

4.03 Strategic Landscape Design Drivers



1 Green 'Context'

Recognising that the site is wrapped by a significant woodland resource; preserving, protecting and enhancing the existing Green Infrastructure (GI) along Priority Habitat and Ancient Woodland Boundaries.



2 'Green Links'

Enhancing Green Infrastructure (GI) Links within the site to draw the natural character further into the site; softening edges and creating attractive tree lined routes.



3 'Blue Infrastructure'

A strong SuDS Strategy that aligns with the Topography and Sitewide Drainage Strategy.



4.03 Strategic Landscape Design Drivers



4 Gateways and Access

Creation of an attractive gateway into the site and creation of tree lined access roads within the site.



5 Enhanced Pedestrian Connectivity

Creating attractive, safe and legible routes for Site users and PROW users the Amenity Spaces and Unit Doorstep Spaces.



6 Amenity Spaces

Pockets of flexible amenity space across the site for users to sit, relax and enjoy whether engaging in casual activity or planned activity outdoors.



4.03 Strategic Landscape Design Drivers

1. Green Context: Preserving, Protecting and Enhancing Green Infrastructure (GI) along Priority Habitat and Ancient Woodland Boundaries by stepping back the developed boundaries and softening the edges with native planting to replace existing areas of hard-standing. Proposals have been sensitively designed with generous 'Green' buffers comprising of proposed native woodland to residential edges.

2. Green Links: The retention of several category A and Category B trees providing valuable visual amenity across the site has been a key driver in the Landscape design development. The proposed East-West 'Green Link' creates a strong green corridor connecting the woodland along frontage of Unit 5 to the Priority habitat Woodland; softening the facade of Unit 1. Proposed tree-lined access roads, rain gardens and hedge-lined pedestrian routes further create opportunities for north-south Green links.

3. Blue Infrastructure: A strong SuDS strategy comprising of several new rain gardens and detention basins has been developed in response to the site's topography. These have been incorporated into the site-wide drainage strategy and will form a key part of the ecological enhancements within the site.

4. Gateways and Access: The Proposed entrance to Unit 1 will create a better relationship with the entrance (the existing building turns its back onto the entrance) with signage and amenity spaces along the proposed Linear Park.

5. Pedestrian Connectivity: The proposed 'Green Links' facilitate legible and attractive pedestrian/cycle routes leading to the Unit doorstep spaces. Proposed improvements to the existing Public Right of Way will further improve access and connectivity through the site and improve the visual amenity of the PROW route.

6. Amenity Spaces: The proposed amenity hubs are designed to encourage flexible activities for site users, strategically located within key areas, including the southern ponds, to integrate with the site's existing landscape. Hubs will also sit amongst proposed features, including the linear park along the site's frontage to enhance user biocentricity, offering a sense of shelter amidst the rain gardens.



4.04 Masterplan Concept Design & Layouts Testing

Initial Concept Sketch Layouts

The opposite sketches show various initial layout options at a very early stage., which pre-dates the acquisition of the site by Wrenbridge. At that time, the two northern car park sites did not form part of the site area.

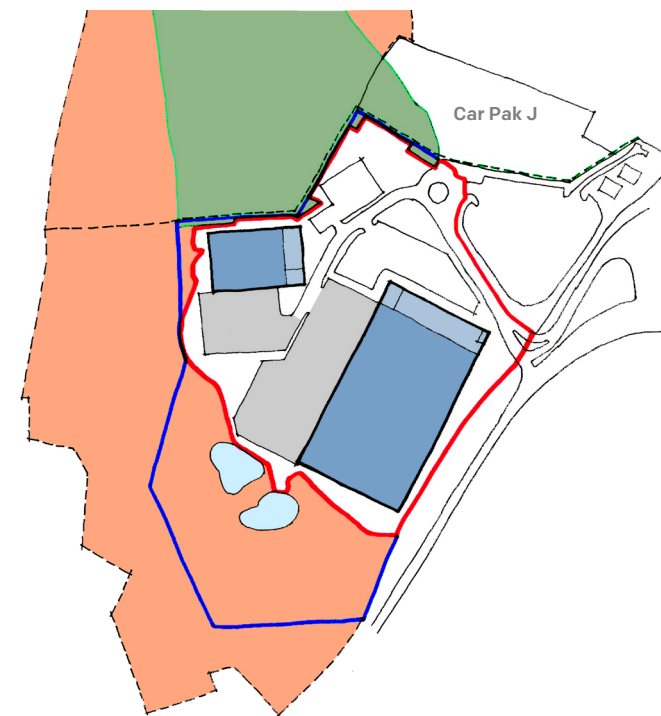
In seeking to achieve Wrenbridge's project design brief, the proposed layout sought to optimise the employment use as well as accommodate a mix of unit sizes that would maximise marketability of a speculative scheme.

Early due diligence work identified the area of Ancient Woodland to the north, and the Priority Habitat area to the west, which were factored in as key constraints.

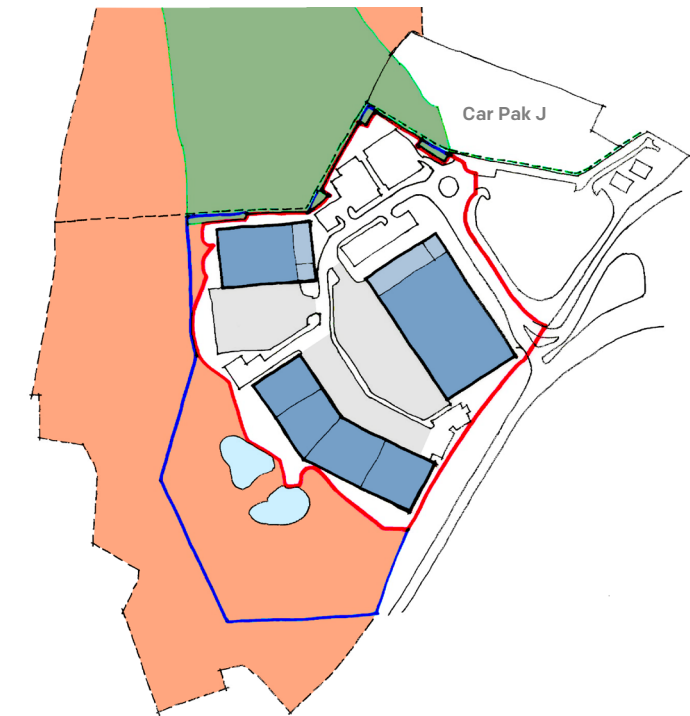
Another key constraint that placed limitations on potential layout options is the existing site levels and single vehicle access from B3270. Due to the landlocked nature of the site, this existing site access is to be maintained. The existing access road up to the existing roundabout is also maintained within these early sketch layouts.

Key:

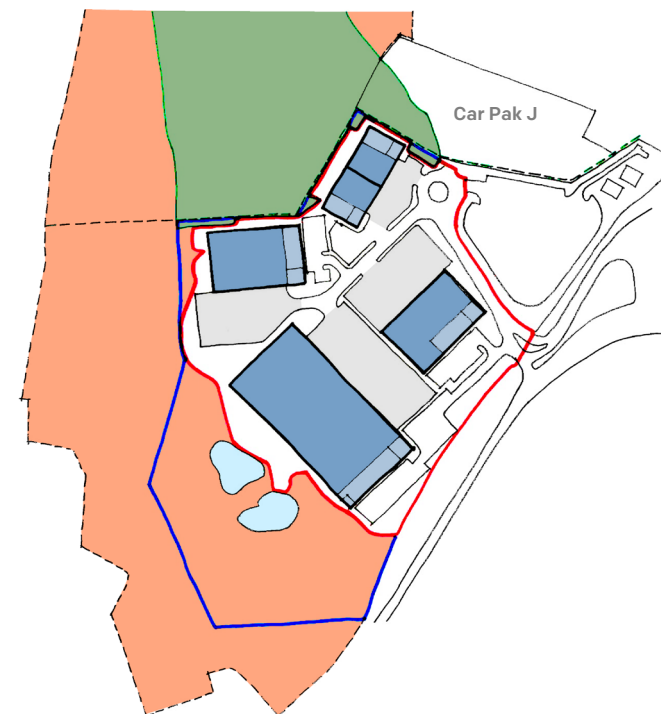
-  Ancient Woodland
-  Priority Habitat
-  Unit
-  Ancillary Office Use
-  Service Yard with HGV access



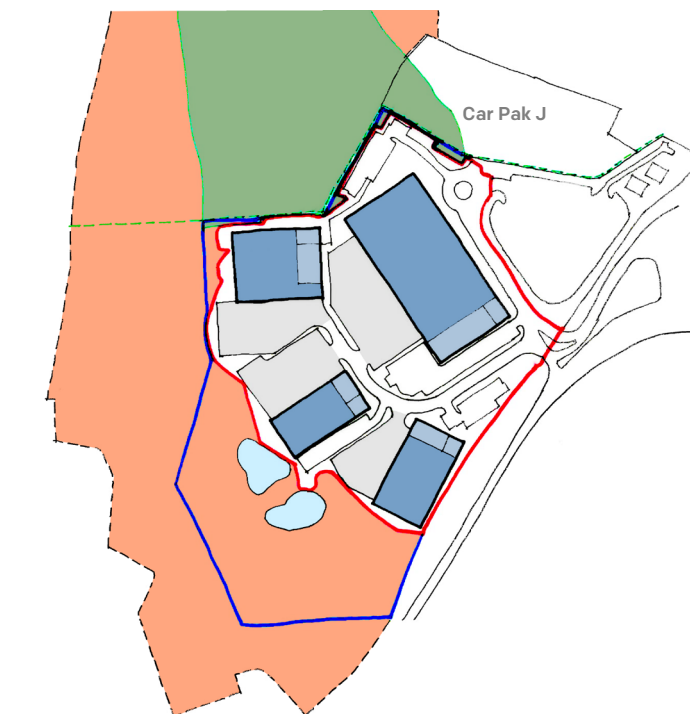
Sketch Layout 1



Sketch Layout 2



Sketch Layout 3



Sketch Layout 4



4.04 Masterplan Concept Design & Layouts Testing

Masterplan Layout Development

The below masterplan layouts show the design development during pre-application discussions with and taking on board feedback provided by Wokingham Borough Council officers. By this stage, the two northern car parks formed part of the site acquisition and were therefore brought into the overall site area for the development.



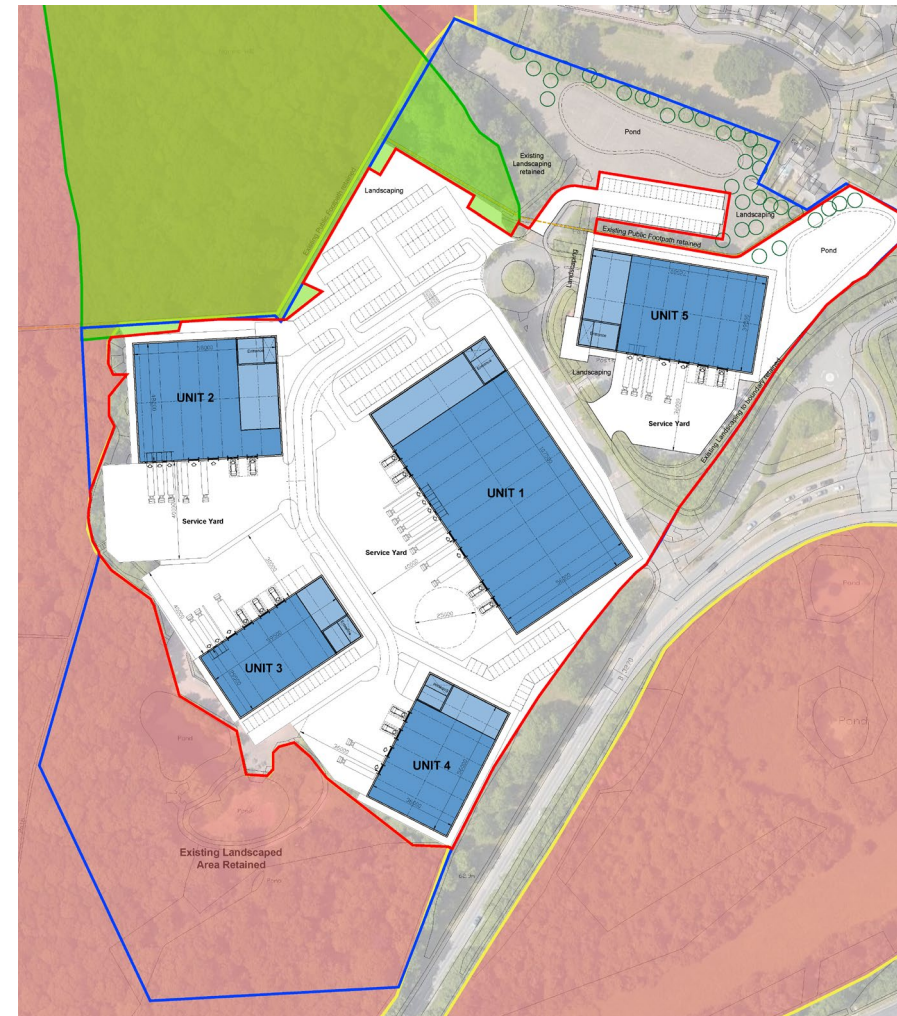
Emerging Masterplan 1

Pros:

- Good mix of unit sizes
- Existing site access and roundabout retained
- Landscaping replaces Car Park J
- All unit car parks close to entrances
- Units 5A/5B can be combined to form larger unit

Cons:

- Unit 2 encroaches 15m Ancient Woodland Buffer area
- Unit 1 and 2 car parks encroach Ancient Woodland Buffer area
- Longwinded access from site entrance to unit 4
- Units 1 and 4 very close to eastern site boundary, resulting in extensive lost of existing trees along the boundary



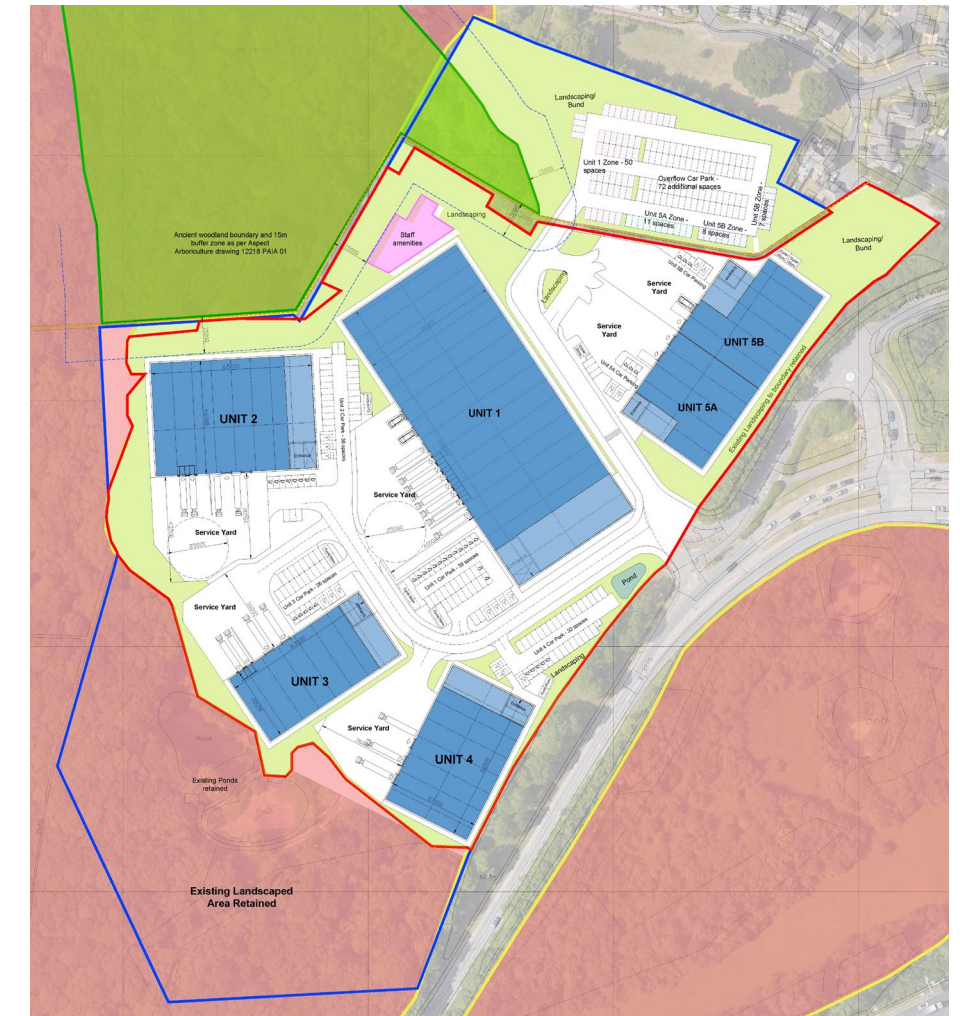
Emerging Masterplan 2

Pros:

- Good mix of unit sizes
- Existing site access and roundabout retained
- Unit 5 rotated to screen service yard noise from houses to north
- Utilises part of Car Park J for unit 5 parking, but still provides additional landscaping

Cons:

- Unit 2 encroaches 15m Ancient Woodland Buffer area
- Unit 1 and 2 car parks encroach Ancient Woodland Buffer area
- Longwinded access from site entrance to unit 4
- Units 1 and 4 very close to eastern site boundary, resulting in extensive lost of existing trees along the boundary
- Unit 5 car park too far from unit entrance



Emerging Masterplan 3

Pros:

- Good mix of unit sizes
- Existing site access and roundabout retained
- Units 5A/5B can be combined to form larger unit
- Utilises part of Car Park J for unit 5 parking, but still provides additional landscaping
- Ancient Woodland buffer area maintained with no encroachments
- Staff amenity to north of unit 1 – softer boundary with Ancient Woodland buffer area
- Unit 1 moved back from site entrance
- Existing roundabout removed to provide better access to unit 5A/5B

Cons:

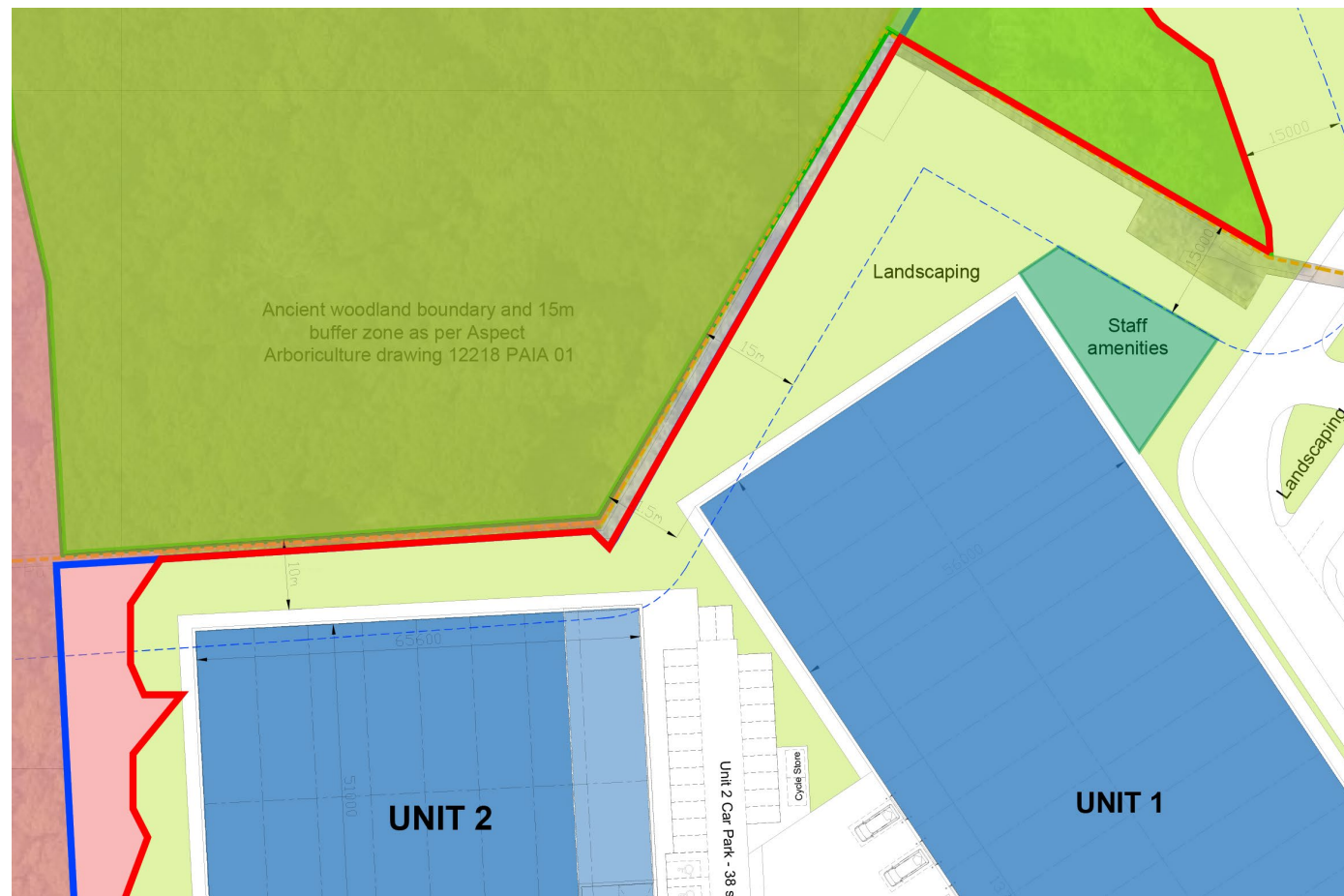
- Existing Car Park J now provides overflow parking for units 1 & 5A/5B
- Unit 4 very close to eastern site boundary
- Unit 1 & 5A/5B remote car parking



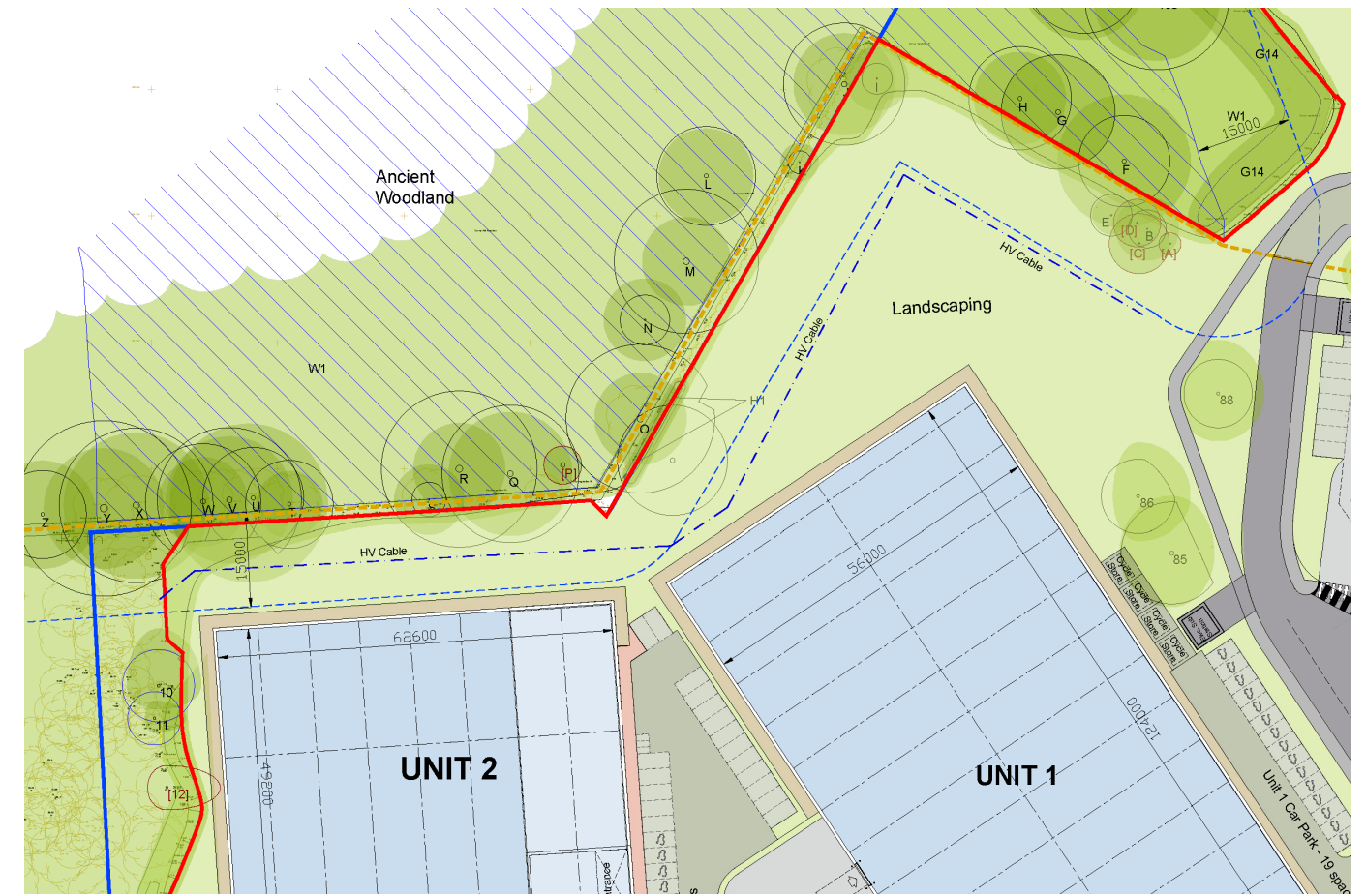
4.05 Key Moves – Pre-Application Consultation

Following several rounds of pre-application consultation meetings with Wokingham Borough Council planning officers, various iterations of the site layout masterplan were presented, and comments received from the LPA were taken on board by the design team. The following pages demonstrate how the consultation process helped to evolve the masterplan.

Built Development Excluded from 15m Buffer



Units 1 & 2 - Previous Scheme Layout

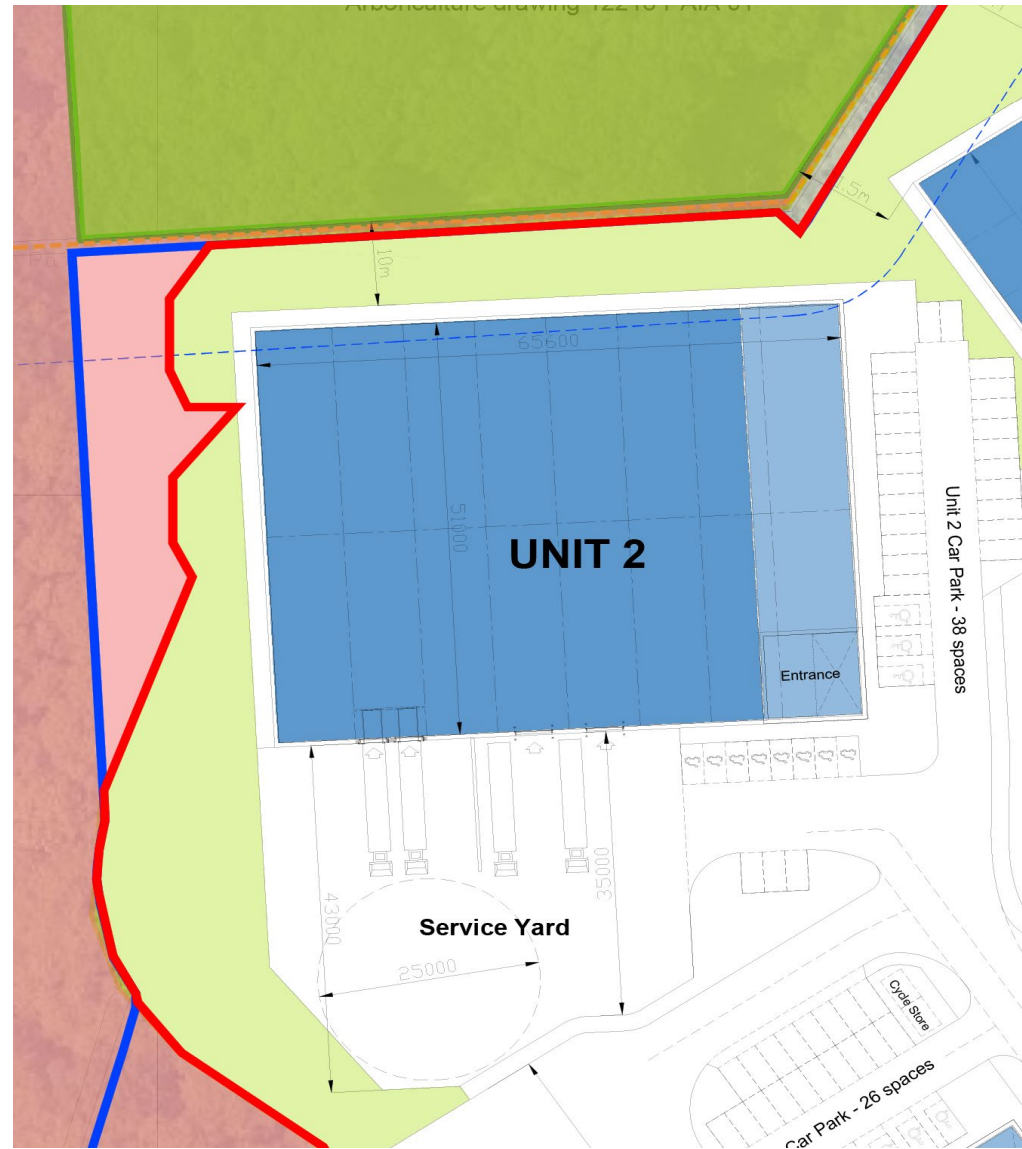
Units 1 & 2 - Revised Scheme Layout

- As a direct result of pre-application engagement with WBC, the proposals have been revised to completely exclude all built development from within the 15m buffer to the adjacent parcel of Ancient Woodland.
- The revisions comprise the shifting of units 1 & 2 southwards; ensuring that both the units and the retaining wall to the north are located outside the buffer.
- The revisions also include the introduction of additional retaining walls to the north of Unit 1, precluding the need for large scale levels changes within the buffer.
- The only feature which will remain within the Ancient Woodland buffer comprises a re-routed HV cable. The alignment of which has been adjusted to maximise the separation between the woodland and the cable route, which avoids Root Protection Areas.

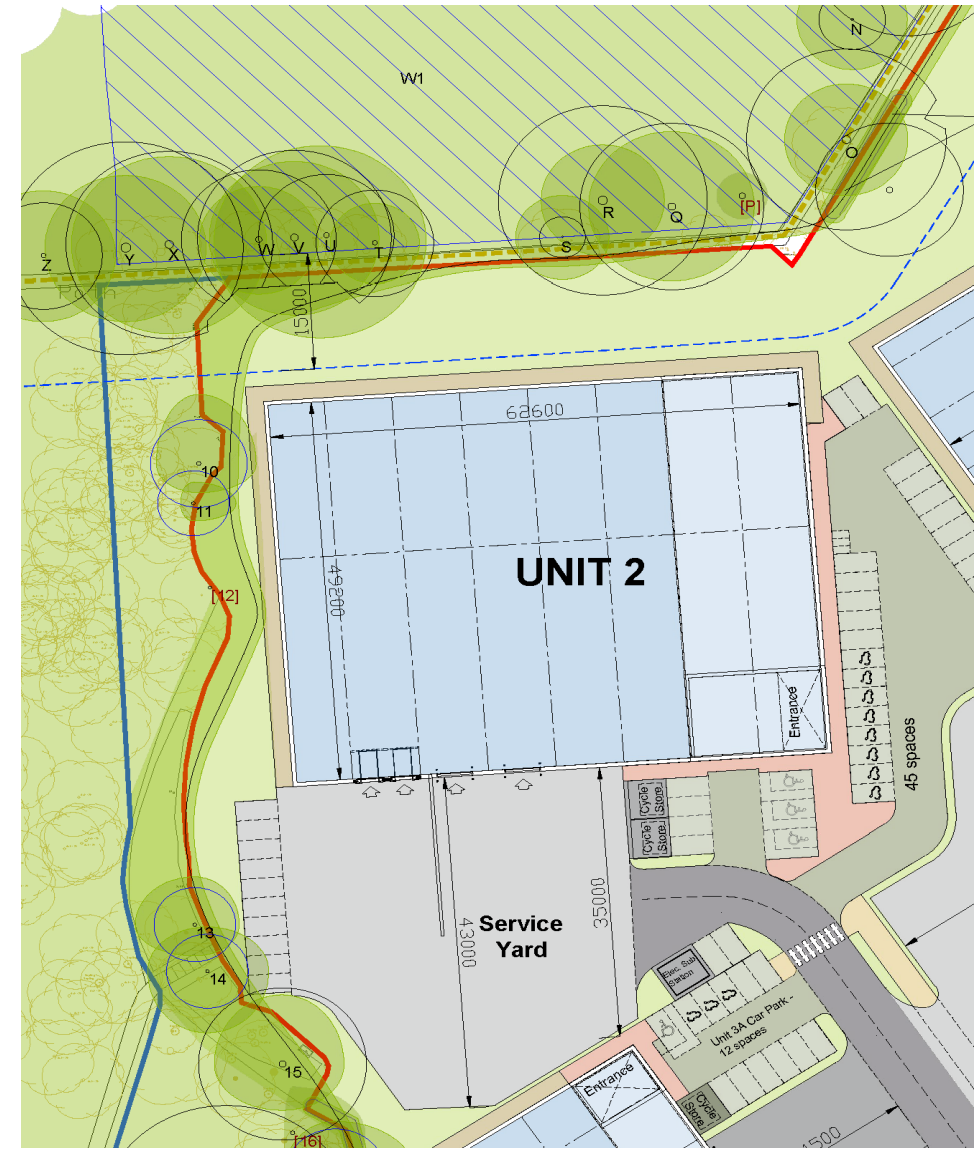


4.05 Key Moves – Pre-Application Consultation

Key Moves to Individual Units – Unit 2



Previous Scheme Layout



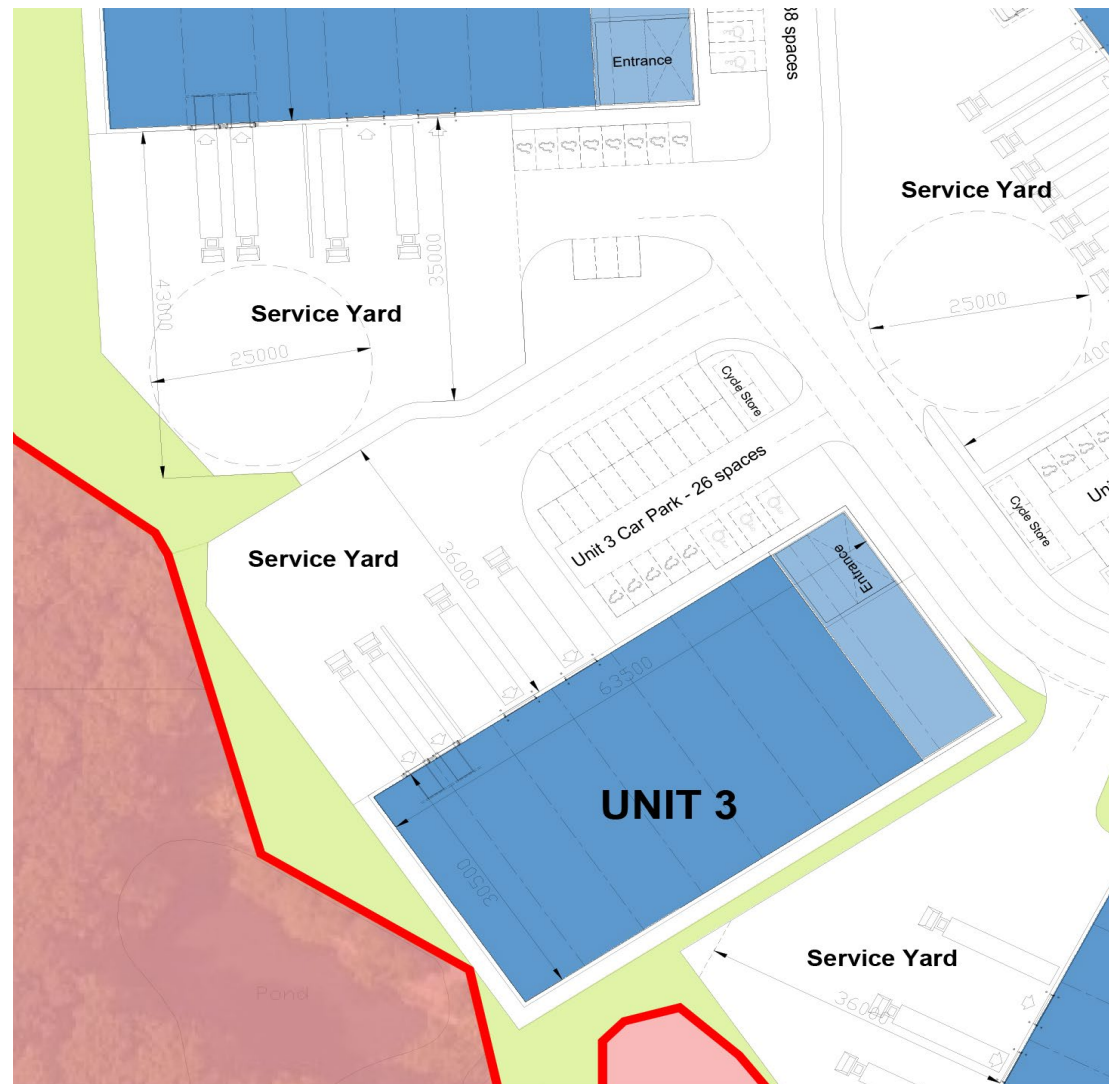
Revised Scheme Layout

- Unit 2 was previously encroaching the 15m Ancient Woodland buffer zone.
- In the revised scheme layout, unit 2 has now been moved out of the buffer zone.
- The maintenance footpath and retaining wall is now also outside of the buffer zone.
- Parapet level reduced by 1.5m.
- Unit FFL reduced by 0.2m (previously 74.000m AOD, now 73.800m AOD)

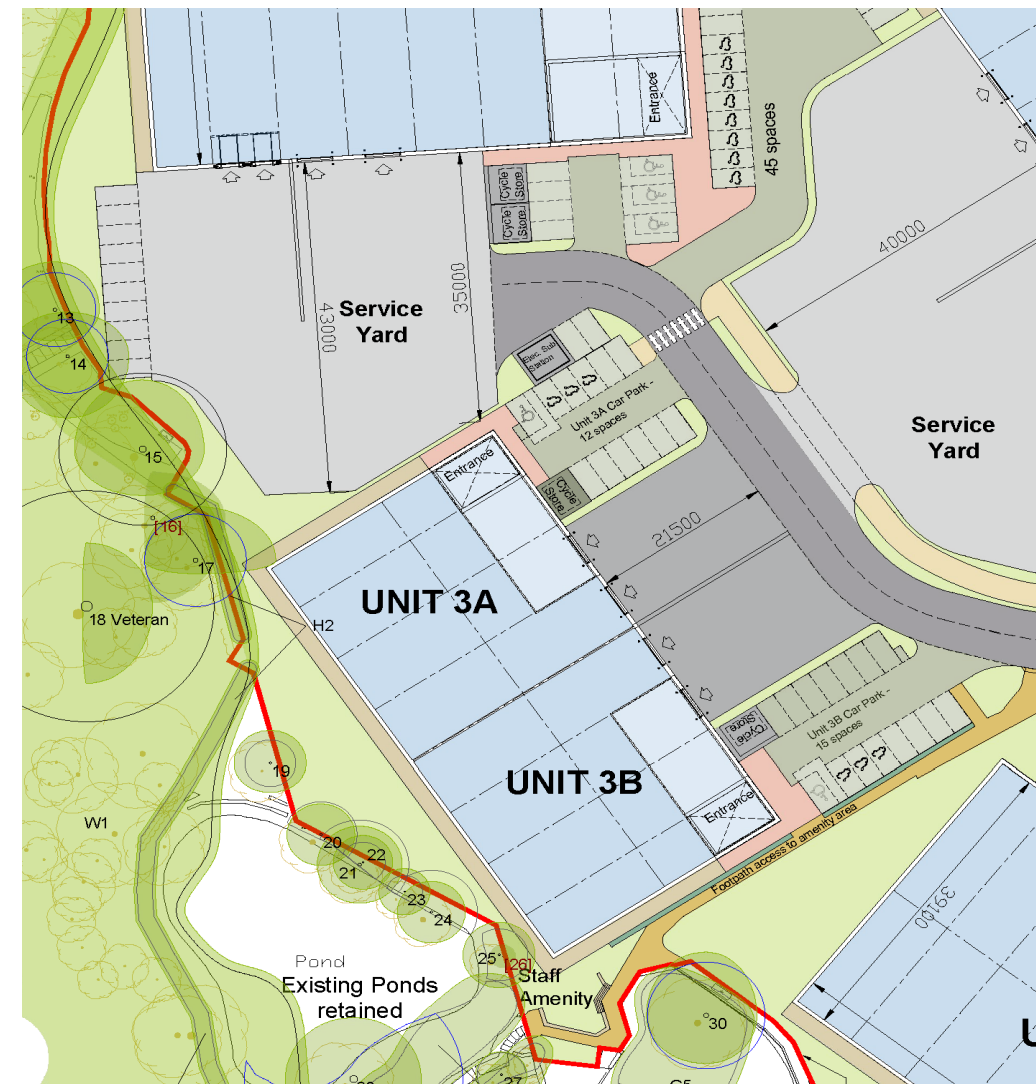


4.05 Key Moves – Pre-Application Consultation

Key Moves to Individual Units – Unis 3A & 3B



Previous Scheme Layout



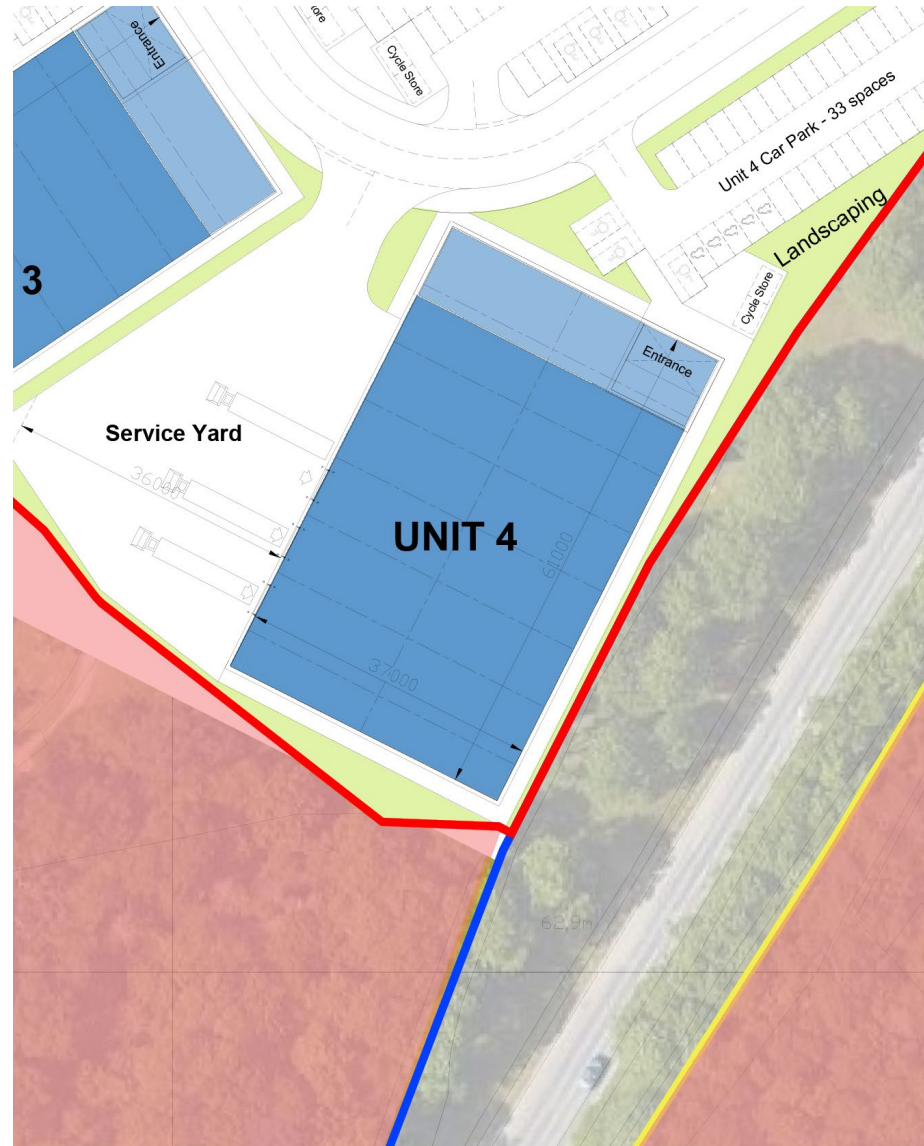
Revised Scheme Layout

- Unit 3 was previously a single larger unit with its long side elevation (south) facing unit 4 service yard.
- In the revised scheme layout, unit 3 becomes a terraced units of 3A and 3B, relocated from previously 5A and 5B. Unit 5 is now a single large unit.
- Units 3A and 3B is also rotated so that the shorter gable elevation is facing south and is set back to allow a meaningful landscaped pedestrian route to the staff amenity areas and existing ponds to the west.

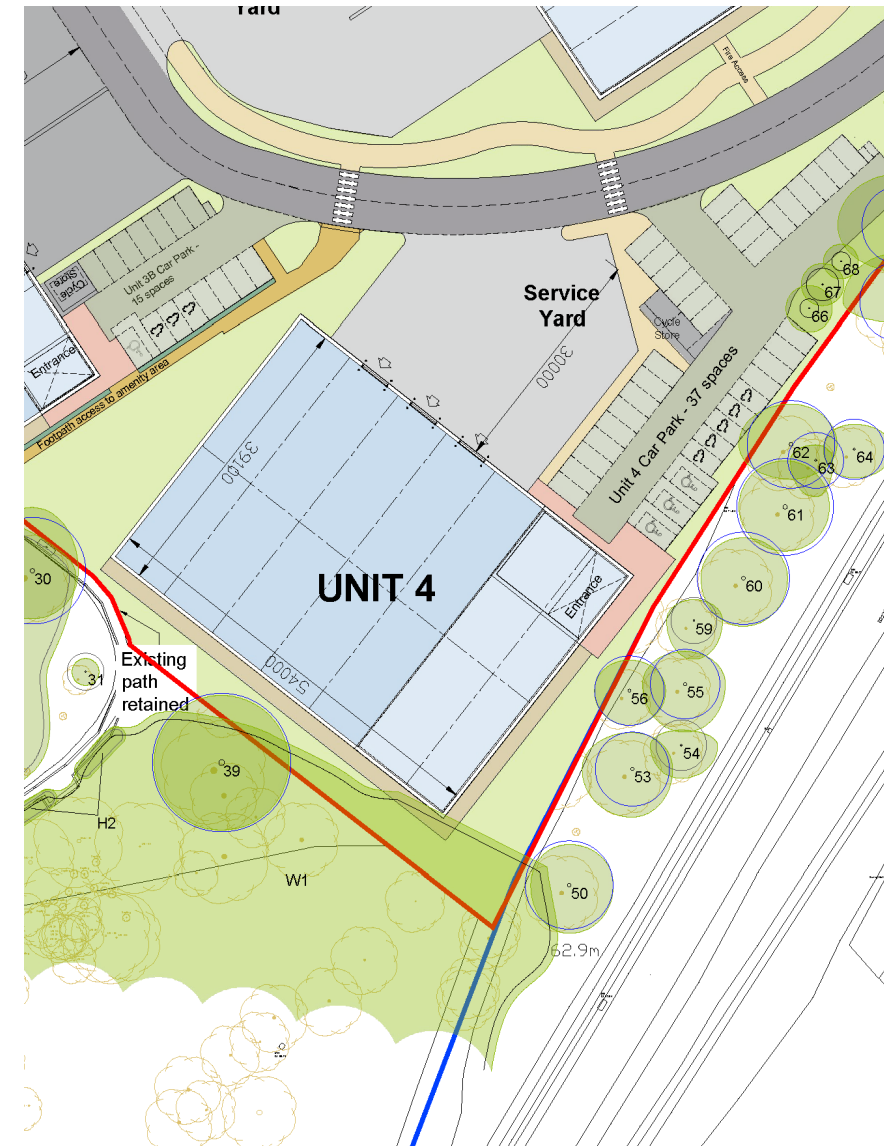


4.05 Key Moves – Pre-Application Consultation

Key Moves to Individual Units – Unit 4



Previous Scheme Layout



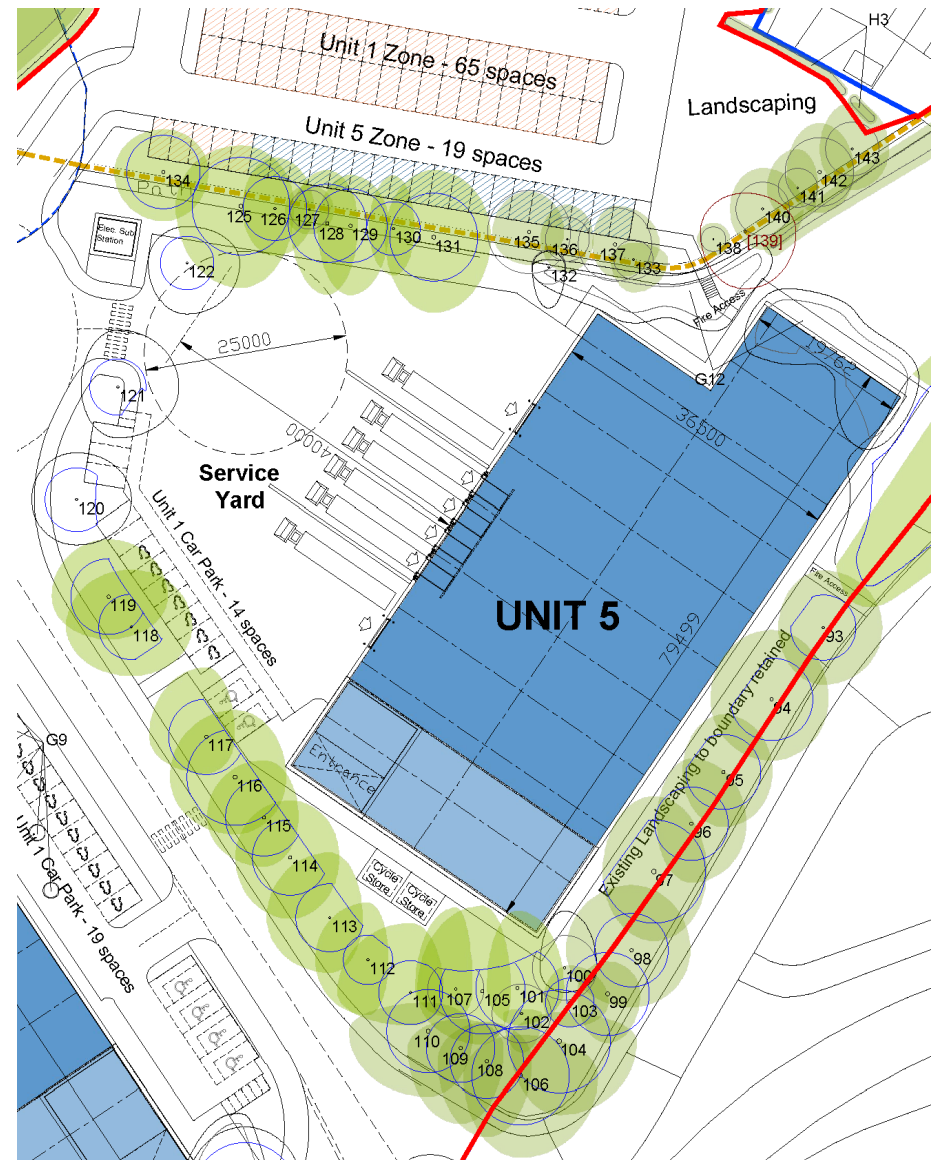
Revised Scheme Layout

- Unit rotated and to reduce the extent of massing along road frontage.
- Unit orientated to maximise set back from road (now ranges from 20-26m from pavement along B3270).
- Office positioned to overlook road frontage.
- FFL reduced by 0.8m.
- Height of parapet reduced from 13.8m to 12.3m.
- Retaining wall reduced – maximum height on south-western corner now 3.7m (previously 5.3m)

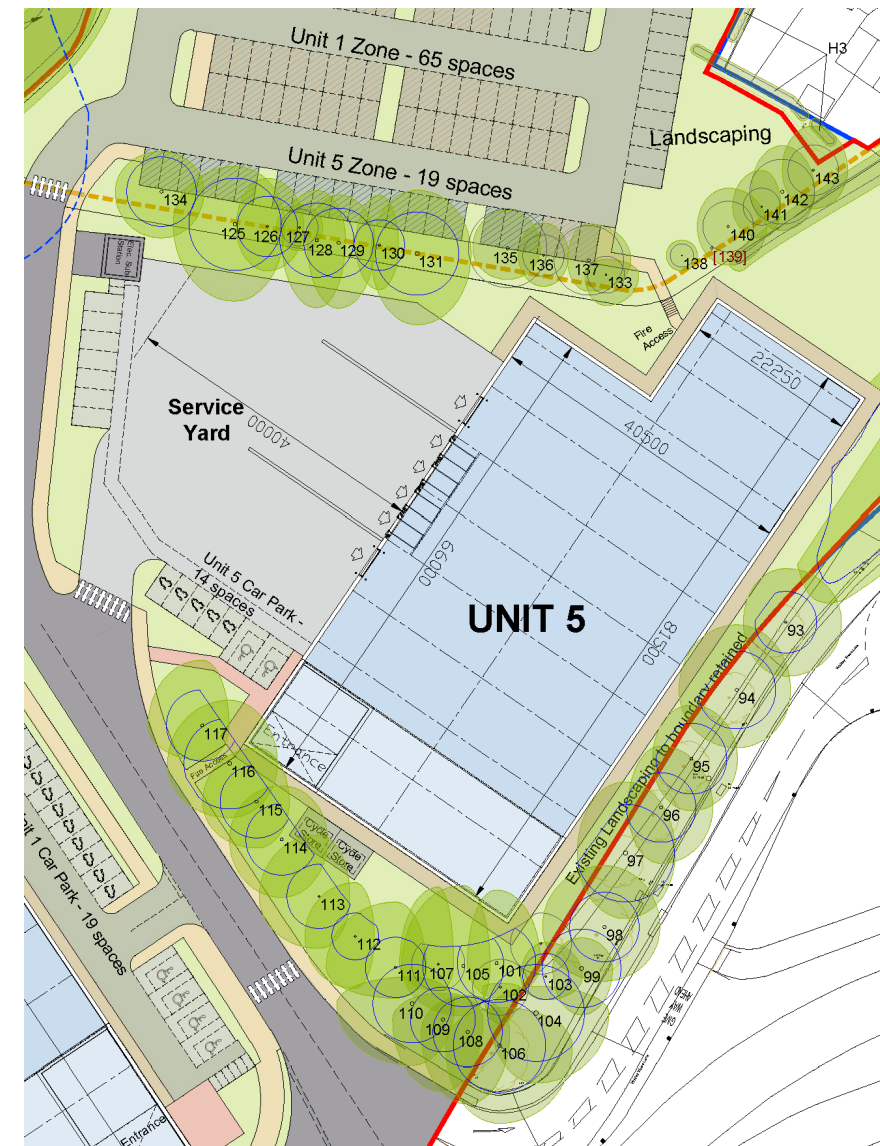


4.05 Key Moves – Pre-Application Consultation

Key Moves to Individual Units – Unit 5



Previous Scheme Layout



Revised Scheme Layout

- Unit has been redesign and lowered to retain more existing trees along the access road.
- New access from the south (following removal of existing roundabout), facilitating reduction in levels by 0.5m (previously 76.500m AOD, now 76.000m AOD).
- Office accommodation repositioned to front access, overlooking main road and site access.
- Parapet height reduced by 1.5m.
- Additional full height vertical glazing added to main road elevation to break up extent of mass of long elevation.

