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**Application No:** W 17 / 0395

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**Town/Parish Council:** Burton Green **Expiry Date:** 02/06/17

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# University of Warwick, Land to west of Gibbet Hill Road, Coventry, CV4 7AL

Demolition of the Redfern Halls of Residence and Warden's house and erection of 11 new buildings to provide 794 bed student accommodation and new Warden's house together with 'village hall' and associated parking facilities, drainage work and soft landscaping provisions FOR University of Warwick

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This application is being presented to Committee due to an objection from the Parish Council having been received.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee are recommended to grant planning permission, subject to the conditions listed at the end of this report.

## **DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT**

Planning permission is sought to demolish the existing Redfern Halls of Residence which provide a total of 214 bed spaces and are no longer fit for purpose and to also demolish the two storey detached Warden's house. Car park 3 is also proposed to be removed. A total of 11 new buildings are proposed to provide a total of 794 bed spaces. They would be laid out in such a way as to provide a mix of studios, apartments and houses, all with ensuite facilities. A new warden's house is also proposed. Part of the concept of redeveloping this area of residential accommodation is to create a student 'village' around which the accommodation is centred. Part of the proposals also therefore include a village hall building which would provide a range of facilities including staff management space, a launderette, post room and a social meeting area. This is envisaged to create a focal point for the new student community.

The table below is intended to provide a summary of the type of accommodation proposed and the way in which it would be laid out in the proposed new buildings:-

Building	Storey Height	No of bed- spaces proposed	Accommodation Type
A	4	91	7 x Studios
			7 x 12-bed houses
В	4	91	7 x Studios

			7 x 12-bed houses
С	2	N/A	Village Hall
D	7	72	2 x 6-bed apartments
			5 x 12-bed apartments
E	5	70	1 x 6-bed apartment
			8 x 8-bed apartments
F	4	91	7 x Studios
			7 x 12-bed houses
G	4	96	16 x 6-bed houses
Н	4	96	16 x 6-bed houses
I	4	39	3 x Studios
			3 x 12-bed houses
J	5	70	1 x 6-bed apartment
			8 x 8-bed apartments
K	4	52	4 x Studios
			4 x 12-bed houses
L	4	26	2 x Studios
			2 x 12-bed houses
M	2	N/A	Senior Warden's House

The proposals also include provisions for cycle stores across the site together with parking provision which would offer a combination of both permanent parking spaces, available throughout the year, as well as 'managed' spaces to offer additional parking provision at times throughout the year when it is required, for example, change over periods at the beginning and end of academic years.

## **THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION**

The application site lies to the southern edge of the University of Warwick's campus and lies close to the roundabout of Gibbet Hill Road and Leighfield Road, which forms the primary entrance into the campus from the south. While the majority of the land to the south and west sides comprise open fields, the existing sports centre lies on the opposite side of Leighfield Road (to the south) and the University's new energy centre has been constructed to the west (approximately 450m away). Between the energy centre and the application site, permission has been granted for the University's new sports hub building although construction on this has not yet begun. An existing car park, labelled 'Car Park 3' on maps and aerial photographs, currently forms the south east corner of the application site, and is in closest proximity to the roundabout. To the north of the site is some additional residential accommodation (Cryfield residences) and further north lies the centre of the campus with a number of other associated buildings.

The wider site of the University of Warwick is dissected by the administrative boundary of both Warwick District and Coventry City. The part of the university site that falls within the administrative boundary of Warwick District and in which the application site lies, is to the south west of the administrative boundary. At the time of writing this report, this is all within the West Midlands Green Belt.

However, it is noted that the emerging Local Plan states that this particular part of the University's campus is to be removed from the Green Belt. While the new Local Plan has not yet been formally adopted, it is at a reasonably advanced stage through its process and there is nothing in the Inspector's Main Modifications (March 2017) to suggest that this is not likely to proceed as per the policy (MS1).

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

**W/13/1247** - Redevelopment of site for halls of residence (Outline application with all matters reserved) – Approved 04.12.2013

**W/13/0815** - Demolition of buildings nos. 1 to 8 – No objections raised 13.07.2013

**W/07/1120** - Development for university purposes including construction of buildings for academic teaching; research; social and administrative uses; sports and cultural facilities; residential accommodation for staff, students and visitors; other ancillary facilities including for the purposes of energy generation; access improvements for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic including public transport services; car parking; site infrastructure including drainage and mains services; hard and soft landscaping including structural planting (Outline-Masterplan submitted) – Approved 14.10.2009

**W/02/1201** - Erection of extension to form staff welfare facility and student laundrette – Approved 30.09.2002

W/76/0197 - Erection of 45 student flats in 5 three storey blocks – Approved 25.03.1976

#### **RELEVANT POLICIES**

- National Planning Policy Framework
- The Current Local Plan
- DP1 Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 2011)
- DP2 Amenity (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 2011)
- DP3 Natural and Historic Environment and Landscape (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP4 Archaeology (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 2011)
- DP6 Access (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 2011)
- DP7 Traffic Generation (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 2011)
- DP8 Parking (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 2011)
- DP11 Drainage (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 2011)
- DP12 Energy Efficiency (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 2011)
- DP13 Renewable Energy Developments (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 -2011)
- SSP2 Major Developed Sites (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 2011)
- DAP3 Protecting Nature Conservation and Geology (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- SC4 Supporting Cycle and Pedestrian Facilities (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)

- SC13 Open Space and Recreation Improvements (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 2011)
- The Emerging Local Plan
- MS1 University of Warwick (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 Publication Draft April 2014)
- BE1 Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 Publication Draft April 2014)
- BE3 Amenity (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 Publication Draft April 2014)
- TR1 Access and Choice (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 Publication Draft April 2014)
- TR4 Parking (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 Publication Draft April 2014)
- FW2 Sustainable Urban Drainage (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 Publication Draft April 2014)
- NE2 Protecting Designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 Publication Draft April 2014)
- Guidance Documents
- Vehicle Parking Standards (Supplementary Planning Document)
- Sustainable Buildings (Supplementary Planning Document December 2008)
- Open Space (Supplementary Planning Document June 2009)

### **SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS**

Burton Green Parish Council: Object, on the following grounds:-

- the site is in the Green Belt; there would be no objections to replacement buildings that are not materially larger
- some parts of the new buildings are 5 storeys and would be seen above the tree line
- other residential blocks across the campus are four storeys which is considered an appropriate height
- strongest objection is to the six/seven storey block at the southern end of the site
- in winter when there is no tree cover these will be more obtrusive
- there is a lack of parking spaces
- there has been no engagement with the Parish Council about the proposals

**Coventry City Council:** No objection

# **Health & Community Protection (Environmental Sustainabilty Section):**No objection, subject to conditions

(WCC) Local Lead Flood Authority: No objection, subject to conditions

**Severn Trent Water:** No objection, subject to conditions

**WCC Highways:** No objection, subject to conditions

WCC Landscape: No objection

**WCC Ecology:** No objection, subject to conditions

WCC Archaeology: No objection, subject to condition

Waste Management: No objection

Warwickshire Police: No objection

#### **ASSESSMENT**

The main issues relevant to the consideration of this application are as follows:

- the principle of development
- the impact on the character and appearance of the area and surrounding landscape, including the impact on the Green Belt
- the impact on the amenity of neighbouring land uses/residential accommodation
- car parking and highway safety
- drainage and flood risk
- ecological impact
- health and wellbeing
- other issues

## The principle of the development

A number of factors are relevant when considering the principle of development. At the time of writing this report the site is still within the West Midlands Green Belt, although regard should also be had to the emerging Local Plan and the impending prospect that this particular site is proposed to be taken out of the Green Belt. There are site-specific policies regarding the University of Warwick in both the saved Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan. There is also an approved Masterplan for the site, although this is nearing ten years old, is undergoing a review, and is due to be updated to reflect the University's changing circumstances and requirements.

Saved Local Plan Policy SSP2: 'Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt'

This policy states that within a number of major developed sites within the Green Belt, as defined on the Proposals Map, appropriate limited infilling and redevelopment for employment or other uses identified in the supporting text as being appropriate for each site will be permitted. One of the major developed sites cited in the policy is the University of Warwick. The explanatory text of the policy at 10.16 sets out the support in principle for some further development at the University which has been set out in previous iterations of the Local Plan and associated supplementary planning guidance. At the same time as recognising the University as a higher education institution of national importance, and the need to ensure its continued success, it is important to have regard to all relevant environmental safeguards and, in particular, the designation of the land as part of the Green Belt. Identifying the site as a major developed site within which the various university uses can expand is the most appropriate means of doing this. An area of 43 hectares was identified for this purpose, which reflects the outer limit to development as defined by the University Development Plan 1994-2004.

It is recognised, at this point in time, that the above policy is out of date and refers to supplementary planning guidance that can now only be attributed limited weight by virtue of its age. Consideration should therefore be given to the emerging Local Plan which is set out below.

Emerging Local Plan Policy MS1: 'University of Warwick'

Continuing with the aims of the saved Local Plan, the new Local Plan recognises there are a number of long established major sites which have a unique and important role in the District's economy. The [emerging] Local Plan seeks to support the role that these sites play in the local economy at the same time as ensuring this is carefully balanced against the impacts of development. Where such major sites are in the Green Belt, it is accepted that some development may be necessary where it would support the long term future of the site, securing jobs and bringing benefits to the wider economy.

Policy MS1 states that development at the University will be permitted in line with an approved Masterplan or Development Brief as agreed with the relevant local planning authorities. In the explanatory text it acknowledges the current Masterplan approved in 2009 and recognises the University's plans to update it during the plan period to set out its future vision.

3.146 acknowledges that within the administrative boundary of Warwick District development has been to meet the residential needs of the university; in the past this has involved a recognition that development in the Green Belt will be necessary to allow the university to expand. The predominantly built up nature of the area known as Central Campus West (the area in which this application is proposed) means that this land is no longer appropriate for retention in the Green Belt. Any further development into the Green Belt proposed through any future Masterplan will need to be carefully considered as part of the long term plan for the University across the two local authority areas.

In the Inspector's Main Modifications to the Local Plan (March 2017) no deletions were made to this policy although some new text was added that sets out explicitly what the Masterplan should do. In the explanatory text related to the Central Campus West being taken out of the Green Belt, more new text has been added to state "Further, the importance of the University in supporting the local economy (as recognised in the Strategic Economic Plan) and the need for the University to be able to grow within its existing boundaries, provide the exceptional circumstances to justify the amending of the Green Belt boundary to exclude the area shown on the Policies Map (map 7 to which no changes are proposed by the Inspector) from the Green Belt." An additional point, 3.146a, sets out that in the event any other development is proposed which is not included in the Masterplan, it will be considered against the overall objectives of the Masterplan.

# The approved 2009 Masterplan

In 2007, an outline planning application was submitted to Warwick District Council for an array of works including new buildings for teaching and other associated uses, sports and cultural facilities, residential accommodation for a variety of end users, access and parking improvements and other infrastructure

including drainage and landscaping. This was subsequently approved in 2009 along with a Masterplan for the site that set out the parameters of future development as it was envisaged over a ten year period (up to 2018). An approved plan (0208/D/100 Rev.A) illustrated the extent of the Masterplan proposals and the accompanying information that expanded on the plan was in the form of a bound document entitled 'Main Campus Masterplan 1'.

The Masterplan sets out a number of goals and objectives. Of particular relevance is Objective 5: to provide residential accommodation on or near campus for a high proportion of students and an increasing number of staff to maximise their contribution to campus life. In reality this means planning for an increase of approximately 3000 places in student accommodation on or near campus, and to create a staff village for academics and researchers and their families to feel more integrated with the campus community.

# Considering the proposals against the existing Masterplan

The approved Masterplan defines the application site within 'Zone 8' where 6,200sq.m. of new academic and support development could be expected to come forward, up to a maximum of four storeys in height. At the time of the Masterplan's approval it was anticipated that the existing buildings would remain and no provision was made for the redevelopment or demolition of student accommodation in this particular area. A recent review of the University's residential accommodation portfolio identified that the existing Redfern buildings were no longer fit for purpose and modernisation was not viable, for the same reasons as identified for the adjoining former Hurst residences in 2013. Both of these buildings (Redfern and Hurst) were among the earliest residences built at the university in the early 1970's.

An application for prior approval for the demolition of the Hurst buildings was submitted to the Council (W/13/0815). This application reflected the fact that these residences were no longer fit for purpose, being undersized, outdated and incapable of viable modernisation, with an increasing maintenance liability. This justification led to the subsequent approval for their demolition. Further to that, an outline application was submitted for the redevelopment of the Hurst residence site for student accommodation (W/13/1247) and this was approved in December 2013. This approval confirms support for the principle of development on the site, and its re-use for the purposes of student residences. Although this permission has recently lapsed, it is noted that the site of the Hurst residences forms part of the area subject to this application, and therefore it seems that a more holistic approach is being taken to redevelopment, by encompassing the whole of the Redfern and Hurst residences to create the new 'Cryfield Village'.

This current application has been submitted as a full application, rather than an application for approval of reserved matters pursuant to the original outline planning permission (issued in 2009). This is because the applicant's agent recognises that the site was not identified for redevelopment in the original Masterplan. However, they suggest in their planning statement that it reflects the spirit of the Masterplan and the mitigation measures which are embodied in the permission. This is considered further in the following section of this report.

Assessment of Green Belt Policy and the 'Very Special Circumstances' set out by the applicant

The application site is in the Green Belt. As such, it is necessary to consider;

- whether the proposal would amount to inappropriate development within the Green Belt for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and development plan policy;
- the effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt and;
- if the development is inappropriate, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

Paragraph 89 of the NPPF establishes that, other than in connection with a small number of exceptions, the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt. The exceptions include the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces. In this instance, the applicant submits that the proposal involves the replacement of buildings in the same use but acknowledges that the replacement buildings would be materially larger than the existing one, and so it is not considered that this exception applies.

The development therefore constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt which is, by definition, harmful and should not be approved unless the harm is clearly outweighed by very special circumstances.

This being the case, the applicant has put forward what they consider to be very special circumstances that clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. These are based around six themes:

- i. the University's need to grow
- ii.consideration of alternative sites around the campus
- iii. the site is previously developed land
- iv. there is recent planning history for development being permitted on part of the site
- v. there are socio-economic benefits which will arise from the development;
- vi. the emerging Local Plan's proposal to remove the site from the Green Belt which can be afforded a degree of weight.

As assessment of the impact of the proposal on the Green Belt and surrounding landscape is provided below, followed by an evaluation of the "very special circumstances" submitted by the applicant:-

The impact on the Green Belt and on the character and appearance of the area and surrounding landscape, including impact

The design rationale for these proposals has taken a long period of time to develop and it is noted that part of this process has involved engagement with

the Local Planning Authority at pre-application stage prior to the formal submission of any application.

It is accepted that the existing buildings that would be replaced cover a smaller area of the site than the proposed replacement buildings. However, consideration should also be given to the footprint that was originally covered by the Hurst residences (since demolished under a separate application). For the most part, the proposals involve replacing four storey buildings (which are no longer fit for purpose and have little architectural merit) with four storey buildings, thus resulting in no greater harm or material impact to the openness of the Green Belt.

The key impacts of this development relate to the proposed five/six storey buildings (of which there are two) and the seven storey building proposed on what is currently Car Park 3, near the roundabout of Gibbet Hill Road and Leighfield Road. Whilst this may sound as though it represents a significant departure from the existing character of the site and would, by definition, be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt, there are site specific considerations that should be borne in mind when making an assessment of the visual impacts of these proposals.

To begin with, the fundamental consideration is the 12 metre levels difference from the north western end of the site, sloping down towards the south eastern end of the site. The junction of the roundabout therefore represents the lowest part of the application site area. Looking at the sections through the site, it is noted that the proposed seven storey building would in fact sit lower, within the skyline, than the four storey building at the other end of the site where the levels are at their highest and on which there are currently four storey buildings present.

The seven storey block has been proposed as a landmark building to announce the entrance to the campus on approach from the south. In preparing their submission, the applicant has undertaken landscape and visual appraisals and provided landscape assessments within the Design and Access Statement. These illustrate the key (distant) views from which the site could be seen as well as illustrating how the building would appear from Gibbet Hill Road on entering the campus. It is acknowledged that a building of this height would be seen. But simply being able to seen does not automatically equate to material harm.

It is acknowledged that earlier permissions and the Masterplan (when it was first being considered), made reference to four storeys being the maximum building heights. It could be argued, therefore, that the principle of a seven storey building should automatically be rejected. However, regard has to be had to other material considerations set out in this report that indicate that such a building is acceptable. Ultimately, this specific red line site area was not included in the Masterplan, because ten years ago the need to replace the Redfern halls was not envisaged. Had the site been considered as part of the Masterplan, it is likely that Car Park 3 would have been excluded since the applicant suggests it has only recently been included as part of the development site. The reason it was included was to ensure the site as a whole enabled a better spread of development to minimise any sense of overdevelopment.

It follows that a seven storey building elsewhere on the site would most likely result in material visual harm because of the levels differences. However, the site of Car Park 3 is significantly lower than the rest of the site and therefore the principle of a seven storey block at this end can be given legitimate consideration, especially since this site is not part of any previous limitation on maximum storey heights.

The five/six storey buildings are positioned close to the existing Cryfield buildings and therefore further towards the central campus area. As such, it is considered that these would not be as prominent when viewed from the south and would be largely screened by the number of other buildings proposed in front of them.

Overall, whilst the addition of two five/six storey buildings, plus a seven storey building, would result in a change to the historic character of the Redfern/Cryfield residences, change does not automatically equate to harm. The proposals, when considered as a cumulative layout and design concept, are considered to reflect the changing circumstances and requirements of the University. Moreover, if it is to meet the requirements for additional bed spaces, consideration must also be given as to whether it would be preferable to maintain a consistent four storey height across the site which would mean providing several more buildings to encompass the required bed spaces, or to minimise the sprawl across the site and use the lowest parts of the site to allow for taller buildings, thus incorporating additional bed spaces contained within the same footprint.

In Green Belt terms, having regard to the extent of the site area and the scale of development already proposed, it is considered that the best and most efficient use of land is being proposed through the introduction of taller buildings at the lower end of the site, rather than introducing an even greater footprint of buildings sprawling across the site than is already proposed. In reality, the skyline should not be significantly affected by these additional buildings on the basis that the four storey building near the North West site boundary will be read as the most dominant roof height, standing taller than the seven storey block at the opposite end of the site.

Paragraph 79 of the Framework indicates that openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt. In simple terms, openness means the absence of development rather than the presence of development in any particular area. Some of the proposed buildings, in particular the seven storey building, are proposed in areas of the site where there is presently no built form. It follows therefore that the development would result in some adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Nonetheless, the appearance of the development and the relationship to its surroundings may be relevant to the consideration of the existence of very special circumstances in the weighing exercise.

The different types of accommodation proposed within the blocks are intended to have their own individual identities, whilst being constructed from a similar pallet of materials that sticks to the basic principles of brick (albeit of varying shades and colours) this reflecting the character and identity of the existing

accommodation which would form part of this wider 'student village'. The use of some cladding is proposed to add some visual interest and break up long elevations of some of the terraced blocks and it is considered this is an appropriate method. Due to the position of the site on the edge of the campus, it is considered necessary to impose a condition requiring that samples of all materials proposed to be used are submitted for approval prior to the commencement of any works. This will ensure that the most appropriate finishes are secured for the development as a whole.

Overall, officers are satisfied, having regard to all of the above considerations that the development would not result in harm to the character of the area sufficient to justify a refusal of permission. Accordingly the development complies with saved Policy DP1 of the Local Plan and emerging policy BE1 of the New Local Plan.

Further, it is considered that the harm to the openness of the Green Belt is limited. However, as the proposal constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt which is, by definition, harmful, it is necessary to consider whether there are very special circumstances that clearly outweigh the harm.

### Assessment of Very Special Circumstances

## The University's need to grow

Objective 5 of the Masterplan sets out the requirement to provide a certain amount of residential accommodation over the ten year period. An assumed increase of around 3000 bed spaces with around 2000 of those expected to be on campus. The Masterplan also sets out as one of its parameters the expectation that there would be 57,000 sq.m. developed for residential accommodation over the ten year period. To date, only 37,000 sq.m. has been built or is under construction and this has provided around 1000 bed spaces. As well as the clear need to fulfil the objectives of the Masterplan in this regard, the University's review of the accommodation portfolio not only looked at the physical accommodation available but also undertook student surveys about the way in which students would prefer to live. This identified a significant gap in the existing portfolio, in particular, for final year/postgraduate/mature students who may wish to return to campus for study but are not able to at the current time.

Of the 6,400 bed spaces currently provided on campus, the type of accommodation blocks in which these exist, have given rise to students from similar social backgrounds being grouped together, with similar rental costs, thus limiting the potential for social integration and cohesion. A need has therefore been identified to develop a more varied approach, with buildings incorporating a range of unit sizes, rents and a better sense of community overall.

The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the overall objectives contained within the Masterplan, to provide more accommodation on campus. Further, it is within the overall floor space parameter in the Masterplan and would simply replace existing accommodation which is no longer fit for purpose.

## Alternative sites around campus

This particular site has been selected only as a result of an extensive review being carried out of all other potentially suitable sites on the campus. This included sites within existing development areas identified in the Masterplan but also included other sites not considered ten years ago when the Masterplan was being developed. Of the high level review that identified 8 potential sites, this was further narrowed down to 4. Of these four, three were areas in the Green Belt which are not proposed to be taken out of the Green Belt in the new Local Plan and aside from this, quite fundamental obstacle, were ruled out due to other factors including (for example) not being a large enough site to accommodate the level of development proposed and its proximity to other uses whereby it may not be the most compatible/appropriate type of development.

This review of other sites therefore identified the application site put forward in this submission as the most suitable overall, in all respects, and this selection is strengthened, not only by the fact this site is to be taken out of the Green Belt, but also due to the earlier permissions granted for the demolition of the Hurst buildings and their redevelopment for residential accommodation to provide more bed spaces than the site previously accommodated.

## Previously developed land

The NPPF states that the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites, whether redundant or in continuing use, which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt can be considered 'appropriate development'. In this instance, the applicant submits that these proposals involve the redevelopment of such a site but acknowledges that while the replacement buildings would be largely on the same footprint as the existing buildings and would remain in the same use, the scale and height would be greater than that which currently exists. However, the landscape and visual appraisals and other supporting information undertaken conclude that the proposed development would have no greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt. This particular point is considered further in the relevant section below.

#### Recent planning history on part of this site

It is a material consideration that in 2013 outline permission was granted for the redevelopment of the recently demolished Hurst halls of residence which fall within part of the red line site area as submitted in this application. Although this permission has just recently lapsed the applicant submits that this provides a highly relevant precedent that confirms the principle of this site for student accommodation.

Moreover, officers consider that it is of equal relevance that in beginning to review the Masterplan in light of it reaching the end of its original ten year period (to 2018) it is not unreasonable to expect the University to take a more holistic approach in how best to achieve one of their core objectives of providing additional residential accommodation, and therefore look to completely redevelop this whole site in its entirety rather than just a part of it. This also interlinks with the statement made in their submission that when the Masterplan

was first being considered ten years ago, prior to its final adoption, it was not envisaged then that the Redfern buildings would need to be replaced. However, in the decade that has passed, a recent review has since confirmed the need to replace these buildings, as set out in an earlier section of this report.

Socio-economic benefits of the development

It is widely acknowledged what a significant contribution the University makes to the local economy. By way of a summary, it makes a significant contribution to the West Midlands economy of circa £520 million a year, with a student population of around 25,000 supported by 6,000 staff. Its Science Park is home to 123 companies employing 2,500 people and its Art Centre hosts 1,250 events a year attracting audiences of 750,000.

The University continues to grow and according to both The Guardian and The Complete University Guide (for 2017-2018) Warwick is ranked as #8 (out of 129 universities and institutes of higher education). It follows that the University wants to continue to develop and attract new students to its campus which in turn ensures the ongoing contribution to the local economy. Based on data held from 2016 records, University students spent £151 million within the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP area and total economic activity associated with the students of the University was £206 million GVA and 5,300 jobs for 2015/16.

The new Cryfield Village project would be part of a wider capital projects investment programme, which between 2010 and 2020 would see the University investing an average of £59 million each year, and supporting 600 jobs.

Emerging Local Plan and the proposal to remove this site from the Green Belt

As set out earlier, the emerging Local Plan seeks to remove this particular part of the campus from the Green Belt on the basis that the type of land and the way in which it has been developed historically no longer renders it appropriate for retention in the Green Belt. Given the advanced stage of the Plan and the fact the Main Modifications, published since this application was submitted, strengthens this assertion with additional text, as well as the need to continue to support the University so far as is appropriate given all other material considerations, officers consider weight can be afforded to this policy.

However, irrespective of whether or not the site were to come out of the Green Belt and how soon this is likely to happen, the development must be considered on its own merits in accordance with the extant Local Plan, having regard to all of the above relevant and material considerations.

Conclusions on the principle of development

Taking into account all of the above and the conclusion that the proposal causes only limited harm, it is considered that, cumulatively, the matters referred to at (i) to (v) above amount to very special circumstances that clearly outweigh that harm to the Green Belt, and that the proposal is acceptable in principle.

The fact that this particular proposal is not explicitly included within the original Masterplan should not automatically preclude it from consideration. This is not

only due to the fact that the Masterplan is nearing the end of its ten year plan period and is under review, but also due to the fact that the proposals to redevelop existing residential accommodation which is no longer fit for purpose, while at the same time providing a substantial increase in the number of bed spaces on campus, is in accordance with the core objectives of the original outline permission that included the original Masterplan.

#### Design

The proposed layout of the buildings follows a relatively simple and linear arrangement, with each block either running parallel or perpendicular to the next nearest building. Adequate spacing between buildings allows permeability and clear visual links through the site, where buildings are orientated such that they largely front the paths and cycle ways through the site and/or create courtyards onto which two or three buildings overlook.

Almost all of the buildings are four storeys in height, reflecting the character of the existing buildings on the site at present. The exception is the proposed seven storey building at the lowest part of the site in the south east corner. All the proposed buildings would follow similar design principles but materials are varied to break up the development and add visual interest.

The character of the site is defined by brick buildings set within a sloping landscape surrounded by mature trees. Circulation routes are such that vistas are usually framed between trees and corners of buildings. The applicants have sought to retain this character and accordingly, the main materials for the facades of each building would be brick, drawn from three distinct colours; grey, red and buff. Adjacent blocks would be built with a different brick to add interest and variety. Timber, concrete and steel cladding, along with metal work is also proposed to add further detail to the elevational treatments and give a contemporary feel overall.

The layout of the buildings, together with their design and the choice of materials is considered to be visually appropriate to the character of the site and its setting within the wider context of the campus and the scheme is therefore considered acceptable in this regard.

# The impact on the amenity of neighbouring land uses / residential accommodation

This part of the site sits on the southern edge of the built up area of the campus, with open fields predominantly surrounding it. The nearest other buildings would be the existing Cryfield residences to the north. These are large sprawling buildings that provide additional residential accommodation for students and at the closest point are located 10m away from the proposed new buildings (rear to side relationship) and 18m away (rear to rear relationship). Notwithstanding the scale and nature of the proposed replacement buildings, regard has been had to the fact that the existing Redfern buildings are four storeys in height and are currently configured in a 'U-shape' courtyard setting where a number of elevations have direct facing relationships with other buildings. The replacement buildings are not arranged in a courtyard style layout but are placed in mire linear arrangements, with buildings sitting behind or adjacent to one another.

Many of them are also staggered and therefore share more oblique relationships in terms of windows which would minimise any potential for direct overlooking.

In terms of the height proposed the vast majority of the replacement buildings are still four storeys, i.e., no greater than the scale of the original Redfern halls. It is therefore not anticipated that the redeveloped site would give rise to any greater harm to residential amenity than the existing situation. In terms of the taller buildings (total of three) these are located on parts of the site where they would have no direct impact on the amenity of other occupiers by reason of either their distance away from other buildings and/or their relationships (angles to other buildings).

Overall, the proposed redevelopment of the site is not considered to give rise to any material harm to neighbouring amenity and accordingly is considered to comply with saved Policy DP2 of the Local Plan and emerging policy BE3 of the New Local Plan.

#### Access, car parking and highway safety

The primary vehicular access into the site from Leighfield Road and the main spine route would continue to be taken from the existing access that currently serves Car Park 3. There would be a secondary access to the west providing a dedicated access to the Warden's House (similar to the existing situation). Both access routes are envisaged to be used predominantly by pedestrians and cyclists, although they would enable access for emergency, refuse and maintenance vehicles as well as disabled car parking. The main access would also provide a route for vehicles accessing halls of residence for a short period of time at the start and end of the academic year when students are moving in / out.

The primary pedestrian routes through the site run parallel with the existing Sustrans route 52 (approved through earlier permissions and already implemented) which runs west to east towards the existing campus centre.

The development proposes 17no. disabled parking spaces to serve the accessible student rooms, as well as a small parking area for the management and maintenance teams. A number of covered cycle storage facilities are proposed across the site which could accommodate 188 bicycles.

A total of 22no. permanent car parking spaces on site are proposed. In addition to this there are 27no. Pay and Display spaces just outside the red line site area along the western boundary. Students are not permitted to keep cars on campus and, accordingly, parking is not to be provided for students living on site. In recognition of the fact that the start and end of academic years will get busier with students moving in/out of buildings, there is provision for an additional 33no. parking spaces, to be managed and used on a short term basis only to allow for loading and unloading.

The County Highways Authority initially raised objection to the development, on the basis that it was unclear what the starting position was for parking; i.e. there have been other approved developments at the campus, within the vicinity, which would add to the parking quota and it was unclear whether or not these had been considered. An addendum to the original Transport Assessment (TA) was submitted for consideration which confirmed that all existing and committed car parks were included in the original TA and accordingly, the Highways Authority removed its objection.

Having regard to all of the above officers are satisfied that the development would not be detrimental to highway safety and sufficient parking is provided as part of the proposals. Overall, the development accords with saved Policies DP6 and DP8 of the Local Plan and emerging Policies TR1 and TR4 of the New Local Plan.

## Drainage and flood Risk

A flood risk assessment was submitted with the application confirming the site is in Flood Zone 1 and providing a drainage strategy. Both the Lead Local Flood Authority and Severn Trent Water have raised no objections to the development but recommended a condition in relation to drainage (both surface and foul water). The applicant submitted some additional information through the course of the application and in relation to drainage, suggested that the strategy initially submitted covers the requirements of the condition. At the time of writing this report, neither statutory consultee has confirmed that the information is sufficient to negate the need to impose a pre-commencement condition so the requirement to impose this condition to any forthcoming permission currently still stands. Overall however, officers consider the development is acceptable in this regard and therefore accords with saved policy DP11 of the Local Plan and emerging policy FW2 of the New Local Plan.

#### **Ecological** impact

Ecological appraisals were submitted with the application and ongoing discussion has taken place between the County Ecologist and the applicants. This has generated the submission of additional supporting information and the final consultation response from the County Ecology team confirmed there was no longer any need to impose some of the conditions initially requested in the first response. At this stage, should permission be forthcoming for the development, there is only a requirement to require further detailed bat activity surveys and a detailed schedule of bat mitigation. Overall, officers are satisfied that the development is acceptable in this regard and therefore accords with saved Policy DP3 of the Local Plan and emerging Policy NE2 of the New Local Plan.

## **Other matters**

## Archaeology

Information was submitted with the application in this regard, including a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). The County Archaeology team has noted that there is no objection in principle to the development subject to the standard condition requiring a WSI, post evaluative works and a mitigation strategy. At the time of writing this report, the County Archaeologist has not confirmed whether or not the WSI already submitted would negate the need for part (a) of this condition to be imposed so the condition in its entirety must remain in the event permission is forthcoming.

#### Land contamination

Historical maps indicate that a former pond has been backfilled with an unknown material within the footprint of the proposed development site which could present a risk to site users. The proposed development is also within influencing distance (<250 metres) of a former landfill site known as Cryfield Grange Gibbett Hill. The Environmental Health Officer (EHO) advised in the initial response that there is little information regarding the former landfill use, therefore this could present a potential ground gas risk to the development. To ensure that these matters are sufficiently investigated, a planning condition would be necessary to require a desk-top study and any site investigation deemed necessary.

Further to these initial comments, the applicant has provided a desk-top study and a site investigation has been carried out. A further report detailing the results has been submitted. The EHO has been re-consulted and is broadly with the content of the report, however, notes that it makes some recommendations with no further detail in the report as to whether or not this has been followed up. Accordingly, a revised condition is now recommended in this regard, requiring only the specific assessments for the site to be carried out along with a condition detailing what should be done in the event any contamination were to be found.

Overall, officers are satisfied with the development in this regard and appropriate conditions are recommended to deal with any outstanding matters in this respect. The development therefore accords with saved Policy DP9 of the Local Plan.

### Crime and safety

Warwickshire Police have raised no objection to the development but made some recommendations within their comments. The applicant has picked up on these and confirmed in subsequent correspondence that security of the buildings, doors and windows would conform to Secured by Design whilst still ensuring safety for occupiers to escape the building in the event of an emergency. Officers are satisfied that the development is acceptable in this regard.

## Open space

No public open space is to be provided as part of the development. Comments from the Open Space Team are awaited at the time of writing this report, as to whether or not a contribution would be required together with the necessary justification for the enhancement of existing public open space close to the site. This will be reported to committee through the Additional Observations update.

#### Renewables

The submitted Sustainable Buildings Statement incorporates a number of technologies and measures that could be implemented across the development, however, calculations have not been included at this stage as to how this will generate the required 10% energy requirements to be produced on site through renewables or a fabric first approach in accordance with saved policy DP13. The

standard condition requiring these details prior to the commencement of development should therefore be imposed on any forthcoming permission.

#### **SUMMARY/CONCLUSION**

The principle of development has been considered having regard to a number of factors, including the relevant policy provisions of both the saved and the emerging Local Plans, as well as the approved Masterplan. However, it is recognised that the Masterplan is nearing the end of its ten year period of adoption and is under review to take account of the University's changing circumstances and requirements as it continues to expand.

The Emerging Local Plan (ELP) proposes the removal of this site from the Green Belt. Given the advanced stage of the ELP, and considering the modifications and additional text in the policy relating to the University proposed by the Inspector, this is a material consideration which is afforded substantial weight. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that the proposal would cause only limited harm to the Green Belt and that the harm is clearly outweighed by the very special circumstances set out above.

Overall, the principle of development is therefore considered to be acceptable. There would be no unacceptable visual harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and no harm to the amenity of neighbouring land uses and existing buildings. The proposal would not be detrimental to highway safety and matters related to drainage, ecology, archaeology and contaminated land can all be adequately mitigated through the imposition of appropriate conditions.

For all these reasons it is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the conditions and notes set out below.

#### **CONDITIONS**

- The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this permission. **REASON:** To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details shown on the site location plan and approved drawings P0103-RHP-CS-XX-A-1005-3, P0103-RHP-CS-XX-A-1006-3, P0103-RHP-CS-XX-A-1010-2, P0103-RHP-CS-XX-A-1200-8, P0103-RHP-CS-GF-A-1100-13, P0103-RHP-CS-01-A-1101-11, P0103-RHP-CS-02-A-1102-11, P0103-RHP-CS-03-A-1103-11, P0103-RHP-CS-04-A-1104-11, P0103-RHP-CS-05-A-1105-11, P0103-RHP-CS-06-A-1106-11, P0103-RHP-CS-RF-A-1107-4, P0103-RHP-BA-XX-A-2000-1, P0103-RHP-BA-XX-A-2001-1, P0103-RHP-BA-XX-A-2005-2, P0103-RHP-BA-XX-A-2016-2, P0103-RHP-BB-XX-A-2015-2, P0103-RHP-BB-XX-A-2016-2, P0103-RHP-BC-XX-A-2020-1, P0103-RHP-BC-XX-A-2025-2, P0103-RHP-BD-XX-A-2030-1, P0103-RHP-BD-XX-A-2035-1, P0103-RHP-BD-XX-A-2030-1

XX-A-2036-1, P0103-RHP-BE-XX-A-2040-1, P0103-RHP-BE-XX-A-2045-2, P0103-RHP-BE-XX-A-2046-2, P0103-RHP-BF-XX-A-2050-1, P0103-RHP-BF-XX-A-2051-1, P0103-RHP-BF-XX-A-2055-2, P0103-RHP-BF-XX-A-2056-2, P0103-RHP-BG-XX-A-2060-1, P0103-RHP-BG-XX-A-2061-1, P0103-RHP-BG-XX-A-2065-2, P0103-RHP-BG-XX-A-2066-2, P0103-RHP-BG-XX-A-2067-2, P0103-RHP-BH-XX-A-2070-1, P0103-RHP-BH-XX-A-2071-1, P0103-RHP-BH-XX-A-2075-2, P0103-RHP-BH-XX-A-2076-2, P0103-RHP-BI-XX-A-2080-1, P0103-RHP-BI-XX-A-2085-2, P0103-RHP-BJ-XX-A-2096-2, P0103-RHP-BK-XX-A-2100-1, P0103-RHP-BK-XX-A-2101-1, P0103-RHP-BK-XX-A-2105-2, P0103-RHP-BK-XX-A-2106-2, P0103-RHP-BL-XX-A-2110-1, P0103-RHP-BL-XX-A-2115-2, P0103-RHP-BM-XX-A-2120-1, P0103-RHP-BM-XX-A-2125-2, P0103-RHP-XX-XX-A-2130-1, P0103-RHP-XX-XX-A-2131-1, P0103-RHP-XX-XX-A-2175-1, P0103-RHP-XX-XX-A-2176-1, P0103-RHP-XX-XX-A-2177-1, P0103-RHP-BD-XX-A-2178-1,

UAG3297\_A (Sheet 1), UAG3297\_A (Sheet 2), B00802-SWH-ZZ-XX-M2-D-550-P04, 457/100, 457/200, 457/500, 457/120, RESRPA-JAN17, RESTRP-JAN17,

C118397-04, C124214-B1.2, C124214-C3.2a, C124214-C3.2b, C124214-D, C124214-E3.1, C124214-E4a and SK600 and specification contained therein, submitted on 3 March 2017. **REASON**: For the avoidance of doubt and to secure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policies DP1 and DP2 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.

- Other than site clearance and preparation works no works shall commence on the construction of the development hereby permitted until samples of the external facing materials to be used have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. **REASON:** To ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with Policy DP1 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.
- A No development shall take place until detailed surface and foul water drainage schemes for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydrogeological context of the development, have been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in consultation with Warwickshire County Council (WCC). The scheme shall be subsequently implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme to be submitted shall:
  - a. Carry out infiltration testing in accordance with BRE 365 guidance to clarify whether infiltration into the ground is a viable means of disposing of surface water.
  - b. Demonstrate that the surface water drainage system(s) are designed in accordance with CIRIA C753

- c. Limit the discharge rate generated by all rainfall events up to and including the 100 year plus 40% (allowance for climate change) critical rain storm to the QBAR runoff rates for all return periods.
- d. Demonstrate the provisions of surface water run-off attenuation storage in accordance with the requirements specified in "Science Report SC030219 Rainfall Management for Developments"
- e. Demonstrate detailed design (plans, network details and calculations) in support of any surface water drainage scheme, including details of any attenuation system, and outfall arrangements. Calculations should demonstrate the performance of the drainage system for a range of return periods and storms durations inclusive of the 1 in 1 year, 1 in 2 year, 1 in 30 year, 1 in 100 year and 1 in 100 year plus climate change return periods.
- f. Evidence from Seven Trent Water (STW) will be required granting approval of discharge of sewerage to their assets including discharge rate and connection points.
- g. Demonstrate overland flood flow routes in case of system failure, through hydraulically modelling the floodwater outline, indicating flood flow depths and velocities.
- h. Provide a Maintenance Plan to the LPA giving details on how the entire surface water system shall be maintained and managed after completion for the life time of the development. The name of the maintenance company and a contact for who will be responsible for the site shall be provided to the LPA.
- i. No development shall take place within 8metres of the top bank of any ordinary watercourse.

**REASON:** To ensure that adequate drainage facilities are available for the satisfactory and proper development of the site in accordance with Policy DP11 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.

- No part of the development hereby permitted shall be commenced until an appropriate ground gas risk assessment for the site has been undertaken and the results of this assessment have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. If the assessment identifies that gas protection measures are necessary, the applicant must submit details of these gas protection measures to the local planning authority for approval. Once approved, the gas protection measures shall be installed in strict accordance with the approved details and no part of the development shall be occupied until a verification report confirming that the gas protection measures have been installed has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. **REASON:** To safeguard health, safety and the environment in accordance with Policies DP3 & DP9 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.
- In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the local planning authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken, and where remediation is necessary, a remediation scheme must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Following completion of the measures identified in the approved remediation

scheme a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the local planning authority. **REASON:** To safeguard health, safety and the environment in accordance with Policies DP3 & DP9 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.

- No part of the development hereby permitted shall be commenced until: a) a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a programme of archaeological evaluative work has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
  - b) the programme of archaeological evaluative work and associated post-excavation analysis, report production and archive deposition detailed within the approved WSI has been undertaken. A report detailing the results of this fieldwork shall be submitted to the planning authority.
  - c) An Archaeological Mitigation Strategy document (including a Written Scheme of Investigation for any archaeological fieldwork proposed) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This should detail a strategy to mitigate the archaeological impact of the proposed development and should be informed by the results of the archaeological evaluation.

The development, and any archaeological fieldwork post-excavation analysis, publication of results and archive deposition detailed in the Mitigation Strategy document, shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved Mitigation Strategy document. **REASON:** In order to ensure any remains of archaeological importance, which help to increase our understanding of the Districts historical development are recorded, preserved and protected were applicable, before development commences in accordance with Policy DP4 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.

- The development hereby permitted (including demolition) shall not commence until a further bat survey of the site, to include appropriate activity surveys in accordance with BCT Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists— Good Practice Guidelines, has been carried out and a detailed mitigation plan including a schedule of works and timings has been submitted to and approved in writing by the District Planning Authority. Such approved mitigation plan shall thereafter be implemented in full. **REASON:** To safeguard the presence and population of a protected species in line with UK and European Law, the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy DAP3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.
- 9 The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced unless and until a scheme showing how either a). at least 10% of the predicted energy requirement of the development will be produced on or near to the site from renewable energy resources, or b). a scheme showing how at least 10% of the energy demand of the development and its CO<sup>2</sup> emissions would be reduced through the initial construction methods and materials has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be first occupied

until all the works within the approved scheme have been completed and thereafter the works shall be retained at all times and shall be maintained strictly in accordance with manufacturer's specifications. **REASON**: To ensure that adequate provision is made for the generation of energy from renewable energy resources or to achieve carbon savings in accordance with the provisions of Policy DP13 in the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.

- Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, a Car Parking Management Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and the development shall thereafter be carried out and maintained in accordance with these approved details. **REASON:** In the interests of the safety of road users and pedestrians in accordance with Policy DP6 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.
- If an air source heat pump is chosen as the method to comply with the requirement for renewable energy, noise arising from the air source heat pump(s) permitted, when measured one metre from the facade of any noise sensitive premises, shall not exceed the background noise level by more than 3dB (A) measured as LAeq (5 minutes). If the noise in question involves sounds containing a distinguishable, discrete, continuous tone (whine, screech, hiss, hum etc.) or if there are discrete impulses (bangs, clicks, clatters, thumps etc.) or if the noise is irregular enough to attract attention, 5dB(A) shall be added to the measured level. **REASON:** To protect the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties in the locality in accordance with Policies DP2 & DP9 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.
- 12 The development hereby permitted shall only be undertaken in strict accordance with the details of both hard and soft landscaping works illustrated on approved drawings 457/100 and 457/200 received on 3 March 2017 and the additional information in relation to the planting mix received on 7 June 2017. The hard landscaping works shall be completed in full accordance with the approved details within three months of the first occupation of the development hereby permitted; and all planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation. Any tree(s) or shrub(s) which within a period of five years from the completion of the development dies, is removed or becomes in the opinion of the local planning authority seriously damaged, defective or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with another of similar size and species, unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation. All hedging, tree(s) and shrub(s) shall be planted in accordance with British Standard BS4043 - Transplanting Root-balled Trees and BS4428 - Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations. **REASON:** To ensure a satisfactory standard of appearance of the development in the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policies DP1, DP2 and DP3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.

13 No development or other operations (including demolition, site clearance or other preparatory works) shall commence unless the tree protection measures identified in the approved application documentation have been put into place in full accordance with the approved details and thereafter shall remain in place during any such construction work unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. In addition no excavations, site works, trenches or channels shall be cut or pipes or services laid, no fires shall be lit within 10 metres of the nearest point of the canopy of any protected tree(s); no equipment, machinery or structure shall be attached to or supported by a protected tree(s); no mixing of cement or use of other contaminating materials or substances shall take place within, or close enough to, a root protection area that seepage or displacement could cause them to enter a root protection area or any other works carried out in such a way as to cause damage or injury to the tree(s) by interference with their root structure and that no soil or waste shall be deposited on the land in such a position as to be likely to cause damage or injury to the tree(s). **REASON:** In order to protect and preserve existing trees within the site which are of amenity value in accordance with Policy DP3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.

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