

Littlecott Mill, Enford, SN9 6AW
Design and Access Statement



Introduction

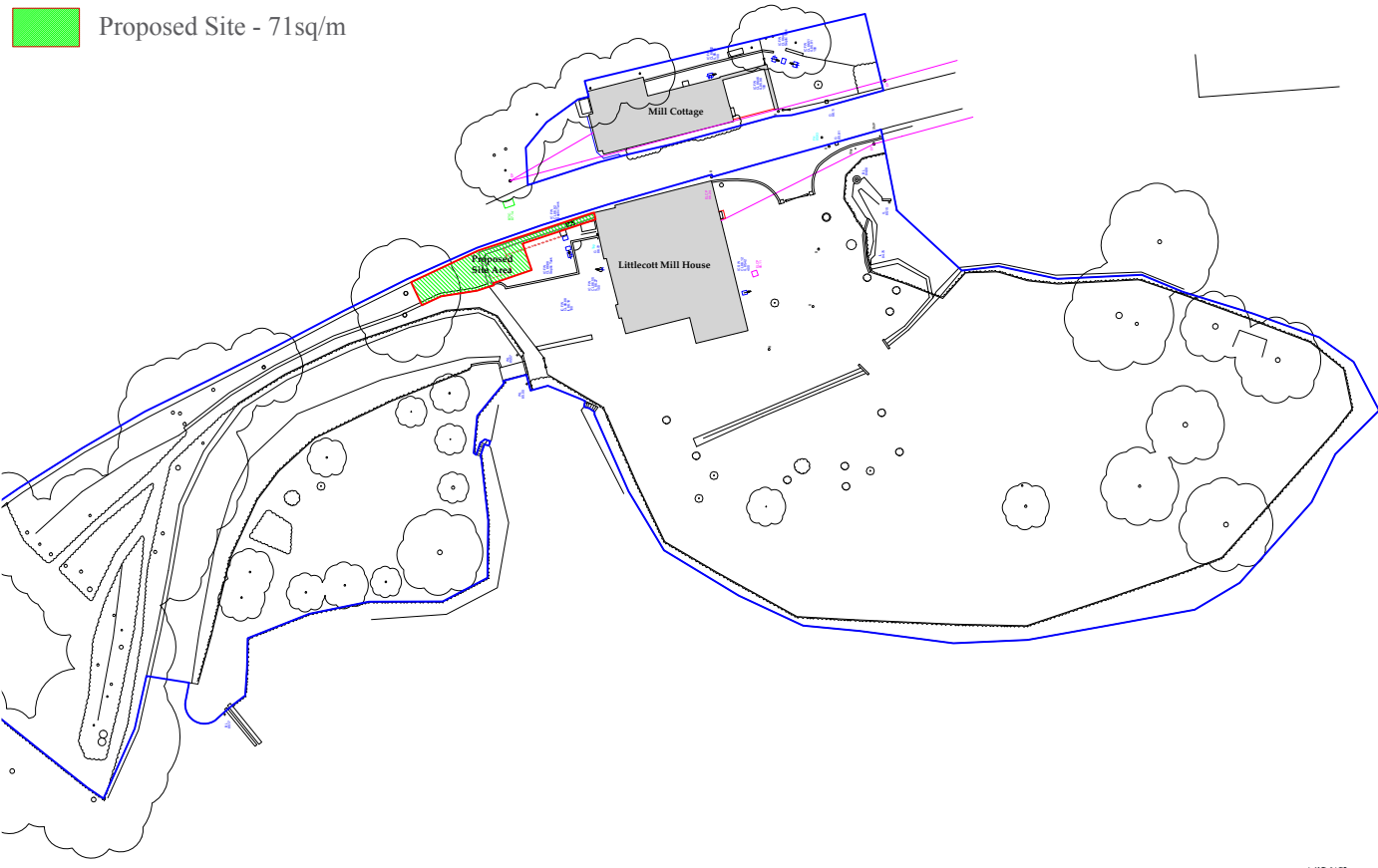
1.01 INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement is submitted in support of a planning application for the erection of a single-storey outbuilding to accommodate a plant room and fuel store, the replacement of an existing dilapidated greenhouse, and the demolition, rebuilding and extension of the failing existing boundary wall at Littlecott Mill, Endford, SN9 6AW.

The proposal is necessitated by health and safety requirements imposed by the Highways Authority, which has determined that private power supplies cannot be routed beneath the public highway separating the Mill House from the cottage annex.

KEY:

 Proposed Site - 71sq/m



Location plan showing proposed site. Proposed area of works: 71sq/m

1.02 EXISTING SITE

The site comprises two principal structures: the historic mill house and a cottage annex, separated by a public road. The mill house is situated within flood zones 2 and 3. As listed in application PL/2024/07733, the existing flood defence infrastructure for the mill is currently powered by a generator placed within the cottage annex, separated by a public highway.

Since then, it has transpired that Highways have notified us that private power supplies cannot run under public roads due to health and safety concerns, and therefore have ordered that it be moved. This means that the power supply for the sumps, along with the previously proposed plant for the mill house, must now be located on the mill house side of the site. This design and access statement sets out our intentions and how we have arrived at our conclusions.

The existing cob boundary wall is in poor structural condition and is capped with asbestos. Consultants have advised that the cob wall is likely to fail once the asbestos capping is removed, necessitating full reconstruction.

The existing greenhouse is dilapidated and structurally unsound, requiring replacement to remain functional.



The current cob wall is falling into a state of disrepair. With the removal of the asbestos capping, the wall will need replacing.

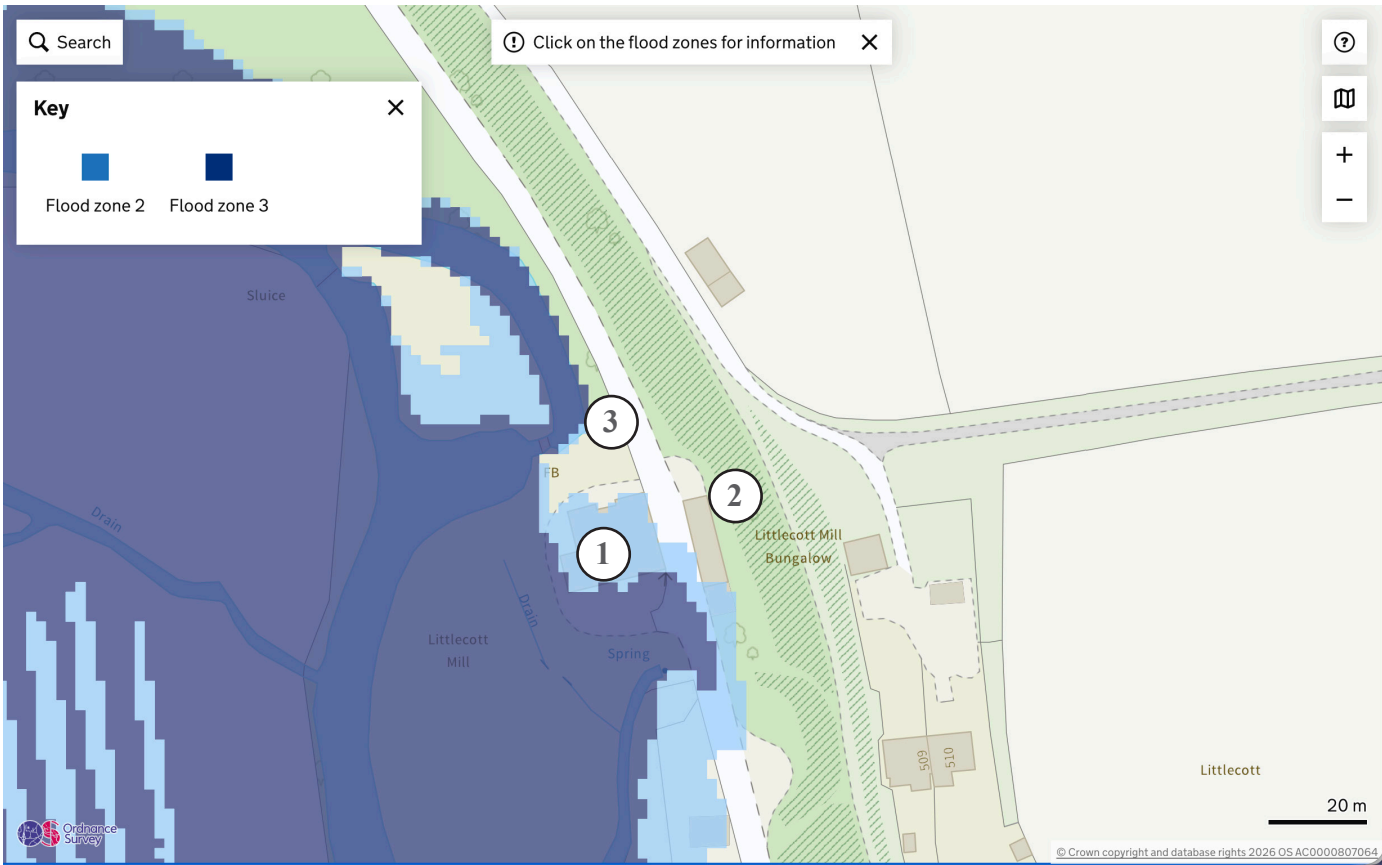


The condition of the greenhouse. Proposal will move the greenhouse to allow the best possible space for the plant room, with the greenhouse suitably re-designed and moved to the end of the plant room.

Flood Risk

2.01 DRAINAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Mill House relies on a subsurface flood defense comprising multiple sump pumps within the disused Mill Race, which collect and discharge excess water to help prevent flooding. Access for maintenance is provided via a kitchen manhole and an additional external access point to the south of the building. This system has performed effectively during past flooding events.



GOV Flood Map for Planning.

2.02 FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

Much of the site, including the Mill House, falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The proposed outbuilding is located outside the flood zone, representing the lowest-risk area of the site – this we feel is the only suitable area on site to house the generator for the sump pumps, and the plant for the mill house. The existing flood defence infrastructure has consistently performed effectively during past flooding events, and the proposed development will not increase flood risk off-site or elsewhere, with surface water drainage continuing to slope toward the River Avon.

A more in-depth flood risk assessment can be found on application PL/2024/07733.

KEY:

- 1. Littlecott Mill (flood zone 2 and 3)
- 2. Mill Cottage (current power source)
- 3. Proposed site area (outside the flood zone)



The south and south west of the site are suseptable to flooding. Image above is the entrance to the mill house.

Proposal Rationale

3.01 PLANT ROOM

The relocation of the plant room is driven by statutory health and safety requirements rather than optional enhancement. Following consultation with the Highways Authority, the only viable location for the power supply infrastructure is where the existing greenhouse is situated. This area sits outside the flood zone and benefits from adequate surface drainage with levels sloping toward the River Avon.

The Mill House itself was assessed as a potential location for the plant room; however, space restrictions and elevated flood risk within Flood Zones 2 and 3 rendered it unsuitable.

The new outbuilding will comprise of three elements:

- 1. The plant room, to house the generator to power the sump pumps and back-up power for the mill house in the event of a power cut.
- 2. The fuel store, to store the fuel to run the generator.
- 3. The replacement greenhouse, suitably designed to fit in with the overall design.

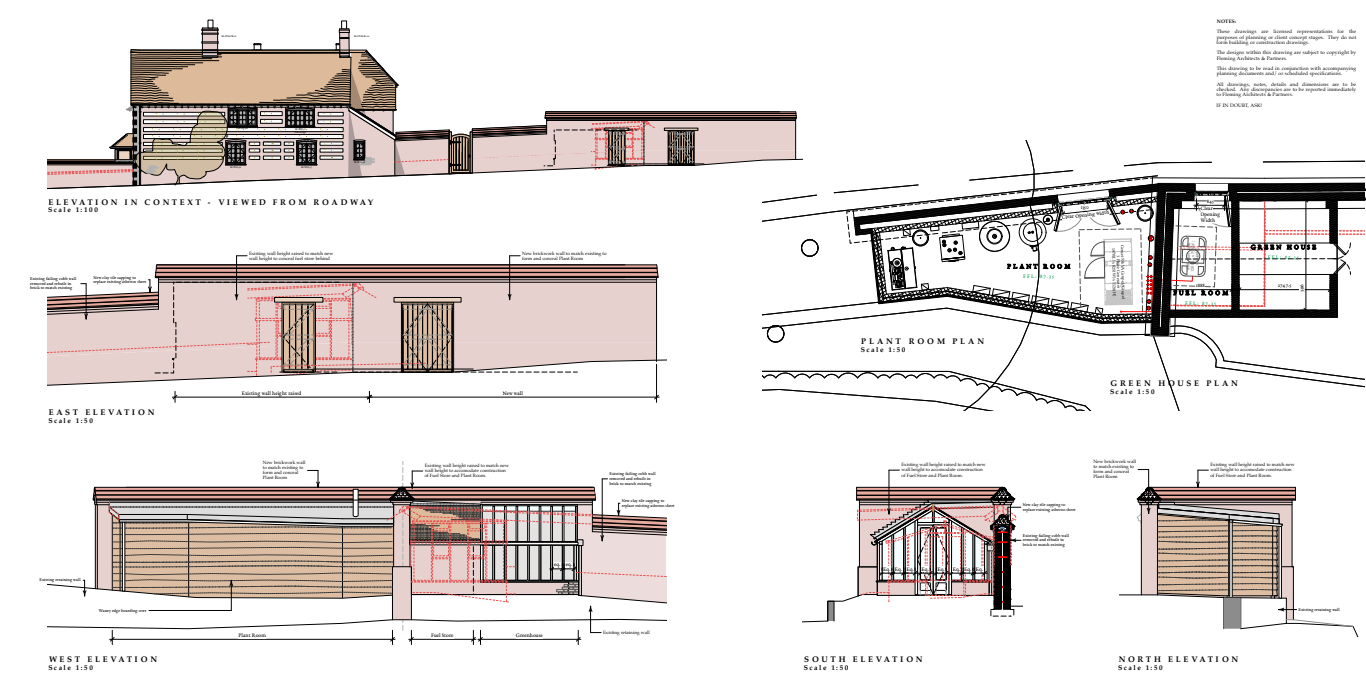


Image: Planning drawings for the plant room and wall.

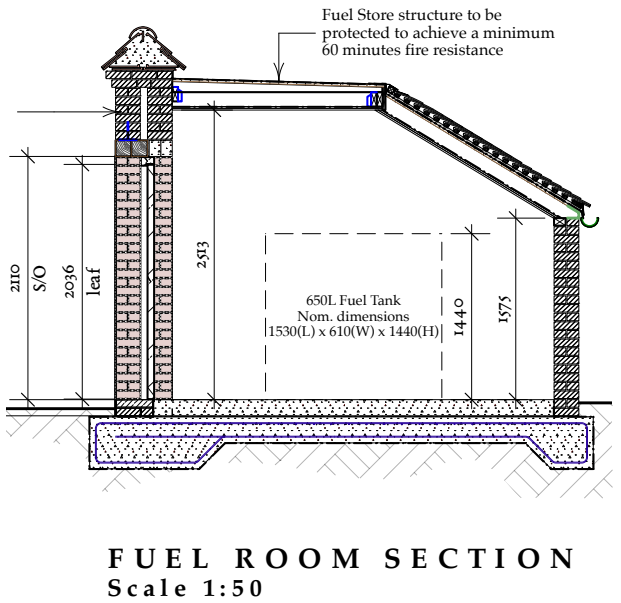
The proposal retains the existing garden layout, with the new greenhouse replacing the existing structure. No significant landscaping works are proposed beyond the boundary wall reconstruction or the existing retaining wall in the garden. The timber waney edge clad elevation faces the River Avon, where the building will be visually softened by the natural setting and existing vegetation.

3.02 REPLACEMENT WALL

The proposals include demolition of the existing cob wall and reconstruction in brick with traditional tile capping, extending the wall height to screen the plant room from view. Access to the fuel store is provided through a pair of untreated oak doors set within the wall, drawing inspiration from local vernacular detailing.



Image: Finished boundary wall for the mill cottage, used as the precedent for proposed mill house boundary wall.



Above: Section showing how the outbuilding will be obscured from the public highway, with the wall looking like an extension of the boundary wall.



Above: Neighbouring Glebe farm



Image: Example of weathered waney edge timber cladding

Ecological surveys have been undertaken to assess the potential impact of the proposals on protected species and habitats:

- Cotswold Environmental PEA, part of planning application PL/2024/07733:
No evidence of roosting bats discovered on site or evidence of nesting birds discovered on site.

A separate PEA undertaken by Cotswold Environmental in relation to the proposed plant room (submitted in conjunction with this statement) reaffirms these findings, and states that no priority habitats will be adversely affected by the works.

- LC Ecological Services EIA:
LC Ecological Services carried out both an ecological and a shadow assessment, for a separate application on the site, in support of an EIA. This report was undertaken to focus on the ecology of the river and the adjacent land and is therefore relevant to this application. The surveys found no evidence of otters or water voles on site. The absence of badger setts and great crested newts in the area was also listed.

A consultation with the Environment Agency has resulted in verbal agreement that the proposals will have no significant impact on local environment, including existing flooding, and as such would have no objections to the proposals.

The design response for these proposals has been guided by the following principles:

1. The outbuilding is positioned behind the rebuilt boundary wall, which will be extended in height and length to obscure the plant room from public view. This new wall uses the cottage’s boundary wall (PL/2024/07733) as a precedent, ensuring visual continuity across the site.
2. The building reflects the local vernacular, with untreated waney-edge timber cladding on the river-facing elevation to blend with the natural environment.
3. The building height has been kept to a minimum to avoid an overbearing presence within the landscape.
4. The proposal is necessitated by health and safety requirements imposed by the Highways Authority, and we feel this is the most appropriate and sensible response.

The proposals are sensitive, well-considered and responsive to the site’s constraints and context. Care has been taken through the application process to ensure the proposals are soft, in keeping, discreet and cause no apparent harm to the wider conservation area, and accordingly, we hope this meets with officer approval.