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Persistence and professionalism pays as Januarys gains permission for two hotels – on the same day



Eastern Gate Properties has gained permission for a 219-bedroom, five-storey hotel on the corner of Newmarket Road and Coldham's Lane, to be occupied by Travelodge whilst O'Callaghan Hotels will shortly be starting work on a 157-bedroom, seven-storey building on Station Road.

Both proposals have been the subject of lengthy debate between the developers, the Council and local residents, and Januarys' Director of Planning Colin Brown said he and his clients were delighted with the outcomes.

"We've worked extremely hard to ensure that the approved designs meet the technical, legal and logistical needs of both sites.

"Given their respective locations, neither of these applications was ever likely to prove straightforward and so it proved. We had to overcome a number of issues before arriving at solutions that were acceptable both to our clients and the Council, but fortunately we had teams with sufficient experience and innovative thinking to enable us to do just that.



"There's no doubt that in their different ways, these are two excellent schemes. Both will provide jobs for the area and in addition the Travelodge will help to regenerate a degraded site.

"Eastern Gate has also pledged to provide land for highway improvements.

"The hotel in Station Road, meanwhile, will be a prestigious and high quality building, which is important given that it's one of the first sites many visitors to Cambridge will see. As well as the 137 rooms, it will offer a restaurant, bar and other business facilities."

property performance indicator

Cambridge Rents

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Januaries appoints and promotes to strengthen core team

Januaries has promoted Paul Belton to Associate and brought in as an Associate Graham Smith from Savills in Peterborough to strengthen its core teams.

Paul Belton has worked in Januaries planning department for three years and has been heavily involved with major projects such as the Berkeley Homes development on the old Cambridge Regional College site on Newmarket Road.

Prior to joining Januaries', he spent five years working for first South Cambridgeshire District Council and then Huntingdonshire DC as Planning Assistant and Development Control Officer.

Such experience has given him an excellent understanding of how the planning process works from a council's perspective and is proving invaluable in his work with Local Development Frameworks.

Mr Belton said, "I'm delighted to have been made an Associate. The next twelve months will be challenging, particularly with the imminent arrival of the Localism Bill, and I'm looking forward to guiding our clients through the planning process."

Graham Smith, who has joined from Savills where, as an Associate Director, he established a commercial professional department, has over twenty years experience in chartered surveying.

As well as his time at Savills, he ran his own surveying practice



Graham Smith (left) and Paul Belton

for a number of years and is a specialist in construction systems project management.

Other skills include bank valuations, motor trade valuations and advice and agri-business development and advice.

Mr Smith said, "Januaries is growing in size and reputation all the time. It's extremely exciting to be part of such a professional outfit that is so highly thought of across Cambridge and further afield."

Residential investment opportunity offers gross rent of £70,500 pa

Nine apartments at 31 Brookfields are for sale through consultant surveyors Januaries.

The apartments, handily situated at the bottom of Mill Road and close to Addenbrooke's Hospital, are currently fully let and bring in an annual gross rent of £70,500 per year.

Offers are invited in excess of £1.2 million.

Nick Muncey, who is handling the sale on behalf of Januaries said, "This is a good opportunity to invest in a property that is already making money. The current owner has undertaken a complete refurbishment of all the apartments as well as the fabric of the building and as a result 31 Brookfields is in pristine condition.

"The apartments are all either studio or one bedroom and are set over three floors. Many have a balcony or terrace and there are two car parking spaces. Current rents range from £550 to £750 pcm. The apartments benefit from fitted kitchens and white goods. There's also a phone entry system and cycle store.

"Previously, 31 Brookfields was used as a hostel for Cambridge United trainees.

"The property is currently giving a yield of 5.9 per cent, which is impressive when compared with the returns being generated by many other investments.



"Given its location – the city centre is only a couple of miles away, there are lots of local amenities including a major supermarket, post office and dentist and there's good access to the regional road network – finding replacement tenants shouldn't be a problem should the need arise.

"If you're looking for a residential investment, this is definitely worthy of serious consideration."

The Hive takes another step forward as Januarys helps with first phase planning permission

The first phase of The Hive, the new multi-million pound Education and Enterprise Park on King's Hedges Road, has been granted planning permission, with a little help from Cambridge Consultant Surveyors Januarys.

The firm was appointed as planning consultants to the project earlier on this year and has spent the last few months working with the planners, those behind the scheme and the local community to bring the scheme to fruition.

Januarys' Director of Planning Colin Brown said, "The Hive is an extremely prestigious and innovative project and we're very proud to be part of it.

"When it's completed, the Hive will be home to three projects: Cambridge Regional College's SmartLIFE Low Carbon Centre, SmartLIFE Eco homes Innovation Park and The Future Business Centre from local charity Future Business. The first planning permission granted is for the SmartLIFE Low Carbon Centre, but we hope permission for the Future Business Centre will be granted shortly.

"Once completed, the SmartLIFE Low Carbon Centre will teach the skills needed to build low carbon homes and install renewable energy systems. It will cost around £3.2 million and should be finished by the end of 2011.

"The Future Business Centre has been submitted for planning



permission and is hoped to be built later this year. Andy Slaymaker, Property Manager at Future Business said, "We're very grateful to Januarys for their guidance. The Future Business Centre will support social and environmental enterprises through business support and affordable incubation space".

Colin Brown of Januarys said, "Green buildings have their own particular planning issues and it's been our job to get the developers what they need whilst staying within planning laws. Overall, the business park aims to attract business that's good for society and good for the environment. This is undoubtedly the first of its kind in Cambridgeshire and possibly in the region. It will help to propel Cambridge to the forefront of one the UK's major future growth areas – green technology – and could provide a blueprint for other, similar schemes.

"We're very pleased to be working on something that will help tackle climate change, reduce carbon emissions and also help to boost the Cambridge economy."



Computer generated image of The Hive

Quality still counts when it comes to attracting commercial tenants

That's the message from Cambridge consultant surveyors Januaryys, who say that new and recently refurbished offices are being let faster than their cheaper counterparts.



"You might expect," says the firm's Nick Muncey, "That these days companies would be looking for a bargain when it comes to premises. However, whilst businesses are obviously keen to negotiate a better deal for themselves, a recently refurbished space or new build is still a better sales tool than offering a slightly scruffy office block at a knock down price.

businesses are still prepared to pay for smart office space in a desirable location.

"This situation puts some developers with empty properties in a dilemma. Should they invest heavily in a refurbishment and hope this encourages more interest from potential tenants? Or sit tight and hope that the existing quality is good enough?

"Obviously there are no guarantees but all the evidence would suggest that if developers have got the money available, refurbishment is the way to go.

"And there's another reason for upgrading. After a few years during which no commercial space was built at all, there are currently serious discussions taking place about erecting some new office blocks in the city.

"If that does happen, then those with premises to let that are a little frayed around the edges will fall even further down the pecking order."

"This is particularly true for firms whose premises are open to clients and customers. Despite tricky trading conditions,

Developers 'should think about provision for the elderly'

Developers should think about provision for the elderly when they're contemplating what to do with their sites.

That's the view of Januaryys' Director of Planning Colin Brown, who says that Cambridge will have a shortage of appropriate accommodation in years to come.

"Latest statistics show that more than half of Cambridge's population is going to be over 55 by the early 2020s.

"Figures also suggest that 40 per cent of adults are likely to move house at least once after they turn 65 and that a quarter of those over the age of 60 would prefer their accommodation to be some sort of specialist housing.

"Faced with such statistics, it is no surprise that 2008's Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Cambridge indicated that current provision falls some way short of demand.

"It would therefore seem sensible that developers investigate the options available to them in terms of building elderly-friendly property.

"A good example of where this is currently happening is on the site of the old Milton Road School.

"Here, we are working with the TLC Group, who currently have two care homes in Cambridge. TLC want to obtain planning permission for 55 one and two bed apartments which are specifically designed for people whose needs fall somewhere between sheltered housing and full time residential care.

"The plans also include a proposal for 9 flats and other facilities such as communal areas and a public café area.

"Location of homes such as these is critical. Being in the centre of a community is important, as are nearby bus routes.

"For these and other reasons, delivering such provision requires more thought than building a straightforward block of flats, but by the same token the rewards are potentially greater.

"If developers have a plot of land they think might be suitable, I would advise them to give this option serious consideration."



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