

ROUGEMONT CASTLE

Supplementary Planning Guidance



Exeter City Council

PLANNING SERVICES

April 2005

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This supplementary planning guidance was adopted at Exeter City Council's Executive Committee on 5th April 2005.

ROUGEMONT CASTLE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

1 Site Boundaries

- 1.1 This document provides Supplementary Planning Guidance in support of the Exeter Local Plan in relation to the Rougemont Castle and its immediate surroundings. That plan indicates the wider boundary of the Tourism Action Area defined in the Local Plan which is broadly the same as that now designated as the Castle Quarter (with the Gandy Street area to form part of the Quarter). Whilst the document focuses on the Castle and the grounds within the Castle and City Walls, inevitably the immediate environs are particularly important because of their designation as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and because it provides the setting for the listed buildings.

2 Site History

- 2.1 The Rougemont Castle site is, with the Cathedral and the City Walls, the most important 'built' feature of the City. The site was occupied from 1068 as part of William the Conqueror's measures to control England's towns and countryside after the invasion. The site itself, in terms of its overall framework and topography, has been preserved almost intact since this time. The Norman Gatehouse with its Saxon architectural elements is one of the oldest surviving pieces of Norman architecture in England. The position of the rampart of the outer bailey remains visible in the topography of the City in locations such as the slope from Gandy Street up to the Phoenix, the changing levels between the lower and upper Library and on Little Castle Street.
- 2.2 There have been several buildings on the site. Control passed to the Duchy of Cornwall in the mid 14th century, with a Garrison being stationed there until the mid 16th century and again during the Napoleonic Wars. The Courts were established in the current building in 1774 which has been subject to alterations and additions in subsequent centuries.
- 2.3 The significance of the site has been set out in a Conservation report by Alan Baxter Associates (available for inspection or on CD price £5 from Planning Services), which indicates that the City and Castle Walls and Norman Gatehouse are of the greatest significance along with the buried remains of the medieval castle and Roman city, and the earthworks within the Castle and in Rougemont Gardens (bank and ditch), which form the inner rampart to the Castle. The courts buildings themselves are of slightly less significance as there have been some substantial alterations particularly internally during the 20th century. Nevertheless, the courthouse retains a good deal of its original fabric and appearance in terms of the front elevations, entranceway, courtroom spaces and roofs. The Courtyard currently detracts from the setting of the listed building because of very extensive parking and utilitarian surfacing. But, because of its potential for significantly enhancing the setting of the listed building, its historic use as a public meeting place, and the expected archaeological resource that lies beneath the surface, it is of high importance.

3 Site Context

- 3.1 The site was chosen for its prominence by William the Conqueror. It is a dominant feature of the character of the City Centre, visible from a wide area. The Castle Walls command extensive views of the City and surrounding countryside. On three sides it is bounded by public parks, listed grade II in their own right, which incorporate associated earthworks for the Castle.
- 3.2 Because of the nature of the use of the site given the requirement for security (initially military and then judicial), the Castle is only accessed from the south up the narrow, inclining Castle Street, dominated by the Norman Gatehouse (situated to the left in the view up the street). By virtue of this single access and its narrowness, the existence of the Castle is often unsuspected by many casual visitors to the City, yet it is only 150 metres from the bustling High Street.
- 3.3 The specific challenge presented by the site is therefore to address its apparent invisibility and to ensure that whatever uses are brought into the Castle do not detract from its inherent character by inappropriate or insensitive alterations to the site or historic buildings, or by allowing its principal access to become vehicle dominated. The site is in fact a microcosm of the problem of the wider Castle Quarter which essentially turns its back on all the busier parts of the City Centre and is relatively difficult to discover. This is dealt with further below.

4 Policy Background

Local Plan Policy

- 4.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan will be the Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011 that is due to be adopted in March 2005. Developers should have regard to the policies of the plan as a whole, the following are particularly relevant:
 - TM3 Within the Tourism Action Areas:
 - a) Permission will be granted for tourist attractions provided they are of distinctive design which conserves and builds on the heritage or character of the areas;
 - b) Permission will not be granted for change of use of a tourist attraction to other uses unless the proposed use will maintain or enhance the tourism role of the area or unless tourism use is not viable;
 - c) Measures will be implemented to enhance the environment, introduce and extend pedestrian priority and expand the signing and interpretation board network.
 - TM4 Rougemont Castle is proposed for a tourist and cultural use that conserves and builds on the heritage of the Castle and provides public access. Proposals may include cultural/entertainment and heritage interpretation facilities, including shops, cafes and restaurants.

- TM5 Developments on sites adjacent to the City Wall will be permitted where the proposals:
 - a) Preserve or enhance the setting of the City Wall through high quality design;
 - b) Where feasible provide public access to the circuit of the City Wall;
 - c) Provide relevant interpretation of the City Wall, together with signing and lighting where appropriate.

4.3 The Castle Quarter covers all of the Tourism Action Area (see Plan A) and therefore is covered by Policy TM3.

Conservation

4.4 The site is in the Exeter Central Conservation Area as indicated by Plan A. The appraisal of this Conservation Area (available from Planning Services) draws attention to the high quality of the townscape with the close linking together of narrow streets, hidden courts, luxuriant gardens in close juxtaposition with massive defensive works dominated by the gatehouse. It recommends consideration of the re-use of the Crown Courts site to allow more public access.

Ancient Monument

4.5 The site, including the gatehouse and Castle and City Walls, the ground beneath all the buildings (but not the above ground structure of the Court and Lodge buildings), and adjoining areas are designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (see Plan A).

Archaeology

4.6 Policy C5 states:

- Development will not be permitted which would cause harm to a site, monument or structure of national archaeological importance, whether scheduled or unscheduled, or which would cause harm to its setting. Proposals should preserve nationally important archaeological remains in situ and, where appropriate, make arrangements for their enhancement and display.
- Where the proposal will affect remains of regional or local importance, the desirability of preserving the remains in situ will be weighed against the need for the development.
- If preservation in situ is not feasible or appropriate the developer must undertake archaeological recording works in accordance with a scheme to be agreed in advance.

Listed Buildings

4.7 All the buildings within the site are Listed as being of Special Architectural or Historic Interest (see Plan B):

- The Gatehouse and Castle Walls are Grade I
- The Crown Courts are Grade II*
- The entrance gates and the statue of Earl Fortescue (1863) are Grade II

- The Lodge is unlisted but protected as a pre-1948 building within the curtilage of the Castle Walls

Northernhay and Rougemont Gardens are on the National Register of Historic Parks and Gardens (Grade II).

Castle/Cultural Quarter

- 4.8 The Council has endorsed the concept of promoting a cultural quarter encompassing the area indicated on Plan A. Its purpose is to be:
- A focus for investment in cultural industries to improve quality and to diversify the 'offer';
 - A driver to raise standards of the built environment of public parks;
 - A major visitor destination in the heart of the City to complement the Cathedral destination;
 - A framework for a funding strategy to secure public and private investment for further enhancements to the cultural quarter.
- 4.9 The overall framework will provide the basis for a series of projects including substantial upgrading of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, improvements to Rougemont and Northernhay Gardens, potential enhancements to the County Library and the regeneration of the Castle site itself. The Castle and its environs can provide the principal focus for an enhanced tourist offer but can also accommodate a wider mix of uses.

5 Key Principles

The context

- 5.1 The conservation report, produced by consultants in November 2004, proposes a number of basic principles. The facades facing into the courtyard could be preserved with only limited alterations such as the re-establishment of pre-existing accesses. No additional buildings would be acceptable, and the removal of insensitive later additions would be encouraged. Public access to the grounds (including the City Wall) should be improved, and the enhancement of the courtyard, and the improvement of the setting of the listed buildings and scheduled monument are key priorities for any regeneration project. The conservation report also proposes a series of policies based upon the existing understanding of the site. These policies have been amended to focus on realistic planning issues and are attached as appendix 1

Alterations to historic buildings

- 5.2 Sensitive repair or restoration works will be welcomed. More detailed guidance will be provided on alterations to the interiors, informed where necessary by more detailed surveys and investigation provided prior to determination of consents. There are, however, significant parts of the building that detract from its character, such as some of the rear elements which are visible from Northernhay Gardens, the former snack bar at the rear of the eastern wing and a significant part of the first floor office space. Proposals to facilitate safe public access to the Gatehouse and to facilitate its interpretation will be supported.

- 5.3 All alterations and repairs to the Castle and City Walls (including the Gatehouse and Athelstan's Tower), any new construction and any excavations or changes to ground levels will require Scheduled Monument Consent from the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, advised by English Heritage.

Public spaces

- 5.4 Public access to the courtyard, City Walls and through to Northernhay Gardens will be required as part of any planning consent, together with occasional, agreed, access to the former courtrooms. The Walls provide commanding views over a significant part of the City with few other comparable vantage points. Plan C indicates a possible 'circuit' but the achievement of a link from the top of the East Wall into Northernhay Gardens without harming the character of the Court building or Castle defences will need to be very carefully assessed. Reinstatement of the original rampart profile may be desirable subject to archaeological evaluation. An enhancement proposal will be sought for the courtyard to improve the setting of the listed building. A long term landscape management plan will be required for all of the public spaces within the Castle boundary; a parallel management plan will be required for the Castle and City Walls. The City Council will consider taking on this maintenance liability, subject to adequate financial provision.

Land uses

- 5.5 The Local Plan requires the site to make a significant contribution to the tourism attractions of the City. Access to and interpretation of the City and Castle Walls, the Norman Gatehouse and the courtyard are all essential elements of that enhanced visitor attraction. Funding for enhancement, interpretation, signing and lighting will be sought from a developer.

Specific uses

- 5.6 A mixed use scheme is desirable, specific uses that will be acceptable, subject to the impact of any significant alterations on the character of the main building, include:
- A visitor attraction;
 - A hotel or residential uses;
 - Assembly and leisure uses including museums, casino and art galleries (but excluding night clubs);
 - Restaurants, cafes and pubs;
 - Retail;
 - Offices.

Whatever use is selected, the applicant will need to satisfy English Heritage and the local planning authority that this is the optimum viable use.

Access

- 5.7 Public access will be sought through the courtyard, on to the Walls and into Northernhay Gardens during the day-time, on Summer evenings and for occasional events. In order to create a satisfactory ambience for the buildings and the ramparts, parking should be kept to a minimum. A maximum of 30 vehicles will be accepted. All other parking needs should be met off site in public car parks.
- 5.8 In considering improved access, the benefits of providing a more active and

welcoming frontage of the Castle's rear on to Northernhay Gardens should be addressed, if practicable. Consideration should also be given to how improved access may be gained, over and above simply opening up one or both of the existing doors into the Castle.

Wildlife

- 5.9 The walls, buildings and open areas of Rougemont Castle may provide existing and potential habitats for protected and other important or declining species of fauna and flora (such as bats and swifts). Certain species are specifically protected through a hierarchy of legislation. Developers will be expected to provide survey information of the wildlife presence and potential of the site and to formulate proposals for its protection, enhancement and management that produce biodiversity gains. The presence of protected species and those listed on national/regional/local biodiversity action plans will be a material consideration. Developers should have regard to the Exeter Biodiversity Strategy and Action plan and should liaise with the City Council's Countryside Projects Officer and English Heritage.

6 Archaeological Evaluation

- 6.1 The City Council is commissioning an archaeological evaluation of the courtyard to identify the location and depth of buried remains of the medieval castle and the Roman city underneath it, and of an undated cemetery. This should inform most proposals for altering the levels of the courtyard, or for making any other changes, and should enable the site to be better understood and presented to the public. However, as this evaluation will probably take place before any specific proposals are submitted by a developer, it is possible that some further evaluation may be required to assess the impact of such proposals.

7 Section 106 Agreement

- 7.1 Contributions will be sought for the following items:
- Interpretation, signage and lighting;
 - City/Castle Wall maintenance;
 - Landscape enhancement and maintenance;
 - Community/Visitor facilities;
 - Public realm enhancement schemes on pedestrian links to the site, in particular Castle Street.
- 7.2 Public access to the site will need to be secured as indicated in paragraph 5.4.
- 7.3 A programme of archaeological work and publication may also need to be secured via a 106 agreement, if the scale of necessary works merits it.
- 7.4 A long term management strategy or plan for the site should also be secured, in line with the recommended policies of the consultant's conservation report (as amended and set out in appendix 1), to ensure a consistent and sensitive treatment of the site and buildings after permissions are granted.

8 Preparation of Proposals

- 8.1 Proposals for the site will require detailed discussion with English Heritage, the City Council and Devon County Council before submission. A DDA access audit and evaluation should be carried out. Alterations to the existing buildings will require Listed Building Consent. Any new build elements, other ground works or works to the ramparts, City/Castle Walls and Gatehouse will require Scheduled Monument Consent. Applications for these and for full planning permission must be informed and accompanied by a detailed archaeological study including site investigation where necessary, and by detailed information – obtained by limited opening up where necessary - on the impact of proposals on the hidden and visible historic fabric of the buildings. A planning application will only be considered if it is accompanied by this information and by an application for Listed Building Consent specifying the proposed works in detail in relation to accurate measured plans and elevation drawings of the buildings concerned and in relation to any impact on the special character of the buildings.
- 8.2 Proposals for the site will need to have regard to the relevant government planning policies (currently PPGs 15 and 16 in particular), the (updated and amended) policies derived from the conservation report for the site (see appendix 1), this guidance, and to other relevant supplementary planning guidance produced by the Council (Trees and Development (adopted March 2004); and Archaeology and Development (adopted November 2004)).
- 8.3 For further information please contact either the Head of Planning Services or the Design and Development Manager.

ROUGEMONT CASTLE CONSERVATION POLICIES

General Policies

1. Any proposals for the conservation and future development of the Rougemont Castle site should accord with national Government Guidance on the historic environment and archaeology, and with relevant sections of the Exeter Local Plan First Review (1995-2011).
2. The conservation priority for those responsible for Rougemont Castle should be the safeguarding of those parts which contribute to the site's national archaeological, historical and architectural importance.
3. The owner of the site should, at an early stage, draw up a Conservation Management Plan to provide a long-term strategy for the site's development and maintenance, according with policies of the supplementary planning guidance
4. There should be public access to as much of the site as possible.
5. New uses for Rougemont Castle should be chosen to:-
 - Maintain the site's national archaeological, architectural and historic importance, in line with policies 1 and 2.
 - Strengthen links between Rougemont Castle and the city and encourage public access.
 - Not generate significant amounts of vehicular traffic.
 - Fund the long term repair and maintenance of the site as a whole.
 - Conform with the overall strategy for the site (Policy 3).
6. The long-term strategy for the site should promote the creation of new links between Rougemont Castle, the city centre and Northernhay Gardens.

Control of Change

7. Proposals for alterations or development at Rougemont Castle should be in accordance with the long-term strategy for the site (as set out in Policy 3).
8. The correct statutory consents (Scheduled Monument Consent, Listed Building Consent, Conservation Area Consent and Planning Permission) should be obtained for all works.
9. There will be a presumption against the construction of new buildings in the Inner Bailey.
10. There will be a presumption in favour of the demolition of structures identified as detracting from the archaeological, architectural and historic importance of Rougemont Castle.

11. Proposals for alterations or new building should be based on an understanding of the archaeological/historical significance of the area affected and should include full provision for appropriate recording.

Provision of Services

12. New services should seek to minimise adverse impact on areas of archaeological or historical significance.

Specific Elements

The Courthouse

13. Any proposals for the courthouse should be based on a clear understanding of the historic fabric, should seek to preserve or enhance those elements of the building which contribute to its Grade II* listing, and to remove those elements which detract.
14. Given the history of the building, an element of public use would be highly desirable.

The Inner Bailey

15. Any proposals for landscape design or other works to the inner bailey should be based on a clear understanding of the archaeological importance and potential of the area and should seek to ensure the preservation *in situ* of important remains. Where *in situ* preservation cannot be justified, arrangements for excavation and recording should be agreed with the City's Archaeology Officer and with English Heritage.
16. There should be a presumption in favour of a significant element of public use of, and public access to, the Inner Bailey.
17. The landscape design of the inner bailey should reflect the traditional open nature of the space and its historic use for public assembly.

Care of the Fabric

18. The Conservation Management Plan should provide for an agreed programme of maintenance and a provision for regular inspection of the condition of the fabric.
19. All works of maintenance and repair should be carried out to the highest conservation standard.

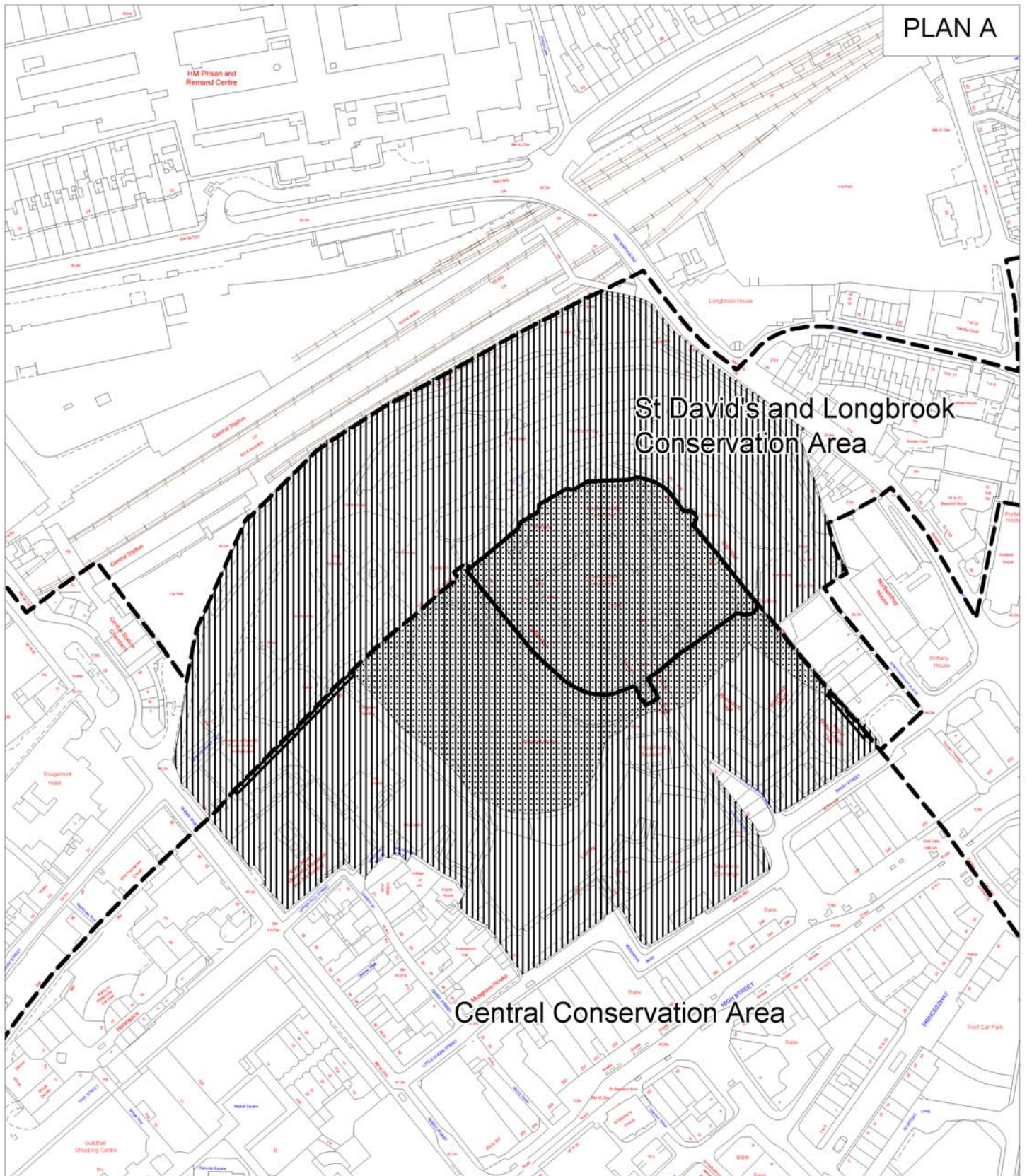
Setting

20. The landscape design of the Inner Bailey should seek to enhance the setting of Rougemont Castle.

21. Vehicle access to the courthouse should be kept to an operational minimum to avoid compromising the quality of the character of the Inner Bailey and facilitate implementation of policy 17.

Management

22. The owner of the site should, at an early stage, put in place a Management Structure to:-
 - Ensure that the Conservation Management Plan is implemented.
 - Monitor the operation of the Conservation Plan and oversee its revision.
 - Formulate a co-ordinated programme of research and presentation of the site.
23. A strategy for signage, both to strengthen links to the City and to interpret the Castle to visitors, should be drawn up. Consideration should be given to methods of fixing which do not damage archaeology or historic fabric and to a style of presentation which is visually harmonious.
24. Consideration should be given to the commissioning of a programme of archaeological evaluation, as part of the drawing up of the long-term strategy for the site.



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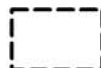
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Area designations



The Site



Conservation Area Boundary



Scheduled Monument



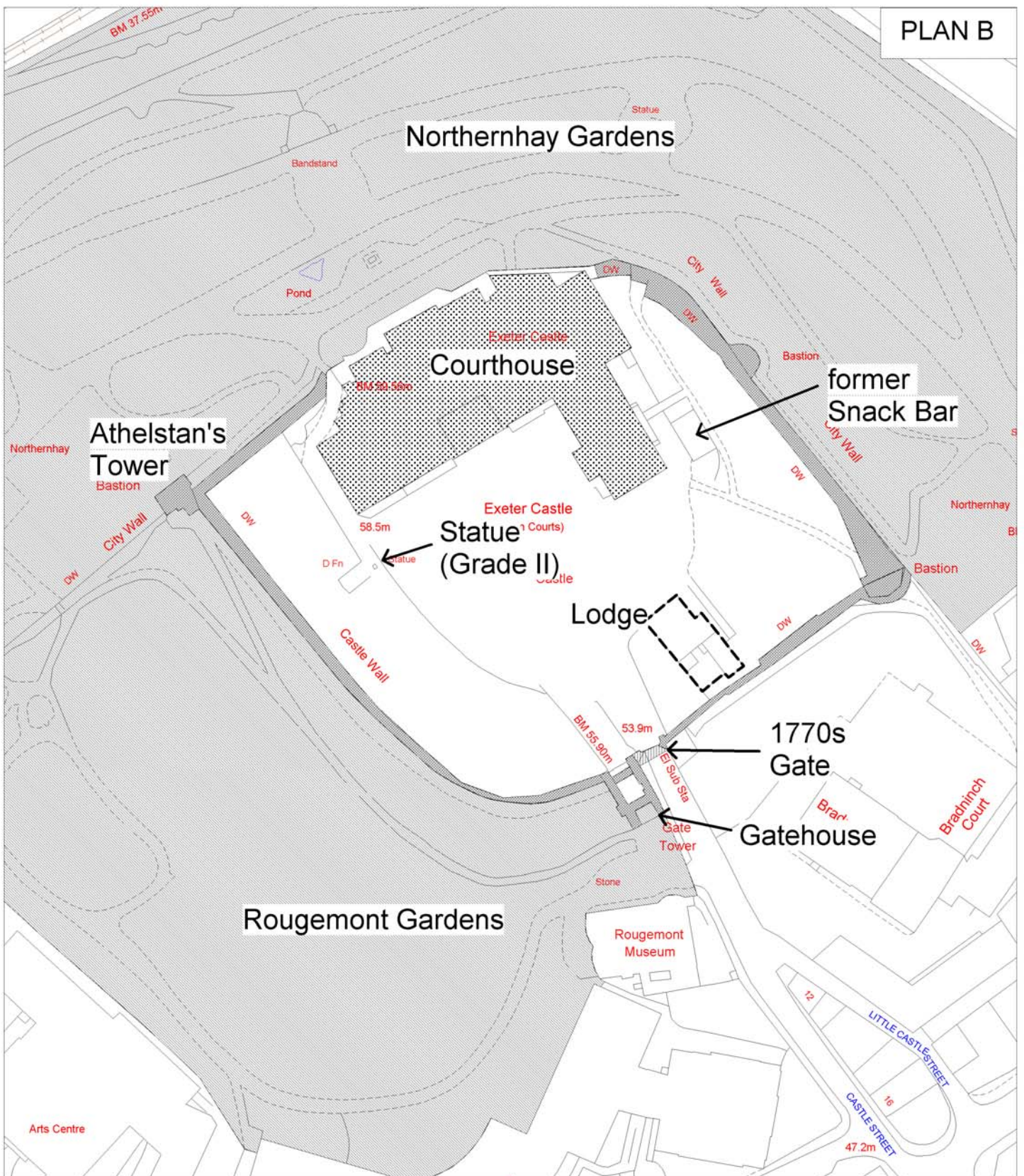
Tourism Action Area

Planning Services, Exeter City Council, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter, EX1 1NN

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Scale 1:1000



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Listed Buildings and Historic Gardens

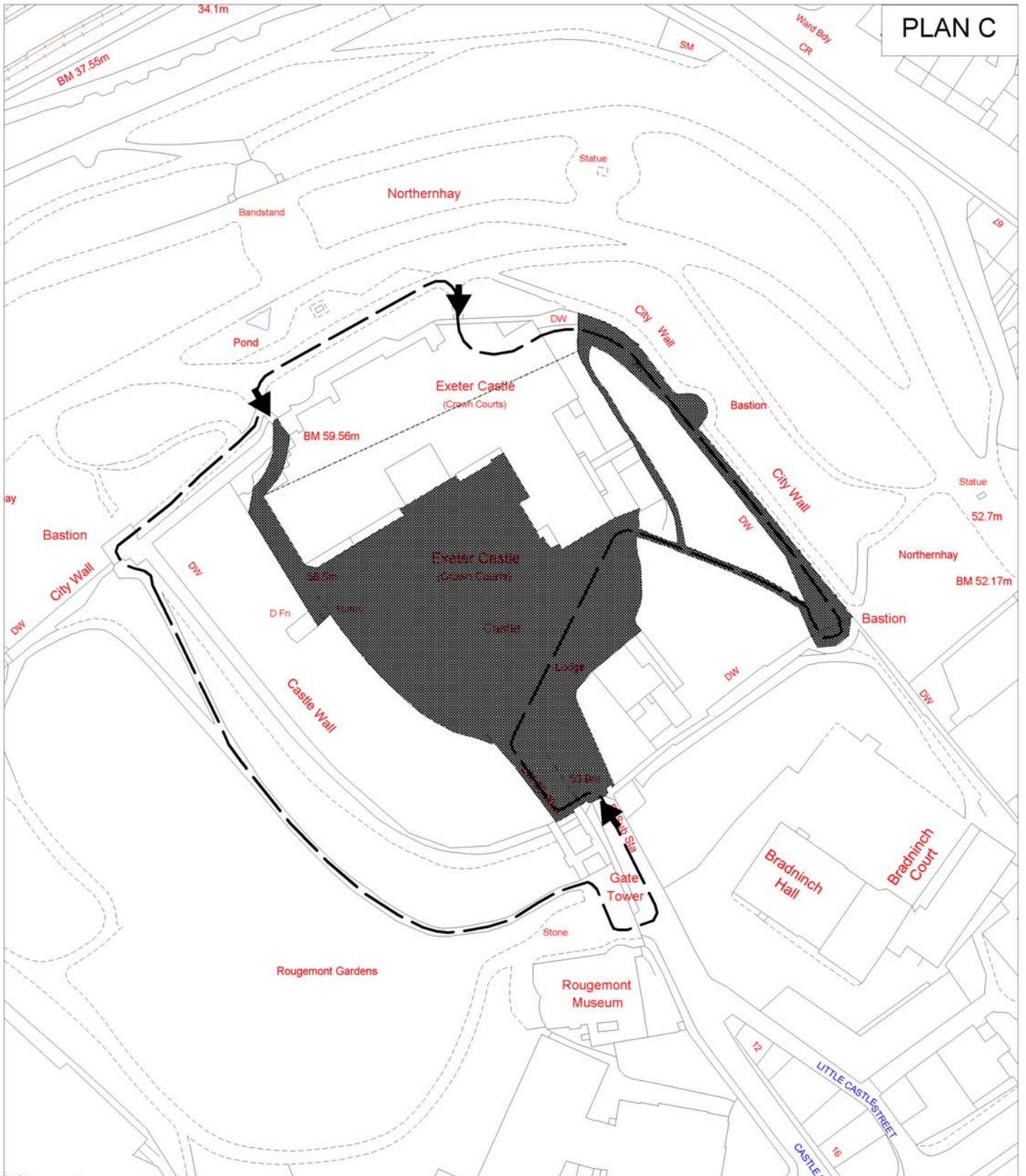
- | | | |
|--|---|--|
|  Grade I |  Grade II* |  Gardens Grade II |
|  Grade II |  Lodge, Curtilage Listed | |

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Access



Public Access Area



Existing Access Points



Possible Visitor Circuit

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