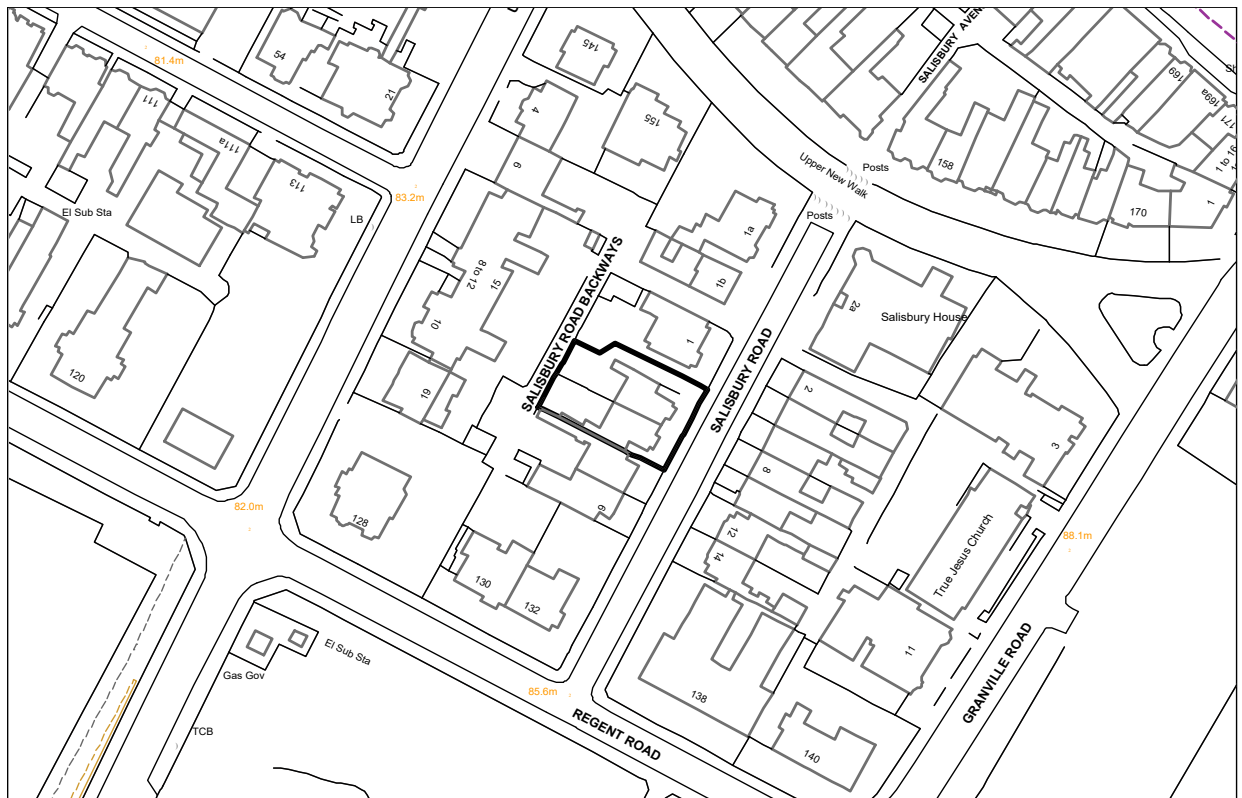


Recommendation: Conditional approval	
20251752	3-5 Salisbury Road
Proposal:	Change of use from university teaching and administration building to fifteen student flats (15 x studio) (sui generis), bin and cycle stores to side (subject to legal agreement)
Applicant:	Mr D Shah
View application and responses:	https://planning.leicester.gov.uk/Planning/Display/20251752
Expiry Date:	31 July 2026
CY1	WARD: Castle



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Summary

- This application has been brought to the attention of committee by request of Councillor Kitterick who raises concerns regarding the internal sizes of the proposed flats
- The main considerations are amenity, highways, and sustainable design
- The application is recommended for approval subject to conditions and a legal agreement to cover NHS and open space contributions

The Site

The application relates to a pair of semi-detached properties previously in use by the University of Leicester for teaching and administration purposes. In terms of designation in the 2026 Local Plan, the site lies within the City Centre, and Central Development Area within New Walk Character Area specifically. The site also lies within New Walk Conservation Area and accompanying Article 4 direction. As an area with a high level of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) the area is subject to a further Article 4 direction being placed to restrict the permitted change from family dwellings to HMOs.

Lastly, the site is within a critical drainage area and above the former racecourse which ran from the 18th-19th century.

Background

There was an application in 1988 for the change of use from educational/student residences to academic teaching offices. This was approved and implemented under application 19881380.

Until recently, the site was formerly known as the Marc Fitch Historical Institute. According to the Leicester University Website, it was used as a centre and library for local history but in 2020-2021 this was relocated and sold by the University. The application form states that the site has been vacant since the beginning of 2025 however with reference to the listing on 'LoopNet', the site appears to have been vacant since late 2022 when it was listed for rent. Despite the listing stating that this could be used as education or office space, I consider the nature of the former use was for educational purposes only and the existing use of the site falls within Class F1 rather than Class E.

Other previous minor planning applications include the removal of existing staircase and door; alterations at side of building (20150313) and the installation of a Boiler flue at rear of university building (20150313) both approved and implemented in the mid-2010s.

The Proposal

The proposal is to change the use from a university teaching and administration building to fifteen student studio flats. A communal lounge is proposed on the ground floor. Bin and cycle stores are proposed for the side. The existing 5 parking spaces (including 1 disabled space) at the rear will be retained.

Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2026

DM1: Preparing development proposals

1. Proposals for major development should:

- a. Be informed by early engagement with neighbours and the local community, as well as with the local planning authority, statutory consultees, infrastructure providers, registered providers of social housing and other relevant bodies where appropriate, to identify and seek to

resolve key planning matters prior to the submission of a planning application. This pre-application engagement should be proportionate to the nature of the proposal and those likely to be affected by it; and

- b. Be accompanied by a concise planning statement setting out:
 - i. How the development proposal is consistent with relevant development plan and national decision-making policies;
 - ii. The outcome of pre-application engagement and the extent to which the proposal has changed in response to this engagement; and
 - iii. The proposed use of any planning obligations to make the proposal acceptable in planning terms.

2. Proposals for other types of development should be supported by the minimum necessary information requirements to enable a decision. In certain circumstances, set out elsewhere in this Framework, this should include pre-application discussions (see policies CO2 and P4). Pre-application engagement may also be required where proposals raise complex planning matters, such as the potential effect on heritage assets.

DM3: Determining development proposals

- 1. When considering development proposals, local planning authorities should:
 - a. Work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner, where necessary seeking solutions to problems arising from initial proposals, to enable a timely decision;
 - b. Take a proportionate approach to the consideration of the planning matters raised by the proposals, in a way that reflects their scale, complexity and potential impact;
 - c. Take account of planning matters raised during any pre-application engagement, including any positive responses to this engagement, as well as representations on the proposals;
 - d. Consult statutory or internal consultees only where it is necessary to do so.
- Decisions on development proposals should not be delayed in order to secure advice from a statutory or internal consultee beyond their statutory deadlines unless there is insufficient information to make the decision, there are public safety risks from proceeding without advice, or more detailed advice may enable an approval rather than a refusal;
- e. Consider whether otherwise unacceptable development proposals could be made acceptable through the use of planning conditions or planning obligations; and
 - f. Not refuse applications for development which should clearly be approved, having regard to their accordance with the development plan, the policies in this Framework and any other material considerations.

DM6: Use of planning conditions and obligations

- 1. Planning conditions should only be attached to planning permissions and other associated consents for development where they are:
 - a. Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - b. Relevant to the development and to planning considerations generally;

- c. Sufficiently precise to make them capable of being complied with and enforced; and
- d. Reasonable in all other respects.

2. Conditions should not be used to:

- a. Require payments of money; or
- b. Require that land is formally given up to another party (such as highways to the local highway authority); or
- c. Restrict national permitted development rights unless there is clear justification to do so.

4. Planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address potential unacceptable impacts through a planning condition. Where national model planning obligations are relevant to the development, they should be used unless there are strong reasons for using a different planning obligation.

DM7: Relationship with other regulatory regimes

1. Development proposals should be assessed on the basis of whether they would be an acceptable use of land. Matters which are controlled by separate regulatory regimes may, in the context of a particular development proposal, be a material consideration where they have land-use implications. Decision-makers should assume, unless there is clear evidence to the contrary, that those separate regimes will operate effectively.

2. Planning decisions should not seek to duplicate or extend controls imposed by separate regulatory regimes other than where there is a development plan policy in place applying optional technical standards for the development proposed (see policy PM13).

S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

1. Decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means:

- a. Policy S4 in this Framework should be applied when considering development proposals within settlements;

S4: Principle of development within settlements

1. Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.

2. In applying policy S4, the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include (but are not restricted to) situations where the development proposal would:

- a. Have a substantial adverse impact in relation to:
 - i. The allocation or safeguarding of land or buildings for particular uses in the development plan, unless there is no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the allocated use, or there is evidence that the safeguarding is no longer appropriate; or

- c. Fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances.

CC2: Mitigation of climate change

1. In order to contribute to climate change mitigation and the transition to net zero, development proposals should, where relevant to the proposal:

- a. Accord with policies TR3 and TR4 so that sustainable patterns of movement are prioritised, opportunities are taken to improve walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport, and infrastructure is provided to support the transition to zero-emission vehicles;
- b. Support good access to facilities in order to limit the need to travel, whether through the development's location, through development densities which improve catchment populations for local services, or by incorporating community facilities and premises to support local employment opportunities;
- c. Use design approaches which conserve energy and other resources in accordance with policy DP3(2)(b);
- d. Take advantage of opportunities to reuse existing structures and materials, including by reusing non-contaminated excavated soil and hardcore within the site;
- e. Take advantage of opportunities to draw low carbon energy from decentralised networks (such as district heat networks), where these are available, and to co-locate energy and heat generators and users, especially to take advantage of suppliers of surplus heat and energy;
- f. Contribute to the creation or restoration of habitats which can act as carbon stores, such as through woodland planting and peatland restoration, while avoiding harm to habitats which can act as important carbon stores, including peatland and salt marsh; and

2. Substantial weight should be given to the benefits of improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings and/or drawing energy from district heat networks, renewable and low carbon sources (including through the installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights) where this would be achieved through proposals for development.

CC3: Adaptation to climate change

1. Development proposals should take into account the current and potential impacts of climate change over the lifetime of the scheme, and in order to minimise vulnerability to these impacts should, where relevant to the proposal:

- a. Be located where the risk of flooding is minimised, or can be managed and the development made safe without increasing risk elsewhere, in accordance with policies F4, F5, F6, F7 and F8;
- c. Incorporate sustainable drainage systems to manage surface water flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff in accordance with policy F8;
- d. Use design approaches which minimise risks from overheating in accordance with policy DP3(2)(b), and include green infrastructure and suitable tree planting in accordance with policies DP3(2)(c) and N3; and

2. Substantial weight should be given to the benefits of improving the resilience of existing buildings and public spaces to anticipated climate change impacts where this would be achieved through proposals for development.

HO7: Meeting the need for homes

1. In applying the policies in this Framework, substantial weight should be given to the benefits of providing homes which will contribute towards meeting the evidenced accommodation needs of the community, as identified through needs assessments prepared for the area of the local planning authority and other relevant evidence. This includes, but is not limited to, homes needed for different groups assessed under policy HO1.

HO9: Specialist forms of accommodation

1. Development proposals to address specialist housing needs should provide living conditions and access to services which are appropriate to the needs of their residents and users. This includes (c.) Purpose-built student and large-scale shared living accommodation:

- i. Being supported by a management plan or other supporting evidence which shows how the development will provide a safe and secure environment for residents; and
- ii. Being located where residents will be able to access frequently-used services (and, for student accommodation, relevant education facilities) easily and safely by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport; Providing adequate living and storage space and sufficient shared cooking, laundry and amenity areas (other than where cooking and laundry facilities are provided within student rooms, in which case these do not need to be available on a shared basis); and iii.
Being supported by a management plan which shows how the development will be managed and maintained to ensure the continued quality of the accommodation, communal facilities and services.

L2: Making effective use of land

1. Substantial weight should be given to the benefits where a development proposal would achieve one or more of the following:

- b. Making better use of vacant and underutilised land and buildings (such as: by bringing back into residential use empty homes and other suitable buildings; converting space above shops; redeveloping underutilised retail and business sites; and building on or above service yards, lock-ups, car parks and other transport infrastructure which are no longer required);

L3: Achieving appropriate densities

1. Development proposals should make efficient use of land, taking into account the identified need for different types of housing and other development, local market conditions, the availability of infrastructure (including that supporting sustainable transport modes) and its scope for improvement, a site's connectivity and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

2. To contribute to making efficient use of land:

- a. Within settlements, development proposals for residential and mixed-use development should contribute to an increase in the density of the

area in which they are situated. The only exception is where there is a clear justification that this is either inappropriate or not possible (for example, where the prevailing density is already very high, the nature of the accommodation required precludes higher densities, or where it would conflict with other policies in this Framework). In considering the potential to increase densities, the existing character of an area should be taken into account, in accordance with policy DP3, but should not preclude development which makes the most of an area's potential; and

c. Where development proposals for residential or mixed-use schemes are within reasonable walking distance of a well-connected station (applying the definitions in the glossary at Annex B), a density of at least 35 dwellings per hectare should be achieved within the net developable area of the site. Higher densities – of at least 45 dwellings per hectare – should be achieved where the service frequency is at least twice that of the minimum required for a well-connected station. Exceptions to meeting these minimum standards should be made only in the case of:

i. Sites which fall below the threshold for major development where it can be demonstrated that meeting the standard is either inappropriate or not possible;

3. The minimum densities in paragraph 2(c) of this policy should be exceeded where possible, especially in areas of high connectivity, to optimise the efficient use of land. The Connectivity Tool (Connectivity Tool - GOV.UK) should be used alongside other relevant quantitative or qualitative evidence in assessing the connectivity of particular locations proposed for development.

4. Development proposals that do not make efficient use of land in accordance with paragraph 2 of this policy should be refused.

DP3: Key principles for well-designed places

1. Development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets. This should not preclude innovation or change where appropriate, especially where an increased scale or density of development is justified in accordance with policies L2 and L3.

2. To create well-designed places, development proposals should also reflect relevant aspects of the following principles, as appropriate to the nature of the development and its location:

a. Liveability: support healthy, mixed, vibrant and integrated communities, which will function well over the lifetime of the development, by incorporating a range of uses and tenures, employing features which promote social interaction, and which are robust, durable and easy to look after;

- b. Climate: contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and the transition to net zero by using building layouts, building orientation, massing, landscaping and materials which conserve energy and other resources, and which minimise risks from the impacts of climate change including overheating;
- c. Nature: incorporate and/or connect to a network of high quality, accessible, multi functional green infrastructure to provide opportunities for recreation and healthy living, strengthen habitats, improve climate change resilience and improve air and water quality. This should include maintaining and enhancing tree cover and incorporating sustainable drainage systems in accordance with policies N3 and F8;
- d. Movement: provide transport infrastructure and choices which support the design vision for the site, provide good connections to the wider settlement (or those nearby), and prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport;
- e. Built Form: use the pattern of buildings to define the arrangement of streets, squares and other spaces, promote compact forms of development to optimise the site's potential, distinguish between public and private areas, create focal points and, where appropriate, enhance views into and out of the scheme;
- f. Public Space: include spaces that are safe, secure, inclusive, and accessible for all ages and abilities, including for groups such as women and girls; and which facilitate and encourage social interaction, play and healthy lifestyles (for example by providing high quality, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, a variety of recreational spaces and places to meet, integrating lighting and making building entrances and windows face onto streets and other public spaces to provide natural surveillance); and
- g. Identity: create visually attractive, distinctive and characterful development to establish or maintain a strong sense of place and pride, including through the use of a coherent palette of materials, design features and planting.

3. Development proposals should be refused if, without clear justification, they conflict with paragraph 1 of this policy or relevant aspects of the principles in paragraph 2, or with any explicit design standards set out in the development plan (including those in locally specific policies, guides, codes or masterplans). Substantial weight should be given to compliance with relevant development plan policies when assessing the design quality of proposals.

4. The principles set out in the Design and Placemaking planning practice guidance should be used to inform how this policy is applied in the absence of locally-produced design policies, guides, codes or masterplans.

5. Substantial weight should also be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or which help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they are consistent with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

DP4: The design process

1. Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution, assessment and delivery of development proposals, including through any pre-application engagement; as outlined in Part 2 of the Design and Placemaking planning practice guidance.

2. The local planning authority should:

b. Ensure that relevant planning conditions refer to clear and accurate plans and drawings which provide visual clarity about the design of the development, including the approved use of materials where appropriate; and

c. Not allow the quality of approved development to be materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes proposed following its initial approval (for example through changes to approved details).

TR3: Locating development in sustainable locations

1. So that development is located where it can support sustainable patterns of movement, enable good accessibility for different users and make the most of existing and proposed transport infrastructure, development proposals should reflect the following principles, taking into account the vision for the site, the type of development and its location:

a. Development proposals which could generate a significant amount of movement, in the context of the area within which they would be situated, should be in locations that are sustainable (or which can be made so, taking into account planned improvements, including any provided for as part of the development itself). This means the location should limit the need to travel, particularly by private car, and offer a genuine choice of transport modes for residents and users, unless the nature of the development would make this impractical;

b. Opportunities should be taken to utilise existing or proposed transport infrastructure in optimising the amount or density of development which can be accommodated in different locations, especially where this can support more walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use;

c. Any significant adverse impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, should be mitigated to an acceptable degree using a vision-led approach;

d. The environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure should be identified, assessed and taken into account – including taking opportunities to avoid or mitigate any adverse environmental effects, and to secure net environmental gains such as reductions in air pollution; and

2. The Connectivity Tool should be used alongside other relevant quantitative or qualitative evidence in assessing the connectivity of particular locations proposed for development.

TR6: Assessing transport impacts

1. Development proposals that are likely to generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by:

a. A transport statement or transport assessment (depending on the extent and significance of the transport issues involved), which is proportionate to

- the nature and scale of the development, so that the likely impacts of the proposal for transport can be assessed and monitored; and
- b. A travel plan, which indicates how sustainable transport objectives will be delivered, monitored and managed over time.

2. Transport assessments and statements, and travel plans, should reflect the transport vision for the development and the transport strategy for the area in which it is located, and how these are intended to be achieved (including, in the case of travel plans, identifying fallback options if initial measures do not deliver the expected outcomes).

3. In assessing movement patterns and potential impacts, including whether they are considered to be severe, reasonable future scenarios should be considered, taking into account impacts at relevant times of the day, potential cumulative impacts, multimodal trip generation and the promotion of sustainable modes of travel, and realising the transport vision for the development itself. Development proposals should be considered having regard to these potential impacts and the other policies in this Framework which are relevant (including TR3, TR4 and DP3(2)(d)).

4. Development proposals should be refused if they would have a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts), or an unacceptable impact on highway safety; taking into account any mitigation measures proposed as well as any wider network improvements, including measures to support sustainable patterns of movement. This applies both during the construction phase and following completion.

HC3: Community facilities and public service infrastructure serving new development

1. Proposals for housing, employment or other development which would give rise to significant numbers of additional people living in, working in or visiting an area should:

- a. Be informed by an understanding of the need for any associated improvements to community facilities and public service infrastructure, whether on or off-site; and
- b. Provide for new or improved community facilities and public service infrastructure which are necessary for the development to be acceptable in planning terms, whether by direct provision or a contribution to off-site improvements (which may be through Community Infrastructure Levy payments, where applicable).

2. Where the development plan does not set locally-specific standards for recreational land and facilities, all development proposals should use relevant national standards and best practice to identify improvements in the quantity and quality of provision which should be provided or contributed towards, as appropriate to the nature of the development and taking into account existing levels of provision in the area.

3. Planning conditions and obligations should be used to secure the timely delivery of community facilities and public service infrastructure required to serve

new development, so that these facilities are available for use when the development (or an agreed proportion of the development) is first occupied or comes into use.

P3: Living conditions and pollution

1. Development proposals should be appropriate for their location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, whether these effects are on or off-site; and whether this is as a result of the development itself or the product of preexisting conditions in its vicinity. In assessing the potential effects of pollution, consideration should be given to the potential sensitivity of the site, and its intended occupiers and users, as well as that of the environment and population in the surrounding area (including where certain groups could be particularly vulnerable to its effects, such as children and older people).

2. Within this context development proposals should:

- a. Provide healthy living conditions for occupiers and users in terms of adequate access to light and avoiding exposure to levels of air, noise, artificial light or other sources of pollution which could have an unacceptable adverse effect on health and the quality of life. Where necessary suitable mitigation measures should be incorporated to secure acceptable living conditions;
- b. Not give rise to, or contribute to, an unacceptable level of access to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring residents and occupiers, or unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site. Adverse impacts of this nature should be avoided where possible, or else mitigated to an acceptable degree. Where possible, opportunities should be taken to reduce pollution affecting the wider area (such as through traffic and travel management or improved external lighting);

HE4: Securing the conservation of heritage assets

1. Heritage assets, as an irreplaceable resource, should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. To achieve this, development proposals which would affect the significance of heritage assets, including any contribution made by their setting should:

- a. Maintain or secure a use consistent with their conservation, taking into account the importance of maintaining the assets, the positive contribution they can make to sustainable communities including local economies, and the positive contribution they can make to local character and distinctiveness; and
- b. Avoid (or if that is not possible, minimise) harm to the significance of heritage assets, and instead conserve this significance.

4. Proposals for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with other policies in this Framework and/or those in the development plan, but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, should be considered on the basis of whether the conservation benefits outweigh the disbenefits of departing from the policies concerned.

HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets

1. Development proposals affecting heritage assets should be accompanied by an assessment of the significance of the assets affected (including any contribution made by their setting) and of the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is necessary to understand the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The relevant historic environment record should be referred to in making this assessment, and appropriate expertise employed where necessary.
2. Assessments of the potential effects of development proposals on the significance of heritage assets (including through effects on their setting) should identify whether proposals would be likely to:
 - a. Have a positive effect, which is where the significance of a heritage asset would be enhanced, or better revealed; or
 - b. Have no effect on the significance of a heritage asset; or
 - c. Result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset, either from work affecting the asset itself or from development within its setting. The degree of harm should be identified: substantial harm would occur where the development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset's significance; or
 - d. Cause the total loss of the significance of a heritage asset.
3. In making this assessment it is the effect on a heritage asset's significance rather than the scale of the development which should be considered.
4. Decision-makers should be satisfied that assessments accurately reflect the effects on heritage assets caused by development proposals.
5. Where a development proposal involves, or has the potential to involve, a heritage asset with archaeological interest, an appropriate desk-based assessment should be undertaken and, where necessary, a field evaluation. These should be used to help understand the asset's significance and the potential effect of the proposal on this, which should inform the design, mitigation and implementation of the development.

HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets

1. When considering the potential effect of a development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, substantial weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential effect amounts to a positive effect, harm, substantial harm, or total loss of its significance.
2. Development proposals which would have a positive effect on a designated heritage asset should be supported.
3. Any harm to a designated heritage asset will be a matter of considerable importance and weight, which should be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs 4 to 6 of this policy.

4. Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building, and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.

HE9: Conservation areas

1. Development proposals within or affecting the significance of conservation areas should:

- a. Retain and conserve buildings and other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area where possible;

3. Proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance) should be supported.

Local Plan 2026

Links to the relevant Local Plan Policies are provided below

[Policy VL01. Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development](#)

[Policy SL01. Location of Development](#)

[Policy Ho08. Internal Space Standards](#)

[Policy Ho09. Student Residential Accommodation Development](#)

[Policy CCFR01. Sustainable Design and Construction](#)

[Policy CCFR02. Energy Statement](#)

[Policy CCFR03. Low Carbon Heating and Cooling](#)

[Policy CCFR05. Managing Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems \(SuDS\)](#)

[Policy HW01. A Healthy and Active City](#)

[Policy DQP01. Design Principles](#)

[Policy DQP04. Landscape Design](#)

[Policy DQP06. Residential Amenity](#)

[Policy DQP07. Recycling and Refuse Storage](#)

[Policy CDA01. Central Development and Management Strategy](#)

[Policy CDA02. New Development Within the Character Areas](#)

[Policy CHA09. New Walk](#)

[Policy HE01 - The Historic Environment](#)

[Policy TCR03. City Centre](#)

[Policy T01. Sustainable Transport Network](#)

[Policy T02. Climate Change and Air Quality](#)

[Policy T03. Accessibility and Development](#)

[Policy T07 Car Parking](#)

[Policy DI01. Developer Contributions and Infrastructure](#)

Other guidance and legislation

Nationally Described Space Standards 2015

Waste Management Guidance 2015

National Planning Practice Guidance – Noise

Consultations

Local Lead Flooding Authority – no objection

Local Highway Authority – no objections subject to conditions

- securing a management plan to be provided covering beginning and end of term traffic and parking
- securing the cycle storage
- securing parking spaces
- requesting travel packs for residents

NHS – requests a contribution of £6,000 To provide the required GP facilities (at De Montfort Surgery) to meet the population increase of 15 patients

Parks and Open Space – requests a contribution of £9,275 to be used towards the following open space improvements:

- for landscaping works/replanting of shrub beds on New Walk
- towards the provision of Calisthenic fitness equipment at Victoria Park

Sustainable Design – requests further information regarding the following:

- Provides a commitment to a maximum U value of 1.60 for the replacement glazing in line with the requirements.
- Reviews the use of gas space and water heating – a commitment to ASHP and electric water heating at this stage is expected as standard practice.
- Confirm why the carbon emissions performance has not been provided on request.

Representations

One objection has been received from Councillor Kitterick, with concerns that the flats would not meeting Nationally Described Space Standards and would provide poor living conditions for occupiers.

Consideration

Principle of Development

As noted above the site is within the City Centre and New Walk Character Area. City Centre policy TCR03 seeks to provide a wide range of uses including both the existing educational use and proposed housing use. Policy CHA09, like TCR03, supports both education and residential uses. Neither Policy places a higher emphasis on either use therefore I consider the loss of one of these uses for another in this location would meet the requirements of those two policies.

Additionally, I am mindful of that the length of the vacancy and marketing period in this instance is significant and demonstrates to me that there is little demand to retain the site as an educational use. The proposal would bring the site back into use which is consistent with another part of policy CHA09 which supports the renovation and reuse of empty buildings, especially where they contribute to the historic character of the area.

Noting these policies support housing and noting that the site has been vacant and marketed for almost 4 years, I consider that the loss of the educational use is acceptable in principle.

As noted in policy SL01, there is demand for student housing with a requirement of 4,800 units required over the plan period. Student housing policy Ho09 states the following:

“New student development will be supported where:

- a) It is accessible by sustainable means from the city centre and is within reasonable walking and cycling distance of at least one of the two main university campuses (Policy T01)*
 - b) It lies outside and does not abut an Article 4 direction area, controlling HMO conversions*
 - c) A travel plan manages beginning/end of term traffic*
 - d) A parking management plan specifies the level of parking provision which is acceptable for all forms of vehicles including bicycles and powered two wheelers (Policy T07)*
 - e) It includes communal facilities which are appropriate to the scale of development*
 - f) A mix of uses is encouraged on the ground floor*
- Occupation will be limited to students in perpetuity.”*

Given the site is within the City Centre and is two blocks away from the University of Leicester I consider the development would comply with part (a) of Ho09. The site is however within an article 4 area controlling HMO conversions contrary to part (b). nevertheless, paragraph 5.44 in the supporting text clarifies that this part is to prevent the further loss of family housing and prevent additional HMOs. Noting the size of the property, its former use being educational, and its proposed use not being an HMO, I do not consider the development would conflict with the aims of part (b) of the policy. I consider a condition can be secured to ensure the site is only used by students.

The additional occupiers will bring further demand to NHS services and nearby parks and open spaces. These consultees have requested contributions to mitigate any negative impacts which I consider are acceptable and can be secured via legal agreement.

Character & appearance

The only external changes to the property are the addition of bin and cycle stores to the side. No details have been provided on these however I consider these can be secured via condition. With this condition, I consider that the character and appearance of the area will be maintained and the development would comply with Policies HE01, DQP01, and DQP07.

Residential amenity of proposed occupiers

Concerns have been raised regarding the flats not meeting Nationally Described Space Standards requirements.

However Policy Ho08 adopts NDSS standards for Class C3 dwellings only, and expressly excludes student accommodation so this is not an available policy

option. For student accommodation it is noted that the premises are used on a temporary basis, usually only during term time, and students often have a primary residence (e.g a family house) elsewhere which they also reside in.

The site is an existing heritage asset and no changes have been made externally, thus preserving its character. Inside minimal alterations are proposed which will reduce the consumption of new materials in line with policy CHA09. With reference to the floorspace schedule and the proposed floor plans, the flats would all exceed 20m² with the average size being 27m². An indicative furniture layout has also been provided for each flat which shows there is space for a bed, bathroom, and kitchen, along with spaces which could be used for storage and studying. In addition, a communal lounge is provided on the ground floor for residents measuring 20m².

The site is located within the City Centre which has a wide range of cultural and leisure facilities along with a short walk to the university campuses which provide ancillary space for students such as student unions and libraries. There is also a wide range of open space available to occupiers such as Victoria Park and the smaller open spaces on New Walk such as the museum, Oval, and De Montfort Park. As part of the application, it is also recommended that the applicant provides financial contributions for public space enhancements which will further mitigate against a lack of provision of open space on site and the internal sizes of the flats.

Taking this together and noting the high demand for student housing stated in policy SL01, I consider that the rooms are an acceptable size and would provide acceptable living conditions for the proposed occupiers.

A 10m² area for bins would be provided, and the site plan states this would accommodate 10 bins. Waste management guidance requires 540L of storage for recyclable and 918L for non-recyclable waste to be provided. The area designated for waste storage would be able to accommodate 2x 1100L bins, thereby exceeding the storage requirement. As noted in the design section, screening/ a bin store is required for the bins in line with policies DQP01, DQP07, and HE01, but I consider this can be secured via condition.

All flats would have large windows ensuring that the outlook and natural light would be adequate. The property is raised and set back from the public realm ensuring that acceptable levels of privacy to the front ground floor flats are retained. Flats 3 and 5 to the rear would be overlooked by two parking spaces which could result in limited disturbance if let out to other occupiers, noting the request from the Highway Officer to allocate these parking spaces I consider allocating these spaces to flats 3 and 5 would satisfy this concern. With this in mind, I consider the development would provide acceptable levels of amenity in line with policy DQP06.

Highway & parking matters

The application site is located on Salisbury Road, an unclassified cul de sac subject to a 30mph speed limit. To the north of the site, the road culminates at Upper New Walk, a pedestrian/cycle route which links into the city centre. Car parking spaces front the site, with Pay & Display restrictions applying Mon-Sat

7.30am – 6.00pm. Elsewhere on Salisbury Road, parking is prohibited, indicated by the use of double yellow lining.

Five off-street car parking spaces are available within the site to the rear of the property, accessed by Salisbury Road Backways which appears to be an existing situation.

To minimise the number of vehicles manoeuvring to and from the site, the Highway Officer considers parking spaces should be allocated. Further, to manage the number of vehicles attending the site, a Management Plan is requested to be submitted and approved to deal with traffic generated by dropping-off and collection at the beginning and end of terms. I consider these elements can both be secured via condition.

The proposal includes the provision of secure covered cycle parking for 12 cycles. This is acceptable and in line with policies T01 and T03 which recommend the use of sustainable methods of travel. Further to this, it is also requested that a Travel Pack be provided for residents of the development prior to occupation to ensure that information is available to encourage sustainable modes of travel and to reduce reliance on the private car. Again, I consider these elements can be secured by conditions.

Sustainable Design and Drainage

Sustainable Design –

A Sustainability and Energy Statement has been provided with the application which notes a range of measures proposed to improve the buildings performance. The Sustainability officer considers that maximising natural ventilation with windows to the rear of first and second floor corridors and large openable windows in bedrooms is a positive aspect of the refurbishment and the proposed mechanical ventilation using extract fans in bathrooms and extract hoods in kitchens is appropriate. They consider that the installation of LED lighting throughout with PIR occupancy sensors is a welcomed energy efficiency measure and (noting the works are only internal) the expectation is that any waste produced is suitably separated for recycling and onward disposal in accordance with the relevant legislation. I also consider these are positive additions to the proposal.

With the development being within the New Walk Conservation Area it is accepted that solar PV has been considered by the applicant and deemed unsuitable for this development.

The development is shown to meet the requirements of Part L of building regulations except for glazing where a range of 1.4-1.8 is proposed despite the maximum value set out in Part L being 1.6. I consider this is acceptable noting that if we were to request a lower threshold, this could (like the installation of solar PV) result in physical alterations to the scheme that impact the conservation area.

The Sustainability Officer has requested that the heat pumps are provided rather than the retained gas heating system, or more justification is provided for the lack of these. The applicant has opted to retain the existing gas heating system noting that the option for Air Source Heat Pumps could be revisited at detailed design stage if conditions are favourable. Additionally, the Sustainability Officer has requested the carbon emissions performance of the refurbishment.

As noted above, the site is a heritage asset and has been vacant for some time. I allocate significant weight to the sensitive reuse of this site especially noting that it would fulfil a need for student development within the City. I also consider that whilst this is a major development, the floorspace of the building is small, being less than 1000m². With this in mind I consider that the sustainability measures proposed are proportionate for the size of development and acceptable in this instance. I recommend these are secured via condition.

Drainage –

The site is in Flood Zone 1 and is also shown to be at very low risk from surface water flooding. A Sustainable Drainage Strategy Note has been submitted, which states that the surface water runoff is discharged into the public sewer system as existing and the proposed conversion does not involve any external alterations or extensions which would allow the applicants the opportunity to introduce any suitable sustainable drainage measures onto the site such as permeable paving, attenuation tanks or rain gardens. The LLFA have no objections to this but recommend that water butts as rainwater harvesting could be considered. I consider a condition can be included for a rainwater butt to be installed at the rear of the property.

Ecology

The application is exempt from the mandatory biodiversity net gain requirements and due to the minor physical works proposed there are no concerns regarding protected species. I consider the development complies with policies NE01 and NE02 of the 2026 Local Plan.

Contributions

The NHS have requested a developer contribution of £6,000 to mitigate the increased demand for their services that would arise from the change of use.

The parks/green spaces service have requested a developer contribution of £9,275 as the proposed residential development, within the Castle ward, will result in a net increase in the number of residents within an area which already exhibits a deficiency in green space. Opportunities to create new open space to address the other needs of the new residents are limited and therefore the service will be looking to make qualitative improvements to existing open space provision to minimise the impact of this development.

These contributions will be secured by a S106 legal agreement.

Conclusion

The development would result in the sensitive reuse of a vacant heritage asset and provide student housing for which there is a need, in a sustainable location and in close walking distance to both universities. The living standards are considered acceptable for the temporary nature of occupancy, and the level of sustainability measures are considered proportionate for the proposed development. Contributions are proposed towards open space improvements and for the NHS and can be secured via a legal agreement.

I recommend the application is APPROVED subject to conditions below and a LEGAL AGREEMENT to cover the open space and NHS contributions:

CONDITIONS

1. The development shall be begun within three years from the date of this permission. (To comply with Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.)
2. The accommodation shall only be occupied by students enrolled on part or full-time courses at further and higher education establishments, or students working at a medical or educational institution as part of their medical or education course. The owner, landlord, or authority in control of the development shall keep an up to date register of the name of each person in occupation of the development together with course/s and establishment attended, and shall make the register available for inspection by the local planning authority on demand at all reasonable times. (To enable the local planning authority to consider amenity standards for any alternative residential use in accordance with Leicester Local Plan 2026 policies Ho03, Ho08, DQP01, DQP03 and DQP06 and the need for parking provision in accordance with Leicester Local Plan 2026 policies Ho09, and T07.)
3. Prior to occupation of the approved development, details of the bin store or details providing screening for the onsite bin store area as shown on the approved site plan shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority and shall subsequently be complete and ready for use. The approved facilities shall be retained thereafter for use in connection with the approved use of the development and all refuse bins shall be kept within the screened designated area other than on refuse collection day. (To ensure adequate facilities for the storage and collection of refuse and to preserve the character of the conservation area in accordance with Leicester Local Plan 2026 policies DQP01, DQP06, DQP07, and HE01.)
4. The development hereby permitted shall at all times be managed and operated in full accordance with a Management, Parking and Travel Plan, the details of which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before the first occupation of the development. The plan shall set out procedures for:
 - (a) how the arrival and departure of students at the start and end of tenancies will be managed;
 - (b) how servicing and deliveries will be managed;
 - (c) the level of parking provision for all forms of vehicles including bicycles and powered two wheelers;
 - (d) the allocation of parking spaces to specific flats (including a plan showing the allocation of the two parking spaces by flats 3 and 5 to be allocated to these two flats specifically);
 - (e) maintaining the external areas of the site;
 - (f) dealing with any issues or complaints arising from the occupiers of nearby properties, including details of how management contact details will be made available to neighbours.

The plan shall be adhered to for the lifetime of the development. (To ensure the development is properly managed so as to minimise its effect on the surrounding area and in the interests of the safety and security of its occupiers in accordance with the aims of Leicester Local Plan 2026 policies Ho09, DQP06, T03, and T07.)

5. Prior to, or at the time of, the first and subsequent occupation of each flat, the occupiers of that flat shall be provided with a 'Residents Travel Pack', details of which shall have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (for the avoidance of doubt, the details submitted with this application are insufficient to meet this requirement). The contents of the Travel Pack shall consist of paper and/or electronic information promoting the use of sustainable personal journey planners, walking and cycle maps, bus maps, the latest bus timetables applicable to the proposed development, and bus fare discount information. (In the interest of promoting sustainable development, and in accordance with Leicester Local Plan 2026 policies Ho08, T01, T02 and T03.)
6. Prior to occupation of the development secure and covered if necessary cycle parking for 12 cycles shall be provided in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The cycle parking shall be retained thereafter for use in connection with occupation of the approved development. (In the interests of the satisfactory development of the site and to preserve the character of the conservation area in accordance with Leicester Local Plan 2026 policies Ho08, T01, T03, and HE01.)
7. Prior to the first occupation of the development, full design details of on-site installations to provide energy efficiency measures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These measures shall represent the further development of the strategy for securing energy efficiency as identified in the Energy Statement received on the 19th June.
The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and retained as such. (In the interests of securing energy efficiency in accordance with Policies CCFR01 and CCFR02 of the Core Strategy.)
8. Prior to first occupation of the proposed flats, at least one water butt shall be connected to the rear guttering of the property and shall be managed and maintained thereafter. (To reduce surface water runoff and to secure other related benefits in accordance with Leicester Local Plan 2026 policy CCFR05.)
9. The development shall be carried out in full accordance with the following approved plans:
D1010, Site plan, Received 3 November 2025
B020, Existing floor plans (4 pages), Received 3 November 2025
D1004, Proposed elevations (2 pages), Received 3 November 2025
3896-05, Proposed floor plans, Revision b, Received 24 November 2025

NOTES FOR APPLICANT

1. The City Council, as local planning authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received. This planning application has been the subject of positive and proactive discussions with the applicant during the process (and/or pre-application).
The decision to grant planning permission with appropriate conditions taking account of those material considerations in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF 2026 is considered to be a positive outcome of these discussions.
2. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply.
Based on the information available, this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because the following statutory exemption/transitional arrangement is considered to apply:
Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:
 - i) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
 - ii) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

