



Joint Development Control  
Committee

06 April 2022

**Report to:**

**Lead Officer:**

Joint Director of Planning and Economic  
Development

## **21/03609/FUL - Castle Ward. National Institute of Agricultural Botany, Huntingdon Road, Cambridge**

Proposal: Retention of the former NIAB Headquarters building, the demolition of all other buildings and structures, and the erection of buildings with basements for 291 Build to Rent units (Use Class C3) including affordable housing and a 202 bed Apart-Hotel (Sui Generis) and associated facilities along with access, car and cycle parking, landscaping and infrastructure works.

Applicant: Vertex Living Ltd

Key material considerations: Principle of development, Affordable Housing, Design and Context, Heritage, Residential Amenity, Car Parking

Date of Member site visit: No

Is it a Departure Application: No

Decision due by: 22 April 2022

Application brought to Committee because: Major development

Presenting officer: Rebecca Ward

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The application was originally heard at the Joint Development Control Committee on the 16 March 2022. At the meeting members voted to defer determination of the application on the basis that they wanted the applicant to consider whether they were able to provide a higher percentage of Affordable Private Rent homes onsite based upon the gross number of new rented homes to be delivered (rather than the net position set out as acceptable in the officer report). In response to this request the applicant has indicated that they would be prepared to provide an additional 21 affordable private rent units, taking the total to 58 (20% of the proposed units) provided the decision could be taken promptly. This is set out by the applicant in the addendum Housing Report (dated 24 March 2022).
2. The total number of Build for Rent units would stay the same as per the application description and no additional changes are required to the design and layout of the scheme. Officers' consideration of the fall-back position and the weight that can be applied to the earlier "permissions" remains. The provision of additional affordable units is nevertheless a material planning consideration to which weight (in favour of the development) can be applied. The officer report has been updated to reflect the recent submissions but otherwise remains substantially similar to the earlier report considered by the Committee at their meeting in March.
3. This application seeks full planning permission for the site which is located within the administrative boundary of Cambridge City Council. The proposal is for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site involving the retention of the

former NIAB Headquarters building, the demolition of all other buildings and for the erection of buildings with basements for 291 Build to Rent units (C3 Use Class) which includes affordable housing. The scheme also proposes a 202 bed Apart-Hotel and associated facilities along with access, car and cycle parking, landscape and infrastructure works.

4. The proposed development is the outcome of two years of extensive pre-application consultation with officers and a variety of technical consultees and members of the public prior to submission of the application. The scheme has also been presented at Cambridge Quality Panel twice. The scheme has been amended significantly during this time to address concerns that have been raised. Amendments have also been made during the application process.
5. The benefits and dis-benefits of the development proposals have been evaluated and assessed against the objectives of the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as summarised below. In terms of social benefits, the proposal seeks to introduce a significant number of BtR homes, 58 of which will be Affordable BtR. The Council's Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy and National Planning Policy support the development of purpose built private rented homes because it helps to provide an additional choice into the market and accelerates the delivery of new homes in the city. The development would provide BtR housing to meet the local identified needs of Cambridge. The scheme also seeks to introduce a range of facilities that residents of this development and members of the public will be able to access including co-working spaces, swimming pool, a gym and Micro-brewery.
6. In terms of economic benefits, the proposal seeks to introduce an Apart hotel which will provide 202 rooms to keep pace with the continued market demand for new accommodation in Cambridge. This use will create various new job roles during and post construction which will be of benefit to the local economy. The additional expenditure from visitors to the 202 bed Apart Hotel and occupiers will help support the local business and services. Along with a package of s106 contributions to support upgrades to existing infrastructure.

7. In terms of environmental benefits, the comprehensive re-development of the site has meant that a high-quality landscape scheme can be secured. There will be a significant increase in biodiversity on the site, exceeding the 10% requirement in Biodiversity Net Gain. The majority of protected Pleached Lime trees will be retained on and around the site with a significant number of new ones planted to enhance the setting on the old NIAB site and preserve the Buildings of Local Interest that surround it. The scheme also includes various sustainably measures which includes an electric only development, Pv panels, achieving targets of 110 litres per person per day in terms of water consumption and cutting carbon emissions by 74% exceeding Part L of the Building Regulations. The drainage strategy also includes rain-water gardens, green roofs and swales through the development.
  
8. Overall, the proposed development will bring significant public benefits which accord with the three dimensions of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2021. The Application Site is part included within an allocation for Mixed Use residential development with the remaining part identified in the Brownfield Register and as such the principle of re-use for residential development is acceptable and has been found to comply with all other policies in the CLP. The balance of these benefits in the circumstances of the application is considered to weigh in favour of granting planning permission, outweighing any harm that the proposed development may cause. In accordance with S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 there is a statutory presumption in favour of granting planning permission.
  
9. Having considered the provisions of the development plan, the views of statutory consultees, local consultees and third-party representations as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval subject to planning conditions as set out in this report at Appendix 2 and to the prior completion of a Section 106 Agreement to secure the recommended planning obligations set out in Appendix 1.

## SITE HISTORY

10. The relevant planning history on the site comprises:

Reference	Description	Decision
07/0005/FUL	Erection of a part 2 storey part 3 storey office and laboratory building, glasshouse, decked car park, plant and equipment, access road, landscaping and ancillary works.	Approved Dec 2006
07/0005/CONDA	Application for confirmation of compliance with conditions of planning permission 07/0005/FUL	Issued Sept 2020
1/1467/SCRE	The proposed development comprises the retention of the former NIAB Headquarters building (with consent for 68 dwellings), the demolition of all other buildings and structures, and the erection of buildings with basements for 290 Build to Rent units (Use Class C3) and a 201 bed Apart-Hotel (Sui Generis) with associated facilities	Screening opinion decided, and EIA screening not required April 2021
20/01501/PRI030	Prior Approval notification of proposed change of use from B1(a) (offices) to Class C3 (dwellinghouses) to create 68 dwellings	Prior Approval Given May 2020
20/03334/PRI030	Prior Approval notification of proposed change of use from B1(a) (offices) to Class C3 (dwellinghouses) to create 7no 1bed dwellinghouses	Prior Approval given July 2020
20/03335/PRI030	Prior Approval notification of proposed change of use from B1(a) (offices) to Class C3 (dwellinghouses) to create 95 dwellinghouses	Prior approval given (September 2020)

11. Key Darwin Green decisions (adjacent site):

Reference	Description	Decision
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07/0003/OUT	Mixed-use development comprising up to 1593 dwellings, primary school, community facilities, retail units (use classes A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5) and associated infrastructure including vehicular, pedestrian and cycleway accesses, open space and drainage works	December 2013
14/0086/REM	Reserved matters of 07/003/OUT for access roads, pedestrian and cycle paths, public open space, services across the site and one allotment site	Approved June 2014
14/1410/REM	Construction of public square with hard surfaced pedestrian and cycle areas, access road, disabled and service bay parking, soft landscaping, drainage and utilities pursuant to outline approval 07/0003/OUT	Approved December 2014
15/1670/REM	Reserved matters for 114 residential units and local centre, including library, community rooms, health centre and retail units pursuant to outline consent 07/0003/OUT	Approved May 2016
16/0208/REM	Reserved matters application for first housing phase (known as BDW1) including 173 dwellings with associated internal roads, car parking, landscaping, amenity and public open space	May 2016
19/1056/REM	Reserved Matters application for second housing phase (known as BDW2) including 328 dwellings with associated internal roads, car parking, landscaping, amenity and public open space. The Reserved Matters include access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale and related partial discharge of conditions 8, 10, 14, 18, 22, 25, 26, 27, 29, 35, 40, 49, 52, 58, 62, 63, 66 and 69 pursuant to outline approval 07/0003/OUT	Refused December 2020

21/03619/REM	Reserved matters application for fifth and sixth housing phases and Allotment 3 (collectively known as BDW5 and 6) including 411 dwellings and allotments with associated internal roads, car parking, landscaping, amenity and public open space. The reserved matters include access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale related partial discharge of conditions 6, 8, 10, 14, 15, 17, 18, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 35, 40, 49, 52, 58, 62, 63, 66 and 69 pursuant to outline approval 07/0003/OUT	Approved December 2021
21/04431/REM	Reserved Matters application for second housing phase (known as BDW2) including 323 dwellings with associated internal roads, car parking, landscaping, amenity and public open space. The Reserved Matters include access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale and related partial discharge of conditions 8, 10, 14, 17, 18, 26, 28, 35, 40, 49, 52, 58, 63, 66 and 69 pursuant to outline approval 07/0003/OUT	Awaiting decision

## PUBLICITY

Advertisements: Yes

Adjoining Owners: Yes

Site Notice Displayed: Yes

Member Briefing - 13th January 2021

12. The application was amended in December with interested third parties being re-consulted on the amended plans. A further set of plans were submitted and uploaded to address errors and omissions in some of the documents in February 2022. These latest plans were not re-consulted on as the changes

were not materially different to the previous amendments. The amendments are set out in the Proposal section of this report.

13. Neighbour letters were sent out in addition to the standard consultation letters, the requirements for statutory press notice and the display of site notices have been met. The application has therefore been subject to extensive consultation and publicity.

14. Prior to the submission of the application the applicants held a series of public meetings and workshops to seek public and stakeholder views of the proposed development. The proposals have also been discussed with officers as part of comprehensive pre-application work as well as presentation to the Cambridge Quality Panel (twice), Disability Panel, the Joint Development Control committee as a Developer's Briefing and the North and West Cambridge Community Forum.

## **POLICY AND MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

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

16. In accordance with those regulations, a screening opinion was submitted by the applicant and determined in April 2021. The Council concluded that a full Environmental Impact Assessment was not needed for the proposed development.

17. **The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017** - The site is not in the vicinity of designated (European) sites of nature conservation importance and is not within such a designation. The Council is satisfied that the application is unlikely to have a significant effect on a European designated site either on its own or in combination with other projects and would not result in likely significant effects on European designated sites.

**18. Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)** - Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

**19. Equalities Act 2010** - The application has been assessed against the relevant sections of the Equalities Act 2010. It is not considered that the application discriminates against people with protected characteristics.

**20. Relevant Central Government Documents and Policies**

Central Government Guidance	National Planning Policy Framework July 2021 National Planning Practice Guidance National Design Guide LTN/20 Cycle Infrastructure
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**Relevant Development Plan Documents and Policies**

Cambridge City Local Plan 2018	Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development Policy 3: Spatial strategy for the location of residential development Policy 5: Sustainable transport and infrastructure Policy 6: Hierarchy of centres and retail capacity Policy 14: Areas of Major Change and Opportunity Areas – general principles Policy 20: Land between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road Area of Major Change Policy 28: Carbon reduction, community energy networks, sustainable design and construction, and water use Policy 29: Renewable and low carbon energy generation Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle Policy 32: Flood risk Policy 33: Contaminated land
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<p>Policy 34: Light pollution control</p> <p>Policy 35: Protection of human health and quality of life from noise and vibration</p> <p>Policy 36: Air quality, odour and dust</p> <p>Policy 37: Cambridge Airport Public Safety Zone and Air Safeguarding Zones</p> <p>Policy 41: Protection of business space</p> <p>Policy 42: Connecting new developments to digital infrastructure</p> <p>Policy 45: Affordable housing and dwelling mix</p> <p>Policy 50: Residential space standards</p> <p>Policy 51: Accessible homes</p> <p>Policy 55: Responding to context</p> <p>Policy 56: Creating successful places</p> <p>Policy 57: Designing new buildings</p> <p>Policy 59: Designing landscape and the public realm</p> <p>Policy 60: Tall buildings and the skyline in Cambridge</p> <p>Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment</p> <p>Policy 62: Local heritage assets</p> <p>Policy 68: Open space and recreation provision through new development</p> <p>Policy 70: Protection of priority species and habitats</p> <p>Policy 71: Trees</p> <p>Policy 73: Community, sports and leisure facilities</p> <p>Policy 74: Education facilities</p> <p>Policy 75: Healthcare facilities</p> <p>Policy 77: Development and expansion of visitor accommodation</p> <p>Policy 80: Supporting sustainable access to development</p> <p>Policy 81: Mitigating the transport impact of development</p> <p>Policy 82: Parking management</p> <p>Policy 85: Infrastructure delivery, planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy</p>
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## Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations

Supplementary Planning Documents	Greater Cambridge Biodiversity SDP Draft (July 2021) Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Sustainable Design and Construction (2020) Great Cambridge Housing Strategy (2019-2023) Affordable Housing SPD (2018) Cambridge City Council's Air Quality Action Plan (2018) Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2016) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste Management Design Guide SPD (2012) Biodiversity SPD (2009) Public Art (2009) Cambridge Quality Charter for Growth (2008)
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## CONSULTATIONS

### 21. Cambridge County Council Education

No objections raised.

There will be capacity in the existing and planned education settings to accommodate the demand from the development without the need for additional capacity and for which the any projects are fully funded. In terms of library provision £6,547.50 has been requested towards the fit-out costs of the Darwin Green Library building.

### 22. Cambridge County Council Highways Authority

#### Amended application

No objections raised.

The amended plans showing a single point of access to the site from Lawrence Weaver Road is acceptable. The Highway seeks that this drawing be referenced in any planning permission that the planning authority is minded to grant.

23. Conditions have also been requested in respect of: existing vehicle access to be closed off; the submission of a traffic management plan. control of private water and an informative to ensure the right licences are obtained for working in the public highway and what should be included in the traffic management plan

Original application

Objections raised.

24. Internal one-way system is considered unnecessary and not supported. This should be consolidated to a single point of access. Design of the access should be a standalone plan so this can be subsequently approved. Swept path analysis shows the body of a vehicle oversailing with parts of building B. Written dimensions of the pedestrian footpaths should be included on the plans. Site plans do not currently show any works within the LWR to connect shared used paths to the site. Whilst the principle of using Howes Place for vehicles is acceptable the swept path analysis shows the body of vehicles being close to the trunks of the Pleached Limes along Howes Place.

**25. County Council Transport Assets Team**

Amended application

No objections raised. Subject to mitigation for a contribution towards the delivery of the cycle way along Castle Street and the car club provision and a condition securing a travel plan.

Original application

Objections raised. The Transport Statement does not include sufficient information to determine the highway impact of the development specifically regarding accident data and net trip generation.

**26. Highways England**

No objections raised.

**27. NHS Cambridge and Peterborough CCG**

No objections raised.

Identified that the development will give rise to need for additional primary healthcare provision through the need for a developer contribution of £174,800 towards the improvements in capacity at Huntingdon Road surgery or the Girton branch.

## **28. Cambridgeshire Constabulary Designing Out Crime Officer**

No objections raised.

Communal areas as designed should encourage residents, tenants and visitors to use them thus improving natural surveillance across the development. The use of cycleways and footpaths aligned together also encourages their use and surveillance. Supportive of the design of cycle stores but would recommend cementing into the ground the stands and hoops. A lighting plan should be provided.

## **29. Environmental Health**

No objections raised.

Requested the following standard conditions; full contaminated land conditions; materials management plan; DCEMP; and a Plant Machinery equipment and noise assessment. Bespoke conditions have also been requested for:

Resident Event Space:

A noise insulation and reduction scheme to the resident event space (which considers any sound-system, the nature and type of events to be held, adequate ventilation to allow windows/doors to be closed when there are louder events, patron noise management etc)

- Noise insulation post completion assessment (to ensure the resident event space is completed in accordance with the approved details)
- Hours of use shall not take place outside of 08:00-22:00 Monday to Saturday and outside of 09:00-20:00 on Sunday/bank holiday.
- All windows and doors to resident event space should remain closed during entertainment or playing of music (except ingress or egress)
- Third party amplification shall be channelled through in-house limited amplification/fixed sound system

### **30. Urban Design Officer**

#### Amended application

No objections raised. Amendments address the previous concerns.

Two options have been presented for access along the boundary with Howes Place (Option A and Option B). In terms of urban design, Option A is the preferred choice as this improves permeability for pedestrians and cyclists from the southeast.

#### Original application

Objections raised.

The following areas should be amended: access to the site from Lawerance Weaver Road resigned and public realm enhancing; error on the basement drawing; cycle and pedestrian link should be provided to Howes Place; re-design of roof on Mews (Building C-E) from View 4; and shadow studies should be included so the impact on amenity can be assessed and further refinement of brick detailing on the gables.

### **31. Conservation Officer**

#### Amended application

32. No objections raised. Following the previous comments on these proposals, revised plans and notes have been received. The height of the Apart-hotel has been reduced so that it is one metre lower where it is close to the NIAB main building and the rest by 550mm. This reduction combined with the changes to the roof form of the building where it faces the NIAB building means that it sits better adjacent to the BLIs. The mansard roof form mirrors that of the main building and the grouping of the dormers on the south elevation references the pairing on the NIAB building opposite. The glazed link has been redesigned to reflect the dormer design and to reduce the amount of glazing. This is a more appropriate response to the context and is supported.

33. Taking the above into account the proposal will not adversely affect the setting of the Buildings of Local Interest. The proposals will comply with CLP

Policy 62. With reference to the NPPF and the effect on the significance of the heritage asset, paragraph 203 would apply.

#### Original application

34. Objections raised. Whilst the BLI are each noted separately they should be considered as a group. The NIAB HQ is clearly the largest and most architecturally significant. The houses are a sub-group of real charm and well considered design (particular the landscape setting) and the separate semi-detached houses are somewhat less important. The removal of the poor-quality mid-century extensions could be considered an enhancement. The demolition of the pair of semi-detached dwellings could therefore be contemplated if the replacement building formed a worthwhile contribution to this side of Howes Place and the old NIAB building. However, at this stage the following design concerns were raised:

- The height of the Apart hotel extends beyond the roof of the old 1920s building. The application also has limited information on the impact of any plant/roof top lifts.
- East elevation fronting Howes Place and the BLI houses appears long and repetitive along with the glazed link blocks. More attempt needed to give facades closets to the BLI more architectural interest.
- Additional details required on the finish of the 1920s building.

35. Conditions are requested for the brick details (bond mortar, mix and design); sample panel containing all other external materials. ridge, eaves and hip details; large scale drawings of sills, lintels etc.; glazing details and plant/equipment on the roof.

#### **36. Access Officer**

##### Original Application.

No objection raised. However, comments that all bathrooms designed for disabled users should be wet rooms and bathrooms need to be redesigned so that ceiling hoists can run from bedroom to bathroom.

### 37. Sustainability Officer

No objections raised.

38. The overall approach to integrating sustainable design and construction into the design of the proposals is welcomed. Significant focus at the pre-application stage was given to discussions around how to mitigate the risk of overheating in the build to rent units which has led to changes to façade design and the massing and layout of the apartments.

- Energy strategy considerably exceeds the 19% reduction in carbon emissions requirement in policy 28 of the Local Plan. Calculations suggest a 74% reduction in emissions. This is delivered via significant fabric improvements to reduce space heating demand, an all-electric approach to heating and hot water and photovoltaic panels. Space heating demand proposed is very close to that required by the Passivhaus standard and in line with emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan net zero carbon buildings approach.
- Apart hotel takes an all-electric approach and achieves BREEAM 'excellent'.
- Significant consideration taken to designing out the risk of overheating, which was an element discussed throughout pre-application discussions. These discussions and analysis using both current and future climate scenarios led to a reduction in single aspect units, a reconfiguration of the blocks and changes in the façade design, massing and layout of the proposals. Window reveals and shading design is to be refined further as part of the detailed design process.
- Looking at an embodied carbon target of 625 kg of carbon dioxide per metre squared in line with the RIBA Climate Challenge 2030 target (current business as usual is around 1200 Kg). This is an area not currently covered in local plan policy.
- Water use of no more than 100 litres per person per day (an improvement on the local plan requirement of 110 litres)
- Space for food growing included in the landscape masterplan.
- In terms of overheating the analysis has been undertaken using both current and future climate scenarios. This analysis has shown some slight risk to some units under Criteria B (night time temperatures), and in response to this window reveals and shading for these units will be finessed at the detailed

design stage. This approach is welcomed. The work continues into the detailed design as their analysis did highlight some remaining risk of overheating, so the approach needs to be refined.

39. A condition to require submission of an updated overheating assessment, BREEAM Design Stage Certification, BREEAM Post certification, implementation of energy strategy and water efficiency have been requested.

**40. Landscape Officer**

Additional information

No objections raised. Landscape prefers Option A which allows for permeability for Howes Place edge for pedestrian and cyclists and is a positive response to Policy 80 of the CLP. Clarity regarding the extent of the basement on ground floor plan and landscape plan is still an important element to coordinate. Based on these comments' conditions should be included as set out below.

Amended application

41. Actions required prior to determination. Update Arboricultural Impact Assessment with clarity around trees. Coordinate AIA plans with landscape plans to ensure the right trees are retained, removed or replaced. Preference for Option A layout as it allows for permeability for Howes Place edge for pedestrians and cyclists. Considered to be a positive response to CLP Policy 80. Additional clarity required though a planning condition on the location of the basement car park and how the landscape strategy will take this into account. Conditions for full hard and soft landscaping, green roof details recommended.

**42. Original application**

Objections raised. Clarity over entrance points from Howes Place. Access to the site from Lawrence Weaver Road resigned and public realm needs enhancing.

**43. Tree Officer**

Additional information

No objections

Amended application

Objection raised due to inconsistency between the plans.

**44. Ecology Officer**

Amended application

No objections raised, following the submission of the Biodiversity Net Gain spreadsheet.

Original application

45. No objections raised. Content with the survey effort informing the Preliminary Ecological Assessment and the follow up bat survey. No further surveys are required prior to determination. The summary Biodiversity Net Gain report is welcome and based on the proposed landscape master plan indicates a significant 92% BNG for the area habitats and a 41% BNG for the retained and proposed hedgerows. A full BNG spreadsheet should be made available in order to check assumptions made for existing and proposed habitat conditions.

46. Conditions for a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, Green Roof and Nest boxes recommended.

**47. Environment Agency**

No objections raised.

**48. Anglian Water**

No objections raised.

A condition has been requested for a full foul water drainage strategy and a set of informatives to ensure the developer progresses the foul water scheme in adherence to other industry legislation. They have also requested the Flood Risk Assessment plans to be approved documents on any decision notice.

**49. Drainage Officer**

#### Amended application

No objections raised.

The submitted documents demonstrate that the site can drain adequately through source control components, swales, pipe work and attenuation basins/tanks. An alternative pumping strategy is considered acceptable if the applicant cannot discharge to the sewer in Lawrence Weaver Road. Condition requested for a detailed foul and surface water drainage scheme for the development and for construction. A verification report should be submitted to demonstrate they have been installed in accordance with the approved details.

#### Original application

50. Objections raised. Clarity required to demonstrate there is sufficient capacity is available on the private receiving drainage network system for the preferred option and for the alternative solution. Hydraulic model should show a plan with pipe/drainage features and a plan indicating a Finished Floor Level of at least 300mm above surface water floor levels.

#### **51. County Council Lead Local Flood and Water Authority**

##### Amended application

No objections raised.

The submitted documents demonstrate that surface water from the proposed development can be managed using green roofs and permeable paving on access and parking areas across the site. Surface water will be conveyed through a swale and pipe network. Conditions are required for a detailed surface water drainage system, construction drainage system and verification report. Informatives for Green Roof, Pollution Control have also been suggested.

##### Original application

52. Objections raised. Information on hydraulic modelling required. Control diameter should be no less than 75mm to reduce risk of blockages, finished floor levels should be raised above 300mm and additional information

required on the alternative pumping strategy along with details of the green roof locations.

**53. Housing Strategy Officer**

No objections raised.

54. The Housing Strategy Team supports this application. It will provide much needed quality affordable private rent homes for applicants who are unable to access suitable accommodation on the Council's waiting list or who cannot, or do not want to purchase a home at this current time. S106 to be agreed to secure the units in line with Annex 9 of the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy along with a monitoring process.

**55. County Council Archaeology**

No objections raised.

The site is in an area of high archaeological potential including with findings of Iron Age and Roman Settlements nearby. A condition is therefore recommended to secure a programme of archaeological investigation.

**56. Cadent Gas**

No objections raised.

Requested an informative is added to any decision notice to ensure the proposed works do not infringe on legal rights of access or restrict covenants that exist on existing gas infrastructure within the local area.

**57. 3C Waste services**

No recommendation. In summary the following comments were made:

- Review of capacities on the bins as the submitted details are not clear.
- Waste streams are collected fortnightly (not weekly)
- No clear on what bins will service which blocks and include residents walking distances.
- Contribution of £140 per units towards the cost of a collection vehicle (total £40,740)
- Cardboard skip during occupation stage

**58. REPRESENTATIONS**

## 59. **Cam Cycle**

### Amended application

No comments received.

### Original application

60. Objections raised. The plans include two-tier cycle parking stands. These are not permitted for residential use under CLP Policy 82. Kerb lines should not interrupt the cycle lane along Lawrence Weaver Road. Plans should be made clear.

## 61. **CAMRA (Cambridge and District Campaign for Real Ale)**

Supports the provision of a microbrewery with drinking area within the buildings. Comments that in recent years we have seen many large residential developments around Cambridge (Orchard Park, Trumpington Meadows, Eddington, Ironworks, Timberworks etc) but none have included a new pub. It is encouraging that the development is bucking that trend by including a new pub. We see this as a positive aspect of this application.

## 62. **Third Party Comments**

The following owners/occupiers/groups have made representations objecting to the application.

The following documents were uploaded to the planning portal for reference prior to Planning Committee on the 16 March 2022:

- Agent on behalf of the applicant (Carter Jonas) - 'Briefing document' (NIAB\_4 v2.2) email dated 14 March 2022
- Residents of Howes Place - 'Redevelopment of former NIAB Site' email dated 12 March 2022
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- Additional comments were submitted prior to Planning Committee on the 16 March 2022:
  - No.7 Howes Place - In summary they conclude that in seeking to secure agreement with the applicant on mutually acceptable alternative access arrangements (Option B), the residents of Howes Place have agreed to adopt

a neutral stance on our other objections / comments in relation to this planning application in return for the applicant 'putting its weight' behind Option B.

- - No.11 Howes Place 29/03 - Concerns about local hydrology and water damage to existing properties.
- Cllr Cheney Payne 27/02 - Supports Option B
- Cllr Sarah Baigent 07/03 - Supports Option B
- Cllr Cathrine Rae 14/03 - Supports Option B

Amended application

63. Objections relating to the amendments were received from the following properties:

Howes Place - No.2b, No.5, No.6, No.7, No.8, No.9, No.11, No.12

Beagle Road - No.17

Plymouth Close - No.8, No.13

The representations objecting to the application can be summarised as follows in relation to planning matters:

Landscape:

- Hoping a mutually acceptable alternative site/access plan can be agreed with the developer based on the principles set out in the Option B (Howes Place residents)
- Inconsistencies between the Landscape Masterplan and the Arboriculture Impact Assessment about tree removal.

Heritage:

- Option B should be the preferred option
- Option B would only partially address the significant harm to the heritage assets of Howes Place (Howes Place residents)
- Harm to setting of Buildings of Local Interest on and around the site
- Harm regarding the loss of two Buildings of Local Interest

Urban Design:

- Harm to amenity of residents in terms of overlooking, overbearing, loss of light and noise impacts to those on Plymouth Close, Falmouth Avenue, Beagle Road and Howes Place
- Buildings C D and E will be significantly visible on Plymouth Close from Beagle Rad due to the gaps between the properties.
- The shared roof terrace that is being proposed to break down the horizontal mass of building E would cause overlooking.
- Still not innkeeping with the scale of the two-storey houses on Plymouth Close
- Proposed privacy screens provide minimal privacy

Other:

- Disruption will be caused to residents during the construction phase.

#### Original application

64. Two address points have registered comments to support the application:

- Elizabeth Way - No.57
- Sorbus Walk - No.3

The representations supporting the application can be summarised as follows in relation to planning matters:

- Refreshing a microbrewery has been proposed
- Good design and community feel

65. 37 address points have registered comments to object to the application:

- Beagle Road - No.11, No.12, No.15, No.16, No.17, No.24
- Burlton Road - No.9, No.11, No 18
- Falmouth Avenue - No.3, No.24, No.26, No.34, No.38
- Holbrook Road - No.23
- Howes Place - No.2b, No.5, No.6, No.7, No.8, No.9, No.11, No.12
- Lawrence Weaver Road - No.113, No.121, No.137
- Overcote Road, Over - No.6
- Oxford Road - No.15
- Plymouth Close - No.1, No.7, No.8, No.15, No.17

- Randal Way - No.47,
- Shrewsbury Road - No.22, No.25
- Yeoman Drive - No.5

66. The representations objecting to the application can be summarised as follows in relation to planning matters:

Build for Rent:

- Inadequate provision of affordable private rent units on the site

Apart hotel:

- Lack of need for another hotel given the proximity of others in the area including Eddington.

Heritage:

- Harm to the setting of the Buildings of Local Interest on and around the site
- Harm to the context of the heritage assets and the amenity of existing residents through the overbearing massing and height of the proposed development.
- Location of a micro-brewery and bar alongside the heritage assets
- Harm regarding the loss of two Buildings of Local Interest No.14-15.
- Felling of 10 Pleached Lime trees which are protected under a TPO 10/1991
- Making Howes Place the backyard of the development for service vehicles, drop-offs and pick-ups. Howes Place is an unadopted private road with unlit and narrow access. This imposes unnecessary harm to the setting as the site is already served by purpose-built roads, footpaths and cycle lanes on Lawrence Weaver Rad and controlled junctions.

Landscape:

- Harm to the health and well-being of future residents through lack of onsite open space
- Felling of 10 Pleached Lime trees which are protected under a TPO 10/1991

Design and Layout:

- Harm to health and well-being of future residents through lack of onsite open space

- Scale and height up to five storeys not in keeping with the character of the area and Darwin Green
- Harm to the amenity of residents in terms of overlooking, overbearing, noise impact and security risks to those on Plymouth Close, Falmouth Avenue, Beagle Road and Howes Place

Access and Highways:

- Inadequate provision of on-site parking spaces for residents, visitors and employees, retail units, café, microbrewery and bar and building maintenance contractors

Drainage:

- Water damage and flooding to existing property

Other:

- Noise during construction phases
- Noise to residents along Howes Place from micro-brewery

## **SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT**

67. The application site is located to the north-west of Cambridge on the north-eastern side of Huntingdon Road. The site covers an area of 2.85ha. The site is bounded to the north-west by Lawrence Weaver Road, to the north-east by the rear of properties facing Falmouth Avenue and to the south-east by Howes Place. The land to the west and north-west are currently being developed for residential led development at Darwin Green.

68. The site currently contains the former NIAB Headquarters and comprises buildings, car parking and areas of hardstanding undeveloped scrub land. The main buildings are located to the south-western part of the site. The former uses at the site have relocated to a new NIAB Headquarters building on Lawrence Weaver Road and staff moved into that building in 2020. The former NIAB headquarters building benefits from Prior Approval for its conversion to 68 new dwelling units. Works are currently underway with occupation due later in 2022.

## **SITE CONSTRAINTS**

69. The south-western part of the site is defined as previously developed land and it is included on the Council's Brownfield Land Register. The north-eastern half part is an allocation for an Area of Major Change linked with Darwin Green in the CLP.
70. The site is not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area. However, the main former NIAB headquarters building fronting Huntingdon Road and Nos.14-15 Howes Place are included on the Council's List of Building of Local Interest. These buildings are part of a wider group including No.1-13 Howes Place.
71. There is a grouped Tree Preservation Order (TPO) on and around the site protecting the Pleached Lime trees. There are also individual TPOs covering Apple and Maple trees.

## **THE PROPOSALS**

72. Full planning permission is sought for the proposed development comprising the retention of the former NIAB Headquarters building, the demolition of all other buildings and structures and the erection of buildings with basements for 291 Build to Rent units (C3 Use) including affordable housing and a 202 bed Apart-hotel and associated facilities along with access, car and cycle parking, landscape and infrastructure works.
73. The proposed Build to Rent uses comprises the following:
- Apartments - (Use class C3)
  - Community rooms/event space 140sqm (ancillary to C3 Use)
  - Management offices (ancillary to C3 Use)
  - Staff facilities (ancillary to C3 Use)
  - Cycle shop 72 sqm (Use class E(a))
  - Shop/Café 122sqm (Use class E(a))
  - Co-working/desk space 150sqm (use class E(g))

The proposed Apart hotel uses comprises the following:

- Gym 214 sqm (Use class E(d))
- Swimming pool (Use class F2(d))
- Co-working/desk space hotel lobby informal
- Micro-Brewery 225 sqm (Use class E(b))

74. Howes Place falls within the ownership of the applicants and is a private road.

The road has been included within the red-line boundary. Some changes are proposed to Howes Place as follows:

- Change to surfacing for the first section of Howes Place (including 110m of new footpaths, cycle and vehicle access points)
- Existing signage to be retained and enhanced

75. The application is accompanied by the following key documents:

- Acoustic Report
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Air Quality Assessment
- Application Drawings, Visuals and Forms
- Archaeological Statement
- BREEAM Assessment Report
- Contamination Report
- Cambridge Build to Rent
- Design and Access Statement
- Ecology Report
- Heritage Statement
- Housing Report
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Landscape Plans, Management Plan and Report
- Waste Management Plan
- Planning Statement
- Surface and Foul Water Drainage Strategy
- Sustainability Statement (including daylight and sunlight assessments, BREEAM assessment)
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Townscape and Visual Impact Appraisal

- Transport Statement
- Utilities Statement

76. Multiple amendments have been made to the application since it was originally lodged. The main package of amendments was submitted and reconsulted upon in December/January 2021-22. Subsequent amendments were submitted in February 2022 due to some inconsistencies on the plans. These amendments did not materially change the scheme from the previous set of amendments and therefore a re-consultation was not necessary. The key changes include:

#### Landscaping:

- Submission of Option B Site Plan that removes all vehicle, pedestrian and cycle connections between the proposed development and Howes Place, with the exception of refuse collection from the Apart hotel and emergency services to respond to concerns raised at the Development Control Forum.
- Amendment to ensure the Arboricultural Impact Assessment aligns with the Landscape Master Plans and Tree Strategy plans. Minor changes to tree removal/relocations along Howes Place.
- Open amenity space addendum

#### Urban Design:

- Height of Apart hotel reduced (Verified View also updated) to reduce impact on Buildings of Local Interest
- Block F has been shifted further away from Howes Place (an additional 2.5m) to reduce impact on Howes Place
- Changes to the appearance of the Apart hotel (including glazed links, roof pitch, dormer windows and gable end) to improve setting of the Building of Local Interest
- Access into the basement car park along with surveillance over the multi-functional zone/parking area near the Lawrence Weaver Road. To improve access arrangements and landscaping.
- Removal of access point onto Lawrence Weaver Road

- Amendments to upper floor of Mews Building to remove bulk and visual impact from surrounding roads.

Other

- Amendment to schedule of accommodation (the affordable mix has not changed)
- Transport Assessment addendum
- Update to Drainage Strategy
- Biodiversity Net Gain calculations
- Waste Strategy
- Public Art Strategy

77. During the application process the developer unilaterally put forward Option B site/access plans which seeks to remove the cycle and pedestrian access points from Howes Place to overcome third party objections. The original application including access points onto Howes Place (Option A) has been retained as part of the proposal to allow Members to reach a view. A summary analysis of the merits of these two options is provided in the Officer conclusion.

## **PLANNING ASSESMENT**

78. The key issues to determination of the planning application are set out as following:

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Paragraph numbers</b>
Principle of development	76-94
Affordable Housing and fallback	95-106
Housing mix and space standards	107-109
Context and Design	110-146
Heritage Impact	147-156
Archaeology	157-159
Sustainability	160-167
Impact to Residential Amenity	168-179

Landscape and Trees	180-185
Ecology	186-189
Drainage	190-193
Car Parking	194-204
Cycle Parking	205-208
Impact on highways	209-213
Waste	214-217
Public Art	218
Pollution	219-226
Indoor Sports and Open Space	227-240
S106	241-247
Development Control forum	248-250
Conclusion/ Planning balance	251-258
Recommendation	259

## Principle of Development

### *Allocation*

79. Policy 20 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 (CLP) identifies the land between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road as an Area of Major Change and allocates land for a new neighbourhood to include 1,696 dwellings (allocation ref. R43). Most of the allocation, including the policy requirements of education, retail, health centre, community and open space facilities will be delivered by Phase 1 of Darwin Green development, which already has outline planning permission for 1,593 dwellings (planning ref. 07/0003/OUT) and subsequent reserved matters permissions (planning ref. 15/1670/REM, 16/0208/REM and C/5000/15/CC).

80. The northern half of the application site falls within the allocated area (see Allocation plan associated with CLP Policy 20) where the principle of residential development is acceptable in line with CLP Policy 20. It should be noted that whilst the rear part of the site is allocated it did not form part of the

subsequent Darwin Green outline planning permission and therefore is not restricted by the approved parameter plans for that development.

#### *Previously developed land*

81. The front part of the site is included within the Cambridge City Council's Brownfield Land Register (see associated with plan ref.18/1451/B1C3). The purpose of the Brownfield Land Register is for the local planning authority to identify previously developed land that is appropriate for residential development (as set out in the Town and Country Planning Brownfield Land Regulations 2017). The register notes that the site has already been given prior approval for a net of 71 dwellings. Paragraph 120(c) of the NPPF states that planning decisions should '*give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs*'. Given part of the site is also recognised as previously developed land, its re-development in principle is acceptable and should be given the appropriate weight in the decision-making process.

#### *Loss of Employment Use*

82. CLP Policy 41 addresses the loss of employment uses including those outside protected industrial sites, is relevant to the proposed development. The policy seeks to guard against the loss of any employment uses unless (a) the loss of a small proportion of floor space would facilitate the re-development of employment uses; or (b) the site is vacant and has been marketed for a period of twelve months. The supporting text of the CLP Policy 41 at paragraph 5.21 removes the necessity to market a site if the site has allocated for another use.

83. Part of the site has been allocated for redevelopment under CLP Policy 20 with the other part designated as Brownfield Land. The applicant has confirmed the former uses at the site have relocated to a new NIAB Headquarters building on the other side of the Lawrence Weaver Road and the staff were relocated in early 2020. The former employment uses, and

associated jobs have therefore not been completely lost but have been re-located. The existing buildings including the 1920 old NIAB building and its associated extensions also have benefit of permitted development rights by virtue of two prior approval permissions granted in 2020 which enables their conversion from office space to residential.

84. Based on the reasons set out above and are satisfied that the proposal would comply with CLP Policy 41 as the site has been allocated and new uses have been established.

#### *Build for Rent*

85. The proposed housing will be for Build to Rent (BtR), whereby the whole development is likely to be retained in a single ownership by a commercial investor and professionally managed and maintained. The BtR is increasing in popularity as a form of housing development; with developers being attracted to Cambridge who will offer this product. Given this is a relatively new tenure, there are no associated policies within the CLP because it pre-dates BtR becoming available. However, additional Annexes to the Great Cambridge Housing Strategy (2019-2023) (which are a *material consideration*) have recently been added to address BtR; this document is a material consideration in making planning decisions.

86. Annex 9: Build for Rent, was considered and subsequently adopted by Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils in July 2021. The outcomes of the Annex (including the affordable housing requirements) were underpinned by a commissioned report from Savills 'The Build to Rent market in Greater Cambridge and West Suffolk June 2020' and 'Arc4: Market demand appraisal reports and Build to Rent Market Strategic Overview and Summary site-specific appraisals 2021'. The Annex outlines the agreed approach the Councils will take to the development of new, purpose-built homes for rent.

87. Paragraph 5 of Annex 9 states that *'The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy supports the development of purpose built private rented housing to help provide additional housing choice and to help accelerate the delivery of new homes'*. Paragraph 15 of the Annex requires that a robust market report will be needed to clearly demonstrate how any proposed scheme would meet local housing need and demand.

88. This application is accompanied by a Build to Rent Market Research Report and Benefit and Opportunities of Build to Rent at the former NIAB Site by Icen Projects Limited (dated July 2021). Additional information was also submitted during the application process. The reports conclude that Cambridge has a relatively young population which is highly skilled and in senior occupations, the largest rented household groups in Cambridge are students and other multi-occupation households followed closely by single person and couples without children, the City's rental market is mature with median rents pointing towards a strong rental demand. Consultation with local agents highlighted that there would be a strong market for BtR accommodation in the City.

89. Planning and Housing Strategy Officers have reviewed the reports and consider the application site is well suited for a BtR development due to its accessibility and proximity to the City centre being around 1.6km, access to frequent bus services around the city and direct access onto a key cycle way, and other services and amenities such as retail provision on Eddington and future planned services on Darwin Green. The type of the proposed rented housing will increase housing choice tenures available to buyers and address housing need. The managed nature of the development along with the associated uses could also help deliver a greater sense of community and provide more certainty to tenants. The principle of development for this tenure type, is therefore acceptable and is in accordance with Annex 9 of the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy, subject to all other material planning considerations. The Affordable Housing Building for Rent product will be discussed in more detail in a subsequent section of this report.

## *Apart Hotel*

90. CLP Policy 77 addresses proposals for high quality visitor accommodation is relevant to the proposed development. The policy supports accommodation beyond the City centre. New accommodation should be located on the frontages of main roads or in areas of mixed-use or within walking distance of bus route corridors with good public transport accessibility.
91. The policy sets out in the supporting text at para 8.46 that there is a projected requirement for around 1,500 new bedrooms “over the next 20 years”. This was predicted on a study undertaken in 2021 ‘Cambridge Hotel Futures’. This figure is not a cap nor is it a definitive figure. The study explored several growth possibilities with the figure of 1,500 bedrooms derived from a medium growth scenario and for 2,000 bedrooms from a high growth scenario. The study acknowledges the potential need for a range of type of visitor accommodation.
92. Whilst officers are aware that planning permissions for Apart Hotels and other hotels have more recently been granted some of which are currently under construction around Cambridge (including the new hotel in Eddington), the policy does not set a ceiling for new visitor accommodation. In terms of plan-making, this policy would have been written and adopted in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 11(b) of the NPPF, which still remains current, which states that strategic policies should, *as a minimum*, provide objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, unless there are reasons otherwise. The wording of the policy, which seeks to encourage visitor accommodation, would accord with this principle. Furthermore, the applicants have confirmed they are in advanced discussions with an end user/occupier for the building demonstrating there continues to be market demand.
93. The principle of the inclusion within this development of the apart hotel taking into account as material considerations it would be in a highly sustainable location with good public transport links, it is therefore acceptable and in accordance with CLP Policy 77, subject to all other material planning

considerations. A planning condition would need to be included to ensure the rooms will only be occupied for short-term accommodation (COND 3).

#### *Associated Uses*

94. The application seeks to introduce the following facilities to serve the whole development:

- Gym 214 sqm (use class E(d))
- Swimming pool (use class F2(d))
- Event space 140sqm (use class F2(b))
- Desk space 150 sqm (use class E(g))
- Micro-Brewery 225 sqm (use class E(b))
- Cycle shop 72 sqm (use class E(a))
- Shop/Café 122sqm (use class E(a))

95. CLP Policy 20 seeks to deliver a Local Centre in Darwin Green to the north of the application site. Detailed planning permission has been granted for this Local Centre under reference number 14/1410/REM and 15/1670/REM. During the pre-application stage in-depth discussions were held with the applicant and the Council's planning policy officers to ensure the retail proposal for this application/site is compatible with the Uses already permitted on Darwin Green. The proposed location of the café, bike shop and brewery on Lawrence Weaver Road would contribute towards creating an active frontage and would complement the Darwin Green and Eddington Local Centres due to the relatively modest size of the units. In addition to this, during the application process representations were received from CAMRA and other third parties recognising the merits of providing a small micro-brewery on the site.

96. CLP Policy 73 addresses Community, sport and leisure facilities. Facilities provided as part of a mixed-use development will be permitted where they are of a type appropriate to the scale of the development and meet the needs of future residents, employees, and visitors. Given the modest size of the

facilities proposed, as set out above, it is considered they are of an appropriate scale and would help to meet the needs of the residents on the site.

97. The size and location of the associated uses comprised in the application are considered to be acceptable and would meet the policy requirements. Based on the above evaluation, officers are satisfied the principle of the development proposed by the application is acceptable and in accordance with the CLP and the NPPF. A condition to remove permitted development rights for the commercial units has been added to ensure a mix of uses are provided onsite in accordance with the description of the development and the weight which has been applied to them in the planning balance (COND 4).

### **Affordable housing delivery and fallback position**

98. CLP Policy 45 states that *‘Planning permission will only be granted for residential development on sites where the minimum percentage of affordable housing has been secured on site in line with the thresholds and percentages set out in Table 6.1’*.

99. For a development of the scale which the application proposes a 40% onsite provision would usually be sought as a minimum for an affordable housing requirement. However, the text of the policy qualifies this starting point by stating, *‘unless exceptional circumstances are demonstrated’*, thus, the clear wording of the policy foresees there may be variations from the relevant percentage and threshold shown in Table 6.1.

100. Paragraph 65 of the NPPF states that major housing developments should “expect at least “to deliver a minimum of 10% affordable housing, however an exception to this requirement should be made where the site or development provides solely for Build for Rent homes.

101. NPPF Annex 2: Glossary of the NPPF affordable housing for rent is referenced stating that the rental level for such units should be set at least

20% below local market rents and will be known as Affordable Private Rent units. The guidance within the NPPG confirms that Affordable Private Rent is a form of affordable housing specifically designed for Build for Rent.

102. In line with the NPPF, paragraph 17 of Annex 9 of the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy requires a minimum of 20% of homes on BtR developments of ten or more homes to be provided as Affordable Private Rent and that the Council will seek to achieve a higher percentage than this whenever possible

103. The Applicant has submitted a standalone Housing Report (Carter Jonas July 2021) and a further addendum Housing Report (Cater Jonas March 2022) in support of the application’s affordable housing proposals. As mentioned previously the proposed scheme is also supported by Build to Rent Market Research Report (Iceni July 2021) and Benefit and Opportunities of Build to Rent Report at the former NIAB Site (Iceni July 2021). As amended, it is proposed that 20% of the BtR units contained in this application will be affordable units – regardless of the fall-back position accepted by officers in the earlier report.

104. Considered as a net figure – having regard to the fall-back argument accepted by officers as a result of earlier “prior approvals” on the site, the percentage of affordable homes increases to 31% (58 units) from the previous 20% (37 units). The table below illustrates this.

	<b>Number of units</b>
<b>Total number of proposed BtR apartments</b>	<b>291</b>
<b>20% affordable housing units</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>OR Fallback position</b>	
Prior Approval (20/03335/PRI03O)	95
Prior Approval (20/0334/PR103O)	7
Existing dwellings	2
<b>Total fallback</b>	<b>104</b>

<b>Total apartments minus total fallback</b>	<b>187 (291-104)</b>
<b>% Affordable units 31% (20%)</b>	<b>58 (37)</b>

105. During the application process concerns were raised by third parties as to whether could the local planning authority should give material weight to the two Prior Approval consents.

106. The applicant has confirmed that if planning permission is granted for this application, they would not seek to progress with implementation of the two Prior Approvals (102 units). However, if planning permission is not granted, they have advised that they may/could continue to implement the Prior Approvals without any affordable housing provision. Officers considered that in this case, given that there is a real prospect that the fallback development would arise and following advice from Counsel, the 20% affordable housing policy requirements would be satisfied by taking the “net additional” homes on the site as the basis for considering the number of required homes. Following the committee deferral of this matter, the applicant has advised that subject to a decision being made promptly, the development is capable, at this time, of providing an additional 21 units as affordable rent and notwithstanding officers' conclusions earlier, the applicant is prepared to deliver these additional units as a benefit at this time.

107. Officers considered that ‘Annex 9: Build to Rent’ policy and the fallback position previously resulted in a proposal that satisfied the requirements for affordable housing. Following the Committee deferral, the applicant has increased the number of affordable units to 58 (from 37 previously). Based upon officer’s earlier conclusions, and the subsequent increase in the number of affordable units within the application, the proposed scheme is considered to accord with CLP Policy 45.

*Securing Affordable Private Rent*

108. Annex 9 sets out a list of criteria an Affordable Private Rent scheme should secure. The table below summaries the criteria and if/how an application has met each of the requirements. A s106 Agreement (on schemes for which planning permission is granted) will be required to ensure that these details are bound into a legal agreement in perpetuity.

	<b>Annex 9 requirements</b>	<b>Comply</b>	<b>Proposal</b>
<b>Affordable Rent Discount</b>	Must be provided at a minimum discount of 20% (regarding the Cambridge Housing Strategy and setting of Affordable Rents policy)	YES	<p>The units will be discounted by 20% of the open market value.</p> <p>Three independent valuations will be carried out to set rent levels and agreed with the LPA.</p> <p>The market value would be subject to an indexation clause.</p> <p>The rent charged on the Affordable Build to Rent units will be inclusive of service charges and water utility charges.</p>
<b>Tenancies</b>	Tenancies of at least 3 years should be offered with a Tenant only break clause allowing a month's notice after 6 months.	YES	Agreed that all tenancies offered will be of at least 3 years and that the break clause will be for the

			tenant only to give one months' notice after at least 6 months of tenancy has elapsed.
<b>Allocations</b>	Allocation criteria should be agreed with the relevant housing team.	YES	Incomes below 40k (single) or 60k (couple) per annum.  Local connection within 2 miles, local work connection within 3 miles.
<b>Covenant Period</b>	Period of 15 years will apply to market homes (with longer up to 25 years wherever possible).  Valuation required to enable clawback to be calculated should a covenant be broken.	YES	Period for 15 years with clawback mechanism and compensation if the covenant is broken.
<b>Management</b>	A single management company or operator will be expected to manage the whole BtR scheme.	YES	All BtR units will be managed by Vertex Living Ltd. There will be daily management on site.
<b>Monitoring</b>	Monitoring report to be agreed	YES	Monitoring criteria has been agreed by all parties. Review to be carried out on a bi-annual basis for the first three years to ensure affordable units are

			being allocated correctly. Following that yearly. (see Appendix 6 as an example).
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## Housing mix and Space Standards

109. CLP Policy 45 also addresses dwelling mix. It states that developments should include a balanced mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures to meet projected future household needs within Cambridge. Annex 9 requires an appropriately balanced mix of property sizes considering the profile of demand. CLP Policy 50 also requires new residential units are permitted where they meet or exceed the Nationally Described Space Standards.

110. The applicant has provided a Build to Rent Market Research Report with the application demonstrating the highest need is for smaller one and twobedroom units. The conclusions of the report have therefore guided the proposed housing mix as set out below.

	Bed spaces	Space standards (Y)	Private Rent	Affordable Private Rent	Total BtR
1 bed studio	1	Y	115	29	144
1 bed flat	2	Y	57	20	77
2 bed flat	3	Y	0	9	9
2 bed flat	4	Y	61	0	61
Total			233	58	291

111. The proposed housing complies with CLP Polices 45 and 50 and Annex 9 demonstrating the mix meets the demand of the local area and will be of a size meets (and with some dwellings exceed) the Nationally Described Space Standard.

## Context of site, design and external spaces

112. The proposed development has gone through lengthy pre-application discussions and multidisciplinary workshops with technical officers from urban design, landscape, heritage, drainage, affordable housing and ecology. Since the scheme was first presented, there have been several significant changes to help the proposals fit in better with the character and appearance of the area, including its relationship with Darwin Green.
113. In addition to the above, proposals were considered twice by the Cambridgeshire Quality Panel. The minutes of the Panel's meetings can be found in Appendix 3-4. The Panel reviewed the scheme last in December 2020 where it commented that it was *'generally, the Panel was impressed with the ambition of the scheme and the quality of the applicant team, whilst noting the density of the scheme means the quality must be retained when built and requires heavy management. There has been real progress since the last review in October'*.
114. The Panel's minutes cover a range of design topics which are covered in more depth below but importantly, it did not consider the scale and massing of the proposals, the loss of two heritage assets or the access points into the development site to be of concern. Subsequent changes were made to the scheme following a series of recommendations from the Panel this includes but not limited to; amendment to the location of the courtyard areas serving the BtR units to reduce overshadowing, enhancement of the vehicle access courtyard design and 3D modelling of the BtR units including north facing flats to assess levels of sunlight.
115. The application is accompanied by a comprehensive Design and Access Statement (DAS) (JTP dated July 2021) and an update Post Submission Response document (JTP dated October 2021 and February 2022) providing an explanation of the design approach for the scheme and reason for subsequent amendments. The application is also supported by a

Heritage Statement (Iceni dated 2021) and Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Neaves Urbanism dated July 2021) which considers the impact of the scale and massing on the surroundings areas.

#### Access

116. CLP Policy 55 requires applications to be well connected and integrated with the immediate locality. CLP Policy 80 gives walking and cycling high priority which should be fully considered at a scheme's design stage. LTN/20 for cycle infrastructure design also seeks to ensure high quality and safe infrastructure. These CLP policies align with paragraphs 110-113 of the NPPF which requires applications to give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements both within schemes and with neighbouring areas.
117. The main vehicle access will be from Lawrence Weaver Road into a basement car park. There will also be a taxi drop-off point off the same access point. The main cycle and pedestrian access points are proposed from Lawrence Weaver Road. Service and refuse vehicles to the Apart hotel will be from Howes Place access.
118. Originally the application also proposed new cycle and pedestrian access points onto Howes Place. However, at the Development Control Forum stage petitioners raised concerns over the uplift in movements along Howes Place (as set out in Option A) requesting the access points should be removed in the interests of highway safety, amenity and heritage.
119. The developer subsequently amended the application and unilaterally put forward Option B site/access plans (key drawing 2206-PLA-XX-GF-DR-L-0008 rev P02), to remove these cycle and pedestrian access points to overcome these objections. Only refuse vehicles serving the Apart hotel (up to two movements a week) and emergency vehicles will use the accesses from Howes Place. All other servicing and staff vehicle access would be via Lawrence Weaver Road. A servicing plan condition is recommended to reflect this position (COND 52). It will be up to the Planning Committee members to

decide, if the application is approved, which Option (A or B) should be adopted. However, the following paragraphs provide members with Officers recommendation.

120. The functional requirements of servicing and refuse collection have been integrated into the overall site layout via the spine route with a separate service route for the Apart Hotel from Howes Place. Howes Place already accommodates servicing associated with the existing residential units including the Councils refuse vehicle. The Transport Statement concludes that the total number of goods vehicles over 3.5T gross weight predicted to be generated by the proposed development will be around 12 per day (4 of which would be from Howes Place).
121. Local representations have raised concerns that the proposed Option A layout would create a short cut/desired line for pedestrians and cyclists away from the Lawrence Weaver Road down Howes Place, postulating the street to be inappropriate for such additional traffic as it is a narrow, unlit private road with uncontrolled access onto Huntingdon Road.
122. In terms of wider movements patterns, the footpaths and cycle lanes on Lawrence Weaver Road would form the major thoroughfare to the Darwin Green development. Additionally, a new toucan crossing will be secured on Huntingdon Road (to the south of the junction) linking to the 'Pavilion Route' which will offer a very direct route for Darwin Green residents heading towards the city and a safe point to cross the road. This has been secured through the Darwin Green application (07/0003/OUT). Some may still use Howes Place however this is likely to be for localised trips by those that know this alternative is there. The routes through the development will also be of benefit to the existing and future residents on Howes Place wishing to access some of the local facilities including the use the shop, open space or the need to use the Local Centre in Darwin Green.

123. For these reasons, technical officers, including the County Council Highways and Conservation Officer did not raise a concern regarding the use of Howes Place for pedestrian/cycle movement, nor when considered alongside the service vehicle use. The access points have not been found to cause harm to the Buildings of Local Interest or residential amenity as discussed in subsequent sections. Officers therefore consider, the Option A layout would provide public benefits in creating a permeable route through the site encouraging walking and cycling activity. Option A is therefore considered to be a better design solution, over that of Option B, that would accord with CLP Policies 55 and 80 and LTN/20

124. In both options, the applicant has committed to upgrading the surface of the road up to the Apart Hotel serving access. Low level lighting can also be considered and installed where appropriate. The detail of these measures can be secured by the proposed landscape condition (COND 43).

125. In terms of access arrangements, the proposal for Option A is considered to accord with CLP Policies 55, 56 and 80 and the aims of the NPPF giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists in the design of the scheme. Option B, whilst still providing good level of access provision when taken as a whole, is more limited when specifically considering connections to Howes Place. The alternative benefits of Option B described by residents of Howes Place and members in recent representations can reasonably form part of the planning balance made by members in considering the officer recommendation.

#### *Layout*

126. The layout of the development has been influenced by the six different interfaces around the edges of the site including the old NIAB buildings, Howes Place, Lawrence Weaver Road and Darwin Green. Howes Green is proposed as a new area of public realm central to the development. A concierge and café, bike shop, co-working space, access to a gym and health and fitness suite and a microbrewery are located adjacent to this space to

encourage activity to spill out into the public realm. This space will provide an attractive route and an active public space between the existing green open space in Howes Place, Lawrence Weaver Road and Yeoman Drive.

127. The proposal for the public realm to the north of the site is more residential in character with two public pedestrian and cycle routes that run across the site connecting a proposed north-east to south-west spine and Lawrence Weaver Road.

128. The first is via the proposed 'Water Meadows' public space, which provides a green link to Darwin Green to the northwest and the second is a more intimate route along the northern boundary of the site. Gardens are contained by the built form of the two 'C' shaped blocks with access to Lawrence Weaver Road via through lobbies. Entrances to homes are proposed via lobbies and private front doors from Lawrence Weaver Road, the new spine street, and public spaces. This approach is considered to achieve activity and along key frontages and provide passive surveillance of the public realm.

129. During the application process, the area to the rear of the vehicle access ramp needed further refinement to have a stronger built frontage to the Mews Street and loading area and to also created a change in surface at the entrance to the Mews Street to create a sense of enclosure to better define the spaces. Similar suggestions were also made by the Quality Panel. The amendments are considered to positively respond to the original concerns.

130. The Designing Out Crime officer of the Cambridgeshire Constabulary has reviewed the scheme and has raised no objection to this layout from a safety and security perspective.

*Scale and Massing*

131. The site does not sit within the approved outline area for Darwin Green which means there is no requirement for the scheme to accord with Darwin Green's approved parameter plans. There is a requirement, however, for the scheme to demonstrate that it fits in with the context of the surroundings as set out in CLP Policies 51 and 55.
132. The general building heights in the north-west quadrant of the City are generally between two and five storeys high. The Urban Design Officer indicated at the first pre-application meeting that anything taller than that would be '*harmful to the urban hierarchy of the area*'. The Cambridge Quality Panel were presented with drawings, similar to that proposed, showing the heights up to five storeys. The Panel did not identify scale and massing as an area of concern in any of its comments, nor did it include it as an area needing review in its recommendations.
133. The scale of the proposal, which rises to five storeys on part of the site triggers the threshold for the application of CLP Policy 60 'Tall Buildings and the Skyline in Cambridge' and Appendix F. A Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been conducted to assess the visual impact of the proposals from key approaches to the site and primary receptors. These five views were selected following detailed discussions between the applicant and conservation, landscape and urban design officers. The scale and massing of the scheme has also been assessed by the Cambridge Quality Panel, the Council's Urban Design Officers and Heritage Officers, none of whom raised any objections on scale and massing grounds.
134. The two five storey apartments are located away from the more sensitive areas of Howes Place, Beagle Way/Plymouth Close and the old NIAB HQ to the northern corner of the site. They would be mainly visible from the Lawrence Weaver Road. To have a better relationship with the street they are stepped with three storeys fronting onto Lawrence Weaver Road, stepping up to four storeys and then to the fifth storey, in the central/rear aspect of each building. They are set back from the road edge by approximately 4-5m with planting to the frontage softening the impact of the scheme.

135. It is also worth noting that Lawrence Weaver Road has a noticeable decline from Huntingdon Road down to where the built development for Darwin Green currently stops. The change in levels will therefore help to reduce the overall prominence of these units from wider viewpoints. Despite third party concerns about how the scheme fits in with the character of the area officers consider the proposed height variations to the BfR apartments would respond to its context and has used appropriate characteristics to help inform the massing and scale of the development in accordance with CLP Policy 55.

136. The Apart Hotel is located to the front of the site adjacent to the old NIAB building and Howes Place. During the application process it was apparent that the scale of the hotel was not acceptable from a heritage perspective given that it was taller than the old NIAB HQ. As amended the scheme has reduced the height of the closest section of the Apart hotel by one meter to aligns it with the height of the old NIAB HQ building. Officers note the northern section of the Apart hotel will remain higher than the old NIAB HQ building, however officers do not consider this to have any visual impact from passer-by. All roof plant enclosures have been located on this northern section to avoid been seen. The verified views from Howes Place and Huntingdon Road now demonstrate the buildings would have an acceptable impact on the heritage assets given the noticeable detachment of the buildings and views from the Howes Place and Lawrence Weaver Road.

137. The units along the eastern edge (known as the Mews) are three storeys in height with the third storey being in the roof. There is a scale/massing difference from 2-3 storey traditional units along Plymouth Way/Beagle Road on Darwin Green. The application was amended to break up the bulk of the Mews Building E by removing some of the roof and proposing alternative materials. The amendments are considered to improve the views from Beagle Road and as amended the scheme is considered to fit in with the context of the surroundings including its relationship to the existing Darwin Green houses.

138. For the reasons set out above the scale and massing of the proposed development would be sympathetic to the local character, the development at Darwin Green and heritage assets in accordance with CLP Policies 55 and 62.

#### *Appearance*

139. The Design and Access Statement provides detailed information on the proposed development's appearance and materials are also labelled on the General Arrangement drawings. In terms of form, the roof space in and around the site at present is varied with flat roof extensions to the old NIAB building, flat roof apartment buildings and more traditional gable roofed units on Darwin Green and Howes Place. As proposed a mix of gable roofs and flat roofs have been introduced throughout the scheme to create a more varied roofscape, this would continue the feel of Darwin Green. The gable roofs are in areas with a sensitive context such as next to the old NIAB building and on the more rural domestic edge adjacent to Howes Place.

140. Façade materials include three brick colours of buff, multi-stock and grey. Glazed brick is used to highlight areas of mixed use and reconstituted stone and white soldier course brick have also been used as special features. Brick banding has also been introduced along Howes Place site to reflect the detail within the old NIAB HQ building. The richness of the glazed brickwork and other materials was welcomed by the Quality Panel. Details of the materials will be conditioned to ensure it followed through to delivery (COND 32).

141. The appearance of the units responds positively to the context of the site and has drawn inspiration from the surroundings to create a high-quality design and appearance in accordance with CLP Policy 55.

#### *Inclusive Access*

142. The Disability Consultative Panel reviewed the scheme at the pre-application stage and made recommendations to the scheme. All apartments will have access to a lift in accordance with M4(2). The M4(3) units will be a ground floor level with accessible car parking spaces. The public and private amenity spaces are clearly defined and have been designed to be inclusive. To respond directly to their specific recommendations, amendments have been made to include the provision of wet-rooms and hoists within the bedrooms. Overall, the scheme provides High quality accessible and inclusive access in accordance with CLP Policy 56.

*Residential Amenity for future occupants*

143. The application is accompanied a Sustainability Statement (Expedition Issue 02 dated Jul 2021) which amongst other matters considers sunlight into the public realm and daylight into the properties. The Council's Urban Design Officer has reviewed the detail and has not raised objections on residential amenity grounds.

144. During the development of the masterplan consideration has been given to maximising the number of dual aspects BtR homes to mitigate overheating and minimising the number of north face homes. Due to the long narrow nature of the site buildings have been orientated to maximise the amount of natural light coming in ensuring that key roof terraces and areas of the public realm benefit from long hours of sunshine.

145. The level of light to Internal spaces, has been informed by a 3D heat model and designed to target daylight levels in line with National Annex NA of BS EN 17037: Daylight in Buildings 2018. As the scheme has progressed through pre-application stages, single aspect north-faced homes have been reduced to 11% and dual aspect homes 65%. Whilst there are no set requirements in the CLP on what percentage should be achieved on development sites, officers consider, given the site constraints, the developer has achieved an overall good standard whereby most homes/rooms will achieve good levels of daylight.

146. The old NIAB HQ building is being converted to residential units under the Prior Approval application and will accommodate 68 units. The existing 1960s extensions is also subject to a Prior Approval consent for 102 units. If this latter consent is implemented the units currently being built in the east facing elevation of the old NIAB HQ building would directly face out into this enclosed courtyard. Light levels into the units would therefore already be restricted due to the overall massing of the existing extensions. As proposed, the two side-wings would be removed opening up the courtyard area allowing more light into this space providing an enhanced condition for those living in the old 1920s NIAB HQ building and the windows that face out onto this space. This opening up will be an improvement. A technical study for these units is therefore not considered necessary.

147. All the amenity spaces except the Apart hotel courtyards achieve levels of sunlight which will maximise the quality and use of the outdoor spaces in accordance with the BRE guide 'Site Layout Planning for Sunlight and Daylight: Guide to Good Practice' which requires external amenity space should receive at least two hours of direct sunlight on March 21<sup>st</sup> over at least half of the space. The Apart hotel courtyard falls slightly short of the BRE target, however, two weeks after 21 March it meets the relevant standard and therefore would have good sunlight access for most of the time.

*Context of site, design, and external spaces - conclusion*

148. In conclusion, the proposed site layout and design responds positively to the site and its surrounding context. The scheme has developed through a collaborative process with the technical officers' teams and has been reviewed by the Quality Panel twice. The proposal would overall provide high quality public realm and buildings. The proposal is considered to accords with CLP Policies 55 and 56 and achieve a well-designed place in accordance with the aims of chapter 12 of the NPPF. subject to securing the planning conditions as described above. (CONDS 32)

## Heritage impacts

149. CLP Policy 55 states that development should respond positively to features of historical and local importance using appropriate local characteristics to help inform the massing and scale of new development, along with responding to their setting in terms of scale and height. CLP Policy 61 relates to the conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's Historic Environment for which proposals should preserve or enhance the significance of the heritage assets of the City, their setting and the wider townscape.
150. CLP Policy 62 is specifically related to Local Heritage Assets (LHA) and states that *'the Council will actively seek the retention of the LHAs including buildings, structures, features and gardens of local interest as detailed in the Council's local list and as assessed against the criteria set out in appendix G of the CLP'*. CLP Policy 62 require that *'where an application for any works would lead to harm or substantial harm to a non-designated heritage asset a balanced judgement will be made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'*. Paras 203 of the NPPF should also be factored into the balanced judgement by the decision maker.
151. The former NIAB Headquarters (HQ) building, and Nos.1 to 15 Howes Place are 'locally listed' non-designated heritage assets (as set out in Appendix G of the CLP). The group's significance arises from the established use of the site by NIAB (a plant science research organisation), the design and subsequent construction by the architect P.R. Morley Holder and their landscaped setting of pleached lime trees which are protected by a tree preservation order.
152. The NIAB HQ was built in the 1920s and located to the front of the site facing Huntingdon Road. It is laid out in an 'E' shape with intervening landscaped areas. The building is constructed of white brick under a mansard plain tiled roof of two and a half storey with a three-storey entrance. The later extensions (during the 1960s) to the NIAB HQ are of much poorer design and

construction. The Conservation Officer advises they are 'children of their time' having little heritage value.

153. As proposed, the removal of the poor quality mid-century extensions from the rear of the 1920s NIAB HQ could represent an enhancement to the group, creating new views of what has been a hidden elevation of the building along with a new landscaped area. This enhancement weighs in favour of the proposal.

154. Nos.1 to 15 Howes Place are two storey semi-detached residential properties built at the same time as the main NIAB HQ building. Local representations indicate they were constructed for officers' families after World War 1. Their finish matches the main building. Unlike the other cottages which align Howes Place, Nos.14 and 15 are located to rear of the HQ building. Whilst they are clearly part of the group being of a related design and similar construction they are isolated in their location and do not contribute to the group with neither having a visual relationship to the NIAB HQ or to the row of houses facing onto Howes Place. The demolition of Nos.14 and 15 Howes Place would result in some moderate harm through the loss of the two units from the group.

155. Turning to the redevelopment proposals, the Apart hotel will sit in a similar location to the demolished extensions. The Apart hotel has been sensitively located to provide breathing space to the main 1920s NIAB HQ building and opening public views of the northern elevation. The closest BtR units within Block F have also been sited off the boundary to respect views down Howes Place.

156. During the pre-application and formal application processes the scheme was amended to respond to local heritage concerns. The Apart hotel and Block F now sit between 25.4m and 43.2m from the nearest cottage on Howes Place. The proposed buildings that align Howes Place buildings have been staggered to break up the bulk and green space has been introduced. The pleached lime trees will continue to provide soft natural screening between the old and the new buildings. The pre-application process delivered a reduction in the height

of the Apart hotel to better align it with the height of the 1920s NIAB HQ at its closest point with other amendments refining the details on the elevations (dormer windows, removal of glazing links and brick work detail).

157. Given the thoughtful separation between the Apart Hotel, Block F and the cottages along Howes Place together with opening up the southern elevation of the 1920s NIAB HQ building, the siting, scale and massing of the Apart Hotel and the other apartment buildings are considered to respond positively to these features of historical importance, retaining their grouped significance, enhancing the overall setting in accordance with CLP Policy 61.

158. Whilst there would be the loss of two non-designated heritage assets (No.14-15 Howes Place), on balance their loss would not be significant given their visual detachment from the group and the subsequent re-development of the site which would see the removal of the 1960s extensions and an enhancement to the setting of the main 1920s building. The proposal would therefore accord with CLP Policy 62. The Conservation Officer supports the proposals on this basis subject to conditions for material details to ensure the quality of the building is followed through to construction (COND 32-34).

## **Archaeology**

159. CLP Policy 61 seeks to ensure the conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment. Furthermore, paragraphs 194 and 203-205 of the NPPF require that archaeological assets are properly assessed, considered and recorded. Para 194 expects local planning authorities to require developers provide "*an appropriate desk-based assessment...*"

160. The submitted Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment concludes that there is a low potential for archaeological remains to be present within the site. However, on the other hand the county Council's Senior Archaeologist's consultation response suggests that there is high archaeological potential associated with Roman burials leading west from the Roman town of Cambridge as well as medieval activity in the deserted settlement of Howes.

161. Taking into account the Senior Archaeologist's comments, it is considered that a suitable programme of archaeological investigation (including historic building recording) should be secured by planning condition (COND 31). Subject to the use of such a condition it is concluded that the proposal complies with CLP Policy 61.

## **Sustainability**

162. CLP Policy 28 requires development to take available opportunities to integrate the principles of sustainable design and construction into design proposals and requires a sustainability statement as part of the Design and Access statement outlining the approach to meeting national carbon targets and that the development proposal does not exacerbate Cambridge's water stress. This local plan policy is supported by the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020.

163. The application is supported by a Design and Access Statement (July 2021) and a Sustainability Statement (July 2021). The overall approach to integrating sustainable design and construction into the design of the proposals has been welcomed by the Principal Sustainability Officer. Significant focus at the pre-application stage was given to discussions around how to mitigate the risk of overheating in the BtR units which has led to changes in façade design and the massing and layout of the apartments. As further design tweaks are to be undertaken as part of detailed design condition wording is recommended below which will require the re-submission of overheating analysis following the detailed design stage to ensure that all units pass the overheating criteria (COND 39).

164. With regards to wider approaches, the Sustainability Statement sets out a holistic approach to sustainable construction considering issues including energy and carbon, transport, biodiversity, water, health and wellbeing and circular economy principles. These measures include:

- Space for food growing included as part of the landscape masterplan.
- Implementation of circular economy principles and adapting lean design methods.
- The materials strategy for the scheme is to be influenced by lifecycle analysis to reduce the embodied carbon of the proposals. The scheme is targeting an improvement on the RIBA 2030 embodied carbon target of 625 KgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> (current business as usual in the residential sector is around 1200 KgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup>).
- Use of biodiverse roofs combined with photovoltaic (Pv) panels, with around 40% of roof space set aside for pv panels. The indicative location of the Pv panels is shown on relevant roof drawings although officers recommend that a condition be used requiring the submission of more detailed drawings following detailed design showing the layout of the biodiverse roofs and Pv panels.
- Targeting of water use of no more than 100 litres per person per day for both the residential units and for the Apart hotel, in excess of 110 litres per person as required by the policy (COND 40 Water Efficiency)
- Achievement of BREEAM 'excellent' for the Apart hotel, with a current score of 71.6% and a potential score of 90.6%.

165. With regards to the energy strategy for the proposals the approach is to take an all-electric approach to heating and hot water provision for both the residential units and the Apart hotel.

166. For the residential aspect of the scheme, a key component of the approach is to set a space heating demand for the scheme of 20 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year. Heating is to be provided by direct electric heating with hot water provided by individual hot water heat pumps with a cylinder. Given the setting of a space heating requirement for the scheme and associated fabric improvements the use of direct electric is considered appropriate on this occasion. Carbon calculations using the new SAP 10.1 carbon intensity figures suggest that this approach alongside the provision of Pv panels will reduce emissions by 74%, which is well in excess of policy requirements of 44% (COND 38).

167. For the Apart hotel, the energy strategy follows a similar approach in that it is an all-electric approach to heating. Air source heat pumps are to be used which are located at roof level in the plant areas to provide heating and any cooling required. Pv panels are also proposed for the Apart hotel. These measures help the scheme achieve 8 Ene01 credits under the BREEAM assessment which exceeds the minimum requirement for achievement of BREEAM 'excellent'. Conditions to secure the implementation of the energy and sustainability strategy for the proposals is recommended. (COND 36 BREEAM Design Stage Certification and COND 37 BREEAM Post Certification)
168. A further measure to enhance the energy performance of the scheme currently under consideration is the application of battery storage to allow for the future potential of a local microgrid with a two-way connection. Whilst this option is still under consideration it is a measure which the Principal Sustainability Officer encourages because it will help to maximise the use of energy generated by the proposed Pv panels on-site further enhancing the environmental performance of the scheme (COND 38).
169. The proposal is therefore considered to comply and in places exceed the requirements of CLP Policy 28 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020. The proposal is therefore acceptable in sustainable construction terms.

### **Impact on Residential Amenity**

#### *Plymouth Close and Falmouth Avenue*

170. During the application consultation third party concerns were raised regarding the location and scale of the proposed 'Mews apartments' (Buildings C-E) in relation to the existing properties along Plymouth Close and Falmouth Close.

171. The proposed buildings will be three storeys in height having a back-to-back distance of 18m-20m and located 12m to the shared boundary. Bedrooms are located along the eastern facade of the buildings facing Plymouth Close and Falmouth Close. The size of the glazing panels has been reduced to mitigate perceived overlooking and will be conditioned (COND 35). All balconies will be on the western elevation facing into the site. There will be some external walkways on the eastern elevation, however, the developer has proposed privacy screens to reduce overlooking, details of which will be conditioned (COND 35).
172. Darwin Green is a higher density edge of City scheme and therefore it is generally accepted there will be some overlooking with varying levels of light to garden areas when compared to lower density housing sites in more rural locations. The proposed back-to back separation distances proposed here are commonly seen in residential areas on Darwin Green including properties between Shrewsbury Road, Lawrence Weaver Road and Randal Way. In terms of overlooking and loss of light to windows the proposed separation distances are not considered to cause any significant impacts to residential amenity.
173. In terms of loss of light to amenity space, the proposal has been tested using 3D modelling to determine the sunlight access on the ground within the site and to the adjacent areas. The BREs guide 'Site Layout Planning for Sunlight and Daylight': A Good Practice states that external amenity spaces should receive at least two hours of direct sunlight on March 21<sup>st</sup> over at least half of the space. Given the gardens to properties along Plymouth Close and Falmouth Avenue properties are north-west facing (with the sun's path going from east-west during the day), the model demonstrates that the garden areas will achieve this criterion when taken with the location of the apartments and cycle stores. In terms of loss of light, the proposed separation distances are not considered to cause any significant impacts to residential amenity spaces.
174. Residents along this Plymouth Close and Falmouth Avenue also raised concern regarding security and noise from the proposed three bike stores and

access path to be located along the boundary. The bike stores will provide secure cycle parking for the users of the Mews buildings only. The stores will be single storey/flat roof buildings. There will be a lock at the front of each store to ensure residents are only able to access their bikes. Due to the nature of BfR scheme there will be onsite management 24 hours a day and therefore this area and the wider site will be monitored to reduce the risk of crime. The Designing Out Crime officer reviewed the proposals and has not raised any concerns. Noise impacts from future occupants locking up bikes would be limited and will be contained within the stores. Significant impacts are therefore unlikely.

#### *Falmouth Road and Lawrence Weaver Road*

175. The northern boundary of the site abuts back gardens of three storey houses and a four-storey apartment building along the Lawrence Weaver Road. The houses are 8m from the site boundary and a residents' car park sits directly adjacent to the site, behind a brick-wall. Along this boundary a new thoroughfare is proposed connecting the top of the mews to Lawrence Weaver Road.

176. The gable end of the Apartment Building (A) is positioned 8m from the site boundary. The existing apartment building has south faced gable end with projecting balconies. The apartment building is angled with these balconies facing into the Lawrence Weaver Road. As such, there will be no significant overlooking or overbearing impacts would occur.

177. The Mews Building (C) is also position 8m from the site boundary. This distance coupled with 12m depth to existing garden areas leaves an acceptable distance to not cause any significant overbearing or overlooking impacts.

#### *Howes Place*

178. The existing houses on Howes Place are two storeys tall and arranged in a line of short terraces. The terraces sit behind a line of mature pleached lime trees and indent around a lawned green space.
179. The proposed buildings closest to this edge have been laid out in a comparable manner and will be four storeys tall, part of which has been amended and dropped down by between 0.5-1m to further reduce impact. They will sit behind two lines of existing pleached lime trees providing a soft landscape edge. This allows for a good offset distance of 25m which increases to 43m at points along the Howes Place. Given this will be a front-to-front relationship it is considered to not cause any significant overbearing or overlooking issues. The model also demonstrates there will be no significant loss of light to amenity space.
180. The proposed buildings will have residential accommodation at ground and upper levels with no active or noisy uses facing Howes Place. The main vehicle access will be from the Lawrence Weaver Road and therefore movements will remain limited. The leisure uses that are more central to the site will be conditioned limiting their opening hours and use to limit the impact on amenity.

*Impact to residential amenity summary*

181. During the pre-application and application process regard has been given to the impact of the development on existing neighbouring properties. This has resulted in amendments to the development to improve the relationship. For the reasons above the proposal is not considered to cause any significant or adverse impacts from overlooking, overshadowing or loss of light noise and consequently would accord with CLP Policy 55 which seeks to ensure development integrates with the immediate locality and similarly accord with paragraph 130 of the NPPF which seeks to create places which are safe.

**Landscape and Trees**

182. CLP Policy 71 specifically deals with trees stating that *development will not be permitted which involves felling (significant surgery (either now or in the foreseeable future) and potential root damage to trees of amenity or other value unless there are demonstrable public benefits accruing from the proposal which clearly outweigh the current and future amenity value of the trees.* CLP Policies 56 and 59 require landscaping including external spaces, public realm and boundary treatments to be an integral part of new developments, of high quality and amongst other matters ensure that existing features such as trees and boundary treatments are retained and protected.

183. The application has been supported by an Arboriculture Impact Assessment along with a detailed Landscape Master Plan. The existing site has a grouped Tree Preservation Order covering the pleached lime trees which align Howes Place and Huntingdon Road. There is also an individual Tree Preservation Order for a Maple and Apple tree. The landscape scheme has been an integral part to the proposal recognising the importance of the Pleached Lime trees to the history of the site and its surroundings.

184. In terms of the boundary treatments, in reference to the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment (P1812-AIA-01 V5), in total on Option A, (9) Pleached Lime trees are to be removed. These (9) include the (3) trees (G3.2, G1.4 and G1.8) which need to be removed due to their health condition regardless of the proposed development. The other (6) trees needing to be removed to facilitate Option A trees labelled as; G1.12, G1.13 and G1.14, G2.12 x2 and G2.28. In total on Option B, (8) Pleached Lime trees are to be removed. Under this Option, tree labelled G2.28 is located to the north and does not need to be removed unlike Option A.

185. The six (or five under option B) healthy trees will be re-planted in gaps on Howes Place to limit the loss. A new row of pleached limes trees will also be planted along the boundary of Lawrence Weaver Road enhancing the character of the area. Several other trees will need to be removed within the

development site to facilitate the proposed development. The trees intended for removal are considered to have a low arboriculture and amenity value.

186. Following comments from third parties, the agent has confirmed that it may be the case that the (3) trees identified for removal due to their condition might not be necessary. However, the health of the trees cannot be established without further assessment and report by an arboricultural specialist. The recommended condition will facilitate that report and thereafter determine the actions necessary (COND 51).

187.

188. A new row of Pleached Limes will also be planted along the boundary of Lawerance Weaver Road enhancing the character of the area. Several other trees will need to be removed within the development site to facilitate the proposed development; however, the trees intended for removal are considered to have a low arboriculture and amenity value.

189. In terms of the landscaping within the site, the site has been set up around eight key character areas which provide a range of spaces for residents and visitors. The main public space sits central to the site known as Howes Green. There will also be private communal gardens, courtyards and roof terraces to serve the BfR and Apart hotel units. These areas will include a variety of new trees and planting, a SUDs feature and play for children. The flat-roofed buildings will also have green/biodiversity roofs. The Quality Panel (December 2020) acknowledged that the landscaping had been better integrated into the scheme. Following further amendments to the scheme have been supported by the Tree Officer and final confirmation is awaiting from the Landscape Officer.

190. Conditions for detailed hard and soft landscape scheme (COND 43) and details for the green roof (COND 44) are recommended in order to refine the landscaping proposals before implementation. A tree protection condition (COND 51) - and replacement planting condition (COND 43) - is similarly recommended to ensure the relevant protection for the TPOs is secured. Officers consider these conditions to be acceptable.

191. The proposal is considered to generally accord with CLP Policies 56, 59 and 71 to deliver a high-quality landscape scheme that respects existing amenity valued trees on and around the site.

## **Ecology**

192. CLP Policies 69 and 70 seek to protect and enhance sites of biodiversity and geodiversity importance and priority species and habitats. Section 3.5 of the Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD provides guidance on survey requirements and biodiversity net gain. A draft Biodiversity SPD, consulted on between July to September 2021 proposes more detailed guidance including clarification on the need to demonstrate measurable net gain for biodiversity.

193. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity, while paragraph 180 (NPPF) sets out the associated principles which should be applied. The application includes the following: a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, a Bat Activity Survey, Biodiversity Net Gain Calculations (and Summary note) and a Sustainability Statement.

194. In summary, this information suggests that significant impacts on a nearby Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) would be unlikely, and that the application site's relatively low ecological value would be significantly improved by the proposed development. New green roofs, wetland drainage features, amenity grassland and tree planting would ensure a biodiversity net gain of 92% in relation to habitats. In terms of hedgerows, retained and newly created hedgerows would ensure a biodiversity net gain of 41%.

195. The Nature Conservation Projects Officer has considered the submitted information and confirmed that that there are no objections if planning conditions for (i) a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (COND 41) ;(ii) full details of the proposed green roofs (COND 44); and (iii)

nest and roosting boxes (COND 42) are all secured. Subject to these conditions being imposed, it is concluded that the proposal complies with the above CLP policies and NPPF.

## **Drainage**

196. CLP Policy 31 sets out a range of requirements concerning sustainable drainage while Policy 32 explains how the potential flood risk both from and to a development will be considered. These policies are supplemented by detailed guidance in the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2018) and Section 3.7 of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2020). Furthermore, paragraph 169 of the NPPF states that major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems and sets out some key principles. As submitted, the application included the following documentation specific to flood risk and drainage: (i) a Flood Risk Assessment, (ii) a Surface Water Drainage Strategy; and (iii) a Sustainability Statement.

197. The Flood Risk Assessment concludes that there is no significant risk of flooding to the site from fluvial, tidal, groundwater, water infrastructure or sewer sources and that the low risk of surface water flooding from the site could be suitably managed. Following initial objections from the Lead Local Flood Authority and the Council's Drainage Officer an updated Surface Water Drainage Strategy was submitted to improve certainty regarding the suitability of the proposed sustainable drainage system and to also confirm a pumped solution which would be required should the sewers within Lawrence Weaver Road not be adopted. The consultees' objections have since been removed whilst Anglian Water and the Environment Agency have both responded with no objections to the proposal.

198. Whilst officer note third party concerns about flood risk to their properties the information within the application demonstrates that surface water from the site can be dealt with appropriately and should not have any resulting impact on neighbouring properties. This information has been considered by the Lead Local Flood and Water Authority. The condition which

seeks to ensure the strategy has been completed in accordance with the planning condition prior to occupation will be imposed.

199. To ensure that the proposed development can be adequately drained and to ensure there is no increased groundwater flood risk on or offsite resulting from the proposed development (including the underground basement car park) a condition will be included (COND 53) requiring further details.
200. Conditions recommended by the above consultees seek to secure the detailed design of the drainage scheme, verification that the works have been implemented in accordance with the agreed plans upon completion, details of surface water management during construction (COND 46-47); requiring a follow up survey confirming it has been constructed in accordance with the approved plans (COND 49); and the implementation of foul water drainage works (COND 48). Subject to imposing of these conditions, it is concluded that the proposal complies with the above CLP policies and NPPF.

## **Car Parking**

201. CLP Policy 82 sets out maximum levels of car parking that the Council will permit for various types of development. Appendix L states that the levels should not be exceeded but maybe reduced where lower levels of parking can reasonably be expected. The application is supported by a Transport Statement (Clewlow Consulting July 2021) and Transport Statement Addendum (Clewlow Consulting November 2021) setting out the approach to car parking levels including local circumstances and average car numbers for developments of this nature. This has been considered by the County Council's Transport Assets team and officers.
202. The proposed development provides 19 car parking spaces within the basement of the development, including 18 accessible spaces and two spaces allocated for car club vehicles. It is proposed that 110 spaces are allocated to the BtR accommodation, 35 spaces to the former NIAB HQ, 28 to

the Apart hotel, 4 staff spaces and 17 visitor spaces. During the application process third party concerns were raised in relation to there being insufficient parking to accommodate the needs of the development.

### *Build to Rent*

203. The Transport Statement includes details on national car ownership trends. *The Department for Transport entitled "Young people's travel – what's changed and why"* indicates that there was a drop in the number of car driver trips per person made by people aged between 17-29. The research indicates that travel behaviour has been driven by changes in young people's socio-economic situations. With BtR market targeting those between 21-35 age group with more emphasis on the younger end of the market car ownership could be likely to be much lower than once was the case.
204. The Transport Statement demonstrates that such trends are becoming clear in Cambridge referencing the Crossways Garden site in Trumpington (Ref: 15/2350/FUL) which is now managed for BtR units where 49 car parking spaces were provided for 51 apartments, but this has now been reduced to 29 spaces.
205. The Transport Statement indicates based on the 2011 National Census data covering the local area (Gilbert Road, Histon Road and Stretthen Avenue), based on one person living in a flat car ownership is, on average 0.35 cars per dwelling. Where there are two people living in a flat the average is found to be 0.64 cars per dwelling. The same approach was taken on a BtR scheme in Orchard Park. Applying this to the proposed mix of units would equate to 144 parking spaces.
206. The provision of car club spaces (secured by a s106 planning obligation) can also be expected to reduce demand for privately owned vehicles as occupiers will have direct access to vehicles they can lease. The car parking demands of the development are therefore expected to be no greater than for 124 vehicles. However, to align with the national trends and to

further discourage future residents from car ownership in such a sustainable location, it is considered that the proposed provision of 110 spaces including 10 accessible spaces and two car club spaces is on balance acceptable and in line with the main aims of the national and local planning policies. All parking spaces will need to be booked in advance through the onsite management company and therefore the number of cars coming to the site can be pre-empted and managed accordingly.

### *The Apart hotel*

207. The Use class for the Apart hotel is 'sui-generis' and therefore does not explicitly fall under a particular section in the CLP Policy 77, however, as a guide for hotels and guest houses (C1 Use) the policy requires no more than one space for every eight residents and one space for every eight members of staff be provided.
208. Most of the units are intended for single occupancy with only sixteen units designed for occupation by two people. The maximum number of guests staying at the Apart hotel is therefore expected to be 220 for which the proposed car parking allocation of 28 (including three accessible spaces) spaces would be in line with policy.
209. The Transport Statement concludes that based on a similar scheme for the Apart hotel at Eddington, a ratio of 0.14 spaces would be needed for the number of staff expected to be present on site at any one time. On this basis there is expected to be approximately 30 staff onsite at any one time which would equate to 4 spaces being needed. Other staff would be expected and encouraged to use public transport. In terms of parking allocated guests and staff will also need to book a space prior to arrival for control and monitoring purposes.
210. Whilst officers understand the parking concerns raised by third parties the evidence presented demonstrates the proposed parking levels are sufficient to accommodate the development. Furthermore, the car parking

provision has not had any objections from the County Council’s Transport Assets team and is in accordance with CLP Policy 82 which amongst other matters also seeks to promote lower levels of private parking in order to help achieve a modal shift.

211. Separate to the above third-party concerns have been raised in regard to existing and future occupiers using the cycleways along Lawrence Weaver Road as overspill parking spaces. At present only a short section of Lawrence Weaver Road is an adopted public highway so beyond its boundaries the Highway Authority do not the means of controlling the street parking; remediation is a matter for the landowner. The full extent of the road and cycleways is nevertheless moving towards adoption which once the adoption formalities are completed suitable waiting restrictions can put in place enabling the Highway Authority to enforce as appropriate to keep the cycleways clear.

### **Cycle Parking**

212. A total of 593 cycle parking spaces will be provided on the site to support the development. There will also be additional cycle parking spaces to serve the conversion of the old NIAB HQ.

213. The table below sets out the cycle parking to be provided for the BtR units which is above the required standard set out in CLP Policy 82. In addition to the covered cycle parking there will be visitor cycle parking located in close proximity to most of the building entrances.

<b>No of Spaces</b>	<b>One-bed unit</b>	<b>Two-bed unit</b>	<b>Visitors</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Proposed</b>	283	160	40	483
<b>Policy Standard</b>	221	140	36	397

214. The table below sets out the cycle parking to be provided for the Apart hotel based on the standard applied to hotels within the City under CLP Policy 82. The proposal will meet, or in some cases exceed the requirements of standard set out in the Policy. Cycle hire will also be available through the proposed bike shop.

<b>No of Spaces</b>	<b>Guest rooms</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Visitors</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Proposed</b>	40	44	10	94
<b>Policy Standard</b>	40	22	nil	62

215. Cycle parking for visitors and staff of the bike shop and café will be provided in accordance with CLP Policy 82. There will be 14 visitor spaces and 12 staff spaces. These spaces will be located at ground level.

### **Highway safety and impact to road network**

216. The application is accompanied by a Response Note and Transport Statement Addendum dated September 2021 and November 2021. These documents have been reviewed by the County Council's Transport Assessment team.

217. The development is expected to generate a net reduction of 55 vehicle trips in the weekday AM and a net reduction of 33 vehicle trips in the weekday PM. There is predicted to be a net increase of 73 cycling trips in the weekday PM. Due to the reduction in vehicle trips overall, there would not be an impact onto the capacity of surrounding junctions.

218. A Travel Plan will be secured by a planning condition (COND 7). A financial contribution towards the upgrade of Castle Hill cycleway and the provision of car club vehicles and spaces are recommended to be secured through a s106 planning obligation based on the net number of cycle movements (see Appendix 1).

219. The scheme has been considered by the Local Highways Authority engineer and following amendments to the scheme recommends conditions for falls and levels (COND 5) and for the provision of a traffic management plan (COND 6).

220. The proposal will not have any significant impacts on the transport network in terms of capacity or congestion, in accordance with CLP Policy 81 and paragraph 110(d) of the NPPF.

### **Provision for Waste and Recycling**

221. The proposed development has been designed in accordance with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP) Waste Management Design Guide SPD. The applicant has submitted a Refuse Strategy Plan showing the arrangement of bin stores and collection areas, the refuse vehicular routes, the refuse collector and residents' routes, and a Refuse Vehicle Tracking Plan.

222. Each apartment will be fitted with three compartment waste bins, with each compartment corresponding to a relevant waste stream to be collected by the City Council. When internal bins are full residents will transfer their waste to the Underground Refuse Store collection points located within 30m of the front door from each block. The applicant notes the requirement for the bins to be emptied fortnightly. The applicant has submitted a drawing demonstrating how a bi-weekly refuse collection for the underground bins can be accommodated on the site if this level of provision is required.

223.

224. The Apart hotel will be responsible for its own waste. There is a secure refuse store located in the southern corner of the building. Refuse vehicles will access the store from Howes Place up to twice a week. A similar arrangement will exist for the commercial units.

225. It is considered reasonable and necessary to attach a condition for a site waste management plan (COND 50) to ensure a suitable refuse strategy is agreed with the Council's Waste department prior to occupation of the development. A financial contribution towards a new special waste vehicle is considered to be reasonable and necessary given the additional demand for waste disposal generated from this development. The financial contribution will be secured through a s106 planning obligation (see Appendix 1).

## **Public Art**

226. CLP Policy 56 amongst other matters requires embedded public art as an integral part of development proposals. A site wide public art strategy has been submitted with the application. The strategy identifies landscape commission, collaboration with architects and an ongoing programme of community led activity as playing a key role in the strategy. The budget for this commission is set out in the strategy at £200,000 and the timing over delivery between June 2022 and September 2027. No objections have been received. A condition is recommended to ensure the public art strategy progresses though to complete implementation (COND 45). On this basis the proposal would accord with CLP Policy 56(j).

## **Pollution**

227. A suite of policies in the CLP provides a comprehensive set of requirements in relation to pollution. CLP Policy 33 seeks to prevent adverse impacts arising from contamination and requires investigation and remediation where it is suspected or known to exist. Policy explains how external lighting will be controlled. CLP Policy 35 seeks to protect human health and quality of life from noise and vibration, whilst CLP Policy 36 addresses air quality, odour and dust.

228. Section 3.6 of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2020) includes detailed guidance on how the above policies will be applied. Furthermore, paragraphs 170 and 183 - 188 of the NPPF addresses risks

associated with pollution and seeks to secure improvements to local environmental conditions wherever possible.

- (i) The application includes the following information specific to pollution: Sustainability Statement; (ii) a Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment; (iii) a Noise Assessment; and (iv) a Air Quality Assessment.

229. The Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment explains that the potential sources of contamination – former office buildings, car parking, construction compound and horticultural nursery glasshouses – result in a risk of potentially significant harm ranging from ‘very low’ to ‘moderate’ depending on the specific land use. The risk of the site being classified as ‘contaminated land’ is identified as being ‘low’. In its conclusion, the report recommends that further work, including a Phase 2 site investigation is completed to confirm (a) the initial assessment identified by the X: (b) to refine the preliminary conceptual site model; and (c) to determine details of investigative/remedial works as necessary.

230. The Noise Assessment suggests that noise affecting the development would mainly originate from road traffic using Lawrence Weaver Road and Huntingdon Road, while noise arising from the development would be from the various commercial uses proposed as well as construction activities. The report concludes that noise impacts to existing and future residents could be suitably managed through planning conditions.

231. The Air Quality Assessment identifies that the nearest Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) to the site are the Cambridge AQMA (1.3 km) and the A14 Corridor AQMA (1.5 km). The report details the baseline situation, construction impacts and operational impacts of the development concluding that significant impacts on air quality could be avoided using appropriate planning conditions. Furthermore, the Sustainability Statement confirms that the development would be served by air source heat pumps with no combustion emissions to air while the proposed 108 active electric vehicle charging points would support a transition to low/zero-emission vehicles.

232. As for light pollution the application does not include the design of external lighting so appropriate details would need to be secured through a planning condition.

233. The Environmental Health Officer and Environment Agency have raised no objections, although several conditions are recommended to cover the following matters:

- Investigation and remediation of contamination (COND 8-12)
- a Material Management Plan (COND 14)
- a Demolition and Construction Management Plan (COND 13)
- a Plant, Machinery and Equipment Noise Assessment (COND 15)
- a Noise insulation/reduction scheme (COND 16)
- Restrictions on various land uses to protect the amenity/quality of properties from noise (COND 17-27) \_
- an Electric Vehicle Charging Point Provision and Infrastructure Strategy (COND 29)
- an Artificial Lighting Impact Assessment and Mitigation Scheme (COND 30)
- an Air Quality Compliance condition (COND 28)

234. Subject to the use of conditions covering these matters, it is concluded the proposal complies with the above CLP Policies 33, 35, 36.

### **Indoor sports and open space provision**

235. CLP Policy 68 requires that all residential development proposals should contribute to the provision of open space and recreation sites/facilities on-site. Requirements are calculated in accordance with the standards set out in Appendix 1 of the CLP. The policy goes on to provide that alternative off-site provision may be acceptable if the proposed development is of an 'insufficient size' to make the appropriate provision feasible or in '*exceptional circumstances*', if the open space provision can be met through enhanced provision off-site.

236. The Council's adopted the Open Space and Recreation Strategy is a material consideration. The strategy seeks to ensure that open space supports the development of sustainable communities and enhances the health and well-being of residents and the biodiversity of the City. It sets out to ensure that open space in Cambridge meets the needs of all who live, work, study in or visit the City and provides a satisfactory environment for nature enhancing the local townscape complementing the built environment.

237. The applicant submitted an Open Amenity Space Addendum (dated November 2022) which includes a plan showing the associated split of the proposed open space across the site. This plan was updated during the consultation process to respond and acknowledge third party objections to the level and type of provision that could be included in the calculation.

238. The Open Space requirement set out in CLP Policy 68 is only applicable to the residential units, which in this case would be the BtR units (as C3 residential development). The Apart hotel is a sui-generis Use and for hotels there is currently no policy requirement for outdoor space to be provided given visitors will only be staying for a short period. A management plan for the open spaces will be secured through the s106 agreement.

239. The table below shows a summary of the proposed on-site/off-site provision:

	<b>Policy required amount</b>	<b>Amount delivered</b>	<b>Complies (Y/N)</b>	<b>Onsite or off-site</b>
Outdoor Sports	0.48ha	-	Y	Off-site contribution
Indoor Sports	1 sports hall for 13,000 people and 1 sports hall	Swimming pool and gym	Y	On-site

	for every 13,000 people			
Children and Teenagers (2-bedroom units only)	0.04ha	0.10ha	Y	On-site
Informal Open Space	0.88ha	0.64ha	Part	Part on-site (77%) Part off-site (33%)
Allotments	0.16ha	-	Y	Off-site contribution
Community Space	Type appropriate to the scale of the development	Community event space	Y	On-site provision
Private amenity space	None dimensions but should be practical to use	All properties will have access.  Balconies to all BfR units.  2770m2 (communal space) 800m2 (roof terrace)	Y	On-site

*Outdoor Sports and Allotment provision*

240. No outdoor sports and allotment provision are provided on the site due to its location, nature and size and by virtue of the level of provision the policy

requires. An off-site contribution of £95,081.00 towards Cambridge North Academy for a target list of improvements and a contribution of £20,800.00 towards Histon Road and Bateson Road allotments will be secured through a s106 planning obligation. See Appendix 1 which includes a summary of the Heads of Terms.

#### *Indoor sports and community space*

241. In terms of indoor sports and community space, the application is providing these facilities on the site through a community room/event space within the BtR units, the swimming pool and gym. An off-site contribution is therefore not considered necessary however, a s106 planning obligation will secure the provision of a completed Community Use Agreement between the site owner/developer and the City Council to ensure these facilities are open to the wider public.

#### *Informal open space*

242. Table I.1 of CLP Policy 68 defines Informal Open space as being 'Informal provision' including examples of recreational grounds, parks, natural greenspace or high quality public hard surfaces.

243. Informal Open Space was designed into the scheme at an early stage of the pre-application discussions. The central heart of the development, Howes Green, will provide an open amenity space for the public, residents and visitors. There is also access to the water meadows which sit between some of the BtR units and landscaped gardens along with a pocket park around the edge of the old NIAB building.

244. The applicant originally included some of the semi-private spaces in the open space calculations - for example the Apart hotel courtyard, roof terraces, communal gardens and courtyard within the existing old NIAB building. Given these areas intimately related to the buildings, officers consider these areas do not align with the examples set out in table I.1 of the

CLP Policy 68 which are generally more publicly assessable and therefore could not be counted for in the calculation.

245. Removing these spaces from the calculation, 77% of the publicly accessible open space can met on-site and therefore the remaining 33% would need to be provided as an off-site contribution. Despite the on-site shortfall the development will still achieve a high-quality environment for future residents with the additional types of open space which are not included in the calculation e.g., the communal roof terraces and the Childrens' and Teenager play space for which there is not a policy requirement but still enhances the offer. Off-site contributions have been provided on other sites where similar situations exist.

246. The Council's s106 Officer has suggested an off-site financial contribution of approximately £31,900.00 to be allocated for improvements to Histon Road Recreation Ground and its facilities (which is 1.6k from the site) could make up the shortfall on-site and would provide some enhancements to the benefit of the wider community. In this case officers consider 'exceptional circumstances' exist and therefore the proposals would accord with CLP Policy 68 and recommend the financial contribution be secured through the s106 planning obligation.

#### *Children and Teenagers' play and Apart Hotel*

247. Given the nature of the development it's unlikely there will be a maximum number of children and teenagers. However, children and Teenagers play has been provided on-site in the form of a small pocket green to the south-west of the site. There will also be play features in the communal areas, roof top terraces and doorstep play areas along the Mews. The amount provided would exceed the policy requirement.

248. Whilst there is no CLP Policy requirement to provide outdoor space for the Apart hotel the developer has included a sensory garden space along with a water feature for those visitors central to the building.

### **S106 obligations**

249. CLP Policy 73 (Community, Sports and Leisure facilities): CLP Policy 74 (Education facilities) and CLP Policy 85 (Infrastructure) all seek to ensure there is or will be sufficient infrastructure capacity to support and meet all the requirements arising from new developments. All the relevant consultees were consulted during the application process to inform and understand current and future needs. The outcomes are set out in Appendix 1 along with the associated projects the contributions will help fund where financial contributions are sought. The principle of the financial contributions has been agreed with the applicant.

250. In terms of community, sports and leisure, the application is providing these facilities on the site through a community room/event space within the BtR units, a swimming pool and gym. A contribution financial or otherwise is therefore not considered necessary subject to completion of a Community Use Agreement which ensures these facilities are open and available for public use as well as residents of the development prior to use first occupation of Apart Hotel and event space through a s106 planning obligation or such other reasonable trigger as agreed with the developer.

251. In terms of Education the County Council confirmed there was sufficient capacity to take on the demands of the development at all levels. They have however requested a financial contribution of £6,547.50 towards library provision.

252. In terms of healthcare, the NHS identified capacity issues at Huntingdon Road/Girton surgery and have therefore requested a financial contribution of £174,800 to be applied for the purposes of improving capacity at the existing practices. They also confirmed that whilst the new surgery at

Darwin Green (closer to the application site) has all the relevant planning permissions in place there is no certainty at this stage on what more might be needed as such contributions cannot be requested.

253. Justification for a financial contribution payable to the Local Highway Authority towards cycleway improvements (a figure yet to be agreed to meet the CIL tests) has been set out in the 'highway and impact to road network' section of this report. In summary the improvements to the cycle network along Castle Street and the Car Club provision are reasonable and necessary to meet the increased demands put on infrastructure proposed by the development. An update will be provided on the final amount.

254. A financial contribution for Waste towards a new waste vehicle is reasonable and necessary given the site will accommodate underground bins.

255. The s106 planning obligations set out in Appendix 1 are considered to comply with the relevant CLP policies and meet the tests set out in The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) as being necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonable in kind.

### **Development Control Forum**

256. The application was presented to the DCF in November 2021 following a petition from various households. The minutes from the meeting are in Appendix 5. In summary, the petitioners requested the following key changes to the application:

- the removal of any points of access from Howes Place (during and after construction) to respect landscape setting and heritage assets.
- to reduce the scale and massing of the development to two storeys on sensitive edges, three storeys central to the site and four storeys adjacent to existing buildings on the Lawrence Weaver Road to protect amenity of

existing residents, contribute to the protection and enhancement of Howes Place and the ability to include more open space and parking provision.

- minimum of 20% 'Affordable Private Rent' dwellings should be provided.

257. The applicants considered the comments made in third party representations and at the DCF and subsequently amended the application. The key changes were as follows:

- The Developer has submitted an Option B scenario whereby all pedestrian and cycle access points have been removed onto Howes Place. Only access into the Apart hotel and an emergency access point will remain under this scenario.
- Under Option B, tree removal along Howes Place has been limited to (8) trees (three of which need to be removed due to their condition) to limit the impact on the setting of the road. Whilst trees need to be removed, they will be replaced in existing gaps.
- Reduction in the ridge of the Apart hotel between 0.5m-1m to limit the impact on the BILs. However, a complete re-design was not considered necessary given the conclusions of the Townscape Appraisal and the support from the Quality Panel.
- The proposal provides a policy compliant scheme of Affordable Housing when taking into account the extant Prior Approval consents granted on the site both of which are a material planning consideration.

258. Officers understand the petitioners remain opposed to the Option A site/access arrangements. However, since the submission of Option B arrangements further dialog has taken place between the applicants and the petitioners. Officers understand the petitioners now support Option B site/access arrangements on the grounds it provides sustainable transport requirements, it significantly improves highway safety and minimises harm to

the appearance, character and setting of the heritage assets of Howes Place and the amenity of existing and future residents. Officers are of the understanding that the up-to-date plans submitted by the applicant reflect these discussions.

## **Conclusion and Planning Balance**

259. Given the recommendation, it may be helpful for Members to think of this proposal as two separate applications; one which includes access points onto Howes Place and another which has them removed. As set out in the report, Option A is the preferred option by the local planning authority's technical consultees because having the access points onto Howes Place responds to good placemaking principles set out in planning policy.

260. However, during the application process the developer has unilaterally put forward Option B which seeks to remove the access points from Howes Place to overcome third party objections. Officers are of the view that Option B does not have any material bearing on the acceptability of the application as a whole and therefore if this is the layout preferred by Members the application can be approved on this basis.

261. The NPPF lists the three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways to achieve sustainable development. The benefits and dis-benefits of the development proposals have been evaluated and assessed against the objectives of the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as summarised below.

262. Turning to the planning balance, in terms of social benefits, the proposal seeks to introduce a significant number of BtR homes, 58 of which will be Affordable BtR (an increase above officers' assessment of the minimum policy requirements for affordable units - based upon the prospect of a fall-back position – and which can be afforded additional weight). The Council's Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy and National Planning Policy

support the development of purpose built private rented homes because it helps to provide an additional choice into the market and accelerates the delivery of new homes in the city. The development would provide BtR housing to meet the local identified needs of Cambridge. The scheme also seeks to introduce a range of facilities that residents of this development and members of the public will be able to access including co-working spaces, swimming pool, a gym and Micro-brewery.

263. In terms of economic benefits, the proposal seeks to introduce an Apart hotel which will provide 202 rooms to keep pace with the continued market demand for new accommodation in Cambridge. This use will create various new job roles during and post construction which will be of benefit to the local economy. The additional expenditure from visitors to the 202 bed Apart Hotel and occupiers will help support the local business and services. Along with a package of s106 contributions to support upgrades to existing infrastructure.

264. In terms of environmental benefits, the comprehensive re-development of the site has meant that a high-quality landscape scheme can be secured. There will be a significant increase in biodiversity on the site, exceeding the 10% requirement in Biodiversity Net Gain. The majority of protected Pleached Lime trees will be retained on and around the site with a significant number of new ones planted to enhance the setting on the old NIAB site and preserve the Buildings of Local Interest that surround it. The scheme also includes various sustainably measures which includes an electric only development, Pv panels, achieving targets of 110 litres per person per day in terms of water consumption and cutting carbon emissions by 74% exceeding Part L of the Building Regulations. The drainage strategy also includes rain-water gardens, green roofs and swales through the development.

265. Overall, the proposed development will bring significant public benefits which accord with the three dimensions of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2021. The Application Site is part included within an allocation for Mixed Use residential development with the remaining part identified in the Brownfield Register and as such the principle

of re-use for residential development is acceptable and complies with all other policies in the CLP. In accordance with S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 there is a statutory presumption in favour of granting planning permission. The balance of these benefits in the circumstances of the application is considered to weigh in favour of granting planning permission, outweighing any harm that the proposed development may cause.

266. Having considered the provisions of the development plans, the views of statutory consultees, local consultees and third-party representations as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval subject to planning conditions as set out in this report at Appendix 2 and to the prior completion of a Section 106 Agreement to secure the recommended planning obligations set out in Appendix 1.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

267. Officers can recommend Committee to approve the application either (a) with or (b) without the new pedestrian and cycle access points onto Howes Place. Accordingly, your Officer's recommend approval to grant planning permission by reference to only one of the following two Options:

268. **OPTION A (with inclusion of pedestrian and cycle access points from Howes Place as part of the development)**

APPROVE subject to:

1. The prior completion of a s106 Agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as set out in Appendix 1 and;
2. the planning conditions and informatives contained in Appendix 2 of this report; and
3. including the delegated authority to officers (i) independently to negotiate, settle and complete the terms of the s106 Agreement substantially reflecting

the obligations set out in Appendix [1] of this report; (ii) independently to settle any minor non-significant amendments to the conditions and/or (iii) in the case of any significant amendment or the introduction of additional conditions to do so in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Committee.

**269. OPTION B (without pedestrian and cycle access points from Howes Place being included as part of the development)**

APPROVE subject to:

1. The prior completion of a s106 Agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as set out in Appendix 1 and;
2. the planning conditions and informatives contained in Appendix 2 of this report; and
3. including the delegated authority to officers (i) independently to negotiate, settle and complete the terms of the s106 Agreement substantially reflecting the obligations set out in Appendix [1] of this report; (ii) independently to settle any minor non-significant amendments to those conditions and/or (iii) in the case of any significant amendment or the introduction of additional conditions to do so in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Committee.