

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD  
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PANEL**

21 October 2020

Item: 4

<b>Application No.:</b>	20/01207/FULL
<b>Location:</b>	Land To The North of Cruchfield Manor Ascot Road Warfield Bracknell
<b>Proposal:</b>	Levelling of a field.
<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr And Mrs Brunander
<b>Agent:</b>	Mr Paul Dickinson
<b>Parish/Ward:</b>	Bray Parish/Bray

**If you have a question about this report, please contact:** Adam Jackson on 01628 796660 or at [adam.jackson@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:adam.jackson@rbwm.gov.uk)

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The application is for the levelling of a field off the A330. The proposals overall result in an increase in levels, however would not have a significant visual impact on the character of the area. In addition, the proposal would not impact on the openness of the Green Belt and is therefore considered appropriate as an engineering operation under paragraph 146 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.2 Details of tree protection fencing have been provided with the application. The creation of the temporary access requires the removal of 4 x elms along the boundary with the A330, however these trees are dead and replacement planting has been shown.
- 1.3 The site is largely of low ecological value and that the proposals are unlikely to affect protected species. There is a low risk that great crested newts and other amphibians could be affected during site clearance and as such a condition has been imposed to ensure site clearance is overseen by a suitably qualified ecologist.
- 1.4 The application site has potential to house archaeological assets, however Berkshire Archaeology are satisfied that archaeological mitigation can be achieved and can be secured by condition.
- 1.5 The proposal includes the creation of a new temporary access onto Ascot Road to facilitate HGV movements. Highways have confirmed they are happy with the temporary access subject to a condition which secures the finer details. The proposal will generate extra traffic along the A330 (0.7% increase in HGVs traffic levels), however this is not likely to have a severe impact on the local highway network.

**It is recommended the Panel grants planning permission with the conditions listed in Section 11 of this report.**

**2. REASON FOR PANEL DETERMINATION**

- The Council's Constitution does not give the Head of Planning delegated powers to determine the application in the way recommended; such decisions can only be made by the Panel.

**3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS**

- 3.1 The proposal is for the levelling of a field to the north of Cruchfield Manor, Ascot Road. The field has maximum dimensions of approximately 225m (length) and 200m (wide) and a site area of about 3.7 ha. The high point of the site is 70m AOD in the south east, falling to about 61m AOD in the northwest. Cruchfield Manor is a Grade II Listed Building, and the application site is within

the Green Belt. In addition, Berkshire Archaeology has advised that the site lies within an area of archaeological significance.

#### 4. KEY CONSTRAINTS

- i. Listed Building
- ii. Green Belt
- iii. Archaeological significance

#### 5. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL AND ANY RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 5.1 The application proposes the levelling of part of the field. The work involves raising the levels of the field as it gradually falls away towards the northwest corner to create a more level field. The final levels of the main altered part would retain a fall of about 2 metres gradually across the field from 69.50 AOD to 67.50 AOD. The remainder of the field would then continue to drop down close to existing levels at the site boundary. Areas of the field would be raised between 2.5 and 3.5m, although most of the level increases are well below this. The changes in levels are required as the land is used for the exercising of their own horses and ponies for private and recreational purposes. The new levels would create a better and safer surface for the exercising of the horses and ponies. The most significant changes in levels are to the middle of the field where existing levels are lower on average than around the site edges. The change in levels along the south west boundary for example, where the field is visible from the A330, are only minor.
- 5.2 There is no relevant planning history on this site.

#### 6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN

##### Adopted Royal Borough Local Plan (2003)

- 6.1 The main Development Plan policies applying to the site are:

Issue	Adopted Local Plan Policy
Design in keeping with character of the area	DG1
Acceptable impact on the Green Belt	GB1, GB2
Acceptable impact on heritage assets	LB2
Acceptable impact on archaeology	ARCH2
Acceptable impact on important trees	N6
Acceptable impact on highway safety	T5

These policies can be found at <https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/planning/planning-policy/adopted-local-plan>

#### 7. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

##### National Planning Policy Framework Sections (NPPF) (2019)

- Section 4 - Decision-making
- Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
- Section 13 - Protecting Green Belt land
- Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

##### Borough Local Plan: Submission Version

Issue	Local Plan Policy
Design in keeping with character of the area	SP2, SP3
Acceptable impact on the Green Belt	SP1, SP5
Acceptable impact on the historic environment	HE1
Acceptable impact on important trees	NR2
Sustainable Transport	IF2

### Borough Local Plan: Submission Version Proposed Changes (2019)

Issue	Local Plan Policy
Design in keeping with character of the area	QP1, QP3
Acceptable impact on the Green Belt	SP1, QP5
Acceptable impact on the historic environment	HE1
Acceptable impact on important trees	NR3
Sustainable transport	IF2

- 7.2 The NPPF sets out that decision-makers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to their stage of preparation. The Borough Local Plan Submission Document was published in June 2017. Public consultation ran from 30 June to 27 September 2017. Following this process, the Council prepared a report summarising the issues raised in the representations and setting out its response to them. This report, together with all the representations received during the representation period, the plan and its supporting documents was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in January 2018. The Submission Version of the Borough Local Plan does not form part of the statutory development plan for the Borough.

In December 2018, the examination process was paused to enable the Council to undertake additional work to address soundness issues raised by the Inspector. Following completion of that work, in October 2019 the Council approved a series of Proposed Changes to the BLPSV. Public consultation ran from 1 November to 15 December 2019. All representations received have been reviewed by the Council and the Proposed Changes have been submitted to the Inspector. In October the Inspector will resume the Examination of the BLPSV. The BLPSV and the BLPSV together with the Proposed Changes are therefore material considerations for decision-making. However, given the above both should be given limited weight.

- 7.3 These documents can be found at:  
<https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/planning/planning-policy/emerging-plans-and-policies>

## 8. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

### Consultees

Consultee	Comment	Where in the report this is considered
Conservation	No objections subject to compliance with the conditions suggested by Berkshire Archaeology. Asked for assurances that the 'haha' is retained unaltered.	See paragraph 9.3
Lead Local Flood Authority	Satisfied that all issues have been addressed and recommends that planning permission is granted.	Noted.
Berkshire Archaeology	Recommends that a condition is imposed securing a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation.	See paragraph 9.9
Trees	Recommends approval subject to conditions securing tree protection details and replacement planting for the trees being removed to make way for the temporary access.	Noted. These details have now been provided up front. See

		paragraph 9.6
Ecology	No objections subject to conditions relating to site clearance and biodiversity enhancements.	See paragraphs 9.7 and 9.8
Highways	Recommends conditions requiring the submission of a construction management plan, access details and details of any gates.	See paragraphs 9.10 and 9.11
Parish Council	There is no mention of the contaminated land of the ancient woodland. It is estimated that the 45,000m <sup>2</sup> of material will need to be imported and that this equates to 5,000 lorry loads over a six-month period (50 per day). This will not have a minor impact and does not consider the weight limit on the Ascot Road.	The site is outside of the area of contaminated land. Part of the site is just within the 500m buffer for ancient woodland, however the Tree Officer has raised no concerns in this regard.

## 9. EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION

9.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- i The impact on the character of the area/heritage assets
- ii The impact on the Green Belt
- iii The impact on trees and biodiversity
- iv The impact on archaeology
- v The impact on highway safety

### **The impact on the character of the area/heritage assets**

9.2 The application site is located within the Green Belt and is rural in character. Several open fields surround the application site, and opposite to the west is Bird Hills Golf Centre. The existing field and surrounding topography generally reduce in level from south east to north west. The maximum level increases are approximately 3.5m around the pond to the northwest of the field, however within most parts of the field, the level changes are much lower. The levels across the site would gradually reduce across the site from south east. The most significant changes in levels are within the centre of the field and around the existing pond away from public vantage points. Along the site boundaries levels drop away so that they are as close to their existing level as possible. Along the east boundary, level increases will be limited to around 1m, and along the south west boundary, where the site would be visible from the A330, and the north west boundary the level increases are only minor, and levels are very close to their existing levels. It is considered that the level changes would have only a moderate impact on the appearance of the site and the surrounding character and current topography (a reduction in level from southeast to northwest) would be respected.

9.3 The site is adjacent to Cruchfield Manor, which is a Grade II Listed building. Cross-sections have now been provided and the Conservation Officer is happy with the impact on the setting of the listed building. The listed building would remain at the highest point of the site, with the ground slowly sloping away. A plan has also been submitted which demonstrates that the 'haha' to the rear of the Listed Building, which is an important part of the history and of the garden, will not be impacted.

### **The impact on the Green Belt**

- 9.4 The application site is in the Green Belt. Paragraph 146 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that engineering operations are not inappropriate development provided they preserve openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. Whilst the application makes changes to and raises the overall ground levels of the site, and therefore has a spatial impact on the openness of the Green Belt, the proposal includes no buildings or structures, and when the works are complete the site would continue to appear as an open field. There would therefore be no visual impact on the openness of the Green Belt, and this mitigates for any minor spatial impact the proposals cause. Overall, the proposal would preserve the openness of the Green Belt.
- 9.5 Paragraph 134 of the NPPF sets out that the Green Belt serves the following 5 purposes:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
  - To prevent neighbouring town merging into one another;
  - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
  - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
  - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

The proposed development does not conflict with the above purposes.

### **The impact on trees and biodiversity**

- 9.6 There are a number of trees across the site which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. A tree protection plan has been submitted with the application showing fencing to be erected during the works. This has been conditioned to ensure the plan is adhered to and that there is no harm to or loss of on-site trees. A further condition has also been imposed requiring replacement planting to be provided should any trees shown to be retained be removed or damaged, and in place of the 4 x elm trees to be removed to facilitate the temporary access.
- 9.7 The submitted ecology report (AA Environmental, March 2020) has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and concludes that the site is largely of low ecological value and that the proposals are unlikely to affect protected species. The report does concede that there is a low risk that great crested newts and other amphibians could be affected during site clearance and as such recommends that site clearance works be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist. This advice has been incorporated into a condition to ensure there is no harm to protected species.
- 9.8 There are opportunities to enhance the site for wildlife through new landscaping in accordance with paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states that opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged. A condition has been added to ensure the biodiversity enhancements set out in the ecology survey are implemented.

### **The impact on archaeology**

- 9.9 The archaeological desk-based assessment identified several potential heritage assets that lie within the development area, including a potential round barrow in the south west part of the site. In response to this and the potential harm to archaeological assets, the applicant has produced an updated scheme that removes and protects the round barrow from the development area and has also commissioned a geophysical survey. The results of the geophysical survey are broadly negative for archaeological anomalies, however it did not pick up the potential round barrow feature. Despite this, the geophysical survey does indicate a reduced potential for large significant archaeology and as such Berkshire Archaeology are satisfied that further archaeological mitigation can be achieved and can be secured by condition.

### **The impact on highway safety**

- 9.10 The site is accessed via the A330, Ascot Road and is approximately 150 metres to the east of the junction with to the A330, Ascot Road and the A3095, Maidenhead Road. The proposal includes the creation of a new temporary access onto Ascot Road to facilitate HGV movements. Highways have confirmed they are happy with the temporary access subject to a condition which secures the finer details.
- 9.11 According to the Transport Statement, the importation phase will involve the transportation of 45,000m<sup>3</sup> of material to the site. This equates to approximately 5000 lorry loads over a 6-month period, and the developer expects a maximum of 50 lorry loads per day. Annual average daily traffic flows (AADF) on the A330 to the north of the site were 13,797 vehicles for the year of 2018, with HGVs representing 1.4% of all motor vehicles (191 vehicles). The addition of 100 HGV movements (50 vehicles, 2-way movements) per day will increase the proportion of HGVs to 2.1% of the AADF. Although the proposal will generate extra traffic along the A330, a 0.7% increase in HGVs traffic levels is not likely to have a severe impact on the local highway network. Paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework sets out that development should only be refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or if the cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

## **Conclusion**

- 9.12 The proposed development is considered to have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area and on heritage assets. The Conservation Officer is satisfied that the setting of the Listed Building on site would not be harmed, nor would the 'haha', which is an important historical feature within the garden. The proposal complies with paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework and policy LB2 of the Local Plan.
- 9.13 The development is considered appropriate development in the Green Belt as it constitutes an engineering operation and would not have a greater impact on openness. The development therefore complies with paragraph 146 of the National Planning Policy Framework and policies GB1 and GB2 of the Local Plan.
- 9.14 Impacts upon trees are minimal and be addressed via condition, and any potential impacts on biodiversity and archaeology can also be avoided through conditions. The proposal complies with paragraphs 170, 174 and 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework and policy N6 of the Local Plan.
- 9.15 Highways impacts are not considered to be severe and as such the proposal would comply with paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Additional HGV movements would not be material given the current road usage. Conditions have been suggested to secure a suitable construction management plan and details of the temporary access so as to cause as little disruption as possible.

## **10. APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT**

- Appendix A - Site location plan and site layout

## **11. CONDITIONS RECOMMENDED FOR INCLUSION IF PERMISSION IS GRANTED**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within three years from the date of this permission.  
Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 2 Prior to the commencement of any works a construction management plan showing details of the construction traffic haul route, details of wheel washing facilities, and details of how facilities for operatives and vehicle parking and manoeuvring will be accommodated during the works period shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall be

implemented as approved and maintained for the duration of the works or as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the free flow of traffic. Relevant Policies - Local Plan T5.

3 Any gates provided shall open away from the highway and be set back a distance of at least 11.5 metres from the nearside edge of the carriageway of the adjoining highway.

Reason: To ensure that vehicles can be driven off the highway before the gates are opened, in the interests of highway safety. Relevant Policies - Local Plan T5

4 No other part of the development shall commence until the access has been constructed in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The access shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the free flow of traffic. Relevant Policies - Local Plan T5, DG1.

5 The temporary access be stopped up and abandoned immediately upon the completion of the development. The footways and verge shall be reinstated before the development is first occupied in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and of the amenities of the area. Relevant Policies - Local Plan T5, DG1.

6 The erection of fencing for the protection of any retained tree and any other protection specified shall be undertaken in accordance with the details set out on the Tree Protection Plan - revision B and in the 'Arboricultural Implication Study and Tree Protection Strategy' and 'Arboricultural and Planning Integration Report' documents. Tree protection measures shall be implemented before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought on to the site, and thereafter maintained until the completion of all construction work and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been permanently removed from the site. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made, without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect trees which contribute to the visual amenities of the site and surrounding area. Relevant Policies - Local Plan DG1, N6.

7 No tree or hedgerow shown to be retained in the approved plans shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree be lopped or topped other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars or until five years from the date of occupation of the building for its permitted use. Any topping or lopping approved shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998 Tree work. If any retained tree is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree shall be planted in the immediate vicinity and that tree shall be of the same size and species unless the Local Planning Authority give its prior written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area. Relevant Policies - Local Plan DG1, N6.

8 Replacement planting shall be provided in accordance with the details set out on the Tree Protection Plan - Revision B following the stopping up of the temporary access.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory landscaping of the site in the interests of visual amenity. Relevant Policies - Local Plan DG1.

9 Site clearance is to be carried-out under the supervision of a qualified ecologist who will check features such as compost heaps, log piles, and piles of debris for reptiles and other wildlife. If reptiles or other protected or priority species are found, destructive work must cease immediately and a method statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before site clearance re-commences. In order to discharge this condition, a brief closing-out report detailing the methods implemented and whether any reptiles or other wildlife were found shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing within one month of completion of site clearance works.

Reason: To ensure that wildlife is not adversely affected by the proposed development.

10 The development is to incorporate the biodiversity enhancements detailed in figure 3 of the ecology survey report (AA Environmental - dated March 2020 - job no: 193406) unless otherwise agreed in writing by the council. A brief letter report confirming that the biodiversity enhancements have been installed, including their specifications, a simple plan showing their locations, and photographs of the enhancements in situ, is to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council within 1 month of the completion of works on site.

Reason: To incorporate biodiversity in and around developments in accordance with paragraph 175 of the NPPF.

- 11 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details set out in the Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy dated 4th December 2019 and in the amended covering letter dated 14th August 2020.  
Reason: To reduce the flood risk posed by surface water run-off.
- 12 No development shall take place/commence until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:
1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
  2. The programme for post investigation assessment
  3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
  4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
  5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
  6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.

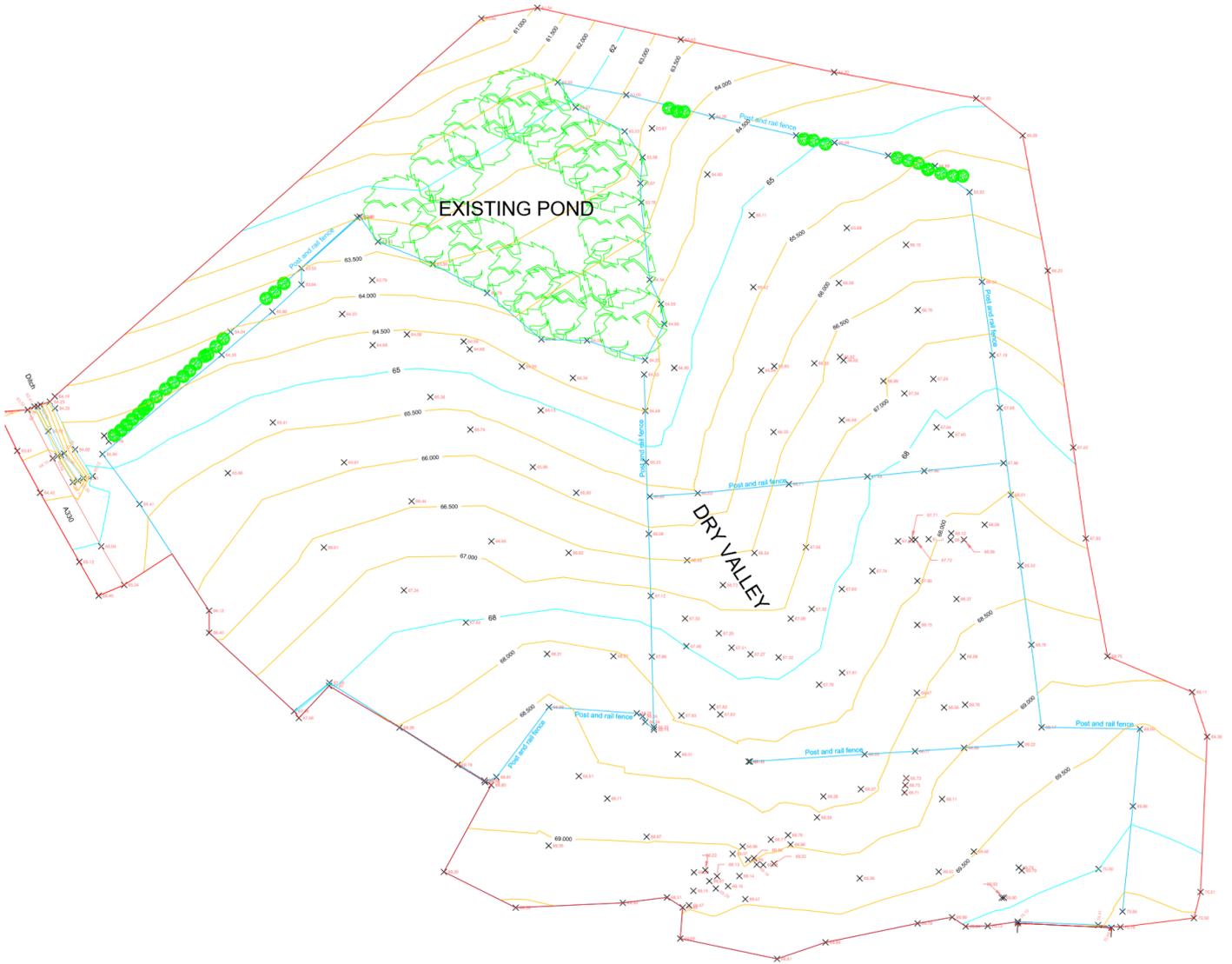
The development shall take place in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation, and the development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, particularly for, but not limited to, Prehistoric and Medieval remains. The potential impacts of the development can be mitigated through a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with national and local plan policy.

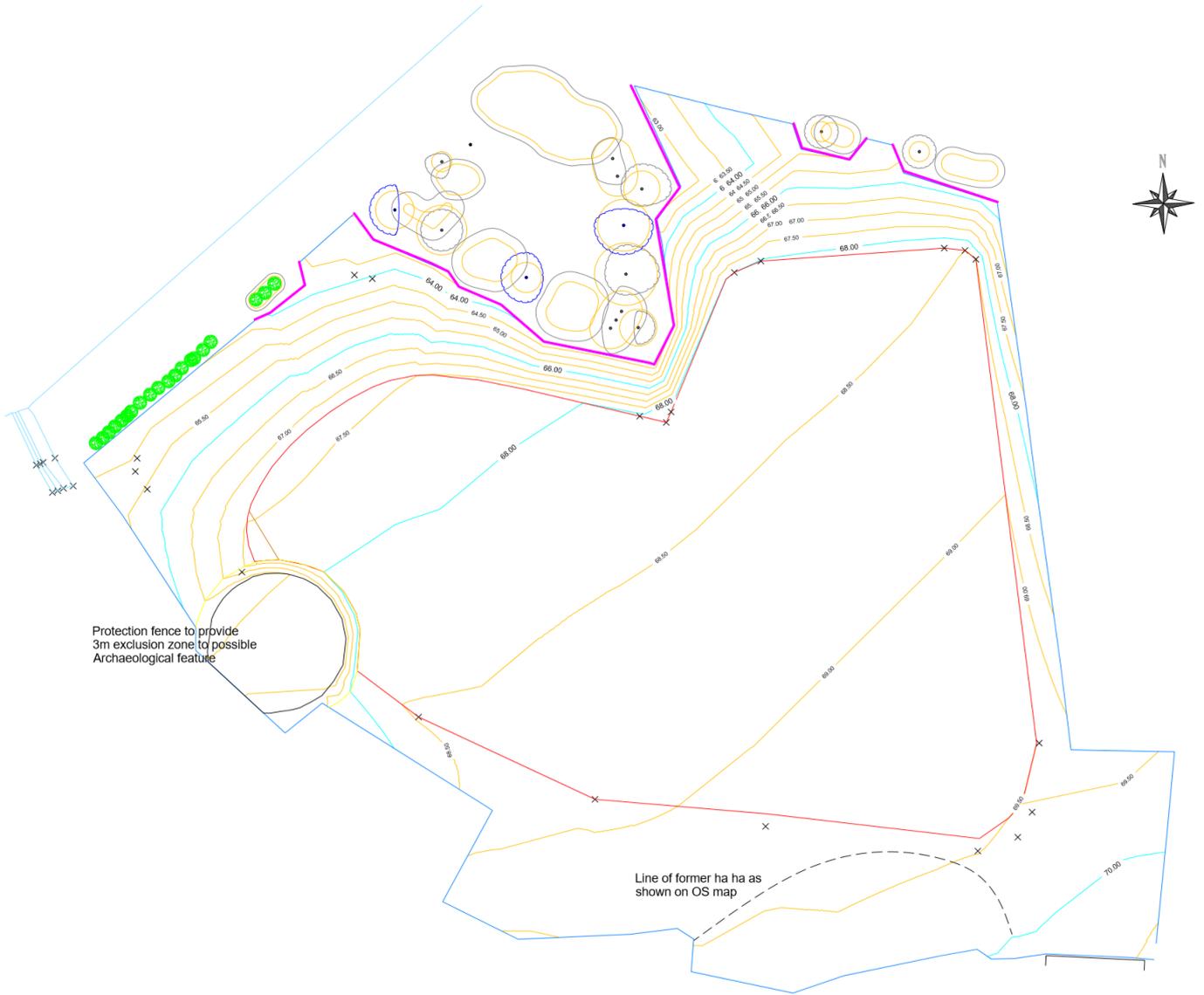
- 13 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed below.  
Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved particulars and plans.



# Existing levels



# Proposed levels



# Proposed levels

ALIGNMENT - (3) - LONGSECTION  
SCALE: H 1:1000,V 1:1000. DATUM: 60.000

Chainage	Existing Levels	Proposed Levels	Level Difference	Horizontal Geometry
00.000	63.178			L=290.588
10.000	63.882			
20.000	64.213			
30.000	64.607	65.169	0.562	
40.000	65.036	65.178	1.178	
50.000	65.316	67.306	1.989	
60.000	65.595	67.576	1.984	
70.000	65.886	67.759	1.873	
80.000	66.158	67.529	1.371	
90.000	66.379	68.077	1.698	
100.000	66.529	68.157	1.627	
110.000	66.589	68.291	1.602	
120.000	66.701	68.412	1.712	
130.000	66.853	68.506	1.653	
140.000	67.207	68.558	1.351	
150.000	67.390	68.681	1.291	
160.000	67.395	68.773	1.378	
170.000	67.462	68.877	1.415	
180.000	67.563	68.983	1.419	
190.000	67.890	69.008	1.208	
200.000	68.054	69.183	1.129	
210.000	68.330	69.263	0.934	
220.000	68.738	69.344	0.606	
230.000	69.089	69.418	0.328	
240.000	69.334	69.425	0.141	
250.000	69.552	69.602	0.099	
260.000	69.815	69.919	0.104	
270.000	70.014	70.147	0.133	
280.000	70.418	70.447	0.029	
290.588	70.704			
300.000	70.886			

