

ANALYSIS OF THE SITE
2.11 THE ASH PLANTATION AND POND



The braided stream flows into the site from the north west forming a wetland.



The stream flows into the man made pond in its north west corner.



Duck weed is apparent in the pond, but generally the water is clear and looks clean.



Location plan



The trees within the centre of the site are nearly all ash. They appear to have been planted at the same time and in rows.



Gaps in the South boundary reveal long distance views out.



The rectangular pond is lined with evenly spaced crack willow.



A narrow rectangular island is covered in goat willow.

ANALYSIS OF THE SITE
2.12 VIEWS TO ADJACENT FIELDS



Looking north and east with the two mature oak trees in the foreground.



Location plan

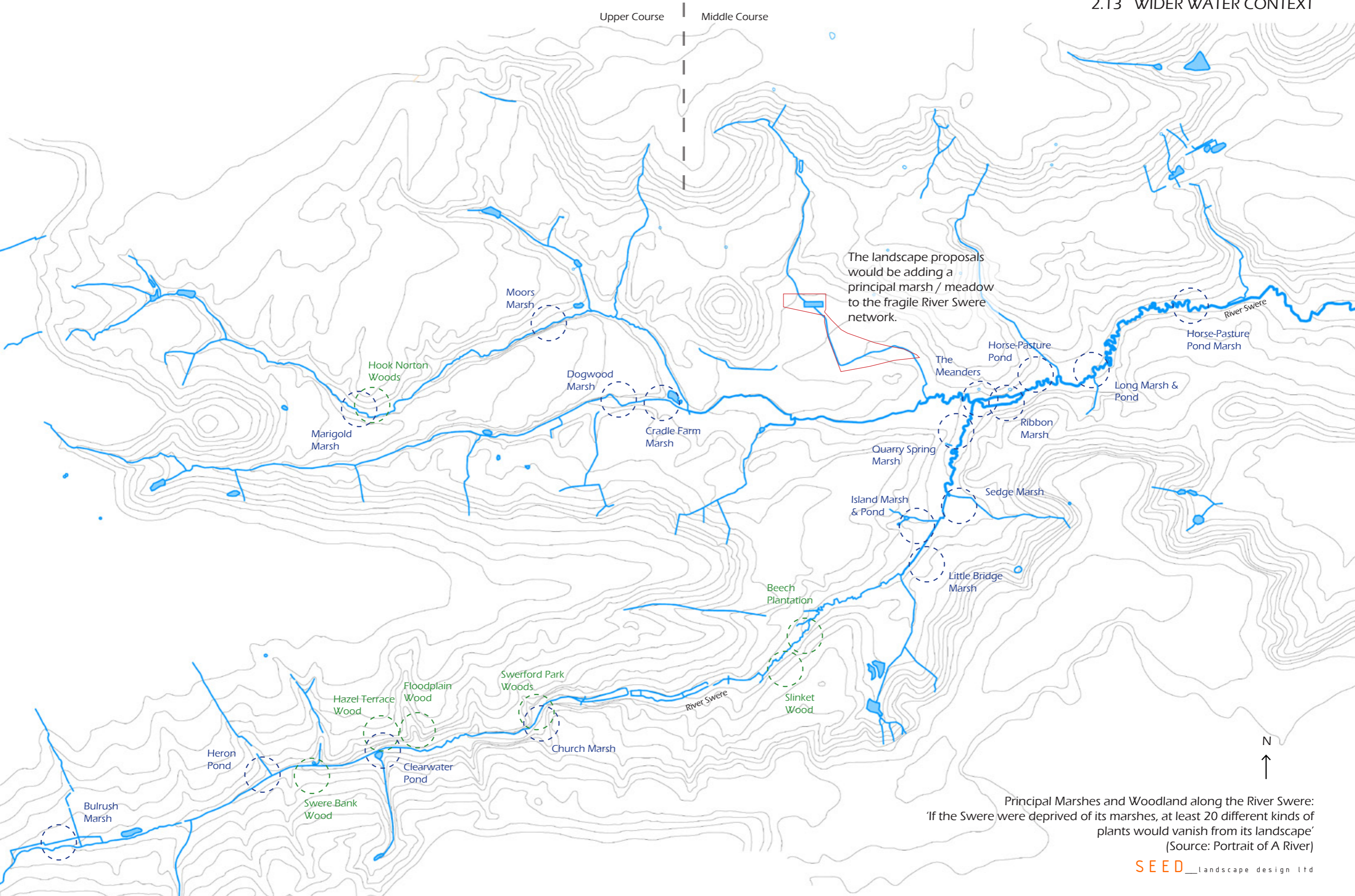


Looking west and north with mature field oaks in the middle ground.



Looking north.

ANALYSIS OF THE SITE
2.13 WIDER WATER CONTEXT



Principal Marshes and Woodland along the River Swere:
'If the Swere were deprived of its marshes, at least 20 different kinds of plants would vanish from its landscape'
(Source: Portrait of A River)



1833 (Source: www.visionofbritain.org.uk)
Stream appears natural and unaffected by man.



1885 (Source: National Library of Scotland)



1945 (Source: Google Earth)
Water courses appear unchanged since 1885



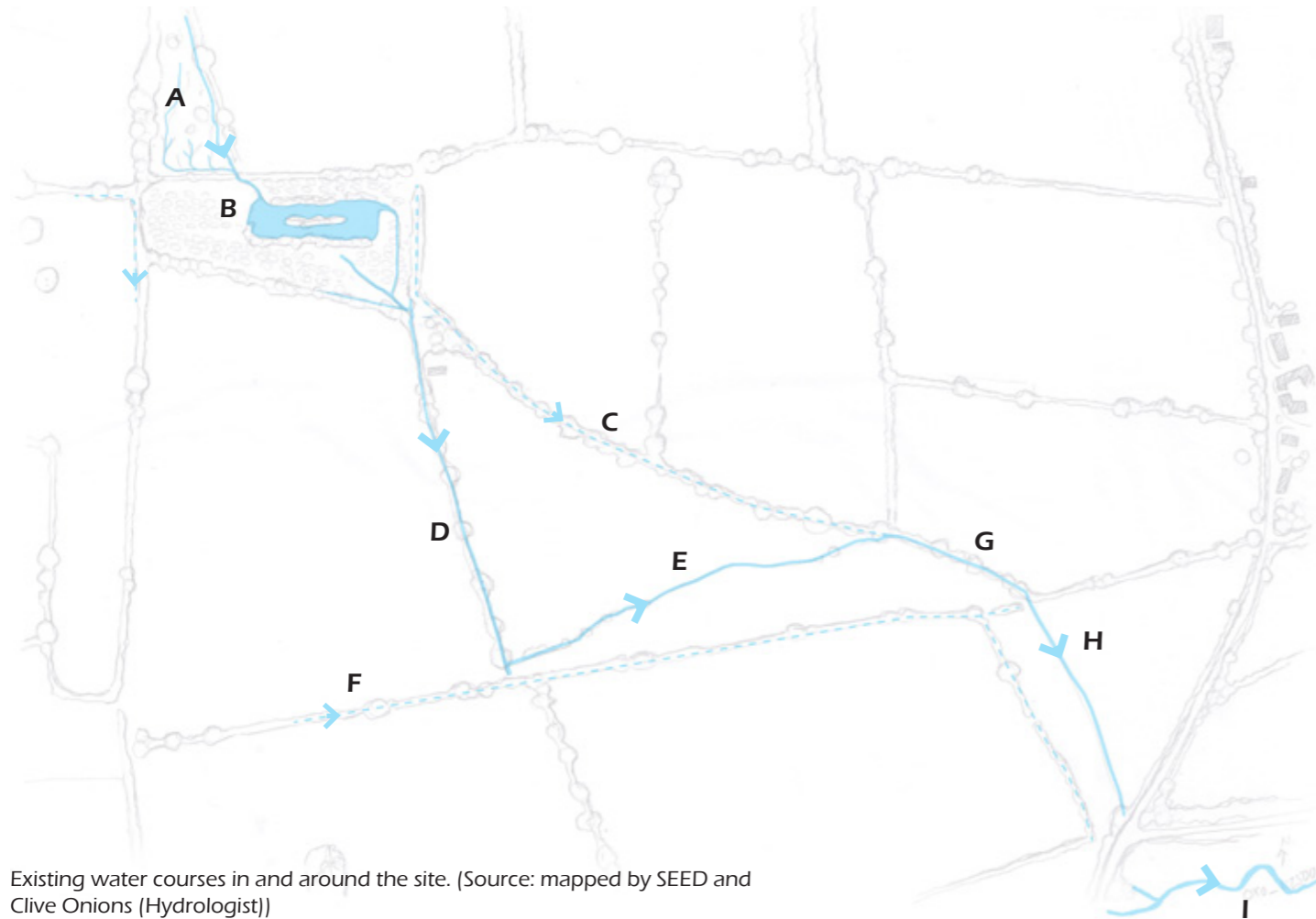
2004 (Source: Google Earth)



2006 (Source: Google Earth)



2009 (Source: Google Earth)



Existing water courses in and around the site. (Source: mapped by SEED and Clive Onions (Hydrologist))

- A** The water enters the site from the north via a braided stream / wetland. This uncontrolled water course is a result of an defunct pond that was constructed around 2009.
- B** Approx 15 years ago a rectangular pond was created and willow planted on the island and around the edge. It does not feel natural or sit comfortably within the landscape.
- C** Old (dry) ditch to field boundary.
- D** This is now the main water course and appears to have been created between 1833 and 1842.
- E** Between 1833 and 1842 the stream was diverted to flow through the field. It does not feel natural, but it now supports a rich variety of wetland meadow plants and is part of the landscape.
- F** Field ditch that appears to be dry most of the time. Although intercepts water from ridge and furrow field to the south.
- G** The diverted streams appears to meets its pre 1833 course. This is marked on site by a large pollarded Willow.
- H** From the historical maps this looks like the pre 1833 course of the stream. Although appears to have been canalised.
- I** The pre 1833 course of the stream and the start of the Wiggington Meanders .



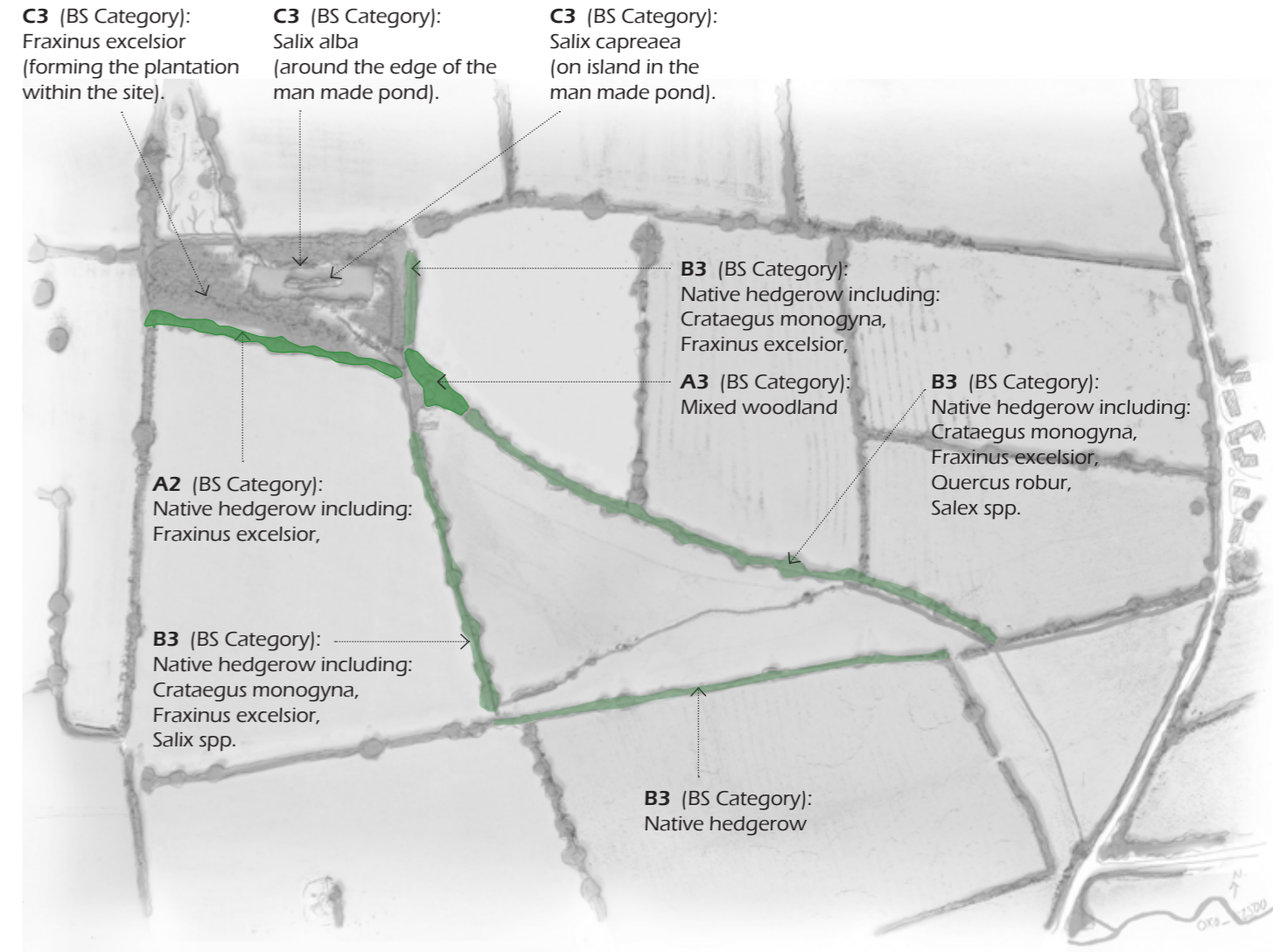
Key ecological habitats (Source: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and National Vegetation Classification Survey by Ecology By Design)

- A NVC community MG4 *Alopecurus pratensis* – *Sanguisorba officinalis* grassland.**
This is a lowland neutral grassland community characterised by a species-rich sward. There are 16 species listed as 'constants' of this community in Rodwell 1992. Of these species, 13 were present within the Site and all were found in quadrats. Of the 35 species recorded in the grassland of the site, only six would be considered untypical of the MG4 community, and these were all infrequently encountered.
The grassland on Site can therefore be considered to have an assemblage of species typical of the MG4 community. However, the constancy with which many of these species occur is lower than that that which would be found in a 'good' example of the community.
MG4 grassland falls within the definition of a lowland meadow and as such is 'habitat of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity under the provisions of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 (See Section 7.2).
- B Broadleaved semi-natural woodland**
A fragment of broadleaved semi-natural woodland is present at the narrowest point at the site where the grassland meets the plantation woodland. Here the ground flora is diverse and includes many bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), lords-and-ladies (*Arum maculatum*) and foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*).
- C Standing water**
A man-made pond was created by the previous landowner in the plantation woodland. It is shaded and there is quite a lot of leaf litter present with little aquatic vegetation. There were some strands of Yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) on the margins.
- D Broadleaved plantation woodland**
The previous landowner created an area of plantation woodland around twenty years ago. This was primarily formed of dozens of young ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) specimens. The trees are planted in uniform rows and are still young. The ground flora is still primarily composed of grassland species present prior to the tree-planting although there are clumps of tufted hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) and evidence of some developing woodland ground flora at the edges of the plantation.



Existing Damaged Landscape

- A** The introduced poorly designed pond and trees almost certainly absorbs floodwater that otherwise would have flooded the damp meadow.
- B** The pond has little ecological value due to its steep edge profiles and over shading by the surrounding trees.
- C** Un-managed, dark mono culture of the Ash plantation has little ecological benefit or diversity. Given that Ash die-back is present in the surrounding hedgerows it is almost certain that the trees will die.
- D** The hedgerows are un-managed and although they are diverse and ecologically rich at the moment if they are not managed as field boundaries they will start to grow out and decline.
- E** The damp meadow is nationally important, but is relatively species poor, almost certainly due to the change in winter flooding caused by the pond and Ash plantation.
- F** The stream is un-managed, hidden and currently has little influence on its adjacent landscape context.
- G** A Cotswold aggregate access road was laid within the last 2 years. It is wide, very yellow and dominant within the landscape.



Key Groups of Existing Trees (Source: Trees and Constraints by Cotswold Wildlife Surveys July 2019)

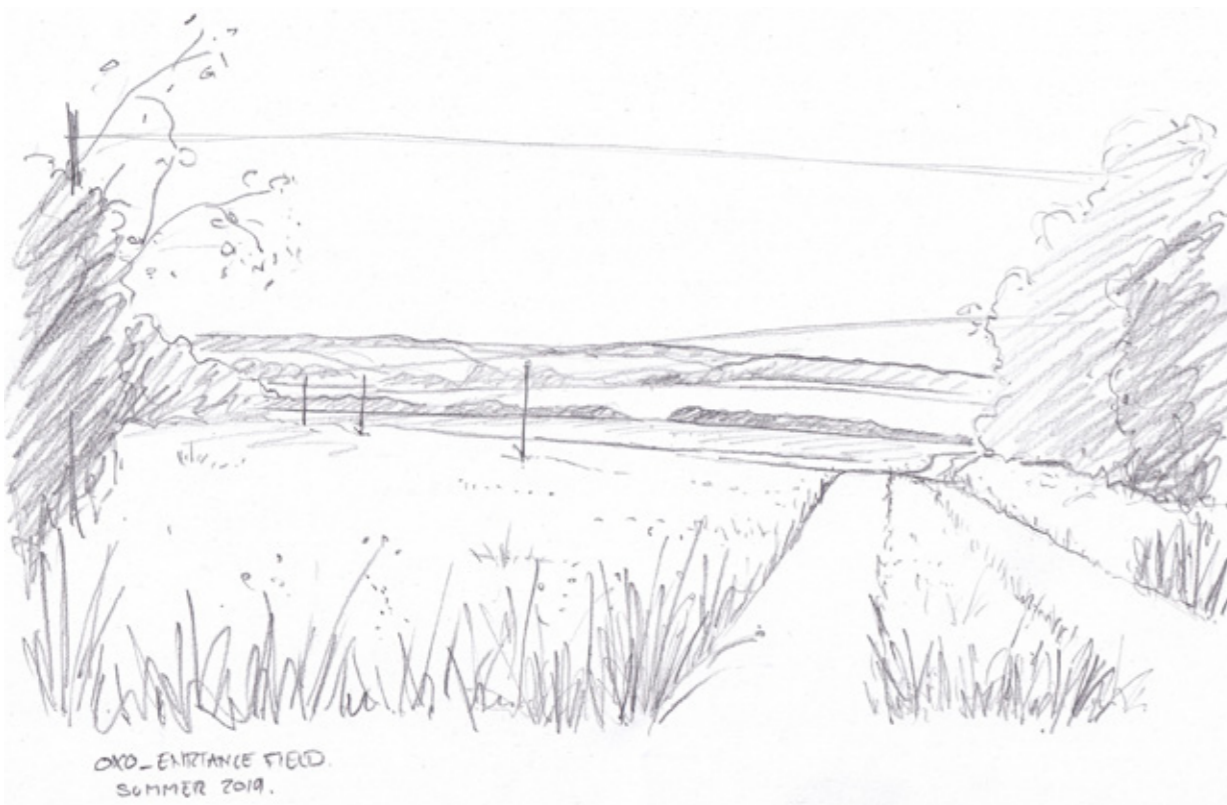
All of the category A and B trees are within the hedgerow boundary and the small area of woodland north of the old barn. This is where the ground flora is the most diverse. The rest of the site is an Ash plantation with un-managed Willow around the pond.

Ash Die-back does not appear to be on site yet (summer 2019), however it is within the adjacent hedgerows and will almost certainly only be a matter of time before the ash on site are infected. The ground flora of the Ash plantation is primarily grassland species prior to the tree planting.

LANDSCAPE RESPONSES TO SITE & INITIAL IDEAS



1. ENTRANCE OFF PUBLIC HIGHWAY:
A new agricultural gate will be set 6m back from the edge of the highway.



2. THE TOP FIELD;
This field is not owned by our Client, but she has right of access through it. The only proposed intervention is to reduce the wide Cotswold chipping road to a 3.1m wide understated farm track with a passing place.



3. SENSE OF ARRIVAL AT THE DAMP MEADOW:
The hedgerow separating the top field from the damp meadow will be managed and reinforced. A new hedgerow tree will be planted to frame the threshold into the damp meadow. The wide cotswold chipping road will be reduce to a 3.1m wide understated farm track, with a passing place.



4. THE DAMP MEADOW:

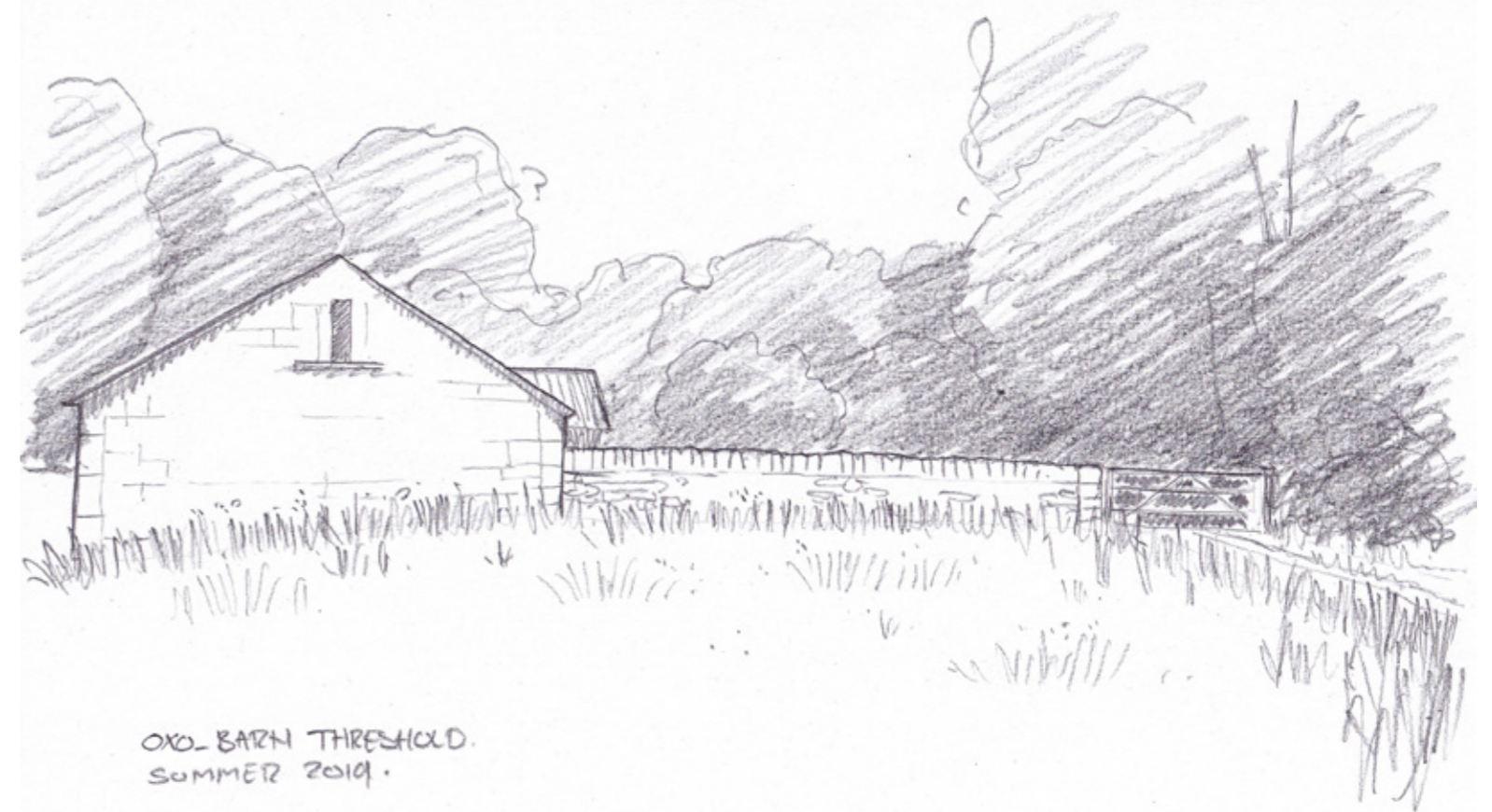
The stream will be cleared of self-seeded shrubs and along with the damp meadow managed as detailed on 4.25 page.

A new low key access track will link the existing track to the Barn.



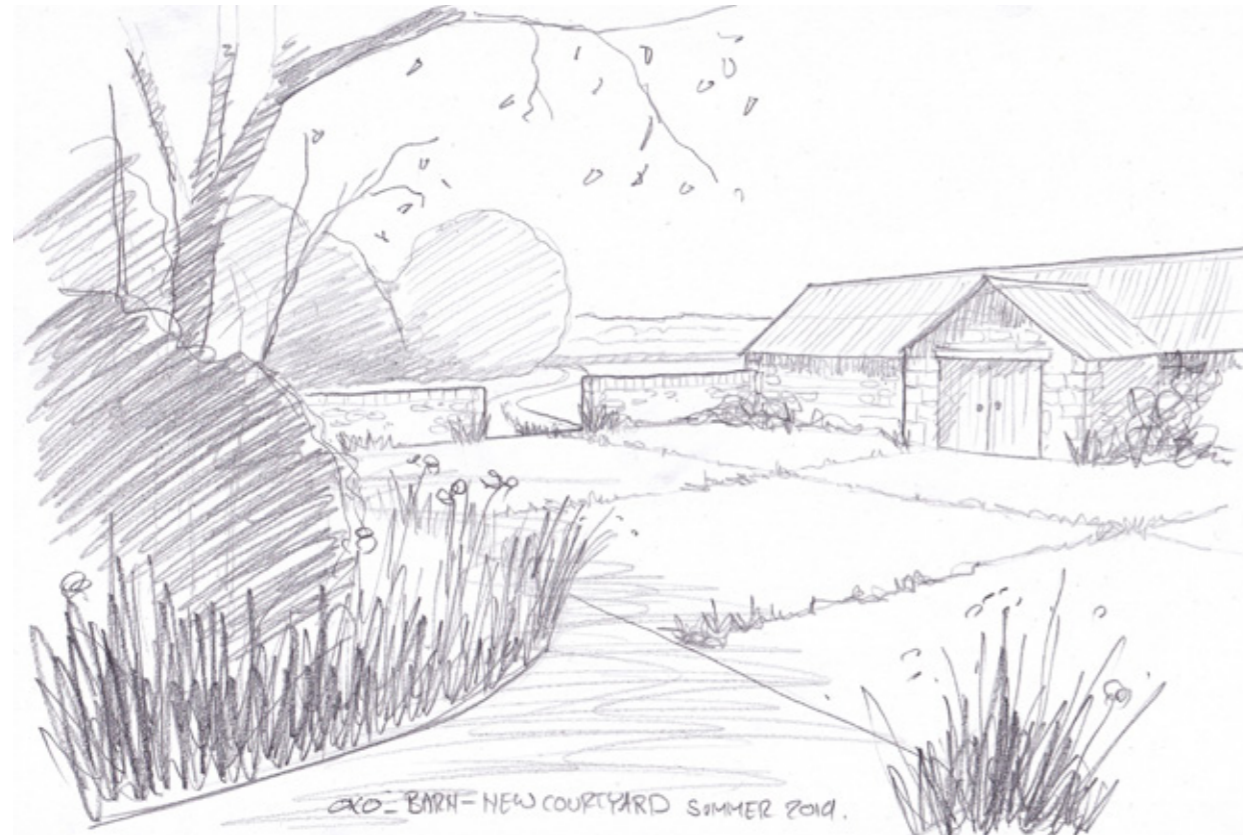
5. SENSE OF DESTINATION TO THE OLD BARN:

A new low key farm track leads to the old barn with a passing place on the hedgerow side of the track.



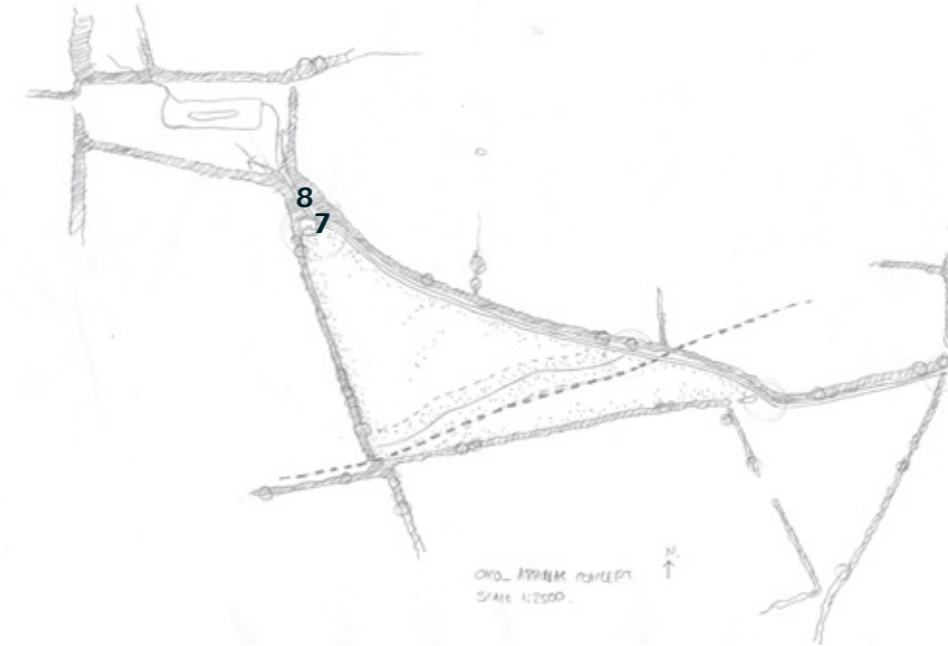
6. SENSE OF ARRIVAL AT THE OLD BARN AND THE WOODLAND:

Access to the site and the old barn would be through an agricultural field gate. The Barn and the associated walls will be repaired for use as storage for site landscape maintenance machinery.



7. THE BARN COURTYARD:

A new agricultural courtyard would be created outside the old Barn. This would allow easy access for landscape management machinery to be stored. The courtyard surface would be poured concrete with large gaps so plants could colonise and water infiltrate



8. SENSE OF DESTINATION TO THE HOUSE:

A new tarmac access track surfaced in gravel would be carefully woven through the existing woodland. The construction would be no dig and only adjacent scrub would be cleared to facilitate it.

LANDSCAPE RESPONSES TO SITE & INITIAL IDEAS
3.4 THE HOUSE SETTING - BRINGING THE NATIVE WOODLAND IN

The woodland just to the north of The Old Barn is mixed, native and old. The mature trees are primarily oak which are the focal points. Hawthorn and hazel is the dominant shrub layer with the blue bells forming the spring ground story. Cow parsley populates the woodland edges. Overall this woodland has an established, native feel, full of various greens and dappled pools of light.

The trees around the pond are almost exclusively ash. They have a striking but unnatural appearance and have little biodiversity. They are unlikely to survive ash dieback.

The design should bring the character of the mixed native woodland to the north of the old Barn into the site. Elements of the ash should be retained to provide shelter and support for the new native woodland. This concept of the old supporting the new ties the multi-generational living back into the landscape, which in turn protectively wraps around the house.



MIX NATIVE WOODLAND:
 Sentinel Woodland Tree / Oaks are Focal Tree / Mixed Broadleaf Trees / Bluebells / Appears Managed / Woodland Glades / Dappled Light / Varied Ground Storey / Open Canopy



ASH PLANTATIONS:
 Ghost Trees / Ash Emerging From Cow Parsley / Looks Good When Not Looking Down Lines / How Long Will Ash Last?

LANDSCAPE RESPONSES TO SITE & INITIAL IDEAS

3.5 THE HOUSE SETTING - VISUAL LINKING INTO THE LANDSCAPE CONTEXT



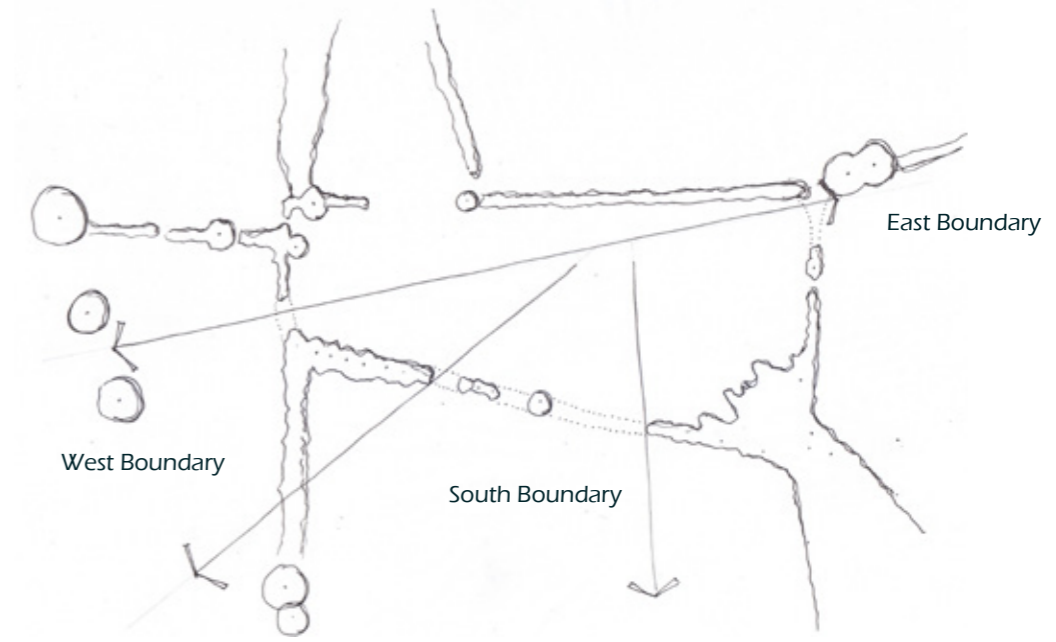
EAST BOUNDARY:
Mature Oaks / Focal Point / Morning Sun



WEST BOUNDARY:
3 Mature Oaks / Hedgerow Tree / Field Trees / Focal Point / Evening Sun

The boundaries of the Ash plantation consists of native, unmanaged hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees dotted throughout. The occasional gap within in the boundary reveals long and medium distant views out to the surrounding landscape.

These views should be exploited during the design process and the most of their north, east, south and west orientation.

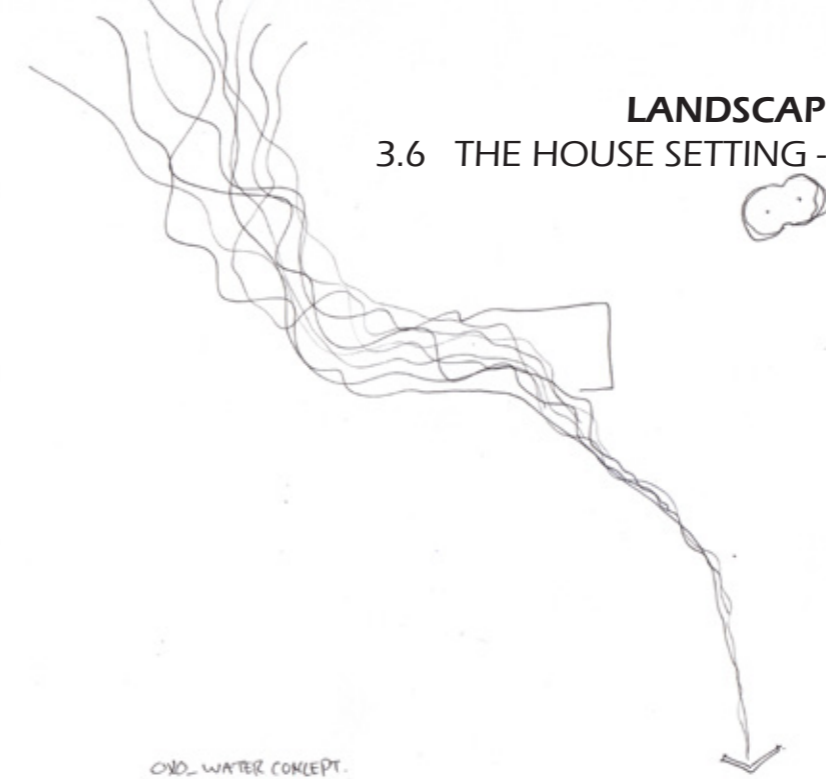


SOUTH BOUNDARY:
Gap In Boundary / Long Distant Views Out / View of South Hill / Silage Field / Bright Green / Dark to Light From Woodland

LANDSCAPE RESPONSES TO SITE & INITIAL IDEAS
3.6 THE HOUSE SETTING - MAKING MORE OF THE WATER ON SITE

The water on site has been modified and diverted over the years and has a manmade character to it. However the marshland to the north feels wild and natural with the vegetation providing wonderful colour and texture.

Having water on the site is a wonderful opportunity. The pond is used by wildlife while adding a reflective nature the space both of which should be enhanced and woven into the design.



NORTH BOUNDARY:
 Natural Wetland / Unspoiled / Layered Sepias and Browns / Winter Structure shaped by SW wind / Yellow Willows / White Fireweed Seed Heads / Yellow Tufted Hairgrass / Green Grass / Standing Water



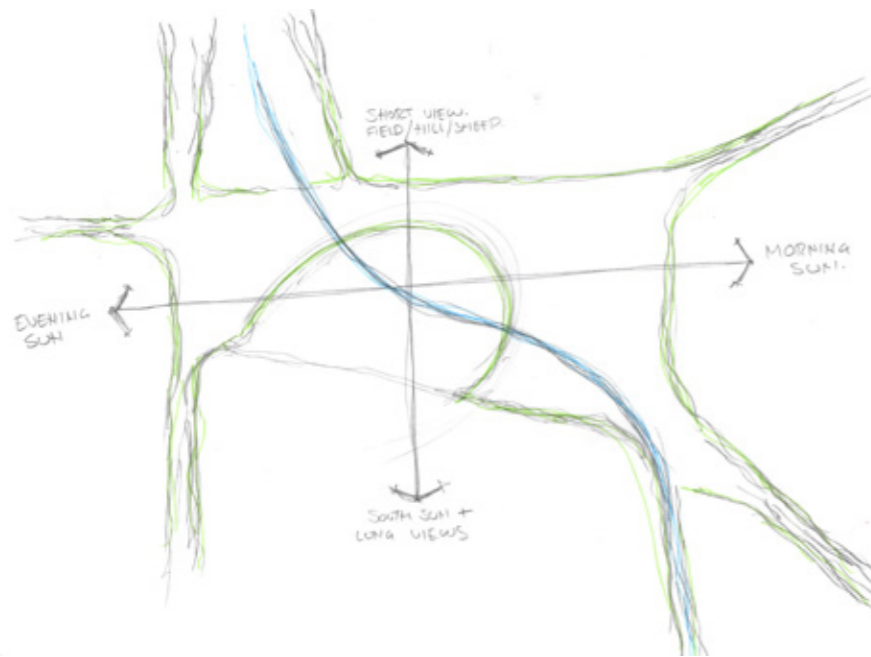
SOUTH REFLECTIONS:
 Crack Willow / Obscured Views Out / Steep Converted Banks / No Marginals Except Yellow Flags / Sky and Trees Reflected / Clear Water / Duck Weed

LANDSCAPE & BIODIVERSITY PROPOSALS



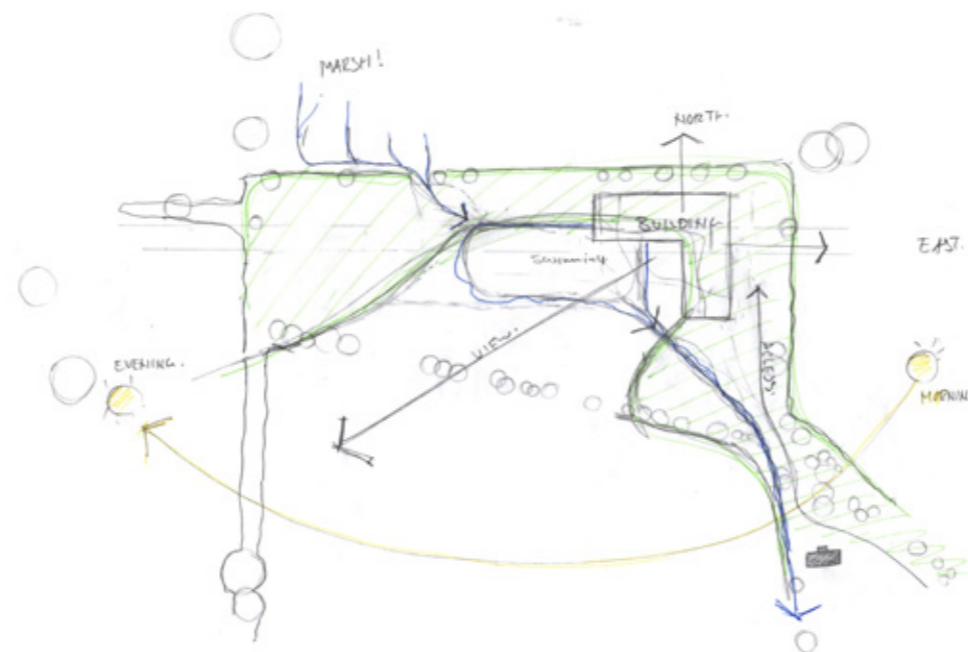
THE LANDSCAPE START POINT

1. Assumption that ash get ash die back.
2. If not then a phased reduction and diversification of trees would take place.



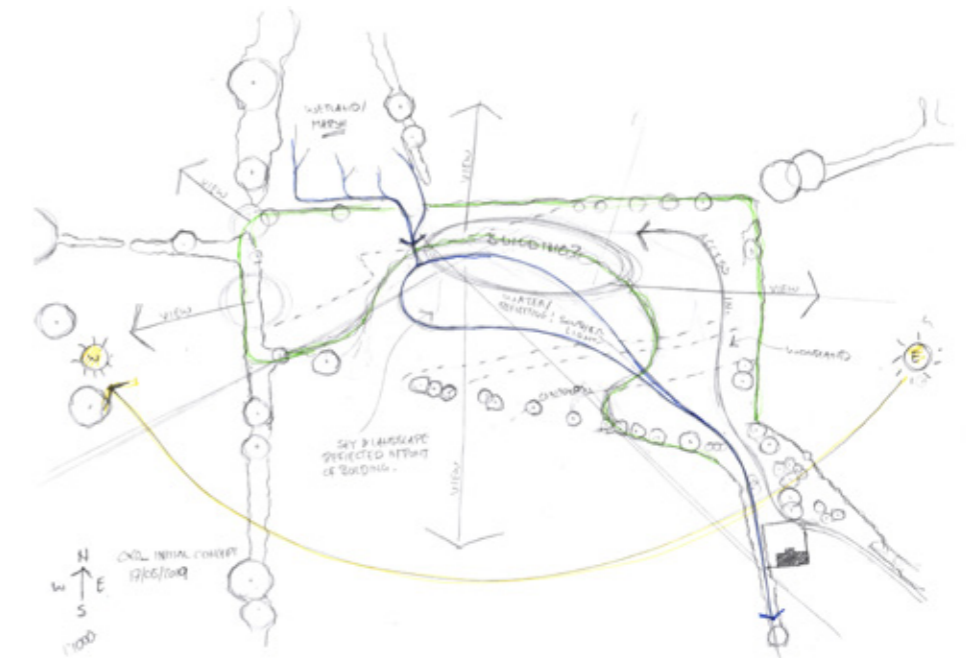
LANDSCAPE CONCEPT:

1. Bring mix native woodland into site.
2. Make more of the water in a naturalistic way on site.
3. Open up key views to landscape and sun.



EXPLORING CONCEPT:

1. Using the existing pond and relating to the building.
2. Open up views for evening sun.



EXPLORING CONCEPT:

1. Create a more naturalistic pond