

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Greenacre Centre, Valerian Way, Stotfold, SG5 4HG
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28th August 2024

Members of the Planning Committee: Cllr B Saunders (Chairperson), Cllr L Anderson (Vice-Chairperson), Cllr J Bendell, Cllr M Cooper, Cllr S Dhaliwal, Cllr S Hayes, Cllr J Headington, Cllr J Hyde, Cllr N Venneear.

You are hereby summoned to attend the Planning Committee meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Greenacre Centre, Stotfold on **Wednesday 4th September 2024 at 19:00** for the purpose of transacting business detailed in the Agenda.

Emma Payne
Town Clerk

Members of the public:

You are now able to observe our meetings by joining via MS Teams. Join on your computer or mobile app [Click here to join the meeting](#). Please note, our meetings may be recorded for Minute taking purposes and will be deleted after Minutes are approved.

Members of the public are invited to observe the meeting and may participate at the 'public section' agenda item. As per Standing Orders, if you wish to speak, you must notify the Town Clerk of your intention prior to the start of the meeting (contact in advance enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk or 01462 730064 or you will be asked at the appropriate point in the Agenda if unable to give prior indication).

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

- a) Members to declare interests in respect of any item on the Agenda.
- b) Proper Officer to consider written requests from members for dispensations.

Members are reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

3. PUBLIC SECTION (MAX. 15 MINUTES)

Members of the public may speak on matters of concern, ask questions, or make statements (maximum of 3 minutes per speaker), after giving notice of their wish to do so to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting. Order of speakers will be in order of notification. [Public Participation Policy](#) applies.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members are asked **to resolve** that the Minutes of the **Planning Committee** meeting held on **14th August 2024** are a correct record.

5. CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

To consider returning comments on applications received.

6.1 [CB/24/01696/FULL](#) – Vine Farm, Edworth Road, Astwick

Erection of an agricultural dwelling.

Members are asked to discuss this planning application following the issue of a new Agricultural Advisor's Report, a Biodiversity Calculation and Biodiversity Net Gain Report, (copies are included in this Agenda Pack).

At the Planning Committee Meeting of 26th June 2024, the Committee **RESOLVED** to:

Object to this planning application on the following grounds:

- ***The application form is incorrect and misleading - It is unclear if the proposed dwelling will be a self-build, market housing or an agricultural dwelling.***
- ***Stotfold Town Council wishes to support the Comments of Astwick Parish Committee.***

Members also asked for CBC Ward Councillors to call this application in to a Development Management Committee Meeting.

6.2 [CB/24/01618/FULL](#) – Stotfold Methodist Church, High Street, Stotfold

Change of use of Methodist Church building to café, charitable food distribution storage area, a mezzanine office area and new ramp.

At the Planning Committee Meeting of 17th July 2024, Members of this Committee felt additional information is needed to support the application. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Seek further information including a planning statement after concerns have been received from residents and the Town Council is currently unable to be make a decision.

The Applicant has now submitted revised plans, a reply to Planning and Highways and a Client Statement in support of its application, copies of which are included in this Agenda for consideration by the Committee.

7. LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

To consider a submission on behalf of Stotfold Town Council to Central Bedfordshire Council's public consultation on the draft Local Plan

[Creating great places to live - new Local Plan | Central Bedfordshire Council](#).

8. CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS BY CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ("DMC")

To consider requesting Central Bedfordshire Council's Development Management Committee to consider specific applications within committee rather than by officer delegation, and to send a representative of the Planning Committee to attend the meeting at which the application is considered, to represent the views of this Committee.

9. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

Planning Applications for information only:

9.1 [CB/24/02190/DOC](#) - Taylors Mill, Taylors Road, Stotfold, Hitchin, SG5 4AZ

Discharge of Condition 2 against planning permission ref. CB/24/00978/LB (Proposed

Development: Listed Building: Replace side and rear roof plane tiles with slates. Strengthening / replacement of the timber roof structure below as required.) Drawing "243c-A130-CB/24/00978/LB-Condition 2 Discharge Info", describing and illustrating the proposed natural slate and complimentary ridge piece product information.

9.2 [CB/24/02266/DOC](#) - 92 Norton Road, Stotfold, Hitchin, SG5 4PG

Discharge of Condition 2 against planning permission CB/22/02212/FULL (Erection of new porch, rebuild front brick wall, raising of garage roof and conversion to gym, erection of new single storey flat roof garden studio, and internal alterations).

9.3 Response from Cala Homes

At the Planning Committee Meeting of 14 August 2024, the Committee resolved to write to Cala Homes with the following comment:

The Committee have requested that Cala Homes reassess the allocation of parking provision across the site as the site will be a destination point for residents and visitors to Stotfold, so additional parking will be needed.

Cala Homes have acknowledged receipt of the feedback and copy of the response is attached.

9.4 Persimmon Homes – Pre-application Meeting - Friday 6 September, 10:00

If any Members wish to attend this meeting, please advise the Clerk so an invitation can be sent to them.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed.



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18th AUGUST 2024 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, STOTFOLD, SG5 4HG, AT 19:00.

Present:

Cllr B Saunders (Chair), L Anderson (Vice Chair), Cllr S Buck, Cllr J Bendell, Cllr M Cooper, Cllr S Dhaliwal, Cllr J Headington.

Also Present:

Cllr L Miller
Cllr J Talbot
Member of the Public – 1 in person, 1 via MS Teams
Cllr H Wightwick – CBC Ward Councillor

In attendance:

Sian van der Merwe, Democratic Services Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs J Hyde and S Hayes. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Accept the apologies.

2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There are none.

3. PUBLIC SECTION

There were no members of the public present who wished to speak.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members received the minutes of the meeting held on **17th July 2024**. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Adopt the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

5. CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION

a) [CB/24/01618/FULL](#) – Stotfold Methodist Church, High Street, Stotfold

The Democratic Services Manager advised she had spoken with the Planning Officer at Central Bedfordshire Council that day for an update on this application. The Planning Officer has yet to write to the Applicant to notify them of the Town Council's request for further information. The Planning Officer advised there will be a 21-day response time from the date the Applicant receives CBC's notification, after which all Consultees will receive a further notice of the extension of the consultation and the response from the Applicant.

The Planning Officer expects that the consultation end date will therefore be extended to mid-October.



6. APPLICATIONS

To consider returning comments on applications received.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

Bring Item 6.2 on the Agenda forward for discussion to this point of the Meeting.

6.1 [CB/24/01882/FULL](#) - White Barn Farm, Taylors Rd, Stotfold, SG5 4AZ

Change of use of agricultural land to extend industrial yard with (Class B8) permission.

A Member of the Public addressed the Committee as he resides adjacent to the property. He stated his objection to this planning application based on the noise pollution from scaffolding loading from 06:30. He believes Taylors Rd is not suitable for heavy goods vehicles and stated there are already numerous problems with trucks blocking Taylors Road to offload their goods. He stated that there are regular traffic jams along Taylors Road and is concerned as there is no ongoing lane onto the A1M, so trucks entering onto the A1M pose a significant danger to the vehicles already on the A1M travelling at high speed. Mr Ramnarain states HGV's are not suitable to go around the bend at the bottom of Taylor Road and they need to travel slowly. He is aware of a number of incidents of trucks knocking bollards and damaging signs along Taylors Road.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

Object to the planning application on the grounds of highway safety issues as the road is not suitable for heavy goods vehicles.

6.2 [CB/24/02094/DOC](#) - Land South of Arlesey Road, Stotfold, SG5 4HD

Discharge of Condition 10 against planning appeal ref. APP/P0240/W/21/3289401 and planning permission CB/21/01248/OUT (Outline application (with all matters reserved except access) for a development of up to 181 dwellings to include up to 35% affordable, an integrated Care Village (C2 use) with ancillary community facilities, 11ha of public open space comprising parkland and woodland extension, Pix Brook flood mitigation proposals, extensive new landscaping, play areas, creation of biodiversity habitat, public car park, new access arrangements and all ancillary works).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

There is no objection to the discharge of condition.

7. PLANNING APPLICATIONS POLICY

Members discussed the merits of consulting with developers for town planning purposes and the following amendment to the Planning Applications Policy is proposed:

In the interests of fairness, transparency and integrity, Officers and all Members of the Town Council can be requested to meet with Housing Developers together (where possible) to discuss aspects of planning related to new housing developments within its town borders. Housing Developers must undertake all consultation in line with planning laws and regulations and ensuring that its consultations with the public are transparent, inclusive, compliant with regulations and fair.



It was **RESOLVED** to:

Recommend to the adoption of the amended Planning Applications Policy to the Town Council.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

Bring Item 10 from the Agenda forward to this point of the Meeting.

8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

- 8.1 Cllr Wightwick advised the Committee that CBC will request additional consultation on the Vine Farm application following receipt of an Agricultural Advisor's Report.
- 8.2 Cllr Wightwick asked the Committee to send further detailed grounds to support an objection to the 7 – 9 Regent Street Application before she will be able to support the Ward Councillors' call in to the Development Management Committee.

9. PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

Members considered Cala Homes' launch of a pre-application public consultation on their website. It was **RESOLVED** to:

a) *Write to Cala homes to ask them to:*

Re-look at the allocation of parking provision across the site as this will be a destination point near the open space for residents and visitors to Stotfold, so additional parking is needed.

10. CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS BY CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ("DMC")

There were no applications to be called in to a DMC on this meeting.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 19:30.

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: _____

MINUTES APPROVED: _____ **(date)**

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PLANNING COMMITTEE

DATE: 4 SEPTEMBER 2024

CLERK'S REPORT

1. [CB/24/01847/FULL](#) – Land at rear gardens of 7 and 9 Regent Street, Stotfold, SG5 4ED

This planning application was considered at the Planning Committee meeting of 17th July 2024 and the Committee resolved to object to this application on the grounds of overdevelopment. Members also requested that this application be called in to DMC for consideration, however, this was not conveyed to the Ward Councillors in time to meet the consultation deadline. Ward Councillor Wightwick also asked for an expanded list of reasons why the Planning Committee was requesting the call-in, which was provided to her as follows:

- Overdevelopment of the site – there is already a bungalow on the next property.
- No. 7 does not have any off-street parking and is a 3-bed house.
- Provision of services to this site will need to be installed through the front property's garden (No. 7).
- Regent Place is a private access road only suitable for one vehicle in or out.
- The proposal takes up the gardens of two of the front properties and would significantly impact the adjoining properties once sold.
- If the proposal is to develop the garden into a home, this will have an impact on neighbouring property and have a significant impact on an already-congested bus route opposite Meadow Way.
- The applicant will only have a right of access to Regent Place as there is a gated entrance to the development at the end of the road and just beyond the driveway to the garage which is proposed to be part of this application.

The Planning Officer also advised Ward Councillor Wightwick that the Application would be refused on the grounds that there was no biodiversity or net gain listed in the “self-build” application.

Following a conversation on 28th August 2024 with the Planning Officer, I was advised that the situation has changed – the Applicant will be re-submitting his application, and this means the Town Council will be re-consulted after the application.

Your Ref: CB/24/01696/FULL
Our Ref: 10493-jm

14 August 2024



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For the attention of Ms J Moss

Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands
Shefford
Bedfordshire
SG17 5TQ

Dear Ms Moss,

Site: Vine Farm, Edworth Road, Langford.
Application: CB/24/01696/FULL
Proposal: Erection of an agricultural dwelling

Thank you for your instruction dated 23 July 2024 requesting Reading Agricultural Consultants Ltd (RAC) comments on the above application.

In preparing this response I have had regard to the Planning Statement (PS) (dated June 2024) prepared by Acorus, the applicant's agent, and the supporting documents and plans. I have also had regard to the dismissed appeal decision APP/P0240/W/22/3313068 (dated 12 July 2023).

Following my site visit I have been provided with an extract of farm accounts for the years 2021 to 2023 and extracts of the alarm logs for the biomass boilers.

I visited the site on 29 July 2024 with yourself and met Ed Wainwright-Lee, the applicant, Alex Farr, Tim Farr and Charles Whitaker of Brown and Co. We viewed the poultry buildings, biomass building, and boilers and I viewed the proposed site for the dwelling.

Background

1. The applicant, trading as AE & WA Farr Ltd, operates a 370,000 poultry broiler unit at Vine Farm within the 10 poultry buildings (approved under CB/15/00096/FUL, CB/16/05078/VOC and CB/21/02692/FULL).
2. The buildings are heated by the two biomass boilers which each provide 1 megawatt of heat to five poultry units, operating at 800 degrees. There is a gas heating system which is used as backup. When I visited the site the external temperature was approximately 28 degrees and the ambient temperature within the buildings was 32 degrees. The buildings have tunnel ventilation and a misting system.



Reading Agricultural Consultants Ltd

Registered Office as above

Company No. 3282982

Registered in England



3. RAC has been provided with a supporting letter from Sir Peter Kendall, former NFU President and local poultry farmer, which sets out occurrences on his own broiler unit with dwellings for manager and assistant manager during heatwaves in 2020 and 2022.
4. RAC has also been provided with a letter from Avara Foods (formerly known as Faccenda Foods Ltd) who AE & WA Farr Ltd are contracted to provide the chickens to. The letter sets out the expectations of Avara Foods for their contract farming partners to always provide sufficient staffing cover for the poultry site. It states that one on-site farm manager cannot be expected to be on-call constantly and that the size of the poultry unit is too big for one person to manage on their own.
5. The business employs three full-time workers: a specialist Poultry Manager, specialist Assistant Poultry Manager and general worker. The poultry manager resides in the dwelling (approved under CB/16/00665/FULL) and the assistant poultry manager lives in an unauthorised mobile home sited by the reception building. The general worker resides on site in an additional unauthorised mobile home for the nights that he is working on site.
6. The assistant poultry manager has been living in the mobile home for over two years.
7. The applicant has provided a staff rota which shows a typical work routine over the 50 day period for the broiler production with at least two workers on site at any time, except for the days between disinfecting and setting up again for the next batch of broilers.

Relevant Planning Policies

8. National planning policy guidance for development in the countryside is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) updated in December 2023.
9. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out the core land-use planning principles that should be adopted and these expressly include:
 - A presumption in favour of sustainable development;
 - Positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of the area and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;
 - Provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses;
 - Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; and,
 - Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission.
10. Paragraph 38 requires that decision makers:
 - should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way; work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic; social and environmental conditions of the area;
 - seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
11. Paragraph 82 et seq deals with housing in the countryside and notes;

“In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs...”

To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services...”
12. However, paragraph 84 maintains the presumption against isolated new dwellings in the countryside unless they are essential, noting:

“Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) *there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside...*

13. Section 6 of the NPPF is concerned with 'Building a strong, competitive economy' and at paragraph 85 it notes:

"planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt..."

14. At paragraph 88 'Supporting a prosperous rural economy' it notes:

"Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) *The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- b) *The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses;..."*

15. New Planning Practice Guidance titled 'Housing Needs of Different Groups' (July 2019) provides some guidance relevant to paragraph 84 of the NPPF in the section 'How can the need for isolated homes in the countryside for essential rural workers be assessed'?

These include:

- *"Evidence of the necessity for a rural worker to live at or in close proximity to their place of work to ensure the effective operation of agricultural, forestry or similar land-based rural enterprise (for instance where farm animals or agricultural processes require on-site attendance 24 hours a day and where otherwise there would be a risk to human or animal health or from crime, or to deal quickly with emergencies that could cause serious loss of crops or products);*
- *The degree to which there is confidence that the enterprise will remain viable for the foreseeable future;*
- *Whether the provision of an additional dwelling on site is essential for the continued viability of a farming business through the farm succession process;*
- *Whether the need could be met through improvements to existing accommodation on the site; providing such improvements are appropriate taking into account their scale, appearance and the local context; and*
- *In the case of new enterprises whether it is appropriate to consider granting permission for a temporary dwelling for a trial period."*

It further notes that: *"Employment on an assembly or food packing line, or the need to accommodate seasonal workers, will generally not be sufficient to justify building isolated rural dwellings"*

16. Policy DC3 of the Adopted Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2015-2035 set out the policy for Rural Worker's Dwellings. It states:

"Permanent new dwelling for the use of rural workers will be supported in the countryside where:

1. *There is a clearly established, existing functional need for agricultural, forestry and other full-time workers to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;*
2. *The unit and the agricultural activity concerned have been established for at least three years, have been profitable for at least one year, are currently financially sound and have a clear prospect of remaining so;*
3. *The need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available or could be made suitable and available for occupation through conversion and change of use; and*
4. *The scale of the proposed dwelling is no larger than that required to meet the requirements of the enterprise..."*

Appraisal

Proposal

17. The application proposes the erection of an additional rural worker's dwelling at the application site which will provide accommodation for the assistant specialist poultry manager. It is understood that the unauthorised mobile home will be removed.
18. The proposed dwelling is a single storey bungalow and comprises a kitchen, lounge/dining area, utility room, cloakroom WC, three bedrooms, bathroom and en-suite bathroom with an integral single garage.

Essential Need

19. The primary test set out in the NPPF is an assessment as to whether it is essential for a rural worker to live at, or near, their place of work. Policy DC3 of the Local Plan requires a clearly established and existing functional need. In this case, there is a well-established poultry business at the application site.
20. The applicant considers that in order to provide the necessary and appropriate management and supervision for the poultry enterprise, it is essential that an additional rural worker lives on site in order to ensure that the welfare needs of all the poultry kept on site are not compromised.
21. There is a legal responsibility under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 to ensure that animals are kept in a manner which accords them freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition; appropriate comfort and shelter, the prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment or injury, disease or infestation; freedom from fear; and freedom to display most normal patterns of behaviour. The issue of security is also acknowledged to be an increasing problem especially where the holding is at risk from fire, trespass, and vandalism – and such risks can only adequately be managed with on-site supervision.
22. Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 it is an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to any animal. The Act also contains a Duty to Care to animals which means that anyone responsible for an animal must take reasonable steps to make sure the animal's needs and its welfare are met. The overall responsibility for Duty of Care for animal welfare for the livestock on the holding lies with the poultry manager and assistant poultry manager.
23. The unit is accredited by the Red Tractor Assurance for Farms which requires that alarms must be responded to within 15 minutes and time, date and response must be logged in the alarm records which are checked at the audits.
24. RAC notes that the Planning Inspector did not consider the time taken to respond to an alarm in the Appeal Decision and instead focussed on the travel time between other settlements and the poultry unit. No consideration was given to any travel delays, weather conditions or changing clothing to meet biosecurity criteria. At my site visit I discussed when the previous manager was living in the owned property in Ashwell, (discussed in further details later) and it was detailed that there were occasions where delays were encountered due to car fires, car failing to start, snow and road closures. In addition, no consideration was given to the need to change into the biosecure PPE clothing for each of the poultry buildings.
25. The applicant has provided an extract of the farm log from 23 October 2023 to 25 March 2024. The log details the age of birds, staff on site and times on site, additional comments and any alarms activated, the response time and time to resolve issues.
26. The logs show alarms triggered by the feed weigher, feed bin, auger pipe, temperature and any biomass boiler related issues, water pipes and drinker. It also notes that some of the alarms required additional attendance to ensure that two workers were on site for any working at height, particularly related to the feed bins and chain conveyor or the biomass boilers.

27. When alarms are triggered, there are mobile phone SMS alerts, and a klaxon sounds. The manager or assistant manager are then required to establish which building is affected, attend within 15 minutes and then fix any failures or faults. The additional comments within the logs note where additional assistance by one of the three staff has been provided due to specialist knowledge.
28. An assessment of the essential need for a rural worker to live at or near their place of work requires:
- an evaluation of the risks involved;
 - the frequency and type of out-of-hours emergency that might arise;
 - the scale and loss that could be incurred should that emergency situation occur;
 - the potential for an on-site worker to identify the problem; and
 - the ability of that resident worker to rectify the problem.
29. The Council accepted there were essential needs relating to the poultry unit in the permitting of CB/16/00665/FULL at which point the unit had permission for eight poultry buildings for up to 320,000 birds.
30. RAC considers the essential needs at site relate to:
- the general welfare and care of all poultry on the farm;
 - the regular inspection of housed poultry for signs of disease or distress and to rectify the problem promptly;
 - the regular inspection of automatic drinkers, feeders, ventilation and heating for each building;
 - the provision of security for poultry from theft or malicious attack; and
 - dealing promptly with unforeseen emergencies.
31. In addition, the biomass boilers generate an essential need as they provide heating to the poultry buildings. It was detailed that the two boilers operate together at all times, with each providing heat to five buildings. Any failure in the biomass boilers will trigger alarms and the welfare of the housed poultry can be placed at risk. Whilst the site has gas heating systems as a backup, this is considered a short term solution. As detailed earlier, repairs to the biomass boiler systems can require staff to be working at height and in such situations the Health and Safety Executive requires two workers to be present. RAC notes that the Planning Inspector did not consider the biomass boilers and their function within the poultry unit and any subsequent effect on the welfare of the birds in the decision (APP/P0240/W/22/3313068).
32. RAC notes that the Planning Inspector did not consider the labour requirements relating to the housed poultry on site.
33. Using reference data in the John Nix Farm Management Pocketbook (54th Edition 2024) that relates to broilers and the current stocking levels the labour requirement would be:

	Size	SMD/bird	Total SMDs
Broiler	370,000	0.002	740
15% management & maintenance			111
Total			851
No of workers at 275 SMD/Worker			3.09

34. RAC considers that there is a requirement for an additional poultry worker to live on site to meet the welfare requirements of the poultry on site. This essential need has been met by the assistant poultry manager residing on site in the unauthorised mobile home for the last two years.

35. As such, RAC considers that the applicant's proposal is compliant with national and local planning policy, in particular Policy DC3.

Financial Sustainability

36. The NPPF deals with the concept of sustainable development at a strategic rather than an individual enterprise level. In terms of economic development, it is concerned with contributing to and building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation.
37. In this context RAC considers any assessment of economic sustainability as the ability of the business/enterprise to utilise its resources which allows it to function properly; it has to have the ability and necessary funds available to stay in business.
38. RAC have been provided with an extract of the farm business accounts for the poultry enterprise for the years ending 2021 to 2023. This shows an increasing turnover each year, increasing by 45% between 2021 to 2023 and overall net profit increasing by 8%.
39. RAC would consider the increase in variable costs by 52% are reflective of market forces with feed and bedding prices increasing significantly over this financial period.
40. RAC considers that the applicant's business is currently supporting the employment of three full-time workers.
41. The Planning Statement notes that the poultry unit is subject to a £8m loan.
42. RAC considers that the business is well-established and will remain viable and sustainable for the long term in compliance with Policy DC3 of the Local Plan.

Other Dwellings

43. There is a dwelling on site (approved under CB/16/00665/FULL) which is occupied by the Poultry Manager.
44. There are two unauthorised mobile homes on site which are occupied by the assistant manager full-time and the general worker when he is working on site.
45. RAC notes that the Planning Inspector discussed the settlements of Newnham and Ashwell. At my site visit I discussed the property in Ashwell in further detail with the applicant. I was provided with an address and postcode and have reviewed the travel times. Travelling via Astwick the quickest route is 6.6 miles (16 minutes) and as discussed earlier in this report that does not take into account time to respond to the alarm, arrive at site, change into biosecure PPE clothing and attend the issue.
46. The applicant has provided details of travel times and changing times from different settlements to the poultry unit. RAC accepts and considers that the times allocated for the travelling and changing of clothing are an appropriate calculation.
47. RAC would note that the agricultural sector and wider rural industry are struggling to recruit staff without providing accommodation and the quality of accommodation is of more importance than in previous decades. The broiler unit requires specialist staff which are difficult to source and therefore retaining staff is a priority and of the utmost importance to the applicant's business.
48. Discussions were had at site regarding the availability and suitability of Church Farmhouse, located 0.4 miles from the poultry unit. This is a six bedroom house currently occupied by the applicant, a Director within the business. RAC considers this dwelling to be beyond sight and sound of the poultry units, and would be beyond the affordability of a rural worker and accommodation provision for an assistant poultry manager.

49. The Keen v SSE & Aylesbury Vale DC High Court case has established that it is unreasonable to expect a farmer/agricultural worker to vacate his/her home to make it available for another agricultural worker. This judgement has been consistently relied upon by Inspectors in appeals where there is a dispute about the availability of existing accommodation on the farm for a rural worker.
50. In terms of appeal cases RAC notes there are many cases that share parallels. The following is a small sample:
- i. Appeal Ref: T/APP/C0630/A/99/1018943/P7 - Appeal by A Pearson and Son where the Inspector concludes (para.6): ***“To my mind it would be entirely unreasonable to expect Mr and Mrs Pearson to leave the bungalow prematurely I have therefore come to the view that The Bungalow cannot be considered as being currently available for the accommodation of a key worker”***
 - ii. Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/A/13/2193698 - Town Farm, Old Stillington, Stockton-on-Tees, TS21 1LX. The Inspector at paragraph 15 concludes: ***“Consequently, I consider it would be unreasonable to deny Sally Thompson and her partner separate accommodation, and to expect Mr and Mrs David Thompson to move out of their family home, either now or after full retirement. In this case I am aware of the judgement in the Keen case, where the court found it was not reasonable to expect the farmer to leave his house and presumably buy another one elsewhere when a clear need had been established for a new dwelling”.***
 - ii. Appeal Ref: APP/H2733/W/17/3186812 – Rye Topping Farm, Ings Lane, Brompton by Sawdon, Scarborough. The Inspector note at paragraph 17: ***“In this case, the existing farmhouse is occupied by the appellant’s 77 year old mother. She remains a partner in the business who is actively involved in the management of the farm……”*** And at paragraph 27 concludes: ***“Bringing matters together, for the reasons given, I am not convinced that this farmhouse can reasonably be considered available to the appellant. This being so, and taking into account the benefits that would arise from the proposal, I therefore conclude on the main issue that there is an essential need for an additional dwelling to accommodate a rural worker”.***

Conclusion

51. The proposal before the Council is for the erection of an additional rural worker’s dwelling to provide accommodation for the assistant poultry manager at the application site.
52. RAC considers that there is an essential and functional need for an additional rural worker to reside on site to meet the welfare of the 370,000 broilers housed on site. This welfare need has been met by the assistant poultry manager residing in the unauthorised mobile home for the last two years.
53. RAC considers that the 15 minute response time can only be met by workers residing at Vine Farm.
54. RAC considers that the business is financially viable and sustainable and likely to remain so in the long term.

55. RAC considers that the essential need cannot be met by the poultry manager alone who resides on site in the approved dwelling. Therefore, it is considered that there is a justified and essential need for an additional rural worker's dwelling to provide accommodation for the assistant poultry manager.
56. The applicant's proposal for an additional rural worker's dwelling is compliant with national and local planning policy.

I hope these comments are helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Olivia Wojniak



Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Vine Farm

August 2024

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Document Reference: BCEnv.24.0092.

Date of Issue: 13 August 2024

Revision Number: 01

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Declaration and Disclaimers

This document was prepared to the standard set out in the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct and makes every reasonable attempt to comply with the relevant best practice guidelines and BS42020:2013 (Biodiversity: Code of Practice for Planning and Development). All information and data set out in this report is true and based upon bona fide opinions and professional knowledge to the best of Brown & Co's knowledge at the time of writing.

Brown & Co has prepared this report for the sole use of the client under the conditions set out in the agreement under which this document was completed. No sections or excerpts of this report can be duplicated without the express written permission of Brown & Co and the client.

Validity – Adhering to current CIEEM guidance (CIEEM 2019), this report is considered valid for a period of 12 months and will no longer be considered valid and applicable for current assessments of Site/project ecological condition as of 14 August 2025.

IMPORTANT CONFIDENTIALITY INFORMATION – This report may contain sensitive wildlife data that could be detrimental if shared externally. As such, this report should not be placed in the public domain or shared with third parties without appropriate censorship.

1. Introduction

1.1 Project Background

Brown & Co was commissioned by Edward Wainright in August 2024 to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment at Vine Farm, Edworth Road, SG18 9TA (NGR: TL20883946)—hereafter referred to as ‘the Site’.

The Site is a flat parcel of land within an existing area of farmland, dominated by modified grassland.

This report sets out the results of a site survey undertaken 07 August 2024 and a subsequent desk-based assessment. The information, assessment and discussion set out in this report aim to inform the potential for Biodiversity Net Gain on the Site in the context of plans to erect a new residential dwelling and associated infrastructure. Access is proposed to be via existing public roadways and agricultural tracks within the adjacent agricultural land.

1.2 Site description

The Site was an approximately 0.65 ha flat parcel of land within an existing complex of agricultural fields north of the village of Astwick, Bedfordshire (see Figure 1). The majority of the Site comprises a hardstanding roadway that runs south from Edworth Road to join an artificial track. An area of existing modified grassland is also present in the south of the Site.

No hedgerows, lines of trees, or watercourses are present within the Site.



Figure 1 – Site location (redline), showing the wider local landscape (© 2024 Microsoft Corporation, © 2024 Maxar, ©CNES (2024) Distribution Airbus DS).

Imagery taken from Bing Aerial August 2024.

The wider landscape around the Site is dominated by agricultural field parcels with various hedgerows, woodland blocks, waterbodies, and small urban areas also present.

Edworth Road, an arterial public roadway, is present directly north of the Site. Multiple other public roadways are present in the surrounding landscape, chiefly associated with the towns of Stofold and Edworth. The A1 dual-carriageway corridor runs north-south 985 m east of the Site.

The River Ivel, a Statutory Main River, runs north-south 1,940 m southwest of the Site.

2. Methods

2.1 Objectives

The aim of this report is to provide an initial assessment of the habitats present within the Site and those included in proposals for the Site with regard to the potential of achieving Biodiversity Net Gain. Plans showing all onsite habitats will be generated.

This report was produced following current best practice guidance, including that set out in BS 8683:2021 Process for designing and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain (British Standards 2021).

2.2 Legislation and Policy

Appendix A sets out the national and local planning policy, as well as environmental and wildlife legislation relevant to the Site. The project must adhere to these documents at all times. The contents of this report are written in part to avoid an offence being committed in regard to this policy and legislation.

2.3 Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation

A survey of the Site was conducted on 07 August 2024 by Senior Ecologist Ryan Clark BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM. Ryan is a qualified ecologist, having worked within ecology and the wider environmental sector for the last 14 years.

The survey area was subject to a walkover by the attending ecologist, where in the onsite habitats were identified and assessed in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd 2023). Flora species lists were compiled for each habitat and assigned positions on the DAFOR (Dominant, Abundant, Frequent, Occasional, or Rare) scale as laid out in Walker *et al.* (2010). Additionally, the Site was assessed for its suitability

for protected and notable species. Any evidence of such species, e.g. Badger setts and signs, was recorded and geo-referenced onsite.

The Statutory Biodiversity metric (Defra 2023) was employed to input the results of the Site survey and the proposed new onsite habitats, thereby generating the value difference between the pre-project and post-project habitats—relative Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric requires the following site condition data points to generate the BNG associated with the Site and proposed works:

Habitat Type: both the broad habitat, e.g. woodland, and the specific habitat type, e.g. lowland mixed deciduous woodland, as outlined in UKHab Ltd. (2023).

Area: an aerial measurement of total land cover area (in hectares) for each habitat parcel. Recording of habitat extents, both pre and post-works, was conducted using the onsite survey results, readily available online mapping and aerial imagery, and verified land use records. The minimal mapping unit (MMU) was taken at 0.01 ha.

Condition: a measure within Defra’s BNG guidance and assessment tools that quantified the relative ‘condition’ of a habitat parcel based on various physical, composition, and landscape variables dependant on the habitat type, e.g. number of vascular plant species present per square metre. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment sheets (Defra 2023) were used to assign condition scores to the habitat parcels identified in the onsite survey.

Strategic Significance: a category ascribed to the geographical location of the Site in regard to its position in the context of Local Planning Authority areas and National Character Area profiles.

2.4 Limitations

The survey of the Site was conducted in August 2024, within the optimal botanical assessment period and habitat survey season (April-September inclusive). Thus, it is considered that a full and appropriate botanical assessment was conducted at the time of survey.

Habitat mapping is subject to seasonal variations, where in, ecotones—transitional zones between biological communities—may drift or be relocated at different periods of the year. This can be a natural shift owing to abiotic factors, or a consequence of management, either within the habitat itself or within adjacent communities.

3. Baseline Conditions

3.1 UK Habitat Classification Survey

This section outlines all habitats recorded within the Site on 07 August 2024. A plan depicting the onsite habitats, their extent and location, and relevant target notes are shown in Appendix B; photographs of the Site are shown in Appendix C.

UKHab baseline habitats present within the Site:

- Other developed land – u1b6 (Secondary codes: 516 – active management and 800 – road).
- Artificial unvegetated – unsealed surface – u1c (Secondary codes: 516 – active management and 839 – track).
- Modified grassland – g4 (Secondary codes: 108 – frequently mown and 516 – active management).

3.1.1 Other Developed Land

The majority of the Site comprises a hardstanding roadway that runs south from Edworth Road and provides access to the Site (Photograph 1). This feature is well maintained and has no colonising vegetation. This habitat will be wholly retained by the current proposals.

3.1.2 Artificial Unvegetated – Unsealed Surface

An existing artificial trackway used for agricultural access (Photograph 2). This feature is well maintained and displays very limited colonising vegetation in the form of bristly oxtongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*), common dandelion (*Taraxacum agg.*), and common ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*). This habitat will be wholly retained by the current proposals.

3.1.3 Modified Grassland

The south of the Site comprises a grassland field parcel (Photograph 3). The sward contained cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*), and false oatgrass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*). Forbs included common dandelion, red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), smooth hawksbeard (*Crepis capillaris*), and white clover (*Trifolium repens*). The species diversity of the sward was noticeably low, with vascular plant species per square metre not exceeding 4. As such, this habitat did not pass criteria A of the condition assessment and therefore could not achieve a condition score greater than Poor.

4. Feasibility of Biodiversity Net Gain

4.1 Irreplicable Habitat and Other Important Ecological Features Evaluation

No irreplaceable or Priority habitats are present within the Site or the surrounding area.

The assessment of the Site did not include an in-depth survey that would have identified suitability and risks in regard to protected and notable species. However, it is estimated that the onsite grassland may provide habitat for some invertebrates that would qualify as Priority Species by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended).

4.2 Proposed Habitats

This section outlines all UKHab habitats proposed to be present on the Site post development; as shown in the indicative Site plan (Appendix B).

UKHab habitats proposed to be present after project delivery on the Site:

- Suburban mosaic of developed and natural surface – u1d (Secondary codes: 516 – active management and 828 – vegetated garden).
- Building – u1b5 (Secondary codes: 516 – active management and 818 – residential building).
- Artificial unvegetated – unsealed surface – u1c (Secondary codes: 516 – active management and 804 - carpark).
- Modified grassland – g4 (Secondary codes: 108 – frequently mown, 201 – young trees planted and 516 – active management).

4.2.1 *Suburban Mosaic of Developed and Natural Surface*

An area of existing grassland is proposed to be lost to create a new residential garden area in the south of the Site. It is considered that this new habitat will likely comprise amenity lawn, paved areas, and ornamental planting bays.

4.2.2 *Building*

A new two-storey red brick building is proposed to be erected in the south of the Site as a residential dwelling.

4.2.3 *Artificial Unvegetated – Unsealed Surface*

An area adjacent to the new residential building is proposed to be laid with an artificial surface to facilitate driveway access to the property and for car parking bays.

4.2.4 *Modified Grassland*

An area of the existing grassland is proposed to be enhanced with target seed sowing and mowing regime. Broadcast seed mixes should be of local provenance and contain a variety of native wildflower species. The mowing regime should be frequent in the first 2 years (at least three cuts per annum), then moving to an annual cut thereafter; arisings should be removed with each cut to remove excess nutrition from the soil, allowing more herbs to establish. With this intervention, it is considered that condition criteria A will be passed by this habitat. Condition criteria B, C, D, E, F and G would also be passed by this habitat.

It is further proposed that seven native trees with a diameter at breast height >7 cm should be planted within the enhanced grassland habitat. Species should include common pear (*Pyrus communis*), crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*) and pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*). These individual rural trees are considered to pass condition criteria A, D, and F, and therefore achieve conditions of Moderate.

4.3 Summary of Habitat Change

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 details summary changes in UKHab habitats associated with the proposed project prior to and after the proposed development.

Table 4.1 – summary of UKHab habitat change pre-development

Habitat	Total area	Area retained	Area enhanced	Description
<i>Non-linear habitats (ha)</i>				
Other developed land – u1b6	0.43	0.43	0.00	Existing hardstanding roadway: entirely retained in current proposals.
Artificial unvegetated – unsealed surface – u1c	0.04	0.04	0.00	Existing artificial track: entirely retained in current proposals.
Modified grassland – g4	0.18	0	0.02	Existing modified grassland field. A 0.02 ha section is proposed to be enhanced from poor to good condition. The remainder of this habitat will be lost.

Table 4.2 - summary of non-linear UKHab habitat change post-development

Habitat	Total area	Description
<i>Non-linear habitat creation (ha)</i>		
Suburban mosaic of developed and natural surface – u1d	0.12	Proposed new residential garden.
Building – u1b5	0.02	Proposed new residential building.
Artificial unvegetated – unsealed surface – u1c	0.02	Proposed new driveway/carparking bay(s).
Individual trees (rural)	0.0285	Proposed new planted small trees.

Figure 2 presents an extract from the completed Statutory Biodiversity Metric completed for the Site.

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.05
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00
Total net % change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	<i>Habitat units</i>	12.67%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00%
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

Figure 2 – extract from a completed Statutory Biodiversity Metric for the Site.

The proposed changes of habitats within the Site result in an increase of habitat units from 0.36 to 0.41—equating to a **Biodiversity Net Gain of 12.67%**.

No hedgerow or watercourse units were present within the Site.

5. Conclusion

The proposals for the Site include the development of a new residential dwelling, with associated garden and driveway areas.

A baseline dominated by a hardstanding roadway, artificial track, and modified grassland field is proposed to house a new building, artificial surface, and vegetated garden. An area of grassland will be enhanced and planted with small trees.

The onsite habitat change is estimated to result in a habitat unit uplift of 12.67%. Thus, the project is considered to meet the legal obligation to achieve a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain in England.

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- **Natural England (2022)** *Reptiles: Advice for making planning decisions*. Available at: Gov.uk.
- **Natural England (2022)** *Water Voles: Advice for making planning decisions*. Available at: Gov.uk.
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APPENDIX A: Planning Policy & Legislation

Relevant Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2023

The NPPF states that:

Para 8

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives).

Para 32

Local plans and spatial development strategies should be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal that meets the relevant legal requirements¹⁷. This should demonstrate how the plan has addressed relevant economic, social and environmental objectives (including opportunities for net gains).

Para 180

Planning policies and decisions should contribute and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

Para 185

To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity

Para 186

When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principle:

- development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be
-

supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2015-2035 (2021)

Policy EE2: Enhancing Biodiversity

The Council will work with developers to conserve habitats, species and sites, delivering enhancement and creation of ecological networks. Development proposals will be permitted where they provide a net gain in biodiversity through the conservation, restoration, enhancement and creation of ecological networks of habitats, species and sites (both statutory and non-statutory) or international, national and local importance.

Development proposals will be permitted where they avoid negative impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity. Where this is not possible, proposals must mitigate unavoidable impacts and, as a last resort, compensate for residual impacts; delivering a net gain in biodiversity by:

1. Incorporating and enhancing existing and creating new biodiversity features within their design; and
2. Maximising opportunities to enhance and create links between ecological networks and habitats of principal importance. Links should be created both on-site and, where possible, with nearby features.

Development proposals within, or in close proximity to, an ecological corridor should enhance the functionality and connectivity of the corridor.

Development that would impact on the strategic ecological network causing fragmentation or otherwise prejudice its effectiveness will not be permitted.

Main Environmental and wildlife Legislation (England)

Environment Act 2021

Schedule 14 of The Environment Act 2021 makes it mandatory for all new developments (with some limited exceptions) to achieve a biodiversity net gain (BNG) of at least 10% by the time the development is completed compared to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat.

The outputs and statutory instruments of this legislation may be amended in the future by the Secretary of State.

Conservation of Habitats and Species regulations 2017 (as amended).

Section 43 of Part 3 of this legislation makes it an offence to do any of the following with regards to European Protected Species (animals) as listed on Schedule 2:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal of a European protected species.
- Deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species.
- Deliberately takes or destroy the eggs of such an animal.
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal. (*Note: no intentionality is necessary to prosecute this activity*).

Section 43 of Part 3 of this legislation makes it an offence to do any of the following with regards to European Protected Species (plants) as listed on Schedule 5:

- Deliberately pick, collect, cut, uproot or destroy a wild plant of a European Protected Species.
- Be in position of or to transport said plant.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (as amended).

Section 40 of Part 3 of this act compels public bodies (local authorities, police, fire and health authorities, and utility companies) with exercisable functions within England to consider actions to be taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England—in particular to have regard to the United Nations Environmental Programme Convention on Biological Diversity of 1992, any relevant local nature recovery strategies, and any relevant species conservation strategy or protected site strategy (prepared by Natural England).

Section 41 of Part 3 of this Act ensures the publishing of a list containing species and habitat types that are of principle importance for the purpose of conserving or enhancing biodiversity in England.

Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.

Under this legislation it is an offence to mutilate, kick, beat, nail or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with the intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

Protection of Badgers Act 1992

Under this legislation it is an offence to (or intend to, or to be reckless as to whether your actions would have these consequences):

- Wilfully kill, injure or take a badger (or attempts to do so).
- Damage or destroy any part of a badger sett. (Note: no intentionality is necessary to prosecute these activities).
- Obstruct access to a badger sett. (Note: no intentionality is necessary to prosecute these activities).
- Disturb a badger when it is occupying a sett. (Note: no intentionality is necessary to prosecute these activities).

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Part 1 of this act makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take any wild bird, to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built, and/or to take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.

Part 1 also makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird included in Schedule 1 of the act, and to take, damage, or destroy the nest of any wild bird included in Schedule ZA1.

Schedule 5 lists non-avian species that are afforded various protections under Sections 9.1a, 9.1b, 9.2, 9.4a, 9.4a (Whales), 9.4b, 9.4c, 9.5a and 9.5b.

Schedule 8 lists plant species that are protected from intentionally picking, uprooting or destroying under Section 13.

Schedule 9 lists non-native invasive plants for which it is an offence under Section 14 to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild any part of said plants. (Note: no intentionality is necessary to prosecute these activities).

Other Legislation (England)

- **The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2017**
- **Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003** (as amended).

-
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
 - Hedgerows Regulations 1997.
 - Weeds Act 1959.

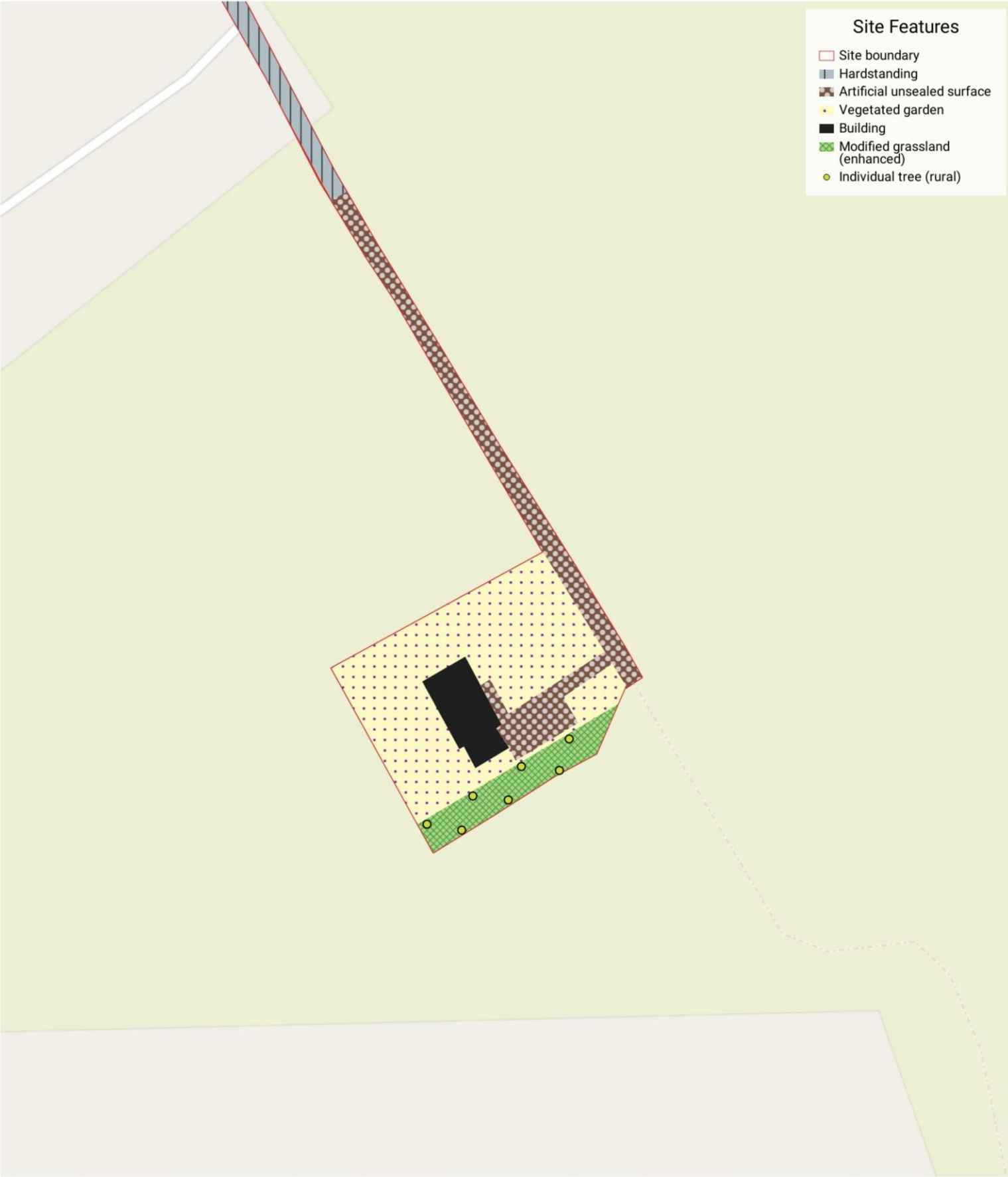
APPENDIX B: Baseline Habitat Plan & Proposed Habitats Plan

See overleaf.









APPENDIX C: Photographs



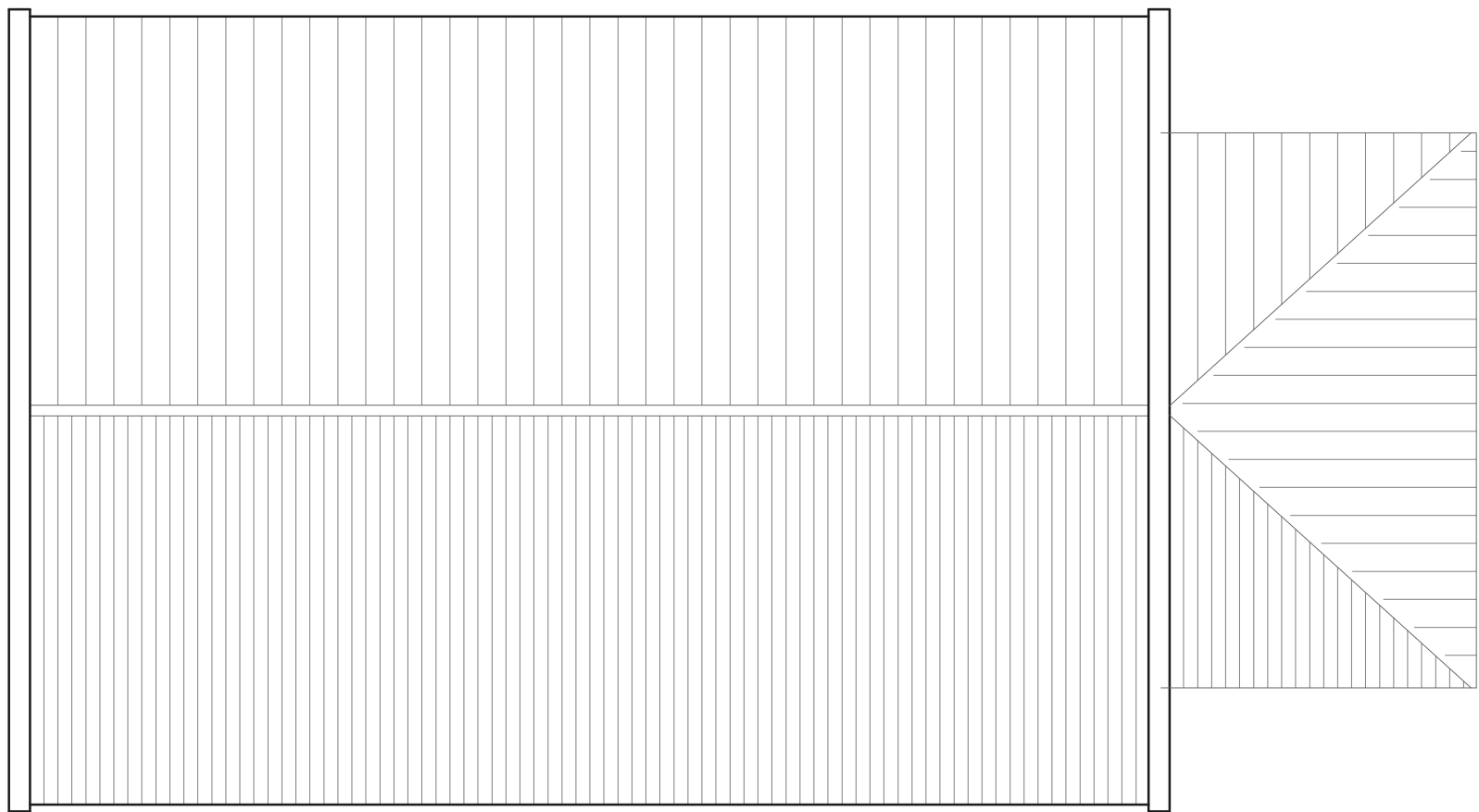
Photograph 1: hardstanding roadway in the centre of the Site.



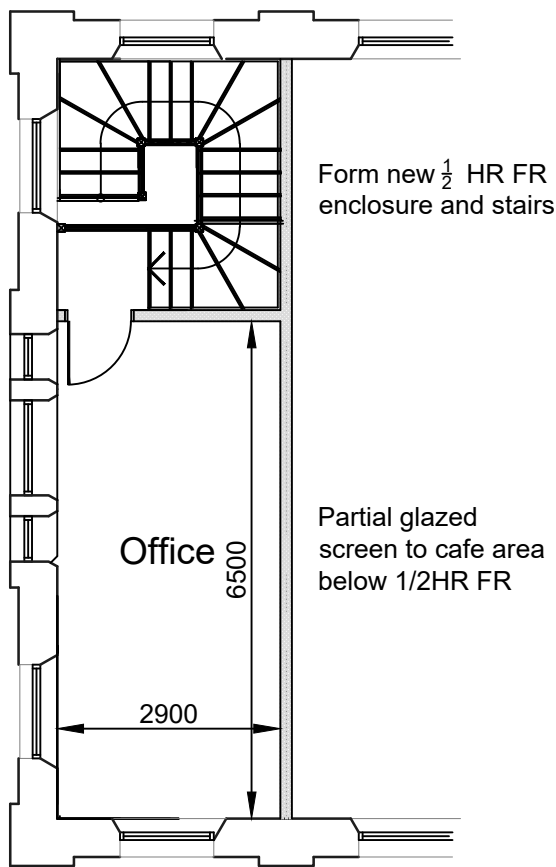
Photograph 2: artificial unsealed surface in the south of the Site



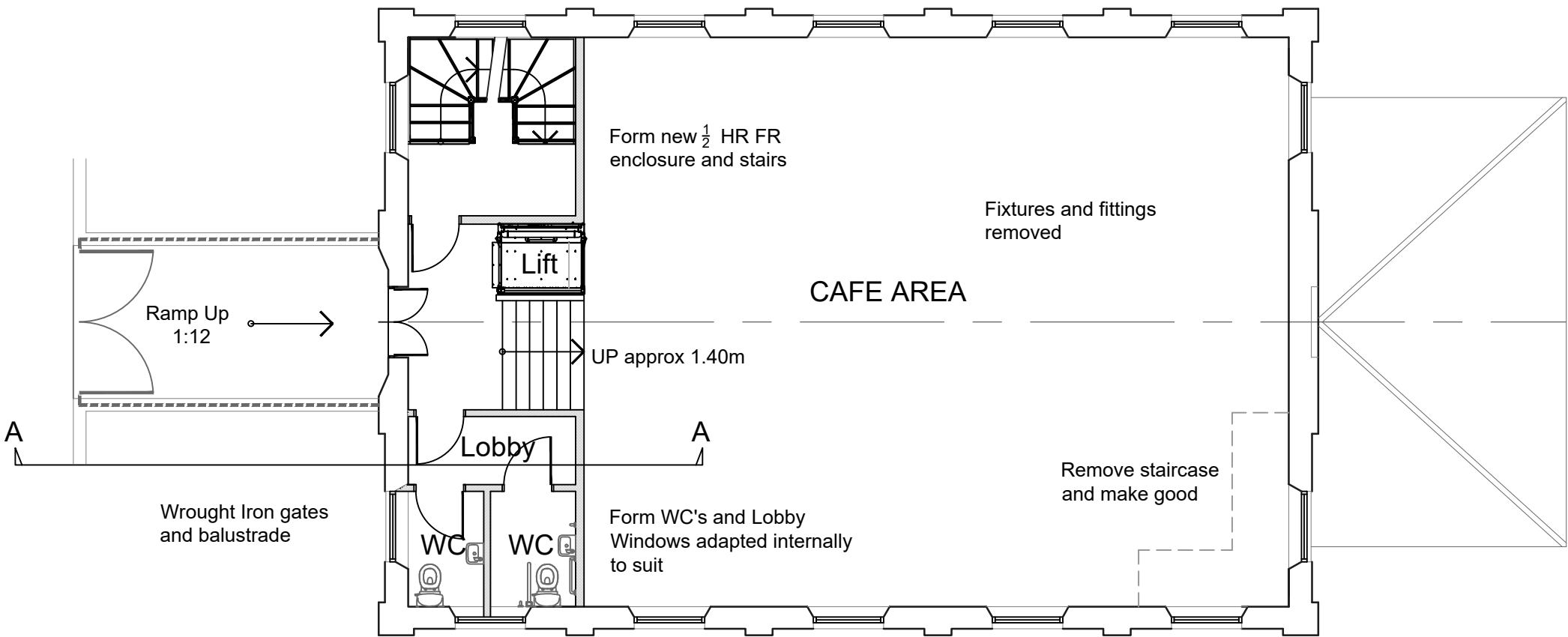
Photograph 3: modified grassland in the south of the Site.



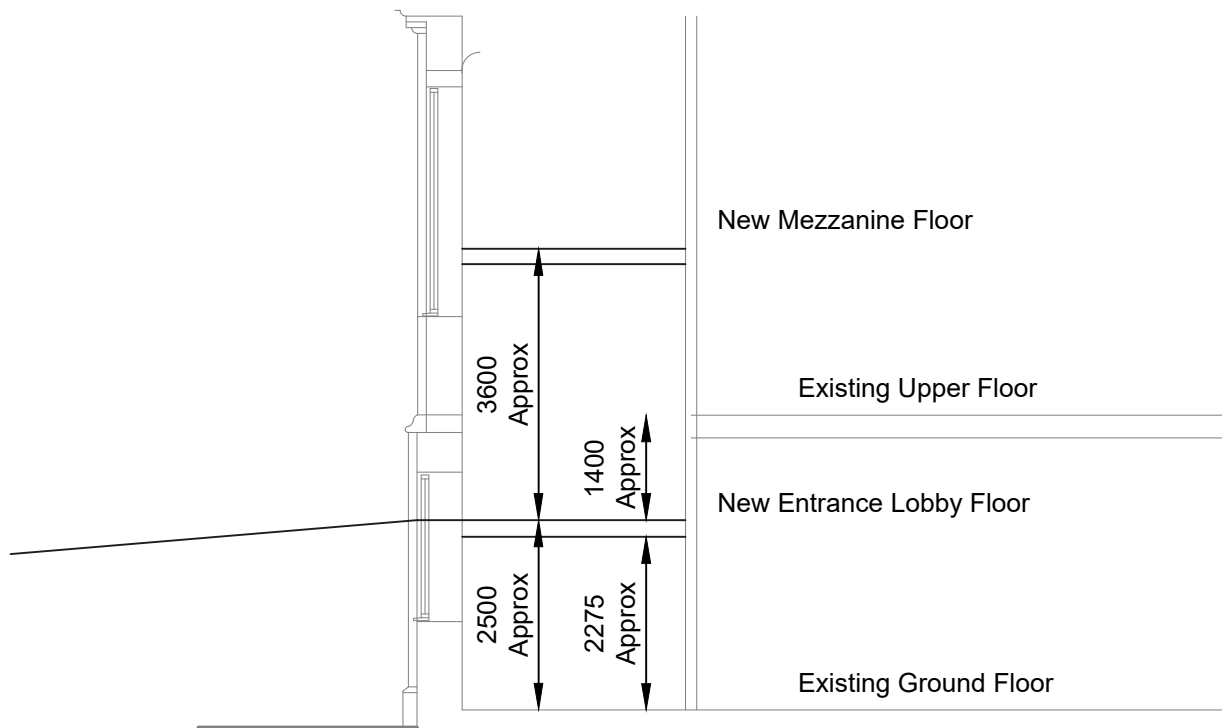
Roof Plan



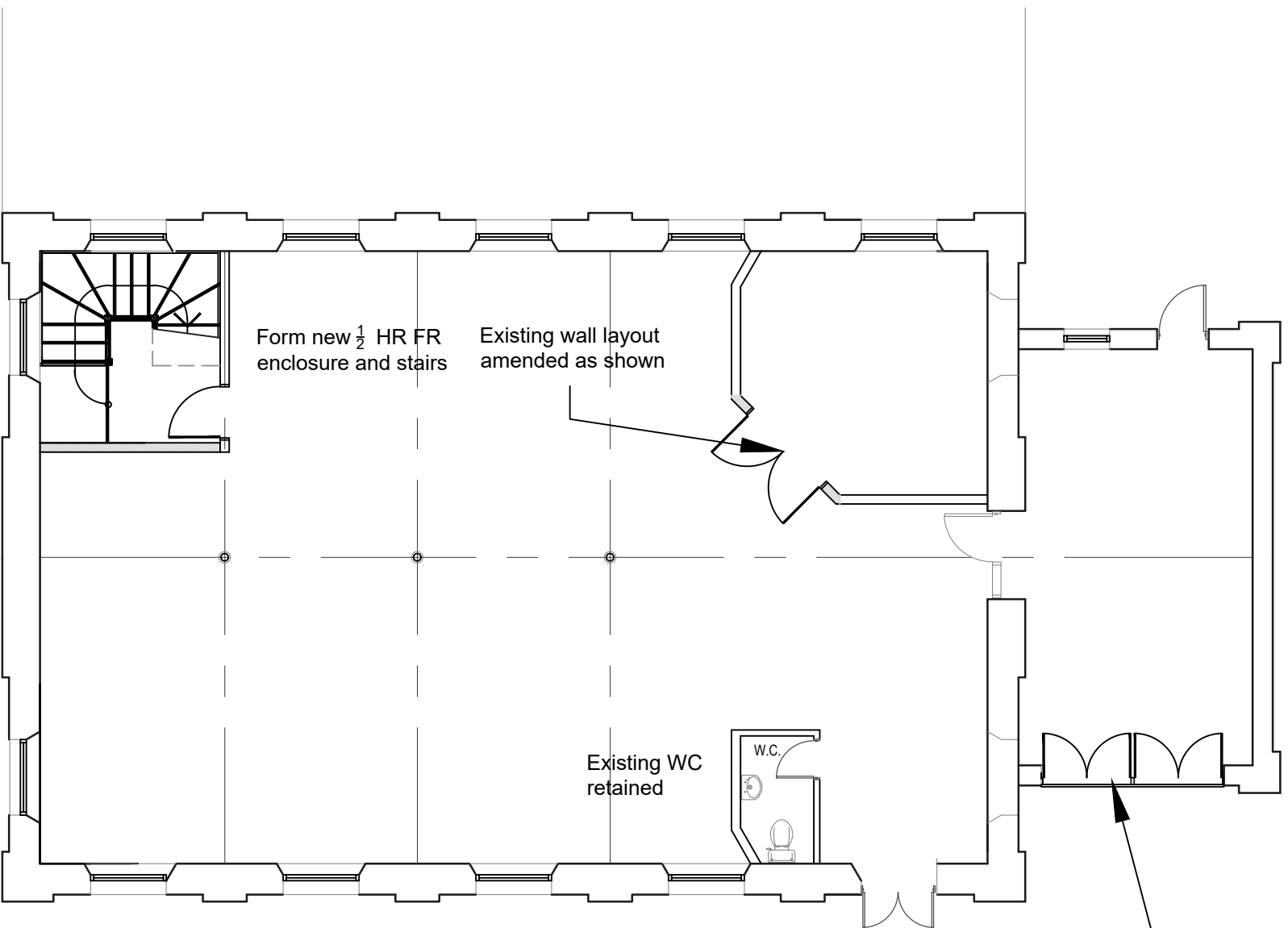
Mezzanine Floor Plan



Upper Ground Floor Plan



Indicative Section on A.A.



Lower Ground Floor Plan

Notes

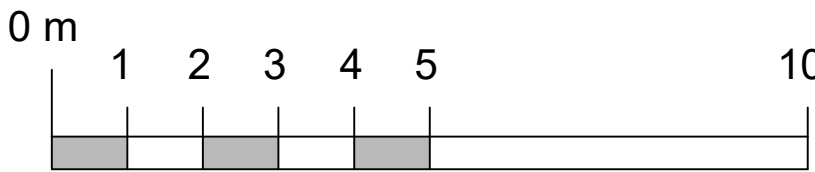
All dimensions to be checked on site prior to the commencement of construction and any discrepancy reported to the construction manager.

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Metric drawing all imperial dims approximate subcontractors MUST ensure they have the latest issue drawing before they commence work on site.

Boundary's and adjacent buildings based on Ordnance Survey extract and check dimensions all dimensions to be checked on site prior to construction



B 22.08.2024 Balcony Removed for planning
Double doors added to annex
A 23.05.2024 Planning Application

Rev. Date

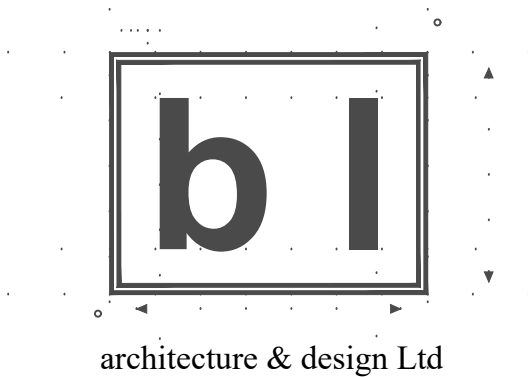
Project Conversion of
Stotfold Methodist Church
High Street
Stotfold SG5 4LL

Title Proposed Plans

Scale 1/100 (at A1)

Drg. No 593-010-B

Date April 2024



The Studio 5 Chequers Cottages
Preston Herts SG4 7TY
Telephone 01462 433443
e-mail b.l.architect@btconnect.com

Notes

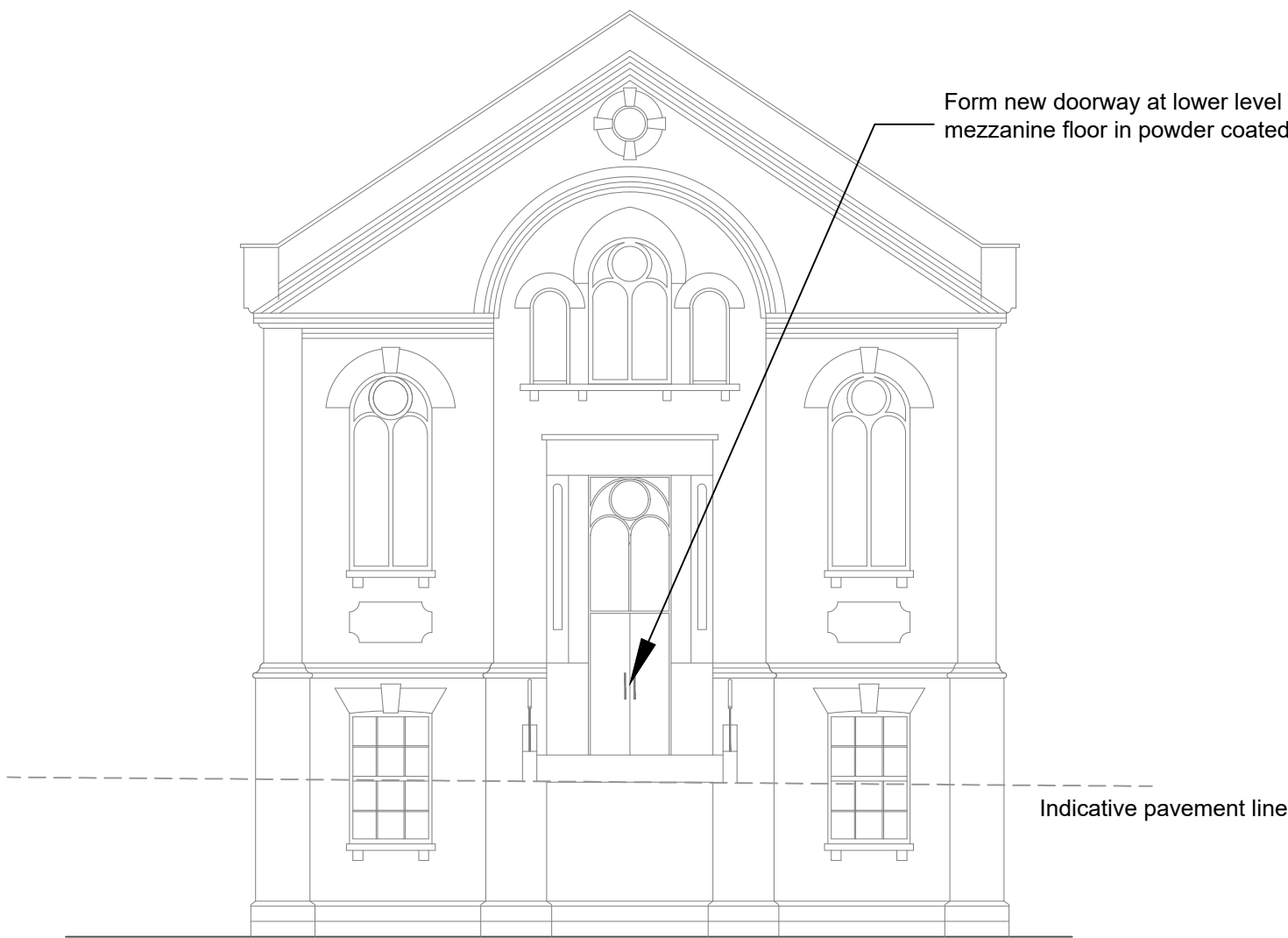
All dimensions to be checked on site prior to the commencement of construction and any discrepancy reported to the construction manager.

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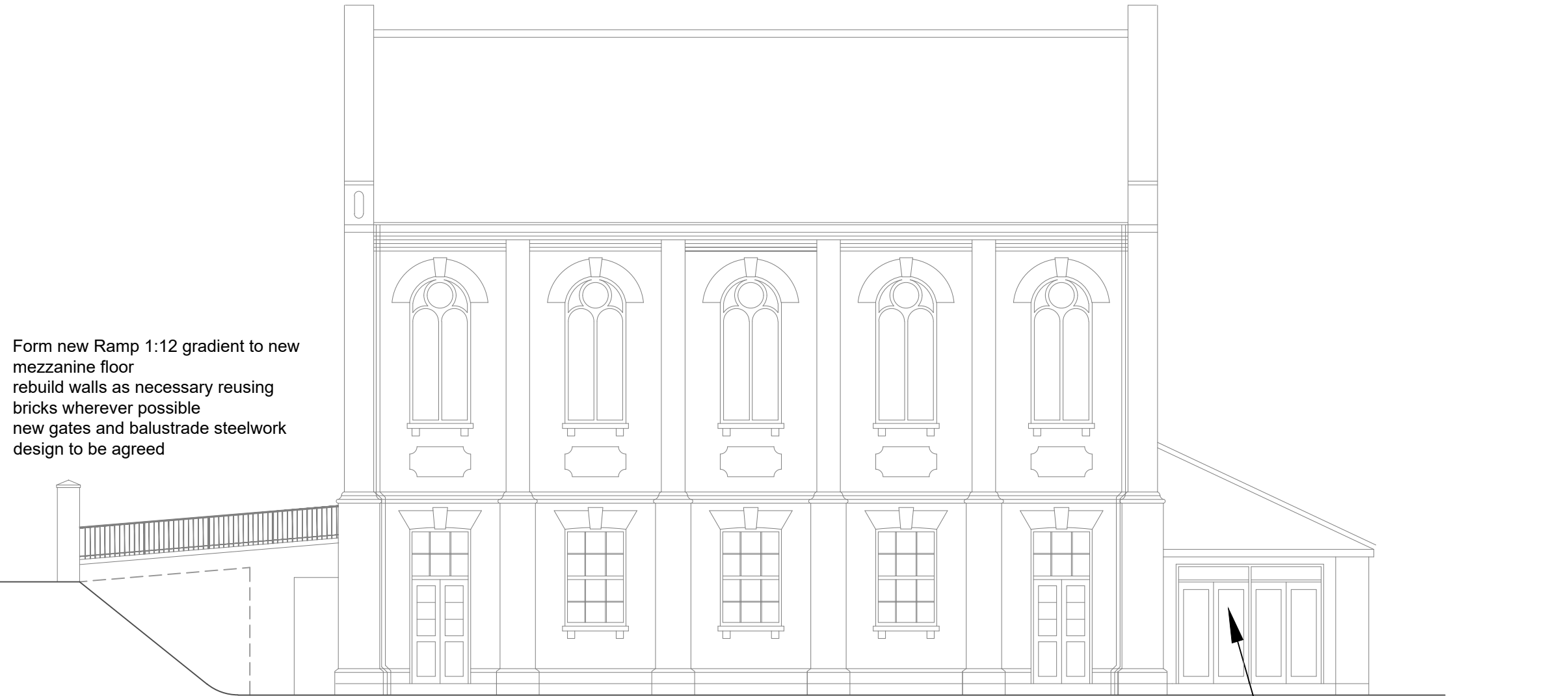
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Metric drawing all imperial dims approximate subcontractors MUST ensure they have the latest issue drawing before they commence work on site.

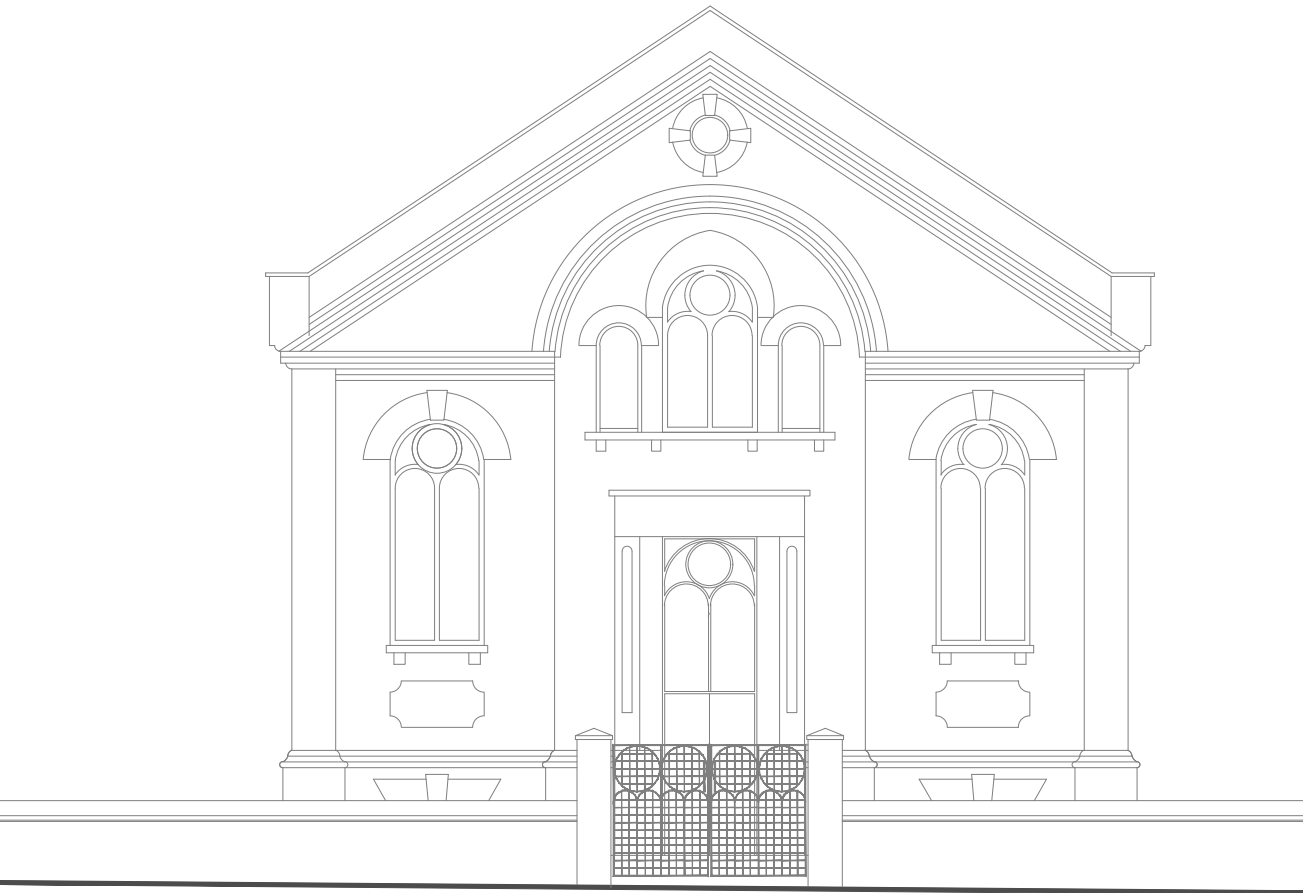
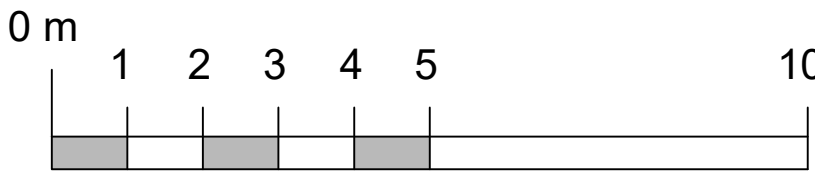
Boundary's and adjacent buildings based on Ordnance Survey extract and check dimensions all dimensions to be checked on site prior to construction



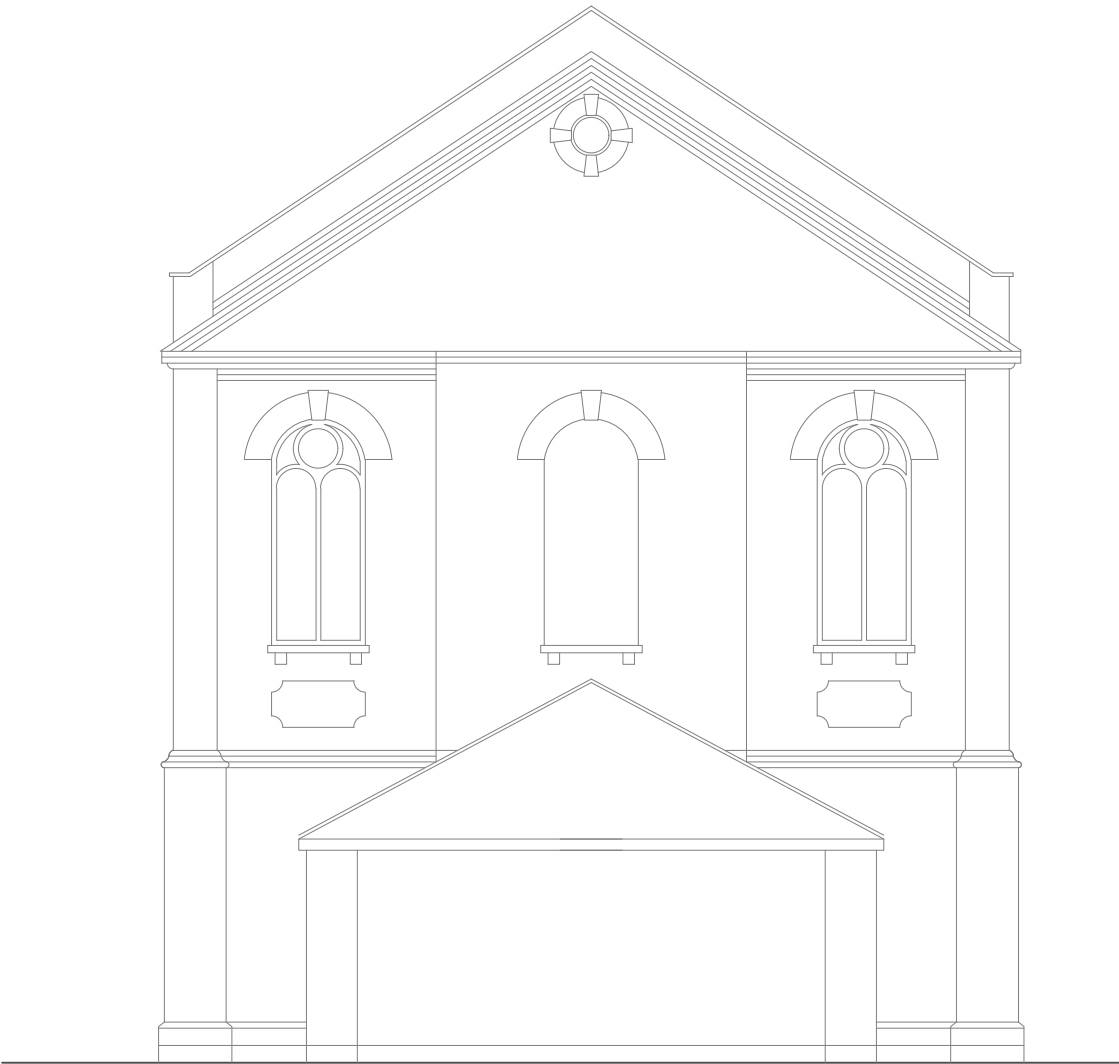
Front Elevation



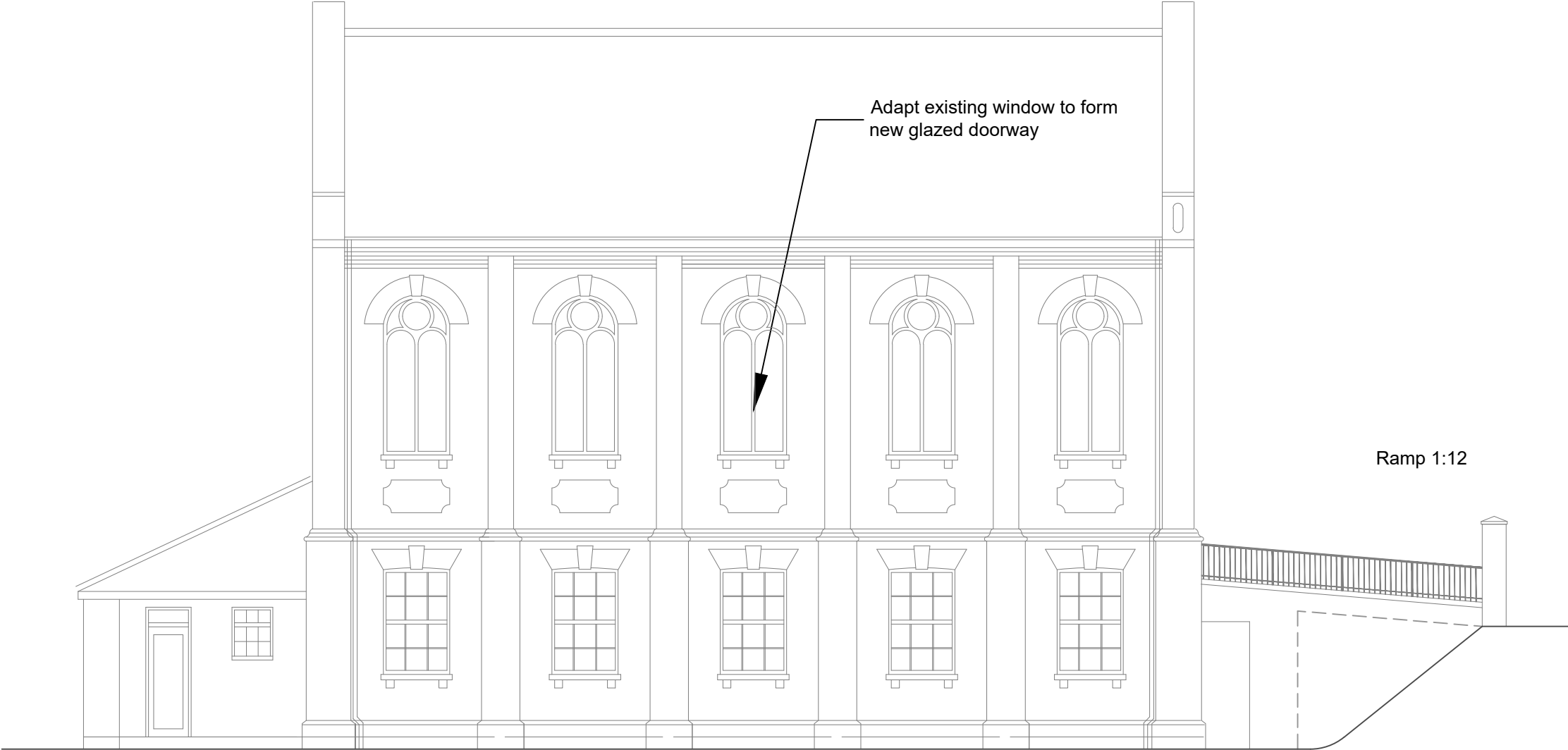
Side Elevation (North west)



Front Elevation From Pavement



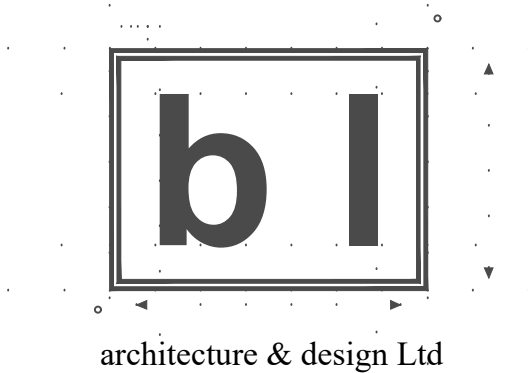
Rear Elevation



Side Elevation (South east)

B 22.08.2024 Balcony Removed for planning
Double doors added to annex
A 23.05.2024 Planning Application

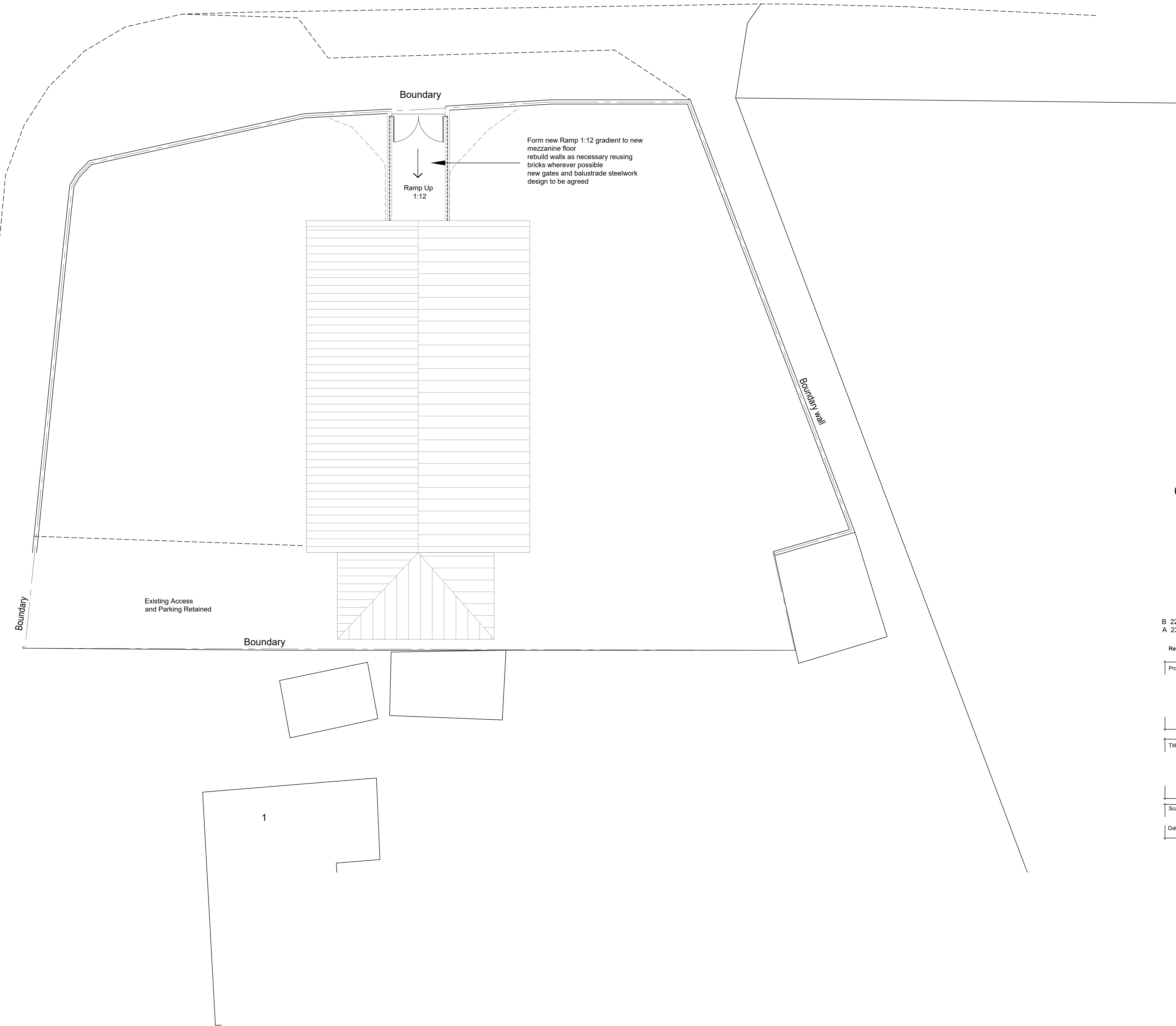
Rev.	Date
Project	Conversion of Stotfold Methodist Church High Street Stotfold SG5 4LL
Title	Elevations
Scale	1/100 (at A1)
Date	April 2024
Drg. No	593-011-B



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High Street

Hitchin Road



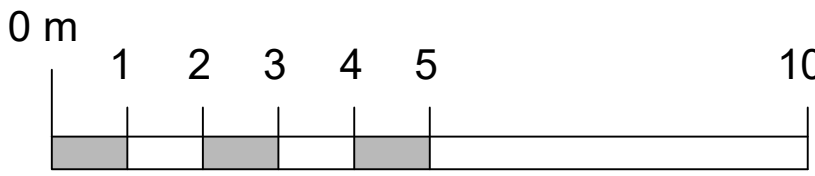
Notes
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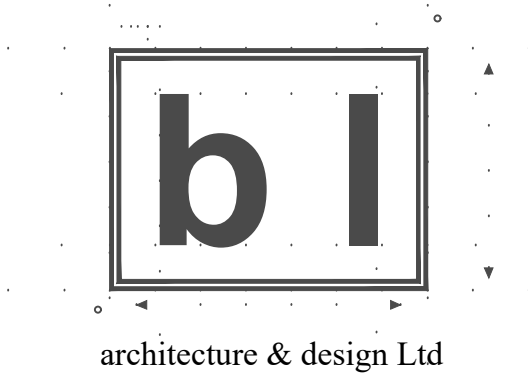
Metric drawing all imperial dims approximate subcontractors MUST ensure they have the latest issue drawing before they commence work on site.

Boundary's and adjacent buildings based on Ordnance Survey extract and check dimensions all dimensions to be checked on site prior to construction



B 22.08.2024 Balcony Removed for planning
A 23.05.2024 Planning Application

Rev.	Date
Project	
Conversion of Stotfold Methodist Church High Street Stotfold SG5 4LL	
Title	
Elevations	
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Drg. No	
593-012-B	
Date April 2024	



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Client Statement

Brief outline of the project

About two years ago, I approached the then Methodist minister asking him if he would be prepared to lease the chapel to us as our present premises are rented, too small and not suitable for purpose.

We then entered into negotiations toward purchasing the Chapel, and made an offer. During the negotiations were made aware of certain conditions: one the graveyard has a covenant on it, and two, allowing the congregation to use the church on a Sunday for regular worship.

After further negotiations, we accepted the terms and presented an offer, which was accepted and we are now in a position to progress with development.

Until recently the chapel had been used for various clubs throughout the week for example, yoga, scrabble, club, mums and toddlers and midweek coffee clubs.

As a Christian charity, we are totally committed to the building stay in a place of worship as it has been for well over 150 years

A brief history of The Need Project

The project was established about 20 years ago at Stotfold Baptist Church and has progressively grown in demand and area covered.

We now feed approximately 750 to 800 families a month and provide approximately 400 carry bags full of best before produce, for example, bread, fruit and vegetables that, without our intervention, would go into waste or landfill.

We work with a large amount of agencies who know the needs of the clients, ranging from citizens, advice, children centres, schools, doctor surgeries, restaurants agencies, the homeless, job centres and several departments of Central Bedfordshire Council. The project is now a separate charity and totally independent

Knowing that our present place of work has a limited time span, we look upon the purchase of the chapel as a place we can call home and carry on ministering to those who are hungry and need our help, we have a two part plan for the building:

Phase 1: To develop the lower Ground floor level to accommodate all our food provision service separately from the upper floors. This will mean we will operate our food parcel delivery service out of the lower ground floor level This phase of our plan needs to be completed as soon as possible with a minimal disruption, in order that we can carry on feeding those people who we help. This part of our vision is, and always will be, priority above anything else because feeding the hungry is our purpose

How The Need Project operation works

We have two Transit vans one will be parked on the drive most of the time which is the one I use, the other is the one used for picking up and delivering of all our items. We do not have deliveries, all the picking up and deliveries are carried out by ourselves in these two vans.

None of our clients pick up food parcels. We deliver all throughout Central Bedfordshire and parts of Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

There are no client appointments at our premises. We deal only with referrers and not the client directly, although on occasions we may see them when dropping off the food.

The volunteers working for us who live in Stotfold walk to the premises, any other volunteers will park elsewhere, so there is no need for any additional on site parking. There are three employed members of staff, and two part time. There are additional volunteers, 20 in our team split into teams of four, who work throughout the week.

As said previously, phase 1. of our vision is essential. Will we endeavouring to get it done as quickly as possible (subject to planning) so there's no hold-up or stopping the flow of feeding our hungry neighbours.

Such is the commitment to our vision and our passion to what we do we have committed ourselves to a 30 year mortgage the mortgage has been secured and have sufficient funds to develop the lower ground floor for the main purpose of our Food project, which will, hopefully, complete phase 1.

Phase 2

We have engaged a design consultant company to design the interior of the upstairs levels so to suit the proposed needs.

- The entrance would have to be lowered to allow wheelchair access.
- The plan we had for a balcony is no longer in our immediate so has been removed from the application.
- Floor areas are still in our design stage.
- No alcohol, will allowed on the premises as we do regard it still as a church.
- There will be no cooking facilities needed as we plan to sell only coffee, tea and beverages, possibly ice cream, milkshakes etc. along the lines of a good coffee shop with the occasional snacks (cakes, biscuits, sandwiches...) similar to a high street coffee shop. So no major extraction will be need just simple ventilation to suit building control.
- The Cafe area will be open to anyone without exclusion.
- We will not be offering a delivery service.

Answer to the questions raised by the highways officer

- The church is used for worship and clubs during the week on various days. This included, until recently, yoga ,Scrabble clubs, toddler groups and coffee mornings.
- I see no reason why we need for cycle parking for Phase 1. however some could be provided for phase 2.
- We have and use only two Transit vans. we pick up and deliver everything these vans nothing is ever delivered to us.
- We employ three people and various volunteers, who park offsite or live locally and walk.
- The upper floor will become a very versatile, flexible space for various activities, including Sunday church services, additional worship services, clubs and activities as existing any future activities may be agreed at a later date.
- The Cafe would be open to anyone.

Feeding people is a wonderful thing to be involved in and it is a privilege to serve people as we have done for early 20 years . We have learnt a lot and we know there is more we can do to help and with that in mind, we wanted to create a safe space where we can signpost people for help and advice. Also a place where professional people like the police, social workers, social prescribers counsellors can meet in a friendly safe environment. We also plan to have interview rooms set apart for this purpose.

We want the place to be, where somebody can come and have a cup of coffee with a friend and chat, or come by themselves, read a newspaper and to be somewhere which has a relaxed environment.

Also possibly somewhere we can have evening events for the community, this is all in the early stages. I will find out more as our design team develops Phase 2. concept for us.

Proposed times for the opening

Ground floor distribution area will be 7.00am until 2.00pm Monday to Friday and 7.00am until 9.00am on Saturday. The proposed time for the Cafe area will be 8.30am until 4.30pm Monday to Friday and 10.30am until 4.30pm on Saturdays.

We are totally committed to this project so much so that we have with both stages engaged people of the highest quality to design and advise using the steps going forward

Gordon Hamilton
The Need Project

Replies to Planning and Highways answers in red

The requirement for a new front door at pavement level is acknowledged. Please could you provide more detail of this part of the proposed elevation – is the upper part glazed? *The upper section will be glazed similar in style to the existing windows, doors glass at present, detail could be a condition of planning.* The design of the proposed doors should be sympathetic to the doors that will be removed and the overall appearance of the building.

1. Please can you confirm that the proposed access ramp meets the requirements for disability access (is it DDA compliant) and what the external finishes will be for the proposed ramp; *1:12 as per building regulations allows for self-propelled wheelchair and assisted.*
2. Please can you confirm whether the building will continue to be used for worship by the remaining congregation. It has been drawn to my attention that whilst the terms of any sale of the building is not a planning matter, the sale of the building does include a clause that the building will continue to be used as a church; *See client statement*
3. Please clarify the use of the floorspace at lower ground level. Are there any other uses proposed within the building? *As shown on drawing GF storage and distribution, Café area at FF level with entrance and small office/meeting area to frontage.*
4. Please confirm the type of food that will be served in the café and whether there will any cooking of food on the premises. If so, please confirm the type of extraction and whether any external extraction units are proposed; *No cooking only coffee, Tea, soft drinks, ice creams cakes and sandwiches See client statement.*
5. Please confirm opening and servicing hours of the premises; *Food distribution 7.0am-2.00pm Monday-Friday 7.00am-9.00am Saturday Café 8.30am-4.30pm Monday-Friday, 10.00am-4.30pm Saturday*
6. Please confirm how visitors/ customers will access the premises – will the food bank area be available by appointment/ referral only? Will the café area be available to visiting members of the public or will this be restricted use? *See client statement*
7. What are the likely traffic movements in and out of the premises and what types of vehicles will be used? What are the parking and servicing arrangements at the property? *See client statement*

One thing she has asked is could we find out exactly what clubs etc use the hall at present, will they continue after the conversion? and roughly what sort of numbers attend.

See client statement

Please note, that the B8 use will be assessed as storage and distribution requiring parking and turning for articulated lorries, unless the planning authority are considering that any permission issued will be personal to the site proposal. Please advise. *Not applicable to use, See client statement*

The following information is required:

1. Current use of the church including any clubs, coffee mornings and afternoon teas. Time and day of use and how many people attend. Where do attendees park their vehicles, *See client statement*

2. Is there secure and covered cycle parking provision on the site. How many cycle spaces and what stands are used to accommodate the cycles *None proposed but some cycle racks could be added for café use.*
3. How many staff are to be employed / volunteer for the proposal. Where will they park their vehicles
4. What size vehicle(s) is used to bring the items to the distribution centre. How many times a day. Where will this vehicle(s) park to unload
5. What size vehicle is used to deliver items for the café. How many times a day. Where will this vehicle park and unload.
6. What is the gross floor area of the office. How many office staff will there be, where will they park their vehicles
7. Will the church be used for other things (services, clubs etc). When will these uses occur and how many will attend
8. How does the distribution centre work. Do people book an appointment to collect or just arrive. How many per day. Are there vehicles that take items to customers, what size are these vehicles, how many vehicles and how many trips per day. Where will these vehicles park
9. How does the café work. Is it only for people using the food bank or is it open to all members of the public. Will the café offer take away. How many covers will the café cater for. Will the café offer a delivery service. Where will vehicles for the café use park

See client statement for answers to above questions 3-9

Sian van der Merwe

From: Sian van der Merwe
Sent: 19 August 2024 15:47
To: xxxx
Cc: Cllr Brian Saunders; Stephen Gregory; Nick Sutcliffe; Emma Payne
Subject: RE: Pre-launch consultation feedback - Cala Homes - Arlesey Road, Stotfold

Thank you for confirming receipt Samuel.

Regards

Sian van der Merwe
Democratic Services Manager
Stotfold Town Council
Switchboard: Tel: 01462 730 064
www.stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk



enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk
www.stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk



From: XXXX
Sent: Monday, August 19, 2024 1:23 PM
To: Sian van der Merwe
Cc: Cllr Brian Saunders <cllrbriansaunders@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk>; Emma Payne; Nick Sutcliffe
Subject: RE: Pre-launch consultation feedback - Cala Homes - Arlesey Road, Stotfold

Dear Sian,

Thank you for your email and I hope this email finds you well.

We acknowledge the feedback received and will share it with the wider project team.

Many Thanks and Kind Regards,

Samuel

CAVENDISH

Insight. Influence. Creativity.

Samuel Solden | Account Executive

e. xxxx

t. xxxx

w. cavendishconsulting.com



THE SUNDAY TIMES

T Best Places to Work 2024

From: Consultation Online Feedback <feedback@consultation-online.co.uk>

Sent: Monday, August 19, 2024 12:54 PM

To: Samuel Solden

Subject: Fw: Pre-launch consultation feedback - Cala Homes - Arlesey Road, Stotfold

From: Sian van der Merwe

Sent: 16 August 2024 4:58 PM

To: Consultation Online Feedback <feedback@consultation-online.co.uk>

Cc: Cllr Brian Saunders <cllrbriansaunders@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk>; Emma Payne

Subject: Pre-launch consultation feedback - Cala Homes - Arlesey Road, Stotfold

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Sirs,

The Stotfold Town Council Planning Committee met on 14th August and Cala Homes' Pre-Launch Consultation was discussed at the meeting.

The Committee have requested that Cala Homes reassess the allocation of parking provision across the site as the site will be a destination point for residents and visitors to Stotfold, so additional parking will be needed.

I would be grateful if you would please acknowledge receipt of this email and its contents by return.

Yours faithfully

Sian van der Merwe
Democratic Services Manager
Stotfold Town Council

Tel: 01462 730 064

www.stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk



enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk

www.stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk

