

Introduction

This presentation has been prepared on behalf of Fortis Homes in advance of an application for Planning Permission for the development of Land to the south of Gattonside, Melrose. The formal pre-application process commenced with the submission of a Proposal of Application Notice to Scottish Borders Council on 12th November 2025 (reference number: 25/01698/PAN) for circa 9.73ha of proposed mixed use development including housing, leisure use (Class 9 and 11), holiday accommodation, café, conversion of Gattonside House and Ancillary buildings from Class 8 to Class 9.

The existing buildings on the site are largely derelict, with Gattonside House itself in a precarious state of disrepair. To the north lies the Garden Villa Nursing Home, followed by a mix of homes and agricultural land, while to the east the site meets the village centre of Gattonside and further residential properties, including the adjacent Category B-listed 'Achnachairidh' on Bakers Road.

The River Tweed forms the southern boundary, separated from the buildings by an area of vacant agricultural land. To the west, the site adjoins more farmland, with Tweedbank Train Station located approximately two miles beyond. The grounds also contain numerous mature trees and areas of woodland, particularly concentrated around the perimeter.



Site Location Plan

Site Designations

The Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (LDP2) zones part of the site for housing, with key planning considerations focused on built heritage, scenic landscape protection, flood risk and existing woodland. The site contains several listed structures: Historic Environment Scotland designates Gattonside House - together with its chapel, former coach house, cottage, walled garden, and boundary walls - as Category B (LB15103), and identifies a Category C listed east lodge with gatepiers in the western corner (LB151563).

The site also lies within the Gattonside Conservation Area, where Gattonside House is recognised as an important feature contributing to local character, and within the Eildon and Leaderfoot National Scenic Area, requiring careful assessment of how any development will maintain or enhance the area's scenic qualities. Future proposals will seek to repair the derelict Gattonside House, improve its setting, and respond sensitively to both the Conservation Area and the NSA.

Flood-risk mapping by SEPA has shown that areas susceptible to flooding are located away from any likely development footprint, and a review by Gondolin Land and Water confirms that, provided development remains broadly in the location of previous consent, significant flood concerns should not arise. Scotland's environment map also identifies an FGS Native Woodland – Integrated Habitat Network along the south-western boundary, but this sits outside the area proposed for development.

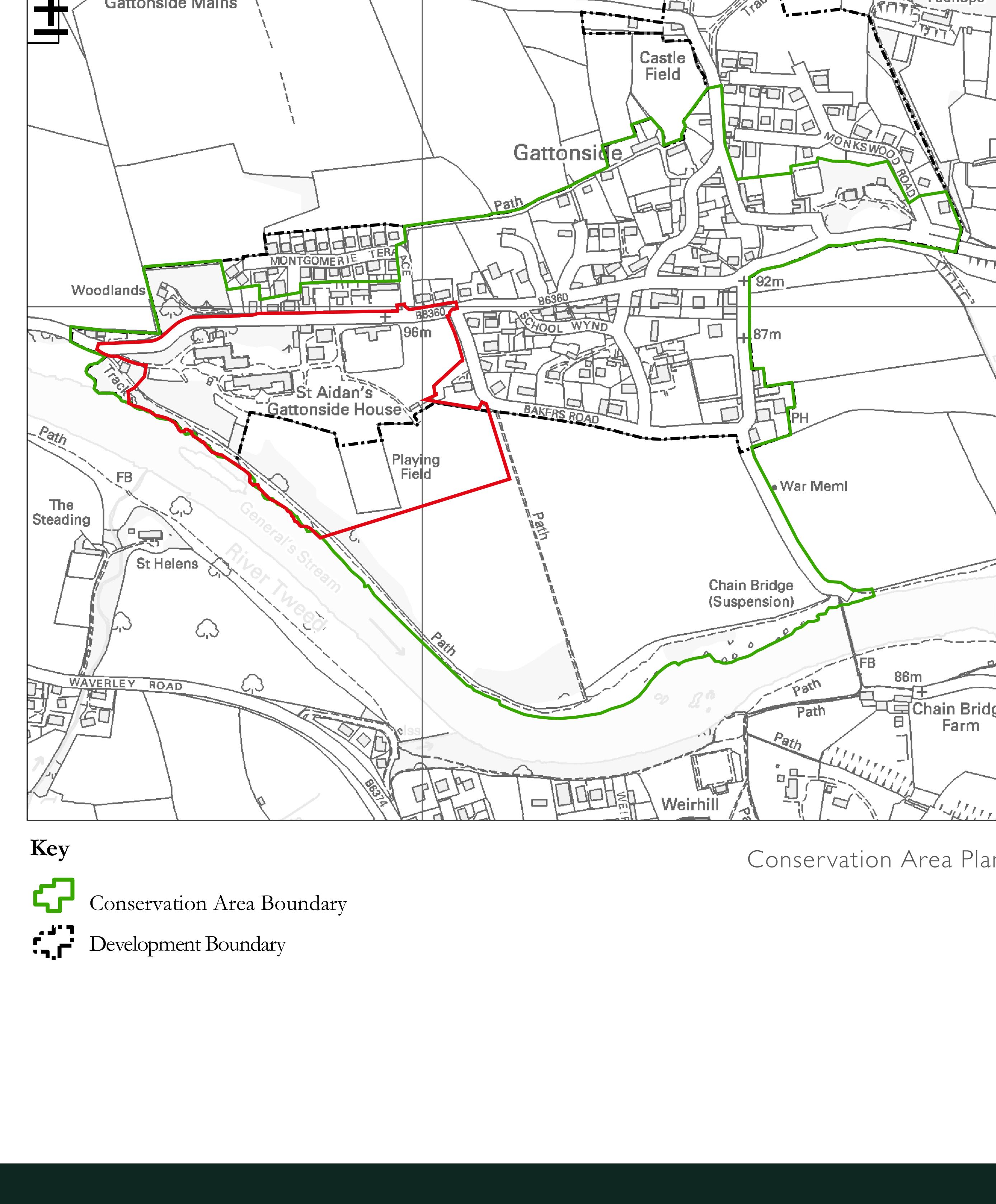
About Fortis Homes

Fortis Homes works across a variety of mixed residential developments focusing primarily on the Lothians and Scottish Borders. The team have been developing both new homes and redeveloping existing residential properties since 2010, and benefit from experience in project delivery across a full spectrum of mixed-use sites.

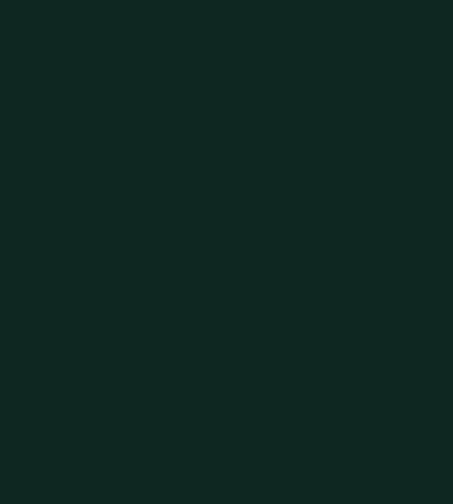
With quality paramount in all of our developments, and sustainability at our heart, we pledge to be customer focused in our delivery, centred around a legacy of sustainable development for future generations.

Our team has been involved in a diverse range of residential development projects since 2010. From considered urban redevelopment projects to countryside farmsteads, we have experience in creating homes that cater to different lifestyles and preferences. Our portfolio showcases our commitment to sustainability, quality and innovation in every project we undertake.

www.fortis-homes.co.uk



Conservation Area Plan





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Planning History

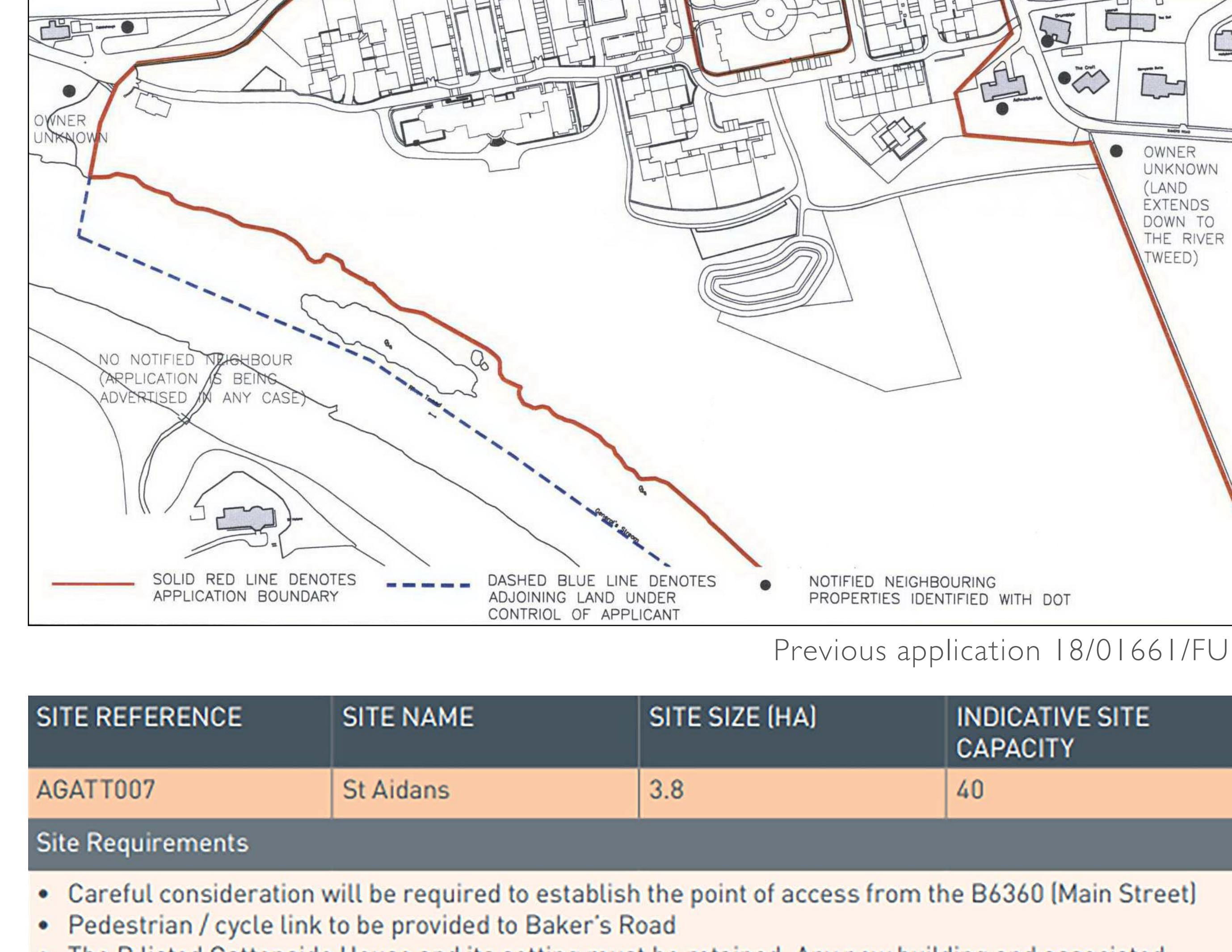
The site is the subject of an existing planning permission for the construction of 44 new homes and a conversion of Gattonside House that was approved in 2016 (SBC PLANNING REF: 09/01043/FUL).

A Section 42 application to extend the period for commencement of the approved development was submitted in 2018 (18/01661/FUL) and approved subject to conclusion of a new Section 75 agreement. It is understood that the legal agreement has not been concluded and that this application remains live.

In 2022, planning permission was granted for a temporary scaffold and tent structure to protect the building following the theft of roofing materials. The structure was erected and applications were submitted in 2024 to extend the period that the tent structure could remain on site. These applications (24/00931/FUL and 24/00932/LBC) are pending consideration.



Previous application 09/01043/FUL



Previous application 18/01661/FUL

Development Plan Context

The current development plan context is defined by the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Scottish Borders Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2), the latter having been formally adopted on 22 August 2024.

Within LDP2, the site lies in the Central Housing Market Area and is specifically allocated for residential development. As illustrated on the map below, the site - referred to in LDP2 as "St Aidans" - has an indicative capacity of approximately 40 homes and is accompanied by a series of detailed development requirements that will guide its future design and delivery.

The Settlement Profile for Gattonside notes that the built form generally comprises one-and-a-half to two-storey properties, with a smaller number of single-storey dwellings located within the Conservation Area. Traditional building materials are predominant here, and the presence of distinctive architectural detailing plays an important role in reinforcing local character. Any new development or alterations within the Conservation Area are therefore expected to preserve and enhance this established character. In response, the proposed scheme would incorporate a high-quality palette of materials that aligns with these expectations.

The landscape setting of Gattonside is also significant; the surrounding countryside forms part of the Eildon and Leaderfoot National Scenic Area, underscoring the need for development to be sensitively designed and appropriately integrated into its wider scenic context.

SITE REFERENCE	SITE NAME	SITE SIZE (HA)	INDICATIVE SITE CAPACITY
AGATT007	St Aidans	3.8	40

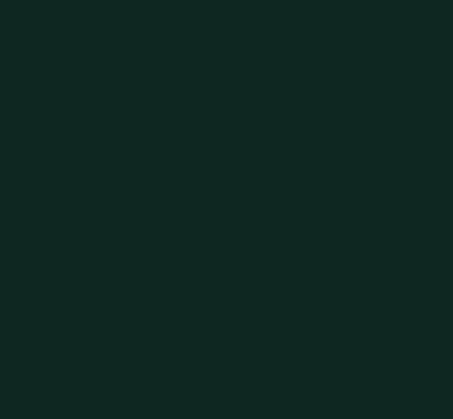
Site Requirements

- Careful consideration will be required to establish the point of access from the B6360 [Main Street]
- Pedestrian / cycle link to be provided to Baker's Road
- The B listed Gattonside House and its setting must be retained. Any new building and associated landscaping should be designed sympathetically to this setting
- Site was formerly a designed landscape associated with Gattonside House and this would need to be explored prior to development. The mature trees within the site and on the surrounding boundary must be protected wherever possible. A tree survey will be required to identify trees to be removed and retained and no trees shall be removed without the written approval of the Planning Authority.
- Archaeology interests have been recorded within the site and archaeological assessment including archaeological evaluation along with associated mitigation measures is required
- The layout and design of the site should be sympathetic to the setting of the National Scenic Area and integrate well within the character of the existing Conservation Area in terms of proportion and materials
- Open space must be provided to allow breathing space within the site and provide recreational facilities
- Protected species interests have been recorded in the area and further assessment on nature conservation will be required
- Mitigation measures are required to prevent any impact on the River Tweed Special Area of Conservation and ensure the protection and enhancement of habitats.

LDP Site Requirements



Scottish Borders Council LDP Map



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Proposal

The current sketch layout proposes 35 new-build homes, comprising 22 private units and 13 affordable homes, together with 17 apartments formed through the conversion of Gattonside House. This results in a total of 52 homes, a reduction from the 55 previously approved for the site.

The arrangement of the development remains broadly consistent with the earlier consented layout. Key elements - such as access, the internal street network, building orientation, the protection of mature trees, open space provision and the placement of the SUDS facility - are retained and refined to better suit the site's established character.

The updated scheme also introduces several complementary uses, including a Padel Court, a site for a small café, and the option for a limited number of high-quality green-roofed holiday pods.

A notable improvement is the substantial reduction in required tree removal, reflecting a more sensitive design approach that responds to the landscape's increased maturity since the original permission was granted.



Gattonside House - Proposed floor plans



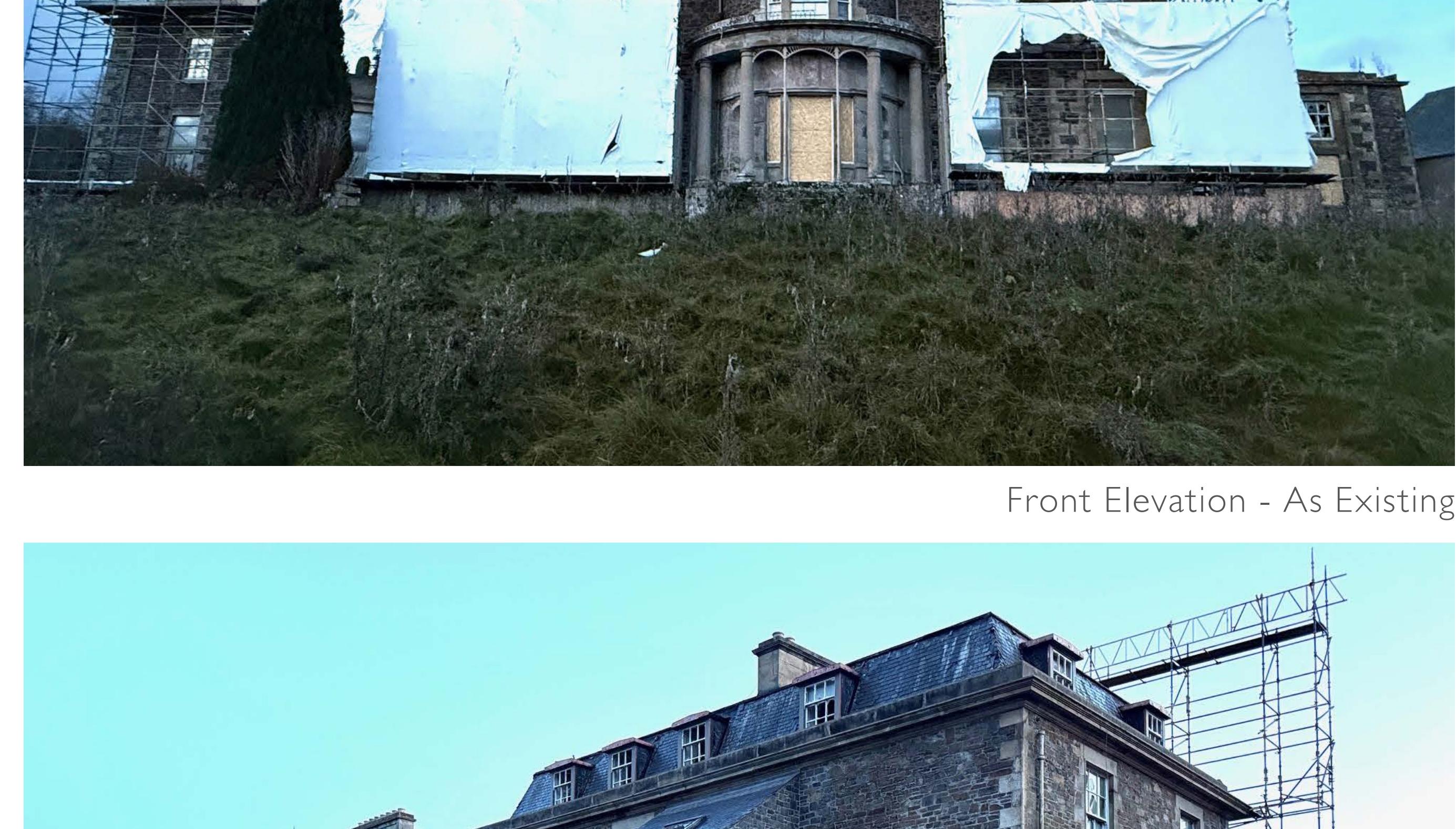
Proposed Site Layout

Gattonside House

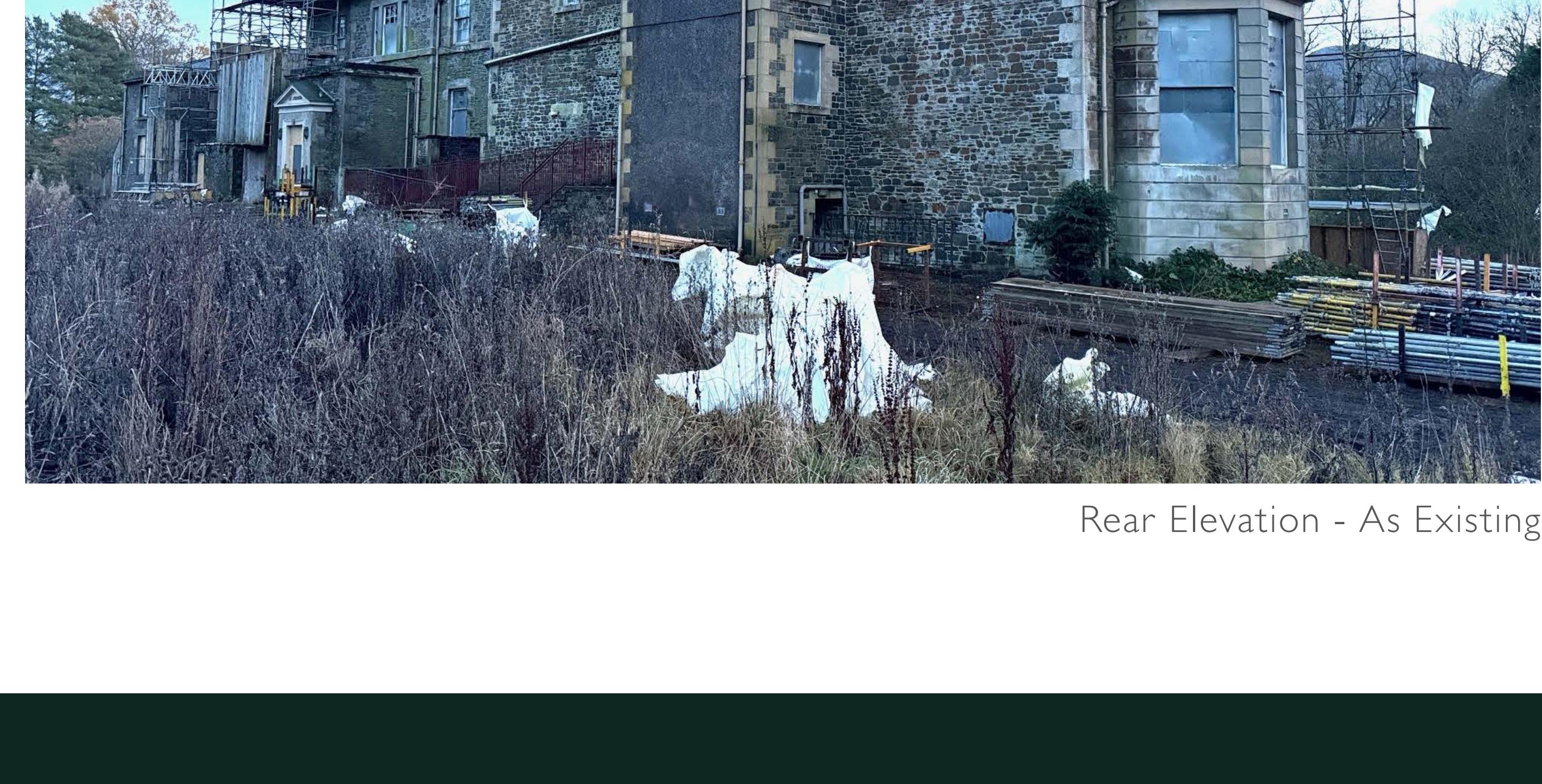
Gattonside House remains part of the proposals and it is still intended to convert it for residential use. The condition of Gattonside House has worsened in recent years and it is now in a perilous state. Dry rot and wet rot have advanced to the point that it is probable that the building would have to be stripped back to its stone structure in order to eradicate the rot.

One of the reasons the previous planning permission has not been implemented is the disproportionate cost of restoring and converting Gattonside House relative to its value on completion. This is despite the potential enabling factor of building more than 50 new homes on the site. The worsened condition of the house only makes the restoration and conversion even less viable.

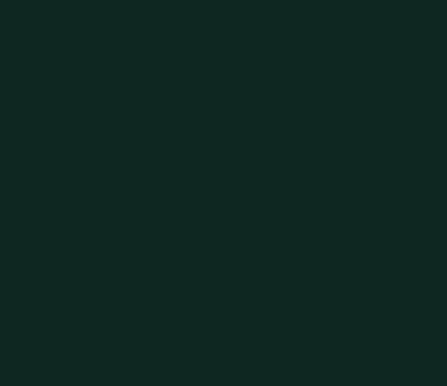
In reconsidering what may be possible in Gattonside House, the Chapel is being proposed for demolition. The Chapel, whilst being of recent historical significance to The Brothers of Charity, is of a form and era that does not easily facilitate conversion, with the resulting homes being compromised in daylight, amenity and ultimately final value. The Chapel does not sit easily next to the older parts of the building and there is an argument that its removal would reinstate some of the architectural integrity of the building at the point of its original extension.



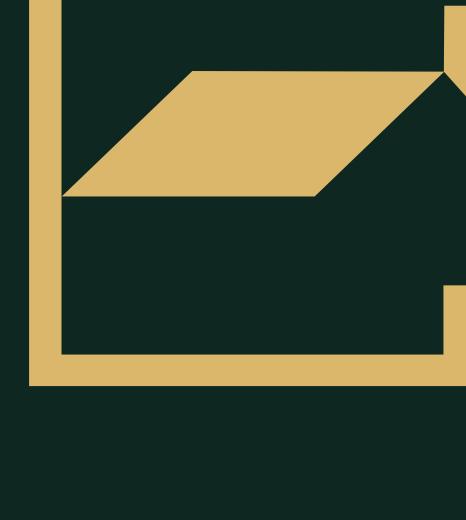
Front Elevation - As Existing



Rear Elevation - As Existing



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Architecture

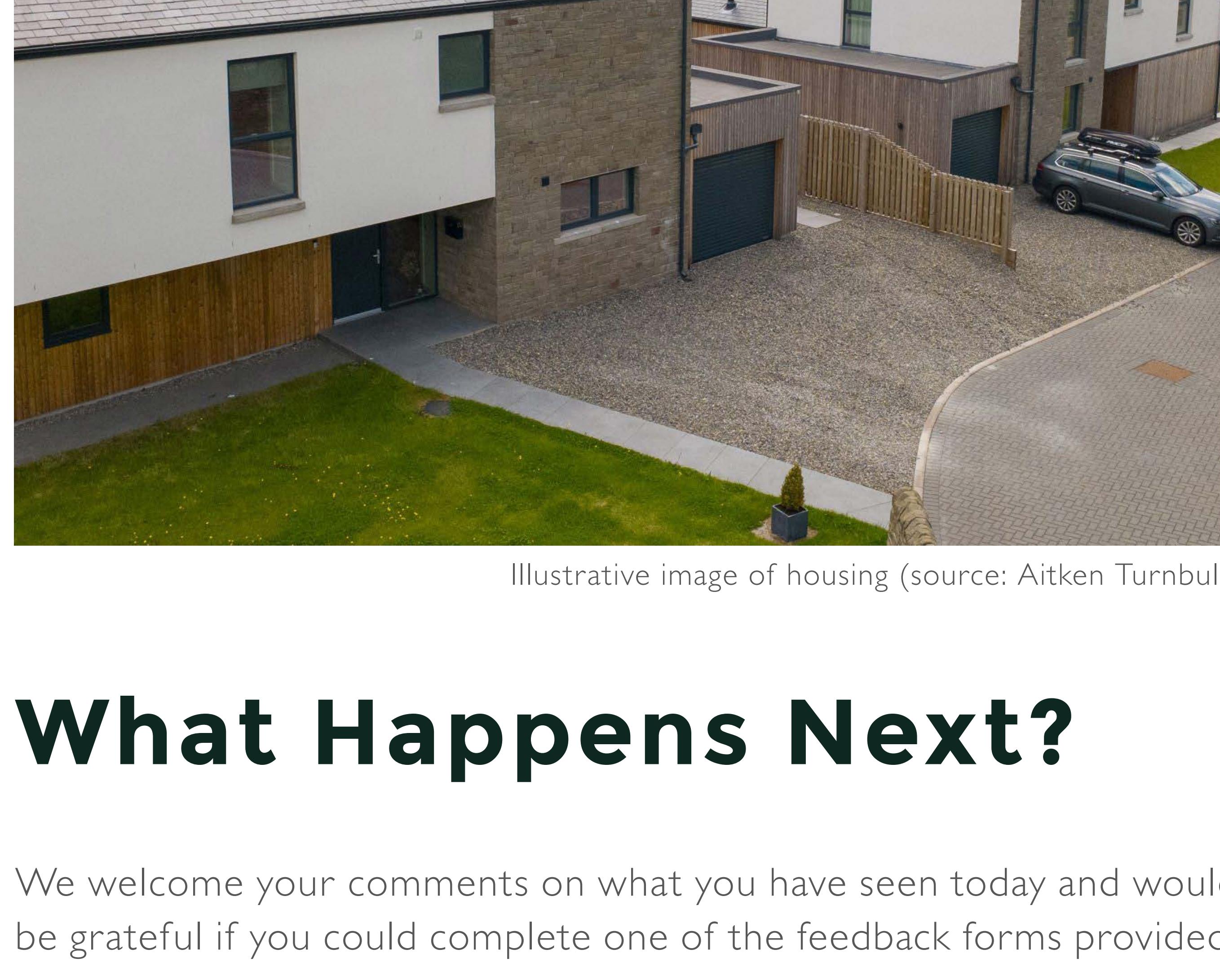
The earlier planning permission set out a vision for a new neighbourhood characterised by predominantly traditional architectural forms, with one larger plot conceived in a contemporary style. More than 16 years have passed since that concept was developed, during which design thinking and the site's wider context have evolved. A refreshed and more nuanced approach is therefore being explored - one that reflects current best practice and a deeper understanding of the site's opportunities and constraints.

The updated proposal introduces a mix of contemporary homes to the main northern section of the site, with illustrative examples shown below. In addition, the scheme proposes more sensitively designed housing in the southern area, where buildings would be 1 to 1.5 storeys in height, together with the potential to introduce smaller dwellings for holiday lets (shown opposite). These southern units would feature flat green roofs and a natural palette of materials, allowing them to sit quietly within the landscape.

This contemporary architectural language provides continuity with the previously approved modern buildings whilst also aligning with relevant local and national design guidance. The approach supports high-quality placemaking and a coherent, visually balanced development.

Carefully controlled building heights, simplified roof forms and modest massing - particularly in the southern part of the site - help to minimise visual intrusion and reduce potential impact on the nearby listed house and its wider setting. The use of green roofs and natural materials further softens the building's appearance and ensures that new development respects the character and significance of the heritage asset.

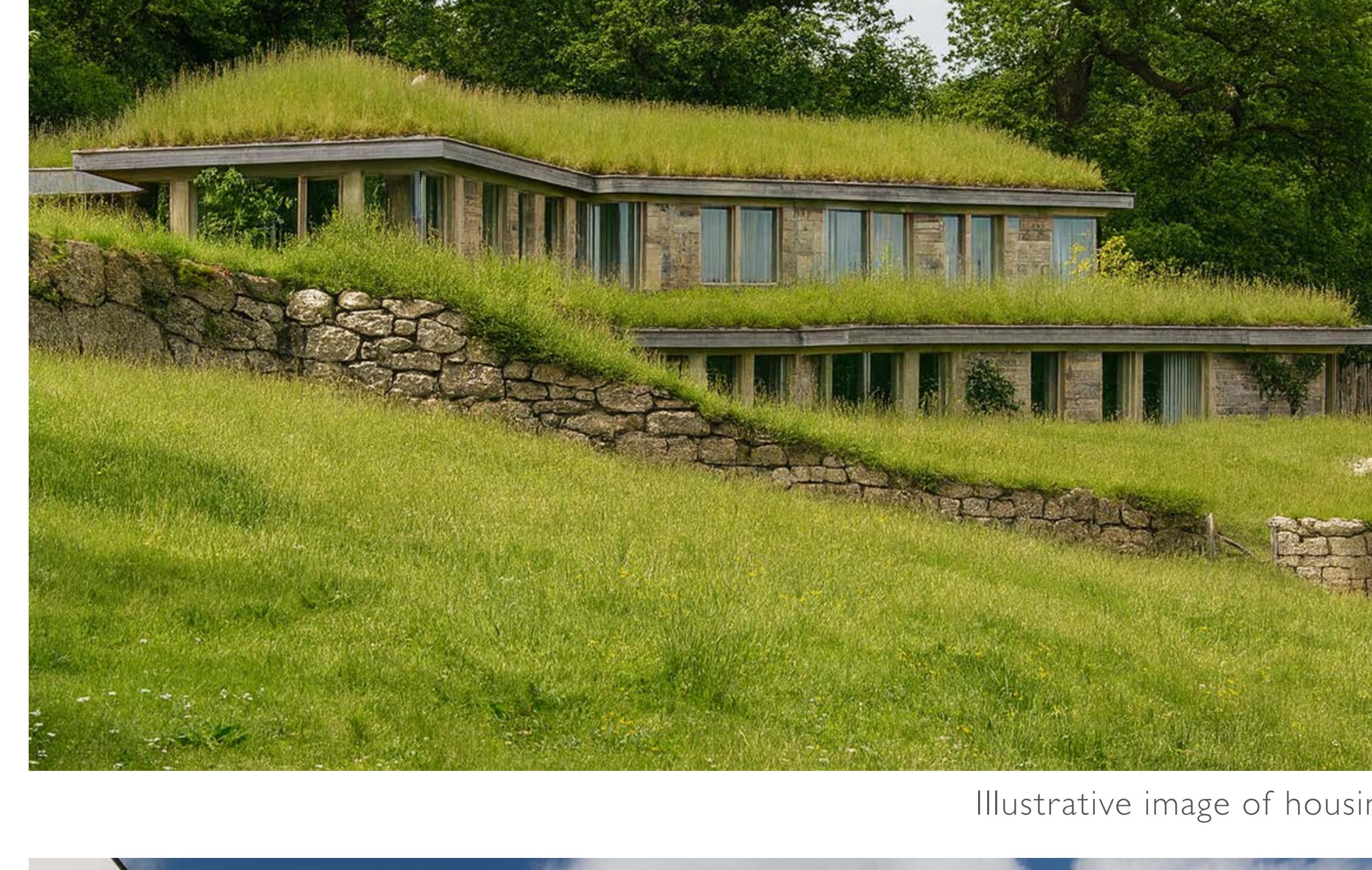
These examples demonstrate how well-designed contemporary forms can be successfully integrated into sensitive environments, highlighting their adaptability, visual quality and capacity to enhance the surrounding context.



Illustrative image of housing (source: Aitken Turnbull)



Illustrative image of housing



Illustrative image of housing



Illustrative image of housing (source: Fiddes Architects)

What Happens Next?

We welcome your comments on what you have seen today and would be grateful if you could complete one of the feedback forms provided.

Alternatively, if you would prefer more time to consider the development, you are welcome to email your comments using the contact details below. For further details, please also visit our website:

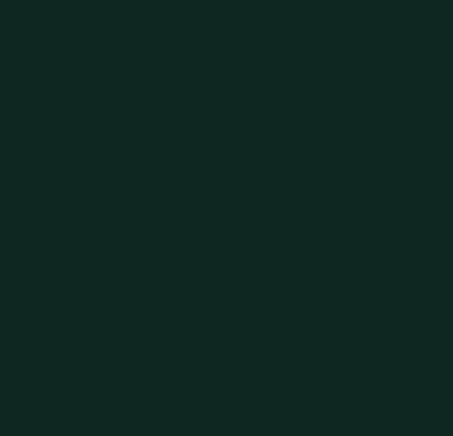
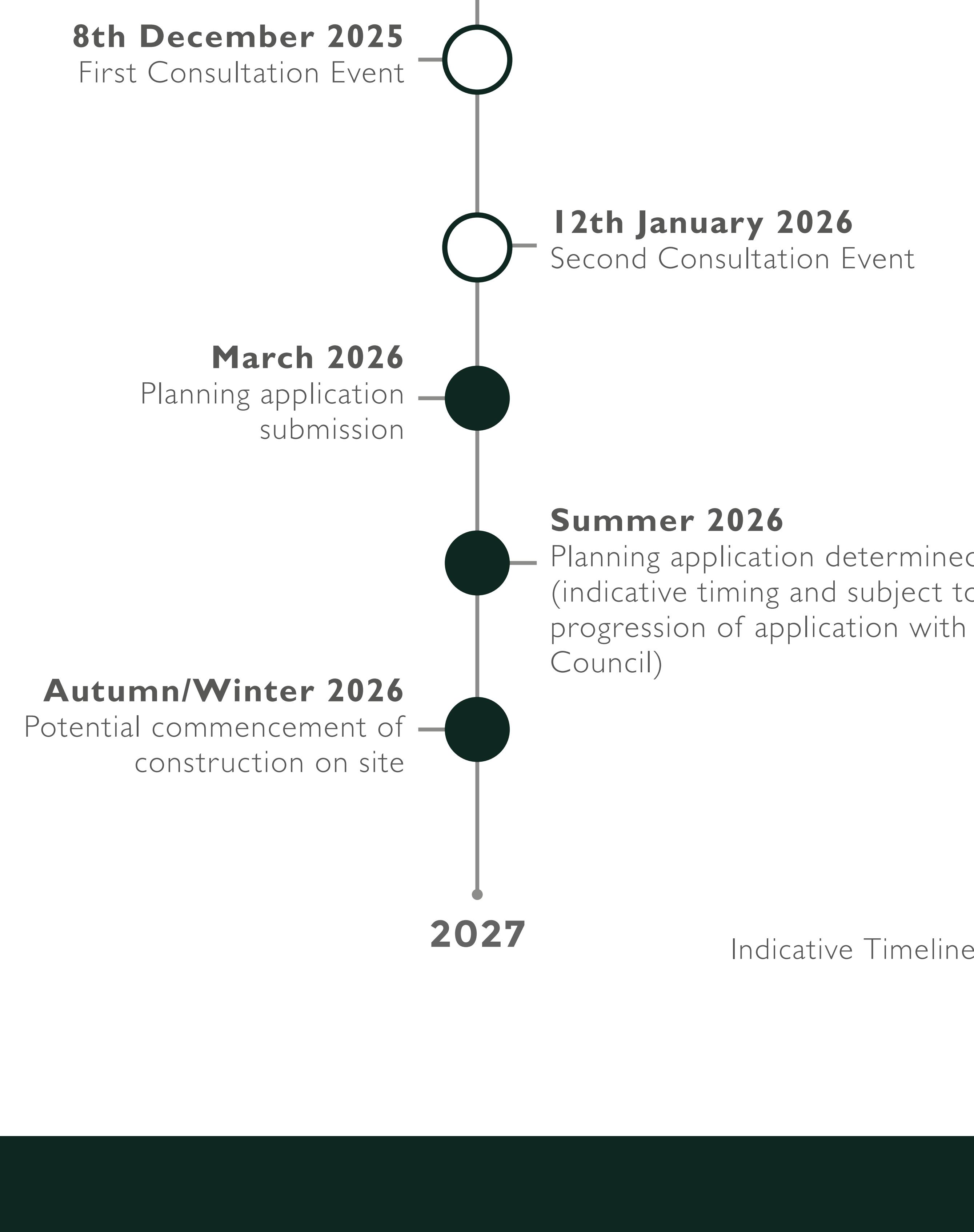
www.gattonsidedevelopments.co

Please submit your comments to the Design Team by 5th January 2026.

We will then review the responses we receive and take them into account when preparing our application. Following the consultation events, we will prepare a Pre-Application Consultation Report, which will summarise the feedback received and explain how this has influenced the proposals.

Address: EMA Architects, 42 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, EH2 4HQ
Email: info@ema-architects.co.uk
Phone: 0131 247 1450

Comments should not be made to Scottish Borders Council at this stage. Any comments made to the prospective applicant are not comments to the planning authority. When a planning application is submitted to Scottish Borders Council, there will be formal neighbour notification and publicity undertaken by the Council at that time and you will have the opportunity to make formal representations regarding the proposal.



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