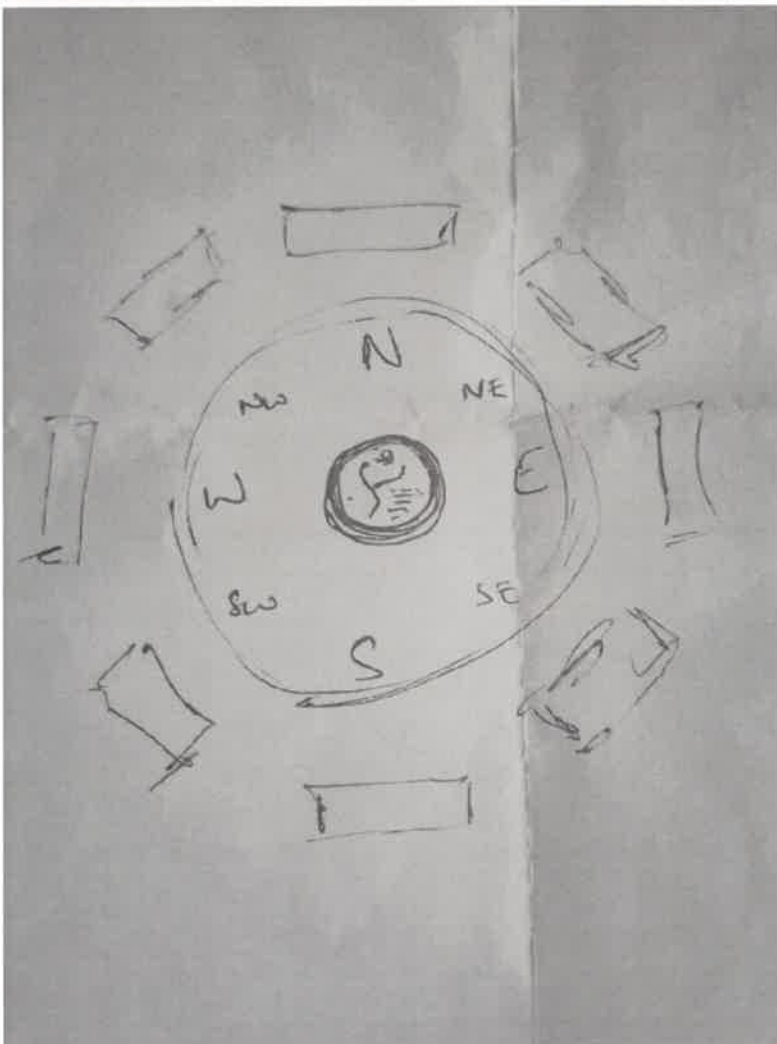


Okehampton Town Council
16th February 2026
Meeting Report

Date:	17 th December 2025
Name:	Abi Horn



Definitions of priority levels

Low- Done on an as and when needed basis. Will be dropped if high priority areas need to be worked on.

Medium- will be done fortnightly and might be done on a reduced frequency if high priority areas need to have work done on them.

High- Will be done weekly and will take precedence over and above other areas

Areas maintained by the Council but not in its ownership

All Saints Churchyard- This area has been agreed to continue maintenance on, in return for use of the carpark at the Church. Maintenance consists of grass cutting in the open graveyard only.

Area of Clapps Wood- This area is not owned by the Council but is legally required to be maintained by the Council under the terms of the agreement associated with the sale of the remainder of Clapps Wood.

Verge by Waitrose – Do you want this area to be continued to be maintained?

East Street Garden- Do you want this area to be continued to be maintained?

Area of the Skate Park by the Guide Hut base- Do you want this area to be continued to be maintained?

The Council cannot seek sponsorship for areas it does not own.

Maps

Each area has had its boundary confirmed with Land Registry and the legal documents relating to their acquisition.

Each area has two maps:

1. Ownership and maintains.
2. Priority level

Key to ownership map

Own and maintain RED hatching

Own but do not maintain GREEN hatching

Do not own but maintain BLUE hatching

Do not own but legally required to maintain BLACK hatching

Key to priority map

Low- Blue

Medium- Red

High- Green

Map A- Waitrose Verge

As the Council does not own this verge the maintenance is going to be minimal. This area has been prioritized as low.

Map B- East Street Garden

As the Council does not own this area the maintenance is going to be minimal. This area has been prioritized as low.

Map C- The Cemetery

This area is mowed and strimmed fortnightly during the growing season. Unused areas are cut by tractor the rest by mower/trimmer and are prioritised as medium. The War Memorial and Sydney Simmons grave are maintained when necessary and are prioritised as low.

Map D- Clapps Wood

While the Council does not own all of this land, it is legally required to maintain it as part of the agreement entered into. The area along the path and fence is strimmed and leaf blown with the brambles cut back fortnightly. This is a medium priority.

The path itself is a low priority and is worked on when necessary, e.g. fence replacement.

The rest of Clapps Wood is strimmed back once a year. It is not feasible to trim it on a more regular basis or desirable to as it has become a habitat for wildlife, this is a low priority.

Map E- West Bridge Verge

The wildflower area does not have much maintenance during the year, only the planting day and the cutting off of the flowers once they have gone to seed and is prioritised as low. The grass area is cut fortnightly and is prioritised as medium.

Map F- Behind Lidl

The area against the building is planted and has never required maintenance and is therefore prioritised as low. The grass area is mown fortnightly to keep the picnic area accessible. In future only the fence line the councils land will be maintained and not the decking as it is not in land within an area owned by the council. This area is prioritised as medium.

Map G- Fairplace Garden

This area requires a lot of maintenance none of which can be done mechanically. This area has been classed as high and will be prioritized over other areas.

Map H- Skate Park complex

The banks of the BMX pump track will be left long to reduce the risk of them being used as extra jumps and eroded away. This is prioritised as low. Part of the Skate park grass is included in No Mow May and is not mown until the 2nd week of June. This area is currently mown fortnightly, but Cllr Weekes has asked that this be reduced to 3 weekly/ monthly. Part of this area is not owned by the Council (please see ownership map). This area is prioritised as medium.

Map I -Simmons Park

The formal beds at the pedestrian gate to the park, the areas around the pond and the rose beds by the Leisure Centre band stand will be high priority for maintaining and will be done weekly.

The areas already agreed for No Mow May (management plan) will be low priority and will not be cut until the 2nd week of June. Platts Meadow is also low priority and will cut yearly.

The edges of the river will be left long as agreed in May 2025 are uncut as alternative safety measures – a reinforced natural barrier

The wooded areas will be managed on an as needed basis led by inspections and weather.

The rest of the park will be mowed fortnightly and will be prioritised as medium.

Priority Level	Areas
Low (Blue on maps)	Verge by Waitrose East Street Garden Wildflower area on West Bridge Planted area behind Lidl Main area of Clapps Wood Banks around BMX Pump track Platts Meadow No Mow May areas
Medium (Red on maps)	Cemetery Clapps Wood path adjacent West Bridge grass area Grass area behind Lidl Skate Park Complex Grass areas of Simmons Park
High (Green on maps)	Fairplace Garden Formal area of Simmons Park Beds by Ponds Rose beds by bandstand

Compost

As the compost heap is created from collected leaves, it inevitably contains seeds which can germinate when the compost is spread, leading to an increase in weeds within the park. Hot composting is not a viable option, as it would require significant capital investment to maintain the heap at the correct temperature, together with approximately one day of staff labour each month to turn the heap. There is also insufficient space on site to allow for a longer compost maturation period.

The compost is used in formal areas of the park, so its application cannot be restricted to informal areas or shrub beds. While purchasing compost could reduce the issue of seed contamination, it cannot be guaranteed to be peat-free and comes with a cost. Despite the increase in weeds, on-site composting avoids the cost of paying for the removal of a substantial volume of garden waste.

Staffing

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
James	8-4:30	8-4:30	8-4:30 ADMIN	8-4:30	AM only INSPECTIONS
Neil	8-4:30	8-4:30	8-4:30	-----	-----
Jacob	8-4:30	8-4:30	8-4:30	8-4:30	AM only
Sam	8-4:30	8-4:30	8-4:30	AM only	College
Hours available to	32	32	28	16	4.5

work in the park					
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A combined working week of 112.5 hours is not just spent on spent on weeding planting and mowing but also includes:

- Machine maintenance
- Training
- Inspections- including playgrounds, trees, carpark, bridges
- Meter readings
- Bin emptying
- Events – getting and returning signs for road closures, getting the park ready for when the fair comes etc
- Repairs to walls and fences
- Painting
- Repairs to playgrounds, skatepark
- Chain sawing
- Admin- apprentice training, quotation seeking, site visits
- Drain clearing
- Pond cleaning
- Hedge cutting

Recommendations

The committee is requested to:

- 1) Resolve if it wishes to continue to maintain land it does not own and is not legally required to do so.

Verge by Waitrose

East Street Garden

Area of the Skate Park by the Guide Hut base

- 2) Resolve to agree the priority areas including if desired to reduce the mowing frequency of the skate park complex.

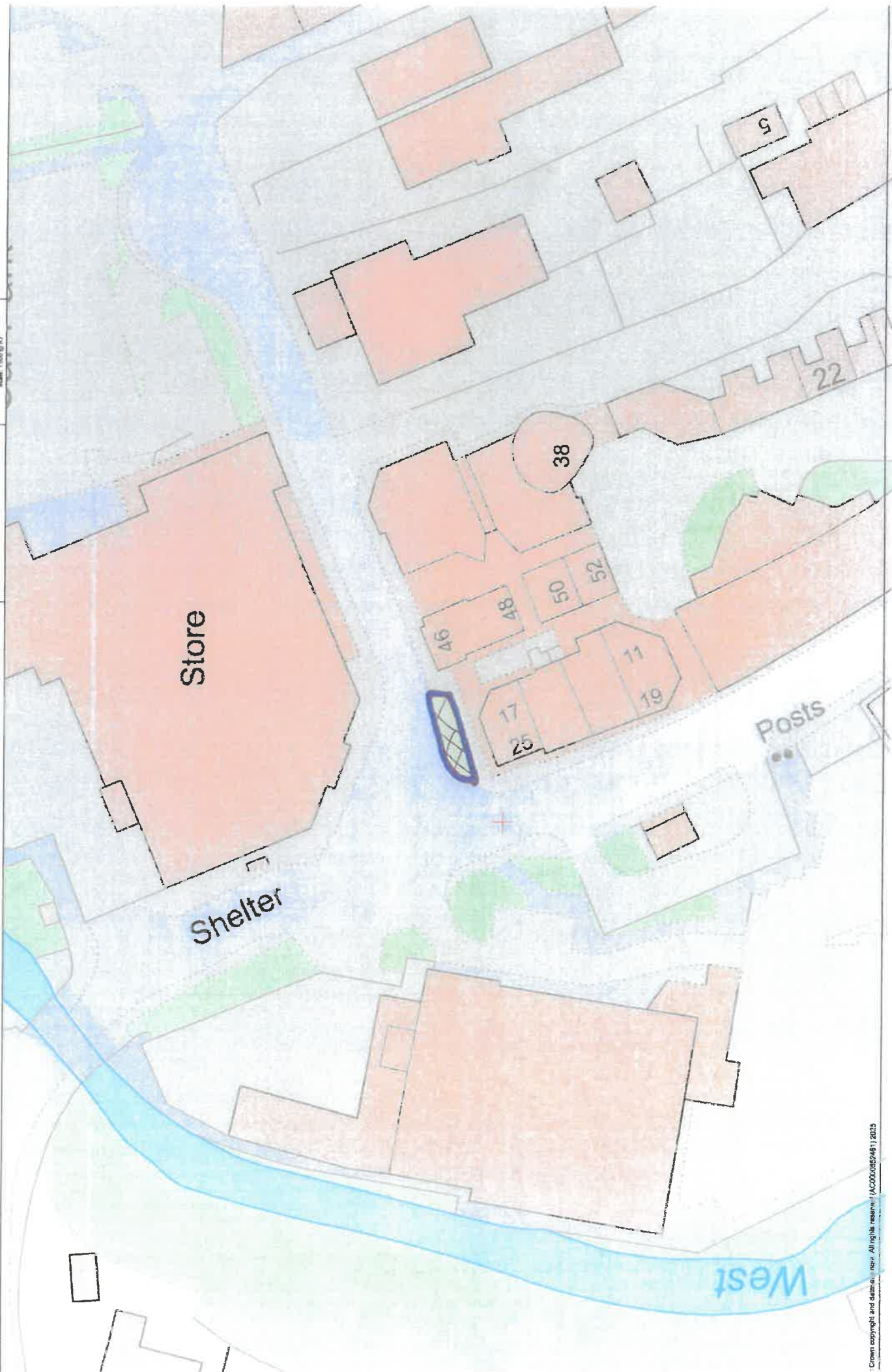
Okehampton

Author: A. Hom

Date: 22/09/2025



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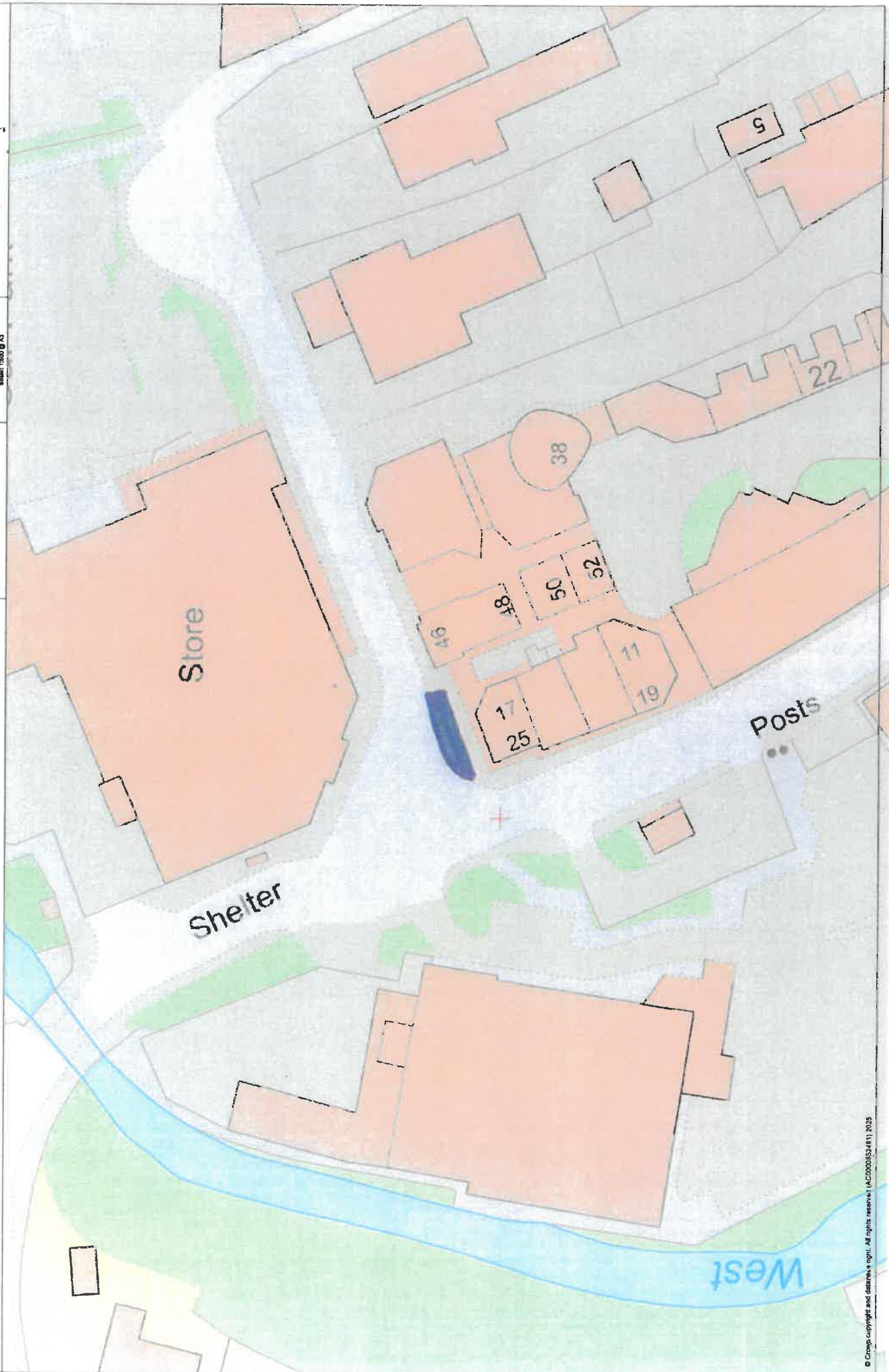
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Author: A. Horn

Date: 22/09/2025



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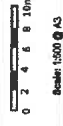




Okehampton

Author: A. Hom

Date: 22/09/2025



Cemetery



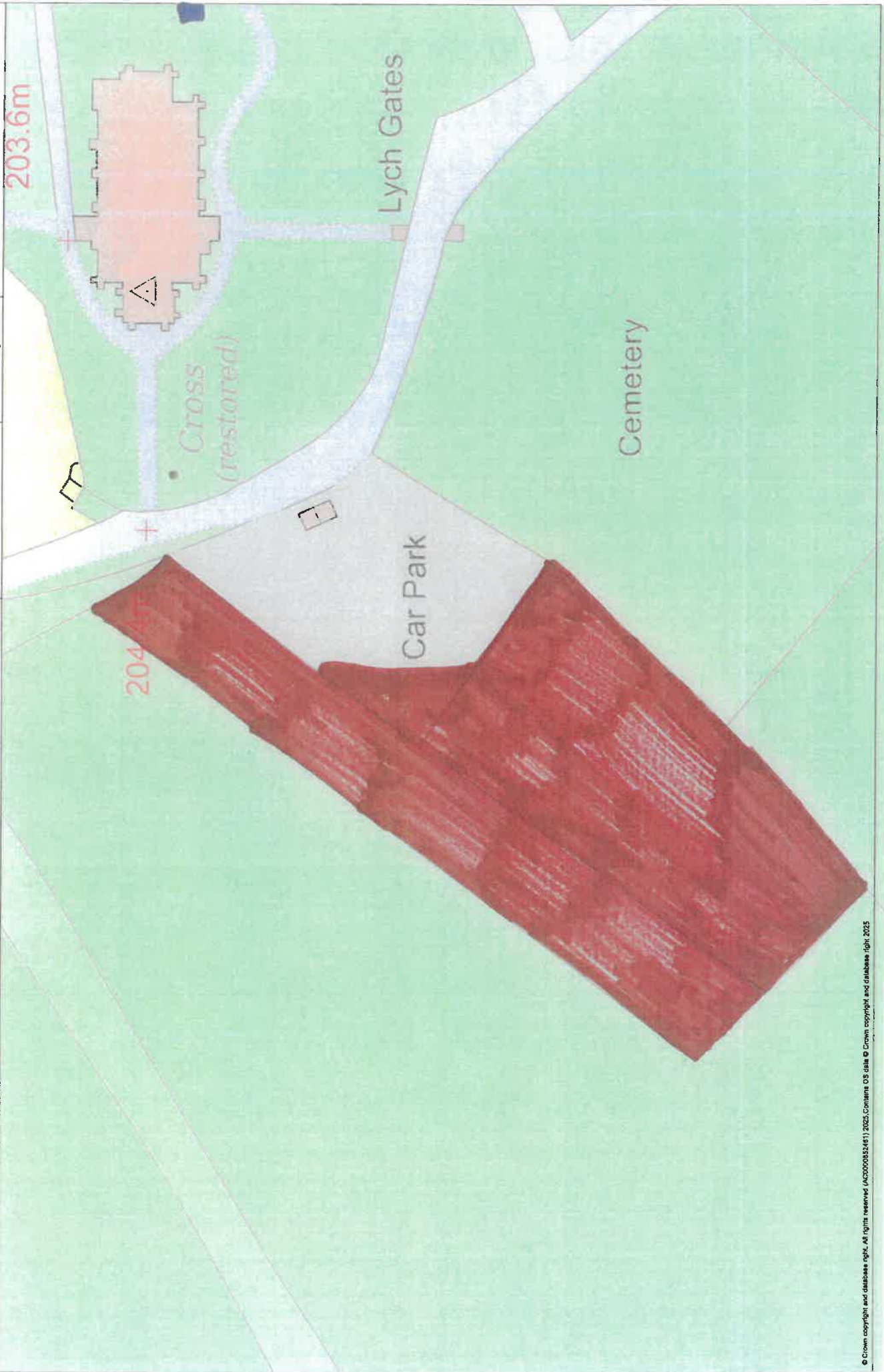
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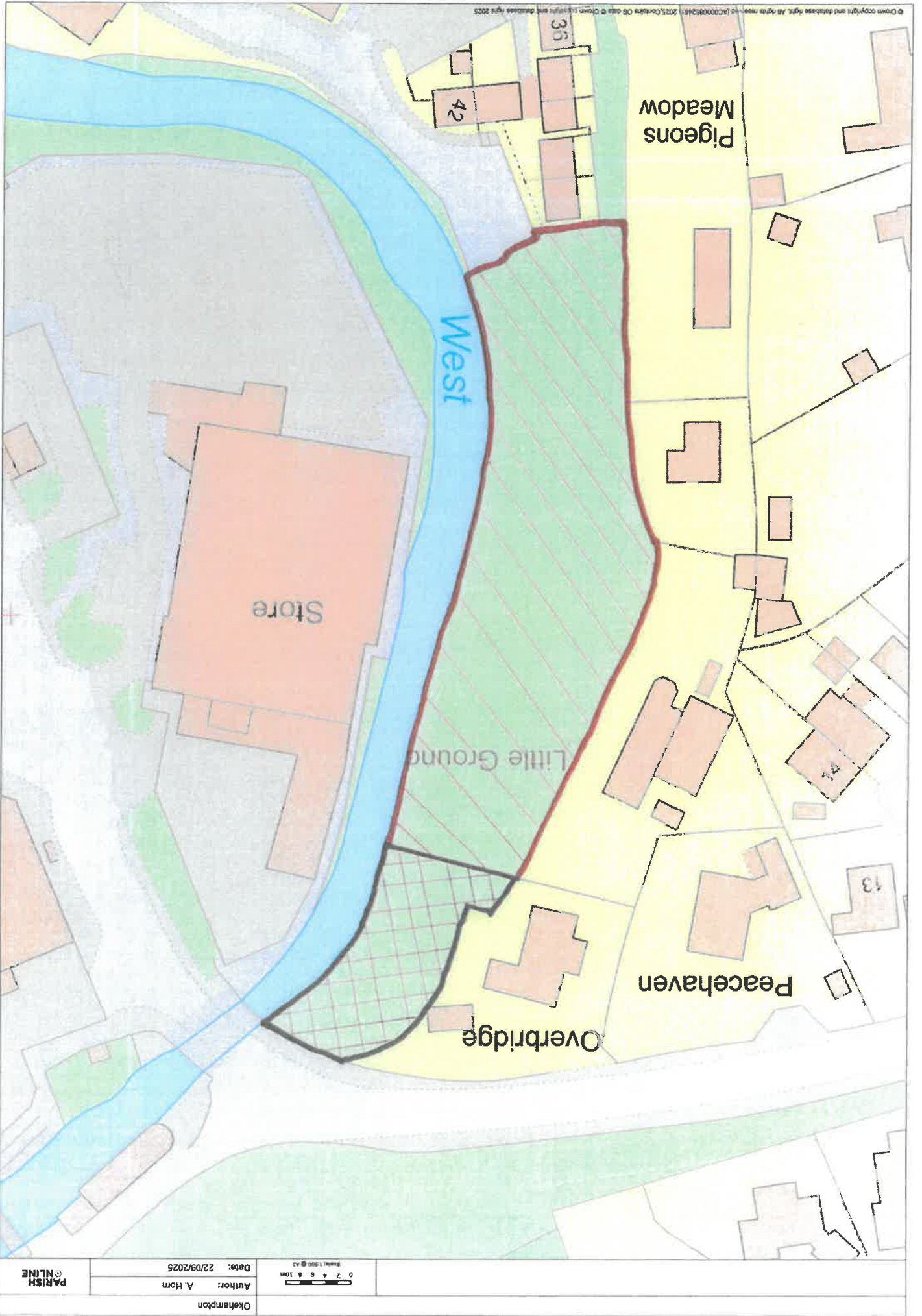
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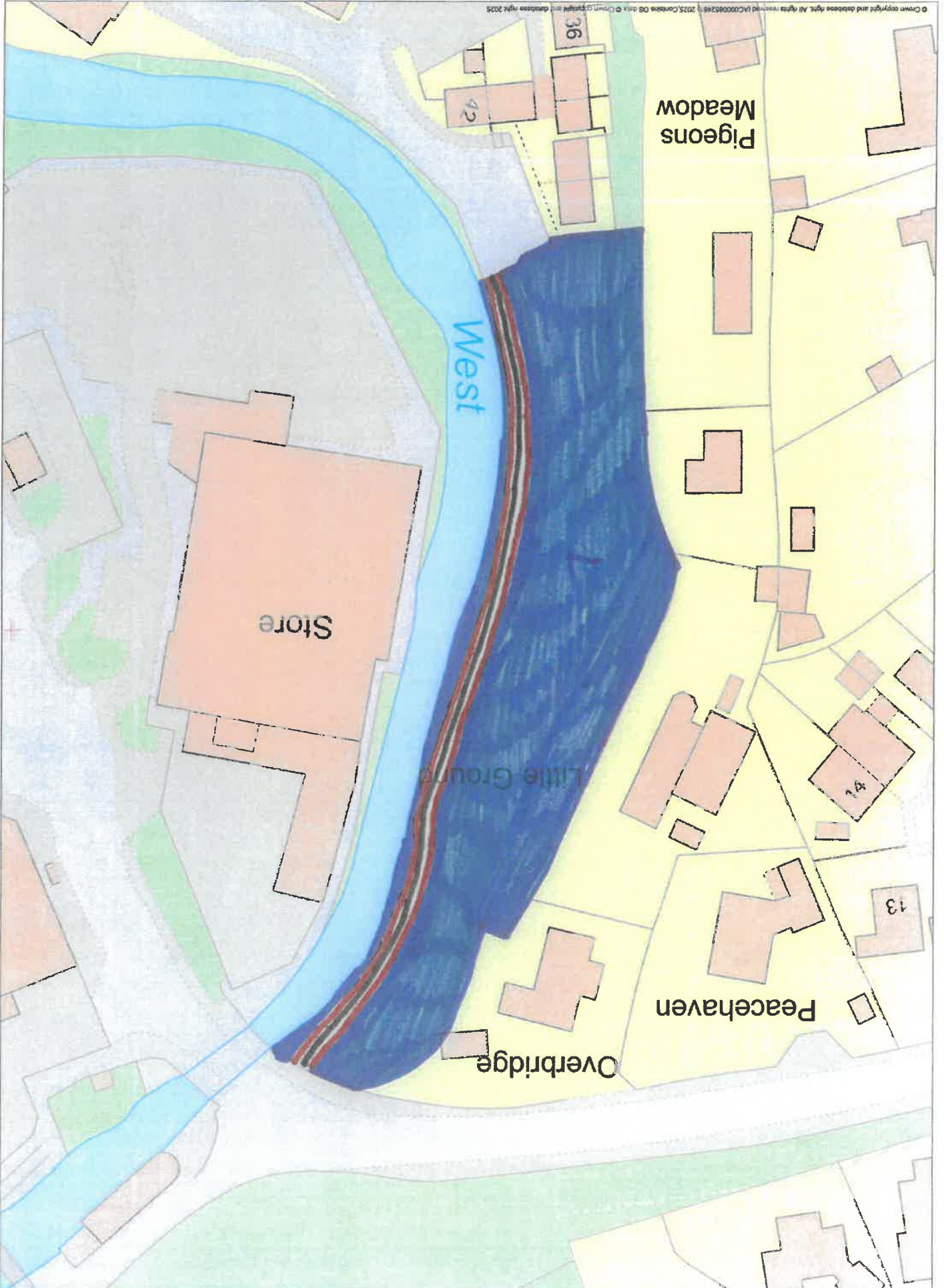
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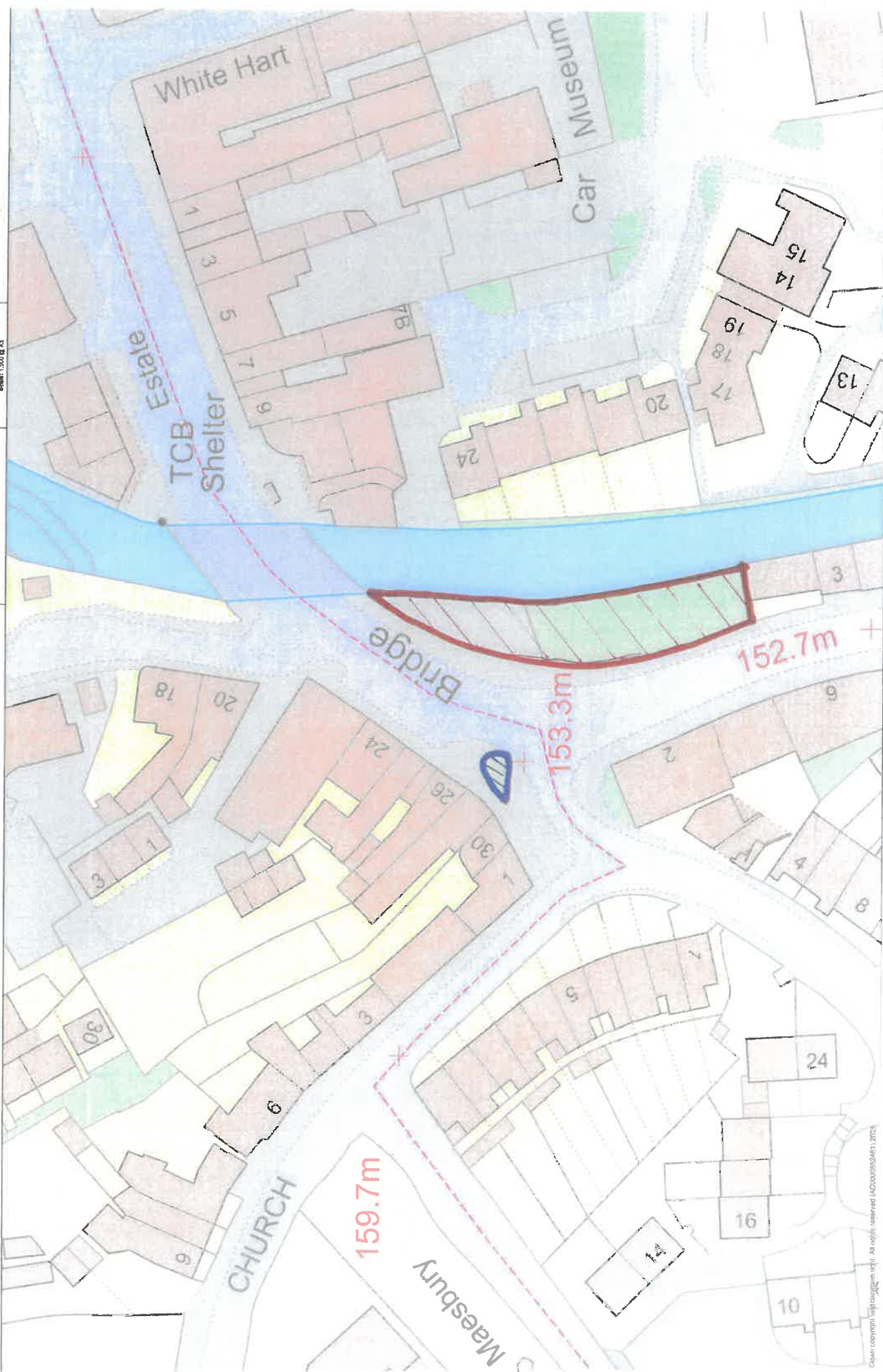






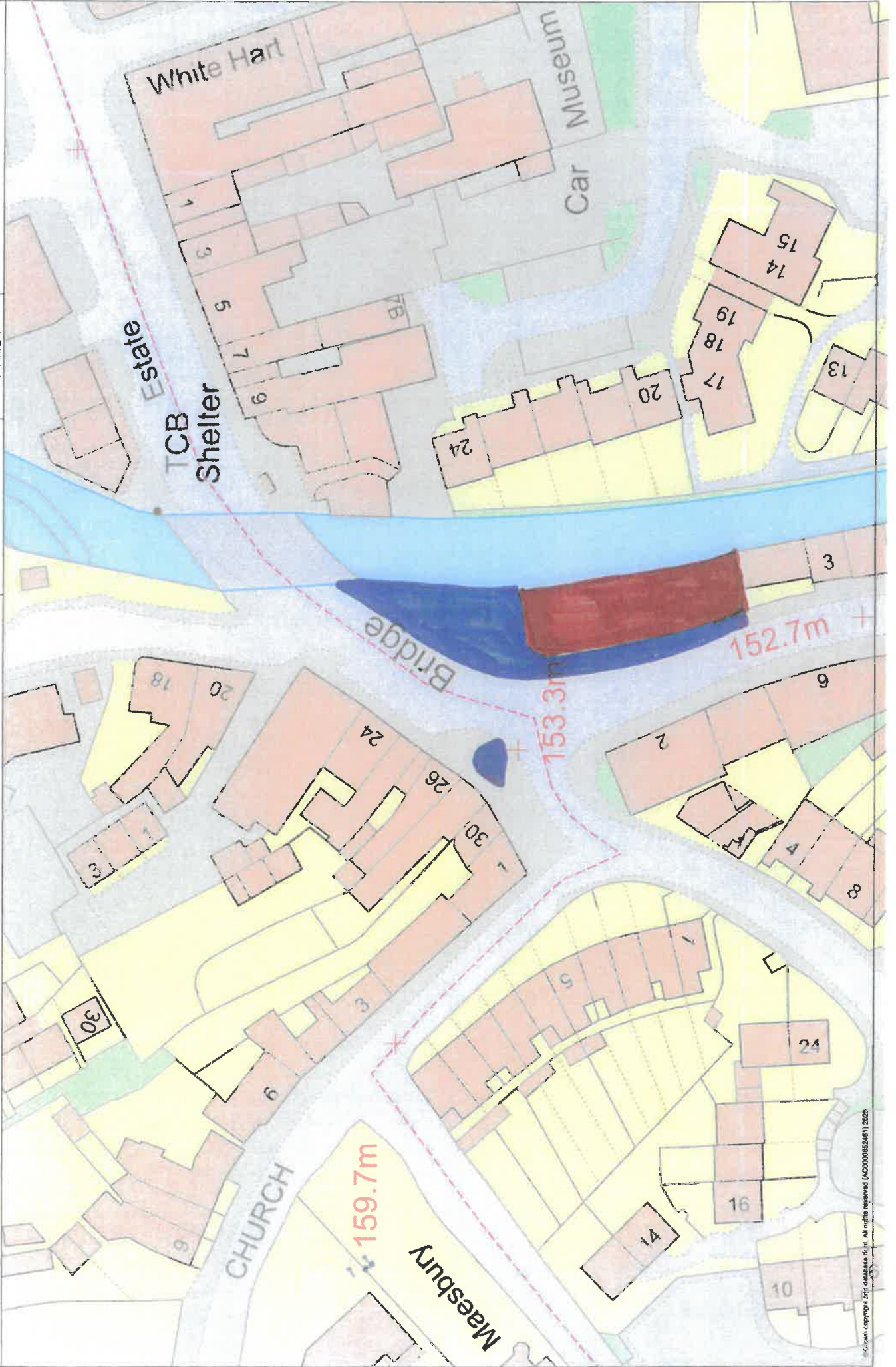
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Okehampton		 Scale: 1:500 @ A3	Date: 22/09/2025	Author: A. Horn	PARISH ONLINE





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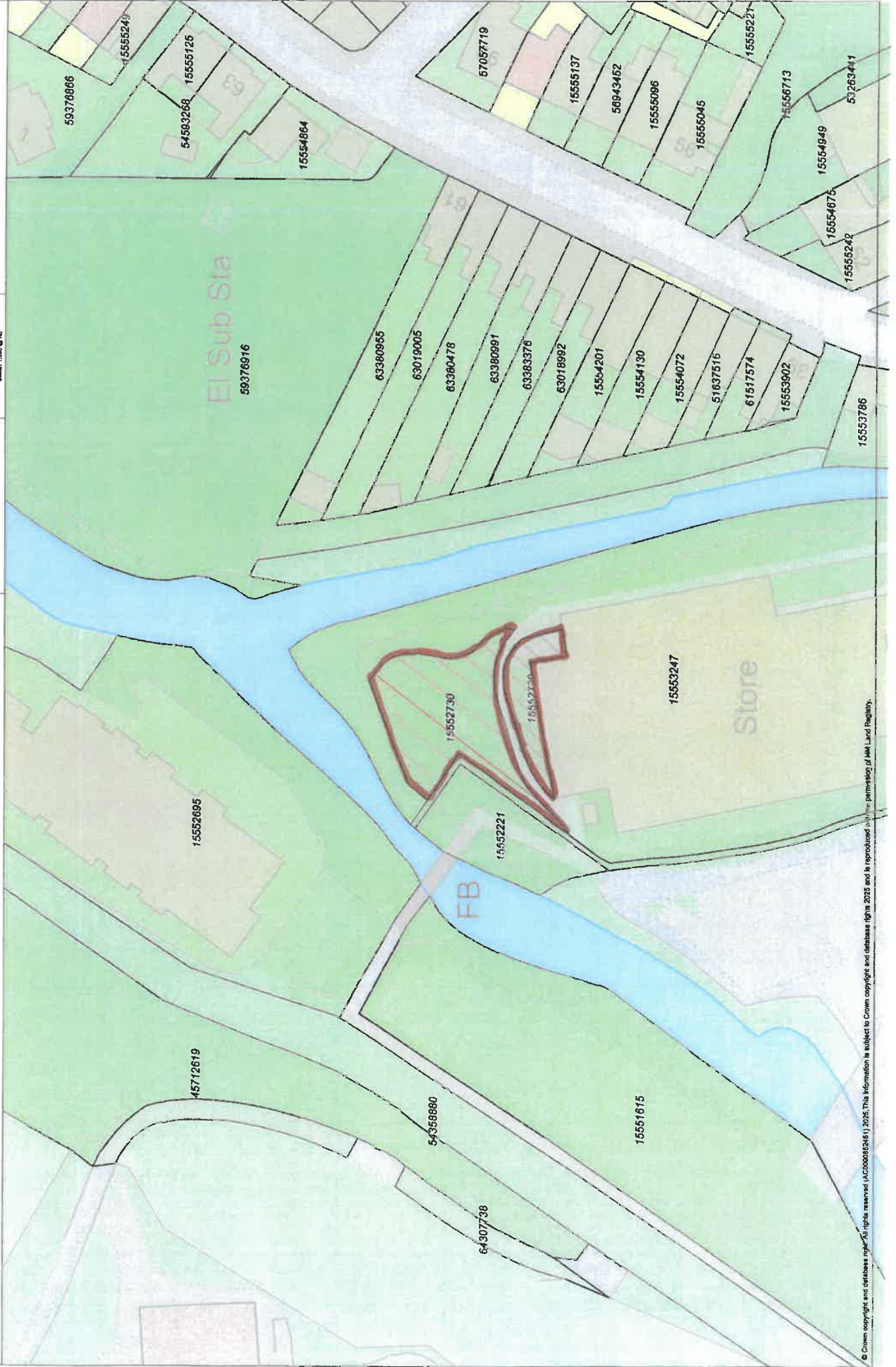
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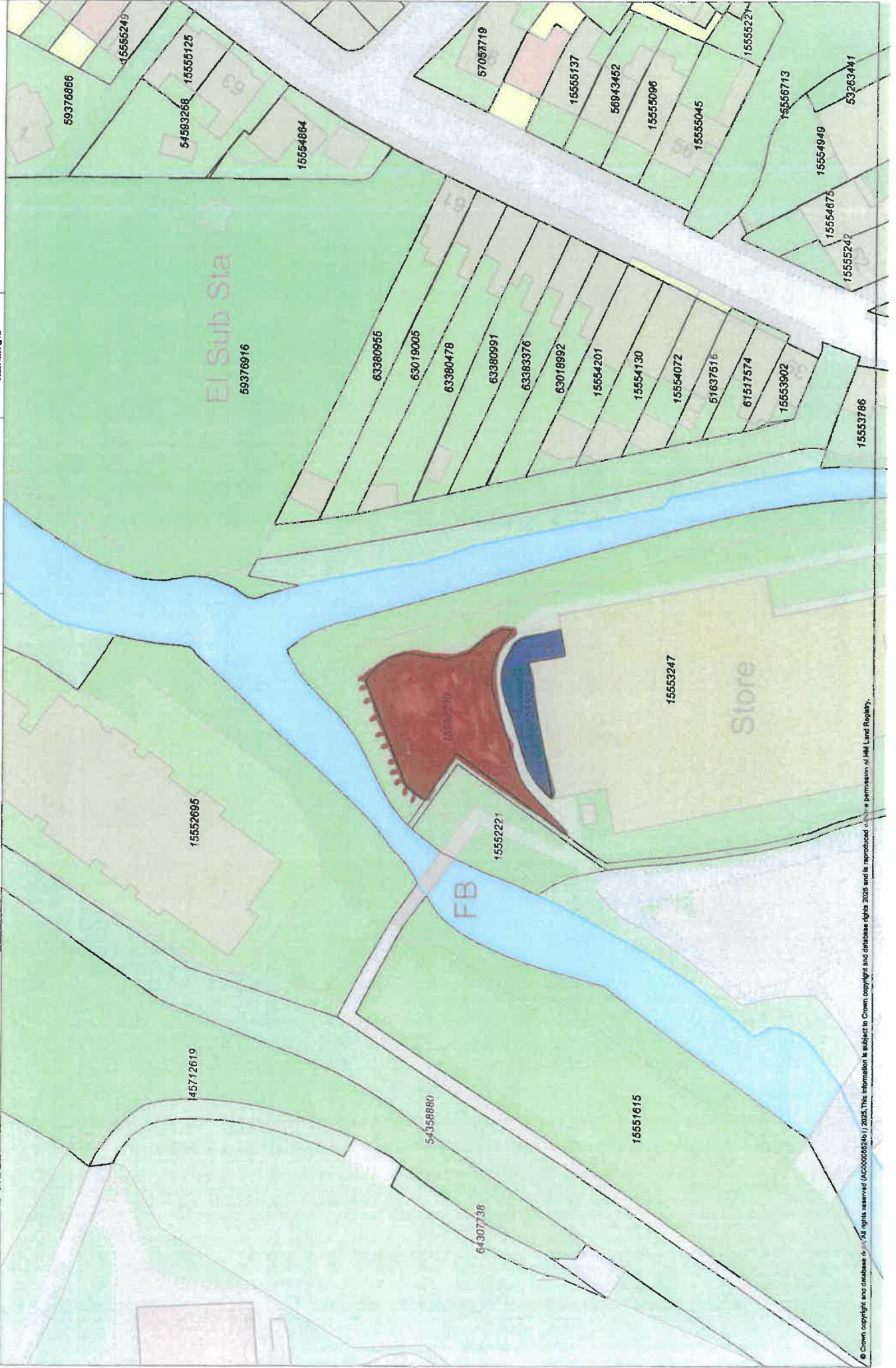
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Date: 16/12/2025

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FAIR PLACE



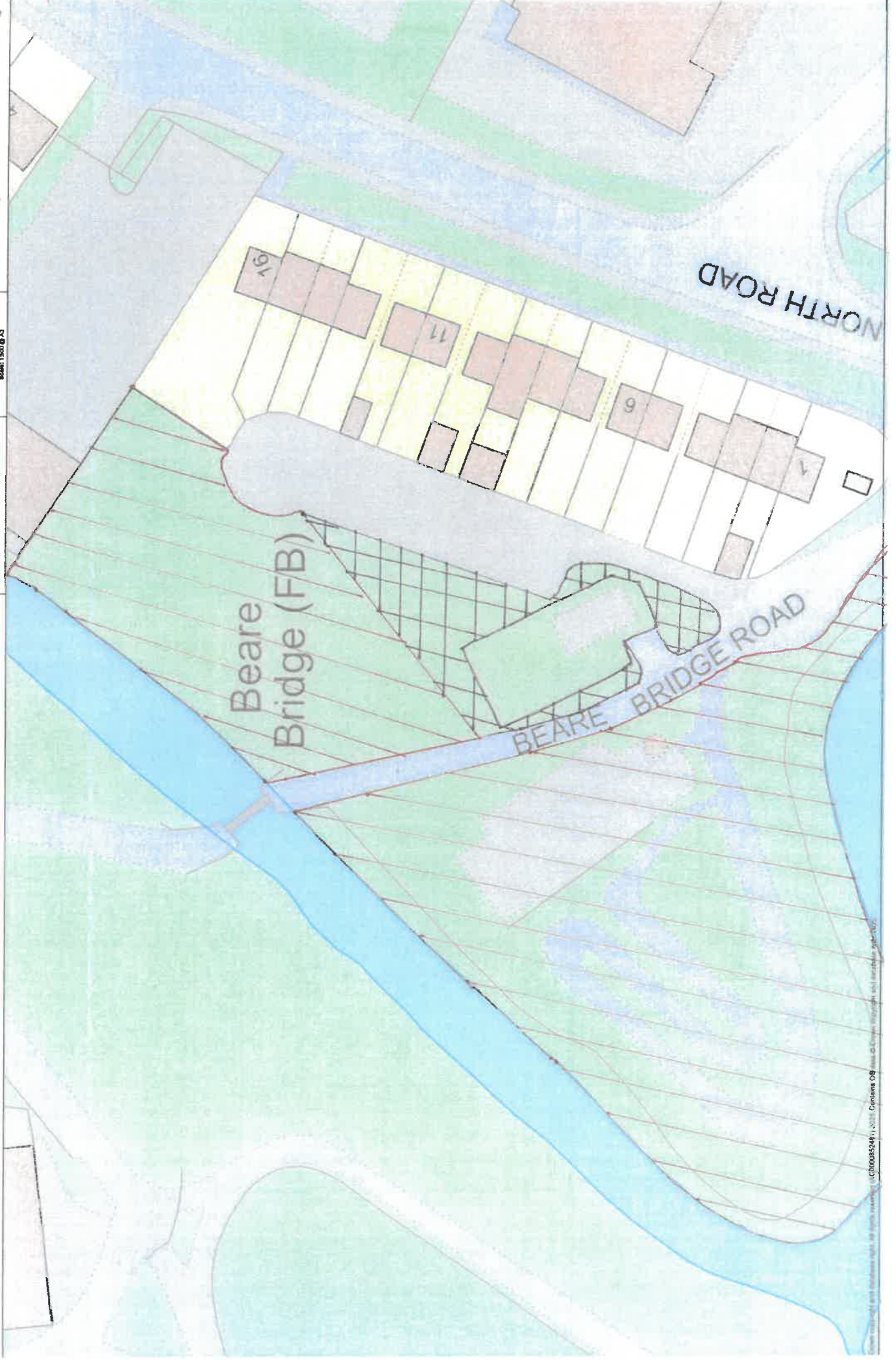
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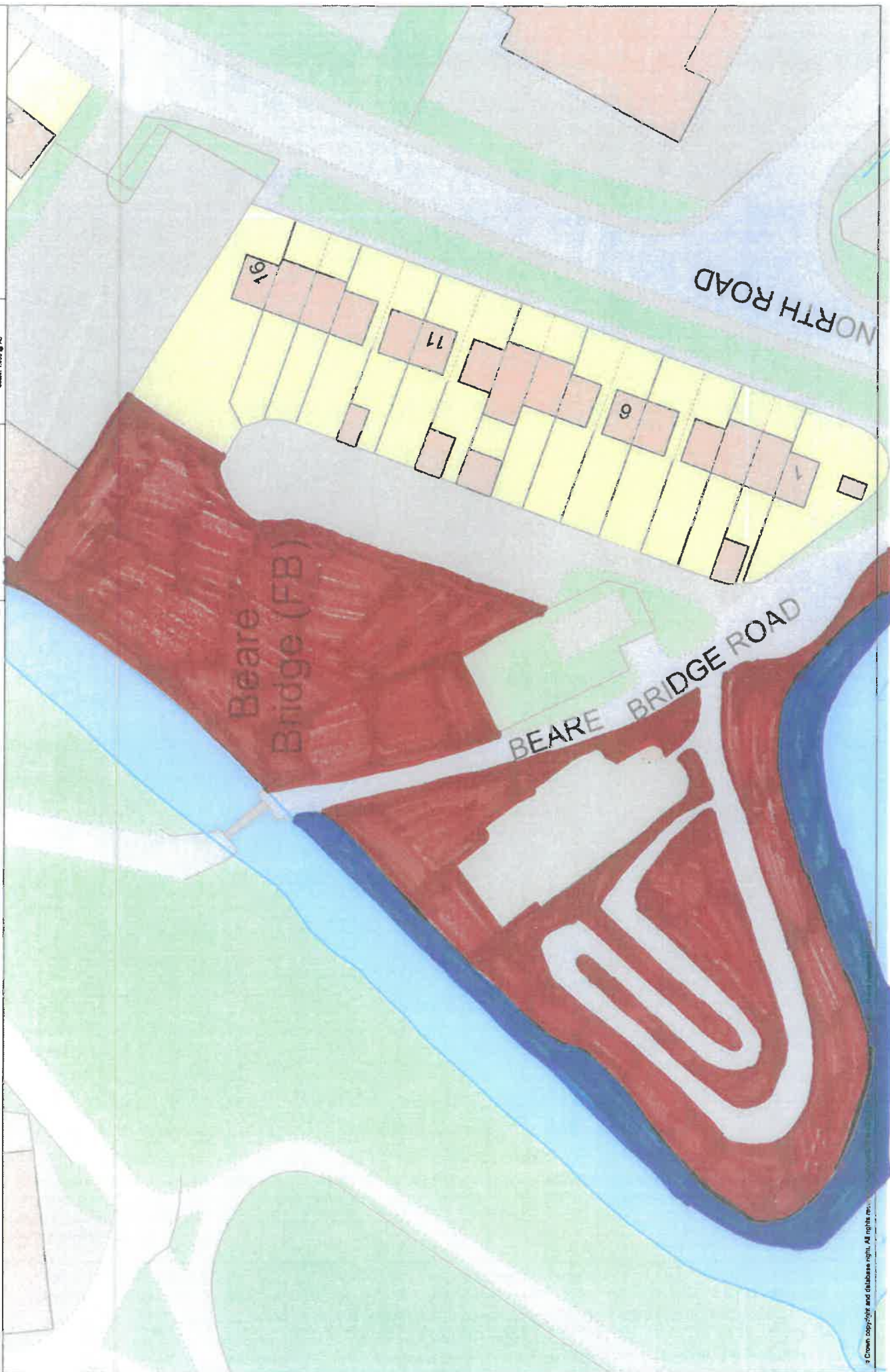






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Okehampton Town Council

Okehampton Town Council

Parks Committee

DRAFT Terms of Reference 2025/26

Responsibilities

To carry out the Council's responsibilities for the following:

- i. The provision of grounds maintenance services for:
 - a. Simmons Park, Kempley Meadows, Platt's Meadow, Putting Green;
 - b. Simmons Park car park and approach road;
 - c. Skate Park/BMX Track; Clapps Wood, Fairplace, land behind Lidl, grass verge at West Bridge, and all land in the ownership/responsibility of Okehampton Town Council (except the footprint of the Town Hall, Charter Hall, Cinema, Lower Market Hall and Public Toilets at Fairplace and in Market Street)
 - d. Land owned by others including the raised flower bed and seating area in New Road, the Gateway Mural area at the junction of East Street and Crediton Road and the planted area off the roundabout in School Way
 - e. Cutting of the grass in the open Church owned Graveyard, adjacent to All Saints Church (no other responsibility for this service/facility); and
 - f. Some wayside seats and
- ii. The provision of grounds maintenance services within the Council owned Cemetery adjacent to All Saints Church, and any other council cemetery, and to act as Burial Authority for all burials and interments, including cremated remains, within the cemetery.
- iii. Roofed structures within Simmons Park, including shelters and the Parks Office and Workshop, and in other locations that are the responsibility of the Council fall within the remit of the Property Committee

Commented [EJ1]: Does the Committee want to continue to maintain these areas?

Budget

To have authority for spending within the allocated budget.

Fees

To determine and keep under review the fees and charges for the committee's services where statutory authority exists for the levying of such charges.

Payment of Expenses

To have authority to authorise cheque and BACS payments for all invoices and expenses relevant to the business of the Council.



Okehampton Town Council

Okehampton Town Council

DRAFT Play Area Policy

Play areas covered by this policy:

- Simmons Park
- Parklands
- Skatepark Complex

Purpose of this Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all play facilities provided by Okehampton Town Council are fit for use, inclusive, well maintained and supportive of children's development. This policy has been developed for the provision, maintenance and development of play areas owned and managed by Okehampton Town Council.

The United Nations convention of the rights of a child states:

- Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood
- Play is a vital component of growing up
- Play is how children develop skills, physical, social and intellectual
- Play provides children with opportunities to test out themselves and others
- Play gives children opportunities to practice and prepare for the outdoor world
- Children should have full opportunity for play and recreation, and society and public authorities shall endeavour to promote the enjoyment of this right.

Policy Statements: Okehampton Town Council will:

1. Provide where possible, conventional play areas, environmental play areas and community play activities to provide every opportunity to play

Conventional – Traditional play areas with the five modes of play (Appendix I)

Environmental – play area featuring natural elements that feel integrated with the outdoor landscape

Community – provide children the opportunity to practice and hone key skills including social, emotional, cognitive and physical

2. Ensure the play area facilities owned by Okehampton Town Council comply with the appropriate British Standards to minimise the risk of accidents and help provide a safer environment for children to enjoy play.
3. Consider provision of specialist play facilities for the Simmons Park Play area, where possible.
4. Monitor, assess and review design and installation of any new equipment. Investigate and take note of any new research into the safety standards regarding play areas. Accidents in play areas arise from many causes including but not limited to:

- Inappropriate design and layout
 - Incorrectly installed equipment
 - Inadequately installed equipment
 - Lack of age and ability related equipment
 - Lack of supervision
 - Aggressive and dangerous use of equipment
 - Misuse of equipment
 - Unsuitable clothing worn
5. Carry out routine weekly inspections as well as a fully documented certified 12-month inspection completed by an independent inspector. Sites will be visually inspected regularly by the nominated persons for superficial defects and faults to equipment in addition to general cleanliness and removal of dangerous objects. The documented inspections will be carried out in accordance with current legislation by trained inspectors.
 6. Monitor safety by keeping a central record of all reported injuries and serious incidents on Okehampton Town Council owned play areas. This information will be taken into account when updating and installing new play equipment.
 7. If a piece of play equipment or safety surface fails a Health and Safety standard or is considered beyond economic repair, it will be cordoned off immediately and then it will be removed and replaced when possible.
 8. Provide opportunities for informal play including informal sporting play in our park and open spaces.
 9. Will consider undertaking consultations with the general public to take into account their needs when replacing, updating or installing new play equipment or areas. Conventional play areas should aim to have all 5 modes of play available – namely swing, rocker, rotor, agility and slide (Appendix I).
 10. Endeavour to introduce more play provision for children with disabilities as standard. Disabled children should have access to a play environment which allows them the same opportunity for recreation and play as able-bodied children. They should be given the opportunity to mix with able bodied children and where possible have the use of suitable play equipment.
 11. Assist in making parents aware of their responsibility to children and seek their help to provide a safe environment in which they can play. This will be achieved by the provision of literature and signage.
 12. Consider replacement of play equipment with environmentally friendly options by using recycled materials and working with suppliers who are actively looking to reduce their carbon footprint.
 13. Designate all fenced play areas as dog free zones to provide an area that is free from dog faeces as is practicable under part IV of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 or other appropriate powers (see Appendix II)
 14. Maintain a register for each of the play areas which contains:
 - A copy of this policy
 - A site plan
 - Full equipment details

- Documentation of ownership of the site
- Inspection, maintenance and any future development plans
- Details of reported accidents and serious incidents

Summary:

This play policy is designed to take account of all statutory requirements in addition to this the Council's commitment to provide safe formal play areas and environmental play opportunities within the confines of its budget and facilities.

Okehampton Town Council understands and acknowledges the need to:

- Consult and liaise where possible before purchasing any new play equipment thereby ensuring the type of equipment will be enjoyed by and put to its maximum potential use
- Educate parents/guardians to be aware of their responsibility in play areas
- Provide play equipment for disabled children and bear this in mind when considering the purchase of new play equipment
- Install signs in prominent positions stating that fenced play areas are dog free zones
- Update or replace old and defective equipment
- Recognise the expected life of existing equipment
- Maintain a site register and ensure it is kept up to date
- Ensure inspections are carried out as set out in policy statement no. 4

Appendix I: Visual Examples of 5-Modes of Play Equipment

Swing:

A classic piece of playground equipment that helps develop balance and coordination while offering fun and relaxation



Agility:

Agility equipment includes climbing frames, nets and obstacle structures that challenge physical strength and coordination



Rocker:

Rocker equipment allows children to enjoy a rocking motion, often designed for multiple users to promote social interaction



Slide:

Slides come in various forms – straight, spiral, tunnel – and are essential for fun and physical development



Rotor:

Rotors include merry-go-rounds and spinning platforms that help children develop balance and spatial awareness.



Appendix II: Environmental Protection Act 1990 Part IV:

Part IV of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 outlines the responsibilities of local authorities in maintaining public cleanliness and managing litter, including dog fouling. It designates principal litter authorities such as county, district, and borough councils, and defines 'relevant land' as areas accessible to the public under the control of these authorities.

Under Section 87, it is an offence to throw down, drop, or otherwise deposit litter (including dog faeces) in public places and leave it. This applies to any area open to the air and accessible to the public, including parks and highways.

Local authorities are empowered to enforce these provisions through Dog Control Orders, which may include:

- Fouling of Land by Dogs Order: Offence of failing to remove dog faeces.
- Dog on Lead Order: Requirement to keep dogs on leads.
- Dog Exclusion Order: Prohibition of dogs from designated areas.
- Specified Maximum Order: Limiting the number of dogs per handler.

Penalties for offences include fines up to £1000 in Magistrates Court or Fixed Penalty Notices typically set at £75. These measures aim to reduce health risks such as toxocariasis and maintain clean, safe environments for public use.

Okehampton Town Council designates all fenced play areas as dog-free zones under this legislation to ensure children have access to clean and safe recreational spaces.