

<b>Agenda Item</b>	A6
<b>Application Number</b>	20/00554/FUL
<b>Proposal</b>	Demolition of buildings including Sarah Witham Thompson, Gressingham and Melling Halls, Black Box Theatre, Old Dining Room and the Long Corridor and erection of a 4 storey Extra Care residential building (use class C3), partial demolition, conversion and change of use of the Art Studio from education facility (use class D1) to ancillary space associated with the Extra Care residential building and change of use and conversion of Barbon Hall and Hornby Hall from education facility (use class D1) to provide affordable residential apartments (use class C3) with associated landscaping, parking, access and service infrastructure
<b>Application site</b>	University of Cumbria, Bowerham Road, Lancaster, Lancashire
<b>Applicant</b>	University of Cumbria & NWSDL
<b>Agent</b>	Clare Bland
<b>Case Officer</b>	Mr David Forshaw
<b>Departure</b>	No
<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	Approval

## 1.0 Application Site and Setting

- 1.1 This is one of three applications on the agenda for separate developments at the University of Cumbria (UoC) campus off Bowerham Road.
- 1.2 This site is at the southern end of the campus near the junction of Coulston Road and Golgotha Road. The buildings to be converted are the Barbon and Hornby Halls (former barrack married quarters). The new build element will be situated to the rear (north east) of these between them and the retained College North and South buildings with its south east elevation facing and close to Coulston Road. The art studio is situated abutting the boundary wall with Coulston Road close to the Golgotha Road pedestrian/cycle entrance.
- 1.3 To the south, west and east are residential roads outside the campus. To the north west is the site of the proposed replacement student accommodation block (see report on application 20/00550/FUL). To the north and north east is the densely developed university campus buildings and circulation routes.
- 1.4 The precise location of this development is within the adopted Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD (SPLA) policy EC6 developable area of the campus and the heritage led residential site (H3.3). It is outside the key urban landscape (EN5).

## 2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 This application is for demolition of a number of university buildings, the majority of which have been vacant for some time, and replacement with a 3 and 4 storey block of self-contained extra care

residential apartments. Occupants will receive individual levels of care as required. Also proposed is conversion of two non-designated heritage asset buildings to provide open age apartments with no provision of care. All units will be operated by Progress Housing and be available for affordable rent at 20% below market rent levels. Accommodation will be subject to a Local Letting Plan. There will be 92 extra care units (67x1 bed and 25x2 bed) and 16 created by the conversion (8x2 bed and 8x1 bed).

2.2 The grounds contain landscaped gardens with a network of paths running through them and linked to the wider campus and public roads, seating areas, planting beds and a growing area and meeting/community space in the converted art studio. The extra care block will contain roof gardens, communal kitchen and dining areas, cycle and scooter facilities, admin and management area and space for on site treatment rooms, hairdressers, laundry and games/media room.

2.3 A new vehicular access is proposed off Golgotha Road to serve just the development. Pedestrians and cyclists will be able to go between the site and university campus to use this entrance but not vehicles. The access will necessitate a change to a section of Golgotha Road to allow two way traffic so vehicles can enter from Coulston Road. 52 parking spaces are to be provided to serve the development.

### 3.0 Site History

3.1 A number of relevant applications relating to the campus have previously been received by the Local Planning Authority. These include:

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
20/00762/FUL	Erection of a 2-storey supported living facility (C3), erection of a bin and cycle store, creation of access road and parking, and alterations of existing ground levels including retaining walls and gabion terraces, associated landscaping and service infrastructure	Decision pending
20/00550/FUL	Demolition of buildings including William Thompson Tower, William Thompson Offices, Primary Curriculum Building, Estates & Secondary Centre buildings and erection of an 8, 9 and 10 storey building comprising residential student accommodation in cluster flat arrangements with ancillary laundry room, cycle store, refuse store, management office and reception, plant room and associated landscaping, access and service infrastructure	Decision pending
20/00425/EIR	Screening request for a replacement student residential block in area A following the demolition of the existing 10 storey William Thompson Tower and surrounding buildings	ES not required
18/01225/PLDC	Proposed lawful development certificate for the erection of a fence and gates	Granted
18/01220/PREMTG	Demolition of existing teaching and accommodation blocks, conversion of 2 barrack buildings to 17 2-bed apartments, erection of 23 4-bed 3 storey townhouses and 2 4-storey student accommodation buildings comprising a total of 30 5-bed cluster flats	Advice provided
18/00399/PRETWO	Demolition of existing teaching and accommodation blocks, conversion of 2 barrack buildings to 17 2-bed apartments, erection of 23 4-bed 3 storey townhouses and 2 4-storey student accommodation buildings comprising a total of 30 5-bed cluster flats	Advice provided

### 4.0 Consultation Responses

4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory and internal consultees:

Consultee	Response
Environmental Health	Conditions requested relating to noise and dust emissions during construction and provision of EV charging points
Housing Strategy	Supports the proposal as meeting an identified specialist and affordable housing need
County Highways	No objections subject to provision of a zebra crossing on Coulston Road, upgrade of bus stops on Coulston Road, restriction of use to extra care, cycle storage and implementation of the travel plan
Policy	Retention of the heritage asset buildings is supported but questions raised about the extent, need for and location of the extra care units as enabling development. Concern raised about the longer term needs of the university and short timescale of the masterplan
County Archaeology	Request condition securing a programme of archaeological works
Conservation Team	No objection subject to conditions
Arboriculture officer	No objection
Public Realm	A contribution of £51,899.50 is requested towards footpath improvements in Williamson Park
Civic Society	No objection to demolition of 1960s blocks and extra care units/affordable being provided. Supports retention of Barbon and Hornby buildings. Concerns about conflict between residents and students and blandness of the new build.
LLFA	To be reported verbally
United Utilities	To be reported verbally
Natural England	To be reported verbally
Police	Crime impact statement and security advice provided
Fire Officer	Standard advice
CSTEP	Require detailed Employment Skills Plan

4.2 A total of 20 neighbour responses were received from 18 different addresses following publicity of the original submission. Of these all were objections apart from two in support and two making comments. The objections can be summarised as:

- Making Golgotha Road 2 way
- Worsening of the amount and speed of traffic in the area
- Poor visibility at the Golgotha Road/Coulston Road junction
- Dangers to pedestrians
- The university entrance should be used not Golgotha Road
- Loss of parking/not enough replacement being provided/pressure on existing on road spaces
- No need for sheltered housing
- Extra care unsuitable within the campus
- 4 storeys too high, out of character and imposing
- Loss of light
- Loss of privacy
- Overshadowing of university buildings
- Effect on the skyline
- Loss of tree
- Loss of wildlife
- Pollution

Those making comments stated materials should be sandstone and not grey colour or brick and a diversion route for cyclists is needed during construction.

4.3 Following re-consultation a further three objections have been received on the following grounds:

- The university should have to improve parking congestion on neighbouring roads e.g. by removing parking charges
- Loss of spaces available to the university
- EV charging is not provided
- Cyclists will be forced onto Coulston Road from loss of cycle routes
- Loss of light
- Loss of trees

- Noise and disturbance
- Effect on historic buildings
- Extra traffic on Coulston Road
- Design out of character
- Building too large and cramped
- Loss of greenspace

## 5.0 Analysis

5.1 The key considerations in the assessment of this application are:

- Principle
- Design and visual impact
- Effect on neighbours
- Heritage
- Traffic and parking
- Other material considerations

5.2 **Principle of Development SPLA DPD Policies SP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development, SP2: Lancaster District Settlement Hierarchy, EC6: University of Cumbria Campus; H3.3: Heritage Led Housing Development; Development Management DPD Policies DM8: Accommodation for Older People and Vulnerable Communities and National Planning Policy Framework Sections 2, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 16.**

5.2.1 SPLA policy EC6 states the Council will support sustainable growth of the campus where it accords with both the masterplan for the University of Cumbria (UoC) and all relevant planning policies. Policy H3.3 supports residential development in the interests of conserving non-designated heritage assets in this part of the campus. The main points of principle to consider are whether the development is justified in the context of these policies and ensures conservation of the non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs).

5.2.2 The University's Masterplan and Estates Strategy have been submitted with the application along with a planning statement which sets the context for the UoC's estate management. The planning statement says the UoC is the country's largest provider of initial teacher training operating from five main campus sites. Changes in government policy and the nature of learning has reduced the number of students by over 2,000 or 30% between 2013/14 to 2017/18. The UoC considers future student growth will be modest and further changes to teaching/learning methods has and will reduce the overall amount of physical space required per head (students, teachers, admin and support staff). The Lancaster campus currently operates at almost double the optimum sqm floorspace per head (14.02sqm v 7.5 sqm). To remain competitive and attempt to deal with the loss of revenue from reduced student numbers UoC has reviewed all its business practices, including the extent and future requirements for the wider estate.

5.2.3 The masterplan identifies estate management issues and options and guides future development requirements. The Estates Strategy sets out initiatives focusing on reducing the amount of space and improving the efficiency and learning environment of the remaining space. This has been informed by various baseline studies including condition and suitability assessments of the buildings. Many have been found to be poor quality and unfit for purpose with poor space utilisation. Having regard to this the strategy recommends this part of the campus be disposed of and the UoC consolidate in the remaining, better quality buildings. According to the planning statement this disposal will enable UoC to facilitate a long term commitment to remain within the City and suitably manage the remaining estate. Financial re-investment in the campus will support the university's initiatives to adapt to a low carbon economy. The existing energy infrastructure is outdated and inefficient to meet modern site requirements. Energy efficiency projects have been identified including a new district heating system and photovoltaic energy to power the campus.

5.2.4 Preparation of the masterplan is supported, and officers have had some involvement in it. However, wider Councillor involvement and endorsement has not taken place. Concern has been raised by officers about the short, 10 year timescale of the masterplan and the ability to plan with comfort for the longer term needs of the University. In response, the applicant states the higher education sector

is extremely fluid with teaching practices continuously evolving (as demonstrated during the pandemic). The UoC considers teaching, student support and administration will never return to the pre-pandemic form. Pre-pandemic, all higher education institutions were seeking to adapt their physical estates in line with new technology and advances in remote learning, alongside the growing demand for better and more dynamic, value for money teaching for students paying higher fees. Having regard to these factors the UoC considers the 10 year masterplan lifespan is appropriate and robust and, unlike a longer plan, is able to offer sufficient flexibility to meet the ever changing requirements placed on it by stakeholders. The UoC's need for a flexible and responsive masterplan (even if covering a shorter period than officers would like) is reasonable. It is accepted that the disposal of this part of the campus is based on a rigorous assessment underpinning the Masterplan and Estates Strategy and that the buildings themselves are in poor condition and unfit for purpose.

- 5.2.5 SPLA policy H3.3 states that development proposals must be conservation led with a presumption in favour of the retention and conservation of identified heritage assets including their wider setting. The policy expects enabling development to be around 15 residential units through conversion of buildings. There is no expectation of new build development although this is not precluded by the policy. A full assessment of the impact of the proposals on all NDHAs and their setting is set out in the heritage section of this report. However, retention of Barbon and Hornby through a sympathetic conversion and sympathetic and justified demolition of more modern parts of the art studio building achieve this presumption. In order to ensure the development directly relates to and secures conservation of the NDHAs it is proposed that a condition be imposed that requires completion of the conversion works before a certain point relating to the new build element, e.g. prior to occupation of the first extra care unit. In this way the requirements of H3.3 are met.
- 5.2.6 DM DPD policy DM8 supports new residential accommodation for a range of vulnerable communities where there are proven needs. Strategic Housing state: *"In terms of the need and demand for extra care... Lancashire County Council's Housing with Care and Support Strategy sets a target of providing one new extra care scheme in each district of Lancashire by 2025. This scheme would clearly contribute towards this target. In terms of Lancaster City Council's own evidence base, the Housing Needs Survey undertaken in 2018 undertaken by arc4 clearly identifies the need to ensure a range of appropriate housing provision is required to meet the needs of the ageing population, and the number of people across Lancaster aged 65 or over is predicted to increase from 28,500 in 2017 to 37,000 by 2033 (29.8%). In considering the responses to the survey, 13.8% of older people responding would consider extra care housing to rent. It is for this reason that the council's Homes Strategy (approved by Cabinet on 27 October 2020 and currently being consulted on), sets out the need to support opportunities to bring forward purpose built extra care housing for rent to enable older people to remain in independent settings for as long as possible. Therefore, the council supports this proposal. The county council's needs analysis suggests that the location of the scheme would be deemed as medium need. However, south Lancaster is a very strong housing market and is typically where many residents would choose to live. It will be critical to the success of this scheme that it not only well integrates into the existing campus, but provides an appropriate level of on-site services for residents creating a good community hub. In summary therefore, the Housing Strategy Team support these proposals which align to the council's Homes Strategy 2020-25 by increasing both the specialist and affordable housing required in Lancaster district."*
- 5.2.7 In conclusion, it is considered the principle of development is acceptable within the context of SPLA policies EC6 and H3.3 and DMDPD policy DM8.
- 5.3 **Design and Visual Impact** DMDPD DM2: Housing Standards; DM29: Key design principles; DM30: sustainable design; Policy DM46: Development and Landscape Impact; NPPF section 12
- 5.3.1 According to the design and access statement the design of the extra care building has responded to the constraints and opportunities of the location and NDHAs and seeks to create active frontages and a new public realm to link the elements, ensure it respects the scale and mass of the NDHAs and promote their importance and setting.
- 5.3.2 The proposed building comprises of two joined but offset wings. It is predominantly 4 storeys in height dropping to 3 storeys at both ends and in the middle where the offset occurs. Materials have been revised following negotiations and are now buff sandstone brick for the lower three floors and grey cladding to the top floor and near the main entrance with light grey aluminium fenestration. The façades are broken up by Juliet balconies and insets to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor where communal roof terraces

are located. Further amendments have introduced additional glazing to communal areas on the front and rear to break up localised wall mass and provide a softer interface close to the site boundary.

5.3.3 The building extends away from Coulston Road with its mass viewed between existing retained campus buildings. The clearest public views are of the side (end) elevation where it is between approximately 10.5m and 12.5m from the campus boundary wall with no intervening buildings. There are existing mature highway trees on this side of Coulston Road which will filter views when in leaf, especially more oblique views from further along the road. The development will be higher than the adjacent campus/converted buildings. However, the close proximity of the old and new buildings will lessen any impact arising from the difference in height and overall mass of the new build. From a roofscape perspective, the new build will be visible but not to an extent that is harmful to the local area.

5.3.4 Concerns raised by officers about the functional relationship with the university have been addressed. There will be no hard boundaries between the new development and wider campus. The development will not restrict public permeability between the campus and outside. Indeed, pedestrian and cycle access will be maintained for the public, and residents of the new development will be encouraged to use the linked paths to access the wider campus. Soft planting is proposed to delineate the landscaped areas associated with the development.

5.3.5 All apartments will meet both nationally described space standards and M4(2) standards and three extra care apartments will meet M4(3) wheelchair user requirements. The design and impact of the scale and massing on the streetscene are considered acceptable and meet the requirements of the local plan.

#### 5.4 Effect on Neighbours DMDPD Policy DM 29: Key Design Principles

5.4.1 The only properties directly affected by the development are on the opposite side of Coulston Road. These are traditional two storey residential properties facing the end elevation of the extra care block. Between nos. 86 and 96 Coulston Road the distance from their front elevations to the end elevation of the development ranges from approximately 27.5m to 32m. The mature highway trees are situated in this space close to the campus boundary. This elevation contains three floors of apartments with principal habitable room windows facing the houses opposite. The addition of a third floor increases the height for potential overlooking by 3m. In accordance with standard interface distances the separation between this elevation and the facing houses should be 27m. Therefore, adequate separation is provided and no undue loss of privacy will occur.

5.4.2 At this distance it is not considered the development will have any adverse impact from being overbearing or cause any direct loss of light that justifies refusal. The development is therefore compliant with policy DM29.

#### 5.5 Heritage DMDPD DM29: Key Design Principles; DM41: Development Affecting Non-Designated Heritage Assets or their Settings; NPPF section 16

5.5.1 There are 7 non-designated heritage assets directly affected by the proposals: **Barbon and Hornby halls** will be subject to minimal external works. All windows and doors will be replaced like for like with timber heritage style in the same colour. Metalwork and rainwater goods will be made good and repainted to match existing. Alterations are proposed to two windows in Barbon: one in the NW and one in the SW elevations to infill the lower part of each with matching stone and the upper frame replaced like for like. These are minimal works and will retain the buildings' historic character and significance. Details of all this work will be secured by condition. The conversion would ensure a new and sustainable use for these buildings and would not have a detrimental effect on their significance.

5.5.2 The **Art Studio** is a small vernacular building of limited architectural interest. The modern extensions limit the ability to understand the original building so their removal will have a positive effect on its significance.

5.5.3 The **perimeter wall** runs to the SE and SW of the application site. Alterations are proposed to form the new vehicular access on Golgotha Road by widening the existing entrance. Gateposts currently located to either side of the access will be relocated to either side of the new access layout. The wall has been subject to many alterations over the years, including in this location, and the proposed

alterations will have only a limited effect on a short stretch. Removal of the modern extensions to the art studio will open up that stretch of wall to view. The significance of the overall wall will not be substantially affected.

- 5.5.4 **College North and South** buildings will be immediately to the rear of the extra care facility. The new development would replace existing buildings on the former parade ground in front of them.
- 5.5.5 **Chapel.** Situated immediately to the north, the setting of the chapel would be most affected by the greater massing of the scheme, although the separation is similar to existing buildings being demolished.
- 5.5.6 The linear form, scale and layout of the new build is somewhat monolithic and uniform. The spatial character is similarly linear and loses much of the attractive courtyard character of the existing post-war campus buildings it is replacing. The footprint of the building is large with limited surrounding space, exacerbated by the need for vehicular access, parking and new boundaries which affect the spacious open tree'd character of the existing campus. Sensitive landscape design is critical to mitigating these impacts. However, the form and design of the new building is distinctively modelled with a varied elevational composition and roofscape. The lively roofscape would help mitigate the 4 storey height and assimilate the building into its context. The revised materials are also an improvement and help relate the development to the character of its surroundings. The scheme would replace the tired 1960s buildings and help refresh the campus environment. Some of the more generous spatial character and variety of the campus would be lost causing minor harm to the setting of the NDHAs although this is mitigated to some extent by landscaping proposals.
- 5.5.7 Achieving good landscape design is essential. The linearity of the spaces is challenging and there have been welcome amendments to improve the quality, quantity and variety of outdoor amenity spaces, seating and circulation. The proposed tree planting is largely ornamental but this would not reflect the existing character of the local area which incorporates large tree species or help integrate the development into the wider landscape character. It is important the character of the existing planting is reflected in the scheme particularly close to the boundaries, subject to appropriateness of species close to buildings. Therefore, a condition is proposed requiring a more suitable soft landscaping scheme.
- 5.5.8 In terms of policy and NPPF paragraph 197 there should be a balanced approach in assessing harm in relation to the significance of undesignated heritage assets, as reflected in policy DM41. In terms of spatial character there would be minor harm on the spacious setting of historic buildings. However, amendments mitigate the minor harm. Retention of Hornby and Barbon and improvements to the art studio are important considerations in favour of the scheme. Subject to improvements to the landscaping and further detailed information on replacement features, both secured through condition, there are no objections.
- 5.5.7 A desk-based archaeology assessment concludes that the historic and potential archaeological significance has been impacted by C20th construction but some earlier structures remain and need to be recorded. Sub-surface remains may survive so an archaeological watching brief is required during construction. Conditions requiring photographic building surveys and submission of a watching brief are proposed.
- 5.6 **Traffic and Parking** SPLA EC6: University of Cumbria Campus; DMDPD DM60: Enhancing Accessibility and Transport Linkages; DM61: Walking and Cycling; DM62: Vehicle Parking Provision; NPPF section 9
- 5.6.1 SPLA policy EC6 states proposals that may result in an increase in student numbers and/or traffic movements must include mitigation to ensure no net increase in traffic movements occurs. As the site would no longer form part of the university campus, its development will result in the loss of 72 spaces that are currently available to students, staff and visitors. To provide for parking needs of the extra care and affordable apartments a dedicated car park with 52 spaces is proposed, accessed from Golgotha Road.
- 5.6.2 A study of parking carried out on behalf of the University shows that on a typical university day no more than 65% of the total 528 on site parking spaces are used, leaving spare capacity of at least 184 spaces. Even with the loss of 72 spaces due to the extra care development sufficient parking is



available on site to meet the future demands of the university. Furthermore, UoC intends to implement a parking strategy and travel plan. The parking strategy will be rolled out across the campus and includes making the proposed student accommodation car free (20/00550/FUL), providing additional cycle parking facilities and encouraging car sharing. The travel plan will ensure alternative modes of travel are encouraged. The site is well served by public transport, pedestrian and cycle links. The travel plan covers the whole campus and measures to be implemented include appointment of a co-ordinator, welcome packs for students resident on the campus, information on, and new signage for pedestrian and cycle routes; on site showers and changing facilities for staff and raising awareness of public transport and discount tickets. The travel plan will be implemented and regularly reviewed through a condition attached to the permission and is acceptable to County Highways. County Highways recognises the University contributes to some vehicles parking on surrounding residential streets but that complaints have not been received recently. The results of the parking survey suggest on-site capacity is not a major factor in this. Therefore, the loss of these spaces to university use should not give rise to additional on street parking by university users.

- 5.6.3 The parking standards for C3 residential use presents a range of parking requirements based on the number of bed spaces and a separate requirement for flatted development based on an individual case basis. This is a flatted development so it is appropriate to consider the end user requirements. Based on the operation of the extra care accommodation, which would be consistent with sheltered accommodation, 28 spaces are proposed (25 standard plus 3 disabled). For the residential flats created by conversion of the two buildings 24 spaces are proposed. This provides a total of 52 spaces which County Highways accepts as appropriate as long as the use is conditioned to provision of extra care accommodation and not open market residential.
- 5.6.4 Sole access to and from the development by vehicles is proposed via Golgotha Road. There is already a pedestrian/cycle entrance in this location which will be widened to allow two way traffic movements. Golgotha Road is currently one-way in the eastbound direction and no vehicles can approach the site from Coulston Road to the east. Although vehicles could access the site along Golgotha Road using the established one-way system, to limit the impact on local residents along that route it is proposed to provide two-way vehicle movements for a 37m length of Golgotha Road from its junction with Coulston Road. This will enable vehicles to turn off Coulston Road into Golgotha Road for the sole purpose of accessing the development. The new layout will be clearly marked to prevent vehicles continuing along Golgotha Road and any vehicle making a wrong turn into Golgotha Road will be able to enter the site and turn round before leaving to get back onto Coulston Road.
- 5.6.5 The applicant's transport statement has assessed the cumulative impact of the three proposals on the surrounding highway network (i.e. the student block (20/00550/FUL), supported living development off Anderson Close (20/00762/FUL) and this development). The three developments are likely to generate additional two-way traffic movements numbering 23 in the AM peak and 27 in the PM peak. Four road junctions have been assessed for capacity including the proposed new access on Golgotha Road. This assessment includes the AM and PM peak hour periods in both 2020 and 2025 with and without the proposed two-way arrangement on Golgotha Road. The modelling results show that all four junctions have capacity to accommodate the additional traffic with minimal increase in queuing which will not result in any severe delays or have a detrimental impact on the operation of the junctions. Therefore, it is considered the cumulative traffic generated by the three proposed developments or this development in isolation will not result in a severe impact on the surrounding highway network.
- 5.6.6 County Highways accepts the analysis although initially raised concern about the timing of the data collection and growth years used. The former point has also been made by objectors. This has been addressed and the survey was carried out during term time when all the university's facilities were open and the growth years are consistent with DfT guidance. Further requested minor amendments to the access, internal parking and turning arrangements and parking on Golgotha Road were requested by County Highways and have been submitted for consideration and are acceptable to County Highways.
- 5.6.7 A new zebra crossing, upgrades to bus stops on Coulston Road, implementation of a travel plan and cycle storage will be secured by a condition. County Highways raises no objection and it is considered the requirements of policy EC6 will be met.



## 5.7 **Other Material Considerations**

- 5.7.1 **Drainage and flood risk** - Current drainage is through a combined system discharging to an off-site combined public sewer. Infiltration may be possible, subject to testing, but if not surface water will continue to be discharged to the combined sewer as at present subject to an agreed discharge rate. Foul water will be gravity fed to the combined public sewer separately from the surface water while on site. Flood risk at the site is low apart from isolated surface water flooding of high potential. To mitigate this ground levels around the building will fall away so as not to create low points. This meets the requirements of policies DM33 and DM34.
- 5.7.2 **Ecology and trees** – There are no priority habitats on site and the nearest designated site is 600m away (Lancaster Moor Hospital Grassland BHS) with no connectivity to the development site. A number of buildings were identified in a preliminary ecological assessment as having potential suitability to be used by bats. Detailed bat surveys have been carried out across the site which found that four buildings support a very low number of roosting common pipistrelles. The trees on site are used for foraging but generally low levels of activity were recorded. The four buildings are Barbon and Hornby (to be converted) and Gressingham and Melling halls (to be demolished). Therefore, a full European Protected Species Mitigation licence will be needed from Natural England before works commence. Further species protection/mitigation is proposed through use of suitable external lighting, no site clearance during bird nesting season, use of bat and bird boxes and hedgehog friendly features. These are covered by conditions. 30 trees are proposed to be removed which are all assessed as of low quality apart from 2 which are of moderate quality. A further two are in poor condition and need to be removed for safety reasons and a highway tree will be felled if County Highways agree. 33 replacement trees are included in the landscaping scheme, which can also be designed to ensure biodiversity net gain. 29 trees within or overhanging the site are to be retained and protected while the development is being carried out. The tree protection plan is appropriate to the site with a combination of fencing, ground protection and arboricultural supervision. The site is within the Morecambe Bay buffer zone and a Habitat Regulation Appropriate Assessment has been completed which concludes the recreational pressures from the development on the designated areas can be mitigated by suitable packs distributed to all resident students. The scheme is compliant with policies DM44 and DM45.
- 5.7.3 **Air Quality** – A qualitative air quality assessment for the construction and operational phases has been submitted. This concludes there is a not significant risk if standard mitigation measures are used. Policy DM31 is therefore complied with.
- 5.7.4 **Sustainability** – An energy statement has been submitted which confirms the development has the potential to achieve a 23% reduction from Part L Building Regulations emission requirements through measures including enhanced thermal building fabric, recovery of waste heat, combined heat and power system, thermal storage water heating, air source heat pumps and solar panels. This complies with the requirements of policy DM30.
- 5.7.5 **Planning obligations** – Contributions have been requested by County Highways and Public Realm to mitigate the effects of the development. However, all contributions must meet standard tests, so justification has been requested. Should adequate justification be provided Councillors will be updated verbally.

## 6.0 **Conclusion and Planning Balance**

- 6.1 The retention and conversion of three NDHAs is supported. There is a need for extra care and affordable rented accommodation so the proposed uses are acceptable. There will be a loss of 30 low quality trees but no adverse impact on the setting of a number of NDHAs. The proposed development exceeds that expected in policy H3.3 but this alone is not a reason to refuse. The impacts of this size of development on neighbours, the townscape and highway infrastructure has been assessed. The conclusion is that with suitable mitigation the development will not give rise to any undue adverse impacts sufficient to justify refusal. The development will enable implementation of measures reducing reliance on private cars and utilising carbon reduction technologies. The benefits of the proposals as a whole outweigh any negative impacts and therefore in the overall balance, the application is recommended for approval.

## Recommendation

That Planning Permission **BE GRANTED** subject to a signing and completing of a s106 agreement to secure the following planning obligations:

- A contribution of £51,899.50 towards footpath improvements in Williamson Park

and the following conditions:

Condition no.	Description	Type
1	Time limit	Standard
2	Approved plans	Standard
3	Surface water drainage scheme/management and maintenance	Pre-commencement
4	Off site highway works	Pre-commencement
5	Employment Skills Plan	Pre-commencement
6	Contaminated land	Pre-commencement
7	Building recording and written scheme of archaeology	Pre-commencement
7	Details of Fenestration/rainwater goods/details for converted buildings	Pre-commencement
9	Materials samples	Above ground
10	Homeowner packs	Above Ground
11	Landscaping details	Above ground
12	Completion of Conversion	Prior to occupation of extra care units
13	Lighting details	Prior to occupation
14	Travel Plan	Prior to occupation
15	Security details	Prior to Occupation
16	Car parking management strategy, cycle store and EV charging points	Prior to Occupation
17	Approved tree Works	Ongoing
18	Ecological mitigation measures	Ongoing
19	Tree protection	Ongoing
20	Hours of construction	Ongoing
21	Landscaping Implementation	Planting season
22	Nesting birds	Specific time
23	Separate drainage	Control
24	Sustainable construction and energy efficiency	Control
25	Nationally described space standards and M4(2) and M4(3) standards	Control
26	Removal of Telecommunications Apparatus Permitted Development	Control
27	Extra Care Use within C3 Only	Control
28	Affordable Housing	Control
29	Retention of pedestrian/cycle routes	Control

### **Article 35, Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015**

Lancaster City Council has made the recommendation in a positive and proactive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development, working proactively with the applicant to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. The recommendation has been taken having had regard to the impact of development, and in particular to the relevant policies contained in the Development Plan, as presented in full in the officer report, and to all relevant material planning considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents/ Guidance.

## Background Papers

None.

