Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Emmanuel and Gonville and Caius College
Land Opposite Wilberforce Road, Cambridge
26 September 2013
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Quality Assurance

Site name: Land Opposite Wilberforce Road, Cambridge
Client name: Gonville & Caius College
Type of report: Landscape and Visual Appraisal

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been produced on behalf of Emmanuel and Gonville and Caius College as part of the evidence base for a representation to the Cambridge Local Plan process to replace the area of sports fields on Wilberforce Road with residential development and new public open space. It forms part of a suite of documents relating to the representation and should be read in conjunction with these reports.

The Document

1.2 This document has been produced by Wendy Fowler BA (Hons) PGDipLA PGDipUD CMLI, Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute and Recognised Practitioner in Urban Design with the Urban Design Group, who has over nine years’ experience producing landscape, townscape and visual impact assessments and appraisals.

1.3 The document has been produced in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), 3rd Edition, produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment1, and Landscape Institute Advice Note: Use of Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Assessment2. These are widely considered to be the industry standards on the subject.

1.4 The purpose of this document is to make an appraisal of the local landscape and townscape in and around the proposal site to ascertain the contribution of the proposal site to the local townscape and inform future development proposals.

The Proposal Site

1.5 The site is located in the western part of Cambridge on Wilberforce Road. It is located within Cambridge City and within the West Cambridge Conservation Area. See Figure 1 – Site Location Plan.

1.6 The proposal site is currently in use as a series of sports pitches, including both hard and soft courts. The south western corner is occupied by a series of hard surface tennis courts. The north

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2 Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/2009: Use of Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Assessment
western corner was historically a series of grassed hockey pitches and is now an area of mown grass with a smaller area of fruit trees in the far corner. The eastern area is a series of close cropped sports pitches and was, at the time of the survey, in use as a cricket pitch. There is a complex of buildings in the south eastern corner, comprising a pavilion, groundskeeper’s cottage and storage buildings.

1.7 The proposal site is surrounded by built development on three sides and by Green Belt to the south.

1.8 Further details of the landscape of the proposal site are included in chapter 4.

**Overview of the Proposed Development**

1.9 The proposed development is to relocate the sports pitches to a new site and for the development of this site for residential use and public open space.

1.10 The main access will be taken from Wilberforce Road with additional access points taken from Perry Court and The Lawns.

1.11 The existing hedgerows and trees are to be retained where practicable, subject to condition survey. New planting is to be established along the southern boundary to preserve the setting of the edge of Cambridge and to reduce visual impact from viewpoints to the west. The existing orchard in the north western corner of the site is to be retained as open space and an area of public open space is to be established along the frontage of Wilberforce Road to maintain the character and setting. This area of private sports ground is identified within the West Cambridge Conservation Area Appraisal as having important positive views from the sports ground to the housing on the eastern side of Wilberforce Road.

1.12 The existing pavilion and property 38 Wilberforce Road are to be retained and incorporated as part of the scheme with a proposal to convert them into residential apartments. This is to ensure that they are protected and enhanced as the building forms part of the streetscape along Wilberforce Road. The remainder of the proposal site is to be developed for low density residential development, to reflect the local surroundings. Further details of the scheme are to emerge as the project progresses.

**Limitations, Constraints and Assumptions**

1.13 The appraisal has been undertaken during late summer when there is almost full foliage on the trees and shrubs. This can potentially reduce the available views of the proposal site. However, during winter months, thick belts of trees or shrubs without any foliage can still have an element of screening impact. Although winter assessments show a worse-case scenario in terms of foliage, the sun is generally lower, reducing contrast and therefore potentially reducing visual impact.
further. Therefore, undertaking the appraisal during late summer or early autumn provides some of the best lighting conditions for taking photographic viewpoints. It should be noted that any assessment is undertaken on site as opposed to using photographic views. Despite guidance on how such photographs are taken, they are intended to be illustrative and are not meant to replace the experience of visiting the viewpoint in person.

1.14 It is not possible or practicable to assess the Zone of Visual Influence of the proposal site from every part of the local area. Narrowing the assessment to a series of representative viewpoints is generally considered to be sufficient to fulfil these tasks.

1.15 This assessment is concerned purely with the scale, massing and setting of the proposed buildings. The only references to architectural style are in relation to townscape assessment where homogeneity or variety in architectural style may be a contributing factor towards townscape character.
2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 This landscape and visual appraisal has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines as set out in the document, ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition’, (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). This is widely regarded by professionals as the industry standard on the subject. The term ‘landscape’ is used to refer to both landscape and townscape as applicable. In the terms of assessment, ‘townscape’ is a way of referring to the built landscape. Therefore, references to ‘landscape’ in the general description of the assessment should be considered to refer also to ‘townscape’, unless otherwise specified.

2.2 A desktop study of the site was undertaken, including an assessment of character, landform, landscape features, historic evolution, policy and designations. This information was both used for, and assessed against, the site visit.

2.3 During September of 2013, the proposal site and the surrounding area were visited on foot, including the area as far south as Barton Road, as far north as Storey’s Way, east to Grange Road and west to Grantchester Road. Each of these areas was evaluated, the findings of which are included in this chapter. In addition, potential viewpoints as far west as Madingley Rise were visited on foot in order to assess the Zone of Visual Influence of the proposed development.

2.4 Photographs of these areas are included in Appendix 2.

Definition of the Study Area

2.5 The assessment has been confined to an area approximately 1-2km from the proposal site. This is considered a sufficient area to establish the landscape baseline. In a more rural setting, a wider area would potentially be studied. However, the nature of a built environment such as Cambridge means that the character of the landscape changes with a much finer grain than might be found in open countryside. A greater distance was travelled to the west for the purposes of the visual appraisal due to the lack of built form. See Figure 4 – Townscape Character Areas.

2.6 A brief description of the existing land use of the area is provided and includes reference to existing settlement, transport routes and vegetation cover, as well as local landscape designations, elements of cultural and heritage value and local landmarks or tourist destinations. These factors

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combine to provide an understanding of landscape value and sensitivity, and an indication of particular key views and viewpoints that are available to visual receptors and therefore are to be included in the visual assessment.

2.7 A more detailed landscape appraisal was undertaken for the site which was used, together with the visual appraisal, to identify the ability of the site to accommodate future development and identify opportunities and constraints to inform any masterplan design.

Photographic Data

2.8 Photographs for the visual appraisal were taken using a Canon EOS 550D SLR camera at a focal length equivalent to 50mm on a conventional 35mm camera, in order to create the view which is generally accepted as being closest to that seen by the human eye. The photographs used are intended to give an indication of the view discussed and are not a substitute for visiting the site in person.
3 PLANNING POLICY BASELINE

3.1 This chapter identifies the planning policy that is relevant to landscape and visual issues on the proposal site.


Chapter 1 – Sustainable Design

3.2 The NPPF states that ‘the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development’ (NPPF paragraph 6). It then goes on to say that the planning system needs to perform a number of roles including ‘an economic role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment…’ (Paragraph 7).

Chapter 7 – Good Design

3.3 Chapter 7 of the NPPF relates to good quality design. Paragraph 60 states that ‘planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles of particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness’. (Paragraph 60.)

3.4 ‘Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.’ (Paragraph 61.)

Chapter 11 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

3.5 The NPPF seeks to protect the natural environment including ‘protecting and enhancing valued landscapes,’ (paragraph 109).

Local Policy – Cambridge Local Plan (2006)\(^5\)

3.6 The proposed development site is located on the edge of the Green Belt and is located on the City edge. Therefore Policy 3/2: Setting of the City is of relevance:

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\(^4\) Department of Communities and Local Government (2012) National Planning Policy Framework

\(^5\) Cambridge City Council (2006) Local Plan
Development will only be permitted on the urban edge if it conserves or enhances the setting and special character of Cambridge and the biodiversity, connectivity and amenity of the urban edge is improved.

3.7 Policy 3/3: Safeguarding Environmental Character relates to the character areas identified in the Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment.

Development will be permitted if it respects and enhances the distinctive character and quality of areas identified in the Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment.

3.8 Policy 3/4: Responding to Context relates to the context of the development in relation to the surrounding built form.

Developments will be permitted which demonstrate that they have responded to their context and drawn inspiration from the key characteristics of their surroundings to create distinctive places. Such developments will:

a. identify and respond positively to existing features of natural, historic or local character on and close to the proposed development site;

b. be well connected to, and integrated with, the immediate locality and the wider City; and

c. have used the characteristics of the locality to help inform the siting, massing, design and materials of the proposed development.

3.9 The proposed development site is located on the opposite side of the road to number 9 Wilberforce Road which is a Grade II Listed building. Therefore Policy 4/10: Listed Buildings is of relevance:

Development affecting Listed Buildings and their settings, including changes of use, will not be permitted unless:

a. it is demonstrated that there is a clear understanding of the building's importance in the national and Cambridge context including an assessment of which external and internal features and aspects of its setting are important to the building's special interest; and

b. the proposed works will not harm any aspects of the building's special interest or the impacts can be mitigated to an acceptable level for example by being easily reversible; or

c. where there will be an impact on the building's special interest, this is the least damaging of the potential options and there are clear benefits for the structure, interest or use of the building or a wider public benefit; and

d. features being altered will be reused and/or properly recorded prior to alteration.
3.10 The proposal site is located within the West Cambridge Conservation Area and therefore Policy 4/11: Conservation Areas is of relevance:

*Developments within, or which affect the setting of or impact on views into and out of Conservation Areas, will only be permitted if:*

- a. they retain buildings, spaces, gardens, trees, hedges, boundaries and other site features which contribute positively to the character or appearance of the area;
- b. the design of any new building or the alteration of an existing one preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Conservation Area by faithfully reflecting its context or providing a successful contrast with it; and
- c. a new or intensified use will not lead to traffic generation or other impacts which would adversely affect the Area’s character.


3.11 The Cambridge Local Plan 2014: Proposed Submission document is currently undergoing a consultation process. Although it is not the current Development Plan, the Policies contained within it are of relevance and will likely be increasingly so as time goes on.

3.12 Many of the Policies within the Local Plan 2006 are echoed within the Proposed Local Plan 2014.

3.13 Policy 8: Setting of the City builds upon Local Plan 2006 Policy 3/2:

*Development on the urban edge, including sites within and abutting green corridors and the Cambridge Green Belt, open spaces and the River Cam corridor, will only be supported where it:

- a. responds to, conserves and enhances the landscape setting, approaches and special character of the city, in accordance with the Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment 2003, Green Belt assessments and their successor documents;
- b. promotes access to the surrounding countryside/open space, where appropriate; and
- c. includes landscape improvement proposals that strengthen or re-create the well-defined and vegetated urban edge, improve visual amenity and enhance biodiversity.*

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*Cambridge City Council (2013) Cambridge Local Plan 2014: Proposed Submission*
Proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity, particularly proposals for landscape-scale enhancement across local authority boundaries, will also be supported.


3.15 Policy 61: Conservation and Enhancement of Cambridge’s Historic Environment echoes the issues highlighted in 2006 Policies 4/10 and 4/11:

To ensure the conservation and enhancement of Cambridge’s historic environment, proposals should:

a. conserve or enhance the significance of the heritage assets of the city, their setting and the wider townscape, including views into and out of conservation areas;

b. retain buildings and spaces, loss of which would cause harm to the character of the conservation area;

c. contribute to the local distinctiveness, built form and scale of heritage assets through the use of appropriate design, materials and workmanship;

d. demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the asset and of the wider context in which the heritage asset sits, alongside assessment of the potential impact of the development on the heritage asset and its context; and

e. provide clear justification for any works that would lead to harm or substantial harm to a heritage asset yet be of wider public benefit, through detailed analysis of the asset and the proposal.

3.16 Policy 62: Local Heritage Assets is appropriate due to the presence of the Listed Building at 9 Wilberforce Road as well as other identified heritage features within the locality of the site.

There is a general presumption in favour of the retention of local heritage assets, including buildings, structures, features and gardens of local interest as detailed in the Council’s local list and as assessed against the criteria set out in Appendix G of the plan.

Where permission is required, proposals will be permitted where they retain the significance, appearance, character or setting of a local heritage asset.

3.17 Policy 67: Protection of Open Space is appropriate due to the presence of the protected open space to the sports ground.

Development proposals will not be permitted which would harm the character of, or lead to the loss of, open space of environmental and/or recreational importance unless:
a. the open space uses can be satisfactorily replaced in terms of quality, quantity and access with an equal or better standard than that which is proposed to be lost; and

b. the re-provision is located within short walk (400m) of the original site.

In the case of school, college and university grounds, development may be permitted where it meets a demonstrable educational need and does not adversely affect playing fields or other formal sports provision on the site.

Where replacement open space is to be provided in an alternative location, the replacement site / facility must be fully available for use before the area of open space to be lost can be redeveloped.

Commentary on Planning Policy

Protecting the Setting of the City

3.18 The proposed development seeks to protect the setting of the edge of Cambridge through the bolstering of the planting along the southern boundary. This will contribute to the green edge of the city as viewed from the countryside to the west.

Protecting the Setting of Listed Buildings

3.19 The development also seeks to preserve the setting of the listed buildings on Wilberforce Road as well as other buildings which overlook the site.

The Conservation Area

3.20 Refer to appendix 4 in connection with changing certain views and buildings as 'Positive Unlisted Buildings'.

3.21 The proposed development seeks to acknowledge the view towards Wilberforce Road, as shown in the West Cambridge Conservation Area Appraisal. A public open space is proposed, which is to bring the view of the road and the streetscape slightly closer to the eye. At present, this view is available only to users of the sports ground, who are generally occupied in sporting activities with little concern for their surroundings. The proposed development is to make this area a public open space, allowing this view to be appreciated by everyone.

3.22 The proposed development is to be built at densities reflecting the local area. The highest densities will be in the western part of the site, reflecting the density of approximately 12 dwellings per hectare (12dph) found in The Lawns and Perry Court. The built form along Wilberforce Road is of a lower density with individual bespoke dwellings creating variety in the built form. The proposals at this stage do not include architectural details, as these will emerge later in the planning process.
however, the densities, massing and setting proposed, reflect those in the remainder of the
Conservation Area.

4 SITE CONTEXT

Introduction

4.1 This chapter describes the context in which the proposal site is located. An initial analysis of the
wider area has been undertaken, followed by a second assessment specifically relating to the
proposal site. This process allows the identification of sites of poor landscape/townscape character
in wider areas of generally good landscape/townscape character.

4.2 The information has been gathered from a combination of desktop and site surveys, utilising both
on-site and standard published research. These documents are explored in greater detail in the
following pages.

4.3 Reference is made to the Figures in Appendix 1 and the photographs in Appendix 2.

Landscape Baseline

4.4 The landscape character and setting describes the context over an area of approximately 1-2km
radius from the proposal site. The information taken from the site visit is used to assess landscape
quality and as a basis against which to assess the proposal site in detail. This is used to identify
sites of lower quality in areas of generally higher quality. It is of less importance for sites within the
built form. However, the proposal site forms part of the city edge and therefore part of the transition
from settlement to open countryside.

Landscape Character Assessment

4.5 The local area is covered by three published landscape character assessments. These are:

- Natural Character Area 88: Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands;
- Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (1991); and
- Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2002).

National Character Area 88: Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands

4.6 The Natural England character profiles are in the process of being updated, with some areas
partially completed. JCA88 is one of these areas and therefore the historic profile is the relevant
document. However, JCA profiles are broad brush, covering large areas of the countryside and can
overlook more subtle differences in landscape character at a local level. They are most useful
when looking at large scale study areas or when no county or local level assessment exists. Such
county and local landscape character assessments do exist for the study area relating to this project and therefore the Natural England assessment has not been used for this appraisal.

Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines

4.7 According to the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines, the study area falls within character area 3: Western Claylands. These extend north west from Cambridge to Peterborough and west to St Neots and cover a large area of the study area of the guidelines.

4.8 The character assessment describes the area as being gently undulating and consisting of large-scale arable fields with ‘sparse trimmed hedgerows and watercourses often cleared of banksides vegetation’. The area is described as containing scattered woodlands, approximately half of which are Ancient Woodland and that these occur in isolated instances throughout most of the character area. The area has been greatly shaped by modern agricultural processes with field rationalisation and hedgerow removal being widespread. The remaining hedgerows are described as being generally gappy.

4.9 The guidelines seek to create a fairly large-scale landscape ‘with large rolling fields enclosed by and sweeping around blocks and belts of woodland and broad hedgerows’. The guidelines seek to achieve this through the planting of woodland belts and the improvement of select hedgerows. Road and footpath margins are also highlighted for improvement and increased planting, particularly on the approaches to villages.

4.10 The study area of the proposal site is located on the very edge of this character area and it is not unusual for such fringe locations to not demonstrate all of the characteristics listed within the published assessments. However, the on-site assessment corroborated the published assessment’s identification of open landscape with large-scale trees and sparse hedgerows and trees. Rolling hills occur on the edge of the study area, according with the description of the area as an undulating landscape.

Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment

4.11 The Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment concentrates on the area of Cambridge City Council and therefore covers an area comprising both significant built and agricultural landscapes. The townscape of the study area is discussed elsewhere and therefore this section concentrates on the landscape elements of the study area which, according to the document, fall within character area described as Rural Lowland Mosaic: West Cambridge Claylands.

4.12 The assessment describes the character area as being predominantly 10-15m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) rising up to Madingley Rise to the west. Fields are described as being of
medium size, sometimes bounded by ditches and sometimes by hedgerows. Bin, Bourn and Washpit Brook run through the area and are often contained by steep banks.

4.13 The assessment describes the land use in the area as being a mix of arable farming, college buildings and open space. It also recognises the strong green edge to the city, created by the mature grounds surrounding the large residential dwellings and college buildings in the local area. Views towards key buildings such as the University Library, Addenbrooke's and the City Centre are highlighted as being a feature of the area, particularly from Madingley Rise.

Designations

4.14 Designations are illustrated on Figure 2 – Designations Plan in Appendix 1.

4.15 The area in the west of the study area is designated as part of the Cambridge Green Belt. The proposal site is located outside of the Green Belt but close to the boundary. The Cambridge Green Belt seeks to meet the aims as set out within the NPPF but also to preserve and protect the compact nature of Cambridge as a city.

4.16 The proposal site is located within the West Cambridge Conservation Area. To the immediate east is the Central Conservation Area, comprising the City Centre and the older college buildings. A townscape analysis of the conservation area is included in the previous section.

4.17 The area to the west of the study area is open Countryside and designated as Green Belt. The built up part of the study area covers areas of open space which relate to the colleges. These tend to be sports fields, as within the case of the proposal site. The open spaces are designated as Protected Open Space. These areas are protected in policy due to their contribution to the setting of the streets and townscape and their allowance of certain views into and out of the City.

4.18 There is an area of Ancient Woodland approximately 3km to the west at Madingley Woods.

Topography and Hydrology

4.19 Local topography is demonstrated on Figure 3 – Topography Plan in Appendix 1.

4.20 The local area is generally at approximately 20m AOD rising to the west up to approximately 80m AOD in the region of Cambourne, over 10km to the west.

4.21 The River Cam is the main watercourse in the area, running approximately north south through the centre of the City. Bin Brook runs north east across the study area before connecting to the Cam in the City Centre. There are a number of ponds and ditches in the area, particularly in the location of the proposal site.

Vegetation
The countryside in the local area is defined by an irregular field pattern ranging in field size, surrounded by hedgerows with isolated hedge row trees. More vegetation occurs along watercourses. Cambridge is a distinct contrast with the surrounding landscape and is characterised by large areas of mature tree planting. These join visually to reduce views towards the built form. The taller buildings within the City Centre rise above this planting to form distinct landmarks from the higher ground to the west.

**Land Use and Settlement**

The main area of settlement in the area is Cambridge which is protected by the surrounding Cambridge Green Belt. The villages of Coton and Barton are located to the west and, further west, is Comberton. The Cambridge colleges have a distinct influence on the local settlement. Further details are given in the townscape assessment below.

**Access and Rights of Way**

The main transport route in the local area is the M11 which runs north south in the western part of the study area. Madingley Road crosses this to the north, running into the centre of Cambridge. Barton Road runs approximately east west to the south of the study area and Grange Road runs north south between the two.

The key Public Right of Way (PRoW) passing through the study area is the Harcamlow Way, a National Trail which forms a figure-of-eight, passing through Cambridge, and crossing near Saffron Walden before continuing further south to Harlow. A bridleway runs south from Madingley Road and meets the Harcamlow Way at the point it crosses the M11. A footpath runs south form here along the Borough boundary but does not lead anywhere. There is also a footpath running from Coton to Barton Road, approximately along the route of the Bin Brook.

**Conclusion of Landscape Setting**

The area of landscape to the west of Cambridge does not contain landscape designations which relate to the quality of the landscape. Although the field pattern is intact, field rationalisation has removed much of the network of hedgerows and associated trees. Planting does occur mainly along road corridors and watercourses with the remainder of the area being sparsely vegetated. The landscape is generally level with a small rise to the west at Madingley Rise. There is a distinct contrast between the green, heavily vegetated edge of the city, with the more open countryside to the west.

**Townscape Baseline**

This section makes an assessment of the townscape character of the area surrounding the proposal site. A desktop assessment was undertaken of published information and reinforced by
visits to site. The proposal site is located within the West Cambridge Conservation Area, (See Figure 2 – Designations Plan) and Cambridge City Council has produced a Conservation Area Appraisal relating to the area.

4.28 The area was visited to evaluate the townscape character and to make a judgement of the contribution of the proposal site to the local townscape.

**West Cambridge Conservation Area Appraisal**

4.29 This designation covers the area to the west of the city centre and was designated in 1972 and extended in 1984 and 2011. The document describes the area as containing a mix of residential and college buildings with the majority dating from the late 19th Century onwards as the area was in use for agriculture or open space until that period. The 2011 extension brought in the hamlet of Newnham which contains a variety of 18th and 19th Century buildings in some instances dating back to the 17th Century. The document states that the conservation area is now noted for wide residential streets with large late 19th and early 20th Century detached residential dwellings. The majority of these are described as being of red brick with some hanging tiles in the style of the period. The area contains large numbers of college buildings, as well as the landmark building of the University library. The document states that, although these range in architectural design, their high quality means that they retain and contribute to the cohesion of the area.

4.30 Open space and the strong landscape structure are cited as key features of the area, with some of the planting forming part of the historic gardens to the large residential dwellings. The college playing fields are also mentioned, as well as the neighbouring Green Belt, due to their relationship with the neighbouring blocks of buildings and their allowance of views into and out of the city.

**Historic Development of the Built Form**

4.31 The conservation area is described as being defined by historic routes out of the city centre with a grid type structure of 19th Century streets lying either side of Grange Road. Bin Brook, which runs through the area, has been straightened at some point in history. During the early years of the 19th Century, the colleges heavily influenced the land ownership in the area and much of the area now belongs to St John’s College. The University produced documentation to prevent individual owners from obtaining the land and that it should be allotted to the colleges in the area. When college income from rent reduced, land started to be leased for residential development. In the middle of

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7 Cambridge City Council (2011) West Cambridge Conservation Area Appraisal
the 19th Century, the college extended the length of leases allowed within the area which resulted in new development in the area.

4.32 The playing fields and the pavilion buildings within the proposal site are first shown on the 1926 Ordnance Survey Map. At this point, there is still very little development in the vicinity of the fields and the area to the north is annotated as allotment gardens. By the time of the 1938 Ordnance Survey map, dwellings have started to appear on Wilberforce Road to the east of the proposal site. The residential development to the north have also started to be constructed. By the time of the 1959 OS map, the development to the north is complete but no additional development has occurred directly to the east. Development has continued to spread west from central Cambridge. By the time of the 1967 OS maps, the development along the eastern side of Wilberforce Road, opposite the proposal site has been completed, as has the development to the north. By the time of the 1983 OS map, the laboratory buildings to the west have been constructed and the playing fields are contained on three sides by development.

Townscape Character Assessment (refer to Appendix II for photographs)

4.33 The West Cambridge Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) has separated the townscape of the area into seven different character areas. A townscape assessment was undertaken in September 2013 to verify these and to assess the areas in the vicinity of the proposal site which are not included within the conservation area, identified as character areas 8 and 9. The assessment concentrates on the area within approximately 0.5km radius of the proposal site.

4.34 The character areas described are shown on Figure 4 – Townscape Character Areas Plan in Appendix 1.

Character Area 1 – Huntingdon Road to Madingley Road

4.35 Character Area 1 incorporates the residential development south of Madingley Road and extends as far south as Huntingdon Road. This area is described within the CAA as being centred on five of the colleges as well as the Cambridge Observatory, the latter of which is concealed by thick tree planting. Residential development does occur within the area and generally comprises large detached dwellings dating from the mid-20th Century. The key area of green space is that between Churchill College and the Observatory which runs alongside Madingley Road.

4.36 The area north of Madingley Road that falls within Character Area 1 is generally related to the colleges, either in the form of teaching buildings or halls of residence. Whilst some large residential dwellings occur north of the road in the eastern edge of the character area, the majority of the residential dwellings occur south of Madingley Road.
4.37 Both the residential dwellings and the college buildings are set within grounds which contain large areas of planting. This creates an open and green townscape with a strong landscape structure contrasting with the built form.

4.38 The college buildings date from a range of periods and there is no overarching style or period of development. The homogeneity in the streets comes from the similar massing of the residential dwellings and the strong landscape structure. The buildings tend to be built close to the road, addressing the street and creating enclosure.

Character Area 2 – Grange Road

4.39 Character Area 2 is the largest of the character areas outlined in the CAA. It incorporates the land from the southern edge of Area 1, south of Madingley Road, as far south as Barton Road, centred around Grange Road.

4.40 The area comprises a roughly gridiron pattern with mainly residential development, although some colleges do have buildings within the character area. Many of the residential dwellings have been converted for student accommodation. Buildings tend to be two to three storeys in height with some taller buildings relating to the colleges, particularly in the centre of the character area, near Grange Road.

4.41 As per the residential development within Character Area 1, the dwellings are generally set within large grounds with strong mature planting, creating a sylvan character to the streetscape. Open space occurs in several places, generally in the form of college playing fields, including the proposal site on Wilberforce Road. These are particularly important where they provide setting for overlooking buildings or frame views.

4.42 Residential development tends to be mid-20th Century although some college buildings date from the late 20th and early 21st Centuries. As per Character Area 1, the buildings tend to address the street, although some instances are set back within their grounds, away from the street frontage.

Character Area 3 – Burrell’s Walk to West Road

4.43 Character Area 3 comprises a series of college buildings and playing fields between Burrell’s Walk and West Road. The most notable buildings are the University library and the buildings of Clare College. The majority of the buildings are three storeys in height but the library tower, described as being ‘monolithic’ in the CAA, rises to 17 storeys and is the tallest building within the conservation area.

4.44 The buildings do not tend to address the street and are set within their own grounds. The complexes of the library and Clare College are set on the same axes and create the settlement
pattern. The buildings to the south relate less to these or to the surrounding street pattern and are set within their own grounds.

4.45 The library dates from the early 1930s and Clare College from the 1920s, and these dominate the character of the area. There is a strong landscape structure, breaking up the mass of the buildings in certain views and softening them.

**Character Area 4 – West Road to Sedgwick Avenue**

4.46 This area comprises the area between West Road and Sidgwick Road, an area of college buildings relating to Selwyn College, Newnham College and Ridley Hall. The buildings in the western end of the character area date from the late 19th Century and include the quadrangle of Selwyn College. The reminder of the site comprises mainly mid to late 20th Century college buildings, some of which are designed by named Architects.

4.47 The CAA describes this area as containing a series of ‘set piece’ buildings which do not relate to the surrounding townscape, but which form an interesting collection. The document also describes the spaces between the buildings as being wind tunnel-like due to the height of the buildings.

4.48 There are large areas of open space, likely relating to the residential villas in the character area. These contain a large number of mature trees, creating a parkland type character in areas.

**Character Area 5 – Newnham College, Selwyn College and Ridley Hall**

4.49 This character area is described as being focussed on three historic colleges: Selwyn, Newnham and Ridley Hall. The buildings tend to be built in red brick in the Queen Anne Revival or Gothic style, according to the CAA. These blocks frame Sedgwick Avenue and Grange Road, providing strong enclosure through their three to four storeys. These buildings are interspersed with mature trees, likely dating from an earlier landscape.

4.50 The residential dwellings on Wordsworth Close are also included within this character area although they appear to bear little relation to the other buildings, except, perhaps, in terms of ownership. These dwellings range in date from the late 19th Century through to the middle to late 20th Century and have no overarching or distinct style.

4.51 As well as areas of landscaped gardens, the character area includes a college sports field in the south.

**Character Area 6 – Barton Road and Newnham Road South**

4.52 This character area includes an area of Gonville and Caius playing fields, the overlooking dwellings on Summerfield and Clare Road, and the residential development to the south of Barton Road around Millington Road.
4.53 The CAA describes dwellings in this area as dating from the late 19th Century to early 20th Century. Those north of Barton Road front onto the playing fields, creating a village green type character which unifies the buildings. Those on Summerfield, in particular, form a strong continuous frontage to the space.

4.54 The residential development south of Barton Road and either side of Millington Road is different in character, comprising individual residential dwellings set into spacious, maturely landscaped gardens. This creates a heavily treed character. The buildings date from a range of periods and exhibit a range of architectural styles. This area gains its character from the landscape setting of the buildings and not from their style.

Character Area 7 – Old Newnham and Queen’s Road

4.55 This character area stretches along the western side of Queen’s Road and comprises large areas of maturely planted landscapes. These form an important part of the setting of the City and contribute heavily to its treed character. This character area is at a distance from the proposal site and it is not considered relevant to explore it in any great detail.

Character Area 8 – The Lawns and Perry Court

4.56 This area does not form part of the West Cambridge Conservation Area but is located adjacent to it. The area comprises a series of 25 modern detached dwellings which abut the western edge of the proposal site. The dwellings are arranged around two separated cul-de-sacs. The dwellings are large but are set within relatively smaller grounds than in neighbouring areas although a strong planting scheme by modern development standards has been implemented.

4.57 These dwellings are constructed using yellow brick with red brick detailing and are of a homogenous style due to their dating from the same period and forming part of the same development. The dwellings address the cul-de-sac roads but are not relevant to the wider streetscape. The rear gardens back on to the proposal site.

Character Area 9 – College Buildings West of Clerk Maxwell Road

4.58 This area is also outside of the West Cambridge Conservation Area, being located to the west of Character Area 8. The character area comprises large university buildings dating from a range of periods and incorporating different architecture styles, although none are distinct. These buildings are a distinct contrast to the adjacent residential development within Character Area 8.

4.59 This area of buildings is surrounding by a thick area of tree planting but contains relatively little large-scale or mature planting between the buildings.
Conclusion of Townscape Character

4.60 The townscape in the vicinity of the proposal site to the north and east is generally of high quality, and this is reflected by its designation as a conservation area. The housing to the west of the site is less distinctive and of a lower quality with little architectural distinction or strong landscape. The townscape assessment has demonstrated that the area contains a mix of college and residential buildings, often at two contrasting scales which are unified by the strong landscape structure of the city. No one architectural style or period dominates overall, although late 19th Century buildings are a feature of the area, interspersed with more modern, bespoke college buildings.

4.61 The character of this area is not from any particular architectural style but from the use of generally high quality architecture interspersed with trees and shrubs to give it its local streetscape setting. Although the sports ground forms an important break in the built form, the streetscape in this area does not rely on this as the built edge is loose with planted front gardens that give glimpsed views of the houses behind. The Council consider this edge to be extremely important, creating a strong mixed edge to the city when viewed from the countryside to the west, that reduces the mass of the built form whilst contrasting and complementing the different types of building.
SITE APPRAISAL

Site Features and Character

5.1 An analysis of the proposal site was undertaken to form a comparison to the wider landscape/townscape setting to assess the contribution that the proposal site makes to the wider built form and countryside.

5.2 The proposal site is generally level and well-drained, partly due to its current use as playing fields.

5.3 There is a hedgerow running approximately north south through the centre of the site. This hedgerow contains a mix of species and a series of hedgerow trees, comprising primarily white poplar with some oak. (See Photographic Sheet 2 in Appendix 2.) There is native hedgerow along the western boundary which has been well-maintained, and another along the southern boundary, which has been allowed to grow up into small trees in places, and along part of the northern boundary (see Photographic Sheet 5 in Appendix 2). A smaller length of hedgerow sub-divides the western part of the site (see Photographic Sheet 3).

5.4 There is an area of orchard planting in the north west corner of the site comprising a range of productive fruit trees (see Photographic Sheet 3). These form a distinctive feature and reduce views to and from the residential dwelling to the north.

5.5 The remainder of the site is either laid to grass for pitches or is under hard surfacing for tennis courts (see Photographic Sheet 5).

5.6 The proposal site comprises a series of grass and hardstanding sports pitches belonging to two of the colleges: Gonville & Caius and Emmanuel. There is a complex of buildings in the south eastern corner, comprising a pavilion building, groundsman’s cottage and storage buildings (see Photographic Sheet 9). These date from the early part of the 20th Century and are of some architectural interest.

5.7 Small, shed type buildings are located in the centre and western ends of the southern boundary. These are used for storage of machinery associated with keeping the grounds.

5.8 Residential development occurs on three sides of the proposal site but it is only addressed by the dwellings on Wilberforce Road, which overlook the site, including a Grade II Listed dwelling at number 9 which dates from 1937 (see Photographic Sheet 9). There is also a Building of Local Interest (BLI) at number 19, located to the south east of the proposal site and leads directly onto the Harcamlow Way, a National Trail which runs from Cambridge to Essex, via Saffron Walden. This building is located away from the proposal site and gains more of its setting from what is
currently gained from Wilberforce Road, although potential access points have been allowed for from Perry Court and The Lawns.

5.9 The site is a typical series of sports pitches relating to the colleges. Areas of open space are highlighted according to the Conservation Area Appraisal as being important features of the local townscape and the conservation area due to the impact upon the setting of the built form and their contribution to views. With the exception of the dwellings on Wilberforce Road, the adjacent residential development does not address the proposal site, but backs onto it. With the possible exception of the dwelling to the immediate north of the area of orchard trees, these dwellings do not benefit greatly from the presence of the open space. There are Positive Unlisted Buildings on Bullstrode Gardens at numbers 6, 7 and 8. These buildings are set away from the proposal site and are separated by their intervening gardens. The buildings on Wilberforce Road, however, do overlook the space and gain some of their setting from it.

5.10 The key features of the proposal site are the hedgerows and trees, particularly the hedgerow running north to south through the centre of the site and identified as important trees and the area of orchard planting in the north western corner.

**Visual Baseline**

5.11 The Conservation Area Appraisal, produced by Cambridge City Council, highlights a series of important views within the conservation area. One of these highlighted views relates to the proposal site and incorporates the views from the central hedgerow east towards the residential dwellings on Wilberforce Road. This view is illustrated by photographs on Photographic Sheet 9 in Appendix 2.

5.12 Looking towards the proposal site, it is most visible from Wilberforce Road which runs along the eastern boundary. (See Photographic Sheets 5 and 6). This view is representative of the view from the residential dwellings on the eastern side of the road which overlook the site.

5.13 There is a strong hedgerow along the southern boundary between the proposal site and the Harcamlow Way. This prevents most views into the proposal site from the Public Right of Way, although the tops of dwellings may be visible over the trees, particularly during winter months (see Photographic Sheet 11). The green edge of Cambridge is of particular importance in providing a buffer between the built form of the city and the surrounding landscape. The view of spires over the green infrastructure is a defining element of the character of the area when viewed from the west. Therefore consideration should be given to bolstering this boundary to reinforce the green edge of the city.
5.14 Views from the area of the Harcamlow Way further to the west towards the proposal site are prevented by the layers of the intervening vegetation. See Photographic Sheet 10.

5.15 Views from Madingley Rise towards the city cross the area of the proposal site. However, the strong landscape structure, particularly along the edge of the city, means that views generally comprise a strong area of vegetation with the taller buildings, such as the University library, rising above them. Areas such as the proposal site tend to be screened behind the layers of vegetation between the viewpoint and the city.

5.16 Neighbouring dwellings to the north and west of the proposal site overlook the proposal site but only from top storey rear windows. The grounds of these dwellings are generally separated from the proposal site by the intervening native hedgerows. See Photographic Sheet 11. The residential dwellings immediately north of the orchard area are an exception and it is recommended that this area of planting is retained as an important landscape and visual feature.
6  SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 The proposal site is included within the West Cambridge Conservation Area, in which areas of playing fields are highlighted as being an important part of the townscape. An assessment of the local townscape character demonstrated that this area does not gain its character from a particular building design or period of style, but rather that the buildings tended to be detached and set within large maturely planted grounds, whether they be a college or a residential building.

6.2 Areas of open space within the conservation area are important and provide breaks and views within the built form. This sports ground forms such a break, but it is considered that the soft built edge along Wilberforce Road forms a strong planted boundary. It therefore does not fully rely on this open space as the front gardens are well planted and provide glimpsed views of the house styles behind.

6.3 The important positive view highlighted within the Conservation Area Appraisal from the middle of the site, is considered by this report to be an important view towards Wilberforce Road. However this view does not penetrate beyond the road towards the City due to vegetation, and if shortened as shown on the framework plan to the western edge of the proposed open space, there would be little change of noticeable view.

6.4 The site is less important to the setting of the residential dwellings to the north and west and does not form part of views towards the countryside from these areas.

6.5 The attached Framework Concept deals with the potential visual impacts on the dwellings on Wilberforce Road by including an area of open space. This public open space would not significantly change resident's views along Wilberforce Road due to the vegetation in the front gardens.

6.6 High quality development at a low density, combined with a strong landscape structure would not detract from the character of the conservation area. The key feature of this design is the creation of a large public open space with stately trees to the front of housing, the conversion of the pavilion to residential apartments, which has a special character to the side of Wilberforce Road and the important existing planting to the middle and sides of the sports ground. All this provides for a natural streetscape setting which would be in keeping with the character of the area.
Appendix 1

Figure 1 – Site Location Plan

Figure 2 – Designations Plan

Figure 3 – Topography Plan

Figure 4 – Townscape Character Areas Plan
Figure 1: Red Line Plan - Wilberforce Road, Cambridge

Legend

- Site Boundary

Area: 6.542ha (16.17ac)
Figure 2: Designations Plan - Wilberforce Road, Cambridge

Legend
- Site Boundary
- Grade II Listed Buildings
- Grade II* Listed Buildings
- Positive Unlisted Buildings
- Conservation Area
- Greenbelt
- Protected Open Spaces
- Important Trees/Tree Groups
Figure 3: Topography Plan - Wilberforce Road, Cambridge

Legend
- Site Boundary
- Heights
  - up to 10m
  - 10m - 15m
  - 15m - 20m
  - 20m - 25m
Figure 4: Townscape Character Areas Plan - Wilberforce Road, Cambridge

Legend
- Site Boundary
1 - Huntingdon Road to Madingley Road
2 - Grange Road
3 - Burrell's Walk to West Road
4 - West Road to Sedgwick Avenue
5 - Newnham College, Selwyn College & Ridley Hall
6 - Barton Road and Newnham Road South
7 - Old Newnham and Queen's Road
8 - Clerk Maxwell Road
9 - South of Madingley Road
Appendix 2

Location of Photographic Views

Site appraisal photographs 1-15
Visual appraisal photographs 1-6
Viewpoint Location Plan

Legend

- Site Boundary

Area: 6.542ha (16.17ac)

BIDWELLS

O.S. Licence No. ES 100017734

O.S. Ref. TL 45

Date: 24/9/2013
SITE APPRAISAL VIEWPOINT 5

- Northern boundary
- Orchard planting between proposal site and properties on Hedgerley Close

SITE APPRAISAL VIEWPOINT 6

- Central hedge
- Western boundary
SITE APPRAISAL VIEWPOINT 13

Maintenance garage

Hedge and Trees

Houses in The Lawns

Houses in Perry Court

SITE APPRAISAL VIEWPOINT 14

8, 7 and 6 Bulstrade Gardens screened by trees and shrubs

36 Wilberforce Road

Hedge and Trees
VISUAL APPRAISAL VIEWPOINT 1

Gardens to dwellings on Bulstrode
Gardens screened by vegetation

36 Wilberforce Road

9 Wilberforce Road

VISUAL APPRAISAL VIEWPOINT 2

9 Wilberforce Road

Pavilion

Southern boundary
VISUAL APPRAISAL VIEWPOINT 5

Link to Cavendish Laboratory
Link to Clerk Maxwell Road
Harcamlow Way

VISUAL APPRAISAL VIEWPOINT 6
Appendix 3

Opportunities & Constraints Plan S037500100-01

Concept Framework Plan S037500100-02
Land West of Wilberforce Road, Cambridge

Concept Framework Plan

- **Low Density Housing** (1.3ha) @ 8-10dph.
- **Medium Density Housing** (0.94ha) @ 20dph
- **Affordable Housing** - (1.5ha) (40%)
- **Conversion of pavilion to residential apartments** (0.16ha)
- **Open Space to Wilberforce Road** (1.15 ha)
- **Total Green Space** (2.8ha)
- **Vegetation retained or proposed**
- **Vehicular site access points**
- **Proposed Footpath and Cycleway Links**

**KEY**
Appendix 4

Supporting Technical Information for Representation

Date: 12th October 2010
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Cambridge City Council (CCC) is currently carrying out a consultation on its draft West Cambridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. This document presents supporting information to the representations Bidwells wish to make on behalf of Gonville & Caius College and Emmanuel College.

1.2 This document uses the following publications as reference material:

- Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5): Planning in the Historic Environment;
- PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment, Planning Practice Guide;
- Guidance on the management of conservation areas;
- Guidance on conservation area appraisals (2006). English Heritage; and

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

2.1 The Draft West Cambridge Conservation Area Draft Character Appraisal and Management Plan seeks to define what is special about the West Cambridge Conservation Area, and to provide detailed information about its spaces, buildings, landscape, public realm and other positive features. The Management Plan provides a framework for future actions which are primarily the responsibility of CCC; although CCC concludes that their successful implementation will also depend on the co-operation and enthusiasm of the University authorities and local people.

Status of the Character Appraisal and Management Plan

2.2 The document is intended to be a 'material' document in the consideration of planning applications for change within, or on the edges of, the Conservation Area.

2.3 The respondent assumes that this conservation area appraisal and management plan will not be used as a basis for a Supplementary Planning Document to detail conservation area policies and that the Recommendations are guidance and not Policy.

Recommendations made by CCC

Recommended Action 1
2.4 As part of the Character Appraisal, CCC recommend an extension to the Conservation Area taking in part of an area currently designated as Cambridge Central Conservation Area, namely

- extend boundary north to encompass land between Madingley Road and Huntingdon Road to include St Edmund's College, New Hall (now Murray Edwards College), Fitzwilliam College, Churchill College and the University Observatories;
- extend the boundary in Mount Pleasant to include No 18 Mount Pleasant and land in front of St Edmund's College (currently in the Cambridge Central Conservation Area); and
- extend the boundary eastwards as to include properties and land as far as Queen's Road to include playing fields, gardens, late 19th century houses, and University buildings principally facing Sidgwick Avenue (currently in the Cambridge Central Conservation).

Recommended Action 2

2.5 CCC recommends that consideration should be given to serving an Article 4 Direction on unlisted buildings – namely Buildings of Local Interest (BLI's) and positive buildings.

Recommended Action 3

2.6 Prior to planning applications coming forward, the CCC will continue to discuss with property owners any future plans for development to ensure that new development 'preserves or enhances' the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Where buildings have been assessed as being 'positive', there is a general presumption in favour of their retention. In addition, if they are BLIs, additional consideration will be given to the preservation or enhancement of their setting, as described in PPS 5.

Recommended Action 4

2.7 CCC will encourage private owners to care for their trees and open green spaces including the provision of bio-diverse habitats for wildlife.

2.8 CCC notes that the owners of sports fields within and around the Conservation Area should also be encouraged to maintain the land in good condition and to encourage bio-diversity whenever possible by sympathetic methods of planting and maintenance.

Recommended Action 5
2.9 The City Council will ensure that the public realm features within the Conservation Area (roads, pavements, street lighting and street furniture) is regularly monitored to see if any improvements are needed.

3 ISSUES

Views

3.1 Referring to the Townscape Analysis Map, CCC illustrate views which they consider to be of some importance.

3.2 Within the Draft document under paragraph 7.1 Principle Issues – the protection of the views is seen to be important. CCC states ‘views across, into and out of the Conservation Area are important and need to be protected’.

3.3 Paragraph 4.3 Views and Vistas notes that ‘the flat topography, many open spaces and long, straight roads within the Conservation Area all provide ample opportunity for long and short views, or for shorter vistas which are often terminated by buildings or trees. The most important views and vistas are marked on the Character Area Maps, but there are lesser views in many other locations which are of equal significance in their contribution, so the omission of any particular view or vista does not mean that it is of no importance’.

3.4 Referring to the Townscape Analysis Map, the majority of the ‘Important Positive Views’ listed are over areas of open space.

3.5 CCC states in the last paragraph of 4.3 that ‘the many open spaces in the Conservation Area are also particularly important in the way in which they provide long views across the Conservation Area, particularly towards the skyline of the historic city. Similarly, long views from the western edges of the Conservation Area towards the City Centre are framed by the immediate buildings and trees, with the spires and other architectural features of the buildings creating the backdrop. The protection of these views is considered further in the Management Plan’.

3.6 CCC sets out its idea as to what it considers is an important view in a clear way. Inferring from the reasons set out in the CCC text, CCC considers that the views of particular importance are those towards the city skyline. CCC states that the most important views are marked on the Character Area Maps. However, the majority of the views marked on the Townscape Analysis Plan are not towards the city skyline, they are away from the skyline of the historic city. They are, very often, simply views across open space and are not, according to the CCC’s own criteria, views of particular importance.
3.7 An example of this is the two views located on Wilberforce Road which are considered by CCC to be 'Important Positive Views'. Both these view cones look to the west to the edge of the Conservation Area. Both views look over Emmanuel College Playing Fields to a hedgerow and hedgerow trees with unexceptional late C20 early C21 houses behind as well as some university buildings. Photos taken from the location of the view arrows are illustrated below.

3.8 The respondent strongly argues that the views from Wilberforce Road across Emmanuel Playing Fields are not, according to the CCC's own criteria, 'Important Positive Views'; do not reflect CCC's own criteria of 'Important Positive Views', are not to any key landmark. These views should be deleted from the Townscape Analysis Map.

View from the view location on Wilberforce Road (northern most view location) towards the late C20/early C21 residential properties off Clerk Maxwell Road to the west.
View from the view location on Wilberforce Road (southern most view location) towards the late C20/early C21 residential properties off Clerk Maxwell Road with the roof line of some University Buildings beyond.

3.9 **Response:** Objection to the views across Emmanuel College Playing Fields from Wilberforce Road being identified in the Townscape Analysis Map.

**Positive Buildings**

3.10 The Council propose a typology "Positive' Unlisted Buildings.

3.11 Not counting Grade II*, Grade II and BL'I's, the 'Positive' Unlisted Buildings count for the majority of the remainder of the dwellings in the Conservation Area.

3.12 Appendix 2 of English Heritage's Guidance on conservation area appraisals sets out ten considerations to help assess the contribution made by unlisted buildings to the special architectural or historic interest of a conservation area. English Heritage’s view is that these provide a basis for considering that a building makes a positive contribution to the special interest of a conservation area, provided that its historic form and values have not been seriously eroded by unsympathetic alteration.

3.13 CCC has already established and maintains a list of Buildings of Local Interest which although have no statutory protection, have been given greater prominence due to the guidance which has recently been published in PPS5 which affects all ‘heritage assets’ (including BLIs). This provides advice on their preservation and the protection of their setting.

3.14 Though lacking the statutory protection of other designations, BL'I's formal identification by the local authority is material in planning decisions.
3.15 In the character appraisal, CCC has identified another ‘tier’ of historic asset: ‘Positive Buildings’. CCC identifies these as positive buildings of townscape merit and continue that commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provides the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly they make a positive contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area.

3.16 CCC notes that the identification of these buildings follow advice provided within English Heritage’s Guidance on Conservation Area appraisals, which provides, at Appendix 2, a list of criteria.

3.17 Presumably this ‘Positive Building’ tier sits beneath BLIs.

3.18 CCC states that a general presumption exists in favour of retaining those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, and any applications for demolition should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings. CCC continues that all buildings marked as ‘positive’ on the Character Area Townscape Appraisal Maps will be retained in the future unless a special case can be made for demolition.

3.19 Due to the fact that CCC proposes to confer this status on a number of unlisted buildings over and above the buildings designated as BLIs, the methodology used should be transparent and the evidence robust.

3.20 No evidence is offered as to why the buildings indicated as ‘Positive’ in the Townscape Analysis have been identified as such. CCC states that it has followed the advice set out in English Heritage’s Guidance on Conservation Area appraisals at Appendix 2. However they have not demonstrated their reasoning. This should be demonstrated.

3.21 In addition, within some of the character areas an extra tier of building typology has been introduced – ‘positive’ buildings in the character area which are considered to be of special interest e.g. Character Areas No 1, 2, 4 and 5. This introduces another tier into ‘positive’ buildings.

3.22 In effect, CCC has created 3 typologies to unlisted buildings to be given special consideration. Only for one of these – BLIs – is there a register of the building and the aspects which confer special consideration. It is not at all clear why or how ‘special interest’ positive buildings and positive buildings should be considered for the purposes of planning applications.

3.23 In Character Area 6 Barton Road and Newnham Road south, 1 Grange Road and the pavilion on the Gonville and Caius sports ground are indicated as positive with no supporting evidence of this status.
Within the text on Character Area 6, neither the buildings listed as Positive nor the reasons why the buildings are identified as Positive are stated. This does not allow transparency in the decision making process. If CCC wishes that special considerations should be applied to these buildings then the reasons for such designation should be clearly stated.
3.25 **Response:** Objection to the inclusion of 1 Grange Road and the pavilion on Gonville and Caius playing fields as the criteria for inclusion are not stated.

3.26 Within Character Area 7 Newnham Road North and Queen’s Road, Springfield and 1 West Road have been identified as Positive with no supporting evidence.

3.27 Within the text on Character Area 7, neither the buildings listed as Positive nor the reasons why the buildings are identified as Positive are stated. This does not allow transparency in the decision making process. If CCC wishes that special considerations should be applied to these buildings then the reasons for such designation should be clearly stated.

3.28 **Response:** Objection to the inclusion of 1 West Road and Springfield as the criteria for inclusion are not stated.

**Article 4 Directions**

3.29 The Town and Country Planning Act (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (GPDO) with amendments in 2010 sets out permitted development rights for certain minor forms of development - i.e. development that may be legitimately undertaken without the need to gain specific planning consent. Where the exercise of permitted development rights causes, or may cause, a specific local problem, local authorities can in the circumstances set out in PPS 5 Policy HE4.1 consider restricting permitted development rights by making directions under article 4 of the GPDO.

3.1 PPS5 Practice Guidance notes that removing permitted development rights will have the effect of increasing the regulation to which developers are subject, and increases the administrative
work of the local authority (who will have to consider applications for development that was formerly permitted). In some circumstances it may also mean the authority is liable to pay compensation where a developer has suffered a loss directly attributable to the restriction. Directions will need to be fully and properly justified in accordance with national policy. Further guidance is available from English Heritage.

3.2 The CCC recommends that an Article 4 Direction on the West Cambridge Conservation Area to cover all unlisted dwelling houses should be considered. CCC also states that an Article 4 Direction can be focused on groups of buildings, rather than the whole Conservation Area, such as Buildings of Local Interest or positive buildings.

3.3 CCC acknowledges that any Direction will require a photographic survey to record the present condition of the buildings concerned, and written guidance will need to be provided to householders. The Draft report also notes that the provision of grants to help with the additional costs associated with the traditional materials or the reinstatement of lost architectural features (such as the replacement of uPVC windows with windows to a traditional design) would be helpful.

3.4 Undoubtedly the introduction of an Article 4 Direction would create a demand on the CCC’s resources both in terms of time to record the asset and also to deal with the increase in planning applications for work previously permitted, as well as a revenue allowance for compensation where a developer has suffered a loss directly attributable to the restriction.

4 RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended Action 1

4.1 CCC proposes that it will designate additional areas to the West Cambridge Conservation Area as recommended in the Draft and will amend the boundary of the adjoining Cambridge Central Conservation Area as required.

4.2 Response: No comment.

Recommended Action 2

4.3 CCC proposes that an Article 4 Direction on the West Cambridge Conservation Area, to cover all unlisted dwellings.

4.4 Response: Objection to the use of Article 4 Direction CCC has not set out sufficient reasoning to why it should be introduced.
4.5 **Response:** Objection to the introduction of Article 4 Direction to cover all unlisted dwellings as CCC has not shown how it is going to implement the directive in terms of staff resources for surveying the properties, consultation with owners as to the implications of the Article 4 Direction and dealing with the additional planning application and enforcement issues as well as the additional resources required for revenue expenditure.

4.6 **Response:** Objection to the additional, unqualified typologies CCC has introduced to unlisted buildings. In addition to BLIs, ‘Special Interest Positive’ buildings have been identified as well as ‘Positive’ buildings – which accounts for the vast majority of the buildings within the Conservation Area. No evidence is given as to the reasoning behind the identification of these categories. This is especially important in that CCC proposes a blanket Article 4 Direction – in its text CCC suggests that such a Direction could focus on groups such as BLIs or Positive buildings – so the identification of these buildings must be transparent and robust. This could affect permitted development rights of identified buildings in that extensions, painting, alterations to roofs and chimneys, replacement windows and doors, the creation of car parking in front gardens and the removal or replacement of front boundaries could require planning permission.

4.7 **Response:** Objection. The typologies identified for unlisted buildings are confusing. It is not clear what the implications are with regards planning considerations which affect each unlisted dwelling typology.

**Recommended Action 3**

4.8 CCC proposes that prior to applications coming forward, the CCC will continue to discuss with property owners any future plans for development to ensure that new development ‘preserves or enhances’ the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

4.9 **Response:** Objection. There is no need for this recommendation as it duplicates PPS5.

**Recommended Action 4**

4.10 CCC will encourage private owners to care for their trees and open spaces including the provision of bio-diverse habitats for wildlife.

4.11 **Response:** Objection. Many of the open spaces are for the purpose of formal sports provision and the provision of a diversity of habitats within these areas could be problematic due to lack of space or in terms of management.

**Recommended Action 5**
4.12 CCC will ensure that the public realm features within the Conservation Area (roads, pavements, street lighting and street furniture) is regularly monitored to see if any improvements are needed.

4.13 **Response:** Objection. Service provision should be equitable across Cambridge. No additional funding/staffing resources are identified to enable this to happen so presumably this would be facilitated out of existing budgets. CCC acknowledges that the Conservation Area is well maintained and there are no obvious examples of where public investment in enhancement schemes is either needed or justified. If monitoring and public realm improvements were facilitated in the manner described in this prestigious and well maintained area, this would mean that less would be available to other areas of Cambridge. The monitoring of public realm should be equitable and justified.

5 **CONCLUSION**

5.1 CCC has issued a West Cambridge Conservation Area Draft Character Appraisal and Management Plan for public consultation.

5.2 Government policy stresses the need for local planning authorities to define and record the special interest, character and appearance of all conservation areas in their district. English Heritage gives guidance on conservation area appraisals and management of conservation areas.

5.3 The respondent objects to the inclusion of certain views and buildings as ‘Positive Unlisted Buildings’ as well as points of principle to the three tiers of unlisted building identified and confusion as to what this means in policy terms. The respondent also objects to the proposal to introduce Article 4 Directions.

5.4 Given our representations in this process we look forward to be involved with the on-going consultations and be given the courtesy and right to make further representations.
Bidwells is the UK’s leading regional property consultancy.