



**Bath & North East Somerset
Monitoring Report
April 2011-March 2013**

Building for Life Assessments

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

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BUILDING FOR LIFE 12

DESIGN ASSESSMENTS

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FRONT COVER PHOTO: BATH WESTERN RIVERSIDE

INTRODUCTION

Securing high quality design is a core planning principle contained within the NPPF, which recognises that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. The NPPF requires Local Plans to develop robust and comprehensive policies setting out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Policy CP6 of the Submitted Core Strategy requires all major development schemes with a residential component to use the Building for Life assessment tool.

Building for life 12¹ is designed to help structure discussions between local communities, the local planning authority, the developer, and other stakeholders. BfL12 is also designed to help local planning authorities assess the quality of proposed and completed developments. BfL12 comprises 12 questions and is based on a traffic light system. New developments should aim to secure as many 'greens' as possible, minimise the number of 'ambers' and avoid 'reds'. The more 'greens' the better a development will be. A red light gives warning that an aspect of a development needs to be reconsidered. The following schemes are a selection of those completed within B&NES during 2011-13, representing a variety of

¹ The BfL12 methodology can be found here:

<http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/Documents/Documents/OurWork/CABE/Building%20for%20Life/Building%20for%20Life%2012.pdf>

different schemes, both brown and green field, and with varying sizes. They have all been assessed using the BfL12 methodology:

SCHEME	SCORE
1. WESTERN RIVERSIDE: KINGSMEAD, BATH	12
	0
	0
2. WEIRSIDE COURT: LOWER BRISTOL ROAD, BATH	8
	3
	1
3. PICCADILLY PLACE: WALCOT, BATH	4
	5
	3
4. SOUTHLANDS: UPPER WESTON, BATH	6
	6
	0
5. FORMER TEMPLE INFANT SCHOOL: TEMPLE STREET, KEYNSHAM	11
	1
	0
6. THE GRANGE HOTEL: 42 BATH ROAD, KEYNSHAM	2
	8
	2
7. ELM TREE AVENUE: WESTFIELD	2
	7
	3
8. CAUTLETTS CLOSE: MIDSOMER NORTON	9
	3
	0
9. WELLOW LANE: PEASEDOWN ST JOHN	3
	8
	1

1. WESTERN RIVERSIDE: KINGSMEAD, BATH

QUESTION	RESPONSE	REFERENCE	SCORE
1. Connections	<p>The site is effectively enclosed by roads on the four sides of the square. They include the Upper Bristol and Lower Bristol Roads, major arteries of the city towards Bristol.</p> <p>Currently, vehicles enter and exit the site on Victoria Bridge Road by the Sainsbury's petrol station and Homebase. With the road essentially only being used for the two retail units, traffic is at a reasonably low level. Connections here are therefore good for the site.</p> <p>The site is open for pedestrians to use, with a straight footpath leading from the Brougham Hayes junction on the A36 across the Victoria Bridge. With the bridge closely linking to the cycle path it leads to the opportunity for Riverside residents and those near to the site to easily access the city centre by non-vehicular means. The cycle potential is currently unfilled fully though, as there is no clearly signposted direction to the river cycle route.</p> <p>As the site is a blank canvas so to speak, no existing roads currently go through the site. The connections allow for natural surveillance, adding an element of safety.</p>	1, 2, 3	G
2. Facilities + Services	<p>A key asset to the site is its location. Due to it being a 10 minute walk or so away from the city centre, residents are provided well with facilities and services. Sainsbury's has a supermarket less than 5 minutes away, towards the city centre.</p> <p>In terms of schooling, there is Haysfield Girls' secondary school on Brougham Hayes, as well as Oldfield Park Infants School on Dorset Close which are both on the southern corners of the site. Planning conditions have been outlined though, where a new school must be</p>	4, 5	G

	<p>opened upon the opening of the 1250th dwelling of the site.</p> <p>There are no impediments for pedestrians to reach these facilities as crossings are available upon exit of the site. There is a pedestrian crossing at the Brougham Hayes junction (to get to the school and Moorland Road shops) as well as the future exit on Midland Road to get to Oldfield Park Infant School and train station.</p> <p>The river has been opened up and the riverside itself has been improved to allow residents to use it.</p> <p>There is also a car sharing opportunity on site through the Car Club, where a hybrid car is available to rent on an hourly or daily basis.</p>		
3. Public Transport	<p>A new bus route has been created to cater for the new site. Located on the newly created road on site, the bus service runs frequently to the city centre and back. Currently, the service is reasonably underused due to the unfinished nature of the Riverside meaning that there are a low number of residents who may choose to use buses.</p> <p>There is however a lack of exposure on the site to the potential of rail usage. Oldfield Park station is a 5-10 minute walk from the site, so it should be an option for residents. But it is not signposted anywhere on the site which is to its detriment.</p>	6	G
4. Meeting local Housing Requirements	<p>The site has met the agreed minimum 25% affordable housing.</p> <p>The affordable housing units have also been carefully placed to ensure that there is a mix of residents across the site. The lack of grouping together of the units means that there is no social stratification.</p> <p>Properties have a reasonable range of sizes. The 299 homes in phase 1A include studio, one, two and three-bedroom townhouses and apartments, ranging from affordable housing apartments to expensive penthouses.</p>		G
5. Character	The Riverside has a distinctive, unique character whilst also having local	7, 8, 9, 10	G

	<p>characteristics. Bath Stone is the primary construction material on all buildings and there are features found on the site which are historical characteristics of the built form in Bath. Terraced Georgian buildings around the site in particular tend to vary in height, with some buildings having two storeys and others having three. The townhouses here adhere to that pattern, resulting in a distinctive character, one which is not monotonous.</p> <p>The reasonable variation of massing in phase 1A is also to its benefit. Changing from small townhouses to dense, large apartment blocks adds diversity and interest to the site. The square built in between the four large apartment blocks is well designed, creating a community character, where you could see residents working together on the plant growing areas in the near future. While the smaller apartment block on the south side of the site backs out on to the townhouse row car park, provisions have been made to hide the aesthetically unpleasant aspects of the back. Wooden slats mean that there is the ability for plants to grow, masking the back of the apartment block. Landmarks of the site are historically-influenced. The Stohert and Pitt crane has been moved on site and the Victoria Bridge is undergoing renovation as part of the project. It leads to a distinctly local feel.</p>		
6. Working with the site and its context	<p>The Riverside takes advantage of the River Avon and the existing cycle path along it via redevelopment of Victoria Bridge. A carefully planted sloping soft landscaping area has been created to provide a linkage to the nearside bank of the river. Its aesthetics however are downgraded by a temporary blue fence which the developer uses outside the showroom to advertise the development.</p> <p>Apartment buildings are tall, which enables the development to take advantage of views over the river and</p>	11, 12, 13	G

	<p>the short distances around it.</p> <p>The area has historically been an industrial area, and its history has been taken into account with public art and an industrial crane implemented into the site</p>		
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces.	<p>The site is bounded on the sides by the river, Lower Bristol Road, Midland Road and the Sainsbury's/Homebase complex, but the interior of the site is vacant and reasonably flat, enabling the developer to create their own street system.</p> <p>Buildings therefore are formed by streets rather than the other way around, which has resulted in a streetscape which is low speed and quiet, as roads currently, and in the future, will be cul-de-sacs. A variation of streets and spaces has been created, with a mixture between public only walkways, a street and a public square. There is one vehicular exit from the site, at Victoria Bridge Road.</p>	1, 14, 3	G
8. Easy to find your way around	<p>Phase 1A is easy to navigate due to its building diversity and small size of the site. Landmarks enable the user to make it hard to get lost, with the crane and the Victoria Bridge on the main pedestrian thoroughfare.</p> <p>The diversity of built form enables a mind map to be created. The row of townhouses on Stothert Avenue, the large square formed by four apartment blocks and the pedestrian walkway from Brougham Hayes junction to the bridge are all vastly different, meaning the user of the site should know where they are in the site.</p> <p>The real test of legibility will be in the future when the site is much larger and has multiple large squares around apartment blocks.</p>	15	G
9. Streets For All	<p>The streets are on the whole, well designed leading to a pedestrian and socially friendly environment. Stothert Avenue is a road which links to the terraced housing car park and also holds on-street parking. But pedestrian demands have also been taken into account, with no level changes</p>	3, 7, 8	G

	<p>between the pavement and road as well as an equal width of pavement in relation to the road.</p> <p>Vehicle speeds are lowered due to the Avenue's current role as a cul-de-sac as well as the surface treatment (used often through the site) which signifies that it is a mixed use space.</p> <p>Homes offer good surveillance, with terraces looking out on to the street and surface parking and a large number of apartment windows all looking out over the square.</p>		
10. Car Parking	<p>Parking options are diverse in the Riverside with three current methods. There is set back on-street parking as well as surface and underground car parks.</p> <p>The apartment blocks have underground car parking which adds an element of safety to the resident as they know their car is securely located. While parking provision should aim to lead to overlooked cars, the secure underground car park with electric gates alleviates this concern.</p> <p>Townhouses have surface parking outside their homes, secured by a gate, while on-street parking is found on Stothert Avenue.</p>	16, 17	G
11. Public and Private Spaces	<p>The division between private and public spaces are relatively clear throughout the site, with an area of defensible space separating the public from the private.</p> <p>Townhouses have railings which separate each property (a Bath characteristic) and the properties from the car park while the apartment buildings have planted areas and shrubs.</p> <p>The large courtyard between the four apartment buildings is well overlooked by residents' windows. Balconies are also present in the courtyard, meaning that there is a high level of natural surveillance over the space.</p> <p>The Riverside benefits from links to the river itself, and as part of the path to the river there is a well-planted, grass area. It enhances biodiversity and has a</p>	10, 8, 18	G

	seamless transition over the level changes.		
12. External storage and amenity space	<p>Storage space for bins and recycling is adequate. Terraced housing has recessed porches with storage space for bins as well as bicycles (when placed vertically).</p> <p>Each unit of housing requires around 150 litres of waste storage, and the 3 blocks: B3, B7 and B8, exceed the threshold with the exception of B7, which is slightly under the obligation. In the apartment blocks, refuse and recycling storage is part of the underground car park complex. This hides away the bins well, and pedestrian links to reach the storage are sound where residents can use the dedicated apartment-to-car park staircases and lifts to reach the storage.</p>	19	G

LEVEL ATTAINED	SCORE
GREEN	12
AMBER	0
RED	0

Connections



Figure 1 Victoria Bridge Road: the vehicle access road for the site



Figure 2 Pedestrian walkway to
Brougham Hayes and Lower
Bristol Road



Figure 3 Walkway to Victoria Bridge and beyond to Upper Bristol Road



Figure 4 Car club space in the Riverside site



Figure 5 Crossing on Lower Bristol Road to Brougham Hayes



Figure 6 A new bus service has been created to serve the Riverside as well as existing neighbourhoods. There are two services per hour



Figure 7 The larger apartment block shares Georgian Bath features while adding its own character



Figure 8 Terraced housing off Stothert Avenue



Figure 9 Masking of the backs of the apartment building in the terraced housing car parking



Figure 10 Townhouses on Stothert Avenue with roofing adding character



Figure 11 Soft landscaping area sloping down in steps down to the river. Blue advertising boards in the background slightly degrade the aesthetics



Figure 12 Landscaping on the riverside



Figure 13 Victoria Bridge maintenance works

Creating well defined streets and spaces



Figure 14 Stothert Avenue's streetscape with large pavements in relation to the road



Figure 15 The Stothert and Pitt crane performs as a landmark to improve ease of navigation

Car parking



Figure 16 Stothert Avenue's on-street parking with natural surveillance overlooking it



Figure 17 Secure entrance to the underground car park for the apartment square complex

Public and private spaces



Figure 18 Apartments around the square offer very good surveillance

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Western Riverside
Kingsmead, Bath
External storage and amenity space



Figure 19 Storage space in townhouses along Stothert Avenue

2. WEIRSIDE COURT: LOWER BRISTOL ROAD, BATH

DESCRIPTION:

Conversion of existing B1 office building into 14 no 2 and 3 bedroom residential flats

QUESTION	RESPONSE	REFERENCE	SCORE
1. Connections	The closed in nature of the site itself means that that scheme is not able to capitalise upon pedestrian/transport links. However, within a wider context the scheme is well connected, adjacent to Lower Bristol Road, 400m away from the nearest bridge to the Bath cycle path and in walking distance to Oldfield Park railway station.	Fig 1, 2	G
2. Facilities + Services	The positioning of the development takes advantage of the proximity of a local neighbourhood centre of Twerton High St, and a small retail park. The nearest primary school is within 0.5 miles and 2 areas of public green infrastructure are within walking distance. However, a pressure on schools within the area has been noted, and is met by a commitment of funds from the developer itself.	Fig 1, 3	G
3. Public Transport	The development itself lies close to the Lower Bristol Road, which conveys buses to both the city centre and the wider area, to Bristol. A bus stop is within 200m of the development. Also nearby is the rail station of Oldfield Park	Fig 1, 4	G
4. Meeting local Housing Requirements	The scheme is comprised of a totality of market housing, and as such is not under requirement to offer affordable housing.		G
5. Character	Despite being a new development, the scheme is in fact a conversion of a previously entirely commercial building. As such, due to technicalities, it has had to keep much of its original features, such as the storey height and complex trussed roof. This limits the scope for creating a new design language for the area, but does ensure maintained, consistent design language between this building and its	Fig 2, 5, 6	G

	surrounding contemporaries.		
6. Working with the site and its context	The surrounding area, indeed most of the river Avon is a designated Bat corridor, and the design of the lighting strategy reflects this need. Harder to resolve however is the noise pollution (NEC level C) from the busy thoroughfare of the Lower Bristol Road. The design of the building, as subject to the planning conditions, creates an internal environment insulated from these effects. This is even more encouraging when coupled with the fact the development utilises the existing building. The development attempts to utilise the views across the Avon with rear facing private spaces. The development has been limited by planning conditions enforcing the vehicular routes through the site as car only, for the use of the surrounding buildings.	Fig 2, 7	A
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces.	Again, a planning condition on the site enforces that the existing vehicular routes remain vehicular routes only, meaning limited scope for creating well defined streets and spaces. In addition to this no other development was permitted other than the repurposing of the existing building, a limitation when defining streets. Landscaping could have been used more effectively, such as a more active front for the cycle store, which is the termination of the cul de sac, or where the private space meets the public, in most cases either an uncompromising stone wall or bland timber fencing.	Fig 5, 8, 9	A
8. Easy to find your way around	Again, the small size of the development lends itself to ease of navigation. Viewpoints could have been considered more carefully, such as the blank wall of the cycle store mentioned above. The entrance to the building, despite differing in landscape treatment as to that on the plans, is well defined and obvious. Due consideration has also been given to a lighting scheme on site.	Fig 10, 14	G
9. Streets For All	The size and cul de sac nature of the	Fig 14	A

	development ensures a low vehicular speed is maintained. There is no pedestrian only route through the site, and the surface treatment and orientation of the roads does not encourage people to use these spaces socially. This would be a failing, if not for a planning condition on the site stating all vehicular routes must be maintained ONLY as vehicular routes with no other purpose. This is to facilitate the surrounding existing buildings.		
10. Car Parking	More than adequate car parking provision is evident, with a disabled and visitors spaces also shown. Parking is well overlooked and the areas not close to the entrance are well lit. A mix of parking types here would not be adequate due to space constraints. One failing is the use of white lining to mark spaces rather than small metal plates, but this is the norm in the area.	Fig 6, 10,	G
11. Public and Private Spaces	Even with limited scope, the provision of successful public and private areas is poor. 'Private' paved areas for the front two dwellings open out directly onto the car park, hemmed in by a too-high wall, making these already small spaces more claustrophobic. The private areas to the rear of the building are better treated, the wall is at a much more reasonable height allowing views down onto the landscaped bank of the Avon. A mixture of gravel and paving here also allows for better drainage. A large section of the site is walled off by unsightly timber, and on the plans this is to be retained as grass, the use of which is entirely unclear. Regardless of which, in reality the section of land is disjointed from the rest of the development, of dubious purpose and also currently a scrub containing building materials. More concerning is the treatment of the semi-public communal area. Placed in the only area that it could be due to site constraints, this differs hugely from indicative plans of a green and gravelled garden area. In	Fig 11, 12, 13, 14	R

BFL12 ASSESSMENT: 11/03245/FUL

WEIRSIDE COURT, LOWER BRISTOL ROAD, WESTMORELAND, TWERTON, BATH

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	fact, the space is a tokenistic ornament, with no regard to the plans and does not look to be populated at any time. It contravenes planning conditions 8, 9 and 10 demanding landscaping treatment on site.		
12. External storage and amenity space	The provision of storage for 14 bicycles is provided, as with a refuse point with access to the street for collection. The cycle store itself is locked and secure, but could be accessed over the wall. Aesthetically, the cycle store is not evident immediately from the street, and presents a blank frontage of timber fence.	Fig 15	A

LEVEL ATTAINED	SCORE
GREEN	8
AMBER	3
RED	1

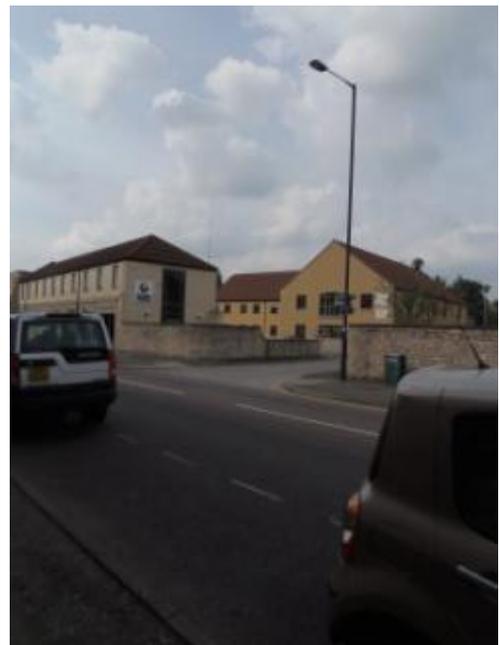
APPENDIX: PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

CONNECTIONS:



FIGURE 1: Illustrating the sites connection to the Lower Bristol Road, and beyond underneath the railway line, to Twerton High Street.

FIGURE 2: (right) Illustrating the junction the development has with the Lower Bristol Road, and the pedestrian access from the pavement to the site



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FACILITIES & SERVICES



FIGURE 3: (left) shows the placement of the site in red and local areas of facilities and services in blue.

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PUBLIC TRANSPORT



FIGURE 4: (left) shows the site in red and the nearest bus stop in blue

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CHARACTER:



FIGURE 5: (above) shows the front elevation of the building, with the windows clearly echoing those of the building in the background

FIGURE 6: (right) shows the pitched roof of the development alongside the existing buildings.

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WORKING WITH THE SITE AND ITS CONTEXT



FIGURE 7: The existing St Johns ambulance building also adjoins the site.

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CREATING WELL DEFINED STREETS AND SPACES:



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CAR PARKING



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PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACES



FIGURE 11: The communal area subject to landscaping. Note the lack of planter boxes, the right illuminated bollards and positioning of paved area.

FIGURE 12: Clear division between public and private space in a masonry wall, however this conceals the claustrophobic nature of the private spaces within



FIGURE 13: The area adjoining the development (but still owned by the developer), described as being turfed in indicative plans.



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WEIRSIDE COURT, LOWER BRISTOL ROAD, WESTMORELAND, TWERTON, BATH
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FIGURE 14: The rear private areas survey the river bank, however this is the view one is met with from the street



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EXTERNAL STORAGE AND AMENITY SPACE:

FIGURE 15: the interior of the cycle and refuse stores, accessible through locked gate, although this shot was taken over a low wall.



3. PICCADILLY PLACE: WALCOT, BATH

DESCRIPTION:

Erection of 11 apartments as three and two storey mews development with turning head after demolition of commercial properties.

QUESTION	RESPONSE	REFERENCE	SCORE
1. Connections	The small, cul-de-sac nature of the scheme means inherently the scope for pedestrian and cycle routes is poor. The development. However, little care has been taken to promote pedestrian dominance despite the no-car zoning. However, the scheme is well connected to a busy vehicular thoroughfare which leads either to the city centre or the motorway.	Fig 1, 2	G
2. Facilities + Services	The Development is well provided with facilities such as a large supermarket across the road, with the city centre (and train station) itself being a 15-20 minute walk away. Both a primary (St. Stephens C of E) and a secondary school lie close, as does a satellite campus of Bath Spa university. Kensington meadows and Hedgemed park both lie within walking distance.	Fig 3	G
3. Public Transport	The development adjoins London road, which is well served by bus routes. These venture out into the wider area, or towards the city centre where it is possible to easily link up with rail services.	Fig 4, 5	G
4. Meeting local Housing Requirements	The scheme does not offer any provision for affordable housing, and is not required to dues to its small size. Although, the site itself is a missed opportunity for the placement of affordable housing considering the demand in the area. There is a distinct lack of variation in house size and tenure.		A
5. Character	The buildings themselves attempt to seize upon architectural elements of the surrounding buildings, but fail to fully grasp the design language of the	Fig 6, 7	A

	<p>area. Ashlar is clumsily used, coupled with a render and timber cladding with no precedence historically. Stylistic elements such as the free standing gables are used with seemingly little consideration as for overall effect, to try and create a new character for the development. The surface treatment of the area retains little historic character, although it is clear that maintaining the character has been attempted in places, such as the building fronting London Road and the use of materials with a sympathetic colour palette.</p>		
<p>6. Working with the site and its context</p>	<p>The site manages to let light into the communal courtyard area even with the difficult, drastic level change with the existing development to the west, although the building design and orientation does not take full advantage of the natural light. The existing 'cottage' on the site has been subject to 'minor alterations' that are damaging the building fabric itself, with no regard as to the use of appropriate/historically sympathetic materials for rendering/ structural purposes. The building is also far from suited in its current state, for use as a bike storage area as shown on plans. The treatment of the junctions between new and existing buildings towards the north east is also questionable, showing poor detailing. The treatment of the new building facing the road, envisaged as a continuation of the terrace, is a blank street frontage due to its lack of use as an entrance, with a wasted tokenistic 'front garden'.</p>	<p>Fig 8, 9,10, 11</p>	<p>R</p>
<p>7. Creating well defined streets and spaces.</p>	<p>The positioning of the main entrance to the house adjoining the street means the entrance facing the road is unused, as is the garden. The main entrance opens onto the side street itself, confusingly. The continuous surface treatment of the road, even within the more private areas of the scheme, means it is uncertain where is public or private road space. This is compounded by the lack of gate shown on the</p>	<p>Fig 7, 12, 13</p>	<p>A</p>

	drawings, which would clearly define space. The change in width of spaces around the rear of the buildings creates an opportunity for an interesting moment which remains unrealised.		
8. Easy to find your way around	The modest size of the development means it is inherently easy to find your way round. This could be enhanced by a more active frontage to the building framed at the end of Piccadilly place.		G
9. Streets For All	The street takes a tokenistic approach to pavement, which at points is not even a metre wide. The historic kerb is retained, but new tarmac is laid either side of it. A no parking zone is in effect across the scheme, but this does not benefit pedestrians hugely, who feel consigned to the small, rather pointless pavement. A better approach would have been the retention of the historic kerb as in effect, but a paved surface treatment, perhaps akin to that at the junction with London Road creating a shared space. This would encourage more activity in the street. No external defensible space would also be lost, as none bar another tokenistic strip of gravel is given. Street furniture is poorly placed, and far from the impression given by the drawings. Cast iron bollards have been replaced with poorly placed lampposts, blocking the pedestrian route across the turning head. The turning head itself does not widen to allow for the passage of pedestrians, indeed seems to hug the turning circle of a vehicle.		R
10. Car Parking	A no parking zone is operational over the development, which does not benefit the area. The given 'car club' parking space is not used to its purpose or of the correct materiality.	Fig 11, 14	A
11. Public and Private Spaces	The communal courtyard shown on the plans of the building is far from what is depicted in the most recent plans, subject to planning condition 2 and 3 on the site. The space itself is not clearly demarked as private, and is open to access from the public realm due to the lack of gate depicted on the	Fig 15	R

	plans. The quality of the communal courtyard is vastly diminished by the lack of planting of trees, turfed areas and planters as shown on plan. This is also true of the 'front garden' sitting next to London road. As mentioned, no cast iron bollards are in evidence, and the street fails as a successful public space due to its surface and pavement treatment. The positioning of the spaces is fairly successful, with the communal courtyard receiving light, especially in the evening, despite the contour change with the surroundings. A tokenistic approach to defensible space toward the front of the buildings has been used.		
12. External storage and amenity space	The plans indicate a bin store large enough to fit all of the schemes waste. In fact, the bin and recycling store spills out onto the space indicated as a car club parking space. The positioning of this store is also inconsiderate, backing on to a neighbour's garden. A cycle store is shown, but is in reality not fit for purpose, not secure, and in a crumbling building.	Fig 11, 14, 16, 17	A

LEVEL ATTAINED	SCORE
GREEN	4
AMBER	5
RED	3

APPENDIX: PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

1. Connections



Figure 1 – The exit from the site on to London Road



Figure 2 – Lamppost blocking crossing area

BFL12 ASSESSMENT: 09/04931/FUL
FORMER GARAGE, 5-9 PICCADILLY PLACE, WALCOT, BATH
28/08/13

2. Facilities and services



Figure 3 – Morrison's supermarket is opposite the site

BFL12 ASSESSMENT: 09/04931/FUL
 FORMER GARAGE, 5-9 PICCADILLY PLACE, WALCOT, BATH
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 3. Public transport



Figure 4 –Bus services from Morrison’s supermarket going into the city centre



Figure 5 – Nearby bus services on London Road to exit the city centre

5. Character



Figure 6 – Timber cladding



Figure 7 –Bath Stone

6. Working with the site
and its context



Figure 8 – The level
change



Figure 9 – The cottage's
interior and cycle storage



Figure 10 – The poor state of the exterior of the 'cottage'



Figure 11 – Bin storage area

BFL12 ASSESSMENT: 09/04931/FUL
FORMER GARAGE, 5-9 PICCADILLY PLACE, WALCOT, BATH
28/08/13

7. Creating well defined streets and spaces



Figure 12 – The streetscape



Figure 13 – Unused entrance on London Road

BFL12 ASSESSMENT: 09/04931/FUL
FORMER GARAGE, 5-9 PICCADILLY PLACE, WALCOT, BATH
28/08/13
10. Car parking



Figure 14 – Car parking and bin intrusion

11. Public and private spaces



Figure 15 – Defensible space

BFL12 ASSESSMENT: 09/04931/FUL
FORMER GARAGE, 5-9 PICCADILLY PLACE, WALCOT, BATH
28/08/13

12. External storage and amenity space



Figure 16 – The bin storage area backs out onto a private residence



Figure 17 – Bins on the outside of the storage area

4. SOUTHLANDS: UPPER WESTON, BATH

DESCRIPTION:

Regeneration and redevelopment of existing PRC dwellings at Southlands, Weston, Bath to provide 74 dwellings following the demolition of 50 existing dwellings.

QUESTION	RESPONSE	REFERENCE	SCORE
1. Connections	The site utilises an existing road layout, and so is well connected to the surrounding existing development that it sits within. New pedestrian routes have been established in places linking with the nearby play park and to new flat developments.	Fig 1, 9	G
2. Facilities + Services	The development is positioned well, a large swathe of green public space is located adjacent to it. Sitting within this is also a children's play park, and more green space can be found within the development itself. Southlands actually adjoins Upper Weston High St, with small shops, restaurants and takeaways. Bath Royal United Hospital also is within a 10 minute walk. The centre of Bath lies a 5-10 minute bus journey away.	Fig 2	G
3. Public Transport	Bus stops are located on Penn Hill road adjoining the development with three local services. On the High Street more services to the centre, to the University and out towards Lansdown can be found. Bath Spa railway station is located a 15 minute bus journey away.	Fig 3	G
4. Meeting local Housing Requirements	The scheme is entirely comprised of affordable housing, with the majority being social rented units, with a number of intermediate tenure units (including the flats on the corner site).		G
5. Character	The development attempts to be of a sympathetic design to the existing buildings on the site, and continues the character not only through finishes such as similar renders and stone finishes, but with similar building form. The new hipped barn roofs are an improvement on the existing buildings, and follow the same pattern and sizing. The materiality links back to bath and	ALL	A

	upper Weston itself, with sympathetic colouring to bath stone. This leads to the buildings almost having a pastiche feel.		
6. Working with the site and its context	As mentioned, existing buildings remained on site, and these have been sympathetically designed around. The original road layout has also been retained for this effect, and links to not only Penn Hill Rd. but also to the High St. orientation is around this road, whilst not necessarily the best for sun path orientation. Level changes have also been handled carefully, due to the gradient across the site.	Fig 2, 9, 14	G
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces.	The nature of the scheme means that buildings are set back off the road, and the main street space is indicated by level changes, and landscaping. An attempt has been made to frame the entrance on Penn Hill street by building a storey higher than usual, and sacrificing external defensible space to bring the building forward to towards the road. The street itself is also unfortunately defined by car parking, which separates the main vehicular thoroughfare from the broad pedestrian pavement. On one side of the street the houses are shaped well, in semi-detached units of 2 or three that work well with the existing units. The other side of the street shows houses inordinately close together, with doorways that do not open onto the road but onto each other, closely, for no discernible reason. This is confusing, offers nothing to the eye and is potentially a nuisance to inhabitants. There are also forgotten areas, such as the neglected path that actually leads past blank elevations to the front of houses. It is unclear if this is even in use. A positive is the parking court of the flats, which is well overlooked, provisioned with entrances and with a brick paved surface treatment. This surface treatment also helps form other places, for example the front of house area around the green space, in tandem with	Fig 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11	A

	landscaping.		
8. Easy to find your way around	The development is easily navigable, effectively being a single street. Where it diverges from this, open vistas towards key buildings help to place you, such as the flats. Signs are also in place, but more could be done with this, for example leading to the relatively hidden play park.	Fig 10	G
9. Streets For All	Little effort has been made to ensure that the street itself becomes a place for social interaction. The surface treatment is plain asphalt, with large kerbs. However, the areas off from the main thoroughfare are far more positive. Lower kerbs and brick paving for parking help to soften the boundaries between road and intermediate space in front of houses, encouraging people to occupy there and the green open space beyond. There is a more successful landscaping in the open area in front of the flats, with lower kerbs leading onto paving used for parking without white paint, which people will occupy. Detailing here shows which areas correspond to each house with the use of soft coloured paving.	Fig 6, 7, 8, 11	A
10. Car Parking	On road parking is used in on the main street, despite the opportunity for drives in between buildings. Encouragingly this does not use white painted lines, but a low kerb to differentiate itself from the rest of the road. Unfortunately, there does not seem the provision for enough spaces as noted from the site visit. Parking provision for the flats has a brick pavement surface treatment and is marked by metal plaques, a good thing. This is also true for many of the houses overlooking the green space.	Fig 12, 13	A
11. Public and Private Spaces	The lack of public shared space on the road is negated by the provision for public and semi-public spaces in front of the houses. This area is lined by trees, lying off the pavement, distinguished from the private a defensible space of the house by a path. As mentioned, a green public	Fig 14, 15, 16	A

	<p>space, well overlooked is in evidence, although this could benefit from further landscaping. A problem space is evident also, a neglected path surrounded by grassed area that is of uncertain ownership. This leads to the front of houses, and so is an issue. The more secluded area containing flats and houses at the western corner of the site contains more of a shared space, used for parking mainly but due to the surface and kerb treatment also encouraging residents to play. It is well overlooked, although unsightly fences are in evidence marking it out as a public space. Each house has a private garden to the rear, fenced off with the same. Defensible space of the houses on the western side of the road is an issue, the space between the houses is small, on a gradient and the doors open out onto this space towards each other, leaving the space at the 'front' of the house feeling unused.</p>		
<p>12. External storage and amenity space</p>	<p>The development is fairly well provided with external storage and amenity space. The flats have both a very secure cycle store and secure bin store. The majority of the houses appear to have space (if they are semidetached) fenced off for refuse and cycles, although it was evident in reality that there was insufficient space in many dwellings, as the defensible area at the front of the houses was crowded with bins.</p>	<p>Fig 17, 18, 19, 20</p>	<p>A</p>

LEVEL ATTAINED	SCORE
GREEN	6
AMBER	6
RED	0

CONNECTIONS



FIGURE 1: Connection to Penn Hill Rd



FIGURE 2: Pedestrian connection to new part of the site and children's play area

PUBLIC TRANSPORT:



CHARACTER:



FIGURE 4: Flats clad in sympathetic materials.



FIGURE 5: The same treatment is to be found on the houses.

WORKING WITH THE SITE AND ITS CONTEXT:



CREATING WELL DEFINED STREETS AND SPACES:



FIGURE 7: Area to the front of the houses and flats element of the site, bounded by fencing.



EASY TO FIND YOUR WAY AROUND:



Figure 10: key building

STREETS FOR ALL:



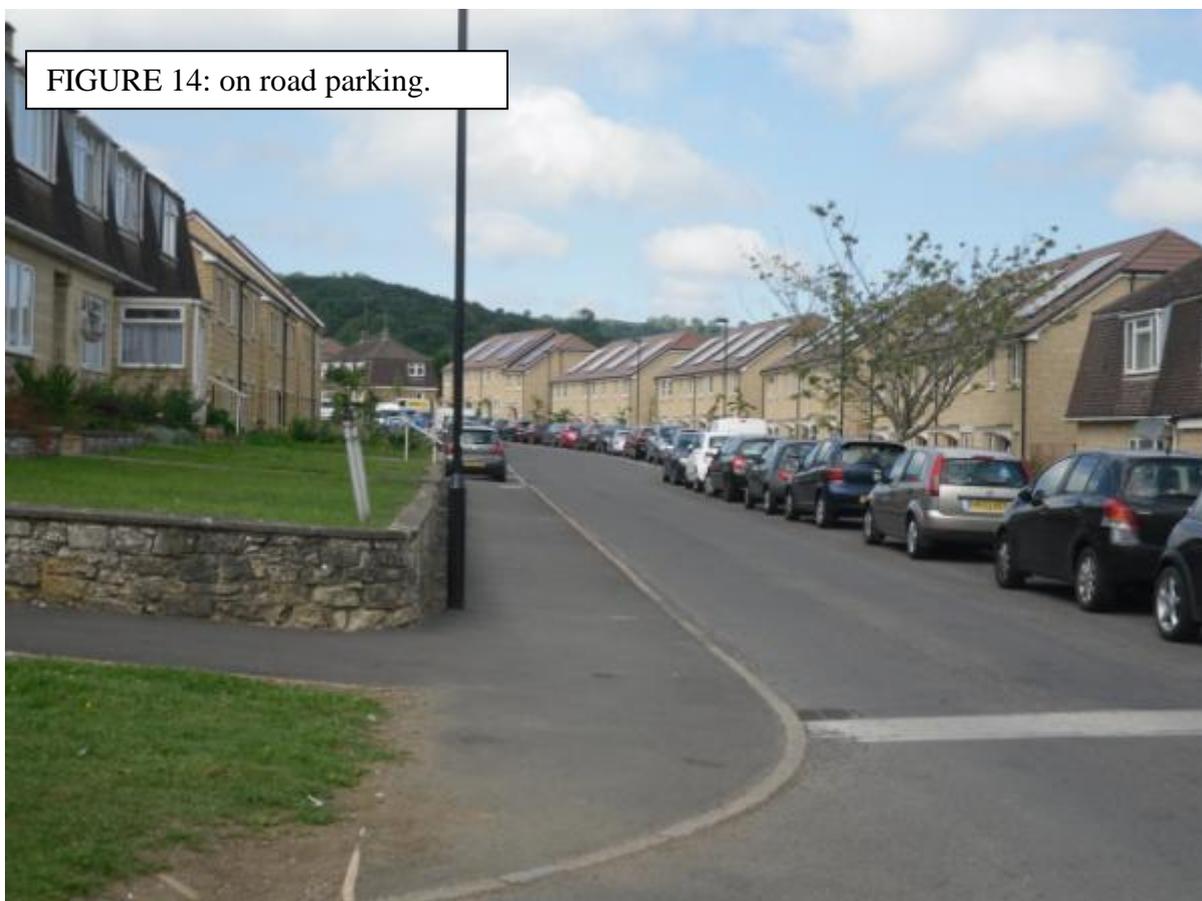
FIGURE 11: lower kerb around parking area and different surface treatments.

CAR PARKING:

FIGURE 13: Car parking
treatment for flats



FIGURE 14: on road parking.



PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACES:

FIGURE 14: Public green space



FIGURE 15: public and private space between the pavement and dwellings



FIGURE 16: Defensible space of each building potentially overlapping, poor door placement.



EXTERNAL STORAGE AND AMENITY SPACE:



FIGURE 17: Refuse storage for flats



FIGURE 18: Bike storage for flats

FIGURE 19: cycle and refuse storage for flats closest to park.



FIGURE 20: evidence of lack of refuse storage for houses.



5. FORMER TEMPLE INFANT SCHOOL: TEMPLE STREET, KEYNSHAM

DESCRIPTION:

Conversion of existing building and erection of new building to form 10 no. dwellings an associated works.

QUESTION	RESPONSE	REFERENCE	SCORE
1. Connections	The site has been modified to allow for vehicular access on Albert road, as previously the site had no car access whatsoever. This contains a splay that allows for as much visibility as possible for drivers. This is due to the proximity of the new vehicular access to the corner of Temple St. and Albert Rd. This also acts as a more public pedestrian entrance, with the other, gated pedestrian entrances being obviously private. Pedestrian crossings are in evidence, due to the nature of the site previously as a primary school	Fig 1, 2	G
2. Facilities + Services	The location of the site means it is well serviced by the high street which leads onto temple St. Within the developments immediate environs lie a public park across the road, a leisure centre down High St. and a new school, St. Kenya's, nearby. A medical centre lies a 5 minute walk away.		G
3. Public Transport	The development is well serviced by a bus stop across the road, with services out to Bath and to Bristol. Keynsham train station is a 10 minute walk away.	Fig 2	G
4. Meeting local Housing Requirements	The development is to be comprised of 1 bedroom flats and multiple bed houses. This was refused by the council, but was overruled by the chairman of the development control committee, as it is in line with policy HG4 of the local plan. There is no requirement for the provision of affordable housing on the site.		G
5. Character	The development retains the character of the original school building well, with similar materiality used in the new	Fig 3,	G

	<p>building. This is evident from the bath stone lintels, stone walling and pointing and the colour of the render, all of which can be seen in the immediate area. The extension to the existing school building maintains the character of the Victorian era building by the same means. The massing of the new building containing flats, coupled with the pitch of the roof and the parapet ensures the continuity of the terraces adjoining the site in Albert Rd, as does the continuation of the stone wall.</p>		
6. Working with the site and its context	<p>Only part of the existing buildings on the site was retained, the main bulk of the old school house. However, the new extension to this is seamless, and the renovation of this building into houses is done carefully, retaining and repairing original features, which are echoed in the new buildings (as ordered in planning condition 12). The footprint of another existing structure, an outbuilding and store house, has been used to inform the design, with the cycle and refuse storage occupying the same space here. Contamination was an identified issue, and subject to planning conditions a contamination assessment revealed that charcoal or coal was evident in the soil, which had to be replaced. The site is also on top of a natural aquifer, although this needs no attention due to its size</p>	Fig 1, 2, 3, 4	G
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces.	<p>The areas within the development are clearly defined, and are as much shaped by the placement of buildings as the surface treatment of the street. The new building containing flats shields the main open area from the street, and the position of the school in relation to the surrounding wall creates some clearly more private areas. All thresholds open out onto the courtyard created by the buildings, and none of the facades are blank, all contain windows and features. A space of around 600mm exists, gravelled in black, around the house, which ensures cars do not travel/park too close. The buildings are also spread close to the</p>	Fig 5, 6	G

	street itself, and in cases where they aren't a wall (of local character) is in place, clearly defining a hard corner.		
8. Easy to find your way around	The scheme itself is small, and with obvious frontages to each building, it is easy to find your way around once located within the courtyard. It is however clear the scheme is a private residence, as disregarding the vehicular access, it is almost impermeable to pedestrians, and inward looking.		G
9. Streets For All	The surface treatment of the car parking area is paved, as is the pavement, evoking a shared space. This is only broken by kerbs, showing that cars traverse within. The low volume of car traffic in the scheme coupled with this surface treatment, indicates that this space is likely to be populated, a social space. This is also encouraged by good surveillance opportunities, all front doors open out onto this space and many windows overlook it. The small nature of the scheme ensures low speeds, as does the corner a car has to turn to come into the main parking area.	Fig 5, 6, 7	G
10. Car Parking	Car parking is provided on a 1:1 ratio, with ten spaces made mandatory by a planning condition. A disabled space is also provided. The spaces themselves are demarked by coloured bricks, rather than white lines. This is more aesthetically pleasing in this brick paved space, and also more cost effective in the long run.	Fig 7,8	G
11. Public and Private Spaces	Effort has been made with the development to design it around a courtyard. As a consequence, the scheme is inward looking, meaning the central paved courtyard, despite parking also, becomes a more communal space that can be populated; accessible by the public, but primarily used by the residents. Each house has a front garden, a semi-private planted area, leading onto a shared area of green space. This gradient of public to private space is encouraging, and boundaries are defined from individual pathways. All	Fig 6, 8, 9, 10, 11	G

	<p>of these spaces are overlooked, windows of occupied spaces within each dwelling forming good surveillance opportunities. The scheme's modest size necessitates smaller private areas in this case, which are not fully fenced off, but are defined more subtly by more narrow entrance ways, for example the gap between the old school and the new build. Problem areas are in evidence, the small size of the area between the northern wall and the school building, and the unused grassed area to the west of the entrance. These are necessitated by planning conditions however, and must be unaltered.</p>		
12. External storage and amenity space	<p>External refuse space is provided within the scheme, occupying an area that used to contain an outbuilding. The space is sufficient for all bins, and is close enough to the road for connection, and removed enough from the occupied areas as not to be a nuisance. Cycle storage is also provided, and is obvious and open. The refuse store however is not secure, neither is the cycle storage area.</p>	Fig 12, 13, 14	A

LEVEL ATTAINED	SCORE
GREEN	11
AMBER	1
RED	0

APPENDIX: PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

CONNECTIONS



FIGURE 1: The main entrance on Albert Road.



FIGURE 2: Pedestrian crossing point, as seen from bus stop

CHARACTER:



FIGURE 3: View taking in new and existing buildings, how the sense of character is maintained

WORKING WITH THE SITE AND ITS CONTEXT:



FIGURE 4: The new building in the foreground echoes the architectural elements of the existing school building beyond

CREATING WELL DEFINED STREETS AND SPACES



FIGURE 5: The curb treatment beside the vehicular thoroughfare, prevents parking/travel too close to the house and shows a change in use



FIGURE 6: Showing the entrances to the houses leading out onto the main communal area. Also note the different spaces in front of the dwellings, a shared communal green area with more private planted areas

STREETS FOR ALL:



FIGURE 7: Despite being primarily parking based, the low car traffic and surface treatment of this area lends itself to a social space also

CAR PARKING:



FIGURE 8: Again showing car parking, with the extra wide disabled spot to the right of the frame, un-marked.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACES:



FIGURE 8: Communal green area to the left is open to the public, though the courtyard nature of the scheme ensures it stays for residents only.



FIGURE 11: Small private space near the edge of the plot, unable to alter dimensions due to existing buildings



EXTERNAL STORAGE AND AMENITY SPACE:

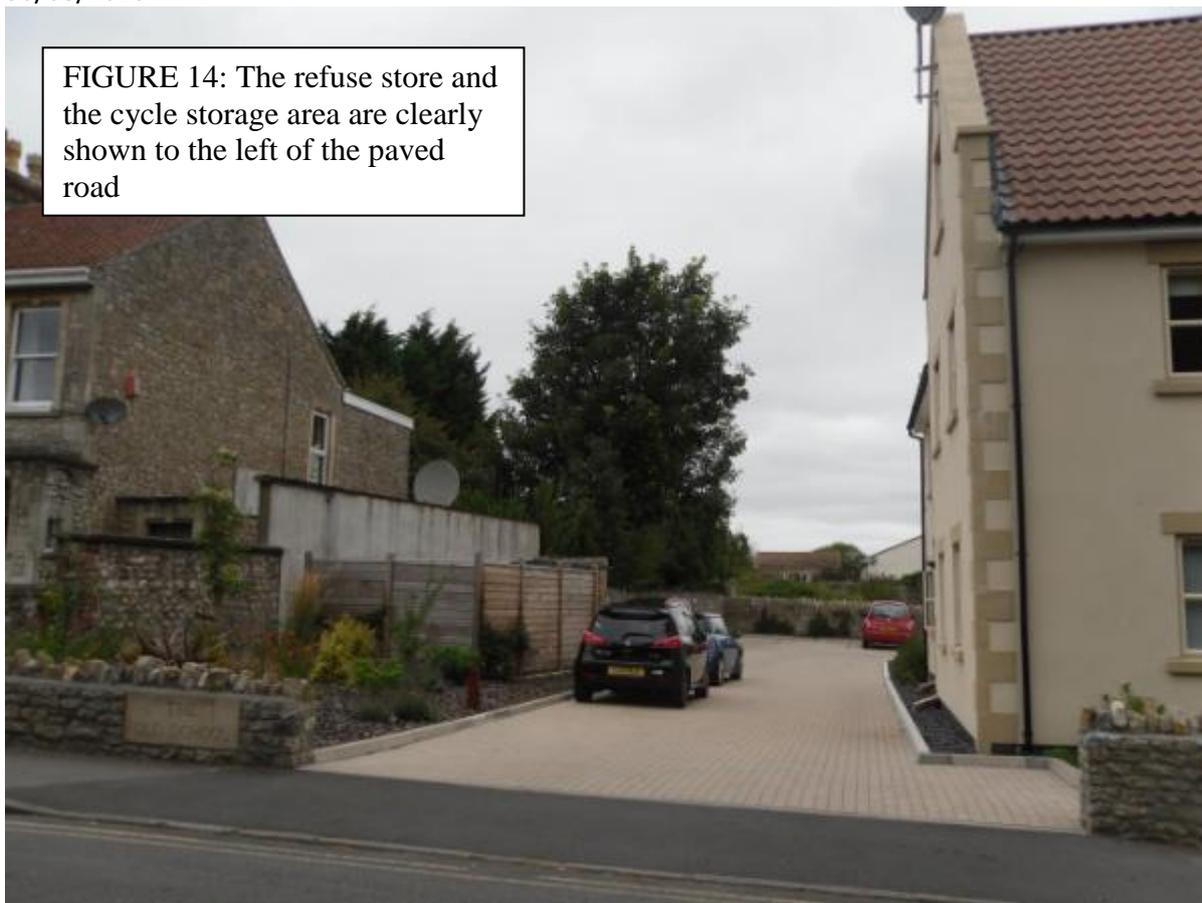


FIGURE 12: The inside of the refuse store



FIGURE 13: The cycle storage area.

FIGURE 14: The refuse store and the cycle storage area are clearly shown to the left of the paved road



6. THE GRANGE HOTEL: 42 BATH ROAD, KEYNSHAM

Erection of 14no residential units to include 2, 3 and 4 bed houses and apartments, rebuild coach house block (staff annex), erection of single storey rear extension to hotel with provision of new accessible bedroom following demolition of 44 Bath Road and existing hotel bedroom wing.

QUESTION	RESPONSE	REFERENCE	SCORE
1. Connections	The site is a relatively small cul-de-sac, so there is little scope for cycle and pedestrian routes. But pedestrians are hindered by the low quality of pavements going through the site. Connections leaving the site however are good, as residents exit out onto Bath Road, a major road of Keynsham linking to the A4.	1, 2	
2. Facilities + Services	Keynsham's High Street is a 10-15 minute walk away and caters for most retail needs. A Co-op supermarket is close by, but is hard to access for a pedestrian, as there is a large roundabout linking the A4 to Bath Road. The site shares a fence with the local secondary school, Wellsway, which is in turn also linked with Chandag Junior School.	3	
3. Public Transport	There are bus stops 20 metres outside the site which offer regular services to Bristol and Bath. Keynsham train station is a 15 minute walk away through an estate. The lack of signage though may discourage a resident to walk there	4	
4. Meeting local Housing Requirements	Affordable housing is not a requirement on the site as the number of dwellings falls under the threshold. Its close proximity to the school and amenities means that it would be a good location for affordable housing.		
5. Character	The site shares a few characteristics with the built form in the surrounding neighbourhood. House dimensions are roughly the same as surrounding homes and building materials are sympathetic. The two dwellings on Bath Road itself though do share features with existing	5	

	homes, and do fit in well with similar massing and materials.		
6. Working with the site and its context	<p>The site is surrounded by houses on Bath Road as well as by the school, resulting in a lack of natural views and sight lines out of the development. Houses therefore do not need to face a certain way in order to take advantage of potential views.</p> <p>The Grange Hotel's existing building has been maintained and worked into the site although it seems that the entrance is a bottleneck, where the road suddenly curves and narrows to circumnavigate it. As a result, pedestrians have suffered due to the very narrow pavement.</p>	2, 6	
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces.	<p>The narrow nature of the site adds difficulty to the process of creating good streets and spaces.</p> <p>The Grange Hotel makes the site too narrow to build anything but a road on, and further into the site the road curves to allow dwellings with back gardens to fit.</p> <p>The curve of the road allows the opportunity for natural surveillance, with all dwellings having their entrances onto the road.</p> <p>However, the site's road for the most part is tarmac, which deters pedestrians from thinking that the road is a shared space. The section of the site closest to the school fence has an abrupt change from tarmac to brick, although this too is the blanket surface treatment, again degrading the pedestrian feel of the site</p>	7	
8. Easy to find your way around	<p>The small size of the site means that navigation is simple. The one road of the site has a simple curve and the site is hemmed in by the school's tennis courts on one side, and the Grange Hotel on the other.</p> <p>The slope of the site also reminds the user of where they are, with an incline through the site up to the boundary with Wellsway school</p>		
9. Streets For All	The street is not pedestrian friendly due to the over-use of tarmac whereby cars dominate.	2, 8	

	<p>The entrance has poorly designed pavements, with one side of the road being less than a shoulder-width wide and the other a confusing combination of gradients linking to the hotel.</p> <p>The tarmac treatment ends midway through the site where brick takes over. This is the only part of the site where residents may feel that it is a shared space between vehicles and pedestrians.</p>		
10. Car Parking	<p>There is an adequate provision of car parking although improvements can be made. A parking 'gazebo' only caters for two cars and abruptly ends leaving other spaces on the parking row uncovered.</p> <p>There also seemed to be an overall lack of spaces, with cars spilling out onto the road to park although the road was wide enough to accommodate them.</p> <p>All parking is overlooked sufficiently by the residents' windows.</p>	9, 10	
11. Public and Private Spaces	<p>Two dwellings in particular have poor set-backs from the road. A tarmac road leads almost up to the front doors, with less than a metre gap separating them. A small materiality change is made, but the road is too close to entrances of dwellings.</p> <p>Planting has adhered to plans, with some trees still in an embryonic stage. Small pieces of grass are used to fill in unused parcels of land, even in tight areas, which degrades the quality of the public space.</p> <p>Due to the road surface and narrow nature of the site, there is a lack of opportunity for children to play.</p>	11, 12	
12. External storage and amenity space	<p>Bin storage provision is poor. A small square of paving slabs exists, with no walls surrounding it, meaning bins are open to the street. It is not large enough to fit all of the site's waste on.</p> <p>Cycle storage is non-existent on the site, and with the lack of garages on the site, storage is an issue.</p>	13	

BFL12 ASSESSMENT: 09/04009/FUL
The Grange Hotel, 42 Bath Road
Keynsham East

LEVEL ATTAINED	SCORE
GREEN	2
AMBER	8
RED	2



Figure 1 Bath Road



Figure 2 Shoulder-width pavement makes the construction of it seem unnecessary



Figure 3 The site shares a boundary with Wellsway School. There may therefore be issues with noise during school hours

Public transport

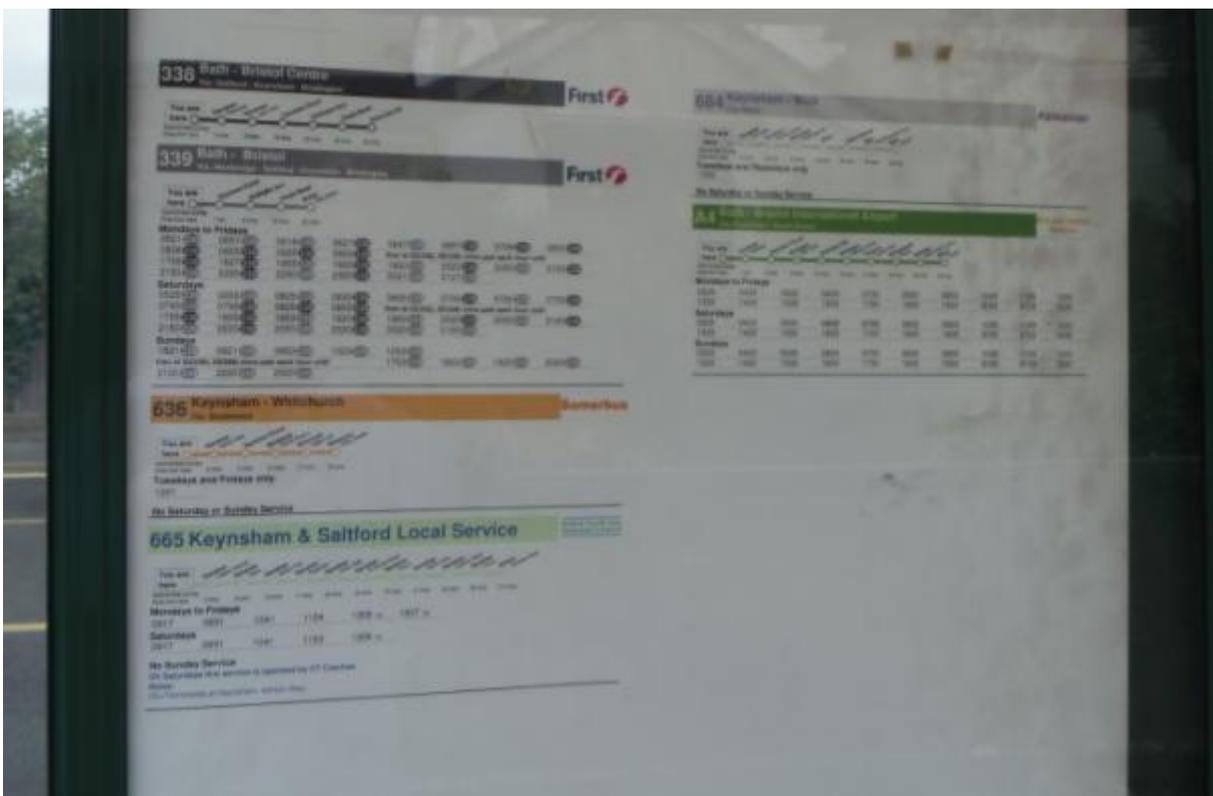


Figure 4 Bus services nearby



Figure 5 The use of sympathetic materials and similar architectural design

Working with the site and its context



Figure 6 The site curves to circumnavigate the hotel



Figure 7 surface treatment changes from tarmac to brick

Streets for all



Figure 8 Confusing change in gradients on the hotel side pavement



Figure 9 Car parking spills out on to the street



Figure 10 Driveway parking. There is no surface change between the street and the driveways



Figure 11 The tarmac street material continues until less than 1 metre before two dwellings. The gap between private and public spaces is too small



Figure 12 Small leftover pockets of land have been planted on but it is too small to be used for recreation



Figure 13 Bin storage has not been thought out sufficiently, with 16 paving slabs supposedly large enough to place 11 dwellings' waste on. It is also blocked by cars that park on the side of the road. Even if it is only used for a collection point, a bin lorry wouldn't be able to access it – there is no turning space and cars are in the way.

7. ELM TREE AVENUE: WESTFIELD

Erection of 28 no. dwellings and access road from Bryant's Avenue (re-submission). Includes 20 social rented and 7 intermediate

QUESTION	RESPONSE	REFERENCE	SCORE
1. Connections	<p>There are two entrances to the site, one of which is to pedestrians only, is overly narrow and has a hole in the ground which was presumably meant for a lamppost.</p> <p>The vehicle entrance connects with the existing roads and houses to add some sense of permeability to the site. However, there are no pedestrian/cycle only routes through the site and pavements vary in width and become almost too narrow at times</p>	1, 2, 3	
2. Facilities + Services	<p>Secondary schools are a reasonable walk away from the site, varying from 1.1 and 1.7 miles away with steep hills making the walk more difficult. Amenities are also a similar distance away, with the centre of Radstock having a few shops and facilities.</p>		
3. Public Transport	<p>Bus provision in the area is adequate, with services linking Radstock with Bath, Bristol and Frome. But there were no bus stops in or around the site, and is a 5 minute walk away.</p> <p>The lack of a train station in the town is an issue, with the nearest being in Frome, roughly 10 miles away</p>		
4. Meeting local Housing Requirements	<p>The site is 100% affordable housing all of which are family homes. This seems to match the existing housing stock around the site, where there are low-wealth family dwellings.</p> <p>A BANES survey (2000) revealed that there was a high demand for 2-bed dwellings compared to other sized homes, which has been matched well here.</p>		
5. Character	<p>The dwellings are lacking in style and identity. Houses seem generic and non-specific to Westfield and Radstock, with very few characteristics being shared with the existing housing stock.</p> <p>Although there is a lack of overriding</p>	4, 5	

	<p>identity in Radstock, the site adds nothing to any tenuous architectural links in the town.</p> <p>The existing housing stock has much larger gardens at the front and rear of the property, but this site is dense with very little room for a back garden.</p> <p>Attempts are made to match building materials to historic stone buildings in the town centre.</p>		
6. Working with the site and its context	<p>Many houses face other existing dwellings' gardens meaning views are limited. Many of these gardens are poorly maintained and without fencing, so often homes seem like they open out directly onto someone else's garden.</p> <p>Bird boxes are found on the side of most dwellings on the site, although it seems tokenistic, with no concerted effort or approach to be sympathetic to nature.</p>	6, 7, 8	
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces.	<p>Buildings on the site do turn corners well, with some terraces curving around a street corner to maximise surveillance.</p> <p>But with there being one street through the site, there can be no variation in street hierarchy and pattern</p> <p>Houses on the site all have front doors opening up onto the street although apartment complexes have two separate entrances, one of which is at the rear of the building.</p> <p>One building in particular has four garages on the ground floor and an entrance, with apartments above. This is a disappointment, where there was the chance to create a more active frontage to the apartments.</p> <p>Landscaping is weak and seems to be an afterthought, filling in the small gaps found between the pavement and front doors</p>	9, 10, 11	
8. Easy to find your way around	<p>The site is easy to navigate through due to its small nature. With one vehicle entrance and one pedestrian-only entrance at either end of the site, it is difficult to get lost.</p> <p>The large 7ft curved wall going around</p>	12, 1	

	the largest corner in the site performs as a marker feature due to its size and distinctiveness. Views are limited due to the enclosed nature of the development, in between two residential streets		
9.Streets For All	<p>The same tarmac surface treatment is used throughout the site, with high curbing also present, giving the impression that the street is for vehicles instead of pedestrians and/or cyclists. The street is therefore not a social or play space for children. If the treatment changed in materiality or was a different material altogether, this issue would not be found.</p> <p>Dwellings and its streets seem to be generic and could be found anywhere meaning that there is a lack of appeal and interest.</p> <p>One side of the street suffers from having pavements which are too narrow, while streets do not link to a dwelling's driveway or paving effectively.</p>	13, 14	
10. Car Parking	<p>Parking is adequate and arguably offers too much. Dwellings independent of size offer at least two parking spaces, and the lack of uniformity in driveway/car park size (width and length) means that some can offer up to four. The large amount of space taken up for spacing could be used for a different use, especially in rear parking courts.</p> <p>Parking is well overlooked by residents although there is no clear and direct route between front doors and the parking with a tokenistic approach to soft landscaping.</p>	15, 16	
11. Public and Private Spaces	<p>There is clear definition of private and public spaces. Walls are a key feature of the site to outline explicitly where a dwelling's land begins. The walls are overbearing though and may be too defensive, so a soft landscaping or materiality change would have been an improvement.</p> <p>The road is designed in a way that very small pockets of greenery have been created. A straighter road would've</p>	11, 9, 17, 8, 18	

	<p>reduced the need for the unnecessary soft planting pockets which add nothing to the site.</p> <p>Back gardens of neighbouring houses either have 7ft walls created for them as a result of the development, or have chosen not to have the wall. This creates an unsightly public/private boundary, and the ability to see into neighbouring gardens is disappointing</p>		
12. External storage and amenity space	<p>The majority of dwellings on the site have porches which enable bin/cycle storage. Family homes though are what this site is based on, and the porches seem to be too small to offer storage for a family's amount of bikes and waste. Others are reliant on storing bins either behind their front garden walls or elsewhere.</p>	19	

LEVEL ATTAINED	SCORE
GREEN	2
AMBER	7
RED	3



Figure 1
Narrow pedestrian entrance with
unplanted lamppost



Figure 2
Vehicle entrance to the site



Figure 3 Narrow, tokenistic pavement

Character



Figure 4 Lack of building character



Figure 5 Relationship to existing housing stock

Working with the site and its context

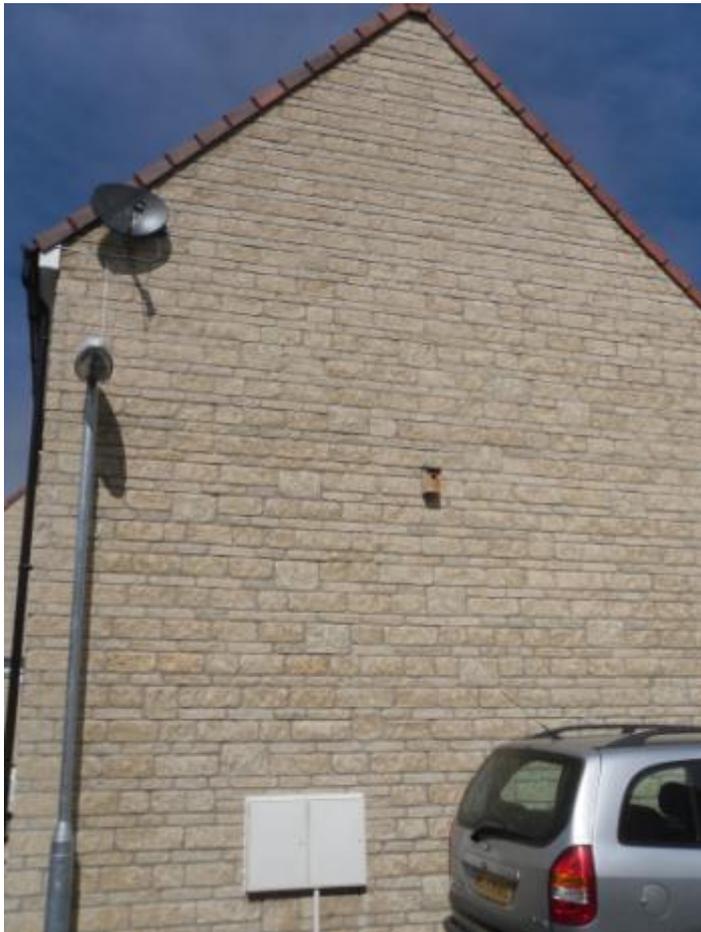


Figure 6 Tokenistic bird boxes



Figure 7 Neighbouring gardens: lack of fencing



Figure 8 Second example of lack of fencing



Figure 9 Houses turning corners



Figure 10 Garages underneath apartment buildings



Figure 11 Afterthought planting

Easy to find your way around



Figure 12 Large curved wall



Figure 13 High curbs are a key feature of the streetscape

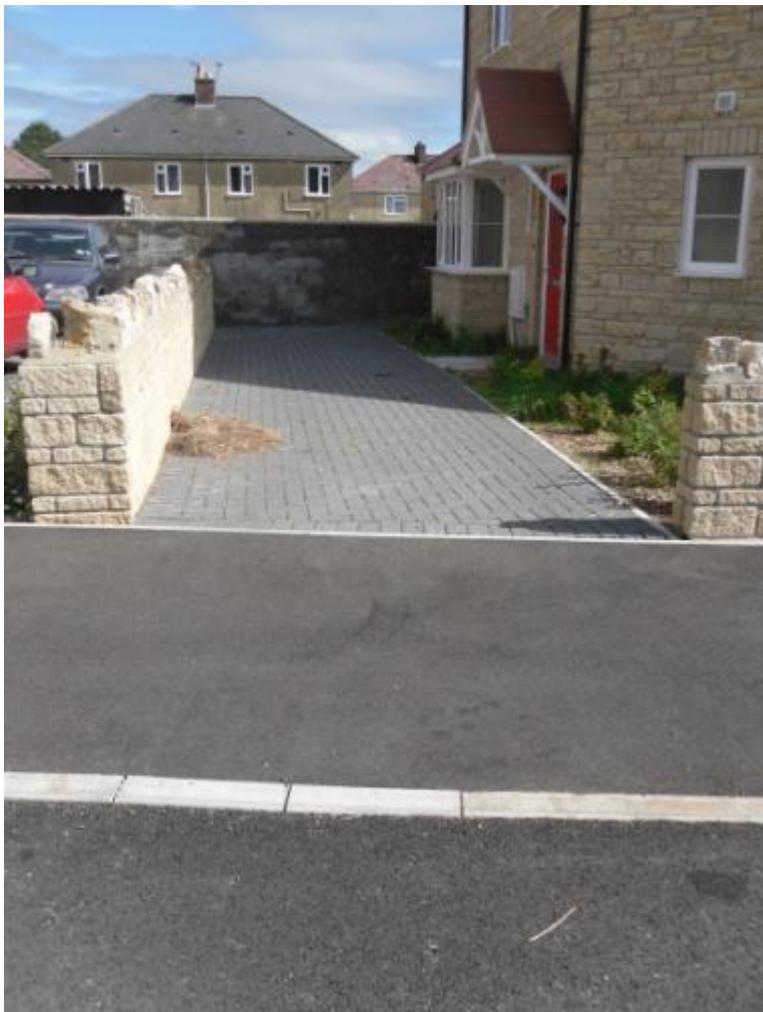


Figure 14 Relationship between driveways and road. Difference in building materials



Figure 15 An example of a narrow driveway in the site



Figure 16 An example of a wider driveway



Figure 17 Sporadic walling at the end of neighbouring gardens



Figure 18 A skip is open to the site: an unintended private open space

BFL12 ASSESSMENT: 10/03397/FUL
Elm Tree Avenue
Westfield
External storage and amenity space



Figure 19 Storage space in porches

8. CAUTLETTS CLOSE: MIDSOMER NORTON

DESCRIPTION:

Erection 112 no. dwellings with access from Withies Park (including a new bridge across the River Somer), landscaping and associated works.

QUESTION	RESPONSE	REFERENCE	SCORE
1. Connections	The site is connected to the surrounding road network through one point of vehicular access, across a new bridge over the river. This is the only course of action that could be taken, given surrounding developments. However, the design of the bridge is clumsy and unsightly, a lighter structure should have been used instead of the heavy masonry and concrete bridge in place. A missed opportunity in connecting to a nearby cul de sac is an issue, but this is due to the need to preserve a hedgerow and watercourse. The site connects well to the pedestrian cycle track Withies lane where possible, allowing permeability to existing development and green infrastructure nearby also.	Fig 1, 2, 8, 13	G
2. Facilities + Services	The development is situated within a ten minute walk to the local neighbourhood centre of Midsomer Norton, and all associated services to be found there: shops, banks, cafes and other areas of employment etc. Two schools lie within a 5-10 minute walk from the site, and a cricket club borders the development. Employment centres of Frome and Bath lie within the reach of public transport. Playing fields lie across withies lane adjacent to the site.	Fig 3	G
3. Public Transport	A bus route runs along the Withies park/Steam mills road. A ten minute walk to the town centre leads to bus services to the surrounding wider area, to Bristol, Frome and bath notably. These areas contain rail links.	Fig 3, 4	G
4. Meeting local Housing Requirements	The development meets policy HG 8 of the BANES local plan, with 39 of 112 homes being allocated as affordable		G

	housing. The development also aims to meet the standards set out by BANES in the Affordable Housing SPD, and the JRF lifetime homes standard. The homes are fragment and sporadically placed, aiming for areas to be tenure blind.		
5. Character	The development fails at replicating the spirit of the existing character of the area, but also fails to create a new sense of character itself. The houses, while being rendered in sympathetic colours, are not designed to any local precedence, and feel 'catalogue built', whilst within the development you feel that you could be in any number of other, identical developments anywhere in the country.	Fig 1, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11	A
6. Working with the site and its context	Due to the rural nature of the site, the development required a vast array of wildlife and environmental assessments, including a wildlife protection and enhancement scheme and a reptile management strategy. Bat boxes, bird boxes and reptile refuges remain un-built. To this effect, hedgerows have been retained in parts of the northern border of the site, and the large hedgerow bordering withies lane has also been retained. The site contains the river Somer, a SNCI, and also has to have had provision for drainage and flood negation, which has been carried out alongside natural drainage. No existing buildings or archaeological remnants are on site.	Fig 1, 2, 7, 8	G
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces.	An effort has been made to master plan the scheme so that the buildings themselves turn corners, rather than the use of fences or garages. The entrances and thresholds to the dwellings also always face the street. The buildings also, on the whole, turn corners well, with active frontages and plenty of opportunity for surveillance. A hierarchy of road spaces is attempted: The main boulevard that you are greeted with when entering the site is relatively wide, fringed with semi-public green spaces and trees, then private paved areas. Roads	Fig 9, 10, 11, 12	A

	<p>leading off this are also shared spaces, but narrower, lacking the semi-public areas. A third strata in the hierarchy of streets, the lane, is formed with the open green space parallel to Withies Lane. The bridge, with bands of paved areas showing a clear change in space, coupled with the bottleneck also creates a difference in spaces between the public highway and the development. The bridge itself is unsightly, a lighter structure should have been constructed here. More private and parking areas for each dwelling are again indicated by a change of materiality. In places is the space relatively undefined, where the site borders the existing development to the south west, leading into a green space that lacks any form of indication of ownership, and the street is bordered ended by a hedge. Also in places the street is bordered by walls of gardens, or car parking is used to turn corners.</p>		
<p>8. Easy to find your way around</p>	<p>The shared nature of the streets means that the site feels fairly easy to navigate. This is coupled with the fact that an effort has been made to front the end of streets mostly with active frontages of different housing types, a feature useful for navigation. Key buildings are used. The central thoroughfare is lined by trees to further differentiate itself. The large loop nature of the site means it is easy to navigate back to a point, especially using withies lane as a reference point.</p>	<p>Fig 10, 11, 12, 13</p>	G
<p>9.Streets For All</p>	<p>The streets themselves are designed to be sympathetic towards pedestrians, with no raised curb and a mixture of asphalt and paved sections clearly indicating a shared space (as does the lack of pavement area). One must assume that this treatment will be carried on through the rest of the scheme. The low volume of traffic also contributes towards this. Cars will drive more slowly here, and this is contributed to by the amount of corners, forcing cars to slow down. All</p>	<p>Fig 5, 6, 9, 13, 14</p>	G

	<p>dwellings open out onto these spaces too, encouraging people to populate them, and this is compounded by the amount of glazing looking out onto the street also. A gradient of private to public space (front gardens, paths and green spaces) is offered in many places, as are trees, vertical elements providing visual delight. A hierarchy of streets is created, with the main boulevard being less dense and more open than the surrounding streets.</p>		
10. Car Parking	<p>A mixture of car parking treatments are provided, with the majority being off road, side of house/garage parking. The large shared space of the road, although not designed as such, has also been used for parking in reality. More than adequate provision for parking has been made, in some cases to the detriment of front of house, defensible space. These are in fact overlooked, and so security is good.</p>	Fig 5, 9, 10, 15, 19	G
11. Public and Private Spaces	<p>A clear public space is indicated by the shared space, both a large vehicular thoroughfare and pedestrian access. On the central boulevard, semi-public green areas border the road (ownership is uncertain), given a private by the way they front each individual house. A line of low bushes clearly differentiates the defensible spaces in front of each dwelling. Private areas are also given over to the rear of each building, with emphasis obviously on privacy of the rear garden. Private areas are marked out clearly between buildings by large timber fencing, which is unsightly from the road. In some areas space is given over to grass, again of uncertain ownership, as no other use is discerned for it. It is unclear whether the green space to the west of the site is accessible at all, and the public green space bordering Withies Lane is small, but provides a green border to the site.</p>	Fig 6, 7, 8, 13, 17, 18	A
12. External storage and amenity space	<p>Each dwelling has a large amount of space, fenced off, for parking and possible refuse storage. This is on partnership with a garage, which on a family orientated development such as</p>	Fig 19	G

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	this is suitable for cycle storage also.		
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LEVEL ATTAINED	SCORE
GREEN	9
AMBER	3
RED	0

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CONNECTIONS:



FACILITIES + SERVICES:

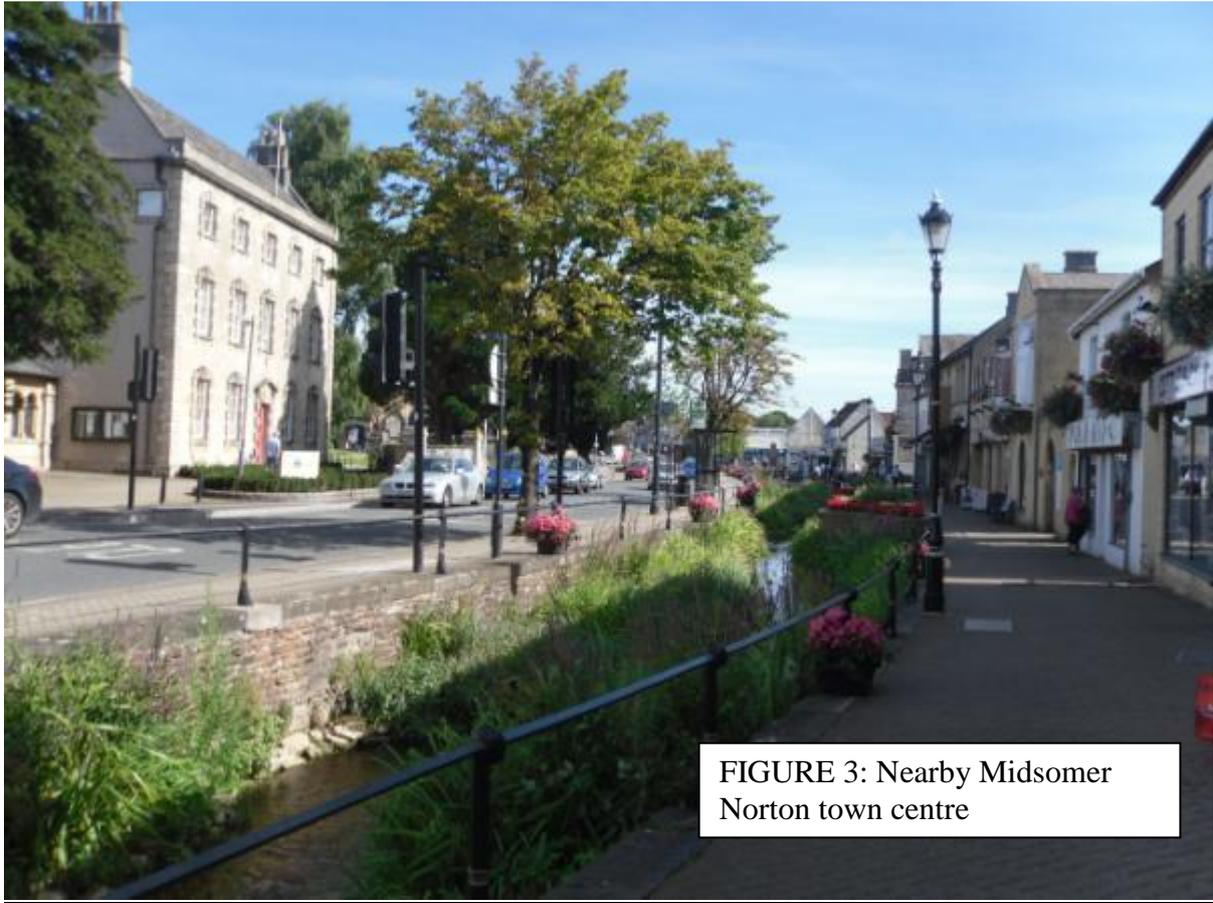


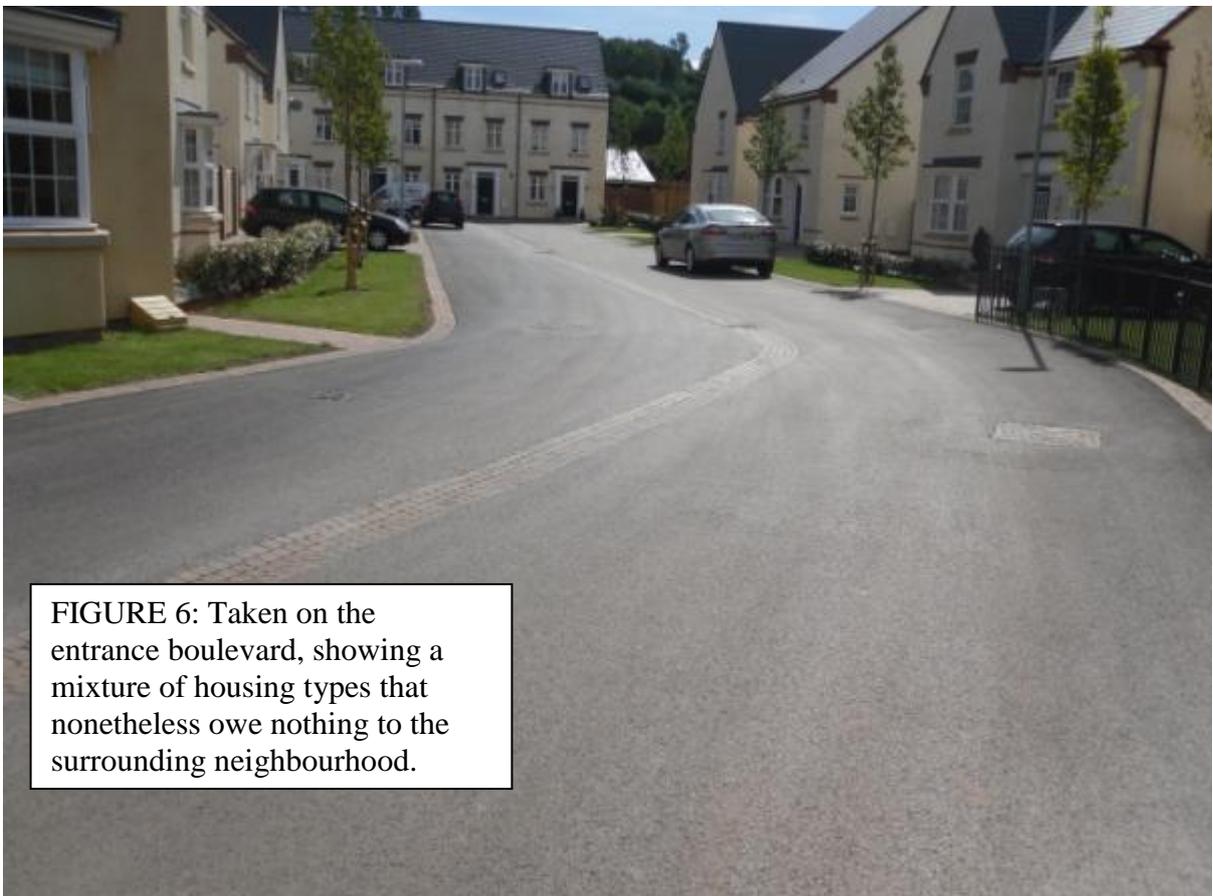
FIGURE 3: Nearby Midsomer Norton town centre

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

FIGURE 4: Withies Park bus stop, connects to the larger bus stop in the town centre



CHARACTER:



WORKING WITH THE SITE AND ITS CONTEXT:

FIGURE 7: The SNCI and location of the SUDS balancing pool. Note lack of access.

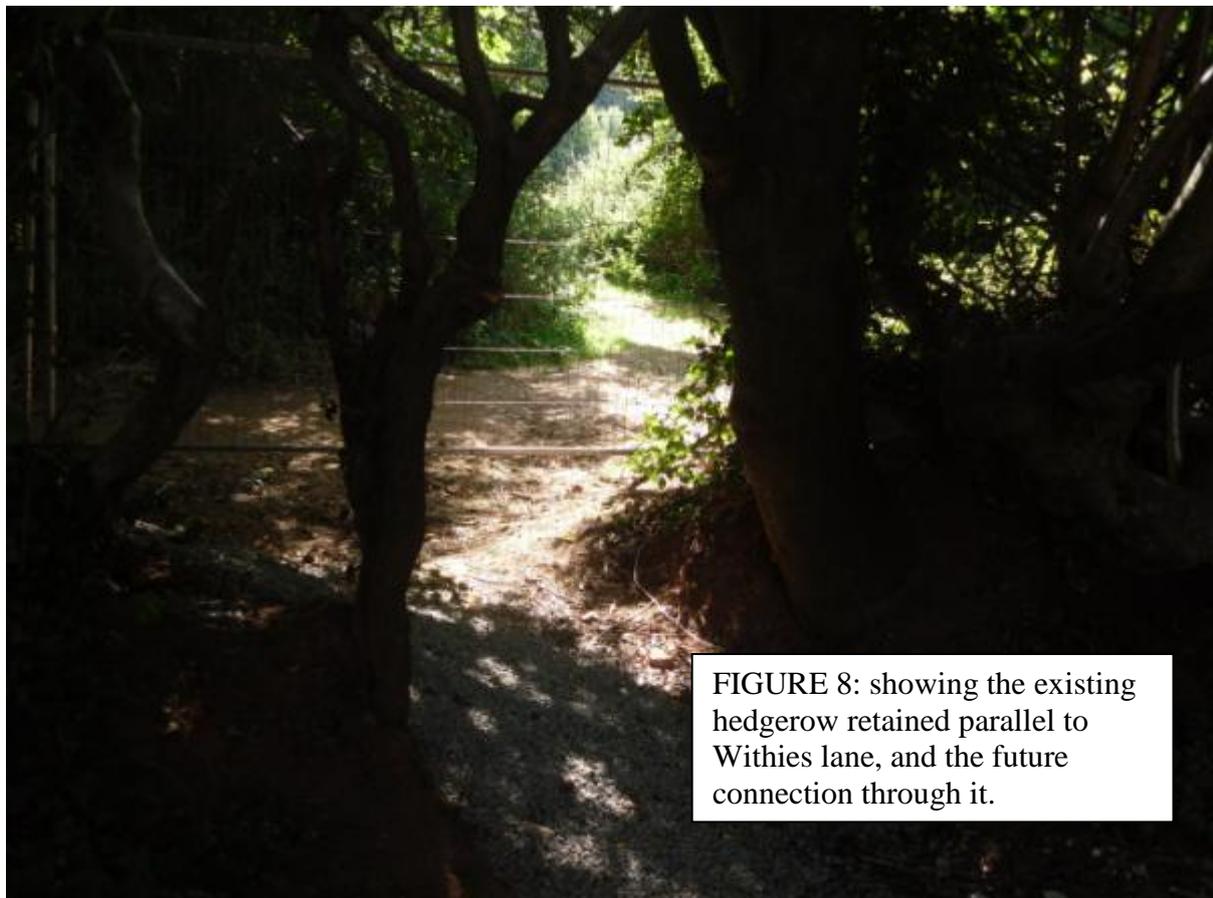
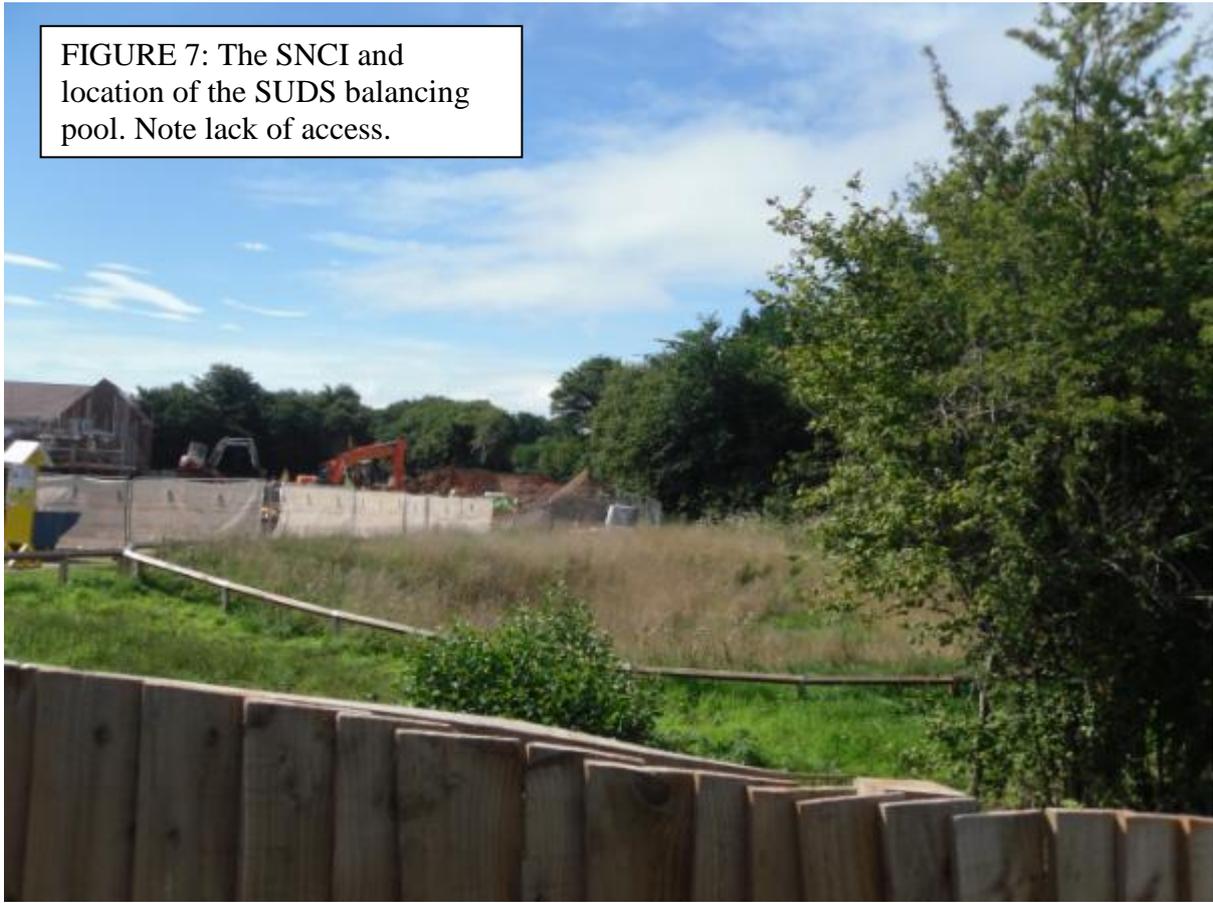


FIGURE 8: showing the existing hedgerow retained parallel to Withies lane, and the future connection through it.

CREATING WELL DEFINED STREETS AND SPACES:



FIGURE 9: The entranceway broad boulevard, with shared space.



EASY TO FIND YOUR WAY AROUND:



FIGURE 11: Active frontage, tall façade and different housing typology used to terminate the street.



FIGURE 12: Blank wall facing the street

STREETS FOR ALL:



FIGURE 13: The shared space, semi-public green space and private paved area of the entrance boulevard



FIGURE 14: The materiality change and bottleneck of the entrance to the site on the bridge. Note high curbs.

CAR PARKING:





FIGURE 16: Car parking treatment in front of the dwelling, at the cost of front defensible space

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACES:



EXTERNAL STORAGE AND AMENITIES SPACE:

FIGURE 19: The private gated amenities and storage space given over to each dwelling of this type. Other dwellings have no visible storage space at the front of the house.



9. WELLOW LANE: PEASEDOWN ST JOHN

DESCRIPTION:

Erection of 95 no. one, two, three and four bed dwellings with associated public space, landscaping, car parking (181 spaces) and 8 new vehicular accesses from Wellow Lane. Erection of a 4m high acoustic fence.

QUESTION	RESPONSE	REFERENCE	SCORE
1. Connections	The site is relatively well connected, spread in a linear fashion in-between an A road and Wellow Lane, with 8 new vehicular access points onto this road. Connections to a footpath are also close by, just off Wellow lane. The bounded nature of the site necessitates few connections. Permeability by pedestrians from Wellow Lane to parts of the scheme could be vastly improved.		A
2. Facilities + Services	The development is situated a 5 minute walk from the small high street of Peasedown St John, with a small shop. A primary school is also within walking distance, although is under strain with pupil numbers. A playground and a recreation ground lie within this distance also, and across the busy A road a Business park is located. Another local centre of employment is the workshops just off Wellow Lane.		G
3. Public Transport	Several bus routes travel through Pease down High Street, with services out to Bath and also to Bristol. A more local service, the 175 and 757 runs parallel and through the centre of the development. The nearest railway station is bath, a 15 minute bus journey.		G
4. Meeting local Housing Requirements	After many revisions, the scheme has met the requirements for affordable housing as set out by the planning department consultations. A mix of affordable housing types is in evidence, with an excess number of flats. The mix is 35% affordable housing, subject to the Section 106 agreement. The scheme is evidently not tenure blind, with affordable housing grouped at the		A

	ends of each section of the scheme, clearly marked out due to the use of parking courts, not garages as the vast majority of market housing.		
5. Character	The development lacks a distinct character of its own, through the fault of unremarkable design and master planning that also owes nothing to the surrounding neighbourhood. In short, the scheme uses the 'lack of local architectural style' as a crutch to mask the fact it has no discernible character of its own.		R
6. Working with the site and its context	The site itself is difficult due to its dimensions and position; bordered by a bypass and intersected by a bus lane that must be retained. The site also contains archaeological remnants of a Neolithic henge, which are preserved in an area of green, open space fenced off accordingly. The site is marked in the Local plan as allocated for housing purposes, and so this must be taken into account, the busy road is dealt with a 4m high acoustic fence. The design of the scheme attempts to use, in places, an access road and a planted verge as a buffer zone, but the verge itself is very poorly planted, in effect a strip of turf. In some areas gardens adjoin the fence itself, meaning that noise pollution is rife. No specific viewing corridors are utilised, contrary to the Design and Access statement. No existing buildings occupied the site, but existing hedgerows were mostly removed and replaced with inferior duplicates.		G
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces.	The road itself feels far broader than it needs to be, this coupled with broad pavements gives the impression that the building form is shaped by the road, rather than the streetscape being informed by the position of buildings. The main access road itself is fronted on one side entirely by a strip of grass and the acoustic fence. Some buildings are designed that turn corners well, in other places this has been overlooked or opportunities squandered by poor		A

	landscaping/setting the building back off the road. The street is also often fronted by a blank wall, in one case a blank garden wall broken only by a recessed garage. Ill-designed spaces such as parking courtyards bordered only by garages are met with blank windows facing the road. In many places front doors are not facing the street front and not easily recognisable. In many of the cul de sac areas a garage is the main focus of the road, with houses left with a view of a garage wall at a 2 metre distance.		
8. Easy to find your way around	Within the scheme it is easy to orientate one's self due to the ever present acoustic fence. However, viewpoints to the surrounding area are often overlooked, as are viewing corridors towards areas of green space within the development itself. The cul de sac nature of the development emphasises repetition, and the main focus of these areas is the inactive frontage of a garage.		A
9. Streets For All	Even with the low traffic nature of the development, pedestrian traffic is orientated around the large pavement areas, not the street itself. Coupled with large, highway grade kerb treatment, this discourages the street for use as a space for all. The materiality of the street also adds to this, with a highway grade asphalt being used. A change in surface treatment of the road is used well to slow cars and indicate a change in the type of space whilst entering a cul de sac, and in some places a clear pedestrian priority route is indicated. These spaces are only partially overlooked, and the main focus of them is a garage, which offers nothing to the street. In one area, a parking courtyard, entered through a building itself is ringed with garages and fences, a clear area of problems. The orientation of buildings also means Wellow Lane is offered with views of garden walls and the rear of garages.		A
10. Car Parking	Car parking in the site is more than		A

	<p>adequate, as deliberated over in the planning process. In fact, on-site parking feels over provisioned. Eating into green areas. Most parking is garage secure or overlooked, although in places this is not the case, as the parking courtyard mentioned previously. The change in car parking solutions actually works against this scheme, as it serves to show the difference between market and affordable housing, the market housing having garages. This makes the scheme non tenure blind. In some areas, car parking 'gazebos' are used seemingly at random, and white paint is used to demark spaces, often hard to access. These areas have no scope for overlooking, ringed only by timber fencing.</p>		
11. Public and Private Spaces	<p>Regardless of the provision of green public areas, described as pocket parks in the documentation, these areas are completely uninviting, badly marked and not planted as per specification. The green area covering the archaeological site is completely impermeable to pedestrians currently, and it is unclear how this will be remedied. The park bordering the bus route peters out close to the road, with a selection of concrete bollards serving no discernible purpose evident. The scheme seems designed around protecting private space at the expense of the treatment of the public areas. High fenced private back gardens often border streets, and defensible space at the front of house is fairly small. As mentioned, the cul de sac areas are major problem zones, the more private courtyard effect spoiled by lack of overlooking and the focus of each area is a garage. This effect is worse in areas where no buildings front onto the open area, just blank timber fencing or blank gables.</p>		A
12. External storage and amenity space	<p>In most cases, external storage and amenity space is provided by a garage. The flats and the other dwellings are served by small buildings in places for</p>		A

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	refuse and cycle storage, although the plans indicate refuse collection points that do not exist in reality.		
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LEVEL ATTAINED	SCORE
GREEN	3
AMBER	8
RED	1





FIGURE 3: Existing bus connection to bypass, bisecting site.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES



FIGURE 4: Close by workshops

PUBLIC TRANSPORT:

FIGURE 5, Showing the 175 bus
at its stop on Wellow Lane



CHARACTER:



FIGURE 6: Existing development and new development, no common design language.



FIGURE 7: Coach house style building, like nothing locally or on site.



FIGURE 8: Façade common to the new development.

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WORKING WITH THE SITE AND ITS CONTEXT:



FIGURE 9: Fence to deal with noise issues from bypass beyond

CREATING WELL DEFINED STREETS AND SPACES:





FIGURE 11: Buildings turn corners



FIGURE 11: Overly broad road and pavement with standard surface treatment. Main entrance into eastern part of site.



FIGURE 12: Buildings turn the corner, but effect is marred by poor landscaping and parking provision fronting the corner.





FIGURE 15: Garden wall and recessed garage forming part of the street front.



FIGURE 16: Parking courtyard space formed by timber fencing only. Not overlooked at all.

STREETS FOR ALL



FIGURE 17: Main access road, showing high kerb and broad pavement.



FIGURE 18: Seemingly random speed bump, only place this surface treatment is found on site.



FIGURE 20: Materiality change at the entrance to each cul de sac.

CAR PARKING:



FIGURE 21: Car Parking courtyard with materiality change at entrance to indicate change of use and to lower speed



FIGURE 22: Parking Gazebo





FIGURE 25: Garages with flats atop, opening onto closed off parking courtyard, antisocial space.



FIGURE 26: Car passing spaces (already pointless) used as parking spaces.

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FIELD BY BYPASS WEST OF BRAYDOWN LANE, WELLOW LANE, PEASEDOWN ST JOHN
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PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACES:



FIGURE 27: Public green space, seemingly inaccessible to the public



FIGURE 28: Poorly treated public space, running into the more private front garden of the dwelling pictured. Little/no barrier.



FIGURE 29: Leftover and unplanned space, filled with shrubs.



FIGURE 30: 'Pocket Park' bookending the site, poorly finished and not as plans suggest.



EXTERNAL STORAGE AND AMENITY SPACE:



FIGURE 32: site plans indicate bin collection point. Also illustrates wall forming street front.