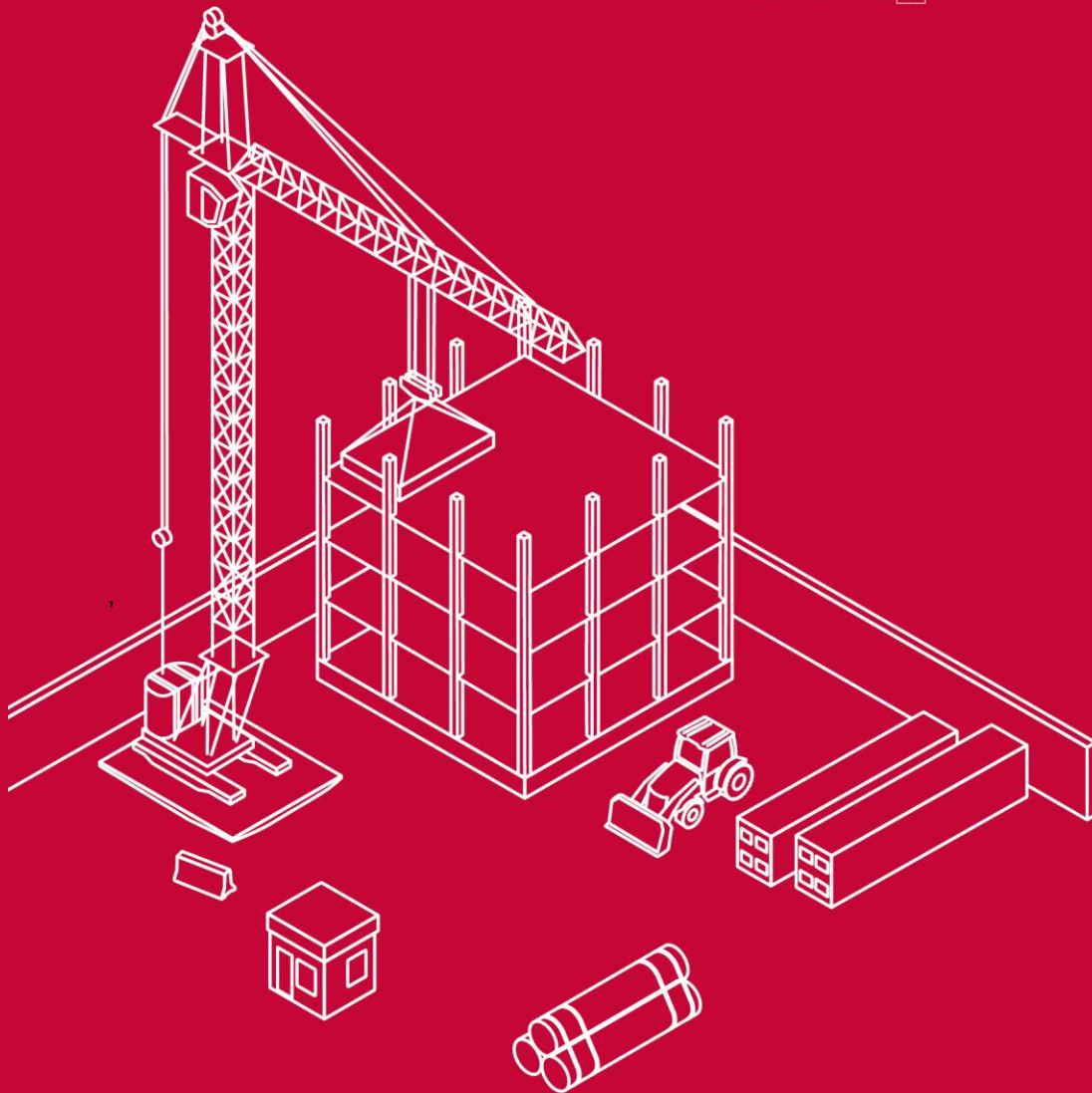


**STRUTT
&PARKER**

BNP PARIBAS GROUP 



FULL PLANNING APPLICATION

**Newton Park, Morpeth,
Northumberland**

July 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

Strutt & Parker have been instructed by Mitford Estate LLP (the Applicant) to submit a full planning application for the conversion of the agricultural steading at Newton Park. Newton Park is a farm forming part of the Mitford Estate, to the north-west of Morpeth and owned by Mitford Estate LLP.

The proposed development comprises the change of use of the existing agricultural steading to form four new dwellinghouses and is based upon accepted conversion principles. Prior Approval was previously sought and granted to convert the modern agricultural building which is located to the south of the steading (20/01235/AGTRES). This application forms a consolidation of that approved scheme and the conversion of the traditional buildings which are located at the north of the steading.

This application forms part of a larger regeneration strategy on the Mitford Estate and Newton Park, which is being undertaken. Since purchasing the Estate in 1993, the Applicant has committed significant resources to consolidating the Estate and have increased the number of acres which are farmed in-hand. This process of consolidation and economies of scale have allowed more investment into modern and efficient farming methods, increasing the sustainability of the Estate, while rendering some existing farm steadings and farm buildings surplus to requirement.

A number of the buildings at Newton Park are no longer necessary as the steading has been integrated into the larger farming business at the Mitford Estate. Importantly, re-developing the steading will prevent the buildings falling into disrepair and provide a beneficial use for the existing buildings.

This Design & Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings and other supporting documents submitted as part of this full planning application.

2. PLANNING POLICY

2.1 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The main purpose of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), originally published in March 2012, was to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development with the overarching principle being the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The latest iteration of the National Planning Policy Framework was published in 2021; this document retains the presumption in favour of sustainable development of the previous iteration.

The site is located approximately 2.7 miles from Mitford and approximately 3.4 miles from the centre of Morpeth. The centre of Morpeth has many amenities including eight schools, several supermarkets, a variety of shops and popular restaurants. There is also a rail station providing regular North to Scotland and South to Newcastle and London.

In line with the Policy S5 of the Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan 2005 and the proposed Policy STP8 of the Draft Plan for Northumberland, the revised Green Belt within Northumberland encompasses Newton Park and the site which forms this application. Paragraph 138 of the revised NPPF 2021 states that the Green Belt serves five purposes:

- a) *“To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- b) *To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- c) *To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- d) *To preserve the setting and specific character of historic towns; and*
- e) *To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.”*

In accordance with the revised NPPF 2021, it is stated that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt. The exceptions to this are detailed in Paragraph 149, as follows:

- a) *“Buildings for agriculture and forestry;*
- b) *The provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;*
- c) *The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;*
- d) *The replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;*
- e) *Limited infilling in villages;*
- f) *Limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and*
- g) *Limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:*
 - *not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or*
 - *not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.”*

In line with the exceptions detailed above, it is reasoned that the proposed development is appropriate within the Green Belt as it represents the conversion of an existing agricultural buildings to form four dwellinghouses.

Accordingly, the proposed development will not result in a disproportionate change in the size or footprint from the existing buildings and as the development incorporates some demolition of other buildings on site, it will not have an impact of the openness of the Green Belt when compared to the existing steading.

Paragraph 84 of the revised NPPF aims to support a prosperous rural economy so that “*planning policies should enable...the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings...*”. The principle of conversion is key to the proposed development; the Applicant wishes to renovate and utilise the buildings before they fall into disrepair.

2.2 NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL PLAN

The Publication Draft of the Northumberland Local Plan was submitted to Independent Examination in May 2019. Phase 1 of the Examination in Public took place between October 2019 and February 2020 and there has been a pause in the Examination in Public as a result of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

It is understood that Phase 2 of the Examination hearings commenced in October 2020. If the Publication Draft is found to be sound it will be adopted.

As discussed, the site is located within the Green Belt, in line with the Policy S5 of the Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan 2005 and the proposed Policy STP8 of the Publication Draft Plan for Northumberland. One of the overarching purposes of the Green Belt, as stated in the proposed Policy STP8, is to prevent Morpeth merging with neighbouring settlements and prevent the merger of rural settlements.

Having regard with the purposes of the Green Belt, the circumstances for acceptable development within the Green Belt as previously discussed, the context of the site within Northumberland and particularly in relation to Newton Park, Mitford and Morpeth, the proposed development is considered appropriate. In particular, Section 4.78 of the Submission Draft of the Northumberland Local Plan states that “*the overarching principle is that the Green Belt should preserve openness and reflect the purposes of the designation*”. Given the previously developed nature of the site and that the proposed development comprises the conversion of existing agricultural buildings to form dwellinghouses, it is reasoned that the openness of the locality will not be affected by the proposed re-development. Therefore, it is reasoned that the proposal is not harmful to the setting and is in accordance with both national and local Green Belt policy.

The proposed Policy HOU1 of the Publication Draft Local Plan supports making the best use of existing buildings stating that “*sustainable, high quality and attractive residential communities will be created and promoted by supporting the conversion and change of use to residential use of other sustainable redundant premises to housing...*”.

2.3 PREVIOUS PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Consent was previously granted to convert the farm buildings at Newton Park to form four dwellinghouses and a studio. This permission was granted in November 2005. The reference number for this approved scheme is CM/05/D/507. This consent was extended under the application CM/20100625 in October 2010.

Approval was granted in June 2020 for the conversion of the southern most modern agricultural building on the steading under Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). The reference number for this approved two-unit scheme is 20/01235/AGTRES.

3. DESIGN MATTERS

3.1 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for the conversion of the traditional farm buildings and one of the modern farm buildings to create four dwellings. In accordance with the drawings submitted within this application, some of the modern agricultural buildings demolished.

The overall aim of this conversion is to provide housing within the traditional buildings, retaining the agricultural appearance of the steading from the roadside using sympathetic conversion methods and minimal intervention.

The proposed conversions appropriately reflect the heritage of the steading, while providing dwellings which are suitable for modern living.

3.2 AMOUNT

The buildings at Newton Park are to be converted to form four dwellings as follows:

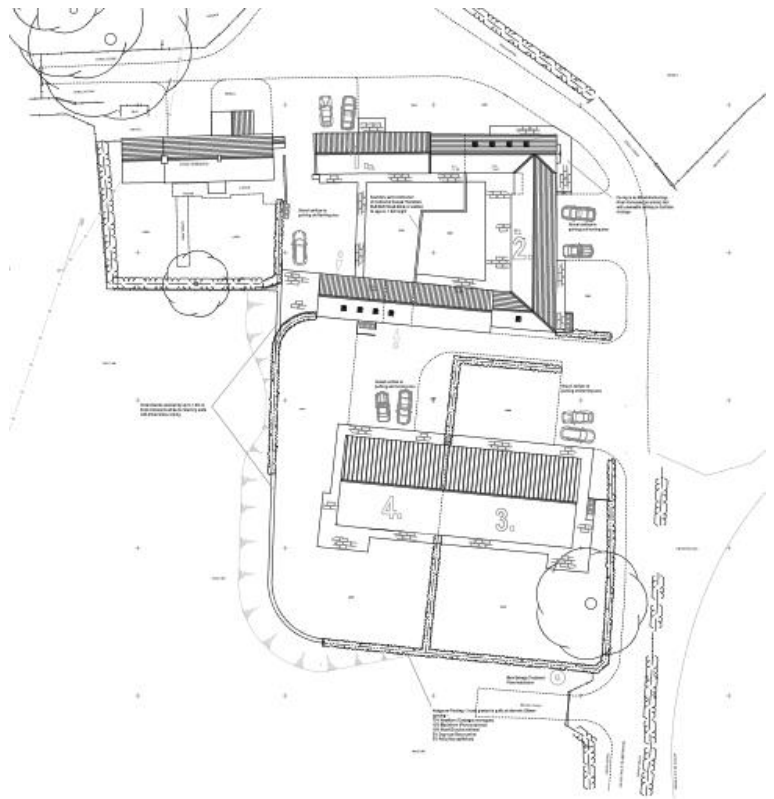
- Unit 1 will provide four-bedroom accommodation over two storeys.
- Unit 2 will provide four-bedroom accommodation over one storey.
- Unit 3 will provide four-bedroom accommodation over one storey.
- Unit 4 will provide three-bedroom accommodation over one storey.

3.3 LAYOUT

The traditional steading comprises a range of stone buildings which have been constructed in a 'horse-shoe' layout. As the proposed development is largely based upon the principle of conversion, the development has been dictated by the existing location, layout and positioning of the traditional buildings.

Parking sufficient for at least three cars per dwelling is proposed; this shall be provided externally and within garages. Each dwelling will benefit from a private residential garden.

The proposed site layout submitted as part of this application is shown to the right.



3.4 SCALE

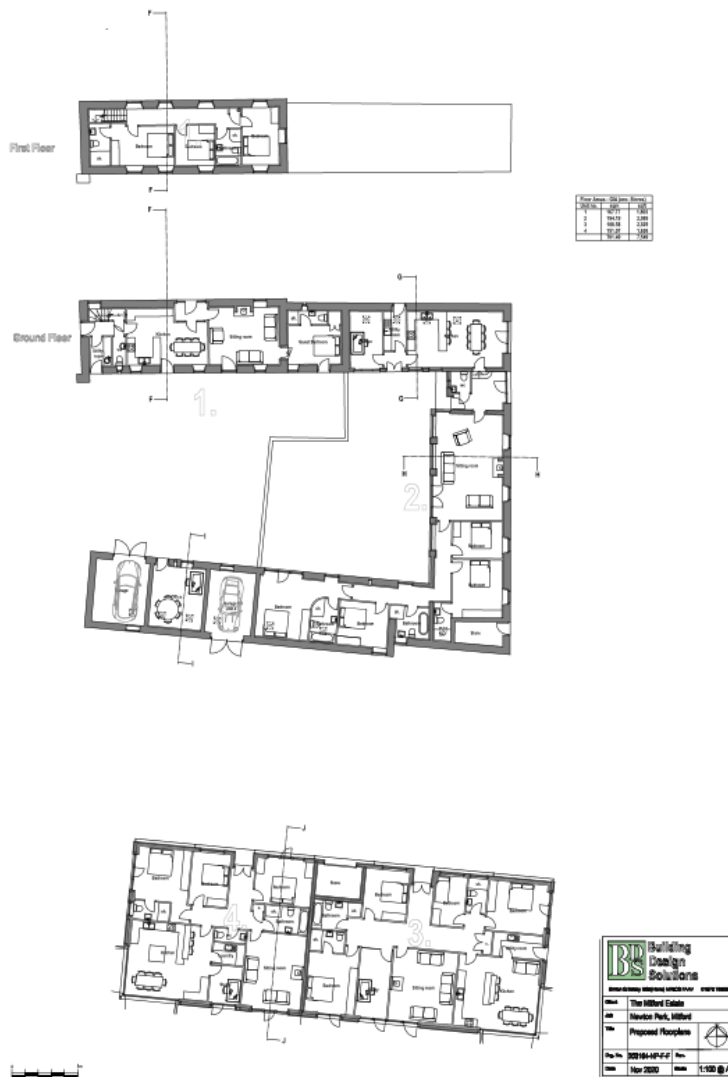
As the proposed development comprises the conversion of the traditional steading alongside the demolition of the existing modern agricultural buildings, the overall scale of the development by footprint will be smaller than the existing steading.

While the majority of the development is based on the principles of conversion, there is a small link to be built in Unit 2 which facilitates the inclusion of an entrance way and WC.

The proposed floor areas of the dwellings are as follows:

- Unit 1 – 1,805sqft
- Unit 2 – 2,089sqft
- Unit 3 – 2,029sqft
- Unit 4 – 1,626sqft

The proposed floor plans are as below:

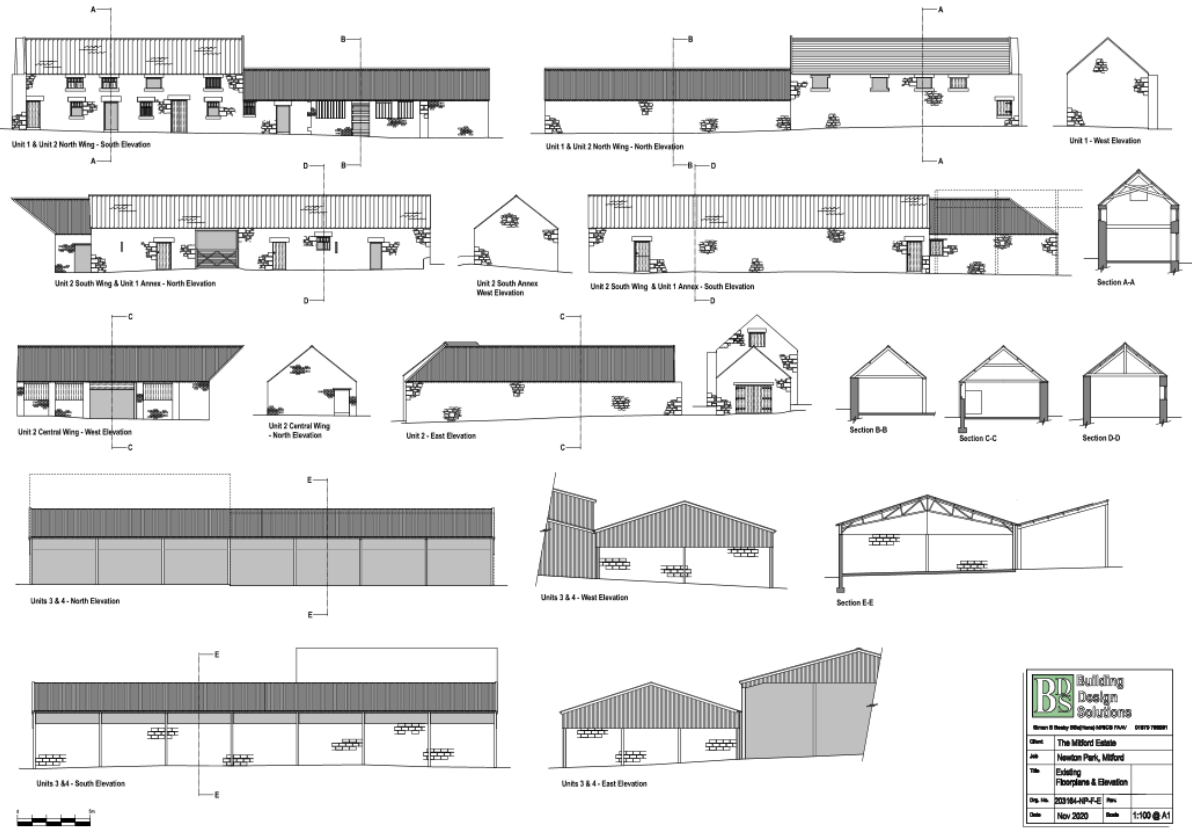


The proposed division of the buildings has been influenced by privacy distances which must be maintained between different units, the goal of minimising intrusion to the existing buildings, the aspiration to retain the agricultural heritage and appearance of the buildings so far as possible.

3.5 APPEARANCE

As the nature of the scheme is conversion, the intention of the detailed design of the scheme is to avoid excessive intervention in the existing buildings, thus keeping their original character and ensuring that the heritage of the traditional steading is not lost.

The existing elevations of the buildings to be converted to form Units 1-4 and associated proposed elevations are as follows:





As evidenced in the above drawings, the proposed alterations to the traditional steading are generally modest, with the majority of doors and windows to be situated within existing openings. The location of these existing openings has influenced the proposed division of the buildings and the internal layouts of the units.

The existing cladding on the modern agricultural building is to be replaced with metal sheeting to the roof and timber cladding to the walls. This choice of materials will retain the agricultural heritage of the building but improve the final aesthetic of the residential units.

Windows are to be constructed in painted timber external joinery in a style commensurate with traditional farm buildings where possible. Where larger portions of glazing are proposed, such as in Units 3 and 4, this shall be constructed in powder coated aluminium painted in dark grey.

The key design aspects of each unit are discussed in turn as follows:

3.5.1 UNIT 1

Unit 1 is to be located within the north-western portion of the traditional steading and will benefit from accommodation over two storeys. The unit will provide four-bedroom accommodation and benefit from a kitchen-dining room.

The majority of windows are to be located with the existing openings, with one new doorway proposed on the northern façade of the building to provide access.

Externally Unit 1 will benefit from a garage and office space to the south of the main dwelling. The garage is of sufficient size to provide cycle storage.

3.5.2 UNIT 2

Unit 2 will be a single storey conversion located within the north-eastern portion of the traditional steading. The unit will provide four-bedroom accommodation and benefit from a kitchen-dining room and dedicated study.

The majority of windows are to be located with the existing openings, with one new doorway proposed on the northern façade of the building to provide access. Conservation style roof lights are proposed on the north and elevations to allow light into rooms with minimal intervention in to the existing building.

A store is proposed to provide cycle storage for Unit 2.

3.5.3 UNIT 3

Unit 3 is to be located with the eastern end of the modern agricultural building. The accommodation will be provided over one storey and will comprise four-bedroom accommodation, a kitchen-dining room and dedicated study.

The existing cladding on the modern building is to be replaced with attractive treated timber cladding. Apertures are to be constructed in dark grey powder coated aluminium and larger sections of glazing are proposed on the southern elevation in particular to take full advantage of the open views to the countryside.

A store is proposed to provide cycle storage for Unit 3.

3.5.4 UNIT 4

Unit 4 is to be located with the western end of the modern agricultural building. The accommodation will be provided over one storey and will comprise three-bedroom accommodation, a kitchen-dining room and dedicated study.

The existing cladding on the modern building is to be replaced with attractive treated timber cladding. Apertures are to be constructed in dark grey powder coated aluminium and larger sections of glazing are proposed on the southern elevation in particular to take full advantage of the open views to the countryside.

Bicycles are to be stored within the garage.

3.5.5 MATERIALS

Given the nature of the development being conversion, the existing stone and brick walls and slate/pantile roofs of the traditional buildings are to be retained. Where any new materials are required due to weathering/poor condition, these shall be reclaimed from elsewhere on the estate or matched to the existing materials.

All minor repairs to stone work and brick work will be finished to match the original stone/brick work and repointing work done with heritage lime mortar pointing for both aesthetic purposes and also to safeguard the integrity of the existing materials through weathering.

3.5.6 APERTURES

Where possible, existing openings are to be utilised for the doors and windows. As necessary, new openings will also be created to make the building suitable for habitable use.

Window and door frames are to be constructed in a mixture of painted timber and dark grey powder coated aluminium; it is hoped that the mixture of these two materials will maintain the agricultural heritage of the buildings, but introduce aesthetically pleasing elements which will also make the buildings functional dwellings for the future occupants.

3.6 LANDSCAPING

A gravel finish is proposed on the parking area and turning areas, while stone paving with permeable joints is proposed directly adjacent to the dwellings.

Each garden will be laid predominantly to lawn, with the hedges, fences and brick walls delineating the boundaries of each garden as indicated on the submitted drawings. Where new hedges are to be planted, these are to be an

appropriate mixture of native species. A stone faced ha-ha is also proposed on the western elevation of the steading (Units 1 and 4).

As is normal with applications of this nature we would anticipate that the more specific detail of the landscaping will be dealt with as a pre-commencement condition to a planning permission.

4. ACCESS

An existing access from the unclassified rural road, named 'Surface Change to Newton Mill', will be utilised to access the proposed conversions (section code 1130U6027100006). This existing access is ample in width to facilitate a shared pedestrian and vehicular use without recourse to a separate footpath.

The layout of the proposed development is such that vehicles will have space to ensure they exist in a forward facing direction.

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