

Heritage Statement



**Barnfield Estate Office
Barnfield Road
Woolwich
London SE18 3QT**

On behalf of

RBG Social Housing

December 2021

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Contents:

1	Executive Summary	2
2	Introduction.....	3
3	Site Location	3
	3.1 Soils & Geology.....	3
4	Methodology	7
	4.1 Legislative Framework.....	7
	4.2 Criteria	8
	4.3 Consultation of Records Relating to Archaeological & Built Heritage Assets	9
5	Heritage Assessment	11
	5.1 Summary Archaeological & Historical Background	11
	5.1.1 Prehistoric.....	11
	5.1.2 Romano-British	11
	5.1.3 Medieval	12
	5.1.4 Post-medieval	12
	5.2 Identification of Built Heritage Assets, Settings & Significance	14
	5.3 Barnfield Estate Office (Oak House)	15
	5.3.1 Description of Building & Its Setting.....	15
	5.3.2 Assessment of Significance	20
6	Description of Proposals & Magnitude of Impact	21
	6.1 Summary Description of Proposals	21
	6.2 Assessment of Magnitude of Impact.....	21
7	Overall Significance of Impact & Conclusion	34
8	Copyright	35
9	References	35
10	Cartography.....	36
12	Appendix 1: Historic Maps.....	37

1 Executive Summary

Border Archaeology has been commissioned to carry out a Heritage Statement relating to the proposed demolition of the Barnfield Estate Office (Oak House) and a community hall and the construction of 19 residential apartments on land forming part of the Barnfield Estate, Barnfield Road, Woolwich, London SE18 3QT.

It is considered that the proposed residential development will have an overall **Slight** impact in heritage terms. This assessment reflects the **Low to Medium** significance of the only heritage asset likely to be impacted by the proposed development, namely Oak House, a former public house built in 1935-36 (The Royal Oak) which is considered to be a building of architectural merit, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as **Moderate to Major**.

Oak House is considered to be of **Low to Medium** importance as a former public house designed in the mid-1930s in a 'Moderne' style, representing one of the earliest buildings erected as part of the construction of the Barnfield Estate in the late 1930s-1940s. It may be regarded as a non-designated heritage asset although it is not registered on the Royal Borough of Greenwich Local Heritage List.

The exterior of the building is reasonably well-preserved and may be regarded as a distinctive and positive element in the streetscape along Barnfield Road. It retains much original architectural detailing, particularly in terms of the metal framed 'Crittall' style windows and stone door and window surrounds both at ground and first floor level. However, the interior was substantially altered and converted to a community centre in 1995, resulting in major changes to the internal layout and removal of any fixtures or fittings relating to its original usage as a public house.

It is considered that the proposed development will have a **Moderate to Major** impact on Oak House. This assessment reflects the fact that the proposed demolition of Oak House will result in the complete loss of any remaining historic fabric and a permanent change to its immediate setting.

However, it should be noted that much internal fabric has already been lost following its conversion to a community centre in 1995, thus diminishing the significance of the building in heritage terms. On this basis, it is considered that the loss of Oak House can be effectively mitigated by undertaking an appropriately detailed programme of historic building recording of the surviving fabric to Historic England Level 3 prior to demolition.

Conclusion: In overall terms, the impact of the proposed development in heritage terms can be assessed as Slight. This assessment takes into account the Low to Medium significance of Oak House, a former interwar public house built as part of the construction of the Barnfield Estate in the 1930s-40s, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as Moderate to Major.

In archaeological terms, it is considered that there is **Low** potential in overall terms for encountering significant archaeological remains, reflecting the likelihood that the existing mid-20th century buildings on the site will have heavily truncated any archaeological remains within their footprint. However, it may be noted that two pottery manufacturing sites of late medieval/early post-medieval date are recorded in the wider surrounding area, to the east and southwest of the proposal site.

2 Introduction

Border Archaeology (BA) has been instructed by the Royal Borough of Greenwich to undertake a Heritage Statement relating to the demolition of the Barnfield Estate Office (Oak House) and a community hall and the construction of 19 residential apartments on the Barnfield Estate, Barnfield Road, Woolwich, London SE18 3QT.

3 Site Location

The proposed development is located on the E side of Barnfield Road within the Barnfield Estate, a large mid-20th century multi-storey Council housing estate situated to the S of Plumstead Common Road within the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

The development area comprises two distinct sites, namely Oak House (Site A) a former public house (The Royal Oak) converted into a community and child-care centre and offices and a separate community hall/nursery to the rear (Site B).

The proposal sites are not located within a designated Conservation Area or Archaeological Priority Area; however Oak House (the former Royal Oak public house) is considered by the Royal Borough of Greenwich Conservation Officer to be a building of architectural merit although it is not listed in the latest iteration of the Council's Local Heritage List (RBG 2021).

3.1 Soils & Geology

The British Geological Survey (BGS) identifies the solid geology underlying the site as comprising Sand and Gravel deposits of the Harwich Formation formed approximately 48 to 56 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period within a local environment previously dominated by shallow seas. (BGS 2021).

A trial hole excavated about 10m NE of the site at TQ 44060 77860 revealed the following sequence of deposits, namely:

0-0.23m (Topsoil)

0.23m-1.14m: Clay and Ballast (Sand & Gravel)

1.14m-1.83m: Ballast (Sand & Gravel)



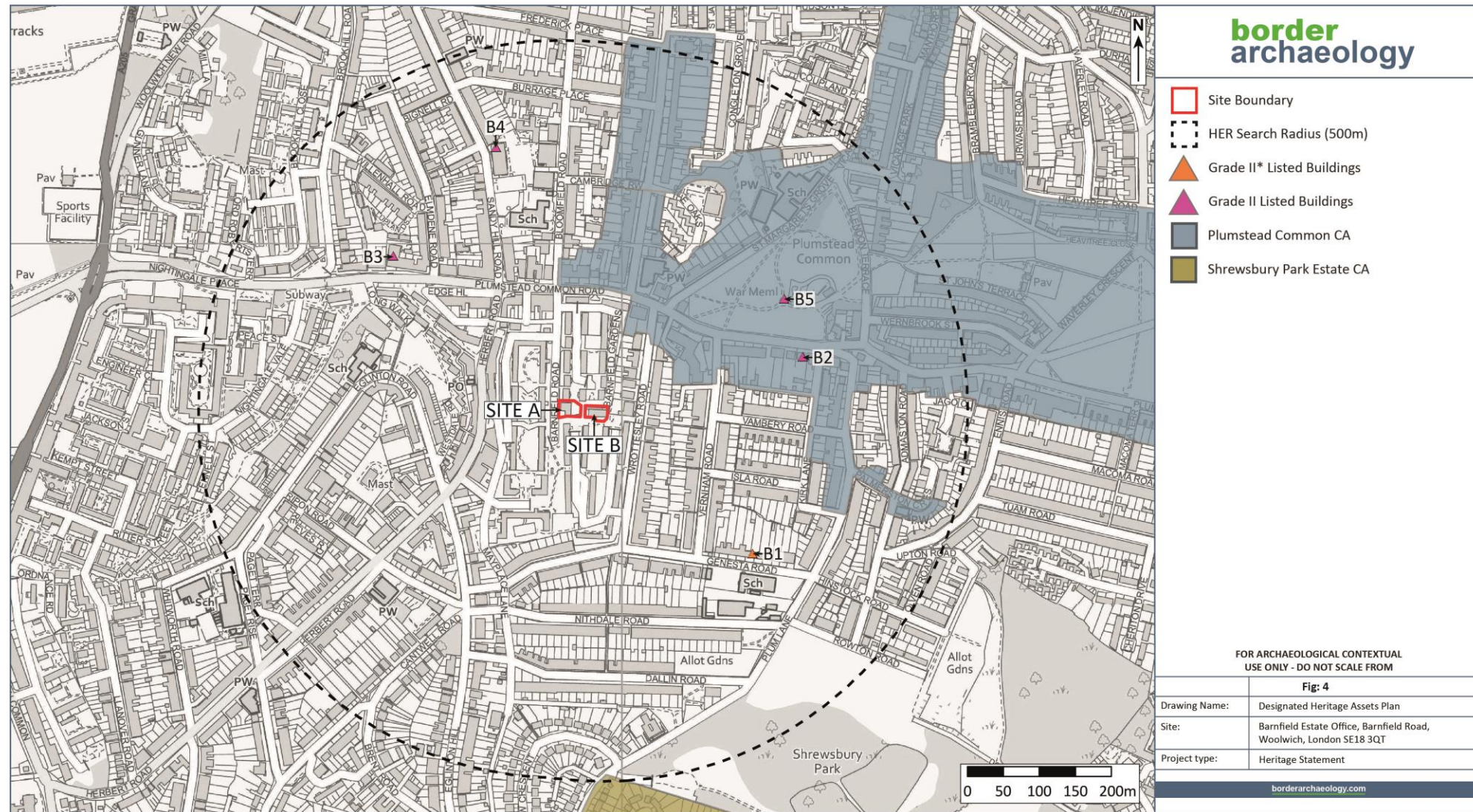


- Site Boundary
- HER Search Radius (500m)
- Prehistoric
- Romano-British
- Medieval/Post-medieval
- Post-medieval
- Undated
- Archaeological Events

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Fig: 2

Drawing Name:	HER Sites, Monuments & Events Plan
Site:	Barnfield Estate Office, Barnfield Road, Woolwich, London SE18 3QT
Project type:	Heritage Statement



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archaeology

- Site Boundary
- HER Search Radius (500m)
- ▲ Grade II* Listed Buildings
- ▲ Grade II Listed Buildings
- Plumstead Common CA
- Shrewsbury Park Estate CA

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Fig: 4

Drawing Name:	Designated Heritage Assets Plan
Site:	Barnfield Estate Office, Barnfield Road, Woolwich, London SE18 3QT
Project type:	Heritage Statement

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4 Methodology

This Heritage Statement identifies and describes those designated and undesignated heritage assets that may be affected by the proposed development and assesses their significance, followed by a description of the application proposals and an assessment of their potential impact on these heritage assets, in order to reach an overall assessment of the significance of impact upon the built heritage resource in the vicinity of the proposed development.

4.1 Legislative Framework

BA is cognisant of the following national and local planning policy guidance and legislative information relating to the status of designated and non-designated built heritage assets and the preparation of Heritage Statements. Listed Buildings are referred to as 'designated heritage assets' at national planning policy level and, under the current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2021, the following policies are of specific relevance to the assessment of these assets.

NPPF Chapter 16 para. 194 states that: *'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary'*.

Chapter 16 para. 195-196 state that: *'(195) Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*

(196) Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.'

Paragraphs 199-202 of NPPF are also of particular relevance with regard to the assessment of impact on designated heritage assets and read as follows:

'(199) 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 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

(200) Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: a) Grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

(201) 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 total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply: a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

(202) Where a development proposal will lead to 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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

With regard to non-designated heritage assets, the following sections in the NPPF are of relevance. Chapter 16 para. 203 states that *'the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect 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'*. Chapter 16 para. 204 states that *'local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred'*.

BA is also fully cognisant of general guidelines on the assessment of heritage assets contained in the *National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Guidance Section 12* ('Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment') and relevant local policy guidance contained in the London Plan Policy 7.8 (Heritage Assets and Archaeology) and the *Royal Greenwich Local Plan* (2014) in particular Policy DH3 (Heritage Assets).

4.2 Criteria

This Heritage Statement has been informed by relevant Historic England guidance for assessing impact on heritage assets, their significance and respective settings, namely, *Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015), *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3 - Second Edition* (Historic England 2017a), *Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice* (Historic England 2017b) and *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets Historic England Advice Note 12* (Historic England 2019).

‘Setting’ is herein defined as “the surroundings in which [the asset] is experienced”. It is acknowledged that these surroundings may evolve and that elements of a setting may 1) make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, 2) affect the ability to appreciate that significance or 3) be neutral (Historic England 2015).

Table 1: Overall Significance of impact on heritage assets

<i>Magnitude of impact.</i>	<i>Importance of heritage asset.</i>				
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
No change	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Negligible	Slight	Slight	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Neutral
Minor	Moderate/Large	Slight/Moderate	Slight	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight
Moderate	Large/Very Large	Moderate/Large	Moderate	Slight	Neutral/Slight
Major	Very Large	Large/Very Large	Moderate/Large	Slight/Moderate	Slight

4.3 Consultation of Records Relating to Archaeological & Built Heritage Assets

In order to fully appreciate the significance of the heritage assets and their respective settings that may be affected by the proposed development, information was collected on designated and undesignated built heritage assets within a 500m study area around the area of proposed development. The research carried out for the Heritage Statement consisted of the following elements:

- Consultation of the Greater London Historic Environment Record (HER). The HER includes information on archaeological and built heritage assets, previous archaeological investigations and historic building surveys. A total of 19 archaeological monuments, one archaeological event and five listed buildings were identified within the study area (*Table 2; fig. 2*). The site does not lie within a Conservation Area or an Archaeological Priority Area.
- Historic England – information on statutory designations including scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens and Listed Buildings along with identified Heritage at Risk;
- Online collections of documentary records, census returns, post office directories and historic maps and photographs were consulted using records held by the National Archives, the British Library and the London Metropolitan Archives;
- Photographs of the site were taken to assess potential impacts on designated and undesignated heritage assets in the vicinity.

#	MonUID	PrefRef	Name	Date	NGR
1	MLO11358	070406/00/00	Findspot: Flint Implement	Neolithic	TQ 4400 7729
2	MLO2064	070210/00/00	Findspot: Palstave	Bronze Age	TQ 4400 7800
3	MLO2090	070227/00/00	Findspot: Gold Stater	Iron Age	TQ 4430 7800
4	MLO1771	070318/00/00	Findspot: Silver Denarius of Vespasian, 98 Burrage Road	Romano-British	TQ 4403 7755
5	MLO24349	070302/00/00	Pottery Manufacturing Site, Wrottesley Road	Med./PM	TQ 4408 7779
6	MLO11346	070304/00/00	Pottery Manufacturing Site, Herbert Road	Med./PM	TQ 4354 7759
7	MLO72876	071781/00/00	Gravel Pit, Plumstead Common Road	Post-med.	TQ 4365 7800
8	MLO72877	071782/00/00	Brickfield, Wrottesley Road	Post-med.	TQ 4390 7770
9	MLO72878	071783/00/00	Clay Pit, Wrottesley Road	Post-med.	TQ 4390 7760
10	MLO77870	MLO77870	Culvert Systems, The Royal Arsenal	Post-med.	TQ 4380 7780
11	MLO82932	MLO82932	106-108 Plumstead Common Road (GII)	Post-med.	TQ 4425 7784
12	MLO83122	MLO83122	Fox Hill Junior School (GII)	Post-med.	TQ 4368 7798
13	MLO83263	MLO83263	85-91 Genesta Road & Attached Walls, Gates & Gatepiers (GII*)	Post-med.	TQ 4418 7757
14	MLO83435	MLO83435	Former Infant School, 45-61 Sandy Hill Road (GII)	Post-med.	TQ 4383 7811
15	MLO10416 5	MLO104165	Plumstead Common, Including Winns Common & The Slade	Post-med.	TQ 4496 7797
16	MLO10418 3	MLO104183	Shrewsbury Park including Shrewsbury Tumulus	Post-med.	TQ 4425 7731
17	MLO10577 8	MLO105778	AT Rail, Garden of 75 Admaston Road	Post-med.	TQ 4438 7760
18	MLO10803 2	MLO108032	WWI War Memorial (GII)	Post-med.	TQ 4422 7792
19	MLO11350	070325/00/00	Possible Barrow, Shrewsbury Park	Undated	TQ 4406 7726
E1	ELO12161	ELO12161	Historic Building Report: Furze Lodge Gas Decontamination Centre	2011	TQ 4403 7732

Table 2: Gazetteer of monuments and events recorded within a 500m radius of the site based on consultation of the Greater London Historic Environment Record

#	DesigUID	PrefRef	Name	Grade	NGR
B1	DLO18222	1247069	Numbers 85 to 91 & Attached Walls, Gates & Gatepiers	II*	TQ 4418 7757
B2	DLO17891	1078954	108 Plumstead Common Road	II	TQ 4425 7784
B3	DLO18081	1210899	Fox Hill Junior School	II	TQ 4368 7798
B4	DLO18394	1387279	Former Infant School	II	TQ 4382 7813
B5	DLO38298	1441884	8th London Howitzer Brigade War Memorial	II	TQ 4422 7792

Table 3: Gazetteer of listed buildings recorded within a 500m radius of the site based on consultation of the Greater London Historic Environment Record

5 Heritage Assessment

5.1 Summary Archaeological & Historical Background

This summary archaeological and historical background is based primarily on consultation of the Greater London Historic Environment Record, supplemented by other readily available, published sources of archaeological and historical information regarding the site.

5.1.1 Prehistoric

The site is located on the 55m contour line on the S edge of an extensive area of sand and gravel known as the Harwich Formation, just below the interface with the London Clay geology. Limited evidence of prehistoric activity has been identified within the 500m radius of the site consisting of a small number of findspots including a Neolithic flint celt found at Plum Lane, about 450m SSE of the site (MLO 11358), a palstave of Middle Bronze Age date found at NGR TQ 4400 7800 (MLO 2064) and an Iron Age gold stater found on Plumstead Common (MLO 2090).

There is evidence for a focus of prehistoric ritual and funerary activity on the higher slopes of Shooters Hill on the S periphery of the study area, represented by the remains of a Bronze Age cemetery originally comprising six round barrows which is recorded at Shrewsbury Park (MLO 104183). Of these six barrows, only one has survived (located about 640m S of the site) and is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (List Entry No. 1430983). Another barrow forming part of the same group was located about 500m S of the site (MLO 11350); it was still in existence in 1936 but appears to have been levelled shortly after that date.

Further evidence of prehistoric ritual activity has also been identified within the eastern portion of Plumstead Common about 1.7km ENE of the site, represented by a cluster of seven round barrows of which only one now survives at Winn's Common, the earthworks of which are Scheduled (List Entry No. 1002005).

Conclusion: The potential for evidence of prehistoric remains has been assessed as **Low**. This assessment chiefly reflects the paucity of recorded evidence for prehistoric activity in the immediate vicinity of the site, chiefly restricted to a scatter of findspots, although some evidence for Bronze Age funerary sites has been recorded on the S periphery of the study area at Shrewsbury Park and to the NE in the vicinity of Plumstead Common.

5.1.2 Romano-British

Recorded evidence of Romano-British activity within the 500m search radius selected for this study is limited to a silver denarius of the Emperor Vespasian (AD69-79) found in the garden of 98 Burrage Road, about 235m SE of the site (MLO 1771).

However, it may be noted that the site at Barnfield Road lies about 1.4km N of the line of the Roman road of Watling Street, the major routeway running from London to Dover via Rochester, the course of which is represented by the present-day A207 running across Shooters Hill. The road is presumed to be of Roman date although it is possible that the Romans may have utilised an existing routeway of earlier prehistoric origin. Limited

evidence for Romano-British settlement has been identified in the vicinity of Shooters Hill and finds of Roman date have also been recorded on the NE periphery of the study area in Plumstead Common.

Conclusion: The potential for encountering evidence of Romano-British occupation in the immediate vicinity of the site has been assessed as **Low**. This assessment reflects the limited scope of the archaeological record for Romano-British remains within the immediate vicinity of the site, although some evidence for Romano-British activity has been identified in the wider surrounding area.

5.1.3 Medieval

It is likely that the study area remained as marginal land throughout the medieval and early post-medieval periods, lying on the W fringes of Plumstead Common, an extensive area of open common (MLO 104165) and to the N of the elevated plateau of Shooters Hill Common.

However, there is evidence of late medieval/early post-medieval industrial activity (specifically associated with pottery manufacture) recorded in the vicinity of the site. Located about 110m E of the site is an Archaeological Priority Area (APA) associated with a pottery manufacturing site known in the 19th century as the 'West Plumstead Potteries' (MLO 23439), the origins of which appear to date back to the 16th century. The pottery kilns appear to have been located between Wrottesley Road and Vernham Road although their history is poorly documented.

Another focus of pottery manufacture, also designated as an APA appears to have been situated about 390m SW of the site, close to the junction of Herbert Road, Ripon Road and Eglinton Road (MLO 11346). This pottery kiln site, known as 'Pott Houses' appears to date back to the late medieval period and remained in use until the mid-19th century. Cartographic evidence shows that there were brickfields located in the immediate vicinity of the site at Barnfield Road which suggests that sand or clay may have been extracted in this area, possibly associated with the nearby West Plumstead pottery works and 'Pott Houses'.

Conclusion: The potential for encountering archaeological evidence of medieval activity has been assessed as **Low to Moderate**. This assessment reflects the fact that two long-established pottery manufacturing sites of late medieval or early post-medieval origin (both designated as Archaeological Priority Areas) are recorded to the E and SW of the proposal site and thus there is some potential for evidence of associated activities to be encountered, including the extraction of sand and clay for the manufacture of pottery and ceramic building materials.

5.1.4 Post-medieval

By the late 18th/early 19th century, it appears that the site lay within an area of enclosed agricultural land on the western periphery of Plumstead Common as shown on an Ordnance Survey drawing of Woolwich and district produced in 1799 (*fig. 17*). A cluster of unmarked square structures, most likely pottery kilns, are marked on the 1799 map to the E of the site, probably forming part of the West Plumstead Pottery.

By the late 1860s, as shown on the OS 1st edition map of 1869 (*fig. 18*), there had been significant residential development in the immediate vicinity of the site, as evidenced by the laying out of Barnfield Road and Princes Road to the W, forming part of the Shooters Hill Estate. The proposal site itself then appears to have lain on the N

edge of a brickfield, with brick drying shed depicted within the SE corner of the development area and a series of clay pits marked further to the S, while immediately to the N was an orchard heavily planted with trees and containing a fountain, which appears to have formed part of a formal garden associated with a detached house situated further to the NE, on the S side of Plumstead Common Road.

Barnfield Road was only partially lined with houses in 1869 (mostly focused towards the N end, close to Plumstead Common Road), however by 1897, it appears that rows of densely packed terraced houses had been built along the E side of the street, occupying the site of the former brickfield as shown on the OS 2nd edition 25-inch map of that date (*fig. 19*). The orchard/garden at the N end of the proposal site had also been converted into horticultural nurseries, with several greenhouses depicted to the E of Barnfield Road, while a smithy is marked in the SE corner of the development site.

Little change to the site is indicated on the OS 3rd edition map of 1916 (*fig. 20*); however, by the mid-1930s there had been a major change to the pattern of land use within the study area, with the demolition of the late 19th century terraces along Barnfield Road and Princes Road and the construction of the Barnfield Estate by the Metropolitan Borough of Woolwich. The estate was intended to provide housing for the rapidly growing population in London in the interwar period, with the building of about 520 homes (later increased to 570).

The development of the Barnfield Estate appears to have begun in or shortly after 1935 with the clearance of the old terraced houses along the E side of Barnfield Road and the building of blocks of flats along the N end of the street, between Barnfield Road and Wrottesley Road, as shown on the OS 4th edition map of 1938 (*fig. 21*). The construction of the estate appears to have been interrupted by the war, with the completion of the remaining blocks taking place during the late 1940s.

In 1935-36 a contract was awarded by Charles Beasley Ltd, owners of the North Kent Brewery, to Eley and Allen, a local firm of architects and estate agents based in Woolwich, for the construction of the Royal Oak public house, which took its name from a nearby 19th century hostelry in Princes Road which had been demolished to make way for the new housing development (LMA Ref. GLC/AR/BR/34/002524). This new public house is marked on the OS 25-inch map of 1956 (*fig. 22*) as is the community hall to the rear, which appears to have been built in the late 1940s/early 1950s. The Royal Oak remained in use as a public house until 1995 when it was converted into a community and child care centre (RBG Planning Ref. 95/0528/F).

Conclusion: The potential for encountering features of a post-medieval date was assessed as being **Low to Moderate**. Historic mapping shows that the site lay close to a brickfield during the late 19th century and there is potential for evidence of archaeological remains associated with brickmaking or pottery manufacture in this area, although it is likely that any sub-surface deposits or features will have been disturbed by the construction of the existing mid-20th century buildings on the site.

Overall Conclusion: The overall archaeological potential of the site has been assessed as **Low**. It is likely that construction activities associated with the construction of the existing buildings on the site will have truncated evidence of earlier sub-surface remains within their footprint (particularly in the case of Oak House, which has a basement); however there appears to be limited potential for evidence of medieval/post-medieval activity (specifically associated with pottery manufacture) to be identified within the proposal site.

5.2 Identification of Built Heritage Assets, Settings & Significance

This section of the Heritage Statement comprises an identification and description of the listed and locally listed buildings in the vicinity of the proposed development and an assessment of their significance in heritage terms. The assessment of significance is based on criteria for the assessment of heritage assets contained in *Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015b), which considers their significance in terms of their evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values.

Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity, which tends to be diminished in proportion to the extent of its removal or replacement.

Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present and tends to be either illustrative or associative.

Aesthetic value may be said to be derived from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place, which can be the result of formal design or gradual, organic changes over time.

Communal value is derived from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values but tend to have additional and specific aspects.

Only five designated built heritage assets were identified within a 500m radius of the proposed development (see *Table 4*). However, it rapidly became clear following the site visit that, due to their distance from the site, as well as intervening buildings, these heritage assets will not be visually impacted by the proposed development in any way.

Consequently, it was concluded that the only potential impacts in heritage terms relate to the Barnfield Estate Office (Site A: Oak House) originally built as a public house known as the Royal Oak and forming part of the Barnfield Estate laid out in the late 1930s-1940s. Oak House is considered by the Conservation Officer at the Royal Borough of Greenwich to be a building of architectural merit, although it should be noted that the building is not currently listed in the Royal Borough of Greenwich Local Heritage List (RBG 2021).

The community hall located to the rear of Oak House (Site B) is a red brick building of 1940s-50s date (in existence by 1956) and is not considered to be a building of significance in heritage terms.

The following section will thus describe Oak House and its setting, followed by an assessment of its importance in heritage terms.

5.3 Barnfield Estate Office (Oak House)

5.3.1 Description of Building & Its Setting

Oak House is situated on the E side of Barnfield Road and comprises a two-storey quadrangular brick building (laid in Flemish Bond) with a single-storey brick structure on the S side, sandwiched between blocks of two to three storey flats forming part of the Barnfield Gardens Estate (*Plate 1*). The building was originally constructed as the Royal Oak public house in 1935-36 for the brewing company of Charles Beasley Ltd (North Kent Brewery) to designs by Eley and Allen, a local firm of architects and estate agents based at Powis Street Woolwich during the early to mid-20th century. It replaced an earlier public house of the same name situated nearby in Princes Road and remained in use as a hostelry until 1995 when it was converted into a community and child-care centre.

The building is designed in a 'Moderne' style, an architectural form which represented a rejection of the traditional Neo Tudor and Neo Georgian styles most commonly used for interwar public houses in favour of a more contemporary aesthetic, characterised by bold streamlined designs with a horizontal emphasis, similar to those used for other public buildings of the period such as cinemas. This style and appears to have been increasingly used for public houses from the early 1930s onwards although it never became especially popular (Cole 2015, 94).

The main building is of two storeys with a hipped tiled roof set behind a tall parapet within stone coping and a dentilled brick eaves cornice. There are two tall brick end chimneystacks on the N side and two end chimneystacks of differing size to the S (*Plate 2*). The principal W-facing elevation is three bays long with a central entrance set within a painted stone architrave with a moulded keystone, with a shallow curved porch and rectangular overlight immediately above the doorway. The existing part-glazed door appears to be a later insertion. At first floor level above the central entrance is a three light casement window with horizontal metal glazing bars set within a stone surround with a moulded sill. Flanking the central bay at ground floor level are two wide 'Crittall' style metal framed windows, with two broader and narrower windows of similar design on the first floor, all of which are set within recessed brick surrounds. The roller blinds are a relatively recent addition.



Plate 1: View looking E showing main elevation of Oak House and single storey extension to S



Plate 2: Oblique view looking NNE showing S-elevation of Oak House with vestibule and extension to right of picture



Plate 3: Oblique view looking SSW showing main E-facing and N-facing elevations of Oak House



Plate 4: Oblique view looking NNE along Barnfield Road towards Oak House and later single-storey extension

The N-facing elevation of the Royal Oak has similar ‘Crittall’ style metal-framed windows and ground and first floor level (*Plate 3*), while attached to the S elevation is a small vestibule lit by a glazed casement, with two doors with moulded surrounds. Extending S of this vestibule is a flat roofed extension which is clearly of a later date, probably added in the late 20th century as indicated by a distinct change in brickwork (*Plate 4*).

The interior of Oak House comprises a ground floor, first floor and basement. The ground floor comprises a central hallway leading into a communal area (*Plates 5 & 6*), flanked on either side by meeting and reception rooms demarcated by partition walls (*Plate 7*), with kitchen, WCs and utility rooms to the rear and a dog leg staircase with a plain moulded handrail and stick balusters leading to the upper floor (*Plate 8*) which has been sub-divided by partitions into offices flanking either side of a central corridor, with kitchen facilities to the rear (*Plate 9*). A number of ceiling beams either painted or clad in plasterboard were noted at ground floor level, otherwise no features of interest were observed. A stairway to the rear of the premises leads to the basement, which is heavily whitewashed; no features of interest were noted in this area. There was no trace of the fireplaces which must have existed within the building as indicated by the four chimneystacks.



Plate 5: Internal view looking SE showing hallway and communal area on ground floor



Plate 6: Internal view looking NW showing communal area on ground floor with doorway leading to stairs to first floor

The internal arrangements appear to have been comprehensively altered following its conversion to a community centre in the mid-1990s, with the insertion of plasterboard ceilings and walls and internal partitions for offices and communal spaces and very little trace was noted of internal fixtures and fittings associated with its former usage as a public house. It may be noted that in 1988, the interior of the Royal Oak was then described as comprising a timber-panelled saloon bar on the ground floor with mock timber beams (CAMRA 1988, 149).



Plate 7: Internal view looking W showing meeting room on ground floor with ceiling beams painted or clad in plasterboard

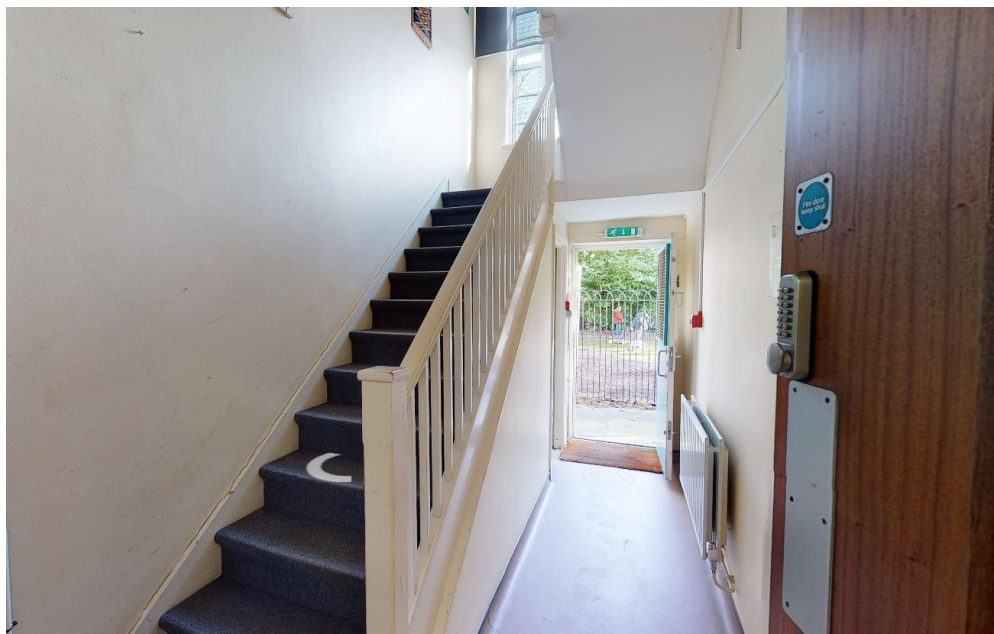


Plate 8: Internal view looking E showing corridor leading to rear entrance with staircase to first floor.

Attached to the S side of the former public house is a vestibule which appears to have provided access to a separate bar area. This vestibule was enlarged with the construction of a single storey flat-roofed extension of late 20th century date, lit by a large metal framed window with horizontal glazing bars. The division between this vestibule and the original extension is indicated by a substantial brick partition wall (*Plate 10*).



Plate 9: Internal view looking SW showing office in SW corner of first floor, lit by 'Crittall' style window



Plate 10: Internal view looking W showing partition wall marking division between the vestibule to the S of Oak House and the later single-storey extension (to left of picture)

5.3.2 Assessment of Significance

Oak House may be regarded as a building of **Low to Medium** significance in heritage terms. It is of some architectural and historical interest as representing an example of an interwar public house (The Royal Oak) which was built as part of the initial construction of the Barnfield Gardens Estate in the late 1930s. It thus represents a building type which may be considered to be a relatively rare survival, particularly in view of its interwar date, contemporary architectural style ('Moderne') and association with a large-scale council housing development (Cole 2015, 43). However, it may be noted that it does not appear to have been considered to have been of sufficient interest to be included in the recent comprehensive survey undertaken by Historic England of urban and suburban public houses in England constructed between 1918 and 1939 (Cole 2015).

Moreover, the Royal Oak does not have particularly significant associations in historical terms and was not designed by an architect of note. Eley and Allen were a minor architectural practice based in Woolwich during the first half of the 20th century, responsible for works on various public and private buildings (mostly in South East London) including the Woolwich Arsenal Cinema in Salutation Alley (built 1913, demolished 1961) and alterations to The Salutation public house in Beresford Square and St Peter's Roman Catholic School at Crescent Road Woolwich (Guillery 2012). The Royal Oak in Barnfield Road represents one of their few surviving buildings of note.

The exterior of the former public house is reasonably well-preserved and retains much original architectural detailing, particularly in terms of its broad, streamlined fenestration in characteristic 'Moderne' style. Visually, it forms a distinctive and positive element within what is otherwise a homogenous streetscape dominated by multi-storey Council housing of mid-20th century date. However, the interior of the building appears to have been completely altered as a result of its conversion to a community centre and offices in the mid-1990s and little or no trace survives of the original internal arrangements and associated fixtures or fittings relating to its usage as a public house, thus detracting from its intrinsic significance in heritage terms.

6 Description of Proposals & Magnitude of Impact

6.1 Summary Description of Proposals

The following summary description of the development is based on architects' drawings and information supplied by the client on 27th January and 9th November 2021 (*fig. 5-16*). Subsequent publication of revised proposals and specifications for the proposed development, together with updated plans and elevation drawings, may necessitate revisions to this report and the conclusions reached.

In brief, the proposed works involve the demolition of Oak House (Unit A) and the separate community hall building to the rear (Unit B) and the construction of a two-storey apartment block containing 19 units, including eight 1-bedroom two-person flats, nine 2-bedroom four-person flats and two 1-bedroom two-person wheelchair-accessible flats.

6.2 Assessment of Magnitude of Impact

The magnitude of impact of the proposed development on the specific heritage asset, namely Oak House (the former Royal Oak public house) has been assessed as **Moderate to Major**. This assessment reflects the fact that the proposed demolition of Oak House will result in the complete loss of any remaining historic fabric and a permanent change to its immediate setting.

However, it is considered that, while the exterior of the public house as built in the mid-1930s has remained largely intact, the interior was substantially changed following its conversion into a community centre in 1995, resulting in the complete alteration of its internal layout and wholesale removal of any fixtures or fittings relating to its original usage.

Its significance in heritage terms has thus already been greatly reduced and on this basis, it is considered that the loss of Oak House, while regrettable, can be effectively mitigated by undertaking an appropriately detailed programme of historic building recording of the surviving fabric, comprising a written, drawn and photographic record to Historic England Level 3 prior to demolition in accordance with Historic England guidance specified in *Understanding Historic Buildings* (Lane 2016).

It may be argued that the proposed two storey apartment block to be erected on the site based on the design drawings supplied by the client, would be very much in keeping with the character of the local area in terms of their scale, proportions and building materials used. The use of reddish-brown brick for the facades and the streamlined form of the elevations underlined by horizontal brick string courses (particularly in the case of the west-facing elevation of the Site A building) appears to sensitively reference the elegant, 'Moderne' architectural character of Oak House.

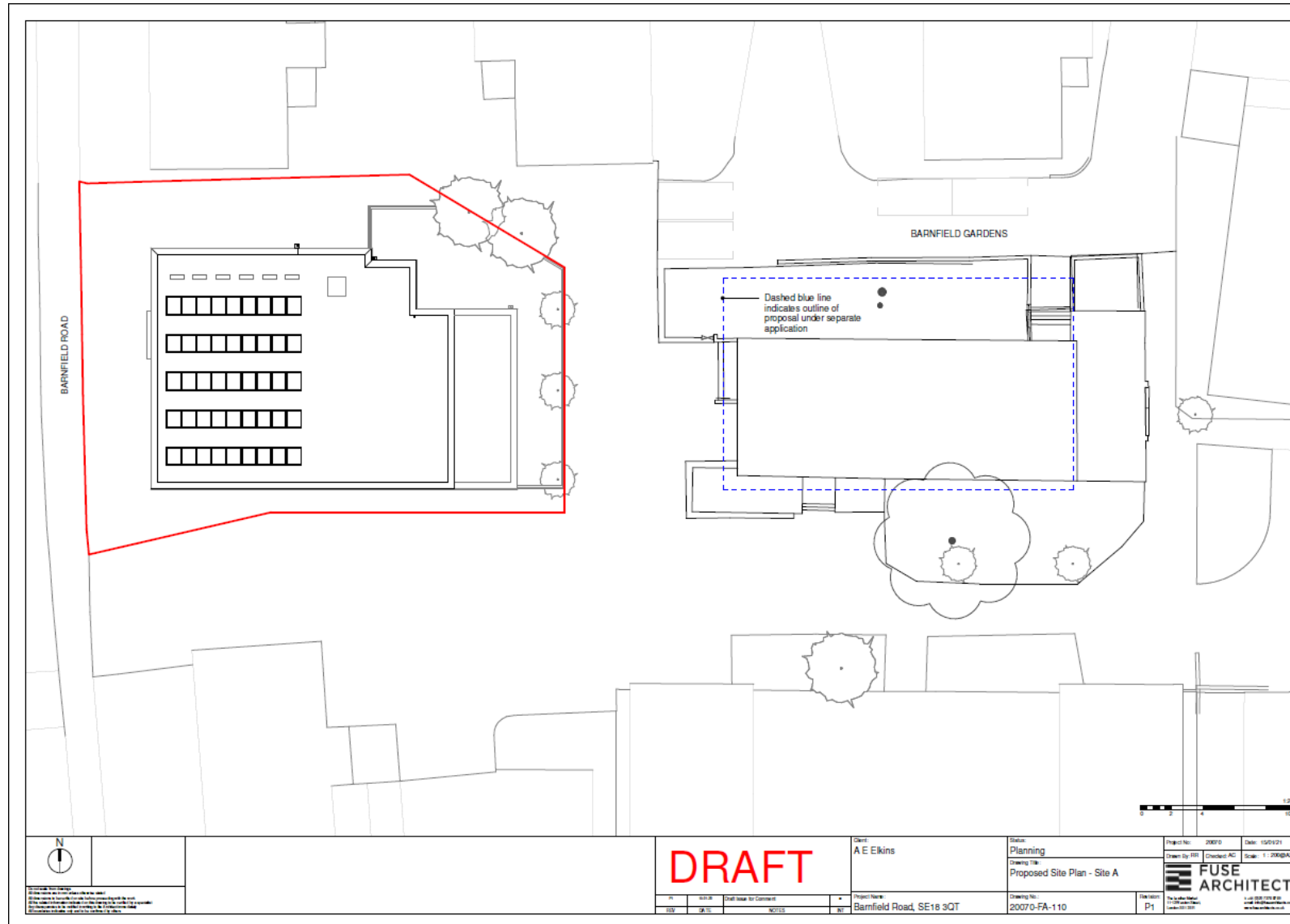


Fig. 5: Site A
Proposed site plan
(Reproduced by courtesy of the client)

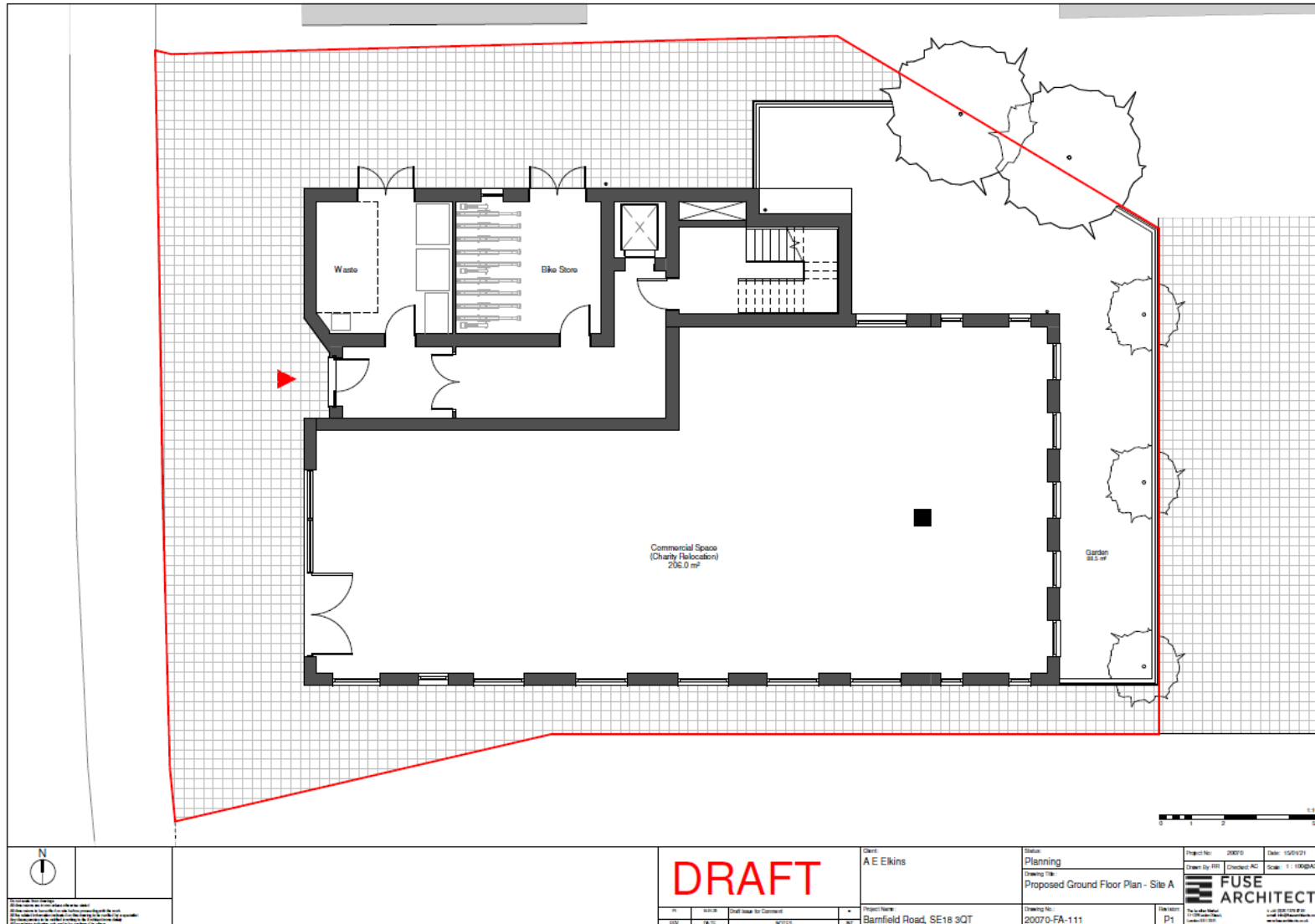


Fig. 6: Site A
Proposed ground
floor plan
(Reproduced by
courtesy of the
client)

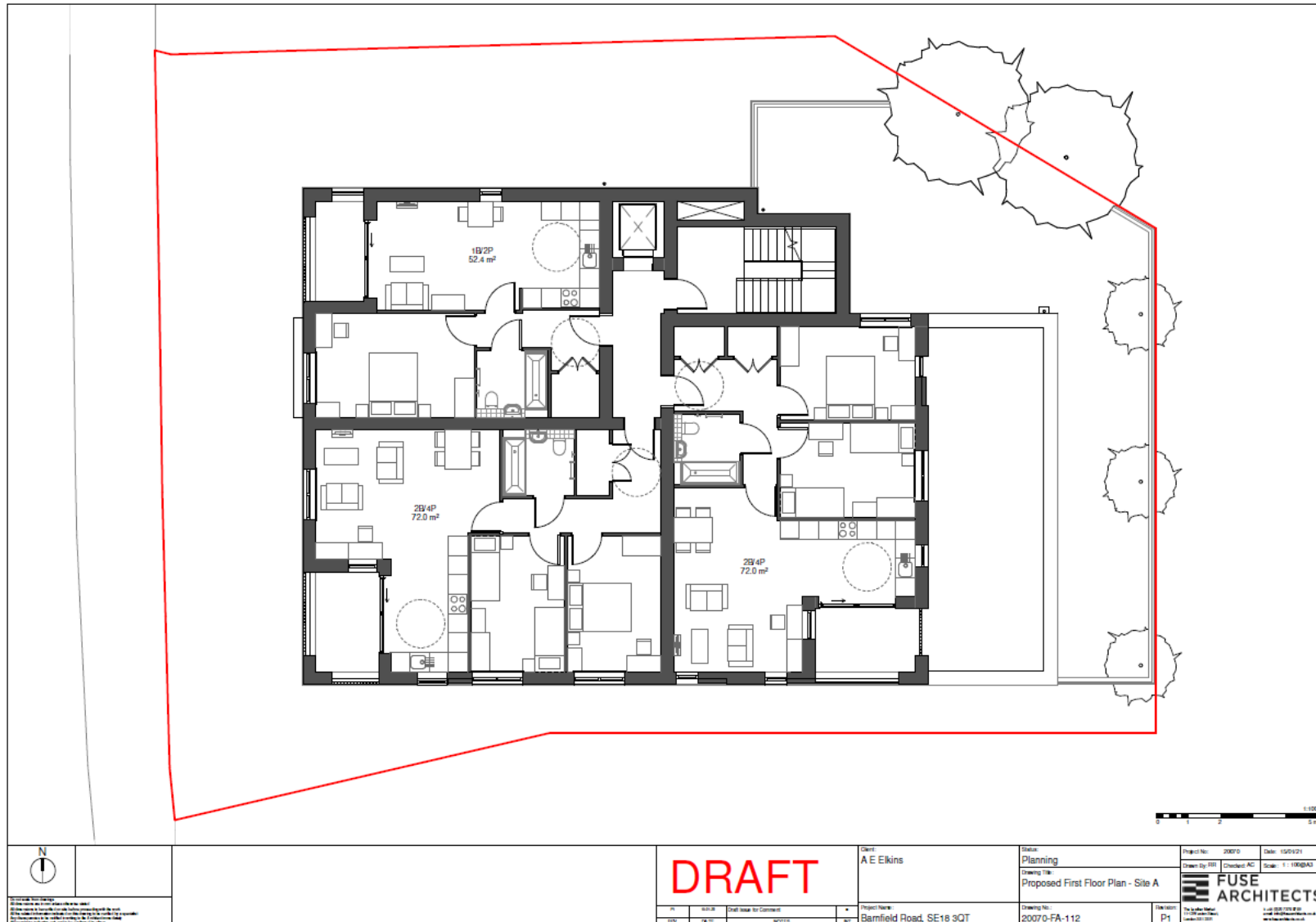


Fig. 7: Site A
Proposed first
floor plan
(Reproduced by
courtesy of the
client)

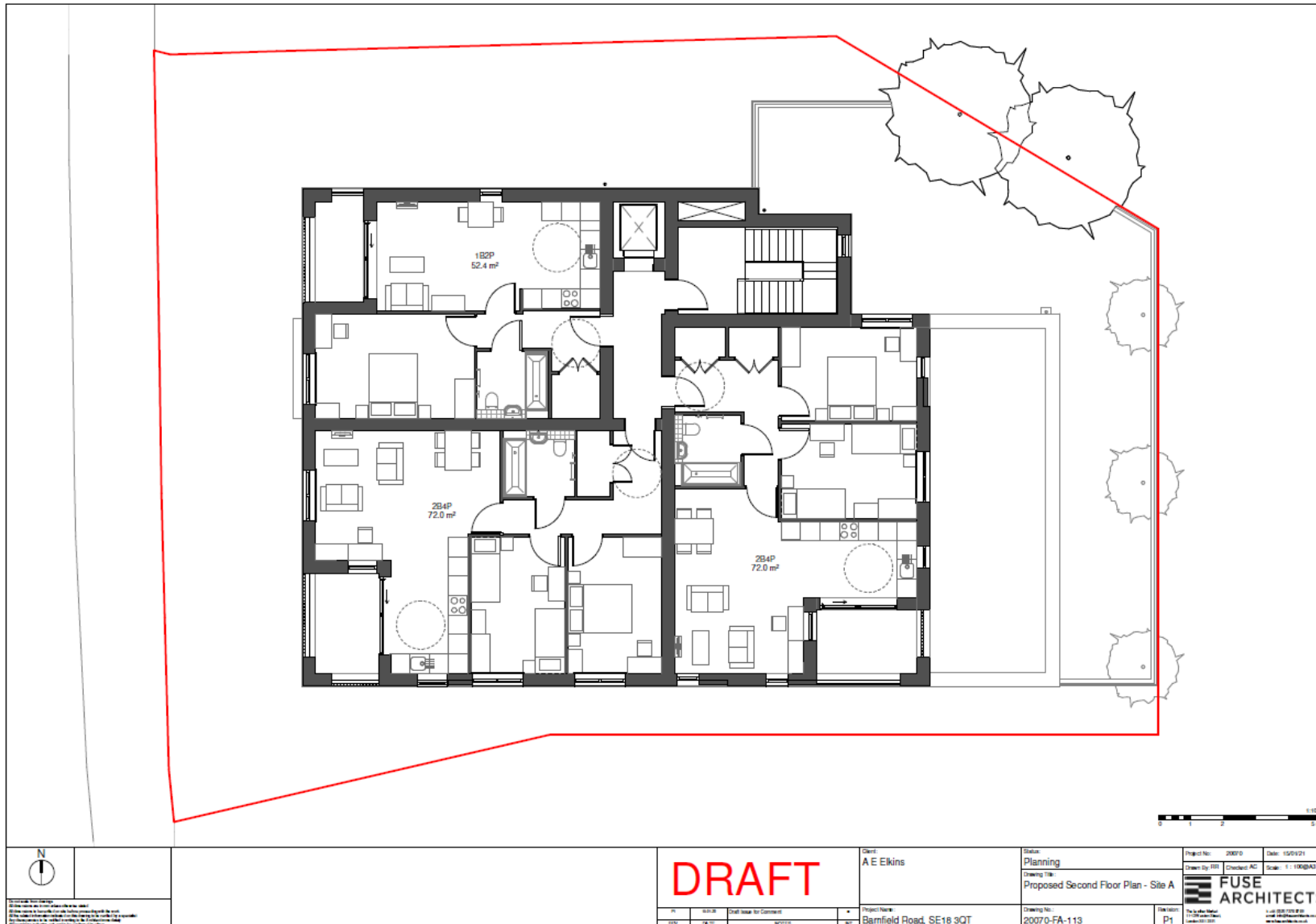
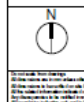


Fig. 8: Site A
Proposed second
floor plan
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DRAFT

Client:
A E Elkins

Project Name:
Barnfield Road, SE18 3QT

Status:
Planning
Drawing Title:
Proposed Second Floor Plan - Site A

Drawing No:
20070-FA-113

Project No: 20070 Date: 15/09/21
Drawn By: BR Checked: AC Scale: 1:100 (B43)
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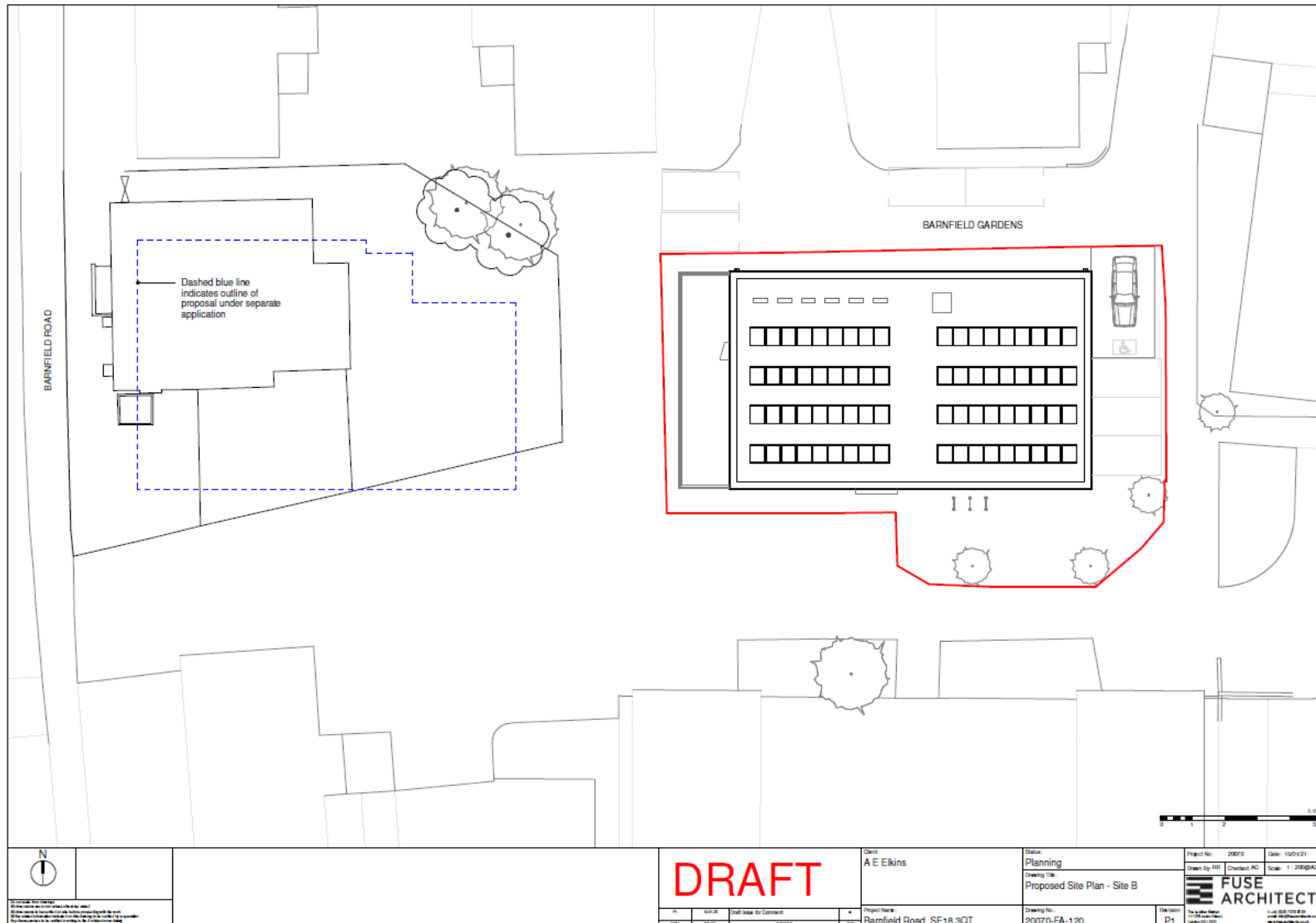


Fig. 9: Site B
Proposed site plan
(Reproduced by courtesy of the client)

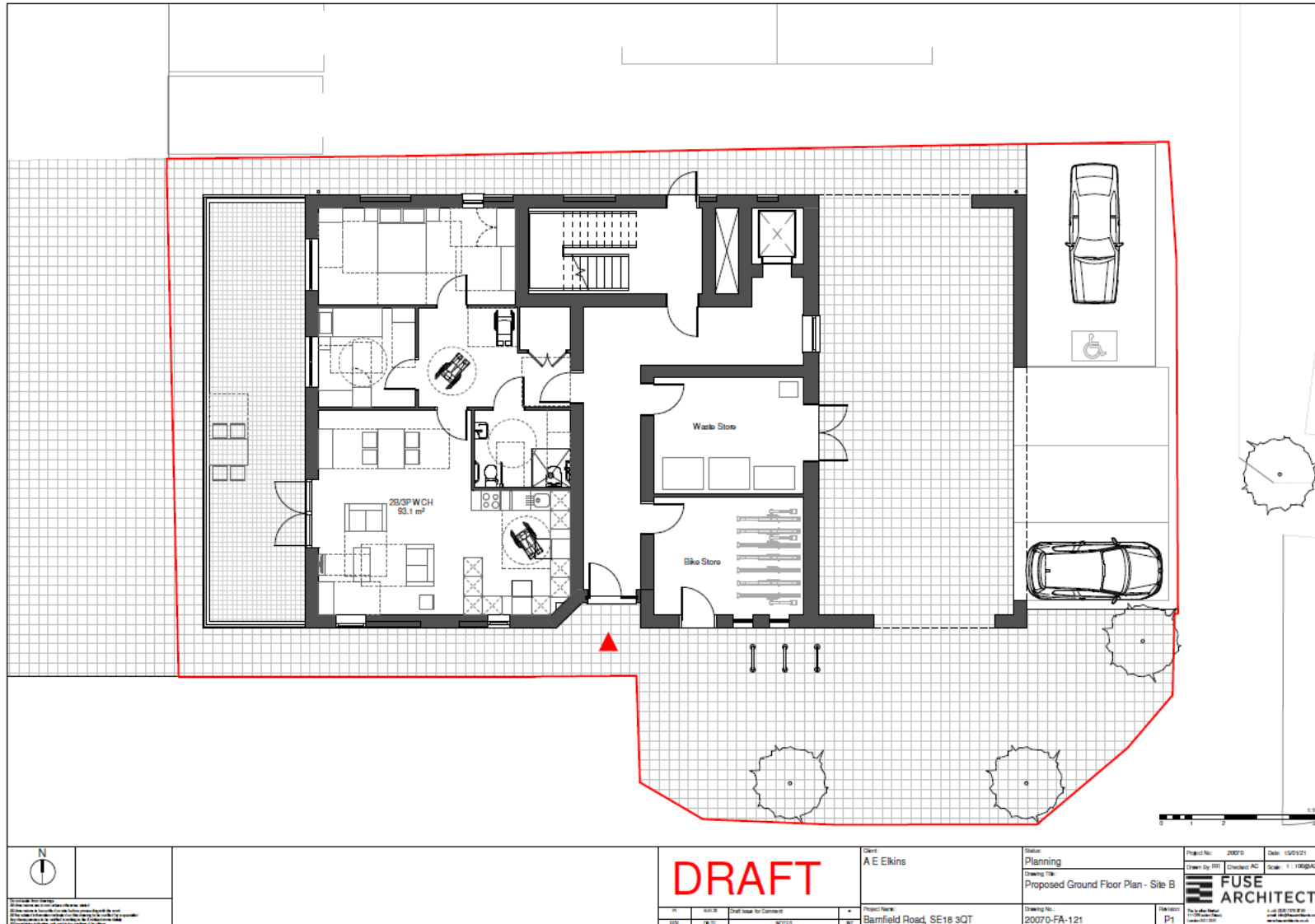


Fig. 10: Site B Proposed ground floor plan (Reproduced by courtesy of the client)

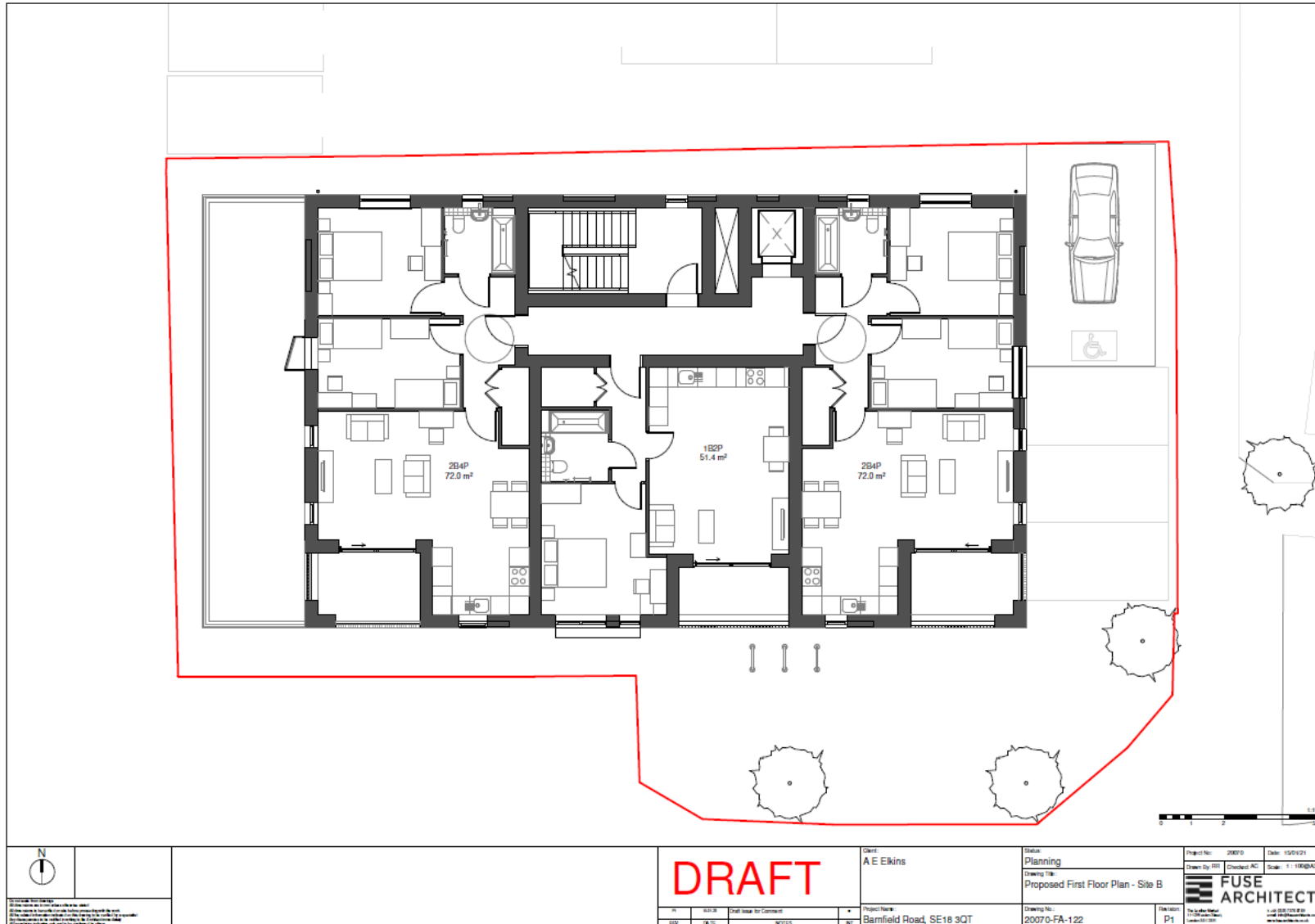


Fig. 11: Site B Proposed first floor plan (Reproduced by courtesy of the client)

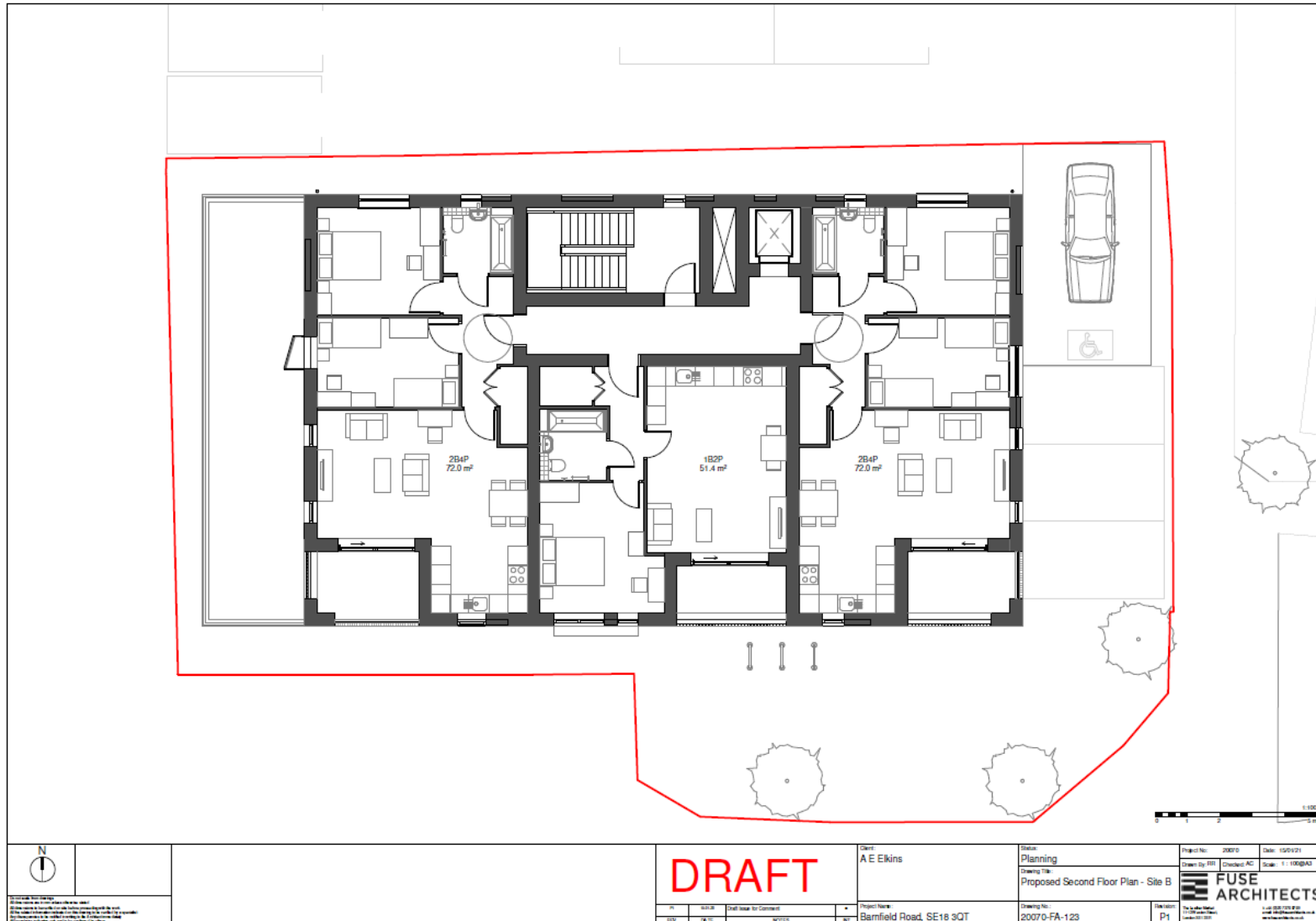


Fig. 12: Site B
Proposed second
floor plan
(Reproduced by
courtesy of the
client)

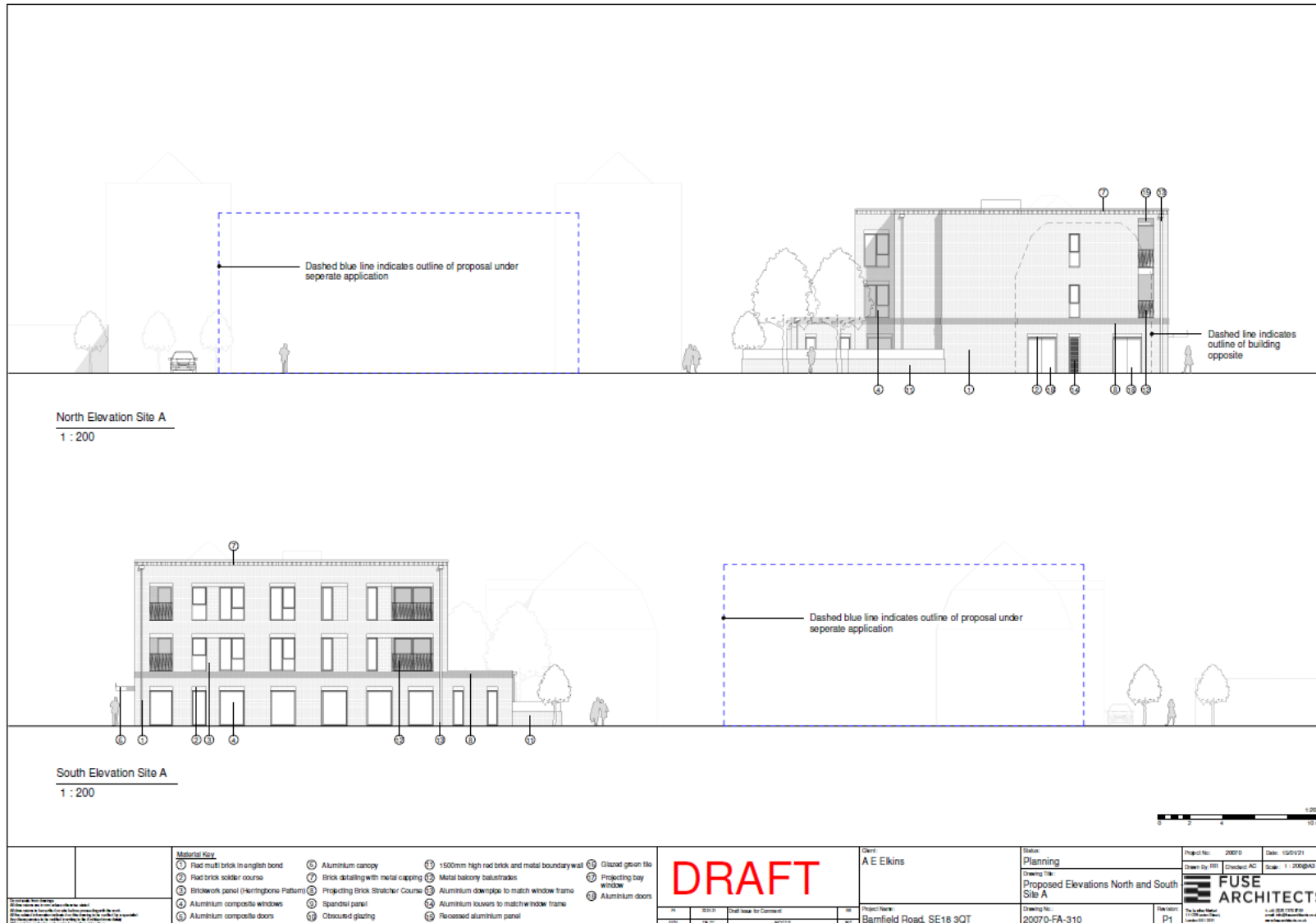


Fig. 13: Site A Proposed north and south elevations (Reproduced by courtesy of the client)

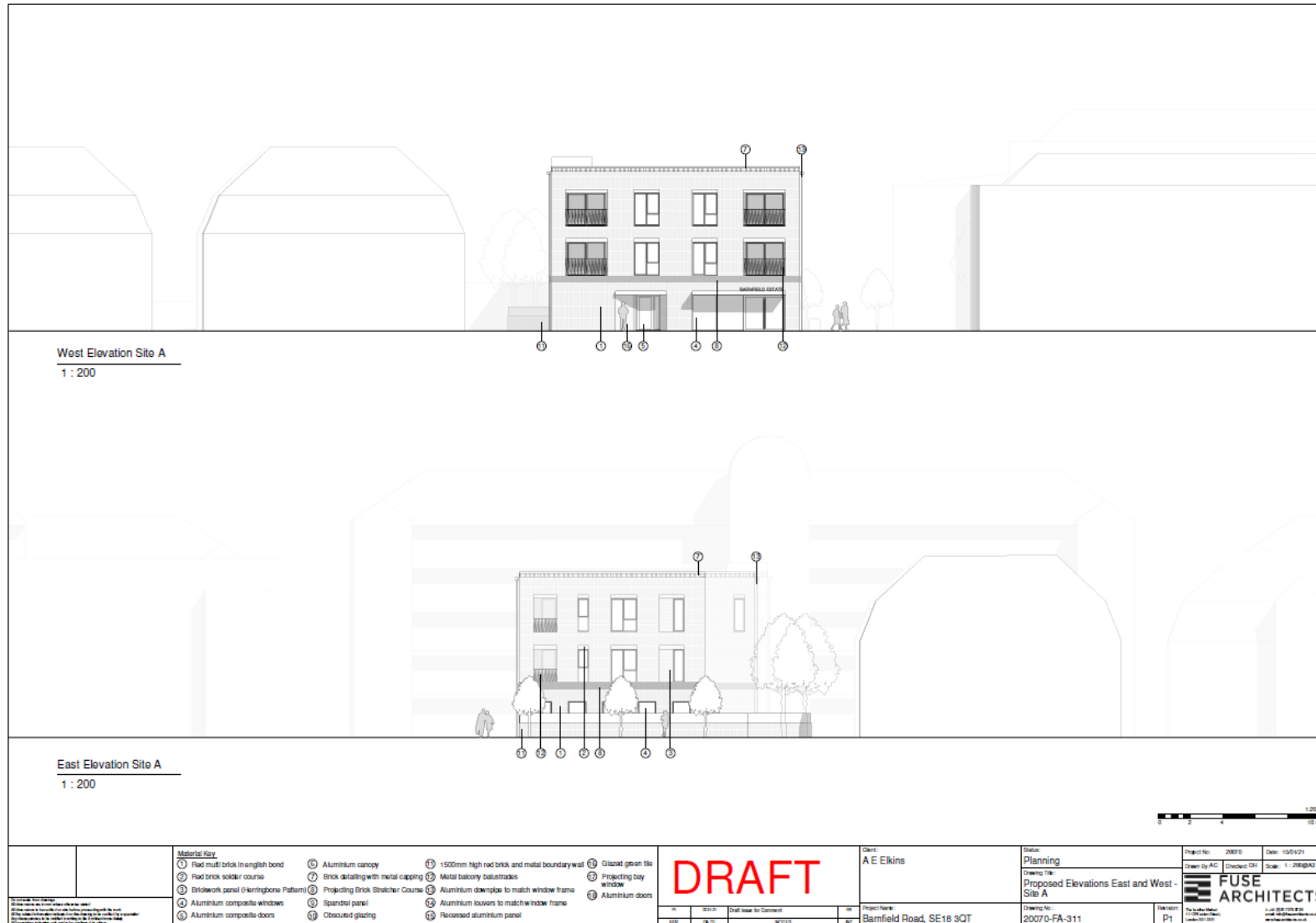


Fig. 14: Site A Proposed east and west elevations (Reproduced by courtesy of the client)

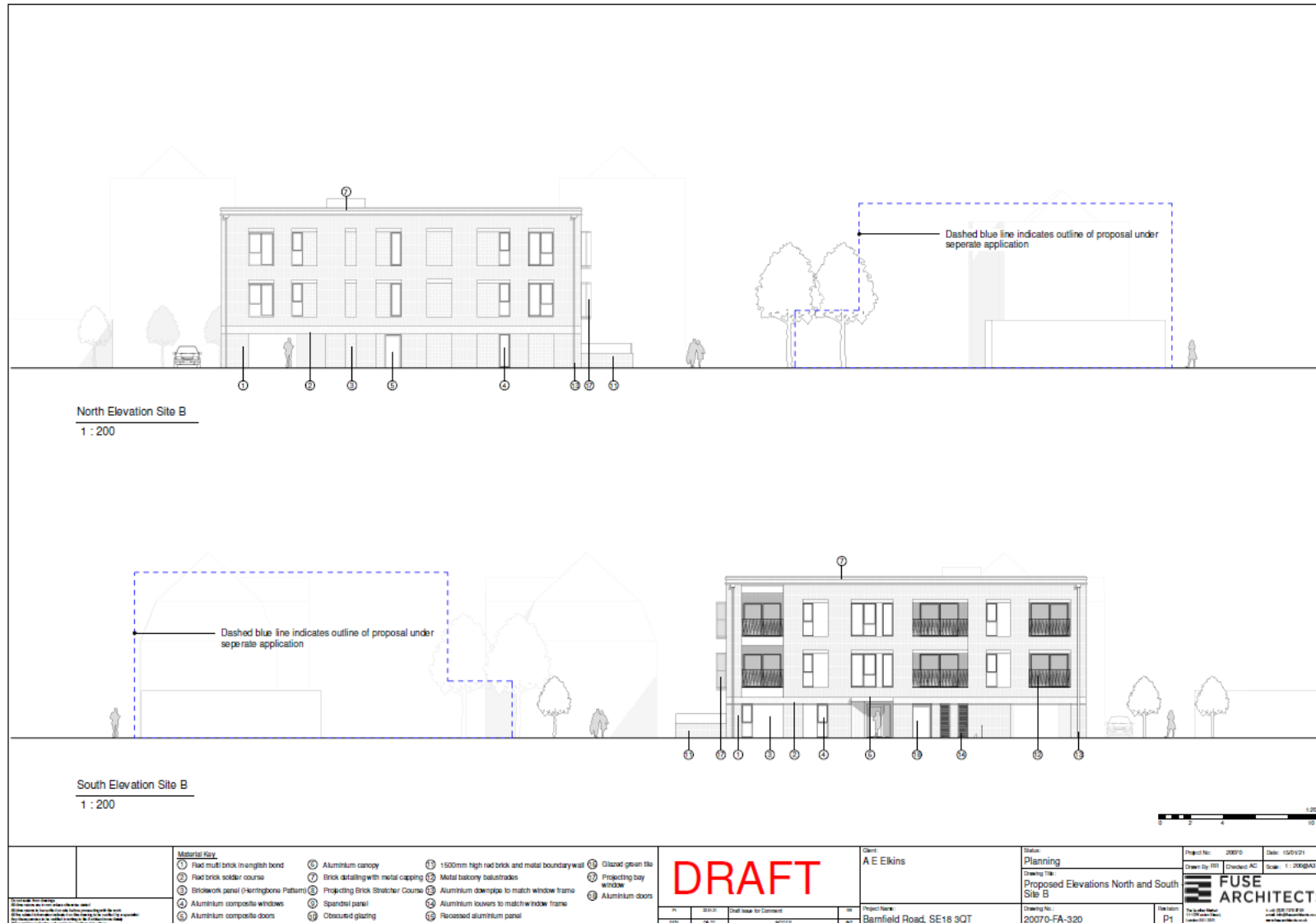


Fig. 15: Site B Proposed north and south elevations (Reproduced by courtesy of the client)

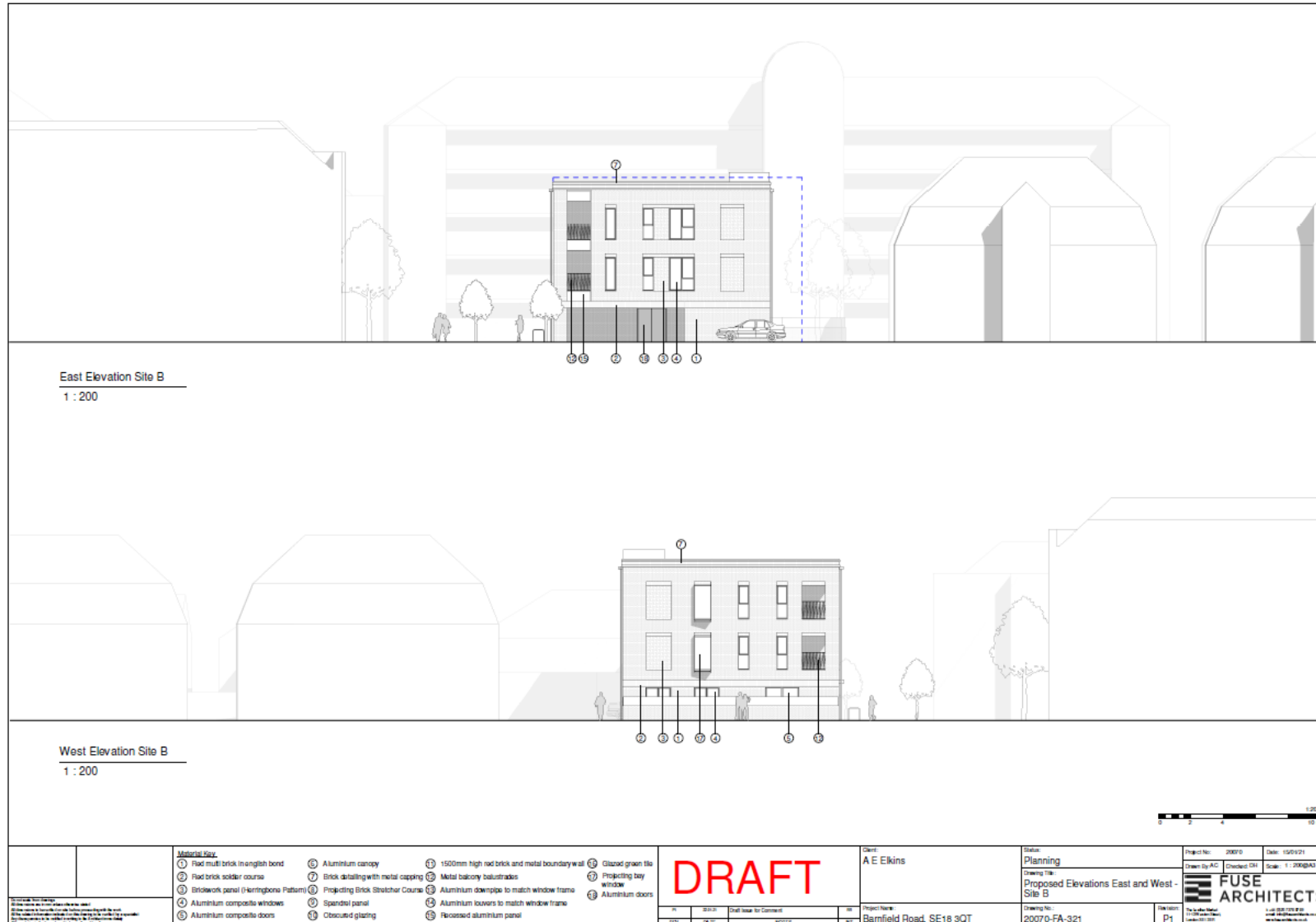


Fig. 16: Site B Proposed east and west elevations (Reproduced by courtesy of the client)

7 Overall Significance of Impact & Conclusion

Having determined the intrinsic significance of the specific heritage assets considered for the purposes of this study and the potential magnitude of impact of the proposed development on these assets, it is now possible to reach an informed overall appraisal of the implications of the proposals by means of cross-referencing the significance of the heritage assets against the magnitude of impact.

It is considered that the proposed residential development will have an overall **Slight** impact in heritage terms. This assessment reflects the **Low to Medium** significance of the only heritage asset likely to be impacted by the proposed development, namely Oak House, a former public house built in 1935-36 (The Royal Oak) which is considered to be a building of architectural merit and a possible non-designated heritage asset, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as **Moderate to Major**.

Oak House is considered to be of **Low to Medium** importance as a former public house designed in the mid-1930s in a 'Moderne' style, representing one of the earliest buildings erected as part of the construction of the Barnfield Gardens Estate in the late 1930s-1940s. It was designed by Eley and Allen, a minor architectural practice based locally in Woolwich. The exterior of the building is reasonably well-preserved and may be regarded as a distinctive and characterful element in the streetscape along Barnfield Road. It retains much original architectural detailing (particularly in terms of the horizontal metal framed 'Crittall' style windows and door surrounds; however, the interior was substantially altered and converted to a community centre in 1995, resulting in comprehensive changes to the internal layout and removal of any fixtures or fittings relating to its original usage as a public house.

It is considered that the proposed development will have a **Moderate to Major** impact on Oak House. This assessment reflects the fact that the proposed demolition of Oak House will result in the complete loss of any remaining historic fabric and a permanent change to its immediate setting. However, it may be argued that much internal fabric has already been lost following its conversion to a community centre in 1995, thus diminishing the significance of the building in heritage terms. On this basis, it is considered that the loss of Oak House can be effectively mitigated by undertaking an appropriately detailed drawn and photographic record of the building prior to demolition, to Historic England Level 3 as specified in *Understanding Historic Buildings* (Lane 2016).

Conclusion: In overall terms, the impact of the proposed development in heritage terms can be assessed as Slight. This assessment takes into account the Low to Medium significance of Oak House, a former interwar public house built as part of the construction of the Barnfield Estate in the 1930s-40s, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as Moderate to Major.

In archaeological terms, it is considered that there is **Low** potential in overall terms for encountering significant archaeological remains, reflecting the likelihood that the existing buildings on the site will have heavily truncated any archaeological remains within their footprint. However, it may be noted that two pottery manufacturing sites of late medieval/early post-medieval date are recorded in the wider surrounding area, to the east and southwest of the proposal site.

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10 Cartography

(All maps were obtained from the National Archives unless otherwise stated)

1799: Ordnance Survey Drawing of Woolwich and District (British Library)

1869: Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25-inch Map

1897: Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 25-inch Map

1916: Ordnance Survey 3rd edition 25-inch Map

1938: Ordnance Survey 4th edition 6-inch Map

1956: Ordnance Survey Provisional Edition 25-inch Map

1975: Ordnance Survey 1:10000 National Survey

(Aerial photographs of the study area dating back to c. 1949 were consulted using online sources and records held at the Historic England Archive and the Cambridge Centre for Aerial Photography)

12 Appendix 1: Historic Maps

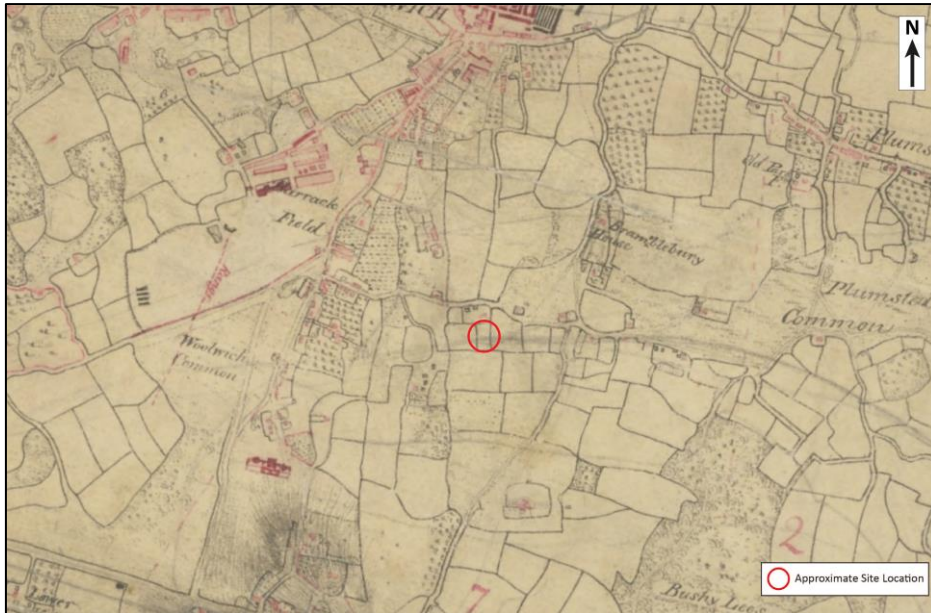


Fig. 17: Extract from the Ordnance Survey drawing of Woolwich and district (1799)
(Reproduced by courtesy of the British Library)



Fig. 18: Extract from the OS 1st edition 25-inch map of 1869
(Reproduced courtesy of the National Archives)



Fig. 19: Extract from the OS 2nd edition 25-inch map of 1897
(Reproduced courtesy of the National Archives)



Fig. 20: Extract from the OS 3rd edition 25-inch map (1916)
(Reproduced courtesy of the National Archives)



Fig. 21: Extract from the OS 4th edition 6-inch map of 1938
(Reproduced courtesy of the National Archives)



Fig. 22: Extract from the OS provisional edition 1:2500 map (1956)
(Reproduced courtesy of the National Archives)

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