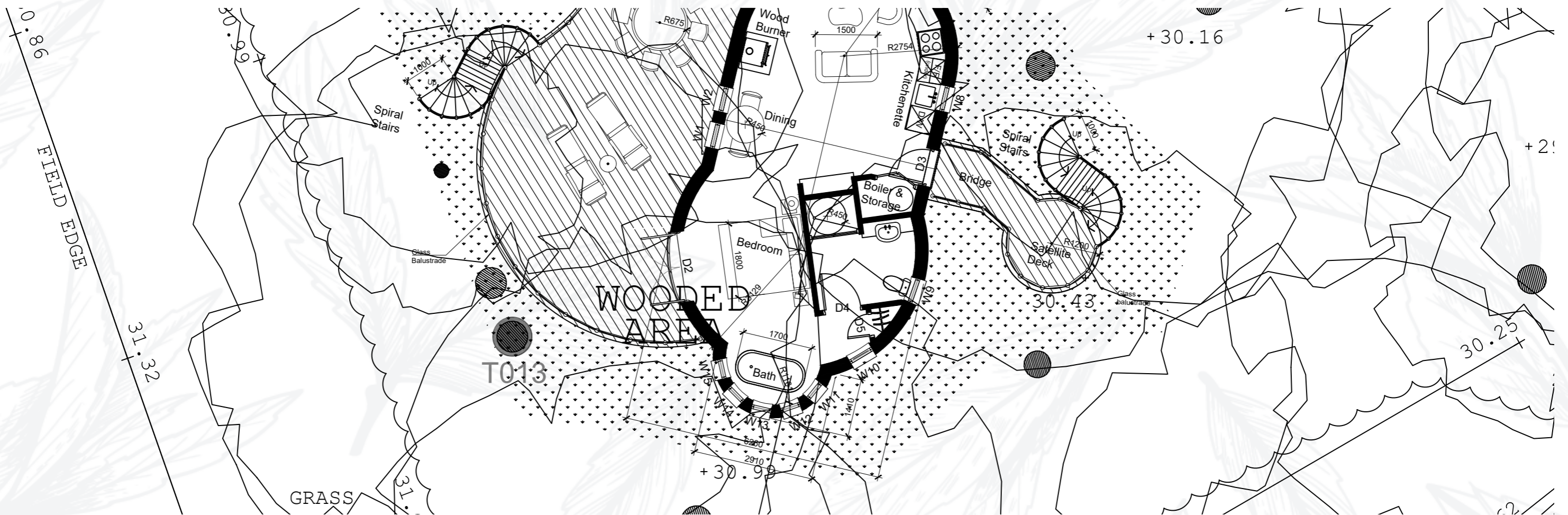




BLUE FOREST
THE TREEHOUSE PEOPLE



MONKS HALL TREEHOUSE

Design & Access Statement

942
NOVEMBER 2021

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1.1 Introduction

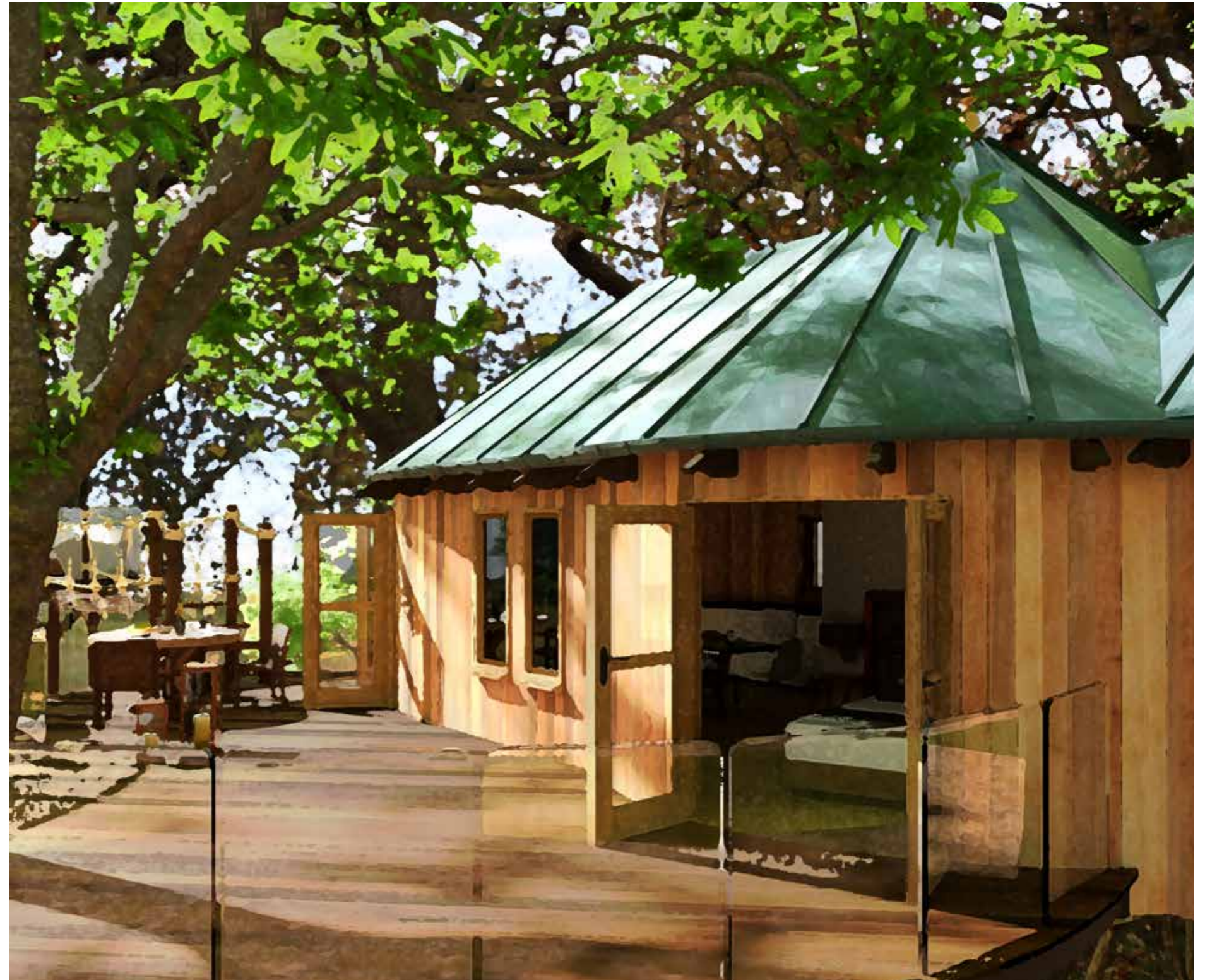
The purpose of this document is to explain the design approach to the development at Monks Hall and how it has taken account of its position and surroundings in order to deliver a high quality development on the site. A beautiful location and unique proposal has been explored as part of this planning application for Mid Suffolk District Council.

Understood to be an Anglo-Saxon Estate, Monks Hall had a long connection with the monks of Thetford Priory through the middle ages. Following the dissolution of the monasteries in the mid-16th Century, Monks Hall was acquired by the Tilney family; the house was substantially rebuilt by them in a form which is still recognisable today and is believed to be one of the oldest continually occupied houses in Suffolk. The Grade II* Listed Manor House is located in the heart of the Waveney Valley on the Suffolk/Norfolk border. The estate has farmland to the north and south, and two and a half miles of frontage onto the River Waveney.

The report summarises the existing site conditions and context, design proposal and appearance, and proposed access arrangements. There is also a brief summary of the arboricultural considerations.

This development comprises one new accommodation treehouse and external decking areas. The site is well contained from the wider landscape and has good access to the surrounding area.

As a small family run design and construction company, Blue Forest has established a reputation for creating inspiring treehouse structures for both private and commercial clients. We specialise in working in sensitive environments particularly in and around trees, offering tailored solutions to all our clients.



1.2 Vision

THE AIMS OF THE PROJECT ARE:

- Exceptionally designed sustainable tourism accommodation inspired by the sense of naturalness of Monks Hall Estate, for the enjoyment of seclusion and peacefulness and to experience heightened natural senses and sounds in accordance with Policies SP07 and LP16.
- To retain the woodland cover and enhance currently limited native understorey with new planting to increase the woodlands ability to store carbon and assist with reducing levels of pollution. In accordance with with policy FC01
- To protect and conserve landscape qualities and the historic environment in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS05.
- To maximise ecology benefits/ enhancements appropriate to the scale and setting of the woodland. There are opportunities for significant enhancement through the woodland management, new planting, and new habitat such as bird, bat and insect housing within the development. This would ensure the scheme complies with Policies, FC01, CS05 of the Core Strategy and ENV4 and LP18 of the emerging plan.
- To minimise lighting to lessen light spill in this rural location, to retain the sense of seclusion, enhance the dark skies experience and mitigate impact on wildlife. The proposals would therefore manage and enhance biodiversity in line with Policy CS05 of the Core Strategy and SP09 of the emerging plan and those policies within Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- To maintain natural infiltration of rainwater into the soils by retaining and utilising the natural pathway surfaces, and raise the treehouse off the ground to maintain water infiltration capacity.
- To incorporate timber from local yards within the local area, and to deliver a high quality and innovative design that will incorporate local materials and sustainable measures which will meet the aspirations of Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy as far as practicable and LP25 of the emerging plan. This includes high water and energy efficiency and other measures that are deemed necessary. Thus, the sustainable design and the location of the development, the scheme will contribute to climate change goals in line with SP10 of the emerging plan and Section 14 of the NPPF.



1.3 Guest Experience

TREEHOUSE GUEST EXPERIENCE

Before arrival guests will be sent information regarding the specific requirements of their stay;

- Share with guests a summary on the history of the estate all that it has to offer, i.e. walking trails, wildlife, etc.
- Provide the guests with a explanation of what is available to do locally.
- Explain the rules of the estate i.e. where they can and can't go, dogs, etc.
- Provide a key code so they can access the treehouse.



On arrival guests will be directed to the designated parking area where they will be met by the hosts. Once the introductions have been made, guests will make their way to the treehouse together with their luggage and introduced to their accommodation. During this time there is an opportunity to answer any further questions they may have and also for our team to talk more about the unique environment in which they are staying, noting the points of interest on the journey to the treehouse.



During their stay, guests shall be left in peace to enjoy the surroundings. Should they require anything they are able to call the hosts. They will have access to bicycles, wellington boots, umbrellas, provided by the estate to promote the guests to explore.



At the end of their stay the guests will return to the car parking area where they shall return the treehouse keys and the host will check that they had an enjoyable stay.

MAINTENANCE AND SERVICE

Change over days are Friday and Monday, the unit will be rented on a 3 night/ 4 night break.



Guests shall deposit rubbish into the external bins beside their treehouse. There will be a number of bins to allow for the waste to be sorted to maximise recycling. The waste shall then be collected from outside the treehouse every afternoon and waste taken back to the car park area to be deposited into larger bins where it shall then be collected by the refuse company.



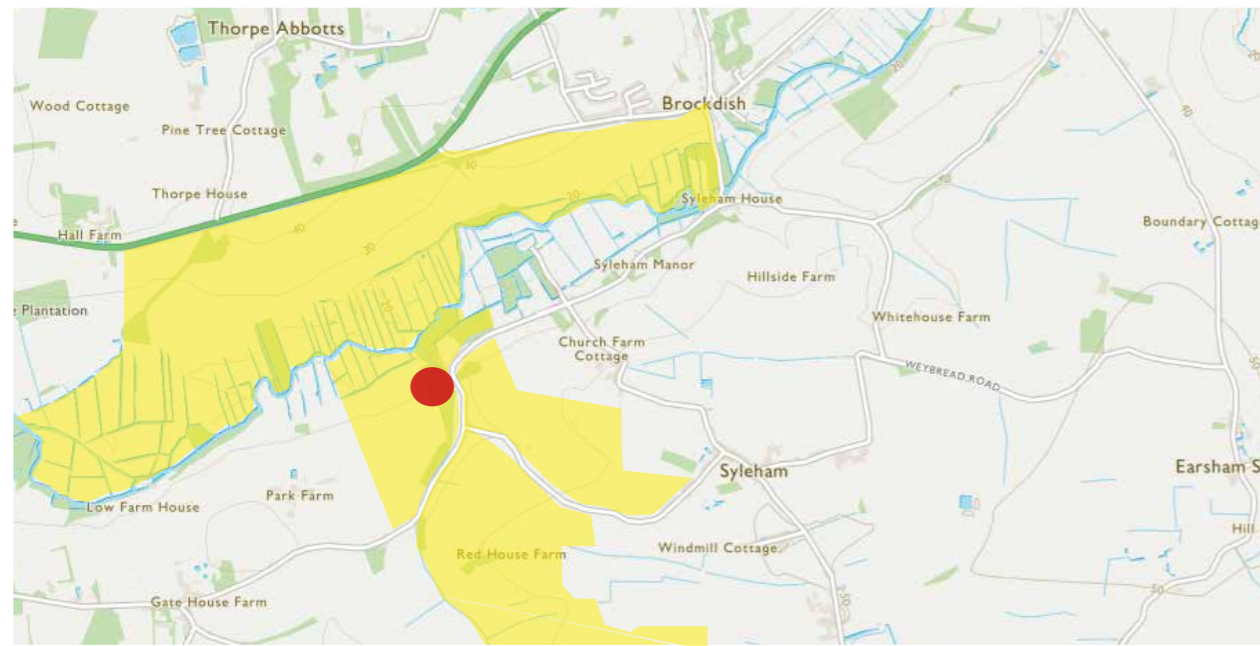
The site shall be closed for a short period each year to enable routine treehouse and site maintenance.



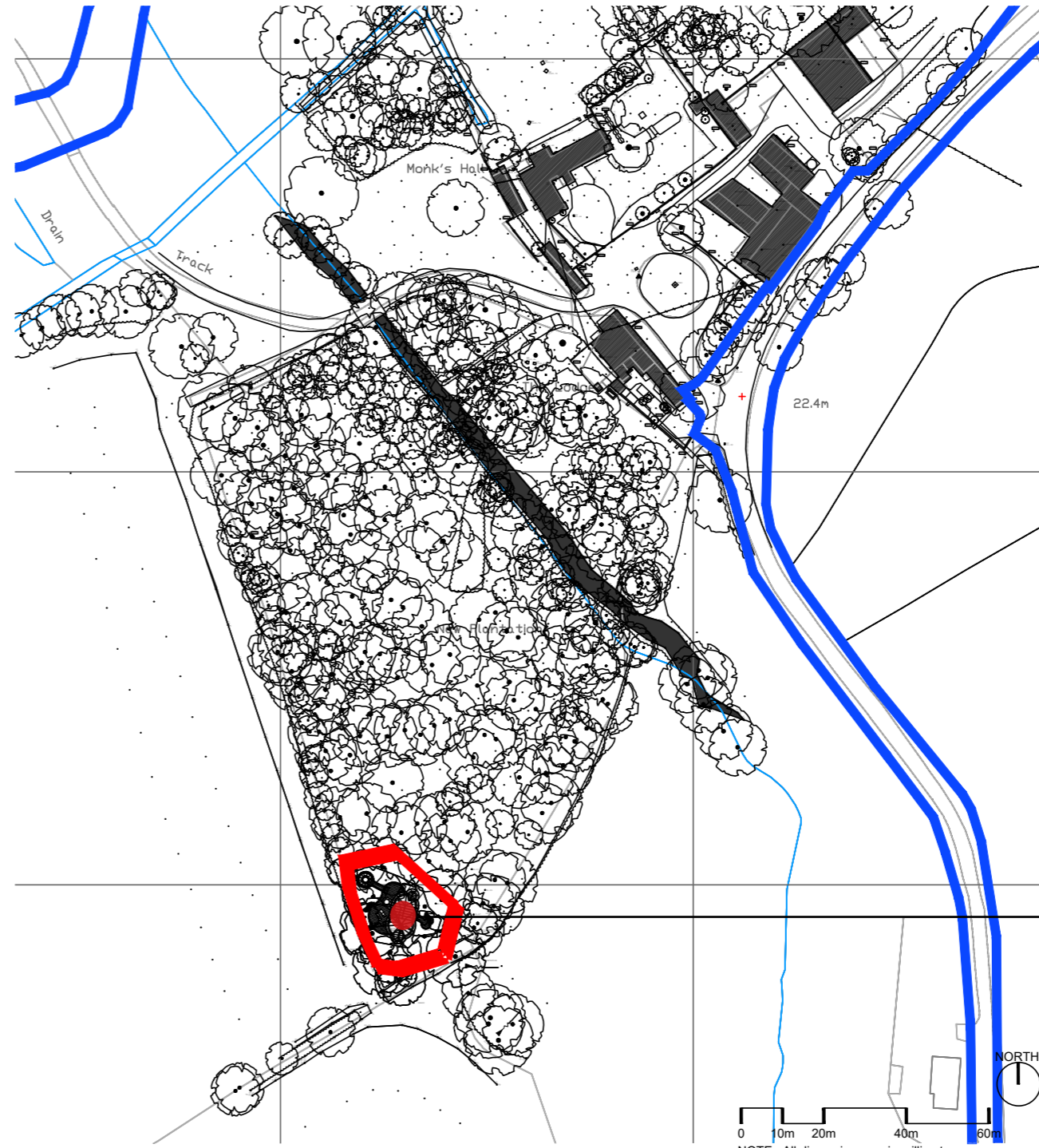
1.4 Site Location Plan



Scale 1:1600000
Projection: British National Grid



Property Area



Monks Hall
Eye
Suffolk
IP21 4LN

Site Location

NOTE: All dimensions are in millimetres.

Site



1.5 Site Plan

One accommodation treehouse is to be erected on the edge of a wooded area near Monks Hall. Key considerations and design parameters include:

- To create a design that will fit discreetly and naturally in to the landscape, utilising existing screening to limit the overall visual impact of the structure.
- To create a structure that can be installed sensitively with limited impact on the surrounding trees and ecology.
- The treehouse to incorporate one bedroom with en-suite bathroom, an outdoor dining deck and an external deck over a rope bridge, looking over the landscape.

The treehouse has been located and designed to limit the visual impact the proposed structure would have within the site and to ensure the amenity of occupants of nearby properties is not materially harmed. Due to the existing screening, the distance the treehouse is sited from the boundaries and neighbouring properties and the use of natural materials, the proposal will blend sensitively into the character and appearance of the surrounding area and environment.

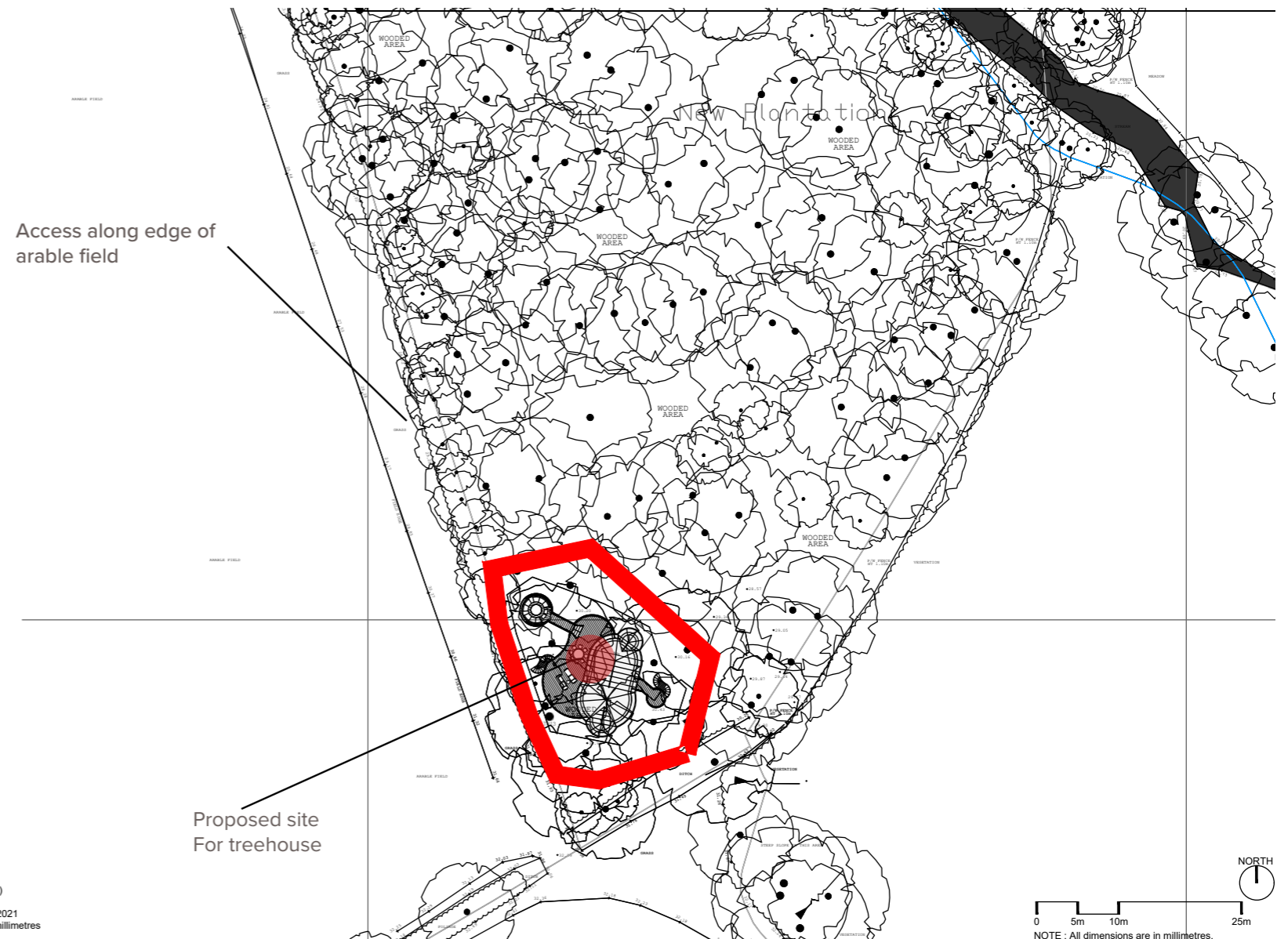
Secondly, with regards to tree health and the proposed manner of support for the structure, to keep maintenance to a minimum and to ensure that the construction of the treehouse has little or no negative impact upon the surrounding trees we have chosen to support the main treehouse structure on posts.

The structure will have two decks accessed from spiral staircases. As the landscape drops away the deck will reach a height of approximately 3.5m at the highest point from ground level.

Our experience in designing treehouses plays a big role in the structures we now design and we have acquired a good understanding of what makes an attractive, safe yet fun and adventurous space. This experience helps us to understand all the critical success factors that are associated with each of our treehouse designs.

The layout of the treehouse and decks are predominantly determined by the location of the trees and the surrounding vegetation. In this case, the main treehouse structure is freestanding, with no dependence on the surrounding trees for support.

The treehouse has been designed to fit discreetly and naturally into the woodland near Monks Hall. The structure will not be imposing in relation to the rest of the property, the distances to boundaries and high level of existing screening. We have provided enough space within the structure to ensure that it will provide a comfortable and flexible space for the guests.



NOTES:
 Property Boundary
 Site Boundary (0.05Ha)
 ©SJ Geometrics, Feb. 2021
 All dimensions are in millimetres



1.6 Contextual Plan & Constraints

The treehouse will be accessed from Monks Hall utilising an existing farm track. Access will be via pedestrian pathways and via electric buggy. Other vehicular access is only proposed for construction and emergency purposes. No additional parking will be required.

The site has abundant mature trees so existing clearings are the natural choice for the treehouse location. All retained planting will then be allowed to flourish below and around the treehouse helping to conceal the timber substructure, as well as giving the treehouse a 'hidden away' feel for guests.

The site allows discreet views across the fields, however, importantly the established trees in this area will allow the treehouse to be hidden from view, ensuring minimal visual impact and maintaining a sense of isolation and exclusivity.

KEY DESIGN DRIVERS

- The treehouse will be designed to blend beautifully with its natural environment.
- The treehouse will be positioned and orientated to benefit from the natural land form of the woodland.
- The treehouse will be located an adequate distance from other buildings to ensure privacy.
- The treehouse will be finished with natural materials.
- The treehouse will be created through the use of sustainably sourced timber and building materials.
- The layout of the treehouse shall conserve the natural character within the woodland, and retain the sense of 'naturalness' of the woodland.
- Layout should minimise the impact on ecology and sensitive archaeological features. Arboricultural, Ecology and Landscape Impact reports will be commissioned if the scheme progresses to a full planning application.
- The treehouse structure will not use the trees for support and will not be fixed to the trees.
- The proposed foundation system is a 'no dig' solution designed to protect tree roots.

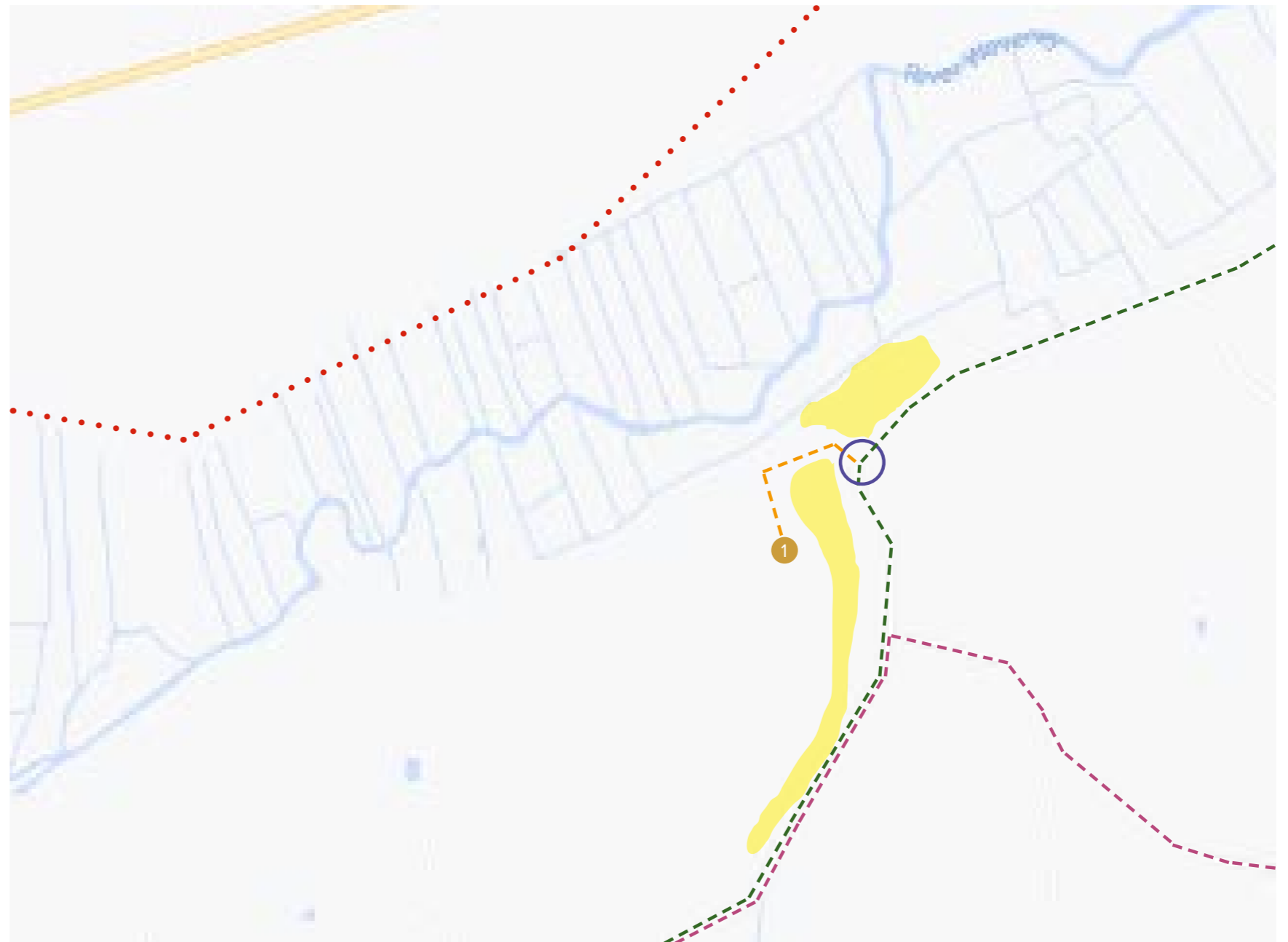


Diagram showing the access to the site from the wider area

- 1 One bed treehouse
- Proposed vehicular entrance to site
- Bus route close to Monks Hall
- Syleham Road
- Existing farm track to treehouses
- Screening from existing trees
- Angles Way walking and cycling route



1.7 Access Strategy

VEHICULAR ACCESS STRATEGY

A particular aim has been to seek to minimise potential landscape and visual impacts upon the character of Monks Hall and the woodland, as well as the landscape resource of the site.

A suitable area for parking was identified as the existing parking area to the south of Monks Hall, with access off Syleham Road.

Vehicular access to the treehouse will be limited to operational and maintenance requirements. Guests will access the treehouse on foot from the car park.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS STRATEGY

After arriving, guests will leave their vehicle in the car park and will access the treehouse on foot or using a small electric buggy along the route of the existing farm / estate tracks.

From an experiential/perceptual perspective, visitors would have a strong sense of being within the Monks Hall estate from the outset. The journey to the treehouse site from the car park site using existing access tracks would form part of the experience, being immersed within the historic woodland, with views over the Waveney Valley.



View of site entrance from Syleham Road



View towards car park



Existing farm track / access



Existing bridge over stream



Existing access track runs along the edge of field / woodland.



1.8 Site Photos



2.1 Relevant Policy

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

1. The Development Plan relevant to the application is made up of the following
 - (1) Mid Suffolk Core Strategy
 - (2) The saved policies of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan 1998.
2. The Core Strategy was subject to a focussed review in 2012 following the adoption of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). However, this plan still pre-dates the latest version of the NPPF which was updated in 2018. Since that time, the council has merged with Babergh Council and the authorities are now working on a joint Local Plan which is being examined in 2021. The relevant policies relate to farm diversification, tourism development, landscape, biodiversity, heritage and these are covered in more detail in the main body of this statement.
3. The Core Strategy includes an updated policy FC3, which supports farm diversification and tourism projects where these cannot be located close to the existing settlements and that they are appropriate to a rural setting. Core Strategy policies are more spatial in nature, with policies relating to climate change, the environment and the economy. The 1998 Plan includes policies relating to tourism and farm diversification and a raft of other policies.
4. The emerging joint Local Plan includes a policy SP07 which actively encourages new development in respect of tourism as well as other policies including Policy LP16 which supports new tourist accommodation. The plan also includes policies in respect of the environment, access and the economy which will be discussed further below.
5. Also, the NPPF is of relevance to this application as the framework is a material consideration in decision making in terms of its policies and the presumption in favour of sustainable development and its influence in terms the weighting of existing policies. The NPPF also contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development within Paragraph 11 of the document, which provides a positive context to decision making. Section 6 relates to supporting economic growth and the rural economy including a new part directly supporting sustainable tourism in rural areas. The application has also had regard to the principles of Section 15 of the NPPF including the protection of the intrinsic beauty of the countryside, Section 16 which relates to the historic environment respectively.
6. This summary seeks to discharge the main policies that are relevant to the development and provide a summary of a positive planning case that can be reached and we welcome discussion with the council on the application of these.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

7. The applicants reside at Monks Hall, a significant property within the local area and which extends to an extensive land holding, including areas of active farmland. The estate also has tracts of woodland, including an area that flanks the residential grounds of the hall. The applicants are seeking to explore the possibility of expanding the facilities on the farm estate and wish to discuss the potential for a sustainable treehouse unit, within the area of woodland adjacent to their gardens. This would be used to facilitate estate activities and as guest accommodation/holiday purposes and would be managed by the applicants at Monks Hall.
8. This would support the viability of the wider farming activities in order to widen the income streams and at the same time promote the sustainable approach to the farming activities on the site. Like many land-based activities, there is considerable pressure and uncertainty within the industry and the opportunity to broaden its wider economic base will continue to support the principal farming element of the business. Indeed, tourism is a use commonly found on estates and farms due to its low-key use and compatibility with farming activities. The unit will be fully managed by the occupants of Monks Hall and parking and access will be taken via the same residential access in order the unit can be seen as an integral element of the farm estate.
9. The pertinent matters will now be discussed below;

PRINCIPLE OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

10. The council's Local Plan documents date from 1998 and 2008 and which are based on the previous PPS4 and PPS7. However, Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy and Policy RT16 of the Local Plan both accept and support tourism as a use that was acceptable in the countryside. Indeed, RT16 supports new tourism facilities subject to the development not affecting landscape, amenity or wildlife habitats.
11. The Core Strategy was subject to a focussed review of the Core Strategy has been undertaken and Policy FC3 was updated to align with the 2012 NPPF. This policy seeks to support the rural economy and states the council will support tourism and farm diversification proposals subject to the development which cannot be located closer to existing settlements and that it is appropriate to its rural setting. The location is considered to be appropriate on the basis, it will support the farm estate on which it is located and the development is sensitively designed and sited to preserve its rural setting.
12. In 2018, the NPPF was updated to specifically support 'sustainable tourism proposals where these respect the countryside'. The emerging plan further supports the principle of tourism development through policy SP07 and encourages new tourism proposals alongside Policy LP16. This supports new proposals subject to an overriding business case and the proposals are sympathetic to the character of the area.



2.1 Relevant Policy (Continued)

13. The development is considered to be a low key and sustainable eco-tourism project which can unlock a range of benefits to the local economy which supporting the long-term future of the farm estate, its landscape, biodiversity and viability. The proposals reflect a very sustainable form of tourism accommodation, seeking opportunities for enhancement in the environment as part of the development, which both has benefits to the site and the visitor experience which furthers understanding of the natural environment.

14. As well as the support of current policies, the scheme is also supported by the NPPF, including Paragraph 83 and 84. Paragraph 83 states planning decisions should enable;

‘The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; and enable;

‘Sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside’.

Paragraph 84 states;

‘Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable’.

15. Indeed, this document seeks to show the scheme represents a sustainable form of tourism development and the development is sensitive to its surroundings, will not affect local roads and it will maximise the sustainability of the site through cycle provision for occupants and encouragement of the local footpath network.

16. Thus, the principle of the proposals can be supported and the other relevant issues will be discussed below.

LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE

17. The policies require development to maintain the wider landscape character and protect heritage assets and their setting. The scheme has been informed from an early stage by input from a Heritage Consultant and consideration of landscape matters, to enhance they are sensitive to landscape character. The unit will sit to the edge of a tract of woodland, which lies adjacent to the grounds of Monks Hall, and will utilise existing access from Monks Hall and parking will take place on existing areas of hard-standing which is screened from wider view. In short, the treehouse or any associated parking, will not be visible in wider views. The sensitive and sustainable design of the treehouse and its siting will ensure the scheme will preserve landscape and local character. The proposals will also grasp opportunities for enhancement through woodland management and biodiversity measures.

18. The 1998 plan suggests the land lies within a special landscape area but this is not reflected within the new emerging joint plan. However, the plans seek to conserve and enhance the wider landscape character through the sensitive siting and design and wider woodland management.

19. The Heritage Assessment also confirms the siting of the treehouse will preserve the setting of Monks Hall and its significance. Thus, the scheme will meet the Core Strategy Policy CS5 which requires policies to protect and conserve landscape qualities and the historic environment. This also accords with the approach within LP19 and LP21 of the emerging plan and section 15 and 16 of the NPPF. It will also accord with Policy HB1 of the 1998 plan which seeks to protect listed buildings and their setting.

BIODIVERSITY

A key driver behind the proposal is the need for Monks Hall to further diversify its enterprises. That objective is becoming more important as the countryside and its custodians move towards practical implementation of the Government’s post Brexit farming systems and its Environmental Land Management Scheme. The accommodation treehouse will offer opportunities for ‘wildlife holidays’. At Monks Hall, plans are also underway to incorporate educational workshops and programmes for scouting groups and other organisations.

20. Turning to ecology, the site is to be subject to an initial PEA and any further surveys deemed necessary and the relevant measures employed within the proposals. From experience on other similar projects, the ecological aspects will not be constraint for the development on the basis the proposals will incorporate the recommendations on mitigation such as minimal lighting and sustainable construction methods. Furthermore, there are opportunities for significant enhancement through the woodland management, new planting, and new habitat such as bird, bat and insect housing within the development. This would ensure the scheme complies with Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy and ENV4 and LP18 of the emerging plan.

21. The application would also be supported by arboricultural advice and assessments, which would ensure the wooded nature and important trees are maintained. This would ensure the scheme complies with Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy.

22. The development would adopt a minimum lighting strategy, with occupants expected to use torch light to and from the unit and minimum lighting on the units themselves. These would meet the bat conservation principles and the unit would have black out blinds for hours of darkness.

23. The proposals would therefore manage and enhance biodiversity in line with Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy and SP09 of the emerging plan and those policies within Section 15 of the NPPF.



2.1 Relevant Policy (Continued)

HIGHWAYS AND ACCESSIBILITY

24. The site lies within a rural area but is within a short distance of Syleham and Brockdish which have a range of local facilities suitable for visitors. Furthermore, the rationale of the accommodation is to provide an experience, where visitors can leave the car behind and explore the countryside by sustainable means, including walking and cycling. The proposals will provide cycle use for the occupants and information on local footpath links. Indeed, the site has access to a number of footpath routes in the local area, meaning once occupants arrive, the wider vehicle trips will be very low. Furthermore, these routes offer the opportunity for occupants to access village facilities, such as pubs and shops, without the need for a car.

25. Turning to highway matters, the site has a good approach road and access via the existing property and the parking for one vehicle will be on an existing area of hard-standing within the grounds of the property. Pedestrian access will be via a footpath to the unit.

26. The site is served by a safe access and will provide adequate parking and other infrastructure. On this basis, the scheme would accord with Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

DESIGN/CLIMATE CHANGE

27. The design aspirations are set out in the accompanying documents but the scheme will represent a high quality and innovative design that will incorporate local materials and sustainable measures which will meet the aspirations of Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy as far as practicable and LP25 of the emerging plan. This includes high water and energy efficiency and other measures that are deemed necessary.

28. The site is also located in Flood Zone 1 and thus directly follows the approach of the NPPF with regards to the lowest risk of flooding.

29. Thus, the sustainable design and the location of the development, the scheme will contribute to climate change in line with SP10 of the emerging plan and Section 14 of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION

30. The development will contribute to meeting the need for tourism accommodation in the area which will support the existing farm / estate and will represent a sustainable diversification scheme. The proposals will provide a new tourism unit which will contribute to the future of the farm estate whilst facilitating wider woodland management and biodiversity improvements and preserving landscape character.

31. The unit will be integral to the farm / estate through the management by Monks Hall and means of access and proximity to the immediate grounds of the property.

32. Paragraph 11 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development which means that where development accords with the development plan development should be approved without delay. The application proposals would fulfil the role required by the planning system and would deliver benefits in respect of the three planning roles which are set out in paragraphs 7-10 of the framework.

33. The above clearly demonstrates that the proposals are sustainable development and thus the presumption in favour of sustainable development lies in support of the development. In short, the development meets the terms of the development plan.



2.2 Arboricultural Survey

The purpose of this report is to provide a preliminary consideration of the arboricultural implications created by the proposed development. In accordance with the feasibility and planning sections of BS5837:2012 "Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations", trees deemed to be within the influencing distance of the projected construction have been evaluated for quality, longevity, and initial maintenance requirements. Where trees do not have to be removed for health and safety reasons, a detailed and objective assessment has been made of the consequences of the intended layout. In this circumstance it is intended to construct a self-supporting treehouse in the woodland. As a result, fourteen individual trees, one hedge and one woodland were inspected. The arboricultural related implications of the proposal are as follows:

1. It is necessary to fell three low quality individual trees and a section of one low quality landscape feature in order to achieve the proposed layout. Additionally, seven trees require minor surgery to permit construction space or access.
2. The alignment of the proposed treehouse encroaches within the Root Protection Areas of trees that are to be retained. In view of this, careful consideration must be given to foundation design as discussed at item 4.4.1 and within the Blue Forest Treehouse Construction Method Statement.
3. The construction process will require the installation of a temporary load bearing surface.
4. This report recommends that specialist advice is obtained by expert practitioners in other disciplines. Such input should always be sought prior to the submission of this report in support of a planning application in order to demonstrate that the techniques and methods hereby proposed are achievable.
5. All trees and landscape features that are to remain as part of the development should suffer no structural damage provided that the findings with this report are complied with in full. This includes ensuring that protective fencing is erected as detailed at items 4.6 and 5.1 of this report.
6. Post Planning Permission – Subject to achieving Planning Permission, a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan will be required. This will include the following: fencing type, ground protection measures, access facilitation pruning specification, installation of services, phasing and an extensive auditable monitoring schedule.

Given the above, there are no overt or overwhelming arboricultural constraints that can be reasonably cited to preclude the proposed construction.

The Proposal

The proposal is to construct a self-supporting treehouse in the woodland adjacent to Monks Hall.

Access

Access from the closest road way and up to the site is via an arable field and is unencumbered by the Root Protection Areas (RPA) of any trees to be retained. Therefore, and from a purely arboricultural perspective, it will not be necessary to install a proprietary temporary load bearing road to protect tree roots.

Site access from the arable field and into the area of construction is encumbered by the Root Protection Areas (RPA) of the following retained trees – T003, T004, T013 and T014. Therefore, and from a purely arboricultural perspective, it will be necessary to install a proprietary temporary load bearing surface to prevent compaction damage to tree roots. This must be installed as a first stage of development, immediately after the completion of the necessary tree surgery and the installation of protective fencing.

Demolition

There is no demolition associated with this proposal.

Construction

Construction of foundations or structural supports for the proposed treehouse and decking encroaches within the RPA of one or more trees to be retained – T003, T004, T007, T008, T010, T011, T013 and T014. As such, the treehouse manufacturer Blue Forest, in conjunction with an Arboriculturalist and Structural Engineer have designed specialized piled foundations where the footprint of the structure coincides with the RPA. The outline details of the specialist foundations have been included in the Blue Forest Treehouse Construction Method Statement. The design must allow for the ground beam or supporting structure to be formed above the existing ground level, not requiring excavation work within the RPA. Furthermore, consideration will need to be given to the piling rig, if required, or machinery used to ensure it is sufficiently small scale to be operable beneath the crown of the retained tree/s.

It is understood that there are no new hard surfaces associated with this proposal. Excavation and soil re-modeling is not shown to encroach within the RPA of any retained trees. Therefore, no adverse arboricultural implications are expected.

Implications of Sloping Ground

The arboricultural implications of the proposed structures are based on an assumption that because there are no significant existing slopes on site, level changes will not occur within the RPA of trees that are shown to be retained.

Requirement for Tree Barrier Fencing

Prior to the commencement of construction and immediately after the completion of the necessary tree surgery and felling work, protective fencing will be erected on site. This must be fit for purpose (including any ground protection if necessary) in full accordance with the requirements of BS 5837:2012 and positioned as shown on the attached Preliminary Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Tree Protection drawing. Full details of fencing will be supplied by Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants in the detailed Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan.

Compound

The site provides adequate internal space to locate a construction compound outside the RPA of any trees and landscape features that are to be retained.

Phasing

The proposal involves the integration of a number of complex aspects that affect tree protection (e.g. – but not exclusively – access, installation of foundations, movement of materials and the installation of services). For this reason, the project must be carefully phased to ensure the highest level of protection for retained trees at all times. As part of the detailed Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan, Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants will produce an in depth phasing recommendation to cover the major operations on site as they affect retained trees.

Monitoring

In accordance with item 6.3 of BS 5837:2012, the site and associated development should be monitored regularly by a competent Arboriculturalist to ensure that the arboricultural aspects of the planning permission are complied with. As part of the detailed Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan, Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants will produce an extensive auditable monitoring schedule to assess the progress of key site events/activities.



2.2 Arboricultural Survey (continued)

Tree Surgery to Facilitate Proposed Development

In order to enable the proposed development it will be necessary to undertake the following tree surgery works to retained trees: -

Feature No	Description of Works	Required BS Category
T003	Crown lift southern aspect to allow up to 1m clearance from proposed treehouse.	B
T004	Crown lift southern aspect to allow up to 1m clearance from proposed treehouse.	B
T007	Crown lift southern and western aspects to allow up to 1m clearance from proposed treehouse.	B
T010	Crown lift northern aspect to allow up to 1m clearance from proposed treehouse.	B
T011	Crown lift northern aspect to allow up to 1m clearance from proposed treehouse.	B
T013	Crown lift north eastern aspect to allow up to 1m clearance from proposed treehouse.	B
T014	Crown lift northern, eastern and southern aspects to allow up to 1m clearance from proposed treehouse.	B

The works listed in the above table will have a minimal impact upon the retained trees in terms of their visual amenity, longevity, landscape importance.

The items listed in the table below require felling to permit the proposed development to proceed: -

Feature No	Reason for Removal	BS Category	Visual Amenity Assessment
H001 (section only)	To enable access into the woodland	C	Low
T005	To enable construction of treehouse.	U	Low
T006	To enable construction of treehouse.	C	Low
T009	To enable construction of treehouse.	C	Low

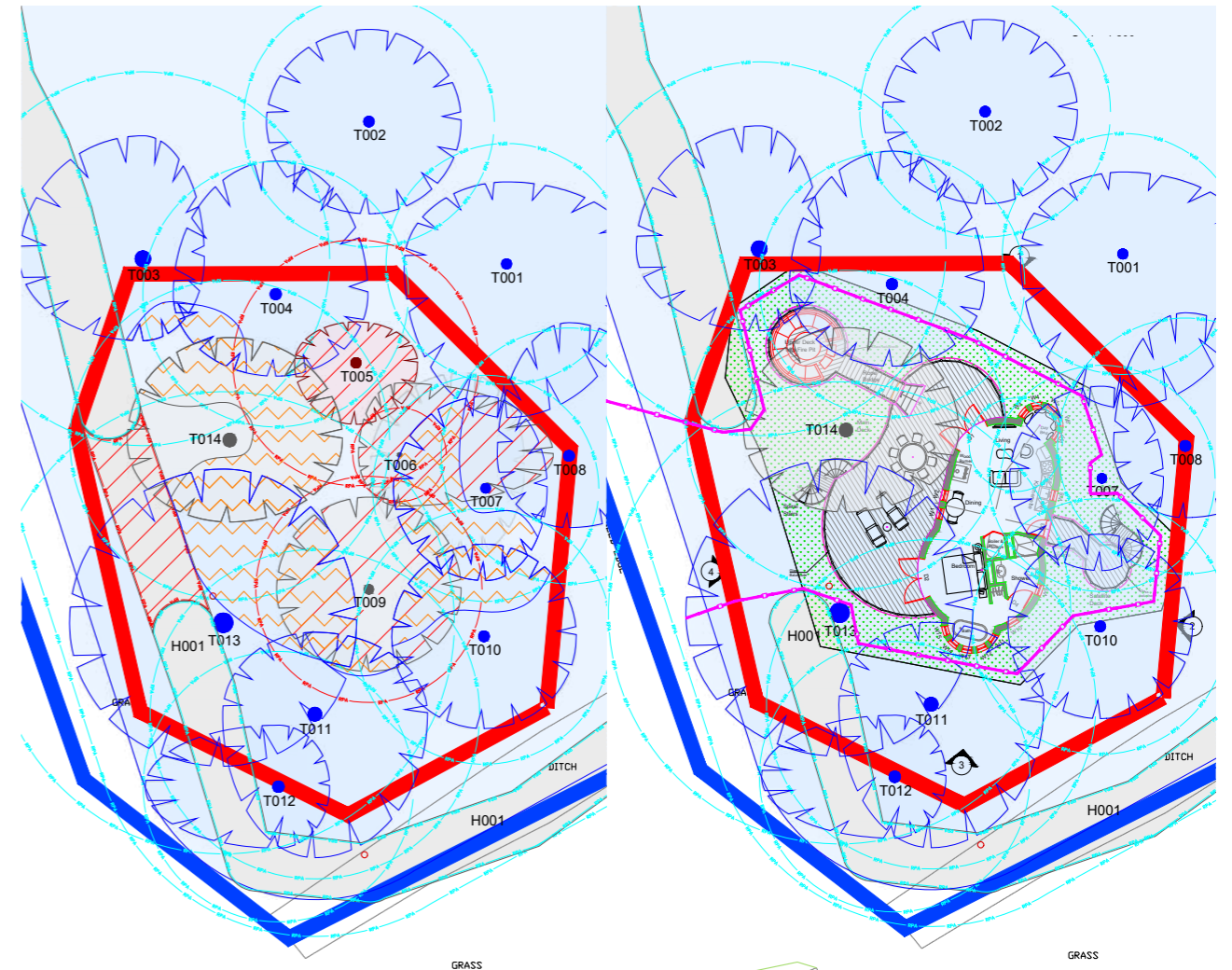
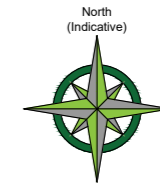
Post Development Implications

No adverse arboricultural implications are considered reasonably foreseeable for the trees that remain provided that the recommendations of this report are complied with in full.

Due to the dynamic nature of trees and their interaction with the environment, their health and structural integrity is liable to change over time. Because of this it is recommended that all trees on or adjacent to the site be inspected on an annual basis.

As stated in BS 5837:2012, regular maintenance of newly planted trees is of particular importance for at least three years during the critical post-planting period and might, where required by site conditions, planning requirements or legal agreement, be necessary for five years or more. Therefore, the designer of the new landscaping should, in conjunction with the landscape design proposals, prepare a detailed maintenance schedule covering this period, and appropriate arrangements made for its implementation.

LEGEND	
	Existing Tree/Feature BS 5837:2012 Category B
	Existing Tree/Hedge to be crown lifted to allow for development
	Existing Tree/Feature BS 5837:2012 Category C
	Existing Tree/Hedge to be crown lifted to allow for development
	Existing Tree/Feature to be removed to allow for development BS 5837:2012 Category C
	Existing Tree/Feature BS 5837:2012 Category U
	Existing Tree/Feature to be removed to allow for development BS 5837:2012 Category U
	Line of Root Protection Area (RPA) - calculated following guidelines set in BS 5837:2012



2.3 Ecology Survey

ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS - INTRODUCTION

The following section provides a summary description of the proposed developments, with an assessment of associated impacts and likely significant effects upon biodiversity.

The assessment and recommendations are based on use of the mitigation hierarchy, which in the first instance aims to avoid impacts. Where impacts cannot be avoided, they should be minimised (through mitigation). Only where impacts cannot be avoided or minimised should there be compensation for biodiversity harm.

Ecological enhancements are suggested, and consideration is given to individual as well as overall net gains or losses of biodiversity.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission is being sought to create a treehouse hideaway that provides a family retreat and quest accommodation for Monks Hall which will result in the felling of 3 trees and some additional tree works including crown lifting. The proposed treehouse and any sections of boardwalk require screw piles for any structural supports. Potential impacts relate to roosting bats and nesting/roosting birds, common amphibians/reptiles and hedgehogs (vegetation clearance).

Assessments and recommendations below are based on drawings provided by Blue Forest and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) prepared by Haydens available at the time of writing and should be updated accordingly as the scheme is subsequently amended.

FURTHER SURVEYS REQUIRED

It is generally advised that subject to no significant change in site management regimes, and dependent on the species present, baseline survey results remain valid for approximately 12–18 months (CIEEM, 2019). Exceptions include where mobile species are/may be present, where site management practices cease or change, or where existing guidance indicates otherwise.

ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS

The EclA assessment process (CIEEM, 2018) involves:

- Identifying and characterising impacts and their effects;
- Incorporating measures to avoid and mitigate negative impacts and effects;
- Assessing the significance of any residual effects after mitigation;
- Identifying appropriate compensation measures to offset significant residual effects; and
- Identifying opportunities for ecological enhancement.

The emphasis in EclA is on the assessment of 'significant effects' i.e. an effect that either supports or undermines biodiversity conservation objectives for 'important ecological features' or for biodiversity in general. In broad terms significant effects encompass impacts on structure and function of defined sites, habitats or ecosystems and the conservation status of habitats and species including extent, abundance, and distribution.

The ecological features to be subject to detailed assessment in this report are those judged to be important and potentially affected by the project; protected species are included where the development will result in a potential breach of legislation.

HABITATS AND VASCULAR PLANTS

a) Potential impacts

Vegetation clearance and construction activities will result in the permanent loss of a small number of trees and shrubs and the temporary disturbance of the understorey vegetation. Accidental damage could occur to retained trees/shrubs, hedgerows, and the grass margin during construction. These impacts including the permanent loss of three trees is considered a negative effect at the local level and will require compensation.

b) Mitigation

Retained areas of woodland and the grass margin should be protected from damage with Heras (or similar) fencing during the construction phase. Given the close proximity of the site to a ditch which drains into a minor to the east a contractor Risk Assessment Method Statement (RAMS) should be developed ahead of works commencing to ensure Good Practice measures are used to avoid and/or minimise the risk of pollution. Measures may include, but are not exclusive to:

- Refuelling of chainsaws etc to be undertaken on a plant nappy or similar and away from the ditch;
- Using water based, non-toxic and biodegradable chemicals and hydraulic/fuel oils where possible;
- Storing chemical and fuels securely within double-banded bowsers or chemical stores (with a 110% capacity to contain any spillage);
- Mixing and washing chemicals and associated equipment in designated areas with wastewater safely disposed of via mains sewerage or tanker as appropriate
- Having adequate site security in place; regularly checking equipment for failures and/or leaks; and
- Keeping spill kits and booms present on the site and ensuring staff are trained in their use.

Further information is available via the Guidance for Pollution Prevention - Works and maintenance in or near water: GPP 5 January 2017 document, produced by Natural Resources Wales (NRW), the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).

c) Residual effects

The proposed development will result in a minor residual loss of a semi-mature ash and two early-mature oaks which require compensation.

AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES

a) Potential impacts

Vegetation clearance, ground-breaking and construction activities could result in the potential entrapment, injury and mortality of amphibians (including potentially GCNs), reptiles and small mammals in open trenches (e.g. sewerage and surface water drainage runs), and movement of stored building materials. Animals can also be harmed if they come into contact with caustic substances such as concrete or cement if required (e.g. septic tank). Such impacts could result in significant negative effects upon low numbers of individuals.

b) Mitigation

Given the potential for reptiles and amphibians to be present within adjacent habitats, good practice site clearance and construction measures are recommended, which could be secured as part of an amphibian and reptiles mitigation method statement, as follows:

- Clear the understorey vegetation by hand using strimmers and/or brush cutters in September/early October or mid-March onwards (if weather is suitable, e.g. no standing snow or an extended period of frosts);
- Each pile location with Root Protection Areas will be hand dug to 300mm to check for any roots in excess of 25mm are present. If any animals are encountered, they should be placed into long vegetation outside of the construction area;
- Any service runs and screw pile locations (where any sections of boardwalk exist) within the grass margin should be cut sensitively down to near ground level to remove cover using a 2-stage cut as follows:
 - The first cut should be to no lower than 150mm above ground level;
 - The area should be left for a minimum of 1 hour (preferable overnight) to allow any animals to move and the second cut should be to just above ground level.
- The arisings should be raked off and can be allowed to compost down.
- Excavations for the service runs and footpaths/board walks will be dug and filled in 10m consecutive sections to prevent any animals falling in;
- Any hand mixing of mortar or concrete (if required) should be on ply boarding over a tarpaulin which is folded over the boarding at the end of each day to prevent animals coming into contact;
- Any excess concrete should be poured into a concrete skip, so it can then set to prevent animals coming into contact.
- All building materials and waste materials should be stored on bare ground or hard standing or stored off the ground on pallets to reduce risk of animals seeking refuge;
- Should any GCNs (Appendix A4) be encountered, works should stop immediately, and advice be sought from a suitably experienced ecologist. The poster in Appendix A4 should be erected in the welfare facilities provided for construction staff on site.
- Any other animals should be allowed to move out of the works area, or safely relocated to suitable habitats (e.g. grass margins, hedgerows and the woodland); and



2.3 Ecology Survey (continued)

• Any downpipes taking water off the roofs should be allowed to discharge into the woodland floor.

c) Residual effects

With mitigation implemented direct impacts upon animals will be avoided with no significant residual effect.

BATS

a) Potential impacts

No bat roosts will be directly impacted by the tree felling, but adjacent trees do support potential roosting niches and therefore, lighting impacts during the construction and operational phases could cause a significant impact on roosting bats as a result of delayed emergence. Light intolerant bat species will avoid lit areas due to the increased risk of predation resulting in reduced foraging success and population recruitment considered a potential significant effect at the local level. Lighting impacts relate to security lighting of site compounds, access routes and light spillage from windows and doorways in the treehouse once it is in use. In this instance, impacts on broadleaved trees and hedgerow habitats are most relevant.

The loss of 3 trees and some understorey vegetation will result in the permanent loss of a small area of high value bat foraging habitat considered insignificant in relation to the conservation status of the affected species.

i) Roofing membranes

Research has shown bats can become entangled in modern breathable roofing membranes (BRMs) which are woven, causing injury or death to individuals (Waring et al., 2013).

The proposed treehouse will have a metal roof and vertical timber cladding on the walls and also some timber shingles on some roof sections. As long as no gaps greater than 5mm are created a modern BRM could be used on the roofs and walls. An insect/small mammal mesh is to be used which will prevent bats gaining access and therefore no impacts are predicted.

b) Mitigation

i) Roosting bats

None required.

ii) Light disturbance

A sensitive lighting strategy is proposed for the construction and operational phases to minimise lighting impacts upon retained natural habitats including boundary hedgerows and woodland and will follow current guidance as necessary. The following measures will be used:

- Type of lamp (light source): Light levels should be as low as possible as required to fulfil the lighting need. Lighting should have a maximum of 7.5 to 10 lux and LED lights should be used using the warm white (or amber) spectrum, with peak wavelengths >550nm (2700 or 3000°K) and no UV component; and

- Lighting design: Lighting should be directed to where it is needed, with minimal horizontal spillage towards retained habitats including broadleaved trees and hedgerows. This can be achieved by restricting the height of the lighting columns/fixtures and the design of the luminaire, including the following measure:
- Light columns/fixtures in general should be as short as possible as light at a low level reduces the ecological impact.
- Luminaires with an upward light ratio of 0% should be mounted on the horizontal i.e. with no upward tilt.
- If taller lights are required, and as a last resort, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres can be used to reduce light spill; and
- PIR movement sensors and timers should be used to minimise the 'lit time'.

iii) Roofing membrane

As long as no gaps greater than 5mm are created a modern BRM could be used on the roofs and walls. An insect/small mammal mesh should be used for any areas requiring ventilation to prevent bats gaining access.

c) Residual effects

No significant residual effects are predicted though the loss of the semi-mature ash and a couple of early mature oak trees should be compensated through tree planting.

NESTING BIRDS

a) Potential impacts

The permanent loss of 3 trees will result in the loss of potential nesting, song perch and foraging habitat considered a significant effect at the local level. Building works including any tree felling or other works listed in the AIA during the breeding/nesting season (1st March to 31st August) has the potential to impact nesting birds. Accidental damage to retained boundary habitats, including trees and hedgerows, during construction could also affect breeding success and/or result in the destruction of active nests. The destruction of active nests would be considered a significant negative effect (as an offence under wildlife legislation) at the local level.

b) Mitigation

Commencement of the works should take place outside of the nesting bird season. If this is not feasible, a check for nesting birds should be undertaken prior to works starting. If any active nests are present, works within 5m must wait until the young have fledged.

c) Residual effects

Impacts upon active nests during construction will be avoided with no significant affects anticipated. The loss of trees should be compensated.

OTHER HABITATS AND SPECIES

a) Potential impacts

Vegetation clearance, ground-breaking and construction activities will result in the temporary (e.g. any materials storage areas) and permanent (where the spiral stairs fix into the ground) loss of foraging habitat for hedgehog. No hedgerows will be removed, though construction works could accidentally damage these habitats.

Ground-breaking activities (e.g. the excavation of piled foundations for any specialist supports, footpaths/board walks and service runs) could result in hedgehogs (and other wildlife) falling into any open excavations left overnight which have steep sides resulting in their becoming trapped. Animals could be injured or killed if the excavation is deep or they fall into or walk across wet concrete.

Such impacts have the potential to result in negative effects upon a small number of animals at the local level.

b) Mitigation

Site clearance should always consider the potential presence of hedgehogs with vigilance, with no clearance of dense vegetation undertaken when temperatures are regularly below 6°C. Animals encountered at other times should be moved to suitable cover, e.g. base of hedgerows or along the edge of the adjacent woodland (to the west of the site).

Any open excavations left overnight should be covered and then checked the next day prior to filling and any animals encountered be relocated out of the works area.

c) Residual effects

Direct impacts upon hedgehog and a nearby hedgerow will be avoided with no significant residual impacts.

COMPENSATION

The felling of 3 native trees should be compensated through native tree planting elsewhere within the landownership of the applicant's. As the applicant's land ownership includes land up to the River Waveney black poplar (*Populus nigra*) trees could be planted on the edge of the marshes/floodplain. Both male and female trees must be planted to allow fertilisation.

Some future thinning of the woodland would improve the condition of some of the existing early mature and mature trees.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The Mid Suffolk District Council planning website was searched for relevant planning applications within a 1km buffer of the application site dating back two years. The majority of approved or currently being considered applications relate to minor alterations/extensions/change of use.

2.3 Ecology Survey (continued)

A barn conversion (Ref: DC/21/03750) was granted planning permission and bat surveys by Greenlight Environmental Consultancy in 2020 indicated use of the barn by a common pipistrelle though a bat licence was not deemed necessary. A single dwelling (Ref: DC/21/02195) was approved on land to the south of Quiet Waters, Hoxne Road, Syleham and GCN surveys were undertaken in 2020 (Greenlight Environmental Consultancy). There is no indication from the above applications that there will be any significant cumulative impact with the current application.

ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Recommended mitigation and compensation measures will address biodiversity losses from the scheme. A minimum of 5 of the 6 following enhancement measures should be implemented to deliver further biodiversity enhancements.

Enhancement opportunities Pollen-rich climbers	Feature Guidance 1. Native nectar rich climbers such as traveller's joy (<i>Clematis vitalba</i>) and wild honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>) could be planted along the western edge of the woodland along existing hedgerows or trained up tree trunks.
Wildflower grass margin	2. The existing grass margin along the western side of the woodland could be cut to near ground level in the spring, lightly cultivated and seeded with a wildflower seed mix such as Emorsgate's EM10F if the grass land is left largely unmanaged, or EM4F if the underlying soils are mostly clay. Pathways can be cut through the margin (See Plate 1 below)
Bat boxes	3. Five bat boxes: x2 kent bat boxes, x2 Vincent Pro and x1 Causa maternity box to be erected on suitable mature trees on the western and southern edge of the woodland.
Small passerine bird boxes	4. Two each of house sparrow terraces and combined robin/wren boxes could be erected on the treehouse 5. Two treecreeper (<i>Certhia familiaris</i>) boxes to be mounted on mature oak trees within the woodland.
Raptor boxes	6. A kestrel box could be erected on a suitable tree along the western edge of the woodland.



CONCLUSIONS

Subject to securing the relevant NE licence(s) the proposed mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures will ensure the proposed scheme will minimise biodiversity impacts and provide some enhancements in accordance with planning policy. Measures proposed could be secured through appropriate planning conditions as per the British Standard (BS 42020:20131). These could include conditions specific to a Biodiversity Method Statement (D.2.1) to provide detailed guidance for mitigation, compensation, and enhancement measures.

7. A barn owl box could be erected on a suitable mature tree along a hedge line to the south-west of the proposed treehouse so occupants could watch the box at a distance should it become occupied.

BAT BOXES



Kent bat box



Causa Maternity Bat Box



Vincent Pro Bat Box

BIRD BOXES



Open Fronted Nest Box



Willow tit/ Tree creeper



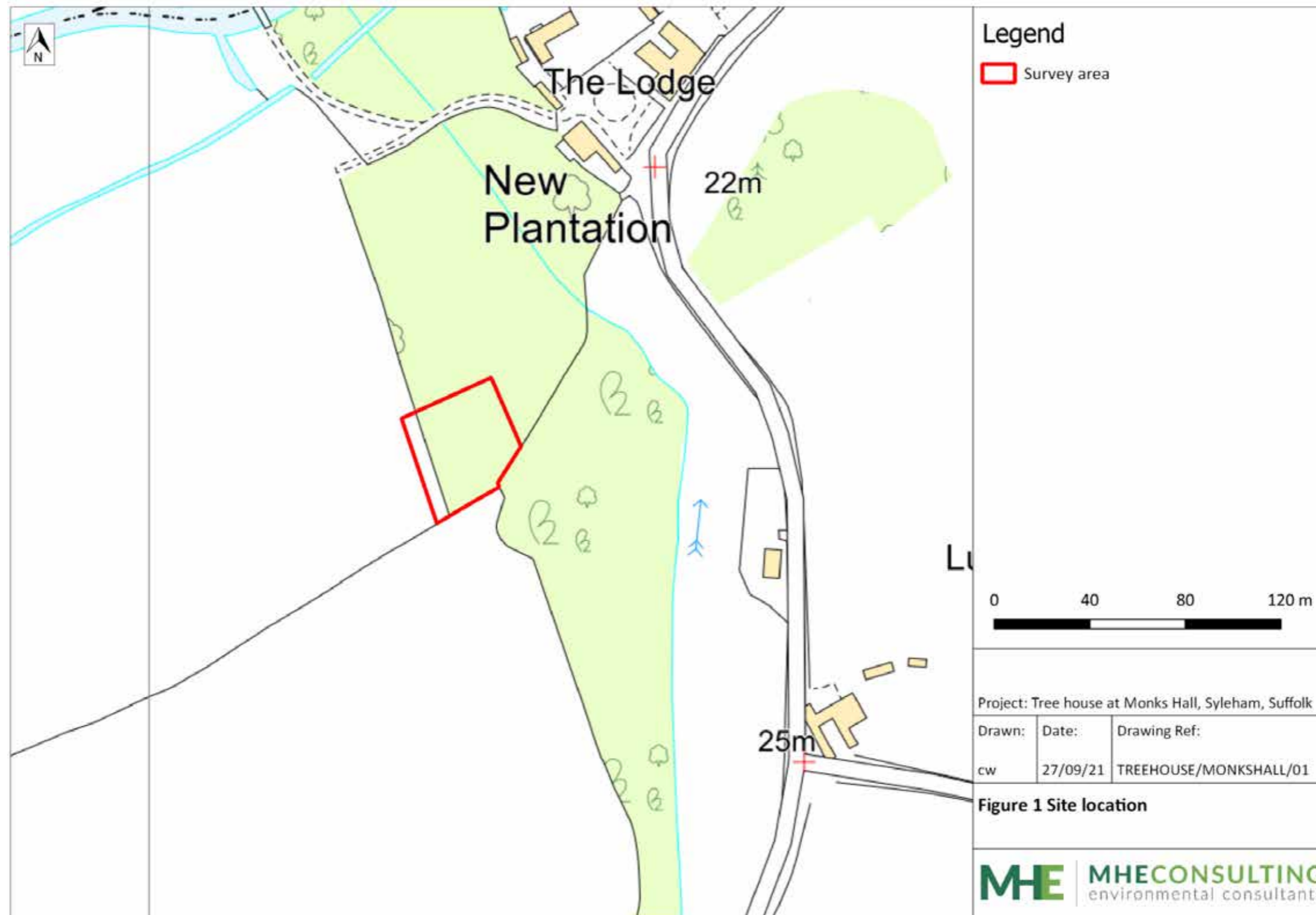
Barn Owl Box



Kestrel Nest Box



2.3 Ecology Survey (continued)





2.4 Heritage Statement

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Bob Kindred Heritage Consultants Ltd were commissioned by Blue Forest on behalf of Mr. & Mrs Grimes to complete a high-level heritage assessment regarding proposals for a treehouse within the grounds at the Grade 2* listed Monks Hall, Syleham, Suffolk IP21 4LN.

1.2 This report forms part of the documentation for the project for the purposes of eliciting a pre-application opinion from the local planning authority regarding the heritage impact (or otherwise) on the setting of the listed building.

1.3 The site is situated on rising ground in woodland to the southwest of Monks Hall. It is an isolated location on the south bank of the River Waveney to the northeast of Hoxne and southwest of Brockdish.

1.4 The proposed site of the treehouse has no direct impact on Monks Hall, is not located within a designated conservation area and it is understood that the local planning authority as not identified any non-designated heritage assets in the vicinity.

1.5 An initial site inspection was made to the site on 10th May 2021 and the photographs in this assessment were taken on that date.

2.0 HERITAGE DESIGNATION

2.1 The thinly scattered distribution of listed buildings in this part of rural Suffolk is shown in Figure 2.



Fig.2 Distribution of listed buildings in the parish of Syleham and general vicinity is shown as blue triangles

2.2 Monks Hall was Listed Grade 2* on 29th July 1955 [List Entry Number: 1032921, Legacy System No: 280065 National Grid Reference: TM 20161 78470]. The statutory description is approximately 66 years old and has not been amended and is set out in the Annex. Further historical research in the intervening six decades has refined some of the dating. Reference is made for example to the ‘original’ porch where ‘early’ might be more accurate.

2.3 In summary, the Hall is now considered to be 15th rather than 16th century and is thought to have always been completely rendered until the first third of the 20th century when the timber-framing to the south elevation of the main range was exposed.

2.4 The Hall was partly re-modelled in the 17th century but a long succession of tenancies and low agricultural rents through to the late 19th century and the isolated location resulted in little external or internal alterations being made. Notable alterations were made to the external appearance by two successive owners in the 1930s and late 1940s, and 16th and 17th century room panelling was introduced from local manor houses or yeoman farmhouses in the early 1950s.

2.5 The Hall was not originally listed Grade 2*. There were three grades 1, 2 and 3 at the inception of the listing process with government ministers dispensing with Grade 3 in 1970 with differentiations made to establish the more noteworthy Grade 2 statutory list entries by appending the asterisk (star) in c.1972.

2.6 Listed buildings thus became in order of importance (as now defined): Grade 1: Buildings of exceptional interest, of the highest significance; Grade 2*: Particularly important buildings of more than special interest; and Grade 2: Buildings of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them.



3.0 SETTING

3.1 The law relating to listed buildings is enshrined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This places a duty on local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and any features of importance, and regarding their settings (Sections 16 and 66).

3.2 As noted in Section 1 there is no direct impact on Monks Hall and the issue for consideration under heritage legislation in this high-level assessment is therefore one of setting.

3.3 Advice regarding the setting of heritage assets is set out in Historic England’s ‘Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3’ [GPA 3] and the aim of GPA 3 is to assist in implementing historic environment policy in the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF 02-2019], but paragraph 10 (p.6) of GPA 3 also states that the implications of development affecting the setting of heritage assets i.e., Monks Hall should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

3.4 While GPA 3 defines the character of a historic place as the sum of all its attributes: its relationships with people, now and through time; its visual aspects; and the features, materials, and spaces associated with its history, including its original configuration and subsequent losses and changes; in this instance the proposal is for a treehouse situated in woodland at a distance of approximately 176.5M (580ft.)

3.5 The NPPF makes it clear that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced, its extent is not always fixed and may make a positive or negative contribution to significance or may be neutral in its effect and this may change over time.

3.6 The secluded visual setting of Monks Hall has been defined in part by the large deciduous trees to the road frontage but also by the woodland to the southwest defined as the New Plantation on the First Series Twenty-Five Inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1884 (published 1886). (Fig.4)





2.4 Heritage Statement (continued)

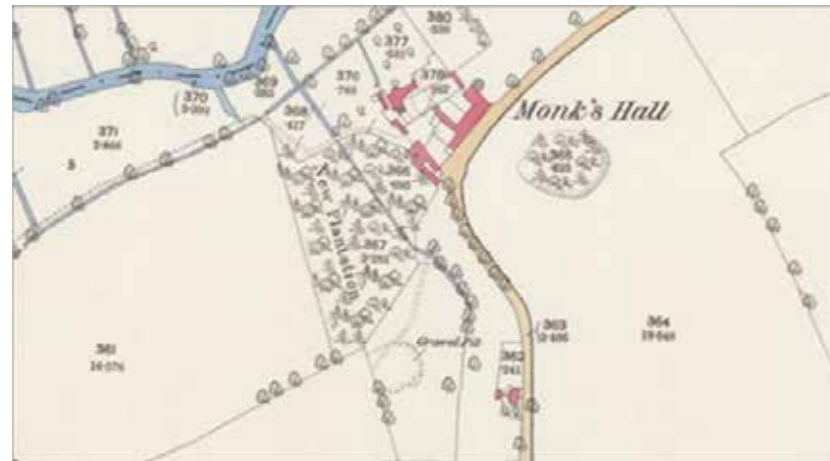


Fig.4 First Series Twenty-Five Inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1884 (published 1886).

3.7 It will be noted that the 1884 Ordnance Survey Map shows a field and gravel pit to the south-southeast of New Plantation and although this is extant, the land is now largely populated by deciduous trees as shown the identical, current aerial view.

3.8 There is no accessible archival information on the age of New Plantation although it must be presupposed that it was planted in the mid 19th century and the map indicates mixed woodland although what remains is predominantly deciduous.

3.9 Paragraph 11 of GPA 3 states that protection of the setting of heritage assets need not prevent change; indeed, change may be positive or neutral as is considered to be the case here.

3.10 Examination of the nature, extent and level of a heritage asset's significance are encouraged by GPA 3 but this should be considered proportionately as it is recognising that where proposals are not likely to be prominent or intrusive the effects on setting may often be limited to the immediate surroundings.

IMPACT OF PROPOSED SCHEME ON SETTING OF MONKS HALL

3.11 The proposals are modest in scale and with regard to the Hall would be entirely hidden from any viewpoint to the immediate south and west. It should be noted that the south elevation of the west wing of the Hall is a blank brick wall with a crow-stepped gable with four small circular windows lighting first

3.12 The west elevation of Monks Hall has two first floor casement windows while ground floor views are truncated by a single-storey brick and flint faced and pantiled outbuilding in close proximity. A red brick boundary wall also encloses the front garden to the south.

3.13 From the Hall in line-of-sight towards the proposed site to the southwest, New Plantation is heavily wooded with mature trees and this woodland does not appear to have been the subject of any recent silvicultural management (extending also to the tree cover in the modern era to the floor and slopes of the former gravel pit).

3.14 Topographically the 30ft. OD contour coincides with the position of the site while the 20ft. OD contour coincides with the position of the southwest corner of the west wing of Monks Hall. The difference in levels is therefore 10M.

3.15 The photographs taken on 10th May 2021 show the woodland not fully in leaf thereby enabling an indication of the location of Monks Hall to be discerned at a distance.



View of Monks Hall looking due east at NGR 620007 278425 at the northwest corner of New Plantation



View of due east at NGR 620007 278425 with New Plantation to the left showing rising topography with the site in proximity to the far field boundary



View from the site to Monks Hall at NGR 620131 278303 visible indistinctly at a distance of approximately 176.5M or 580ft and circled in red.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 Following the site inspection of 10th May 2021 and taking into account the environs, general topography, distance of the site from Monks Hall, orientation of the Hall and the long-established tree planting of New Plantation it is contended that the erection of the treehouse in the location proposed would have no visual impact on the heritage significance or the special architectural or historic interest of Monks Hall or its setting.



2.5 Flood Risk Analysis

FLOOD MAP FOR PLANNING

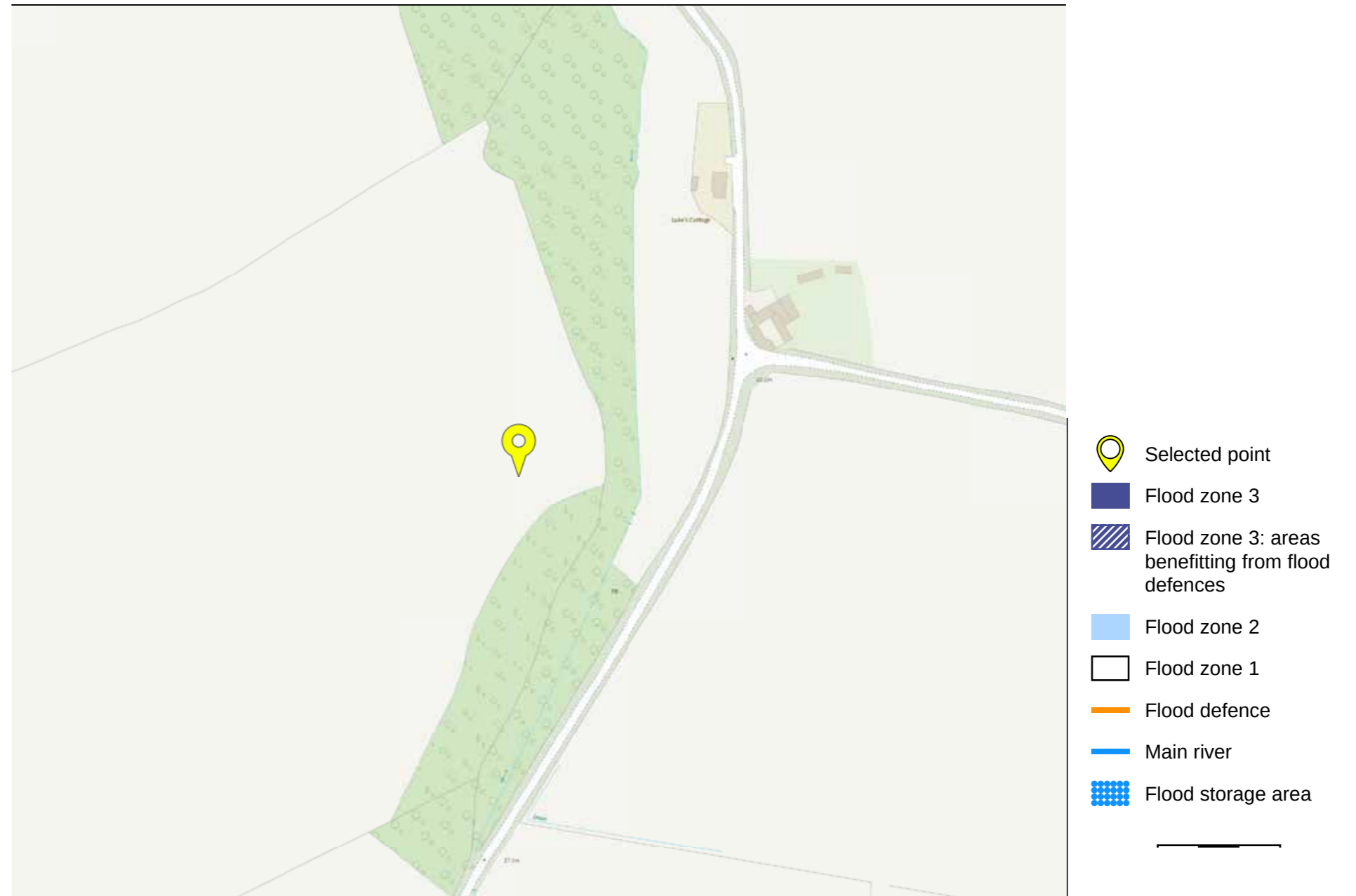
Your selected location is in flood zone 1, an area with a low probability of flooding.

This means a flood risk assessment is not needed, as the development is smaller than 1 hectare and not affected by other sources of flooding.

Notes

The flood map for planning shows river and sea flooding data only. It doesn't include other sources of flooding. It is for use in development planning and flood risk assessments.

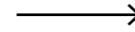
This information relates to the selected location and is not specific to any property within it. The map is updated regularly and is correct at the time of printing.



3.1 Treehouse Design Principles

LANDSCAPE EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

- The site is within a Priority Habitat Inventory Area of Deciduous Woodland.
- The woodland aesthetic is typical of its perceived naturalness, with mature tree trunks at eye level, and the muted green canopies above, with textures of fallen trees and the changing colour during the seasons.
- The texture and pattern of the woodland is reflected in its slightly unmanaged condition.
- The muted colour palette of the trees together with the occasional dapples of sunlight provide occasional contrast.
- Above all the woodland feels tranquil and peaceful.
- The well-wooded nature of Monks Hall estate combined with gently undulating topography and the high level of tree cover in the local landscape allows for relatively few public views of the woodland overall.



TREEHOUSE PRINCIPLES

- The layout of the treehouse and deck further emphasises the perceived sense of seclusion and naturalness. The form of the treehouse is intentionally compact to reduce the visual impact.
- The treehouse will appear integrated but secondary to the woodland, with the perception of being immersed within a woodland setting being primary to the visitor experience, retaining the existing strong sense of place and character.
- Raised platforms will provide ecological pathways.
- Visitors will experience the 'woodland first'. Large windows in the West Elevation, a raised deck and outdoor seating will heighten the natural senses, visitors will enjoy filtered views of the tree canopy and listening to the sounds of the woodland.
- The use of natural timber materials characteristic of the tree species, tones and textures present within the woodland will further amalgamate and sensitively integrate with the woodland character.
- Combinations for light and dark architectural finishes will match the muted colour palette.



3.2 Design Board



Creating Memories & Inspiring Dreams

3.3 Ground Floor Plan

The treehouse concept will be informed by the landscape. Sustainability will be key to the treehouse's design and specification which will have a natural timber exterior finish that will help it to blend into its surroundings.

1. Spiral staircases up to treehouse
2. Rear deck
3. External dining and seating deck
4. Double entrance doors
5. Open plan living area with log burner and TV
6. Kitchenette
7. Reading nook
8. Dining table and chairs
9. Storage
10. Bedroom
11. Shower room
12. Bathtub in bay window
13. Stairs up to rope bridge
14. Rope bridge
15. Upper satellite deck with circular seating area

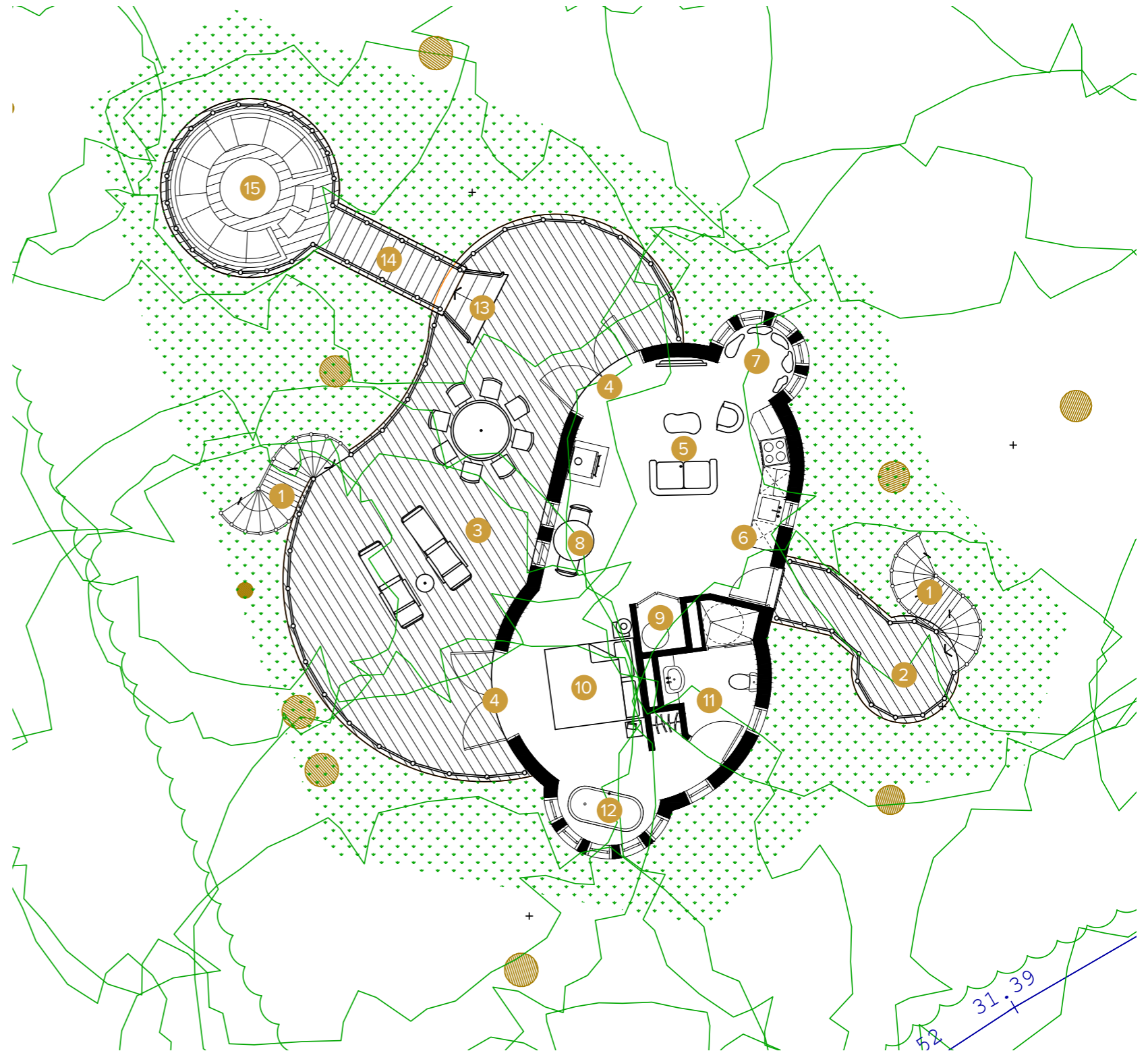
SPECIFICATION

Treehouse internal area: 55m²

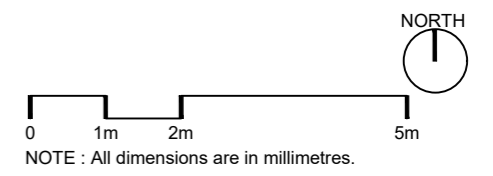
External main deck area: 55m²

Upper deck (including rope bridge): 16m²

Rear deck: 8m²



3.4 North Elevation



3.5 East Elevation



Copper roof with standing seam detail
Oak copper gutter.
Fascia detail-TBC

Oak framed doors and windows

Cedar cladding
Glass balustrades with
stainless steel posts
Treated hardwood decking

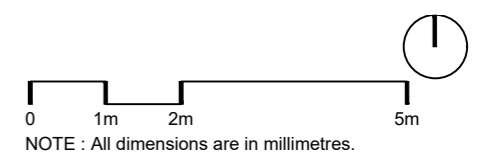
Rope bridge

Satellite deck

0 1m 2m 5m
NORTH
NOTE : All dimensions are in millimetres.



3.6 South Elevation



3.7 West Elevation



NOTE : All dimensions are in millimetres.



3.9 Specification

CONSTRUCTION

The principle throughout the treehouse design is to have a natural and contemporary timber aesthetic. Combined with Blue Forest's innovative craftsmanship, this will produce a high quality finish in keeping with the estate and its natural surroundings.

A timber spiral staircase will provide access to a rear timber deck of the treehouse. There will be another timber deck for dining and relaxing looking over the woodland and towards the surrounding countryside. A safe and attractive balustrade, 1.1m high will be situated on the edge of the walkways and deck areas. The balustrade will be constructed using solid posts, evenly spaced with glazed panels between.

APPEARANCE

The exterior roof of the treehouse will consist of a copper roof with standing seam detail and a copper gutter. The exterior walls will be varied widths of vertical Cedar cladding and European Oak framed windows and doors will be used throughout.

Over the course of their natural weathering, all the timber cladding on the treehouse will weather to a silvery grey colour, blending in naturally with the surrounding vegetation.

SUSTAINABILITY

Blue Forest will ensure that the timber in the proposed treehouse will be sustainably harvested and certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). As the timber will come from an environmentally sustainable forest, it can be classified as renewable construction material.

Where natural timber materials are inappropriate, suitable alternatives have been specified. However, for this treehouse, all materials used will be as sustainable as possible.



1. Copper standing seam roof



2. Softwood timber rafters with Cedar sarking boards



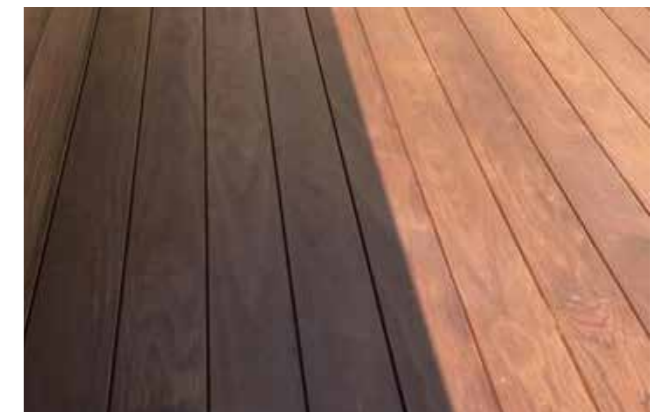
3. Rope detail of internal junction



4. Varied widths of vertical Cedar cladding



5. Oak framed doors and windows



6. Timber decking



7. Softwood spiral staircase with rope balustrade



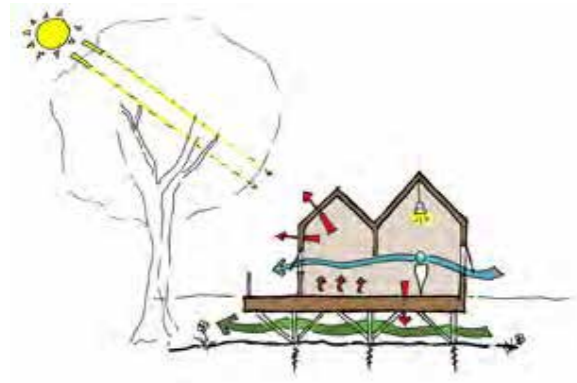
8. Glass balustrade



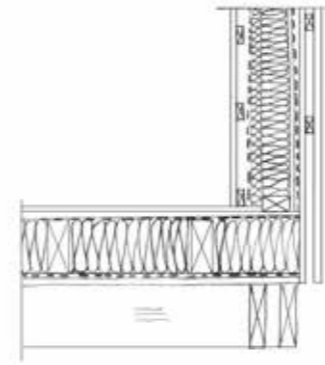
9. Detail of decking and substructure



4.1 Our Approach



Fabric-first approach to treehouse design



Highly Insulated building fabric



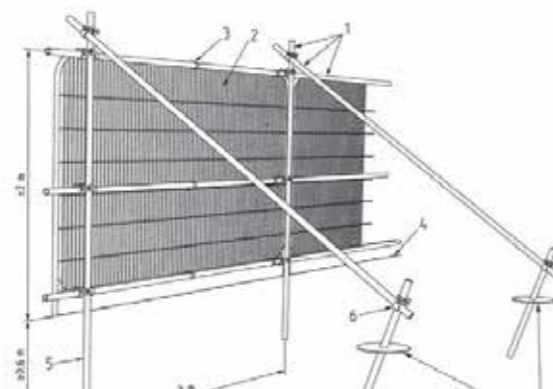
Landscape led design. Tones and textures inform material choices.



Locally sourced and sustainably harvested timber



Ground protection measures mitigate damage to trees



Works carried out under arboricultural and archaeological watching brief



'No-dig' foundation system to avoid damage to tree roots



Bat and bird roosts built into wall



Feature habitat wall



Stand alone bat & bird boxes in selected trees



Native tree planting and native under storey planting



Bespoke lighting limits impact on woodland environment



5.1 About Blue Forest

Blue Forest is an award winning company. We have taken a pioneering approach in the design and construction of sustainable and environmentally friendly buildings and have developed a reputation as the world's leading luxury treehouse builder.

The Blue Forest team, which includes directors Andy Payne, Simon Payne and Ben Lutyens (shown below), are passionate about the well-being of the environment and are keen to promote sustainable principles and ethics throughout the design and construction process. The majority of the timber used in our buildings is FSC / PEFC certified or sourced from sustainably managed forests where there is an active strategy of replanting and habitat regeneration.

Blue Forest's passion for the environment has led to the design and implementation of many revolutionary green technology solutions for our clients.

Our uniquely tailored service provides a turn key solution, where everything from design and planning to construction and commissioning comes in an easy, reliable and professional package.



ANDY



SIMON



BEN





BLUE FOREST
THE TREEHOUSE PEOPLE

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