



Cambridge City Council Local Lettings Plan

Location covered by plan: Timber Works – off Cromwell Road, Cambridge (*Clara Rackham Street and Leah Manning Close*)

Landlord

The landlord of the properties covered by this plan is: Cambridge City Council

Total number of properties covered by this plan

118 homes (expected to be ready for letting starting September 2021 with estimated competition in January 2023)

Affected property types and sizes

56 x 1 bedroom flats, comprising of

- 6 x ground floor (including 3 wheelchair accessible);
- 13 x first floor;
- 13 x second floor;
- 12 x third floor;
- 9 x fourth floor;
- 3 x fifth floor

4 x 2 bedroom house.

45 x 2 bedroom flats, comprising of

- 4 x ground floor (including 3 wheelchair accessible);
- 11 x first floor;
- 10 x second floor;
- 10 x third floor;
- 8 x fourth floor;
- 2 x fifth floor

13 x 3 bedroom house (including 1 wheelchair accessible)

Reasons for introducing the Local Lettings Plan

1. Background

This Local Lettings Plan (LLP) applies to all first-time Cambridge City Council lettings on the new development off Cromwell Road, Cambridge known as 'Timber Works'.

The Council has worked in partnership with housing developer, Hill, through the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) to build a new housing development in the heart of Cambridge City, perfectly situated for access to the city centre and train station. For more information visit: <https://www.timberworks-cambridge.co.uk/location/>

The central location of the development allows travel by foot, public transport, and through cycling - including the new Chisholm Trail cycle route (under construction) linking the site to Cambridge North train station/Cambridge Science Park. For more information visit: <https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/transport/transport-projects/chisholm-trail>

2. Building a mixed community

The reason for this LLP is to support a mixed and balanced community, to support the local economy, and to give priority to people who live and work locally, potentially minimising the impact on the environment by limiting the need for people to travel long distances. It is hoped this will build and strengthen the diverse community that exists in Romsey.

The Council understands the need to provide housing for the growing population of Cambridge, and those who are unable to buy or rent homes due to expensive owner-occupying and Private Rented Sector (PRS) in the City.

3. Additional information

Council tenants are allowed pets under their tenancy agreement; however, it is requested that tenants in flats have a maximum of one (1) dog due to space constraints. This aims to protect the development and its residents from potentially negative impacts, taking into consideration advice from Environmental Health and the Dog Warden in relation to noise, Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) already in force across the City, and the possible impact of dog fouling in open spaces.

Applicants should be aware that there is minimal car parking available. There will be visitors' parking with time restrictions and enforced using Fixed Penalty Notices. Wheelchair accessible homes will include parking, however there will be a charge for this.

Disruption will be kept to a minimum constructing the site, however new tenants should be aware of possible inconvenience and we ask them to co-operate with the builders where required.

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been completed?

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed on 17 August 2021.

How we propose to let the properties covered by the plan

1. Completion dates

The letting of the 118 affordable homes will be staggered from September 2021 as homes are constructed, until site completion estimated to be in January 2023.

- a) September 2021 – 4 units
- b) November 2021 – 16 units
- c) January 2022 – 10 units
- d) July 2022 – 36 units
- e) September 2022 – 24 units
- f) January 2023 – 28 units *

**all dates subject to change.*

2. Affordability and rent levels

Rent levels for homes, including most service charges, will be set in line with our [Affordable Rents Policy](#) (60% of gross median market rent for that size of property, location and service provision, or the current Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate, whichever is lower). For more information on LHA levels in Cambridge City, please visit <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/local-housingallowance>

Additional charges may be added exceeding this level, such as for parking.

Applicants will be asked to complete an affordability assessment prior to any offer to try and prevent financial hardship where there is a risk that an applicant may not be able to afford the level of rent being charged, in line with our Anti-Poverty Strategy.

3. Allocating homes

The Council's Lettings Policy applies to all lettings.

In addition to this, subject to demand:

- a) Approximately a third of homes will be allocated to applicants who are currently working either full time or part time within Cambridge City, some of whom may be in lower 'bands' under the Council's Letting Policy but struggle to access housing that is affordable.

Eight (8) homes will be prioritised to those working within the Romsey, Petersfield, and Market wards, but currently living outside of those wards, to promote community integration, whilst reducing the need to drive to work.

b) Approximately a third of homes will be allocated to current tenants of Cambridge City Council whose homes are no longer suitable for them.

This could be because their family have moved out and they wish to move to a smaller home; they are fleeing domestic abuse; or their current home is no longer suitable for other reasons, such as requiring a wheelchair accessible home. As well as helping to support a mixed community, this will help to free up existing homes for applicants on the Council's housing register.

c) Approximately a third of homes will be allocated to anyone on the Council's housing register. This will be a mixture of applicants who are already a tenant of a Registered Social Landlord (such as housing associations), whilst for others it may be their first home.

Each size of home will be allocated to a mix of household types and sizes. e.g. 1-bedroom homes will be allocated to both single people and couples, whilst 2-bedroom homes will be allocated to those with both school aged children as well as resident adult children. This will help provide a mixture of different types of household across the new community.

Following the decision at Housing Scrutiny Committee on 20 January 2022, tenants being decanted from Hanover Court and Princess Court, Cambridge, are to be prioritised for rehousing at new developments at both Mill Road "Ironworks" and Cromwell Road "Timber Works." The allocations will be attributed to one of the three (3) criteria groups described in this Local Lettings Plan.

For more information and to view the report [click here](#).

The Council will also continue to give appropriate priority to those who are homeless and those who need to move on medical or welfare grounds and may have an urgent need for housing, as well as those given an emergency status for rehousing following other regeneration and decanting projects.

(Please note: There may be overlaps between the above groups. For example, someone allocated a home could be both working locally and be a home seeker applicant.)

Wheelchair accessible homes

Seven (7) homes are wheelchair accessible and priority will be given to applicants on the Council's housing register requiring this type of housing. This may involve assessment from an Occupational Therapist to ensure people's needs are met.

Housing First

Rough sleeping is a major issue in Cambridge. To help address this, as part of wider plans across other development sites, two (2) 1-bedroom flats and one (1) 2-bedroom flat at Timber Works will be let under the Housing First England initiative (<https://hfe.homeless.org.uk/>) This is a project already active across the City that offers accommodation for single homeless people requiring a new start. These homes will not be advertised and will be let directly to eligible applicants.

Unacceptable behaviour

When shortlisting applicants, the Council will consider whether an applicant or a member of their household has a history of behaviour which in the opinion of Cambridge City Council is unacceptable. Unacceptable behaviour can include (but is not limited to) domestic or other abuse, harassment, anti-social behaviour, drug dealing or other criminal activity, failing to maintain or repair their home or associated garden or garage, noise nuisance or tenancy related debt.

Some applicants may also not be accepted where applicants have specific vulnerabilities or support needs, including alcohol and/or drug abuse. The Council may require additional information before deciding whether they can be considered for the property.

Parking

Adverts will detail whether a home is allocated with a car parking space at an additional charge. Parking charges will in most cases not be eligible to be paid for by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit and may lead to the overall rent and service charges exceeding 60% of market rent or LHA levels.

The period that the plan covers

Until lettings are completed. The policy will be reviewed at this time and may be extended.

This plan is approved by:

Role

Housing Services Manager, City Homes (on behalf of landlord)

Housing Services Manager, Housing Advice (on behalf of Housing Advice Service)

Housing Strategy Manager

If there are any enquiries about the criteria contained within this document please email HousingOfficer@cambridge.gov.uk

Date of plan

17/08/2021

Updated: 01/02/2021

Staff Guidance – Examples of reasons for introducing the LLP

Please note the examples below are to be used by staff as a guide to identifying LLP objectives. It should not be considered a definitive list.

For re-lets in a specific area using current social housing stock

- Help meet particular unmet needs within an area
- Help regenerate areas
- Help to ensure that affordability of homes is taken into account when they are let
- Help promote homes in areas which tend to attract fewer bids through Home-link
- Encourage greater community cohesion and sustainability
- Respond to particular housing management issues where problems of anti-social behaviour, nuisance or crime occur (including environmental crime such as fly tipping and dog fouling)
- Address an imbalance of residents from different age groups or family type within existing developments
- Giving those in acute need the opportunity to bid for homes in the context of the Council's Housing First programme
- Take into account any restrictive covenants associated with the land

For first-time housing lets on a new development

- Create a balance between those in and out of work to support the local economy
- Give priority to people working within an agreed geographical radius of the development; although ensuring that priority is available to employees of a range of employers and employment types
- Create a mix of household types and children's ages
- Give priority to households whose children currently attend schools in the catchment area
- Ensure specialist housing, for example disability adapted homes may be reserved for households who require them
- Provide a balance between households that will need additional support and those that will not
- Allow for under-occupation of some homes
- Identify the balance to be struck between existing social tenants and home-seekers
- Ensure some homes are available for let nearer to completion, where homes have been advertised through Home-Link well in advance of them being available to let
- Enable households whose needs have more recently been assessed to bid
- Give those in acute need the opportunity to bid for homes in accordance with the Council's Housing First programme