



# Second Deposit Draft

June 2004

Proposals Map: Western Vale

Policy: H8 vii)

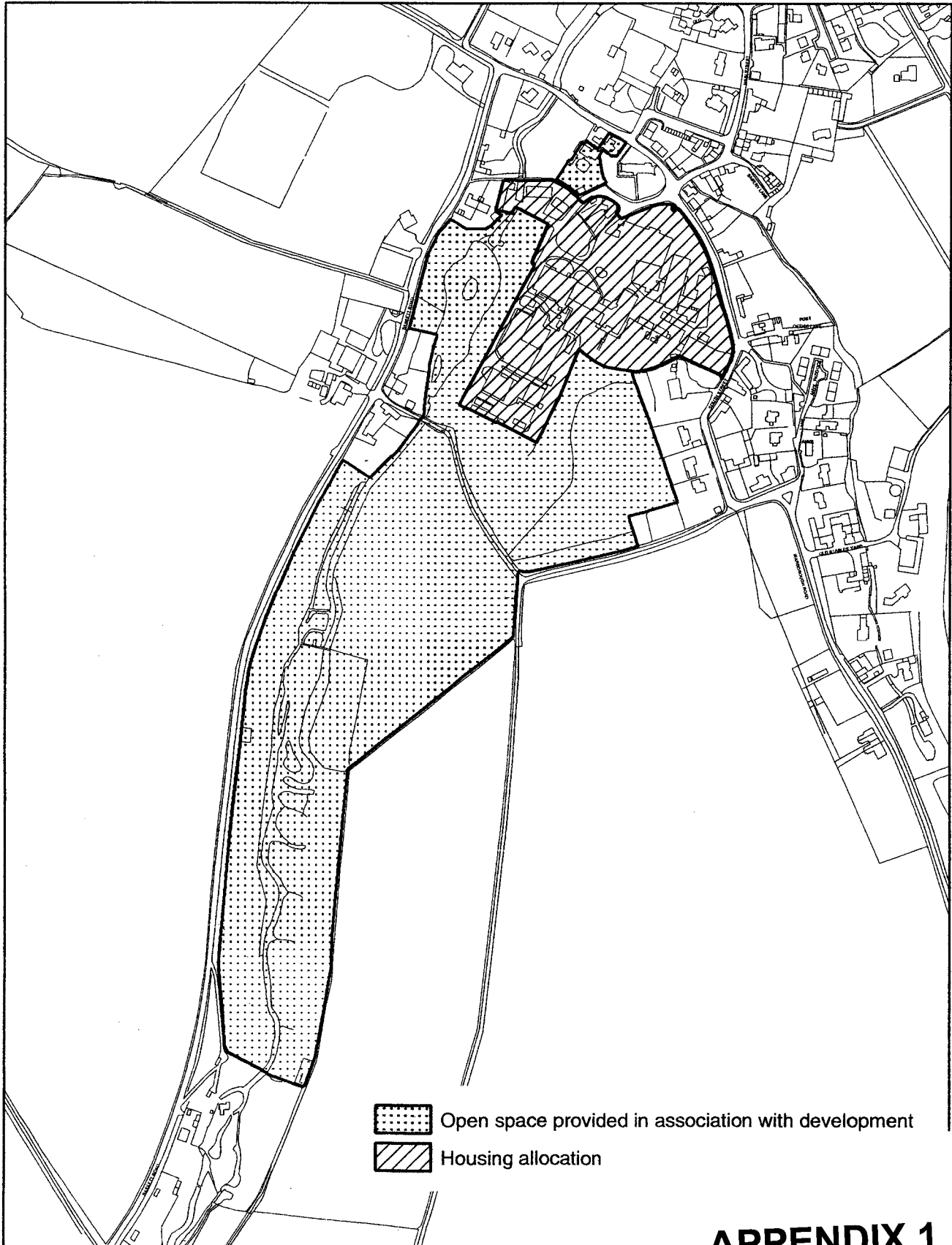
Change: Add a housing allocation and open space provided in association with development

Site: Land at Dow Agro Sciences, Letcombe Regis

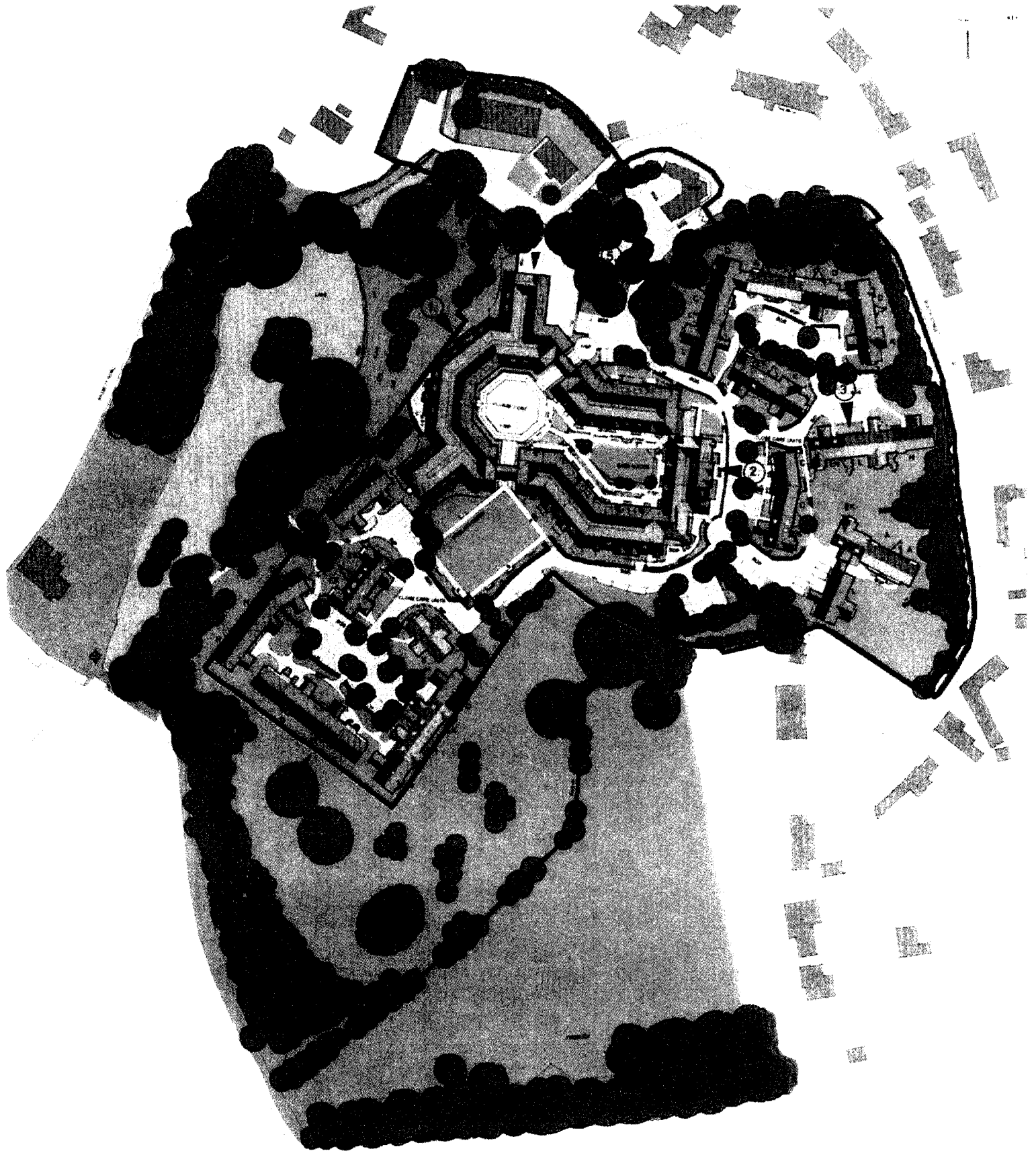
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1:5,000



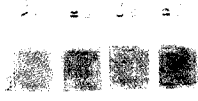
## APPENDIX 1



**APPENDIX 1**

**CONSERVATION CONSULTANCY  
ECOLOGICAL CONSULTANTS**

Client: Dow Agrosciences Ltd  
 Project: Letchworth  
 Date: 12/01/07  
 Scale: 1:500  
 Drawing No: 0280/1.7



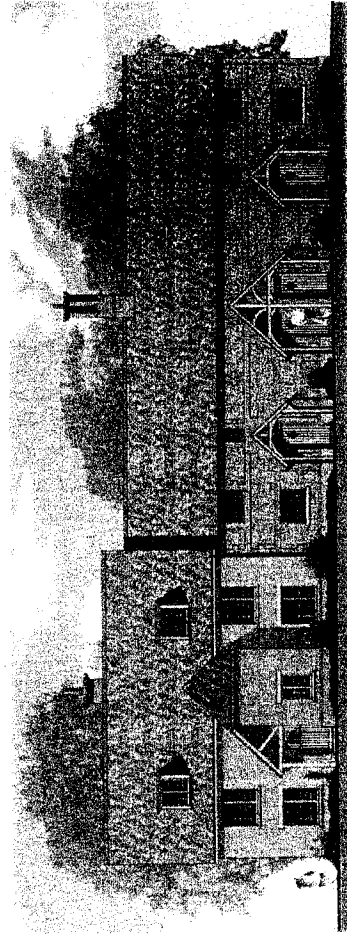
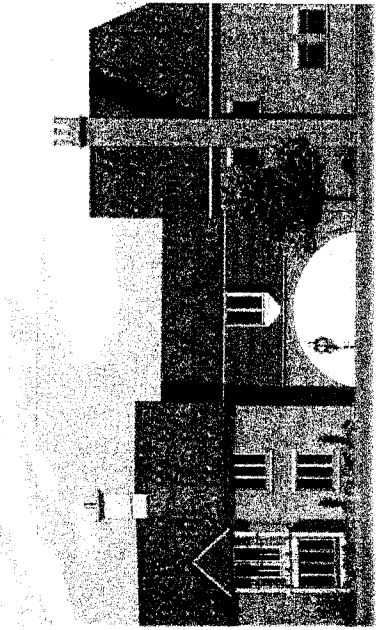
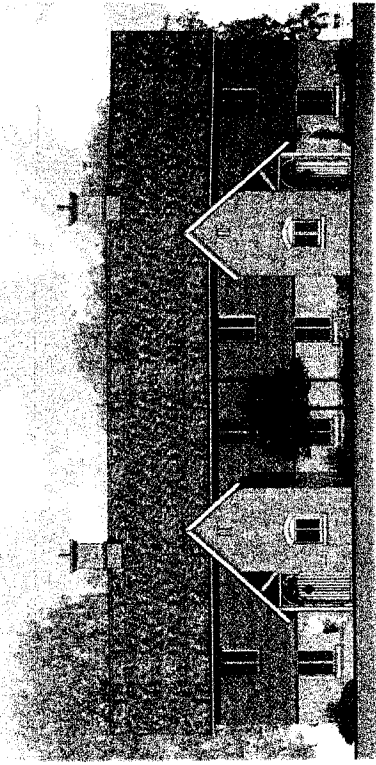
191 Tree symbols used in this plan are defined in the legend. This symbol will be used to identify trees which are to be retained. This symbol will be used to identify trees which are to be removed.



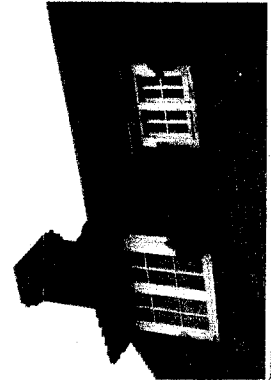
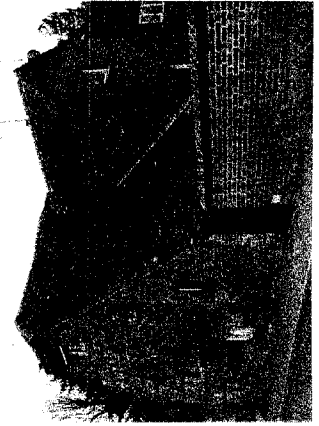
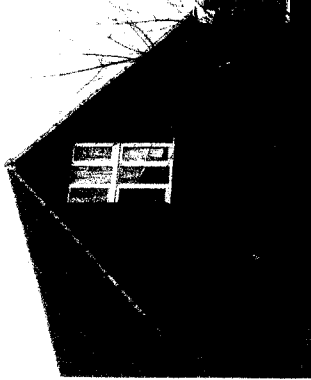
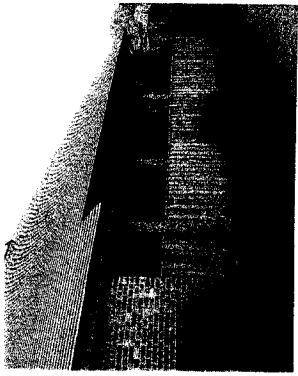
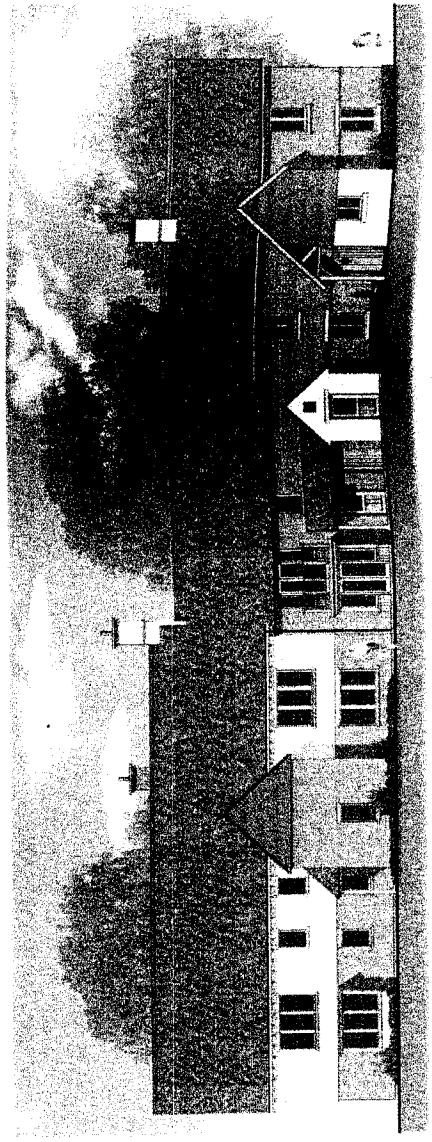
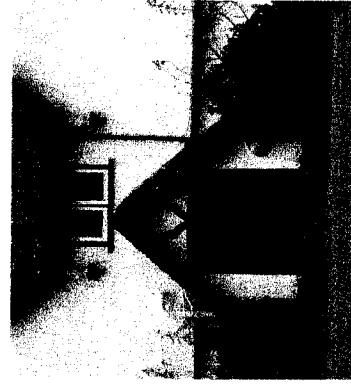
Notes:  
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**Adams Habermehl**  
 Dow Agrosciences Site  
 Letchworth Regis, Oxon  
 Client: Letchworth Manor Estate Ltd  
 Drawing: Continuing care retirement community  
 Tree survey and retention / removal plan  
 Drawing No: 0280/1.7  
 Scale: 1:500 (A1)  
 Date: 12/01/07

### 7.3 Building Design - continued



Typical Elevations with design reference photos



APPROVED FOR THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
DATE: 07 APR 1988

# APPENDIX 1

## Building Design - continued

### Typical Contextual Site Elevations



Close Care Units

South Street

Section through site - View looking South



Care Suites in Core Building

Main entrance

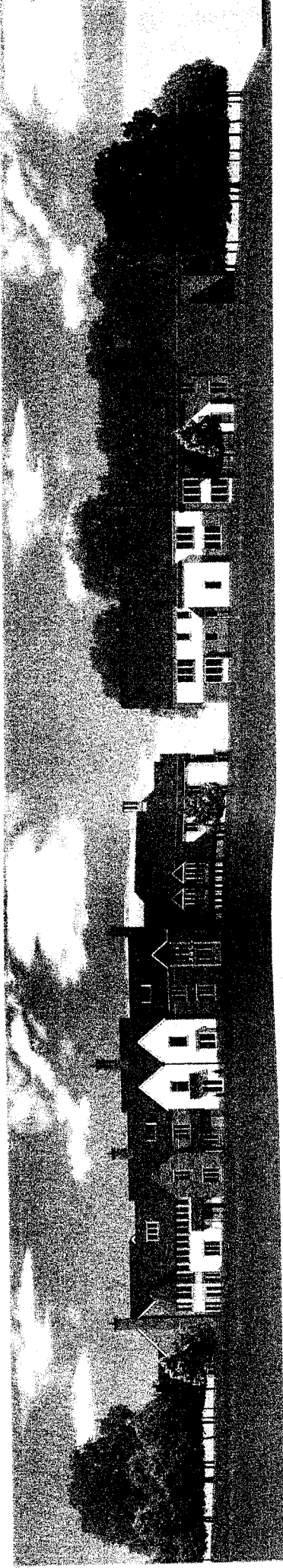
Care Beds

Dining/Dayrooms

Terraced Lawn

Letcombe Brook

Section through Site - View looking South



Care Suites in Core Building

Close Care Units

Section through Site - View looking West



## 7.3 Building Design - continued

### Typical Contextual Site Elevations

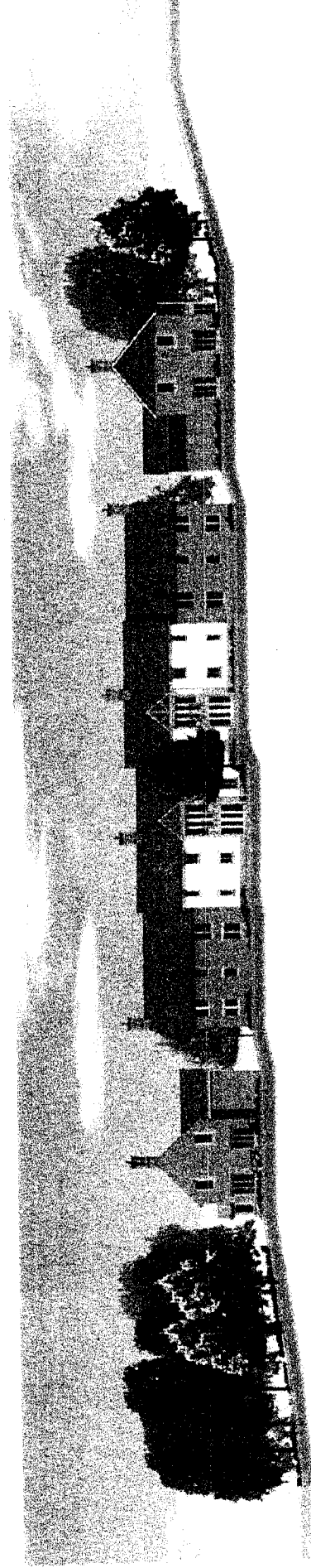


Care Beds in Core Building

Dining/Dayrooms

Coffee Shop & hairdressing

### Section through Site - View looking East



Letchombe Brook

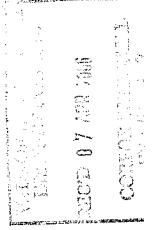
Close Care Units

Close Care Units

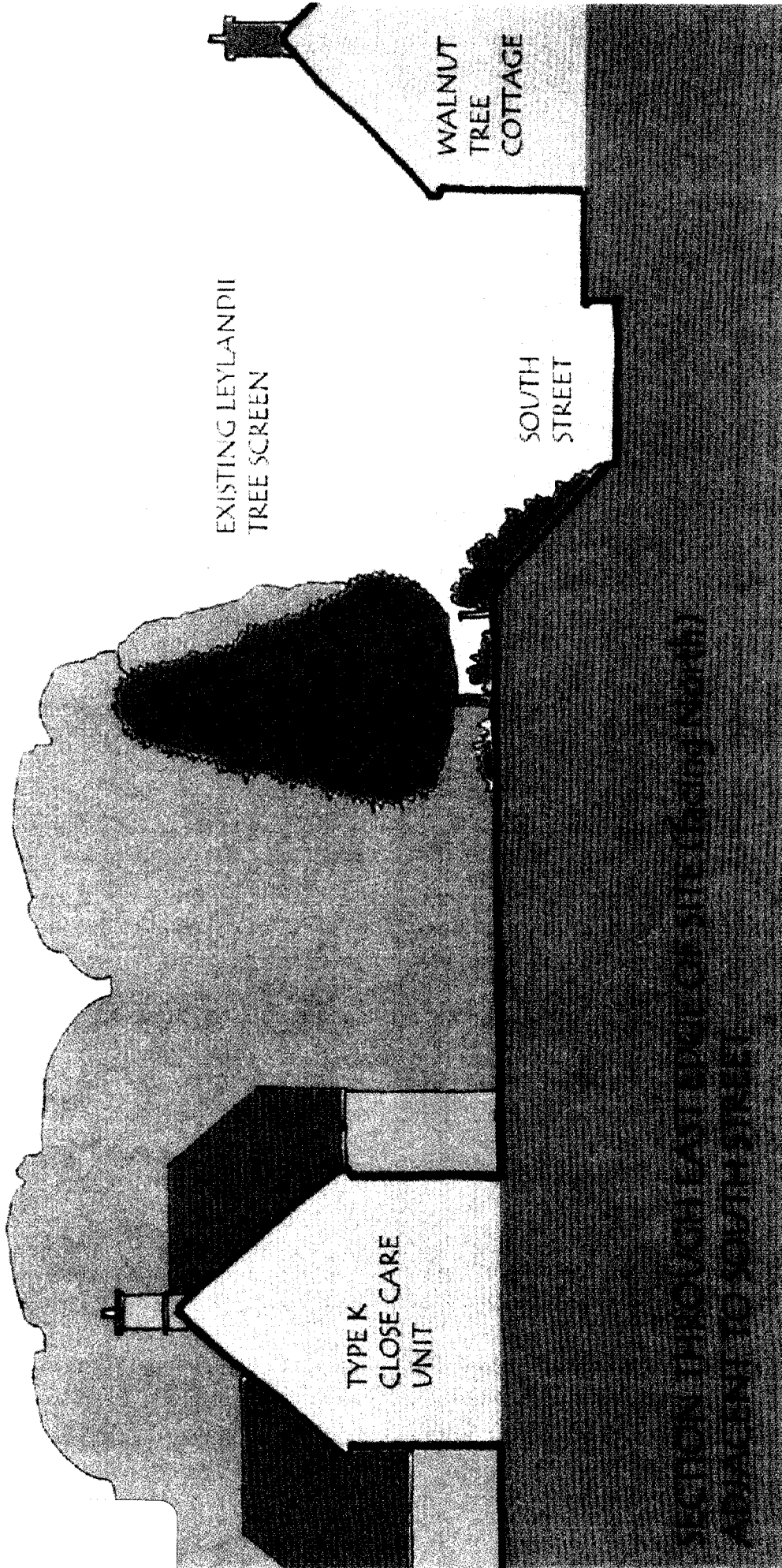
Close Care Units

Re-graded Bank

### Section through Site - View looking North



# APPENDIX 1



<b>ARCHITECTS</b> RICHMOND ARCHITECTS 20 Mill Street London Road Bath BA1 1PW Tel: 01225 429104 Fax: 01225 460111	<b>CLIENT</b> RICHMOND RETOUMBER RES RICHMOND RETOUMBER RES RICHMOND RETOUMBER RES RICHMOND RETOUMBER RES	<b>PROJECT</b> RICHMOND RETOUMBER RES CONTINUING CARE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY (RETUMBER RES)	<b>DATE</b> 21/03/06	<b>SCALE</b> 1:100	<b>REVISION</b>	<b>DRAWING NO</b> R1006-01
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### 3.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

3.1 This statement supports the following proposals:

- (i) Outline planning application for the redevelopment of the site as a Continuing Care Retirement Community (use class C2) ("Care Community") including the demolition of all buildings except the Lodge, change of use of the Lodge to village shop (use class A1), rearranged access, car parking, landscaping and ancillary development.
- (ii) Application for conservation area consent for demolition of all buildings except the Lodge.

3.2 Whilst the planning application is in outline form, detailed illustrative plans are provided to explain the operation of the site and to demonstrate how the redevelopment of the site can take place in accordance with national and local planning policies.

3.3 The Care Community will comprise the following living accommodation:

- 60 care bedrooms
- 50 fully serviced care suites
- 72 close care units

3.4 The core of the Care Community will include a range of associated facilities including a village reception, restaurant and tea room/coffee shop (described in full below). Richmond Letcombe Regis will operate a shop from the existing Lodge building.

3.5 Richmond Villages is an established residential care home and Care Community operator and part of the Barchester Health Group. Barchester Health Group employs over 13,000 staff and operates 11,000 care beds and is widely regarded as the number one provider of high quality residential and nursing home care in the UK. "Richmond Villages" is a specific and identifiable name to differentiate the Care Community brand that Barchester offers. Richmond Village will operate Richmond Letcombe Regis.

#### 4.0 OPERATION OF RICHMOND LETCOMBE REGIS

- 4.1 There are number of health care operators currently offering different types of retirement accommodation in the UK. This section explains exactly what is proposed at Richmond Letcombe Regis and details the intended operation of the Care Community.

##### Context

- 4.2 Britain is an ageing society. Between 1961 and 2001 the population aged 65 and over increased by 51 per cent, with 9.4 million people aged 65 and over at the time of the 2001 Census. The 2001 Census also shows that there will be more people aged 65 and over, than are aged under 16 by 2014. The average age of the UK population increases by 3 months every year.
- 4.3 Family and social networks are also changing. More people will live alone in later life as divorce rates rise and family relationships become more complex and more distant. It is known that women, on average, are living longer than men and it is now a common situation that one member of a married couple is relatively able bodied, whilst their spouse is in need of a high level of care. In addition, many people in their fifties and sixties find themselves responsible for parents in their eighties and nineties, who may live some distance away from the rest of their family.
- 4.4 At the same time 'age' is being redefined. People in their sixties and seventies no longer see themselves as 'old', and retirement is seen as a rewarding and active part of life. Concepts of age are emerging which reject the notion of older people being a 'burden' on society and which embrace ideas such as the 'third age', the 'grey pound' and greater empowerment of older people. The diversity of older people's aspirations, expectations and needs has now been recognised.
- 4.5 Housing need in later life can no longer simply be equated with a need for security, as this fails to recognise the wide-ranging housing needs and preferences of older people. Traditional models of sheltered and warden controlled housing are being replaced. Such traditional approaches are unable to provide the care and support many older people need and only serve to hasten an unwanted and sometimes unnecessary move into institutionalised residential care. Traditional retirement housing also fails to recognise the diversity of housing needs in later life.

##### The Barchester "Richmond Village" Concept

- 4.6 A number of Continuing Care Retirement Communities (Care Communities) have been successfully established under the "Richmond Villages" name in carefully researched areas around the country. The care community concept is primarily to enable older people to continue to live independent lives in their own space, cosseted by a comprehensive and flexible network of social, domestic and personal care services available in any combination and on demand.

##### Traditional Retirement Housing

- 4.7 Traditional 'retirement housing' has tended to constitute high rise and high density apartments located within or adjacent to town centres. Few such schemes offer domestic or personal care services nor do they generally provide community facilities to support social activity and sustain and enhance quality of life for residents. As such traditional retirement housing offers little advantage over traditional residential housing and is not compatible with the care community concept.
- 4.8 Barchester's research has consistently found that older people have been frustrated by the lack of choice available in terms of support services available and location. Not all older people want to live in town centres. Many older people will have lived their entire lives in rural locations and for them town centre living would be an alien and unfamiliar concept. In addition, the recent rise in town centre entertainment, coupled with new flexible licensing hours have altered older people's preferences towards a more quiet, rural lifestyle.

- 4.9 Barchester's research also suggests that not all older people want to live in high density retirement 'flats.' The layout of such flats tends to create long corridors which fail to create communities or involve people with their neighbours. Typically flats are of single aspect and do not offer the variety of daylight or open views that older people tend to desire.
- 4.10 Barchester's care community concept seeks to widen choice for older people by providing accommodation such as that proposed at Richmond Letcombe Regis.
- 4.11 At the other end of the spectrum of housing options for older people is traditional nursing care. Barchester is a leading provider of nursing care yet fully acknowledges that this is not a positive housing choice for many older people. Traditional nursing care is needs driven due to the lack of fully adapted and supported housing alternatives and does not offer the privacy and independence that is available within the care community concept..

#### **Independence and choice provided by Richmond Village Care Communities**

- 4.12 Richmond Letcombe Regis is not a traditional retirement flats scheme. Nor is it a sheltered or warden controlled accommodation (which typically provides a warden to 'look in' on residents).
- 4.13 Richmond Letcombe Regis will be entirely different in that it will provide intensive levels of nursing and personal care in every unit as required and available 24 hours a day. It will also provide support services to enable residents to live as independently as possible for as long as possible.
- 4.14 The Richmond Villages care community concept is based on a 'hotel resort' model. This model is popular because hotel resorts are entertaining and enjoyable places to stay, with activities and social opportunities. Richmond's research confirms that loneliness is a big factor impacting the lives of many older people before failing health or physical frailty demands a move into a residential or nursing home environment. The loss of social life is often a result of losing the confidence to travel due to security worries or the fear of a trip or fall.
- 4.15 In the Richmond Villages model, residents 'live' in their unit, bedroom or suite. The full range of facilities within the care community are then available to use on site, as and when the needs of residents change.
- 4.16 A key constituent of the Richmond Villages care community concept is the ability for residents to retain their independence and make their own choices. Richmond provides a 'menu' of care, housekeeping and related services from which residents are able to pick and choose to compile the level of care that they feel they need. The continuing care aspect allows an older person to move to the care community in the knowledge that they can maintain their independence and ability to choose for themselves, right up to the point where they need a significant level of nursing and personal care.
- 4.17 Richmond Villages research suggests that there are many older people that would not move into a traditional nursing home but would choose to move into a care community. This is because of the choice, independence and social aspect that care communities provide. These advantages allow people to make a positive decision to move into a care community, rather than be forced to move to a care home when they are so ill that they have no option.
- 4.18 The type of care provided does not seek to replicate that provided in a hospital. No surgery will be carried out on the site. The emphasis is on nursing and personal care.
- 4.19 It is important to note that the care community concept is not a new concept and this proposal is by no means a pioneering scheme. Richmond Villages already runs care communities at Coventry (opened 1991) and Nantwich (opened 1996). They will open a further care community in Painswick next year. There are 5 other Richmond Villages care communities currently planned. Therefore the features described in this document (and those that will be subject to the section 106 agreement) are not ideas or suggestions. They are proposals that have developed and evolved in Richmond Villages'

existing care communities, that are known to be utilised by residents and therefore are deliverable and sustainable.

### **Residents**

4.20 Richmond Letcombe Regis will offer a range of accommodation (see below for full descriptions). Potential residents will decide on the level of accommodation that best suits their requirements.

4.21 Specific reasons given by residents to move into care communities include:

- future health worries;
- partner health worries;
- desire to stay independent;
- feelings of loneliness or boredom;
- to feel safer;
- old home or garden has become too much;
- not to place a burden on children or other relatives to provide care.

4.22 There are three types of accommodation:

### **Care Bedrooms**

4.23 The care bedrooms will constitute a bedroom with an en-suite shower, toilet and wash basin. These rooms will accommodate the residents in need of the most intensive type of care. Some will not be well enough to leave their bedrooms. Trained nurses are available to carry out nursing procedures.

4.24 Residents will have the full benefit of Richmond Letcombe Regis facilities such as the restaurant and coffee shop. Richmond corporately provides private and communal spaces well in excess of the relevant (CSCI) standards.

4.25 Typically, residents of care bedrooms may have come to the village following a trauma situation. A typical resident would be an older person who has had a fall and subsequent hospital treatment. The care bedrooms will largely be occupied long term by frail elderly people, but they can also accommodate those convalescing after an illness or operation.

### **Care Suites**

4.26 The care suites are larger and offer a greater degree of privacy and independence than the nursing care bedrooms. The care suites will include a bedroom, an en suite bathroom, the living area and a small kitchenette for preparing snacks and hot drinks'.

4.27 Residents of the care suites will need personal care but will typically be more active and able to take advantage of the larger suites. They may be able to dress themselves and move around a little more easily.

4.28 Again, residents of the care suites will be able to enjoy all the facilities of Richmond Letcombe Regis. They will typically depend on the 'hotel' services such as cleaning and laundry. They are likely to take all their meals in the restaurant. They will receive personal and nursing care as required, but typically residents of the care suites will require a fairly high level of care.

4.29 A resident of a care suite may be a frail elderly person who has decided to move from their house to a suite in an environment that can provide security, support and nursing care as required. Residents are likely to see a care suite as a preferable alternative to residential or nursing care.

4.30 The internal size of the care suites and associated dayrooms exceed the relevant standards. The care suites will be available on a range of tenures.

### Close Care Units

- 4.31 The close care units will be detached from the core of Richmond Letcombe Regis. They will be of a range of sizes and designs and will accommodate one or two bedrooms, a kitchenette and a living room area. The close care units will be linked to the core of Richmond Letcombe Regis by covered walkways and paths suitable to allow residents and staff to move between them easily.
- 4.32 The close care units are aimed at residents in need of a low to moderate level of care. Many residents will take most meals in the restaurant. Many will take some form of domestic support such as laundry or cleaning. However, the level of personal care provided can vary with the needs of the individual. Where appropriate intensive nursing and domiciliary care can be provided in a close care unit.
- 4.33 Typically residents of the close care units will be more able than residents of the care suites and will be able to move around generally of their own accord. Richmond Villages finds in particular that close care units tend to accommodate an elderly couple where one person is in need of a very high level of care. The two bedrooms are particularly appropriate where one member of a couple needs a level of care that their spouse can no longer provide informally. Where necessary, the more unwell member of the couple can be cared for by trained staff whilst the spouse is able to live a more active life as they wish. This increases the quality of life for both. Alternatively, one of the couple may be resident in a care bed in the core facility.
- 4.34 Some residents may make a preparatory move to Richmond Letcombe Regis because they (or their partner) have been diagnosed with an illness that will eventually require a high level of care.

### Changing levels of care

- 4.35 When residents first move to Richmond Letcombe Regis, they may find that they only need a low level of care, such as minor personal assistance and some meals. In time, residents can request additional care as they find they need it. This allows residents to remain settled in a single location, maintaining the relationships and feelings of security they have developed, whilst their care requirements adapt to suit their condition. In certain cases residents may be able to move into a nursing care bed within Richmond Letcombe Regis, which would be a much less traumatic move compared to a move to an alternative nursing home in a different location.

### Number of residents in Richmond Letcombe Regis

- 4.36 It is not possible to give a precise number of residents that will be living in the Care Community. In some cases single rooms are converted to double rooms where a couple require joint accommodation.
- 4.37 However, the 60 care beds are likely to only accommodate 60 people. The 50 extra close care suites may include 20% double rooms at any one time, which would amount to 60 residents. Richmond's experience tends to suggest that 20-30% of the 72 close care units will accommodate a couple, which would amount to 94 residents. Therefore the total number of residents is estimated at 229 (see table below).



Type of Unit	Number of 'Units'	Number of Residents
Nursing Care Bedroom	60	60
Extra Close Care Suite	50	60
Extra Care Unit	72	94
Key Worker flats	15	15
<b>Totals</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>229</b>

NB All these figures are typical estimates based on evidence from Richmond's existing operations at Coventry and Nantwich.

### Effect on Letcombe Regis

- 4.38 Not all of the 229 residents will be able to make a full contribution to the village of Letcombe Regis. On the basis of experience in their other care communities, Richmond anticipate that about 60 residents would regularly enjoy, for example, a visit to the local pub and use the other facilities of the village.
- 4.39 It should not be overlooked that residents of Letcombe Regis or nearby villages may have elderly parents or relatives that need to move in to care home accommodation. Lack of choice in the area may prevent them from making such a move. The provision of a care community in Letcombe Regis provides further choice for existing residents of the area that need, or have residents who need, personal or nursing care.

### Richmond Care Village Services and Philosophy

- 4.40 Richmond Care Villages Ltd. (Richmond) will operate Richmond Letcombe Regis.
- 4.41 The Richmond ethos is to provide an excellent standard of services and care to its residents. Buildings are designed and built to a high quality. Externally the buildings are designed to give the impression of individual buildings in a streetscene, rather than a large institutional building. Richmond Villages finds that residents relate better to feeling they are in their own individual and identifiable home rather than a room in a large complex.
- 4.42 The interior of the buildings, including both private and communal rooms, is designed to a high standard and incorporates all the appropriate design features that older residents would require. Private and communal areas will be in excess of those required by the relevant (CSCI) standards.
- 4.43 This Richmond Villages ethos also seeks to ensure that the care community proposal becomes an active part of the local community both socially and commercially.
- 4.44 Socially, Richmond Letcombe Regis expects and needs residents of the rest of the village to use its facilities as described below. This relationship will work both ways. Richmond Villages has chosen Letcombe Regis for its local facilities, which will be important for residents of Richmond Letcombe Regis.
- 4.45 Commercially, Richmond's purchasing policy is to source produce for facilities such as the restaurant and tea rooms locally where possible. The proposed shop will be operated locally and will source goods from local providers such as farm shops. Local businesses such as handymen or window cleaners will be employed.

### **Sustainable Operation**

- 4.46 Richmond Villages endorses Government guidance relating to sustainable development and seeks to ensure sustainable principals in its buildings and operations. Typically, a care community operation results in significantly less traffic generation than residential development. This issue is discussed in full in the attached Transport Assessment by WSP.
- 4.47 The attached Sustainability Assessment demonstrates that the Care Community is a sustainable proposal.
- 4.48 The highly sustainable operation of Richmond Letcombe Regis originates from two main factors. First, residents will have most of the facilities they need on site which will restrict their need to travel. Second, those facilities will be opened to other residents of Letcombe Regis which will reduce their need to travel.

### **On Site Facilities**

#### **Shop**

- 4.49 The existing Lodge building will be converted into a shop based on the traditional village shop model. This will provide a selection of basic 'top up' goods for residents. It will be operated locally and, as discussed above, will source local products such as goods from farm shops.
- 4.50 Richmond Villages will manage the shop. They will provide the building and meet requirements such as insurance and infrastructure. Staff will be volunteers from Richmond Letcombe Regis or perhaps elsewhere in the village.
- 4.51 The shop will be run on a 'not for profit' basis. Any money raised will be used to fund social activities and excursions for residents.
- 4.52 The Village Retail Services Association guidance on establishing village shops states that a potential customer catchment of not less than 400 people is necessary. With the current population of Letcombe Regis standing at 548, and an adult population of 436 over 18s, the village stands almost on the margin of a viable population for sustaining a shop. The population of Richmond Letcombe Regis, therefore, could be critical in tipping the balance in ensuring the viability of the proposed conversion of the Lodge to a shop.
- 4.53 The main costs involved in running a shop are building costs and staff costs. Neither of these will be an issue for the proposed shop as the building will be provided by Richmond Villages and the staff will be volunteers. As such, Richmond Villages consider that the shop is a viable proposition.

#### **Restaurant and Coffee Shop**

- 4.54 A restaurant and coffee shop will be provided within Richmond Letcombe Regis. The coffee shop will be a place for residents to meet communally over a drink or light snack.
- 4.55 The restaurant will provide the option of meals at traditional meal times for all residents, although as discussed above the care community concept is that residents will decide themselves whether to take a meal in the restaurant. Private dining rooms will be available for special occasions such as parties.
- 4.56 The restaurant will be fitted out with sound and lighting facilities so that it can accommodate musical and dramatic performances and events. Richmond Villages finds such events very popular with residents. Events also enable Richmond Letcombe Regis to build relationships with local schools, the surrounding community and other similar groups.
- 4.57 The restaurant and coffee shop will be open to residents of Letcombe Regis of any age.

### **Space for Local Businesses**

- 4.58 Richmond Letcombe Regis will invite local businesses such as hairdressers to use space within the core. These services will be provided on demand but, for example, the hairdresser at Richmond Nantwich operates five days per week. These facilities will be open to residents of Letcombe Regis.

### **Library/Book Club**

- 4.59 A library or book club will also be provided on the site and operated by volunteer residents of Richmond Letcombe Regis.

### **Bowling Green**

- 4.60 A bowling green is proposed within Richmond Letcombe Regis. In addition, residents will be able to use the 'nature trail' as well as the footpaths and open spaces around the village, linking with existing community activities catered for at the cricket ground and village hall.
- 4.61 All of the above facilities will be open to residents of Letcombe Regis village. The attached draft heads of terms for the unilateral undertaking demonstrate that Richmond Villages is committed to providing access to these facilities in perpetuity.

### **Use of Off Site Facilities**

- 4.62 Of course, care community residents will also want to use facilities outside Letcombe Regis. A minibus will be operated from the site by Richmond Letcombe Regis staff. This will provide a regular service to Wantage. It will also provide trips to further destinations such as Oxford and Swindon on a regular basis. The minibus will have three main advantages:
- it will ensure that residents of Richmond Letcombe Regis do not need to own a private car
  - it will ensure that residents who are no longer able to drive are able to enjoy travel outside Letcombe Regis
  - it will enable residents of Letcombe Regis the opportunity to join the care community travel club to enable them to enjoy direct bus services.
- 4.63 The minibus service is designed to be complementary to the existing bus and taxis services that operate in the area. The minibus will be able to offer an 'on demand' door to door service that will pick up residents and drop them at their destination. The minibus will be fitted with a lift to enable people in wheelchairs to use the service. The drivers will be trained in dealing with people of limited mobility and will provide assistance to passengers where required.
- 4.64 Richmond Villages will offer an agreement to run the service for the first five years of the operation of Richmond Letcombe Regis. A care community 'travel club' will be formed, which will be open to members of the wider community. This will give residents from outside the care community to use the minibus service.

### **Employment Processes and Staff**

- 4.65 It is anticipated that approximately 110 full and part time staff will be employed on the site. This equates to approximately 80-90 full time equivalent posts. This ratio is typical of residential care provision. As an example, to provide a single trained nurse (or similar care assistance) 24 hours a day requires three full time members of staff.
- 4.66 The types of jobs will basically be as follows:

Senior admin	3 full time jobs (all numbers approximate)	2 part time jobs	Likely to be Vale of White Horse residents	Needs knowledge of local area and facilities
Nursing	5 full time	6 part time	Could be local residents but may need to seek further afield	Requires qualifications relevant to level of care associated with post
Care	34 full time	16 part time		
Housekeeping	7 full time	11 part time	Likely to be Vale of White Horse residents	Skills as relevant with opportunities for on the job training
Chefs	8 full time	10 part time		
Handymen/groundstaff	4 full time	1 part time		
Admin	1 full time	3 part time		

- 4.67 Most staff will work a shift system to ensure that 24 hour care is provided. The shifts will be early (7am to 2pm), late (1pm to 9pm) and nights (8pm to 8am). Richmond will use the minibus to collect and drop off where possible to deter use of private cars. These shift patterns avoid staff needing to travel in the evening peak hour and avoid the worst part of the morning peak hour.
- 4.68 A draft Green Travel Plan is attached that will influence the travel habits of staff travelling to and from the site. This will minimise the number of vehicle movements and the effect on local roads.
- 4.69 15 Key Worker flats will be provided on site. Some staff accommodation will also be provided within the core of Richmond Letcombe Regis to enable 'on call' staff to rest during quiet night time periods.
- 4.70 As referred to in the draft section 106 agreement, Richmond Villages will use reasonable endeavours to seek to offer these jobs to Vale of White Horse residents. In addition, Richmond will use reasonable endeavours to form links with local colleges in order to offer job placements and opportunities within the Care Community to local students.
- 4.71 Richmond Villages is part of the Barchester group. Barchester employ 13,000 people nationwide. It is expected that many of the nursing posts will be advertised and filled internally.

#### **Summary of Description of Operation**

- 4.72 A key factor of the operation is that it is essential to Richmond that the Care Community becomes an active part of Letcombe Regis village. To be successful, Richmond Letcombe Regis needs the vitality that links with the local community will bring. Richmond Letcombe Regis residents will enjoy seeing other village residents using the facilities such as the restaurant and coffee shop. Richmond Villages finds that its residents do not want to feel cut off from the wider community and enjoy visits to the facility from non residents due to the life and variety they bring.
- 4.73 Likewise the care community can make a significant contribution to village life. Richmond Letcombe Regis will include a range of facilities open to villagers including a village shop. The transport choice of residents of Letcombe Regis will be widened.

4.74 Richmond Letcombe Regis will not significantly alter the demographics of Letcombe Regis in terms of either age or overall number. The age of residents will vary, traditionally from 55 upwards. Some residents will be relatively active and will make a contribution to village life.



## **5. EFFECT ON LOCAL HEALTH CARE**

- 5.1 Richmond Villages typically finds that the establishment of a high quality nursing home tends to be welcomed by public local health care services.
- 5.2 There are many older people who prefer not to move into 'traditional' nursing homes due to the perceived lack of independence, choice and community that such homes offer. They are more likely to decide to move to a care community which, as described above, offers more independence.
- 5.3 Older people living at home, particularly those who live alone, can place significant reliance upon public health service providers. They tend to require GPs to make home visits and, when necessary, require lifts to hospitals or outpatient centres.
- 5.4 Residents living within Richmond Letcombe Regis will be able to call upon a named carer or a domiciliary care manager. These will be highly experienced carers who can identify problems that require actual medical attention. The availability of such care within Richmond Letcombe Regis, coupled with the added company and general security of the atmosphere tends to reduce the number of necessary calls on GPs and hospitals.
- 5.5 GPs within the vicinity of Richmond's existing care communities have built up good relationships with the care communities. In particular, a relationship of trust is built up between local GPs and the senior nurses and matrons at the care communities, to enable any problems to be dealt with quickly and professionally.
- 5.6 Should a resident of Richmond Letcombe Regis need to visit a GP or hospital they would be provided with door to door transport from one of the Richmond's drivers. This reduces demand for ambulances, GPs on site visits and outpatient transportation.
- 5.7 Older people are likely to need to use the national health services whether they live at home, with relatives or in retirement homes or communities. Richmond's care communities tend to reduce such need by providing a high level quality of care that enables public resources to be focused where most necessary.

## Letcombe Regis Parish Council

Chairman of the Parish Council

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The Old House  
Letcombe Regis  
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OX12 9JP

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19 June 2006

Mrs Geraldine LeCointe  
Team Leader  
Vale of White Horse District Council  
Planning Department  
Abbey House, Abbey Close  
Abingdon, Oxon OX14 3JE

**Sent by email and post**

Dear Mrs LeCointe,

### **PROPOSED ERECTION OF CARE COMMUNITY VILLAGE, USE OF LODGE AS SHOP, AND DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS AT LETCOMBE LABORATORY SITE, LETCOMBE REGIS**

#### **APPLICATION REF. NOS. LRE/957/65-X**

As you are aware from our previous correspondence dated the 9 May 2006, the Parish Council finds itself in an awkward position with regard to this application. We consider that the site is unsuitable for a large major scheme being located within a small village where access is via narrow winding roads, and services and facilities are practically non-existent. However, in the event of the Local Plan Modifications which allocate the site for 100 houses, and to which we continue to raise our strong objection, we now find that a significantly larger scale, and in our opinion inappropriate, development of this site is a more likely outcome of the planning process. Given the present situation, this letter expresses our opinion with respect to issues related to a larger scale development of the former Dow site and, in particular, the construction of a care village establishment.

The concept of a care village establishment, which in theory offers a social facility for local residents, can in principle be considered acceptable to the Parish Council. However, the application scheme as it currently stands raises a number of concerns. We have discussed these with the care village operator who has agreed to make a number of changes to the layout and commitments in relation to the s106 agreement. Unfortunately, the application deadline is such that these changes have not, we understand, to date been made and are unlikely to be incorporated in any revised plan prior to the planning committee date.

We thus find that we have no choice but to object to the detail of the current application proposal. However, we would be prepared to support an application for a care village establishment if the following modifications and s106 contribution

package were to be agreed and implemented by the care village operator and the District Council.

## Scale

Both national and local planning policies state that villages are not sustainable locations for large-scale development. Indeed policy H18 of the District Council's Local Plan states that care home establishments should only be proposed in the 5 larger settlements of the District. We thus have some concerns regarding the size of the development as currently proposed, and the implications of a potential doubling in the village households and a 50% increase in the number of adult residents. This leads us to conclude that a reduction in independent units (where residents are more likely to hold those characteristics of private households as opposed to residents in a care home) would help alleviate our concerns.

## Layout

There are also some concerns relating to specific layout issues, which we believe have arisen as a result of the scale of the proposal.

- The footprint of the built up area extends beyond the current footprint of the existing built up area. One of the main reasons why the site is acceptable for development is the fact that it is considered a 'brownfield' site. To go beyond the 'brownfield' edge of the site creates an unacceptable precedence of new development on 'greenfield' land in the open countryside.
- The proposed building layout misses an opportunity to extend and connect the green and open area which is the Letcombe Brook Corridor (a local nature area designation) with the school playing field (a proposed Millennium Green). Such a connection would be a significant benefit for wildlife and, once the Millennium Green has been established, would provide a visual and physical 'green' connection between the site and the village thus strengthening connections between residents and assisting in the integration of the care home community with the existing village. We believe integration an important feature of the plan and would discourage a development that is akin to a village-within-a-village.
- The proposed units on the eastern part of the site extend very close to the boundary that we feel would compromise the existing trees in this area. One of the main attractive features of the site is the enclosed boundary along South Street. This has been cited in the Conservation Area appraisal as a feature worthy of retention. By moving the units further away from the boundary will allow the retention of existing trees and/ or the growth of new trees along the boundary.

## Design

You will appreciate that the key feature of the existing village is the variety of styles and materials used in the buildings, largely due to the historic evolution of the village. In addition many of the buildings are fairly small in scale and noticeably detached, though positioned close to each other with small spaces in between.

We note that the architect has attempted to create a diverse variety of buildings through the use of 8 different building types. However the buildings appear to be

fairly uniform in scale (width, height and length) and their 'terraced' massing further emphasises this formality. We would like to see a greater variety in building form, with more narrow width and smaller height buildings that would reflect the appearance of many of the older properties within the village. In addition more breaks along the building line would more closely reflect the character of dwellings in Letcombe Regis.

Essentially and importantly, we are trying to avoid the creation of a suburban estate. Although the proposed scheme already goes some way to avoid this, we would like to see a far greater level of attention paid to architectural integration within the proposed development and with respect to the existing village.

As mentioned above, the enclosed boundary and embankment along South Street particularly characterises that part of the Conservation Area. Currently the proposed independent units are positioned very close to this boundary, potentially threatening the retention of existing trees and/or the successful growth of new trees in this area. In addition the buildings appear to tower over the small-scale cottages lining the northern side of South Street. This is partly due to their elevated position but also due to their large scale regarding width span and height. We would suggest that these buildings in particular are modified in design so as to reflect the characteristics of those buildings on the opposite side of South Street.

The use of cat-slides for the porch / stairways appear a rather strange feature, bearing in mind that cat-slides in the village are used on the main part of the building to bring the eaves down to first floor level. The eaves on the main part of all the buildings proposed are virtually identical emphasising a uniform appearance, whilst the use of cat-slides are used on ancillary parts of the building. We feel the appearance of these buildings would be better improved by using the cat slide design on some of the main building rooflines and avoiding such a feature on the ancillary stairway part of the buildings.

The main building itself is a considerable size and we appreciate the changes in external appearance in an attempt to minimise this structure. We have no scaled elevations of this building, and assume that these have already or will be requested by the District Council. It is important to us that this building does not tower over that of the neighbouring units, and ideally the three storey elements are limited as much as possible. This is also important if the building is not going to intrude visually within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The existing buildings cannot be seen from the Downs as they are screened by mature trees which will be removed if this scheme goes ahead.

### **Heritage**

As you are aware the site is located in the Conservation Area of the village and contains a number of historic features that contribute positively to the history of the area - in particular the brick-and-stone walls and piers surrounding the tennis courts and along South Street and the Bassett Road. It appears from the layout plan that these features will be removed either in part or in full. We wish to see these features retained.

**Affordability**

As you are already aware, we are concerned that many of the care village residents will be attracted from outside the area, as local people will not be able to afford the new properties. Ideally we would like a clause in any planning permission granted to ensure that local residents are offered first choice of any available accommodation and that a shared equity package is available on some of the properties if necessary.

**S106 Planning Obligations**

As you may be aware, the earlier applications on the site offered a number of benefits to try and off-set the potential impacts of proposing such a major extension (in terms of increased population and households). We feel that the following terms should be extended in relation to the Care Home proposal;

- *Extension to the burial ground*

As a small village, Letcombe Regis Burial Ground has a limited number of available spaces. Bearing in mind the age of many of the Care Home's residents, it will be necessary for the Parish Council to purchase additional land to provide burial facilities. At this stage the Parish Council has not been able to secure such land (past attempts have not been successful). Clearly there is an opportunity to provide a burial ground on the application site (or within adjacent land owned by the applicant).

The amount of land required will be based on the need to provide approximately 50 additional spaces (for the Care Home residents alone) every 2-3 years. There are currently only 30 spaces left in the burial ground that will only meet the needs of the existing residents for the next 3 - 7 years.

- *Village Hall Improvements*

Although we appreciate that the Care Home will have meeting place facilities it is likely that residents of the Care Home (a total of 229 – 279 people, depending on occupancy of independent care units) will occasionally make use of the village hall, particularly if they join local community groups such as the WI. The hall will need to improve its capacity regarding floor area, additional chairs, tables, tea accessories, and toilets etc. We are thus seeking a financial contribution of £120,000 towards the extension and the additional accessories.

- *Recreational Ground Pavilion*

Similarly to the village hall we anticipate that the Care Home residents will wish to participate in village sports and social events held at the recreational ground and pavilion (e.g. cricket). The Pavilion has a limited capacity and will require significant improvements to accommodate the additional people. We are thus looking for a financial contribution of £30,000 to improve the existing facility.

- *The Tennis Court*

The tennis court on the site has been available to the village during the ownership of the site by Dow. In the previous applications both Sport England and the District Council considered that the tennis court was an amenity that should be protected. This resulted in the tennis court being replaced on the



village recreational ground. We thus require a financial contribution towards the provision of such a facility.

In addition to these financial contributions we would also like the s106 agreement to address the undeveloped areas within the ownership of Letcombe Manor Estates. We understand that the applicants are willing to transfer that land relating to the nature trail to BBOWT with a commuted maintenance sum – we welcome and support this.

We appreciate that the deadline on this application is very challenging, particularly bearing in mind the required submission date of statements in relation to the public inquiry to be held in October regarding the scheme for 99 dwellings on the site. The applicants have promised to withdraw this appeal and cancel the inquiry if permission is given to the Care Village scheme. A solution to this timing might be to permit an outline application with all matters other than access to be determined at a later stage. The Care Village operator would then have the assurance needed to continue with the land purchase, and also the time required to amend the current scheme to overcome concerns relating to the detailed layout as expressed above.

We look forward to reading your forthcoming committee report and recommendation.

Yours sincerely,

Maurice Ginniff  
Chairman of Letcombe Regis Parish Council

CC. Cllr A Crawford  
Planning Committee Councillors

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## Letcombe Regis Parish Council

Chairman of the Parish Council

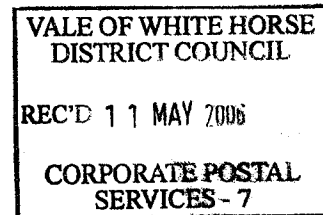
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8 May 2006

Mrs Geraldine LeCointe  
Team Leader  
Vale of White Horse District Council  
Planning Department  
Abbey House  
Abbey Close  
Abingdon  
Oxon  
OX14 3JE



Dear Mrs LeCointe,

**PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS AT LETCOMBE LABORATORY SITE,  
LETCOMBE REGIS  
APPLICATION FOR CONSERVATION CONSENT REF. NOS. LRE/957/64-CA**

As you are aware an earlier application for Conservation Consent on this site to demolish all the buildings was refused in January 2006. One of the main reasons for refusal was the lack of an approved scheme which would be implemented to replaced the demolished buildings on the site. PPG15 clearly states in paragraph 4.27;

*"...Consent for demolition should not be given unless there are acceptable and detailed plans for any redevelopment. It has been held that the decision-maker is entitled to consider the merits of any proposed development in determining whether consent should be given for the demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area."*

Although a current application exists in relation to a Care Home Village Establishment there is of yet no approved scheme for the site. It would thus be premature to determine this application until a scheme has been approved on this site. In addition any consent for demolition should be tied to a contract for rebuilding works to ensure that the site is not left in a ruinous condition that would be harmful to the Conservation Area.

Notwithstanding the above concern, Letcombe Regis Parish Council would also wish to object to the proposed demolition of the stable block and boundary walls along South Street and around the tennis court adjoining the stable block. Giles Quarme,

an architect specialising in historic buildings, noted in his report dated April 2003, that was submitted with the early application for development on the site (app nos. LRE/957/60) that the walls and brick piers were visually attractive and should be retained where possible and incorporated into any new development proposal.

With regard to the stables Mr Quarme clarified their value in paragraph 4.2.5 stating;

*"The alterations to the interior of the building has ensured that there is no likelihood of it being listed as its quality has been impaired. However it does make a positive contribution to the conservation area and contributes to the historic evolution of the site. The unsympathetic alterations can easily be reversed and the original attractive appearance of the building easily and fully restored."*

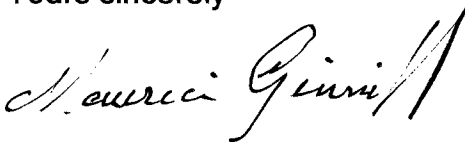
PPG15 states in paragraph 4.27;

*"The general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area. The Secretary of State expects that proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings."*

The Parish Council believe that there is enough evidence to demonstrate that the stables and the garden walls are attractive features that contribute to the historic character of the surrounding area and the Letcombe Conservation Area, and hence should be preserved.

In light of the above, the Parish Council would wish to see this application refused.

Yours sincerely



Maurice Ginniff  
Chairman of Letcombe Regis Parish Council