

MOORLANDS FARM | HEDGE END



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

AUG 2022_REV B

**RADLEY
HOUSE**
PARTNERSHIP | CHARTERED
ARCHITECTS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Design & Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared in support of a Full Planning Application for the demolition of the existing farmhouse and associated ancillary farm buildings and construction of industrial buildings and estates office, at Moorlands Farm, Botley Road, Hedge End.

This statement has been prepared by Radley House Partnership and is to be read in conjunction with Radley House Partnership drawings and the following reports and drawings;

- A – Planning Statement – by Teal Planning Ltd
- B – Arboricultural Impact Assessment – by Technical Arboriculture
- C – Ecology Assessment – by Eco Support Ltd
- D – Highways Assessment – by Nick Culhane Highways Consultant
- E – Flood Risk Assessment – by Fernbrook Consulting Engineers
- F – Drainage Strategy Plan – by Fernbrook Consulting Engineers
- G – Landscape Visual Impact Assessment – by ACLA Ltd
- H – Archaeological Desk-top Assessment – Pre-Construct Archaeology
- I – Marketing Statement – by Primer Olds B.A.S
- J – BREEAM Accredited Assessor – By Green and Castle Ltd

1.2 LOCATION

The proposal site is located between Hedge End and West End in Southampton. It sits to the north west of Hedge End industrial estate, alongside the M27. The site is accessed off Botley Road.

The site is within the designated Countryside and adjacent to a SSSI and Urban Edge. A farm has been established on the site since the late 1950's early 60's and has since become redundant. This site is now in need of redevelopment

1.3 INTENT

The brief is to create a development consisting of flexible light industrial/ storage units, open storage yard and an estate office. The intention is to create a sustainable scheme which is also reflective of the site's location within the countryside (although the site is a brownfield site).

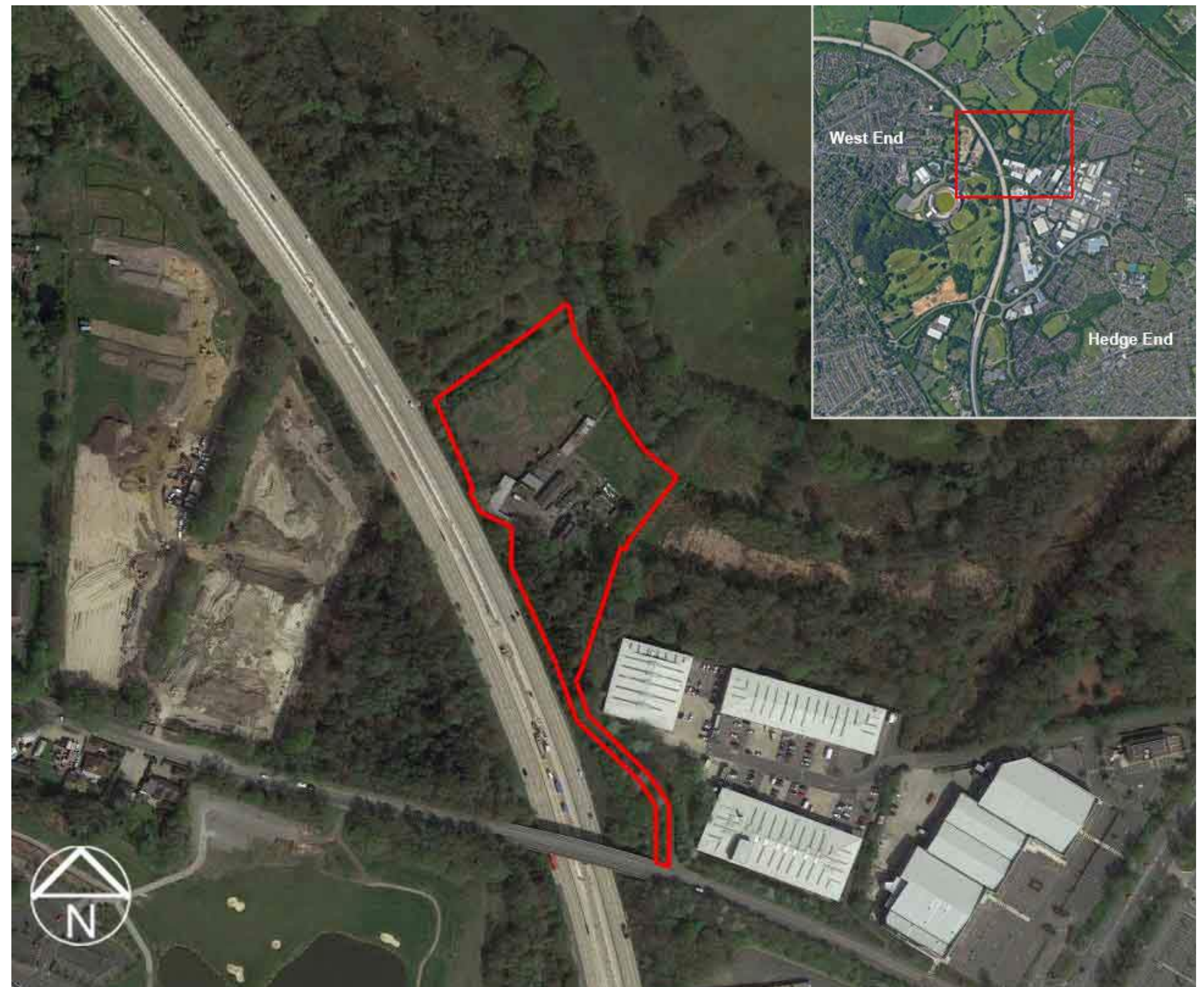


Fig. 1 LOCATION PLAN

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.4 PLANNING HISTORY

An application for 'Construction of a dog training hall with associated exercise area, parking and landscaping following demolition of existing barn', was first granted on 15th February 2013 (app ref: F/12/71729). The application was renewed on 30th December 2015, before being granted permission again more recently on 13th March 2019 (app ref: F/18/84683).

Not long after the permission it was confirmed that the dog training hall was no longer required.

An Outline Planning application to provide a light industrial development, including the conversion of the existing farmhouse to provide ancillary office space was registered on 29th July 2021.

The Outline application was withdrawn on 23rd February 2022. Prior and subsequent to the formal withdrawal of the application it was agreed to submit a number of feasibilities to the Local Authority for informal advice, prior to the submission of a revised Full Planning Application. These include the preferred feasibility and accompanying illustration shown opposite.

The following recommendations were made by Eastleigh Borough Council on 1 April 2022, if a new revised application were to be submitted based on this preferred draft arrangement in the near future (*for the full detailed response from EBC please refer to Appendix A*);

- Layout – A reduction of overall development to be considered and reduction of encroachment into the strategic gap.
- Building appearance – High quality materials and height/roof form variation. Green roofs would also be encouraged.
- Building appearance – Details of the appearance of the proposed buildings required.
- Trees - Impact on trees of widened entrance area and access road. Space needed for replacement planting for screening.
- Landscaping/Trees - A reduction in hardstanding, particularly on the Western side. Further screening would be welcomed as well as varied surface materials.
- Landscaping/Ecology – Consideration to be given in the Landscaping Scheme to breaking up the hard surfaced areas as much as possible. Further detail will be needed as to how the ecology buffer zone indicated on the northern side of the site would be created / managed.
- Trees/Landscaping/Ecology – Future application is to be accompanied by a boundary treatment plan.
- Ecology and drainage – The indication of a SuDS feature is welcomed. More details required along with information on the proposed swale.
- Ecology – CEMP requested for any new application along with an Ecology Impact Assessment on the adjacent SSSI.
- Landscaping - Visual Impact Assessment should be produced on the impact of the development and on the adjacent Public Right of Way.
- Landscaping – Measures to be put forward to protect and enhance the adjacent SSSI.



Fig. 2 PLANNING HISTORY, INCLUDING OUTLINE AND SUBSEQUENT PRE-APP FEASIBILITIES.

2.0 SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 HEDGE END INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

The site sits to the east of the M27 motorway, and to the northwest of Hedge End industrial estate. This area accommodates a number of warehouses for shops and various businesses and industries. Wellington Park, the industrial/commercial estate closest to the proposed site (C), includes large international companies. Wellington Park is visible from the site’s access road.

The proposed site also sits within the designated countryside and adjacent a designated S.S.S.I. (Site of Special Scientific Interest). It is now outside the designated strategic gap this is discussed in more detail in Section 3.3.

Images A, C & D show a range of units and businesses located within the Hedge End industrial/commercial estate. These neighbouring industrial buildings vary in massing and scale with most comprising of two storey warehouses.

The material palettes are typical of industrial buildings, predominantly steel frame and cladding with a number of buildings incorporating brick and glass into the design depending on their use and typology.

Although it is a high-density industrial area, landscaping has been applied to soften boundaries between units and roads

2.2 HEDGE END AND WEST END

The areas around the industrial estate are largely residential. These areas are mostly developments with a range of scales and architectural styles. Although mostly traditional, the houses range from mobile homes, flats and one to five bedroom houses.

To the west of the site, across the bridge over the M27, is West End. Directly across the bridge lies the Ageas Bowl cricket ground, a golf course and more residential areas. To the north of the site is mostly farmland, open fields, and an allotment.

Surrounding the proposal site is a dense vegetation and a number of mature trees. These shield the site from the motorway and neighbouring industrial and agricultural sites.

Due to the nature of the surrounding areas as well as the proximity to the motorway, the site would be best suited to light industrial buildings.

2.3 COMPARABLE SITES

A number of analogous sites have been developed and these include the Berrywood Business Park (B), which was also once a farm and, the residential development which is under construction to the West of the site, on the opposite side of the M27 (E) – Planning ref: O/15/76418 and RM/18/82821.

Other farm sites permitted to be developed also include the Home Farm site (F/15/76447).



Fig. 3 Surrounding Area and Context

3.0 SITE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

3.1 SITE ANALYSIS

The existing site is a farm stead which accommodates a farm house (1) along with a number of agricultural ancillary buildings and outbuildings (2), including barns, sheds and greenhouses.

North of the farmstead is an open pasture field (4), once occupied by livestock.

To all boundaries (3) trees and mature vegetation create a physical boundary between the M27, and adjacent plots which include a S.S.S.I (Site of special Scientific Interest). The Wellington Park Industrial/commercial estate is also screened although it is partially visible via the main access road (6).

The trees to the north east of the site have TPOs (Tree Preservation Order's) and will not be affected in any future development.

Between the dense vegetation and M27 motor way is pedestrian footpath 10 (7), which is also screened by existing trees and vegetation when viewed from within the site.

A pond (8) is also just located to the north of the footpath. There are a number of other ponds in the site which are discussed in more detail in the Ecology Statement.



Fig. 4 Analysis from within the proposed site

3.0 SITE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

3.2 PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY AND BOUNDARY SCREENING

The proposed site borders a Public-Right-of-Way, which runs between the site’s western boundary and M27, before turning east along the northernmost site boundary.

The Public-right-Of-Way is formally known as Footpath 10 and is part of an extensive network of publicly accessible footpaths and bridleways, located across the County.

Footpath 10 is accessed form the main site entrance to the south, off Botley Road. It then drops down towards the M27. From this initial point the site is fully screened by mature vegetation. As one continues northwards the vegetation gives way to a fenced ‘corridor’ (fenced both sides). A band of tall trees also divides Foot Path 10 from the proposed site.

The fence between the footpath and site ceases a short distance beyond the existing cluster of buildings. Again, dense vegetation separates and screens the path from the proposed site and open space to the north.

As the path leads around the northwest corner of the site boundary it becomes lined on both sides by shrubs, bushes and saplings.

As the Footpath reaches the northeastern corner of the site boundary a pedestrian access gate can be found. Once through the gate the footpath leads through open fields. Due to the lack of vegetation and screening at this section of the Public-right-of-Way, views southwards are possible into the proposed site.



Fig. 5 Views from Footpath 10

3.0 SITE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

3.3 COUNTRYSIDE

Moorlands Farm sits on the Settlement Edge adjacent Hedge End's Industrial/commercial Park. The site abuts the M27 motorway on its western boundary and extensive S.S.S.I to the north, east and south.

The proposed site was situated within a Strategic Gap. This designated area (which identifies the gap between West End and Hedge End), has now been redrawn to the north east of the proposed site.

Moorlands Farm therefore sits within the Countryside and is now (as of April 2022) located outside of the Designated Strategic Gap.

While located within the countryside, the site is already developed and is home to a large but now redundant farmstead.

The proposed site is set back and screened from Botley Road to the South and M27 to the West. It is also screened on all boundaries by dense vegetation and therefore is not visible from long/medium range views.

Moorlands Farm is also visually split into two halves, within the site. The southern half consists of a large cluster of farm buildings (main house, outbuildings and hardstanding). The southernmost extent of the sites access road is in fact located within the settlement boundary. The northern half of the site is characterised by an enclosed and screened pastureland, a significant part of which is subject to the extant approval for the dog training centre (Please see 1.4).

The characteristics of the site are therefore, the fact that the site is already developed, well connected (M27) and screened by dense vegetation on all boundaries. This has been recognised by the Local Authority and is demonstrated through the permissions granted for redevelopment and an alternative use (Dog training Centre – Please see 1.4).

These same characteristics have also resulted in a new residential development being permitted (to the west of the M27) - *Planning ref: O/15/76418 and RM/18/82821*. This recent development was permitted prior to the adoption of the new Local Plan from April 2022. When permitted in March 2019 this site was located within the Countryside and within the Strategic Gap. This was also the case for the Berrywood Business Park – Please see section 2.3.



Fig. 6 SITE ANALYSIS

3.0 SITE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

3.4 EXISTING SITE DENSITY

The existing local area is predominantly industrial and commercial. The figure ground plan (Figure 7) shows in dark grey all the existing industrial and commercial buildings and in light grey all residential dwellings.

As the diagram shows, the area closest to the site is largely industrial/commercial. Many of the industrial/commercial units are large warehouses, supermarkets, furniture and other large stores. Towards the west of the industrial park there are a number of smaller units.

As a number of large units already exist across this area, smaller units may be in higher demand.

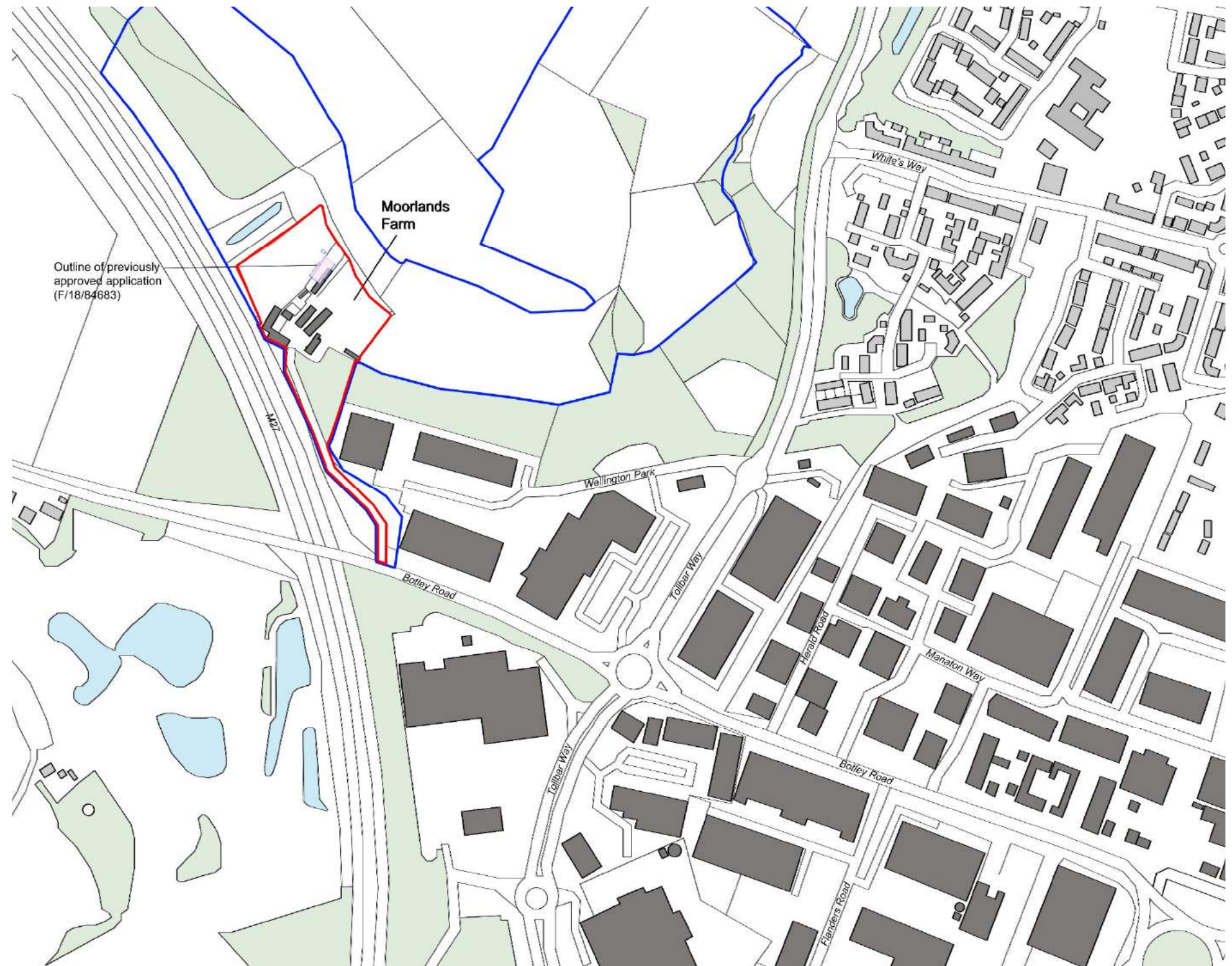


Fig. 7 EXISTING FIGURE GROUND

3.0 SITE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

3.5 PROPOSED SITE DENSITY

The figure ground plan (Figure 8) now shows the proposed layout in block form – please see following section for more details on the proposed layout.

While it is shown as a continuation of the Retail/Commercial park located to the south east, with regards to size the units proposed are considerably more modest. This is to ensure that the new development is reflective of its location abutting the Urban Edge of Hedge End. In effect the proposed layout positions the buildings within the location of the existing farm stead and does not encroach further north then the position of the approved Dog Training Centre building (F/18/84883).

The existing dense screening identified in the site analysis (Section 3.0), ensures that the proposed layout will have a negligible physical and visual impact. It offers an opportunity to redevelop an unsustainable and dilapidated site, with the aim of delivering ecological benefits and employment opportunities for the local community.

The layout shows the sites potential while respecting its setting adjacent to the M27, the public footpath (please see Section 3.2), adjoining open land and Moorlands Meadow SSSI.

Access to the site is to remain as existing, via Botley Road. This is to run through the site and will lead to each of the proposed units.

The appearance of the units, which is also to be influenced by the site's location and characteristics, is discussed in more detail in Section 4.2.

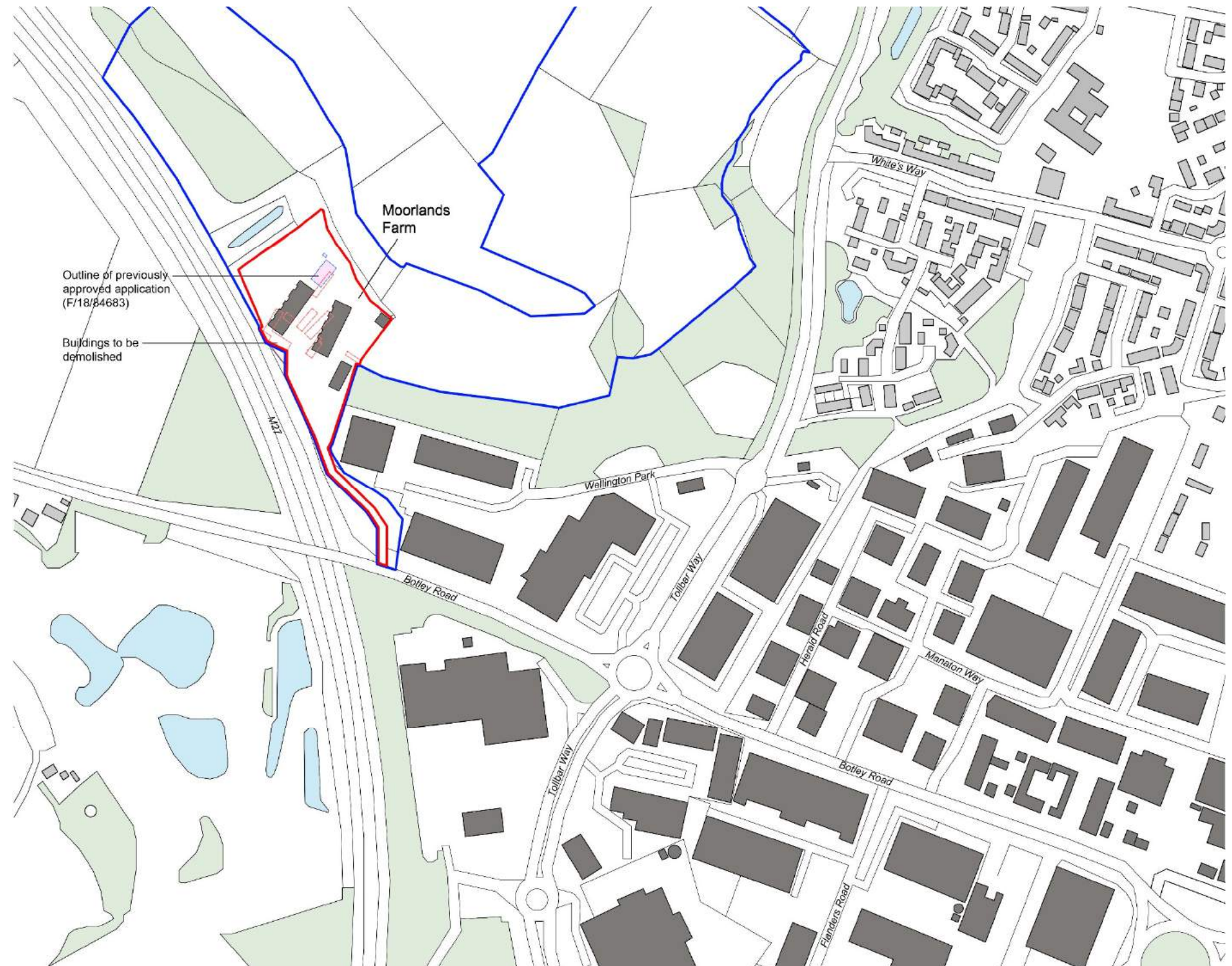


Fig. 8 PROPOSED FIGURE GROUND

4.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

4.1 SITE LAYOUT

The proposed layout demonstrates how the site can comfortably accommodate an innovative light industrial scheme while also delivering significant ecological enhancements.

The proposed units are restricted to the southern half of the site where the current farmstead is situated and, where the Dog Training facility (app ref: F/18/84683), had been permitted to be located. This allows the northern half of the site to be created into an ecological buffer. This ecological buffer will become part of the natural strategic gap (as described in Section 3.3). Therefore, the proposed development on the southern parcel of the site will become the outer edge of the Hedge End Industrial/Commercial park.

As the physical edge, where the industrial estate ends and the strategic gap begins, the scheme has been designed to reflect the transitional nature of the site. A robust landscaping scheme combined with sedum roofs and natural building materials, delivers an alternative industrial typology. This is to deliver a clear contrast and separation with the more typical industrial/ commercial units located to the south.

The buildings have been designed with materials that reflect the rural characteristics of the site (please see Section 4.2, for the appearance of the proposed buildings). Trees and vegetation are introduced within the development with new vegetation proposed between buildings, and to their respective elevations and roofs. This allows the northern ecological buffer, landscaped boundaries and developed southern half of the site to be visually and ecologically 'stitched' together. Corridors of vegetation that promote biodiversity are created throughout the site.

Bands of new trees and vegetation further enhance the existing mature boundary screening, therefore reducing the visual impact of the proposals when viewed from outside the site and adjacent Public-Right-of-Way (please see Section 3.2).

In accordance with the revised July 2021 NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework), an emphasis on new tree planting has been made to meet the objectives set out in Paragraph 131, which states *"planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible"*.

The submitted application also shows the proposed location of sufficient parking, cycle parking and refuse storage for all proposed infrastructure.



Fig. 9 PROPOSED SITE PLAN (NORTHERN HALF)

4.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

The southern half of the proposed layout shows the proposed works to the existing access road, which leads off Botley Road. Please note the close proximity of Wellington Park Industrial/commercial estate.



Fig. 10 PROPOSED SITE PLAN (SOUTHERN HALF)

4.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

4.2 APPEARANCE AND MASS

The proposed scheme will consist of the following four new buildings;

Block A – 824m² (GIA) light industrial unit, single storey, however height to allow for two storeys/mezzanine space (if required).

Block B – 824m² (GIA) light industrial unit, single storey, however height to allow for two storeys/mezzanine space (if required).

Block C – 276m² (GIA) light industrial unit, single storey, however height to allow for two storeys/mezzanine space (if required).

Block D – 200m² (GIA) Estate office, two storeys (100 m² per floor).

The proposed buildings have been designed with materials to allow the scheme to not only blend into the surrounding greenery, but to also reflects the site’s agricultural past. The design solutions proposed for the 4no units at Moorlands therefore allow the scheme to be fully integrated within a countryside setting and to visually blend into the strategic gap, to the north.

While timber and metal cladding is predominantly used to reflect the sites rural location and agricultural past, it is also implemented to break up the visual mass of the longer buildings (Units A&B). The

‘Blocks’ of timber cladding have been applied to units A&B to give the impression that these units are in fact a collection of structures or buildings. This is amplified by using a variety of the cladding finishes for each block and through the positioning of openings. Each block of cladding is also broken up by planting to create separation and give the impression of a series of individual rural buildings.

Green roofs have also been proposed to the longer buildings and those located closest to the Ecology buffer and strategic gap. They will link these buildings to the proposed green infrastructure by promoting bio-diversity. The green roofs will also add additional insulation to these larger buildings (and roof areas), and help regulate air temperature and improve rainwater retention.

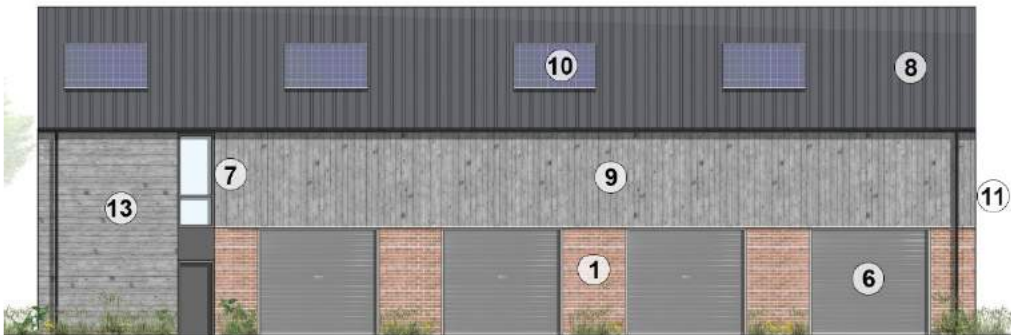
Each building type is unique in design and again this is to reflect the variety of buildings that would typically be seen on an agricultural site or farmstead.

Unit Type D which is to be the new Estate Offices, is the only building designed purely as two storeys. While units A, B and D have been designed with only a ground floor, they are of a height to deliver flexibility of use which in turn would insure lifetime use of the buildings. In effect the buildings have floor to ceiling heights to accommodate a wide range of plant and machinery. Depending on the types of businesses accommodating the buildings, a first floor mezzanine for offices/staff welfare, can also be accommodated if this is required.

Units A&B will be flat roofed and will measure 7.186m in height. Unit D is also flat roofed with a lower roof height of 6.875m. Unit Type C has a pitched roof measuring 9.5m in height. These designs and differing roof heights add variation and interest to the scheme.



Unit Type A and B



Unit Type C



Unit Type D

MATERIAL PALETTE

- 1. Red Brick
- 2. Charred larch (horizontal cladding)
- 3. Silvered Cedar/Larch (diagonal cladding)
- 4. Charred larch (vertical cladding)
- 5. Light timber frame/visor
- 6. Aluminium loading bay doors
- 7. Black aluminium framed windows
- 8. Zinc cladding/roof (pitched)
- 9. Silvered Cedar/Larch (vertical cladding)
- 10. PV panels
- 11. Black aluminium rainwater goods
- 12. Wall creepers
- 13. Silvered Cedar/Larch (horizontal cladding)

Fig. 11 MAIN ELEVATIONS OF THE PROSOED UNIT TYPES

4.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

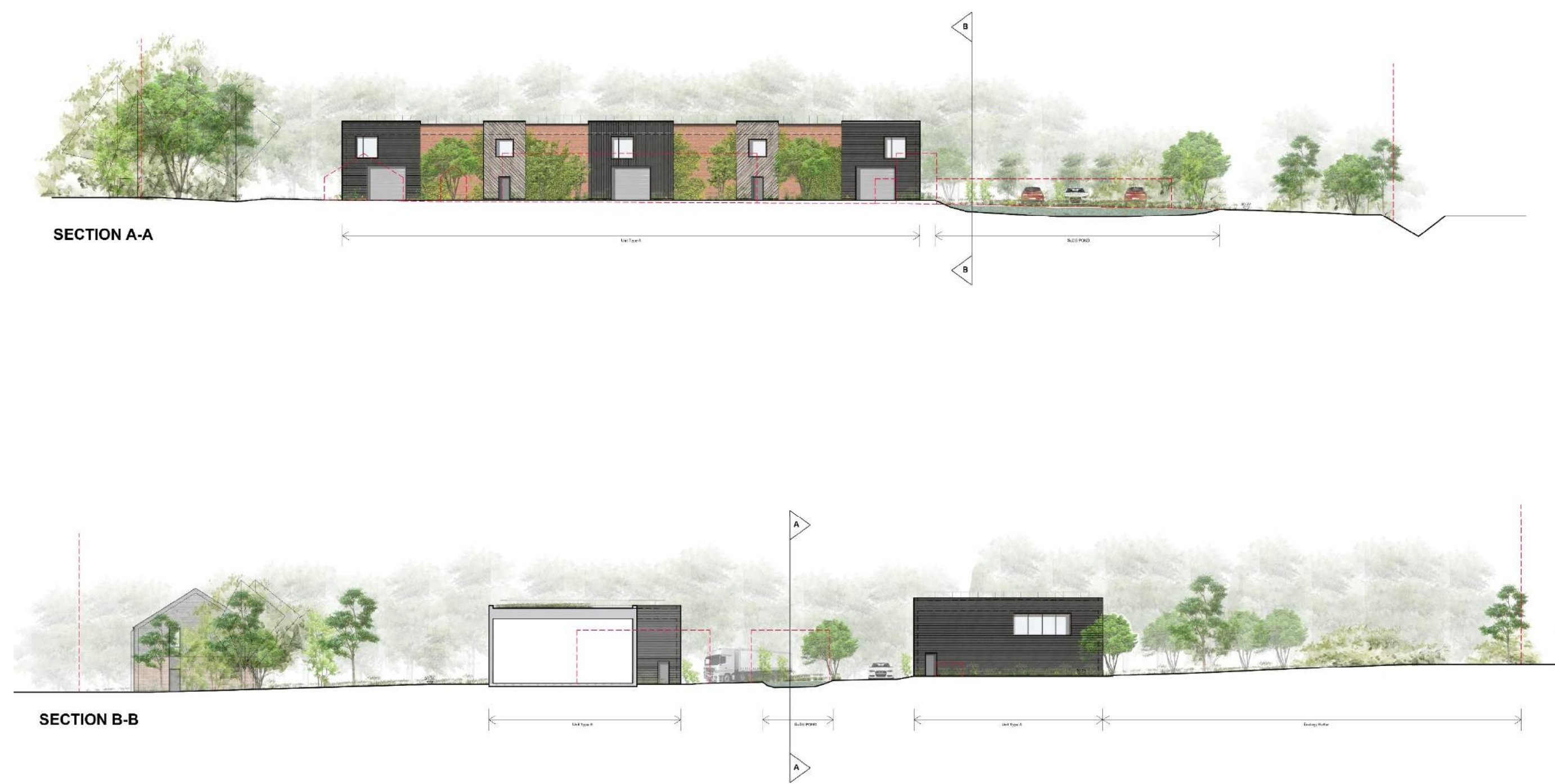


Fig. 12 PROPOSED SITE SECTIONS

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY

5.2 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

It is recognised that the site is already developed and is fully screened on all boundaries by mature trees and vegetation. In terms of location, it is also surrounded by existing commercial/industrial developments to the south and the M27 and new high density residential development to the west.

The proposals however, aim to ensure that the physical and visual appearance of the perceived gap is sustained through its layout and the design of the new buildings and their integration with the surrounding existing and enhanced landscape.

The layout's goal is to introduce bands of trees and vegetation to stitch together and connect the existing mature boundary screening. The existing boundary trees and vegetation are to be enhanced.

As forementioned the buildings will be designed with green roofs (Units A&B) to blend in and compliment the surrounding vegetation. Natural materials and agricultural in character, will also soften the appearance of the new buildings and therefore strengthen the perception of a 'green gap'.

The philosophy of the scheme is to promote new and fuse existing habitats together, therefore preventing 'habitat fragmentation'.

These designs will deliver a clear contrast and separation with the more typical industrial/commercial units located to the south.

5.3 PROPOSED BOUNDARY SCREENING

The green infrastructure not only provides ecological benefits but also screens the development when viewed from beyond the site boundaries.

The enhancement of the boundaries through new hedge and tree planting restricts views initially from the adjacent footpath (10), SSSI and beyond.

Additional hedge planting and new vegetation within the site, and coordinated with existing trees and foliage, creates secondary 'barriers' of screening. This reduces any views of the new buildings further.

The elevations of the larger buildings are then finally broken up with sections of vegetation including wall creepers.

The dense boundary screening, combined with multiple layers of screening within the site blend together with the proposed building designs (please see section 4.2). The development therefore becomes visually fragmented and blends in with the surrounding vegetation.

Please refer to the Landscaping design by ACLA Ltd and Ecology Assessment by Eco support Ltd for full details.

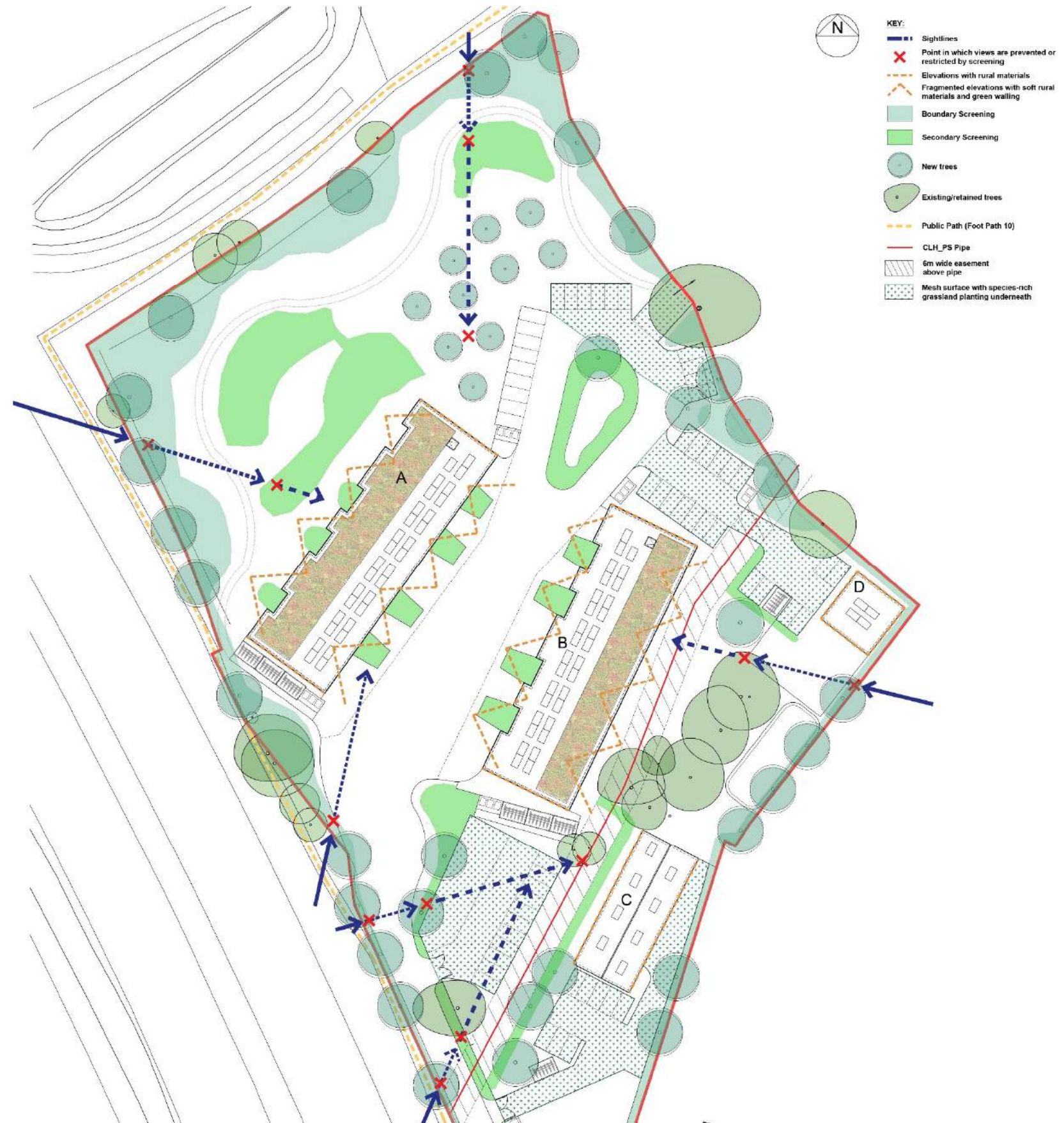


Fig. 14 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND SCREENING

6.0 TRANSPORT

6.1 ACCESS AND PARKING

The main access route through the site continues from the existing access road. Each building can easily be reached by the access road as it turns towards the northeast.

This layout has been designed to allow sufficient parking for all the different industrial blocks with direct and easy access to the individual units. Cycle parking spaces have also been provided across the site close to each of the units.

6.2 PARKING, CYCLE AND REFUSE STORES

Figure 15 shows how each of the parking areas, cycle stores and refuse areas relate to each of the light industrial units.

Parking spaces and cycle spaces were calculated using the B1 (b)(c) High Tech/Light Industry requirements from the Hampshire County Council: Parking Strategy and Standards 2002. Refuse storage has been calculated for the site using the Industrial Unit requirements in the British Standard, Waste Management in Buildings, Code of Practice.

The table opposite describes the number of parking spaces, cycle parking areas and loading bays, for each unit.

Unit	Sq.m. GEA	Cycle Stands	Car Spaces	Service Vehicles Loading Bays
Unit A	876 sq.m.	18	19 <i>(1 space / 46 m².)</i>	3
Unit B	876 sq.m.	18	13 <i>(1 space / 67m²)</i>	3
Unit C	302 sq.m.	6	8 <i>(1 space / 38m²)</i>	4
Estate Office Unit D	230 sq.m.	6	6 <i>(1 space / 38m²)</i>	N/A
Total	2,284	48	46 <i>(1 space / 49m2)</i>	
Open Storage Yard –		-	Illustrative Subject to arrangement of the yard by tenants	

Fig. 15 TABLE OF PARKING/CYCLE/BIN STORE PLAN

6.0 TRANSPORT

6.3 TRANSPORT LINKS

6.3.1 Connectivity and Linkage

The proposed site is very well connected and has direct access to the following transport opportunities.

Road, Air and Seaports:

- The site benefits from excellent local road connections via Botley Road (B2025) and Tollbar Way (B33452).
- Tollbar Road connects with Great Charles Watts Way (A334) to the southeast and onto the M27 (Junction 7). The M27 provides connections with the wider Hedge End/Southampton area and beyond, including via the M3 at Eastleigh.
- Southampton Airport is located off the M27 at J5, also to the north-west of the site. The port of Southampton and Portsmouth docks are also conveniently accessed via the motorway and local network.

Rail Connections:

- Hedge End railway station is 1.5 miles to the north east, accessed via Botley Road and Tollbar Way. It is on the south-eastern network route that links to London Waterloo (1 hour 26 mins journey time) and Portsmouth Harbour (43 mins journey time).
- Services to Waterloo include stops at Eastleigh, Winchester, Basingstoke, Farnborough and Woking. Services to Portsmouth include a stop at Portsmouth & Southsea.

Bus Services:

- Bus services operating on Botley Road comprises:
 - Route 8 (First Bus – City Red) that links between Hedge End station (Grange Park) and Southampton City Centre, via Tollbar Way, West End, Chartwell Green, Bitterne and Northam.
 - X4 (Xelabus) – between Hedge End and Eastleigh via Wilburn, West End, Chartwell Green and Mansbridge.
- The nearest bus stops are on Tollbar Road and Botley Road (West side of the M27, Moorlands Green Hospital).

Pedestrian and Cycle Route:

- Dedicated pedestrian and cycle paths are provided on the north side of Botley Road, and along the road's length over the M27. They merge into a shared path, east of the site access. Shared pedestrian and cycle paths continue along Botley Road and Tollbar Way leading from their shared roundabout junction, providing safe access across the wider commercial and employment area.
- Links to Hedge End railway station and the Ageas bowl cricket ground are signposted for pedestrians and cyclists next to the site access on Botley Road.

Public Footways/Bridleways:

Footpath no. 10, West End was diverted as part of the construction of the M27. It runs south of the site access junction and road and crosses the Moorlands Farm Land north of the farm buildings and the area included within this application. The footpath will not be affected by the proposals



Fig. 16 TRANSPORT LINKS

7.0 CONCLUSION

This Statement addresses matters regarding, design and impact. It has been prepared to evaluate these aspects and to demonstrate that the proposed development is a high quality and attractive scheme, which makes a positive contribution to the surrounding area.

The proposed scheme makes efficient and effective use of a brownfield site, whilst responding positively to the character of the area.

There is currently a farm stead which consists of a farm house and number of outbuildings which have long since been unoccupied and of which are all consider dilapidated. The existing development is therefore not fit for purpose.

These proposals aim to be an exemplar light industrial scheme. Local businesses will have the availability of BREEAM Excellent buildings, which will address local employment needs while contributing positively to the environment.

A considerable and substantive landscaping scheme and ecology strategy forms part of the proposals and will enhance the surrounding biodiversity while safeguarding the site's location close to a designated S.S.I and strategic gap.

The bespoke designs of the proposed buildings are informed by the site's characteristics as a former farmstead and within the countryside. The new units have been designed to coordinate with the robust landscaping scheme to become a continuation of the wider countryside.

The application put forwards meets all local and national policies and must also be considered a positive contribution to the surrounding area.

It is therefore respectfully requested that this planning application is approved.

APPENDIX A

ADVICE FROM EBC

From: Altman, Rebecca <rebecca.altman@eastleigh.gov.uk>
Sent: 01 April 2022 10:22
To: Marie Nagy
Cc: tom@countryhomes.co; Jason Murphy; Alice Gamble; Griffin, Tim; Parker, Nicholas
Subject: RE: Moorlands Farm - West End - proposed light industrial development following withdrawal of application ref. O/21/91192

Dear Marie

Thank you for the latest proposals for Moorlands Farm.

I have reviewed these plans in liaison with our Landscape Architect and on the whole I feel that this latest proposal is moving in the right direction. At this stage I have not sought comments from other specialist consultees as this would be more useful when further technical information is provided (e.g. drainage, ecology).

The proposal now shows the new buildings predominantly within the site of the existing buildings, minimising the encroachment into the undeveloped part of the site. This is a significant improvement. The sketch images of the elevations also indicate a much softer design for the buildings, with varied timber cladding that could create a more 'rural' appearance appropriate for the countryside setting. With appropriate landscaping, these buildings could be further assimilated into the landscaping, reducing their visual impact. This would all assist in reducing the 'urbanising' effect of the development, which was a significant concern with the previous scheme being contrary to Policy DM18 of the emerging local plan. Please note that we are anticipating adoption of the emerging Local Plan within the next month.

I have set out below some specific queries and comments for consideration:

- **Building appearance** – The acceptability of the proposed building design would to a great extent depend on the quality of materials and the height of the buildings. The sketches suggest some variation in roof form, which would be encouraged. Green roofs could also be considered, which would provide added benefits for biodiversity and drainage.
- **Entrance area and access road** – The access road appears to be shown abutting the western boundary and it is not clear if this would leave any room for retained trees or replacement planting. The trees currently alongside the access track provide a significant level of screening, particularly from the motorway, therefore any proposal to remove trees would need to be carefully considered and space for replacement planting needs to be provided (min. 2m wide). The level of hard surfacing on the western side of the site also still seems quite large, which may be due to required turning space (this would need to be clarified) Any amendments to reduce the level of hard surfacing and /or provide further screening would be welcomed, or provision of varied surfacing materials could be considered.
- **Planting** – In developing the detailed landscaping scheme, consideration should be given to breaking up the hard surfaced areas as much as possible. E.g. could a planted 'island' be created at the access road entrance? The screening strip adjacent to the open storage yard south of Unit B also appears too narrow. Further detail will be needed as to how the ecology buffer zone indicated on the northern side of the site would be created / managed.
- **Units C and D** – We would question whether the smaller unit, Unit C, could be of a similar design / shape to the other larger units. Further details of the appearance of this building would be required, along with the proposed estate office (Unit D).
- **Boundary treatments** – It is recommended that any future application is accompanied by a boundary treatment plan. The types (design, colour etc) of boundary treatments can make a significant impact on the quality of a development.
- **Ecology and drainage** – The indication of a SuDS feature is welcomed. Detailed drainage proposals would need to be worked up alongside ecology and landscaping schemes, and I would recommend liaison with EBC

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specialists at the earliest opportunity to ensure that all matters raised during the previous application can be satisfactorily addressed.

I trust that these comments are useful in progressing the proposed development.

I would also draw your attention back to the consultee comments provided for the previous application, which set out a number of key matters that need to be addressed going forward. This included ecology and drainage matters concerns from Highways England, and concerns about the impact on the adjacent public footpath.

I would advise that any future application is submitted as a full application, but as a minimum I would suggest an outline application would need to include details of access, layout and scale.

Moving forwards, if you wanted detailed consultation responses from our Specialists (e.g. ecology) at a pre-application stage, this may require a formal pre-application submission. We can discuss this in due course.

Please accept these comments without prejudice to any future decision of the Local Planning Authority.

Kind regards,

Rebecca Altman

Rebecca Altman
Principal Planning Officer
Working days - Wed-Fri

As most staff are currently working from home, email is the best way to contact us.
A direct phone call may not be answered.

023 8068 8266



Eastleigh Borough Council | Eastleigh House | Upper Market Street | Eastleigh | SO50 9YN