

# 4.0 Design

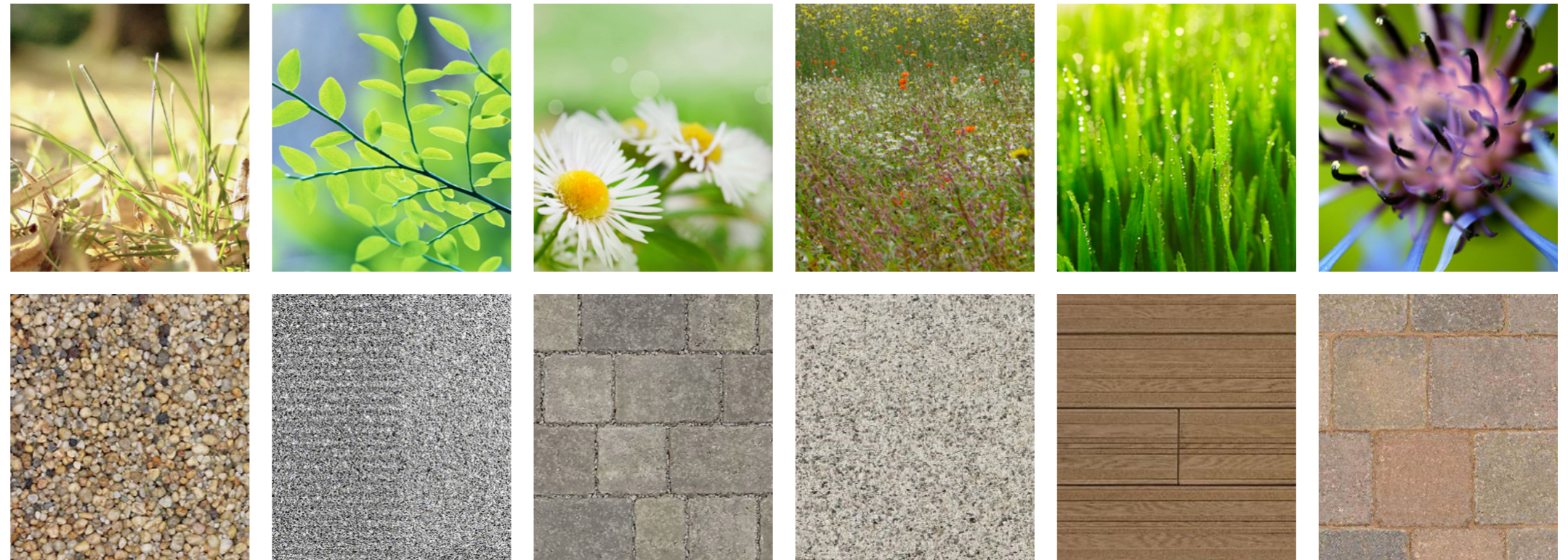
## 4.6 Landscaping & Amenity

### 4.6.1 Overview / Materiality

A range of high-quality materials are proposed that are suitable for the town centre location within the heart of the conservation area. A variety of hard paving materials have been selected, in order to break up large areas for greater visual interest, as well as emphasising the orientation of blocks and alignment with adjacent streets. It helps to create legible and clear routes through the site and also serves to provide differentiation between different areas and uses and to help denote public and private spaces. Shared surfaces are generally proposed as there is limited vehicle movement through the site, with paving texture used to denote pedestrian routes and assist those with visual or wayfinding impairment.

In terms of soft landscaping, a variety of different habitat creation areas are proposed, including use of native species to enhance the ecological value and biodiversity of the site. Proposed planting also provides a softening effect to the proposed development and is beneficial for resident and visitor health and well-being, with multi-sensory planting proposed.

Proposed :Landscape Scheme





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## 4.6 Landscaping & Amenity

### 4.6.2 Public Realm

The proposed site layout provides opportunities for the creation of a number of different public realm areas with different character and uses. This includes areas of public open space as well as the new public routes created through the site.

Both designated and incidental public realm areas will provide opportunities for social interaction for both the new and existing local communities, with a mix of formal and informal uses to encourage casual use – places to meet, to sit and to rest.

The amount of Public Amenity Space created across the site is approximately 6025 sqm in total.

Two key areas of public open space have been created.

The first, Calthorpe Square and the Manor Gardens, creates a welcoming entrance to the site, at the main entrance to the upper ground level off Calthorpe Street. This space serves to provide both space and an improved aspect to the front of Calthorpe Manor, enhancing and preserving views from along Calthorpe Street. It creates a defined, attractive place that links the Manor back to the existing Gatehouses, with the proposed gable ends to Block A providing an appropriate and contextual backdrop to the new square.

Calthorpe Square - Manor Gardens



Indicative 3D Visualisation



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### 4.6.2 Public Realm

From the new Square, the Manor Gardens - a high-quality shared surface street, overlooked by Block A frontage and the proposed new townhouses, leads into the new development, linking to Calthorpe Gardens – the main north – south connection through the site, with Blocks A-D which front the route, referencing the horseshoe shape of the old development. Calthorpe Gardens leads to the second key element of public open space, via landscaped podium steps that bridge the upper and lower proposed ground levels.

This is the Church Square Play Plaza. Forming an element of public realm that enhances the Methodist Church setting is a key objective of the proposals, and as a valued community asset, it is an appropriate location to centre the required play provisions around. The play spaces are envisaged as fairly informal in nature, so whilst they will be equipped, they will have sculptural pieces that can adapt to flexible and imaginative play whilst being in keeping with the high-quality public realm and town centre, urban character of the site.

We have proposed to remodel site levels, terracing down towards the church to provide opportunity for direct connection through to the church via a gated access for play groups, as well as to improve the safety and overlooking of the yard space to the south-west of the church, which is presently screened by a large retaining wall and the inactivity of the car park. The remodelling of levels also helps generally to integrate the development into the surrounding context and existing street levels.

This key element of public space is overlooked by Blocks D,E and F, which all provide natural surveillance and active frontage.

The proposed play area of approximately 787 sqm exceeds that required based on 600 residents as well as the figure requested at pre-application stage (500sqm). The site is also only a 5 minute walk to People's Park, which includes an equipped playground, open green space as well as tennis court and bowling green.

Church Square - Play Plaza



Indicative 3D Visualisation



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### 4.6.2 Public Realm

Two new east – west routes through the site provide access to the central Play Plaza, with Smithy Walk to the south of Block F, referencing the previous use of the site, and Calthorpe Walk to the south of Calthorpe House. Both of these routes use a mix of high-quality surfacing, planting and careful framing of heritage asset views to create attractive and welcoming walks through the site. They also both feature visitor cycle storage to further encourage sustainable routes through and around the site. Calthorpe Walk in particular references the typical narrow passageways around the town centre, opening up with a view of the Church, and contains attractive incidental open space, for example, to the rear of the proposed Gatehouse, with a landscape setting and views of the Manor Gatehouse cottages and St Johns Church.

The overall amount of Public Open Space may also fall below that indicated at pre-application stage, but has been based on a viable balance between open space and development, as well as the need to create active frontage and repair existing streetscenes.

### Sketch Development Views



Smithy Walk



Calthorpe Walk



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## 4.6 Landscaping & Amenity

### 4.6.3 Communal Private Amenity

For new residents, those within the apartment blocks predominantly have access to private communal external amenity space. Across the site, a total of approximately 1,350 sqm of external private communal space is provided.

To **Blocks A and B**, an attractive, landscaped courtyard is created between the wings of the block at upper ground level over the lower ground car park. This also creates a buffer space from the development to the adjacent Manor Gatehouses, and planting restricts access from the Calthorpe Square public realm, with secure gate allowing for maintenance access only. The external space benefits from a communal Garden Room for both blocks, and access from each core allows use by all residents. A second garden room to the end of Block B looks out to the entrance of Calthorpe Walk, providing access to general external amenity space as well as providing a welcoming entrance to the new route.

A further shared external amenity space is provided at 3rd floor roof terrace level, which is also accessible by all units. It is proposed that the duplex units fronting Calthorpe Gardens also have restricted core access to enable use of these spaces.

**Blocks C and D** have a similar arrangement, with lower ground floor shared external courtyard to the east of the blocks between wings. Although technically open to the footpath around the east of the site, this is very much a secondary route, primarily envisaged for residents, and the landscape design, with wildflower edges, will discourage use by non-residents.

The communal garden room for Blocks C and D is at the third floor roof terrace level, with access out to a landscaped garden terrace. At second floor, a further roof terrace is provided, although it is not designated for resident use, but given over as a dedicated space for nature, with a proposed biodiverse roof that can include bug hotels in addition to intensive planting.

**Block E** has shared private space to the west, also providing a buffer zone to adjacent Calthorpe House. Secure gates and railing at each end of the shared space prevent unauthorised access, which is also overlooked by a communal garden room. The garden room is externally accessed and allows for equal use between apartments and duplex units, and the internal core also provides access to the private, landscaped communal courtyard. Block E is the only block to have separate outbuildings for cycle storage, which is located within the secure boundary of the courtyard for improved security. The stores have a green roof for enhanced biodiversity.

The lower roof element of Block E is also designed as a nature terrace, with biodiverse roof specified, including incorporation of features such as bug hotels.

**Blocks F and G** have a shared, fully enclosed courtyard, known as The Smithy Gardens in reference to historical site use. This is also an attractive, landscape space with a mix of hard and soft landscaping. It is also overlooked by a communal garden room, shared between the blocks as well as a garden maintenance store. The proposed single storey refuse store also is proposed to have a dedicated nature roof.

### Development Sketch Views



Blocks C and D



Block E



# 4.0 Design

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### 4.6.4 Private Amenity

Whilst most of the apartments benefit from the use of shared private communal space, where appropriate to the scheme, private amenity in the form of balconies or terraces have been proposed. Balconies have been positioned where animation of public space is important, for example overlooking Calthorpe Square from the end of Block A, as well as overlooking the Church Square Play Plaza from Block E. Raised or sunken terraces are also proposed where required for privacy or to deal with transitioning site levels, and many ground-fronting units feature small terraces for defensible space.

The proposed townhouses each have their own private, rear garden in accordance with typical town house typologies, as well as an inset balcony to the principal bedroom.

All dwellings also benefit from high-quality areas of public realm and the proposed amount is compatible with an urban, town centre location.

### Sketch Development Views



Balconies to Block E overlooking the Church Square Play Plaza

### 4.6.5 Defensible Space

Ground floor fronting apartments typically have a small area of private, defensible space, bounded with planting or low brick wall and railings, as is typical for many local frontages. This not only provides valuable private amenity space, but improves security by defining public and private boundaries, as well as providing a sense of privacy.

Sometimes, these terraces or also raised slightly due to site levels, which can also increase the feeling of privacy.

Duplex units are also often employed to ground floor locations on primary routes or fronting on to key areas of public realm. This creates more of an active frontage and traditional street feel, with front door access and enhanced activity, but also locates private bedrooms to the upper levels for additional privacy.

### Sketch Development Views



Defensible Space and Private Terrace to Block F / G Duplex Units to Calthorpe Street



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## 4.6 Landscaping & Amenity

### 4.6.5 Defensible Space

Proposed boundary treatments vary across the site in accordance with site specific conditions, but generally, the existing retaining walls have been removed as much as possible to create better engagement with surrounding context.

To the north of the site, the high retaining, boundary walls to Marlborough Road and Calthorpe Street are being removed. The new frontage of Block G and new paving up to back of pavement will provide a more active frontage and the new boundary with Marlborough Road, with a detail in the paving to denote the boundary between the site and adopted pavement. Small brick walls to terraces to the end of Block F provide the new Marlborough Road frontage adjacent to the site entrance.

To Calthorpe Street, a low brick wall with railings define private defensible space outside of Blocks F and G, with soft landscaping up to back of pavement providing further defensible space.

The existing wall and fence boundary treatment between the site to the west of Block E and to Calthorpe House will be retained, with new brick wall along the side access to Calthorpe Walk, in front of the existing fence-line boundary to the side of Calthorpe House. This can be greened with climbing plants to create a more attractive boundary and encourage biodiversity.

The proposed Gatehouse forms the next boundary along Calthorpe Street, with gated access to the car park entrance and a new lower level retaining wall required along the side of the access ramp. A hedge line against the existing boundary to the rear of the existing Gatehouses courtyard, forms the boundary to the external courtyard of Blocks A and B behind.

South of the new Gatehouse, the new public realm area of Calthorpe Square and Manor Gardens forms the boundary with Calthorpe Street, defined with paving to encourage movement and use direct of Calthorpe Street.

To the southern side of the site access off Calthorpe Street, a new boundary wall is proposed to enclose the retained short-stay visitor / public car park, to improve the frontage to the main road. The existing boundaries with the buildings to the south and to Calthorpe Manor will be retained.

Along the new access road into the site along Manor Gardens, the existing retaining wall with the Manor will be retained, and close boarded timber fencing will be used along the side and rear boundaries of the proposed townhouses.

The existing retaining wall between the rear of Marlborough Place properties and the eastern boundary of the site will be retained, with planting in front. The retaining wall to the eastern boundary with the church however, is proposed to be removed and replaced with a lower wall where remodelling of site levels allow. This has been proposed in consultation with the adjacent Methodist Church to allow for greater permeability through to their site as well as to improve security by providing increased natural surveillance of the site, and reduced chance for climbing on to the Church extension via the current higher site levels.



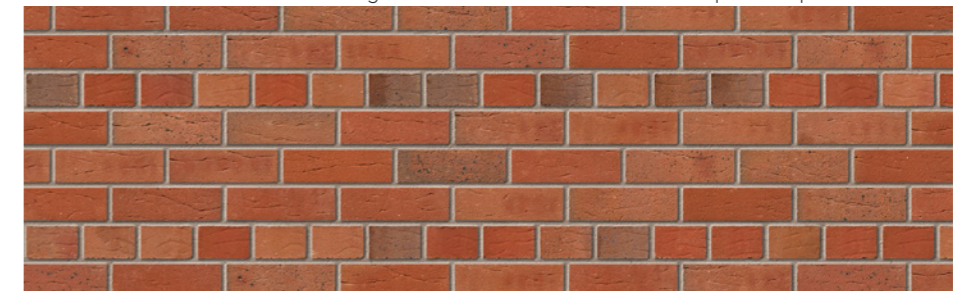
Bull nose brick coping to Marlborough Road



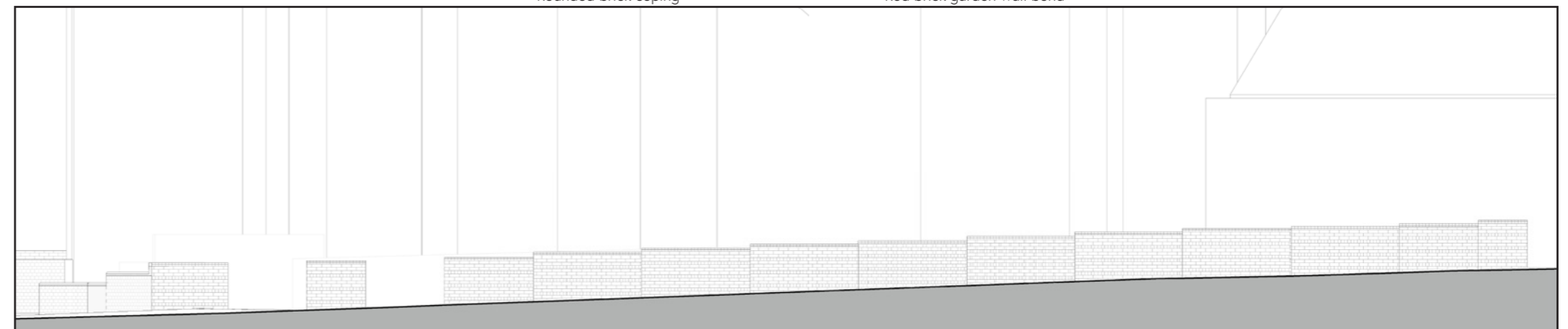
Local use of low brick walls with railings to create small areas of defensible private space



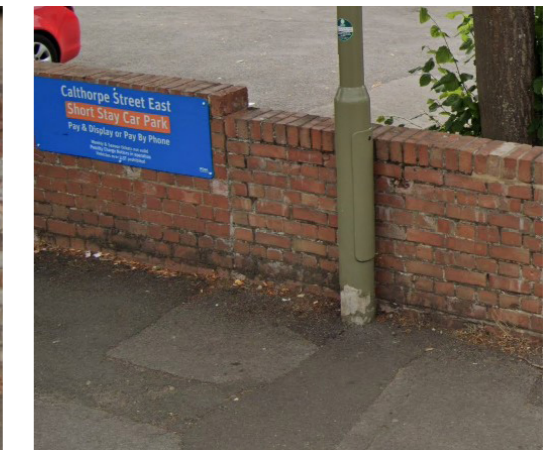
Rounded brick coping



Red brick garden wall bond



Indicative proposal for new red brick boundary wall, with garden wall bond and bullnose brick coping



Poor condition of existing car park wall to Calthorpe Street

# Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain



5.0



# 5.0 Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain

## 5.1 Existing Trees

### Existing Trees

There are a number of existing trees both across the site and to the site edges. The intention is to keep as many as possible, especially where the commissioned tree survey has identified them as good quality. This is for the benefit of both ecology and for visual amenity and wellbeing for residents and visitors.

However, the existing trees in the centre of the site are laid out in accordance with the current parking layout and their retention would not create opportunity for efficient redevelopment of the site or allow us to respond positively to the site edges. Similarly, there are existing street trees to the northern end of both Calthorpe Street and Marlborough Road, which would prevent us from developing more meaningful street frontage, with a contextually-typical set back from pavement.

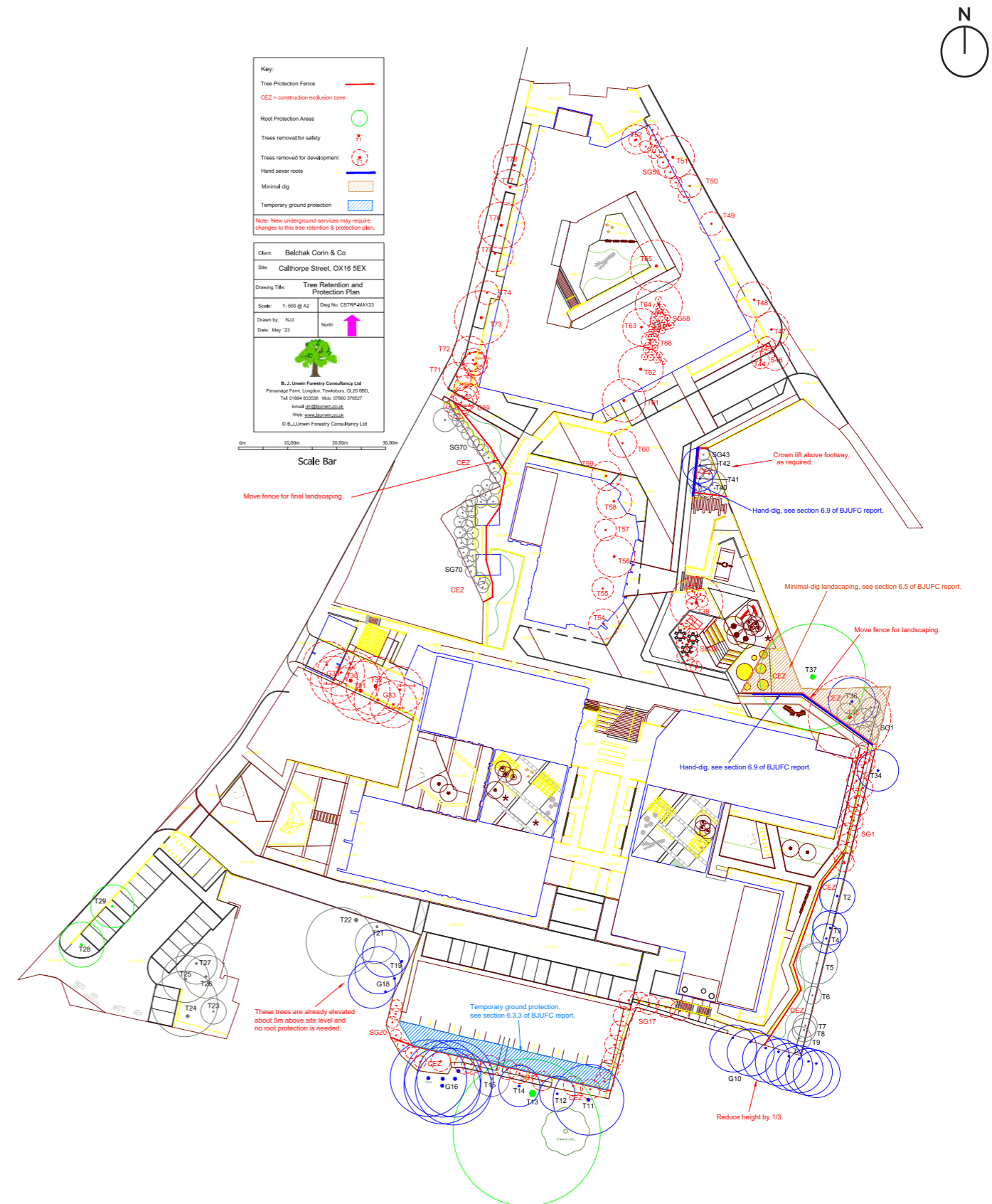
We have therefore proposed to remove trees where beneficial for the overall layout of the scheme and conservation area character in general, with the majority of these being Class C trees and described as poor quality. In terms of detailed layout, some elements of the scheme were adjusted to allow specifically for the retention of trees, for example the alignment of the site entrance off Marlborough Road and the corner of the Church, as well as the wing of Block D to accommodate a class B tree to the rear of Marlborough Place.

All trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order are being retained, along with the majority of Class B and all Class A trees.

The proposed landscaping scheme also makes provision for replacement planting, including trees, which will be better integrated into surrounding, supporting landscape to create improved habitats, as opposed to the existing site trees that are somewhat isolated and generally surrounded by hard paving and car parking or on main roads.

Please also refer to the accompanying Arboricultural Survey and Tree Impact Assessment.

### Tree Removal and Protection Plan



Extracted from report by J Unwin - Refer to accompanying Tree Survey and Impact Assessment



# 5.0 Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain

## 5.2 Ecology

### Ecology

The proposed landscaping scheme, including retention of existing trees where possible along with replacement and new planting, aims to increase biodiversity and ecological value across the site.

As well as a mix of planting throughout the public realm and external amenity space, we also have areas of dedicated biodiverse nature roofs, which have restricted access to encourage use by nature.

Elements of lightweight green walls have also been provided, to both improve visual amenity and ecological value, as well as contributing generally to a greening of the site that is good for well-being.

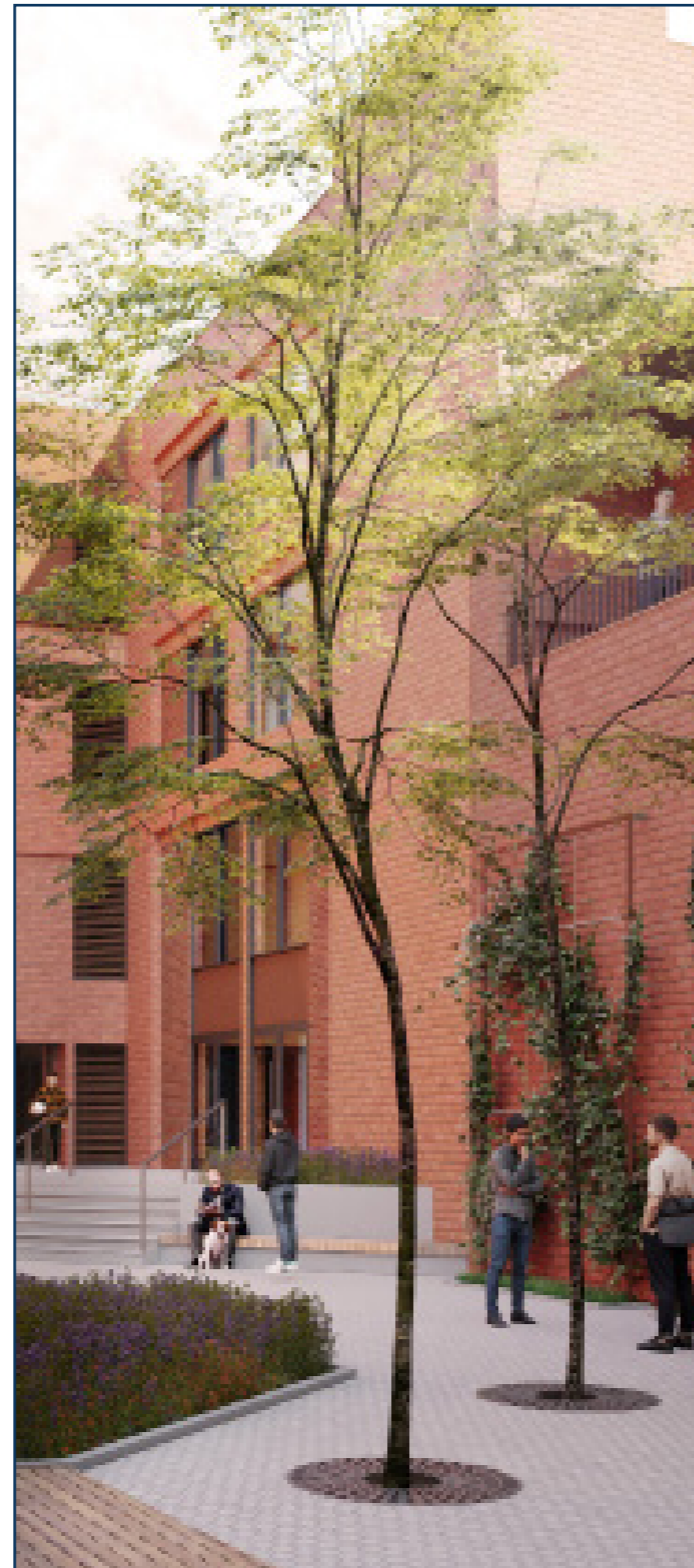
Specific habitats have also been created, with bird boxes proposed to trees and the south-eastern elevations of Blocks C and D proposed for the incorporation of integrated swift bricks and bat boxes. Bug hotels are also envisaged as being incorporated within the proposed nature roofs.

The re-use of an existing brownfield site also supports ecology more widely, by reducing the pressure on greenfield sites to provide new homes, whilst the accessible location and provision of secure cycle stores and permeable links aims to encourage sustainable travel and contribute to a healthier environment. The proposed energy strategy and use of renewable technology also helps to contribute to a cleaner environment.

### Biodiversity Net Gain

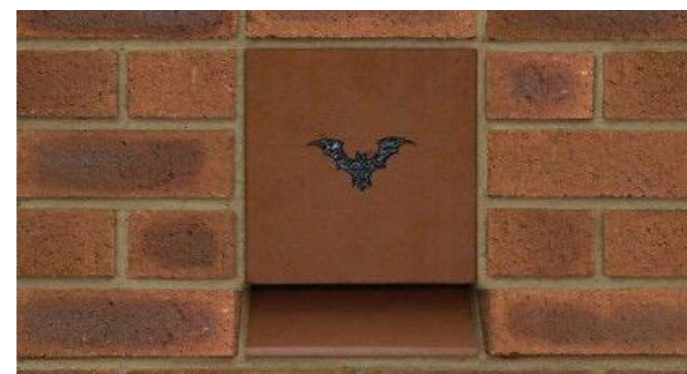
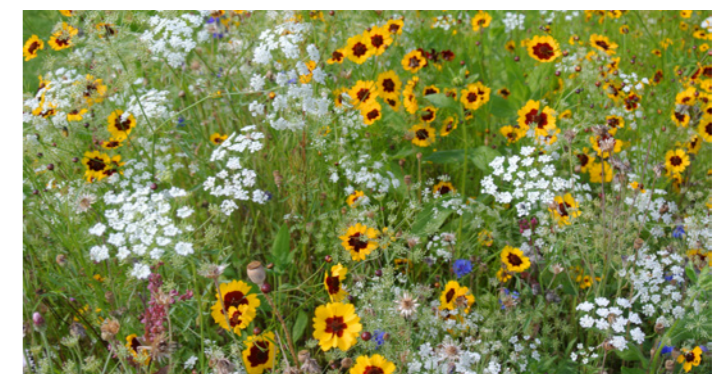
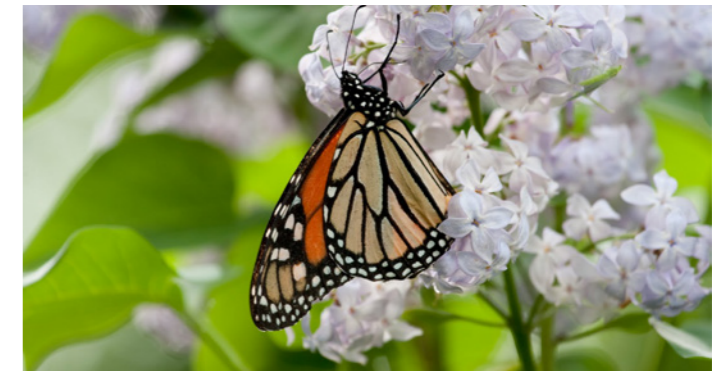
Biome have been appointed to assess the Biodiversity Net Gain associated with the proposed development of the site, over and above the value of the existing site. An overall positive gain of 18% has been calculated, which demonstrates a clear improvement in biodiversity for the site and that a number of successful measures have been employed to offset the loss of existing habitat, for example with the removal of a number of lower quality trees.

Please refer to the assessment for more detail.



## 5.3 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

### New Habitats





# Flood Risk & Drainage



6.0



# 6.0 Flood Risk & Drainage

## 6.1 Flood Risk Assessment

The proposed site is situated in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken by Hydrock and accompanies this application, providing greater detail on flood risk.

The assessment demonstrates that the site is suitable for the nature of the proposed development, is not at risk of flooding and that the proposals will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

The proposed sustainable urban drainage strategy (SUDs) also minimises risk of flooding by reducing the amount of surface water across the site and providing storage for rainwater. Greater use of soft landscaping, use of permeable paving and incorporation of blue roof systems, all contributes to a sustainable system.



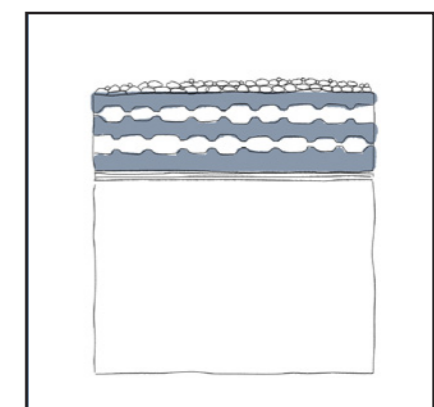
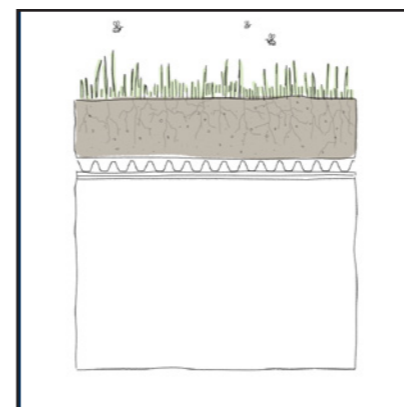
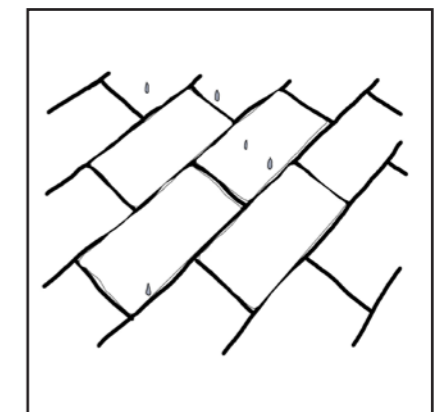
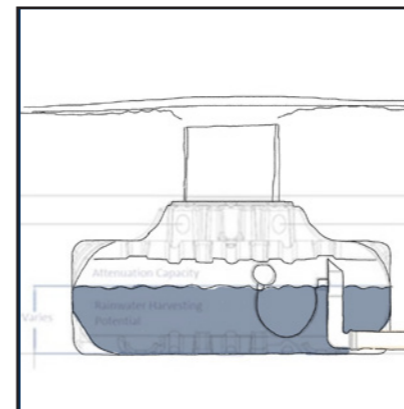
## 6.2 Drainage Strategy

The Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategy (SUDs), has been prepared by Shear Design Ltd, a civil and structural engineering company, which has helped to inform the development of the design, for example by recommending the use of blue roofs to provide additional rainwater attenuation. Geo-cellular storage below ground has also been used as part of the strategy, along with permeable paving, green roofs and increased areas of soft landscaping.

The proposed surface water drainage system has been designed with two catchments, one to the lower ground area in the north, and one to the upper ground area in the south, both of which will discharge into existing sewers.

For foul drainage, the existing network is also sufficiently sized to accommodate the proposed number of new units.

For further detail, please refer to Shear Design's Drainage Information.





# Accessibility



7.0



# 7.0 Accessibility

## 7.1 Pedestrian Permeability

### Pedestrian Permeability

As detailed in Section 4.3 (Layout), increased permeability has been a key consideration of the development of the proposals and a significant response to the pre-application feedback.

The remodelling of site levels has helped to create improved transitions with the surrounding street levels and the parking strategy whereby the majority of vehicles do not pass through the site, has helped to create a much more pedestrian-friendly environment. The improved public realm and landscaped setting will also make this a much more attractive and enjoyable site to walk through, and the enhanced surveillance from active frontage and engaging street scenes makes it a welcoming environment to encourage passing through.

Specific routes have also been created, with a number of east-west connections as well as primary north-south route through the site, along which a series of public realm spaces have been created to encourage use and activity as well as providing places to stop and rest and to create legibility and points of reference throughout the site environs.

At the northern end of the site, The Smithy Walk between Blocks F/G and E links Calthorpe Street and Marlborough Road, opening up to views of the Methodist church and the new Play Plaza.

Across the centre of the site, Calthorpe Walk between Block E and Blocks B/D, again links Calthorpe Street with Marlborough Road, either by passing through our new public realm and linking to the Smithy Walk, or directly through the Church yard – possible due to the proposed remodelling of site levels.

To the south of the site, the Manor Gardens links the site access off Calthorpe Street, with the rest of the site, either to the north-south connection along Calthorpe Gardens, or along the eastern site boundary and again out through the church or the northern end of the site.

A pedestrian ramp as well as steps is provided to allow access to Calthorpe Walk, whilst a platform lift allows navigation of the landscaped podium steps between the upper / lower and northern / southern parts of the site. This is available direct from the public realm, meaning there is no access required through private residential areas, and is available for visitors and members of the public.

Proposed Site Plan





# 7.0 Accessibility

## 7.2 Cycles

### Access

#### Access

The permeability through the site allows for bicycles to be wheeled through it and connect back into the surrounding road infrastructure, and a cycle wheel channel is incorporated into the landscaped podium steps to ensure that all routes through are accessible to cyclists.

#### Residents' Parking

Secure cycle parking for residents is provided in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council Cycle Parking Standards, with one space per one bed unit and two spaces per 2 bed or larger unit provided. Each block, A – G has its own cycle storage to allow for more convenient access and improved security, and where possible the stores have been broken down into smaller store with a target maximum of 20 spaces in each. This responds to Secured by Design feedback through the pre-application consultation process, which advised on smaller stores to reduce the impact if the security to one of the stores was breached. Whilst a maximum of 20 has not always been possible to achieve whilst at the same time of ensuring efficiency and accessibility, smaller stores have been incorporated and are generally within the footprint of the blocks they serve and well overlooked. Block E does have separate stores outside of the building, but within the secure fence line of the external courtyard, for added security.

See Section 8.3 for more detail.

Cycle spaces	1B	2B+	Total
Block A	23	22	45
Block B	18	18	36
Block C	14	30	44
Block D	30	18	48
Block E	20	14	34
Block F	34	24	58
Block G	15	8	23
	154	134	288

Required Cycle Storage by Block

### Residents' Storage

#### Blocks A-D

Blocks A-D have a number of stores at the lower ground floor car park level – these are either accessed through one of two double door pedestrian entrances into the car park from the public realm, or direct from the public realm to Block B along Calthorpe Walk. The stores within the lower ground floor car park are located close to the pedestrian entrance points without the need to transfer through motor vehicle accessible areas, to improve safety and convenience. There is then direct access via vertical circulation cores to each block A-D.

#### Block E

Block E has 2 separate external secure stores, again to limit the number of cycles in each to 20, located behind the secure line of its private amenity space. They also benefit from overlooking from the apartments. These can be accessed through the various pedestrian points into the site, or from the vehicular access points, with safe routes through the site which are largely free from motorised vehicles other than infrequent servicing.

#### Blocks F & G

Blocks F & G share a number of stores accessed off the central enclosed courtyard, as well as off Calthorpe Street. The provision of several stores is again designed to limit the number of cycles in each for improved security, as is the location within the building or secure courtyard. A semi internal / external entrance allows for cycles to come through the entrance off Calthorpe Street to access the stores off the courtyard.

### Electrical Charging Points

For each block there will be a provision for electrical charging for cycles, and large cycles including motorcycles can be securely stored within designated bays within the lower ground floor car park below blocks A-D, that serves the whole development.

### Washdown facilities

There will be washdown facilities for cycles within one of the stores for each group of blocks – i.e. A-D, E and F-G.

### Town Houses and Gatehouse

Each townhouse will have external access to a rear garden where bicycles can be securely stored.

The gatehouse has a ground floor storage / utility area, with a recess that can be used to store bicycles.

