

## Design and Access Statement

Proposed Development of Land at  
Higher College Farm  
Longridge

May 2022

Job No. 6478

Version 1.4 (Proposed site plan updated to 05H)





## Site Analysis

The development site consists of the field adjacent to Lower Road with an existing detached three storey farmhouse to the southern side of the site with single storey extensions, an existing detached single storey garage/ carport lies to the western side of the house.

The site is defined by mature existing hedgerows to the northern and eastern boundaries, with the existing access track running from Lower Road to the house along the western site boundary. The site contains some existing trees and there are existing trees adjacent to the western boundary and within the site

The overall site is approximately rectangular on plan and on a north to south axis, with Lower Road being to the northern side. There is gradual slope in ground level from north to south.

**The site area is 15300m<sup>2</sup> (1.53ha)**



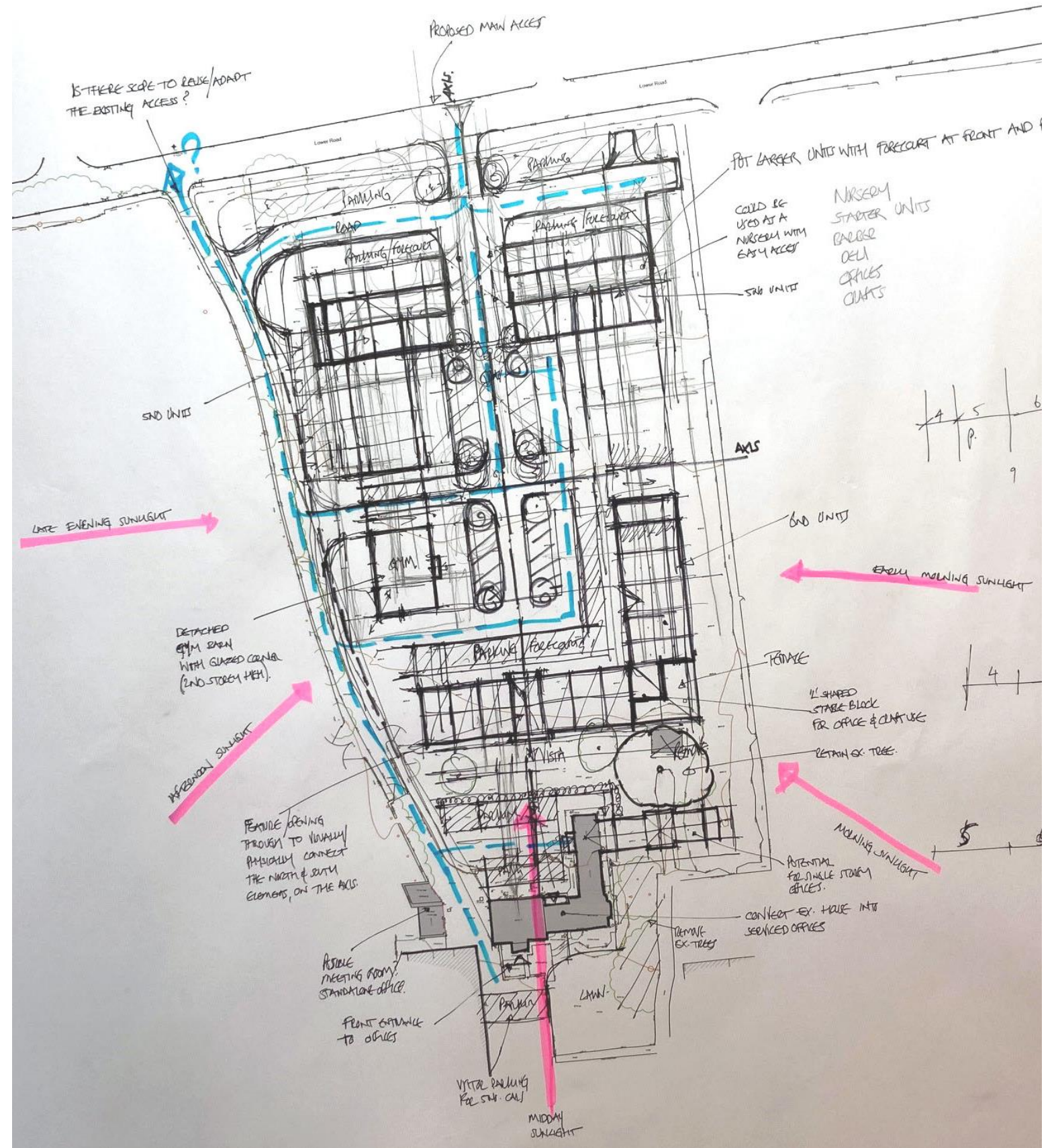
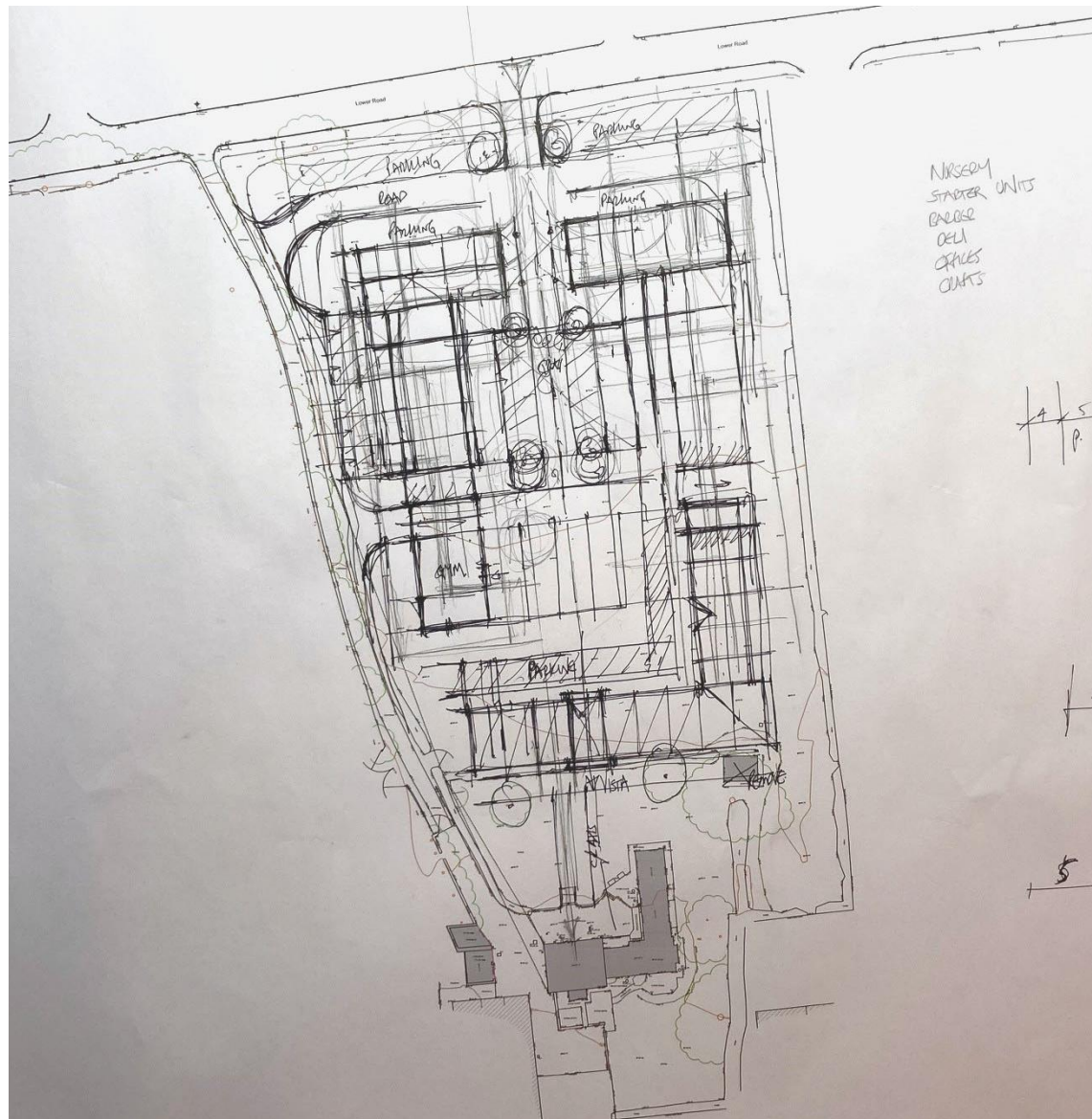
Panoramic photograph of the development site from the south east corner of the field

Extract of existing site plan. NTS



## The Brief

- To create a high-quality development which will provide a range of business units that will offer long-term flexibility for a variety of uses.
- To convert and extend the existing house to provide office space, or other appropriate commercial and service uses.
- The proposed scheme is to respect the character and appearance of this site within the overall rural location.
- The proposals must embrace and promote sustainability in terms of the quality of the build and materials used to reduce the carbon footprint and long-term maintenance and running costs.

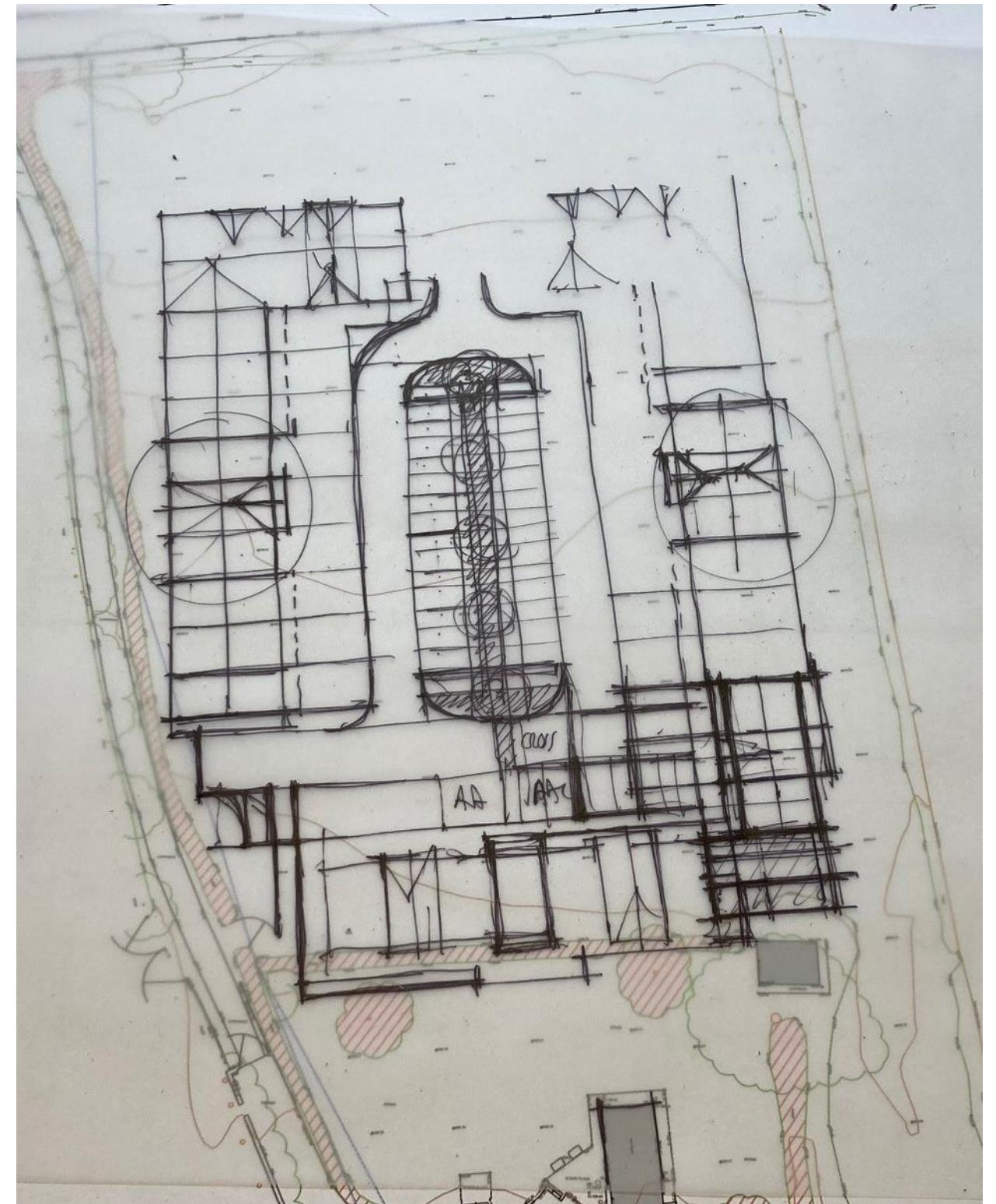


Design development of the site plan showing sun angles throughout the day. A strong central axis with courtyard designed from the outset. NTS



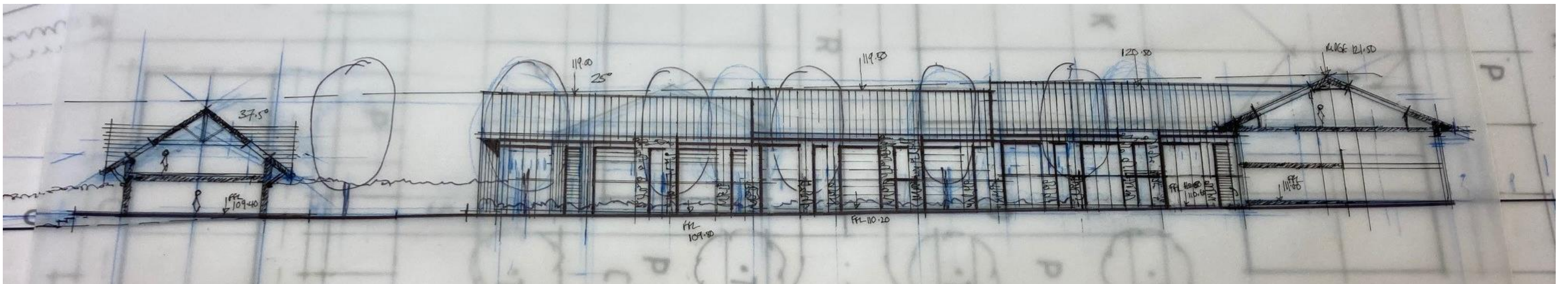
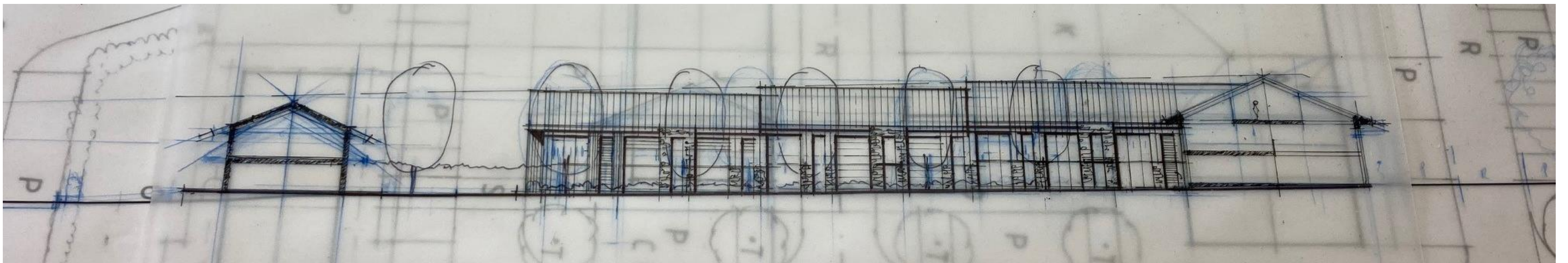
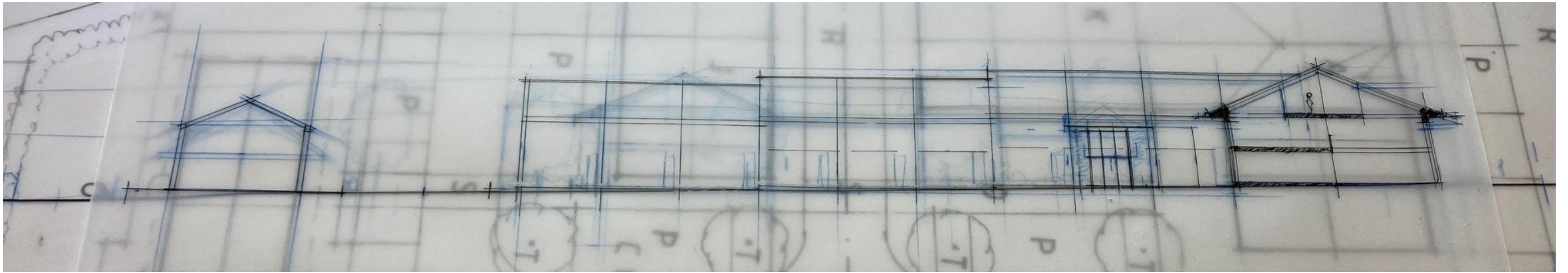






Further design development images of the site. Existing track used to serve existing farmhouse only. All units served by enlarged central courtyard. NTS





Design development images of the elevational treatments. Stepped roofline to reduce the scale of the buildings further down the site. Being the closest in proximity to the existing farmhouse, the scale of Unit E has been reduced to appear subservient, with materials selected to be sympathetic to the existing farmhouse. NTS



Pre-Application Advice Submission



Extract from 6478-08A Proposed Elevations For New Buildings, as initially submitted for pre-application advice NTS

## Pre-Application Advice

A pre-application submission has been made by the project Planning Consultants to gain early input from the Local Planning Department. Following a meeting with the Planning Officer, an enquiry response was received dated 11.03.2022 (Ref: RV/2022/ENQ/00001). The enquiry explains that the Planning Officer has no significant reservations for the proposed design, layout and arrangement, with the following observations: (*observations in italics* with action taken to address **in bold**)

- ‘Increase the provision of tree planting/green areas within the main body of the site – potentially intermediate planting between some parking bays/forecourts.’

**The design has been revised to include additional planting/green areas in the main body of the site. Parking areas have been broken up by regular strips of planted beds, positioned to reflect and reinforce the steps between buildings.**

- ‘All cycle storage provision should be lockable, secure and enclosed. This should be located away from the ‘bin storage compound’ to ensure it remains attractive for users and should be within the main body of the site.’

**Noted, the cycle storage will be lockable, secure and enclosed. Bin storage to be well screened. Details to be confirmed during the detailed design process.**

- ‘A robust waste management strategy including collection routes and storage areas should be considered given the majority of the units, particularly to the south of the site, fail to appear to have ready access to such provisions.’

**Preliminary refuse vehicle access routes have been determined and swept paths checked to ensure easy collection from the bin storage compounds indicated. Waste management strategy to be produced as detailed design progresses.**

- ‘I have no significant reservations in respect of the overall proposed architectural language of the proposed buildings, however I do consider that the overall roof extents could benefit from the inclusion of devices to provide additional visual relief. This could be achieved through the inclusion of ‘breaks’ within the roofscape which would afford a higher level of visual permeability, which could also be complimented through the inclusion of devices that are reminiscent of chimney or vertical ‘vent’ details.’

**Comments taken on board within the amended proposals:**

**Rooflines to buildings A-J and B-D have been broken up with the inclusion of concealed external air-conditioning plant decks, with access via stairs concealed within vent stacks. Vent stacks to tie in with architectural language of the development. The plant deck will avoid unsightly air conditioning plant being fixed onto the external walls, maintaining the quality of the development.**

- ‘The outward facing elevation of the buildings (east and west) would benefit from higher levels of glazing as per in the inward facing elevations, this would assist in lessening the overall visual mass of the proposal whilst introducing an element of potential reflectivity which would assist in the proposal being assimilated visually into the landscape.’

**Design amended to incorporate more glazing.**

- ‘The northern facing elevations of both buildings ‘A’ and ‘B’ would benefit from the introduction of an elevational device or devices that would lessen the overall horizontal extents on the unrelieved roofscape whilst introducing a ‘feature-element’ to ensure suitable relief and animation to the primary outward facing elevation.’ **Feature gables have been introduced to the north elevations of buildings A and B, reflecting the language of building E. Vertical stacks and rooflights have been introduced to break up the rooflines.**

The Planning Officer has requested that the tree planting to the North, East and West of the site be increased. This has been taken into account with additional tree planting shown to these areas on the amended proposed site plan.



Extract of Proposed Site Layout Plan 6478-05H as initially submitted for pre-application advice. NTS



# Use

The purpose of the proposed new buildings is to satisfy demand for small to medium size business units that can be used to cater for a wide range of individual requirements, with the buildings having flexibility designed to allow them to respond to individual needs which would include commercial, business and service as well as light industrial and to be suitable for storage.

The main central courtyard accommodates vehicular and pedestrian circulation through the site with parking and forecourts arranged off this. Each unit has its own designated parking and forecourt area, with additional car and bicycle parking spread around the whole site.

# Amount

One of the main design objectives is to reach an appropriate balance between the footprint of new buildings to make best use of the site, but without over-developing and losing the required balance.

**Approximate footprint area:**

Existing building/outbuilding footprint	= 342m <sup>2</sup>	2.2% of total site area
New building footprint	= 2840m <sup>2</sup>	18.5% of total site area
Extension (to existing) footprint	= 229m <sup>2</sup>	1.5% of total site area

**Total footprint of existing and proposed buildings = 3410m<sup>2</sup>      22.2% of total site area**

As above, the total building footprint of the proposed site is to occupy 22.2% of the overall 1.53ha site area. This demonstrates that the proposed development is of an appropriate size for the site, leaving plenty of room for soft landscaping to reinforce the rural feel.

# Scale

Working with the existing site topography (which slopes down towards the south) has resulted in the buildings stepping down the site to accommodate existing levels. This is also reflected in the elevational treatment with stepped roof profiles, which reduces the scale and massing, giving a sense of reducing hierarchy as you move down the site towards the existing farmhouse.

**Approximate building heights are given below**, these vary across length of each unit due to sloping site.

**Buildings A and B**

Eaves: 6m

Ridge 10.4m

**Buildings C and L**

Eaves: 6m

Ridge 9.1m

**Building K**

Eaves: 6m

Ridge 8.7m

**Buildings D and J**

Eaves: 6m

Ridge 8.4m

**Building E**

Eaves: 3m

Ridge 8m

The arrangement of the buildings around a central courtyard with a large opening between the units opposite the main entrance has helped to fragment the massing of the development.

As before, the purpose of the proposed new buildings is to satisfy demand for small to medium size business units that can be used to cater for a wide range of individual requirements, with the buildings having flexibility designed in. The buildings have the potential to allow for mezzanine/first floors as required by the occupants, maximising use of the footprint.

Extensions to the house follow on from the existing single storey elements with eaves heights and feature glazed gables to match the existing and maintain their subservience to the main farm house.



## Layout, Landscaping and Biodiversity Enhancements

The central courtyard has been formed to organise the various new buildings and create space and synergy for various uses to work together and attract visitors. This is an important part of the whole design concept, and a considered hard and soft landscaping scheme would encourage all year-round use for the businesses to display/ operate.

The site has been designed with legibility for the end user in mind. All buildings are visible from within the courtyard with views and access to the farmhouse maintained through the glazed central frontage of unit E.

Working with the existing site topography (which slopes down towards the south) has resulted in the buildings stepping down the site to accommodate existing levels, which also reduces the massing and adds interest.

The proposed layout responds to existing site features, all buildings are set well back from the site boundaries, the existing mature hedgerows to the northern and eastern boundaries are to be retained. Space is to be given to the perimeter of the site to allow for areas of open grassed area to add character and enhance the appearance of the attractive rural setting with wildflower meadow areas planted, to enhance the biodiversity of fauna and wildlife.

The existing mature tree to the north east of the existing farmhouse is to be retained. The site will be enhanced further by the planting of trees and hedgerows across the site, primarily to the central courtyard and to the main site entrance.

Bat and bird nesting boxes are to be incorporated into the scheme to provide additional roosting opportunities to further increase the site's ecological value and biodiversity.

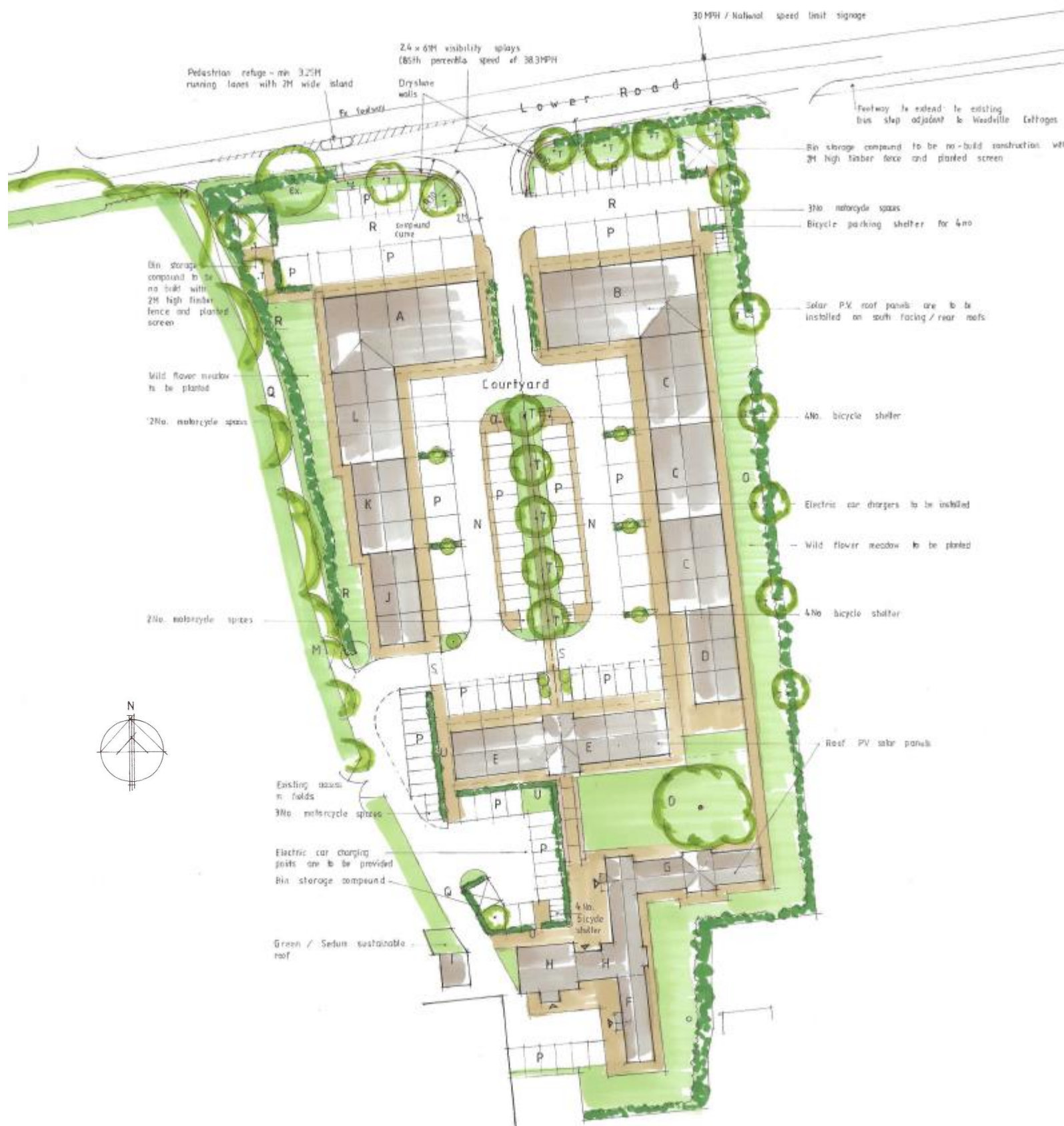
Smaller courtyard areas are to be formed to fragment the site and provide all units with access /views to open green spaces.

Following pre application comments, further tree planting to the North, East and West of the site has been added to increase the site's ecological value and biodiversity further still.

The proposed site plan 05H provides further information on the provision for bicycle shelters and motorcycle parking, with spaces dotted across the site.

The Landscape Architect and the Arboricultural Consultant have advised the two car parking spaces closest to existing tree T1 be omitted to protect the tree's roots. The parking spaces have been moved adjacent.

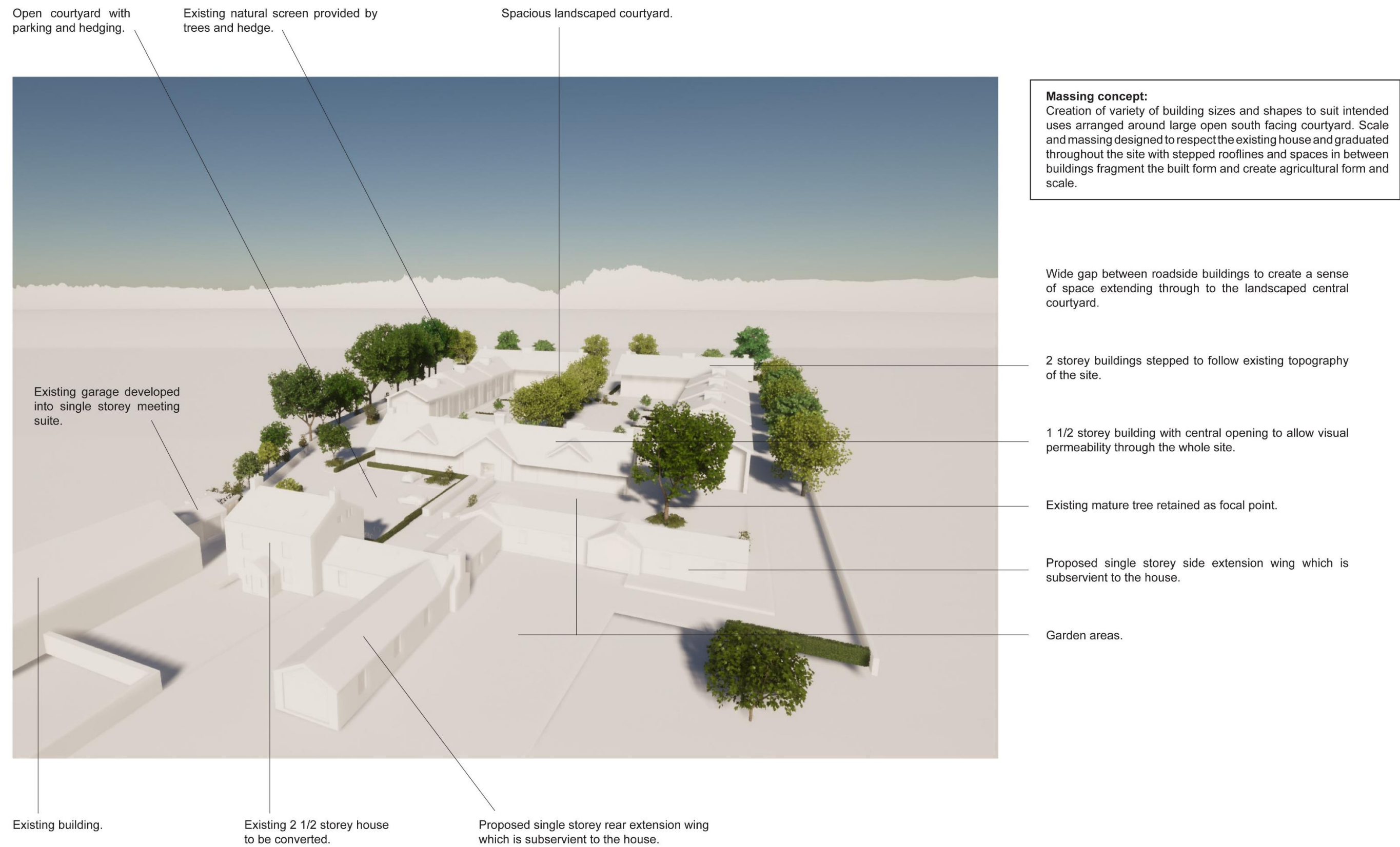
The location of the bin storage compounds to the north of the site have been moved to less prominent positions, screening is to be provided by 2m high fencing with planting.



Extract of Proposed Site Layout Plan 6478-05H. NTS



Proposed Site Massing



Extract from 6478-13A Proposed Site Massing. NTS



# Appearance

The buildings are to be of a contemporary appearance but with a rural, agricultural feel. Quality, sustainable materials are to be used throughout. The buildings will follow a hierarchy from north to south, as the physical scale drops the material use will change to add interest.

At 25° the proposed pitched roofs are shallow enough to keep the scale down but reflective of the local buildings the scale not too steep

## Buildings A and B

Walls: Reclaimed natural random coursed stone walls with Zinc appearance aluminium vertical cladding over

Roof: Projecting roof finished with Zinc appearance aluminium cladding with profile gutter and verge detailing. To incorporate roof lights.

Doors and windows: powder coated aluminium (grey colour)

## Buildings C, K and L

Walls: Reclaimed natural random coursed stone walls on the courtyard side with Zinc appearance aluminium vertical cladding over

Roof: No eaves projection with hidden guttering to allow Zinc appearance aluminium cladding to continue up from the wall cladding. To incorporate roof lights.

Doors and windows: Powder coated aluminium (grey colour)

## Buildings D and J

Walls: Vertical Larch slat effect over dark grey membrane, over dark grey brick plinth course. The change in walling material will add texture, variety, interest and help fragment the building.

Roof: Zinc appearance aluminium cladding with standing seam detail and powder coated aluminium guttering. To incorporate roof lights.

Doors and windows: Powder coated aluminium (grey colour)





Appearance continued...

Building E

Walls: Reclaimed stone with quoins and dressed surrounds

Roof: Natural slate with projecting eaves and verges with exposed timber roof structure. Powder coated aluminium guttering and flush fitting Velux triple roof lights.

Doors and windows: Powder coated aluminium (grey colour)

Being the closest in proximity to the existing farmhouse, the scale of Unit E has been reduced to appear subservient, with materials selected to be sympathetic to the existing building.

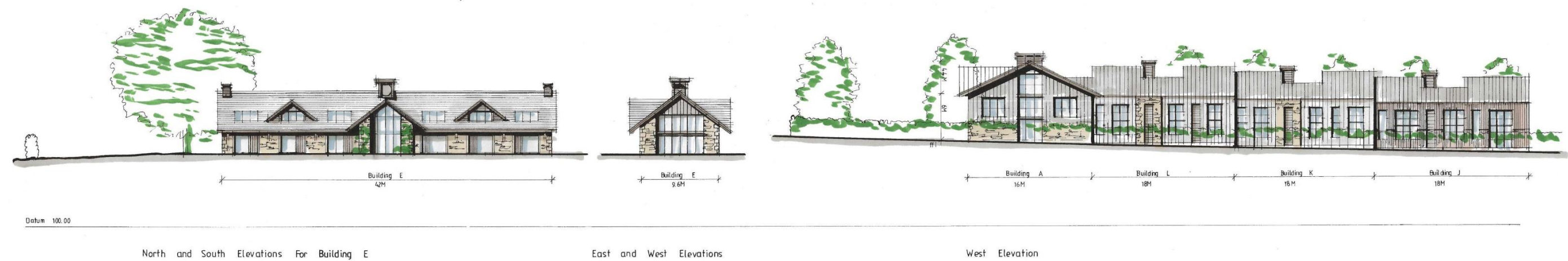
Following the pre-application response, the design of building E has been reviewed to incorporate subservient gables to break up the array of rooflights previously proposed. Stacks have been included to reflect the commercial-agricultural feel. The glazed gables to the atrium have been opened up to the underside of the of the roofline to allow better visibility through the site, linking old and new.

Extensions to House F and G

Walls – reclaimed stone with quoins and dressed surrounds to match existing house

Roof – natural slate with eaves detail to match existing

Doors and windows – painted timber to match existing



Extract from 6478-08B Proposed Elevations For New Buildings. NTS





## Access

The existing access and drive off Lower Road is to be retained to maintain existing access arrangements for the farmer on to adjacent fields only. A new gateway is to be installed to separate this with the new roads serving the main development. A new development road to link with the existing drive to will continue to serve the southern part of the site including the house conversion.

A new site access is to serve the proposed development, formed off Lower Road on the central axis of the site.

Parking and forecourt areas provide access to all units with electric car charging points installed to cater for future demand for electric car charging. Designated secure bicycle parking areas are to be provided within the development site to encourage sustainable forms of transport. Generous paths with crossing places ensure people can walk around the development safely.





## Sustainability

As before, a sustainable palette of materials is to be used throughout. Aluminium roofing/window frames and natural stone clad walls are built to last and can be recycled at the end of their lifecycle. The timber cladding is a renewable material with low embodied energy.

The proposals are to meet the energy efficiency requirements of Ribble Valley Borough Council Building Control by undertaking a 'fabric first' approach, providing a high level of thermal insulation.

The south facing aspects will utilise large areas of glazing to take advantage of passive solar gain, helping to reduce the heating demands of the units.

Photovoltaic panels are to be fitted to the rear (south facing) aspects of roofs to provide the development with a renewable source of electricity.

As before, electric car charging points installed to cater for future demand for electric car charging. Designated secure bicycle parking areas are to be provided within the development site to encourage sustainable forms of transport





## Conclusion

The proposals will create a high-quality development which will provide a range of business units that will offer long-term flexibility for a variety of uses.

The proposed scheme respects the character and appearance of this site within the overall rural location. Careful thought to the hierarchy of the proposed buildings ensures that the additions sit well with the existing farmhouse.

The proposals embrace and promote sustainability in terms of the quality of the build and materials used to reduce the carbon footprint and long-term maintenance and running costs. Soft landscaping across the site will add character and enhance the appearance of the attractive rural setting while improving the biodiversity of the site.



