

Called-in Planning Application, PIN reference APP/Q0505/V/25/3360616
RAILPEN LTD
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TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL - PROOF OF EVIDENCE THE BEEHIVE, CAMBRIDGE

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TOWNSCAPE & VISUAL APPENDICES – REFER SEPARATE DOCUMENT

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Qualifications & Experience

- 1.1.1 My name is Alastair Macquire and I hold an Honours Degree from the University of Sheffield which is a dual degree in Landscape Architecture and Planning. Following a year in the industry, I gained my Post Graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture, also at the University of Sheffield.
- 1.1.2 I am a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute.
- 1.1.3 I have over 20 years' experience in the industry having worked in several multi-disciplinary practices providing detailed landscape advice for a variety of projects in sectors ranging from residential to retail and distribution to renewables.
- 1.1.4 I regularly prepare detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs) either as stand-alone documents, evidence for presentation at public inquiry or hearing, or as chapters within wider Environmental Statements. These range from wind farm developments in sensitive rural locations to large scale employment schemes which, due to their scale, are prominent within the receiving landscape, to extensive residential led developments around existing settlements and within the countryside.
- 1.1.5 The last 23 years in the industry has allowed me to develop a thorough understanding and appreciation of how landscape character and the visual environment work in combination and how the perception of development can be moderated by variations in character and the presence of landscape features.
- 1.1.6 I am a freelance Landscape Architect and consultant for Bidwells' Landscape and Townscape Assessment team.

1.2 Statement of Truth

- 1.2.1 The evidence which I have prepared and provide for this call-in inquiry (reference APP/Q0505/V/25/3360616) in this Proof of Evidence (PoE) is true and has been prepared and is given in accordance with the guidance of my professional institution. I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.



27th May 2025

.....
Signature

.....
Date

1.3 Scope

- 1.3.1 I am instructed by the applicant, Railpen, in respect of the proposed redevelopment of the Beehive Centre (**the Application site**).
- 1.3.2 My PoE is submitted in response to an application (ref: 23/03204/OUT) for “*Outline application (with all matters reserved) for the demolition of existing buildings and structures and redevelopment of the site for a new local centre (E (a-f), F1(b-f), F2(b,d)), open space and employment (office and laboratory) floorspace (E(g)(i)(ii) to the ground floor and employment floorspace (office and laboratory) (E(g)(i)(ii) to the upper floors, along with supporting infrastructure, including pedestrian and cycle routes, vehicular access, car and cycle parking, servicing areas, landscaping and utilities. (The Development is the subject of an Environmental Impact Assessment)*” being called in by the Secretary of State.
- 1.3.3 I was not the author of the Townscape & Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) but have been instructed by Bidwells to undertake a review of the TVIA as part of preparing my evidence in response to the Secretary of State’s call-in matters.
- 1.3.4 My PoE deals with townscape and visual matters.
- 1.3.5 The Application scheme was called in by the Secretary of State (SoS) on 12th February 2025. The matters the SoS wishes to be informed about comprise:
- a) The extent to which the proposed development is consistent with Government policies for Building a strong, competitive economy in NPPF (NPPF Chapter 6);
 - b) The extent to which the proposed development is consistent with Government policies for Ensuring the vitality of town centres in NPPF (NPPF Chapter 7);
 - c) The extent to which the proposed development is consistent with Government policies for Achieving well-designed places in NPPF (NPPF Chapter 12);
 - d) The extent to which the proposed development is consistent with the development plan for the area; and
 - e) any other matters the Inspector considers relevant.
- 1.3.6 The Application scheme went to the Cambridge City Council Planning Committee in February 2025 with the Officer’s Report (CD 3.01) citing a recommendation for refusal

based on daylight and sunlight matters. Following this meeting the Putative Reason for Refusal (PRfR) from Committee was as follows:

‘By virtue of the scale, massing, and positioning of the maximum building parameters, the proposed development fails to keep potential reductions in daylight and sunlight to a minimum in St Matthew’s Gardens, Silverwood Close and other adjacent properties and gardens. The extent and degree of harm would be both wide ranging, significantly adverse and acutely felt by existing occupants. Many habitable rooms would feel poorly lit, colder, and gloomier, particularly where living rooms are concerned. Multiple gardens would also feel less pleasant and enjoyable, due to the significant increase in overshadowing that would be experienced. Moreover, the proposed development would be overly dominant and imposing on neighbouring properties, particularly in St Matthew’s Gardens and Silverwood Close, resulting in an oppressively enclosed outlook. The overall harm to residential amenity would be significantly adverse and permanent, contrary to policies 55, 56, 57 and 60 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) and paragraph 135 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).’

- 1.3.7 The PRfR relates to matters of daylight and sunlight and the effect of the proposals upon nearby residential receptors, rather than townscape and visual issues. The evidence prepared by Mr Lonergan of EB7 and Mr Kaddish of Bidwells deals with the PRfR.

1.4 **Approach**

- 1.4.1 My evidence adopts the following approach:

- Review the proposals and undertake a peer review of the Townscape & Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA, within CD 2.36c & 2.36d) that formed a chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES);
- Consider townscape and visual matters raised by 3rd parties;
- Consider the consistency of the Proposals with townscape and visual related planning policy, including Chapter 12 of the NPPF; and
- Conclusions will be drawn.

- 1.4.2 Throughout my evidence I refer to Core Documents (CD) as agreed with the Council.

- 1.4.3 The terminology in this proof of evidence follows the guidance of ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ (GLIVIA3) by the Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (Third Edition, 2013). The methodology for the Bidwells TVIA is included in Appendix 10.1 of the ES (CD 1.10), and

for ease of reference I have applied the same methodology in my own analysis of townscape and visual effects.

- 1.4.4 As paragraph 16.4 of the Officer's Report to the CCCPC (CD 3.01) states, **"The TVIA has been produced in accordance with current best practice guidance, as set out at paragraph 10.4 of the ES. This includes the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA3) by the Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (Third Edition, 2013)."**
- 1.4.5 Para 7.40 of the Statement of Common Ground (CD 6.01) confirms that the parties agree that the methodology on which the TVIA is based is appropriate and in line with the industry best practice guidance, GLVIA3, as well as other relevant technical guidance.
- 1.4.6 My evidence should be read alongside the other proofs of evidence prepared on behalf of the applicant by Mr Kaddish (planning), Mr Leonard (design), Mr Lonergan (daylight / sunlight), Mr Handforth (heritage) and Mr O'Byrne (socio-economics).

2.0 The Planning Application

2.1 The Site & its Setting

- 2.1.1 The TVIA within the ES (CD 2.36c & 2.36d) provides a detailed description of the Site and its townscape setting. The Statement of Common Ground also includes a description of the Site and its setting at paragraphs 2.1 – 2.13.
- 2.1.2 I do not intend to reproduce this entire appraisal but note that the Site lies within an urban setting, comprising a number of large scale, retail buildings. The built form associated with the Site is utilitarian in nature and does little to contribute positively to the local townscape. The buildings are set within an expansive area of hardstanding, used for customer and employee car parking, with scattered car park trees forming the limited landscape presence within the Site. The retail units back onto the eastern and south western boundaries of the Site, facing in and onto the car parks.
- 2.1.3 The Site forms an “island” which has developed as part of the organic growth of the city, located within a transitional area between the mainline railway, to the east, and areas of residential development, to the west. The Site lies within a gateway location where Coldham’s Lane crosses the railway, one of the few crossing points within this part of the city. Further retail and employment uses extend to the north of the Site and Coldham’s Lane, located within a broadly triangular parcel between the railway and Newmarket Road. The Site forms part of this townscape area of commercial land uses which extend along the railway corridor.
- 2.1.4 The townscape to the east of the railway corridor is characterised by an area of contemporary residential development. The townscape to the west of the Site comprises a variety of residential development of varying ages, scale and appearance.
- 2.1.5 The Site is not subject to any qualitative landscape or townscape designations. It is noted that the townscape to the west of the Site is covered by the Mill Road Conservation Area. The Cultural Heritage Chapter within the ES (Chapter 7, CD 2.36c) and Mr Handforth’s Heritage Evidence undertake a detailed assessment of the potential effects of the proposals upon the localised heritage assets.
- 2.1.6 The Site lies outside of the ‘Historic Core Area’ of the city, as identified on Figure F.1 within Appendix F of the Adopted Cambridge Local Plan (CD 4.04). Victoria Avenue, Emmanuel Road, Parkside and the A603 define the eastern edge of the ‘Historic Core’, with the Site located over 800m to the east of this area, beyond areas of housing and larger scale built form associated with Anglia Ruskin University. The Site lies within a more varied and contemporary townscape which has evolved (and continues to evolve) over the past 150 years.

2.2 The Proposals

- 2.2.1 The detailed description of the proposals is set out in Chapter 4 of the Statement of Common Ground (paragraphs 4.1 – 4.7, CD 6.01).
- 2.2.2 As an overview, the proposals comprise the demolition of the existing built form within the Site and the development of a series of buildings, set within areas of landscaped public realm which will comprise a mix of office and laboratory uses. The proposed development embodies 21st century Cambridge, comprising high tech laboratory space that recognises the global importance of Cambridge as a centre of research, set within high quality, landscaped public realm that creates informal public open space and makes a significant contribution to local biodiversity. The proposals are illustrated on a series of Parameters Plans which indicate land use, access and circulation, landscaping and maximum buildings heights and plots. The Parameters Plans are included within CD 2.16 – 2.20.
- 2.2.3 The proposals have been developed over a number of years by an experienced, multi-disciplinary team as well as extensive consultation and input from the Council, public consultation events and design review panel.
- 2.2.4 While this is an Outline Application, an Illustrative Scheme (IS) has been prepared which has informed the parameters plans and the detailed Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e). The Illustrative Scheme represents the likely maximum scale of the proposals and reflects the likely scenario of development that would be brought forward. The Design Code forms part of the plans and documents that would be approved as part of any planning permission. As such, the Design Code will inform the Reserved Matters Application and provides assurance that a high quality development, that responds positively to the receiving townscape and visual environment, can and will be achieved within the Site.
- 2.2.5 I review the proposed development, including approaches to mitigation, in Section 3 of my evidence.

2.3 Consideration of the Application by the Council

- 2.3.1 The Planning Application was submitted to Cambridge City Council in August 2023 and, following a scoping exercise, included a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The EIA covered a number of topics, notably Townscape & Visual and Cultural Heritage matters.
- 2.3.2 During the initial consultation period an objection was received from the Council's Landscape Team (dated 28th November 2023) which raised concerns in relation to the layout of open spaces, the Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e) and the assessment of townscape and visual effects.

- 2.3.3 Following this response, the design team undertook extensive discussions with the Council, other consultees and the community to address the concerns that had been raised. This resulted in a significant revision of the scheme which was submitted to the Council in September 2024.
- 2.3.4 The updated proposals also prompted updates to the TVIA chapter within the ES which included an updated pack of verified photomontages. These are included in Appendix 10.6A of the ES (CD 2.44a – 2.44z). The visualisations included some additional viewpoints identified by the various consultees. Notably, in relation to the TVIA, were views from St Mary the Great Church and the upper floor of the Grand Arcade car park.
- 2.3.5 The Design Codes (CD 2.64a – 2.64e) were also subject to additional further work to refine the proposals and ensure that they responded positively to the receiving townscape and visual environment.
- 2.3.6 The Council's Landscape Team commented on the revised scheme, with regard to landscape design, the Design Codes and townscape and visual matters, with responses received on 31st October 2024. The responses confirmed that the significant updates to the scheme addressed many of the original concerns in terms of the open space provision, townscape and visual matters and the Design Codes. Paragraphs 8.51 and 8.52 of the Officer's Report to Committee (CD 3.01) set out the responses from the Council's Landscape Team, stating that:

“8.51 For context, the previous response from the Landscape Team provided more detail and, while it requested minor amendments to the Design Code which have since been made, it concluded that the revised submission has successfully resolved the majority of negative and harmful impacts. Regarding landscaping and public open space, the response confirms that the proposals have been significantly improved and that there are no outstanding objections to them. Concerning the townscape and visual effects, the response confirms that the site can accommodate the proposed increase in scale and massing, with the identified harm being at an acceptably low level.

8.52 The Landscape Team consider the provision of extended public open space, new play areas and opportunities for play, increased tree planting, and other greening measures which improve biodiversity, as well as the ground-floor public offering, will positively offset the low level of harm identified. The Landscape Team are therefore able to support the development.”

- 2.3.7 As reported at paragraph 16.25 of the Officer's Report to Committee (CD 3.01), the Council's Landscape Team concluded, in relation to townscape and visual matters, that:

“the revised application successfully addresses the majority of the negative and harmful impacts of the original application proposal. While the development would result in significant change, the Landscape Team is confident that the site can accommodate the proposed increase in scale and massing. Although a state of ‘no harm’ cannot be achieved by the proposed development, the resulting harm would be at an acceptably low level. The Landscape Team consider the provision of extended public open space, new play areas and opportunities for play, increased tree planting, and other greening measures which improve biodiversity, as well as the ground-floor public offering, will positively offset the low level of harm identified...”

3.0 Review of the Proposals and the Townscape & Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA)

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 In this section of my Proof of Evidence I consider the potential effects of the proposals upon the townscape character of the Site and its setting, and also on views from publicly accessible viewpoints.
- 3.1.2 This section includes a summary of the findings of the Bidwells Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA), but also provides my own independent review of the potential townscape and visual effects. My analysis is based upon a desk top assessment of all existing reports and assessments, including consultations and comments received from the Council, and a site visit undertaken in March 2025.

3.2 Review of TVIA Methodology

- 3.2.1 As I have noted, the Council agree that the methodology within Appendix 10.1 of the ES (CD 1.10) is appropriate and reflects the industry best practice guidance (GLVIA3) as well as other relevant technical guidance (paragraph 7.40, page 21 Statement of Common Ground (CD 6.01)). The Officer's Report (CD 3.01) also confirms that the TVIA was prepared in accordance with the industry best practice guidance and supporting technical guidance.
- 3.2.2 In line with guidance set out within GLVIA3, Bidwells has undertaken an extensive desk and field based assessment with regards to the selection of representative viewpoints, and the 17 viewpoints, which form the basis of the visual assessment within the TVIA (Appendix 10.3a of the ES, CD 2.43), together with the identified receptors and associated sensitivity, were agreed with the Council during the consultation process.
- 3.2.3 Similarly, as advocated by GLVIA3, the proposed townscape receptors, informed by published character assessments and detailed fieldwork, also formed part of the baseline that was shared with, and approved by, the Council during their consideration of the Planning Application.
- 3.2.4 The TVIA was produced by an experienced chartered landscape architect.
- 3.2.5 In accordance with the requirements of Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance within the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) (CD 4.04), (see for example paragraph F.48), the potential townscape and visual effects of the proposed development were tested at an early stage in the project design process – and on an iterative, ongoing basis through the pre-application process – with the aid of detailed computer modelling

prepared by Vu City. The Vu City model has comprehensive coverage of the buildings and vegetation in Cambridge, as well as its landscape setting, and the Vu City model is often used for testing the potential effects of development in other sensitive urban environments, such as London and Oxford. Importantly, the results of the early Vu City modelling were also shared with the Council, and it is on this basis that the viewpoints within the TVIA were agreed.

- 3.2.6 In accordance with paragraph F.54 of Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance within the Adopted Cambridge Local Plan (CD 4.04), the TVIA was also accompanied by verifiable photomontages, as well as a computer generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility model (ZTV).
- 3.2.7 The ZTV assesses the potential visibility of a development taking into account the effect of topography and the built environment. The ZTV, included at the start of Appendix 10.3A of the ES (CD 2.43) provides two scenarios, one excluding the flues and one including them. The ZTV illustrates that the presence of the railway line immediately to the east increases intervisibility locally to the east, however, the built environment reduces opportunities for views, particularly to the north and south of the Site. The ZTV is a tool to inform the initial identification of viewpoints. These are then 'sense checked' in the field. As identified within the TVIA, the Site and its setting has been visited on a number of occasions by the assessors who have a good understanding of Cambridge and its setting.
- 3.2.8 The photomontages, prepared by AVR, illustrate different scenarios within the representative viewpoints and comply with the methodology set out in Landscape Institute's guidance "*Visual Representation of Development Proposals*", TGN 06/19. The verified montages are included within Appendix 10.6a of the ES (CD 2.44a – 2.44z).
- 3.2.9 In summary, the TVIA methodology thus follows the most up to date guidance, and the assessment is also supported by a ZTV and verified photomontages, which are again prepared in accordance with the most up to date guidance. In accordance with best practice, Bidwells has also consulted with the Council during the Planning Application process, agreeing methodologies and receptors, as highlighted within the Statement of Common Ground. The methodology provides an appropriate and robust basis on which to assess the proposed development.
- 3.2.10 Both the TVIA, and my own review, are assessed against the baseline of the existing Site condition. In judging the nature of effects upon character and views (i.e. beneficial, adverse or neutral), increased visibility or prominence of built form can give rise to negative townscape and/or visual effects, due to changes to the baseline condition and/or character of either landscapes and/or views.

3.2.11 However, it is also possible that prominent new buildings, if well designed, can result in positive townscape and / or visual effects. This important principle is also acknowledged at paragraph 5.37 of GLVIA3 (page 88), which states that when making a judgement about the nature of effects caused by a development (beneficial, adverse or neutral), it is important to consider not only **“the degree to which the proposal fits with existing character”** but also **“the contribution to the landscape that the development may make in its own right, usually by virtue of good design, even if it is in contrast to existing character”** (my emphasis).

3.2.12 It is clear from the extensive work that has gone into developing the Illustrative Scheme and Design Code that the proposals have sought to mitigate the adverse effects arising from the redevelopment of this site, identified through the initial design development and consultation process. As such, the proposed development presented in the Illustrative Scheme and Design Code adopts mitigation to avoid, minimise and remedy the potential significant adverse effects.

3.2.13 I note that the TVIA assessed mitigation at two stages. However, given that the Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e) forms part of the application and would form an approved document (should planning permission be granted), I have assessed the proposals at a single stage, based on the Parameters Plans (CD 2.16 – 2.20) and Design Code. The Design Code has been subject to significant design development, with input from the Council and other consultees, and incorporates the necessary mitigation as well as setting out the design controls for the development in terms of massing, height, circulation, open space, character and landscaping. The Design Code elevates the proposed development from a group of simple boxes that would typically be illustrated as part of an outline application, to a high quality, articulated scheme which responds to the townscape and visual setting of the Site. The Design Code effectively sets the bar in terms of the quality of development that would be achieved on this site. As such, a comprehensive scheme of mitigation has been incorporated as part of the submitted proposals and it is considered reasonable to assess the Outline proposals at a single stage because of the Design Codes.

3.3 Review of the Proposals

3.3.1 This is an outline application, however, to provide reassurance to the Council, consultees and community that a high quality development would be achieved, a Design Code for the Site was developed (CD 2.64a – 2.64e). The Design Code sets out guidance to inform a Reserved Matters application and covers off a wide range of topics including: layout, massing, height, architectural detailing, materials, open space, connectivity and landscaping. The Design Code forms part of the journey of the proposals, from the basic

parameters, to demonstrate how a high quality development, that will contribute positively to the receiving townscape, will be achieved. The Design Code has been developed with detailed input from the technical team as well as the Council, to ensure a robust and comprehensive set of guidelines. The Design Code will form part of the suite of approved plans and drawings, should the application be permitted.

- 3.3.2 As noted in Section 2, the proposals comprise the reimagining of the existing retail park to deliver technology and life science workspace within Cambridge, adjacent to the city centre. There is a shared vision between the Applicant and the Council, as set out within the agreed Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) from January 2022, to deliver an exemplar of sustainable development which assists the city in meeting its climate change objectives as well as repairing the urban fabric of this part of the city. The proposed development would optimise this brownfield site, providing high quality space for the knowledge industry and enhancing employment opportunities which embody 21st century Cambridge.
- 3.3.3 In terms of the nature of the proposed development, the Site's location near to the city centre of Cambridge has had a significant influence on the type of the development and uses that will be associated with the Site. Cambridge is a global centre for learning and research and the proposed redevelopment of the Beehive Site presents a real opportunity to reinforce this character and achieve the Council's aspirations in terms of sustainability, urban improvement and employment, by delivering a high quality, high tech research facility.
- 3.3.4 As identified within Mr Kaddish's evidence, changes in consumer behaviour means that large format, retail parks, such as the Site, are less in demand and, as such, the Site presents a real opportunity to reimagine a city centre brownfield site and deliver a high quality research and employment development which embodies 21st century Cambridge.
- 3.3.5 While residential uses are present within the immediate townscape to the north and west, retail and education / research uses are also present within this urban context, with the Cambridge Retail Park extending to the north east and the Anglia Ruskin University located just to the west. The proposed uses are considered to be a natural addition to the local townscape.
- 3.3.6 As illustrated by the historic maps within Mr Handforth's evidence, the townscape setting of the Site has developed in a rather organic manner, with the Site forming an island between the railway corridor and the residential uses. The townscape setting has changed within the recent past, with the St Matthews Gardens development being developed in the early 21st century, replacing a large industrial building, and residential uses emerging along the eastern side of the railway line, opposite the Site, replacing former industrial

and commercial premises. These more contemporary residential developments have been designed to optimise their sites and, as a result, typically comprise taller built form, such as 3 storey townhouses or 6 storey apartment buildings. As such, the townscape setting of the Site has an eclectic and varied character which defines this part of Cambridge in the 21st century.

- 3.3.7 The need to make best use of land, particularly urban brownfield sites, has resulted in some developments being introduced which are taller than their neighbours. These developments have been informed by their immediate and wider townscape setting and reflect the ‘incidents’ of taller buildings within the city, as identified within the analysis of Appendix F of the Adopted Local Plan (CD 4.04). The introduction of taller built form into the established city skyline has been successful elsewhere within Cambridge, creating articulation and interest beyond the historic core. The redevelopment of the Beehive Site presents an opportunity to introduce a high quality development that contributes positively to the Cambridge skyline and reflects the evolving nature of the city.
- 3.3.8 In terms of the design of the proposed development, Mr Leonard’s evidence provides a detailed analysis of the masterplan for the Site from initial inception through to the current iteration. The design of the proposals is the result of years of work by an experienced, multidisciplinary design team, as well as consultation with the Council, public and a formal design review. The design has changed considerably as result of the assessment and an iterative consultation process.
- 3.3.9 The layout of the proposals has been subject to significant design development in order to make best use of the Site as well as creating new streets and open spaces that promote legibility and connectivity. The proposals are broken down into a series of character areas which assist in placemaking and the creation of a successful innovation neighbourhood. A detailed breakdown of the proposed internal character areas is set out within Mr Leonard’s evidence.
- 3.3.10 The height and massing of the development has been carefully developed and informed by the existing receiving townscape and visual environment. Varying roof heights and careful articulation in the elevations will create a high quality, attractive and distinctive design for the proposed development that responds positively to its townscape setting. The height and massing of the proposals has been informed by a study of the silhouette and how the development would appear on the Cambridge skyline. As set out by Mr Leonard in his evidence, a series of strategies have been applied to ensure that the proposals respond positively to the wider townscape. These include: centring of mass, with taller built form set back from residential boundaries; distinct taller areas, with the taller built form creating a single point, reducing down towards the boundaries so that the proposals merge into the mature treescape that characterises the townscape; and a

varied skyline, enhancing articulation and reducing potential to form a single, linear silhouette. This approach ensures that the proposals respond positively to the evolving city and its skyline.

- 3.3.11 It is noted that within the specific plot codes, the Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e) identifies that where the office / laboratory blocks present a façade onto the northern or western boundaries they must be no greater than 3 storeys so as to create a considered and modulated interface with the neighbouring properties, and a sympathetic transition between the taller elements within the eastern part of the Site and the wider residential neighbourhoods. Mr Leonard's evidence includes a series of cross sections through the proposals and the neighbouring properties. The analysis shows how the proposed development has evolved from the original submission not only in terms of massing and height but also in terms of elevational treatments that have emerged as part of the detailed design work undertaken within the Design Codes.
- 3.3.12 Furthermore, Mr Leonard's evidence also includes a comparative analysis illustrating the relationship between residential properties and other commercial and education / research developments within the nearby townscape. The analysis illustrates the relationship between existing contemporary built form (such as the Ironworks and Brooklands) within the localised townscape setting and neighbouring terraced properties. Mr Leonard's evidence then compares that relationship with the proposals and the neighbouring properties on Silverwood Close, York Street and St Matthews Gardens. The analysis demonstrates that the neighbourly conditions that would be created are in-keeping with those found within a city such as Cambridge.
- 3.3.13 The proposals also incorporate a comprehensive scheme of landscaping, which includes the creation of public open space and areas of amenity. The creation of publicly accessible civic spaces has formed one of the key drivers to the layout to ensure a successful development, establishing useable, landscaped spaces that benefit users of the development as well as the existing community that the proposals will be introduced into.
- 3.3.14 The comprehensive landscaping scheme would not only create a high quality setting for the built form and public open space associated with the proposals, but would also contribute to the sylvan character of the city as well as significantly enhancing local biodiversity and canopy coverage. The Illustrative Scheme shows how existing treescape will be retained and enhanced through significant additional planting. The proposed landscaping will reinforce the treecover that characterises the townscape setting, as well as enhancing the buffer between the proposals and the neighbouring properties.
- 3.3.15 The Illustrative Scheme sets out the likely maximum scale of the proposals taking into account the parameters plans and the Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e). As set out within

Mr Leonard's evidence, a significant amount of consultation with the Council and other stakeholders has been undertaken and shaped the final scheme. The Design Code has formed part of this process to ensure that the standards for the proposed development are high and the proposed redevelopment of the site responds positively to the various opportunities and constraints identified during the design evolution.

- 3.3.16 The proposed masterplan, and building and landscape designs, would establish a high quality research and employment scheme which embodies 21st century Cambridge, whilst also creating a vibrant and active public realm. The masterplan illustrates how a coherent and distinctive sense of place, within an area that is currently characterised by low quality retail buildings and extensive areas of hardstanding, would be created.

3.4 Review of Townscape Effects

- 3.4.1 In accordance with best practice, the TVIA reviews existing landscape and townscape character assessments in order to provide the context for a more detailed analysis of the character of the Site. Existing character classifications are also illustrated on Map 7 within Appendix 10.2 of the ES.

- 3.4.2 The TVIA identifies that the Site lies within the 'Post 1900 Suburb' character area based on the mapping on Page 63 within the Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2003) (CD 9.01), but shares characteristics of the 'Industrial – Railway Corridor' Cambridge character type. It is noted that the extent of the 'Industrial – Railway Corridor' is not identified on the mapping within the assessment. The 2003 landscape character assessment (CD 9.01) identifies that the characteristic features of the 'Industrial - Railway Corridor' include:

- **"large warehouses and derelict sites;**
- **derelict and underused large urban spaces - gradually passing out of this phase;**
- **rail corridor gives poor impression to those entering City;..."**

- 3.4.3 The Cambridge Inner Green Belt Boundary Study (2015) (CD 9.06) provides an update to the townscape assessment of Cambridge. The 2015 study provides a more detailed map of Cambridge's townscape at Figure 7: Townscape Character which illustrates that the Site lies within Townscape Character Area 5b: 'Railway Corridor'. The map is reproduced at Figure 10.3A of the TVIA. The 2015 assessment describes the 'Railway Corridor' townscape character area at paragraph 4.7.37 and notes that:

"The railway corridor is characterised by medium and large-scale commercial, light industrial and office development on both sides of the railway line. There are also extensive areas of hard surfacing for car parks and little vegetation."

3.4.4 The mapping within the updated assessment illustrates that the Site forms part of the 'Railway Corridor' rather than the adjoining residential areas. For ease of reference, I include the map below at Figure AM1, with a zoomed in extract included at Figure AM2.

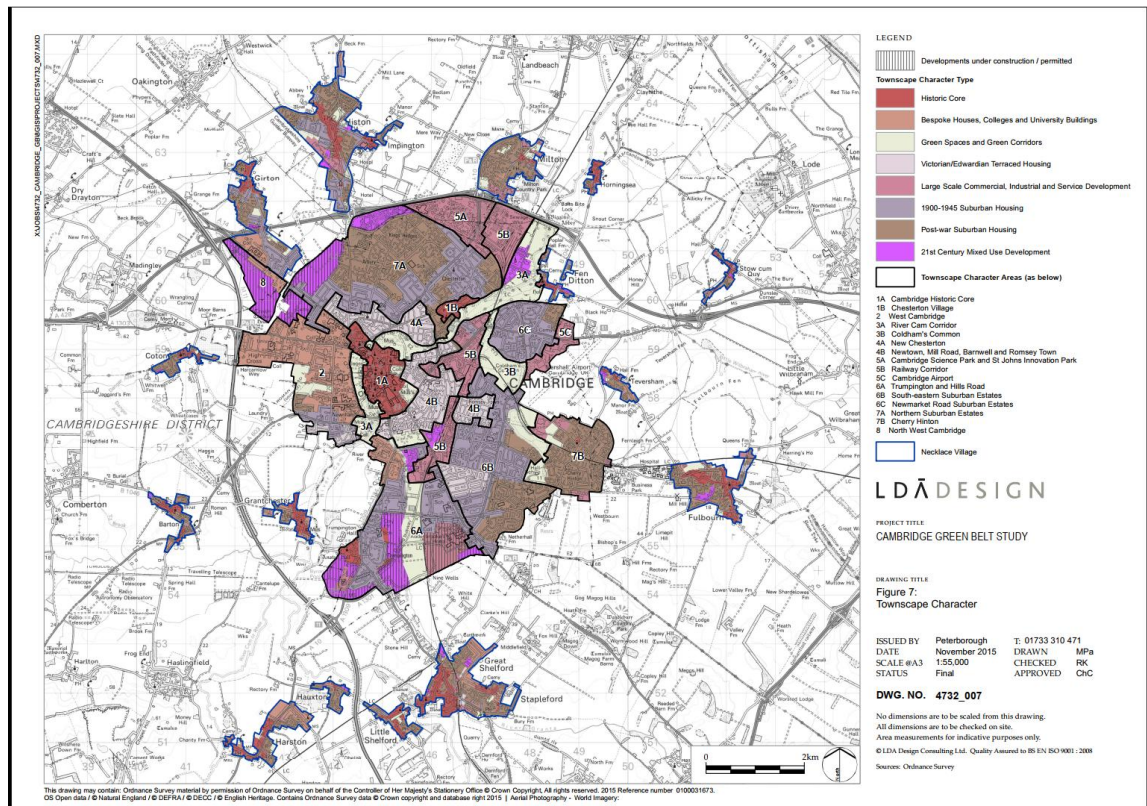


Figure AM1: Extract from 2015 Cambridge Green Belt Study – Figure 7: Townscape Character

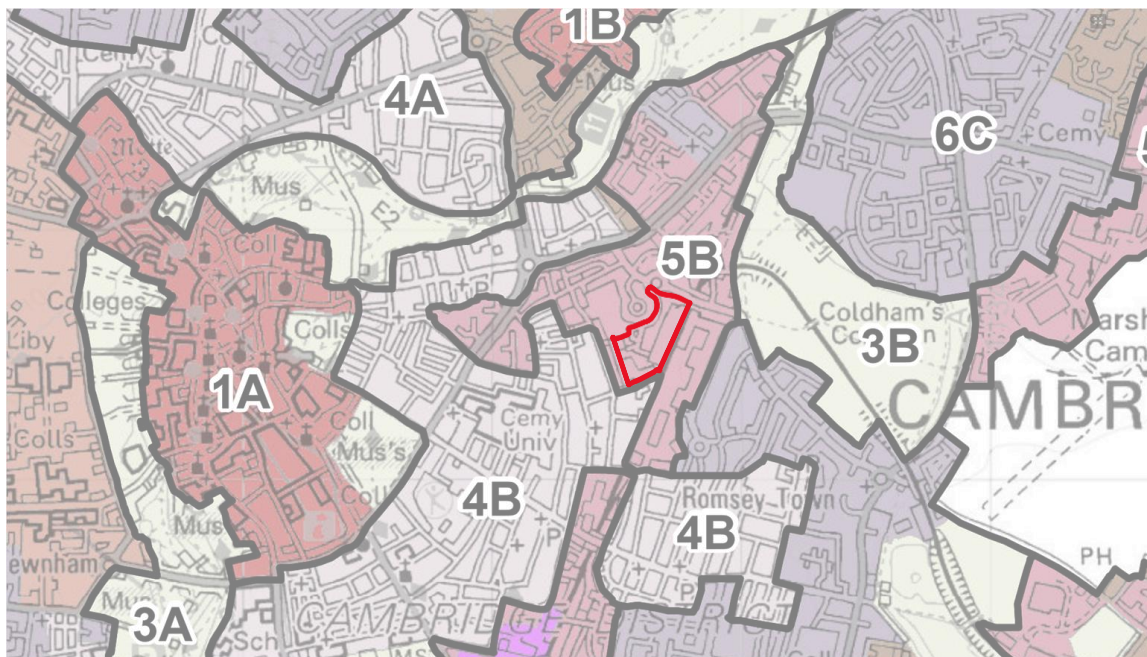


Figure AM2: Zoomed in Extract from 2015 Cambridge Green Belt Study – Figure 7: Townscape Character illustrating the Site location

- 3.4.5 It is noted that the 2015 assessment changes the townscape character reference to the residential areas adjacent to the Site from 'Post 1900 Suburb' to 'Victorian / Edwardian Terraced Housing' townscape character type, with the residential areas to the north and west of the Site identified as the 'Newtown, Mill Road, Barnwell and Romsey Town' (character area 4b). I agree with this approach as I do not consider that the area in which the site is set evokes a "suburban" character. Rather it forms a high density area of residential development that has evolved in this edge of city centre location, reinforcing the nucleated character of Cambridge. The Site and its setting are distinctly urban in character and this is supported by the updated townscape assessments.
- 3.4.6 As noted above, the Site forms an island that has been created by the organic nature of the city's growth, with the establishment of the railway and surrounding residential areas leaving a parcel of land which was then developed for retail uses. The townscape varies in terms of age, use and the scale of the built form. This is not a uniform townscape characterised by just 2 storey residential uses. Amongst the areas of terraced housing lie contemporary education facilities (Anglia Ruskin University), large footprint retail development (The Beehive Centre and Cambridge Retail Park), 5 storey residential apartments (Hampden Gardens) and entertainment development. This is clearly a varied townscape and one which has evolved, and continues to evolve, within this dynamic city.
- 3.4.7 The TVIA identifies a series of townscape receptors, which comprise:
- 'Industrial – Railway Corridor' Cambridge character type;

- 'Post 1900 Suburb' Residential character type;
- Cambridge skyline;
- Setting of open green spaces;
- Setting of the Green Belt;
- Setting of public rights of way; and
- Setting of the Mill Road Conservation Area.

3.4.8 The discussions with the Council during the application confirmed that the identified character types and townscape receptors were an appropriate reflection of the baseline in order to form basis for the assessment of effects.

3.4.9 The TVIA assesses the various townscape character types and townscape receptors in terms of value and susceptibility to inform a judgement on sensitivity. This reflects the approach advocated within GLVIA3. I concur with the assessment of susceptibility, value and sensitivity as set out in Table 10.2 of the TVIA.

3.4.10 The TVIA assesses the effect of the proposals upon the character of the various townscape receptors within Table 10.5A of the TVIA.

3.4.11 I have undertaken my own assessment of townscape effects with reference to the findings of the TVIA and this is set out within the table in **Appendix AM1** of this proof.

Summary of Appendix AM1: Assessment of Townscape Character Effects

3.4.12 An overview of my assessment within Appendix AM1 is set out below in Table AM1.

Table AM1: Summary of Townscape Character Effects

Key Townscape Receptors (inc. sensitivity)	AM Review
Industrial – Railway Corridor Cambridge Character Type (Medium – Low)	Residual Effect: Moderate Beneficial
Residential Character Type: 'Post 1900 Suburb' (Medium)	Residual Effect: Moderate Beneficial
Cambridge skyline (High)	Residual Effect: Moderate Neutral
The setting of green open spaces and setting of the Green Belt (Low)	Residual Effect: Minor Neutral
The setting of PRow (Medium)	Residual Effect: Moderate – Minor Neutral

The landscape setting of the Conservation Area (Medium – Low)	Residual Effect: Moderate Neutral
<u>Cumulative</u> effect upon the Cambridge skyline (High)	Residual Effect: Moderate Neutral

- 3.4.13 I concur with the TVIA that the proposals would result in a Moderate Beneficial effect upon the ‘Industrial – Railway Corridor’ and ‘Post 1900 Suburb’ townscape character types, as identified within the published assessments. The proposals present a significant opportunity to enhance a non-descript area characterised by utilitarian retail built form in a gateway location. This is a distinctly urban townscape and, as set out above, I do not consider that the setting of the Site comprises a suburban character.
- 3.4.14 While an unsympathetic redevelopment of the Site could result in adverse effects, it is clear that the proposals have been subject to rigorous testing and have evolved significantly from the original submission having adopted an iterative approach to the design development. As set out within the comments from the Council’s Landscape Team (CD 9.25a & 9.25b), the amendments that have been made would ensure that a high quality development would be achieved, which responds positively to the receiving townscape.
- 3.4.15 As noted above, the published character assessment for Cambridge highlights that there is an opportunity to enhance the ‘Industrial – Railway Corridor’. The proposals would create a high quality employment hub within this part of the city. The proposals have been carefully developed to create a series of character areas within the development that establish a high quality setting for the built form as well as a considered and modulated interface with the neighbouring existing townscape areas. Naturalised, landscaped boundaries create a transition between the more formal open spaces within the Site and the wider townscape to the south and west. The open spaces would contribute positively to the wider receiving townscape, forming a focal point for informal recreation and green links through to the wider Green Infrastructure network. The supportive comments from the Council’s Landscape Team dated 31st October 2024 reinforces these conclusions.
- 3.4.16 It is acknowledged that the proposals would be taller than the existing built form within the Site, however, the scheme has been carefully developed to incorporate articulation and varying heights to reduce the perceived bulk, mass and scale and the development. The Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e) demonstrates how the plots would reduce in height towards the adjacent residential areas to ensure a considered and modulated transition. The adoption of a high quality approach to architecture, as set out within the Design Code, would ensure that the proposals create a focal point development within the community which assists with placemaking and enhances the localised townscape. Again, this is reinforced by the conclusions reached by the Council’s Landscape Team in their response

dated 31st October 2024 (CD 9.25a) where they state that **“Whilst still not slender, the amended layout and the mass and scale of the parameters retains height and mass in a discrete area of the site while the remaining plots recede in prominence. The mass is retained in a more contextual part of the site where surrounding development can more easily absorb and offset the proposed scale.”**

- 3.4.17 The Council’s Landscape Team’s October 2024 comments (CD 9.25a) go on to conclude that **“The amendments to the layout result in an acceptable balance and significant enough change to the resulting impacts that we now concur with the findings in Table 10.5A. It is clear that the application results in a significant change to the local area around the site, however, it is considered that the changes result in an acceptable level of harm and change which is positively offset by the ground level offer to the public which will result in a positive feature for the development and the surrounding residents.”** (my emphasis)
- 3.4.18 I conclude that the proposals would result in Moderate Beneficial effects upon the receiving townscape character of the ‘Industrial – Railway Corridor’ and ‘Post 1900 Suburb’ townscape character types.
- 3.4.19 The Cambridge skyline is a key townscape receptor and one which has driven the design development of the proposals. My findings, in terms of the effect of the proposals upon this receptor, differ slightly from the TVIA in terms of the nature of the effect. I agree with the conclusion that the effect upon the receptor would be Moderate, but I conclude the nature of the effect would be Neutral based on the Parameters Plans and Design Code, whereas the TVIA concludes Beneficial, taking into account the final Reserved Matters scheme. The sensitive nature of this receptor has informed the height, scale and massing of the proposed development, through testing of the silhouette, so that the proposals are compatible with the wider, evolving city skyline. The iterative design process has resulted in a scheme which responds positively to the receiving townscape. As illustrated by the verified photomontages within Appendix 10.6A of the TVIA, when the design measures set out within the Design Code are applied, the proposals appear as a natural addition to the city’s skyline. While the tallest element will break the skyline in some views, the location of the Site, away from the historic core of the city, ensures that the proposals would appear as one of the ‘incidents’ of scattered taller buildings, emerging above the prevailing lower built form and trees, as referred to within Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance of the Local Plan (CD 4.04), that characterise the wider skyline of the city.
- 3.4.20 As noted above, Appendix F Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance within the Local Plan (CD 4.04) notes that tall buildings can positively affect the townscape. The proposals have been refined through a comprehensive, iterative design process which includes input from outside of the project design team. The result is a high quality addition to the wider city

skyline that will not affect the appreciation and enjoyment of the cluster of development that defines the historic core.

- 3.4.21 The Cambridge skyline is not static and has evolved over the years and will continue to evolve into the future. Views of the skyline are similarly not static, typically associated with receptors moving through the wider townscape or landscape setting. As set out within the visual assessment, where the proposals are seen within the wider city skyline, they occupy just a narrow part of the wider field of view and do not affect the character of the city. The proposals present a significant opportunity to deliver a high tech, life sciences development that embodies 21st century Cambridge, recognising the city's importance globally as a centre for research. The proposals would deliver high quality laboratory spaces in buildings of architectural merit, set within landscaped public realm of exemplary design. The proposals not only contribute positively to the receiving townscape but have been carefully designed to ensure that, where evident, they would reflect one of the 'incidents' of taller buildings emerging from the lower built form and treescape within the city's skyline. I conclude that the high quality proposals set out within the Design Code would mitigate potential adverse effects and the proposals would not negatively affect the townscape qualities associated with the skyline. Overall, I consider that the proposals set out within the Design Code are compatible with the receiving townscape and would result in a Moderate Neutral effect upon the Cambridge skyline.
- 3.4.22 With regard to the effect of the proposals upon the Conservation Area, I concur with the TVIA that the significance of the effect would be Moderate, but conclude that the nature of the effect would be Neutral rather than Beneficial when assessed against the Parameters Plans and Design Code. The proposals would replace existing low quality retail development and introduce a development of architectural merit set within a high quality landscaped context. The density of built form within the Conservation Area reduces intervisibility with the proposed development and where the proposals are glimpsed, they would not compromise the townscape setting of the wider designation. I conclude that the proposals would result in a Neutral effect upon the townscape setting of the Conservation Area. Mr Handforth's evidence deals with the relationship from a heritage perspective in detail.
- 3.4.23 With regard to the other receptors (setting of greenspace and public rights of way), I agree with the findings of the TVIA and as noted above, in their October 2024 comments (refer CD 9.25a), the Council's Landscape Team conclude that they also agree with the findings of Table 10.5A of the TVIA.
- 3.4.24 Both my own review and the TVIA conclude that the proposals would not result in any long term, significant adverse townscape effects given the substantial design development to the proposals that has occurred over the past 4 years and the controls

set out within the Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e). The proposals present the opportunity to enhance the townscape character of the Site and the ‘Railway Corridor’ character type. It is considered that the redevelopment of the low quality retail development and areas of parking would represent a positive change within this townscape context. The redevelopment of the Beehive Centre presents a significant opportunity to reimagine this edge of city centre site, making best use of brownfield land and creating a development that embodies 21st century Cambridge, delivering high tech research space that recognises the global importance of Cambridge. The proposals would deliver built form of notable architectural merit that contributes positively to the immediate setting and represents a characteristic, incident of taller development within the evolving city skyline, all set within a series of well-designed, landscaped civic spaces.

3.4.25 Where my assessment and the TVIA differ typically relates to the nature of the proposals, i.e. adverse, neutral or beneficial. We agree that before mitigation the proposed development could give rise to adverse effects. We agree that the proposals would represent a noticeable change within the localised townscape which elevates the perceived magnitude of change. However, within my assessment, I conclude that the high quality finishes advocated by the Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e) would temper the perceived adverse effects ensuring that the proposals would be compatible with the wider townscape setting, resulting in Neutral effects, and ensuring that long term adverse effects would be avoided.

3.4.26 I conclude that the proposed development could be introduced into this edge of city centre location without any long term, significant adverse townscape effects. Indeed, the receiving townscape character would experience some positive changes as a result of the redevelopment of the Site, while the high quality development set out within the Design Code would ensure that adverse effects are neutralised, particularly in relation to the Cambridge city skyline.

3.5 **Review of Visual Effects**

3.5.1 As noted above, and at paragraph 7.42 of the Statement of Common Ground, the viewpoints which formed the basis of the TVIA were identified and agreed in consultation with the Council. The views are considered representative of receptors’ visual experience of the Site, including local residential receptors, from publicly accessible locations. The original TVIA identified 15 viewpoints (1 – 14B) and, following consultation with the Council, two additional viewpoints (one from St Mary the Great Church and one from the top floor of the Grand Arcade car park) were incorporated into the TVIA.

3.5.2 The viewpoint selection was informed by the ZTV as well as Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance of the Cambridge Local Plan (CD 4.04) which identifies a series

of key views, predominantly located within the wider landscape setting of the city, from which an appreciation of the skyline and wider townscape can be enjoyed. The key views location plan from the Local Plan is reproduced at Figure 10.1 within the TVIA. For ease of reference the TVIA views and corresponding Local Plan Key Views are set out below:

Table AM2: Key Views from Appendix F of the Local Plan (CD 4.04) and their corresponding Viewpoints within the TVIA

TVIA Viewpoint	Local Plan Key View
1 - Castle Hill Mound	1
9 – Ditton Meadows	11
10 – Redmeadow Hill	3
11 – Wort's Causeway	9
13 – Little Trees Hill	7
14B – Limekiln Road	8

- 3.5.3 As set out at paragraph 7.42 of the Statement of Common Ground (CD 6.01), the viewpoints that form the basis of the visual assessment within the TVIA are agreed with the Council. Having reviewed the evidence base which sets out the reasoning for the viewpoint selection, I concur with the identified representative viewpoints.
- 3.5.4 In line with the guidance in GLVIA3, the TVIA assesses the sensitivity of the identified viewpoints arising from the value and susceptibility of the view and associated receptors. Having reviewed the baseline visual assessment within Appendix 10.3A of the TVIA, I agree with the judgements relating to the sensitivity of each view and concur that they reflect the approach set out within the agreed methodology.
- 3.5.5 I have undertaken my own assessment of visual effects with reference to the findings of the TVIA within the table at **Appendix AM2** of this proof.

Summary of Appendix AM2: Assessment of Visual Effects

- 3.5.6 The assessment within **Appendix AM2** appraises the visual effect of the proposals upon the various visual receptors identified within the TVIA and agreed with the Council. An overview of my assessment of visual effects is set out below in Table AM3.

Table AM3: Summary of Visual Effects

Visual Receptors (inc. sensitivity)	AM Review
Visitors to Castle Hill Mound Scheduled Monument (High)	Residual Effect: Moderate Neutral
Ramblers on Coldham's Common (Medium – High)	Residual Effect: Minor Adverse to Minor Neutral
Ramblers on Fen Ditton and river towpath (Medium – High)	Residual Effect: None
Ramblers on Redmeadow Hill (High)	Residual Effect: Moderate – Minor Neutral
Drivers on Wort's Causeway and Limekiln Road (Medium – High)	Residual Effect: Moderate Neutral
Ramblers on Little Trees Hill (High)	Residual Effect: Minor Neutral
Residents of the adjacent residential area to the south and west, including within the Mill Road Conservation Area (High)	Residual Effect: Minor Adverse to Minor Neutral
Pedestrians on Mill Road Bridge (Low)	Residual Effects: Minor Neutral
Visitors of the Saint Mary the Great (High – Medium)	Residual Effect: Minor Neutral
Visitors of the Grand Arcade car park (Medium)	Residual Effect: Moderate – Minor Neutral
Pedestrians on Elizabeth Way Bridge (Medium)	Residual Effect: Minor – Negligible Neutral
Visitors to The Beehive Centre (High)	Residual Effect: Moderate Beneficial

- 3.5.7 Overall, I generally agree with the identified magnitude of change arising from the proposals. Where there is some difference between my assessment and the TVIA typically relates to assessment of mitigation and the nature of the effect, i.e. adverse, neutral or beneficial. Where there are differences in opinion between myself and the TVIA, these are set out and explained within the table in Appendix AM2. While I agree that some viewpoints will experience a positive effect, within the context of the more sensitive viewpoints, it is my professional judgement that rather than the proposals giving rise to Moderate or Major – Moderate Beneficial effects, the high quality architecture advocated by the Design Code would temper potential adverse effects, arising from the increased visual presence of the built form, and ensure that the proposals appear compatible within the townscape view, resulting in a Neutral effect at this outline stage.

- 3.5.8 I do note that, in relation to Viewpoint 3 from Coldham's Common, the proximity of the viewpoint to the Site and angle of the view means that much of the eastern elevation of the development would be evident above the residential built form that defines the immediate setting of the open space. As a result, while the high quality design of the proposals, set out within the Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e), would temper the perceived adverse effect, the proposals at this outline stage could still give rise to a very low level adverse effect upon this viewpoint (I conclude Minor Adverse to Minor Neutral). However, this is a static view and the typical receptors (walkers) are transient. As such their appreciation of the proposed development will change as they move through the greenspace which lies within a distinctly urban setting. This is demonstrated by the differences between Viewpoints 2 and 3. Viewpoint 2 is also taken from one of the public rights of way crossing Coldham's Common, approximately 370m to the north of Viewpoint 3. The verified photomontages demonstrate that, within a relatively short distance, the perception of the proposed built form changes and the perceived presence is reduced due to the change in angle of view towards the Site and presence of intervening vegetation structure.
- 3.5.9 Furthermore, users of the greenspace are aware of the wider city context. This is not a rural location and built form creates a backdrop to the open space within these views and the setting of Coldham's Common. The proposals have been carefully developed to reduce the overall bulk of the built elements, creating an articulated form that does not dominate the backdrop or appear overly prominent. The articulated nature of the proposed built form compliments the varied roofscape that extends back from the edge of the parkland. As such, it is considered that potential significant adverse effects would be tempered by the high quality architectural guidance set out within the Design Code. The proposals would change some localised views but would not result in the loss of visual qualities. Overall, while some very low level adverse effects may reside these would be highly localised and the proposals could be successfully introduced into the urban setting of Coldham's Common.
- 3.5.10 As identified in relation to townscape effects, the Cambridge skyline is a particular focus for the assessment, with viewpoints 1, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14B reflecting the key views identified within Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance of the Cambridge Local Plan (CD 4.04). The verified photomontages based on these viewpoints are included within Appendix 10.6A of the TVIA. These views have informed discussions from the outset and influenced the design development of the proposals.
- 3.5.11 Viewpoint 1, from Castle Hill Mound is one of the closer views, but is well-separated from the Site. From this location, the cluster of prominent spires associated with the historic core of the city lies off to the right of the view, to the south of Castle Hill Mound, with the

more contemporary, wider varied city townscape, that extends to the east of the historic core, characterising the fore and middle ground of this view. The skyline is characterised by the varied townscape of the wider city centre, which forms a patina of roofs extending out to the east. This is not a uniform townscape rather layers of built form create variety with taller buildings emerging from the mature treescape associated with the city's green spaces. From this location, the proposals have been carefully designed to adopt a more articulated form, with most of the proposed built form set down below the horizon. It is acknowledged that the tallest element, including the flues, would break the skyline but this would not be to the same extent as the church spire to the right of the view, with the additional intervening distance ensuring that the proposals do not appear dominant. The silhouette of the proposals has been subject to substantial testing, with the original scheme amended significantly to address concerns relating to height and massing and ensure that a high quality scheme, that forms a natural addition to the city skyline, is achieved.

- 3.5.12 As advocated by the Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e), the use of a varied palette of materials incorporating recessive colours ensures that the eye is not drawn. The proposals would rise up through the mature treescape of the city with the taller element, that breaks the horizon, perceived as one of the 'incidents' of taller buildings that are present within the wider city, as identified within Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance within the Local Plan (CD 4.04). The proposals are separated from the historic core of the city, which lies further to the right of Viewpoint 1 and would appear as distinctly separate to the more traditional townscape that defines the immediate setting of the viewpoint, reflecting the nucleated character of the city.
- 3.5.13 It must be noted that the photomontage is a single frame of just one view. In reality, there is a broader panorama from Castle Hill Mound, with the focus drawn to the historic core which lies further round to the right. This is also a static view, and it must be acknowledged that visitors to Castle Hill Mound will be looking around and appreciating this view in a wider city context. I conclude that the high quality design set out within the Design Code would temper the perceived adverse effects and the proposals would not affect the qualities of this view, out over the wider city and its evolving skyline. While the TVIA concludes that the proposed development would result in a Beneficial effect at the Reserved Matters stage, I conclude that at this Outline stage the proposals would result in a Neutral effect upon the view from Castle Hill Mound.
- 3.5.14 With regard to the longer distance key views, I concur with the findings of the TVIA. The proposals, while visible, would be perceived within the context of the evolving built environment of the wider city. Where visible, the proposals would be perceived as one of the 'incidents' of taller buildings emerging from the prevailing lower built form and trees

which Appendix F of the Local Plan acknowledges as a characteristic of the changing city skyline. The proposals have been carefully developed and the silhouette thoroughly tested to ensure that, where the proposals are visible, their outline does not appear dominant and a simple, elegant form is achieved. The high quality design set out within the Design Code would ensure that the proposed built form does not draw the eye and instead forms a natural addition to the evolving skyline of the city. While the taller elements would break the skyline in some views, they would be perceived as one of the scattered 'incidents' of taller buildings that already characterise the city.

- 3.5.15 Also, as with the view from Castle Hill Mound, the views within the TVIA and accompanying photomontages represent a single frame, static view. In reality, receptors in these locations will be taking into account a wider, panoramic view as they move through the landscape. The proposals would occupy a very narrow extent of the wider field of view. Overall, the proposals could be introduced into the wider city skyline without detriment to, or loss of, visual qualities. It is concluded that the proposals would result in a Neutral effect upon the wider key views identified within Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance of the Local Plan (CD 4.04).
- 3.5.16 Viewpoints 4, 5 and 7 are located within the more localised townscape setting of the Site, just to the south and west, representing local residential receptors from publicly accessible locations. I consider that some visual receptors immediately adjacent to the Site, as illustrated by Viewpoint 4, could experience some Minor Adverse to Minor Neutral effects as a result of the increased height of built form associated with the Site (the TVIA concludes Minor Neutral). Furthermore, the urban setting of these viewpoints reduces the sensitivity to change as one might expect to see taller, varied built form within an edge of city centre location such as this. The nature of the built environment also reduces intervisibility and ensures that, where glimpsed, the proposals are perceived as part of the wider, varied townscape that characterises this part of Cambridge. As such, the residual adverse effects would be minor and limited to highly localised viewpoints immediately adjacent to the Site.
- 3.5.17 As set out in **Appendix AM1**, the Design Codes were developed to provide assurances that a high quality development would be achieved and these set out details on height, massing, neighbouring conditions and architectural treatment to ensure that a high quality scheme, that responds positively to the receiving urban setting is achieved. The Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e) will form part of the approved documents should planning permission be granted. It is noted that the Design Code states that the plots which face the residential areas to the north and west must have a maximum façade of 3 storeys to ensure a considered and modulated interface with the neighbouring properties. As set out within Mr Leonard's evidence, the refinements to the proposals have incorporated

reductions in height and massing, introduction of articulation and the identification of a sympathetic palette of materials and architectural finishes. The illustrative cross sections and comparative analysis within Mr Leonard's evidence demonstrates how the proposals would respond positively in terms of scale and massing with neighbouring properties and in relation to the localised townscape character. The proposals would not affect the qualities of views from the public realm, which are already defined by their urban setting. As such, it is concluded that the proposals, as set out within the Design Code, would result in a Minor Adverse to Minor Neutral effect near to the Site, with adverse effects reducing to neutral as distance and presence of intervening built form increases.

3.5.18 In terms of the other visual receptors, I agree with the TVIA in terms of the likely magnitude of change experienced, but consider that the high quality design set out within the Design Code will temper potential adverse effects, ensuring that the proposals are compatible with their localised and wider city setting, resulting in a Neutral effect.

3.5.19 I note that in their October 2024 consultation response, the Council's Landscape Team state that they consider that there would be some residual adverse effect upon the view from Mill Road Bridge (Viewpoint 8), although they acknowledge that this receptor is of lower significance. In my assessment of the effect of the proposals upon this view, I conclude that the context of the view ensures that the proposals are compatible, with a varied, contemporary built frontage already characterising the western side of the railway. While the proposals would be visible, they would be seen within this context of an evolving townscape and would not appear dominant or overbearing. The commentary within the Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment should be recalled, which identifies that the 'Industrial – Railway Corridor' presents an opportunity for enhancements. I consider that the proposals could be introduced into this view without affecting the visual qualities and, as such, the overall effect would be Neutral.

3.5.20 It is clear from the submissions made during the Planning Application and comments received from the Council that a considerable amount of work has been undertaken in refining the design of the proposals and the development of the Design Code ensures that a high quality development, that responds positively to the localised and wider visual environment, can and will be achieved. The scale, form and appearance of the proposals have been rigorously tested in relation to the Site's immediate setting as well as the wider city, with the silhouette of the proposals evolving to ensure that a simple, elegant form, which responds positively to the evolving city skyline, can be achieved. The proposals would represent a high quality addition to the Cambridge skyline and the more immediate townscape setting and would not affect the visual qualities of that skyline. Any residual adverse effects would be minimal and highly localised. It is concluded that the proposed

development is supportable in terms of its introduction into the receiving visual environment.

4.0 Response to 3rd Party Comments

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 It is noted that a number of 3rd parties have commented on the proposals during the application process. The comments received vary in terms of issues, however, it is noted that Better Beehive, Cambridge Past, Present & Future (CPPF) and some residents have raised concerns in relation to the effect of the proposals upon key views across the city and the scale / height of the development. This section of my evidence seeks to address these 3rd party comments from a TVIA perspective.

4.2 Effect upon Key Views of the Cambridge Skyline

- 4.2.1 The Better Beehive and CPPF Statements identify that they have concerns relating to the effect of the proposals upon the Cambridge skyline.
- 4.2.2 As set out in Section 3 of my evidence, the visual assessment within the TVIA incorporates a number of the key views of the Cambridge skyline, as identified within Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance of the Local Plan (CD 4.04), and these are agreed with the Council. The TVIA viewpoints to refer to are: 1, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14B. To assist the understanding of the potential effect of the proposals, and in line with the guidance set out within Appendix F of the Local Plan, a series of corresponding verified photomontages have been prepared, which illustrate the proposals. These are included within Appendix 10.6A of the TVIA (CD 2.44a – z).
- 4.2.3 I have undertaken my own assessment of the effects of the proposals upon the above viewpoints, as well as the Cambridge skyline, from a townscape character and visual perspective, as set out within **Appendices AM1 and AM2**.
- 4.2.4 It is clear that the proposals have been carefully and sympathetically designed so as to reduce their perceived presence on the skyline, with the revisions to the scheme made during 2024 reducing the height, scale and massing of the built form. Furthermore, the Design Code has been carefully developed to ensure that a high quality design can and will be achieved. It is accepted that the proposals would be visible on the skyline, but that does not make them unacceptable. Cambridge is a dynamic and evolving city and the assessment within Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance of the Local Plan (CD 4.04) accepts that the skyline has, and will, change as a result of the introduction of taller buildings and policy does not preclude taller built form within the city.
- 4.2.5 The key features of the Cambridge skyline are the cluster of spires and towers associated with the churches and colleges associated with the historic core of the city. However, these are not the only features within the wider city setting that characterise the perceived

skyline. As can be seen in the baseline photography which reflects the current situation, the historic core forms a cluster of towers and spires, set within a wider contemporary urban setting. As set out in my evidence, the proposals would be located well away from the historic core and the high quality design set out within the Design Codes will ensure that when viewed from key locations around the city, such as Castle Hill Mound, the proposed built form would not appear dominant or overbearing, appearing as a contemporary addition to the wider, evolving city skyline.

4.2.6 The nature of the viewpoints and associated receptors must also be acknowledged. The photographs and photomontages that accompany the application comprise single frame, static views. The representative views typically form part of a wider panorama experienced by transient receptors. As such, where visible, the proposals would only occupy a narrow extent within the wider field of view. They would not appear prominent or overbearing, nor would they affect the visual qualities of the views. Further, care must be taken when assessing the photomontages. These are prepared to be viewed at scale when printed, although there is a tendency to zoom into the images when viewing on a computer or tablet and this is not how the view would actually be perceived in reality. As illustrated by the montages, when viewed at the correct scale, the proposals would not appear dominant or at odds with the wider city skyline which is characterised by a variety of traditional and contemporary forms.

4.2.7 The comments received from the Council's Landscape Team (dated 31st October 2024) (CD 9.25a) should also be acknowledged. The Council's comments make reference to Viewpoints 1, 10, 11, 13 and 14 and conclude that:

- Viewpoint 1 – **“The accumulation of masses across the site has been resolved acceptably. The left side of the view is entirely resolved while the right side of the view has been contained to a singular high point rather than an extended length of mass. Whilst this point does break the horizon line, it does so in a manner more suited to the city skyline.”**
- Viewpoint 10 – **“The accumulation of mass has been resolved acceptably in this view. The mass no longer competes so strongly with other tall elements on the skyline and is found to be acceptable.”**
- Viewpoints 11, 13 & 14 – **“The cluster of development has become more discrete, whilst still relatively large in these views. The impact with the horizon has been reduced significantly and the sense of visual gravity has been reduced. In addition, the application of Design Code limitations furthers this improvement in an acceptable way.”**

- 4.2.8 The Council's comments recognise the considerable amount of design development that has gone into the proposals and confirm that, in their professional opinion, the proposals can be accommodated within this townscape setting without any long term, significant adverse effects upon the Key Views and Cambridge skyline.
- 4.2.9 As set out within **Appendices AM1 and AM2**, as well as Section 3 of my evidence, I consider that the proposals would be compatible with the evolving Cambridge skyline and would not adversely affect the character and qualities of the views identified within Appendix F of the Adopted Local Plan and wider townscape. It is acknowledged that the proposals would result in a degree of change, however, change need not equate to harm and the proposals have been subject to considerable design development to ensure that they respond positively to the comments received as well as the baseline situation. This is demonstrated by the comprehensive Design Code. I conclude that the proposals can be introduced into the identified key views and would not result in long term adverse effects upon the Cambridge skyline.

4.3 Scale and Height of the Proposals

- 4.3.1 It is noted that a number of the comments are concerned about the scale and height of the proposals from a residential amenity perspective. Mr Lonergan's and Mr Kaddish's evidence deal with these matters.
- 4.3.2 In terms of the proposed scale and height of the proposals from a townscape and visual perspective, as demonstrated within the TVIA, DAS, Design Code and Mr Leonard's proof, a considerable amount of work has gone into the design development of the proposals over the years. The design of the proposals has been the subject of an iterative process, with the project design team working closely with, and responding to comments from, the Council, consultees and the community. The result is a high quality scheme that responds positively to the receiving townscape as well as the wider sensitive skyline and a wide variety of townscape and visual receptors.
- 4.3.3 As set out above, and in **Appendices AM1 and AM2** of my evidence, I conclude that the proposals would, on the whole, be compatible with the receiving townscape and wider visual environment. The proposals would not result in the loss of townscape or visual qualities and, in some cases, would result in positive townscape effects. The proposed redevelopment of the Site would incorporate the creation of new public open spaces for informal recreation and biodiversity enhancements. These spaces break up the new built environment and would ensure that a considered and modulated interface with the existing adjacent land uses is achieved. The Design Code demonstrates that the proposed buildings would respond positively to the neighbouring properties to the south and west, with the built form stepping down towards the boundaries of the Site.

- 4.3.4 As set out within my assessment of visual effects, and demonstrated by the verified photomontages in Appendix 10.6A (CD 2.44a – 2.44z), it is acknowledged that the proposals would be visible, but that does not make them harmful or unacceptable. The use of high quality architectural finishes, articulation and materials, as set out within the Design Code, would ensure that the proposals can be successfully introduced into the receiving urban context and would form one of the ‘incidents’ of taller buildings emerging from the prevailing lower built form and treescape within the wider skyline, which Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance of the Local Plan (CD 4.04) identifies is an existing characteristic.
- 4.3.5 As set out above, the Cambridge skyline is not static and continues to evolve as the city grows and changes. The city has a nucleated character which has developed in an organic manner as features, such as the railway and highway network, have influenced and shaped the growth of Cambridge. The proposals would be distinctly separate to the cluster of towers and spires that characterise the historic core of the city and, where visible, would be perceived in the context of other, more contemporary built form. Furthermore, as set out within Mr Leonard’s evidence considerable work has gone into refining the silhouette of the proposals to ensure that the development avoids the creation of a visually merged, large block. Rather a high quality development of architectural merit will be achieved that contributes positively to the evolving Cambridge townscape.
- 4.3.6 The CPPF Statement considers that the proposals would be “overpowering” in terms of views from Coldham’s Common. I disagree with these conclusions and as set out within **Appendix AM2** in relation to Viewpoints 2 and 3, while I accept that there would be a low level adverse effect upon Viewpoint 2, the urban setting of the green space is an existing component and the receptor is aware of their location within the city. The built form that surrounds the parkland is architecturally unremarkable, with layers of development stepping back, and up, from the green space. The proposals would be perceived within the context of the wider townscape of the parkland, with the refined proposals creating an articulated form that gently rises above the roofscape, but does not appear significantly out of scale. The careful design that has gone into the Design Code also ensures that a development of particular architectural merit can and will be achieved here. These are also transient, changing views and as the receptor moves through the space their perception of the proposed development will change. The proposals have been carefully designed to adopt a high quality, articulated form. The proposals would not appear dominant and would not affect the public’s enjoyment of the greenspace.
- 4.3.7 The CPPF Statement also makes reference to the redevelopment of the Grafton Centre, stating that, cumulatively, the two developments would create an “exceptionally large area of bulky, flat roofed development in direct contrast to historic assets”. The photomontages

(CD 2.44a – 2.44z) are helpful in understanding the potential cumulative effects of the proposals and the development at the Grafton Centre. The cumulative visuals also include other consented schemes and schemes in planning referred to within the cumulative assessment (refer Cumulative Key Plan within CD 2.44a). As noted above, when the visuals are viewed at the correct scale, the new developments reflect the varied roofscape that characterises the wider city. The articulated roofscape ensures that the proposed and approved developments do not appear as a single large mass rather they complement the horizontal character of these panoramic views. Just because the proposals contrast to the historic core does not automatically equate to harm, rather it ensures that there is a clear separation between the cluster of the traditional built form associated with the historic core and the wider, more contemporary city setting of 21st century Cambridge.

- 4.3.8 The proposals have been subject to rigorous testing and critical review. The Council's Landscape Team confirm that any residual adverse effects would be low level and would be outweighed by the open space and landscape enhancements that the scheme would deliver. As set out within my evidence, I conclude that the proposed development would be compatible with the evolving city, distinctly separate to the historic core and presenting a significant opportunity to develop this brownfield site, delivering high tech life sciences laboratories that embody 21st century Cambridge and recognise the city's standing as a global centre for research. I acknowledge that the scale of the proposed built form could give rise to some adverse visual effects, however, these would be highly localised to the immediate setting of the Site and would be minor at worst. The high quality development set out within the Design Code, would ensure that the scale and height of the proposals does not give rise to long term, significant adverse townscape or visual effects. Indeed, the carefully designed proposals would give rise to some beneficial effects upon the receiving townscape character.

5.0 Consistency with Townscape Related Planning Policy

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Within the reasons for calling in the application, the Secretary of State makes reference to the extent to which the proposed development is consistent with Government policies for Achieving well-designed places in NPPF (NPPF Chapter 12). It is noted that the Officer's Report to Committee states that there would be a slight conflict with Policies 60 and 67 of the Cambridge Local Plan (paragraph 16.26). This section of my evidence assesses the compliance of the proposals with the identified policies from a townscape and visual perspective.
- 5.1.2 It is noted that Mr Leonard's Proof of Evidence addresses design, architecture and masterplanning from a policy perspective.

5.2 Response to Chapter 12 of the NPPF

- 5.2.1 Chapter 12 of the NPPF relates to achieving well-designed places. The framework identifies that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable building and places is fundamental and that good design is a key aspect in creating better places in which to live and work as well as making development more acceptable to communities. The framework identifies that effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interested parties is also key. As set out within my evidence, the design development of the proposals has adopted an iterative approach with considerable engagement with the Council and other stakeholders to ensure that the proposals respond sensitively and positively to the receiving townscape and visual environment. It is clear that the proposals have undergone critical review and testing during the course of the application, with the result being a high quality development that will enhance the localised townscape as well as be compatible with the wider city. This is reinforced by the comments made by the Council's Landscape Team in October 2024 (CD 9.25a).
- 5.2.2 The proposals are supported by a comprehensive Design Code for the Site, which has been developed with input from the Council and takes into account the more sensitive receptors associated with the Sites localised and wider setting. The Council's Landscape Team comments from October 2024 confirm that they are supportive of the Design Code which addresses their previous comments and concerns. The Design Code will form part of the suite of approved documents should planning permission be granted.

5.2.3 Paragraph 135 sets out a series of requirements for new development. Table AM4, below addresses each of the criteria.

Table AM4: Compliance with Paragraph 135 of the NPPF

Paragraph 135 Requirement	Do the Proposals comply?
<i>A) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;</i>	Yes – The proposals present an opportunity to replace a non-descript retail development with a new employment and research facility that includes significant new publicly accessible open space provision. The inclusion of a comprehensive scheme of landscaping will also ensure the long term, positive contribution of the proposed development.
<i>B) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;</i>	Yes – While this is an outline application, a comprehensive Design Code has been prepared, with input from the Council and other stakeholders, to ensure that a high quality development, which responds positively to the receiving townscape and visual environment, is achieved.
<i>C) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);</i>	Yes – The proposals would replace an area of utilitarian retail development and hardstanding alongside the railway corridor, which the local character assessment identifies as presenting an opportunity for enhancement. The relationship between the proposals and the neighbouring residential areas has informed the design development, with the Design Code ensuring that a high quality development can be achieved.
<i>D) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;</i>	Yes – The Design Code sets out how the proposed development would create a high quality, distinctive scheme. The Council's Landscape Team's comments from October 2024 confirm that the Design Code addresses their outstanding comments and concerns.

<i>E) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and</i>	Yes – The proposals seek to optimise this edge of city centre site through the use of taller built form to deliver a comprehensive scheme of office and laboratory space which utilises a brownfield site and recognises the global importance of Cambridge as a centre for research and learning. In addition, the proposals would deliver a network of publicly accessible, landscaped civic spaces which would not only create a high quality setting for the proposed built form but contribute positively to the local community.
<i>F) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.</i>	Yes – As set out within the DAS, Design Code and Mr Leonard's evidence, the proposals would achieve this objective.

- 5.2.4 As set out above, it is considered that the proposals comply with the requirements of paragraph 135.
- 5.2.5 The Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e) would ensure that outstanding and innovative design would be incorporated into the proposed development.
- 5.2.6 The proposals would include a comprehensive scheme of landscaping, creating a high quality setting for the proposed built form, as well as ensuring a sympathetic transition with the neighbouring properties, significantly enhancing biodiversity and responding positively to climate change. The proposals also include a network of landscaped open spaces, including a new civic park, that will not only contribute positively to the proposed development but also the surrounding communities.
- 5.2.7 It is concluded that the proposals comply with the objectives and requirements of Chapter 12 of the NPPF.

5.3 Response to Policy 57

5.3.1 Policy 57 of the Adopted Cambridge Local Plan related to designing new buildings and states that:

“High quality new buildings will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they:

- a. have a positive impact on their setting in terms of location on the site, height, scale and form, materials and detailing, ground floor activity, wider townscape and landscape impacts and available views;...”**

5.3.2 Mr Leonard’s evidence sets out the significant design development that the proposals have undergone since the inception of the project, that has culminated in the Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e) and Parameters Plans (CD 2.16 – 2.20). The considered and iterative design process ensures that the proposals respond positively to their townscape setting. The comments received from the Council’s Landscape Team in relation to townscape and visual matters (CD 9.25a & 9.25b) support the approach taken and the design of the proposals. As set out within the TVIA and my evidence, the proposals would have a positive effect upon the receiving townscape character and would be compatible with the character of the evolving Cambridge skyline. Within the Key Views, identified by the Local Plan, the proposals would conserve the visual qualities of these views and the public’s appreciation of the city. It is considered that the proposals comply with Policy 57.

5.4 Response to Policy 60

5.4.1 Policy 60 of the Adopted Cambridge Local Plan relates to tall buildings and the skyline in Cambridge. It is noted that the policy does not preclude taller built form but sets out a series of criteria against which new tall development will be assessed. Table AM5 assesses the proposals against these criteria from a townscape and visual perspective.

Table AM5: Compliance with Policy 60 of the Adopted Cambridge Local Plan

Policy 60 Criteria	Do the Proposals comply?
<i>a) location, setting and context – applicants should demonstrate through visual assessment or appraisal with supporting accurate visual representations, how the proposals fit within the existing landscape and townscape</i>	Yes – The proposals have been developed over a number of years with detailed input from a broad technical team and have adopted an iterative approach to the design evolution, with inputs from the Council and other stakeholders. The proposals have been informed by detailed site assessments, use of the VuCity modelling and technical

	advice from landscape architects, townscape and urban designers, architects and engineers. The Planning Application is supported by a comprehensive suite of plans, cross sections, elevations and visualisations. A full set of verified photomontages, illustrating the proposals in the context of the agreed representative viewpoints, which include Key Views from Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance of the Local Plan (CD 4.04), accompany the TVIA at Appendix 10.6A (CD 2.44a – 2.44z) The verified montages, informed by the Design Code, illustrate that the proposals have sought to minimise the scale and mass of the built form while ensuring that the best use of the site is made, with the high quality architectural finishes and materials ensuring that the development does not draw the eye. As set out in section 3 of my evidence, I consider that the proposals can be introduced without detriment to the character and appearance of the Cambridge skyline.
<i>b) impact on the historic environment - applicants should demonstrate and quantify the potential harm of proposals to the significance of heritage assets or other sensitive receptors (view of, backdrop and setting), assessed on a site-by-site basis but including impact on key landmarks and viewpoints, as well as from the main streets, bridges and open spaces in the city centre and from the main historic approaches, including road and river, to the historic core. Tall building proposals must ensure that the character or appearance of Cambridge, as</i>	Yes – Mr Handforth’s evidence deals with matters relating to heritage. With regard to the effect of the proposals upon the characteristic skyline, as set out within Section 3 of my evidence and the supporting tables in Appendices AM1 and AM2, I consider that the proposals can be introduced without detriment to the character and appearance of the Cambridge skyline. The Site is located away from the historic core and while the proposals would be visible, when the high quality architecture set out within the Design Code is applied, they would be compatible with the wider city skyline and would not adversely affect the perceived setting of the cluster of historic towers and spires of the city, appearing as one of the ‘incidents’ of taller buildings emerging from the mature treescape within the wider townscape, that characterises the Cambridge skyline.

<i>a city of spires and towers emerging above the established tree line, remains dominant from relevant viewpoints as set out in Appendix F</i>	
<i>c) scale, massing and architectural quality – applicants should demonstrate through the use of scaled drawings, sections, accurate visual representations and models how the proposals will deliver a high quality addition to the Cambridge skyline and clearly demonstrate that there is no adverse impact</i>	Slight Conflict – As set out within the application drawings, DAS, Design Code and Mr Leonard's evidence, the proposals have been subject to significant design development to manage the perceived scale and massing of the proposals and ensure that they can be introduced into the receiving townscape and wider city skyline without long term adverse effects. The Design Codes have been developed alongside the Council to ensure that a high quality development, that responds positively to its townscape setting, can and will be achieved within the Site. It is concluded that the high quality development, as set out within the Design Code, would give rise to positive effects upon the townscape character. As set out within Appendix AM2, it is acknowledged that some highly localised, low level adverse effects may remain from viewpoints immediately adjacent to the Site and from some locations on Coldham's Common. However, the residual effects would be Minor Adverse to Minor Neutral, reducing to Minor Neutral within a short distance. Within the context of the city skyline, it is concluded that the proposals set out within the Design Code would be compatible with the evolving townscape, beyond the historic core, and would not result in adverse effects upon the Cambridge skyline.
<i>d) amenity and microclimate – applicants should demonstrate that there is no adverse impact on neighbouring buildings and open spaces in terms of the</i>	Mr Lonergan's, Mr Kaddish's and Mr Leonard's Evidence deal with matters of amenity.

<i>diversion of wind, overlooking or overshadowing, and that there is adequate sunlight and daylight within and around the proposals</i>	
<i>e) public realm – applicants should show how the space around tall buildings will be detailed, including how a human scale is created at street level</i>	Yes – The Design Code illustrates the comprehensive network of open spaces that would be created as part of the proposals, with visualisations and cross sections providing an understanding of the scale of the development and the interface between the built form and public realm.

- 5.4.2 As set out within Table AM4, there is a slight conflict with Policy 60 due to the wording of the policy, which requires “no adverse effects”. The policy clearly does not preclude tall built form within Cambridge and the TVIA and my evidence demonstrate that the redevelopment of this edge of city centre site could be achieved with only Minor Adverse to Minor Neutral effects perceived near to the Site. Indeed, most assessed receptors would experience a neutral or beneficial effect as a result of the proposed development, ensuring compliance with the policy.
- 5.4.3 It is noted that Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance of the Local Plan (CD 4.04) identifies that proposals for taller buildings should include detailed townscape or landscape and visual impact assessments, either as stand-alone documents or as part of a wider Environmental Statement and that these assessments should be supported by verified visualisations. The Appendix also advocates engaging with the Council to ensure a collaborative and iterative approach to the design development. The proposals for the Site comply with these requirements. A TVIA formed part of the Planning Application and, as set out in my evidence, provides a robust assessment of the potential townscape and visual effects. The TVIA was supported by a full set of verified photomontages illustrating the maximum parameters of the proposals and the proposed development once the controls set out within the Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e) are applied. The Council has been engaged from an early stage, from pre-app through the application stage. This engagement has ensured that assessment methodology, townscape receptors and viewpoints have been agreed between the parties from an early stage.
- 5.4.4 Mr Kaddish’s evidence deals with the matter of planning balance and the weight that should be given to the slight conflict with Policy 60 as well as setting out the various benefits associated with the proposals. It is considered that any residual adverse effects would be outweighed by the benefits of the proposed development.

5.5 Response to Policy 67

- 5.5.1 Policy 67 of the Adopted Cambridge Local Plan relates to the protection of open space. It is not clear how the proposals would be contrary to this policy given the brownfield nature of the Site. There is no open space of recreational or environmental importance currently associated with the Site, which currently comprises a series of retail units and associated car parking and service yards. Furthermore, the proposals would not harm the character of such a space within the localised or wider townscape setting. The proposals would create new publicly accessible open space that would contribute positively to informal recreation provision, biodiversity enhancements and canopy coverage. The creation of a new civic park, Hive Park, together with the network of spaces across the wider site (including Maple Square, The Lanes, Garden Walk and Abbey Grove) are all considered to represent a positive addition to the Site that will also contribute positively to the localised townscape and community in terms of publicly accessible open space of recreational and environmental importance. It is considered that the proposals comply with Policy 67.

6.0 Summary and Conclusions

6.1 Summary

- 6.1.1 My name is Alastair Macquire and I hold an Honours Degree from the University of Sheffield which is a dual degree in Landscape Architecture and Planning. Following a year in the industry, I gained my Post Graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture, also at the University of Sheffield. I am a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute.
- 6.1.2 I am instructed by the applicant, Railpen, in respect of the proposed redevelopment of the Beehive Centre. My Proof of Evidence deals with townscape and visual matters. My evidence undertakes a review of the submitted TVIA and the Council's response to the proposals.
- 6.1.3 The TVIA has been undertaken in accordance with the relevant industry best practice guidance and the assessment methodology is agreed with the Council.
- 6.1.4 The TVIA has been developed in conjunction with discussions with the Council, informing the identification of townscape and visual receptors. The receptors that form the basis of the assessment within the TVIA are agreed with the Council.

Effect upon Townscape Character

- 6.1.5 Both my own review and the TVIA conclude that the proposals would not result in significant adverse effects upon townscape character given the substantial design development to the proposals that has occurred over the past 4 years, the comprehensive Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e) and the urban context of the Site. This is also supported by the findings of the Council's Landscape Team, (CD 9.25a).
- 6.1.6 Table AM6, below, summarises the assessment of effects upon townscape character within **Appendix AM1**.

Table AM6: Summary of Townscape Character Effects

Key Townscape Receptors (inc. sensitivity)	AM Review
Industrial – Railway Corridor Cambridge Character Type (Medium – Low)	Residual Effect: Moderate Beneficial
Residential Character Type: 'Post 1900 Suburb' (Medium)	Residual Effect: Moderate Beneficial
Cambridge skyline (High)	Residual Effect: Moderate Neutral

The setting of green open spaces and setting of the Green Belt (Low)	Residual Effect: Minor Neutral
The setting of PRow (Medium)	Residual Effect: Moderate – Minor Neutral
The landscape setting of the Conservation Area (Medium – Low)	Residual Effect: Moderate Neutral
<u>Cumulative</u> effect upon the Cambridge skyline (High)	Residual Effect: Moderate Neutral

- 6.1.7 Both my own review and the TVIA conclude that the proposals would not result in any long term, significant adverse townscape effects given the substantial design development to the proposals that has occurred over the past 4 years and the controls set out within the Design Code (CD 2.64a – 2.64e).
- 6.1.8 The proposals present the opportunity to enhance the townscape character of the Site and the 'Railway Corridor' character type through the creation of a high quality development that embodies 21st century Cambridge and recognises the global importance of the city. The proposals would represent a high quality reimagining of this site and it is considered that the replacement of the low quality retail development and areas of parking would represent a positive change within this townscape context. The redevelopment of the Beehive Centre presents a significant opportunity to deliver high tech life science research facilities within this edge of city centre site, making best use of brownfield land and creating a development of notable architectural merit that contributes positively to the immediate setting and forms one of the 'incidents' of taller development within the evolving city skyline, all set within a series of well-designed, landscaped civic spaces.
- 6.1.9 Where my assessment and the TVIA differ typically relates to the nature of the proposals, i.e. adverse, neutral or beneficial. We agree that before mitigation the proposed development could give rise to adverse effects. We agree that the proposals would represent a noticeable change within the localised townscape which elevates the perceived magnitude of change. However, within my assessment, I conclude that the scale, massing, articulation, open spaces and high quality finishes advocated by the Design Code would temper the perceived adverse effects, ensuring that the Outline proposals would be compatible with the wider townscape setting and long term adverse effects would be avoided.
- 6.1.10 I conclude that the proposed development could be introduced into this edge of city centre location without significant adverse effects upon the townscape character. Indeed, the immediate receiving townscape would experience some positive changes as a result of the redevelopment of the Site, while the high quality development set out within the Design

Code would ensure that adverse effects are neutralised, particularly in relation to the Cambridge city skyline.

Effect upon the Visual Environment

- 6.1.11 In terms of effects upon visual receptors, while there are some slight differences of opinion between my findings and the TVIA, overall, we are in agreement that the proposed development could be introduced without significant adverse visual effects. While some highly localised visual receptors immediately adjacent to the Site and on Coldham's Common would experience a degree of change, the considered approach set out within the Design Code would ensure that perceived adverse effects would be very low level or neutralised altogether, and would ensure that the proposals respond positively to the receiving visual environment. Indeed, some receptors would experience beneficial effects through the introduction of a scheme of notable architectural merit set within high quality, landscaped civic spaces.
- 6.1.12 Table AM7, below, summarises the assessment of visual effects within **Appendix AM2** of my evidence.

Table AM7: Summary of Visual Effects

Visual Receptors (inc. sensitivity)	AM Review
Visitors to Castle Hill Mound Scheduled Monument (High)	Residual Effect: Moderate Neutral
Ramblers on Coldham's Common (Medium – High)	Residual Effect: Minor Adverse to Minor Neutral
Ramblers on Fen Ditton and river towpath (Medium – High)	Residual Effect: None
Ramblers on Redmeadow Hill (High)	Residual Effect: Moderate – Minor Neutral
Drivers on Wort's Causeway and Limeclin Road (Medium – High)	Residual Effect: Moderate Neutral
Ramblers on Little Trees Hill (High)	Residual Effect: Minor Neutral
Residents of the adjacent residential area to the south and west, including within the Mill Road Conservation Area (High)	Residual Effect: Minor Adverse to Minor Neutral
Pedestrians on Mill Road Bridge (Low)	Residual Effects: Minor Neutral
Visitors of the Saint Mary the Great (High – Medium)	Residual Effect: Minor Neutral

Visitors of the Grand Arcade car park (Medium)	Residual Effect: Moderate – Minor Neutral
Pedestrians on Elizabeth Way Bridge (Medium)	Residual Effect: Minor – Negligible Neutral
Visitors to The Beehive Centre (High)	Residual Effect: Moderate Beneficial

6.1.13 Overall, I generally agree with the identified magnitude of change arising from the proposals within the TVIA. Where there is some difference between my assessment and the TVIA, this typically relates to the assessment of mitigation and the nature of the effect, i.e. adverse, neutral or beneficial. While I agree that some viewpoints will experience a positive effect, within the context of the more sensitive viewpoints, it is my professional judgement that rather than the proposals giving rise to Moderate or Major – Moderate Beneficial effects, the high quality architecture advocated by the Design Code would temper potential adverse effects, arising from the increased visual presence of the built form, and ensure that the proposals appear compatible within the townscape view, resulting in a Neutral effect at this outline stage.

6.1.14 While my approach to the assessment of effects differs slightly from the TVIA, the overall outcome is broadly the same, i.e. that while there may be some residual adverse effects arising from the proposed development, these would be very low level and highly localised. Overall, the proposals present an opportunity to redevelop this brownfield site near to the city centre and deliver high quality employment and research space that responds positively to the receiving townscape and wider visual environment, forming part of 21st century Cambridge. Importantly, the proposals would not result in long term adverse effects upon the identified key views of Cambridge's Historic Core (as identified in Appendix F of the Cambridge Local Plan) or the public's appreciation and enjoyment of the city's townscape. Any residual adverse effects would be minimal and highly localised. It is concluded that the proposed development is supportable in terms of its introduction into the receiving visual environment.

Response to 3rd Party Comments

6.1.15 As set out within my evidence, I consider that the concerns raised by the 3rd parties broadly reflect those initial comments made by the Council's Landscape Team. However, as set out within the DAS and TVIA, and reported in the Officer's Report to Committee, the proposals underwent a significant redesign during the application process to address concerns relating to massing and the Cambridge skyline. As identified by the Council's Landscape Team's comments in October 2024 (CD 9.25a) these improvements to the

scheme address the initial concerns and ensure that any residual adverse effects are low level and would be outweighed by the comprehensive scheme of enhancements. The Design Code sets the bar in terms of the design of the proposals and demonstrates that a high quality development, which responds positively to the receiving townscape, would be achieved.

6.1.16 I conclude that while the proposals would represent a slight change to the Cambridge skyline, change need not equate to harm and the proposals would occupy a very narrow extent of the wider field of view, as well as being located away from the cluster of historic towers and spires within the central core of the city. I conclude that the proposals would not adversely affect the public's appreciation and enjoyment of the historic core of Cambridge. The city has evolved in an organic manner resulting in a varied skyline, with a mix of historic and more contemporary buildings evident. The proposals would represent an acceptable addition to the townscape, forming one of the 'incidents' of taller buildings, as identified within the Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline guidance of the Adopted Local Plan, that characterise Cambridge.

6.1.17 It is clear from the submissions made during the Planning Application, and comments received from the Council, that a considerable amount of work has been undertaken in refining the design of the proposals. Furthermore, the development of the Design Code ensures that a high quality development, that responds positively to the localised and wider visual environment, can and will be achieved. The scale, form and appearance of the proposals have been rigorously tested in relation to the Site's immediate setting as well as the wider city context, with the silhouette of the proposals evolving to ensure that a simple, elegant form can be achieved, which will represent a positive addition to the evolving skyline, but that also responds positively to the more immediate, neighbouring properties and townscape setting. The proposals would represent one of the 'incidents' of taller buildings emerging from the prevailing lower built form and treescape that Appendix F of the Local Plan identify as characteristic of the Cambridge skyline and would not adversely affect the visual qualities of the key views identified within the Adopted Local Plan.

Effect upon Townscape Policy

6.1.18 In terms of national and local policy, I consider that the proposals comply with the aims and objectives relating to design, as set out within Chapter 12 of the NPPF. While there would be a slight conflict with Policy 60, as set out within Mr Kaddish's evidence, any harm would be slight and would be mitigated by the other benefits arising from the proposed development.

- 6.1.19 As set out within my assessment, the few residual adverse effects would be very low level and highly localised. Furthermore, change need not equate to harm and while a number of receptors would experience some change, the low quality development currently associated with the Site, its urban context and the opportunities to deliver a high tech research and employment development that embodies 21st century Cambridge, together with the desire to deliver high quality architecture, must be acknowledged. The proposals have been carefully designed to ensure that perceived adverse effects are limited and highly localised to the immediate setting, with most receptors experiencing either a neutral or beneficial change. The comprehensive scheme of landscaping, open space and other benefits to improve this urban brownfield site would outweigh any residual adverse effects. Mr Kaddish's evidence undertakes a detailed planning balance exercise.

6.2 Conclusions

- 6.2.1 As set out within my evidence, the proposals have been subject to significant design development which includes detailed liaison with the Council and other stakeholders. This iterative approach has culminated in the Illustrative Scheme which forms the basis of the detailed Design Code and Parameters Plans. The Illustrative Scheme demonstrates how the Site could be developed to make best use of the land within this urban location and reflects the most likely scenario that would come forward. The Design Code sets the bar in terms of the quality of design and relationship between the proposed development and neighbours and will ensure that a high quality, well-considered scheme of significant architectural merit can be achieved.
- 6.2.2 The iterative process to the design development is evident within the Council's assessment of the proposals, with officer's concluding that any residual adverse effects would be low level and mitigated by the delivery of a high quality development within a landscaped setting.
- 6.2.3** I conclude that the proposed redevelopment of the Beehive site could be accommodated without any significant adverse townscape character or visual effects. My evidence demonstrates that where any adverse effects remain at the Outline stage, these would be very low level and highly localised, with most receptors experiencing a neutral or beneficial effect. The proposals present a significant opportunity to reimagine this site and deliver a high tech scheme that embodies 21st century Cambridge and recognises the global importance of the city as a centre for research. Mr Kaddish undertakes a detailed planning balance assessment within his evidence and concludes that any low level residual adverse effects would be outweighed by the benefits of the proposed development. I therefore submit that the proposed development is acceptable from a townscape and visual perspective.

7.0 Glossary

IS – Illustrative Scheme

LCA – Landscape Character Area

LCT – Landscape Character Type

NCA – National Character Area

PRfR – Putative reason for refusal

SOCC – Statement of Common Ground

Townscape receptors – Defined aspects of the townscape resource that have the potential to be affected by the proposal.

Visual receptors – Individual and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by the proposal.

ZTV – Zone of Theoretical Visibility: A map, usually digitally produced, showing areas of land within which development is theoretically visible.

TOWNSCAPE & VISUAL APPENDICES – REFER SEPARATE DOCUMENT

