

## COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES  
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 7 February 2018

ITEM NO.

Ward: Church

App No.: 172045/FUL

Site Address: St Patrick's Hall, 20 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, RG2 7HB

Proposal: Construction of 836 new student bedrooms, a cafeteria/bar, bin and bike stores, sub-station and energy centre, together with a new access link and landscaping. Demolition of the existing student accommodation block at New Court, the SETS building, the warden's house, no. 4 Sherfield Drive, the reception and common room, (resubmission of application ref. 161182) (amended description).

Applicant: University of Reading

Date valid: 15 November 2017

Target Decision Date: 14 March 2018 (agreed extension)

26 Week Date: 16 May 2018

### RECOMMENDATION

Delegate to Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to:

i) GRANT Full Planning Permission, subject to the satisfactory completion of a S.106 legal agreement to secure:

a) An employment skills and training plan for both construction and end user phases or payment in lieu of a plan (construction £38,795 and end user £4724.70) to be provided at least one month prior to commencement. Any payments to be index-linked from the date of permission.

b) The sum of £30,000 towards the upgrade of the pedestrian crossing immediately to the south east of the Shinfield Road/Northcourt Avenue junction. Payable prior to first occupation and index-linked from the date of permission.

c) The sum of £6,324 for the provision and ongoing maintenance of 4 street trees on the eastern side of Northcourt Avenue opposite the application site. Payable prior to commencement and index-linked from the date of permission. Any surplus monies to be retained for ongoing maintenance of these trees, or additional tree planting elsewhere within Northcourt Avenue.

d) The submitted student management plan and a mechanism for annual review by the Council. To include requirement for compliance with parking management policy as set out in UoR Student Residence Agreement.

e) The use of the site to be *sui generis* university halls of residence and not to be used for other uses, including non-student residential use (with the exception of short term summer school and conference accommodation during university holidays).

f) The development not to be occupied until a 10 year Local Wildlife Site Management Plan for the Whitley Park Farm/St Patricks Hall Pond LWS has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. To include but not limited to:

1. Management of the woodland to ensure that it is botanically and structurally diverse
2. Management of the ponds to ensure that they do not become silted up, colonised with invasive species etc.
3. Provision of bird and bat boxes

4. Measures to manage public and student access.  
Thereafter implemented in accordance with the terms of the approved 10 year LWS Management Plan.

Or

ii) to REFUSE permission should the S106 legal agreement not be completed by 14 March 2018, unless the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agrees to a later date for completion of the agreement.

(The S106 to be subject to such terms and conditions that the Head of Legal and Democratic Services considers appropriate and in the best interests of the Council.)

And subject to conditions to include the following:  
(pre-commencement conditions labelled '(PC)')

1. TL1 The Standard time limit
2. AP1 Approved plans condition
3. M2 Materials (details and samples) to be approved (to include details and sample panel of facing brickwork and feature brickwork showing brick type and colour, mortar mix, bond and pointing; and details and sample of roof materials) (PC)
4. AC1 Archaeology - submission and implementation of Written Scheme of Investigation (PC)
5. PD9 Restriction on use - sui generis university halls of residence only.

*Trees and Landscape:*

6. L2a Landscaping - full details of hard and soft landscaping to be submitted, to be in accordance with the principles shown on submitted landscape drawings 3025\_L\_SW\_0\_01 Rev 02 and to include full details of proposed and existing services above and below ground and including SuDS drainage proposals. To include large canopy, native and wildlife-friendly species. To include a timetable for the provision of landscaping. (PC)
7. L4 - The standard tree protection condition (PC)
8. L6a - Submission of Arboricultural Method Statement for protection of all trees within and adjacent to the site (PC)
9. L10 - The standard landscape boundaries condition - details to be submitted (PC)
10. L2b - Implementation of approved landscaping plans and documents in accordance with approved timetable.
11. Detailed section drawings and details of works to provide retaining walls surrounding Block I, including measures to address ground stability and groundwater (PC)
12. Detailed landscaping proposals for rear of Block I (drawing 3025\_L\_SW\_1\_01 dated 16 January 2018) to be implemented prior to first occupation of Block I.
13. L3 - Standard Landscaping Maintenance - any plants/trees that fail within 5 years of planting to be replaced.
14. L5 - Landscaping Management Plan to be submitted
15. L6b - Arboricultural method statement to be followed

*Ecology*

16. N16 External Lighting - Full details to be agreed. To include a plan indicating the locations of the lights, specifications, height, luminance (isolux contour map); lens shape/beam pattern and any hoods/shades and should have due regard to the location of existing and proposed trees. Plans to indicate areas identified as being of importance for commuting and foraging bats. No lighting other than in accordance with approved details. (PC)
17. Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP:Biodiversity) to be submitted for approval prior to commencement. Approved CEMP to be adhered to throughout the demolition and construction period. (PC)
18. Submission of Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) to include all

mitigation and enhancement measures detailed in submitted Ecological Impact Assessment rev.06 dated 25 January 2018 together with a timetable for implementation to be submitted for approval. (PC)

#### *Transport*

19. CO2 Construction Method Statement (PC)
20. DC5 Bicycle parking - provision in accordance with plans to be submitted prior to commencement. (PC)
21. DC1 Vehicle parking space provided in accordance with approved plans prior to occupation.
22. DC2 Vehicle access provided in accordance with approved plans prior to occupation
23. Visibility splays of 2.4 x 70 to be provided for new access prior to occupation
24. Within 3 months of first occupation, the Reading University Travel Plan (updated to include this application site) to be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The plan shall include a full analysis of the existing / proposed modal split for staff at St Patricks Hall, reasons for the modal choice and detailed proposals for future transport provision with the aim of securing reduction in car trips generated to and from the site.
25. Annual Review of Travel Plan
26. Student arrivals/departures and car parking management plan to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, prior to first occupation - implementation in accordance with approved plan.
27. Annual Review of student arrivals/departures and car parking management plan.

#### *Environmental Protection*

28. CO3 - Establishing if site is contaminated (PC)
29. CO4 - Remediation scheme needed as site is known to be contaminated (PC)
30. CO5 - Remediation to be implemented (PC)
31. CO6 - Reporting unexpected contamination
32. N2 - Noise assessment for mechanical plant (including that associated with CHP plant) before installation, to include details of noise insulation or mitigation measures. Installation in accordance with approved details.
33. Glazing and entrance of the front façade of the 'Hub' building to be installed in accordance with the specifications recommended within (SRL, Acoustic Report for Planning, 15 November 2017, report number C13904A/T09/JEE prior to first occupation.

#### *Construction*

34. CO2 - Construction Method Statement (to include controls on noise and dust and bonfires) (PC)
35. CO1 - Construction/demolition - standard hours

#### *Amenity*

36. All building heights and floor levels to be in accordance with approved drawing number StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-000004 Rev.A dated 16 January 2018, prior to first occupation of the building to which they relate.
37. No part of Block I to be occupied until all projecting privacy fins have been fitted to the north east elevation as shown on the approved drawing. Fins to be maintained as approved at all times thereafter.
38. PD5 - No use of roofs - flat roofs not to be used as terrace, roof garden or similar amenity area.

#### *Environmental Sustainability*

39. SU5 - SuDS Detailed Drainage Design to be submitted including timetable for implementation and management and annual maintenance plan. (PC)
40. Site Waste Management Plan re-use and recycling of demolition waste - Policy CS2
41. SU3 - BREEAM Interim Certificate - 'Very Good' standard with minimum score of 62.5 (PC)
42. SU4 - BREEAM Final BREEAM Certificate prior to first occupation of the building to

which it relates.

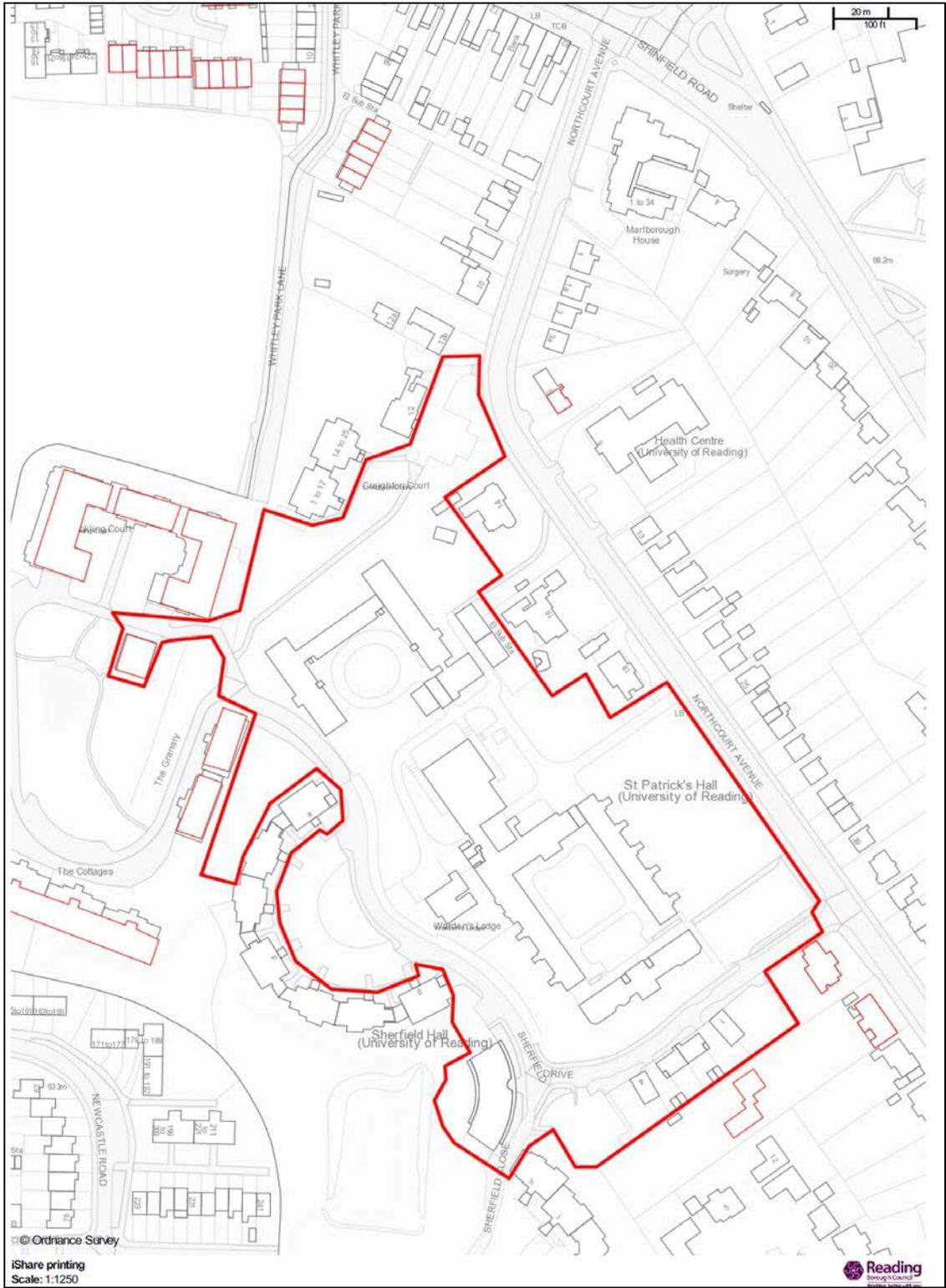
43. CHP Plant to be provided prior to first occupation.
44. SU6 - No building hereby permitted shall be occupied until the sustainable drainage scheme for the site has been completed in accordance with the submitted and approved details.

#### Informatives

1. Positive and Proactive Approach
2. Drawings
3. Highways - recovery of expenses due to damage caused by construction traffic.
4. S106
5. Compliance with terms of permission.
6. CIL
7. Parking Permits - no entitlement to permit (any future permit scheme)

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The site forms part of a wider residential campus containing a number of halls of residence and ancillary support buildings serving the University of Reading. A total number 1081 student bedspaces currently exist within the wider site (see appendix 2).
- 1.2 The St Patrick's campus is sited approximately two kilometres to the south east of the town centre and approximately 250 metres west of the Shinfield Road boundary of the main Whiteknights Campus.
- 1.3 The application site measures 3.6 hectares and includes the residential buildings of Pearson's Court (early 20<sup>th</sup> Century) and New Court (1960s) and a cafeteria building.
- 1.4 Whitley Park Farmhouse towards the south western corner of the wider site is Grade II listed.
- 1.5 The main vehicle entrance serving the wider site is Sherfield Drive, off Northcourt Avenue, with a secondary entrance serving Pearson's Court and the cafeteria centrally located on the Northcourt Avenue frontage. A pedestrian access off Northcourt Avenue is located adjacent to Creighton Court at the western end of the site.



Site location plan - not to scale



Site Photograph

## 2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 161182/FUL - Demolition of St Patrick's Hall of residence buildings, the Northcourt reception/bar building and university residences at 1, 2, 3 & 4 Sherfield Drive and the construction of residences for students, a cafeteria/bar, bin and bike stores, sub-station and energy centre, together with a new access link and landscaping. Minor alterations to elevations of existing office building. Withdrawn. *(This withdrawn application proposed 1024 new student bedspaces and 6 three-bedroom flats for students with families, resulting in a proposed net increase of 726 bedspaces).*
- 2.2 152106/SCR - Request for screening opinion on the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment for the redevelopment of St Patricks Hall. Decision: EIA Environmental Statement not required (4 May 2016).
- 2.3 151596/PRE - Redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall, Northcourt Avenue - Level 3 pre-app meetings held.

## 3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 Full planning permission is sought for:
- i) 836 new bedspaces within the site, a net increase of 654, resulting in a total student population within the wider Northcourt Avenue site of 1735 (compared with 1081 currently).
  - ii) Erection of new blocks of student accommodation arranged around a central courtyard ranging in height between four and five storeys (Blocks A to G), in the general location of the existing 1960s New Court complex which is to be demolished.
  - iii) Erection of a two and a half storey terrace of four student houses on the existing car park adjacent to the Sherfield Drive entrance (Block H).

- iv) A two storey block of student flats (Block I).
  - v) A four storey block of student flats in place of the existing student union bar building adjacent to Sherfield Close (Block J).
  - vi) Erection of new student 'Hub' building containing bar and café with three stories of student residential accommodation above (Block K).
  - vii) A four storey (fourth within a Mansard roof) building to replace the existing SETS building at the southern end of the Pearson's Court quadrangle.
  - viii) A four storey block of student flats adjacent to Creighton Court (Block L) .
  - ix) A new gas-fired combined heat and power building to the rear of 'Chedworth'.
  - x) A new single storey security building is proposed at the north west corner of the site.
- 3.2 The proposals retain the western, northern and eastern ranges of Pearson's Court, which was added to the Council's List of Locally Important Buildings and Structures ('Locally Listed') during the course of the previous application. All other buildings within the site are proposed to be demolished, with the exception of the existing residential buildings at 1, 2 and 3 Sherfield Drive.
- 3.3 The proposals have been amended on the advice of officers to reduce the scale and change the window configuration of 'Block I' at the southern end of the site. The applicant has also opted to amend the scale of Blocks A and B, reducing it from six to five storeys during the course of the application.
- 3.4 A schedule of the number of bedrooms across the wider St Patricks site as a whole, as existing and as proposed, is included at Appendix 2.
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**
- 3.5 The development would be liable for CIL due to the amount of new floorspace proposed.
- 3.6 The Council's CIL charging schedule sets a base rate of £120 per square metre for residential floorspace, including student accommodation. The rate is index linked and the current rate for 2018 is £147.29 per square metre.
- 3.7 The new floorspace proposed is 21383.75sqm
- 3.8 Floorspace to be demolished that has been in use for at least 6 months in the last 3 years is 5865.55sqm
- 3.9 Existing floorspace to be retained within the site is 3628.09sqm
- 3.10 The estimated basic CIL charge would therefore be £1,751,294.30 [one million seven hundred and fifty one thousand two hundred and ninety four pounds and thirty pence]
- 3.11 However it should be noted that the CIL Regulations allow for an exemption from payment for charities. The University, as applicant and landowner has submitted an exemption form requesting relief on the basis that it is a registered charity. This can only be processed and a decision made once the application has been determined and CIL Liability assumed and the Relief criteria met. It should

therefore not be assumed that the Council will be entitled to claim the CIL charge from the developer.

- 3.12 To qualify for the relief, there are a number of qualifying criteria. The charity will need to demonstrate that they meet these criteria as part of the CIL process, post-decision.
- 3.13 Additionally the relief is subject to a clawback period where a disqualifying event would trigger the withdrawal of the charitable relief. In this instance the clawback would be seven years from the date on which the chargeable development commences.
- 3.15 This gives an indication of the likely CIL outcomes but is provided without prejudice to further examination of the CIL application by the Council.

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

##### **Environment Agency**

- 4.1 (consulted as the site is in flood zone 1 but exceeds 1 hectare in size).  
No objection received

##### **RBC Transport Development Control (TDC)**

- 4.2 The site is located within a sustainable location with students and visitors able to access St Patrick's Hall of Residence on foot from Whiteknights Campus, London Road Campus and other key facilities in south-west Reading. All local roads to the halls (Northcourt Avenue, Wellington Avenue, Pepper Lane, A327) exhibit continuous footway provision with street lighting.
- 4.3 A controlled pedestrian crossing on the A327 exists at two separate points adjacent to the Northcourt Avenue/A327 priority junction, which assists with the movement of students crossing the A327 to access the northern area of the Whiteknights Campus and Redlands Road.
- 4.4 The walking distance between St Patrick's Hall and the Shinfield Road entrance into Whiteknights Campus is 450 metres, which is the most convenient entrance for areas north of the campus including the sports centre and the majority of Halls of Residence. The central and southern areas of the campus including the University Library and Reading Enterprise Centre are most conveniently accessed from the Halls via Northcourt Avenue (south) and Pepper Lane. The Pepper Lane entrance is located 900 metres from St Patrick's Hall.
- 4.5 It is likely that a large proportion of students at St Patrick's Hall of Residence will own a bicycle as a form of transport to local areas.
- 4.6 ReadyBike stands are also available offering bike hire by the hour at the following locations:
  - a. on the south-eastern corner of the Elmhurst Road/A327/Redlands Road signalised junction;
  - b. opposite the University's Chaplaincy Centre 100 metres from the University Library; and
  - c. east of Randolph College.
- 4.7 Shower facilities are also located at several buildings on the campus should students travelling by bicycle from the Halls of Residence require these. Cycle parking compounds can be found across the campus providing over 1,800 cycle parking spaces.

- 4.8 Bus services are located within close proximity to the application site with the closest bus stops to St Patrick's Hall of Residence located on the A327 within 300m either side of the Northcourt Avenue / A327 Christchurch Road junction.
- 4.9 These bus stops are served by Reading Bus service Claret 21 / 21a, 3 and 9 providing up to 9 buses an hour between the site and the town centre.
- 4.10 Following initial scoping discussions with the applicant it was agreed that any application would need to be accompanied by a Transport Statement. TDC Comments on the Transport Statement are as follows:
- 4.11 The proposed development is to be generally car free apart from a small proportion of parking for staff and accessible spaces (9 spaces), vehicle trip generation is therefore anticipated to be low. The University's Student Residence Agreement (SRA) requires students to enter into a contractual agreement which prohibits students parking on campus and on the local roads within 1 mile of the University. The proposed vehicle trip generation has been based on the travel modes by students at the existing St Patricks Hall that can be found at Table 1 of the Transport Technical Note. This Table also illustrates the comparison over previous years and can be found below.

**Table 1: Travel Mode to Campus (Travel Survey Comparison)**

Mode of Travel	(2013)	(2014)	(2016)
Cycle	2%	4%	7%
Motorcycle/ Scooter/Moped	2%	0%	0%
Walk	95%	96%	93%
Bus	0%	0%	0%
Car as driver alone	0%	0%	0%
Car as driver with passengers	0%	0%	0%
Car as passenger	0%	0%	0%
Train	0%	0%	0%
Taxi	0%	0%	0%
Not applicable/don't do this	0%	0%	0%

- 4.12 As can be seen, the 2016 modal splits are consistent with the previous survey results. The conclusions drawn within the 2017 Transport Statement are therefore still current, i.e. that the development proposal would not have a severe residual impact on the operation of the local highway or sustainable transport networks, in accordance with the requirements of national and local planning policy, and a safe means of access can be provided.
- 4.13 For completeness, the applicant has assessed the daily multimodal trip generation of the proposed development to reflect the latest modal splits and the reduction in the proposed number of new student bedrooms.
- 4.14 As with the 2014 travel survey, the 2016 survey does not provide a breakdown of travel mode by journey purpose. Therefore the same methodology in the Transport Statement has been employed here; the journey purpose information has been based on the 2013 survey results. The 2013 survey was a one-off survey and more up-to-date information is not available.
- 4.15 The multi-modal trip generation for the proposed redevelopment by journey purpose is summarised in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Most Recent Modal Share by Journey Purpose**

Mode/Journey Purpose	Lectures/ Campus (2016)	Grocery Shopping (2013) Ref: Table 3.4	Reading - Daytime (2013) Table 3.4	Reading – Night Time (2013) Table 3.4	Out of Reading (2013) Table 3.4
Cycle	7%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Motorcycle/ Scooter/Moped	0%	2%	2%	2%	0%
Walk	93%	66%	48%	16%	7%
Bus	0%	11%	45%	25%	11%
Car as driver alone	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%
Car as driver with passengers	0%	5%	0%	0%	2%
Car as passenger	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Train	0%	0%	2%	0%	48%
Taxi	0%	0%	0%	50%	0%
Not applicable/don't do this	0%	14%	2%	5%	27%

- 4.16 Applying the modal shares presented above to the proposed development (prior to the reductions in scale during the course of the application) (952 bedrooms) has provided the potential multi-modal trip generation for the development, by journey purpose presented in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Proposed Development (952 bedrooms) Daily Multimodal Trips by Journey Purpose**

Modal Split	Lectures/ Campus (2016)	Grocery Shopping	Reading - Daytime	Reading - Night Time	Out of Reading	Total
Cycle	71	0	0	14	0	84
Motorcycle/ Scooter/Moped	0	9	6	14	0	29
Walk	881	257	124	96	2	1,360
Bus	0	44	118	151	2	316
Car as driver alone	0	9	0	0	0	9
Car as driver with passengers	0	18	0	0	1	18
Car as passenger	0	0	0	0	0	0
Train	0	0	6	0	10	16
Taxi	0	0	0	303	0	303
Not applicable/don't do this	0	53	6	28	6	92

- 4.17 The existing student accommodation comprises of 298 student bedrooms, as such the redevelopment will result in a net increase of 654 student bedrooms. The existing development is currently occupied and therefore the trips generated by the student's halls are present on the local transport networks.
- 4.18 Table 4 presents the potential net increase of students, by journey purpose for the proposed redevelopment.

**Table 4: Net Daily Student Trips by Journey Purpose**

Modal Split	Lectures/ Campus (2016)	Grocery Shopping	Reading (daytime)	Reading (night time)	Out of Reading	Total
Cycle	48	0	0	9	0	58
Motorcycle/Scooter/Moped	0	6	4	9	0	20
Walk	606	176	85	66	1	934
Bus	0	30	81	104	2	217
Car as driver alone	0	6	0	0	0	6
Car driver with passengers	0	12	0	0	0	12
Car as passenger	0	0	0	0	0	0
Train	0	0	4	0	7	11
Taxi	0	0	0	208	0	208
Not applicable/don't do this	0	36	4	19	4	64

- 4.19 As per the findings of the Transport Statement, the above assessment demonstrates there would be increases in pedestrian movements to/from the university, but that the number of students travelling by car would remain minimal for all journey purposes. The development is proposed to be car free and as such only those students permitted to park at halls would account for car driver trips.
- 4.20 The tables above highlight that the development will result in a significant increase in pedestrian trips and it is stated at paragraph 6.2 of the Transport Statement that the existing pedestrian crossing facility located at the junction of Shinfield Road and Northcourt Avenue is not currently used in the manner intended, with pedestrians not using the central island.
- 4.21 The Personal Injury Accident data indicates that this junction poses a risk to users and therefore increased pedestrian movements, without sufficient improvements to the crossing facility, could increase risk of personal injury accidents. The Transport Statement has implied that this could be resolved by redesigning the crossing which would likely require an increase to the width of the pedestrian island to serve additional pedestrian movements.
- 4.22 Given that the proposed development will introduce an increase in pedestrian movements between the application site and the University Campus utilizing this crossing facility the applicants should contribute towards the upgrade of this crossing. As a result a contribution of £30,000 is sought towards the upgrade to this junction.
- 4.23 A Travel Plan has been submitted to accompany the application and in principle is acceptable subject to the up to date survey information from 2016 being included, as a result I am happy for this to be dealt with by way of a condition.

#### *Parking*

- 4.24 In accordance with the Council's adopted parking policy, the redevelopment is proposed to be car free with only car parking for staff, visitors and residents of accessible units by permit only. Total parking on-site is to be provided for 30 vehicles. Parking is to be provided for each of accessible residential units equating to 9 parking spaces. Parking is to be provided for staff at a provision of 21 spaces. An additional space is to be provided for moped/motorcycle parking. The Council's Parking SPD refers to Halls of Residence and implies that such accommodation would be on the University Campus ("on site"). The site is detached from the campus but because it is within such close proximity, TDC

accept that requiring compliance with the Council's Halls of Residence standard is appropriate.

- 4.25 The proposed provision of car parking and the car parking layout that been provided complies with policy.
- 4.26 During the pre-application discussions it was acknowledged that given the scale of the development there was likely to be concern from local residents with regards to on street parking as a result of the development. It was therefore agreed that a parking beat survey be undertaken of Northcourt Avenue and Wellington Avenue during term time and out of term time, with the study area covering the roads up to 200m and/or to the nearest junction from the development site.
- 4.27 To ensure that the parking survey captured residential parking and not overspill parking related to other uses in the area during the day it was agreed that the survey should be undertaken between the hours of 0030 and 0530 on a weekday night. The parking beat survey was undertaken at 0100 hours on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> November (term time).
- 4.28 The results of the parking beat survey can be found below at Table 6.3 (taken from the Transport Statement), this confirms that there is limited on street parking that occurs during the peak residential parking perking period.

**Table 6.3: Parking Demand by Road**

Location	11 Nov 2015		16 Dec 2015		27 Sep 2016		29 Sep 2016	
	No. Cars	Available spaces						
Northcourt Ave (east)	3	35	2	37	3	36	4	35
Northcourt Ave (west)	9	31	5	36	6	35	8	32
Wellington Ave (north)	1	14	2	12	0	14	0	14
Wellington Ave (south)	2	10	2	10	2	8	2	8
<b>Total</b>	15	90	11	95	11	93	14	89

**Table 6.2: Parking Beat Survey Results Summary**

Survey Period	Term-time		Out of Term-Time		Difference: Term-Time vs Holidays	
Date	No. Cars	Available spaces	No. Cars	Available spaces	No. Cars	Available spaces
Nov/Dec 2015	15	90	11	95	4	-5
27 Sept 2016	11	93	-	-	0	-2
29 Sept 2016	14	89	-	-	3	-6
<b>Average</b>	-				2.33	-4.33

- 4.29 A comparison between the term time and out of term time (Table 6.2 above) identifies that there is very little difference when the two are compared.
- 4.30 Survey data has also been submitted by local residents for a smaller area than was surveyed by the applicant, but for an increased number of nights. The

residents' survey data also provides parking numbers for term time and out of term time to provide a comparison.

- 4.31 This survey identifies a variance of overnight parking during term time of between 14 and 35 cars, which is an increase above the surveys undertaken by the applicant. The time the survey results have been collected by residents does vary in the evening, between 19:50 and 00:15, but there does not appear to be any correlation between the time and the number of cars. Given the variances it would appear that there is likely to be a proportion of visitor parking associated with student accommodation but this could also be associated with the other surrounding residential units and night time activities at the University Campus.
- 4.32 It is noted that daytime parking has been assessed by local residents but as stated above the overspill parking that would occur from other uses during the day would make assessing the impact of parking associated with the student accommodation difficult. I therefore have not used this data to assess the parking impact of the development.
- 4.33 Based on the survey results the proposed development would have minimal impacts within regards on street parking and therefore has been deemed acceptable.
- 4.34 Cycle parking has been proposed that complies with the Council's standards with a provision of 270 cycles spaces on site. This level of provision exceeds the Councils standard of 1 cycle space per 5 students and therefore is deemed acceptable.
- 4.35 The Council's standard also requires cycle parking at a ratio of 1 cycle space per 3 staff which would require a provision of 7 spaces. The proposal includes with up to 17 cycles proposed on site and therefore also complies.
- 4.36 It is also noted that four cycle stores are proposed each able of accommodating 68 bicycles. Sheffield type stands are not proposed in 3 out of 4 stores with a provision of vertical parking illustrated. This type of cycle parking would not be accepted and therefore a revised drawing should be submitted illustrating Sheffield type stands or an acceptable alternative e.g. two tier Josta-style cycle parking. Further information has been provided that stipulates that one of the stores proposed would accommodate 68 Sheffield type stands however these facilities would not be able to accommodate this number of Sheffield type stands. TDC appreciate the need to manage impacts on tree roots but the cycle parking should be in an acceptable form to encourage and promote the use of cycling as an alternative mode of transport. Further information should therefore be provided, but TDC are satisfied that this can be dealt with by way of a condition.
- 4.37 At the beginning and end of term time there will be peak periods when student vehicles will need to enter and park on site associated with moving in and out of accommodation. The applicant has established a management plan which manages arrivals, parking and induction into the accommodation. The management strategy incorporates the following measures:
- Each student is issued with a staggered arrival time to mitigate delays and congestion on arrival;
  - Students are given 30 minutes to drive on to site to unload their car near to their accommodation;
  - A clearly signed one way system is introduced on the day of intake, to reduce the impact of traffic on the surrounding roads and manage the flow of student arrival through the day;

- Staff assist the management of arrivals and ensure parking restrictions are adhered to;
- Temporary dedicated parking facilities offsite provided for cars once initial drop off has been completed; and
- Leaflet drops to local residents are also completed before intake, advising residents of key dates and activities together with a round the clock contact number.

4.38 In principle, the above is acceptable subject to the full management plan being submitted. TDC are satisfied that this can be dealt with by way of a condition.

#### *Access*

4.39 Whilst only minimal car parking is to be proposed on site for students, vehicular access for staff and visitor parking, as well as vehicular access for servicing and deliveries and emergency access, will be retained from Northcourt Avenue.

4.40 It is proposed to retain the existing vehicular access south of the halls from Northcourt Avenue (Sherfield Drive). As part of the proposals an additional section of road will be created within the site and the north-west access will be upgraded to provide an additional vehicular and pedestrian access onto Northcourt Avenue.

4.41 This northern access will become the 'Northern Green Access Corridor, which has been designed to direct pedestrians away from Northcourt Avenue drawing them into St Patrick's Hall. This route will also be suitable for vehicles and will include parking, and a lay-by/ drop off zone.

4.42 The new access will also improve access to Benyon Hall thereby reducing traffic using the southern entrance and vehicle movements across the St Patricks Hall site, benefitting the pedestrian environment.

4.43 The provision of the northern access will provide a dedicated, safer, night time route for students returning from campus, buses and/or the town centre on foot/cycle. The added benefit will also be a reduction in pedestrian and cycle traffic along the frontages of the private residential properties fronting Northcourt Avenue.

4.44 The vehicular route is to be 5.8m to 6m in width and is therefore acceptable to accommodate two-way traffic.

4.45 Given the relatively low level of traffic, it has been agreed that the northern access can take the form of a vehicle crossover. A visibility splay of 2.4m x 43m is required but the submitted drawing illustrates a visibility splay of 2.4m x 70m which is well in excess of the required standard. In view of the road alignment and typical on street parking in this location, it has been agreed that visibility to the north can be provided to the edge of the parked car.

4.46 The site layout has been designed to ensure that refuse and service vehicles can enter and exit the site in forward gear. All vehicles will enter the site at the southern access and exit via the north-west access. An 'Auto Track' assessment has been undertaken to demonstrate that the proposed layout enables a refuse vehicle to manoeuvre within the site. Although the vehicle used is smaller than the vehicles used by Reading Borough Council, this is marginal and TDC are satisfied that a refuse vehicle would be able to travel through the site.

#### *Construction*

4.47 It is stated at Point 7.13 that a 'just in time' delivery system will be operational, with vehicles waiting in the numerous lay-bys and lorry parks surrounding

Reading town centre. As such there will be sufficient parking availability for HGV's onsite, with limited vehicles waiting on Northcourt Avenue. This is to be secured in full detail in a Construction Method Statement. TDC would stress that vehicles waiting on Northcourt Avenue would not be accepted, vehicles should therefore be allowed onto site or waved away to come back at a later time.

- 4.48 As a general point the CMS should state that no loading / unloading, parking, storage of materials will be undertaken at any time.
- 4.49 TDC would also draw your attention to the Council's Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway, which can be found at the following link. <http://www.reading.gov.uk/maintenanceandroadworks>
- 4.50 There are therefore currently no objections to the development subject to the following conditions.

DC1 Vehicle parking space provided in accordance with approved plans  
DC2 Vehicle access provided in accordance with approved plans  
DC5 Bicycle parking - plans to be approved  
DC6 Bin storage  
CO2 Construction Method Statement  
Condition. Visibility splays to be provided before development commences  
Condition. Travel Plan - UoR Travel Plan to be updated to include application site  
Condition. Annual Review of Travel Plan  
Condition. Student arrivals / departures and Car Parking Management Plan - details of the allocation of the car parking spaces and management of the student arrivals and departures - Prior to first occupation.

#### **Lead Flood Authority (RBC Highways)**

- 4.51 Confirm that the proposed sustainable drainage system is acceptable subject to conditions securing full specifications of the SuDS design and its implementation prior to first occupation, together with details of the implementation, maintenance and future management of the sustainable drainage scheme.

#### **RBC Natural Environment - Trees**

- 4.52 In terms of tree removal, the proposal involves the removal only of those trees previously agreed during the consideration of withdrawn application 161182/FUL and 68 trees are now proposed for removal instead of 72. Tree Retention and Removal Plan 3025\_L\_TP\_0\_01 Rev 02 indicates that 95 trees are to be planted, hence there will be a net gain in tree number of 27 which would meet the objectives of our Tree Strategy to increase canopy cover. In addition, money for 4 street trees opposite the site in Northcourt Avenue is to be secured via the S106 legal agreement.
- 4.53 It is noted that new tree species as shown on Landscape\_softworks drawing 3025\_L\_SW\_0\_01 Rev 02 are in line with the species suggestions from the University's Ground Department and Natural Environment have no objections to these. Other landscape features, as shown on this plan and on Illustrative Masterplan 3025-L-GA\_0\_01 appear in line with previous discussions, details of which will need to be secured.
- 4.54 With reference to the Tree Survey, AIA & AMS from Challice Consulting, ref CC/1500 AR3552, dated 9 November 2017, this document is generally acceptable - see comments below.
- 4.55 In general the proposals are acceptable. However the following matters require attention.

- 4.56 In relation to lighting, External Lighting Layout & CCTV drawing PO263(60)SK03B appears to present some conflicts with new or existing trees, full revised details can be secured by condition.
- 4.57 In relation to services as shown on Services drawings PO263(50)SK01G and Incoming & Existing Services layout PO263(50)004, there are conflicts with RPAs of retained trees, e.g. T 64, 93, 12, 32. In relation to the Arboricultural Method Statement para. 23.1 states that services are outside RPAs, which does not appear to be the case (see above), hence service installation should be dealt with in the AMS, to be secured by condition.
- 4.58 Sustainable Drainage proposal drawing (Drainage Strategy Plan BR1508-CUR-SK-D02 D) and SUDs Statement Part 4 - the layout on which does not appear to be the current proposed layout. It is important to ensure that SUDs (particularly underground cellular storage) do not conflict with new or existing trees.
- 4.59 The following conditions are recommended:
- L2a Landscaping - When details need to be submitted for approval (pre-commencement) in line with Landscape\_softworks drawing 3025\_L\_SW\_0\_01 Rev 02
  - L2b Landscaping implementation
  - L3 Standard Landscaping Maintenance
  - L4 The standard tree protection condition
  - L5 Landscape Management Plan details
  - L6a Arboricultural method statement needed
  - L6b Arboricultural method statement to be followed
  - N16 External Lighting - When details need to be agreed (Pre-commencement) Design to have due regard to the location of existing and proposed trees

#### **RBC Ecologist**

- 4.60 The Ecological Impact Assessment (The Landmark Practice, November 2017) (updated January 2018 to reflect the amendments to the proposal) describes the detailed ecological assessments that have been undertaken between 2015 and 2017. The surveys have been carried out to an appropriate standard and show that any impact upon protected species will be minimal, provided that the precautionary mitigation as described in the report is implemented. This includes timing the vegetation clearance to avoid the bird nesting season, cutting the vegetation to ground level to deter future use by reptiles, updating bat and badger surveys prior to the commencement of each development phase, as well as the creation of the 'Northern Green Access Corridor' ("created to enhance the habitats present in the north-west of the site", Section 6.3). These can be secured via a condition requiring a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be submitted.
- 4.61 In terms of great crested newts, the submitted survey report, found that the species was absent.
- 4.62 The applicant has submitted an outline landscaping scheme that includes new planting. A condition should be set to ensure that full details are submitted including details of future management.
- 4.63 The applicant has submitted plans showing horizontal lighting levels, which appear to show minimal light spillage. However, it will be important to ensure that the lighting does not adversely affect wildlife and further details should be provided. This can be secured by condition.

- 4.64 The proposals will likely result an increased use of the adjacent Whitley Park Farm/St Patricks Hall Pond Local Wildlife Site Local Wildlife Site as a result of the increased number of students (approx. 700) who would occupy the halls. As such, it is appropriate to have a planning obligation to ensure that the proposals do not result in a deterioration of the LWS, and that ecological value of the LWS is maintained (ideally improved) in the medium to long term. This is in accordance with policy CS36 of RBC's core strategy which states that: *"Local Nature Reserves and Wildlife Heritage Sites (Now called Local Wildlife Sites) will be safeguarded and where possible, enhanced. Permission will not be granted for any development that would adversely affect a designated nature reserve or Wildlife Heritage Site."*
- 4.65 The plan, which should be for 10 years, will need to include, but not necessarily be limited to the following, to be secured by S106 agreement:
- Management of the woodland to ensure that it is botanically and structurally diverse
  - Management of the ponds to ensure that they do not become silted up, colonised by invasive species etc.
  - Provision of bird and bat boxes
  - Measures to manage access.

#### **RBC Environmental Protection**

- 4.66 The noise assessment submitted (SRL, Acoustic Report for Planning, 15 November 2017, report number C13904A/T09/JEE) shows that noise levels around the site are low, with the dominant noise source being distant road traffic, and therefore thermal double glazing units with trickle vents will be acoustically acceptable on site to achieve the requisite internal noise standards.
- 4.67 The submitted noise assessment states the predicted limits for plant noise, rather than an actual assessment of noise from the proposed plant. The applicants note that it is not possible to do an accurate and detailed assessment of plant noise at this stage as final plant selections are not yet known, and therefore suggest a planning condition requiring a detailed plant noise assessment is recommended.
- 4.68 The noise assessment refers to the front façade of ground floor of the the Hub building ('Block K') which is fully glazed, an indicative glazing system has been included in the assessment, and the entrance doors are lobbied; predicted noise levels at the nearest noise sensitive receptor will be no greater than the measured night time background noise levels, which indicates a low noise impact.
- 4.69 Consideration could be given to attaching a condition to any consent to ensure that the glazing/entrance design recommendations of the noise assessment will be followed, or that alternative but equally or more effective measures will be used. Recommended condition below:
- 4.70 To minimise the disturbance by noise of future residential occupiers of the accommodation and its effect on neighbouring residents, residential accommodation must be designed and constructed or converted so as to achieve the insulation requirements set out in Building Regulations Approved Document E.

- 4.71 Noise from operation of the CHP and any associated plant should be included in the noise assessment as above, to be secured by condition. It is noted that the CHP will be gas fired and therefore there will be no noise from fuel deliveries.
- 4.72 The development proposes an increase in student numbers, however there will be no increase in parking and the majority of students will not be permitted to bring cars on to site. The application site does not fall within Reading's Air Quality Management Area. Therefore there are no concerns regarding exposure or adverse air quality impact.
- 4.73 Where development is proposed, the developer is responsible for ensuring that development is safe and suitable for use for the intended purpose or can be made so by remedial action.
- 4.74 A Site Investigation Report has been submitted (Curtins, Phase 2 Site Investigation, 3 November 2017, Ref B041466.003/GB/8133 Revision: A).
- 4.75 An isolated contaminant exceedance of Arsenic was recorded on site from Made Ground sample WS3, however the location of the exceedance will be beneath a building in the final development thereby breaking the pollutant linkage pathway to end users of the site. Therefore the associated risks are considered low with no specific remediation measures required.
- 4.76 Gas monitoring has been undertaken on the site, and is still ongoing, with a further four visits still to be completed at the time of submission of this report. The consultant states that current results indicate a classification of CS1 meaning no gas protection measures are required, however final reporting of the monitoring visits will be undertaken when the monitoring regime is complete. This is to be added as an addendum to this report. EP would need to see this addendum to ensure appropriate measures are put in place if the monitoring determines necessary. This and the other relevant findings of the report, as well as the gas monitoring results when complete (if necessary) should be confirmed within a formal remediation strategy to be submitted. A specific land gas remediation scheme may be required. Conditions to secure this are recommended:
- Submission of Remediation Scheme
  - Implementation of Approved Remediation Scheme
  - Reporting of Unexpected Contamination
- 4.77 With regard to external lighting, two separate plans have been submitted although they are difficult to read and interpret and it is recommended that full, detailed lighting proposals be secured by condition (HK Consulting Engineers, External Lighting LUX Plot Layout, P0263(60)SK02, revised 8/11/17 & External Lighting Layout & CCTV, P0263(60)SK03, revised 8/11/17).
- 4.78 EP have concerns about potential noise, dust and bonfires associated with the construction (and demolition) of the proposed development and possible adverse impact on nearby residents (and businesses) and air quality. A condition securing controls over noise, dust and bonfires during construction and demolition is recommended. The standard condition restricting hours of construction work and associated deliveries is also recommended (08:00hrs to 18:00hrs Mondays to Fridays, and 09:00hrs to 13:00hrs on Saturdays, and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays).

**Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service**

- 4.79 No comment received. Any representations received prior to the committee meeting will be reported in an Update.
- Thames Valley Police Crime Prevention and Design Officer**
- 4.80 No comment received. Any representations received prior to the committee meeting will be reported in an Update.
- Scottish and Southern Electricity**
- 4.81 SSE has existing equipment in the development area, however as the applicant has already been in contact with SSE regarding the diversion of said equipment, SSE have no objections.
- Southern Gas Networks**
- 4.82 No comment received. Any representations received prior to the committee meeting will be reported in an Update.
- Thames Water**
- 4.83 No comment received. Any representations received prior to the committee meeting will be reported in an Update.
- 4.84 **Reading UK CIC**  
No comment received. Any representations received prior to the committee meeting will be reported in an Update.
- Berkshire Archaeology**
- 4.85 The Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment submitted with the application provides detailed information regarding the known archaeological potential of the area and the previous uses of the proposal site through historic mapping.
- 4.86 In summary, based on the known archaeological remains from within the search area, the report identifies a low potential for prehistoric and/or Roman archaeology to be present within the site. Documentary research indicates that there are likely to be areas of significant truncation within the areas of previous development, but areas outside this are likely to have suffered very little disturbance, increasing the potential for archaeology to survive.
- 4.87 Given that the site has some archaeological potential, the report suggests targeted trial trenching within the areas not previously developed, identifying a number of locations. This is an appropriate approach for the first stage of archaeological work, although there are additional areas that should be included within the trenching, such as Blocks H and L, or areas of extensive ground work for services or roads for example.
- 4.88 As always depending on the results of the trial trenching further phases of investigation, prior to development, may be required and adequate time should be allowed for this within the development programme.
- 4.89 A condition requiring approval of a written scheme of archaeological investigation is attached to any planning permission granted, to mitigate the impact of the development is required.
- Sport England**
- 4.90 The site is not considered to form part of, or constitute a playing field as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015 No.595), therefore Sport England has considered this a non-statutory consultation. This is because the width of the playing field adjacent to one of the new developments is not sufficient to accommodate a recognised size of pitch.

- 4.91 As the proposal does not have any impact on any existing sport facilities or playing fields, and does not generate significant demand for new indoor or outdoor sports facilities, Sport England has no comments to make

**Victorian Society (commented on 161182/FUL)**

- 4.92 No comment received. Any representations received prior to the committee meeting will be reported in an Update.

**RBC Housing Development Team**

- 4.93 No comment received. Any representations received prior to the committee meeting will be reported in an Update.

**RBC Access Officer**

- 4.94 No comment received. Any representations received prior to the committee meeting will be reported in an Update.

**RBC Sustainability Team**

- 4.95 No comment received. Any representations received prior to the committee meeting will be reported in an Update.

**RBC Waste Operations**

- 4.96 No comment received. Any representations received prior to the committee meeting will be reported in an Update.

**RBC Valuation Team**

- 4.97 No comment received. Any representations received prior to the committee meeting will be reported in an Update.

**Reading Civic Society (RCS)**

- 4.98 The grounds for objection are:-
1. Having retained Pearson Court the new application should respect its scale and style. RCS take the view that this is not being done.
  2. The intensity of buildings within the space, their height and proximity to Persons Court is excessive.
  3. The materials are out of sympathy with the location and out of character with Pearson's Court and indeed also the Grade II Whitley Park Farmhouse on the site.
  4. Overall we consider the height of the proposed buildings to be excessive and not in keeping with the surrounding area. This is a residential area not part of the main university campus where such things have far less overall impact.
  5. This submission is very disappointing for a university which has a new School of Architecture. It should be seeking excellent design, impact and community engagement. We argue that, despite a massive amount of documentation, it has failed to achieve this. The community should be able to join with the university in saying "**Fantastic Campus**" rather than just the student community being appealed to in this way by the University's marketing.
- 4.99 The previous planning application planned to demolish St Patricks Hall, and other buildings, and to erect 1024 new student bed spaces along with ancillary works, a net increase of 726 bed spaces. The new application is for 24 less spaces.
- 4.100 RCS were impressed by Reading Borough Council's response to the previous planning application when it took the initiative to add Pearson's Court to the Local List of Heritage Buildings, it is one of Reading's seven Locally Listed buildings.

- 4.101 RCS also wish to note how quickly the University responded to this listing by withdrawing the previous application and thinking again.
- 4.102 RCS took part, in the Public Consultation at the University and talked and listened to the team there. RCS asked about how the listing was regarded. Clearly diplomacy was exercised and no comment was made. It was clear, if just from the body language, that the listing was, to say the least, an inconvenience.
- 4.103 RCS can understand such a position. However the decision having been made RCS are not encouraged by how the Heritage Building is being crowded by the proposed new buildings. The proposals do not exactly make a positive feature of this building, rather the new buildings dominate it. The issues are in proximity, height and mass of the new buildings. RCS note Block A is a six storey block just 22 metres from Pearson's Court with a further three blocks adjoining also of the same height and wonder how that is justified in a residential area.
- 4.104 The design seems almost brutal in its overall footprint and impact. Noting that the University has a new School of Architecture this proposal should surely be more imaginative, draw on the geography of the site to achieve the objective more intelligently, with a combination of more appropriately spaced out buildings which do not reach up to 6 storeys.
- 4.105 RCS are aware that residents have severe concerns on many fronts, not the least overlooking of gardens etc. It is surprising that the application has not anticipated this risk and sought to address the inevitable adverse reaction. Addressing the site layout and the heights more intelligently, in discussion with the local community, would have been surely the way ahead.
- 4.106 The proposal presented at the public exhibition has changed little, if at all. RCS cannot find any comment in the D+AS about feedback from that consultation. Perhaps everyone reserved their fire for the planning submission.
- 4.107 RCS have concerns that instead of the university delivering a project which the local community can support fully and say "Fantastic Campus" if planning approval is given to an un-refined scheme an unwelcome project will be imposed on the community.
- 4.108 RCS would request/demand that the university should be an example to its students and try harder.

#### **Public Consultation**

- 4.109 Neighbours adjoining the site and all objectors to 161182/FUL were consulted by letter.
- 4.110 Three site notices were displayed along the Northcourt Avenue frontage
- 4.111 An advertisement was placed in the local newspaper.
- 4.112 67 letters of objection were received, including detailed responses from the Northcourt Avenue Residents' Association (NARA). No letters of support were received.
- 4.113 A second round of consultation was carried out by letter on 18 January 2018 notifying neighbours and objectors of amended plans received in respect of Block I, and the associated change in the description of development. The deadline for additional comments is 31 January 2018 and any representations received will be reported to Committee in an Update Report.

4.114 A third round of consultation was carried out by letter on 25 January 2018 notifying neighbours and objectors of amended plans received in respect of Blocks A and B. The deadline for additional comments is 6 February 2018. A number have been received at time of writing and are summarised below and any representations received will be reported to Committee in an Update Report.

4.115 The matters raised by objectors are summarised as follows. The full text is available to view on the Planning Register website:  
[http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb\\_PL/welcome.asp](http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb_PL/welcome.asp)

a) *Design, Character and Heritage*

- Contrary to Policy CS7 in respect of density, mix, scale (height and massing), historical characteristics, regular building lines, regular heights (including rooflines), distinctive style and appearance and individual frontages.
- Contrary to Policy CS33 - the size and type of the proposed buildings is out of keeping with the locally listed Pearson's Court, and with nearby houses and with the history of the avenue. The CHP building is close to the road and locally listed building.
- Contrary to CS15 - proposals are significantly higher density. Overdevelopment. The existing floor area is 9297sqm, 5669sqm to be lost, new floor area 21933sqm - a 236% increase.
- Contrary to draft policy EN6 of the Pre-submission Draft Local Plan 2017.
- Approximately 4.3% of the site is built on. This would change to 17.7%. 35% loss in open space.
- St Patrick's Hall is part of Northcourt Avenue, a residential road. 6/7 storey buildings would face 1 storey buildings on the street.
- The density is well in excess of the recommended density of 35-55 dwellings per hectare.
- Not high quality design and does not reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials.
- Massive scale, ugly and out of scale proposals out of character and scale with the gracious long established local environment. 6 storey blocks will dwarf surrounding buildings.
- The replacement SETS building will dwarf, detract from and overwhelm the locally listed building.
- Out of sympathy with Grade II listed Whitley Park Farmhouse.
- Pearson's Court is of modulated shades of red brick with tiled roof. The new building with red and orange brick and grey metal top are glaringly intrusive and out of character.
- Para 4.4.29 of the Design and Access Statement included in the first application states "the five and six storey elements currently envisaged with the comprehensive redevelopment proposals would be out of scale with Pearson's Court, if the buildings were to be retained." What has changed? There is no consistency in the applicant's arguments.
- NARA considers that the planning application should be considered in a matter which is consistent with Bridges Hall in Wokingham Borough (F/2011/259). Building heights are restricted to 4 storeys.
- The university is running a public lecture series '*Communities by Design Encouraging conservation around architecture around communities in Reading*' and '*Place and Environment- Understanding Reading's past and present, working towards a smarter and more sustainable future*'. What the University/UPP is trying to force through does not fit with these fine sentiments.
- An alternative proposal is suggested.
- The tall six storey buildings will turn Northcourt Avenue into Little Manhattan.
- The suggestion in para. 3.15 of the Demand and Impact Assessment implies that the site is 'on campus' is incorrect.

- Request that the scale of buildings be limited to four storeys.
- The proposal would be contrary to draft policy ER1e of the Pre-submission Draft Local plan 2017 in terms of harm to the setting of the locally listed building, sewerage capacity and exceedance of the upper limit of 500 bedspaces suggested in the draft policy.
- The flat roofed buildings will be out of character with all buildings in the area, an eyesore and ugly. Lower, pitched roofed buildings would be more acceptable.
- The block to be built on the existing car park is too large and too high to be so close to the road.

**b) *Transport/Highways***

- Contrary to Policy CS23 - junction of Shinfield Road and Northcourt Avenue is not appropriate or safe for the number of students. The transport statement records the accident history.
- The transport contribution towards enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities is welcome but this will not address hazards from parked cars in Northcourt Avenue.
- The access road has been laid out as a circuit, encouraging fast driving, rather than peaceful walking and cycling on site.
- The access at the bend of Northcourt Avenue opposite the health centre access presents a potential road safety hazard.
- The proposal will worsen severe parking problems, especially in the immediate vicinity of the site.
- There are currently 159 parking spaces within the St Patricks campus site, to be reduced to 78. Increase in student numbers by 64% but decrease parking by 46%. Virtually no visitor parking. Students will parking in the surrounding area.
- The University has no way of identifying student cars and has an unenforceable parking policy.
- Significant increase in the number of vehicles servicing the site for deliveries, refuse collection, taxis, site maintenance etc.
- Worsen the level of vehicles obstructing residents' driveways.
- A parking survey done in November 2015 to January 2016 clearly shows an increase in the number of cars parked when undergrads are in residence. Because of changes to parking restrictions elsewhere, the number of cars parked in Northcourt Avenue has increased significantly.
- Northcourt Avenue is designated a Strategic Cycle Route but is unsafe and further development will make this worse.
- No dedicated cycle lanes to the University are proposed.
- There will be an additional 702 students using the roads, creating traffic and parking spaces demand. The 702 additional students are exempt of council taxes and the road maintenance costs will be charged to the council taxpayers. UPP Group Ltd. has made over £10million profit on their accounts to the end of August 2016. This is again an example of wealth transfer from the tax payer to the private sector. UPP Group needs to make a substantial annual contribution to the council as well as to align their design to the character of the area.

**c) *Student Accommodation and Community Matters***

- *Through the 1950s to early 1990s residents shared facilities with students including parties on the lawn, sports matches and use of the common room. Since UPP took over this has been abandoned.*
- *Accommodation should be provided at Whiteknights Campus rather than the St Patrick's site.*
- *University security staff, when contacted, do not act on anything but University property, so when noise disruption occurs in Northcourt Avenue, Wellington Avenue, Christchurch Road, The Mount, the do not intervene. NARA has no confidence that they will respond in the future.*

- *NARA strenuously dispute that there has been any significant discussion with UPP/UoR around core issues like scale and mass of buildings.*
- *The UoR has sold Wells Hall, Sibley Hall, London Road and Bulmershe for housing then submits plans to overdevelop St Patrick's site.*  
*The UoR disposed of over 1,100 rooms at other sites as demand for accommodation was increasing.*
- *There will still be a net decrease in University supplied bedspaces due to UoR disposals.*
- *UoR have a business strategy to increase the student population by 4000 over the next 3-4 years. It is not a requirement but a business decision.*
- The delicate balance of students to nonstudent residents is already at a critical level and is in danger of undermining standards and the character of the area should it increase further.
- Lack of public consultation. In this case it is absolutely critical, and an essential next step, that the local residents should be closely involved in designing, discussing and evaluating the impact of possible options in this proposed development, in order to avoid the wide-ranging adverse and irreversible physical and environmental consequences.

**d) Residential Amenity**

- The CHP building would remove any useful light from the habitable rooms of Chedworth House.
- There is no detail on emissions from the CHP plant or its acoustic effects. This will cause noise disturbance to Northcourt Avenue.
- The huge increase in the number of students and their movement to and from the university will have a large impact on local residents.
- Contrary to Policy DM4 - overlooking to no 24 Northcourt Avenue, loss of sunlight to houses opposite the site, visual dominance of excessively high buildings and noise and disturbance from the increased number of students.
- Overlooking of houses in Weardale Close.
- Increased anti-social behaviour, noise and litter - late and night/early morning.
- 23 November 2017 the Council's Licensing Sub-Committee did not allow the extension of opening hours until 5am for Domino's Pizza at 64 Christchurch Road due to concerns over disturbance caused by the student population.
- Loss of evening sunlight to houses opposite on Northcourt Avenue.
- Glare from external lighting.
- Noise broadcast from open windows due to heights of buildings.
- A lower building design could be achieved e.g. St George's Hall
- Blocks 'SETS', 'H' and 'I' are likely to reduce privacy to 24a Northcourt Avenue
- (In response to consultation on the revised Block I) - Study bedrooms will look directly into the bedrooms and garden of 24 Northcourt Ave and the gardens of 2 and 3 Sheffield Drive.

**e) Trees**

- *Trees on the site are numerous, attractive and important for wildlife. It is regrettable that the proposal includes the removal of 68 trees, many of which are mature or semi-mature and species rich habitats.*
- *Contrary to Draft Policy EN14 Trees Hedges and Woodlands*

**f) Ecology**

- Established wildlife corridors would be interfered with.

**g) Construction**

- There would be a large number of HGVs and other vehicles going past the houses of residents for a period of at least 2 years.

- Can the residents of Northcourt Avenue be given an assurance that work will only take place Monday to Friday during normal working hours and that the grass in front of Pearson's Court will not be flood lit or patrolled by dogs if used as a construction compound
- What will be done about damage to the road due to construction traffic?

**h) *Infrastructure***

- Contrary to Policy CS31 - The significant increase in the number of students will add significant pressure on local residents and facilities such as healthcare and bus services.
- Inadequate water supply and sewerage infrastructure to serve the development.
- Lack of any social housing offset such as providing a portion (10%?) of the accommodation for Reading's homeless single people shows 'Middle Class Bias' in the plans.

**i) *Environmental***

- The size of building is guaranteed to produce a wind tunnel effect.
- It is wasteful to demolish existing buildings that could be made to meet modern standards of insulation.

**j) *MP Letter***

A letter has been received from Matt Rodda MP objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- The proposals are out of keeping with other buildings and the scale of the development in the area. The proposal would change a green and pleasant arts-and-crafts road into a highly urban and over-developed urban area.
- The application is contrary to policies in the Core Strategy and draft Local Plan.
- Pearson's Court would be totally overshadowed by the proposed development.
- The massing of large, modern, tall buildings on this currently moderately developed site would be out of keeping with the area and with the university area as a whole.
- The materials are inappropriate and are very different to the existing built environment.
- There is a long-standing planning agreement between Reading and Wokingham Boroughs that development at the university would be a similar scale in either borough.
- Overlooking to the garden of 24 Northcourt Avenue.
- Urge the Council Planning Department to consider the alternative design put forward by one of the residents who is an architect.
- While not a planning criterion, the application seems sadly out of keeping with the University's commitment to architecture and design.

**k) *Petitions***

Northcourt Avenue Residents' Association have submitted a petition containing 451 signatures on the grounds of overdevelopment of the site; the impact on local infrastructure (noise, litter, local transport and services); traffic & parking; and insensitive relationship to historic buildings.

**l) *Comments on revised drawings***

5 representations have been received at the time of writing. They are summarised as follows. Additional comments will be reported and addressed in an Update Report.

- The proposal now submitted is still non-compliant with RBC's Planning Policy in so many ways. These have been highlighted previously by local

residents and I will not repeat them. I am astonished that you are even entertaining this late “tinkering around the edges” with which the Developer appears to be indulging.

- Concerns remain over number of students, emergency access, litter, bad behaviour of students.
- First floor windows of Block I would overlook the bedroom of 20 Northcourt Avenue
- Block I would overlook gardens of 2 and 3 Sherfield Drive.
- It is a pity Block I cannot be designed to fit more comfortably across the contours of the site instead of excavating. Concerns over stability of boundary with 20 Northcourt Avenue and possible damp problems from ground water.
- The committee date should be deferred to March to allow the changes to be better considered.

## 5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

5.2 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

### 5.3 National

National Planning Policy Framework  
National Planning Practice Guidance

### Reading Borough Local Development Framework:

#### 5.4 *Core Strategy (2008) (Altered 2015)*

CS1	Sustainable Construction and Design
CS2	Waste Minimisation
CS3	Social Inclusion and Diversity
CS4	Accessibility and Intensity of Development
CS5	Inclusive Access
CS7	Design and the Public Realm
CS9	Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities
CS10	Location of Employment Development
CS12	Maintaining a Variety of Premises
CS13	Impact of Employment Development
CS14	Provision of Housing
CS15	Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix
CS20	Implementation of Reading Transport Strategy
CS22	Transport Assessments
CS23	Sustainable Travel and Travel Plans
CS24	Car/Cycle Parking
CS28	Loss of Open Space
CS29	Provision of Open Space
CS30	Access to Open Space
CS32	Impacts on Community Facilities
CS33	Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
CS34	Pollution and Water Resources
CS36	Biodiversity and Geology

CS38                    Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

5.5    ***Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) (Altered 2015)***

SD1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
DM1	Adaption to Climate Change
DM2	Decentralised Energy
DM3	Infrastructure Planning
DM4	Safeguarding Amenity
DM12	Access, Traffic and Highway-related Matters
DM16	Provision of Open Space
DM17	Green Network
DM18	Tree Planting
DM19	Air Quality

5.6    **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Sustainable Design and Construction (2011)  
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)  
Employment Skills and Training (2013)  
Planning Obligations under S106 SPD (2015)

6.      **APPRAISAL**

i)      **Principle of Use**

6.1    The principle of the use of the site for halls of residence is well established and the site already accommodates over 1000 students. There is no particular general policy objection to this being increased, subject to site-specific constraints.

6.2    Emerging policy relates to this site, in the form of Draft Policy ER1e of the Pre-Submission Draft Reading Borough Local Plan (2017). Although of limited weight currently, this policy supports the general principle of additional student accommodation within the site. The current proposal exceeds the upper limit of the guideline amount of development set out in the draft policy (net gain of approximately 450-500 bedspaces). With regard to these figures, it is important to note that the draft policy is qualified by paragraph 9.3.2 of the Draft Local Plan, which explains that "*Where dwelling or floorspace figures are included alongside the allocations, these are intended as a guide, and usually reflect an indicative maximum capacity. They are based on an initial assessment taking into account the characteristics of each site. However, the capacity of sites will ultimately depend on various factors that need to be addressed at application stage, including detailed design and layout.*" It is apparent that this draft policy does not necessarily prevent a greater number of bedspaces being provided within the site. If it did, it should be remembered that this is not current development plan policy and should be given limited weight in determining the application.

6.3    The submitted Demand and Impact Assessment identifies a need for additional accommodation to serve the University. Draft Policy H12 (whilst currently of limited weight) seeks to steer this to, or adjacent to, existing University locations and is an indicator of the Council's future approach.

6.4    Based on the context described above it is considered that the St Patrick's site is an appropriate location for additional student accommodation.

ii)     **Heritage**

6.5    National Planning Practice Guidance advises that in most cases the assessment of the significance of the heritage asset by the local planning authority is likely to need expert advice in addition to the information provided by the historic environment record, similar sources of information and inspection of the asset

itself. Advice may be sought from appropriately qualified staff and experienced in-house experts or professional consultants, complemented as appropriate by consultation with National Amenity Societies and other statutory consultees. (NPPG Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 18a-010-20140306). In line with this advice, the following assessment is based closely on the advice of the Council's Historic Buildings Consultant (HBC), having due regard to the advice of the Victorian Society (a national amenity society) as well as all other material considerations.

#### *Whitley Park Farmhouse*

- 6.6 The applicant's revised heritage statement describes Grade II Listed Whitley Park Farmhouse as follows:

*"The Farmhouse dates from the late 18th or early 19th century. It is a two-storey, red brick building with grey brick headers and red brick quoins dressings. It has a hipped slate roof with a small, centrally placed dormer, and a central chimney. The doorway is centrally positioned on the eastern elevation and is set within a Roman Doric pedimented porch. The windows are timber casements (see Figure 1 below). The building has an attractive, fairly symmetrical, principal elevation. The List Entry Description mentions an early-mid 19th century barn on saddlestones located to the immediate north-east of the Farmhouse but this was not present when the site was visited, there was, however, a single-storey, lean-to side extension on the north elevation of the Farmhouse and a single-storey, flat roofed outbuilding also located to the immediate north of the Farmhouse. Despite the changes to the building, it is still recognisable as a traditional farmhouse. The building is currently used for student accommodation... Whitley Park Farmhouse is of high heritage significance primarily for its aesthetic (architectural interest) and historical values (historic interest) as an example of a traditional and historic farmhouse. It may also be of some communal value for former and existing University of Reading staff and students who may have lived or used the building... This is reflected in its designated status as a grade II Listed Building."* (para 5.2.2.1)

- 6.7 The Historic England website sets out the legal context in respect of listed buildings as follows:

*"When making a decision on all listed building consent applications or any decision on a planning application for development that affects a listed building or its setting, a local planning authority must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Preservation in this context means not harming the interest in the building, as opposed to keeping it utterly unchanged.*

*This obligation, found in sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, applies to all decisions concerning listed buildings.*

*The recent Court of Appeal decision in the case of Barnwell vs East Northamptonshire DC 2014 made it clear that in enacting section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Parliament's intention was that 'decision makers should give "considerable importance and weight" to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings' when carrying out the balancing exercise'.*

*Decision-making policies in the NPPF and in the local development plan are also to be applied, but they cannot directly conflict with or avoid the obligatory consideration in these statutory provisions."*

- 6.8 The submitted heritage report identifies that views from the front of the listed building could be affected by the proposed new buildings, particularly those on the site of the existing New Court, although existing trees and buildings will screen much of the development. The Council's Historic Buildings Consultant advises that the setting of Whitley Park Farmhouse comprises views to the northeast towards Benyon Hall and views beyond, east towards Pearson's Court.
- 6.9 The submitted heritage assessment rightly notes that the original and historic setting of the farmhouse has changed considerably and the farmland associated with this former farmhouse has been lost and notes that:
- "Existing views of modern, university buildings detract from the historic setting of the Farmhouse to some degree by urbanising its context and as such, the wider setting of this Listed Building is considered to make a slight negative contribution to its overall significance (aesthetic and historical values/special architectural and historic interest). However, the largely open, immediate setting of the Farmhouse, together with historic pond and trees, make a positive contribution to the significance of the former Farmhouse (historic and aesthetic values). Due to its open and green character, this immediate setting provides something of a physical reminder of the building's original function as a Farmhouse and of its original and historic, predominantly rural context both in views out from and views of this Listed Building. The immediate front setting also provides space with which to appreciate the Listed Building's principal architectural elevation within and against an apparently rural backdrop. While this immediate setting is of increased importance, given that all of the Farmhouse's associated farmland has been developed, the positive aspects of the Farmhouse's immediate setting can only be considered to make a low positive contribution to its overall significance/special interest, which lies predominantly in the architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building itself."*
- 6.10 With regard to this assessment, it is considered that the proposed changes, the increased scale of the new buildings, and changes in the style of architecture would occur beyond the immediate setting of the listed building and would not harm this setting due to the distances involved, the way in which the farm setting of the farmhouse has already been lost to a great extent, and the existing modern buildings which already influence and detract from the setting to a greater degree. The intervening tree screen also reduces visual effects to a degree, although the long term survival of trees should not be relied upon.
- 6.11 The Council's Historic Buildings Consultant (HBC) advises that the setting of Whitley Park is currently affected by the modern Benyon Hall JCR building and modern campus buildings to the east. The proposed demolition and replacement of these buildings with further campus blocks up to six storeys in height has been assessed by the applicant's heritage consultant as resulting in negligible harm to its setting, which equates to a less than substantial harm to the setting within the definition of the NPPF. The HBC concludes that the proposed new development would have negligible effect on the setting which is now largely limited to its immediate surroundings and which is currently affected by the modern campus buildings to the east. It follows that the impact would be reduced by the revised proposal with blocks reduced to five storeys.
- 6.12 For these reasons it is considered that the setting of the listed farmhouse would be preserved, in accordance with statutory requirements, national planning policy and Policy CS33.

### *Pearson's Court*

6.13 Pearson's Court was added to Reading's List of Locally important Buildings and Structures 'Local List' on 20 October 2016 based on the advice of the Council's Historic Buildings Consultant and in accordance with the criteria set out on page 62 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (altered 2015).

6.14 Historic England Advice Note 7 Local Heritage Listing (2016) states:

*"Local lists play an essential role in building and reinforcing a sense of local character and distinctiveness in the historic environment, as part of the wider range of designation. They enable the significance of any building or site on the list (in its own right and as a contributor to the local planning authority's wider strategic planning objectives), to be better taken into account in planning applications affecting the building or site or its setting."*

6.15 The Advice Note continues:

*"In deciding applications for planning permission that affect a locally listed heritage asset or its setting, the NPPF requires, amongst other things, both that local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of such heritage assets and of putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation and the consideration of the positive contribution that conserving such heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality (NPPF paragraphs 126 and 121). Whilst local listing provides no additional planning controls, the fact that a building or site is on a local list means that its conservation as a heritage asset is an objective of the NPPF and a material consideration when determining the outcome of a planning application (NPPF, paragraph 17)."*

6.16 The reasons given by the Council for locally listing Pearson's Court, in reference to the SDPD criteria and on the advice of the Council's Historic Buildings Consultant are as follows:

*"In summary Pearson's Court:*

- *has a well authenticated historical association with a notable person(s) or event;*
- *has a prolonged and direct association with figures or events of local interest;*
- *has played an influential role in the development of an area or the life of one of Reading's communities;*
- *is representative of a style that is characteristic of Reading;*
- *is the work of a notable local architect;*
- *form a group which as a whole has a unified architectural or historic value to the local area;*
- *to some extent has a prominence and a landmark quality that adds to the sense of place of a particular locality.*

*Reasoning*

1. *Pearson's Court dates from 1913 and is considered to be substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance under criteria under the 'Selection for the Local List' b) of the Reading Borough Council primary local listing criteria.*
2. *As detailed in the WYG Local Listing Assessment submitted under application 161182/FUL (WYG, 2016), Pearson's Court is also considered to satisfy the following secondary criteria:*
  - *Historic Interest:*

- a) *Historical Associations (a) under sub-criteria (a)(i) and (ii) with R L Pearson, Charles Steward Smith of local architects C. Smith & Son and potential the author of the 'Biggles' books, William Earl Johns and as one of three sites used to accommodate Royal Flying Corps cadets attending the School of Instruction and the No. 1 School of Military Aeronautics during WWI;*
- b) *Social Importance (b) under sub-criterion as the second oldest, surviving, purpose-built hall of residence still in use in Reading University;*
  - *Architectural Interest*
  - a) *Sense of Place (a)(i) as its style characteristic of historic parts of the University of Reading; and*
  - b) *Innovation and Virtuosity (b) is met under sub-criterion (ii) as the work of notable local architect/architectural practice, Charles Steward Smith (1858-1923), of C. Smith and Son who was the first president of the Reading Society of Architects.*
  - *Group Value (c) under sub-criterion (i) as the quadrangle of Pearson's Court has an architectural unity.*
  - *Townscape Value criterion is partly met as the building has localised townscape value."*

6.17 Paragraph 9.1.25 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (altered 2015) states that:

*"The LPA will establish a list of 'Locally important Buildings and Structures'. Where a building or structure merits designation as a locally important heritage asset, it would be recorded as such by adding it to this list, which will form part of Reading's Historic Environment Record. The asset would then be conserved and where appropriate enhanced in accordance with Policy CS33 of the Core Strategy and national planning policy..."*

- Policy CS33 of the Core Strategy states that:

*"Historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced. This will include... Other features with local or national designation... Planning permission will only be granted where development has no adverse impact on historic assets and their settings..."*

- Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states:

*"The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."*

6.18 The Sites and Detailed Policies Document states that following local listing, the asset should be conserved in accordance with CS33.

6.19 The proposed new blocks of accommodation to the north of Pearson's Court replace existing three storey buildings, and also the unattractive 1960s catering block currently attached to the northern façade, which currently form part of the setting of Pearson's Court. The new blocks would be substantially larger and closer to Pearson's Court due to their height and massing, particularly Block A which rises to 5 storeys at a distance of approximately 24.5 metres from the north façade of Pearson's Court.

- 6.20 The proposals would retain the existing northern, western and eastern ranges of Pearson's Court unchanged (except for removal of the catering block) and integrate them within the scheme as a whole. The open grassed area to the front (north east) of Pearson's Court is to be retained and this is considered to be an important part of its setting viewed from the street.
- 6.21 Pearson's Court currently has more limited setting to the north-west as this is affected by the catering block and New Court buildings. The setting to the north would change significantly as part of the proposals and the five storey scale of Block A would appear as somewhat stark in relation to Pearson's Court. However it is considered that this is outweighed to some extent by the removal of the catering block which would better reveal the character of the north-west façade of Pearson's Court and the improved landscaping. It is also important to note that protection of the setting of a locally listed building is not a statutory requirement and does not carry the same weight in planning terms as would the case if the building were statutorily listed.
- 6.22 The SETS building was constructed later (1927) and although included in the local listing for completeness, it does not have the same degree of heritage significance as the older northern, western and eastern ranges.
- 6.23 The new townhouses (Block H) at the junction of Sherfield Drive and Northcourt Avenue would affect views across the open space towards the eastern range of Pearson's Court. This arrangement would alter the setting to a degree however the 2½ storey scale is not considered to be excessive and the building would sit to one side of the north east façade and allow views to remain across the open space from the east and importantly from the main pedestrian entrance adjacent to Chedworth House.
- 6.24 The new CHP building is not considered to be harmful to the setting of Pearson's Court due to its relatively low height and position off to one side when viewed from Northcourt Avenue. The building would not harm the experience of the locally listed building from within the site, or more widely when viewed from the street.
- 6.25 The Council's Historic Buildings Consultant advises as follows:

*"Crucially, the demolition of the original Pearson's Court building is no longer proposed. The later developed Sets building to the south of Pearson's Courtyard is proposed to be replaced with new, four storey accommodation with a mansard roof for the replacement Sets building. The proposed replacement building will form a termination to the Pearson's Court range, but would not be attached to it.*

*The design achieves the requirement of retaining the locally listed Pearson's Court within the development incorporating its original function as a hall of residence. Incorporating the hall into the proposed scheme would give it a new renewed function and retain it in its historic, sustainable use and secure the conservation of the non-designated heritage asset, which is a heritage benefit.*

*The proposed new four storey building proposed to replace the SETS building is of a similar height and scale to Pearson's court and, being separated from it, is not considered to harm its setting. The proposed brick construction and mansard roof would complement the design of Pearson's court."*

- 6.26 It is therefore considered that the retention of the most significant parts of the Pearson's Court together with the grassed area to the east, the removal of the catering block and provision of new hard and soft landscaping would, on balance,

result in an appropriate setting for the locally listed building; the key heritage benefit being the retention of the locally listed building.

- 6.27 On the basis of the above assessment, the proposals are considered to comply with national planning policy in the NPPF and associated guidance, Policy CS33 of the Core Strategy and guidance on locally listed buildings in the Sites and Detailed Policies Document.

**iii) Transport**

- 6.28 The detailed comments of the Council's Transport section are set out in section 4 above. These are considered to be a reasonable assessment of the proposals and it is recommended that the application should be considered on the basis of these comments. The contribution towards the pedestrian crossing is considered to be necessary to make the development acceptable, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. It therefore passes the tests in Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations.

- 6.29 It is proposed to secure the submitted Student Management Plan within the S106 agreement. This makes reference to the Student Residence Agreement. This tenancy agreement prohibits student occupiers from bringing cars to site or within 1 mile of the University.

A car parking management plan is proposed to be secured by condition and would provide further controls, particularly at peak times such as when new student occupiers move into rooms. It is proposed that this should include an annual review requirement to allow for refinements to address unforeseen problems.

- 6.30 On the basis of Transport advice received it is considered that the proposals, as managed by the mitigation measures proposed in the recommended S106 and conditions would comply with Development Plan Policies CS20, CS22, CS24 and DM12 and the guidance set out in the Council's Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011.

**iv) Character and Scale**

- 6.31 It is considered that the existing site has a distinct campus character compared to the remainder of Northcourt Avenue. Pearson's Court has a restrained, good quality institutional character which is enhanced significantly by the open space to the front. Beyond the formal quadrangle arrangement of Pearson's Court, the site, takes on a more relaxed campus feel, with less visual reference to the mature suburban housing in the surrounding streets.

**SETS**

- 6.32 The proposed SETS block would replace the southern range of Pearson's Court and would be the main change to the existing Pearson's Court complex. The increase in scale is significant compared with the building it would replace. However it is considered that it would appropriately reflect the scale of the remainder of Pearson's Court and would not appear overly obtrusive when viewed from within the site, or from Northcourt Avenue. The Mansard roof would add to the apparent bulk of the building but it is considered that this would be adequately mitigated by the distance from the road, and the amount of open space around the building, including Sherfield Drive, the gap between the building and the remainder of Pearson's Court, and the open space to the front of Pearson's Court.

### *New Court*

- 6.33 Taken as a whole - Blocks A,B,C,D,E,F, and G would entirely replace the existing 1960s New Court complex. The proposals would form a substantial mass of built form that would be a distinct change from the current, relatively modest New Court buildings. The applicant has submitted revised drawings showing Blocks A and B reduced by one storey, to five storeys which would reduce the overall mass to a degree (an approximately 2.5 metre reduction in height from 20 metres to 17.5 metres at the highest point of Block A (southeast elevation).
- 6.34 Blocks E, F and G would replace the eastern side of New Court. These would be a four storey scale and would be sited closer to Northcourt Avenue than the current buildings and would extend significantly further on a Northwest-Southeast axis. It is considered that the set-back from Northcourt Avenue would acceptably mitigate the visual effects of this building, the height of which would be broadly level with the cupola on the Pearson's Court clock tower. The screening provided by the existing University-owned Edwardian buildings 14, 16 and 18 Northcourt Avenue which front the street would add a degree of screening and views of these blocks would be limited to a large extent to glimpses between these buildings and through tree canopies. It is considered that the four storey height, footprint and massing of these blocks would be acceptable within this context.
- 6.35 Towards the rear of the proposed site, Blocks A, B, C and D would rise to five storeys with Block A being taller than Block B,C and D due to a commercial floor to ceiling height at ground floor (serving a proposed café, reception area, manager's office and launderette). This five storey scale of Block A (arguably 5½ storey) would begin at a point approximately 84 metres back from the Northcourt Avenue boundary of the site, with the end of Block D sited 70 metres from Northcourt Avenue. It is apparent that this scale would be unacceptable if it were immediately adjacent to Northcourt Avenue which is characterised by a distinctly modest, domestic, scale of development. The degree to which it is acceptable therefore depends to a great extent on the different, separate, campus character of the St Patrick's site, the distance from the street and the mitigating effects of open space within the site and any intervening screening which might be expected to remain.
- 6.36 As referred to above, the St Patrick's site is considered to have a distinct campus character with the main visual relationship to Northcourt Avenue being the eastern façade of Pearson's Court and the open space to the front with more limited views of land to the northern, western and south western ends of the site. The retention of Pearson's Court and associated open space results in a relatively spacious setting to the site as a whole being presented to the street. It is considered that this spaciousness would provide some compensation for, and relief from, the visual impact of the substantial mass of building proposed to the north. In terms of screening, whilst the 4 and 5 storey blocks cannot be completely screened by lower buildings, it is considered that direct views from the street would be disrupted by Chedworth House, 16 Northcourt and Crooksbury House as well as the new townhouses proposed at the south east corner of the site (Block H). Views from the street in Northcourt Avenue (and to some extent from within the site) would also be broken by new and existing tree planting. It is considered that the factors described above, when combined with the set-back distance from the street, would sufficiently limit the visual impact of the substantial mass of building proposed at Blocks A to G and would not result in harm to the character of Northcourt Avenue, or the surrounding area.
- 6.37 The proposed townhouses, Block H, would be sited on the existing car park area fronting Sheffield Drive. This would have a 2½ storey scale with steeply pitched roof and dormers accommodating a third floor of accommodation. It is

considered that this scale would be appropriate given the larger houses that exist on the western side of Northcourt Avenue together with the set back from the road and the end-on arrangement to the road, in effect forming a terrace fronting Sherfield Drive.

- 6.38 Block I on the southern boundary would replace a two storey pitched roof buildings in a similar position. The design has been revised to a two storey residential block with lowered ground floor level. The design is somewhat contrived in appearance with the blank rear wall and sunken floor levels however it is considered that this block would not be readily visible from outside the site and would not contribute significantly to the overall mass of the development.
- 6.39 Block J to the south west corner of the site is proposed as a four storey L-shaped block of residential accommodation with the southern wing stepping down to follow the surrounding land levels. Glimpses of this block would be visible from Northcourt Avenue, along Sherfield Drive and also from surrounding houses, however the block is set well within the site and it is considered that it would not appear overly obtrusive when viewed from the public realm.
- 6.40 Proposed Block K would be sited at the western end of the pedestrian route leading from Northcourt Avenue and between Pearson's Court and Blocks A and G. It comprises 'The Hub' cafe and bar at ground floor with three floors of residential accommodation above projecting in three wings outwards from a central core. It is considered that the unusual form gives the building visual interest and it would sit comfortably in its location which is well-within the campus environment.
- 6.41 Block L would be adjacent to existing buildings at Creighton Court. The four storey scale would be taller than the existing adjacent buildings by about a storey. The new block would be sited further from the road than Creighton Court and would be viewed within the context of the four and five storey blocks adjacent (C, D and E). It is considered that the block would be sufficiently distant from Northcourt Avenue and would be screened to a great extent by Creighton Court to the east and the new blocks to the south. The scale would not appear excessive in this context.
- 6.42 The RSL building is an existing relatively small single storey building currently which currently serves as the site office and staff common room. It is proposed that this will be changed to storage, workshop and staff rest facilities as the reception is proposed to move to Block A.
- 6.43 The proposed CHP plant building would sit to the rear of Chedworth House. The building would have a functional appearance and a large footprint for an ancillary building. However it is considered that the building would be reasonably well screened from Northcourt Avenue by Chedworth House and existing vegetation. The proposed landscaping would also serve to soften the visual effects of the building. On this basis it is considered that the building would not appear overly obtrusive when viewed from the street or viewed from within the site in the context of the development as a whole.
- v) **Appearance (detailing)**
- 6.44 The retained Pearson's Court will continue to strongly influence the appearance of the site as a whole when viewed from Northcourt Avenue due to its prominent position in the site. Its high quality of materials and detailing would serve to maintain local distinctiveness and assist in softening the effect of the new blocks and integrating them into the site. The proposals are therefore considered to be a far more visually sensitive approach to developing the site compared with the previous, withdrawn proposal.

- 6.45 The proposed new buildings would be predominantly finished in brick, which is considered to be characteristic of the site and wider area in general. Two types are proposed, a deeper red brick that responds to Pearson's Court and a red/orange blend which references other older buildings in the area. It is recommended that details and sample panels of the precise bricks, the bond, and mortar are secured by condition. Panels of more textured feature brickwork are proposed to some flank walls to add interest, for example the northwest elevation of Block E.
- 6.46 Windows are proposed to be aluminium framed and the frame arrangement, a composite of a number of panes, allows for large window openings which add visual interest and avoid excessive expanses of brickwork.
- 6.47 The roof of Block H, the townhouses adjacent to Northcourt Avenue would have a traditional tiled roof, which is considered appropriate for its setting. The mansard roof to the SETS block would be finished in a grey standing seam roofing material, which is considered reasonable for the type of roof. The other roofs within the development would be flat with a roofing membrane concealed from view by a parapet design.
- 6.48 The overall approach to the new buildings is considered appropriate with a generally acceptable quality of detailing, vertical emphasis and articulation within the building facades to ensure that the new buildings integrate effectively within the existing campus setting. This includes an appropriate appearance within the setting of the listed farmhouse and locally listed Pearson's Court buildings and when viewed from the street. The appearance and detailing of the proposals are therefore considered to be in accordance with Policies CS7 and CS33.

vi) **Neighbouring Amenity**

*Block I*

- 6.49 The majority of neighbouring buildings adjoining the site are in University ownership and in use as student accommodation, or university support functions. It is considered that the proposals are compatible with these in terms of any overbearing effects or impact on privacy.
- 6.50 Block I would have some impact on the privacy of 3 Sherfield Drive due to upper floor windows facing towards the garden at a distance of 7.5 metres. However the impact would be mitigated to a great extent by the sunken nature of the revised building design, which would be less than two storeys in height relative to this neighbouring house. In addition, 3 Sherfield Drive is within the application site and the occupancy and use of 3 Sherfield Drive building is under the control of the University. It is bound up with the use of the wider campus site as a whole. On this basis it is considered that the proposal would not be harmful to the amenity of future occupiers.
- 6.51 24 Northcourt Avenue is a relatively new dwelling approved under permission ref. 080834 (08/00738/FUL) which is located in a backland location to the rear of 24a Northcourt Avenue. Block I was initially proposed as a three storey block orientated on a southwest-northeast axis with bedroom windows facing southeast towards the garden boundary of number 24. This was considered harmful to the amenity of the neighbour and officers advised that a revised design was required.
- 6.52 The applicant has submitted a revised design reduced to two storeys of accommodation with no windows facing southeast and the ground floor level set

at 67.45 metres above datum, which is lower than the ground levels of around 68.8m which currently surround the existing building at 4 Sherfield Drive (to be demolished) and is similar to ground levels at the lower end of the existing car park at the southwest corner of the application site. The building would sit approximately 8 metres from the boundary with number 24 Northcourt Avenue at the closest point, increasing to 9 and then 12 metres within the recessed sections of the rear façade. Windows are proposed in the northeast end of the building. Some views towards the rear of 24 Northcourt Avenue would be possible from these however the views would be at an angle, from a relatively low floor height (due to the sunken two-storey design, and would be at a distance of approximately 29 metres to the rear of the neighbouring house (in excess of the 20 metres set out in Policy DM4. Privacy fins are proposed to the upper floor windows in the northeast facade which would further reduce views towards the neighbour (these can be secured by condition). The two windows shown in the southeast elevation are specifically designed to limit views towards the northeast and southwest and would have limited impact on the privacy of 24 Northcourt Avenue, especially when the low height of the building is taken into consideration. The concerns expressed by neighbours regarding the privacy impacts of the revised design are noted; however the revised proposal is considered to be acceptable for the reasons set out above.

- 6.53 It is considered that the significant reduction in scale of the revised design would prevent an overbearing effect on the house or garden at 24 Northcourt Avenue. Direct sunlight would be largely unaffected due to the relatively low height and the position to the north and north west of the neighbouring garden. The building would not be of a scale or siting which would cause harmful loss of daylight.
- 6.54 Detailed landscaping proposals show 5 semi-mature Norway Maple trees (4 metre minimum height at planting) set on top of the embankment to be formed adjacent to the boundary with 24 Northcourt Avenue. These would provide some screening to the proposal which would soften its appearance and improve privacy to the neighbour. A condition securing this before first occupation of Block I is recommended.
- 6.55 The neighbour comments in respect of retaining structures surrounding Block I, land stability and drainage are noted. It is considered reasonable to require additional detail of the structure, land stabilisation measures (where required), and measures to deal with groundwater to be submitted, to be secured by condition.
- 6.56 The revised Block I would not harm the amenity of other neighbours due to its minimal scale and the distances involved.

#### *Privacy and Overbearing Effects Elsewhere*

- 6.57 The new 2 ½ storey townhouses at Block H and the four storey SETS block would be 44 metres and 52 metres from the western boundary of 24a Northcourt Avenue respectively. Policy DM4 seeks a minimum distance of 20 metres and it is therefore considered that the proposed arrangement is sufficient to prevent harmful overlooking or overbearing effects. The University-owned building at 22 Northcourt Avenue lies between and provides an additional degree of separation.
- 6.58 Houses to the east side of Northcourt Avenue would lie across the street and would be a considerable distance from the main new buildings proposed. Block H would be closer (31 metres), but would be positioned end-on and could reasonably be described as a typical relationship between residential properties across the street. The proposal would not result in a harmful overbearing effect on these neighbours. Direct overlooking would largely be prevented by the orientation of the building, although views across the public realm at a distance

of 31 metres would not be harmful and the two windows within the north east flank elevation are considered to be acceptable for this reason.

- 6.59 All other blocks within the development are considered to be sufficiently distant from neighbouring dwellings to prevent harmful overlooking, or overbearing effects.

#### *Daylight / Sunlight*

- 6.60 It is considered that the buildings, due to their scale, orientation and arrangement would be sufficiently distant from non-university owned neighbouring properties to avoid harmful loss of ambient daylight.

- 6.61 Concerns regarding the effect on longer distance sunlight received have been raised by neighbouring residents. This would mainly affect properties to the eastern side of Northcourt Avenue, although some late afternoon sun to 24 and 24a Northcourt may also be affected. In all cases, existing trees already interrupt low angled sunshine to a degree. It is also reasonable to expect changes to longer range views of the sun as it sets low in the sky in an urban environment such as this. It is considered that the proposals would not affect daylight or sunlight to the extent that the amenity of neighbours is harmed.

#### *Lighting*

- 6.62 External lighting has the potential to cause glare which could affect the amenity of neighbours. An indicative lighting proposal has been submitted, which is acceptable in general terms. It is recommended that precise details of all external lighting should be secured by condition to ensure that it does not cause light pollution to neighbours, or the wider area (this is also required for environmental and ecological reasons).

#### *Student behaviour*

- 6.63 Concerns over student behaviour have been held to be a material consideration in a number of planning appeal cases. However the extent to which concerns should restrict planning permission depends on the circumstances of the case and is often held to be of greater importance where a site is not currently in use for student accommodation. In the case of the current application the wider site accessed from Northcourt Avenue already houses a large number of students (1081). The proposed increase in numbers is significant, a net increase of 654, resulting in a total student population within the wider Northcourt Avenue site of 1735. However this increase is not in itself a definite indicator of harm in terms of noise and disturbance. An important factor will be the degree of oversight and management of the site that will take place once occupied.

- 6.64 The proposals include a student management plan, which sets out the proposed management of the site, the provisions for security and monitoring, arrangements for community liaison and details of how the behaviour of student occupiers will be managed.

- 6.65 In the absence of clear evidence to suggest a particular problem with the existing number of students on site, it is considered that the management plan approach is acceptable, provided that the management plan is secured under a S106 legal agreement.

#### *Plant and vehicle noise*

- 6.66 Based on the advice of the Council's Environmental Protection section (see Section 4 above), it is considered that the location of the proposed Combined Heat and Power (CHP) plant would be acceptable in noise and air pollution terms, subject to a final noise assessment to be secured by condition once the precise equipment is known.

- 6.67 Other plant proposed would be within buildings, or at roof level on the larger blocks and therefore further from neighbouring properties.
- 6.68 In all cases it is recommended that precise acoustic details should be secured by a condition requiring a BS4142 noise assessment to be submitted, including details of any mitigation found to be necessary.
- 6.69 The proposed Hub building would include catering facilities, a bar and a focus for social activities within the site. It is considered reasonable for a site of this size to include such a facility and the size and nature of what is proposed is considered to be of an appropriate size, i.e. sufficient to meet the needs of occupiers of the site, but not so large as to be likely to attract a large number of additional students from beyond the site. The siting of the Hub, towards the rear of the site and away from boundaries with non-student neighbours would minimise the potential for disturbance. The proposed student management plan includes security and nuisance reporting procedures. Any serious noise and disturbance or anti-social behaviour, over and above that which could reasonably be foreseen at Planning application stage, would fall to be dealt with by Environmental Health or the Police. The student management plan should be secured by S106 agreement (see below) and should include an annual review mechanism to allow improvements based on actual experience, where necessary.
- 6.70 On this basis it is considered that the proposed development would not result in harm to the amenity of neighbours and would be in accordance with Policies DM4, CS15 and CS34.

vii) **Amenity of future occupiers**

*Outdoor Space*

- 6.71 The area of lawn to the front of Pearson's Court currently provides the most useful open space in terms of visual amenity and recreational potential. This is to be retained as part of the proposals and is considered appropriate to meet the needs of future occupiers. Other outdoor areas would be provided around the buildings, within the courtyards and within the wider site, including around the pond and to the rear of Sherfield Hall. Substantial sporting opportunities exist a short walk away at the University's SportsPark. It is considered that the open space provision is in accordance with Policies DM4 and CS29.

*Daylight and Room Sizes*

- 6.72 The submitted daylight study concludes that the assessed bedrooms achieve good average daylight factor and uniformity ratio, with values also being in line with the BREEAM 2014 New Construction Hea 01 Daylighting criteria requirements. Regarding the assessed kitchen/living/dining areas, even though they achieve good practice average daylight factors, the uniformity ratio is not satisfactory due to the deep room plans. However, they comply with the BREEAM 2014 New Construction Hea 01 Daylighting minimum and average daylight illuminance requirements.
- 6.73 It is considered that the proposed bedrooms would receive an appropriate amount of daylight for the nature of the accommodation proposed. It is also considered that the small room sizes are acceptable for student accommodation. This is on the basis that it is reasonable to expect that occupiers would not spend extended periods of the day within these rooms and they exist as part of a wider student accommodation provision. A shared kitchen, living and dining room is proposed for each cluster of rooms. Additional amenity areas exist within the wider site, including the outside spaces and Hub building. It is also reasonable to

expect that occupiers would spend significant periods of time elsewhere on the University's estate. Overall the quality of accommodation is considered appropriate for its intended use, in accordance with Policy DM4. It would not be appropriate for use as Class C3 dwellings however as the nature of the use and access to other amenities would be quite different. This is one of the reasons supporting a restriction on the use of the accommodation to 'student occupiers only' within the S106 agreement.

**viii) Trees and Landscaping**

6.74 The proposals will result in the loss of 68 existing trees to enable the redevelopment to proceed. Overall, based on the advice of the Council's Natural Environment Officer, it is considered that the proposals successfully retain key trees, including the Limes to the Northcourt Avenue frontage and the Hornbeams within the Pearson's Court quad. The retention of these, together with other mature retained trees would integrate effectively within the scheme to maintain a well-landscaped setting.

6.75 The proposed landscaping strategy would provide good quality hard and soft landscaping throughout the site. On the basis of the comments of the Council's Natural Environment Officer set out in section 4 above, it is considered that the proposals would be appropriate, in accordance with Policies CS38 and DM18 on this basis. The need to incorporate ecological considerations are noted. The conditions recommended by the Council's Natural Environment Officer and Ecologist are considered to be reasonable and necessary to secure fully detailed landscaping proposals in accordance with the principles set out in the landscaping details currently submitted.

6.76 Further along Northcourt Avenue to the south, the street is characterised by large trees within the pavement which create an avenue and which contribute significantly to the visual amenity of the street. In recognition of the substantial increase in the scale of development within the site, and the need to integrate it effectively within the wider public realm, the applicant has agreed to fund 4 street trees to be provided within the highway, parallel to the frontage of the site. This is to be secured by S106 agreement.

6.77 It is considered that the landscaping aspects of the proposals are acceptable, in accordance with Policies CS36, CS36 and DM18.

**ix) Ecology**

6.78 The Council's Ecologist has confirmed no objection to the proposals, subject to the conditions detailed within section 4 above. These conditions are considered to be reasonable and necessary to ensure that the proposals provide appropriate ecological protection and mitigation.

6.79 The submitted Ecological Report does not find evidence of Great Crested Newt activity within the pond within the site, which was an initial concern prior to the 2016 application.

6.80 It is considered that the proposals are in accordance with Policy CS36 and DM17 on this basis.

**x) Environmental Sustainability**

6.81 Policy CS1 and supporting Sustainable Construction and Design SPD require major new-build developments to achieve a halfway split between BREEAM Very Good and Excellent, equating to an average of 62.5 BREEAM points. The submitted BREEAM assessment indicates that this will be achieved and conditions securing this are recommended.

- 6.82 A key focus of policies CS1 and the wider sustainability agenda is energy efficiency. Policy DM2 requires consideration to be given to decentralised energy, including CHP. The proposals include a gas-fired CHP plant to provide heating and to contribute towards the power needs of the development. A condition securing this is recommended.
- 6.83 Policy CS2 requires waste from development to be minimised. A waste re-use and recycling strategy is recommended to be secured by condition.
- 6.84 It is considered that the proposal would achieve an acceptable standard of environmental sustainability, within the constraints of the existing site, in accordance with Policies CS1, CS2, DM1 and DM2.

**xi) Drainage**

- 6.85 The applicant has submitted a Drainage Strategy to address sustainable drainage requirements. This proposes the use of permeable paving for new internal access roads and paths; French Drains adjacent to paths and under new access roads and use of underground cellular attenuation tanks where required.
- 6.86 The amount of runoff from the site would increase above existing levels as infiltration tests that have been carried out by the applicant indicate that there is limited infiltration capacity within underlying soil and rock strata, as such the *amount* of runoff would be likely to increase with any additional hard surfacing/buildings within the site. The *rate* of discharge is therefore a key consideration. Measures to slow down the rate of surface water flows within the site are incorporated in the design as referred to above and , based on Lead Flood Authority advice, are considered sufficient to ensure that the existing discharge rates, including for a worst-case 1 in 100 rainfall event would not be exceeded.
- 6.87 It is recommended that full specifications and adoption arrangements should be secured by condition. On this basis the proposals are considered to comply with national guidance and Policies CS35 and DM1.

**xii) Water Supply and Foul Drainage**

- 6.88 Thames Water have not responded directly to consultation on this application. However the applicant has supplied a letter from Thames Water providing quotes for connection to the fresh water supply, which do not raise any concerns in this regard. Correspondence from Thames Water is also included at Appendix A of the SuDS Drainage Strategy confirming that Thames Water carried out an Impact Study in 2016 and concluded that no upgrade work was required to the foul sewer to accommodate the development. It is considered that adequate provision exists for both fresh and foul water.

**xiii) S106 Matters**

*Employment Skills and Training*

- 6.89 The proposal is classified as a Major development. As such the requirements of the Employment Skills and Training SPD (2013) apply.
- 6.90 Whilst an actual plan is encouraged, the SPD does allow for financial contributions to be made in lieu of a plan. The proposed S106 allows for either eventuality.
- 9.91 Using the formulae on pages 11 and 12 of the SPD:  
*Construction Phase:*  
Using the gross floorspace to be constructed the contribution would be: £2,500 x 15,518 / 1000 = £38,795

*End User Phase:*

9.92 The site will employ staff in the Hub, security and other supporting functions. The applicant has confirmed that the site would employ a Full Time Equivalent of 21 staff. This equates to an 'employment density' of 739 m<sup>2</sup> per member of staff.

9.93 The employment density figures will be used in the following formula (See page 12 of the SPD):

*Floor area proposed (net) (15518) / employment density (739) x 0.5 (target percentage of jobs for Reading residents x 0.30 (percentage without level 2 skills x £1,500 (average cost of training)) = £4,724.70*

9.94 The written plan, or alternative payment in lieu, are to be secured by S106 agreement to be provided one month prior to commencement to allow training and recruitment to be arranged. Any financial payments are to be index-linked to account for inflation.

*Pedestrian Crossing*

9.95 As set out in the Transport comments in section 4, the proposed development will introduce an increase in pedestrian movements between the application site and the University Campus utilising the crossing facility on Shinfield Road, the applicant's should contribute towards the upgrade of this crossing. As a result a contribution of £30,000 is sought towards the upgrade to this junction. Payable prior to first occupation and index-linked.

*Tree Planting*

9.96 As referred to above, the sum of £6,324 is sought for the provision and ongoing maintenance of 4 street trees on the eastern side of Northcourt Avenue opposite the site. Payable prior to the first available planting season following commencement and index linked. Any surplus monies to be retained for ongoing maintenance of these trees, or additional tree planting within Northcourt Avenue.

*Student Management Plan.*

9.97 The proposed Student Management Plan should be secured by S106 legal agreement consistent with other similar student schemes in the Borough. It is recommended that this should include a mechanism for annual review and should include requirements to comply with the parking controls set out in the University's Student Residency Agreement.

*Use*

9.98 Although the use of the site as a student halls of residence would be sui generis and any change of use would require planning permission. It is considered prudent to include a restriction within the S106 agreement preventing use of the student bedrooms and flat accommodation for other residential uses.

*Local Wildlife Site Management Plan*

9.99 As referred to in the Ecologist comments in section 4.

**xiv) Equality**

9.100 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the current application) that the protected groups would have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application.

## 7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Based on an the assessment of the proposals in their revised form, as set out in the report above, it is considered that the proposed development would be acceptable in Planning terms and is recommended for approval, subject to the planning obligations and conditions set out in recommendation at the head of the report.

Case Officer: Steve Vigar

### APPENDICES:

1. Information Submitted.
2. Existing and Proposed Bedspace Numbers
3. Drawings

### Appendix 1: Information Submitted with the Application:

#### Drawings - For Approval

StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-000003 Rev.B, dated 24 January 2018 - Proposed Site Plan  
StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-000004 Rev.B, dated 25 January 2018 - Proposed Building Levels Plan

StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-010300\_A Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Block AB Sections  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-010301\_A Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Block AB Sections  
StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-010100\_A Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Block AB - Ground Floor  
StP-WIA-00-01-DR-A-010101\_A Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Block AB -First Floor  
StP-WIA-00-02-DR-A-010102\_A Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Block AB- Second Floor  
StP-WIA-00-03-DR-A-010103\_A Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Block AB - Third Floor  
StP-WIA-00-04-DR-A-010104\_A Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 -Block AB -Fourth Floor  
StP-WIA-00-06-DR-A-010106\_A Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Block AB - Roof Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-010200\_A Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Block AB - Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-010201\_A Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Block AB - Elevations

StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-020200 dated November 2017 - Block CD Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-020201 dated November 2017 - Block CD Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-020100 dated November 2017 - Block CD - Ground Floor  
StP-WIA-00-01-DR-A-020101 dated November 2017 - Block CD - First Floor  
StP-WIA-00-02-DR-A-020102 dated November 2017 - Block CD - Second Floor  
StP-WIA-00-03-DR-A-020103 dated November 2017 - Block CD- Third Floor  
StP-WIA-00-04-DR-A-020104 dated November 2017 - Block CD - Fourth Floor  
StP-WIA-00-05-DR-A-020105 dated November 2017 - Block CD - Roof Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-020300 dated November 2017 - Block CD - Sections

StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-030200 dated November 2017 - Block EFG Elevations

StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-030201 dated November 2017 - Block EFG Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-030202 dated November 2017 - Block EFG Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-030100 dated November 2017 - Block EFG Ground Floor Core E  
StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-030101 dated November 2017 - Block EFG - Ground Floor Core  
FG  
StP-WIA-00-01-DR-A-030102 dated November 2017 - Block EFG - First Floor Core E  
StP-WIA-00-01-DR-A-030103 dated November 2017 - Block EFG - First Floor Core FG  
StP-WIA-00-02-DR-A-030104 dated November 2017 - Block EFG - Second Floor Core  
E  
StP-WIA-00-02-DR-A-030105 dated November 2017 - Block EFG - Second Floor Core  
FG  
StP-WIA-00-03-DR-A-030106 dated November 2017 - Block EFG - Third Floor Core E  
StP-WIA-00-03-DR-A-030107 dated November 2017 - Block EFG - Third Floor Core  
FG  
StP-WIA-00-04-DR-A-030108 dated November 2017 - Block EFG - Roof Plan Core E  
StP-WIA-00-04-DR-A-030109 dated November 2017 - Block EFG - Roof Plan Core FG  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-030300 dated November 2017 - Block EFG - Sections  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-030301 dated November 2017 - Block EFG - Sections

StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-040100 dated November 2017 - Block H - Ground Floor  
StP-WIA-00-01-DR-A-040101 dated November 2017 - Block H - First Floor  
StP-WIA-00-02-DR-A-040102 dated November 2017 - Block H - Second Floor  
StP-WIA-00-03-DR-A-040103 dated November 2017 - Block H - Roof Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-040200 dated November 2017 - Block H Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-040300 dated November 2017 - Block H Sections

StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-050300 Rev. B, dated 18 January 2018 - Block I Sections  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-050200 Rev. A, dated 16 January 2018 - Block I Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-050100 Rev. A, dated 16 January 2018 - Block I Ground Floor  
StP-WIA-00-01-DR-A-050101 Rev. A, dated 16 January 2018 - Block I First Floor  
StP-WIA-00-02-DR-A-050102 Rev. A, dated 16 January 2018 - Block I Roof Plan  
3025\_L\_SW\_1\_01, dated 16 January 2018 - Block I Softworks

StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-060100 dated November 2017 - Block J - Ground Floor  
StP-WIA-00-01-DR-A-060101 dated November 2017 - Block J - First Floor  
StP-WIA-00-02-DR-A-060102 dated November 2017 - Block J - Second Floor  
StP-WIA-00-03-DR-A-060103 dated November 2017 - Block J - Third Floor  
StP-WIA-00-04-DR-A-060104 dated November 2017 - Block J - Roof Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-060200 dated November 2017 - Block J Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-060300 dated November 2017 - Block J Sections

StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-070100 dated November 2017 - Block K - Ground Floor  
StP-WIA-00-01-DR-A-070101 dated November 2017 - Block K - First Floor  
StP-WIA-00-02-DR-A-070102 dated November 2017 - Block K - Second Floor  
StP-WIA-00-03-DR-A-070103 dated November 2017 - Block K - Third Floor  
StP-WIA-00-04-DR-A-070104 dated November 2017 - Block K - Roof Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-070200 dated November 2017 - Block K - Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-070201 dated November 2017 - Block K - Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-070300 dated November 2017 - Block K - Sections

StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-080100 dated November 2017 - Block L - Ground Floor  
StP-WIA-00-01-DR-A-080101 dated November 2017 - Block L - First Floor  
StP-WIA-00-02-DR-A-080102 dated November 2017 - Block L - Second Floor  
StP-WIA-00-03-DR-A-080103 dated November 2017 - Block L - Third Floor  
StP-WIA-00-04-DR-A-080104 dated November 2017 - Block L - Roof Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-080200 dated November 2017 - Block L - Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-080300 dated November 2017 - Block L - Sections

StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-090100 dated November 2017 - Block SETS - Ground Floor  
StP-WIA-00-01-DR-A-090101 dated November 2017 - Block SETS - First Floor  
StP-WIA-00-02-DR-A-090102 dated November 2017 - Block SETS - Second Floor  
StP-WIA-00-03-DR-A-090103 dated November 2017 - Block SETS - Third Floor  
StP-WIA-00-04-DR-A-090104 dated November 2017 - Block SETS - Roof Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-090200 dated November 2017 - Block SETS - Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-090300 dated November 2017 - Block SETS - Sections

StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-100100 dated November 2017 - CHP, Water Tanks, HV/LV -  
Ground Floor  
StP-WIA-00-01-DR-A-100101 dated November 2017 - CHP, Water Tanks, HV/LV -  
Roof Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-100200 dated November 2017 - CHP Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-100300 dated November 2017 - CHP Section

StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-110100 dated November 2017 - URSL - Proposed Ground Floor  
StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-110101, dated November 2017 - URSL - Proposed Roof Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-110200 dated November 2017 - URSL - Proposed Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-110201 dated November 2017 - URSL - Proposed Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-110300 dated November 2017 - URSL - Proposed Sections  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-110301 dated November 2017 - URSL - Proposed Sections

StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-120203 dated January 2018 - Proposed Elevations - Pearsons

StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200300 dated 2 November 2017 Standard Bedroom Strip  
Section and Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200301 dated 2 November 2017 Standard Bedroom Strip  
Section and Elevation  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200900 dated November 2017 Standard Bedroom Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200901 dated November 2017 Standard Bedroom Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200902 dated November 2017 Ensuite Bedroom Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200903 dated November 2017 Ensuite Bedroom Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200904 dated November 2017 Ensuite Bedroom Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200905 dated November 2017 Townhouse Bedroom Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200906 dated November 2017 Townhouse Bedroom Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200907 dated November 2017 Townhouse Bedroom (Corner A)  
Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200908 dated November 2017 Townhouse Bedroom (Corner A)  
Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200909 dated November 2017 Townhouse Bedroom (Corner A)  
Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200910 dated November 2017 Townhouse Bedroom (Corner B)  
Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200911 dated November 2017 Townhouse Bedroom (Corner B)  
Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200912 dated November 2017 Townhouse Bedroom (Corner B)  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200913 dated November 2017 Townhouse Bedroom (Dormer)  
Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200914 dated November 2017 Townhouse Bedroom (Dormer)  
Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200915 dated November 2017 Access Standard Bedroom Plan  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200916 dated November 2017 Access Standard Bedroom  
Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200917 dated November 2017 Access Standard Bedroom  
Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200918 dated November 2017 Access Ensuite Bedroom Plan

StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200919 dated November 2017 Access Ensuite Bedroom Elevations  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-200920 dated November 2017 Access Ensuite Bedroom Elevations

StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-000018 dated November 2017 - Proposed Site Section AA  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-000019 Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Proposed Site Section BB  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-000020 Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Proposed Site Section CC  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-000021 Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Proposed Site Section DD  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-000022 Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Proposed Site Section EE  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-000024 Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Proposed Site Section GG  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-000025 Rev.A dated 24 January 2018 - Proposed Site Section HH  
StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-000026, dated November 2017 - Proposed Site Section II

StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-000003 Rev.B, dated 24 January 2018 - Proposed Site Plan

StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-000004 Rev.A, dated 16 January 2018 - Proposed Building Levels Plan

StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-000005 dated November 2017 - Bin Store Floor Plan/Elevations/Section AA  
StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-000006 dated November 2017 - Bike Store Floor Plan/Elevations/Section AA  
StP-WIA-00-GF-DR-A-000007 dated January 2018 - Bike Store Floor Plan/Elevations/Section AA

Topographical Survey DB1639-TOPO Sheet 1of5 dated 10 December 2015  
Topographical Survey DB1639-TOPO Sheet 2of5 dated 10 December 2015  
Topographical Survey DB1639-TOPO Sheet 3of5 dated 10 December 2015  
Topographical Survey DB1639-TOPO Sheet 4of5 dated 10 December 2015  
Topographical Survey DB1639-TOPO Sheet 5of5 dated 10 December 2015

3025\_L\_TP\_0\_01 rev.02 Tree Retention and Removal Plan dated 25 January 2018

3025\_L\_PC\_0\_01 dated 25 January 2018 - Parking and Cycle Provision Plan

Drawings Indicative:  
3025\_L\_GA\_1\_01, dated 16 January 2018 - Block I Landscape General Arrangement  
3025\_L\_HW\_0\_01 rev.02 dated 25 January 2018 - Landscape Hardworks  
3025\_L\_SW\_0\_01 rev.02 dated 25 January 2018 Landscape Softworks  
3025\_L\_GA\_0\_01 rev.02 dated 25 January 2018 Landscape General Arrangement  
3025\_L\_GA\_0\_01 Rev. 1 dated 25 January 2018 Illustrative Masterplan  
Drainage Strategy Drawing BR1508-CUR-SK-D02 rev F dated 15 December 2017

StP-WIA-00-ZZ-DR-A-201201 dated November 2017 - CGI Images

P0263(60)SK02 Rev. E dated 8 November 2017 - External Lighting LUX Plot Layout  
P0263(60)SK02 Rev. B dated 8 November 2017 - External Lighting Layout and CCTV  
P0263(50)SK01 Rev.G dated 9 November 2017 - Primary Services Infrastructure Routes

P0263(50)004 Rev. P3 dated 9 November 2017 - Incoming & External Services Layout

Indicative 3D 'Concept Site Model' received 26 January 2018

### **Drawings - As Existing**

As per planning register: [http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb\\_PL/welcome.asp](http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb_PL/welcome.asp)

### **Submitted Supporting Documents**

Archaeological Desk Based Assessment dated 10 November 2017

Ecological Impact Assessment ver. 06 dated 25 January 2018

Great Crested Newt Report dated 5 July 2016

Flood Risk Assessment ref. BR1508 rev 03 dated 9 November 2017

Acoustic Report ref C13904A/T09/JEE rev. C dated 15 November 2017

Thames Water letter ref. DS4004722 dated 25 November 2015

Student Management Plan, received 20 November 2017

Visual Impact Assessment ref 3025 ver. 03 dated 25 January 2018

Utilities Assessment P0263 rev D dated November 2017

Transport Statement and associated appendices SRD/HB/sjs/lh/JNY9421-01A dated 10 November 2017

Transport Consultation Technical Note JNY9421-03 dated 25 January 2017

Travel Plan SRD/HB/sjs/lh/JNY9421-02 dated 10 November 2017

Sustainable Drainage Systems (Planning Stage Proposals) BR1508/SUDS rev 03 dated 9 November 2017

SuDS Micro Drainage reports dated 15 December 2015

Phase 2 Site Investigation B041466.003/GB/8133 rev.A dated 3 November 2017

Heritage Statement ref. A094496 rev. 7 dated November 2017

Energy Statement P0263 Rev.F dated November 2017

Demand and Impact Assessment of St Patrick's Hall Redevelopment dated November 2017

Outline Daylight Level Analysis Rev D dated November 2017

BREEAM Pre-Assessment dated 20 October 2017

Statement of Community Involvement dated June 2016

Statement of Community Involvement dated November 2017

Planning Statement dated November 2017

Sustainable Design Checklist dated November 2017

Tree Survey CC/1500 AR3552 dated 9 November 2017

CIL Form 2: Claiming Exemption or Relief

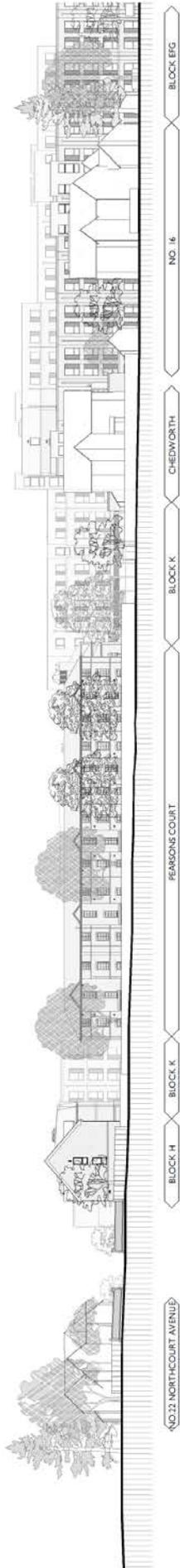
Design and Access Statement 0616-PL-DOC-001 dated November 2017

APPENDIX 2 - Existing & Proposed Accommodation - Whole UoR Northcourt Ave- Site

	Existing nos	Proposed nos
Benyon Hall	391	391
Sherfield Hall	344	344
Pearsons Court	116	116
Sets	4	0
New Court	178	0
Northcourt Avenue Houses	48	48
New build Cluster flats		612
New build town house		224
<b>Total New accommodation</b>		<b>836</b>
<b>Total Student accommodation</b>	<b>1081</b>	<b>1735</b>
Creighton Court	24	24
Sherfield Drive Bungalows No 1	2	2
Sherfield Drive Bungalows No 2	2	2
Sherfield Drive Bungalows No 3	1	1
No 4 Sherfield Drive	3	
Wardens House	5	
Total family accommodation	37	29

PROPOSED BUILDING REFERENCE	PROPOSED BEDROOM NUMBERS	
Building A	72	As amended
Building B	126	As amended
Building C	73	
Building D	48	
Building E	62	
Building F	62	
Building G	69	
Building H	32	
Building I	28	As amended
Building J	72	
Building K	72	
Building L	36	
Building SETS	84	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>836</b>	





SECTION EE

Proposed Elevation to Northcourt Avenue

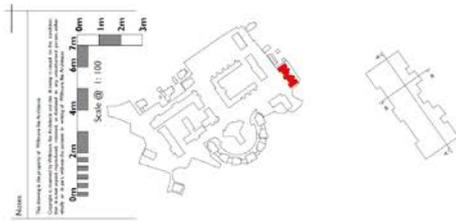


SECTION CC

Proposed NE-SW Section from Northcourt Avenue showing SE Elevations of Blocks A & G

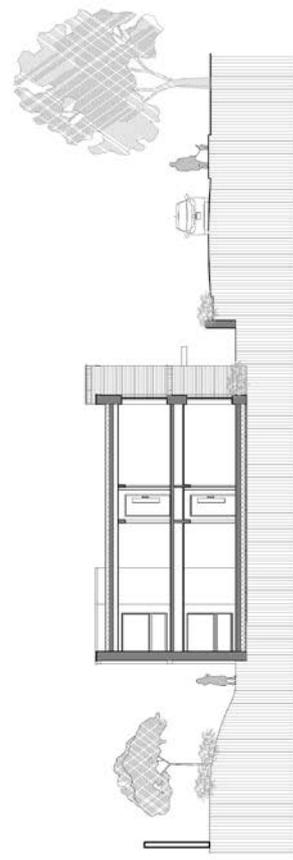
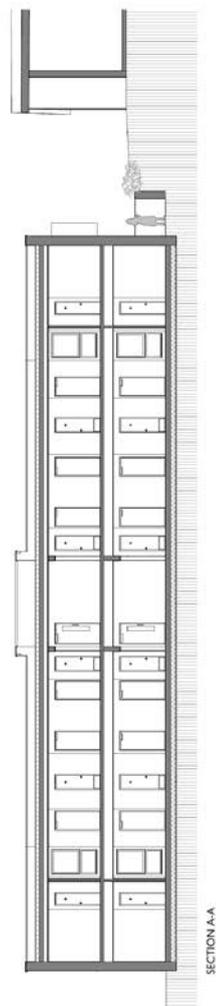


Indicative 3D Computer Generated Model of the Proposed Development



Drawing Status		PLANNING	
Client			
UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAMME			
Job Title			
ST PATRICKS HALL			
UNIVERSITY OF READING			
Drawing Title			
BLOCK I - SECTIONS			
Scale	Drawn	Checked	Date
1:100	JAT	RT	JAN 18
Job No	Drawing No	Rev	
0615	15P-V01A-02-DW-A-000102	B	

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 201 Princes Street, Manchester, M2 4BB  
 Tel: 0161 275 3600  
 Email: info@willmoreles.com  
 www.willmoreles.com



Block I Sections

Full set of drawings and documents at:  
[http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb\\_PL/welcome.asp](http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb_PL/welcome.asp))

## EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 7 FEBRUARY 2018

(for full Minutes of all items see

<http://committee.reading.gov.uk/TROVEPROGS/TROVEIIS.DLL?/IS=465941335/LI=Committee+Minutes+Library/ID=40/OS=90+158/DI=5967/DS=5867/LO=0/RW=2560/RH=1080/CD=32/VD=committee/WV=7/ST=ac/AC=AP/Fl=685/HU=EmptyURL>)

### 61. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee considered reports by the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services.

Resolved -

...

(2) That the following application be refused for the reasons indicated:

172045/FUL - ST PATRICK'S HALL, 20 NORTHCOURT AVENUE

Construction of 836 new student bedrooms, a cafeteria/bar, bin and bike stores, sub-station and energy centre, together with a new access link and landscaping. Demolition of the existing student accommodation block at New Court, the SETS building, the warden's house, no. 4 Sherfield Drive, the reception and common room, (resubmission of application ref. 161182) (amended description).

An update report was tabled at the meeting which gave details of further information on conditions, the travel plan, and Section 106 contributions in relation to a Traffic Regulation Order and Employment Skills and Training. The recommendations had been amended accordingly. The report also gave details of two re-consultations which had been carried out on amendments to the proposal, with deadlines for comments of 31 January and 6 February 2018, and of additional representations received.

Refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development would harm the character and amenity of the surrounding area for the following reasons:
  - i) the uncharacteristic height and mass results in an obtrusive, overbearing appearance;
  - ii) harm to the setting of the non-designated heritage asset 'Pearson's Court';
  - iii) the increase in the numbers of students would harm the mix and balance of the existing residential community;

iv) the proposal would result in a harmful loss of mature trees.

As such the proposal is considered to be an overdevelopment of the site contrary to Policies CS7, CS15, CS33, CS36 and CS38 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy.

2. The proposed development would lead to unacceptable additional pressure on parking on surrounding streets. Contrary to Policies CS20 and CS24 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy.

The Committee also resolved the following:

“That this Planning Applications Committee notes and supports the aspirations of the University of Reading to maintain and enhance its world-class status and recognises the need for it to attract increasing numbers of national and international students.

However, in line with the draft emerging Local Plan, this Committee believes that the University of Reading should be providing most of the desired additional student accommodation on the main campus.

We therefore urge the University of Reading to re-activate the regular meetings with senior Reading Borough Council members and officers to discuss how the Council and the University can work better together on delivering University of Reading aspirations whilst recognising the need to minimise the impact of new developments on local residential areas.”

Comments and objections received and considered.

Objectors Richard Bennett and Ian Kemp, and Rose Lennon, Robin Upton and Robert Van de Noort on behalf of the applicant, attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.