

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

WEST CHAZEY

A DESIGN STORY BY:
OUTSET **THINK**
ARCHITECTS

CONTENT

- INTRODUCTION
- CONTEXT
- PLANNING CONTEXT
- DESIGN PROCESS
- DESIGN RESPONSE
- LANDSCAPE DESIGN
- ACCESSIBILITY



1. INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This DAS document has been prepared to set out the Proposed Development at West Chazey, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7ED. The proposed development comprises a single-storey pool house, located within the private rear garden of the existing dwelling. The building will provide an indoor swimming pool, with associated gym and changing facilities. Its primary use is ancillary to the main house and intended for private domestic enjoyment.

This DAS is compliant with the Development Management Procedure (England) 2015, and the Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (PPG, Paragraph 031, reference ID 14-031-20140306). The DAS illustrates the design principles and concepts that underpin the application proposal and address the requirements set out in the PPG website 'Making an Application'. Specifically, responding to the PPG

requirements 'What should be included in a DAS', A Design and Access Statement must:

(a) explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development; and (b) demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the proposed development, and how the design of the development takes that context into account. A development's context refers to the particular characteristics of the application site and its wider setting. These will be specific to

the circumstances of an individual application and a Design and Access Statement should be tailored accordingly. Design and Access Statements must also explain the applicant's approach to access and

how relevant Local Plan policies have been taken into account. They must detail any consultation undertaken in relation to access issues, and how the outcome of this consultation has informed the proposed development. Applicants must also explain how any specific issues which might affect access to

the proposed development have been addressed.

This document is therefore structured in the following way in order to meet the requirements set out above:

Section 1.0 is a general description of the project.

In **Section 2.0**, we have set out our understanding of the context, assessing the site's immediate and wider context in terms of physical characteristics.

Section 3.0 outlines the relevant planning policy context.

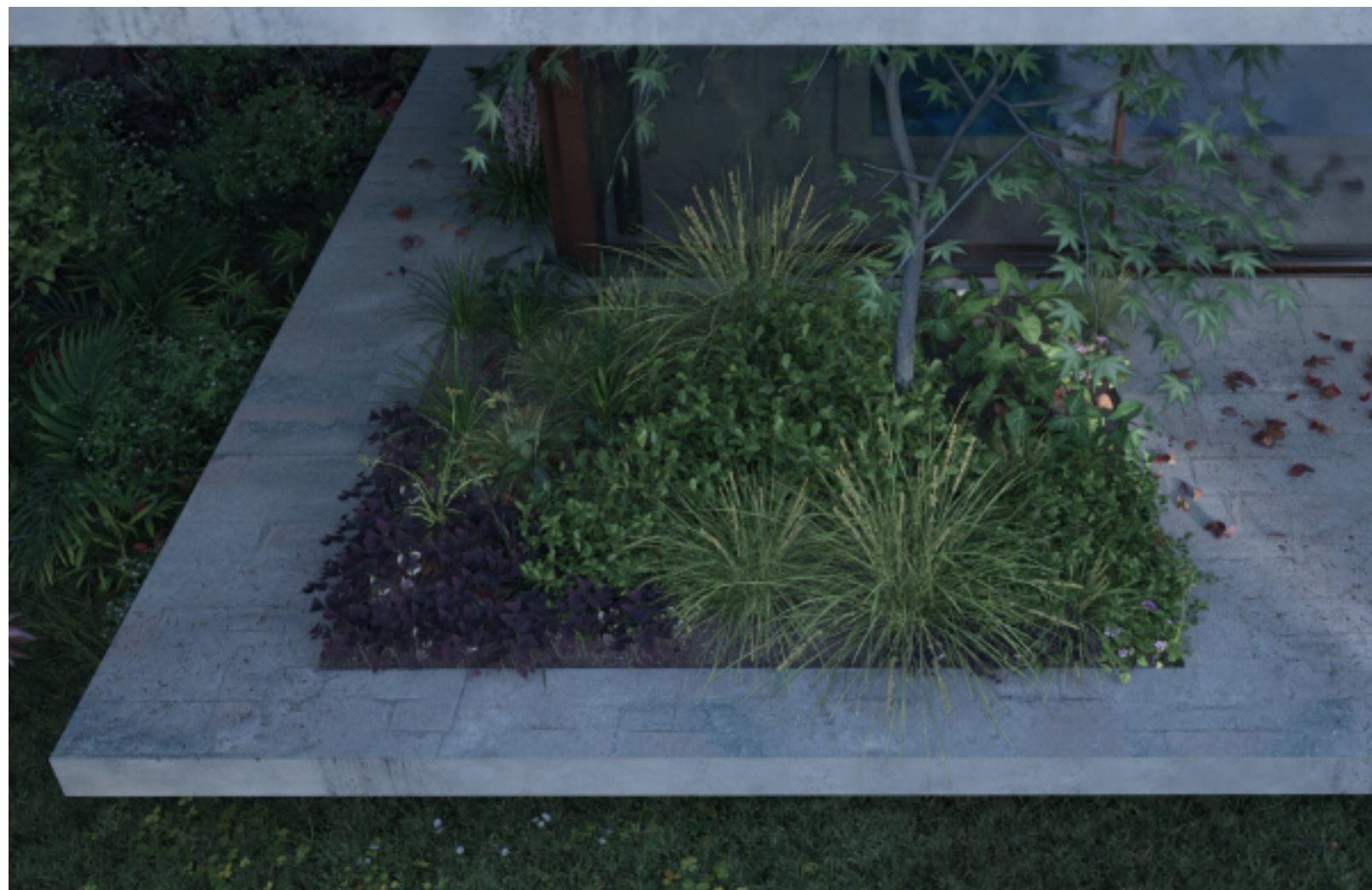
Outlined in **Section 4.0**, is the design evolution, which sets out the design constraints and opportunities, the conceptual approach and

explores a number of design options.

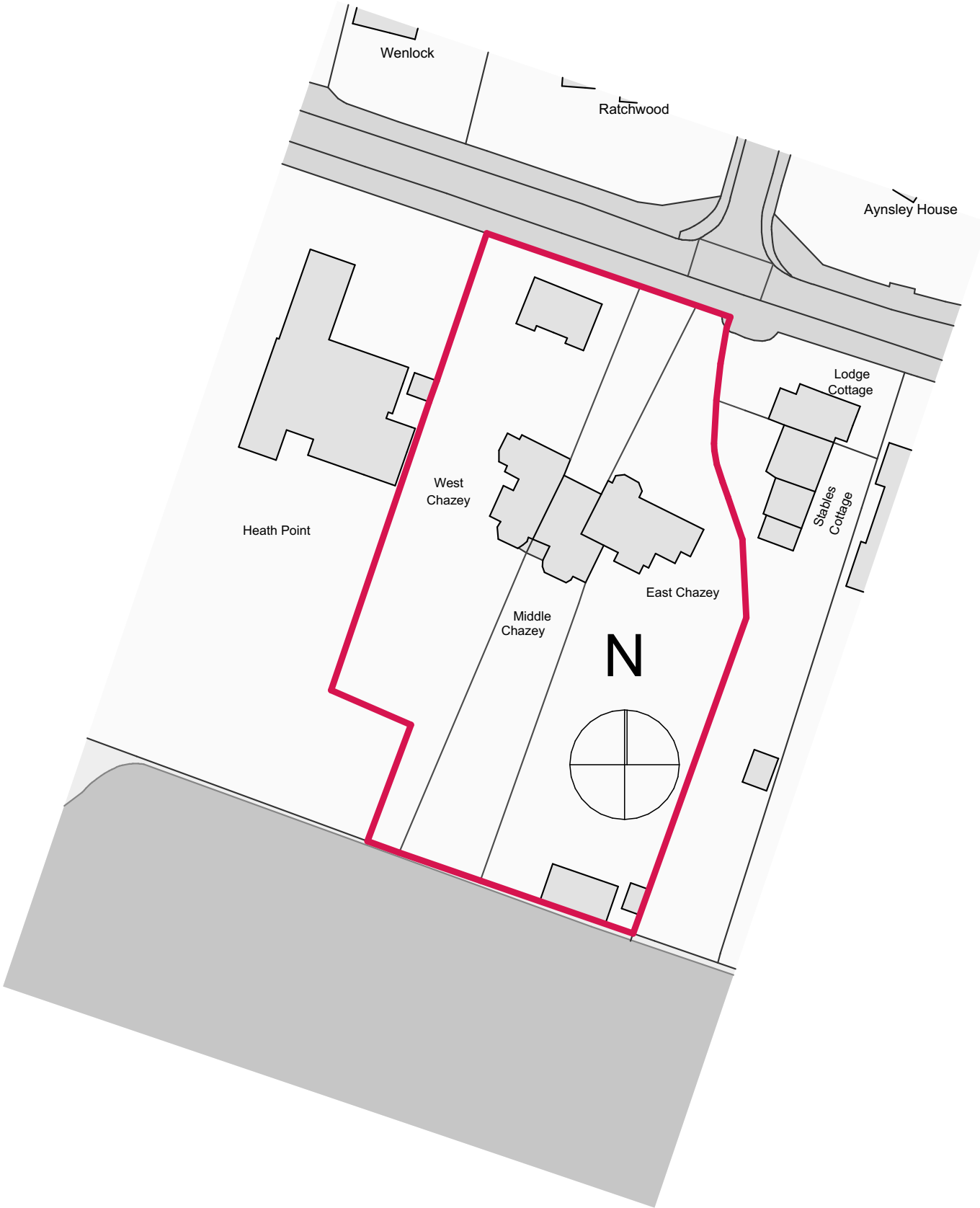
Section 5.0 details the design response, which is the subject of this detailed planning application. Here we describe the scheme under the Layout, Use, Amount, Scale, and Appearance sub-headings suggested in DCGL Circular and sets out some of the technical strategies of specific aspects of the design.

Landscaping is outlined in **Section 6.0**

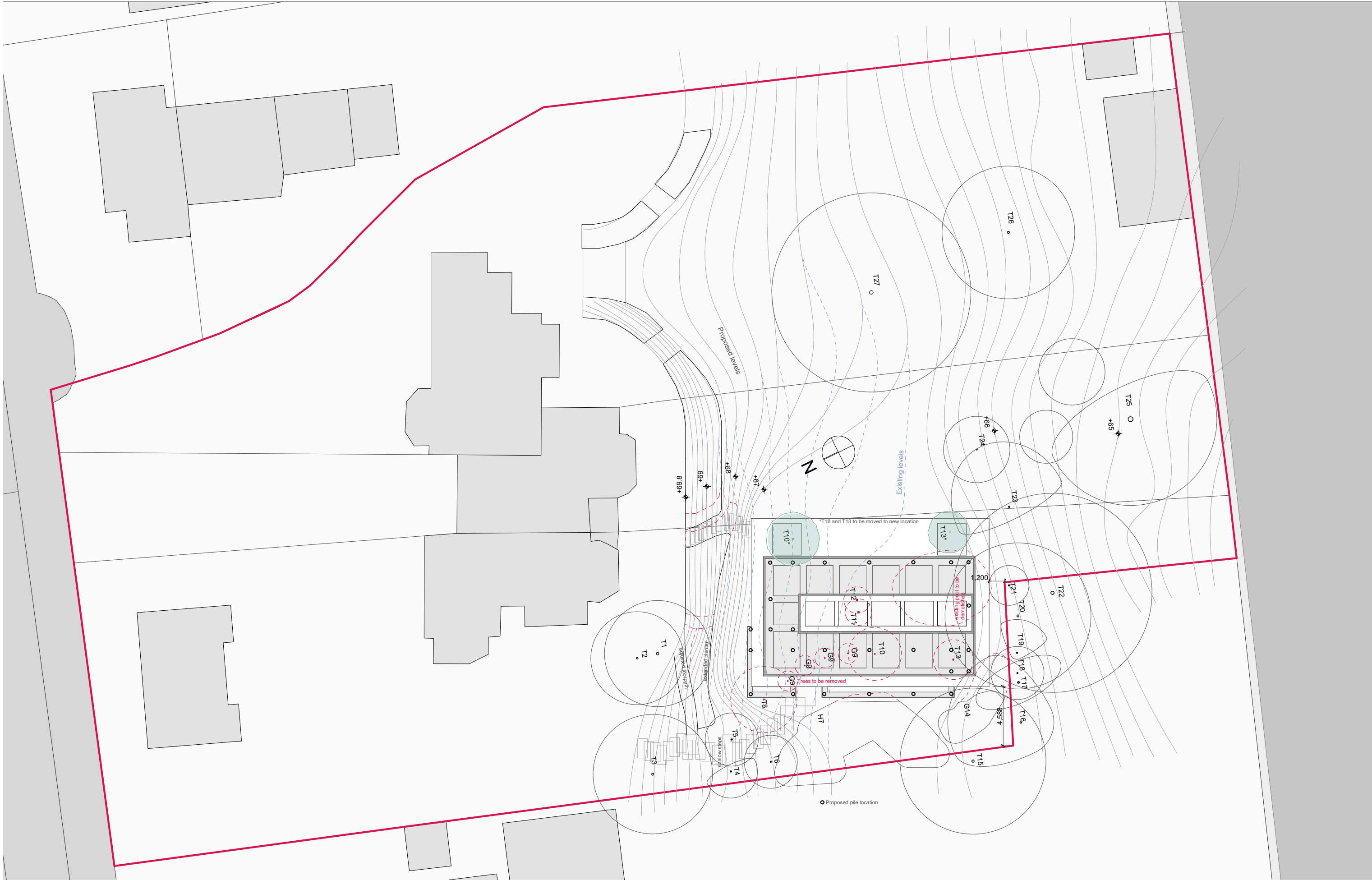
Section 7.0 sets out the accessibility aspects of the design. A suite of application documents support the application and this document should be read in conjunction with these reports.



2. CONTEXT



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SITE PLAN

SITE AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

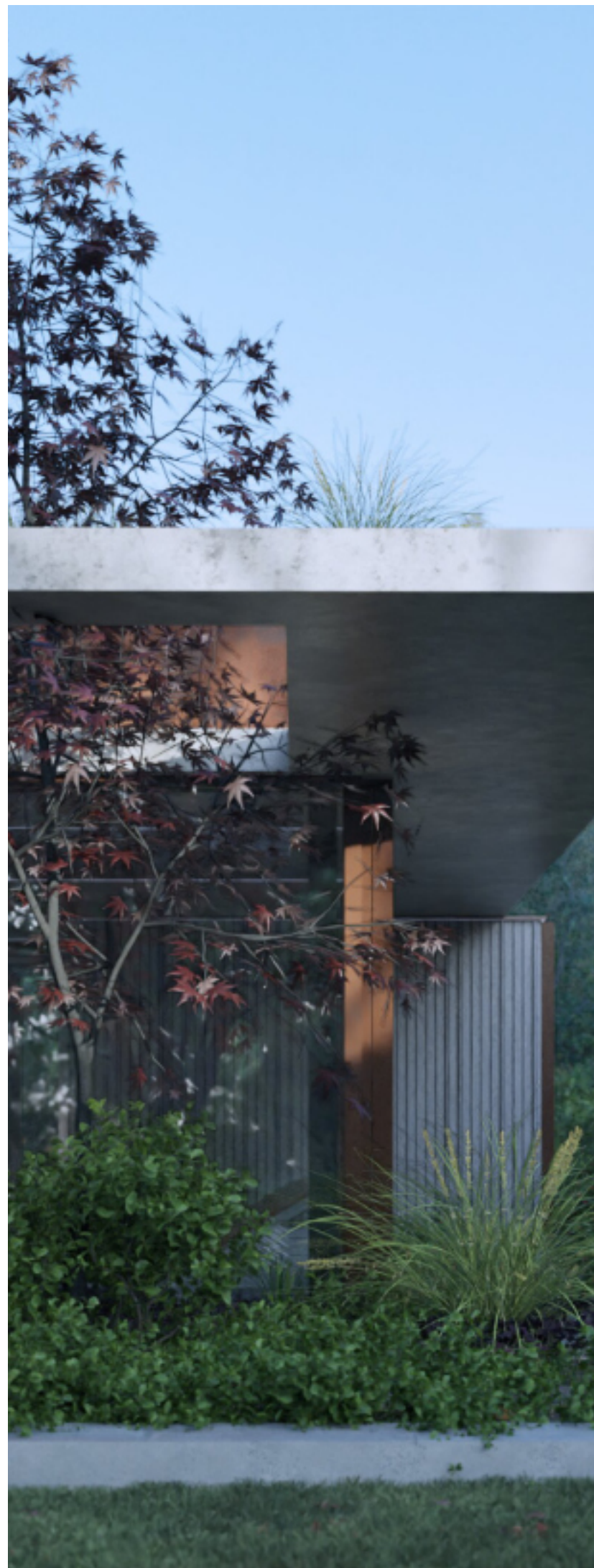
The application site is West Chazey, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7ED. It comprises a substantial detached dwelling set within generous landscaped gardens, typical of the high-quality residential character of this part of Caversham Heights. The property is positioned within a mature residential area defined by large period houses, tree-lined boundaries, and substantial private plots.

The host property is a late-Victorian/Edwardian villa of significant architectural quality, finished in red brick and render, with a pitched tiled roof and characteristic bay windows. The building is set back from the street frontage, with landscaped gardens to the front, and extensive rear gardens extending westward.

The rear garden is notable for its expansive lawn, mature trees, and landscaped terracing. A swimming pool is already present within the curtilage, positioned towards the northern edge of the garden, enclosed by established hedging and shrub planting that provides a high degree of screening from neighbouring properties. The wider area is residential in nature, characterised by low-density development, deep garden plots, and significant tree cover, which collectively contribute to a verdant suburban character. Properties along Upper Warren Avenue are generally screened from one another by mature boundary treatments, maintaining privacy and a sense of spaciousness.



3. PLANNING CONTEXT



PLANNING POLICY

The planning policy context in which the Proposed Development will be examined is as follows (the Development Plan):

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National Planning Policy Framework;

National Planning Policy Guidance;

PRBC Local Development Framework
Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015)
CS7 Design and the Public Realm
CS24 Car/Cycle Parking

ENV24

DESIGN GUIDE TO HOUSE EXTENSIONS SUPPLEMENTARY
PLANNING DOCUMENT Adopted, March 2021

CC3: Adaption to Climate Change

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

H9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

The Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-25

As well as the above, the following documents and the policies and guidance contained within these will also be material considerations:

The National Planning Policy Context (2019)

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG online 2019)

Sustainable Design and Construction 2011 SPD

4.DESIGN PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

The proposed development comprises a single-storey pool house, located within the private rear garden of the existing dwelling. The building will provide an indoor swimming pool, with associated gym and changing facilities. Its primary use is ancillary to the main house and intended for private domestic enjoyment.

The pool house represents a modest intervention within the overall curtilage of the site. The footprint occupies a small proportion of the substantial garden, leaving the majority of the plot as open landscaped amenity. The single-storey structure is deliberately restrained in scale, ensuring it remains subordinate to the existing dwelling.

The internal arrangement has been designed as a processional sequence, beginning at the main dwelling and leading discreetly through the garden to the pool house. Enclosed volumes for gym and facilities are located to the edges of the plan, framing the central glazed pool hall. This creates a layered spatial composition, with movement guided along the pool length and outward toward framed garden views.

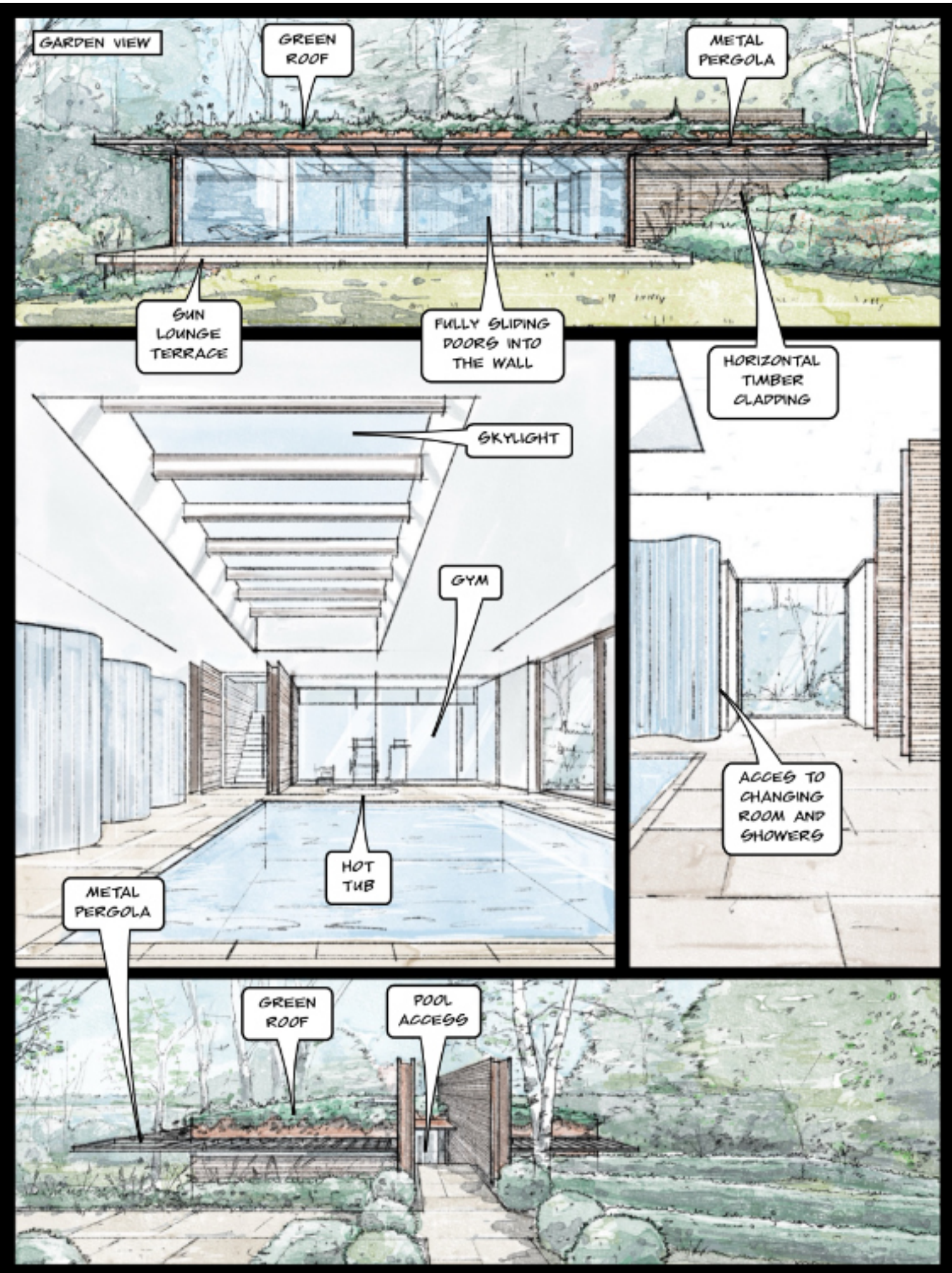
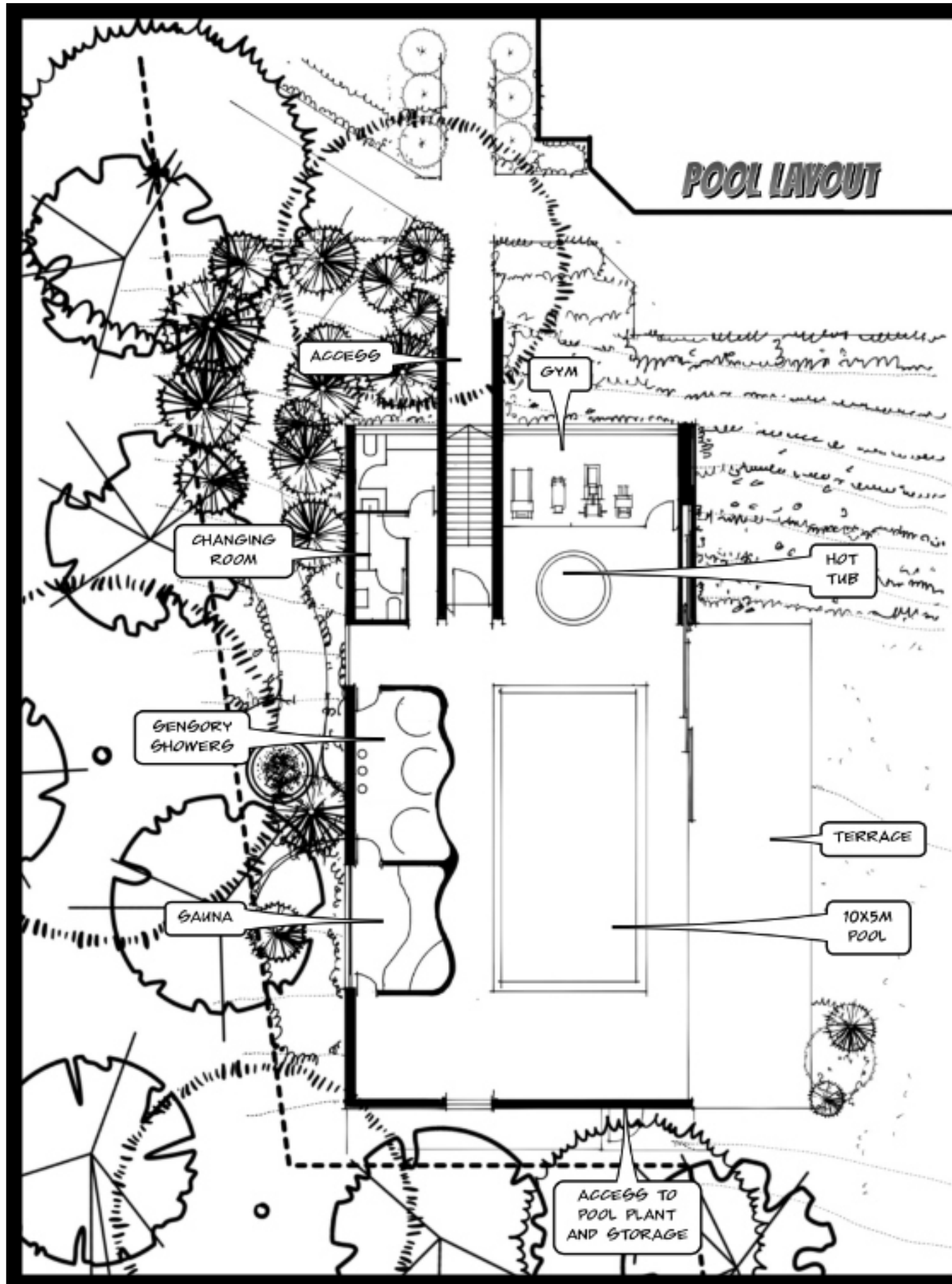
The building is a single-storey pavilion, set into the natural topography of the site. By utilising the drop in garden level, the green roof aligns visually with the landscaped areas adjacent to the house, effectively reading as an extension of the garden.

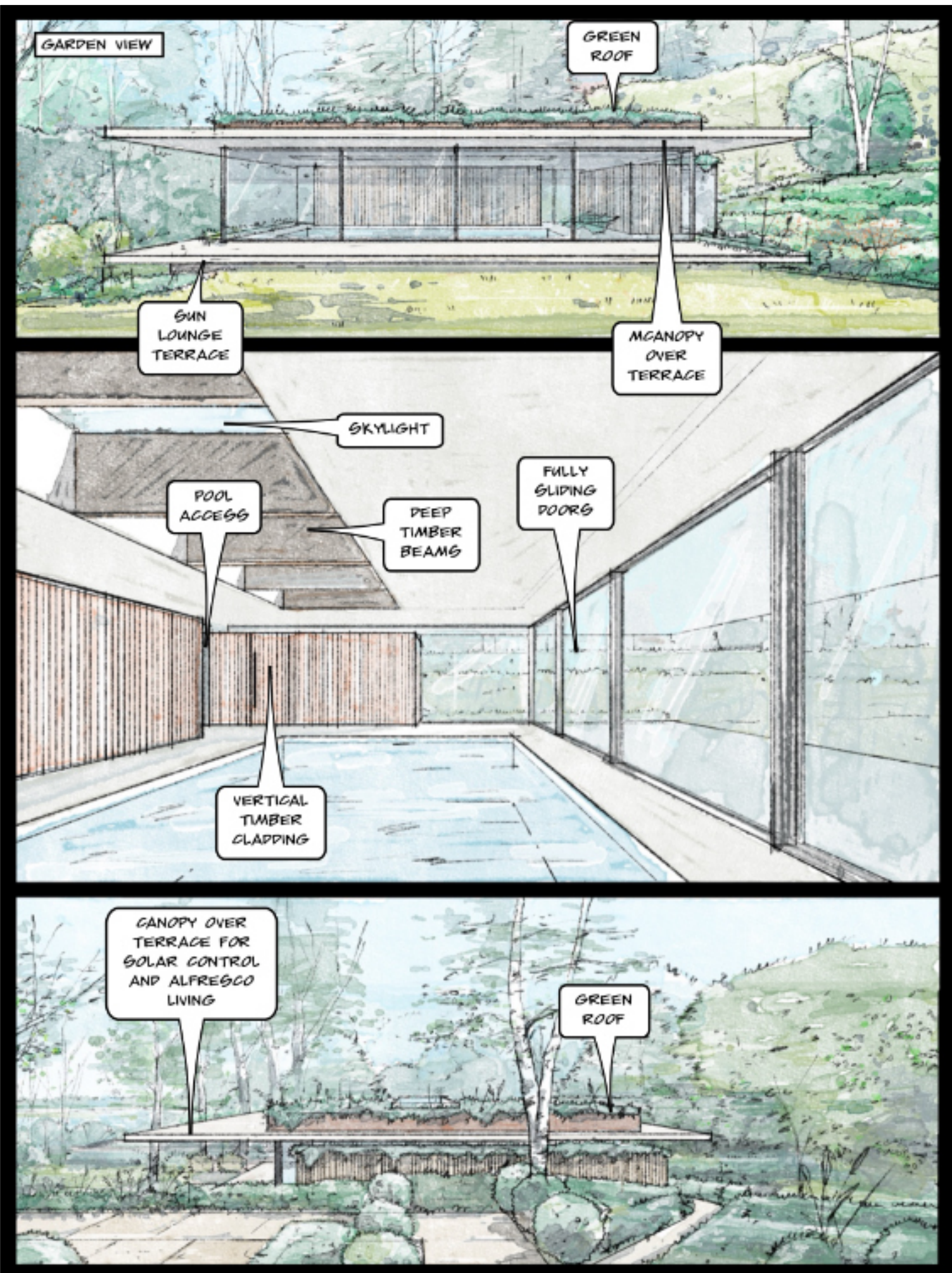
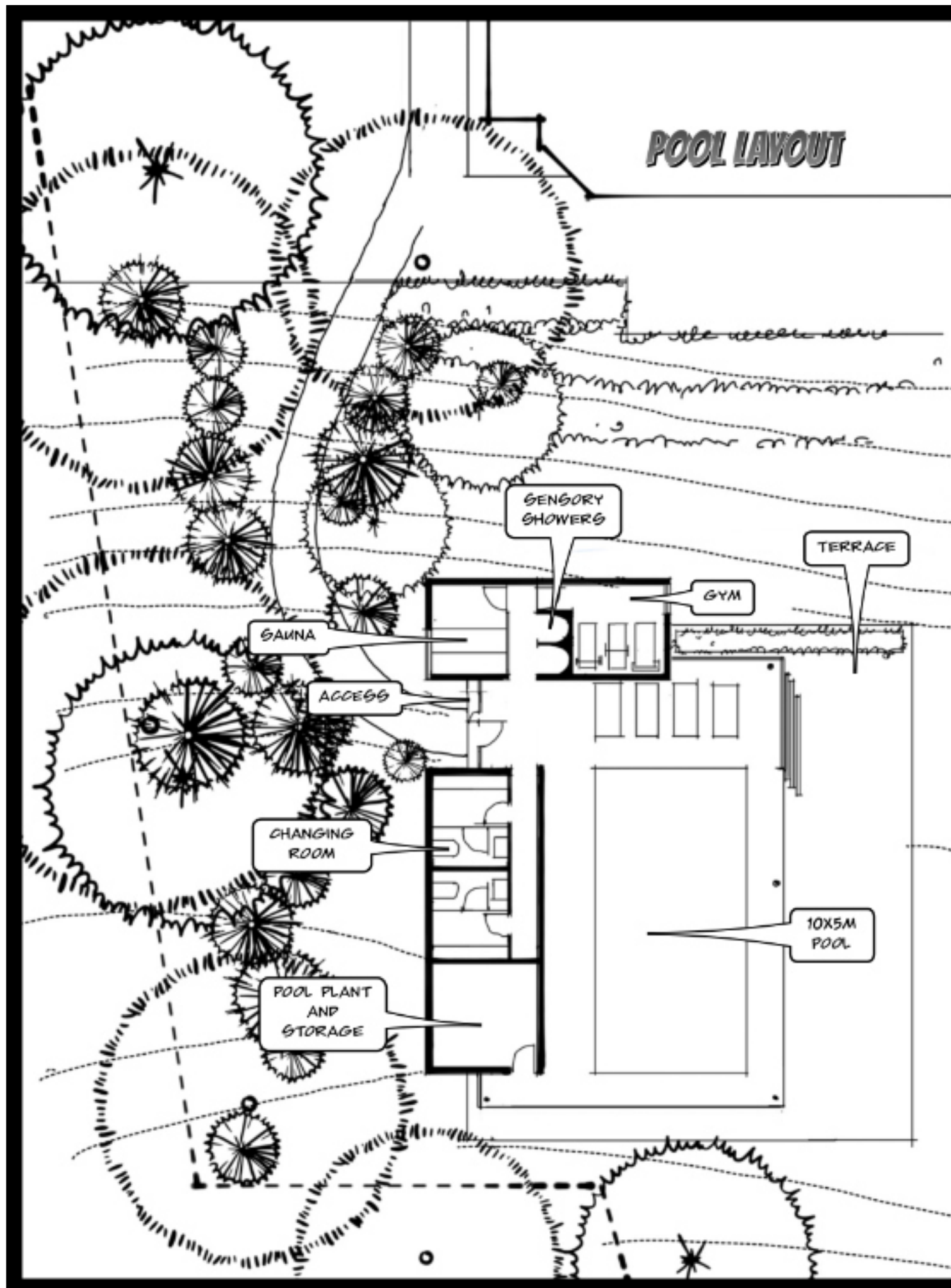


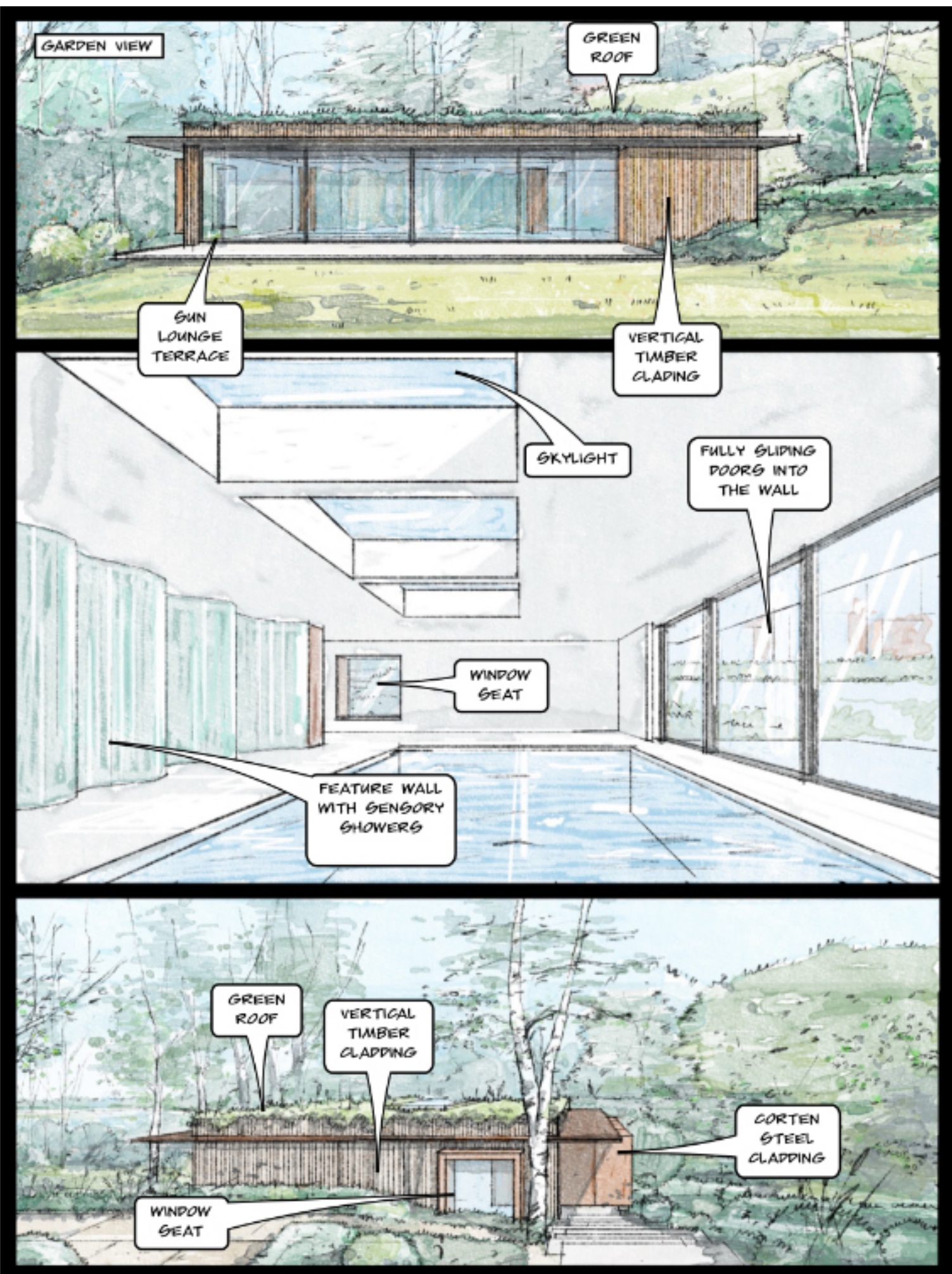
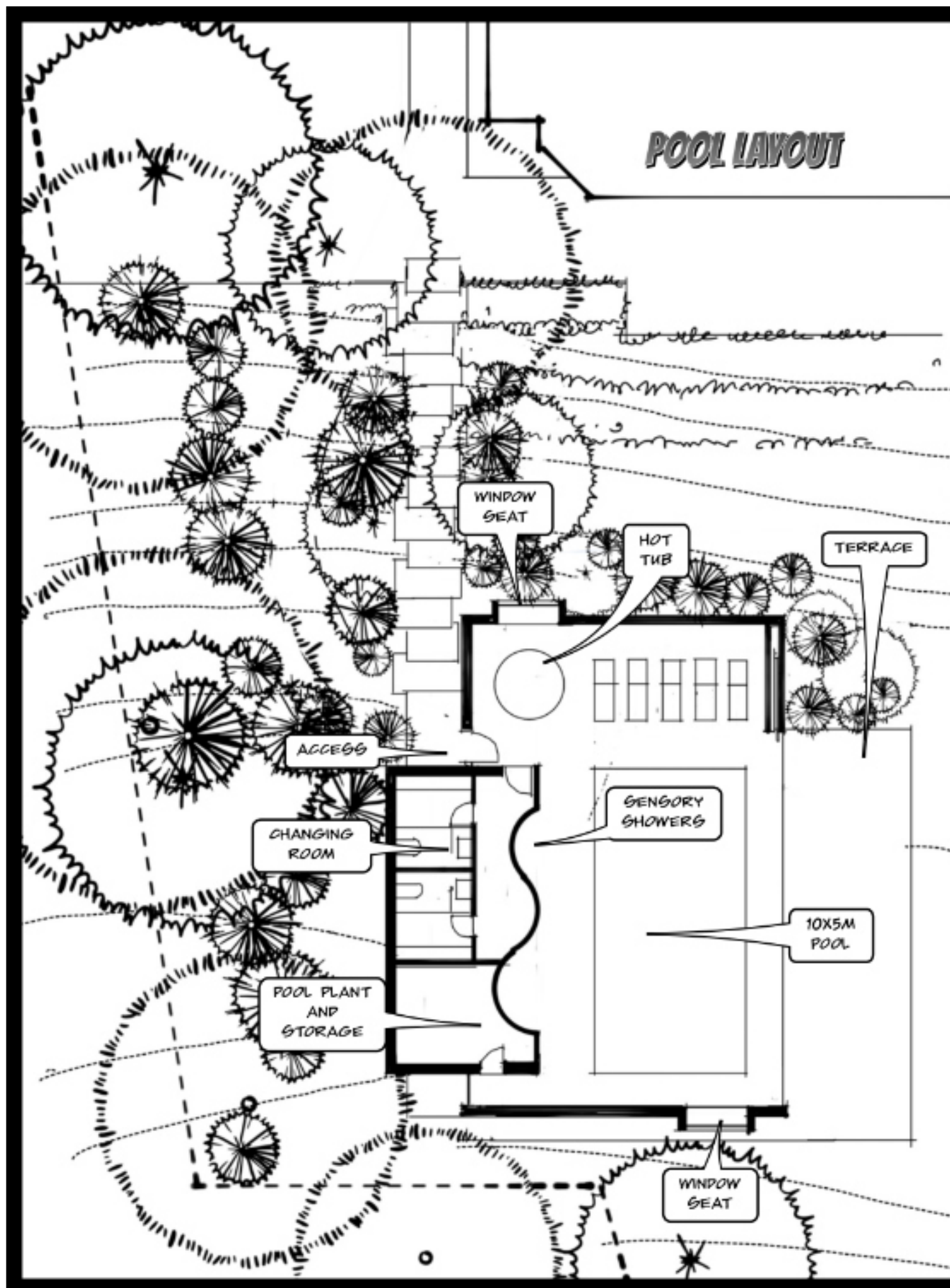
DESIGN EVOLUTION

INITIAL SKETCH DESIGN OPTIONS









5. DESIGN RESPONSE

CONCEPT

SITE CONTEXT AND DESIGN RATIONALE:

The proposed pool house is located within a generously landscaped private garden, benefiting from mature planting, a pronounced change in ground level, and a secluded rear aspect. The design intention is to create a structure that is recessive in character, carefully integrated into the landscape rather than one that competes with the existing dwelling or surrounding environment.

The pool house adopts a restrained architectural language: a single-storey, low-lying composition of glass and concrete with a flat, planted roof. The horizontal emphasis and slender form echo the natural topography of the site, ensuring the building sits comfortably within the garden setting. From a distance the massing recedes visually, with the green roof merging into the surrounding soft landscaping.

ARCHITECTURAL AND SPATIAL QUALITIES:

The pool house has been conceived as part of a wider garden sequence, experienced as a progression from the main dwelling, through the formal garden, and into a more contemplative retreat. Access is deliberately indirect, reinforcing a sense of journey and discovery. The plan arranges enclosed ancillary volumes (housing gym and facilities) at the periphery, leaving the central glazed pool hall as an open, light-filled zone.

Floor-to-ceiling glazing establishes a continuous dialogue with the surrounding landscape, effectively drawing the garden into the architecture. A continuous roof light and subtle integrated lighting reinforce the spatial rhythm and orientation, while reflections across the water animate the interior environment throughout the day.

SCALE, MASSING AND RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING DWELLING:

The proposed pool house is subordinate in both scale and prominence to the existing dwelling. Set below the garden level of the house, its roofscape is effectively an elevated garden, maintaining the continuity of the landscaped



setting. The modest single-storey height ensures that the development does not compete visually with the existing dwelling, and its low profile reduces its perceived mass.

IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY:

The proposal sits entirely within the rear curtilage of the site and respects all boundary offsets, maintaining a minimum separation of 1.2 metres. Given its single-storey nature and recessed position, there will be no issues of overlooking, overshadowing, or overbearing impact on neighbouring properties. The orientation ensures that the outlook from adjacent dwellings remains unaffected.

LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRATION

The pool house has been designed as a landscape-led intervention. The extensive green roof provides biodiversity value, reduces surface water run-off, and contributes to the thermal efficiency of the structure. Existing planting and new planters are integrated into the architecture, with trees passing through carefully placed openings in the roof canopy. Collectively, these measures ensure that the proposal enhances the site's ecological value and reinforces its garden character.

OUTDOOR AMENITY:

The pool house footprint represents a very small percentage of the overall plot. Its design, with a roof that

reads as an extension of the garden, ensures that usable amenity space is preserved and enhanced. Far from reducing garden provision, the proposal elevates the quality of the outdoor environment by creating an amenity that complements and strengthens the landscaped setting.

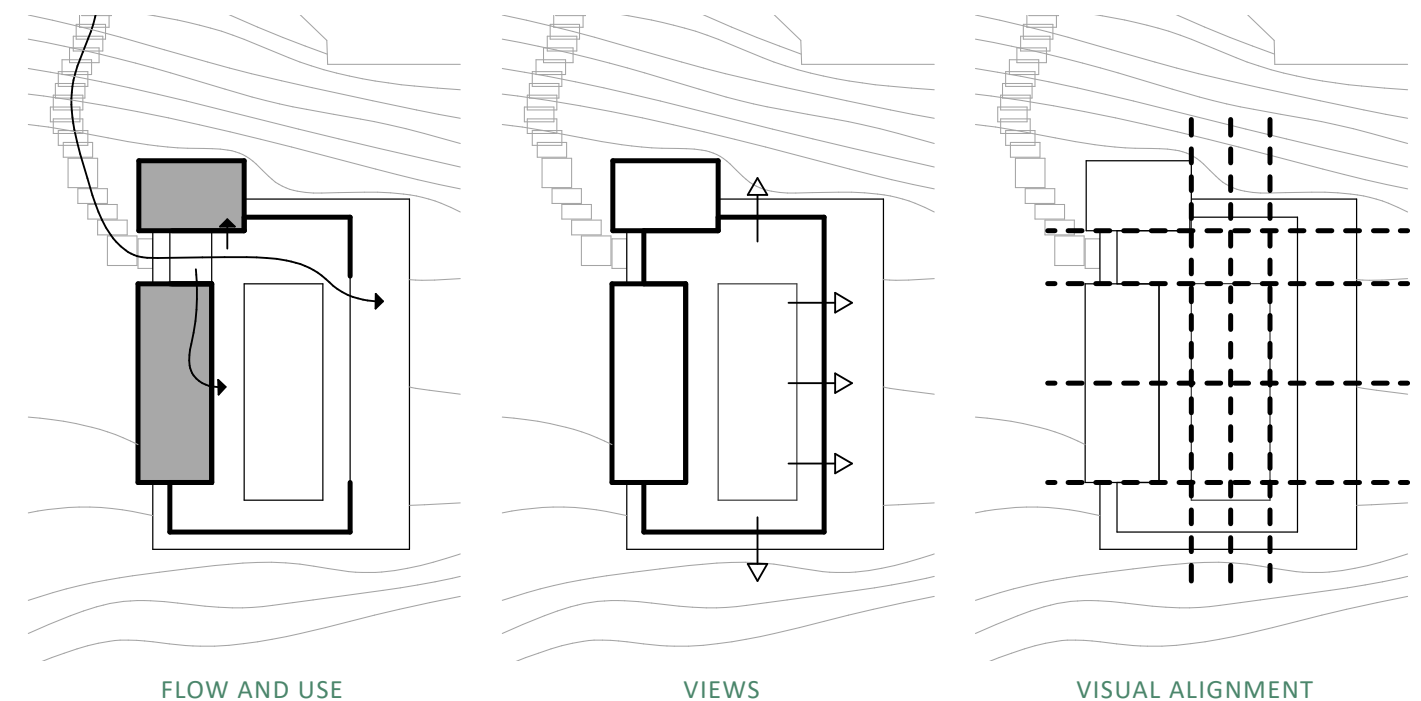
SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Sustainability is embedded within the design approach. The green roof improves insulation and habitat creation, while passive ventilation and extensive glazing reduce reliance on artificial lighting and mechanical systems. The restrained palette of natural materials—glass, concrete, and timber—ensures durability, low maintenance, and a strong contextual response.

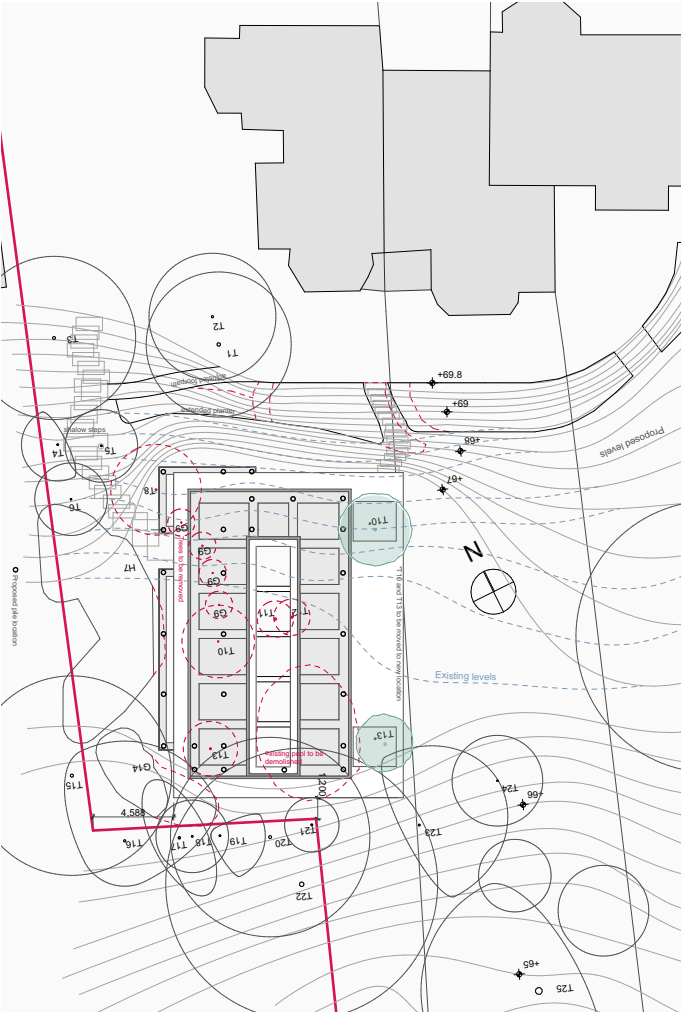
The development enhances the street scene through high-quality design. The existing street scene consists of a variety of designs with extensions of mediocre designs.

CONCLUSION

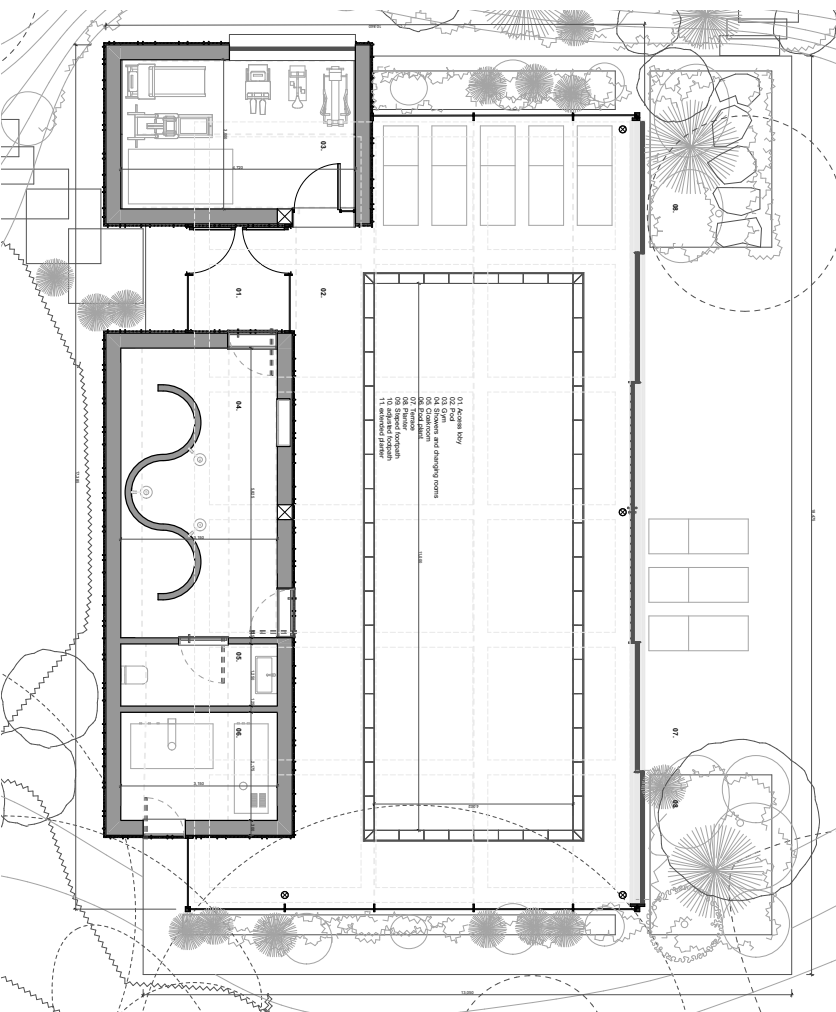
The proposed pool house is a modest, carefully considered addition to the site, fully integrated with the topography and landscape. Its design ensures subordination to the main dwelling, protection of neighbouring amenity, and enhancement of the natural environment. The proposal represents sustainable, high-quality architecture that contributes positively to the site's character and offers a unique opportunity to enrich the use and enjoyment of the garden without adverse impact.



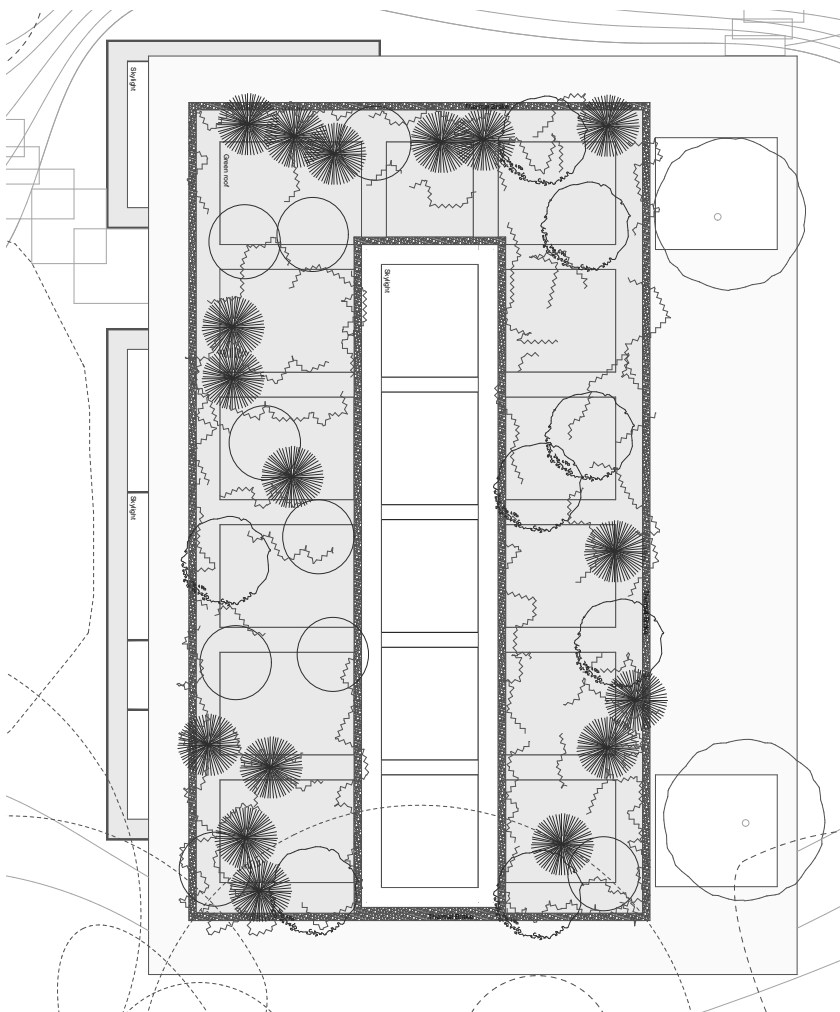
A JOURNEY THROUGH LIGHT AND LANDSCAPE



SITE PLAN

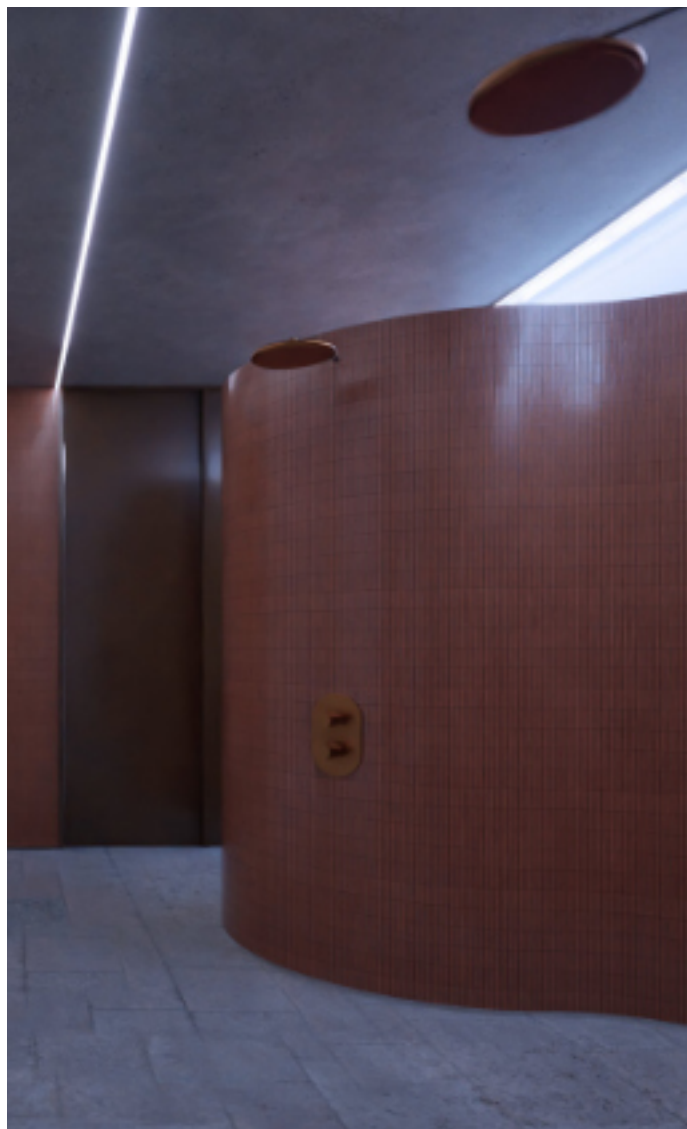


PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN



PROPOSED ROOF PLAN





6. LANDSCAPE DESIGN

STRATEGY:

INTEGRATION WITH TOPOGRAPHY

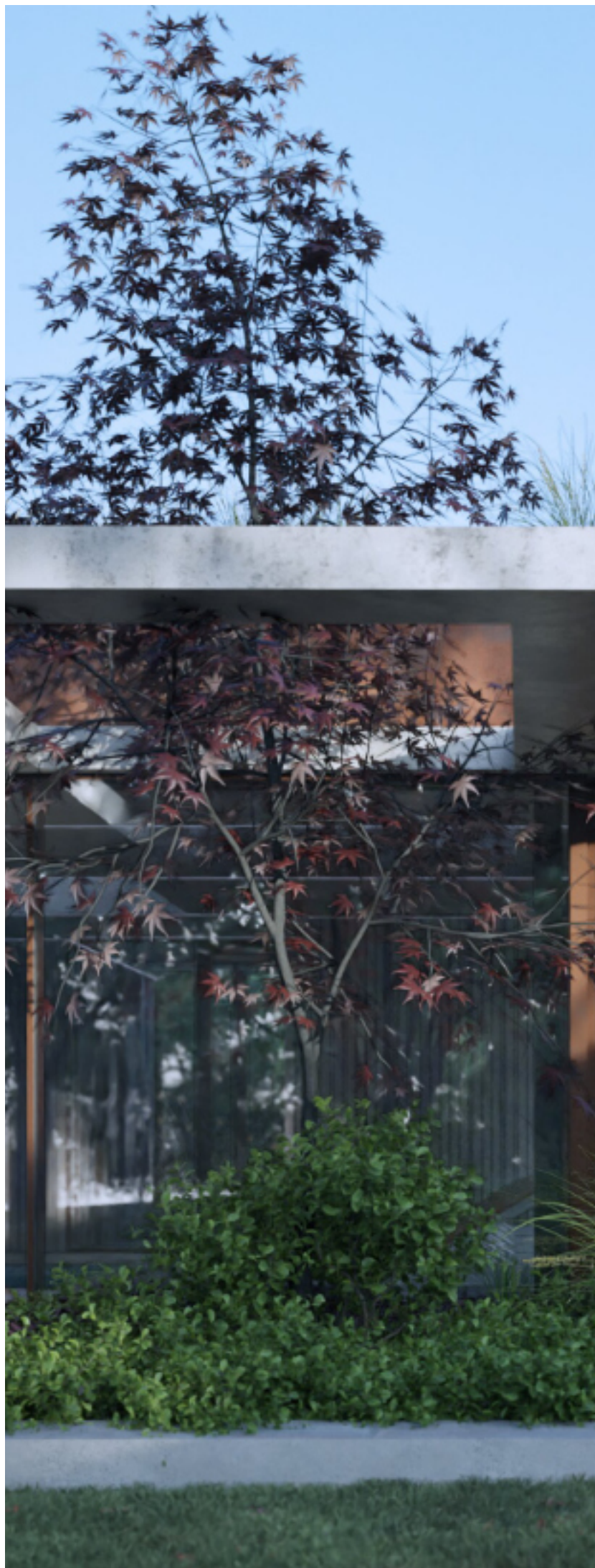
The building is positioned within a natural drop in the site levels, accessed via a stepped route that weaves through dense planting. The approach sequence has been carefully designed to feel immersive, with planting spilling across the path and trees rising through openings in the stair and canopy. These measures blur the distinction between built and natural elements.

GREEN ROOF

The roof is conceived as an elevated garden, extensively planted with a mix of native grasses, ground-cover, and seasonal species. This provides biodiversity value, habitat creation, and improved storm-water management, while visually extending the existing garden across the building form. From upper garden levels, the pool house roof reads as a continuation of the landscape, minimising visual impact.

CANOPY PLANTING AND TREES

Trees are allowed to pass through the architecture itself, rising through carefully designed apertures in the roof slab. This strategy ensures continuity of the vertical landscape, reduces the sense of interruption, and visually anchors the structure within its garden setting.



PLANTED THRESHOLDS

At ground level, planters are integrated into the terraces, with soft landscaping spilling onto stone surfaces. These planted thresholds create a natural transition between inside and outside. The use of shrubs, ornamental grasses, and climbers softens the geometry of the concrete and glazing, creating an environment that is visually rich and seasonally dynamic.

MATERIAL AND PLANT PALETTE

The landscaping palette combines natural stone, timber, and concrete with layers of perennial planting. The species selection is designed to reflect the existing character of the garden: ornamental maples, native shrubs, and low-maintenance ground covers provide a textured and layered effect.

VISUAL IMPACT AND AMENITY

The landscape-led approach ensures that the pool house does not appear as a conventional outbuilding but as part of the garden itself. The extensive greening measures mean that from most viewpoints, the structure dissolves into its surroundings, offering minimal visual intrusion. The result is an enhancement of the overall garden experience, with new sequences of movement, framed views, and spaces for quiet retreat.

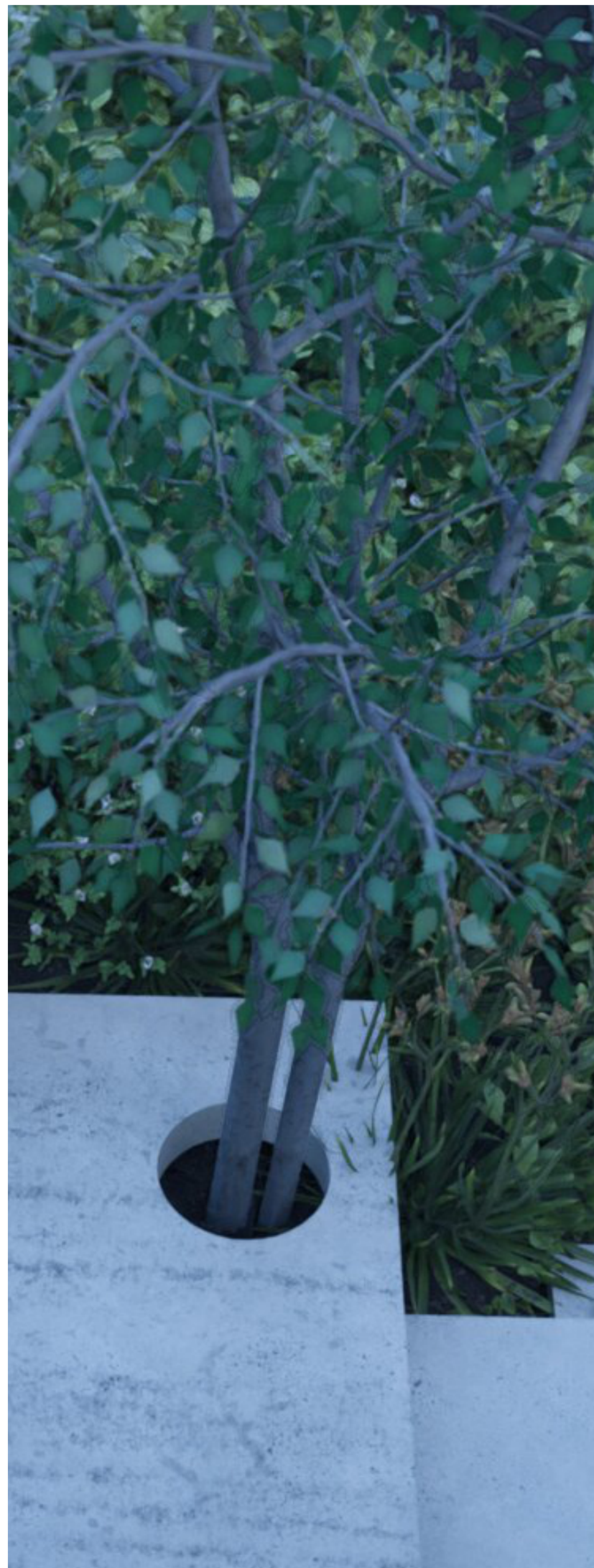
FOUNDATIONS AND TREE STRATEGY

To safeguard the existing garden environment, the pool house will be constructed using piled foundations, minimising excavation and disturbance to surrounding root zones. This approach ensures that the development integrates sensitively with the existing landscape. As part of the scheme, trees T10 and T13 will be carefully relocated into integrated planters within the pool house terrace. This strategy not only preserves these specimens but also reinforces the design intent of blending architecture and landscape, allowing trees to form a vertical continuity through and around the building.





7.ACCESSIBILITY



INTRODUCTION

Attached to this DAS are the additional documents and plans. This DAS to be red in conjunction with all drawings and the prepared documents.

climate resilience objectives of the NPPF (paras 152–158).

Overall, the proposal represents sustainable, landscaped architecture that enhances the enjoyment of the dwelling's garden while protecting the character of the area and the amenity of neighbours. It is wholly consistent with the NPPF and with the key policies of the Reading Borough Local Plan, and it therefore merits full planning approval.

PARKING

The proposal will not alter existing parking arrangements on the site. All off-street parking associated with the main dwelling will be retained, and no additional parking demand will be generated as the pool house is an ancillary facility for private domestic use. The scheme is therefore fully consistent with Policy TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway-related Matters) and Policy TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) of the Reading Borough Local Plan, which require developments to provide safe access and to ensure that parking provision remains appropriate for the scale and use of the site.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed pool house represents a modest, high-quality addition to the site that is fully consistent with the principles of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

The building is designed to be clearly subordinate to the host dwelling, set below garden level, and fully contained within the private curtilage. Its low, single-storey form, green roof, and integration with planting ensure that it reads as part of the wider garden landscape rather than an intrusive new structure. This approach is directly in accordance with Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm), which requires development to respect and respond positively to the character of the site and surrounding area.

Neighbouring amenity is safeguarded: the proposal will not result in overlooking, overshadowing, or overbearing impacts due to its discreet siting and recessive profile. This complies with Policy H9 (Residential Conversions, Extensions and Ancillary Residential Accommodation) and the amenity safeguards within Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity).

The project embeds sustainability within its design. The green roof contributes to biodiversity, provides improved insulation, and enhances surface water management. Generous natural daylighting and passive ventilation reduce reliance on artificial systems, aligning with Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) and Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network), as well as the