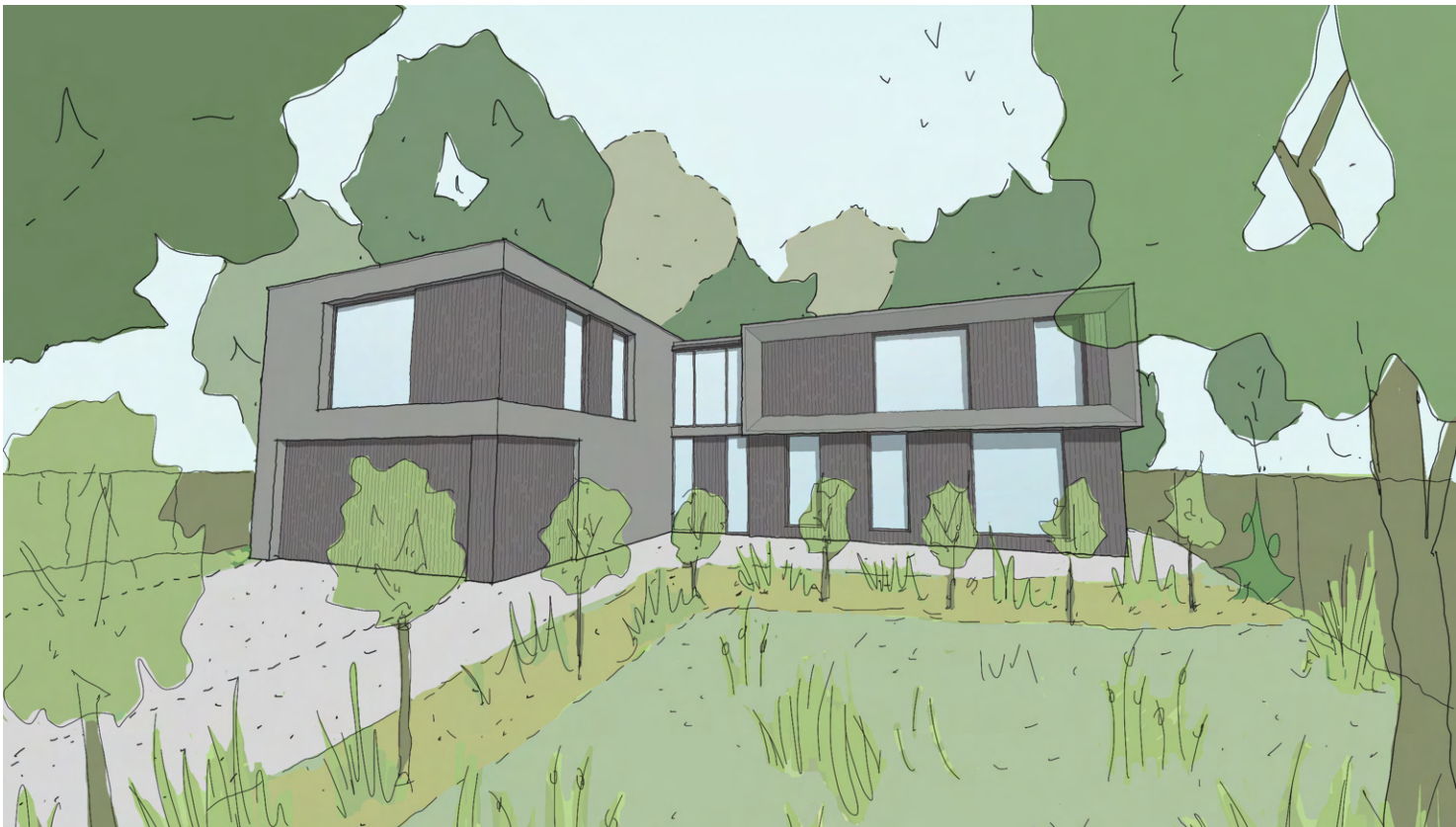


# Design Development - Initial Proposals

**Concept Sketches** Initial sketches of the proposals show the mixed material composition, although actual materials had not been finalised at this stage.

The projecting shroud around the first-floor windows on the eastern side of the house was introduced to provide a number of benefits, it reduces the risk of overheating from midday and afternoon sun by overhanging both the first and ground-floor windows, and it also prevents any overlooking from the first-floor windows to the rear façade of 4 Conisboro Way.



Initial Concept Sketch



Initial Concept Sketch

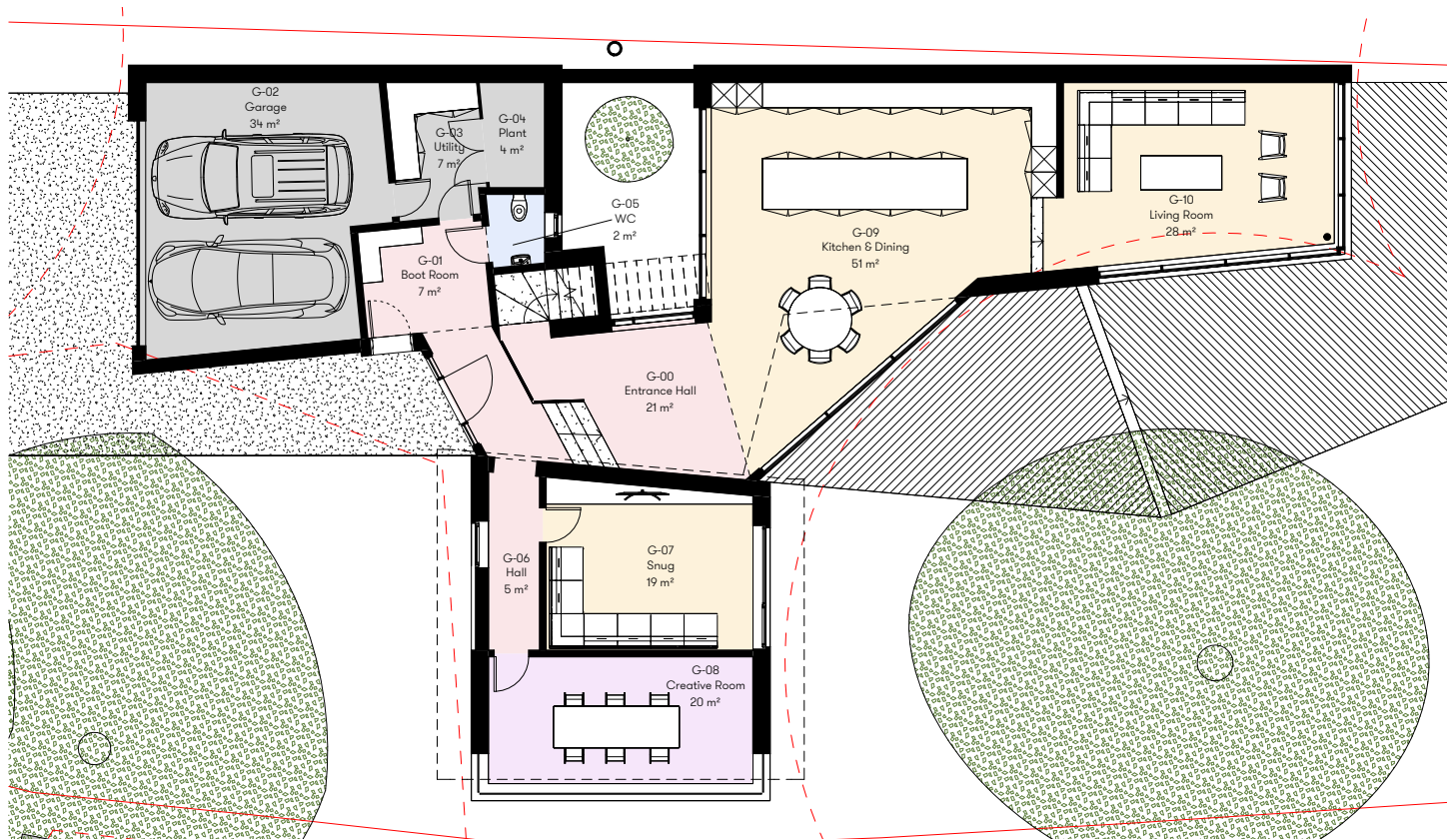
# Design Development - Pre-App Submission

**Pre-App Proposals** A pre-application advice submission was made to Reading Borough Council in November 2022. Prior to this submission the proposals were refined and developed. This included the introduction of a courtyard garden to the western side of the house to help break up the bulk of the building and provide additional outlook from rooms within this area.

**Pre-App Feedback** The pre-application feedback was received in December 2022, a full copy of this feedback is provided in Appendix B of this report. The feedback stated that the whilst the design of the proposals was a substantial departure from the design of dwellings in the surrounding area, it is not considered harmful as it would be obscured from the highway by the surrounding houses and trees.

Concern was raised about the height and size of the dwelling due to its proximity to the site boundary and the potential to appear overbearing to 4 Conisboro way.

The feedback received has been used to update the proposals to address the concerns raised and full details and analysis of the current scheme is set out in the following sections of this report.



Pre-App Submission - Ground Floor Plan (NTS)



Pre-App Submission - Front Elevation (NTS)



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# **CURRENT PROPOSALS**

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# Introduction & Use

**Introduction** The proposals have been updated to address the feedback received in the pre-application advice response. These amendments include a reduction in the height of the building above ground level of nearly 1m. This has been facilitated by providing additional steps in the ground and first floor layouts. The building has also been pulled away from both the eastern and western boundaries by reducing the footprint.

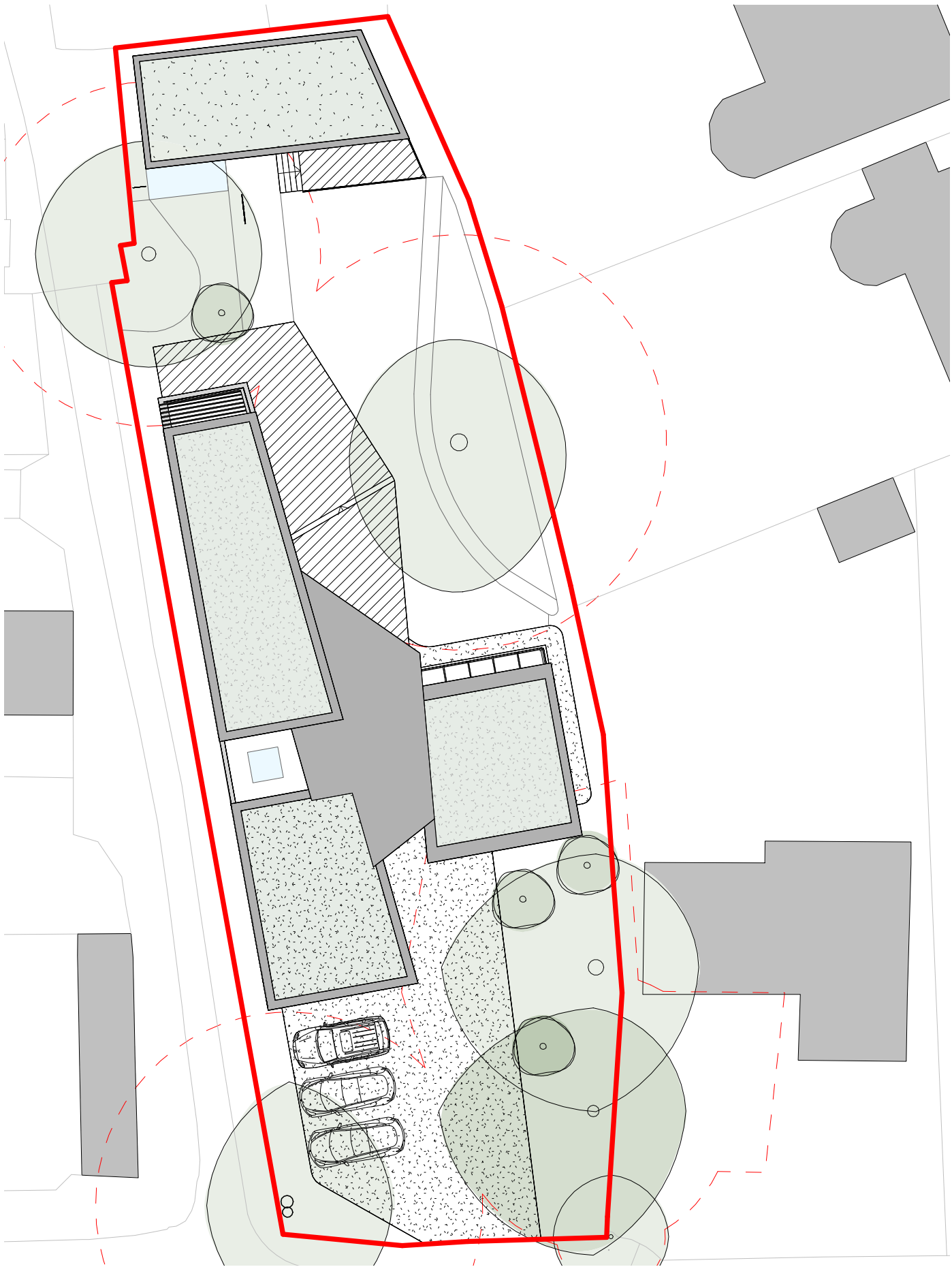
Full details and analysis of the current proposals are set out in this section.

**Use** The site currently falls within the C3 Dwellinghouse use class and the proposals within this application will also fall within this same use class.

The annexe to the rear of the site will be entirely ancillary to the main dwelling house. This space is intended to contain a single room to be used as a garden studio for exercise or work.

For complete transparency, the applicant is considering temporarily living in the garden studio building during the construction of the main house. If the annexe is used for this purpose, it will be returned to the proposed configuration set out in this application upon completion of the main house and this can be controlled via condition.

In any case, the layout of the site means that the annexe building cannot ever receive the benefit of its own independent access or garden space. Access will always be required via the main house and therefore there is no potential for this building to be used independently of the main house. Regardless, we welcome the application of any condition the local authority may consider appropriate to provide further reassurance of the annexe’s ancillary relationship.



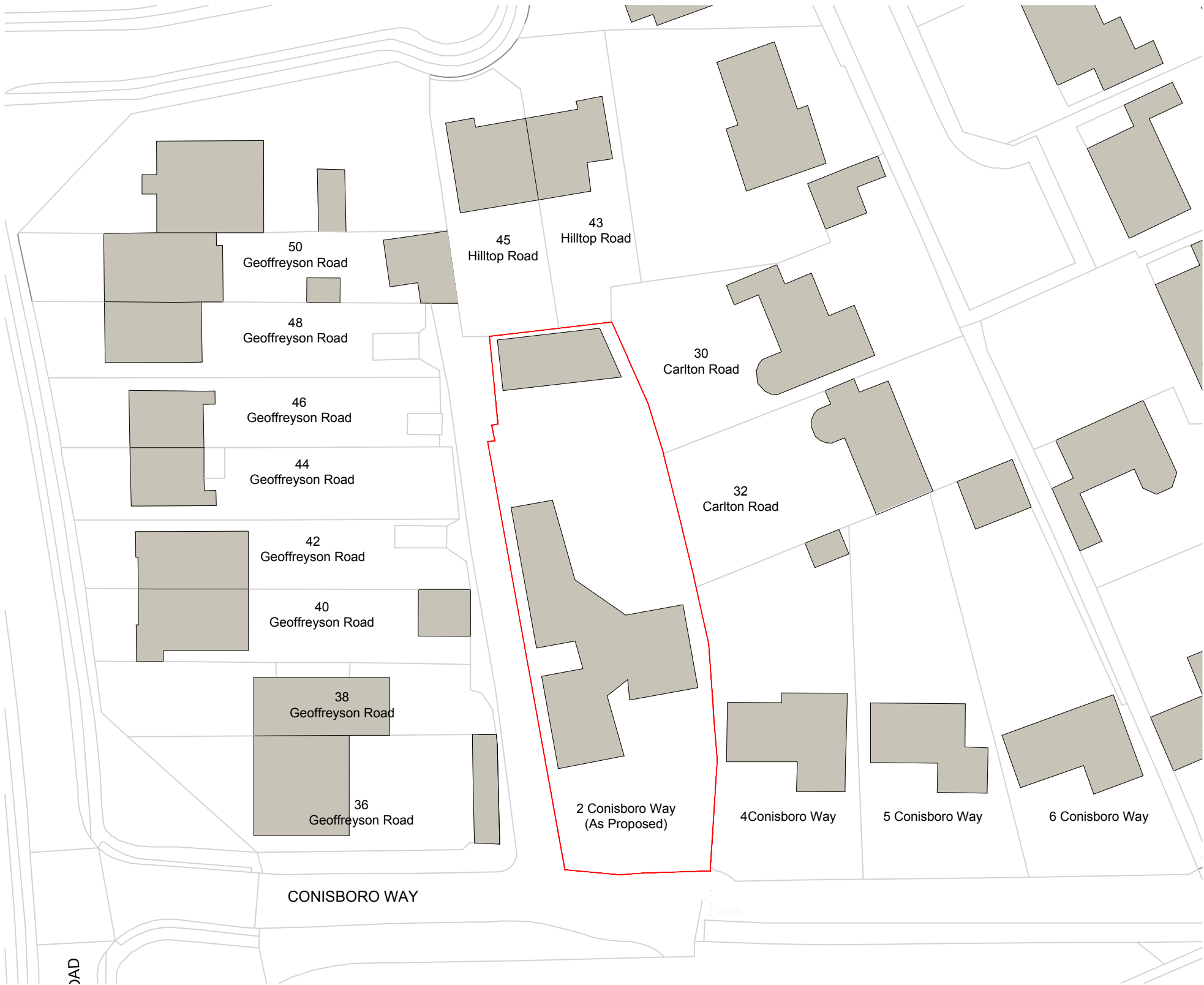
# Amount

Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed house is larger than those in the surrounding area, it is also the case that the overall site area of 1063m2 is substantially larger than any of the surrounding dwellings and it, therefore, has the capacity to comfortably accommodate a larger home.

The built footprint of the proposals, including the annexe is 319m2, therefore, once the proposals are built, 30% of the site area will be developed.

The below table sets out the ‘developed area’ of each of the dwellings surrounding the application site. These vary from 19% developed in the case of 32 Carlton Road to 43% developed in the case of 50 Geoffreyson Road. There are three houses in the immediate area that have a higher proportional developed area percentage than the application site will have following completion of the proposals.

| Site                          | Site Area<br>(m2) | Built Footprint<br>(m2) | Percentage<br>Developed |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 50 Geoffreyson Road           | 349               | 150                     | 43%                     |
| 36 Geoffreyson Road           | 408               | 143                     | 35%                     |
| 40 Geoffreyson Road           | 328               | 112                     | 34%                     |
| 2 Conisboro Way (As Proposed) | 1063              | 319                     | 30%                     |
| 43 Hilltop Road               | 285               | 79                      | 28%                     |
| 38 Geoffreyson Road           | 332               | 92                      | 28%                     |
| 45 Hilltop Road               | 293               | 71                      | 24%                     |
| 30 Carlton Road               | 603               | 144                     | 24%                     |
| 42 Geoffreyson Road           | 312               | 74                      | 24%                     |
| 6 Conisboro Way               | 622               | 132                     | 21%                     |
| 4 Conisboro Way               | 553               | 117                     | 21%                     |
| 48 Geoffreyson Road           | 345               | 68                      | 20%                     |
| 32 Carlton Road               | 524               | 100                     | 19%                     |
| 46 Geoffreyson Road           | 318               | 51                      | 16%                     |
| 5 Conisboro Way               | 543               | 87                      | 16%                     |
| 44 Geoffreyson Road           | 326               | 52                      | 16%                     |



## Scale

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The house has been designed to follow the sloping topography of the existing site. This is driven by the need to accommodate the root protection areas of the existing mature trees which means the external ground levels cannot be lowered. To accommodate the preservation of the Root Protection Areas the building is tiered in line with the sloping topography, with the lowest levels at the front of the site and the level of the ground floor (and the roof line) increasing towards the rear in step with the topography. Further details of how the levels relate to the root protection areas are set out in the landscaping section.

The eastern part of the house which is closest to 4 Conisboro Way has a roofline below the existing ridge of this house, this is despite the fact that the proposed dwelling is further set back and therefore the natural topography of the site is higher in this location in comparison to the more forward location of 4 Conisboro Way.



# Layout

**Internal Layout** The layout of the house has been heavily influenced by the need to avoid the root protection areas of the existing mature trees. The house occupies the 'developable area' identified in the site strategy diagrams included earlier in this report.

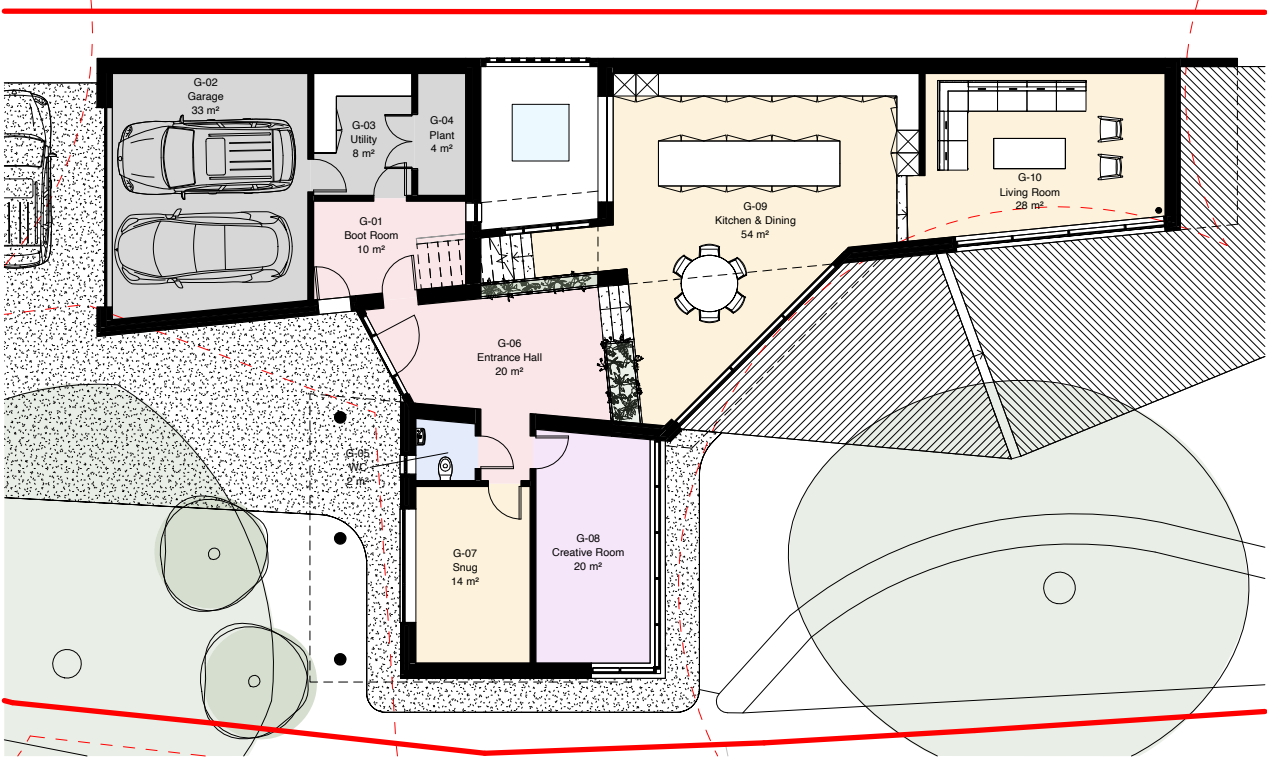
The house is mainly located along the west side of the site with a smaller portion spreading across the width of the site which is facilitated by a break in the root protection areas.

The western portion of the house tapers towards the rear to accommodate the larger root protection area of the oak tree (T016) which is a key feature of the site. This part of the house contains the main living areas which have been orientated and positioned to take in views of this tree.

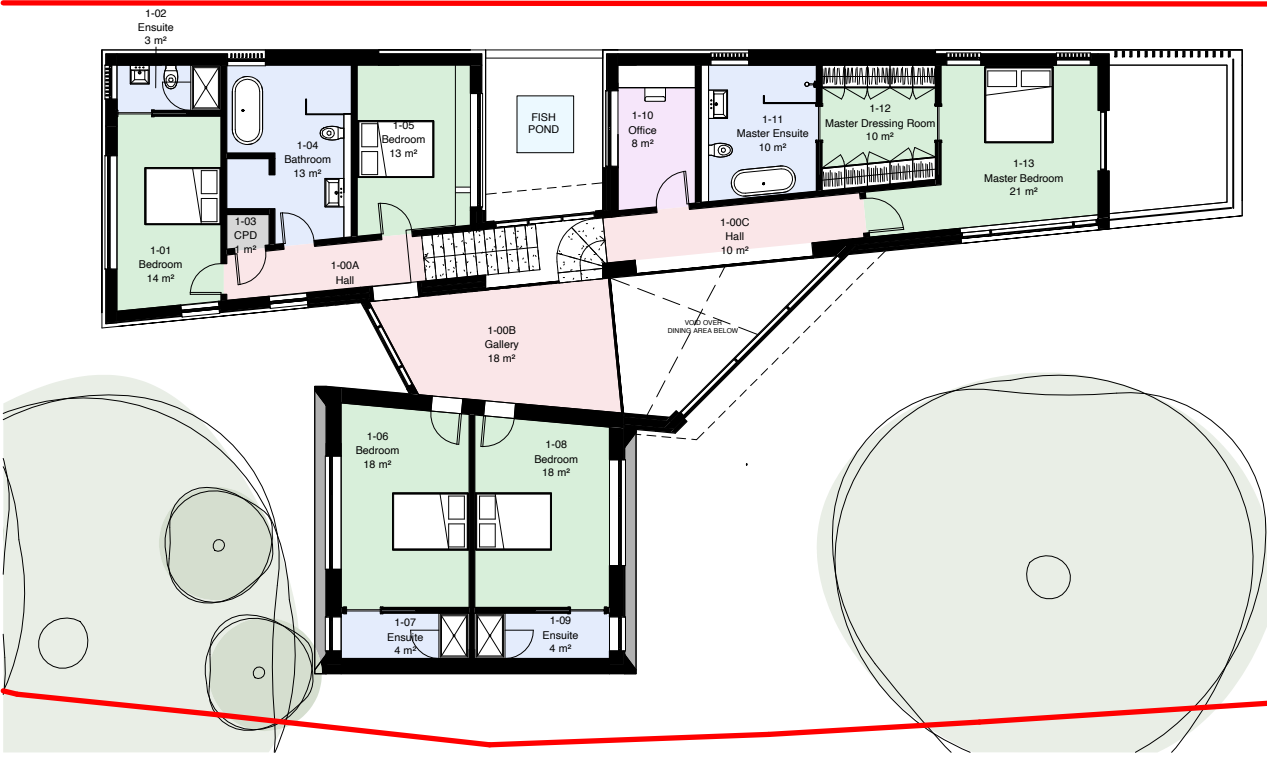
Along the western side of the house, the elevation is broken via the introduction of an external courtyard.

The ground floor plan is split into three levels which increase in height from front to back in line with the existing topography. This split-level arrangement allows for access into the garden without the need to dig within the root protection areas of the existing trees.

At first floor, the layout is again split into separate levels to follow the site topography whilst minimising the overall height of the building. The eastern part of the building is slightly offset from the ground floor, sitting forward, and supported on columns.



Proposed Ground Floor Plan (NTS)



Proposed First Floor Plan (NTS)

# Landscape

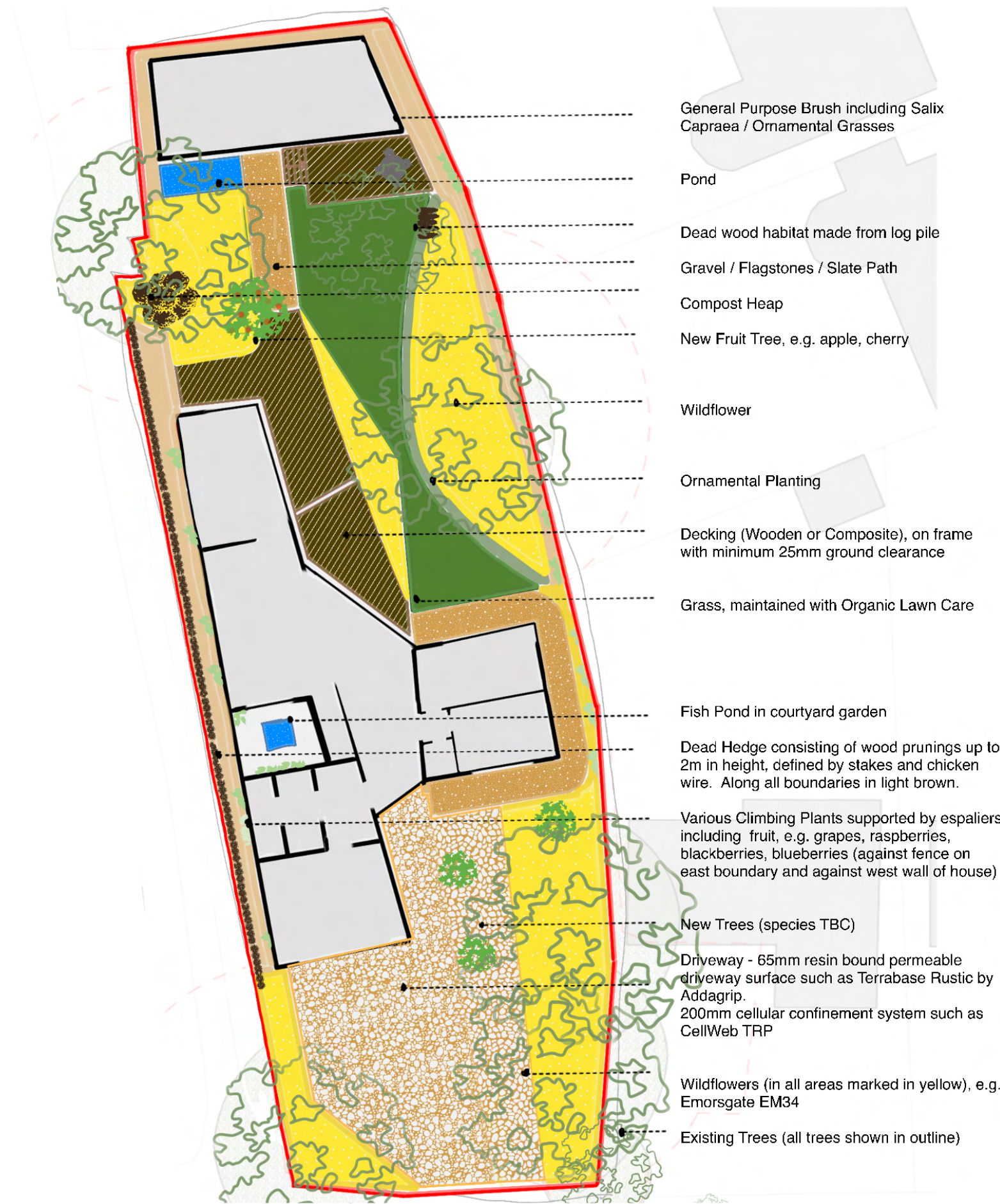
A preliminary landscape plan has been prepared to support the application. The scheme proposes a substantial area of wildflower planting across the site. Some small areas of ornamental planting are proposed to frame the amenity lawn to the rear garden.

Several areas of hard landscaping have been proposed, and these have been specified to ensure compatibility with tree Root Protection Areas as set out on the next page.

New timber fencing is proposed along the boundary with the exception of the western side of the house. which is proposed to feature a 2m high 'dead-hedge' along the boundary to the adjacent track. This side of the house will also feature espaliers with climbing plants trained up the façade to break up the brickwork and provide a landscaped setting to this facade despite its proximity to the boundary.

Two small ponds are proposed, the first in the courtyard garden and the second adjacent to the annexe building.

The retention of the existing mature trees at the front of the site provides a significant level of visual screening of the proposals from Conisboro Way.



# Landscape

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**Hard Landscape in Tree Root Protection Areas**

Due to the position and size of tree root protection areas on the site, it is inevitable that any hard landscaping will be built within these areas. These areas will be formed using ‘no-dig’ build-ups where finishes and any required subbase or framework are formed entirely above the existing ground levels.

Whilst the house is proposed almost entirely outside the root protection areas, the internal floor levels of the ground floor are dictated by the relationship with external landscaping. We have therefore used the below external landscaping build-ups to determine minimum levels which have subsequently informed the internal floor levels of the house.

Due to the sloping topography, this requires a total internal level change of 900mm from the garage/driveway junction up to the living room/rear decking junction.

**Driveway**

- Permeable driveway surface.
- Cellular Confinement System such as CellWeb TRP.

**Decking to Rear Garden**

- 32mm Composite decking with open joints
- 125mm Secondary frame
- 125mm Primary frame on posts
- Minimum 25mm ground clearance

Note: We have introduced a 300mm step in this area to reduce the impact on internal levels. This step is matched internally between the kitchen and main living room area.

**Annexe Building**

- 300mm Insulated timber floor structure supported on mini screw piles.
- Minimum 50mm ground clearance.

Further details of these build-ups is provided in the Arboriculture Impact Assessment document.

**Ecology**

The landscape proposals have been developed to maximise the Biodiversity Gain achieved in comparison to the existing site. Large areas of wildflower planting are proposed, the ‘dead-hedge’ to the western boundary and the two ponds will also provide habitats that are not currently found on the site.

The proposals include planting a number of new fruit trees and the espalier planting along the western wall of the house and eastern boundary fence will be a mix of fruit varieties including grapes, raspberries, blackberries and blueberries.

A large number of bat and bird boxes are proposed to be integrated into both the house and annexe.

# Access

## **Vehicular & Pedestrian Access**

Vehicle and pedestrian access to the site is facilitated by a new crossover located centrally along the southern boundary which provides vehicle access onto a new driveway with external parking for three cars. There is sufficient area for vehicles to turn within the site boundary and leave in forward gear.

A garage is provided with two additional parking spaces, it is acknowledged that the garage does not meet the council's minimum size standards to be counted towards the overall site parking provision as these standards presume that only part of the garage will be used for parking. The minimum parking provision of three vehicles is therefore achieved entirely via the external parking and the garage is supplementary to this.

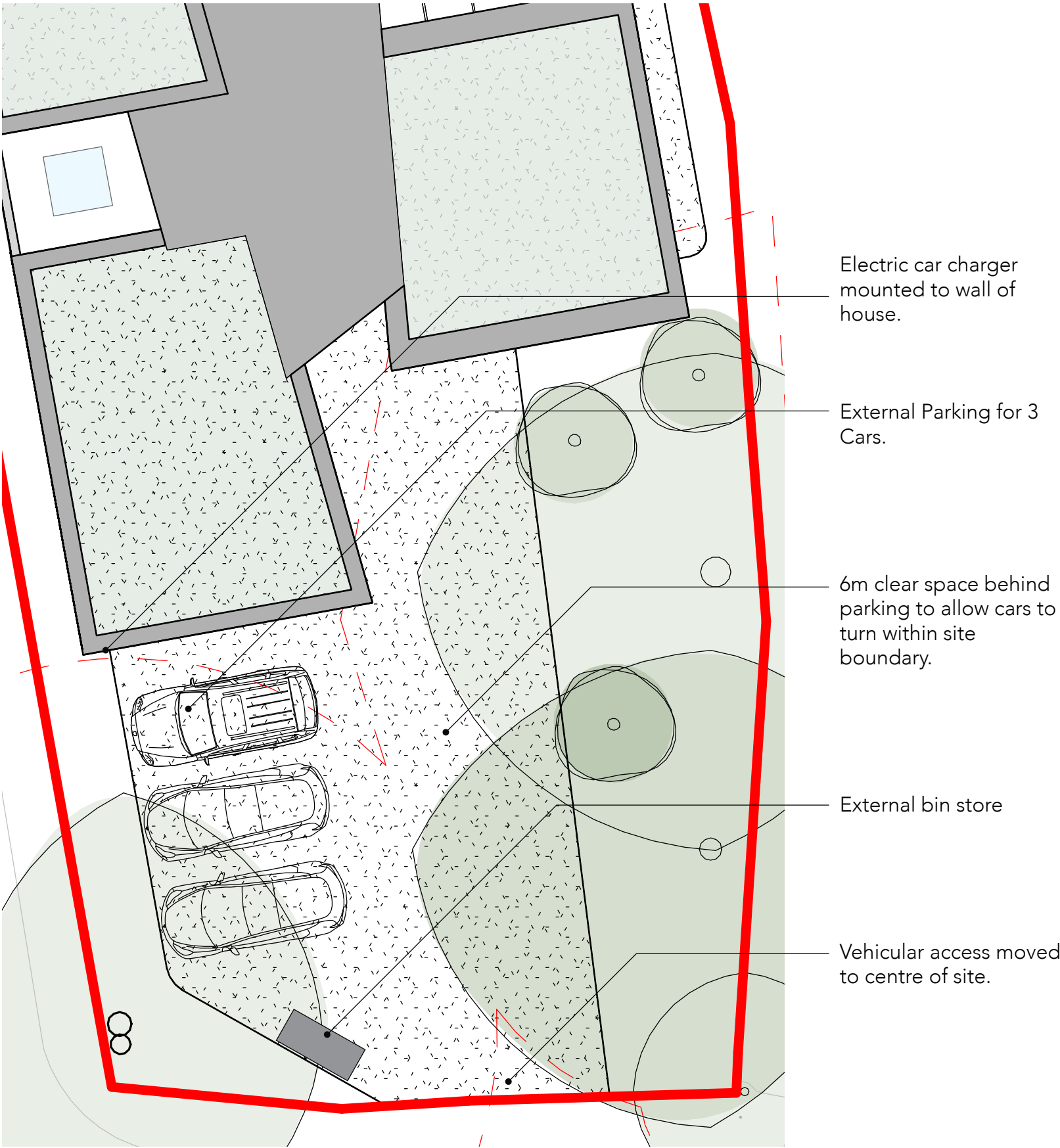
The garage will also provide secure storage for cycles, avoiding the need for an external store.

General waste and recycling bins will be stored within an enclosure adjacent to the parking area close to the site entrance.

## **Future Adaptability**

Whilst a split-level ground floor arrangement has been required to accommodate the existing topography and the root protection areas, this has been designed to allow the future adaptation of the floor plan to include a stairlift that can access both the kitchen area and the first floor as a single installation.

Additionally, the Utility Room is designed to allow its future conversion into a kitchen space and the ground floor WC is large enough to be converted into a wheelchair-accessible shower room. This would allow a future wheelchair user to have step-free access to cooking, washing, bedroom and living spaces within the entrance storey.



# Appearance

**Materials** A mix of external materials has been proposed to break up the visual appearance of the house.

The lower levels feature light-coloured multi brickwork that grounds the proposals on the site. Along the western boundary, the brickwork continues to enclose the inset courtyard but is perforated in this location to further breakup the appearance of the building. This façade will also feature stainless steel espaliers to support climbing plants as set out in the landscape proposals.

The first-floor features metal panels with large inset areas of timber cladding. In several areas along the southern and western facades, the timber cladding continues across windows in the form of vertical louvres. Along the western façade this reduces any perception of overlooking towards the gardens along Geoffreyson Road, this is in addition to all windows along this boundary being obscure glazed and non-opening.

The timber will be untreated and will weather to a natural grey finish in the first few years following the completion of the works.

CGI visuals have been provided of the proposals on the next pages.

