

## SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

### PLANNING COMMITTEE 17<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2025

This report provides supplementary information following publication of the main report, for consideration by committee members in determining the following application:

#### **Agenda Item 5 - EDC/25/0165 – Western Cross Phase 4**

##### Consultation on Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Since publication of the main report, the Government has launched a consultation on a revised draft of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025 and open until 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

The draft introduces a fundamentally new structure, replacing numbered paragraphs with Local Plan-style policies. Key changes include the reintroduction of strategic planning through Spatial Development Strategies, an expanded presumption in favour of sustainable development, and measures to support SME developers. It also reflects recent legislative changes, incorporates mandatory swift bricks and chalk stream protections, and adds a new chapter on clean energy and water to align with the Government's Clean Power by 2030 ambitions.

While these proposals represent a significant overhaul rather than a simple refresh, the draft NPPF currently carries limited weight as an open consultation. It is indicative of the future direction of national planning policy but the draft text does not contradict or materially affect the assessment, conclusions in the main report or recommendation on this application which is for a high quality residential development in a sustainable urban location that will contribute to local housing supply.

For the avoidance of doubt, the current NPPF (dated December 2024) remains a material consideration as set out in the main report.

##### Amendments to Main Report

Since publication of the main report it has been established that the Affordable Housing section of the report contains some minor typographical errors. As such, paragraphs 6.96 and 6.99 are hereby amended to read as follows:

6.96 The proposed affordable housing mix (excluding tenure) provide a full range of unit sizes, as shown in the table below:

Dwelling Size/Type	Proposed Affordable Housing	Proposed Affordable Rent	Proposed Shared Ownership	Private
1 Bed (apartment)	8	0	8	24
2 Bed (apartment)	20	0	20	35
2 Bed (house)	11	4	7	18
3 Bed (house)	15	4	11	47
4 Bed (house)	3	3	0	47
<b>Total</b>	57	<del>46</del> 11	<del>44</del> 46	171

#### **Affordable Housing**

- 6.99 Regarding shared ownership units, 28no. 1/2-bed apartments and 18no. 2/3/4-bed houses are proposed. No larger family units are proposed at the shared ownership level, which is disappointing because a more varied mix would have been welcomed. However, no objection was raised in regard to this proposed shared ownership arrangement by the DBC Housing Officer, and when read in conjunction with the proposed affordable rent provision, which includes larger family homes, it is considered that the shared ownership provision is acceptable.

#### Amendments to Recommended Planning Conditions

Since publication of the main report, and following further engagement with the applicant, it is proposed that a number of minor amendments are provided to recommended planning conditions 8, 10 and 22 as follows:

##### *Condition 8 - Soft Landscaping Details and Updates*

The applicant expressed concerns that the requirement under 8 to include 25% native trees and shrubs and 5% wildlife friendly ornamental species could impact building foundation design, compromise the intended landscape aesthetics, and create ongoing maintenance challenges. This has been reviewed with the EDC's landscape consultants who have advised that most native trees require high to medium water, which could complicate foundation design and increase costs. However, a few low-water species (e.g. *Carpinus betulus*, *Betula pendula*) are suitable. Native shrubs tend to be larger, more structural, and visually distinct compared to typical ornamental plants, creating a noticeable difference if used extensively. To balance practicality and aesthetics, it is suggested that minimum native planting requirements be limited to notable open spaces rather than plot frontages, ensuring adequate space for growth and reducing resident complaints. To address these issues, the wording of this condition has been revised to allow greater flexibility.

It is therefore proposed that recommended condition 8 be amended to read as follows (additional text identified with **emphasis**):

No development above foundation level shall take place until detailed soft landscaping plans have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include:

- (a) Detailed planting plans that broadly accord with the details illustrated and annotated on the approved drawings at 1:200 scale for the whole scheme confirming the final arrangement of individual plant species and densities, including details of the numbers of all trees, hedges, shrubs, and herbaceous species to be planted, together with a planting schedule providing individual species, plant sizes (heights, spread, pot size, girth) and densities, and detailing plant supports.
- (b) Confirmation that, subject to suitable evidence to justify an alternative approach for specified areas of the site where this may compromise other design outcomes, the final planting fulfils requirements of the site Wide Biodiversity Action Plan secured under the outline planning permission achieving:
  - (i) 25% native trees and shrubs
  - (ii) 25% wildlife friendly ornamental species
  - (iii) 50% other ornamental tree and shrub species
- (c) Confirmation that a break in hedgerow planting between apartment blocks B and C facilitates a 3 metre wide access from Fastrack to the communal garden.  
The approved soft landscaping shall be carried out in full during the first available planting season following first occupation of any dwelling hereby approved, or in

accordance with a timetable agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and shall be managed in accordance with the Landscape Management Plan (P24-1771 G0001 V4, dated November 2025) at all times.

*Informative: Care should be taken when specifying any tall/climbing/spreading shrubs around any hit-and-miss walls, as these could grow up, through and around brickwork. Wildlife-friendly ornamental Species should enhance visual amenity while also providing food, shelter, and habitat opportunities for local wildlife support pollinators, birds, and other fauna.*

#### *Condition 10 Boundary Treatments*

The applicant raised concerns that the requirement under 10(a) to replace fencing with brick walls for all tandem on-plot parking spaces would result in significant cost increases. While acknowledging the importance of brick walls in key locations, the condition has been rationalised so that brick walls are required only for plots with double tandem parking on tertiary routes that are more visible from the public realm.

It is therefore proposed that recommended condition 10 be amended to read as follows (amended and additional text identified with **emphasis**):

No development above foundation level shall take place until a revised plan, that has the effect of amending the approved Boundary Treatments Plan (Drawing No. P24-1771\_EN\_0002\_S1\_REV C), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The revised plan shall:

- (a) Replace fencing with brick-built screen walls enclosing the parking areas serving the following plots; T07.02; T07.03; T10.06; ~~T13.01; T17.02;~~ T22.02; T23.01; ~~T32.01;~~ T40.02; T41.02; ~~T42.01b; T42.02; T42.03; T42.04; T42.05; T42.06;~~
- (b) Increase the public access opening from Fastrack to the communal garden to at least 3.00m width by reducing the extent of hedge row planting between apartment blocks B and C;
- (c) Provide contemporary railings on top of the 0.6m high brick wall boundaries associated with the Fastrack apartment blocks A, B and C, which differentiates from ball top railings utilised on the remainder of the development; and
- (d) Include entrance gates for the private approaches to the independent ground floor apartments.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of the building to which they relate and shall thereafter be retained and maintained at all times.

#### *Condition 22 Residential Travel Plan*

The applicant has clarified that the proposed one year's free membership to the car club programme, along with £50 free driving credit, will be offered per residential dwelling. The wording of this condition has therefore been updated to reflect this specificity.

It is therefore proposed that recommended condition 22 be amended to read as follows (amended and additional text identified with **emphasis**):

Notwithstanding the submitted Residential Travel Plan (document ref 173535-R03 October 2025), no dwelling shall be occupied until a Full Residential Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Full Residential Travel Plan

should aim to reduce car dependency and shall include objectives and modal-split targets, a programme of implementation and provision for monitoring, review and improvement. The Full Residential Travel Plan should also include details for the operational arrangement for the car club with the wider Western Cross area, and the mechanism for advertising the one year's free membership to the car club programme and the availability of £50 free driving credit **per residential dwelling**. Thereafter, the latest approved Full Residential Travel Plan shall be implemented in full and adhered to throughout the life of the development, with monitoring and reporting taking place for a minimum of five years from first occupation.

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