

██████████  
New Garden Pavilion  
Doddington Place  
Sittingbourne  
Kent ME9 0BB

██████████  
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Design & Access Statement

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██████████  
18 October 2022

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## 1. Our design intent

- Commemorate the late Henry Oldfield & the late Christopher Oldfield in a beautiful way, as described in the Applicants' letter on page 4.
- Create a lovable Edwardian-style garden folly for a much loved Edwardian garden, which already contains multi-storey follies within its grounds.
- Provide an elevated publicly accessible platform enjoying great views over the Sunken Garden & the Rock Garden.
- Make an elegant virtue of the requirement to have separate public upwards & downwards staircases.
- Design an enclosed summerhouse with marvellous elevated views that can also be kept private when the garden is open to the public.

- Choose a position that is largely or totally concealed by the existing mature trees & planting when viewed from the south, west or north. Also from the main road in the valley & from the main house.
- Complement & potentially improve the setting of the listed heritage assets.

The developed proposals shown in this document follows Pre-application consultation advice received (Ref:21/506588/PAMEET) for the concept design proposals (see Appendix).

## 2. A letter from the Applicants

Doddington Place,  
Kent ME9 0BB

10 October 2021

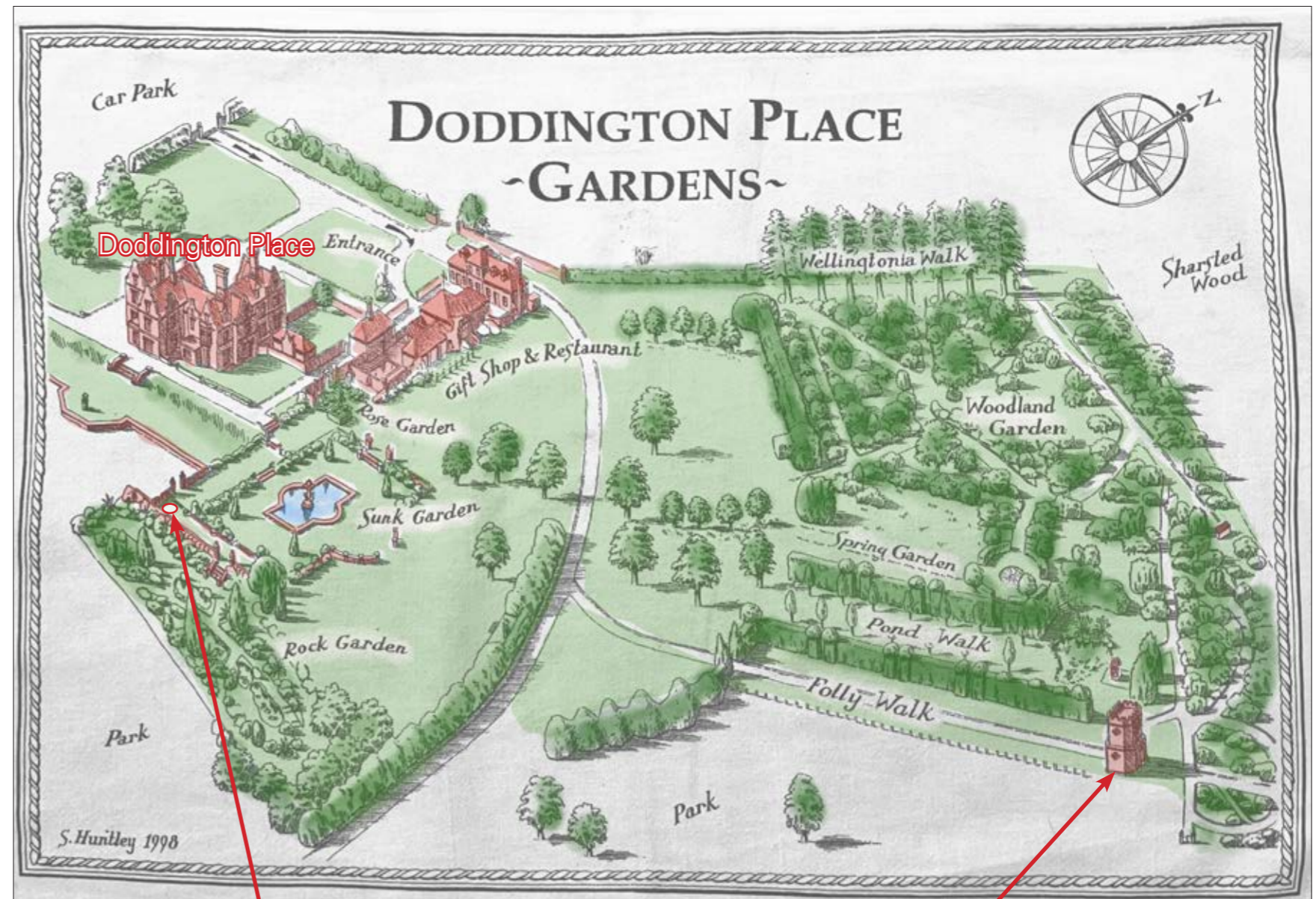
For the Planning Department, Swale Borough Council.

This letter accompanies the pre-planning application which has been prepared by Thomas Croft, Architects, in respect of a new building, the proposed Translucent Tower, in the garden of Doddington Place.

In 1997 you approved the building of The Folly in the garden here. This building – a room above an arch, reached by a spiral staircase – has been a marvellous embellishment to the garden, connecting two parts of it which were previously separated by an anti-climactic clump of laurel. I wanted to build it to commemorate my first wife, who died in 1995. The Translucent Tower would commemorate my sons Christopher and Henry who died respectively in 2022 aged 35 and in 2017 aged 25. It would similarly be an embellishment to the garden, allowing people to view the sunk garden and the rock garden from above. It has been designed by Thomas Croft to be thoroughly sympathetic to its surroundings, with care taken, in a minimalist structure, not to obscure the brick wall behind and beside it. I very much hope that you will see fit to approve this application and I look forward to an opportunity to show you the location and the proposals on site.

Yours faithfully

Richard Oldfield



Proposed new Pavilion location

Multi-storey Folly structure constructed in 1997

3. Doddington Place

- Existing building



## 4. History of the house & gardens

Doddington Place is listed Grade II & its Outbuildings & Garden Terraces are also separately listed Grade II. This is how they are described in Historic England's listing:-

Gardens designed in c 1875 by Markham Nesfield, with an extension in 1909 by John Duke Coleridge, surrounding a country house and set in a late C19 park.

### 1. Historic Development

In the mid C19 the Croft family owned the Doddington estate and lived in a house known as Whitemans which stood below the church and vicarage in Doddington village. In c 1870 Sir John Croft commissioned the architect Charles Brown Trollope to build a new house on the high ground c 350m to the north-east of Whitemans. Markham Nesfield was called in in 1874 to provide a design for the gardens around the house and the plans he prepared survive (private collection). At the same time a small park was created to surround the new house. At the beginning of the C20 the Croft family sold the Doddington estate to General and Mrs Douglas Jeffreys, who shared the house with Mrs Jeffreys' father, Sir Richard Oldfield. Mrs Jeffreys commissioned the garden architect John Duke Coleridge to extend the gardens and he added an Italianate sunken garden to the south-east of the house, the plans for which are dated 1909. A rock garden was added during the same period. The gardens have been continually developed throughout the C20 by the Oldfield family. The site remains (2004) in private ownership

### 2. Description

#### 2.1 Location, area, boundaries, landform, setting

Doddington lies in the northern part of the county of Kent, midway between Maidstone and Canterbury and close to the southern edge of the M2. The c 36ha site is bounded to the south and south-east by the main street between Newnham and Doddington, to the west by Church Hill, and to the north and north-east by woodland. The house stands in the centre of the site, on the edge of a level plateau from which the ground falls southwards down to the public road along the southern boundary of the park. The landform suggests that this road was moved southwards from an earlier line. From the house there are views across the valley to the south, and from the eastern edge of the gardens there are views out over the park to the east.

#### 2.2 Entrances & Approaches

The main drive enters the park c 450m from the house, through the balustraded brick wing walls which accompany the early C20 lodge on Church Hill, at the north-west corner of the site. The drive is partly lined with horse chestnuts and crosses the park in a straight line running south-east, leading through a gateway at the western edge of the gardens to the gravelled forecourt below the north front of the house. A second drive enters from the south boundary, c 400m to the south-east of the house; this winds north-west through the park, continues north of the coach house and other outbuildings (listed grade II), and joins the main drive below the north front.

### 2.3 Principal Building

The red-brick and tile Doddington Place (listed grade II) is built to an irregular plan with projecting gables and an asymmetrical service wing. The two-storey building has attics, rusticated quoins, and stone mullioned windows with gothic details. It was built c 1870 by Charles Trollope for Sir John Croft and was extended in the early C20.

A range of single-storey outbuildings lies immediately to the north-east of the house. Built of red brick and tile at the same time as the house, they are arranged around a courtyard.

### 2.4 Gardens & Pleasure Grounds

A low terrace wall (listed grade II), part of Nesfield's scheme, supports the lawn beneath the south front, and a gravel walk that leads to the main gardens which lie to the east. The low, brick terrace walls of the sunk garden (listed grade II) below the east terrace surround a central lily pond and provide for level grass walks and borders. To the south a short flight of brick steps leads to a narrow band of rockwork laid out in 1910, through which runs a series of small pools. Beyond this, to the south, lies the park.

North-east of the house and outbuildings, beyond one of several large yew hedges, is an informally arranged woodland garden. Developed since the 1960s beneath the existing tree canopy, it includes a Wellingtonia avenue. Next to it is the Pond Walk, which forms a straight vista from the house north-east towards an informal pond which dates from the 1950s, and the Spring Garden and a hydrangea walk.

Beyond the gravelled forecourt below the north front is a car park and tennis courts beside a small orchard.

### 2.5 Park

The park surrounds the house to the east, west, and south and is laid to grass. It was laid out when the house was built in the 1870s, incorporating existing plantings from an earlier park, many of which were lost in the storm of October 1987. The most notable trees to survive are a range of horse chestnuts along the southern boundary which may predate the house.

### 2.6 Kitchen Garden

An existing walled garden attached to Whitemans in the south-west corner of the site (outside the area here registered), on the edge of Doddington village, was used as a kitchen garden when Doddington Place was built in the mid C19.

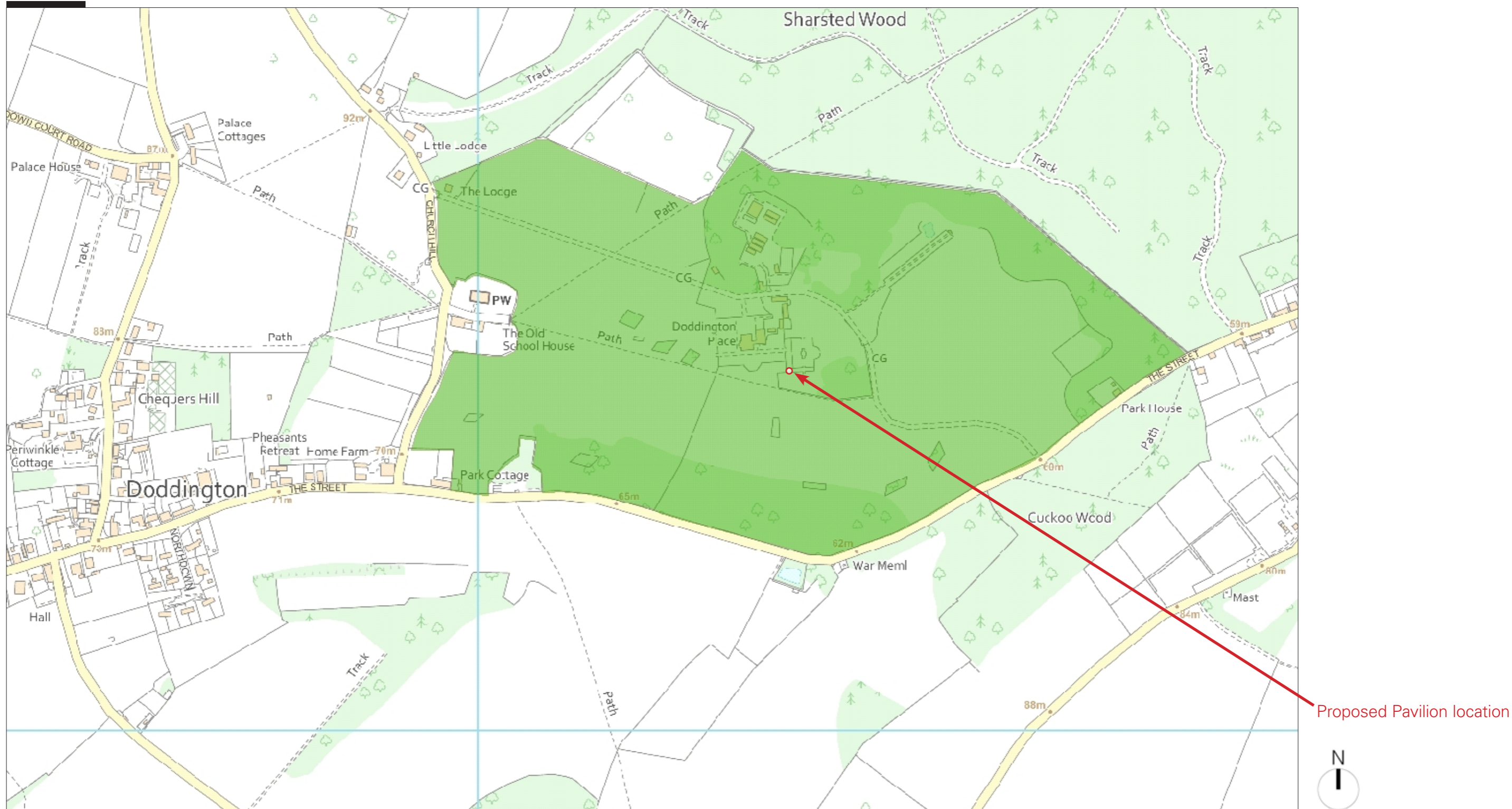
### 3.0 References

- Survey of historic parks and gardens in Kent, (Kent County Council nd)
- Inspector's Report: Doddington Place, (English Heritage 1988)
- Doddington Place gardens and park restoration scheme, (Doddington Place 1989)

The gardens & tea room are open to the public on a regular basis & are a popular local attraction. See:-

[www.doddingtonplacegardens.co.uk](http://www.doddingtonplacegardens.co.uk)

5. OS site location plan

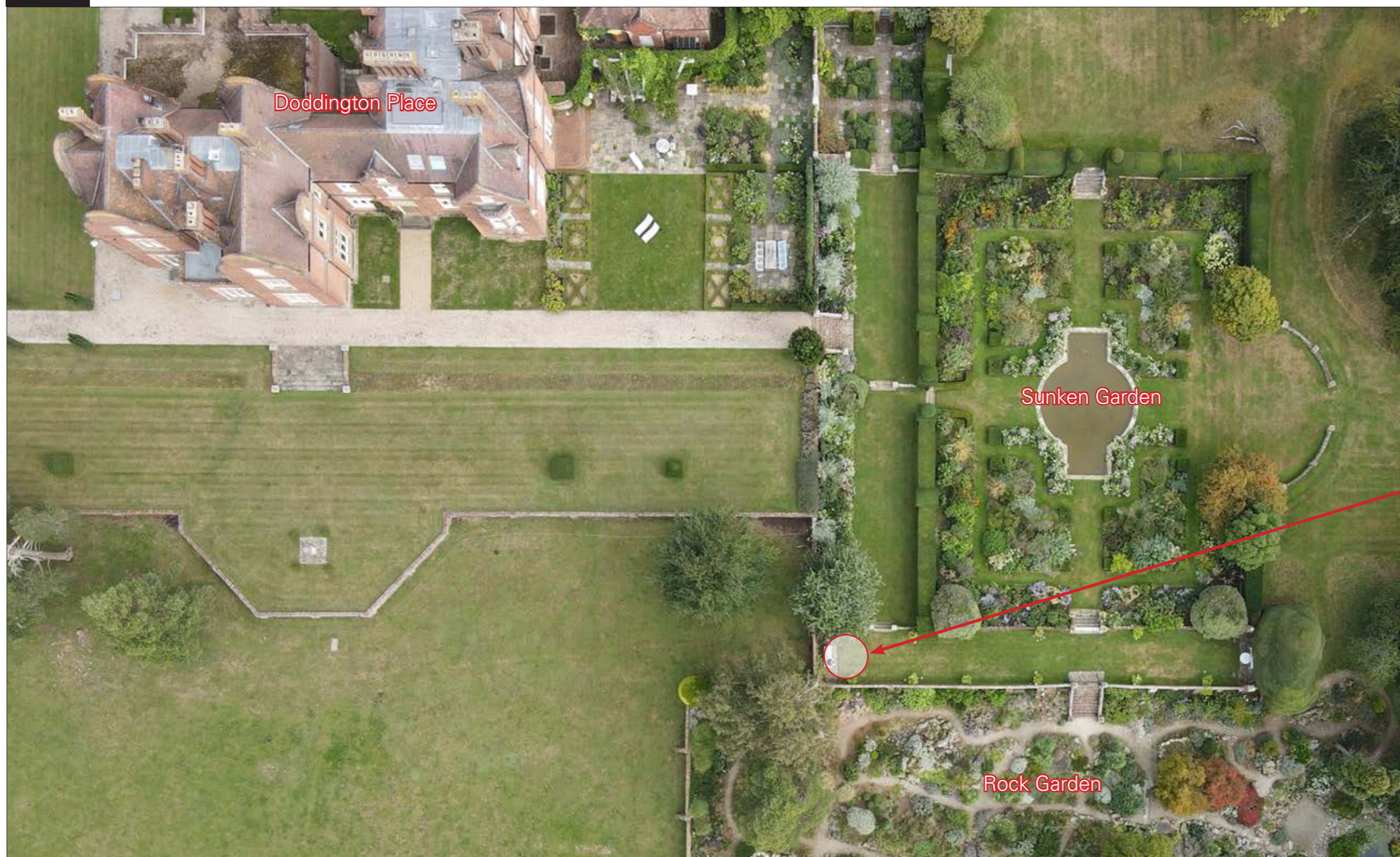




6. Aerial photo of the site



7. Detailed aerial photo



Proposed Pavilion location



8. The Site  
- Existing photo looking west



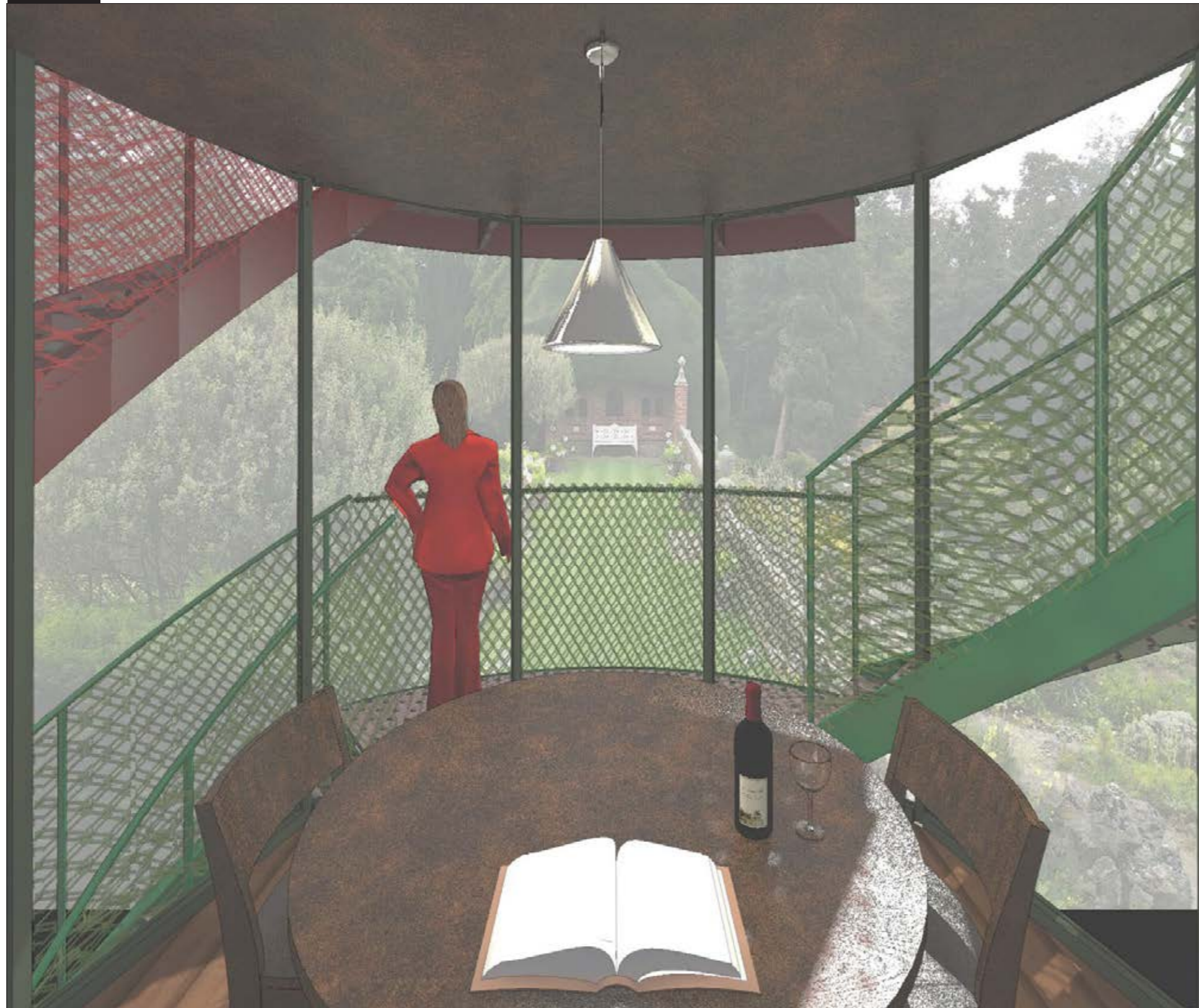
9. Perspectives of proposed Folly











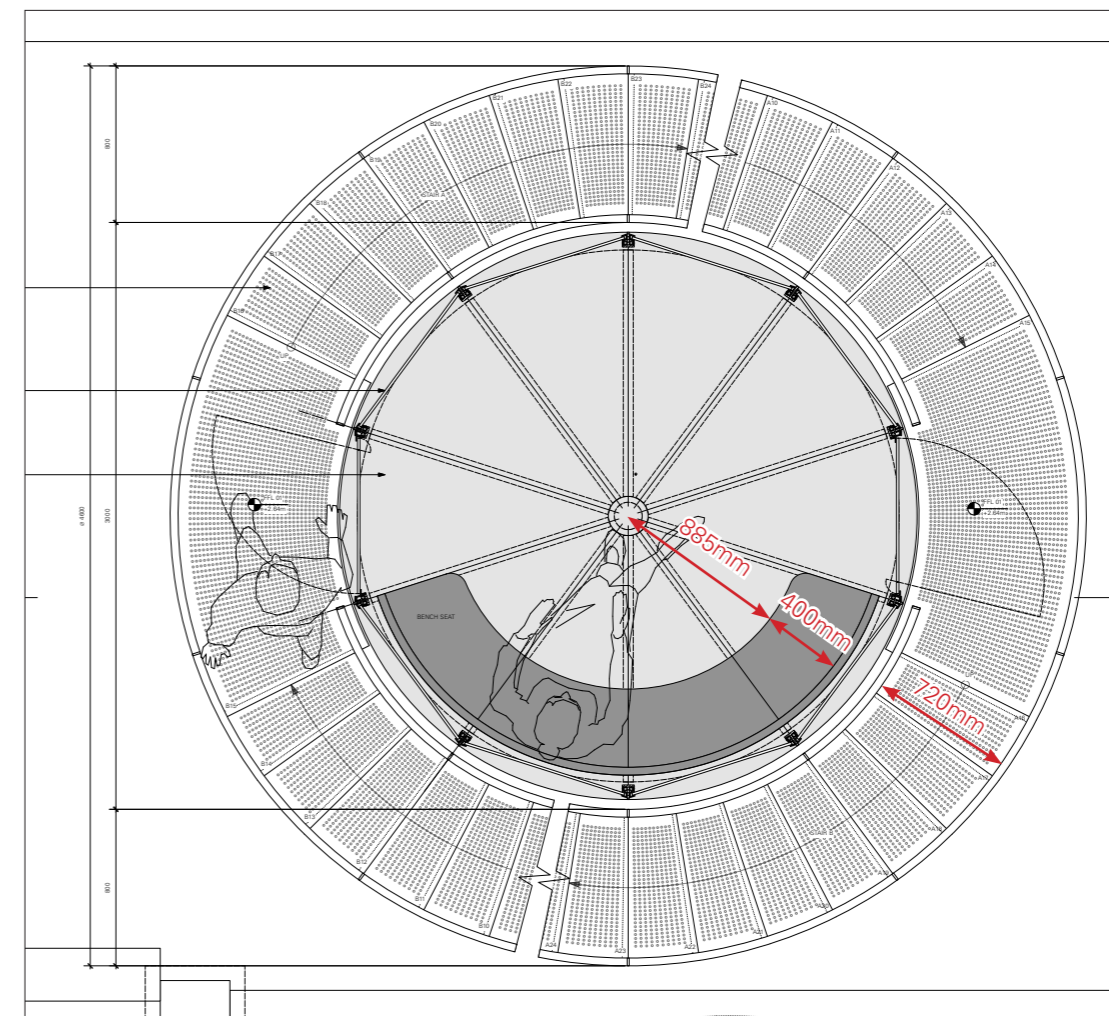
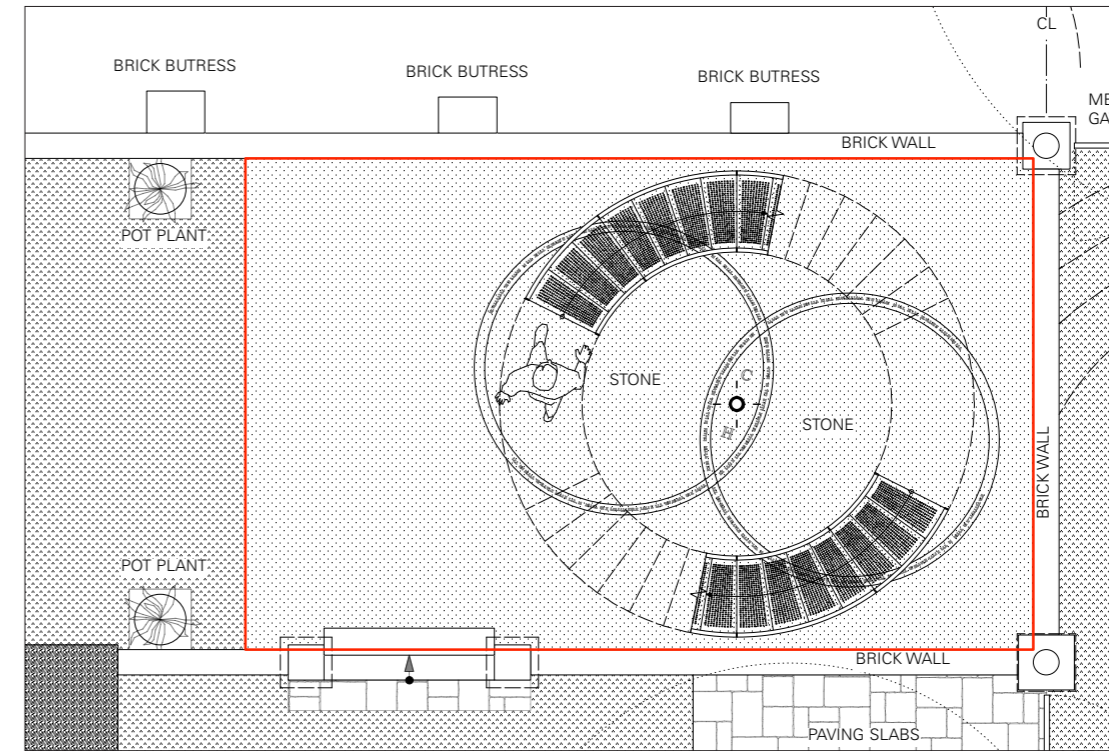


10. Responses to Pre-application advice

*“....that the footprint size of the structure needs careful consideration so as to not look squeezed into the space,.....”*

The dimensions of the various components have been carefully considered so that the overall size of the pavilion is at the optimum as well as being practical. The 720mm width of the stair between stringers will just sufficiently allow an ambulant person to access. On the upper levels, the proposed bench seat at 400mm deep with 885mm leg room is intended to provide a modest amenity for enjoying the 360° views of the surrounding landscape from unique elevated vantage points.

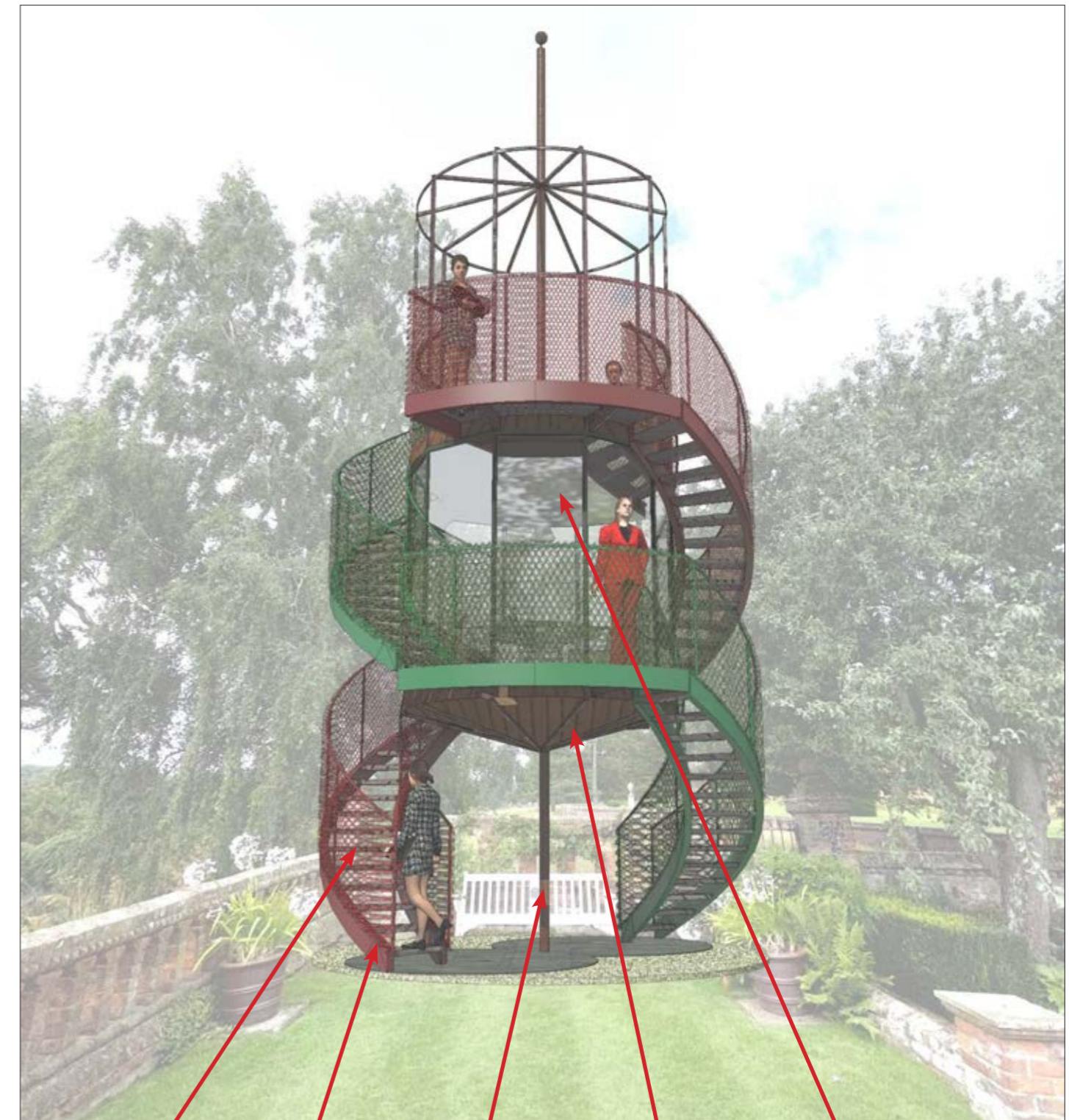
So, we believe the footprint of the proposed pavilion is at the optimal size in order for it to function comfortably.



*“Clearly the choice of colours and materials to be used will be important and we talked about the use of more than one colour in shades which tonally complement the surrounding existing structures and planting (so e.g. picking up on green shades, red, brown, cream and white shades) without the overall appearance looking too ‘fussy’.”*

The proposed palette of materials and colours are intended to be inobtrusive and are to complement existing materials around the site. As such, the visual impact of the pavilion will be minimal and in turn enhance the rich and diverse landscaping.

The detailing of the metal structure including perforated stair treads, simple metal spindles will give the pavilion a visually lightweight appearance but at the same time provide reassuring stability and durability.



Metal mesh

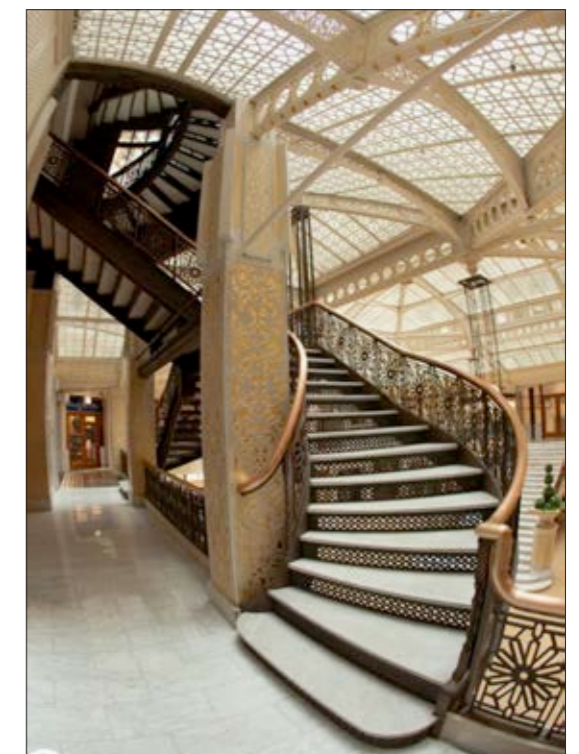
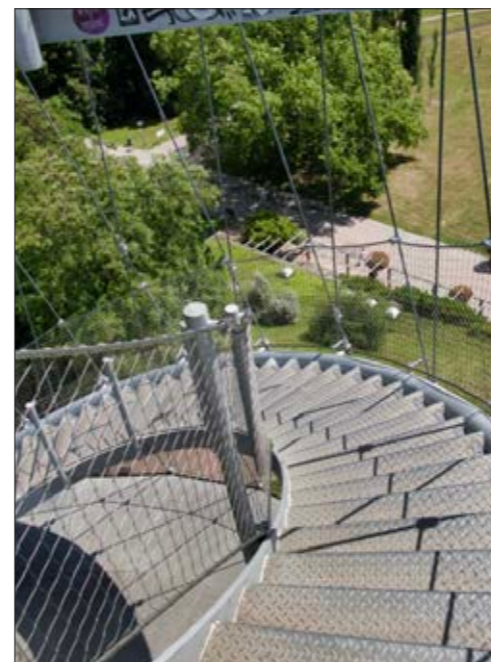
Metal stair

Steel column

Timber soffit

Clear glazing

11. Inspiration images






Doddington Place - the recent garden folly



Appendix A

- Pre-application advice

**Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT**  
DX59900 Sittingbourne 2  
Phone: 01795 424341  
Fax: 01795 417141  
www.swale.gov.uk



Thomas Croft Architects  
Studio 117  
Great Western Studios  
65 Alfred Road  
London  
W2 5EU

Our Ref: 21/506588/PAMEET  
Date: 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022  
Contact: alicereeves@swale.gov.uk

Dear Mr Croft,

**21/506588/PAMEET – Request for pre-application advice – New garden pavilion – Doddington Place Garden, ME9 0BB**

Thank you for your request for pre-application advice and for meeting with the Conservation Manager and I on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May. Please accept my apologies for the delay in sending this follow up letter. I understand your proposal is for the erection of a garden folly within the grounds in remembrance of the applicant's son, Henry. The folly would be available for public use when the gardens are open to the public and would provide views over the sunken garden and rock garden. I note the site is in a sensitive location, within a blanket Tree Preservation Order, conservation area, Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is a designated historic garden. The host property is Grade II Listed, as are the gardens in their own right.

Development Plan Position

The development plan currently comprises of the adopted Local Plan Bearing Fruits 2031. The key policies that would be of consideration should an application come forward are:

- CP4 (Design)
- CP8 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)
- DM3 (The rural economy)
- DM14 (General development criteria)
- DM24 (Designated Landscapes)
- DM32 (Listed buildings)
- DM33 (Conservation areas)
- DM35 (Historic parks and gardens)



Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG): 'Conservation Areas' and 'Listed Buildings'

Pre-application advice


In this case I am reliant upon the expert views of the Design and Conservation Manager who has commented on the proposals as follows:

*"The proposed contemporary folly-type structure has in my view, the potential to add another layer and visual element to the overall special interest of the grade II registered historic garden (see: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000398?section=official-list-entry>), whilst also positively contributing to the setting of the adjacent grade II listed late C19 redbrick Doddington Place house (see: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1069325?section=official-list-entry>).*

Serving Faversham, Isle of Sheppey, Sittingbourne and surrounding rural areas

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*I very much support the principle of the proposal and would suggest given the very specific nature of the folly structure, that not only does it have the capacity to provide visual delight in its own respect, but it also has the potential to enhance an appreciation and enjoyment of existing elements of the historic garden, notably the sunken garden, from the elevated views it would provide. These elevated views would also enable a greater appreciation of the wider setting to the garden and house, which in turn are one of the key focuses of the Doddington and Newnham Conservation Area. The proposed development would I suggest be likely to enhance the character and appearance of this conservation area subject to the detailed design of the scheme being worked up carefully with due consideration being given to wider context, as has certainly been the case thus far.*

*I consider the proposed location for the structure to be an excellent one, and my only reservation around this is that the footprint size of the structure needs careful consideration so as to not look squeezed into the space, thereby detracting from the visual benefits and potentially resulting in harm to the special interest of the grade II registered garden, and possibly also to the setting of the Serving Faversham, Isle of Sheppey, Sittingbourne and surrounding rural areas adjacent listed house, although I note the structure would be largely hidden from view from the house itself due to existing tree cover.*

*I consider the suggested indicative height of the structure to be broadly appropriate and note this would mean that the structure would be largely hidden from view from longer views into the formal garden area to the east of the listed house. I consider however, that the top of the structure, potentially poking up and being visible from some viewpoints a little above the adjacent tree canopies could be a positive aspect of the overall scheme, providing it is elegantly designed and visually low-key in profile.*



*I note the precedent and sketch images provided and consider that very careful choices will need to be made to reach a suitable balance between the key considerations of visual lightness and delight, structural robustness and functionality, the latter also needing to take into account ease of maintenance and repair.*

*Clearly the choice of colours and materials to be used will be important and we talked about the use of more than one colour in shades which tonally complement the surrounding existing structures and planting (so e.g. picking up on green shades, red, brown, cream and white shades) without the overall appearance looking too 'fussy'.*


*I also note the personal reasons behind this proposal and consider that the proposed folly-like structure offers up a unique opportunity to celebrate the life of a special and much missed family member which not only the estate's family can enjoy, but also general visitors to Doddington Place can enjoy as part of their overall experience."*

From a planning policy perspective, and given the comments of the Conservation Manager above, I consider that the principle complies with Local Plan policy in regard to the conservation and enhancement of the surrounding area which in this case is an especially sensitive one. The Council is also supportive of proposals that would enhance the rural economy, and this is likely to be a popular visitor attraction. The proposal would not appear to cause any adverse effects to the host property or surrounding area and as such, it is likely that the Council would offer support should an application be submitted.

Serving Faversham, Isle of Sheppey, Sittingbourne and surrounding rural areas

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If you do wish to submit a planning application please refer to our Local List of Validation Requirements to ensure that your application is dealt with as efficiently as possible, and with the best chance of being determined swiftly. The Local List can be found at the link below;  
<https://swale.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/planning-permission/applying-for-planning-permission-and-fees/>.

Forms and guidance notes can be downloaded from <http://www.swale.gov.uk/types-of-application-and-fees/>. Please submit your application for consideration to Mid Kent Planning Support (MKPS), Maidstone House, Kings Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6JQ (tel no. 01622 602736; email [planningsupport@midkent.gov.uk](mailto:planningsupport@midkent.gov.uk)).

This advice is given without the benefit of having consulted neighbouring residents and the Parish Council, who would be formally consulted should an application be received. It should also be noted that this advice is that of a Council Officer, and any application may have to be determined by the Council's Planning Committee.



It should be noted that this is an informal officer opinion only and does not prejudice any future decision made by the Council.

It is advisable to contact South Thames Gateway Building Control to ensure you comply with any permission required by them. (STGBC Partnership, Foord Annex, Eastgate House, High Street, Rochester, Kent ME1 2EW tel no. 01634 331133; email [building@stgbc.org.uk](mailto:building@stgbc.org.uk)).

Yours sincerely,

Alice Reeves  
Planning Officer

Serving Faversham, Isle of Sheppey, Sittingbourne and surrounding rural areas

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Appendix B

- Existing and proposed drawings

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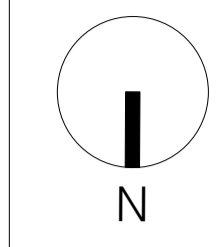




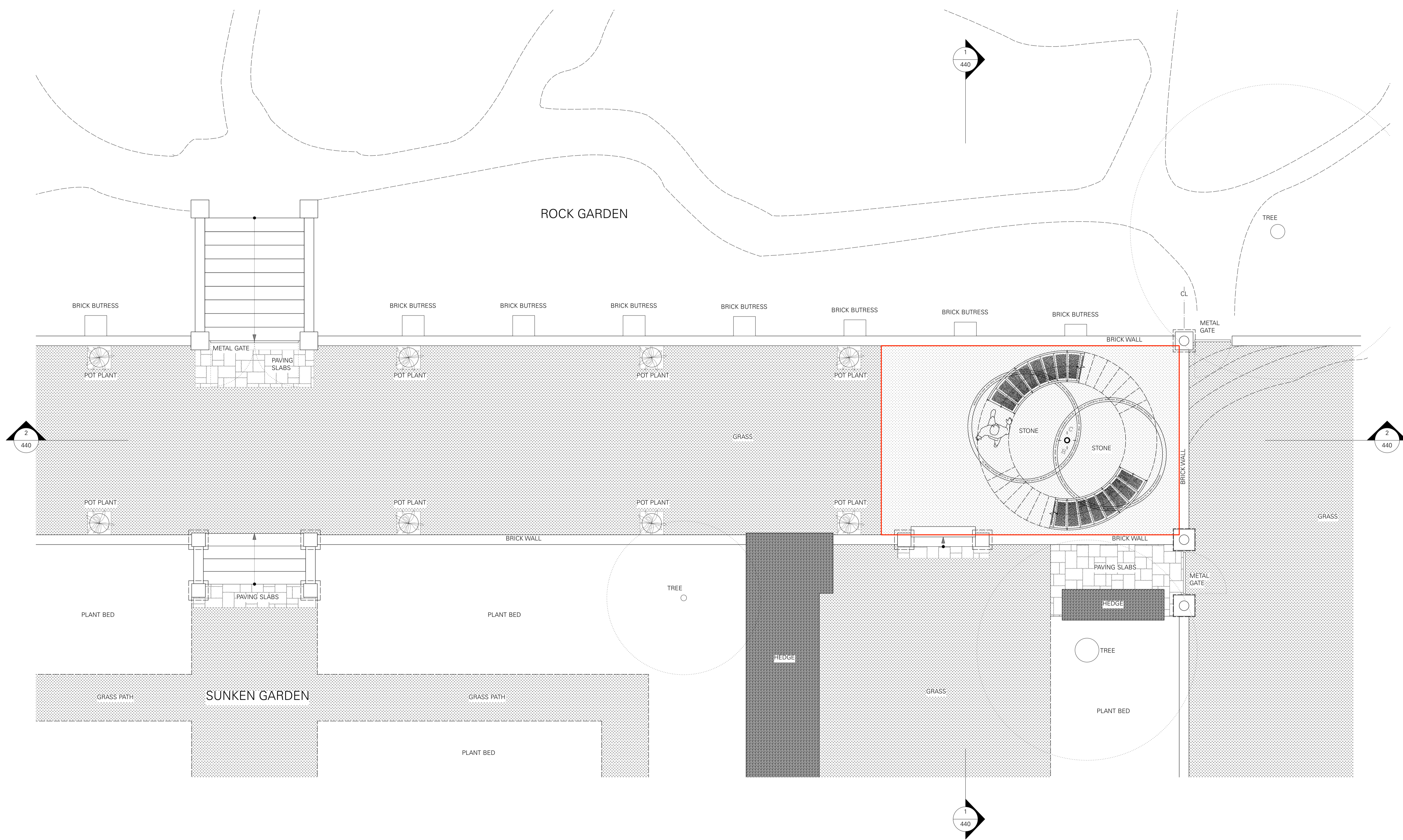




NOTES



SITE AREA - 37 sqm



CHECK	REVISION NOTES	DATE	REV
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HC	PLANNING APPLICATION	10/10/2022	P0

NEW GARDEN PAVILION  
DODDINGTON PLACE  
SITTINGBOURNE  
KENT ME9 0BB

PROPOSED SITE PLAN

PLANNING

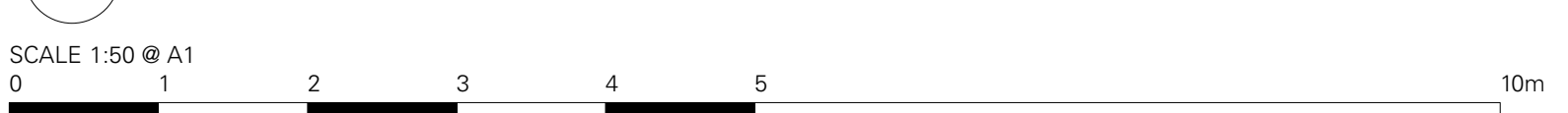
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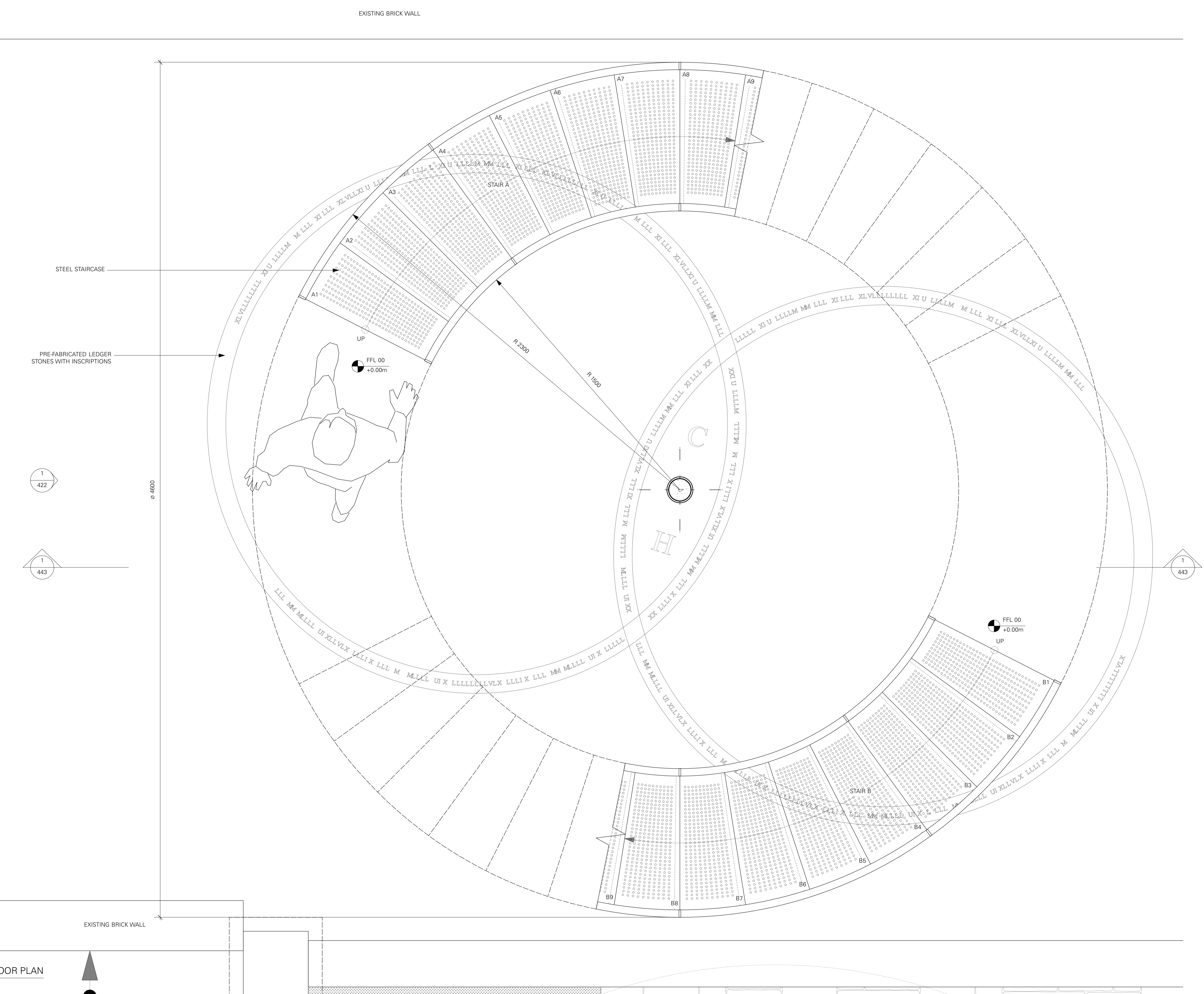
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1 PROPOSED SITE PLAN





1 PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN  
1:10



CHECK	REVISION NOTES	DATE	REV
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HC	PLANNING APPLICATION	10/10/2022	P0

NEW GARDEN PAVILION  
DODDINGTON PLACE  
SITTINGBOURNE  
KENT ME9 0BB

PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN

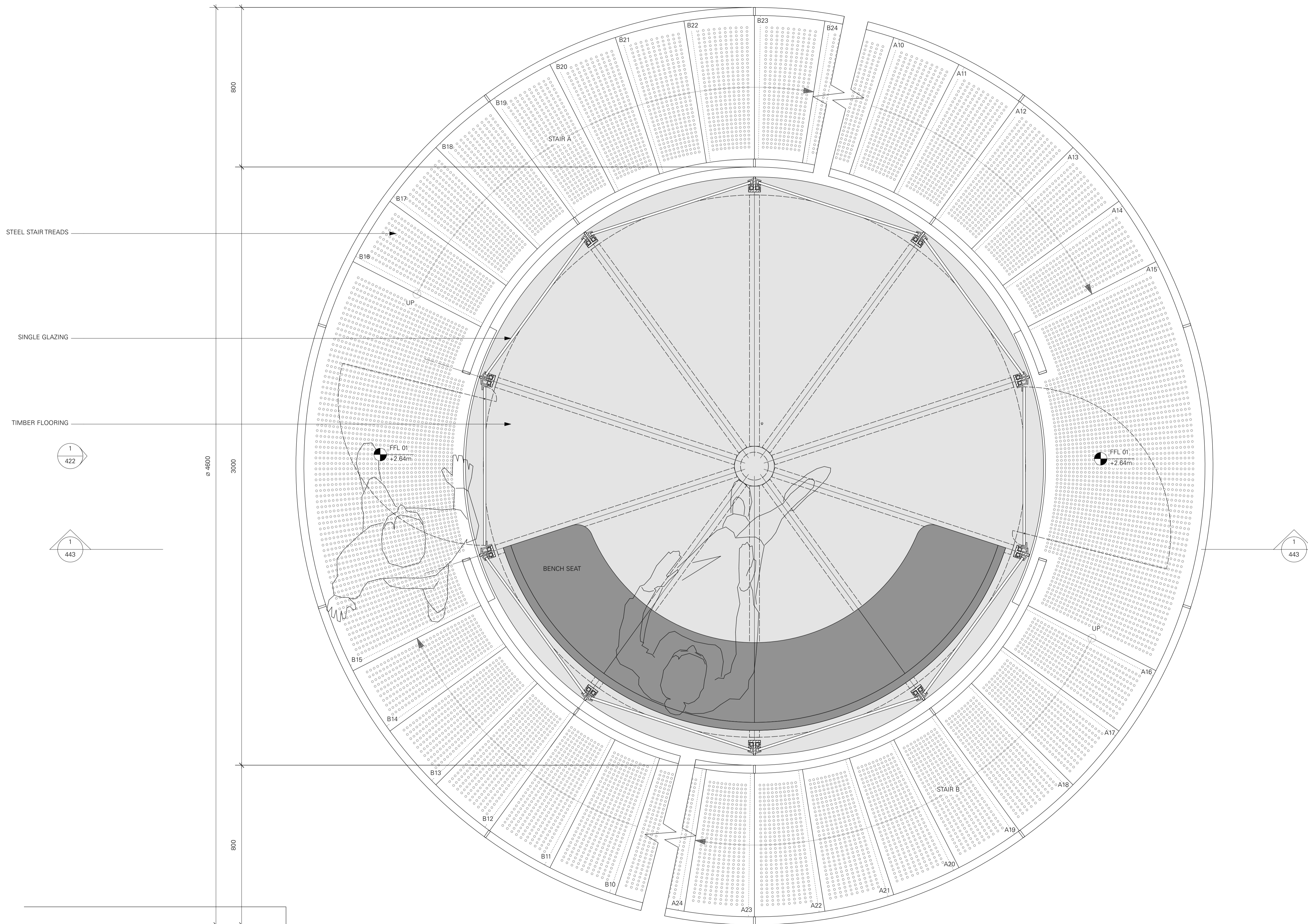
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NOTES



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HC	PLANNING APPLICATION	10/10/2022	P0

NEW GARDEN PAVILION  
DODDINGTON PLACE  
SITTINGBOURNE  
KENT ME9 0BB

PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN

PLANNING  
DRAWING STATUS

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1 PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
1:10



SCALE 1:10 @ A1



NOTES

CHECK	REVISION NOTES	DATE	REV
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HC	PLANNING APPLICATION	10/10/2022	P0

NEW GARDEN PAVILION  
DODDINGTON PLACE  
SITTINGBOURNE  
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PROPOSED EAST ELEVATION

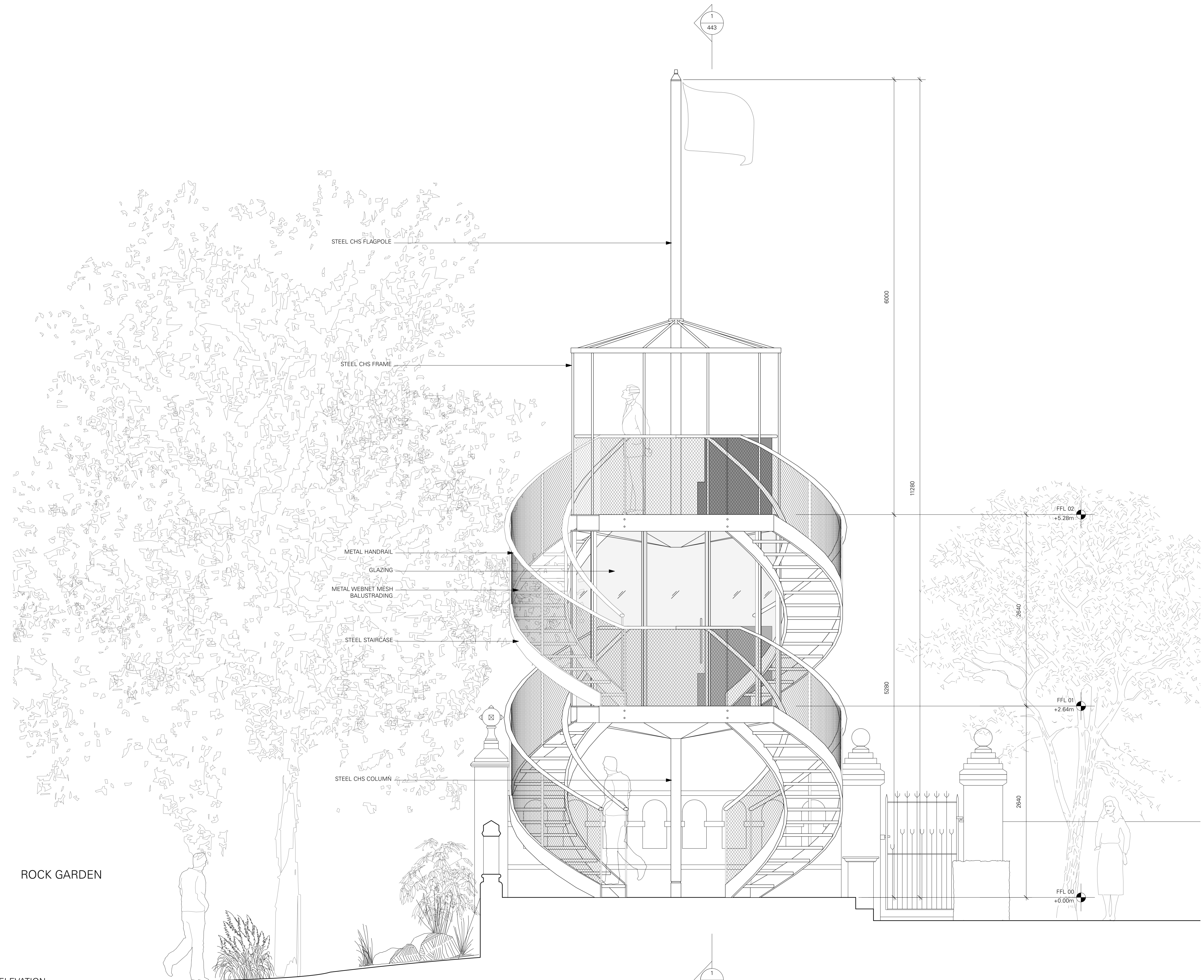
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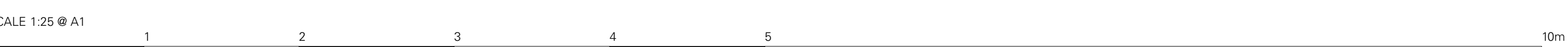
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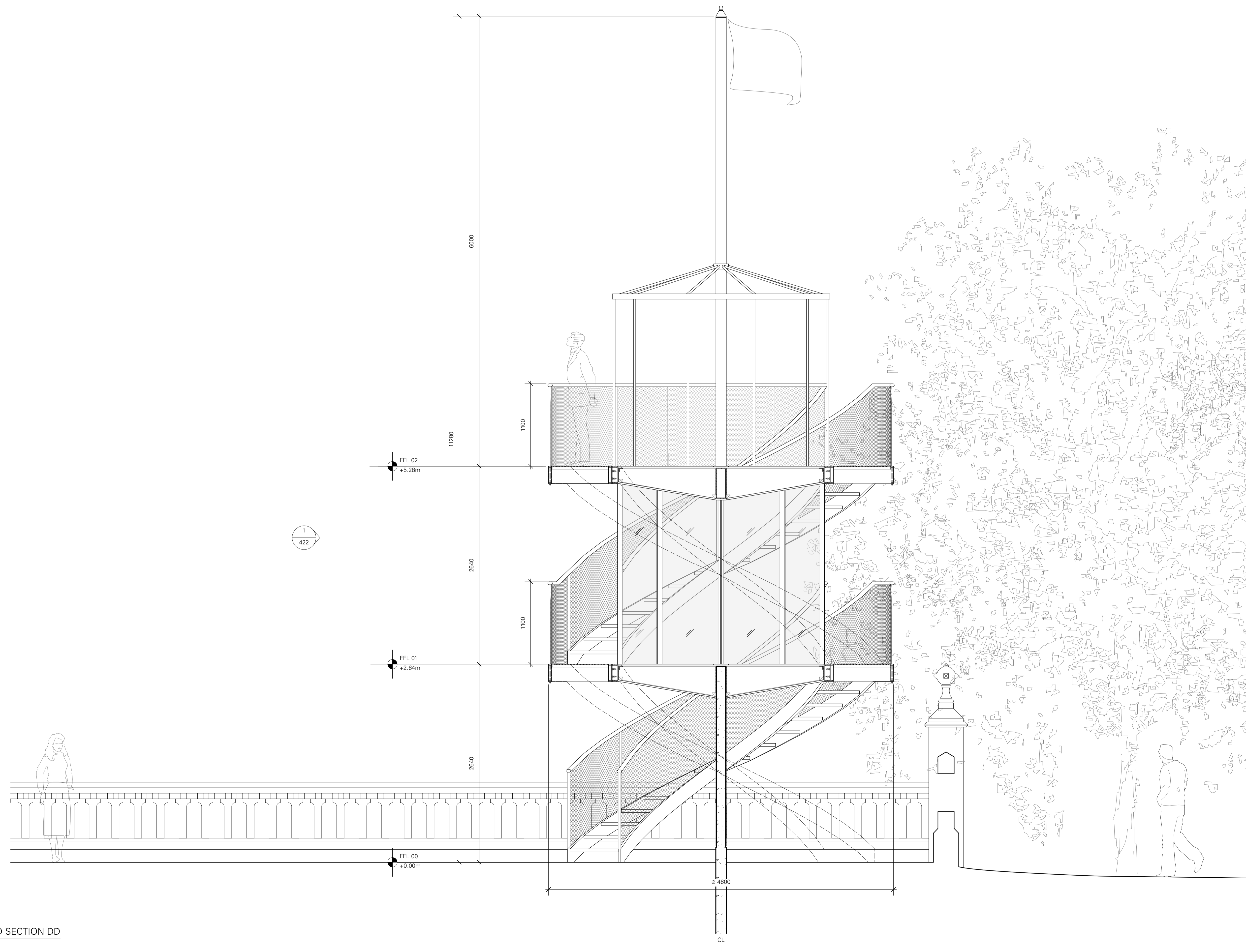


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NOTES



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HC	PLANNING APPLICATION	10/10/2022	P0

NEW GARDEN PAVILION  
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PROPOSED SECTION DD

PLANNING  
DRAWING STATUS

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