



HIDDEN HOUSE
MAIDSTONE ROAD
NETTLESTEAD
KENT, ME18 5HE

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

HIDDEN HOUSE, MAIDSTONE ROAD, NETTLESTEAD, KENT, ME18 5HE

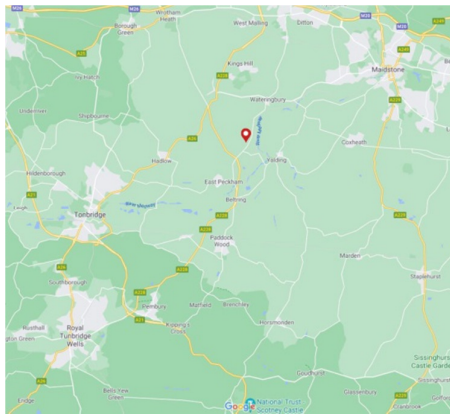
1.0 INTRODUCTION

This scheme proposes the construction of a modern semi sunken-house designed to reference Kentish barn structures. Many examples of which can be found throughout Kent **and the local area within 1km of the site.**

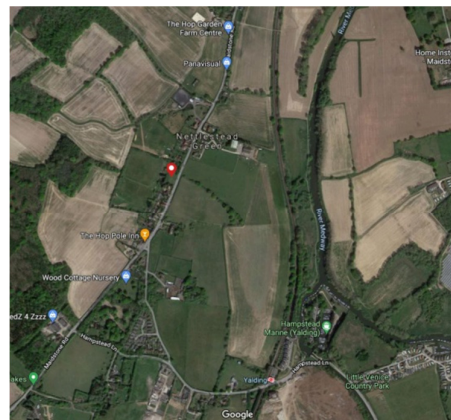
This statement is provided to demonstrate how development has been designed to provide an accessible and safe environment for a modern home while the building and landscape design ensure that the important aspects of the setting of the building are preserved and enhanced.

2.0 EXISTING SITE

The site is located in Nettlestead Green on the B2015 Maidstone road within the Marden and Yalding Ward.



Regional map



Local Map

The site was previously a working orchard with dense tree planting (see below). A built form has historically occupied the site since c.1907. This structure was recently removed from the site due to dilapidation and was witnessed by a planning officer prior to its removal. A large concrete slab and regularly spaced pads are still present and visible on the site. The site is now open with a dense tree and hedge lining to the Maidstone road boundary with outcrops of trees and shrubs at its boundaries.



Map c. 1907



Aerial Photo 1946



Aerial Photo 1990



Aerial Photo 2008

3.0 PROPOSED

3.1 Use

The proposed is a residential detached house a use which fits within the well-defined ribbon of development along the western edge of Maidstone road.

3.2 Scale

The proposed dwelling is a three bedroom dwelling over two storeys with a 150m² footprint, occupying 3.8% of the site area. The building has a 'T' plan form with an 'upside-down' living arrangement. To minimise the buildings visibility the ground floor has been sunk into the existing site, this will vary from 1.3m to 2.5m. As a result the ground floor will be fully submerged at the rear of the property.

From the Maidstone Road the impact of the development would be further mitigated by the existing tree line, which will be maintained and reinforced with native species.



Google street view montage of the proposed building location

As shown in the image above (red above ground and green below) the existing trees would totally obscure the proposed building from the North. The additional planting proposed in the landscaping scheme will further enhance the tree cover and improve the sites appearance from the street.



Google street view montage of the proposed building location

Viewed from the South the building will be visible in brief snatches between the existing and proposed trees along the Maidstone Road boundary. The building viewed in context will appear as a single storey barn style building amongst orchards and wild flower meadows, perfectly at home in its surroundings.

The landscaping plan will be discussed in greater detail later in this document.

3.3 *Appearance*

Drawing on the influences of local modern agricultural buildings, the Hidden House has been designed to be in context with the landscape.



Local agricultural building

This is achieved, while providing interest through strong glazed forms and, once inside the private courtyard, modern interpretations of traditional working materials.

The lower level of the building will be constructed in light coloured slim-line brickwork with pale mortar. This will create a surface with a more residential appearance when viewed up close, without the harshness associated with concrete.



Atlantis 50mm Brick

The external walls above ground level will be finished in open timber cladding directly referencing the vernacular. The material will age naturally over time adding to the buildings natural evolution to its final palette.



Scottish Larch Cladding

The roof will be clad in zinc with an alternating width pattern to relate back to the steel and asbestos profile sheet roofing seen historically on agricultural buildings. The fine finish achievable with the selected palette of materials will give ever more depth to the façade of the building as you approach.



Zinc Roof Cladding

3.4 *Layout*

The proposed building is located at the northern end of the site, close to the previous structure's historic location.

The siting provides natural visual and noise screening from the road and the neighbouring property, Cherry Hill, afforded by the mature tree-line, which will be reinforced as part of the works.

Internally the house's 'upside-down' living arrangement offers further screening to the lower floor sleeping accommodation. The master bedroom and living spaces are situated on the ground floor level. The master and lounge area have views across the wildflower meadow and orchard to the south, whilst there are no views to the north from habitable rooms to avoid any loss of privacy to Cherry Hill. The living space and home office area arranged in a linear form facing west. This elevation is only appears as a single storey and cannot be seen from the road or the existing neighbouring properties.

3.5 *Landscaping*

The landscape architects Hill-Wood & Co has taken a three point approach to the site. Details of the items discussed below can be found on the included drawing 0416/21/B/1.

I. Reducing the impact of the building

The reduced level of the ground floor has allowed Hill-Wood to screen the site from Maidstone Road whilst creating a journey of discovery as you enter the site. Visitors will enter from Maidstone Road along the permeable driveway set down amongst banks of mixed native shrubs at right-angles to the street. As you enter the site, the driveway will draw visitors into the courtyard and towards the sunken building, which until now has appeared in glimpses as single storey rural structure, will be revealed as a modern home nestled amongst established retained dense trees and reinforcement mixed native planting.

The use of mixed native hedgerows with interspersed tree planting along all boundaries will further screen and diffuse views of the property while preserving the openness of the site and aiding habitat connectivity.

II. Preserving the natural openness of the site

The site is currently open at its southern end, creating a natural break in the ribbon of development. Our clients have been passionate about preserving this as part of the landscaping design. Hill-Wood has managed to achieve this while also referencing the sites history by incorporating an orchard of fruit trees set in a wildflower meadow which is encouraged within the Maidstone Borough Landscape Character Assessment. This is complemented by the introduction of additional feature trees along the eastern boundary providing a new depth to the landscape and character of the site whilst enhancing the character of the streetscape.

III. Improving biodiversity

Complementing the elements incorporated into the building's fabric, the planting and materials, such as gabions, have been chosen to significantly improve the site's biodiversity, for self-colonisation, with some draping vegetation to soften the hard landscape. These features work in addition to log piles to aid and enhance biodiversity connectivity and habitats across the scheme.

4.0 ACCESS

4.1 Site access

Access to the site is via private driveway, in an established location, on a 40mph limit road with exceptional visibility in both directions. **Visibility splays are achieved to the 120m requirement and will be included in the subsequent full application.**

4.1.1 Road transport links

The site benefits from excellent access to motorways and major roads via the A228.

4.1.2 Bus routes from The Hop Pole Inn 235m from site

No. 6 Maidstone - Royal Tunbridge Wells

&

No. 6x Maidstone Hospital - Tunbridge Wells Hospital

Linking to all Kent services

Plus schools only services

4.1.3 Train Stations

Yalding 0.59 miles with good foot access via public right of way (Time to London Charing Cross from 1h 9m)

&

Wateringbury 1.5 miles with good footpath access

4.1.4 International travel (c. 1hr or less)

Heathrow airport

Gatwick airport

London City airport

Stansted airport

Eurotunnel Le Shuttle

Eurostar passenger services (Ebbsfleet and Ashford)

Dover ferry port