

# Proposed Audi Dealership - Land at Generals Farm, Boreham

## Public Exhibition

### Welcome

Audi is one of the foremost brand names in the world market. The company has been looking for some time for a site at North Chelmsford to accommodate a new Audi Centre Hub (one of only nine in the UK).

The proposed Audi centre will include a modern car show room with associated offices, meeting rooms and ancillary uses, together with car inspection/workshop facilities and associated parking.

The layout of these structures and use of building materials will be informed by specific design criteria that are used by Audi around the world and give it a recognised identity. The proposals will however be tailored to meet the site specific issues. A team of specialist consultants have been appointed to advise on potential impact and subsequent mitigation measures to ensure that the new buildings and associated uses will not harm the local area.

The selected development site currently houses a mix of commercial and agricultural uses and includes a large brownfield area of land comprising buildings and yard areas associated with former Generals Farm.

Access will be via the existing site access road from the B1137 Main Road, which currently serves the Generals, the Premier Inn Hotel and the Grange pub/restaurant.

The proposed development site is currently in a very poor state. There is little vegetation of note on the site because it has been intensively farmed, previously developed, used for vehicle storage and contains poultry sheds and other farm structures.

We are mindful of the potential impact of the proposals on the nearby Grade I listed Boreham House and its registered gardens, and the Grade II listed Generals. Consultant studies have addressed matters of transportation and access, landscape and visual impact, cultural heritage, ecology, lighting, noise and flood risk/drainage.

It is clear that the setting of Boreham House has historically been degraded and that these proposals offer an opportunity to address the untidy mix of uses at the Boreham Interchange that are open to view from the Grade I listed building.

A carefully planned landscape strategy will also address the wider visual impacts arising from the development proposals as viewed from the edge of Boreham.

The proposals will have a significant beneficial effect on the local economy. Implications for job creation are set out below. The new jobs will span a range of sectors and skill levels. The existing Audi location will take on another franchise, thus further increasing jobs in the local area. There will be indirect economic and employment benefits from the construction and operation phases of the development, with further jobs generated with local suppliers, shops and local services.

We believe that the proposed Audi dealership will be a big boost to the local economy. We hope that the local community will see this as an exciting new investment and help ensure that it is delivered in Chelmsford and not lost to an alternative location outside the City Council boundary.



### New Employment

|                  | Current Site | New Centre on opening | Additional positions | New Centre normalised | Additional positions | Exist. Site New Franchise | <b>TOTAL NEW POSITIONS</b> |
|------------------|--------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Administration   | 3.5          | 4.5                   |                      | 5.5                   |                      | 3                         |                            |
| Parts            | 3            | 4                     |                      | 5                     |                      | 2                         |                            |
| Retail Sales     | 12           | 17                    |                      | 20                    |                      | 8                         |                            |
| Service Advisors | 5            | 7                     |                      | 10                    |                      | 3                         |                            |
| Technicians      | 9            | 14                    |                      | 20                    |                      | 8                         |                            |
| Valeting         | 5            | 7                     |                      | 9                     |                      | 4                         |                            |
| Drivers          | 2            | 5                     |                      | 8                     |                      | 2                         |                            |
| Managers         | 5            | 6                     |                      | 6                     |                      | 4                         |                            |
| Reception        | 3            | 5                     |                      | 5                     |                      | 3                         |                            |
| Logistics        | 3            | 7                     |                      | 9                     |                      | 3                         |                            |
| Business Sales   | 0            | 4                     |                      | 5                     |                      | 1                         |                            |
| Facility Mgmt    | 0            | 1                     |                      | 1                     |                      | 0                         |                            |
| Accounts         | 1            | 1                     |                      | 1                     |                      | 1                         |                            |
| Call Centre      | 0            | 4                     |                      | 8                     |                      | 0                         |                            |
| Event Marketing  | 0            | 1                     |                      | 1                     |                      | 0                         |                            |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>51.5</b>  | <b>87.5</b>           | <b>36</b>            | <b>113.5</b>          | <b>62</b>            | <b>42</b>                 | <b>104</b>                 |

The new site will require an additional 36 positions for Day one opening. Within 12- 24 months the workforce will increase to 113.5 people. Within 3-6 months of moving the current site will be occupied by a new franchise that will generate 42 positions. The total number of positions on both sites will result in a total of **104** additional jobs in Chelmsford.

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## The Site Context

The site is approximately 4 hectares and is situated between Chelmsford and Boreham to the east of the major interchange of the A12, the A138 and B1137.

Beyond the adjoining roads and to the east of the site lies open countryside separating Boreham from Chelmsford which is predominantly in agricultural use.

Immediately to the south west, between the site and the intersection, lies a hotel, the Grange public house and restaurant and associated car parking. The site is bisected by Paynes Lane (a definitive public bridleway) with The Police House and Mill Mead Cottages accessed from it.

To the south of the site, Boreham House occupies land fronting the B1137 surrounded by agricultural land. This is a Grade I listed building with associated Grade II registered park and gardens.

Land to the north, beyond the A12 is the subject of proposals for a major new neighbourhood – to be known as ‘Beaulieu’. At the centre of the proposed new neighbourhood lies the Grade I New Hall School with its registered garden. A new railway station and business park associated with the new neighbourhood will be situated on land fronting the A12 and closest to this site.

The existing Generals Lane Bridge will be rebuilt and enlarged to provide access to the new development and work is also likely to involve additional substantial alterations to the intersection to accommodate both the new neighbourhood and the proposed North Chelmsford By-pass.

The proposed business park development of ‘Beaulieu’ will extend far further to the north east than the Audi proposal site, to just beyond the Boreham Brook on the north side of the A12.



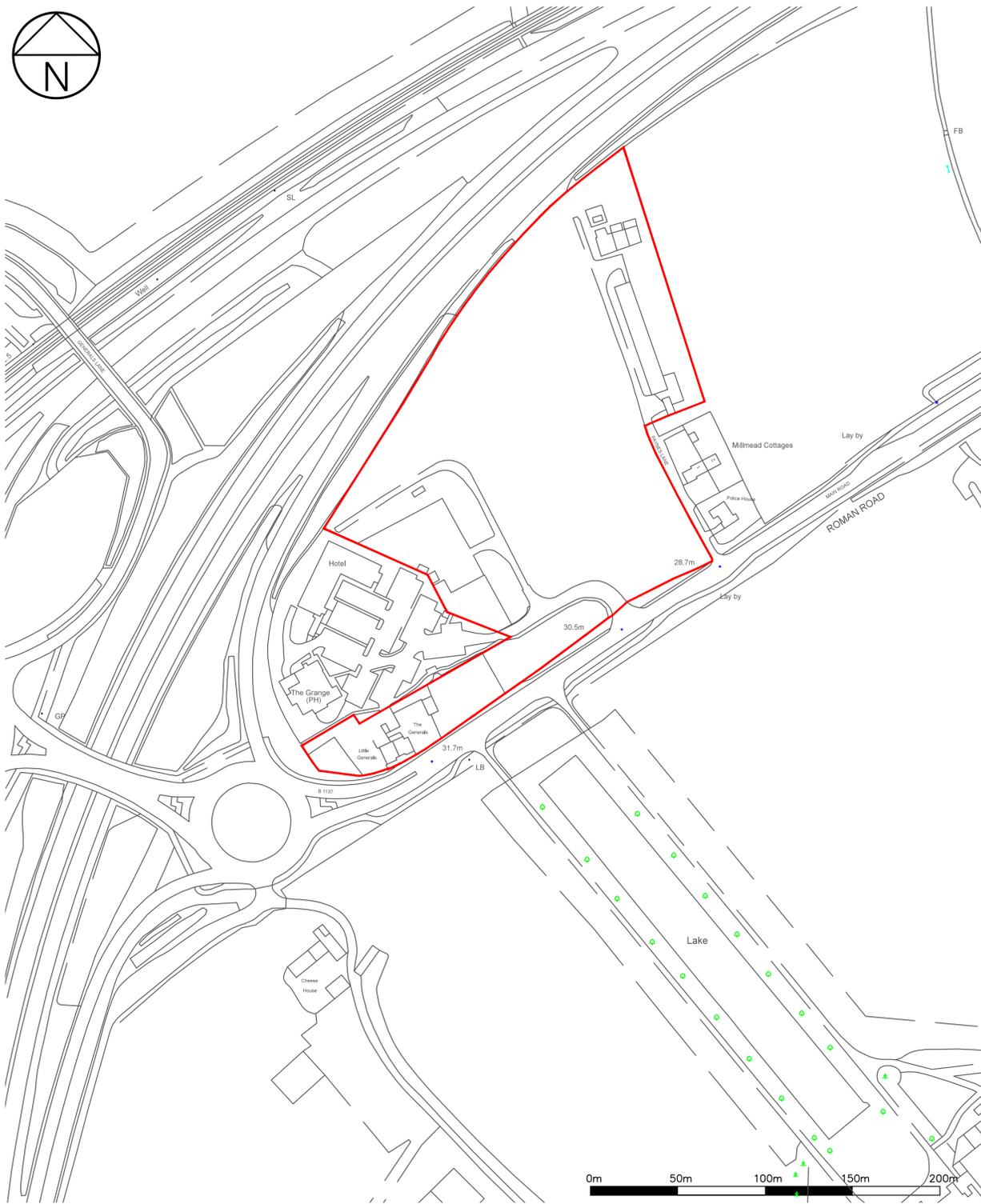
Site Context

-  Beaulieu Application Site
-  Beaulieu Development Parcels
-  Proposed alterations to Boreham Interchange, rebuild of Generals Lane Bridge. To include an increase in height

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## The Site

The existing site comprises an arable field, agricultural buildings and poultry sheds, yard areas associated with commercial uses carried out at the former Generals Farm and the Grade II listed The Generals, formerly the General's Head Inn, along with its garden and an open area of grassland.



Site location



Poultry sheds



Agricultural buildings



Sub station within site



Looking south west from north of edge of site



The Generals



Site entrance



Yard area

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### Heritage Assets

#### The Generals

Formerly the General's Head Inn, this house is Grade II listed and lies within the proposed development site. The Generals has always been a relatively modest property, and has been in various uses over the centuries, including an inn. It is now in commercial use.

The heritage value of The Generals is largely derived from its architectural and historic interest. Its architectural interest stems from the evolution of its built fabric and the resulting architectural composition, the most evident of which is the early C19 Gothic appearance of its front and side elevations. Its historic interest is closely associated with the physical form of the building, stemming from the building's past as an inn on the main road between Colchester and London, a former Roman road.

The setting of the property that contributes to its significance is limited to the remnants of a pond and a small copse to the east of the building. The wider surroundings no longer contribute to the significance of the building.

The development proposals will not result in any changes or alterations to The Generals but propose additional tree planting in the grounds and new estate railings to replace the timber fencing.



The Generals



The Generals

#### Boreham House

Boreham House lies to the southwest, approximately 380m from the site. The house is a fine early Georgian mansion, designed by James Gibbs and executed by Edward Shepherd for Benjamin Hoare between 1727 and 1728. The grounds contain a rare formal canal c 250m long on the approach to the house with the pleasure gardens beyond. The House is Grade I listed and its grounds are Grade II.

The setting of the House is dominated by the former Ford's tractor depot to the north-east. A line of electricity pylons run to the east of the south-east corner of the House's gardens. The vast Royal Mail depot on the other side of the A12 to the west is also very visible. The most intrusive development has been the Boreham bypass and the railway line both of which are audible from the gardens.

The existing outlook from the facade of Boreham House is along the formal canal towards the Generals and its garden and the rather untidy application site which is partly enclosed along the B1137 roadside by several ivy covered trees with the hotel behind. The proposals offer the opportunity to enhance the outlook from Boreham House.

New areas of woodland planting along the B1137 will augment the existing remnants of the copse to the east of the Generals, and strengthen the fragmented tree line along the roadside to provide a wooded backdrop to the B1137. This will enclose and screen the existing hotel development and the proposed Audi dealership to the east. The existing openness of the application site will revert to the more enclosed landscape that is evident of historic maps.

The landscaping proposals offer great scope to enhance this area opposite Boreham House with consequential benefits to the wider setting of the property and the Generals.

The land north and west of Boreham House and The Generals has seen a significant change in character in relatively recent history, with the development of the A12 and the Boreham Interchange. It is no longer, and indeed has not been, rural in character for some time. Historically too, the application site and its surroundings have, at least partially, been more enclosed with properties and planting. Development of this area would not therefore be entirely without precedent and would not encroach upon the historically rural context of Boreham House and its gardens which historically, but especially since the construction of the modern road system, has been restricted to the land south of the B1137.

The application site in its existing state makes no contribution to the significance of either of The Generals, Boreham House or the registered gardens of Boreham House, but the proposed development and carefully planned landscape strategy provides the opportunity to enhance the setting of these properties as well as address landscape and visual impacts arising from the development proposal.

The proposed Audi dealership building would necessarily be quite large in terms of footprint to accommodate the showroom and workshop. Its bulk has been minimised by the use of a flat roof and together with the siting of the building into the ground this will result in a height of 8.25m, which is a third less than that of the neighbouring hotel block. Its materials have been chosen for their lightweight appearance and significant use of glazing has been made. The end of the proposed building, facing Boreham House will comprise a stone wall together with a 'green' roof.



Boreham House

#### Boreham Conservation Area

Boreham Conservation Area lies approximately 900m away from the site to the east and is centred on the historic village of Boreham which contains a number of listed buildings including the parish church.

#### New Hall

To the north-west New Hall lies at a distance of c.1km. The formal approach is from the south and the start of its avenue lies c.650m to the west of the proposed Audi site. The building is Grade I listed and its grounds and avenue a Grade II registered park and garden. It was originally a Tudor Palace and Hunting Lodge and is now a public school. New Hall is separated from the development site by the A12, the railway line, significant vegetation and the Boreham Interchange and is considered to be sufficiently distant that there is unlikely to be any material impact on its setting from the development.

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### Ecology

The majority of The Generals site comprises arable fields and grassland of low ecological value and is unlikely to provide suitable habitat for protected species. The building of the former Generals Inn and its associated grounds include features suitable for roosting bats and nesting birds and are of moderate to high ecological value and are to be retained. The former chicken sheds, which are to be demolished, located to the east of Paynes Lane, are of moderate ecological value because of their potential for bat roosting and bird nesting.

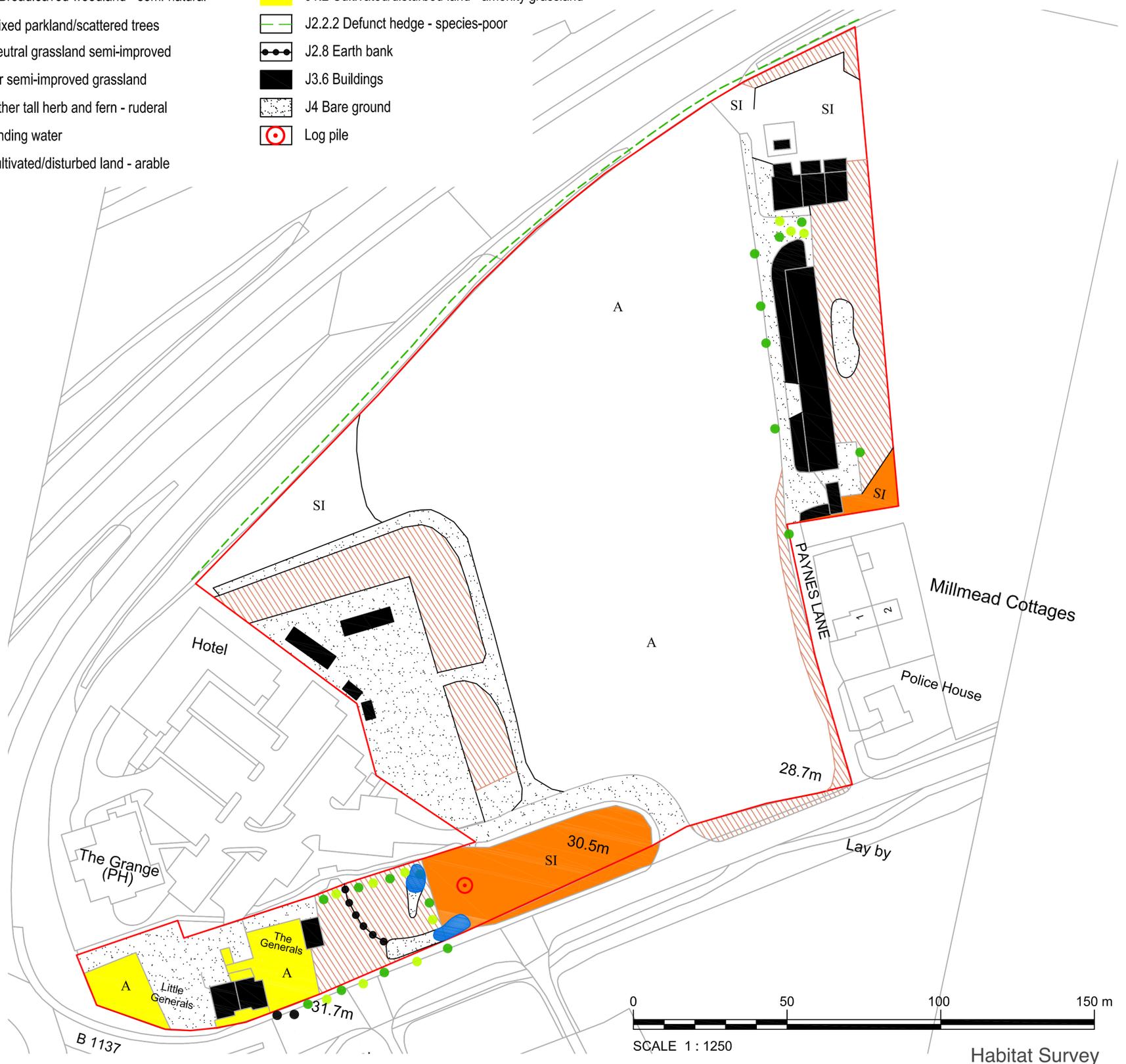
The majority of the site (including arable and grassland habitats) can be developed without any further ecological requirement. The building and grounds associated with the former Generals Inn should not be subject to development without further detailed survey to assess their status as potential bat roosting and foraging habitat. The chicken sheds may be demolished with reference to the recommendations above.

There are no recommendations for survey and mitigation for use of the arable and grassland parts of the site and there are no material concerns with respect to ecology.

The areas of higher ecological value, not currently affected by the development proposal include habitat potentially suitable for roosting bats and nesting birds. However the surveys undertaken indicate that an EPS mitigation licence would not be required and that avoidance of harm to protected species could be managed by appropriate timing of works. Therefore there are no material considerations with respect to ecology to prevent the grant of planning permission.

#### Legend

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  A1.1.1 Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural |  J1.2 Cultivated/disturbed land - amenity grassland |
|  A3.3 Mixed parkland/scattered trees        |  J2.2.2 Defunct hedge - species-poor                |
|  B2.2 Neutral grassland semi-improved       |  J2.8 Earth bank                                    |
|  B6 Poor semi-improved grassland            |  J3.6 Buildings                                     |
|  C3.1 Other tall herb and fern - ruderal    |  J4 Bare ground                                     |
|  G1 Standing water                          |  Log pile   |
|  J1.1 Cultivated/disturbed land - arable    |  |



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### Landscape

The visibility of the site

To the north and north west of the site, the raised A12, slip roads and the Generals Lane bridge (to be rebuilt as a larger, taller structure) and associated roadside screen planting effectively screen long views but there are clear short distance views into the development site from the A12 especially where it is raised as it crosses the Boreham Brook.

From the south west long views are contained by the surrounding hotel and pub/restaurant buildings, and The Generals and its trees (within the site) together with the car park planting and planting around the interchange.

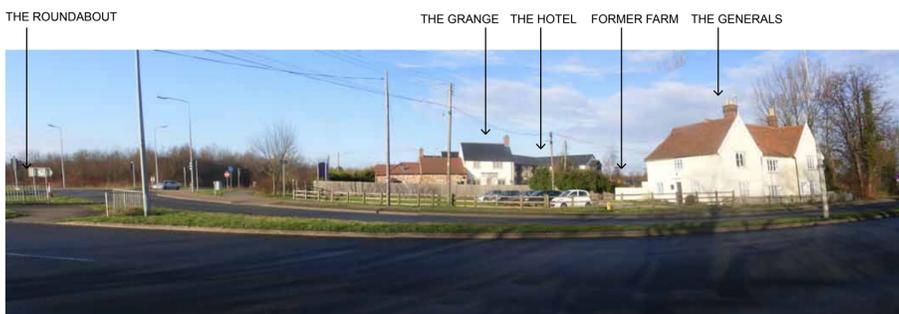
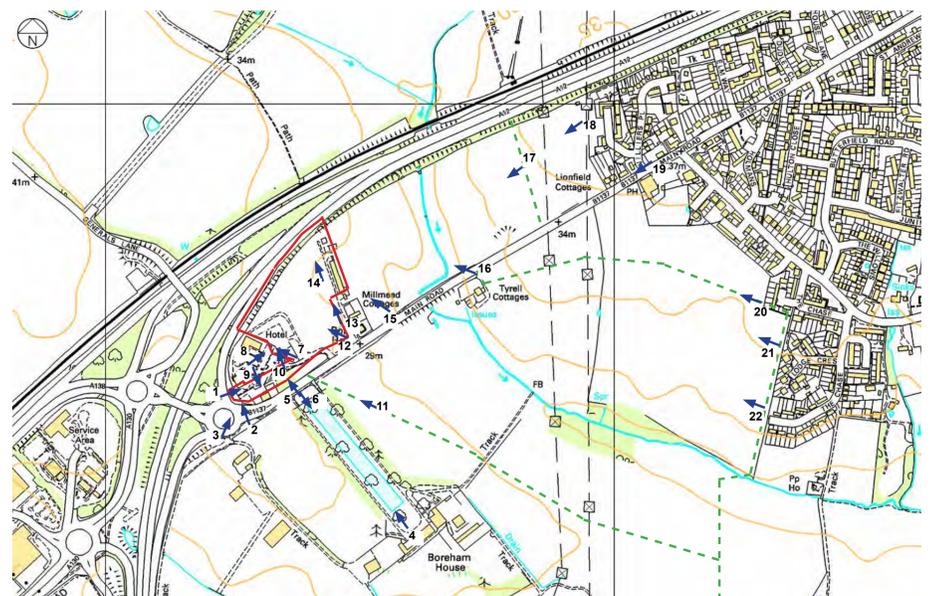
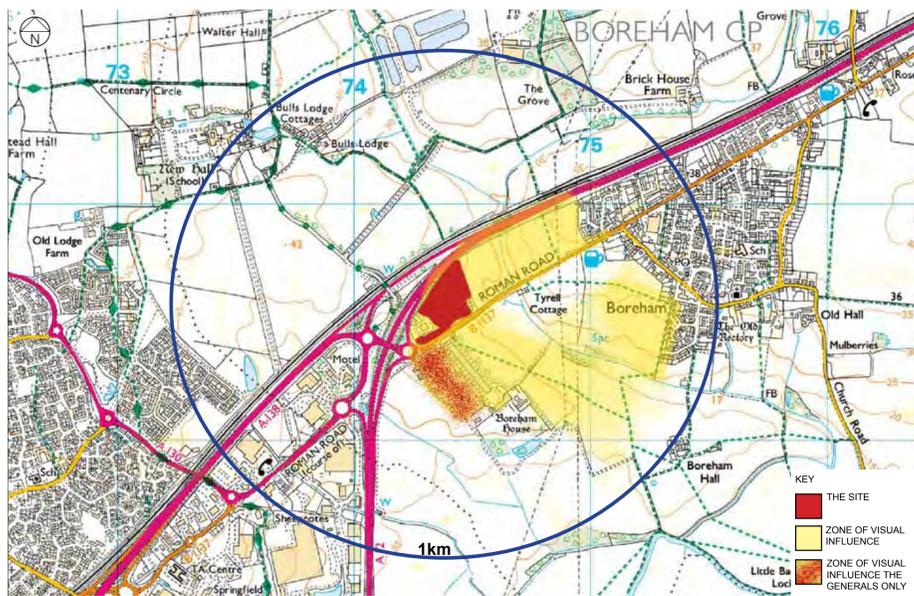
To the south east The Generals house and garden and the trees form a screen for part of the Main Road frontage but the central part of the site is open to the road and unscreened.

To the east views are contained by the Police House, Mill Mead Cottages, Tyrell Cottage and vegetation at these locations and along Main Road. There are views from the footpaths and some properties on the higher ground on the edge of Boreham, south of Main Road and the hotel is visible some 900m -1000m away.

From the north east long views of the site are partially screened by the Police House and Mill Mead Cottages, and trees on Paynes Lane and the poultry sheds currently form a visual barrier to the lower portion of the site. There are limited views from Main Road as these are screened by trees, some hedgerows as well as the buildings. Further north east there is a clear distant view of the hotel from Main Road at Boreham adjacent to the Lion Inn. There are long distance views from the edge of Boreham north of Main Road, also from the defunct footpath to the elevated parts of the site and the hotel.

The police house has direct views over the site.

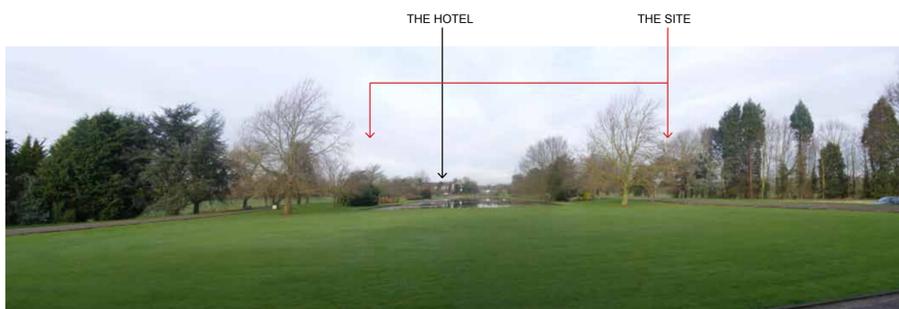
The quality of the landscape is poor. Field boundaries have been lost. There is little tree cover. The gardens and trees associated with The Generals are in very poor condition. The vehicle storage is unsightly. There are many opportunities for enhancement for the setting of both the Grade I listed Boreham House and the Grade II listed, The Generals, and also to reinstate field boundaries and tree planting within the site, to enhance the wider local character area. The poultry sheds and other small agricultural buildings and areas of hard-standing appear in poor condition and are unattractive in the wider landscape.



2. VIEW FROM THE INTERSECTION TOWARDS THE GENERALS AND THE GRANGE WITH THE HOTEL BEHIND.



5. VIEW TO THE SITE FROM BOREHAM HOUSE AT THE END OF THE LAKE.



4. VIEW FROM BOREHAM HOUSE.



6. BOREHAM HOUSE LOOKING SOUTH EAST FROM MAIN ROAD.

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## Landscape

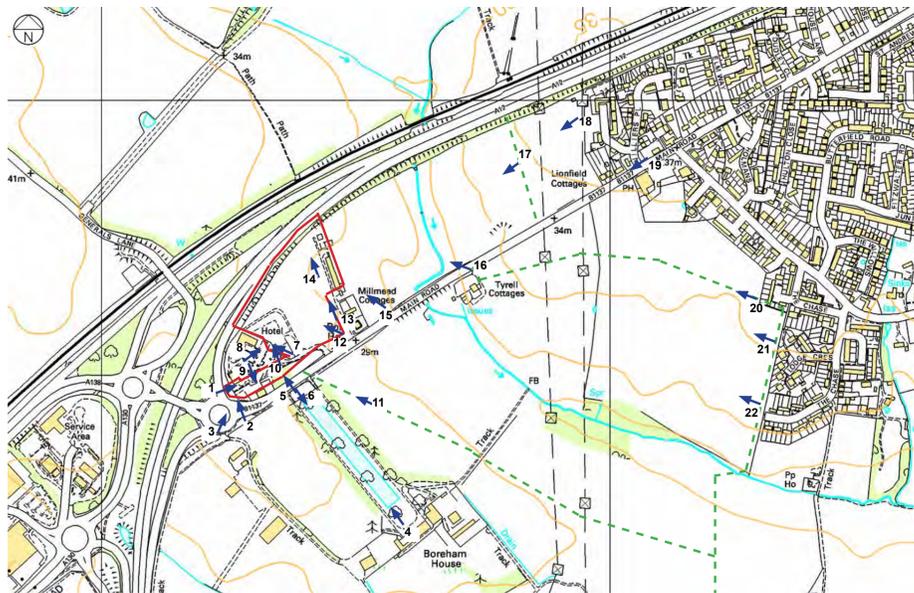


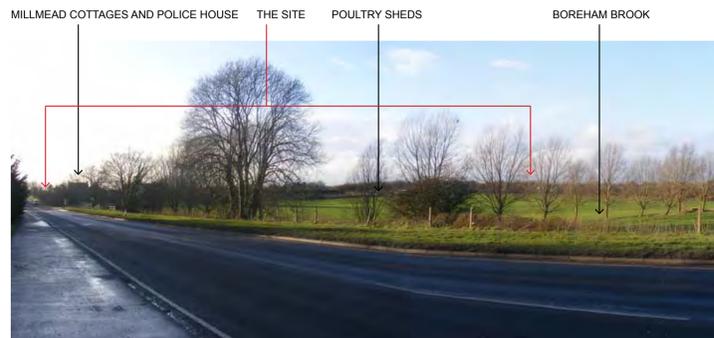
Photo viewpoints



14. PAYNES LANE AND THE POULTRY SHEDS.



7. VIEW FROM THE ENTRANCE ROAD LOOKING OVER THE FARM YARD TO THE HOTEL AND THE GRANGE.



16. VIEW FROM MAIN ROAD B1137 AT TYRELLS COTTAGE.



10. VIEW FROM THE ENTRANCE ROAD.



17. VIEW FROM DEFUNCT FOOTPATH SOUTH WEST OF BOREHAM AND NORTH OF MAIN ROAD.



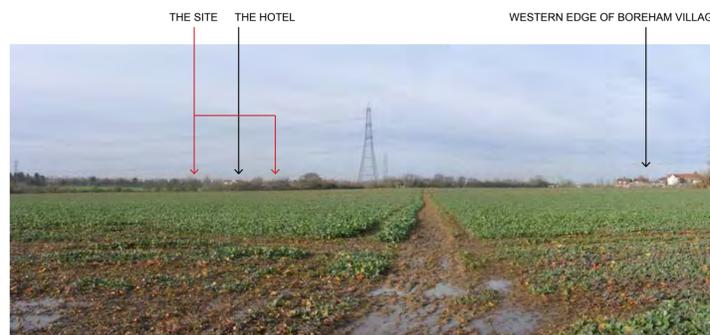
11. VIEW TOWARDS THE SITE FROM FOOTPATH EAST OF BOREHAM HOUSE.



19. VIEW FROM MAIN ROAD BOREHAM NEAR THE LION INN.



12. VIEW FROM PAYNES LANE/MAIN ROAD LOOKING NORTH WEST OVER THE SITE



20. VIEW FROM FOOTPATH LEADING TO TYRELL COTTAGE FROM THE EDGE OF BOREHAM.

