

HIGHBURY AND FISHERTON MANOR SCHOOL SITES CONCEPT STATEMENT

Redevelopment of the Highbury
and Fisherton Manor Schools site
and links to adjoining sites



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INTRODUCTION

This concept statement primarily addresses the redevelopment of the Highbury and Fisherton Manor Schools site at Highbury Avenue in Salisbury.

Redevelopment of this site presents an important opportunity to deliver, for the local community, a high quality new Highbury Primary School. This will be a great improvement on the existing outdated and unsatisfactory premises at the site. The proposals deal with the re-use of the brownfield part of the site in a way which releases capital value to enable the new school to come forward earlier than would otherwise be the case.

The document also includes consideration of the site's relationship with the Old Manor Hospital site north of the A36 Wilton Road, the new Salisbury Courts proposal, and other existing uses at the Foyer and the Old Manor Social Club. These sites are adjacent to each other and to the school site, and as such there are significant benefits in considering how they inter-relate as development proposals come forward.

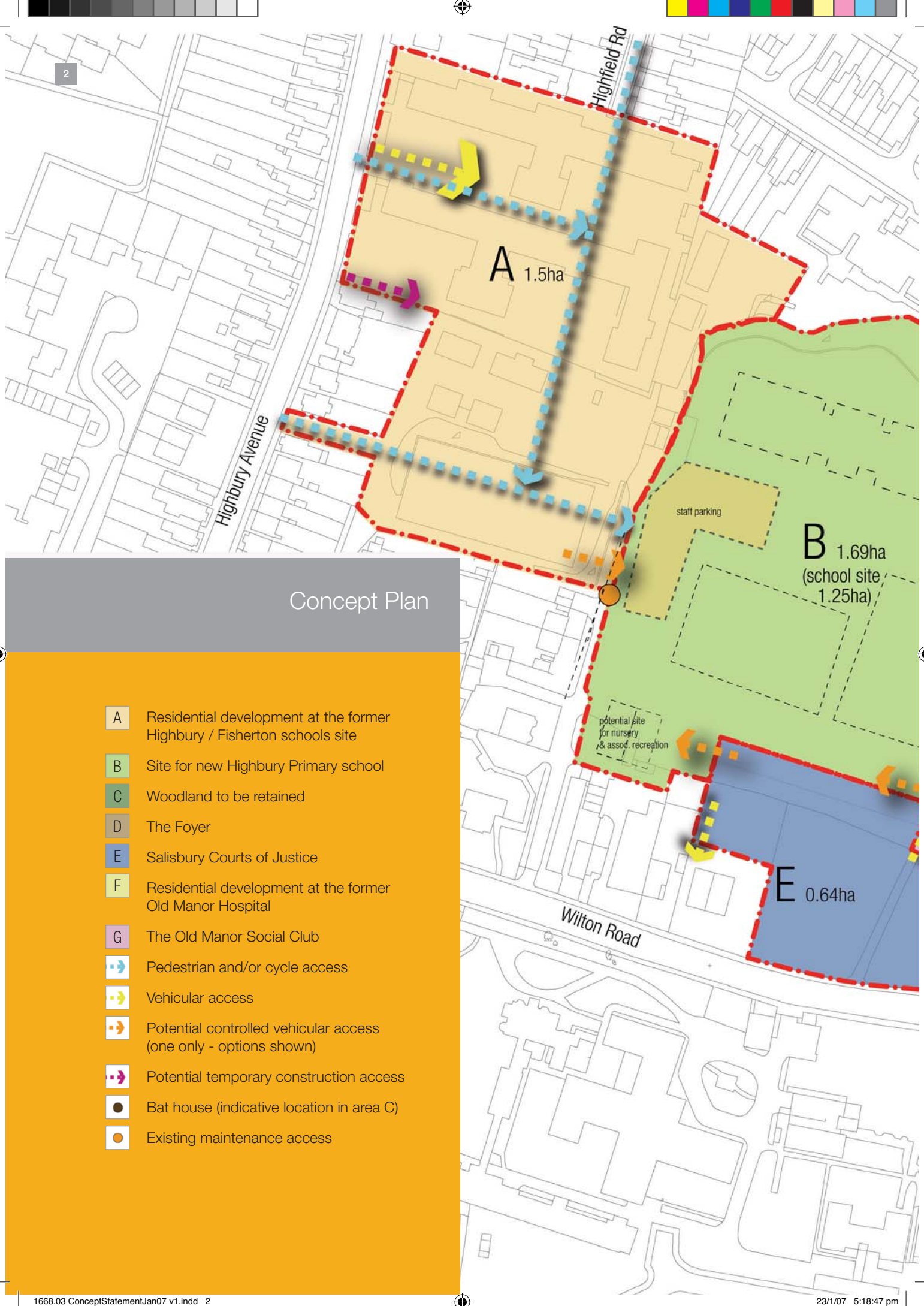
The area covered by the document is identified in the accompanying plan, along with proposals for how development might proceed.

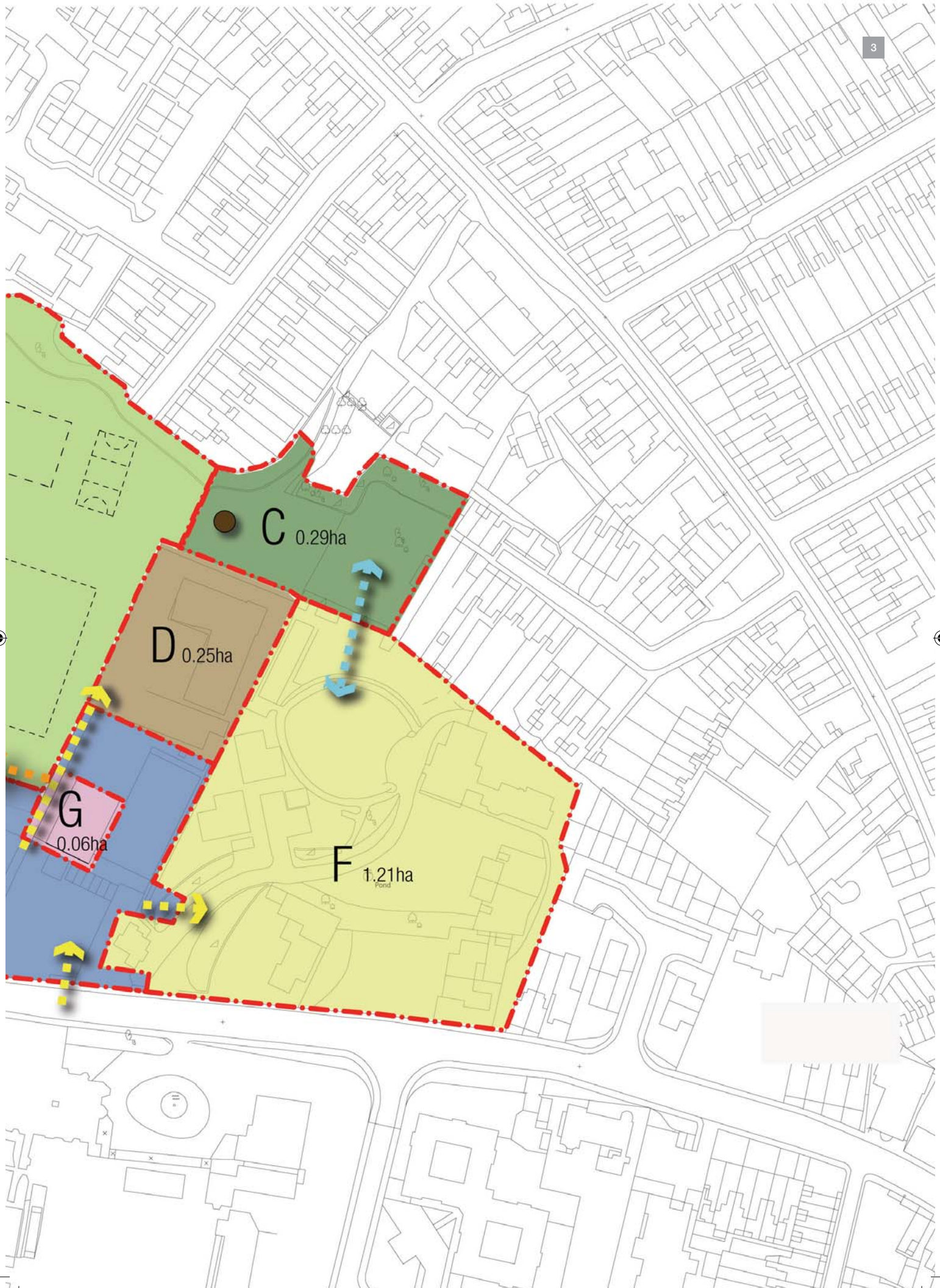
This document has been prepared by Wiltshire County Council in partnership with Salisbury District Council. It provides guidelines for the future use and integration of these sites.



Concept Plan

- A Residential development at the former Highbury / Fisherton schools site
- B Site for new Highbury Primary school
- C Woodland to be retained
- D The Foyer
- E Salisbury Courts of Justice
- F Residential development at the former Old Manor Hospital
- G The Old Manor Social Club
- Pedestrian and/or cycle access
- Vehicular access
- Potential controlled vehicular access (one only - options shown)
- Potential temporary construction access
- Bat house (indicative location in area C)
- Existing maintenance access







LAND USE PROPOSALS

The following land use proposals have been identified, as illustrated on the concept plan:

Area A: Residential development at the former Highbury/ Fisherton Schools site

This site measures 1.5 hectares and comprises an area of school buildings and associated hardstanding. Some of the buildings are no longer in use following the closure of Fisherton Manor School, and the Highbury School is in a building which is unsuitable for meeting today's educational needs and is programmed to be replaced in Area B.

It is not considered appropriate to retain and refurbish the school buildings for educational use. This is primarily because the building design and layout is inadequate for today's needs. The steps and slopes around the school present problems for those with mobility difficulties and outside facilities for the Reception class limit opportunities for independent learning due to insufficient spaces between outbuildings and difficulties associated with supervising children.

The playgrounds are sloping, making it difficult to learn games and athletic skills, and there is no shade during the day. The conversion and refurbishment costs would be considerable, and the buildings, location of playing fields and access would still fall short of standards expected in a new school.

Given the site's location in a residential area, close to public transport routes and the city centre, redevelopment for housing is appropriate.

It is important that the capital receipt from the sale of the site to a developer should contribute significantly to the design and construction of a new Highbury Primary School on Area B. This means that there will be no additional education contribution arising from the redevelopment of the site.

Existing buildings

Consideration has been given to conversion of the existing school buildings to other uses. However, the buildings are of no great architectural merit, suffer from poor fabric, and pose significant difficulties for conversion or refurbishment.

In addition, the former Fisherton Manor school buildings have been empty since August 2005 and have begun to attract squatters and vandalism. A solution to this problem needs to be found.

If the buildings are retained then the potential capital receipt from the site will be reduced considerably. This will undermine the ability to raise funds for the provision of the new school.

It is recognised that the retention of these buildings is not a requirement of the proposals for this area, given the need to maximise development value in the interests of providing the new school.

The existing buildings will therefore be demolished. This applies to both the empty buildings and those currently in use by Highbury Primary School pending construction of the new school. The site will be secured during and after demolition to stop trespassing and prevent anti-social behaviour. Hours of operation for demolition will be designed to minimise impacts on adjoining uses and residential amenity. Suitable measures will be put in place to ensure the safe removal of any hazardous substances and to avoid contamination of adjoining sites. Construction working will be controlled by planning conditions relating to any future consent to redevelop the site.





Residential capacity, layout and form

A significant bat roost occupies the former Fisherton Manor School building and therefore a DEFRA licence must be obtained before demolition can commence. Once a licence is granted, demolition can take place at a time when the bats are not present. Management of these works will need to accord with the conditions imposed by the DEFRA Licence.

Mitigation for the loss of the bat roost must be provided. This will take the form of a specially constructed bat house which will provide an alternative roost. The precise location of the bat house is yet to be agreed but its current proposed position is indicated on the concept plan in Area C. This may be subject to revision following further discussions with Natural England.

Area A has capacity for approximately 52 to 68 dwellings in a mixture of flats and houses based on a residential density range of 35 to 45 dwellings per hectare.

The site has significant level changes which will affect the form and layout of development. A mixture of flats and houses would be appropriate, rising to a maximum of 3 storeys.

An element of affordable housing will be provided in line with Policy H25 of the Salisbury District Local Plan. It explains that the Council will seek an element of affordable housing on sites of 1 hectare or more in urban areas, or where more than 25 dwellings are to be provided.

The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG, Sept 2004) for affordable housing considers a minimum of 25% to be the basic requirement on such sites and explains that the Council may negotiate for proportions up to 40% on a site by site basis in order to meet affordable housing needs.

Access and parking

The main site access will be from Highbury Avenue, serving pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic. This should be located as shown on the plan and not be opened until the new Highbury Primary School is open on Area B.

A temporary access will also be provided from Highbury Avenue at the point shown on the concept plan. This will serve construction traffic until such time as the main access can be constructed and opened. This temporary access will also be designed to allow up to 25 dwellings to be occupied on the southern part of the site. The temporary access will be reduced to a 3 metre wide footpath/cycleway/emergency access, once the main access is in place.

A secondary pedestrian/cycle access will also be provided to Highbury Avenue in the position of the current emergency/maintenance access to Highbury Avenue. The existing pedestrian access from the north via Highfield Road should also be maintained.

The layout and detailed design of the new residential development in Area A should be designed following 'home zone' principles, to incorporate parking provision for residents to a level agreed with the planning and highways authorities and to minimise potential for parking by parents dropping off children on their way to the new school.





Pedestrian and cycle access to new school in Area B

Pedestrian and cycle access to the new school in Area B will be provided through Area A using the main site access, the dedicated pedestrian/cycle access to Highbury Avenue, and the pedestrian access to Highfield Road. The detailed layout of Area A should facilitate the provision of pedestrian/cycle access to the school from Highbury Avenue and Highfield Road via these points of access.

Routes should be designed to be direct, safe and secure for children and parents passing through this new residential area on their way to school.

These should include a separate pedestrian/cycle route from Highbury Avenue into the site.

Salisbury District Council is committed to upholding the highest quality of design in all aspects of development. It has produced a design guide, entitled 'Creating Places' (April 2006), which provides advice on design issues for all types of development. The document has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance and will subsequently be used as a material consideration in determining the suitability of any future development proposals.

**Area B:
Site for a new Highbury Primary School**

Area B is 1.77 hectares in size, and is currently used as a private playing field for Highbury School. Until its closure in July 2005, the playing field was also used by Fisherton Manor School. It is located within the Salisbury City Conservation Area.

There are significant functional advantages to having the new Highbury Primary School and its associated outdoor space located together, compared with the current situation where the school buildings are located separate from the playing field. Therefore the new school and its playing field will be located together on Area B.

Funds from the sale for residential development of the adjacent site (Area A) and another former school site in Salisbury (Pembroke Park) will contribute to the design and construction of the new school on Area B.

The new school will accommodate up to 9 classes (270 pupils). The building, outdoor play provision, and associated staff and visitor parking will occupy approximately 1.25 hectares.

The concept plan shows an indicative location for the building. The details of its position and layout will be agreed when a planning application is made.

Given that Area B lies within the Conservation Area, the design of the school building must be of a high quality which enhances the area.

Given the presence of bat roosts in some of the existing school buildings, the design of the new school building would make provision for bats. This would be in addition to the new bat house proposed in Area C.





The design of the new school would also explore the opportunity to harness and nurture all elements of ecological interest present on the site, for development in the school curriculum.

It is important that the school should provide a safe and secure environment. The eastern and southern perimeter of the site will therefore be provided with a secure boundary, with details to be agreed by the education authority, the school governors, and the district council. The school building and associated outdoor play areas will also be fenced off from the playing field, with gated access.

Busy Bees Nursery has expressed an interest in using part of the site to provide a pre-school. A location south of the new primary school has been identified as a possibility, as indicated on the concept plan, but its provision is subject to Busy Bees obtaining funding and planning permission.

The existing vegetation covering the steep slope to the northern side of Area B and in the north eastern corner should be retained as much as possible. Due to the existing condition of this vegetation, survey work will be required to determine any necessary surgery and management works.

Community use of playing field

The existing school playing field has historically had limited public access for occasional community use, although this is not currently the case. The development of a new school at the site offers the opportunity to formally establish controlled public access to provide a significant community benefit.

It is proposed that the new school playing field will include two junior-sized football pitches which will be available, by prior arrangement, for use out of school hours by local groups. This will be achieved through formal booking arrangements. There will be no access for dog walkers.

A hard court area suitable for netball or similar sports will also be available for community use under the same arrangements.

Access and parking

Vehicular access for staff and authorised visitors will be strictly controlled and will be via either Area E or Area A, as indicated on the concept plan. The preference will be for access from Wilton Road via Area E, although this must be subject to agreement with the Highways Agency. If agreement is not possible then access will be via Area A.

Under either option, staff and visitor parking will be provided for up to 20 vehicles, with a turning area for delivery vehicles. Visitors and delivery vehicles will have access by prior arrangement only.

Should access be achievable via Area E, a gate at the site boundary will be operated by an electronic card or similar method, to prevent unauthorised access. The gate must be of a type that will provide a solid physical barrier to pedestrians, who will not be able to use this gate to access the school.





Area C: Woodland to be retained

The existing maintenance access will be retained, and will also serve as an emergency access to the school site.

All pedestrian/cycle access will be via Area A along direct, safe and secure routes to be provided as part of the new residential development.

Temporary construction access will be provided from Highbury Avenue via Area A, using the temporary access indicated on the concept plan.

Area C is 0.29 hectares in size and comprises existing woodland within the boundary of the Highbury and Fisherton Manor Schools site. It lies within the Conservation Area and has some mature trees with nature conservation value.

A bat house is proposed for construction in this area as mitigation for the loss of bat roosts in the roofspace of buildings to be demolished in area A. The proposal is subject to ongoing consultation with Natural England regarding its size and most appropriate location on the school site. The current approximate position of the proposed building is indicated on the concept plan but this may be subject to change following these discussions.

The future management of this woodland area will be considered in conjunction with future residential development at the Old Manor Hospital (Area F).

The overriding aim will be to conserve the woodland environment but there may be potential for public access linked to the residential development. Establishment as a community woodland might be considered. Due to its current condition, a survey will be required to determine any necessary surgery and management works.

Area C will be securely fenced off from Area B to ensure children are unable to gain unsupervised access to the Bat House. Supervised access for children may be permitted, provided that this has no adverse impact on bat roosting habits.

Area D: The Foyer

The Foyer (Orchard House) is an existing use which will be retained. Access to the Foyer will continue to be from Wilton Road, and this access will be improved following development proposals in Area E. The boundary between Area D and Area B will be securely fenced.





**Area E:
Salisbury Courts
of Justice**

Area E has full planning permission for a new Courts building. This includes an area currently used as car parking, old tennis courts, and a small part of the adjacent school playing field.

A further planning application is to be submitted to provide access to the rear of Montague House, which fronts Wilton Road, via a new access road to the north of the courts car park. Changes to car parking arrangements around the Old Manor Social Club (Area G) are also proposed.

The current permission includes a new access arrangement onto the A36 Wilton Road. This access will be shared with the Foyer (Area D) and the Social Club (Area G), and will also facilitate access to the Old Manor Hospital site (Area F).

Staff and authorised visitor and delivery access for the school (Area B) might also be provided through this area. This will be subject to Highways Agency agreement.

The boundary between Area E and Area B will be securely fenced.

**Area F:
Residential development
at the former Old Manor
Hospital**

Area F is allocated in the adopted Salisbury Local Plan for residential redevelopment (Policy H3). Development proposals should assess the potential to include public access to woodland at Area C.

Access to Area F will be provided via the new junction with the A36 Wilton Road being provided as part of the Courts development in Area E. A second access to Wilton Road may also be required.

**Area G:
The Old Manor
Social Club**

The Old Manor Social Club is an existing use which will be retained. However, there is potential for redevelopment for other uses should the social club find another home. Access will continue to be from Wilton Road, and this access will be improved following development proposals in Area E.

The boundary between Area G and Area B will be securely fenced.





CONCLUSION

This concept statement sets out proposals to ensure that the redevelopment of the Highbury and Fisherton Manor Schools site delivers a significant community benefit and integrates well with neighbouring sites.

In particular, the concept statement sets out proposals that will deliver a high quality new school, which would otherwise be difficult to fund. The proposals also provide new public access to a significant area of open space for sport and recreation, and an element of affordable housing for local people.

Provision is also made to help mitigate the effects of the proposals on protected species (bats).





CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any questions or would like to know more about the redevelopment of the Highbury and Fisherton Manor Schools site, please contact:

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