

PURPOSE OF THIS CONSULTATION

WELCOME

This consultation is presented on behalf of Churchill Living and invites you to view and provide feedback on the initial proposals to redevelop the former Hemdean House School site in Caversham. The consultation is made up of a number of information boards including the following -

- The Purpose of the Consultation
- Introduction to Churchill Living
- Planning Policy
- Housing Need
- Benefits of Older People Housing
- Location & Site
- Context
- Constraints & Opportunities
- Design Evolution
- Indicative Plans
- Preliminary Views
- Next Steps

We value your comments on the proposed development. The comments are considered following the consultation to help steer the proposals prior to a planning application being submitted to the Local Planning Authority. How Churchill Living have considered your comments will be detailed in a Statement of Community Involvement that will support any planning application.

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the comprehensive redevelopment of the vacant buildings and associated land that comprises the former Hemdean House School site (The Site) with the construction of 51 retirement flats (of one and two bedroom apartments), associated communal facilities, vehicular access, car parking and landscaping, the retention and conversion of the former School House into 10 (ten) open market starter-home flats, and the retention and conversion of the former Lodge into 1 (one) 2-bed cottage.

VISION

Churchill Living's vision for the site is to deliver a development that meets our customers' needs and the local need for retirement apartments whilst also contributing to the character of Hemdean Road, and making a positive contribution locally in terms of socio, economic and environmental benefits.

Our aim is to create a high quality development that embraces sustainable design, enhances the setting of the area and maintains the local vernacular.



INTRODUCTION TO CHURCHILL LIVING

WHO ARE CHURCHILL LIVING LTD?

Churchill Living (Churchill) is a privately-owned British Company, highly trusted and respected within the housing industry. Churchill prides itself on building beautiful purpose-built one and two bedroom retirement apartments in desirable locations across the UK, for those looking for an active, independent, safe and secure lifestyle. Our developments can be found in 23 counties throughout the UK.

Throughout our history we have undertaken over 200 developments and sold over 10,000 units. Through our group company, Churchill Estates Management (CEM) we retain the ongoing operation, management, care and responsibility for every apartment within our completed developments.

“With first class Customer satisfaction at the heart of the business, we’ve been changing retirement living for the better for over 20 years. We continually strive to be the retirement housebuilder of choice for those looking to enjoy independence, security and peace of mind.”

Our developments not only provide well documented benefits to our customers but also to the wider community. Our customers tend to shop locally providing much needed ‘daily shoppers’ for local shops and businesses.

“People living in specialist retirement homes typically experience reduced health risks, contributing to fiscal savings to the NHS and social care services of c. £3,500 per person per year.” Healthier and Happier – Homes for later Living, September 2019.



Typically, our customers downsize from a 3 or 4 bedroom family home. Therefore, for each retirement apartment occupied, a family home is released for sale into the wider housing market.

Churchill is an award-winning business having recently won a number of prestigious industry and wider business awards including;

- The **WhatHouse Awards**. Churchill has won the **GOLD Award in the ‘Best Retirement Home Developer’** category at the WhatHouse? Awards 2025. Before this category has been created, Churchill was the only retirement housebuilder ever to have been awarded ‘Housebuilder of the Year’.
- The **HBF Customer Satisfaction Survey**. Churchill retains the top ‘5 star’ status having been recommended by more than 90% of our customers for a 9th consecutive year in 2024.

Summarised below are some of Churchill’s key statistics;

- Over 10,000 apartments under management
- Seven regional offices around the country

Churchill has a full complement of in-house professionally qualified Architects, Town Planners, Surveyors and Engineers employed in the seamless delivery of projects through every stage of the process from site identification to construction completion and home sales. The business benefits from a wholly owned town planning consultancy, Planning Issues, which advises on planning related and public consultation matters.

TYPICAL DEVELOPMENT FEATURES



Owners' Lounge



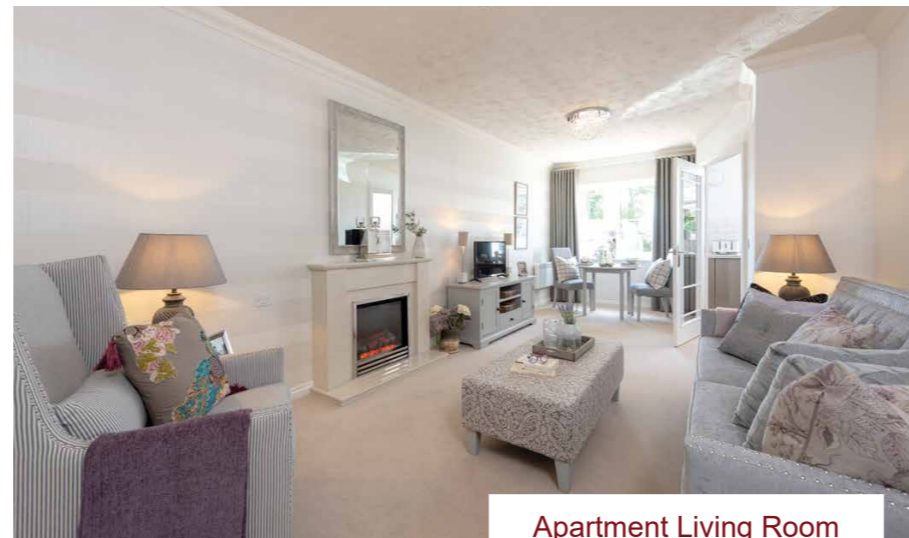
Coffee Bar



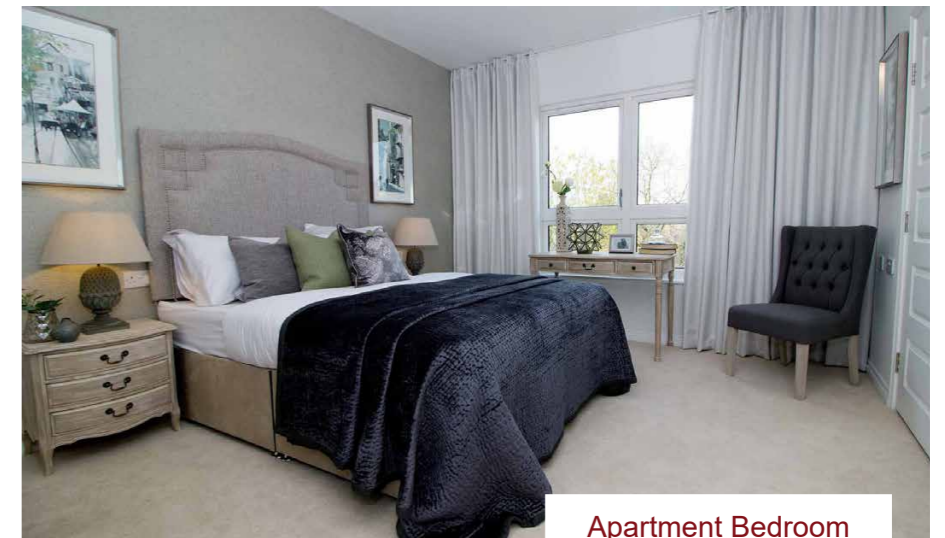
Guest Suite



Landscaped Gardens



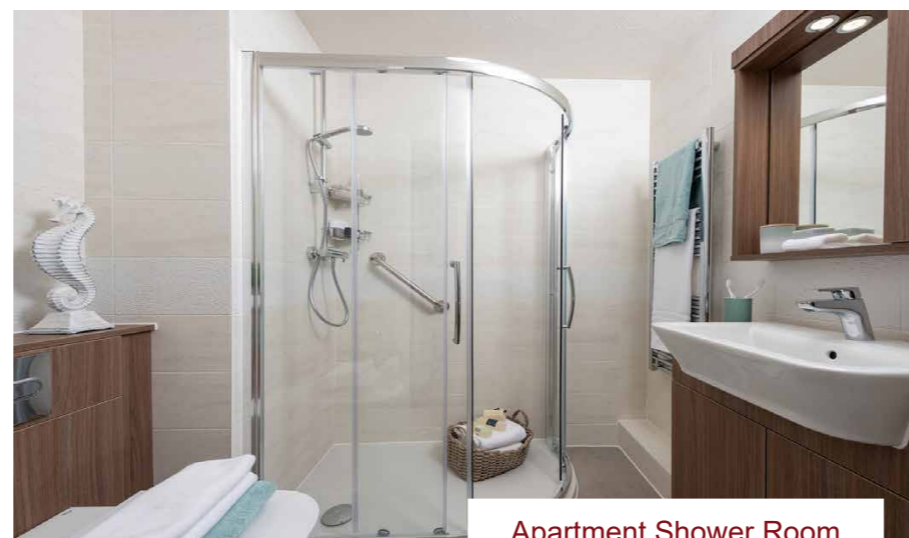
Apartment Living Room



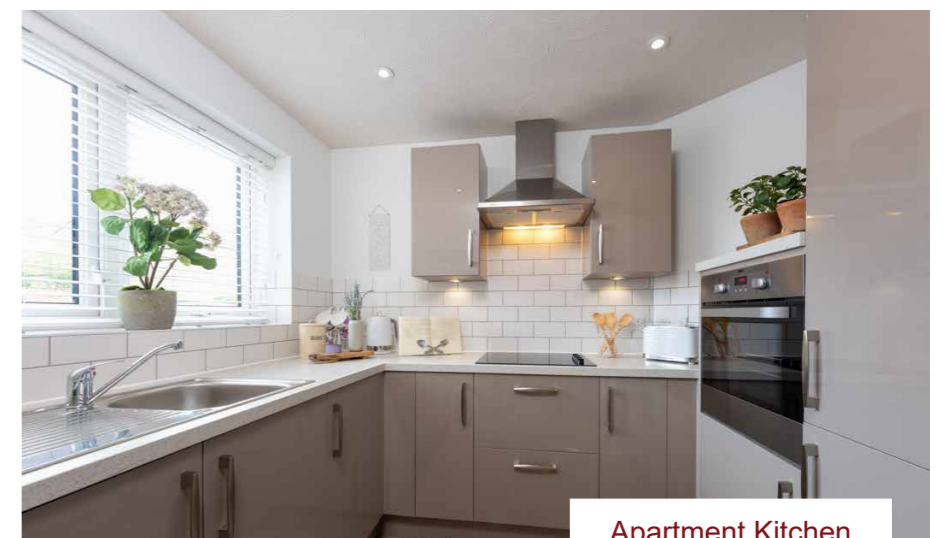
Apartment Bedroom



Apartment Dining Room/Second Bedroom



Apartment Shower Room



Apartment Kitchen

HOUSING NEED

A NATIONAL NEED

It has been widely acknowledged that the UK has a housing crisis. Not enough homes are being built to meet the needs of the population. National Planning Policy includes Planning Practice Guidance on 'Housing for older and disable people' to assist Councils in preparing planning policies on housing for older and disable people. This sets out that providing housing for older people is 'critical'.

People are living longer lives and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing. In mid-2016 there were 1.6 million people aged 85 and over; by mid-2041 this is projected to double to 3.2 million.

As recorded in 2021 Census, there are more people than ever aged 65 years and over in England. Subsequently, more than one in six people were aged 65 years and over on Census Day in 2021.

The 2022-based Subnational Population Projections identifies that in England, the population of over 65's is projected to increase from 17.6% to 18.7% of the total population between mid-2022 and mid-2032.



A LOCAL NEED

The Census 2021 data shows that the population of Reading has increased by 11.9% since 2011 to 174,000 people and is the 4th most densely populated area in the South East. There has been an increase of 17.2% in people aged 65 years and over.

A Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was undertaken in 2016 for Berkshire (including Reading).

The SHMA stated the area was expected to see a notable increase in the older person population, with the total number of people aged 65 and over expected to increase by 73% over the 23 years from 2013; this compares with overall population growth of 17% and growth in the under 65 population of just 7%. The projected growth in the population aged 65 and over is higher than that projected for both the region and England as a whole

The SHMA finds there were about 8,300 units of specialist housing for older persons in Berkshire. Based principally on the expected growth in population of older persons, the SHMA estimated a need for an additional 10,900 specialist dwellings for older persons over the 2013-36 period. The modelling showed an indicative split of specialist housing provision for older persons of 13% affordable, 87% market housing is recommended.

In Reading, the need equates to 1,189 specialist housing units for older people across the plan period.



BENEFITS OF RETIREMENT LIVING

SOCIAL

- Churchill Lodges offer significant opportunities to enable residents to be as independent as possible in a safe and warm environment.
- Retirement housing helps to reduce anxieties and worries experienced by many older people living in housing which does not best suit their needs by providing safety, security and reducing management and maintenance concerns.
- The Housing for Later Living Report (2019) shows that on a selection of wellbeing criteria such as happiness and life satisfaction, an average person aged 80 feels as good as someone 10 years younger after moving from mainstream housing into housing specifically designed for later living.

ECONOMIC

- Each person living in a retirement living homes enjoys a reduced risk of health challenges, contributing fiscal savings to the NHS and social care services of approximately £3,500 per year (Homes for Later Living September 2019).
- With circa 51 units proposed, at a ratio of 1.3 people per apartment, there will be around 67 occupants. At a saving of £3,500 each per year, this equates to a saving of £234,500 per year in local NHS and social care costs in comparison to mainstream housing. This is a significant economic benefit.
- A recent report entitled Silver Saviours for the High Street (February 2021) found that retirement properties create more local economic value and more local jobs than any other type of residential development. For an average 45 unit retirement scheme, the residents generate £550,000 of spending a year, £347,000 of which is spent on the high street, directly contributing to keeping local shops open.
- An average retirement scheme will support the following new jobs -
 - 85 construction jobs
 - 1 permanent job in repairs and renovations
 - 2.3 permanent jobs in management and care
 - 3.2 permanent jobs on the local high street (residents are basket shoppers and will do their shopping locally)

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Making more efficient use of land thereby reducing the need to use limited land resources for housing.
- Providing housing in close proximity to services and shops which can be easily accessed on foot thereby reducing the need for travel by means which consume energy and create emissions.
- Providing shared facilities for a large number of residents in a single building which makes more efficient use of material and energy resources.
- The proposal includes renewable technology through the use of solar panels to assist in the reduction of CO2 emissions.
- All areas of the building will be lit using low energy lighting and where applicable utilise daylight and movement sensor controls.



Our schemes free up family housing by older people looking to downsize - a typical 41 unit retirement development generates approx 92 moves in the chain



A development that maximises the use of previously developed land reducing pressure on greenfield sites



£3,500 P/A

Our developments bring health and social care savings - each person living in a Home for Later Life saves the NHS & Social Services approx £3,500 per year



Economic and social benefits of older people using local shops, services and facilities. Our Owners shop locally, supporting businesses and communities



Due to its sustainable location, retirement living housing reduces the need to own a car. Owners often shop locally on foot or by public transport



Our developments allow for independent, secure living and provide companionship which helps to reduce isolation and loneliness

CHURCHILL'S TYPICAL CUSTOMER



“

“The things I like best about Jubilee Lodge are the spacious and well laid out apartments, and the Owners’ Lounge which is a perfect place to socialise and meet new Owners.

“As Jubilee Lodge is so close to town, it is easy to walk to the shops, library, park, pubs and cafes – it’s a perfect location.”

“Also being local, I can still see my friends and go to my U3A meetings as well. It’s the best move I’ve made!

“I wanted to downsize, especially after seeing my late brother and sister-in-law move to a Churchill apartment in Thame. I went to stay with them in their Guest Suite and was impressed, so when a Churchill Lodge was being built near me I was very interested. I decided this was where I wanted to be and here I am!

“Tracey our Lodge Manager is invaluable, if you ever have any problems you just have to ask and she will do her best to sort them out. She is also great at organising events for everyone to enjoy and she is very friendly. It’s great fun here and we all have a good laugh.”

”



“

“Moving to our beautiful Churchill apartment has given us a new lease of life. Freedom to do what we want, when we want, and not having to worry about looking after a big house and its maintenance.

“We are safe and secure in the knowledge that security in our apartment is second to none. We’ve joined an amazing community of other Owners and can join in activities when we want to, but also have privacy should we need it. Having a Lodge Manager on site is also very helpful so that we can chat to them if we ever have a problem.

“When we decided to retire we discussed the possibility of downsizing to a bungalow, however it soon became clear that firstly we didn’t want to spend time refurbishing our new home, and secondly we wanted that sense of community. We came across Dovehouse Lodge and we have never looked back.”

“Dovehouse Lodge is in a perfect location. It’s so close to the lovely market town of Hitchin with so many coffee shops and restaurants, a market square where you can sit and enjoy many activities, a market several times per week where you can browse, and amazing walks in and around the vicinity.

“You don’t need a car as the town is only ten minutes’ walk away. Or if you want to stay closer to home Dovehouse Lodge has beautiful gardens where you can sit and enjoy the sunshine. I’ve taken up such a range of hobbies since moving here. I was never a big walker, but now I go out to enjoy the surrounding area with my husband all the time. My friends here go to lots of classes, like dancing, and I do too.

“When we told people we were moving to a retirement apartment, they often assumed we were moving to a care home. But Churchill offers totally independent living. True, there’s always someone to talk to if things aren’t going well and no one is ever forgotten about. But if you want to be left to your own devices, that’s fine too.”

”



“

“We are delighted with the peace and quiet and the wonderful outlook over the beautiful garden which we no longer have to care for.”

“We enjoy the communal activities and time spent with other Owners over coffee and meals. We enjoy the new peace of mind we have living here and the freedom that living in a Churchill development provides, together with the benefit of our kind Lodge Manager.

“Although we were already thinking of moving to a smaller, more manageable property from our old 5 bedroom house, Jean started to have some health issues which highlighted the reasons even more as to why a smaller property would suit us at this time in our lives.

“Our family were really supportive of our decision and could see the benefits to us of downsizing.”

”

PLANNING POLICY

READING BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN (Adopted 2019 and Reviewed 2023)

The Council's development plan consists of the Reading Local Plan (adopted in 2019), as well as the Local Plan Review which was undertaken in March 2023. The relevant policies are as follows -

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC3: Adaption to Climate Change
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN4: Locally Important Heritage Assets
- H1: Housing provision
- H2: Density and Mix
- H3: Affordable Housing
- H5: Standards for new Housing
- H6: Accommodation for Vulnerable People
- OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities

HOUSING LAND SUPPLY

The Council's Housing Implementation Strategy (April 2025) highlights that the LPA are able to demonstrate a 5.15-year housing land supply which has reduced from 6.11-years in 2024.

THE REDEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE

The principle of residential development on the site is considered acceptable given it will reuse a vacant brownfield site. The development will make efficient use of land in a sustainable location. It will provide much needed 1- and 2-bed apartments and cottages and help free up family housing elsewhere.

The principle is considered acceptable.

EMERGING READING LOCAL PLAN

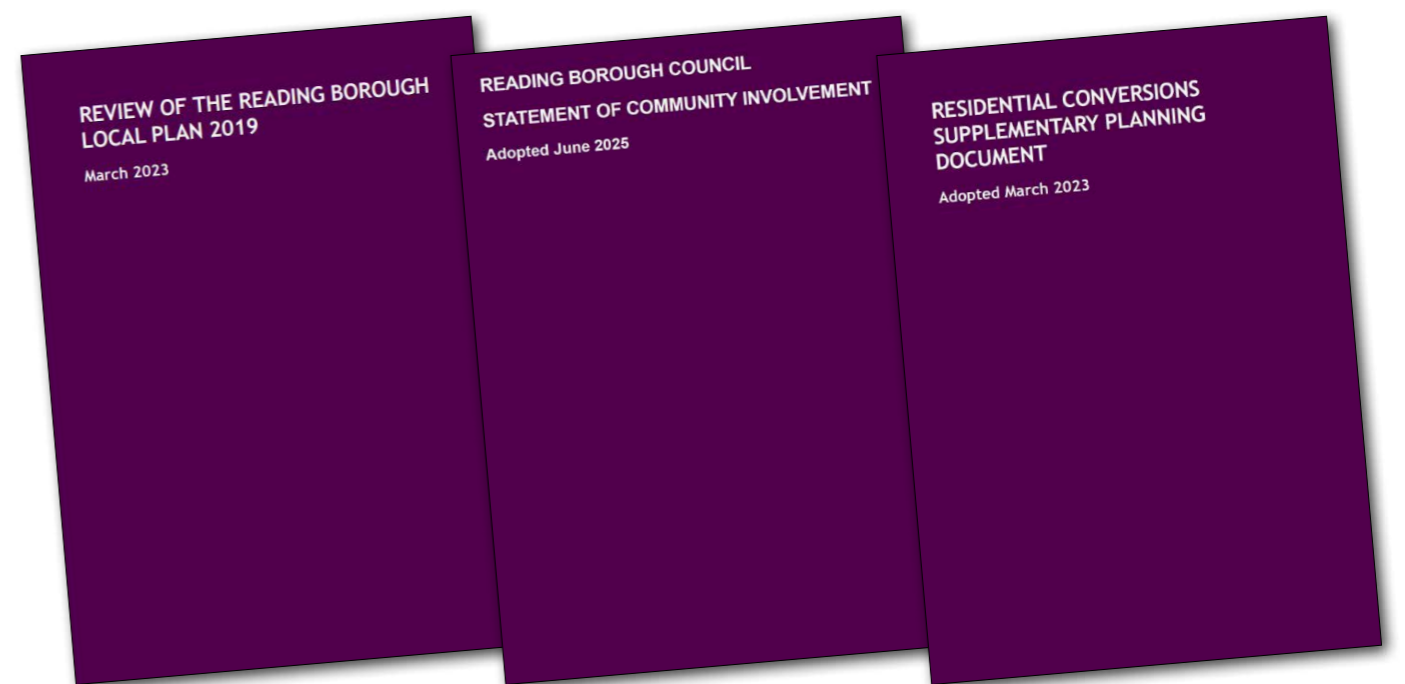
The Council submitted the Local Plan Partial Update to the Secretary of State on 9th May 2025 and is currently going through examination.

The emerging plan includes the site as a future residential allocation if no education or community use came forward. The policy (CA1h) states that -

The site will be "Continued education and community use of the site, or, if no longer required for education, change of use and development for residential. Development should -

- Contribute to providing enhanced bus priority on Vastern Road exiting the northern station interchange;
- Retain those buildings that make the most significant contribution of the character of the surrounding area;
- Avoid adverse effects on important trees including those protected by TPO; and
- Ensure appropriate back-to-back separation from existing residential.

It is considered that the proposed development will meet and accord with the criteria set out in the policy.



LOCATION MAP



SITE & CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

- 01**

 - The site currently comprises of the vacant former Hemdean House School site (shown within the red line).
 - Site area is approximately 2.66 acres / 1.08 hectares in area.
- 02**

 - The former School comprises of nine buildings, all different appearances, heights and ages.
- 03**

 - The former Lodge (Nursery) sits at the bottom of the site, is 1.5-storeys tall, and locally listed.
- 04**

 - The School House sits at the top of the site and, is 4-storeys tall, and is also locally listed..
- 05**

 - The site lies within a residential area with direct access into the site from Hemdean Road.
 - There is no predominant building facing material adjacent to the site. Red brick, buff brick and white render is prevalent. Roofs are predominately pitched red clay and grey concrete tile. The building typology is traditional, and the scale is domestic.
- 06**

 - The site is generally flat to the western side of the site, rising east-to-west by approximately one metre from Hemdean Road towards the hard play area in the middle of the site.
- 07**

 - The site rises by a further six metres from the hard play area to the School House. The western boundary is another five meters higher than the School House.
- 08**

 - The northern and southern site boundaries comprise of a 1.8m tall close board timber fence
- 09**

 - The western boundary comprises of a heavily vegetated, steep 45-degree banking.
- 10**

 - The eastern boundary comprises of a 2.4m metal security fence with several mature trees.
- 11**

 - The site does not lie within a Conservation Area and there is no relevant planning history on the site, other than previous works connected to the School.
- 11**

 - An area of steeply sloping dense woodland comprises the northern leg of the site.

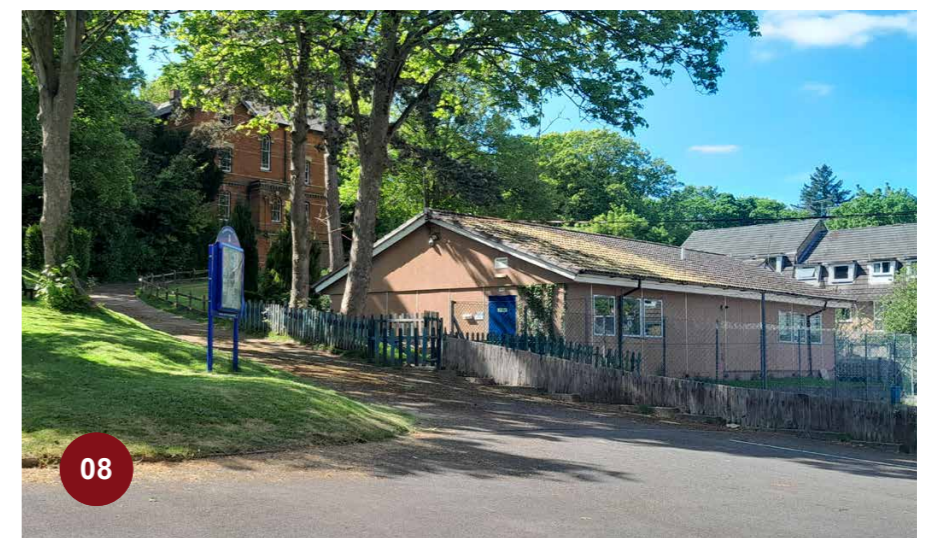
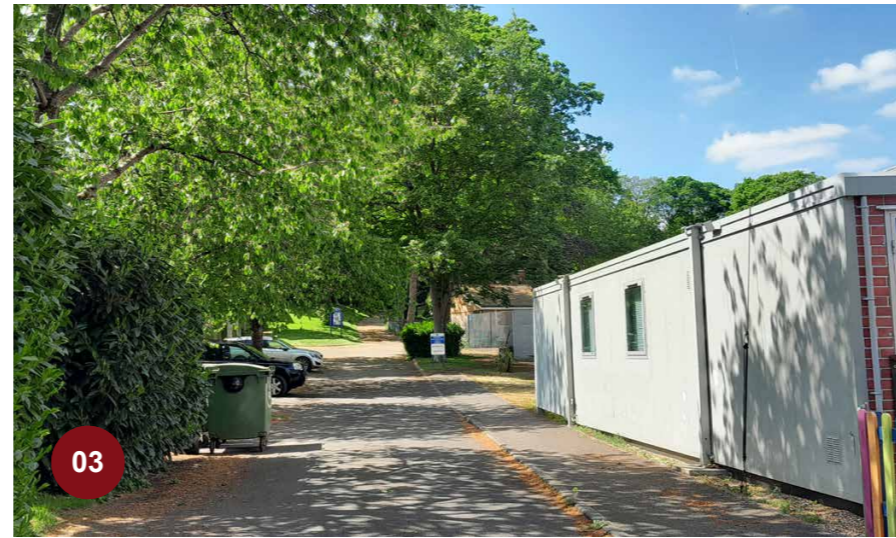
SITE PHOTOS

The images below are of the existing development along Hemdean Road in the setting of the site. They range in a variety of ages, heights and styles. They are predominantly semi-detached and terraces; scale is domestic.



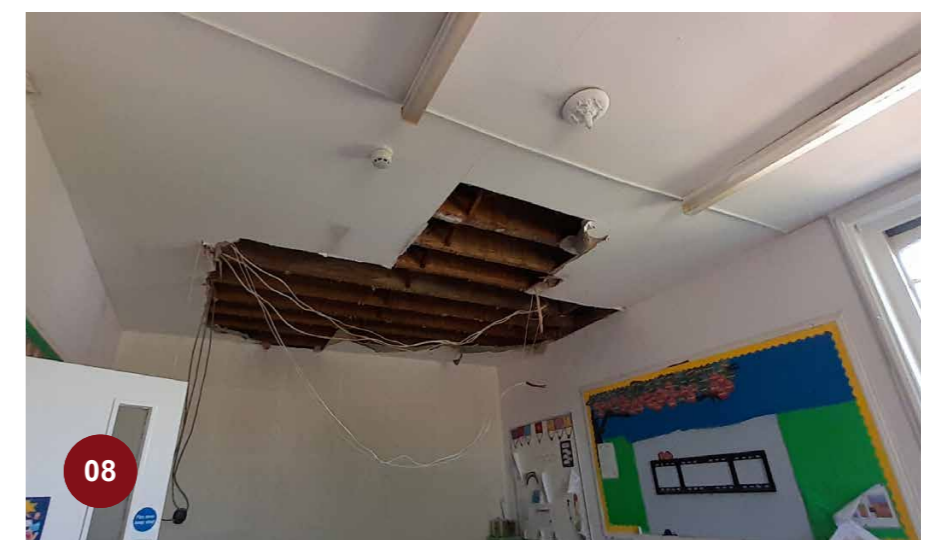
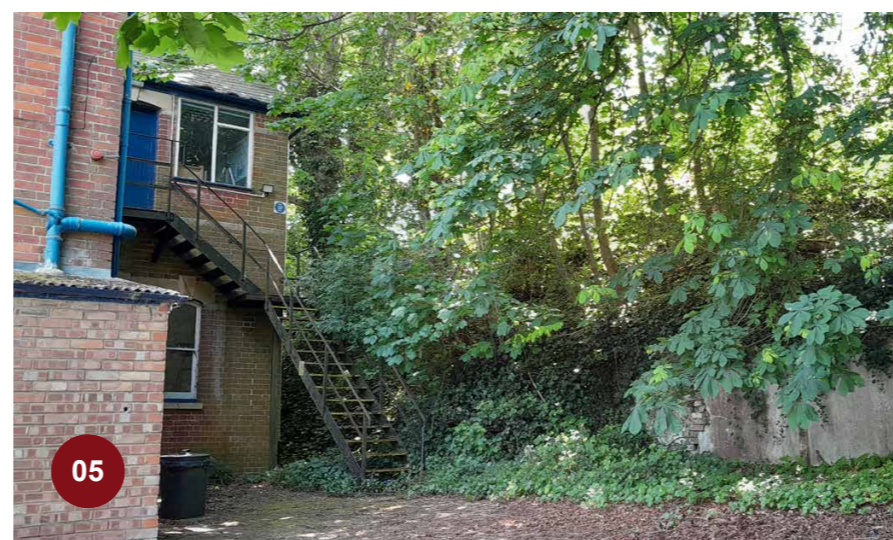
SITE PHOTOS

The images below are of the existing, now vacant Hemdean House School and Nursery, in the context and setting of its surrounds.



SITE PHOTOS

The images below are of the existing School House in the setting of the site.



SITE PHOTOS

The images below are of the existing school playing fields and hard courts in the setting of the site and its neighbours.



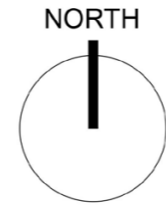
SITE PHOTOS

The images below are of the existing school buildings in the setting of the site and its neighbours.



SITE CONSTRAINTS

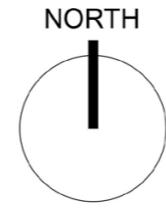
Below represent the physical constraints to the redevelopment of the site.



- 01  Site Boundary
- 02  Existing vehicular & pedestrian access
- 03  Existing poor quality buildings
- 04  Areas of open playing fields
- 05  Areas of open tarmac hardstanding
- 06  Noise / traffic pollution
- 07  Existing trees within the site
- 08  Existing locally-listed, high quality buildings
- 09  Narrow internal access road; no fire tender access
- 10  Steep slope in site
- 11  Discontinuation in the urban building line

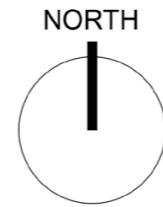
SITE OPPORTUNITIES

Below represent the opportunities for the redevelopment of the site.














- 01  Site Boundary
- 02  Retain vehicular & pedestrian access
- 03  Create new access point
- 04  Retain high quality buildings
- 05  Extend urban building line
- 06  Create new active frontages
- 07  Improved active and passive surveillance
- 08  Retain high quality trees
- 09  Improve internal access road to School House for fire tender access
- 10  Create new landscaped gardens
- 11  Create new areas of parking

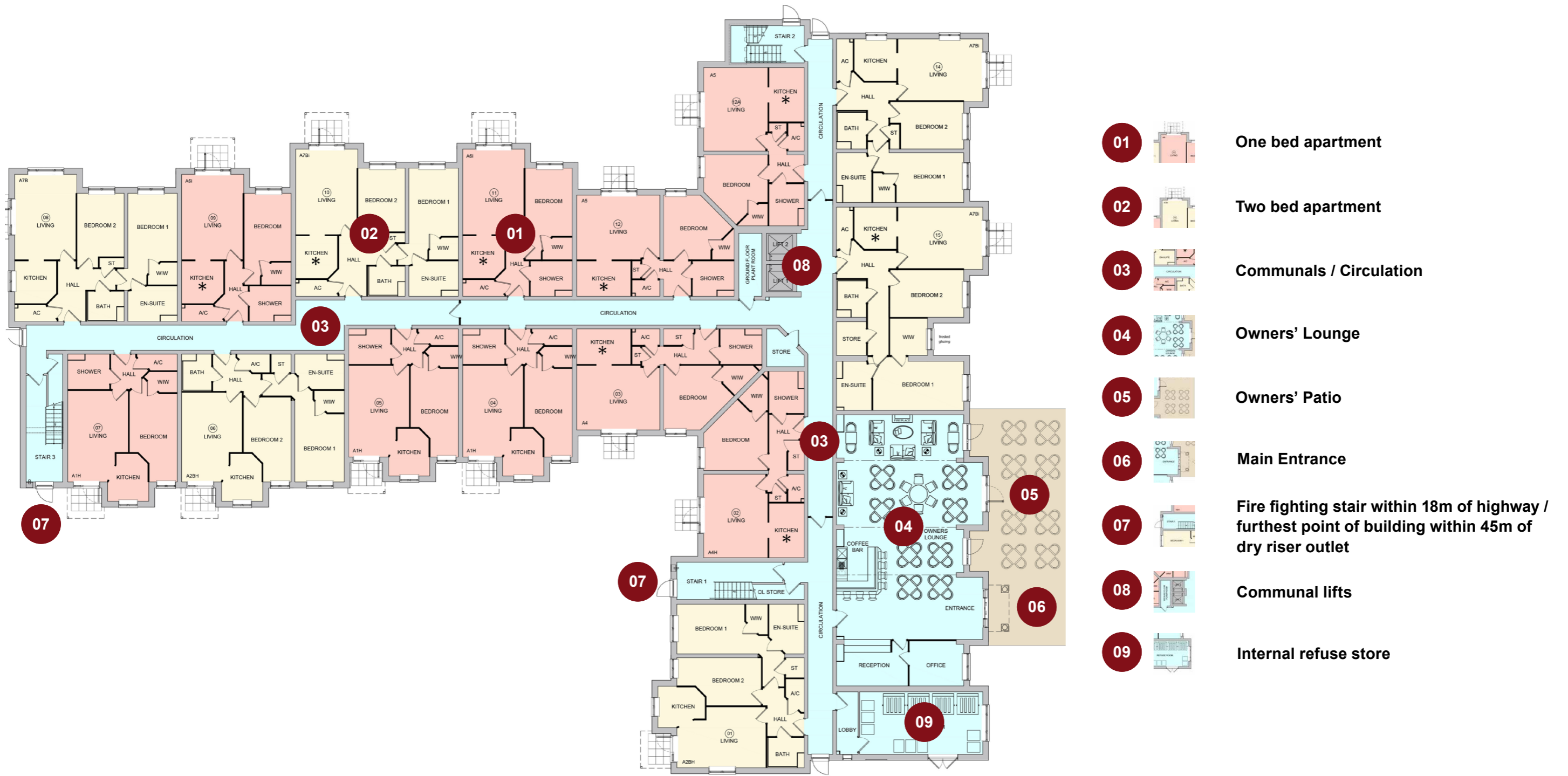
PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT












The proposal is to demolish 6 of the 9 buildings on the existing school site, the removal of 1 mature tree to Hemdean Road to form a new access point off Hemdean Road, a new stand-alone 3-storey retirement development comprising of 51 apartments with parking, re-grading the hard play area to form new landscaped grounds, retain and convert the former School House and Lodge into open market flats and a cottage with parking, and widen the access road to the School House for fire tender and refuse access.

- 01  **Proposed Retirement Living development, with dedicated parking**
- 02  **Lodge conversion into 2-bed cottage with gardens and parking**
- 03  **School House conversion, with separate parking and refuse pick-up**
- 04  **Proposed access point for retirement development**
- 05  **Retain existing access point for former Lodge and School House developments**
- 06  **New landscaped areas**
- 07  **Retained mature trees**
- 08  **Possible retaining structures**
- 09  **Car parking areas**
- 10  **Widened access road for improved vehicular, refuse and fire tender access**
- 11  **Covered buggy store**

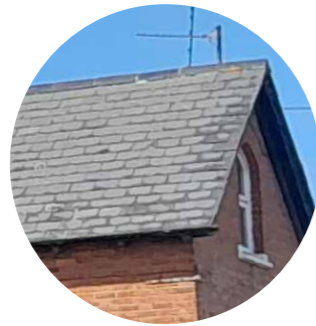
PROPOSED RETIREMENT LIVING LAYOUT



- 01**  **One bed apartment**
- 02**  **Two bed apartment**
- 03**  **Communals / Circulation**
- 04**  **Owners' Lounge**
- 05**  **Owners' Patio**
- 06**  **Main Entrance**
- 07**  **Fire fighting stair within 18m of highway / furthest point of building within 45m of dry riser outlet**
- 08**  **Communal lifts**
- 09**  **Internal refuse store**

INFLUENCES AND PROPOSED MATERIALS

Below are examples of materials and detailing that have been used in the local area of Caversham that are intended to be used as part of the proposed development.



Slate-effect roof tiles



Red clay-effect roof tiles



Red brick



White fascias



Red brick ribbons



Red-orange brick



Gable detailing



Stone portico



Contrasting heads and cills



White brickwork



White uPVC windows



Horizontal windows

INDICATIVE SOUTH ELEVATION



INDICATIVE NORTH ELEVATION



CONTEXTUAL MASSING MODEL

VIEW LOOKING NORTH WEST



VIEW LOOKING SOUTH DOWN HEMDEAN ROAD



VIEW LOOKING EAST



VIEW LOOKING AT SOUTH EAST



CONTEXTUAL MASSING MODEL

VIEW LOOKING SOUTH WEST



VIEW LOOKING NORTH WEST



VIEW LOOKING SOUTH EAST

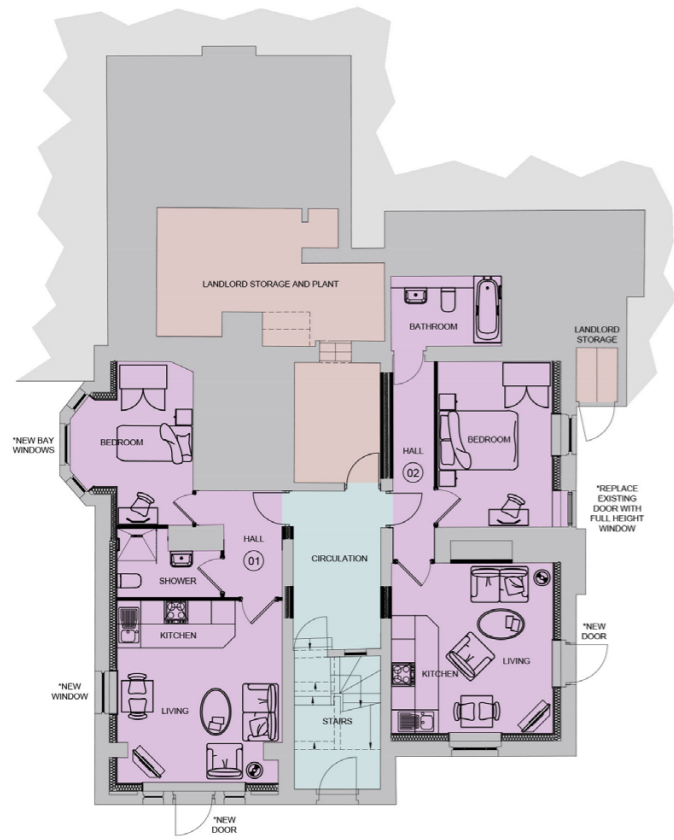


VIEW LOOKING NORTH EAST

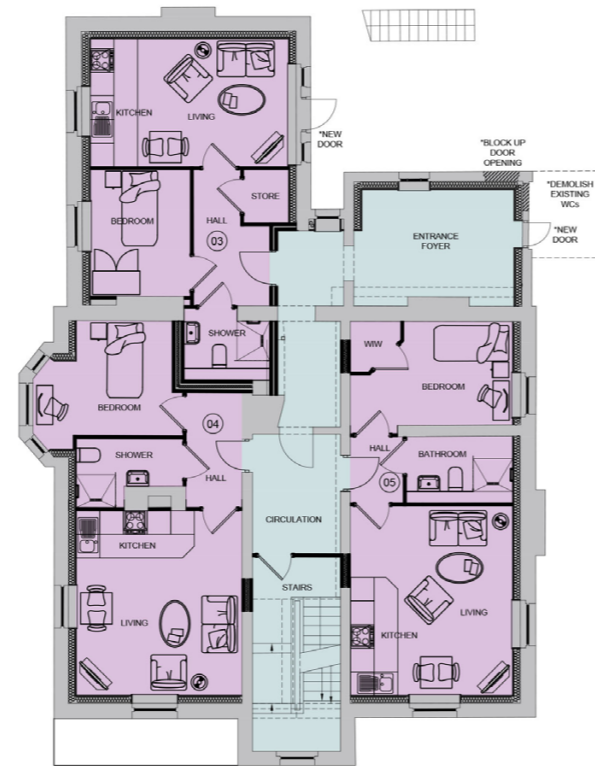


PROPOSALS FOR FORMER SCHOOL HOUSE FOR CONVERSION INTO 10 OPEN MARKET STARTER FLATS

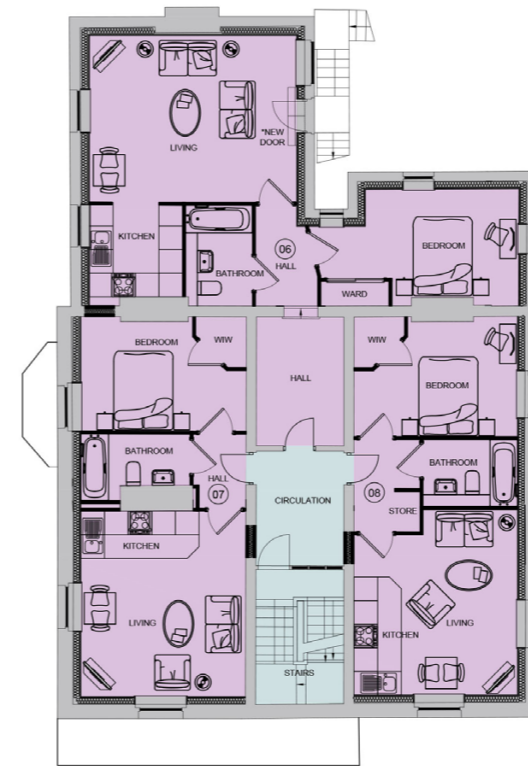
LOWER GROUND FLOOR



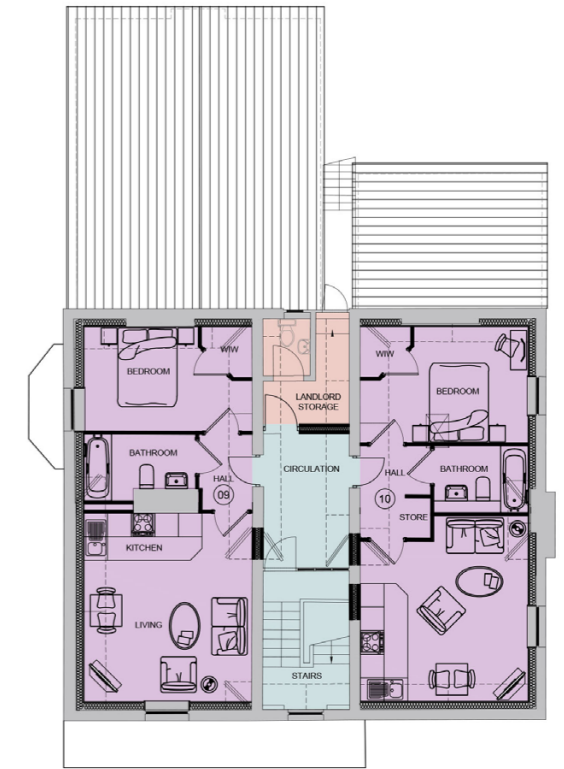
GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



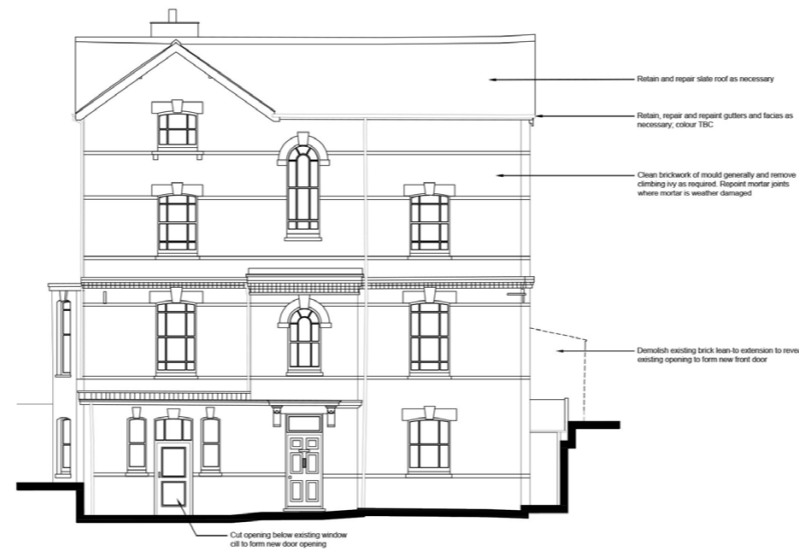
SECOND FLOOR



SOUTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

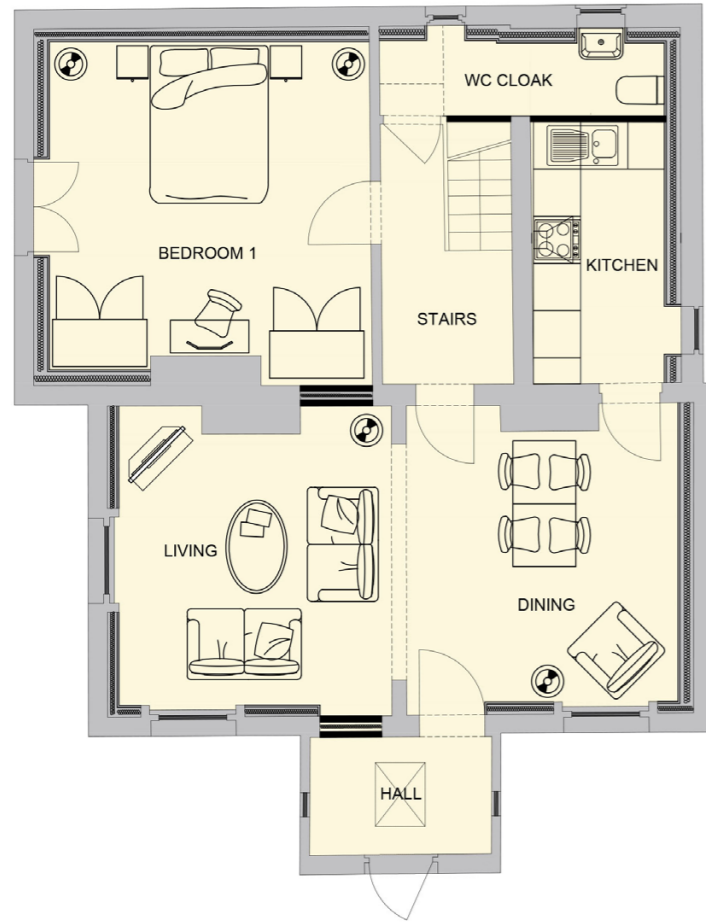


NORTH ELEVATION

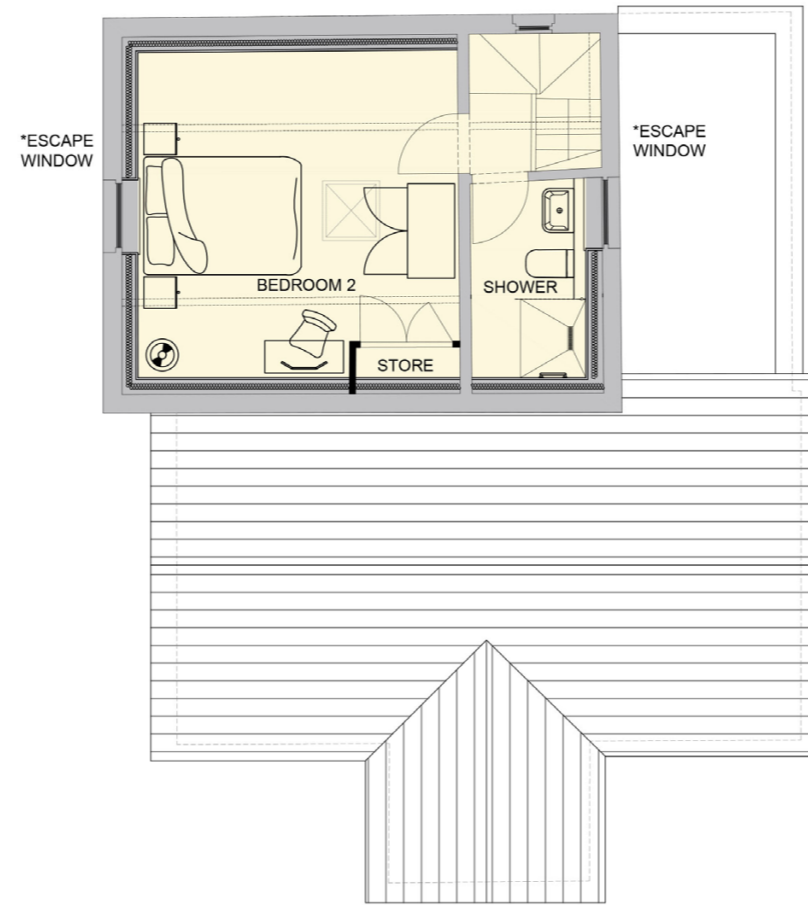


PROPOSALS FOR FORMER LODGE FOR CONVERSION INTO A COTTAGE

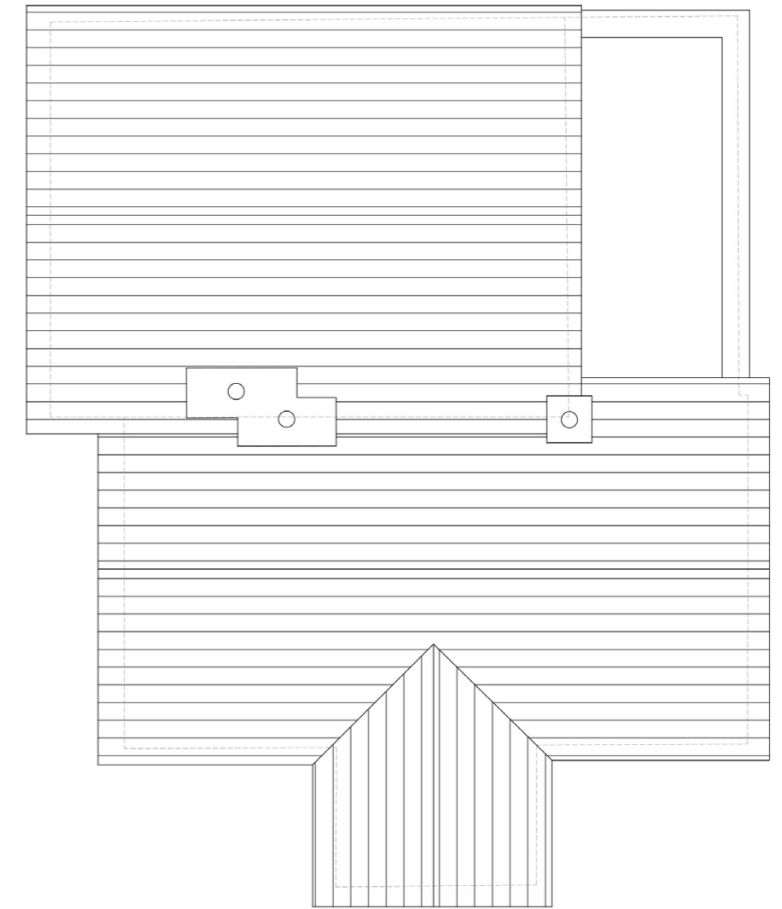
GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



ROOF PLAN



WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



HEMDEAN ROAD ELEVATION



NEXT STEPS

Thank you for taking the time to review our initial proposals for the redevelopment of the former Hemdean House School; your time is appreciated.

We would be most grateful if you could take the time to put any comments or questions you may have into the feedback form on the website.

Feedback received online will be considered by Churchill Living and where feasible inform further development of, or changes to the design and layout of the proposed scheme.

Once again, thanks for your time.

