

Better Beehive Group Cambridge

BBCG Supplementary Comment 13 January 2025 made following submission of revised planning application documents uploaded on 4 December 2024 on the GCSP planning webpage.

We concern ourselves with the revised Daylight and Sunlight Addendum and its Appendix and how the information in that report relates to Cambridge Local Plan policies; in particular to Policy 60: Tall buildings and the skyline in Cambridge and Appendix F as well as Policies 55 : Responding to Context and 56 : Creating Successful Places. We also look at the revised Design Code.

A supplementary assessment has been submitted to reveal how the Beehive proposals will potentially affect the daylight and sunlight levels on neighbouring dwellings and gardens. The report focuses on St. Matthews Gardens and Silverwood Close, but other neighbours will potentially be affected by a degree of overlooking and/or overshadowing.

The assessment considers both the maximum parameter building envelopes as well as the illustrative scheme. With regard to the modelling of the maximum parameter envelope plots, there are numerous properties in St. Matthews Gardens and Silverwood Close that fail to comply with the BRE guideline levels for daylight and sunlight. See Table 1 of the Addendum.

We appreciate that the modelling of the illustrative scheme shows an improvement to the BRE light levels from the maximum scheme (compare Tables 1 and 2 of the Addendum), but the assessment still shows many properties with rooms that will remain non-compliant with the BRE guidelines.

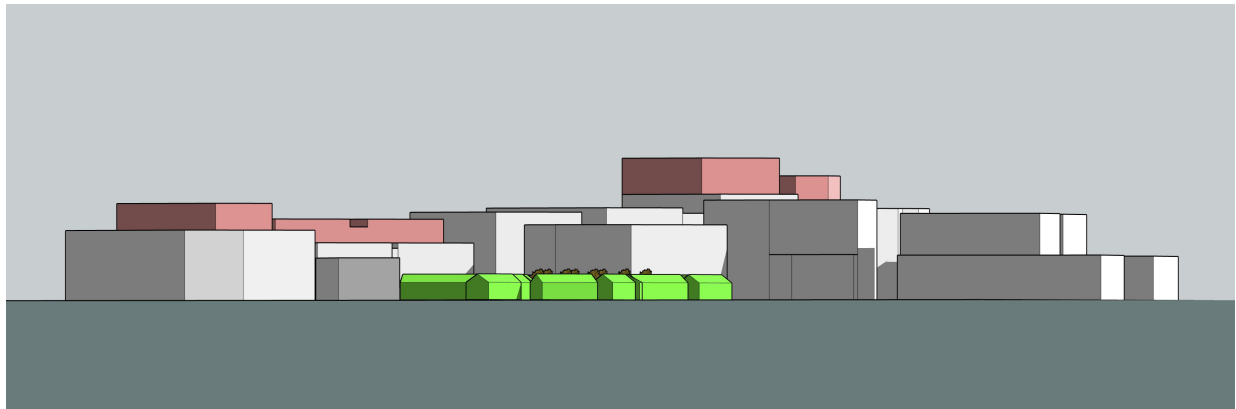
We noted that the overshadowing of neighbouring gardens, as opposed to dwellings, was considered in the previous Daylight and Sunlight Report, August 2024. It concluded that one property in Silverwood Close would receive less than 2hrs of sun on 21st March and therefore fail BRE guidelines. However, as a direct result of positioning a multi-storey car park and large office buildings near neighbours' boundaries, there will be overshadowing of many more gardens. It will be of no surprise to understand the any degree of overshadowing, and overlooking, is unacceptable to neighbours.

Turning to the Design Code, we note that the revised version has kicked the problem of overshadowing/overlooking down the road by adding the following instruction when addressing Plots 1, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 *"Consideration of daylighting and amenity for neighbouring properties must be demonstrated at reserved matters application stage."*

Instead of fixing the problems of overshadowing at the outline application stage by further reducing the height and mass of the buildings, this clause allows this very real issue to be decided at Reserve Matters stage.

Our concern is that this approach simply sets up future opportunities for too much flexibility, together with too little concern for neighbours, and the continued pushing for as much floor space as possible, especially as the BRE standards for sunlight and daylight is a document for guidance only. We can quite see that the height and massing will remain as shown in the outline parameter plans and the overshadowing of neighbouring houses and gardens will become reality in a few years.

We would reason that there remains a fundamental flaw in the overall design and layout of the Beehive site contrary to Cambridge Local Plan policies, i.e. the site continues to be over developed, with too numerous, overly large buildings, far too close together and too close to domestic dwellings.



Community visualization of the Beehive proposals (23/03204/OUT. View from northwest showing Silverwood Close properties in green.
Images are for demonstration purposes only however they have been produced using Sketchup and we believe them to be technically and proportionally correct.