



Meditation space & internal alterations

Kadampa Meditation Centre, Bath Road, Reading, RG1 6HH

Design & Access Statement - Rev A

01 - Executive summary



Executive Summary

- Design and access statement for a purpose-built meditation room extension
- Internal refurbishment of old meditation room to create improved teacher office space
- The improved centre and peaceful meditation space, will be an enhancement to the Reading community, open to all, inclusive of the disabled.
- Carefully designed to overcome the existing tree roots
- Extension replaces exiting bomb-shelter
- Sensitive and appropriate design to respect nearby residential buildings
- Outside of Conservation Area and far from any listed building
- Sustainable location, based on proximity to shops and transport links

"The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. This design guide, the National Design Guide, illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice. It forms part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools."

National design guide pg 2

02 - This statement

Colony Architects use a Design and Access Statement as an illustration tool to explain the planning application design proposal, the rationale behind its creation and how it is appropriate for the context. The Statement also serves to meet statutory requirements, local planning policy and national guidance documents. Statutory requirements of a Design & Access Statement.

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013 requires a Design and Access Statement to be made in the following application situations:

- Major Developments
- Within a designated area (Conservation Areas, World Heritage Sites)
- The provision of one or more dwellinghouses; or the Provision a building, or increase in building area greater than 100m2

The statement should cover:

- The design principles and concepts that been applied to the development
- How access relating to the development has been dealt with, adopting local planning policy requirements
- Explain the steps taken to appraise the context and how the design of the development takes the context into account
- State what, if any, consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development, and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation



Design Guidance Documents

In addition to the statutory requirements of a Design and Access Statement, there is further guidance on the document structure and overall design process within the National Design Guide - Planning practices guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places, prepared by The Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government. This guide identifies three over arching priorities: - Climate, Character & Community. These themes re are then broken into the 10 essential characteristics that a well-designed place or building should embody. Our Design and Access Statements references these 10 chapters to present the design proposal and illustrate the suitability and well-designed nature of the proposal.

Design Process

During the design process, the design team observe not only statutory requirements and guidance documents, but also local planning policy requirements, examples of these documents include:

- Design Quality (Supplementary Planning Documents / Guidance)
- Character & Conservation Area assessments
- Lifetime Homes & Wheelchair User housing requirements
- Housing Design Standards
- Sustainability Checklists
- Parking & Highways Standards

Components for good design

A statement must demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the proposed development. It is that an applicant should understand the context in which their proposal will fit and use this understanding to design the scheme. To gain a good understanding of context and to use it appropriately, applicants should follow a design process which includes assessment, involvement, and evaluation, as well as proposing a final design. The following are important components for good design that this statement discusses:

Use

How the use or mix of uses proposed for the land and buildings have been derived from an understanding of the site's context.

Amount

How much development is proposed. For residential development, this means the number of units proposed for residential use. The statement should explain and justify the amount of development proposed for each use, its distribution across the site, how it relates to the site's surroundings and how accessibility to and between all parts of the development have been maximised.

Layout

The way in which buildings, routes and open spaces (both public and private) are provided, placed and orientated in relation to each other, and to buildings and spaces surrounding the site.

Scale

The size of the buildings (including their height), in relation to their surroundings. The statement should also explain and justify the size of individual building parts and how these relate to each other.

Appearance

The visual impression made by the building should be explained and justified, including its built form, architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture.

Detailing

Consider how the building is crafted and materials relate, the detailing should reinforce the macro level design concept at a micro level off detail. The touch and feel of a building is just as important as the aesthetics.

Landscaping

The treatment of private and public spaces to enhance or protect the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated, through hard and soft landscaping measures, and how these will be maintained.

The Access Component

Design and access statements should explain how access arrangements will ensure that all users will have equal and convenient access to buildings and spaces and the wider transport network. It should include an explanation of the applicant's policy and approach to access, with particular reference to the inclusion of disabled people, a description of any consultation undertaken in relation to access issues and how the outcome of consultations and advice received on accessibility issues has been followed. Access for emergency services should be explained where relevant.

03 - Location



Regional location

- The centre is located to the south-west of the town centre
- The central location offers excellent public transport links (bus & rail)
- The position along the Bath Road (A4) also offers convenient vehicular access



Aerial view

- The centre is positioned within a predominantly residential area, with occasional commercial & institutional buildings
- The main Bath Road (A4) runs directly to the north of the centre
- The site is narrow and deep, and the existing building is well set back from the highway
- Along the western boundary a residential access road serves "The Firs" residential complex



Site location plan

- The red line illustrates application boundary, which has a total area of 1281sqm
- Existing parking is positioned to the front and garden to the rear
- The proposed new development is located within the rear garden
- A number of mature trees are within the garden area

04 Context - understanding local character & identity



View of centre from the Bath Road (A4)



Modern in-fill housing developments opposite the site



Architecture and scale

- Mixture of Older (Victorian) generous “villa’s” and modern infill housing schemes
- Sale is mainly three storey, with occasional 2 storey dwellings and 4 storey commercial buildings
- Buildings are set will back from the highway, allowing a strong tree lining to the Bath Road
- Parking spaces to the front beneath the trees
- Older building detached within generous curtilages, modern infill either terraced housing or flatted accommodation with shared central amenity space

Materials

- Strong use of brick
- Pitched roofs (slate/tile)
- Feature use of hanging tile/render
- Variety of architectural style and detailing



Example of nearby institutional building within the residential context



Aerial view of the site, illustrating the mixture of Victorian Villa’s & modern infill development



The Firs - the 3 storey modern residential scheme west of the site

05 Kadampa Meditation centre



Example of meditation room



Example of meditation room

The meditation centre

- Kadampa Meditation Centre is a centre for meditation and modern Buddhism based in Reading, rooting from a worldwide tradition and practice.
- The centre serves as a special place of relaxation, peace and refuge in Berkshire and is a member of the New Kadampa Tradition
- The Reading centre has been open for 15 years
- The centre hosts a broad range of classes and events enabling everyone the opportunity to develop lasting inner peace
- The main purpose of this project is to build a new state of the art meditation room to host the classes and events
- The room should offer space for 30 and have supporting toilet, catering, break out space, a small shop and storage, and a 'contemplation' garden space.

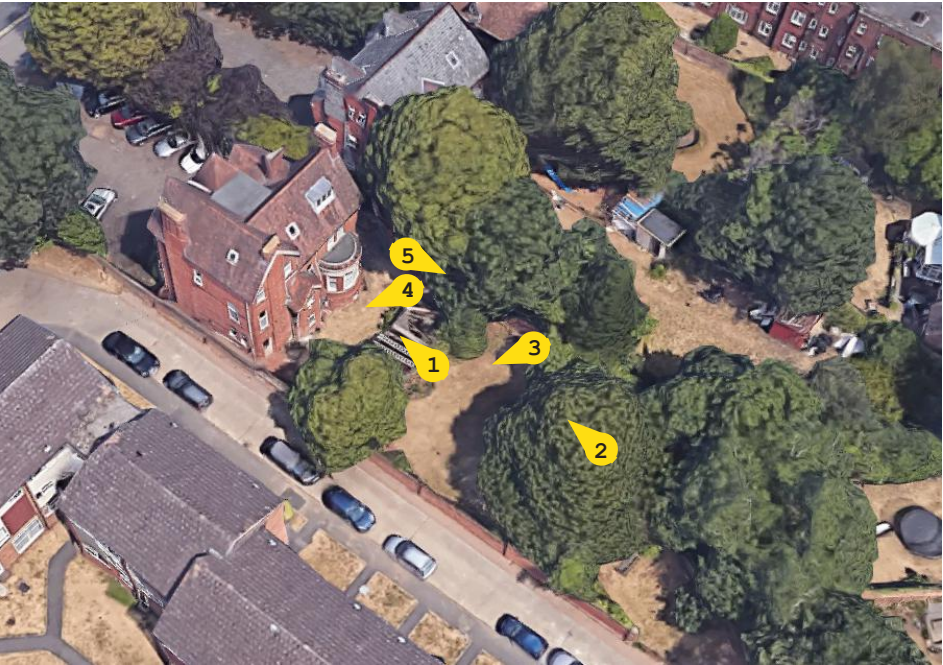


Existing meditation room at Reading

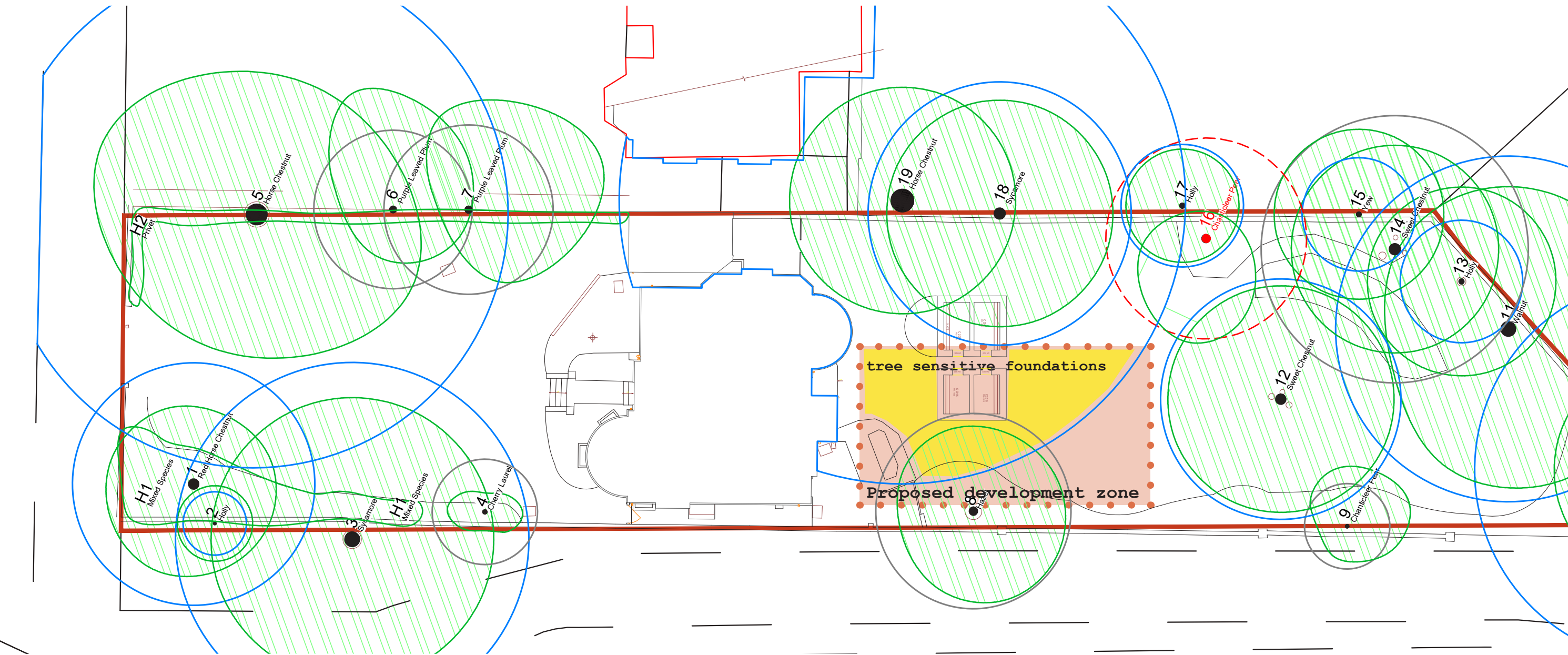


Example of meditation room

06 Context - the existing meditation centre



07 Context - existing trees



Designing around the existing trees

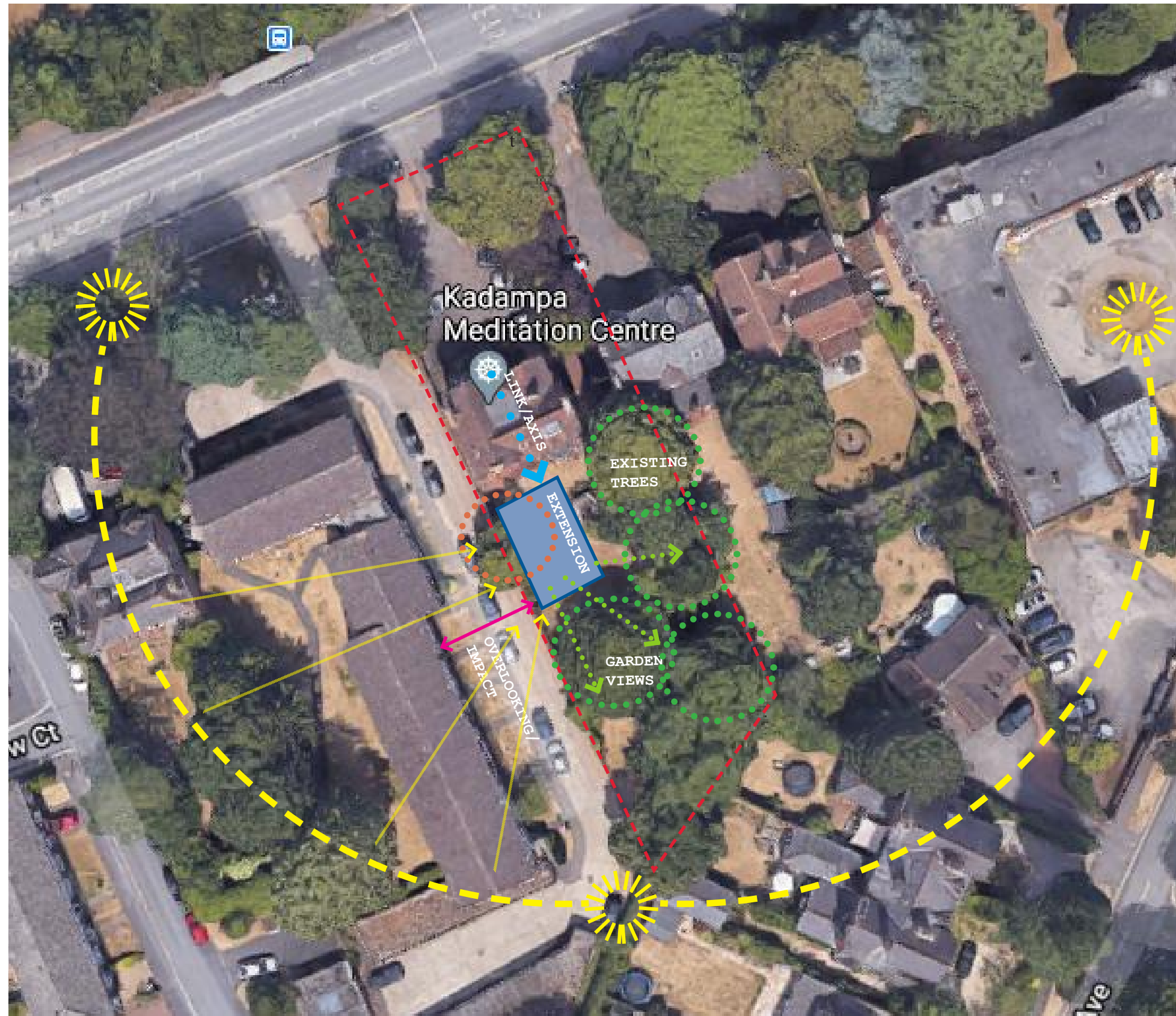
- A key characteristic and constraint of the site are the existing trees within the rear garden, on and off the site
- A Tree survey and Arboricultural report has been prepare by David Archer Associates to assist with development and how to design around the existing trees
- A number of these trees and their RPA's extend within highlighted build zone, thus a carefully

considered structural/ground work design will be will be required to avoid harming the nearby trees, especially tree 18 (Sycamore) & 19 (Horse Chestnut) which is to the north/east of the proposed development zone

- The site of the extension does replace a significant bomb-shelter outbuilding and areas of existing hard standing
- It is likely that Tree 8 (Hazel) will be removed to enable the development

- It is important for Tree 12 (Sweet Chestnut) to also be retained and this will limit the extent of the extension to the south-east

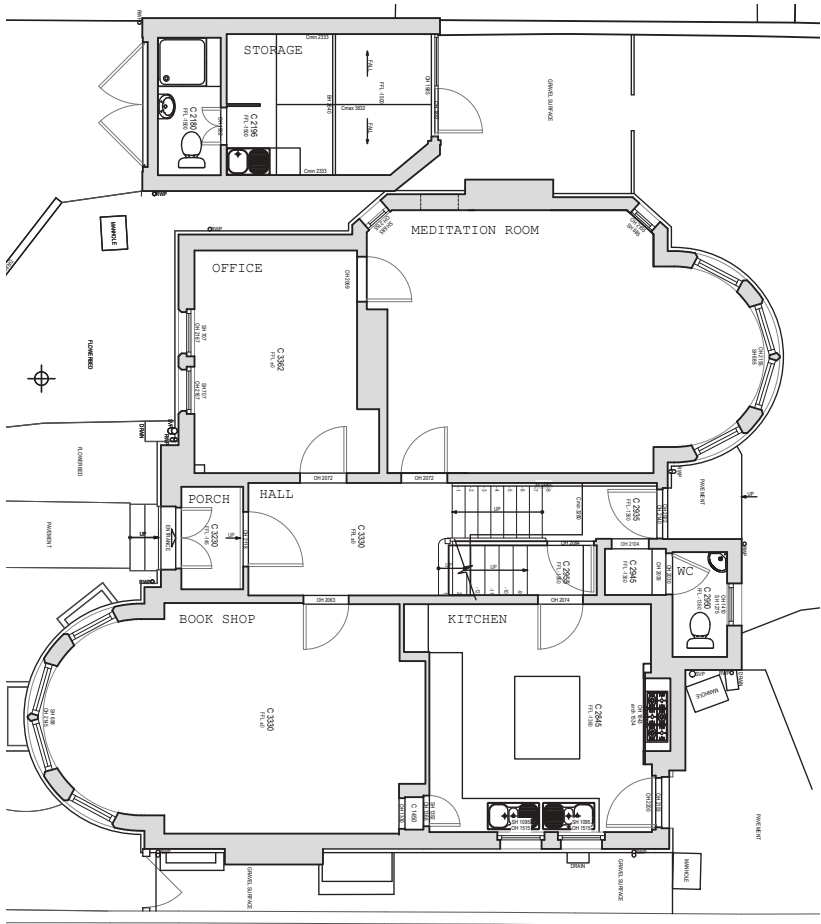
08 Context - site constraints



Site Analysis

- Consider impact on trees on the east and southern boundaries
- Linking strategy to existing building
- Maximising natural light and consider tree shading
- Greater opportunity for natural light from the western boundary
- Potential overlooking from neighbouring residential accommodation to the west
- Extension clearly seen from public space on the western side, street facing aesthetic
- View and link with garden important

09 Existing building - analysis & use



Existing Ground floor



Existing Rear elevation

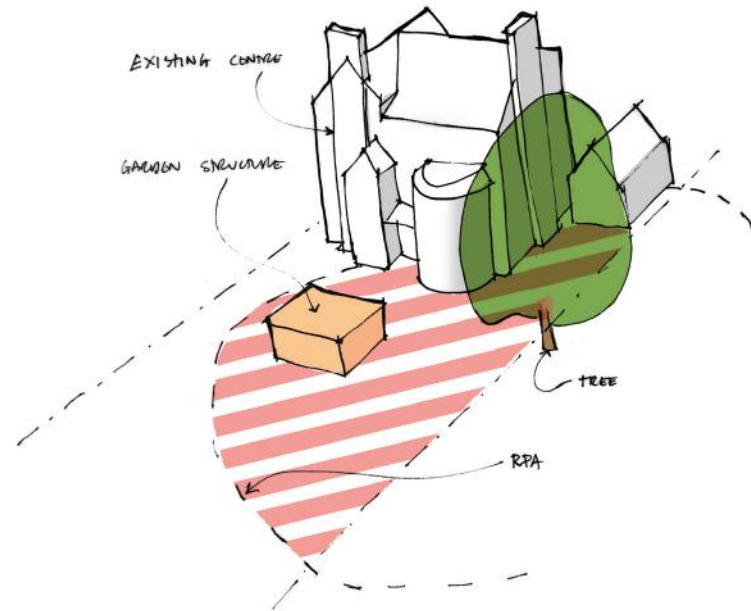
The existing building

- The exiting building is has operated as the Kadampa Meditation centre for over 15 years
- The ground floor of the building operates as the meditation room, office, meeting room, with wc and kitchen facilities.
- The upper floors have a few residential rooms that users reside in for varying lengths of time, for example a two-week retreat or 6 month extended learning programme
- The centre’s Teacher also resides at the property
- There is basement storage and a few outbuildings

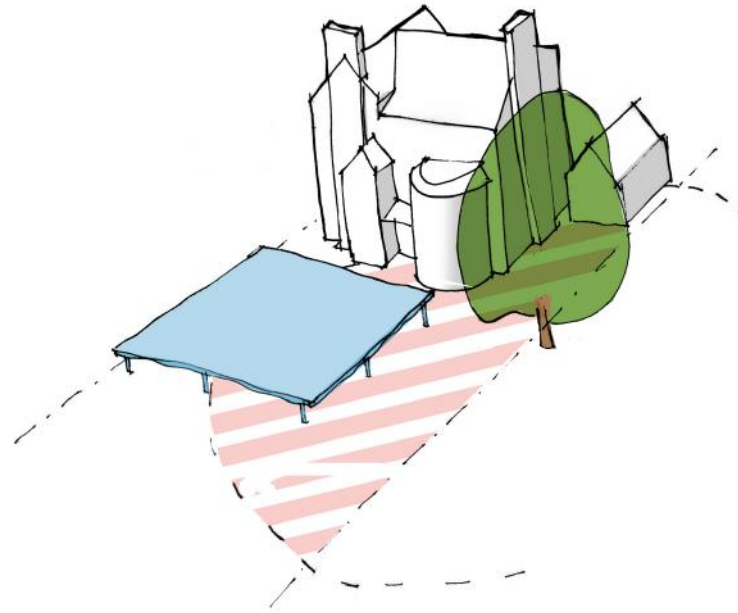
Use & issues

- It is considered that the current building has an established mixed use of Class F (lower floors) and C (upper floors)
- The conversion from a Victorian villa into a commercial use creates number of issues, these include: -
- Proportion, size and spatial qualities of the existing meditation room is not suitable for hosting the meditation sessions
- The raised first floor prevent wheelchair access
- There is an aspiration for a high-quality architectural solution that promotes the centre, including a response to the worldwide health crisis, to allow sufficient air flow, passive and mechanical, in the design response, with the use of openable glazing throughout.
- There is no disabled WC
- The kitchen require improvements
- Lack of prep-room

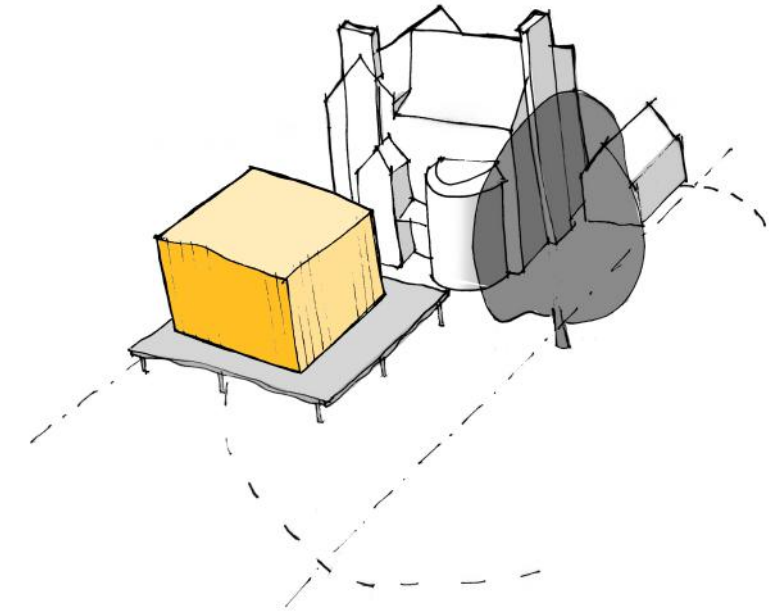
10 Design - response & concept



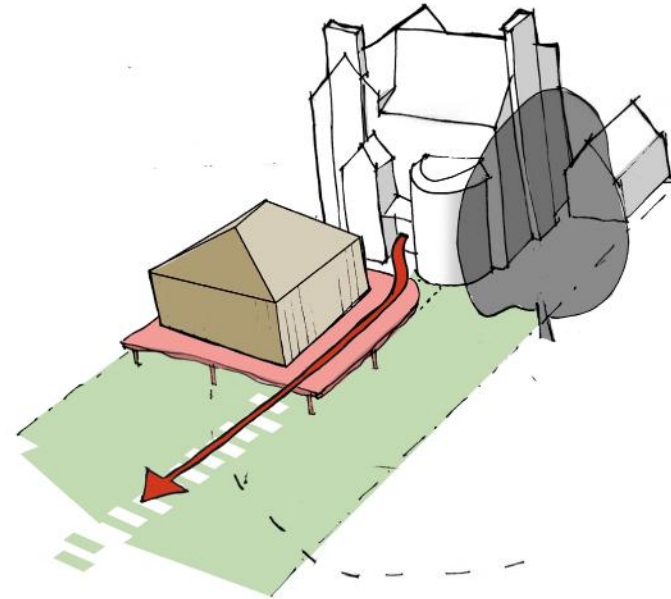
1 - Tree RPA & existing building



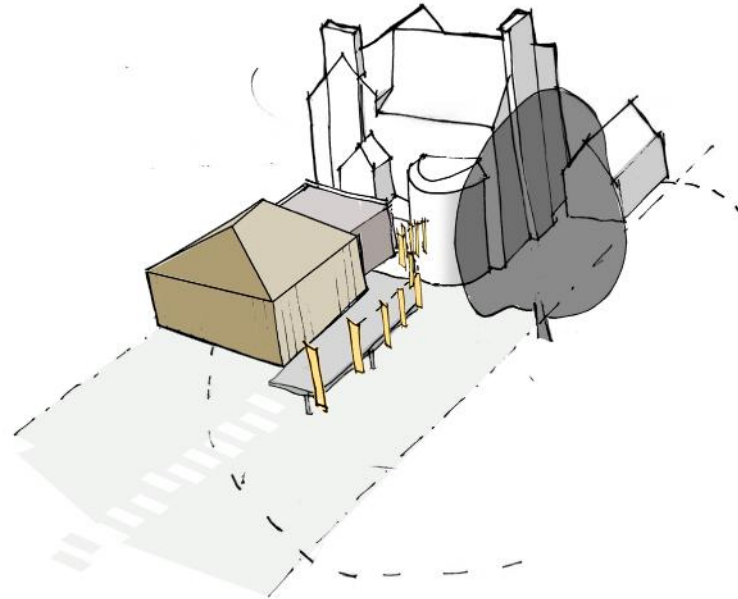
2 - Floating pedestal sensitive to RPA



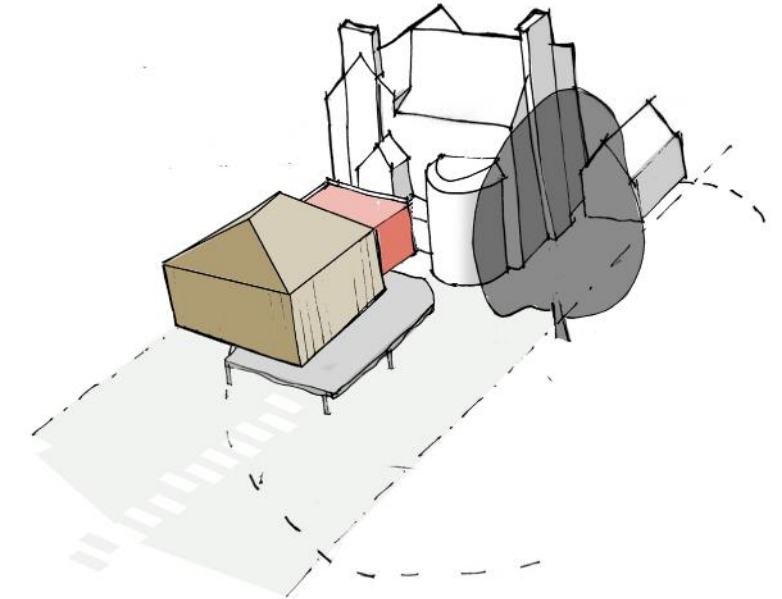
3 - 'The hub' - spiritual core



4 - Link to garden

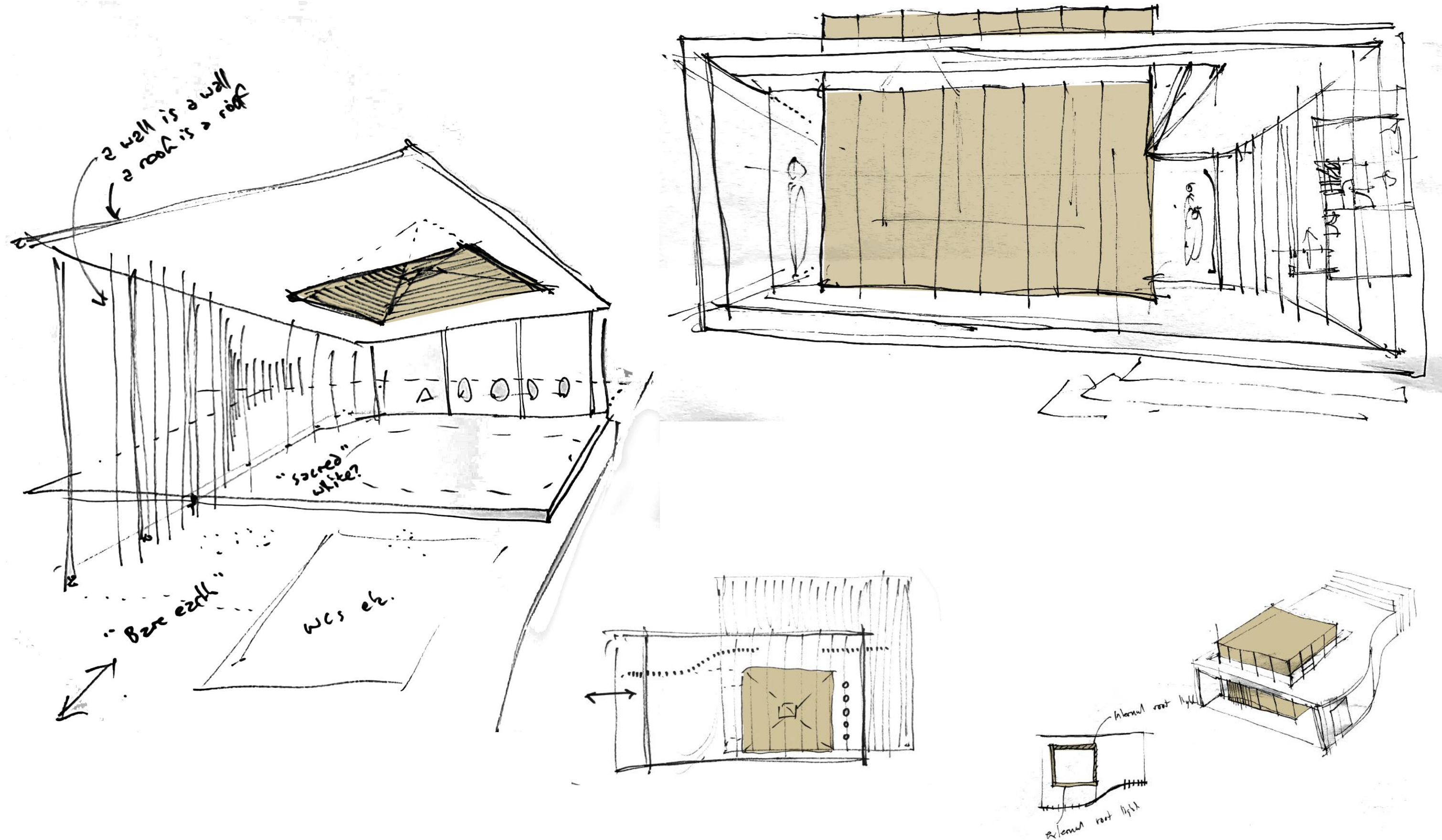


5 - Ancillary accommodation

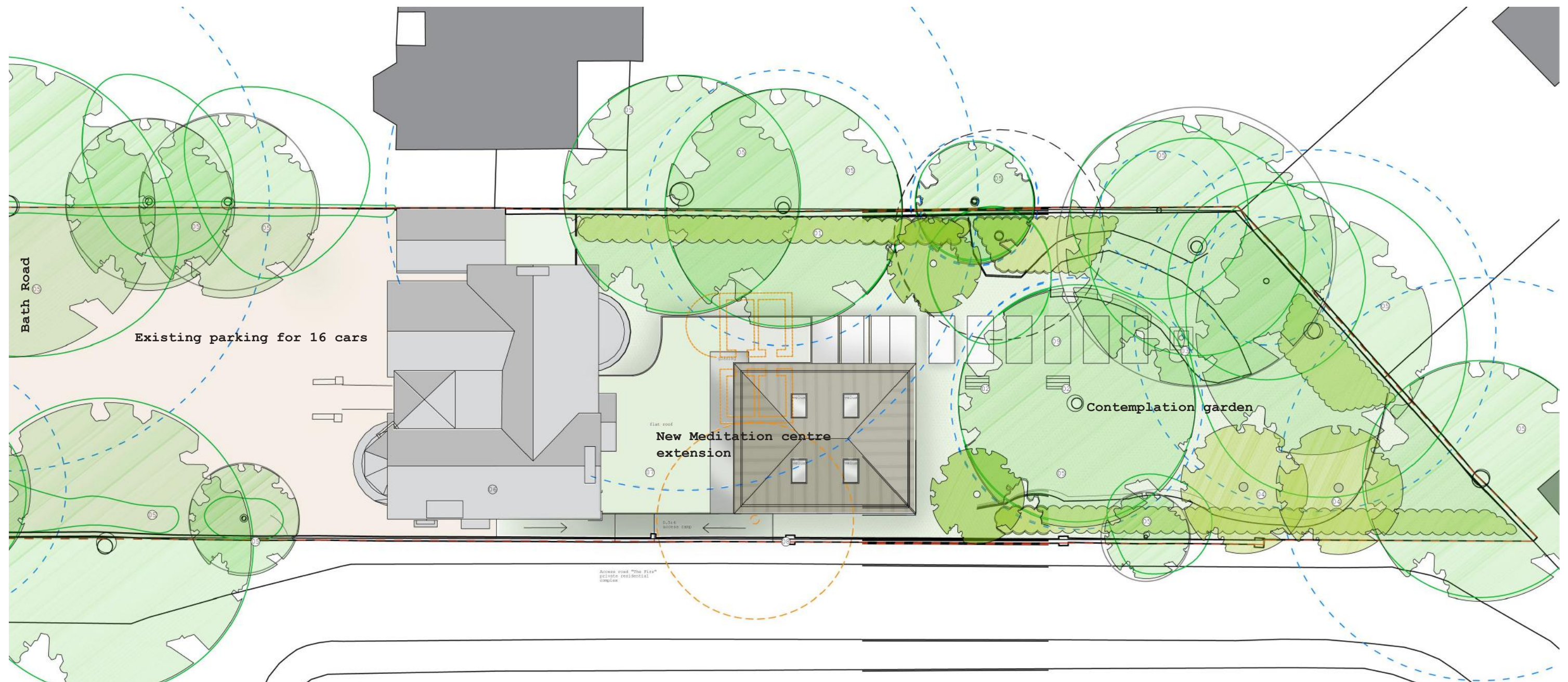


6 - Colonnade and cover

11 Design - concept development



12 Layout & access - site plan



Proposed site plan 1:200 @ A3

Access

- Access to the new centre is via the link to the existing building, all users will come from the Bath Road site entrance
- Garden access will be maintained along the western boundary for maintenance
- The western boundary access is sloped with a level threshold for wheelchair users

- The centre is served by 16 car parking spaces, which will be retained
- Existing cycle storage and refuse strategy will be retained

Layout

- The extension is positioned to the rear of the existing building, designed around the tree root

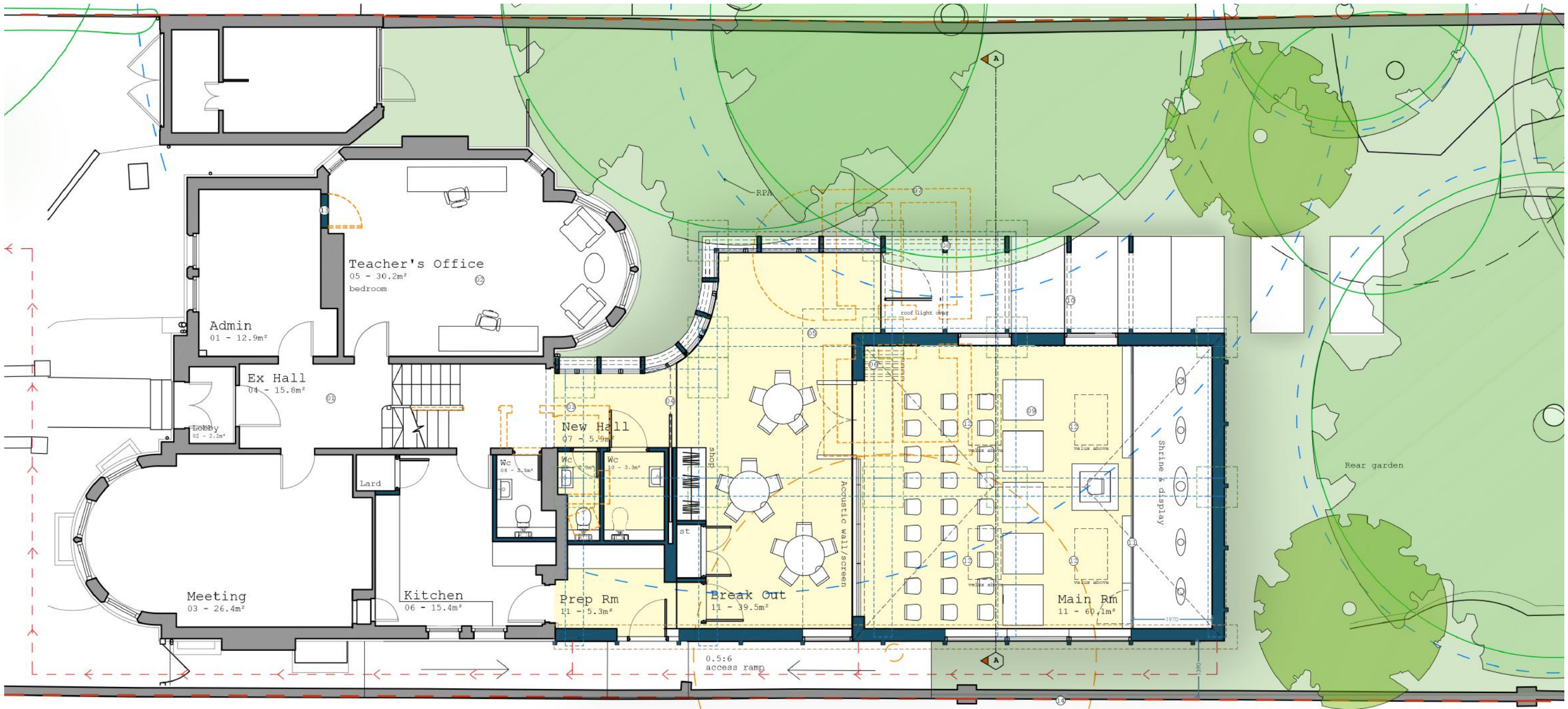
constraints

- The main body of the extension is set back from the existing building to allow the Bow window and features of the existing building to be appreciated
- The curved colonnade allows a direct link to the new contemplation garden to the rear which will be landscaped as part of the works.



Colonnade to garden, allowing access past the spiritual hub, the curved offset is a design foil to the existing bow window on the existing building

14 Amount & Use - Floor plan



Proposed floor plan 1:100 @ A3

Use & layout

- The proposed extension continues alters the ground floor accommodation, relocating the meditation room to the rear and converting the former meditation room into the teacher's office
- The corridor area is widened through the removal of a small part of the existing building
- Additional wc's, including the a disabled wc are positioned off the new corridor link
- The kitchen is retained in its current location and has a link through the new prep-room to the break-out

space

- The break-out space is where people gather before a session and refreshments are served
- For some events a removable wall to the main room can be demounted to offer user flexibility
- The curved wall allows a route past the main room, with a direct axis through the colonnade to the garden
- Total new build area - 119.9m²
- Total refurbishment - 105.4m²
- Total building ground floor - 225.3m²

Existing Accommodation

Room No.	Room Name	Size (m²)
01	Admin	12.9
02	Lobby	2.2
03	Meeting	26.4
04	Ex Hall	15.8
05	T. Office	30.2
06	Kitchen	15.4
08	Wc	2.5
Existing	Sub-total	105.4

Proposed Accommodation

Room No.	Room Name	Size (m²)
07	New Hall	5.9
09	Wc	2
10	Dis Wc	3.3
11	Prep Rm	5.2
05	Break Out	42.7
06	Main Room	60.8
Proposed	Sub-total	119.9
Building	Total	225.3

15 Appearance - elevation and materials



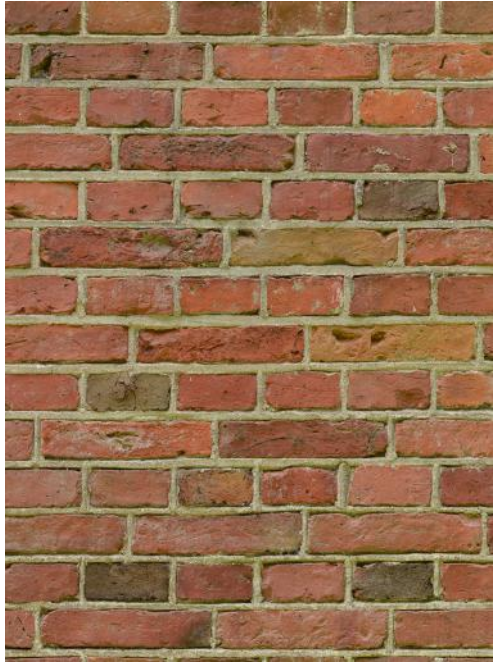
Proposed side (east) elevation 1:200



Proposed side (west) elevation 1:200



Proposed rear (south) elevation 1:200



red brick



Concrete frame

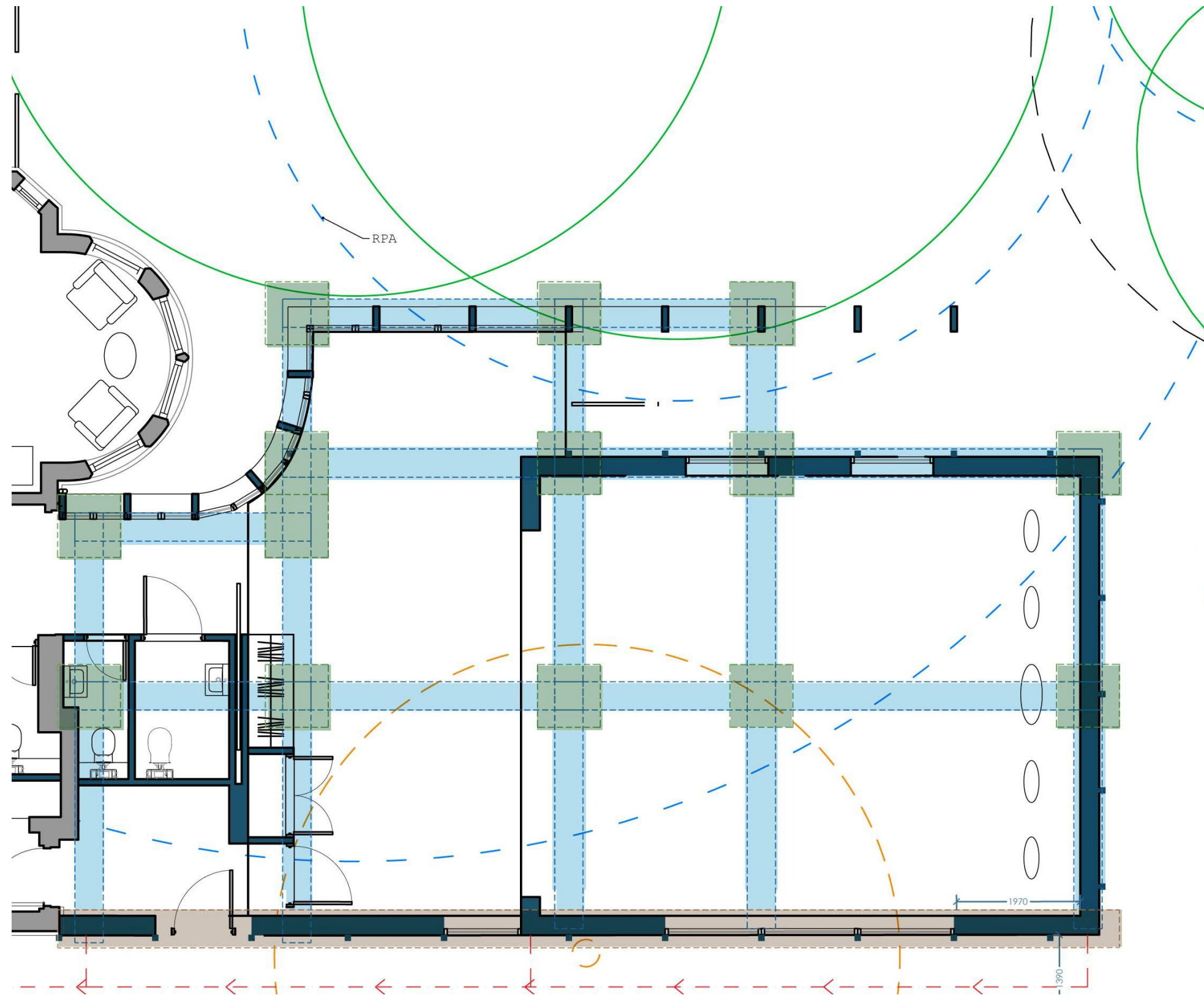


stone style finish Colonnade



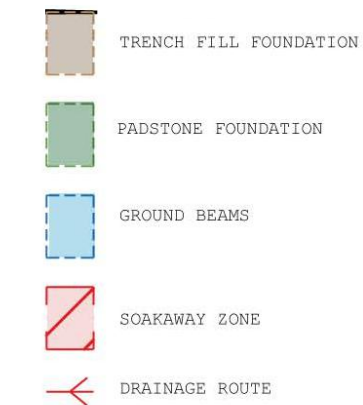
standing seam cladding

16 Tree sensitive design - ground work concept



Use Foundation and ground work principles

- Arboricultural survey in accordance with BS5837
- Early involvement with arboriculturist design input
- Floating slab over a series of beam and pad foundations to minimise new footings within RPA
- Edge nearest the trees cantilevered to reduce proximity of ground works
- New pad footings within the RPA to replace approximate area of removed structure and hardstanding
- Floating slab to allow increased water penetration to existing roots structures
- Pads close to RPA's (root protection area) to be hand dug
- Rainwater from the existing building will be routed to a new soakaway located within the car park area at the front of the property; this route has been positioned so that there is no impact on retained trees.
- Subject to Building Control (BC) approval and detailed design, rainwater from the roof of the proposed extension will be diverted into the ground beneath the underside of the floor (slab). However, if this is not deemed acceptable by BC, the water will be routed to the new soakaway as indicated on the TPP.



Proposed ground work plan - NTS

17 Garden view - spiritual hub



18 Garden view - west side access



19 Internal view - breakout and meditation space



20 Internal Space - glass link



21 Internal View - Break out



22 Garden view - colonnade link

