

Stroud District Local Plan Review: Land south of Bristol Road, Stonehouse

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The following provides additional information regarding land being promoted by Robert Hitchins Limited (RHL) to the south of Bristol Road Stonehouse through the Stroud District Local Plan Review.

2 Constraints and Opportunities

- 2.1 Details were submitted for consideration through the Council's Strategic Assessment of Land Availability (site reference STO006). The assessment concluding the site to have 'future potential', noting:

"Development of housing or employment should be small scale and there would need to be green gaps retained to allow views towards the canal corridor and to emphasise the physical separation between the historic mills. In terms of housing, this site could be part developed for medium density development typically comprising a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings at an average density of about 30 dph, and the suggested yield is 70 units."

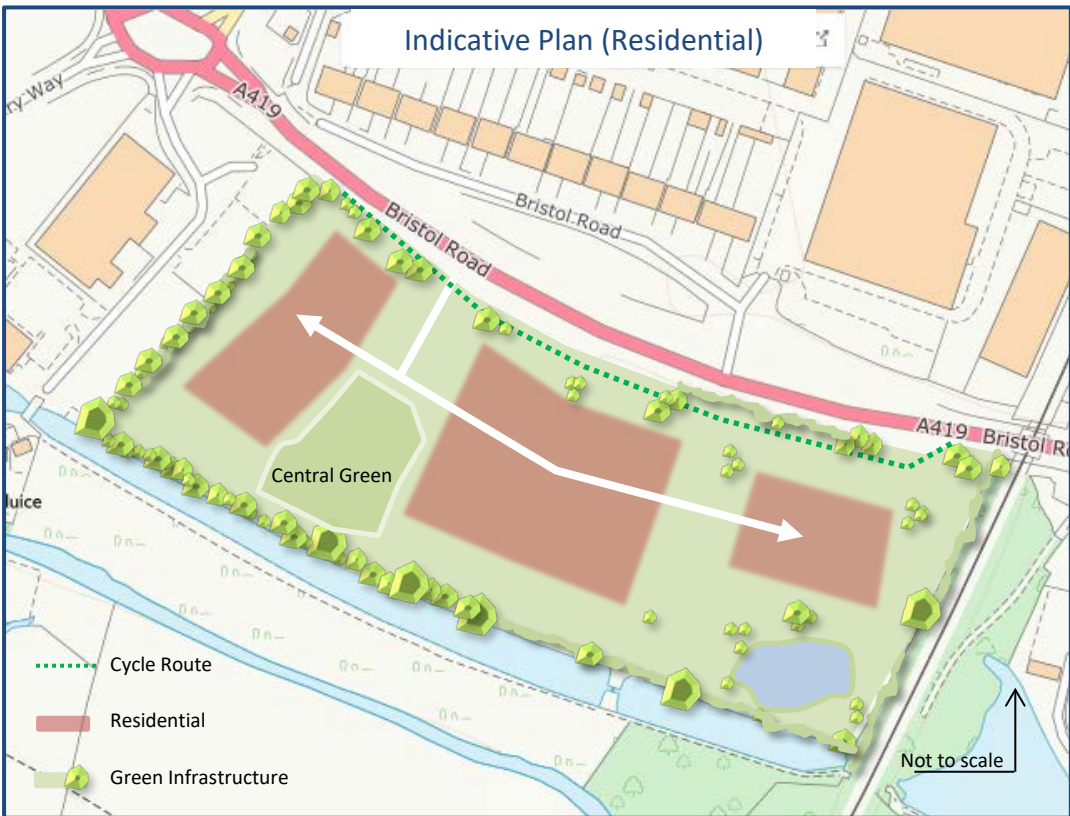
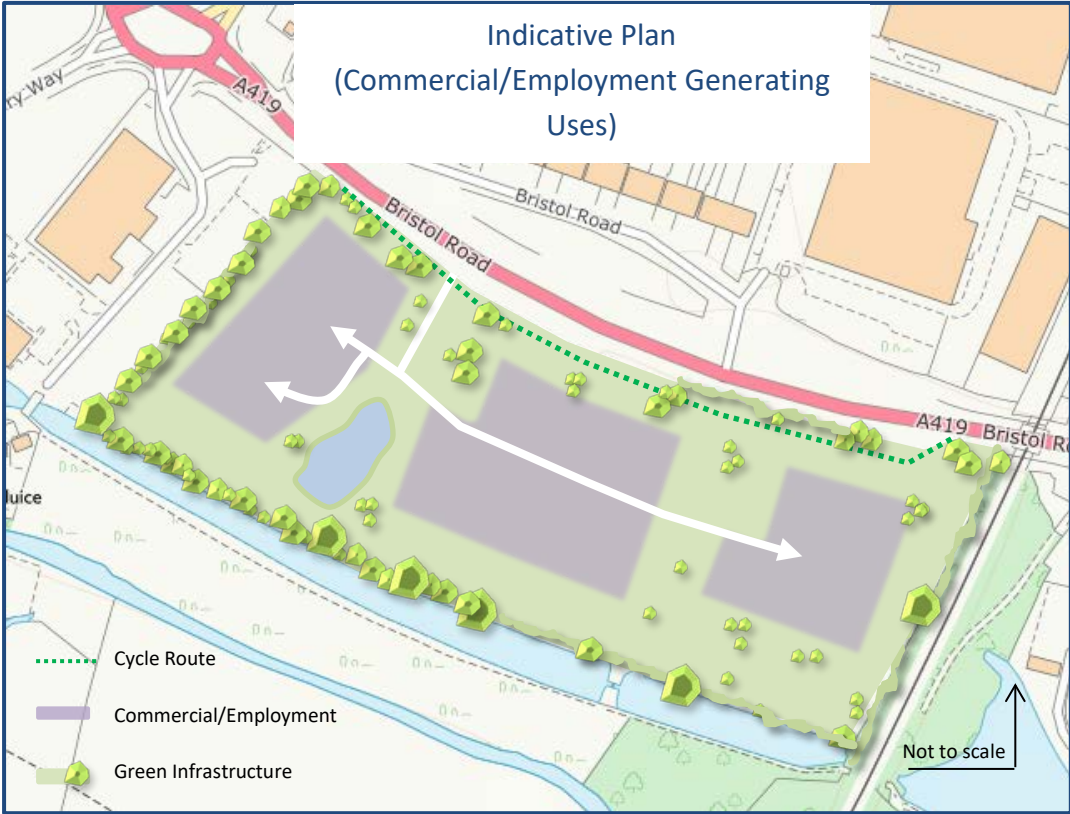
- 2.2 The Assessment acknowledges there are no known physical constraints preventing development of this land and that it is accessible with good access to local facilities and services.

- 2.3 The land is however located within the IHCA and the supporting Heritage Assessment appended herewith concludes: *"Overall, development of the site would be considered to cause minor less than substantial harm to the IHCA, at the low end of the spectrum of harm"*. The Council's Landscape Sensitivity Assessment identified this site as Medium sensitivity for both housing and employment uses. In considering both landscape and heritage considerations the SALA Assessment suggests:

"If housing or employment is considered, it should strictly follow the Conservation Area policies and guidelines and strong green gaps should be retained which allow views towards the canal corridor. It would however be very important that it addresses both the Bristol Road and canal edges in an appropriate way as well as providing gaps in the frontage."

- 2.4 Having regard to the heritage and landscape sensitivities two indicative layouts are put forward below; the first for residential the second for a 'mixed use' employment scheme.

- 2.5 Both layouts retain 'gaps' to allow views across and to emphasise physical separation between Bonds Mill, Beards Mill and Stonehouse Court.



3 Deliverability

3.1 The land is within the ownership of a highly experienced residential and commercial developer/promoter with a proven track record delivering many housing and employment developments within Stroud District including the adjacent Stonehouse Park development and the mixed use West of Stonehouse strategic site.

3.2 The land can be readily serviced and given its highly accessible location is well placed to deliver commercial and/or residential development at an early stage:

3.3 Housing Delivery Programme

Year	Event
0	Application for outline pp submitted
0.5	PP granted
2	Commence housebuilding
2.5	First occupation
3.5	45 completions
4.5	90 completions (site complete)

3.4 Employment Delivery

The land is well positioned along the A419 corridor linking the M5 to Stroud, a location that has already proven to be attractive to the business/commercial market as evidenced by the development at Stonehouse Park.

4 Summary and Conclusions

4.1 In summary land to the south of Bristol Road Stonehouse has the capacity to accommodate up to 90 dwellings or a mix of employment generating uses (up to around 10,000 sq m in a sustainable and highly accessible location. It is in the control of an experienced developer and can be brought forward quickly delivering jobs, new homes or a combination of both.

RHL August 2019

APPENDIX 1
Heritage Assessment: Pegasus Group August 2019

LAND SOUTH OF BRISTOL ROAD,
STONEHOUSE

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

PREPARED BY PEGASUS GROUP
ON BEHALF OF ROBERT HITCHINS LTD

P19-0284 | AUGUST 2019

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Pegasus Group

Pegasus House | Querns Business Centre | Whitworth Road | Cirencester | Gloucestershire | GL7 1RT

T 01285 641717 | **F** 01285 642348 | **W** www.pegasusgroup.co.uk

Birmingham | Bracknell | Bristol | Cambridge | Cirencester | East Midlands | Leeds | Liverpool | London | Manchester | Newcastle | Peterborough

DESIGN | **ENVIRONMENT** | **PLANNING** | **ECONOMICS** | **HERITAGE**

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HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

LAND SOUTH OF BRISTOL ROAD, STONEHOUSE

ON BEHALF OF: ROBERT HITCHINS LTD

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

Pegasus Group

Pegasus House | Querns Business Centre | Whitworth Road | Cirencester | Gloucestershire | GL7 1RT

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Summary

Pegasus Group has been commissioned by Robert Hitchins Ltd to carry out a Heritage Assessment of proposed built development on land south of Bristol Road, Stroud, Gloucestershire.

The site is located within the Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA) and, as such, the site has been assessed in terms of its contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The site is considered to make only a minor contribution to the character and appearance of the IHCA; derived from the site's historic and aesthetic values, being historic agricultural land that is open space next to the Stroudwater Canal. However, its contribution has been diminished by the realignment and expansion of Bristol Road, and modern industrial and commercial development to the north

and west, which have undermined the aesthetic and historic values of the site and, by extension, the IHCA. New built form within the site would not obstruct any key views within, towards or out from the IHCA. Overall, development of the site would be considered to cause minor less than substantial harm to the IHCA, at the low end of this spectrum of harm.

A proportionate level of setting assessment has been carried out to determine whether the site contributes to the significance of any nearby designated heritage assets through setting. It is concluded that no heritage assets include the site as part of their setting, and thus built development of the site would cause no harm to the significance of the heritage assets in the vicinity of the site.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Pegasus Group have been commissioned by Robert Hitchins Ltd to carry out a Heritage Assessment of proposed built development on land south of Bristol Road, Stonehouse, as shown on the Site Location Plan (Plate 1).
- 1.2 The site is an open agricultural field located within the Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA). It is accessible from a private track off Bristol Road (A419). The Stroudwater Canal runs parallel with the site to the south and a railway line and embankment run along the eastern boundary.
- 1.3 This Heritage Assessment provides information with regards to the significance of the historic environment to fulfil the requirement given in paragraph 189 of the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF¹) which requires:
- “an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.”**
- 1.4 In order to inform an assessment of the acceptability of the scheme in relation to impacts to the historic environment, following paragraphs 193 to 197 of the NPPF, any harm to the historic environment resulting from the proposed development

is also described, including impacts to significance through changes to setting.

- 1.5 As required by paragraph 189 of the NPPF, the detail and assessment in this Report is considered to be *“proportionate to the asset’s importance”*.

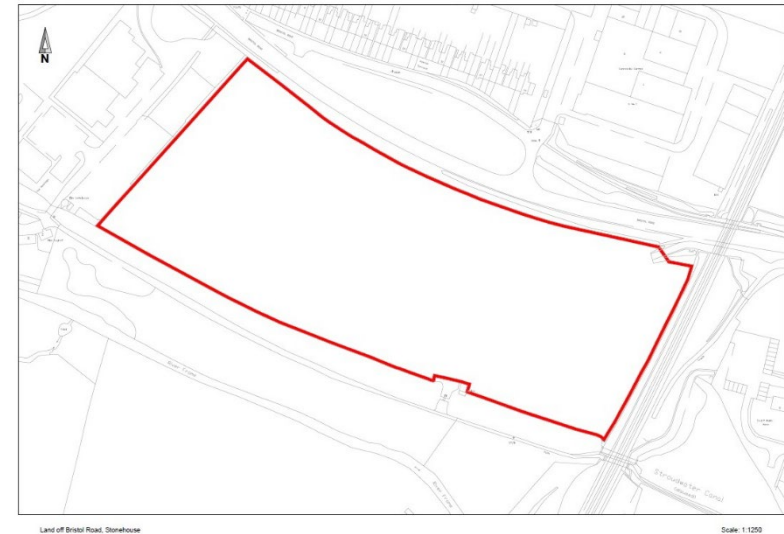


Plate 1: Site Location Plan

¹ NPPF, MHCLG, 2019

2. Site Description and Location

- 2.1 The site is a roughly rectangular open field which currently serves as agricultural land. It is located to the south of Bristol Road (A419) and is currently accessible via a private track. The Stroud Water Canal runs parallel with the site boundary to the south and the railway line passes the site along its east boundary. There is an area of modern commercial and industrial development to the west.
- 2.2 The majority of the site (all of the agricultural land) is located within the Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA).

Site Development

- 2.3 Historic mapping illustrates that the site has remained in agricultural use since at least the 18th century.
- 2.4 The earliest detailed cartographic source for the site is the c. 1730 Map of the Manor of Stonehouse (also known as the Levi Ball Map), which survives in the form of later photographs and copies (not reproduced due to copyright restrictions).² This shows the site within a larger open field labelled 'The Everlands'. Stonehouse Court (the manor house) and an associated vineyard are marked to the east, and Bristol Road (which follows a difference course from the present-day highway) can be seen to the north. Buildings associated with Bond's Mill can be seen

to the west and the River Frome to the south.

- 2.5 The 1840s Tithe Map demonstrates that the site remained part of an open field with no perceptible boundary changes (Plate 2). The Stroudwater Navigation (or Stroudwater Canal) was constructed between 1775 and 1779 and is clearly illustrated on the map, with a body of water (possibly a wharf connected to the manor house) separating the site from Stonehouse Court.



Plate 2: 1840 Tithe Map

² Gloucestershire Archives, Ref. PC/1850.

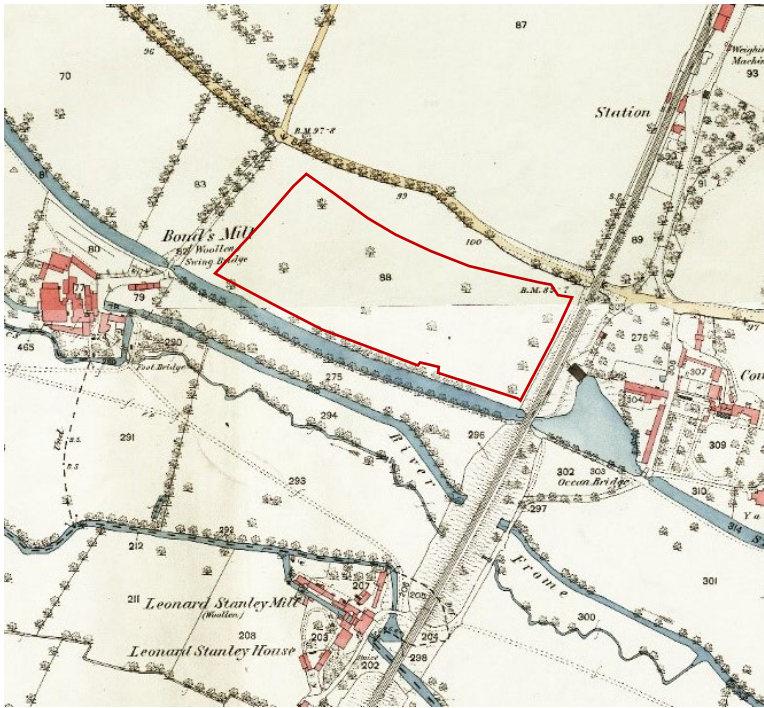


Plate 3: First Edition Ordnance Survey

2.6 The Bristol and Gloucester Railway was opened in 1844 and the railway, along with a new embankment, can be seen on the First Edition Ordnance Survey running along the east boundary of the site (Plate 3). This had the effect of physically and visually severing the site from Stonehouse Court. Bond's Woollen Mill and a swing bridge over the canal are clearly marked to the west of the site. No changes or developments within the site are depicted.

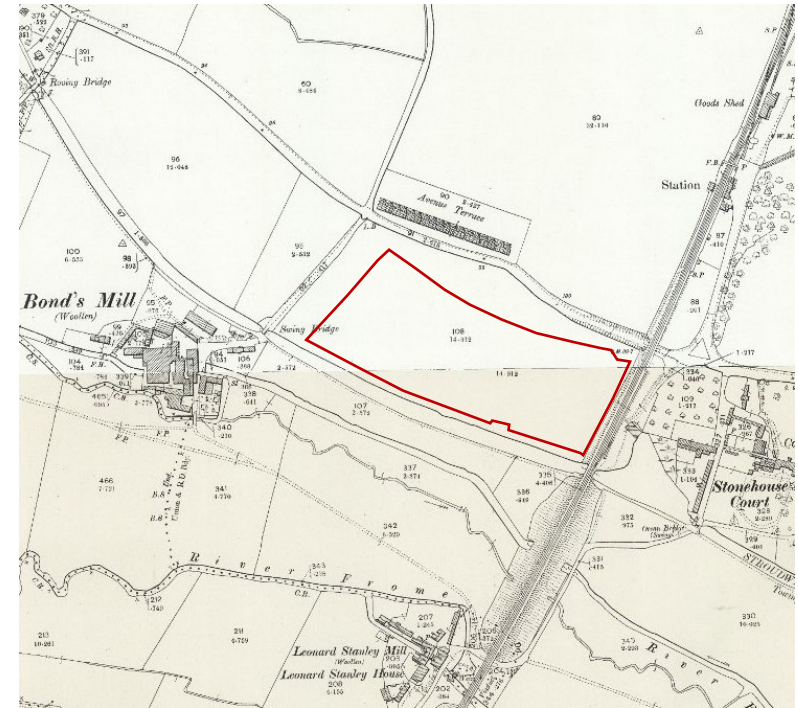


Plate 4: 1902 Ordnance Survey

2.7 The 1902 Ordnance Survey demonstrates no changes to the site (Plate 4). Beyond the site, the most notable development is the construction of a long row of terraced houses on the northern side of Bristol Road (labelled 'Avenue Terrace'). This corresponds with the row of terraces still extant today, which stand outside the IHCA. The map also illustrates built expansions to Bond's Mill.

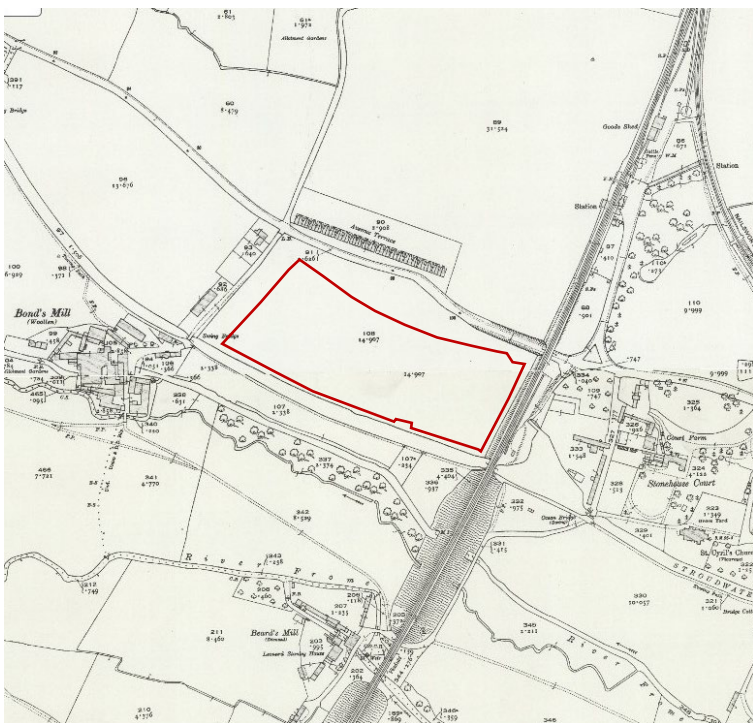


Plate 5: 1922-1923 Ordnance Survey

2.8 By the time of the 1922-1923 Ordnance Survey, new buildings had been erected along the western boundary of the site. Again, no notable changes are marked as having taken place within the site itself (Plate 5).

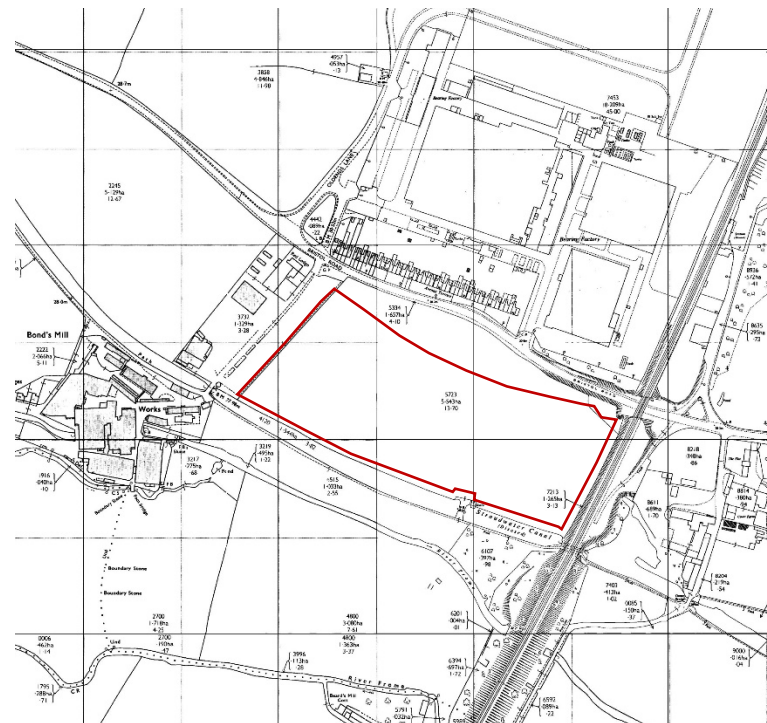


Plate 6: 1976-1977 Ordnance Survey

2.9 The 1976-1977 Ordnance Survey illustrates additional built development to the west of the site as well as substantial industrial development to the north, adjacent and behind Avenue Terrace (Plate 6).

2.10 In more recent years, the Bristol Road has been realigned and widened (1977-79) so that it now defines the northern boundary of the site. Additional industrial and commercial development has taken place to the north and west, and a new residential estate now lies to the north-east.

Planning History

- 2.11 Whilst the historic mapping described above indicates the development of the local area, a review of the recent planning history records held online by Stroud District Council has also indicated one application which is relevant to the current proposals, as follows:

S.13/1348/OUT

- 2.12 A planning application for residential development of the site (including up to 90 dwellings) was refused in 2014 on the grounds that:

“The site provides a significant contribution to the character of the IHCA by virtue of the sense of openness and the views into and out of this canal area.

The proposed development would have a substantial detrimental impact on the character of the Conservation Area as a result of the introduction of built form into the views and vistas into the Conservation Area. This creates a visual intrusion into the otherwise rural uninterrupted landscape of this part of the Conservation Area.”

- 2.13 An appeal was subsequently lodged by Robert Hitchins Ltd, but was later withdrawn in October 2015.

3. Methodology

3.1 The aims of this Heritage Assessment are to assess the contribution that the site makes to the heritage significance of the identified designated heritage assets, and to identify any harm or benefit to them which may result from the implementation of the development proposals, along with the level of any harm caused if relevant.

Site Visit

3.2 A site visit was undertaken by Pegasus Group on 8th August 2019, during which the site and its surrounds were assessed. Selected heritage assets were assessed from publicly accessible areas.

3.3 The visibility on this day was clear. Surrounding vegetation was in full leaf at the time of the site visit, and thus the potential screening that this affords was also considered when assessing potentially intervisibility between the site and surrounding areas.

Sources

3.4 The following key sources have been consulted as part of this assessment:

- **The National Heritage List for England for**

³ NPPF Annex 2, MHCLG, 2019

information on designated heritage assets;

- **The Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area Statement and supplementary documents; and**
- **Historic maps and satellite imagery.**

Assessment of significance

3.5 In the NPPF, heritage significance is defined as:

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. ³For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance”

3.6 Historic England’s Historic Environment Good Practice advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment⁴ (henceforth referred to as ‘GPA 2: Managing Significance’) gives advice on the assessment of significance as part of the application process. It advises understanding the nature, extent, and level of significance of a

⁴ Historic England, 2015, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment*

heritage asset. In order to do this, GPA 2: Managing Significance also advocates considering the four types of heritage value an asset may hold, as identified in Historic England's Conservation Principles⁵; **evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal**. These essentially cover the heritage 'interests' given in the glossary of the NPPF, which comprise archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest.

3.7 *Conservation Principles* provides further information on the heritage values it identifies:

Evidential value: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. This value is derived from physical remains, such as archaeological remains, and genetic lines.

Historical value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present - it tends to be illustrative or associative. Illustrative value is the perception of a place as a link between past and present people and depends on visibility. It has the power to aid interpretation of the past through making connections with and providing insights into past communities and their activities through shared experience of a place. By contrast, associative value need not necessarily be legible at an asset, but gives a particular resonance through association with a notable family, person, event or movement.

Aesthetic value: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. Aesthetic values can be the result of conscious design

or fortuitous outcome or a combination of the two aspects. The latter can result from the enhancement of the appearance of a place through the passage of time.

Communal value: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. This can be through widely acknowledged commemorative or symbolic value that reflects the meaning of the place, or through more informal social value as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence. Spiritual value may also be part of communal value.

3.8 Significance results from a combination of any, some or all of the values described above.

3.9 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are generally designated for their special architectural and historic interest. Scheduling is predominantly, although not exclusively, associated with archaeological interest.

Setting and significance

3.10 As defined in the NPPF:

"Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."⁶

3.11 Setting is defined as:

"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may

⁵ English Heritage 2008 *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*

⁶ NPPF Annex 2, MHCLG, 2019

change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”⁷

3.12 Therefore, setting can contribute to, affect an appreciation of significance or be neutral with regards to heritage values.

Assessing change through alteration to setting

3.13 How setting might contribute to these values has been assessed within this report with reference to *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets*⁸ (henceforth referred to as *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*), particularly the checklist given on page 11. This advocates the clear articulation of ‘*what matters and why*’.

3.14 In *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*, a stepped approach is recommended, of which Step 1 is to identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected. Step 2 is to assess “*whether, how and to what degree settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciate*”. The guidance includes a (non-exhaustive) check-list of elements of the physical surroundings of an asset that might be considered when undertaking the assessment including, among other things: topography, other heritage

assets, green space, functional relationships and degree of change over time. It also lists points associated with the experience of the asset which might be considered, including: views, intentional intervisibility, tranquillity, sense of enclosure, land use, accessibility and rarity.

3.15 Step 3 is to assess the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the asset(s). Step 4 is to explore ways to “*maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm*”. Step 5 is to “*make and document the decision and monitor outcomes*”.

3.16 Descriptions of significance will naturally anticipate the ways in which impacts will be considered. Hence descriptions of the significance of Conservation Areas will make reference to their special interest and character and appearance, and the significance of Listed Buildings will be discussed with reference to the building, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Levels of significance

3.17 In accordance with the levels of significance articulated in the NPPF, three levels of significance are identified:

- **Designated heritage assets of the highest significance**, as identified in paragraph 194 of the NPPF comprising Grade I and II* Listed buildings, Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, World Heritage Sites and Registered Battlefields (and also

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Historic England, 2017, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets*

including some Conservation Areas) and non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to Scheduled Monuments, as identified in footnote 63 of the NPPF;

- **Designated heritage assets of less than the highest significance**, as identified in paragraph 194 of the NPPF, comprising Grade II Listed buildings and Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens (and also some Conservation Areas); and
- **Non-designated heritage assets.** Non-designated heritage assets are defined within the Government's Planning Practice Guidance as "*buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets*"⁹.

3.18 Additionally, it is of course possible that sites, buildings or areas have **no heritage significance**.

Assessment of harm

3.19 Assessment of any harm will be articulated in terms of the policy and law that the proposed development will be assessed against, such as whether a proposed development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, and articulating the scale of any harm in order to inform a balanced

judgement/weighting exercise as required by the NPPF.

3.20 In order to relate to key policy, the following levels of harm may potentially be identified:

- **Substantial harm or total loss.** It has been clarified in a High Court Judgement of 2013¹⁰ that this would be harm that would "have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced"; and
- **Less than substantial harm.** Harm of a lesser level than that defined above.

3.21 It is also possible that development proposals will cause **no harm or preserve** the significance of heritage assets. A High Court Judgement of 2014 is relevant to this¹¹. This concluded that with regard to preserving the setting of a Listed building or preserving the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, 'preserving' means doing 'no harm'.

3.22 Preservation does not mean no change; it specifically means no harm. *GPA 2: Managing Significance* states that "*Change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged*". Thus, change is accepted in Historic England's guidance as part of the evolution of the landscape and environment. It is whether such change is neutral, harmful or

⁹ MHCLG, Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 039 (ID: 18a-039-20190723 Revision date: 23.07.2019)

¹⁰ EWHC 2847, R DCLG and Nuon UK Ltd v. Bedford Borough Council

¹¹ EWHC 1895, R (Forge Field Society, Barraud and Rees) v. Sevenoaks DC, West Kent Housing Association and Viscount De L'Isle

beneficial to the significance of an asset that matters.

3.23 As part of this, setting may be a key consideration. For an evaluation of any harm to significance through changes to setting, this assessment follows the methodology given in *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*, described above. Again, fundamental to the methodology set out in this document is stating ‘*what matters and why*’. Of particular relevance is the checklist given on page 13 of *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*.

3.24 It should be noted that this key document states that:

“setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation”¹²

3.25 Hence any impacts are described in terms of how they affect the significance of a heritage asset, and heritage values that contribute to this significance, through changes to setting.

3.26 With regards to changes in setting, *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* states that “*conserving or enhancing heritage assets by taking their settings into account need not prevent change*”.

3.27 Additionally, it is also important to note that, as clarified in the Court of Appeal¹³, whilst the statutory duty requires that special regard should be paid to the desirability of not harming the setting of a Listed Building, that cannot mean that any harm, however minor, would necessarily require planning permission to be refused.

Benefits

3.28 Proposed development may also result in benefits to heritage assets, and these are articulated in terms of how they enhance the heritage values and hence significance of the assets concerned.

¹² Historic England, 2017, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets (paragraph 9)*

¹³ *Palmer v Herefordshire Council & Anor* [2016] EWCA Civ 1061 (04 November 2016)

4. Planning Policy Framework

4.1 This section of the Report sets out the legislation and planning policy considerations and guidance contained within both national and local planning guidance which specifically relate to the application Site, with a focus on those policies relating to the protection of the historic environment.

Legislation

4.2 Legislation relating to the Built Historic Environment is primarily set out within the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* which provides statutory protection for Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.

4.3 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:

“In considering whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

4.4 In the 2014 Court of Appeal judgement in relation to the Barnwell Manor case¹⁴, Sullivan LJ held that:

“Parliament in enacting section 66(1) did intend that the desirability of preserving the settings of listed buildings should not simply be given careful consideration by the decision-maker for the purpose of deciding whether there would be some harm, but should be given “considerable importance and weight” when the decision-maker carries out the balancing exercise.”

4.5 A judgement in the Court of Appeal¹⁵ (‘Mordue’) has clarified that, with regards to the setting of Listed Buildings, where the principles of the NPPF are applied (in particular paragraph 134 of the 2012 version of the NPPF, the requirements of which are now given in paragraph 196 of the revised NPPF, see below), this is in keeping with the requirements of the 1990 Act.

4.6 With regards to development within Conservation Areas, Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

“In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”

4.7 Notwithstanding the statutory presumption set out within the

¹⁴ East Northamptonshire District Council v SSCLG (2015) EWCA Civ 137

¹⁵ Jones v Mordue Anor (2015) EWCA Civ 1243

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Area) Act 1990, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Policy Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)

- 4.8 National policy and guidance is set out in the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in February 2019. This updated the previous National Planning Policy Framework 2018, which in turn had amended and superseded the previous 2012 version. The NPPF needs to be read as a whole and is intended to promote the concept of delivering sustainable development.
- 4.9 The NPPF sets out the Government’s economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. Taken together, these policies articulate the Government’s vision of sustainable development, which should be interpreted and applied locally to meet local aspirations. The NPPF continues to recognise that the planning system is plan-led and that therefore Local Plans, incorporating Neighbourhood Plans, where relevant, are the starting point for the determination of any planning application, including those which relate to the historic environment.
- 4.10 The overarching policy change applicable to the proposed development is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This presumption in favour of sustainable

development (the ‘presumption’) sets out the tone of the Government’s overall stance and operates with and through the other policies of the NPPF. Its purpose is to send a strong signal to all those involved in the planning process about the need to plan positively for appropriate new development; so that both plan making and development management are proactive and driven by a search for opportunities to deliver sustainable development, rather than barriers. Conserving historic assets in a manner appropriate to their significance forms part of this drive towards sustainable development.

- 4.11 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and the NPPF sets out three “objectives” to facilitate sustainable development: an economic objective, a social objective, and an environmental objective. The presumption is key to delivering these objectives, by creating a positive pro-development framework which is underpinned by the wider economic, environmental and social provisions of the NPPF. The presumption is set out in full at paragraph 11 of the NPPF and reads as follows:

“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For plan-making this means that:

- a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;**

- b) **strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:**
 - i. **the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or**
 - ii. **any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.**

For decision-taking this means:

- c) **approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or**
- d) **where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:**
 - i. **the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or**

- ii. **any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole."**

4.12 However, it is important to note that footnote 6 of the NPPF applies in relation to the final bullet of paragraph 11. This provides a context for paragraph 11 and reads as follows:

"The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 176) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 63); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change." (our emphasis)

4.13 The NPPF continues to recognise that the planning system is plan-led and that therefore, Local Plans, incorporating Neighbourhood Plans, where relevant, are the starting point for the determination of any planning application.

4.14 Heritage Assets are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:

"A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets

identified by the local planning authority (including Local Listing)."

4.15 The NPPF goes on to define a Designated Heritage Asset as a:

"World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under relevant legislation.¹⁶" (our emphasis)

4.16 As set out above, significance is also defined as:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.¹⁷"

4.17 Section 16 of the NPPF relates to 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' and states at paragraph 190 that:

"Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict

between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal."

4.18 Paragraph 192 goes on to state that:

"In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness"

4.19 With regard to the impact of proposals on the significance of a heritage asset, paragraphs 193 and 194 are relevant and read as follows:

"193 – When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."

¹⁶ NPPF Annex 2, MHCLG, 2019

¹⁷ IBID

“194 – Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens should be exceptional;**
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.”**

4.20 In the context of the above, it should be noted that paragraph 195 reads as follows:

“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, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and**
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and**

- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and**
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use”**

4.21 Paragraph 196 goes on to state:

“Where a development proposal will lead to 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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”

4.22 The NPPF also provides specific guidance in relation to development within Conservation Areas, stating at paragraph 200 that:

“Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.”

4.23 Paragraph 201 goes on to recognise that *“not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance”* and with regard to the potential harm from a proposed development states:

“Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole” (our emphasis)

- 4.24 With regards to non-designated heritage assets, paragraph 197 of NPPF states that:

“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.”

- 4.25 Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to a Scheduled Monument will be subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.
- 4.26 Overall, the NPPF confirms that the primary objective of development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable development, not to hinder or prevent it. Local Authorities should approach development management decisions positively, looking for solutions rather than problems so that applications can be approved wherever it is practical to

do so. Additionally, securing the optimum viable use of sites and achieving public benefits are also key material considerations for application proposals.

National Planning Guidance

- 4.27 The then Department for Communities and Local Government (now the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)) launched the planning practice web-based resource in March 2014, accompanied by a ministerial statement which confirmed that a number of previous planning practice guidance documents were cancelled.
- 4.28 This also introduced the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which comprised a full and consolidated review of planning practice guidance documents to be read alongside the NPPF.
- 4.29 The PPG has a discrete section on the subject of the ‘*Historic Environment*’ which confirms that the consideration of ‘significance’ in decision taking is important and states:

“Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential

impact and acceptability of development proposals¹⁸

4.30 In terms of assessment of substantial harm, the PPG confirms that whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgement for the individual decision taker having regard to the individual circumstances and the policy set out within the NPPF. It goes on to state:

“In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset’s significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting¹⁹.”

While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later inappropriate additions to historic buildings which harm their significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the

¹⁸ MHCLG, Planning Practice Guidance, paragraph 007 (ID: 18a-007-20190723 revision date 23.07.2019)

¹⁹ MHCLG, Planning Practice Guidance, paragraph 018 (ID: 18a-018-20190723 revision date 23.07.2019)

potential to cause substantial harm” (our emphasis)

4.31 With regard to design, the relevant section of the PPG states at paragraph 02 that:

“Good design should:

- **ensure that development can deliver a wide range of planning objectives**
- **enhance the quality of buildings and spaces, by considering amongst other things form and function; efficiency and effectiveness and their impact on well being**
- **address the need for different uses sympathetically²⁰.”**

4.32 Paragraph 023 goes on to explain how to consider buildings and the spaces between them and reads as follows:

“Plans, policies and decisions can effectively manage physical form at a variety of scales. This is how planning can help achieve good design and connected objectives. Where appropriate the following should be considered:

- **layout – the way in which buildings and spaces relate to each other**

²⁰ MHCLG, Planning Practice Guidance, paragraph 002 (ID: 26-002-20140306 revision date 06.03.2014)

- **form – the shape of buildings**
- **scale – the size of buildings**
- **detailing – the important smaller elements of buildings and spaces.”²¹**

Local Planning Policy

- 4.33 Planning applications within Stonehouse are currently considered against the policy and guidance set out within the Stroud District Local Plan.
- 4.34 The Stroud District Local Plan was adopted in November 2015 and includes relevant policies relating to the historic environment.
- 4.35 Delivery Policy ES10, ‘Valuing our historic environment and assets’, states:

Stroud District’s historic environment will be preserved, protected or enhanced, in accordance with the principles set out below:

1. Any proposals involving a historic asset shall require a description of the heritage asset significance including any contribution made by its setting, and an assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on that significance, using appropriate expertise. This can be a desk based assessment and a field evaluation prior to determination where necessary and should

include the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record.

2. Proposals and initiatives will be supported which conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the heritage significance and setting of the Districts heritage assets, especially those elements which contribute to the distinct identity of the District.

These include:

A. the 68 sites of national archaeological importance (which are designated as Ancient Monuments), any undesignated archaeology of national significance, and the many buildings that are Listed as having special architectural or historic interest

B. the stone, bronze, iron age and roman settlements and remains; the medieval settlements including Berkeley Castle; historic houses; historic parks; gardens and villages

C. the townscapes of the larger towns such as Stroud where the industrial heritage influenced its historic grain, including its street layouts and plot sizes

D. the District’s historic market towns and villages, many with designated conservation areas, such as Berkeley, Wotton Under Edge, Minchinhampton, Painswick and Dursley.

3. Proposals will be supported which protect and, where appropriate, enhance the heritage significance and setting of locally identified

²¹ MHCLG, Planning Practice Guidance, paragraph 023 (ID: 26-023-20140306 revision date 06.03.2014)

heritage assets, such as buildings of local architectural or historic interest, locally important archaeological sites and parks and gardens of local interest.

4. Proposals will be supported which protect and, where appropriate, enhance key views and vistas, especially of the spires and towers of historic churches and mills.

5. Any harm or loss would require clear and convincing justification to the relevant decision-maker as to why the heritage interest should be overridden.

A full programme of work shall be submitted with the application, together with proposals to mitigate any adverse impact of the proposed development, and where appropriate, be implemented through measures secured by planning condition(s) or through a legal agreement.

4.36 Delivery Policy ES11, 'Maintaining, restoring and regenerating the District's Canals', states:

"The Council will encourage the restoration of and other necessary functional improvements to the District's canals. It will seek to improve access to and along the canals to encourage use for transport and for leisure / recreational purposes.

Development on the route of, or adjacent to, the Stroudwater Navigation, the Thames and Severn Canal or the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal must not prevent the improvement, reconstruction, restoration or continued use of the canals or towpaths.

All developments adjacent to the canals must respect their character, setting, biodiversity and historic value as well as have regard to improving and enhancing views along and from the canals. Environmental improvements to any canal's appearance will include enhancement of its historic and biodiversity value.

In assessing any proposals for development along or in the vicinity of any of the Districts three canals, the Council will have regard to any relevant adopted design guidance. Reasonably related financial contributions may be sought via Community Infrastructure Levy or, where appropriate, via legal agreements for contributions towards the improvement or restoration of the related canal and towpaths."

4.37 Delivery Policy ES13, 'Protection of existing open space', reads:

"Development proposals shall not involve the whole or partial loss of open space within settlements, or of outdoor recreation facilities, playing fields or allotments within or relating to settlements, unless:

1. a robust assessment of open space provision has identified a surplus in the catchment area to meet both current and future needs, and full consideration has been given to all functions that open space can perform

2. any replacement facility (or enhancement of the remainder of the existing site) provides a net benefit to the community in terms of the quality, availability and accessibility of open space or recreational opportunities.

There should be no harm to spaces which:

A. contribute to the distinctive form, character and setting of a settlement

B. create focal points within the built up area

C. provide the setting for important buildings or scheduled ancient monuments

D. form part of an area of value for wildlife, sport or recreation, including areas forming part of a 'green corridor'.

Local communities through Neighbourhood Plans shall designate Local Green Spaces which are of importance to them and are of particular local significance."

Stonehouse Neighbourhood Development Plan

4.38 The Stonehouse Neighbourhood Development Plan was adopted on 22nd February 2018 and incorporates policies relating to the heritage of Stonehouse.

4.39 Policy ENV4: Protecting the Local Heritage Assets of Stonehouse, states:

"Planning applications for the demolition, development or substantial alterations of buildings or structures defined as local heritage assets, including those identified in the Town Character Assessment (see Appendix 3), will be expected to show what consideration has been given to retaining; a)The asset itself. b) Its most distinctive and important features. c) The positive elements of its setting and immediate surrounds. d) The contribution the asset and its setting makes to the character of the local area.

Development proposals will only be supported where they demonstrate that:

i) they have complied with the Stonehouse Design Statement and Town Character Assessment;

ii) where relevant, they enhance the entrance to Stonehouse via the canal; and,

iii) if within the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA), that they have complied with the IHCA Management Proposals Supplementary Planning Document and IHCA Design Guide."

4.40 Policy ENV5: Protecting and Enhancing Stroudwater Canal, reads:

"The Cotswold Canals Trust's long-term vision of a navigable through-route to the Rivers Thames and Severn is supported. To help achieve this vision, to improve accessibility and to protect the canal and environs as a valuable local asset:

i) Opportunities to develop and improve the canal and its towpath as a travel corridor for pedestrians, mobility scooters, cyclists, and boaters will be supported;

ii) Proposals for moorings will only be supported where they:

a) Do not restrict access to the water by wildlife;

b) Do not adversely impact on the biodiversity, habitats or ecology of the canal or canal-side; and,

c) Where adverse visual or landscape impact is unavoidable, use tree and hedgerow planting where necessary (using species local to its setting) to mitigate this impact.

iii) The provision of temporary moorings will be supported where it can be demonstrated that such expansion is likely to benefit Stonehouse by means of increased tourism, commerce and leisure activity; and,

iv) Development proposals along the canal route will need to meet the requirements set out in Local Plan policy ES11.”

4.41 Policy ENV6: Protecting Views and Vistas, states:

“The views and vistas important to Stonehouse (identified by the Town Character Assessment) are set out on Map 13 (Appendix 2, p.84) and should be conserved from any significant adverse impact of new development (such as detracting from or obstructing vistas and views). These views and vistas are:

i) within Stonehouse, those of St Cyr’s Church, Nutshell Bridge and the Ocean;

ii) from Stonehouse to the open countryside over the canal (and in particular from the Ebley Road)

iii) from Stonehouse south, west and east to surrounding Cotswold escarpment, and to the landmarks of Selsey Common, Selsey Church, Stanley Mills, Penn Woods and Coaley Peak and Cam Long Down.

iv) to and from Stonehouse from the Doverow Hill escarpment; and,

v) from Stonehouse to Haresfield and Standish hills to the north and east.

Development proposals will need to demonstrate that their design, scale, height and massing does not adversely impact these existing views and vistas, and positively enhances them where possible. Where a Design and Access Statement or a Planning Statement Plan is required by the planning authority, that document should demonstrate compliance with this policy.”

5. Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area

- 5.1 Given that the site is located within the Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA), proposals for development have the potential impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and so its heritage significance.
- 5.2 When considering potential impacts of development on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, it is important to recognise that the Conservation Area covers a large area and includes a wide variety of areas of differing characters. The site itself lies within Character Area 4, 'The Green Corridor: Rural Frome Valley', and represents an extremely small portion of the total area covered by the Conservation Area. As noted in the NPPF at paragraph 201, it is necessary to consider the relevant significance of the element which has the potential to be affected and its contribution to the significance of the designation as a whole, i.e. would the application proposals undermine the significance of the Conservation Area as a whole?
- 5.3 The Stroud IHCA was first designated in September 1987. Since then, various boundaries of the IHCA have been altered and extended, and the whole Conservation Area was subject to a comprehensive review between 2006 and 2008. This review was formalised by the adoption of the Stroud Industrial Heritage

Conservation Area Statement and Design Guide in November 2008.

- 5.4 The IHCA Statement describes the IHCA as:

"a linear conservation area, following the valleys of the River Frome and the Nailsworth Stream, extending to the east, west and south of Stroud. In addition to these watercourses, the course of the IHCA follows the various transport infrastructures, which developed over the 18th and 19th centuries. These were the 'arteries' of the locality and represented a new era in the industrial basis of the Stroud Valleys."²²

- 5.5 The IHCA stretches 14½ miles (c. 23km) from Chalford to Saul, with a southern branch from Stroud that extends almost 4½ miles (over 7km) to Longfords. In total, the IHCA covers an area of 2.4 square miles (6.3 square kilometres).

- 5.6 The significance and special interest of the Stroud IHCA is principally derived from:

- **The numerous designated heritage assets within the IHCA (including former mills, weavers' cottages and grand houses), many of which have historic illustrative value in revealing the area's prosperous industrial past;**
- **Associated buildings and transport**

²² Vol. 1, p. 9.

infrastructure remains (i.e. canals and railways) which are also illustrative of the area's industrial heritage;

- **Settlement patterns and layouts along the valleys, which are illustrative of the area's long-term socio-economic development from the medieval period to the modern day;**
- **The relationship between historic built forms and natural features of the valley landscape, which contributes to the aesthetic value, historic grain and unique character of the area;**
- **Open and green spaces, including agricultural land, which are illustrative of the historic rural separation between settlements, residences and industrial buildings, and contribute to the aesthetic value of the area;**
- **Views and vistas, especially long-range views from within the Conservation Area towards prominent historic buildings and/or the surrounding rural landscape; and**
- **Its wider setting, including surrounding agricultural land, water meadows and woodland, and the local topography which facilitates long-range views towards the Conservation Area from various natural landmarks, such as the Cotswold Escarpment.**

5.7 The site's contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is principally derived from its historic and aesthetic values, being illustrative of the rural land that once provided visual and spatial separation between industrial buildings, domestic buildings and settlements along the valley. However, this contribution has been diminished by the re-

alignment and expansion of Bristol Road to the north and modern industrial and commercial developments to the north and west.

- 5.8 There are numerous approaches to the IHCA via public footpath, road and railway. Furthermore, the canal and associated towpath are significant in illustrating the historic experience of traversing the area.
- 5.9 The site does not constitute an approach to or public route through the Conservation Area; it is private land, and it is not crossed by any public rights of way.
- 5.10 There are many views from within, towards and across the IHCA, although the Conservation Area Statement does not systematically identify any key views or view cones. The Stonehouse Neighbourhood Development Plan (adopted February 2018) and the Stonehouse Town Character Assessment (2016) do identify important views from within Stonehouse; however, none of these involve the site.
- 5.11 Beyond the site to the south-east, there are key views (identified in the Stonehouse Town Character Assessment, 2016) from the canal towpath to Stonehouse Court Hotel (Grade II* Listed), the church of St Cyr (Grade II* Listed), Nutshell Bridge (Grade II Listed) and agricultural land to the south, all of which are located in the Conservation Area (Plate 7). There are no views to the site from this location; these are obstructed by dense vegetation and the railway line and embankment (Plate 8).



Plate 7: Panoramic view (facing east) from the Stroudwater Canal towpath (beyond the site to the south-east) taking in the Stonehouse Court Hotel (left), St Cyr's church (centre-left), and agricultural land (right)



Plate 8: View towards the site when standing next to Ocean Bridge on the Stroudwater Canal towpath (the site is not visible)

5.12 When traversing the canal towpath to the south of the site there are glimpsed views to the site through trees and vegetation (Plate 9). The backdrop to these views comprise the terraced houses on Avenue Terrace and the chimneys of the modern industrial buildings on the Oldends Industrial Estate (all located outside the IHCA). From this general part of the canal towpath, there are more significant views to the south (away from the site) across the water meadows and wider countryside (Plate 10).



Plate 9: Glimpsed view to the site from a section of the Stroudwater Canal towpath located south of the site



Plate 10: South-facing view from the Stroudwater Canal towpath (facing away from the site)



Plate 11: Glimpsed view to the site from Avenue Terrace

5.13 Beyond the site to the north, there are glimpsed views into and across the site from Bristol Road and Avenue Terrace. However, the vegetation along the southern boundary of the site obstructs views to the canal (Plate 11). From these vantage points, there is no visual perception of an association between the site and the canal.

5.14 When standing within the site at the southern boundary, there are glimpsed views to the canal and the countryside beyond through trees and vegetation (Plate 12). From elsewhere in the site, views to the canal and railway line are screened by the vegetation along the southern and eastern boundaries and there is no visual perception of the industrial heritage of the Conservation Area (Plate 13).



Plate 12: Glimpsed view to the Stroudwater Canal and countryside beyond from the southern boundary of the site



Plate 13: View towards the canal and railway line (neither visible) from the north-west corner of the site



Plate 14: View over Bristol Road to Avenue Terrace and the Oldends Industrial Estate from the northern boundary of the site



Plate 15: Glimpsed view to Doverow Hill from within the site over modern residential and industrial development

5.15 When facing north within the site, there are glimpsed views to the long row of late Victorian/early Edwardian terraced houses on Avenue Terrace and industrial buildings/chimneys located in the Oldends Industrial Estate (all located outside the IHCA) (Plate 14). There are also some long-range glimpsed views to Doverow Hill in the north-east (Plate 15).

5.16 West-facing views within the site are screened by the dense trees and vegetation that line the western boundary and separate the site from the private carpark beyond.

5.17 As noted above, Bristol Road and modern industrial and commercial developments to the north and west diminish the site's contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, making it a discrete area of agricultural land in glimpses from the canal rather than providing a clear link through to similar land beyond.

- 5.18 Overall, the site is considered to make only a minor contribution to the character and appearance of the Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area.
- 5.19 Development would introduce modern built form to the site and change its historic agricultural character. However, built development would not alter or obstruct any key views or vistas within or towards the Conservation Area. Equally, a sensitively designed scheme would not lead to heavy enclosure on both

banks of the canal.

- 5.20 Consequently, built development would be considered to cause only minor harm to the character and appearance, and hence significance, of the Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area, at the low end of this spectrum of harm, and this harm has the potential to be reduced through sensitive scheme design.

6. Setting Assessment

6.1 Step 1 of the methodology recommended by the Historic England guidance *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (see *Methodology* above) is to identify which heritage assets might be affected by a proposed development.

6.2 Development proposals may adversely impact heritage assets where they remove a feature which contributes to the significance of a heritage asset or where they interfere with an element of a heritage asset's setting which contributes to its significance, such as interrupting a key relationship or a designed view.

6.3 Consideration was made as to whether any of the heritage assets present in the vicinity of the site include the site as part of their setting, and therefore may potentially be affected by the proposed development.

6.4 Assets within the vicinity of the site that were considered for setting assessment included:

- **Grade II Listed The Gatehouse at Bonds Mill (1399861);**
- **Grade II Listed Cartshed to West of Court Farmhouse (1090687);**
- **Grade II Listed Coach House Immediately North East of Little Court (1171806);**
- **Grade II Listed Little Court and the Coach**

House (II);

- **Grade II Listed Barn to North of Court Farmhouse (1171810);**
- **Grade II Listed Court Farmhouse (1340683);**
- **Grade II* Listed Stonehouse Court Hotel (1340682);**
- **Grade II* Listed Church of St Cyr and its designated monuments (1340646);**
- **Grade II Listed Mill Workshops (1171456);**
- **Grade II Listed Splash Cottage (1090732); and**
- **Grade II Listed Leonard Stanley House (1305584).**

6.5 The site is not considered to contribute to the heritage significance of any of these assets through setting, owing to lack of intervisibility or association (i.e. landownership).

6.6 These assets have been subject to a previous setting assessment in relation to a proposed residential development on the same site. It was concluded within this that the site did not contribute to the significance of any of the assets through setting and this assessment was not disputed by Stroud District Council (ref. S.13/1348/OUT).

6.7 Nonetheless, the assets nearest to the site, The Gatehouse at

Bonds Mill and the Listed Buildings associated with Stonehouse Court, will be briefly discussed below in order to confirm that the site does not contribute to their heritage significance through setting.

The Gatehouse at Bonds Mill

- 6.8 The Gatehouse at Bonds Mill is a Grade II Listed Building and represents a heritage asset of less than the highest significance as set out in the NPPF (paragraph 194). It is also the nearest designated heritage asset to the site, standing c. 30m west of the site's south-west corner boundary (Plate 15).
- 6.9 There is no intervisibility between the asset and the site owing to the tall and dense vegetation along the western boundary of the site, although some glimpsed views may be possible in the winter.
- 6.10 The asset was constructed as a WWII pillbox for the defence of the Stroudwater Canal. There is no historic association between the Gatehouse and the site, and the pillbox was designed to provide lines of sight down the Stroudwater Canal rather than towards the site.
- 6.11 Consequently, the site is considered to make no contribution to the heritage significance of the asset through setting, and no harm is anticipated to be caused by the development of the site.



Plate 16: Grade II Listed The Gatehouse at Bonds Mill viewed from the Stroudwater Canal towpath. The asset is not visible from within the site.

The Stonehouse Court complex

- 6.12 The Stonehouse Court complex comprises six designated heritage assets.
- 6.13 Stonehouse Court Hotel is a Grade II* Listed Building and represents a heritage asset of the highest significance as set out in the NPPF (paragraph 194) (Plate 16).
- 6.14 The Cartshed to West of Court Farmhouse; Coach House Immediately North East of Little Court; Little Court and the Coach House; Barn to North of Court Farmhouse; and Court Farmhouse are Grade II Listed Buildings and represent heritage assets of less than the highest significance as set out in the NPPF (paragraph 194).
- 6.15 The c. 1730 Map of the Manor of Stonehouse demonstrates a historic association between the site and Stonehouse Court in terms of landownership; the site comprised part of the agricultural hinterland of the manor.
- 6.16 However, this association has been severed, and any historic views between the site and the manor have been blocked by the construction of the Bristol and Gloucester Railway. Today, there is no intervisibility between the site and the assets associated with Stonehouse Court, and no legible association.

- 6.17 Therefore, the site is not considered to contribute to the heritage significance of these assets through setting, and no harm is anticipated.



Plate 17: Grade II Listed Stonehouse Court Hotel viewed from the Stroudwater Canal towpath. The asset is not visible from within the site.*

7. Conclusions

7.1 The site is located within the Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA) and, as such, the site has been assessed in terms of its contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The site is considered to make only a minor contribution to the character and appearance of the IHCA; derived from the site's historic and aesthetic values, being historic agricultural land that is open space next to the Stroudwater Canal. However, its contribution has been diminished by the realignment and expansion of Bristol Road, and modern industrial and commercial development to the north and west, which have undermined the aesthetic and historic values of the site and, by extension, the IHCA. New built form

within the site would not obstruct any key views within, towards or out from the IHCA. Overall, development of the site would be considered to cause minor less than substantial harm to the IHCA, at the low end of this spectrum of harm.

7.2 A proportionate level of setting assessment has been carried out to determine whether the site contributes to the significance of any nearby designated heritage assets through setting. It is concluded that no heritage assets include the site as part of their setting, and thus built development of the site would cause no harm to the significance of the heritage assets in the vicinity of the site.

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HERITAGE



Pegasus Group
Pegasus House
Querns Business Centre
Whitworth Road
Cirencester
Glos
GL7 1RT

Telephone: 01285 641717

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