



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

**Report to:** Planning Committee

**Lead Officer:** Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

**Ward/parish:** Market

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

**Applicant:** Cambridge City Council

**Presenting officer:** Charlotte Spencer

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

**Member site visit date:** 23 March 2026

**Key issues:**

1. Principle of development
2. Design, layout and landscaping
3. Impact on heritage assets
4. Impact on highway safety

**Recommendation:** Approve subject to conditions

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### 1. Executive summary

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Table 2 Consultee summary

## 2. Site description and context

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

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

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

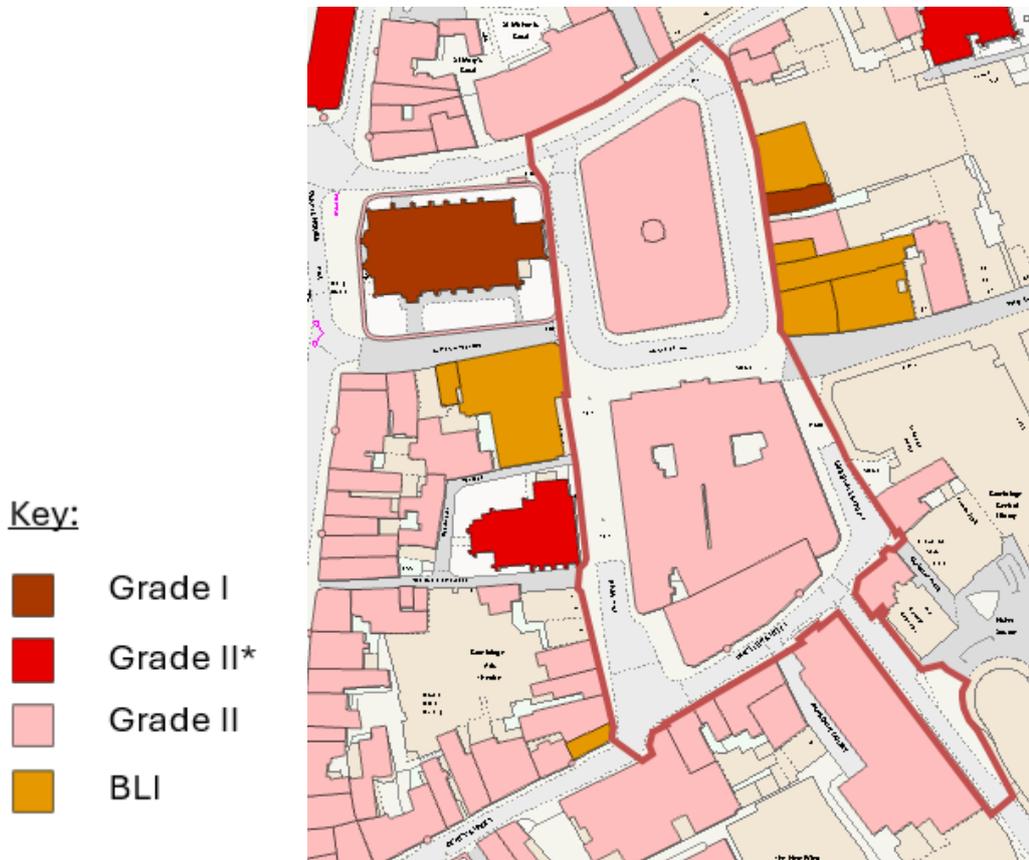


Figure 1: Map of nearby Listed Buildings and Buildings of Local Interest

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

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

### **3. The proposal**

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

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

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

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

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

#### 4. Relevant site history

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

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

## **5. Policy**

### **5.1. National policy**

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

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

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

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

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Environment Act 2021

ODPM Circular 06/2005 – Protected Species

Equalities Act 2010

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

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

## **5.3. Cambridge Local Plan (2018)**

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

Policy 81: Mitigating the transport impact of development

Policy 82: Parking management

#### **5.4. Other guidance**

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

Cambridge and Milton Surface Water Management Plan (2011)

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

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste

Cambridgeshire Design Guide For Streets and Public Realm (2007)

#### **5.5. Area Guidelines**

Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal (2015)

### **6. Consultations**

#### **Publicity**

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y – Listed Building/ Affecting Conservation Area

#### **Conservation Officer- Object**

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

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

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

### **County Archaeology- No Objection**

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

### **County Council Active Travel Officer - Object**

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

### **County Highways Development Management - Object**

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Ecology Officer- No Objection**

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

#### **Environmental Health- No Objection**

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

## Historic England- Object

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

### **Landscape Officer- No Objection**

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

### **Sustainable Drainage Officer- No Objection**

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

### **Sustainability Officer- No Objection**

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

## **Urban Design Officer - Object**

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

## **Waste Officer- No Objection**

- 6.65. No comments

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

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

## **7. Third party representations**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **8. Member Representations**

- 8.1. None received

## **9. Local Groups / Petition**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **10. Assessment**

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

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

## **11. Principle of Development**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **12. Design, layout and landscaping**

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

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

### Market Stalls

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

#### *Fixed stalls*

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

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

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

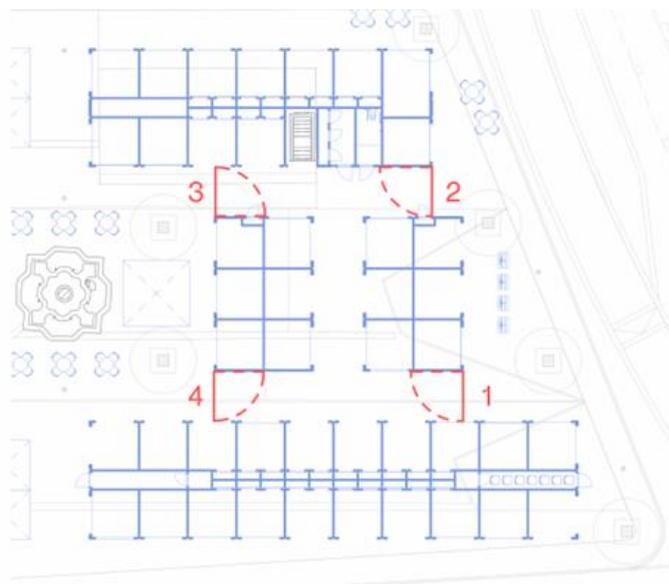


Figure 2: Location of proposed gates

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

*Demountable stalls*

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

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

#### *Covered seating area*

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

#### Basement

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

### Landscaping

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

### *Hard Landscaping*

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

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

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

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

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

#### *Soft Landscaping*

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

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

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

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

#### *Public Art*

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

#### *Conclusion*

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

### **13. Heritage assets**

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

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

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

#### *Direct Impact on Listed Setts*

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

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

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

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

#### *Direct Impact on the Listed Railings*

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

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

*Direct Impact on the Fountain*

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

*Impact on the setting of the Listed Structures in Market Square*

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

*Impact on the setting on other Listed Buildings*

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

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

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

*Impact on the Conservation Area*

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

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

Summary

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

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Direct Impact on Listed Structures</b>

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

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

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

Table 4 Summary of impact on other heritage assets.

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

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

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

#### *Archaeological Potential*

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

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

## **14. Carbon reduction and sustainable design**

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

## 15. Biodiversity

- 15.1. The application is supported by a statutory BNG metric, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), Bat Emergence Survey (BES) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Plan.
- 15.2. The site consists of buildings and sealed surfaces. The PEA has recommended non-licensable reasonable avoidance measures to remove any risk of residual harm or disturbance to protected or priority species and the Ecology Officer agrees with the analysis.
- 15.3. Following the PEA recommendations, a PRA was conducted. The Market Square, forming this application was not noted to have any potential for roost suitability. Mitigation measures are set out within the information provided by the applicant and can be secured by way of a condition.
- 15.4. The applicant has provided a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Plan in support of the application. This suggests that the proposal is exempt from the statutory 10% BNG requirement as it would fall below the 25m<sup>2</sup> threshold for impacted habitat. Given the majority of the site comprises the existing hardstanding surrounding buildings, officers agree that the development would not impact more than 25m<sup>2</sup> of "habitat".
- 15.5. Notwithstanding that the application is exempt from BNG, a metric has been submitted for the whole Civic Quarter re-development resulting in an increase 0.3 habitat units, mainly in the form of planting within this proposal for the Market Square. This is supported.
- 15.6. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, who raises no objection to the proposal and recommends several conditions to ensure the protection of species is delivered. The condition recommended regarding compliance with reports is considered reasonable and required to ensure the protection and enhancement of ecological species. Given that the site does not offer suitable places for bird or bat boxes or hedgehog holes a condition for ecology enhancement is unreasonable. Given that no flat roofs are proposed within this application, a green roof condition is not necessary. Additionally, as the site within an urban context, a condition for ecological lighting is not reasonable. Officers are satisfied that the proposed development complies with policy 70 of the Local Plan, the Biodiversity SPD 2022, the requirements of the Environment Act 2021 and 06/2005 Circular advice.

## **16. Water management and flood risk**

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

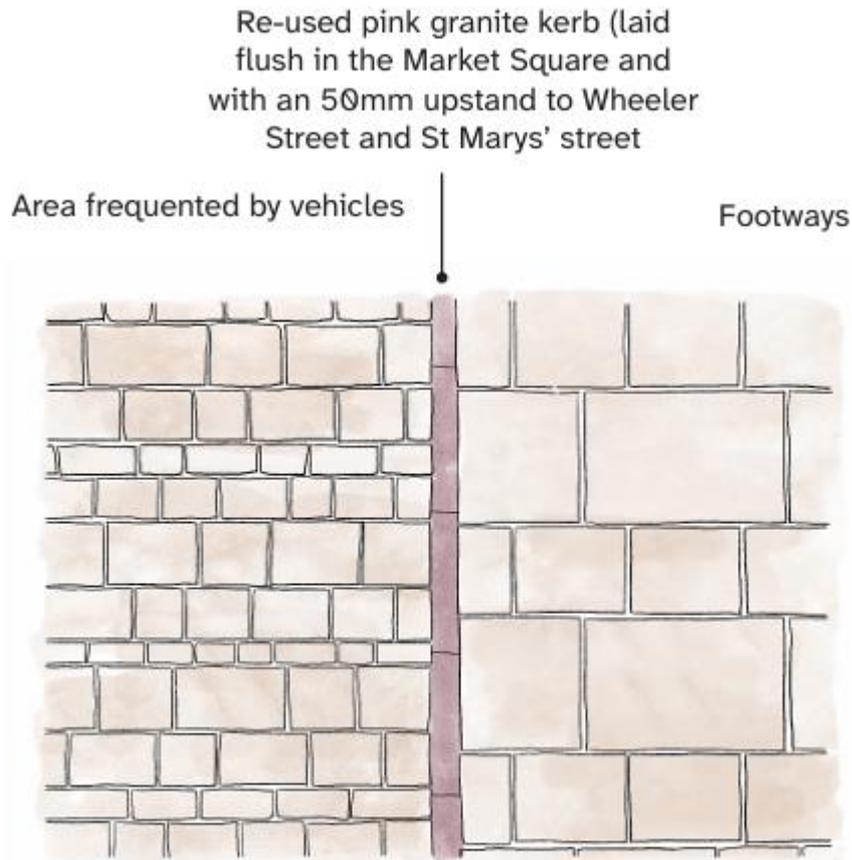
## 17. Highway safety and transport impacts

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

### Surface Treatment

#### *Market Hill Flush/ Shared Surface*

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



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

Figure 3: Proposed paving for carriageways and footways.

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

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

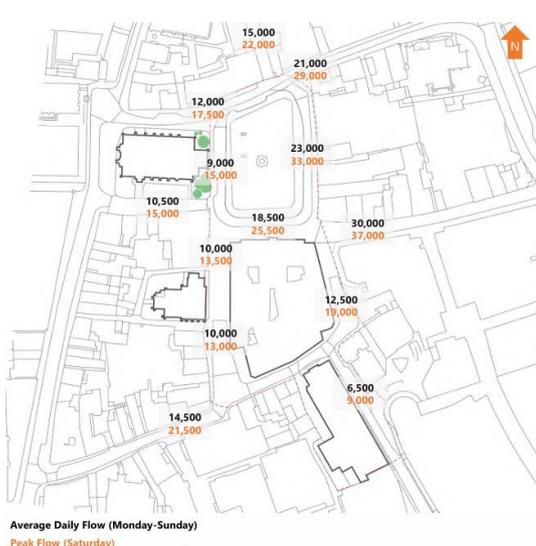


Figure 4: Spring Pedestrian Movements

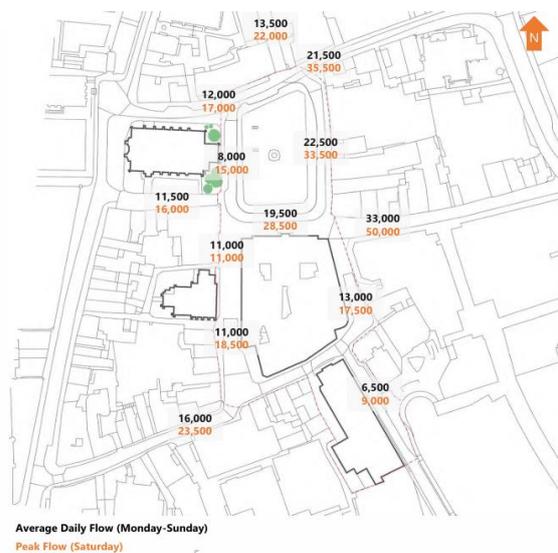


Figure 5: Summer Pedestrian Movements

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

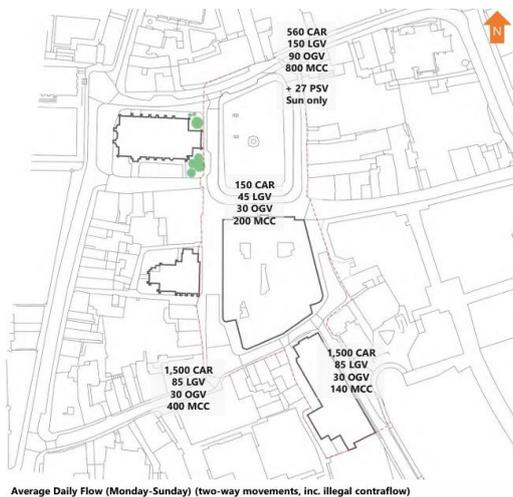


Figure 6: Spring Vehicle Movements

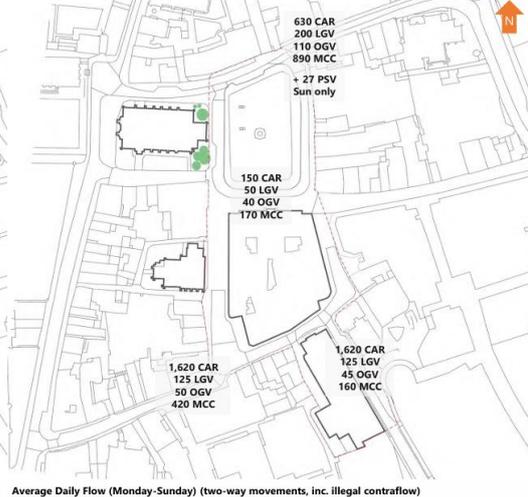


Figure 7: Summer Vehicle Movements

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

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

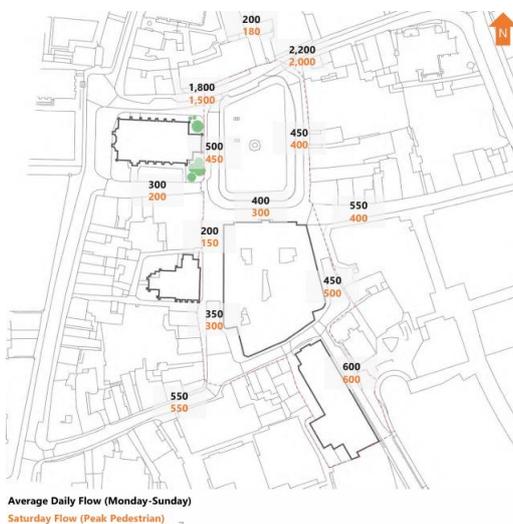


Figure 8: Spring Cycle Movements

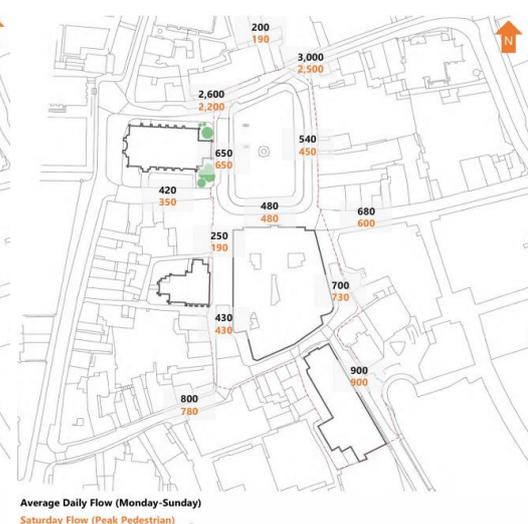


Figure 9: Summer Cycle Movements

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

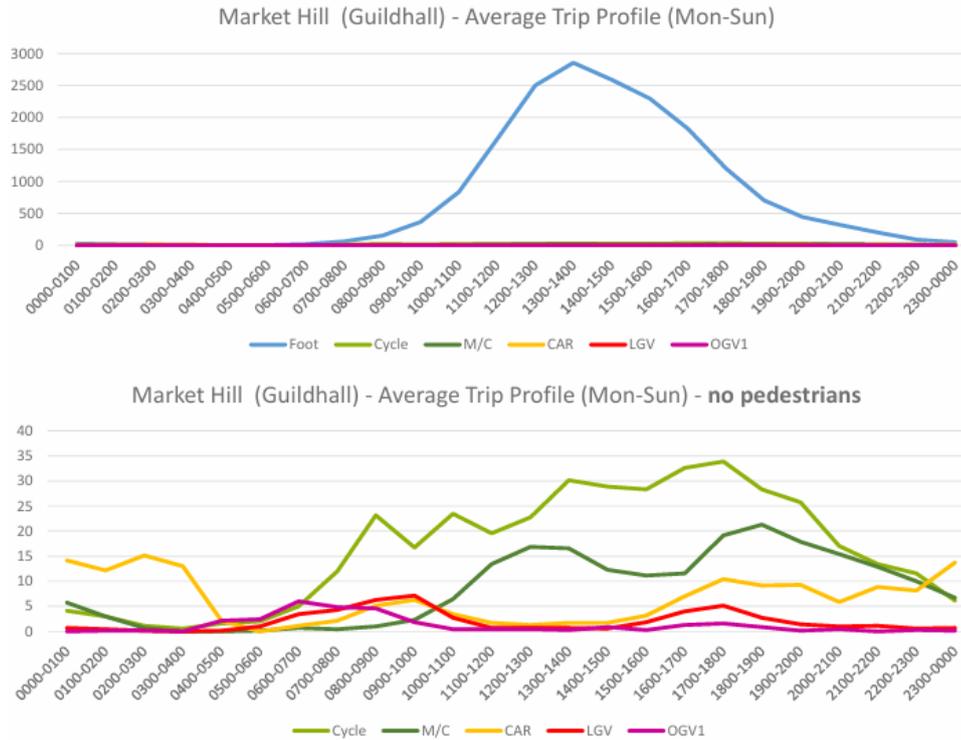


Figure 10: Spring Average Daily Trip Profile

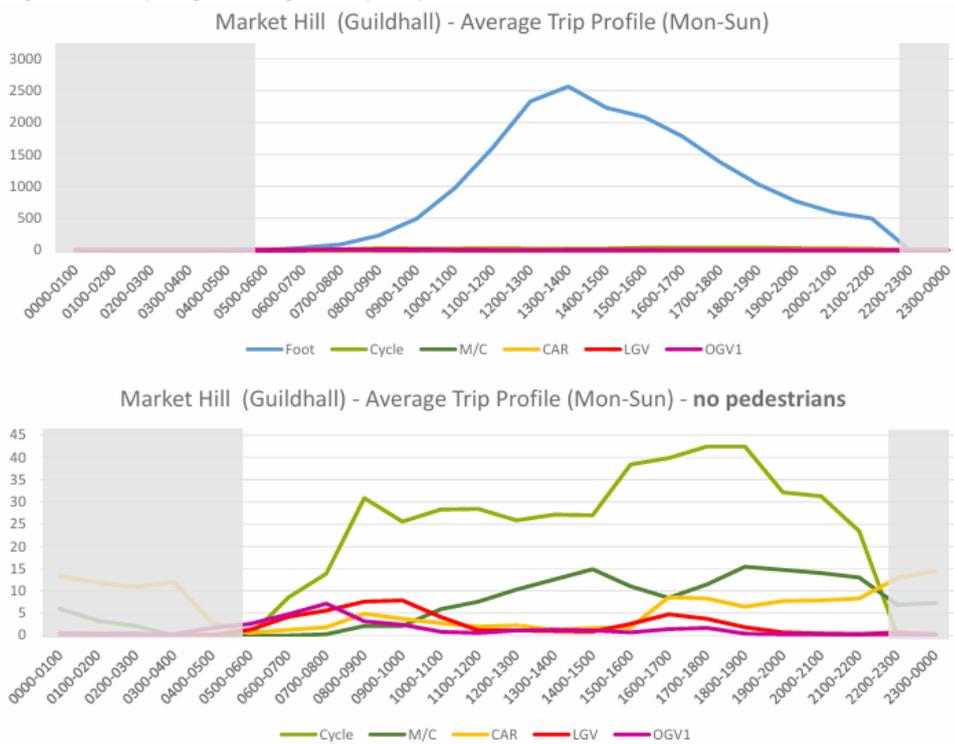


Figure 11: Summer Average Daily Trip Profile

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

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

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

*Market Hill Northern Route*

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

*Peas Hill Flush/ Shared Surface*

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

*Flush/ Shared Surface Guildhall Street*

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

#### *Materials*

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

#### Motor Vehicle Movements

##### *Reversal of flow of traffic on the Market Hill loop*

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

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

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

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

*Swept Path Analysis – Market Hill Loop*

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

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

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

#### *HGV Access to the Market Hill Loop*

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

#### *Motor Vehicles Serving the Market*

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

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

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

#### *Waste Collection*

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

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

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

### Obstacles Within the Public Highway

#### *Cycle Parking Locations*

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

### *Planting with the Public Highway*

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

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

#### Wheeler Street/ Corn Exchange Street

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

#### Other Concerns

*Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)*

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

#### *Road Safety Audit*

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

#### Summary

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

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

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

## **18. Car and cycle provision**

### **Cycle parking**

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

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

Figure 12: Existing and proposed cycle parking provision

- 18.3. As set out in the above table, 81 existing cycle parking spaces are to be removed from the pedestrianised area of Peas Hill which forms a busy pedestrian thoroughfare, with the 16 existing spaces adjacent to the Giggling Squid to be re-located and reduced to 15 spaces further to the east. There is also a net reduction in spaces within Market Hill itself, with the 20 existing spaces along its western edge to be removed and 12 additional spaces provided to the northern side of The Guildhall.
- 18.4. 18 additional new cycle parking spaces are then proposed along Guildhall Street to complement the existing 34 spaces, in addition to an entirely new area of cycle parking along Guildhall Street, with 14 spaces in this location.

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

### **Car parking**

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

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

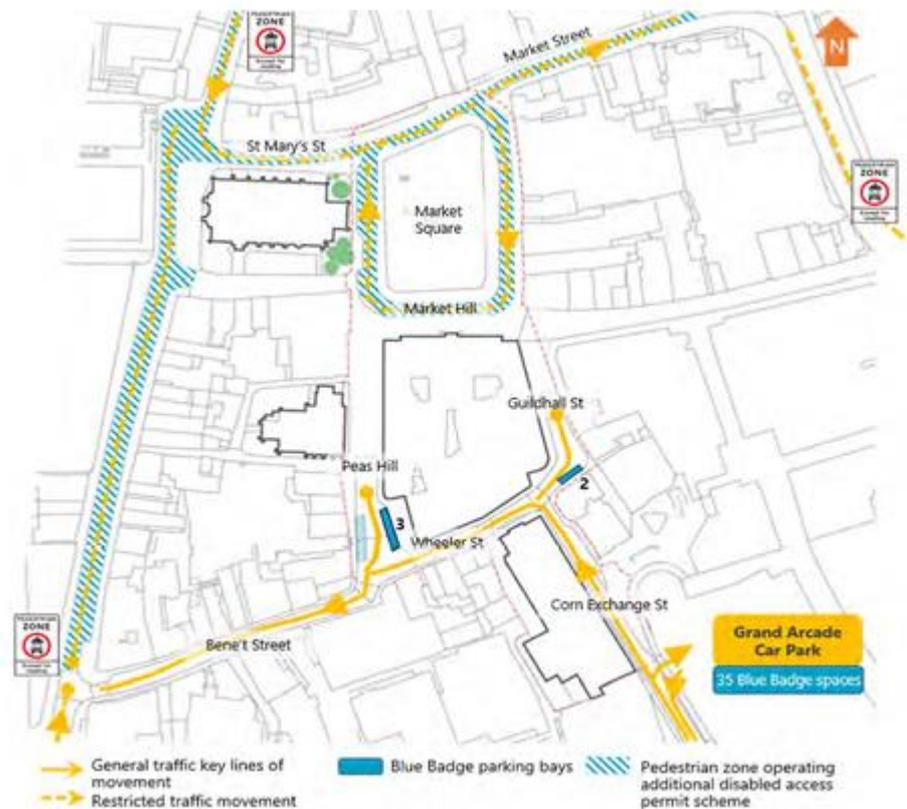


Figure 13: Existing Blue Badge Arrangements in Civic Quarter

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

## **19. Amenity**

### **Neighbouring properties**

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

### **Construction and environmental health impacts**

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

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

#### *Outdoor entertainment*

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

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

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

#### *Odours*

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

#### *Plant*

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

### *Artificial lighting*

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

### *Contaminated Land*

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

## **Summary**

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

## **20. Third party representations**

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

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

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

Table 3 Officer response to third party representations

## 21. Accessibility

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

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

## **22. Other matters**

22.1. Waste

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

## **23. Planning balance**

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

23.2. Summary of harm

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

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

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

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

*Overall*

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

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

## **24. Recommendation**

### **24.1. Approve** subject to:

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

## **25. Planning conditions**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

It shall include/ adhere to the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

carried out in accordance with the approved details.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Informatives**

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

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

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

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