

# Swindon Borough Council

## Planning Committee

**Tuesday, 13 April 2021**

In Public Virtual Meeting - LiveStream

At 6.00 p.m.

### **Conservative Councillors**

*Timothy Swinyard (Chair)*  
*Alan Bishop*  
*Nick Burns-Howell*  
*Malcolm Davies*  
*Jenny Jefferies*  
*Vinay Manro*  
*Nick Martin*  
*Vera Tomlinson*  
*Matthew Courtliff (Deputy)*  
*Steve Heyes (Deputy)*  
*Oladapo Ibitoye (Deputy)*  
*Caryl Sydney-Smith*  
*(Deputy)*  
*Matthew Courtliff (Deputy)*

### **Labour Councillors**

*John Ballman*  
*Paul Dixon*  
*Steph Exell*  
*Jane Milner-Barry*  
*Carol Shelley*  
*Peter Watts*  
*Junab Ali (Deputy)*  
*Claire Crilly (Deputy)*

### **Liberal Democrat Councillors**

*Stan Pajak*

**Committee Officer:** Shaun Banks (Telephone 07980 752047)  
email:sbanks@swindon.gov.uk

Swindon Borough Council can be contacted at the Civic Offices, Euclid Street,  
Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 445500)

**Access Arrangements** - The venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you have any special requirements to enable you to attend the meeting or would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size, please contact the Committee Officer as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.

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## **AGENDA**

### **NOTE:**

The Committee will consider both written and virtual representations in respect of the Planning Applications to be considered. If you wish to make representations at this meeting you need to register with the Committee Officer by 12:00 noon on the day prior to the meeting. Further details are available from the Committee Officer.

To view this meeting please click [here](#) (you do not need to log it or have a Microsoft

account)

[Public and Press Access - Planning Committee](#)

This link will only work from 6pm on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

**3. Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)**

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

**4. Public Question Time**

See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.

**5. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public**

*Certain items are expected to include the consideration of exempt information and the Standards Committee is, therefore, recommended to resolve "That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the item listed below, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information".*

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraph No.</u>
<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>

**6. Determination of Planning and Related Applications (Pages 13 - 16)**

**7. S/20/0974/RACH - Erection of 1no. detached dwelling, part removal of existing front boundary wall and associated works, Land at 52 Priors Hill, Wroughton, Swindon (Ward: Wroughton and Wichelstowe) (DSDG) (Pages 17 - 34)**

**8. S/RES/20/1689/NIGI - Construction of an acoustic bund north of the M4 - Reserved Matters from previous permission S/13/1524, Noise Bund, Wichelstowe Southern Access, Wichelstowe (Ward: Wroughton and Wichelstowe) (DSDG) (Pages 35 - 48)**

**9. S/HOU/20/1076/PEKO - Erection of a ground/lower floor rear extension, 11 St Helens View, Old Town (Ward: Old Town and East Wichel) (DSDG) (Pages 49 - 62)**

**10. S/20/1385/RACH - Change of use of twelve car parking spaces to a waterless hand car wash and valeting operation with associated canopy and portacabin, West Car Park, North Swindon District Centre, Abbey Meads, Swindon (Ward: Priory Vale) (DSDG) (Pages 63 - 84)**

**11. Swindon Railway Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (Ward: Central, Mannington & Western, and Rodbourne Cheney) (DSDG) (Pages 85 - 220)**



12. **S/19/1755/CHHO - Erection of 11 no. dwellings and associated works, Land East Of Berricot Lane, Badbury (Ward: Ridgeway) (DSDG)** (Pages 221 - 272)
13. **Enforcement Action (DSDG)** (Pages 273 - 288)

**Date of Despatch:** 01 April 2021

**Public Question Time** - Swindon Borough Council remains committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters, and matters relating to planning and licensing applications). During Covid-19, you must submit your question to [CommitteeServices@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:CommitteeServices@swindon.gov.uk) with your contact details 48 hours before the meeting. So that the committee officer can send you details about how to participate. The deadline is 15:00 on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Questions must be relevant, clear, and concise. You may not use Public Question Time as an opportunity to make speeches or statements. Questions in writing should be sent to the Committee Officer whose contact details appear on the agenda above or to the Chief Legal Officer, we will publish it, along with the answer, alongside the Minutes. The process associated with asking a public question is set out in the "Public Question Time at Council Meetings Protocol and Guidance" available on the Council's Website. ([Protocol Guidance](#)) or from the Committee Officer named above.

## **WELCOME TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **PLEASE READ**

**THIS PROTOCOL SETS OUT THE PROCEDURES IN PLACE REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS AT THE PLANNING COMMITTEE INCLUDING HOW MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC CAN ADDRESS THE COMMITTEE.**

**IF YOU WISH TO SPEAK ABOUT AN APPLICATION THAT INTERESTS YOU PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES. THEY EXPLAIN HOW THE COMMITTEE DEALS WITH EACH ITEM. THESE GUIDELINES ONLY APPLY TO APPLICATIONS LISTED ON THE MAIN SCHEDULE IN THE AGENDA.**

**ANYONE WHO WISHES TO SPEAK ON AN ITEM MUST NOTIFY THE COMMITTEE CLERK (CommitteeServices@swindon.gov.uk) BY 12 NOON THE DAY BEFORE THE MEETING (INCLUDING WHICH SLOT YOU WISH TO SPEAK I.E. OBJECTOR, APPLICANT ETC.)**

**THE PURPOSE OF PUBLIC SPEAKING IS TO EMPHASISE COMMENTS AND EVIDENCE ALREADY SUBMITTED THROUGH THE PLANNING APPLICATION CONSULTATION PROCESS. THEREFORE, YOU MUST HAVE SUBMITTED WRITTEN COMMENTS ON AN APPLICATION IF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO IT AT COMMITTEE. IF THIS IS NOT THE CASE, YOU SHOULD REFER YOUR REQUEST TO SPEAK TO THE COMMITTEE CLERK IN GOOD TIME BEFORE THE MEETING, SO A DECISION CAN BE MADE BY THE CHAIR IF IT IS APPROPRIATE FOR YOU TO SPEAK.**

**THE ORDER FOR EACH ITEM ON THE SCHEDULE IS:**

- 1. THE COMMITTEE CHAIR CALLS THE ITEM**
- 2. PLANNING OFFICER PRESENTS THE APPLICATION**
- 3. THE FOLLOWING MAY SPEAK:**
  - a) WARD COUNCILLORS MAY SPEAK (UNLIMITED)**
  - b) APPLICANTS AND/OR AGENT (WHO WILL COUNT AS 1 SPEAKER) AND SUPPORTERS OF THE APPLICATION (A MAXIMUM OF 5 MINUTES EACH UP TO 2 SPEAKERS, IF MORE THAN 2 THEN A MAXIMUM OF 10 MINUTES SPEAKING TIME FOR ALL SPEAKERS).**
  - c) OBJECTORS TO THE APPLICATION (A MAXIMUM OF 5 MINUTES EACH UP TO 2 SPEAKERS, IF MORE THAN 2 THEN A MAXIMUM OF 10 MINUTES TOTAL SPEAKING TIME FOR ALL SPEAKERS)**
  - d) PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES (A MAXIMUM OF 5 MINUTES).**
  - e) COUNCILLORS WHO HAVE DECLARED PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS MAY SPEAK**
- 4. MEMBER ONLY DISCUSSION, INCLUDING MOTIONS, DEBATE AND ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS TO OFFICERS OR ANYONE ELSE WHO HAS SPOKEN**
- 5. A PLANNING OFFICER WILL CLOSE THE ITEM BY COMMENTING ON ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS**
- 6. COMMITTEE MEMBERS VOTE ON THE APPLICATION**
- 7. CHAIR BRIEFLY EXPLAINS THE DECISION**
- 8. NEXT BUSINESS**

**THE 10 MINUTE MAXIMUM PUBLIC SPEAKING PERIOD WILL BE YOUR ONLY OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK, UNLESS MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WISH TO ASK YOU QUESTIONS UNDER GUIDELINE8.**

**SPEAKERS WHO MERELY REPEAT POINTS ALREADY MADE BY OTHERS MAY BE ASKED TO STAND DOWN.**

**IF THERE IS MORE THAN ONE PERSON WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMITTEE (EITHER IN THE OBJECTORS OR SUPPORTERS/APPLICANTS SLOTS), THEY ARE EXPECTED TO NOMINATE A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE SPEAKERS LISTED TO REPRESENT THEIR COLLECTIVE VIEWS. IT IS ACCEPTED THIS IS MORE CHALLENGING IN VIRTUAL COMMITTEES, IN ABSENCE OF AN AGREED REPRESENTATIVE THE TIME WILL BE SPLIT EQUALLY BETWEEN ALL THOSE WISHING TO SPEAK IN ONE SLOT.**

**OTHER NON-COMITTEE MEMBERS MAY SPEAK (FOR A MAXIMUM OF 5 MINUTES) AT THE CHAIRS DISCRETION IF THEY MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:**

- **THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL OR ANOTHER CABINET MEMBER IF THE ITEM IS AN IMPORTANT APPLICATION OF STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE AND RELEVANCE TO HER OR HIS PORTFOLIO;**
- **THE CABINET MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORT & PLANNING IF THE ITEM IS AN IMPORTANT APPLICATION OF STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE; AND,**
- **OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL IF THE ITEM IS AN IMPORTANT APPLICATION OF STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE WHICH WILL HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE ENTIRETY OF THE BOROUGH**

**IF THE MEETING IS A VIRTUAL MEETING AND A SPEAKER IS CUT OFF DUE TO TECHNOLOGICAL ISSUES WE WILL TRY TO RETURN YOU TO THE MEETING ONCE (AND ONCE ONLY). IF WE CANNOT GET YOU BACK IN THE MEETING AND YOU HAVE PROVIDED THE COMMITTEE CLERK WITH A WRITTEN STATEMENT AN OFFICER WILL READ YOUR SUBMITTED STATEMENT UP TO THE END OF YOUR ALLOTTED TIME.**

**THE CHAIR AND THE COMMITTEE HAVE THE DISCRETION TO DEPART FROM THESE GUIDELINES, BUT WILL IN MOST CASES EXPECT ALL PARTIES TO ABIDE BY THEM.**

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**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2021**

PRESENT: - Councillors Timothy Swinyard (Chair), John Ballman, Alan Bishop, Nick Burns-Howell, Malcolm Davies, Paul Dixon, Steph Exell, Jenny Jefferies, Vinay Manro, Nick Martin, Jane Milner-Barry, Stan Pajak, Carol Shelley and Peter Watts.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Vera Tomlinson.

**41. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded Councillors to declare any known interests in any of the matters to be considered by the Committee.

Councillor Jenny Jefferies made a declaration of interest in respect of application numbered S/18/1783/SASM as she had previously worked with the agent over ten years previously. As the interest was personal but not prejudicial the Councillor remained in the room during the discussion and voted on the application.

Councillor Tim Swinyard made a declaration of interest in respect of application numbered S/18/1783/SASM as he was a season ticket holder at Swindon Town Football Club. As the interest was personal but not prejudicial the Councillor remained in the room during the discussion and voted on the application.

**42. Minutes**

Resolved – That, subject to Minute 30(d) being amended to read:

“(d) Information from the applicant circulated to Members prior to the meeting, which the Director of Strategic Development advised could not be used as a reason for approval”, the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020, be confirmed and signed.

**43. Public Question Time**

There were no public questions

**44. S/18/1783/SASM - Erection of 18no. dwellings with parking, open space, landscaping, cycle access and associated works, Twelve Oaks Golf Club, Lechlade Road, Highworth**

In respect of application numbered S/18/1783/SASM - Erection of 18no. dwellings with parking, open space, landscaping, cycle access and associated works, Twelve Oaks Golf Club, Lechlade Road, Highworth the Committee considered: -

- (a) An application for permission to develop;
- (b) Recommendations of the Director of Strategic Development;
- (c) The views of interested persons set out in the report circulated with the Committee Agenda;
- (e) The comments at the meeting of the following interested persons:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address/Organisation</u>
Councillor Steve Weisinger	Ward Councillor
Councillor Alan Bishop	Ward Councillor
Councillor Maureen Penny	Ward Councillor
Danielle Wyatt Bond	Agent
Julie Murphy	Parish Councillor
Sarah Freeman	Local Resident

Councillors Matthew Courtliff, Nick Martin, Jane Milner-Barry, Stan Pajak and Carol Shelley spoke in respect of this application.

The application can be broadly summarised as:

- The application had been brought before the Committee at the request of Highworth Town Council for the reasons set out within the agenda report.
- The golf course and driving range closed in 2015 and the application sought to re-develop part of the club and construct 18 dwellings with vehicular access from Lechlade Road to the north of the site and separate pedestrian/cycleway access from Lechlade Road.
- A food retail store had been given planning permission to the south of the site and there are two detached dwellings facing Lechlade Road to the east.
- A change of use of land for the siting of 18 holiday let lodges had been allowed on appeal September 2015. The applicant's agent confirmed that this permission has been commenced and remains extant and could be fully implemented although no Certificate of Lawfulness application has been made to confirm this.
- However the appeal decision for the grant of planning permission for the holiday lets was based upon policies for rural tourism development and did not support the creation of housing in this location to which different policies applied.
- The development did not fit in any of the categories for development in the countryside permitted in the countryside by the Local Plan and therefore the principle of development is in conflict with the adopted Local Plan. It was necessary to ask whether any other material considerations outweigh that conflict with local policy and indicate in favour of the grant of permission.
- In relation to residential development in the countryside, Paragraph 78 of the National Planning Policy Framework supports housing in rural areas where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Officers considered that 18 dwellings on this site could contribute to enhancing the vitality of Highworth in terms of supporting local shops, services and schools.
- Paragraph 11 (part d) of the National Planning Policy Framework states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless, (i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development; or (ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
- There were no areas or assets of particular importance which provide a clear reason for refusing the development in this location.

- The Council was unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing; however, this position is under review and was not in itself a reason for approval, rather, those local policies which concern the provision of housing cannot alone be the basis of a refusal, and the proposal has to be assessed against the policies within the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole. However, the proposal would make a modest contribution to the Borough's housing supply.
- In this particular instance the element of Policy SD2 referring to settlement boundaries, specifically that pertaining to Highworth, cannot be considered as a reason for refusal alone. The contribution of the additional dwellings to the housing supply has to be balanced against any identified harm.
- Policy HA2 (Affordable Housing) requires 30% affordable housing on sites capable of accommodating 15 dwellings or more; this would require 5 or more affordable housing units and would need to be secured through a Section 106 Agreement. There is therefore some conflict with the Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework policy in terms of the non-provision of affordable housing and a housing mix which does not respond to local need.
- However the Housing Officer did not consider that this location would be suitable for on- site provision and the type of housing under consideration but that an off- site contribution to affordable housing would be appropriate subject to the conclusions of the independent review of the Viability Assessment.
- Given national appeal decisions the development was not considered as being isolated new homes in the countryside.
- The land immediately to the south of the application site is allocated in the Local Plan for employment development and in part has Planning Permission for a supermarket.
- In addition planning permission for the Swindon Town Football Club Headquarters and Training centre to the north is subject to a resolution to approve by Planning Committee in October 2020 and shared the same vehicular access as the proposed development. Therefore although not adjacent to the development boundary the proposed residential development would not be isolated from the town of Highworth.
- The Inspector at the Hill Cottage, Broad Blunsdon appeal gave that conflict limited weight because of the existence of some transport choices for residents. The proposed development at Twelve Oaks would provide some level of choice to residents, who, through a proposed new footway/cycleway, would be able to walk to destinations in the town, including bus stops.
- In summary it is considered that the development of 18 dwellings would represent a modest contribution to the ability of the Council to demonstrate a five year housing land supply. In addition regarding residential development in the countryside, the National Planning Policy Framework supported housing in rural areas where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. It is considered that 18 dwellings on this site could contribute to enhancing the vitality of Highworth in terms of supporting local shops, services and schools. It could also afford an opportunity for the delivery of larger properties on larger plots to meet that part of the market under-provided in the Borough in general. Although very finely balanced in this respect the proposal in principle, in the absence of a 5 year housing land supply, is supported by officers.
- Highway Officers had no objection to the development subject to conditions, including the securing of a contribution to the travel plan through a Section 106 agreement.

- The development comprised 17 five bedroom dwellings and 1 four bed dwelling of traditional appearance comprising of four designs with garages.
- Overall the plan was considered appropriate given its location and the site was not considered suitable for a higher density scheme and was acceptable in respect of residential amenity.
- All matters relating to ecology, archaeology, landscape and drainage had been resolved subject to conditions.
- A viability study had indicated that a contribution in the region of £615,000 was achievable for off-site affordable housing as well as contributions for off-site open space provision.
- It was not considered that the adverse effect of granting permission would outweigh the benefits of granting the application. Therefore subject to the completion of a Section 106 agreement and planning obligations to off-site affordable housing, open space and the satisfactory completion of the travel plan and conditions the application was recommended for approval.

Submissions in support of the application can be broadly summarised as:

- The application had been redesigned to meet the planning requirements of the Council, including space and highways requirements.
- Over the previous eighteen months the applicant had worked closely with planning, highways and ecology officers to secure a positive application and planning permission.
- The application aimed to bring young families to the area, improving the local demographics and would complement neighbouring developments that had been approved.
- Paragraph 20 of the officer's report addressed how the application was in accordance with paragraph 78 of the National Planning Policy Framework and that it would contribute to the vitality of local amenities and business.
- Although the Housing Officer did not consider the location suitable for affordable housing a contribution had been agreed for provision outside of the site in a more appropriate location.
- Paragraph 27 of the report confirmed that the development would not constitute an isolated development and the applicant believed that it would add to the prosperity of the town.
- The development was designed to support young families.
- The Hill Cottage appeal decision indicated that government planning inspectors may be unlikely to consider concerns over access on foot, by bicycle and by public transport to be a reason on their own to withhold planning permission for new housing in these particular circumstances.
- Appropriate financial contributions had been identified through a viability study.
- The four and five bedroom homes would allow growing families to grow without the need to move and helped address housing mix within the Borough.

Submissions opposing the application can be broadly summarised as:

- The application was for the development of land outside of that allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan and within the Thames Valley Landscape Area and would adversely affect the area's perception of remoteness.
- Following the approval of a nearby equestrian centre and a football training centre, when added to by this development would increase traffic excessively.



- Should approval be given no work should be permitted on residential properties until work on the equestrian centre and a football training centre had been completed to ensure that those works were undertaken.
- The Parish Council had been unanimous in objecting to the application and its rationale was set out in paragraph 6 of the officer's report.
- The Borough Council had recently refused an application for a single dwelling, adjacent to a plot of 70 houses (elsewhere) and accessing the site from the same road because, it was outside of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan.
- Football related traffic and residential traffic would access the A361 from the same point and with a 50mph speed limit this would be potentially hazardous.
- The Local Government Association supported affordable housing and this development provided none on site contrary to Policy HA2 of the Local Plan, and the £615,000 contribution for off-site only went part way to meeting the affordable housing obligation.
- The applicant, Swindon Town football Club, was effectively seeking permission for a free standing footballer's village of eighteen large dwellings.
- The mix of dwellings did not respond to local needs and was situated well away from the existing residential built-up area of Highworth.
- The Town Council was disappointed with the positive recommendation and had serious concerns relating to the proposal; these reasons were set out within the report.
- The Town Council's concerns regarding the development included its location outside of the development boundary, the site not being allocated within the Neighbourhood Plan, the application running contrary to the Borough Council's Local Plan, the creation of an urban sprawl detracting from the hilltop status of the town, its isolation and lack of accessibility to the town, the additional scale of traffic on a busy and dangerous road, the visual impact on the landscape and setting of the town, and the development provided no benefits to the local community.
- The development was contrary to Local Plan Policies SD2, TR2 and EN5.
- The development was justified on the basis of other developments coming forward (a supermarket, business park and training facility) although there is no guarantee all of these will be built.
- Access to the site was questionable from a safety standpoint and therefore failed to meet Policy TR2.
- The replacement of holiday lets (supporting rural tourism) with large houses was not acceptable from a visual and landscaping perspective and was a harmful intrusion into the countryside and failed to protect the local landscape in accordance with Policy EN5 changing it forever.
- Should the application be granted, any Section 106 monies should be ring fenced to Highworth.
- The development was not sustainable and did not protect the rural character of the landscape and in line with national and local policies should not be granted approval. It would not add to the vitality of Highworth.
- The diverse nature and number of reasons opposing the application should support its refusal under Policy SD2.
- No travel plan had yet been produced for a busy, unlit and dangerous road and traffic from the site would further stretch the limited parking available in the town centre and local road infrastructure.

- The traffic survey was undertaken at a time that was not reflective of the peak usage, nor were the number of accidents in the vicinity reflected in the report.
- The Infrastructure Plan that is due to be presented to the Planning Committee suggests the infrastructure in Highworth is stretched and this development will add further demand.

### Summary

Members raised questions about the lack of affordable housing and why it could not be provided on site and questioned whether Councillors have sufficient grounds to refuse the application. The officer referred to the Viability Assessment and discussions with the Housing department in respect of finding a suitable site where the S106 monies could be spent elsewhere in the town. Councillor Courtliff stated that whilst young families may not be able to afford the proposed dwellings growing families may be able to do so. Councillor Milner-Barry raised the issue of it being outside the settlement boundary and accessed off a dangerous road and contributions not compelling.

Resolved - That the Director of Strategic Development be authorised to grant Planning Permission subject to:-

- (a) the completion of a legal agreement to secure planning obligations in respect of affordable housing and off-site open space and to secure the satisfactory completion of the Travel Plan, and
- (b) The planning conditions set out in this report, with delegated authority to make reasonable amendments, additions or omissions to those conditions before issuing formal consent as may be necessary.

(Councillor Jenny Jefferies made a declaration of interest in respect of this application as she had previously worked with the agent over ten years previously. As the interest was personal but not prejudicial the Councillor remained in the room during the discussion and voted on the application.)

(Councillor Tim Swinyard made a declaration of interest in respect of this application as he was a season ticket holder at Swindon Town Football Club. As the interest was personal but not prejudicial the Councillor remained in the room during the discussion and voted on the application.)

## Determination of Planning and related Applications

**Planning Committee**

**Date: 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

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Author: Director of Strategic Development and Growth

Wards: All Wards

Parishes Affected: All Parish Area

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### **1. Purpose and Reasons**

- 1.1 To determine the planning and related applications in the Committee reports that follow this report in the Committee Agenda, as may be amended by an additional information sheet circulated before the meeting

### **2. Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1.1 determine the applications set out in the Committee agenda in accordance with the recommendations set out in the reports, including, where relevant, the additional information.

### **3. Alternative Options**

- 3.1 The Committee could choose not to determine the Planning applications

### **4. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management**

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 4.1 There would be financial implications if, following a refusal to grant planning permission or the grant of conditional permission, costs are awarded against the Council on appeal. However, this would only happen if the Council was adjudged to have acted unreasonably

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 4.2 There are no staffing implications. No comments have been received from relevant trade unions, unless specified in the attached schedule.
- 4.3 Human Rights considerations have been taken into account in compiling the reports. It is considered that the recommendations of the reports are compatible with Convention rights and that in accordance with the principle of proportionality any interference with the Convention rights of individuals is justified by the overall benefit to the community.

### **5. Appendices**

- 5.1 Appendix 1 - Documents which may be relied on in the preparation of the application reports

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Shaun Banks, (07980752047) sbanks@swindon.gov.uk.

# **Determination of Planning and related Applications**

**Planning Committee**

**Date: 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

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5.2 Planning and related applications reported to this Committee for the first time.

## **APPENDIX 1**

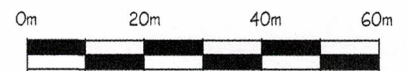
### **DOCUMENTS WHICH MAY BE RELIED ON IN THE PREPARATION OF THE APPLICATION REPORTS**

1. The approved Development Plan, consisting of
  - Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026, (2015), and the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 Policies Map (2015)
  - Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Core Strategy, (2009)
  - Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Development Control Policies DPD (2009)
  - Wiltshire and Swindon Aggregate Minerals Site Allocations Local Plan, (2013)
  - Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Core Strategy, (2009)
  - Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Development Control Policies DPD, (2009)
  - Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Site Allocations Local Plan, (2013)
  - Swindon Central Area Action Plan, (2009)
  - Wroughton Neighbourhood Plan (2016): for applications in Wroughton Parish
  - Highworth Neighbourhood Plan (2017): for applications in Highworth Parish
  - South Marston Neighbourhood Plan (2017) for applications in South Marston Parish
  - Hannington Neighbourhood Plan (2018) for applications in Hannington
2. Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes, Supplementary Planning Documents and Development Control Guidance Notes
3. The National Planning Policy Framework, (2018); and policy statements, guidance and DCLG circulars that support the National Planning Policy Framework
4. Ministerial Statements and other guidance material to the consideration of applications
5. Relevant appeal decisions and case law
6. Relevant planning history, case files and related correspondence including the views of statutory consultees
7. Any emerging relevant Development Plan Documents

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LOCATION PLAN 1:1250 @ A4



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Application Number S/20/0974

Proposal Erection of 1no. detached dwelling, part removal of existing front boundary wall and associated works.

Location: Land At 52 Priors Hill Wroughton Swindon



This Plan is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to provide accurate representation of the development.

In all cases reference should be made to the submitted plans.

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Application Number S/20/0974

Proposal Erection of 1no. detached dwelling, part removal of existing front boundary wall and associated works.

Location: Land At 52 Priors Hill Wroughton Swindon



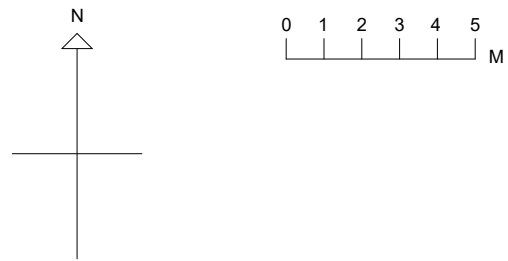
This Plan is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to provide accurate representation of the development.

In all cases reference should be made to the submitted plans.

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Client  
**Mr J Enamiriewan &  
Mr A Oyinloye**

Project  
**Land at Priors Hill  
Wroughton  
Swindon  
SN4 0RW**

Drawing Title  
**Existing-Proposed Site Plan**

Drawing No.  
**19/1297/02 Rev E**

Date  
**December 2020**

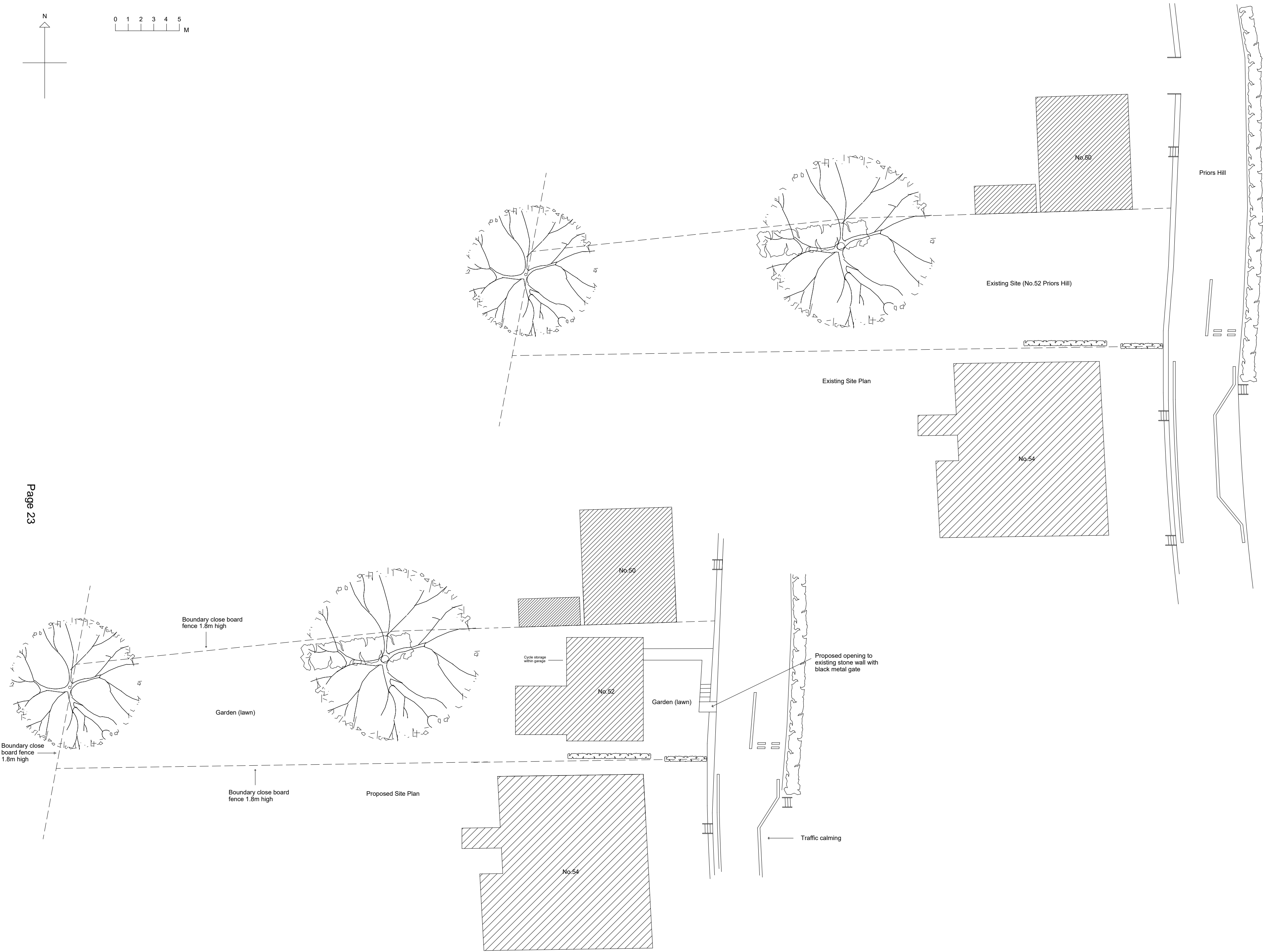
Scale  
**1:200 @ A2**

Drawn by  
**MM**

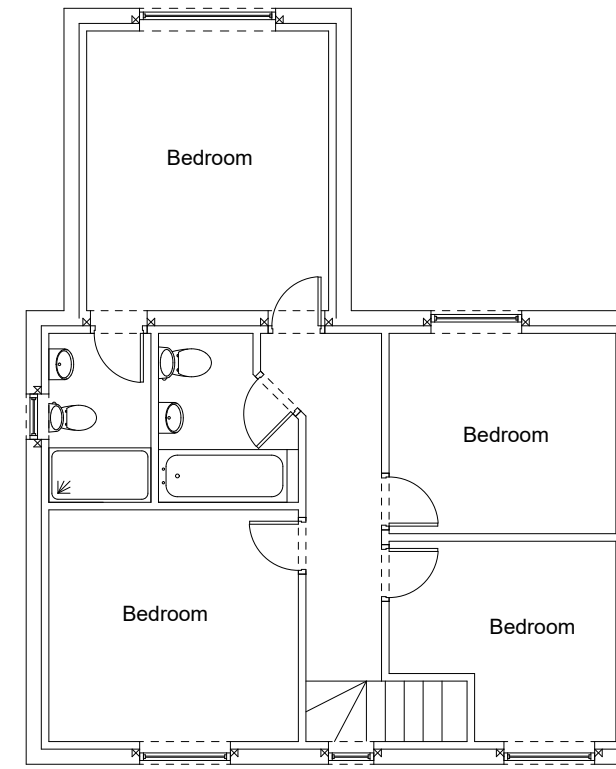
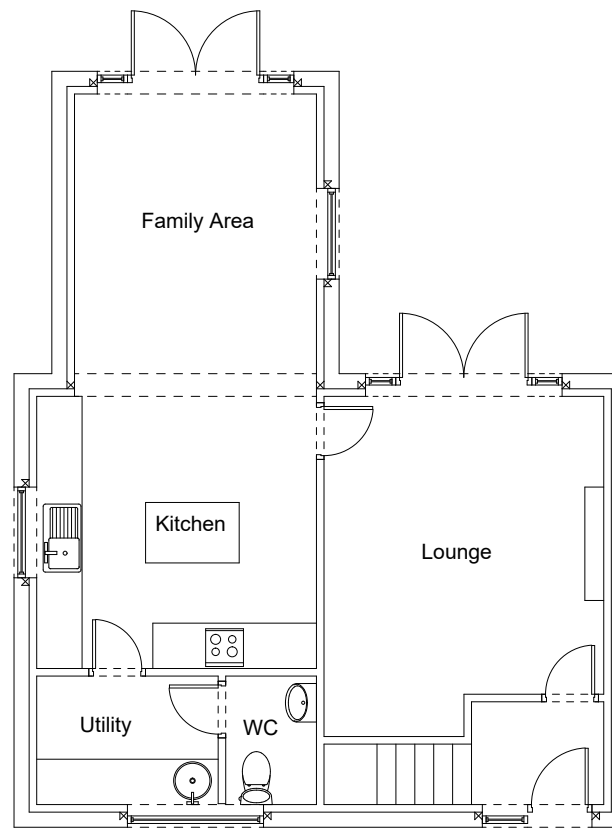
Checked by  
**RGN**

27b High Street  
Highworth  
Swindon  
SN6 7AG

01793 762368  
07798 864291



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Client  
**Mr J Enamiriewan &  
Mr A Oyinloye**

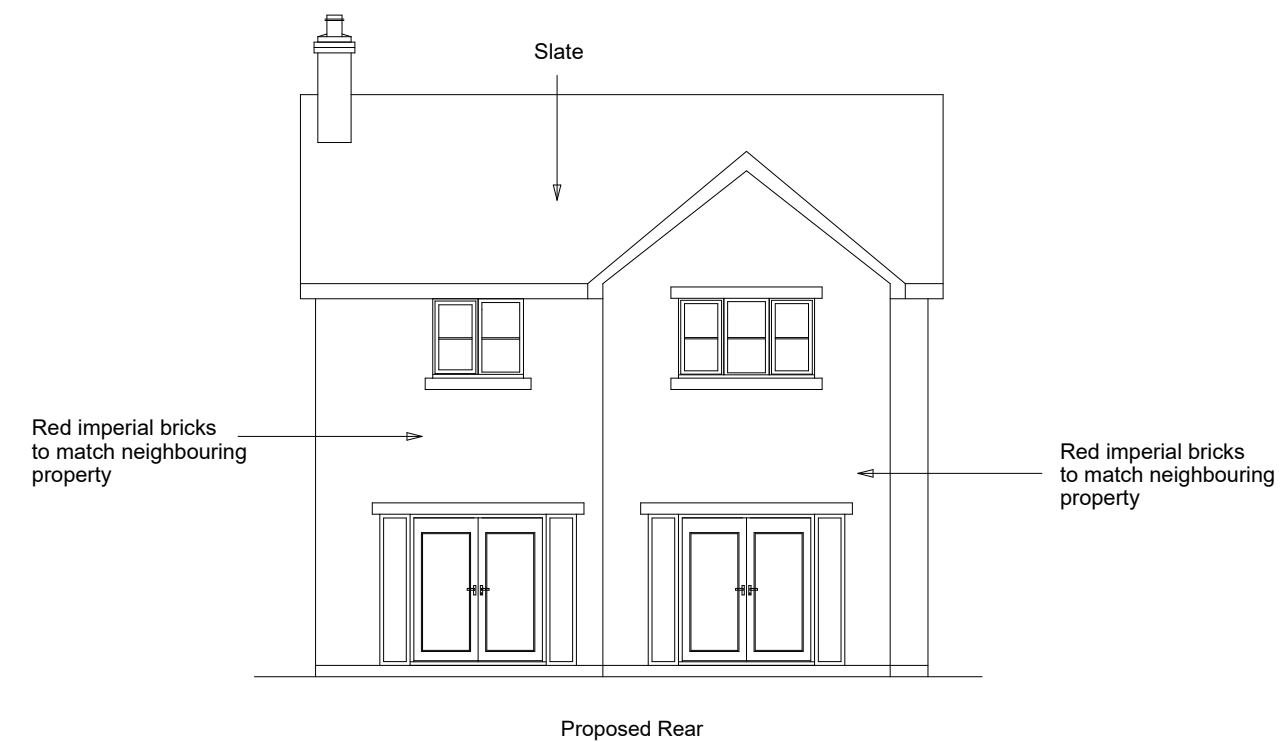
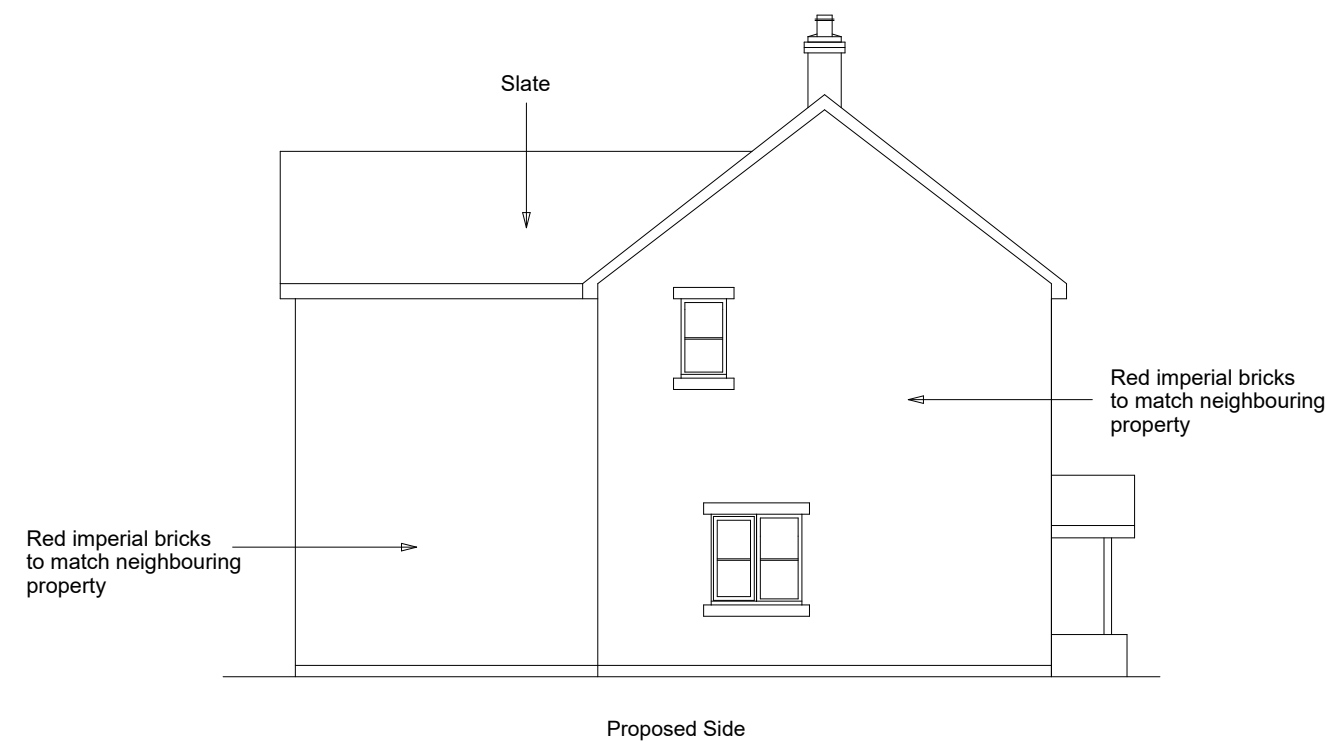
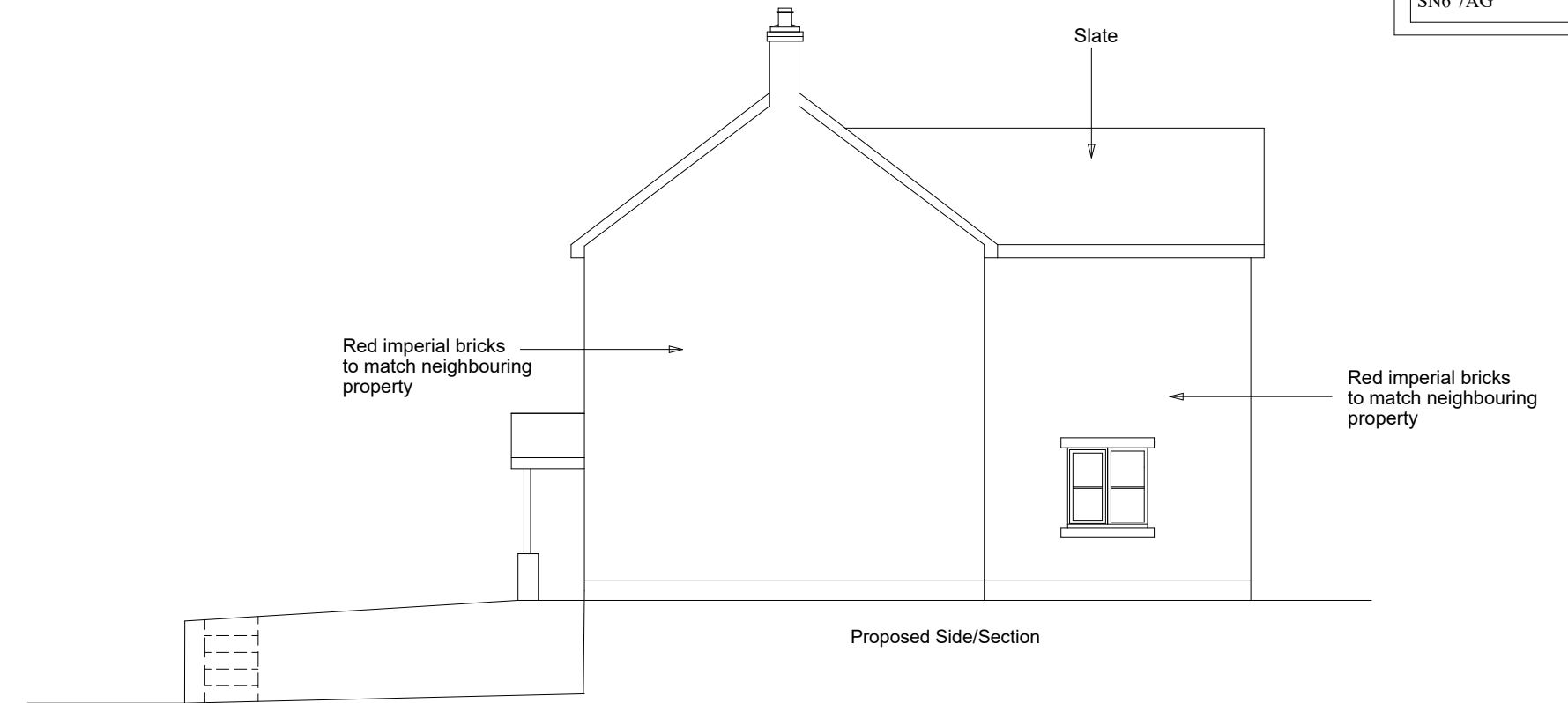
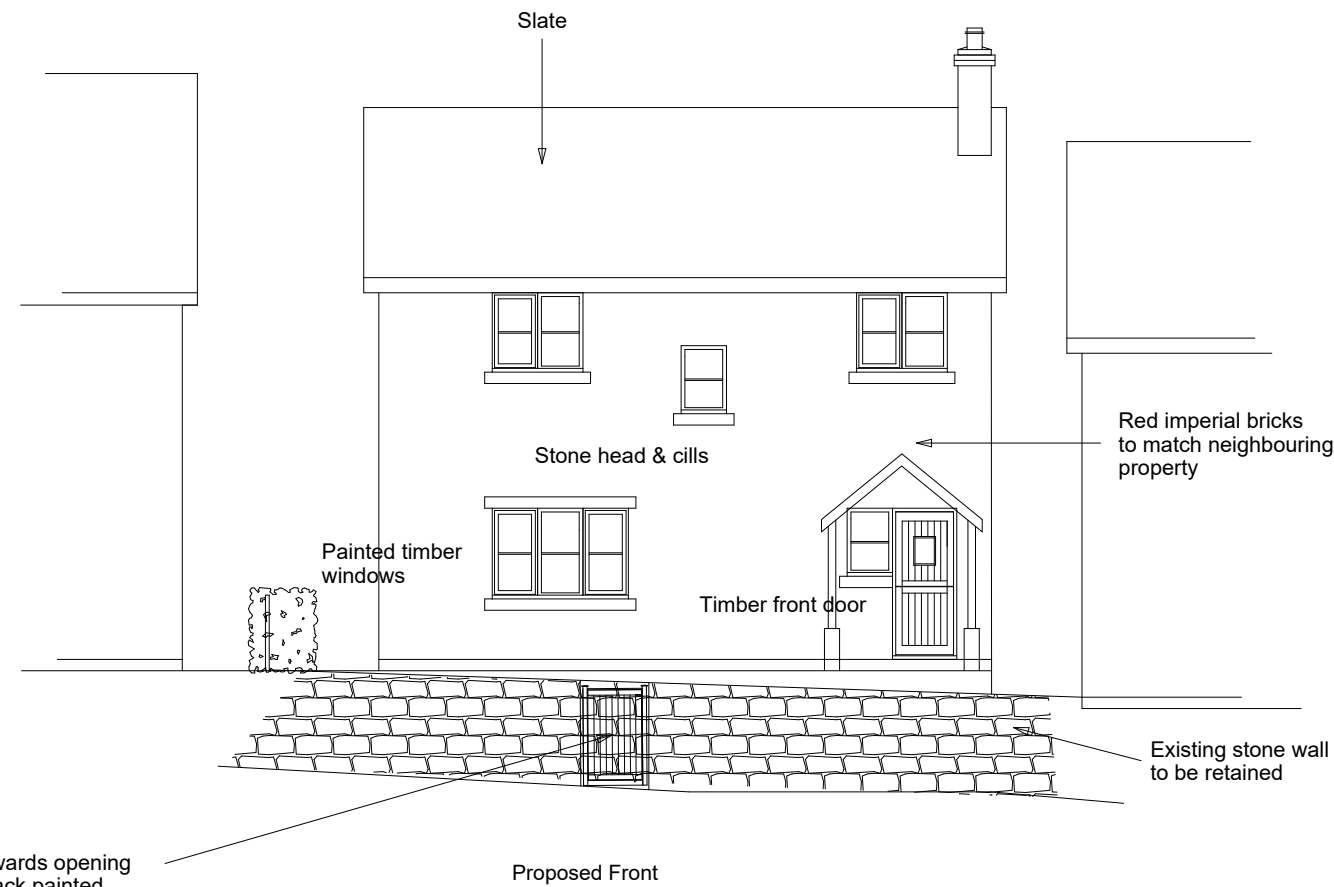
Project  
**Land at Priors Hill  
Wroughton  
Swindon  
SN4 0RW**

Drawing Title  
**Proposed Dwelling**

Drawing No.  
**19/1297/01 Rev F**

Date	Scale
February 2021	1:100 @ A2
Drawn by	Checked by
RGN	RGN

27b High Street Highworth Swindon SN6 7AG	01793 762368 07798 864291
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inwards opening  
Black painted  
metal gate right hand



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# COMMITTEE REPORT

**Item Number:**  
**Application Number:**  
S/20/0974/RACH

**Ward:** Wroughton And Wichelstowe  
**Parish:** Wroughton

**Proposal:** Erection of 1no. detached dwelling, part removal of existing front boundary wall and associated works.

**Site Location:** Land at 52 Priors Hill, Wroughton, Swindon

**Case Officer:** Ralph Chakadya

**Agent:**  
Rod Navarrete  
Home Plan Design Services  
27B High Street  
Highworth  
Swindon  
SN6 7AG

**Applicant**  
Mr J & A Enamiriewan & Oyinloye

## Background

1. This application has been brought to the Planning Committee for determination at the request of Councillors Cathy Martyn and Brian Ford, both whom declared an interest that prevented them to bring forward objections to the application.
2. Planning application S/00/02556 for the erection of a dwelling on the site was granted planning permission on appeal. This scheme has not been implemented.

## Summary of Recommendation:

3. That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to conditions and a Unilateral Undertaking to secure a financial contribution towards the provision of offsite Electric Vehicle Charging Point.

## The Proposal:

4. This proposal is for the erection of 1no. detached dwelling, partial removal of existing front boundary wall and associated works on an infill plot between 50 and 54 Priors Hill.
5. No provision is made for onsite car parking with Parking Survey details submitted to justify offsite car parking.
6. Following concerns raised by the Conservation Officer regarding the loss of the historic front boundary wall to provide vehicular access, plans were revised removing onsite parking and vehicular access and thereby retaining the historic wall. A revised plan, drawing numbered 19/1297/02 Rev E and a Technical Note dated December 2020

were submitted in support of the proposals and addressing the issues regarding offsite parking provision.

### **The Site and Surroundings:**

7. The site comprises vacant land situated between 50 and 54 Priors Hill.
8. On this part of Priors Hill, dwellings are located on either side, and tend to be 18th and 19th Century and detached and situated approximately 1-2 metres above the level of the road. Those properties with vehicular access have undercroft/basement garages due to the lower road levels.

### **Representations:**

9. Neighbours: A total 11 households submitted 22 representations objecting to the proposal highlighting the following:
  - Lack of parking
  - Highway safety and capacity
  - Inaccurate and misleading Parking Survey
  - Impact onto the Conservation Area
  - Loss of the historic front boundary wall
  - Overlooking and loss of privacy
  - property at number 48 Priors Hill has not and is not shown on any of the drawings, or plans of the proposed build (*Officer comment: No.48 is shown on the submitted location plan*)
  - Overshadowing
  - The permission granted in 2001 is outdated and should not be the basis to grant permission now
  - Impact onto foundations of neighbouring number 54 and 56 as they are old buildings
  - Permission will create precedent
10. Councillors Parish Council: Whereas most issues have been addressed, there are still concerns as to how any building can be developed on the site given the constraints of access. The front boundary wall would need to be retained. The Parish Council questions whether any enhancement to the parking area outside The Swan (former public house) would be able to mitigate parking requirements for any new property.

### **Consultees**

11. Conservation Officer: Following submission of revised plans raises no objection to the proposed dwelling subject to conditions.
12. Highways: Following submission of revised plans and Parking Survey Details raises no objection subject to conditions and a financial Unilateral Undertaking to provide an Electric Vehicle Charging point.
13. Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre: Multiple records of Water Vole and Soprano Pipistrelle Bat and a single record of a Myotis sp. Bat within 500m of site. Site within 500m of County Wildlife Site (SU18.096).

### **Planning Policy:**

14. The Swindon Borough Local Plan (SBLP) 2026 (adopted March 2015).
  - Policy SD1 (Sustainable Development Principles)
  - Policy SD2 (The Sustainable Development Strategy)
  - Policy DE1 (High Quality Design)
  - Policy HA1 (Mix, Types and Density)
  - Policy TR1 (Sustainable Transport Networks)
  - Policy TR2 (Transport and Development)
  - Policy EN4 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity)
  - Policy EN5 (Landscape Character and Historical Landscape)
  - Policy EN10 (Historic Environment & Heritage Assets)
15. Wroughton Neighbourhood Plan
16. Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents
  - Wroughton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP)
  - Swindon Residential Design Guide (SRDG) (2016),
  - Technical Guidance on Parking Standards SPD (2007).
17. National Policy
  - National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF)
  - National Design Guidance (2019)

### **Planning Considerations:**

18. The relevant considerations are the principle of the development, character and appearance, the impact on heritage assets, the impact on residential amenity, highway safety and landscaping issues.

#### **Principle of the development**

19. The proposed site is located within Wroughton's settlement boundary in what is considered to be a sustainable location. Therefore, the development complies with Policy SD2 of the adopted SBLP, which focuses development to such areas. Furthermore, the location of the site within easy reach of public transport links and walking distance of shops and services is in line with the sustainability expectations of the NPPF. Whereas policies and circumstances have changed over time, it is worth noting that the Planning Inspector previously granted planning permission for a dwelling on this site at Appeal in 2001. For these reasons, the principle of residential development in this location is considered acceptable.

#### **Character and appearance**

20. The proposed dwelling would follow the existing frontage building line of properties on this part of Priors Hill. As per the revised plans, the proposed detached dwelling follows the design, size and scale of surrounding detached and semi-detached properties on this part of Priors Hill. Whilst the proposal would erode some of the spaciousness along the street scene such as the large visual gap at this location, the introduction of a dwelling at this location would continue the built form along the Priors Hill and retains adequate separation distances with the adjoining properties. It is therefore, not considered to be detrimental to the street scene and character of the Conservation Area. Accordingly, the proposal is deemed compliant with Policy DE1.

#### Impact on Heritage assets

21. As discussed in Paragraph 127 of the NPPF and Policies DE1 and EN10 of the Local Plan, when looking to undertake development one needs to consider the setting of a building, its character, particularly how the works affect the character and appearance of the surrounding heritage assets and how the works reinforce 'local distinctiveness'.
22. The site lies within Wroughton Conservation Area. In determining planning applications, section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the decision maker to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.
23. The front boundary wall is of historic significance within the Conservation Area, though comprises a non-designated heritage asset for the purpose of this assessment. As highlighted above, the infill dwelling respects the prevailing frontage building line, size, scale and style of dwellings on this part of Priors Hill within the designated Wroughton Conservation Area. Following concerns raised by the Conservation Officer, plans were revised to include improved external materials, changes to the fenestration, removal of the dormers and reduction to the apex.
24. The revisions also ensure that the front boundary wall that is part of the historic fabric on this part of Priors Hill would be retained with only pedestrian access being provided from the street. To ensure the provision of the pedestrian access would not damage the boundary wall, appropriate conditions regarding the erection of an opening and the methodology for undertaking this work would be added to the planning consent if granted. The revised proposal now embraces the qualities of local character and distinctiveness and with appropriate conditions in place is not considered to result in harm to the appearance and character of the Conservation Area and the street scene. As such, the impact on the Conservation Area would be neutral and the development would preserve its the character and appearance. The proposal is therefore deemed to be compliant with Policies DE1 and EN10, and the NPPF.

#### Neighbouring amenity

25. Whilst slightly set back from the frontage of neighbouring number 50 Priors Hill, the proposed dwelling retains an acceptable rear building line and sufficient separation distances from number 50 and 54 Priors Hill, ensuring no harm is caused to neighbouring amenity in terms of loss of light or being overbearing. The occupants of number 48, directly to the rear of number 50, have raised concerns regarding potential overlooking and loss of privacy to their property, and that their property has not be shown on the submitted plans. However, there is no direct overlooking to the rear garden of number 48, as this property lies directly to the rear of number 50 Priors Hill. If there is any overlooking to number 48, it would potentially be from number 50 Priors Hill, a situation that is existing and not for assessment as part of the current proposals.
26. Residents have raised concerns regarding noise and disturbance during construction of the dwelling and the difficulty of accessing the site to deliver building materials. Whilst it is acknowledged that the site is challenging and there will be some disturbance to residents during construction, an appropriate condition would be added requiring the submission of a construction Method Statement to be approved prior to commencement. With such a condition in place and the acknowledgement that the

construction period would be temporary, the development is not considered to result in permanent harm to residential amenity.

#### Highways

27. The proposal was revised with parking to the front of the site omitted to overcome the Conservation Officer's objection seeking retention of the wall at the front of the site within the Conservation Area. A small opening will be created in the wall to provide pedestrian access. A number of residents have made representations regarding lack of parking. As the parking cannot be accommodated onsite, a Parking Survey has been undertaken and submitted within the Technical Note to include the surrounding roads, in order to consider other methods of how the parking demand for the site will be accommodated without compromising highway safety.
28. The survey was undertaken within 200m of the site, however, as the surrounding highway lacks pedestrian footways to connect with the nearby roads, only the parking spaces identified on Priors Hill were considered, so as to ensure that a reasonable walking distance was taken into account, but also with the need to maintain pedestrian safety in mind. The Parking Survey was able to identify 9no. available spaces along Priors Hill, which would sufficiently accommodate the parking demand from the proposed development. Whilst representations have been received questioning the accuracy of the survey, the Council's Highways officers are satisfied with its findings, its methodology and manner in which the survey was conducted.
29. Although the situation is not ideal, any parking associated with a new development would be preferable to be provided within the curtilage of the application site. As the parking on site compromises the Conservation Area, alternative parking arrangements have been sought within the vicinity and shown to be sufficient to accommodate the proposal without compromise to highway safety.
30. With the absence of parking within the site, the Electric Vehicle Charging Point required by the adopted Parking Standards is unable to be provided. This is particularly important within the rural areas and therefore its provision is considered to meet the test for offsite infrastructure to make the development acceptable in planning terms. Therefore, as this aspect cannot be provided on site, a £2500 contribution will be required to be likely secured through a Unilateral Undertaking under Section 106. The actual siting of the charging point will be determined in consultation with Ward Members and the Parish Council.
31. With the revised layout as shown, sufficient space can be accommodated onsite to provide cycle parking and bin storage for the dwelling. These aspects are covered by planning conditions.

#### Ecology

32. The presence of bats that are defined protected species has been recorded within 500m of site. An appropriate informative would be added to the planning consent advising the applicant of the measures to take when undertaking development on the site including obtaining a Bat licence if bats are found on site

#### Representations

33. Most of the issues raised by third parties are addressed within the above report. Regarding precedent, each application is considered on its own merits and therefore approval of the scheme would not set a precedent. Whilst any potential impact on foundations to neighbouring number 54 would be a civil matter, an appropriate informative would be added to the planning consent advising the applicant that the permission does not grant authority to encroach onto neighbouring properties in terms of foundations, guttering or any overhang.

#### Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

34. The Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL Charging Schedule) on 26th March 2015 and became effective on 6th April 2015.
35. The development would be CIL liable development based on the approved CIL Charging Schedule. The development is located within the Council's adopted CIL Charging Schedule Residential Zone 2. The standard CIL rate as set out in the adopted CIL Charging Schedule do not reflect the rates that would be chargeable as these are index linked annually on the 1st January in any given year.

#### Concluding Comments:

36. The principle of residential development in this location is acceptable. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposal will not lead to any unacceptable impact upon the character of the historic front boundary wall or the Conservation Area and that it will preserve the significance of each. The proposal will also cause no demonstrable harm to residential amenity nor will it lead to any highway safety concerns. It is deemed to be compliant with Policies DE1, SD2, EN10 and TR2 of the adopted SBLP, the adopted Technical Guidance on Parking Standards, the adopted Residential Design Guide and the NPPF.

#### Recommendation

37. That planning permission be GRANTED subject to conditions and Unilateral Undertaking to secure a financial contribution towards the provision of an offsite Electric Vehicle Charging Point.

#### Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.  
Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 (1) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.
2. This approval shall be in respect of drawings and details:
  - Unnumbered Location Plan received 06 August 2020
  - Drawing No. 19/1297/02 Rev E Proposed Site Plan received 22 December 2020
  - Drawing No. 19/1297/01 Rev F Proposed Floor and Elevation Plans received 19 February 2021
  - Transport Technical Note by Highgate Transportation received 15 February 2021Reason: To define the scope of the development hereby permitted, in accordance with section 72 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3. Prior to the commencement of works on site in connection with the development hereby permitted, details of the proposed slab levels of the building in relation to the existing and proposed levels of the site and the surrounding land shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development hereby approved shall be constructed in accordance with the approved slab levels.  
Reason: To ensure the details and appearance of the development is acceptable
4. Prior to the commencement of works on site in connection with the development hereby permitted, details of all external facing materials shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with these approved details.  
Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory.
5. The removal of stone in order to provide a pedestrian opening in the front boundary wall shall be carried out by hand [or by hand-held tools] only.  
Reason: The boundary wall is a significant non-designated historic structure where the use of power driven tools could lead to damage to the existing historic fabric
6. All pointing, re-pointing, making good and mortar beds and surfaces shall be undertaken using no stronger than a NHL3.5 lime mortar at a ratio of 1 part lime to 3 parts sand.  
Reason: As the historic wall is constructed of traditional construction and the use of harder products such as cement could cause increased decay of the historic fabric.
7. The method of pointing and bedding of new and existing masonry shall be as follows:
- All raking out of old mortar shall be by hand;
  - All new pointing shall be given a flush finish (not weather struck); and
  - All pointing shall be pat finished and not smoothed by tooling.
  - The gauge of pointing should match that of the existing for making good.
- Reason: As the historic wall is constructed of traditional construction and the use of harder products such as cement could cause increased decay of the historic fabric.
8. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved Plan shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Plan shall:
- i. specify the type and number of vehicles;
  - ii. specify the point of construction access and access route to the site;
  - iii. set out details of the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
  - iv. set out arrangements for the loading and unloading of plant and materials;
  - v. set out arrangements for the storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
  - vi. set out arrangements for wheel washing facilities;
  - vii. specify the intended hours of construction operations;
- Reason: To reduce the potential impact on the public highway during the site preparation and construction phase(s) of development in accordance with Policy TR2 of Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026.

9. The dwelling hereby permitted shall not be occupied until space has been laid out within the site for a minimum of 1 no. bicycles to be parked in a secure and sheltered location, in accordance with SBCs Parking Standards and such provision shall be maintained thereafter.

Reason: To promote and encourage sustainable transport and travel in accordance with Policy TR1 of Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026.

10. Prior to the commencement of works on site in connection with the development hereby permitted, details of the proposed means of disposal of surface water from the development shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the works for the disposal of surface water have been constructed in accordance with the approved details.

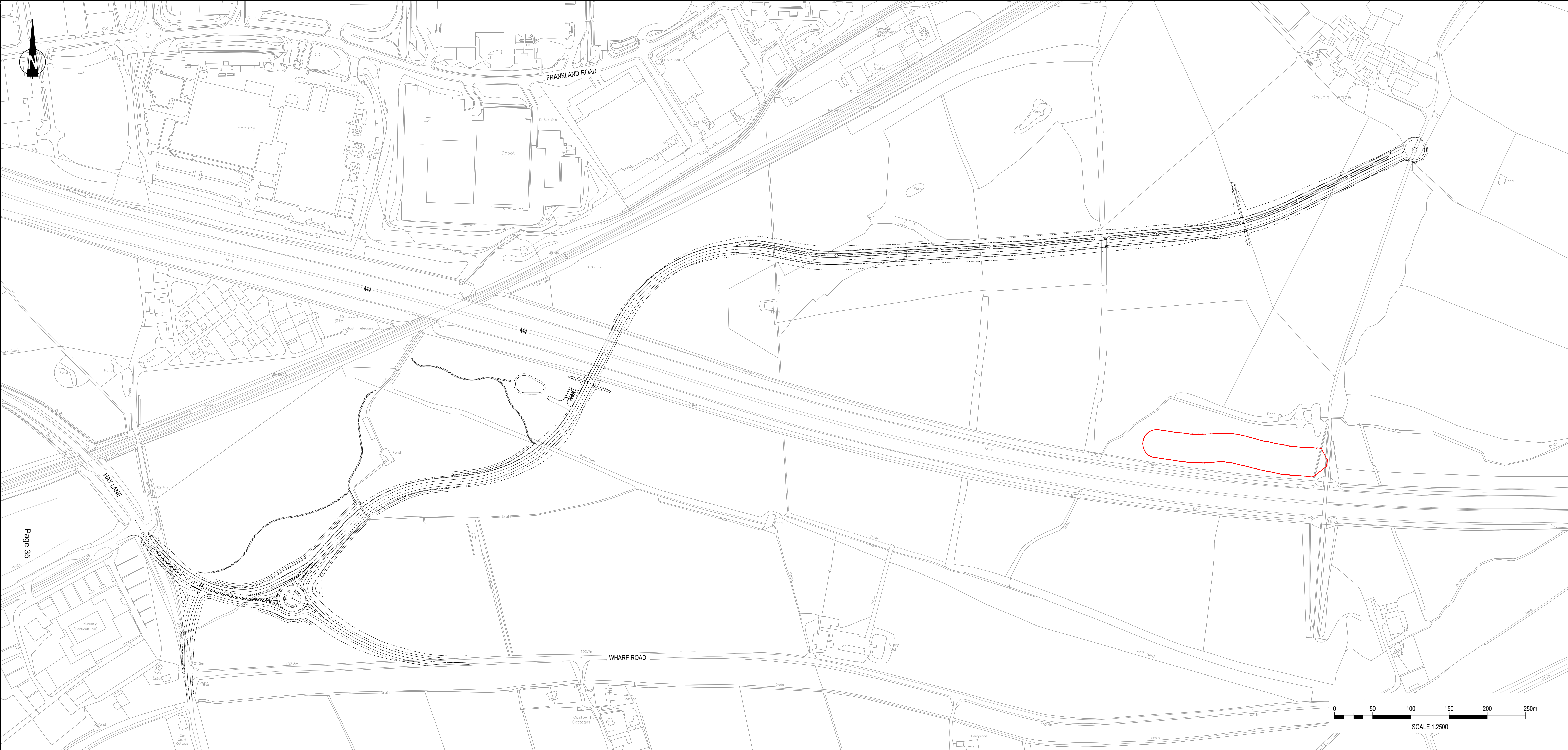
Reason: In order to minimise danger and inconvenience to users of the highway.

### **Informatives**

1. CIL Liable Development: This development constitutes Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) liable development. CIL is a mandatory financial charge on development. For more information on CIL visit [www.swindon.gov.uk/cil](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/cil) or telephone the SBC CIL Team on 01793 466289 or 466397 or email [cil@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:cil@swindon.gov.uk). To avoid additional financial penalties the requirements of the impact of CIL must be managed before development is commenced and subsequently payment made in accordance with the requirements of the CIL Demand Notice issued. Information on possible exemptions that may be capable of being applied for can be found at: [https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200126/applications/70/community\\_infrastructure\\_levy](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200126/applications/70/community_infrastructure_levy) and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy>. CIL remains relevant in the event that planning permission is allowed by Planning Appeal.
2. There is a risk that bats may occur at the development site. Many species of bat depend on buildings for roosting, with each having its own preferred type of roost. Most species roost in crevices such as under ridge tiles, behind roofing felt or in cavity walls and are therefore not often seen in the roof space. Bat roosts are protected all times by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) even when bats are temporarily absent because, being creatures of habit, they usually return to the same roost site every year. Planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation or substitute for the need to obtain a bat licence if an offence is likely. If bats or evidence of bats is found during the works, the applicant is advised to stop work and follow advice from an independent ecologist or to contact the Bat Advice Service on 0845 1300 228, email [enquiries@bats.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bats.org.uk) or visit the Bat Conservation Trust website.
3. The granting of planning permission does not authorise you to carry out any works on, over or under your neighbour's land or property without first obtaining their consent.

End of report

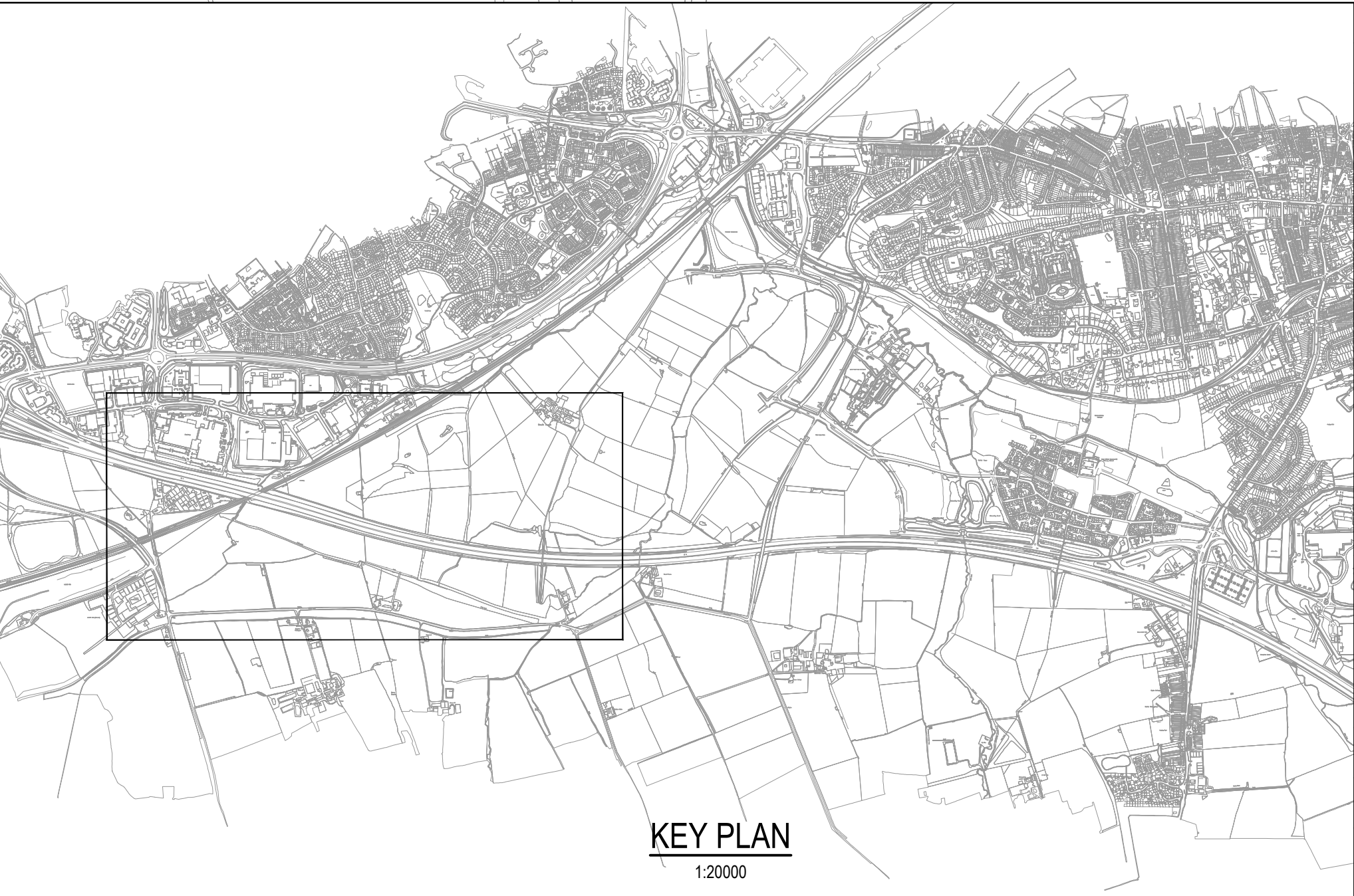




- NOTES:**
- DO NOT SCALE THIS DRAWING. IF IN DOUBT PLEASE REQUEST FURTHER INFORMATION.
  - ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN METRES UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE.
  - THIS DRAWING IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL OTHER RELEVANT CONTRACT DRAWINGS, CONSTRUCTION DETAILS AND SPECIFICATIONS.
  - THE TOPOGRAPHIC INFORMATION WAS TAKEN FROM BERNARD GEOMATICS SURVEY, DATED AUGUST 2018.

**KEY:**

— NOISE BUND BOUNDARY



**KEY PLAN**  
1:20000

Mark	Revision	Date	Drawn	Chkd	Appd

**SCALING NOTE:** Do not scale this drawing - any errors or omissions shall be reported to Stantec without delay.  
**UTILITIES NOTE:** The position of any existing public or private sewers, utility services, plant or apparatus shown on this drawing is believed to be correct, but no warranty to this is expressed or implied. Other such plant or apparatus may also be present but not shown. The Contractor is therefore advised to undertake their own investigation where the presence of any existing sewers, services, plant or apparatus may affect their operations.

**Drawing Issue Status**

**FOR PLANNING**

**WICHELSTOWE SOUTHERN ACCESS  
NOISE BUND RMA**

**LOCATION PLAN**

Client		
<b>GRIFFITHS</b> civil engineering and construction		
Date of 1st Issue 20.11.2020	Designed -	Drawn ZAS
A1 Scale 1:2500	Checked APLR	Approved JS
Drawing Number 44771-STN-HGN-NBP-DR-CH-0101		Revision <b>P01</b>

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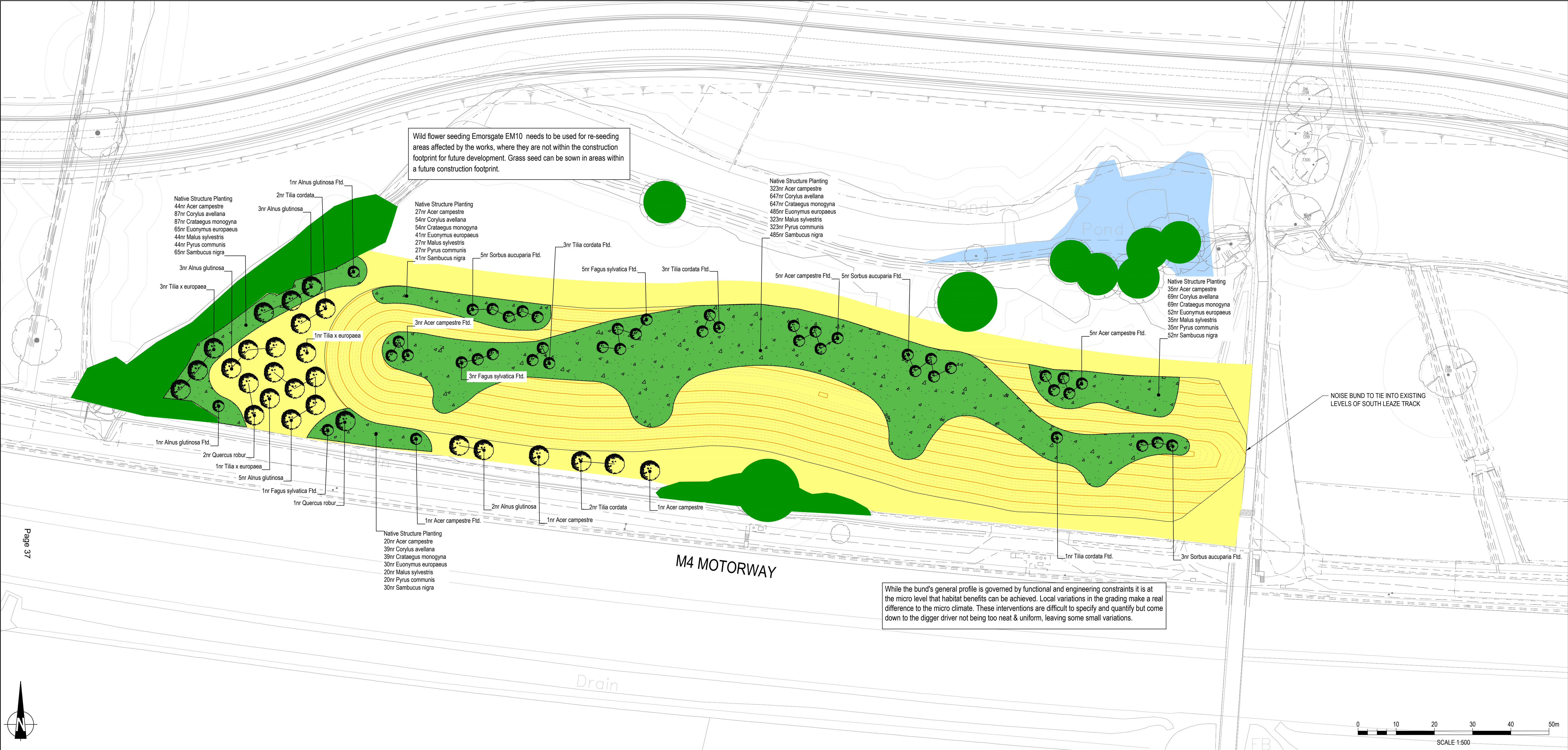
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READING  
Tel: 01189 500 761



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Legend

Existing vegetation

Proposed

Standard tree

Feathered tree

Native structure planting

Wildflower grass mix  
Emorsgate EM10 - Tussock  
Mixture, sowing rate 4g/m<sup>2</sup>

- NOTES:
1. All proposed planting is subject to the location of underground utilities and services.

2. Where hedgerows cross over services, shrubs only shall be planted for a minimum 2m length either side of the service.

3. Not withstanding any notes on these drawings it is the contractors responsibility to check for the presence of any underground and overhead services before undertaking any excavations or planting works.

4. This drawing should be read in conjunction with all relevant drawings, standard earthworks details, structures, drainage, utilities, lighting and signage drawings.

5. Please refer to the landscape specification 44771-3000-S1 Rev A 'Soft Landscape Specification' produced for RMA Wichelstowe Southern Access Road.

6. All planting to be within the site boundary - refer to Engineers' General Arrangement drawing.

Wichelstowe Southern Access RMA Noise Bund Plant Schedule							
Tree							
Name	Form	Height	Girth	Root Condition	Percentage	Ctrs	Qty
Acer campestre	Standard	250-300cm	8-10cm	RB			2
Acer campestre Ftd.	Feathered	175-250cm		RB			14
Alnus glutinosa	Standard	250-300cm	8-10cm	RB			13
Alnus glutinosa Ftd.	Feathered	175-250cm		RB			2
Fagus sylvatica Ftd.	Feathered	175-250cm		RB			9
Quercus robur	Standard	250-300cm	8-10cm	RB			3
Sorbus aucuparia Ftd.	Feathered	175-250cm		RB			13
Tilia cordata	Standard	250-300cm	8-10cm	RB			4
Tilia cordata Ftd.	Feathered	150-175cm		RB			7
Tilia x europaea	Standard	250-300cm	8-10cm	RB			5
							72
Native Structure Planting - Tree and shrub species to be planted in random, single species groups of 3, 5 and 7.							
Name	Form	Height	Girth	Root Condition	Percentage	Ctrs	Qty
Acer campestre	Whip/Feather	60-80cm		BR	10.00 %	1,000	449
Corylus avellana	Transplant	60-80cm		BR	20.00 %	1,000	896
Crataegus monogyna	Whip/Feather	60-80cm		BR	20.00 %	1,000	896
Euonymus europaeus	Transplant	60-80cm		BR	15.00 %	1,000	673
Malus sylvestris	Whip/Feather	60-80cm		BR	10.00 %	1,000	449
Pyrus communis	Whip/Feather	60-80cm		BR	10.00 %	1,000	449
Sambucus nigra	Transplant	60-80cm		BR	15.00 %	1,000	673
							4485
Grass seeding area: 9250m <sup>2</sup> (final grass seeding area TBC following confirmation of extent of works)							

P01

Plant labels and schedule added

17.03.21

IM

KH

Mark

Revision

Date

Drawn

Chkd

Appd

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Drawing Issue Status

FOR PLANNING

WICHELSTOWE SOUTHERN ACCESS

NOISE BUND RMA

LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Client

GRIFFITHS

civil engineering and construction

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BRISTOL  
Tel: 01173 327 840

Date of 1st Issue  
04.03.2021

Designed  
KH

Drawn  
IM

A1 Scale  
1:500

Checked  
AC

Approved  
JWS

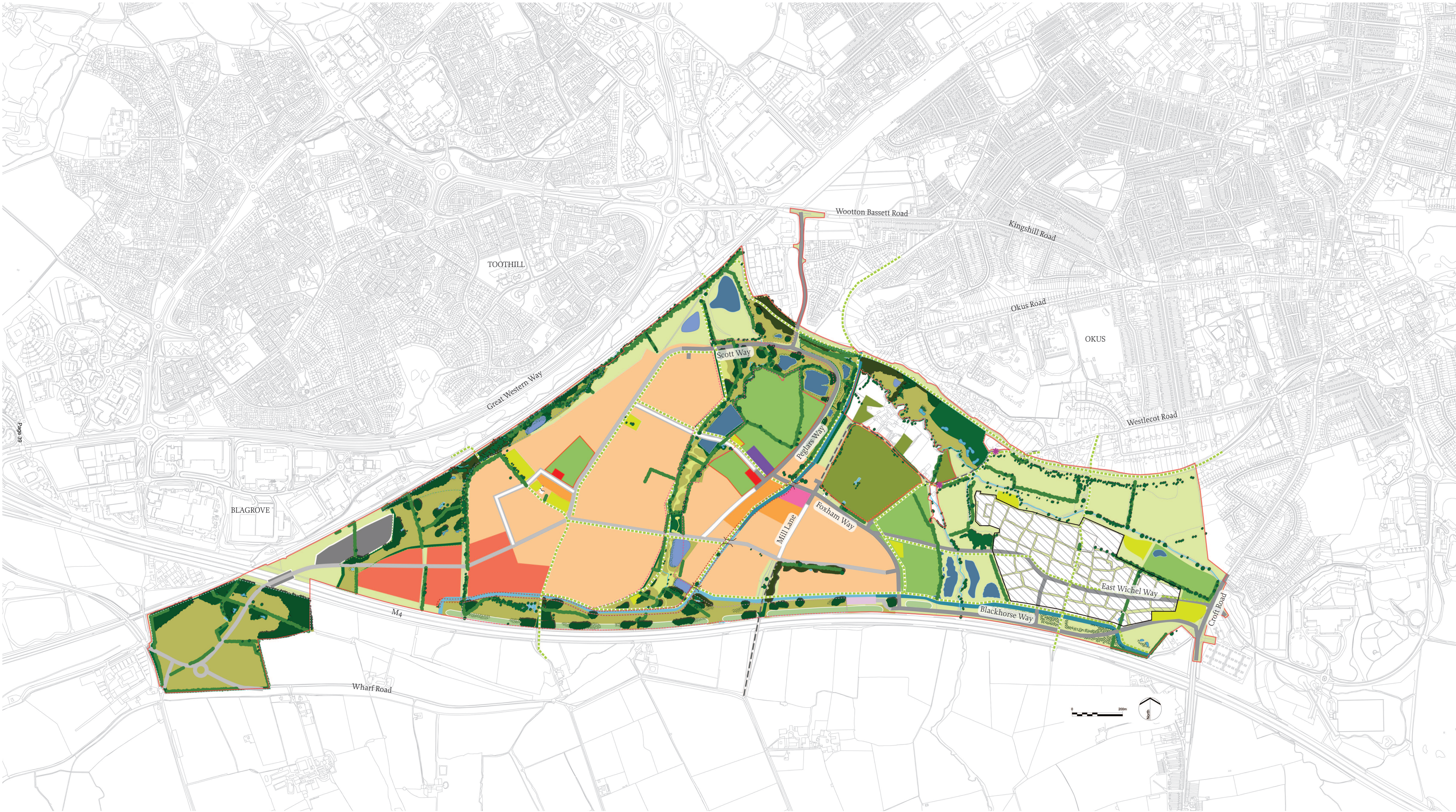
Drawing Number  
44771-STN-WSA-3001-DR-LS-2014

Revision  
P01



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KEY	
	Application boundary
	Retained Hedgerows
	Retained Trees
	Scheduled Ancient Monument
	Proposed green links
	Proposed green infrastructure
	Proposed playing fields
	Proposed local open space with play area
	Proposed ecological management and connectivity areas
	Areas of consented development to be completed in accordance with reserved matters approvals
	Proposed residential areas
	Proposed mixed use areas
	Proposed western employment area
	Proposed waterways facilities site
	Supermarket
	Proposed primary school
	Proposed secondary school
	Proposed park & ride
	Proposed road closure
	Existing road
	Completed primary streets
	Proposed primary streets
	Proposed secondary streets, streets with bus route and community street
	Completed existing canal
	Proposed canal
	Existing ponds (ecology)
	Proposed ponds (ecology)
	Existing ponds/basins (SUDS)
	Proposed ponds/basins (SUDS)

PROJECT TITLE		WICHELSTOWE	
DRAWING TITLE		LUMP 2	
ISSUED BY	Exeter	T 01392 260430	
DATE	Jan 2014	DRAWN	GH
SCALE/A0	1:5000	CHECKED	DB
STATUS	Final Draft	APPROVED	DB
DWG NO. 3555_304			
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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**Item Number:**  
**Application Number:**  
 S/RES/20/1689/NIGI

**Ward:** Wroughton And Wichelstowe  
**Parish:**  
 Wroughton

**Proposal:** Construction of an acoustic bund north of the M4 - Reserved Matters from previous permission S/13/1524.

**Site Location:** Noise Bund, Wichelstowe Southern Access, Wichelstowe

**Case Officer:** Nicole Gillett

**Agent:**  
 Miss Chloe Duggan  
 Stantec  
 Caversham Bridge House  
 Waterman Place  
 Reading  
 RG1 8DN

**Applicant**  
 Swindon Borough Council  
 Wat Tyler House  
 Beckhampton Street  
 SN1 2JH

## Officers Report

### Background

1. An application has been submitted for a noise bund on the southern edge of Wichelstowe. This is an application by Swindon Borough Council Highways Department in agreement with the Joint Venture for Wichelstowe to provide noise protection for future residents whilst also facilitating removal of excess soil arising from the development.
2. This is a Reserved Matters application submitted pursuant to the outline permission for the Wichelstowe development (S/13/1524 refers). The proposals should accord with the Land Use Master Plan (LUMP2) approved at the outline stage and comply with the approved Noise Attenuation Bund Strategy (S/COND/16/1504 refers).
3. The application has been requested to be determined by the Planning Committee as Ward Members (Cllr Martyn and Cllr Ford) "are firmly of the opinion that the land on which the original relief road was due to be built should be kept free and available." Please see the principle section of the report, which considers these concerns.

### Summary of Recommendation

4. That the Director of Strategic Development and Growth be authorised to APPROVE the Reserved Matters subject to:-

(a) The planning conditions set out in this report, with delegated authority to make reasonable amendments, additions or omissions to those conditions before issuing formal consent as may be necessary.

## **The Proposal**

5. This Reserved Matters submission seeks permission for the construction of a noise bund. The noise bund will be constructed using soil from the Wichelstowe southern access works (S/RES/20/0778). The noise bund will contribute towards noise mitigation at the site.

## **Site and Surroundings**

6. The noise bund site comprises 0.88 ha and is located on the southern edge of the Wichelstowe development, adjacent to the M4 and west of the Public Right of Way (WR35).

7. The wider site currently has permission for; a Primary School, Secondary School, Restaurant, Supermarket and some 1000+ homes permitted or pending determination. The wider site already benefits from a length of restored canal and the proposal will be linked to the future canal and landscaping features. The site is currently open land, but is surrounded by works linked to the southern access.

## **Consultations**

8. County Archaeologist – no comment.

9. Canal Trust – no objection.

10. Drainage Officer – no objection.

11. Ecologist – Following landscape plan revisions the Council's Ecologist is able to support the proposal.

12. Environment Agency – Following an additional plan, showing the proposal outside the flood zone, the Environment Agency confirmed that the proposed bund is acceptable subject to a condition: "bund to be constructed in the same location and does not have a larger footprint than that shown for the bund in drawing number 44771-STN-HGN-NBP-DR-CH-0102 (titled Wichelstowe Southern Access Noise Bund RMA General Arrangement, revision P04, dated 24 February 2021 and prepared by Stantec). This is to prevent a loss of floodplain storage to ensure there is not an increase in flood risk elsewhere, in accordance with paragraph 163 of the NPPF, adopted policy EN6 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 and emerging policy DM36 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2036."

13. Environmental Health Officer – no objection.

14. Highways Officer – no objection subject to a construction management plan that is covered by Condition 35 of the outline. The Officer advised they see no conditions or obligations that seek to retain the alignment of the Southern Relief Road and they are not



aware of any aspiration on the part of the local highway authority to deliver such a relief road. On that basis they could not reasonably object to the application proposals on the grounds that it does not safeguard the previous route of the Southern Relief Road.

15. Highways England - no objection subject to a condition for the applicant to provide a drainage maintenance schedule prior to completion.

16. Historic England – no comment.

17. Landscape Officer – Following landscape plan revisions the Landscape Officer is able to support the proposal.

18. Natural England – no comment.

19. Wiltshire LLP – no objection.

20. Ward Members Cllr Ford Cllr Martyn – requested application be determined at planning committee. Councillors “are firmly of the opinion that the land on which the original relief road was due to be built should be kept free and available.” OFFICER NOTE: Please see the principle section of the report, which examines these concerns.

21. Wroughton Parish Council – objection. WPC appreciates the requirement for a noise bund but supports Cllr Martyn’s comments in relation to the relief road.

## **Representations**

22. The application has received no representations from members of the public.

## **Planning Considerations**

23. The main issues for consideration in determining this Reserved Matters submission are:

- o Principle
- o Layout
- o Landscaping

24. The submission must also be determined against the background of the outline planning permission (S/13/1524 refers) including the relevant conditions, approved Wichelstowe Land Use Master Plan (LUMP) and Noise Bund Strategy. Compliance with policy including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) and Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (SBLP 2026) is also necessary.

25. The SBLP 2026 was formally adopted on 26 March 2015. Below is a list of the key policies relevant to this application:

- o Policy SD1: Sustainable Development Principles
- o Policy SD2: The Sustainable Development Strategy
- o Policy DE1: High Quality Design
- o Policy EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- o Policy EN6: Flood Risk
- o Policy NC1: Wichelstowe

26. The Wroughton Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) was adopted in July 2016 and forms part of the development plan. At paragraph 1.5 of the WNP it states: "Development in West Wichel and Middle Wichel is guided by the masterplan for Wichelstowe, and this plan acknowledges and takes account of these future communities. Policies within this plan will not apply to any development which is already consented within West Wichel and Middle Wichel." The WNP requires development of Wichelstowe to be in accordance with the approved land use master plan (LUMP). Further, the WNP notes "There was frustration at the delays in developing Wichelstowe, which many people believe is increasing pressure from developers on Wroughton's greenfield sites."

27. The main issues relating to the proposal are examined below.

## **Principle**

28. Whilst it is not common practice to examine the principle of a proposal at Reserved Matters stage, the proposal has been requested to be put before Planning Committee as Ward Members (Cllr Martyn and Cllr Ford) "are firmly of the opinion that the land on which the original relief road was due to be built should be kept free and available."

29. An Outline Planning Application (S/02/2000 refers) for the Southern Town Expansion, now known as Wichelstowe, was granted permission on 19th May 2005. A Time Extension application (S/TIME/13/1521 refers) was granted on 10th January 2014 to extend the life of the Outline Planning Permission by a further 10 years. Application, S/13/1524 changed a number of the conditions that were carried forward within the Time Extension application and created a new Outline Planning Permission for Wichelstowe with a new Masterplan (referred to as LUMP2).

30. The new LUMP2 Masterplan changed the location of The Croft Road Hay Lane Link (CRHLL). The committee minutes (Tuesday, 11th February 2014) for S/13/1524 state "That this Committee requests that consideration be given by the developer to protecting/safeguarding the previously agreed alignment of the Croft Road to Hay Lane Link route (also known as the Southern relief Road) as identified on the original Land Use Master Plan."

31. The CRHLL ran previously along the southern edge of the site adjacent to the M4, however, the approved LUMP2 Masterplan (S/13/1524 refers) shows the CRHLL running on a more central alignment through the site. Application S/13/1524 and the LUMP2 Masterplan approved noise bunds and landscaping within the area of the previous southern relief road. The noise bund is required to accord with LUMP2 and in turn safeguard the amenity of the future residents.

32. Whilst, the committee minutes (Tuesday, 11th February 2014) note the developer is asked to 'consider' leaving land for the road, the decision notice for S/13/1524 does not contain any conditions to prohibit the noise mitigation infrastructure in the approved location. By submitting this application, Swindon Borough Council, as applicant has chosen to apply to implement the approved noise bund strategy in accordance with the outline planning permission. There is no policy or mitigation reason for the Planning Authority to require the former route of the Southern Access Road (as per the original Outline consent) is safeguarded, particularly so given the subsequent consent of

application S/13/1524. Nevertheless, as required by the (Tuesday, 11th February 2014) committee minutes, your officers have asked the Joint Venture (JV) partnership for Wichelstowe to consider protecting/safeguarding the previously agreed alignment of the Croft Road to Hay Lane Link route. The JV has provided a statement regarding how they have considered the southern relief road.

33. The Highways Officer supported the revised Croft Road Hay Lane Link location at committee in 2014 (S/13/1524 committee report refers). Whilst this report does not wish to repeat the detailed analysis of the previous committee report the below extracts highlight that Planning Committee Members could have been no doubt as to what S/13/1524 was proposing:

“[Taken from Planning Committee report for S/13/1524 11/02/2014]

Highway Infrastructure:

33. The submitted Masterplan Report suggests that generally the strategic highways solution shown by the previous LUMP is “over-engineered”. This submission, proposes to reduce the infrastructure by rationalising the extent of highway network within the site. This includes the relocation of the proposed Croft Road Hay Lane Link (CRHLL) to within the development from a previous alignment shown parallel to the M4. The new alignment would revert back to the route shown in the previously approved LUMP to meet the tunnel under the M4.

34. This Croft Road Hay Lane Link was referred to as the “Southern Relief Road” in the documentation supporting the previous outline planning permission (S/02/2000 refers). Almost all of the objections to this Section 73 application relate to this proposed change which is viewed as a deletion of the strategic route. As much of the changes proposed involves new Highway alignments through the site and the alteration of triggers for key infrastructure the involvement of the Highway Authority throughout the consideration of this application has been critical. Owing to this the Highway Officer has provided a detailed analysis of the proposal and this is set out as a separate section within this general report (see below)...[Highway Officers Section within the 2014 Committee Report]

47. Realignment of Croft Road Hay Lane Link (CRHLL)

47.2 LUMP2 realigns this road [CRHLL] from its junction with Foxham Way diverting it through the residential development. It retains a width of 7.3m (with localised narrowings to control speeds) and maintains limited accesses however no more than 2 per km. The introduction of more accesses and its cohesion with the urban fabric suggests it should have a 30mph limit. As the CRHLL moves out of the residential area and into the employment area where there will be fewer accesses and pedestrians the speed limit increases to 40mph..

... it is evident through observations that drivers are currently choosing a route of J16/Hay Lane/Wharf Road/Mill Lane/Foxham Way/Croft Road over routes through Wroughton which would suggest that if as the results show LUMP2 is quicker than this existing route then LUMP2 will remain an attractive option.”

34. In addition, to supporting the realignment, the Highways Officer has commented on the current noise bund proposal. The Highway Officer advised “I note the comments made by Ward Members, who raise concerns that the proposed bund lies on the alignment of the originally proposed Southern Relief Road and thereby prejudices its future implementation. I have looked at the original plans and it is clear that the Relief Road was planned to run through the site of the bund and in that regard, it would be prejudiced by the proposals. Having studied the outline planning permission however, I see no conditions or obligations that seek to retain the alignment of the Southern Relief Road and I am not aware of any aspiration on the part of the local highway authority to deliver such a relief road. On that basis I cannot reasonably object to the application proposals on the grounds that it does not safeguard the Southern Relief Road.”

35. To summarise, this is a Reserved Matters application submitted pursuant to the outline planning permission for the Wichelstowe development (S/13/1524 refers). The proposal accords with the approved Land Use Master Plan (LUMP2) and specifications of the Noise Strategy Condition (S/COND/16/1504 refers). The Highways Officer has not raised an objection to its location and advised there is no aspiration on the part of the local highway authority to require or deliver such a relief road, as access is now secured across the site in an alternative form. As the Reserved Matters accord with the relevant provisions of the outline (S/13/1524) it is considered the principle of a noise bund in this location is acceptable.

### **Layout**

36. Local Plan Policy DE1 requires high standards of design for all types of development. Proposals will be assessed against several design principles, including amenity in respect of disturbance and noise, in this case, in relation to the 4,500 homes allocated for Wichelstowe (Policy NC1b).

37. The proposal accords with the Land Use Master Plan (LUMP2) approved at the outline stage, which showed a noise bund in the proposed location. Further, the layout of the noise bund complies with the approved Noise Attenuation Bund Strategy (S/COND/16/1504 refers). The Environmental Health Officer offered no objection to the proposal, given it accords with the above. The layout is considered to contribute to noise mitigation at Wichelstowe to provide for residential amenity in accordance with Local Plan Policies NC1 and DE1 (c).

### **Landscaping**

38. Local Plan Policy NC1 (c) requires Wichelstowe to protect, enhance and integrate with existing environmental assets. Further, EN4 (b) and EN5 (a) requires development to protect and enhance biodiversity and provide net local biodiversity gain and ensure unacceptable impacts on the landscape are avoided.

39. Following revised plans, showing additional biodiversity features, there were no objections to the development in terms of landscape or ecology. As a whole there will be additional provision of habitat and landscaping to enhance the development in accordance with Local Plan Policies NC1 (c), EN4 (b) and EN5 (a).

## Other Matters

40. Local Plan Policy NC1 (e) states Wichelstowe proposals shall ensure the risk of flooding is minimised, both within the development and adjacent properties, in accordance with Policy EN6. In this regard, the LLFA offered no objection to proposals. Further, following a revised plan, showing the proposal was outside the flood zone, the Environment Agency has no objection. The EA requests a condition to specify the proposal should be built in accordance with the approved plans. Condition 1 of the recommendation ensures the proposal will be built as per the plans. It is considered the proposal has been designed to ensure the risk and impact of flooding would be minimised in accordance with Local Plan Policy NC1 (e) and EN6.

41. Following a detailed explanation of the drainage of the site, Highways England were able to support the proposal subject to a recommended condition for the applicant to supply a drainage maintenance programme. The condition has been added to this recommendation.

## Conclusion

42. As stated above, when determining a Reserved Matters application the first issue to consider is whether or not the proposal accords the outline planning permission including the relevant conditions, in this case the approved Wichelstowe Land Use Master Plan (LUMP) and Noise Bund Strategy, and whether the proposal accords with the relevant provisions of the NPPF 2019 and Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 or whether material considerations mean the proposal should be refused.

43. As already noted, the proposal accords with the approved Land Use Master Plan (LUMP2) and approved Noise Strategy Condition (S/COND/16/1504 refers). It is considered that the principle of a noise bund in this location is acceptable and the proposal accords with the relevant provisions of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 and NPPF 2019. As such, there are no policy reasons to refuse the application. Whilst the (Tuesday, 11th February 2014) committee minutes note the developer is asked to 'consider' leaving land for the road, the details submitted to support the revised permission S/13/1524 demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Highway Authority that the new alignment of the CRHLL was satisfactory. Consequently, the outline permission does not contain any conditions to prohibit the noise mitigation infrastructure in this location. As the proposal does not conflict with relevant policy or provisions of the outline planning permission, the Reserved Matters are recommended for approval.

## Recommendation

44. That the Director of Strategic Development and Growth be authorised to APPROVE the Reserved Matters subject to:-

(a) The planning conditions set out in this report, with delegated authority to make reasonable amendments, additions or omissions to those conditions before issuing formal consent as may be necessary.

## Conditions

1. This approval shall be in respect of;

Location Plan 44771-STN-HGN-NBP-DR-CH-0101 P01 Received 21/12/20  
General Arrangement 44771-STN-HGN-NBP-DR-CH-0102 P04 Received 08/03/2021  
Existing Site Layout 44771-STN-HGN-NBP-DR-CH-0103 P01 Received 21/12/20  
Exceedance Flow Directions 44771-STN-HGN-NBP-DR-CH-0104 P02 Received 08/03/2021  
Proposed Levels 44771-STN-HGN-NBP-DR-CH-0601 P01 Received 21/12/20  
Landscape Proposals 44771-STN-WSA-3001-DR-LS-2014 P02 Received 23/03/21  
Tree Pit Standard Details 44771-STN-WSA-3001-DR-LS-2015 P01 Received 18/03/21  
Landscape Strategy 44771-STN-WSA-3001-DR-LS-2016 Received 23/03/21  
44771 - TN021 - Noise Bund Surface Water Strategy Rev 01 Received 08/03/21  
Wichelstowe Southern Access Noise Bund AIA-AMS Received 21/12/20  
Wichelstowe Southern Access Noise Bund GIES Rev 1 (March 2021) Received 18/03/21

Reason: To define the scope of the development hereby permitted, in accordance with section 72 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Surface water drainage measures shall be implemented in accordance with the General Arrangement Plan 44771-STN-HGN-NBP-DR-CH-0102 Rev P04. Prior to completion of the works a maintenance schedule shall be submitted for written approval to the planning authority (in consultation with Highways England). Surface water drainage shall be maintained as such thereafter and in accordance with the agreed schedule.  
Reason: to protect the integrity of the M4 drainage asset and in the interest of the safe and efficient operation of the SRN.

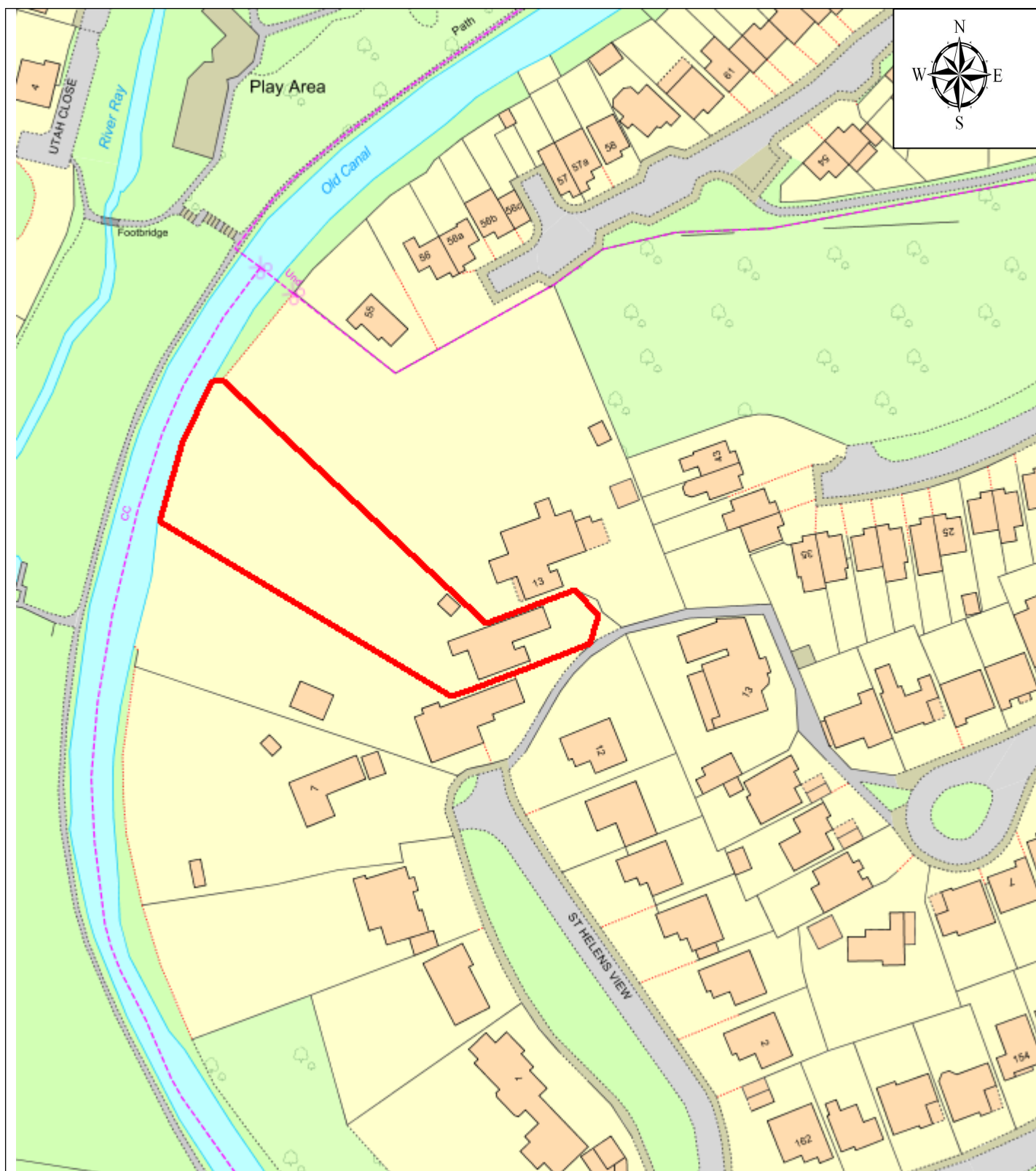
End of Report

## Agenda Item 9

Application Number S/HOU/20/1076

Proposal Erection of a ground/lower floor rear extension.

Location: 11 St Helens View Old Town Swindon SN1 4JN



This Plan is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to provide accurate representation of the development.

In all cases reference should be made to the submitted plans.

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Application Number S/HOU/20/1076  
Proposal Erection of a ground/lower floor rear extension.  
Location: 11 St Helens View Old Town Swindon SN1 4JN



This Plan is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to provide accurate representation of the development.

In all cases reference should be made to the submitted plans.

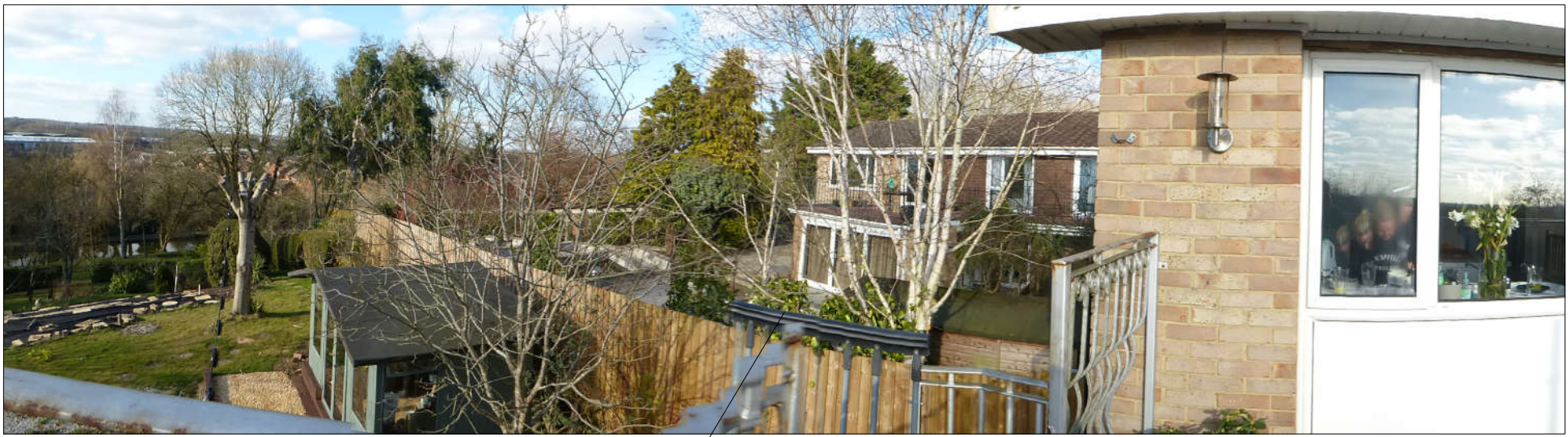
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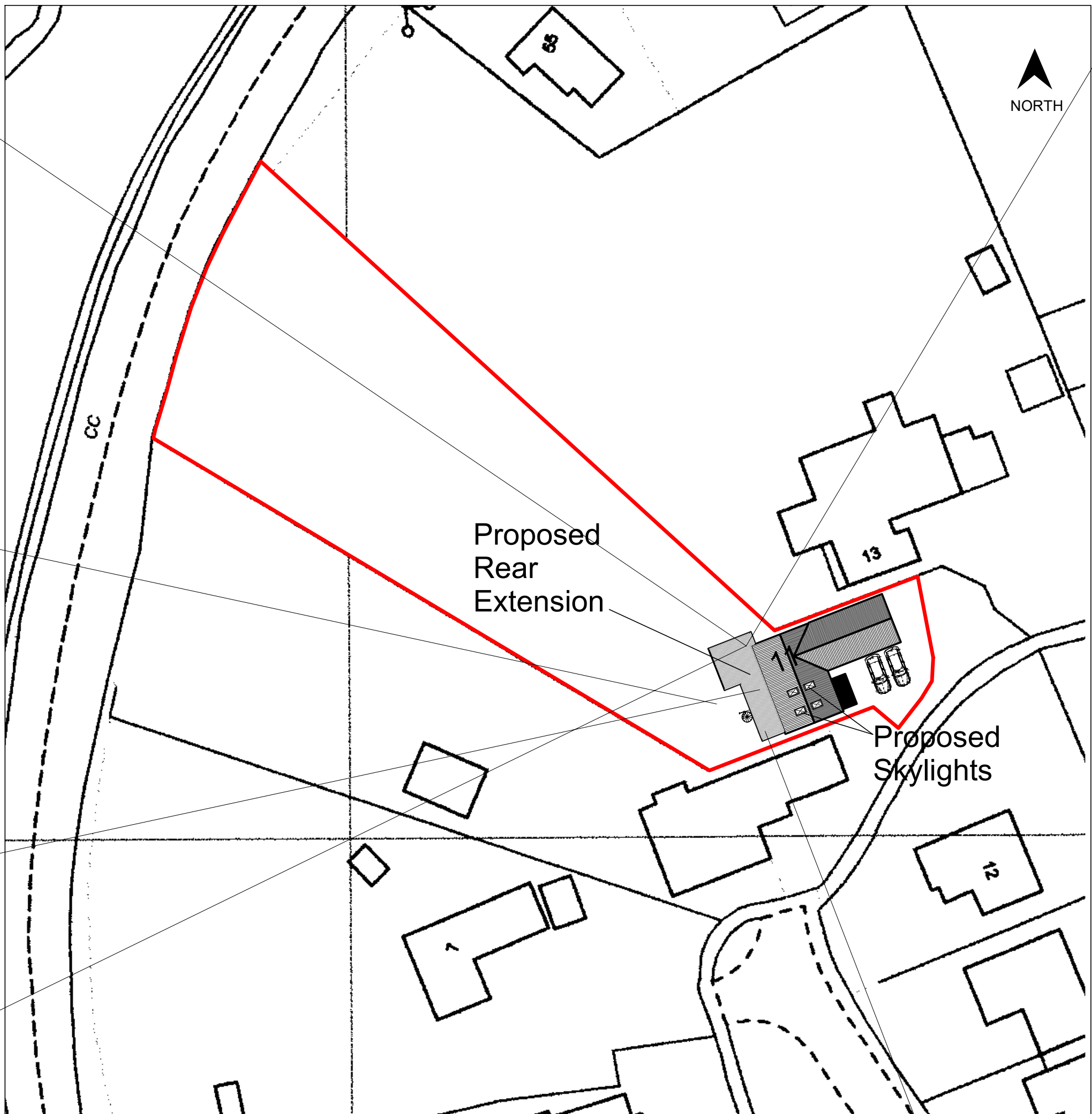
Veiw From Balcony



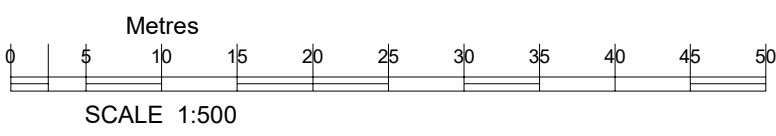
Veiw From Balcony



Veiw From Garden



BLOCK PLAN SCALE 1:500



Veiw From Balcony



Veiw From Balcony

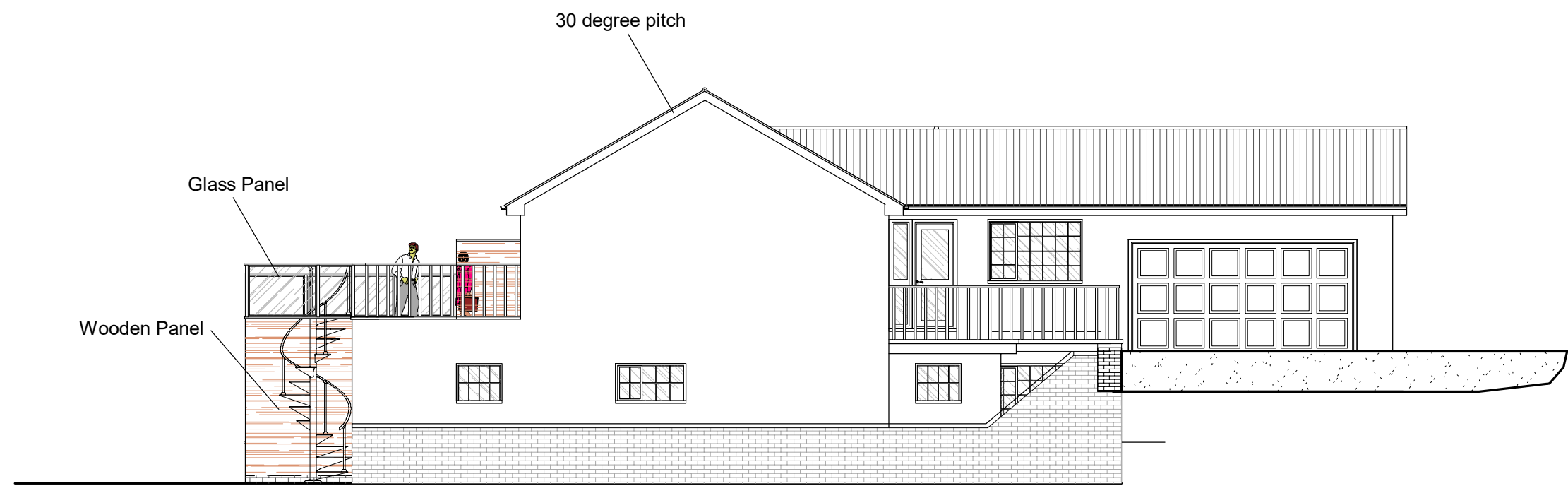
Bath Room  
Obscurely glazed

Bath Room ?  
Obscurely glazed

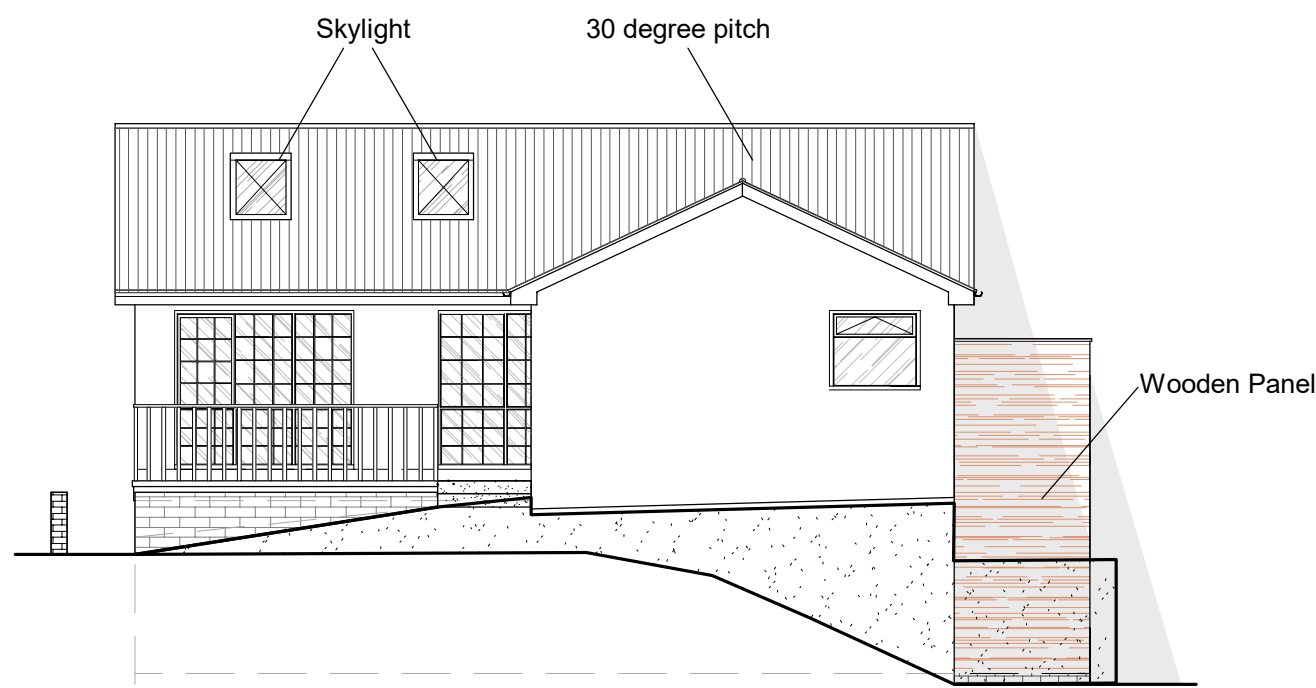
<b>FS CONSULTANCY</b> 12 Darcey Close, Grange Park Swindon, Wilts SN5 6DZ TEL. 01793 420244		CLIENT <b>Mr &amp; Mrs C Hart</b>	
TITLE <b>Proposed Grd/Lower Floor Rear Extension With New Roof &amp; Skylights 11 St Helens View, Old Town, Swindon Wiltshire SN1 4JN</b>		REV <b>1:1</b>	
SIZE <b>A1</b>	CAGE CODE	DWG NO <b>002 20/02/2020</b>	SCALE 1:1250/1:500/1:100/ 1:50
SHEET 2:2			



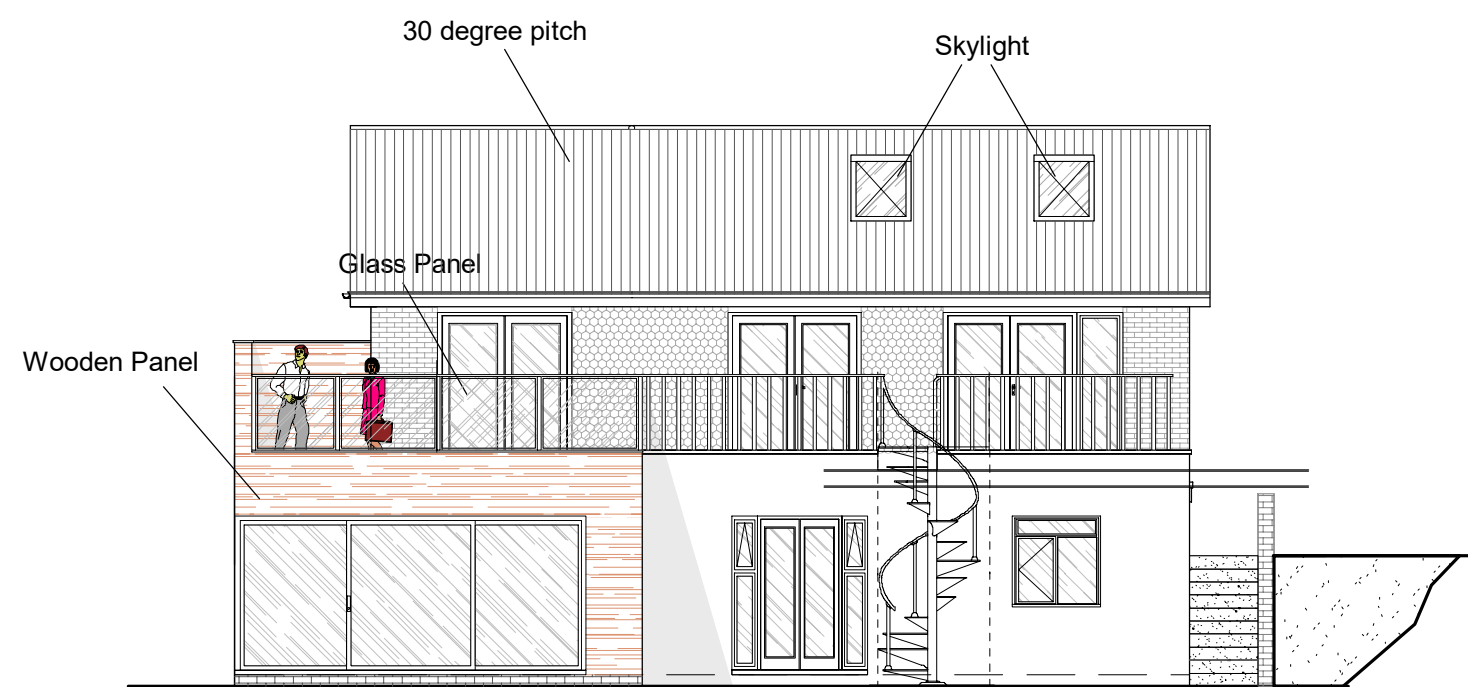
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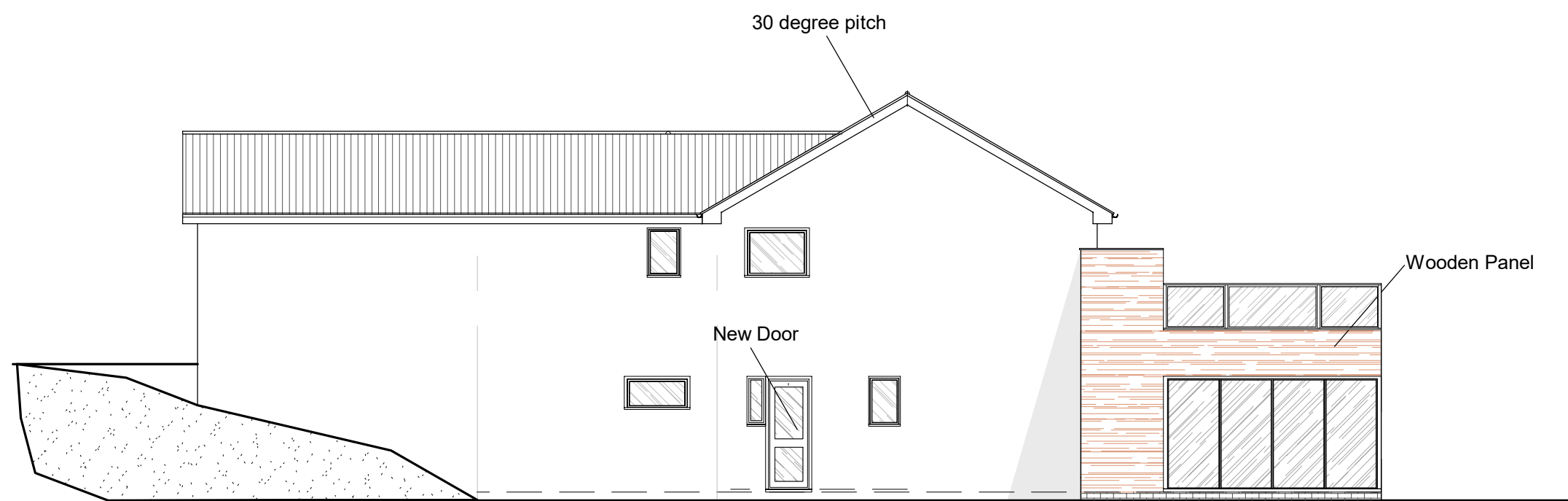
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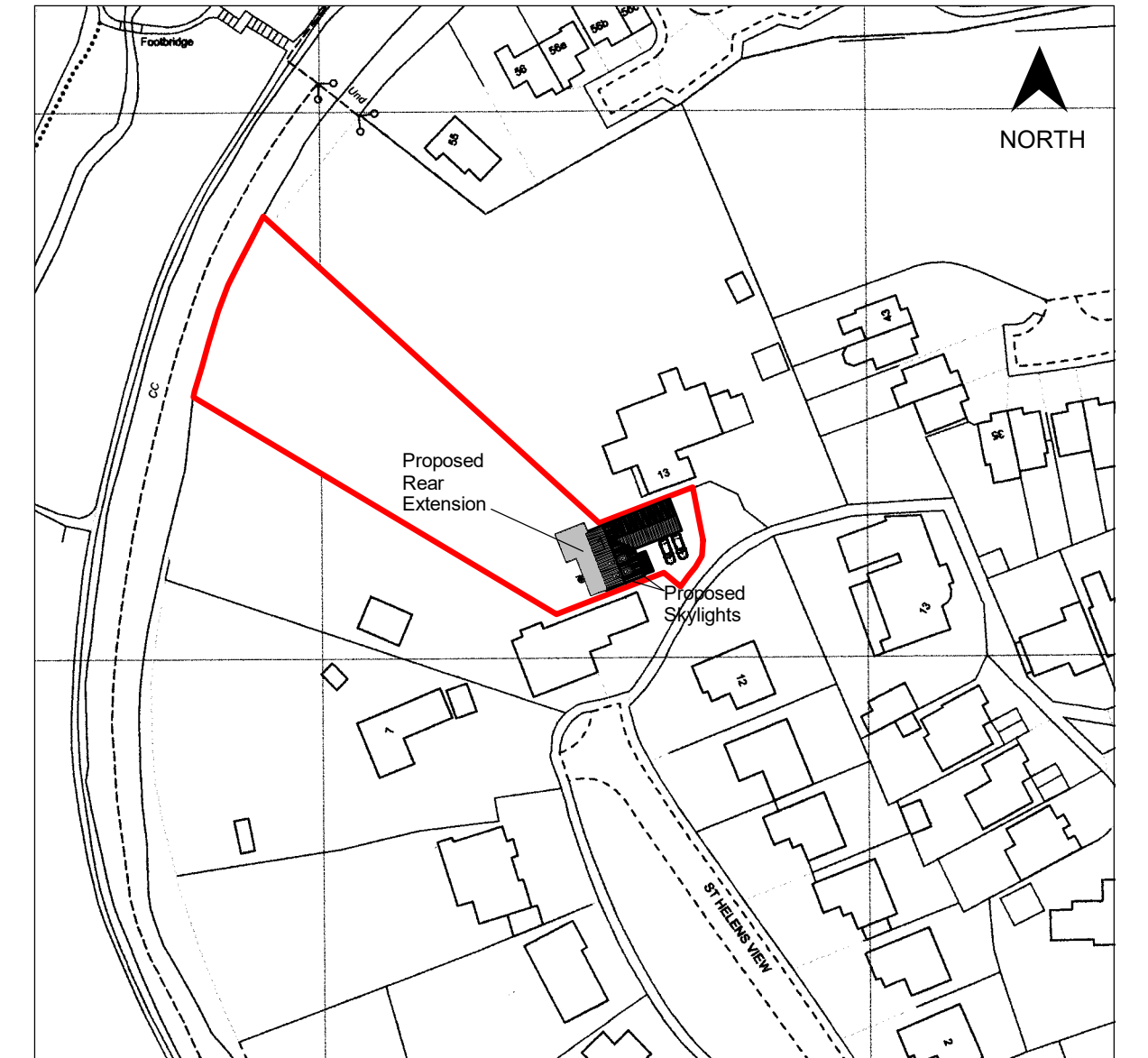
Proposed Front Elevation



Proposed Rear Elevation



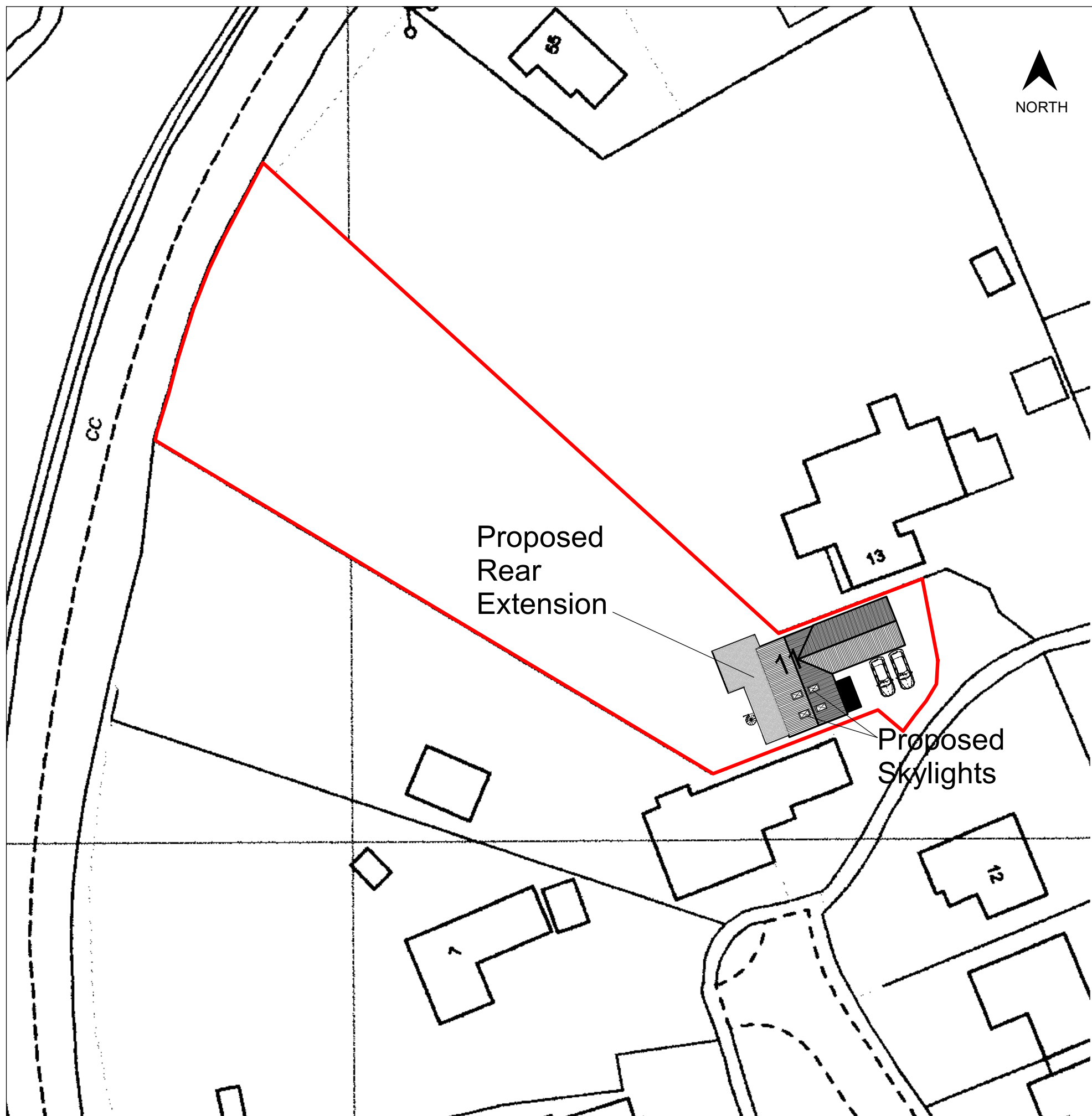
Proposed Side Elevation



SITE PLAN SCALE 1:1250

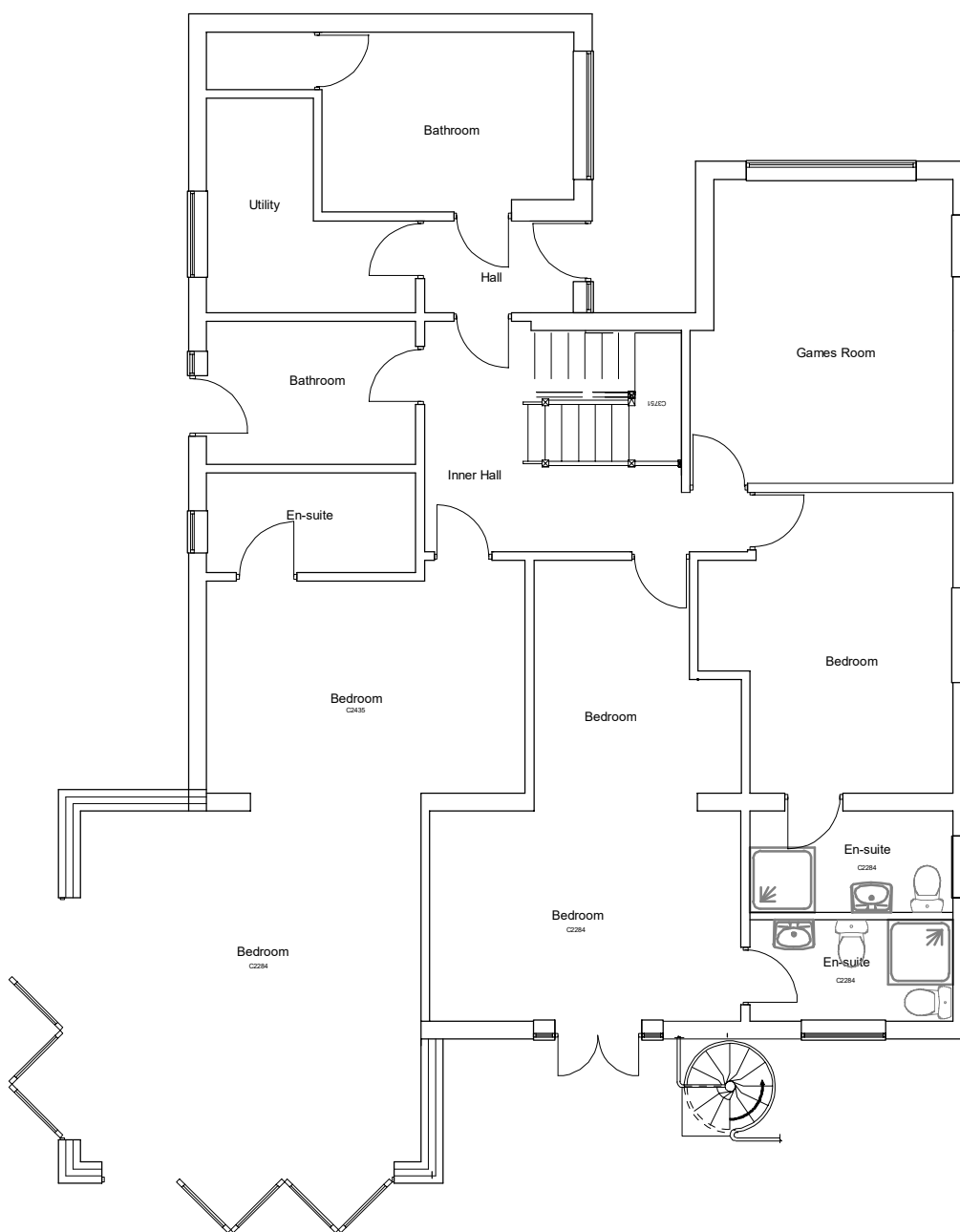
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Metres  
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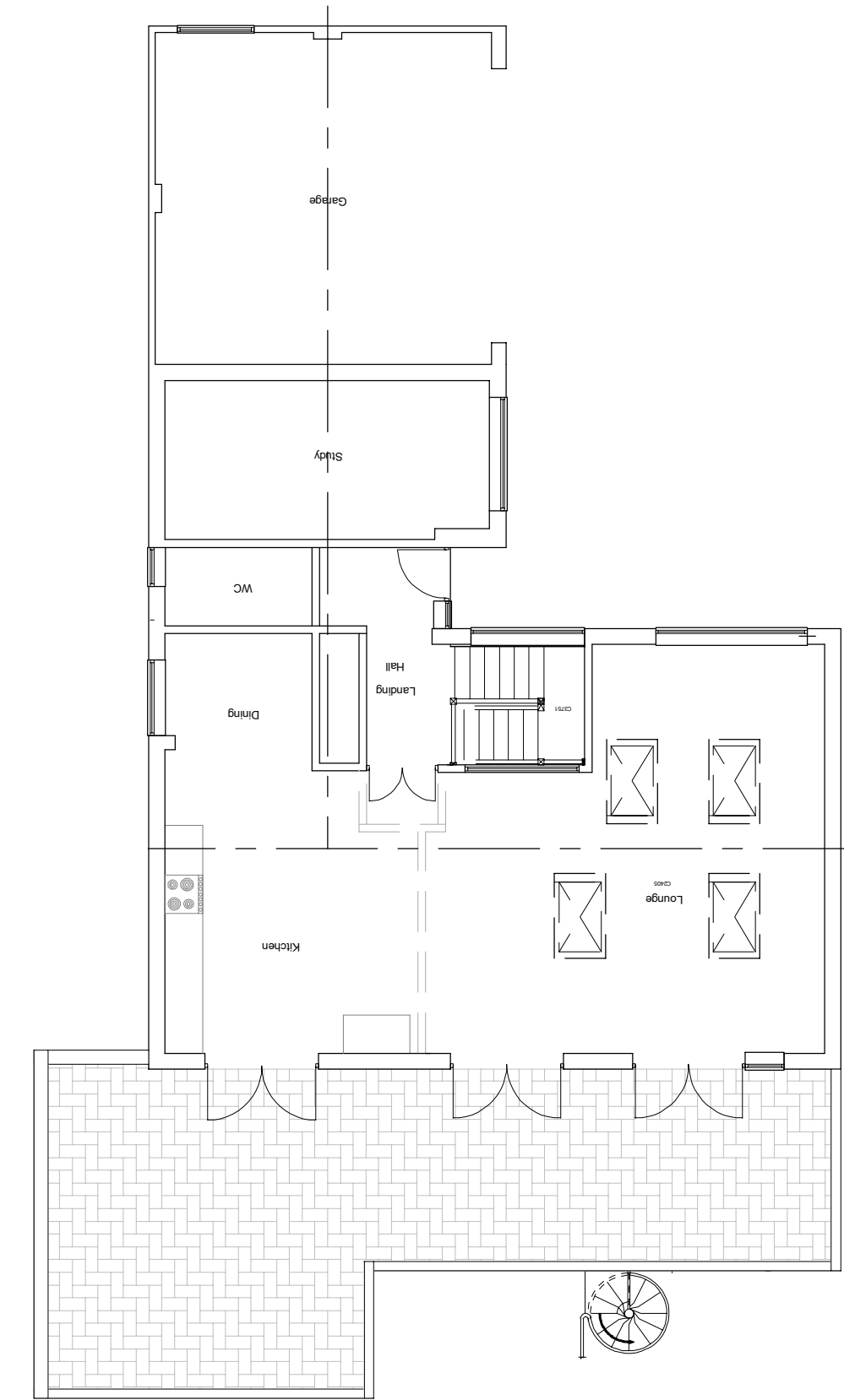
BLOCK PLAN SCALE 1:500

Metres  
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SCALE 1:500

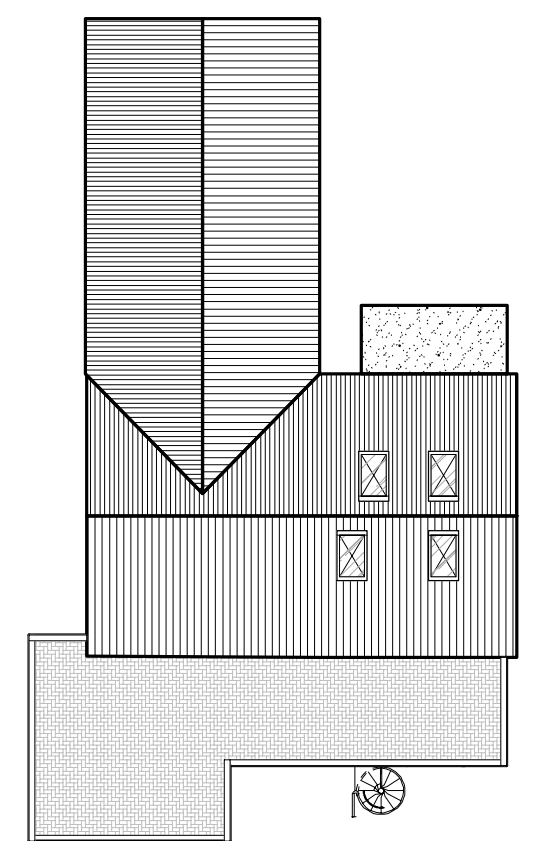


Proposed Grd Floor Plan

Metres  
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SCALE 1:100




Proposed 1st Floor Plan



Proposed Roof Plan

Metres  
0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14  
SCALE 1:200

 FS CONSULTANCY 12 Darcey Close, Grange Park Swindon, Wilts SN5 6DZ TEL 01793 420244	CLIENT <b>Mr &amp; Mrs C Hart</b>			
	TITLE <b>Proposed Grd/Lower Floor Rear Extension With New Roof &amp; Skylights 11 St Helens View, Old Town, Swindon Wiltshire SN1 4JN</b>			
	SIZE <b>A1</b>	CAGE CODE	DWG NO <b>002 02/12/2020</b>	REV <b>1:1</b>
	SCALE 1:1250/1:500/1:100/1:50			SHEET 2:2

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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**Item Number:**

**Application Number:**

S/HOU/20/1076/PEKO

**Ward:** Old Town & East Wichel

**Parish:**

South Swindon

**Proposal:** Erection of a ground/lower floor rear extension.

**Site Location:** 11 St Helens View, Old Town

**Case Officer:** Mr Peter Korankye-Gyabong

**Agent:**

Mr Francis Skeete

FSC

12 Darcey Close

Grange Park

Swindon

SN5 6DZ

**Applicant**

Mr & Mrs C Hart

11 St Helens View

Old Town

SN1 4JN

### Officers Report

**Background:**

This application has been brought before the Planning Committee at the request of Cllr Nick Burns-Howell.

**Summary of Recommendation:**

1. Planning permission be **GRANTED** with conditions

**The Proposal:**

2. The proposed development would involve the erection of a lower ground floor side and rear extension with a balcony above. The lower ground floor element would project off the northwest side wall by approximately 1.8m, extend approximately 5.5m from the original rear wall into the rear garden, be 4.7m wide and be approximately 3.2m from the natural ground level. From the side wall of the original dwellinghouse, adjacent to the northern and north western boundary with No. 13 St Helen's View, an L-shaped 1.8m wooden parapet panel is proposed from the top of the lower ground floor extension to form a privacy screen. Protective glass screen of 1m in height is proposed above the top of the extension as part of the terrace area of the extension, which would feature a flat roof design.

3. The applicant also proposes 2 x rooflights in the south roof slope, 2 x rooflights in the north roof slope of the south wing to serve the upper ground floor lounge and a new door in the western side elevation to serve a lower ground floor bathroom. The proposed

extension will provide an enlarged bedroom and feature 2 x large bi-folding doors. The proposal would involve the removal of the existing rear conservatory and the spiral staircase to the west side elevation for the proposed to be built.

### **Site and Surroundings:**

4. St Helens View consists of a number of detached residential properties of slightly varying style and design which are set broadly along a staggered building line. The application site consists of a detached bungalow style with a lower ground floor with its ridge line set perpendicular to the road. The original rear wall of the host dwelling is set beyond the rear wall of the neighbouring property to the northwest, No. 13 and recessed behind that of No. 9 to the southeast, by several metres in each case. The intervening boundary between the host dwelling and No. 9 is formed from thick hedging while that between the host dwelling and No. 13 consists of a fence with some trees on both sides. No. 13 has a patio doors set approximately 13m to the common boundary. Their upper ground floor habitable room windows are also located above their own terrace area at around 15m to the common boundary. The patio and floor level at No. 13 is set some 2 metres above the ground floor level of the host dwelling. There is existing inter-visibility and inter-looking between properties from No. 9 through to No. 13 St Helens View.

### **Site History:**

5. Planning application reference S/03/1096 for erection of a single storey rear extension was approved and implemented.

### **Representations:**

#### **6. Neighbours:**

Five neighbour representations have been received; one of the neighbours (No. 9 St Helens View) representations neither raises objection nor support the application stating they “believe that this extension would have no detrimental affect to our property.”

The remaining four representations from No. 13 raises concerns regarding the following matters:

- The proposals would lead to an unacceptable increase in the loss of privacy and overlooking
- The proposed ‘rear extension’ would project from the existing side elevation contrary to guidance within the Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD
- The proposed extension would be in breach of the ‘45 degree rule’
- Trees as screening is generally unacceptable
- The dimensions (height and breadth) of privacy screen and the extension are not provided
- If SBC consider that the proposals are acceptable planning conditions should be applied to cover the following:
  - Vegetative screening is included in the application and that its retention is forms a condition of any consent,
  - The vegetative screening is formed of suitable species of appropriate size (considering seasonal cover, rate of growth and eventual maturity),
  - The dimensions (height and width) of the proposed timber screen and also the extension are included in the application and are deemed acceptable, and
  - The timber screen should be extended to at least the mid-point of the North



elevation to be effective.

7. South Swindon Parish Council: Initially objected to the scheme in relation to the following:

- a) Proposed extension would be in contravention of 45 degree rule.
- b) Is contrary to SBC Local Plan Policy DE1.
- c) Proposed extension would overlook garden space, habitable rooms on the ground floor and first floor terrace and balcony area.
- d) Proposed rear extension would project from existing side elevation of host dwelling contrary to guidance in Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document.

8. The Parish Council has since revised the comments stating "on inspection of the site, the applicant has explained that they intend to plant a line of trees along their property border to provide a privacy screen. On the condition that the neighbouring residents agrees with this approach, this would seem to mitigate the impacts of any loss of amenity (privacy). However, it is important that this approach would need to be agreed with the neighbouring residents in order for this to be an acceptable mitigation."

#### **Relevant Policy:**

##### 9. Adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (2015)

- o Policy SD1 (Sustainable Development Principles)
- o Policy DE1 (High Quality Design)
- o Policy TR2 (Transport and Development)

#### Material Planning Considerations

- o Adopted SPD Residential Extensions and Alterations (2011)
- o Adopted DCGN Technical Guidance on Parking Standards (2007)

#### National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

#### **Planning Considerations:**

10. The main issues to be considered are the design and appearance of the proposal in relation to the host dwelling and the surrounding area, and the impact upon the neighbour's amenity.

#### **Design:**

11. Policy DE1 (High Quality Design) of the Swindon Borough Local Plan seeks to ensure that there is a high standard of design for any development which is also sympathetic to the local context and character. Development should also be acceptable in terms of scale, mass, and sitting and have an acceptable appearance. The Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD suggests a maximum depth of 4 metres for single storey rear extensions and 3 metres for two storey rear extensions. The proposal exceeds the 4 metres maximum suggested depths for single storey rear extensions, extending 5.5 metres. However, the impact of this is not significant. It is noted from the representations that concerns are raised in relation to the side projection and its potential impact on the built form of the property. However, planning applications are assessed on their own merits on a case by case basis. The site is very different from those buildings referred to as examples in the SPD and the intentions therein. The site is recessed at the rear from the

nearest property to the north by approximately 12.5m where the land slopes very steeply towards the rear wall, leaving the neighbour at No. 13 on an elevated ground level. As a result of the distance from the road and the rearward sloping nature the proposal will not be readily visible from the streetscene.

12. Further, it is acknowledged that although the proposed 'rear extension' would project from the existing side elevation which would normally be unacceptable within a normal terraced and semi-detached context, it is noted that No. 9 St Helens View has their rear outrigger projecting from the side elevation in a similar fashion as proposed and, coupled with the distance from public view points this particular proposal cannot be said to strictly reflect the reasons why this element of the Design Guide was developed. Given the presence of roof terraces within the locality it is also considered that the proposed additional balcony, together with the single storey rear extension and privacy screen at upper ground floor level, is acceptable in design terms. Overall, the extensions are deemed to be acceptable in design terms and are not considered to cause harm to the character or appearance of the host property or the area in which it is situated in accordance with Policy DE1 and the SPD.

### **Residential Amenity:**

13. Policy DE1 also seeks to protect the amenity of neighbouring properties in respect of light, outlook, privacy, noise, disturbance, privacy and smell. The Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD states that the effect of an extension will be assessed with regard to the impact upon residential amenity to ensure there would not be unacceptable harm by reason of light, visual intrusion, privacy or nuisance (paragraph 2.7). Paragraph 2.8 of the SPD goes on to state that the proposal will be assessed in terms of the siting, orientation and size of an extension in terms of daylight, with the use of the 45 degree angle to assess impact upon daylight to a neighbouring window.

13. The key issues with regard to amenity, relate to the impact on outlook from No. 13. The proposal is sited to the south of No. 13 where intervening vegetation cover both in the control of the owners of No. 13 and No. 11 formerly occluded light to both gardens prior to its removal. What exists now comprises sparsely populated vegetation cover especially in the winter months. Nevertheless, the site is over 12 metres away from the nearest wall of No.13 and would not breach the 45 degree line as measured from the left side first floor lounge window at No. 13. Furthermore, the siting of the development, away from the shared boundaries, would have very little demonstrable impact upon the direct sunlight to the adjacent property at No. 13 due to the separation distance of approximately 13 metres and the natural land level differences as well as the orientation of the site the extension being such that it would not result in any significant impact on direct sunlight reaching the neighbouring house or garden. The proposal, as amended on drawing no. 003 24/03/2021 Revision 1:3 received on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 would also screen the entire north facing area and 50% part of the northwest view of the development with a 1.8m high privacy screen to prevent the occupiers to have direct view to the sensitive areas of No. 13. It is considered that the revised scheme will alleviate overlooking concerns and the prevailing privacy issues as the proposed will block both the views obtained by No. 9 through No. 11 to No. 13, meaning the only direct view from the balcony would be towards the western bottom end of their garden and largely towards the properties along Dunsford Close, over 100 metres away and separated by tall vegetation.

14. The neighbour at No. 13 has requested for planning conditions to cover the use of trees along the shared boundary to deal with the overlooking issues raised. It is considered that the proposed privacy screen in a form of wooden parapet panel adequately overcomes any privacy issues raised and therefore it is not reasonable to impose such conditions if planning permission is granted. The proposal does not raise any concerns in respect of overlooking or loss of privacy. In relation to No. 9 St Helens View, the proposed extension will be approximately 10m from side wall of this house. Given its single storey nature and the fact that the extension will only face the side blank wall, where all the windows serve bathrooms and are obscure glazed no overshadowing, loss of light or loss of privacy will occur. Overall, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy DE1 and the Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD and no unacceptable impact to neighbouring amenity arises.

### **Highways:**

15. Policy TR2 requires that parking is provided in accordance with the Parking Standards (2007). As existing, the property has 3 no. bedrooms and the proposal would not create additional bedrooms, the Parking Standards require a single family dwelling with up to 3no. bedrooms provides 2no. parking spaces measuring 2.4 x 4.8 metres. The host dwelling can accommodate these parking spaces in the garage and on the private driveway to the front of the dwelling. The proposal accords with Policy TR2 in this respect.

### **CIL:**

16. The proposed development would be minor for the purposes of CIL legislation due to the proposed extensions floorspace falling below 100 sqm GIA. Therefore, no contribution towards CIL would be required.

### **Concluding Comments:**

17. The proposed extension is acceptable in design terms and is not considered to cause unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity in accordance with Policy DE1 and the Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD. Through a combination of the privacy screen to the north and its increased coverage to the northwest, the proposal has addressed the concerns created by the original plans submitted and is therefore acceptable, in accordance with policy.

### **Recommendation:**

18. That planning permission be **GRANTED** with conditions

### **Conditions**

1. This approval shall be in respect of drawings nos. 002 02/12/2020 Rev 1:1 (received 04 December 2020), 002 20/02/2020 Rev 1:1 (19 March 2021), 003 24/03/2021 Rev 1:3 (received 25 March 2021 and received by the Local Planning Authority on the 13th November 2018 and 001 07/08/2020 Rev 1:1 received by the Local Planning Authority on the 24 August 2020.

Reason: To define the scope of the development hereby permitted, in accordance with section 72 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be constructed using external facing materials that match and correspond with those of the existing building. Such facing materials shall be retained thereafter in their approved form.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory.

3. The privacy screen, shown on drawing: 003 24/03/2021 Revision 1:3, shall be provided prior to first bringing into use the extension hereby permitted and thereafter retained.

Reason: In the interests of amenity.

4. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 (1) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

### **Informatives**

1. CIL - Reg. 42 Exemption for Minor development: Whilst the development generates a net gain in floor space and is Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) liable, it is exempt from CIL liability under CIL Regulation 42, as it constitutes minor development for the purposes of calculating CIL liability because the proposed extensions floorspace is below 100 sqm GIA.

End of Report



Responsibility is not accepted for errors made by others in scaling from this drawing.  
All construction information should be taken from figured dimensions only.

0mm 50mm 100mm

KEY

- British Land Estate Boundary
- Application Area

DRAWING NOTES

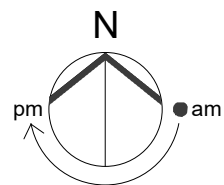
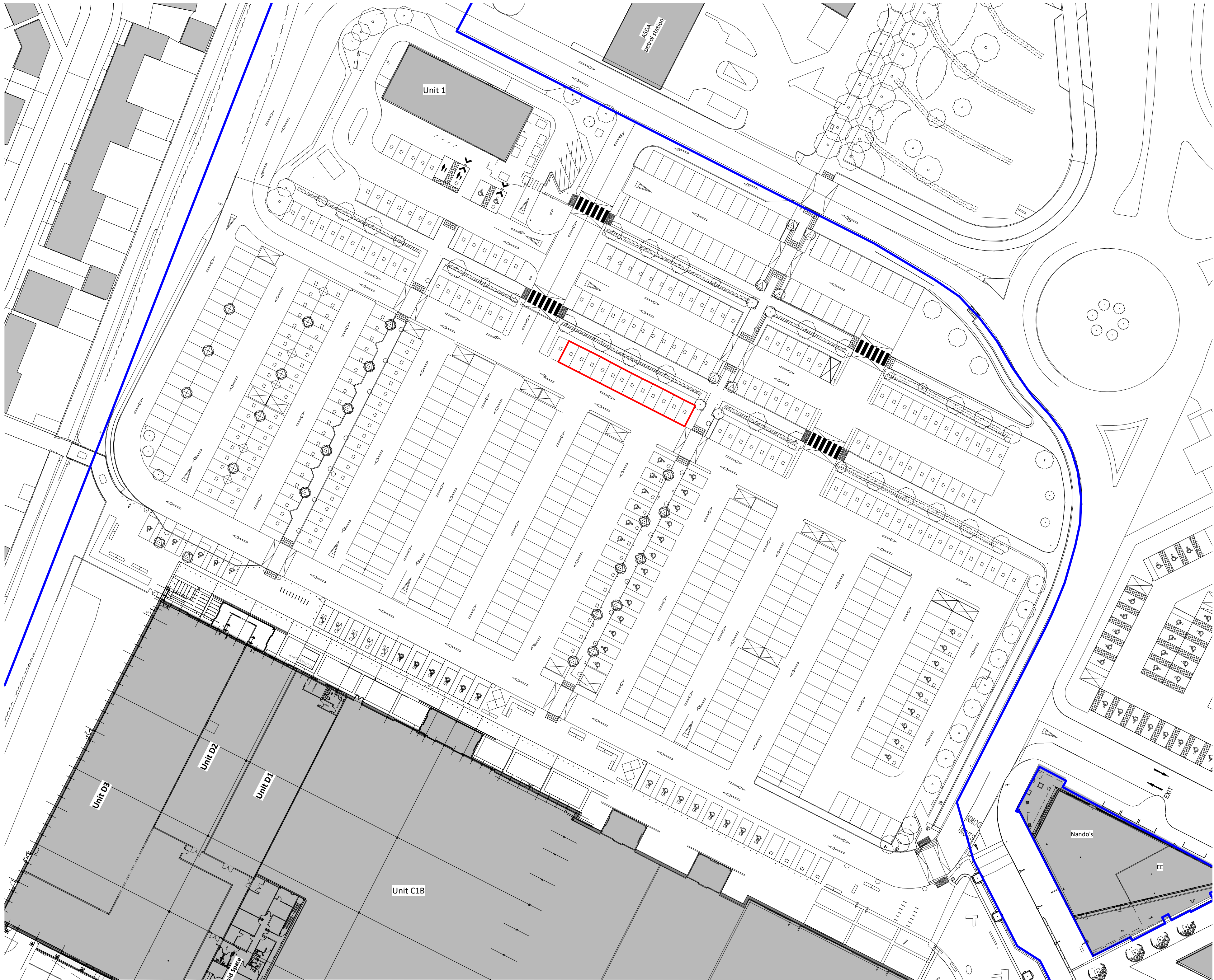
Existing information taken from information provided by others.

Proposed layouts are subject to:

- Planning approval
- Building control approval
- Structural and M&E coordination
- Confirmation of title/ownership extents

All areas quoted are indicative and subject to detailed design.

0 10 m 20 m 40 m



Site Block Plan  
1 : 500

PL	PL01	14.10.2020	First Issue
STATUS	REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION
CLIENT	REVISD BY		
British Land	JL		
CHECKED BY			TR
ORIGINATOR NO			32488

CONSULTANT  
**STRIDE TREGLOWN**  
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PROJECT  
Car Wash  
Orbital District Centre  
Swindon  
SN25 4AN

DRAWING TITLE  
Site Block Plan

SUITABILITY STATUS PL : PLANNING	SCALED As indicated @ A1
PROJECT   ORIGINATOR   ZONE   LEVEL   TYPE   ROLE   CLASS   NUMBER 32488-STL-CW-00-DR-A-XXXX-18002	REVISION PL01



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Application Number S/20/1385

Proposal Change of use of twelve car parking spaces to a waterless hand car wash and valeting operation with associated canopy and portacabin.

Location: West Car Park North Swindon District Centre Abbey Meads Swindon



This Plan is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to provide accurate representation of the development.

In all cases reference should be made to the submitted plans.

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Proposal Change of use of twelve car parking spaces to a waterless hand car wash and valeting operation with associated canopy and portacabin.

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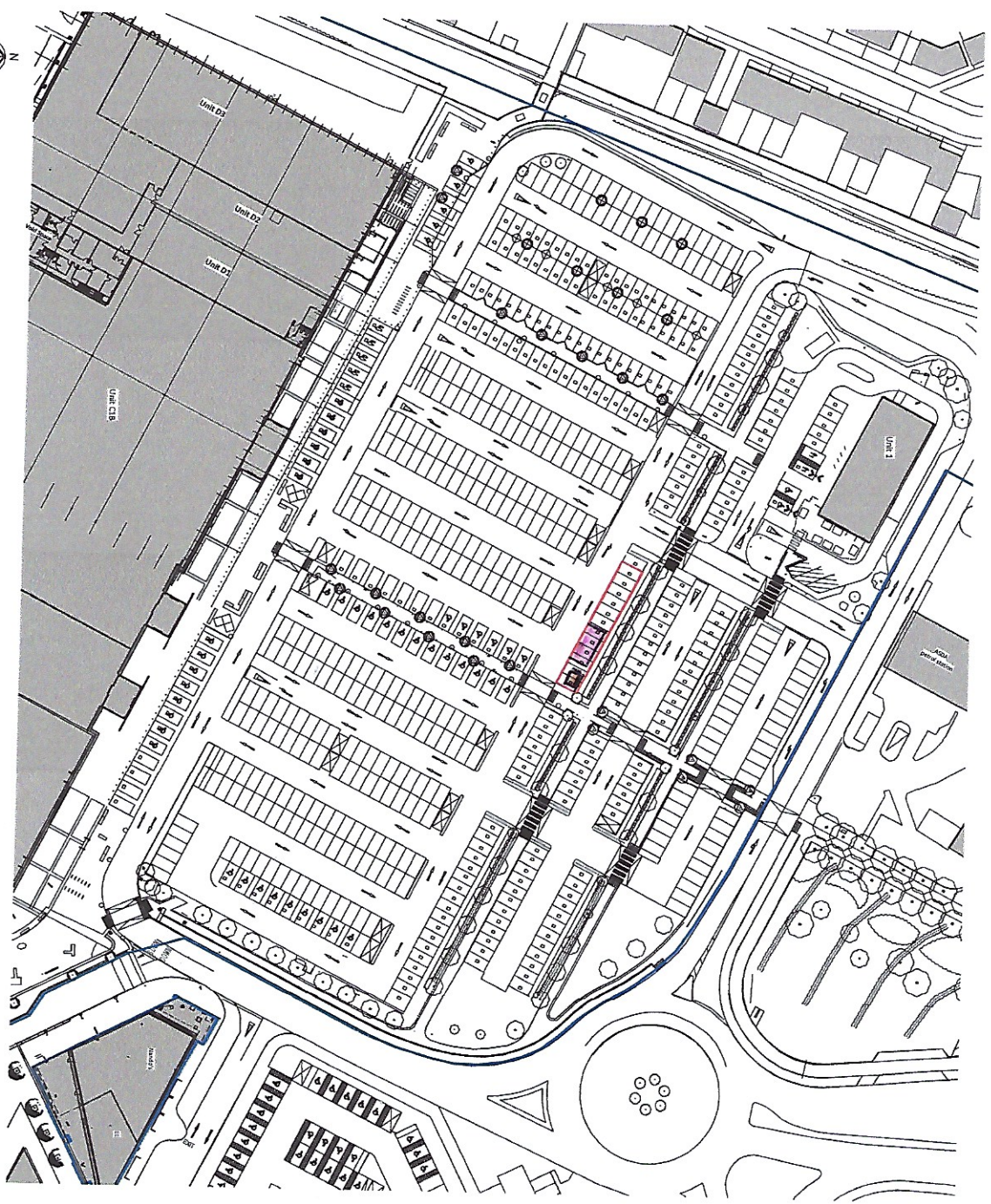
Responsible to use approved for errors made by others is not liable from this drawing  
 This drawing is the property of STRIDE TREGLOWN and shall remain confidential  
 0m 10m 20m 30m 40m 50m 60m 70m 80m 90m 100m

- KEY**
- Boundary
  - Access Area
- NOTES**
- Design information data from information provided by others.
  - Proposed works are subject to:
  - Planning approval
  - Structural approval
  - Construction of the proposed works
  - All work should be available and subject to detailed design.

0 10 m 20 m 40 m

PERCABIN

CANOPY



Site Block Plan  
 1:500

TO: 14/02/2019 10:11 AM  
 CLIENT: British Land  
 PROJECT: Car Wash  
 ORBITAL DISTRICT CENTRE  
 SWINDON  
 SN25 4AN

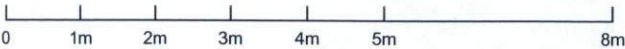
CONSULTANT: STRIDE TREGLOWN  
 PROJECT: 32488  
 DRAWING TITLE: Site Block Plan

PL: PLANNING  
 As indicated  
 @ A1  
 32488-STL-CV-00-DR-A-XXX-18002  
 P101

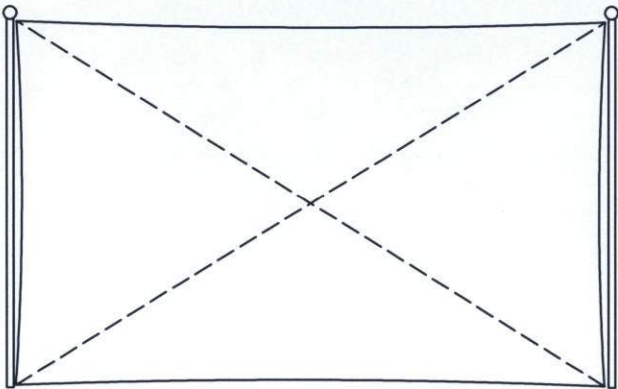
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CANOPY  
DIMENSIONAL DRAWINGS

SCALE 1 : 100

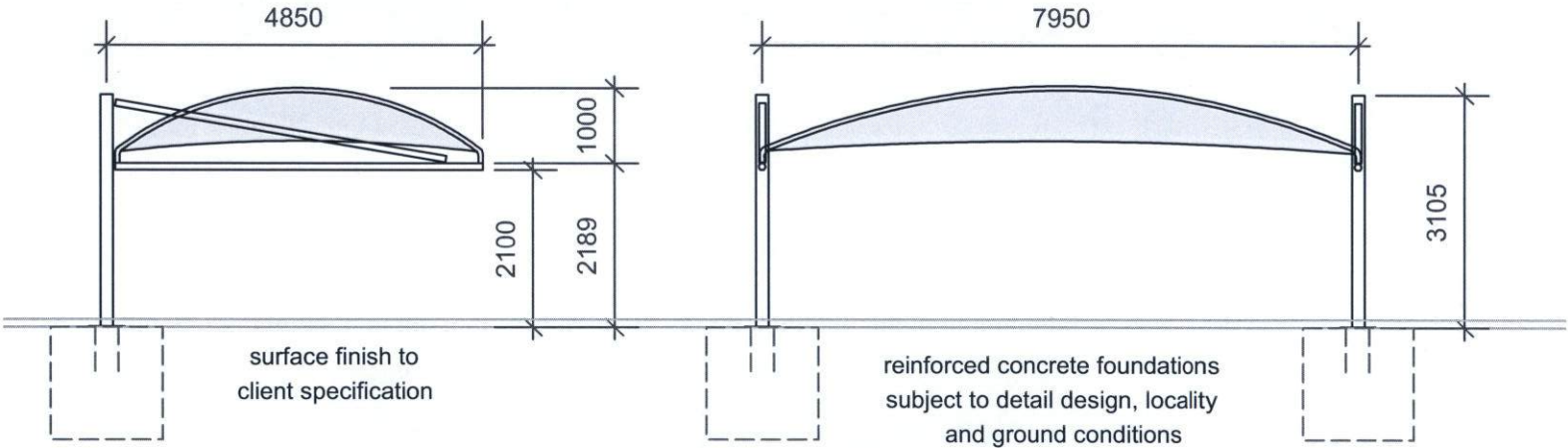


S/20/1385

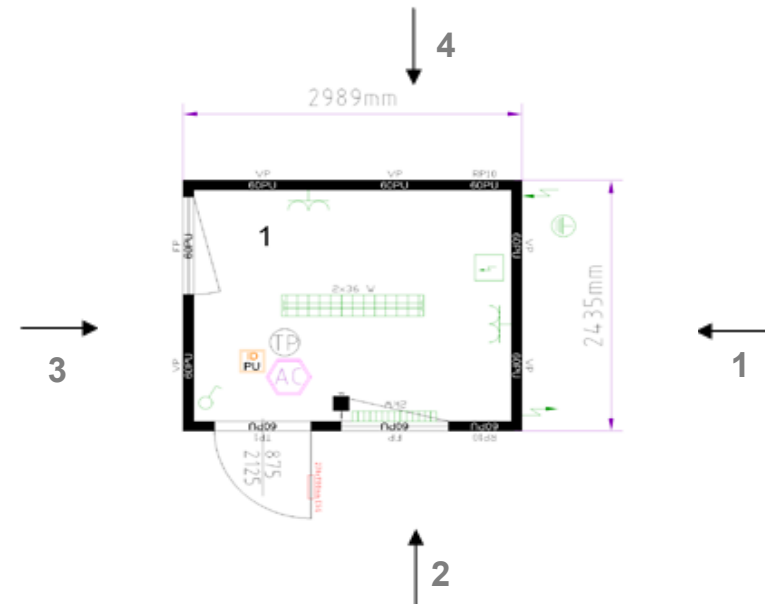
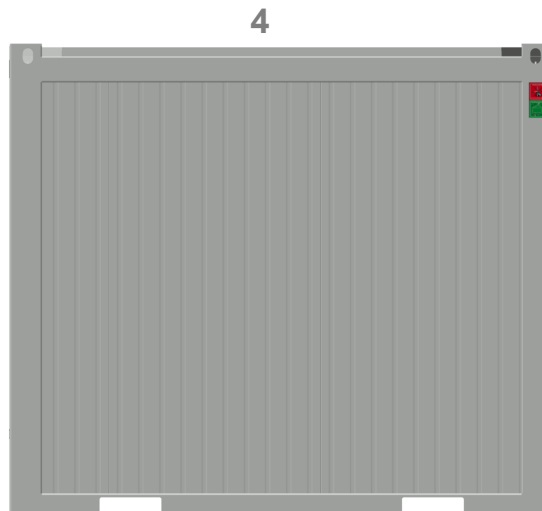
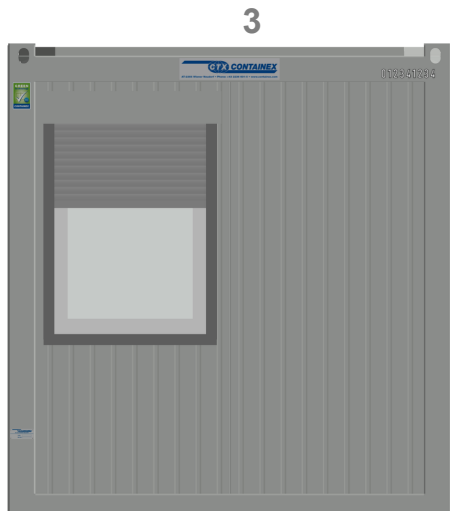
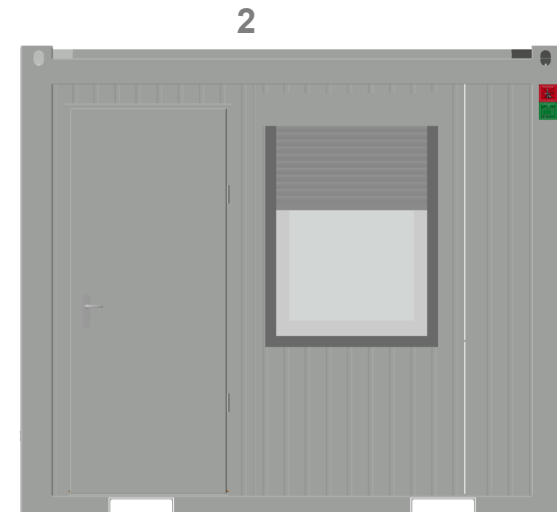
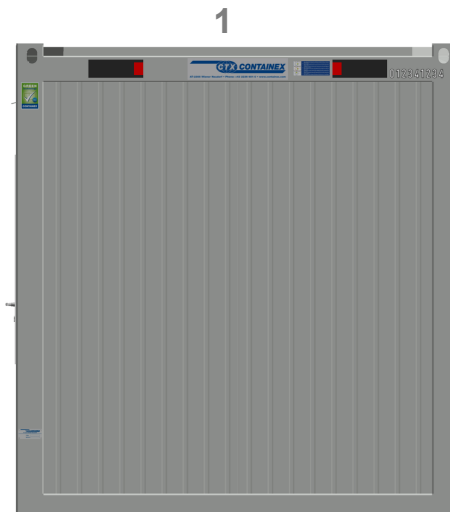
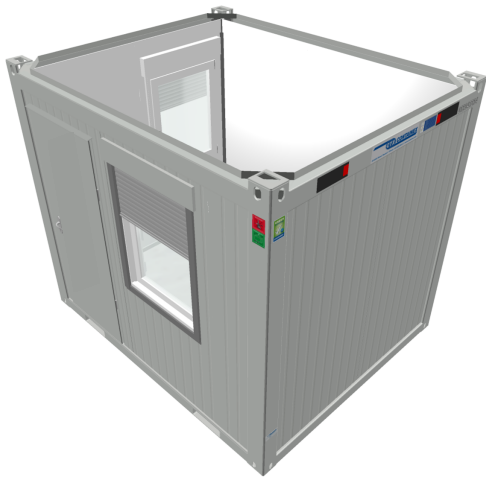


All units on  
168mm dia. Galvanised Steel Support Posts  
&  
89mm dia. Galvanised Steel horizontal side/inclined brace members  
&  
60mm dia. Galvanised Steel Roof Arches  
  
Connection plates and bolts to manufacturer's details

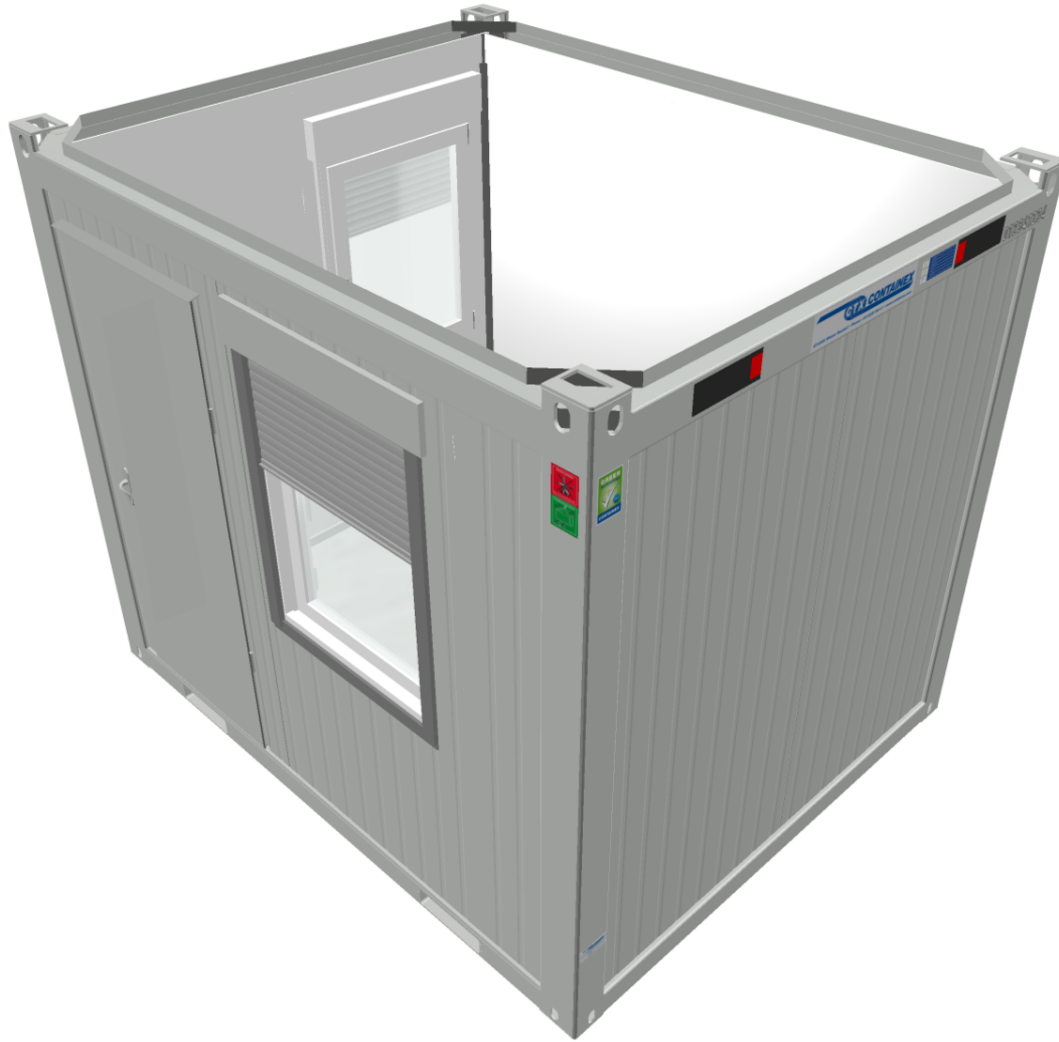
Tensile Characteristics of Fabric	
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Coating	PVC
Finish	Biface
Fire Rating	M2 NFP 92.503/DIN 4102 B1/BS 5438
Colour Reference	5007 - Silver/Grey



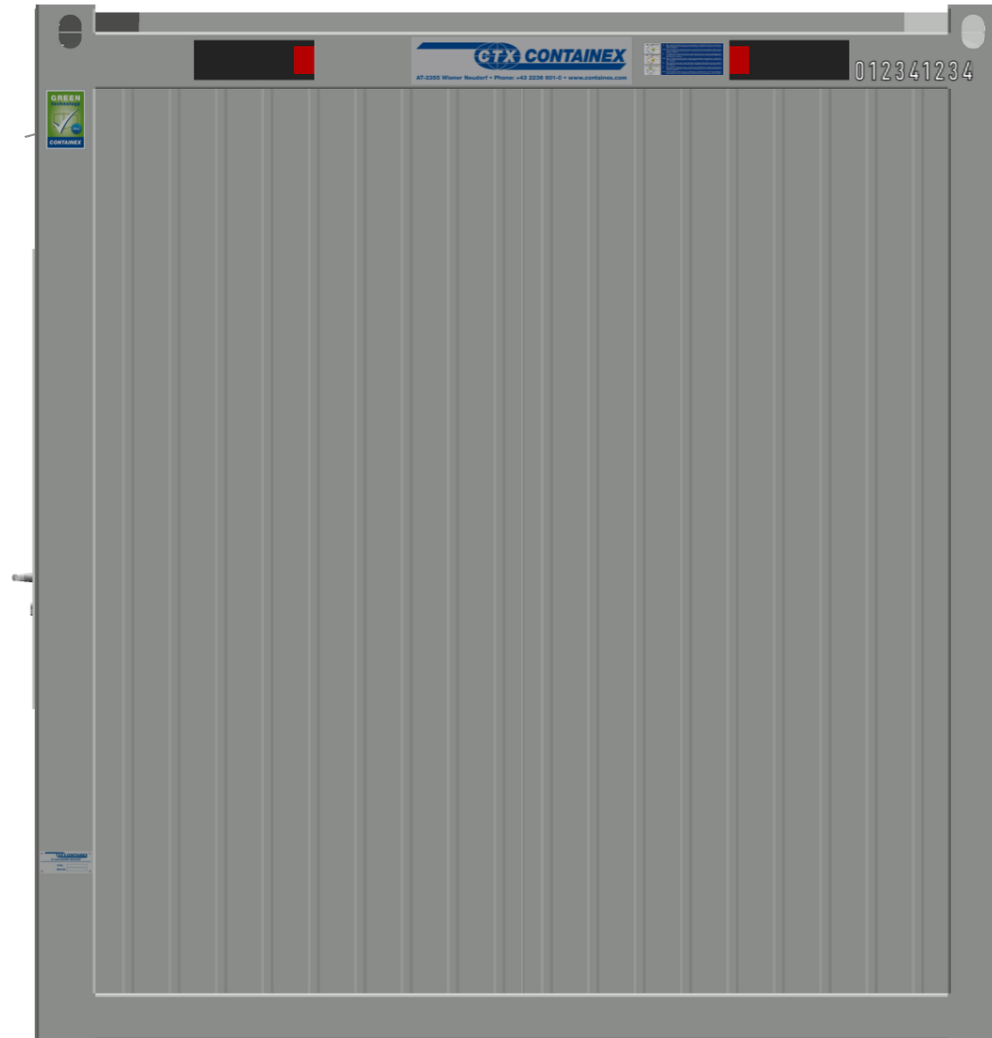
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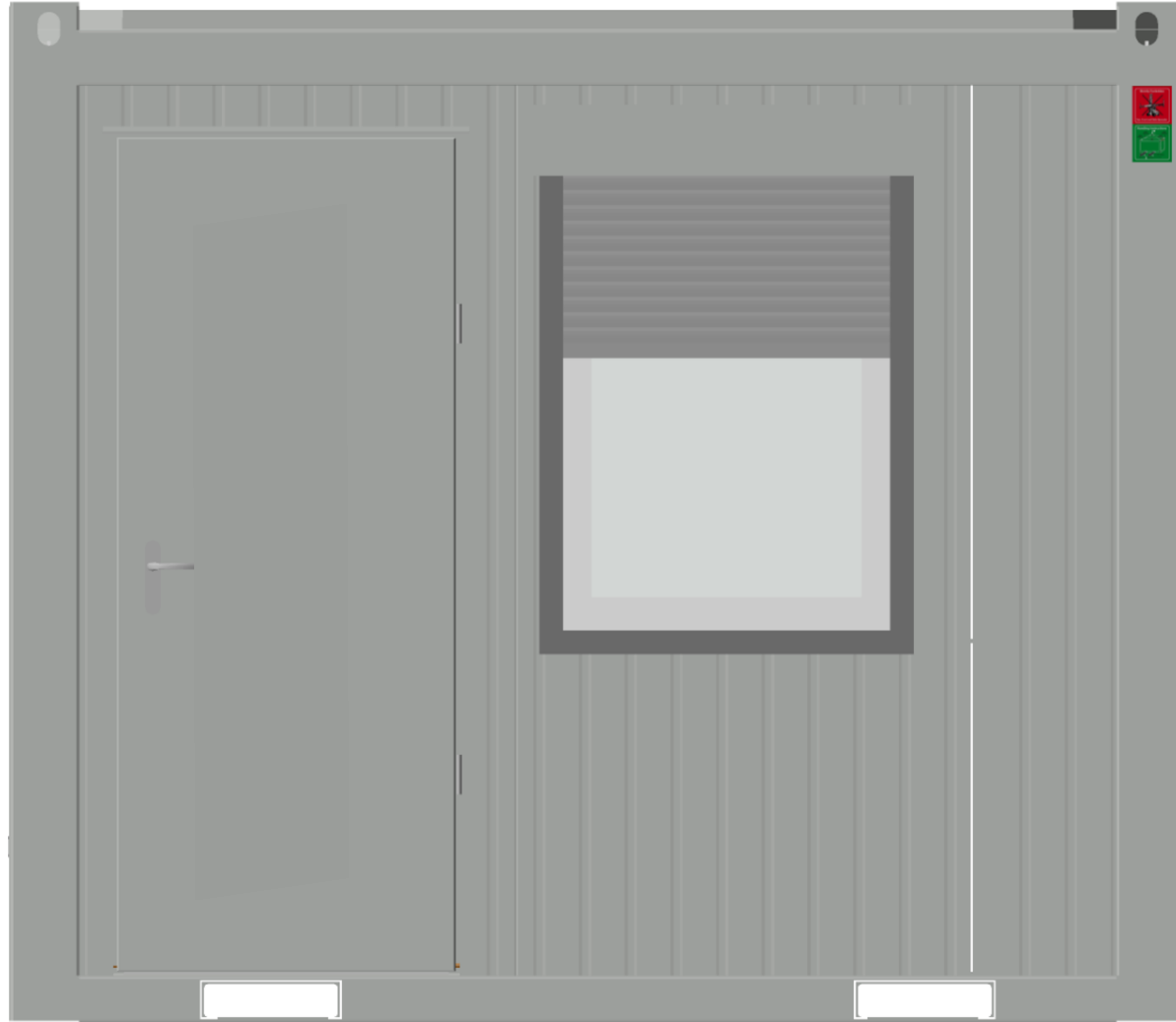


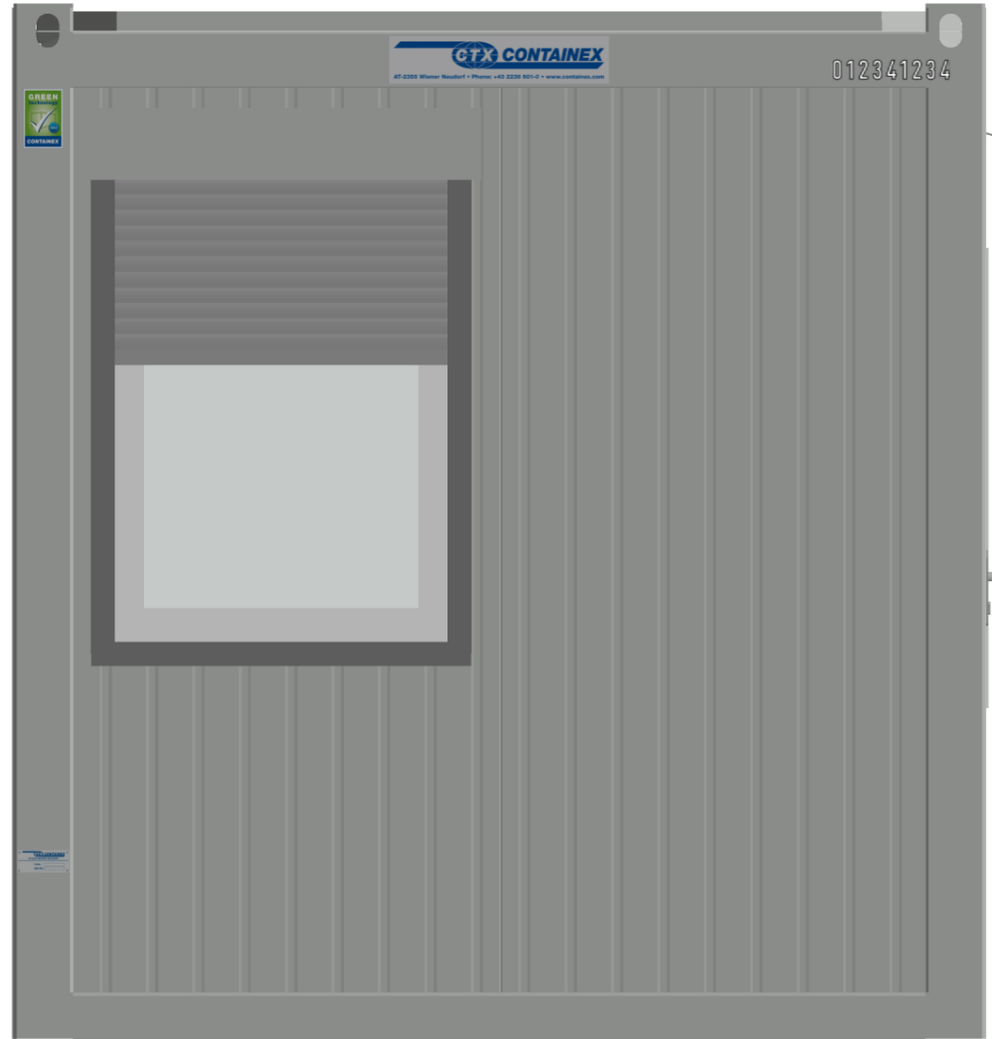


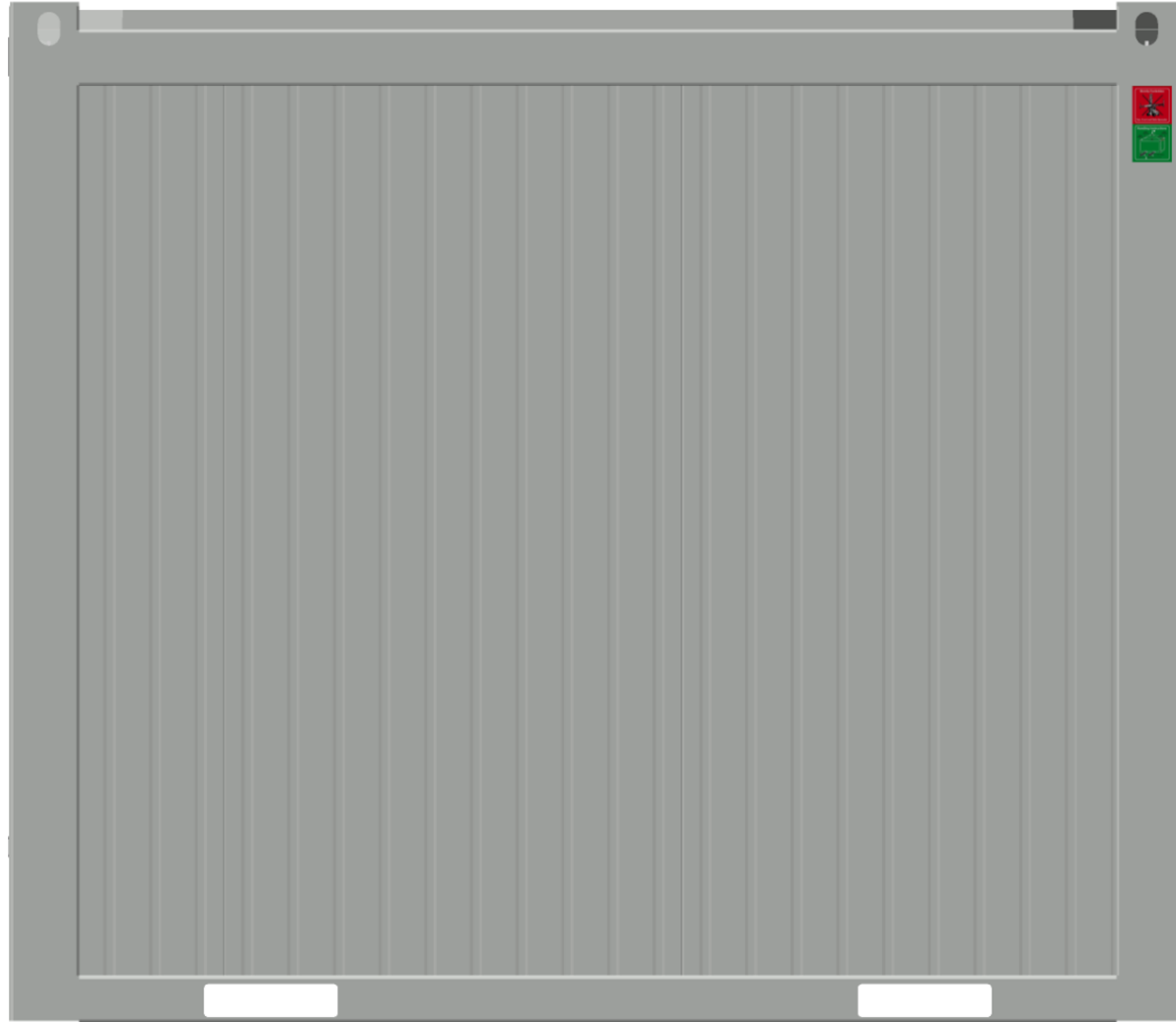












## COMMITTEE REPORT

**Item Number:**

**Ward:** Priory Vale

**Application Number:** S/20/1385/RACH

**Parish:** Haydon Wick

**Proposal:** Change of use of twelve car parking spaces to a waterless hand car wash and valeting operation with associated canopy and portacabin.

**Site Location:** West Car Park, North Swindon District Centre, Abbey Meads, Swindon

**Case Officer:** Ralph Chakadya

**Agent:**

Mr Stuart Minty  
SM Planning  
80-83 Long Lane  
London  
EC1A 9ET

**Applicant**

The Car Wash Company  
C/O Agent

### Officers Report

**Background:**

Cllr Vinay Manro has requested that this application be considered by the Planning Committee due to concerns regarding siting and impact on highway safety.

**Summary of Recommendation:**

1. That planning permission be GRANTED with Conditions.

**The Proposal:**

2. The application seeks planning permission for the change of use of twelve car parking spaces at the North Swindon District Centre to a waterless hand car wash and valeting operation with associated canopy and portacabin.
3. The applicant submits that the car washing is done through an environmentally friendly waterless product, containing no toxic or harmful chemicals. The cleaning operations include vehicles being sprayed with a waterless product, which is then removed from the vehicle by a microfibre cloth. The operation requires no access to drainage, drains or water.
4. Following concerns raised by officers and Councillor Manro, additional details were submitted clarifying the impact on parking, highway safety, drainage, and noise, and the siting of the car wash. Officers were satisfied with the additional information submitted and no further consultations were required.

### **The Site and Surroundings:**

5. The site is located within the West Car Park at the North Swindon District Centre also referred to as the Orbital Shopping Park. The application site relates to twelve existing car parking spaces located centrally within the existing car park to the western part of the retail park. The parking spaces are adjacent to the pedestrian access running through the car park.

### **Representations:**

6. Neighbours comments: None
7. Councillor Manro: *Initial comments:* Raised concerns regarding highway capacity and safety of operatives, loss of parking, siting of the car wash, drainage and noise  
*Additional comments:* The submitted additional information addresses most issues raised. However, residents would still prefer an alternative location.
8. Haydon Wick Parish Council Comments: No objection in principle although the Committee would like to suggest the applicant considers moving to the corner of the car park, adjacent to the roundabout away from the two way traffic. The Committee also suggests that SBC consider a traffic impact survey.
9. Drainage Engineer: No objections
10. Highway Engineer: No objections following the submission of additional information
11. Environmental Health Officer: No objection following submission of additional information

### **Planning Policy:**

12. Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (2015)
  - Policy SD1 (Sustainable Development Principles)
  - Policy DE1 (High Quality Design)
  - Policy EC3 (The Role of Centres and Main Town Centre Uses)
  - Policy TR1 (Sustainable Transport Networks)
  - Policy TR2 (Transport and Development)
  - Policy EN7 (Pollution)
13. Material Planning Considerations
  - National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

### **Planning Considerations:**

14. The relevant considerations are the principle of the development, parking and highway safety, visual appearance and amenity, and drainage.

#### **Principle of the development**

15. The application site forms part of the west car park for the established North Swindon District Centre. A car wash complements the uses at the District Centre and subject to highways issues, amenity, visual appearance and drainage, the principle of the development is considered acceptable.

#### **Highways (Loss of Parking and Safety)**

16. The retail centre is well connected to public transport links, including a designated

bus terminal to the southern entrance, which offers a genuine and practical alternative for customers to arrive at the Centre by other means than the use of the private car. In addition, the site is well served by purpose built pedestrian accesses, which safely and conveniently links the site to the residential developments that surround the site. As such, the retail centre is highly sustainable in terms of access by other means of travel other than the car as encouraged by policies TR1 and TR2 of the Swindon Local Plan. Given the sustainable transport options available, the loss of 12no. parking spaces, as a proportion of the overall number of spaces contained within the car park, will not be significant enough to affect the efficiency of such a large retail car park that currently provides over 900 standard parking spaces (not including disabled and parent/child bays).

17. In addition, as clarified by the applicant, the proposed change of use will in reality, only result in the loss of 6no. parking spaces as six of the parking bays will remain available for parking, as the intention is that people would have their car washed when using other services within the retail centre. In assessing the additional information submitted by the applicant regarding how the car wash would operate and the resulting loss of parking, the Council's Highways Officer is satisfied the loss of parking is not significant in terms of affecting the public highway.
18. Concerns have been raised regarding the lack of a Traffic Impact Survey to inform functionality and safety. However, the Highways Officer noted that whilst a Traffic Impact Survey would be useful in informing traffic flows into and around the car park, and therefore any potential impact on functionality within the District Centre, this car park is a private facility, so the ultimate responsibility for managing safety within the car park lies between the landowner and their commercial tenants. The landowner is fully aware of the proposals as appropriate notification was served on them.
19. Regardless, the applicant submits that the premise of the waterless car wash is that the operation can be carried out in one single parking space, rather than the queuing system that is more commonly seen with other car washes when cars pass through different stages from jet washing through to vacuuming. This operation is fundamentally different. No queuing is required and it would not result in vehicles obstructing the main through routes to the car park. The applicant submits that they operate in excess of 50 sites across the country, many being located within retail car parks and the issue of traffic building up has never occurred.
20. Whereas alternative siting within the West Car Park has been suggested by Councillor Manro, the current position is informed by a number of factors. The proposed car wash operation has been positioned so as to maintain its distance from all entrance and exit points, purposefully sited to avoid traffic flows into or out of the car park. As it would be positioned adjacent to multiple aisles, customers can freely move around the car park as vehicles pull into and out of the car wash bays. As highlighted, the use of the spaces would not be materially different to the existing situation. It should also be noted that the location also has no parking directly behind or opposite, meaning that vehicles would not have to contend with other manoeuvring vehicles.
21. Overall, officers are satisfied that the proposed car wash would not result in unacceptable levels of loss of car parking spaces detrimental to the highway network



and safety. The proposal accords with policies TR1 and TR2 of the Local Plan.

#### Visual appearance and amenity

22. Policy DE1 seeks to ensure that there is a high standard of development for all proposals; this includes consideration of the design and appearance, impact upon neighbours in respect of matters of light, privacy, outlook, noise, disturbance, smell, pollution and space.
23. The car park is characterised by structures housing shopping trolleys. The only structures proposed in association with the car wash is a portacabin circa 3m x 2.5m and canopy structure maximum 3.1m high - structures of a size and scale similar to the existing trolley structures. Due to size and scale, the proposed portacabin and canopy are not considered to result in harm to the visual amenities of the car park and the character of the retail park.
24. Whilst concerns have been raised regarding potential noise from the car wash, the operations of a waterless car wash do not result in noise levels that would be detrimental to the nearest residential properties which are at least 100m away. Following the submission of the vacuum and valeting equipment details, the Council's Environmental Health Officer is now satisfied that the proposed car wash would not generate levels of noise that would be detrimental to the amenities of the nearest residential properties.
25. The submitted hours of operation are 9am-5pm Monday to Saturday and from 10am-4pm on Sundays. The District Centre's opening times between Monday and Saturday goes beyond these suggested hours except on Sunday when the closing time is the same. As such, the opening times that fall within the opening hours of the retail centre are considered acceptable.

#### Drainage

26. The proposed car wash is waterless based. The Council's Drainage Officer has assessed the proposal and has not objected.

#### Representations

27. All the issues raised have been addressed within the above report

#### Concluding comments

28. The proposal will not generate any design, amenity or highway concerns and can be supported in policy terms. The proposal is therefore in compliance with Policy SD1, DE1, EC3, EN7, TR1 and TR2 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026, and the NPPF.

#### **Recommendation:**

29. That Planning Permission be GRANTED with conditions.

## **Conditions**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.  
Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 (1) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.
2. This approval shall be in respect of drawings and details:
  - Drawing No. 32488-STL-CW-00-DR-A-XXXX-18001 PL01 Location Plan;
  - Drawing No. 32488-STL-CW-00-DR-A-XXXX-18002 PL01 Proposed Block Plan; Unnumbered Drawing Canopy Dimensions
  - Unnumbered Drawing Portacabin Details
  - Unnumbered Drawing Front and Rear of Portacabin
  - Unnumbered Drawing Portacabin Foundation Details
  - Operational Statement

received by the Local Planning Authority 22 October 2021

Reason: To define the scope of the development hereby permitted, in accordance with section 72 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Hours of operation

3. The premises shall not be used in connection with the development hereby permitted, outside the following hours:-  
0900 to 1700 Monday - Saturday, and 1000 to 1600 Sundays or Bank Holidays.  
Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the area.

## **Informative**

CIL

1. Outside CIL definition of Planning Permission: Whilst the development proposed generates a net gain in floor space, the development proposed does not constitute Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) liable development as the proposed works fall outside the definition of planning permission for CIL purposes as defined by the Community Infrastructure Levy (England and Wales) CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended) Regulation 5 'Meaning of Planning permission'.

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## Swindon Railway Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

### Planning Committee

Date: 13th April 2021

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Author: Director of Strategic Development and Growth

Wards: Central Ward, Mannington & Western Ward & Rodbourne Cheney Ward

Parishes Affected: Central Swindon North CP & Central Swindon South CP

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### 1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans (CAAMP) describe the special character and appearance of designated areas to aid the determination of development proposals or works which may affect those areas and seek management therein (in accordance with section.72 of the Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990).
- 1.2 This report seeks Committee approval of an updated Swindon Railway Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) and seeks authorisation for adoption as a development management document.
- 1.3 This follows the Conservation Area Review which commenced in January 2020 and further public consultation undertaken in Autumn 2020. The update includes a revised and enlarged Conservation Area boundary and a refreshed and updated CAAMP. The adoption and application of the updated CAAMP will guide and inform the management of change and the determination of proposals for enhancement.

### 2. Recommendations

#### Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 This report seeks Committee's approval of the recommendations made in the Swindon Railway CAAMP as amended following a period of further consultation exercise. A copy of the draft report is contained in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Approve the draft Swindon Railway CAAMP once updated in accordance with the recommendations in this report, and then adopt as a development management document.
- 2.3 Authorise the Director of Strategic Development and Growth to make the necessary amendments to the draft CAAMP as set out in this report and minor typographical corrections to the document required in advance of publication, in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee.

### 3. Background and Context

- 3.1 Conservation Areas were first introduced through the Civic Amenities Act 1967.
- 3.2 A conservation area is an area designated as being of "*special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve*"

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Liz Smith-Gibbons, (07766510475) [conservation@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:conservation@swindon.gov.uk).

or enhance" via s. 69 of Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 (hereafter '1990 Act').

- 3.3 The 1990 Act requires local planning authorities to:
- a. review its conservation areas; ('from *time to time*' s.69(2) 1990 Act)
  - b. prepare policies and proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the character or appearance of its conservation areas; and
  - c. pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area in exercising its planning function.
- 3.4 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) sets out Government policy and guidance on the protection of conservation areas and other elements of the Historic Environment. The NPPF advises that Local Planning Authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest. Historic England's guidance on Conservation Areas advises that there are many benefits to a character appraisal, including as a tool to demonstrate an areas special interest and in providing a basis for development control and informing management proposals.
- 3.5 The Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (hereafter the Plan), at Part 4, includes a range of policies aimed at enabling sustainable development. The Plan includes policies targeted at managing the impact upon all heritage assets and specifically at policy EN10 (a, b and c) to ensure development that would affect conservation areas conserve those elements which contribute to its special character and appearance.
- 3.6 The Swindon Railway Village and Swindon Railway Works Conservation Areas were first and separately designated in 1975 and 1987 respectively. Subsequent review and adoption of both was undertaken in 2008 where they remained as separate, albeit adjacent conservation areas. This is the first subsequent review since 2008.

### **Council Aims and Objectives**

- 3.7 The Vision for Swindon 2019 – 2020 has four main priorities, the most relevant to new development being:
- Priority 1 Improve infrastructure and housing to support a growing, low-carbon economy
  - Priority 3 Ensure clean and safe streets and improve our public spaces and local culture

Pledges 3, 6 and 15 of the Council Plan are of relevance; to refresh and implement the Masterplan for Swindon Town Centre, the Local Plan Review and safeguarding Swindon's heritage and making the best use of our (heritage) assets.

- 3.8 By assisting in the preservation and management of change and enhancement within the defined boundary area and its setting, the adoption and application of the updated CAAMP will contribute to the wider management of The Vision.

#### **4. The Review Process and outcomes**

- 4.1 The review was specifically identified as an essential research and information gathering project (Heritage Action Zone (HAZ), project 2: Review Heritage Designations) to be funded by Historic England through the Swindon Heritage Action Zone Delivery Plan. This review was scheduled for Year 1 of the HAZ Delivery Plan as it was anticipated that the outcomes of the Review would inform HAZ projects scheduled for Years 2,3 4, and 5. The review of the Swindon Railway Village and Swindon Railway Works Conservation Areas began in January 2020 and it included the following:

- a. An assessment and analysis of the existing conservation areas and their boundaries with regard to the requirements of the legislative and policy requirements
- b. Regard to prevailing Conservation Area and other relevant Historic Environment guidance
- c. Consultation with SBC officers and members and the community during the preparations of the draft CAAMP to enable discussion and draw\_out local knowledge and other feedback.

This included:

- i. Two interactive workshops and a questionnaire with local residents and other stakeholders through (27<sup>th</sup> February 2020).
- ii. Two interactive workshops with various Council departments (12<sup>th</sup> February 2020).
- iii. Promotion of the review project through wider Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) opportunities, including presentation at the Swindon and District History Network (SDHN) held at Swindon Central Library (3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020).
- iv. The emerging proposals in regard to the boundary alterations were discussed with members including Member for Town Centre, Culture and Heritage and Cabinet member for Strategic Infrastructure, Transport and Planning (March 2020).
- v. Liaison with Ward members (4<sup>th</sup> March 2020)

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Liz Smith-Gibbons, (07766510475) [conservation@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:conservation@swindon.gov.uk).

- 4.2 The initial engagement and consultation raised awareness of the Conservation Area review, sought to utilise local knowledge of the Conservation Area's special interest and gather feedback on the opportunities for enhancing this special interest and proposed changes proposed to the Conservation Area boundary.
- 4.3 The information gathered from the community and other stakeholders was captured and evaluated by heritage professionals Purcell who produced the final draft document and the recommendations contained therein.
- 4.4 The results of this consultation informed the preparation of the draft Swindon Railway Area CAAMP which recommended:
- a. A merger of the two separate conservation areas, the Swindon Railway Village Conservation Area and Swindon Railway Works Conservation Area as into the '*Swindon Railway Conservation Area and Management plan*'.
  - b. Enlargement and addition to the designated of the Conservation Area boundary.
- A comparison of the existing two-boundaries and proposed singular boundary area are contained in Appendix 2. In summary the areas proposed for inclusion are
- a. Buildings on the south side of Faringdon Road (eastern end only)
  - b. The area of Faringdon Road around the Health Hydro
  - c. The area around Station Road and Swindon Railway Station
  - d. The area to the west of Rodbourne Road to include the Pattern Church (formerly the Pattern Store) and the west car park of the McArthur Glenn Outlet Village
- 4.5 Additional conservation area boundary additions originally tabled for discussion but which, following analysis, are not proposed for inclusion are:
- Cambria Place and properties to south Faringdon Road (Western end)
  - Park Lane (west side)
  - Fleet Street
- 4.6 The review and analysis of the reasons and justification for the areas to be included and excluded are outlined on page 13 of the draft Swindon Railway CAAMP (Appendix 1).
- 4.7 The updated draft Swindon Railway CAAMP sets out the vision for the future of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area and a framework to guide change. The objectives align with the duties to preserve or enhance the designated areas
-



character and appearance. It also highlights opportunities to enhance the areas character and appearance through the following recommendations:

- a. Heritage Impact Assessment of proposed alterations, demolition and development should be undertaken by applicants to analyse and describe the effects of the proposal upon significance to ensure the special interest of the Conservation Area is preserved or enhanced.
- b. Proposals for extension, alteration and new development will only be approved where they would preserve or enhance the special interest of the Conservation Area, or where the public benefits would outweigh any harm.
- c. Due consideration should be given to archaeological potential and protection or mitigation of remains.
- d. The design, construction and materials of new development, extension, alteration or repair should be of the highest quality.
- e. The condition of the Conservation Area should be monitored and reviewed periodically.
- f. The 'Article 4' Directions adopted for the Conservation Area be reviewed.

4.8 The draft CAAMP sets out issues and opportunities in regard to the management of the conservation area to enable preservation and enhancement in the form of seven 'themes' :

- a. Connectivity: The railway line, integral to the special interest of the Conservation Area, presents issues in connecting the former railway works part of the area to the town centre.
- b. Thoroughfares and Experience: The way people experience and move through the Conservation Area is an important part of their appreciation and interaction with the railway heritage and improving this experience will enhance its special interest.
- c. Public Spaces in Swindon Railway Works: The railway works contains an important series of public spaces, improvement to the appearance and connectivity of which would enliven this new urban quarter and enhance the Conservation Area.
- d. GWR Park: Exploring how this important community resource could better contribute to the special interest of the Conservation Area and how user experience could be improved.
- e. Vacant, Underused and Detracting Sites: Although considerable work has been done to transform the Conservation Area over the past 30 years, there remain opportunities to improve some buildings and sites, including within the area's setting.

- f. Unsympathetic Alterations: Small features of individual buildings, such as windows, doors and shopfronts, all contribute to the overall appearance of the Conservation Area. It is these features which have been altered and improvements would enhance the character of the area.
- g. Engagement with Swindon's Railway Heritage: Considering the initiatives for encouraging public involvement and enjoyment of all the Conservation Area has to offer.

**5. Statutory consultation - the process and summary of comments received**

- 5.1 The draft Swindon Railway Area CAAMP was formally consulted upon for a period of six weeks between 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020 and 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020 in accordance with the methods outlined in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which included:

- a. Publicity on the Council's website,

This included a bespoke webpage to promote the Council's Consultation for the 6 week period

Notification letters and emails to statutory bodies groups and individuals – (with email being initial choice) and including circa 500 letters and multiple email notifications sent to:

- Owner/properties within the proposed Conservation Area extension and properties bounding
- Heritage Action Zone Stakeholders
- Those attending the consultation workshops

Press release to local newspapers to enable information to reach a wider audience, and social media posts (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) by SBC Communications. A total of 3684 reached, with 34 'likes/comments/shares'

- b. Despite Covid-19 restrictions copies were provided to Swindon Central library and available subject to the appropriate restrictions necessary.

- 5.2 The proposed amendments resulting from the consultation are now reported back to Planning Committee.

- 5.3 A summary of the responses received during the consultation is provided at Appendix 3. The comments in regard to the recommendations set out in the draft CAAMP are as follows.

Alterations to boundaries

- i. A merger of the two separate conservation areas (Swindon Railway Village and Swindon Railway Works Conservation Areas) into a single '*Swindon Railway Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*'

This was in the main accepted and supported by respondents including Historic England, Mechanics Institution Trust, Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal Trust, Swindon Cycle Campaign and several individual responders. The exception included the response from Swindon Civic Voice (SCV) who objected to the merger unless the number of proposed (smaller) character areas could be reduced from three rather than the suggested six.

The character areas approach is justified within the CAAMP and the rationale for the six proposed areas does not undermine the holistic approach to the historic Railway Area. This is now accepted by SCV.

- ii. Enlargement of the designated Conservation Area boundary to incorporate additional areas of historic interest

There was broad acceptance of the incorporation of the additional areas proposed within the CAAMP. However one objection to the inclusion of the Station Road area and southern end of Faringdon Road within the Conservation was offered by the bus companies who expressed concerns that inclusion could potentially limit future development and traffic movements in those areas. The response to the comments is that there is no presumption within the document for the removal of buses within the wider area.

SCV and several other individuals also expressed a desire to include additional areas such as Cambria Place and properties to south Faringdon Road (Western end)/Park Lane (west side)/Fleet Street which had been considered within the Review but which were ultimately rejected.

The basis and justification for restricting the enlargement is set out on page 13 of the CAAMP. Some or all of these historic buildings may be worthy of inclusion on a 'Local List', the compilation of which is a project scheduled for completion by the end of the Heritage Action Zone.

Some respondents also suggested other areas for inclusion, which had not been considered within the Review e.g. greater areas of the later Victorian streets near Milton Road (SCV). However, after consideration it was decided that there was simply not a strong enough case to support the inclusion of these areas within the Conservation Area boundary at this point in time. As above, individual historic buildings or assets could be assessed for inclusion on a 'Local List.'

- iii. Other

Many of the responses highlighted the need for additional studies and strategies for several aspects of the management of the conservation area, for example a Public Realm Strategy. This is accepted.

In regard to the relationship with other strategies, e.g. Town Centre Movement Strategy (TCMS) concern was expressed that the document was not reflective of this strategy. The CAAMP is amended at Section 8 to identify the purpose of the document in this regard. Similarly, clarity of 'principal' pedestrian routes in regard to Farnsby Street is agreed.

The emphasis in regard to cycling/cyclists in wider movement has been noted and amended.

Buildings of significance within the Conservation Area, was raised as a concern regarding the classification of the National Trust 'Heelis' as 'neutral'. This is agreed and clarified.

Matters regarding terminology were expressed (SCV) (e.g. 'tunnel' to be used as opposed to 'underpass' in regard to the Bristol Street entrance to the rail works). This has been amended.

In regard to the canal, the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust raised concern regarding the use of the term 'lost'. This point is accepted and removed. Reference has now also been made to the electrified railway.

- 5.4 Finally it should be noted that during the overall review process responses revealed a significant amount of support interest, enthusiasm and pride by local people and organisations for the Swindon Railway Conservation Area.

Respondents used the consultation process to share their local knowledge and further enrich the CAAMP by drawing attention to a wide range of Swindon's historic environment including the former route of the canal, the Baptist tabernacle, the War Memorial, Faringdon Road shop frontages and a little known tunnel under the rail track to the western end of Dean Street. Several respondents also suggested opportunities to enhance the area through improving the Bristol Street tunnel, better management of the front gardens of the Railway Village cottages and other properties, the reinstatement of rose beds and other facilities within GWR Park on Faringdon Road and the need for improved signage and to engage people and by offering tours of the area.

Many of these aspects are specific HAZ projects and would be considered with the CAAMP as a core document.

**iv. Alternative Options**

The alternative to adoption of the CAAMP would be to continue to rely on the 2008 documents.

The consequence would be:

- failure by the Council to meet its statutory duty to review the conservation area at regular intervals
- a continued reliance on a policy document that, through its age, could be perceived to have reduced relevance and weight, potentially resulting in an increased risk of challenge by developers
- protection of areas considered worthy of inclusion and designation would be susceptible to reduced planning controls
- to hinder the ability of the existing documents to inform and influence other Council projects and priorities

**v. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management**

Financial and Procurement Implications

There are no immediate financial implications. The adoption of new CAAMP standards will have no financial implications beyond those associated with the officer time required to manage the public consultation exercise and to develop the document to the point of adoption.

If the CAAMP is adopted by Planning Committee implications may relate to any cost to the Authority if the designation were challenged. However, this would only happen if the Council was adjudged to have acted unreasonably.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

Human Rights considerations have been taken into account in compiling the reports. It is considered that the recommendations of the reports are compatible with Convention rights and that in accordance with the principle of proportionality any interference with the Convention rights of individuals is justified by the overall benefit to the community.

Law and Democratic Services will be consulted prior to the finalisation of the document ahead of approval for adoption by Planning Committee later in the year.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

An updated 'fit-for-purpose' CAAMP will inform and guide the effective management of the area by Council officers and other stakeholders when considering issues such as health, crime and disorder.

**vi. Risk Management**

Failure to periodically review conservation areas from time to time fails the Council's duty via statutory legislation and national planning policies.

**vii. Consultees**

The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (s151 officer) and Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

**viii. Background Papers**

The relevant background documentation:

Swindon Railway Village Conservation Area Appraisal (Swindon Borough Council, December 2008)

Swindon Railway Works Conservation Area Appraisal (Swindon Borough Council, December 2008)

Statement of Community Involvement (Swindon Borough Council, SCI, 2019)

These are available via the Council's website and via the Conservation Team.

**6. Appendices**

- 6.1 Appendix 1 –Draft Swindon Railway Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
- 6.2 Appendix 2 – Maps detailing proposed change in Conservation Area boundary
- 6.3 Appendix 3 – summary of the responses received





Page 95

# SWINDON'S RAILWAY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

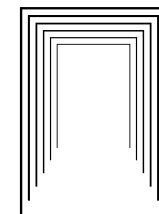
JUNE 2020

CE G. W. R. WORKS, SWINDON

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PURCELL



SWINDON  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# CONTENTS

## HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT 03

## PREFACE 04

## 1 INTRODUCTION 06

- 1.1 What is a Conservation Area? 06
- 1.2 What Does Conservation Area Designation Mean? 06
- 1.3 Planning Legislation, Policy and Guidance 06
- 1.4 Purpose and Scope of this CAAMP 07
- 1.5 Consultation and Engagement 08

## 2 LOCATION AND BOUNDARY 09

- 2.1 Location of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area 09
- 2.2 Conservation Area Boundary 10

## 3 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST 14

## 4 BRIEF HISTORY OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY LEGACY AND THE CONSERVATION AREA 17

- 4.1 Swindon's Early History 17
- 4.2 Origins of New Swindon 17
- 4.3 Construction of the Railway Works 18

## BRIEF HISTORY OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY LEGACY AND THE CONSERVATION AREA (CONT.)

- 4.4 Construction of the Railway Village 18
- 4.5 The Medical Fund 20
- 4.6 Provision of the Mechanics' Institution 20
- 4.7 The Highs and Lows of the Railway Works 21
- 4.8 Further Expansion 23
- 4.9 Post World War II 24
- 4.10 Late Twentieth Century 26

## 5 CHARACTER IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS 28

- 5.1 Topography and Geology 28
- 5.2 Archaeology 30
- 5.3 Historic and Current Land Use 32
- 5.4 Street and Plot Pattern 34
- 5.5 Building Height, Scale and Massing 35
- 5.6 Building Materials 37
- 5.7 Architectural Detailing 39
- 5.8 Boundary Treatments 41
- 5.9 Movement and Activity 42
- 5.10 Public Realm, Open Spaces and Trees 44
- 5.11 Positive Landmarks in the Conservation Area 46
- 5.12 Views and Setting 51
- 5.13 Character Areas 58

## 6 BUILDINGS IN THE CONSERVATION AREA 71

- 6.1 Introduction 71
- 6.2 Listed Buildings 72
- 6.3 Positive Buildings 74
- 6.4 Neutral and Detracting Buildings 75

## 7 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES 76

## 8 MANAGEMENT PLAN 86

- 8.1 What is the Purpose of the Management Plan 86
- 8.2 Controls 87
- 8.3 Guidance 88
- 8.4 Recommendations 92

## 9 FURTHER INFORMATION AND SOURCES 95

## BIBLIOGRAPHY 98



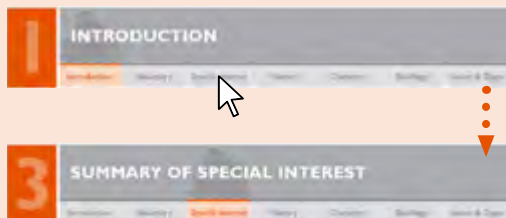
# HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT



## Navigation

For ease of use this document has been produced to be read on-screen. It contains a series of features that make it easier to use and navigate between the different parts.

*To go to a different section of the document, simply use your mouse to click on the name of the section you would like to look at. The document will automatically navigate you to the correct page.*



Within the text, anything highlighted in **blue** is a hyperlink. Click on it with your mouse to navigate to the desired destination.

see the ['Further Information and Sources'](#) section



## Abbreviations

The abbreviations are used within this document are listed below:

<b>CAAMP</b>	Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
<b>CMP</b>	Conservation Management Plan
<b>DCMS</b>	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
<b>GWR</b>	Great Western Railway
<b>HAZ</b>	Heritage Action Zone
<b>HER</b>	Historic Environment Record
<b>NHLE</b>	National Heritage List for England
<b>QR Code</b>	Quick Response Code
<b>TA</b>	Territorial Army
<b>UTC</b>	Swindon University Technical College



## NHLE List Entry Numbers

The List Entry numbers for listed buildings within Swindon's Railway Conservation Area are referenced in brackets where the building is first named in the document. Details of where to find the relevant list entries can be found in ['Further Information and Sources'](#).



## FAQs: General Questions

**What is a Conservation Area?**  
See [Section 1.1](#)

**How do I find out if a building is statutorily listed?**  
See [Plan 9](#)

**What are the boundaries of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area?**  
See [Section 2](#), [Plan 2](#)

**What is a Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan?**  
See [Section 1.4](#)

**How do I find out which character area a building is in?**  
See [Plan 8](#)

**How do I find out if a building is a non-designated heritage asset (i.e. positive building)?**  
See [Plan 9](#)

**What are the problems facing the Conservation Area?**  
See [Section 7](#)

**Where can I find more sources of information about the Conservation Area?**  
See [Section 9](#)

**What is the overall special interest of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area?**  
See [Section 3](#)

**How does the conservation area designation affect changes that can be made to buildings?**  
See [Section 8.2](#)

**Where can I find advice and guidance about making alterations or extension to a building?**  
See [Section 8.3](#)

**How do I find out if a building is within the Conservation Area?**  
See [Plan 2](#)

**Where are there opportunities to enhance the Conservation Area's special interest?**  
See [Section 7](#)

**What characteristics contribute to the special interest of the Conservation Area?**  
See [Section 5](#)

# PREFACE



Swindon is undergoing a period of exciting regeneration and has strong potential for growth and economic success. In recent decades the town has transformed itself from one dominated by the railway industry, to one with a prosperous mix of industries. However, Swindon would not be the town it is today without the railway works. Its railway heritage continues to be a vital part of the town's identity and a source of pride for many. The legacy of Swindon's railway heritage is a valuable asset on which to anchor the town's future development and is deservedly protected by its designation as Swindon's Railway Conservation Area.

This review of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area has been undertaken as part of a wider project, the Swindon Heritage Action Zone (HAZ), which is aimed at aiding understanding and raising awareness of Swindon's railway heritage. This project, funded by Historic England, will use the unique special interest of Swindon's railway heritage as a catalyst to unlock and boost economic growth which will, in turn, have a positive effect on the wellbeing of residents and visitors.

Swindon's Railway Conservation Area encompasses the highly significant former Great Western Railway (GWR) works, Swindon Railway Station as well as the internationally important railway village and associated development along Faringdon Road.

The GWR company's decision to locate their railway works at Swindon was fundamental to the success and growth of the town historically and continues to be important today.

***The former GWR works are part of one of the most significant surviving historic railway establishments in the world. Founded in 1842, the works were in operation for nearly 150 years.***

**Fig. 1:** The Long Shop in the former railway works presents an impressive 200m elevation to the railway line and is a landmark along the journey into Swindon by rail



# PREFACE



**Fig. 2:** The railway village comprises vernacular workers cottages such as these in Taunton Street

The Railway Works were designated as a conservation area in 1987 in recognition of the national and international importance of what has been called “one of Britain’s finest monuments to the early days of the railway age.”<sup>01</sup>

Swindon’s railway village, built by the GWR company to satisfy the needs of its workforce, is one of the most significant industrial housing estates of its period and has been described as “an almost complete planned railway settlement of the 1840s and early 1850s, unrivalled in its state of preservation by Crewe, Wolverton and Derby, England’s other surviving railway company settlements.”<sup>02</sup> The village was designated as a conservation area in 1975.

These two areas, village and works, are intrinsically linked in their origins, purpose and significance and have therefore been re-designated as a single conservation area in recognition of this. The Conservation Area has also been extended to incorporate further areas closely associated with the railway works and village, which strengthen the special interest of the Conservation Area.

In addition to supporting the Swindon HAZ objectives, this Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) will assist the Council in undertaking its statutory duty of preserving and enhancing the special interest of the area and will be a tool to assist residents and developers.

<sup>01</sup> John Cattell & Keith Falconer, *Swindon: the Legacy of a Railway Town* (Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, 1995)

<sup>02</sup> Ibid

## 1.1 WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

***A conservation area is defined as an “area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which is it desirable to preserve or enhance.”***<sup>01</sup>

<sup>01</sup> Section 69 (1), *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*

1.1.1 Designation of a conservation area recognises the unique quality of that area as a whole. This quality comes not only from individual buildings and monuments but also other features, including (but not limited to) topography, materials, thoroughfares, street furniture, open spaces and landscaping. These all contribute to the character and appearance of an area, resulting in a distinctive local identity and sense of place.

1.1.2 The extent to which a building, or group of buildings / structures, positively shape the character of a conservation area is derived from their exteriors, principally those elevations which are street-facing but also side and rear elevations, integrity of their historic fabric, overall scale and massing, detailing and materials. Open spaces can be public or private, green or hard-landscaped and still contribute to the special interest of an area. Furthermore, the spaces between buildings, such as alleys, streets and paths all contribute to appearance and character.

1.1.3 Swindon’s Railway Conservation Area was designated in 2020, having previously been two separate conservation areas designated in 1975 and 1987, respectively. See [Section 2.0](#) for the location and boundaries of the Conservation Area.

## 1.2 WHAT DOES CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION MEAN?

1.2.1 To protect and enhance conservation areas, any changes that take place must conserve, respect or contribute to the character and appearance which makes the conservation area of special interest. In order to ensure this, Development Rights exist within conservation areas. In practice, this means that Planning Permission is needed for works which materially affect the external appearance of a building or feature.<sup>02</sup> The restrictions include those relating to demolition, new openings and some types of extension. In addition works to trees are also controlled. Further details can be found in the Management Plan ([Section 8.0](#)) of this document.

## 1.3 PLANNING LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

1.3.1 Planning legislation, policy and guidance is utilised when considering development or other changes within Swindon’s Railway Conservation Area. This is to ensure that proposals seek to preserve or enhance the area’s character and appearance, including its setting.

1.3.2 The primary legislation governing conservation areas is the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. The Act defines what a conservation area is and is the legislative mechanism for ensuring their preservation and enhancement.

1.3.3 *The National Planning Policy Framework (2019)* sets out the overarching requirement for local planning authorities to identify and protect areas of special interest (paragraph 185). Government guidance on the historic environment is found within the relevant section of the *National Planning Practice Guidance*.

<sup>02</sup> Permitted Development Rights, as defined by *The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015*, are works which can be undertaken without the need to gain Planning Permission.

1.3.4 The *Swindon Borough Local Plan* (2015) sets out the Council's own policies which guide development within the Borough, including policies and guidance for protecting and enhancing the historic environment including conservation areas (Policy EN10).<sup>03</sup>

1.3.5 In addition to these legislative and policy requirements, this CAAMP has been prepared in line with the following best practice guidance published by Historic England, the public body who manage the care and protection of the historic environment:

- *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition)* (February 2019)
- *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (April 2008)
- *The Setting of Heritage Assets Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)* (December 2017)
- *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets Historic England Advice Note 12* (October 2019)

1.3.6 Historic England have additional information in regard to the historic environment, including caring for and making sensitive changes to historic buildings see the '[Further Information and Sources](#)' section of this document for more information.

1.3.7 The Council also have further guidance documents relating to specific topics such as archaeology and shopfronts which provide detailed advice. See '[Further Information and Sources](#)' for details.

## 1.4 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS CAAMP

1.4.1 Understanding the character and significance of conservation areas is essential for managing change within them. It is therefore a requirement under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* that all local planning authorities "*formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement*" of conservations areas within their jurisdiction, and that these proposals are periodically reviewed.<sup>04</sup>

1.4.2 The proposals are normally presented in the form of a CAAMP, which defines and records the special interest of a conservation area, as well as setting out a plan of action for its on-going protection and enhancement.

1.4.3 Conservation areas may be affected by direct physical change, by changes to their setting or in the uses of buildings or areas within them. A clear definition of those elements which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a place will enable the development of a robust policy framework for the future management of that area, against which development applications can be considered.

1.4.4 Over time, conservation areas evolve and the characteristics which underpin their special interest may decrease in their integrity because of gradual alteration. It is therefore important to review and take stock of the character of a conservation area at intervals to ensure designation is still suitable and that the proper management of change is in place. Furthermore, our understanding or appreciation of what is special about an area can change over time, meaning that it is important to review the boundaries of conservation areas and include / exclude buildings and spaces which do / do not contribute to and reinforce the conservation area designation.

<sup>03</sup> The *Swindon Borough Local Plan* is currently under review (2020)

<sup>04</sup> Section 71 (1), *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*



1.4.5 Although this CAAMP is intended to be comprehensive, the scale and complexity of the Conservation Area means that specific mention cannot be made of every building or feature. The omission of any building, structure, feature or space does not imply that the element is not significant or does not positively contribute to the character and special interest of the Conservation Area. The protocols and guidance provided in the Management Plan ([Section 8.0](#)) are applicable in every instance.

1.4.6 The assessments which provide the baseline information for this CAAMP have been carried out utilising publicly available resources and thorough on-site analysis from the publicly accessible parts of the Conservation Area.

## 1.5 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

1.5.1 It is a statutory requirement under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* for conservation area guidance produced by or on behalf of the Council to be subject to public consultation, including a public meeting, and for the local authority to have regard of the views expressed by consultees.<sup>05</sup>

1.5.2 During the early preparations of this CAAMP, consultation was undertaken with local residents and other stakeholders through a series of interactive workshops and a questionnaire. This engagement was intended to raise awareness of the Conservation Area review, utilise local knowledge of the Area's special interest and gather feedback on the opportunities for enhancing this special interest and changes proposed to the Conservation Area boundary. The results of this consultation have informed the preparation of this document.

<sup>05</sup> Section 71 (1), *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*



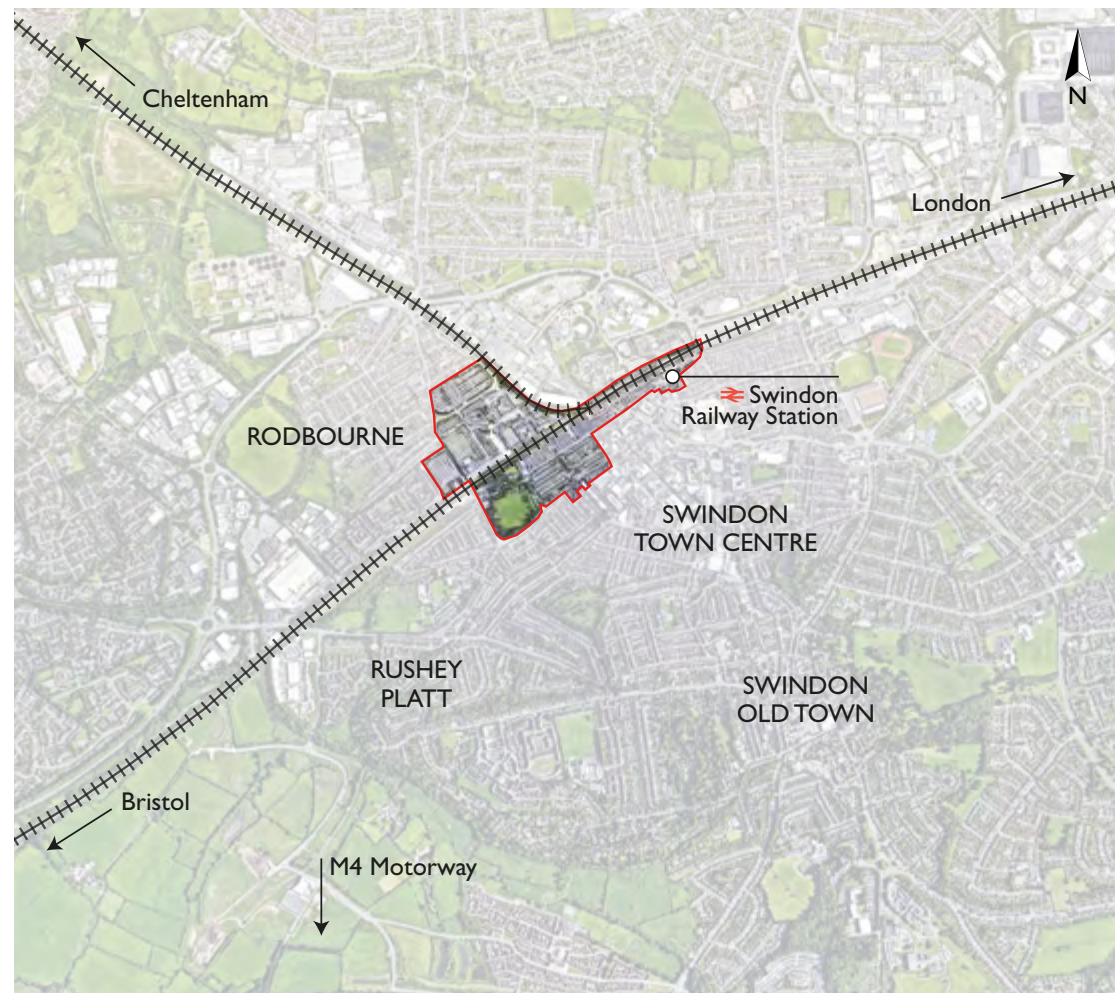
**Fig. 3:** Public engagement workshop with local residents and interest groups

## 2.1 LOCATION OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY CONSERVATION AREA

2.1.1 Swindon is the largest settlement in Wiltshire, located at the north-east corner of the county, roughly equidistant from Reading to the east and Bristol to the west. The town is located close to the M4 motorway and has excellent transport links by both road and rail while retaining a rural setting. Of considerable relevance is the London to Bristol railway line which bisects the town, and at a local level, bisects Swindon's Railway Conservation Area.

***Growing from a small market town in the mid-19th century, the arrival and success of the railway industry has seen the town of Swindon grow to a current population of around 190,000 people.***

2.1.2 Swindon's Railway Conservation Area is an urban conservation area located between the town centre of Swindon to the south-east and the residential suburbs of the town, including Rodbourne to the north-west. The Bristol to London railway line, all important to the area's special interest, divides the conservation area in two, separating the village to the south and former railway works to the north. **Plan 1** shows the location of the Conservation Area within its wider context.



**Plan 1:** Location of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area.

Image © 2020 Getmapping plc.

### Key

— Swindon Railway Conservation Area Boundary

++ Railway Line



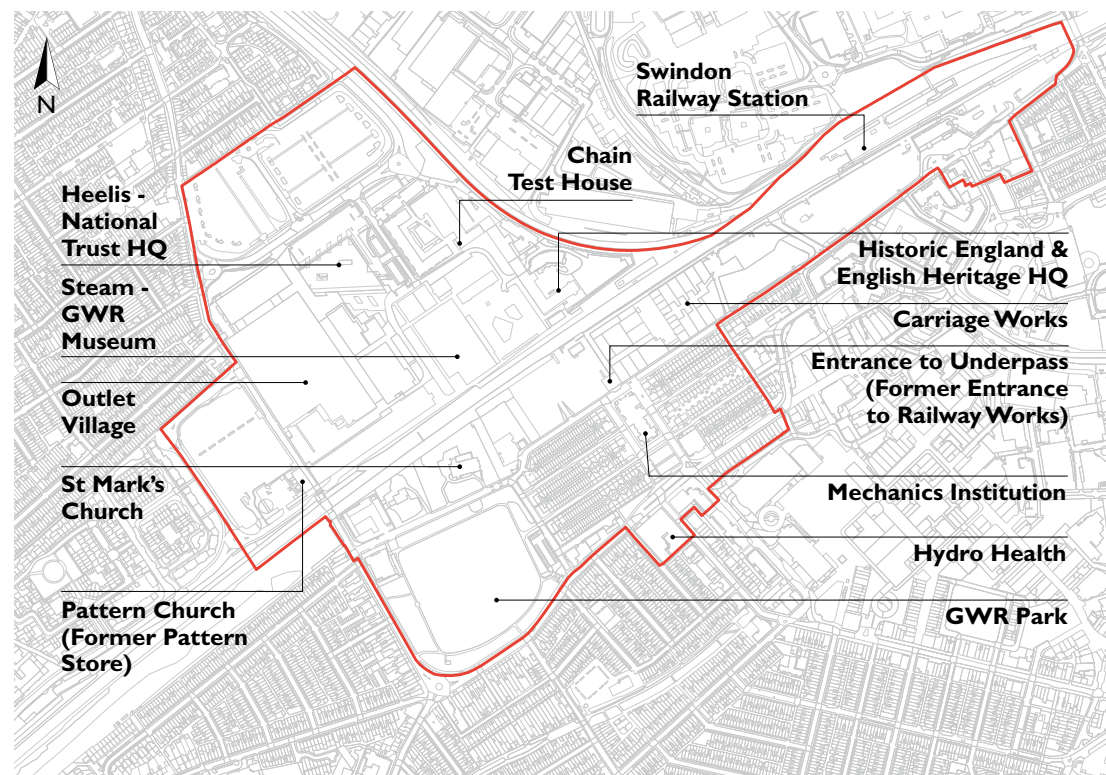
## 2.2 CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

2.2.1 Swindon's railway heritage was originally designated as two separate conservation areas, one encompassing the former railway works and the other the railway village. Both entities are intrinsically connected in terms of their origins, history and evolution. Both exist because of the GWR company's decision to locate their works at Swindon and the necessity of developing a self-contained village for their workers. The village would not exist without the works and the works would not have been sustainable had the village not been built. There is therefore considerable overlap in the historic development and significance of the two areas.

*Treating the railway village and former railway works as a collective strengthens the special interest of the area as one that is internationally important for its railway and social heritage.*

2.2.2 As a result, the two original conservation areas have been redesignated as a single conservation area designation - **Swindon's Railway Conservation Area**.

2.2.3 **Plan 2** shows the boundary of the Conservation Area with key buildings and spaces identified for orientation. The key areas included within the designation are described overleaf.



**Plan 2:** Boundary of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area © Crown copyright and Database Rights 100024296 2020





## THE FORMER GWR RAILWAY WORKS

***At their peak, the railway works extended over 100 acres and employed over 14,000 people making them one of the largest in the world.***

2.2.4 The works produced many well-known locomotives including the King and Castle Classes and Britain's last steam locomotive, Evening Star. The Conservation Area designation covers the historic core of the works roughly rectangular in shape and bound by two railway lines, the busy Rodbourne Road and its historic northern boundary wall (NHLE: 1382136). The physical separation of the former works even today gives the impression of there being an 'inside', familiar to many Swindon residents. The historic buildings which survive are simply designed, large and fairly austere workshops and sheds, and those which have been built since the closure of the works in the late 1980s follow a similar pattern of scale and appearance. Since the closure, this part of the Conservation Area has undergone considerable regeneration with the historic buildings sensitively converted to viable new uses including retail and offices and new buildings and landscaping have been sympathetically integrated.

2.2.5 A period of further growth between 1895 and 1920 led to the former railway works expanding as far west as Rodbourne Road. In this area several historic remnants can be found, such as a section of boundary wall (NHLE: 1382144); the turntable (NHLE: 1023521); and visually prominent Pattern Store building (NHLE: 1355885). These structures and those within the main railway works area are important physical and visual reminders of Swindon's railway industry at its peak and therefore contribute to the principal special interest of the area as a internationally important site.

## THE RAILWAY VILLAGE

2.2.6 The railway village is located adjacent to the south of the railway line which bisects the Conservation Area and separates the village from the railway works. The village extends beyond just the picturesque, parallel streets of terraced cottages (listed under several entries) to include all the essential elements important to the welfare and well-being of the GWR company's workers. These include the Mechanics' Institution (NHLE: 1198947), built in the 1850s, St Mark's Church (NHLE: 1355898), consecrated in 1845 and GWR Park. The railway village is bounded by the railway line to the north, Park Lane to the west, East Street to the east and Faringdon Road to the south.

2.2.7 Some elements of the railway village, such as the Territorial Army (TA) Centre and Workshops, although not within historic buildings still make a contribution to the Conservation Area due to their historic associations and continuity of use. The TA Centre has its origins as a Drill Hall for the local Rifle Corps and the TA Workshops are on the site of St Mark's Parochial Hall, which would have been central to the communal and spiritual life of the GWR workers who resided in the railway village.

2.2.8 Although no longer directly associated with the railway works across the railway line, the village has changed little, both in terms of its appearance and its use. It remains a residential enclave, although now surrounded by urban Swindon rather than fields, and retains the range of amenities enjoyed by previous generations. The village is an early and important example of a planned industrial village of the 1840s, associated with the then new railway industry. The key community buildings and spaces funded by the GWR company and residents themselves were pioneering and have contributed to, amongst other things, the formation of the National Health Service and the inception of public lending libraries. The village remains an important physical and visual reminder of what the railway brought to Swindon and in turn what Swindon gave the world.



### BUILDINGS ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF FARINGDON ROAD

2.2.9 This area principally contains a terraced row with retail units at ground floor that were developed in the later 19th century as a result of the greater need for retail amenities as the success and expansion of the railway works led to a larger residential population in the railway village and the immediate surrounding area. It also includes the Health Hydro (NHLE: 1382135), funded by the railway workers through their Medical Friendly Society and originally containing a dispensary and other medical facilities as well as washing facilities and Turkish baths. The Turkish Baths are the oldest continually in use in the country and the swimming pool is also one of the oldest. Both are still open and enjoyed by the public and the building's importance is demonstrated through its Grade II\* listing.

2.2.10 The inclusion of these buildings supplements the special interest of the area as a holistic community containing the employment, homes and all necessary amenities for railway workers and their families. There are opportunities to further enhance the special interest of the Conservation Area, particularly through the sensitive replacement or alteration of Bridge House and restoring historic features missing from the retail terrace and the Health Hydro.

### STATION ROAD AND SWINDON RAILWAY STATION

2.2.11 The decision by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, GWR's chief engineer, to include a railway station at Swindon likely influenced the subsequent decision to locate the railway works there too. In turn, the growth of Swindon town as a result of the railway works brought more industry and trade via the railway station. Today, only part of the historic railway station survives, the stone building on central platforms (NHLE: 1409181) as well as the Queens Tap (NHLE: 1023524), Great Western Hotel (NHLE: 1283238) and the former Aylesbury Dairy (NHLE: 1355881) which were all established and positioned to take advantage of the railway line. Inclusion of these buildings in the conservation area designation provides insight into the origins and opportunities the railway brought Swindon.

2.2.12 This area also contains several structures which are more directly connected to the former railway works, namely the boundary walls of the works (NHLE: 1382140 and 1023464) and the carriage works (NHLE: 1023506 and 1283531). There are also likely to be industrial archaeological remains of the former works buildings below the station car parks. As with other former works structures, these are important physical reminders of the railway works at its peak and therefore contribute to the principal special interest of the area as an internationally important railway works.



### AREAS NOT INCLUDED IN THE CONSERVATION AREA

2.2.13 During the preparation of this CAAMP, several areas were considered for inclusion but ultimately, following assessment and public consultation, not taken forward for inclusion in the conservation area designation. These include the residential enclave of Cambria Place, the houses on the west side of Park Lane and a section of the town centre around Fleet Street and Bridge Street.

2.2.14 It is important to note that these areas form the immediate setting of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area and therefore any development within them has the potential to affect the special interest of the Conservation Area. As such due consideration of impact on the special interest of the Conservation Area is required by those planning works.

### CAMBRIA PLACE

2.2.15 This enclave of terraced cottages were constructed for the Welsh workers of the railway works, who were originally housed within the Barracks on Faringdon Road (NHLE: 1023496) and therefore they do have a connection with the works and the GWR more generally. However, the buildings have undergone more significant change than those within the original railway village and are not of the same architectural quality than of those the terraces. They were not part of the original planned concept of the village and therefore inclusion in the Conservation Area would dilute its special interest.

### PARK LANE

2.2.16 These buildings were completed between 1883 and 1899 and were constructed as part of the wider growth of Swindon resulting from the success of the railway works but were not part of the GWR railway village itself. The semi-detached and short rows of terraces do not possess the same architectural style or characteristics as the railway village cottages and have no direct association with the GWR company. These buildings are not of the same aesthetic or historic value, therefore inclusion could dilute the special interest of the area.

### FLEET STREET

2.2.17 The street layout and buildings forming the junction of Fleet Street and Bridge Street dates to the early 20th century or inter-war period and created an important commercial area. The buildings around the junction, which feature distinctive curved frontages, are of some aesthetic and historic value. The buildings would be considered of local significance<sup>01</sup> and would likely be eligible for inclusion on any emerging Local List. However, the area has undergone considerable change with many other historic buildings being replaced with modern buildings of low architectural quality. The historic buildings which do survive have also undergone change. Inclusion of this area, which does not directly relate to the railway village or works could dilute the special interest of the Conservation Area, particularly as it would include buildings of neutral or detracting value.

<sup>01</sup> See 'Buildings of Significant Local Interest Supplementary Planning Guidance'

### SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- Association with the **GWR** company and distinguished Victorian engineers.
- At its height the railway works were the largest of their type in the world.
- The pride and sense of community that the railway legacy has instilled in residents.
- The industrial buildings are exemplary of their period.
- The railway village is one of the earliest examples of a model railway estate.
- The historic appearance and character of the area survives and is clearly legible.



**Fig. 4:** GWR workers outside Rodbourne Road entrance, Swindon, 1910 (Collection of P.A. Williams, copyright owner of the William Hooper Archives)



Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

3.1 The special interest of the Swindon's Railway Conservation Area is derived from both its architectural interest and its historic interest, which are manifested through its appearance and character.

3.2 The legacy of Swindon's railway heritage influences many aspects of life today in Swindon, not least because just a few short decades have passed since Swindon was the epitome of a living, working railway town. The special interest of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area has many facets, from the historic importance of the railway works and the social advances that took place in the railway village to the architectural and historic interest of the area's buildings.

***It is important to preserve and enhance the special interest of the area so that current and future generations can appreciate and enjoy the legacy of Swindon's railway heritage.***

3.3 The small hilltop town grew to the large and vibrant town it is today because of the GWR company. The decision by distinguished Victorian engineers Gooch and Brunel to locate Great Western's railway repair works at Swindon in the late 1830s, changed the fortunes and future of the town forever and for the next 150 years the railway works were at the heart of the community and local economy.

3.4 From small beginnings, the railway works grew to be the largest in the world for the repair and manufacture of locomotives, carriages and wagons. It was home to cutting edge technology pioneered by the GWR company, one of the most well-known railway companies of the Victorian and Edwardian eras. There remains a strong sense of pride amongst residents of all that was achieved at the works. For generations, Swindon's children aspired to work 'inside' the railway works as their fathers and grandfathers had done, have a job for life and become part of a family who looked after each other through good and bad times. The works continue to have significance for the local community, many of whom had relatives employed there.

***Although the railways works have now closed, the legacy of the railway lives on both in the town's sense of community and in the physical buildings and appearance of the area. Swindon's Railway Conservation Area contains the surviving and significant elements of this railway heritage.***



Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

3.5 The surviving industrial and administrative buildings of the former works display innovative construction techniques which respond to the topography and geology of the area as well as the requirements of their use. They exemplify the style of industrial buildings typical of the period (c.1840–1920), recognised in the listed status of many, but also have a local character through the use of Swindon stone. Throughout the lifetime of the works it was necessary to adapt and change the buildings and structures, sometimes through demolition. Loss has also been a necessary part of the regeneration of the works since their closure in 1986; remains of this industrial archaeology present opportunities to further understanding of the works.

***The regeneration of the works is an exemplary example of sensitive and viable reuse of a historic site. With all the redundant historic buildings now converted to a diverse range of new uses and high-quality, sympathetic new buildings constructed, the area is growing into an exciting and vibrant public urban quarter, rooted in the railway heritage.***

3.6 Swindon's residents are, rightly, perhaps even more proud of their achievements outside the railway works. The community, under the paternalistic watch of the GWR company, developed a pioneering healthcare system as well as the country's first lending library. The community raised money to build themselves a church, St Mark's, and later a hospital and public baths, still in use as the Health Hydro. This community spirit and collective effort is a defining feature of Swindon.

3.7 The railway village itself is one of the earliest examples of a model estate built by a railway company, for its employees and their families, at a time when few models existed. The cottage housing, recreational space, shops and pubs all built by, or for, the GWR company during a compressed period of time (c.1840–1880), provide a unique example of Victorian planning and architecture. The planned layout and architectural cohesion of the railway village and its supporting amenities is of considerable interest and the relationship between the different elements, housing, church, park and workplace is undisturbed and clearly legible today. Many of the communal buildings as well as GWR Park remain landmarks in the area.

***The Park continues to provide a welcome respite from the urban surroundings with historically important events such as the Children's Fete being revived by the local community.***

3.8 The railway village and the railway works are intrinsically connected in terms of their origins, history and evolution. The village would not exist without the works and the works would not have been sustainable had the village not been built. Although weakened through the closure of the works, the village and works continue to have a strong and positive relationship. The railway line, which separates the two principal parts of the Conservation Area, is also of considerable importance to the special interest of the area, as without it neither would exist. The imposing barrier of the railway line with but a few crossing points, is historically important as it served as a physical and emotive divide between the works and the village, and consequently the growing town of Swindon.



# BRIEF HISTORY OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY LEGACY AND THE CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

This section provides a brief summary of the historic development of the railway works and village. It identifies the key events, features and associations which make Swindon's Railway Conservation Area what it is today. The necessary brevity of the section cannot do justice to the area's complete history and comprehensive histories have been prepared by others. The reader is directed to the '[Further Information and Sources](#)' section of this document which identifies the key works.

## 4.1 SWINDON'S EARLY HISTORY

- Before the 19th century, there was no settlement on the site of the future railway village and works; the area was characterised by a rural landscape made up of common land, grassland and arable fields as shown on the Andrews and Dury map ([Fig. 5](#)).
- However, Swindon had been settled since the Saxon period with the historic hilltop settlement, known as 'Swindon Old Town', located just over a mile to the south-east of the present railway line. Without the arrival of the railway, Swindon would likely have remained a rural backwater.
- From the late 17th century, a trade in quarrying was established in Swindon with local stone later being used for the construction of buildings in both the railway works and village.

## 4.2 ORIGINS OF NEW SWINDON

- The Wilts and Berks Canal was cut through the open fields in 1810 and a branch, the North Wilts Canal, added in 1819. The proximity to the canal was one of the reasons the railway works came to be built at Swindon.
- In 1833, Isambard Kingdom Brunel, now legendary Victorian engineer, was appointed to advise the course of a new railway between London and Bristol; he recommended a route via Swindon which would run parallel with the canal.

- The Great Western Railway was completed in 1841 and Swindon Railway Station opened in 1842. A branch line to Cheltenham and Gloucester was also constructed, diverging at Swindon.



**Fig. 5:** Andrews and Dury map of 1810 shows Swindon in the early 19th century, before the arrival of the railway or canals, a time when it was a peaceful pastoral landscape (Local Studies – Swindon Libraries: AAA912 642493)

# BRIEF HISTORY OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY LEGACY AND THE CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 4.3 CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAILWAY WORKS

- Upon the advice of Brunel and Daniel Gooch (superintendent of locomotive engines), the GWR company board decided to establish works at Swindon for the repair of their locomotives, an auspicious decision for the future of the town. Swindon was chosen for its level topography and its proximity to the canal and the branch line to Cheltenham. The works were constructed between 1841 and 1842 and opened in 1843.
- Most of these early buildings were built in stone from local quarries in Old Swindon, the main industry at the time, and from Bath and Corsham.
- Although initially conceived as a works for the maintenance and repair of locomotives, soon the GWR company board decided to also manufacture locomotives at the site, this at a time the country was gripped by 'railway mania'.

***A mark of the early success of the works was that they doubled in size by 1847, less than five years after they originally opened.***

## 4.4 CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAILWAY VILLAGE

- Due to the rural position of the GWR works, housing and amenities for the company's workers were needed. Shortly after the works were built, a planned village of terraced cottages, designed by Brunel, was built opposite the works on the southern side of the railway line.
- This 'model village' was designed to function as a self-contained community and became known as New Swindon. The village comprised of about 280 two-storey cottages, each with a front garden and rear yard, built in locally quarried 'Swindon' stone and Bath limestone (Fig. 6). Construction began in 1842 and was completed in 1847.

- Brunel was able to look to 18th century workers' housing in the industrialised North; however, when the works were established at Swindon, the railway age was still young meaning there was little precedent for railway housing specifically to draw upon.<sup>01</sup>
- The east-west orientated streets were named after towns and cities connected by the railway line (to the west: Bristol, Bath, Exeter, Taunton, to the east: London, Oxford and Reading).
- Shops were provided along with additional cottages for company officers and foremen in blocks at either side of High Street (now Emlyn Square), which was then an open square at the heart of the village. The three-storey height of these buildings emphasised the role of this central open space as the civic core of the village. A covered market was held on the square.

**Fig. 6:** Bristol Street in the Railway Village, 1995 (© Crown copyright. Historic England Archive: BB95/12086)



<sup>01</sup> John Cattell and Keith Falconer, Swindon: the legacy of a railway town, p.12.

# BRIEF HISTORY OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY LEGACY AND THE CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

- Large detached villas in generous gardens were built between Bristol Street and the railway line, for the works manager and station superintendent. Although these were demolished for the construction of the carriage works in the 1870s, these are visible on Snell's panorama reproduced below (**Fig. 7**).
- Along with the village, a church, vicarage (NHLE: 1198485) and school (NHLE: 1283807) were constructed to the west, built using funds subscribed by shareholders of the GWR company. The vicarage and school were completed in 1844, the church was consecrated in 1845 and a parochial hall was constructed on what is now the TA Workshop's site.
- The GWR company bought the land for a cricket ground to the west of the village in 1844, which became a formal park in 1871.
- In 1860, the company employees formed themselves into Volunteer Rifle Corps in response to feared French Invasion during the Napoleonic Wars. The volunteers originally drilled on the open space of Emlyn Square until an armoury and drill hall was constructed at the southern end in 1862.
- Overcrowding was a constant problem within the railway village, with demand for housing outstripping supply. A barracks was constructed for single male workers in 1849–1852. It subsequently housed Welsh workers until the Cambria Place enclave was developed south of GWR Park from 1863.

**Fig. 7:**  
A detail of  
Edward Snell's  
1849 panoramic  
view showing the  
railway village and  
its still rural setting  
(STEAM Museum  
of the GWR)





# BRIEF HISTORY OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY LEGACY AND THE CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 4.5 THE MEDICAL FUND

- Workers and their families were constantly fending off ill-health with diseases such as typhus prevalent due to the over-crowding, poor drainage and an inadequate water supply within the village.<sup>02</sup> A 'sick fund' had been established by the GWR company upon the opening of the works and in 1847 the Medical Fund was established which paid for a permanent company doctor.
- The Fund established a cottage hospital in 1872 in the former armoury (NHLE: 1199753) (**Fig. 8**), the Rifle Corps having moved to a new drill hall on the present TA Centre site, and a house and surgery for the company's chief medical officer was built in 1876 (Park House – NHLE: 1355897).
- The Medical Fund provided an inclusive healthcare service which ultimately inspired Nye Bevan, father of the NHS, when he visited Swindon in the 1940s.

## 4.6 PROVISION OF THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTION

- The GWR Mechanics' Institution was formed in January 1844 in order to disseminate useful knowledge and provide amusement for GWR company employees. It included a library, lecture programme, concerts and other social events. The Institution was originally located within the railway works, which was far from ideal for the workers and their families.
- A purpose-built Mechanics' Institution was constructed from 1854 to 1855, at the heart of the railway village on what is today Emlyn Square, see photograph of the building in the 1880s (**Fig. 9**).



**Fig. 8:**  
Former Medical Fund cottage hospital (now Central Community Centre), Faringdon Road, c.1930 (STEAM Museum of the GWR)



**Fig. 9:**  
The Mechanics Institution was constructed on Emlyn Square in the 1850s, this photograph shows the building, which was at heart of railway village life, in the 1880s (STEAM Museum of the GWR)

<sup>02</sup> Grinsell, L. V., Wells, H. B., Tallamy, H. S., Betjeman, John, Studies in the History of Swindon, p.102.

# BRIEF HISTORY OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY LEGACY AND THE CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

- The library formed a component part of the Institution, expanded through the purchase of books from member subscriptions. The building also contained a theatre, public baths and an octagonal covered market.
- From 1866, the Mechanics' Institution held the annual Children's Fete at the park (**Fig. 10**).



**Fig. 10:** The Children's Fete in GWR Park, c.1910 (Local Studies - Swindon Libraries: MID01c)

## 4.7 THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF THE RAILWAY WORKS

- The railway works had doubled in size between opening in 1843 and 1847 when a financial crisis affecting the whole country meant that expansion of the works ceased.
- In 1850, when the economy recovered, the broad-gauge track system, which the GWR had used from the outset, was being adopted by new railways across the South West and Midlands. This, and the general wave of 'railway mania' across the country, led to increased demand for new broad-gauge rolling stock, manufactured and repaired at Swindon. Below is a photograph of one of these early broad-gauge locomotives, the Lord of the Isles (**Fig. 11**).



**Fig. 11:** An early photograph of the broad-gauge Lord of the Isles locomotive built at Swindon in 1851, with St Mark's church in the background (STEAM Museum of the GWR)

# BRIEF HISTORY OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY LEGACY AND THE CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

- However, further company cutbacks were made in 1857 and by the early to mid-1860s the company was close to bankruptcy.
- In 1868, the GWR company decided to build their new carriage works in Swindon, rather than Oxford, bringing a new period of growth and employment. The carriage works were built south of the railway between the railway village and the mainline railway.
- A major phase of expansion and modernisation followed, see plan of 1880 (**Fig. 12**). A Chain Test House (NHLE: 1355879) was built in 1873, and an enormous new locomotive and tender building factory was constructed to the west of the works (NHLE: 1199356) in 1874. This building phase was the first to be constructed in brick and iron framing for the internal construction. However, aware of the distinctive quality of their early stone buildings, the buildings fronting the GWR lines were always given masonry façades.<sup>03</sup>
- Another period of economic depression swept across Britain in the second half of the 1870s, felt at the works from 1880. This coincided with the demise of broad-gauge tracks as lines were converted to standard gauge, including the GWR lines, draining the company's finances.



**Fig. 12:** The GWR works in 1880 with buildings added between 1870 and 1880 coloured green (Local Studies – Swindon Libraries: SWI.385/2069695000, Hawksworth, Great Western Railway: Swindon Works from 1846)



#### 4.8 FURTHER EXPANSION

- Due to the growing importance of Swindon as a railway town and a local commercial centre, development began to fill the formerly open land between the works and Old Swindon during the second half of the 19th century. This began to change the railway village from a rural settlement to the much more urban one it is today.
- The Mechanics' Institution underwent major extension in 1891 with the replacement of the covered market with a new reading room and lecture, smoking and games rooms.
- The following year, 1892, the Medical Fund Baths and Dispensary (now the Health Hydro) was constructed, funded by public subscription, opposite the cottage hospital and provided better amenities for the workers and their families. See photograph of the baths in 1907 (**Fig. 13**).
- Changes to local administration around the turn of the 19th century saw Old and New Swindon, which had previously been under separate local authorities, become united and incorporated as the Borough of Swindon.
- The size of the works almost doubled between 1895 and 1920, see OS map of 1923 (**Fig. 14**). The growth comprised alteration and extension of existing buildings on the main site as well as major expansion to the north of the Cheltenham branch line and west of Rodbourne Road, including the large, four-storey fireproof Pattern Store, built in 1897 and the turntable, installed in 1902, which is the only one from the works to survive.



**Fig. 13:** Health Hydro, Milton Road, 1907 (Local Studies - Swindon Libraries: MID01b)



**Fig. 14:** This map of 1923 shows considerable expansion of the works through the late 19th and early 20th century, a period when it almost doubled in size (Landmark Historical Map – Promap)

# BRIEF HISTORY OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY LEGACY AND THE CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 4.9 POST WORLD WAR II

- When the railways were nationalised in 1948, British Rail took ownership of the railway works and village.

**By 1948, the works estate stretched for over 1.5 miles, covered over 100 acres and employed more than 14,000 people.<sup>04</sup>**

<sup>04</sup> Cattell and Falconer, p.128.

- Britain's last ever steam locomotive, Evening Star, was manufactured at Swindon in 1960 (**Fig. 15**). A plan showing the works at this time is reproduced on the following page (**Fig. 16**). With the demise of steam-powered engines, production continued on diesel hydraulic engines only (the separate carriage and wagon works were closed in 1962) with the works completely reorganised for work on diesel engines and carriages in 1965.



**Fig. 15:**  
Evening  
Star steam  
locomotive,  
1960 (Local  
Studies -  
Swindon  
Libraries:  
P50403)

- In 1966, Swindon Borough Council bought the majority of the railway village from British Rail and was planning to demolish the densely-packed cottages. Following a campaign by poet laureate and champion of Victorian architecture, John Betjeman, the village was saved from demolition and, in the 1970s, a comprehensive refurbishment scheme was launched by the Council to preserve the area's traditional character whilst upgrading and modernising the buildings.
- Some demolition was required, specifically the terrace of seven houses adjacent to the north of the cottage hospital, which itself was converted into a community centre.
- The refurbishment included: repairs to slate roofs; cleaning of stone façades; the replacement of individual gardens with one long strip of grass; the burial of external wiring; the removal of extensions in the rear yards and replacement with a single lean-to running the length of the terrace containing new kitchens; and improvements to the public realm and landscaping.
- The cottages were statutorily listed in 1970, worthy recognition for those campaigning against their demolition, and the village was designated as a conservation area in 1975.



# BRIEF HISTORY OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY LEGACY AND THE CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

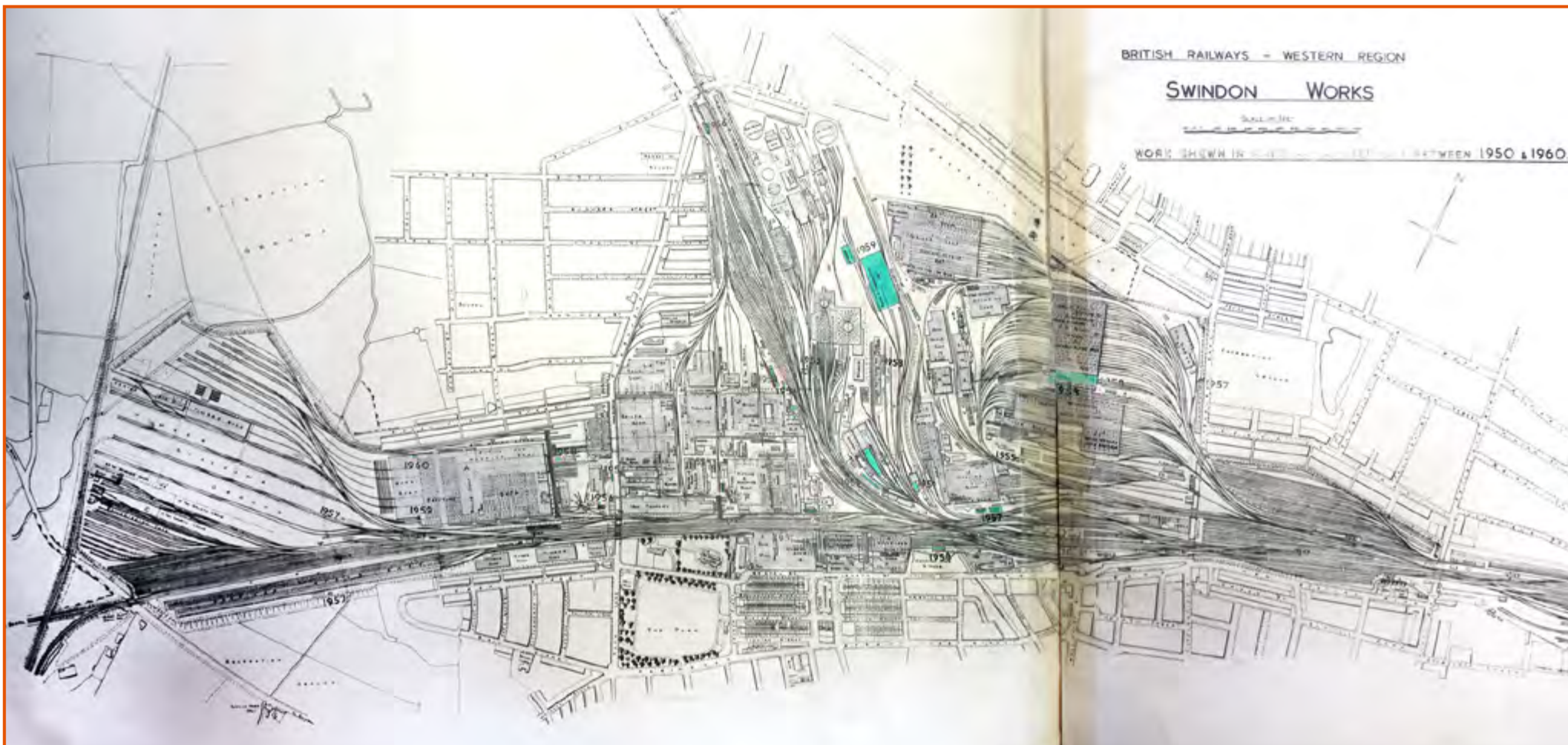
Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info



**Fig. 16:** The vast extent of the GWR works in 1960 can be seen on this plan. This was the year the last steam locomotive was manufactured at Swindon (Local Studies – Swindon Libraries: SWI.385/2069695000, Hawksworth, Great Western Railway: Swindon Works from 1846)



# BRIEF HISTORY OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY LEGACY AND THE CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

## 4.10 LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY

- The latter half of the 20th century saw considerable change to Swindon's town centre with the terraced streets, which formerly formed the eastern setting of the railway village, redeveloped with large commercial buildings, including the David Murray John Tower and the Brunel and Parade shopping centres.
- In recognition of their historic and architectural significance, many of the railway works' buildings were listed in 1984 before the works were finally closed in 1986, just short of the 150th anniversary of their opening. The works were also designated as a conservation area in 1987, at which time the area was in a derelict state, see photograph of workshop 12 (**Fig. 17**).
- Since this time the works have undergone considerable regeneration with many of the historic workshops being sensitively converted to viable new uses and many other historic structures saved and refurbished, such as the Water Tower (NHLE: 1198186).
- The traditional manufacturing use of the site has been replaced by a variety of uses including office, retail, leisure and, most recently, residential; the works are once again bustling with activity.



**Fig. 17:** View of workshop 12 in 1994, prior to conversion into Great Western Designer Outlet (© Crown copyright. Historic England Archive: BB94/16317)

# BRIEF HISTORY OF SWINDON'S RAILWAY LEGACY AND THE CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

- Workshops 9, 13 and 15 (NHLE: 1241674, 1199356, 1023520 and 1283270), which used to build locomotives, were converted into the Great Western Designer Outlet Village. The General Offices (NHLE: 1199355) were converted into the National Monuments Record Centre and offices for English Heritage, now serving both Historic England and English Heritage (**Fig. 18**). Workshops 19 and 20 (NHLE: 1023522 and 1355878), some of the oldest parts of the works, were converted into STEAM, the museum of GWR.
- The modern buildings of the works, including all the workshops west of Rodbourne Road and along Station Road and Sheppard Street, were demolished to make way for new development or to be used for car parking.
- Within the historic core of the works new development included Heelis, a new, state-of-the-art headquarters for the National Trust, which was built in 2005, and the first residential buildings within the works, recently completed by Thomas Homes.

**The conversion of the Chain Test House, one of the last historic works buildings to be reused, which led to its removal from the Heritage at Risk register.**



**Fig. 18:** The railway works today: Historic buildings have been given new uses and sensitive and high quality new development has reinvigorated the area. Here is shown the General Offices, converted for use by English Heritage and part of the recent Thomas Homes development with the open space of Heritage Plaza between

**This section provides analysis and assessment of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the way in which this contributes to its special interest. The following sections look at the Conservation Area as a whole, covering different elements of character including street and plot patterns, material and architectural details, public realm, important views and setting. Then follows a section which identifies and assesses the different character areas within the Conservation Area.**

## 5.1 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

### TOPOGRAPHY

Page 122  
5.1.1 Swindon was in part chosen by Gooch and Brunel as the location of their locomotive works because of its favourable topography. Swindon is near the point on the GWR line from London to Bristol where the gradient of the line changes from relatively flat (towards London) to steeper (towards Bristol). Originally it was anticipated that there would be a need for trains to change locomotives at this point on journeys to one more powerful to deal with the increased gradient and therefore Swindon was also a suitable location to make repairs to waiting locomotives.

5.1.2 The land remains relatively level at Swindon, evidenced by the pre-existing canals, however the natural topography has been adapted to ensure the works were truly level to ease the movement of heavy locomotives and carriages around the works and on and off the railway line. Although Snell's panoramic view of New Swindon (see [Section 4.0](#)) appears to show

the railway village at the same level as the works, this cannot have been the case as today there is some 5–10m height difference between the two. The adaption of the ground level is particularly evident in the raised level of the carriage works and car parks adjacent to the south of the railway line, which were part of the works and are therefore at the same level as the line and main core of the railway works to the north.

5.1.3 The dramatic change in ground level serves to emphasis the authority of the works, making the boundary walls even more imposing and giving the impression of the works overlooking the village from some viewpoints. Along with the railway line, the change in level also serves to bisect and divide the Conservation Area into north, historically one of employment and industry and south, one of residential, health and leisure.





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

**Character**

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

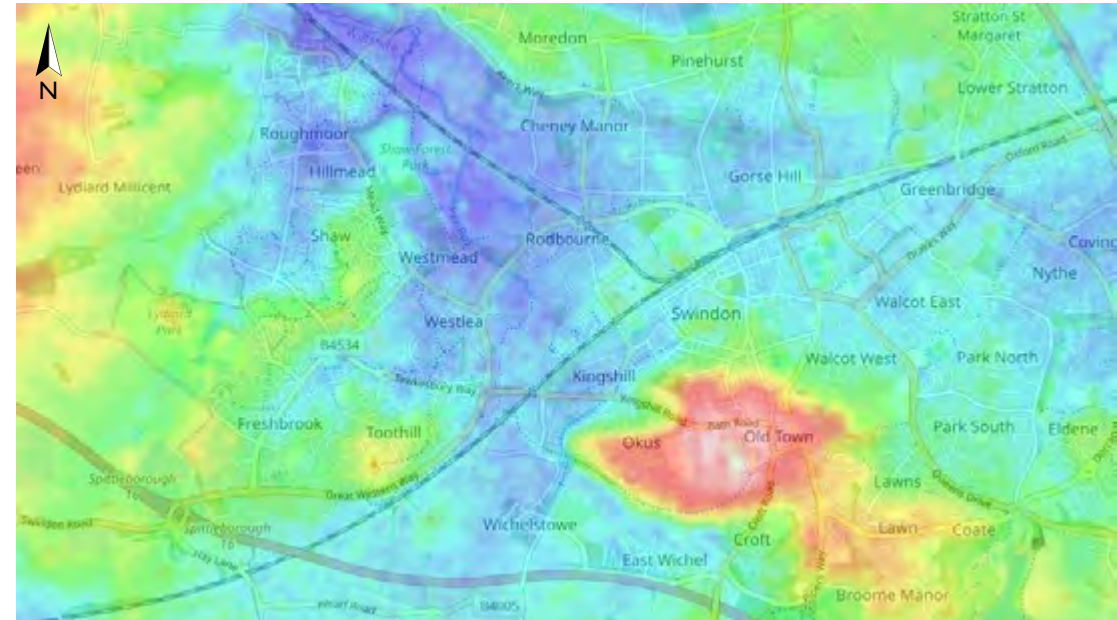
Management

Further Info

## GEOLOGY

5.1.4 The geology of Swindon has shaped the appearance of the Conservation Area in two principal ways. Firstly, the potential instability of the clay bedrock of the area was of concern to Gooch and Brunel and one they aimed to counteract through the unique design of the early workshops of the railway works. They used inverted brick arches in the structure of the buildings at foundation level, visible at the base of the buildings, to provide longitudinal stability on the uncertain ground. Secondly, prior to the arrival of the railways, one of Swindon's primary industries was quarrying the local Purbeck stone (a type of limestone), present within the hilly outcrop of Old Swindon. This local stone was the primary building material of the first phase of railway works buildings, the cottages and other buildings in the railway village and the railway-facing 'public' elevations of later works buildings. Swindon also had a local brick-making industry meaning it was able to meet demand for the rapid expansion of the railway works.

Page 123



**Plan 3:** Topography of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area and its surroundings (© OpenStreetMap contributors)

Low Ground

High Ground



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 5.2 ARCHAEOLOGY

5.2.1 Although not always a visible part of the Conservation Area, archaeological remains can contribute considerably to our understanding of how the area has developed. There is also potential for archaeological remains, both those that are known and those not yet uncovered, to reveal more about the evolution and function of Swindon's Railway legacy.

5.2.2 Old Swindon has its origins in the Saxon period, however records within the Wiltshire and Swindon Historic Environment Record (HER) database show that, outside the Conservation Area, there have been a small number of archaeological finds dating to the Roman period including coins and pottery. These represent the earliest occupation of the area.

5.2.3 Before the arrival of the railway at Swindon, the landscape was essentially rural, dominated by agricultural fields surrounding the small hilltop settlement of Old Swindon, itself a designated conservation area, and the still smaller settlement of Even Swindon, which was to the north of the present day railway line. There were also known to have been several manor houses in the area, including Westcott, near to the present-day Park Lane and remembered in the name of Westcott Place. However, due to the expansion of the town through the 19th and 20th centuries, physical remains of the pre-railway period in and around the Conservation Area are relatively limited.

5.2.4 The exception to this are the remains of both the Wilts and Berks Canal and the North Wilts Canal, which date to the early 19th century. The cutting of the canals was a significant intervention within the rural landscape and their existence at Swindon was an important part of the reason for the railway works being established there. Unfortunately, the arrival of the railway also signaled the demise of the canals with both closing by 1910. However, there are upstanding and buried remains of both canals and their routes remain visible in the layout of the area. The visible remains include the cuttings and bridges which are within the Conservation Area to the west of the carriage works where the North Wilts Canal cutting now forms a pedestrian and cycle route under the mainline (NHLE: 1382142) (**Fig. 19**).



**Fig. 19:** The route of the North Wilts Canal remains legible within the townscape of Swindon, where it passed under the railway line is now a cycle and pedestrian path



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

5.2.5 Upon the arrival of the railway the fields were developed for the works and the village. Within these areas no earlier features or deposits have been discovered; all finds have been directly associated with the railway. Upstanding remains include surviving buildings and structures constructed in various phases during the 19th century into the mid-20th century, including the 1950s traversing table, which, although curtailed, survives as a feature within a public open space (**Fig. 20**). Many buildings and features have been demolished following the works closure in 1986. Previous archaeological investigations have found evidence of demolished structures and buildings, and there is considerable potential for additional below-ground archaeology, in particular: floors; drains; pipes; footings; and internal inspection pits used to access the underneath of locomotives for maintenance and repair.

5.2.6 Within the railway village, several cottages and a former bathhouse were demolished as part of the 1970s refurbishment works. A wall of the former cottages survives separating Taunton Street and Faringdon Road and there is also potential for further archaeological remains of these lost buildings to be present in the area.

5.2.7 Further information on the archaeological resource can be found via the Wiltshire and Swindon HER and the Wiltshire and Swindon Historic Landscape Characterisation Project also contains information about the changes in land use of the area. See '[Further Information and Sources](#)' for more details.



**Fig. 20:** The 1950s traversing table is an example of the visible, archaeological remains from railway works





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

### 5.3 HISTORIC AND CURRENT LAND USE

#### HISTORIC LAND USE

5.3.1 Swindon's Railway Conservation Area has a very distinct historic use as a railway works and a village for its workers which has strongly shaped the appearance of the area and has directly contributed to the importance of the area as an innovative, purpose-built railway settlement.

5.3.2 Prior to the closure of the works in 1986, land uses in different parts of the Conservation Area were clearly defined and were separated from each other which has helped maintain the character of the area today. To the north of the railway line the land was in use as GWR railway works maintaining, repairing and manufacturing locomotives and carriages. This use extended south of the railway line to include the north side of Bristol Street, London Street, Sheppard Street and Station Road. To the south of the railway line were the residential and amenity uses of the railway village including the recreational spaces of GWR Park and the Mechanics' Institution.

#### CURRENT LAND USE

5.3.3 Since the closure of the railway works, there has been a need to diversify the uses within the Conservation Area to ensure the regeneration of the defunct railway buildings and some of the community and amenity buildings within the railway village. Viable new uses, retail, museum and office, have been found for all the surviving historic buildings in the railway works and have been accommodated whilst preserving their historic appearance, therefore continuing to make their historic use as workshops, engine sheds and offices clear. New buildings have continued the diversification of use with the introduction of residential uses previously not present north of the railway line. South of the railway line, within the railway village and around the railway station, current land uses remain similar to the historic uses. Pubs and hotels remain around the transport hub of Swindon Railway Station and the railway village remains principally in residential and recreational use with some retail. Some of the former works buildings have been demolished adjacent to the south side of the railway line and are currently in use as surface car parking, which presents an opportunity to improve the appearance of the Conservation Area. **Plan 4** overleaf shows the current distribution of different uses across the Conservation Area.



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

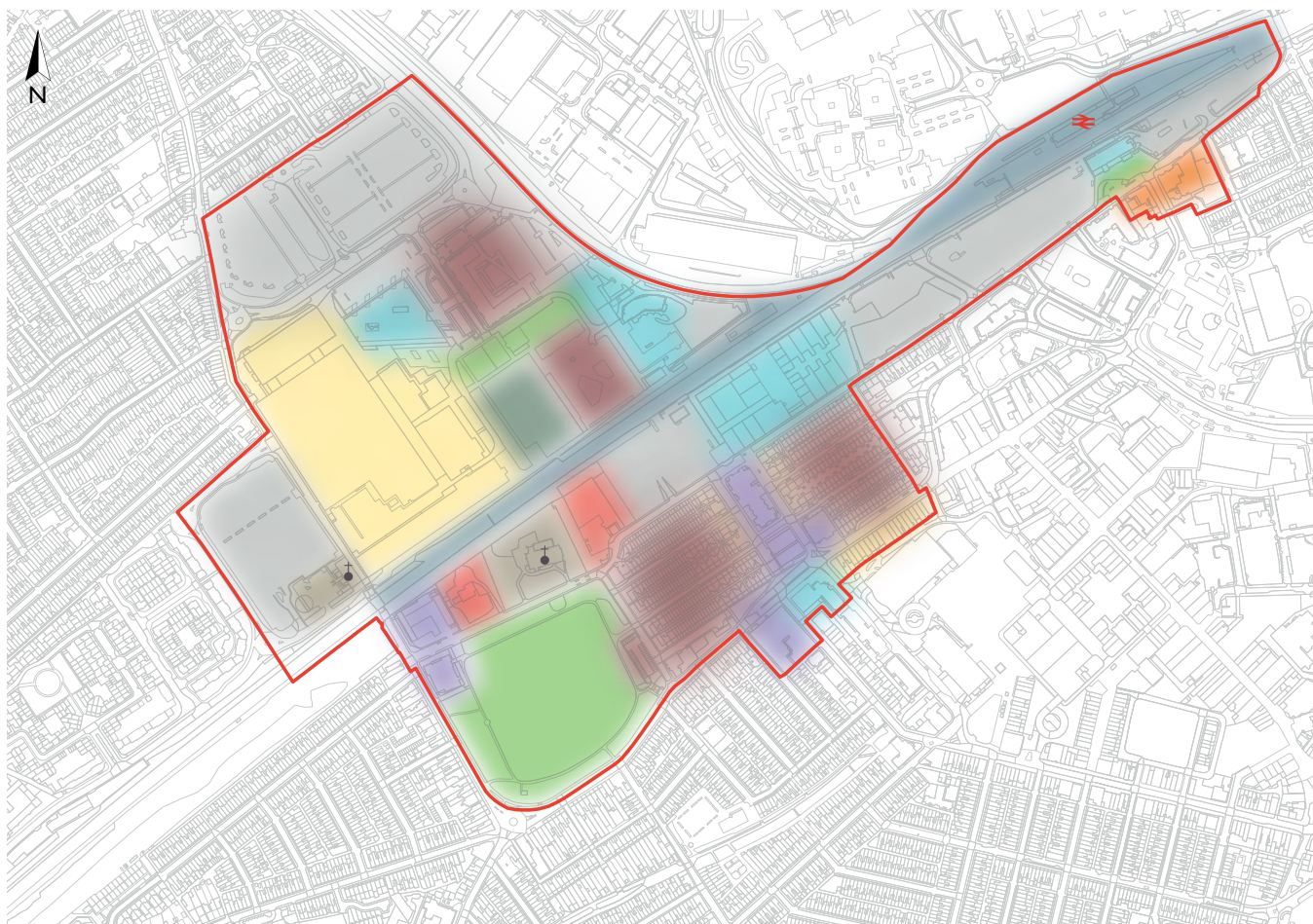
Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

Key

- Hotel and Hospitality
- Religious
- Educational
- Museum
- Public Open Space
- Residential
- Surface Car Parking
- Retail
- Commercial
- Recreational / Amenity Use
- Railway Line & Station

**Plan 4:** Plan showing the distribution of current uses across the conservation areas (© Crown copyright and Database Rights 100024296 2020)



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 5.4 STREET AND PLOT PATTERN

5.4.1 The street and plot pattern of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area are informed by the historic function and uses of the area. Although there were pre-existing routes, such as the canals and Faringdon Road, the railway lines, so important to the historic function of the area, are also the feature about which the layout the rest of the area is primarily orientated.

5.4.2 The northern half of the conservation area, the former railway works, has a broad grain with large plots, some linear, some rectangular with large open spaces and avenues connecting them. The area is broadly laid out on a grid, as can be seen from the First Edition OS map (Fig. 21), with the access routes and plots orientated parallel with, or perpendicular to, the main railway line and formed on its eastern side by the branch line to Cheltenham. The layout of the area serves as a reminder of its former use manufacturing and maneuvering large locomotives.

5.4.3 South of the railway line, the grain is much finer and the layout of streets and open spaces more ordered. The parallel streets of terraced cottages are orientated around the central Emlyn Square demonstrating the importance and hierarchy of this space within the railway village. The relatively dense residential grain of the village, as seen in the photograph adjacent (Fig. 22), is relieved to the west by the large, open GWR Park and the series of plots forming St Mark's Church and the former vicarage, adjacent to the railway line. Faringdon Road, which forms the southern boundary of the railway village and GWR Park, is a historic route, which pre-dates the arrival of the railways and serves to enclose the historic core of the railway village. The other important route south of the railway line is Sheppard Street and Station Road which is a continuation of London Street and follows the historic boundary of the railway works to the railway station.



**Fig. 21:** This First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886 shows the early growth of the railway works, this historic core is roughly the area of the works covered by the conservation area designation today, and shows the gridded arrangement of the buildings (Landmark Historical Map - Promap)



**Fig. 22:** The terraced cottages of the railway village are on fine-grained, narrow fronted plots on street parallel with the railway line





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

### 5.5 BUILDING HEIGHT, SCALE AND MASSING

5.5.1 The scale and mass of buildings in Swindon's Railway Conservation Area are derived from the historic function of the area. This means that there are some distinct differences in scale and massing across the Conservation Area, but these differences are important for demonstrating the different historic uses which contribute to the legacy of the railway heritage.

5.5.2 Within the railway works, the buildings are industrial scale with tall storey heights and either large, rectangular or long and linear footprints, see adjacent photograph of Workshop 12 (**Fig. 23**). Despite this, buildings are frequently single storey due to their use for manufacture, although some are two-storeys. Stores and office buildings were not restricted and rise to four-storeys. Despite being taller these buildings, because of their overall mass and their heavy-looking pitched slate roofs, have a grounded feeling, keeping in character with the area's industrial former workshops. Buildings like this would have once also extended along much of the north side of Bristol Street, London Street, Sheppard Street and London Road, however all but the carriage works have been lost leaving large areas of surface car parking. Recent buildings in the railway works have maintained the historic scale and massing with a mix of heights between two and four-storeys and both long and linear or larger footprints.



**Fig. 23:** The former locomotive building workshop (Workshop 12), a large single-storey building characteristic of the railway works



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

5.5.3 The railway village has overall a much more human scale, in keeping with its use, consisting of streets of two-storey cottages with slightly taller, three-storey buildings around Emlyn Square (**Fig. 24**). Community and religious buildings are larger, such as the Mechanics' Institution, the Platform (former barracks building) (**Fig. 25**) and St Mark's Church, which being more important for the community needed to have more prominence in the street scene. Around the railway station, the scale remains relatively domestic compared with the surrounding commercial buildings outside the Conservation Area boundary. However, Signal Point, positioned above the entrance to the railway station, is a 12-storey slab-block, the tallest structure in the Conservation Area and out of scale to everything else within in.

Page 130



**Fig. 24:** The diminutive cottages of Bristol Street in the railway village with taller properties around Emlyn Square and the more prominent Mechanics' Institution



**Fig. 25:** The Platform was constructed as a barracks before being converted to a Wesleyan Chapel, this use, along with its position on Emlyn Square mean the building is taller and more prominent than the surrounding cottages of the railway village.



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 5.6 BUILDING MATERIALS

5.6.1 The dominance of stone buildings is a defining feature of the Conservation Area and stems from the presence and availability of local stone quarried at Kingsmill near Old Swindon (some stone from Bath and Corsham was also used). The shared palette of local materials provided the different building types, styles and uses some homogeny, indicating an almost familial bond across the railway works and village, which despite the closure of the works and the re-use of many buildings, remains today.

5.6.2 Most of the original buildings within the former railway works are stone, with red brick used only for strengthening inverted arches, entrance arches and some window heads. The roofs are generally slate. The stonework of these buildings is often roughly hewn and comprising a mix of different size stones; this robust materiality is significant in demonstrating the former utilitarian nature of the works. Later works buildings feature more brick, which was cheaper than stone. All buildings facing the railway line, the public face of the works, were given masonry façades, which is a valuable representation of the vital importance of the railway line. This significance is further indicated by the historic boundary walls to the works, which were built of imposing stone to the town centre side, facing the railway village and along Station Road but in brick or a mixture of brick and stone to the less prominent 'back' of the works.

5.6.3 The cottages in the railway village also adopt local Swindon stone, as well as some Bath limestone as do its religious and community buildings including the Mechanics' Institution and St Mark's Church. The cottages employ coursed stone blocks of a roughly hewn, rustic appearance demonstrative of their vernacular character. As within the railway works, the outward facing cottages, along Bristol and London Street, have a more polite appearance of smooth ashlar blocks.

5.6.4 Outside of the former railway works and railway village, buildings are built in brick including the retail terrace and Health Hydro along the east end of Faringdon Street. The recent residential buildings in the works are also in brick and other contemporary materials, in colour tones complementary to their historic neighbours. This use of contrasting materials to the dominant use of stone is useful in demonstrating the phasing of buildings across the works.





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

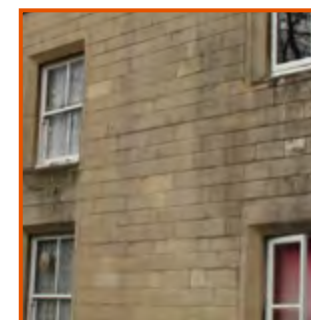
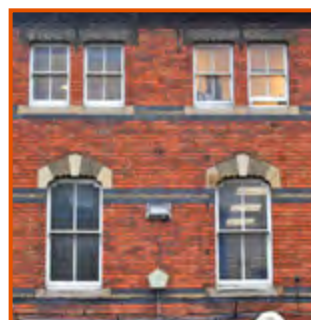
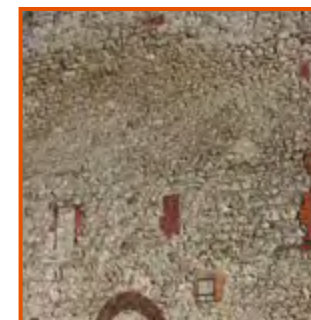
Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info



**Fig. 26:** Palette of materials used within the Conservation Area



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 5.7 ARCHITECTURAL DETAILING

5.7.1 Swindon's Railway Conservation Area displays a range of architectural features and styles. Architectural detail forms a valuable visual identification of the use of the different buildings in the Conservation Area, many of which are no longer in their original use.

5.7.2 The former railway works buildings are of an unpretentious, industrial style, indicative of their working function. Pier and panel construction, which comprises tall squared piers articulating relatively plain panels between, is a unifying feature amongst the earlier buildings, and lends a faintly classical air. There are some decorative flourishes include quoining, brick or stone window heads and surrounds and roundels in gable ends. The few non-workshop buildings, those designed as offices, are distinguished by tall chimneys. The later works buildings, contrastingly in brick, feature greater decorative detail including polychromatic brickwork, recessed brick arches, string coursing and cornices. These later 19th century departures are indicative of the evolving Victorian style and distinguish the later buildings from the original phase of works buildings. Recent buildings are relatively neutral in design and style but draw upon historic characteristics from the workshop building style with gable roof lines and pier and panel articulation.

5.7.3 By contrast in the railway village, the architectural detailing assists in creating the domestic and even picturesque character. The outward, railway-facing cottages are more decorative than those not visible from the railway line, demonstrating the importance of public appearances to the GWR company. These cottages feature Elizabethan and Jacobean motifs such as gable ends, quoins, slit openings, chamfered mullion windows and tall chimneys. Inward-facing cottages and those facing the town, originally open countryside, are much plainer with a more vernacular character.

5.7.4 Later Victorian terraces, specifically those along Faringdon Road, have their own architectural language including historic shopfronts and, at upper levels, polychromatic brickwork and barge-boarded gables. Their architectural features distinguish them in date and function from the adjacent railway village; built later in the 19th century.

5.7.5 Larger, public and religious buildings such as St Mark's Church, the Mechanics' Institution, the Platform (originally barracks and then used as a Wesleyan Chapel) are in a lively Gothic Revival style and are more highly decorated featuring crenellated towers, crocketed spires, pointed gables and pointed arch windows. These buildings contrast with the domestic and works buildings and indicate their social and communal importance.





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

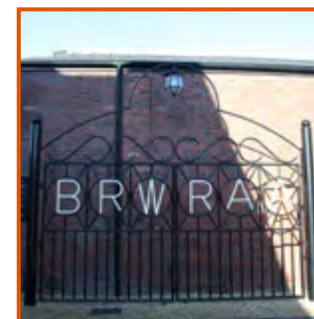
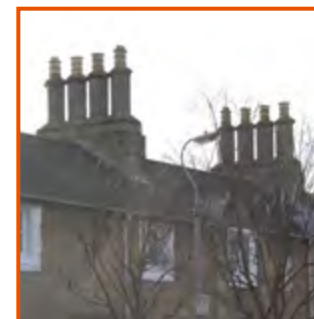
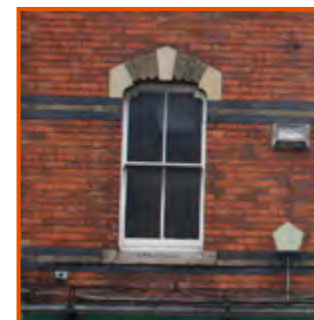
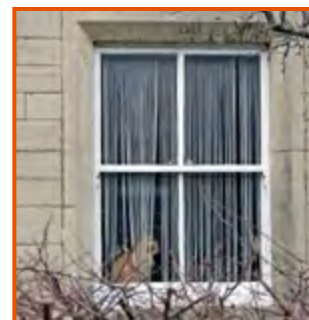
Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info



**Fig. 27:** Palette of architectural features used within the Conservation Area





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 5.8 BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

5.8.1 The use and type of boundary treatments is significant for distinguishing between the public and private spaces within Swindon's Railway Conservation Area, as well as between the working and domestic areas.

5.8.2 Within the former railway works, the buildings are positioned hard against the open spaces and avenues that separate the buildings. Before the closure of the works there were a lot more buildings and structures all of which were part of the same complex meaning that boundaries between them were not needed. The works are collectively surrounded by a tall and imposing boundary wall (Fig. 28), which served as a clear and impressive division between 'inside' and 'outside'. It continues to be significant both historically and socially contributing to the areas special character and appearance.

5.8.3 The terraced cottages in the railway village are set back from the pavement behind a combined front garden, extending the length of each street. Bounded by a modern, low wall, this arrangement was installed as part of the 1970s refurbishment works but historically a low wall was the boundary treatment here. Individual boundary divisions between the cottages were lost in the 1970s but this street boundary remains important for defining the private residential amenity space. To the rear of the cottages, small private yards are enclosed by brick boundary walls creating narrow back alleys. Between Reading and Oxford Streets, the brick walls have been removed and there is now a more open, less private character to the backalley.

5.8.4 Other civic and religious buildings within the railway village and on Faringdon Road have traditional metal railings. These have been lost at the Health Hydro. GWR Park also has railings forming its boundary, allowing important visual permeability into this green open space. The terraced row of shops on Faringdon Road are positioned hard against the pavement as is indicative of urban retail frontages.



**Fig. 28:** This image shows the imposing boundary wall of the works juxtaposed with the residential scale of the village cottages



## 5.9 MOVEMENT AND ACTIVITY

5.9.1 The type of movement activity taking place within the Conservation Area has changed over time, particularly since the closure and subsequent regeneration of the railway works. There would once have been a bustle of workers streaming in and out of the railway works, which themselves would have been closed to all but those who worked 'inside' (see front cover image). Today, the former railway works are publicly accessible and the railway village is now subject to greater vehicular movement, particularly buses. **Plan 5** overleaf identifies the principal routes through the area today for pedestrians, public transport (buses and trains), other vehicles and cyclists. Different types of movement affect the character of an area through the ambience they create and due to the physical appearance of the modes of movement.

5.9.2 The London to Bristol railway line, which bisects the Conservation Area, is perhaps the most important and physically dominant means of transport through the area. The railway works and associated village and amenities would not have been developed if it were not for this railway line and therefore contributes considerably to the special interest of the area. However, the railway also forms a barrier to movement across the area. Whilst historically this was desirable, as the railway line also formed or reinforced the boundary between the works and the town, today it causes challenges for ease of vehicular and pedestrian movement between the two sides of the line. There are just three points within the Conservation Area where there is access across the railway line.

***The most important of these historically was the pedestrian underpass opposite the Mechanics' Institution as this was the principal entrance for workers to the railway works and provides an evocative reminder of the journey 'inside'.***

5.9.3 Within the former railway works, movement and activity is generally pedestrian with vehicles limited to defined services routes, separate from the main pedestrian routes. The activity in this part of the Conservation Area has changed the most since the closure of the works, as there would have been no public access historically and activity would have been limited to the operating hours of the works. Today, it is developing into a vibrant new urban quarter with activity across the day thanks to the mix of residential, commercial and retail uses.

5.9.4 The inner railway village streets have a relatively tranquil character with little pedestrian or vehicular activity other than by residents. Being at the heart of the village and containing some of its important amenities, Emlyn Square is rightly more bustling and has the potential to be more so with the restoration of the Mechanics' Institution. Unfortunately, many of the town's bus routes pass along Church Place, Bristol Street and Emlyn Square, which disrupts the residential atmosphere and also hinders the movement of pedestrians and cyclists. Outside the bounds of the railway village, activity is more characteristic of an urban town with Rodbourne Road and Faringdon Road both busy vehicular routes.

5.9.5 GWR Park, considered in more detail in the following section, is one of the most important amenity spaces in the Conservation Area. It is well frequented by a variety of different user groups throughout the day and year. The park is accessed from one of four entrances, one on each side of the park, although those on Park Lane and Faringdon Road are the most used. As these are both busy roads with limited pedestrian crossings, there are challenges with connectivity, particularly from the south side of Faringdon Road. As the park is open all the time, there are sometimes issues with anti-social behaviour at night time. Activity in the park could be increased with the provision of better amenities, such as public conveniences, or by hosting events within it.



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

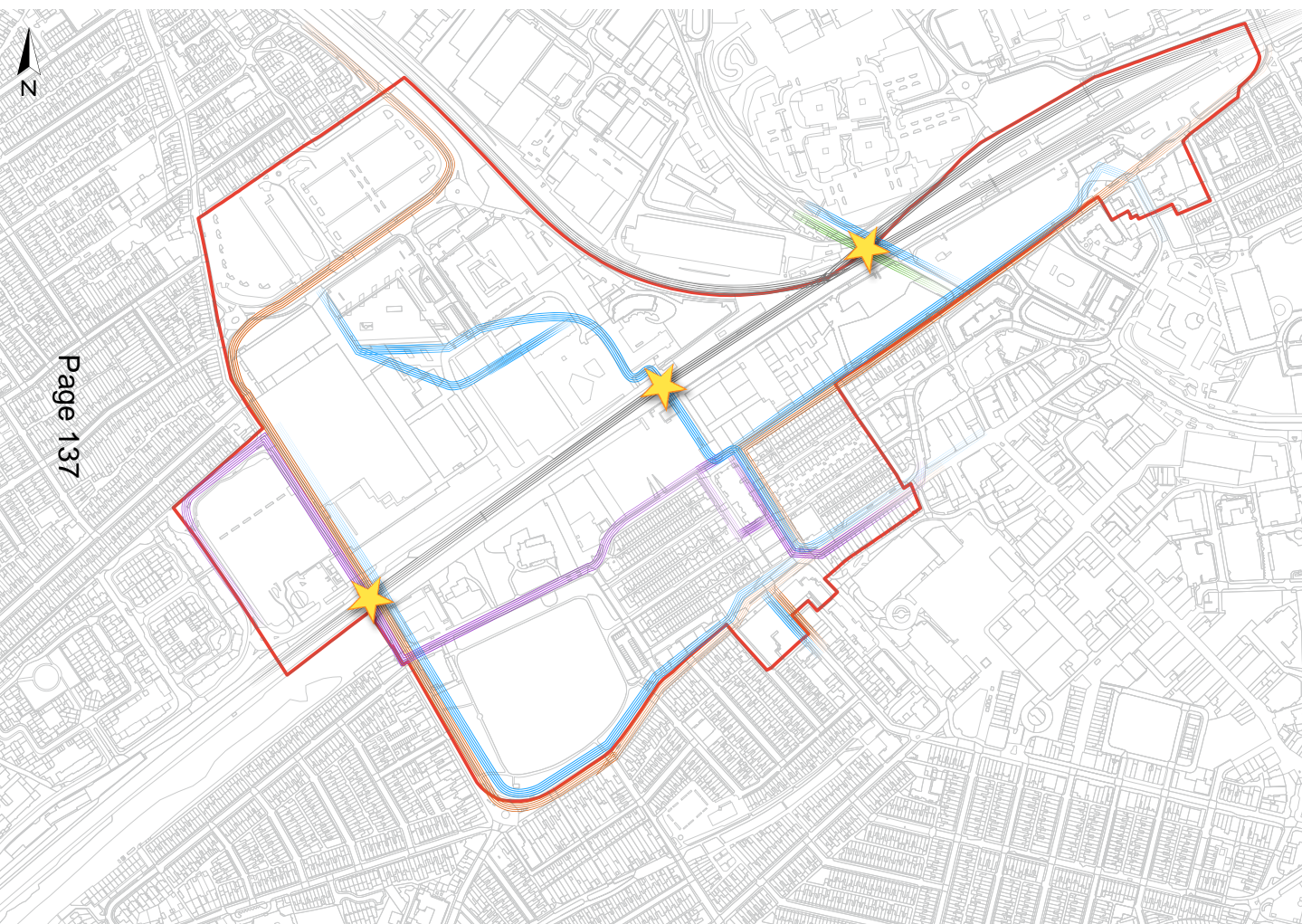
Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info



## Key

- Principal pedestrian routes
- Route of buses through conservation areas
- Railway lines
- Principal vehicular routes
- Cycle path
- ★ Access points across the railway lines

**Plan 5:** Plan showing important pedestrian, vehicular and bus routes through the conservation areas, where there is the greatest amount of movement and activity (© Crown copyright and Database Rights 100024296 2020)





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 5.10 PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACES AND TREES

5.10.1 The nature and extent of the public realm within the Conservation Area has changed over time, originally it would have been restricted to south of the railway line with the railway works a private industrial complex. Today there are important public spaces on both sides of the line with the largest and most historically significant being GWR Park (**Fig. 29**). The land was purchased as a cricket pitch by the GWR company for its workers in the 1840s and has been an important amenity ever since. Turned into a formal park in the 1870s, many historic features survive including avenues of mature trees, the encircling paths and some boundary railings. The park was central to community life of the railway village, hosting events such as the Children's Fete, which has recently been reestablished. St Mark's churchyard, opposite the park on Church Place, is also of historic and amenity value. It contains memorials to Joseph Armstrong, second superintendent of the works, and members of the Gooch family (NHLE: 1023481 and 1283831). The churchyard also contains many mature trees, which along with those in the vicarage gardens adjacent and GWR Park, give a verdant character to this part of the conservation area.



**Fig. 29:** GWR Park retains some of its historic features, such as part of its formal planting, and remains the most important amenity space in the Conservation Area



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

5.10.2 Within the former railway works, the programme of regeneration has included the creation of a series of new public spaces interspersed with areas of car and coach parking. These spaces have been introduced following the demolition of non-historic workshop buildings but retain an industrial character. The most successful space is that in front of the Designer Outlet Village which uses traditional surface treatments and durable, sympathetic street furniture (**Fig. 30**). Other spaces are less evolved and there are unsympathetic barriers which hinder movement and detract from the appearance of the area. Some trees and other soft landscaping has been introduced, of particular note is the planting to south elevation of Heelis. A recent and successful area of public realm has been introduced in front of Swindon Railway Station forming a welcoming entrance to the town.

5.10.3 The surface treatments within public spaces and streets varies across the Conservation Area. Some traditional and historic materials exist such as stone and brick sets; where they survive, historic surfaces should be retained. However, there is also extensive use of modern materials including tarmac and concrete pavers, sometimes in poor condition, which detract from the areas special interest. There are historic items of street furniture across the Conservation Area, in particular bollards, and traditional lampposts were introduced into the railway village as part of the 1970s refurbishment scheme. However, there is a lot of unsympathetic street furniture across the Conservation Area.



**Fig. 30:** The public space at the entrance to the Designer Outlet Village is sympathetic to its historic surroundings and uses durable, traditional materials





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

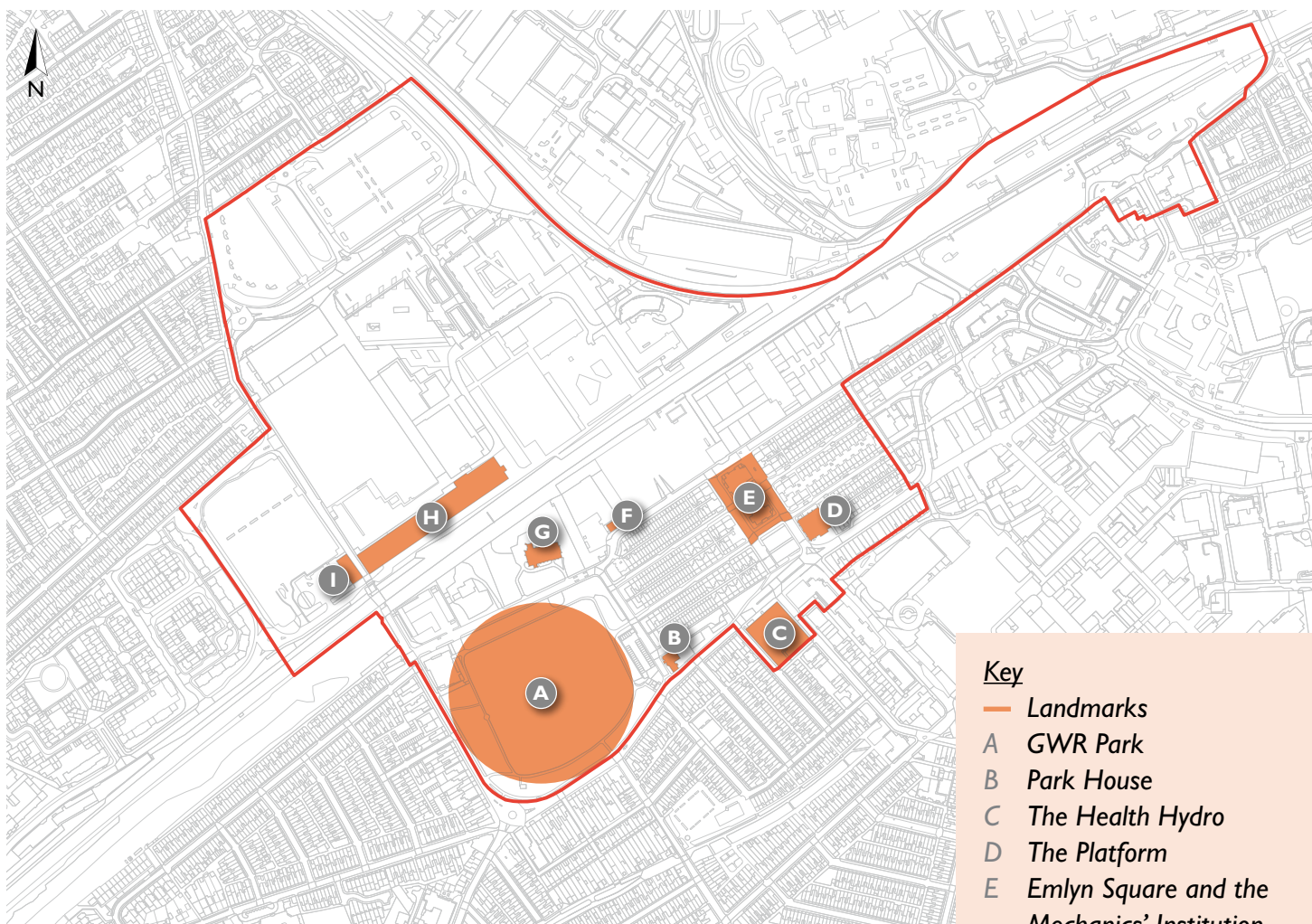
Management

Further Info

## 5.II POSITIVE LANDMARKS IN THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.II.1 Nearly all the buildings and spaces in the Swindon's Railway Conservation Area contribute to its special interest. However, there are individual buildings, groups of buildings and spaces which play a more important role in establishing the character of the area. These are considered landmarks and are identified on **Plan 6** and described on the following pages. The landmarks are so defined due to their use, their height, contribution to the layout of the area or their role in wayfinding. There are also buildings which are very visually prominent but detract from the appearance of the Conservation Area; Signal Point marks the location of Swindon Railway Station but the building itself is out of scale and unsympathetic in appearance and therefore is not included within the landmarks.

Page 140



**Plan 6:** Plan identifying the landmark buildings and features within the Conservation Area (© Crown copyright and Database Rights 100024296 2020)

### Key

— Landmarks

A GWR Park

B Park House

C The Health Hydro

D The Platform

E Emlyn Square and the Mechanics' Institution

F The Water Tower

G St Mark's Church

H The Long Shop

I Pattern Church

(The Pattern Store)





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

**Character**

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info



## A. GWR Park

5.11.2 GWR Park is the largest green and public space in the Conservation Area and is an important amenity and destination for those living in the railway village and the wider town. The Park was an early and essential feature of the railway village, the land being purchased by the GWR company as a cricket ground for its workers in 1844. It has continued to play a central role in community life hosting events and providing much needed open space as the town grew around it.

## B. Park House

5.11.3 This grand house presides over the GWR Park and railway village. It was the residence and surgery for the GWR's chief medical officer and its physically dominant appearance when compared to the railway cottages, assists in demonstrating the authority of the GWR company but also the welfare provisions it made for its employees. Its brick material also demonstrates its grander status contrasting with the stone built cottages of the railway village.

## C. The Health Hydro

5.11.4 The Health Hydro's broad and decorative frontage and use of distinctive red brick ensure it is visually distinctive from the other community buildings in the railway village opposite. It provides a connection between the town centre and the village and, being built by public subscription, is an important reminder of the communal effort to improve the lives of those working and living in the area. The building contains the country's oldest Turkish Baths with these and the swimming pool still open to the public.



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info



## D. The Platform

5.11.5 The Platform is prominent due to its scale from both within Emlyn Square, where its corner towers are visible and Faringdon Road, from within which its twin octagonal turrets are important features. The building is interesting for having been adapted for different uses, starting life as a barracks for single GWR railway workers before swiftly being converted into a Wesleyan chapel and then a museum. The architecture of the building demonstrates this adaptation with features surviving from all three phases. Today, the building is a music centre and community space.

## E. Emlyn Square and the Mechanics' Institution

5.11.6 Emlyn Square, originally called High Street, was the heart of the railway village, both physically and socially. Despite the closure of some of the buildings in the Square, it remains an important part of the layout of the village and in connecting the town centre with the former railway works (via the underpass). The square has considerable potential to increase its landmark contribution to the Conservation Area, in particular with the repair and reuse of the Mechanics' Institution. This building is one of the most important and visually prominent within the railway village. Its central position, larger scale and massing demonstrate the building's importance to the railway workers as the cultural and educational centre for the community.



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info



### F. The Water Tower

5.11.7 Being taller than most of the surrounding buildings, the water tower is a local landmark visible from across the railway lines, from GWR Park, as well as from within the railway village itself. It is an important visual reminder of the many different aspects of the railway works and one of the few elements on the south side of the railway line.

### G. St Mark's Church

5.11.8 St Mark's Church was part of the original railway village, being consecrated in 1845. Designed by a young Sir George Gilbert Scott, the spire is built in an unusual position on the north side, intended to produce an impressive view from the railway line on the approach to Swindon railway station; the GWR company took great care over the public-facing appearance of their buildings. The church spire is visible from both sides of the railway and provides an important visual connection with the village from the works on the north side.





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

**Character**

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info



## H. The Long Shop

5.11.9 As with St Mark's Church, the Long Shop is an example of the effort GWR made to provide an imposing view of its buildings for those travelling on the railway. The impressive masonry façade, nearly 200m long, was designed to match earlier GWR buildings at a time when brick was the cheaper material of choice for lesser buildings within the works.

## I. Pattern Church (The Pattern Store)

5.11.10 This building is prominent along Rodbourne Road and provides an important visual connection from the village side of the railway line to the former works to the north. The building is also prominent from the railway lines itself on the approach to Swindon railway station. It is an important visual reminder of the many different aspects of the railway works.



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 5.12 VIEWS AND SETTING

### VIEWS WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.12.1 The way in which the Conservation Area is experienced is primarily visual, that is through the experience of the appearance of the area. Views may be static or dynamic, long or short, channelled or panoramic, designed or incidental.

5.12.2 It is important to note that other, less tangible factors also contribute to the experience of the Conservation Area such as smells, noises and vibrations in the case of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area for example the frequent noise and vibrations of passing trains contribute considerably to the experience of the area even though the trains themselves are not always visible.

5.12.3 Views within Swindon's Railway Conservation Area contribute to our understanding and therefore appreciation of why it is special. Whilst there are a small number of specific views which particularly assist in revealing the character and special interest of the Conservation Area, in general the Conservation Area is experienced through incidental views, which are not individually of significance. This is particularly the case within the terraced streets of the railway village and moving around the historic remnants of the railway works. These are described on the following pages. All views which take in the historic buildings, listed or not, and general historic environment of the area are important and contribute to the understanding and experience of the area.

### Terraced streets in the railway village

5.12.4 The terraced workers cottages have a strongly unified character and harmonious appearance which is best experienced in the channelled views along the linear streets. Views from the inner streets have a strong residential character whilst those along the outer streets are more varied with views of the imposing railway works boundary wall or the edges of the town centre along Faringdon Road. The views along the streets are often terminated with glimpses of GWR Park or the Mechanics' Institution in Emlyn Square. In addition to the linear views along the terraced streets views along the sides of Emlyn Square, Church Street and East Street, which form the gridded layout of the railway village, also contribute to the understanding of the area, in particular the permeability and connectivity through the village to the railway works and town centre.



**Fig. 31:** The view along Bathampton Street lined with terraced cottages and terminating with the Mechanics' Institution



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

**Character**

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## Rear alleys in the railway village

5.12.5 The rear alleys separating the rows of terraced cottages are particularly atmospheric and indicative of the historic character and appearance of the railway village. The alleys are enclosed by the brick boundary walls of the cottage yards and each has a strongly unified character the same as the street elevations. However, each alley has its own slightly unique character due to the different phases of construction of the streets. All the alleys present a more industrial character than the street elevations and there is an impression of the continuing sense of community within the railway village.



**Fig. 32:** The view along the rear alley between Bathampton Street and Exeter Street

## Railway works

5.12.6 Although the railway works have undergone substantial change since their closure including the demolition of buildings and the construction of new development, there remains a strong sense of its industrial character. All the historic buildings which survive have been converted to new uses that have had little change to their external appearance and several of the historic open spaces, such as Heritage Plaza which formerly contained the traversing table, survive and can be experienced.



**Fig. 33:** The view across Heritage Plaza, a historic open space within the works with the Chain Test House and former General Offices around it, along with the recent Thomas Homes development





## Railway Works Boundary Wall

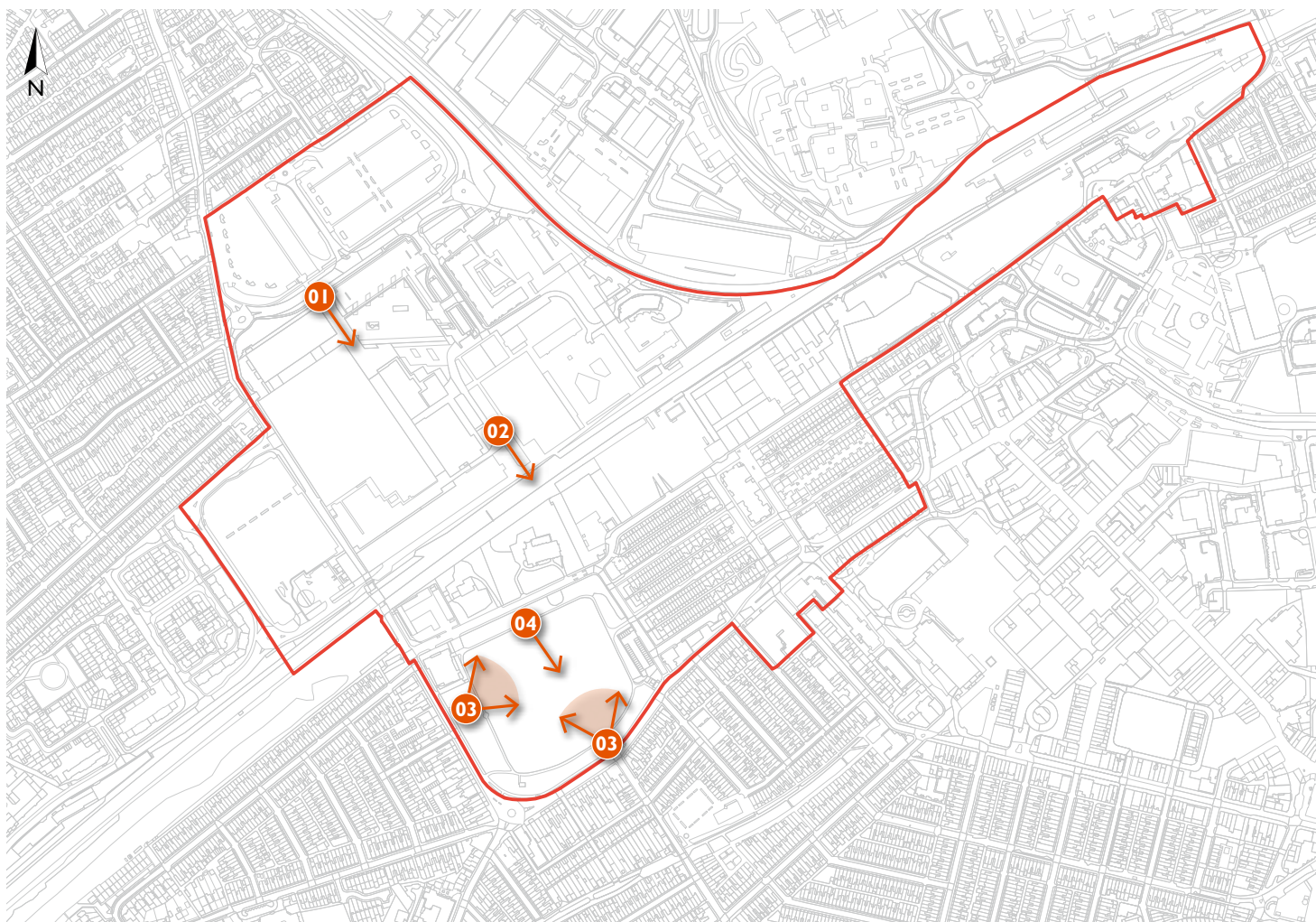
5.12.7 One of the best ways of understanding the historic relationship between the railway works and village is through the experience and views of the works boundary wall. The wall, which is Grade II listed, is at its tallest and most imposing along the southern frontage of the works, adjacent to the railway village and town centre. The wall provides a strong sense of enclosure to views along London Road and Station Road in particular.

**Fig. 34:** The view looking west along Station Road with the listed boundary wall of the railway works along its length



## Defined Views

5.12.8 There are several defined views, identified on **Plan 7** and described overleaf, which make a specific contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area. Although, these views are not designed and like other views of the Conservation Area are incidental, they reveal specific important characteristics about the Conservation Area and therefore deserve specific identification and consideration.



**Plan 7:** The small number of defined views of the Conservation Area, which make a particular contribution to its special interest (© Crown copyright and Database Rights 100024296 2020)

### Key

→ Defined view of importance



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

**Character**

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info



**View 1** *Channelled view towards the entrance to Designer Outlet Village*

5.12.9 This view is of recent origin but not only showcases the historic buildings of the railway works but also the sensitively designed new buildings. The composition of new public realm and buildings is best seen from this position. It demonstrates the positive regeneration which has taken place since the closure of the works and the vibrant future of this new urban quarter.

**View 2** *View across railway line from former railway works to railway village*

5.12.10 This view is one of the few where the railway village is visible from the former railway works and therefore shows the connection between these two integral parts of the Conservation Area. It contains two important landmarks south of the railway line which help provide orientation; the water tower and St Mark's Church. This view is incidental and has only come into existence as part of the regeneration of the works. Now that it exists, it contributes to the understanding of the railway heritage of the area and should be protected, or indeed enhanced as this part of the railway works is used for parking and servicing at present.



**View 3** *Views towards St Mark's Church and Railway Village across GWR Park*

5.12.11 Panoramic views across GWR Park, particularly from its southern and eastern entrances, give the best comprehensive impression of the railway village as they capture the streets of terraced cottages and some of the village's amenities many of which were provided by the GWR company, including the park itself. The most prominent feature from this important landmark is St Mark's Church, the spire of which rises above the trees which characterise this part of the Conservation Area. Views from the open space of the park also take in the setting of the Conservation Area, considered in the following section.



**View 4** *Views from GWR Park to Radnor Street Cemetery*

5.12.12 The openness of GWR Park allows for views south towards Radnor Street cemetery which was used as the graveyard for St Mark's after its own churchyard became full. The cemetery therefore has an important connection to the conservation area and its history and special interest.





## THE SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.12.13 The experience of a conservation area is not limited to what is within its boundaries, the setting of a conservation area can also contribute to the understanding and enjoyment of its special interest. Setting is defined as “the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced”.<sup>01</sup> This is both the experience of that setting from within a conservation area and also its surroundings from which a conservation area can be experienced. Different elements of setting may make different contributions and may be positive, negative or neutral. The extent of the setting of a conservation area is not fixed and may change over time as its surroundings evolve. The ways in which setting contributes to the special interest of the conservation area are often expressed in terms of views, however, like within the conservation area other less tangible factors also contribute. These include but are not limited to; the pattern and appearance of the surrounding townscape, the noise, ambience and use of the surrounding area, the historic relationship and present connectivity between the area with its surroundings.

5.12.14 The following analysis of the setting of Swindon’s Railway Conservation Area is not exhaustive but highlights some of the important components of the area’s setting which assist in the understanding, legibility and appreciation of what is special about the Conservation Area. It includes references, where relevant, to views out of the Conservation Area and also views from the setting into the Conservation Area.

5.12.15 Large parts of the immediate and wider setting of Swindon’s Railway Conservation Area is terraced streets of Victorian housing, in particular to the south and west of the railway village and GWR Park, including edging the park itself. These areas demonstrate the growth of Swindon following the establishment and initial success of the railway works and therefore contribute to the understanding of how important the railway works were to the growth of Swindon into the town it is today. Although the terraces are standard Victorian red brick urban housing, their layout is defined by local features such as the route of the canal, land ownership and the topography of the area as it rises towards Old Swindon.

5.12.16 Cambria Place makes a particular contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area. This enclave of terraced houses and former Baptist Chapel was built to house GWR’s Welsh railway workers and they bear similarities in appearance to the cottages within the railway village, see photograph on the following page ([Fig.35](#)).

5.12.17 More widely the residential areas to the north and west of the former railway works, which developed slightly later in the Edwardian and inter-war periods, further demonstrate the on-going success of the railway works and the contribution they made to the continued expansion of the town.

5.12.18 The openness of GWR Park means it is one of the best spaces in the Conservation Area that the wider town can be experienced. Views south-east from the park take in the Victorian residential development on the slopes up to Old Swindon and Radnor Street cemetery ([View 4 on Plan 7](#)). The cemetery which has an important connection with the railway village for being the extension of St Mark’s graveyard; the visual connection is therefore of considerable importance to the special interest of the Conservation Area.

<sup>01</sup> MHCLG, *National Planning Policy Framework* (2019), p.71





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info



**Fig. 35:** Terrace of cottages which are part of the Cambria Place enclave which were originally built to house Welsh railway workers

5.12.19 From the closest residential streets, including Park Lane and Faringdon Road, which form the Conservation Area boundary, and Wescott Place, the Conservation Area can be directly experienced through the green and treed GWR Park and glimpses of St Mark's Church and railway village. Along Park Lane, the former railway works can also be directly experienced with views of the Pattern Store building.

5.12.20 At its peak, the railway works extended considerably further than the historic core which survives today. The vast former extent of the works is interpreted through the use of street names within new developments that have associations with destinations (as in the railway village), trains and people of the GWR. This serves to increase the understanding of the former works and reinforces the sense of place.

5.12.21 Swindon's town centre, located adjacent to the east of the Conservation Area, has changed considerably in the post-war period and as such the street layout and character of buildings bears little resemblance to how this area would have been historically. Prior to the establishment of the railway works, the small settlement of Swindon was about a mile to the south-east. The success and importance of the railway works have seen the town's centre shift towards the railway works and village, which were originally in open countryside. This knowledge increases the importance of the town centre, despite the change which has taken place. There are some fragmentary remains of the pre-war street plan around Bridge Street and Fleet Street and some early 20th century buildings. Due to their proximity to the Conservation Area this area makes an additional contribution by alluding to how the town centre setting of the railway village would have been historically.



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

5.12.22 There are however some parts of this town centre area which are negative such as the rear of the Sir Daniel Arms on Holbrook Way, which immediately edges the Conservation Area and uninviting backstreet Henry Street. The large commercial office buildings along the south side of Station Road also make a negative contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area due in particular to their large massing and position in relation to the street frontage.

5.12.23 The busy roads which surround the Conservation Area are an expected part of the setting of an urban conservation area. However, they have a negative impact on its setting due to the noise and the way they cut the Conservation Area off from its surroundings, particularly with the town centre to the east. Modern transport needs mean that the historic connectivity which would have existed between the town and railway village has been reduced, which has been harmful to the special interest of the Conservation Area. The railway works, on the other hand, have always been separated from their surroundings by a tall boundary wall. Breaches in the wall for new roads have been necessary as part of the successful regeneration of the works but in general the separation with the surrounding residential areas which form the setting of the former works remains and contributes to the understanding and special interest of the area.

5.12.24 Swindon is a growing town and since the post-war period taller and larger buildings have become part of the town centre, visible from the Conservation Area and often close to its eastern edge. Signal Point is one such building which is within the Conservation Area boundary but makes a negative contribution due to its height and appearance. One of the most prominent tall buildings in the setting of the Conservation Area is the David Murray John Tower which is visually dominant from many parts of the area, particularly from the open space of GWR Park (Fig.36). Whilst the tower is well-known locally and may have some architectural merit in its own right, it has a negative impact on the special interest of the Conservation Area due to its dominance, height and appearance. Other large and tall buildings are also beginning to be added to Swindon's skyline and are becoming a more visible part of the setting of the Conservation Area. The historic character of the Conservation Area is strong, and the visibility of modern buildings need not detract from its special interest if their design is sensitive to the historic character and special interest of the Conservation Area.

5.12.25 When proposals are being developed within the setting of the Conservation Area, specific analysis should be undertaken to understand the contribution a specific site or building makes to the special interest of the Conservation Area and how the proposals may impact upon this contribution and the special interest of the Conservation Area as a whole. Further guidance can be found within Historic England's 'Tall Buildings: Historic England Advice Note 4' and 'The Setting of Heritage Assets Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3', see '[Further Information and Sources](#)' for details.





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

**Character**

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 5.13 CHARACTER AREAS

### Character Area 5: Former Railway Works

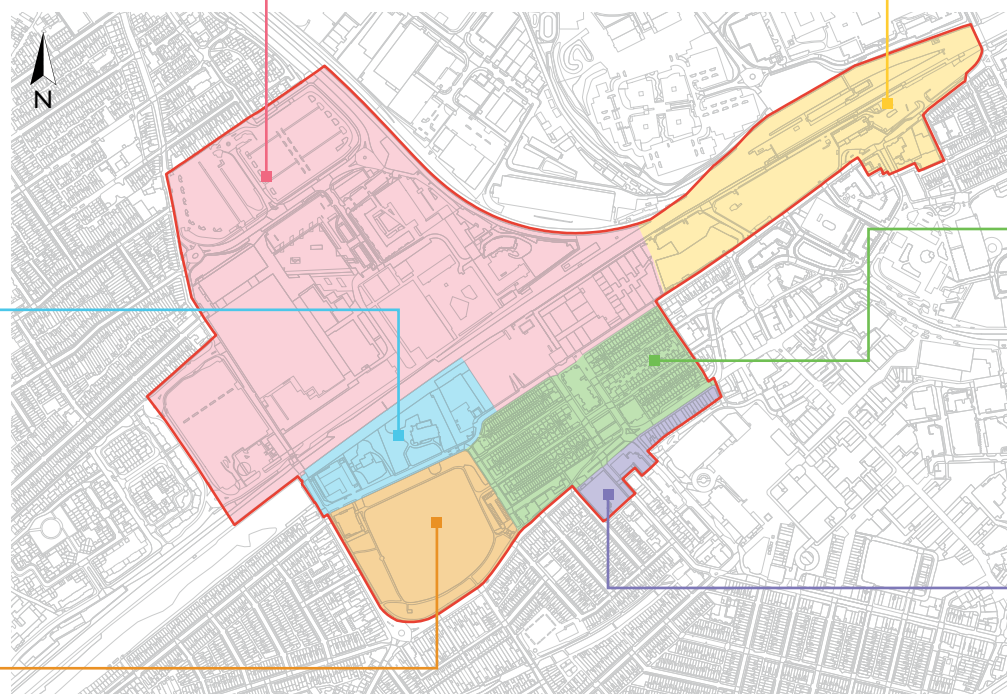
The place of work for many generations of Swindon residents before its closure, today regenerated into a new public urban quarter.

### Character Area 4: Church Place

Containing further buildings which supported the railway village community, Church, vicarage and school.

### Character Area 3: GWR Park

The original and most important public green space within the Conservation Area.



### Character Area 6: Sheppard Street and Station Road

Containing the railway station and associated hotels and public houses as well as parts of the former railway works.

### Character Area 1: Railway Village Core

The terraced streets of workers cottages and the important community and amenity buildings in Emlyn Square.

### Character Area 2: South side of Faringdon Road

Victorian retail buildings and the Health Hydro, separated from the railway village by Faringdon Road.

**Plan 8:** Plan showing the different character areas within the Conservation Area (© Crown copyright and Database Rights 100024296 2020)





## CHARACTER AREA I: RAILWAY VILLAGE CORE



## Character Area Summary

- Strong unified character of the terraced streets.
- Grander buildings in Emlyn Square demonstrative of this being the communal heart of the village.
- Unity in architectural details and materials.
- Historic residential and community uses remain.

5.13.1 This character area contains some of the most significant and character-defining elements of the Conservation Area, namely, the parallel rows of terraced workers cottages, named for destinations on the GWR line, and the central community and amenity buildings of Emlyn Square. Laid out between 1842 and 1847, the cottages were designed by the GWR company to house their workers. The properties are now largely owned and managed by the Council. The area retains its ordered layout of rows of streets flanking a central square, originally an open space but quickly infilled with the impressive, Gothic Revival style Mechanics' Institution (1855, enlarged 1893). Although in a derelict and vacant state, this building remains a focal point and landmark within the character area, positioned opposite the workers entrance to the railway works.

5.13.2 The fine-grained, two-storey cottages are an exemplary example of early railway workers housing. Those on the northern side, facing the railway line, have more decoration, using Elizabethan and Jacobean features than the inward and south-facing streets, which have a plain, more vernacular style. The buildings fronting Emlyn Square also feature these decorative motifs and are a grander three-storeys, or four in the case of the Platform (the former Barracks). The Mechanics' Institution and the Platform have octagonal turrets and crenulations which would be considered to contribute to their landmark quality. The grander appearance of the buildings in Emlyn Square is demonstrative of the physical and communal heart of the village and its amenity function remains in the Glue Pot pub and community café in the former bakery. The former Medical Fund Hospital, at the southern end of the square is now a community centre and the Platform is also partly in community use.

**Fig. 37:** View of the terraced cottages of the railway village



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## CHARACTER AREA 1: RAILWAY VILLAGE CORE (CONT.)

5.13.3 The majority of buildings in the character area are mainly local Swindon stone with Bath stone for some architectural details. This consistent use of materials gives a familial relationship between all the buildings of the character area despite the differences in their style and decoration. Park House, which was built after the initial 1840s phase, is in brick, as are the extensions, outbuildings and boundary walls of the cottages. It should be noted that Park House is not built in local brick, which is usually red / orange in colour. The cottages all have timber vertical sliding sash or casement windows with lintels or hood mouldings. Porches are often recessed, others projecting with moulded brackets.

5.13.4 Despite their density, the residential streets have a spacious feel due to their green front gardens and low boundary treatments. Although the historic boundaries and divisions between the cottages were lost as part of the 1970s refurbishment scheme, the overarching historic character remains. The rear alleys between the rows of cottages have a more urban character indicative of later Victorian workers housing with outbuildings and walls enclosing small yards. In addition to the private front gardens, there is a small grassed area separating Taunton Street from Faringdon Road, which formerly contained further cottages, demolished in the 1970s and the wall of which survives. The space now contains several mature trees serving as a buffer between the village and the busy road. There is also a row of trees to the rear of the community centre softening

the otherwise urban Emlyn Square. There are other smaller trees within the private front gardens and a small number in the alleys.

5.13.5 The residential character of the area means that the terraced streets are quiet, mainly used by local residents and has little vehicular movement. However, Bristol Street and London Street do suffer from through traffic and bus services which detracts from their residential character. Emlyn Square, at the centre of the village, is more bustling, as it is a more major thoroughfare for people moving between the town centre and the former railway works. However, the Square also has heavy bus traffic which makes safe pedestrian movement challenging and has a negative impact on residents (noise and pollution).

5.13.6 Surface treatments within the public realm are a mix of tarmac, concrete pavers and some more traditional finishes such as textured engineering brick pavers in the rear alleys. There are also some instances of historic paving in the form of the sarsen stone setts marking the parking bays in some of the residential streets. There are also some manhole covers in London Street and the alleys have GWR lettering. Traditional, short lampposts, installed as part of the 1970s scheme, are in keeping with the residential scale and historic character. Those historic elements of the public realm are valuable to the special interest of the area.



## CHARACTER AREA 2: SOUTH SIDE OF FARINGDON ROAD



## Character Area Summary

- Developed after the railway village, this area is a transitional zone with the town centre.
- It contains amenities (shops and the Health Hydro) for residents of the village.
- The buildings are predominantly brick, contrasting with the stone used in the railway village.
- The busy Faringdon Road separates this area from the rest of the Conservation Area.

5.13.7 This area is beyond the original GWR company's model village and was developed during the second half of the 19th century as a result of the growth of New Swindon beyond the railway village. Faringdon Road forms the southern boundary of the Conservation Area. The area acts as a transitional zone from the intimate community of the railway village to the retail core of the town centre.

5.13.8 The area includes the Health Hydro (1891), Bridge House and a row of terraced shops with residential uses above. The Health Hydro and Bridge House occupy the full width of their urban blocks and are set back from the pavement, whereas the terrace is much more fine-grained with narrow frontages set hard against the pavement.

5.13.9 The Health Hydro was built by public subscription as the GWR Medical Fund Baths and Dispensary and was an important welfare and amenity facility for railway workers and their families; the building remains a public swimming baths and is a landmark within the area. The shops within the terrace form the edge of the retail town centre, which has been much altered in the post-war period. Although greatly altered, there are many traditional shopfront features surviving particularly decorative corbelled pilasters. A few full historic shopfronts also survive with traditional signage and lighting. Bridge House is a post-war commercial building, converted to residential use, which detracts from the Conservation Area due to its unsympathetic appearance and out-of-scale massing.

**Fig. 38:** Terrace of shops on the south side of Faringdon Road





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## CHARACTER AREA 2: SOUTH SIDE OF FARINGDON ROAD (CONT.)

5.13.10 The buildings in this character area are predominantly brick including the historic terrace and Health Hydro in red brick, which serves to contrast and visually separate them from the stone buildings of the railway village. These historic buildings possess architectural decoration. The two-storey, Queen Anne-style Health Hydro has gables, tall chimneys and classical stone doorcases but has unfortunately lost its boundary railings. The terrace, which is slightly taller at three-storeys, has contrasting brick banding and window heads, dentilled eaves and bargeboards. Some have unfortunately been rendered or painted, reducing the consistent appearance of the whole row, or have had their timber sash windows replaced with plastic units and, as previously indicated, some have inappropriate modern shop frontages.

5.13.11 Faringdon Road is a busy vehicular route and part of the town centre one-way system. It is also a popular pedestrian route connecting the town centre with the Health Hydro and GWR Park. However, there are challenges in the connectivity across Faringdon Road as there are limited and often confusing pedestrian crossing points. This affects the connectivity between the railway village and the Health Hydro. Although the pavements are generous, the public realm has a definite urban character; hard landscaping with very few trees or greenery.





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## CHARACTER AREA 3: GWR PARK



### Character Area Summary

- Part of the original planned village, the park remains the most important green open space in the Conservation Area.
- Historic landscape features such as the pathways, avenues of trees and elements of formal planting survive, but other features have been lost.
- It contains some neutral and detracting buildings.

5.13.12 GWR Park is an integral and highly significant part of the Conservation Area. It is the largest green public space in the Conservation Area and as such is an important amenity for residents of the railway village and residents further afield. As well as the park, the character area contains the garages of the railway village and the TA Centre, which are within the historic boundaries of the open space.

5.13.13 The land for the park was purchased by the GWR company as a cricket ground for its workers in 1844, while the village was still under construction. It became a formal park in 1871 with some areas of formal planting, and alignment of pathways and entrances, surviving. Other features such as the cricket pavilion, green houses and drinking fountains have been lost. Also in the 1870s, the local Rifle Corps moved to a new drill hall on the site of the TA Centre in the corner of the park, its use very similar to today. Although this building is modern, it is not out of scale and it contributes to the special interest of the area through the historic associations of its use. The garages were added in the post-war period on the part of the park which once contained a glass house and entrance lodge. These buildings detract from the appearance of the area through their inconsistent use and the poor quality of their appearance.

**Fig. 39:** View from the entrance to GWR Park from the railway village



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## CHARACTER AREA 3: GWR PARK (CONT.)

5.13.14 The park today is a large grassed area with a surrounding path and edged by avenues of trees and boundary walls and railings, some of which are historic. It also contains a children's play area, seating, memorials and the remains of formal planting along the eastern side. It is a destination for many different types of users, but the closed public conveniences detract from its accessibility. Although to the east, the relatively tranquil residential character pervades, the south and western boundaries of the park are formed by busy roads, which reduces the tranquillity of the open space.

5.13.15 As well as being an important recreation facility for GWR workers, the park was a central community and social feature of railway village life, hosting fetes and other events. This continues today with the recent re-inauguration of the Children's Fete.

5.13.16 The openness of the park allows some of the best views in the Conservation Area, taking in St Mark's Church, the water tower, and Park House as landmarks with the terraced cottages of the railway village between. There are also views south to Radnor Street Cemetery on the hillside, another important green space in the town which was used once the graveyard of St Mark's had been filled. The visibility of the modern town centre gives this character area a broader sense of the surroundings of the Conservation Area and the growth and success of the town resulting from the railway industry.





## CHARACTER AREA 4: CHURCH PLACE



## Character Area Summary

- Green leafy area with generous plots.
- Retains its historic religious, educational and community uses.
- The spire of St Mark's Church is a landmark across the Conservation Area and from the railway line.
- The use of stone provides a visual connection to the railway village.

5.13.17 This character area historically contained important amenities for the railway village community; St Mark's Church, the vicarage and parochial hall, and later the village schools. Many of these uses continue with the church; a nursery within the former vicarage; and Swindon University Technical College (UTC) housed in the workshops and former infant school buildings to the east of the area.

5.13.18 Church Place is a pleasant avenue but for the frequent buses which pass along it on route to the town centre. The street has an open and leafy character with the park to the south and spacious plots to the north. Trees within the park (Character Area 3) and within the churchyard and former vicarage gardens, add to the verdant character but do restrict the visibility of the buildings. The area is bounded to the north by the mainline railway but is separated from it by a dense bank of trees so is not generally visible, but is perceived through the noise of the trains.

5.13.19 The parochial hall has been replaced by single-storey workshops associated with the TA Centre opposite, which makes a neutral contribution to the area.<sup>02</sup> This building is bounded by metal railings, however, in general, boundaries within this area are stone walls. These are low level to the former vicarage and church but a much taller wall, more characterful of the railway works, surrounds the UTC.

<sup>02</sup> This site is subject to an approved Planning Permission to replace the existing building (Ref. No: S/17/0768)

**Fig. 40:** The landmark spire of St Mark's Church



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## CHARACTER AREA 4: CHURCH PLACE (CONT.)

5.13.20 All the historic buildings in the character area, except for the metal water tower, are constructed in stone, mainly local Swindon stone, which gives them a familial relationship with the core of the railway village.

5.13.21 The former vicarage is a two-storey detached house in an Elizabethan style similar to that used in the railway village with tall gables and chimneys and quatrefoil windows. It was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott, working with William Bonython. The pair also designed St Mark's Church. The Church is in a decorated Gothic style with elaborate architectural detail. The building is a landmark, not only within the character area but within the wider Conservation Area. Its tower and spire is unusually positioned on the north side to be visible from the railway line and was designed to showcase Swindon for those arriving by train.

5.13.22 To the east of the Church used to be the Bristol Street School, demolished, except for the Infant's School, in 1881 and replaced with the present long single-storey buildings used to store the GWR company's horse-drawn wagons. Recently refurbished and a sympathetic new infill building constructed, the area has returned to its original educational use. At the eastern edge of this character area, and signaling the transition to the industrial railway works area, is the recently refurbished water tower dating from 1870. Its height and intricate white metal framing give this building landmark quality, particularly as seen from GWR Park, along Bristol Street and from the railway works.

5.13.23 Also on the north side of Church Place is the churchyard of St Mark's which provides a further green space. The church itself remains an operational religious building and the adjacent vicarage is now in educational use as a children's nursery, reinforcing the historic and continuing educational use in this part of the Conservation Area.



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## CHARACTER AREA 5: FORMER RAILWAY WORKS



### Character Area Summary

- Retains its industrial character through the impressive scale and appearance of the buildings.
- Phasing of the building evident through the changes in materials.
- Use of stone for all elevations facing the railway line demonstrative of this being the public face of the works.
- Sensitively designed new buildings including Thomas Homes and Heelis.

5.13.24 The former railway works is the part of the Conservation Area which has changed most substantially, both during its working life and since its closure in the 1980s. However, this area is also one of the most evocative and demonstrates most clearly the impressive scale and importance of the railway works, once the largest in the world.

5.13.25 Historically, the works were used for the manufacture and repair of locomotives, carriages and wagons first for the GWR company and later for British Rail. Left derelict after closure, the complex has been transformed into a vibrant new urban quarter with retail, office, cultural and residential uses. Existing historic workshops have been sensitively converted to new uses and other buildings demolished to allow for high-quality, sympathetic new development. This process is ongoing, with the carriage works, south of the railway line, currently being converted into commercial and educational workspaces. Sites to east and west of the carriage works are currently used as surface car parks.

5.13.26 The core of the former works is bounded by Rodbourne Road and Kemble Drive, with railway lines to the south and east. There are no through roads passing through the area itself. The buildings occupy large plots demonstrating their former workshop function and are loosely laid out on a grid with avenues and public spaces between. The buildings are much coarser grained than other parts of the Conservation Area and feature large rectangular or long and linear footprints and tall storey heights.

5.13.27 The former workshops are single-storey due to their distinctive use for manufacture and repair of locomotives and carriages, which could not be done

**Fig. 41:** The National Monuments Record Centre, housed within the former General Offices of the railway works





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## CHARACTER AREA 5: FORMER RAILWAY WORKS (CONT.)

over multiple levels, though the two early steam driven turning shops are two-storeys (NHLE: 1023529). Stores, such as the pattern store, the Locomotive Manager's Office (Churchward House – NHLE: 1023519) and the former General Offices (now offices for English Heritage and Historic England) are multi-storey, the latter having storeys added as the railway works expanded. Recent buildings in the railway works have maintained the historic scale and massing with a mix of heights between two and four-storeys, and both long and linear or larger footprints.

5.13.28 The original phase of buildings within the railway works was in local Swindon stone, with brick used only for strengthening and also limited architectural detail to windows and entrances. The stone was roughhewn, contributing to the heavy, industrial character. Pier and panel construction was used, allowing for future adaptability. Later Victorian buildings within the works were constructed largely in brick, which was cheaper than stone. However, stone continued to be used on elevations facing the railway line, which was the principal public face of the works, and demonstrates the GWR company's concern for appearances. One such example is the southern elevation of Workshop 9, now part of the Designer Outlet Village, which, with its long repetitive elevation, makes it a landmark for those arriving by train. The later buildings also have greater decoration, including polychromatic brickwork, recessed brick arches, string coursing and cornices, although they retain an industrial, utilitarian style. Roofs are often pitched and gabled ends are common. The original office buildings have tall chimneys. Windows are generally large and square-headed with timber frames. Recent buildings, added as part

of the regeneration of the area, draw on some of these historic characteristics. The Thomas Homes development, for example, uses brick and have ordered façades sympathetic to the articulation of pier and panel construction. Heelis is perhaps the most distinctive of the recent additions but even this building, which appears as a large modern workshop, uses brick, gabled rooflines and simple detailing to remain in keeping with the character of the area.

5.13.29 Another distinctive feature of this character area is the high and imposing boundary wall, parts of which are within Character Area 6. This wall is the feature which most clearly demonstrates the closed nature of the works to the outside world; workers called it 'inside'. As with the buildings, the parts of the wall which face the railway village and town to the south, are constructed in stone, whereas the 'back' of the works, facing north, are in cheaper brick. The change in level between the works and the railway village means the southern stretch of wall is also a retaining wall and ensures that it appears even more imposing.

5.13.30 Although busy roads and railway lines surround the character area, movement through it is largely pedestrian with vehicular and service routes well separated from the main pedestrian flow. Movement is diagonally across the area through a series of new public spaces, going from the Designer Outlet Village to the underpass, leading on to the railway village and town centre. A successful area of public realm is at the entrance to the Designer Outlet Village, which uses traditional surface treatments of brick sets and durable, sympathetic street furniture.



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## CHARACTER AREA 6: SHEPPARD STREET AND STATION ROAD



### Character Area Summary

- The listed boundary wall of the railway works is a dominant and imposing feature.
- Enclave of inns and manufacturing building opposite the railway station built to capitalise on the commercial opportunities.
- Remnants of the North Wilts Canal, which pre-dates the railway, survive as a cycle path.

5.13.31 This area largely comprises the mainline railway and Swindon railway station. South of the railway line is a zone, historically part railway works, part Victorian townscape, now almost entirely surface car parking. It also contains an enclave of historic buildings associated with the railway station, an inn, a hotel and a former dairy, which were built to capitalise on the trade and commercial opportunities of the railway.

5.13.32 The railway line is the dominant feature of the area with Sheppard Street and Station Road parallel to the south. Between are large, hard-landscaped car parks. Those which were formerly occupied by the railway works are raised to the same level as the railway line and bounded to the street by the imposing, listed stone boundary wall of the works. The car park to the western end of the character area is on the same level as the railway village and town centre and formerly contained non-railway related manufacturing works and residential terraces.

5.13.33 The buildings opposite the station are two to three-storeys in height, finished in brick and render and in a range of architectural styles. The grandest and most ornate being the Great Western Hotel in a Gothic Revival style. Adjacent is the Queens Tap, a mid-19th century inn and on the other side is the former Aylesbury dairy, also once the Swindon Steam Laundry, which is being converted into a hotel, continuing to show the advantage of proximity to the railway station. Marking the station itself is Signal Point; a 12-storey, post-war slab block, currently vacant. Visibility of the historic station building, on the central platform is limited, except from within the station itself. It dates to 1842 and is in a strong classical styling with characterful Swindon stone.

**Fig. 42:** The imposing stone boundary wall of the railway works forming the boundary to Station Road



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## CHARACTER AREA 6: SHEPPARD STREET AND STATION ROAD (CONT.)

5.13.34 Station Road and Sheppard Street form the principal route from the railway station to the rest of the Conservation Area. The route is busy with traffic as it is part of the town centre one-way system. The road is flanked on the south side, outside the Conservation Area, by large scale commercial buildings which distract from its historic character. The listed boundary wall is important for its sense of enclosure and imposing character but, due to the nature of the road and narrow pavements, appreciation of it is restricted. Beyond the railway station, a solid, stone boundary wall continues forming the edge of the railway embankment. This wall is known as Milk Bank, for its association with the former Aylesbury

Dairy opposite. The cycle and pedestrian passage under the railway line, which is on the alignment of the lost North Wilts Canal, is unassuming and suffers from anti-social behaviour but is a well-used route during the day (see [Fig. 19](#) on [page 30](#)). Just outside the Conservation Area boundary to the east is a vehicular route which passes below the railway line, the next route to vehicles to the west is Rodbourne Road. The only area of public realm within the area is the recently re-landscaped station forecourt. Providing a welcoming arrival to Swindon, its surface treatments guide pedestrians towards the town centre. It would be beneficial if a similar approach could be taken for the route into the rest of the Conservation Area.







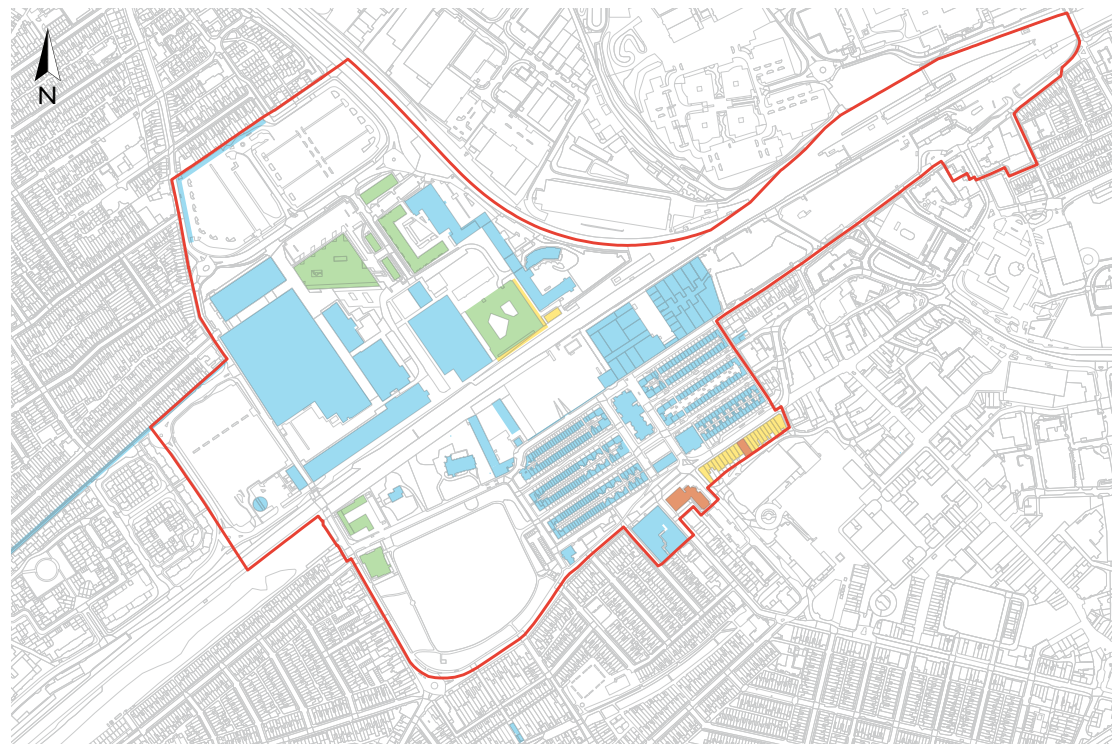
## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.1.1 Swindon's Railway Conservation Area is significant in its own right, it also contains many individually significant buildings which contribute to the overall character and special interest. This includes many statutorily listed buildings and undesignated heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the area. However, there are also buildings and structures that make no specific contribution or indeed detract from the character of the Conservation Area.

6.1.2 **Plan 9** considers all the buildings and substantial structures in the Conservation Area dividing them into the following categories:

- Listed Buildings
- Positive Buildings (those that are not designated but add value to the Conservation Area)
- Neutral Buildings
- Detracting Buildings

6.1.3 With regard to positive, neutral and detracting buildings, judgement of these buildings and structures has been made by means of visual examination from public thoroughfares only. There will be aspects of buildings and structures, both positive and negative, which do not relate solely to their appearance, such as their use or past associations. The intention is to identify which buildings have additional designation or contribute to the area and those which present opportunities for enhancing the special interest of the area. It is not intended to provide a fully comprehensive and detailed assessment of each building individually. It should not be assumed that the omission of any information is intended as an indication that a feature or building is not important. A detailed assessment of significance specific to a building or site within the Conservation Area should always be carried out prior to proposing any change. Specific opportunities for enhancement are identified in the '[Issues and Opportunities](#)' section of this document.



**Plan 9:** Plan identifying the value and contribution made of different buildings across the Conservation Area (© Crown copyright and Database Rights 100024296 2020)

Please note: Not all Listed Buildings are identified on this plan, for example those which are outside the boundary of the Conservation Area are not shown and those structures which are small in size, such as the tombs in St Mark's churchyard are not depicted. The NHLE should be used as the definitive list of statutorily listed buildings and structures, see '[Further Information and Sources](#)' for more information.

### Key

- Listed Buildings
- Positive Building
- Neutral Building
- Detracting Building



## 6.2 LISTED BUILDINGS

6.2.1 Listed buildings are protected under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* and are designated for their architectural or historic interest. The criteria for listing is defined by DCMS (see '[Further Information and Sources](#)' for more details). Listing ranges from Grade I (the highest level of protection) through to Grade II\* and II (the most common level). Grade I and II\* listed buildings together comprise around 7% of listed buildings nationally, with the remainder being Grade II.

6.2.2 Statutory listing does not equate to a preservation order intended to prevent change. However, alterations, additions or demolitions to listed buildings do require Listed Building Consent, which allows local planning authorities to make decisions that have been informed by an understanding of the building or the site's significance.

6.2.3 Outbuildings and subsidiary structures associated with listed buildings are likely to be within their 'curtilage'. That is, a building or structure which is associated with a listed building and has been so since before July 1948. This could be, for example, a wall attached to a listed building, or a building in a rear yard of a listed building such as those within the railway village. In the case of curtilage listing, the curtilage listed structure has the same level of protection as the main listed building and will be subject to the same Listed Building Consent procedures.

6.2.4 Furthermore, national and local planning policies also recognise that changes to other buildings or sites in the setting of a listed building can affect its special interest. Preserving or enhancing the setting of a listed building is a material consideration in planning decisions.

***The considerable national importance of Swindon's railway heritage means a high proportion of the buildings within the Conservation Area are listed.***

6.2.5 The significance of these buildings varies in nature. Some buildings, such as the Health Hydro ([Fig. 43](#)) and the Mechanics' Institution (both Grade II\* listed), have strong communal value for their historic and current social and amenity use. Whereas the surviving workshops and sheds of the railway works (ranging from Grade II to II\*) are significant for their innovative design and technological value ([Fig. 44](#)).

6.2.6 Despite their listed status, some of the listed buildings in the Conservation Area have been subject to unsympathetic alterations and repairs. There is potential to enhance the significance of these buildings, and improve the contribution they make to the Conservation Area, through the sensitive reversal or replacement of poorly considered interventions. Some of these opportunities are identified in Theme 6 of the '[Issues and Opportunities](#)' section of this document.

6.2.7 The location of all the listed buildings in the Conservation Area is shown on the plan at the beginning of this section and further details can be found at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>.



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

**Buildings**

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info



**Fig. 43:** The Health Hydro was funded by GWR employees and built as a public baths and dispensary. It is Grade II\* listed and remains in use as a public swimming and Turkish baths.



**Fig. 44:** Former engineering shops 19 and 20 (now home to STEAM) are original works buildings and a Grade II listed.





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

**Buildings**

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

### 6.3 POSITIVE BUILDINGS

6.3.1 Buildings and structures which do not meet the criteria for statutory listing but that still make a positive contribution to the overall character and appearance of the conservation area are categorised as positive buildings. The extent to which a building will positively contribute will largely depend on the integrity of its historic form and is not restricted to its principal elevation; for example, roofscapes and side / rear elevations can all make a positive contribution.

6.3.2 Criteria for identifying positive contributors include:

- Position and presence within the streetscape;
- Use of characteristic materials, architectural motifs or detailing;
- Scale and massing;
- Relationship with neighbouring buildings, both physical and historical;
- Associations with notable architects or other historic figures or events important within the local area; and
- Historic uses associated with the wider conservation area.

6.3.3 As the majority of buildings within the conservation area are statutorily listed there are only a few positive buildings in Swindon's Railway Conservation Area. These include the row of shops on the south side of Faringdon Road (**Fig. 45**) and the retained façades of B-Shop in the former railway works. The row of shops forms an appropriate historic frontage to Faringdon Road and the buildings have architectural features of merit. The retained façade of B-Shop is important for continuing the historic stone frontage of the railway works when viewed from the railway line, alongside its listed neighbours.

6.3.4 As with the listed buildings in the conservation area, there is potential for some of the identified positive buildings to improve the character of the conservation area further still through the sensitive replacement of poorly considered modern interventions. Some of these opportunities are identified in Theme 6 of the 'Issues and Opportunities' section of this document.

6.3.5 There are no additional planning controls associated with positive buildings, beyond those resulting from the buildings being within a designated conservation area, details of which can be found in the Management Plan section of this document.

6.3.6 The location of the positive buildings in the conservation area is shown on **Plan 9** at the beginning of this section.



**Fig. 45:** Nos.25–45 Faringdon Road are part of a longer terraced row of shops which make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

**Buildings**

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 6.4 NEUTRAL AND DETRACTING BUILDINGS

6.4.1 The buildings which do not make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area fall into two categories, either being neutral buildings or detracting buildings.

6.4.2 Neutral buildings are those which neither make a positive contribution nor unduly detract from the character of the Conservation Area. These include the TA Centre buildings on Church Street (**Fig. 46**), which although they have a notable connection to the area due to their use, the buildings themselves do not contribute. Should proposals for the replacement of these buildings come forward, this could offer an opportunity to enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area through high-quality, sensitively-designed replacement.

6.4.3 The neutral building category also includes very recent buildings which, although sensitively-designed to suit their setting, it is too soon to formulate a definite judgement on their contribution to the Conservation Area. These include Heelis (**Fig. 47**) and the residential buildings on the north side of the railway line.

6.4.4 Detracting buildings are those which are considered to make a negative contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This may be due to their scale and massing, design, materials, condition or use, or a combination of the above. Detracting buildings offer great potential for enhancement of the Conservation Area either through their refurbishment, demolition and / or replacement as part of any proposals that come forward, with a sensitive new design. Within Swindon's Railway Conservation Area detracting buildings include Bridge House on Faringdon Road and Signal Point over Swindon Railway Station whose appearance is at odds with the historic character of the Conservation Area.



**Fig. 46:** The TA Centre contributes to the historic interest of the Conservation Area, as it is on of the railway village's Rifle Corps Drill Hall, however the building itself is of no value and is considered to be a neutral building in the Conservation Area



**Fig. 47:** Heelis, headquarters of the National Trust, is a recent building which has been sensitively-designed but about which it is too soon to formulate a value judgment, and therefore is currently identified as a neutral building in the Conservation Area



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

**Issues & Opps**

Management

Further Info

***This part of the document provides analysis of the current issues and opportunities facing Swindon's Railway Conservation Area following both detailed site surveys and public consultation. These have been divided into the following, often inter-related, themes. Recommendations for each theme are identified within the [Management Plan](#).***

Page 170

### **Theme 1: Connectivity**

The railway line, so integral to the special interest of the Conservation Area, presents issues in connecting the former railway works part of the area to the town centre.

### **Theme 2: Thoroughfares and Experience**

The way people experience and move through the Conservation Area is an important part of their appreciation and interaction with the railway heritage and improving this experience will enhance its special interest.

### **Theme 3: Public Spaces in the Former Railway Works**

The railway works contains an importance series of public spaces, improvement to the appearance and connectivity of which would enliven this new urban quarter and enhance the Conservation Area.

### **Theme 4: GWR Park**

Exploring how this important community resource could better contribute to the special interest of the Conservation Area and how user experience could be improved.

### **Theme 5: Vacant, Underused and Detracting Sites**

Although considerable work has been done to transform the Conservation Area over the past 30 years, there remain opportunities to improve some buildings and sites, including within the area's setting.

### **Theme 6: Unsympathetic Alterations**

Small features of individual buildings, such as windows, doors and shopfronts, all contribute to the overall appearance of the Conservation Area. It is these features which have been altered and improvements would enhance the character of the area.

### **Theme 7: Engagement with Swindon's Railway Heritage**

Considering the initiatives for encouraging public involvement and enjoyment of all the Conservation Area has to offer.





Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

Theme I: Connectivity

7.1 The central, urban location of the Conservation Area means that Swindon’s railway heritage has the potential to be accessed by all. The Conservation Area contains, or is close to, major transport links, including the railway station, M4 motorway and local bus routes and has good car parking provision, which means it is attractive to visitors. However, many visitors and locals only visit parts of the Conservation Area, mainly the retail and cultural offerings in the former railway works. Likewise, there are challenges in encouraging users of the town centre to visit the Conservation Area. It would be mutually beneficial if there were increased pedestrian and cycle movements in both directions between the town centre and former railway works as this would lead to a greater number of people interacting with Swindon’s railway heritage.

7.2 The principal barrier to movement across the Conservation Area is the railway line, which historically served as the divide between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ the railway works. The railway line separated the distinct uses of

the area; employment and industry to the north and residential and amenity to the south. The railway line has only three crossing points within the Conservation Area; Rodbourne Road, the former canal (now cycle path) and the former workers entrance underpass, the latter being the main connecting route (see front cover image). Each of these routes has issues relating to accessibility, safety and opening hours, and opportunities to improve them should be taken. Improving the main underpass is a priority. This theme aligns closely with Theme 2 overleaf.

7.3 Introducing new routes across the railway line could improve connectivity in both directions between the town centre and the former railway works but also presents potential conflict with the special interest and historic character of the area. The importance of the physical divide formed by the railway line should be considered as part of any proposals for new crossings.

*Existing buildings and features close to the existing crossing points, such as the Mechanics’ Institution and GWR Park, could be utilised to encourage increased movement from either side of the railway line.*



Fig. 48: The pedestrian underpass below the railway line, which was once the main entrance for employees into the railway works from the village



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## Theme 2: Thoroughfares and Experience

Page 172



7.4 Connected to the previous theme, there are considerable opportunities both at smaller and larger scales to improve the public thoroughfares of the Conservation Area and the experience of those using them. This theme includes opportunities to improve the public realm at a macro level with changes to vehicular movement and at a micro level considering surface treatments and street furniture. Public spaces and squares, within the former railway line are considered within Theme 3.

7.5 The urban nature of the Conservation Area means that it attracts a range of different users; pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and passengers on public transport. As with any town centre there can be tensions between these different groups. The characteristics of the various modes and physical interventions within the townscape, to safely segregate them and enable movement, can cause issues for pedestrian movement in particular and are often uncharacteristic features in the streetscape.

7.6 There are several busy roads within and at the edges of the Conservation Area, including Faringdon Road, Station Road and Rodbourne Road. These are unpleasant for pedestrian users and a lack of adequate crossing points mean they are barriers to movement into and through the Conservation Area. In addition, many of the town centre bus routes pass through the heart of the Conservation Area, along Church Place and Bristol Street and through Emlyn Square. The junctions of

Emlyn Square with Bristol Street and Faringdon Road (opposite the Health Hydro) are particularly confusing and inhibitive to pedestrian movement. Given the importance of this area in providing connection with the former railway works (see Theme 1), it would benefit from rationalisation and improved accessibility for pedestrians. Similarly, the junction of Fleet Street with Faringdon Road, which although just outside the Conservation Area forms an important entrance into it from the town centre, is busy with traffic and is restrictive to pedestrian movement.

***It is recommended that a transport and accessibility audit be undertaken with the aim of an overarching movement strategy being developed for the Conservation Area and its immediate setting.***

7.7 This audit should include a review of bus routes and consideration given to reducing or removing them from the central parts of the Conservation Area. It would also be desirable to improve the pedestrian experience and accentuate the natural desire lines of movement through the area. This could include: traffic calming measures; improved crossings; widening pavements; shared surfaces; reducing obstructions such as bollards; improved lighting and installation of public art; and enhanced signage. Improving the legibility and orientation would assist in encouraging movement between the town centre and former railway works, supporting Theme 1. However, it is important to enhance the tranquillity of the residential streets in the railway village. Opportunities should also be taken to accentuate historic features important to the character of the area, such as the imposing boundary wall of the railway works along Station Road.





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## Theme 2: Thoroughfares and Experience (cont.)

7.8 At a more micro level, there are some issues with the condition of surface treatments, both pedestrian pavements and road surfaces. Aging, environmental damage and physical impacts by vehicles have caused deterioration, particularly within the residential streets of the railway village and around Emlyn Square, the latter largely due to bus traffic. As well as detracting from the appearance of the Conservation Area, uneven surfaces are potential hazards for pedestrians, particularly those with mobility challenges.

***Undertaking repairs or resurfacing where the condition is poor would be beneficial with sympathetic traditional materials used where appropriate and where these already exist.***

7.9 There are some items of historic street furniture within the Conservation Area, and others which have a traditional style, particularly lampposts in the railway village, signage in GWR Park and bollards. However, there are also numerous other examples of street furniture which are not sympathetic and sometimes hinder pedestrian movement. These include litter bins, benches and road traffic signage. In the long-term, it would be desirable for non-historic and unsympathetic items of street furniture to be replaced with durable, high-quality versions, which are sensitive to their specific context within the Conservation Area. 'Studies in the History of Swindon' contains some useful insight as to what would be historically appropriate, see '[Further Information and Sources](#)' for details of this publication. Any schemes for improving pedestrian movement at a macro level, should include sensitive consideration of surface treatment and new street furniture.







Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------



**Fig. 49:** The entrance to the Designer Outlet Village from its northern car park

### Theme 3: Public Spaces in the former railway works

7.10 The regeneration of the former railway works has included the creation of a series of inter-connected public spaces as part of this new urban quarter. Now that works to the buildings are largely completed, there is an opportunity to review the way the public spaces are currently used and consider potential changes and enhancements. Whilst the public space at the entrance to the Designer Outlet Village is very successful and is an obvious thoroughfare and dwell space others are comparatively underused, such as the public square at Heritage Plaza (Thomas Homes). In others, there are physical barriers and landscaping which inhibit pedestrian movement into and through them, particularly between Heelis and STEAM. In general there are issues with legibility as well as physical obstacles within these public spaces which exacerbate the connectivity issues identified in Theme 1.

7.11 Enhancing the public spaces would improve the user experience, encourage movement and further increase vitality to this new urban quarter.

***There is an opportunity to develop an overarching approach to these spaces, giving its own identity whilst ensuring harmony.***

7.12 A rationalisation of planting and street furniture, and removal of obstacles which restrict movement, such as railings and barriers would also be beneficial. There are also opportunities to make more of the views across the railway line to the village and park, strengthening the relationship between two of the important elements of the Conservation Area's significance. Improving orientation and interpretation is also important and is considered in Theme 7.

***Preparation of an interpretation strategy would be beneficial as it would also assist with connectivity, pedestrian experience and engagement with Swindon's railway heritage.***

7.13 Commissioning of new public art and sculpture which draw upon the railway heritage, could also be used to enliven key nodes and act as a wayfinding, improve legibility and provide interpretation as part of an overall strategy. Bringing new uses to some of the spaces, through food markets, entertainments or other pop-up activities, would also be desirable to widen their appeal.



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info



**Fig. 50:** Historic photograph of the cricket pavilion in GWR Park c.1910 (STEAM Museum of the GWR)

**It is recommended that a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) is developed for the park which can consider in detail its significance and the opportunities.**



**Fig. 51:** Historic photograph of the ornamental planting along the eastern edge of the Park in c.1900 (STEAM Museum of the GWR)

## Theme 4: GWR Park

7.14 GWR Park has always been an important amenity for residents of the railway village and wider urban population of Swindon. It is the largest green public space in the Conservation Area and is a destination for a wide range of people including families, young people, dog walkers and joggers. The park has evolved from an open field used for cricket matches to the more planned space it is today. However, it has also lost many of its historic features, such as its ornamental planting and bandstand. There are relatively few facilities within the park; the public conveniences are closed and no refreshment offering. There are children's play facilities. Furthermore, parts of the park are suffering from erosion and waterlogging and there are concerns about anti-social behaviour, particularly at night.

7.15 The park has the potential to play a more central role in raising awareness and increasing both residents and visitor's enjoyment of Swindon's railway legacy. This could be through new interpretative signage and reinstating or reinterpreting some of the lost historic features, such as formal planting or a new pavilion. A café or refreshment kiosk and new public conveniences would improve the experience of those using the park and encourage new users, whilst also bringing in revenue. Building on the reinstatement of the Children's Fete, there is also the opportunity to host external events (such as food/music festivals, fireworks etc.) within the park, capitalising on its central location and proximity to public transport and car parks. Should this be considered, it will need to be developed in tandem with improving wayfinding and pedestrian connectivity.

7.16 The CMP could also consider the maintenance and accessibility issues facing the park, including the potential for new and improved entrances and strategies for reducing anti-social behaviour. It would be beneficial for the TA Centre and the garages of the railway village to be included to ensure a holistic approach to improving this part of the Conservation Area.





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

**Issues & Opps**

Management

Further Info

## Theme 5: Vacant, Underused and Detracting Sites

7.17 Since the closure of the railway works in the late 1980s, regeneration of the redundant and derelict former railway buildings has taken place. This is a considerable achievement and today all the surviving historic works buildings have been transformed for new uses, or, in the case of the carriage works, are in the process of being converted. Sensitively-designed new buildings have also filled many of the vacant plots, restoring structure and coherence to the townscape.

Page 176  
7.18 However, one of the most significant historic buildings within the Conservation Area remains vacant and in a dilapidated condition; the Mechanics' Institution. This Grade II\* listed building was central to community life within the railway village for over 100 years and its continued dereliction is harming the appearance of the Conservation Area and gives the railway village an air of neglect. Depending on the new use of the building, it has the potential to encourage movement between the town centre and former railway works by creating a destination in this central location.

***Repair and reuse, ideally in a community or public use, of the Mechanics' Institution would bring this landmark building back to its former glory, significantly enhancing the Conservation Area.***



**Fig. 52:** The vacant and derelict Mechanics' Institution





Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

### Theme 5: Vacant, Underused and Detracting Sites (cont.)

7.19 There also remain a number of large open plots, which formerly contained railway works buildings or structures, that are now in use as surface car parks. These sites have development potential. As with all development proposals the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area and other impacts upon historic environment, should be a primary consideration. Like the other recent developments in the Conservation Area, schemes need to be of the highest quality and offer an acceptable design response. The sites may need to retain an element of car parking.

7.20 The urban setting of Swindon’s Railway Conservation Area is demonstrative of the success of the railway industry, contributing to the towns growth. From the initial growth in the Victorian period, the town

centre underwent significant change in the post-war period and whilst not all buildings of this period detract, including sensitive refurbishment could be considered of those that do as the opportunity arises.

**Any proposed new tall buildings should be informed by the impact it may have on the Conservation Area and its setting.**

7.21 Elements of the historic town centre do survive and, although just outside the Conservation Area, are important to its setting. There are a number of vacant buildings and others suffering from neglect, particularly around the junction of Bridge Street and Fleet Street. Revitalising this part of the town centre closest to the Conservation Area would not only improve its setting, but also encourage movement and connectivity between the town centre and Conservation Area.



**Fig. 53:** The surface car park adjacent to the Carriage Works



Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

## Theme 6: Unsympathetic Alterations

7.22 The conservation area designation brings about increased control as to what changes can be made to buildings in the area. Most buildings are also statutorily listed and therefore subject to stricter planning controls. This has generally prevented insensitive and inappropriate alterations across much of the Conservation Area, preserving its historic appearance and integrity. However, there are opportunities to preserve and enhance the Conservation Area by managing changes, and mitigating inappropriate interventions.

Page 178

7.23 For example, some elements of the 1970s conservation scheme for the railway village would not be considered best practice today and these are harming both the physical fabric of the cottages and the special interest of the Conservation Area. This includes the use of hard, cement pointing, plastic rainwater goods and the brick planters. Whilst some elements are being rectified, namely the gradual reinstatement of historically appropriate front doors to the cottages, there is opportunity for a broader scheme of work which returns the railway village closer to its historic appearance. This could also include reinstating historic boundary treatments as well as boundary divisions between the cottages.

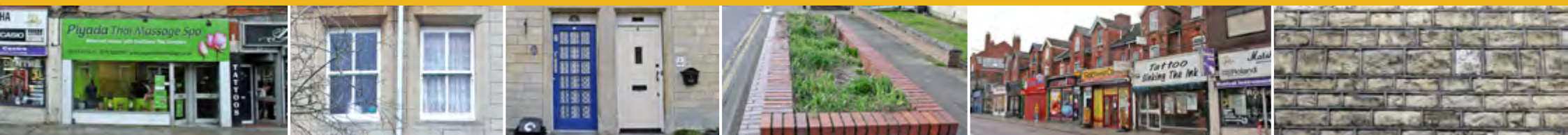
7.24 There are also some localised issues with modern features such as TV aerials, satellite dishes, domestic wheelie bins and recycling boxes visible within the street scene, which detract from its historic appearance. Whilst bins in

particular are generally stored within the rear alleys, there are opportunities to make improvements by removing these features from view.

7.25 The new areas added to the Conservation Area enable consideration of development to preserve or enhance its character and appearance. This would include consideration of the shops along Faringdon Road where there has been a loss of historic shopfront features, and in some case entirely modern frontages have been inserted. Many of the shops also feature signage which is of inappropriate design in this historic context.

**Opportunities to replace the modern shopfronts and signage with traditional designs should be seized, drawing inspiration from the historic versions which do survive utilising the Council’s Shop Fronts Coding Guidance.**

7.26 The residential storeys above have also been subject to changes which have not all responded positively to the buildings character. This includes replacement of historic timber windows with uPVC units and the painting or rendering of façades. The appearance of this part of the Conservation Area could be considerably enhanced if these changes could be reversed and managed. The use of additional planning controls (e.g. Article 4 direction) should be investigated as appropriate to manage such changes (see [‘Management Plan’](#)).



**Fig. 54:** Selection of the small-scale detracting features within the conservation area





Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## Theme 7: Engagement with Swindon's Railway Heritage

7.27 Many residents of Swindon are proud of the town's railway heritage. This is often through direct connections, such as living in the railway village or having had relatives once employed at the works. The cultural and retail uses within the former railway works and the important institutions headquartered there are also contributing to increasing the engagement of residents and visitors with Swindon's railway legacy.

Page 179 7.28 However, there are opportunities to build upon what has already been achieved. Improving orientation at key points within the Conservation Area would assist in increasing movement into and across the area. Enhanced signage, including mapping, would demonstrate the attractions in other parts of the Conservation Area and how close they are. Locations could include: the entrances to the former railway works from the Designer Outlet Village car parks; at both ends of the central underpass opposite the Mechanics' Institution; outside the railway station; and on Faringdon Road at its junctions with Emlyn Square and Fleet Street. Developing an overarching strategy for interpretation would also be useful, which could include heritage trails, QR codes and other digital material and innovative physical installations.

7.29 It is important that dialogue is maintained with existing local interest groups and stakeholders associated with the Conservation Area. Developing partnerships with local schools, colleges and the Royal Agricultural University would draw in a new generation of stakeholders of Swindon's railway legacy beyond those who have direct connections with the works when they were in use. These direct connections are nonetheless important and a programme of gathering and sharing people's memories of the railway works and village could be considered to capture this social heritage for prosperity.



**Fig. 55:** Public engagement workshops undertaken as part of the preparation of this CAAMP

7.30 Engaging generally with the community would also be valuable as this can increase civic pride, assist in sharing the story of Swindon's heritage to younger generations and, importantly, increasing capacity to look after Swindon's railway. The Conservation Area benefits from a mixed community of residents, businesspeople and visitors. However, there are issues with anti-social behaviour in some parts of the Conservation Area, including the railway village, which can negatively impact the experience of other users. There may be opportunities to improve perceptions of the area through engagement with the community using the heritage as a starting point for other well-being initiatives.

7.31 Dialogue and engagement across the spectrum of Council departments including Highways and Housing is important along with other statutory bodies such as Wiltshire Council.

***The Swindon HAZ project, funded by Historic England, presents an opportunity to enact some of these initiatives and increase public engagement with, and enjoyment of, Swindon's railway heritage.***





## 8.1 WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

8.1.1 The Management Plan sets out the vision for the future of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area and a framework to guide change. The overarching ambition for the Conservation Area is to preserve and enhance what is special about the Conservation Area, and it is the statutory duty of the Council to ensure this happens. Preserving and enhancing the special interest of the Conservation Area is achieved by ensuring that change and development take place in a considered and sympathetic way and through the understanding that we all have a shared responsibility for looking after Swindon's railway legacy and the Conservation Area as a whole.

8.1.2 This aligns with the aims and objectives of the Swindon HAZ and the policies set out within the Local Plan, which should be used alongside this document. The Council also has a suite of specific guidance documents to assist in developing proposals including regarding shopfront design and archaeology.

8.1.3 The long-term objectives are to ensure new development is of high quality and responds to the special character of the Conservation Area as well as phase out past ill-considered change and additions. This ranges from very small changes such as reinstating lost historic features to much larger proposals for new buildings both within the Conservation Area and within its setting. It also includes improvements to the public realm of the Conservation Area and increasing accessibility to the railway heritage through interpretation and way-finding.

8.1.4 In addition, regular maintenance of buildings is a vital part of ensuring the special interest is preserved as well as that of the physical fabric of individual buildings. Repairs are often necessary; ensuring that these are done in the most sensitive and least impactful ways possible is an important part of looking after historic buildings and the Conservation Area as a whole.

8.1.5 Advice on best practice maintenance and repair techniques can be found from Historic England, see '[Further Information and Sources](#)'.

8.1.6 The following sections set out how and why change within the Conservation Area is controlled, guidance on alterations, extension and new development, and recommendations responding to the themes within '[Issues and Opportunities](#)'.



**Fig. 56:** Workshop with consultees for the preparation of the CAAMP, we have a shared responsibility for Swindon's railway heritage



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

Management

Further Info

## 8.2 CONTROLS

8.2.1 The purpose of applying planning controls within conservation areas is to ensure that any changes that take place conserve, respect or contribute to the character and appearance which makes the Conservation Area of special interest. The overarching aim is to preserve and enhance the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area.

8.2.2 Undertaking work to any building often requires Planning Permission. When a building is in a Conservation Area the types of work which require Planning Permission may be different, for example permission may be needed for demolition or extension of a structure. In addition other types of permission may also be required such as Listed Building Consent to undertake work to listed buildings and Advertisement Consent may be needed for commercial advertising and signage. Works to trees within the Conservation Area also often require permission.

8.2.3 For further information and advice about when different consents and permissions are required within the Conservation Area, see the guidance on the Government's Planning Portal, Swindon Borough Council Policy or contact the Council's Planning and Regeneration Department, see '[Further Information and Sources](#)' for details.

## ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

8.2.4 Whilst many types of change and development within the Conservation Area are controlled by existing planning controls, the Council is able to develop bespoke controls to ensure that specific elements of a Conservation Area are protected from harmful change. This is done through the application of an Article 4 Direction. These provide additional control by specifically revoking certain permitted development rights meaning that Planning Permission needs to be sought before work can be undertaken.

8.2.5 There is a current Article 4 Direction in place within Swindon's Railway Conservation Area covering the residential streets in the railway village as well as Church Place. The Direction means that work such as painting the exterior of a building, any extension or alteration, erection of garden structures and the creation of vehicle cross-overs all require permission. The Direction was adopted in 1980 and since this time some of the works it covers now require Planning Permission as standard under current legislation. There are also now few buildings covered by the Direction which are not statutorily listed and therefore not subject to the tighter planning controls this designation imposes. Furthermore, several of the buildings recently added to the Conservation Area designation are neither listed nor covered by the Article 4 Direction and are at risk of inappropriate change. For these reasons, it is recommended that the current Article 4 Direction be reviewed.



Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

### 8.3 GUIDANCE

#### ALTERATION, EXTENSION AND DEMOLITION

8.3.1 The appearance and character of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area is the result of a distinct and compressed phase of development in the mid-19th century by the GWR company and the subsequent evolution of the area as a result of the growth and success of the railway works. The current appearance reflects this evolution and it is not the purpose of conservation area designation to prevent future change, which is necessary for the enduring sustainability of the heritage asset. Instead, the purpose of designation is to ensure change is carried out in a manner that not only does not cause harm but also, where appropriate, enhances the Conservation Area. The appropriateness of any demolition, alteration or extension should be considered on a case-by-case basis, as what is appropriate in one location will not necessarily be acceptable in another.

8.3.2 **Demolition** of buildings or removal of features that detract from the Conservation Area may be beneficial. Demolition of detracting buildings and structures will only be permitted where a suitable new development is proposed, as gap and vacant sites detract from the Conservation Area.

8.3.3 **Alterations** should preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area. This means that changes should be respectful of the prevailing architectural and visual character of the Conservation Area and the specific character area in which it is located. Alterations should also use appropriate materials, whether these are the same as those typically found in the Conservation Area or whether they are new materials that are complementary. Enhancement could be achieved through removing a detracting feature and replacing with something more 'in keeping' or with something that draws inspiration from the character of the Conservation Area.

8.3.4 **Extensions** should be subordinate to the existing buildings in their scale, massing and design. Extension to the side and front of buildings is unlikely to be appropriate as this would change the visual appearance of the streetscape, whereas extension to the rear is likely to be more acceptable. All extensions should be of high-quality design and construction. Whilst the design may use materials and finishes which are characteristic to the Conservation Area, including local stone and brick, there may be scope for use of a wider, less traditional material palette only where these are part of a high-quality sensitively designed extension that complements or enhances the appearance of the original building.





Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

## NEW DEVELOPMENT

8.3.5 There are opportunities for new development within the Conservation Area such as on the surface car parking plots adjacent to the railway and the replacement of buildings which detract from the special interest of the area. There may also be opportunities to redevelop buildings which make a neutral contribution. In addition, there are also many opportunities for new development in the setting of the Conservation Area.

8.3.6 Any new and replacement development needs to take account of, and be sensitive to, the following:

- the significance of any building proposed to be removed;
- the significance of any relationship between any building to be removed and any adjacent structures and spaces;
- the potential to draw inspiration from the historic use and character of a site;
- the potential impact of the new design on known or potential archaeological remains;
- the potential impact of the new design on the setting of any neighbouring listed buildings or positive buildings;
- the materials and architectural detailing characteristic of the area should inform the choice of materials and detailing of the new design;
- the scale and grain of the surrounding area, including historic plot boundaries;
- the potential impact on important views; and
- the impact of development on the setting of the Conservation Area

8.3.7 This list is not exhaustive; each location will present its own unique requirements for a sensitive and appropriate new design. In all cases, new development must be of the highest quality of design, construction and detailing. The principal aim of new development should be to preserve and enhance the character of their setting and the Conservation Area as a whole. The height of new development will also be a consideration in assessing its acceptability. Where proposed buildings would be substantially taller than their surroundings or have the potential to affect important views or the dominance of landmarks due to their height, proposals will need to demonstrate that they preserve or enhance the special interest of the Conservation Area. Historic England's guidance documents '*Tall Buildings: Historic England Advice Note 4*' and '*The Setting of Heritage Assets Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3*' along with the National Design Guide provide advice on the sensitive design of taller buildings, see '[Further Information and Sources](#)' for details.



Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

### WINDOWS, DOORS AND RAINWATER GOODS

8.3.8 The majority of buildings in the Conservation Area contain traditional timber sash or casement windows, see photograph of cottages in the railway village (**Fig. 57**). There are also a number of buildings, mainly within the former railway works, which are of recent construction and therefore, appropriately, use modern metal and plastic materials for these features.

8.3.9 The majority of buildings within the Conservation Area are statutorily listed and are therefore subject to tighter controls relating to changes to windows, doors and rainwater goods. However, there are some historic buildings where there has been unfortunate replacement with uPVC units. Replacement of historic windows, doors and rainwater goods is strongly discouraged, unless they are damaged beyond repair, and where replacement is necessary this should be in timber and the appropriate historic style for the individual building in order to maintain authenticity of appearance. Where inappropriate replacement has already been undertaken, returning these features back to their traditional appearance is encouraged.

8.3.10 Rainwater goods would have historically been painted cast iron or lead; however other metals may be appropriate subject to their detailed design. White-painted timber is likely to be the most appropriate material for windows; the proportions and type of window are dependant on the age and style of individual buildings. For doors, painted timber is also likely to be the most appropriate material, although a greater range of colours is appropriate.



**Fig. 57:** The cottages in the railway village have their original timber windows and the doors are being systematically replaced with historically appropriate timber units



Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

### TELECOMS EQUIPMENT

8.3.11 The installation of telecommunications antenna, i.e. television aerials and satellite dishes, on chimneys and the front and sides of elevations and roofs of buildings in the Conservation Area will be resisted and requires Planning Permission and, where necessary, Listed Building Consent. Such features are not in keeping with the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The removal of existing visible aerials and dishes is encouraged, as this will enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area.

### TREES

8.3.12 There are many historic, mature trees within the Conservation Area with those in GWR Park and forming the verdant character of Church Place, particularly important. There have also been trees planted in recent decades, as part of the railway village refurbishment scheme and the regeneration of the former railway works. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining existing mature trees with works to those with a diameter of 75mm or greater (measured at 1.5m from soil level) requiring permission from the local authority. New trees may be considered, as part of succession planting or new public realm landscaping.

### SHOPFRONTS AND ADVERTISING

8.3.13 Retail uses are an important part of the Conservation Area today. Historic shopfronts or those which retain historic features remain, whilst others have been replaced with inappropriate designs and materials. Council guidance document 'Swindon Shop Fronts Coding Guidance' contains detailed advice on the appropriate design of shopfronts and signage within the Conservation Area. Details can be found in '[Further Information and Sources](#)'.





Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

## 8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.4.1 The following recommendations have been developed in response to the issues and opportunities identified and the guidance provided over the previous pages. These recommendations are designed to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the special interest of Swindon's Railway Conservation Area.

### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Heritage Impact Assessment** of proposed alterations, demolition and development should be undertaken by applicants to analyse and describe the effects of the proposal upon significance to ensure the special interest of the Conservation Area is preserved or enhanced.
- **Proposals for extension, alteration and new development** will only be approved where they would preserve or enhance the special interest of the Conservation Area, or where the public benefits would outweigh any harm.
- **Due consideration** should be given to archaeological potential and protection of remains wherever below ground intervention is proposed.
- **The design, construction and materials of any new development, extension, alteration or repair** should be of the highest quality.
- **The condition of the Conservation Area** should monitored and reviewed periodically.
- **The Article 4 Directions adopted for the Conservation Area** be reviewed.



Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

## RECOMMENDATIONS BY THEME

**Theme 1: Connectivity****Short to Medium-Term**

- Look for opportunities to encourage pedestrian and cycle movement through the Conservation Area, in particular between the town centre and former railway works.
- Review the accessibility of the routes crossing the railway line.
- Plan and carry out improvements to the existing routes crossing the railway line, including improving their safety for users.

**Long-Term**

- Consider introducing a new access across the railway line, with the special interest of the Conservation Area the key factor in the decision-taking process.

**Theme 2: Thoroughfares and Experience****Short to Medium-Term**

- Undertake a transport and accessibility audit and develop a movement strategy improving the experience of those using the Conservation Area as well as enhancing its appearance.
- Make changes to existing pedestrian crossings so that they are safer and make moving through the Conservation Area easier.
- Make repairs to damaged and uneven surface treatments.
- Maintain the historic elements of the public realm and consider removing and, if necessary, replacing non-historic and insensitive elements including bins and road signage.

**Long-Term**

- Consider introducing additional crossing points, traffic-calming measures and public realm improvements to improve the pedestrian experience and accentuate the natural desire lines of movement through the area, whilst being sensitive to the special interest of the Conservation Area.
- Consider changes to the bus routes which pass through the centre of the railway village.

**Theme 3: Public Spaces in the Former Railway Works****Short to Medium-Term**

- Prepare an overarching strategy for the public spaces within the former railway works so there is harmony across the whole area but allowing for individual identities.
- Develop proposals for the public spaces encouraging movement, removing barriers and rationalising planting.
- Consider new uses and features for the public spaces to increase activity and improve way-finding.
- Develop an interpretation strategy, which could include the commissioning of new public art.

**Long-Term**

- Look for opportunities for strengthening the relationship with the railway village through exploiting and enhancing views across the railway line (see View 2 in [Section 5.12](#)).



Introduction

Boundary

Special Interest

History

Character

Buildings

Issues &amp; Opps

**Management**

Further Info

## RECOMMENDATIONS BY THEME (CONT.)

**Theme 4: GWR Park****Short to Medium-Term**

- Commission a CMP for the park and develop proposals in line with its findings.
- Improve the amenities within the park (public conveniences and refreshment offer).
- Look for opportunities to host external events in the park.

**Long-Term**

- Consider the reinstatement or reinterpretation of lost historic features.

**Theme 5: Vacant, Underused and Detracting Sites****Short to Medium-Term**

- Secure a viable and appropriate new use for the Mechanics' Institution and ensure that the necessary repairs and refurbishment are undertaken.
- Critically assess any proposals which come forward for new development on the underused or detracting sites within the Conservation Area to ensure that they are sympathetic, contribute to the character of the area and are of the highest quality.
- Critically assess proposals within the setting of the Conservation Area to ensure they are sympathetic to its special interest and do not cause harm.

**Theme 6: Unsympathetic Alterations****Short to Medium-Term**

- Look for opportunities to enhance the Conservation Area by encouraging and making changes to the small and localised inappropriate interventions of the past, including TV aerials and satellite dishes.
- Encourage the replacement of inappropriate alterations to shopfronts and signage with suitably designed, traditional alternatives.

**Long-Term**

- Consider reinstating the historic boundary treatments and divisions within the railway village.

**Theme 7: Engagement with Swindon's Railway Heritage****Short to Medium-Term**

- Develop an overarching strategy for interpretation and engagement in relation to the railway heritage and Conservation Area.
- Introduce enhanced signage and orientation to encourage movement across the Conservation Area.
- Continue engagement and partnership with existing stakeholders including local interest groups.
- Develop partnerships with new local stakeholders such as schools and colleges.





Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

## LEGISLATION AND POLICY

### NATIONAL PLANNING LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents>

National Planning Policy Framework (2019): [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/740441/National\\_Planning\\_Policy\\_Framework\\_web\\_accessible\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740441/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_web_accessible_version.pdf)

Planning Practice Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

Planning Portal: <https://www.planningportal.co.uk>

National Design Guide (2019): [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/843468/National\\_Design\\_Guide.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/843468/National_Design_Guide.pdf)

### LOCAL PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Swindon Local Plan (2015)<sup>01</sup>: [https://www.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/3988/swindon\\_borough\\_local\\_plan\\_2026](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/3988/swindon_borough_local_plan_2026)

Swindon Planning Policy Guidance: [https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20113/local\\_plan\\_and\\_planning\\_policy/651/planning\\_policy\\_guidance](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20113/local_plan_and_planning_policy/651/planning_policy_guidance)

Swindon Shop Fronts Coding Guidance: [https://www.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/5196/swindon\\_shop\\_fronts\\_coding\\_guidance](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/5196/swindon_shop_fronts_coding_guidance)

Guidance on protected trees: [https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20059/land\\_and\\_premises/375/find\\_out\\_about\\_protected\\_trees](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20059/land_and_premises/375/find_out_about_protected_trees)

### HISTORIC ENGLAND GUIDANCE

Historic England's website contains a range of advice and guidance on conservation best practice, such as *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* and guides on understanding heritage value, setting and views, to specific guides on types of repairs or types of buildings. This information can largely be found in the advice area of their website: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/>

Links to the most relevant guidance and that used in the preparation of the CAAMP are overleaf.

<sup>01</sup> Swindon Borough Council are currently (2020) undertaking a review of the Local Plan for the period to 2036.



Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
--------------	----------	------------------	---------	-----------	-----------	---------------	------------	--------------

Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition): <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management-advice-note-1/heag-268-conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management/>

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (April 2008): <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historicenvironment/conservationprinciplespoliciesguidanceapr08web.pdf>

The Setting of Heritage Assets Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) (December 2017): <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/heag180-gpa3-settingheritage-assets.pdf>

Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets Historic England Advice Note 12 (October 2019): <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/statements-heritage-significance-advice-note-12/heag279-statements-heritage-significance/>

Tall Buildings: Historic England Advice Note 4 (December 2015): <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/tall-buildings-advice-note-4/heag037-tall-buildings/>

National Heritage List for England (NHLE): <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

## KEY LITERARY WORKS ON THE RAILWAY HERITAGE OF SWINDON

John Cattell and Keith Falconer, *Swindon: the legacy of a railway town* (English Heritage, 2000)

Peck, Alan, S., *The Great Western Railway Works at Swindon* (Oxford Publishing Company, 1983)

Silto, William, *Of Stone and Steam: the story of Swindon Railway Village* (Barracuda, 1989)

Grinsell, L. V., Wells, H. B., Tallamy, H. S., Betjeman, John, *Studies in the History of Swindon* (Swindon Borough Council, 1950)

## FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

For further study, the following archives hold material that may be of relevance to the history and significance of Swindon's railway works and village:

- Wiltshire and Swindon Archives
- Wiltshire Buildings Record
- Swindon Museum and Art Gallery
- STEAM: Museum of the GWR



Introduction	Boundary	Special Interest	History	Character	Buildings	Issues & Opps	Management	Further Info
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Other sources include:

- The Wiltshire and Swindon Historic Landscape Characterisation Project: [https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-2730-1/dissemination/pdf/Wilts\\_HLC\\_Report.pdf](https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-2730-1/dissemination/pdf/Wilts_HLC_Report.pdf)
- The Wiltshire and Swindon HER, which includes information on the archaeological resource of the area: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/museums-history-heritage-archaeology-historic-environment-record>

For further information about the selection of listed buildings, refer to:

- DDCMS, Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings (November 2018): [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/757054/Revised\\_Principles\\_of\\_Selection\\_2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/757054/Revised_Principles_of_Selection_2018.pdf)
- Historic England's Listed Selection Guides, specifically Industrial Buildings (<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/dlsg-industrial/heag134-industrial-buildings-lsg/>) and Infrastructure: Transport (<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/dlsg-transport-buildings/heag120-infrastructure-transport-lsg/>)

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AAA912 642493: Andrews and Dury, *A topographical map of the County of Wilts, surveyed originally 1773* (1810)

Box DL I: Marlborough drawings (Swindon)

GWR Swindon Choral and Orchestral Union Programmes, 1888-1931

MID01a: Photograph of Entrance to the GWR Works on south side of the railway showing London Street and the Mechanics Institute

MID01b: Photograph of Health Hydro, Milton Road, 1907

MID01c: Photograph of the Children's Fete in the GWR Park, c.1910

SWI.385/2069695000: Hawksworth, *Great Western Railway: Swindon Works from 1846*

P50403: Evening Star steam locomotive, 1960

## THE HISTORIC ENGLAND ARCHIVE

BF110313: St Mark's Church, file, 1850-1994

BF081508: St Mark's Vicarage, file, 1880-1996

BF097256: Mechanics Institute, file, 1854-2007

BF100341: Central Community Centre (formerly Great Western Medical Fund Hospital), file, 1895-1994

BF110308: Former Great Western Railway Museum, file, 1994-2003

BF110310: The Railway Village, file, 1840-1998

BF110317: The Park, file, 1895-1915

BF110322: Great Western Railway Washing and Turkish Baths, file, 1868-1877

BF097788: Health Hydro, file, 1855-1998

PC07019: General view, GWR Park, photograph, 1900-1930

PC07020: General view, GWR Park, photograph, 1903-1908

PC11062: General view, GWR Park, photograph, 1900-1905

GOM01/01/2033: A view looking north along Bristol Street showing the Saw Mill and Carriage Body Shop of the Great Western Railway Works, photograph, 1957

GOM01/01/2034: A view looking east along Taunton Street showing the terrace on the south side of the street, photograph, 1957

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## THE HISTORIC ENGLAND ARCHIVE (CONT.)

GOM01/01/2035: A view looking north-east along Bathampton Street showing houses on the north side of the street and the Mechanics' Institute in the distance, photograph, 1957

BB94/04692: Early view showing the 'Lord of the Isles' locomotive on the railway line in front of St Mark's Church, Church Place, Swindon

BB94/04789: Cricket Pavilion in Great Western Railway Park, Swindon c.1910

BB94/04815: Postcard of east side of Great Western Railway Park, Swindon c.1900

BB95/12086: Bristol Street in the Railway Village, 1995

## STEAM: MUSEUM OF THE GWR

Edward Snell's 1849 panoramic view showing the railway village and its rural setting

Former G.W.R. Hospital (now Central Community Centre), Faringdon Road, c.1930

*The Mechanics Institution, 1880s*

*The broad-gauge Lord of the Isles locomotive built at Swindon in 1851*

*Cricket pavilion in GWR Park, c.1910*

*Ornamental planting along the eastern edge of the Park, c.1900*

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R W Dunning, K H Rogers, P A Spalding, Colin Shrimpton, Janet H Stevenson and Margaret Tomlinson, *A History of the County of Wiltshire: Volume 9*, ed. Elizabeth Crittall (London, 1970). Available from: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/wilts/vol9>

Open Domesday for information about Swindon in the Domesday book, available from: <https://opendomesday.org/place/SUI583/swindon/>

National Library of Scotland for Historic Ordnance Survey mapping, available from: <https://maps.nls.uk>

G.W.R. workers outside Rodbourne Road entrance, Swindon, 1910 (Collection of P.A. Williams, copyright owner of the William Hooper Archives)

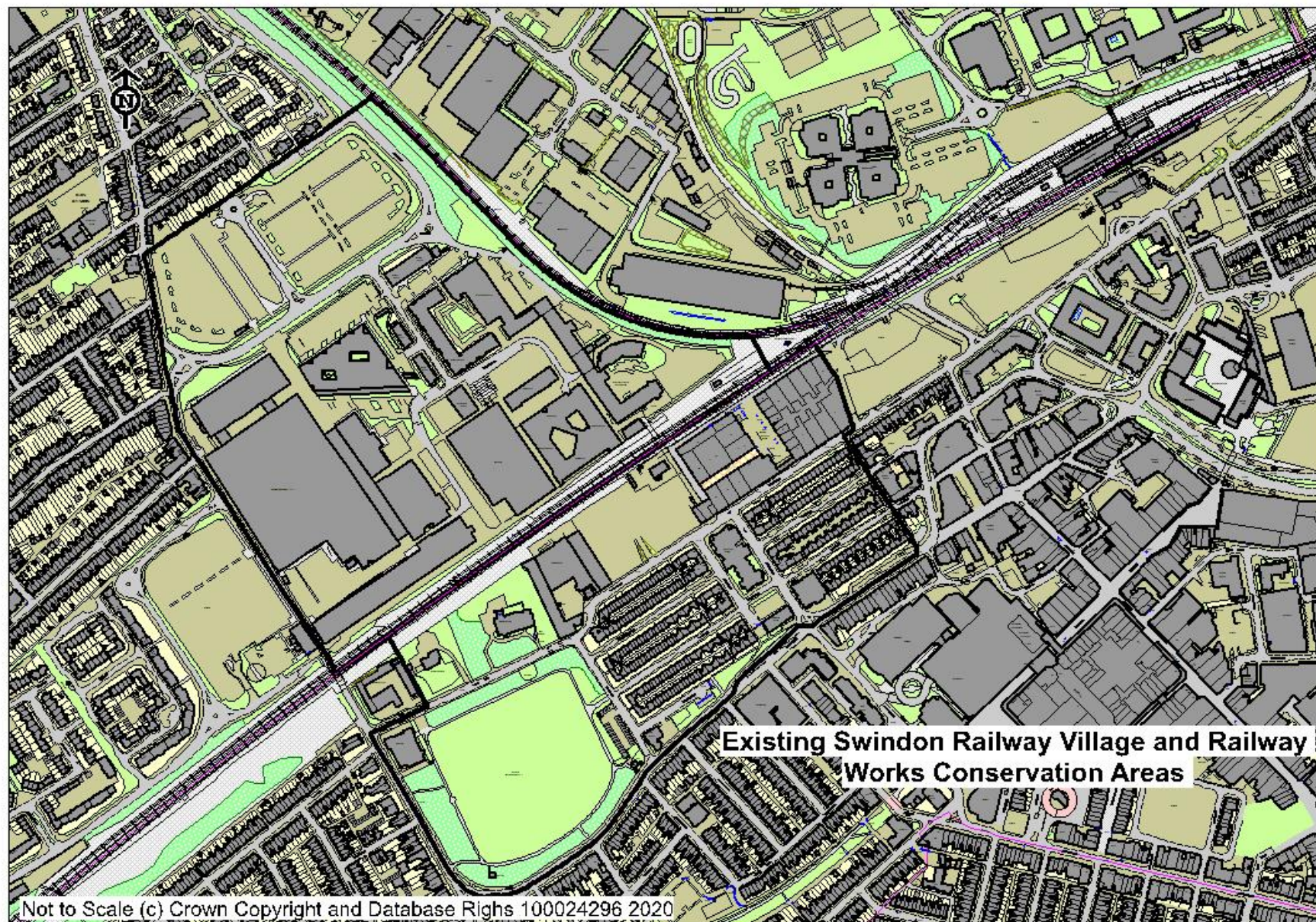




Appendix 2:

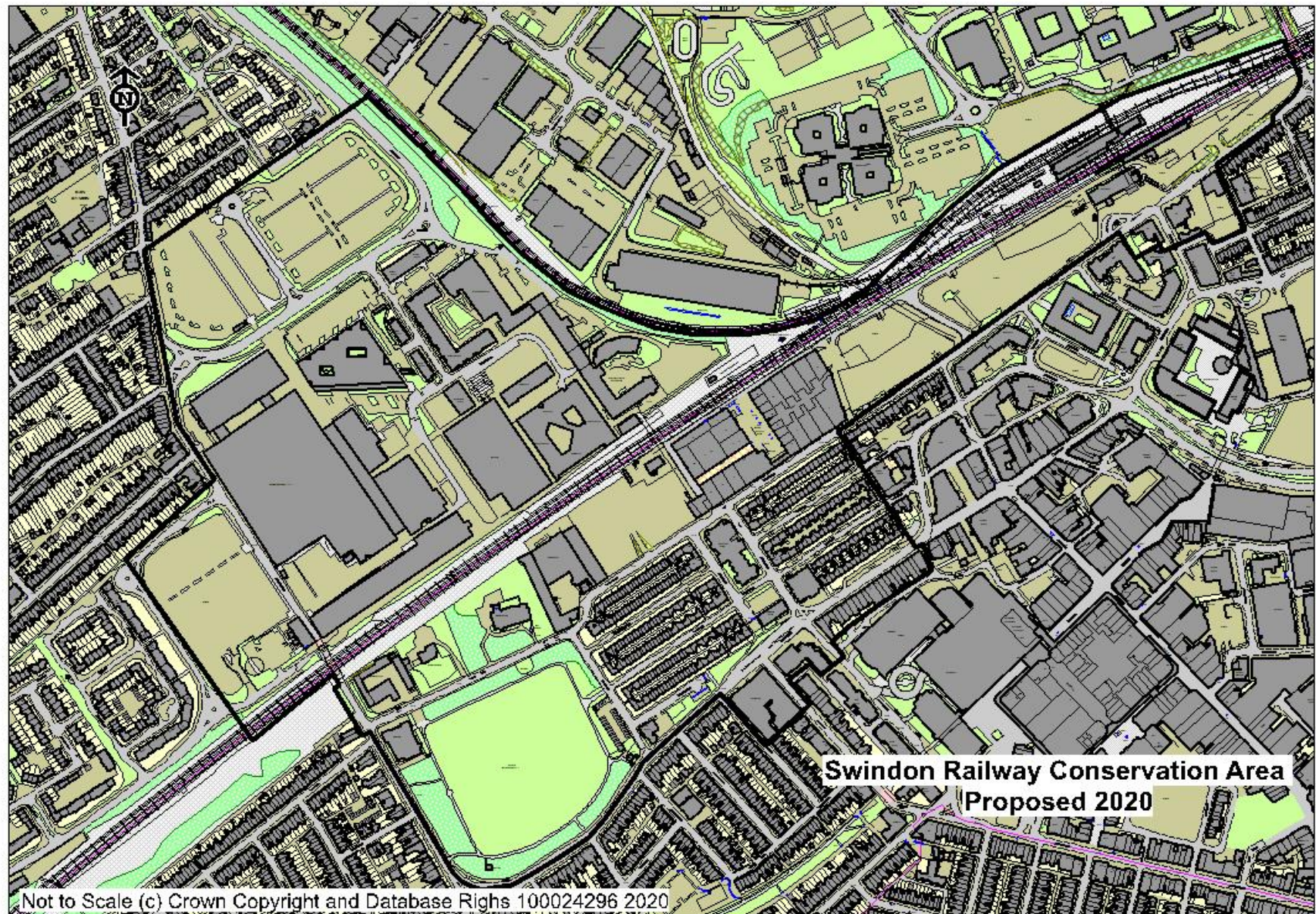
Maps of the Existing Swindon Railway Conservation Areas and proposed Swindon Railway Conservation Area





**Existing Swindon Railway Village and Railway Works Conservation Areas**







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# APPENDIX 3

	Responder	Date	Document ref	Summary of response	Proposed response
	SBC Officers		Page 8  Whole Document  Front cover (or similar)	Amendments and Updates  Minor corrections and clarifications  Adoption date	Update document to reflect current status of document post consultation.  Proof reading changes.
1	Gareth Lopes Powell  Historic England	21/09/2020	N/A	Praised Council for work. Agree that merger should take place and agrees that Station Road etc. be included	No change
2	Resident	23/09/2020	N/A	Well researched and written. Welcomes merger and process by which aid management overall. Specifically supports/notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pedestrian road crossing (connectivity) across Faringdon Road near Health Hydro</li> <li>- Removal of planters and consideration of boundaries/management of front gardens</li> </ul>	No change.  Theme 7 does not preclude any engagement on this matter. No change to document.  Agree that later alterations may be significant and that would be matter for establishing significance during necessary consent process e.g. Listed building Consent in respect of



				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Disappointed not to see ref to Health Hydro in Theme 7 in regard to engagement</li> <li>- Windows doors and r/w goods. References potential significance to previous alterations to cottages</li> </ul>	Railway Village Cottages. No change to document
3	Sally Cole, Treasurer Mechanics Institute Trust	23/09/20	N/A	<p>Supports merger of two boundaries</p> <p>Seeks expansion of Railway (Cottage) museum on Faringdon Road (perhaps utilising former Barracks) to enhance interpretation and activities.</p>	No change required in regard to CAAMP
4	Resident	25/09/20	Page 13	<p>Seeks inclusion west of Park Lane and also streets bearing names of engineers, including Newburn Crescent previously site of Churchward mansion). Also other cottages related to Railway Workers (e.g. Westcott area)</p> <p>Tunnel to west under railway inc Western end Dean Street. Historical interest to Railway historians and watchman's hut</p>	<p>The inclusion of Park Lane has been noted to not be desirable. Further areas denoted by reference to street names would not be a basis to include areas into the CA.</p> <p>References to other remnants (evidential value) beyond CA are helpful and would be considered in Heritage assessment of any future development proposals. No change to document.</p>
5	Resident	29/09/20	N/A	<p>Welcomes combining CA's and development, esp along Station Road and other overall regeneration including facelift to Bristol Street car park and MI reuse</p> <p>Highlights need for Pavilion in park, more heritage signage</p> <p>Tours of Railway area</p>	Noted no change to document required.

6	Resident	30/09/20	Page 10	Draws attention to turntable and potential for working exhibit (in Swindon)	Reference to the turntable (grade II listed) is helpful and reflective of the desire to include in the SRCA.
7	Resident	02/10/20	Page 20 Para 4.5	Not enough of Swindon as model for NHS – needs to be shared ‘far and wide’	Reference to the NHS is made at paragraph para 4.5. It is not for the CAAMP to outline this specific aspect but suggest that going forward the significance should be clear. No change to document.
8	Resident	04/10/20	N/A	Understands the value of the history and the opportunity it gives to Swindon, however feels that there is a far larger problem to focus on, here and it is a shame that this plan does not recognise this and account for it in some way	The CAAMP is a bespoke piece of work with a different purpose to what is being referred to by the respondent. The CAAMP, which is part of planning policy and aligns with wider Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) aims and objectives. No change to document.
9	Resident	07/10/20	Pages 13, 19, 55	<p>Boundary should be further increased to include south (eastern) end of Faringdon Road, Westcott Place and Cambria Cottages and Chapel.</p> <p>Notes links to former lodging house (Platform) which was used by Welsh families</p> <p><i>“It would be utterly remiss of Swindon Borough Council to ignore this important slice of Swindon Works history and the development of Swindon”</i></p> <p>Referring to the issues of the Baptist tabernacle and MI.</p>	<p>It is not considered appropriate to arbitrarily stretch the CAAMP boundary to include specific buildings in this way. Nevertheless, the individual buildings noted are likely to be considered Heritage Assets (Cambria Chapel is NHLE 1355893).</p> <p>The considerations of this issue are covered in the CAAMP.</p> <p>Reference to Lodging and Welsh are covered on page 19 of CAAMP.</p> <p>No change to document.</p>

10	Resident	24/10/20	Pages 76-85	<p>References the condition and/or inappropriateness of signage, bollards and other street furniture.</p> <p>Raises matter of memorials to GWR workers that fought during WW and that those in the outlet are “<i>out of way and not easily viewed</i>”</p>	<p>These matters, are important and pertinent are covered in the wider <b><i>Issues and Opportunities</i></b> Section on Page 76.</p> <p>Any desire for plaque memorial could be need to be considered although those is the outlet (listed building) are protected.</p>
11	Andy Brown (SBC DM Manager)	27/10/20	N/A	<p>Supports merger of two CA’s into one singular CA plus proposed additions. “<i>I am sure that Brunel would have be pleased with and supportive the proposed changes</i>”</p>	<p>Noted. No change to document.</p>
12	Chris Barry of Wilts and Berks Canal Trust	28/10/20	Page 70 para 5.13.34	<p>“<i>gone through this document in some detail; it's excellent - well put together, comprehensive, sensitive and nicely illustrated</i>”</p> <p><i>Para 5.13.34 mentions the 'lost' N Wilts canal, but it's important to recognise that it's not lost yet...the line is protected under Policy EN11...</i></p> <p><i>Under Theme 7, the canal line and the Trust's intention of restoring it could get greater prominence? Perhaps in 7.28 or 29 under maintaining dialogue with stakeholders?</i></p> <p><i>8.1.1 - the vision refers to preserving &amp; enhancing what's special; hopefully the canal would be included in that, though not necessarily specifically mentioned.</i></p> <p><i>8.1.3 refers to reinstating lost historic features - maybe a specific mention there?</i></p>	<p>Remove reference to ‘lost’ (page 70, para 5.13.34)</p> <p>Engagement with Stakeholders through the wider HAZ project will continue as set out in Page 94. No change to document.</p> <p>No specific mention of the Canal is proposed in this document.</p>



				<p><i>8.2.4 mentions Article 4 Directions - might this be applicable to, or even helpful in canal restoration</i></p> <p><i>8.3 covers alterations, extensions &amp; demolitions; if or when the canal is restored under the railway, a lot of ground work will be needed, including a culvert under Station Road - creating, of course, a safe &amp; attractive pedestrian &amp; cycle route there. Might it be worth an extra bullet point there, as a marker?</i></p> <p><i>General Recommendations the canal isn't an archaeological feature, but something with the potential to undergo historically respectful restoration, with all the recreational, social &amp; financial benefits that</i></p> <p><i>Lastly under the themed recommendations, the canal would fit very nicely in the first section, on Connectivity, as the underpass &amp; its environs would be much enhanced by the restored canal!</i></p>	<p>The reference to article 4 directions has perhaps been misunderstood and would not be appropriate in regard to proposed canal restoration.</p> <p>As the CAAMP notes appropriateness of 'alteration, extension and demolition' would be on cases by case basis (CAAMP page 88 para 8.3.1)</p> <p>The ref' to the Wilts and Berks Canal at 4.2 and 5.2.4 is an attempt to highlight the route of the canal and the archaeological contribution to current character and appearance.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
13	Central Swindon North PC	6/11/20		<p><i>The Central Swindon North Environment &amp; Planning Committee have reviewed the draft CAAMP and agree with and support the recommendations relating to the 7 Themes.</i></p> <p><i>However, the Council have concerns about the general recommendation that 'Proposals for extension, alteration and new development will only be approved where they would preserve or enhance the special interest of the Conservation</i></p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The references are as required by the legislative and policy requirements including the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, National Planning Policy Framework and</p>

				<p><i>Area, or where the public benefits would outweigh any harm....and who would make the judgement on whether the benefits outweigh harm?"</i></p> <p><i>Within the draft CAAMP the term 'High Quality' is used several times when referring to developments, extensions, and street furniture. The Council would query who or how would it be determined what would be considered as 'High Quality'.</i></p>	<p>Local Plan Policy, which the CAAMP would for part of.</p> <p>This forms part of the decision making process of a Local Planning Authority, determined via Planning Policy (as above) through usual planning considerations.</p> <p>No change to document.</p>
14	Gerry Prodohl (SBC Transport Development Management Officer)	28/10/20	Chapters 5, 7 and 8	<p>The Management Plan document addresses accessibility and movement, promoting specific measures to improve it, queries absence of reference to the adopted Town Centre Movement Strategy (TCMS)...[there are] a series of schemes, a number of which are directly relevant to the Conservation Area, designed to deliver that vision. Whilst TCMS recognises the importance of the HAZ and seeks to support its regeneration...it is suggested that reference is made to the Management Plan sitting alongside TCMS and ... that any movement-related proposals are assessed for consistency with the adopted Movement Strategy before they are finalised.</p> <p>Further comment on the characteristics and contribution of the movement network could be included (Station Road Faringdon Road, etc.) in Para 5.9.</p>	<p>The CAAMP is a document to guide the preservation and enhancement of the SRCA and should not be confused with the wider ambitions of the HAZ and its associated projects. The exclusion of the mention TCMS (or other) is not indicative of not being aligned.</p> <p>Recalling that the statutory duty is to preserve or enhance the areas character and appearance therefore it is very helpful that the TCMS has been able to accommodate the references to the CA.</p> <p>The 'proposals' and any potential opportunities and considerations would be as part of ongoing</p>

			Plan 5	<p>Whilst the issue surrounding their impact [buses] on the environment within the Railway Village is appreciated some mention of the accessibility benefits could be made.</p> <p>Plan 5 defines Milton Road as a Principal Pedestrian Route...the designation should actually have applied to the adjacent Farnsby Street, which connects the Conservation Area with the town centre at Canal Walk.</p> <p>In Chapter 7 the interrelationship is a little confusing, as the issue of severance due to road traffic is referred to under Theme 2, with only severance by the railway considered in Theme 1. It may be worth considering whether this is actually a single theme relating to difficulty of movement.</p> <p>The recommendation, within Theme 2, I supported. This audit must however be undertaken within the context of TCMS if it is to carry any weight...it may be worth emphasising early in the document that it is not in itself a Plan for improving movement into and through the Conservation Area.</p>	<p>engagement through the wider HAZ project and not within this document.</p> <p>It is not for a CAAMP to identify all aspects of the 'detail' of the issues. The level of detail and nature of information within the Management Plan allows for a holistic response with consideration to all stakeholders.</p> <p>Agree that Farnsby Street should be identified as well as Milton Road (noting the term principal is applied for the purposes of the CAAMP as a non-highway term)</p> <p>Appreciate that they are similar as acknowledged in the document, and the connection and relationship of each is identified. No change to document.</p> <p>Agreed add at section 8 (e.g. 8.1.3)</p> <p><i>"The CAAMP is not in itself a Plan for improving movement, but is a tool for the areas management".</i></p>
15	Rodney Hacker Wiltshire and	29/10/20	N/A	Supports concept of CAAMP and merger of two areas into one.	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Any features of significance, either independently or as part of wider character and</p>



	Berkshire Canal Trust			<p>Trust highlights (positively) the flexibility of tools to manage development. It also highlights the potential benefits of preservation and enhancement and in this the potential for the role of the canal (with much discussion on Restoration of Canal in the Town Centre).</p> <p>It is recommended that the plan includes the restoration and protection of heritage canal features alongside the railway features.</p>	appearance, would be sought to be preserved and enhanced. As such the omission of any specific typological features is not indicative of any lack of value. In terms of the canal the role in the development of the Railway area is acknowledged in the document (pages 17, 28, 30, etc.)
16	Dick Millard Swindon Cycle Campaign	30/10/20	N/A	<p>Supports proposals of CAAMP and merger of two areas into one.</p> <p>Supports objective to make area pedestrian and cycle friendly (as for HAZ)</p> <p>Theme 1: Connectivity Page 77: <i>"We support the proposal to examine whether further suitable crossing points can be provided..."</i></p> <p>Further comments and suggestions set out in relation to cycle connectivity in relation to: Bristol Street; Town Centre (eg. the Brunel Centre); Emlyn Square and Farnsby Street.</p> <p>Theme 2: Thoroughfares and Experience: <i>"There are several busy roads within and at the edges of the Conservation Area, ... . These are unpleasant for pedestrian users (and cyclists) and a lack of adequate crossing points mean they are barriers to movement ... We support to</i></p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted. Document refers to "a range of different users" and lists cyclists within this (Page 78)</p> <p>Insert "and cycle" to 'Theme 2' text on Page 93.</p>

				<i>proposal for a transport and accessibility audit, whose scope should explicitly include cyclists. “</i>	
17	Resident	30/10/20	N/A	<p>Advocates inclusion of Cambria Place. Also specifically highlights a number of buildings (additions to boundary) being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greyhound and Falcon PH (now residential)</li> <li>- Mechanics Institute annexe (Rodbourne Road and Morris Street)</li> <li>- Parish Church St Augustine</li> </ul> <p>Suggests monthly updates on enforcement.</p> <p>Requests hedge height reduced at property (former managers' house) in Church Place to be able to see house.</p>	<p>It is not considered appropriate to arbitrarily stretch the CAAMP boundary to include specific buildings in this way. Nevertheless, the individual buildings noted are likely to be considered Heritage Assets, and in the case of St Augustine Parish Church, is grade II listed building (NHLE 1023525).</p> <p>Updates on enforcement (Planning) will not form part of the CAAMP.</p> <p>The matter of the hedge has been passed on.</p>
18	Resident	01/11/20	N/A	<p>Refers to authenticity of features, in particular street furniture and public realm and potential for enhancement.</p> <p>Refers to examples at Black Country Museum</p> <p>Seeks courtyard/gardens to be reinstated between Reading and Oxford Street to reinstate 'Victorian living environment'</p> <p>Theme 4 - GWR Park could serve the local community much more significantly. Perhaps with the addition of a Kiosk (such as the Town Gardens and Queens Park) and facilities for people to use and enjoy.</p> <p>The TA centre does detract from the area, as well as the installation of metal artwork on</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The CAAMP covers an area of habituated residential properties and is not a museum.</p> <p>Noted. Improvement of amenities is set out on Page 94.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

				<p>Faringdon Road. It would be lovely to see a formal garden area added, such as a Rose Garden with benches.</p> <p>Theme 5 - Signal Point is by far one of the most ugliest and detracting buildings in the area. I would love to see a replacement building more in line with the original station built as a replacement.</p> <p>Theme 6 - Retail Units on Faringdon Road should be decorated using traditional colours such as Racing Green, Oxford Blue, Black and Oxblood/Claret. Where possible, neon and plastic modern signs should be limited and replaced where possible. Typefaces on shop fronts should be kept traditional.</p>	<p>Noted. See page 46 for commentary on Signal Point.</p> <p>Noted. This accords with the test on Pages 84, 91, etc.</p>
19	Resident	01/11/20		<p>Agrees with boundary changes – but advocates addition to include entire length of listed wall at Redcliffe Street to illustrate the area of the works - with precedent set by proposing to include Pattern Store. Inclusion would encourage upkeep and alerts to existing issues.</p>	<p>It is not considered appropriate to arbitrarily stretch the CAAMP boundary to include specific structures in this way. The inclusion of the entire length of the wall would not result in a practical CAAMP boundary and would not offer enhanced protection in light of its existing listed building status (NHLE 1382144).</p>
20	Martha Parry Swindon Civic Voice (SCV)	06/11/20		<p>Oppose unification of areas unless there are three character areas.</p> <p>Support Designation and inclusion of Station Area (but as part of works area!). Also inclusion of Army site at Church Place.</p>	<p>This does not undermine the holistic approach to the historic Railway Area. This is now accepted with Swindon Civic Voice.</p> <p>Any development would need to demonstrate the effect upon the character and appearance.</p>



			<p>Highlight links to canal but wish the CAAMP to provide comfort that to bring canal along Faringdon Road be abandoned and be reflected in Local Plan.</p> <p>Believes matters relating to traffic are watered down since the 2006 Conservation Area Appraisal.</p> <p>Concerned that area of Emlyn Square not identified as central focus – suggesting thinking is flawed.</p> <p>Inadequate description of the GWR park and the role in regard to use during war and the parks various names!</p> <p>Restoration of the park required in CAAMP. Highlights some helpful info to inform Local List but also the SCV refer to buildings that they feel should be listed (Radnor Street Cemetery, Cambria Place) or CA designation.</p>	<p>The canal is not a matter for a CAAMP to address directly.</p> <p>There are numerous references to traffic and is further enhanced by direct consideration in management plan. This is now accepted by Swindon Civic Voice.</p> <p>Emlyn square and its role is considered in CAAMP (paras 4.4/4.6/5.4.3/5.11.6). This is now accepted by Swindon Civic Voice.</p> <p>The GWR is part of the CA (area 3) and the CAAMP highlights appropriate management (Theme 4). This is now accepted by Swindon Civic Voice.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate to arbitrarily stretch the CAAMP boundary to include specific buildings/or areas in this way. Nevertheless, the individual buildings noted are likely to be considered Heritage Assets (Cambria Chapel is NHLE 1355893).</p> <p>Listing is not within the remit of the LPA.</p> <p>Terminology in regard to the works entrance/underpass/tunnel to be reviewed. Amend 'underpass' to 'tunnel' or 'works entrance' as applicable</p>
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Various instances:  
P. 10 Plan 2/Pages  
42/48/68/77 (x3) and  
page 85

21	Ben Staite (SBC Transport Planning)	2/11/20		Acknowledges Station Road is a key corridor in the town centre and the ambition to improve cycling and walking provision and notes a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan is being prepared to improving walking and cycling infrastructure within the Swindon Heritage Action Zone.	Noted.
			Page 42 para 5.9.2	The nature of Faringdon Road (between Farnsby Street and Milton Road) does represent a barrier between connectivity for sustainable forms of transport.	Noted.
			Page 42 para 5.9.4	There is no reference that the rail network is now electrified through Swindon and that Swindon rail station, which forms the only access to rail services in the borough forms falls within the Proposed Conservation Area boundary.	Noted. Refer to electrification at para 5.9.2
			Page 83 - Fig 53	Notes the dividing of bus routes at Emlyn Square has dated from when the protective boarding around the Mechanics Institute was installed and discusses the existing arrangements.	Noted. Consideration of bus routes, parking etc. part of wider management objectives.
				Notes traffic congestion on the highway network in the Historic Railway Quarter has become a significant issue in recent years and discusses the series of traffic management interventions that have been assessed,	Noted. The document acknowledges the car parking in the area.

			Page 77 para 7.2	<p>implemented where feasible and measures kept under review.</p> <p>The former canal is a strategic cycle link known as the Western Flyer, which has seen branding treatment and investment through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (2011-2015).</p>	Noted.
22	Andrew Norris (SBC Landscape Architect)	04/11/20	Page 93	<p>Supports the objectives set out and main recommendation to this <i>well-researched piece of work hopefully provides some Landscape perspective to the ongoing appraisal and management plan</i> conversation for this exceptionally valuable and significant conservation area.</p> <p>This accessible document ... is logically structured and well set out. Would welcome the inclusion of any follow on work e.g. studies which may take place through emerging work, (such as the good work of the ongoing Heritage Action Zone project and the recently adopted Town Centre Movement Strategy). I hope this CAAMP could be a document that has sufficient flex to accommodate / adopt additional detail as it emerges, as much as emerging work should advocate compliance with the CAAMP in turn.</p> <p>This document responds in a 'light touch' way and would benefit from augmenting this overview detail with additional insight to reinforce the 'What' and the 'How' elements.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Agreed.</p> <p>Agreed. CAAMP allows for future changes and detail to follow. "Public Realm" added to "Public Spaces" across the Railway Works mentioned on page 93.</p>



				<p>These all centre on human experience, whether resident, visitor, worker, or any other of the many user groups that this important conservation area supports. There is an acute need for a bespoke Public Realm Strategy for the Railway Village and Works Conservation Area.</p> <p>Whilst this document examines both built form and its setting, it needs to be based on a more dedicated and informed approach to the public realm. Concern expressed about the level of detail or direction set out in CAAMP Chapters 5 and 6.</p> <p>The CAAMP is a valuable piece of work, and welcome it going much further in advocating far more specific place making objectives.</p>	
23	Peter Garitsis (SBC Urban Design)	04/11/20		<p>Supports merger of areas, the railway works and the railway village were built as reciprocal entities and it makes sense to consider them part of the same 'place'. The document is really well presented and being such an important part of Swindon's heritage, this is to be applauded. The historical significance of the works is carefully articulated and is a great way of setting out the context for understanding the place as a whole. The text and images are really well put together and the sections are easy to find and I appreciate the live links on the pdf too, which make it very interactive and useful as a tool.</p>	Noted.

			<p>Page 71 plan 9</p> <p>Page 12</p> <p>Page 77</p>	<p>The use of the term “neutral” to describe the National Trust HQ is questioned. The ‘Heelis’ building is very responsive to its environment, encouraging movement to and from the railway works, and establishes a strong, simple contemporary architecture</p> <p>Questions the term “positive” to describe 25-45 Faringdon Rd owing to poor form and the mix-match of shop frontages.</p> <p>Bristol Street tunnel is recognised as important to the historic significance of the Railway Works and the Railway Village. It has a significant role to play in urban design terms to connect the town across the Railway, but at present it is not attractive to do so. I would though like to see what opportunities there could be in proactive terms that could make it workable as an attractive pedestrian use for today and the future. It would be very important to retain a strong connection to the history and memory of the function of the route, but there is a need to enliven and regenerate its wider ‘function’.</p> <p>It would be very helpful to include a transport and movement study to assess possibilities for reducing the gyratory bus routes that surround the Mechanics Institution and in many ways</p>	<p>Agreed. Status of the building to be clarified. Page 71 Plan 9 and page 75</p> <p>Noted, but historically they are valuable as set out on page 12. No change to document.</p> <p>Noted. Future interventions/development of the structure would need to be appreciable of the duty to preserve the listed buildings special interest and its significance. Page 77 recognises this.</p> <p>Noted. Such studies may emerge from the CAAMP.</p>
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				create 'severance' from its surrounding historic context and the wider town centre.	
24	David Stuart - Historic England	09/11/20		<p>The amalgamation of the two Conservation Areas into one is seen as an important outcome to allow for an integrated approach to the HAZ area as a whole, which facilitates the creation of branding and destination objectives. The new unified Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan will also play an important role in promoting enhanced management arrangements which will help protect those investments made during the life of the HAZ, and beyond through the creation of a sustainable legacy which can continue to build on those achievements.</p> <p>Historic England as a sponsoring partner to the Conservation Area work has been involved throughout the exercise. We have been impressed by the Council's management of this project, especially during what have been challenging times during its latter stages.</p> <p>We are very pleased with the report, which has been produced and commend its recommendations and proposals to your authority. Once formally agreed and adopted the document can confidently inform the delivery of HAZ projects dependent upon this outcome.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted with thanks.</p> <p>Noted.</p>



25	<p><b>Nick Small</b></p> <p>Head of Strategic Development &amp; the Built Environment – Stagecoach West</p> <p><i>per et pro</i></p> <p><b>Paul Walker</b></p> <p>Strategic Development Manager – Go South Coast</p>	22/09/20	Section 7	<p>We have been aware of concerns that the presence of buses within the Conservation Area, and particularly the Railway Village, materially and detrimentally affects the character and experience of the Area. We understand the reasons given for this. The Draft Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) makes a specific recommendation that buses should be reduced or removed from the Conservation Area in the longer term.</p> <p>The proposal to join the Conservation Areas appear to be rational. The designations are adjoining, sharing a long common boundary, each shares a common history, from which its heritage value and other key aspects defining its qualities, and character arises. Stagecoach and GSC have no objection to this proposal</p> <p>The extension of the designation here [Station Road] will establish a significant set of potential limitations and constraints on the appropriate development of the area that are to our mind entirely unjustified by the need to conserve the heritage potential of this area. We do not see that the consultation SPD adequately justifies how this frontage relates to the understanding and reading of the Railway Village, or its character, or the wider statutory purposes of a Conservation Area. Including this area could</p>	<p>Noted.</p>          <p>Noted.</p>          <p>Page 12 considers the rationale behind the Conservation Area extension, which in itself will seek to ensure “appropriate development” results. Pages 84 and 86 further considers this. The historic Railway area is wider than the Railway Village alone and there are several character areas with different constraints and opportunities. There is no presumption within the document for the removal of buses within the wider area. No change to the document.</p>
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				<p>lead to an assumption or aspiration that buses should be removed from Faringdon Road also, on heritage grounds. Including the Station and this southern Faringdon Road frontage is in our view irrational, unjustified and prejudicial. Stagecoach and GSC object to this proposal.</p> <p>No objection to the inclusion of the Pattern Store and adjoining car park in the Conservation Area.</p> <p>The presence of buses in the Railway Village is a legacy of decisions made many years ago. The route used is a quite vital means to bypass chronic congestion on Faringdon Road, and as such, it represents a very significant and necessary element of bus prioritisation in the town and both bus companies' networks...we recognise that this solution may no longer be appropriate, given the context of the area.</p> <p>Would welcome a proposal for a separate Access and Movement Study, to look to resolve the conflicts and tensions involved in properly accommodating bus services on this side of the town without prejudicing safe, efficient and reliable bus services....It cannot be a simply a matter of balancing heritage issues against a limited range of other factors such that all other considerations weigh lightly.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted. The CAAMP does not preclude future studies.</p>
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				<p>Any such study needs to recognise that the Conservation Area is a major destination for car-borne traffic, and one that could easily grow. It is a major centre of employment, culture, and retailing; as well as hosting conferences and events...in many respects the former works are once again the heart of the life of the town – which is quite an achievement. But this is also the root of the transport problem. The Draft SPD is almost blind to this issue: the source of this and many of the other challenges within the CA, are a direct result of the way in which it has been redeveloped.</p> <p>Addressing the problems will need a bold and collaborative approach in which we are very keen to participate, positively and creatively. However this could well lead to multiple beneficial outcomes – including the removal of buses from the Railway Village by the creation of more effective and appropriate bus priority on Faringdon Road. Any solution set need to recognise the essential nature of the management regime for scarce car parking space at the Factory Outlet Centre. Finally, we would point to existing work being done by the Council to look at the role and function of Great Western Way on this side of town, helping to radically reduce the amount of general traffic on Faringdon Road and Wootton Bassett Road.</p>	Noted with thanks.
--	--	--	--	--	--------------------



				Both Stagecoach and GSC support the progression of a suitably framed and robust Access and Movement Study covering not only the Conservation Area, subject to it including Rodbourne and the wider area and network south of Great Western Way.	
26	Lisa Bullock (Network Rail)	11/11/20		[The document] looks to improve the environment around the station, which is obviously a positive progression. We would be very interested when you start looking at altering the Article 4 as we would not like to see any railway land have any such restriction... we have no other comment to make'	Noted.

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Application Number    S/19/1755  
Proposal                Erection of 11 no. dwellings and associated works.  
Location:               Land East Of Berricot Lane Badbury Swindon Wilts



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In all cases reference should be made to the submitted plans.  
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Application Number S/19/1755  
Proposal Erection of 11 no. dwellings and associated works.  
Location: Land East Of Berricot Lane Badbury Swindon Wilts



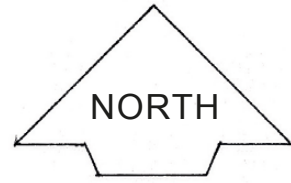
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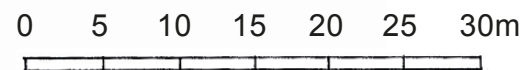
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- Proposed area of private porous block paving
- Proposed area of adoptable porous block paving
- Proposed tree planting
- Proposed shrub planting
- Proposed hedge planting
- Proposed grassed areas
- Proposed 2.2m high premier acoustic reflective fencing providing noise level reductions of 28 decibels
- Proposed 1.8m high stone screen wall
- Proposed 1.8m high close boarded timber fence
- Proposed 900mm high stone wall
- Proposed 900mm high post and rail timber fence with stile
- Proposed 400mm high timber post and rail fence along one side of plot 4's driveway and plot 5's front garden



Scale Bar 1:500 @ A2



Willow House  
7 The Avenue  
Stanton Fitzwarren  
Wiltshire SN6 7SE  
Tel: 01793 763587  
Fax: 01793 764437

Use Written dimensions in preference to scaled.

**Site layout for development on land  
east of Berricot Lane, Badbury**

Email: [info@bowernapson.co.uk](mailto:info@bowernapson.co.uk)

Date: June 2020

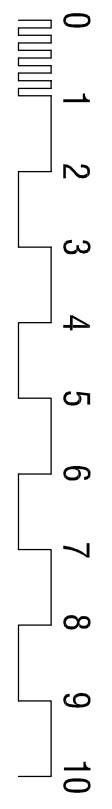
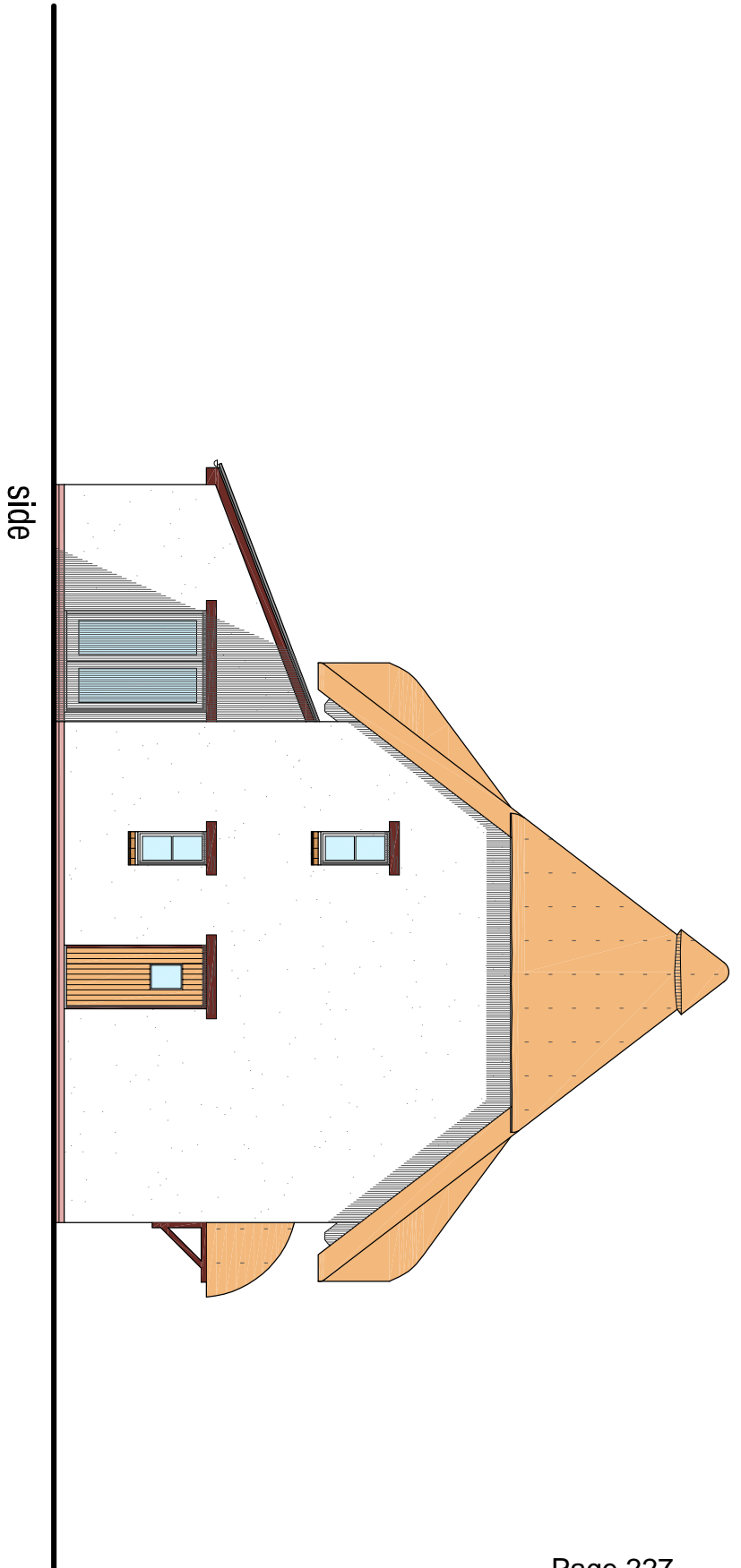
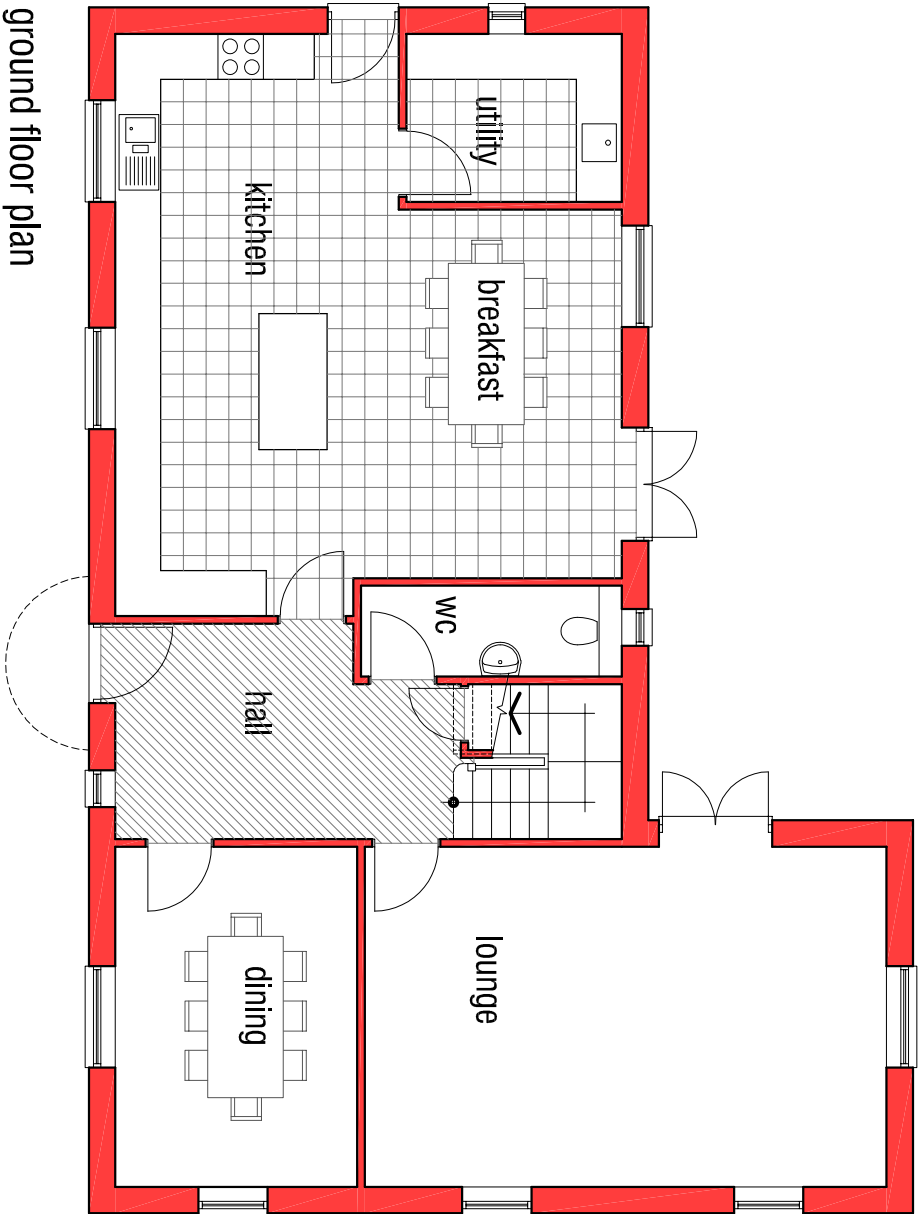
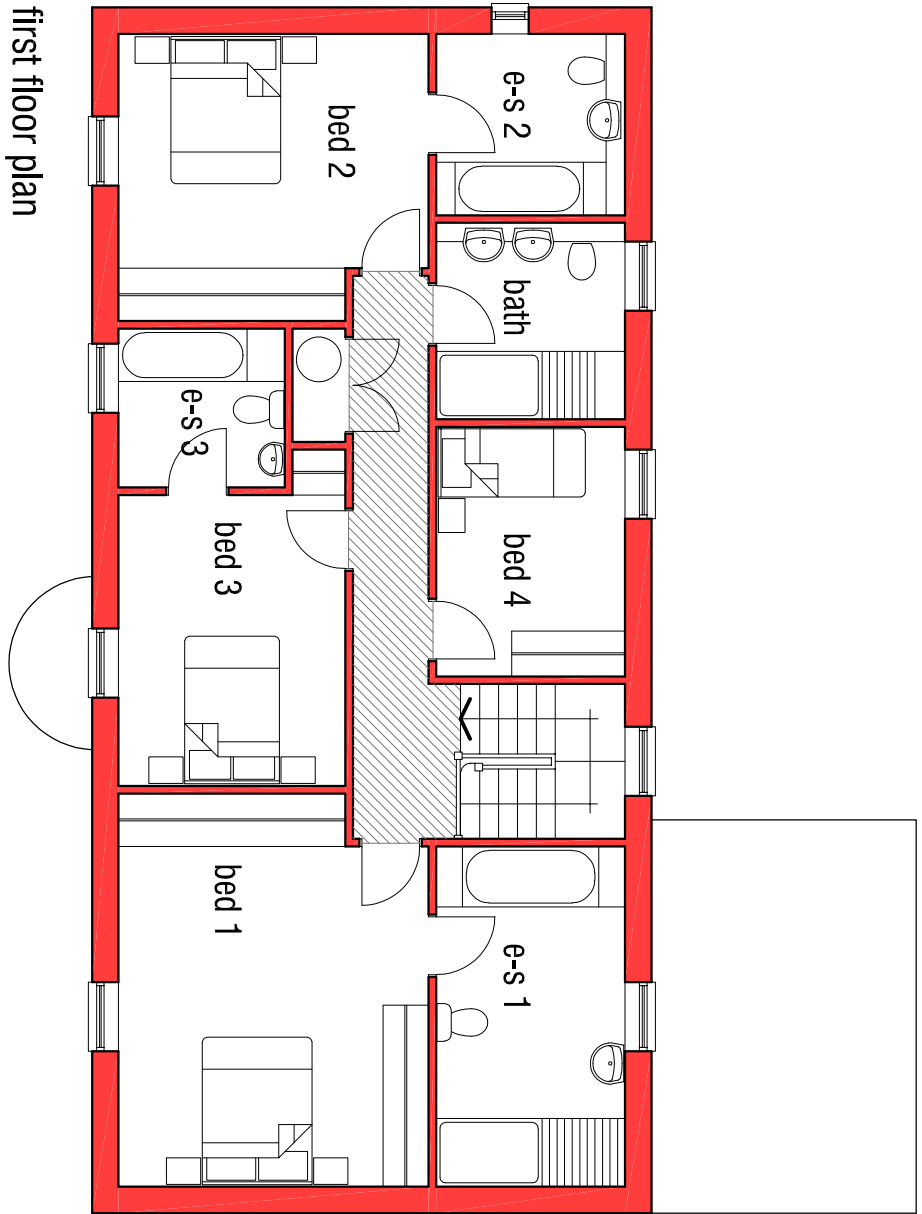
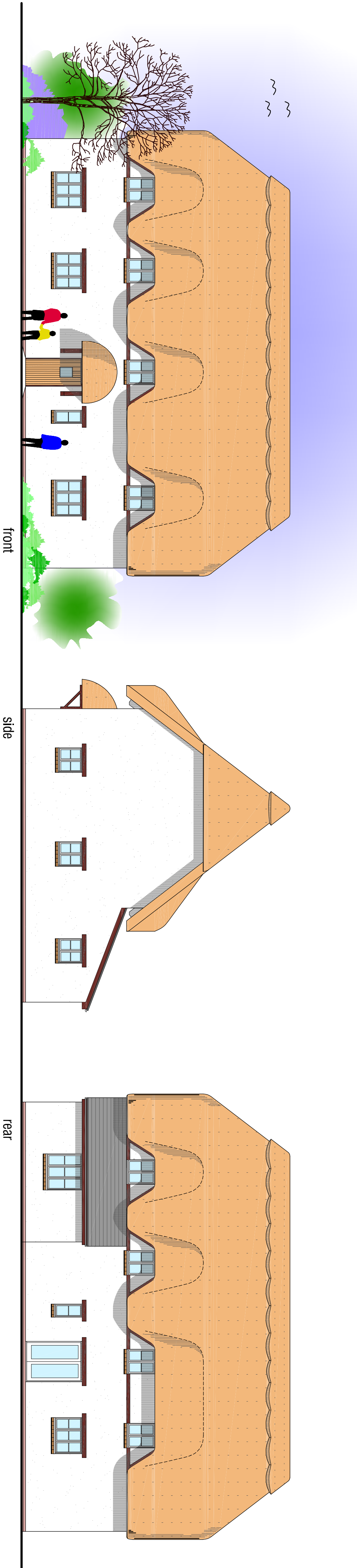
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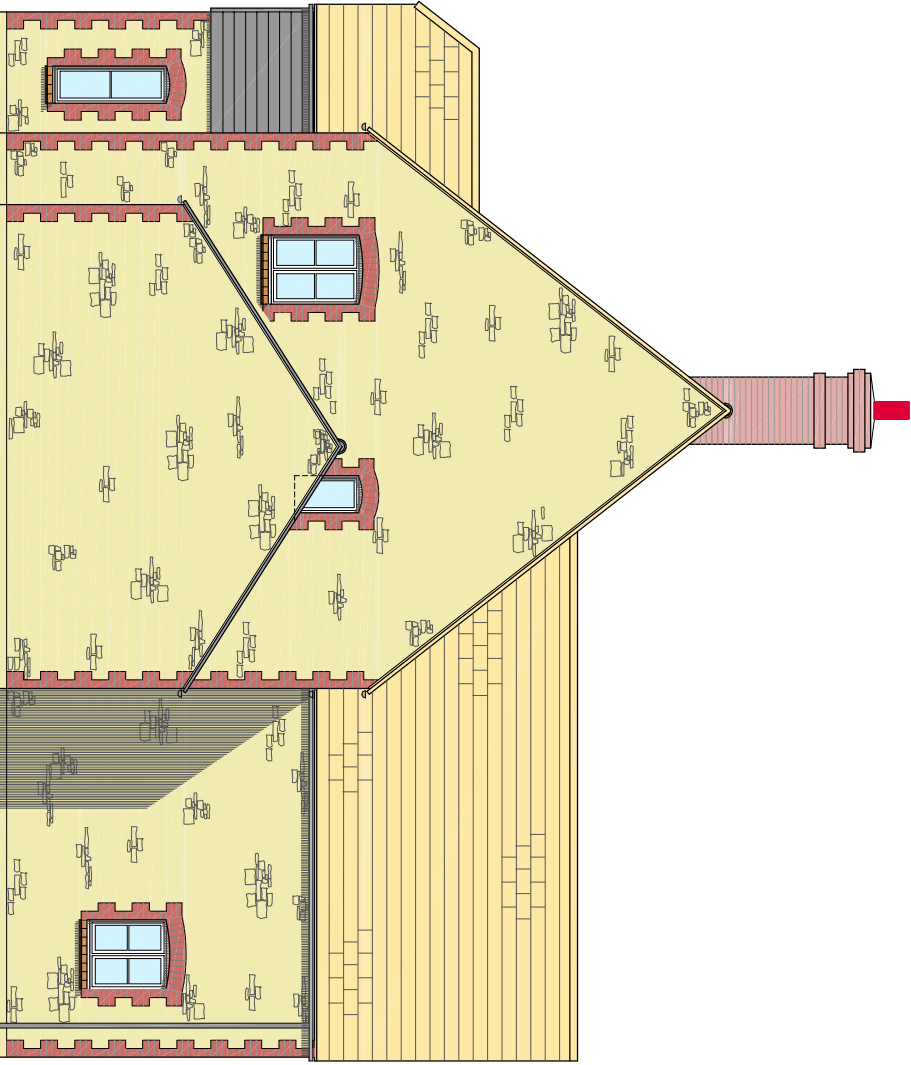
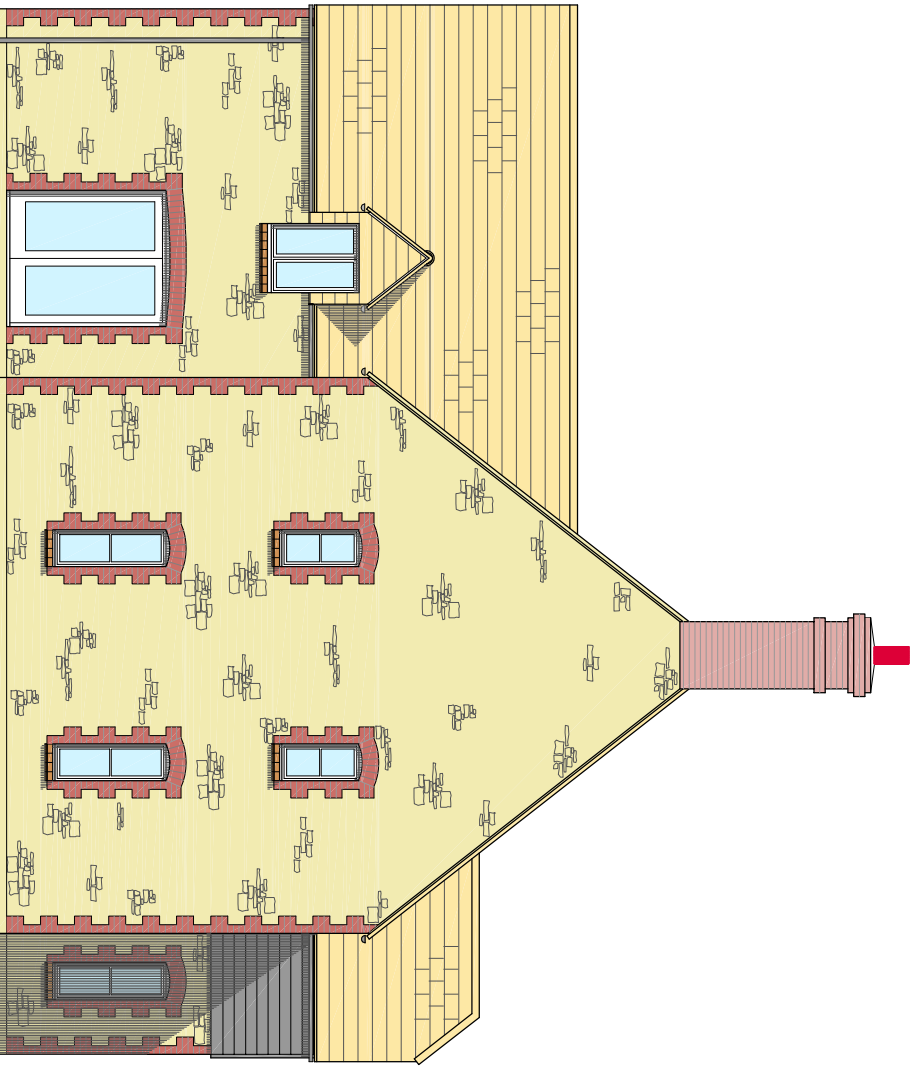
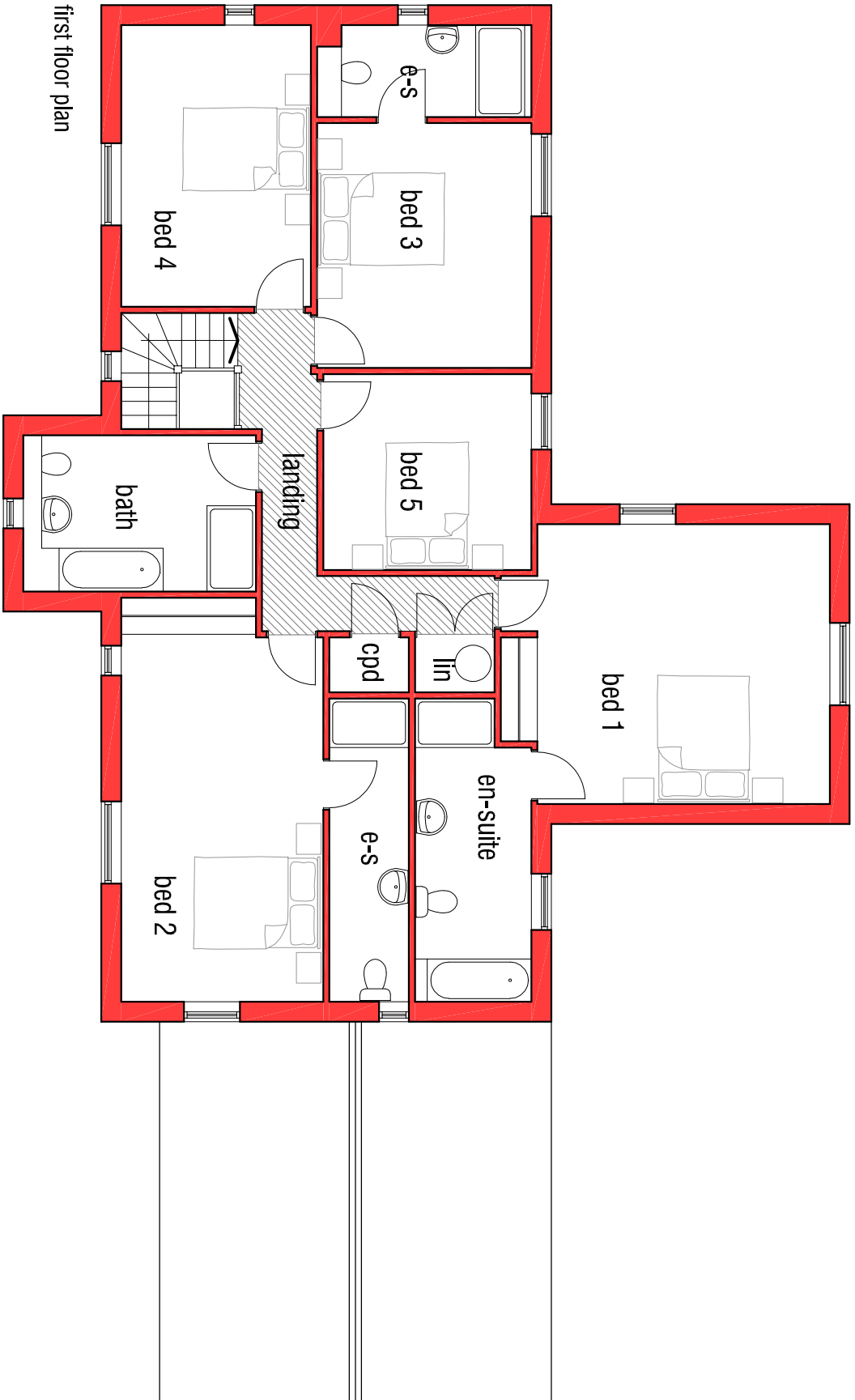
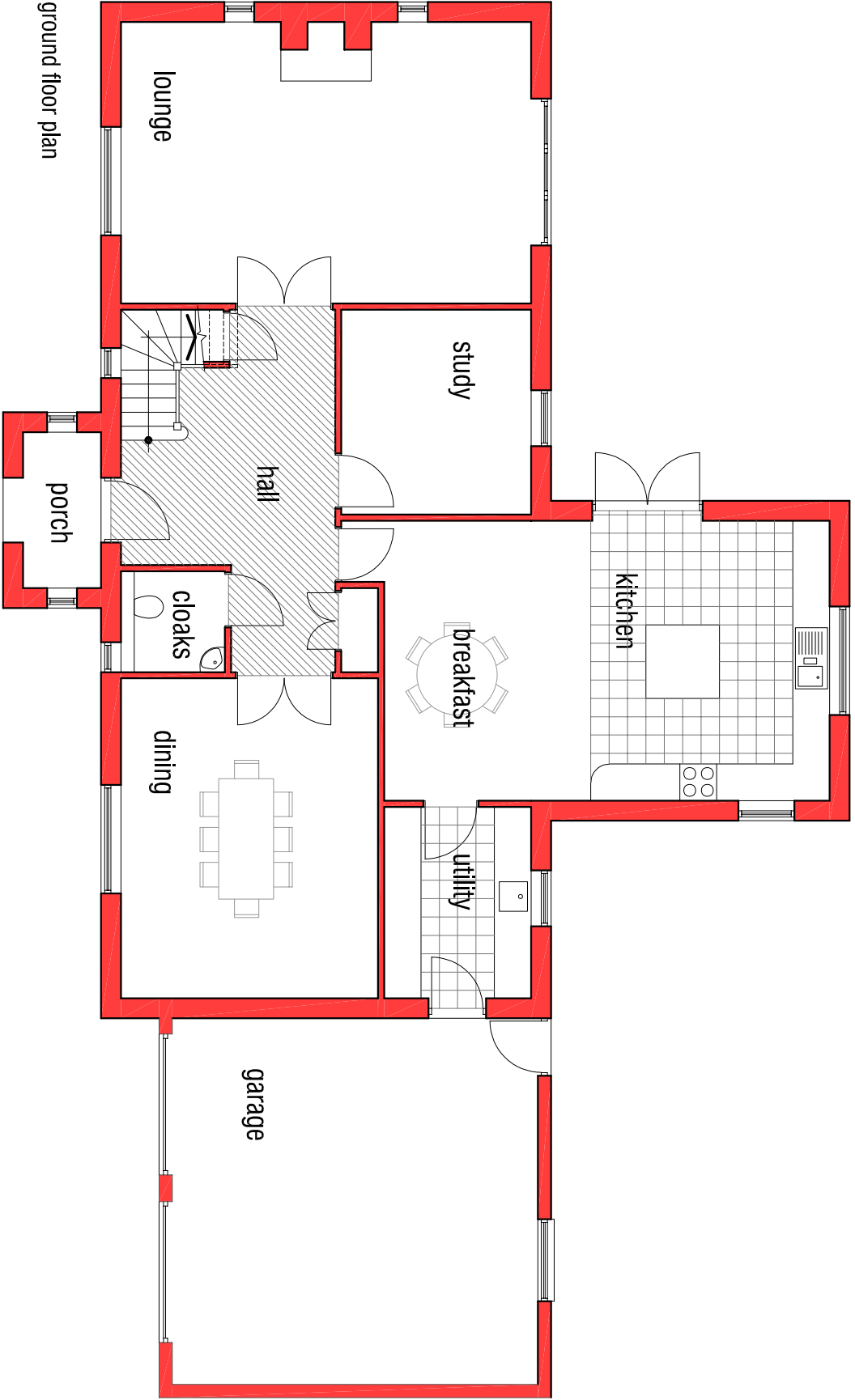
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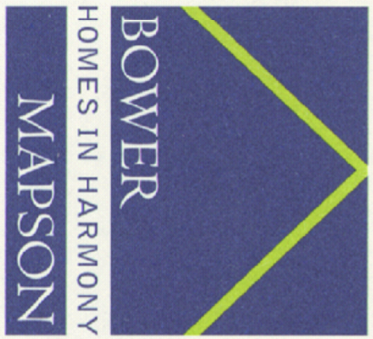


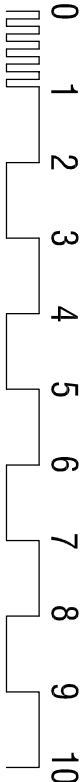
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Revision A : 3-02-2020 : ENLARGED VERSION + BED 2 GABLE WINDOW REMOVED		
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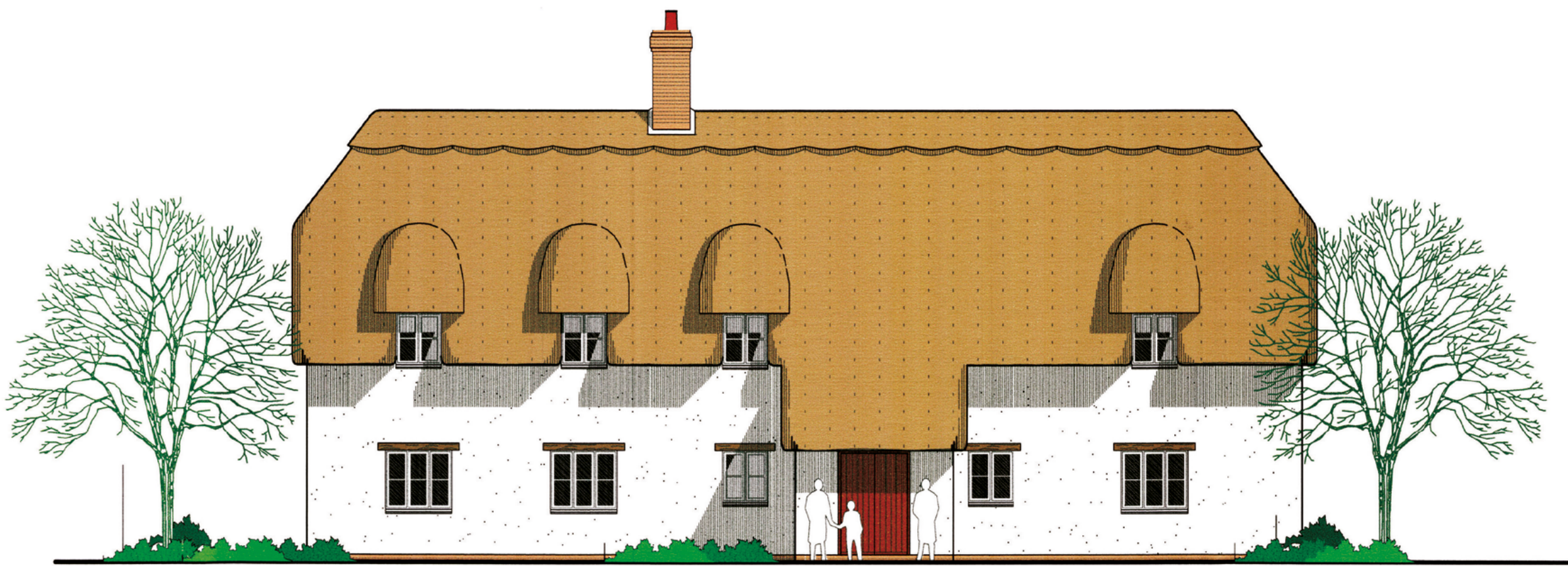


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<b>PLOT 2 : PLANS AND ELEVATIONS</b>		<b>LAND EAST OF BERRICOT LANE, BADBURY</b>	
Email: <a href="mailto:info@bowernapson.co.uk">info@bowernapson.co.uk</a>		Web: <a href="http://www.bowernapson.co.uk">www.bowernapson.co.uk</a>	
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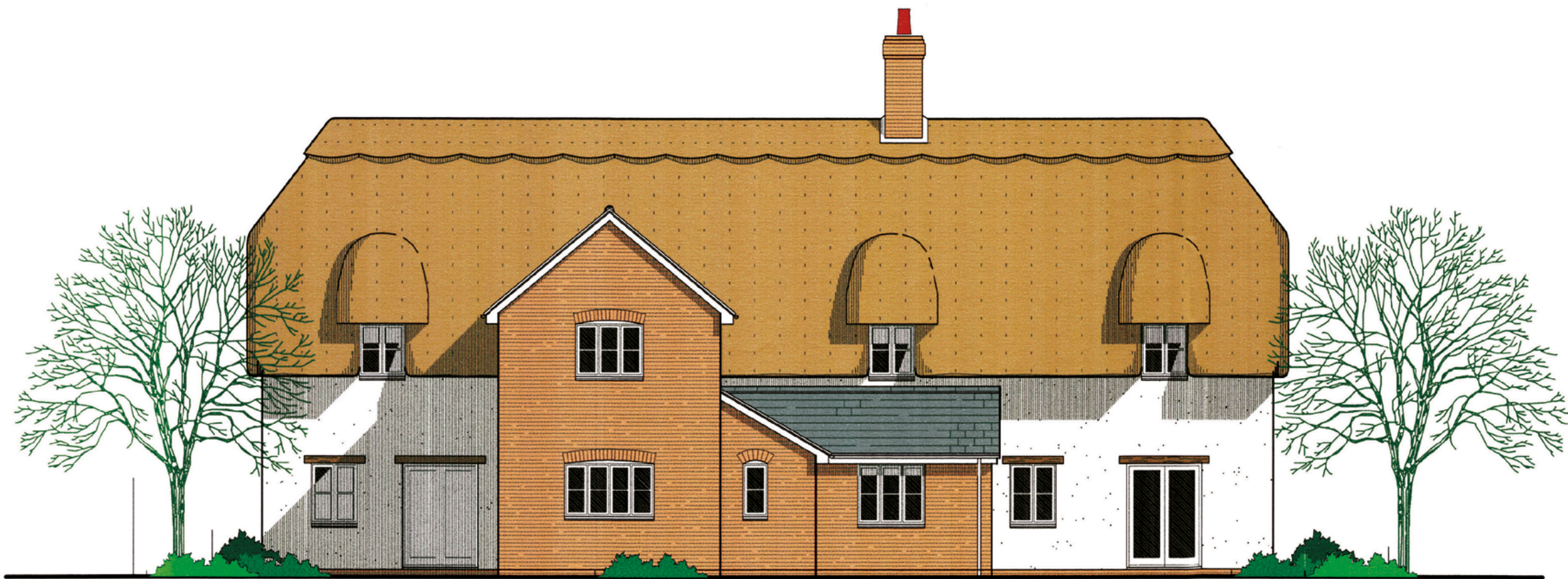




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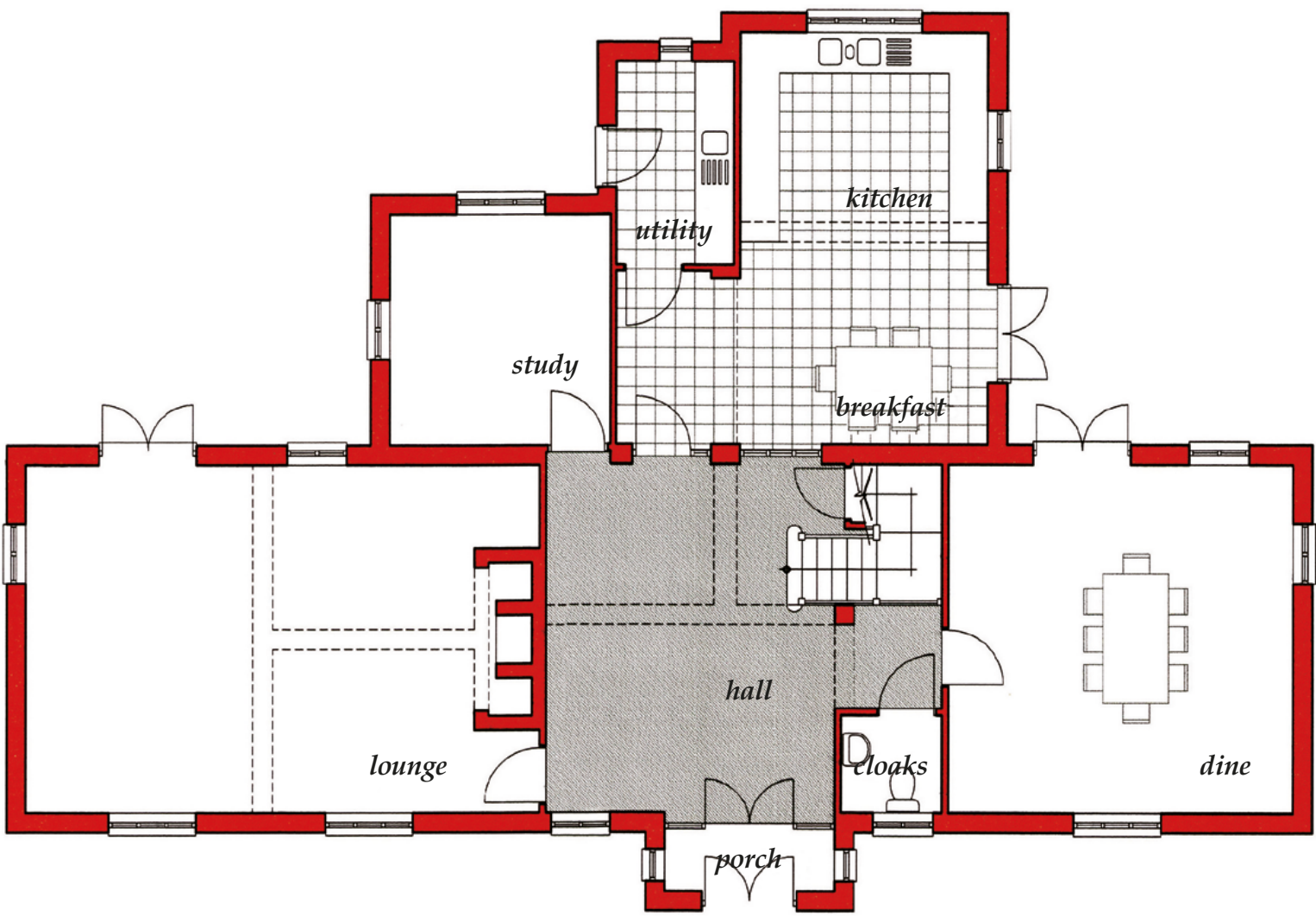
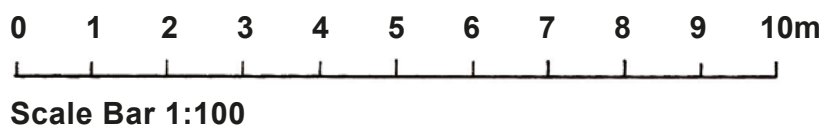
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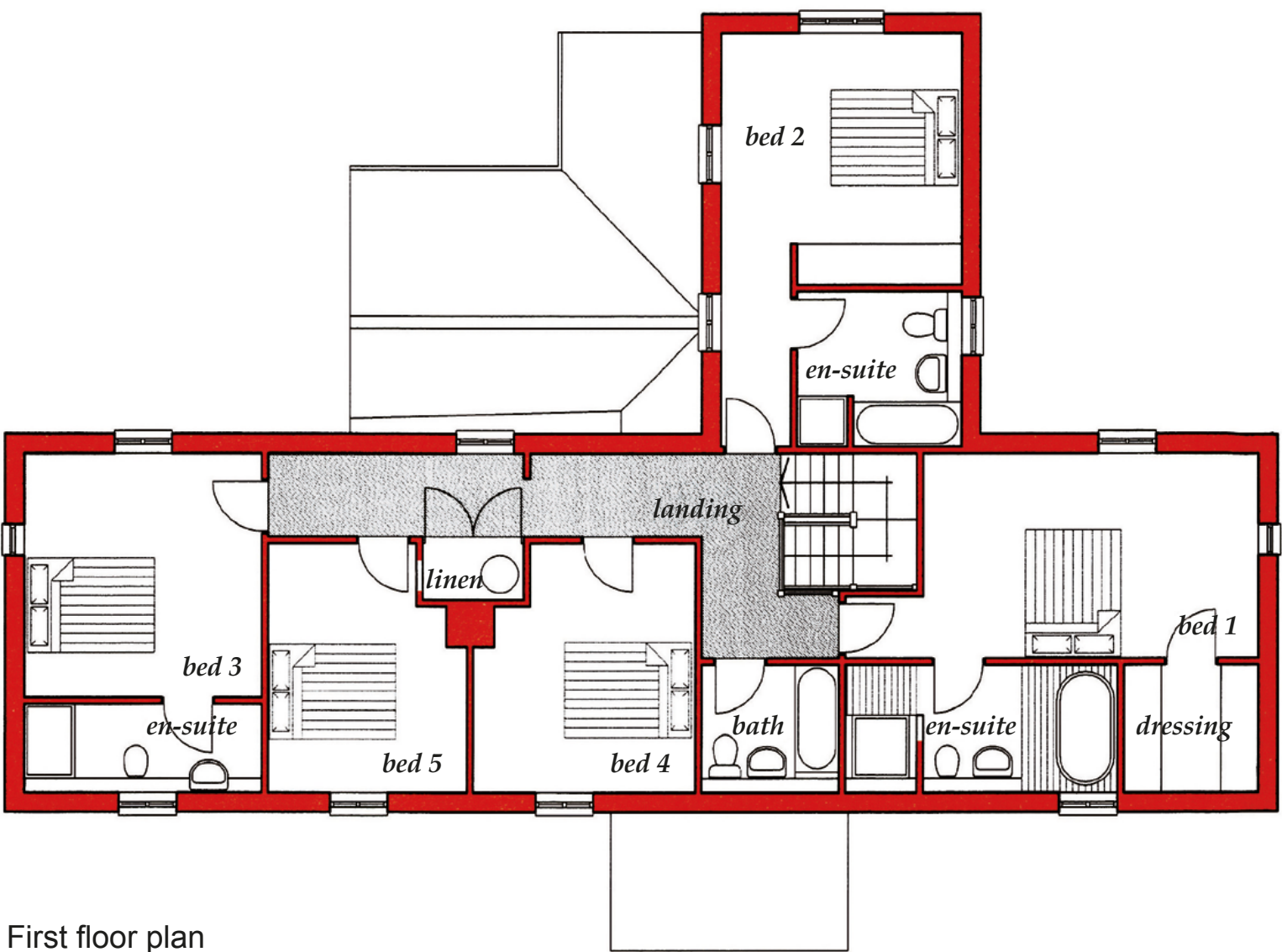
Rear view



Side view



Ground floor plan



First floor plan

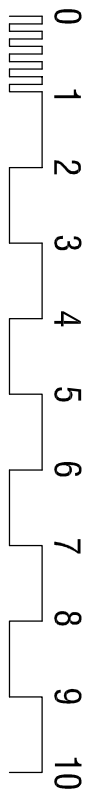
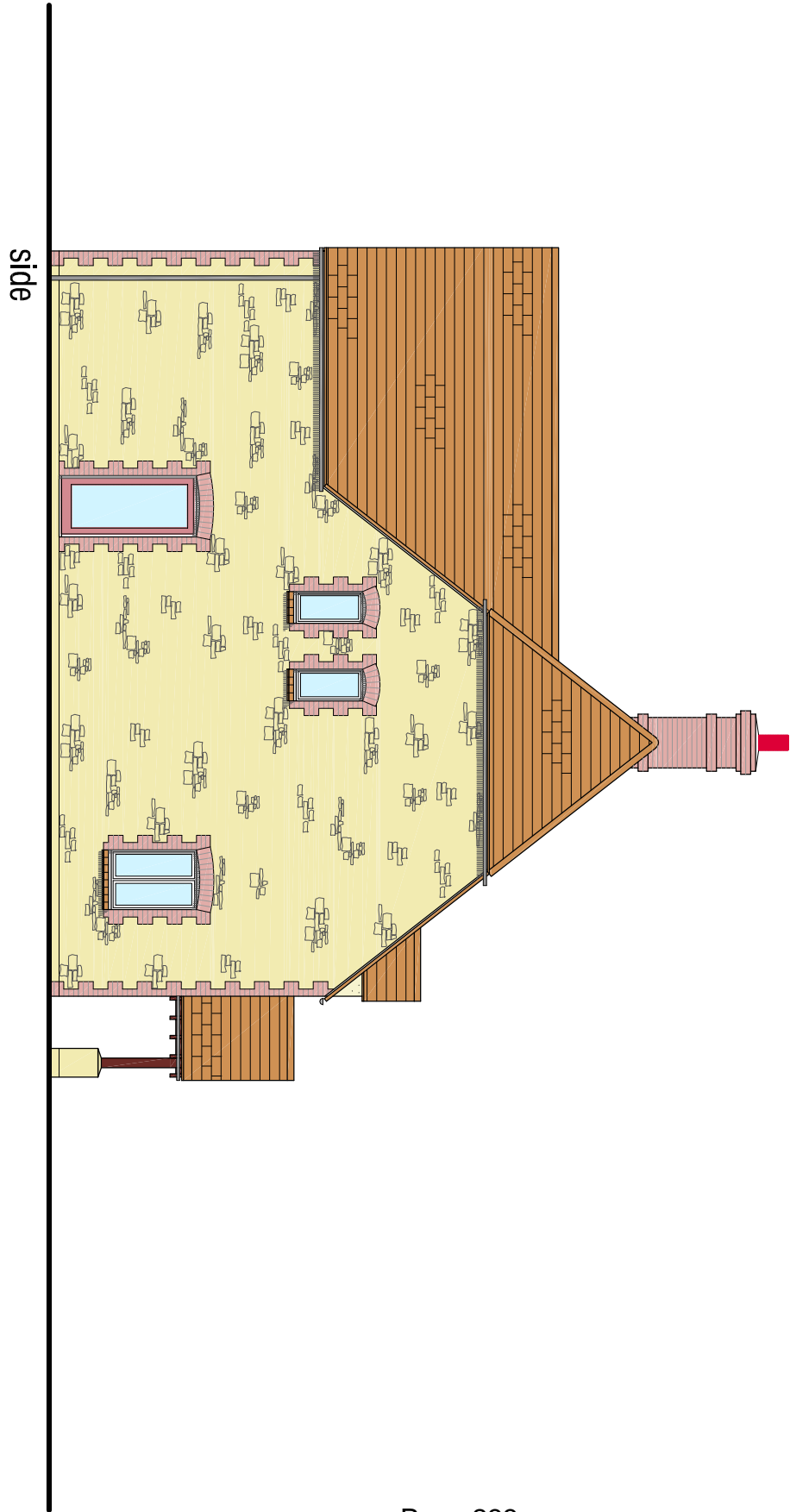
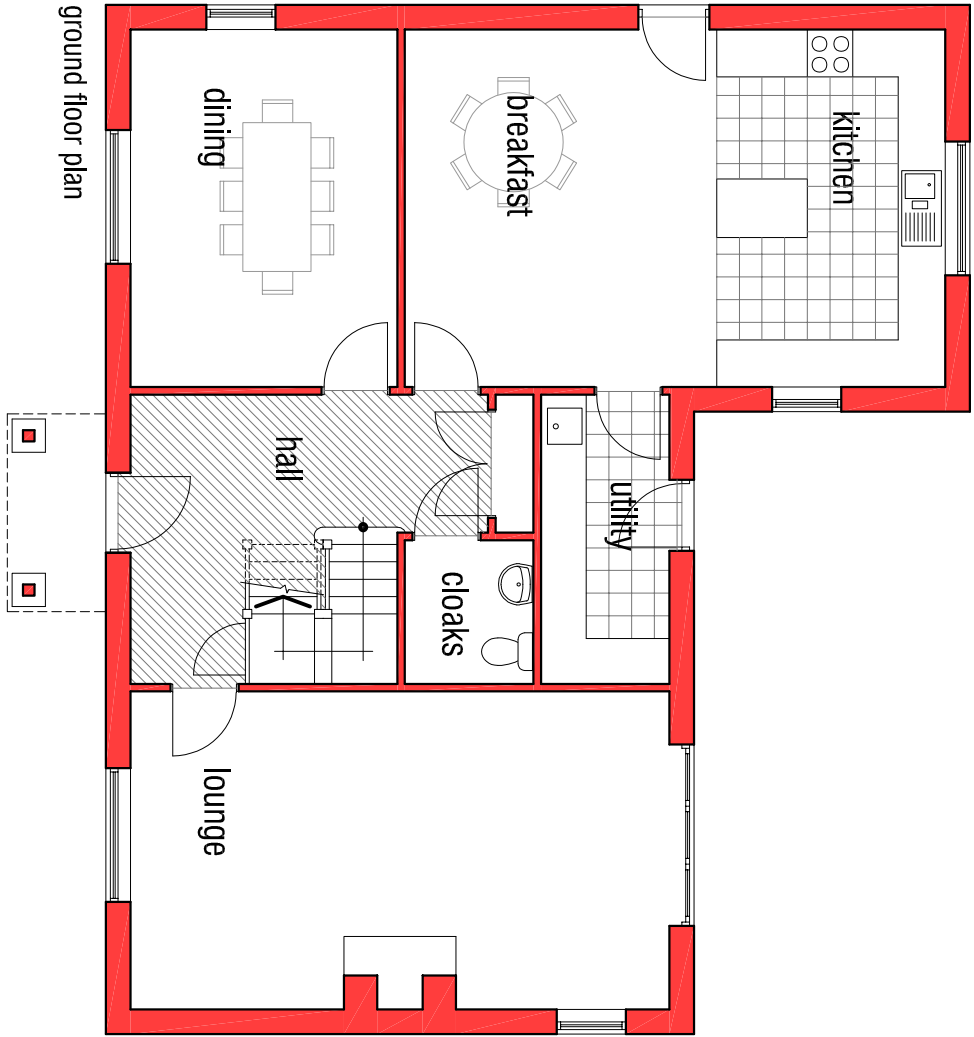
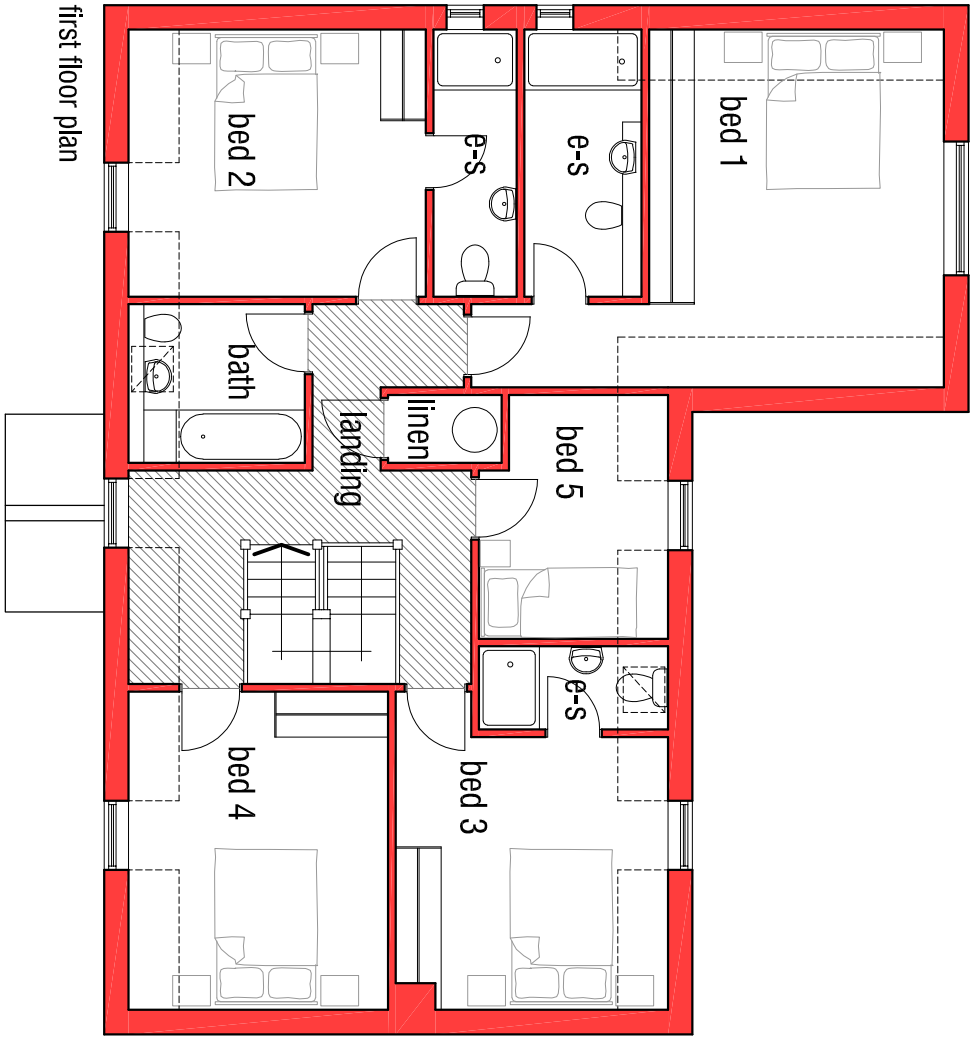
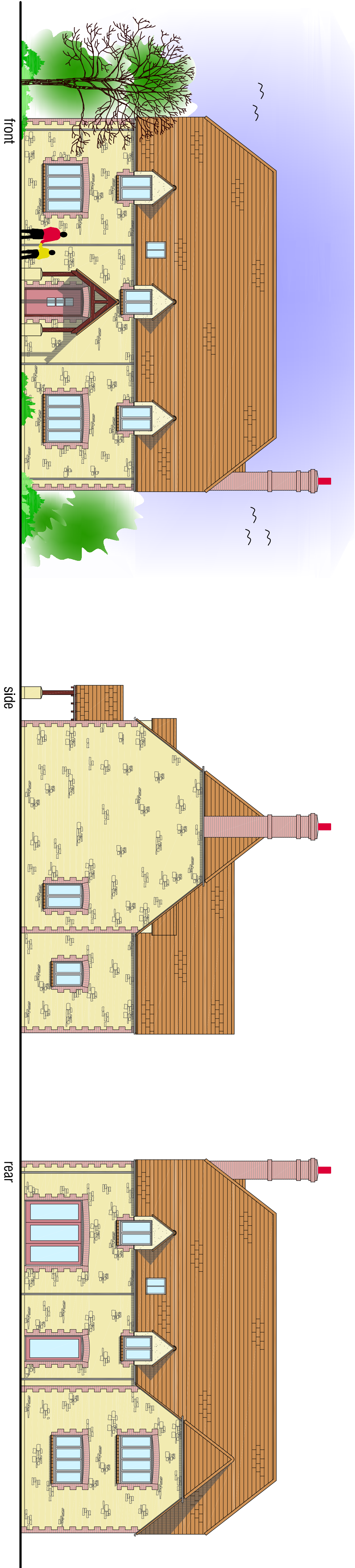


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7 The Avenue  
Stanton Fitzwarren  
Wiltshire SN6 7SE  
Tel: 01793 763587  
Fax: 01793 764437

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<b>Plot 3</b> <b>Land east of Berricot Lane, Badbury</b>		
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## PLOT 4 : PLANS AND ELEVATIONS

LAND EAST OF BERRICOT LANE, BADBURY

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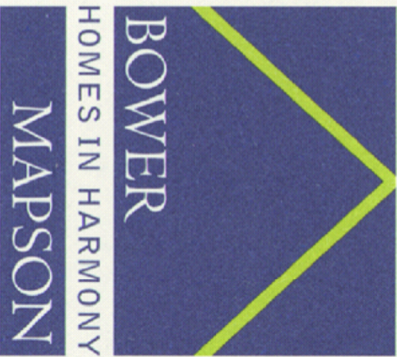
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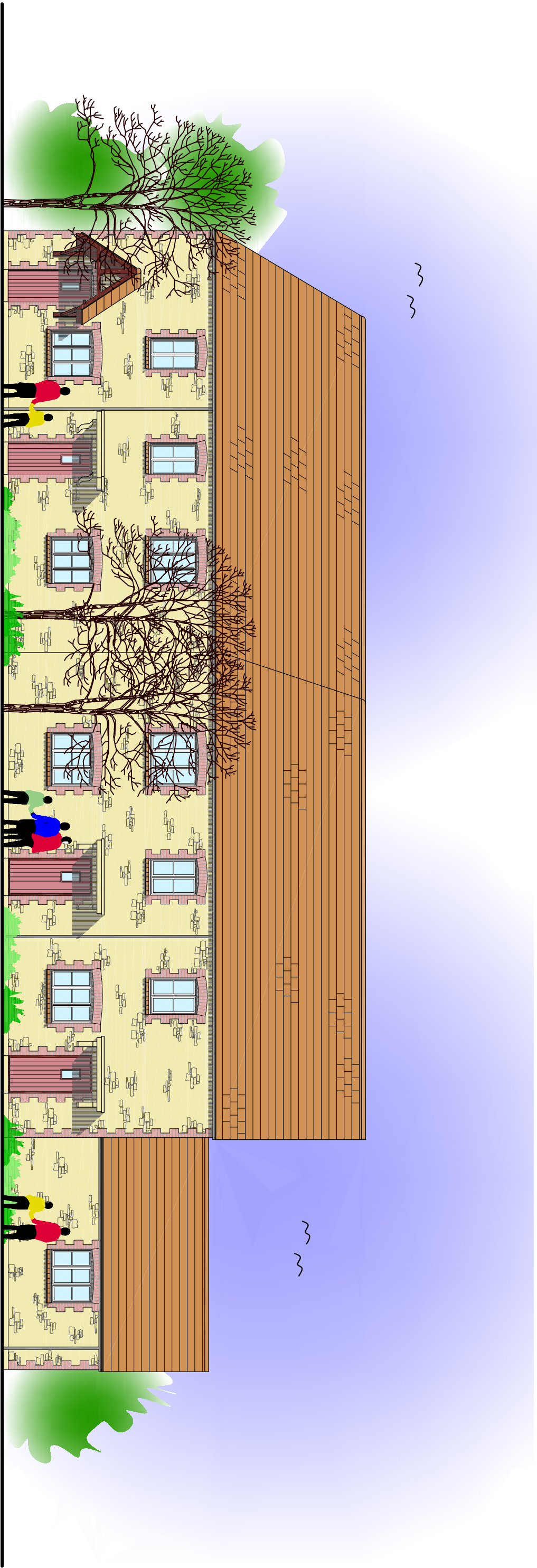
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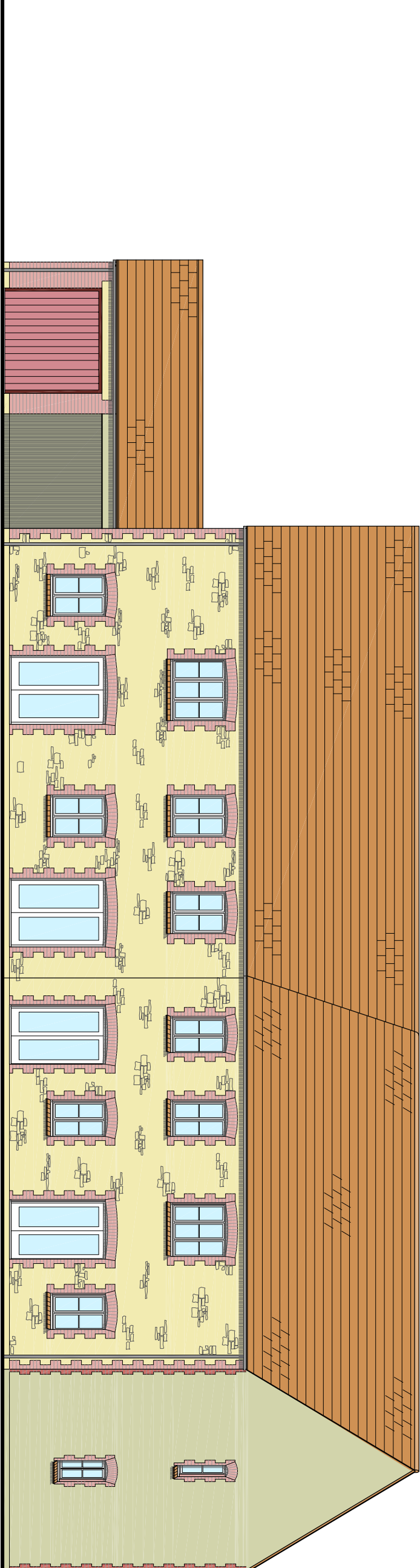


front 5

6

7

8



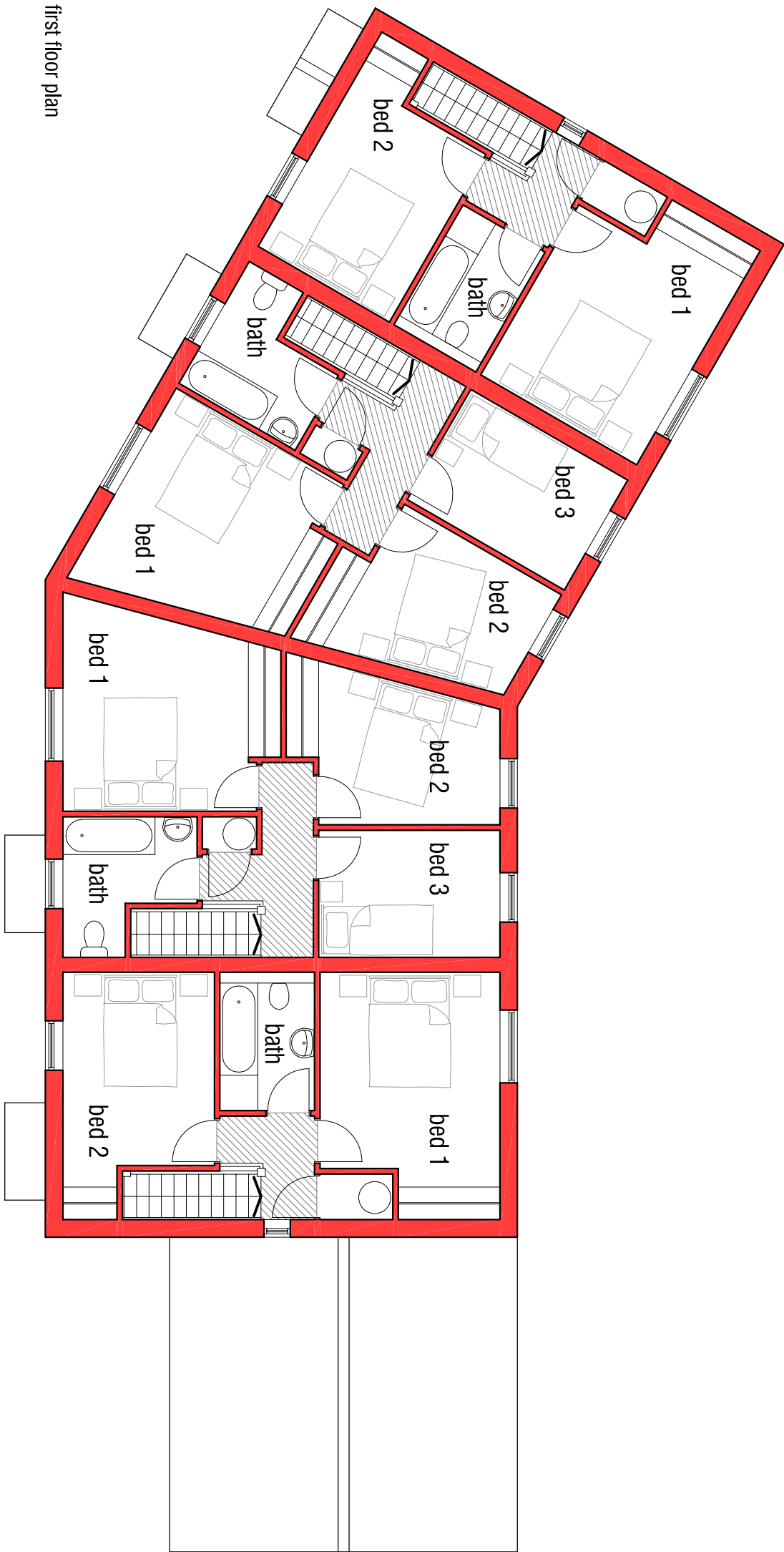
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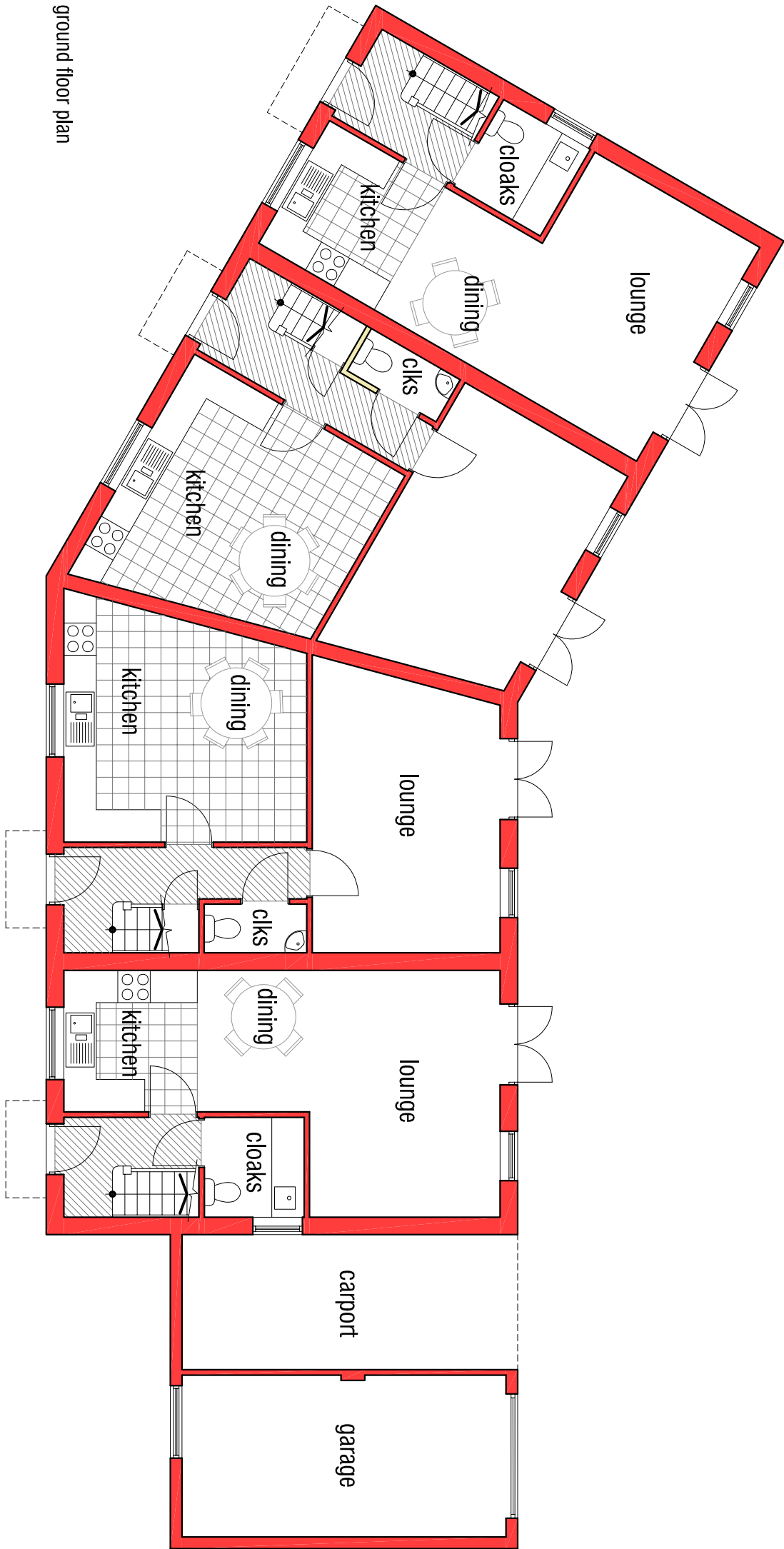
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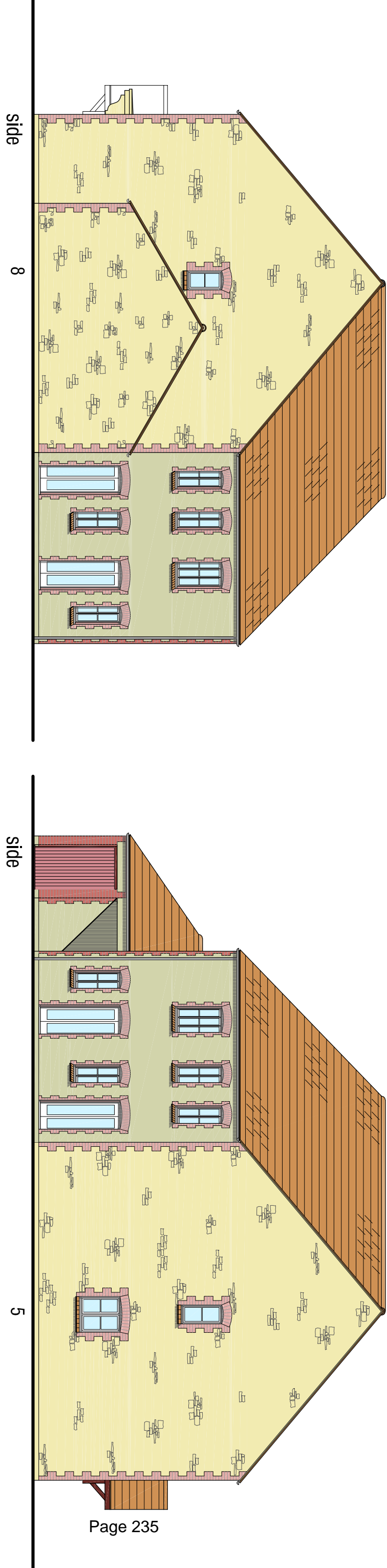
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first floor plan



ground floor plan

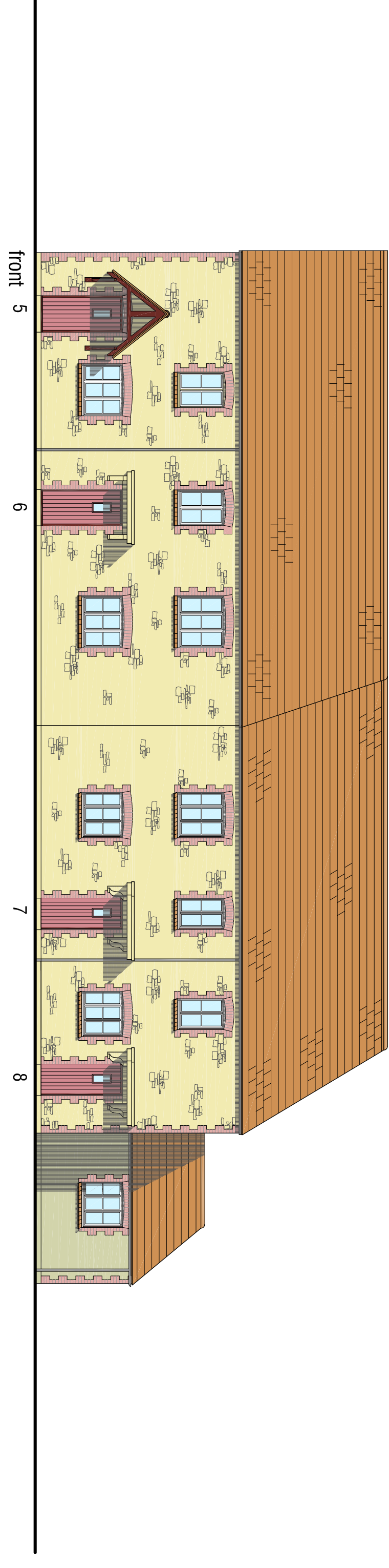


side

8

side

5



front 5

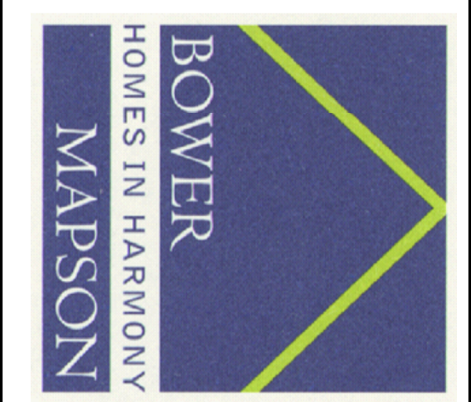
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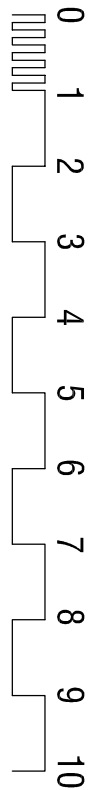
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8

REVISION C : 10-06-2020 : PLOT NUMBERS AMENDED  
REVISION B : 03-02-2020 : PLOT NUMBERS AMENDED  
REVISION A : 08-01-2020 : GARAGE / CARPORT SIZE AMENDED  
Use written dimensions in preference to scaled.

**PLOTS 5, 6, 7 & 8 : PLANS AND ELEVATIONS**  
**LAND EAST OF BERRICOT LANE, BADBURY**

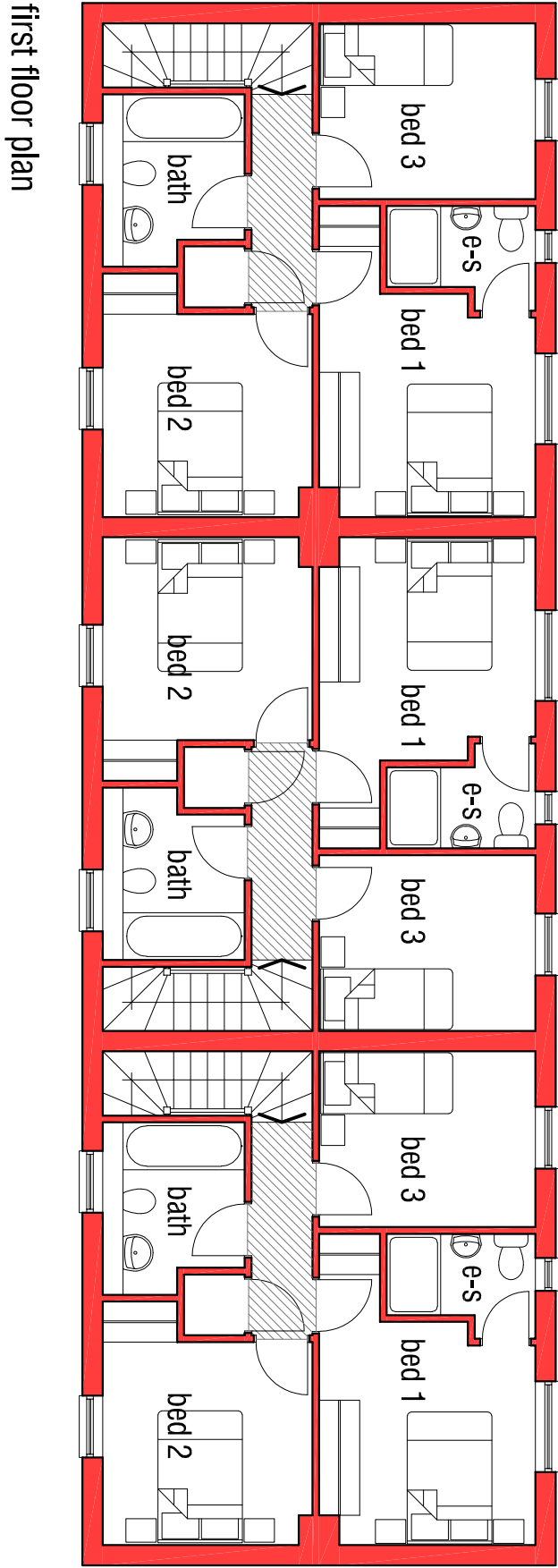
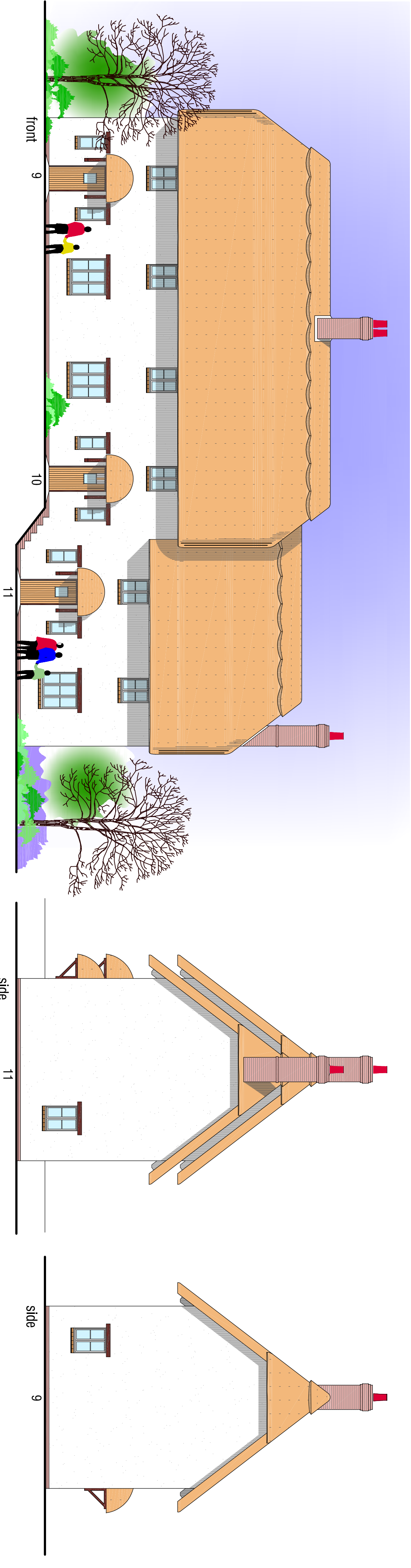
	<b>Willow House</b> 7 The Avenue Stanton Fitzwarren Wiltshire SN6 7SE		<b>LAND EAST OF BERRICOT LANE, BADBURY</b>	
	Tel: 01793 763587 Fax: 01793 764437	Email: info@bowermapson.co.uk Date: NOVEMBER 2019	Scale: 1:100 @ A1	Web: www.bowermapson.co.uk Dwg. No. 069 / 118 REV. C.



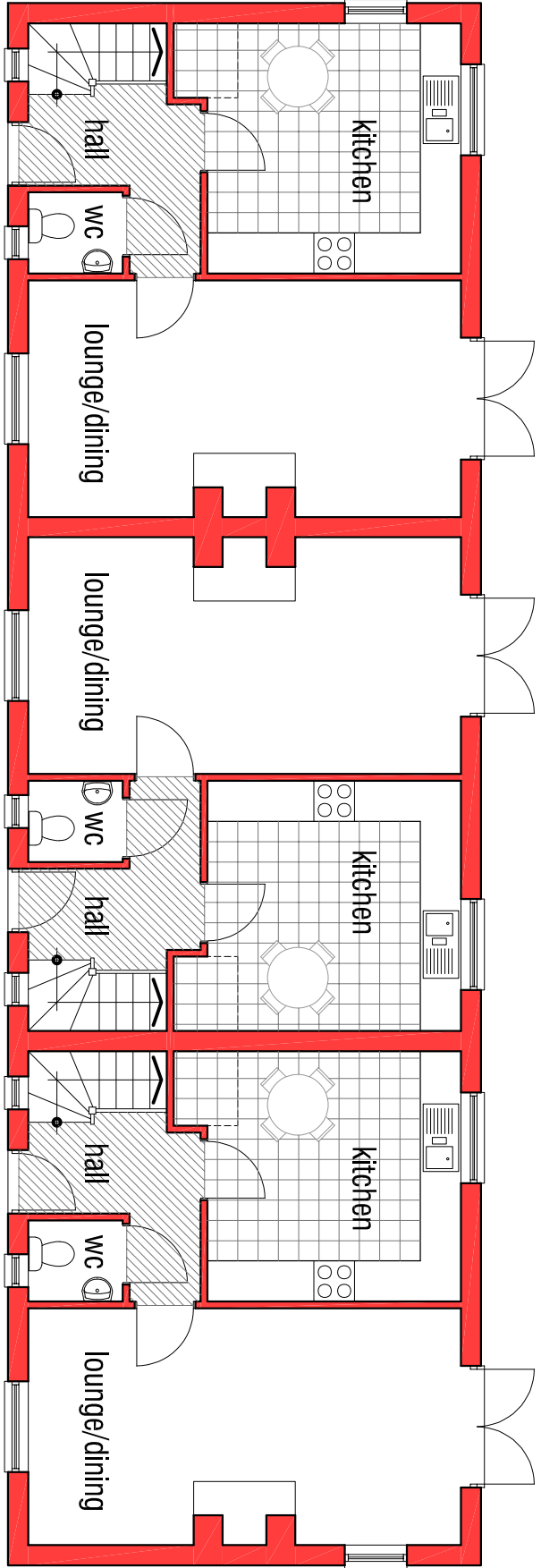


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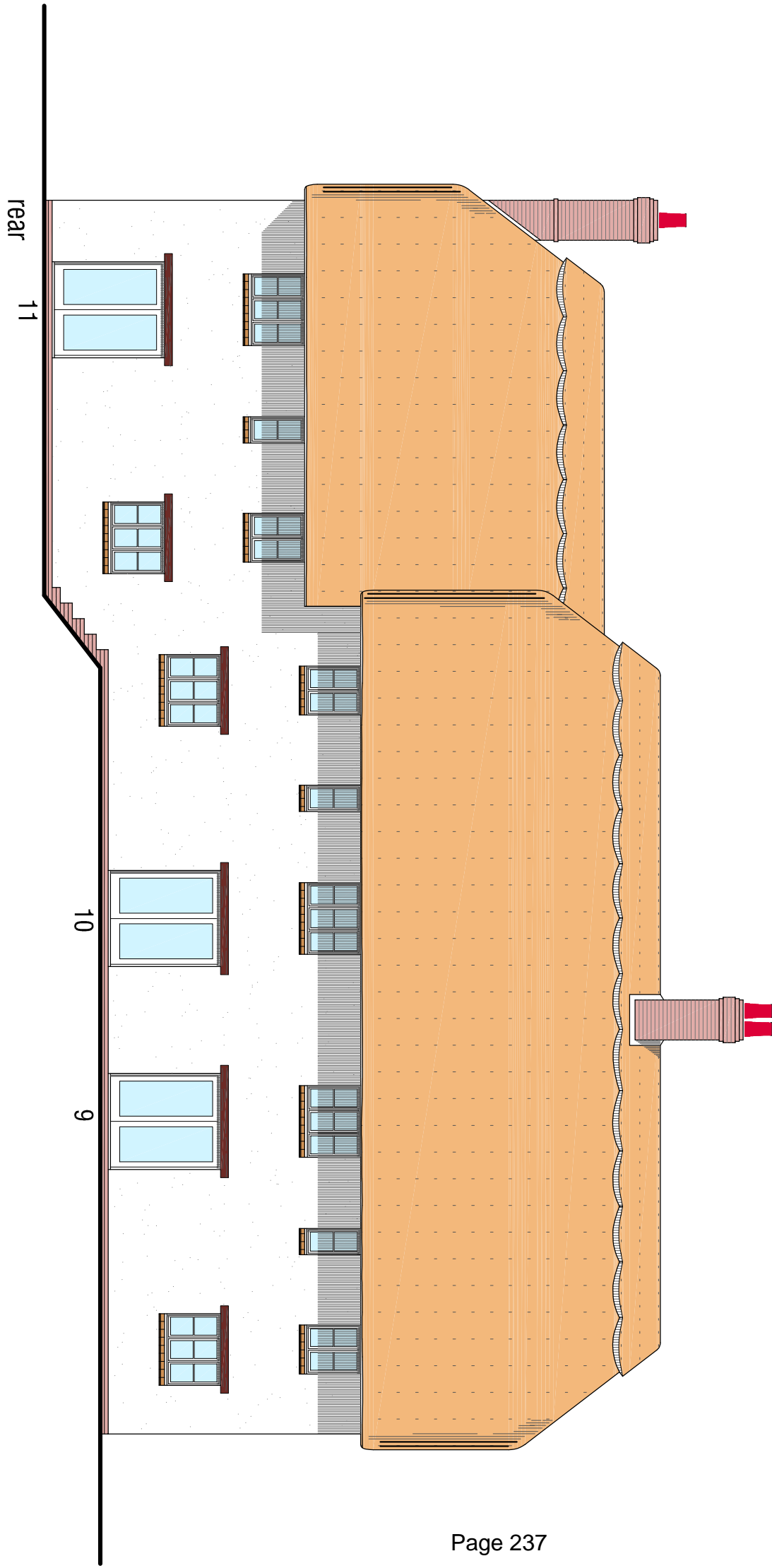





first floor plan



ground floor plan

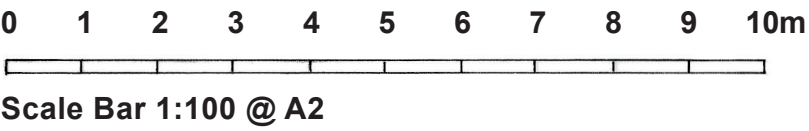



 <b>BOWER MAPSON</b> HOMES IN HARMONY		<b>Willow House</b> 7 The Avenue Stanton Fitzwarren Wiltshire SN6 7SE <b>Tel: 01793 763587</b> <b>Fax: 01793 764437</b>		<b>REVISION, B : 10-06-2020 : PLOT NUMBERS AMENDED</b> <b>REVISION, A : 03-02-2020 : PLOT NUMBERS AMENDED</b> Use written dimensions in preference to scaled.	
<b>PLOTS 9, 10 &amp; 11 : PLANS AND ELEVATIONS</b> <b>LAND EAST OF BERRICOT LANE, BADBURY</b>		Email: <a href="mailto:info@bowermapson.co.uk">info@bowermapson.co.uk</a>		Web: <a href="http://www.bowermapson.co.uk">www.bowermapson.co.uk</a>	
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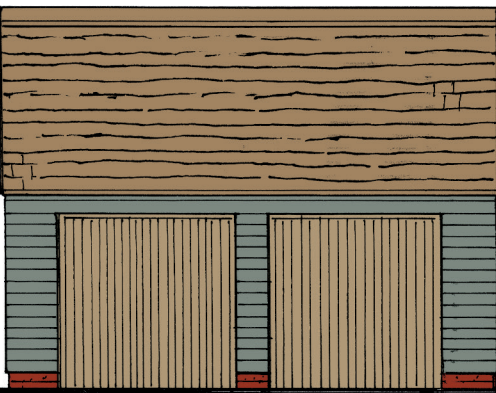


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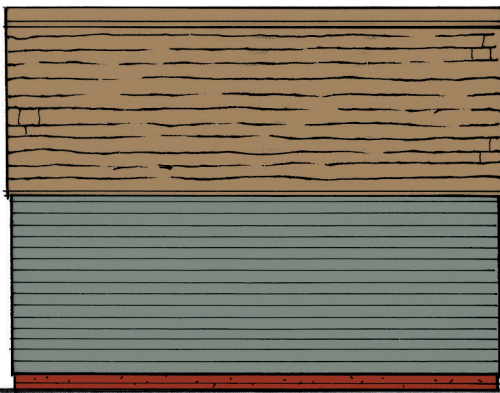
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**Garage details for plots 1, 3, 4, 9 and 11**  
**Land east of Berricot Lane, Badbury**

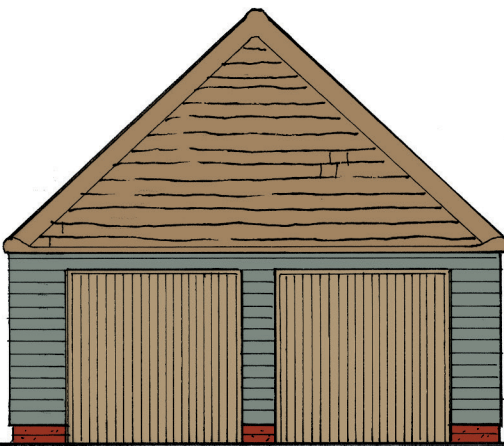
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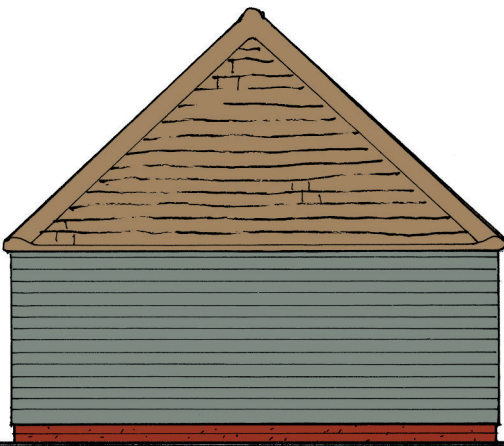
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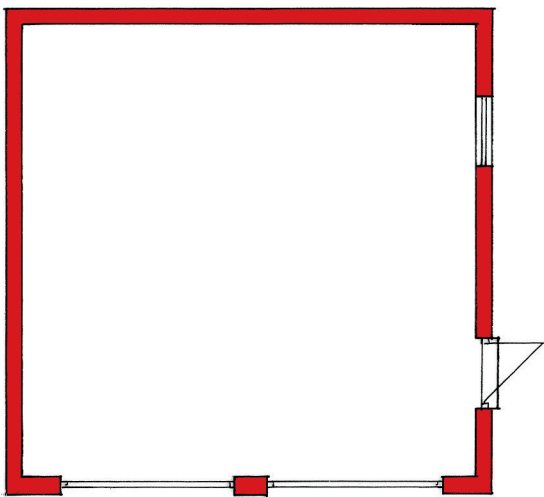
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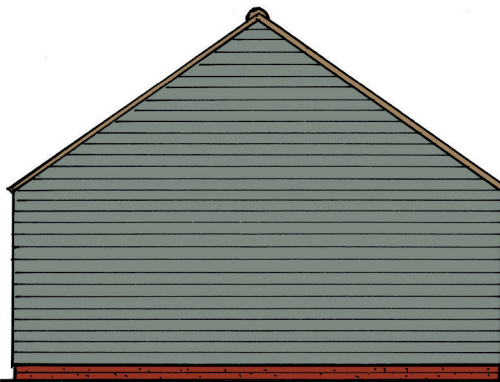
Plots 1 and 4 garages front elevation



Plots 1 and 4 garages side elevation



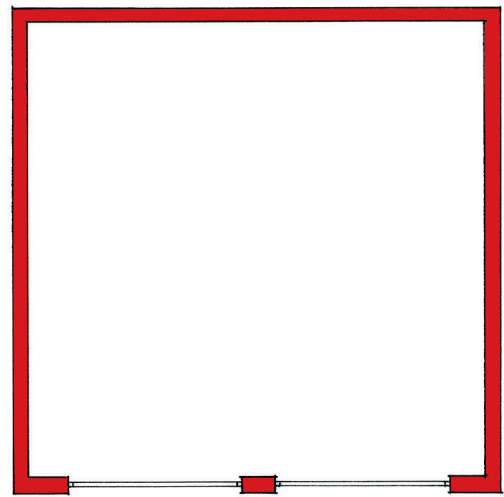
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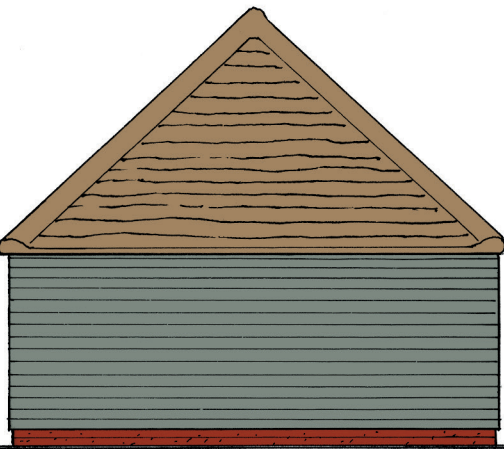
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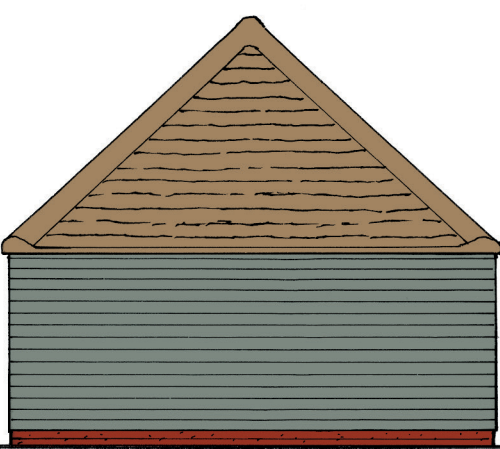
Plot 3 garage side elevation



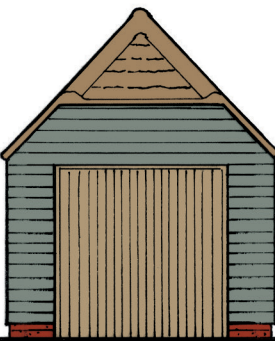
Plots 1 and 4 garages floor plan



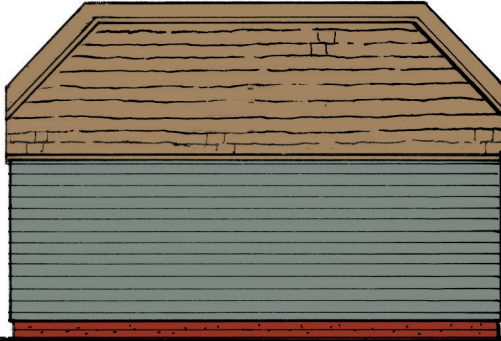
Plots 1 and 4 garages rear elevation



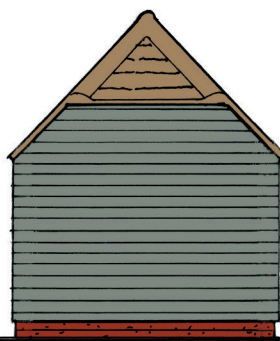
Plots 1 and 4 garages side elevation



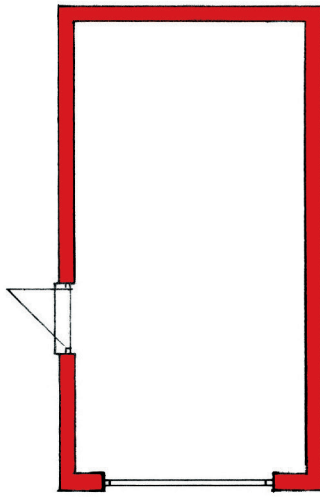
Front elevation garage for plot 9  
(plot 11 handed version)



Side elevation garage for plot 9  
(plot 11 handed version)



Rear elevation garage for plot 9  
(plot 11 handed version)



Floor plan garage for plot 9  
(plot 11 handed version)



Side elevation garage for plot 9  
(plot 11 handed version)



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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**Item Number:**  
**Application Number:**  
 S/19/1755/CHHO

**Ward:** Ridgeway  
**Parish:** Chiseldon

**Proposal:** Erection of 11 no. dwellings and associated works.

**Site Location:** Land East Of Berricot Lane, Badbury

**Case Officer:** Charlotte Hopkins (Chopkins@swindon.gov.uk)

**Agent:**

**Applicant**  
 Bower Mapson Homes Ltd  
 Willow House  
 7 The Avenue  
 Stanton Fitzwarren  
 Swindon  
 SN6 7SE

## Officers Report

### Background

1. This application was brought before the Planning Committee on the 8th December 2020. Committee resolved to grant planning permission for a number of reasons set out in the Committee minutes against the recommendation of officers in their report. Since then, discussions have been ongoing in respect of the Section 106 agreement. During this time, the Council has been made aware of potential deficiencies in the reasoning that lead to the decision to grant planning permission (subject to the completion and signing of the S106 and appropriate conditions); the reasons given; and in the way that these reasons were reported. The deficiencies would make the decision difficult to defend in a legal challenge. In light of this, and following legal advice, this application is resubmitted back to Planning Committee for re-determination. There are no material alterations to the scheme; although there are amendments and updates throughout the report and members must still read it in full. The officer will be able to provide an update on S106 matters. No further consultation has been required.
2. The application is brought before Planning Committee at the request of Councillor Sumner for the reason that it is locally controversial.

3. The scheme initially sought full planning permission for the erection of 15no. dwellings and associated works, however revised plans have been submitted during the course of the application which reduced the scheme to 13no. dwellings and most recently to 11no. dwellings.

### **Adequate Reasons**

4. Although there is no general common law duty to give reasons, a particular application's circumstances may require reasons be given<sup>1</sup>. Where the report recommendation is accepted and approved by members, normally no further reasons are needed<sup>2</sup> (as they are detailed in the report). However, where members overturn officers recommendations, adequate reasons are normally required. Should members be minded to overturn the officer's recommendation for this application, adequate reasons need to be provided.

5. As to what constitutes adequate reasons:

*"The reasons for a decision must be intelligible and they must be adequate. They must enable the reader to understand why the matter was decided as it was and what conclusions were reached on the 'principal important controversial issues', disclosing how any issue of law or fact was resolved. Reasons can be briefly stated, the degree of particularity required depending entirely on the nature of the issues falling for decision. The reasoning must not give rise to a substantial doubt as to whether the decision-maker erred in law, for example by misunderstanding some relevant policy or some other important matter or by failing to reach a rational decision on relevant grounds. But such adverse inference will not readily be drawn. The reasons need refer only to the main issues in the dispute, not to every material consideration. They should enable disappointed developers to assess their prospects of obtaining some alternative development permission, or, as the case may be, their unsuccessful opponents to understand how the policy or approach underlying the grant of permission may impact upon future such applications. Decision letters must be read in a straightforward manner, recognising that they are addressed to parties well aware of the issues involved and the arguments advanced."*<sup>3</sup>

6. The issue for the court is "...whether the information provided by the authority leaves room for "genuine doubt...as to what (it) has decided and why""<sup>4</sup>. If members are minded to overturn a recommendation for refusal that should mean addressing the officers' reasons for refusal and providing reasoning as to why members have decided those issues differently.
7. With this application it needs to be clear at least whether members view that the proposed development is in breach of the development plan, read as a whole; how the planning balance is concluded; whilst paying special regard and attaching "great weight" to heritage harm as required by Sections 66 and 72(1) of the

<sup>1</sup> Dover DC v CPRE Kent [2017] UKSC

<sup>2</sup> South Bucks DC v Porter (No 2) [2004] 1 WLR 1953 ("South Bucks")

<sup>3</sup> South Bucks

<sup>4</sup> South Bucks



Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and to harm to the AONB as required by paragraph 172 of the NPPF respectively. The officer's views on these issues are set out in detail in this report.

## Summary of Recommendation

8. That planning permission be **REFUSED**

## The Proposal

9. This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of 11 no. dwellings and associated works on a greenfield site of approximately 0.6 hectares in area, located on the northern edge of the hamlet of Badbury.
10. The proposed layout would form a cul-de-sac style development of detached and terraced 2 storey dwellings and associated garages/parking courtyards. Overall the scheme offers 3 x 5 bed detached homes, 1 x 4 bed detached home, 2 x 2 bed terraced homes, 5 x 3 bed terraced homes. This mix includes 4 affordable terraced units (36.4 %).
11. Access to the proposed development is to the east of the site via Medbourne Lane. Medbourne Lane extends south into the village of Badbury, and to the north crosses the motorway bridge and continues to the village of Liddington.

## The Site and Surroundings

12. The site currently comprises of an open field that is grassed and slopes down from both Medbourne Road and the southern boundary of the site, to the north west corner of the site. The western boundary of the site is formed from a dense field hedge including Hawthorns of 5 to 6 metres tall, beyond which Berricot Lane is located. A break in the hedge provides views into the site from Berricot Lane and across the site towards residential dwellings adjacent to the southern boundary and out to the Ridgeway and Liddington Hill to the east/south east. A public right of way runs roughly west-east alongside the northern boundary of the site, with a small cluster of residential dwellings located to the north west along Berricot Lane. Beyond the public right of way is a band of trees and shrubs which opens up further to the east. The M4 motorway is located approximately 150 metres to the north of the site. Badbury Lane, which then becomes Medbourne Lane, runs parallel to the eastern boundary of the site and is lined by a dense belt of trees further north of the site. The eastern boundary of the site itself, contains an existing metal gated access and limited vegetation, allowing for unobstructed views into and across the site from the road and views out from the site up towards the Ridgeway and Liddington Hill. Directly to the south of the site are a number of residential properties whose gardens back onto the site.

13. The site is located adjacent to but outside of the rural settlement boundary of Badbury, as defined on the Local Plan Policies Map. Badbury is a small hamlet of approximately 40 dwellings. The site is also located within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The site adjoins the boundary of the Badbury Conservation Area to the south and is located in close proximity of a number of Grade II listed buildings which include 30 Berricot Lane (north of site), 28 & 29 Badbury, 24 Badbury (south of site), Badbury Cottage (south east of site), together with 26 Badbury (south-east of site) which is a key building of interest and has the status of a non-designated heritage asset. The site may also be experienced from the Liddington Castle Fortification which is a Scheduled Monument.

## Representations

### Neighbours

14. 41 letters of objection received in response to initial consultation (erection of 15 no. dwellings), a further 24 letters of objection received in response to revised consultation (erection of 13 no. dwellings) and a further 20 letters of objection received in response to the latest revised consultation (erection of 11 no. dwellings). The main points raised can be summarised as follows:
- Principle:- site is outside defined settlement boundary, proposed increase in number of dwellings is a significant increase relative to size of the village
  - Design and Layout:- cul de sac layout proposed at odds with the general context and character. Marked difference to historic grain of Badbury, which is characterised by linear development along its principal road, density of development is substantially higher than development in adjoining conservation area
  - Highway related concerns:- the village is a notorious rat-run and is already hazardous for those on foot, surplus cars would be parked on roads and grass verges at the edge of the village, lack of parking due to garages and parking spaces falling below standard
  - Impact on landscape/countryside:- inappropriate and harmful to the AONB, urbanising impact, light pollution, harm to views as one approaches Badbury to the north.
  - Impact on conservation area and setting of listed buildings:- harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area, as well as causing harm to the setting of adjoining and nearby Grade II listed buildings.
  - Sustainability:- not sustainably located with no true choice of transport modes, no pavements, lack of facilities in hamlet (no school, church, shop, doctors, post office) and poorly served by public transport– nearest bus stop is on the A346, reliance on car, no sustainable energy measures

- Amenity:- detrimental to living conditions of adjoining neighbours, loss of privacy/overlooking to No.29 Berricot Lane, noise and pollution from M4 will impact future residents, unsatisfactory living standards with some houses failing to meet nationally defined space standards
- Wildlife:- impact on wildlife, timing of ecology survey during daytime and in the winter, relevant to note that the field was badly disturbed only a couple of years ago as a result of the water pipeline and the consequent earthworks and that it will take some years for it fully to recover its ecological balance and it is not possible so soon after to judge its ecology
- Infrastructure:- impact on infrastructure capacity, sewage systems unable to cope

### Chiseldon Parish Council

#### 15. *Initial Consultation (15 dwellings)*

Chiseldon Parish Council objects to the planning application on the same basis as it's objection to the site's inclusion in the Swindon Local Plan. The objections are reiterated below:

#### Sustainability.

- The hamlet has no footpaths along its length meaning walking is unsuitable due to issue of "rat running" that is prevalent in this area during rush hours. It is especially unsuitable for children and those with mobility issues.
- The narrow roads and aforementioned rat running also mean that cycling as a means of transport is hazardous.
- No public bus service stops within the hamlet meaning that those wishing to use public transport would need to navigate the narrow, unlit roads without footpaths, and then cross the A346 to access buses.
- The above 3 points mean that motor vehicle transport is the only viable solution. Badbury has no on-street parking facilities and properties often lack on-site parking. This results in the already narrow lanes being obstructed with parked vehicles. Introducing extra dwellings to this area with the associated number of vehicles is not sustainable for this hamlet.
- There are no facilities in Badbury with the exception of 1 public house. The area is not sustainable for further dwellings as every requirement means a motor vehicle must be used to access other facilities in the neighbouring villages.

#### Conservation Area and North Wessex Downs AONB

- The proposed site is located directly next to the Badbury Conservation area as detailed in the document "Badbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan" Adopted by Swindon Borough Council in February 2009.
- Item 6.1 on page 18 of this document details how this conservation area could be enhanced and improved.



- It encourages planning to respect and promote what is special about this conservation area. It should also seek to ameliorate or remove negative elements. These points should be considered when assessing this application.
- The site lies completely within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and as such it should be considered whether the location in question is suitable for a new development. The plot seeks to include 15 dwellings which this council believes is a major development on AONB land for which exceptional circumstances would have to be demonstrated. The council does not feel that exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated in this respect.
- The location of the proposed development is not entirely in keeping with the linear nature of this Hamlet which should be preserved as one of its main characteristics as listed in the Badbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management plan listed above. Page 12 item 31 states “The predominant pattern of development is linear. Dwellings and former farm buildings stand beside the highway as it winds through the hamlet”. Page 13 also states “....backland development is uncharacteristic of this predominantly linear village”.

This site received significant local opposition during the SHELAA process and during the Local Plan consultation. The council has also been requested through representations by residents of Badbury at its meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019, that in the event that officers intend to decide the matter through delegated authority, and such a decision is to grant planning permission, this application is called in before the planning committee at Swindon Borough Council.

#### *Revised Consultation (13 dwellings)*

The council has reviewed the revised plans and still objects by majority vote.

- The majority of our previous objections remain, although we commend the developer on the thatched houses to the front and reducing the number of houses on the plot.
- We believe the developer has gone a long way to ensure the development fits in with the style of buildings within the hamlet, whilst there are still a few more houses than we would prefer.
- If it were of benefit we would be pleased to open dialog with the developer to discuss ways of mitigating concerns of the PC and the local residents for this proposed development.

#### *Revised Consultation (11 dwellings)*

- The Parish Council planning committee voted to OBJECT to this revised application on the basis of the objections previously submitted by the council.

### Planning Policy

16. In the revised submission, the total number of dwellings has reduced from 13 (previously from 15) to 11. It is understood the percentage of affordable housing will be 36%, which thus exceeds the requirement in Local Plan Policy HA2 and is

therefore a benefit of the proposal. However, the revised number of dwellings would still lead to a significant (circa 25%) increase in the number of dwellings in Badbury, therefore the scale of development remains disproportionate to the size of the rural settlement, and would considerably alter its built form through the introduction of an inward facing scheme that does not correspond to the prevailing linear settlement pattern. On this basis, the view remains that, owing to the limited size and existing settlement pattern of Badbury, the proposed development would constitute major development within the North Wessex Downs AONB. NPPF paragraph 172 directs that planning permission should be refused for major development in AONBs unless there are exceptional circumstances and where the development can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. The proposal does not demonstrate the exceptional circumstances required to allow major development in the AONB. A policy objection is raised.

### Conservation

17. Despite proposing amendments and reducing the number of dwellings, the proposed development is in principle inappropriate and as a result causes harm to the significance of the conservation area and the designated heritage assets via development within their setting. The proposed scheme would be a discordant development which in principle is inappropriate as well as poorly conceived design which does not reflect local character or distinctiveness. Following most recent revisions (11 dwellings), the in principle objection remains to the scheme as well as to the detailed design of the scheme and layout where there are serious concerns as to the ability to reinforce local distinctiveness. Recommended that the application is refused planning permission for the reasons previously given.

### North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Unit

18. The AONB unit objects to the proposed development and objected as part of the SHELAA process. Given the scale/density of the development within this hamlet, the proposal can be categorised as a major development as it would have the potential to permanently alter the prevailing character of the hamlet and surrounding countryside within a protected landscape. Development should only be permitted in an AONB if exceptional circumstances exist, for which the agent has failed to demonstrate. The scale of development would overly urbanise this approach to the development, dominating the wider open countryside to the detriment of the natural beauty of the AONB and its special qualities. The proposed development by reason of scale, density, layout and design would have a harmful effect on the landscape character of Badbury and the natural scenic beauty of the AONB. The development would be contrary to the North Wessex Downs Management Plan.
19. The revision still retains the suburban character, the inward facing layout, density, design and car parking for the terraces adds significantly to this. The revised development still fails to reflect the linear character of the village.

## Landscape

20. Objection raised in principle. Having reviewed the site for the recent SHEELA process, it is not considered that the site is suitable for a development of this type due to the harmful effect on landscape character, the AONB, the Conservation Area and the visual harm to those who have views of it to include adjacent residential properties, roads passing the site and nearby public rights of way. It does not matter how the scheme is amended or rearranged, due to the objection in principle.

## Urban Design

21. The proposal is considered harmful to the character and context of the area and the way it currently functions. The proposal seeks to fill in the gap which is essentially part of the village's setting and its approach. The development is considered discordant and inharmonious to its existing rural character through its offering of a dense and tight-knit insular configuration. Facilities such as schools, healthcare and retail are also absent from the area making the scheme unsustainable and reliant on private vehicles which is contrary to accessibility principles.

## Highways

22. Objection in principle to the proposed development by way of its reliance on travel by car. The revised Site Layout shows 11 houses served by an access road that forms a priority junction onto Badbury Lane. The proposed access can be delivered in accordance with prevailing highway design standards. The development is seen to fall below the standards set in the new Parking Standards document (2021), in as much as two of the eleven dwellings fall short by one space. However in this case, given the site-specific circumstances, it is not considered the non-compliance would be likely to give rise to a significant hazard to highway safety, therefore refusal is not recommended on parking grounds. In respect of visitor parking, adequate provision is made within the site. Cycle parking could be accommodated either within garages or in gardens and a standard Planning Condition would ensure that adequate provision is made. In respect of movement on foot, the Site Layout plan shows a connection to the footpath that runs alongside the site and that connection is welcomed. Whilst there are no concerns for the changes to the layout, the view is retained that the site is fundamentally unsuited to new residential development and the objection set out in the memo of 1st April 2020 still holds due to the site being poorly accessed, to the extent that it is fundamentally contrary to the transport guidance of the NPPF. The Local Highway Authority recommends refusal on these grounds.

## Drainage

23. Following review of drainage strategy, the LLFA requested information on Microdrainage (or similar software) outputs for the 1 year, 30 year and 100 year (including an allowance for climate change) and details of exceedance flow route management. Following review of further submitted details, the LLFA recommends approval subject to conditions.

Archaeology

24. The proposed development is in a highly sensitive area for archaeology. The Historic Environment Record indicates the presence of medieval settlement remains within the red line area. The archaeological evaluation requested has now been undertaken at the site (Thames Valley Archaeological Services Archaeological Evaluation (BLB19/159, dated April 2020). In light of the findings, there is a need for further archaeological mitigation work should the application be consented. It is recommended that an archaeological condition for monitoring and recording is attached to any grant of consent.

Ecology

25. The planning application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (November 2020). The Council's consultant Ecologists have reviewed this report and advised that it provides a sound assessment of the sites current status and potential for protected and notable species to be present. No objection raised subject to conditioning the ecological enhancement/mitigation measures set out in the report, together with other conditions as noted.

Arboricultural

26. No objection, subject to conditions. Concerns initially raised in relation to the position of the dwelling in Plot 3, the location of the soakaway and the siting of acoustic fencing (all related to Plot 3). These matters have now been satisfactorily addressed in Site Layout Rev H, updates to Plot 3 Rev C, updated Tree Survey and Arboricultural Report, updated Drainage Strategy Rev A, Landscape Layout Rev E. No objection raised, subject to conditions.

Environmental Health Officer

27. Noise impact assessment requested in order to assess whether the development will give rise to an adverse impact on the amenity of future residents. Following submission and review of Planning Noise Assessment 20/0069/R1, the Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that the proposal is acceptable in this location, subject to post construction/pre-validation surveys.

Historic England

28. On the basis of the information available to date, no comments are offered. It is suggested that the views of the Council's specialist conservation and archaeological advisers are sought.

Affordable Housing

29. Housing Strategy & Development Officer confirms the mix being offered is acceptable - 2 x 2 bed and 2 x 3 bed. The split agreed is 70/30 between Rented (Social or Affordable) and Intermediate (including Low Cost Home Ownership initiatives), so 3no. Rented and 1no. Intermediate



Crime Design Officer

30. Concerns raised with initial scheme around the proposed footpath beside plot 8, which did not uphold the responsibility to ensure that design considers crime prevention. Confirms revised layout addresses concerns providing a clear and open route and objection is therefore removed.

Thames Water

31. On the basis of information provided with regard to water network and water treatment infrastructure capacity, no objections are raised to the planning application. Thames Water recommend informatives be attached to any planning permission granted.

North Wiltshire Swifts

32. Recommends that the Council conditions the installation of 13 integral swift bricks in clusters of 2/3 preferably in the north, east and west gable ends or elevations close to the eaves with clear flight access.

**Planning Considerations:**

33. The main considerations in the determination of this application are whether the proposal accords with the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 and the relevant policies of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (2015).

**Policy Context:**National Planning Policy Framework

34. The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are to be applied. Of particular relevance are sections: 2: 'Achieving Sustainable Development', 5: 'Delivering a sufficient supply of homes', 8 'Promoting healthy and safe communities', 9 'Promoting sustainable transport', 12 'Achieving well-designed places', 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' and 16 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'.

Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026

35. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
36. The following policies of the Adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (adopted in 2015) are considered relevant to this application:
  - SD1 '*Sustainable Development Principles*' sets out the development principles which underpin the local plan

- SD2 '*The Sustainable Development Strategy*' aims to meet Swindon's development needs whilst protecting the Borough's most important assets
- SD3 '*Managing Development*' seeks to take a positive approach to reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development
- DE1 '*High Quality Design*' seeks high standards of design for all development
- DE2 '*Sustainable Construction*' aims to ensure new developments are designed and constructed to minimise their environmental impact
- HA1 '*Mix Types and Density*' advises that housing development should be designed and respect the character of the surrounding area
- HA2 '*Affordable Housing*' seeks all developments of 15 homes or more, or on sites larger than 0.5 hectares to provide 30% affordable housing
- EN1 '*Green Infrastructure Network*' requires development provides for the protection and integration of visually or ecologically important existing trees, hedges or woodlands.
- EN3 '*Open Space*' seeks all development to provide or contribute towards public open space
- EN4 '*Biodiversity and Geodiversity*' seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and provide net local biodiversity gain.
- EN5 '*Landscape Character and Historic Landscape*' seeks to protect and enhance the intrinsic character, diversity and local distinctiveness of the landscape
- EN6 '*Flood Risk*' seeks to minimise the risk and impact of flooding
- EN7 '*Pollution*' seeks to protect the amenity of future users of development from the emission of pollutants from an existing use
- EN10 '*Historic Environment and Heritage Assets*' requires that development affecting heritage assets shall conserve and where appropriate enhance their significance and setting.
- IN1 '*Infrastructure Provision*' seeks to ensure all new development makes a positive contribution to sustainable growth by mitigating its impacts upon infrastructure
- IN4 '*Low Carbon and Renewable Energy*' seeks to achieve an increase in the level of renewable energy generation in Swindon Borough through integrating renewable/low carbon energy in new development
- TR1 '*Sustainable Transport*' seeks to reduce the need to travel and support and encourage the sustainable, safe and efficient movement of people
- TR2 '*Transport and Development*' encourages sustainable travel and seeks to mitigate the impact of development and ensure that suitable parking provision is provided

## Other Material Planning Considerations

- Swindon Residential Design Guide (2016)
- Swindon Borough Council's Parking Standards for New Development (2021)
- The North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2019 -2024
- Badbury Conservation Area Appraisal (2009)

## **Principle of Development**

37. The development strategy for the Borough is set out in Swindon Local Plan Policy SD2. This policy supports the key government objectives for sustainable development in the most accessible locations, identifying that development will be brought forward through opportunities within the urban area and the development of allocated strategic sites. The proposed development is located outside of the Badbury rural settlement boundary as defined by the Policies Map and therefore lies within the open countryside. Policy SD2 of the Local Plan states that development proposals in rural and countryside locations outside the rural settlement boundary will be permitted where:
  - local needs have been identified and allocated through a Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order; and/or
  - it supports the expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in a rural service centre; or
  - it is in accordance with other policies in this Plan permitting specific development in the countryside
38. The site is not allocated or identified for development in a Neighbourhood Plan and the proposal would not support the expansion of tourist or visitor facilities. As a result, the proposed development would not provide a suitable location for housing and, in this respect, is contrary to Policies SD1 (sustainable development principles) and SD2, of the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which amongst other things, seeks to protect the character and appearance of the countryside and ensure that the majority of new development is located within defined settlement boundaries.
39. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that applications for planning permission, must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
40. At the planning inquiry for Land at Hill Cottage Blunsdon (Planning Inspectorate reference: APP/U3935/W/17/3192234, SBC reference: S/OUT/17/1032) the council's position was that it is able to demonstrate 2.7 years' supply of housing land in the Borough.
41. Paragraph 11 d) of the NPPF, states that, in instances where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, permission should be granted unless:



- i. the application of policies in the Framework that protect assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
  - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole
42. The lack of a demonstrable 5 year housing supply is not in itself a reason for approval, and in this case, the proposal would make a modest contribution (11 dwellings) to the overall supply of housing in the Borough. Rather, those policies which concern the provision of housing cannot alone be the basis of a refusal and the proposal has to be assessed against the policies within the NPPF as a whole. In this instance the element of Local Plan Policy SD2 referring to settlement boundaries, cannot be considered a reason for refusal alone.
43. Turning back to the first bullet point of paragraph 11 part d), and relevant to the current proposal, policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance include those applicable to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and those applicable to heritage assets (as confirmed in footnote 6 of the NPPF). The proposal will be assessed against these policies in the following sections of this report.

## **Heritage Assets**

44. In determining any planning application, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas as set out in sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
45. Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). Policy EN10 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure the historic environment is sustained and enhanced. This includes all heritage assets including historic buildings, conservation areas and archaeology. Development affecting heritage assets shall conserve and where appropriate, enhance their significance and setting.
46. The proposed development is in a highly sensitive area for archaeology, with the Historic Environment Record indicating the presence of medieval settlement remains. A comprehensive archaeological evaluation and assessment was requested prior to determination which has now been prepared and submitted for consideration. The Council's consultant archaeologist has reviewed the archaeological assessment and raises no objection but identifies a need for further archaeological mitigation work should the application be consented. An archaeological condition for monitoring and recording is required to be imposed on any consent granted.

47. The application site adjoins the boundary of the Badbury Conservation area to the south, therefore the development has the ability to affect the setting, character and appearance of the conservation area given the importance of the open countryside beyond the boundary. There are also a number of Grade II listed buildings within the vicinity of the application site, including 30 Berricot Lane, 28 & 29 Badbury, 24 Badbury, Badbury Cottage. 26 Badbury is identified as a 'key building of local interest' and a non-designated heritage asset. It is also noted that the site may also be experienced from the Liddington Castle fortification which is a Scheduled Monument. The development is therefore within the setting of these heritage assets.
48. Badbury is a relatively small settlement which is predominantly a scattering of dwellings located along a spine road. To the north of the village, the road forks with Berricot Lane with a green space at the fork which acts as an informal village green, with a number of historic buildings located around the green at this junction. It is at this point that the rural undeveloped countryside is experienced, particularly in gaps and spaces in and around the historic buildings which give glimpses to the rolling hills and long distance views beyond. The importance of the landscape character around the edge of the village is specifically highlighted within the Badbury Conservation Area Appraisal which identifies the special interest that justifies the designation of Badbury as a Conservation Area including the *"rural setting of the village in a pastoral landscape with significant views to surrounding countryside, including Liddington Castle"*. Section 2.4 goes on to note that *"landscape setting is an important part of the special interest of this small conservation area. The views of surrounding agricultural land and local landmarks contribute to its character and reinforce the area's identity as a scarp settlement between down and plain"*. The application site forms part of the undeveloped and open setting in and around the built form, which forms the transition between the village and the open countryside beyond.
49. Development in the hamlet is very closely associated with the main road as noted in section 3.1 of the conservation area appraisal: *"the predominant pattern of development is linear. Dwellings and former farm buildings stand beside the highway as it winds through the hamlet"*. In addition, the contribution of historic vernacular with the thatched cottages and historic buildings gives a character and appearance that is important to the significance of the area.
50. Policy EN10 of the Local Plan states that development within or which would affect the setting of the Borough's Conservation Areas will conserve those elements which contribute to their special character and appearance. As discussed above, the significance of the Conservation Area derives from the linear nature of the settlement, its agricultural setting and open green edge and typical vernacular thatched downland cottages. The proposed development is to be accessed and laid out around its own access road with the dwellings facing inwards in a cul-de-sac design, which is incongruous with the historic linear pattern of development. The development would introduce a negative and discordant visual intrusion to the experience and historic development of the settlement through the removal of the open and undeveloped aspect of the village which can be experienced within the village and from gaps and spaces in and around the historic buildings. The site at

present provides an important link to the wider countryside and the proposal would significantly erode this. The proposal therefore fails to preserve or enhance the setting and special character and appearance of the conservation area, contrary to Local Plan Policy EN10, the NPPF and section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

51. The identified listed buildings within the vicinity of the site are significant for their materials, construction and relationship to the early development of Badbury. Number 28/29 Badbury directly to the south of the development site, are grade II listed thatched dwellings listed as late 17<sup>th</sup> century or early 18<sup>th</sup> century, which were formerly a row of cottages. No. 30 Berricot Lane, north of the development site is a grade II listed 18<sup>th</sup> century thatched cottage. Badbury Cottage to the east of the main road is a grade II listed two storey thatched 18<sup>th</sup> century cottage set back from the main road, whilst 24 Badbury is also a grade II listed thatched cottage 18<sup>th</sup> century or earlier located to the south of the site in the fork in the road around the informal village green. With relation to their setting, the buildings like much of the historic buildings in this location front the road edge and have large open spaces surrounding. The Council's Conservation Officer advises that although OS Maps are not definitive to explaining relationships between sites, there is clearly a historic association of the fields to the extremity of Badbury and the clear historic association and relationship of the subject site with the historic buildings to the front which are located around a small informal green. This component of the village is experienced as a very historically sensitive location and development within proximity of the open spaces surrounding this area has an impact to how the group of historic buildings are experienced in this location.
52. The listed buildings are examples of historical, vernacular rural dwellings, such that their countryside surroundings contribute to their legibility and thereby to their significance. The proposed development would remove the open aspect and introduce development into the open countryside. The overall scale, bulk and massing of the new dwellings would overly dominate the views of the open area and significantly change the experience and nature of these views. It is considered that as a result of the inherent relationship and historic connection between the historic buildings and the open countryside, the proposed development would fail to preserve the significance of the listed buildings by reason of development within their setting, contrary to Local Plan Policy EN10, the NPPF and section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
53. It is clear that the proposal will cause harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets, thus failing to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and setting of nearby listed buildings. Although serious, the harm to the heritage assets in this case would be 'less than substantial', within the meaning of the term in paragraph 196 of the Framework.
54. Paragraph 197 of the Framework seeks that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. It is noted that 26 Badbury was not assessed within the heritage statement despite



being noted on the conservation area map. A similar assessment to setting is made with regards to the listed buildings for development within the setting of 26 Badbury which forms part of the collective group of historic buildings at the northern extent of the village. The open spaces and open aspect's surrounding the buildings is important to how they are experienced, which would be significantly eroded as part of the proposed scheme. As such, weight, should be given to the detrimental harm caused by the scheme which causes harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset via development within its setting.

55. Whilst the site may be present in long distance views from Liddington Castle Hill Fort, it is considered that the proposed development would cause neutral harm to the Scheduled Monument via development within its setting.
56. Paragraph 196 of the NPPF states that where there is 'less than substantial harm' to designated heritage assets, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. Whilst benefits of the development include the development of market and affordable housing in the context of a housing land supply shortage, socio-economic benefits of expenditure from future occupiers and short term employment opportunities in construction, this would be at the expense of the historic environment which is afforded considerable importance and weight. The limited public benefits identified do not outweigh the less than substantial harm caused. The scheme conflicts with the Framework, which directs at paragraph 193, *'that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation... irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to their significance'*.
57. Given the national importance to protecting heritage assets, relative to the modest benefits that would result from the development, the considerations that weigh in favour of the proposal do not clearly outweigh the identified harm to the heritage assets, to justify the development. Furthermore, whilst it is acknowledged that there is a lack of five year supply of housing land, housing land supply issues are likely to be temporary, while the harm to the setting, character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of the listed buildings would be permanent. In the application of paragraph 11 d) i), in light of the findings above on heritage assets, the heritage policy set out in the framework provides a clear reason for refusing the development.

## **Impact on Landscape and AONB**

58. The development site is located within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Policy EN5 of the Local Plan applies which seeks to protect, conserve and enhance the intrinsic character diversity and local distinctiveness of landscape within Swindon Borough. The policy states proposal within the Borough which are within and/or abuts the North Wessex Downs AONB must accord with the relevant criteria set out in the AONB Management Plan and paragraph 115 and 116 of the NPPF (paragraph 115 and 116 of the 2012 NPPF are superseded by paragraph 172 of the revised NPPF).

59. Paragraph 172 of the NPPF requires decision-makers to attribute 'great weight' to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs, which have the highest state of protection in relation to these issues. The scale and extent of development within these areas should be limited. Paragraph 172 directs that planning permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Footnote 55 confirms that whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.
60. Whilst it isn't possible to derive precedents from decisions reached elsewhere in different contexts, it is noted that development of 10 dwellings<sup>5</sup> <sup>6</sup> and 20 dwellings<sup>7</sup> have been found to be major development in AONBs, which demonstrates that depending on the details of the proposed site, relatively small-scale proposal can be considered as major development in the AONB for the purposes of NPPF paragraph 172. Further, the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan (2019-2024) states that "*as a general guide to assessing the likely impact of development on the AONB, The North Wessex DOWNS AONB unit define 'major development' as set out in the Town and Country Planning Development Management Order*" (i.e. 10 dwellings or more).
61. The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. The North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan (2019-2024) emphasises that the special qualities with regards to development in the AONB come from its "*undeveloped and rural quality*", "*containing typically modest villages with distinctive and ancient settlement patterns*".
62. The proposed development would lead to a significant increase to the small hamlet of Badbury, with an increase of circa 27.5% in the number of dwellings. The proposed development would considerably alter the built form of the rural hamlet, through the introduction of a relatively dense inward facing scheme that does not correspond to the prevailing linear historic settlement pattern of Badbury where dwellings are closely associated with the main road which winds through the village. This is with the exception of the proposed terrace fronting Medbourne Lane. Instead the cul-de-sac style development would introduce a suburban character to the rural landscape with an associated expanse of hard standing and parking courtyards.
63. Open views exist across the site from a number of public vantage points in the vicinity, despite the presence of boundary vegetation and nearby residential development. These views are experienced by residential properties, users of the road passing the site and nearby public rights of way. The views provide visual

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<sup>5</sup> Land south of Tregellast Parc, St Keverne Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/W/18/3208554

<sup>6</sup> Land adjacent to 113 Broad Park Road, Bere Alston, Appeal Ref: App/Q1153/W/16/3157958

<sup>7</sup> Part of Motha Farm, Carey park Road, Polperro, Looe, Cornwall, Appeal ref: APP/D0840/W/16/3146313

links to the wider countryside, and contribute to the character of the locality. Glimpses to the open countryside are provided at the informal village green to the south of the development site. The eastern boundary and part of the western boundary of the site allow views into and across the site, whilst long distance views out of the site to fields and rolling hills including Liddington Hill to the east/ south east of the site are provided. The development would curtail these views and links with the wider countryside, which form part of the rural character and setting of the hamlet of Badbury. The development would also impose development at close quarters to users of the public right of way which runs west-east, restricting views across and out of the site, as well as views towards the conservation area which includes a number of listed buildings. It should be noted that the Landscape Appraisal submitted in support of the application does not contain a winter assessment and therefore whilst the western and parts of the northern boundaries of the site are to a degree screened by mature vegetation, the visibility provided varies at different times of the year.

64. It is considered that the scale and layout of the development would overly urbanise the northern approach to the village, dominating and interrupting the views to wider open countryside, to the detriment of the natural beauty of the AONB and its special qualities. The development also has the potential to create additional harm in terms of light spill for the proposed properties and any street lighting, creating harm to the dark skies environment which is a special quality of the AONB. The scheme would result in a discordant urban intrusion into the rural landscape, failing to protect and conserve its intrinsic character in terms of historic settlement pattern and natural beauty, contrary to Policy EN5 of the Local Plan, the AONB Management Plan and paragraph 172 of the NPPF.
65. Taking into account the above and the nature, scale and setting, it is considered that relative to the limited size and settlement pattern of Badbury, the proposed development of 11 dwellings would constitute major development within the North Wessex Downs AONB. Paragraph 172 of the NPPF directs that planning permission should be refused for major developments in AONBs other than in exceptional circumstances and where the development can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include assessment of:
  - the need for the development including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy
  - the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
  - any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated
66. In terms of the first bullet point, it is accepted that Swindon Borough Council is unable to demonstrate a deliverable five year housing supply. In this respect, the development would contribute to meeting a need for housing in the Borough, including 36.4% affordable homes. However considering the second bullet point, there is clear scope for that need to be met other than by major development in the



AONB, given the amount of land within the Borough that lies outside of the AONB and in higher tier settlements in the settlements hierarchy. Turning to the third bullet point, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the landscape character of Badbury and the natural scenic beauty of the AONB. The proposal would introduce considerable built form at the northern boundary of the hamlet, with the cul-de-sac layout appearing incongruous with the prevailing linear historic pattern of development. The development would erode the rural setting of the village and restrict views to open countryside at the boundaries of the settlement, with further potential harm from light spill. The visual harm created by the proposed development would extend to those who have views of it to include adjacent residential properties, users of the road passing the site and users of the public rights of way.

67. Whilst the site would support a need for housing in the Borough, including 4 affordable units, this would not demonstrate the exceptional circumstances referred to in paragraph 172 in which major development in AONBs would be supported. The development would result in a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the area and would not conserve or enhance the landscape or scenic beauty of the North Wessex Downs AONB contrary to Local Plan Policy EN5, the North Wessex Downs Management Plan and paragraph 172 of the NPPF. In considering paragraph 11 d) i) of the NPPF, the policies within the framework with regards to the impact on the AONB, provide a clear reason for refusing the development.

## Design and Layout

68. Section 12 of the NPPF places great emphasis on the creation of high quality buildings and places in the planning and development process. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF notes developments *should “function well and add to the overall quality of the area”, be “visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping”, “are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting”, “establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit”.*
69. Swindon Local Plan Policy DE1 states that high standards of design will be required for all types of development and development will be assessed against context and character, layout, form and function, amenity and quality of the public realm. The adopted Residential Design Guide also requires high design standards as well as offered guidance on layout, context and character amongst other factors.
70. Policy DE1 requires development to be in context with the existing natural, built and historic environment, and to respond positively to enhance or create distinctive character and identity. Badbury is characterised by a predominately linear pattern of development which is closely associated with the main road as it winds through the hamlet. This offers a relatively low density form of development contributing to

the rural setting of the village. Conversely, the application proposes a cul-de-sac style of development, with the site accessed and laid out around its own access road with the dwellings facing inwards, with the exception of the proposed terrace fronting Medbourne Lane to the east. This results in a tightly-knit, insular style of development which is at odds with the historic grain and linear development pattern of Badbury and instead urbanises the areas rural character. Plots 5-11 propose a much higher density than existing surrounding development and in particular the courtyard style arrangement and off-plot parking would typically be found in suburban areas. The Swindon Residential Design Guide advises at page 26, section 3.46 that “*character and context should help inform the most appropriate car parking arrangements particularly in established and historic areas*”.

71. It is accepted that the reduction from 15 to 11 dwellings assists to reduce the density and has allowed increased soft landscaping to the front of plots 1 and 2 for example, which is visible at the entrance to the development. However, this does not overcome the objections raised overall to the cul-de-sac layout and density presented within this rural context.
72. Badbury conservation area is characterised by a mix of downland cottages and late 20th century bungalows, with traditional thatched downland cottages forming the typical village vernacular. The application proposes detached two storey thatched cottages with render at plots 1, 3 and a terrace of 3 thatched rendered cottages at plots 9-11. Plots 2 and 4 are detached two storey dwellings constructed of natural stone with stone slate or clay tiled roofs whilst Plots 5-8 is a two storey stone terrace with a clay tiled roof.
73. Section 4.2 of the Residential Design Guide states in line with Policy DE1, development proposals will be assessed in terms of siting, orientation, scale, massing, materials and detailing. Whilst the proposal presents thatched cottages with materials and architectural features which attempts to reflect the village vernacular, concern is raised that the proposed thatched cottages are oversized and lack the small proportions of historic thatched cottages. As a consequence, it is considered that the height and massing of the buildings would distract and dominate the historic thatched cottages. It is noted that the smaller proportions of the historic buildings may be difficult to achieve against today's building regulations standards, however given the layout and density of the proposed scheme together with the proximity to the existing historic buildings, no other conclusion can be reached other than that the proposal will dominate and overbear the historic buildings. Further, the slope of the site results in the change in levels being emphasised at Plots 9-11 and the excessive circa 10.5 metre heights are exacerbated as a result. Plot 2 and 4 also appear excessively tall with a wall height that is equal to the roof height. The thatched cottage at Plot 3 also has a large brick extension to the rear which attempts to create a mock later extension, however an extension of this size overcomplicates the already excessive proportions of the building.
74. Policy DE2 of the Local Plan aims to ensure new developments are designed and constructed to minimise their environmental impact and contribute to meeting statutory targets for reductions on CO2 emissions, whilst Policy IN4 aims to

achieve an increase in the level of renewable energy generation in Swindon Borough through integrating renewable/low carbon energy in new development. Although the application is not accompanied by an environmental/sustainability appraisal, nor any plans detailing sustainability measures, in the applicant's letter of the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020 it is stated *'As well as our standard triple glazing and our external walls having insulated 150mm wide cavities, we will be proposing heating the homes with Air Source Heat Pumps rather than fossil fuel boilers'*. Whilst these measures would bring about environmental and sustainability benefits to the scheme, the detail is lacking within the application submission and any approval should be subject to the condition that full details are submitted to the LPA for approval.

75. Overall, it is considered that by virtue of the layout, design, scale and bulk, the development fails to respond to the local identity and character of the area, in conflict with Policy DE1 and Policy HA1 of the Local Plan and the Residential Design Guide. The development is also contrary to para. 127 of the NPPF which seeks to ensure developments *"are sympathetic to local character and history" and "establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials"*.

### **Residential Amenity**

76. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF requires that development promotes health and well-being with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Policy DE1 of the Local Plan requires consideration of amenity in respect of light, outlook, privacy, noise, disturbance, pollution and smell. The Residential Design Guide provides further detailed guidance in respect of Policy DE1.
77. No.27-29 Badbury currently enjoy unobstructed views across the development site from their rear elevations and gardens. Concern has been raised that a single storey rear extension and conservatory extension at No. 29 Badbury is not shown on the proposed site layout plan, which creates a false misrepresentation of the distance between the existing property and the proposed development with the conservatory extension at No.29 extending approximately 4.5 metre beyond the rear wall as currently detailed.
78. Revised layout plans have been submitted (Site Layout Rev H) which in reducing the number of units has effectively removed Plot 2 as initially proposed. Plot 1 has been re-orientated, with the gable end facing south east towards the rear of 27 Badbury. This south east facing gable includes a first floor en-suite window and given this is a non-habitable room, a condition could be imposed requiring that this window be obscurely glazed in order to protect the privacy of No. 27.
79. The Swindon Residential Design Guide SPD sets out separation distances to help relieve the impact of development for existing residents to ensure good solar access to rooms and gardens and to satisfy the privacy, outlook and amenity requirements of Policy DE1. The SPD sets out a minimum separation distance of 12 metres between development which is arranged rear to side. In the case of the gable end which forms the south east side elevation of proposed plot 1, a separation distance of 13 metres is achieved to the rear elevation of No.27 Badbury at the closest point. This achieves the standards set by the SPD, therefore the amenity of this



neighbour will not be unacceptably harmed. Given the off-set angle of the dwelling at Plot 1 to the rear elevations of No. 28 and No.29 Badbury, the proposal would not result in direct overlooking to the rear facing windows of these properties and therefore would not lead to unacceptable loss of privacy or light.

80. Whilst the proposal will obstruct views out from the existing dwellings located at the sites southern boundary, loss of view is not in itself a material planning consideration. Given the siting and orientation of the proposed dwellings in relation to the existing dwellings, it is not considered outlook will be harmed to an unacceptable degree to the extent that the development would be considered overbearing. Boundary fencing and appropriate landscaping to be agreed within a landscaping scheme, would help maintain privacy between gardens and ground floor windows. Overall, the scheme would not lead to an unacceptable impact to neighbouring amenity in accordance with Policy DE1, the SPD and the provisions of the NPPF.
81. It is considered that the future residents of the development would also benefit from suitable amenity levels in terms of privacy levels, outlook, access to light, internal and external space. Each dwelling would have access to private external garden areas and whilst the configuration of plots 5-7 results in a somewhat narrow and awkward external amenity space, on balance, in considering these are 2/3 bed dwellings, the garden size is adequate. The internal floor area of Plots 5 & 8 (2 bed, 4person) at 73.9m<sup>2</sup> falls slightly below the national standard of 79m<sup>2</sup>, as well as Plots 6 & 7 (3 bed, 5 person) which achieve 92.2m<sup>2</sup> compared to the national standard of 93m<sup>2</sup>. On balance, this discrepancy is not considered to be significant and the development would overall provide a good standard of living for future occupiers. With regard to residential amenity the development is compliant with Policy DE1 of the adopted Local Plan.
82. In addition to Policy DE1, Policy EN7 of the Local Plan requires that where development would be adversely affected by the emissions of pollutants from an existing use, the proposal will only be permitted where the users of the future development are protected from loss of amenity from those emissions in accord with Policy DE1. Paragraph 180 of the NPPF requires an assessment of new development to ensure it is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effect of pollution on health and living conditions. The M4 motorway is located approximately 150m to the north of the site. Following a noise survey carried out at the site and in consideration of the internal and external noise levels as detailed in the British Standard BS 8233:2014, the assessment indicates that a suitable internal noise climate can be achieved with the windows closed and therefore mechanical ventilation systems are recommended. Acoustic fencing is proposed to the northern boundary and part of the western boundary of the site to achieve the daytime external amenity noise criteria within the gardens. The Environmental Health Officer is satisfied with the measures proposed, subject to these being secured by condition and post development validation surveys to demonstrate the standards have been achieved. The development complies with Policy DE1, EN7 and the provisions of the NPPF in residential amenity terms.

## Highway Access, Safety, Parking and Accessibility

83. Policies TR1 and TR2 of the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan seek to ensure new development is located and designed to reduce the need to travel and to encourage sustainable alternatives and that access for developments is appropriate to the scale, type and location of the proposal without detriment to highway safety and traffic movement. The NPPF at paragraph 108 requires appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be or have been taken up, safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users, any significant impacts from the development on the transport network or on highway safety can be mitigated to an acceptable degree.
84. Paragraph 103 of the NPPF states that “significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes”. Policy SD1 of the Local Plan states that development should be accessible by walking, cycling and/or public transport and Policy TR2 states that new development should be located and designed to reduce the need to travel and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives, particularly walking and cycling, and provide the potential to maximise bus travel.
85. The development site is located in close proximity to the settlement of Badbury, although Badbury itself is very limited in terms of facilities and services with only a public house. The village of Chiseldon is located to the south west of Badbury, beyond the A346 Marlborough Road and has facilities such as a primary school, doctors surgery a parish church, pubs and hotel, a Spar shop and petrol station. Three Trees Farm Shop and Café is also located to the south of the Chiseldon village. The closest of these facilities is located approximately 15-20 minutes walk away from the application site. It is also noted some employment opportunity exists in the Old Dairy business park located in the south part of the village and at the care home. The village of Badbury is not itself served by a bus service, with the nearest bus stops located on the A346 Swindon to Marlborough Road at the junction with Badbury, at a distance of approximately 0.5-0.6 miles from the application site and a 10-12 minute walk. A regular Monday- Friday bus service is provided, with a slightly reduced service on a Saturday.
86. Whilst some of the local services and facilities, including the bus stops, are located within what might be considered an achievable walking distance, the quality of the walking environment must also be assessed. The route between the proposed development site and just before the junction with the A346 to access the facilities within Chiseldon, lacks pavements and instead pedestrians would have no choice but to walk along the grass verge or road. There is limited street lighting within the village core, with a lack of street lighting between the edge of the village and the A346 (Marlborough Road) which further reduces the attractiveness of the walking route. As identified above, future residents would also have to cross the busy A346 which has no controlled pedestrian crossing facility, in order to access the services and facilities in Chiseldon and the north bound bus stop to Swindon. For these reasons, walking and cycling is unlikely to appear as a very attractive option for residents, particularly in hours of darkness. That said this doesn't mean that no new residents will choose to cycle or walk.

87. Although paragraph 103 of the NPPF acknowledges that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas (and this should be taken into account in decision-making), it is difficult to argue that the site is genuinely well located to minimise travel and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes. Instead, Officers are of the view that the development is poorly accessed and would be car dependent, contrary to the spirit of the NPPF and policies SD1 and TR2 within the Local Plan. As a consequence this weighs against the development.
88. The development site itself would be accessed directly from Medbourne Lane to the east of the site, in the form of a new simple priority junction. The road is derestricted at this point i.e subject to a 60mph speed limit, although the Badbury village signed boundary and associated 30mph speed limit is immediately to the south of the proposed access, meaning traffic speeds past it can be expected to be below the posted 60mph limit.
89. Highways Officers consider that the proposal will generate relatively low levels of vehicle traffic with generated movements likely to be split between movement to the south, towards the A346, and movement to the north in the direction of Swindon. Highways Officers confirm that by way of the volume of vehicle flow and geometry of the local highway network, no issue of network impact or safety concern is raised.
90. The Highway Officer requested further details were submitted to evidence existing vehicle speeds or alternatively a visibility splay appropriate to the posted speed limit is demonstrated on the proposed site layout plan, in order to confirm the acceptability of the access in highway safety terms. Information has been provided on traffic speeds and the Site Layout Plan updated accordingly. The Highways Officer is content that the means of access shown on the updated Site Layout Plan is safe for both drivers and for pedestrians.
91. The proposed dwellings are to be served by a short street, proposed to be offered for adoption. Concern was raised with the initial plans due to both the geometry of the on-site street which did not lend itself to shared use, the access to terraced plots fronting Medbourne Lane and the dimensions of some of the car parking spaces. The Highways Officer has confirmed that the layout proposed in the Site Layout Plan Rev H, is acceptable in terms of the highway geometry with a uniform 6m shared space now shown. The revised scheme also accommodates a footpath connection to the terrace fronting Medbourne Lane (now plots 9, 10 and 11).
92. Policy TR2 of the Local Plan requires parking is provided in line with the Council's adopted Parking Standards. The Council has recently adopted new Parking Standards in January 2021, which require 1-2 bed dwellings in this location provide 2no. parking spaces and 3+ bed dwellings provide 3no. parking spaces. As a result of the newly adopted standards, Plots 6 and 7 now fall one parking space short of the required number, providing 2 spaces instead of 3. The proposal make provision for three visitor parking spaces and in that respect, fully accords with the new Standards. The development is seen to fall below the standards set in the

new Parking Standards document, in as much as two of the eleven dwellings fall short by one space. Highways Officers recommend that given the site-specific circumstances, the non-compliance would be unlikely to give rise to a significant hazard to highway safety and do not therefore recommend refusal on parking grounds. The parking can therefore be accepted.

### **Biodiversity**

93. The NPPF requires biodiversity to be taken into consideration during the determination of applications, avoiding significant harm to biodiversity and promoting opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments. Policy EN4 Biodiversity and Geodiversity of the adopted Local Plan is also relevant.
94. The planning application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (November 2020). The Council's consultant Ecologists have reviewed this report and advise that it provides a sound assessment of the sites current status and potential for protected and notable species to be present. Suitable recommendations are given for detailed presence/absence surveys for reptiles, the results of these should be reported, with appropriate precautionary working methods/mitigation clearly set out for the approval of the LPA. The provisional ecological enhancement/mitigation measures are appropriate and have been made into recommendations which can be conditioned with any approval. A lighting plan needs to be provided which will keep retained habitats in darkness. Works are also to be carried out in accordance with the submitted Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Report (P.M. Griffiths, November 2020) and associated Tree Survey / Tree Protection Plan (Drawing no. 069/401 Rev. A). To achieve net biodiversity gain, the application proposes a wildlife pond to increase aquatic habitat availability, green spaces sown with wildflower and grass seed mix, bird/bat boxes, habitat piles, hedgerow creation and/or restoration. The Council's Ecologist confirms that the proposal is acceptable with regards to Ecology and recommends a series of conditions should planning permission be granted. The proposal is considered to meet the requirements of Policy EN4 and the NPPF.

### **Arboricultural**

95. Policy EN1 of the Local Plan requires that development provides for the protection and integration of visually or ecologically important existing trees, hedges and woodlands. The application is supported by a tree survey and arboricultural impact report (ref PMG/C154, November 2020) that also includes an assessment of the implications of the proposed development on the existing trees and a tree protection plan. The existing trees are around the periphery of the site, located along the western and southern boundaries, and the development footprint is largely outside their root protection areas (RPA). There is a maturing Hawthorn (T9) adjacent to the proposed access and it is identified for removal. The Arboricultural Officer is in agreement with the tree survey assessment that the tree's form is affected by the proximity to the overhead cables and acknowledges that, if planning permission is granted, its loss could be mitigated by replacement planting along the same boundary.



96. The Arboricultural Officer initially raised concern in relation to proposed plot 3 and the conflict with trees in the north west corner of the site. These matters have now been satisfactorily addressed in Site Layout Rev H, updates to Plot 3 Rev C, updated Tree Survey and Arboricultural Report (Nov 2020) and updated Drainage Strategy Rev A and involve: revising the internal layout of the dwelling in Plot 3 to emphasise access to the rear garden space over the side which is constrained by the overhanging tree canopy of two sycamores; moving the garage further to the east away from the boundary hedge; re-routing the proposed soakaway to avoid the root protection area of adjacent trees; re-siting the acoustic fencing at the north west corner of the site with the methodology proposed as hand dig; the siting of the fence posts to avoid any damage to the root systems of the adjacent trees. The Arboricultural Officer raises no objection following these amendments. The proposal has demonstrated that visually and ecologically important trees and hedges will be protected, according with Policy EN1 of the Local Plan.

### **Drainage**

97. Policy EN6 of the Local Plan seeks to minimise the risk and impact of flooding. The application is supported by a Drainage Strategy. The LLFA raise no objections and propose conditions be added to any permission granted. Thames Water also raise no capacity issues and make a number of advisory informative comments, which can be added to the decision notice.

### **Affordable Housing**

98. Paragraph 64 of the NPPF states where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for affordable home ownership (as part of the overall affordable housing contribution from the site). Policy HA2 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan requires affordable housing is sought on site at a ratio of 30% on all suitable sites proposed for development that comprise 15 or more dwellings or sites of 0.5 hectares or more. As the site is 0.6 hectares, the threshold is met and the application proposes affordable housing on site at a ratio of 36.4%, which exceeds the requirement set by Local Plan Policy HA2.
99. The Council's Housing team has raised concern whether a Registered Provider would be willing to take on the affordable units. However, White Horse Housing Association have confirmed an interest in taking on the affordable units. The affordable housing would need to be secured by way of a S106 legal agreement; it is advised that any S106 legal agreement require the relevant contracts to be entered into between White Housing Association and the landowners prior to commencing the development to alleviate any concerns the Site could not provide onsite affordable units.

### **Infrastructure Requirements:**

100. In addition to affordable housing which has been addressed above, this section considers the overarching infrastructure policy framework set out through Policy IN1 of the adopted Local Plan. The Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule was adopted on 26th March 2015.

101. The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) 'CIL Regs' came into force on 6th April 2010. The CIL Regs Regulation 122 embedded three of the five tests of Circular 05/2005 as statute. Regulation 122 states that where an item of infrastructure may be requested as a planning obligation, in order to support a decision the three following test must be satisfied:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- Directly related to the Development, and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

102. Compliance with Regulation 122 is therefore material to any contributions that will inform a decision to grant planning permission.

103. The development would be CIL liable development based on the approved Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (April 2015). The development is located within the Council's adopted CIL Charging Schedule 6th April 2015 Residential Zone 2. The standard CIL rate as set out in the adopted CIL Charging Schedule do not reflect the rates that would be chargeable as these are index linked annually on the 1st January in any given year.

## **Open Space**

104. Policy EN3 of the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan details a requirement for residential development to provide or contribute towards public open space in line with open space standards set out in appendix 3 of the Local Plan. This development would generate a requirement to secure off-site open space contributions. In the event that planning permission is granted, this would be necessary to secure by way of a S106 agreement.

## **Other Matters**

### **Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)**

105. Local Authorities' are required by the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance to carry out a SHELAA. The SHELAA assessment aims to identify sites with potential for any future development. It does not allocate sites to be developed, nor confer any permission or authorisation for development. The site in question (as part of a slightly larger 0.72 hectare site) has been assessed against the SHELAA requirements and was found to be suitable for potential future development, however the SHELAA assessment did identify constraints in terms of the AONB and proximity to heritage assets.

### **Draft Local Plan and Sustainability Appraisal**

106. The proposed site was included as a potential housing allocation site in the Regulation 18 (Emerging Strategies) consultation of the Local Plan. However, the proposed site has not been taken forward as part of the Submission Draft Local Plan. The site has been assessed for the purposes of the Sustainability Appraisal Report of the Submission Draft Local Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal outline the primary reasons for the site's rejection as follows:

*“The Sustainability Appraisal identifies landscape and conservation concerns with the development of the site. Overall, it is felt that the potential dis-benefits of developing the site outweigh its benefits”.*

107. It is also noted that the site scored particularly poorly in terms of the Transport topic of the Sustainability Appraisal, in terms of its ability to reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices, which was assessed in terms of accessibility to public transport facilities (including a regular bus service and commuter bus service).

## **Planning Balance and Conclusion**

108. Special attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their setting and preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas as required by section 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The scheme would cause ‘less than substantial harm’ to the setting, character and appearance of the conservation area as well as to Grade II listed buildings via development within their setting. The proposal fails to preserve the traditional, linear and agricultural character of the area or make a positive contribution to the locality in terms of its local character and distinctiveness. The site as existing adds to the significance of the listed buildings through the open, rural setting, which would be undermined by the proposed development. The NPPF requires any harm to the significance of any designated heritage assets should require clear and convincing justification and that the harm is weighed against the public benefits. The limited public benefits that arise from the development do not outweigh the ‘less the substantial harm’ identified. The proposal fails to preserve or enhance the setting of the conservation area or the setting of listed buildings, contrary to section 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and in conflict with Policy EN10 of the Local Plan and the NPPF which seeks to conserve the historic environment.
109. The proposal site is located outside the Badbury rural settlement boundary and constitutes development in the open countryside, contrary to Policy SD2 of the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026. As the Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply and because of the provisions of Paragraph 11 d) of the NPPF, this is not sufficient to raise a policy objection in relation to this issue alone.
110. Paragraph 11 d) of the Framework, states that, in instances where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, permission should be granted unless i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development. Pursuant to footnote 6, this includes the policies applicable to AONBs and designated heritage assets, which are both relevant considerations in the assessment of the proposed development scheme.
111. In light of the findings above on heritage assets, the application of policy on heritage assets in the framework provides a clear reason for refusing the

development. Turning to consider the impact on the AONB, the framework attributes great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty of AONBs. Taking into account the nature, scale and setting of the proposal and relative to the limited size and existing settlement pattern of Badbury, it is considered that the proposed development of 11no. dwellings and associated works in this context constitutes major development within the AONB representing a circa 27.5% increase in the number of dwellings in the hamlet. Paragraph 172 of the NPPF directs that planning permission should be refused for major development in AONBs unless there are exceptional circumstances and where the development can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. It is acknowledged that the delivery of 11no. dwellings including 4 affordable units is a benefit given the absence of a 5 year housing land supply within the Borough. However, it is not considered that this constitutes exceptional circumstances required to allow development in the AONB, nor that the proposal would be in the public interest. The framework therefore provides a clear reason for refusing the proposal with regards to the impact on the AONB. The proposal is contrary to Policy EN5 of the Local Plan, the AONB Management Plan and the provisions of the NPPF.

112. The presumption in favour of sustainable development, or tilted balance, does not apply given the clear harm identified to the areas and assets of particular importance which includes to designated heritage assets and the AONB. Although the tilted balance is not engaged in this case, for completeness it is felt useful to comment on part ii) of paragraph 11d) as to whether the adverse impacts of the scheme would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. There are benefits to the proposal which would include the provision of housing in the context of the current housing land supply shortfall, together with the affordable units the scheme would deliver in a rural area, the contribution towards economic growth during the construction phase and the additional population created would also be likely to assist the local economy in terms of utilising local services. Nonetheless, the benefits would be limited given the reasonably modest scale of the development proposed. Considering the harm identified to the character and appearance of the conservation area and setting of listed buildings and the building of local interest, the harm to the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB, the harm caused to the character of the area in terms of design and layout, together with the poor accessibility of the site and reliance on private motor vehicles, the benefits of the development would not outweigh the harm identified above. The proposal conflicts with Local Plan Policies SD1, SD2, DE1, HA1, EN5, EN10, TR2, the Residential Design Guide (2016) and the provisions of the NPPF. As such, the proposal does not represent sustainable development and permission should be refused.

## Recommendation

113. That Planning permission be **REFUSED**.



## **Reasons**

1. The application proposes the unsustainable development of a greenfield site located within the countryside, outside the identified Badbury rural settlement boundary as shown on the Local Plan Policies map. The proposal does not comply with policies SD1 (Sustainable Development Principles), SD2 (The Sustainable Development Strategy) of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (2015) and the NPPF (2019).
2. By reason of its context and location, the proposed development constitutes major development in the AONB for which exceptional circumstances have not been demonstrated, nor is the proposal in the public interest. The development would result in a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the area and would not conserve or enhance the landscape or scenic beauty of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In these respects, the development is contrary to Policy EN5 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (2015), the provisions of the NPPF (2019) and the North Wessex Downs Management Plan 2019-2024.
3. The proposed scheme would result in an incongruous, prominent form of development that has an unacceptable design and in principle which causes harm to the setting, character and appearance of the conservation area as well as to other designated and non-designated heritage assets via development within their setting. The proposal would fail to preserve the traditional, linear and agricultural character of the area and fails to make a positive contribution to the locality by not embracing the qualities of local character and distinctiveness. The proposal is, therefore, contrary to Policies DE1, EN5 and EN10 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (2015) and the heritage paragraphs of the NPPF (2019).
4. The proposal, by reason of its siting, design and layout, would appear out of context with its surroundings failing to respect the character and visual amenity of Badbury and the rural setting. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy DE1 and Policy HA1 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (2015), the adopted Swindon Residential Design Guide (2016) and the NPPF (2019).
5. The development site is remote from services and facilities and offers very limited opportunities for public transport. The development would as a consequence be car-dependent and contrary to the requirements of para 103 of the NPPF (2019) and Policy TR2 and Policy SD1 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (2015).

## **Informatives**

1. This decision shall be in respect of the following plans and documents:

Design and Access Statement, Heritage Assessment (DPDS, November 2019),  
Location Plan Drawing No 069-51, Refuse Vehicle Swept Path Analysis Drawing

No B726/1, Thames Valley Archaeological Services Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (dated November 2019) all received by the Local Planning Authority on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019

Landscape Appraisal (Patrick Griffiths, dated October 2019) received by the Local Planning Authority on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019

DPDS Letter in response to Conservation comments (dated 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020), Significance Matrix, Badbury View Comparison, Representations in respect of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2036 Regulation 19 Submission Draft Consultation (dated January 2020) all received by the Local Planning Authority on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

Email correspondence PFA Consulting dated 14<sup>th</sup> February 2020 received by the Local Planning Authority on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Topographical Survey Drawing No 19916-200-01 received by the Local Planning Authority on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

Planning Noise Assessment 20/0069/R1 received by the Local Planning Authority on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Archaeological Evaluation (BLB19/159, dated April 2020) received by the Local Planning Authority on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Plot 1 Drawing No 069/110 Rev A, Plot 2 Drawing No 069/128, Plot 4 Drawing No 069/129, Plot 5 -8 Drawing No 069/118 Rev C, Plot 9 -11 Drawing No 069/119 Rev B, Garage Plots 1, 3, 4, 9 and 11 Drawing No 069/25 Rev C, Material Schedule Drawing No 069/60 Rev B, Schedule of Gross Internal Floor Space in m2, Street Space Diagram Drawing No 069/130, Proposed Drainage Strategy Statement B726 Revised all received by the Local Planning Authority on the 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (UE0409\_BerricotLn\_PEA\_2\_201116, November 2020) received by the Local Planning Authority on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

Plot 3 Drawing No 069/115 Rev C, Site Layout Drawing No 069/101 Rev H, Drainage Strategy Drawing No B726/03 Rev A, Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Report PMG/C154 November 2020, Landscape Layout Drawing No 069/400 Rev E, Local Character Drawing No 069/130 Rev B all received by the Local Planning Authority on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020.

2. CIL Liable Development: This development constitutes Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) liable development. CIL is a mandatory financial charge on development.

End of Report

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