

NOVEMBER 2023

# PLANNING, DESIGN & ECONOMIC STATEMENT

**LAND AT WOODSIDE DRIVE, ALMONDSBURY,  
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This application seeks full planning consent for the development of a vacant site in the Green Belt located between the settlement boundary of Almondsbury and the M5/M4 interchange to provide small, flexible use commercial units within Class E (g i, ii and iii), Class B2, and Class B8.

The location within minutes of Junction 20 and adjacent to existing commercial, industrial and recreational uses makes the site highly suitable for a commercial/industrial development.

The applicant has discussed the proposals informally with senior officers within the Council's Economic Development and Planning Teams and the feedback received was positive on the basis of the site's highly accessible location and the critical shortage and subsequent need for this type of development in the north (and east) fringe of Bristol. The location in the Green Belt was noted by officers as a constraint, which the Planning Department would need to consider in the planning balance, but there was clear support for the scheme from an economic development perspective.

There have been refused permissions and a dismissed appeal for residential development on the site due primarily to the Green Belt location and the absence of 'Very Special Circumstances' to justify the harm by reason of inappropriateness and impact on openness. However, this proposal for modern, flexibly designed accommodation suitable for small and start-up businesses to help meet un-met need and demand in the district and wider Bristol area is deemed to constitute 'Very Special Circumstances', which would allow a departure from the Green Belt policy of restraint.

The applicant owns the land and if approved, it is anticipated that construction would start in late 2024 with completion in late 2025.

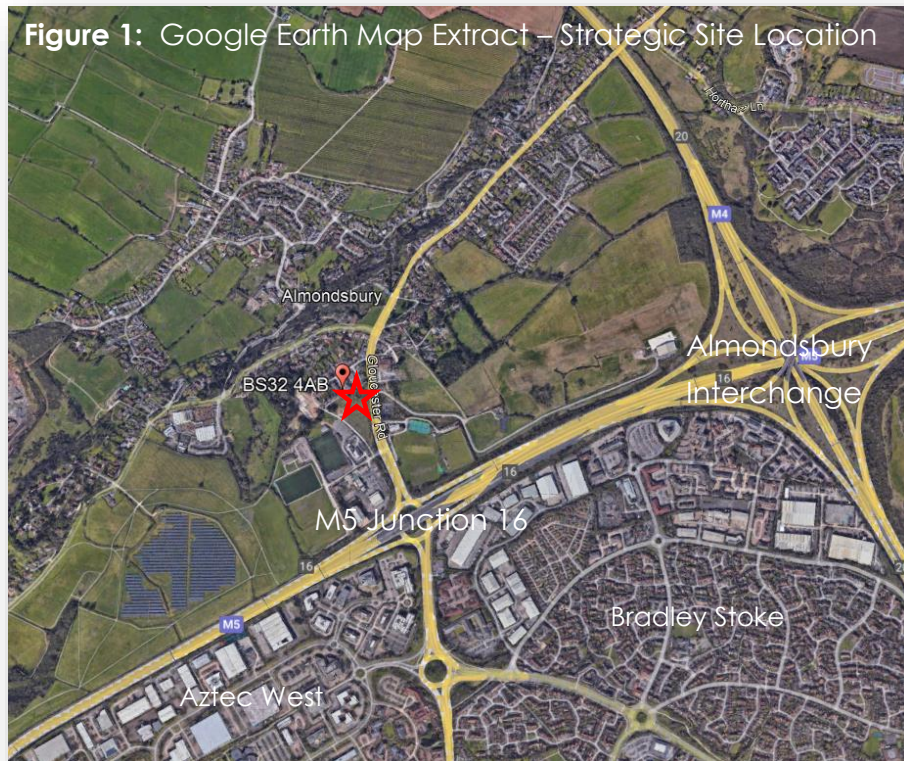
## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning, Design & Economic Statement has been prepared by Stokes Morgan Planning Ltd on behalf of Freemantle Developments Ltd. It accompanies a detailed planning application for the erection of 3no. buildings with a combined floorspace (GIA) of 2,843sqm for flexible uses within Class E (g i, ii and iii), Class B2 and Class B8 together with associated access, landscaping works, and drainage.
- 1.2 The purpose of this statement is to explain the background to the scheme and provide an assessment of the key planning issues associated with the principle of development, set against the context of national and local planning policy and guidance, and any relevant material considerations. The Economic element is set out at sections 6.13 to 6.27.
- 1.3 This statement should be read in conjunction with the items identified on the submitted Application Schedule.
- 1.4 This document is structured as follows:
- Application Site & Surroundings
  - Pertinent Planning History
  - The Proposed Development;
  - Planning Policy Context;
  - Planning Analysis;
  - Planning Balance/Conclusions.

## 2. APPLICATION SITE & SURROUNDINGS

### LOCATION

- 2.1 The application site lies on the southern edge of Almondsbury, adjoining but outside the defined settlement boundary, approximately 170m north of Junction 16 of the M5 and approximately 900m northwest of the M4/M5 Almondsbury Interchange. The Bristol North Fringe lies to the south with Aztec West on the opposite side of the M5.
- 2.2 Housing on Oaklands Drive and Woodside Drive enclose the site to the north, separated by an Ambulance Station. The Gloucestershire FA Headquarters sit to the west, on the opposite side of Woodside Drive, with the North Bristol Rugby Football Club beyond. The land to the south between the site and the motorway is occupied by the National Highways Motorway Depot and to the east, the site is bordered by the A38 with Almondsbury Sports and Social Club beyond.





**Figure 2:** Google Earth 2D View – Strategic Site Location -M5 in background



- 2.3 It is pertinent that all the surrounding buildings and land uses to the east and west of the site, up to the motorway, are in the open countryside and Green Belt.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.4 The triangular shaped site has a site area of 1.22ha. Currently vacant with no planning use, it previously formed part of the estate to Oaklands House, now demolished and redeveloped as a care home.
- 2.5 The site is discreet in views from the A38 due to the belt of mature and semi-mature trees along the road boundary, behind a stone wall. The Motorway Depot and FA Headquarters with associated car parking, together with the floodlighting associated with the sports pitches, dominate views on the approach from the motorway. In views from the north, the site is only visible in private views from the housing. It is most visible in close-range views from the immediate west and south but is viewed within the commercial, urban context.

## **ACCESS**

- 2.6 The site is accessed off Woodside Drive, which is a private drive in the ownership of the applicant. Woodside Drive connects with a cul-de-sac spur of Gloucester Road, which joins the A38 Gloucester Road.
- 2.7 The Gloucestershire FA Headquarters (buildings and car parking) adjoin to the southwest, and beyond this, the Motorway Police Control Centre (200 metres), which adjoins junction 16 of the M5. Almondsbury Sports and Social Club (buildings and playing fields) lies to the southeast on the opposite side of the A38. All of these are outside of the settlement boundary. The North of Bristol Urban Fringe commences immediately to the south of the M5, approximately 450 metres from the site.

## **DESIGNATIONS**

- 2.8 The site is in the Green Belt but is not in a protected landscape (such as an AONB) or Conservation Area, and is not subject to any ecological designations.
- 2.9 There are no listed buildings on the site, however there is a Grade II listed building, Pear Tree Cottage, to the northeast, and a blanket Tree Preservation Order (ref SG/TPO1106) applies across the site.
- 2.10 The site benefits from a location in Flood Zone 1.

## **3. PERTINENT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 3.1 The site itself has had five unsuccessful planning applications for residential development, which are identified on Table 1, and two dismissed appeals (determined together). Submitted by the previous land owner, these were all refused primarily on Green Belt grounds, and although there were additional reasons for refusal, none of these have any relevance to this commercial proposal.

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**Table 1:** Planning History

PLANNING APP. REF.	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	DECISION	DATE
PT16/4857/O	Land to southeast of Oaklands Drive, Almondsbury	Erection of 28no dwellings with associated parking areas and landscaping (outline) with access to be determined. All other matters reserved.	Refused	12/01/17
P19/2266/F	Almondsbury Squash Club	Erection of 2 no. detached dwellings with associated works.	Refused and dismissed on appeal	17/09/19
P19/2287/F	Almondsbury Squash Club	Erection of 2 No. detached dwellings, creation of parking and associated works.	Refused and dismissed on appeal	17/09/19
P21/00851/O	Land At The Recreation Ground Oaklands Drive	Erection of 9 no. self-build dwellings (Outline) with access to be determined, all other matters reserved.	Refused	13/05/21
P21/00852/O	Recreation Ground Oaklands Drive	Erection of 9no. dwellings (Outline) with access to be determined, all other matters reserved.	Refused	13/05/21



- 3.2 The wider Oaklands House estate, off Oaklands Drive, which this site originally formed part of, has been redeveloped under planning approval reference PT18/4625/F and now accommodates a care home.
- 3.3 The former Almondsbury Squash Courts and Stable Block at the end of Oaklands Drive, to the north of the application site, has been redeveloped under approval reference PT17/2444/O and PT18/2466 RM and is now occupied by 10no. dwellings, with six on Oaklands Drive and four on Woodside Drive, facing the application site.

## **4. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 4.1 The proposed description of development is as follows:

*"Erection of three buildings with a combined floorspace of 2,843sqm to provide modern, flexible use units within Use Classes 'E – Commercial, Business and Service (g(i)(ii)(iii)); B2 and B8, together with associated access, drainage, and hard/soft landscape works."*

### **AMOUNT**

- 4.2 The submitted drawings show 21 units in total, however these are flexibly designed with removable internal walls to provide greater flexibility and choice for a wide range of businesses, ranging from small, start-up businesses to larger, more established ones. The ability to occupy a larger unit or expand the business without moving to an alternative location is a key benefit and selling feature of this type of accommodation, where there is a critical shortage and strong and growing need.
- 4.3 Units 1-7 are arranged as 7no. units, each 135sqm, totalling 945sqm. Units 11-15 are arranged as 8no. units, with two at 142sqm and six at 176sqm, totaling 1,340sqm. Units 16-21 are arranged as 6no. units, each 93sqm, totaling 558sqm.

### **SCALE**

- 4.4 The buildings would be of two-storey height with a shallow, hipped roof, with a height of 6m at the eaves and 7m at the ridge. Each unit would have a full-height

roller shutter door and a separate door access, together with windows on two levels to maximise light and/or to provide the flexibility to accommodate a mezzanine, although floorspace is to be provided upon completion at ground floor level only as demonstrated on the submitted plans.

### **ACCESS & PARKING**

4.5 The site currently has a vehicular access off Woodside Drive, however this is to be relocated to provide access to Units 12-15 and Units 16-21. Two new vehicular accesses are proposed further south along the site's southwestern boundary to provide access to the parking courts for Units 8-11 and Units 1-7.

4.6 The scheme proposes:-

- A total of 85 off-street car parking spaces - five of which (6%) will be for the dedicated use of blue badge holders;
- Six Sheffield stands providing secure and covered parking for up to 12 cycles in two stores;
- A two-metre-wide footway on the east side of Woodside Drive for its entire length;
- Tactile paving on the north and south sides of Gloucester Road, on the alignment of the existing footway on the west side of the A38;
- White 'KEEP CLEAR' carriageway markings on Gloucester Road across its priority junction with Woodside Drive; and
- Yellow box carriageway markings on the A38.

### **LAYOUT**

4.7 The buildings are arranged as a linear development extending horizontally across the site, following its triangular shape. With the exception of a small parking courtyard for Units 1-7, the parking areas would be visually contained by the buildings.

- 4.8 The buildings are sited to preserve the southeasterly vista from the rear elevation of Pear Tree Cottage. The tree-lined boundary along the A38 would be retained and supplemented with new trees and shrubs, and the area immediately to the south of the garden would be landscaped with native copse planting; and new native hedges; shrubs and trees. These planted areas, which would include plant species of known value to wildlife, would appear as a continuation of the garden to the listed building, while screening the proposed development and providing green commuting routes and wildlife corridors.
- 4.9 A green corridor is proposed along the northwestern boundary to provide an attractive visual barrier between the development and the existing houses on Woodside Drive.

#### **LANDSCAPING & ECOLOGY**

- 4.10 All existing trees along the site boundaries are to be retained with the east and northwest boundaries to be retained and enhanced as green corridors.
- 4.11 New native hedges and trees are proposed along all the site boundaries to provide a soft edge to the development and provide a network of linked green corridors for wildlife.
- 4.12 A landscaped, informal open space is proposed to the south of the site, enclosed by a native hedge and an avenue of trees on the southwest boundary; a native hedge along its northwestern boundary; and the existing trees supplemented with new native planting along the eastern site boundary.

#### **APPEARANCE**

- 4.13 The materials would comprise metal profile cladding and sheeting for the walls and roof for Units 1-7 to the south of the site; and a combination of metal profile cladding and sheeting and timber for Units 11-15 and Units 16-21 in the middle and to the north of the site respectively.

## 5. PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

5.1 The applicant has discussed the development proposal with officers within the Council's Economic Development and Planning Teams. The discussions have involved:-

1. A Teams Meeting attended by Martin Farmer (Economic Development Officer), Nicholas Warfield (Freemantle Developments), Andrew Ridler of Alder King (Head of Industrial and Logistics Agency) and Rebecca Morgan (Director, Stokes Morgan) on 20 October 2022 following submission of a Call for Sites promotion in relation to the emerging Local Plan;
2. A meeting at South Gloucestershire Council's offices attended by Andrew Ridler, Martin Farmer, and Ian Steel (South Gloucestershire Council, Business Investment and Digital Connectivity Manager), whereby it is understood there was a general discussion on the industrial market in South Gloucestershire and wider Bristol, and the contribution this site could make to meeting economic development needs; and
3. A meeting at South Gloucestershire Council's offices in Yate on 3 May 2023 attended by Ian Steel, Karen Carter (Economic Development Assistant), Michael Fishpool (Senior Planning Officer), Patric Conroy (Planning Policy Manager), Louise Seaman (Regeneration and Development Manager) and Chris Thomas (Property Investment Manager), Nicolas Warfield (Freemantle Developments), Andrew Ridler (Alder King) and Kit Stokes (Director, Stokes Morgan Planning). The purpose of this meeting was to discuss Freemantle's proposal in broad terms; their proposals for delivering flexibly designed accommodation suitable for small and start-up businesses within the commercial and industrial sectors in the district; and how this might help to address the economic shortfalls.

5.2 As identified in the Executive Summary, officers were supportive in principle, accepting that there was genuine need for the type of development proposed. It

was agreed that the site was a good strategic location in accessibility terms, but the Green Belt constraint was highlighted. A meeting with ward councillors was advocated prior to the submission of a planning application.

5.3 The applicant subsequently met the two ward councillors on-site, separately, to introduce and discuss the proposal. The meeting with Councillor Tony Williams took place on 24 June 2023 and the meeting with Councillor Matthew Riddle was on 29 June 2023.

## **6. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

6.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires proposals for development to be considered in accordance with the policy context of the adopted Development Plan and any other relevant material considerations.

### **THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

6.2 The Development Plan for South Gloucestershire comprises:

- The South Gloucestershire Local Plan Core Strategy 2006 – 2027, adopted December 2013; and
- The Policies, Sites, and Places Plan (PSP Plan), adopted November 2017.

6.3 The key adopted policies relevant to this proposal and addressed at the Planning Analysis section, are:

#### *South Gloucestershire Adopted Core Strategy*

- CS1 High quality design
- CS2 Green infrastructure
- CS3 Renewable and local carbon energy generation
- CS4A Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CS5 Location of development (incl. Green Belt)
- CS6 Infrastructure and developer contributions

- CS8 Improving accessibility
- CS9 Managing the environment and heritage
- CS11 Distribution of economic development sites
- CS14 Town centres and retail
- CS34 Rural areas

*South Gloucestershire Local Plan Policies, Sites and Places Plan*

- PSP1 Local distinctiveness
- PSP2 Landscape
- PSP3 Trees and woodland
- PSP7 Development in the Green Belt
- PSP8 Residential Amenity
- PSP11 Transport impact management
- PSP16 Parking standards
- PSP17 Heritage Assets and the Historic Environment
- PSP19 Wider biodiversity
- PSP20 Flood risk, surface water and watercourse management
- PSP21 Environmental pollution and impacts
- PSP27 Storage and Distribution Uses
- PSP28 Rural Economy
- PSP31 Town Centre Uses

**DEVELOPMENT PLAN STATUS IN PLANNING DECISIONS**

- 6.4 The Old Sodbury appeal decision<sup>1</sup> issued on 6 January 2023 established that South Gloucestershire's Development Plan is out-of-date due to it being more than five

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<sup>1</sup> APP/P0119/W/22/3303905



years old. The appeal Inspector concluded that the tilted balance set out at NPPF Paragraph 11(d) had been triggered and granted planning permission.

- 6.5 The Thornbury decision<sup>2</sup> issued on 13 February 2023 endorsed the position on the status of the Development Plan established by the Old Sodbury appeal. The tilted balance was applied in the determination of the appeal and permission was granted, consistent with NPPF Paragraph 11(d).
- 6.6 The Council has accepted that the Development Plan is out-of-date and accordingly, it is **duty bound to determine all applications for development in accordance with NPPF Paragraph 11(d)** unless the application of Framework policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing development, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
- 6.7 The location of the site in the Green Belt is a protective policy set out in the Framework and would provide a clear reason for refusing development unless there are 'Very Special Circumstances' to justify a policy departure. The applicant's case is that 'Very Special Circumstances' do exist and the tilted balance in favour of the approval of this sustainable development therefore applies to this application.

## 7. PLANNING ANALYSIS

- 7.1 The key planning issues relevant to the assessment of this application are as follows:
- Does the proposal fall into any of the defined exceptions to inappropriate development? If not, are there any 'Very Special Circumstances' to justify the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness?
  - Is this a suitable location within the context of the adopted spatial strategy and any relevant material considerations, for a commercial development?

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<sup>2</sup> APP/P0119/W/21/3288019

- Would the proposal result in any landscape harm?
- Would the proposal preserve or enhance the setting of the adjacent listed building?
- Is the design of the scheme appropriate for the site and context?
- Would the proposal result in any harm to local highway safety conditions and would it encourage travel by sustainable modes?
- Would the proposal result in any harm to neighbouring residential amenity?
- Would the scheme have any ecological implications and would it deliver biodiversity net gain?
- Is the proposal acceptable on flood risk and drainage grounds?
- Would the benefits significantly and demonstrably outweigh any adverse impacts?

These matters are addressed separately in the following section.

## **GREEN BELT**

7.2 The application site is in the Green Belt. The NPPF at Paragraph 149 identifies that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate unless the proposal falls into one of the specified exceptions. The proposed commercial/industrial development does not fall into any of the 'appropriate' categories of development, and as 'inappropriate' development, it is harmful by default and cannot be approved unless there are very special circumstances to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness.

### **The Very Special Circumstances**

7.3 The NPPF does not define what constitutes 'very special circumstances', however case law has established that the correct approach in assessing this is to first consider the harm caused by the development to the openness and purpose of

the Green Belt; secondly to consider the benefits associated with the proposal; and thirdly to consider whether the benefits outweigh the harm so as to amount to 'very special circumstances'.

### Openness

- 7.4 The NPPF does not define the term 'openness', however the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)<sup>3</sup> refers to assessments on openness as being informed through consideration of spatial and visual aspects; the duration of the development; and the degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation.
- 7.5 The site is greenfield in planning terms and the Council has considered, in the past, the site to be of visual benefit to the local area<sup>4</sup> because it *“provides a break between the built up area of Almondsbury and the open countryside (and Green Belt) beyond.”* This is not, in fact, the case bearing in mind the site sits adjacent to a large cluster of commercial buildings with car parks, as well as sports clubs with buildings, artificial pitches and floodlighting, which sit against the backdrop of the M5 and the North Fringe of Bristol Urban Area. The “open countryside” that the Council refers to, which is contained to the east by the A38 Gloucester Road and to the south by the M5, are not open green fields in a rural setting but large developed areas of hard surface and buildings, fencing, floodlighting, and telecommunications infrastructure. Although it is accepted that the site itself forms a green gap between the settlement boundary and a large cluster of built form adjacent to the motorway, this is only visible in aerial imagery, not 'on the ground'.
- 7.6 The submitted LVA has identified that the immediate context within which the site sits has an urban fringe character and that the site is generally not discernible from the wider landscape. It is only visible in close-range views. The commercial buildings and car parks, and the sports pitches with fencing and floodlighting, restrict views of the site from the west and there are no distant views of it from that aspect. From the south and southeast, the boundary trees and stone wall form a

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<sup>3</sup> Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 64-001-20190722

<sup>4</sup> Delegated report for application reference P21/00851/O

dominant feature, largely concealing views of the site. From the east, where the site is visible through gaps in tree cover, it is viewed against the backdrop of existing buildings, fencing, car parking, floodlighting and telecommunications infrastructure.

7.7 Consequently, from a spatial aspect, the proposal is unlikely to have any demonstrable impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

7.8 With respect to the visual aspect, although the site is generally only visible in close-range views due to its physical containment by the M5 and Almondsbury and the local topography and vegetation, the proposal will result in the development of large commercial/industrial buildings on a currently undeveloped site. It would therefore have a discernible visual impact on the openness of this part of the Green Belt. However, the visual harm to the openness of the Green Belt would be off-set by the function and appearance of the Green Belt in this location and the economic benefits associated with the delivery of a modern, flexibly designed business/industrial park suitable for a wide range and size of businesses, which is currently significantly under-catered for not only in this area but in the wider district, and at a time when neighbouring Aztec West and Almondsbury Business Park are almost at capacity (more on the benefits are provided later on).

7.9 In terms of Green Belt function, the NPPF at Paragraph 138 identifies that there are 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 special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

7.10 It is acknowledged that the site sits in an area identified<sup>5</sup> by the West of England Strategic Partnership (now the West of England Combined Authority) as

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<sup>5</sup> West of England Joint Study Area Second Report Appendix 18 – Area 1

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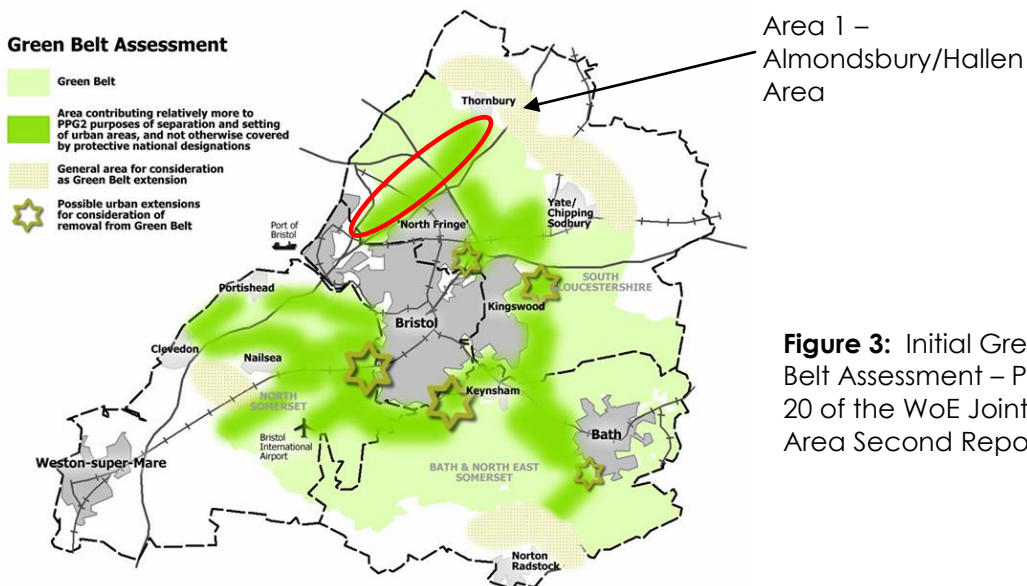
contributing strongly overall to the purposes of the Green Belt and primarily to the purposes of separation and setting of urban areas (in other words, the Green Belt running along the M5 corridor, enclosing the North Fringe of Bristol, serves purposes 1, b, and c – see Figure 3).

7.11 However, this is an extensive corridor, and with the exception of the area to the south of Almondsbury, west of the A38, it is intact, as demonstrated by Figures 4 and 5.

7.12 As demonstrated by Figures 4 and 5, Almondsbury already has built form that sits adjacent to the motorway therefore the infilling of the existing gap (i.e. the development of the application site) would not compromise or undermine the importance of the Green Belt with respect to containing the north fringe of Bristol and safeguarding the existing countryside from encroachment. The southeast and southwest edges of Almondsbury would remain open and the village would therefore retain its identity as a separate, rural village outside but at the edge of the north fringe of Bristol.

**Appendix 2**  
Initial Green Belt Assessment

From report to West of England Partnership Planning, Transport And Environment Group, 14 October 2005



**Figure 3:** Initial Green Belt Assessment – Page 20 of the WoE Joint Study Area Second Report



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**Figure 4:** Google Earth Map – shows a largely intact Green Belt corridor (Area 1) along the M5 but with existing encroachment up to the M5 associated with existing development



**Figure 5:** Google Earth Map – view of the application site between Almondsbury defined settlement boundary and the existing built form, all outside the settlement boundary in open countryside



## Benefits

### *Delivery of Economic Development Land*

- 7.13 Policy CS5 anticipates that most new development will occur in the north and east fringes of Bristol's urban area, and Policy PSP27 directs B8 proposals of any size to the safeguarded employment areas. However, studies commissioned by the Council and West of English Combined Authority, which form part of the evidence base to emerging strategic policies, proposals and strategies, identify a critical shortage of employment land in the district as a whole, and in the north fringe of Bristol, as well as shortage of and increasing demand for small industrial and commercial units. Although Policy PSP28 sets out a hierarchical approach to new business development in rural areas with preference for the re-use of existing buildings, and endorses the national approach to 'inappropriate development' in the Green Belt, it acknowledges that where special circumstances can be demonstrated, new buildings that constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt can be permitted.
- 7.14 The 2022 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for South Gloucestershire Council explains that maintaining economic prosperity is a key priority of the Council Plan 2020, and is reflected in the Council's Economic Development Strategy, as well as the Council's partnership with the West of England local authorities where joint employment land studies had been commissioned. The AMR explains that the total amount of employment land has been gradually reducing since 2013/14.
- 7.15 The 2021 Employment Land and Spatial Needs Assessment (ELSNA, authored by the West of England Combined Authority) analysed the employment land supply across the sub region and identified a number of key issues including:
- Industrial market: There is a **shortage of medium and small sites** to support the advanced manufacturing and engineering sectors.
  - Logistics and distribution: There is a **particular need for smaller scale 'last mile' distribution premises**, which require more accessible locations to residential areas.

- The ELSNA anticipates a **higher demand for smaller employment sites** close to residential areas in future. This trend has been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

7.16 As part of the annual AMR, South Gloucestershire prepares an Employment Land Survey (ELAS) to monitor the availability, distribution and loss of employment and non-residential land. The ELAS states that the total **amount of employment land** available (sites with planning permission yet to be developed) has been **steadily declining** since the 2014 ELAS.

7.17 The Employment Land Review Technical Paper (ELRTP), 2022, notes that there is a keen **desire to grow the Rural Fringe as an employment area** for South Gloucestershire but identifies that this is **restricted by limited opportunities for development** because of the **Green Belt** and the fact that the Call for Sites Opportunities only tends to harvest residential and more lucrative planning prospects.

7.18 The Employment Land Review Core Report (ELRCR) - South Gloucestershire Council, January 2022 by Atkins in 2022 provides specific findings for the South Gloucestershire area and for the for the local sub-areas. It identifies that future office supply in the district “remains critically low” with only 3.6ha of land appropriate for office development. It also states:

*“Established office park locations, such as Aztec West Business Park in Almondsbury and Bristol Business Park in Stoke Gifford, are almost at full capacity and not likely to offer considerable future supply.”*

*“The main problem in Bristol North Fringe, however, has been the lack of speculative development due to a lack of viable employment land supply and because urban centres represent more lucrative development prospects, whereas Bristol North Fringe occupiers are cost-orientated business facing functions. However, the North Fringe is expected to benefit from public transport improvements outlined in the WECA Transport Delivery Plan, including development of a new train station enhancing connectivity with Bristol, which will*

*boost its attractiveness as a potential office location for national and regional businesses. Crucially, potential floorspace is likely to be a more relevant metric than land for office supply, due to the likelihood of increasing heights and therefore plot ratios in excess of 1. So, in effect, locations such as the North Fringe could yield more sqm than anticipated.” [Agent emphasis]*

*“South Gloucestershire is not currently well positioned to absorb the demand from the urban Bristol market when the existing consented accommodation reaches capacity – predominantly due to a lack of available office space.”*

7.19 The ELRCR states further at paragraph 2.5.2:

*“The analysis indicates a **need to identify additional industrial and office supply** to address the projected shortfall in Bristol, B&NES and South Gloucestershire. **In particular, this includes small-scale industrial space in accessible locations and edge-of-centre premises for ‘city serving’ industrial activities and last mile distribution.**” [Agent emphasis]*

7.20 With respect to the need for small-scale flexible workspaces, which is proposed in this scheme, the workspace market in Bristol is going through a period of change, with increasing numbers of micro, SMEs, changing work styles supported by advances in technology, and a demand for new forms of accommodation such as flexible and co-working space. In this respect, it is essential to ensure sufficient space to support the growth of new start-up companies and to accommodate SMEs, including lower-cost and affordable business space.

7.21 Flexible workspaces are increasingly relevant and appropriate during this period of restructuring and changing work styles. In planning terms, open workspaces fall within the relatively new planning Use Class E1: Commercial, Business and Services, which allows for a mix of uses, including offices (formerly Use Class B1(a)). This approach recognises that a building may be in several different uses concurrently or be used for different uses at varying times of the day. This new planning Use Class, introduced in 2020, provides greater flexibility. Its aim was to encourage flexibility,

and in part, to support the diversification of workspaces and thus provide enhanced opportunities for the flexible workspace concept.

- 7.22 This site can deliver the type and size of industrial and commercial floorspace consistent with the substantial need identified by the Council and West of England Combined Authority, and in a highly accessible, strategic motorway location.
- 7.23 The intention is to provide a range of workspaces in response to factors such as increased demand for flexible office floorspace; affordability of the provision; accessibility and commuting time expectations; health and safety impacts; work-life balance; and a greater emphasis on wellbeing generally. This reflects the approach in Draft Local Plan Policy E7.
- 7.24 The variation in unit size, with the flexibility to combine if required, is a very attractive benefit of the scheme, which would appeal particularly to small and start-up businesses. The position adjacent to an existing cluster of commercial / storage uses and the M4/M5 interchange, close to Almondsbury Business Park, and Aztec West, which is almost at capacity, makes the site highly suitable for the proposed, flexibly designed commercial/light industrial development.
- 7.25 The supporting letter from Alder King (see Appendix 1) advises that the location would be "...of significant appeal to existing and expanding occupiers" seeking B2, Class E(g) or B8 floorspace. It adds that *"The proximity to Junction 16 would make it appealing to more footloose inquiries seeking a Bristol base from which to cover the wider South Wales and South West region"* and *"Its location on the A38 corridor and the proximity to Aztec West makes it readily accessible by commuters from the rural villages in the district."*
- 7.26 In conclusion, the proposal would deliver much needed economic development land at a time when there is a critical shortage and continued, steady decline, including in the north fringe. It would deliver the type, size, and range of commercial and industrial floorspace that is identified as being required, in a flexible format that would be attractive to a wide range and size of businesses, in a highly accessible and appealing strategic motorway location.

7.27 The proposal also has the potential to deliver economic benefits to Almondsbury through the provision of accommodation for existing or new businesses in the village and increased spending locally by businesses, employees and visitors. This is a further benefit in the planning balance.

*Ecological Enhancement*

7.28 The submitted Ecological Appraisal identifies that the existing site has low ecological value, which is limited to the foraging and commuting habitat for bats associated with the tree-lined eastern site boundary. A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment will be submitted during the application process to demonstrate that the proposal will deliver biodiversity net gain. If 10% is demonstrated to be achievable, this will be deemed a benefit of moderate weight in the planning balance in view of the district's Ecological Emergency<sup>6</sup> and given that the 10% requirement is not mandatory for major schemes until January 2024.

**Benefits versus Green Belt Harm**

7.29 The proposed development would not result in any spatial harm to the openness of the Green Belt and although it would have a negative visual impact by virtue of the loss of a currently undeveloped site to commercial/industrial buildings and car parking, this would be tempered by the fact that these would only be visible in close range views against the backdrop of an existing urban setting associated with the adjacent commercial/industrial/sports buildings; fencing; car parking; floodlighting; and telecommunications infrastructure and the elevated and dominating motorway infrastructure associated with Junction 16 of the M5 and the Almondsbury (M4/M5) Interchange. The existing tree-lined eastern boundary is a dominant feature in views from the southeast and east, and the high level of screening that these provide would be strengthened by supplementary planting using native species. Thus, the visual impact on the openness of the Green Belt is deemed to be low, and this would be off-set by the substantial economic benefits of the scheme.

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<sup>6</sup> Declared in July 2019.

7.30 The applicant owns the land, has the funds to deliver the much needed economic development, and intends to do so within a year of securing full planning permission.

#### Green Belt Circumstances Conclusion

7.31 The economic benefits associated with the scheme are deemed to be compelling, weighing very positively in favour of the scheme in the planning balance, and constituting the 'very special circumstances' needed to justify a departure from Green Belt policy at a national and local level.

#### **SPATIAL STRATEGY**

7.32 The site's location is rural in spatial planning terms. Development for economic purposes would, therefore, be contrary to the adopted spatial strategy.

7.33 However, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 enables development plan policies to be set aside in favour of material considerations where appropriate/justified.

7.34 The site is excellently located in strategic terms due to its position next to Junction 16 of the M5 and within minutes of the M4/M5 interchange, as well as its proximity to the north fringe of Bristol, close to Aztec West and Almondsbury Business Park (both safeguarded employment areas under Policy CS12). As identified in the letter from Alder King, the **location is a significant benefit**, which would appeal to (and attract) many businesses.

7.35 The documented (evidenced) need for new employment land; in this broad location (with the site being outside but next to the north fringe of Bristol, including two safeguarded employment areas); for the range of employment uses proposed as well as in the format presented; has been set out in the previous section (as part of the very special circumstances case) and so will not be repeated here.

7.36 In summary; the site's location accords with the principles of Policy CS8 with respect to proximity to existing transport infrastructure, which is a positive in the planning balance, and there is a **very clear need for the development in economic**



**development terms**, which would **justify a departure** from the adopted spatial strategy, consistent with the provisions of Section 38(6) of the 2004 Act.

### **LANDSCAPE IMPACT**

- 7.37 The application is supported by a Landscape Visual Appraisal (LVA) Addendum, which sets out the findings of the visual assessment of the site and the impact of the proposed development on the receiving landscape.
- 7.38 The site and its immediate context has no statutory landscape protection and the two designated Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSI), at 1km away and visually segregated from the site through landform/topography and green infrastructure, have no tangible relationship with the site in visual or landscape terms. This is confirmed in the LVA, which identifies that, from the north/northeast, the site is “contained by the urban fringe of Almondsbury” and the landform and various green infrastructure form a visual barrier from the open countryside. It adds that “...there are no distant or middle distant views of the site from the north.” (Paragraph 2.2).
- 7.39 Existing built form, structures and hard-surfacing to the southwest of the site restrict views from that aspect, and there are no distant views. From the east, again, built form and transport infrastructure enclose the site and there are limited views from that aspect, with the dense tree-lined boundary forming a dominating feature. From the south, the M5 and the elevated sections of Junction 16 form a visual barrier.
- 7.40 In appraising the site’s landscape context, the LVA concludes that the surrounding area is “built up and has an urban fringe character” (Paragraph 2.2) and “the site is not generally discernible from the wider landscape”. (Paragraph 2.3). This conclusion is supported by the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI), which has established that there are no long distance public views of the site, as well as Map 2 in the current consultation on the character appraisal and management plan for Almondsbury (see Appendix 2), which identifies the important views and vistas from and within the Conservation Area. Most of the identified views/vistas on the map are north/northwest facing, towards the open countryside beyond the village and

Severn Estuary. There are no identified important south facing views or vistas beyond the Conservation Area – not surprisingly, because these would face the north fringe of Bristol's urban area.

- 7.41 The viewpoint locations within the ZVI are generally close range views of the site because these are the key locations where the proposed development would, theoretically, be visible in the landscape from public vantage points. The viewpoint photographs demonstrate high visibility of the site from the immediate north and west, and negligible visibility from the immediate south and east.
- 7.42 The landscape value of the site itself is limited to the belt of trees along the eastern boundary, which are protected by a blanket TPO. The remainder of the site has a derelict character and appearance with overgrown scrub, spoil and temporary fencing. As identified in the Green Belt section of this report, the site does not form a visual break between the built up area of Almondsbury and the open countryside beyond, as previously claimed by the Council, because the land beyond the site is all previously developed land within an urban fringe location adjacent to the M5.
- 7.43 The proposed development would be visible in close range views from the immediate west, south, north, and to a limited extent from the east, but this would be viewed alongside existing non-residential buildings; a dual carriageway and the M5.
- 7.44 The visual impact of the proposed development in close range views would be mitigated through strategic planting along the site's boundaries and within the site, with dense planting proposed to the south, east and north.
- 7.45 Consequently, the proposal would not result in any harm to the landscape setting of Almondsbury or the wider countryside to the west, east and north of the village, and there are no landscape grounds upon which to refuse the application.

## **HERITAGE**

- 7.46 The proposed development would sit to the south of a Grade II listed building; Pear Tree Cottage, separated from the site by a stone wall, which forms part of the listing, and a fence.
- 7.47 Pear Tree Cottage has a southeasterly aspect away from the application site, across the A38 dual carriageway, towards the national grid site and associated apparatus with the Almondsbury Interchange in the background. The proposal would have no effect on views of the listed building's rear elevation and garden, which faces southeast obliquely across the A38. Although there are oblique views from the listed building of the tree-lined boundary and the adjacent strip of open land running along the A38, on the application site, these views are limited due to the density of tree cover.
- 7.48 The site, and therefore the proposed development, would not be visible within the context of the listed building due to trees and shrubs in its established garden; intervening trees on the party boundary; and the tree-lined boundary along the A38. Any existing gaps in tree cover will be filled over time as new planting establishes, and this will reduce and most likely remove any intervisibility between the listed building and the site; and remove any glimpsed views of the buildings from the east and north-east, on the A38.
- 7.49 Consequently, it is considered that the proposal would result in a low level of less than substantial harm on the significance of the listed building's setting; its outlook; and views of it. This harm would be outweighed by a compelling economic public benefit, consistent with Paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

## **DESIGN & CONTEXT**

- 7.50 The dated commercial buildings to the southwest sit within an urban context and lack architectural interest. Although the neighbouring buildings are generally smaller in scale, with smaller footprints, the Police building to the west of the site is three-storey in height and exceeds the height of the proposed buildings (see the submitted sections). The proposed development would not therefore appear out

of scale with its surroundings, and unlike the neighbouring commercial buildings, it would sit within a landscaped setting with strategic landscaping along the site boundaries, which would soften the visual impact of both buildings and car parking.

7.51 The appearance would be typical of a commercial development, arranged as individual units within a linear block (with the exception of Units 1-7, which would be a 'T' shape), with limited openings restricted to the principal elevations facing into the parking areas, and a shallow and hipped profiled roof.

7.52 The buildings would be viewed on the approach from the south within an urban context and edge of motorway location, with visibility diminished by boundary trees on the approach towards Almondsbury along the A38. In views from the north-west, just outside the settlement boundary of Almondsbury, the development would appear very discreet by virtue of the mature trees along the A38 and the siting and orientation of the buildings, which would be viewed against the backdrop of the commercial buildings, telecommunications infrastructure, and sports facilities to the west.

7.53 Overall, the design of the scheme is considered to be appropriate for the site and its urban fringe, motorway location, maximising the efficiency of the irregularly shaped site while respecting the viewpoints and setting of the adjacent listed building and its prominence in views from the A38 on the approach to Almondsbury from the south.

#### **HIGHWAY SAFETY, ACCESS & PARKING**

7.54 The application is supported by a Transport Statement, which identifies the following:

- The site sits in a well-established pedestrian and cyclist network with crossing points, public rights of way, and cycle paths, and bus stops are within 110 – 190m, which provide a frequent service to the wider area. The walking and cycling routes to access local facilities and employment are convenient, safe and desirable, and the distances are well within the recommended acceptable distances set out in national guidance and adopted local policy.

- The proposal is predicted to generate 31, two-way vehicular trips during the AM peak hour and 23, two-way vehicular movements during the PM peak hour., with only 383, two-way vehicle trips during the 12-hour period of 07:00 to 19:00 hours, at an average of circa 32 trips per hour. This is considered too low to have an adverse impact on either the capacity or the safety of the local highway network.
- A visibility of 2.4m by 25m in both directions can be achieved, consistent with national guidance for a design speed of 20mph;
- The swept path analyses demonstrate that delivery and emergency vehicles can access the site, park temporarily, and egress the site in a forward gear.
- The proposed cycle parking provision (73 secured and covered spaces) complies with adopted policy, and the proposed parking provision (85 spaces) is acceptable within the context of the adopted policy requirement for this size scheme (between 15 and 101 spaces) and the Climate Change Emergency declared by the District in 2019.
- The provision of one active EVCP and passive provision for a minimum of 17 spaces (one fifth) accords with Part S of the Building Regulations 2010 in the absence of any adopted policy requirement for electric car charging.
- The proposed provision of 660 litre containers for each unit complies with the Council's waste and recycling guidance and the swept path analyses demonstrate that the approach to refuse collection (and access for vehicles) is acceptable.

7.55 The TS therefore makes the following conclusions:

- The site is within a highly sustainable location that will encourage sustainable modes of travel and less dependency on the private car to the extent that the development will be attractive to those who do not have access to a car.
- The proposals will not have an adverse impact on either the capacity or the safety of the local highway network and are, therefore, acceptable in highway terms.

7.56 As such, there are no sustainable transport or highway safety reasons to reject this application.

### **NEIGHBOURING RESIDENTIAL AMENITY**

7.57 The site sits next to commercial and industrial uses and although there are houses within approximately 25m of the proposed development, on Oaklands Drive, the closest building (Units 16-21) would not have any openings on the side or rear elevations and consequently any noise transfer is unlikely to be significant enough as to result in any adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity.

7.58 The buildings would be designed with appropriate sound insulation measures and any audible activity associated with the operation of the commercial and industrial uses, which would be of a small-scale bearing in mind the format of the proposed accommodation, would be focused at the front of the building and in the parking area. The building would act as an acoustic barrier and the proposed landscaped buffer along the site's northern boundary, together with existing trees to the north-west and north-east, would also help to absorb any audible noise (or vibrations).

7.59 With respect to outlook, the 25m (approx.) distance of Units 16-21 from the houses on Oaklands Drive, together with the landscaped buffer and new trees proposed to the north of the site, would soften the visual impact of the development. The adjacent listed building, Pear Tree Cottage, is further from the proposed buildings, and has a south-easterly aspect, which would not be compromised by the scheme.

### **ECOLOGY & TREES**

7.60 The submitted Ecological Appraisal identifies that the site, which comprises areas of scrub and disturbed ground, with a cluster of trees in the north-west corner and a line of trees along the eastern boundary, has low ecological value.

7.61 No protected species were found during the ecological survey, but recommendations for enhancement measures and precautionary measures during site clearance have been made, and could be conditioned.



- 7.62 The proposal retains most of the existing on-site trees – only two small Category U trees (T12, uprooted, and T13, dead) on the eastern site boundary would be removed. No works within Root Protection Areas of any of the trees is proposed and all retained trees would be protected during construction.
- 7.63 Provided the scheme delivers ecological net gain (to be demonstrated through submission of a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment) and tree protection measures are implemented, the proposal would accord with adopted policy requirements.

### **DRAINAGE & FLOOD RISK**

- 7.64 The application site is in Flood Zone 1, which is a sequentially preferable area for development in flood risk terms. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) identifies that the probability of fluvial, tidal, groundwater flooding is low. This weighs positively in the planning balance.
- 7.65 The FRA reports that there are areas of low to high risk surface water flooding near the site and it is likely that the site contributes to off-site surface water flooding to the southeast. The FRA therefore identifies that surface water runoff could be a risk to the site, particularly with climate change, and consequently this has been factored into the drainage strategy for the scheme, with surface water run off restricted to greenfield rates. The surface water drainage strategy involves a below ground storage tank and permeable paving if this is possible, and the foul water strategy comprises a foul water rising main, which is to be offered for adoption by Wessex Water.
- 7.66 The strategy will need to be negotiated with the Lead Local Flood Authority and Wessex Water, and submission of a detailed scheme following agreement on the strategy can be secured by condition.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The site sits in a fringe, edge of motorway location. Its only constraints in spatial planning terms are its location in open countryside, outside the defined settlement boundary and urban area, and its proximity to a Grade II listed building.
- 8.2 It has been demonstrated that the site, although historically undeveloped and open, is not important in Green Belt terms due to the proximity to existing development with an urban character between the northern fringe, defined by the M5 motorway, and the southern edge of the defined settlement boundary to Almondsbury. The development of the site would not result in the coalescence of Almondsbury with the north fringe because the countryside between the M5 would largely remain in tact and there is already built form in this location.
- 8.3 The site's setting could not be described as rural or remote, and the site's proximity to the M5 motorway and the Almondsbury Interchange, together with the north fringe of Bristol, makes it highly suited to a commercial/industrial development.
- 8.4 The site does not sit in a protected or important landscape and is not subject to any ecological designations. The proximity to the listed building is a negative in the planning balance, however the degree of intervisibility with the site is limited due to the density and location of intervening vegetation, and the proposal would not result in any adverse harm to the setting of, outlook from, or views of the listed building. The rear elevation that is highly visible in views from the south/southeast on the A38 would not be affected by the scheme.
- 8.5 The site is not visible in mid or long-range views and would not result in any harm to landscape character, or to the setting of Almondsbury. In close-range views, it would be visible from the south within the context of existing development to the west and north, and largely concealed in views from the east due to the tree lined boundary along the A38.
- 8.6 The economic need for the proposed development, as clearly demonstrated through the Council's economic evidence base associated with the local plan

LAND AT WOODSIDE DRIVE, ALMONDSBURY  
**PLANNING, DESIGN & ECONOMIC STATEMENT**

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review referred to in this statement, constitutes 'Very Special Circumstances', which would justify the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and the application should therefore be supported.

# APPENDIX 1



Our Ref: AJR/SC/0164

3 February 2023

**alder  
king**

PROPERTY  
CONSULTANTS

Mr N Warfield  
Freemantle Developments Limited  
6 College Fields  
Clifton  
Bristol  
BS8 3HP

Dear Nick

## **BRISTOL – LAND FRONTING A38 AT ALMONDSBURY**

Further to your email and our discussions in respect of your proposed scheme I have reviewed the proposal and think this is an exciting opportunity which will be well received by the market.

The request for an overview is timely as the Industrial Agents Society have just completed their assessment of take up for 2022 and I set out below some headline statistics for your information:-

- **Greater Bristol Take Up (space acquired) 2021**
  - 2.627 million sqft & 211 acres
  - 184 Transactions
- **Greater Bristol Take Up (space acquired) 2022**
  - 2.37 million sqft & 45.89 acres
  - 154 Transactions
- **South Gloucestershire Take Up (space acquired) 2021**
  - 1.193 million sqft & 147.99 acres
  - 59 Transactions
  - 45% of total take up in sqft
  - 32% by number of transactions
- **South Gloucestershire Take Up (space acquired) 2022**
  - 1.087 million sqft & 28.25 acres
  - 49 Transactions
  - 46% of total take up in sqft
  - 32% by number of transactions
- **South Gloucestershire Take Up (space acquired) sub 10,000 sqft 2021**
  - 104,763 sqft

3 February 2023

- 27 Transactions
- 9% of total South Glos Take Up in sqft
- **South Gloucestershire Take Up (space acquired) sub 10,000 sqft 2022**
  - 116,990 sqft
  - 24 Transactions
  - 11% of total South Glos Take Up in sqft

In brief, as is the case across the City and notwithstanding the current economic back drop the lack of immediately available space constrained take up in 2022. Unfortunately this situation looks likely to continue unless further space is provided. The problem is particularly great for those seeking space below 10,000 sqft.

I set out below a summary in relation to the location, type of units proposed; and need/demand for them, based on my knowledge and experience in this market:

- The site is an infill plot in a strategic motorway location adjacent to an existing Highways England / Ringway Infrastructure Support Depot and Avon & Somerset Police's Traffic Division activities which incorporate a variety of uses falling within categories such as Office (current E former B1), Storage (B8), Workshop (B2), and Open Storage & Vehicle Parking (B8).
- Access to the site is via the A38 with J16 of the M5 within a quarter of a mile.
- The location would be of significant appeal to existing and expanding South Gloucestershire occupiers seeking Light & General Industrial (B2), Office (Class E) or Storage & Distribution space (B8) particularly those currently located within North Bristol, Thornbury & Yate.
- The site's proximity to the Motorway Junction would in addition make it appealing to more foot loose enquiries seeking a Bristol base from which to cover the wider South West & South Wales region and who may not already be represented in the locality.
- The site is not "semi rural" as has been suggested, and will be seen by occupiers / the wider market as forming part of the North Bristol Employment Area (Cribbs Causeway, Patchway, Filton, Bradley Stoke, Aztec West).
- The site is near established residential areas and is readily accessible from the South Gloucestershire Villages to the north via the A38 Bus corridor, which also makes it convenient for commuters.
- The development plan shows a variety of smaller format units ranging from 1,000 – 3,000 sqft in a flexible configuration which provides the potential to combine if required. This is an attractive benefit, which will particularly appeal to small and/or start-up businesses.
- The proposed scheme would complement the existing Industrial / distribution base within the vicinity of the site.

/Cont'd...

3 February 2023

- I would anticipate demand coming from the following types of occupier:
  - Storage & Distribution
  - Last Mile Delivery
  - Light Industrial
  - General Industrial
  - Service/business Support Providers
  - Office/Studio
  - Start up/Incubator Businesses
  - R&D
  
- There is currently a real shortage of this type of space across the City, and in particular in South Gloucestershire. The lack of supply is largely due to:
  - Construction prices to deliver small format buildings of this type being high which impacts viability.
  - A limited number of opportunities where small sites suitable for this use have been available, not lost to owner occupation where the likely numbers employed may be less or to higher value alternative use.
  - Developers having focused on delivering large format buildings where construction costs are lower.
  
- Within the last 18 months the following small unit schemes are being / have been developed:
  - **Link 49, Severn Road, Avonmouth**
    - 27,906 sqft in 14 Units
    - Available now
    - Leasehold Only
    - 7,448 sqft in 4 Units Under Offer
  
  - **Broomhill Road, Brislington**
    - 36,704 sqft in 35 Units
    - Construction commencing Q1 2023
    - To be Built in Phases with completion Q1 2024
    - Leasehold or Freehold
  
  - **Armstrong Business Park, Yate**
    - 30,000 sqft in 6 Units completed 2021
    - All 6 Units Pre Sold in advance of practical completion
    - Two Units within scheme of 2,992 & 4,665 sqft re let in Q4 2022 after only 1 month of marketing

/Cont'd...

3 February 2023

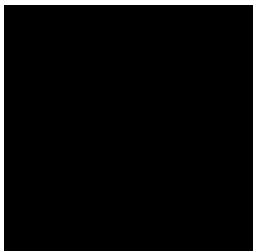
- For the scheme to be viable it will be essential to have an open Planning Consent permitting E1, B2 & B8 uses and to widen its occupier appeal the ability to offer the completing building to either purchase or rent.
- We strongly believe that there will be early and strong interest in the proposed scheme which will provide much needed space for current and future market requirements which are not currently being catered for.

I am aware of a number of enquiries who with a positive response from the Economic Development Team & Planners we could engage with some of whom I am anticipating will already be known to them.

As discussed there is one enquiry which I think is particularly interesting and that is from Six O'clock Gin who have a requirement for approx. 15,000 sqft of production space with a visitors centre. I have mentioned the opportunity to their retained agent and submitted the plans showing our initial thoughts.

Let me know if you need any additional information.

Regards



**ANDREW J RIDLER**  
**Partner**

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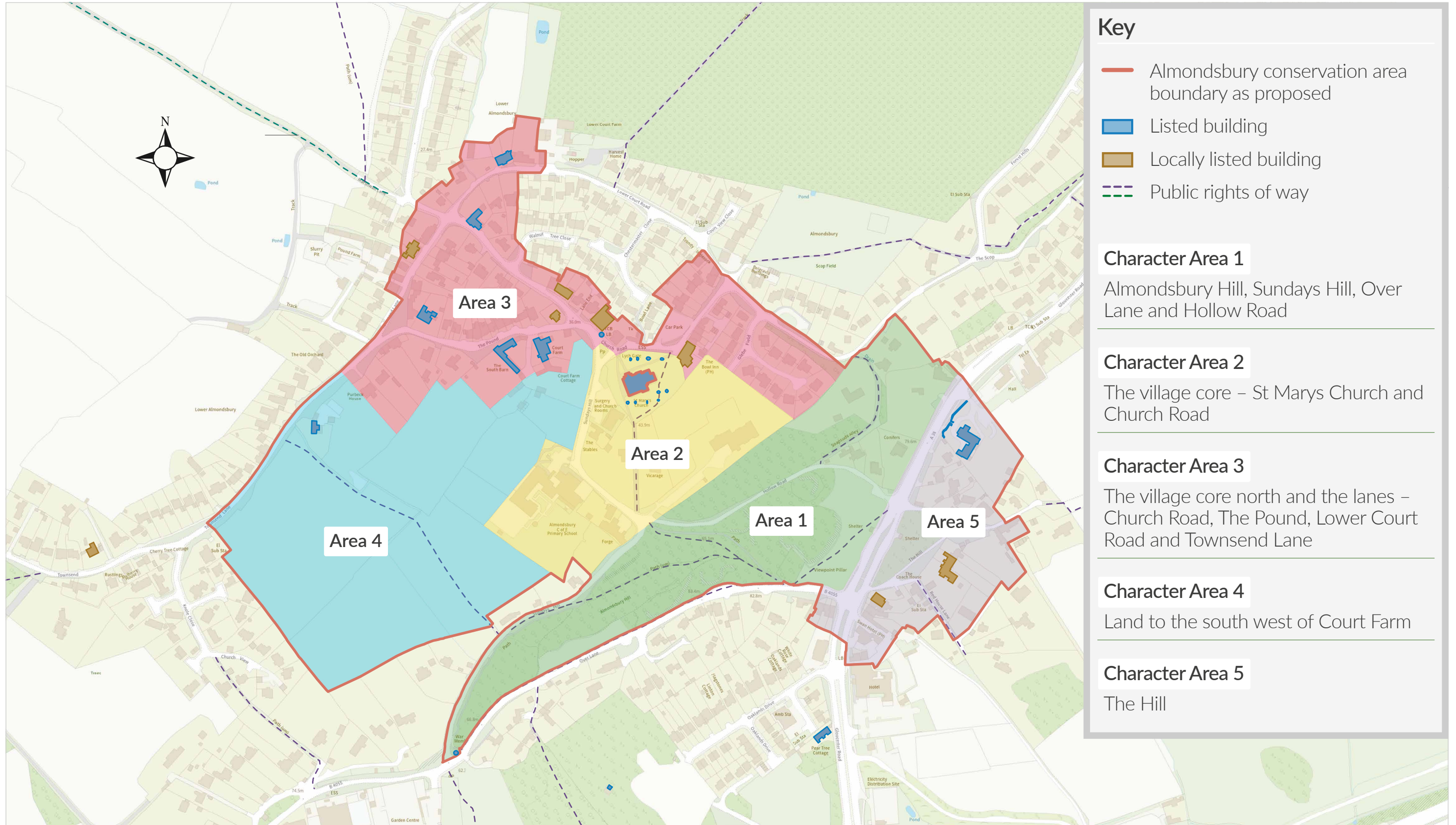


# APPENDIX 2



# MAP 1 ALMONDSBURY CONSERVATION AREA

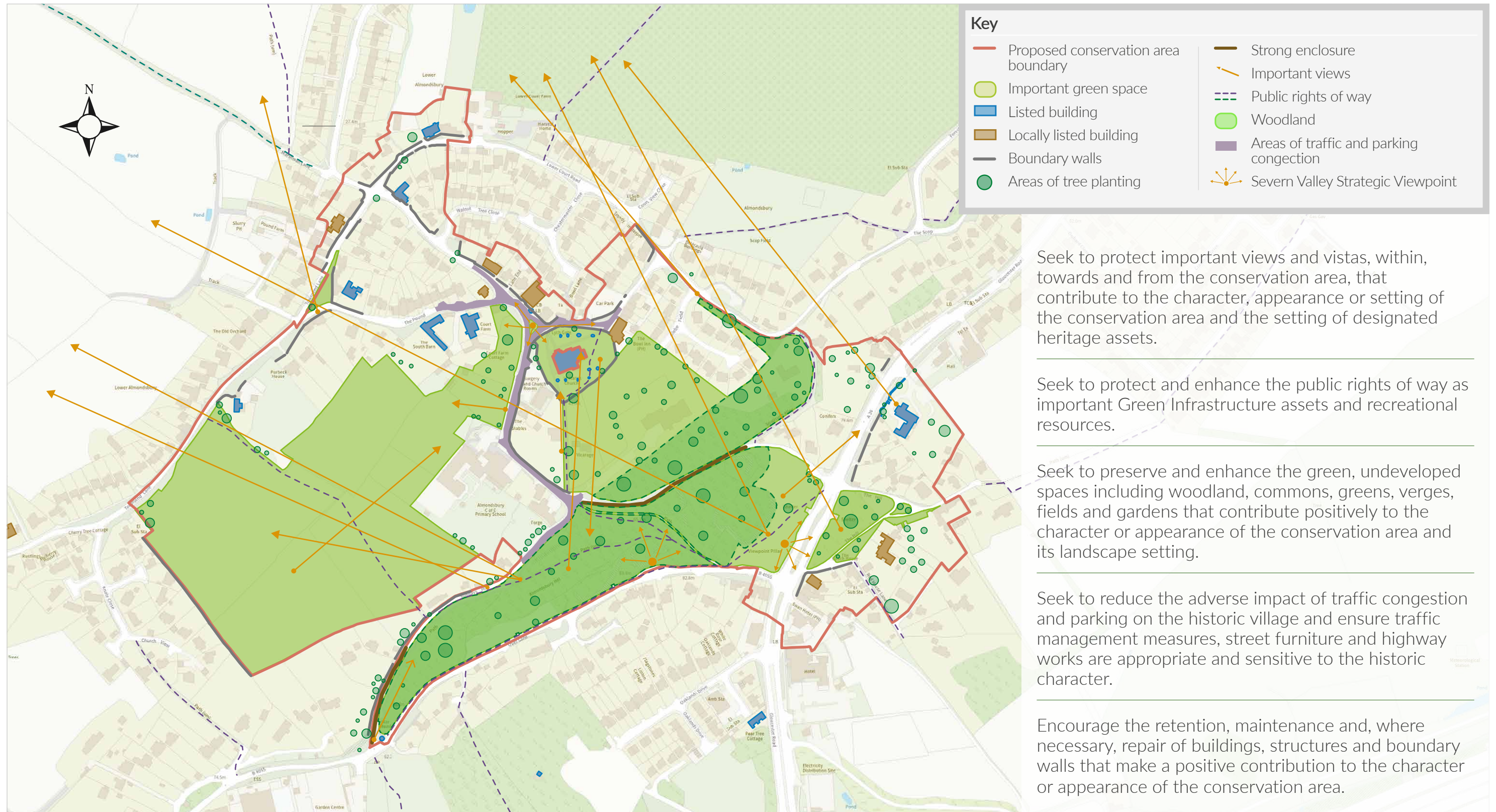
## Boundary and Character Areas





# MAP 2 ALMONDSBURY CONSERVATION AREA: PRESERVATION & ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

Encourage appropriate management, protection and enhancement of the following features/elements and their settings.



Seek to protect important views and vistas, within, towards and from the conservation area, that contribute to the character, appearance or setting of the conservation area and the setting of designated heritage assets.

Seek to protect and enhance the public rights of way as important Green Infrastructure assets and recreational resources.

Seek to preserve and enhance the green, undeveloped spaces including woodland, commons, greens, verges, fields and gardens that contribute positively to the character or appearance of the conservation area and its landscape setting.

Seek to reduce the adverse impact of traffic congestion and parking on the historic village and ensure traffic management measures, street furniture and highway works are appropriate and sensitive to the historic character.

Encourage the retention, maintenance and, where necessary, repair of buildings, structures and boundary walls that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.