



**Benton House,
Longbenton
Heritage Statement**

Client: Outcomes First Group

AB Heritage Project No: 62926

Date: 30/01/2024

Benton House, Longbenton Heritage Statement

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AB Heritage has been commissioned by Outcomes First Group Ltd to produce a Heritage Statement covering proposed works at Benton House, Front Street, Longbenton, NE7 7XE. Production of the Heritage Statement has been phased and comprises Phase 1, a Statement of Significance that seeks to understand the significance of the site and Phase 2: a Heritage Impact Assessment which aims to assess any impacts to the setting and fabric of the Grade II Listed Benton House.

The proposed scheme of works is for the redevelopment of the Grade II Listed Benton House into a school for children with special educational needs. This will involve: the internal subdivision of the ground and first floors to create classrooms, a kitchen, dining room and office spaces; the removal of a late 20th century fire door and replacement with a timber-framed sash window, and; the reinstatement of the main entrance in the principal elevation. The proposals will remove poor quality 20th century fabric and fittings and the general refurbishment of the property.

The application site is located on the southern side of Front Street and forms the focal point of Longbenton Conservation Area. The site is bounded to the south by grounds characterised by hardstanding, a square lawn and a Grade II Listed ha-ha. The property is essentially divided into three elements: a central block, an eastern wing and a western wing. The central block and eastern wing are currently disused but formerly were part of a takeaway and, before that, Benton Conservative Club. The western wing is in use as two residences.

The exterior of Benton House has been largely unchanged since its construction, barring the addition of the eastern wing and the removal of the main entrance. However, the interior has been demonstrably altered and the original circulation has been rendered almost unreadable. However, some historic fabric does still survive, mainly within the western wing. This includes timber skirting, window shutters, fireplace surrounds and exposed beams.

Benton House is considered to be a Heritage Asset of Medium-High Significance while the interior is considered to be of Low Significance.

While the proposed scheme of works will be a slight change to the setting of Benton House and the Grade II Listed ha-ha, through the introduction of a MUGA east of the property, the bulk of the changes will be beneficial to the significance of the Grade II Listed Building through the reinstatement of original features.

For these reasons, the proposals are considered to result in No Harm to the significance of Benton House, its associated ha-ha and Longbenton Conservation Area.

In line with 'No Harm' identified, the proposed development is found to be compatible with local heritage related planning policy S6.5 and National Planning legislation and policies governing the management of the historic built environment.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 AB Heritage Limited has been commissioned by Outcomes First Group to produce a Heritage Statement covering proposed works at Benton House, Front Street, Longbenton, NE7 7XE. Production of the Heritage Statement has been divided into two phases: Phase 1: Statement of Significance and Phase 2: Heritage Impact Assessment. The Phase 1 work was requested to guide the works of the design team, ahead of submitting a full Heritage Statement as part of a forthcoming Planning Application.

1.2 Site Location & Description

1.2.1 The proposed development site is the Grade II Listed Benton House (former Conservative Club), Front Street, Longbenton, NE7 7XE and is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR): NZ 27254 68426. The site is located within the Longbenton Conservation Area.

1.2.2 The application site, Benton House, comprises a former Conservative Club spread over a central block (marked in red) and eastern wing (marked in blue), as well as two residential flats spread over a western wing (marked in green) (Plate 1). The principal elevation of the property overlooks hardstanding and a square section of lawn bounded to the south and west by mature trees. Overall, the grounds amount to c.5000sqm.

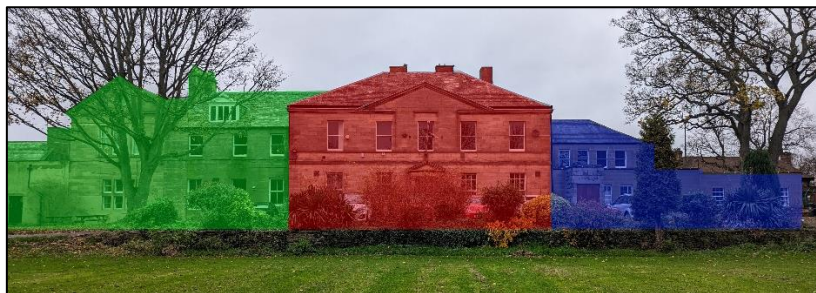


Plate 1. View north at Benton House, components marked up

1.2.3 The application site is located c.200m east of the junction of Front Street and Benton Road, where the Four Lane Ends metro station is located. The site is bounded c.10m to the north by Front Street, c.45m west by the Newcastle Reformed Evangelical Church, and c.45m to the east by a block of mixed-use units. The land to the south of the site boundary is residential (Plate 2).



Plate 2. Aerial image of the site (Google Earth Pro, 2023)

1.3 Overview of Proposed Development

- 1.3.1 The proposed scheme of works is for the redevelopment of the Grade II Listed Benton House, with a change of use from conservative club (Class E) to education use (Class F1), with associated internal and external alterations to the building, and alterations to the ground including provision of a multi-use games area and new fencing.

1.4 Planning Background

- 1.4.1 The application site has been the subject of 17 planning applications since 1990, including the following involving construction work to the central block of Benton House:
- Proposed addition of disabled access internal WC to replace the existing external inaccessible WC Benton House Front Street Benton NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE7 7XE Ref. No: 12/01611/LBC | Received: Mon 08 Oct 2012 | Validated: Mon 08 Oct 2012 | Status: Decided - permitted
 - Replace 5 box windows and 6 casement windows in hardwood and exactly same format as the present windows and will be painted. Benton House Front Street Benton NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE7 7UJ Ref. No: 08/02935/FUL | Received: Fri 05 Sep 2008 | Validated: Fri 17 Oct 2008 | Status: Decided – refused
 - The retention of windows already fitted subject to minor alterations to their appearance (removal of horns to the upper sashes). (Retrospective) Benton House Front Street Benton NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE7 7UJ Ref. No: 09/00998/LBC | Received: Tue 21 Apr 2009 | Validated: Tue 21 Apr 2009 | Status: Decided - permitted
 - Install central heating with balanced flue - Conservative Club Benton House Front Street Benton NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE7 7UJ Ref. No: 90/01123/LBC | Received: Thu 31 May 1990 | Validated: Thu 31 May 1990 | Status: Decided – permitted

1.5 Consultation

North Tyneside Council Planning Team

- 1.5.1 Clare Lazzari (Heritage Consultant, AB Heritage) contacted the Conservation Office through the North Tyneside Council Planning Team via email on the 24th of November 2023.
- 1.5.2 The email identified that the report would consider potential impacts to the Grade II Listed assets of: Benton House and the ha-ha south of Benton House, as well as Longbenton Conservation Area. It identified that Listed assets within the wider area, such as Ethel Williams Hall and Manor House (both Grade II Listed) would not be affected by the proposals due to the fact that they only have intervisibility with the rear elevation, where no work is to take place.
- 1.5.3 The email also noted that, based on research and the site visit, that the main areas of special interest in Benton House were architectural and historical, and that the exterior was of greater sensitivity and interest than the interior. The email offered the opportunity for a Conservation Officer to comment on the scope of the report and provide any additional information that may not have been readily available to AB Heritage at the time of writing. At the time of writing, no response had been received.

Tyne and Wear HER

- 1.5.4 Clare Lazzari (Heritage Consultant, AB Heritage) contacted Rachel Grahame (Archaeology Officer, Tyne & Wear Archaeology) on the 24th of November 2023. The email identified that the scheme of work was largely internal with the exception of the installation of a multi-use games area (MUGA) in the grounds. The email proposed that a full HER search was not carried out and asked for Ms Grahame's opinion on this matter.
- 1.5.5 Rachel Grahame replied on the 27th of November stating that the site was located within the boundary of Longbenton Medieval village and assuming that the MUGA was being created to the south of Benton House, an Archaeology Desk-Based Assessment was likely to be needed in addition to a Heritage Statement. Clare Lazzari informed the client of this.
- 1.5.6 Following a meeting with the client, architect and other involved parties on the 1st of December, a more suitable location for the MUGA was identified, to the east of the house. Clare Lazzari emailed Rachael Grahame on the 6th of December highlighting this and requested confirmation that a DBA would still be necessary in light of the new location.
- 1.5.7 Rachel Grahame replied on the 18th of December to state that if ground-breaking works across the whole project was minimal then a DBA could likely be skipped, but the whole application would be assessed by the Tyne & Wear Archaeology Officer upon submission. The outcome would be determined at that point.

1.6 Project Qualifiers

- 1.6.1 This report has been prepared under instruction and solely for the use of Outcomes First Group and any associated parties they elect to share this information with.
- 1.6.2 Measurements and distances in this report are approximations only and should not be used for detailed design purposes.

- 1.6.3 All work undertaken is based upon the professional knowledge of AB Heritage and relevant standards, technology and legislation at the time of writing. Changes in these areas may occur in the future, causing changes to the conclusions, recommendations or advice given. AB Heritage is not responsible for advising any parties on the implications of such changes.
- 1.6.4 This report utilises information obtained from third party sources. AB Heritage takes no responsibility for the accuracy of such information.
- 1.6.5 Where recommendations are provided these need to be approved by the Local Planning Authority and do not themselves comprise mitigation of impacts.

2. AIMS & METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims of Report

2.1.1 Early assessment of the implications of proposed development on the heritage resource is key to informing reasonable planning decisions. Indeed, NPPF 194 requires local planning authorities to request descriptions on the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. This states that:

‘The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance’.

2.1.2 This assessment therefore has the following objectives:

- To identify cultural heritage features subject to potential change, and to understand their significance, so that the design works can avoid adverse change where possible, or protect / enhance their significance; and
- To inform the on-going design process for the proposed scheme.

2.2 Methodology

Focus of Study

2.2.1 A study area of 250m from the centre point of the site was established to fully encapsulate the Longbenton Conservation Area.

Standards & Guidance Used

2.2.2 The assessment has been carried out in line with the following guidance:

- *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (ClfA, 2020).
- *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings and Structures* (ClfA, 2020).
- *Conservation Principles, Policies & Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (Historic England, 2008).
- *Understanding Historic Buildings* (Historic England, 2016).
- *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Historic England, 2017).
- *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* (Historic England, 2019).
- *Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage - Historic England Advice Note 7 (Second Edition)* (Historic England, 2021a).

Selection and Assessment of Sources

2.2.3 In line with para 3.3.6 and Annex 1 of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment, this report considers appropriate sources of information and a rationale behind their use. These have been detailed in Table 1:

Table 1: Examination of Appropriate Sources

SOURCE	TYPE OF EVIDENCE	CONSULTED	COMMENT
Tyne & Wear Historic Environment Record	The primary source of information concerning the current state of archaeological, heritage and architectural knowledge in this area. Contains published and unpublished archaeological and historical sources, including any previous investigations undertaken within the study area.	24/11/2023	See Section 1.5
Consult North Tyneside Council Conservation Officer	Early discussion with the Local Planning Authority Planning Archaeologist and / or Conservation Officer is key to understanding the significance of an area and creating a tailored approach most appropriate to assessment of a site.	24/11/2023	See Section 1.5
Site Walkover	This task allows for development of a greater understanding of the on-site heritage resource, or any historic issues of the site, including information the general condition and setting of the area of proposed development and the site in which it stands.	23/11/2023	A site visit was carried out by Clare Lazzari (Heritage Consultant, AB Heritage) on the 23 rd of November 2023. Only the exterior and the Longbenton Conservation Area were visited as the interior was not accessible. The interior of Fairways flat was visited. A second site visit, to assess the interior of Benton House, was carried out on the 7 th of December 2023. The basement, attic and stewards house were not accessed; photographs of these interiors were provided by Michael Dunn of Space Architecture and Design Ltd.
National Heritage List for England	Information on statutory and non-statutory designated sites, including Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments.	23/11/2023	The list entries for: Benton House (1354993), ha-ha south of Benton House (1184194), shop west of Benton House (1025391) were accessed.
Tyne & Wear Archives	Readily accessible information on the site's history from readily available historic documentary sources, maps and photographs.	14/12/2023	Books on local history (Elliott, 1999; Fordyce, 1867; Burke, 1834) were accessed. Two plans labelled Benton House were viewed though these related to nearby Benton Hall (also known as Benton House), another Bigge family property. No other pertinent records were found.

SOURCE	TYPE OF EVIDENCE	CONSULTED	COMMENT
Local Historic Societies	Using the British Association for Local History (https://www.balh.org.uk) list of local societies, checks were made with relevant organisations where there was a specific and obvious benefit to consulting local expertise on the history of the proposed development site.	06/12/2023	Golf's Missing Links (www.golfsmismissinglinks.co.uk) webpage on Benton Park Golf Club was accessed for history into the site's use as a golf club. Newcastle Universities' Co-Curate website (https://co-curate.ncl.ac.uk/) was visited for historic images of Benton and Longbenton.

2.2.4 For reporting purposes, any relevant information gathered from the above sources has been allocated an AB number [AB 1 to AB 6], which can be viewed in the Cultural Heritage Features Gazetteer (Appendix 1).

Assessment of Significance

- 2.2.5 Assessment of heritage significance is judged on various factors, including existing designation(s) and the perceived heritage interests or values of a feature and / or its setting in-line with criteria set out by English Heritage in '*Conservation Principles, Policies & Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*' (2008) and Historic England's '*Advice Note 12*' (2019).
- 2.2.6 As a result, this report will assess significance against **Archaeological, Architectural, Artistic, Historic** and **Setting** interests. Each relevant category discussed will result in an overall level of significance being defined for the feature, in accordance with a five-point scale comprising Very High, High, Medium, Low and Uncertain.

Impact Assessment

- 2.2.7 The degree of impact upon the heritage resource is determined based on professional judgement as to the level of effect from a proposed development on the baseline conditions of the site and the cultural heritage resource identified. The criteria for assessing the level of impact will be expressed against a five-point scale comprising Very High, High, Medium, Low and Uncertain.
- 2.2.8 Overall, the degree of change will be assessed in terms of NPPF (as harmful or beneficial) and, where appropriate, against relevant local planning policy.

3. PLANNING & LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

3.1 Heritage Legislation

- 3.1.1 Current legislation, in the form of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, provides for the legal protection of important and well-preserved archaeological sites and monuments through their addition to a list, or 'schedule' of archaeological monuments.
- 3.1.2 Likewise, structures are afforded legal protection in the form of their addition to 'lists' of buildings of special architectural or historical interest, under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. This legislation also allows for the creation and protection of Conservation Areas by local planning authorities to protect areas and groupings of historical significance.
- 3.1.3 The categories of assets with some form of legal protection have been extended in recent years, and now include Registered Parks and Gardens, and Historic Battlefields. While designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site is not a statutory designation under English planning law, such a designation is regarded as a material consideration in planning decisions.

3.2 National Planning Policy Framework 2023

- 3.2.1 The NPPF sets out government policy on the historic environment, which covers all elements, whether designated or not, that are identified as 'having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest'.
- 3.2.2 Paragraph 194 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail required in the assessment should be 'proportionate to the assets importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'.
- 3.2.3 Paragraph 201 explains that 'where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.
- 3.2.4 Paragraph 202 advises that where a proposal involve less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, Paragraph 203 states that a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

3.3 Local Planning Policy

North Tyneside Local Plan

- 3.3.1 North Tyneside Local Plan was adopted in July 2017 and sets out the Council's policies to guide planning decisions.

Policy S6.5 Heritage Assets

North Tyneside Council aims to pro-actively preserve, promote and enhance its heritage assets, and will do so by:

- *Respecting the significance of assets.*
- *Maximising opportunities to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings.*
- *Targeting for improvements those heritage assets identified as at risk or vulnerable to risk.*
- *Seeking and encouraging opportunities for heritage-led regeneration, including public realm schemes.*
- *Supporting appropriate interpretation and promotion of the heritage assets.*
- *Adding to and keeping up-to-date the Borough's heritage asset evidence base and guidance. Examples include conservation area character appraisals, conservation area boundary reviews, conservation area management strategies, conservation statements/plans, registers of listed and locally registered buildings, the historic environment record and buildings at risk registers.*
- *Using the evidence it has gathered, implement the available tools to conserve heritage assets, such as Article 4 Directions and Building Preservation Notices.*

3.3.2 Long Benton Conservation Area also has a Character Appraisal document (North Tyneside Council, 2007) which acts as an SPD (Supplementary Planning Document) providing further guidance to development within its bounds.

4. HERITAGE REVIEW OF THE SITE

4.1 Historic Development of the Site & Surrounding Area

- 4.1.1 Geologically, the area around Longbenton is rich in natural coal seams, and, by the 18th century, these were being heavily exploited. Coal merchants based in Newcastle grew wealthy from the profits and desired to move away from the noise and pollution of the city, constructing mansions in the countryside of Northumberland.
- 4.1.2 There is some confusion regarding the construction date of Benton House, with some sources suggesting 1740 as a probable date (Longbenton Conservation Area Character Appraisal, 2007, and Elliott, 1999). Benton House is mentioned as having been 'considerably enlarged' by William Bigge (1707- 1758), the Sheriff of Northumberland, before being inherited by his son, Thomas Charles Bigge (Burke, 1834).
- 4.1.3 However, other sources have tentatively attributed the design to prominent North East architect William Newton (1730 – 1798) who had links to Thomas Charles Bigge, placing the date of construction later on in the 18th century (Pears, 2013).
- 4.1.4 Nevertheless, Benton House passed from Thomas Charles Bigge to his son, Charles William Bigge upon his death in 1794 and Charles resided at the Benton House estate until 1812 'having completed the erection of his new hall at Linden' (Fordyce, 1867).
- 4.1.5 By 1842, Benton House was in the ownership of Dixon Dixon but was resided in by Mrs Purvis Atkinson (Elliott, 1999) as listed on the 1842 tithe apportionment. Number 12 (Benton House) is listed as Mansion and land, while number 9 is listed as Longbenton Farm under the ownership of Balliol College, Oxford. Plate 3 shows the site though not in any detail.

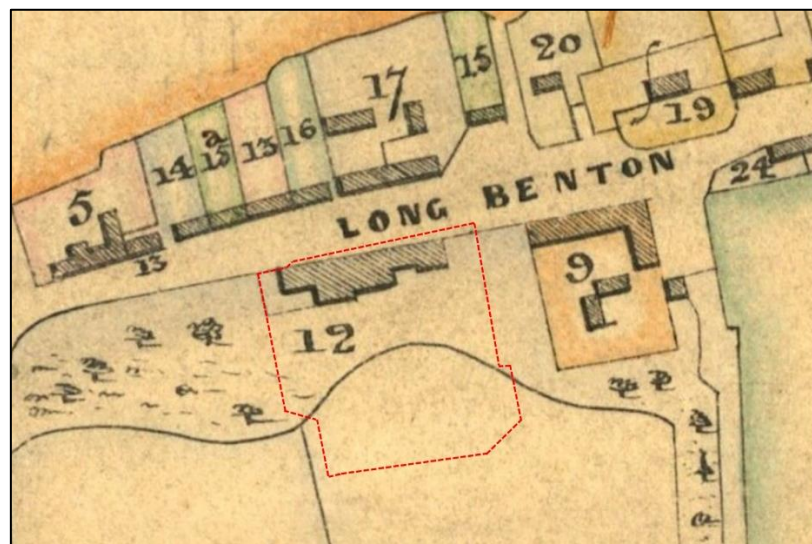


Plate 3. 1842 tithe map (The Genealogist.com, 2023)

- 4.1.6 Plate 4 shows a smaller detached structure next to the main body of Benton House, which may have been in use as an outbuilding, screened from views from the lawn by a wall.

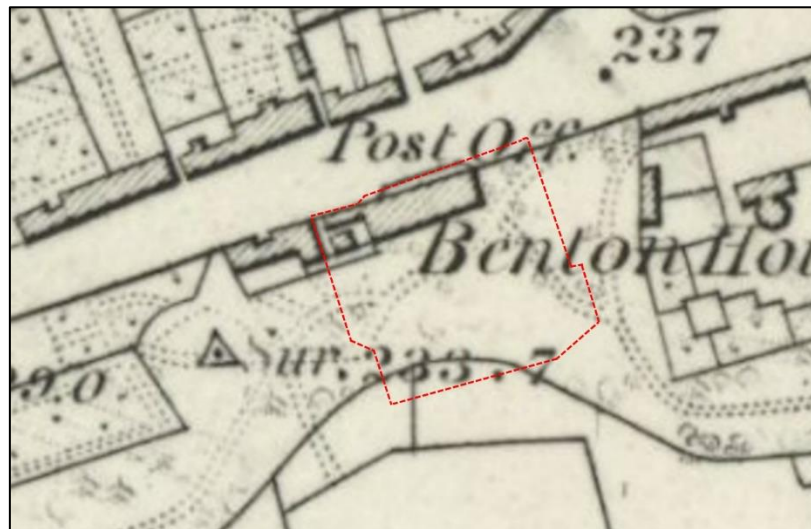


Plate 4. 1864 six-inch OS map (National Library of Scotland, 2023)

- 4.1.7 By 1897 the smaller outbuilding had been linked to the main residence, and an additional structure attached to the south of that extension; this may have been a substantial orangery. This map is the earliest known evidence of the Grade II Listed ha-ha south of Benton House [AB 3] (Plate 5).

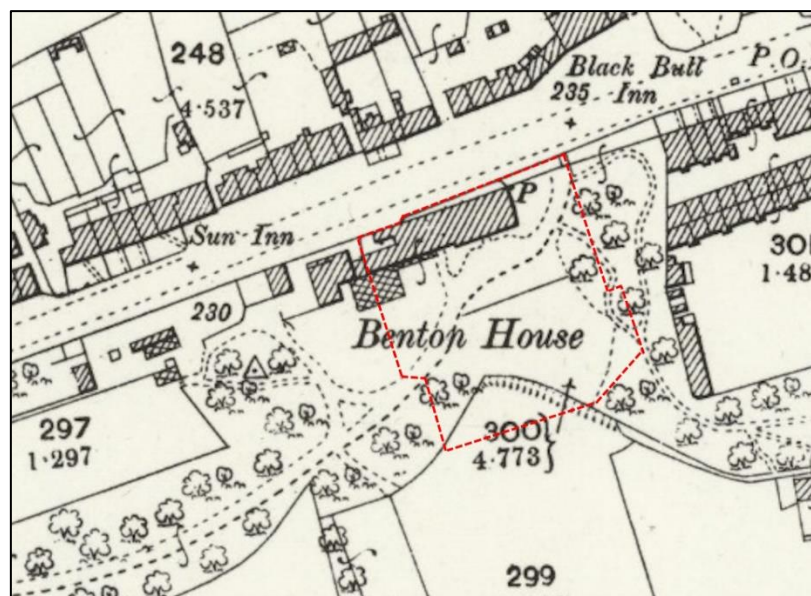


Plate 5. 1897 25-inch OS map (National Library of Scotland, 2023)

- 4.1.8 In 1909 the grounds of the Benton House estate were converted into a golf course, with the house being used as a clubhouse (Halsall, 2018). A photograph from 1910 shows that the orangery seen on the 1897 OS map had been demolished and a new orangery had been constructed to the east of the main residence (Plate 6).



Plate 6. 1910 photograph of Benton House Golf Course clubhouse (Elliott, 1999)

- 4.1.9 A newspaper article from 1910 wrote that the 'palatial home' of the club was 'second to none in the North of England'. The article also noted that the eighteenth hole was situated immediately in front of the clubhouse and featured a 'dyke and wall' as obstacles (Newcastle Evening Chronicle, 08/07/1910). This appears to refer to the ha-ha which is shown on Plate 7.
- 4.1.10 Plate 7 appears to show a doorway within the western wing of the property, situated centrally between two sash windows on the ground floor. This has since been replaced by a modern fire door.



Plate 7. Undated photograph (Benton Conservative Club social media, 2023)

- 4.1.11 The golf club at Benton House was closed for the duration of the First World War, when the course was used for growing crops (Newcastle Sunday Sun, 02/05/1920). Plate 7 highlights the entrance path to the club, with two distinct paths to entrances in the western wing and the central block.

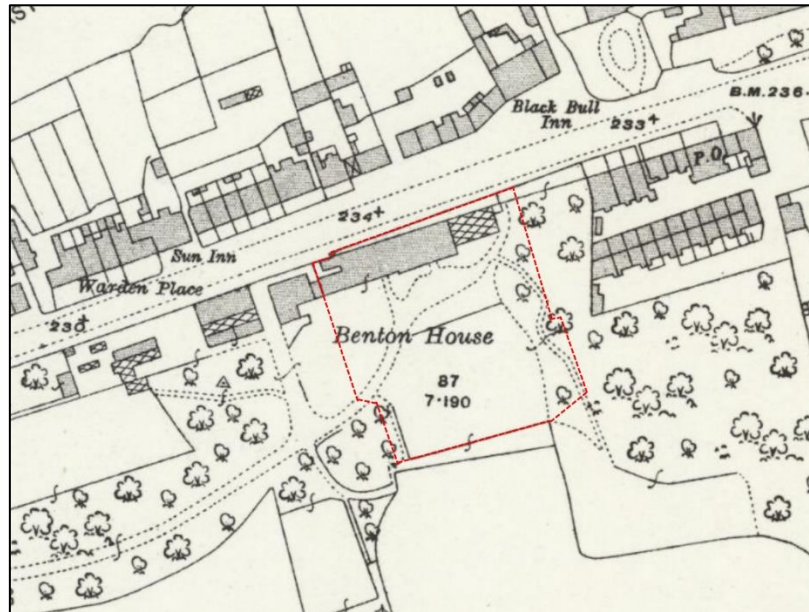


Plate 8. 1916 25-inch OS map (National Library of Scotland, 2023)

4.1.12 The golf club was reopened in 1920, with the course having been remade by renowned golf-course architect Dr McKenzie (Newcastle Sunday Sun, 02/05/1920). An aerial image from the 1930s shows the extent of the course and bunkering, with the proposal site marked in red (Plate 9).



Plate 9. 1930s aerial image of Benton Golf Club (Newcastle Libraries, 2023)

4.1.13 By 1945 the scale of Benton House and the grounds appears unchanged, though a telephone exchange had been erected c.25m east of the property (Plate 10)



Plate 10. 1945 aerial image (Google Earth Pro, 2023)

4.1.14 By 1947, further additions had been made to Benton House, providing infill development within the western wing, likely creating a shopfront [AB 5]. Smaller outbuildings had also been constructed to the east of the orangery (Plate 11).

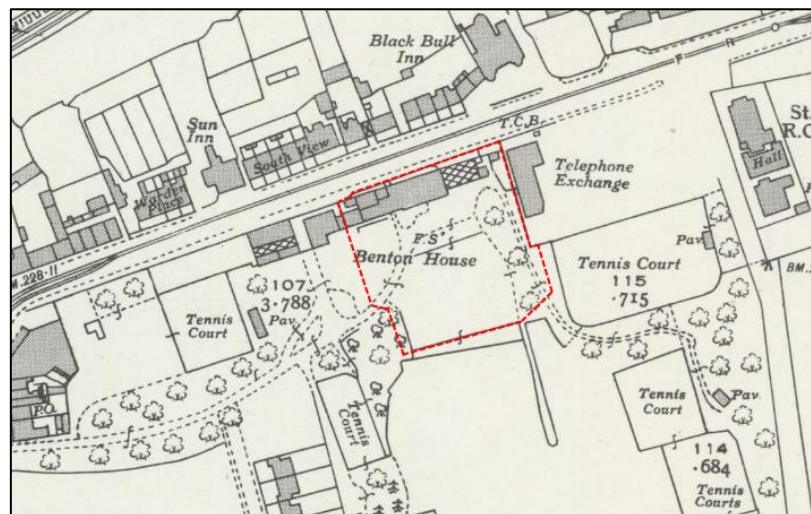


Plate 11. 1947 25-inch OS map (National Library of Scotland, 2023)

4.1.15 Benton House was included as a Grade II Listed Building on the National Heritage List for England in 1950. The list description describes the property as a Conservative Club and notes that the interiors were damaged by fire. The list entry also describes the property as having 1:3:5 bays; no mention is made of the eastern wing. This is consolidated by the 1952 National Grid map which shows no addition to the east of the house, suggesting that the orangery had been lost to the fire (Plate 12).

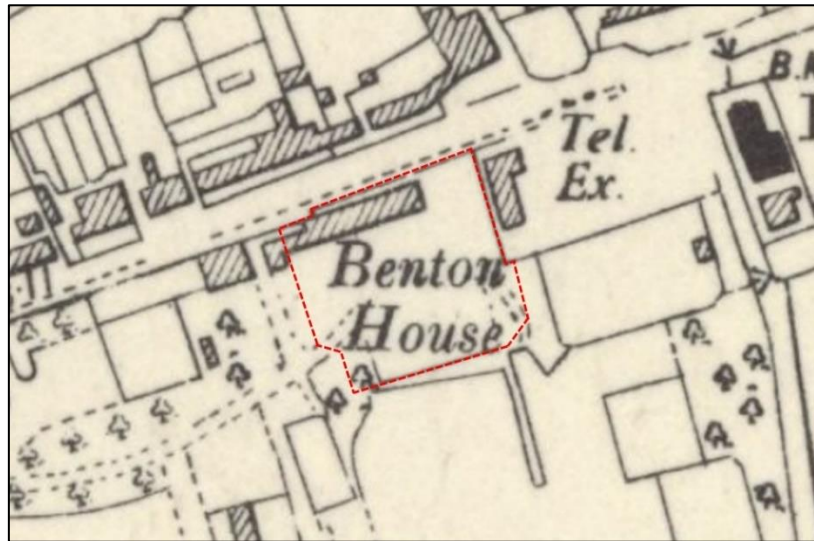


Plate 12. 1952 National Grid map (National Library of Scotland, 2023)

4.1.16 The scale of Benton House itself appears unchanged on the 1968 National Grid map, though the grounds had been reduced to the south lawn only, the surrounding land having been sold to the council for residential development (Plate 13).

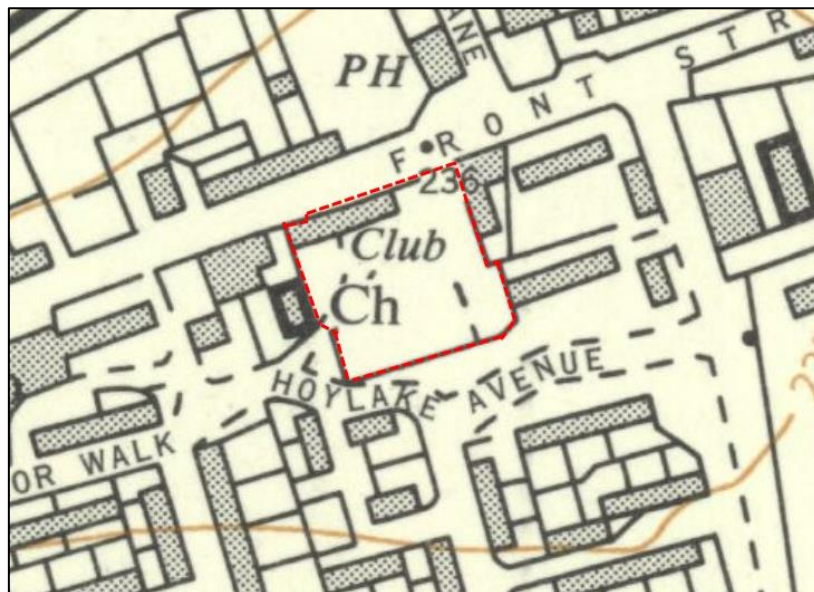


Plate 13. 1968 National Grid map (National Library of Scotland, 2023)

4.1.17 In the later 20th century, an extension was constructed to the east of the central block of Benton House (Plate 14). While building plans of this extension are not readily available, the interior features, such as wall panelling and bar design, suggests a 1970s date. The extension created an eastern wing to the Conservative Club.



Plate 14. 2003 aerial image (Google Earth Pro, 2023)

4.1.18 The Conservative Club continued operating until 2021. In 2022 Geisha Restaurants began operating a takeaway kitchen on the site. The site was subsequently placed on the market in 2023.

4.2 Current Site Condition

4.2.1 The site visit was undertaken on the 23rd of November 2023 by Clare Lazzari (Heritage Consultant, AB Heritage). During this site visit the exterior of Benton House, the interior of Fairways flat and the Longbenton Conservation Area were visited. A second site visit was undertaken on the 8th of December 2023 to access the interior of Benton House.

4.2.2 The purpose of the site visits was to gain a first-hand understanding of the character of the application site and the surrounding area.

4.2.3 The proposed development site at Benton House is situated on the southern side of Front Street, c.200m east of the junction of Benton Road and Front Street. The rear, or north-facing, elevation is set back c.10m from the road at Front Street, while the principal, or south-facing, elevation is situated in private grounds, c.75m northeast of Hoylake Avenue. The main entrance to Benton House is located in the principal elevation and accessed via a tarmac driveway leading off Hoylake Avenue (Plate 15).



Plate 15. View northeast across site

- 4.2.4 The site comprises a large two storey mansion with east and west wings under slate roof. Within the 20th century, the west wing was subdivided into two first floor flats, and two shops on the ground floor. The central block and east wing of Benton House are now disused but formerly housed a takeaway and the Benton Conservative Club (Plate 16).



Plate 16. Principal elevation

- 4.2.5 The principal elevation is faced with ashlar sandstone, under a slate roof. The five bay central block features symmetrical sash windows with glazing bars to the ground floor. The sash windows to the first floor are later 20th century replacements and do not feature glazing bars.
- 4.2.6 The principal elevation features a central Tuscan porch over Doric columns. The main entrance formerly under the porch has been replaced by a sash window (Plate 17).



Plate 17. View north at former main entrance

- 4.2.7 The western wing comprises three bays set back, and a pedimented single bay fronted with ashlar stone and tripartite windows on the ground and first floors (Plate 18).



Plate 18. View north at western wing

- 4.2.8 The eastern wing comprises a mid-20th century extension faced with stone and containing smaller sash windows with glazing bars to the ground floor, and sash windows without glazing bars to the first floor. As with the rest of the property, this is under a slate roof (Plate 19).



Plate 19. View northeast at the eastern wing

4.2.9 The rear elevation is accessed from Front Street and features asymmetrical fenestration. Plate 20 shows that the rear elevation, apart from that of the western single bay, is of undressed stone. The rear elevation provides a clear view of the four chimney stacks which serve the property. The two central chimney stacks are 20th century replacements of two much taller stacks (see Plate 7).



Plate 20. View south at the rear elevation from the Black Bull carpark

Interior

Ground Floor – central block and eastern wing

4.2.10 The ground floor has been greatly modified, following a fire in 1960 (Tyne & Wear Archives ref: AccT52/228) which destroyed much of the interior and was subsequently redeveloped. The ground floor is entered via a fire exit in the western wing. This opens eastwards into a large, open-plan space with lowered ceilings (Plate 21).



Plate 21. View east from western wing into central block

4.2.11 This space continues to the east, into the five bay central block of Benton House, with central sash window where the original entrance would have been. All sash windows have secondary glazing. This space has been formerly used as a commercial kitchen and storage area. The metal framework for a lowered ceiling is visible here. Above this is cornicing but this appears to be a plastic replacement (Plate 22).

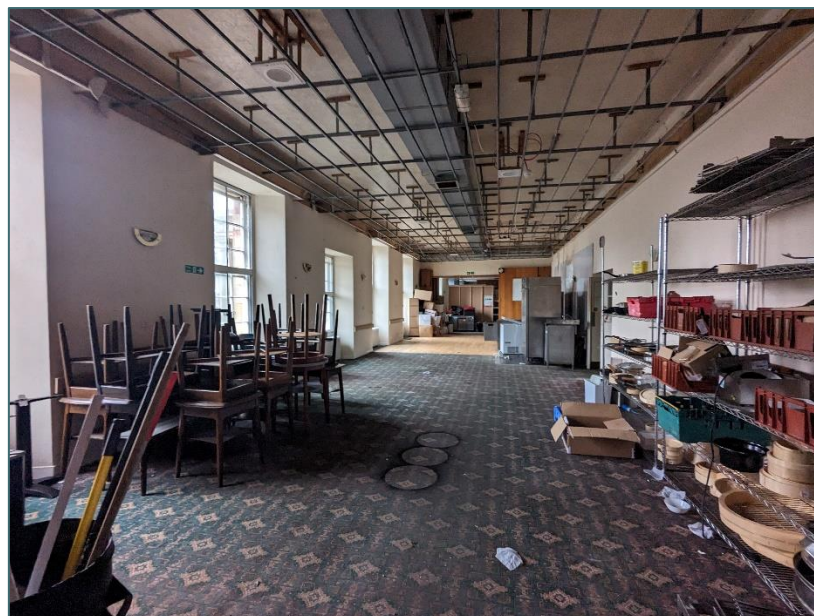


Plate 22. View west across central block ground floor interior

4.2.12 The former kitchen and storage room leads into the eastern block of the property which contains a toilet block. The ceiling in this area appears in poor condition (Plate 23).



Plate 23. Toilet block in eastern wing

4.2.13 To the north of the toilet block, is the former lounge area. This is an open plan space which extends from a bar area to the north of the former kitchen through to the eastern elevation of the property. It is presently used as storage space (Plate 24).



Plate 24. View west across former lounge

4.2.14 A former games room is situated at the easternmost end of the property, with three 20th century replica sash windows overlooking the hardstanding and lawn to the south of Benton House (Plate 25).



Plate 25. View southeast across former games room

Ground Floor – western wing

- 4.2.15 The ashlar-faced pedimented section of the western wing (seen on Plate 18) contains a residential flat. The ground floor does not contain any distinguishing historic features. Low quality 20th century fittings in this area include a staircase leading to the first floor of the flat, and radiators (Plate 26).



Plate 26. View southwest across ground floor of western wing residence

First Floor – western wing

- 4.2.16 The first floor of the flat housed in the western wing contains more historic features, including original fireplace surrounds, although the fireplaces have since been blocked up. These rooms also contain historic doorframes and skirting (Plate 27).



Plate 27. Example of first floor rooms in western wing residence

First Floor – eastern wing

- 4.2.17 The first floor of the eastern wing contains a former bar and lounge area which is generally in a state of disrepair (Plate 28).



Plate 28. View west across eastern wing first floor

First Floor – central block

- 4.2.18 The first floor of the central block contains a further large room formerly used as a games room though with no distinguishing historic features. As with other rooms in the central block, the ceiling height has been lowered and 20th century wall panelling and lighting has been fitted (Plate 29)



Plate 29. View across first floor games room in central block

Second Floor – central block

- 4.2.19 The central block extends upwards into a second floor which is currently disused, the floor covered by insulation roll. These rooms feature lower ceiling heights and smaller window frames, characteristic of Georgian hierarchical design, and were likely used as servant's quarters originally. These rooms appear to have not been used since a fire broke out in the mid-20th century; the interiors remain smoke and fire damaged (Plate 30)



Plate 30. View northeast along second floor space

4.2.20 The second-floor space retains the original chimney breasts, although the fire surrounds have since been removed. These fireplaces would have been much smaller compared to those on the ground and first floor of the central block, reflecting the status of those who lived and worked on the second floor (Plate 31).



Plate 31. View west towards second floor fireplace

Fairways Flat

4.2.21 Fairways is a first floor flat located within the western wing of Benton House, accessed by a door from Front Street. It extends up into the roof void. The ground floor contains a shopfront which is presently disused and does not form part of Fairways (Plates 32).



Plate 32. Location of Fairways within the rear elevation

4.2.22 The interior of the flat contains some original features including sash windows with timber shutters, and a period fireplace in the kitchen (Plate 33).

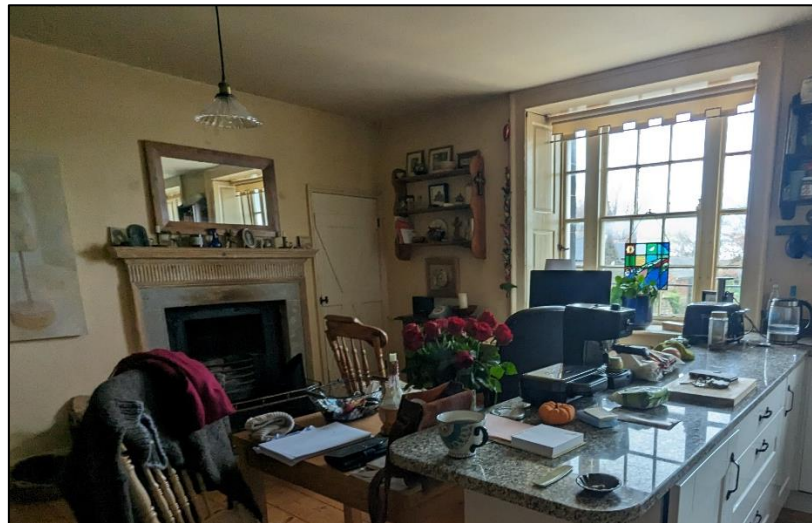


Plate 33. View northwest across kitchen

4.2.23 The flat extends upwards into the existing attic space, with dormer windows on both principal and rear elevations. The timber roof beams here have been exposed as has the stonework to the western elevation (Plate 34).



Plate 34. View west across attic space

4.2.24 Many existing fireplaces within the property have been removed and replaced by replica surrounds, such as in the office. Although the fireplace has been blocked up, the chimney breast brickwork has been retained and exposed (Plate 35).



Plate 35. Chimney breast in attic space

Summary

- 4.2.25 Overall, Benton House is largely unchanged externally since its construction, barring the addition of the eastern wing in the mid-20th century. The interior of the house, however, has been demonstrably altered and the original circulation is now all but unreadable due to the demolition of internal walls and original staircases.
- 4.2.26 The house retains very few historic fixtures and fittings; those which do survive include timber window shutters, skirting and fireplace surrounds in the western wing of the property.

Longbenton Conservation Area

- 4.2.27 Longbenton Conservation Area is a roughly rectangular area, focussed on c.500m of Front Street and the land north and south of that – the medieval village core. The predominant building use in the conservation area is residential, with a mix of 18th and 19th century stone-built terraced properties and more substantial detached dwellings to the north of Front Street. Structures are mostly two to three storeys in height (Plate 36).



Plate 36. View northwest at properties to north of Front Street

4.2.28 The conservation area also features larger detached residences, such as Ethel Williams Hall [AB 5] and North House c.125m northeast of the proposal site (Plate 37). These properties have limited intervisibility with the rear elevation of Benton House [AB 2], which itself will not be affected by the proposed development. It is therefore predicted that these properties will not be impacted by the scheme of works.



Plate 37. View north to North House from Coach Lane

4.2.29 Benton House [AB 2] and its grounds make up much of the land to the south of Front Street, being the most substantial property within the conservation area. Benton House is set back c.75m north from Hoylake Avenue, overlooking a square lawn which is bounded by mature trees. These grounds form part of the Longbenton Conservation Area [AB 6] Open Spaces Sub-Area (Plate 38).



Plate 38. View northeast towards site from Hoylake Avenue

4.2.30 The main feature within the grounds south of Benton House is a Grade II Listed 18th century ha-ha [AB 3] (Plate 39) which appears to have been substantially backfilled based on earlier photographic evidence (see Plate 7).



Plate 39. View northeast at remains of ha-ha

4.2.31 The land southeast of Benton House, however, comprises hardstanding overlooked by a former 1940s telephone exchange now used as rentable office space (Plate 40).



Plate 40. View east across hardstanding

4.2.32 Aside from office space, there are few commercial properties within the conservation area. One of the remaining few includes a Grade II Listed shop [AB 4] built into the rear elevation of Benton House's western block. Formerly a deli and later a salon it is now occupied by a tattoo shop and retains a historic timber shopfront (Plate 41)



Plate 41. View south at Grade II Listed shop from Front Street

4.2.33 The shop, although built into the western wing of Benton House, is an entirely separate premises and will not be affected by the proposed development.

5. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 Focus of Study

- 5.1.1 In accordance with English Heritage guidance *Conservation Principles, Policies & Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (2008), and Historic England's Advice Note 12 (2019), Heritage Assets derive their significance from a defined range of interests or values. These are **Archaeological**, **Architectural** or **Artistic**, **Historic** and **Setting** Interest. This report will assess those factors relevant to the overall understanding of the importance of the feature under consideration.
- 5.1.2 The site is in proximity to several heritage assets (see Fig. 1 & 2 and Appendix 1). However, based on the site visit and historic research, this report will focus on providing an understanding of the potential impacts to the following Heritage Assets and/or their settings:
- Benton House [AB 2]
 - Ha-Ha South of Benton House – Grade II Listed [AB 3]
 - Longbenton Conservation Area [AB 6]

5.2 Benton House [AB 2]

Description & General Condition

Benton House is a Grade II Listed Building, listed in 1950. The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) list entry describes the building as:

House, now club. Late C18 and C19. Built for T.C. Bigge (1739-94). Sandstone ashlar; graduated Lakeland slate roof. 2 storeys; 1:3:5 bays. Main block of 5 bays has inserted sash window in central Tuscan porch with fluted necking; glazing bars to 2 sashes either side; none to renewed first floor sashes. Sill and floor bands; dentilled broken pediment over central 3 bays, and dentilled eaves gutter cornice; floating cornice above central window. Wing set back at left has pedimented first bay containing tripartite windows, transomed on ground and sashed at first floors; eaves cornice under keystone roundel in pediment. Half-glazed central door (with large overlight) in 3-bay linking section which has renewed sash windows and early C20 pedimented dormer. Hipped roof with ashlar chimneys. Interior damaged by fire. Shop inserted in rear of first bay: see under Front Street.

- 5.2.1 Since its listing, Benton House has undergone significant change including the addition of an eastern wing in the later 20th century. The property contains two residential properties within the western wing, while the central block and eastern wing are disused and in generally in a state of disrepair.

Assessment of Significance

Architectural Interest

- 5.2.2 The main area of architectural interest in Benton House is derived from it being an example of mid-to-late 18th century neoclassical design.

- 5.2.3 The exterior of the central block and western wing is largely unchanged since its construction, with the exception of the replacement of the sash windows, and removal of central doorway which detracts from the original appearance.
- 5.2.4 Architectural interest is also derived from the juxtaposition between the principal and rear elevations. The principal elevation, faced in ashlar sandstone, was intended for show whereas the rear elevation was not, instead being more functional in design.
- 5.2.5 The interior has been demonstrably altered since its construction, most notably in the 20th century when the property ceased functioning as a residence and became a clubhouse. Further alteration occurred following a fire in the mid-20th century which damaged much of the interiors. An eastern extension was constructed in the later 20th century, which involved the demolition of substantial portions of the original eastern elevation to create an open-plan layout.
- 5.2.6 The western elevation suffers less from the significant loss of historical features and fittings seen across the rest of the property. Internally historic fabric and fittings within this area of the property includes timber skirtings, shutters and fireplace surrounds.
- 5.2.7 Overall, the main area of architectural interest lies in the exterior, with the interior detracting from the significance of the building. Despite the alterations to the interior, the property retains legibility as a fine country mansion.

Historical Interest

- 5.2.8 The main area of historical interest derives from the property's association with the prominent Bigge family, who were wealthy landowners and coal merchants, with three generations holding the title of High Sheriff of Northumberland in the 18th century.
- 5.2.9 The scale and massing of Benton House is testament to the status of this family, who had ties to some of the most influential figures in the development of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and the surrounding area. The design of the property applies typical Georgian hierarchical standards, placing the family in spacious and light rooms, while servants would have been situated in smaller, darker rooms at the top of the building.
- 5.2.10 Consequently, the historic interest of Benton House is a strong positive contributor to the heritage significance of the building.

Setting

- 5.2.11 Benton House has a relatively quiet, suburban setting within the Longbenton Conservation Area. The setting north of Front Street is characterised by a mix of historic terraced housing and larger, detached properties as well as a bustling pub, The Black Horse. To setting to the south of Benton House is characterised by mature trees and mid to later 20th century semi-detached and detached properties, c.75m south of the development site.
- 5.2.12 Although having mostly lost all of its former country-house setting, the current setting serves to enhance our understanding of the growth of Longbenton, around the historic core of the village, from the 18th century onwards.
- 5.2.13 Overall, the baseline heritage setting of Benton House is a positive contributor to the experience, understanding and appreciation of the heritage asset.
-

Overview

- 5.2.14 The interior of Benton House is assessed to be a heritage asset of Low Significance. Surviving historic features are largely confined to the western wing and include timber skirting, shutters and fireplaces. Despite these surviving features, the overall readability of the house's interior has been substantially degraded by fire and 20th century intervention. This intervention, including the construction of an eastern wing, has meant that the original circulation patterns within the building can no longer be appreciated.
- 5.2.15 Given that much of the interior has been altered, the most significant element of the building is its exterior. The exterior of the property is assessed to be a heritage asset of Medium-High significance and the scale and architectural style of the property inform us of the importance and status of the Bigge family during the 18th century.

5.3 Ha-Ha South of Benton House [AB 3]

Description & General Condition

- 5.3.1 The ha-ha south of Benton House is a Grade II Listed structure, listed in 1986. The NHLE list entry describes it as: *Late C18. Sandstone rubble wall, with flat stone coping, has ashlar right return and 4 stone steps at right.*
- 5.3.2 The ha-ha is currently overgrown with mature shrubs which detracts from its appearance. Earlier photographs of Benton House show a much more substantial feature (as shown e.g. on Plate 7), it having been backfilled at a later date during landscaping works.

Assessment of Significance

Historical Interest

- 5.3.3 The primary historical interest of the ha-ha derives from its continued use as a landscape design feature within the grounds south of Benton House.
- 5.3.4 The ha-ha would have acted as a barrier to any livestock which would have grazed on the extensive grounds south of Benton House, preventing them from getting closer to the property, while maintaining uninterrupted views south.
- 5.3.5 During Benton House's period of use as a golf club in the early to mid-20th century, the ha-ha lost its functional use as a defensive barrier and design feature, instead becoming an obstacle on the eighteenth hole.
- 5.3.6 Although having lost its original purpose the ha-ha still remains a key feature within the grounds of Benton House and serves to inform our understanding of 18th century landscaping design.
- 5.3.7 For this reason, historical interest is a key contributor to the significance of the heritage asset.

Setting

- 5.3.8 The Grade II Listed ha-ha shares the wider suburban residential setting of Benton House. Although still relatively peaceful, this is a much different setting to the original country-house setting the ha-ha would have once been situated in.

- 5.3.9 However, the more immediate setting of the ha-ha is that of the grounds of Benton House, extending to the principal elevation of the house in the north, and to the lawn and trees. This is largely unchanged since the property's construction.
- 5.3.10 The immediate setting of the ha-ha contributes positively to the significance of the heritage asset by informing the experience, understanding and appreciation of the structure as a feature which allowed uninterrupted views south from Benton House.

Architectural Interest

- 5.3.11 The rubble construction of the ha-ha reflects the more functional design of the feature, while the capstones mirror that of the ashlar fronting on Benton House, reflecting the scale and grandeur of the estate.
- 5.3.12 Presently the ha-ha does not stand at its original height, with much of it having been buried during landscaping works to the south lawn. While this is a marked detriment to the significance of the feature, the upper portion is still readable as an original landscaping feature in the grounds of Benton House.

Overview

- 5.3.13 The ha-ha is a Grade II Listed structure in the grounds of Benton House. Due to its special historical interest and setting, it is assessed to be a feature of Medium Significance.

5.4 Longbenton Conservation Area [AB 6]

Description & General Condition

- 5.4.1 Longbenton Conservation Area was designated in November 1985 and re-appraised in 2007. It covers the extents of the Medieval village of Longbenton as well as 18th century development to the south of Front Street.
- 5.4.2 The Conservation Area was designated for the area's architectural and historical significance. Many properties which are considered to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area were constructed before 1800, making them some of the earliest properties in the wider area.
- 5.4.3 The predominant building style in Longbenton Conservation Area is 18th century stone-built residential properties. Structures are a mix of terraced housing and larger, detached properties with open space and mature trees surrounding them. Properties to the north of Front Street largely follow the Medieval and early Post Medieval layout of a village, with burgage plots to the rear. Land to the south of Front Street is largely occupied by Benton House and its grounds, the largest property within the Conservation Area.
- 5.4.4 The Conservation Area is largely unchanged in layout since the 18th century, with appreciable views from both the east and west of Front Street, though the area has lost its village status having been subsumed into the wider suburbs around Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Assessment of Significance

Architectural Interest

- 5.4.5 The Conservation Area retains a number of distinctive, masonry constructed historic properties, and the grouping of such high-quality structures gives the Area an aesthetically pleasing visual quality.
- 5.4.6 The architectural interest is assessed to be a major positive contributor to the significance of the Conservation Area as a designated heritage asset.

Historical Interest

- 5.4.7 The built environment of Longbenton Conservation Area is of historical interest as an illustrative example of the gradual development of a Medieval village through the Post Medieval period, with many properties being examples of 18th century design. The street layout and property boundaries remain largely unchanged, barring the loss of terraced housing where the Black Bull carpark now stands (Longbenton Conservation Character Appraisal, 2007).
- 5.4.8 In addition, Longbenton Conservation Area includes examples of both labourer's dwellings as well as grand properties constructed by wealthy families who wished to move out of the city, but still remain in proximity to business interests, either in coalfields or in Newcastle.
- 5.4.9 For these reasons, historical interest is also a key positive contributor to the significance of the heritage asset.

Setting

- 5.4.10 Longbenton Conservation Area has a busier, more urban setting comprising mid to late 20th century housing, shops and a busy Metro rail station. However, the historic street layout and housing development faces towards Front Street with private grounds to the rear of the properties, creating an insular sense which prevents the Conservation Area from being detrimentally affected by the busier setting around it.
- 5.4.11 The setting marks a change between quieter historic village core of Longbenton and the busier residential developments and roads beyond. The setting serves therefore to enhance our understanding of Front Street as a historic route which has been encapsulated by suburban sprawl.
- 5.4.12 The setting therefore contributes to the significance of the heritage asset by informing our experience, understanding and appreciation of Longbenton Conservation Area.

Archaeological Interest

- 5.4.13 As an area-based asset, the Longbenton Conservation Area is sited in the boundary of Longbenton Medieval village and as such the vicinity may have potential to hold buried archaeological evidence as well as built fabric of pre-1800 buildings.
- 5.4.14 Therefore, archaeological interest is a positive contributor to the significance of the heritage asset.

Overview

- 5.4.15 Due to its architectural, historical and, to a lesser extent, archaeological interests, Longbenton Conservation Area is deemed to be a heritage asset of High Significance. Its setting also contributes positively towards this assessment.

6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Mitigation by Design

- 6.1.1 During a meeting with Michael Dunn (Director, Space Architecture & Design) on the 1st of December 2023, the proposed site layout was discussed. Potential locations for installation of a MUGA were highlighted. AB Heritage provided early advice to the client to avoid groundbreaking south of Benton House, close to the Grade II Listed ha-ha. This tied in with advice from Rachel Grahame (Senior Archaeology Officer, Tyne & Wear Archaeology) who identified the need to minimise ground-breaking within the Longbenton Medieval Village area during the consultation stage.
- 6.1.2 The above advice was taken on board and any substantial impacts to potential archaeology mitigated by placing the MUGA to the east of Benton House on an area of pre-existing hardstanding.

6.2 Details of the Proposed Development Works (Figures 2-7)

- 6.2.1 The proposed redevelopment of Benton House seeks to create a small school for children with special educational needs. It is expected that the school will enrol 60 students from Year 2 to Year 5.

Exterior (Figures 4 - 5)

- 6.2.2 Works to the exterior fabric of Benton House will be limited to: the removal of the central sash window under the porch and reinstatement of a central main entrance; and replacement of the modern fire door in the western block and replacement with a timber-framed sash window.
- 6.2.3 The scheme of works also includes the creation of a multi-use games area (MUGA) which will be located on existing hardstanding to the east of Benton House. This will involve the demolition of a poor quality late 21st century shed, grubbing up of hardstanding and relaying new surface. A perimeter fence will be constructed around the MUGA.
- 6.2.4 Redevelopment of the interior of the building will involve the construction of 37 new partition walls to create the following rooms:

Interior Ground Floor (Figures 6 - 7)

Western Wing (7 new partition walls)

- Plant room
- Cleaners room
- Showers
- Two therapy rooms
- Gym
- Immersive room
- Two classrooms

Central Block (16 new partition walls)

- Reception/waiting room
- Reception/office
- Meeting room
- Assisted toilet
- Deputy head's office
- Head's office
- Server
- Two classrooms

Eastern Block (4 new partition walls)

- Kitchen
- Medical Room
- Toilet block
- Dining room

Interior First Floor

Western Wing (no alterations to layout)

- Staff room
- Meeting room
- Office
- Toilet

Flat within Western Wing (no alterations to layout)

- Two meeting rooms
- Store room
- Toilet and shower

Central Block (8 new partition walls)

- Five classrooms

Eastern Block (1 new partition wall)

- Classroom
- Two store rooms

Interior Second Floor

Western Wing (no alterations to layout)

- Six store rooms
-

- 6.2.5 As outlined above, the redevelopment works will be largely achieved through construction of stud partition walls to create the various schoolrooms. As yet, final details of fixing the partitions to the existing load bearing walls is unknown. It is expected that there will be some fixings to the original stonework by brackets and bolts. If required, drilling into the existing masonry walls will have a minimal but irreversible impact.

6.3 Assessment of Change

Exterior

- 6.3.1 The most significant historic element of Benton House is the external elevation which has, apart from the addition of the mid 20th century eastern block, been largely unchanged. The reinstatement of the main entrance within the central block and reinstatement of a sash window to the western block ground floor is considered to be beneficial to the understanding of Benton House as a fine Georgian country manor with symmetrical proportions.
- 6.3.2 The creation of a MUGA to the east of Benton House, on existing hardstanding, is located so as to minimise impacts to the Grade II Listed property, as well as Grade II Listed ha-ha to the south. Due to the small amount of groundbreaking necessary for the construction of the play area, a minor impact to the potential buried archaeological resource cannot be discounted.
- 6.3.3 Overall, the proposed works to the exterior of Benton House and its grounds are minimal and will retain the sense of a former country manor. It is considered therefore that this will not result in an adverse change to the Longbenton Conservation Area or the Land South of Benton House sub-area.

Interior – Ground Floor

- 6.3.4 As the original circulation and historic features of the interior have largely been degraded by fire and 20th century intervention, it is assessed that the interior can withstand a greater degree of change than the exterior.
- 6.3.5 The creation of individual rooms within the largely open-plan interior of the ground floor will reinstate a sense of movement through the property from the grand main entrance. While this will be a demonstrable change from the current baseline conditions in Benton House, it is considered that this will result in no change to the appreciation of the historic property and fabric.

Interior – First Floor

- 6.3.6 The proposals do not seek to alter much of the current first floor circulation; indeed, the circulation of the western block, which contains the largest amount of historic fabric and features will not be changed.
- 6.3.7 The first floor of the central block will be subdivided into classrooms. The division of the large spaces to the first floor will result in a very low adverse change to our understanding of the scale and grandeur of the space within Benton House.

Interior – Second Floor

- 6.3.8 The circulation and fabric of the second floor will not be impacted by the proposals and be used only as storage.

6.4 Impact Assessment

- 6.4.1 Overall, the current appearance of Benton House on the exterior is that of a former country manor and retains its sense of grandeur despite 20th century interventions and additions. The interior circulation and historic fabric however has been demonstrably altered by fire and 20th century redevelopment and therefore does not contribute as positively to the significance of the heritage asset as the exterior. The proposed development will refurbish the property and be respectful of areas that have been subject to the least change over the years, particularly the western wing.
- 6.4.2 While the proposed scheme of works will be a slight change to the setting of Benton House and the Grade II Listed ha-ha, through the introduction of a MUGA east of the property, the bulk of the changes will be beneficial to the significance of the Grade II Listed Building through the reinstatement of original features.
- 6.4.3 For these reasons, the proposals are considered to result in No Harm to the significance of Benton House, its associated ha-ha and Longbenton Conservation Area.
- 6.4.4 In line with 'No Harm' identified, the proposed development is found to be compatible with local heritage related planning policy S6.5 and National Planning legislation and policies governing the management of the historic built environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.5 Outline Recommendations

- 6.5.1 No further works with regards to cultural heritage are recommended. All decision regarding mitigation or further work however are the purvey of the Local Planning Authority.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1.1 AB Heritage has been commissioned by Outcomes First Group Ltd to produce a Heritage Statement covering proposed works at Benton House, Front Street, Longbenton, NE7 7XE. Production of the Heritage Statement has been phased and comprises Phase 1, a Statement of Significance that seeks to understand the significance of the site and Phase 2: a Heritage Impact Assessment which aims to assess any impacts to the setting and fabric of the Grade II Listed Benton House.
- 7.1.2 The proposed scheme of works is for the redevelopment of the Grade II Listed Benton House into a school for children with special educational needs. This will involve: the internal subdivision of the ground and first floors to create classrooms, a kitchen, dining room and office spaces; the removal of a late 20th century fire door and replacement with a timber-framed sash window, and; the reinstatement of the main entrance in the principal elevation. The proposals will remove poor quality 20th century fabric and fittings and the general refurbishment of the property.
- 7.1.3 The application site is located on the southern side of Front Street and forms the focal point of Longbenton Conservation Area. The site is bounded to the south by grounds characterised by hardstanding, a square lawn and a Grade II Listed ha-ha. The property is essentially divided into three elements: a central block, an eastern wing and a western wing. The central block and eastern wing are currently disused but formerly were part of a takeaway and, before that, Benton Conservative Club. The western wing is in use as two residences.
- 7.1.4 The exterior of Benton House has been largely unchanged since its construction, barring the addition of the eastern wing and the removal of the main entrance. However, the interior has been demonstrably altered and the original circulation has been rendered almost unreadable. However, some historic fabric does still survive, mainly within the western wing. This includes timber skirting, window shutters, fireplace surrounds and exposed beams.
- 7.1.5 Benton House is considered to be a Heritage Asset of Medium-High Significance while the interior is considered to be of Low Significance.
- 7.1.6 While the proposed scheme of works will be a slight change to the setting of Benton House and the Grade II Listed ha-ha, through the introduction of a MUGA east of the property, the bulk of the changes will be beneficial to the significance of the Grade II Listed Building through the reinstatement of original features.
- 7.1.7 For these reasons, the proposals are considered to result in No Harm to the significance of Benton House, its associated ha-ha and Longbenton Conservation Area.
- 7.1.8 In line with 'No Harm' identified, the proposed development is found to be compatible with local heritage related planning policy S6.5 and National Planning legislation and policies governing the management of the historic built environment.
- 7.1.9 No further works with regards to cultural heritage have been recommended.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Cultural Heritage Features Gazetteer

This gazetteer incorporates relevant archaeological, heritage and historic environment assets identified during a search of sources listed in Table 1 within 250m of the site.

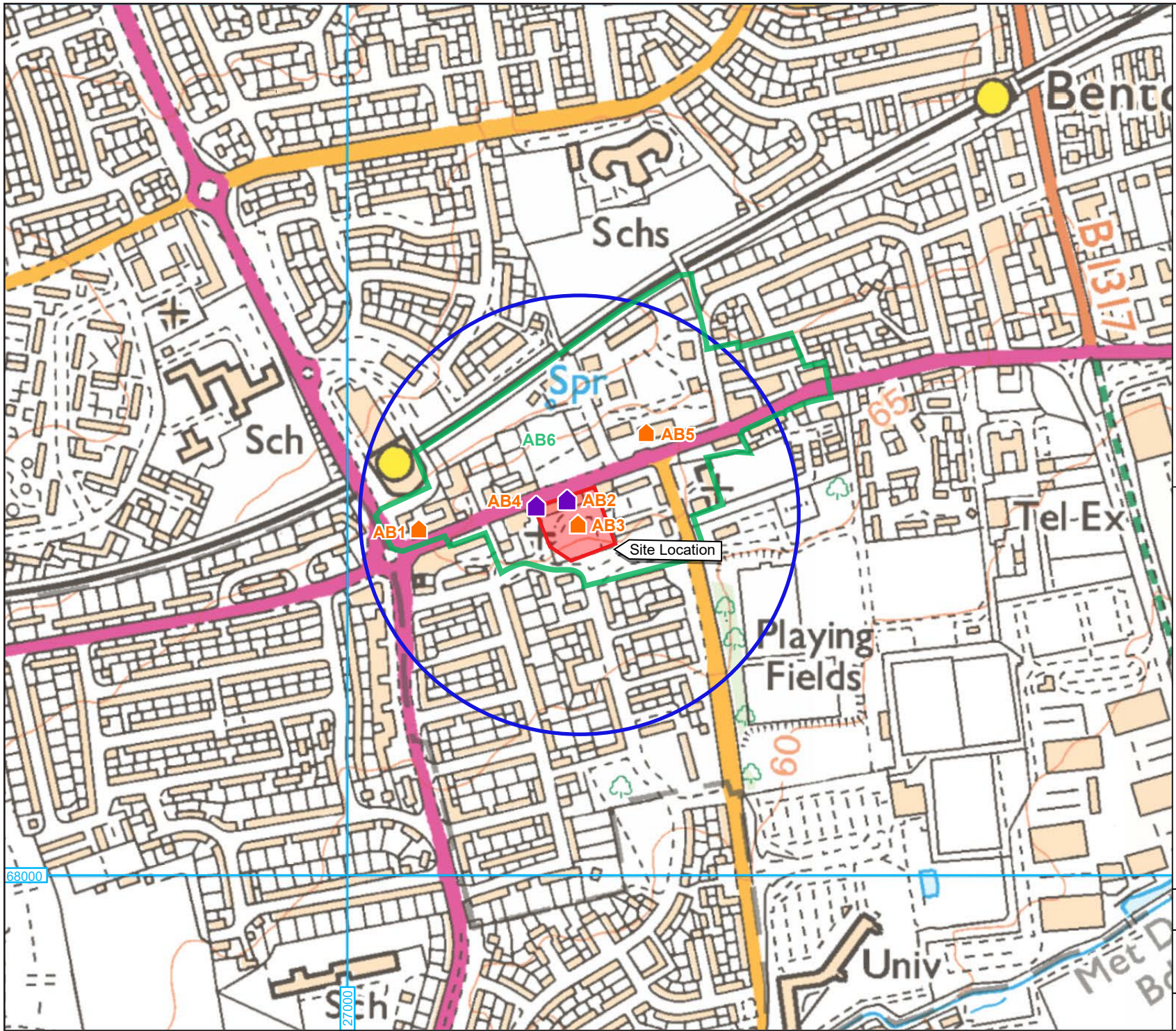
Abbreviations

GII LB – Grade II Listed Building

CA – Conservation Area

NHLE: National Heritage List for England

AB No.	Period	Description	Status	NGR	Ref. No.
1	Post Medieval	Manor House. Late 17 th /early 18 th century farmhouse, divided into flats in 1980s.	GII LB	NZ 27079 68398	NHLE: 1025389
2	Post Medieval	Benton House (former Conservative Club). Mid to Late 18 th century mansion. The proposal site.	GII LB	NZ 27250 68429	NHLE: 1354993
3	Post Medieval	Ha-ha south of Benton House. 18 th century, later used as an obstacle on early 20 th century golf course.	GII LB	NZ 27255 68414	NHLE: 1184194
4	Post Medieval	Obsidian Tattoo Shop (formerly Vogue Hair Stylist's Shop). Rear elevation of western wing of Benton House with 20 th century shopfront inserted at ground floor.	GII LB	NZ 27221 68420	NHLE: 1025391
5	Post Medieval	Ethel Williams Hall. Mid-18 th century with 19 th century alterations and additions.	GII LB	NZ 27341 68508	NHLE: 1354992
6	Multi-Phase	Longbenton Conservation Area. Area extends to the original extents of Medieval village. Later developed in 18 th century, with Benton House as the largest property, south of Front Street.	CA	Centred on: NZ 27207 68437	



KEY

- Site Location (inset)
- Site Boundary
- Search Area (250m)
- 🏠 Listed Building
- Conservation Area AB3

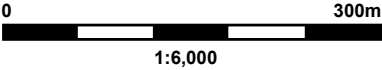
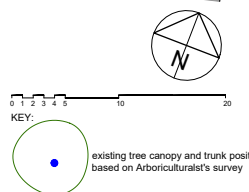


Figure 1: Site Location

Project:
Benton House, Longbenton

Date: 14/12/23 Job No: 62926

REVISIONS TO BE MADE TO THIS DRAWING				
NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	CHECKED
A	Initial drawing	10.11.23	MD	mjt
B	Final drawing	15.12.23	MD	mjt
C	Minor amendments	16.01.24	MD	mjt
D	Final drawing	17.01.24	MD	mjt
E	Final drawing	23.01.24	MD	mjt
F	Minor amendments	24.01.24	MD	mjt



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Front Street, Benton, Newcastle
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Drawing:
Existing Site Layout Plan

Scale:	1:250	1:500	1:1000	1:2000	1:5000	1:10000	1:25000	1:50000	1:100000	1:250000	1:500000	1:1000000
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Reference	Description	Date	Author	Reviewer
A	Site plan added	01.11.23	MD	MD
B	Final survey of site	10.11.23	MD	MD
C	Final survey of site	15.12.23	MD	MD
D	Final survey of site	16.01.24	MD	MD
E	Final survey of site	17.01.24	MD	MD
F	Final survey of site	23.01.24	MD	MD
G	Final survey of site	24.01.24	MD	MD



KEY:

- existing tree canopy and trunk position based on Arboriculturalist's survey
- indicates 2.4 metre high green palisade fence with matching gates

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Drawing No: Proposed Site Layout Plan

Scale	Date	Author	Reviewer	Project
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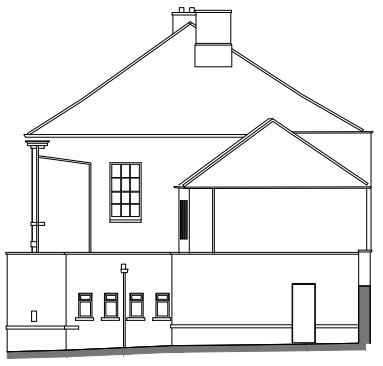
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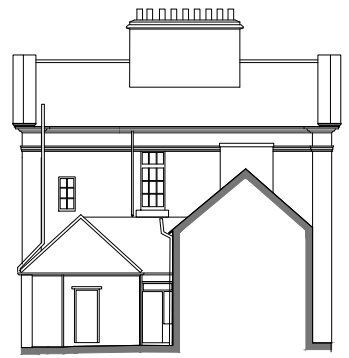
EXISTING ELEVATION FACING NORTH
0 1 2 3 4 5 10 20



EXISTING ELEVATION FACING SOUTH



EXISTING ELEVATION FACING EAST



EXISTING ELEVATION FACING WEST

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Drawn: Existing Elevations

Scale	1:500	Date	15/01/24	Author	JM	Check	MP	Project No.	123456789
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REVISIONS				
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2	Issue for Planning Application	24.01.24	MJD	MSJ



PROPOSED ELEVATION FACING NORTH

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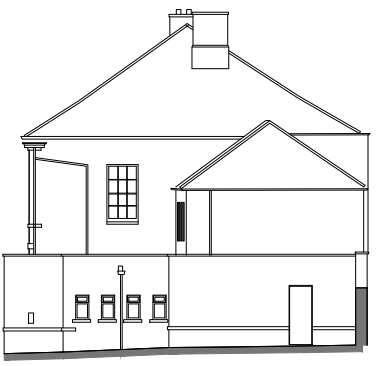


PROPOSED ELEVATION FACING SOUTH

not original door and ramp removed
new window to match existing, retained added
new stonework lintel and sill to match existing
frame profiles, panelling and details of window to match
existing retained windows to either side

original entrance and
door to be retained
door to be painted hardwood in a painted hardwood frame
pannelled and lettered as shown with polished brass knocker and letter box

new entrance doors
to replace existing



PROPOSED ELEVATION FACING EAST



PROPOSED ELEVATION FACING WEST

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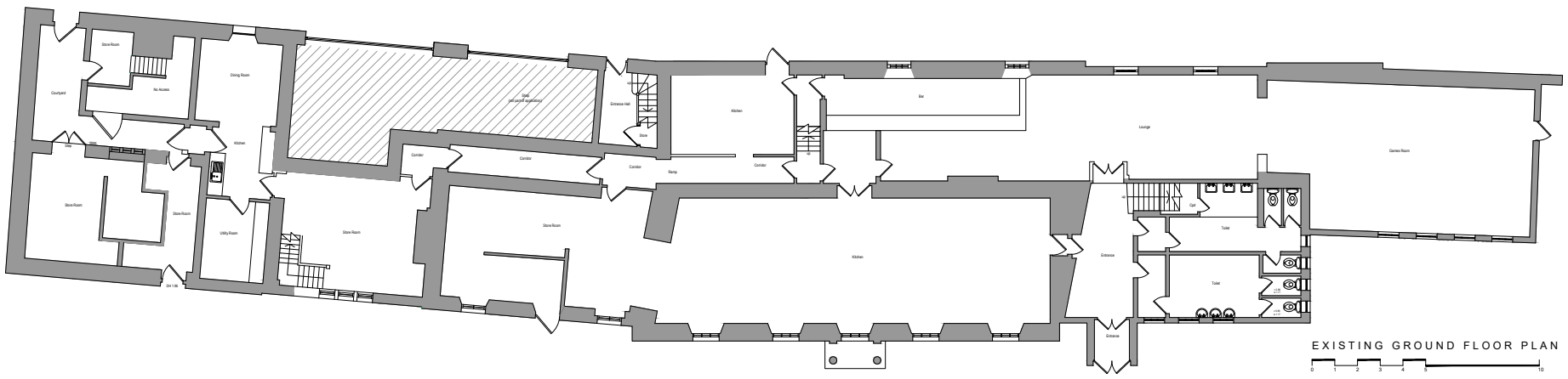
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Client: Outcomes First Group Ltd

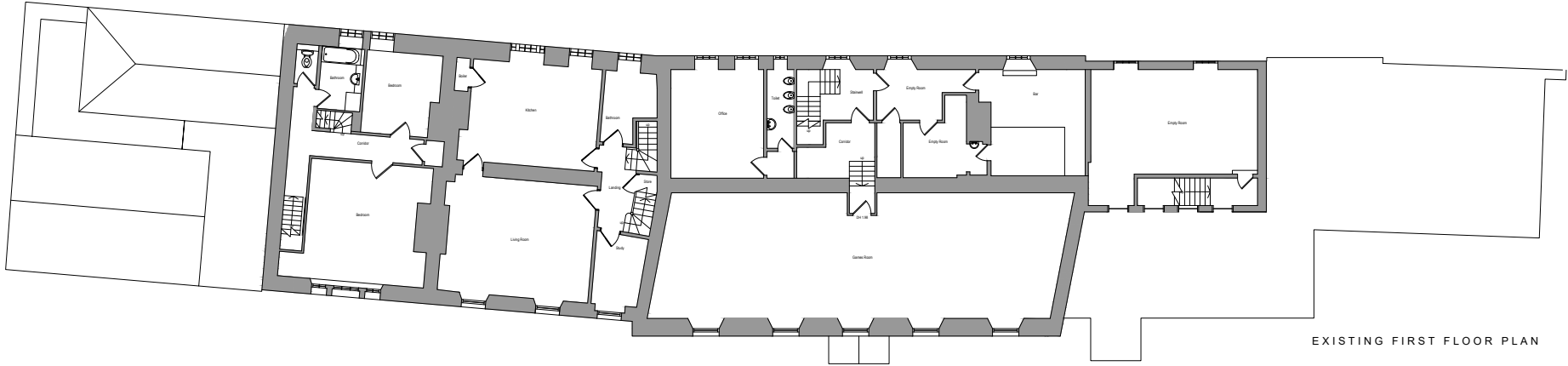
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Front Street, Benton, Newcastle NE7 7JU

Drawn by: Proposed Elevations

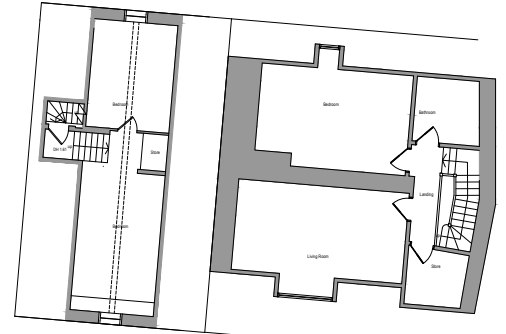
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EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN



EXISTING FIRST FLOOR PLAN



EXISTING SECOND FLOOR PLAN

PLANNING APPLICATION

space
architectural and interior design

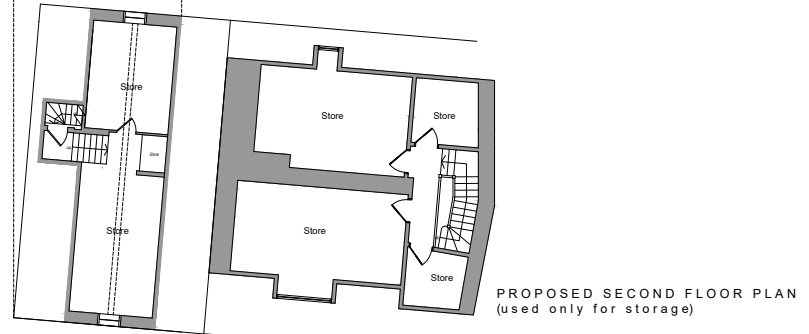
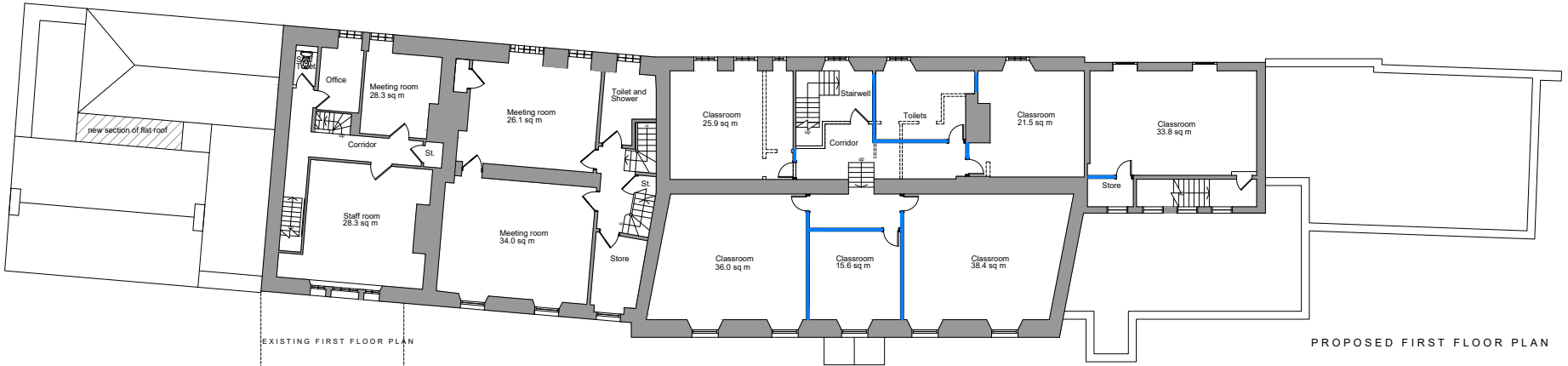
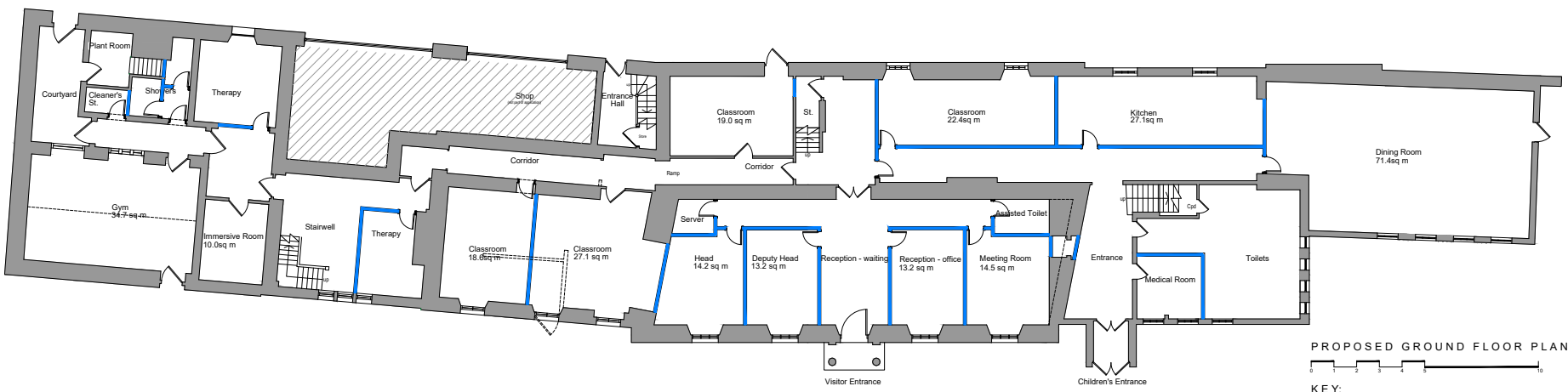
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Drawn by: Proposed Floor Plans



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