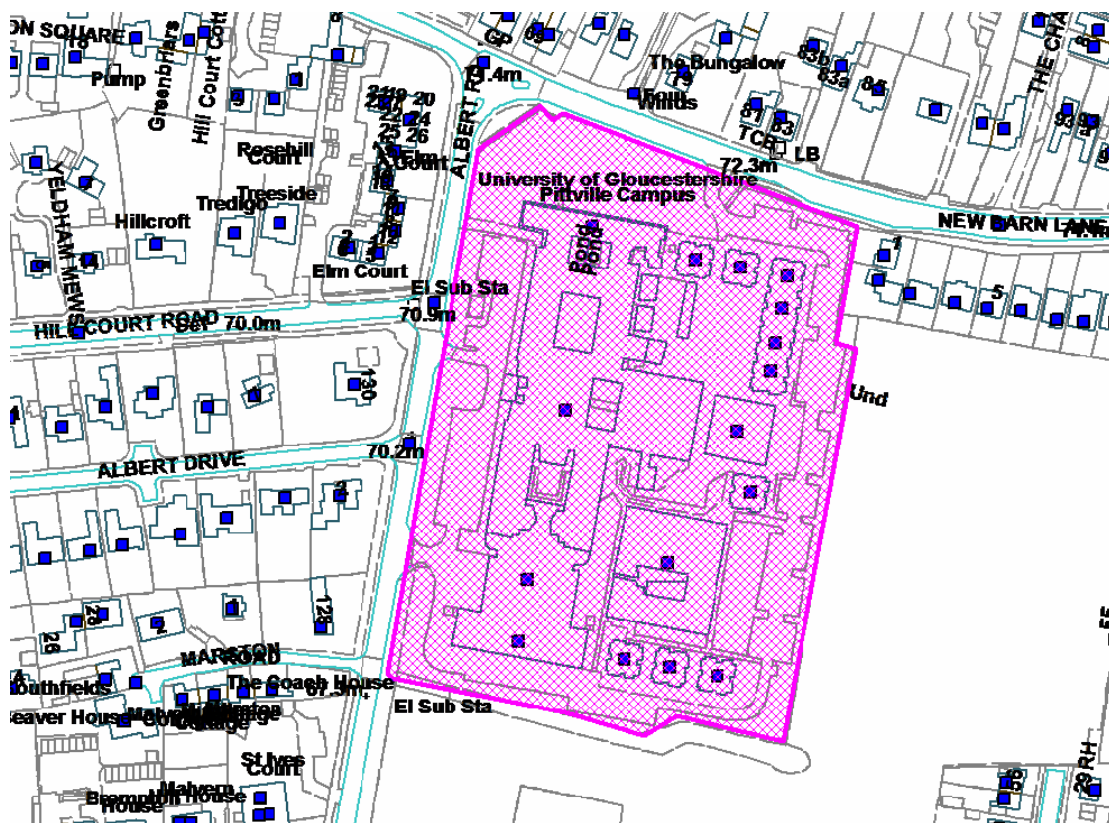


APPLICATION NO: 14/01928/FUL	OFFICER: Mrs Lucy White
DATE REGISTERED: 23rd October 2014	DATE OF EXPIRY: 22nd January 2015
WARD: Pittville	PARISH: Prestbury
APPLICANT:	Uliving and University of Gloucestershire
AGENT:	Plainview Planning Ltd
LOCATION:	Pittville Campus, Albert Road, Cheltenham
PROPOSAL:	Erection of a student village incorporating 603 new-build student bedrooms, the refurbishment of the existing media centre (which will include a reception/security desk, a gym, retail facilities, multi-faith area, refectory and bar, quiet study area, laundrette, ancillary office space), and the provision of a mixed use games area. In addition, the proposal involves the demolition of existing teaching facilities, 23 existing rooms and the retention and refurbishment of 191 existing student rooms.

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE



1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This application is before Committee at the request of Councillor John Payne. The reason for referral given is the impact of the proposed development upon the locality in terms of potential harm to amenity, poor architectural design, site management and environmental impact. There has also been an objection from Prestbury Parish Council.
- 1.2 The applicant proposes the erection of a student village incorporating 603 new-build student bedrooms, the refurbishment of the existing media centre (which will include a reception/security desk, a gym, retail facilities, multi-faith area, refectory and bar, quiet study area, laundrette, ancillary office space), and the provision of a mixed use games area. In addition, the proposal involves the demolition of existing teaching facilities, 23 existing bedrooms and the retention and refurbishment of 191 existing student rooms.
- 1.3 The application is accompanied by a number of detailed reports and statements covering design, planning policy, transport, operational site management, noise and environmental impact, ecology, trees, site contamination, utilities and energy resources.
- 1.4 Revised drawings and documents were received on 3rd and 11th December in response to the on-going discussions with the Council, concerns and issues raised by local residents and errors and omissions in some of the previously submitted reports. Notably, the Transport Statement and Operational Site Management Plan have been significantly revised. Additional surveys have been undertaken in respect of cycle and pedestrian routes to and from the site, the numbers and frequency of students travelling to each campus destination and modes of travel. The detail of the transport assessment is discussed later in the report.
- 1.5 Similarly, Addendums to both the Operational Site Management Plan and Planning Statement include responses to questions and concerns raised by local residents and the Council following the initial consultation exercise. These issues relate principally to student behaviour and measures to manage students off-site, justification for the amount of student accommodation proposed and whether the proposed development is purely demand led. Additional information was also sought in regards to the proposed retail provision, on-site car parking, deliveries, site security, waste management, introduction of postgraduate students to the site, affect on public utilities, sound insulation and noise during the demolition phase.
- 1.6 A series of later statements and reports by the applicant were submitted from 5th January, largely focussed on the economic and financial justification for the proposed development. Notably, a report 'Economic Impact of University of Gloucestershire' was made available on 8th January 2014 and a copy has been circulated to members of the Planning Committee via email.
- 1.7 Pre-application and Public Consultation
- 1.8 This application has been subject to formal pre-application discussions and the University entering into a competitive bid process with a number of development teams. Prior to Uliving's involvement with the scheme, the University was keen to notify local residents of their intention to redevelop the site. This process included a meeting with a local residents group in May 2013 and subsequent meetings with residents and local councillors. Sketch proposals were also presented to CBC officers in September 2013 to seek their views during the early competitive bidding process. The intention of this public engagement and dialogue with CBC was to incorporate feedback into the proposed redevelopment of the site as ideas and proposals were evolving.
- 1.9 In March 2014, pre-application submissions were received by two development teams. Discussions between the University, Uliving and Council officers then took place during

March and feedback provided on the proposed draft schemes. The quality and amount of detail submitted by the two bidders differed and a corresponding response was provided by the planning department; the majority verbal given the very tight deadlines imposed on the bidders by the University.

- 1.10** Still part of the pre-application process, further discussion took place between Uliving and CBC in April which focussed on the concerns previously raised by officers during the bidding process which largely centred on layout, the concept and style of architectural design and student numbers. A draft scheme was subsequently presented to the Architects' Panel in July 2014 which sought to address these issues; however the Architect's Panel were not supportive of the proposals; officers also continued to have strong reservations.
- 1.11** The applicant undertook a four week public consultation exercise during August and early September 2014. Around 1000 local residents in neighbouring streets and beyond were notified of the university's proposals for the site and invited to attend one of four public meetings/exhibition at which a formal presentation was made by University and U-living representatives followed by a question and answer session. Feedback and issues raised at these meetings was also made available via an on-line FAQ facility which was updated throughout the public consultations exercise in response to additional queries.
- 1.12** A final public consultation and exhibition took place on 21st October 2014, its purpose to present a revised scheme incorporating changes in response to the concerns raised by local residents, CBC officers and the Architects' Panel. In summary the key changes were amendments to the design, height, form, materials and fenestration detail of the accommodation blocks (notably the corner building at the junction of New Barn Lane and Albert Road), the introduction of postgraduate students to the town houses fronting Albert Road and more detailed off-site site management measures proposed.
- 1.13** Pursuant to the public consultation exercise and the wide ranging responses received from local residents, several further meetings took place with CBC officers to discuss the issues raised and any additional information required to be incorporated into any future planning application. These issues were focussed on amenity (noise and disturbance, off-site management of student behaviour), student numbers, design, student parking and highway safety.
- 1.14** The Design and Access Statement which accompanies the application provides a full and detailed account of the dialogue between the main parties and how the applicants have amended the scheme in response to both pre and post application discussions.
- 1.15** Description of Site
- 1.16** Pittville Campus is located approximately one mile to the north east of the town centre within a predominantly residential area. The site has been used for educational purposes since the 1960s and up until 2011, when all teaching ceased at the Pittville Campus, up to 1,300 students were taught on site with 200 staff during term time. The site has two principal street frontages facing Albert Road and New Barn Lane with the playing fields and school grounds of Pittville School forming the south and east boundaries. The nearest residential properties are those adjacent at a distance of 21 metres to the existing student residential blocks. Surrounding development is predominantly residential and domestic in scale with the exception of several blocks of three and four storey apartment blocks on Albert Road. Dwellings on New Barn Lane are mostly semi-detached properties with a mix of render and facing brick. The architectural style of properties on Albert Road differs more with some larger detached, stone faced detached dwellings of individual style.
- 1.17** The development of the site has evolved over the years and existing buildings on the site reflect a cumulative, ad hoc form of development. The existing buildings, in terms of

footprint, cover a large proportion of the site and are of varying architectural style and form. These consist of 7,120 square metres of teaching space accommodated in a range of single and two storey teaching buildings to four storey residential buildings and teaching facilities. The Media Centre for example was built in the 1990s and has a predominantly rendered finish but with a distinctive curved metal finish roof form. This contrasts with the earlier four storey pre-cast Tower Block fronting New Barn Lane and the later pavilion style, rendered, accommodation blocks facing the north, east and southern boundaries. The ten existing residential buildings accommodate 214 students and have remained in residential use despite the closure of all teaching facilities on the site in 2011.

- 1.18** Many of the teaching facilities are linked internally and notably when viewed from Albert Road the existing built form creates an almost continuous façade. There is very little soft landscaping across the site other than the landscaped strip and mature trees fronting Albert Road and New Barn Lane which are effective in softening the appearance of the corner of the site and creating a buffer between the existing four storey built form and the public realm. The majority of the external spaces are taken up with hard surfaced courtyards, access roads and car parking.
- 1.19** The site is accessed via an 'in' and 'out' arrangement on Albert Road which links to an internal perimeter access road. There is a second vehicular access onto New Barn Lane. A bus lay-by is located on Albert Road opposite Hillcourt Road.
- 1.20** The Central Conservation Area (Pittville Character Appraisal Area) runs along the southern boundary of the site and the grade 1 listed Pittville Pump Rooms is located within metres of the site. The neighbouring Pittville School is also included in the Index of Buildings of Local Importance.

2. CONSTRAINTS AND RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Constraints:

None

Relevant Planning History:

14/00339/PREAPP REC

New Student accommodation

14/00434/PREAPP 13th August 2014 CLO

Redevelopment of site for student's residences accommodation, including demolition of existing buildings, erection of new buildings, and related / ancillary facilities, services, and amenities, with associated works comprising access, parking, hard and soft landscaping

87/00036/ZHIST 19th February 1987 PER

Gloscat, Cheltenham Gloucestershire - Erection of Fine Art Library and Fashion Block on Existing Car Park. Demolition of Sarjeants Hall and Construction of Car Park

91/00651/PF 1st August 1991 PER

Erection Of One Elliott Medway Demountable Building For Student Union Facilities (As Revised By Letter Dated 24 Jul 91)

91/01281/PF 5th May 1992 PER

Extensions to Form New Academic and Educational Accommodation, Plus 131 Student Residences, Additional Catering Facilities, Parking And Associated Works (S.106 Completed 25 May 93)

92/00499/PF 30th July 1992 PER

Provision of Temporary Building for Art-Fashion Studio Facilities Required For Two Year Duration

93/00039/PF 25th February 1993 PER

Siting Of Three New Transformer Substations around the Perimeter of the Site Using Established Hedging For Screening Supplemented By New Beech Hedging

95/00171/PF 27th April 1995 PER

Temporary Retention Of Demountable Student Union Building (Retrospective)

95/00190/PF 25th May 1995 PER

Revised Proposals for the Erection of Student Residence Buildings and Ancillary Accommodation with Car and Cycle Parking and Related Demolition

96/00138/PF 21st March 1996 PER

Revised Proposal for Dining Hall Element of Approved Student Residence Buildings and Ancillary Accommodation

97/00935/PF 15th January 1998 PER

Replacement Flue Installation (Extraction Ductwork to Existing Printing Studio (External Elevation of Tower Building) As Amended By Revised Plans and Letter Received 5 December 1997

98/00780/PF 15th October 1998 PER

Cheltenham and Gloucester College Of Higher - Replacement Windows Incl. Insulated Panels To Lower Section And Removal/Infill Other Areas With Wall Panel Cladding To Various Elevations

08/01510/FUL 18th December 2008 PER

Installation of window within front elevation of Pittville Campus facing Albert Road.

09/00204/FUL 8th April 2009 PER

Inclusion of a small extension to the Art and Design building at the University of Gloucestershire Pittville Campus, to house a DDA-compliant lift. The lift is to provide access to the upper floors of the 4-storey element of the building

C14/00021/DEMO REC

Demolition of property.

3. POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Adopted Local Plan Policies

CP 1 Sustainable development

CP 3 Sustainable environment

CP 4 Safe and sustainable living

CP 5 Sustainable transport

CP 7 Design

CP 8 Provision of necessary infrastructure and facilities

GE 5 Protection and replacement of trees

GE 6 Trees and development

NE 4 Contaminated land

HS 1 Housing development

HS 2 Housing Density

RT 7 Retail development in out of centre locations

RT 8 Individual convenience shops

RT 9 Car sales
RC 2 Youth and adult outdoor playing facilities
RC 3 Outdoor playing facilities in educational use
RC 5 Development of amenity space
RC 7 Amenity space in housing developments
UI 1 Development in flood zones
UI 2 Development and flooding
UI 3 Sustainable Drainage Systems
UI 7 Renewable energy
TP 1 Development and highway safety
TP 6 Parking provision in development

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Affordable housing (2004)
Amenity space (2003)
Flooding and sustainable drainage systems (2003)
Landscaping in new development (2004)
Planning obligations (2003)
Planning obligations: transport (2004)
Public art (2004)
Security and crime prevention (2003)
2004)
Sustainable buildings (2003)
Sustainable developments (2003)
Travel plans (2003)
Central conservation area: Pittville Character Area and Management Plan (July 2008)
Index of buildings of Local Interest SPD (2007)

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

4. CONSULTATIONS

Architects' Panel

14th November 2014

Erection of a student village incorporating 603 new-build student bedrooms, the refurbishment of the existing media centre (which will include a reception/security desk, a gym, retail facilities, multi-faith area, refectory and bar, quiet study area, laundrette, ancillary office space), and the provision of a mixed use games area. In addition, the proposal involves the demolition of existing teaching facilities, 23 existing rooms and the retention and refurbishment of 191 existing student rooms.

COMMENTS

This site is a major site to develop in the town. It has a prominent corner location within a residential area of large houses and apartment blocks. It is close to the racecourse, home to the internationally renowned national hunt festival. It lies on the edge of both the Central Conservation Area and the Green Belt. The site is meshed into the town's modern history. The site was first developed in the late 1950's and early 60's to replace the Cheltenham Art College, housed in a now long demolished Victorian building in the town centre, off the Lower High Street.

What became the Gloucestershire College of Art & Design had fine art courses, fashion design and an innovative, cross-disciplinary Environmental Design course teaching architecture, landscape architecture and town & country planning alongside each other.

The original college comprised the low buildings fronting Albert Road along with the multi-storey block. This was designed on a small collegiate plan with enclosed courtyards, a taller, central entrance atrium and the ability to move around the complex, between different departments under cover.

We are concerned that the main layout of the site may now already be fairly fixed, despite concerns already expressed about the overall spatial design and we remain concerned that the buildings are what we might call 'spotted' round the site, with no links between each other or the existing buildings retained. This results in open spaces that spill aimlessly around the site without developing any sense of place and gaps between blocks that give no cover to pedestrians, or sense of containment. This is a major opportunity lost to create spaces within and around the edges of the whole site that contribute to a spatial coherence and more collegiate air that could add something both to the site and its setting. The way that the basic elements within the units are used - at the moment forming 'L's', 'T's' and short terraces could very easily be reconfigured so that views into, around and out of the site, along with the place and space making was significantly enhanced - the overall construction costs need be no different.

We are also concerned that the blocks themselves miss an opportunity to form a backdrop to the whole development that is sympathetic to its surroundings, but creates a rewarding environment for its occupants.

These blocks, under the skin of the elevations appear to be quite crude representing simple, vertical extrusions of a basic plan form. There is very little modulation of the elevations, nor expression of the units behind, just a simple attempt to vary the blocks by using a myriad different materials that contribute to create a muddled and cluttered effect. The tower house blocks are the most attractive with a simpler palette of light colours. However, against the existing blocks with their pronounced eaves and corner glazing details they still lack strength, which could be easily added at no cost with a stronger eaves line, possibly projecting as a brises soleil and perhaps a vertical expression of the town house units with a pilaster rib, for example. Jettied upper floors would also give more emphasis to the plinth and allow some cover when walking round the buildings.

Further expression and detail could easily be shown, for example, by adding downpipes, canopies and covered/recessed areas at entrance doors - effectively a missing layer of refinement and detail that would not add cost.

It also seems odd that these blocks, which adjoin the existing pitched roofed pavilions, have flat roofs while the others have shallow pitched roofs, the addition of which could add so much to the town houses quality. And why don't doors and windows continue to line through between the ground and upper floors?

The whole development would become calmer and more coherent if the 'L' shaped blocks were in the same materials as the town houses with definition being provided by the different forms and massing. There are no fewer than five different materials used over the elevations of these blocks, including dark grey bricks that are at odds with any notion of a local colour palette and with very little architectural expression in the composition of those elevations. The long, curved brick walls facing the media centre and games area are the only nod to architectural expression, which are then weakened by being broken up with other materials, hinting at a lack of confidence by the designers. The resulting muddle and clutter is at odds with what could be much more crisp and unified. The pitched roofs are also oddly contrived so that they are pushed back from the eaves where they could have been expressed as with the existing blocks.

We are also concerned that the central block is too large a mass in the middle of the site. If this block were reduced in size slightly additional units could be added to other blocks to maintain numbers while at the same time opening opportunities to vary the static eaves line

that contributes to a dullness in the whole scheme. Contrast the existing roof line, which is varied in type and height creating much greater visual interest.

The highest, section of the corner block appears poorly thought out, missing an opportunity to open extensive views from this vantage point, over the racecourse and to the hills and again the roof edge is weakly defined.

We remain convinced that substantial improvements can be made with simple design tools and use of materials without having to delay the progress of the scheme unduly.

We believe that a more coherent architectural approach would not necessarily cost the developer/client any more because it is about simplification and refinement rather than adding materials or construction.

The panel also felt that it was disingenuous to suggest that opportunities to improve the scheme are limited because "hands are tied". Many of the suggested design improvements need not have any cost implications and could easily be incorporated in revisions to the proposals.

In conclusion we believe that significant improvements could be easily made, but that to do so requires a robust and unified approach by officers along with other consultees. We are happy for our views to be shared with those and to help further if required.

Salient Points

1. Simplify and unify elevational treatments.
2. Keep palette of materials and colours restrained, refined and restricted.
3. Express roofs and eaves more.
4. Add shadows and jetties to show more articulation.
5. Show detail; downpipes, ribs/pilasters, canopies etc. to add expression to elevations.
6. Instead of just having gaps between blocks, use the massing of units to consciously form spaces and control views into and out of the site.
7. Reduce the scale of the central block in conjunction with suggestions above.

Comments on revised scheme

17th December 2014

COMMENTS

The Architects Panel looked at and discussed some alterations to the scheme prior to the Planning Panel meeting of 17th Dec.

These alterations were made in response to previous comments. Those previous comments should be read in conjunction with these additional remarks.

It was regrettable that none of the more fundamental and underlying concerns appear to have been considered at all.

We reiterate that we feel that the approach to the design of the blocks, the expression of their elevations and their positioning on the site, in conjunction with a better design for the landscaping and setting of the buildings is key to creating a good quality scheme. There is little joy or inspiration in this design, which is supposed to house some of our best, young, creative minds.

The corner building, with the improvements made, is probably now the most successful element, along perhaps with the large, curved wall elements. The corner is improved with a simpler, clearer design, although the dropped glazing sections do not add anything and running the stone to the ground with no plinth expression introduces a weakness.

We noted small, colourful insertions adjoining doorways, but these are almost completely lost within the overall banality and serve simply to underline the lack of wit and expression in the overall approach.

The panel continues to feel unable to support the proposal without major changes being made and is increasingly disappointed that the opportunities have not been fully grasped, to the potential detriment of the whole scheme, which appears unable to garner support from any quarter.

Civic Society

6th November 2014

We do not oppose the development of this site as a student village. But Pittville is a vitally important part of the town, and any development in this area must be sympathetic to its character and of real architectural quality. What is needed so near the Pittville Park should have a Park-like or garden city feel to it. We do not think what is proposed passes this test. The four-storey buildings are too uniform and barracks-like. What is needed is something with a variety of different building heights so as to provide a more varied and interesting development. It is our view that the site probably cannot sustain as many as 600 student bedrooms, and that most of the new blocks should be no more than two or three storeys, and in a more interesting style. We want the new student village to be somewhere that is a pleasant area for both the students and local residents. In our view, the town and the students deserve something better than this.

Heritage and Conservation Manager

8th January 2014

The comments from the Conservation and Heritage Manger are reproduced in full in section 6.5.13 of the report.

Gloucestershire County Council Highways Officer

9th January 2014

A full application for six new residential buildings, for 603 new student bed spaces, refurbishing of 191 existing bedrooms, giving a total residential population of 794, Change of use of existing 1099m² media centre. A Transport Statement (TS) and a Travel Plan have been submitted with the application.

The application was submitted without any lengthy pre-application correspondence. An initial contact was made by Connect, primarily to discuss the traffic calming on Albert Road, GCC requested a copy of the draft TS, and replied with concerns. Unfortunately it appears that the transport consultant, did not receive the comments from the highway authority, and the application was subsequently submitted. The applicant needed the application to be determined in very short space of time, and required a signed legal agreement prior to committee. Both the highway and local planning authority, agreed to try and deal with the application in a very short space of time, notwithstanding that the period spanned the Christmas and New Year holidays. The highway authority has prioritised this application, but did make it clear to the applicant that the all information would be required well in advance of the 2 weeks period prior to the committee date of 22nd January. GCC received the application on 27/11/14, to resolve all issues within a truncated 2 month period was very ambitious.

Applications like this are unusual, and often require a lot of research and linking with existing strategic work or authority led sustainable transport bid projects. Currently the

Local Sustainable Transport Fund work is being rolled out, as is the Cheltenham Transport Plan. GCC is reviewing the Local Transport Plan with strategic sections on Active Travel Network, and Think Travel. Gloucester's role as a host city for the 2015 Rugby World Cup will be used as a catalyst to encourage active travel around Cheltenham and Gloucester during that event and beyond.

Perhaps of greater interest is GCC launching the NUS charity's national "Green Impact". GCC is amongst the first local authorities to sign up to the NUS charity's national Green Impact programme, which will be delivered in partnership with the University of Gloucestershire Students' Union. Green Impact provides self-development opportunities for staff and work experience for local young people whose assistance will increase our capacity to bring about change. It forms part of the council's wider approach to carbon reduction and is linked to other council initiatives such as the Travel Plan, Cycle to Work scheme and waste reduction work.

It is unfortunate that this application did not afford the opportunity of a lengthy pre-application stage, or that the target date for determination is so restricted. The lack of staff from University of Gloucestershire Students' Union to be actively involved in this application is considered to be a missed opportunity.

Outstanding issues to be fully resolved

Post Graduate Students

120 Post Graduate Students will reside on the new development. The UoG has estimated that 50 of these students will work in county schools, and will be able to own a car, to enable them to access teaching placements. The University arranges car sharing (3 to a car) by placing them in schools near to each other. Only 15 car parking spaces have been allocated for these students. It is difficult to reconcile how the university will determine which students will bring their car, to Pittville Campus prior to admission. The proposal has therefore assumed that the remaining 70 Post Graduate Students will not own or travel by car, although no details have been provided as to whether all or some of the Post Graduate Students will be subject to the tenancy agreement that restricts car ownership

It is considered that this assumption is flawed, and in a worst case scenario the 120 Post Graduate Students will have access to the car, but only 15 spaces will be allocated. At the least all these students should be identified in the Student Residential Travel Plan, with mitigation and a remedial fund secured.

Access

The proposed access lacks a great deal of imagination, and it's difficult to reconcile that a great deal of importance has been attached to the layout, or that it will contribute positively to making places better for people. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, and it should be indivisible from good planning. The access appears not to conform with paragraph 56 and 57 of the NPPF.

The relocation of some of most of the 33 spaces currently shown at the main access would create a positive message, and divorce its self from the main trip attraction to the site, students. A shared space would be much more appropriate at this location, to give the arrival a much safer focus. Mixing high pedestrian and cyclist's flows with reversing cars, in a restricted area, is not good design.

Shuttle Bus

The applicant is proposing a night time shuttle bus to bring students from Cheltenham town centres night clubs to the Pittville Campus. No details of timings, frequency or how this will be secured in perpetuity have been supplied.

Car Parking

The application forms states that 80 staff will be full time, and 20 part time, (90 FTE). The information of allocated parking is unclear, and is quoted as 122, 115 or 109 in different documents.

The Landscape Plan shows 115 spaces on the plan, but the Transport Statement and Travel Plan detail 122 as shown below

- 70 spaces for Pittville Campus staff
- 10 for staff visiting from other campuses
- 15 for post graduate students
- 10 blue badge spaces
- 5 spaces for Uliving staff
- 12 spaces for visitors to the media centre

However the landscape plan also has a key which notes 109 spaces:

- 44 New Barn Lane Entrance,
- 38 Rear Media Centre and
- 27 Main entrances.

115 car parking spaces is also quoted in the Planning Summary October 2014.

The parking issue is further confused by the post graduate student issue, which remains unclear.

The conflicting parking numbers, allocation, and robust evidence is concerning when parking is a considered to be a main issue for local residents and councillors.

Cycle Parking

The applicant has proposed a number of cycle parking spaces, based on the tables in the CBC Local Plan, but this minimum this should not be seen as a target. The use of cycling should be positively encouraged for better health, reduced collisions and congestion. The proposal to accommodate the cycle parking in large remote garages is not considered to be good design, is contrary to the NPPF, or would encourage students to use the cycle as a mode of choice. The proposed cycle parking has also been raised by the CBC cycle officer and a member of the Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Cycle Campaign. Smaller well designed facilities, located near to the entrance doors of the units, would suggest ownership of the cycle parking, rather than a divorced communal facility. Future growth should be designed in, so that if cycle growth occurs up to 2031 and beyond, this can be accommodated.

Travel Plans

Two travel plans have been submitted;

Student Residential Travel Plan

Framework Residential Travel Plan

The failings of the submitted travel plans have been highlighted in the draft response. However highway authority suggests that a revised Travel Plan document is submitted, which has 3 parts:

1. Framework Travel Plan
2. Student Travel Plan
3. Staff Travel Plan

It would be nice to link the Travel plans in partnership with the University of Gloucestershire Students' Union. The Travel Plans will be secured by a s106 agreement.

Cycle Routes

The applicant has audited some cycle routes from the halls to The Park, and FCH/Hardwick. GCC in consultation with the CBC cycle officer and John Mallows from The Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Cycle Campaign suggest more appropriate routes. This would require a cycle contra flows on sections of Winchcombe Street, High Street and Rodney Road, or routes via Albert Place, Sherborne Street, Gloucester Place and A46, to Winchcombe Street. The decision on the Cheltenham Transport Plan Traffic Regulation Order committee, on 15th January may alter requirements. The applicant preferred method of mitigation is by a contribution secured through a legal agreement. This method requires highway bills of quantities, supplied by the applicant and verified by the highway authority term contractor, and Forward Programme Manager.

Future Traffic Regulation Orders associated with these routes will also be required. I have not received information from the transport consultant on costings of the highway works, or details of solicitors detail to instruct GCC solicitors.

Walking Routes

GCC has audited a preferred walking route, to Evesham Road to Cheltenham town centre and to the local M&S and Morrison's on Prestbury Road have been identified by GGC as requiring improvements to some pinch points and missing dropped kerbs. These highway improvements are to be delivered by contribution, and implemented by GCC. The works were shown in the draft response.

Legal Agreement

A legal agreement is required, but due to lack of information I have been unable to instruct my solicitors to prepare a draft.

GCC Mitigation

New dropped kerbs with tactile paving of parts of the highway that will provide direct attractive walking routes **£XXXX [awaiting cost estimates from Connect]**

Contra flow on Winchcombe Street, High Street (shared cycle/pedestrian) and Rodney Road to enable direct cycle routes to be established, Town Centre and The Park, including signage lineage and Traffic Regulation Costs Estimated but awaiting LSTF and CTP TRO committee **£20,000** alternative routes may be required.

Pinch point at Wellesley Road and Marle Hill Road, new dropped kerbs, extending H marking on Marle Hill Road, new pigmented HRA, with unbound gravel around the tree **£XXXX [awaiting cost estimates from Connect]**

Remedial fund for Staff Travel Plan to meet targets - **£5,000**

Remedial fund for 105 Post Graduate Students Travel Plan to meet SOV targets - **£47970**
{Needs confirming with university on robust car ownership, distribution and travel habits of Post Graduate Students}

Finger post signage and plan monoliths (similar to LSTF project), to create hub points for travel 3 monoliths (£9000, 3 sets of fingerposts (£7700) - **£16,770**

GCC Travel Plan Co-ordinator for 10 years **£10,000**

Recommendation

The highway authority recommends that this application be refused due to insufficient information submitted to enable the planning authority to be able to properly assess the highway and transport impact of the proposed development.

- *More favourable consideration may be given if the matters outlined below are addressed to the satisfaction of the highway authority.*
- *Detailed clarification of Post Graduate Students on work placement, their car ownership, and if subject to tenancy agreement as the first year students.*
- *Comprehensive Car Parking assessment and full clarification of inconsistencies in the submission*
- *Rethink of Cycle parking to relocate near residential units and scope to expand in the future*
- *Revised access layout design to contribute positively to making places better for people, to conform to paragraph 56 and 57 of the NPPF. Possible shared space with good permeability.*
- *Full details Shuttle bus and how it is to be secured in perpetuity.*
- *Revised Travel Plan document is submitted, in 3 parts; Framework Travel Plan, Student - Travel Plan, Staff Travel Plan, secured by legal agreement using GCC templates*
- *Travel Plans Remedial fund (staff and Post Graduate Students, depending on outcome of first bullet point)*
- *Costing of required highway mitigation which needs to get AMEY and Forward Programme Manager approval.*
- *Legal Agreement*

Wales and West Utilities

6th November 2014

Wales and West Utilities have no objections to these proposals, however our apparatus may be at risk during construction works and should the planning application be approved then we require the promoter of these works to contact us directly to discuss our requirements in detail. Should diversion works be required these will be fully chargeable

English Heritage

7th November 2014

The application(s) should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice.

COMMENTS ON REVISED PLANS

17th December 2014

The application(s) should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice.

Environmental Health

13th November 2014 –

I have reviewed this application and offer the following comments:

General:

In general, the design for the site appears satisfactory and includes features which attempt to control any potential impact on nearby properties. Ideally I would have preferred building TH2 to have been orientated with its main entrances facing the inside of the development, rather than onto Albert Road. This would help to control any potential noise from students accessing and egressing their properties, however I note that the properties are already

nearly 50m from the homes on the opposite side of the road, which will itself minimise any impact.

During the demolition and construction of the development there is some potential for nearby residents to be affected by students from blocks R8, 9 & 10 accessing the student union by way of the 'diversion' shown on the Site Establishment plan. Control of this potential nuisance can be achieved by the University employing on-site security to actively monitor and control any disruption from residents using this route. Discuss with Uni.

Blocks TH1, TH2 & TH3 all include mirror image terraced properties where internal staircases run up party walls which is good practice, however they also include properties where the stairs run up internal walls without stairs on the opposite side. This means that the stairs are directly opposite bedrooms, with potential for the sleep of residents being disturbed by residents of neighbouring blocks, even though their activity is entirely reasonable. I would suggest that the applicant considers making alteration to the internal lay out of these premises to ensure that as far as possible all blocks are the mirror image of their neighbour.

Outline (Construction) Methodology:

The application proposes to use concrete strip foundations 'subject to further site investigation'. In case this should change and piled foundations are required I must request a condition on the following lines is attached to any consent for development:

Condition:

The method of piling foundations must be submitted to the LPA for approval before work commences on site.

Reason: This is due to the possibility of the use of piled foundations causing loss of amenity and nuisance to the residents of other properties nearby.

The site is in close proximity to a comprehensive school, I must therefore recommend a condition to ensure that site deliveries do not take place during the school run, but come to think of it, this isn't my condition to recommend, is it?

The application indicates intended working hours of 08:00 ' 18:00 Monday ' Friday and 8:00 ' 13:00 on Saturdays, with no works of demolition or construction on Sundays or Bank Holidays. These times are within the working hours recommended by this department, and as such I would recommend a condition is attached to make these working hours enforceable in order to protect nearby residents from loss of amenity due to noise from construction works, on the following lines:

Condition:

Works of construction and demolition shall be restricted to 08:00 ' 18:00 Monday ' Friday and 8:00 ' 13:00 on Saturdays, unless permitted in advance by the LPA.

Reason: To protect the residents of nearby properties from loss of amenity due to noise from mechanical plant used in construction and demolition operations

Informative: If the need arises to work on site outside of these hours the site operator should seek an agreement under the Control of Pollution Act 1974 with CBC Public Protection team. This will then allow work to take place during these hours when it is absolutely necessary only, and subject to conditions agreed in the consent notice. An example of such a situation would be the delivery to site of equipment requiring a road closure.

Acoustic Report:

The application includes a comprehensive acoustic report which includes an assessment of potential noise impact from the completed development on existing property, as well as the impact of existing noise sources (mainly road traffic) affecting the new residences. The report identifies a number of conditions which may be attached to any permission for development in order to control the effects of noise, which I would recommend are incorporated as follows:

Condition

A noise management policy for the completed site should be submitted to the LPA for approval before new or re-furbished buildings are first used.

Reason: To protect residents of nearby properties and on-site residents from the effects of noise generated on the site.

Informative: This policy should be developed in conjunction with student representatives and distributed to new residents on site. An appropriate policy is likely to include advice on controlling noise levels when on and around the site and identify possible sanctions that may be imposed if the advice is not followed.

Condition

The design of air handling plant serving catering facilities provided in Media Centre shall be submitted to the LPA for approval before installation.

Reason: To protect the residents of nearby properties from loss of amenity due to noise from air handling plant.

Informative: Submitted information is expected to include an assessment of the levels of noise affecting nearby residential properties, not just a measured level for the equipment selected.

Condition

The design of air conditioning plant serving the Media Centre shall be submitted to the LPA for approval before installation.

Reason: To protect the residents of nearby properties from loss of amenity due to noise from air conditioning plant.

Informative: Submitted information is expected to include an assessment of the levels of noise affecting nearby residential properties, not just a measured level for the equipment selected.

Condition:

The design of noise attenuation measures for the Media Centre shall be submitted to the LPA for approval before implementation.

Reason: To protect the residents of nearby properties from loss of amenity due to noise from amplified music.

Condition

The external noise level at the boundary of the campus from combined mechanical equipment noise shall not exceed 35dB LAeq, 1hour between 7:00 and 23:00, and 25dB LAeq 5 minutes between 23:00 and 7:00, when assessed as a rating level in accordance with BS 4142:1997.

Reason: To protect the residents of nearby properties from loss of amenity due to noise from mechanical plant.

Condition*

The music noise level from amplified live or recorded music shall not exceed 55dB LMax, fast between 07:00 and 23:00 and 45dBLMax, fast between 23:00 and 7:00.

Reason: To protect the residents of nearby properties from loss of amenity due to noise from amplified music in the student union / media centre.

Condition*

Use of the Multi-Use Games area and outdoor gym should be restricted to 09:00 - 21:00, daily.

Reason: To protect residents both on and off site from loss of amenity due to noise from the use of this facility.

Condition*

Deliveries of material to commercial units on the site using HGVs shall only be made between 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Saturday.

Reason: To protect residents both on and off site from loss of amenity due to noise from deliveries to commercial units.

The acoustic report also identifies the glazing to be used in residential property. I would therefore recommend the following:

Condition *

Glazing to residential property will be two panes of 4mm glass, separated by a 16mm sealed air gap.

Parish Council

25th November 2014

Following on from our conversation on 25th November 2014, regarding the Pittville Campus refurbishment planning application 14/01928/FUL, closing date 26th November 2014:

Prestbury Parish Council object to this proposal on the following grounds:-

Having studied the proposal it is felt that the application is not fit for purpose as the drawings are incorrect, existing buildings to the rear of the site are not shown on the proposed elevation drawings, this gives a false impression of the final site layout. There are also anti-social, travel plan issues and proposed staff numbers seem to be incorrect.

There is also concern that this application contravenes various planning policies mainly CP4, CP5, CP7 and TP1.

18th December 2014

Prestbury Parish Council objects to this development on the grounds that 800 plus people is an excessive number in this location, increasing traffic and creating public order problems. This application plus those to develop Starvehall Farm and Pittville School will have a detrimental impact on the area.

The revised Pittville Campus application also fails to comply with the following planning policies:

Policy CP4 requires adequate provision for security and the prevention of crime and disorder. There is no security off-site and the applicant intends to rely on the public to report anti-social behaviour from students returning late at night fuelled by alcohol, as frequently reported in the local press regarding other areas of town.

Policy CPS states that the location must minimise the need for travel. There will be eight hundred students living here, but studying at the other side of Cheltenham and in Gloucester. It is unlikely that they will walk to their destination and cycling will be extremely dangerous on main roads, thus the number of buses will quadruple from the current situation, adding to the traffic disruption and causing even more CO2 emissions.

Policy CP7 requires a high standard of architectural design. This development does not improve the original complex or complement and respect neighbouring buildings. The drawings submitted in the application are not the same as distributed to the public and give a false impression of open space to the planning committee.

Policy TP I makes clear that development will not be permitted where there is a danger of generating high turnover on-street parking. Although students will 'not be encouraged' to bring vehicles to their accommodation, inevitably some will try and will be forced to park in surrounding streets which are already adversely affected by recent parking restrictions. There will be events in the marquee area and, at certain times of the year, parents will visit, all compromising highway safety.

GCC Community Infrastructure Team

7th November 2014

Please note that GCC Community Infrastructure team have no comments to make on the application.

18th December 2014

No contributions will be sought towards Community Infrastructure arising from this proposal.

Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records

5th November 2014

Report available to view on line.

9th December 2014

Updated report available to view on line.

Contaminated Land Officer

17th November 2014

A detailed ground investigation report has been submitted and no remediation work has been deemed necessary. However as a precaution the following condition should be included in case any unforeseen contamination is identified during the course of demolition or re-development work.

In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development it must be reported immediately in writing to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and a remediation scheme

submitted to the approval of the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme, a verification report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced and submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval.

9th December 2014

Comments as per 17th November

Cheltenham Cycle Campaign

28th November 2014

Cycle parking

The proposal for 200 cycle spaces we consider to be too low for the proposed number of students accommodated at the site that we understand to be around 600. The aim should be for the majority of students to have access to a bicycle. The vast majority of the students will need to travel to other campuses, as there will be little teaching on this site.

Albert Road access

We believe that the speeds should be lower in the urban area and we support the 20s plenty campaign. It would be particularly beneficial for those on bicycles to have the speed limit in Albert Road set at 20mph.

The access from Albert Road is not ideal, as there is a one way system proposed, so those cycling to the campus up Albert Road will need to cycle past the exit to gain access. Cycling routes on the site to the main storage areas are not at all clear on the plan.

Cycle routes to other campuses

There are several choices of routes, which are mostly along quiet roads, to the Park campus. The proposals under the LST programme for the central area will generally improve permeability for cycling, thus improving conditions. Two way cycling in Montpelier street would also aid some journeys to the Park.

The preferred route to Hardwick campus crosses Evesham Road at the Pump Room. We have long argued for traffic lights for all traffic at this cross roads, which would benefit the crossing of the main road by all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists. The present pedestrian crossing set back from the cross road is of little benefit to anyone.

Access to Hardwick from the Honeybourne line is not ideal, and there may be opportunities that the university could take to provide a direct access. The footway is narrow between the Honeybourne path and Hardwick entrance, and those on a bike are unlikely to make two right hand turns to gain access to the campus from the Honeybourne line.

Land Drainage Officer

13th November 2014

I have reviewed the Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the application. The proposed drainage strategy is appropriate and I concur with the report's summary and conclusions. However, in addition to those measures already proposed, I would recommend that where possible, 'soft/surface' SuDS features be considered for inclusion within the green landscape of the development.

Trees Officer
6th January 2014

The Tree Section has no objections to this application. As there is a loss of low amenity trees on site these are mitigated by a suitable Landscape Planning Proposal, however more detailed is required.

Please could the following conditions can be attached;

Detailed Landscaping

The landscaping proposal shall be carried out no later than the first planting season following the date when the development is ready for occupation or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The current Landscape Planning Proposals must be modified to also specify planting size, root type (it is anticipated that container grown trees will be planted) and protection so as to ensure quick successful establishment. The size of the trees shall be at least a Selected Standard as per BS 3936-1:1992. The trees shall be maintained for 5 years after planting and should they be removed, die, be severely damaged or become seriously diseased within this period they shall be replaced with another tree as originally required to be planted.

Reason: To preserve the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with Local Plan Policies GE5 and GE6 relating to the retention, protection and replacement of trees.

Protective Fencing (standard condition, can be altered to add specific info such as Arb Report ref & TPP ref)

Tree protective fencing shall be installed in accordance with the specifications set out within the submitted BS 5837:2012 Tree Protection Plan contained within Tree Protection Plan submitted 22nd Nov 2014. The fencing shall be erected, inspected and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any works on site (including demolition and site clearance) and shall remain in place until the completion of the construction process.

Reason: In the interests of local amenity, in accordance with Local Plan Policies GE5 and GE6 relating to the retention, protection and replacement of trees.

Arboricultural Monitoring

Prior to the commencement of any work on site, a timetable of arboricultural site inspections shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These site inspections shall be carried out by a suitably qualified arboriculturalist and all findings reported in writing to the Local Planning Authority. The approved timetable shall be implemented in full, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reasons: To safeguard the retained/protected trees in accordance with Local Plan Policies GE5 and GE6 relating to the retention, protection and replacement of trees.

Landscape Architect

13th November 2014

Landscape Plan Drawing Number: IA-363-LP-P01

Site Layout

The scheme proposed has pleasing, flowing lines.

There are a number of issues which could have an impact on the site layout and so require consideration prior to determination of the application. These are listed below:

Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS)

JCS Policy INF3: Flood Risk Management (Para iv) requires new development to incorporate suitable Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) where appropriate in the view of the local planning authority to manage surface water drainage. Cheltenham Borough Council encourages a SuDS based drainage strategy for new development through the design and layout of schemes. A landscape approach to SuDS is preferred for the following reasons:

- Natural forms of drainage are employed/enhanced
- Such schemes can provide both visual and practical amenity
- Biodiversity is benefited through the provision of food and habitat for wildlife.

By adopting a landscape approach to SuDS a proposed development respects the following JCS policies:

- INF3 Flood Risk Management (para iv)
- INF 4 Green Infrastructure (para 1.i, para 4)
- SD10: Biodiversity and Geodiversity (para iii)

The Landscape Plan does not show SuDS. There would appear to be sufficient space to allow for the inclusion of SuDS elements such as swales and detention ponds within the site layout and the landscaping scheme should be revised to allow for this if possible. Also consider creating 'rain gardens' within the gardens of the accommodation blocks and townhouses and elsewhere within the proposed ornamental planting beds.

The scheme should demonstrate compliance with Standard 1 of the draft National Standards.

Surface runoff not collected for use must be discharged to one or more of the following, listed in order of priority:

- 1) discharge into the ground (infiltration); or where not reasonably practicable,
- 2) discharge to a surface water body; or where not reasonably practicable,
- 3) discharge to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system; or where not reasonably practicable,
- 4) discharge to a combined sewer.

Hard Landscaping

Further details of feature paving and block paving type, colour, supplier are required. Areas of permeable paving should be indicated on the plan.

Bin & Bike Stores

The bin store in the corner of the lawn next to C2 is too prominent. Although screened by trees it will have a negative visual impact on what would otherwise be a pleasing amenity space. Similarly the bin store in front of R8 interrupts the flowing shape of the lawn and will diminish the amenity value of this area.

Conversely, the bin and bike store near TH3 seems too 'tucked away' with poor informal surveillance.

Consider incorporating all bin and bike stores into the buildings, where there would be improved security through increased informal surveillance and where they will not disrupt the flowing lines of the landscape scheme.

The exception would be the bike stores next to the MUGA. Here, they integrate well with the sports theme, will be well lit and the general activity in this area will provide informal surveillance.

Planting

South Border:-

On my last site visit there appeared to be a substantial gap between the front of the shrub border and the perimeter fence. The Landscape Planning Statement suggests infilling this area with a mix of native deciduous and evergreen shrubs. Proposals for this border should be included in the Planting Plan.

East Border:-

Suggest augmenting this border with more evergreen shrubs. Proposals should be included in the Planting Plan.

At present there is insufficient detail to allow for further comment regarding planting proposals. Please could landscape conditions LAN02 and LAN03B be attached to planning permission, if granted.

Maintenance

A long term maintenance schedule for the landscape scheme is required. The schedule should clearly state who is responsible for the maintenance of the general landscape and of the SuDS.

Revised comments

2nd January 2015

Documents:

Landscape Planning Statement

Landscape Plan Drawing Number: IA-363-LP-P01

Site Layout

From the outset it was felt that the proposed landscape scheme had pleasing, flowing lines.

However, there were a number of issues which could have had an impact on the site layout and so required consideration prior to determination of the application. These are listed below:

- Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS)
- Planting
- Bin and Bike Storage

- *Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS)*

JCS Policy INF3: Flood Risk Management (Para iv) requires new development to incorporate suitable Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) where appropriate in the view of the local planning authority to manage surface water drainage. Cheltenham Borough Council encourages a SuDS based drainage strategy for new development through the design and layout of schemes. A landscape approach to SuDS is preferred for the following reasons:

- Natural forms of drainage are employed/enhanced
- Such schemes can provide both visual and practical amenity

- Biodiversity is benefited through the provision of food and habitat for wildlife.

By adopting a landscape approach to SuDS a proposed development respects the following JCS policies:

- INF3 Flood Risk Management (para iv)
- INF 4 Green Infrastructure (para 1.i, para 4)
- SD10: Biodiversity and Geodiversity (para iii)

The original landscape scheme did not include soft landscape SuDS.

Through discussions between the landscape architects for the applicant and CBC, the latest Landscape Plan was developed which includes drainage swales as part of the landscape scheme.

The Swale Strategy Plan shown in the Landscape Planning Statement indicates the direction of surface water run-off. The detailed drainage scheme is to be prepared by drainage engineers. The final drainage scheme should demonstrate compliance with Standard 1 of the draft National Standards.

Surface runoff not collected for use must be discharged to one or more of the following, listed in order of priority:

- 1) *discharge into the ground (infiltration); or where not reasonably practicable,*
- 2) *discharge to a surface water body; or where not reasonably practicable,*
- 3) *discharge to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system; or where not reasonably practicable,*
- 4) *discharge to a combined sewer.*

- *Planting*

- Trees

The tree planting strategy provides structure and enclosure to balance the built form and also enhances the curvilinear pathways. The varieties of trees selected will provide interest throughout the year and help to define different spaces within the campus. The trees proposed for both the interior of the campus and the perimeter will contribute to biodiversity, providing food and habitat for wildlife.

- Townhouse Borders

The original landscape scheme included wildflower borders around R2-R6. Wildflowers are lovely when in bloom, but for much of the year can look untidy and may not be the best choice for planting next to buildings. Following discussions the wildflowers have been replaced with mixed borders of evergreen shrubs and herbaceous perennials which give year-round interest.

- South Border

On my last site visit there appeared to be a substantial gap between the front of the shrub border and the perimeter fence. The Landscape Planning Statement suggests infilling this area with a mix of native deciduous and evergreen shrubs. Proposals for this border should be included in the Planting Plan.

- East Border

Suggest augmenting this border with more evergreen shrubs. Proposals should be included in the Planting Plan.

- Conditions

At present there is insufficient detail to allow for further comment regarding planting

proposals. Please could landscape conditions LAN02 and LAN03B be attached to planning permission, if granted.

- *Bin & Bike Stores*

Discussions between the applicant's and CBC's landscape architects led to Block TH3 and its nearby bike store being incorporated into the 'secure zone'. There had previously been open access to this part of the site which had left the bike store vulnerable with poor informal surveillance.

However, the bin store by C2 remains in the location shown - where it will detract from the amenity value of an otherwise pleasing space. Consider relocating it to the space between C3 and TH2. This would probably require replacing the gate between C3 and TH2 with a secure screen. Is this gate really necessary? In this position the bin store would not intrude on the lawns but would be easily accessible - cf. the bike store between R1 and TH1. This option would be well worth exploring as it keeps the bin store within the building line just like the bike store.

Hard Landscaping

Further details of feature paving and block paving – type, colour, supplier – are required. Areas of permeable paving should be indicated on the plan.

Maintenance

A long term maintenance schedule for the landscape scheme is required. The schedule should clearly state who is responsible for the maintenance of the general landscape and of the SuDS.

Crime Prevention Design Advisor

2nd December 2014

In my capacity as Crime Prevention Design Advisor for Gloucestershire Constabulary I would like to comment on the material considerations of the planning application at Pittville Park Campus, Albert Road, Cheltenham with the reference number 14/01928/FUL.

The following points should be considered in order to improve security and reduce the fear of crime. Each wing and individual abode should be independently lockable and subject to access control, thereby providing a secure environment for each resident. Low level planting should be used and maintained around each building to prevent access to ground floor windows. The railings and gates between each building should be robust and offer security. The cycle stores, railing design or adjoining low level walls shouldn't provide climbing opportunities into upper floors or into secure pedestrian area. Access and movement though the site should be subject to CCTV. Access into the car parks should be monitored and controlled, with vehicles displaying permits.

Trees planted across the site need to be managed to encourage clear lines of sight for pedestrians and unimpeded CCTV usage. The lighting plan should be sympathetic to the surrounding area while creating a constant coverage along paths, which in turn will help define dedicated routes from the late night bus stop. The layout and surface treatment around the site should limit opportunities for skateboarding or BMX usage. The MUGA and other facilities across the site should be managed to prevent inappropriate or late night use.

Crime and Disorder Act

Gloucestershire Constabulary would like to remind the planning committee of their obligations under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 17 and their Duty to consider crime and disorder implications

(1) Without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to

the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

Secured by Design

Secured by Design focuses on crime prevention of homes and commercial premises; promoting the use of security standards for a wide range of applications and products. The design principles can reduce crime by 60%; create a positive community interaction; work to reduce the opportunities exploited by potential offenders; remove the various elements that contribute and encourage situational crime; and ensure the long term management and maintenance of communal areas.

To assist in achieving these security levels the door sets and windows installed in these buildings should comply with BS PAS 24:2012. Laminated glazing should also be considered on glazed door panels, windows adjacent to doors and any additional glazing which is easily accessible to provide additional security and resilience to attack.

Conclusion

Gloucestershire Constabulary's Crime Prevention Design Advisors are more than happy to work with the Council and assist the developers with further advice to create a safe and secure development, and when required assist with the Secured By Design accreditation. Please feel free to contact me should you have any queries or wish to discuss these issues further.

5. PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS

Number of letters sent	339
Total comments received	147
Number of objections	141
Number of supporting	2
General comment	4

- 5.1** A total of 339 local residents in neighbouring streets were notified of the proposals. A number of site notices were also displayed within the vicinity of the site and extending to the southern end of Albert Road. Local residents were similarly informed of the revised plans and documents submitted on 3rd December 2014 and site notices displayed.
- 5.2** As a result of the public notification exercise and at the time of writing, a total of 147 representations have been received by the Council from individuals/households (141 objecting, 2 in support and 4 making general observations). There have also been a number of repeat and additional objections received by some local residents in relation to the amended scheme.
- 5.3** A petition (and accompanying letter) with 448 signatures was received by the Council on 25th November 2014. The petition relates to the impact of the proposed development upon the existing convenience store located opposite the application site in New Barn Lane (Park Stores). The petition header states:-

“Park Stores is a valued facility in Pittville used by many local residents. The proposed development plans for the Pittville Campus include a retail outlet which is likely to compete directly with Park Stores. There is the danger that Park Stores could be pushed out of business in consequence.

We intend to request Cheltenham Borough Council should not allow a retail outlet in the Campus Development, or otherwise should limit it to selling items not available at Park Stores.”

- 5.4** The Prestbury Parish Council has also objected to the proposed development.

5.5 Due to the volume of comments received from local residents, a copy of all third party representations (including the petition) will be available to view in the Members' lounge and planning reception at the Council offices.

5.6 The concerns raised by local residents are all very similar and can be summarised as follows:-

5.7 Impact upon the amenity of local residents in terms of noise and disturbance and anti-social behaviour and associated on and off-site management issues

- The number of students proposed on site is excessive and overwhelming for a quiet residential area
- Potential increase in crime and vandalism in area
- Proposed scheme appears to be financially driven and not demand-led
- Poor architectural design which is out of character with the local area
- Four/five storey buildings inappropriate for site and locality
- Density of proposed development too high and does not reflect surrounding development
- Impact on existing convenience store (Park Stores) and potential closure of a local facility
- Increase in pedestrian and vehicular traffic and highway safety implications
- Potential for parking congestion in neighbouring streets – students parking cars off-site
- Cumulative effect of Pittville Campus, Starvehall Farm and residential development at Pittville School and overwhelming impact on the locality in terms of movement and activity at the site and infrastructure
- Potential impact/strain on essential services (gas, water and electric) and associated impact on supplies to neighbouring properties
- Potential harm/damage to Pittville Park due to excessive numbers of students using it socially and as a route to other campus sites. Noise and disturbance to other users of the park.

5.8 These matters will be considered in the following sections.

6. OFFICER COMMENTS

6.1 Determining Issues

6.1.1 The key considerations in the determination of this application are:-

- The principal of the redevelopment of the site for residential/student accommodation purposes and local and national planning policy implications
- Design and appearance (inc layout, scale, mass, form and materials) and impact on the character and appearance of the local area

- Impact on the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties in terms of noise and disturbance
- Highway safety implications and the potential for an increase in pedestrian and vehicular traffic within the vicinity of the site and parking in neighbouring streets
- The number of students proposed on site, the increase in activity at the site and the pattern, frequency and modes of travel used between other university campuses
- Contribution of the proposed scheme to the economy of Cheltenham

6.1.2 The remainder of the report will look at each of the above considerations, albeit transport and amenity issues are interrelated.

6.2 Principle of Redevelopment and Planning Policy

6.2.1 The key issues in terms of planning policy are the suitability of the redevelopment of this brownfield site for student residential use and the intensification of an existing residential use of the land making it the primary use.

6.2.2 Although the proposed development falls within Class C1 of the Use Classes Order, the Local Plan does not contain any specific saved policies relating to student accommodation. However at paragraph 10.47 it does provide supporting text (although not 'saved text') in respect of student accommodation. It recognises the growing number of full-time students in Cheltenham and the University's plans to increase its halls of residence provision. It states that, whilst the Council generally supports the provision of more purpose-built student accommodation, proposals would need to be judged in light of other relevant local plan policies. Because the proposal falls into use class C1 it would not trigger requirements for affordable housing of the Local Plan or emerging JCS.

6.2.3 Similarly, the NPPF does not contain any specific policy relating to student accommodation but supports educational development and a range of accommodation options. It states at paragraph 72 "*Local planning authorities should take a proactive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education*".

6.2.4 Of additional relevance is the more recent guidance contained within the NPPG states that :

"All student accommodation, whether it consists of communal halls of residence or self-contained dwellings, and whether or not it is on campus, can be included towards the housing requirement, based on the amount of accommodation it releases in the housing market. Notwithstanding, local authorities should take steps to avoid double-counting".

6.2.5 It could therefore be argued that the proposed development of 580 net student bedrooms could go towards meeting the Council's 5 year housing land supply (although not subject to an affordable housing requirement). However, students tend to live in shared accommodation and therefore the number of dwellings which could be offset would be significantly less than the 580 bedrooms proposed. Further, the proposed development does not specifically relate to the provision of market housing and the applicant has not provided any further information or justification with regards this issue.

6.2.6 Although carrying limited weight (the JCS was submitted to the Government for inspection on 20th November 2014), Policy C2 of the emerging Joint Core Strategy (JCS) states that "the requirements for the location and standards of student

accommodation...will be set out in relevant District Plans". Similarly, local amenity and transport requirements are reinforced by JCS policies SD5, SD15 and INF1 and INF2.

6.2.7 To summarise, whilst there are no specific local plan policies relating to student accommodation, the policy guidance set out in the NPPF is broadly in conformity with the housing policy objectives of the Local Plan which seek to encourage student accommodation and a range of accommodation types.

6.2.8 The application site is an existing university campus with residential accommodation and therefore constitutes a brownfield site (previously developed site) within the principal urban area of the Local Plan. As such the NPPF recognises the value of efficient redevelopment and encourages "*the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed*". In terms of national policy guidance and development plan policy outlined above, the redevelopment of this site is acceptable in principle. Given that the application site has, until recently, accommodated a teaching facility and currently student halls of residence, the provision of purpose built student accommodation with ancillary facilities must also be considered acceptable in principle subject to any proposed development meeting the objectives of relevant national and development plan policy and with regard to all other material considerations.

6.3 Background and Supporting Statement from University

6.3.1 This is a significant planning application for the large scale redevelopment of an existing University site within an established residential area. Equally, the importance of the proposed scheme to the University in terms of its long term vitality and viability and, consequently, the economic benefits to Cheltenham are recognised. To this effect the applicant has provided the Council with a written statement outlining the risk to the University should planning permission not be granted for the proposed development. The University suggest that the economic arguments outweigh all considerations in regard to this scheme. The statement is attached as an Appendix.

6.3.2 The University has also commissioned a report into the 'Economic Impact of the University of Gloucestershire'. This assessment, which was carried out in autumn 2014, has been reviewed and officers fully appreciate that the University is a key player within the local economy both directly and indirectly in terms of employment, investment, capital expenditure and spending power, promoting local business and charities and cultural and social benefits. The report also highlights the University's launch of a new Growth Hub in October 2014 which provides a framework for business support services within which business professionals from the University are brought together with Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership. This is helping to deliver objectives of the GFirst Strategic Economic Plan.

6.3.3 A copy of this report was forwarded to the Council on 8th January 2015. Given the length of the report it has been circulated via email to all members of the Planning Committee. A printed copy has been made available in the Members' lounge.

6.3.4 Pittville Campus has not been used as a teaching facility since 2011 although the residential element of the site has remained in use. The University state that it is not financially viable to re-introduce teaching back to the campus; courses are taught more successfully elsewhere at other campuses with improved facilities and further investment in managing the existing accommodation on site would limit the University's financial investment elsewhere. The University are already in the process of looking to demolish the mothballed teaching buildings and a prior notification for demolition application has recently been submitted to the Council but is yet to be validated.

6.3.5 The benefits of the scheme to the University appear to be two-fold. Firstly, the ability to guarantee all (or most) first year students a place in university managed student accommodation (halls of residence) and therefore being able to be competitive within the

market. Secondly, the transfer of management of existing and proposed university owned student accommodation to Uliving on a leasehold arrangement, ensuring both quality maintenance and management and thus releasing capital from current maintenance regimes to invest in teaching accommodation and facilities elsewhere. Coupled with this, the University will also receive a substantial capital receipt from Uliving which would be used to invest further across the University in teaching accommodation primarily for subject area that have the potential to expand. Essentially, the funding is predicated on a financial guarantee from Infrastructure UK which maximises security and the financial efficiency of the project.

- 6.3.6** Pursuant to the University's aim of ensuring all first year students a place in University accommodation, and in order for officers to fully comprehend the 'shortfall' situation, the applicants were asked to clarify the numbers of first year students (and other eligible students) enrolling each academic year and secondly the proportion of those students who request university accommodation. The local community has criticised the proposed development for appearing financially driven and not demand-led.
- 6.3.7** The University has identified a current shortfall of 554 beds which, with a projected increase in student numbers, is anticipated to increase to 573 (or 693 if post graduate students continue to be allocated places at Pittville). The demand pool of students and the above figures exclude local students who are already living in Gloucestershire and neighbouring counties.
- 6.3.8** The University point out the fast changing university market, the government's relaxation in maximum student numbers and the increase in tuition fees. Consequently, the expectation of students in terms of good quality and guaranteed accommodation in the first year is increasingly becoming a decisive factor for prospective students when choosing where to study. Currently, the University of Gloucestershire has difficulties competing in the market with the constraints of its estate and the range, number and quality of its residential accommodation. The University has a current shortfall of 554 beds and this is expected to rise. Ultimately, failure to provide the additional 603 beds and reinvest capital would in the words of the University "*jeopardise the University's current position and future position in a very volatile Higher Education market*".
- 6.3.9** The University has also supplied details of the funding mechanism behind the scheme and the deadlines involved in securing the government sourced funding. In summary, due to the forthcoming elections in May, there is no guarantee that this particular funding policy will continue or as a best case scenario the financial pricing terms could increase which would impact on land value. Even if this funding policy is continued without impact on pricing, the ability to complete the scheme by September 2016 is problematic and uncertain.
- 6.3.10** The University has considered other funding solutions but these would contain more risk in terms of viability and programming and would need to be carefully assessed by the University and any partner involved in the delivery of proposed development. The University concludes that given the very tight timescales and the need to provide this additional accommodation by the start of the academic year in 2016, they would not be able to source funding in time. In any event, future delay to the redevelopment of this site would result in an alternative construction programme, a reduced scheme with fewer beds and marketing difficulties whilst construction is on-going.
- 6.3.11** Officers acknowledge and are sympathetic to the difficulties that universities face in an increasingly competitive market and value the contribution of the University of Gloucestershire to the vitality and economic and social well-being of Cheltenham. With that in mind it is important to stress that the principle of the redevelopment of the site for student accommodation is not in dispute here, however, the merits of the proposed

development must be considered in light of all material considerations which should be weighed up in the balance of determining this application.

6.3.12 Having established that the principle of redevelopment of this site for student accommodation is acceptable the remainder of the report will assess each of the other key considerations outlined above.

6.4 Design, Landscaping and Layout

6.4.1 Description and Layout

6.4.2 Policy CP 7 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that proposed development achieves a high standard in architectural design, reflects the principles of urban design and complements and respects neighbouring development and the character of the locality. This is reinforced by emerging JCS Strategic Objective 5 and Policy SD5.

6.4.3 The NPPF sets out the importance to the design of the built environment in that *“good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people”*. At paragraph 58 it aims to ensure that developments *“respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.... are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping”*.

6.4.4 The proposed development provides 603 student bedrooms in a range of accommodation types within seven buildings across the site. The scheme also includes the refurbishment of 191 existing students bedrooms (and the demolition of existing accommodation and 23 bedrooms) and the refurbishment and alterations to the Media Centre which will provide, over three floors, a number of social and ancillary facilities for the site including a main reception/security desk, a gym, a small shop, multi-faith area, refectory and bar, laundrette and staff offices, ancillary office space).

6.4.5 A mixed use games area (MUGA) is also proposed alongside landscaped courtyards/gardens and a central plaza. With the exception of the Media Centre all existing teaching facilities on the site would be demolished, including the existing student union (the Laurie Lee building which was originally proposed to be retained).

6.4.6 The proposed accommodation is provided in three town house blocks (180 beds in 15 townhouses), two of which front Albert Road and New Barn Lane, the third located in the north west corner of the site and facing the proposed MUGA. Each town house would accommodate 12 students over four floors with communal kitchen, bathrooms and living space. The remainder of the 603 student rooms are proposed in cluster blocks containing flats with 8 students, again with communal kitchen and living areas but with en-suite bedrooms. A small number of studio apartments are also proposed.

6.4.7 The proposed building height is four storeys with the exception of the five storey corner element to Cluster Block 3 at the junction with New Barn Lane and Albert Road.

6.4.8 As outlined in detail within the Design and Access Statement, the scheme has evolved since the bidding process and early pre-application dialogue. The proposed layout has been broadly agreed since the latter stages of the pre-application process and certainly upon receipt of the application.

6.4.9 As outlined by the Urban Design Officer (who has been involved at each stage of the design review of this application), earlier proposals showed larger individual buildings than currently proposed, enclosing two or three larger external spaces with little

character. There were limited frontages to Albert Road and New Barn Lane and the buildings failed to turn the corner at the junction of these two roads. In essence, the collegiate identity envisaged by the University was not evident at this stage.

- 6.4.10** Following pre-application discussions in relation to a significantly revised layout submitted in March, there were further modifications to the layout. The proposed buildings were set further back from the road frontages and shown as turning the prominent corner at the junction with new Barn lane and Albert Road. The MUGA was realigned horizontally and the block adjacent to the west boundary moved further from the boundary. Gaps were increased between some of the blocks to improve pedestrian safety and remove the confined, narrow alleyways that these spaces initially created. The pedestrian footways now proposed provide a link between the external spaces and individual accommodation blocks. This goes some way to creating a collegiate feel to the layout. Some of the footways adopt a linear form enhanced by avenues of trees to reflect the curved element of the building facades fronting the Media Centre.
- 6.4.11** In response, the proposed layout now includes the seven accommodation blocks arranged across the site to create a strong perimeter and frontages to both Albert Road and New Barn Lane and wrapping around the corner junction. The layout of the blocks creates a series of external, predominately rectilinear landscaped spaces, linked via footpaths, each with a distinctive character and associated with the individual blocks which face onto it. The retained Media Centre and two of the cluster blocks front onto a central, terraced plaza area or 'Campus Gateway' as described in the DAS. This area would serve as the point of arrival and provide a link to pedestrian routes. The site entrance would also serve as a drop off point and provides a bus stop and visitor car parking.
- 6.4.12** The retained Media Centre would undergo a number of internal and external alterations, notably the removal of unsightly metal staircases and superfluous extensions and would have a new fully glazed double-height entrance foyer.
- 6.4.13** The site would be accessed from two points, using the existing vehicular and pedestrian accesses via New Barn Lane and a slightly modified access from Albert Road. The existing bus stop on Albert Road would be relocated within the site at the main entrance gateway which would also function as a drop off/pick up point and access for all deliveries and visitors to the site. Buses would enter and leave the site via an in/out route. Two car parking areas are proposed, one to the rear/side of the Media Centre accessed via the main entrance and the other via the north-east access. A total of 122 parking spaces are provided across the site (although the Highways Officer has highlighted inconsistency in exact numbers proposed) and these are split into allocated parking for visitors, staff, blue badge holders and a restricted number of postgraduate students.
- 6.4.14** Covered cycle parking and refuse storage facilities are provided across the site. Cycle storage for up to 180 bicycles is proposed in both secure and open covered stores (96 covered and enclosed and 84 covered with open sides) but criticised by GCC Highways and the Cheltenham Cycle Campaign group.
- 6.4.15** All refuse collections would be undertaken via the two access points and parking areas. There would be no through route or link between the two parking areas as currently exists. The proposed parking spaces would also be used at the start and end of each term when students first arrive and vacate accommodation. Access to and management of visitor/student parking at the start of each academic year would be managed over several days with students being allocated a time slot for arrival, full details of which are provided in the Operational Site Management Plan accompanying the application.

- 6.4.16** The central area which includes six of the residential, blocks would become the secure part of the site. Access to this area would be via locked gates (student access only) with some perimeter fencing and gates fronting Albert Road and New Barn Lane. The remaining parts of the site would have free access, including the existing residential accommodation, Media Centre and MUGA albeit there would be no authorised public access onto private land.
- 6.4.17** In summary, and notwithstanding the views of the Architects' Panel, officers are fairly comfortable with the layout of the scheme in terms of building footprint, permeability and the location of access points. The Urban Design Manager comments that "*the arrangement of buildings and spaces works well, creating distinct elements, enabling the establishment of a safe residential area and usable entry, reception and communal area*". However, the Council's views on the layout of the scheme are made on the basis of the scheme put forward by the applicant and do not imply that the number of units proposed or other aspects of design are acceptable.
- 6.4.18** This then leads onto an assessment of the architectural design of the scheme which Officers have significant concerns about.

6.5 Architectural Design

- 6.5.1** Throughout the bidding process, pre-application discussions and post-submission phases officers have been consistent in expressing their concerns in relation to the architectural merits of the scheme. The key issues have been the mass, form and scale of the proposed buildings, the monotonous facades with bland, unimaginative and repetitive fenestration patterns. Generally, the architectural treatment has lacked interest, been uninspiring and has produced buildings with a monolithic, repetitive and overbearing appearance.
- 6.5.2** Notably, the design and detail of the corner building (C3) have been disappointing and the end elevations to blocks TH2 and C2 which form the principal elevations fronting Albert Road and frame the entrance to the site read only as typical, subservient and functional end elevations to buildings with secondary windows of inappropriate proportion and excessive horizontal detail. Although there has been some attempt at improving the articulation of these end elevations and to add interest to the street scene and important external spaces, Officers consider the result disappointing, a conclusion reinforced by comments from the Architects' Panel and Civic Society.
- 6.5.3** Similarly, the scheme has lacked a coherent approach to design and use of materials across all seven buildings. With the exception of the town houses, a mix of red and grey brick, render and stone have been incorporated into individual blocks alongside variations in cladding material and colour in the window recesses (up to 7 different materials proposed in one of the cluster blocks). No attempt has been made at incorporating any of the design, materials and architectural cues from the existing buildings on the site i.e. the pavilion style residential blocks and Media Centre.
- 6.5.4** The problem seems to lie in the applicant proposing a range of standard university accommodation units; cluster flats and town houses which are common amongst current new university builds. However they are typically standard in terms of plan form, height, window size and pattern and thus, without an imaginative and innovative response, can limit individuality in design and prejudice an architectural response to context and local townscape. This uniformity in form and elevation treatment is evident in both the proposed townhouses and cluster flats.
- 6.5.5** At both pre-application and post submission, the applicant has attempted to create a Regency style of architecture, particularly in relation to the townhouses fronting Albert Road. The DAS comments "*the concept takes the qualities of the established grand 'Urban Townhouses' and Terraces in and around the Cheltenham area and expresses*

these in a contemporary way, avoiding pastiche. Facades have been modelled to articulate horizontally when taken 'en-masse', whilst vertical emphasis draws distinction between each individual residence, through hierarchy of fenestration created in surrounding apertures and the use of complimentary materials".

- 6.5.6** At pre-application stage, there was much criticism from officers and the Architects' Panel in relation to architectural design. Although some initial progress was made just prior to submission (more so in relation to the townhouses and corner cluster block), the architectural treatment of the facades failed to convince Officers that the Regency approach, in this instance, was wholly appropriate. As outlined by the Urban Design officer, an initial informal analysis by the Council's Heritage and Conservation Manager identified concerns in relation to roof form, detailing, materials and proportions and notably issues of hierarchy which have resulted in facades and patterns inconsistent with Regency buildings.
- 6.5.7** Regency buildings typically exhibit an obvious rhythm and pattern in their facades which tend to repeat horizontally but vary vertically in terms of hierarchy in response to the function of internal spaces. Window heights generally decrease in size vertically but with first floor windows typically taller than upper floor openings. The proposed elevations to the townhouses (and similarly the cluster blocks) display no hierarchy or variation in window size. Instead, window detailing, the grouping of windows with recessed side panels in a contrasting contemporary material of various widths have been used as alternative means of introducing both horizontal and vertical differences within the facades but with little success. The horizontal stone detailing of the recessed ground floor element of the townhouses is more successful but does not overcome the shortcomings in the overall design of these important elevations which would provide one of the principal frontages of the proposed scheme.
- 6.5.8** This lack of hierarchy and 'added on' grouping of recessed windows is replicated in the cluster block elevations. The ground floor brick plinths are again more successful in appearance but would benefit from a deeper recess. It is clearly evident that the hierarchical pattern of Regency architecture has been difficult to replicate in buildings where there is uniformity in plan form and room size across all floors. Officers have suggested that, at the very least, the upper floor windows could be reduced in height/size. With the exception of the fifth floor windows on the corner block (C3) this has not been incorporated; the argument put forward by the University being a need for identical room size and openings to achieve standard room rental charges across the site. It is this rigid approach that is shackling the quality of architecture.
- 6.5.9** The applicant has consistently been asked to provide more detail in respect of the proposed terracotta side panels and recessed window detail ("*terracotta planks or similar in natural colours set back from the ace of the render frame*" as identified in the DAS). Unfortunately this additional information has still not been submitted and the Council is therefore uncertain of the resultant visual impact of this material and detail which appears to be a key component of the architectural treatment and has been incorporated into the majority of the proposed buildings. Similarly, the applicant has been asked to confirm the stone detailing which should be in natural stone rather than re-constituted stone. Again, the stone 'brick' detailing shown on the submitted drawings is misleading and there are concerns and uncertainties in relation to its appearance.
- 6.5.10** Of all the proposed buildings the curved facades of cluster blocks C2 and C4 (as revised) are perhaps more successful elements in terms of articulation and interest. These two buildings have a scalloped, cantilevered brick façades which appear suspended above the ground floor on 'vee' structural supports. Window frames are recessed with a deep reveal contrasting with projecting window frames in a hit and miss pattern with painted metal surrounds set forward of the façade. These elements are an attempt to add interest and articulation and are a contemporary twist in design terms. However,

although a good concept it is executed poorly, particularly in the case of cluster block C4. The concept fails due to brickwork used for the cantilevered sections and the cantilever being too small and inconsistent. The fenestration detailing and pattern is also poor with no obvious logic.

6.5.11 The corner building (C3), as revised, is also improved. The curved section is now in reconstituted stone which reads as overlapping the brick façades of the side elements. Similarly, the recessed brick plinths to the side elevations fronting New Barn lane and Albert Road reflect the recessed stone base of the townhouses. The grey clad fifth floor element has an improved appearance with additional fenestration, smaller window proportions and a simple, more elegant projecting cornice detail.

6.5.12 In light of the criticism and comments received from the Architects' Panel and Civic Society, officers requested that the Council's Heritage and Conservation Manager undertake a formal design review of the proposed development. This is an important and prominent site in the town and although just outside the Central Conservation Area it would affect its setting and that of a locally indexed building. It was therefore considered important to carry out a thorough and balanced design critique. The Conservation Officer's comments are as follows:-

6.5.13 *The proposals allow for the retention of some of these buildings including the retention of the building known as the Media building and the existing 10 residential unit buildings. These existing buildings are considered to good examples of contemporary architecture and their retention is welcomed. Indeed the existing residential buildings exhibit the form and proportions of a Regency villa of the 19th century but in a modern way.*

- a. All the proposed new buildings (both town houses and cluster blocks) fail to respond in any way to the retained buildings. This failure of response is by totally ignoring the built 3 dimensional form, mass, height, architectural detailing, materials or colours of the existing retained buildings. Such a fundamental error has been exacerbated by the submitted elevation drawings failing to show the relationship of new buildings to the existing buildings.*
- b. Not only do the cluster block buildings ignore the existing retained buildings and their existing materials, but in addition they are also proposed with too many different new materials. These include red brick, reconstituted stone, render, terracotta panels and grey cladding panels on the corner block C3. Only the visual link in materials between the new and existing buildings is the use of render.*
- c. Although the existing retained buildings have a rich and specific type of architectural detailing; their architecture is such that these large retained buildings are reduced to a human scale very successfully. Unfortunately this successful detailing on the retained buildings has been ignored in the detailing of the new buildings.*
- d. The three cluster blocks (C1, C2 and C4) are not exactly identical in their proposed size, form and architectural design. However they are certainly very similar and this uniformity of size, mass and design in combination with their overall lack of human scale in their design and generally poor detailing will create a visually oppressive and visually unsettling environment. This oppressive effect is likely to be increased by the lack of an obvious architectural hierarchy within this group of buildings, possibly causing disorientation for people using the buildings.*
- e. In addition this visually unsettling situation is likely to be exacerbated by the non parallel east end wall of block C2 and west end wall of block C4. These external walls are both 11.8m high and are just 4.2m apart from each other, but appear to have no relationship to each other. Also both of these flank walls contain windows, and there*

maybe an over looking and lack of privacy issue. The proposed angles of these flank wall seem to be totally arbitrary

- f. Similarly the west end flank wall of block C2 is set at an arbitrary angle and again this angle has no precedent or relationship to any other building on the site.*
- g. The variation in height of the roof parapet is of concern and will look particularly disturbing when viewed from a distance.*
- h. Successful architectural design relies on the skilful combinations of locating architectural features to reduce scale and mass, as well as changing materials to reduce scale and add variety and interest. In general terms all the new buildings have failed to respond to the retained buildings but have also failed to achieve very little merit in their proposed design.*

2. Specific concerns about the architectural design:

- a. **Cluster block C1-** the overall design of this building is particularly poor. The elevation A has poor proportions with the central fenestration pattern above the front door being particularly poor. The overall mixture of materials gives a disjointed appearance to the form of the building. The main entrance is visually weak and inconsequential, resulting in a lack of architectural legibility. The concept of a visually strong ground floor has been insufficiently developed which results in the four storey block generally lacking a satisfactory scale. This lack of scale is exceptionally poor in the 12m high south flank wall which is located only 6m away from another 12m high flank wall without scale (ie north wall to block C2).*
- b. **Cluster block C4** – the design of this building is also poor for all of the same reasons as outlined above for block C1 and also some additional reasons. The concept of a scalloped cantilevered front to the elevation A (south elevation) with structural supports at ground floor level, is a good one. However this concept fails by using brickwork (usually used as in load bearing construction) for the cantilevered section and the amount of cantilever appearing small. The main entrance door again is visually weak and inconsequential and its impact is further compromised by one of the steel support to the cantilevered section above, being located almost in front of the main door.*
- c. **Cluster block C2** - the design of this building is also poor for almost all of the same reasons as outlined above for block C 4 and also some additional reasons. The concept of a scalloped cantilevered front to the elevation A (south elevation) with structural supports at ground floor level, is a good one. However this concept fails by using brickwork (usually used as in load bearing construction) for the cantilevered section. However at least the amount of cantilever appears to be adequate albeit that the amount cantilevered when considering elevation B and elevation D, is inconsistent. The visual prominence of the main entrance door is better in this block than the other blocks. However the fenestration patterns on elevation A is poor. One of the most prominent elevations when entering the site will be the west flank wall (elevation B). So it is especially disappointing that this elevation is so very poor, with no human scale and very weak proportions and no logic to the fenestration pattern.*
- d. **Cluster block C3** - the design of this building is also poor although perhaps not as poor as the other three cluster blocks. However given its prominent location on the site, its design remains unacceptable. The reasons for its design failings are almost all of the same reasons as outlined above for block C 4 and also some additional reasons. The concept of the curved corner section is a good idea. However I am unconvinced about the idea of this cluster block building stepping forward at the corner of the site. This stepping forward in conjunction with the extra storey and height of the building at the corner appears rather arbitrary and again visually unsettling. Again the concept of a visually strong ground floor has been insufficiently developed which results in the four*

storey block generally lacking a satisfactory scale. This lack of scale is exceptionally poor in the 12m high south facing flank wall (elevation D) and the 12m high east facing (elevation C) both of which are located only 6m away from other 12m high flank walls to the town house blocks TH1 and TH2.

- e. **Town House Row 1 and Row 3** – (notwithstanding the general comments above which still are applicable) the design of these blocks are more successful than the cluster blocks and visually sit more comfortably on site. This partly due to the restrained palette of materials. However the proportions of elevations A and C are poor and these elevations exhibits an unresolved duality.
- f. **Town House Row 2** – (notwithstanding the general comments above which still are applicable) the design of this block is more successful than the cluster blocks and visually sits more comfortably on site. This partly due to the restrained palette of materials. However the elevation D is poor and the break in the otherwise continuous ground floor reconstituted stone material is disappointing. The proportions of elevation C are poor and this elevation exhibits an unresolved duality.

3. Summary –

- a. This is a large and prominent site within the town. The proposals affect the setting of the central conservation area and also affect the setting of the adjacent Locally Indexed Building (i.e. Pittville School).
- b. For the reasons outlined above the architectural design of these new buildings is poor and unacceptable.
- c. This development will harm the setting of the conservation area and also harm the setting of the adjacent Locally Indexed Building.
- d. Therefore this development will not be in accordance with the NPPF and clauses CP7, and BE11 of Cheltenham's Local Plan.

6.5.14 The above comments indicate clearly the significant shortcomings in the architectural design of the scheme and its potential harm to the setting of the conservation area and locality in general.

6.6 Architects' Panel and Civic Society

- 6.6.1** At paragraph 62 the NPPF advises that *Local Planning Authorities should have local design review arrangements in place to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design....in assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the recommendations from the design review panel*".
- 6.6.2** The Architects' Panel has reviewed the proposed development on 5 occasions, three times during pre-application negotiations and twice post submission. The applicant's architect has also been given the opportunity on two occasions to present the scheme to the Panel and to discuss ideas and suggestions in an open forum. The number of times this application has been reviewed by the Panel is over and above normal practice but, given the significance of the site, the large scale redevelopment proposal and the extent and persistence of the design issues identified, it was considered appropriate to do so. The comments of the Panel were circulated promptly to the applicant following each review.
- 6.6.3** It is correct to say that the Panel has had significant concerns with regards the architectural design of the proposed scheme from the outset. Despite officer responses to the layout of the scheme, the Panel has concerns in relation to the overall spatial design and the 'spotted' placement of buildings around the site with no links between

them or the retained existing buildings. They comment that this results in open spaces that spill aimlessly around the site without developing a sense of place and create gaps between buildings that offer no cover for pedestrians. As such they consider the scheme *“lacks spatial coherence and more collegiate air that could add something both to the site and its setting”*. Similarly, the L and T shaped blocks could be reconfigured to enhance views and spaces.

- 6.6.4** Secondly, they consider the proposed buildings themselves miss an opportunity to form a back drop to the whole development that is sympathetic to its surroundings. They describe the buildings as *“quite crude representing simple, vertical extrusions of a basic plan form. There is very little modulation of the elevations, nor expression of the units behind, just a simple attempt to vary the blocks by using a myriad of different materials that contribute to create a muddled and cluttered effect”*.
- 6.6.5** They consider the townhouse blocks the most attractive with a simpler colour palette. However in comparison with the existing buildings on the site with their pronounced eaves and corner glazing details they lack strength. They suggest more vertical expression and projecting upper floors to give more emphasis to the plinth and recessed entrance doorways. Other suggestions included the introduction of a calmer colour palette more consistent with the townhouses and remove any dark grey brick which contextually is out of place. The curved elevations to C2 and C4 exhibit some architectural expression but are unnecessarily broken up with other materials. The fifth floor of the corner building (C3) with its weak roof edge, also required a rethink. There were also concerns in relation to roof form, window alignment and a lack of variation in eaves and building height across the site.
- 6.6.6** In essence, they felt a more coherent architectural approach was needed with simplification and refinement and this could be achieved without adding materials or construction. A list of key points and suggestions for improvement was provided in the summary to their report.
- 6.6.7** In response to the above concerns the applicant/architect entered into further discussion with Officers and a revised scheme was submitted on 3rd December 2014.
- 6.6.8** Not all of the Panel's suggestions were incorporated into the revised scheme but it is evident that there has been a conscious attempt at addressing some of the design issues. The colour palette has been simplified across the site, all grey brick removed, a slight variation in eaves height in the townhouses, the corner element to C3 simplified in terms of materials and fenestration detail and a simpler more elegant cornice detail and additional windows added to the recessed fifth floor. The curved elevations of cluster blocks C2 and C4 were also simplified and now read more as continuous brick facades under a 'vee' support feature.
- 6.6.9** The Panel considers the revised corner building perhaps the most successful element of the scheme along with the curved wall elevations of C1 and C2. However there are still concerns in relation to dropped glazing sections and the lack of a plinth to the corner section. In light of the above the Panel are unable to support the scheme without major changes being made and they summarise their thoughts as:-

“It was regrettable that none of the more fundamental and underlying concerns appear to have been considered at all...We reiterate that we feel that the approach to the design of the blocks, the expression of their elevations and their positioning on the site, in conjunction with a better design for the landscaping and setting of the buildings is key to creating a good quality scheme. There is little joy or inspiration in this design, which is supposed to house some of our best, young, creative minds.”

6.6.10 The Civic Society is equally critical of the design of the proposed development. They recognise the importance of this site within Cheltenham and that any new development should be sympathetic to its local character and be of architectural quality. They consider the four storey buildings too uniform and 'barrack-like' in appearance with little variation in height and interest.

6.7 Summary

6.7.1 It is evident that this scheme has been heavily criticised by officers, external design review panels and local residents. The majority of the above concerns in relation to elevation treatment, fenestration detail, materials, articulation and interest, height and mass have been raised with the applicant throughout pre-application discussions and post submission. It is acknowledged that the applicant has made obvious attempts at addressing some of these issues; some recent revisions have been well received but the majority remain unsatisfactory and have resulted in a scheme which lacks the robustness and quality needed. Rather than taking a whole scale rethink of the design concept and style of the proposed development, the applicant has largely limited revisions to a 're-covering' of the facades, modifications to external window detail and simplification of certain elements, materials and colour palette. In fairness to the applicant this is due in part, to the time constraints imposed by the funding mechanism for the scheme outlined earlier. However, officers are of the view that this is not an adequate defence or argument for permitting a scheme which falls far short in terms of good quality design and one which responds to and is sympathetic to local character. It is regrettable that more was not made of the pre-application discussions.

6.7.2 Notwithstanding the above, officers are of the view that the design issues with the scheme are not insurmountable and that, with more time, a good scheme could be brought forward for this site. However, the Council must judge the scheme on the details submitted and the negotiation reached at the time of determination of the application.

6.8 **Impact on neighbouring property**

6.8.1 The key issues in relation to amenity are noise and disturbance to the locality caused by pedestrian and vehicular movements to and from the site. Associated with these issues is the potential for anti-social behaviour, crime and vandalism and an increase in litter within the vicinity of the site. Underlying all of these concerns is consideration of the numbers of students proposed to be accommodated at this site and their management on and off-site and at different times of the day. Currently there are 215 students living at the Pittville Campus; the proposed development provides a net gain of 580 bedrooms in a range of accommodation types. Aspects of the amenity issues relate equally to highway considerations and this will necessitate some overlap in officer assessment.

6.8.2 The relevant Local Plan Policy is CP4 which sets out that development will only be permitted where it would:

- (a) not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of adjoining land users and the locality
- (b) not result in levels of traffic to and from the site attaining an environmentally unacceptable level; and
- (c) make adequate provision for security and the prevention of crime and disorder (note 5); and
- (d) not, by nature of its size, location, layout or design, give rise to crime or the significant fear of crime or endanger public safety; and
- (e) maintain the vitality and viability of the town centre and district and local shopping facilities.

- 6.8.3** Of these (a, b, c and to a lesser extent d) are of particular relevance in relation to the proposed increase in student numbers and the potential increase in levels of traffic and the implications of the “no car policy” for students (which is discussed in more detail in the transport section of the report).
- 6.8.4** The application proposes the erection of a student village that will accommodate a total of 794 student bedrooms. This would be a significant number of students housed in a concentrated location, within a principally residential environment somewhat removed from the main teaching establishments and the town centre. This could result in significant movements of students across the town in different directions and at different times of the day. The success of the scheme is therefore directly dependant on the ability to understand and manage these movements in ways that will not unduly compromise the existing levels of amenity currently enjoyed by neighbouring residents.
- 6.8.5** There has been a total of 141 letters of objection received by local residents, the vast majority of which comment on students numbers and noise and disturbance caused by student activity at the site and management off-site. Many voiced their concerns and made representations during the public consultation meetings held in August and September 2014. Local residents have highlighted the existing problems caused by student behaviour and complaints received by the Council’s Environmental Health Team in respect of all the University campus locations (errors in documentation submitted by the applicant have now been corrected with regards numbers of complaints received by CBC). In summary, the strength of local opposition to the proposed development is not in doubt.
- 6.8.6** The applicant has submitted an Operational Management Plan (OMP) which outlines the management regime to be adopted at this site and includes details of travel patterns, servicing of the site, on-site security and the maintenance of retained and proposed buildings. This document is supplemented by two addendums which were produced in response to questions and concerns raised by Officers, consultees and local residents during the initial consultation period and through subsequent discussions with the applicant.
- 6.8.7** The proposal discusses a number of initiatives that have been used to help the management of initiatives that are currently in place to assist in the management of other university owned sites. For example, the two projects running in Cheltenham are StreetWatch which is active in St Paul’s ward and involves a regular evening patrol of students and local residents intervening when community members (students or not) are acting in an anti-social manner. The SuperStarsExtra project supports the police by patrolling the town centre on key student nights and similarly intervenes when community members act in an anti-social manner or need assistance. These schemes involve the recruitment of around 20 student volunteers.
- 6.8.8** The University currently has two community liaison groups, one for Park Campus and one for Francis Close Hall. These groups comprise representatives from the local community, the University, Student’s Union, the police and CBC. They meet every four months and have been established over a number of years. These working groups aim to resolve, in partnership, any issues that occur within the community and meet throughout the academic year. Each Campus also has a Residential Support Team and appointed Residential Assistants/Advisors who live on campus. Every student upon arrival at the University is also required to sign up to the University’s Student Code of Conduct which sets out the institutional expectations related to their behaviour both on-campus and within the local community (the OMP provides further detail of the sanctions involved if breaches occur).
- 6.8.9** At the Pittville Campus the applicant proposes to adopt similar schemes and initiatives and establish a community liaison group. The application details state that a Pittville

Liaison Group will be established post planning application approval. Working in partnership with the police the University will also develop a site-specific 'patrol' scheme for the Pittville Campus (titled Ssh -Student Safety Heroes) aimed at limiting anti-social behaviour and crime whilst students are travelling to and from the town centre. The scheme will again involve 20 student volunteers and operate on key student nights in town (Mondays and Wednesday evenings) between 10.30pm through to 3.am. The primary objectives of the scheme are to intervene when necessary to reduce noise levels and anti-social behaviour and assist if students require support or find themselves in difficulty. The student volunteers will be supported and in contact with a co-ordinator, the on-site security team and the local police. A Partnership Agreement (dated November 2014) between the University and the Cheltenham Policing Team has also been entered into and submitted as part of the application. This outlines the joint commitment to establishing and maintaining the above 'Ssh' scheme, clarifies objectives, roles and working practices and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

- 6.8.10** The University propose a number of other measures to limit noise nuisance; all proposed opening windows will be restricted to 100mm opening, improved glazing, partition doors and ventilation systems in the Media Centre, grocery deliveries to the site will be restricted to after 6pm on weekdays and through the weekend, the University Student Services Team would relocate and be based at Pittville, Uliving/Derwent management staff on site Monday-Saturday during the day and 24 hour on-site security seven days a week (maximum of 2 out of office hours). The function rooms and bar of the refurbished Media Centre will have restricted hours of use (between 07:00 and 23:00 hours) and amplified or live music would not be allowed to exceed specific levels. Similarly, there would be restricted use of the MUGA.
- 6.8.11** The University also proposes to operate a shuttle bus service for students returning from the town centre on the main weekday student event nights and this has now been extended to include Friday and Saturday nights. The 24 seater bus would run between 10.30pm to 4am collecting students from the main event location.
- 6.8.12** The shuttle bus and late night taxis would access the site from the main vehicular entrance on Albert Road and drop students off in the car park area behind the Media Centre. The barrier would be left open at night for this purpose and for ease of management. During the day taxis would be able to park and collect students in the bus lay-by/taxi drop off area at the main entrance on Albert Road or via the access onto New Barn Lane. Taxis would also operate a 'silent pick up' system linked to the client's mobile phone and engines would be switched off while waiting. The University propose to communicate and update all taxi firms licensed by CBC of the management of taxis at Pittville and this would be done via the Council's Licensing & Business Support Team. The parking areas and main access would also be under CCTV surveillance and security patrols at all times of the day.
- 6.8.13** The applicant was asked to provide clarification on the use of the Media Centre for music and other live events and if they were ticketed events how would they be advertised. The bar and facilities in the retained Media Centre would be for the sole use of on-site students at Pittville and maximum capacity for events would be subject to the controls placed upon the bar operator and licence restrictions. There would be no University wide events held at Pittville which could attract larger numbers, parking congestion and associated noise and disturbance.
- 6.8.14** The Council's Environmental Health Team has no objection to the proposed development subject to conditions relating to noise emission, acoustic measures, plant and extraction equipment, deliveries to the site, and piling. However, it should be pointed out that the Council's Environmental Health Officer is concerned only with the affects of the scheme in terms of on-site noise emissions and the acoustic performance

of the proposed buildings. The EHO's remit does not extend to off-site noise and disturbance issues; this is covered under police legislation.

- 6.8.15** In general, the EHO considers design for the site satisfactory from an amenity point of view and includes features which attempt to control any potential impact on nearby properties. The EHO was however concerned about some potential for nearby residents to be affected by students from blocks R8, 9 & 10 accessing the student union by way of the 'diversion' shown on the Site Establishment plan during the demolition and construction phase of the development. The University has subsequently confirmed that control of this potential nuisance would be carried out by the on-site security staff that would monitor activity and use of this route during construction.
- 6.8.16** The University intends to prioritise 120 bedrooms in townhouse blocks TH1 and TH2 to postgraduate students; one of these buildings fronts Albert Road. The expectation is that these students will be older, bring a working student population to the student village and add to the mix of (predominantly) undergraduate and international students. Their behaviour is also likely to be more restrained. The University's initial suggestion of relocating the front doors of the Albert Road townhouse block to face the interior of the site was dropped. Officers considered that on balance, there would likely be similar noise generated through use of the rear patio doors which serve the main living room; activity and noise could then spill out onto the rear external areas of the townhouses, particularly in the summer months. There were also concerns in relation to the aesthetic appearance of the townhouses fronting Albert Road which in townscape terms should read as a typical front townhouse elevation from the street. The Environmental Health Officer has noted that the proposed townhouses would be nearly 50m from residential properties on the opposite side of the road, which would itself minimise any impact.
- 6.8.17** A contact telephone number would be circulated to local residents in the event of disturbances or problems occurring at any time of the day or night.
- 6.8.18** The 'patrol' schemes and other initiatives currently in operation at other campus locations all have merit and no doubt are successful in reducing noise and disturbance and anti-social behaviour but none are directly comparable to the application site and this proposal. Whilst it is acknowledged that the University is proposing similar schemes and initiatives at the Pittville Campus site, Officers have concerns and reservations about their appropriateness and effectiveness in the long-term in addressing the issues raised by the local community. This is primarily due to the significant number of students proposed in one location and the uncertainties in the management of this number of students. There are no examples across the University of Gloucestershire where the numbers of students are remotely similar and therefore the proposed scenario is very much an unknown quantity in terms of the management of students both on and off-site. Uliving has consistently quoted examples of individual sites that they manage elsewhere in the country where there are large numbers of students but every site and its context will be different and in this respect any planning proposal should always be considered on its individual merits.
- 6.8.19** Further, the majority of existing University accommodation is located on existing campus sites adjacent to teaching facilities and this therefore limits student movements and activity to and from each site. In light of the above, comparisons should not be made with existing student accommodation, campus locations, current student behaviour and management and complaints received from the public.

6.9 Overview

- 6.9.1** The initiatives proposed represent assumptions and do not form a tangible part of the planning application and, as a result, cannot be adequately controlled and subsequently monitored by the Local Planning Authority. Based on the submitted information, officers

cannot see how, through the use of conditions or a legal agreement, that satisfactory measures can be put into place to ensure that neighbouring amenity will not be compromised. The initiatives suggested by the University are commendable and it is apparent that they are taking this issue seriously. Officers are equally aware that Ulling/Derwent is currently managing student accommodation in a range of sites across the country. However, as stated above, given the number of students proposed at Pittville and the site's relative isolation from teaching facilities and the town centre generally, officers do not consider a compelling case in relation to amenity has been advanced. Consequently, officers are unable to advise Members with confidence that these schemes will not unduly compromise and impact on neighbouring amenity. The applicant has thus failed to demonstrate that there would not be significant and demonstrable harm to the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties.

6.9.2 Officers have considered whether the proposed community liaison group, which adopts the same principles as the existing groups in their support of the management of existing campus sites in the town, would assist in the successful management of the proposed development. But again, given the scale of the proposals, this would represent a gamble and although would be beneficial to some extent may not prove to be appropriate or sufficient. Whilst working groups are often successful, officers consider that it would be an overly reactive measure that would not go to the heart of the reservations that have been identified; that ultimately the numbers of students moving to and from the site needs a well considered and enforceable strategy. If such a strategy was forthcoming it is this that a working group could engage with but the view of officers is that, in its current form, the application is limited in terms of mitigation measures for neighbouring amenity.

6.9.3 Despite the concerns over student numbers and impact on local amenity being a focus of discussion during the pre-application stage, much of the detail of the schemes and initiatives proposed by the applicant have been progressed, finalised and submitted post submission. For example, confirmation of the University's commitment to and detail of the 'patrol' Ssh scheme, the Partnership Agreement with the police and extension of the shuttle bus operation have occurred much later in the process. Further, the extent of concerns, queries and on-going negotiations is evident by the number and length of addendum reports that have been necessary. Whilst the University has cooperated and been willing to supplement and consider further the management of students, the additional information has largely been submitted on an ad-hoc basis and in officers' view is still not as developed or advanced enough to provide the assurances needed to thoroughly assess the impact upon local amenity.

6.9.4 With more time, this issue may be resolvable but in its current form the application has some significant shortcomings. Officers consider that more direct engagement with the local community may be beneficial prior to determination of this application. Working groups could be set up to discuss pertinent issues and concerns and how they could be overcome. This would not only involve the local community in the decision making process but would also give local residents greater confidence in how the site could be managed. Officers anticipate that these discussions would inevitably include further consideration of the numbers of students proposed which appears to be the principal concern amongst the local community and not the principle of the redevelopment of the site for student accommodation. However, given the time constraints of the funding mechanism, the applicant has requested that the application be determined without further delay. In light of the all the above considerations members are advised that the proposal does not comply with Policy CP4 of the Local Plan.

6.10 Access, transport and highway issues

6.10.1 The key issues in relation to transport are the pedestrian and vehicular movements to and from the site, the patterns, distribution and modes of transport used and their impact

in terms of highway safety (and amenity). The suitability of the proposed accesses to the site and any off-site improvements of highway alterations necessary will also need to be considered.

- 6.10.2** The applicant has submitted a full Transport Statement and Travel Plan(s) although these documents have undergone a number of significant revisions and additions post submission. The applicant has undertaken additional surveys/audits and analysis in relation to pedestrian and cycle routes into and out of town and to the other campus locations. This work has also involved the resources of the County Council, CBC staff and representatives of the Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Cycle Campaign.
- 6.10.3** It is regrettable that the Transport Statement originally submitted lacked sufficient direct relevance to the proposed development and its anticipated modal transport patterns in relation to the numbers of students proposed. Similarly, the Travel Plan was not sufficiently detailed. Not exclusively, more information has therefore needed to be sought with regards cycle parking, bus routes, extended bus services and the numbers and distribution of students attending teaching facilities. A revised and more comprehensive Transport Statement and Travel Plan were submitted on 3rd and 11th December 2014.
- 6.10.4** It is not intended to summarise the full content or all issues included within the Transport Statement and Travel Plan. These are lengthy and, in places, technical documents; summaries and consolidation are provided in the following paragraphs where relevant to the points raised.

6.11 Car Parking

- 6.11.1** There are two fundamental assertions in terms of the highway assessment of the proposed development. Firstly, the student residential element of the scheme will be car free with no on-site car parking allocated to students other than blue badge holders, 15 spaces for post graduate students on teacher training placement and 12 spaces for visitors. A total of 122 spaces are provided on site (subject to clarification of inconsistencies in submitted drawings) and these spaces are primarily allocated for staff (75 spaces) for day time use (Mon-Fri only) and will also be used at the start and end of each term when students arrive and vacate accommodation. Details of the parking regime and its management/enforcement are provided in the OPM and subsequent addendums. The University Sustainable Plan (included within the revised Travel Plan) sets out a number of incentives to encourage staff to reduce reliance of individual car usage. This strategy would be adopted by both the University and Uliving staff at the Pittville student village.
- 6.11.2** In summary, all students (in any academic year) who enter into a tenancy agreement for university managed accommodation will not be permitted to bring a motor vehicle or motor cycle to Cheltenham. Students living at the Pittville student village should not be in a position to be able to park a car on site (with exception of blue badge holders) or in neighbouring streets. The car park will operate a permit system for staff, the 15 postgraduate students and visitors to the site and regular patrols and the barrier at the front entrance to the site should prevent any indiscriminate parking. Any breaches, either on or off-site that are brought to the attention of the University's management and security team will be dealt via the University's Code of Conduct procedures and could ultimately lead to a student's expulsion from the university.
- 6.11.3** The postgraduate students on site that are on teaching training placements (PGCE students) would be placed in groups of schools that are close to each other. It is therefore anticipated that car sharing would take place; hence 15 spaces are allocated for approximately 50 PGCE students and would share spaces with day time staff. However, the Highways Officer has concerns with regards the numbers, management

and enforcement of this aspect of the parking allocation and has requested additional information from the applicant.

- 6.11.4** There has been considerable concern amongst the local community regarding the potential for off-site parking of student and staff cars in neighbouring streets and how the University would enforce any occurrences. The applicant clarifies that the police advice is that it is not the responsibility of the University to patrol the streets to investigate if cars owned by staff or students are parked within the vicinity of the site. Currently at other University campuses, the University responds to community concerns when there is intelligence that links a car to a member of the institution and will liaise with the police if parked illegally or causing a nuisance. To reiterate, students living in halls of residence will not be permitted to bring a car to Cheltenham but if they are found to have brought a car will face sanctions associated with their tenancy. However, there would not be any control over other students visiting and parking near the site who are not residing in university owned accommodation. That said, should this occur the numbers and frequency are expected to very low and transient and should not cause significant harm to local amenity.
- 6.11.5** The Travel Plan details the arrival and exit procedures for the student village. In summary, student intake would be managed over two weekends per year and residents advised in advance of a two hour time slot for arrival. There would be contingency arrangements in place for students missing their slot or in the event of overlap issues (30 spaces left free). Parents/students would be able to use the park and ride facilities or town centre car parks should they wish to extend their visit. The end of term procedures are less problematic since, in practice, students tend to vacate their accommodation over an extended period of several days/weeks. Note that, the racecourse will not be formally used for parking associated with the student village.
- 6.11.6** There has also been some concern about the use of the site during the summer periods and associated parking and traffic problems. In the summer months, outside of term time, the site would mainly be occupied for maintenance purposes. There could also be some international students on 51 week tenancy agreements still resident. The site could also be used for summer schools and a small number of conferences but the applicant has confirmed that such short-term occupiers would be subject to a no-car tenancy agreement.

6.12 Traffic Generation and Patterns and Modes of Travel

- 6.12.1** The second key underlying premise is that the site's existing vehicle trip potential would be greater than the proposed vehicle trip movements to and from the site. Prior to 2011 when teaching facilities at the Pittville Campus closed, there were a maximum of 1,300 students and 200 staff visiting the site on a daily basis. However, this figure should be tempered by the fact that average occupancy levels across the university can drop as low as 33% and this equates to 660 students although staffing levels do not alter significantly. The Transport Statement modelling is based on this lower figure but still demonstrates a drop in trip rates for the proposed development.
- 6.12.2** The revised Transport Statement provides a detailed analysis of modal trip rates and calculations for both staff and students based on 794 student beds, 132 staff and a net decrease in non-residential buildings of 7,120 sq metres. The 2013 Travel Survey and an additional survey of existing students on site in November 2014 have been undertaken by the University has also been used to provide a mode share and frequency of for students travelling from their term time accommodation to their relevant teaching facility.
- 6.12.3** Comparing the calculated number of vehicle trips associated with students at Pittville for both previous/existing and proposed scenarios, the applicant's Transport Assessment

demonstrates a decrease of 393 vehicle trips per week, from 1,219 to 883. The proposed vehicle trips will be generated by postgraduate students with on-site allocated car parking and trips associated with recreational/retail activity only and not students bringing their own cars onto the site.

6.12.4 In total, the vehicle trips associated with the previous and proposed uses at Pittville (staff, students and others) have been calculated to reduce by 729.6 per week from 2,376.0 to 1,646.4. This reduction in weekly vehicular movements to and from the site is wholly expected since students will not be permitted to bring cars to Cheltenham and the number of staff proposed on site has also reduced from 200 to 132.

6.12.5 The Transport Statement also concludes that:-

- The modifications to the existing access to Albert Road, which have been assessed for the swept path of several vehicles, are acceptable.
- The site is accessible by a choice of means of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport
- The proximity of existing bus stops and the existing services between the application site and other campus locations is adequate and a viable alternative to the private car
- The level of parking provision is sufficient
- Cycle parking is provided in accordance with local standards
- An assessment of travel during construction concludes that expected vehicular trips during construction would be lower than the total daily traffic movements of the current use of the site

6.12.6 Notwithstanding the conclusions reached by the applicant's transport consultant the Highways Officer has a number of observations and concerns in relation to post graduate student parking provision, the main access from Albert Road and cycle parking provision and off-site highway improvements. In the background to his report he also points out that many of the outstanding issues stem from the applicant's limited pre-application involvement of the Highway Authority. Also relevant is the application determination deadline of the January 2015 Planning Committee meeting. Although this corresponds with the target date for determination, this date has been imposed on the Local Authority by the applicant as direct result of the applicant's funding mechanism for the proposed development. This has limited the time that has been available to complete and sign a s106 agreement for the highway improvement and mitigation works associated with the proposed development. Unfortunately, some of the requested additional information was submitted a little later than agreed and some remains outstanding.

6.12.7 The Highways officer has concerns about the allocation process of parking permits for the postgraduate students. There remain too many uncertainties regarding the remaining 70 postgraduate students who it is only assumed will not be bringing cars to Cheltenham and subject to the same tenancy agreement of other resident students at Pittville. There appears to be some flexibility in allocating parking permits to postgraduate students which could give rise to on-site parking issues. Although, at the least, these students should be identified in the Student Residential Travel Plan with mitigation and a remedial fund secured, at present the number of postgraduate students and the allocation process of parking spaces for some is uncertain and there would be no mechanism to enforce these numbers or parking spaces. More information is therefore required with regards the post graduate students. That said, officers have no

objection to the principle of postgraduate students residing at Pittville or the numbers proposed.

- 6.12.8** The Highways Officer considers the layout and design of the main access onto Albert Road poor principally due to mixing high pedestrian and cycle flows with reversing cars and bus traffic in a restricted area, and one which would not contribute positively to making places better for people. He suggests that some of the 33 spaces at the access, and the creation of a shared space would be an improvement. Officers have also suggested that some of the spaces are replaced with soft landscaping and alternative surfacing material be considered to limit the extent of tarmac at the entrance. Draft proposals have been provided but discussions are still on going in respect of a revised access.
- 6.12.9** The Highways Officer also comments of the timings and frequency of the proposed shuttle bus and how this provision would be secured in perpetuity. Further detail of the shuttle bus operation is provided in the Operational Management Plan and Addendum in terms of hours of operation and collection/drop off points; but more information on its long-term provision is needed and how this facility would be incorporated into a s106 agreement.
- 6.12.10** Information on allocated on-site parking is unclear and there is inconsistency in the numbers quoted in the various submitted documents. The parking issue is further complicated by the postgraduate student allocation.
- 6.12.11** Proposed cycle parking and storage has been based on minimum standards quoted in the tables of the Local Plan (total 180). The Highways Officers considers that this minimum should not be seen as the target provision since the use of cycling should be positively encouraged. Given the student population at Pittville and the distances involved in students travelling to teaching facilities and the town centre the use of bicycles as a regular travel mode is expected to be high. The proposed siting of some of the cycle stores in remoter parts of the site is not optimal or good design and would not encourage the use of bicycles. There are also issues with the number of covered secure cycle spaces proposed and the lack of mitigation measures in place should the demand for cycle storage, once the site is occupied and established, exceeds supply. Revised details have been requested from the applicant.
- 6.12.12** There are also concerns in relation to the submitted Travel Plans. The Highways Officer suggests that a revised Travel Plan document is submitted in three parts (Framework Travel Plan, Student Travel Plan and Staff Travel Plan). Although the Student Residential Travel Plan relies on a default modal shift due to non car ownership, the Plan has no action plan, timescales or remedial strategy and there needs to be more promotion of car sharing and other incentives. The Travel Plans will be secured by a s106 agreement and will include, for example, details of car and cycle parking provision and allocation and the shuttle bus facility. In this respect it must be enforceable and provide the Council and the local community with assurances that it is a meaningful strategy.
- 6.12.13** The revised Transport Statement includes cycle and pedestrian audits to assess the likely routes that students would take to travel to and from the town centre and the teaching facilities at Park, Francis Close Hall and Hardwick campuses and more importantly their suitability, safety and ability to accommodate the additional footfall. In consultation with CBC's cycle officer and the Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Cycle Campaign these audits have also assessed the suitability and condition of these routes. In addition to dropped kerbs, some footpath resurfacing works and finger post signage, the audit concludes that a cycle contra flow on sections of Winchcombe Street, High Street and Rodney Road or routes via Albert Place, Sherborne Street, Gloucester Place and A46 to Winchcombe Street are necessary. The applicant's preferred method of

mitigation is by a financial contribution secured through a legal agreement. Traffic Regulation Orders will also be required for the routes identified and a Travel Plan Coordinator. Similarly, one of the audited preferred walking routes will require improvements to pinch points and missing dropped kerbs.

- 6.12.14** Coupled with the cycle and pedestrian audits carried out, officers sought clarification from the University with regards the numbers of students anticipated to travel to each of the campus locations (and Oxtalls if relevant) and the numbers expected to leave the site during peak morning traffic flows. The University estimate that 30% of students will study and travel to Park, 61% to Francis Close Hall and 9% to Hardwick. This seems a logical distribution given the proximity of Francis Close Hall and Hardwick and the existing residential accommodation at Park campus. It is also confirmed that approximately 27% of lectures commence at 9.15 (this would equate to approximately 214 students including all postgraduates), demonstrating that not all student trips will be concentrated at am peak times and should be staggered throughout the day and week. These students would walk, cycle or travel by public transport, albeit the majority are likely to walk or cycle to Francis Close Hall or Hardwick. Although this number exceeds the number of students currently leaving the site during the am peak, historically the site would have attracted around 600+ students daily and, as a busy teaching facility, arguably more vehicular and pedestrian activity during the day time.
- 6.12.15** The Highways Authority has yet to receive from the applicant full costings of the highway works. The Highways Officer has thus been unable to advance instructions to GCC solicitors to complete a draft legal agreement.

6.13 Summary

- 6.13.1** There is no highways objection to the principle of the redevelopment of the site for student accommodation or necessarily the numbers of students proposed and the patterns and modes of travel of both staff and students. In total, the vehicle trips associated with the previous and proposed uses at Pittville (staff, students and others) have been calculated to reduce by 729.6 per week.
- 6.13.2** However, the Highway Authority recommends refusal of the proposed development due to insufficient information submitted to enable the local planning authority to be able to fully assess the highway and transport impact of the proposed development. In summary, further consideration is required of the following:-
- Detailed clarification of postgraduate students on work placement, their car ownership and car parking allocation
 - Comprehensive car parking assessment and removal of inconsistencies in the submission
 - Revisions to cycle parking and secure storage facilities including mitigation measures for an increase in demand
 - The methods to ensure that the shuttle bus facility is secured in perpetuity
 - Revised Travel Plan and Travel Plan remedial fund
 - Full and complete costings of required highway improvements and mitigation works
 - Completion of legal agreement

6.14 Other considerations

6.15 Retail Impact and Park Stores

- 6.15.1** The local community has concerns about the impact the proposed university shop will have on the existing convenience store (Park Stores) located on New Barn Lane. To this effect, a petition organised by the management of the store has been submitted.
- 6.15.2** The proposed development includes a small shop within the Media Centre of approximately 60 sq metres. It is anticipated that this outlet would sell a range of stationery items, a limited range of small scale consumables, confectionary and alcohol. Park stores has a floorspace of approximately 46 sq metres and sells a similar range of small scale convenience goods and serves both the existing student population at Pittville and the local community. In contrast, the proposed on-site shop would only be available to students resident at Pittville Campus and would not be open to the general public. In this respect the two retail premises would not be in direct competition with each other and Park Stores would continue to serve the local community. Currently Park Stores attracts trade from existing students at Pittville and there is no reason to suggest that, even with a similar retail outlet provided on-site, that trade at Park Stores would suffer, particularly given the additional 580 students that would be living opposite.
- 6.15.3** The applicants had some initial contact with the owners of Park Stores to discuss how the two outlets could operate alongside each other. It is understood that nothing has been resolved on this matter and discussions are likely to continue.
- 6.15.4** Notwithstanding the above observations, in planning policy terms the threshold set by the NPPF and NPPG for requiring a retail impact assessment is 2,500 sq metres, which is far below what is proposed.

6.16 Additional Guests

- 6.16.1** Local residents are concerned that the number of students on site could double at weekends because the proposed student bedrooms provide double beds. The University has confirmed its policy of allowing students an occasional guest staying in their room for no more than 2 consecutive nights. The student would be responsible for the guest at all times and the guest would be subject to the same terms of the tenancy licence and notify the University of their presence on site.
- 6.16.2** Student accommodation tends to be quieter at weekends with many students returning to their parental home or visiting friends. It is not uncommon across the other University halls of residence for up to 20% of students being away at the weekends, whilst only 5-10% may have guests.

6.17 Trees and Landscaping

- 6.17.1** The applicant has submitted a comprehensive arboricultural report and tree survey alongside and landscape plan. Although a few sub-standard, low amenity trees and shrubs are proposed to be removed along the Albert Road frontage and the southern boundary to facilitate building works, the remainder of the trees on site, some of which are attractive mature and semi-mature specimens, will be retained. In the region of 137 new trees are proposed to be planted across the site which would provide structure and enclosure to the built form, enhance the curvilinear pedestrian routes and the boundary treatment along the south and north east boundaries with Pittville School. They would also be used to frame internal footpaths and external landscaped courtyard areas. Given these strong mitigation factors, the Council's Trees Officer has no objection to the proposed development subject to conditions relating to approval of a detailed landscape

plan (including specimen, size and planting methods etc), the erection of tree protective fencing in accordance with the submitted tree protection plan and arboricultural monitoring. Details of hard surfacing and a long-term maintenance schedule for all future landscaping would also be required.

- 6.17.2** The Council's Landscape Architect is generally satisfied with the layout and design of the proposed landscaping which are the more pleasing aspects of the proposal. However, a number of issues were identified with the scheme as first submitted relating to sustainable urban drainage (SuDS), planting, bin and cycle storage location.
- 6.17.3** Policy INF3 of the JCS (Flood Risk Management) requires new development to incorporate suitable Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems where appropriate to manage surface water drainage and this instance a landscape approach to SuDS is preferred. Following discussions with the applicant's landscape architect, the revised landscape plan includes drainage swales and a Swale Strategy Plan is shown in the Landscape Planning Statement; however a full drainage scheme would need to be approved post decision in compliance with national standards.
- 6.17.4** The wildflower beds initially proposed have been removed (due to long term maintenance issues) and it is suggested that the east boundary should be augmented with more evergreen shrubs. These details could be provided in a Planting/Landscape Plan for approval post decision.
- 6.17.5** The bin and cycle store located by cluster block C2 is not ideal and would detract from the amenity value of this external space. Its relocation has been discussed with the applicant but no alternative location has been identified.

6.18 Energy and Utilities

- 6.18.1** A revised Energy Statement was received on 9th January which resolves some of the queries from local residents regarding levels of water usage. Further detail was also requested in relation to the impact of the proposed development on existing/future public services and utilities infrastructure (i.e. gas, water and electricity). Although not strictly a planning matter both reports are still largely restricted to an assessment of the energy/service requirements of the retained buildings on the site rather than an analysis of the demands of the proposed buildings and any impact on existing services to neighbouring properties.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1.1** Paragraph 14 of the NPPF requires that "*at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision taking....For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay Where the development plan is absent or silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting planning permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole..*"
- 7.1.2** Fundamentally, the principle of the redevelopment of this brownfield site to create a student village is acceptable and not in dispute. Equally, the provision of a large number of students in excess of the current student population at Pittville is not out of the question. This was a vibrant and active site when in full use as a teaching facility and it is expected that a new student village would generate similar levels of activity.

- 7.1.3** The applicant has put forward a strong argument in terms of the benefits of the proposed development upon the vitality and future growth of the University of Gloucestershire and thereby maintaining the economic and social benefits to the local and regional economy. The applicant has provided an economic case which broadly outlines the short and long-term affects on the University should this scheme not go ahead and the difficulties presented by the proposed funding of the project.
- 7.1.4** The provision of additional student accommodation to meet the identified shortfall and subsequent improvements in the University's competitive performance is one element of the University's well being and benefit to the local economy; there are many other contributing factors. Similarly, the proposed increase in accommodation does not appear to be directly related to any planned increase in the number of University courses offered.
- 7.1.5** The various submitted statements and reports on this issue have been carefully considered to determine whether the economic argument 'tips the balance' in terms of supporting the proposed scheme in its current form. The value of the proposal to the current and future economy of the town must be weighed alongside any harm to amenity that an increase in numbers of students living on site would cause to the local community and any harm caused to the character of the area through inappropriate or poor design.
- 7.1.6** As stated previously, paragraph 17 of the NPPF states that one of the core land-use planning principles underpinning both plan-making and decision-taking is that planning should "*always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers of land and buildings*". Officers are of the view that the proposed development fails to achieve either of the above. Similarly, *paragraph 64* states that "*Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions*".
- 7.1.7** The preceding sections have demonstrated the significant and demonstrable harm that would be caused by the proposed development. There are uncertainties in respect of the numbers of students proposed and their management on and off-site; whilst the various management and operational strategies put forward by the applicant have merit officers consider that they are not sufficiently developed to provide assurance as to their effectiveness. The schemes rely heavily on volunteer student patrols and local resident monitoring of behaviour and whilst the Partnership Agreement with the police is good in principle, this agreement is part of a long-term strategy for managing and maintaining this development and other campuses around the county and no information has been provided with regards the detail of its procedures and implementation. Mitigation measures and methods for the long-term delivery of proposed management strategies are therefore not yet fully in place.
- 7.1.8** Whilst the layout is generally acceptable and some elements of design have shown recent improvement, the architectural design lacks sufficient interest, quality and robustness and is uninspiring. This is a significant site within the town, adjacent to the Central Conservation Area that should require architectural design of the highest quality. The proposed scheme lacks imagination and would create an unwelcoming entrance framed by unattractive end elevations, overbearing and monotonous façades to buildings which would feel oppressive when viewed from external courtyard areas and the public realm.
- 7.1.9** Officers consider that there are elements of the proposed design which have not been properly thought through and an opportunity has been missed to create an inspiring and bespoke architectural response that creates a strong sense of place and one which in townscape terms is contextually appropriate and sympathetic to the character of existing buildings on the site and surrounding development. In this respect the design has been

heavily criticised and has not received the support of the Architects Panel, the Civic Society, the Council's Conservation and Heritage team and local residents.

- 7.1.10** Officers feel that although some progress was made during pre-application discussions in terms of the layout and aspects of the design, the application was submitted prematurely. The architectural design and transport considerations had not been sufficiently advanced and there remained reservations about the number of students proposed and their management. Subsequently, the determination of this application has felt rushed albeit dialogue with the applicants and their consultants has been continuous and productive.
- 7.1.11** With more time and on-going discussions with the applicants, officers are confident that an appropriate scheme for a student village at this site could be brought forward and the issues highlighted are not necessarily insurmountable; but this does not fit within the timescale of the University's funding bid. However, in its current form the proposed development has too many shortcomings and the economic arguments put forward by the applicants do not lead officers to conclude that the scheme should be supported. On balance, the cumulative effect of a poor architectural response, the potential harm to the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and the unresolved highway issues outweigh the economic argument. The recommendation is therefore to refuse for the following reasons.

8. REFUSAL REASONS

1. The application site is previously developed land with an existing education and residential use and is a large and prominent site within the town. Any proposals for development on the site will therefore have a significant impact upon the character of the locality and will affect the setting of the Central Conservation Area and an adjacent Locally Indexed building (Pittville School).

Whilst the layout of the proposed development is broadly acceptable, the architectural design of the proposed buildings is considered poor, uninspiring and lacks the robustness and quality of design needed. The concerns relate principally to elevation treatment, the pattern, proportions and detailing of the fenestration, the mix and choice of materials and the uniformity in height and mass. There has also been little attempt to respond architecturally to the retained buildings on the site in terms of form, mass, height, architectural detailing, materials and colour. Consequently, the elevations are crude and represent vertical extrusions of a basic plan form resulting in monotonous and overbearing facades. There is little modulation or articulation in the detailing of the elevations which are repetitive and rely on an excessive and inappropriate mix of materials that, in places, creates a cluttered effect. As such the proposed development represents a missed opportunity, does not respond to the character of the surrounding area or existing buildings on the site and does not make a positive contribution to this key site within the town. The proposed development does not therefore adhere to the aims and objectives of Policy CP7 of the Local Plan and paragraphs 17, and 64 of the NPPF.

2. The application proposes the erection of a student village that will accommodate a significant number of students (794), far in excess of the existing residential use of the site, in a concentrated location within a predominantly residential environment. The site is also somewhat removed from the town centre and the main teaching facilities of the University. The proposed development is therefore likely to result in significant movements across the town in different directions and at different times of the day. The success of the scheme is therefore directly dependant on the ability to understand and manage these movements in ways that will not unduly compromise the existing levels

of amenity currently enjoyed by neighbouring residents. The potential harm caused to local amenity would result primarily from noise, disturbance and anti-social behaviour of students both on and off-site.

The applicants propose a number of strategies to manage student behaviour both on and off-site. The off-site strategies rely primarily on student volunteer patrols, local residents' monitoring of student behaviour and community liaison groups; they are based on assumptions and are not sufficiently advanced in terms of providing evidence of their long-term effectiveness and the mitigation measures necessary. The proposed development does not therefore adhere to the aims and objectives of Policy CP4 of the Local Plan and paragraphs 17 and 69 of the NPPF.

3. Insufficient information has been submitted to enable the Local Planning Authority to be able to fully assess the highway and transport impact of the proposed development. Further detail and consideration is required of the following:-

- Detailed clarification of postgraduate students on work placement and their car ownership and on-site car parking allocation
- A comprehensive car parking assessment and removal of inconsistencies in the submission
- Revisions to the number and location of cycle parking and secure storage facilities including mitigation measures for an increase in demand
- Full details of the shuttle bus and how this facility is to be secured in perpetuity
- Revised Travel Plan(s) and Travel Plan remedial fund
- Full and complete costings of required highway improvement and mitigation works

In the absence of the above detail, the proposed development does not adhere to the aims and objectives of Policies TP1 and TP6 of the Local Plan and paragraph 32 of the NPPF.

4. No agreement has been completed in terms of contributions towards highway improvements and mitigation works and infrastructure. This development will lead to an increase in use of footpaths and cycle routes and also the surrounding highway networks and the relocation of a bus stop is proposed. The development should therefore mitigate its impact in terms of providing payments towards forms of infrastructure and highway improvements such as dropped kerbs, footpath upgrades, contra flows, finger post signage and bus stop relocation. No agreement exists and therefore the proposal does not adhere to the objectives of Supplementary Planning Guidance, 'Planning Obligations: Transport', and Policy CP8 of the Local Plan.

APPLICATION NO: 14/01928/FUL	OFFICER: Mrs Lucy White
DATE REGISTERED: 23rd October 2014	DATE OF EXPIRY: 22nd January 2015
WARD: Pittville	PARISH: Prestbury
APPLICANT:	Uliving And University Of Gloucestershire
AGENT:	Mr Ian Woodward-Court
LOCATION:	Pittville Campus, Albert Road, Cheltenham
PROPOSAL:	Erection of a student village incorporating 603 new-build student bedrooms, the refurbishment of the existing media centre (which will include a reception/security desk, a gym, retail facilities, multi-faith area, refectory and bar, quiet study area, laundrette, ancillary office space), and the provision of a mixed use games area. In addition, the proposal involves the demolition of existing teaching facilities, 23 existing rooms and the retention and refurbishment of 191 existing student rooms.

Update to Officer Report

1. OFFICER COMMENTS

- 1.1. An additional reason for refusal is suggested in relation to the provision of public art.

No agreement has been completed in terms of contributions towards the provision of public art. The proposed development is large scale and, given the nature of the proposed use, the commissioning of public art as an integral part of the development is considered appropriate. The provision of public art within the proposed development should be delivered through an agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. No agreement exists and therefore the proposal is contrary to Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Public Art' (July 2014) and Policy CP8 of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan.

- 1.2. Since publication of the officer report further representations have been received from local residents and these are attached.
- 1.3. A letter from the University's Vice-Chancellor was also been sent directly to all Members of the Planning Committee via email on 19th January 2014. A copy of this letter was forwarded to the Planning Department and is attached. A further update on the content of the letter will be provided on Thursday.

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Update to Officer Report

1. OFFICER COMMENTS

- 1.1. Further to the previous update report, Members of the Planning Committee should have received, via email on 19th January 2014, a letter from the Vice-Chancellor of the University. This letter has been written in response to the Officer's report published last week and whilst it does not raise new issues for consideration, Officers wish to comment as follows.
- 1.2. Officers' views on design, impact on local amenity and the strategies suggested in the Operational Site Management Plan (and addendums) and the economic argument put forward by the University are discussed at length within the Officer report. That said, it is not uncommon for applicants and officers to have differing views on all these matters.
- 1.3. The University does not agree with the officer's view that the application was submitted prematurely and that the applicant should have taken more advantage of the pre-application process. The pre-application discussions are set out in the introduction to the officer report and whilst these did commence in September 2013 with the bidding process, it is wrong to suggest that there has been a continuous dialogue with the Council since then; regrettably there have been long periods of silence. At the time of submission, there was no agreement over elements of the proposal (although the site layout was considered broadly acceptable at this stage) and the applicant was well aware of the concerns that had been raised by officers in relation to the architecture that was being proposed. These views have remained consistent throughout this application.
- 1.4. The suggestion from the University that the central question relating to design should be: *is the design suitable for its purpose?* and the comment that *"form should follow function"* disappoints officers and represents a low threshold for acceptability. Policy CP7 of the Local Plan rightly requires development to be a high standard of architectural design and this Authority expects proposals for development, whatever their purpose or function, to meet these standards. It is quite apparent that this proposal is falling short of these expectations and for a site of such significance, this is not acceptable.
- 1.5. The University comments that the police and the Council's Environmental Health team have no 'fears or uncertainties' with regards amenity and the management of the site and students. To clarify, the Council's Environmental Health Officer is concerned only with the affects of the scheme in terms of on-site noise emission and the acoustic performance of

proposed buildings. His remit does not extend to off-site noise and disturbance issues associated with student behaviour.

- 1.6. Finally, the University also suggests that a condition could be attached to a planning consent that requires the Council's approval of the Operational Management Plan (OPM). National policy guidance when attaching planning conditions is clear; they must be necessary, relevant, precise, enforceable and reasonable. The officer report is quite clear regarding the reservations about the strategies and management initiatives put forward by the University in the submitted OPM and the lack of detail in respect of their long-term provision. Furthermore, information as to what a revised OPM would contain has not been provided and without that level of detail there are no assurances as to how deliverable these measures would be in the long-term. Without this detail, any potential condition would lack precision, enforceability and therefore reasonableness and as such, would be entirely inappropriate.
- 1.7. In conclusion, there is nothing in the letter which alters officers' recommendation to the Planning Committee.

1.8. **Third Party Representations**

- 1.9. Members should also have received a copy of a letter sent via email on 21st January 2014 from Diane Savory writing on behalf of GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in support of the University of Gloucestershire's proposal to redevelop its Pittville Campus. A copy of the letter is attached. Further representations have been received from local residents since the last update and these are also attached.