

Hanover Court and Princess Court, Cambridge
Pre-application Meeting 3
19 September 2022



Project Partners

Client

Cambridge Investment Partnership

Local Authority

Cambridge City Council

Architects

Pollard Thomas Edwards

Planning Consultant

Carter Jonas

Arboriculturalist

Haydens

Revisions

Rev	P01
Date	12.09.22
Notes	Issued ahead of meeting

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Site Location



Pre App 2 Outcomes

Pre App 2 Outcomes

Conservation

GB observed that the option presented is both taller and bulkier than the existing buildings and is therefore problematic in conservation terms.

Existing buildings are already harmful to the Conservation Area and we need to preserve or enhance the designated area. The increased height and mass of the development would not achieve this.

GB observed that the proportions of the existing buildings (narrow span), their set back from the roads, the screening impact of trees and the reduced mass of the car park (although a detracting feature in its own right) all help mitigate the impact of what are already tall buildings.

GB concerned that the increased span of the blocks, the closer proximity and increased height, particularly towards George IV Street and Union Road would increase the harmful impact.

GB's view was that this proposal in its current form is likely to be towards the higher end of less than substantial harm to the character of the conservation area.

GB also noted that we will need to review the impact on the setting of nearby listed buildings and the Conservation Area. While the existing development does not impact on the wider area (its visual presence being very contained) subtle changes in height/location of blocks could change that.

No in principle issue with demolishing the existing buildings but any proposal to demolish would need to be accompanied by an appropriate redevelopment proposal.

Urban design

A revised option (Option B) was therefore presented which showed, in a basic form, how a frontage block might be provided along Union Road that allowed G05 to stay.

Key observations were as follows

Design should either allow views of G05 from Union Road or replacement tree planting on the corners with Bentinck Street and George IV Street.

This does not need to reflect the existing situation but may look at vistas towards trees at either end or may focus on new planting features as well.

The corners of Union Road are felt to be important. An appropriate scale of development is needed here. More height may be able to be added to the centre of the block.

Also, it was felt that there may be opportunities for height near to the Chemistry block but the building does then need to step down on Bentinck Street.

Along the Bentinck frontage, some height may be able to be added centrally if the alignment of the block and retention of trees can help justify this.

On Coronation Street, it was questioned if the block might step away from the pavement edge to allow views of T10 from the west. This may help break up mass/height.

Some of the gaps between the blocks may also be able to be filled in if the revised "gallery block" option is pursued

Layout does not need to be symmetrical.

The surrounding tight grain of street is acceptable to integrate on/around the site, so long as previously discussed views towards trees are incorporated.

Officers also suggested that while tree retention was clearly important, if a specified density was necessary for the development to include policy compliant affordable housing, a balance may need to be struck between tree retention and impact on the conservation area. Further options should be tested to assess this balance. While a strong tree objection would be made to the loss of trees identified as Primary constraints above, it was agreed that this would be a useful exercise so that the other benefits of the potential development (impact on conservation area, delivery of affordable homes etc) can be fully understood when appraising options for the site.

Next Steps

It was agreed that the Option B scheme would be worked up in light of the comments raised. It was also agreed that a new Option C layout with some tree removal would also be prepared to help test options more fully and to understand what opportunities might arise if some tree removal was proposed.



Pre-app 2 Massing diagram



Alternative option tabled during Pre-app 2, showing gallery access building fronting Union Road

Tree Retention Priorities

The adjacent diagram describes the Tree Officer advice on which trees offer a constraint to development and others which do not, received during the Pre-application Workshop on 28 June 2022 and further clarified in a post-meeting note.

In addition;

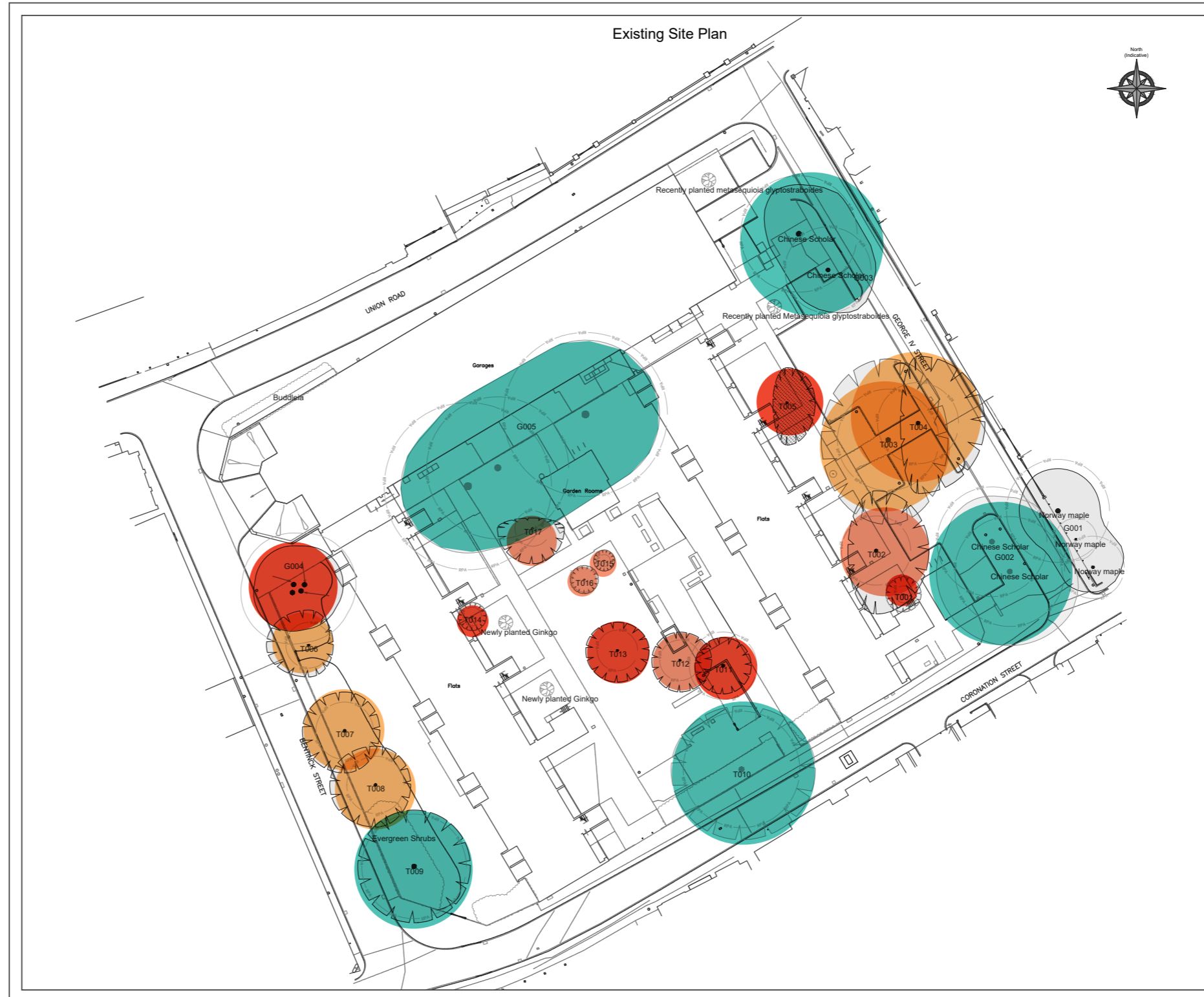
- The Tree Officer confirmed that the removal of trees G05 is not supported. These are existing Category A trees that are in good condition. These trees can, in the Tree Officer's opinion be suitably protected during the demolition of the car park and during the redevelopment of the site.
- These trees offer important amenity value to the street and should be retained.
- A very clear and detailed demolition method statement would be needed and some below ground structure may need to be retained but given the importance of the trees, these protective measures are needed.
- The Tree Officer expressed the view that the basement area of the car park could be backfilled, and frontage development of an appropriate scale could be provided along Union Road.
- The Tree Officer observed that because of the presence of G2 and G3, removal of T3 and T4 would be supported if this released pressure on primary constraint trees.
- The Urban Design Officer did however observe that T4 is important in terms of visual filtering/screening so if it is removed, replacement planting would be needed to help soften the impact of a building of height.
- The distance from existing tree canopies to development was discussed. The Tree Officer observed that many of the trees are now mature and in which case, a 2m level of separation would be appropriate.

Primary constraints
T9, T10, G2, G3 and G5

Secondary constraints
T3 and T4 (closely spaced trees), T6, T7 and T8

Tertiary constraints
T2, T12, T15, T16 and T17

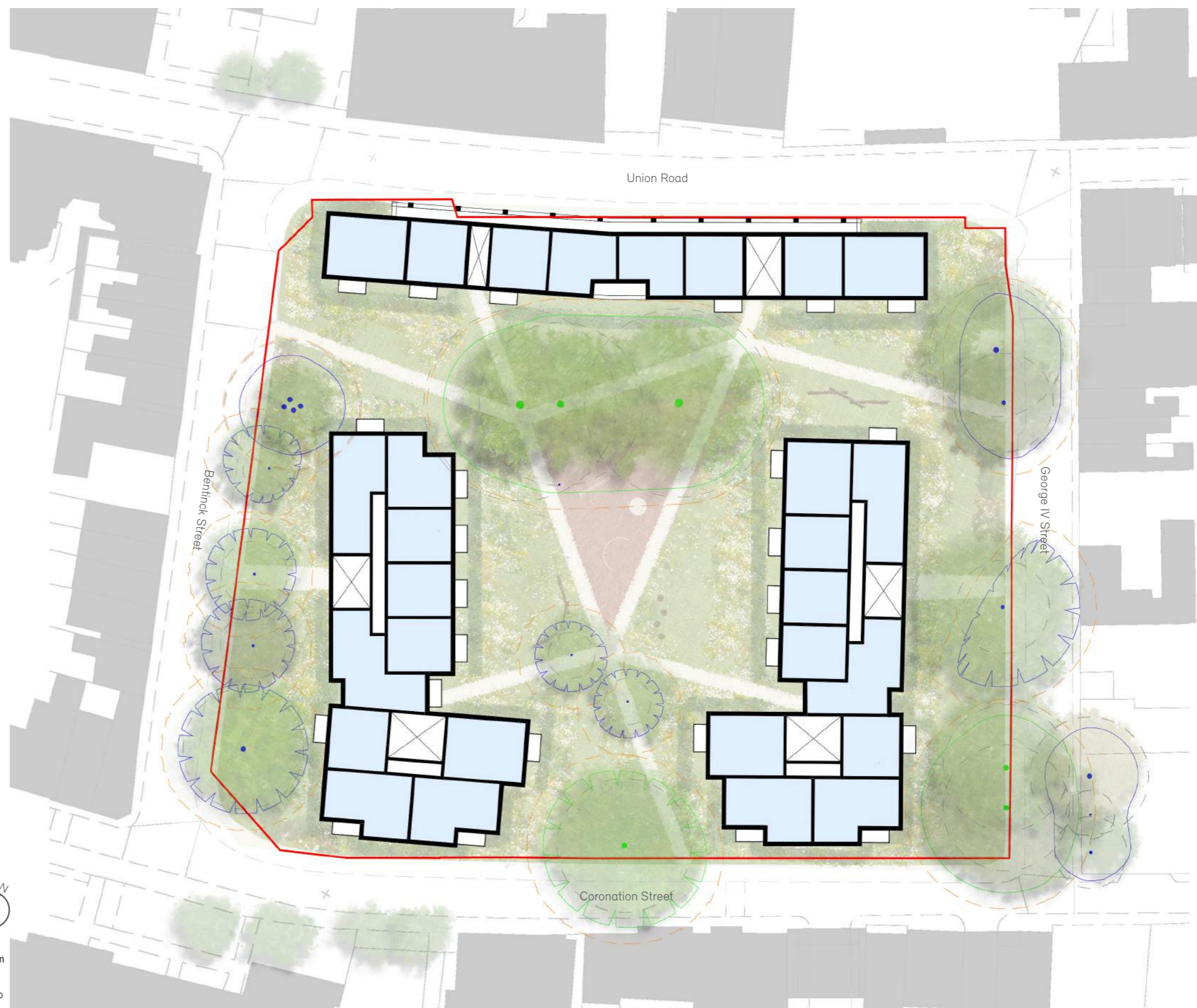
Trees not a constraint
T1, T5, T11, T13, T14 and G4



CATEGORY AND DEFINITION	
Trees unsuitable for retention	
Category U	Those in such condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the current land use for longer than 10 years
Trees to be considered for retention	
Category A	Trees of high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years
Category B	Trees of moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years
Category C	Trees of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150mm
CP NOTE:	
This document details the constraints created by the trees on the site and should be used as a design tool to inform the layout of the proposed development. This document is not sufficient for planning submission purposes.	
NOTE:	
Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants were provided with a Topographical Survey but these do not always show the positions of all the trees/features on site. The locations of any additional features have been fixed using GPS. As such the position of the trees/landscape features should not be taken as exact but gives a fair distribution of their locations on site.	
LEGEND	
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	Existing Tree/Feature BS 5837:2012 Category B
	Existing Tree/Feature BS 5837:2012 Category C
	Line of Root Protection Area (RPA) - calculated following guidelines set in BS 5837:2012
	Existing Tree/Feature to be Removed BS 5837:2012 Category U
	Additional feature which doesn't meet BS 5837:2012 categorisation but is included for reference
14/01/22 HVB Based on Randal Surveys drg no 16581GN1	
The position, condition, and dimensions of the trees are based on a site survey undertaken on 21/12/21	
"The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon"	
Scale 1:500	
0m 5m 10m 15m 20m 25m	
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Hanover & Princess Court, Bentinck Street, Cambridge, CB2 1HG	
14/01/22	HVB CIP/Pro/9132-D-CP
1:500 (A3)	AG 9132-D-CP

Approach 1 - Tree Retention

Site Layout



- 2M CANOPY CLEARANCE ZONE
- NEW HOMES

Massing

Home Type	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed
Apartments	83	46	9
Mix	60%	33%	7%
Grand Total		138	



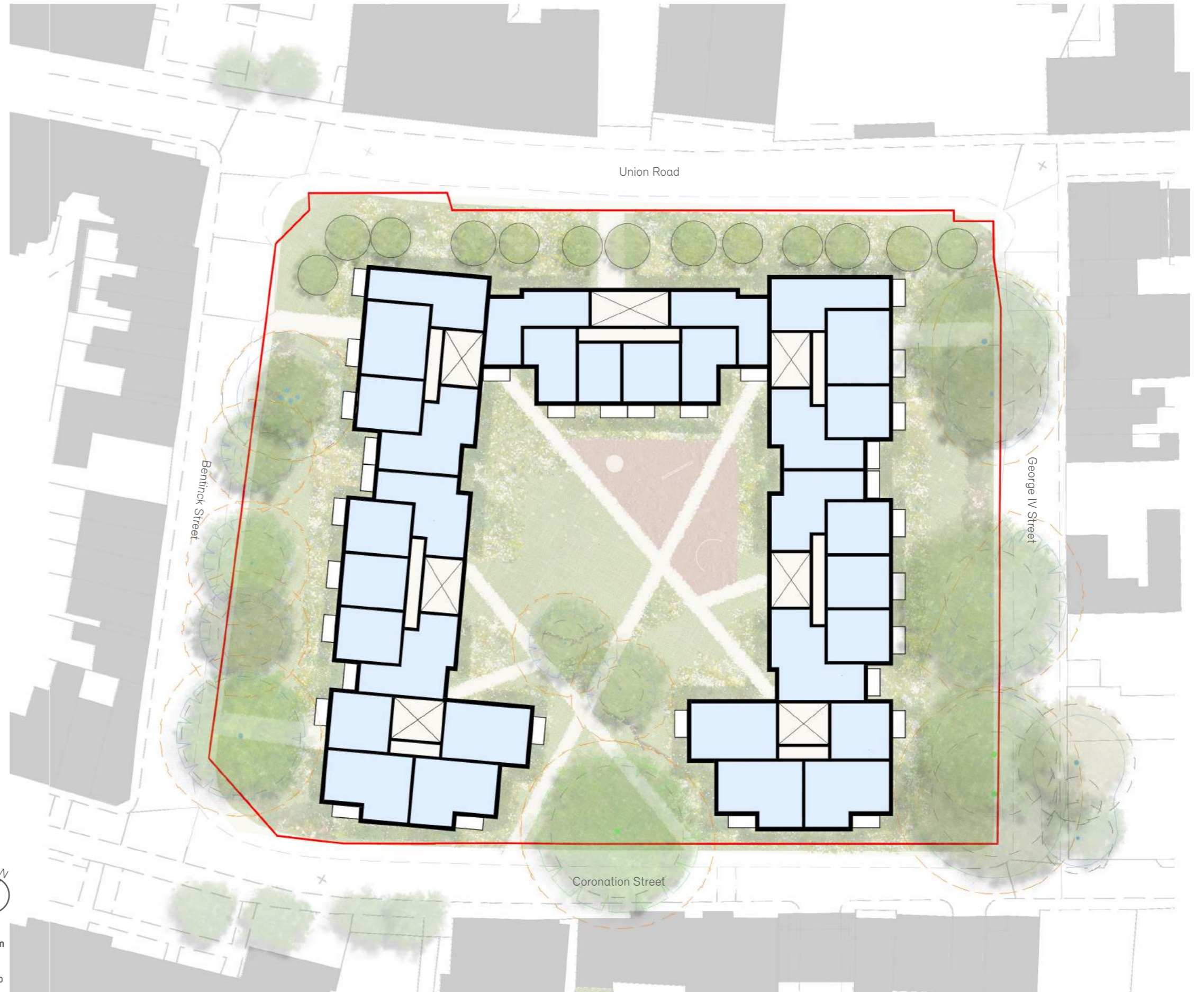
Massing

Home Type	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed
Apartments	83	46	9
Mix	60%	33%	7%
Grand Total	138		

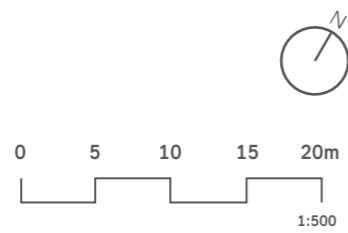


Approach 2 - G005 removal

Site Layout



- 2M CANOPY CLEARANCE ZONE
- NEW HOMES



Massing

Home Type	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed
Flats	84	72	9
Mix	51%	44%	5%
Grand Total	165		



Massing

Home Type	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed
Flats	84	72	9
Mix	51%	44%	5%
Grand Total	165		



Options Viability

The options have been carefully considered and assessed in light of the tree officers' comments. All trees on the edges of the site/surrounding streets identified by the tree officer as being of primary and secondary importance can be retained. However, group G005 presents a number of challenges. The existing canopy overhangs the garages, restricting the future building footprint to 50% of that of the existing garages. Demolition of the garages without causing damage to the roots of G005 may be feasible at great expense. Retaining G005 would reduce the number of homes by 27 units from 165 to 138.

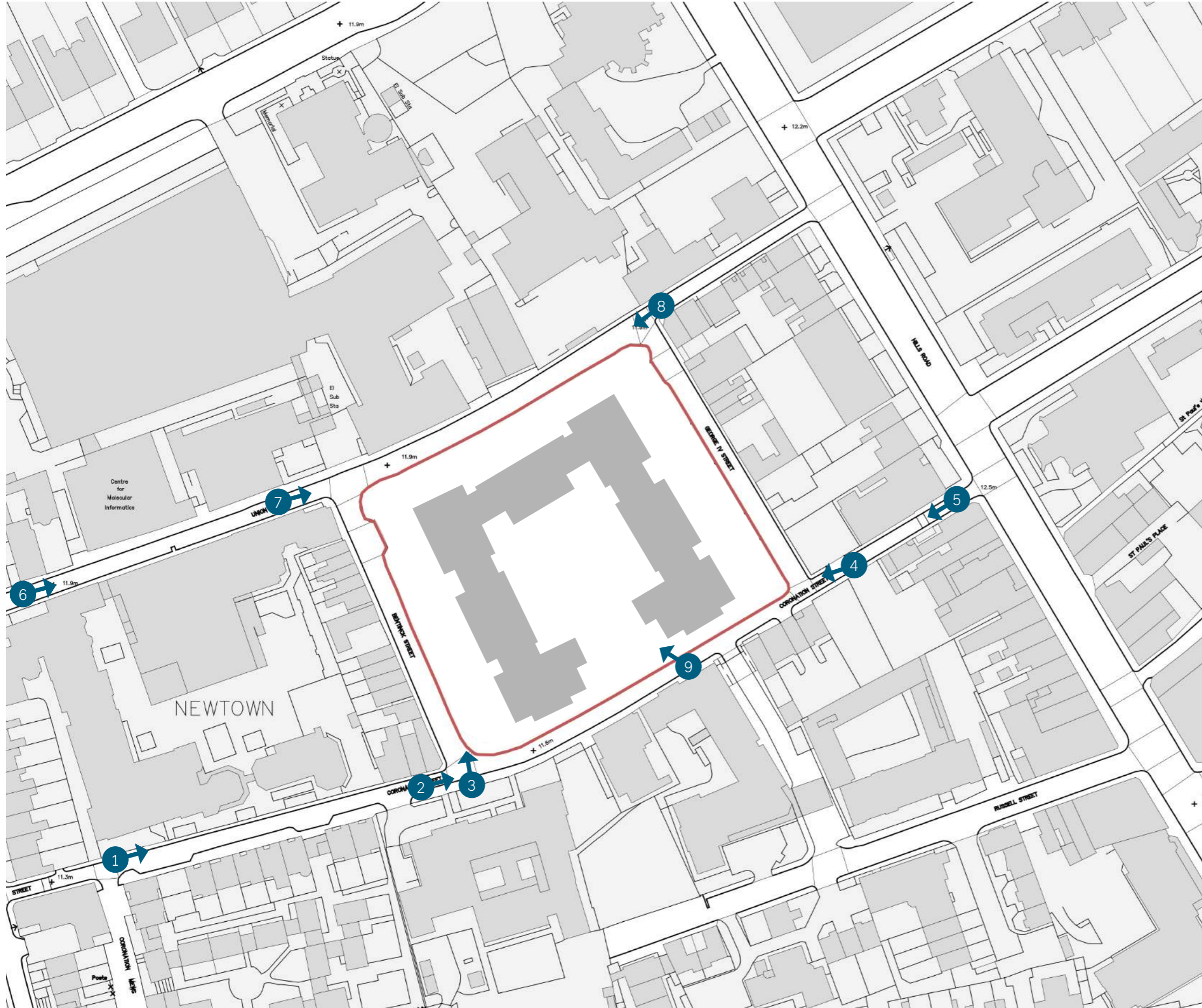
The Council have assessed the financial viability of each of the options and retaining G005 would only be achievable with a reduced provision of affordable housing. Policy compliant provision of 40% affordable housing could be made, equating to 55 homes. However, there are 82 existing affordable homes and whilst we appreciate re-providing the same number is not a planning policy requirement, it is key objective of the City Council for any redevelopment of the existing buildings.

If retaining these trees was deemed necessary to achieve an acceptable planning permission whilst providing 82 affordable homes the project would have an additional deficit of £5,000,000. This would render the redevelopment option financially unviable resulting in the retention of this substandard housing.

Whilst it is not relevant to the policy position we were keen to understand both councillors' and the public's position on this decision. Councillors were provided with the information above and determined that providing 82 affordable homes was of greater importance and that this, combined with new tree planting on Union Road, would be more likely to be supported than a reduced affordable housing provision and retention of G005. On requesting the public's preference for either retaining the 3 trees or achieving 82 affordable homes, 8 of 12 respondents voiced that achieving 82 affordable homes would be of greater importance to them.

Approach 2 - Street Views

Street View Locations



STREET VIEW LOCATIONS WITH BUILDING HEIGHTS



View looking east along Coronation Street

----- Existing Building

----- Pre -Application Meeting 02 Massing



View looking east along Coronation Street

--- Existing Building

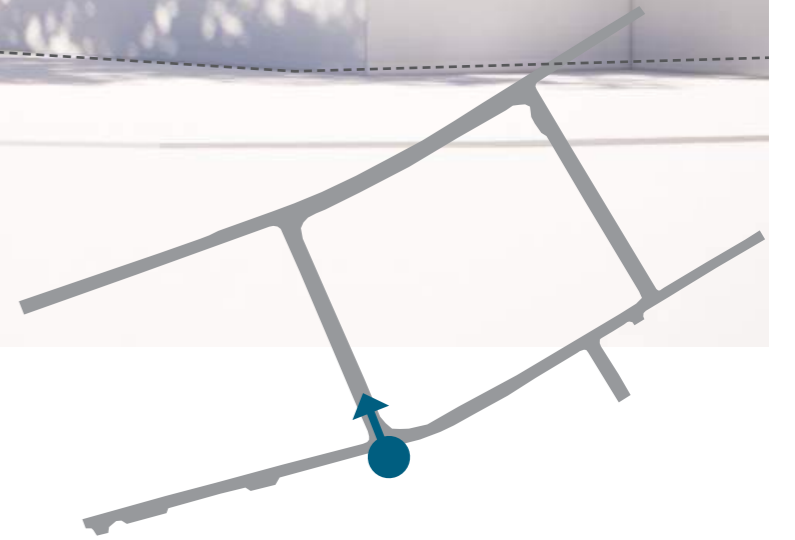
--- Pre -Application Meeting 02 Massing



View looking north along Bentinck Street

----- Existing Building

----- Pre -Application Meeting 02 Massing





View at corner of Coronation Street and George IV Street

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing



View looking west along Coronation Street

----- Existing Building

----- Pre -Application Meeting 02 Massing



View looking east along Union Road

----- Existing Building

----- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing



View looking east along Union Road, at corner with Bentinck Street

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing



View looking west along Union Road

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing



View looking into the courtyard from Coronation Street

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing

Public Consultation

Public Consultation

Public Consultation Event

- Saturday 20 August 10.00-16.00 (On Site)
- Thursday 1 September 15.00-19.00 (On Site)

Consultation statistics

- 52 Survey responses
- 75 In person attendees
- 12 webinar views

Consultation Survey Key Points

- 57% rated current condition of buildings less than 5 (1-10, 10 being the best);
- 78% support renovate or redevelop the existing buildings
- 67% preferred redevelop approach
- 73% answered above 5 for new tree planting along Union Road and 38% answered 10 (1-10, 10 being the best);
- 64% agreed or strongly agreed that trees around edge of the existing buildings are important
- 67% think providing at least 82 affordable homes is more important than retaining 3 trees

Responses to improvements to open space

- Play equipment and park
- Dog toilet
- Exercise equipment
- Sense of open space

THE EXISTING BUILDINGS

The estate was built in the late 1960s. The blocks were built in the 'brutalist' style of architecture that was seen in many developments of the post-war era.

Hanover Court and Princess Court provide 127 flats, with 82 of these rented to Cambridge City Council tenants together with a low-rise garage block, a community building and a communal garden.

Despite £2.5m expenditure on the blocks over the past ten years, significant work is still required in addition to the ongoing programme of works and required routine planned maintenance.



Problems with structure identified; two phases of works have been carried out but further works are still necessary to address inherent issues.



The ceiling heights are below modern standards and there is not enough room to create greater sound insulation between floors.



In addition to completing the removal of gas piping a substantial programme of works to upgrade fire safety is required; this will require intrusive works in individual flats which will cause further disruption to residents.



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COULD THERE BE IMPROVEMENTS?

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LIVING SPACE

Unit sizes vary but the 2 bedroom homes are significantly below national minimum space standards. All the homes have low floor to ceiling heights and generally provide a poor standard of living compared to modern standards. Little remodelling is possible because there is no steel or concrete frame to strip back to.



Comparison of an existing 2 bed flat in Hanover Court (Left) with a 2 bed flat in the Timberworks, Cromwell Road development (Right) at a similar scale.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

A priority would be to improve energy efficiency. Cavity wall insulation would create some improvement. A greater improvement would be achieved through external wall insulation but this may not be possible.

The buildings rely on structural brickwork; they do not have a concrete or steel frame. Cladding is normally pinned to the frame. Tests would be needed to see if cladding could be pinned to the brickwork and additional foundations would be needed.

Even if cladding is possible it would not create the same standards or lower energy bills as a new build.



REDEVELOP THE GARAGE

There may be an opportunity to address the structural defects of the garage block through redevelopment.

This would however require the closure and relocation of the lifts serving both residential buildings and would be difficult and expensive to build whilst retaining safe access to the existing buildings.



OPTION 1

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Site plan



View looking down Union Road



Courtyard view

OPTION 2

THE FUTURE OF HANOVER COURT AND PRINCESS COURT

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Site plan



View looking down Union Road



Courtyard view





--- Existing building

--- Proposed massing



- - - Existing building
- - - Proposed massing



- Existing building
- Proposed massing



- Existing building
- Proposed massing



Camera Location [545889, 15, 257958] Bearing 246° Pitch 0° Focal Length 37mm 21/06/2022 15:00

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- Existing building
- Proposed massing



- - - Existing building
- - - Proposed massing



- Existing building
- Proposed massing



- - - Existing building
- - - Proposed massing



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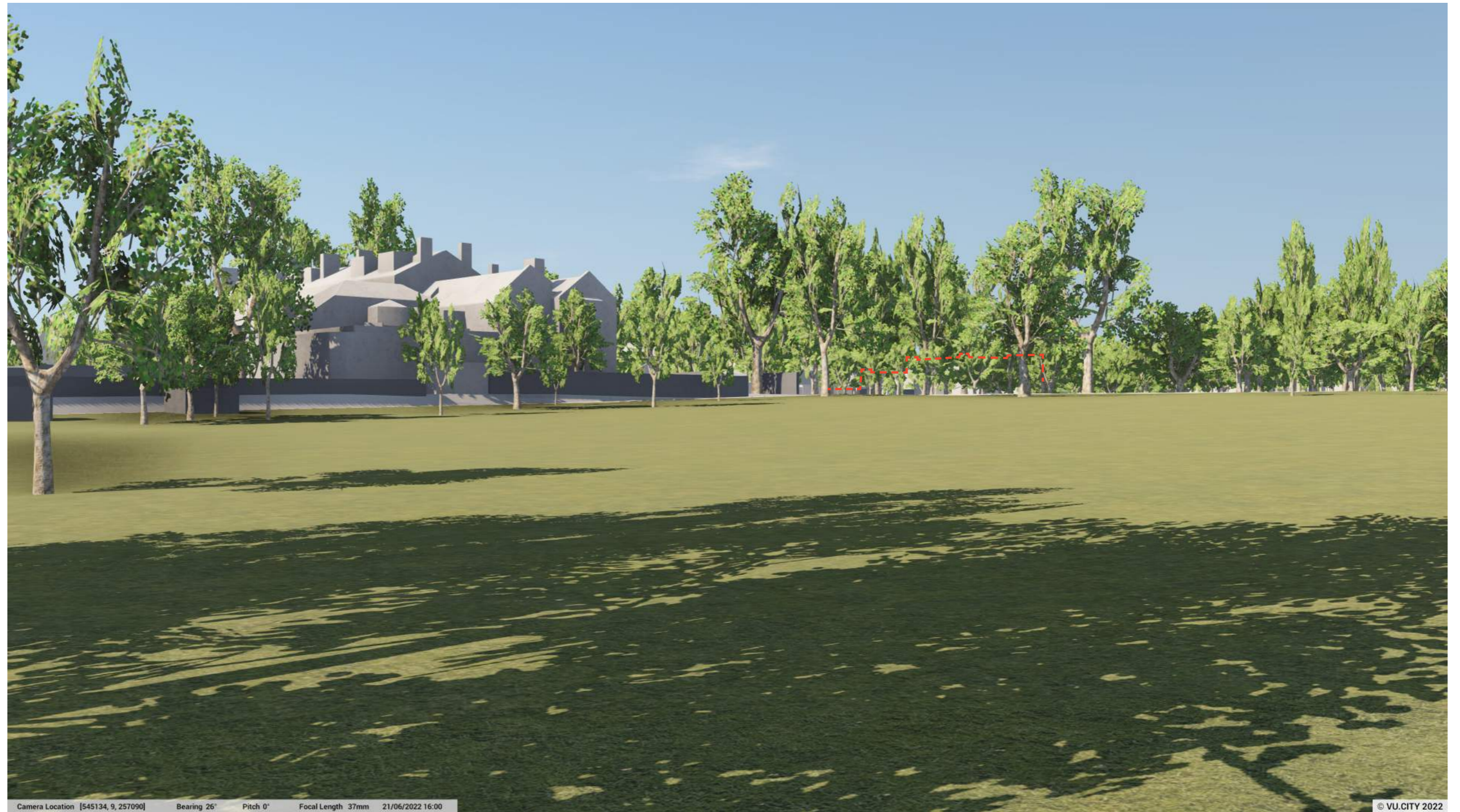
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--- Existing building

--- Proposed massing



- Existing building
- Proposed massing



Camera Location [545134, 9, 257090] Bearing 26° Pitch 0° Focal Length 37mm 21/06/2022 16:00

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- Existing building
- Proposed massing



Camera Location [545134, 9, 257090] Bearing 26° Pitch 0° Focal Length 37mm 21/06/2022 16:00

© VU.CITY 2022

--- Existing building

--- Proposed massing



- - - Existing building
- - - Proposed massing



- - - Existing building
- - - Proposed massing

Approach 2 - Tree Planting Potential

The available tree planting along Union Street allows for tree species with a natural crown spread of circa 3m to 3.5m in each direction.

Examples of suitable tree species:

Large Trees (12m tall plus)

- Upright Beech, Green, Purple and Golden Varieties available (*Fagus sylvatica fastigiata* 'Darwyck');
- Upright Pin Oak/Green Pillar Oak (*Quercus pauciflora*);
- Upright Cypress Oak 'Koster' (*Quercus robur fastigiata* 'Koster');
- Upright Birch (*Betula pendula fastigiata*).

Medium Trees (7m to 12m tall)

- Field Maple varieties Elsrijk, Elegant, Lineco or Jubilee (*Acer campestre* 'Elsrijk', 'Elegant', 'Lineco' and 'Jubilee');
- Sweet Gum 'Thea' (*Liquidambar styraciflua* 'Thea');
- Small-Leaved Lime (*Tilia cordata*);
- Upright Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus fastigiata*).

Small Trees (Up to 7m tall)

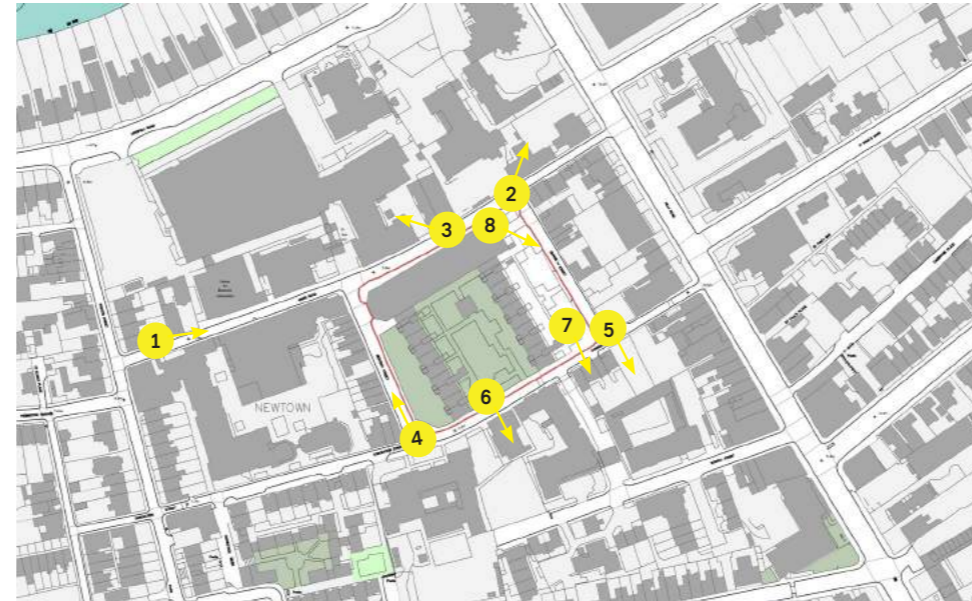
- Variety of Cherries;
- Magnolia Yellow Birch (*Magnolia brooklynensis* 'Yellow Bird');
- Golden Hornet Crab Apple (*Malus* 'Golden Hornet');
- Japanese Scarlett Rowan (*Sorbus commixta* 'Olympic Flame').

Appendix

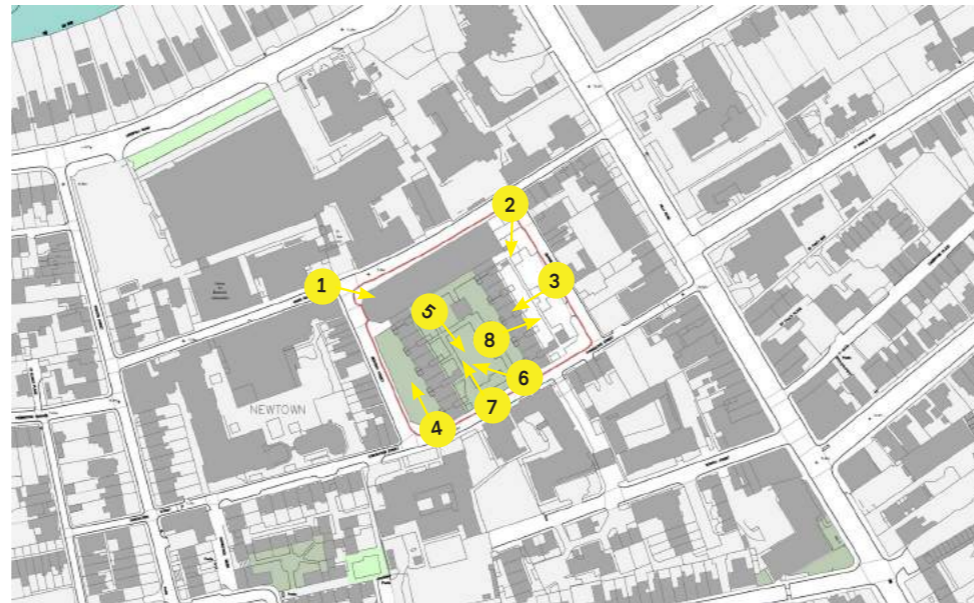
Site Photos - Approach



Site Photos - Surrounding the Site



Site Photos - The Site



Street Elevations



Bentinck Street



Coronation Street



George IV Street



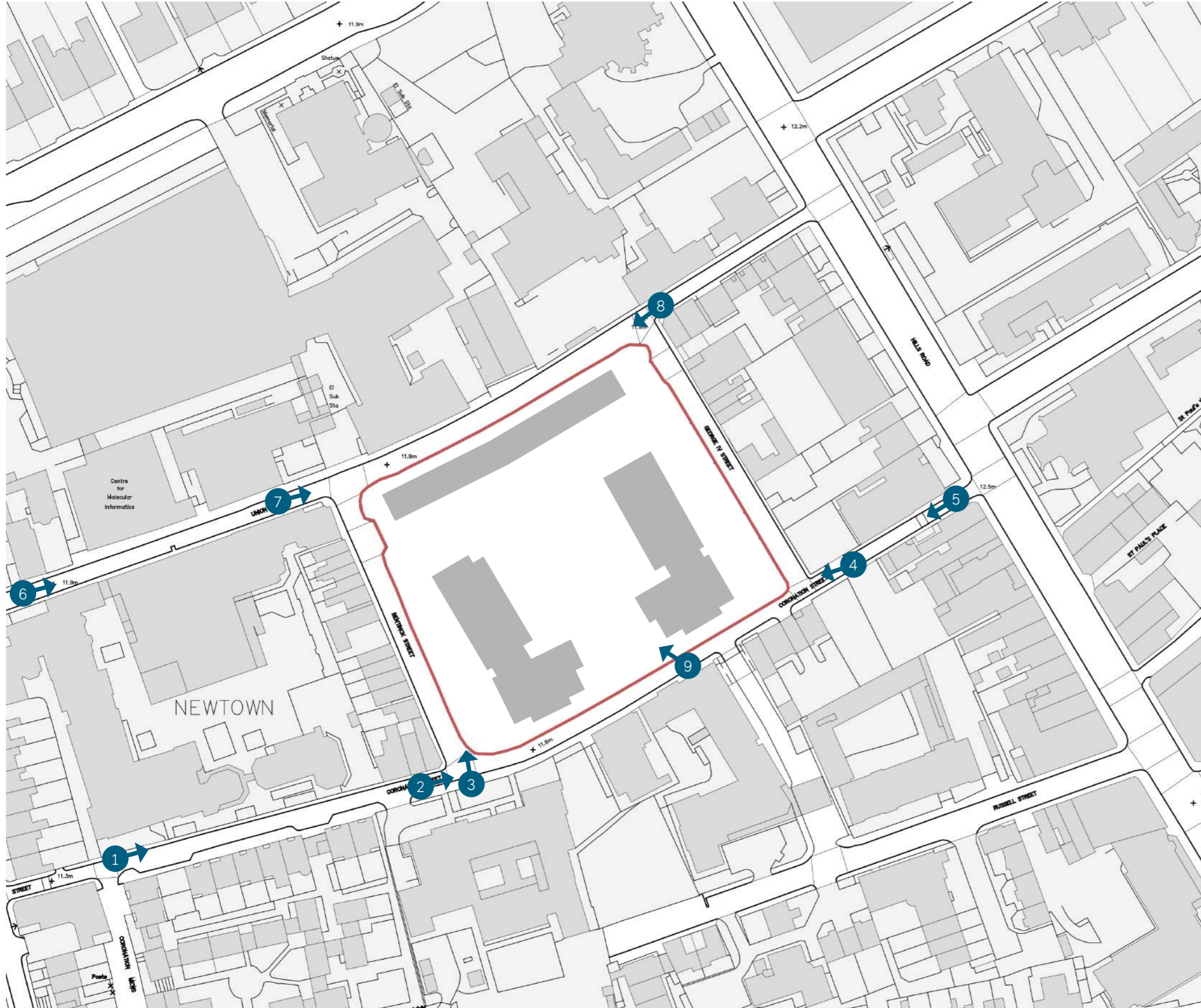
Union Road



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The position, condition, and dimensions of the trees are based on a site survey undertaken on 21/12/21	
The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon	
Scale 1:500 0m 5m 10m 15m 20m 25m	
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Client: Cambridge Investment Partnership	Drawing Title: Constraints Plan
Site: Hanover & Princess Court, Bentinck Street, Cambridge, CB2 1HG	
Date: 14/01/22	Drawn By: HvB CIP/Pro/9132-D-CP
Scale: 1:500 (A3)	Checked By: AG Drawing No: 9132-D-CP Rev: -

Approach 1 - Street Views

Street View Locations



STREET VIEW LOCATIONS WITH BUILDING HEIGHTS



View looking east along Coronation Street

----- Existing Building

----- Pre -Application Meeting 02 Massing



View looking east along Coronation Street

--- Existing Building

--- Pre -Application Meeting 02 Massing



View looking north along Bentinck Street

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing



View at corner of Coronation Street and George IV Street

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing



View looking west along Coronation Street

----- Existing Building

----- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing



View looking east along Union Road

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View looking east along Union Road, at corner with Bentinck Street

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View looking west along Union Road

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View looking into the courtyard from Coronation Street

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing

Indicative Consultation Views



Approach 1 - Tree Retention



Approach 2 - G05 Removal

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