

Reddam House- New Boarding House

Landscape Statement
18th December 2024

0363-BDL-XX-XX-RP-L-0402-P03



Contents

1	Introduction	03
1.1	Document Purpose	
2	Analysis	04-12
2.1	Historic Aerial Views	
2.2	Historic Maps	
2.3	Site History	
2.4	Existing Site Condition	
2.5	Existing Landscape Materials	
2.6	Site Analysis	
2.7	Existing Trees	
3	Landscape Vision	13-18
3.1	Design Ambition	
3.2	Precedents	
3.3	Courtyard Character	
3.4	Play Character	
3.5	Precedents Schemes	
4	Design Development	19-20
4.1	Opportunities and Constraints	
4.2	The Foraging School	
5	Landscape Proposal	21-26
5.1	Illustrative Landscape Masterplan - GF	
5.2	Illustrative Landscape Masterplan - RL	
5.3	Landscape Section	
5.4	Main entrance - Landscape Character	
5.5	Main entrance - Landscape Character View	
5.6	Courtyard - Landscape Character	
6	Landscape Strategies	27-36
6.1	Trees and Vegetation Retention and	
6.2	Removal Strategy	
6.3	Access Strategy	
6.4	Lighting Strategy	
6.5	Hard Landscape Strategy	
6.6	Soft Landscape Strategy	
6.7	Maintenance Strategy	

1

Introduction

1.1

Document Purpose

Located to the south of Reading, the Reddam House sits within a vast natural landscape. Part designed, part wild grounds and woodlands surround the buildings.

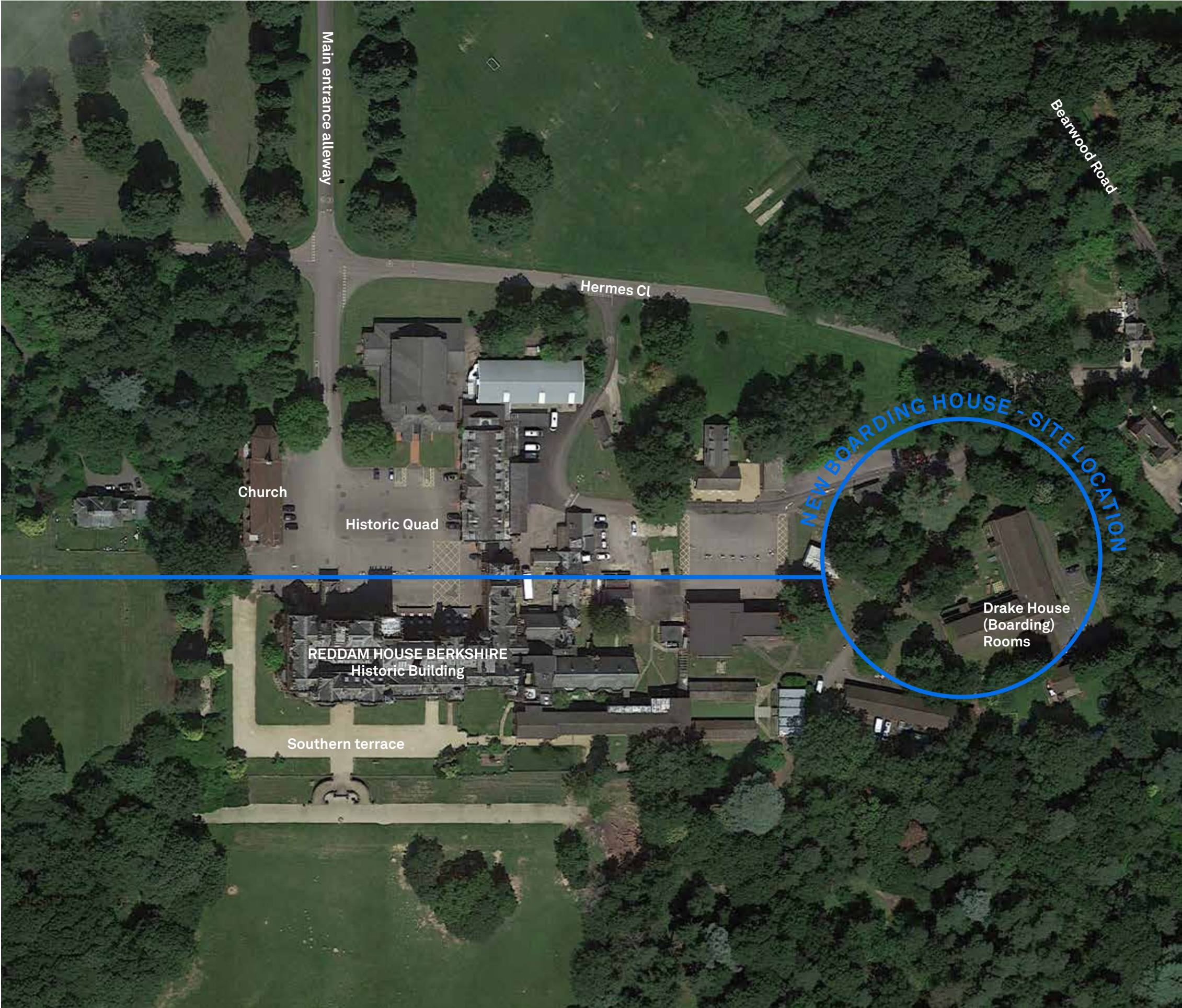
The Estate contains a grade 2* listed mansion house, formerly called Bearwood House. It is now called Reddam House School and sits within a Registered Park and Garden and a Conservation Area.

Reddam House Berkshire is an independent, co-educational school located in Wokingham, Berkshire. Catering to children from 3 months to 18 years of age, the school is situated on 125 acres of woodland and parkland, with its main building housed in the historic Victorian mansion, Bearwood House. Reddam House has a student body of approximately 670. The school offers both day schooling and flexible boarding options, including weekly and termly boarding, for students of all ages.

The proposed site for the new Boarding House sits to the east of Reddam House and associated buildings of heritage value, adjacent to the current Drake House (Boarding Rooms).

The purpose of this document is to explore the constraints and opportunities provided by the landscape setting and to set out key design principles and landscape proposals for the site.

Site Area



2 Analysis

2.1 Historic Aerial Views



2 Analysis

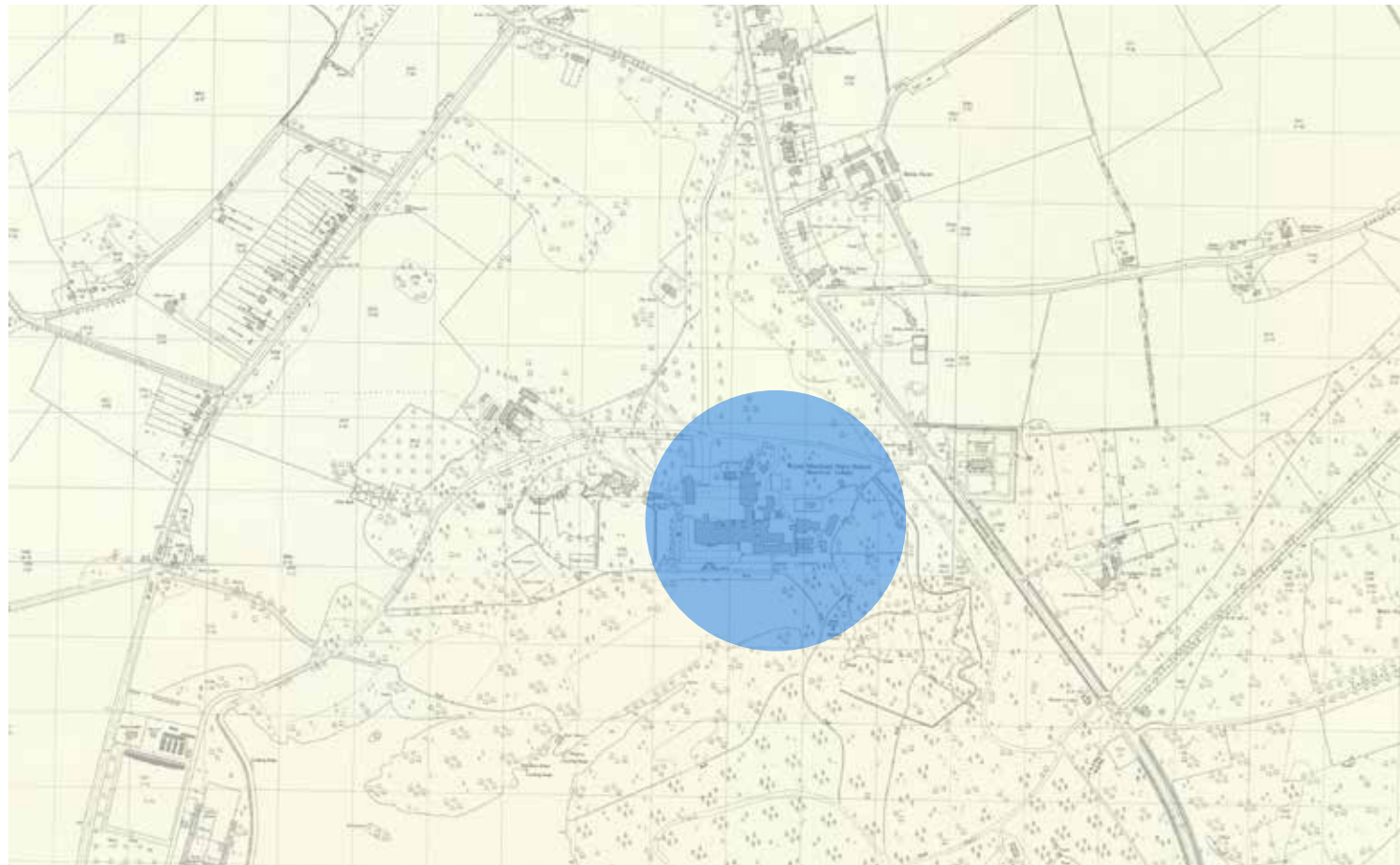
2.2 Historic Maps



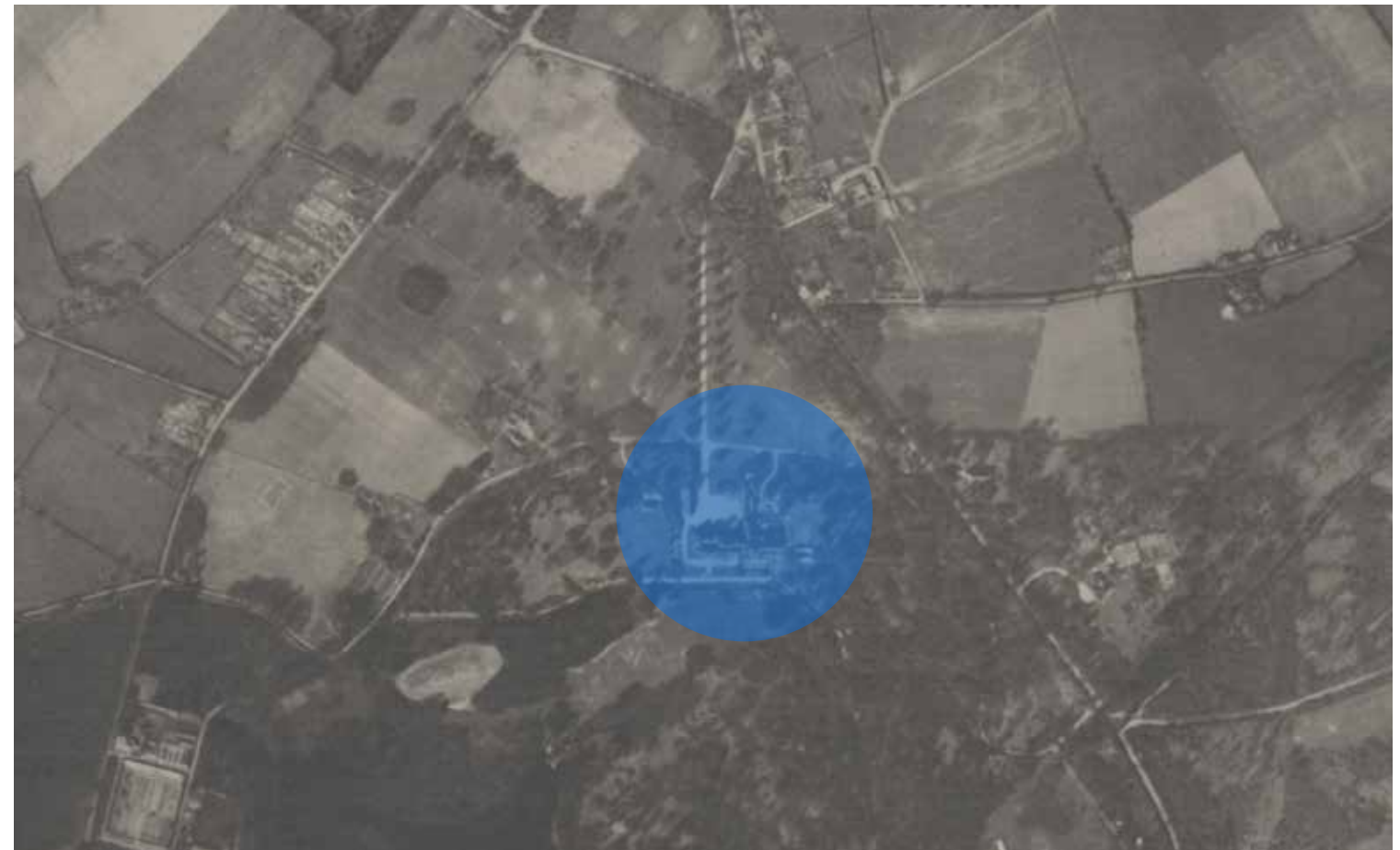
OS Map 1840-1880



OS Map 1944-1973



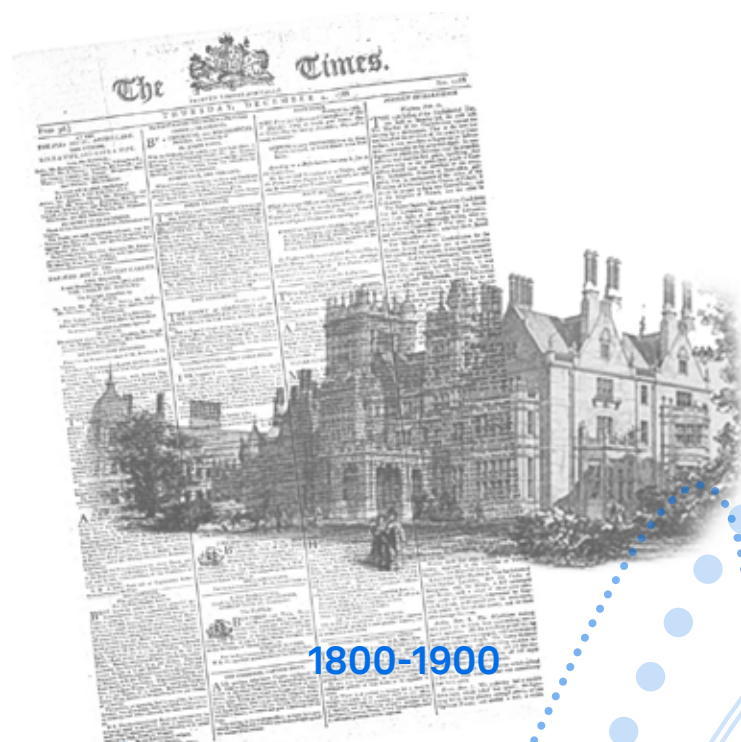
OS Map 1944-1973



OS Map 1944-1973

2 Analysis

2.3 Site History



1800-1900

1816

John Walter II, who owned The Times newspaper, bought a 304-acre property called Bear Wood from King George III's crown estate. This land would eventually become home to the future Bearwood Mansion and school.

1822

Walter constructed a modest Georgian-style villa on the Bear Wood estate. This villa stood on the site where the current Bearwood Mansion now exists, though it was later demolished by his son.

1865-1874

John Walter III, the son of John Walter II, decided to replace his father's villa with a new, grander house. He commissioned architect Robert Kerr to design the mansion. The construction took nearly a decade, costing £150,000 (equivalent to around £17.2 million today). The mansion became one of England's largest Victorian country houses.



1900-1950

1914-1918

During World War I, Canadian soldiers who had fought on the Western Front were housed at Bearwood Mansion. In 1915, John Walter V offered the estate to the Canadian military to use as a recovery hospital for wounded troops.

1919

After the war, John Walter V sold Bearwood Mansion to Sir Thomas Devitt and Sir Alfred Yarrow, who gifted the mansion and surrounding parkland to the Royal Merchant Navy School. The Royal Merchant Navy School was originally founded in 1827 in London as the Merchant Seaman's Orphan Asylum. Its purpose was to care for and educate the children of sailors who had died at sea.

1921-1922

In 1921, the school moved to Bearwood House in Berkshire. The following year, King George V directed that "orphanage" be removed from the name, renaming the institution as the Royal Merchant Navy School.



1950-2015

1961-1966

The Royal Merchant Navy School transitioned to an all-boys institution. In 1965, the school is changing its name to Bearwood College.

1991

Queen Elizabeth II, as Patron of the school, inaugurated the Bearwood Theatre.

1995

Bearwood College returned to being co-educational, admitting both boys and girls.

2014

Due to declining enrollment and high maintenance costs, Bearwood College closed its doors in mid-2014. Later that year, the property was acquired by the Reddam House group.

2015

Reddam House Berkshire was founded on the former Bearwood College site. This new school is part of the international Reddam House network and continues to maintain informal connections with former students of the Royal Merchant Navy School and Bearwood College.

2

Analysis

2.4

Existing Site Condition



Location Plan



View 01 - Historic tree alignment school



View 02 - Reddam House southern facade



View 03 - Reddam House main entrance



View 04 - View from the southern courtyard towards Bearwood lake



View 05 - Little cottage within the site



View 06 - Wood play for children

2

Analysis

2.4

Existing Site Condition



Location Plan



View 01 - Overview on on-going site demolition



View 02 - Drake House front facade



View 03 - Drake House courtyard



View 04 - Drake House back building



View 05 - Maintenance building



View 06 - Poor quality trees to private garden



View 07 - Existing gas tank and site topography

2

Analysis

2.5

Existing Landscape Materials

In contrast to the curtilage and setting of the Listed Reddam House, the existing landscape around Drake House is characterized by low-quality materials that are in a poor and outdated state.

The material palette consists of black top paths and large concrete paving flags all in a deteriorated condition.

Due to the poor condition of the paving and its monotone nature, the space surfacing may be difficult to navigate for partially sighted individuals, with several paving units potentially posing a trip hazard.

The new public realm material palette should priorities addressing these issues, ensuring a safe and durable environment. Additionally, a unified material palette and cohesive design elements could be introduced to enhance the site’s visual and functional appeal.



Tired existing tennis table



Outdated picnic tables



Existing fire pit



Existing services to be considered



Existing black top + potential trip hazard



Macadam path through courtyard



On site container contributes to the visual pollution

2

Analysis

2.5

Existing Landscape Materials

There are some high-quality landscape materials in the locale, however, this is limited to the historic building and the southern terrace.

The architecture provides further inspiration with detailed brickwork/stonework and facade fenestration.

These historic facades and materials sit alongside modern buildings creating a convergence of styles and materials.

The landscape proposals for the New Boarding School should seek to draw inspiration from the more historic materials and interesting detailing, whilst providing a robust, accessible and easy to navigate public realm.



Heritage stone details on building facade



Mix of brick and wood



Stone steps and loose gravel



Detail engraved within stone ramp



Woodwork within historic church



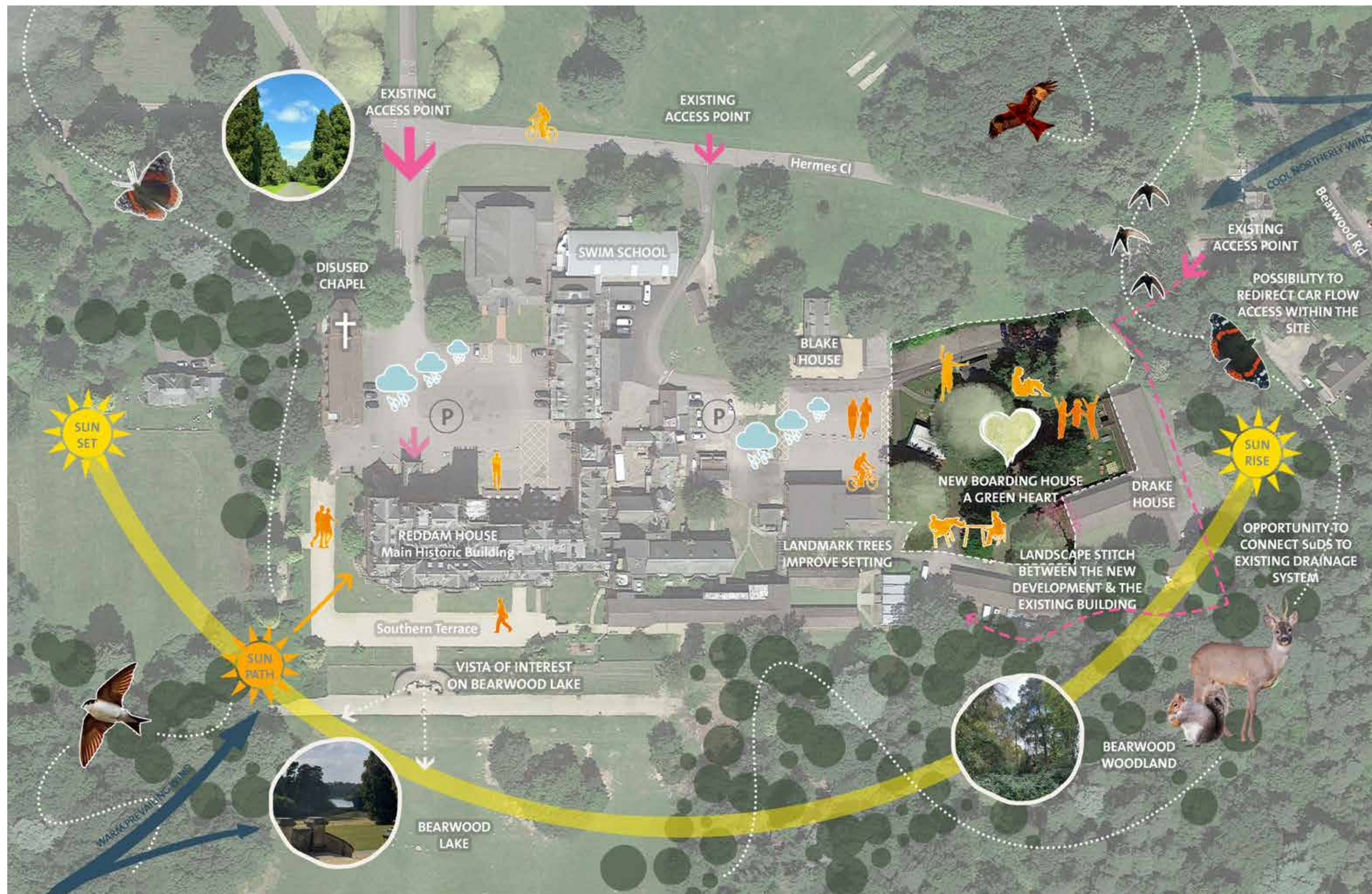
Historic stone pavement and ramp



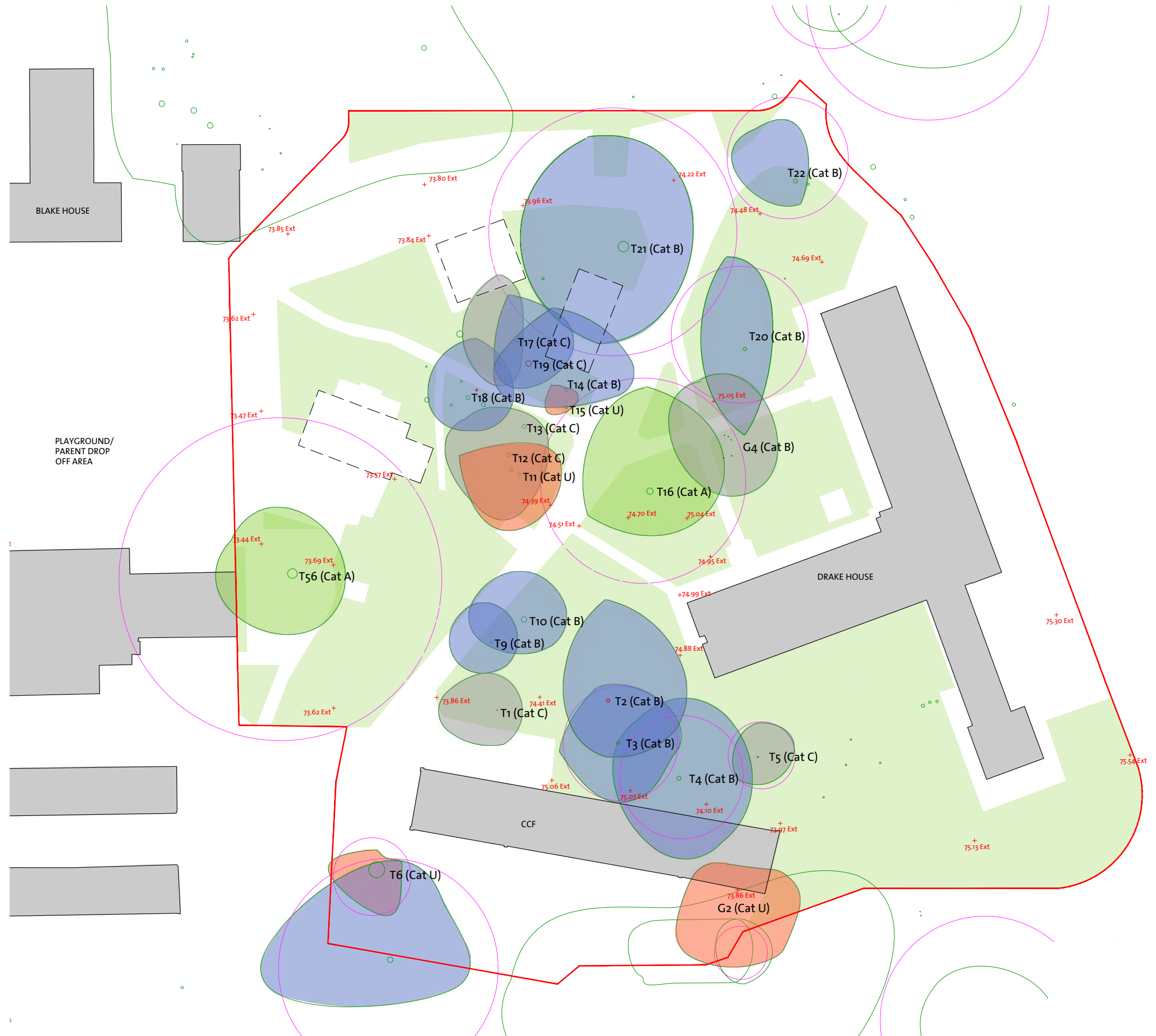
Possibility to reuse timber on site

2 Analysis

2.6 Site Analysis



Existing topography was also carefully assessed as part of the design process to make sure that any excavation within the Root Protection Area of retained trees will be kept to a minimum.



3 Landscape Vision

3.1 Design Ambition



RESPECT & ENHANCE NATURAL SETTING
Create active oasis courtyard as a green lung for the new boarding house



ESTABLISH A DISTINCT IDENTITY
Create a unique landscape inspired by the rural history and heritage



REVITALISING SPACES
Enhance setting of existing and future boarding house



CREATE CONNECTED COMMUNITIES
Create treasured public space where people can come together



A HARDWORKING PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPE
Celebrate existing landscape + incorporate sustainable drainage



IMPROVE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
Create a biodiverse, engaging pedestrian + cycle shared through the site

3 Landscape Vision

3.2 Precedents

The Landscape Concept draws on other precedent schemes where new building have been successfully integrated into a mature landscape setting and where the landscape and planting become the glue that binds the buildings together.

Carefully considered spaces can function as very valuable educational, sensory and social spaces.

Bishops Stortford College BD Landscape Architects

- Enhanced landscape for two new boarding houses
- Courtyard between buildings for socialising and an engaging community
- High-quality detailing
- Creation of an instant landscape setting to the new buildings
- Work around existing mature tree framework alongside strategic new tree planting



3 Landscape Vision

3.2 Precedents

University of Oxford Beecroft BD Landscape Architects

- Careful considered architectural and landscape response respecting the site
- Improved landscape setting of the building
- Establish link between modernity and historical heritage
- Provide high quality landscape for staff students and visitors

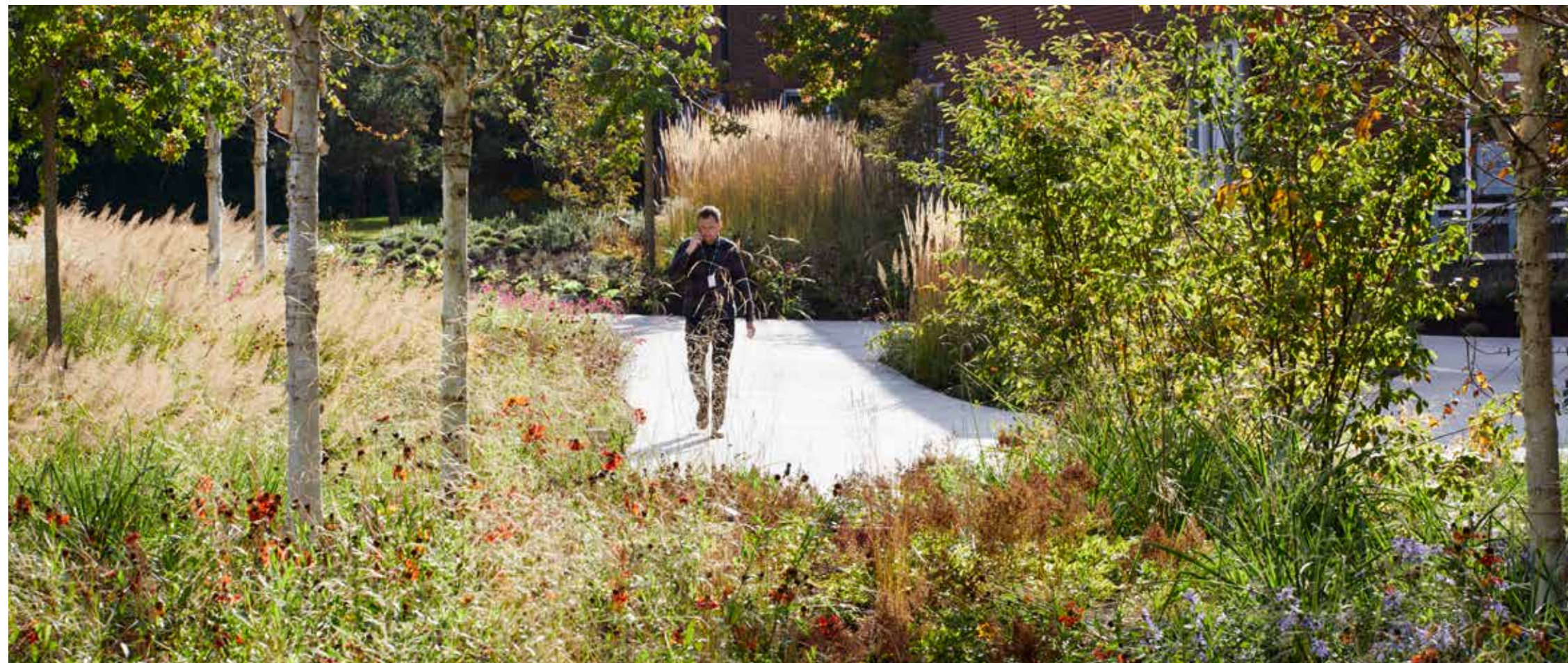


3 Landscape Vision

3.2 Precedents

Fidelity Heart Zone BD Landscape Architects

- Courtyard between buildings acting as a green Central Heart for the campus
- Fluid and contemporary setting landscape design for staff and visitors
- Clear hierarchy of routes and a sequence of arrival for visitors
- Planted rain garden to capture surface water run-off from the adjacent surfaces
- Generous seating steps as an amphitheatre space
- Specimen tree planting
- Artwork to provide focal points and added interest in the landscape
- Planting reflecting different landscape typologies, such as hill sides, productive gardens and woodland planting, to provide a diverse and biophilic setting



3

Landscape Vision

3.3

Courtyard Character



Shade tolerant planting mix



Create a sense of journey



Rough timber picnic tables with corten cut-out pattern detail



Main path in resin bound gravel in buff colour



Staggered paving within existing grass



Create multi-use space for students and staffs (outdoor class, dining, meeting)



Green and luxuriant buffer to screen building



Edible planting palette



Bench design to respect rural setting



Defined entrance to the courtyard

3

Landscape Vision

3.4

Courtyard Character



Adventure trail



Informal timber play



Timber logs



Play in rural setting



Willow tunnel



Stepping stones



Incidental natural play



Climbing logs



Seating with fire pits

4 Design Development

4.1 Opportunities & Constraints



Create inclusive community places



Promote active + sustainable travel



Tackle climate change through innovation



Increase biodiversity for nature + wellbeing



Rain water harvesting + blue roofs throughout



Incidental natural play to connect children with nature



SuD as hard working green infrastructure



Reference Bearwood site history + heritage



4 Design Development

4.1 The Foraging School

Landscape Concept & Sketch Development

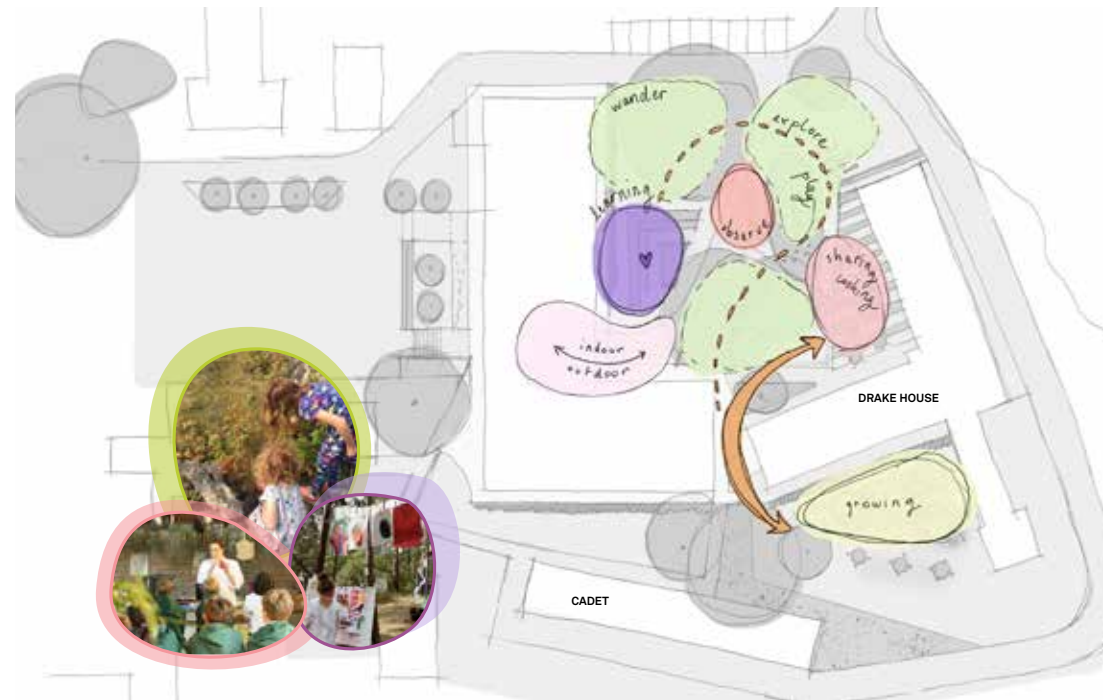
The landscape design for the New Boarding House outdoor spaces explores the concept of a foraging school/courtyard where a nature-driven living environment is encouraged. Natural pathways lined with edible plants introduce students to the idea of foraging.

The play area is designed to spark imagination, featuring nature-inspired play structures, sensory gardens, and rain gardens that invite students to explore and engage with the outdoors. The adventure trail takes students on a journey through the landscape, where they can discover foraging plants, learn about local ecosystems, and tackle an obstacle course that connects them to the nature.

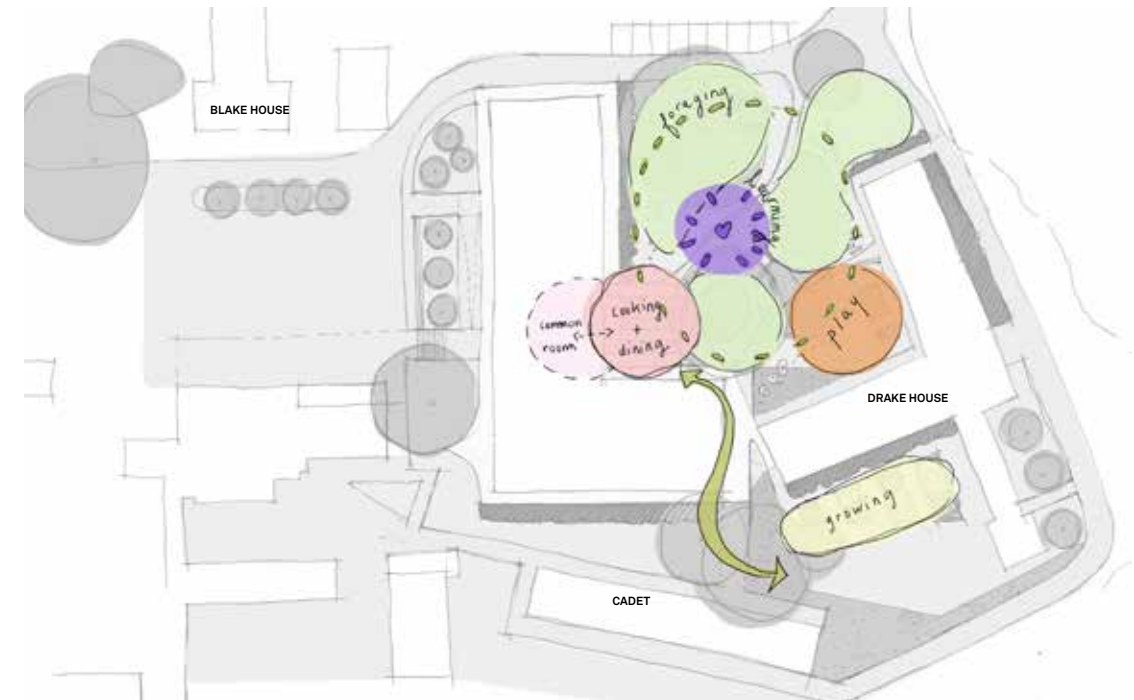
In the kitchen garden, students have the chance to grow their own food in raised beds, all while learning about sustainable food production. Outdoor classrooms, kitchen preparation bar and a central fire pit offer spaces for group lessons, cooking sessions, and community activities.

The aim is to create a living, breathing space where students connect deeply with nature, food, and the environment in meaningful ways.

Option 1 - Concept



Option 2 - Concept



Option 1 - Sketch Plan



Option 2 - Sketch Plan



5

Landscape Proposal

5.1

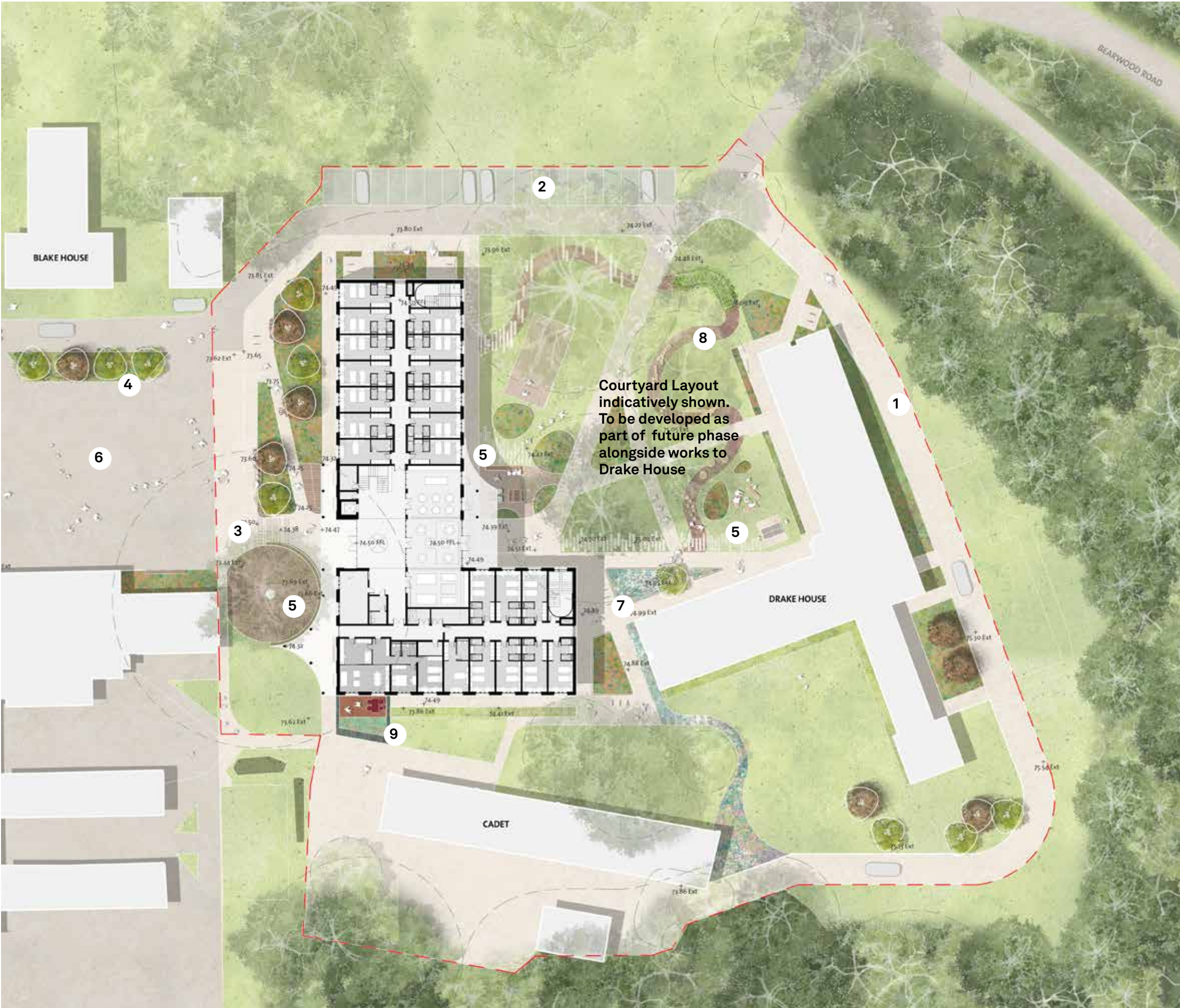
Illustrative Landscape Masterplan - Ground Floor

The main entrance of the Boarding House as it is approached from the west will be framed by the retained Atlas Cedar tree and new planting to the north. The threshold level of the building will be approximately 0.75m above existing ground level its western side and therefore a new set of steps and accessible ramp will draw visitors towards the main entrance.

To the south of the new steps, the building and external spaces addresses the Atlas Cedar Tree, with new seating formed in an arc around the tree. Surface conditions around the tree will be improved, firstly by making sure that vehicles cannot park within the root protection area of the tree, and secondly by incorporating bark surface to alleviate compaction around the tree.

Natural surveillance to this area will be provided by the Parent House and Garden that is located in the south West corner of the New Boarding House.

The form of the new Boarding House creates an informal courtyard with the existing Drake House Building, characterised by mature trees of varied species. Vehicular traffic will be removed from this space, allowing the new green heart to incorporate social spaces and playtrails that utilise timber from felled trees.



- KEY
1.

New access to Cadet Building
2.

New staff parking bays
3.

New stepped access
4.

New tree planting to edge of playground
5.

Key social spaces with new seating in arc form
6.

Flexible space and playground
7.

Rain gardens
8.

Play trail
9.

Parents' house garden

5

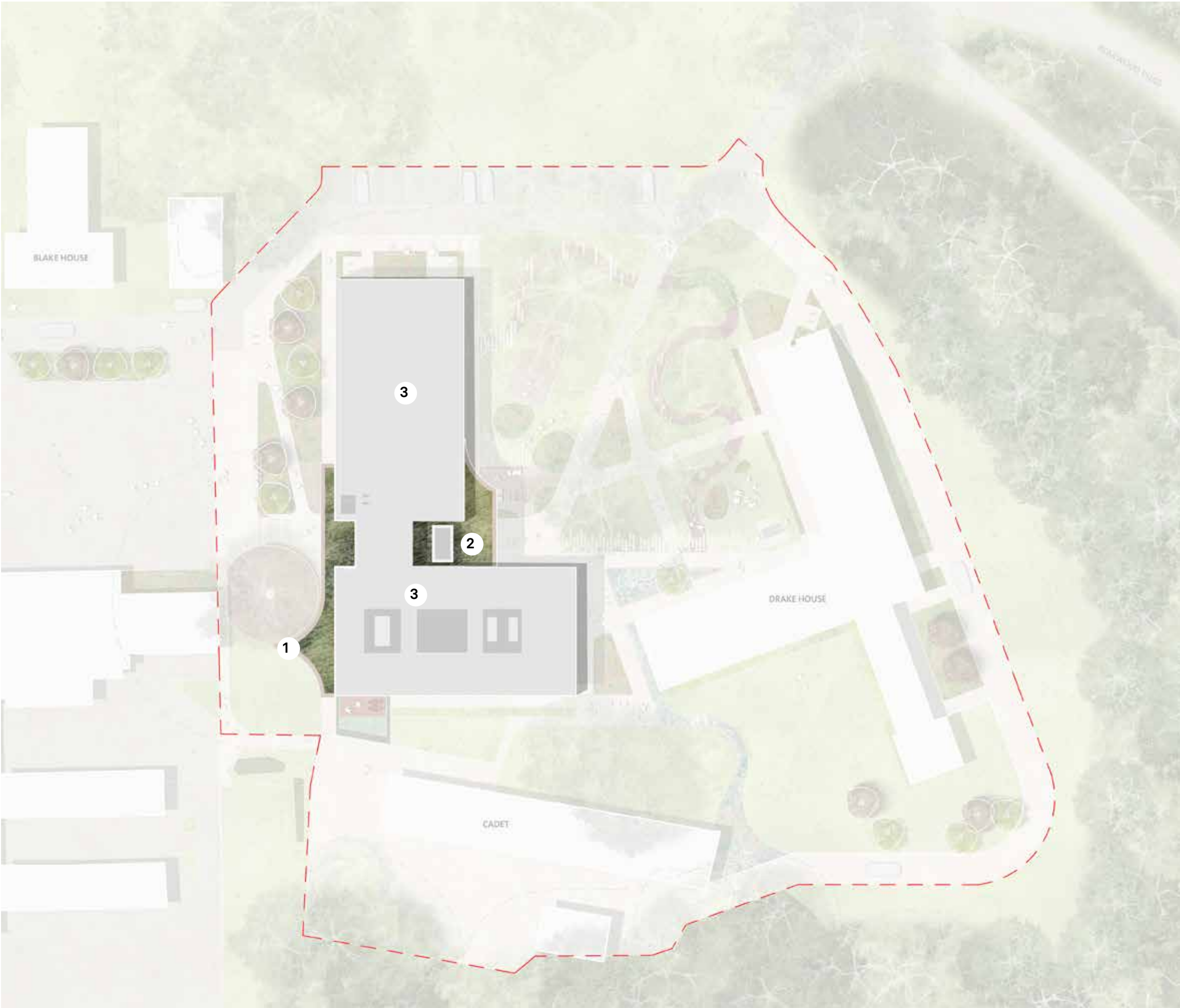
Landscape Proposal

5.2

Illustrative Landscape Masterplan - Roof Level

Canopy structures located at the entrances to the New Boarding House will incorporate green roof planting, designed to enhance the biodiversity value of the site whilst also improving the outlook from the 1st floor rooms.

Green roofs will be designed with a minimum substrate depth of 80mm to mitigate against drought conditions.



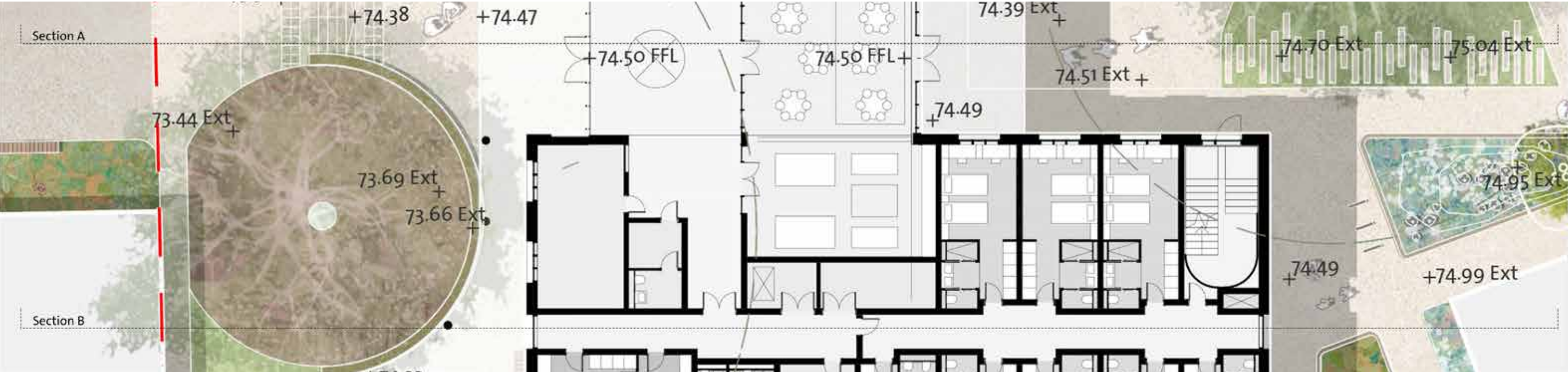
- KEY
- 1. Gravel margins incorporated along the edges of the canopy structure.
 - 2. Biodiverse Green Roof over 1st Floor Canopies
 - 3. 'Blue Roof' rainwater attenuation system at Roof level

5

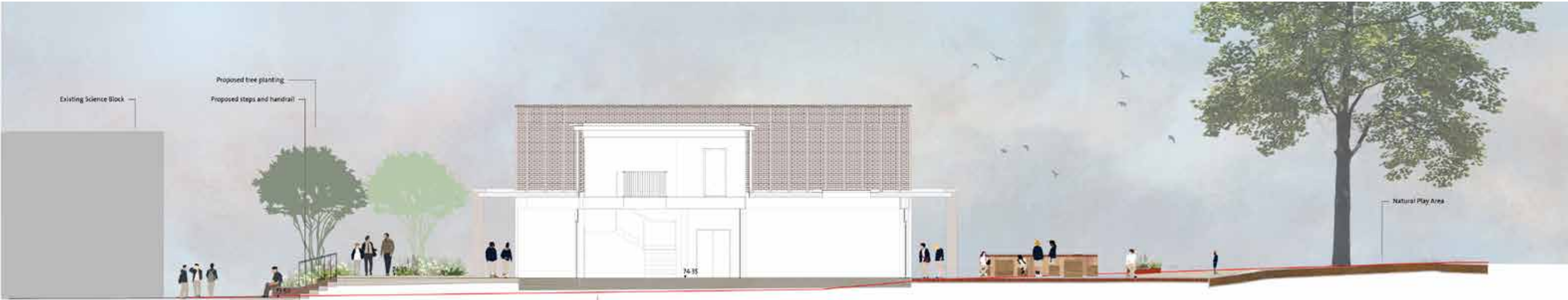
Landscape Proposal

5.3

Landscape Section



Location Plan



Section A-A



Section B-B

Finished Floor level of building set to avoid excavating the existing ground profile

5

Landscape Proposal

5.4

Main entrance - Landscape Character



1. Wrapped lightweight bench to follow canopy line around existing tree with bark mulch as surface



2. Ornamental planting to ramp and step access



3. Timber slatted bench unit



4. Buff coloured aggregate finish to paths



5. Enhanced existing vegetation under existing tree



6. Flexible space for playground

5 Landscape Proposal

5.5 Main entrance - Landscape Character View

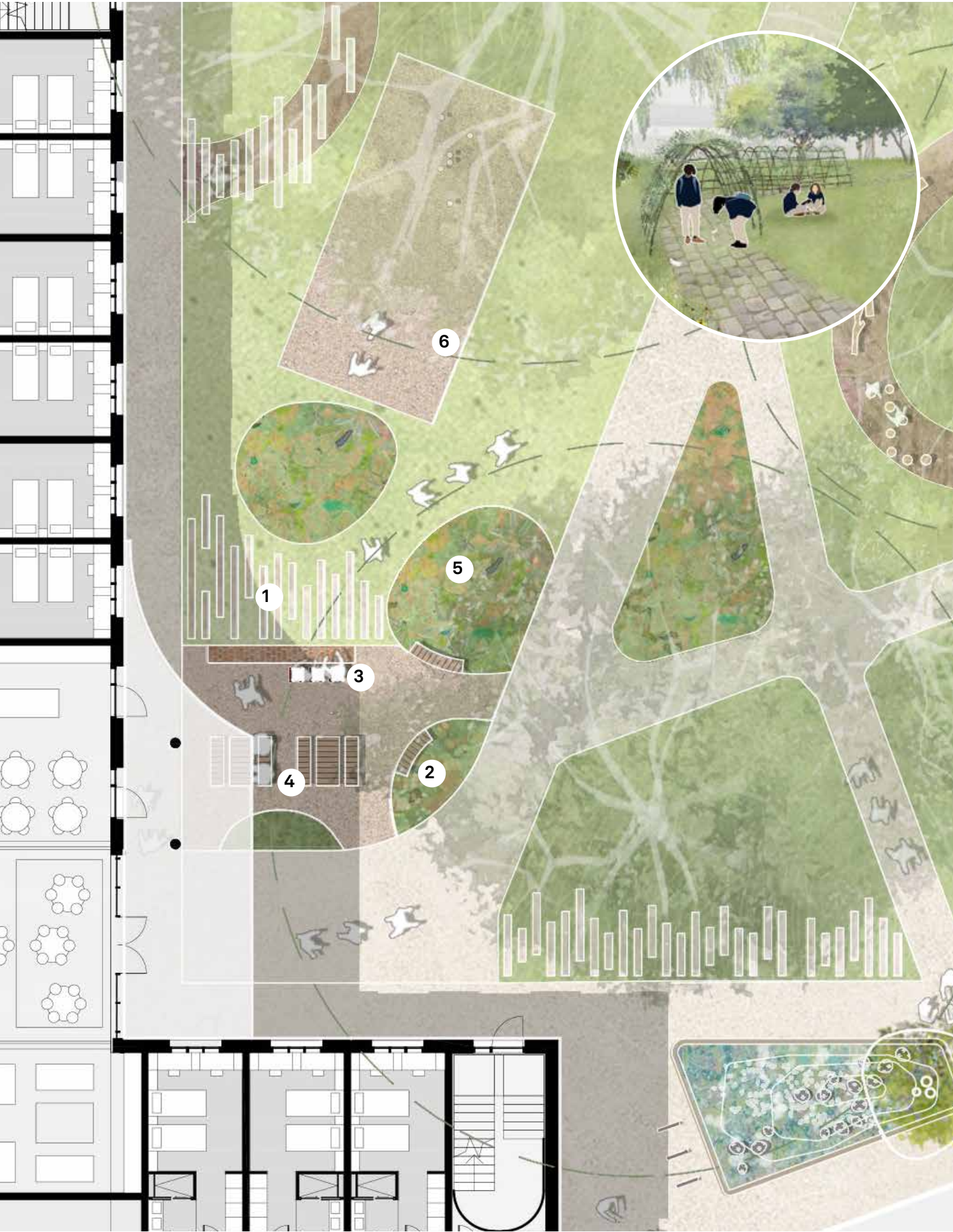


5

Landscape Proposal

5.6

Courtyard - Landscape Character



1. Staggered paving within existing grass



2. Timber slatted bench unit in planting



3. Outdoor kitchen area with surfacing for food preparation.



4. Picnic tables



5. Biodiverse shade tolerant planting mix



6. Flexible space for outdoor activities e.g.

6

Landscape Strategies

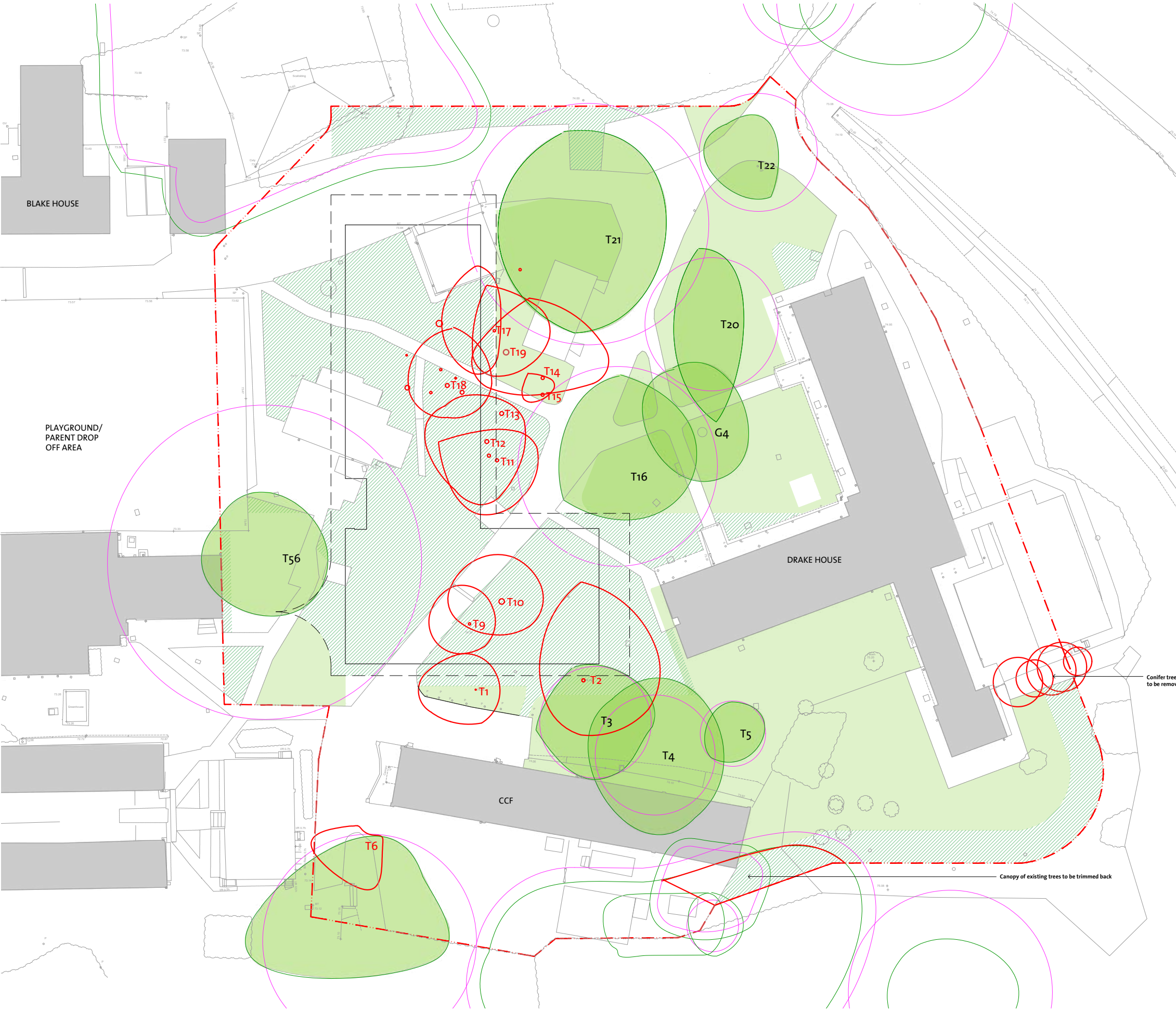
6.1

Tree and Vegetation Retention and Removal Strategy

KEY

- Tree to be removed
- Tree to be retained
- Root Protection Area

Careful consideration was given to the setting of the higher quality trees, particularly the large Atlas Cedar tree (T56) on the western side of the study area and the Oak Tree (T16) that sits in between the existing Drake House and the new Boarding House. Although the footprint of the building overlaps parts of the Root Protection Area (RPA) of these trees, the proposed Finished Floor Level (FFL) and construction methodology for the building was developed to minimise excavation in this area. As such the proposed FFL sits approximately 0.75m above the highest existing ground level around T56. Further information on arboricultural consideration can be found in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by WSP.



6

Landscape Strategies

6.2

Access Strategy

KEY

Main Building Access

Vehicular Access

Drop-off Zone

Access to Parent's House

Pedestrian Access

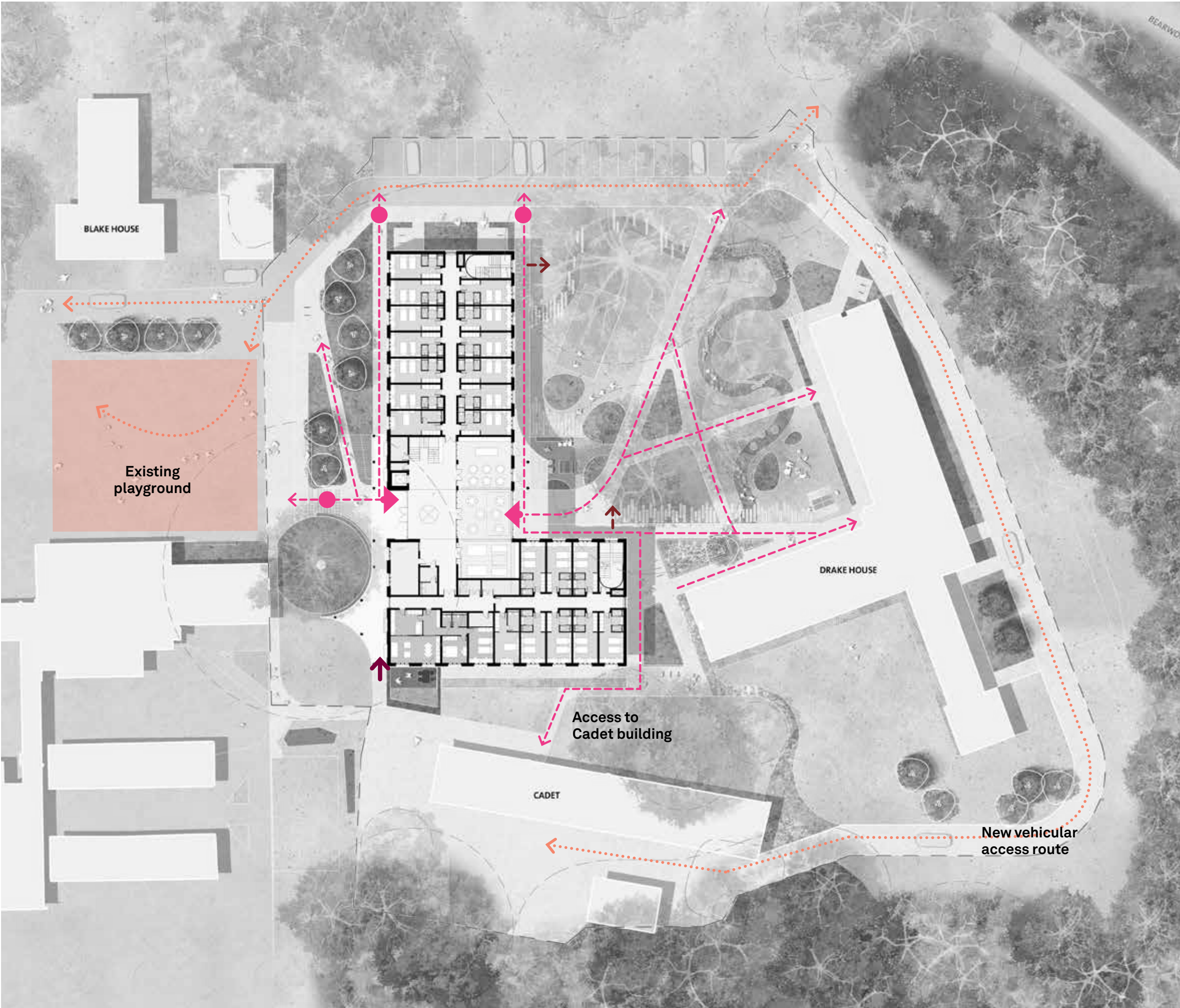
Escape Route

Stepped Access

The circulation strategy focusses on removing vehicular traffic from the new green heart that will be formed between the existing Drake House and the New Boarding House. As such, safe and welcoming social spaces will be created and vehicular traffic will be limited to the perimeter of the site.

This will require a new road to be constructed to access the Cadet Block.

In addition to improving legibility and safety for pedestrians, the circulation strategy will also control the informal parking that currently occurs over the rooting areas of mature trees.



6

Landscape Strategies

6.3

Lighting Strategy

The Lighting Strategy for the New Boarding House needs to provide safe and inviting light levels for the circulation network, whilst also respecting and responding to the ecological constraints and considerations.

Lighting location and fixtures will be specifically designed to minimise any light spilling back towards the quieter area. This will be achieved by in using warmer colour temperature.

This helps minimise the impact of lighting on the site, protecting the night sky and reducing its effects on the ecosystem and nature.



1. High intensity lights to steps and main entrance to the west of the new boarding house



2. Low intensity bollards integrated to planting



6.

Landscape Strategies

6.4

Hard Landscape Strategy

Our Approach

The proposed hard landscape spaces differ in scale and function but the aim is to create a sense of unity and order through a common palette of materials and cohesive selection of street furniture from the same supplier/range.

Preference is given to robust elements that are low maintenance, vandal resistant and that have a timeless design quality whilst also being tactile and comfortable.

Keeping the material and street furniture palette simple will help to create a coherent landscape design between the different spaces and reduce the variety of maintenance regimes or repairs required.

Paving materials, street furniture and other hard landscape elements have been selected for robustness, longevity, durability and sustainability.

- A series of principles have been developed to assist with the landscape concept proposals;
- The colour palette should tie into the architectural facade palette to create a sense of continuity
 - The opportunity to continue materials indoors and outdoors should be explored
 - Materials should be robust, hard wearing and easy to replace
 - Materials should tie into the surrounding buildings and/or landscape materials
 - A range of textures and finishes should be used to create design details
 - Paving and street furniture should be EU and/or UK sourced
 - All timber should be sourced from FSC or other sustainably accredited source
 - Site felled timber should be utilised for biodiversity elements and street furniture or play where possible.
 - A range of seating types including arms rests, backrests, transfer spaces and wheelchair accessible tables should be utilised to ensure the proposals are inclusive
 - Public realm proposals should consider ease of access and material and lighting choices should aid those with vidual impairments.
 - Play elements should provide for a variety of different play types, such as role play, imaginative play, motor skills development etc.



Primary Path / Surfaced in compacted gravel with pressure treated timber edging



Secondary Path / Surfaced in compacted gravel with pressure treated timber edging



Car park surface / Reinforced grass systems where practical



Rough timber benches



Clay pavers tying into local materiality of red brickwork



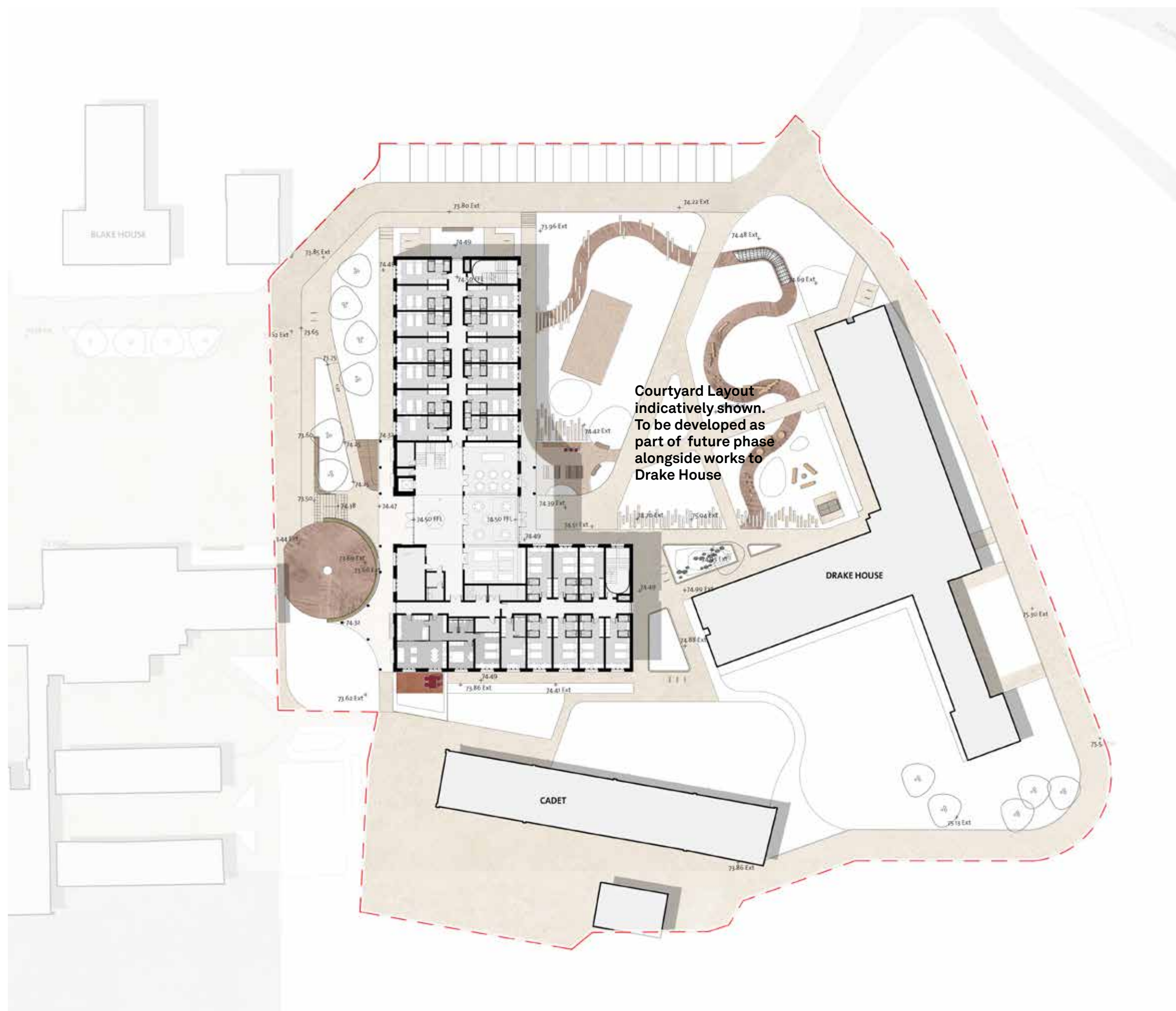
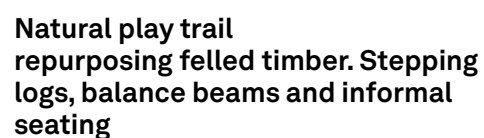
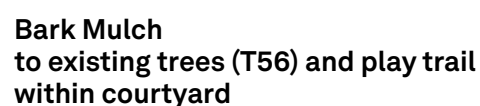
Hardwearing timber street furniture creating different levels of seating



Staggered paving within existing grass

Hard Landscape Plan

Keys



6

Landscape Strategies

6.5

Soft Landscape Strategy

Planting Strategy

The planting strategy for New Boarding School sets out to form a confident approach to planting by:

- Creating attractive and robust spaces for passive recreation
- Create habitable and treasured spaces
- Improving habitat provision through biodiverse and native planting
- Providing a green and tranquil space for students and staffs.
- Planting will respect the need for low maintenance and robustness.

Ornamental Shrubs

As with tree planting, the proposed shrub planting will be designed to provide year round colour and interest. A robust framework of shrubs will provide structure and year-round presence, stands of softer grasses and sedges will provide verticality and movement, whilst blocks of herbaceous planting will add shots of colour and seasonal interest.

Planting Palette

The chosen planting mix has been selected to be low maintenance and provide year round foliage and seasonal interest. To the roof terrace a range of structural grasses, vibrant perennials and ornamental trees to create year round interest and variety.

To the ground floor the locations will be mainly shady mix with a variety of robust grasses, ferns, shrubs and perennials. The focus will be on ensuring an easy to maintain planting mix. The mix is largely evergreen with a number of perennials and bulbs for a pop of colour.

Ecology and Biodiversity Strategy

An integral part of the landscape strategy will be the promotion of biodiversity and mitigation of any adverse effects. The soft landscape areas will be species rich to promote local biodiversity and ecological benefits of the area . A number of bird and bat nesting boxes will be provided to blank walls.

Irrigation Strategy

The approach to the soft landscape areas is to design a planting mix that is drought tolerant and robust to limit the maintenance required (once established). No areas of soft landscape are completely without the need for watering and maintenance but the types should limit the ongoing type and intensity of maintenance for the appointed management team. During the establishment period, the areas of soft landscape will need a different watering regime to that of the long term management of the different areas.



Tree planting framing building facade



Formal hedge to Parent’s House Garden



Seating within lush planting to ramp



Rain gardens



Shade tolerant planting to courtyard



Biodiverse green roof with integrated insect houses



Bulb planting to existing grass improving biodiversity and seasonal interest.

6

Landscape Strategies

6.5

Soft Landscape Strategy

Soft Landscape Plan

Keys

- Existing grass to be retained and enhanced
- Existing trees to be retained
- Proposed trees
Semi-mature multistem trees with biodiverse perennial planting
- Ornamental Planting
Drought tolerant biodiverse mix
- Rain gardens
Biodiverse planting that can tolerate fluctuations in water level
- Defensive planting
Mixed-native species hedge
- Formal hedge
to parent's house garden
- New Staff Parking Bays with permeable surfacing



6

Landscape Strategies

6.5

Soft Landscape Strategy

Soft Landscape Planting Palette - Shady Aspect
The ground floor planting mix is proposed to be biodiverse and shade tolerant. Planting should be robust and easy to maintain within the public realm.

- Evergreen
- Spring interest
- Summer interest
- Autumn interest
- Winter interest: through retaining seedheads, winter flowers or grasses changing colour



Digitalis purpurea



Euphorbia amygdaloides var. robbiae



Geranium cinereum 'Sateene'



Heuchera 'Plum Pudding'



Vinca major 'Alba'



Astrantia major 'Venice'



Ajuga reptans 'Rosea'



Deschampsia cespitosa



Tiarella cordifolia



Dryopteris affinis



Polypodium vulgare



Asplenium scolopendrium

6

Landscape Strategies

6.5

Soft Landscape Strategy

Soft Landscape Planting Palette - Sunny Aspect
Planting beds located within south facing sunnier aspects will incorporate planting species suitable for such conditions. Planting mixes will be developed to provide a succession of colour, form and visual interest

- Evergreen
- Spring interest
- Summer interest
- Autumn interest
- Winter interest: through retaining seedheads, winter flowers or grasses changing colour



Verbena bonariensis



Rudbeckia fulgida



Lavandula stoechas 'Spring-break Princess'



Echinacea purpurea



Anemanthele lessoniana



Miscanthus sinensis 'Grosse Fontäne'



Calamagrostis



Molinia caerulea arundinacea



Monarda didyma 'Pink Lace'



Persicaria 'Pink Elephant'



Salvia x jamensis 'Royal Bumble'



Sanguisorba officinalis

6

Landscape Strategies

6.6

Maintenance Strategy

Caring for the Gardens and Social Spaces

The success of the new landscape spaces will rely on an ongoing commitment and regime of maintenance and management for the healthy establishment of the new trees and soft landscape areas. The management and maintenance of the landscape will be undertaken by the School Facilities team.

Maintaining the Landscape

Allied to the design, environmental and capital cost considerations for the landscape proposals, a key objective is the need to address and balance the future maintenance and management implications as the landscape spaces evolves, matures and changes over time.

An integrated approach to the landscape management should be adopted at an early stage of the detailed design process. Due consideration should be given to the financial and resource constraints to ensure an appropriate and robust management and maintenance structure is established to meet the aspirations of the school. The management plan and structure should be flexible to take account of how the spaces can evolve in terms of usage, water management and vegetation growth, as well as being responsive to economic changes.

Materials

Paving materials, street furniture, lighting and other installations will be selected for robustness, durability and longevity. The aim is for a cohesive family of fixtures and fittings that is appropriate to the heritage of the surrounding buildings and set by the design team. Preference is given to high quality paving and robust seating for the timeless design quality, vandal resistance and low maintenance requirement.

Planting

Planting associated with the soft landscape pockets will respect the need for low maintenance and robustness. Semi-mature trees should be used for immediate visual benefit and impact, and to reduce the risk of damage to the trees/plants from vandalism.

Monitoring of the Proposals

A Landscape Management Plan will be an essential document to provide a framework within which effective monitoring, management and maintenance can occur.

The purpose of the Management Plan would be to confirm the structure, principles and objectives of the long-term management. In addition the report would highlight key maintenance operations that would be necessary to ensure the long-term health and vigour of the landscape.

On going Maintenance

The Management Plan will be used as a guideline document to help understand the maintenance requirements as well as provide a structure for change.

Soft Landscape Areas; Trees & Planted Zones

The maintenance of Soft Landscape planting beds will include:

- Watering
- Weed control
- Pruning/feeding
- Plant replacements
- Litter picking
- Re-cultivation/mulch top-up
- Cutting back grasses

Hard Landscape Areas

The maintenance Hard Landscape items will include:

- Maintenance of Access Routes
- Cleaning
- Vandalism
- Settlement of paving
- Drainage maintenance
- Litter picking
- Replacing light fittings over time

