

Coton House is a late C18 country house set in extensive grounds.

In 1948 the House and estate were sold to British Thomson-Houston Company (later part of AEI group and then GEC) for use as a hostel for apprentices. New buildings were erected during this period until the estate was placed for sale by GEC in 1967.

The site remained vacant until 1970 when it was acquired by the Post Office for its national management training college. The House was brought back into use in 1977 following extensive alterations (with considerable adverse impact on its heritage value). The Post Office - and then Royal Mail - undertook further new building.

In June 2010 a major fire broke out on the first floor of the House, resulting in massive interior damage and the loss of the roof. Some 50 firemen attended the blaze from 12 fire crews throughout Warwickshire. Since then Coton House has remained 'shrouded' in plastic sheeting to await restoration.

In January 2012, the use of Coton House as a learning and conference centre by Royal Mail ceased, and the estate has been sold. It is considered that the existing premises have now outlived their usefulness for corporate accommodation in consequence of their age, form and character.

The proposals seek to provide a new 'chapter' for the estate.

The worst situation would be for the estate to be left without a viable future, which would inevitably result in further decay and dereliction. The proposals seek to avoid that fate by:

- Restoring and re-instating the listed House and stables to residential dwellings;
- Replacing the extensive institutional buildings with around 60 new homes;
- Enhancing the setting of the listed buildings and other historic structures.

The proposals will result in a significant reduction in the amount of buildings on site. The new housing is designed to have the character of an estate village. It is intended that these proposals will provide a sustainable new future for the Coton House estate and provide an attractive location for a small residential community.

It is acknowledged that this scale of development would not support the on-site provision of services such as a school or shops. However Coton House is located close to existing facilities in Rugby.



This presentation includes historic photographs of Coton House and views of the buildings that exist today. We explain how the emerging proposals have been conceived, leading to the preparation of an overall layout plan.

Please do speak to a member of the planning team if you have questions on the proposals. We welcome your comments.



The House & Estate retain the potential for beneficial use.

The general configuration of the estate has not been completely obliterated from the layout shown on historic maps (see board 4). The entrance to the estate from the west remains along an impressive tree-lined drive, but the mass of training college buildings masks the approach to the House. The gardens to the west of the House are occupied by modern buildings and it is difficult to appreciate the original spatial qualities of the mansion, estate buildings and gardens.

The House has been reduced in size by the removal of the service wing to the west. Much of the walled garden has been demolished, the drive from the north has been reduced to a farm track and the lodges that marked the two entrances have been lost.

The proposals would remove training college buildings and reconsider the arrangement, height and massing of new development with the objective of restoring the fabric, enhancing the setting of listed buildings, and improving views across the parkland.

Coton House is a Grade II* statutorily listed building.

The House is currently shrouded in scaffolding and sheeting to prevent further deterioration, following the substantial damage by fire that resulted in the loss of the majority of the upper floors and roof and severe damage to the remaining fabric.

Proposals to sensitively convert the mansion into residential apartments have been discussed with Rugby Borough Council and English Heritage and include:

- Reinstatement of roof and repair of the external fabric;
- Restoration of the 'imperial' staircase and entrance hall;
- Retention of the 'state' rooms and fine fireplaces within the apartments;
- Opening-up and restoration of the landscape around the House and drive.

The conversion would retain the integrity of the neo-classical design and give the House a viable future. It would improve its setting and restore the linkage with other historic buildings on the estate.



Eastern elevation from north-east. Date unknown



North elevation from north-east c.1971



South elevation from south-east c.1971



Staircase hall c.1951



Library c.1951

Coton House, Past -Historic photographs showing the mansion & its interiors



North elevation from north-east. 2012



Collapsed roof & propped chimneys. 2012



South elevation from south-east. 2012



Staircase hall. 2012

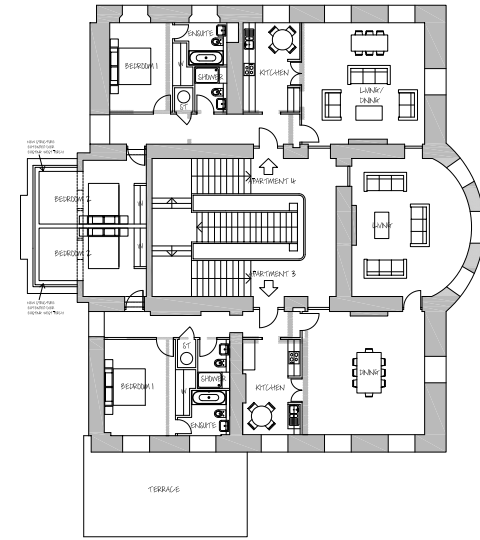


Collapsed floor & roof structure. 2012

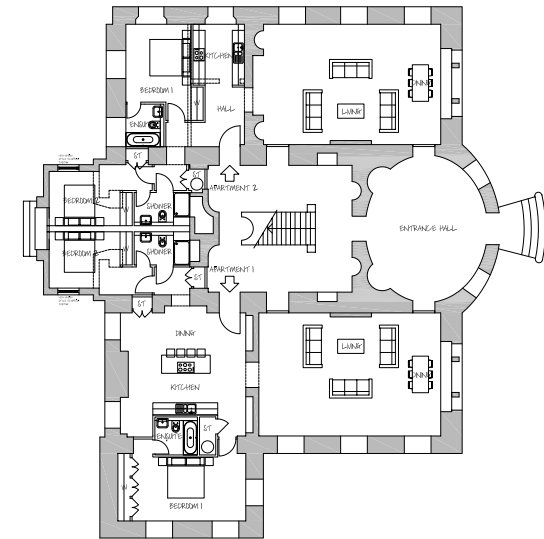


Former library. 2012

Coton House - Present -The mansion as it currently stands following the fire in 2010



Indicative proposed first floor layout



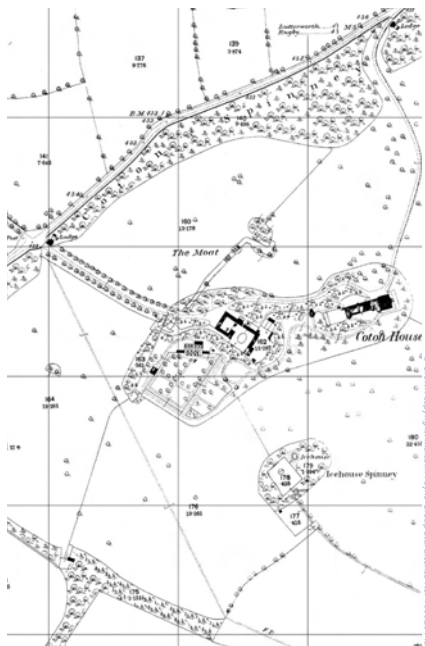
Indicative proposed ground floor layout

The Estate retains vestiges of other heritage buildings & structures.

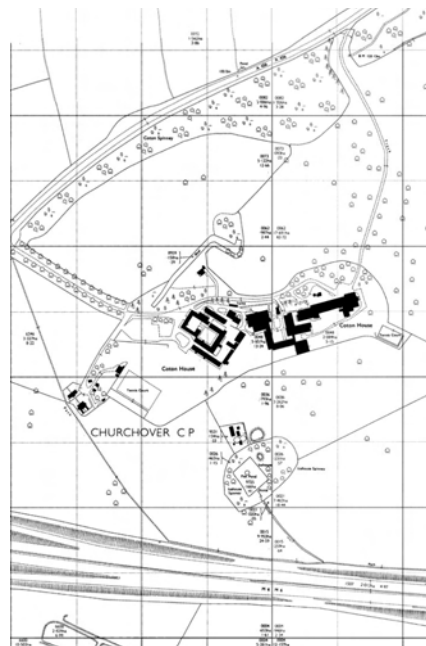
Historic maps show the evolution from 1887, with the detail layout of the gardens, to 1972 with the early training college. The setting of Coton House was further compromised by the intrusion of larger scale training college buildings shown on the current map.

The Grade II listed Stable Block has been altered, except for the roof structure and clock tower. The proposals include conversion of the block into dwellings and its retention as the focal point in the approach to the House. Other vestiges of the estate to be retained including the gardener's cottage, game larder and dairy, the sundial, topiary garden, kitchen garden walls and the moat to an earlier house.

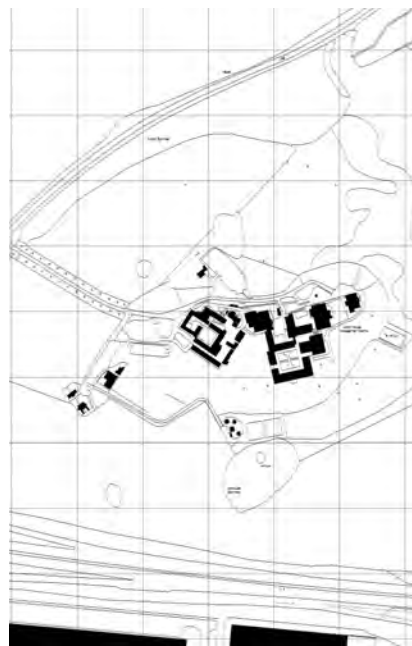
The historic structures will be protected and the arrangement of the original gardens is being used as the basis for the new layout.



1887 Ordnance Survey Extract



1972 Ordnance Survey Extract



2012 Ordnance Survey Extract

The Historic maps show the evolution of the estate from the map of 1887 showing the layout of the gardens, through to the map of 2012 showing the development of the training centre.

The entrance to the estate is from the A426. The mansion has been reduced in size and an intervening group of training and residential buildings divides it from the Stable Block to the west.

The formal gardens have largely disappeared under the new buildings, with the exception of the circular topiary garden and the remnants of the walled kitchen garden.



Dairy from the east. 2012



Topiary Cottage from the east. 2012



Game Larder from the east. 2012



Entrance Lodge (now demolished)



Stable Block. Date unknown



Listed Stable Block from entrance drive. 2012

The training centre buildings have a negative impact on the Estate.

The layout of the modern training centre buildings restricts views through the site and compromises the relationship between the House, Stable Block and other historic structures and gardens.

The design, scale and form of the modern buildings are not appropriate for conversion to other uses, and the extensive alteration and extension of some earlier ancillary buildings has produced poor quality accommodation and scarred elevations which cannot be reversed.

The proposals envisage the demolition of all the structures that have a negative impact on the character of the House, Stable Block and gardens.

The objective is to achieve a cohesive planned future for the site in use and built form, eradicating the haphazard and discordant past development that has occurred during the institutional occupations of the estate.



Former dining block. 2012



Former delegate accommodation blocks. 2012

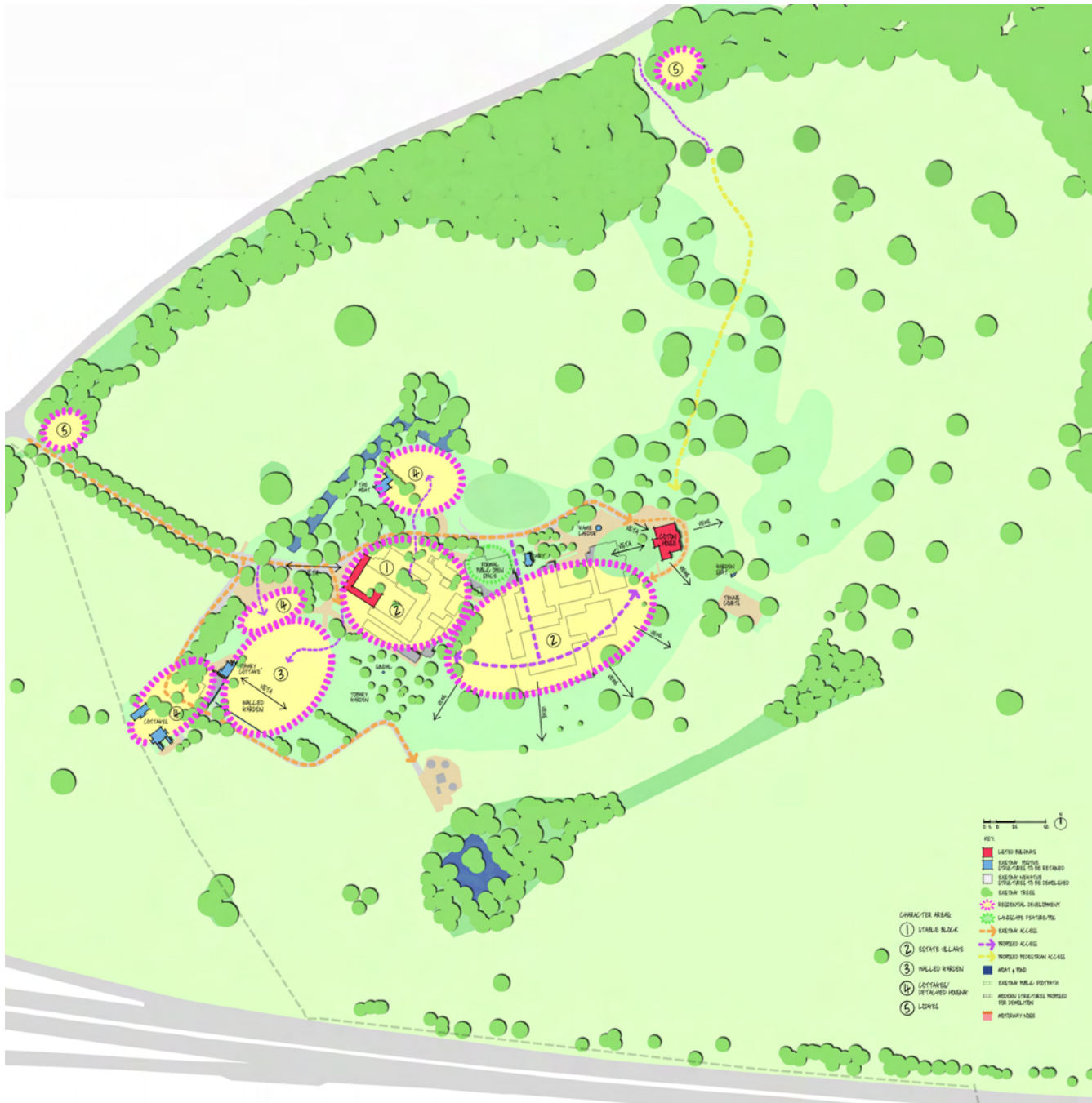


Former delegate accommodation blocks. 2012



Former training & accommodation blocks. 2012





The parkland & woodland provides a distinctive setting.

Coton House and estate sit in open countryside (but not within the Green Belt) and have been subject to major development over a number of years with a large footprint of built area and intensive use.

The extent of replacement development must be carefully considered but the listed buildings, trees and garden structures are viewed as opportunities rather than constraints, because they add to the character of the development. As well as these contextual matters other issues are being addressed including:

- The proposals for listed buildings will take into account their long term maintenance;
- Trees will be surveyed, their quality assessed and the majority retained;
- Tree protection will be considered as part of a total landscape strategy;
- Wildlife habitats will be fully investigated and protected;
- Upgrading drainage and services which have supported intense past occupation;
- Consideration of highway issues in the light of the previous traffic generation;
- Noise mitigation in relation to proximity to the M6 Motorway.

The relationship between historic buildings, landscape and wildlife habitats will be substantially enhanced in the proposals.

Returning the core of the estate to residential use.

The objective is to create a small 'estate village' with the House and Stable Block as focal points and the remnants of other buildings integrated into the layout to restore the character of the core area. This would require the redefinition of the developable area to open up views between the extant historic elements, using the original routes through the estate as a basis for the layout, and the creation of groups of houses with a character that is appropriate to their setting. The proposals include:

- ① The recreation of lodges at the north and west entrances to the estate;
- ② The improvement of the setting of the House and its conversion to apartments;
- ③ The enhancement and conversion to dwellings of the Stable Block;
- ④ The introduction of estate village houses & cottages, arranged in informal groups;
- ⑤ The re-definition of the enclosure of the walled garden with a group of houses;
- ⑥ The recreation of the topiary garden and the historic routes through the site.



KEY:

- CONVERTED GRADE II LISTED COTON HOUSE
- CONVERTED & PARTIALLY REBUILT GRADE II LISTED STABLE BLOCK
- RETAINED BUILDINGS
- PROPOSED DWELLINGS & GARAGES
- RETAINED TREES & PLANTING
- REMOVED TREES & PLANTING
- PROPOSED TREES & PLANTING

NEGATIVE SCHEDULES OF ACCOMMODATION

AROUND 10 HOMES IN THE RESTORED HISTORIC BUILDINGS INCLUDING:

CONVERSION OF COTON HOUSE:
SAY 2 NO. APARTMENTS

CONVERSION OF STABLE BLOCK:
SAY 5 NO. HOMES

EXTENSION OF FORMER DAIRY:
EXTENDED TO FORM 1 NO. HOUSE

AROUND 40 NEW HOMES TO MAKE UP PART OF CONFERENCE CENTRE INCLUDING:

- A 5 BEDROOM HOUSES
- B 5 BEDROOM HOUSES
- C 4/5 BEDROOM HOUSES
- D 4 BEDROOM HOUSES
- E 4 BEDROOM HOUSES
- F 3 BEDROOM HOUSES
- G 3 BEDROOM HOUSES
- H 2 BEDROOM APARTMENT
- J NEW WATERHOUSE TO SITE ENTRANCE

0.5 1 2 50M NORTH



Englefield, West Berkshire



Englefield, West Berkshire



Church Street, Churchover



Church Street, Churchover



Grafton Underwood, Northamptonshire



Grafton Underwood, Northamptonshire



School Street, Churchover



Church Street, Churchover



Lacock Abbey, Wiltshire



Lacock Abbey, Wiltshire



School Street, Churchover



Lutterworth Road, Churchover

The appearance of the scheme will reflect the local vernacular.

In addition to the existing historic structures of the estate the nearby village of Churchover to the northwest of the site provides contextual references for the character and appearance of the proposed development.

A wide variety of cottages, terraces and detached dwellings are characterised by pitched tiled roofs with a mixture of facing brickwork and rendered elevations with stone or brick heads, cills and banding. Chimneys and gables provide interest to the roofscape and walls, hedges and railings provide a sense of enclosure.

The general layout, grain and appearance of estate villages developed around other stately homes provide further precedents for the character of the proposed development.

Studies of the way in which large landowners provided residential accommodation close to their homes will be used to develop a village character appropriate to Cotton House and Estate.

The proposals will continue the tradition of estate housing in an historic setting of landscape and buildings.



Indicative examples of village housing



Indicative examples of village housing

What happens next?

The intention is to submit planning applications (including applications for Listed Building Consent) shortly. Once submitted, Rugby Borough Council will announce receipt of the applications. Details will be publically available via the Council's website www.rugby.gov.uk. Rugby Borough Council will undertake a formal consultation on the submitted applications once submitted and will invite written representations.

The planning process is expected to last 13 weeks from the point of submission.

The applications will be accompanied by the following documents and technical reports:

- Site Masterplan
- Design and Access Statement
- Planning Statement
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Heritage Impact Statement
- Ecological Assessment, inclusive of Bat Surveys
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Drainage and Utilities Assessment
- Transport Statement
- Marketing Report
- Landscape Appraisal
- Noise Assessment
- Arboricultural Assessment and Method Statement



We welcome your views on the proposal and would ask you to complete and return a comments form if you wish to express an opinion on the proposals at this stage.

Alternatively please write to:



*Framptons Town Planning
Oriel House, 42 North Bar, Banbury,
Oxfordshire, OX16 0TH or
enquiries@framptons-planning.com
or visit www.framptons-planning.com*

Thank you for taking the time to attend this public exhibition. Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to speak with a representative who will be pleased to answer your questions.