

2 CONTEXT

2.9 Site Connectivity

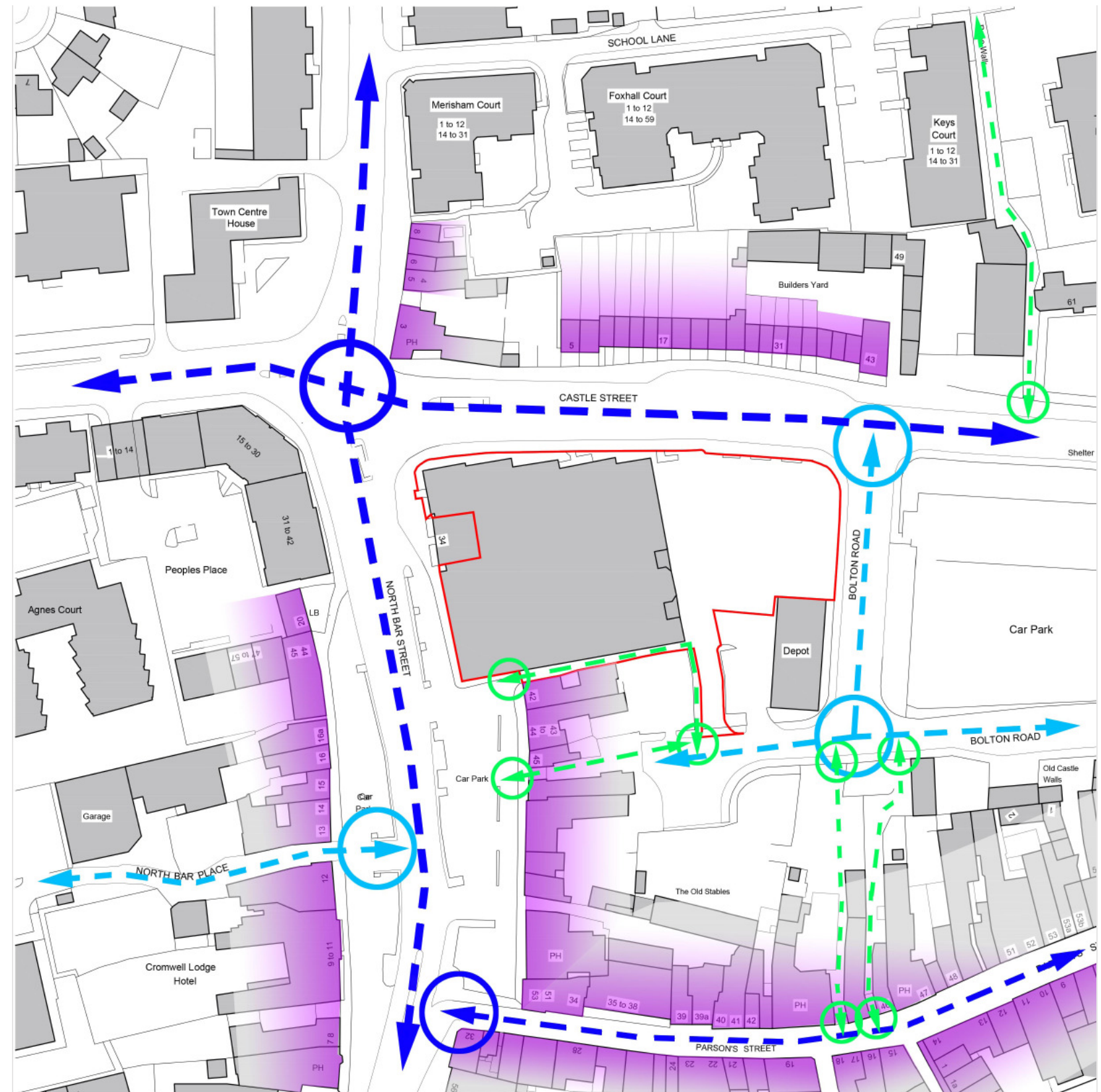
In general terms, there are three levels of movement in and around the site.

The routes identified in dark blue are the primary vehicular and pedestrian routes. These are the main arterial routes surrounding the site which take the bulk of traffic.

The routes identified in light blue are the secondary vehicular and pedestrian routes. These tend to be quieter service roads that serve the rears of the burgage plots.

The routes identified in green are the tertiary pedestrian routes. These tend to be historic 'cut-throughs', from serviced areas to main roads.

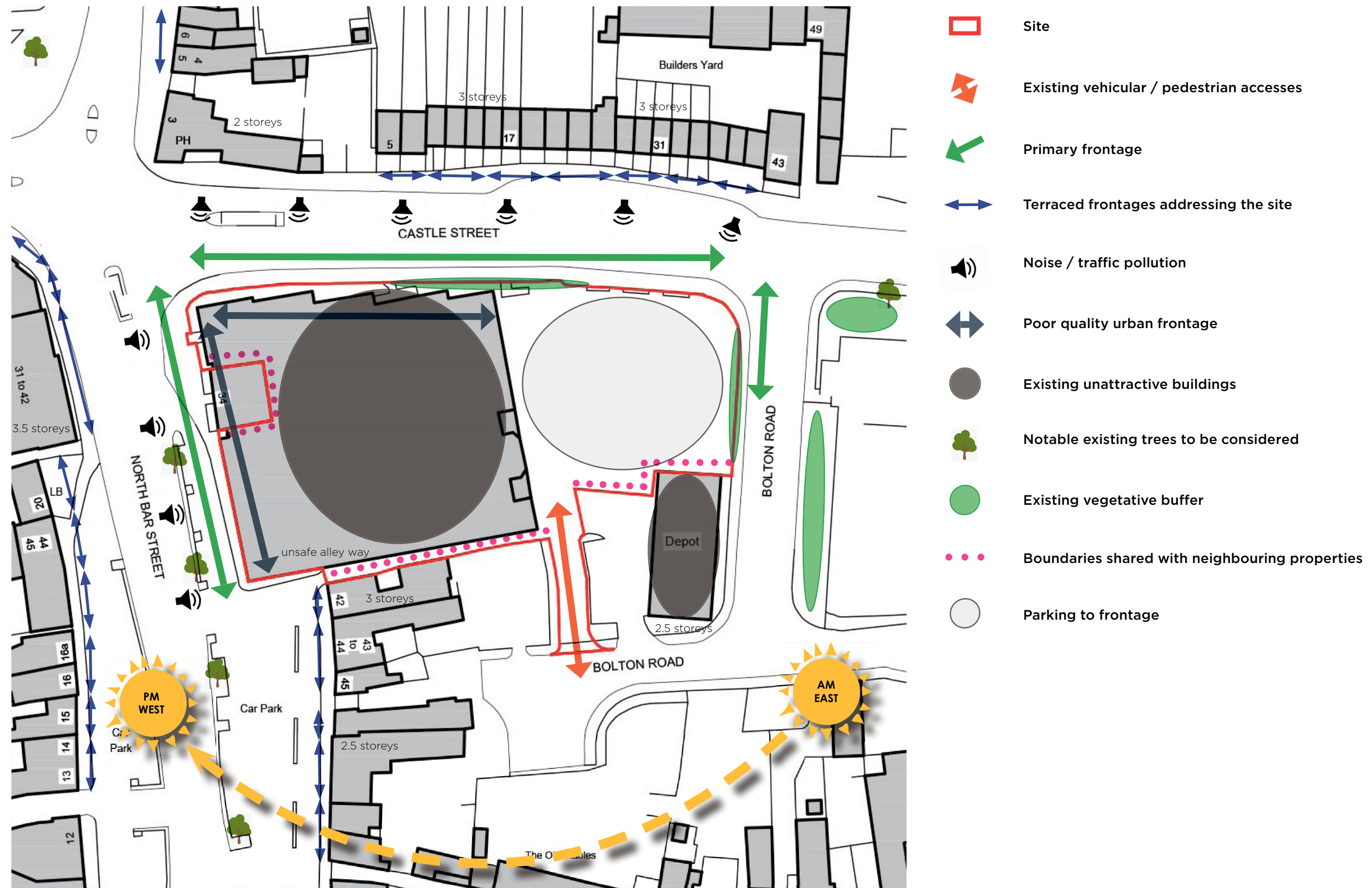
Each type of route can be found around the site.



Connectivity surrounding the site

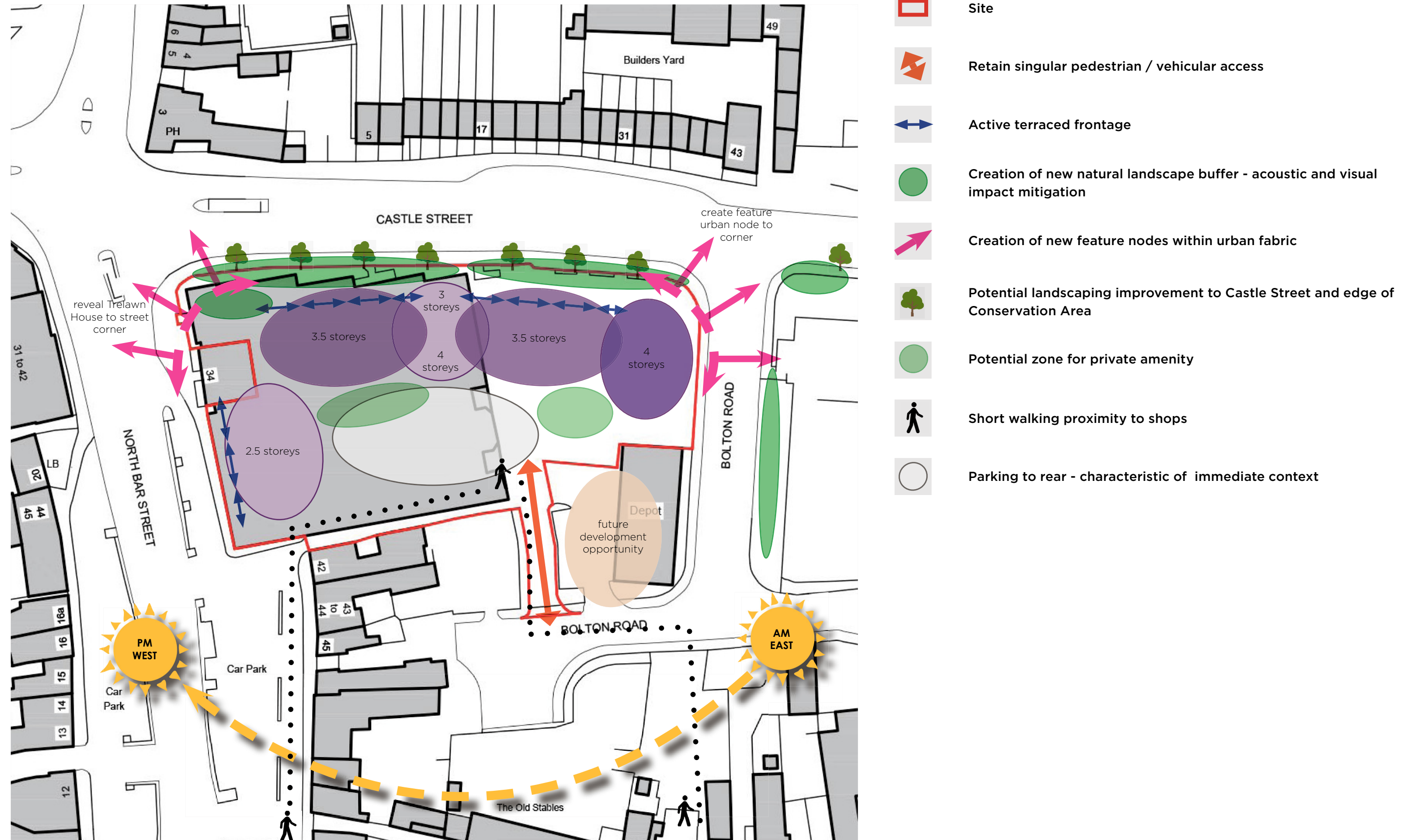
2 CONTEXT

2.10 Site Constraints



2 CONTEXT

2.11 Site Opportunities



2 CONTEXT

2.12 Streetscene to North Bar Street

EXISTING STREET SCENE - WEST SIDE OF NORTH BAR STREET



EXISTING STREET SCENE - EAST SIDE OF NORTH BAR STREET



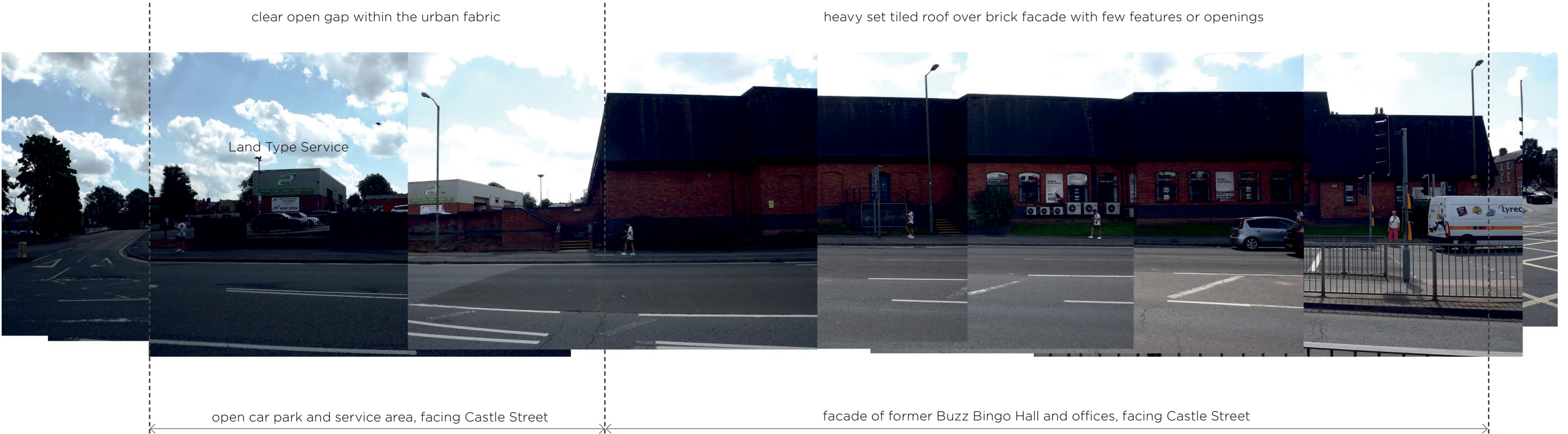
2 CONTEXT

2.13 Streetscene to Castle Street

EXISTING STREET SCENE - NORTH SIDE OF CASTLE STREET



EXISTING STREET SCENE - SOUTH SIDE OF CASTLE STREET



3 PLANNING

“.....significant weight should be given to development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents.....”

National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 134

3 PLANNING

3.1 Planning Policy National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets the Government’s overarching planning framework that guides development nationwide.

The NPPF sets out the Government’s clear intention to significantly boost the supply of new homes (paragraph 60). There is an intention to deliver 300,000 new homes a year.

Paragraph 119 sets out that this means making as much use as possible of previously developed land. The Government is championing the take up of brownfield land by encouraging the remediation of degraded or contaminated spaces, promoting the development of under-utilised land thereby reducing the need to use limited land resources.

Paragraph 86f recognises that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourages residential development on appropriate sites.

The NPPF seeks to achieve healthy, safe and inclusive places (paragraph 92). These are fundamental principles of the scheme proposed. These are key benefits that residents are looking for when they seek to move to a Churchill Retirement Living scheme.

Other key paragraphs include -

- Para 60 - Supporting the needs of groups with specific housing requirements.
- Para 69 - Role of small and medium sized sites in meeting housing need.
- Para 120c - Substantial weight applied to using brownfield sites within settlement for new homes.
- Para 124 - efficient use of land.

PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides guidance on how policies in the NPPF should be implemented. The PPG sets out that the need to provide housing for older people is critical. It acknowledges that offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the health and social care systems.

The PPG is clear that “Where there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing, local authorities should take a positive approach to schemes that propose to address this need”.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The development plan for Cherwell consists of the Local Plan Part 1 2011-2031 (adopted 2015), saved policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 and the Local Plan Partial Review (Oxford’s Unmet Housing Need) (adopted 2020).

The site is allocated under Policy Banbury 8: Bolton Road Development Area. The Council have also adopted a Banbury Vision and Masterplan SPD. This includes the site within area 1, which is identified as in need of regeneration. This encourages three to four storey development on the site.

This is an important site, which will assist with the wider regeneration of the town centre. The proposal is in keeping with the scale of existing buildings whilst maximising the use of previously developed land. It will deliver an effective and efficient use of brownfield land in accordance with policy BSC2.

There is a local housing need. The Council are unable to demonstrate a 5 year land supply and this is an available and suitable site to deliver some of this much needed housing. It will reduce the need for greenfield development elsewhere in accordance with the NPPF.

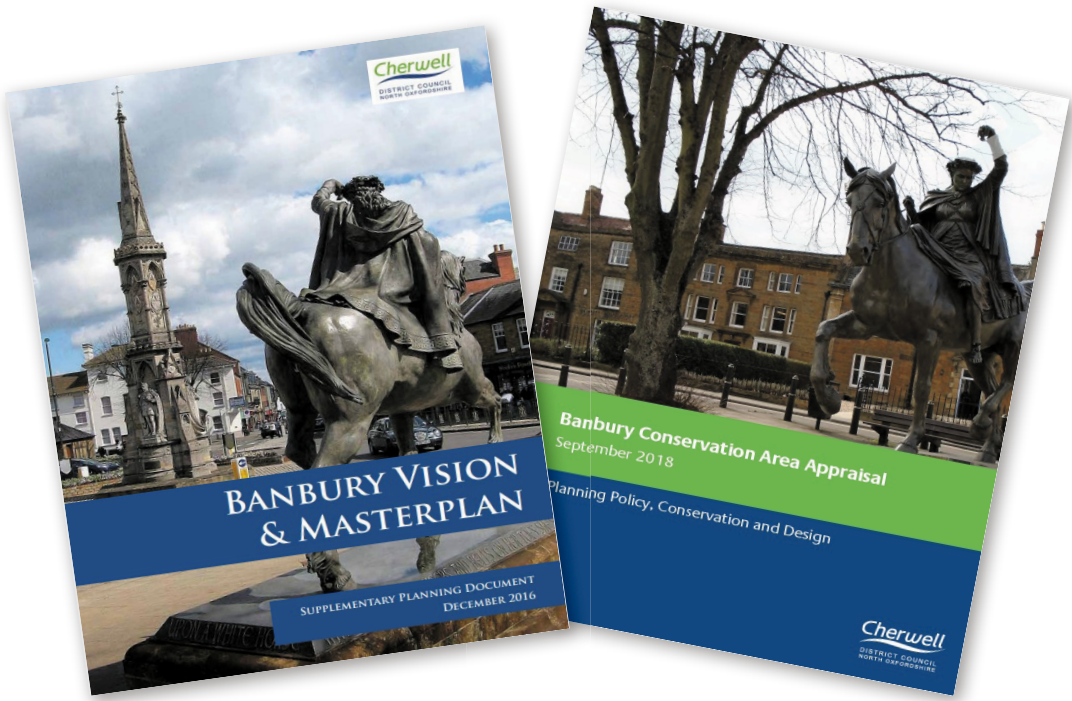
The proposal will meet the needs of older people, as well as freeing up family housing further down the housing chain, meeting the requirements of policy BSC4.

The proposal will incorporate solar panels and deliver a sustainable form of development in accordance with policies ESD1, ESD2 and ESD3.

The design has been carefully considered and reflects the historic character of the area in accordance with policy ESD15. The proposal will significantly open up the setting of the grade II listed Trelawn House, as well as delivering the tree lined avenue on Castle Street, in accordance with the Banbury Vision and Masterplan SPD.

Overall the proposal will provide much needed redevelopment of a largely vacant brownfield site in a sustainable location. It will significantly enhance the character and appearance of the area and open up the setting of Trelawn House. The development will provide much needed housing for older people, providing wider social and economic benefits and freeing up family housing elsewhere in the market.

The proposal responds to site specific Policy Banbury 8, the Banbury Vision and Masterplan SPD and also the wider development plan and NPPF.



3 PLANNING

3.2 Banbury Conservation Area Appraisal SPD

The Banbury Conservation Area Appraisal (BCAA) identifies the extent of the conservation areas and the buildings of special historical interest therein.

Page 5, bullet point 2, notes the requirement to “*promote economic regeneration through a series of ‘heritage led schemes’*”.

Page 5, bullet point 6, notes that it is important to “*ensure the retention of historic and culturally significant buildings...*”.

Page 5, bullet point 9, notes the requirement to “*Ensure that all new development is sustainable, high quality and responds to its historic environment.*”

Page 8, Figure 2, shows the extent of the Banbury Conservation Area, and how the proposed development site interacts with it. Whilst not within it, the site can be considered within “*the setting*” of it.

Page 13, Figure 6, shows that the proposed development site lies outside of the three Banbury Archaeological Sites.

Pages 24 & 25 show historic photos of North Bar Street immediately to the north and south of the site.

These have been reproduced on pages 13 and 14 of this Design and Access Statement.

Pages 32, 37 & 41, Figures 14, 16 and 18, illustrate what are considered to be the positive and negative features and views of the site (refer to Section 3.3 of this DAS).

Page 38, bullet point 2, defining the Threats / Negative features to St. Mary’s Church notes that -

“The views from the Church precinct are harmed by the exposed backs of buildings; London Yard to the north and the Telephone Exchange building to the south are highly visible.”

Page 46, bullet point 5, defining the Threats to Main Route, bullet point 5 notes that -

“North Bar is a poor relation in this linear family of streets and, despite the construction of a fairly massive block of apartments at the Warwick Road junction, lacks landmark buildings of any note”.

Page 90, para.2, notes the following -

“Demolition of existing historic and heritage buildings should never be a first option when considering development. The presumption should always be to work with what we have.

The historic architecture of Banbury, the materials used in its construction the massing and architectural details and strongly defined and should be respected.

The uniformity of the building heights and regularity of façades contribute to the intrinsic character of the street scape.

Heritage-led regeneration rather than replacement with ever taller but unexciting bland contemporary buildings should be the rule of the day”.

Page 93, point 22.2.5.5, describes the Castle Street / Bolton Road area as follows -

“The town planning schemes of the 20th century have left Banbury with current day Castle Street and Bolton Road area, the remains of the northern working canal-side suburb of the town.

The area now comprises a limited number of terraces of 19th century housing with sits ill with the 20th century roads that have been engineered through”.

The multi-storey car park has now gone and the site sits ready for a heritage inspired scheme sympathetic to the northern boundary of the medieval core and the remaining terraced housing with will enhance the approach to the canal.”

Page 95, point 23.2 defines development that should preserve or enhance the area as follows -

“Development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area, the special architectural interest of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance.”

This enables higher standards of design in new developments and secures the conservation of existing important features and characteristics.

Information supporting planning applications must demonstrate the proposal, and its impact on the conservation area, in sufficient detail to enable a thorough assessment”.

3 PLANNING

3.3 Key Views and Vistas

The Banbury Conservation Area Appraisal (BCAA) identifies key views and that could be impacted both positively or negatively by the works to the proposed development site and the removal of the Bingo Hall.

This is noted in the BCAA, shown in Fig. 18 opposite, as follows -

1. View looking south towards St. Mary's Church from a position on the footway on the eastern side of Town Centre House (a broken blue line defined by a (?) symbol).

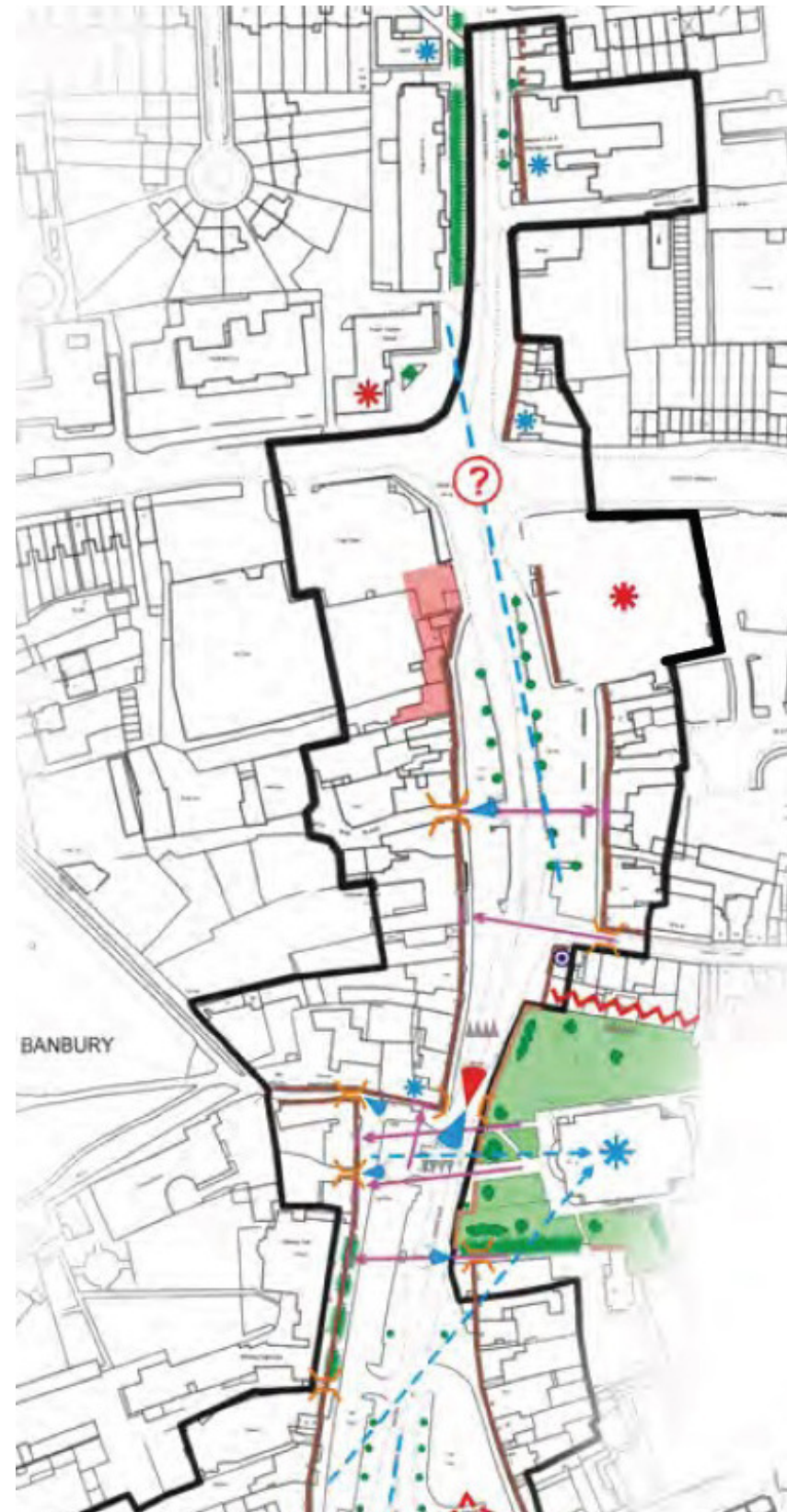
The BCAA notes two other key vistas that presently are defined as 'negative or neutral vistas' looking towards the proposed development sites from other parts of the town centre.

These are denoted by inverted red cones, and are noted in the BCAA as follows -

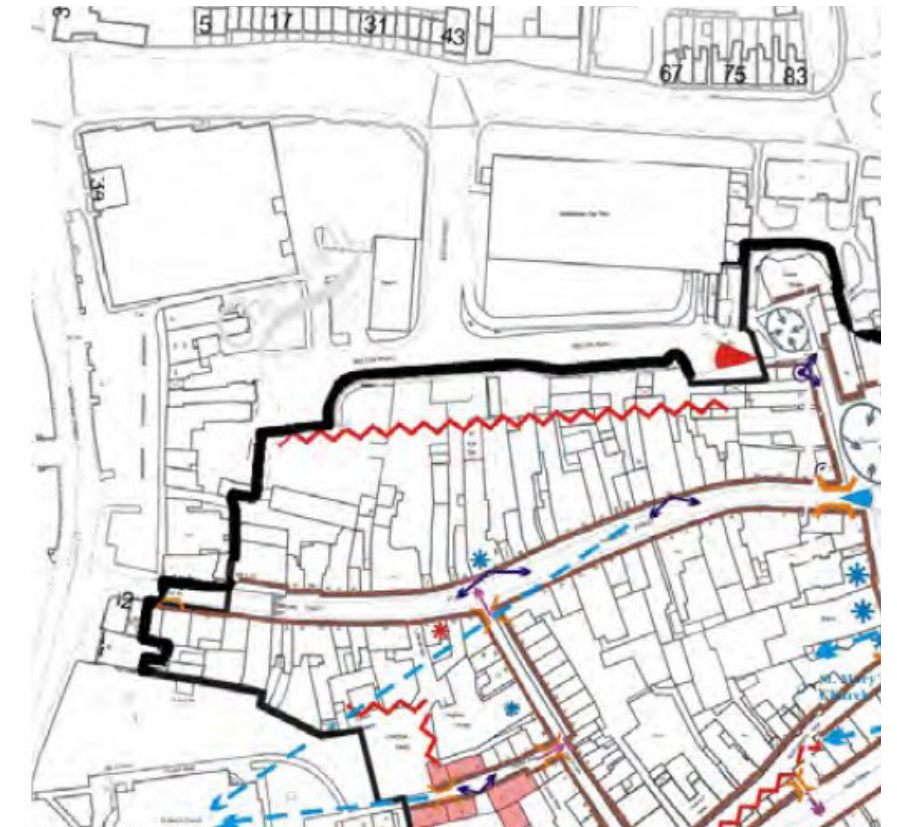
1. Vista from the pinch point in North Bar Street directly adjacent to St. Mary's Church looking north towards the Bingo Hall (Fig. 18).
2. Vista from directly outside J. T. Davies Public House looking west towards Land Tyre Services and the Bingo Hall (Fig. 14).

Importantly, the BCAA views the Bingo Hall to be a **'negative landmark'**.

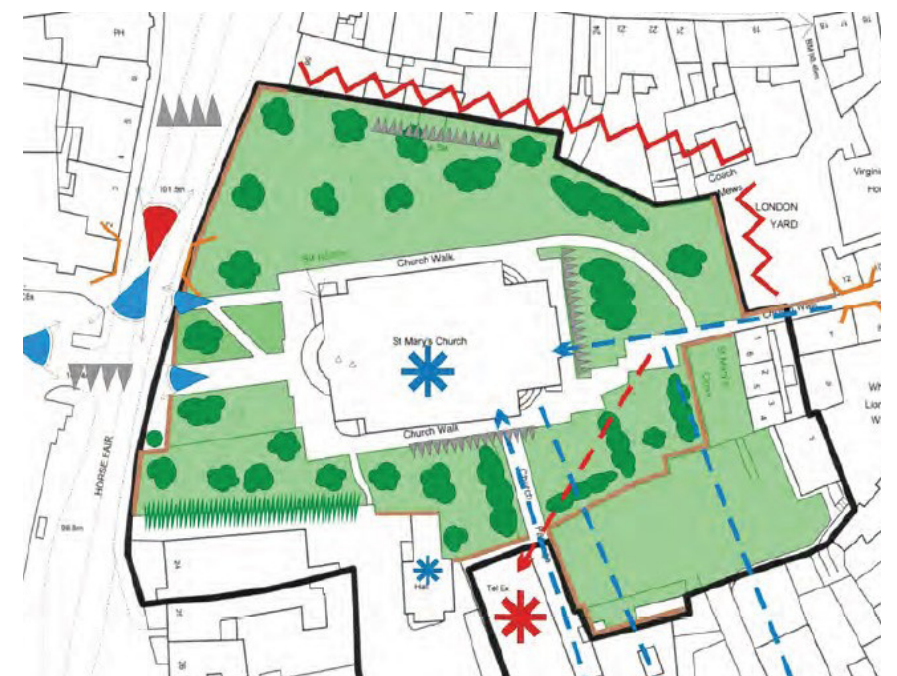
CGI views of the proposed development from each of these key vistas will accompany this application.



Excerpt from BCAA, Figure 18, p.41



Excerpt from BCAA, Figure 14, p.32



Excerpt from BCAA, Figure 16, p.37

3 PLANNING

3.4 Banbury Vision & Masterplan SPD

The Banbury Vision and Masterplan (BV&M) SPD was issued in December 2016 and is Cherwell District Council's aspiration for their long term vision for Banbury. The former Buzz Bingo Hall and car park lies within the 'Banbury 8' zone, along with a retail unit that houses a car repair business (Land Tyre Services) and a public car park.

The SPD identifies the site within the 'Indicative Town Centre Action Area' (p.12) and as one of a number of 'Local Plan town centre allocations' (p.14). It is a key site in delivering regeneration of the Bolton Road area (p.30).

The masterplan seeks to place new development fronting Castle Street and North Bar Street and to create the following improvements -

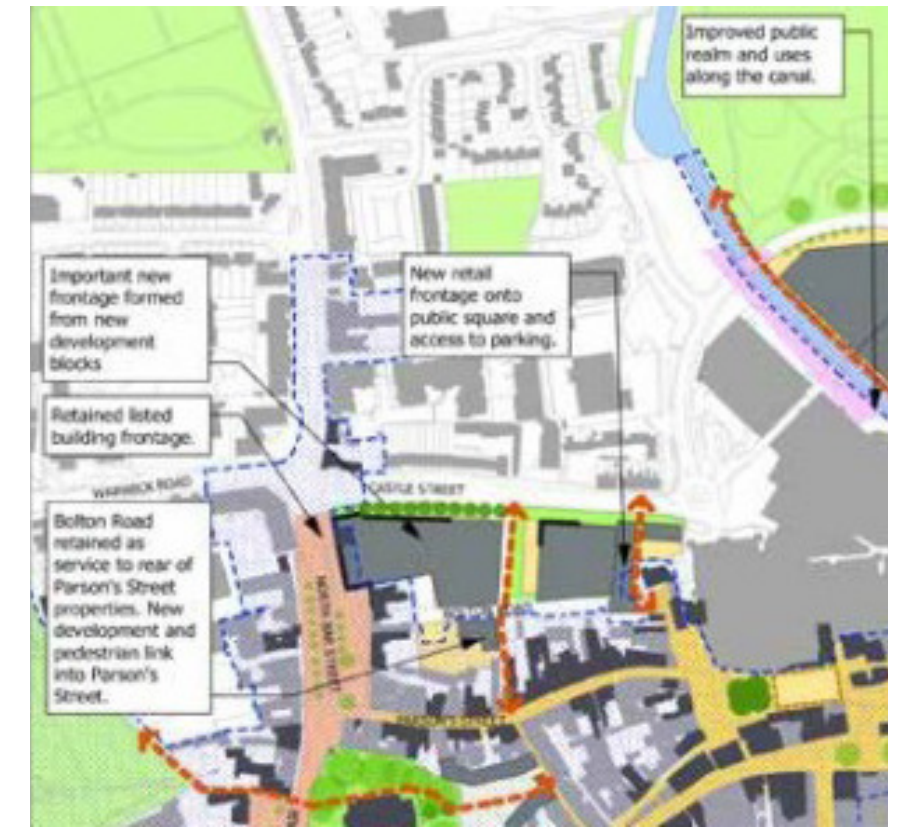
- Creation of new urban blocks.
- Densification of the area.
- Preservation of Trelawn House.
- Creation of a new strategic landscaped edge to the north side of Castle Street, ideally at least 7 metres wide.
- Environmental improvements and enhancements to North Bar Street.
- Creation of new and important street frontages.
- Introduction of a hierarchy of facade heights along Castle Street.
- Scheme to rise up in height to the junction of Castle Street and Bolton Road to create an urban node.

It is interesting to note that the masterplan development zone continues to envelop Trelawn House, and that the 'feature corner' is to the corner of Castle Street and Bolton Road, not Castle Street and North Bar Street, which is the more important corner within the urban fabric of Banbury.

This application is solely for the Bingo Hall site, not the entirety of land in 'development area 1', however a masterplan to prove that the scheme will not prejudice the Local Authority's ambition to delivery 200+ homes to all three areas within 'Banbury 8' accompanies this application.



Town Centre linkages and spaces, p.36



Town centre buildings and spaces, p.37



Bolton Road urban framework plan, p.62

3 PLANNING

3.5 Banbury 8 Development Area

The Bolton Road area (Banbury 8), p.40, is described by the Banbury Vision and Masterplan Document as follows -

“The Bolton Road development is an area located to the north-west corner of the town centre, south of Castle Street. Bolton Road runs in an east-west direction through the area with the properties fronting into Parson’s Street backing onto it. The area contains a bingo club, offices and small business units. It is well located to provide access into the main retail area, but suffers from a poor image as back land with unattractive parking facilities”.

Appendix 1, p.63, notes that the design principles of the proposals should be consistent with the following design principles -

1. Bolton Street (sic) development area split into three development areas (1, 2 & 3) by the existing road network, with area 1 on the west to provide three / four storey mixed use development for residential and town centre use. Existing modern buildings will need to be removed if Area 1 comes forward for redevelopment’.
5. Existing Listed Buildings fronting Parson’s Street and North Bar Street to be retained as part of the comprehensive regeneration of the site. All development proposals within the Bolton Road developments area should seek to preserve and enhance listed buildings and the conservation area.’
7. Improved frontage onto Castle Street with ‘strategic landscaping.’

Through subsequent title investigations, the Bingo hall site has a covenant on the title which specifically prohibits the sale of alcohol on the land. On this basis, retail involving the sale of alcohol would be prohibited, severely reducing the ability to provide a substantial retail element within any mixed-use proposals.

We have investigated retail use with a number of potential providers and found no appetite for a retail offer in this location. On this basis the proposals will be purely residential.

1. Bolton Street development area split into three development areas (1, 2 and 3) by the existing road network, with area 1 on the west to provide three/four storey mixed use development for residential and town centre uses. Existing modern buildings will need to be removed if Area 1 comes forward for redevelopment. Uses and occupiers could remain on the site.
2. Area 2 on the east to be redeveloped for car parking and perimeter mixed use along Bolton Street close to Cornhill and the public space next to The Beer Tree public house.
3. Area 3 includes the surface car park behind Parson’s Street to be developed for mixed use with a gateway building forming a frontage and access to Parson’s Street through a new pedestrian link. The special historic architectural character of the listed buildings and their settings to be considered as part of any redevelopment proposals.
4. New pedestrian and cycle link through the rear of Parson’s Street properties to connect the Bolton Road Development and car park to retail activity on Parson’s Street.
5. Existing Listed Buildings fronting onto Parson’s Street and North Bar Street to be retained as part of the comprehensive regeneration of the site. All development proposals within the Bolton Road development area should seek to preserve and enhance listed buildings and the conservation area.

6. Cornhill public space improved and extended with strategic landscaping at the eastern end of Bolton Road and a new pedestrian/cycle link onto Castle Street to improve town centre accessibility.
7. Improved frontage onto Castle Street with strategic landscaping.
8. Bolton Road retained for service access to rear of Parson’s Street properties. Consideration to be given to the inclusion of the rear of Parson’s Street as part of the development area after consultation with owners/operators.
9. Existing single storey building to be redeveloped.
10. Environmental improvements to North Bar Street and Horse Fair to include new public realm, landscape and car parking improvements.

Bolton Road urban framework plan, p.62

3 PLANNING

3.6 Cherwell Residential Design Guide SPD

Paragraph 4, p4, of the Cherwell Residential Design Guide (CRDG) states that -

“The Guide is designed to promote a holistic approach. Design is not a tick box exercise and we expect a contextual approach to guide the process. Each chapter of the Guide deals with different parts of the design. It starts with exploring the site and context, followed by developing the structuring principles of the Masterplan, and then explores the individual elements of place including streets, buildings and landscaping. The final chapters consider sustainability and innovate approaches, building details and uses of materials.”

The CRDG is divided into 8 sections, as follows -

1. The Importance of High Quality Design
2. Cherwell’s Special Character
3. Responding to the Site and It’s Context
4. Establishing the Structural Principles
5. Streets and Spaces
6. Building Plots and Arrangements
7. Building Elevations and Details
8. Innovation and Sustainability

Pages 31-33 of the CRDG note 37 questions to be addressed within the design through the design process. These will be addressed in Appendices A & B at the back of this document as responses to the requirements of the National Design Guide and the Building for a Healthy Life Assessment.

3 PLANNING

3.7 Previous Pre-Application

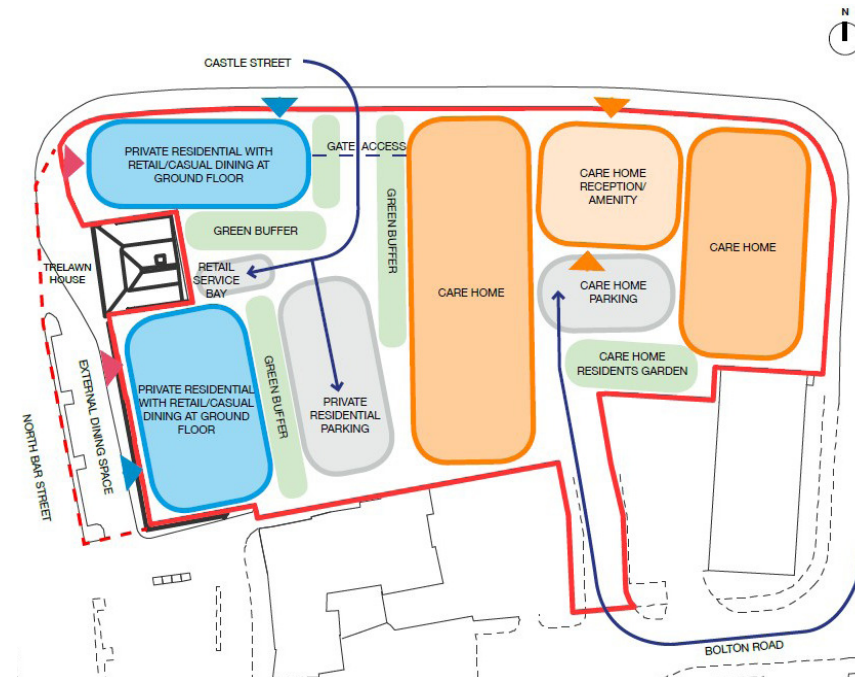
An initial pre-application design for the site was undertaken in May 2021 by 3D Reid architects for the redevelopment of the site, for the provision of 116 residential and care home flats.

It comprised of four buildings rising in height from 3-storeys to 7-storeys to the centre of the site, with vehicular access from both Bolton Road and Castle Street.

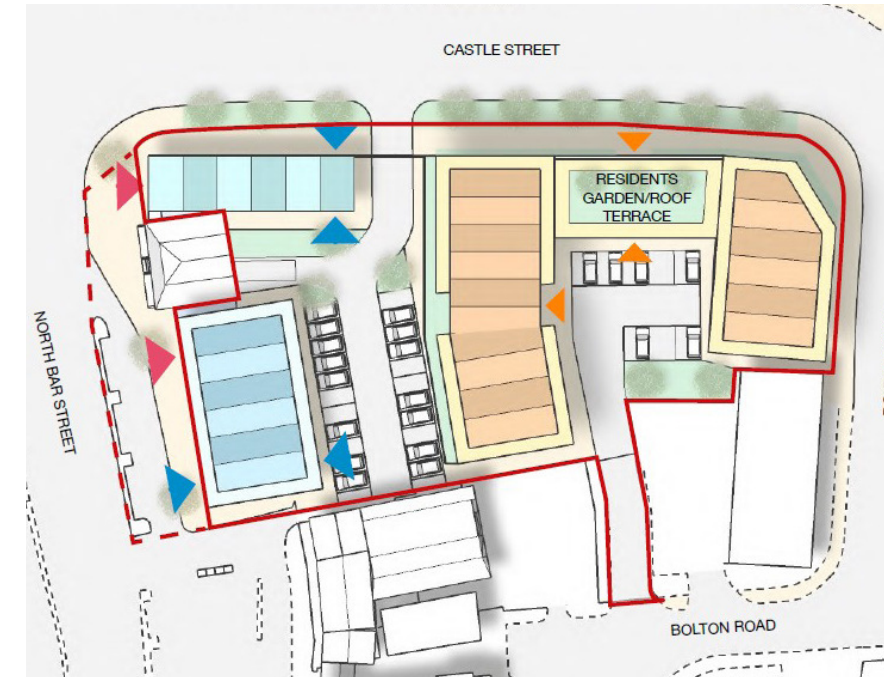
When compared to the proposals for 'Banbury zone 8' in the Banbury Vision and Masterplan SPD, it is clear that this concept did not meet with many of the aspirations of the Masterplan, including but not limited to the following -

- The scheme does not incorporate the depth of strategic landscaping as proposed in the BV&M SPD.
- A massing strategy that is at odds to the urban grain to the immediate area.
- A lack of external amenity space generally.
- Breaks in the frontage to Castle Street.
- A vehicular access road off Castle Street.
- Seven storeys is too tall for the area, as denoted by the BV&M SPD
- Buildings of height that would dominate the Castle Street street scene.
- No clear architectural or massing strategy that could generate elevations that could integrate themselves into the street scene or urban grain.
- The concept consumes Trelawn House, and will affect it's setting.
- The scheme represents over-development of the plot.

On this basis it was advised that any proposals for the site should seek to correct these issues by being generally lower in height, set further back from Castle Street and be of a suitable scale and massing so that a clear and obvious architectural language can be read on the two main elevations.



Concept Diagram



Proposed Site Plan



Massing Model, facing south-east



Massing Model, facing north-east

3 PLANNING

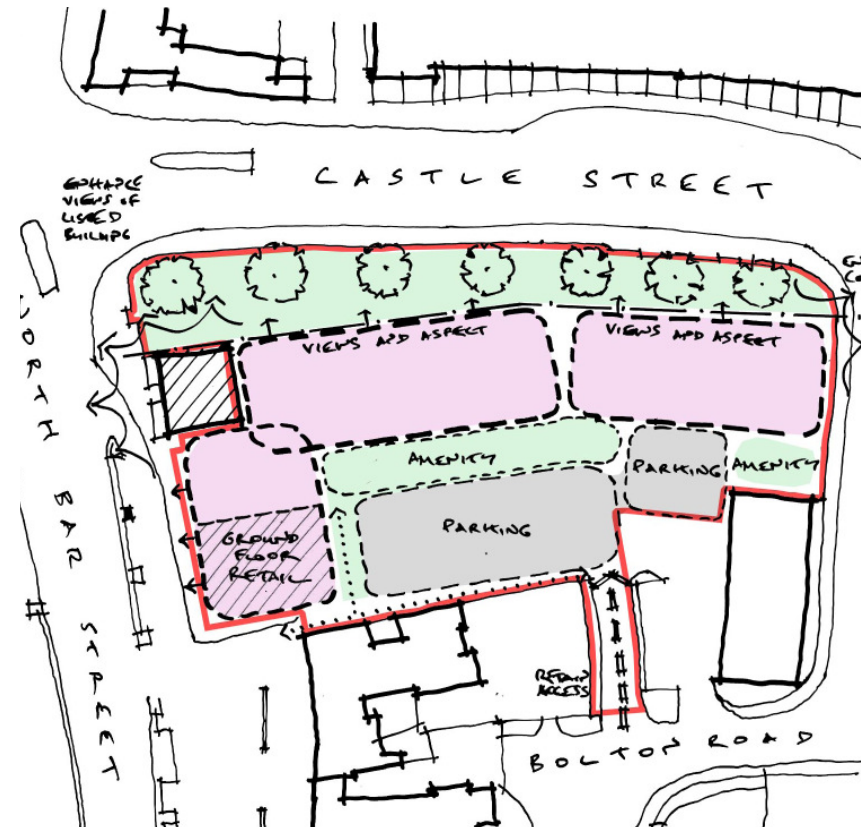
3.8 Pre-Application

A pre-application document was issued to Cherwell District Council on 19th August 2021 by Planning Issues. The document contained a location plan of the site, photographic site analysis, analysis of the constraints and opportunities of the site, indicative elevations to Castle Street and North Bar Street, and a massing model illustrating proposed scale, massing and heights.

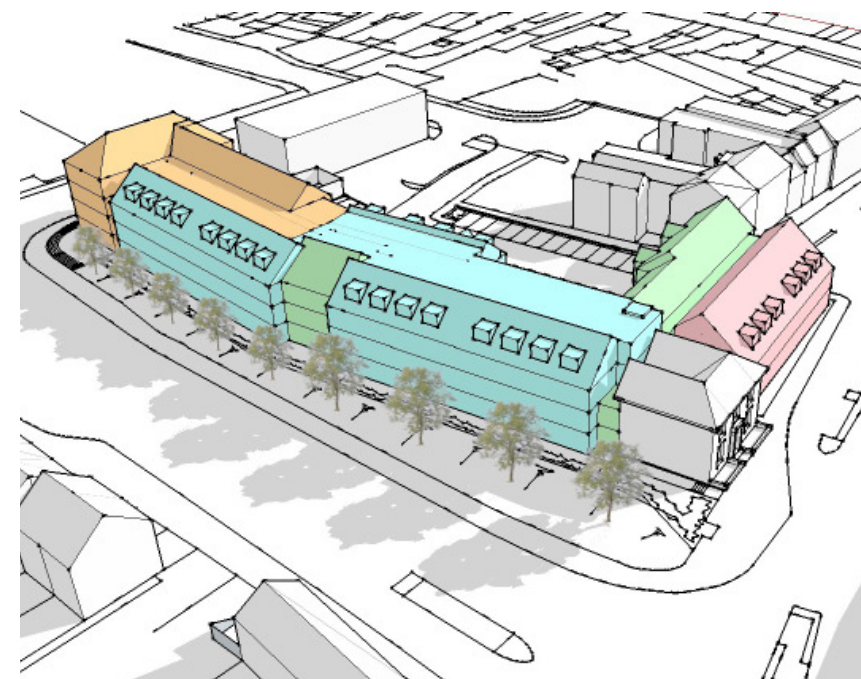
When compared to the proposals for 'Banbury 8' in the Banbury Vision and Masterplan SPD, it is clear that this concept meets with many of the aspirations of the Masterplan, including but not limited to the following -

- The scheme incorporates a wide strategic landscaped edge as proposed in the SPD.
- A massing strategy is in harmony with urban grain to the immediate area.
- Amenity space is provided.
- A consistent terraced frontage to Castle Street.
- Vehicular access road off Bolton Road.
- 2.5 storeys to North Bar Street, rising to 4 storeys to the corner of Bolton Road and Castle Street.
- Height to Castle Street that would not over-dominate the street scene.
- Opportunity for a 'feature building' to the corner of Castle Street and Bolton Road.
- Opportunity to restore Trelawn House to prominence within the street scene.
- Height to North Bar Street that would be subservient to Trelawn House.
- An obvious massing strategy that could generate elevations that could integrate themselves into the street scene or urban grain.
- The concept represents optimal development of the plot.

On this basis it was concluded that the concept represented both a general compliance with the SPD, and an improvement on the previous scheme.



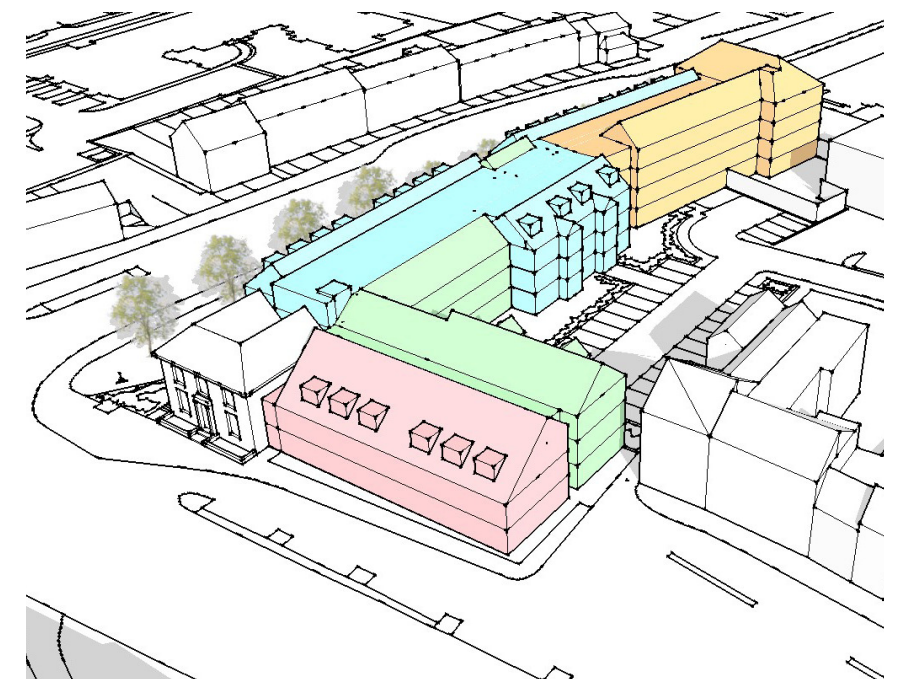
Concept Diagram



Proposed Massing Model, facing south-east



Proposed Site Plan



Proposed Massing Model, facing north-east

3 PLANNING

3.9 Feedback from Cherwell District Council

An on-line meeting was held on 2nd November 2021 between representatives of Planning Issues, Churchill Retirement Living and Cherwell District Council. In addition to the Pre-application information shown on section 3.8, the Planning Officer also reviewed the updated information provided for the Public Consultation in section 3.10.

Advice from the Planning Officers included the following key points -

- Proposals do not address or encourage use or connectivity to existing or future masterplan.
- The scheme should be presented as part of a masterplan showing no prejudice of development of adjacent sites.
- The footprint of the building is 'far too big', and 'too deep'.
- Perception that any part of the development being 4-storeys is 'too high' to Castle Street, despite the BV&M SPD advising 3- to 4- storeys.
- The proposals 'fail to respect Trelawn House', and the proposals also failed to respect the Conservation Area.
- Deemed that there would be no 'active frontage' (i.e. usable front doors) or permeability to Castle Street.
- Concern that the external amenity to Castle Street will be 'very dark' and patios won't be used.
- Concern that there was too little amenity, particularly to the internal courtyard.
- Concern that there was 'no connectivity' between the building and Castle Street and North Bar Street.
- The building elevation to Castle Street was not deemed to be sufficiently 'broken up'.
- The buildings were deemed to be a 'Georgian pastiche'.
- The scheme failed to address the Bolton Road frontage.
- Deemed that dormers 'harm the conservation area'.
- Square windows were not a design feature of the area.
- Balconies not a feature in Banbury.

3 PLANNING

3.10 Public Consultation

“Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.” National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 128

An on-line public consultation was held between 1st - 8th November 2021. The on-line presentation via a micro project website was viewed 42 times.

The one responder to the micro project website, though undecided about the principle of the retirement housing being developed on the site, felt that the redevelopment of the site would bring positive benefits and improvements to the area.

For more detail regarding this consultation, please refer to the Statement of Community Involvement by DevComms.



North Elevation



South Elevation



West Elevation