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## 1.0 Purpose of the Document

As development partner, Grainger's role is to obtain planning approval for the masterplan and facilitate the delivery of Wellesley, the Aldershot Urban Extension, over the next approx. 15 years. In taking this forward Grainger have worked closely with local stakeholders and the community on the proposals for the development. This has resulted in our submission of a Hybrid Planning Application to Rushmoor Borough Council which comprises of an outline planning application for the whole development plus a detailed planning application for Phase 1 comprising of 228 new homes.

A key component of the development is the Neighbourhood Centre and this document provides a summary of the more detailed assessment undertaken and documented in the Design and Access Statement as well as the Conservation and Heritage Strategy. It draws together the assessment and forms one of the

Character Areas within the Wellesley development as explained in Chapter 6 of the Design and Access Statement. This document also provides further detail on Grainger's proposals for the short, medium and long term management of the existing assets located within the proposed Centre.

This document is intended to show how, through careful urban design, historical and conservation objectives can be aligned with civic and townscape objectives to breathe new life into these distinguished buildings in their fine setting.



## 2.0 Introduction

Wellesley will be a sustainable economic development and consequently should benefit from the favourable consideration advised by the NPPF. The development will include a sustainable local retail element that satisfies the adopted Core Strategy's requirement for a Local Neighbourhood Centre. Furthermore, the proposal will ensure a high quality scheme is delivered, providing wider economic, regeneration and social benefits to Aldershot in line with current Government objectives and national, regional and local planning guidance.

At the heart of Wellesley a Neighbourhood Centre is proposed, containing a number of non-residential functions, such as retail, leisure, service and business space, to support and service the community and act as a focal point. This provision is an important component of the Sustainability Strategy, intended to create new jobs, reduce the need to travel within the Wellesley Area and to provide shopping, leisure and other services for residents and businesses. Grainger carried out a Retail Impact Assessment to ensure the scale of the Neighbourhood Centre proposals enhance Wellesley and positively contribute to the existing local retail offerings, rather than competing with them.



The 8th Division Memorial in front of the 4th Division Headquarters Building



4th Division Headquarters frontage with 8th Division Memorial, Cenotaph and St Michael and St George RC Garrison Church beyond

### 3.0 Background

The group of historic buildings centred on the former 4th Division Headquarters has been identified for the location of the Neighbourhood Centre. Just as the buildings were originally sited there to be central to the grid of barrack blocks, and strategically adjacent to both Queen’s Avenue and the Parade Park, the location is correspondingly suitable for the future new community’s needs, provided that certain design constraints and sensitivities can be appropriately handled, particularly with respect to:

- Preserving and enhancing the character of the Conservation Area
- The frontages presented to Queen’s Avenue, Alison’s Road and the new Parade Park and Stanhope Lines
- The setting, scale and massing of the listed buildings
- The uses appropriate for the internal arrangement of the existing buildings
- Facade treatment of both existing and proposed buildings
- The incorporation of historic and ceremonial features associated with the existing buildings
- Addressing a need for facilities which are lacking in the remaining operating barracks



The complex viewed from Queen’s Avenue

Given the importance of the buildings and surrounding area, Grainger has taken a thorough and flexible approach to the assessments informing the hybrid planning application and specifically tested a number of options for the delivery of the following:

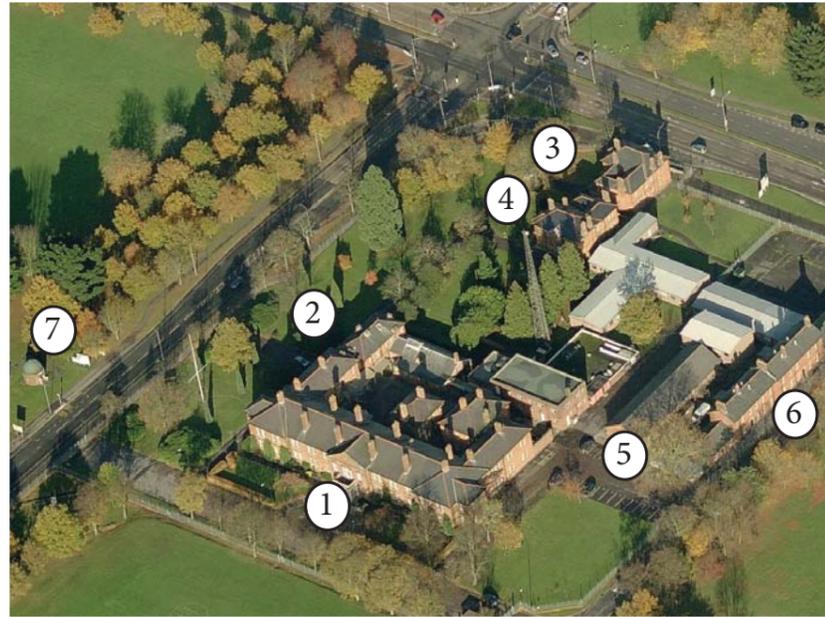
- New Retail Unit (moderate sized food store) – 1,400 sqm gross
- Additional Retail Units in Local Centre – 1,560 sqm gross
- Office space – up to 3,180 sqm
- Public House/Restaurant – 610 sqm
- Nursery/Community Building – 330 sqm



The Old Post Office fronting onto Queen’s Avenue

This testing resulted in the identification of a number of options which are set out within this document. Final detailed proposals for the area will be explored with Rushmoor Borough Council, English Heritage and the wider community as the Neighbourhood Centre is:

- Located on a key junction and includes of a number of important listed buildings;
- Contains significant historical assets and landmarks;
- And is set within the curtilage of a listed building and a conservation area and will therefore be subjected to both listed building and conservation area consent.



Neighbourhood Centre buildings from the air, as existing



1. Former 4th Division Headquarters building. Purpose-built as a headquarters building in 1894. Grade II Listed. Brickwork detailing and main internal staircase are particularly fine. The plan form is U-shaped, enclosing several outbuildings in a rear courtyard. Internally the building is arranged on two floors as cellular offices with corridor access throughout.



2. Former Post Office building. Purpose-built as a Post Office in 1896. Curtilage and locally listed. The part fronting onto Queen's Avenue is 2-storey, with a double workshop space to the rear, which is currently used as a print workshop and mail distribution.



3. Alison's House (4. Cranbrook House similar) Pair of houses built to accommodate senior officers. Currently used as military offices. Curtilage and locally listed.



5. Stable Block. Built in the 1890's as military stables. Subdivided in recent years to form a conference room, gymnasium and store.



6. Military Police Barracks. Built in 1898 as Military Police Barracks and stables. Currently used as offices for the Royal Logistics Corps. Curtilage and locally listed.



7. Alexander Observatory.

4.0 Market position

This location for the Neighbourhood Centre (NC) is proposed for the following reasons:

- At the intersection of and Queen’s Avenue and Alison’s Road, this is the best connected and most accessible part of the site
- There is a natural flow of activity to this area because it is on the main bus route and next to other community uses, i.e the school and Parade Park
- This is the historic centre of the former Military Town
- This location will also obviate the need for service vehicles to penetrate further into the site, thus reducing congestion
- These factors will all help the retail elements to be much more commercially viable as a result, than if they were located in a quieter portion of the site. The naturally heavy footfall will reassure occupiers, particularly in the early stages of development, while a sense of place is still being created.

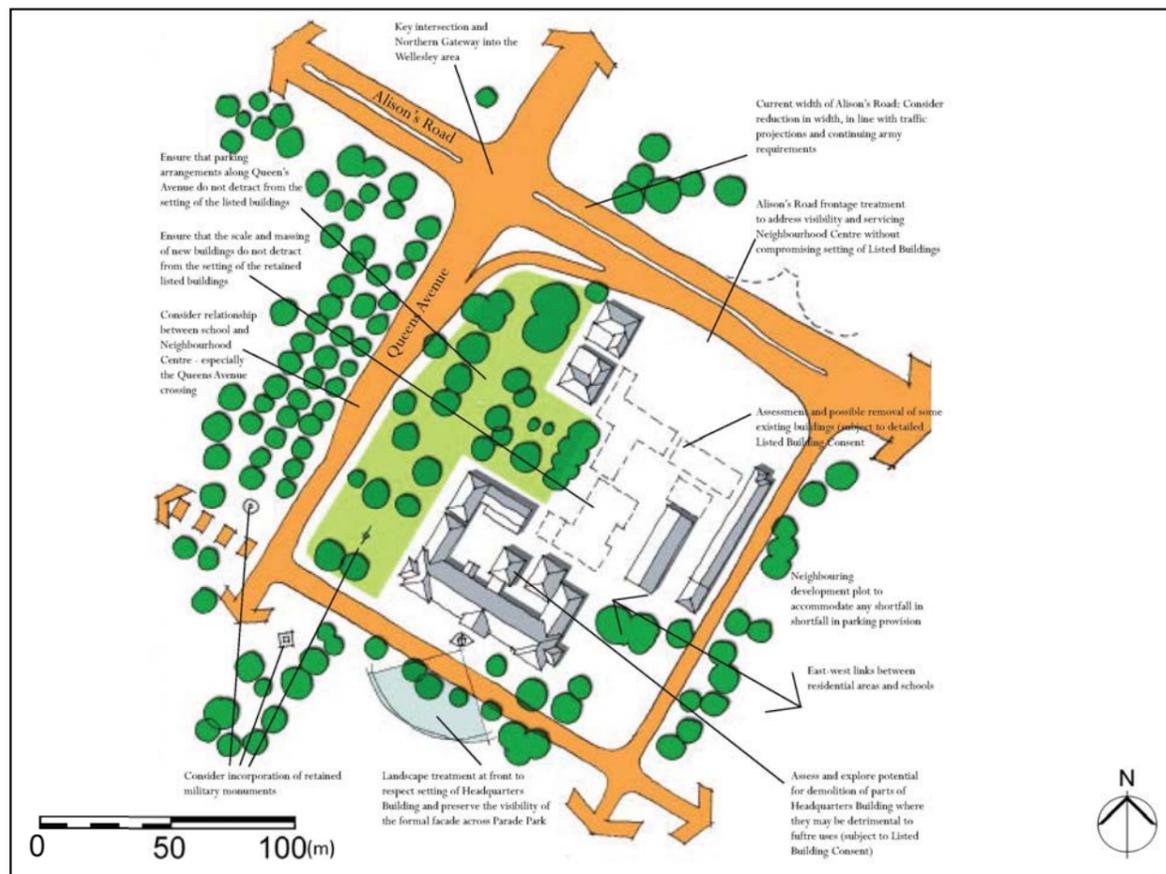
The multi-use of the space also works well in other ways, for example, the car parking can be used by those looking to shop, or those looking to pick up their children from school, or both, and so on.

CBRE recommended that a retail provision at the Neighbourhood Centre comprising a new build convenience store of approximately 1400 m2 and additional general retail provision of 1500 m2 would be sustainable. This provision would provide the local facilities required whilst not competing directly with Aldershot Town Centre.

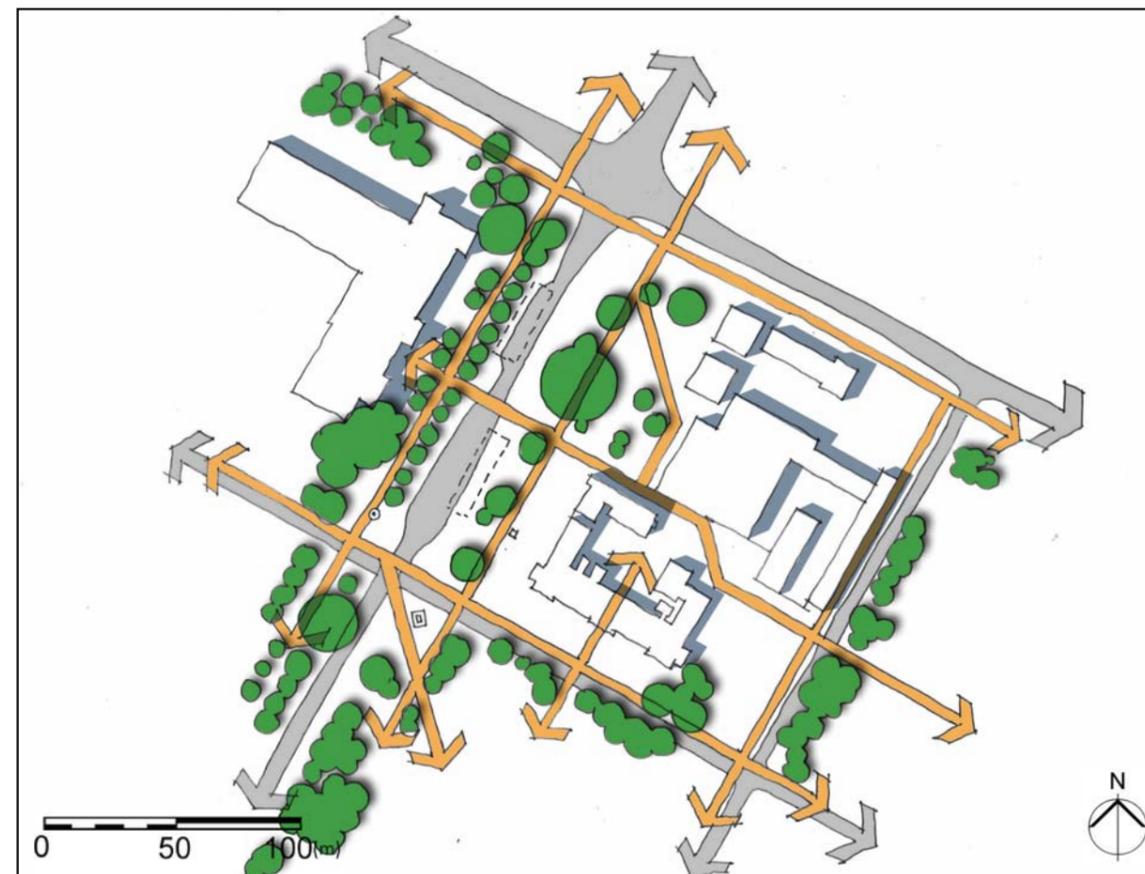
Alternative uses have also been assessed. A new neighbourhood of this scale will sustain a number of local facilities such as a public house/restaurant, but these will rely on an operator coming forward once the neighbourhood is established. One use not considered viable and therefore discounted is hotel use. This is primarily due to the number and proximity of existing hotels and the lack of demand.

The Retail Impact Assessment undertaken by the applicant assesses any potential impact of the proposed retail provision in the NC at Wellesley on Aldershot Town Centre and North Camp District Centre. The findings of the RIA demonstrates that there is strong comparison and convenience retailer representation in both Aldershot Town Centre and North Camp District Centre whilst there is good diversity of uses and core retail is highly accessible. The convenience floorspace proposed for the NC will provide day-to-day needs for the local population and will not be of a scale that will have a significant adverse impact on provision in the two identified existing centres. The

proposed comparison offer is likely to be convenient in its nature with relatively small turnover and therefore is unlikely to undermine the future of any of the centres assessed in RIA. Furthermore, the balance of retail convenience and comparison floorspace in the proposed NC has significant sustainability merits for the emerging neighbourhood in ensuring a local retail offer. The RIA also concludes that the timing of the provision is key to ensuring minimal impact on the town centre.



Issues and constraints



Sketch showing the principal pedestrian routes and desire lines around the Neighbourhood Centre

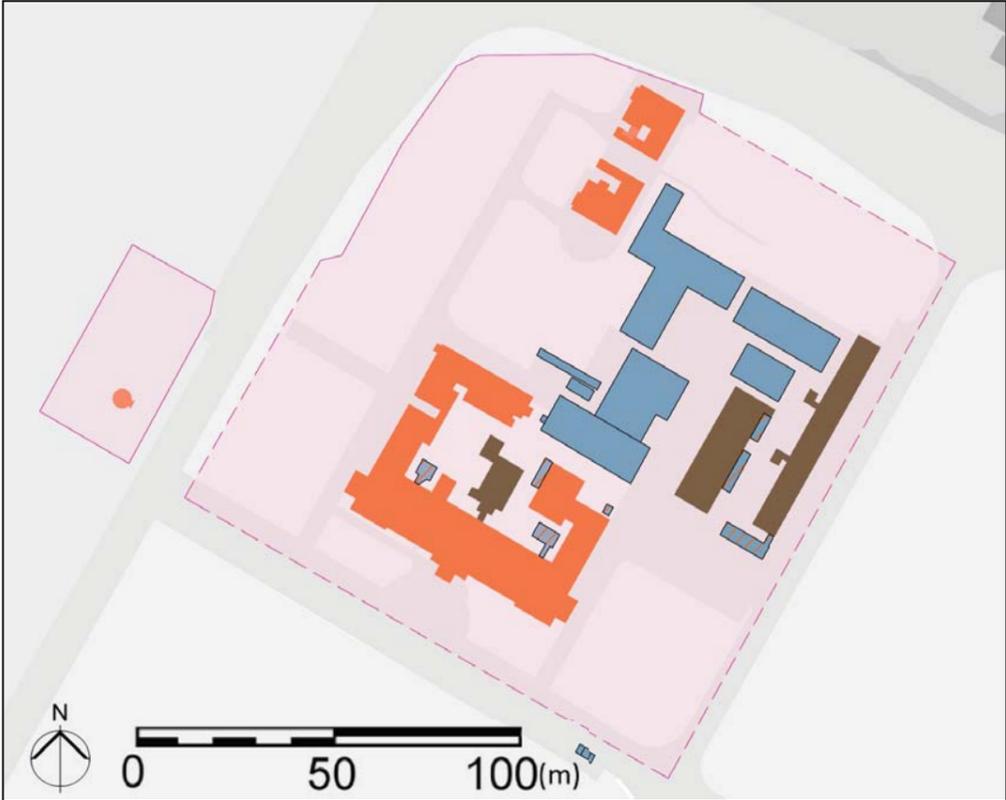
5.0 Historical Assessment

The group of buildings has been subject to an assessment for historical character and each building has been analysed in respect of its appropriateness for different uses. In terms of the views of the group from the Alison's Road intersection and Queen's Avenue, retention of Alison and Cranbrook Houses and the Post Office is considered important to safeguard the setting of 4th Division Headquarters. The Stable Block and the Military Police Barracks are

considered to have a neutral impact, as is the annex building located within the courtyard of the 4th Div HQ. This annex, which has previously been used as accommodation and for various administrative purposes, is considered of little architectural merit. Its removal could potentially make a more open and pleasant space suitable for a range of public or private amenity uses.

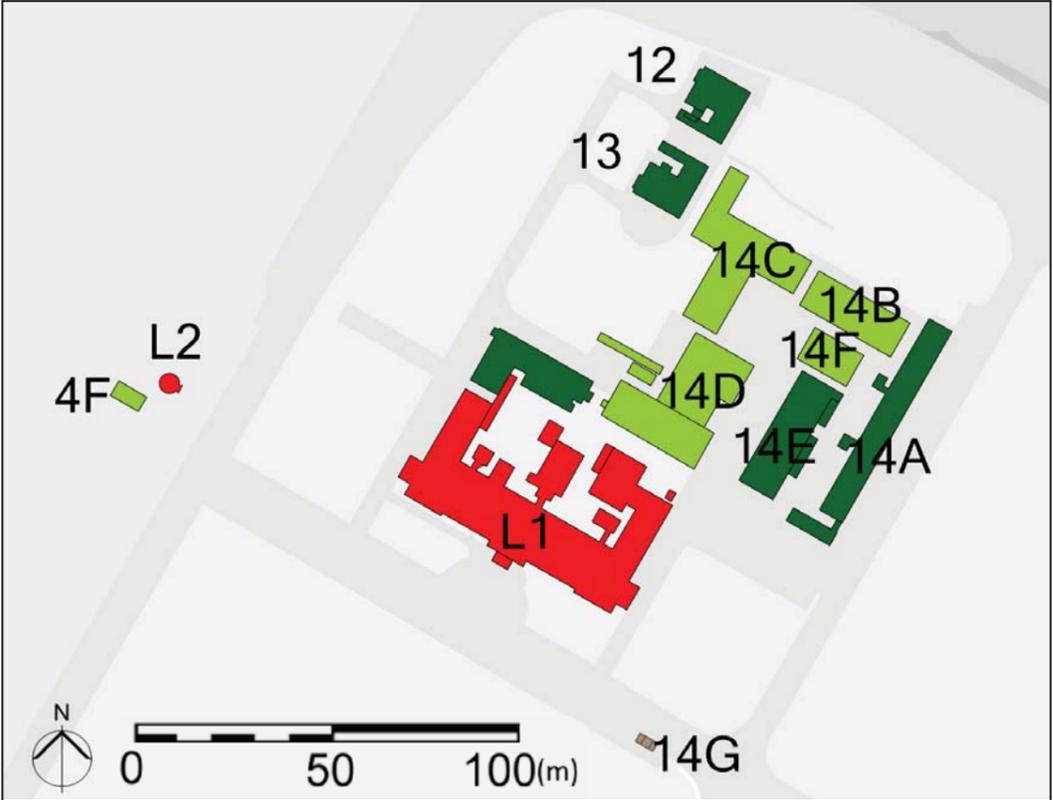
The internal arrangement of the 4th Div Headquarters building makes it relatively easy to convert into residential or office accommodation. However,

retail use poses more of a challenge, as the alterations necessary to open up the southern principal entrance facade for successful retail use would seriously compromise the historic significance of the listed building and its setting. Shown opposite is a range of conversion options considered.



Historic character and value assessment

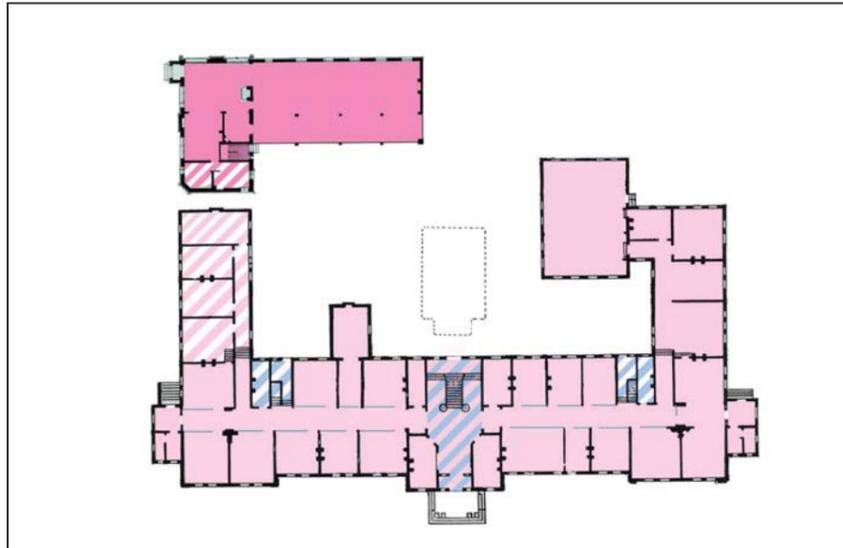
- KEY**
- Independent Structures of Positive Impact
  - Independent Structures of Neutral Impact
  - Independent Structures of Negative Impact
  - Parts of Listed Buildings having a negative impact on the building and its setting



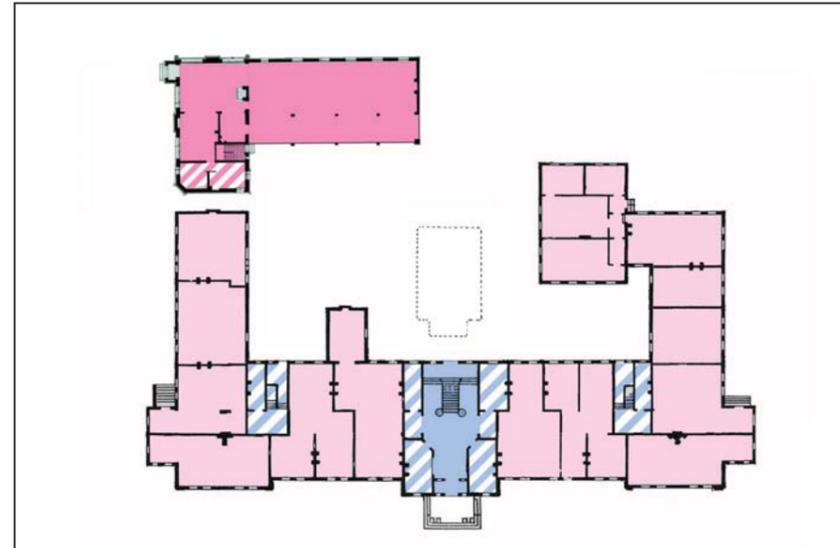
Retention and demolition strategy

- KEY**
- CATEGORY 3 - Buildings in the Listed Building Curtilage to be demolished subject to Listed Building Consent
  - CATEGORY 4 - Demolition/Alteration in Conservation Area subject to Conservation Area Consent
  - CATEGORY 5 - Statutory Listed Buildings to be retained but may be subject to partial demolition - subject to Listed Building Consent
  - CATEGORY 6 - Partial demolition in Listed Building curtilage subject to Listed Building Consent
  - CATEGORY 7 - Buildings to be retained

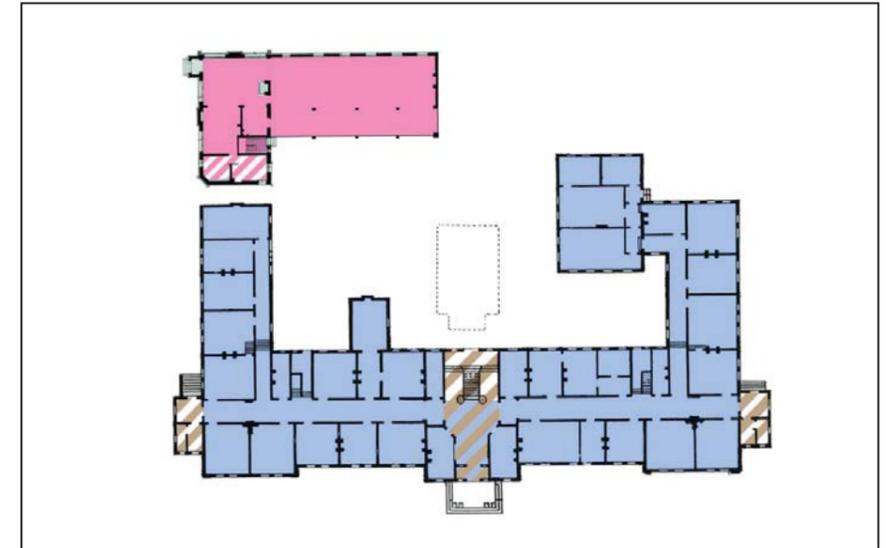
- KEY**
- L1 4th Division Headquarters
  - L2 Alexander Observatory
  - 4F Substation
  - 12 Alison's House
  - 13 Cranbrook House
  - 14A Military Police Barracks
  - 14B/C/D/F Other buildings
  - 14E Stable Block



4th Division Headquarters Ground Floor as retail Option 1 - retail units would be accessed from the internal corridors. This solution would not require significant modifications to the main south facade. The opportunity to create a retail courtyard was explored, and it was recognised that this would provide a good link to the supermarket. The offices above would be accessed from the principal entrance at the centre of the south facade.



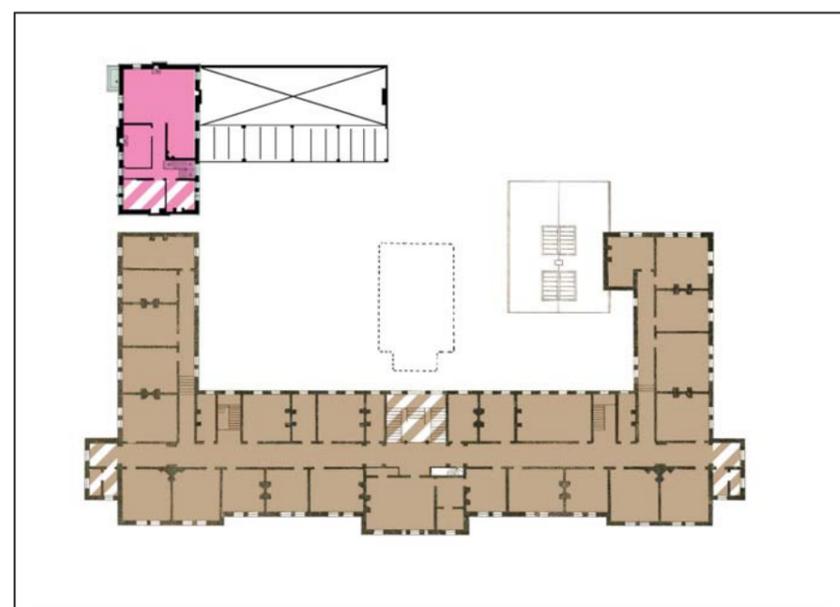
Ground Floor as retail Option 2 - A more radical solution whereby individual retail units could be formed with their own separate entrances from the south facade. The rear courtyard would then become a more conventional service yard. This solution would require significant modifications to the south facade. Circulation for the shops and offices would be kept separate.



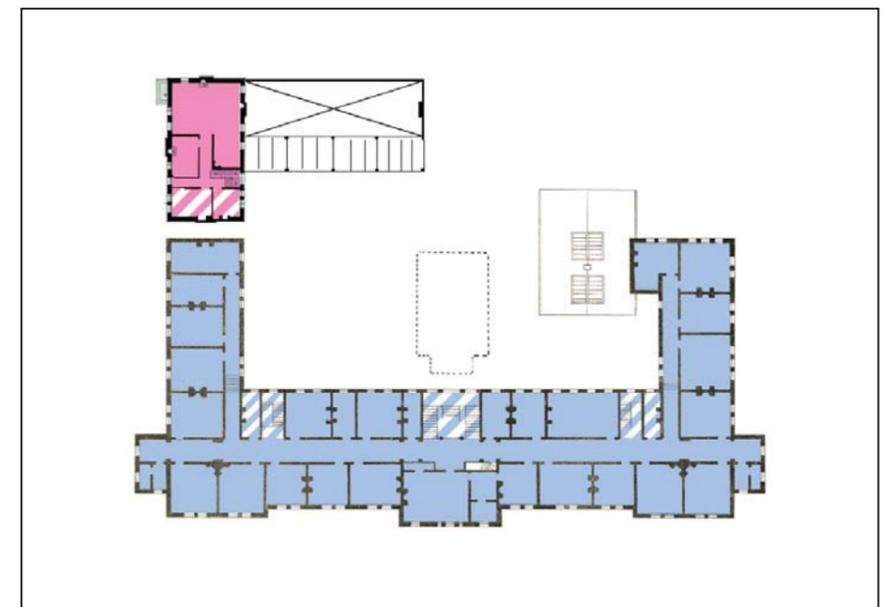
Ground Floor Option 3 - Offices. This option is the least challenging as it is most similar to the function for which the building was originally built.

**KEY TO USES**

- Retail
- Office
- Residential
- Cafe



First floor converted to residential. A range of studios, 1- and 2- bedroom apartment could be created with corridor access.



First Floor conversion into offices - the existing cellular room arrangement suits this use without major alterations.

Alternative re-use options for 4th Division Headquarters

6.0 Analysis and Options for Neighbourhood Centre

The location chosen for the Neighbourhood Centre is a prime site on the main thoroughfare, which is a public transport corridor, with a pedestrian link to the school opposite.

Illustrated here are design studies for the 4th Division Headquarters Building and its immediate environs. As the centrepiece of the Neighbourhood Centre, this building can be adapted to a range of uses, office, residential and retail. Although it will be unacceptable to modify the exterior of this building, there is more scope for significant intervention at the rear, especially with the removal of the central rear annex. The other retained buildings can also be adapted to a range of different uses. The Post Office is ideally suited to become a cafe/restaurant.

Whichever combination of new buildings and retained buildings is eventually chosen, certain considerations are paramount:

- The setting of the Listed Buildings and retained monuments
- The relationship of the 4th Division Headquarters frontage to Parade Park and the safeguarding of the visual link between the front of the 4th Division Headquarters and the cupola of the Cambridge Military Hospital
- Safe and easy access between the Neighbourhood Centre and the school located immediately opposite on the other side of Queens Avenue.



Option 1 - the supermarket is located with a frontage and service yard on Alison's Road, so as to create a public space between it and the Headquarters building.



Option 2 - the supermarket is located with a frontage and service yard on Alison's Road, with a wing projecting south to form a link with the Headquarters building.



Sketch to explore the possibility of creating shop-fronts on the south facade of the Headquarters building - the window openings would have their cills lowered to the ground, or they would be enlarged, or even fitted with awnings and signage to advertise their use as retail units.



Option 3 - the supermarket is brought closer to the Headquarters building, creating a tighter and more defined public space between them.

KEY

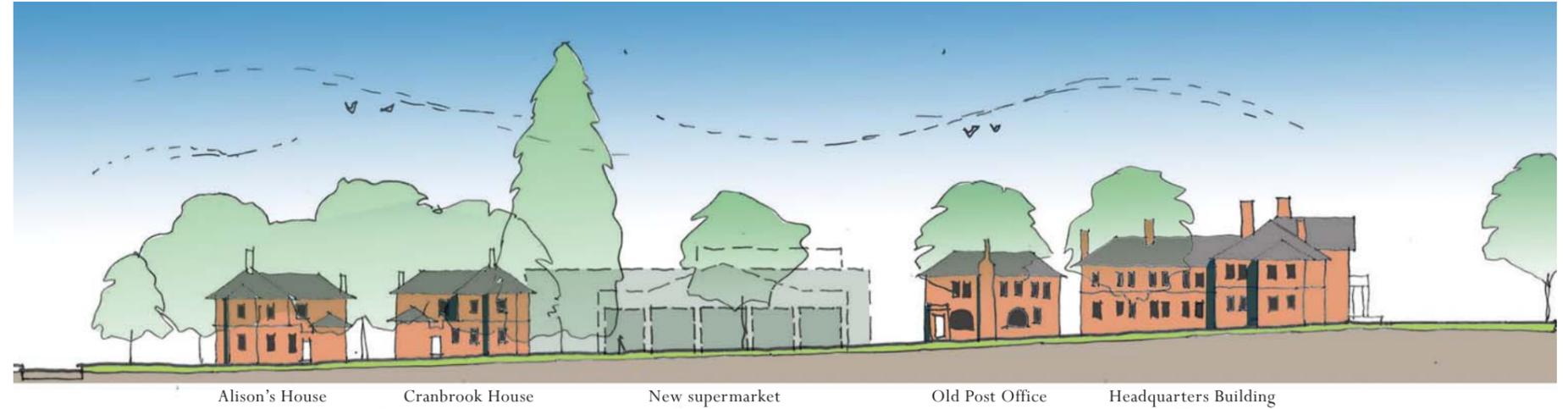
- Retail
- Office
- Day nursery / creche
- Cafe
- Residential



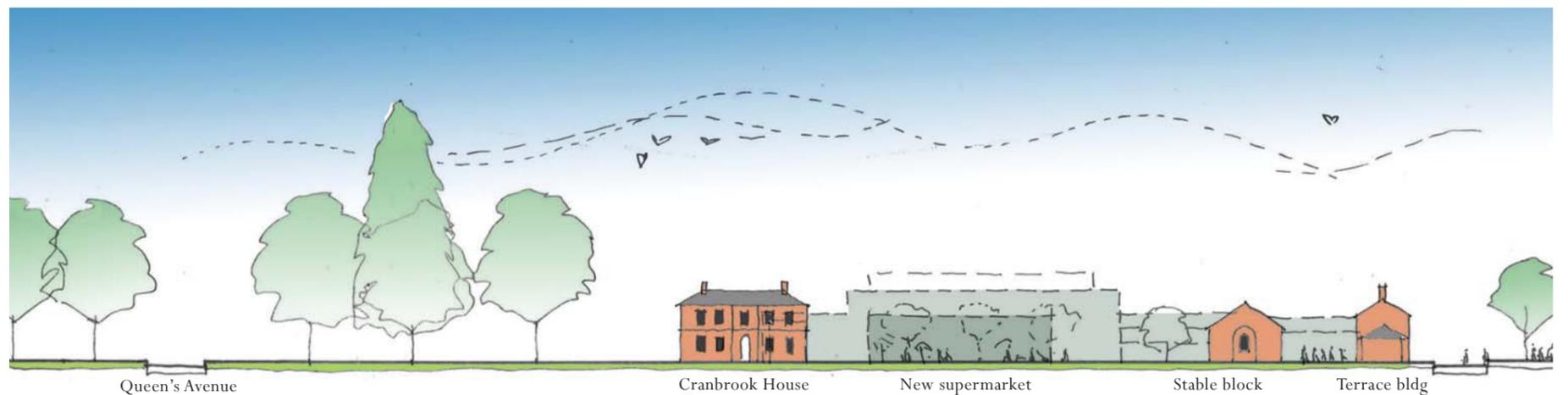
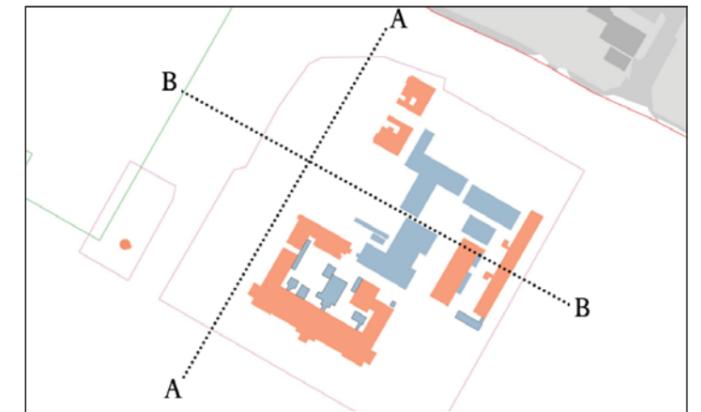
Option 4 - The supermarket is located fronting onto Maida Road, away from the SE Headquarters Building. Two small blocks of flats face the school and the pedestrian route.



Option 5 - the supermarket is located on Alison's Road, outside the curtilage of the Listed Building. A tight block of shops, offices and flats is formed to complement the retained 4th Div complex, the two Victorian houses, the stable block and the terrace building. This option gives the flexibility of a newbuild store outside the curtilage of the Listed Building, should the design of the store be considered detrimental to its setting.



Section A-A (Options 1-4) Elevation of Historic Buildings from Queen's Avenue



B-B Section / elevation (Options 1-4)

7.0 Design Strategy



- KEY**
- Existing buildings within site
  - Key buildings outside site
  - Open Space
  - Footpaths/cycleways
  - Shared Surface
  - Neighbourhood centre square
  - Existing trees
  - Proposed trees
  - Shared or low kerb surface - Block pavers
  - Steele's Road south of 4th Div. HQ, Monument setting & neighbourhood centre square - Reconstituted stone
  - Entrance to 4th Div HQ- Yorkstone setts
  - Footpaths through public open space and over Root Protection Areas e.g. Queen's Avenue, Stanhope Lines, Parade park - Permeable Resin Bound Gravel
  - Footpaths to Steele's Road - Plank paving

Neighbourhood Centre Strategy  
 (subject to Listed Building Consent)

Existing healthy and mature trees to be retained  
 Formal Planting  
 Vehicular link to be carefully designed to make it more pedestrian friendly

8.0 Landscape Strategy

SPECIAL TREATMENT ZONE



GREEN SQUARE



SHARED SURFACE



PROPOSED PLANTING STRATEGY  
FORMAL PLANTING



## 9.0 Property Management and Preservation

The buildings are currently within the control of the DIO occupied by the Army and will be handed over to Grainger in July 2014. Thereafter, Grainger will be responsible for the management and maintenance of the area. It is likely that Grainger will seek to let some buildings prior to the redevelopment of the area in order to ensure that the buildings are maintained and kept secure.

In anticipation of the handover, Grainger have already:

- Reviewed the existing buildings from a historical perspective,
- Carried out structural and condition surveys
- Identified the level of significance of the built form

This work fed into the initial options developed for the Neighbourhood Centre.

Once handed over from the DIO, Grainger will implement a security protocol and undertake another review of the buildings. Upon completion Grainger will produce and implement a short and medium term programme of works to protect the buildings and make them water tight similar to that already in place for the Cambridge Military Hospital.

Thereafter, detailed proposals will be prepared, consulted and market tested.

## 8.0 Next Steps

The Neighbourhood Centre will be the heart of the new community. Consequently, it is imperative to ensure the scheme is delivered holistically. This will guarantee that the shops, offices and café provided are attractive to occupiers. Equally, the Neighbourhood Centre must be delivered at the appropriate time, balancing the need of the new residents with occupier appetite. Bringing a neighbourhood centre on-line too early in a programme can result in unsightly boarded-up shop fronts, damaging the desirability of the scheme - a position that can be hard to recover from.

The Delivery Strategy for Wellesley locates the initial phases of the development adjacent to the Aldershot Town Centre in order to promote the use of existing facilities, deliver infrastructure and act as a catalyst for regeneration. In terms of the Neighbourhood Centre the retail offer will require a critical mass before retail operators will consider the site suitable. Therefore Grainger propose delivery commences by the occupation of 1,000 dwellings and completion of 1,500 dwellings. This will ensure the whole area will have the infrastructure necessary to support it and the critical mass to sustain the retail element.

As the principal developer, Grainger will take the lead in bringing the Neighbourhood Centre forward. The Neighbourhood Centre is a key part of the social infrastructure and as such, will be developed in a manner which complements the wider scheme. The re-development costs will be mainly funded by the services and occupiers located in the new centre although supplemental cross-subsidy may be required from the wider scheme. When completed, the intention is that both the Neighbourhood Centre and Parade Park will be preserved as community space for the use of new residents.



Main central staircase inside the 4th Division Headquarters Building

# Wellesley

ALDERSHOT

Neighbourhood Centre

Submitted By

Investing in homes since 1912  
**grainger plc**

## Design Team

Project Management - R & M Regeneration Management Limited  
Masterplanners- ADAM Urbanism  
Planning Consultants- Savills  
Landscape Architects - Capita Symonds  
Transport/Highway Engineers - WSP  
Energy/Sustainability Consultants - Capita Symonds  
Infrastructure and Waste Management Consultants - Capita Symonds  
Commercial Advisor - CBRE  
Legal Advisor - Shoosmiths



R & M

ADAM

savills

CAPITA SYMONDS

Planning | Environment | Design

Incorporating Lowjoy and Andrew Martin Associates

WSP

CBRE  
CB RICHARD ELLIS

shoosmiths