



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Conversion of Walshaw Hall, Tottington, Bury March 2023

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Produced by:

Brian Jones

Approved by:

Joseph Orchard

Signed:

B. R. Jones

Signed:

J. Orchard

Date:

28th Mar 2023

Date:

28th Mar 2023

C Squared Architects Ltd:

address: The Barns,
Stretton Road,
Warrington, WA4 4NP.

tel: 01925 357555
email: enquires@csquaredarchitects.co.uk
website: www.csquaredarchitects.co.uk

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Introduction

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1.1 Introduction

Capstone Care appointed C Squared Architects to design the conversion of the vacant former Use Class C2 residential care home of Walshaw Hall into apartments for open market sale. The proposed apartments will fall under Use Class C3 "Dwellinghouses"

About Capstone Care & Walshaw Hall

Capstone Care operated Walshaw Hall Care Home as a registered care home from 1986. The former house was converted and extended to provide 50 registered care beds in 42 single and 4 double bedrooms.

In 2013 Capstone Care were granted planning consent for a new purpose-designed care home adjacent to Walshaw Hall. "The Beeches" opened in 2016 and provides specialist care for residents with 56 ensuite bedrooms and associated communal and care facilities. The home provides specialist dementia care, elderly residential care, and respite care services.

Capstone Care continued to operate Walshaw Hall alongside the new care home but the shortcomings of the older, converted care home soon became evident and occupancy rates fell to unsustainable levels. The decision was taken to close Walshaw Hall in 2019 when the new care home was renamed 'Walshaw Hall Care Home'. The subsequent covid pandemic further reinforced the appropriateness of closure of the older home due to not meeting Capstone Care's operational requirements or standards.

The buildings have been vacant since and Capstone Care are now seeking planning consent to bring the former care home back into use by converting to apartments for open market sale.

Design Team

C Squared Architects Ltd: Specialists in healthcare design, with nearly 25 years experience between the Directors in the elderly care sector. As a practice, we are fully experienced in designing quality care facilities to meet CQC standards and our clients high expectations. We specialise in dementia care design and create care homes that minimise confusion and disorientation for the residents. We also have considerable experience of other sectors, including houses and apartments and will shortly complete the conversion of a former hotel in Chorley to supported living apartments.

Planning & Design Group (P&DG): An independent and well-respected firm of Planners and Urban Designers. Their Mission is to provide innovation and creativity in the fields of Planning and Urban Design in order to deliver high quality, sustainable planning, urban and landscape design projects which meet the needs of their clients and stakeholders.



Capstone Care – Walshaw Hall Care Home



C Squared Architects – Bingham Care Home

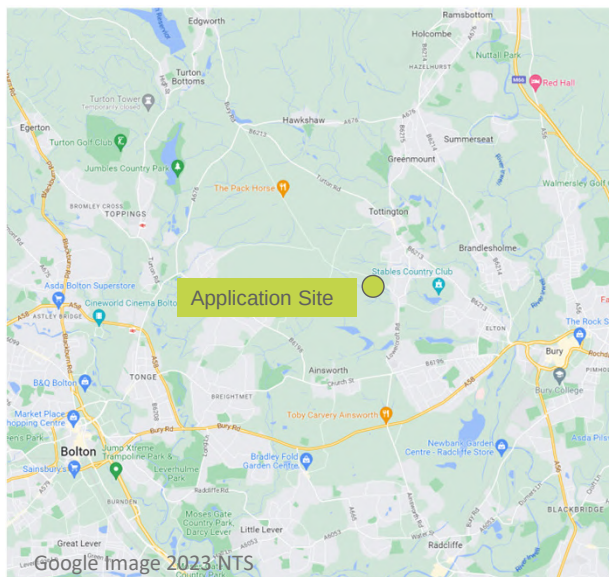


C Squared Architects – Chorley

1.2 Site Location

This site is located on the edge of Tottington, approximately 3 miles North-West of Bury town centre. The extents of the grounds of Walshaw Hall and Walshaw Hall Care Home includes buildings, open gardens and woodland over 5.5 acres (2.2 hectares). The site is bounded by Bradshaw Road to the north and open countryside to the other 3 sides.

The site lies within the Liverpool, Manchester and West Yorkshire Green Belt. The construction of the new care home was approved by Bury Council as an exception to development in the Green Belt in 2013 by demonstrating very special circumstances.



1.3 Site Description & Character

Walshaw Hall is a former care home comprising a large country house with 2 storey extensions.

It lies in extensive grounds with a significant number of mature trees, mainly covered by TPOs, and green space.

The original house dates from the late 19th Century, the extensions were late 20th Century additions.

West of Walshaw Hall is Walshaw Hall Care Home, completed in 2016.

Two properties in separate ownership, the Lodge and The Coach House, are accessed from within the Walshaw Hall demise.

The site falls broadly north to south with significant views south over open countryside towards central Manchester, approximately 11 miles South-East.

Site Plan Key

- Application Site
- Walshaw Hall Boundary

1. Walshaw Hall
2. Walshaw Hall Care Home
3. Walshaw Hall Care Home parking & servicing
4. Walshaw Hall former staff car park – not in use
5. Walshaw Hall former visitors' car park – not in use
6. Walshaw Hall site entrance
7. Significant areas of mature trees
8. Views across open grounds to countryside & Manchester skyline
9. The Coach House
10. The Lodge



1.4 Walshaw Hall

Walshaw Hall was built in the late 19th Century. The map opposite shows its extents in 1893.

The house and outbuildings are built in coursed dressed local stone with slate roofs in a Gothic style. Features include chimneys, bay windows, dressed ashlar window surrounds and quoins, castellated parapets, bracketed eaves, bands of scalloped slates, decorative ridge tiles and a squat, castellated central tower with flagpole.

The 1895 photograph of the Hall shows dark framed windows. The original elaborate fretwork bargeboards and finials were replaced by a simpler design early to mid 20th Century when the front elevation also had extensive ivy cover.

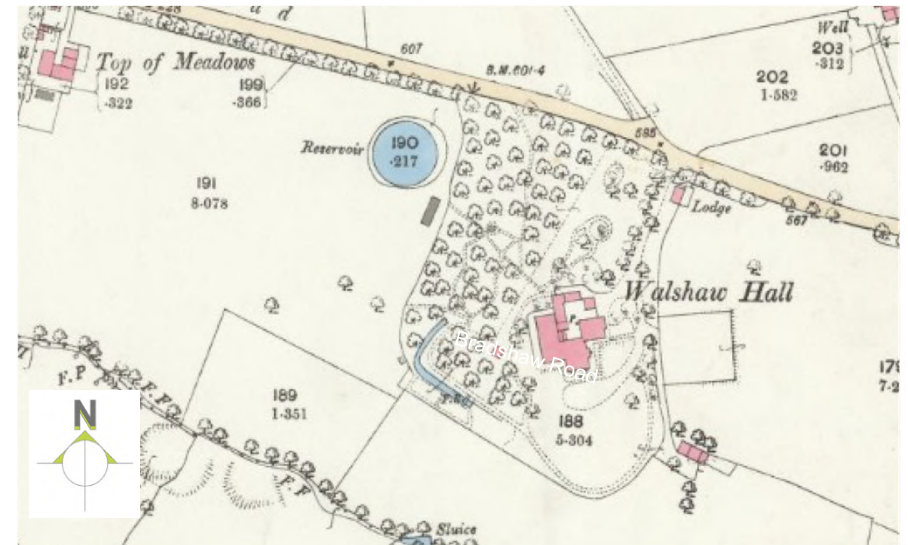
Walshaw Hall was converted to a care home in the 1980s. Its facilities were expanded in the 1990s with the construction of a 2 storey rear extension and two single storey, flat roof extensions alongside the main frontage. These extensions replicated materials of the original building, including natural stone walling with slate roofs, vertical timber sash windows in stone surrounds and ashlar quoins. Eaves and bargeboard details however were flush to walls and windows and external joinery largely repainted white.

The new Walshaw Hall Care Home, originally called “The Beeches” and completed in 2016 to the immediate west of the original building, uses a similar palette of colour, materials, detailing and fenestration, albeit with reconstituted buff stone walling. Extensive use of curtain glazing elements to residents’ lounges and dining areas provides more contemporary features.

Walshaw Hall is included in Bury Borough Council’s draft Local List published in 2019.

Walshaw Hall was closed in 2019, being considered unsuitable and uneconomic to function as a modern care home. The owner has explored options to bring it fully back into use and this is discussed further later in this document.

OS Mapping 1893 NTS



Walshaw Hall, 1895

1.5 Site Photographs



Photograph Key:

1. Walshaw Hall frontage pre-2013
2. Aerial view looking south (Google Image)
3. Walshaw Hall frontage 2023
4. South-East corner
5. West elevation
6. 3 views across the central courtyard
7. East & North elevations, extension in foreground
8. North elevation looking towards new Care Home

1.6 Design Policy

There are a number of local heritage and design related policies to take into account when developing proposals for the reuse of Walshaw Hall, in conjunction with national design related policies in the National Planning Policy Framework and other guidance.

Heritage

Walshaw Hall is recognised under Bury Council's 'Draft Local List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest' as a locally listed building. Conversion proposals need to acknowledge the underlying qualities of the building and its setting as a 'non designated heritage asset'. The retention and reuse of Walshaw Hall fulfils the requirements of Paragraph 203 of the NPPF.

Green Belt

The site lies within designated Green Belt. The new development of Walshaw Hall Care Home was granted planning consent and acknowledged the 'very special circumstances' – the need for dementia care, the proximity to Walshaw Hall and the virtual invisibility of the existing and new buildings from the public domain, namely Bradshaw Road.

Bury Borough Council SPD 9 'Conversion and Re-use of Buildings in the Green Belt' sets out the council's criteria for appropriate reuse. The principle of conversion of Walshaw Hall from a care home to apartments requires few external alterations, limited additional external works and requires relatively few internal structural alterations. The proposed change of use therefore fully accords with the requirements of this SPD and NPPF Green Belt policies. Most importantly, through the minimum alterations, internally and externally, the delivery of 19 apartments (1-2 bed) will contribute to the council's housing supply.

Other Design Related Planning Policies

Council Policy & SPDs, including parking standards, have been considered in developing the proposals.

Relevant national policies including NPPF have been considered as appropriate.



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Design

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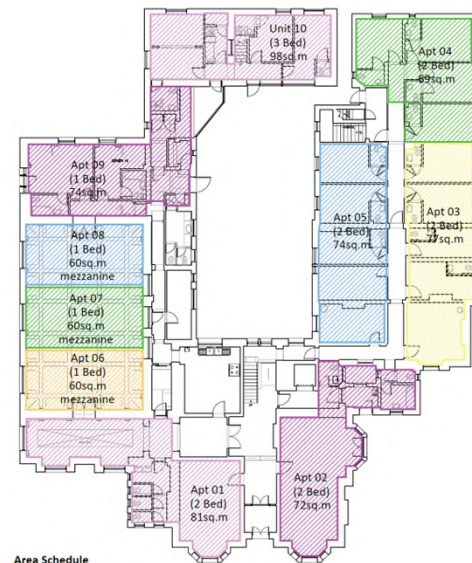
2.1 Design Development

When the new care home, then named 'The Beeches', opened in 2016 it was to be run as a specialised care unit for dementia and other needs, with the existing care home in Walshaw Hall retained as a lower dependency and respite care facility.

It soon became clear that the 30 year old facilities in Walshaw Hall, with inadequate bedrooms and ensuite facilities, narrow corridors and areas accessible only via stairs, were no longer fit for purpose in comparison with the newly built care home, nor was there sufficient demand for the type of care which Walshaw Hall could provide in its current form. The decision was taken to close Walshaw Hall in 2019.

3 options have been considered for the future of Walshaw Hall :-

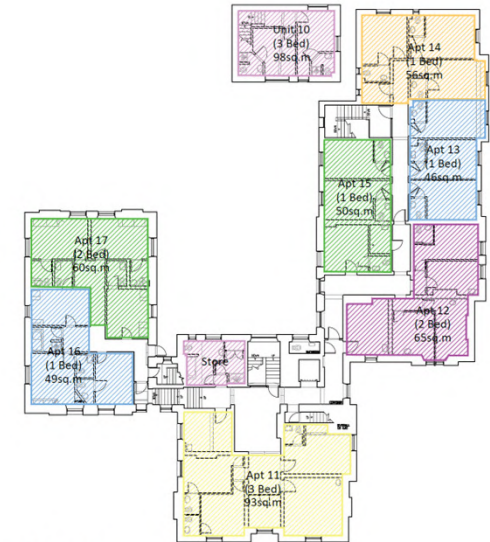
- 1. Refurbishment as a care home** – bringing facilities up to current day standards including bedrooms with ensuite shower facilities, can typically reduce the number of bedrooms by 1/3rd, from 46 bedrooms to around 31. This is below the threshold of viability for a care home where cost effective care provision staffing needs a minimum number of residents, even allowing for the new care home adjacent. Resolving accessibility issues would also require extensive and expensive major internal alterations. Changes in demand for care post-covid simply confirmed that this option was not viable.
- 2. Conversion to retirement apartments** – retirement and care villages, many in rural locations, are a growing option for the elderly. However, such developments provide a much larger range of facilities and services than can be provided at Walshaw Hall without significant new building. Conversion to stand-alone retirement apartments would provide a small number of apartments remote from services and public transport, a significant consideration for more mobile, but ageing, residents. The same issues of accessibility as option 1 would apply. Such a development would not be feasible for many potential residents and considered not to be viable.



Area Schedule

Apt 01 - (2 Bed)	81sq.m
Apt 02 - (2 Bed)	72sq.m
Apt 03 - (2 Bed)	77sq.m
Apt 04 - (2 Bed)	69sq.m
Apt 05 - (2 Bed)	74sq.m
Apt 06 - (1 Bed)	60sq.m
Apt 07 - (1 Bed)	60sq.m
Apt 08 - (1 Bed)	60sq.m
Apt 09 - (1 Bed)	74sq.m
Unit 10 - (3 Bed)	98sq.m

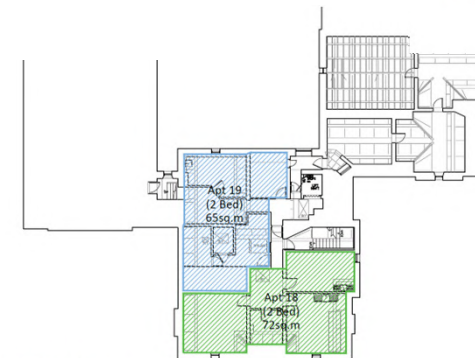
Apartment Feasibility Study
Ground Floor



Area Schedule

Apt 11 - (3 Bed)	93sq.m
Apt 12 - (2 Bed)	65sq.m
Apt 13 - (1 Bed)	46sq.m
Apt 14 - (1 Bed)	56sq.m
Apt 15 - (1 Bed)	50sq.m
Apt 16 - (1 Bed)	49sq.m
Apt 17 - (2 Bed)	60sq.m

Apartment Feasibility Study-
First Floor



Area Schedule

Apt 18 - (2 Bed)	72sq.m
Apt 19 - (2 Bed)	65sq.m
Total	1,281sq.m

Apartment Feasibility Study-
Second Floor

2.1 Design Development

3. Conversion to open market apartments – this option provides greater scope for a range of apartment layouts and types within the constraints of an existing building. Accessibility issues are less constrained. The rural location means significantly more parking is required but existing parking areas can be reconfigured to suit. The proximity between care accommodation and general housing offers diversity and benefits social cohesion.

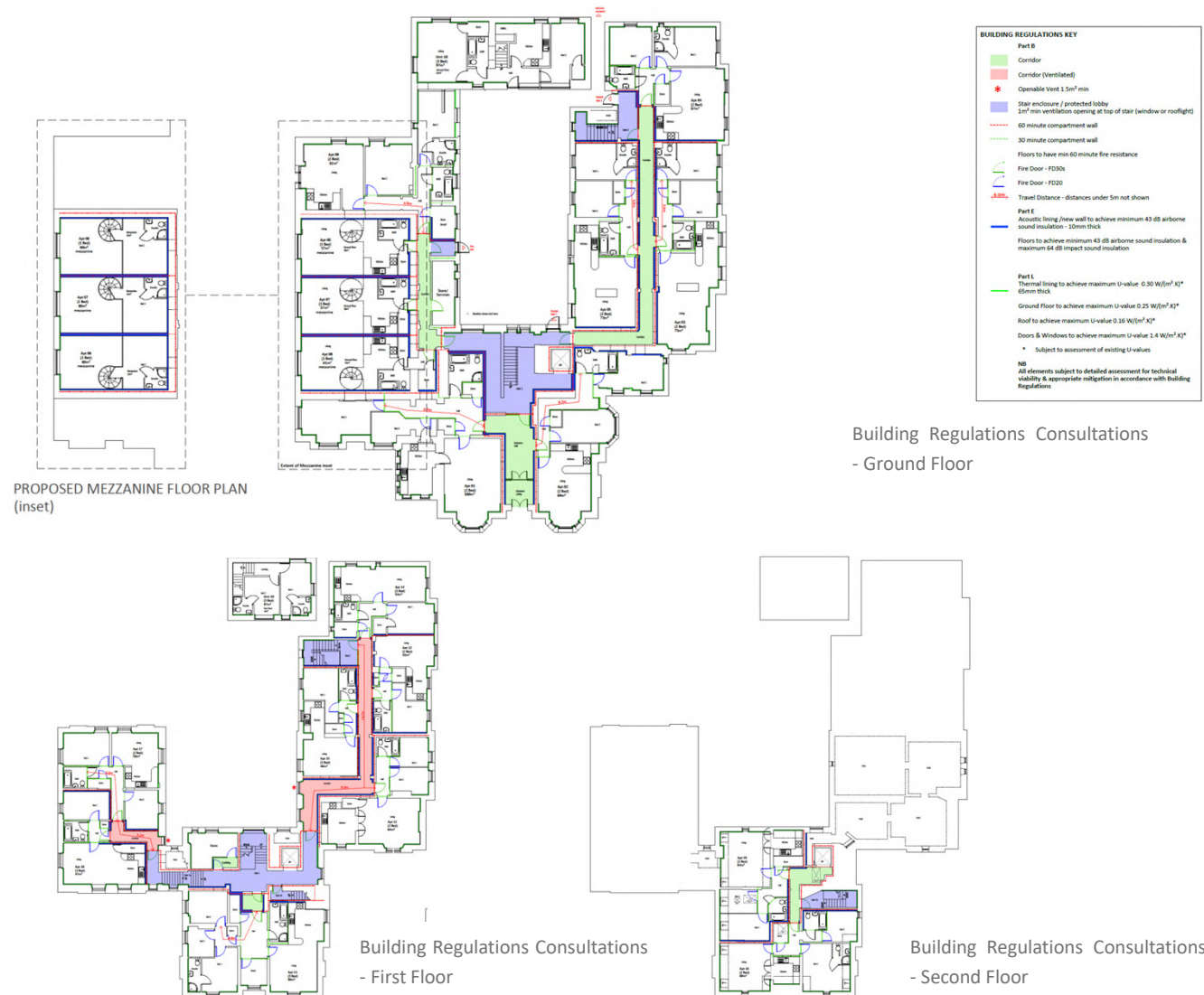
The conclusion is that Walshaw Hall can most effectively be brought back into full use by converting the redundant care home into open market apartments.

An initial feasibility study in 2019 when considering options prior to the intended closure established an optimum layout for a mix of 1,2 and 3 bedroom apartments.

Following the pandemic, which confirmed that refurbishment as a care facility would not be viable, this initial apartment concept has been developed into detailed proposals which are now the subject of this planning application.

The mix and layout of apartments has been further refined to suit the client's market research. Building Regulations advice has been sought to ensure the proposals satisfy fire safety, thermal, acoustic, access and other requirements.

The gross external area of the building across 3 storeys of accommodation is approximately 1730m². There is some additional second floor roof space which is not suitable for habitable space but may be useable for storage subject compliance with Building Regulations.



2.3 Proposed Layout

Site Layout

The site plan on the previous page illustrates the minor alterations to external works required to bring the apartment scheme to Council standards of parking, access, and refuse storage.

The access road was improved as part of the Care Home construction works in 2016 and no additional changes are required. Parking is accommodated in the existing car park in the east of the site and by minor changes and modest expansion of the car parking area in front of the main entrance to the building on the south side, which currently has no demarcated parking bays.

3 new disabled parking spaces are provided by the north-east corner of Walshaw Hall, close to an available level access through the north access into the central courtyard and secondary building entrances.

Space is also identified for 6 additional future parking spaces for Walshaw Hall Care Home.

A new recycle store is provided at the north-east end of the building, to be built in reclaimed stone and timber fencing, similar to the existing recycling store of the Care Home.

Internal Layouts- Ground Floor.

The ground floor is converted to 10 apartments comprising a mix of 1 and 2 bedrooms. Each apartment has been designed to make efficient use of existing spaces and services. Apartments facing south and east benefit from views over grounds and open country countryside beyond.

3 apartments in the west wing are in the former main dining room, a large double-height space which has been subdivided to provide mezzanine apartments. Apartment 6 also includes a smaller former lounge with a southern aspect. Apartment 10 at the north end of the building is reconfigured as a self-contained 2 storey building, providing a 2-bedroom apartment with a separate external entrance from within the central courtyard.

A secure cycle store is provided with access from within the building and externally from the central courtyard.

There is an existing lift which serves all 3 main floors.



2.3 Proposed Layout

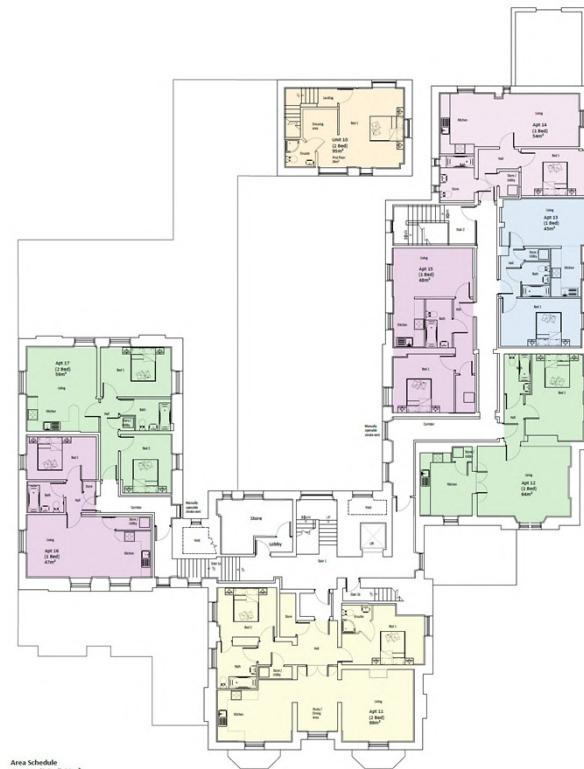
Internal Layouts- Upper Floors.

The first floor is converted to 7 apartments, also a mix of 1 and 2 bedrooms. Each apartment has been designed to make efficient use of existing spaces and services. Apartments facing south and east benefit from views over grounds and open country countryside beyond.

Apartment 11, on the south side above the main building entrance, has a series of living spaces arranged along the south façade to maximise benefit of the spectacular views south over open countryside towards Manchester city centre.

Apartments 16 and 17, in the west wing over the double height former lounge, are at a higher level than the remainder of this floor and accessed via an additional flight of stairs.

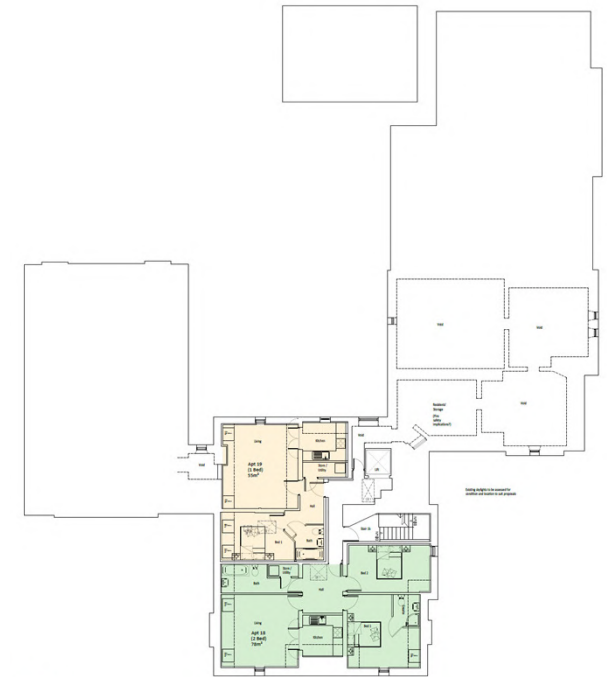
The second floor was formerly staff and ancillary accommodation. This will be converted to two apartments. There is a limited number of windows and existing rooflights on this floor, with some in locations and of a size which is not ideal for the best use of available space. Some new Velux rooflights are proposed, in discrete locations to provide appropriate levels of natural light.



Area Schedule

Apt 11 - (2 Bed)	96m ²
Apt 12 - (2 Bed)	64m ²
Apt 13 - (1 Bed)	45m ²
Apt 14 - (1 Bed)	54m ²
Apt 15 - (1 Bed)	49m ²
Apt 16 - (1 Bed)	47m ²
Apt 17 - (2 Bed)	59m ²

Proposed First Floor Plan – NTS



Area Schedule

Apt 18 - (2 Bed)	78m ²
Apt 19 - (1 Bed)	55m ²
Total (19 Bed)	1,287m ²

Proposed Second Floor Plan – NTS



2.4 Scale & Appearance

Walshaw Hall was originally a large house and later a care home, and the nature of those uses means the internal layouts and external appearance are domestic in scale.

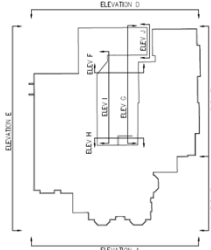
The building therefore lends itself readily to the proposed conversion to apartments. Careful design of those apartments and circulation makes full use of internal spaces and fenestration with few external alterations. These are largely confined to the central courtyard, where some windows are altered to accommodate ground floor fire exit doors and upper floor manually openable smoke vent windows

The appearance of the courtyard is improved by removal of (1) an external metal fire escape stair and canopy; (2) a flat-roofed upvc corridor extension, with the main wall line continued and faced in reclaimed stone; (3) large upvc glazed screen and door to apartment 10, replaced with reclaimed stone infill walling and clerestory windows for privacy; (4) kitchen extract ductwork.

The overall built form will remain the same, the only new construction being the recycle store, shown on elevation C opposite. This is a smaller version of the one provided for the adjacent Care Home, in reclaimed stone topped with a timber screen.

The proposed works will also include a full condition assessment and appropriate replacement and making-good to bring the building up to a good state of repair which meets current Building Regulations and other relevant standards.

Windows in the original building and later extensions are predominantly traditional timber sliding sash windows. Their condition and thermal performance will be assessed as part of this process. Any upgrade or replacement will seek to maintain the contribution fenestration makes to the overall character and appearance of the building and replace occasional anomalous later window types with more appropriate fenestration.



Elevation
Key



Elevation A – South Elevation –
NTS



Elevation C – East Elevation (part) – NTS



Courtyard Elevations H & I
NTS

2.5 Sustainability & Energy

The conversion and refurbishment of Walshaw Hall into apartments brings an existing building back into use. This effective reuse of existing resources is wholly in accordance with the principles of sustainable development set out in the NPPF.

The proposed works offers an opportunity to bring an old building up to modern standards of energy use, including the requirements of Part L of the Building Regulations.

A 'fabric first' approach entails providing internal linings of thermal insulation to both the solid stone walls of the original building and the cavity walls of the 1990s extensions. Roof insulation will also be significantly improved. Single glazed sash windows will be replaced with double glazed units or provided with secondary glazing subject to detailed assessment of condition of window frames. This brings the thermal envelope of the building in line with present day insulation standards and significantly reduces heating loads.

The building can be heated by either gas or electricity. The former care home had gas fired heating. There is scope to use renewable or low-carbon sources including photovoltaic panels or air-source heat pumps. The latter provide an effective cost-efficient, low-energy option for this type of refurbishment work and a location for an air-source heat pump installation is identified on the site plan.



3.0

Access

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3.1 Inclusive Access

The proposals for the site layout and conversion of Walshaw Hall into apartments has been designed to allow an appropriate level of accessibility for an existing building which by virtue of inclusion in Bury council's draft local list is a non-designated heritage asset.

Step free access to the building

Level access is available from the site entrance off Bradshaw Road to the building.

The main formal entrance to the building, on the south elevation, is accessed via steps to a low raised terrace and further steps to the entrance doors. This cannot be brought up to an accessible standard without substantial alterations for ramps and would significantly alter the character of this frontage.

Level access is therefore provided via the central courtyard, accessed from the north side of the building adjacent to the main access road and car park of the adjoining Walshaw Hall Care Home. New disabled parking spaces are provided near to this courtyard access.

Internal Layout

Walshaw Hall has narrow corridors, typically around 1-1.2m wide but in some areas constricted to 0.75m. An area of the building's first floor, in the west wing, is at a higher level than the rest of the building and two apartments in this area are accessible only via stairs. The majority of the upper floors do however have lift access and the remaining 17 apartments, including the 2-storey apartment and 3 mezzanine apartments, have level access to sanitary accommodation.

The building previously functioned as a care home and ordinarily the level of accessibility required for that C2 use class is greater than for C3 dwellings. Planning and Building Regulations acknowledges accessibility constraints in converting existing buildings, particularly heritage assets and the overall level of accessibility externally and internally makes best use of opportunities without unduly compromising the building and its setting.



Photograph Key:

1. Walshaw Hall frontage showing 2 sets of steps to main entrance
2. North side of Walshaw Hall with proposed level access
3. Two views of central courtyard to include level entrance to building



3.2 Vehicular Access

The proposals provide 45 parking spaces including 3 disabled parking spaces. This provision aligns with Bury Borough Council's SPD 11 – Parking Standards in Bury as described in more detail in Section 2.

The existing vehicular and pedestrian access to the Walshaw Hall site from Bradshaw Road was improved as part of the works for the construction of the new Care Home in 2016. This access will remain unchanged and can suitably accommodate the traffic flow and traffic generation for the current proposals and existing use.

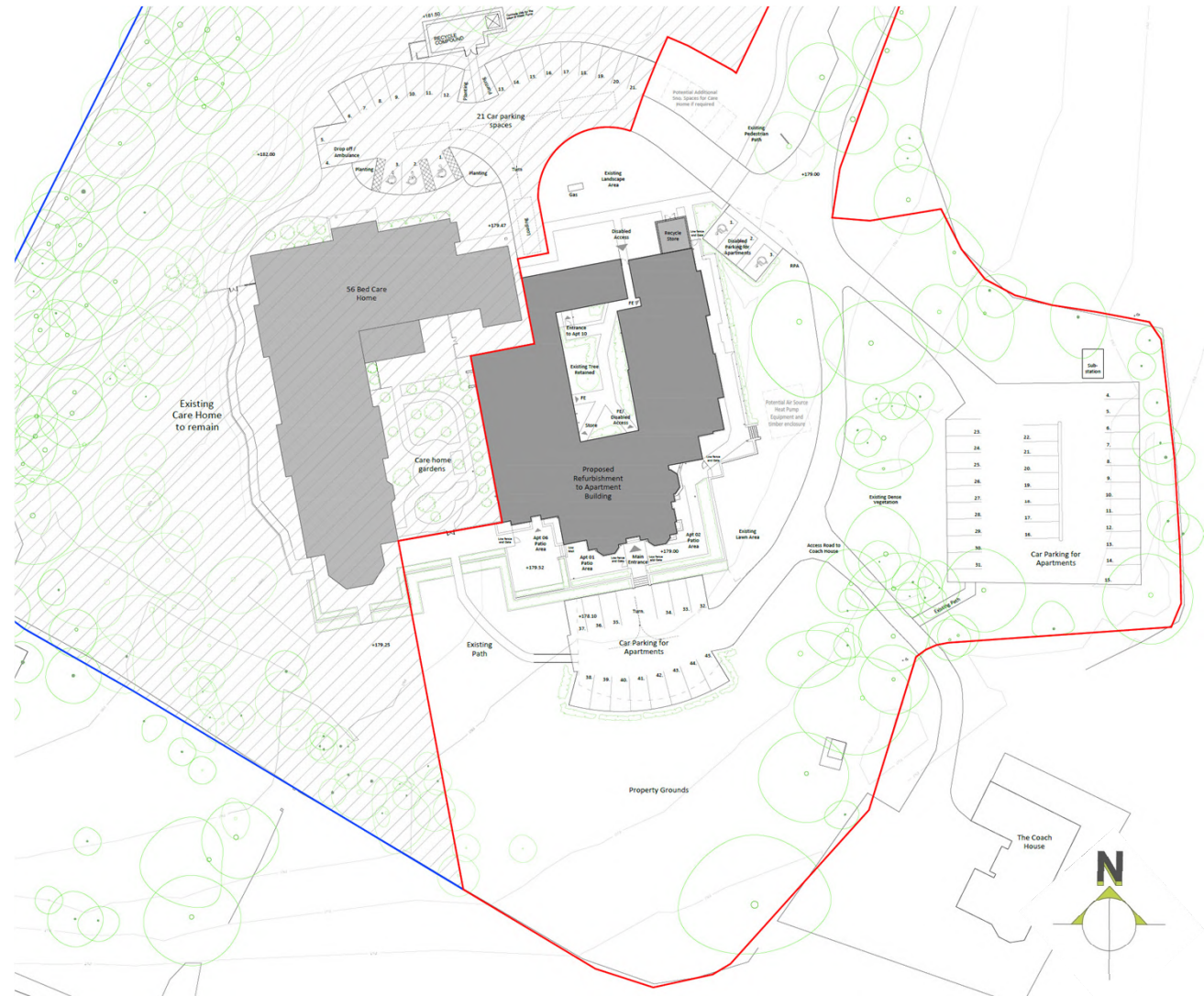
The parking proposed primarily involves reuse of existing parking areas and hardstandings.

The disabled parking spaces have been located to provide easy access to the level access available into the building via the central courtyard.

Provision for electric vehicle charging will be in accordance with Building Regulations Approved Document S.

A secure cycle store is provided within the building and accessed from the central courtyard.

The recycle store has been located to allow easy access for residents whilst allowing collection by refuse vehicles using the existing site road and turning configuration.



4.0

Summary

4.1 Summary

Walshaw Hall is a large late 19th Century house with 1990s extensions added when it was converted to a care home. A new care home has been built adjacent to Walshaw Hall to provide modern, specialised care facilities and opened in 2016.

It is in a rural location, in designated green belt and a non-designated heritage asset by virtue of inclusion in Bury council's draft local list. The original house was built of stone and slate in a gothic style and the later extensions used complementary materials.

Falling demand for the type of care accommodation Walshaw Hall provided, and its physical shortcomings was exacerbated by the covid pandemic. Walshaw Hall closed in 2019 and is now vacant.

The owners have assessed the feasibility of 3 options for the refurbishment and reuse of Walshaw Hall:-

1. Refurbishment as a care home.
2. Conversion to retirement apartments.
3. Conversion to open market apartments.

The assessment concluded that the location of the site and the accommodation which could be provided in the existing building is best suited to conversion to open market apartments.

The proposals now submitted provides 19 apartments with a mix of 1 and 2 bedrooms, including 2 storey and mezzanine apartments. External works largely reuses existing parking areas with some modest expansion and provision of 3 new disabled parking spaces and a recycle store.

The proposals have been carefully thought out to make best use of the existing spaces within Walshaw Hall, minimising internal structural alterations and maintaining the external appearance of the building.

In summary, the proposal is well thought out, efficiently reuses Walshaw Hall and it's site to continue the useful life of this locally listed building in a sustainable manner.



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