

PUXTON PARISH COUNCIL

Puxton & Hewish

Clerk: Donald Hill

18 Mitford Slade Court, Mendip Road, Yatton, Somerset BS49 4JG
Tel: 01934 835578 Mobile: 07774 125578 e-mail: clerk@puxtonparishcouncil.org.uk
Website: puxtonparishcouncil.org.uk

You are summoned to a Council Meeting on September 5th 2019

All meetings are held at 7.30pm in the Village Hall unless stated otherwise

All are welcome, unless precluded by a procedural resolution. You will not be entitled to speak, except within the Public Session

Don Hill - Clerk

AGENDA & AGENDA NOTES

We have vacancies for two Councillors - contact the Clerk or a Councillor, in the first instance, to apply

- 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**
- 3 **PUBLIC SESSION - 15 minutes:** Residents may raise matters affecting the parish.
- 4 **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING - 4th July 2019 - to be agreed, and signed by the Chair.**
- 5 **MATTERS ARISING NOT DEALT WITH ELSEWHERE**
- 6 **PLANNING** (*Latest Enforcement Report June 2019: Applications post agenda & prior to meeting to be added*)
New: 19-P-1889-FUL Pool Farm - Change of use, from 4 to 2, self-contained dwellings
Due: 19/P/0815/FUL Puxton Park car park. 19/P/0704/FUL J21 Park & Ride. 19/P/0723/OUT Full Quart. 19/P/1448/FUL Wick Lane Barn.
Approved: 19/P/1243/FUL: Manor Farm caravan storage. 19/P/0787/FUL: Stonebridge Farm - Stables.
Withdrawn: 19/P/1469/FUH Round Pond Garage.
- 7 **OTHER MATTERS**
Holy Saviour Church: Update from Cllr Redding. Tim Beacham's accrued maintenance costs (to be ratified) per item 9 below.
Wyndham Grange Lights: might be better angled to avoid dazzling traffic. **Clerk yet to follow up.**
Policing: PSCO reports that there has not been a spate of burglaries, just the one mentioned in July.
Puxton Road/Puxton Lane junction: becoming increasingly unsafe, prompting calls for action. See earlier Minutes as under:
June 2018 - Minute 74/18
Traffic Management at Puxton Lane/Road Triangle: *The speed of current traffic poses a potentially serious danger to drivers. We have an old fashioned country triangle that used to be accessed cautiously from all directions. Today it is increasingly a rat run for preoccupied and urgent commuters. A collision - especially from those turning towards the bridge and those coming from the bridge into Puxton Road - is sure to happen eventually. Is there some form of one-way system that can be clearly signposted such that traffic can be both clearly managed through this hazard and can clearly understand the potential danger of it? Clerk to investigate and report back.*
July 2018 - Minute 82/18
Traffic Management at Puxton Lane/Road Triangle: *NSC suggest that the only solution to mitigate the danger issues, would be to do away with the triangle and have an ordinary junction (the finger post to be re-located). The meeting felt this would be too drastic an alteration that would have a negative impact on the essentially 'village' character of the area around Holy Saviour and the Village Green. They agreed that no further action be taken, but that the situation be monitored.*
Wick Lane Rail Bridge Road Signs: damaged signs on both sides have been reported to NSC.
- 8 **COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**
- 9 **FINANCE**
2019-20 Accounts: pre-circulated with meeting papers.
2018-19 Audit: External Audit completion due.
Cheques: 242 APS Parish Maintenance £320. 243 HMRC PAYE £158.40. 244 Tim Beacham £240. 245 NSC May 2nd Election £45.
Bank Mandate: A notice of completion due. **Clerk to check progress at HSBC Clevedon.**
Financial Regulations: Updated via NALC Model and pre-circulated. To be approved.
- 10 **ONGOING ITEMS BEING MONITORED BY CLERK**
Puxton Rd Drainage at Wyndham Grange: on job list : **Puxton Lane Grip** in hand : **Puxton Rd/Lane junction:** sign re-siting : **A370 Footpath:** 1st section start date due - Cllr Treadaway pursuing. **A370 Central Refuge:** Confirmation & timetable due : **New Oldbridge River Bridge:** Timetable due : **Puxton Rd 30mph/speed bumps:** pursue : **Maysgreen Lane:** signs at Puxton Rd : **Maysgreen Lane** Cheese Factory edge repair to be re-done : **Council Houses Gully** improved but not fully clear of flooding : **Holy Saviour Church:** footpath bridge to be repaired by NSC : **Wick Lane:** Gully outside Manor Farm floods. NSC investigating.
- 11 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** October 3rd 2019 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. Clerk will be away. Cllr Redding to Minute.

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 4th July 2019

All meetings are held at 7.30pm in the Village Hall unless stated otherwise

Present: Cllrs Jim Corbett (Chair), Lynda Redding, Peter Penfold, Clayton Penfold

In Attendance: NSC Ward Cllr Stuart Treadaway, Don Hill (Clerk)

Public Attendance: 1

Everyone welcomed our new Ward Councillor, Stuart Treadaway, and time was spent ranging over various issues that were to the forefront of Members' minds. The meeting formally got underway at 7.45pm.

086/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Cllr Howard

087/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS - None

088/19 PUBLIC SESSION

Policing: There have apparently been a spate of local robberies. **Clerk to enquire of our PCSO.**

Road Safety: The junction of Puxton Road and Puxton Lane is becoming increasingly unsafe. The meeting agreed that the **Clerk put down the problem as an agenda item for the September meeting.**

The Clerk mentioned that the matter has been discussed at earlier meetings - the two relevant minutes are set out below:

June 2018 - Minute 74/18

Traffic Management at Puxton Lane/Road Triangle: *The speed of current traffic poses a potentially serious danger to drivers. We have an old fashioned country triangle that used to be accessed cautiously from all directions. Today it is increasingly a rat run for preoccupied and urgent commuters. A collision - especially from those turning towards the bridge and those coming from the bridge into Puxton Road - is sure to happen eventually. Is there some form of one-way system that can be clearly signposted such that traffic can be both clearly managed through this hazard and can clearly understand the potential danger of it? Clerk to investigate and report back.*

July 2018 - Minute 82/18

Traffic Management at Puxton Lane/Road Triangle: *NSC suggest that the only solution to mitigate the danger issues, would be to do away with the triangle and have an ordinary junction (the finger post to be re-located). The meeting felt this would be too drastic an alteration that would have a negative impact on the essentially 'village' character of the area around Holy Saviour and the Village Green. They agreed that no further action be taken, but that the situation be monitored.*

089/19 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING - 6th June 2019 - were agreed, and signed by the Chair.

090/19 MATTERS ARISING NOT DEALT WITH ELSEWHERE - This afternoon a further compliant relating to May Minute 072/19 and June Minute 077/19 was received: because the issues the complainant raises are, as our current and past Chairs have repeatedly pointed out, a matter between the complainant and the Hall Management, the Clerk was not instructed to pursue the matter.

091/19 PLANNING (*Latest Enforcement Report June 2019*)

New: 19/P/1469/FUH Detached garage, The Round Pond Bristol Road Hewish. **19/P/1448/FUL** Erection of steel frame lean-to to existing building with adjoining silage clamp on agricultural land and building at Wick Lane Hewish.

Both these applications were reviewed and no objections were raised. There was a caveat regarding the Round Pond application, however. The Flood Risk Assessment part of the application suggests that "The building will not be used to provide any form of residential accommodation and, if planning permission is granted, it will be subject to a condition prohibiting future residential occupation." (*the 3 generous dormer windows for an area of garage storage prompted a wry smile from one Member*). Members felt that, if this application is granted, this same condition should be attached to the existing former garage block (now a beauty salon) at the front of the residence. **Clerk to so report to NSC Planners.**

Decisions Due: 19/P/0815/FUL Puxton Park car park. **19/P/1243/FUL:** Manor Farm caravan storage. **19/P/0704/FUL** J21 Park & Ride (Banwell PC). **19/P/0723/OUT** Full Quart - Hotel. **19/P/0787/FUL:** Stonebridge Farm - Stables.

092/19 OTHER MATTERS

Holy Saviour Church: Cllr Redding reported on a 'Community Clean-up' on June 22nd that saw the Graveyard coming back into some sort of order from the overgrown chaos it had become. The work was done largely by people from Congresbury, but there were some willing hands from Hewish and Puxton as well. It was accepted that the day had been a success and should be repeated. However, it was also realised that the only effective solution was regular maintenance.

The Church is the responsibility of the Church Commissioners. The Graveyard - because it is an 'Open' graveyard; ie still used for burials - is the responsibility of The St Andrews (Congresbury) Parish. Income generated from use of the Church - eg its recent use as a film set - goes to the Church Commissioners. Whilst it might seem reasonable that the Commissioners pay some of the graveyard upkeep costs to ensure that the attractiveness of their asset is enhanced, that does not seem to be the way things are done.

Ongoing maintenance would cost £120 (*£15 per hour for an 8 hour day*) per two weeks. Over 30 weeks between the start of April and the end of October this would be 15 x £120 = £1800.00. Cllr Redding will discuss, with the Vicar, the possibility of this work being authorised, on the basis of it being paid for 50% by Puxton Parish Council and 50% by Congresbury PC/St Andrews. As there is money available in the current Puxton PC budget, the meeting agreed that Cllr Redding will arrange for the contractor to do a day's work during the next few days so that the June 22nd efforts are not lost. The meeting further agreed that the £120 charge for this work will be paid for from the Puxton Parish Council Parish Maintenance budget. **Cllr Redding** will report progress to the September meeting.

Wyndham Grange Lights: might be better angled to avoid dazzling traffic. *Clerk yet to follow up.*

093/19 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr Peter Penfold: reiterated worries about the state of the A370 pavement between J21 and Congresbury. **Cllr Treadaway** undertook to investigate progress of the expected solution.

094/19 FINANCE

2019-20 Accounts: pre-circulated with meeting papers, reviewed and noted.

Cheques: 240 Vision ICT re website state mourning provision £84.00. **241** Laurence Holmes Solicitors re £40,000 1st Charge on Village Hall £1561.00

Bank Mandate: A letter and completed mandate form were unanimously agreed. The letter was signed by the three existing signatories - Cllrs Corbett, P Penfold and Clerk Don Hill: and by the two signatories to be added; Cllrs Redding and C Penfold. The mandate alteration form was also completed and signed by the two new signatories. The mandate completed on April 6th 2017 will be cancelled and replaced by this new mandate. *Clerk to progress.*

095/19 ONGOING ITEMS BEING MONITORED BY CLERK

Puxton Rd Drainage at Wyndham Grange: on job list : **Puxton Lane Grip** in hand : **Puxton Rd/Lane junction:** sign re-siting : **A370 Footpath:** 1st section start date due. **A370 Central Refuge:** Confirmation & timetable due : **New Oldbridge River Bridge:** Timetable due : **Puxton Rd 30mph/speed bumps:** pursue after A370 central refuge organised (minute 017/19) : **Maysgreen Lane:** signs at Puxton Rd : **Maysgreen Lane** Cheese Factory edge repair to be re-done : **Council Houses Gully** improved but not fully clear of flooding : **Holy Saviour Church:** footpath bridge to be repaired by NSC : **Wick Lane:** Gully outside Manor Farm floods. NSC investigating.

096/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

September 5th 2019 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. *(As usual, there will be no meeting in August)*

The meeting closed at 8.35pm

Planning Application 19/P/1889/FUL
Pool Farm, Bristol Road, Hewish, Weston-super-Mare, BS24 6SG
Proposed change of use of 4 self-contained dwellings to 2 self-contained dwellings



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

THE PROPERTY

The application site comprises a single house, previously used as a guest house until the late 1980s. By 2003 it had been converted (without planning consent) into 4 self-contained dwellings. Each unit has been occupied continuously as such since the date of substantial completion. The current freeholders purchased the property in May 2003; they live in one unit, and the other three are rented out. Separate services were installed to each unit in 2009 (water), 2012 (electricity) 2015 (gas). The change of use from business to domestic and the creation of the dwelling as four separate units is long enough ago for enforcement not to be practical.

The applicant now wishes to regularise the current position by means of this application to change the use from 4 to 2 self-contained dwellings. No operational development is proposed or required to complete this change of use. Pool Farm is a traditional two storey dwelling with ample surrounding curtilage. Works to effect the proposed change will be confined to the interior of the building only and the exterior will remain unaffected. The interior and exterior layouts have been sub-divided so that both proposed dwellings will have adequate levels of private amenity space. The existing site access arrangements will be unaffected by the proposal.

FLOOD RISK

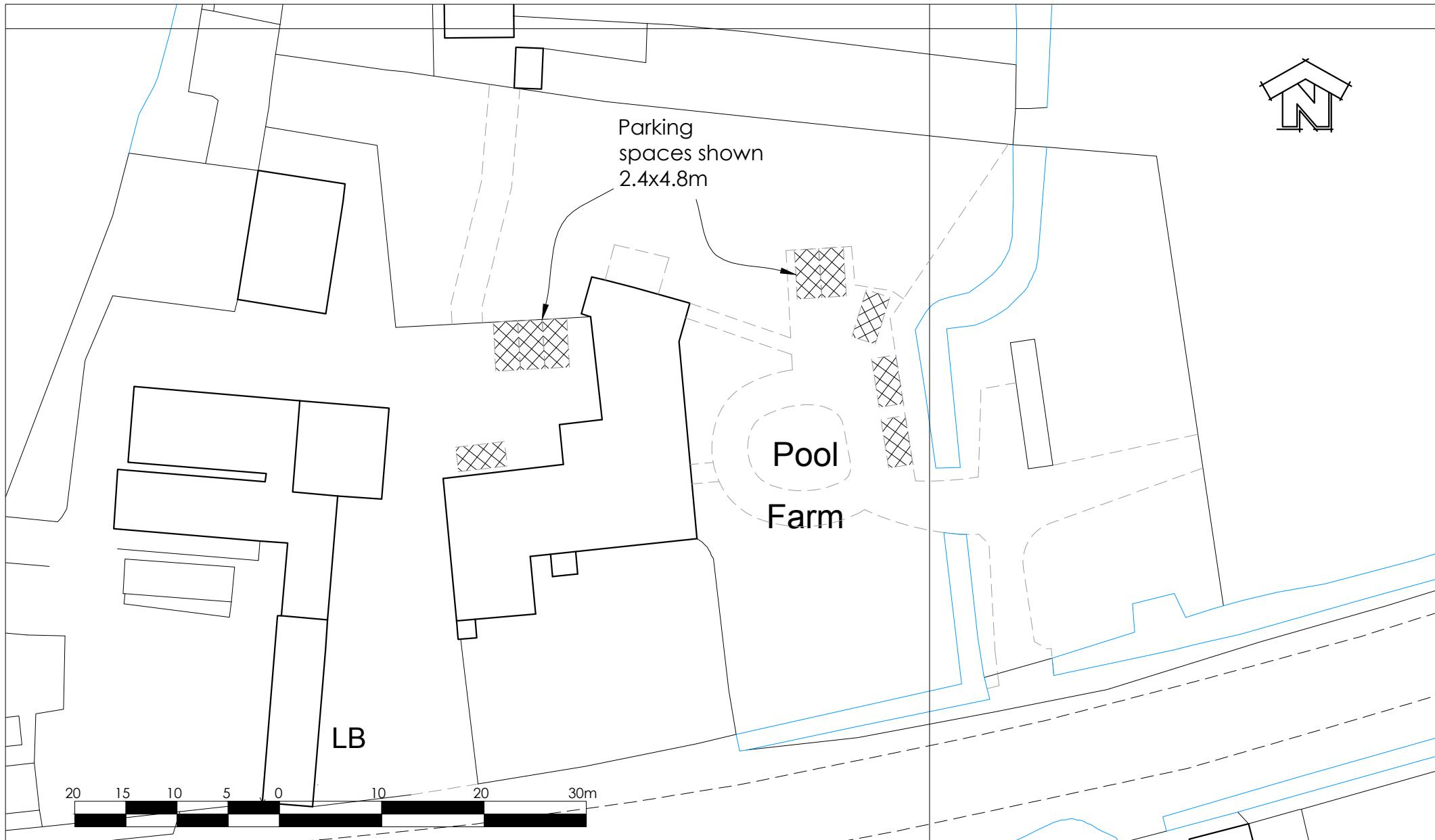
The site is located on land that is considered to be at increased risk of flooding from tidal or fluvial sources. Accordingly, the usual format of site-specific flood risk assessment has been submitted with the application which confirms that steps can be taken to mitigate against the risk which will make it acceptable. There is no historical data to support flood events occurring in living memory. The proposal will enhance the existing position in relation to surface water and run-off drainage provision, reducing flood risk on site and elsewhere. The proposals for flood warning and future management will ensure there is no increase in flood risk at the site or elsewhere. The flood risk can be adequately managed to ensure the safety of future occupiers. The existence of a first floor area within the building with a floor level that is set well in excess of the water level predicted during a local flood event will ensure that future occupiers of the proposed self-contained residential units have a generously sized safe internal refuge area where they can await evacuation or wait for flood water levels to subside.

ECOLOGY

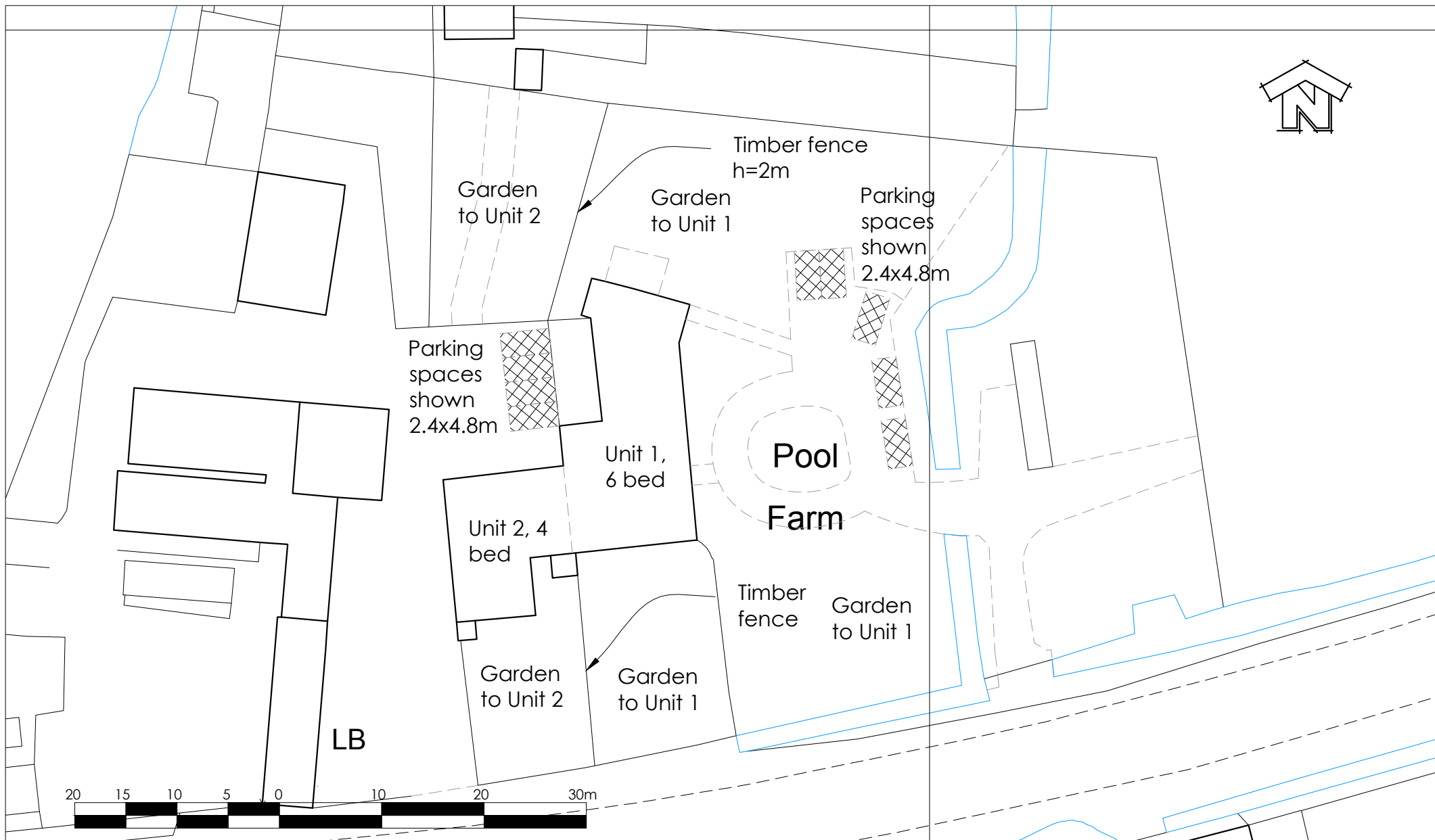
Having regard to the standard legislation relating to the protection of rare species and, in this instance, given that the application relates a proposed change of use which involves internal alterations to the subject building only, it is highly improbable that any protected species will be affected by the proposal. For this reason, no ecological survey has been undertaken in support of the application.

CONCLUSION

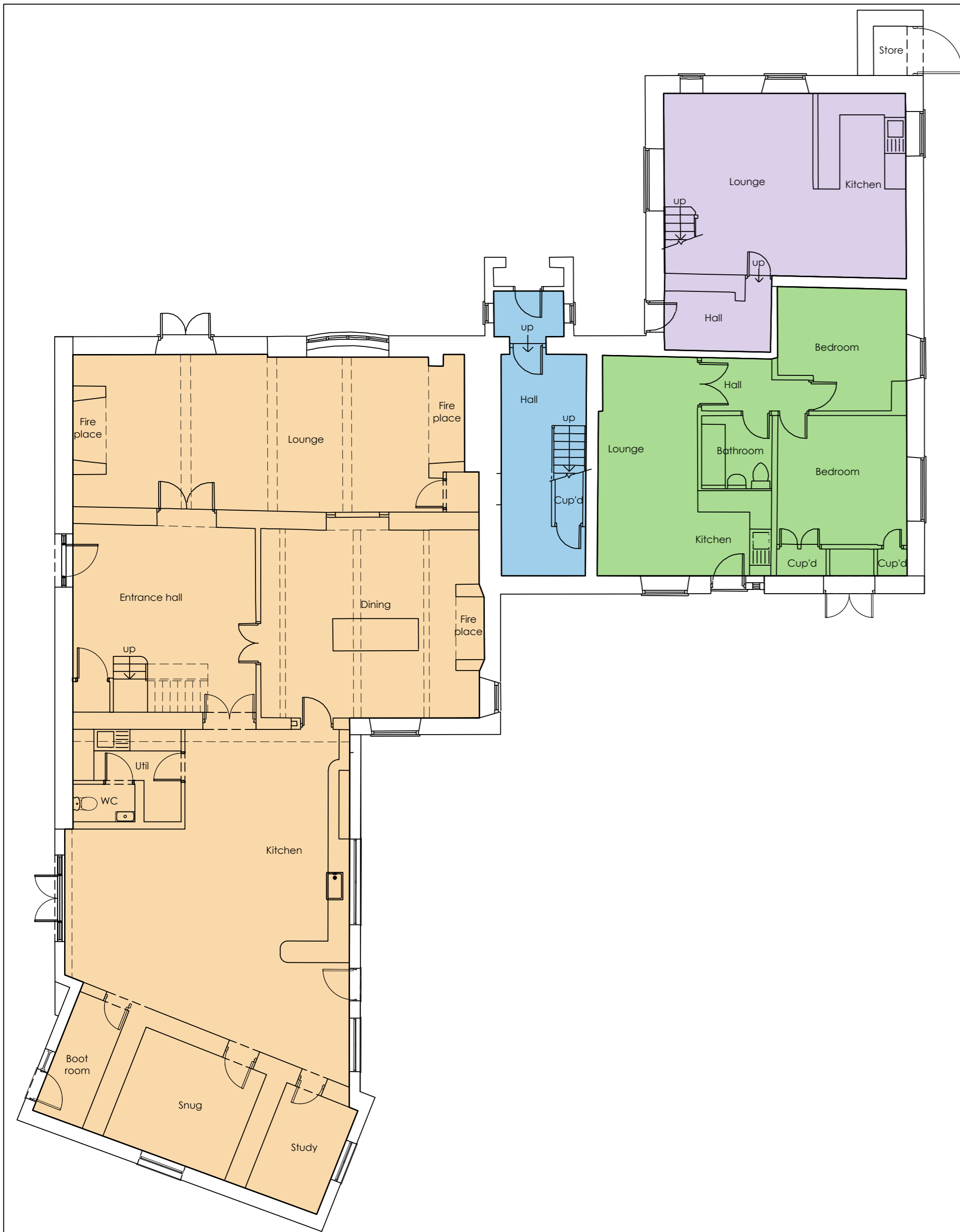
The site lies in the open countryside where the creation of new dwellinghouses is not normally permitted. However, in this case unauthorised development comprising the sub-division of a single dwelling into 4 has already been carried out and this application is looking to regularise that situation. The unauthorised conversion works were substantially completed in excess of four years ago and the development is now technically immune from enforcement action, although there is no lawful development certificate in place to confirm this. Paragraph 79 of the NPPF advises that Standard planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless (inter alia) "...the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling". Given the fact that national planning policy guidance is supportive of proposals to sub-divide existing dwellings in countryside locations, there should be no objections, in principle, to a proposal which will see the amalgamation of 4 dwellings into 2.



Location	Scale	Date	Drg no.	Rev	Status	Title
Pool Farm, Hewish, BS24 6SG	1:500@A4	July 2019	EP002	-	Planning	Existing Site Plan



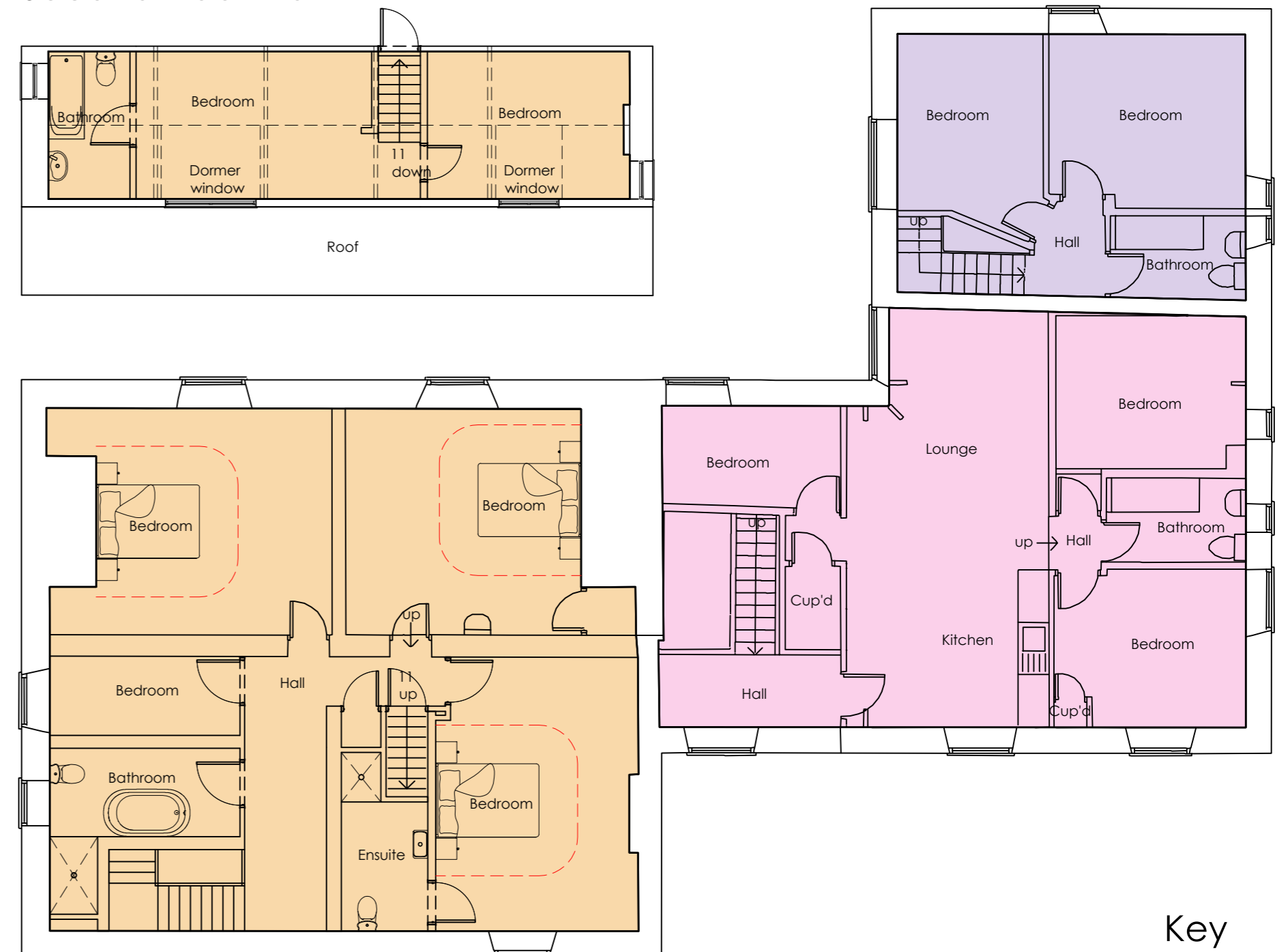
Location	Scale	Date	Drg no.	Rev	Status	Title
Pool Farm, Hewish, BS24 6SG	1:500@A4	July 2019	PP003	-	Planning	Proposed Site Plan



Ground Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

Key



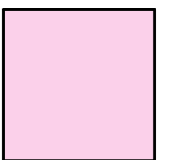
Unit1



Unit2



Unit3

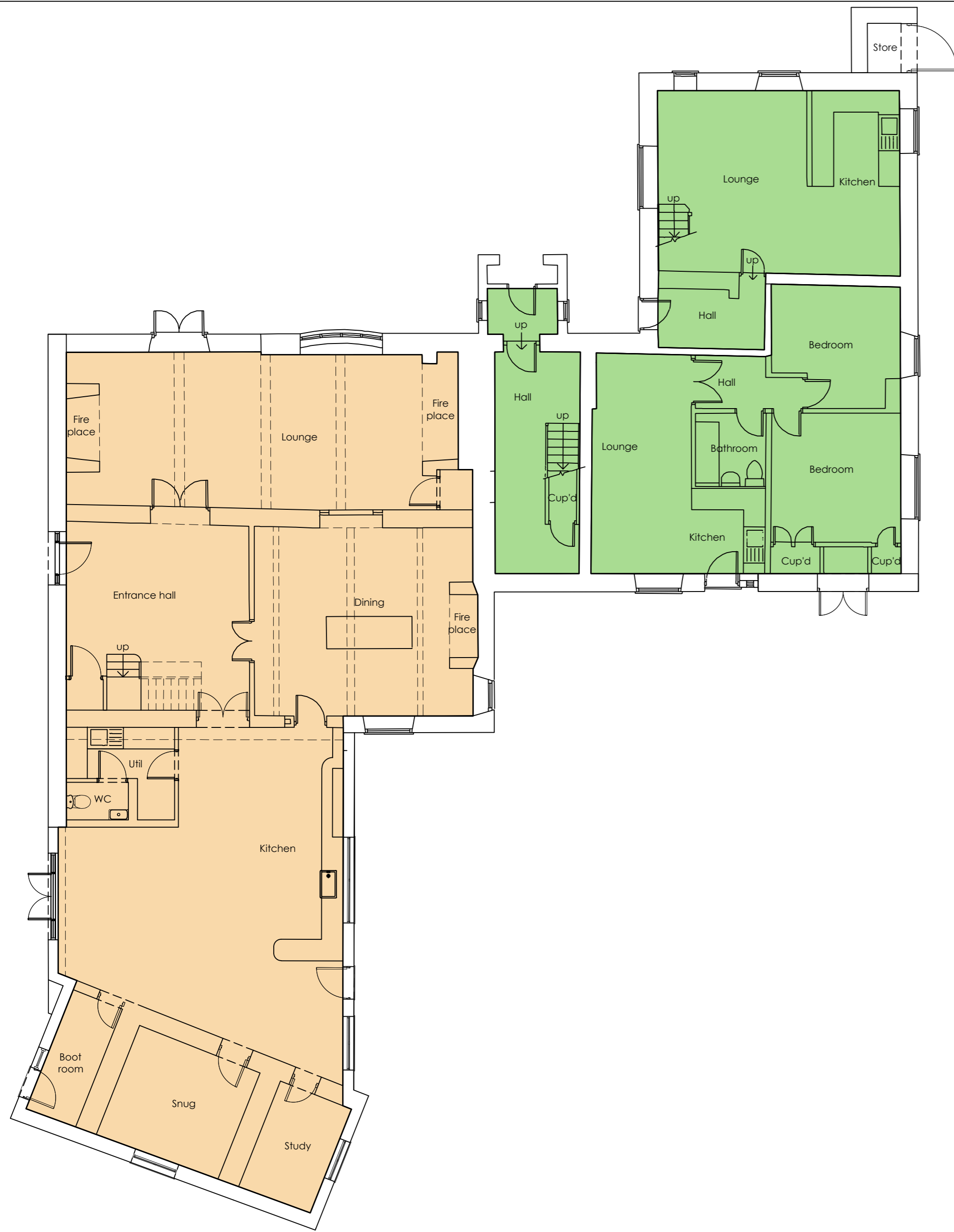


Unit4



Communal

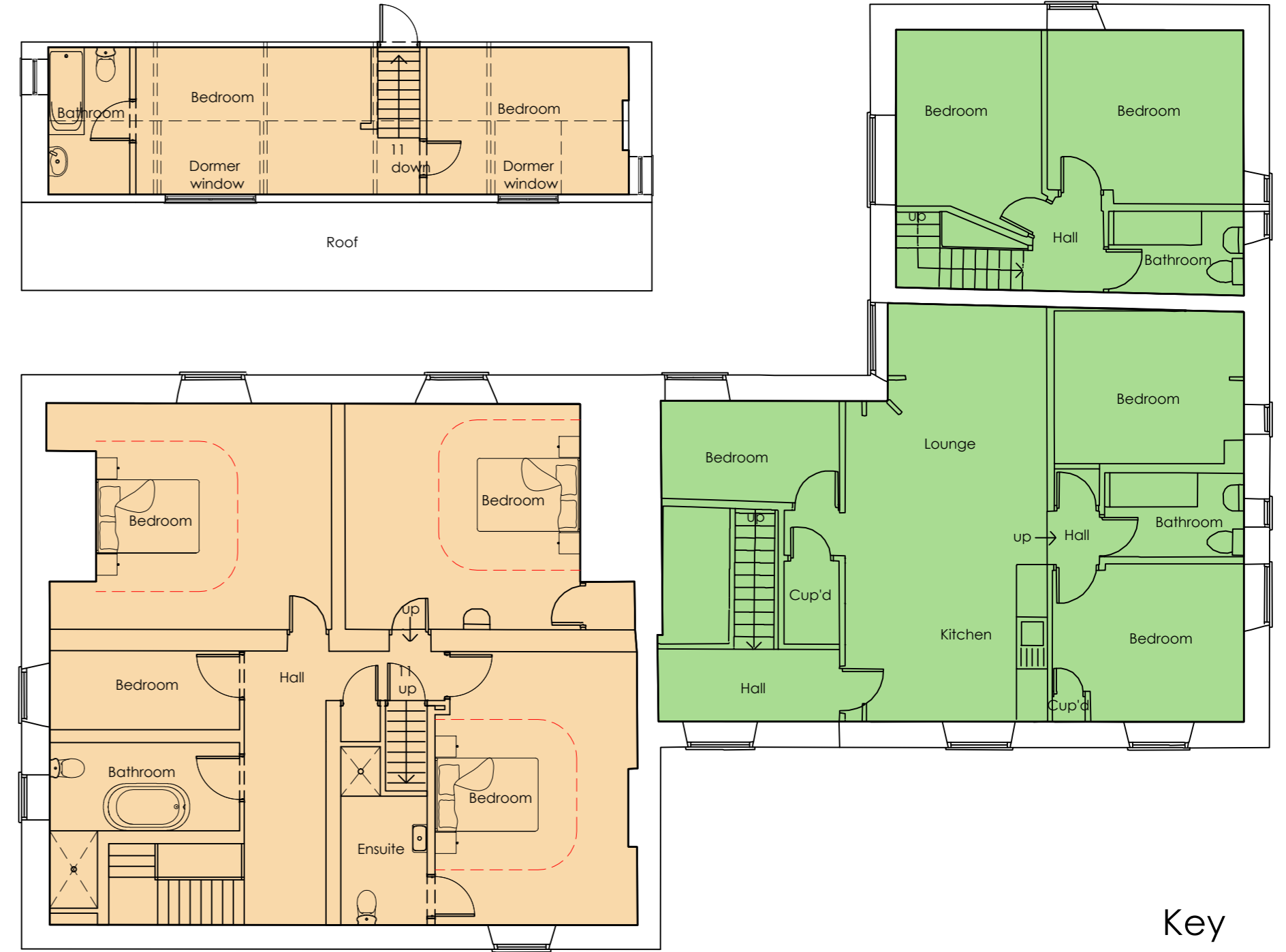
Location	Scale	Date	Drg no.	Rev	Status	Title
Pool Farm, Hewish, BS24 6SG	1:100@A2	July 2019	EP004	-	Planning	Existing Plans



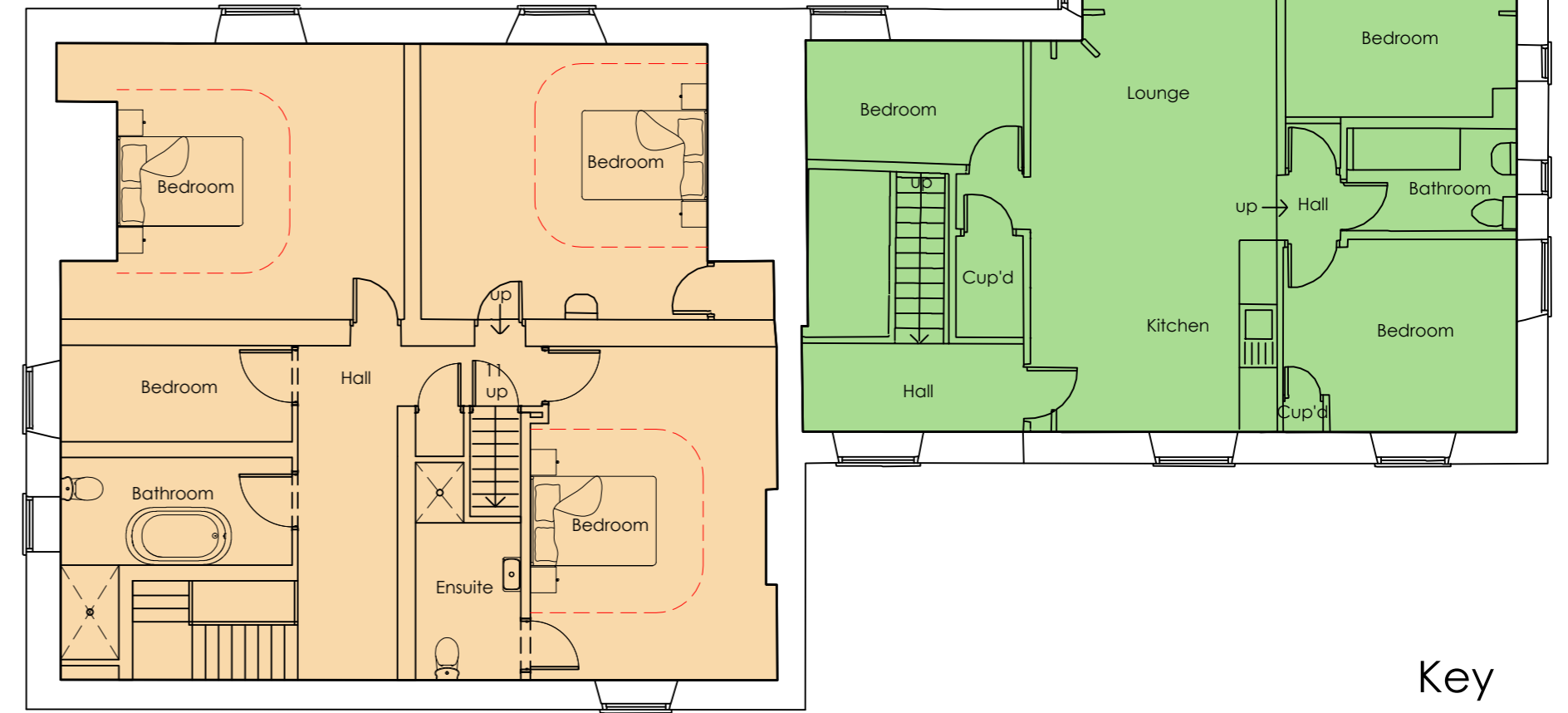
Ground Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan



First Floor Plan



Location	Scale	Date	Drg no.	Rev	Status	Title
Pool Farm, Hewish, BS24 6SG	1:100@A2	July 2019	PP005	-	Planning	Proposed Plans

PUXTON PARISH COUNCIL INCOME & EXPENDITURE: 1st April 2019 - 31st March 2020 (Precept £7400.00 : No CT Support Grant)

DATE 2019 -2020	ITEM	CH	BANK		BALANCE	Stmnt	NOTES	GENERAL FUND EXPENSE ANALYSIS									TOTALS	VAT	OPERATING FUNDS				
			IN	OUT				Clerk	Clk/Clr Exp	Hall Hire	Parish Maint	Ins/Subs Audit	Pub- -licity	Community Fund	Other Costs	Web site			Election Pro	Capital Prov	General Fund	Total Op Funds	
Apr 1	Funds Bought Forward				14,350.74														2000.00	5601.00	6749.74	14350.74	
	Less H & P Community Fund				1,567.96																	1,567.96	1,567.96
	OPERATING BAL B/F				12,782.78														2,000.00	5,601.00	5,181.78	12782.78	
Apr 4	ALCA	100237		58.30	12,724.48	70						58.30											58.30
	NSC 1st Half Precept	BACS	3700.00		16,424.48	70													250.00	250.00	3,200.00		
	Clerk's net pay & expenses	SO		245.50	16,178.98	70		211.20	34.30														245.50
	H&P Village Hall Hire	SO		22.92	16,156.06	70	AGREES			22.92													22.92
May 9	Clerk's net pay & expenses	SO		245.50	15,910.56	71		211.20	34.30														245.50
	H&P Village Hall Hire	SO		22.92	15,887.64	71	AGREES			22.92													22.92
Jun 6	Clerk's net pay & expenses	SO		245.50	15,642.14	72		211.20	34.30														245.50
	H&P Village Hall Hire	SO		22.92	15,619.22	72				22.92													22.92
	Philip Smith - Internal Audit	238		59.50	15,559.72	72						59.50											59.50
	HMRC re PAYE Apr/May/Jun	239		158.40	15,401.32	72	AGREES	158.40															158.40
Jul 4th	Clerk's net pay & expenses	SO		245.50	15,155.82	73		211.20	34.30														245.50
	H&P Village Hall Hire			22.92	15,132.90	73				22.92													22.92
	Vision ICT re web provisions	240		84.00	15,048.90	73											84.00						84.00
	Laurence Holmes Solicitors	241		1561.00	13,487.90	73									1,561.00								1,561.00
	Add back Community Fund		1567.96		15,055.86	-	AGREES																0.00
																							1,567.96
Aug 1	Clerk's net pay & expenses	SO		245.50	14,810.36			211.20	34.30														245.50
Sep 5	Clerk's net pay & expenses	SO		245.50	14,564.86			211.20	34.30														245.50
	Adrian Leonard July Maint	242		320.00	14,244.86						320.00												320.00
	HMRC re PAYE Jul/Aug/Sep	243		158.40	14,086.46			158.40															158.40
	ICO GDPR Fee for 2019-20	DD		35.00	14,051.46							35.00											35.00
	Tim Beacham St Saviours	244		240.00	13,811.46						240.00												240.00
	NSC re Election costs	245		45.00	13,766.46											45.00							45.00
	Transfer from Election Prov'n			45.00	13,721.46														45.00				0.00
					13,721.46																		0.00
					13,721.46																		0.00
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PUXTON PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on 5th September 2019

1. GENERAL

- 1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3. The council's accounting control systems must include measures:
- for the timely production of accounts;
 - that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
 - to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
 - identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7. Members of Council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council. The Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this council and these regulations will apply accordingly.
- 1.9. The RFO;
- acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
 - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
 - assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
 - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.10. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:
- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
 - a record of the assets and liabilities of the council; and
 - wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 1.12. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:
- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
 - procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
 - identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
 - procedures to ensure that un-collectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
 - measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.
- 1.13. The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:
- setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
 - approving accounting statements;
 - approving an annual governance statement;
 - borrowing;
 - writing off bad debts;
 - declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
 - addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors, shall be a matter for the full council only.
- 1.14. In addition the council must:
- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
 - approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of £200; and
 - in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

- 1.15. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified. In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

2. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)

- 2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.
- 2.2. Before each meeting of the Council, the RFO shall circulate to Members, detailed and up-to-date income and expenditure accounts that have been reconciled with the latest available bank statements. This will be supported by an electronic file containing the bank statements and the income and expenditure paperwork, which the RFO will make available to any member who from time-to-time may request it. Members will review, comment and note the accounts and any considerations arising from them under the agenda item of Finance that will form a part of each Meeting of the Council.
- 2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.6. The internal auditor shall:
- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
 - demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.
- 2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties for the council;
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 2.9. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.10. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

3. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET) AND FORWARD PLANNING

- 3.1. The Council shall review and update its medium term forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the council not later than the end of December each year, for consideration at the January meeting of the Council.
- 3.2. The RFO must, in the context of the medium term forecast, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the council at its January meeting, where the council shall consider it and shall fix the precept for the ensuing financial year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority.
- 3.3. The approved annual budget shall be recorded in the Minutes of the Council's January meeting and shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing financial year.

4. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND

- 4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:
- the council for all items, to be evidenced by a minute, or
 - where an urgent need arises between meetings, by the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of the Council and one other member (both authorising signatories). Such authority is to be evidenced by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk, and and the two authorising signatories.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.

- 4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the council. During the budget year and with the approval of council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').
- 4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.
- 4.4. The salary budget is to be reviewed annually in December for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by inclusion in and approval of the budget at the council's January meeting.

- 4.5. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £200. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 4.7. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.8. The RFO shall provide the council with a monthly statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements shall show explanations of significant variances.
- 4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS

- 5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; they may not be delegated to a committee; they shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.
- 5.2. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the papers for the Meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to council for review, authorisation and inclusion as part of the minutes of that meeting. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and payment relating to termination of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to personal information.
- 5.3. Invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which they relate have been performed to approved council expectations.
- 5.4. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available council meeting.
- 5.5. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:
- a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee];
 - b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee]; or
 - c) fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of [£10,000], provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee].
- 5.6. For each financial year the RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which council may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.
- 5.7. A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is authorised - thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.
- 5.8. In respect of grants a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by council. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £5,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the council.
- 5.9. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 5.10. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.
- 5.11. Any change in the recorded details of suppliers shall be ratified and minuted by the next following meeting of the council.

6. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS

- 6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3. All payments shall be effected by cheque or other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of council.
- 6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council or committee shall be signed by two members of council, in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.
- 6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 6.6. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at a council or committee meeting (including immediately before or after such a meeting). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the council at the next convenient meeting.
- 6.7. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.8. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items (principally salaries) may be made by banker's standing order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two members are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

- 6.9. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.10. If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.
- 6.11. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chairman of Council in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.
- 6.12. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 6.13. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.
- 6.14. The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 6.15. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.
- 6.16. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.17. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by the RFO and a Councillor. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.
- 6.18. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £200 unless authorised by council in writing before any order is placed.
- 6.19. No pre-paid debit cards will be issued.
- 6.20. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the RFO and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.
- 6.21. The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by the Clerk / RFO (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES

- 7.1. As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.
- 7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.
- 7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council.
- 7.4. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record. This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
- a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
 - b) by the internal auditor;
 - c) by the external auditor; or
 - d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.5. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 7.6. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.
- 7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by council.
- 7.8. Before employing interim staff the council must consider a full business case.

8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

- 8.1. This Council takes out no loans. If that situation is subject to change, these regulations will need to be restructured to accommodate the change.
- 8.2. This Council has no investments. Reserves held by the Council are held in a bank account that is optimally deemed to earn the highest return based on the lowest level of risk.
- 8.3. If the Council's reserves reach a level where an investment strategy is deemed necessary these regulations will need to be restructured to accommodate that change.

9. INCOME

- 9.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- 9.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk.
- 9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 9.10. Any income arising which is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting (see also Regulation 16 below).

10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

- 10.1. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.
- 10.2. Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 10.3. All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any *de minimis* provisions in Regulation 11.1 below.
- 10.4. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 10.5. The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the minutes can record the power being used.

11. CONTRACTS

- 11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:
- a. Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that the Regulations at b. below need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
 - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
 - iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
 - iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;
 - v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and
 - vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.
 - b. The council does not intend to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations") which is valued at £25,000 or more. Should this situation change, this clause will be revised in accordance with the NALC guidance at the time.

12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS (PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS)

Such payments will only arise if revision of these regulations occurs per clause 11. b. above.

13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT

This section of the NALC model financial regulations does not currently apply to this Council

14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

- 14.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £250.

- 14.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.5. Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 14.2 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council with a full business case.
- 14.6. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

15. INSURANCE

- 15.1. Following the annual risk assessment (per Regulation 17), the Clerk / RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.
- 15.2. The Clerk / RFO shall record all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 15.3. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.4. The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to council at the next available meeting.
- 15.5. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the council.

16. CHARITIES

- 16.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk / RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

17. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 17.1. The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk / RFO shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 17.2. When considering any new activity, the Clerk / RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the council.

18. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 18.1. It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.
- 18.2. The council may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of council.
