

Quantock House, Taunton
Historic Environment
Desk Based Assessment
& Visual Impact
Assessment

Client: QUANTUM GROUP

AB Heritage Project No:10867

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AB Heritage Limited has been commissioned by Quantum Group to produce an Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment and Visual Impact Assessment covering the proposed development of a new building at the existing site of Quantock House, Paul Street, Taunton, Somerset. TA1 3PB.

This assessment has reviewed all of the known cultural heritage features within a 150m study area around the proposed development site in order to gain an understanding of the potential for the survival of archaeological features within the site boundary. The cultural heritage features in this area indicate that the proposed development site lies within the former extent of the medieval town [AB 2] of Taunton, and is surrounded primarily by surviving structures of post medieval date, close to the town centre. Historic maps have also shown that the proposed development site has been the site of former buildings in the post medieval period [AB 58 & 59]. Evidence of activity pre-dating the medieval town [AB 2] is limited.

It was concluded that the potential for surviving archaeological features within the site boundary is likely to be moderate to low, and any remains may relate to the medieval of Taunton [AB 2] or the former post medieval buildings [AB 58 & 59] within the site.

The predicted medium impact of the proposed development results in a moderate significance of effect in relation to medieval features, and a minor significance of effect of in relation to post-medieval features, and in line with Table 3. A watching brief in the areas proposed for groundworks outside of the footprint of the existing building has been recommend, subject to the approval of the local planning archaeologist.

In addition, a number of heritage assets and key viewpoints have been identified within Taunton from which the visual impact assessment has been undertaken. It was concluded that less than substantial harm would be posed to the heritage assets and viewpoints as a result of the proposal.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 AB Heritage Limited (hereinafter AB Heritage) has been commissioned by Quantum Group to produce an Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment and Visual Impact Assessment covering the proposed development of a new building at the existing site of Quantock House, Paul Street, Taunton, Somerset. TA1 3PB.
- 1.1.2 This report includes a description of the baseline conditions; an examination of available documentary, cartographic and known archaeological evidence; and identifies any known and potential cultural heritage receptor(s) within the application site and its surrounding area. It proposes a suitable mitigation strategy for cultural heritage, where such a works is deemed appropriate.
- 1.1.3 A Visual Impact Assessment has been incorporated into this report in order to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on the historic town of Taunton, in which the site is located.

1.2 Site Location & Description

- 1.2.1 The proposed development site is centred at (NGR) ST 22836 24320 in the town centre of Taunton, Somerset. The site comprises of a sub-square area of land bounded to the east and north by Paul Street, and Mary Street to the South. The High Street multi storey car park bounds the site to the west beyond the site boundary.
- 1.2.2 A two to eight storey building, known as Quantock House, constructed of reinforced concrete with red brick panels on lower storeys lies at the centre of the proposed development site. A car park lies to the north and west of Quantock House, and a green space with a number of large trees lies to the south east of Quantock House. Both are within the boundary of the proposed development site.

1.3 Geology & Topography

- 1.3.1 The proposed development site lies upon a bedrock geology of sedimentary mudstone and halite-stone within the Mercia Mudstone Group. This was formed in a local environment dominated by hot deserts in the Triassic Period.
- 1.3.2 No superficial deposits have been officially recorded in this area (BGS 2016).
- 1.3.3 The proposed development site lies on a moderate incline, rising from c.27m in the north to c.29m in the south. The existing site is terraced into the slope.

1.4 Proposed Development

- 1.4.1 The proposal includes the demolition of the existing eight storey building named Quantock House, and the construction of a new nine storey building in its place. The lower ground floor will be parking and plant, while the upper ground floor will be primarily retail and restaurant space, with a formal garden to the south of the building. The remainder of the floors are

proposed to be occupied by a new 62 bedroom care home and 58 assisted living extra care apartments.

2. AIMS & METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims of Works

- 2.1.1 Early consultation of the results of archaeological research and consideration of the implications of proposed development are the key to informing reasonable planning decisions.
- 2.1.2 The aim of this report is to facilitate such a process by understanding the historical development of the proposed development site and the likely impact upon any surviving archaeological resource resulting from the proposed development, devising appropriate mitigation responses where necessary.
- 2.1.3 A visual impact assessment has been undertaken as part of this report to determine whether there will be any significant harm to the visual setting of the heritage features surrounding the proposed development site as a result of the proposed new building. The assessment will also determine whether the form and appearance of proposed plans will significantly impact the current historic character of the surrounding area, and the current character of Taunton's skyline.

2.2 Methodology of Works

- 2.2.1 The assessment has been carried out, in regard to the collation of baseline information, in line with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (1994, latest revision 2014).
- 2.2.2 This assessment includes relevant information contained in various statutory requirements, national, regional and local planning policies and professional good practice guidance, including:
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979
 - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990
 - The National Planning Policy Framework, 2012
- 2.2.3 The Somerset Historic Environment Record (HER) is the primary source of information concerning the current state of archaeological and architectural knowledge in this area. For reporting purposes, the HER information has been re-numbered with AB numbers, which can be viewed in Appendix 1. The information contained within this database was supported by examination of data from a wide range of other sources, principally:
- The Heritage Gateway (www.heritagegateway.org.uk) for information from Historic England National Monuments Record, Pastscape and other research resources, including the Access to Archives (A2A)
 - The Historic England website professional pages, particularly the National Heritage List for England
 - A site-walk over on 3rd August 2016
 - A visual impact assessment on 3rd, 5th and 12th August 2016

- Additional relevant documentary resources at the Somerset Heritage Centre, and online historic sources
- The project scope which was formed following a scoping exercise with the local Conservation Officer on 30th June 2016 (Appendix 4).

2.2.4 Information from these sources was used to understand:

- Information on statutory and non-statutory designated sites
- Information on heritage assets recorded on the Somerset HER
- Readily accessible information on the proposed development site's history from readily available historic maps and photographs
- Any information on the proposed development site contained in published and unpublished archaeological and historical sources, including any previous archaeological investigations undertaken within the study area
- A greater understanding of key cultural heritage issues of the proposed development site and surrounding area, developed through the onsite walkover, including information on areas of past truncation within the proposed development site boundary
- The impact of the proposed development on the known and potential archaeological resource, resulting in the formulation of a mitigation strategy, where required, which appropriately targets any future works to those required to gain planning consent.

2.3 Consultation

- 2.3.1 The scope of this assessment was fully discussed and approved with the South West Heritage Trust. Please see Appendix 4 for the agreed scope.
- 2.3.2 During consultation between Zoe Edwards (Assistant Heritage Consultant; AB Heritage) and Steve Membery (Senior Historic Environment Officer; South West Heritage Trust) on 7th July 2016, it was confirmed that a 150m study area covering non-designated features surrounding the proposed development site would be sufficient for this assessment.
- 2.3.3 Zoe Edwards also consulted with Nic Wall at the South West Heritage Trust in June and July to confirm the scope of the Settings Assessment within the report. A scoping exercise was undertaken in Taunton by Zoe Edwards and Nic Wall on 30th June 2016, and a formal scope was approved for the Settings Assessment as a result of this. Nic also confirmed that a 500m study area for designated features surrounding the proposed development site would be a sufficient area.
- 2.3.4 In further consultation, Nic agreed that existing photographs provided by the client, which show the views of the surrounding area from the upper storeys of the existing building, would be sufficient for the visual impact assessment, in place of AB Heritage staff entering the building which was already undergoing targeted internal demolition.

2.4 Assessment of the Cultural Heritage Resource

2.4.1 This desk-based assessment contains a record of the known and potential cultural heritage resource of an area. In relation to buried archaeological remains, where there is a potential for encountering a particular resource within the application site this is assessed according to the following scale:

- Low - Very unlikely to be encountered on site
- Medium - Possibility that features may occur / be encountered on site
- High - Remains almost certain to survive on site

2.4.2 There is currently no standard adopted statutory or government guidance for assessing the importance of an archaeological feature and this is instead judged upon factors such as statutory and non-statutory designations, architectural, archaeological or historical significance, and the contribution to local research agendas. Considering these criteria each identified feature can be assigned to a level of importance in accordance with a five-point scale (Table 1, below).

2.4.3 Tables 1 - 3 below have been developed by AB Heritage, based on a version of those applied in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges 2007, Vol 1, Section 3: Cultural Heritage. While not a transport scheme in itself, the purpose of using this general structure is to provide a carefully categorised system of assessment with which to better understand over significance of effect.

Table 1: Assessing the Importance of a Cultural Heritage Site

SCALE OF SITE IMPORTANCE	
NATIONAL	The highest status of site, e.g. Scheduled Monuments (or undesignated assets of schedulable quality and importance). Grade I and Grade II* Listed Buildings. Other listed buildings that can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their fabric or historical associations not adequately reflected in the listing grade. Conservation Areas containing very important buildings. Undesignated structures of clear national importance. Extremely well preserved historic landscape, whether inscribed or not, with exceptional coherence, time depth, or other critical factor(s).
REGIONAL	Grade II Listed Buildings or other designated or undesignated archaeological sites (in addition to those listed above), or assets of a reasonably defined extent and significance, or reasonable evidence of occupation / settlement, ritual, industrial activity etc. Examples may include areas containing buildings that contribute significantly to its historic character, burial sites, deserted medieval villages, Roman roads and dense scatter of finds.
LOCAL	Evidence of human activity more limited in historic value than the examples above, or compromised by poor preservation and/or survival of context associations, though which still have the potential to contribute to local research objectives. Examples include sites such as 'locally designated' buildings or undesignated structures / buildings of limited historic merit, out-of-situ archaeological findspots / ephemeral archaeological evidence and historic field systems and boundaries etc.
NEGLIGIBLE	Assets with very little or no surviving archaeological interest. Examples include destroyed antiquities, structures of almost no architectural / historic merit, buildings of an intrusive character or relatively modern / common landscape features such as quarries, drains and ponds etc.
UNKNOWN	Insufficient information exists to assess the importance of a feature (e.g. unidentified features on aerial photographs).

- 2.4.4 The importance of already identified cultural heritage resources is determined by reference to existing designations. Where classification of a receptor's value covered a range of the above possibilities or for previously unidentified features where no designation has been assigned, the value of the receptor was based on professional knowledge and judgement.
- 2.4.5 For some types of finds or remains there is no consistent value and the importance may vary, for example Grade II Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. For this reason, adjustments are occasionally made, where appropriate, based on professional judgement.

2.5 Impact Assessment Criteria

- 2.5.1 The magnitude of impact upon the archaeological and heritage resource, which can be considered in terms of direct and indirect impacts, is determined by identifying the level of effect from the proposed development upon the baseline conditions of the site and the cultural heritage resource identified. The criteria for assessing the magnitude of impact are set out in Table 2 (below).
- 2.5.2 In certain cases, it is not possible to confirm the magnitude of impact upon a cultural heritage resource, especially where anticipated buried deposits exist. Where possible a professional

judgement as to the scale of such impacts is applied to enable the likely 'Significance of Effects' to be established; however, a magnitude level of 'uncertain' is included for situations where it is simply not appropriate to make such a judgement at this stage of works.

Table 2: Criteria for Determining Magnitude of Impact

IMPACT LEVEL	DEFINITION
HIGH	Changes to most or all of the key archaeological or key heritage baseline elements, or comprehensive changes to the setting of such key features that lead to total or almost complete alteration of a features physical structure, dramatic visual alteration to the setting of a heritage asset, or almost comprehensive variation to aspects such as noise, access, or visual amenity of the historic landscape.
MEDIUM	Changes to many key archaeological materials/historic elements, or their setting, such that the baseline resource is clearly modified. This includes considerable visual change to many key aspects of the historic landscape, noticeable differences in noise or sound quality, and considerable changes to use or access changes to key historic landscape elements
LOW	Detectable impacts which alter the baseline condition of an archaeological or heritage receptor to a slight degree – e.g. a small proportion of the surviving heritage resource is altered; slight alterations to the setting or structure, or limited changes to aspects such as noise levels, use or access that results in limited changes to historic landscape character.
NEGLIGIBLE	Barely distinguishable change from baseline conditions, where there would be very little appreciable effect on a known site, possibly because of distance from the development, method of construction or landscape or ecological planting, that are thought to have no long term effect on the historic value of a resource.
UNCERTAIN	Extent / nature of the resource is unknown and the magnitude of change cannot be ascertained.

2.5.3 The overall Significance of Effects from the proposed development upon the Cultural Heritage Resource is determined by correlating the magnitude of Impact against value of the Cultural Heritage resource. Table 3 highlights the criteria for assessing the overall Significance of Effects. Where effects are moderate or above these are classified as significant.

Table 3: Significance of Effects

IMPORTANCE	MAGNITUDE			
	HIGH	MED	LOW	NEG
NATIONAL	Severe	Major	Mod	Minor
REGIONAL	Major	Mod	Minor	Not Sig.
LOCAL	Mod	Minor	Minor	Not Sig.
NEGLIGIBLE	Minor	Not Sig.	Not Sig.	Nt.

Not Sig. = Not Significant; Nt. = Neutral; Mod = Moderate

2.6 Visual Impact Assessment

- 2.6.1 This visual impact assessment does not consider all impacts in relation to setting, and therefore it should not be considered a full settings assessment. In this case, the specific aspect of setting impact assessed will be only the ‘form and appearance of the development’ and its relationship with the surrounding heritage assets.
- 2.6.2 This visual impact assessment was undertaken in line with the *Historic England Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning on the Settings of Heritage Assets* (Historic England 2015), with specific reference to ‘The form and appearance of the development’ attributes (*ibid*, p11). The pro-forma used to assess the visual impact is provide in Appendix 2.
- 2.6.3 The overall level of potential impact upon the visual setting of the heritage assets and the character of the surrounding area and skyline will be assessed in line with the Impact Assessment Criteria of section 2.5, and a suggested mitigation strategy will be provided where applicable. The importance of ‘visual setting’ to the importance of each asset will be defined using Table 4, below. As is the case in the determination of significance for heritage assets, an importance of medium or above is considered to be significant.

Table 4: Table for Assessing Importance of Setting

VERY HIGH	Archaeological remains or historic building where the visual setting is <i>the</i> primary reason for original placement, subsequent usage or perception. View shed or view towards site was constructed or developed with visual setting as a primary reason for the placement, subsequent usage or perception of surrounding skyline.
HIGH	Archaeological remains or historic building where the visual setting is a large factor in original placement, subsequent usage or perception. View shed or view towards site was constructed or developed with visual setting as a large factor in the placement, subsequent usage or perception of surrounding skyline.
MEDIUM	Archaeological remains or historic building where it is considered that the visual setting is one of several considerations in original placement, subsequent usage or perception. View shed or view towards site was constructed or developed with visual setting as one of several considerations for the placement, subsequent usage or perception of surrounding skyline.
LOW	Archaeological remains or historic building where it is thought that the visual setting is less important in original placement, subsequent usage or perception than other considerations (e.g. fertility of land or proximity to transport). View shed or view towards site was constructed or developed with limited bearing on the placement, subsequent usage or perception of surrounding skyline.
NEGLIGIBLE	Archaeological remains or historic building where there is little or no consideration of setting in original placement, subsequent usage or perception.

- 2.6.4 The visual impact assessment was conducted by Zoe Edwards (Assistant Heritage Consultant; AB Heritage) on the 3rd and 5th August 2016. The assessment was made from the best possible position with regard to viewpoint, safety, while remaining on public land. No private property beyond the proposed development boundary was entered as a part of the settings assessment, and the existing building at the proposed development site was not

accessed for health and safety reasons. Therefore, the assessment was made at ground level, outside of the building, and aided with the use of photographs provided by the client from the upper storeys of the building.

2.7 Limitations

- 2.7.1 It should be noted that the report has been prepared under the express instruction and solely for the use of Quantum Group, and any associated parties they elect to share this information with. Measurements and distances referred to in the report should be taken as approximations only and should not be used for detailed design purposes.
- 2.7.2 All the work carried out in this report is based upon the professional knowledge and understanding of AB Heritage on current (August 2016) and relevant United Kingdom standards and codes, technology and legislation. Changes in these areas may occur in the future and cause changes to the conclusions, advice, recommendations or design given. AB Heritage does not accept responsibility for advising the client's or associated parties of the facts or implications of any such changes in the future.
- 2.7.3 This report has been prepared utilising factual information obtained from third party sources. AB Heritage takes no responsibility for the accuracy of such information. It should also be noted that this report represents an early stage of a phased approach to assessing the archaeological and cultural heritage resource of the application site to allow the development of an appropriate mitigation strategy, should this be required. It does not comprise mitigation of impacts in itself.
- 2.7.4 When undertaking the Visual Impact Assessment, the assessment was made from the best possible position with regard to viewpoint, safety, and remaining on public land. No private property beyond the proposed development boundary was entered as a part of the settings assessment, and therefore the assessment was made at ground level. A personal judgement of the validity of the position of assessment was made during the visit. This was highlighted in the results where necessary, and considered when providing an indication of the potential impact of the proposed development on the setting of the heritage asset, in line with Table 2.
- 2.7.5 The existing building at the proposed development site was not accessed for health and safety reasons, and therefore high resolution photography provided by the client from within the building and of views looking out from the building were used for the Visual Impact Assessment.

3. PLANNING & LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The following section highlights the key planning and legislative framework relevant to this project, including legislative framework, national planning policy and relevant sector guidance.

3.2 Statutory Protection for Heritage Assets

- 3.2.1 Current legislation, in the form of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, provides for the legal protection of important and well-preserved archaeological sites and monuments through their addition to a list, or 'schedule' of archaeological monuments by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. This necessitates the granting of formal Scheduled Monument Consent for any work undertaken within the designated area of a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- 3.2.2 Likewise, structures are afforded legal protection in the form of their addition to 'lists' of buildings of special architectural or historical interest. The listing of buildings is carried out by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. The main purpose of the legislation is to protect buildings and their surroundings from changes that would materially alter the special historic or architectural value of the building or its setting. This necessitates the granting of formal Listed Building Consent for all works undertaken to or within the designated curtilage of a Listed Building. This legislation also allows for the creation and protection of Conservation Areas by local planning authorities to protect areas and groupings of historical significance.
- 3.2.3 The categories of assets with some form of legal protection have been extended in recent years, and now include Registered Parks and Gardens, and Historic Battlefields. While designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site is not a statutory designation under English planning law, such a designation is regarded as a material consideration in planning decisions, and World Heritage Sites are in practice protected from development that could affect any aspect of their significance including settings within the Site and a buffer zone around it.

3.3 National Planning Policy

- 3.3.1 The NPPF sets out government policy on the historic environment, which covers all elements, whether designated or not, that are identified as 'having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest'.
- 3.3.2 One of the over-arching aims is to 'Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations'. To achieve this, local planning authorities can request that the applicant describe "the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting". The level of detail required in the assessment should be "proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance". It goes on to say that "where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest,

local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.”

- 3.3.3 A key policy within the NPPF is that “when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
- 3.3.4 With regard to non-designated heritage assets specific policy is provided in that a balanced judgement will be required having due regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset affected.
- 3.3.5 Paragraph 132 states that ‘Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of a heritage asset or development within its setting. Substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional, while substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, should be wholly exceptional’.
- 3.3.6 Paragraphs 133 & 134 explain that ‘where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.
- 3.3.7 It also advises that where a proposal involve less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

3.4 The Taunton Deane Adopted Core Strategy 2011-2028

- 3.4.1 Policy CP 8 of the Taunton Deane Adopted Core Strategy 2011-2028 is the core policy relating to cultural heritage. Extracts of the policy and the policy background have been provided below.

‘3.107 The Government’s overarching aim is that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations. The Government’s objectives which relate to planning for the historic environment are set out in the NPPF: ‘recognising that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and that they should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, recognising the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring’.

Policy CP 8 - Environment

‘The Borough Council will conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment, and will not permit development proposals that would harm these interests or the settings of the towns and rural centres unless other material factors are sufficient to override their importance.’

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE BASELINE

4.1 Known Heritage Assets

Within the Proposed Development Site

- 4.1.1 There is one known archaeological feature which encompasses the area of the proposed development site. This comprises the non-statutory designated medieval town of Taunton [AB 2]. This was developed from as early as the 8th century and includes town defences.

Within the Study Area

- 4.1.2 The substantial number of known cultural heritage features within the 150m study area characterises the area as one of significant post medieval development in the area of an earlier medieval town, with limited evidence of activity pre-dating the early medieval period.

4.2 Previous Archaeological Works in the Study Area

- 4.2.1 No previous works have been recorded within the site boundary. However, a number of previous works have been undertaken within the 150m study area. This includes an excavation at c. 100m north of the proposed development site which uncovered evidence of activity of prehistoric to post medieval date [AB 1]. Medieval layers have also been identified during an evaluation centred on Billetfield [AB 3] c. 70m south-east of the proposed development site.
- 4.2.2 Medieval to post medieval artefacts were recorded from within rubbish pits alongside the remnants of wells during a watching brief [AB 7] at the site of the multi-storey car park c. 15m north of the site boundary, while excavations [AB 9] on High Street, c. 60m north-west of the proposed development site have recorded evidence of the local cloth and tanning industries.

4.3 Archaeology & History Background

Prehistoric & Roman Periods (c. 500,000 BC – AD 410)

- 4.3.1 Somerset is known to have been inhabited during the prehistoric period, with much of the evidence in this era dating to the later prehistory, in the form of hill-top burial monuments and hillforts. Such features cluster in the Quantock and Blackdown hill ranges, which lie c. 10km north-west and c. 10km south of the proposed development site respectively. Norton Hillfort also lies c. 3.5km north-west of the proposed development site, where there is evidence of activity from in the prehistoric and Roman periods (Gathercole 2002).
- 4.3.2 Evidence of activity and occupation dating to this period is also evident in Taunton, where sites of intensive settlement activity of Bronze Age to Roman date have been investigated at the M5 Park and Ride site at c. 3km east of the proposed development site. Areas of Taunton are known to have been encompassed by forests of oak, alder willow and hazel at this time (PRN 44412), however, the modern area of the town centre has produced evidence of prehistoric activity, including an iron Age smelting site (PRN 4442) c. 190m north-west of the proposed development site, and pits of late prehistoric or Roman date [AB 1], at c. 100m north of the proposed development site (Context One Archaeological Services Ltd ND).

- 4.3.3 Along with a number of other settlements, the area of Taunton was an example of one which is suggested to have become 'Romanized' in the centuries following the Roman invasion of Britain in 43AD. Other examples include Ilchester c. 30km to the east of Taunton, Puriton c. 20m to the north, and Bath c. 60km to the north-east of Taunton (Somerset Heritage Service ND). Despite this, little surviving evidence of settlement within the bounds of the modern town has been recorded, with only records of pottery sherds and field boundaries of this date found between 150m and 400m north of the site (PRN 44422, 44433 & 44440). No such evidence of prehistoric or Roman activity has been recorded within the site boundary.

The Medieval Period (AD 410 – AD 1536)

- 4.3.4 The first documented evidence relating to the settlement of Taunton from this period comes around 700 AD when King Ine of Wessex constructed an earthen castle here, with this structure being destroyed by his queen Æthelburg of Wessex in 722 (to prevent its seizure by rebels). It was in the same year that Taunton is mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, with the name reflecting the settlements position on the River Tone - the element *tun* coming from the Saxon word 'farm' or 'estate', and the word *Tone* was the Celtic word meaning 'roaring river' (Gathercole 2002).
- 4.3.5 An extensive Saxon cemetery (PRN 44407) has been recorded beneath the site of the present Castle and Castle Green, c. 270m north-west of the proposed development site, suggesting that this was the location of a precinct for a former Saxon minster church which post-dated the fortifications.
- 4.3.6 In the 12th century, the Bishop of Winchester constructed the castle in Taunton (PRN 44204; SAM 1013541), c. 350m north-west of the proposed development site, and is suggested to be on the site of a former royal residence. The castle underwent numerous renovations in the subsequent centuries. The castle had an inner and outer bailey, the latter of which encompassed much of the present area of the Municipal Offices and the bus station, at c. 200m north-west of the proposed development site at its closest point.
- 4.3.7 The town emerged around the castle (including the area of the proposed development site) during the medieval period and was enclosed by defences [AB 2]. The church of St Mary Magdalene [AB 4] was constructed c. 250m north of the proposed development site in the 15th century, and now holds Grade I Listed status and has 'the finest [west tower] in Somerset' (Historic England 1975, NHLE 1278073).

The Post Medieval Period (AD 1537 – AD 1900)

- 4.3.8 The town and population of Taunton continued to expand through the post medieval period, and the archaeological records in the area characterise it as an area which became progressively more industrial through this era. Like many of the towns in Somerset, industry in Taunton was dominated by shirt and collar manufacture. This is evident within the study area, with the Poolwall silk mill and shirt factory site [AB 10] covering the proposed development site and much of the study area. Industry and trade was enhanced in the early 19th century with the construction of the Taunton to Bridgewater Canal (PRN 43826), and the Bristol to Exeter Railway (later Great Western Railway) through the town in the mid-19th century.

- 4.3.9 There is a substantial number of surviving buildings of post medieval date within Taunton, and the study area, many of which now hold Listed status. Examples include the United Reformed Church [AB 48] on Paul Street, and Mary Street House [AB 38], both within 20m of the proposed development site.
- 4.3.10 Historic maps show that the area within the site boundary was occupied by structures [AB 58 & 59] during the post medieval period, as discussed in Section 4.4.

Modern Period (AD 1901 – present)

- 4.3.11 Within the town centre, public amusements and amenities such as the cinema [AB 61] on East Street c. 70m north-east of the site, are recorded on the 1904 OS map, emerging in association with the continued expansion of Taunton and its population.
- 4.3.12 Local government developments included the construction in 1935 of the Classical style County Hall (NHLE 1246219) on land c.300m to the west of the proposed development site.
- 4.3.13 The latter half of the 20th century in Taunton is characterised by the expansion of the town and transport routes in the area, most significantly following the construction of the M5 in the 1970s, which passes the proposed development site at c. 2.5km to the east.
- 4.3.14 While historic maps show there were structures of this proposed development site prior to the construction of the existing Quantock House, these are not considered to be of historic importance.

4.4 Historic Map Sources

- 4.4.1 In the Taunton Town Plan of c.1780 (Plate 1) Mary Street and Paul Street lie in their present day locations. The proposed development site is located at the north-west of the junction of these roads. Street facing plots [AB 58] are apparent across the site, although it is not apparent what the nature these plots comprise of. Any development to the rear of street facing plots is not recorded on this map.

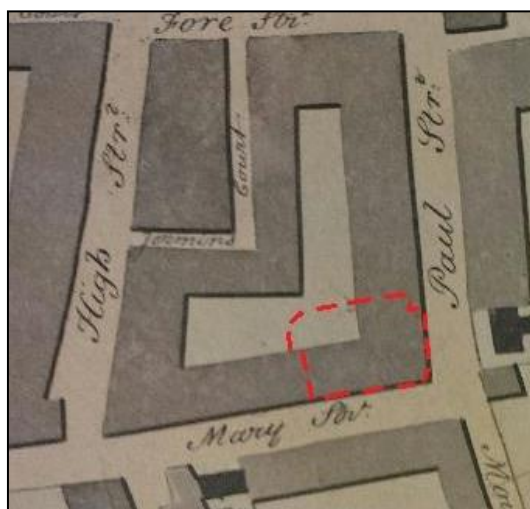


Plate 1: Taunton Town Plan, c.1780

- 4.4.2 The Tithe Map of c.1840 (Plate 2) is the earliest available map which provides detail of the area of the proposed development site. A number of buildings [AB 59] lie within the site

boundary, along the northern side of Mary Street and western side of Paul Street. A number of open spaces are apparent between blocks of buildings. It remains uncertain whether these buildings represent those shown on the lesser detailed Taunton Town Plan (Plate 1).



Plate 2: Tithe Map of Taunton, c.1840

- 4.4.3 The first edition OS map (Plate 3) shows that the majority of the buildings within the proposed development site are unchanged from the Tithe Map, although some appear to have been extended into the open spaces. This includes a row of small buildings to the north of a lane which leads west from Paul Street. An increased density of development is apparent outside of the proposed development site also.

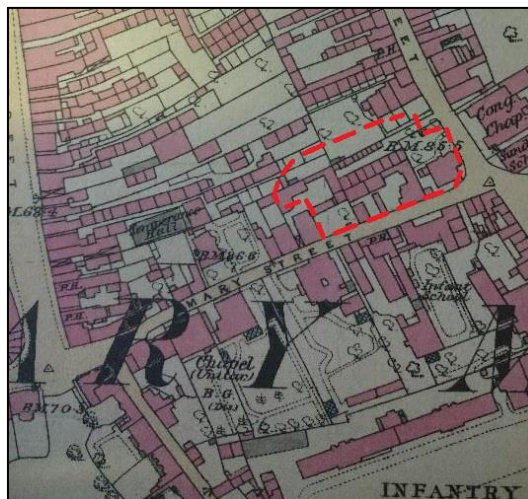


Plate 3: The 1st edition of the 25" OS map of Taunton, c.1880s

- 4.4.4 The 1930 edition of the OS map shows the layout of the former buildings within the proposed development site are broadly unchanged. A small row of buildings within the site boundary, north of the lane which heads west of Paul Street, have been demolished.
- 4.4.5 By the 1961 edition of the OS map (Plate 4), all of the earlier buildings within the area of the proposed development site appear to have been demolished. A warehouse has been constructed in the west of the site, while a large building lies east of the centre. These

structures are not considered to be heritage assets of significance. A further group of three smaller buildings lie within the south-west corner. The site is largely covered by a car park.

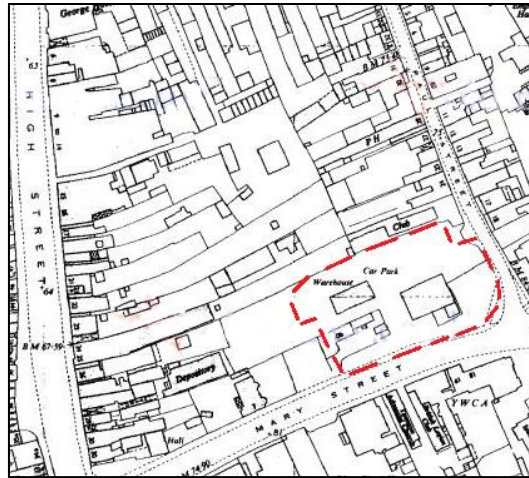


Plate 4: The 1961 edition of the OS map of Taunton

- 4.4.6 By the 1969 edition of the OS map of Taunton the all earlier buildings within the proposed development site have been cleared for the construction of Quantock House, appearing as it does at present. The existing Quantock House is not considered to be a heritage asset.

4.5 Site Visit

- 4.5.1 A site visit was undertaken at Quantock House on 3rd August 2016, by Zoe Edwards (Assistant Heritage Consultant; AB Heritage). The purpose of this visit was to gain a greater understanding of the existing land use and past impacts within the current site limits, along with an appreciation for the potential survival of below ground archaeological deposits.
- 4.5.2 Quantock house was partially demolished at the time of the site visit and therefore an external inspection was undertaken only.



Photo 1: The northern facade of Quantock house, viewed from the west

- 4.5.3 The proposed development site comprises a two to eight storey building, known as Quantock House, constructed of reinforced concrete with red brick panels on lower storeys (Photo 1). The structure is terraced into the incline of the land. The two storey range of the structure lies to the south of the eight storey range, on higher ground and at the upper ground floor level of the eight storey range. The two ranges are connected by a single storey glass and steel structure at upper ground level (Photo 2). The lower ground storey of the eight storey range extends to the south and west beyond the mains structure (Photo 3). The northern façade of the eight storey range extends outwards beyond the lower ground floor, and is raised on concrete columns (Photo 1).



Photo 2: The two ranges of Quantock house, viewed from the east



Photo 3: Lower ground storey of Quantock House extending to the west, viewed from the north

- 4.5.4 The perimeter of the site is bound by a short brick wall with a white painted metal fence. Temporary metal fencing panels surrounds this to secure the site (Photo 1).
- 4.5.5 A car park lies to the north and west of Quantock House (Photo 1), and a green space with a number of large trees lies to the south east of Quantock House. Both are within the boundary of the proposed development site.
- 4.5.6 No evidence of extant or buried cultural heritage features at the proposed development site was visible.

5. VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 Step 1 - Identification of Heritage Assets & Key Viewpoints

5.1.1 Appendix 3 shows tables of every heritage asset and viewpoint from which a visual impact assessment was undertaken. Tables 5a – 5c (below) present the assets and viewpoints where views towards or from the proposed development site have been confirmed.

5.1.2 The status of assets will be shortened in the tables, as follows:

- LB: Listed Building
- CA: Conservation Area

The Identification of Heritage Assets for Visual Impact Assessment – Table 5a

5.1.3 The heritage assets to be included in the on-site visual impact assessment were identified as suitable assets for assessment following a scoping exercise (see Appendix 4), with reference to the location of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, and other points of cultural heritage interest in the area surrounding the proposed development site. The assets chosen for assessment were chosen based on their spatial relationship with the proposed development site (i.e. distance from site, key views between assets, and/or likely inter-visibility).

5.1.4 Following the scoping exercise, a total of 14 assets were identified for assessment, of which 10 were identified to have a visual relationship with the proposed development site. These assets are shown in Table 5a.

Table 5a: Heritage Assets with Views to/from the Proposed Development Site Identified for Visual Impact Assessment

AB Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. dist. / orientation from site	Views from asset to site?	Views from site to asset?	Assessment Limitations	Notes	Photo Number (App. 5)
4	Church of St Mary Magdalene	Grade I LB	National	250m NNE	Glimpse	Yes	Ground level assessment from asset – views from tower likely but untested	Screening from surrounding buildings of historic and modern date	1
35	18 Mary Street	Grade II LB	Regional	15m S	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary	2
37	19 Mary Street	Grade II LB	Regional	15m S	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary	3
38	Mary Street House	Grade II LB	Regional	15m S	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary	4
39	The Lawn (Royal British Legion Club)	Grade II LB	Regional	30m SW	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary	5

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT DESK BASED ASSESSMENT & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

AB Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. dist. / orientation from site	Views from asset to site?	Views from site to asset?	Assessment Limitations	Notes	Photo Number (App. 5)
40	Unitarian Chapel, Mary Street	Grade II* LB	Regional	50m SW	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary	6
41	Mary Street Memorial Schools	Grade II LB	Regional	75m SW	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary	6
48	United Reformed Church, Paul Street	Grade II LB	Regional	20m E	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary	7
49	Nos 12 and 13, Paul Street	Grade II LB	Regional	25m NE	Yes	Yes	None		8
47	Nos 11 and 13 (Wessex Lodge), Billetfield	Grade II LB	Regional	90m E	Glimpse	Yes	Ground level / public land assessment from asset – views from windows likely but untested		9

The Identification of Key Short and Mid Distance Viewpoints for Visual Impact Assessment – Table 5b

- 5.1.5 These views have been assessed in order to understand the current character of the area surrounding the proposed development site, and the way in which this character may change as a result of the proposal. The consideration of views from the proposed development site towards the viewpoints is therefore not considered to be a significant factor in this assessment, and as such this factor has been omitted from this part of the assessment.
- 5.1.6 The viewpoints were identified during the scoping exercise (Appendix 4) based on the existing historic character surrounding the viewpoint, or a view shed which would be suitable for assessing the potential visual impact upon a number of surrounding assets.
- 5.1.7 A total of 11 key short and mid distance viewpoints were assessed, of which seven were identified to have a views of the proposed development site. These seven assets are shown in Table 5b.

Table 5b: Key Short and Mid Distance Viewpoints with Views of the Proposed Development Site Identified for Visual Impact Assessment

View Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. distance / orientation from site	Views to site?	Assessment Limitations	Notes	Photo Number (App 5)
SD1	View from St George Square / Barracks Parade Ground & Green	-	Local	130m S	Partial	None	Partial views through gaps in buildings	10
SD2	View from Church Square	-	Local	250m NNE	Glimpse	None		11
SD5	View E between 23 High Street and Mendip House, High Street	-	Local	80m W	Yes	None		12
SD7	View along Mary Street / Upper High Street	-	Local	Immediately S	Yes	None	Heavily screened by tree line to along southern boundary of site in summer	13
SD8	Views W along Billetfield	-	Local	50m SE	Partial	None	Heavy seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary	14
SD10	Views N from The Mount/Mountway	-	Local	50m SE	Partial	None	No views from majority of the road, partial view of site close to the junction with Mary Street/Billetfield	15
SD11	Vivary Park (Vivary Park Conservation Area), various viewpoints	CA	Local – Regional	c. 200m SW	Partial (from War Memorial, NHLE 1059909)	None	Mostly screened by other buildings	16

The Identification of Long Distance Views for Visual Impact Assessment – Taunton’s Skyline - Table 5c

- 5.1.8 Taunton’s skyline is visible from various locations within and around the centre of Taunton. Its skyline is currently dominated by a number of historic buildings, including several church towers of medieval to post medieval date (e.g. [AB 4 & 56]), and the towers of the Kings College (NHLE 1059965) c. 750 south-east of the site, Queens College (NHLE1276273) c. 1.8km south-west of the site, and Taunton School (NHLE 1233996) at c. 1.8km north-west of the site. These buildings form a skyline which can be described as historic in character, and as such they contribute positively to the long distance views over Taunton (*Pers. Comm_ Nic Wall 2016*), which is further enhanced by their significant architectural qualities.
- 5.1.9 There are currently a small number of features within Taunton’s skyline that detract from this historic character and architectural quality. This includes the County Hall (C Block), c. 300m west of the site; Waterside House, Firepool, at c. 1.2km north-east of the site; and the existing Quantock House (*Pers. Comm_ Nic Wall 2016*).
- 5.1.10 Overall, it is concluded that the skyline of Taunton can be considered a heritage feature of Regional importance (in line with Table 1). With this in mind, a selection of long distance viewpoints was identified as a result of the scoping exercise (Section 2.3) which provide views of Taunton’s skyline. These have been included in the visual impact assessment in order to assess how the proposal would significantly impact the existing skyline of Taunton.
- 5.1.11 A total of 5 key long distance viewpoints were assessed, 4 of these were identified to have a visual relationship with the proposed development site. These assets are shown in Table 5c.

Table 5c: Long Distance Views of Taunton's Skyline Identified for Visual Impact Assessment

View Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. distance / orientation from site	Views to site?	Assessment Limitations	Notes	Photo Number (Appendix 5)
LD1	View SE from the railway bridge on Silk Mills Road	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	2.6km NW	Yes	None	Partial seasonal vegetation screening	17
LD2	Views from Taunton Station Platform	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	1.1km north	Yes	None		18
LD3	O'bridge Viaduct	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	1.5km NE	Yes	None	Partial seasonal vegetation screening	19
LD5	Hestercombe Gardens Formal Garden Terrace	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	4.5km NNE	Uncertain	Too far from site to distinguish existing building from this distance		20

5.2 Step 2 - Assessing Whether, How and to What Degree these Settings Make a Contribution to the Significance of the Heritage Assets/Viewpoints

- 5.2.1 This visual impact assessment focusses on the impact of the proposed development on the *visual* setting of the heritage assets, and of the character this creates in the areas of the specific viewpoints identified. Therefore, the heritage assets and viewpoints which have been confirmed to have a visual relationship with the proposed development site in Tables 5a – 5c have been taken forward into Step 2 of the assessment.
- 5.2.2 Step 2 assesses whether the visual setting of these assets and viewpoints is a significant contributory factor to the overall importance of the asset/view. This will take into account whether the original visual setting of these have been impacted (e.g. by modern development) such that the visual setting has become less significant over time.
- 5.2.3 The results of Stage 2 are shown in Tables 6a – 6c.

Table 6a: Visual Setting Significance – Heritage Assets

AB No.	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. dist. / orientation from site	Attributes of visual setting contributing to asset importance	Imp. of visual setting to Imp. of asset (Table 4)
4	Church of St Mary Magdalene	Grade I LB	National	250m NNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skyline views of tower - Views towards asset from The Parade - Relationship with adjacent heritage assets of similar date (e.g the Vicarage, Church Square & other features of a grouped Listing in Church Square) which represent the original setting of the asset 	High
35	18 Mary Street	Grade II LB	Regional	15m S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proximity to adjacent Listed Buildings of similar date 	Low
37	19 Mary Street	Grade II LB	Regional	15m S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proximity to adjacent Listed Buildings of similar date 	Low
38	Mary Street House	Grade II LB	Regional	15m S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proximity to adjacent Listed Buildings of similar date 	Low
39	The Lawn (Royal British Legion Club)	Grade II LB	Regional	30m SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proximity to adjacent Listed Buildings of similar date 	Low
40	Unitarian Chapel, Mary Street	Grade II* LB	Regional	50m SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proximity to adjacent Listed Buildings of similar date 	Low
41	Mary Street Memorial Schools	Grade II LB	Regional	75m SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proximity to adjacent Listed Buildings of similar date 	Low
48	United Reformed Church, Paul Street	Grade II LB	Regional	20m E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proximity to adjacent Listed Buildings of similar date 	Low
49	Nos 12 and 13, Paul Street	Grade II LB	Regional	25m NE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proximity to adjacent Listed Buildings of similar date 	Low

AB No.	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. dist. / orientation from site	Attributes of visual setting contributing to asset importance	Imp. of visual setting to Imp. of asset (Table 4)
47	Nos 11 and 13 (Wessex Lodge), Billetfield	Grade II LB	Regional	90m E	- Proximity to adjacent Listed Buildings of similar date	Low
56	St Georges Roman Catholic Church	Grade II* LB	Regional - National	150m ESE	- Inter-visible across landscape from its hilltop position	High
25	Jellalabad Keep	Grade II LB	Regional	150m S	-	Negligible

Table 6b: Visual Setting Significance – Key Short & Mid Distance Viewpoints

AB No.	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. dist. / orientation from site	Attributes of visual setting contributing to importance of viewpoint	Imp. of visual setting in view towards site (Table 4)
SD1	View from St George Square / Barracks Parade Ground & Green	-	Local	130m S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tranquil green close to town centre - Adjacent to the Jellalabad Keep - Retains character of former historic & modern barracks 	Medium
SD2	View from Church Square	-	Local	250m NNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surrounded by historic buildings, some of which are associated with the church ([AB 4]) 	Medium
SD5	View E between 23 High Street and Mendip House, High Street	-	Local	80m W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High Street comprises a number of Listed Buildings, and is a pedestrianised road - There is one partial viewpoint of inter-visibility from High Street 	Low
SD7	View along Mary Street / Upper High Street	-	Local	Immediately S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Historic Listed Buildings dominate the roadside, creating a historic character along the road - The large existing structures of modern date do are designed and positioned such that they not significantly impose on this character 	Medium
SD8	Views W along Billetfield	-	Local	50m SE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Historic buildings are dispersed along this road, some of which are Listed. This includes St Georges Chruch [AB 56], which is set back from the roadside - Modern development imposes on historic character to some degree (e.g. the adjacent supermarket) 	Low
SD10	Views N from The Mount/Mountway	-	Local	50m SE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to Jellalabad Barracks from The Mount - Buildings of modern and historic character, some of which are Listed 	Low

AB No.	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. dist. / orientation from site	Attributes of visual setting contributing to importance of viewpoint	Imp. of visual setting in view towards site (Table 4)
SD11	Vivary Park (Vivary Park Conservation Area), various viewpoints	CA	Local – Regional	c. 200m SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vivary Park is a tranquil green space in the town centre, incorporating Listed structures of local importance (the war memorial, the fountain, and the bandstand). - The remit of the Conservation Area is historic in character and incorporates many historic Listed Buildings along Mary Street and Mount Street - Few modern structures within or adjacent to the Vivary park impose on the character of the area 	Medium

Table 6c: Visual Setting Significance – Long Distance Views of Taunton’s Skyline

AB No.	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. dist. / orientation from site	Attributes of visual setting contributing to asset viewpoint	Imp. of visual setting in view towards site (Table 4)
LD1	View SE from the railway bridge on Silk Mills Road	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	2.6km NW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The skyline of Taunton from this viewpoint consists of four church spires and towers in Taunton, with a backdrop of the Blackdown Hills AONB - The foreground consists of an area of modern residential development, and farmland 	Low
LD2	Views from Taunton Station Platform	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	1.1km north	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The skyline of Taunton from this viewpoint shows modern and historic buildings, including three church towers, with a backdrop of the Quantock Hills AONB - The foreground consists of piled building debris, disused vehicles, and overgrown vegetation 	Low
LD3	O’Bridge Viaduct	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	1.5km NE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The skyline of Taunton from this viewpoint shows modern and historic buildings, including at least three church towers, with a backdrop of the Blackdown Hills AONB - Modern block of flats in the foreground detracts attention from the town centre skyline 	Low
LD5	Hestercombe Gardens Formal Garden Terrace	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	4.5km NNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The skyline of Taunton from this visible from this distant viewpoint, although individual assets are difficult to define - Views across the landscape comprise farmland, Taunton, and the Blackdown Hills AONB in the background 	Low

5.3 Step 3 - Assessing the Effect of Proposed Development

- 5.3.1 This step will assess the affect (or impact) that the proposal is likely to have upon the visual setting of the heritage assets and the viewpoints identified, with reference to the 'The form and appearance of the development' attributes (Historic England 2015 & Appendix 2), which will enable an understanding of the effects of the proposal on visual settings.
- 5.3.2 Overall, the aim of this assessment is to identify any potential significant effects on historic features (see Paragraph 2.5.3). Therefore, only the assets and viewpoints that have medium or highly important visual setting attributes (identified in Table 6a – 6c) will be assessed in step 3 (see Section 5.1).
- 5.3.3 Step 3 takes into consideration the existing setting of the assets and viewpoints, which incorporates the current building of Quantock House.

Overview of the Proposal

- 5.3.4 The proposal comprises the demolition of the existing eight storey Quantock House, and the construction of a new nine storey building in its place. The lower ground floor will be parking and plant, while the upper ground floor will be primarily retail and restaurant space, with a formal garden to the south of the building. The remainder of the floors are proposed to be occupied by a new care home and residential apartments.
- 5.3.5 The existing tree line along the southern boundary of the proposed development site appears to remain in the plans, providing a level of screening between the proposal and the heritage assets/viewpoints.
- 5.3.6 Graham Parkes at Quantum Group has also notified AB Heritage that they 'plan to provide a buff and dark brick to the lower levels of the development...in a Flemish bond to match the memorial hall and United Reformed Church adjacent'.
- 5.3.7 Section 1.6 contains some additional details, and Table 7 below shows the details of form and appearance of the proposal relevant to this assessment. Proposal elevations are shown in Figure 2. The form and appearance of the proposal will be taken into account when determining the impact and overall effect of proposed development upon heritage assets and views. The form and appearance of the existing Quantock House, and the existing impact and overall effect this has upon heritage assets and views will also be considered in this stage.

Table 7: The Form and Appearance of the Proposed Development

Form of development / massing	Maximum of 9 storey building with parking and landscaping
Prominence, dominance or conspicuousness	Tall building, seasonal screening from tree line long the southern boundary of the site, and a tall multi-storey car park to the north
Visual permeability (extent to which it can be seen through)	None
Materials (texture, colour, reflectiveness, etc.)	Wall-ceiling windows on most floors, with buff and dark brick to the lower levels of the development
Architectural design / style	Contemporary design with some consideration for the design of adjacent heritage assets
Impact of existing building upon visual setting of heritage assets and views	Medium (based on scale and screening)

Table 8a; Effect of the Proposed Development on the Visual Setting of Heritage Assets

AB Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. distance / orientation from site	Importance of visual setting to importance of asset (Table 4)	Impact of proposal on the visual setting of the asset (Table 2)		Significance of effects on the asset as a result of the impacts to visual setting (Table 3)
						Impact Level	Reason	
4	Church of St Mary Magdalene	Grade I LB	National	250m NNE	High	Negligible - Low	Substantial screening from other buildings, only views will be from above ground level	Minor
56	St Georges Roman Catholic Church	Grade II* LB	Regional - National	150m ESE	High	Low	Substantial screening from other buildings, only views will be from above ground level	Minor

Table 8b: Effect of the Proposed Development on the Visual Setting of Short and Mid Distance Viewpoints

AB Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. distance / orientation from site	Importance of visual setting to importance of viewpoint (Table 4)	Impact of proposal on the visual setting of the viewpoint (Table 2)		Significance of effects on the viewpoint as a result of the impacts to visual setting (Table 3)
						Impact Level	Reason	
SD1	View from St George Square / Barracks Parade Ground & Green	-	Local	130m S	High	Negligible – Low	Substantial screening from other buildings	Not Significant
SD2	View from Church Square	-	Local	250m NNE	High	Low	Substantial screening from other buildings	Minor
SD5	View E between 23 High Street and Mendip House, High Street	-	Local	80m W	Medium	Negligible – Low	Only a small section of the road has views of the site	Minor

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SD7	View along Mary Street / Upper High Street	-	Local	Immediately S	High	Medium	Large scale building, but substantial seasonal screening from tree line along Mary Street site boundary	Minor
SD8	Views W along Billetfield	-	Local	50m SE	Medium	Low	Substantial screening from other buildings and tree line along Mary Street site boundary	Minor
SD10	Views N from The Mount/Mountway	-	Local	50m SE	Medium	Low	Partial screening from other buildings	Minor
SD11	Vivary Park (Vivary Park Conservation Area), various viewpoints	CA	Local – Regional	c. 200m SW	High	Low - Medium	Mostly screened by other buildings	Minor

Table 8c: Effect of the Proposed Development on the Visual Setting of Long Distance Views – Taunton Skyline

AB Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. distance / orientation from site	Importance of visual setting to importance of viewpoint (Table 4)	Impact of proposal on the visual setting of the viewpoint (Table 2)		Significance of effects on the viewpoint as a result of the impacts to visual setting (Table 3)
						Impact Level	Reason	
LD1	View SE from the railway bridge on Silk Mills Road	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	2.6km NW	Medium	Low	Screening only partial skyline view	Minor
LD2	Views from Taunton Station Platform	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	1.1km north	Low	Low	Screening and adverse setting impact of building rubble and disused vehicles in foreground	Minor

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT DESK BASED ASSESSMENT & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

AB Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. distance / orientation from site	Importance of visual setting to importance of viewpoint (Table 4)	Impact of proposal on the visual setting of the viewpoint (Table 2)		Significance of effects on the viewpoint as a result of the impacts to visual setting (Table 3)
						Impact Level	Reason	
LD3	O'Bridge Viaduct	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	1.5km NE	Low	Low	Partial seasonal screening from vegetation	Minor
LD5	Hestercombe Gardens Formal Garden Terrace	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	4.5km NNE	Low	Negligible – Low	Difficult to identify individual buildings (whether positive or negative contributors to skyline) from this distance	Not Significant

5.4 Conclusion of Visual Impact to Heritage Assets and Key Viewpoints

- 5.4.1 Overall, Tables 8a – 8b above show that the effects/impacts of the proposal on the visual setting of the heritage assets/viewpoints is low at most.
- 5.4.2 Therefore, it is perceived that *less than substantial* harm to the visual setting of these assets/views will be caused as a result of the proposed development, in line with the impact assessment criteria in Section 2.5.
- 5.4.3 Any changes to the massing or design of the proposal should be addressed alongside this visual impact assessment to ensure that such amendments would not result in an adverse change to this conclusion.

5.5 Maximising Enhancement and Minimising Harm

- 5.5.1 Overall, it is perceived that the proposed development will have a maximum of a low impact on the visual setting of the heritage assets and viewpoints identified in Tables 5a – 5c. This is not considered to be a significant impact.
- 5.5.2 However, where heritage assets and key views are concerned, efforts can still be made to ensure that the development scheme takes account of local character (e.g. consideration of vernacular architectural style, appropriate materials etc.) so that the effect of the proposed development be minimised as far as possible.

5.6 Making and Documenting the Decision and Monitoring Outcomes

- 5.6.1 The true effect of a development on setting may be difficult to establish from a theoretical perspective. Once the development has been implemented, it may be helpful to review the success of the scheme and to identify any 'lessons learned' to aid with the formulation of mitigation strategies for similar developments in the future.

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL & MITIGATION

6.1 Known Heritage Resource

- 6.1.1 A single non-statutory designated feature covers the proposed development site and comprises of the medieval town of Taunton [AB 2]. This was developed from as early as the 8th century and includes town defences.
- 6.1.2 Historic maps have also shown buildings [AB 58 & 59] of post medieval date were present within the area of the proposed development site, which can be considered as heritage assets should any remnants be present below the ground surface.
- 6.1.3 The remaining features within the study area surrounding the proposed development site show that there has been activity in this area since the prehistoric period, while the historic development of the area is dominated by domestic and industrial developments in the medieval and post medieval periods.

6.2 Past Impacts within the Site Boundary

- 6.2.1 The proposed development site is known to have been subject to several phases of below ground impact relating to past development. This includes the construction of the buildings [AB 58 & 59] shown on historic maps within the site boundary, the subsequent demolition of these, and the construction of the existing Quantock House. It is assumed that there is a network of sub-terranean services such as drains and sewers, which may have also contributed to the damage or removed any archaeological material previous present.
- 6.2.2 However, the car park and tiled areas surrounding the existing building may not have been subject to impacts as substantial as those within the footprint of Quantock House. Impacts within these areas are more likely to relate to the post medieval use of the site and previous buildings within the site boundary (i.e. [AB 58 & 59]). Therefore, the overall level of past impacts within the site boundary are considered to be medium (Table 2).

6.3 Potential Archaeological Resource

- 6.3.1 Taking into consideration the past impacts within the site boundary, and the know heritage research within and surrounding the site boundary, the potential for any complex or significant archaeological features to be present below the surface at the proposed development site is considered to be moderate to low.
- 6.3.2 Should any archaeological material be present, these may relate to the medieval of Taunton [AB 2] or the post medieval and modern phases of building within the site boundary [AB 58 & 59]. Such potential would only possibly survive below the level of the existing foundations of Quantock House or outside of the footprint of the existing building.
- 6.3.3 Any complex or significant archaeological features related to post medieval and modern phases are believed to be of local importance, whereas those related to the Medieval Town of Taunton [AB 2] may be of local-regional importance.

6.4 Predicted Impact of Proposed Development

Direct Physical Impacts

- 6.4.1 Taking into consideration the archaeological potential, form of proposed works, and the levels of past impacts within the site boundary the magnitude of impact upon the potential archaeological resource is perceived to be medium adverse (see Table 2).
- 6.4.2 Overall this would result in a significance of effect of minor in relation to post-medieval features and moderate in relation to medieval features, in line with Table 3.

Indirect Visual Impacts

- 6.4.3 As per the details of Section 5.5, the impacts of the proposal on the visual setting of the heritage assets and key viewpoints assessed is perceived to be low adverse at most (in line with Table 2), and therefore these effects are not significant (in line with Table 3 & Section 2.5).

6.5 Outline Recommendations

- 6.5.1 It is recommended that any groundworks associated with the demolition of Quantock House, and the clearing of the existing foundations associated with the building are monitored by an archaeologist under watching brief conditions. This watching brief will allow for the rapid recording of low significance material if identified, and the ring fencing of any more significant remains, should the exist, to allow for a suitable mitigation strategy to be put in place.
- 6.5.2 The areas which are currently outside of the footprint of Quantock House, such as the car park and grassed areas, should be investigated further in an Archaeological Evaluation in order to confirm the archaeological potential where the past impacts to the ground surface have been less substantial. An appropriate mitigation strategy should then be devised based on the results of the investigation, if required.
- 6.5.3 It is also recommended, in line with Section 5.6, consideration for the visual impact upon the setting of heritage assets and key viewpoints in the surrounding area should continue to be made by the client as plans progress, taking appropriate advice from landscape and visual impact specialists.

7. REFERENCES

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Gazetteer of Cultural Heritage Features

This gazetteer incorporates all archaeological and historical sites identified on the Somerset HER, and other sources within the 150m study area, along with additional designated features incorporated into the visual impact assessment beyond the study area.

Abbreviations

NGR - National Grid Reference

CA – Conservation Area

LB – Listed Building

NHLE – National Heritage List for England

AB No.	Period	Monument Type	Name/Description	Status	NGR	Reference No.
1	Prehistoric - Post Medieval	Excavation	Fore Street excavations (1979), 5-8, Fore St, across four burgage tenements. A phase of late prehistoric or Roman activity succeeded by continuous occupation from the 12th century. Rich assemblages of artefacts and environmental data were recovered from late medieval and 16th century pits.		ST 2278 2443	44450
2	Medieval	Medieval Town / Defences	Medieval town defences. The town gates were initially wooden 'bars' across the road entrances to control traffic, and were renewed in 1264-5. There is a suggestion that at least one of these entrances later had a masonry gateway built over the road; Taunton Medieval town. The medieval town, which as it stands seems to have grown up from the 12th century, lay on the south bank of the river on a slight ridge. Evidence for a ford in the vicinity of the later Tone Bridge. A watching brief identified little evidence, except intermittent pits carefully sited within existing pipe trenches but burials and a wall were noted in the area of the priory.		ST 2200 2400	44459; 44440; 32100
3	Medieval	Evaluation	Billetfield evaluation (1998), medieval layers but no features were recovered		ST 2290 2420	44668
4	Medieval	Church	Church of St Mary Magdalene, earliest phases dating C15	Grade I LB	ST 22884 24607	NHLE 1278073
5	Medieval	Causeway	Site of a medieval causeway\dam of the C12 in Upper High Street.		ST 2250 2410	44487

6	Medieval	Building	Municipal Buildings, Corporation Street - built as a grammar school in c. 1480	Grade II* LB	ST 22623 24522	1060041
7	Medieval - Post Medieval	Watching Brief	Paul Street watching brief - Foundation pits dug for the construction of the multi-storey car park contained well linings and rubbish pits with finds of pottery of the C11-C19 (mostly C17-18), animal bone, and evidence for leather and horn working.		ST 2282 2436	44447
8	Medieval - Post Medieval	Hedges / ditches	Evaluation, 11-13 Billet Street, Taunton. Field boundary hedges dating to C13. A number of C16-C17 field or property ditches were also recorded		ST 2297 2435	24541; 24683
9	Medieval - Post Medieval	Excavation	Excavation (1982), High St. Pits containing occupation debris mainly from the C12 to C14, with a C15-16 potsherd and a C18 chimney stack foundation, and indications of tanning and cloth industry		ST 2273 2426	44449
10	Post Medieval	Mill	Poolwall silk mill and shirt factory site, Upper High Street, Taunton, c.1783		ST 2260 2420	31915
11	Post Medieval	Factory	C19 collar factory site, Billet Street, Taunton		ST2293 2440	32931
12	Post Medieval	Cellars	Evaluation (2006), 51-56 Upper High Street. Infilled cellars of probable 19th century buildings. These were probably demolished during the first half of the 20th century.		ST 2269 2421	28527
13	Post Medieval	House	C17 house site 24-25 High St. Each with a two-room plan. Brick-built, of three storeys and attics, with diagonal chimney stacks. Refronted and the ground floor refitted in c.1800, original central entrance survives.		ST 2271 2427	32672
14	Post Medieval	Park	Vivary Park; Entrance Gates and Gatepiers to Vivary Park. Probably dating from 1896 when the park was laid out. Very elaborate late Victorian ironwork gates and gatepiers. Main gatepiers have openwork circular details and tops with brackets supporting bronze lamps with scrolled crossbars.		ST 2280 2390	32600; NHLE 1234117

15	Post Medieval	Factory	C19 Shirt and collar factory site, The Mount		ST 2290 2420	31949
16	Post Medieval	Brewery	Early C19 Taunton Ale Brewery site, Pig Market		ST 2276 2438	31700
17	Post Medieval	Brewery	Mary Street Brewery, 1809. Some buildings survive: the pub, the aerated water factory and stables		ST 2280 2420	31695
18	Post Medieval	Factory	C17 Clay pipe manufactory. Quantities of clay pipe together with fired clay kiln furniture and some slag		ST 2270 2410	31470
19	Post Medieval	Sewer	C19 sewer, High Street. Brick-built egg-shaped sewer.		ST 2280 2450	14026
20	Post Medieval	House	C17 House, No. 51 High Street. Two houses of timber and stone, two-storeyed.		ST 2267 2434	14708
21	Post Medieval	Turnpike Road	Turnpike Road, Whiteball to Thurloxton		ST 0997 1902	26223
22	Post Medieval	Evaluation	County Hotel evaluation recovered finds and features of post-medieval date, East Street, Taunton; Excavation recovered finds and features from the C12 -C20.		ST 2290 2440	44656; 44665
23	Post Medieval	Burial ground	Burial Ground of the United Reform Church, in use from at least 1785 to 1860.		ST 2292 2432	44472
24	Post Medieval	Cross	St John's Cross stood in the area of the junction of Mary Street and Mount Street by 1597 and in 1616		ST 2273 2422	44488
25	Post Medieval	Barracks	Jellalabad Keep & Barracks, The Mount, Taunton; Watching brief (1996), A deposit of waste from clay pipe manufacture was discovered; Watching brief (1998-1999). The trenches showed that much of the site appeared to have been raised with dumped clay during the late C19.	Grade II LB	ST 2295 2418	NHLE 1051986; 44458; 31468; 31469; 44707
26	Post Medieval	Market	The Parade, including Market House. 1770-72 by Copleston Warre Bampfylde, an amateur architect. Radically altered in 1932 by H S	Grade II LB	ST 22734 24490	NHLE 1059989

			W Stone. Centre block of 2 storeys plus attic and basement, originally flanked by one storey arcaded open markets			
27	Post Medieval	Hotel	County Hotel, Main block has an imposing early C19 3 storey stucco front. Central large Tuscan porch to entrance with architrave surround. Entry to yard under rusticated arch to left; Brendon Bar, East Street. Probably C18, altered recently. Stucco front of 2 storeys plus attics. Now extension to County Hotel; No "8", East Street. In the alley behind Cheapside and adjoining the Brendon Bar. 3 storey 2 window painted brick front, probably C18.	Grad II* LB; Grade II LB	ST 22862 24445	NHLE 1060016; NHLE 1344726; NHLE 1060017
28	Post Medieval	Building	No 5 (Clune House), Mount Street. Early C19 brown brick front. 2 storeys plus attics.	Grade II LB	ST 22803 24148	NHLE 1344746
29	Post Medieval	Building	Nos 48 to 50, High Street. 3 storey early C19 brown brick fronts, partly minted. Cornice and parapets.	Grade II LB	ST 22675 24326	NHLE 1344721
30	Post Medieval	Building	Nos 43 to 44, High Street. Mid C19 ashlar front. 3 storeys. Cornice band and pilasters	Grade II LB	ST 22681 24296	NHLE 1060003
31	Post Medieval	Building	Nos 39 and 40, High Street. 1 building, gable end to street. Probably C17/early C18, refronted later. 3 storeys	Grade II LB	ST 22679 24276	NHLE 1232961
32	Post Medieval	Shops	No 38, High Street. Early C19 3 storey stucco front with band over 1st floor. Modern shop fronts; No 37, High Street. Plain 3 storey early C19 brown brick front, flipped pantile roof with eaves brackets. 2 windows, sashes with some glazing bars. Modern projecting shop front with plain carriage entry to right.	Grade II LB	ST 22675 24260	NHLE 1344720; NHLE 1276818
33	Post Medieval	Building	No 34 (Powlett House), High Street. 3 storey C18 red-brick front, altered by C19 round-headed windows and terra-cotta ornament.	Grade II LB	ST 22690 24236	NHLE 1060002
34	Post Medieval	Building	Nos 33 and 33A, High Street. 3 storey red brick front, partly painted	Grade II LB	ST 22690 24224	NHLE 1344719
35	Post Medieval	Building	No 18 Mary Street. Early C19 stucco front set back slightly with minted brick range coming forward on right. 3 storeys. Moulded	Grade II LB	ST 22881 24264	NHLE 1060006

			eaves cornice, slate roof. Forms a group with 20 Mary Street and the entrance Gates to Infant School to the rear.			
36	Post Medieval	Building	No 20 Mary Street, 2 storey square red brick house in garden behind No 19 on the street	Grade II LB	ST 22838 24257	NHLE 1060007
37	Post Medieval	Building	No 19 (Queen Anne Cottage), Mary Street. Early C18 2 storey colourwashed stucco front. Moulded cornice and parapet. Old tile roof. Plain pilasters flank front	Grade II LB	ST 22856 24260	NHLE 1233130
38	Post Medieval	Building	Mary Street House. 3 storey early C19 brown brick front at rightangles to the road. Centre breaks forward. Moulded cornice, hipped slate roof	Grade II LB	ST 22842 24237	NHLE 1060008
39	Post Medieval	Royal British Legion Club	The Lawn (Royal British Legion Club), Mary Street. At right angles to the road. Late C18/early C19. 2 storeys. Rendered. Moulded cornice, hipped slate roof.	Grade II LB	ST 22791 24217	NHLE 1233157
40	Post Medieval	Chapel	Unitarian Chapel, Mary Street. Built 1721. Frontage altered with C19 stucco decoration. 2 storeys, heavy moulded cornices. Both storeys divided by Corinthian pilasters.	Grade II* LB	ST 22778 24228	NHLE 1060009
41	Post Medieval	School	Mary Street Memorial Schools, Mary Street. Built 1886. Red brick building on the corner with Mount Street. Asymmetrical with tall square corner tower surmounted by lead dome and wooden cupola with weathervane.	Grade II LB	ST 22759 24216	NHLE 1233188
42	Post Medieval	Apartments	Nos 24A to 29 (consec) including Nos 1 to 6 (consec) Vivary Apartments/ Row of 2 storey early C19 and later stucco houses with gardens overlooking Vivary Park.	Grade II LB	ST 22770 24206	NHLE 1344749
43	Post Medieval	Cottage	Nos 3 and 4, Mount Street. Pair of early/mid C19 cottages. 2 storeys, No 4 of higher elevation, brown brick, No 3 colourwashed. Pantile roof to No 4. 3 windows each	Grade II LB	ST 22761 24194	NHLE 1059975
44	Post Medieval	Building	Premises of Somerset Child Guidance and Schools Psychological Service, The Mount. Probably mid C19 rendered and colour-washed house. 2 storeys plus attics.	Grade II LB	ST 22951 24205	NHLE 1344745

45	Post Medieval	Building	Nos 31A and 32 High Street. 3 storey early C19 brown brick front. Old tile roof. 3 windows (centre 1 painted only), sashes with glazing bars. 2 small shop fronts with original glazing divisions.	Grade II LB	ST 22695 24222	NHLE 1060001
46	Post Medieval	Gates	Entrance gates to Infant School, Mary Street. Ashlar piers with panel treatment flank entrance. Lintel is inscribed: "Original Infant School 1828".	Grade II LB	ST 22893 24262	NHLE 1344724
47	Post Medieval	Building	Nos 11 and 13 (Wessex Lodge), Billetfield, Taunton. Circa 1860. Red brick with stone dressings and Welsh slate roof. Gothic villa. L shaped block with stair turret in angle. Main section is 3 storeys with a 4 storey tower	Grade II LB	ST 22974 24345	NHLE 1051983
48	Post Medieval	Church	United Reformed Church, Paul Street. Founded 1662 by Joseph Alleine, present buildings erected 1797. 2 storeys. Red brick, ashlar dressings.	Grade II LB	ST 22904 24318	NHLE 1344773
49	Post Medieval	Building	Nos 12 and 13, Paul Street. Early C19 red brick front. 3 storeys. Hipped pantile roof, moulded eaves. 4 windows, sashes with glazing bars.	Grade II LB	ST 22870 24363	NHLE 1059952
50	Post Medieval	Building	Nos 1 to 6, Cheapside. An imposing early C19 stucco block on an island site at the west end of East Street. North front is slightly curved and treated with pilasters and bands.	Grade II* LB	ST 22842 24454	NHLE 1060078
51	Post Medieval	Building	No 19 and 20, High Street. Early/mid C19. 3 storeys. Painted brick, pantile roof.	Grade II LB	ST 22718 24316	NHLE 1060000
52	Post Medieval	Building	No 18, High Street. Mid/late C19. 3 storeys. Brick with stucco dressings.	Grade II LB	ST 22717 24321	NHLE 1344757
53	Post Medieval	Building	Nos 9 to 13, High Street. Long range of buildings, now unified by continuous modern shop fronts. Early/mid C19. 3 storeys, lower elevations to right. Fainted brick with stucco dressings	Grade II LB	ST 22730 24370	NHLE 1059999
54	Post Medieval	Bank	No 7 (Barclays Bank), Fore Street. Late C19. 3 storeys. Freestone. Deep cornice with brackets, parapet. Banded quoins. Rusticated ground floor.	Grade II LB	ST 22774 24451	NHLE 1060023

55	Post Medieval	Building	No 2, Fore Street. Plain 3 storey painted brick Georgian front. Cornice and parapet. 3 windows, sashes with glazing bars to upper floor only. Modern shop front.	Grade II LB	ST 22811 24456	NHLE 1060021
56	Post Medieval	Church	St Georges Roman Catholic Church. 1861 by B Bucknell. In an early C14 style. Red rubble with ashlar dressings. Clerestoried nave with aisles, chancel with side chapels. West tower with corner buttresses, a large Decorated style west window and long traceried bell openings.	Grade II* LB	ST 23038 24292	NHLE 1231201
57	Post Medieval	Building	Nos 7 and 8, High Street. Early C19. 3 storeys. Painted brick. Moulded eaves cornice, slate roof.	Grade II LB	ST 22708 24389	NHLE 1059998
58	Post Medieval	Building	A group of buildings shown on the 1780 Taunton Town Plan within the boundary of the proposed development site, facing Mary Street		ST 22836 24320	-
59	Post Medieval	Building	A group of buildings shown on the c.1840 Tithe Map of Taunton. It is uncertain whether some or all of these buildings are those shown on the 1780 Taunton Town Plan.		ST 22836 24320	-
60	Modern	Burial ground	Nonconformist Burial Ground, Mary Street. 'B.Gd. (dis.)' shown on Ordnance Survey map of c1904		ST 2279 2420	18518
61	Modern	Cinema	Cinema on East Street. 'Cinema' shown on Ordnance Survey map of c1904		ST 2290 2441	14693
62	Undated/Multi-period	School	School, Mount Street		ST 2280 2420	31951
63	Undated/Multi-period	CA	The Mount Street & Vivary Park Conservation Area	CA	AREA	-

Appendix 2 Visual Impact Assessment Pro-forma

Heritage Assets

Asset Name/UID	
Proximity to asset	
Introduction of movement or activity	
Diurnal or seasonal change	
Degree to which location will physically or visually isolate asset	
Competition with or distraction from the asset	

Key Viewpoints

Change to skyline	
Change to character	

Appendix 3 Heritage Assets & Viewpoints Identified for Visual Impact Assessment

Heritage Assets Selected for Visual Impact Assessment

AB Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. distance / orientation from site	Views from asset to site?	Views from site to asset?	Assessment Limitations	Notes
4	Church of St Mary Magdalene	Grade I LB	National	250m NNE	Glimpse	Yes	Ground level assessment from asset – views from tower likely but untested	Screening from surrounding buildings of historic and modern date
6	Municipal Buildings, Corporation Street	Grade II* LB	Regional - National	250m NW	No	No	None	
25	Jellalabad Keep	Grade II LB	Regional	150m S	No	Yes	Ground level assessment from asset – views from upper storeys likely but untested	
26	The Parade, including Market House	Grade II LB	Regional	200m NW	No	No	None	
35	18 Mary Street	Grade II LB	Regional	15m S	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary
37	19 Mary Street	Grade II LB	Regional	15m S	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary
38	Mary Street House	Grade II LB	Regional	15m S	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT DESK BASED ASSESSMENT & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

AB Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. distance / orientation from site	Views from asset to site?	Views from site to asset?	Assessment Limitations	Notes
								tree line to along southern boundary
39	The Lawn (Royal British Legion Club)	Grade II LB	Regional	30m SW	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary
40	Unitarian Chapel, Mary Street	Grade II* LB	Regional	50m SW	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary
41	Mary Street Memorial Schools	Grade II LB	Regional	75m SW	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary
48	United Reformed Church, Paul Street	Grade II LB	Regional	20m E	Yes	Yes	None	Partial seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary
49	Nos 12 and 13, Paul Street	Grade II LB	Regional	25m NE	Yes	Yes	None	
47	Nos 11 and 13 (Wessex Lodge), Billetfield	Grade II LB	Regional	90m E	Glimpse	Yes	Ground level / public land assessment from asset – views from windows likely but untested	
56	St Georges Roman Catholic Church	Grade II* LB	Regional - National	150m ESE	No	Yes	Ground level assessment from asset – views from tower likely but untested	

Key short and mid viewpoints selected for visual impact assessment

View Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. distance / orientation from site	Views to site?	Assessment Limitations	Notes
SD1	View from St George Square / Barracks Parade Ground & Green	-	Local	130m S	Partial	None	Partial views through gaps in buildings
SD2	View from Church Square	-	Local	250m NNE	Glimpse	None	
SD3	View from the St Mary Magdalene Churchyard	-	Local	250m NNE	No	None	
SD4	View from North Street, looking SSE	-	Local	300m NNW	No	None	
SD5	View E between 23 High Street and Mendip House, High Street	-	Local	80m W	Yes	None	
SD6	View SE from S side of Corporation Street	-	Local	230m NW	No	None	
SD7	View along Mary Street / Upper High Street	-	Local	Immediately S	Yes	None	Heavily screened by tree line to along southern boundary of site in summer
SD8	Views W along Billetfield	-	Local	50m SE	Yes	None	Heavy seasonal screening from existing tree line to along southern boundary

View Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. distance / orientation from site	Views to site?	Assessment Limitations	Notes
SD9	View WSW from the east end of East Reach	-	Local	1km ENE	No	None	
SD10	Views N from The Mount	-	Local	50m SE	Partial	None	No views from majority of the road, partial view of site close to the junction with Mary Street/Billetfield
SD11	Vivary Park (Vivary Park Conservation Area), various viewpoints	CA	Local – Regional	c. 200m SW	Partial	None	Mostly screened by other buildings

Long Distance Views of Taunton's Skyline

View Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. distance / orientation from site	Views to site?	Assessment Limitations	Notes
LD1	View SE from the railway bridge on Silk Mills Road	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	2.6km NW	Yes	None	Partial seasonal vegetation screening
LD2	Views from Taunton Station Platform	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	1.1km north	Yes	None	
LD3	Obridge Viaduct	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	1.5km NE	Yes	None	Partial seasonal vegetation screening

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT DESK BASED ASSESSMENT & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

View Number	Name	Designation	Importance (Table 1)	Approx. distance / orientation from site	Views to site?	Assessment Limitations	Notes
LD4	Longrun Meadow	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	1.3km NW	No	None	
LD5	Hestercombe Gardens Formal Garden Terrace	-	Taunton skyline - Regional	4.5km NNE	Uncertain	Too far from site to distinguish existing building from this distance	



Subject: Quantock House Scoping Meeting
Between: AB Heritage,
 South West Heritage Trust/
 Taunton Deane Borough Council
 & Quantum Group
Date: 04/07/2016

The following note summarise the outcome of a meeting between Zoe Edwards (AB Heritage), and Nicholas Wall (Senior Conservation Officer, Somerset Heritage Trust) on 30th June 2016, regarding the scope of a heritage settings assessment covering the proposed development at Quantock House, Taunton. The purpose is to define the discussion that occurred, along with agreements taken on site on how to progress heritage input into the project.

Meeting Discussion Points

During the scoping exercise on 30th June a number of points were discussed. The key discussions are listed below, along with any outcomes or requirements resulting from such discussion:

- Overall, the existing building at the site is screened from view from most of central Taunton by a line of trees along Mary Street to the south, and by buildings on all other sides including the adjacent multi-storey car park.
- The heritage setting impacts of the proposal upon the surrounding heritage assets will be visual, and therefore a heritage visual impact assessment will be required as opposed to a full heritage settings assessment.
- The primary heritage settings impacts will therefore most likely be to the buildings immediately adjacent to the site, and to the skyline of Taunton from the various high-points which are present on the approach to the town centre.
- The Listed Buildings which are not immediately adjacent to the site but lie within the Mary Street Conservation Area, will be assessed as part of the heritage settings assessment as part of the Conservation Area.
- The other key areas for assessment include glimpsed views from 'High Street' towards the site, and a small number of buildings which have been identified by the council as landmark heritage sites, including St Georges Church c.150m east of the site, and the barracks c.250m to the south of the site.
- The potential change to the current historic character along Mary Street/Upper High Street will need to be assessed.

Heritage Statement – Amended Scope of Works

Based on the information above, the existing scope of works covering the Heritage Statement will be amended and now comprise the following works:

- Order and review of the Somerset Historic Environment Record (HER) covering the site and up to a maximum 500m buffer area surrounding the proposed development boundary covering Statutory Designations, and 150m for archaeological features (the latter is subject to the approval of the local planning archaeologist).
- Examination of readily accessible pre-Ordnance Survey Maps, documentary sources and historic aerial photographs covering the site of proposed development at the Somerset Heritage Centre.
- On-line research (e.g. A2A and Heritage Gateway, NHLE).
- A site walkover/basic site survey to understand key cultural heritage issues of the site, including information on areas of past truncation within the site boundary.
- A heritage visual impact assessment covering:
 - The views along Mary Street/Upper High Street
 - The eight Listed Buildings in closest proximity to the site, consisting of six on the southern side of Mary Street and two on the eastern side of Paul Street



Subject: Quantock House Scoping Meeting
Between: AB Heritage,
South West Heritage Trust/
Taunton Deane Borough Council
& Quantum Group
Date: 04/07/2016

- The views towards the site from key points within the neighbouring Mary Street Conservation Area, with mention to the Listed Buildings and landmark heritage buildings within it
- The views towards the site from the barracks to the south of the site from the most inter-visible location
- The view towards the site from High Street from the most inter-visible location
- The view towards the site from The Parade from the most inter-visible location
- The view towards the site from up to five high points which show the skyline of Taunton town centre (including the Obridge and Silk Mills)
- A heritage visual impact assessment and development of a mitigation strategy, where required, which appropriately targets any future heritage works only to that required to progress through planning.
- Production of fully illustrated report and OASIS entry
- Full project management and QA.

Appendix 5: Visual Impact Assessment Photographs



Photo 1: View from Church of St Mary Magdalene [AB 4] towards proposed development site



Photo 2: View from 18 Mary Street [AB 35] towards proposed development site



Photo 3: View from 19 Mary Street [AB 37] towards proposed development site



Photo 4: View from Mary Street House [AB 38] towards proposed development site



Photo 5: View from The Lawn (Royal British Legion Club) [AB 39] towards the proposed development site



Photo 6: View from the Unitarian Chapel, Mary Street [AB 40] and Mary Street Memorial Schools [AB 41] towards the proposed development site



Photo 7: View from the United Reformed Church, Paul Street [AB 48] towards the proposed development site



Photo 8: View from Nos 12 and 13, Paul Street [AB 49] towards the proposed development site



Photo 9: View from Nos 11 and 13 (Wessex Lodge), Billetfield [AB 47] towards the proposed development site



Photo 10: View from St George Square / Barracks Parade Ground & Green towards the proposed development site



Photo 11: View from Church Square towards the proposed development site



Photo 12: View east between 23 High Street and Mendip House, High Street, towards the proposed development site



Photo 13: View along Mary Street / Upper High Street, towards the proposed development site



Photo 14: Views west along Billetfield towards the proposed development site



Photo 15: Views north from The Mount/Mountway towards the proposed development site



Photo 16: View from the Vivary Park (Vivary Park Conservation Area), War Memorial (PRN 46217, NHLE 1059909) towards the proposed development site



Photo 17: View south-east from the railway bridge on Silk Mills Road towards the proposed development site



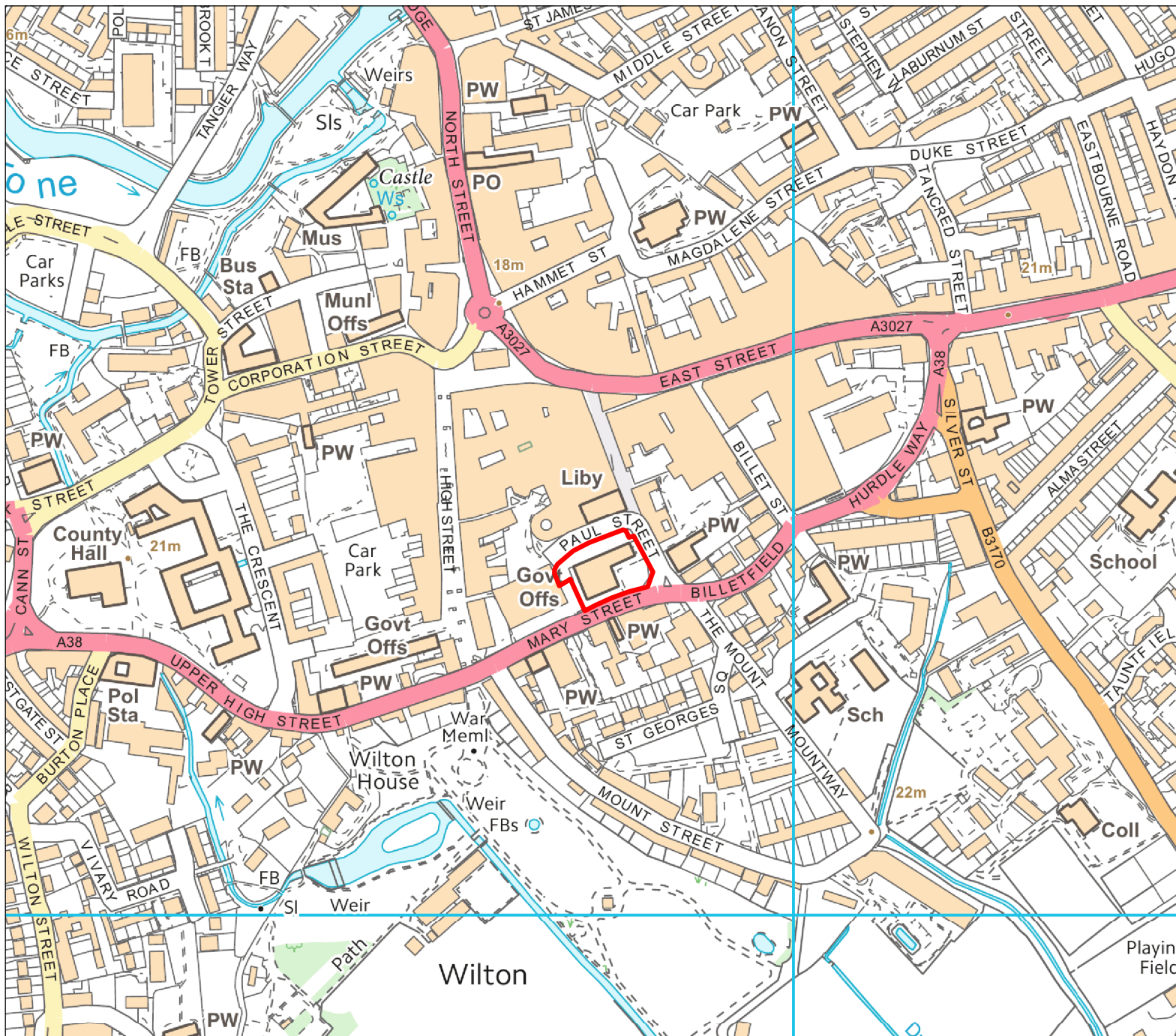
Photo 18: View from Taunton Station Platform towards the proposed development site



Photo 19: View from the Obridge Viaduct towards the proposed development site



Photo 20: View from Hestercombe Gardens Formal Garden Terrace towards the proposed development site



Legend

 Site Boundary

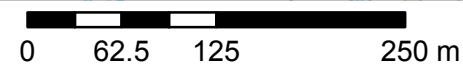


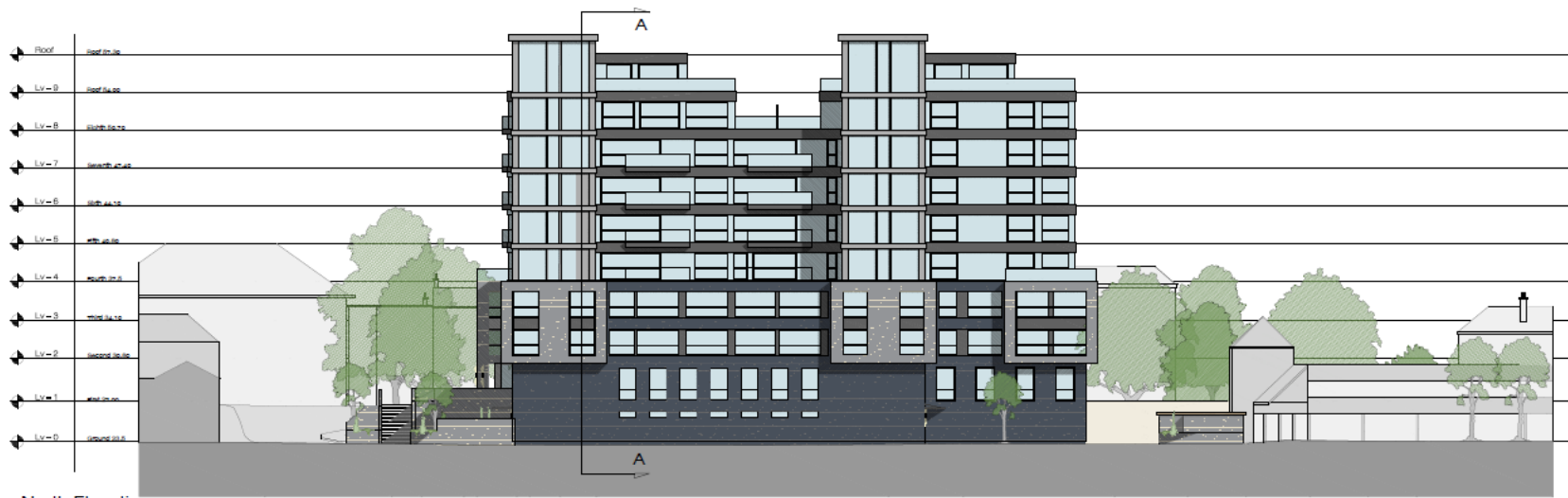
Figure 1: Site Location

Project: Quantock House, Taunton

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North Elevation



West Elevation

Figure 2: Proposed North & West Elevations

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dated September 2016



NOT TO SCALE



South Elevation



East Elevation

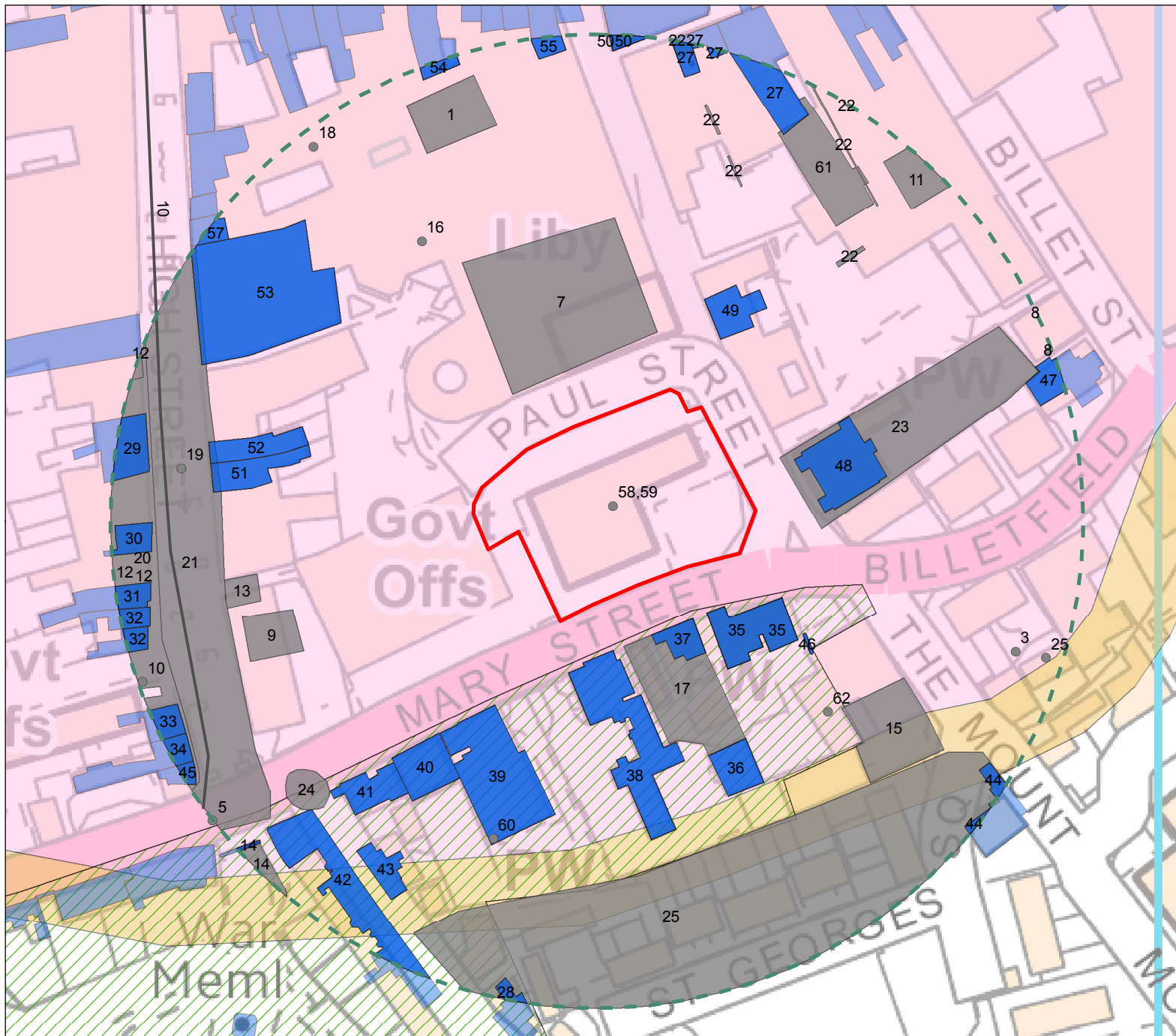
NOT TO SCALE

Figure 3: Proposed South & East Elevations

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Job Number: 10867

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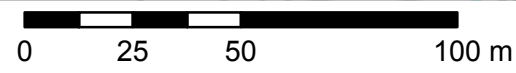
- Legend**
- Monument Points
 - Monument Linears
 - Monument Areas
 - Listed Buildings
 - ▨ The Mount Street & Vivary Park Conservation Area [AB 63]
 - Medieval Town Defences [AB 2]
 - Medieval Town [AB 2]
 - Site Boundary
 - - - 150m Study Area

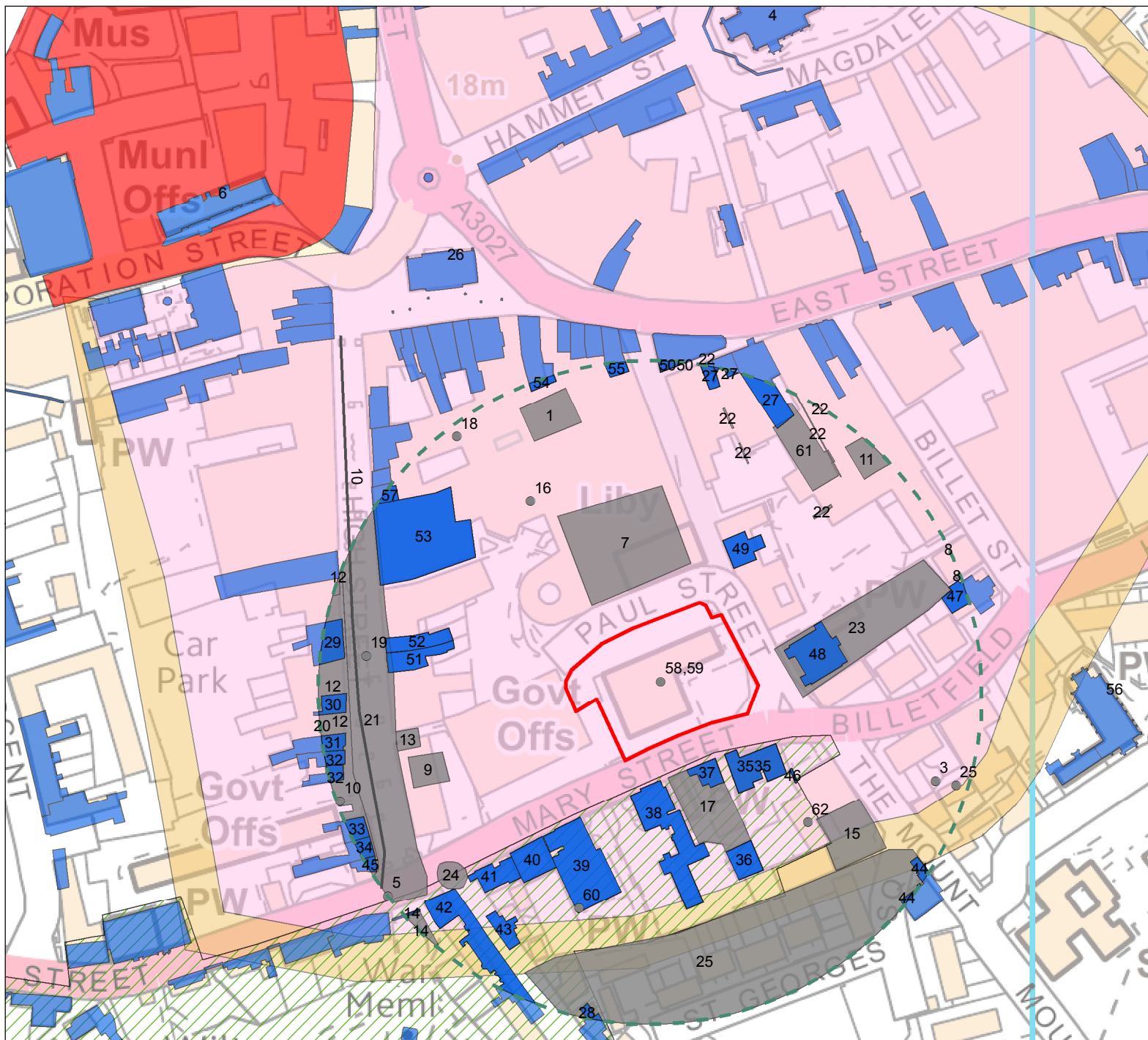
Figure 4: Map of Cultural Heritage Features within 150m of the Proposed Development Site

Project: Quantock House, Taunton

Date: 17/08/16 Job Number: 10867

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Legend

- Monument Points
- Monument Linears
- Monument Areas
- Listed Buildings
- ▨ The Mount Street & Vivary Park Conservation Area [AB 63]
- Scheduled Ancient Monument (Taunton Castle)
- Medieval Town Defences [AB 2]
- Medieval Town [AB 2]
- Site Boundary
- - - 150m Study Area

Figure 5: Map of Cultural Heritage Features within Taunton Town Centre

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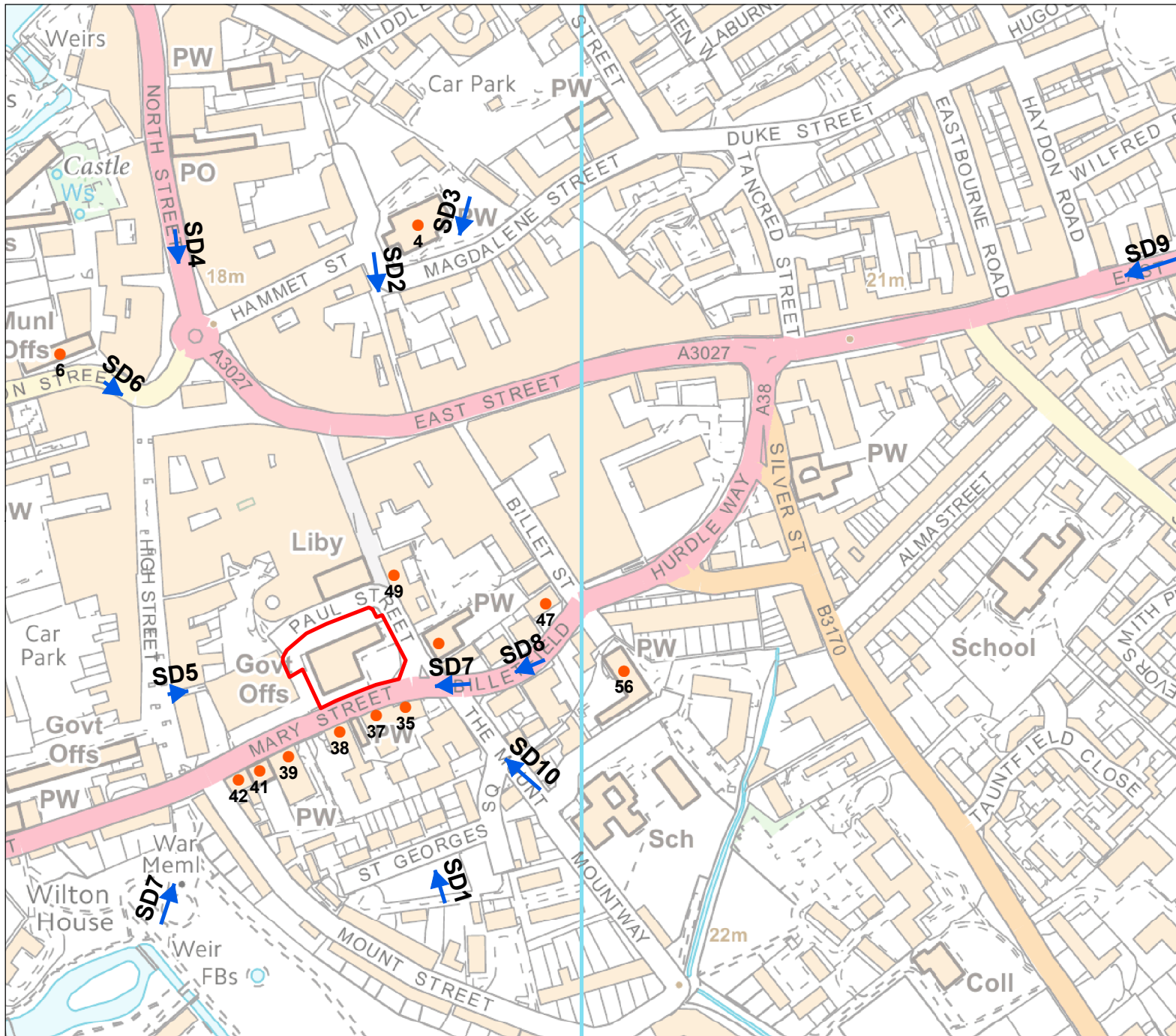
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Legend

- Heritage Assets in
- ➔ Short Distance Viewpoints in VIA
- Site Boundary

VIA: Visual Impact Assessment

Figure 6: Heritage Assets & Short Distance Viewpoints in Visual Impact Assessment

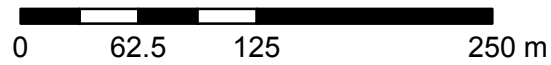
Project: Quantock House, Taunton

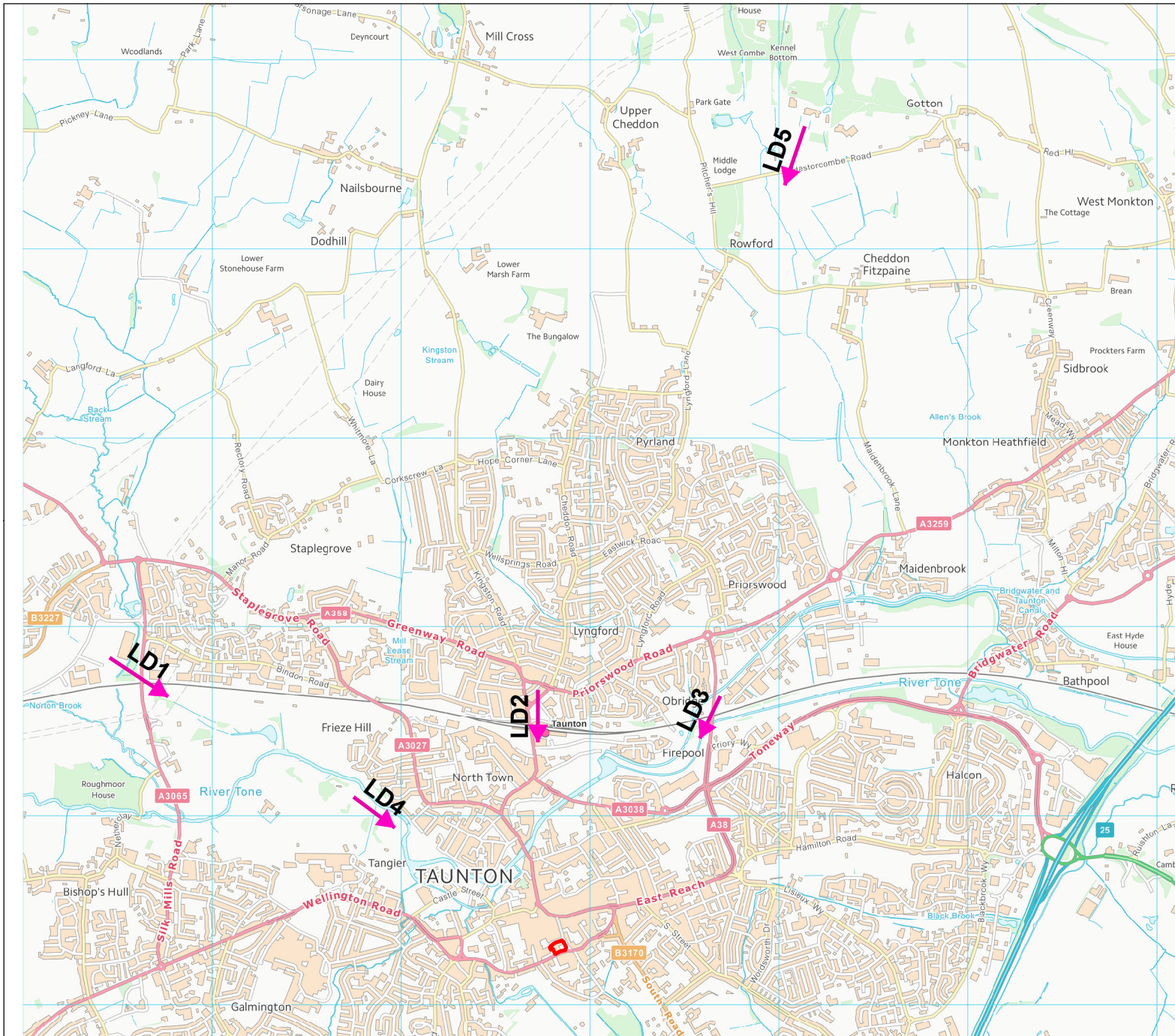
Date: 17/08/16

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Legend

- Long Distance Viewpoints in VIA
- Site Boundary

VIA: Visual Impact Assessment

Figure 7: Long Distance Viewpoints in Visual Impact Assessment

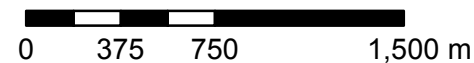
Project: Quantock House, Taunton

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Approved by: AB





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