



Rochford Parish Council

Members of the General Purposes Committee are summoned to attend a meeting to be held at the Parish Rooms on **Wednesday, 10th June 2026 at 7.30 pm**

The Agenda is set out overleaf.

Other Councillors are welcome to attend this meeting if they wish to do so.

If there are any items on the Agenda for which members will require further information, please notify the Clerk by 1pm on the preceding working day to enable it to be ready for the meeting.

Emma Ferris

Emma Ferris
Clerk to the Council

Membership for 2026/27:

Councillors Arthur Williams, Rodd Hubbard, Gunella Edwards, Graham Whitehead, James Edmunds, Denise Crosbie, Linda Thomas and Errol Huston-Bailey

Terms of Reference for General Purposes Committee:

1. To work within delegated powers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 101) within the delegated budget to provide and manage the following Services:
2. Management of the Allotments
3. Management of Rochford Lawn Cemetery
4. Street Furniture
5. Doggetts Wildlife Area
6. Highways Matters
7. Town Clock
8. War Memorial
9. Management of Back Lane Public Toilets
10. To submit regular budgetary reports to the Finance Committee
11. To consider other initiatives which would benefit the Community of Rochford.
12. To recommend an annual budget to Full Council
13. To deal with any further matters which Full Council may delegate from time to time.
14. To consider any planning applications received where required

Agenda

1. To appoint a Chair for the year 2026 – 2027
2. To appoint a Vice-Chair for the year 2026 – 2027
3. To receive apologies for absence.
4. To receive any Declaration of Interests
5. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on **Wednesday, 29th April 2026** as a true record of that meeting.
6. Allotments
 - a) To receive a verbal report covering
 1. Waiting Lists
 2. Vacant Plots
 3. Maintenance of allotment site
 - b) To meet chair of Rochford Allotments and Leisure Gardeners Association.
 - c) To discuss security concerns at the Rocheway Allotment site.
 - d) To discuss if inspection dates should be published in advance.
 - e) To decide if a bouncy castle can be erected for the summer fete.
7. Rochford Lawn Cemetery
 - a) To receive a verbal update including
 - Number of burials
 - Maintenance of Cemetery
 - Complaints
8. Doggetts Wildlife Area
 - a) To receive information on licensee meeting with Clerk.
 - b) To discuss site visit that took place on the 26th of May 2026.
 - c) To discuss replacement/ restoration of display boards
9. Defibrillator
 - a) To receive a verbal update on the return of the defibrillator at the parish rooms.
 - b) To receive a verbal update on the defibrillator at Rochford Lawn Cemetery
10. Tree Survey
 - a) To receive a copy of the specification that is to be sent to contractors to apply to quote for surveying every tree on parish land.
11. Back Lane Public Toilets
 - a) To receive a verbal update and a draft copy of the business case for the parish to receive an asset transfer of the Public Toilets in Back Lane and discuss alterations to be made.

12. Planning Applications

Planning Reference	Applicant	Location	Description
26/00176/FUL	Christine Ellis	Unit 2 TAH House, Aviation Way	Change of use from Class B8 (storage) to Class E(d) Indoor sport, recreation or fitness. Not involving motorised vehicles or firearms or use a swimming pool or skating rink
26/00368/FUL	Geoff Horwood	Outbuilding at Honeypots, Gusted Hall Lane	Demolish existing bungalow on site and sub-divide plot to construct a 3 bed self-build detached chalet bungalow with parking.
26/00350/FUL	Greenhill	14 College Gardens	Variation of Conditions No.2 of Application Reference number; 25/00903/FUL Date of decision: 13/03/2026; Revise the drawings approved to included 25-042-100 A proposed plans The proposed scheme approved included a pitched roof to the side extension at 1 st Floor. This has been amended to now be a flat roof to match existing



**Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee
Held on Wednesday, 15th April 2026
at The Parish Rooms, Rochford at 7.30 pm**

In Attendance: Leona Bryceland, James Faulkner

Councillors: Denise Crosbie
James Edmunds
Gunilla Edwards
Daniel Efde (Chair)
Rodd Hubbard
Linda Thomas
Myra Weir
Graham Whitehead
Arthur Williams

Clerk: Emma Terris

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- 65/25 To receive apologies for absence**
53/25.1 Apologies received for Cllr Edwards, Hanser, Hubbard & Weir
- 66/25 To receive any Declarations of Interests**
66/25.1 Cllr Efde & Cllr Williams declared an interest in Rochford District Council
66/25.2 Cllr Thomas declared an interest in in the allotments as a tenant.
66/25.3 Cllr Edmunds declared an interest in NRG Landscaping.
- 67/25 To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th March 2026 as a true record of the meeting.**
67/25.1 The minutes of the last meeting were **agreed** as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.
- 68/25 Allotments**
68/25.1 A verbal report of the waiting list and outstanding plots was received.

68/25.2 A request was received to allow Gardners to maintain people's plots. Cllr Williams proposed that Gardeners be allowed to maintain people's plots. Cllr Edmunds seconded this proposal. A vote was held and was **agreed** unanimously

69/25 Rochford Lawn Cemetery

- 69/25.1 A written report was received on the number of burials and cremated ashes were received.
- 69/25.2 A verbal report on the maintenance of the cemetery was received.
- 69/25.3 Feedback from training provided by Councilwise in collaboration with the Institute of Cemetery and Cremation Management was received.
- 69/25.4 It was unanimously agreed for signs to be placed at the allotments instructing dogs to be always kept on a lead.
- 69/25.5 It was proposed by Graham Whitehead that committee accept Arbescape Tree and Ground quote for £650. A vote was held and with 9 in favour and 2 abstaining the proposal was **agreed**.

70/25 Doggetts Wildlife Area

70/25.1 A committee visit will be arranged for councillors to visit the site to investigate works that have reported to be done.

71/25 Planning Matters

71.25.1 The following planning applications were received and considered:

26/00213/FUL: Council Offices 15 South Street
Erection of new brick boundary wall and fence at land to rear of nos. 15 & 17 South Street.

Comment: Members would like to object due to the conservation area that the wall would be in.

26/00231/FUL: The Milestone, Union Lane
Proposed change of use from commercial public house with managers flat to 5 self-contained flats and alterations to 2 windows/door

Comment: Members would like to object due to the conservation area and the lack of commercial units in the area.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.52 pm

Tree Condition and Risk Assessment Survey Specification for Rochford Parish Council



Date:

Issued by: Rochford Parish Council, The Parish Rooms, West Street, Rochford, Essex SS4 1AS

Contact: clerk@rochfordparishcouncil.gov.uk | 01702 54072

1. Introduction and Background

Rochford Parish Council wishes to commission a comprehensive tree condition survey and risk assessment for all trees on its land. This will cover the following sites:

- Rocheway Allotments (between Rocheway and Stambridge Road, Rochford)
- Rochford Lawn Cemetery
- Doggetts Wildlife Area (including the fishery lakes and surrounding land).

The survey will provide a professional inventory, condition assessment, and prioritised risk-based management recommendations. This supports the Council's duty of care under the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957/1984 and aligns with National Tree Safety Group guidance on proportionate risk management.

2. Objectives

- Create a complete, auditable record of all trees (or tree groups in dense areas) on the sites.
- Assess tree condition, defects, and risk to people, property, and users of the sites.
- Provide clear, prioritised recommendations for management works.
- Support ongoing maintenance, biodiversity, and public safety.
- Deliver data in an accessible digital format for future reference and updates.

3. Scope of Works

The consultant shall survey every individual tree (or logical groups where appropriate in dense woodland/scrub areas at Doggetts). Minimum requirements include:

Data to be Recorded for Each Tree / Group

- Unique reference number and GPS location (or accurate mapped position).
- Species (common and scientific name).
- Approximate age class (young, semi-mature, mature, veteran, etc.).
- Height (m) and diameter at breast height (DBH in cm).
- Physiological and structural condition (e.g., good, fair, poor, declining).
- Notable defects (decay, cracks, lean, root issues, deadwood, etc.).

- Risk assessment (likelihood of failure × consequence rating, using a recognised system such as the ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualification or equivalent).
- Management recommendations (e.g., no action, monitor, prune, fell, further investigation) with timescales (immediate, 6 months, 12 months, etc.).
- Biodiversity / wildlife features (e.g., potential bat roost, nesting sites, veteran characteristics) – especially important at Doggetts Wildlife Area.
- Any immediate safety hazards.

Additional Requirements

- Scaled plans or GIS maps showing tree locations with reference numbers.
- Photographic record of notable or defective trees.
- Separate sections or reports for each site if requested.
- Consideration of site sensitivities: public access (cemetery & allotments), ecological value (Doggetts as a Local Wildlife Site with ponds and habitats), and users (anglers, walkers, plot holders, visitors).

The survey must be non-invasive and cause minimal disturbance.

4. Consultant Qualifications and Standards

- The lead surveyor(s) must be a qualified arboriculturist (e.g., Arboricultural Association Registered or equivalent, with relevant certifications such as LANTRA Professional Tree Inspection or ISA TRAQ).
- Public liability insurance of at least £5 million.
- Demonstrable experience in surveying similar public sites (cemeteries, allotments, wildlife areas) for UK local authorities or parish councils.
- Work carried out in accordance with British Standard BS 5837:2012 (Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – though primarily condition survey) and current industry best practice (e.g., National Tree Safety Group).

5. Deliverables

1. Digital database/spreadsheet containing all tree data.
2. Comprehensive illustrated report with executive summary, site-specific findings, prioritised works schedule, and risk ratings.
3. Scaled location plans (PDF and, if possible, editable GIS format).
4. Risk assessment methodology explanation.
5. Any urgent safety recommendations issued immediately upon discovery.

All data and reports become the property of Rochford Parish Council.

6. Programme

- Site access arrangements to be agreed.
- Full survey completion and draft report within 6–8 weeks of instruction.

- Final report within 2 weeks of draft feedback.

7. Tender Requirements

Please provide:

- Fixed price quotation.
- Method statement and programme.
- CVs/qualifications of personnel.
- Two recent references from similar parish/town council work.
- Confirmation of insurance and health & safety procedures.

8. Evaluation Criteria

- Relevant experience and qualifications (30%).
- Quality and appropriateness of methodology (30%).
- Price (30%).
- Understanding of council needs and site sensitivities (10%).

9. Further Information

Maps and site boundaries can be provided upon request. Contractors must comply with all health & safety requirements and have appropriate risk assessments for working in a cemetery, active allotment site, and wildlife area (including proximity to water).

Closing date for quotations:



ROCHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Business and Project Management Toolkit

Business Case

Community Asset Transfer of Back Lane Public Toilets from Rochford District Council to Rochford Parish Council

Title of business case	Community Asset Transfer – Back Lane Public Toilets, Rochford	
Author of business case	Parish Clerk – Emma Terris	
Sponsor of business case	Rochford Parish Council	
Sub-board / Committee	Full Council / Finance & General Purposes Committee	
Approvals	Head of Service / Relevant Officer (RDC liaison)	(x - Date)
	Parish Council Resolution	(x - Date of resolution)
CAT Reference	Stage 3 Community Asset Transfer (following RDC Committee 17 March 2026)	
Date of business case	02/06/2026	

Revision History

Version	Revision Date	Status	Summary of changes	Author
1.0	02/06/2026	Draft	Initial issue to support CAT Stage 3 application and Parish Council consideration	Emma Terris

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1. Executive Summary

This business case supports Rochford Parish Council's application for the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of the Back Lane Public Toilets from Rochford District Council. The facility is already successfully managed on a day-to-day basis by the Parish Council, with established opening hours and operational procedures in place.

On 17 March 2026, Rochford District Council's Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee formally resolved (R5) that the asset be declared surplus to enable the CAT application to proceed to Stage 3 of the process. This represents a significant step towards securing long-term local ownership.

The Back Lane toilets are a vital central amenity in Rochford town centre. They were fully refurbished in 2017 by Rochford District Council at a cost of approximately £111,000 and serve residents, visitors, shoppers, users of the adjacent Back Lane Car Park, Citizens Advice Bureau, and other local services. The facility is among the most well-used in the district.

Key drivers for transfer:

- District Council policy of devolving discretionary services such as public toilets to town and parish councils (evidenced by successful transfers/leases to Hockley, Rayleigh, Hullbridge and others).
- Secure tenure and control for the Parish Council, removing reliance on time-limited management agreements or leases.
- Synergies with the parallel CAT of the adjacent Back Lane Car Park to the same Parish Council – opportunities for shared staffing, contracts, security and coordinated management.
- Greater local accountability and responsiveness to community needs through elected Parish Councillors.
- Protection of the facility from potential future budget pressures or policy changes at District level.
- Ability to plan proactively for maintenance, minor enhancements and long-term sustainability funded through the local precept.

The transfer is expected to be at nominal consideration (peppercorn or £1) with appropriate due diligence, condition survey and negotiation of any transitional support or dowry to cover known liabilities. No significant commercial re-purposing is proposed; the primary use remains as high-quality public conveniences.

This business case sets out the objectives, justification, benefits, costs, risks, timescales and appraisal to enable informed decision-making by both the Parish Council and Rochford District Council.

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Objectives and Deliverables

Ref	Objective	Deliverable(s)	Measure / Corporate Objective	Baseline	Target
1	Complete successful Community Asset Transfer to secure full ownership or long-term (99-year) leasehold of Back Lane Public Toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal transfer documentation completed • Asset added to Parish Council asset register • Insurance and maintenance responsibilities transferred • Due diligence and condition survey completed 	Secure long-term tenure for key community asset Alignment with RDC CAT policy and Parish Council strategic priorities	Agreement for Lease dated 19 October 2017 (no formal Lease completed). Term: 10 years from 19 October 2017 (expires 18 October 2027). Peppercorn rent. Contracted out of LTA 1954 (no security of tenure).	Full ownership or 99-year lease completed by end 2026 / early 2027
2	Maintain and enhance high-quality, accessible public toilet provision in central Rochford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued operation to at least current standards • Published opening hours maintained or improved • Regular cleaning, maintenance and inspection regime • User feedback mechanisms in place 	User satisfaction / reduction in complaints Accessibility compliance Footfall / usage data (if collected)	Approximately 4–6 complaints received per annum. Usage is high, particularly on Tuesdays when market traders depend on the facility as the primary public toilet in the town centre. Accessibility features include a disabled toilet fitted with handrails	Zero or minimal justified complaints Full accessibility maintained Positive resident feedback in annual survey
3	Achieve financial and operational sustainability with local accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual budget and maintenance plan approved by Parish Council • Efficient local procurement of cleaning/maintenance contracts • Building of prudent reserve for future capital works • Integration with Back Lane Car Park management where beneficial 	Net cost to Parish Council (precept funded) Response times for repairs Value for money benchmarks	Total annual operating costs under the existing arrangement were £16,111 in the last financial year. This figure includes cleaning contracts, utility charges (water & electricity), building insurance, and minor reactive repairs.	Stable or reduced net operating cost through efficiencies and shared services Transparent local reporting

2. Business Justification

There has been a clear strategic direction from Rochford District Council over recent years to devolve responsibility for public toilet provision to town and parish councils. This approach recognises that local councils are best placed to manage these discretionary but highly valued community facilities, with greater flexibility to raise funding through the precept and more direct accountability to local residents.

In 2017, Rochford District Council invested significantly in modernising several toilet blocks across the district, including a full refurbishment of the Back Lane facility in Rochford at a cost of approximately £111,000. This investment brought the toilets up to a good modern standard with improved accessibility and facilities. Following this, operational management responsibility for Back Lane (and several other sites) was passed to the relevant parish/town councils. Rochford Parish Council has successfully managed the Back Lane toilets since that time, publishing clear opening hours and handling day-to-day operations, including temporary closures for maintenance (e.g. 15-19 July 2024).

The current situation is one of operational management by the Parish Council without full ownership or long-term security of tenure. The ongoing Community Asset Transfer process, culminating in the District Council's March 2026 committee decision to declare the asset surplus and progress to Stage 3, provides the opportunity to complete the transfer to full local control.

Key justification points:

- **Proven track record:** The Parish Council already manages the facility effectively. Transferring ownership formalises and secures this arrangement.
- **Precedent and policy alignment:** Multiple other toilet assets in the district have been successfully transferred or leased long-term to parish/town councils (e.g. Hockley Parish Council signed a 10-year lease; Rayleigh and Hullbridge arrangements). Back Lane is a logical next step in this established programme.
- **Strategic location and usage:** Back Lane is a prominent, central, year-round facility serving a wide catchment including town centre users, car park users, nearby businesses and community services (Citizens Advice Bureau is located in Back Lane). It is one of the higher-usage blocks in the district.
- **Financial sustainability for District Council:** Transfer removes ongoing revenue and capital liabilities from the District (cleaning, utilities, maintenance, insurance, future major works). Similar transfers have removed significant annual costs from District budgets (e.g. ~£20,000 p.a. impact noted for Rayleigh arrangements).
- **Local accountability and responsiveness:** Parish Councillors are directly elected by Rochford residents and can respond more quickly to local feedback on cleanliness, opening hours, accessibility or anti-social behaviour issues. Decisions about the facility can be made in the context of other local priorities and assets.
- **Risk mitigation for the community:** Without secure local ownership, there remains a theoretical risk that future District budget pressures could lead to reduced support or even closure proposals. Full transfer locks in the facility as a community asset under local democratic control.
- **Environmental and efficiency opportunities:** As owner, the Parish Council can plan and fund phased upgrades to more water-efficient fittings, LED lighting, better insulation or smart controls, delivering long-term cost and environmental benefits (aligned with climate goals).

The combination of the 2017 capital investment, successful operational handover, established CAT policy, recent committee decision declaring the asset surplus, and clear community benefit makes a compelling case for completing the transfer now.

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3. Benefits

The following benefits will be realised through successful completion of the asset transfer:

Objective Ref	Benefit	Measure	Baseline performance	Target performance	Owner / Date
1, 2	Secure long-term community ownership and protection of a key town centre facility	Tenure secured; asset on Parish register; no ongoing lease uncertainty	The Parish Council currently occupies the property under an Agreement for Lease dated 19 October 2017 between Rochford District Council and Rochford Parish Council. No formal Lease was subsequently completed. The arrangement is for a 10-year term (expiring 18 October 2027) at peppercorn rent and is contracted out of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 (no security of tenure)	Full ownership or 99-year lease by early 2027	Parish Council / RDC Legal Q4 2026 – Q1 2027
2, 3	Improved local responsiveness and accountability for cleanliness, maintenance and opening hours	Number of complaints; resident survey satisfaction scores; speed of response to issues	Approximately 4–6 complaints per year (roughly one every 2–3 months).	Reduction in complaints; high satisfaction in local surveys; issues resolved within agreed SLA	Parish Clerk / General Purpose Committee Ongoing from transfer date
2	Enhanced community benefit and support for town centre vitality / accessibility	Usage levels (qualitative); feedback from users, businesses, CAB; support for events/visitors	High usage, especially on market days (Tuesdays), when traders depend on the facility as their main/only toilet provision in the town centre. It supports the functioning of the weekly market and town centre activity	Maintained or increased positive perception of Rochford as a welcoming town centre with good facilities	Parish Council Annual review
3	Financial sustainability and prudent long-term planning	Annual net cost; reserve fund balance; major works planned and funded	Current net cost to the Parish Council is £16,111 per annum (2025/26 actuals), covering cleaning, utilities, insurance and minor repairs under the existing arrangement.	Transparent precept-funded budget; reserve built for future capital needs; no unplanned calls on general reserves	Parish Council / RFO Annual budget cycle

3.1 Commercial / Income Benefits

The primary purpose of the asset is as a free public convenience. No significant commercial income is anticipated or proposed. Minor opportunities may exist in future for:

- Sponsorship or advertising panels (subject to planning/amenity considerations and community acceptance) – potential small income.
- Community or event-related use of any ancillary space (unlikely given size and primary function).
- Grant funding for specific enhancements (e.g. eco-upgrades, accessibility improvements, baby-changing upgrades).

Any income would be ring-fenced for the maintenance and improvement of the toilets or related community assets.

4. Costs and Resources

4.1 Costs / Funding and Resources

The Parish Council already bears the majority of day-to-day operating costs under the current management arrangement. The transfer primarily shifts ownership, long-term maintenance liability and strategic control. One-off costs associated with transfer are expected to be modest.

Cost Category	2026/27 (est.) £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	Annual Ongoing £	Source / Notes
Legal & conveyancing fees (transfer)	2,000 – 4,000	0	0	0	One-off; shared or negotiated with RDC
Condition / building survey & due diligence	1,500 – 3,000	0	0	0	One-off; essential for transfer
Asset valuation / registration (if required)	500 – 1,000	0	0	0	One-off
Transition / set-up (insurance, policies, signage)	1,000 – 2,000	0	0	0	One-off
Cleaning & hygiene supplies	8,000 – 9,000	(x)	(x)	(x) 8,000 – 12,000	Already funded by Parish; est. based on comparable sites
Utilities (water, electricity, sewerage)	2,000 – 3,000	(x)	(x)	(x) 2,000 – 4,000	Already funded; potential efficiency savings post-transfer
Insurance (buildings, public liability, etc.)	(x)	(x)	(x)	(x) 1,500 – 2,500	May change on ownership transfer
Minor repairs & maintenance (day-to-day)	1,000 – 2,000	(x)	(x)	(x) 2,000 – 5,000	Variable; proactive maintenance reduces major works
Business rates / NNDR (if applicable)	0	0	0	0	Confirm with RDC / Valuation Office
Total annual operating (est.)	17,000 – 24,000	(x)	(x)	(x) 14,000 – 25,000	Net cost to Parish precept; efficiencies targeted

Notes on costs:

- All (x) figures are estimates and must be refined with actual data from the current management provider, utility bills, insurance schedules and District Council finance team.
- The Parish Council already funds the ongoing cleaning and day-to-day costs. Transfer does not create a new large revenue burden but does bring future major repair/replacement liability (e.g. roof, drainage, full re-fit in 8-12+ years). A sinking fund/reserve should be established.
- Potential dowry or transitional support from RDC: To be negotiated as part of Stage 3 – e.g. contribution to reserve or specific known works. Precedent from other transfers should be reviewed.
- Funding source: Parish Council precept (with clear ring-fencing or budget line for toilets). Possible future grant applications for capital enhancements (e.g. Changing Places, eco features).

4.2 Investment Appraisal

The financial case is not primarily one of short-term payback or income generation. It is a strategic investment in community infrastructure and local control. The 2017 capital investment of £111k by the District has already modernised the facility; the Parish Council's role is to protect and sustain that investment over the long term (10–20+ years).

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Key appraisal points:

- Social and community value: High – central public convenience supporting town centre economy, accessibility, tourism and daily life for residents (including vulnerable groups).
- Risk transfer: District removes ongoing and future liabilities; Parish gains control and can plan.
- Long-term cost avoidance: Proactive local management and timely minor repairs reduce likelihood of expensive emergency works.
- Environmental return: Ownership enables planned upgrades to low-water, low-energy fittings – contributing to carbon reduction and lower running costs.
- Overall: The net cost is modest in the context of the Parish Council's overall budget and is fully justifiable given the essential nature of the service and the precedent of other successful transfers in the district.

4.3 VAT Implications

None identified at this stage. Public conveniences are generally non-business activities for VAT purposes. Professional advice to be sought during due diligence if any commercial elements are considered in future.

5. Timescales

Milestone	Target Date
Stage 3 CAT process commences / business case submitted to RDC	June / July 2026
Due diligence, condition survey, legal review	July – September 2026
Negotiation of transfer terms (consideration, dowry, covenants, any ongoing support)	August – October 2026
Parish Council formal approval of terms and budget provision	September / October 2026 Full Council
Legal completion of asset transfer	November 2026 – January 2027
Post-transfer: Insurance update, asset register, maintenance plan, staff/contractor briefing	Within 1 month of completion
First annual review and community feedback report to Parish Council	12 months post-completion

6. Procurement

Post-transfer, the Parish Council will be responsible for procurement of cleaning, maintenance, repairs and any capital works in accordance with its Financial Regulations and Standing Orders. Opportunities for joint procurement or shared contracts with the Back Lane Car Park (and potentially other Parish assets) will be actively explored to achieve best value.

For the transfer process itself, legal work will be handled by the Parish Council's appointed solicitor in liaison with Rochford District Council's legal team. Any specialist surveys will be procured in accordance with Parish procurement rules (quotes for lower values, tender for higher).

7. Findings from Feasibility / Options Appraisal

The case for transfer is strongly supported by:

- Successful operational management by Rochford Parish Council since the post-2017 handover – demonstrated capability and local commitment.
- Clear and recent District Council policy decision (17 March 2026) declaring the asset surplus specifically to enable this CAT to Stage 3.
- Established precedent across Rochford District: other toilet blocks successfully devolved to parish/town councils with positive outcomes for communities and reduced District liability.
- Strategic co-location with Back Lane Car Park (also in CAT process) – unique opportunity for integrated local management not available to other potential operators.
- High community value of a modern, central, accessible public toilet facility in the heart of Rochford – supports town centre vitality, tourism, accessibility and daily life.
- No credible alternative operator or provider has come forward; the Parish Council is the natural and best-placed custodian.
- Risk of inaction: Continued uncertainty over tenure could hinder long-term planning and investment in the facility by the Parish Council.

No feasible 'do nothing' or alternative options (e.g. closure, commercial let, community group takeover) are considered appropriate or in the public interest. The facility is needed and valued as public conveniences.

8. Risks and Issues

8.1 Key Risks

Risk description	Impact	Treatment / Controls
Unexpected major repair or structural issue post-transfer (e.g. drainage, roof, fabric)	Significant unbudgeted cost; service disruption	Full condition survey as part of due diligence; negotiate dowry or reserve contribution from RDC; establish sinking fund from precept; comprehensive insurance
Vandalism, anti-social behaviour or misuse	Damage, cleaning costs, reputational impact, user deterrence	Regular inspections; good lighting & design; liaison with police & community safety team; CCTV if justified and proportionate; rapid repair response
Public or user resistance to any future changes (hours, charging – though not proposed)	Complaints, negative publicity, low usage	Clear communication that primary use remains free public conveniences; consult on any proposed changes; maintain or improve current opening hours where possible
Delays in legal transfer or negotiation of terms	Prolonged uncertainty; missed opportunities for planning	Early engagement with RDC officers and legal teams; use of Locality support workshops if available; clear project timeline with milestones
Insufficient precept funding or budget pressure in future years	Service reduction or quality issues	Transparent annual budgeting and reporting to residents; build reserve; explore external grants for enhancements; demonstrate value and community benefit

8.2 Key Issues

No major issues identified at this stage. The main 'issue' is the need to confirm exact current costs, legal status of existing management arrangement, and any specific liabilities or covenants that RDC may wish to retain or impose. These will be addressed through the due diligence process in Stage 3.

9. Equalities Impact (EQIA)

A full EQIA will be completed as part of the Stage 3 process or post-transfer if required by either authority. Initial assessment:

- The facility already provides accessible toilets (disabled access, Radar key compatible – to be confirmed in survey).
- Transfer to local control is expected to have a positive or neutral impact on equalities groups by enabling more responsive management and potential future enhancements (e.g. baby change improvements, Changing Places if feasible).
- No adverse impact anticipated on any protected characteristic group. The service remains free and open to all.
- Consultation with relevant groups (e.g. disability forums, older people's groups) can be undertaken if any service changes are proposed post-transfer.

10. Environmental Impact (Climate Change Rating)

Current rating: Low to Medium positive potential.

- Re-purposing or closure not proposed – continued use as toilets avoids embodied carbon of new build.
- Ownership enables planned investment in water-efficient flushing mechanisms, low-flow taps, LED lighting, smart controls and improved insulation – reducing water consumption, energy use and carbon emissions over time.
- Potential for rainwater harvesting or other sustainable features in future refurbishments.
- Local management may reduce vehicle miles for cleaning/maintenance crews if combined with other Parish assets.
- Any future major works will consider whole-life carbon and climate resilience in design and materials.

11. Data Protection Impact (DPIA)

No personal data is collected or processed as part of the routine operation of the public toilets. No DPIA required. Any future installation of CCTV would require a separate DPIA and compliance with data protection law.

12. Confidentiality of the Business Case

There are no confidentiality constraints with this report. It is intended to be a public document supporting transparent decision-making by both Rochford Parish Council and Rochford District Council.

13. Assessment and Approval

This business case has been prepared to support Rochford Parish Council's consideration and the Stage 3 Community Asset Transfer process with Rochford District Council.

Recommended next steps / actions:

1. Parish Council to review and approve this business case (or amended version) at Full Council or relevant committee.
2. Submit approved business case to Rochford District Council CAT team as part of Stage 3 evidence.
3. Commission condition survey and obtain detailed costings for (x) items.
4. Engage solicitor for legal due diligence and transfer negotiations.
5. Discuss potential dowry / transitional support with RDC officers.
6. Develop post-transfer management plan, budget and communication strategy for residents.

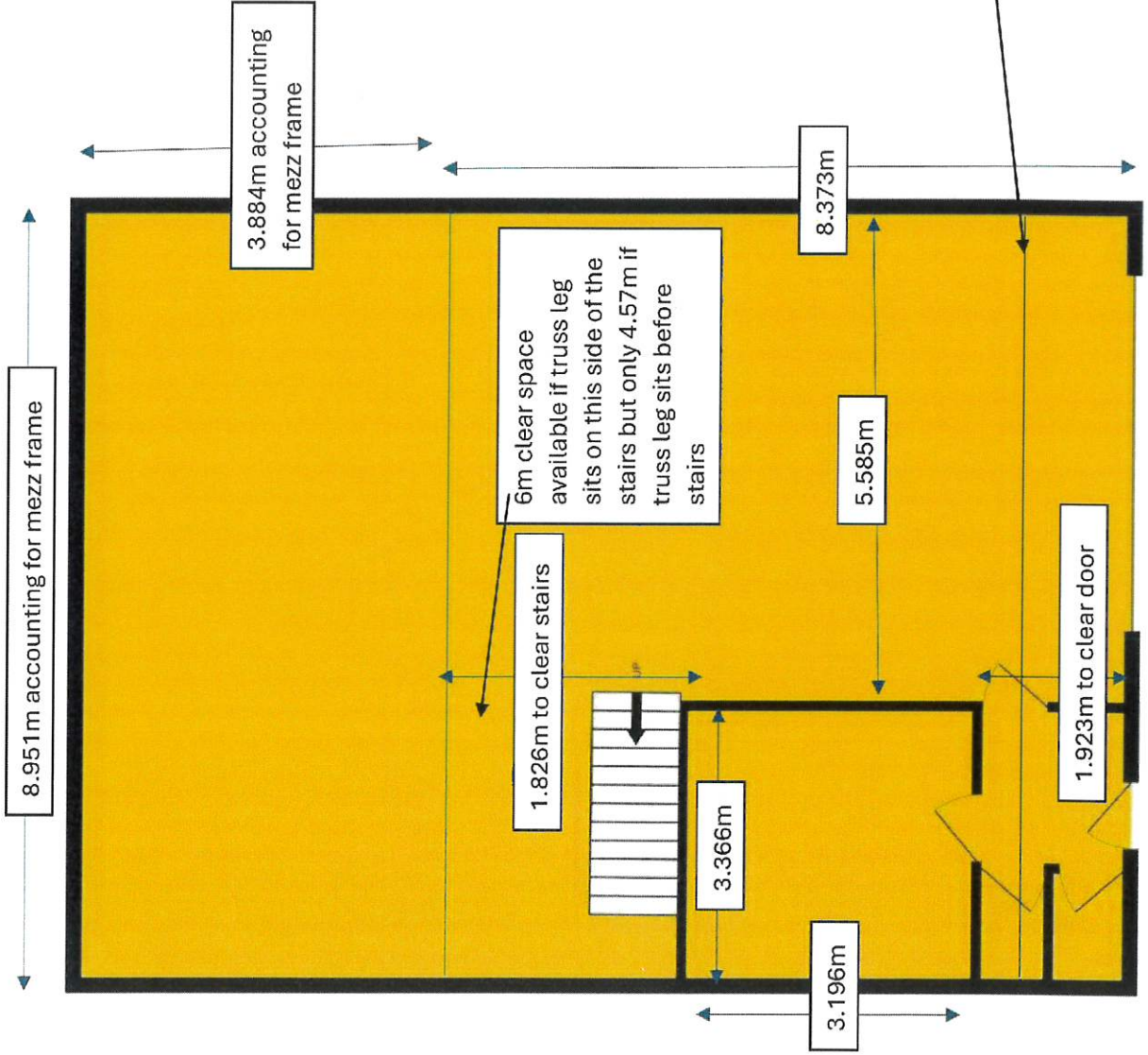
Parish Council Approval

Body	Approved by (Name/Position)	Date	Signature / Minute Ref
Finance & General Purposes Committee	(x)	(x)	(x)
Full Council	(x)	(x)	(x)
RDC CAT Stage 3 acceptance	(x - RDC Officer)	(x)	(x)

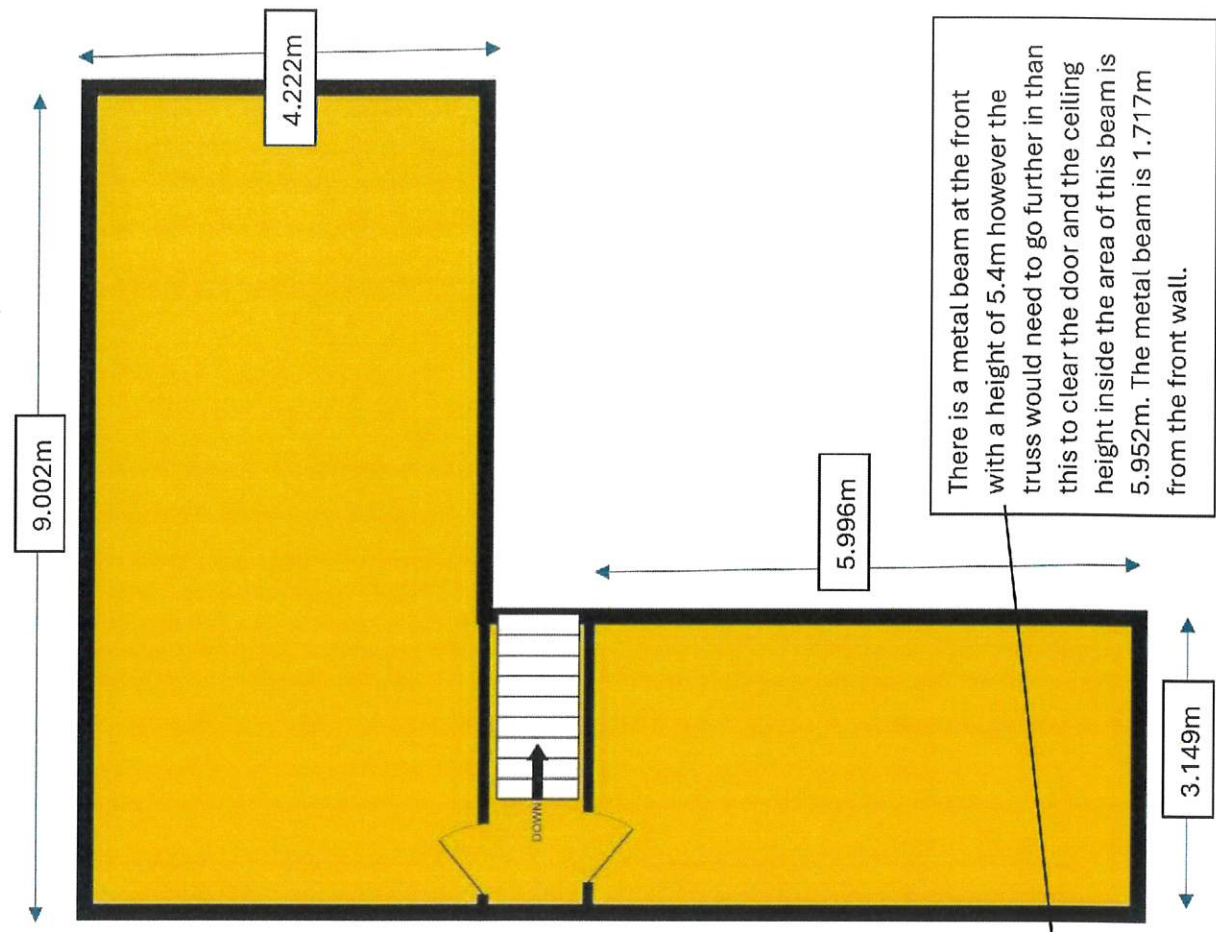
Contact for further information:

Rochford Parish Council
The Parish Rooms, West Street, Rochford, Essex SS4 1AS
Tel: 01702 540722 | Email: clerk@rochfordparishcouncil.gov.uk
Website: www.rochfordparishcouncil.gov.uk

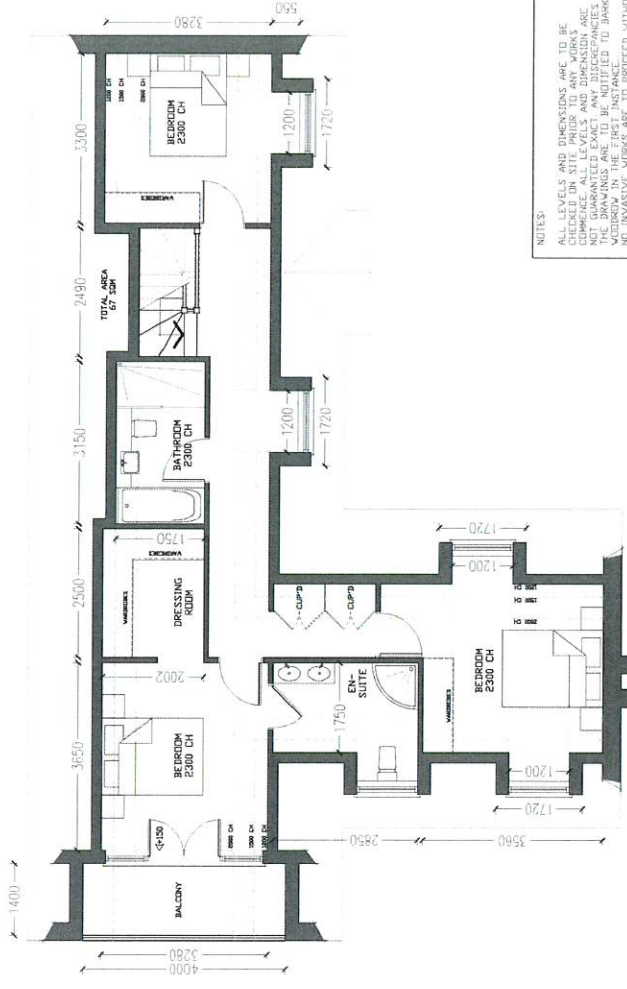
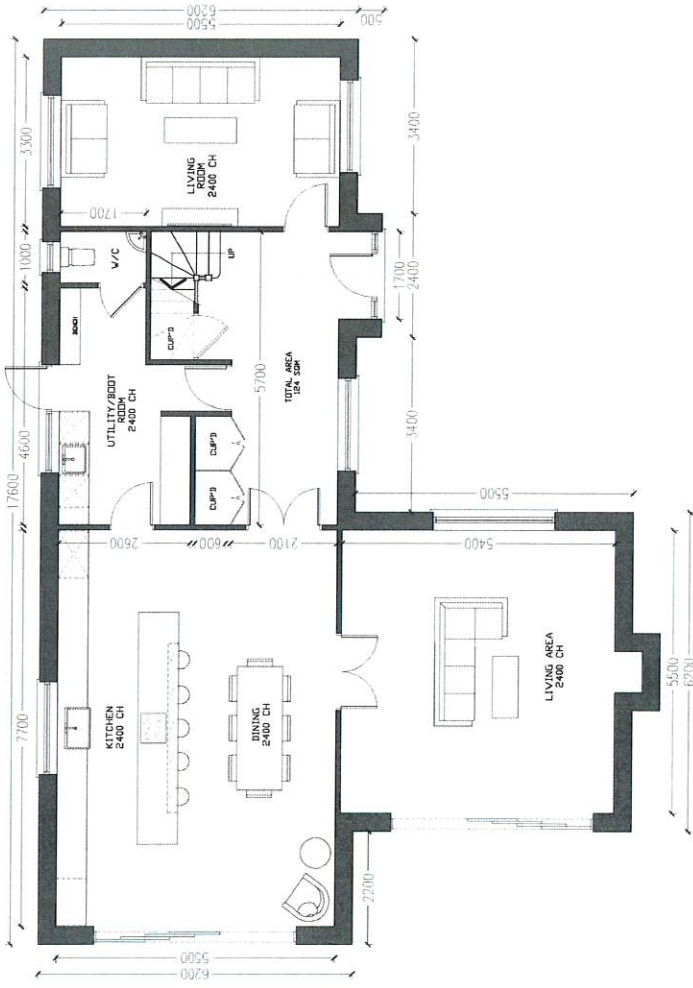
GROUND FLOOR
1180 sq.ft. (109.6 sq.m.) approx.



1ST FLOOR
667 sq.ft. (62.0 sq.m.) approx.



1 PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS



NOTES:
 ALL LEVELS AND DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE CHECKED ON SITE PRIOR TO ANY WORKS BEING COMMENCED. THE CONTRACTOR IS NOT GUARANTEED THAT ALL DIMENSIONS AND DISPOSITIONS ARE CORRECT. THE DRAWINGS ARE TO BE NOTIFIED TO BARKER WOODROW PRIOR TO ANY WORKS BEING COMMENCED. NO UNLAWFUL WORKS ARE TO BE PERFORMED WITHOUT HAVING FIRST OBTAINED A REFRESHMENT AND REPAIRS PERMIT FROM THE LOCAL COUNCIL. THE CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR IDENTIFYING AND REMOVING ALL ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIALS FROM THE SITE PRIOR TO COMMENCING WORK. APPROVED STRUCTURAL CONSULTANTS MUST BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONTROL OF ASBESTOS REGULATIONS. ALL DRAWINGS ARE TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS' SPECIFICATIONS. THE CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE DRAWINGS AND THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS OF BARKER WOODROW. ANY REVISIONS TO THESE DRAWINGS MUST BE APPROVED WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT FROM BARKER WOODROW.



PLANNING ISSUE



CLIENT	MT Geoff Howwood 10000 10000 PO Box 10000 PO Box 10000
CONSULTANT	BARKER WOODROW ARCHITECTURAL, CIVIL & LANDSCAPE 10000 10000 10000 10000
SITE	Land Adjacent To Honeyspots Gusted Hall Lane, SS5 4JL
TITLE	3 Bed Detached New Build Chalet Bungalow
SCALE AT A1	DATE
PROJECT NO.	27/04/25
EG	800
REVISION	26/10/61

2 PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

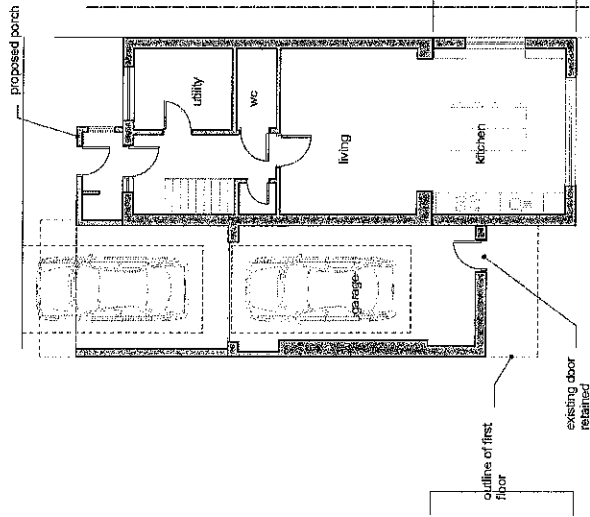


3 LOCATION PLAN

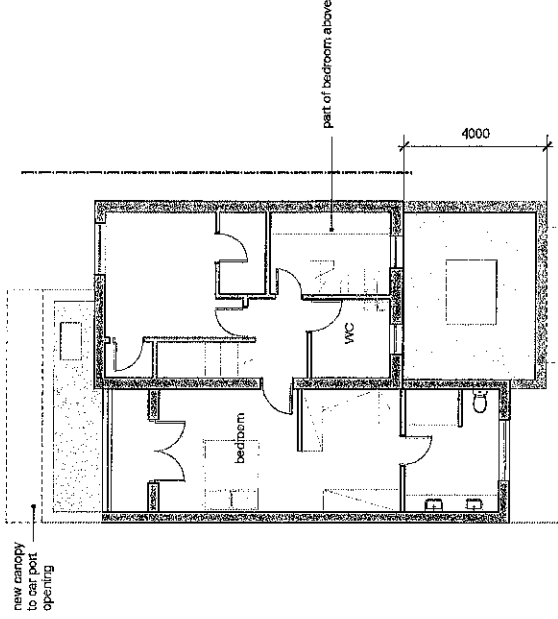


4 SITE PLAN

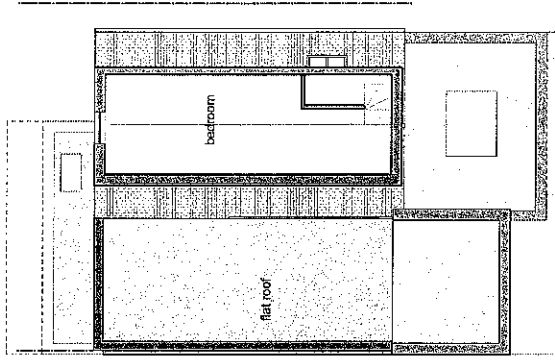




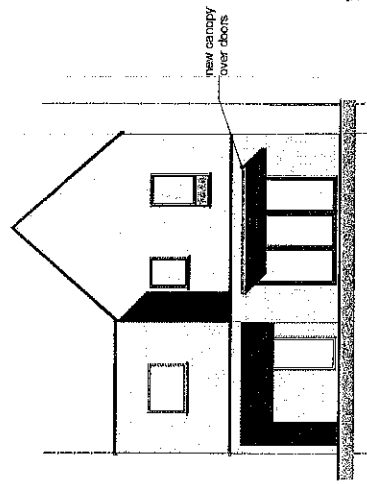
1 Proposed Ground floor
Scale: 1:100



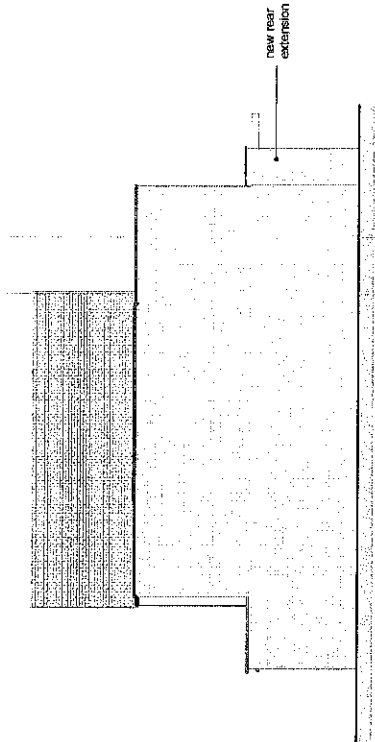
2 Proposed 1st floor
Scale: 1:100



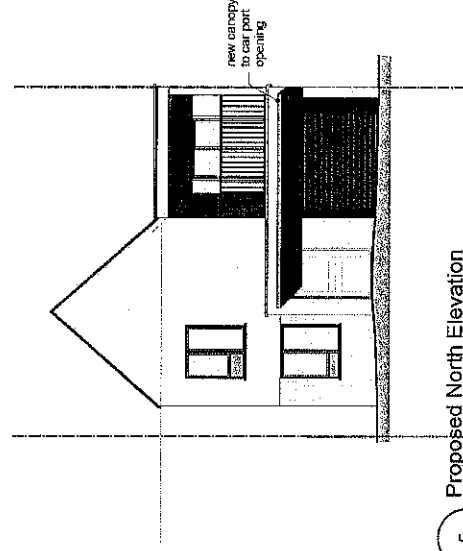
7 Proposed 2nd floor
Scale: 1:100



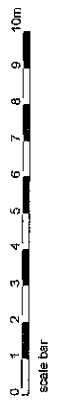
3 Proposed South Elevation
Scale: 1:100



4 Proposed West Elevation
Scale: 1:100



5 Proposed North Elevation
Scale: 1:100



		Client: Greenhill
Colin Harper, Partner		Site No: 14, College Gardens
The Mould, Rappah, SSS 7UP		Title: Proposed Plans/Elevations
Drawing No: 25-042-100	Drawn by: NV	Check: []
Date: Sep 2025	Scale: 1:100	Rev: A

