
6th April 2019

Stratford Court &
Braemar Lodge,
Stratford Road,
Salisbury

Ecological Briefing Note

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Ecological Briefing Note

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. This report has been prepared by Tyler Grange LLP on behalf of Colten Care Ltd to inform a planning application in respect of two properties at Stratford Road, Salisbury, known as Stratford Court and Braemar Lodge, centred on National Grid Reference SU 14085 31321; hereafter referred to as the 'site'.
- 1.2. The development proposals will provide a comprehensive care facility to the west of Stratford Road, Salisbury. It is proposed that the outdated Stratford Court will be demolished to make way for a new replacement care home that will be a state-of-the-art facility to meet modern high standards of care, including dementia care. It will complement the existing high standard of care at the adjacent Braemar Lodge, which is also proposed to be refurbished through the development works. The specific description of development is as follows:

"Phased comprehensive development to provide two Class C2 care facilities. Phase 1 - Demolition of the existing Stratford Court Class C2 care home and the erection of a new replacement C2 care facility with associated access and landscaping works. Phase 2 – Upgrade and refurbishment of the existing C2 Braemar Lodge care home with associated access and landscaping works."
- 1.3. The proposed scheme will therefore create two distinct 'semi-detached' care homes with self-contained facilities. The delivery of the scheme will be separated into two key phases as set out in the description of development, which will provide the required flexibility and futureproofing for future operations.
- 1.4. The existing facilities in Braemar Lodge will be refurbished and upgraded to the highest standards as part of the development. Most changes will be accommodated within the existing fabric of the building. Additional facilities will be provided in the new care home for dementia care, new large care suites, lounge and dining areas, extended service areas and outdoor amenities. The improved accommodation will deliver an improved environment and quality of care for residents, and a more efficient working environment for staff.
- 1.5. A more detailed commentary of the development proposals is set out within the enclosed Design and Access Statement.
- 1.6. The pre-application response from the Wiltshire Council (WC) ecologist (dated 8th February 2019) noted that: *"The buildings on site appear to offer minimal opportunities for roosting bats. Significant areas of mature hedge and trees on site have connectivity to the wider green corridor along the river Avon and therefore may be of value to wildlife such as foraging bats."*
- 1.7. The WC ecologist recommended that:
 - *"Mature trees and hedges on site should be retained where possible particularly along the south western boundary to maintain connectivity with the adjoining greenspace. If this green boundary cannot be retained a suitably qualified ecologist will be required to advise the applicant."*
 - *Lighting of the development should be designed to avoid lighting of treelines and hedges."*



2.0 Desk Study

- 2.1. Due to the small scale and nature of the proposals, an internet-only data search of European Protected Species (EPS) licences granted by Natural England (NE) was carried out. Protected sites with statutory or non-statutory protection are not considered in this report as it is unlikely that such sites would be affected by increased recreation or other pressures resulting from the care homes' redevelopment.

3.0 Site Habitat Description and Evaluation

- 3.1. The Extended Phase I survey was carried out by Tyler Grange ecologist Ivi Szaboova on 20th March 2019. Descriptions of the site habitats and photographs are in **Appendix 2**; the methodology is in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2. The site comprises two buildings and hardstanding (**negligible ecological importance**), set within grounds comprising scattered amenity grassland, ornamental vegetation, shrubs, compost heaps, and wildlife enhancement features (**site importance**); mature trees along the south-west boundary (**local importance**), and ornamental young trees/shrubs between the buildings (**site importance**).

4.0 Protected Species Recommendations

Bats

- 4.1. The Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the buildings' bat potential (external and internal survey) was carried out by Ivi Szaboova (NE bat licence number 2015-15725-CLS-CLS) on 20 March 2019. The methodology is provided in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.2. The PRA results together with the desk study indicate:
- No evidence of bats or other protected species was found at either building although low bat potential exists at Stratford Court.
 - Full access was possible to the loft voids at Braemar Lodge. Partial access was possible at Stratford Court (south loft only) due to the presence of false ceilings and fibreglass insulation on the loft floor.
 - NE issued EPS licences in the site's vicinity (see **Appendix 3**) for brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Myotis *Myotis* sp., Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*, serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, and soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*.

Stratford Court:

- Stratford Court was assessed to have **low bat potential** due to the presence of a few lifting tiles/lead flashing (these may lead to batten spaces between the tiles and hessian roofing felt), occasional gaps between bricks, and gaps/holes at the wooden soffits.



- As bats are highly mobile species that frequently switch roosts, therefore, as a precaution, potential roost features (PRF) should be dismantled by hand under a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS); supervised by a licensed bat worker (LBW). LBW will deliver a toolbox talk to contractors prior to work starting. If a bat is found during PWMS works, work will stop, the ecologist will contact NE for advice and obtain an EPS licence if required.
- In order to make the PWMS effective, one night-time survey prior to work start is required to assess bat activity levels at the site. The night time survey could be carried out during the planning application determination period. If roosting bats are identified, a NE EPS licence will be required.

Braemar Lodge:

- Braemar Lodge was assessed to have **negligible bat potential** as the building is in good repair, with the roof and the building itself appearing to be well-sealed.
- Night-time surveys and PWMS works are not required.

Trees:

- Trees at the site are of varying ages; all assessed from the ground as having **negligible/low bat potential**.
- No further bat surveys of trees are required. Nesting bird surveys may be required if the trees are to be removed.
- The south-west boundary tree-line and shrubs likely provide a foraging resource for the local bat assemblage, as well as connectivity to off-site habitats and (via the tree-lined River Avon) to the wider countryside. As such the trees and shrubs at the site should be retained where possible.

Lighting:

- Sensitive lighting strategy will be required to ensure that commuting or foraging bats that may utilise the site habitats will not be adversely affected.

Amphibians and Reptiles

- 4.3. The site is situated within the natural range of protected amphibians (including great crested newt (GCN) *Triturus cristatus* and common toad *Bufo bufo*) and common reptiles (such as slow worm *Anguis fragilis*).
- 4.4. There are no off-site ponds within 500m although some of the site habitats (tree lines/shrubs with grassy margins; compost heaps) are suitable, with good connectivity to off-site terrestrial habitats. The majority of suitable site habitats will be retained.
- 4.5. As a precaution, if refugia suitable for amphibians/reptiles require removal, they should be dismantled by hand after a toolbox talk to operatives and under a PWMS/ecological watching brief. If GCN is found during work, work will stop, the ecologist will contact NE for advice on how to proceed and obtain a NE GCN EPS licence if required.



Other Protected Species

- 4.6. The site is situated within the natural range of dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*, with some of the site habitats suitable for the species. However, the south-west boundary tree line will not be affected by the proposals, and the young trees between Stratford Court and Braemar Lodge are sparse, with limited shrub layer. Moreover, the proposals will not result in an increased number of domestic pets or increased lighting along the retained boundary tree line. The species is therefore not considered in this report.
- 4.7. There was no evidence of badger *Meles meles*, nesting birds, and West European hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* at the site although the habitats are suitable. Works should be carried out under PWMS with a toolbox talk and a check for the above species (if suitable habitat is to be removed) before works start.

5.0 Mitigation and Enhancement

- 5.1. The most significant issue with respect to development of the site is potential for adverse effects on bats (if present), nesting birds and amphibians/reptiles (if work requires habitat removal). The development has been designed to retain opportunities for these species and compensate for the loss of habitats involved.
- 5.2. New habitats are proposed, such as sensory planting beds (with plants such as lavender and rosemary which are beneficial to insects), tree/shrub planting, fruit orchard, wildlife walk and wildlife pond, flower borders, and kitchen garden. All of these habitats will provide additional opportunities for shelter and foraging for a range of wildlife. The landscape strategy details showing the retained and new habitat are provided in the Site Plan in **Appendix 4**.
- 5.3. The proposals seek to retain trees and shrubs where possible, as well as the existing wildlife enhancement features at Braemar Court woodland walk area such as bird boxes, hedgehog/toad/insect homes and discrete compost piles. Bat boxes will be installed on the retained mature trees.
- 5.4. The site will be enhanced by further planting, as well as installation of similar wildlife features at Stratford Court (to be re-named Braemar Court) post-completion of the development to achieve biodiversity gain and contribution to the delivery of Local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets by enhancement of tree lines and by inclusion of mitigation measures within the proposed green infrastructure for amphibians/reptiles, bats, birds, and hedgehogs.
- 5.5. It is considered that the inherent mitigation in the masterplan design will more than compensate for the losses of habitats required to facilitate development.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1. With the implementation of the mitigation and enhancement strategy described in this report, the proposed development would be in conformity with relevant legislation.



References

- 1) Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2018). *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland, Second Edition*. <http://www.cieem.net/ecia-guidelines-terrestrial-> Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- 2) Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) Interactive maps, available online at: <http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk>
- 3) Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010). *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey - a technique for environmental audit*. JNCC, Peterborough
- 4) Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.



Appendix 1: Methodology



Appendix 1: Methodology

Phase I Habitat Survey

- A1.1. The habitat survey method was based on guidance set out in the '*Handbook for Phase I Habitat Survey*' (JNCC, 2010). This entailed recording and mapping the broad habitat types present and recording dominant plant species present. Note was also taken of any evidence of, or potential for, the presence of protected or notable flora and fauna.
- A1.2. The evaluation of habitats and species is defined in accordance with published guidance (CIEEM, 2018). The level of importance of specific ecological features is assigned using a geographic frame of reference, with international importance being most important, then national, regional, county, borough, local and lastly, within the site boundary only.
- A1.3. Value judgements are based on various characteristics that can be used to identify ecological features likely to be important in terms of biodiversity. These include site designations, or for undesignated features, the size, conservation status (locally, nationally or internationally), and the quality of the ecological feature. In terms of the latter, quality can refer to habitats (for instance if they are particularly diverse, or a good example of a specific habitat type), other features (such as wildlife corridors or mosaics of habitats) or species populations or assemblages.

Day-time Bat Survey

- A1.4. Based on available aerial imagery, buildings at the site to be affected by the development were considered to have the potential to support roosting bats. Therefore, an external and internal building inspection was undertaken to look for evidence of bats and determine the level of the features' potential to support roosting bats.
- A1.5. The survey was conducted based on guidance provided within 3rd edition of the Bat Conservation Trust's (BCT) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins, 2016).

External and Internal Building Assessment

- A1.6. A visual inspection of the buildings' interior (where safe access was possible) and exterior was undertaken; using binoculars, and a Clulite high-powered torch. A number of factors was considered, including internal conditions, presence of features suitable for use by crevice-dwelling and void-dwelling bats, proximity to foraging habitats or cover, and potential for disturbance from lighting and other sources.
- A1.7. Externally, the buildings were carefully examined, and a visual inspection was undertaken of features such as stonework, lead flashing, windows, window sills, roof and ridge tiles for potential bat access points, as well as the ground below these features for evidence of bat use. Such evidence may include live sightings, corpses, smell of bats, audible sound of bats (social calls), droppings, scratch marks, feeding remains, bat-fly pupal cases and staining from fur oil or urine. Potential access features were marked on site plans, so they could be examined closely during the internal building survey, and to ensure that areas which the access features led to could be inspected to assess whether bat access was possible. Endoscope and a torch were available to search such crevices where access allowed.
- A1.8. The internal survey followed a similar approach. Note was taken of features that may indicate a higher likelihood of bats being present, including large dark roof voids with space for flying and/or



large roof timbers with joints, cracks and holes. The buildings were searched thoroughly, with attention paid to areas near potential bat access points which were identified during the external building survey, and the floor below these features.

A1.9. Internal searches were carried out working upwards; with the locations most likely to support bats checked first. Visual inspection of external features, where necessary, was undertaken from inside the buildings.

A1.10. Survey conditions are noted in Table 1.1 below.

Date	Weather Conditions
20/03/2019	Dry Temperature – 11°C Wind – Beaufort scale 1 Cloud cover – 100%

Table 1.1 Survey Conditions

Assessment of Site Habitats for their Potential to Support Protected Species

A1.11. The land within the red line boundary surrounding the buildings was surveyed and note taken of the habitats present, and potential for other protected species to be present and affected by proposals.

Limitations

A1.12. Owing to the timing of the survey, some plant species may not have been visible. Given the nature of the proposals and the habitats present, this is not considered likely to affect the conclusions of this report. Full access into the loft voids at Stratford Court was not possible. Due to the scale and nature of the proposals, a full data search was not carried out.

A1.13. That said, due to the proposals these limitations are not considered likely to affect the conclusions of this report.

Quality Control

A1.14. Ecologists at Tyler Grange LLP are members of CIEEM and abide by the Institute's Code of Professional Conduct.



Appendix 2: Ecological Features



Appendix 2: Ecological Features

Site Context

- A2.1 The site is located within the northern extent of Salisbury on Stratford Road which forms the site's north-east boundary. The site is surrounded by buildings to north-west/south-east, with school and recreational fields to north-east/south-west, and allotments to north-west. Further afield, arable and grassland fields with hedgerows are situated to the west/north-west and the tree-lined River Avon lies c.380m to the west. Aerial image of the site in wider context is provided in **Figure 2.1** below.

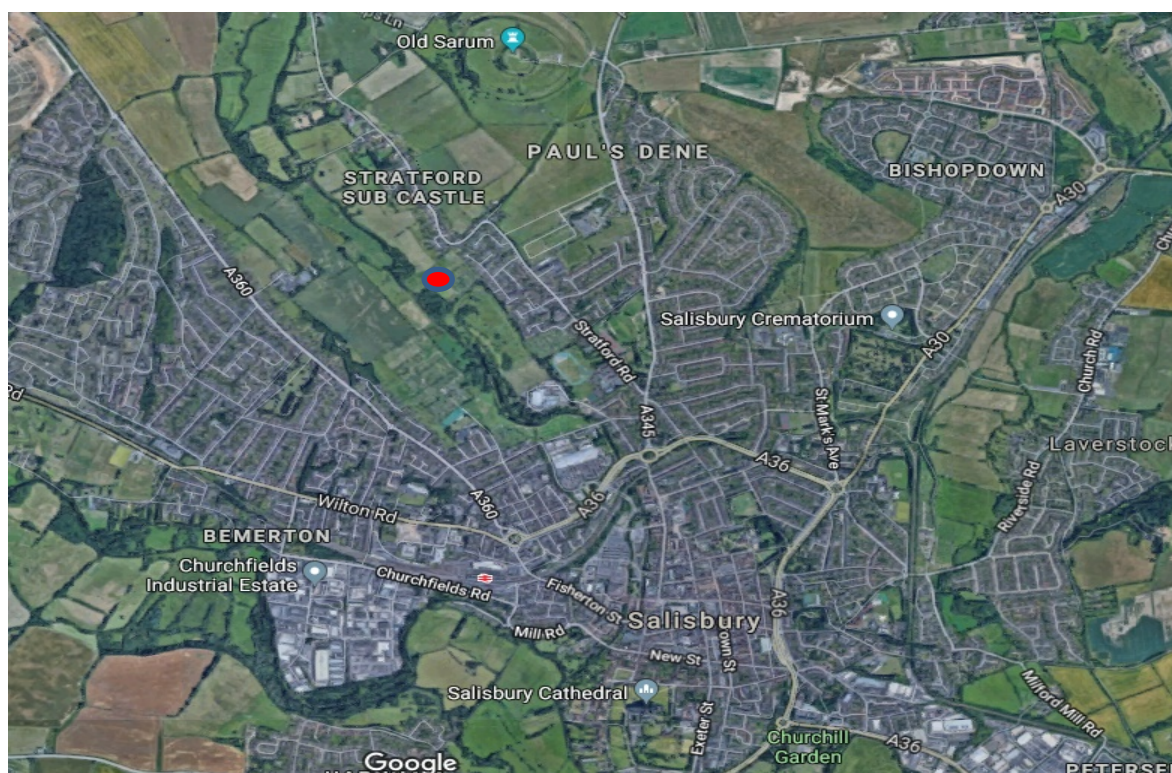


Figure 2.1: Aerial image of the site in the wider context (Magic; accessed 25.03.2019). The site is indicated by a red dot.

Habitats

- A2.2 The site habitats are shown on **Figure 2.2**; described alphabetically below.



Figure 2.2: Aerial image of the site habitats, with red line boundary (Magic; accessed 25.03.2019).

Buildings and Hardstanding

- A2.3 The site comprises two buildings; both with complex structure and a number of wings, with associated hardstanding.

Stratford Court (B1)

- A2.4 Stratford Court, B1 (Photograph 1 – 4) is a disused former care home building, built in c. 1970s. B1 is constructed of brick; with hipped and pitched roofs, plastic and wooden soffits/fascias, and some lead flashing. The roofs are covered with concrete pantiles in fairly good condition, with a few gaps underneath where the tiles are damaged or missing. Occasional gaps are present under ridge tiles where the mortar has disintegrated (Photograph 4). A few holes are present within the wooden soffits (Photograph 5). Hanging tiles are present at the north-west aspect of the north wing and the south aspect of the south-east wing, with lead flashing at the window (Photograph 1 and 3). Windows and doors are in good condition and are kept shut.



Photograph 1: B1; north and west wing; north-west aspect; view from the western site corner.



Photograph 2: B1; north wing; north-east aspect; view from the northern site corner.



Photograph 3: B1; west and south-east wing; south aspect; view from the southern site corner.



Photograph 4: B1; south-east wing; north-west aspect; view from the north. Gap under the end ridge tile visible.



Photograph 5: B1; west wing; south-west aspect. Hole in the soffit visible.

- A2.5 Loft spaces exist within the roof void. The loft void in the south-east wing is accessible via a service hatch, with partial access only possible due to the presence of false ceiling and the loft void being covered by fibreglass insulation. No access was possible into the north and west wing loft voids.
- A2.6 The south-east loft void has ventilation slots at the north-east and south-west gables. Hessian roofing felt in good condition is present, with wooden rafters, ridge board, collar beams, hangers, and supporting beams (Photograph 6).



Photograph 6: B1; south-east wing loft void.

- A2.7 B1 wings and floors are connected via corridors (with closed fire doors) and the rooms are affected by natural light.

Braemar Lodge (B2)

- A2.8 Braemar Lodge, B2 (Photograph 7 and 8) is a current care home. It is constructed of brick; rendered on some aspects and is well maintained.



Photograph 7: B2; south-east wing, north-east aspect. View from north-east.



Photograph 8: B2; courtyard between south-west, north, and south-east wing. View from south.

A2.9 B2 roof is covered in well-sealed slate tiles in good condition. Two loft voids are present, both with a cluttered truss roof construction. The north wing loft void houses the boiler tanks.

A2.10 B1 and B2 are of no inherent ecological importance and therefore they are considered to be of **negligible ecological importance**.

Grassland, Ornamental Vegetation, Shrubs and Trees

A2.11 Areas of amenity grassland, ornamental vegetation and shrubs are scattered around B1 and B2. A tree line with shrubs forms the south-west boundary (Photograph 9) comprised of beech *Fagus sylvaticus*, maple *Acer* sp., conifers, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare* and ornamental species. Young birch *Betula* sp., cherry *Prunus* sp. trees with shrubs/ornamentals are situated at the woodland walk almond the south-east and south-west boundary of B2, and also form the boundary between B1 and B2. Bird boxes are installed at the woodland walk, as well as homes for insects, hedgehogs, and amphibians. Compost piles are present.



Photograph 9: Woodland walk (B2's south-west boundary), with a boundary tree line, scattered trees/shrubs and wildlife enhancement features.

A2.12 The grassland, shrub, scattered immature trees, and ornamental planting areas are well managed; supporting common and widespread plant species. The compost piles and wildlife enhancement features provide additional shelter. As these habitats provide a foraging/shelter resource for the site fauna, they are considered to be of **site ecological importance**.

A2.13 The mature trees along the site's south-west boundary are not replaceable in the short to medium term and are considered to be of **local ecological importance**.

Appendix 3: NE EPS Bat Licences in the Vicinity of the Site



Appendix 3: NE EPS Bat Licences in the Vicinity of the Site

A3.1. NE Magic website shows several NE EPS bat licences (**Figure 3.1** below) issued within a 5km radius of the site:

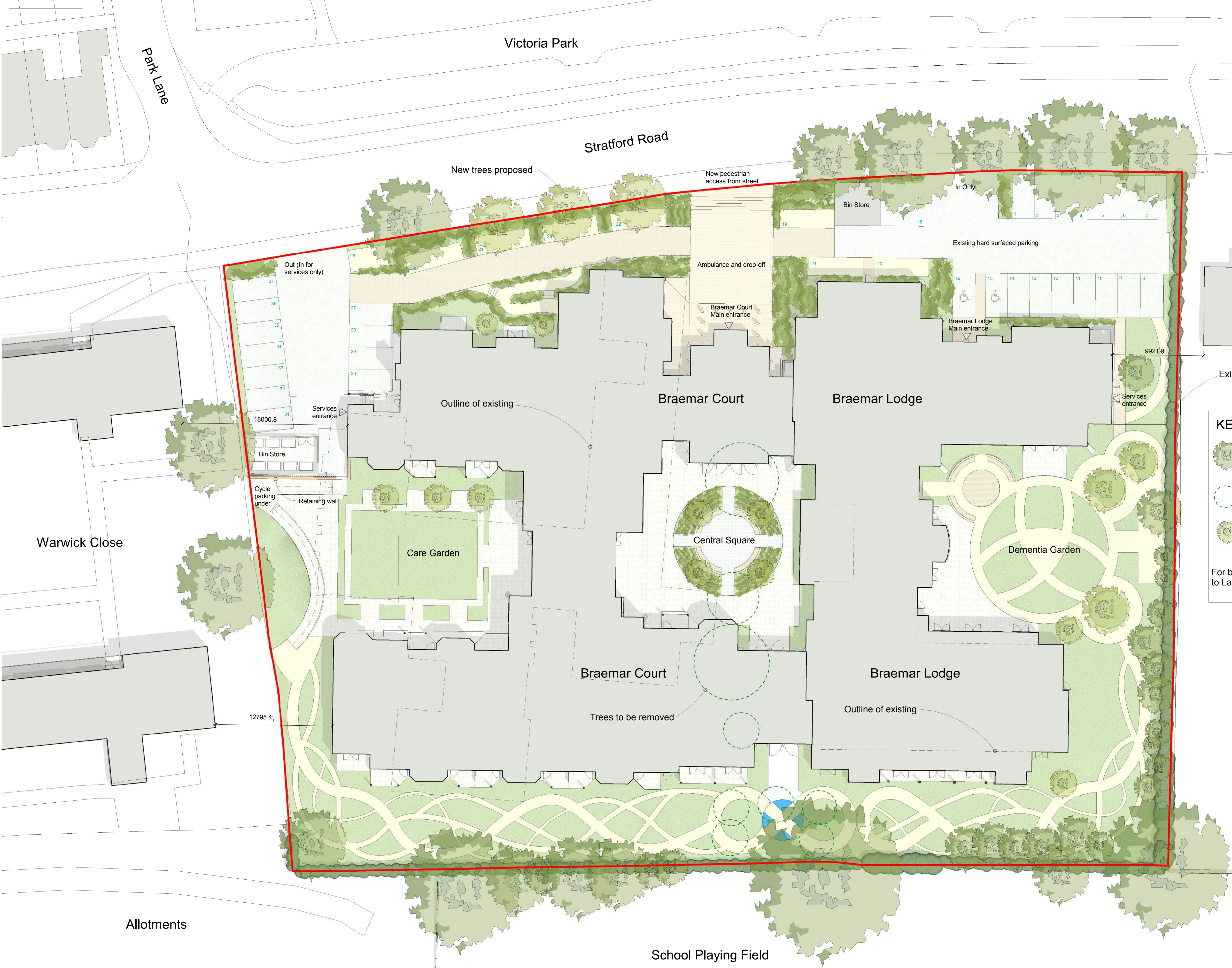
- 1.2km north-west, licence EPSM2011 – 3675, issued for brown long-eared bat. Licence allows the destruction of a resting place; valid between 18/11/2011 and 30/09/2013;
- 1.5km north-west, licence EPSM2010 – 2618, issued for common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, serotine bat, brown long-eared bat, Natterer's bat. Licence allows the destruction of a resting place; valid between 04/07/2011 and 30/09/2014;
- 3.5km west, licence 2014-4895-EPS-MIT, issued for brown long-eared bat, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle. Licence impacts on and allows the destruction of a breeding site; valid between 03/04/2014 and 01/11/2017; and
- 4.6km south-east, licence 2016-25790-EPS-MIT-1, issued for brown long-eared bat, soprano pipistrelle. Licence impacts/damages breeding site and allows damage/destruction of a resting place; valid between 10/10/2017 and 31/10/2026.



Figure 3.1: NE EPS bat licences issued within a 5km radius of the site (Magic; accessed 25.03.2019)

Appendix 4: Site Plan Semi-detached Care Homes





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Do not scale from this drawing. Work to figured dimensions. All dimensions to be checked on site and any discrepancies reported to the Architect immediately.

REVISION NOTES					
Rev	Date	Description	Drw	Chk	
A	15.05.2019	Amendments to allow phasing			
B	17.05.2019	Issued for Co-ordination	LS	JG	
C	21.05.2019	Planning			
D	22.05.2019	Bin store access amended	LS	JG	
E	22.05.2019	Description changed			
F	24.05.2019	Entrance note amended	LS	JG	
G	29.05.2019	Text amended			

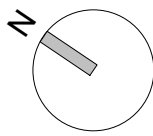
KEY

Existing and retained trees

Trees to be removed

New trees proposed

For boundary treatments please refer to Landscape Architect's drawings



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Client

Colten Care

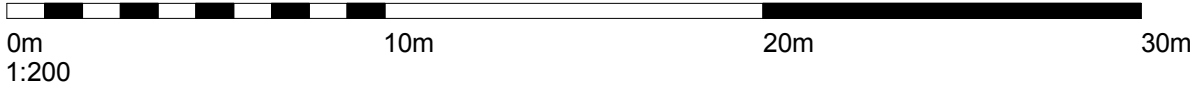
Project
Braemar Lodge
Stratford Road, Salisbury

Title
**Site Plan Semi-detached
Care Homes**

Scale A1 @ 1 : 200

Revision	Drawing Status
G	Developed Design
Suitability	Suitability Description

Drawing No.
5849-WLA-SM-XX-DR-A-0008



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