

Design & Access Statement

Aston Children's Home - Aston, Oxford 01.10.2021

Rev. B



Reference:

6366/P/4000

Revision:

A - 19.11.21

B - 24.11.21

Author:

Elena Macho Garcia

Soft Landscaping: Zoë Lindgren

Date of Creation:

October 2021



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01 Introduction

Quattro Design Architects have been appointed by Beard Construction to design a new children's residential home in Aston, Oxford.

The scheme represents an opportunity to develop a project that enhances the built environment of Aston, whilst securing suitable, sustainable development for the area.

The development consists of the construction of a new children's residential home with 6 bedrooms (2 of them for staff) and associated garden, access, parking, landscaping and boundary fencing.

1.1 Project Team

The project team is comprised of the following parties:
Oxfordshire County Council
Beard Construction
Bluestone Planning
Cotswold Transport Planning
HWM Building Services
Simpson Engineers
Quattro Design Architects Ltd.

1.2 Principle Objectives

It has been our aim to provide a scheme that meets the specific requirements of the client's brief, including:

- Providing new buildings with an identity that sensitively responds to the surrounding buildings and location.
- Providing a scheme on a site that is suitable in terms of scale, use of the building and materials.
- Introducing high quality accommodation into the area that reflects the surrounding typology.

Behind every scheme we design is the principal objective to create a pleasant, attractive and sustainable development for the local area and its residents, meeting National and Local Planning Policies.



02 Site assessment

2.1

Site Location and Description.

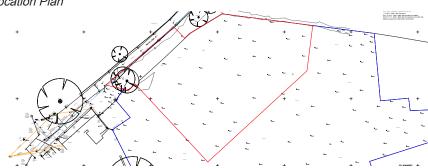
The site is located on the edge of the village built environment and within the Aston Conservation Area, 100 meters. North West of the nearest listed building.

Access to the site is via Back Lane which reduces in width as you proceed to the north of the site. Other key features site are:

- -Trees and hedgerow on the western edge of the site.
- It is located in an Area of Archaeological Interest.
- The nearest dwellings are located to the south and east of the site.
- The site is not liable to flooding, according to the Government's Flood map online resources.

There is approximately 12,615sqm or 1.26ha of assessment area and the site chosen to be developed is approximately 2080sqm or 0.2 ha. The East and West boundaries are delineated by a close board fence and private housing. The Northern and Southern limits of the assessment area are defined by farmlands. The surrounding is a largely countryside land mixed with detached houses.





Existing Site Plan

03 Evaluation / Feasibility

3.1 Site Constraints.

The main site constraints have been assessed as follows:

- Existing tree located on the Western boundary affecting the site entrance location.
- Being located in an Area of Archaeological Interest.
- Adjacent dwellings located to the south and east of the site.
- · Its rural setting.

3.2 Site Opportunities.

The main opportunities presented by the site are as follows:

- Provide an aesthetically pleasing scheme that compliments the architectural vernacular of the area.
- Provide high quality accommodation for the client and its users.
- Site access can be achieved without disturbing tree roots to any greater extent.
- Opportunity to improve the immediate adjacent road visibility.

3.3 Response to site analysis.

A number of technical studies have been carried out to inform the feasibility of the proposed development. These studies – which include archaeological, arboricultural, ecological and utilities assessments – have all fed into the development of the proposals.

The proposals seek to provide a high quality building of a vernacular design, which picks up on local building materials and design features to ensure that the proposed development will be appropriate in the context of the character and appearance of the village Conservation Area, and will reflect the edge-of-settlement-location.

The orientation and location of the proposed building has been carefully considered in order to minimise the effect on the amenity of the nearest residential properties and to maximise opportunities for a well-landscaped, sustainable development.

The width of Back Lane, the need for appropriate visibility splays and the presence of trees and hedgerows on both sides of the Lane have all informed the position and form of the proposed access.

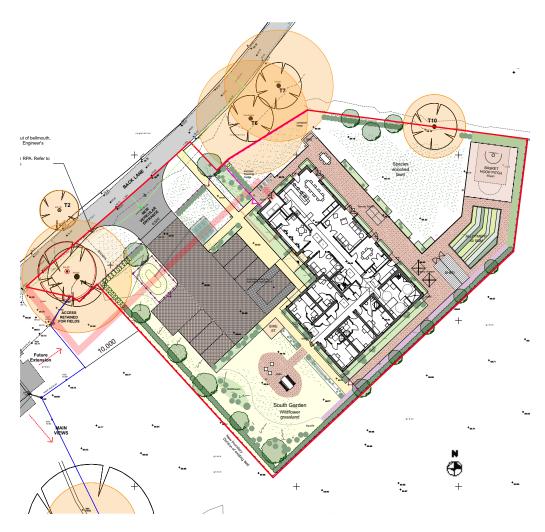
04 Proposals

Following detailed site analysis including 5 alternative options, public consultation and pre-app advice and feedback, the design team chose to proceed with the below option, for the following reasons:

- Building located away from all neighbours where practicable.
- Vehicular access point respects tree root protection zone and minimises hedgerow removal .
- Reduced travel distance for accessible parking.
- New trees and hedgerows will be able to provide a visual and acoustic barrier for neighbours whilst also screening parking.
- Rear garden has improved protection because of the building orientation.
- Rear garden has a better relationship with the surrounding countryside.

The accommodation schedule is as follows:

6 Bed accommodation - 4 Children + 2 Staff 336 sqm Shed and allotment. Small Basketball court. Bike store. Bin store.



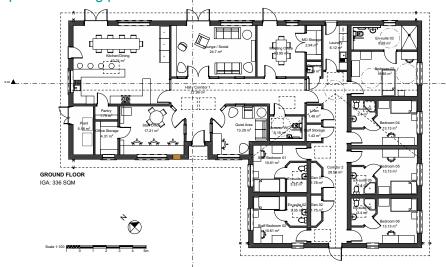
Proposed Site



4.2 Boundary treatment

Facing fields: Post and rail in a continuation of the post and rail fencing found on the neighbouring properties. Facing Back Lane: Close boarded to define and give more privacy to side gardens. Generally: Native hedgerows to provide privacy and to connect wildlife corridors, refer to 09 Soft Landscape section.





In the north west wing is the main entrance with living areas comprised of staff office, storage, kitchen/dining, pantry, lounge/social, quiet area, accessible WC and meeting office.

In the south west wing are the bedrooms comprised of two staff bedrooms with en-suite, three children's bedrooms with en-suite and one accessible bedroom with accessible en-suite. Laundry area with cleaning, linen and general stores.

4.4 Parking

Private Parking provision is in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council parking standards. White paving blocks to mark the spaces, no painting.



Parking provision will be:

- 1no. Accessible parking space
- 4no. parking spaces for staff
- 2no. parking spaces for visitors
- Area for reversing

Bicycle store in a location that can be monitored from the Staff office.



05 Materials

5.1 Palette of Materials.

Walls building:

- · Reconstituted Stone, colour Golden Buff
- Vertical Timber Cladding Brimstone Poplar, self finish

Windows & doors:

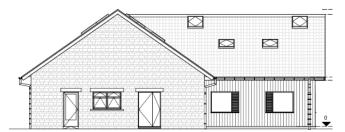
- Windows (included ventilation louvres): Aluminium PPC Light Grey RAL7035
- Principal door: Aluminium PPC Light Green RAL140 70 10
- Secondary doors: Aluminium PPC Light Grey RAL7035

Window Sills & Heads:

- Buff Reconstitued Stone (where reconstituted stone occurs)
- PPC Light Grey RAL7035 (where timber cladding occurs)

Pitch Roof:

· Dark grey fibre cement slate.



Building materials

Hard Landscape:

- Driveway Marshall's Priora Permeable block, colour: Bracken
- Access. bay Marshall's Priora Permeable block, colour: Natural
- Garden paving Formapave's Aquaflow block paving, colour: Golden Brindle and charcoal
- Pedestrian paths Ulticolour Tarmac, colour: Buff

Existing Fence:



Existing - Post and rail

Proposed Fence:

- Timber close boarded fence (private garden facing Back Lane)
- Post and rail fence in oak or chestnut (facing open fields)
- Rebound Sports Mesh welded (two sides of basketball pitch)





- 5.2 The elevational design has been carefully considered to reduce impact within the semi-rural setting, endeavouring to ensure that the Home will be a deserving addition to the village of Aston. The materials and colours have been diligently chosen in conjunction with Bluestone Planning Consultants (refer to their separate report) to ensure that the design reflects the colours and materials from the locality.
 - The intention has been to design a low maintenance and robust building with a homely character, reflecting patterns from the neighbouring houses. Materials with a natural appearance have been chosen (stone and wood) with a muted, simple and traditional pallet in order to reference the surrounding context.
- 5.3 Reconstituted stone is a common material found within Aston. It has low maintenance, weathers well and is an ideal choice for a robust building. This will form the greater part, containing the main elements of the internal spaces.
 - Reconstituted stone also provides opportunity for detailing and patterning and links the building with the historic essence of the village.
- Natural timber cladding has been proposed for the bedroomed wing, to provide a contrast and to reduce the massing.On this single storey building where the roof carries an important visual weight, the timber cladding will be installed in the vertical plane to contribute an

appreciable balance between wall and roof.

- 5.5 The pitched roof over the main living areas is slightly steeper and higher than the rest to convey the functional hierarchy of the internal spaces. It is covered in dark grey slate to mimic similar roofs in the area. On the South facing slope, photovoltaic panels will be installed.
- 5.6 Windows, doors and louvred vents in aluminium are finished in polyester powder coating, coloured light grey. The principal door will be in a pastel green to identify the main access and to give it a homely touch.
- 5.7 Rainwater goods will be in an anthracite finish so that they recede from attention. A roof overhang discourages climbing.

06 Access

This proposed residential site has been designed to be as accessible and practical for all users as possible. Provision for disabled access across the site has been considered and facilitated.

A new driveway will be built with turning area to ease the access and will provide parking spaces for up to 6 cars + 1 disabled parking space. A pedestrian route will be formed alongside the new road to access the building.

Waste and management trucks will pull over in Back Lane and will collect the waste from the Refuse Collection Point marked up in blue in the proposed site plan.

Fire tender vehicles can access the site and get to within 45m of all parts of the building.

All external routes to the building are, wherever possible, ramped in order to remove the need for steps, and of a width suitable for wheelchair use / transfer of waste for collection.

07 Waste Minimisation

The following information sets out the approach to waste management that will be applied to the design, construction and occupation of the proposed development.

We have looked to cover as far as possible the construction and occupation waste issues and the preventative measures that have/will be put in place to reduce the amount of waste produced.

The following list specifies the expected sources of waste from the construction process:

- Building materials from the demolition of the existing buildings on site.
- Soils from site clearance works.
- Organic waste from site clearance works.
- Wastage of construction materials during build phase (aggregate, brick, tiles, timber, metal, paint, various types of plastics, etc).
- Cardboard (from packaging).

7.1 Site Clearance, Site Preparation and Excavations.

There are anticipated wastes associated with the site preparation and site clearance. High quality topsoil will be separated during excavation works and stored within the site. This can then be re-used on site where appropriate



(gardens, planting areas, highway verges, and for ther construction of the mound, etc).

Where possible the amount of excavated material will be kept to a minimum and will be re-used on site to re-grade any required areas, for example, the mound. For excavated material not being used on the site, the contractor will look to re-use it on any other available nearby site currently under construction.

7.2 Construction

The ground floor to the building shall be constructed using pre-cast concrete planks on sleeper walls.

All timber used within the scheme will be sourced from suppliers registered with FSC.

All site operatives will be made aware of the segregated skip system that will be put in place to keep waste materials apart prior to being taken to a registered waste disposal company.

Preference will be given to suppliers of materials who will collect unused materials and packaging for re-use and recycling.

Any materials that are delivered to site will be carefully stored in a secure materials compound, with special consideration given to any hazardous materials and waste – although wherever possible materials that do not have hazardous content will be specified. Suitable Method Statements will be completed by the contractor for all potentially dangerous products and materials.

Items will be stored in a sensible manner so that materials are easily accessible in the correct order. This will reduce the potential for breakages and will therefore in turn, reduce waste materials.

7.3 Site Ooccupation.

All waste disposal and recycling facilities will be agreed with the local planning authority. In accordance with the services already provided by West Oxfordshire District Council.

The property will be given the opportunity to recycle as much waste as possible, through the provision of separated recycling and non-recycling bins as follows:

- 1no. Grey or black wheelie bin for waste, fortnightly collection.
- 1no. Blue lidded bin for recycling, fortnightly collection.
- 1no. Black box for recycling glass, fortnightly collection.
- Available upon request: Wheelie bin with green lid for garden waste, and



extra recycling boxes.

The proposal will allow for the suitable storage of all the required containers within their boundary.

7.4 Transportation of Waste.

Registered carriers will be used for the transportation of all construction waste, in line with 'Duty of Care' requirements. All waste will be taken to appropriately licenced sites.

Appropriate waste transfer documentation will be required to be completed by those delivering the waste, and the Site Manager will keep a detailed account of all aspects of disposal, including a register of carriers, disposal sites and relevant licensing details.

The Council will collect domestic waste. Sufficient space has been provided for the property to manoeuvre all bins directly from side garden to its own bin collection point next to the vehicular access.

The proposal set out by this Waste Minimisation Statement can be said to be in accordance with the governing criteria in practice within the area. The site will provide a sustainable ethos that promotes waste minimisation, waste re-use and recycling throughout the life span of the development.

08 Sustainability

8.1 Sustainability Statement.

The applicant is fully committed to provide or improve a building that will be more energy efficient than the minimum statutory requirements dictated by Building Regulations. This will include incorporating design measures such as:

- Low air permeability rates.
- The orientation and dimensions of fenestration generally reflect the requirement to maximise natural glare free daylight and control sunlight to minimize solar gain.
- Natural ventilation strategy.



- Photovoltaic panels on the roof to generate and offset the electric usage.
- Blinds, roof overhangs and solar controlled glass are used to shade south facing rooflights and windows.
- The sections of the new building have been designed to maximise daylighting and promote natural ventilation with rooflights, creating chimney effect.
- There will be good thermal performance high levels of insulation to the building envelope and thermal mass from the masonry construction.
- Artificial lighting will be highly efficient, low energy and controlled.
- Efficient water use will be achieved using low flush toilets, waterless urinals and low water use taps.
- The building will be supplied with ASHP Air Source Heat Pump.
- Straightforward control systems individual environmental control in all spaces for easy operation by the users.
- Safe storage for recycling will be provided.
- Safe storage for bicycles will be provided to promote cycling.

09 Soft Landscaping

9.1 Soft Landscaping Objectives

- Create an impressive and welcoming new home with landscaping that protects and enhances the Conservation area and the Grassland setting.
- Create appropriate and interesting green spaces for the users' wellbeing.
- Enhance and compliment the existing landscape with new provisions for wildlife, such as edible nuts & berries, refer to Section 9.5 for details.
- Conserve valuable existing habitat along the North and East boundaries and parts of land facing Back Lane.
- 9.2 Views to and from the Site response to OCC's Pre-app Landscape comments.

The landscape type is 'lowland village farmland' (from OWLS) where rolling grassland fields abound. We have endeavoured to respect this setting.

A large existing field is being divided to allow for the proposed development.

The South-East aspect brings the remainder of this grasslands field into immediate view with interspersed 'scrubs' (native shrubs) and mature trees along the timber post and rail boundary. Larger vistas to the North, East and South afford a pleasantly pastoral view with ponies in the adjacent paddocks and sheep grazing on land owned by a nearby Livestock farm.

In the semi-distance domestic buildings terminate the rural scene. They are all substantial dwellings as can be seen on the image and not unusual in the locality. North Street to the east and any other long distance views do not have a presence because of the generally level contours.

From the row of nearby houses situated in the East, their outlook back towards the Site across the paddocks meets an overgrown hedgerow of trees and scrub forming a tall green edge dividing Back Lane from the site.



Image 1 Views from the Site to neighbouring paddocks with grazing ponies and sheep

9.3 Proposed Landscape response to existing setting

The perimeter of the development consists of a dense native hedgerow with intermittent trees of varying sizes to mirror the trees in the surroundings. Hedgerows are vital features in the local landscape and dotted with trees are a typical characteristic of the British countryside.

Employing hedgerows here to help halt biodiversity decline and all the other multiple good reasons the reader will be familiar with, will also serve to screen neighbouring houses both visually and acoustically. It can be maintained at a height of 2m to provide sizable screening if required, but a less substantial hedgerow may appear more natural in the setting.

The hedgerow is interrupted by tall ornamental grasses around the corner of the ball pitch. The quality of tall dense grasses will not only screen the sporting activities on the ball pitch and mature much faster than a hedgerow, but will also stand without sending encroaching twigs through the mesh fencing.

Ornamental grasses call to mind grassy verges. They form seed heads reminiscent of our own native grasses. They draw the eye by swaying and rippling in the wind forming an attractive focus. They can be said to reflect the typical grasslands of the larger area as seen for example at Wittenham Clumps, less than 20 miles away.



Image 2 Grasslands at Wittenham Clumps, less than 20 miles away

9.4 Landscape impact on neighbouring properties

A nearby dwelling, White House Farm, sits 84 m from the Easternmost window of the proposal. (Its outhouses are 64m away). It is the closest of a string of detached residential buildings stretching to the South.

Aston Children's Home as seen from the neighbouring houses in the East, will appear to nestle behind new hedgerows, the dark roof blending with the backdrop of the tall green edge to Back Lane. The long line of hedgerow will be alleviated on the right by lighter ornamental grasses facing the fields. They provide a continuity with the line of straw coloured grasses that grow to a fuller height under the paddock fences.

Westwards and close to the gated field entry, nr. 3 Home Farm Cottage lies in closer proximity. Its fence is 10m set distance from the Home's boundary and the distance between windows is 44m.

There is an obligation to screen this property especially, both acoustically and visually. Please refer to Section 9.6 for how this has been achieved.

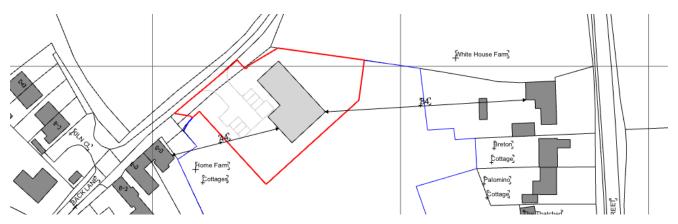


Image 3 Distances to neighbouring properties

9.5 Green infrastructure and Biodiversity site enhancements

- to achieve net gain of 10%

Ecology references:

- updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Wild Service dated October '21 for detailed information on the ecological features and habitats of the site and surrounding area and associated mitigation and enhancement recommendations
- Biodiversity metric by Aluco Ecology dated late October '21.

Existing habitats:

The habitats within the redline application boundary include semi-improved grassland, hedgerow and trees and ruderal vegetation and scrub. Mitigation measures have been adopted within the proposals as summarised below.

Proposed augmentation of Habitat matrix encompasses:

- expanded connectivity to existing wider ecological networks in the form of new native hedgerows with trees and a swale;
- hedgerows with bat attracting buffer planting;
- supplementary native scrub;
- wildflower meadows with species rich grass;
- green roof and green walls to Refuse Store.



A comprehensive list follows -

Trees:

The existing trees and associated scrub habitat has been retained along the North-East and North-West perimeter except where a new vehicular entrance is proposed from Back Lane. The South-East and South-West boundaries are New Enclosures.

Following the Arboriculturist's report, the existing Elm tree next to Back Lane identified as requiring removal has been proposed to be felled. This is the only removed tree.

New tree planting along new boundaries is specified as native with fruit trees to help support varied seasonal foraging for birds. Proposed trees are a mix of large, medium and small for an optimum range of wildlife provisions.

Scrub (native shrubs):

Native shrubs have been inserted to ameliorate the North-East boundary where much of the existing bramble has been retained and stands in need of consolidation. These comprise Common Alder and Grey willow with Holly. The existing Hawthorn is amalgamated with new Hawthorn planted as whips in gaps between the major roots. Refer to Drawing No. 113, Landscape Area C - Allotment Garden.

In the South Garden, an area of 30sqm has been tucked away in the corner comprised of Spindle, Wild Rose, Guelder-Rose, Dogwood, Common Elder, Wild Honeysuckle, Goat Willow allowed to grow into a tree and Hops (noted locally in the roadside hedgerow). Increased vegetation here will afford some shelter from prevailing winds across the open fields.

Refer to Drawing No. 112, Landscape Area A.

Native Hedgerows - existing:

Recognising the imperative of wildlife corridors, it is the aim to retain existing trees and hedgerows wherever possible. The formation of a vehicular and pedestrian access from Back Lane will force a section of hedgerow to be taken out, but in mitigation to substitute for and to improve upon, the scrub lost will be plentifully replaced with new hedgerow and scrub elsewhere.

Native Hedgerows - proposed:

Native hedgerow planting seeks to improve habitat corridors and refugee potential.

5No. species of local provenance requested by Ecologist - Wayfarer tree, Guelder-Rose, Hawthorn, Hazel and Dogwood. These will be planted in a double staggered row at 5/m. Note that Blackthorn is too thorny and Wild Privet is too poisonous to be in close proximity to play areas.

The hedgerow along the South-East boundary will be enriched with a seed mix



suited to hedgerow margins containing tall herbs.

Native hedgerows - proposed work on existing North-East boundary:

The existing hawthorn tree with its straggly branches will remain to offer its May blossom for appreciation and then later its berries for wildlife in autumn. It will be pruned and cut back to the fence line along with the brambles and nettles and ameliorated with a new mixed hedgerow set .75m in front.

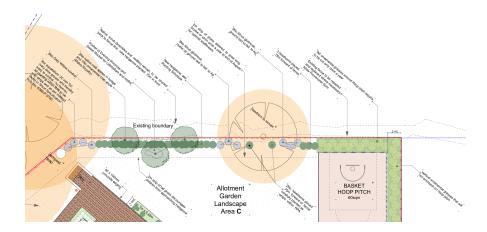


Image 4 North-East boundary enhancement

Connectivity:

Whilst the attainment of a continuous link around the site perimeter is broken by the new entrance ways, the connection to the existing corridors running under the neighbouring paddock fences has been accomplished. (Recommendation from Updated Ecological Survey Page 6, is to connect existing hedgerows with existing).

An allotment has been provided for the users of the building.

A Green Roof contributes to sustainability. Refer to Drainage Engineer's statement regarding Sustainable Drainage (to be conditioned).

Grassland:

The creation of areas of native species rich grassland have been proposed to broaden the ecological value of the existing open grassland.

Wildlife magnets:

- Invertebrate loggery will be formed from branches and twigs of felled trees;
- Nettle stands are retained along the North-East boundary;
- Bird and Bat boxes fixed to existing mature trees. The building users do not wish for integrated nest boxes because of the problem with unsightly droppings;
- Sensory planting has been specified for the users and to promote a diversity of pollinators throughout the year, refer to Planting Schedule.

SuDS:



A Sustainable drainage system has been incorporated to minimise surface runoff, manage flood risk and maintain the natural water cycle. Drainage Engineer's scheme utilising attenuation tanks demonstrates compliance.

The Refuse Store carries a Green roof which will capture and hold back rainwater. In the event of a heavy downpour, excess storm water will discharge into the Swale.

Swale:

Functions as a sustainable storm water capturing device, with plants to enhance local distinctiveness and add value to the overall design.

9.6 Historic landscape features

Aside from the verticality of the overgrown hedgerow aligning Back Lane, to the untrained eye there are no other plainly apparent landscape features within the development site, but the archaeology report reveals remains of earthworks both within the site and in the contiguous field in the same ownership, a bank and ridge and furrows. See Image 5 for extract of diagram from Archaeological desk-based Assessment.

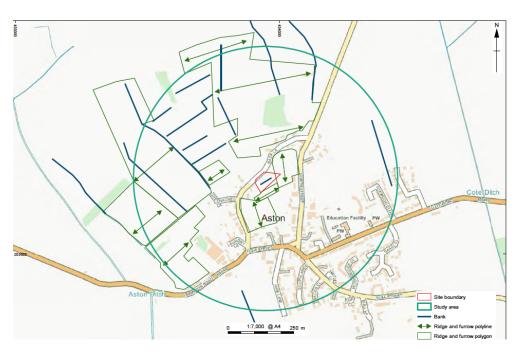


Image 5 Earthworks as revealed by Archaeological study

As compensation for the loss of the bank and as a nod to the nearby archaeology, a mound has been created along the South-West boundary.

On this project, the Pre-app comments oblige us to pay attention to "conservation of special interest, character, appearance and setting" and to compensate for

features lost.

It is anticipated that the project will be sympathetic to and link to the place historically, drawing on the surroundings and the heritage in both the building and the landscape.

The mound serves the following practical needs:

- buffer for south westerlies. This area is open to strong winds across the fields
- visual screen to nr. 3 Home Farm Cottages. Hedgerow and trees are slightly raised to augment screening
- acoustic screen to nr. 3 Home Farm Cottages.
- creates a sense of sanctuary and visual interest as well as reinforcing the boundary
- excavated material can be used in the formation. This means that it is a sustainable solution for carting less fill off site.

The mound undulates from 400mm height to 800mm height depending on available width with a shallow bank incline of 1:3.

9.7 Planting within the site

The woody and entangled appearance of the hawthorn gave rise to the selection of Potentilla fruticosa 'Abbotswood' for its similar twiggy habit. It will provide a defensive line under the bedroom windows, but not thorny, for bedrooms facing east and north towards the natural environment.



Image 6 Potentilla fruticose 'Abbotswood' planted under windows to side and rear facing the natural environment

The June berry is the selected hedge to be planted under windows facing towards the entrance area. It is known for attracting bees and other pollinators



and yields a splendid spring flowering with a crimson autumnal show before the leaves fall.



Image 7 June berry hedging planted under windows facing hard landscaping

9.8 Existing soil

Soil samples will be required to be tested in a laboratory as the Site investigation reveals soil of high alkalinity. In this instance, it must be assumed that subsoil for the lower level of tree pits can be amended to suit and that topsoil will need to be imported.



Image 8 a small number of selected Plants

10 Lighting

10.1 Refer to drawing by Gemma Lighting for Lighting Design Layout, and Technical Information for proposed wall fittings and lighting bollard fittings.

Dark corridor along NW boundary requested by Ecologist.

The Nelson lighting bollard is perfect to achieve dark sky compliance. The internal louvre stack ensure all of the light is controlled and there is 0% upward light distribution. 2900 Kelvin LED. Also, there is the option of a 180° spill shield that will control the distribution into woodland / protected areas.

11 Supporting information

11.1 Drawings

As per the enclosed drawing issue register.

11.2 Supporting Documents

- Topographical Survey
- Ground Investigation
- Highways Survey
- Drainage and Level Survey
- Structural Survey
- Heritage Statement (updated)
- Archaeological Desk Top Appraisal
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (updated)
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (updated)

