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**Our ref:** CWB/ME/  
**Your ref:**

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Dear John

**11/091/FUL - PROPOSED ERECTION OF 4no. FOUR BED DETACHED RESIDENTIAL UNITS, TOGETHER WITH 9 CAR PARKING SPACES, CYCLE PARKING AND ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING WORKS (FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING OUTBUILDINGS TO THE SIDE AND REAR OF 82 RICHMOND ROAD)  
82 RICHMOND ROAD, CAMBRIDGE, CB4 3PT**

I write further to our meeting at The Guildhall on 28<sup>th</sup> September also attended by Neil Davison of Enterprise Property Group Limited, Simon Somerville-Large of Laragh House and Mariano Cavaleri of Cavaleri Partnership.

We were reassured by the discussion we had at the meeting to the effect that, for the most part, the application seems to be moving forward positively, and we found the discussion to be productive in terms of hopefully closing down one or two issues that are still slightly at large.

As you know, my clients have consulted extensively with the local community regarding the proposal, and in addition to a public consultation event which took place before the application was submitted, we held a further exhibition of the application proposals after the submission, on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2011. This was a well attended event, and presented us with an opportunity of explaining how the scheme had evolved from the pre-application consultation event, whereby a number of points raised by local residents have been taken into account in arriving at a final scheme solution.

Naturally, some of the matters that have subsequently been raised in representations to you were aired at the meeting, and there were some further comments regarding scheme specific matters such as the choice of materials, and we are once again responding positively to those comments in order to arrive at a satisfactory solution for the site.

With this in mind, I now attach some revised drawings, as follows:

- 1107-RR-DR-100A - General Arrangement Plans
- 1107-RR-DR-101A - Roof Plan
- 1107-RR-DR-110A - Site Plan
- 1107-RR-DR-200A - Elevations

We also attach a 3D visualisation of the scheme, and an updated copy of the Design and Access Statement, having regard to the design changes now made.

I also attach a drawing (1107-RR-SK-Entrance 01) which was utilised in discussions with Chloe Hipwood from the Council's Refuse Department, together with copy emails from Oliver Chambers of Cavaleri Partnership to Chloe and a further email from Patrick Lanaway of SLR (our client's Highway Consultant) dealing with one or two matters arising.

In terms of the changes to the scheme, these are relatively limited, but in essence comprise the following:

1. Having regard to the discussions held with Chloe Hipwood, the access arrangements alongside 82 Richmond Road have been modestly revised, in a number of ways. Firstly, a surface finish is now proposed, to adoptable standards, for the area of land between the road kerb, to a point just beyond the frontage of 82 Richmond Road. Secondly, and in concert with this, the boundary wall on the site frontage is being reduced in extent (across the frontage) in order to create a wider mouth into the scheme, and a low level wall will be constructed, projected off the western corner of the property at 82 in order to provide a reference point for the refuse vehicle driver who would be reversing into the site in order to access the bin store. Thirdly, and in accordance with the request from Chloe Hipwood, the block paving into the site has been extended as far as the bin enclosure, where bins will be taken by owners on collection day for convenient collection by the refuse vehicle.
2. In accordance with discussions held with local residents at the consultation event on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, the opportunity has been taken to adjust the materials used in the elevational treatment of the proposal. As you will see (and as is perhaps best illustrated by the computer-generated image), three principal materials are now being used. These comprise a Cambridge Buff brick, to be utilised as the plinth for the houses (below the ground floor windows), and also wrapping around the units and applied within the entrance pods, and the staircase element giving access to upper floors. At first floor level, the proposal is to apply the timber shingles, in a stained cedar or similar, whereas the uppermost floor is now proposed to be finished with a roofing slate, of a smooth texture, approximately 5mm thick in a blue/black colour. The various application drawings have been adjusted to illustrate these changes, and it is considered that the finished product now blends better with the site and its surroundings, and is accordingly more contextual than previously proposed.
3. In the context of concerns expressed by one or two residents to the south (76 and 78 Richmond Road in particular), the opportunity has been taken to introduce two new Birch trees along the common boundary between the site and the adjoining garden at 78 Richmond Road. It is considered that these trees will afford a degree of screening between the frontage of the southernmost plot of the four proposed, and neighbouring gardens at 76 and 78 Richmond Road, and therefore will improve privacy between the existing houses and those now proposed.

Having dealt with those changes, I now turn to one or two further matters which merit comment. At our recent meeting you commented that one of the issues that you needed to resolve in your own mind was the question of the relationship between the four dwellings proposed and the rear gardens and the rear elevations of the properties that are contained within the interior of the "U" shape of the application site, namely Nos. 84-90 Richmond Road.

In this regard, I think that it is very pertinent to note that there have been no objections submitted to the Council from any of those occupiers, who we believe are potentially most affected by the proposal, albeit not (in our submission) in a manner that is unacceptable from a planning point of view.

Nevertheless, we have taken the opportunity of preparing a more detailed site section, and this is also attached to this further submission, being Drawing 1107-RR-SK-Site Section. You will see that this drawing, in addition to identifying the various floor and roof levels of the proposed development (8.53 metres to the highest point of the roof on the front elevation facing 84-90 Richmond Road, and 6 metres to the small parapet at first floor level), also identifies that the front to back distance between the proposed units and the rear of the Richmond Road houses is a little under 32 metres, whilst boundary planting intervenes, therefore further reducing the propensity for overlooking between the two developments.

It is accepted that these days the Council does not apply typical distances between properties backing onto one another in terms of protecting reasonable expectations of amenity or privacy, although historically a rule of thumb of about 20 metres used to be adopted. In our estimation, having regard to the distance of nearly 32 metres, the boundary planting, and the limited views that will be available from bedrooms only within the development, are all factors that indicate that there is no material issue here. Moreover, the lack of objection from any of the residents in question is, we believe, telling, and indeed the occupier of 84 Richmond Road has indicated that he is perfectly content with the proposals.

Whilst dealing with potential issues regarding overlooking and loss of privacy, it is of course also appropriate to readdress such considerations in relation to properties immediately to the south and to the north of the site, where it is noted that some residents have written expressing their concerns. On the south side of the development, the potentially affected properties are Nos. 76 and 78 Richmond Road, whereas to the north it is Nos. 92 and 94 that are conceivably impacted upon.

We obviously addressed the whole question of potential impact on these properties within the Planning Statement that accompanied the initial planning application, but it is, in our view, very relevant to note that any views from the proposed dwellings into those properties will be at oblique angles, and at some distance away from the most private parts of the properties, (i.e. their rear elevations and the immediate garden areas at the back of the houses).

In any event, as you are aware, any windows facing in the direction of neighbouring properties at upper floor levels are bedroom windows, which are rarely occupied during the day, and when occupied during the evening and over night, curtains are invariably drawn. Added to the new Birch trees that are proposed to be planted alongside the boundary with No.78 Richmond Road, it is not considered that this relationship is so significant that it would justify a withholding of planning permission. With regard to the properties to the north, the fact is that the proposed development is slightly off-set, being positioned more to the south of the development site, and away from the common boundary with the immediate property to the north. This is primarily as a consequence of the need to design the houses so as not to interfere with protected trees (T002 and T003) as per the Arboricultural Assessment. In this regard, we note that Joanna Davis has confirmed that she is content with the proposals in relation to the trees, which is obviously very welcome. The trees themselves provide a strong visual screen between the pair of northernmost houses within the scheme and the adjoining gardens, and therefore we think that the issue of overlooking and any loss of privacy in relation to those properties is negligible in the extreme.

I turn now to the question of access, and whether or not the development will give rise to an increased number of trips compared to previous uses. In this regard, I would wish to make clear that my clients relied entirely, in preparing their Transport Assessment, on data provided to them by the current site owner, who was asked to give a profile of comings and goings from the site on a typical day.

Many of your representors' have suggested that the figures that have been quoted are excessive and that it is considered that the number of trips likely to have been associated with the previous uses on the site have been overstated.

In the circumstances of residents local knowledge, we are happy to accept the points that have been made, and accordingly we do not seek to rely on the traffic data that was presented to the Council by us in submitting the application, albeit entirely in good faith based on the information we have been given.

Notwithstanding this, our Highways Consultants at SLR have reassured us that there is no issue on this site relating to traffic generation. Based on the TRICS assessment within the Transport Statement (Section 5.1), four houses such as this will generate on average two movements in each peak hour, and SLR are satisfied that there are no limitations in terms of the capacity of Richmond Road or its junction with Huntingdon Road at these times to cope with an additional two vehicles.

SLR have also advised that we are then left with the matter of the access arrangements. Notwithstanding the comments of local residents regarding actual flows, SLR have commented that there are 22 garages on site and a small commercial unit, all of which have the potential to generate traffic and were the site to be reused in an intensive way in the future, then the flows that had been given would, in practice, be wholly realistic for a small business and 22 lock-up garages. Even if the garages were rented by local residents, traffic would still use the existing access arrangements to get into and out of the site, so compared with the current use of the site, even if it has been vacated for a while, the traffic potential to serve the site in its current form would more than likely be more significant than for four houses as now proposed.

The Local Highway Authority has confirmed that it is content with this argument, and it offers no objection to the proposal either in terms of its access arrangements, or the traffic generation.

In light of this, we would hope that you will be able to support the application, and will be able to recommend it for approval at the Committee Meeting in early November. If, however, you have any further queries, please do come back to me at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely  
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