not the third floor extension to the main hotel building. In his decision on the appeal the Inspector agrees with most of the conclusions reached by the Committee but in his view seen in isolation the form and design of the extension would have been appropriate to the existing hotel and would not detract from it. This effectively means that, in the context of the appeal, any other scheme for an expansion of the hotel needs to be assessed by consideration of the following:

- Height, scale, mass and bulk
- External materials
- Position on the site
- Landscaping and Trees
- Impact on the Heritage Assets and Protected Open Space
- Impact on the Green Belt

I have considered the comments received from English Heritage, the Design and Conservation Panel and the UDC team in relation to these points.

Height, scale, mass and bulk,

Conversion of Leisure Centre

8.17 The works to the Leisure Centre building do not involve any expansion of the footprint of the building. The existing pyramidal roof which covers part of the roof will be removed and the maximum height of the converted building will be 3.8 metres. The table below sets out the comparisons between the existing leisure centre extension, the previously refused extensions and the conversion proposed by this application. This clearly demonstrates the significant reduction in height, scale, mass and bulk compared with the previous schemes and arguably the existing situation.

Scheme	Maximum Height (m)	Maximum Width (m)	Maximum Length from main hotel building (m)	Position set back from river (m)
Existing leisure centre building	7.4 (to apex of pyramid roof)	21.25	34.5	16.00
Refused extension 2010	14.4 (16.5 for 10 metres to accommodate rooftop plant)	19.5	47.25	18.5
Refused extension 2011	10.8 (13.8 for 10 metres to accommodate rooftop plant)	20.5	51.25	21.00
Proposed conversion	3.8	21.25	34.5	16.00

Third Floor Extension to Hotel

- 8.18 The third floor extension to the hotel did not form part of the 2011 application that was considered by the Inspector but a similar extension was included in the 2010 application. The Committee did not refer to the third floor extension to the hotel in its decision on the 2010 application and the focus of the objection was clearly the larger extension on the site of the Leisure Centre. This new extension would have obscured at least part of the third floor extension. However in the current proposals the third floor extension will be highly visible across the low level Leisure Centre conversion.
- 8.19 The proposed third floor extension will increase the height of the south wing of the hotel from 10.2 metres to 14 metres with a

plant room above measuring 11.5 metres wide (maximum) to bring the maximum height of this part of the hotel to 16 metres.

External materials

8.20 A limited palette of material has been selected for the conversion and extension comprising facing brick, timber boarding/curtain walling, polished concrete panels and aluminium faced timber doors and windows. This is supported. Amendments have been made to the over cladding of the existing brickwork on the second floor as follows:

- o The extent of over cladding brickwork has been reduced with additional light weight zinc cladding introduced to the bays on the corners of the building stepping up along the façade to give the impression of a ziggurat form, with brickwork being only prevalent centrally to the elevation. The architect's view is that this reduces the perceived scale of the proposals with the building being recessive not intrusive in the landscape positively enhancing the elevational treatment of the existing building at the same time.
- o The zinc cladding extends around the western elevation of the existing south block fronting the river. The architect's view is that this has a positive effect of providing additional mass that appears relatively low key and of modest visual impact when viewed from the river side.
- o The balconies to the existing south block are to be renewed and replaced. They are to be of a revised form providing a distinct cant line through the angle of the glass to respond and reflect the strong cant form of the existing hotel.

Position on the site

8.21 Neither the Leisure Centre conversion nor the third floor extension project beyond the existing footprint of the hotel. The relationship between the development and the river is therefore unchanged. This was a concern for the Committee in relation to the previous applications.

Landscaping and Trees

8.22 Additional information has been submitted in response to concerns raised by the Tree Officer and the Landscape team. This information has been of some assistance but full agreement on the appropriateness of tree removal has not been reached and there is no information regarding replacement trees. In my view these matters could be resolved by planning condition if the application was to be recommended for approval.

Impact upon the Heritage Assets, the Green Belt and Protected Open Space

8.23 The application is supported by a Heritage Assessment and Conservation Area Statement. This document considers the character of the area and the contribution of individual buildings such as Peterhouse Masters Lodge. An assessment is made of the development against identified heritage assets and consideration is also given to its impact on the Green Belt. The document concludes that the proposals will not have an adverse impact on the setting or character of the conservation area or the significant local heritage assets. In particular it is noted that 'the new building will not be higher than the immediate adjoining section of the existing hotel and the elevational treatment responds to the existing hotel continuing the rhythmic theme' and that 'the proposed extension and landscaping proposals are considered to retain the special interest and setting of the adjacent listed buildings, and preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.'

8.24 The Inspector makes the following comment about the existing impact of the Leisure Centre.

viii) The presence of the single storey leisure centre and car park disrupts the openness of the two green spaces and interrupts some of the views from Sheeps Green towards the city centre. However the single storey height helps to limit the degree to which it detracts from the general sense of openness in the locality and prevents it from impeding on views entirely. In the latter respect the degree of intrusion quite rapidly lessens with distance

such that the building only marginally interferes in the longer views from many parts of Sheeps Green (para 10)

- 8.25 In my view the conversion of the Leisure Centre would have a very similar impact on the Conservation Area and setting of listed buildings as Heritage Assets and the Protected Open Space. The impact is likely to be reduced by the fact that the pyramid roof is to be removed.
- 8.26 The impact of the third floor extension is more complicated. The Inspector did not consider the impact of this extension because it did not form part of the 2011 scheme. Also the omission of any upward extension above the Leisure Centre means that this elevation is much more prominent when viewed from the South. In my view the over-cladding of parts of the existing second floor and the third floor with zinc cladding as now proposed is the key to the success of this elevation.
- 8.27 The applicant has demonstrated that a 'physical' reduction in bulk and mass via the omission of the end bay is not possible because of the need to provide fire escape access to the third floor. The alternative approach of using a mixture of brick and zinc cladding delivers a 'perceived' reduction in mass and bulk which in my view is successful. The site does sit adjacent to a very sensitive environment but the third floor extension as now designed will read as part of the existing hotel. It is accepted that the hotel itself detracts from the visual amenity of its surroundings but I do not consider it possible to justify refusal of a satisfactory extension to the main body of the building on such grounds.

Impact on the Green Belt

- 8.28 The application site is not within the Cambridge Green Belt. However, it does lie adjacent to land designated as green belt. The proposed development would be visible from the Green Belt but I have argued above that its visual impact on the wider area is acceptable.

Comments from English Heritage, the Design and Conservation Panel and the UDC team

- 8.29 English Heritage supports the proposal for the conversion of the leisure centre but is concerned that the third floor extension will

appear quite prominent in some views. They consider that the case is balanced. The D and C Panel also supported the conversion of the leisure centre. The Panel supported the principle of the third floor extension but felt that the design needed more development. The final view of the UDC team was that both aspects of the scheme were acceptable given the design constraints.

- 8.30 English Heritage and the D and C Panel have not reviewed the amended plans, but they have received detailed attention from the UDC team. In my view the amendments do go some way to addressing the concerns of English Heritage and shift the balance towards approval of the application. Similarly the amendments respond positively to the comments made by the Panel. The amendments clearly address the outstanding concerns of the UDC team which now supports the whole scheme.

Conclusion - Context of site, design and external spaces and impact on Heritage Assets

- 8.31 The proposals for the extensions to the hotel have come a long way in addressing the constraints of this sensitive setting. The following changes were delivered by the application as submitted:

- retention and conversion of the Leisure Centre
- reduction in the number of external materials proposed
- simplification of the overall material palette
- the retention of the position of the footprint in relation to the River

The amendments to the elevational treatment of the third floor extension have led to a further perceived reduction in height, scale, mass and bulk over and above that delivered by the scheme as submitted.

- 8.32 I am convinced that the combination of these changes means the overall proposals for the site are sympathetic to its setting. When compared to the existing semi-transparent leisure centre which is out of character with the building and surrounding area it will have a positive, enhancing impact upon the surrounding Conservation Area/setting of listed buildings, protected open space and the adjacent Green Belt.

8.33 In my opinion the proposed development is successful in its response to the context of the surrounding area and its sensitive setting. The proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policies 3/4, 3/7, 3/14, 4/1 and 4/11 and to guidance provided by the NPPF 2012.

Lighting

8.34 The applicants have not submitted details of external or internal lighting but had the application been recommended for approval this could have been secured via a planning condition. In my view this would address concerns raised by third parties. I am satisfied that the application complies with policy 4/15 Cambridge Local Plan 2006.

Renewable energy and sustainability

8.35 The renewable energy and sustainability credentials of the previous scheme were not considered a reason for refusal. Both the previous proposal and this application have successfully addressed this requirement, proposing a development which off-sets its carbon footprint by at least 10 percent and provides an improved existing facility within a sustainable city centre location.

8.36 The guidance and feasibility work which has been submitted with the application includes an analysis of the projected energy consumption for the development. This demonstrates a consideration of various other technologies in order to argue the case for use of solar panels and air source heat pumps. These are considered a suitable technology and it is demonstrated that they will meet the 11 percent on site requirement of energy generation. Details are needed of the visual and noise impact of this equipment but had the application been recommended for approval these could have been secured by planning condition.

8.37 I am satisfied that the applicants have suitably addressed the issue of sustainability and renewable energy and the proposal is in accordance with Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policy 8/16 and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2007.

Disabled access

- 8.38 Inclusive access was not considered a reason for refusal of the previous scheme. Both the previous proposal and this application have successfully addressed this issue and provided facilities to aid inclusive access for all.
- 8.39 Hotels or guest houses with over ten bedrooms should have between 6 and 10 per cent of accessible rooms. The new build accommodation will provide 14 per cent accessible rooms.
- 8.40 The proposal will be required to conform to Part M of the current Building Regulations. The new facilities include:
- Nine disabled parking bays are proposed, equivalent to one in fifteen of the car parking provision on site
 - A power operated entrance door with manifestations and an opening width of 1.6 metres
 - All levels of the hotel will be accessible by lift.
- 8.41 I am satisfied that the proposed extension has thoroughly considered accessibility and inclusive access for all those who visit the building. The Access Officer is supportive of the scheme. The proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 3/7, 3/12 and 6/3.

Amenity of nearby occupiers

Impact on amenity of nearby occupiers

- 8.42 Whilst the surrounding undeveloped open space constrains the proposed development, the uses adjacent to the application site are almost wholly commercial and University uses. As such, I do not consider there to be any privacy issues from overlooking or that the extension will have an enclosing or overbearing impact upon the occupiers of any neighbouring buildings. It will be the demolition and construction phases of the development which are likely to have a more significant impact upon the neighbouring university lecture and conference facilities in terms of noise and disturbance unless well managed.
- 8.43 Conditions have been suggested by the Environmental Health Officer to mitigate the impact of the development upon nearby uses during the construction and operational stages of the

development and to deal with matters such as contaminated land remediation. If the application was to be recommended for approval I am confident that those conditions would provide an appropriate degree of control over these potential adverse impacts to comply with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 3/4 and 4/13.

Amenity for future occupiers of the site

- 8.44 The proposal enhances and improves the facilities on the site. In my opinion the proposal provides a high-quality environment and an appropriate standard of amenity for future guests to the hotel, and I consider that in this respect it is compliant Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 3/7 and 3/14.

Refuse Arrangements

- 8.45 The applicant has not provided detailed information on waste and recycling but has confirmed that existing facilities will be used. The Environmental Health Officer is content but recommends a condition to secure these details. If the application was to be recommended for approval I am confident that refuse arrangements could be appropriately controlled therefore in my opinion, the proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policy 3/12.

Highway Safety

- 8.46 A number of issues have been raised by third parties with regard to highway safety. These express concern about the potential increase in pedestrian/vehicular/cyclist conflicts as a result of the likely increase in footfall and movements. This is not only on Granta Place but on the roads which provide access to it, namely Silver Street, Mill Lane and Laundress Lane. The Highway Authority has considered the proposals and is aware of the concerns of local residents. Officers are satisfied that the proposal will not give rise to any significant implications for highway safety and as such do not object to the proposal.
- 8.47 It is important to note that this was the conclusion also reached when considering the previous proposals. As such, I am of the view that the proposal will not have any adverse impact in terms of highway safety, and consider the proposal compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policy 8/2.

Car and Cycle Parking

Car parking

- 8.48 The existing car park to the south of the leisure centre makes provision for a total of 174 car parking spaces, 3 of which are dedicated for disabled users. These spaces are shared between the hotel and leisure facility, but this area is also open for use to the general public. The current proposals will result in a reduction of the current car parking provision to 167 car parking spaces. This is inclusive of 4 disabled accessible spaces.
- 8.49 Third party representations have included the view that given the additional 29 rooms and resultant additional guests who will be travelling to the hotel, there should not be a loss in the provision of on-site car parking spaces. However this a reduced provision accords with the current City Council's Car Parking Standards as set out in Appendix C of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006 and the site is located within the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). Accordingly, I consider the reduction in car parking spaces from 173 to 167 is acceptable. It is also worth noting that the reduction in car parking provision was not the subject of a reason for refusal in relation to previous proposals. I am satisfied that the proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policy 8/10.

Cycle parking

- 8.50 The site currently makes provision for 34 cycle parking spaces; this is to be increased to provide a total of 54 cycling parking spaces, an increase of 20 cycle parking spaces. If the Cycle Parking Standards are applied to the total number of hotel rooms in the expanded hotel then this would represent an under provision of cycle parking. In my view such an approach is unreasonable and the uplift should be considered in relation to the additional rooms that are generated by this proposal only. The Cycle Parking Standards require 1 space for every two members of staff and 2 spaces for every 10 bedrooms. There are 29 additional bedrooms which would generate a requirement for 6 cycle spaces. The application form indicates that no additional members of staff will be appointed. Twenty additional spaces are to be provided which exceeds the cycle

parking requirement. If the application was recommended for approval a planning condition could have secured details of the location of the cycle parking as queried by the Walking and Cycling Officer. I am satisfied that the proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policy 8/6.

Archaeological Interest

- 8.51 The site is in an area of archaeological potential as it is considered likely that important archaeological remains survive on and around the site known for multi-period remains. Immediately to the northeast is the site of a friary of the friars of the Sack dating from the 13th to 14th Centuries. To the north and around Peterhouse medieval structures are known to remain. County Archaeology has previously recommended that a negative condition could be used to ensure proper archaeological investigation and recording. If the application was recommended for approval I would have recommended such a condition. In my view subject to such a condition the proposal is compliant with Cambridge local Plan 2006 policy 4/9.

Outstanding matters raised by consultees

Sustainable Drainage Officer comments

- 8.52 The Sustainable Drainage Officer (SDO) is concerned that possible risk of flooding has not been fully considered. The submission and approval of further details could be secured by condition and the SDO is content with this approach. If the application was recommended for approval I would have recommended such a condition.

Nature Conservation Officer comments

- 8.53 The Nature Conservation Officer is keen to secure opportunities for ecological enhancement. If the application was recommended for approval I would have recommended that such provision be secured by planning condition. In my view subject to such a condition the proposal is compliant with Cambridge local Plan 2006 policy 4/3.

Third Party Representations

8.54 The principal new issue that has been raised in third party representations is the loss of the Leisure Centre. I have addressed this issue above in my section on 'Principle of development and relationship with previous schemes' and it forms the basis for my recommendation of refusal of the application. Otherwise no new issues were raised by the third party representations received to this application in comparison with those received in response to the previous schemes. The majority of these were concerned with the design of the scheme in such a visible and sensitive site given the surrounding context of the River Cam, protected open space, conservation area and setting of listed buildings. I have addressed these concerns in my section 'Context of site, design and external spaces and impact on the Heritage Assets'.

Planning Obligations

8.55 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.

8.56 In bringing forward my recommendations in relation to the Planning Obligation for this development I have considered these requirements. The Planning Obligation Strategy (2010) provides a framework for expenditure of financial contributions collected through planning obligations. The Public Art Supplementary Planning Document 2010 addresses requirements in relation to public art. The proposed development triggers the requirement for the following community infrastructure:

Transport

- 8.57 Contributions towards catering for additional trips generated by proposed development are sought where 50 or more (all mode) trips on a daily basis are likely to be generated. The site lies within the Southern Corridor Area Transport Plan where the contribution sought per trip is £369.
- 8.58 The applicants have submitted a Transport Assessment. This acknowledges that there will be an increase in the number of trips from all modes of transport to the site as a result of the proposed development of approximately 116 additional trips. The Highway Authority has accepted this figure and requested that Southern Corridor Area Transport Plan payment of £42,804 is secured by way of a Section 106 agreement.
- 8.59 In this case the applicants are not unwilling to enter into a legal undertaking to secure the required contributions, but the s106 has not been progressed in the light of the recommendation to refuse the application. I have requested that the Committee grant delegated powers to officers to negotiate and complete a S106 planning obligation or to accept a Unilateral Undertaking to secure the requirements of the Planning Obligation Strategy 2010 in the event of an appeal. However at this time, in the absence of the Planning Obligation the proposal does not accord with Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policies 8/3 and 10/1.

Public Art

- 8.60 The development is of a scale that requires provision to be made for public art. The applicants propose to make a public art contribution in accordance with the Public Art SPD. In my view this is an appropriate approach given the comparatively small value of 1% of construction costs and that it was proving difficult to provide any form of meaningful public art in relation to the previous schemes which would have generated a higher figure. Public Art is necessary to ensure that future users of the development who will use city centre facilities will benefit from enhanced public art in the City. The proposal to use commuted sums to deliver public art directly relates to the development because the hotel rooms will accommodate guests visiting the City and experiencing public art in the public realm. The contribution is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development because it is directly related to construction

costs and there are no known additional costs such as contaminated land remediation which can justify a reduction from the 1% construction costs approach.

8.61 In this case the applicants are not unwilling to enter into a legal undertaking to secure the required contributions, but the s106 has not been progressed in the light of the recommendation to refuse the application. I have requested that the Committee grant delegated powers to officer to negotiate and complete a S106 planning obligation or to accept a Unilateral Undertaking to secure the requirements of the Planning Obligation Strategy 2010 in the event of an appeal. However at this time, in the absence of the Planning Obligation the proposal does not accord with Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policies 3/7 and 10/1 and the Public Art SPD 2010.

Monitoring

8.62 The Planning Obligation Strategy (2010) requires that all new developments contribute to the costs of monitoring the implementation of planning obligations. It was agreed at Development Plans Scrutiny Sub- Committee on 25 March 2014 that from 1 April 2014 monitoring fees for all financial and non-financial planning obligations will be 5% of the total value of those financial contributions (up to a maximum of £50,000) with the exception of large scale developments when monitoring costs will be agreed by negotiation. The County Council also requires a monitoring charge to be paid for County obligations in accordance with current County policy

8.63 For this application 5% of the public art contribution and the County Council monitoring fee is required.

Planning Obligations Conclusion

8.64 It is my view that the planning obligation is necessary, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably in scale and kind to the development and therefore the Planning Obligation passes the tests set by the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. In the absence of the necessary s106 Agreement the application is recommended for refusal on these grounds.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 This application brings forward a much reduced scheme in comparison with the previous schemes for the site that were not supported by the Council or, in the case of the most recent refusal, the Planning Inspector at appeal. In doing so the current scheme, as amended, responds positively to the reasons for refusal. However in proposing the removal of the existing operational Leisure Centre, which is a D2 use in its own right, the new scheme introduces a new reason for rejection of the application which has not been overcome by the applicant through re-provision on or off site.
- 9.2 Mitigation measures in terms of contributions towards the SCATP and Public Art have not been secured via a Planning Obligation not through a lack of willingness on the applicants part but because the application is recommended for refusal on policy grounds. In the absence of such an agreement the application is contrary to the Planning Obligations SPD, the Southern Corridor Area Transport Plan and the Public Art SPD.
- 9.3 Refusal is recommended.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

1. REFUSE for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development would result in the loss of a well-used, highly valued and centrally located Leisure Centre which meets the needs of the local community and which does not operate as an ancillary facility to the primary use of the site as a hotel but which has become established as an independent D2 use. The leisure facility is neither replaced to at least the existing scale and quality within the new development nor relocated to another appropriate premises or site of similar or improved accessibility for its users. The loss of the Leisure Centre therefore represents an unnecessary loss of a valued facility which would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs. The proposed development is contrary to Cambridge Local Plan policy 6/1 and to advice provided in paragraphs 70 and 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

2. The proposed development does not make appropriate provision for transport mitigation measures, public art and monitoring in accordance with Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policies 3/7, 8/3 and 10/1 and as detailed in the Planning Obligation Strategy 2010, the Public Art Supplementary Planning Document 2010 the Southern Corridor Area Transport Plan 2002

2. In the event that an Appeal is lodged against the decision to refuse this application, delegated authority is sought to allow officers to negotiate and complete the Planning Obligation or to accept a Unilateral Undertaking required in connection with this development.