Agenda Item	6.3
Report No	PLS-049-20

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: South Planning Applications Committee

Date: 22 September 2020

Report Title: 20/00338/FUL: The Highland Council

62 King Street, Nairn

Report By: Area Planning Manager – South

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Erection of 12 flats and CAB offices

Ward: 18 – Nairn and Cawdor

Development category: Local

Reason referred to Committee: Community Council objection and more than 8 representations against the proposal.

All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

Recommendation

Members are asked to agree the recommendation to **Grant** planning permission as set out in section 11 of the report.

1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1 The proposal involves the erection of a 3 storey mixed use building comprising of 12 flats on the first and second floors, offerring affordable housing, with the ground floor designed as a new Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) office for Nairn.
- 1.2 The building is rectilinear in form, with gable projections to west and north-east elevations. It will have pitched roofs, with the roofs of the gable projections stepped to break up the mass. The external finishes comprise the following:
 - Roof dark grey standing seam metal
 - Walls at first and second floor smooth white render
 - Wall at ground floor linear brick in natural blue
 - Entrance Siberian Larch
 - Natural stone walling
- 1.3 The building is public facing on three sides with its principal elevation onto King Street, which includes the entrance to the CAB office. The north-east elevation faces onto the existing car park and south-west elevation faces Court House Lane. Access to the flats is from Court House Lane.
- 1.4 The proposal includes improvements to Court House Lane to create an active travel link, for pedestrians and cyclists, between King Street and High Street. The intention is for vehicular access on the lane to be stopped up. The addition of a walled landscaped area along this route will afford both privacy to the rooms of the CAB office and an attractive entrance marker for the flats.
- 1.5 Enclosed tree planting areas will be formed on the north-east and south-west elevations and a separate tree planting area will be located further to the north-east of the building. Trees will be planted on the north-west side fronting onto King Street. Surface treatment is resin bound gravel with natural stone walls proposed along sections of the perimeter and roadside.
- 1.7 It is not proposed to provide dedicated parking for the flats. The parking behind the existing Old Social Work Building within the application site is to be redesigned to accommodate an additional 6 spaces.
- 1.8 Pre Application Consultation: None
- 1.9 Supporting Information: Design Statement Parts 1 & 2 (19.06.20), Updated Transport Statement (24.06.20), Visual Information Proposed Views 1 to 5 (19.06.2020).
- 1.10 Variations: A number of changes have been made to the proposal. The key changes relate to:
 - 1. The retention, rather than demolition, of the Old Social Work Building
 - 2. The building has been handed and moved south-west, towards Court House Lane, to improve alignment with the existing Council Finance Building on the south-east boundary.
 - 3. Relocation of the main entrance to the north-west corner facing King Street/A96.

4. Relocation of the bin storage area from the north-east boundary (car park) to the south-east boundary next to the existing Council Finance Building.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site sits within part of the existing public Library Car Park within Nairn town centre. The building is situated within an area of the car park that was the site of the former Youth Centre, and before that the Free Church, which was demolished around 2011.
- 2.2 On the south-east boundary is the single storey Category B listed building (Council Finance Office). On the south-west side of the site is a vacant 2 storey traditional stone-built building (the Old Social Work Office). Court House Lane, which runs between the two, provides an additional route for vehicular traffic from King Street/A96 to the car park behind the Old Social Work Building and Falconer's Lane.
- 2.3 On the west side of King Street, in a slightly elevated position, lies recently constructed buildings of modern design the Community Centre and Police Station.
- 2.4 The site is not within, nor is it located adjacent to, the Nairn Fishertown Conservation Area.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 There is no site-specific history associated with this application.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.1 Advertised: Nairnshire Telegraph, unknown neighbour

Date Advertised: 11.02.2020, 24.03.2020 and again on 07.07.2020

Representation deadline: 21.07.2020

Timeous representations: 26 support, 14 against

Late representations: 0

4.2 Material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

Against

- a) Contrary to Policy NA7, paragraph 2.8, paragraph 4.34 of Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP);
- b) Need for the development; particularly housing need when Nairn has accommodated nearly 200 new affordable houses/flats in the last 10 years;
- c) Result in the loss of the Old Social Work Building/Police Station valued for historic significance;
- d) Incompatible with the Nairn Town Centre Action Plan (NTCAP):
 - Proposal would pre-empt, or complicate, the delivery of other elements of the town centre regeneration plan and does not enable or deliver on key

requirements for the revival of the town centre and High Street. The NTCAP respects the need of Nairn town centre to be an attraction to tourists and shoppers, with convenient parking, events areas, a heritage building used as a gateway/tourist/welcome/refreshment centre. This area was to become a Tourist Hub for Nairn. Coach parking bays were to be provided in the area. It fails to meet the key objective of promoting the town centre's vitality and viability. It will not increase footfall into and through the town centre and to the High Street shops and services. Housing and a CAB office will produce minimal extra footfall compared to tourists and coach visitors. Will not provide the improved social and amenity space or facilities which are identified as the wider aims of the NTCAP;

- NTCAP Proposal 2 seeks to bring upper floors back to productive use for affordable housing. A priority to increase social housing by regenerating existing Nairn High Street properties has seen little progress since 2015. Many unsold and vacant properties in poor repair above High Street shops, could be purchased by the Council and refurbished to add at least 12 new social rented properties. Bringing back into use existing properties is better use of public funds than a resource intensive new build. Renovation of empty flats in Town Centre/ High Street better option and will rejuvenate High Street. CAB could be accommodated within an existing shop. No proven need for housing on this site;
- NTCAP Proposal 4 seeks a civic hub in the town centre;
- NTCAP Proposal 6 seeks to establish a new Town Square;
- NTCAP Proposal 7 identifies a new multi-function space. New build located on an area intended for a multi-purpose open air or covered event and social space changes the landscape of the Town Centre;
- NTCAP Proposal 8 seeks to reconfigure car-parking to achieve more efficient use of space;
- NTCAP Proposal 9 seeks to bring the former Social Work building back into productive use for community /cultural purpose, which could include some affordable housing. No detailed financial case has been made for not refurbishing this heritage building;
- NTCAP Proposal 10 Convert the Council's Finance Office to civic use. Envisaged to become part of a new Town Square;

Proposal offers none of these possibilities. It does not accord with the existing master plan and would render more difficult the subsequent provision of a coherent and integrated multi-functional public space. The proposed building does not serve as a civic hub and does not incorporate any open, public social or recreational space to serve as a town square. Local town residents and visitors will have neither incentive nor opportunity to stroll, relax and take in the sights of that vicinity. Precludes, or prevents, a more ambitious reconfiguration of the parking space to incorporate space and amenities for tourist, visitor and coach parking;

e) Loss of parking. Note the parking survey submitted, and Community Council carried out survey in January and February which shows between 92 and 95% occupancy in the middle of winter. Summer traffic is known to be far greater. Proposed parking layout will make circulation impossible. Requirement for dedicated parking provision for 12 flats and CAB office, bin storage and

access for a larger new building will remove parking space currently available and used by all the town's residents and many visitors. Total parking loss estimated at around 50 spaces taking into account building on or pedestrianisation of car parking spaces and increased usage from occupants. In terms of the proposed parking layout (Drawing 9594-L(90)004 REV A) query whether the extra spaces can be achieved and whether the refuse lorries will be able to access the car park as suggested;

- f) Design does not acknowledge, complement or link to the important adjacent historic town centre buildings and does not enhance the appeal of the town centre as a destination. It will be a bulky rectangular building devoid of character and without distinctive features, local identity or architectural merit and will not enhance the streetscape;
- g) Adverse impact on the Conservation Area;
- h) The 3 storey building is located on a very prominent site. Overshadows the B Listed building (Council's Finance Office) and will also largely block views of the B Listed Courthouse:
- The modern 3 storey block would dominate the Town Centre blocking views from the main road and the Community Centre. Prevent or restrict regeneration of Listed buildings on or near the site. Does not respect urban history of site;

For

- a) The proposal meets aspirations of NTCAP. Encourages greater connectivity between King Street and High Street. Recreates sense of place for town centre.
- b) Design is sympathetic to the surrounding buildings and enhances the appearance of the town. Modern building that respects its context and is of its place and time and would be built to modern standards. Wider landscaping will help anchor building into the site and repair the urban fabric. Need for bigger CAB offices more accessible location with improved facilities.
- c) There is demand for affordable housing in Nairn.
- d) Loss of parking is not a problem and would encourage active travel.
- e) The Old Social Work Building has been vacant for years and failed to attract buyer. Uneconomical to renovate and previous CAB proposal estimated £1.5M.
- 4.3 All letters of representation are available for inspection via the Council's eplanning portal which can be accessed through the internet www.wam.highland.gov.uk/wam.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 **Nairn River Community Council** in its most recent response advises:

This is the wrong building in the wrong place

While Nairn River Community Councillors welcome provision of more 1 and 2 bed social housing to meet identified local need and appropriate accommodation for our valued Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), we cannot understand why Highland Council continues to propose a 'newbuild' in this unsuitable location, and has not explored alternative options to repurpose existing buildings since they have, since the previous version of this Plan was submitted, and responded to by the public, received information from several bodies in the Town, detailing numerous under-utilised or empty buildings in the High Street and King Street area which could be purchased and/or converted to provide social housing and accommodate a new CAB, to help regenerate our Town Centre.

A poor fit with the aims of the Nairn Town Centre Plan 2015

As detailed in our objections to the previous edition of this Planning Application, this plan is a significant departure from the '2015 Nairn Community Town Centre Plan' which states among its priorities

Town Centre Plan Priority No 2 as part of High Street improvement – 'bring upper floors back to productive use' for affordable housing

Town Centre Plan Priority No 7 provide new multi function space creating a 3 storey block at a location intended for a multi-purpose open air or covered event and social space and ne Town Square completely changes the landscape of the Town Centre as envisaged in Town Centre Plan 15. The new building proposed would severely restrict civic space development in this area. Why depart so completely from what the Community has said they wanted, when alternative social housing solutions exist elsewhere. (see later)

Town Centre Plan Priority 8 Convert the Council's Finance Office to civic use

This single storey heritage building's prominent architectural features fit well with the newly refurbished Victorian Courthouse and were envisaged to become part of a new Town Square. The proposed three storey block of flats in modern style would dwarf this older listed Italianate former school and landmark building and make it barely visible from the main road.

A newbuild block of flats is not in keeping with surrounding Victorian heritage architecture, one of Nairn's top 'selling point' for locals as well as visitors. Close to a million pounds of public money was recently spent on renovating our historic Courthouse Building, so we cannot understand why Highland Council would want to compromise this landscape.

We also note that this Application does not mention Highland Council's requirement to lodge an official notification of this Planning Application on 15 Feb 2020 in the Edinburgh Gazette (source of the Scottish Government for Listed Building and Conservation Areas) for a variance to build these (modern) flats, in the vicinity of an existing Conservation Area (Nairn Fishertown) and numerous Listed building around the Town Centre area.

Town Centre Plan Priority 9 Bring the former Social Work Building/Old Police Station back into use

Repurposing an existing building was the original plan to create a new CAB with flats above but the current plan bears no relation to what was originally proposed. A new 3 storey block will reduce available space in the Town Centre to achieve other aims of the Town Centre Plan

The Nairn Town Centre Plan 2015 was also designed to help Nairn to prepare for the A96 bypass by developing a vital, diverse, and attractive town centre, linking the High Street to the Viewfield area and creating more welcoming civic spaces and improved public amenities.

According to the 'Guide to The Planning System in Scotland,' by law, the Highland Council has a duty to decide on planning application in accordance with existing local development plans.

The Nairn Town Centre Plan 2015 (sic) agreed by the local community and Highland Council does not show any requirement for flats to be built in this area but does indicate an ambition for the Court House Lane carpark to become a new Town Square.

This would no longer be viable if this development were to go ahead, due to the resulting reduction in space for parking (for both cars and coaches) and other public amenities.

Planning Advice Note 82 (PAN82) indicates that any development which departs significantly from a Local Plan presents a conflict of interest to a local authority and requires a full process of public consultation with the community who approve the plan. Scottish Ministers should be notified in this case as there are clear objections from more than one "group or organisation that represents the community" and "The application is contrary to the Development Plan for the area."

Failure to get a plan 'Right First Time'

This latest Planning Application supersedes two previous application over the past 2 years. The first, Plan A, was to house the CAB and flats in the renovated former Police Station Buildings (consistent with a key aim of the Nairn Town Centre Plan 2015)

The second, Plan B was a completely different proposition, changed suddenly in November 2019 to a newbuild three storey block in a totally different location – the site of the former Nairn Community Centre on King Street (currently a car park)

The current application Plan C now proposes a newbuild of the same size, and modern design as before, with minor changes in location and aspect.

As detailed below it will still result in the loss of dozens of car parking spaces, including existing electric vehicle charging points, at a time when High Street public parking is also being severely curtailed dues to COVID 19 social distancing measures, and Nairn High Street shops face unprecedented economic uncertainty

This Application has now been amended so many times that we feel the project should be halted and require a completely new Application. It does not fit in any way with the 'Right First Time' principle which underpins local development planning in Scotland.

Failure to consult the local community

This entire project has been characterised by a lack of due process and public transparency. Plan A and Plan B above were progressed by Highland Officers, and approved in private pf Nairn's 4 Highland Councillors, with no reference to Community Councils or wider public.

Furthermore Plan A (renovation of a heritage building) was hastily replaced by Plan B (a newbuild), in November 2019 just after Nairn's Common Good Register was finalised, confirming that the public toilet block linked to the Old Police Station and due for demolition as part of Plan A was on Common Good Land, as would require a 12 week public consultation for any 'change of use'.

Instead of taking the time needed to consult the public to get this plan right for Nairn, goes against both the spirit and the legal agreements of the 'Community Empowerment Act' and the new 'Scottish Planning Bill', which requires full transparency and proactive collaboration with local communities on local planning matters.

The National Standards for Community Engagement defines community engagement as: 'A purposeful process which develops a working relationship between Communities, Community organisations and public and private bodies to help them to identify and act on Community needs and ambitions.

It involves respectful dialogue between everyone involved, aimed at improving understanding between them and taking joint action to achieve positive change'

Open collaborative dialogue at local community level has been noticeable by its absence, in development of the earlier iteration of the Current Application, despite Community Councils repeatedly requesting it from relevant Officers and Nairn's 4 Highland Councillors, alongside similar appeals by other local business and community organisations such as BID, ANB and NICE (Nairn's Community Enterprise Trust).

During a West and Suburban CC meeting in late 2019 (whilst NRCC were in abeyance) Councillor Saggers did promise a public consultation before the revised CAB Plan went to the Planning table. This did not happen and was thus documented as part of our objections to Plan B, now superseded here. Unfortunately, the current Plan appears almost identical, and though we are pleased that the Old Police Buildings has been reprieved from demolition, it appears to ignore most of previous comments and concerns about building design and location.

Failure to support the economy

Increasing sustainable economic growth is a main purpose of the Scottish Government. It expects decisions of the planning system to help build a growing local economy, while at the same time protecting our environment for future generations and making sure that communities can enjoy a better quality of life.

The building of these flats will not in any way help regenerate the Town Centre rather they will reduce opportunities to promote the town and attract visitors to investigate the High Street and local shops.

Equalities impacts

We are concerned that these flats would also be inaccessible to less mobile residents No provision for a lift to the first and second floors means no wheelchair access to the flats and we do not see any adaptability of flats here for tenants who may become disabled during tenancy as per BS300 2009 code of practice for design of new buildings.

There also does not appear to be any disabled parking provision, or any drop off point for wheelchairs etc in the immediate area of the flats of CAB offices nor any provision for disabled parking bays.

The Building Standards Technical Handbook 2019 domestic' requires that every building must be designed and constructed in such a way that all occupants and visitors are provided with safe, convenient and unassisted means of access to the building.

This is relevant both for the proposed CAB facility on ground floor which is likely to cater for many clients with mobility and health issues, and for design of flats on the upper floors as it may preclude any person with mobility difficulties from being allocated a tenancy.

Loss of Town Centre Parking

According to this planning application, 22 parking spaces will be lost from Town Centre capacity. We believe this loss to be at least 50

We mote that the survey of parking needs was carried out off peak and off season in November and did not take into account of summer tourist traffic in the town, thus contravening The Highland Councils' own guidelines for timing surveys.

It also did not take account of:

- 1/extra parking needs of CAB office staff (14 spaces according to THC Transport Team
- 2/parking access needs of residents of the twelve flats above (14 spaces based on 1.2 spaces per flat as per THC regulations)

Recent surveys carried out by local residents confirm that the current parking area in this Town Centre location is normally 95% full on most working days.

It is thus clear that there would be at least 50 spaces lost to shoppers and visitors to Nairn Town Centre by this newbuild rather than the 22 suggested

That represents a 20-25% total loss of parking space in the immediate area, with significant detrimental impact on prospects for rival of High Street retail economy.

This does not factor in recent additional parking restrictions in Nairn High Street now to be imposed at short notice with minimal public consultation for the foreseeable future, to facilitate COVID social distancing measures.

Closure of Court House Lane

The closure of Court House Lane to the A96 to allow the squeezing in of a few parking places is another reason for full Public consultation on this application. Court House Lane is a well used and sensible egress out of the parking area and to close it off is not acceptable without the full consensus of the People of Nairn. The only reason the costs of doing so is being added to this application is to provide space to reduce the number of car parking spaces actually being lost to this travesty of a project. In our opinion no other developer would be permitted to categorically state

that any road, let alone this well used road, vital to the future of the High Street, would be closed off without some kind of public consultation.

This is a very high-handed position for The Highland Council to take.

CAB – Changing Needs Post COVID?

While we recognise the important role of the CAB in our community we know of several alternative accommodation options not yet explored, and we are also aware that CAB may need more time to review and adapt its business model and working practices for a post COVID world.

Air Pollution/Health Issues for Housing Tenants

There are public health issues in housing potentially vulnerable residents so close to the vehicle emissions and noise pollution of the A96. There is a growing evidence of higher rates of dementia, heart disease, stroke and lung disease in those living near busy roads.

Alternative Options for Social Housing

As detailed in our previous objection to the previous version of this plan Nairn community representatives including Community Councils have drawn to the attention of Highland Council Officers the existence of several 1 or 2 bedroom properties available for sale, and numerous vacant properties requiring renovation in and around the High Street, that could be purchased by the Council and refurbished to add at least 12 new properties for social rent to Nairn's housing stock. Bringing back into use existing properties is a better, and greener use of public funds, more in line with Highland's environmental policy than a new-build.

There is also an approved Planning application (14/03721/FUL) for twelve flats in the grounds of the Manor Care Home on Cawdor Road. The ground was broken under the certificate of lawfulness 19/04432/CLE in October 2019 but no activity noted on the site since then. If there is such urgent need for social housing in Nairn, that the Highland Council is prepared to spend a vast sum of money, break their own guidelines and contravene their own approved Town Centre Plan for this, why doesn't the Council take the burden off the Town Centre by pursuing the developers at the Manor to complete that overdue project or take it over themselves?

Inconsistent with commitments of Highland Council Local Housing Strategy 2017 – 2022

Section 1.5 Council Programme: A Place to Live

4. Encourage and assist the regeneration of our town centre and high streets

Section 1.6 Community Planning

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act' came into force in December 2016.

The Strategy clearly states that "Community Participation and Dialogue: People in Highland will be more involved in decisions that affect their lives".

Section 1.14 Equality Statement Highland Council is committed to the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010, ensuring that people are not **discriminated against on the grounds of age, disability**

Re Town Centre Action Plans "The Council has adopted a Town Centre Action Plans for Nairn as planning guidance, which is treated as a **material consideration** in determining planning applications"

This is in summary a planning application for the wrong building in the wrong place and completely incompatible with the vision of the local community (including the business community) for the future of Nairn's Town Centre at a time when the town faces unprecedented economic challenges.

We trust that, as this planning application clearly does not meet planning guidelines, it will be refused.

5.2 **Transport Planning Team**:

Active Travel Connections

Welcome the principle of improving active travel connections between the A96 Trunk Road and the High Street by re-designation of Court House Lane for use by pedestrians and cyclists only. The design details for this will need to be resolved through a Road Construction Consent (RCC) application and Traffic Regulation Order to support the intended changes.

Achieving good quality active travel connections through to the High Street should also ensure that the existing pedestrian routes from Court House Lane and Falconer's Lane are attractive places where pedestrians feel safe using them at all times. Seek a condition for an assessment on the quality and personal security of the existing routes through to the High Street from Court House Lane and Falconers Lane, with any recommendations for improvements being implemented prior to any occupation of the new development.

Parking

The Existing Car Park Layout Drawing No. 9594-PL(00)003, suggests existing provision of 198 car parking spaces (including spaces with electric charging facilities and designated disabled spaces). Drawing 9594-L(90)004 REV A shows the proposals for the changes to the parking within the public car parks serving this part of the town centre. After incorporation of the proposed changes to the existing car park layouts, the information suggests the loss of the existing parking on the application site would result in a net reduction of 8 car parking spaces over the current provision. Disabled parking spaces will increase from 7 to 9 spaces and the 2 spaces with electric charging facilities lost from the development site will be relocated into the reformatted car park behind the retained 'Old Social Work Building' off Court House Lane. Provision of motorcycle parking spaces will increase from 2 to 4 spaces and it appears there may be scope to increase that further through the detailed design process.

Potential for 2 additional new car parking spaces on Falconer's Lane where it meets the proposed pedestrianised Court House Lane, but this would be dependent on no ongoing vehicular access being required between Falconer's Lane and the Library Car Park, when Court House Lane was re-designated for active travel use only. Any required vehicular access between Falconer's Lane and the Library Car Park would need to be clarified through promotion of the required Traffic Order for Court House Lane. At the conclusion of that process then a decision could be taken on whether the proposed 2 additional parking spaces could be implemented.

No dedicated car parking provision for the occupiers of and visitors to the 12 new flats and the CAB Offices. The new flats will be marketed as having no car parking, which would not be against the Council's standards that permit reduced parking provisions within town centre locations provided the developments support wider Council policy. From a transport perspective, that would include good non-car connectivity and providing financial contributions towards enhanced active travel facilities. The proposed conversion of Court House Lane and delivering improved active travel connectivity between the A96 Trunk Road and the High Street would meet those requirements.

The proposal indicates that the new CAB Offices will replace their existing office on the High Street which already places demands on existing town centre public parking. Any additional public parking demands that this new development would generate should be adjusted down by any demands that the existing office currently generates.

The updated Transport Statement (June 2020) suggests that the Council has advised that the removal of the existing car parking spaces from the former community centre site off Court House Lane should not be considered as a net reduction in provision, as it was only formed as a temporary measure pending built redevelopment on the site. However, given public car parking has been available on the development site for what appears from on-line viewing to be at least 6 years after demolition of the former Youth Centre, Transport Planning does not accept the suggestion that the loss of those spaces should not be deemed as a net reduction. The Applicant has received confirmation from the Council Parking Management Team that the spaces within that site are not covered by the current Decriminalised Parking Enforcement Order for Nairn car parks. This suggests that the parking available on that site was not intended to be recognised as formal public parking going forward.

Transport Planning note that surveys undertaken by the applicant in November 2019 suggest that there is currently spare capacity in the public car parks serving this part of the town centre, and that surveys undertaken in November may not demonstrate peak usage of public car parks in the town centre through the year, given the likely increase in usage during the summer tourist season. Transport Planning is aware of the alternative survey data compiled for the Community Council that suggested a greater usage of those public car parks than was found in the application submission. This data does suggest a greater level of usage during those survey periods, but also shows that there was sufficient spare capacity in those car parks surveyed to accommodate the current proposed net reduction of 8 spaces.

This possible greater usage was supported by feedback received from the Local Area Roads Office, who clarified that whilst existing public parking provisions appear to be generally sufficient for most of the year, there can be pressure on capacity during the busy summer season. This is not unusual for popular tourist locations like Nairn.

After review of all the information made available, Transport Planning does not believe that the proposed net reduction of 8 public car parking spaces would generate unacceptable parking capacity issues for Nairn Town Centre. This conclusion takes into account the promoted position that this new development

would be generating little, if any, additional town centre parking demands at the busiest times.

The Council's parking management team has indicated that the town centre would benefit from alternative parking controls in the existing public car parks serving the town centre. It would appear there is an existing free 24hr maximum stay arrangement operating, which would not encourage short-stay / high-turnover use of the car parks that is required for supporting visitors to the town centre commercial and social facilities. Alternative arrangements could allow for an overall reduction in long-stay public parking demand, freeing up more space for short-stay visitors generating turnover for local businesses and community facilities. It could also encourage more long-stay users of the existing car parks to travel in and out of the town centre by more sustainable means, which would support the current declared climate emergency. This may be something that could be considered by the local business and community groups in Nairn with the Council's Parking Enforcement Team, if there are future recognised pressures on the public parking serving the town centre.

To ensure that construction impacts on wider town centre access and parking are effectively considered and managed by the developer, a condition requiring a Construction Traffic Management Plan prior to any works commencing on site should be sought. This should cover how the works will be managed to limit impacts on access to public car parking serving the town centre.

Cycle Provision

Welcome the inclusion of new public cycle stands to accommodate up to 10 bicycles. These should be suitable for staff and visitors to the new CAB Office and for visitors to the flats. 12 spaces for use by residents of the flatted units is sufficient to meet the requirements of the Council's Guidelines, but they appear to be open to the elements and not in a secure lockable facility to meet the long-term requirements of resident parking. Recommend a condition requiring the secure long-term residents cycle parking prior to any works commencing on site.

Servicing

The latest proposals have changed the bin storage and collection arrangements so that collection will now happen from the public car park off Falconer's Lane. This suggests that the Council's larger refuse collection vehicles should be able to manoeuvre through the proposed revised layout for that car park.

Roads Drainage

The submitted drainage proposals for the new building are to provide a new cellular soakaway unit, which is assumed will be for the owner / occupier of the building to take on with regards to ongoing maintenance requirements. No detail on the arrangements for draining the surface water run-off from the changed Court House Lane. Understand that the existing road drains through gullies into what is assumed will be Scottish Water owned sewers. Not clear at this stage whether Scottish Water would continue to accept such discharge into their sewer if the road is being changed through an RCC. If not, this would have fundamental implications to how the roads drainage for this revised Court House Lane could operate. Recommend a condition requiring the surface water drainage arrangements for the proposed alterations to Court House Lane be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority in

consultation with Scottish Water and the Roads Authority prior to any works commencing on site.

- 5.3 **Waste Management Team** is content with the proposed plans for siting/storage for the bins and collections.
- 5.4 **Flood Risk Management Team** has no objection to proposed surface water drainage scheme.
- 5.5 **Development Plans Team** note the significant amendments to the original scheme:
 - Re-orientation and re-siting of the proposed built development
 - · Retention of the Old Social Work Building and public toilets
 - Re-configuration of the Falconers Lane Carpark
 - · Relocation of the bin store
 - Additional Greening of the site
 - Improvements to the public realm
 - · Provision of public cycle parking

With the retention of the Old Social Work Building the proposal now accords with Nairn Community Town Centre Plan (2015) & Nairn Town Centre Development Brief (NTCDB) (2011).

The scheme now also better reflects the historic street pattern of the locality and makes a better use of the site. The commercial entrance fronting King Street provides this important road with a good active frontage and continues the improvement of the frontages off this road (Proposal 14 of the NTCAP).

Changes to the original submission show significant additional greening across the development and provision of public cycle parking and again consider this to be a major improvement to the scheme. The closure of Court House Lane to vehicular traffic and conversion to an active travel route between the town centre and Community centre is also supported.

The use of colour is supported, and the chosen colour should complement that of the Community Centre, Police Station and the Bus Station flats.

Welcome the low level stone walls along the Court House Lane (either side of the flat entrance) with planting beyond.

In terms of the loss of parking from the site of the proposed built development, there is justification in certain cases to reduce parking requirements for new development below those recommended in Council guidelines if proposals can demonstrate a high level of good quality, non-car accessibility. This position is reflected in the Scottish Government's National Transport Strategy 2 which was published in February 2020. The overarching priority of NTS2 is to embed the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy in decision making which promotes investment in walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared transport options in preference to single occupancy private car use for the movement of people.

The removal of the existing car parking spaces on the site of the former Community Centre itself should not be considered as a net reduction in provision overall as it was only formed as a temporary measure pending built redevelopment of the site and was therefore never intended as a long term car park. The use of town centre

car parks for overnight parking associated with residential use is considered to result in the use of the car park being more resource efficient.

The NTCAP sets out a range of aspirations and priorities for enhancing the vibrancy and vitality of the area. These are particularly focused around opportunities associated with the de-trunking of A96 and the reduction in traffic. Two of the three overarching themes relate to this aspect of the planning application: the desire to "make better use of area between King Street and the High Street" and "improve walking and cycling links between the town centre and surroundings". The latest version of the application which directs investment in the public realm and active travel routes is considered to reflect this position.

5.6 **Historic Environment Team** considers the retention of the Old Social Work Office to be a positive step.

It advises that the Listed building (Council Finance Building) was originally built in the shadow of the (now demolished) Free Church to function as the church school, and was historically only visible by accessing the vennel, from where views of the principal elevation would open up as one passed the church. The Listed building was not originally intended to be visible from the east. As such the historic setting of the Listed building would not be significantly affected by the proposed development. The proposed development could be considered an appropriate response to the historic context of the Listed building and that by repairing some of the original street pattern and associated vennel its wider setting is being partially restored. Since the demolition of the Free Church many have now become accustomed to less restricted views of the Listed building.

In conservation terms, no objection or significant concern regarding impacts to the setting of the Listed building. As much as possible should be done to ensure sightlines towards the building, especially from the A96, are maximised and that the public realm improvements encourage access from the development to the High Street, passing the listed building so that it can continue to be enjoyed.

The proposal is positive in that it respects and acknowledges its historic context and repairs and enhances the original layout, grain and rhythm of this part of Nairn.

- 5.7 **Contaminated Land Team:** There is no historic use or activity within the boundary of the above planning application site, and so a contaminated land condition requiring further investigation is not recommended for this application.
- 5.8 **Scottish Water** has no objection. In relation to surface water it advises that for reasons of sustainability and to protect customers from potential future sewer flooding, Scottish Water does not accept any surface water connections into its combined sewer system. There may be limited exceptional circumstances where such a connection would be permitted (brownfield sites only), however this will require significant justification taking account of various factors including legal, physical, and technical challenges.
- 5.9 **Transport Scotland:** No objection.

6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the application

6.1 Highland Wide Local Development Plan 2012

- 28 Sustainable Design
- 29 Design Quality & Place-making
- 30 Physical Constraints
- 31 Developer Contributions
- 32 Affordable Housing
- 34 Settlement Development Areas
- 42 Previously Used Land
- 56 Travel
- 57 Natural, Built & Cultural Heritage
- 64 Flood Risk
- 65 Waste Water Treatment
- 66 Surface Water Drainage
- 75 Open Space

6.2 Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2015

Policy 1 (Promoting and Protecting City and Town Centres)

NA7 Town Centre – Uses: Tourism, housing, retail, business and community:

Development to be in accordance with Nairn Town Centre Development Brief including uses that: add to commercial vitality and viability; improve physical appearance of area; increase pedestrian links and footfall to the High Street.

Paragraph 2.8 focus attention on the town centres to bolster their role as well connected meeting places and as hubs for local facilities.

Paragraph 4.34 Develop the role of Nairn as a tourism and employment centre.

6.3 Highland Council Supplementary Planning Policy Guidance

Developer Contributions (March 2013)

Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)

Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013)

Managing Waste in New Developments (March 2013)

Physical Constraints (March 2013)

Public Art Strategy (March 2013)

Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)

7. OTHER MATERIAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Nairn Town Centre Development Brief (2011)

7.2 Nairn Community Town Centre Plan (2015)

The Nairn Community Town Centre Plan and its associated Action Plan (NTCAP), which was developed in consultation with the community and adopted in 2015,

contains several proposals which are relevant to the consideration of this development. Themes 2 and 3 are most relevant:

- Theme 2: Make better use of area between King Street and High Street
- Theme 3: Improve walking and cycling links between the town centre and surroundings

These break down into specific proposals:

NTCAP Proposal 2 bring upper floors back to productive use

NTCAP Proposal 4 develop a civic hub

NTCAP Proposal 6 establish a new Town Square

NTCAP Proposal 7 provide new multi-function space

NTCAP Proposal 8 reconfigure car-parking to achieve more efficient use of space

NTCAP Proposal 9 to bring the former THC Social Work back into use

NTCAP Proposal 10 convert the Council's Finance Office to civic use

NTCAP Proposal 11 improve walking and cycling links to and from the High Street

NTCAP Proposal 14 reinstate King Street (A96) as a vibrant town centre street that balances the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles

7.3 Scottish Government Planning Policy and Guidance

Paras 81, 82 & 83 – Promoting Rural development

Paras 106 & 108 – Business and Employment

Para 232 - Green Infrastructure

Paras 286 – 289 – Sustainable Transport and Active Travel

8. PLANNING APPRAISAL

- 8.1 Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 8.2 Section 59 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Area) (Scotland) Act 1997 requires the planning authority to pay special attention to the impact on the setting of a listed building.

Determining Issues

8.3 This means that the application requires to be assessed against all policies of the Development Plan relevant to the application, all national and local policy guidance, including that in respect of the historic environment, and all other material considerations relevant to the application.

Planning Considerations

- 8.4 The key considerations in this case are:
 - a) compliance with the development plan and other planning policy
 - b) design and layout
 - c) impact on the setting of the listed building
 - d) parking/active travel
 - e) site servicing
 - f) any other material considerations

Development plan/other planning policy

- 8.5 The Development Plan consists of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan.
- 8.6 The development sits within Nairn Town Centre where the most relevant Development Plan policies are:
 - HwLDP Policy 28 (Sustainable Design) assesses development against a number of criteria and the most relevant in this case are: impact on cultural heritage; and sensitive siting and high quality design.
 - HwLDP Policy 29 (Design Quality and Place Making) seeks the design of new development to make a positive contribution to the architectural and visual quality of the place.
 - HwLDP Policy 57 (Natural, Built & Cultural Heritage) in respect of the form and scale of development and the impact on its setting. Provided the proposed development will not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity and heritage resource, it will be supported.
 - IMFLDP Policy 1 (Promoting and Protecting City and Town Centres) lends support for proposals which enhance the vitality and viability of the city centre.
 - IMFLDP NA7 (Town Centre Uses: Tourism, housing, retail, business and community). Provided these uses are in accordance with Nairn Town Centre Development Brief then the proposed development will be supported.
- 8.7 The general policies of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan support development that makes effective use of brownfield land, is accessible by public transport, cycling and walking, and can demonstrate sensitive siting and high-quality design that is compatible with surrounding land uses. New development must also make a positive contribution to the architectural and visual quality of place.
- 8.8 The Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP) promotes the town centre first principle enshrined in national planning policy and supports development that protects and enhances the viability and vitality of the city centre. The Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan highlights a clear objective to strengthen Nairn's historic town centre with a specific focus on promoting uses that add to commercial vitality and viability, improve the physical appearance of the town centre and increase pedestrian links and footfall to the High Street. It confirms that the Council will not support development that is likely to have an adverse effect on the town centre's

- vitality and viability. IMFLDP Policy NA7 includes housing and business as the uses acceptable in the Town Centre. The proposed development of an office and flats is therefore acceptable in principle.
- 8.9 It is not for this application to address whether CAB need to relocate from its present address, as outlined within representations. The principle of an office use in this location would however be appropriate. In relation to housing need, in its Report to the Housing and Property Committee on 09 September 2020, the Housing Service indicated in the Annual Monitoring Report for Highland Housing Register Allocations that the pressure on housing varies across Highland; with applicants whose need for housing is less acute able to receive offers of housing more guickly in some areas than applicants with more acute housing needs in other areas. Analysis of the number applying for each house being let indicates that the pressure on social rented housing is greatest in Nairn, followed by, respectively, Badenoch and Strathspey, Inverness and Mid Ross. In Nairn, the housing waiting list identifies 244 (single bedroom) and 78 (2 bedroom) applicants. The availability of additional housing sites and/or opportunities within Nairn, while outwith the scope of this application, appears unable to meet this demand overall at the present time. Accordingly, this proposal of 12 units will provide a modest, but nevertheless welcome, reduction to this overall number on the current Nairn housing waiting list.
- 8.10 The Nairn Town Centre Development Brief (2011) focuses on regeneration of the area between King Street and the High Street. The purpose of the brief is to identify and promote opportunities and actions for the redevelopment of this important town centre gateway. This development proposal, which is in the corner of a car park on the site of the former Youth Centre, accords with this.
- 8.11 The Nairn Community Town Centre Plan (2015) and associated Town Centre Action Plan (NTCAP) identifies 14 proposals that could, over time, deliver economic, environmental and social benefits for the town and wider area. This proposal is contributing towards 2 of the key themes:
 - Theme 2. Make better use of area between King Street and the High Street
 - Theme 3. Improve walking and cycling links between the town centre and surroundings.
- 8.12 The NTCAP is intended as a decision-making tool for investment and fund-raising, and not a precise blueprint for the future of Nairn town centre. The NTCAP shows indicative locations for a town square and multi-function space. The proposed building would occupy most of the indicative location for the multi-function space, but this space could be provided elsewhere. It is intended to pedestrianise Court House Lane, which lies on the southwest boundary of the site and this would provide an opportunity to provide an area which could act as a multi-function space albeit not on the scale envisaged in the NTCAP. The NTCAP Proposal 6 (new Town Square) recognises that it has the potential to overlap with the provision of a new multi-function space (Proposal 7). As a result, the proposal is not viewed as contrary to this Plan.
- 8.13 Representations suggest that the demand for housing and new CAB offices should be met through the use of existing premises on the High Street (NTCAP Proposal 2) rather than new build. In addition, they highlight that the Old Social Work Building

could be brought back into use (NTCAP Proposal 9) with a community use and include some affordable housing. NTCAP Proposal 2 aims to bring the upper floors back into use for residential or commercial uses on the High Street. However, this has not happened to date and while it would be a desirable aim for improving the High Street it does not prevent the development of a new site for affordable housing and new offices for the CAB, which are viewed by the applicant as the optimal solution.

- 8.14 The proposal will not preclude the creation of a Civic Hub in the town centre (NTCAP Proposal 4), the conversion of the Council's Finance Office to civic use, or the re-use of the Old Social Work Building, given that the latter is not to be demolished as part of this proposal. Reconfiguration of the parking space (NTCAP Proposal 8) can still take place and it is intended to do this with Falconer's Lane Car Park (and the other surrounding car parks as discussed below). The pedestrianisation of Court House Lane contributes to the improvement of walking and cycling links between the High Street and King Street (NTCAP Proposal 8). Representations have been received in respect of its closure to vehicles although the car parks to the south of Court House Lane will still be accessible.
- 8.15 It is considered that the proposal meets with the aspirations of the Development Brief and the themes and opportunities outlined within the Nairn Community Town Centre Plan and Action Plan in so far as this development can deliver these. Subject to the proposal having no significant detrimental impact on townscape, cultural heritage assets, existing infrastructure and community and residential amenity the proposal would comply with the Development Plan.

Design and layout

- 8.16 The site does not lie within a Conservation Area. It does however sit within an area of the town that contributes to its built heritage, and directly adjacent to locally important traditional stone buildings. Notwithstanding the specific buildings, the defining historic character of this part of Nairn is the linear pattern of development that runs perpendicular to King Street and along lanes and vennels that connect King Street to High Street.
- 8.17 The development proposed is on the site of the former Free Church (Youth Centre). The scale and mass of this proposal is similar to that building and the rectangular form with narrow frontage respects the historic linear development pattern. The proposal, as now amended, retains the existing historic buildings within the site.
- 8.18 The proposal provides a clearly defined active frontage to King Street, something that is not only a good design principle but a desirable precedent to set for future development proposals along King Street as a whole, particularly when looking longer term to the de-trunking of the A96. Having direct and active frontages enhances the public realm and makes a street more pedestrian friendly. It is considered that the introduction of a building and landscaping features of stone walls and planting would enhance the streetscene and contribute to the reinstatement of King Street as a vibrant town centre street. Indeed, this is one of the outcomes sought in NTCAP (Proposal 14).

- 8.19 Court House Lane will provide the access for the flats, the entrance framed by a natural stone wall that contains planting to provide some screening to CAB interview rooms. This will provide an attractive feature enhanced by the proposed pedestrianisation of the lane to improve walking and cycling links to and from the High Street (as identified by NTCAP Proposal 11). This will also help improve connectivity between King Street and High Street and thereby meet Nairn Community Town Centre Plan Theme 3 which aims to improve walking and cycling links within the town centre.
- 8.20 In terms of detailed design, the proposal is a contemporary design with two principal 3 storey elements running parallel to Court House Lane, with a lower roofed, but 3 storey element, to the north towards the car park. The mix of materials, including render, brick and timber, assists in further breaking up the mass of the building at the same time as relating to the recently constructed public buildings the Police Station and Community Centre to the west side of King Street. The building has a varied fenestration that provides added visual interest. The flats themselves will provide a good level of occupant amenity.

Setting of Listed building

8.21 Representations have been made regarding the impact on the setting of the Category B listed Council Finance Building. Only the single storey wing of this will be visible from King Street. Historically, the former Church on the application site (Youth Centre) obscured the view of the Council Finance Building which was only visible from access to the vennel from where views of the principal elevation would open up passing the church. The listed building was not therefore originally intended to be visible from the east. As such the historic setting of the listed building would not be significantly affected by the proposed development. While of modern design, the proposed development can be considered an appropriate response to the historic context of the listed building. The Historic Environment Team has no objection to the proposal.

Parking/active travel

- 8.22 There will be no dedicated car parking provision for the occupiers of and visitors to the 12 new flats and the CAB office. Council parking standards permit reduced parking provisions within town centre locations provided that the developments support wider Council policy. From a transport perspective, that would include good non-car connectivity and providing financial contributions towards enhanced active travel facilities. The proposed pedestrianisation of Court House Lane and delivering improved active travel connectivity between the A96 (King Street) and the High Street would meet those requirements.
- 8.23 The Scottish Government's National Transport Strategy 2 (February 2020) promotes investment in walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared transport options in preference to single occupancy private car use for the movement of people. This approach forms a central part of the emerging Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan review and has already been incorporated within recent Development Plans, such as the Inverness City Centre Development Brief, which

- provides for greater priority to be given active travel infrastructure over existing car parking guidelines.
- 8.24 Representations raise issues with regard to the loss of parking provision from the development of the site. The original submission involved the demolition of the Old Social Work Building and the provision of 15 parking spaces. However, the proposal has now been amended with the retention of that building. The former Youth Centre occupied the site and since its demolition car parking spaces have been formed and have existed for several years. While a brownfield site, Transport Planning considers that these spaces should be taken into account in terms of the loss of parking provision. It is aware of the alternative survey data compiled for the Community Council suggesting a greater usage of those public car parks than was found in the application submission.
- 8.25 The agent has submitted a proposed car parking layout within the existing car parks demonstrating that extra parking spaces could be created through reconfiguration of existing spaces. This would result in a reduction from 198 to 190 spaces. The Transport Planning Team has reviewed the submitted details, including the proposed car parking layout, and consider that the proposed net reduction of 8 public car parking spaces would not generate unacceptable parking capacity issues for Nairn Town Centre. This conclusion takes into account the promoted position that this new development would be generating little, if any, additional town centre parking demands at the busiest times. Notwithstanding this, Members will note that objectors, and the Community Council, disagree with the applicant's Transport Assessment and estimate the reduction could be up to 50 spaces. Objectors query whether the extra spaces can be achieved in certain locations as shown on the proposed car parking layout. However, the applicant confirms the extra spaces can be formed.
- 8.26 Transport Planning has received feedback from the Council's Parking Management Team, which suggests that Nairn Town Centre would benefit from alternative parking controls being introduced in the existing public car parks serving the town centre. At present there is an existing free 24-hour maximum stay arrangement operating, which offers limited control over how those car parks are used. Alternative arrangements could allow for an overall reduction in public parking numbers required without impacting on the ability of customers to access this development, or existing wider town centre facilities. It could also encourage more long-stay users of the existing car parks to travel into and out of the town centre by more sustainable means, which would support the current declared climate emergency. This could be considered by the local business and community groups in Nairn, along with the Council's Parking Enforcement Team, if there are future recognised pressures on the public parking serving the town centre.
- 8.27 The applicant has indicated that cycle storage could be provided within the communal stairway at ground floor and there is space in the larger flats for storage. Transport Planning has indicated that any external cycle provision for the residents of the flats needs to be addressed. This can be addressed by condition.

Site servicing

- 8.28 Surface water drainage for the new building is intended to be taken to a new cellular soakaway unit. Discussions and agreement between the applicant and Scottish Water will be required as to whether this can be taken into the combined public sewer system. For the pedestrianisation of Court House Lane there is no detail on the arrangements for draining the surface water run-off or indication whether Scottish Water would continue to accept such discharge into its sewer if the road is being changed through an RCC. Transport Planning has requested a condition relating to surface water drainage arrangements for the proposed alterations to Court House Lane to deal with these matters.
- 8.29 The Council's Waste Management Team has raised no objection with respect to refuse vehicle access and Transport Planning is satisfied that safe access can be achieved for refuse vehicles in the car parks.

Developer contributions

- 8.30 Policy 31 requires that, where development proposals create a need for new or improved public services, facilities or infrastructure, the Council will seek from the developer a fair and reasonable contribution in cash or kind towards these additional costs or requirements.
- 8.31 Subject to acceptance by Members, contributions will be required as set out within Appendix 2 with cash payment only required towards increasing capacity at Nairn Leisure Centre. It is anticipated that this will be secured through upfront payment.

Other material considerations

- 8.32 The pedestrianisation of Court House Lane will require redesigned as a route. It is not intended to stop the road up and remove it from the Council's list of roads but instead promote the change through Traffic Regulation Order and Road Construction Consent. These are separate processes funded by the developer with both regular features of development proposals.
- 8.33 The Community Council and others raise issues with regard to procedures both in terms of consultation, more generally as well as specifically to this application, and on the requirement for notification of planning applications.
- 8.34 Taking the latter first, the requirement to notify Ministers of Council interest development has been amended in recent years. This is no longer a requirement unless the development is *significantly* contrary to the development plan (my emphasis). This is not considered to be the case here. The Nairn Community Town Centre Plan does not form part of the Development Plan. It is guidance. In any event the assessment indicates that the proposal is not contrary to that guidance on the whole.
- 8.35 On the matter of consultation, the community was consulted on, and participated in, the Nairn Community Town Centre Plan. The community will have the opportunity to comment on the new Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan when it is available for consultation within the coming months, which may result in the Town

Centre Action Plan forming part of the Development Plan should this be desired. This is the first, and principal, opportunity for community engagement in planning.

8.36 The second opportunity relates to the ability to comment on individual planning applications and many individuals, and the community councils, have taken the opportunity to do so. This application is not a 'major' application that would require Pre-application Consultation with the community by the applicant. The correct process has been followed in this regard. While some making representations believe that further consultation, on this specific proposal, should have occurred prior to its submission as an application that is a matter for the applicant not the decision maker.

Non-material considerations

- 8.37 A number of issues that are not directly material to the consideration of this planning application have been raised. These include:
 - Requirement of a new office for CAB
 - Review of CAB business model post COVID
 - Disabled access for the flats
 - Common Good
- 8.38 As stated in the assessment above, the business needs, and future requirements, of the CAB are a matter for it and not this application. Planning considers the use rather than the occupier.
- 8.39 In respect of accessibility, including disabled access, this is a matter that is more appropriately dealt with by Building Standards rather than Planning. Having said that the applicant advises that Building Standards do not require this in this instance. The Council has other properties to accommodate tenants that require ground floor accessibility.
- 8.40 Matters relating to the Common Good are not matters that can be dealt with through this planning application.

Matters to be secured by Section 75 Agreement

8.41 On the basis that the contributions will be paid upfront, a legal agreement is not required.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 With the amendment to the application, specifically the retention of the Old Social Work Building, the remaining areas of concern relate to compliance with the Nairn Community Town Centre Plan and Action Plan (NTCAP), parking and design.
- 9.2 The proposed building for the 12 flats and CAB office is to be developed on previously developed land, a factor material to the determination of this application, albeit it was not envisaged as part of the Town Centre Action Plan; which suggested that it be used for multi-function space (NTCAP Proposal 7). Having said that, the proposed town square (NTCAP Proposal 6) could double-up as a multi-function space. In addition, the development does not prevent the implementation of other

proposals in the NTCAP in terms of the creation of a town square, or the use of the Council Finance Office for civic use. It is understandable that the community, having been involved in the process, would naturally be seeking absolute adherence to the action plan. However, a degree of flexibility will be required as development opportunities arise within the plan area. The key is to ensure that the overall aims can be achieved. It is considered that this proposal does not preclude this.

- 9.3 While of its time, the proposal is compatible with the historic development pattern of this side of King Street and the more contemporary designs of more recent buildings to the west. The building provides an opportunity to set a desirable precedent for an active and vibrant new street when the A96 is de-trunked and recreate a strong sense of place. The wider landscaping of the site through use of natural stone walls and planting areas on the King Street and Court House Lane elevations help to provide a strong identity that is reflected in the existing built fabric of the area. Pedestrianisation of Court House Lane will improve walking and cycling links to High Street. It is considered that the proposal is an appropriate response to the redevelopment of this site and adequately addresses the themes and proposals contained within the Nairn Community Town Centre Plan and Nairn Town Centre Action Plan contained within it.
- 9.4 The development, subject to the amendment to the adjacent car parks, will result in the loss of 8 parking spaces overall. Transport Planning considers that this will not generate unacceptable parking capacity issues for Nairn Town Centre. The development provides some benefits with regard to active travel and, in the longer term, there may be opportunities to improve capacity issues through parking enforcement.
- 9.5 All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

10. IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Resource: Not applicable
- 10.2 Legal: Not applicable
- 10.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): Not applicable
- 10.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: Not applicable
- 10.5 Risk: Not applicable
- 10.6 Gaelic: Not applicable

11. RECOMMENDATION

Action required before decision issued N

Notification to Scottish Ministers

Conclusion of Section 75 Obligation N

Revocation of previous permission N

Payment of Developer Contribution Y

Subject to the above, it is recommended that planning permission be **GRANTED**, subject to the following;

Conditions and Reasons

1. No development or work shall commence until a detailed specification for all proposed external materials and finishes (including trade names and samples where necessary) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, development and work shall progress in accordance with these approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

- 2. No development shall commence until details of a scheme of hard and soft landscaping works have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Details of the scheme shall include:
 - i. All earthworks and existing and finished ground levels in relation to an identified fixed datum point;
 - ii. A plan showing existing landscaping features and vegetation to be retained:
 - iii. The location and design, including materials, of any existing or proposed walls, fences and gates;
 - iv. All soft landscaping and planting works, including plans and schedules showing the location, species and size of each individual tree and/or shrub and planting densities; and
 - v. A programme for preparation, completion and subsequent on-going maintenance and protection of all landscaping works.

Landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme. All planting, seeding or turfing as may be comprised in the approved details shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the commencement of development, unless otherwise stated in the approved scheme.

Any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, for whatever reason are removed or damaged shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of the same size and species.

Reason: In order to ensure that a high standard of landscaping is achieved, appropriate to the location of the site.

3. No development shall commence until an assessment is submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority in consultation with the Roads Authority, of the quality and personal security of the existing routes through to the High Street from Court House Lane and Falconer's Lane. For the avoidance of doubt, any recommendations for improvements shall be implemented prior to any occupation of the new development.

Reason: In the interests of pedestrian safety.

4. No development or works shall start on site until the detailed design for an amended layout for the public parking adjacent to the site (Library and Falconer's Lane Car Park) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority in consultation with the Roads Authority. The approved scheme shall have been completed, and available for use, prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

5. No development or works shall start on site until a Construction Traffic Management Plan (including a routing plan for construction vehicles) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The approved Traffic Management Plan shall be implemented prior to development commencing and remain in place until the development is complete. For the avoidance of doubt, the Plan shall detail how the works will be managed to limit impacts on non-car connectivity to the town centre and the existing public car parks.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

6. No development shall commence until full details of a covered and secure communal bicycle storage/racking system for 12 bicycles have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, the storage/racking system shall be installed and available for use of residents in accordance with these approved details prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved.

Reason: To ensure covered cycle provision is made for the residents of the flats.

7. No development shall commence on site until a scheme for the collection and storage of refuse and recycling within the application site has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall thereafter be implemented prior to the first use of the development and thereafter maintained in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interests of amenity.

8. No development shall commence until full details of the surface water drainage arrangements for the proposed alterations to Court House Lane are submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority in consultation

with the Roads Authority and Scottish Water. The development shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that surface water drainage is provided timeously and complies with the principles of SUDS; in order to protect the water environment.

9. No development shall commence until full details of any external lighting to be used within the site and/or along its boundaries and/or access have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Such details shall include full details of the location, type, angle of direction and wattage of each light which shall be so positioned and angled to prevent any direct illumination, glare or light spillage outwith the site boundary. Thereafter only the approved details shall be implemented.

Reason: In order to ensure that any lighting installed within the application site does not spill beyond the intended target area, does not impact adversely upon the amenity of adjacent properties and does not result in 'sky glow'.

10. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 and Class 14 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 (as amended, revoked or re-enacted; with or without modification), no development shall commence until full details of any temporary site compounds and storage areas (including their location, scale and means of enclosure) shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority in consultation with the Roads Authority. Thereafter, the site compounds and storage areas shall be formed in accordance with these approved details. Furthermore, all site compounds shall be maintained in a tidy, safe and secure fashion and be removed from the application site within one month of the development being completed.

Reason: To ensure that the site compounds are sensitively located and are adequately secured to prevent unauthorised entry, and in the interests or road safety.

REASON FOR DECISION

All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

TIME LIMIT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PLANNING PERMISSION

In accordance with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended), the development to which this planning permission relates must commence within THREE YEARS of the date of this decision notice. If development has not commenced within this period, then this planning permission shall lapse.

FOOTNOTE TO APPLICANT

Initiation and Completion Notices

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) requires all developers to submit notices to the Planning Authority prior to, and upon completion of, development. These are in addition to any other similar requirements (such as Building Warrant completion notices) and failure to comply represents a breach of planning control and may result in formal enforcement action.

- 1. The developer must submit a Notice of Initiation of Development in accordance with Section 27A of the Act to the Planning Authority prior to work commencing on site.
- 2. On completion of the development, the developer must submit a Notice of Completion in accordance with Section 27B of the Act to the Planning Authority.

Copies of the notices referred to are attached to this decision notice for your convenience.

Accordance with Approved Plans & Conditions

You are advised that development must progress in accordance with the plans approved under, and any conditions attached to, this permission. You must not deviate from this permission without consent from the Planning Authority (irrespective of any changes that may separately be requested at the Building Warrant stage or by any other Statutory Authority). Any pre-conditions (those requiring certain works, submissions etc. prior to commencement of development) must be fulfilled prior to work starting on site. Failure to adhere to this permission and meet the requirements of all conditions may invalidate your permission or result in formal enforcement action

Flood Risk

It is important to note that the granting of planning permission does not imply there is an unconditional absence of flood risk relating to (or emanating from) the application site. As per Scottish Planning Policy (paragraph 259), planning permission does not remove the liability position of developers or owners in relation to flood risk.

Scottish Water

You are advised that a supply and connection to Scottish Water infrastructure is dependent on sufficient spare capacity at the time of the application for connection to Scottish Water. The granting of planning permission does not guarantee a connection. Any enquiries with regards to sewerage connection and/or water supply should be directed to Scottish Water on 0845 601 8855.

Septic Tanks & Soakaways

Where a private foul drainage solution is proposed, you will require separate consent from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). Planning permission does

not guarantee that approval will be given by SEPA and as such you are advised to contact them direct to discuss the matter (01349 862021).

Local Roads Authority Consent

In addition to planning permission, you may require one or more separate consents (such as road construction consent, dropped kerb consent, a road openings permit, occupation of the road permit etc.) from the Area Roads Team prior to work commencing. These consents may require additional work and/or introduce additional specifications and you are therefore advised to contact your local Area Roads office for further guidance at the earliest opportunity.

Failure to comply with access, parking and drainage infrastructure requirements may endanger road users, affect the safety and free-flow of traffic and is likely to result in enforcement action being taken against you under both the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

Further information on the Council's roads standards can be found at: http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/roadsandtransport

Application forms and guidance notes for access-related consents can be downloaded from:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads and pavements/101/permits for working on public roads/2

Mud & Debris on Road

Please note that it an offence under Section 95 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to allow mud or any other material to be deposited, and thereafter remain, on a public road from any vehicle or development site. You must, therefore, put in place a strategy for dealing with any material deposited on the public road network and maintain this until development is complete.

Construction Hours and Noise-Generating Activities

You are advised that construction work associated with the approved development (incl. the loading/unloading of delivery vehicles, plant or other machinery), for which noise is audible at the boundary of the application site, should not normally take place outwith the hours of 08:00 and 19:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays or at any time on a Sunday or Bank Holiday in Scotland, as prescribed in Schedule 1 of the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971 (as amended).

Work falling outwith these hours which gives rise to amenity concerns, or noise at any time which exceeds acceptable levels, may result in the service of a notice under Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 (as amended). Breaching a Section 60 notice constitutes an offence and is likely to result in court action.

If you wish formal consent to work at specific times or on specific days, you may apply to the Council's Environmental Health Officer under Section 61 of the 1974 Act. Any such application should be submitted after you have obtained your Building Warrant, if required, and will be considered on its merits. Any decision taken will reflect the nature of the development, the site's location and the proximity of noise sensitive premises. Please contact env.health@highland.gov.uk for more information.

Contaminated Land

A petrol filling station was located to the south west of the site and records indicate that there was a fuel leak within the area in 1991. The extent of the leak was uncertain, but the pipe lines were exposed and dug out at the time. A previous site investigation carried out for the wider area in 2007 indicated that, although there was some hydrocarbon impact remaining in the area of the filling station, there was no evidence from a borehole located within the above site boundary that a hydrocarbon plume had migrated towards this site. Should any indication of hydrocarbon contamination be identified during the site's development then further consultation with the Council's Contaminated Land Unit should be undertaken.

Road Construction Consent (RCC) and Traffic Regulation Order

A Road Construction Consent (RCC) application and Traffic Regulation Order will be required for the proposed changes/redesignation to/of Court House Lane, for use by pedestrians and cyclists only.

Protected Species – Halting of Work

You are advised that work on site must stop immediately, and Scottish Natural Heritage must be contacted, if evidence of any protected species or nesting/breeding sites, not previously detected during the course of the application and provided for in this permission, are found on site. For the avoidance of doubt, it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly kill, injure or disturb protected species or to damage or destroy the breeding site of a protected species. These sites are protected even if the animal is not there at the time of discovery. Further information regarding protected species and developer responsibilities is available from SNH: www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-species

Designation: Area Planning Manager – South

Author: Keith Gibson/Bob Robertson

Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.

Relevant Plans: Plan 1 - 9594-PL(00)001 Location Plan

Plan 2 - 9594-PL(00)002 Existing Site Layout Plan

Plan 3 - 9594 PL(90)001 REV C Proposed Site Layout Plan

Plan 4 - 9594-PL(04)001 Rev A Proposed Elevations

Plan 5 - 9594 PL00 003 Existing Parking Layout

Plan 6 - 9594 L90 004A Proposed Parking Layout

Plan 7 - 9594 PL90 002 Rev A View 1

Plan 8 - 9594 PL90 003 Rev A View 2

Plan 9 - 9594 PL90 004 Rev A View 3

Plan 10 - 9594 PL90 005 Rev A View 4

Plan 11 - 9594 PL(90)006 Rev A View 5

Appendix 2 – Details for contributions

Total Per Flat

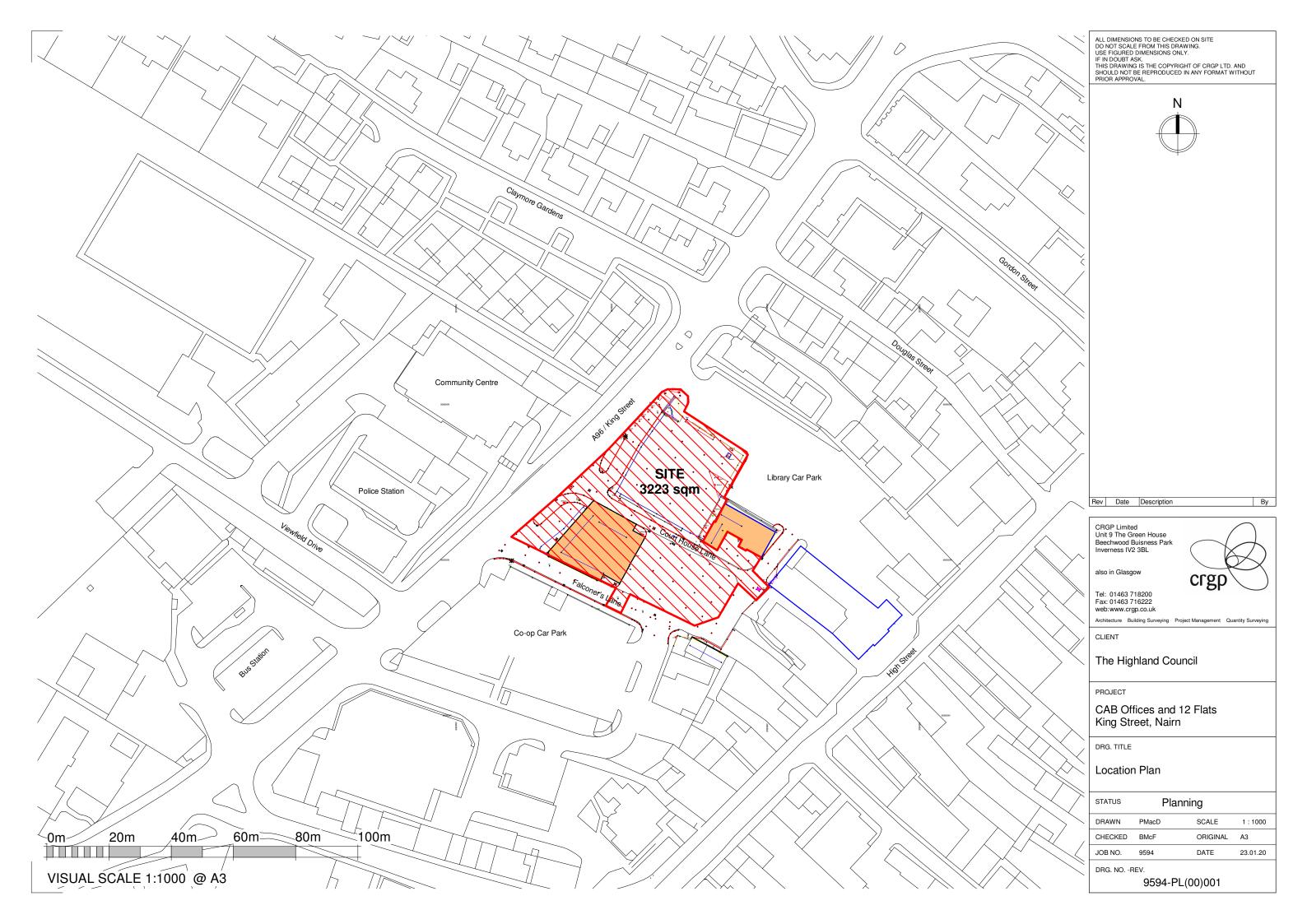
(x 12)

Total

£1,019.00

£12,228.00

Туре	Contribution	Rate (per house)	Rate (per flat)	Total Amount*1	Index Linked	Base Date*2	Payment Trigger*3	Accounting Dates*4	Clawback Period*5
Schools		,		•	•			•	
Primary (Millbank)	No capacity issue	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Secondary (Nairn Academy)	Mo capacity issue	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Community Facilities	Expansion of Nairn Leisure Centre to provide dance studio and sea café area	£1,019	N/A	£1,019	BCIS	Q2 2018	Upfront	N/A	
Affordable Housing	N/A	•	-	•		•	•		
Transport									
Public Transport	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Road Improvements	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Road Traffic Orders / Active Travel	Redesign of Court House Lan	ne. Developer to t	fund TROs.						
Green Infrastructure									
N/A - Town Centre location	n and the large civic areas surro	ounding the site,	no new open	space provis	ion require	d in this insta	ance		
Water & Waste									
Applicant is advised to con- Team regarding recycling of	tact Scottish Water directly to ccontributions.	onfirm any water	and waste w	vater upgrade	costs and	to seek advi	ce from Coun	cil Waste Mana	gement
0 0 , 0									





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Rev Date Description

CRGP Limited Unit 9 The Green House Beechwood Buisness Park Inverness IV2 3BL

also in Glasgow

Tel: 01463 718200 Fax: 01463 716222 web:www.crgp.co.uk

Architecture Building Surveying Project Management Quantity Surveying

The Highland Council

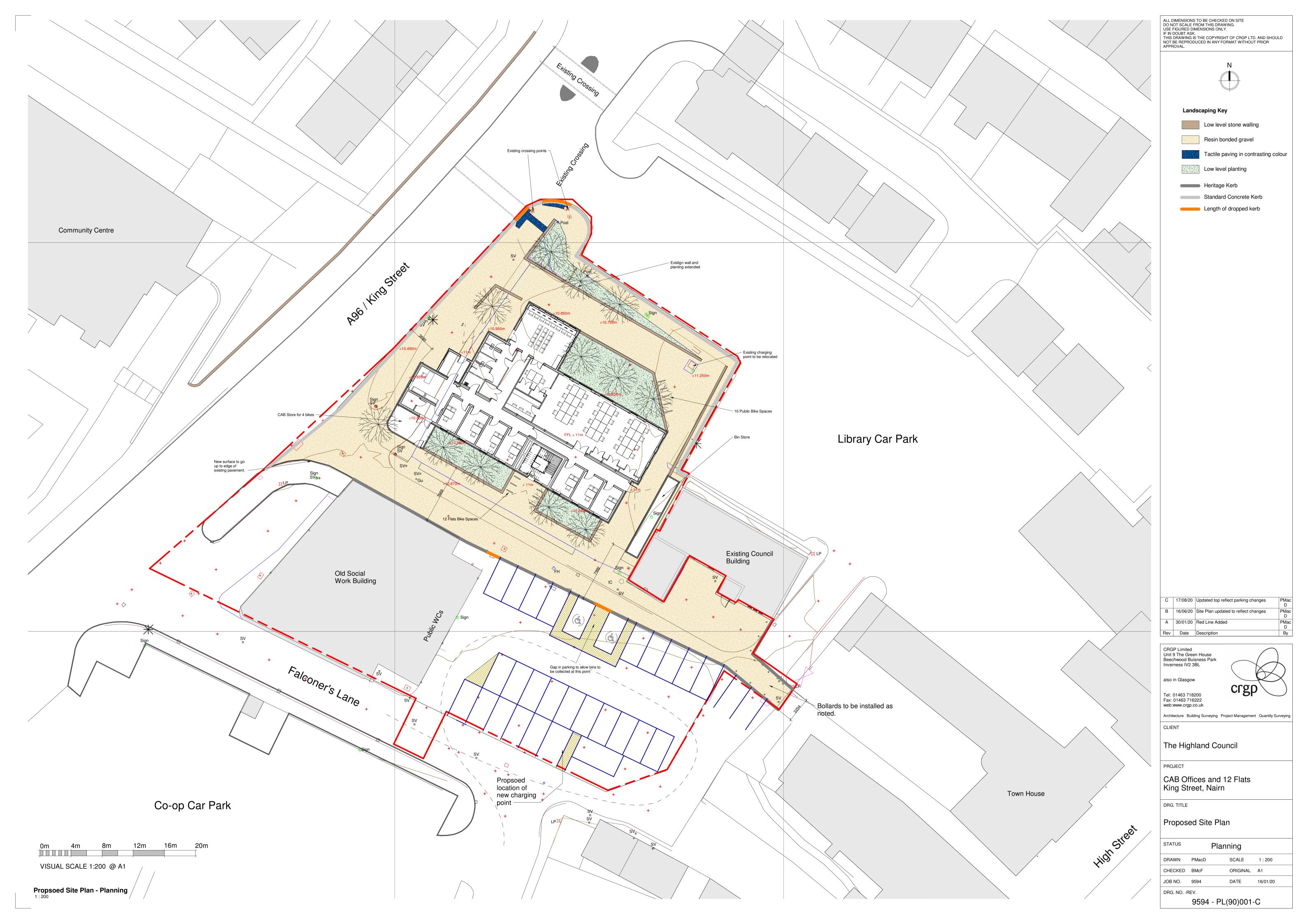
PROJECT

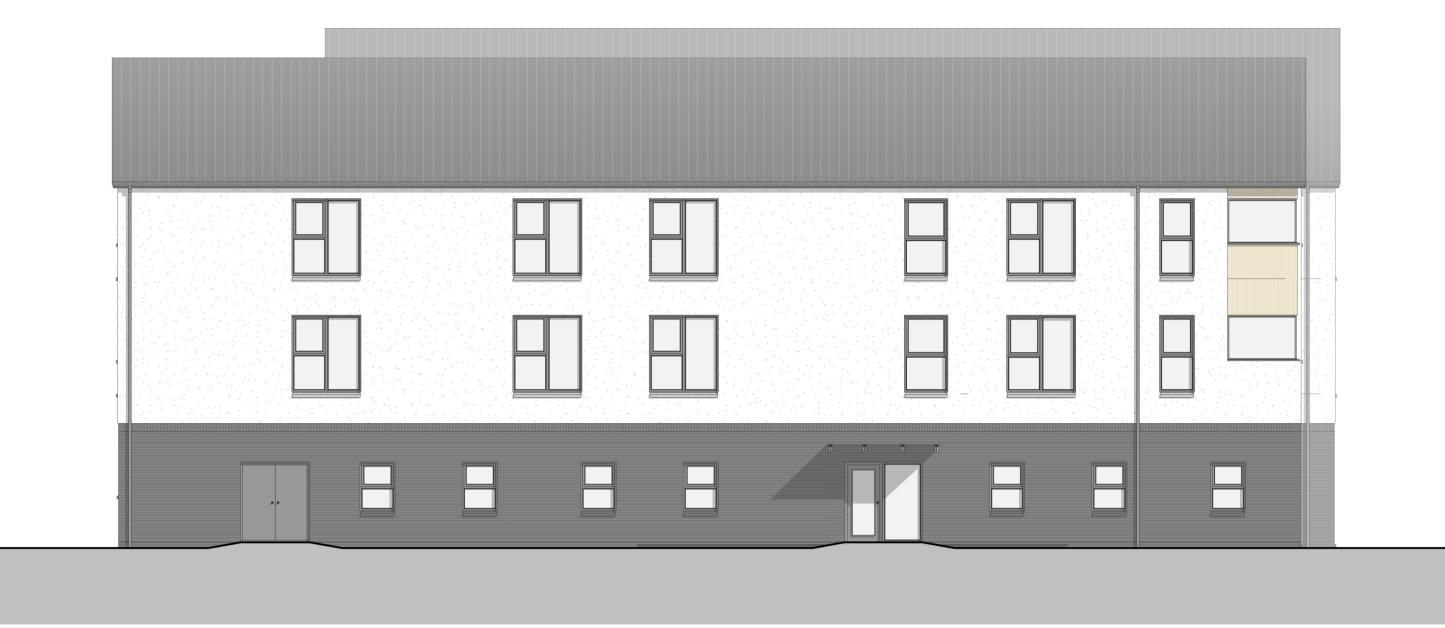
CAB Offices and 12 Flats King Street, Nairn

DRG. TITLE

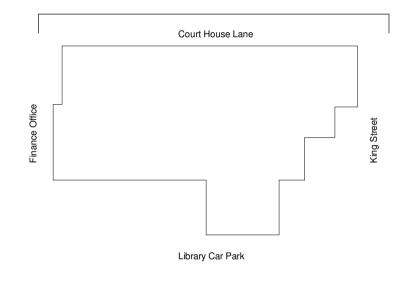
Existing Site Plan

STATUS	PI	anning	
DRAWN	PMacD	SCALE	1:200
CHECKED	BMcF	ORIGINAL	A1
JOB NO.	9594	DATE	23.01.20
DRG. NOF	REV.		
	9594 -	PL(00)002	2



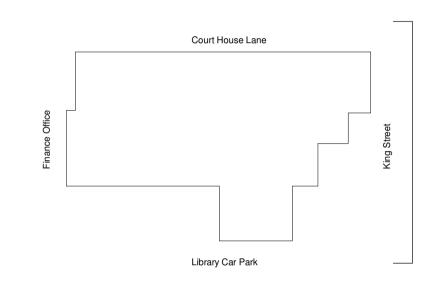


Elevation A - Court House Lane



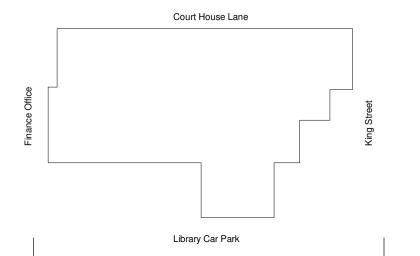


Elevation B - King Street



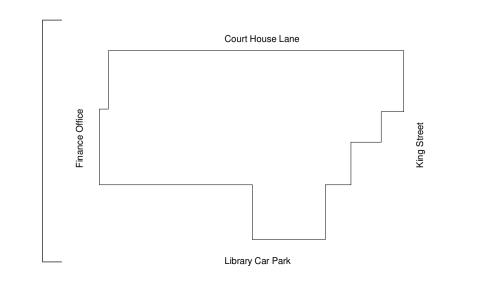


Elevation C - Library Car Park





Elevation D - Finance Office



Α	16/06/20	Planning Update	PMac
			D
Rev	Date	Description	Ву

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The Highland Council CAB Nairn

PROJECT

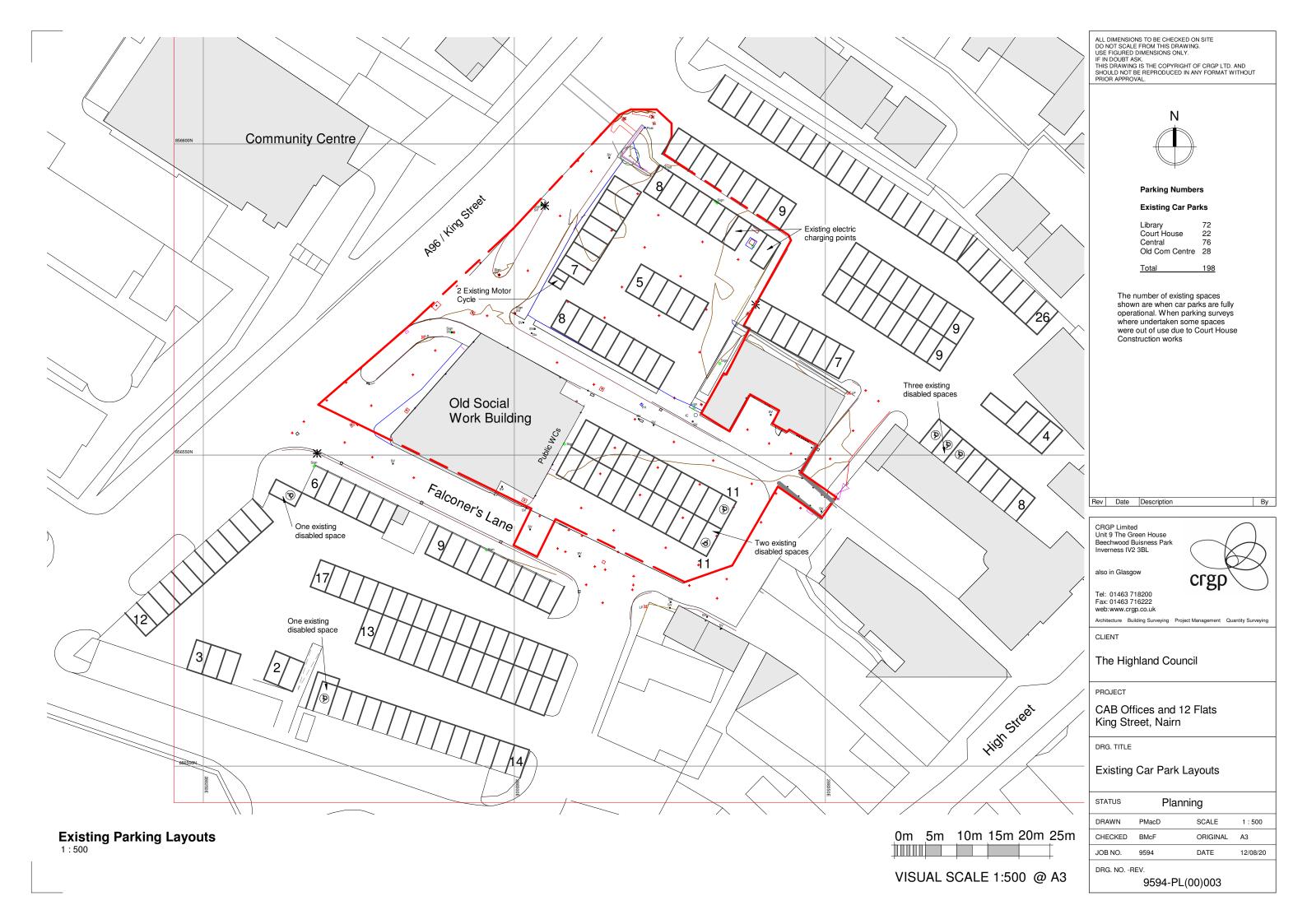
New CAB Offices and 12 Flats King Street, Nairn

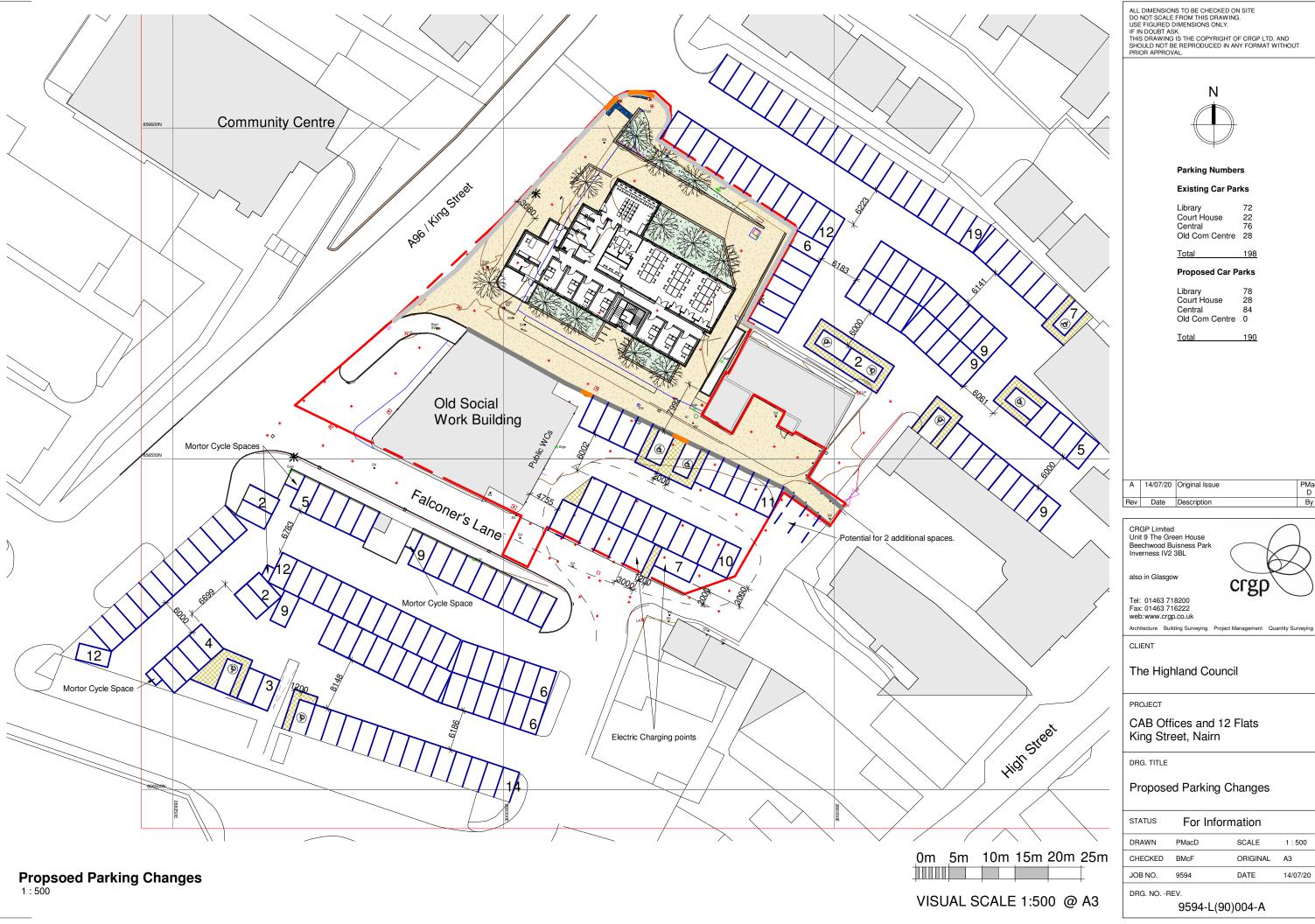
Proposed Elevations - CAB and Flats

i iais			
STATUS	Plan	ning	
DRAWN	PMacD	SCALE	1:100
CHECKED	BMcF	ORIGINAL	A1
JOB NO.	9594	DATE	24/01/20
DRG. NOF	REV.		
	9594 - PL	(04)001	-A

VISUAL SCALE 1:100 @ A1

6m 8m 10m 2m 4m





Α	14/07/20	Original Issue	PMac D
Rev	Date	Description	Ву

STATUS	For Information				
DRAWN	PMacD	SCALE	1:500		
CHECKED	BMcF	ORIGINAL	A3		
JOB NO.	9594	DATE	14/07/20		



View looking along Court House Lane from King Street

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lev	Date	Description	Ву	l

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Proposed View 1

STATUS	Pla	Planning		
DRAWN	PMacD	SCALE		
CHECKED	BMcF	ORIGINAL	A3	
JOB NO.	9594	DATE	09/03/20	

DRG. NO. -REV.

9594-PL(90)002-A



View looking along Court House Lane to King Street and Community Centre

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Proposed View 2

STATUS	Plai		
DRAWN	PMacD	SCALE	
CHECKED	BMcF	ORIGINAL	A3
JOB NO.	9594	DATE	09/03/20

DRG. NO. -REV.

9594-PL(90)003-A



View looking accross existing car park

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Proposed View 3

STATUS	Planr	ning	
DRAWN	PMacD	SCALE	
CHECKED	BMcF	ORIGINAL	A3
JOB NO.	9594	DATE	09/03/20

DRG. NO. -REV.

9594-PL(90)004-A



Proposed birds eye view

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Proposed View 4

STATUS	Planning			
DRAWN	PMacD	SCALE		
CHECKED	BMcF	ORIGINAL	A3	
JOB NO.	9594	DATE	09/03/20	

DRG. NO. -REV.

9594-PL(90)005-A



Proposed entrance to CAB on King Street

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CAB Offices and 12 Flats King Street, Nairn

DRG. TITLE

Proposed View 5

STATUS	Planning		
DRAWN	PMacD	SCALE	
CHECKED	BMcF	ORIGINAL	А3
JOB NO.	9594	DATE	19/06/20

DRG. NO. -REV.

9594-PL(90)006