

Merton Priory Chapter House Design and Access Statement

1041_D031C_Design and Access Statement
05/01/2015

Date	Revision	Amendments	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
23.01.2015	DRAFT	First Draft issue for comment	SK	AY	TG
10.02.2015	-	Client and English Heritage comments incorporated into the document	SK	AY	TG
11.02.2015	A	Amendments to the rendered elevations	SK	AY	TG
24.02.2015	B	Issued for SMC	SK	AY	TG
24.02.2015	C	Issued for Planning (area of extension revised)	SK	AY	TG

1.0	Introduction	p.4	5.0	Further Information	p.32
1.1	Project summary	p.4	5.1	Access	p.32
1.2	Project details	p.4	5.2	Arboricultural	p.32
1.3	Aims and objectives	p.5	5.3	Heritage and Conservation	p.32
1.4	OS Map	p.5	5.4	Sustainability	p.33
			5.5	Lighting	p.33
2.0	Existing context	p.6	5.6	Security	p.33
2.1	Aerial photographs	p.6	5.7	Existing Drainage	p.33
2.2	Merton Priory Site History	p.7	5.8	Flood Risk Assessment	p.33
2.3	Chapter House History	p.7	5.9	Ecology & Bio-Diversity	p.33
2.4	Existing Enclosure	p.8			
2.5	Site Photographs	p.9	6.0	Advice and Consultations	p.34
			6.1	Stakeholder Consultations	p.34
3.0	Design Process	p.12	6.2	Public Consultations	p.34
3.1	Stage 1: Brief Analysis	p.12	6.3	English Heritage	p.35
3.2	Conservation Policies	p.12	6.4	Transport for London	p.36
3.3	Stage 2: Initial Design Response	p.14	6.5	National Grid	p.37
3.4	Stage 3: Design Development	p.16			
3.5	Stage 4: Phasing	p.20	7.0	Appendices	p.39
3.6	Stage 5: Design Review Panel	p.22	A	Design Review Panel Information	
3.7	Stage 6: Development of Extension	p.24	B	Existing Drainage Survey	
			C	Archaeological Trial Excavations	
4.0	Proposed Scheme - Design	p.26			
4.1	Amount: Existing and Proposed	p.26			
4.2	Scale: Massing	p.27			
4.3	Layout: Proposed Plans	p.28			
4.4	Layout: Landscape	p.28			
4.5	Layout: Archaeology	p.29			
4.6	Appearance: Elevations	p.30			
4.7	Appearance: Visualisations	p.31			

1.1 Project summary

This application for the extension to the Merton Priory Chapter House Visitors Centre under Merantun Way serves to describe the proposed design process and site analysis which lead to this proposal.

The proposed development involves the demolition of the south wall of the enclosure under the road bridge and construction of a new single storey extension (70m2). This application covers Phase 1 of a greater vision for the site. The proposal for the chapter house chamber seeks simplicity, elegance and intrigue in it’s design. The design is informed by the historical layout of the Priory; new build elements follow the line of archaeology and attempt to reinterpret the spirit of the original Priory buildings. The use of prefabricated lightweight elements will minimise disruption of the historical remains and provide glimpses of the archaeology and exhibition within; enticing visitors to explore the Chapter House chamber and discover the significance of the original Priory.

New facilities and amenities will be provided to improve visitor comfort whilst increasing the potential for the Chapter House to be made available for events, functions and performances. The project attempts to re-establish the Priory remains as a priceless piece of community heritage; providing a unique insight into a noble past.

This Design and Access statement analyses the existing site issues and aims to provide responses to these issues.

This information has been prepared by Haverstock, who have been appointed by The London Borough of Merton and The Merton Priory Trust. Haverstock are the project architect and lead consultant for the project.

1.2 Project details

Site Address

Merton Priory Chapter House
Merton Abbey Mills
Merantun Way
SW19 2RD

Proposal

Provision of a new extension to the south of the Merantun Way Road Bridge to improve the internal exhibition design and inclusion of a visitor cafe. This application covers Phase 1 of a greater vision for the site.

Client:

London Borough of Merton	The Merton Priory Trust
Civic Centre	Watermill Way
London Road	London
London	SW19 2RD
SM4 5DX	

Agent:

Haverstock
Studio 10, Cliff Road Studios
Cliff Road
London
NW1 9AN

Tel. 020 7267 7676
Fax. 020 7267 5020



Aerial view of site

1.3 Aims & objectives

1.3.1 Project aims

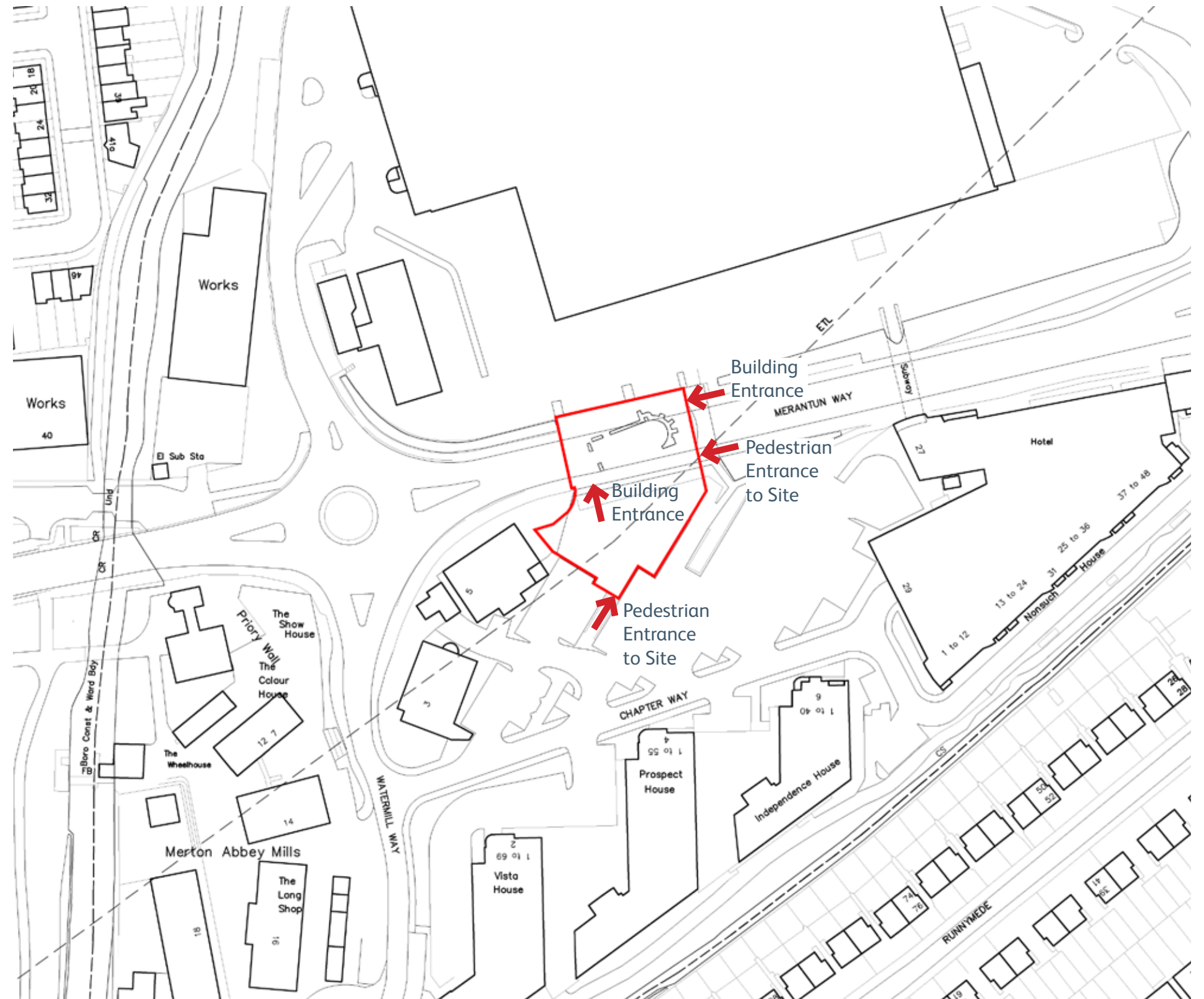
The overall aim of the project is to stabilise and preserve the remains of Merton Priory, to enhance their setting and to establish an educational and events centre.

1.3.2 Project objectives

- To stabilise and preserve the remains of the Priory and enhance its setting;
- To establish an education and events centre at Merton Priory, including a fragment of the cloister garden as a community garden;
- To adapt and extend the existing Chapter House enclosure to create an enclosed space for the presentation and interpretation of the archaeological remains of Merton Priory and the wider site that will include improving access, providing basic facilities and storage and lowering of the ground around the archaeology to expose more of the fabric of the Chapter House and replace brick enclosing walls with glazing;
- To negotiate the return to the Borough of some of the surviving artefacts from various excavations from the Museum of London Archives and display them for the benefit of residents and visitors. (This is a future aspiration)

1.4 Ordnance survey

This OS map highlights the site area and immediate context surrounding the site. The total site area is 0.15ha.



2.1 Aerial photographs

2.1.1 Site description

The images on the right show the site and its surrounding context from an aerial perspective.

The site is located underneath and adjacent to a 1980's road bridge. There is a chamber of approximately 610m² underneath the road bridge and an external area to the south of approximately 900m². The ruins of the chapter house are located in the chamber underneath the road bridge.

Inside the chamber the foundations of Merton Priory Chapter House are partially exposed and surrounded by sand and by a paved walkway which includes various stone coffins, carved fragments of tracery and other artefacts from the Priory.

The external area is mostly tarmacadam, at a higher level than the Chapter House floor, with a grassed bank and a small concrete paved pathway running along the south side of the enclosure. An electricity pylon is also located on the site, to the south of the road bridge.

2.1.2 Surrounding context

The surrounding context to the site includes a number of large 20th Century developments. These developments include a KFC and Pizza Hut restaurant to the west of the site, a large Sainsbury's and Marks and Spencer shop to the north, residential apartments to the south and a Premier Inn hotel to the east. There is also an overhead power line which runs over the site and an electricity pylon that is located within the site boundary.



View looking east



View looking south



View looking west



View looking north



Site photograph of road bridge looking north west



Site photograph of road bridge looking north east

2.2 Merton Priory site history

This site history has been summarised from the Conservation and Management Plan for Merton Priory and Merton Abbey Mills, prepared by Barry Stow Architect Ltd and Associates on 6th September 2006:

The manor of Merton, which belonged to the crown, was given by Henry I to Gilbert the Norman, Sheriff of Surrey. It was in December 1114 that Gilbert established an Augustinian Priory at Merton. This first church is likely to have been made of timber and was probably located in the western part of the manor, near to the site of the present parish church.

On 3rd May 1117 the canons at Merton at that time moved to a new site, which is the same site that has been excavated today. Latin text indicated that some buildings were transported from the earlier settlement and that a new wooden chapel was constructed¹. A range of different building works appear to have been undertaken for the next 55 years up to 1175.

A great storm in 1222 destroyed the tower of the Priory Church and a further phase of building was instigated. Evidence from the excavations date this rebuilding work at around 1230 to 1250, which including rebuilding of the church, construction of a new infirmary and Reredorter and probably other alterations.

The significance of Merton Priory and the Chapter House is evident in the ecclesiastical, royal and government activity that was conducted at the priory and meetings which were held in the Chapter House itself. King Henry III held called a council meeting in January 1255 to discuss how to meet his expenses abroad at Merton, the king also had private chambers at Merton Priory.

The priory continued to be a building of significance throughout the 1300's, however by 1393 the church appears to be in a state of disrepair. The Prior sent a certificate to the Bishop concerning the status of the house, which reference the Chapel of the Blessed Mary as being truly decayed and ruinous with the nave of the church in a similar state. There is records of repair programs being undertaken at the close of the fourteenth century.

2.3 Chapter House history

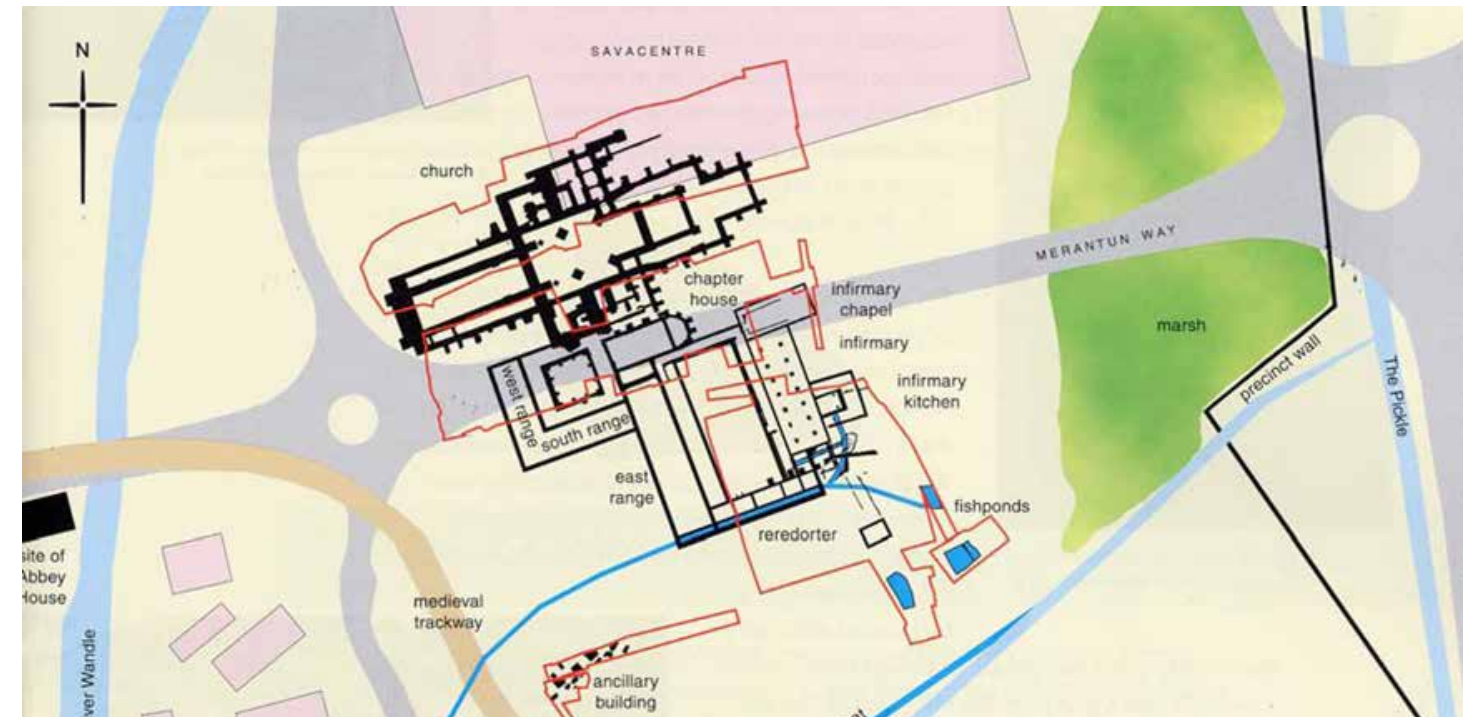
The Chapter House was the second most important of the monastic buildings after the Priory church. 'This was where the community gathered for daily meetings and, at Merton, it is likely to have been in this building that the major gatherings were held, for example the King's Great Council in 1236.

At Merton the chapter house was situated to the south of the Priory church, the position adopted in monasteries, and in its early thirteenth century form it was rectangular in plan, measuring about 17.5 metres long by 10 metres wide. In the fourteenth century the east wall was removed and replaced by a semi-circular apse.

It had a floor of elaborate mosaic tiles, probably laid in the thirteenth century, which included representations of robed figures and animals, and fragments of coloured and painted glass indicate that it may have contained an elaborate east window.

It contained 31 graves, some later re-used, which included burials in stone-lined graves (cists) or wooden coffins and others which had no lining or container of any kind¹.

The remains of the Chapter House are located on the site within the current enclosure underneath the road bridge and are central to the design which forms this planning application.



Site map showing location of former Merton Priory buildings and modern road system



Artists impression of the Priory



Ruins of the Chapter House today

¹ Colker 1970 referenced in Conservation & Management Plan for Merton Priory & Merton Abbey Mills, prepared by Barry Stow Architect Ltd & Associates. p.16

¹ Conservation and Management Plan for Merton Priory and Merton Abbey Mills, prepared by Barry Stow Architect Ltd and Associates. p.33

The current enclosure of the visitor centre is formed from above by the concrete soffit of the Merantun Way road bridge and to the west by the brick clad bridge supporting structure. To the north, east and south the enclosure is completed by independent solid masonry walls. Each of the masonry walls are independent of the road bridge with an air gap separating them from the underside of the bridge. This is a requirement of TFL who own the bridge. There is a car park on the external side of the north wall, a public pedestrian passageway on the external side of the east wall and a grass and tarmac bank to the south.

As part of this application it is proposed to demolish the south wall of the enclosure and construct a single storey extension to the south side.



2.5 Site Photographs - External



01. North entrance to the pedestrian passageway



02. East wall of the enclosure from the pedestrian passage



03. Panoramic view of the south elevation of the enclosure

2.5 Site Photographs - External



04. South entrance into the enclosure and grass bank



05. North wall of the enclosure from the car park adjacent



06. Panoramic view of the pylon, looking west

2.5

Site Photographs - Internal



07. Internal view of Chapter House remains, looking east



08. View of the chapter house remains, looking east



09. Internal panorama looking west

3.1 Stage 1: Brief Analysis

Before the design process began much time and care was spent researching the historical significance of the site. A Conservation and Management Plan was undertaken for Merton Priory and Merton Abbey Mills in 2006 by Barry Stow Architect Ltd., commissioned by The Merton Priory Trust and the London Borough of Merton.

The policies set out in this plan were analysed by Haverstock at the outset of the project. The policies became the basis for the project brief and informed the development of the design.

Please note: same of these principles and policies are proposed to be addressed in Phase 2 of the works.

3.2 Conservation policies

These policies have been copied from the Conservation and Management Plan for Merton Priory and Merton Abbey Mills, prepared by Barry Stow Architect Ltd and Associates p.155 onwards.

3.2.1 Setting Policies

- Policy 1.
- A key aim of the Management Plan shall be the re-establishment of the identity and legibility of the Priory site and its constituent parts, as a whole, and the medieval and post-medieval linkages to the River Wandle, by establishing a programme of actions that will preserve, conserve, protect and improve the setting.
- Policy 2.
- The Management Plan shall be the framework document for achieving, in the long term, the re-establishment of the legibility of the Priory site, by promoting the highest possible standards of design in any future development which is appropriate and beneficial to the unique status, dignity and character of the site.
- Policy 3.
- The Merton Priory Trust will actively seek to prevent any adverse effects of repair, maintenance regimes, and/or new works on the archaeology, the buildings, the landscape, the ecology, and the public uses of the Estate.
- Policy 4.
- The Merton Priory Trust will make representation to the local authority to ensure that, in future reviews of the Unitary Development Plan, the emerging LDF and in subsequent Plans, the significance and importance of the Priory Precinct and its setting is embodied in future plan policies. Positive measures for the enhancement and regeneration of the Priory Precinct, in the long term, shall be directed to benefit its character, appearance and setting.
- Policy 5.
- Research carried out during this study indicates that there are strong grounds for reconsidering the present boundaries of the scheduled area. This further study shall be proposed to the local authority and English Heritage.

- Policy 6.
- Monitor and make representation to the Highway Authorities to reduce the impact of noise and pollution on the site. The local authority shall be requested to take this into consideration in future proposals, for example, when specifying resurfacing and other works to Merantun Way and the flyover.
- Policy 7.
- Sustain and enhance the natural habitats and ecologically important zones in and around the site, to balance these needs with those of the buildings and urban landscape. The urban landscape character of the Merton Priory Precinct and Merton Abbey Mills site is a confused mixture of large infrastructure (elevated roads, high voltage overhead power lines), contemporary retail park and a residual enclave of historic industrial buildings on the banks of the Wandle. The impoverished nature of the urban landscape is reflected in the Merton UDP designation of the A24 Merantun Way - the subject of the ‘Improvements to Streetscape/ Frontage Policy CW1.’ The scale of the contemporary built form also dominates, and detracts from, the relatively human scale of the Abbey Mills complex and the historic priory precinct.
- Policy 8.
- To be successful, the setting of the Priory and the Mills will require a co-ordinated design response which seeks to: In the short term
- i. Maintain and enhance nature conservation values;
 - ii. Screen or filter views of adjoining large scale contemporary development; In the medium term
 - iii. Unify the site through a simple, high quality palette of hard landscape materials and tree species;
 - iv. Lower visitors’ eye line through canopy tree planting;
 - v. Create a quiet garden enclosure, such as an herb garden, as an antechamber to the new visitor centre, on the site of the land over which the Trust has an option. This uses the precedent of an historic monastic garden in the same location. The garden shall be secure and protected against vandals. In the long term
 - vi. Remove the electricity pylon from the Precinct;
 - vii. Remove all inappropriate development from the Precinct;
 - viii. Re-align Merantun Way to remove the flyover from the Precinct.

3.2.2 Conservation Policies

- Policy 9.
- The Management Plan shall be the framework document for achieving the conservation of the cultural heritage asset of the Chapter House and ensure its preservation as a permanent and treasured part of local and national heritage.
- Policy 10.
- The Trust shall operate a programme of inspections, and carry out any necessary maintenance as well as a programme of continual improvement of the immediate setting of the building fabric. These works will be defined as urgent, intermediate or long term and will be dealt with accordingly.
- Policy 11.
- Maintain the built fabric of the Chapter House to the best standards of conservation and presentation and in accordance with international, national, and local conservation principles and policies.
- Policy 12. Preserve the archaeological remains of the Priory in situ.
- Policy 13. Ensure that any activities or events undertaken at the Chapter House are not detrimental to the remaining archaeology and its setting.

3.2.3 Presentation Policies

Policy 14.

Prepare and adopt an interpretation strategy for the presentation of the Chapter House, the Priory Precinct and its environs including the post-medieval industrial archaeology. This shall coordinate the architectural, archaeological, historic and cultural stories that the site embodies. The strategy and proposals shall build upon the policies and proposals in the Conservation Management Plan and shall form the basis of applications for funding from the National Heritage Memorial Fund or other agencies, as appropriate.

Policy 15.

The improvement of the presentation of the Chapter House will require a co-ordinated design proposal which seeks to:

- i. Remove all unrelated stored material from the Chapter House building;
- ii. Improve the lighting within the building;
- iii. Improve visibility and views into the building from the pedestrian passage;
- iv. Carry out appropriate works to the Chapter House foundations to emphasise and better demonstrate the form of the archaeological remains;
- v. Improve the presentation of the associated material; stone coffins, window tracery and etc.;
- vi. Create a suitable environment to allow the housing of significant illustrative displays, material and artefacts presently stored at the Museum of London, and other places;
- vii. In parallel with creation of the new visitor centre [Policy 16], ensure improved visitor facilities within the Chapter House building; WCs, seating, wheelchair access, storage & etc.;
- viii. Establish the Chapter House as a place of spiritual significance, and as a fitting place for religious services. All these improvements shall be carried out generally in accordance with Policies 11, 12 and 13.

Policy 16.

Provide new visitor facilities and improve accessibility to the Chapter House to encourage visitors. We recommend that this requires a design proposal for a new facility for visitors. In the meantime, the environment and exhibition within the present enclosure shall be redesigned and improved. The design proposal shall take note of the feasibility study prepared for English Heritage and Merton Council.

Policy 17.

As part of the interpretation strategy, design, publish and maintain a state-of-the-art website as a popular, educational and research resource, including appropriate and relevant information on the broader history and archaeology of Merton.

Policy 18.

Provide clear signage and interpretive material for visitors in order to improve public awareness of the location and facilitate their understanding and appreciation of the Priory, its importance within London and in a historic context. Direction signs shall be located at all local Underground stations, tram stops and bus stops and shall incorporate the logo graphic of the Merton Priory Trust, or otherwise an easily recognisable graphic such as a simplified plan of the Priory. The position of the Priory and the precinct buildings, walls and boundary shall be marked on the ground, as far as possible, by the use of brass studs or similar markers, particularly in public areas such as the Savacentre car park and the Abbey Mills car park.

3.2.4 Research and Understanding Policies

Policy 19.

Encourage and promote continuing academic research to improve understanding of the historical, architectural and archaeological value of the Priory site, necessary for its appropriate management and improvement.

Policy 20.

The Plan shall inform research strategies in connection with any future archaeological investigations within the Priory site or in its vicinity.

Policy 21.

Access to the Chapter House and Priory Precinct as an educational resource shall be encouraged by means of an active outreach programme to schools.

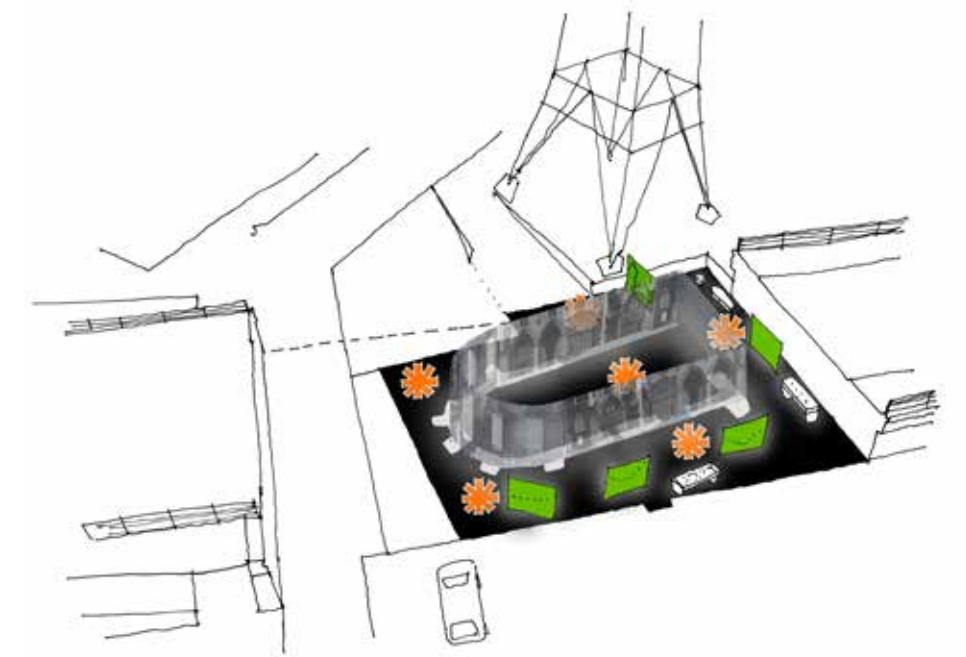
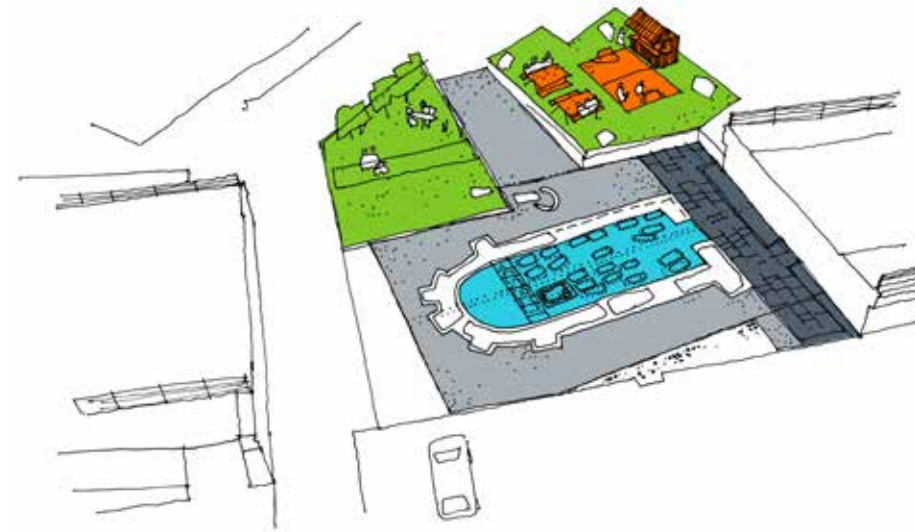
Policy 22.

Through the foregoing policies, the Trust shall promote education, study and research, founded upon the Priory’s reputation as a focus of learning and education.

3.3.4 Ground treatment

The entrance pathway could be bounded by green space of the Infirmary Garden and activity space below the Pylon. The paved forecourt material could be extended within the chamber, only changing where the archaeology suggests boundaries between inside and outside spaces, such as the south Transept and Cloister, and of course the Chapter House. We believe the Chapter House floor could be constructed level with the surrounding floor finishes using a lightweight raised floor, touching the ground very lightly. Based on modules it would be conceivable to make some of the units glazed with lighting below for visitor to view the remains of burial chambers and other foundations. Inlay markings could be incorporated illustrating the burial positions of the 31 Priests and Calico trench below.

NOTE: Ground treatment is proposed in Phase 2 of the works



3.3.5 Means of display

Our initial thoughts revolved around the visualisation of the Chapter House enclosure. Rather than fixing exhibition furniture around the remains a perimeter projection curtain could be installed, using similar technology to Ron Arad's 'Curtain Calling' installation in the Round House, Camden. Strips of William Morris or Arthur Liberty fabric could be used as the projection medium, viewable from both sides. This would be a theatrical intervention and form a primary source of light and energy hovering above the preserved archaeological remains. This solution also offers versatility for the use of the space as the fabric could be drawn up to the ceiling, fully opening the chamber for talks or events.

Other exhibition furniture such as screens and cases must be considered carefully and work in unison with the Chapter House curtain. These could be used as a secondary light source in the relative darkness of the chamber.

NOTE: The means of display will form part of Phase 2 of the works.



3.3.4 Ground treatment



3.3.5 Means of display



3.4 Stage 3: Design Development

The images on this page show a snap shot of the work that has been done previously and highlights how the design has developed from initial design diagrams to a more refined proposal.

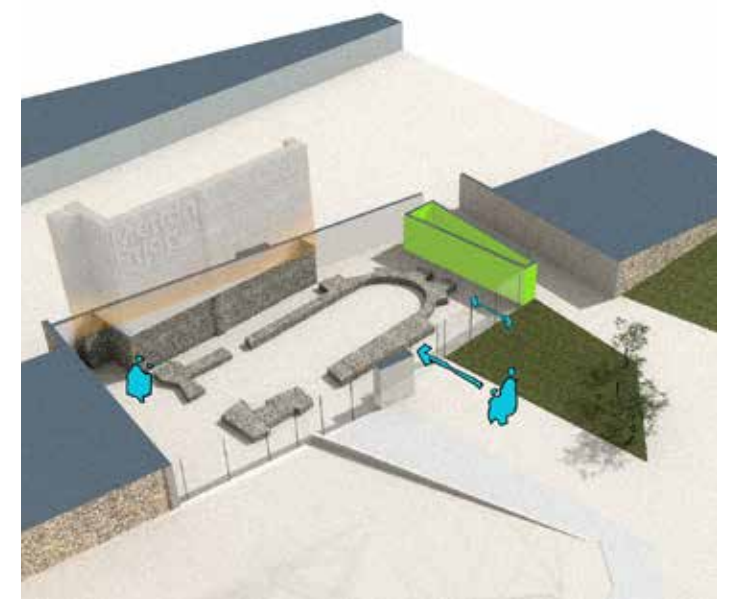
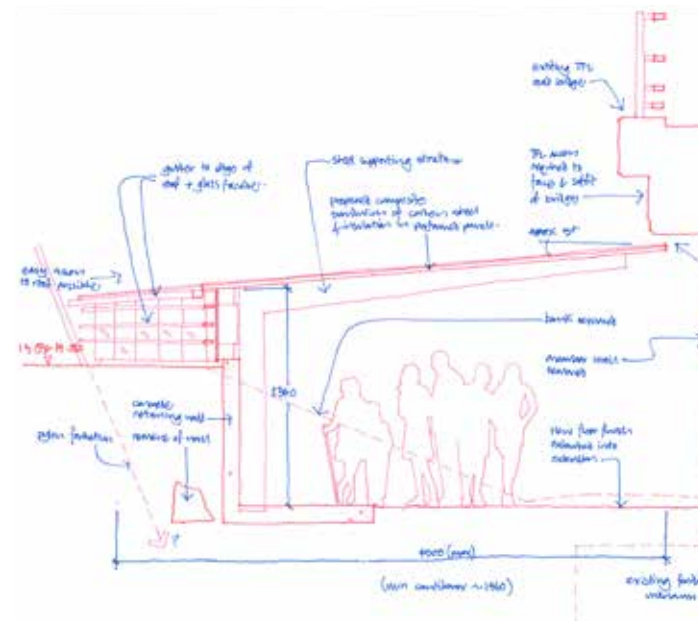
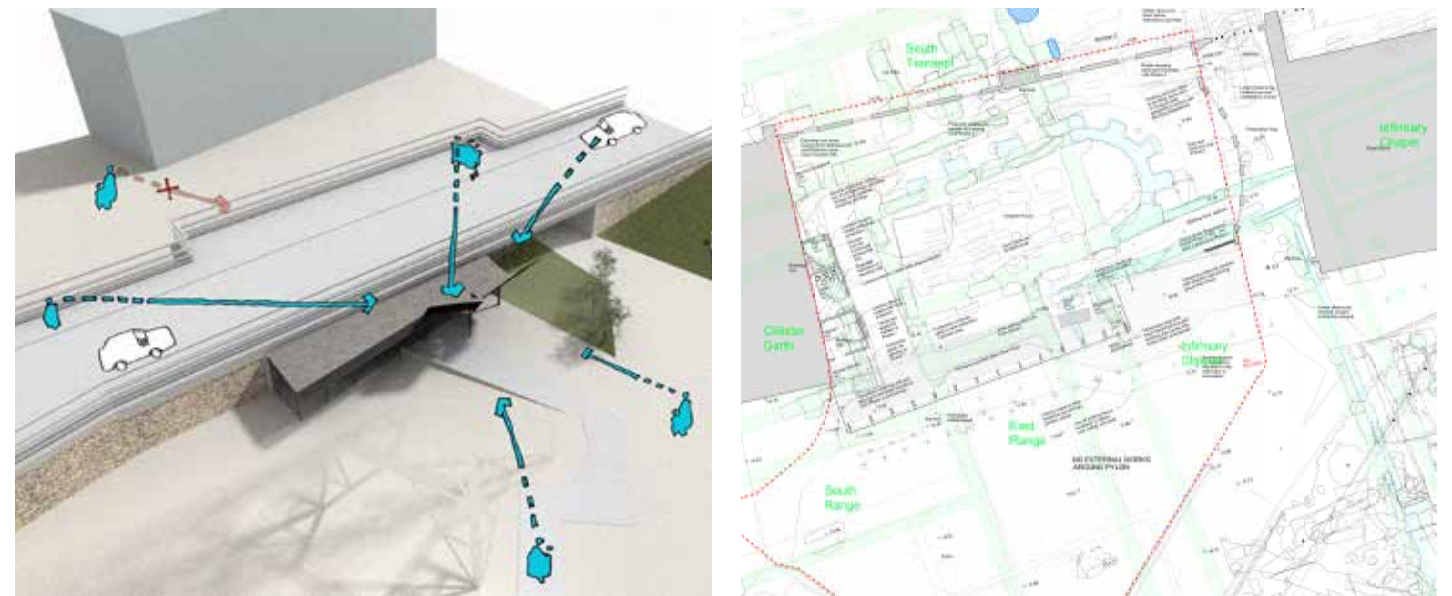
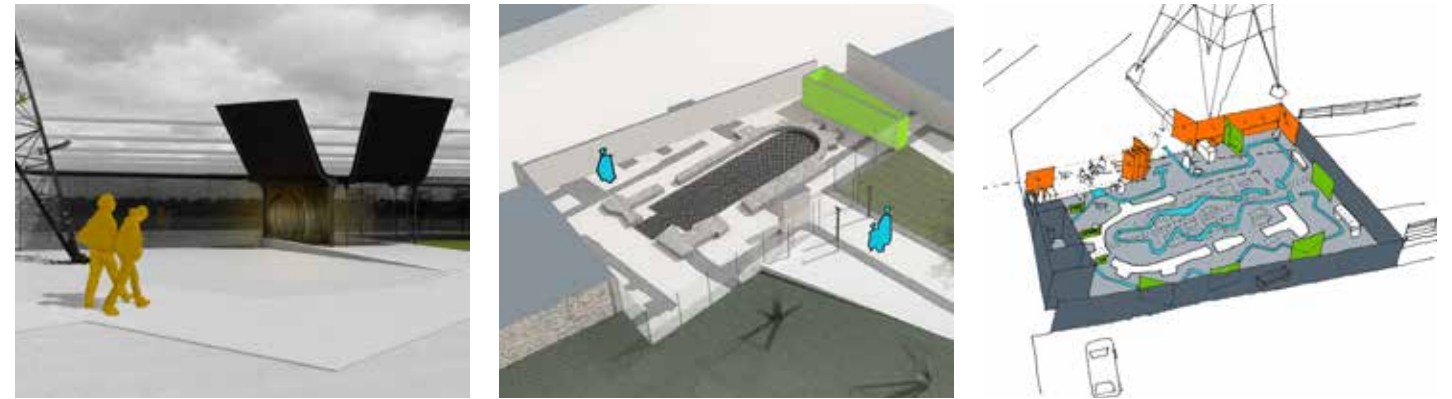
3.4.1 Layout and External Appearance

Following further research and site investigations the design was developed from the initial diagrams to a more complete proposal. The developed scheme was presented to the Merton Priory Trust and Richard Lancaster of London Borough of Merton. Following a discussion of the proposal the design was developed and became the basis for the scheme presented in this Design and Access Statement.

A number of options were considered during the design development including:

The orientation of the new interventions: It was important that all new built elements respected the orientation of the existing archaeology, therefore any new interventions follow the orientation of the remains of Merton Priory rather than the current context of the road bridge.

Is an extension required? Having tested this question it was decided an extension would be required for two main reasons: firstly the extra space provided was required by Merton Priory Trust in order to fulfil their vision for the Chapter House enclosure & secondly the extension enables the southern elevation to follow the line of the South Range wall of the original Merton Priory.



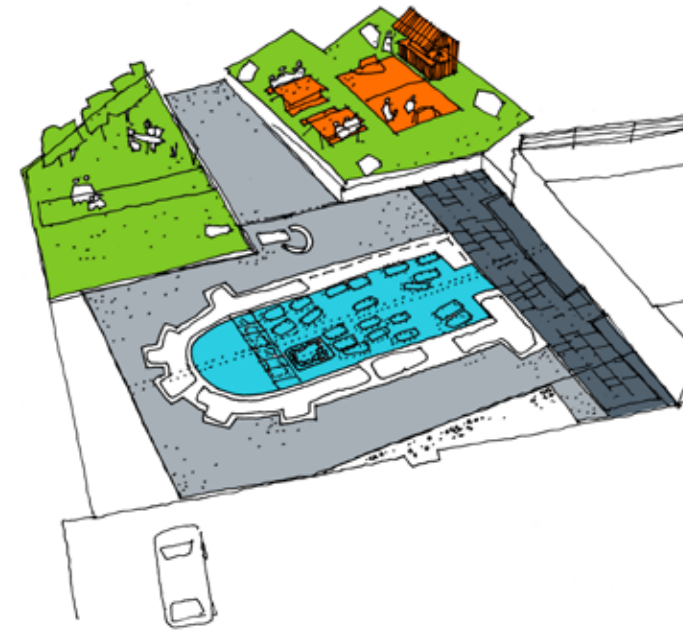
Cantilevering extension structure

Extension of South Transept wall above the road bridge

Development of design diagrams and images

Visibility of the scheme for visitors: Currently the scheme is hidden from the public eye. By extended to the south and incorporating a glazed elevation the proposal seeks to announce the scheme externally whilst also allowing views into the space from the outside. It had been our intention to incorporate an elevated canopy of the entrance to announce the act as a beacon to the surrounding area and also to clearly define where to enter the building. The canopy however was omitted from the design by the client.

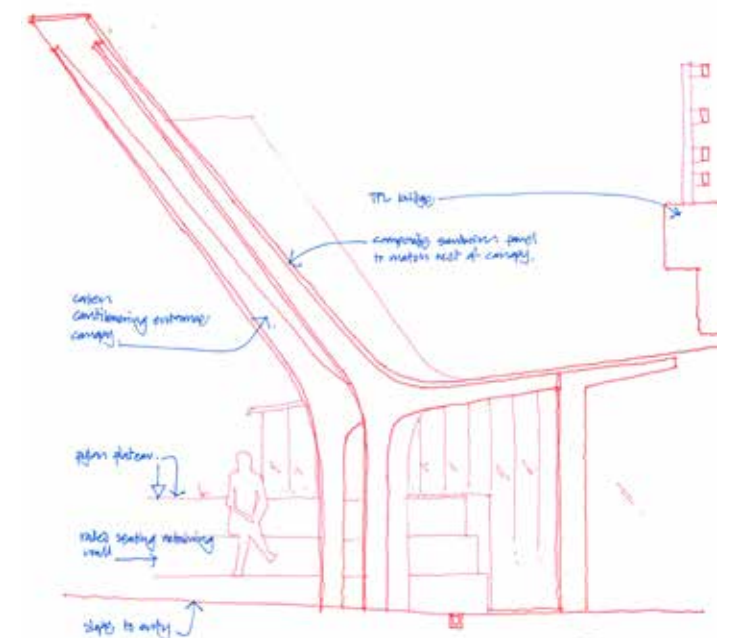
Internal layout of the building: It was important that the layout of the internal accommodation of the scheme followed the same rules as the external construction, as a result the internal constructions follow the orientation of the Merton Priory archaeology. It is also the intention to expose as much of the remaining archaeology as possible within the enclosure.



Initial concept sketch



Canopy to announce main entrance - now omitted

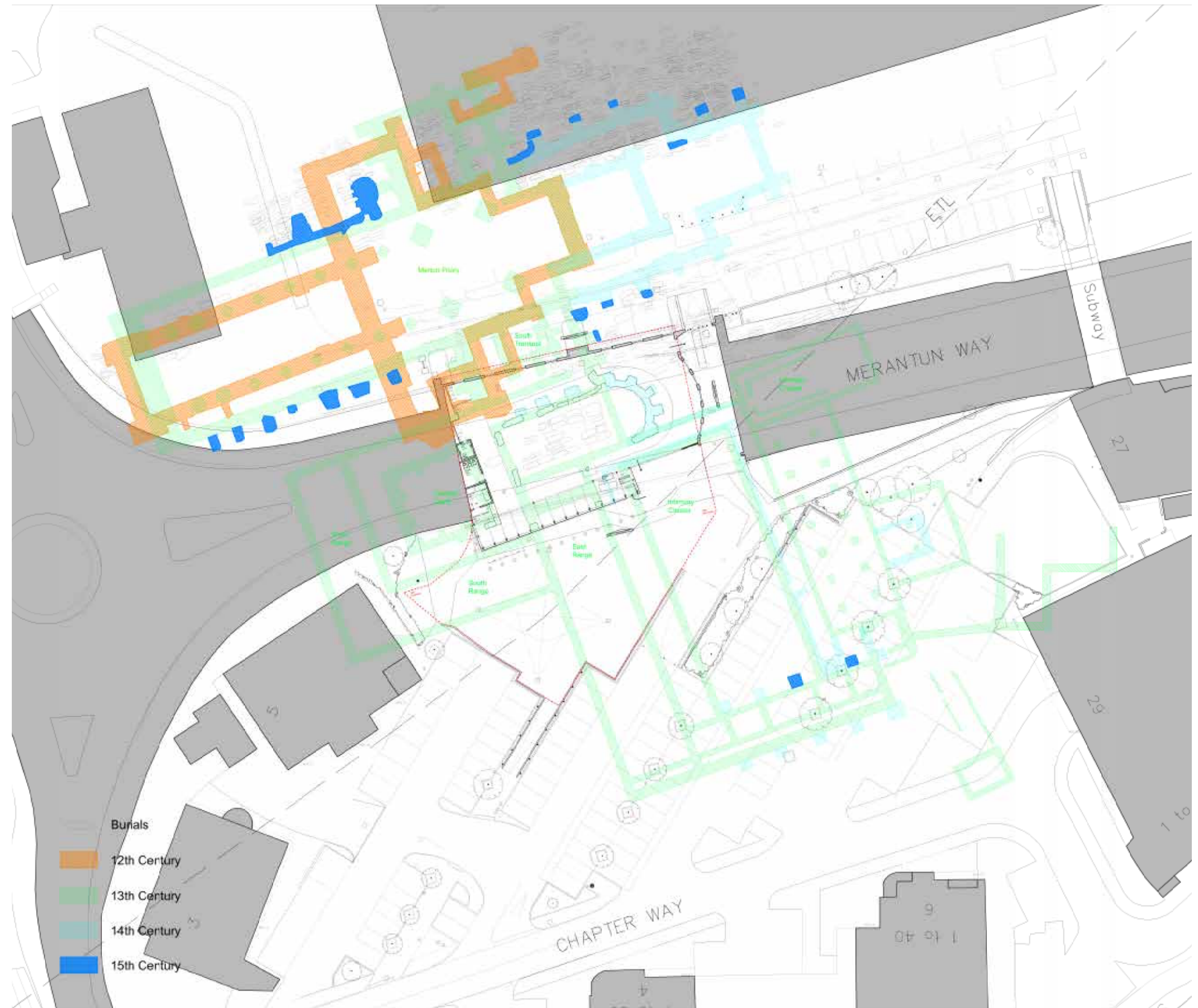


Development of design diagrams and images

3.4.2 Plan Development

Archaeology Layout

The plan on the right indicates the archaeology layout of Merton Priory in relation to the contemporary context. The plan for the proposed development and extension to the museum is strongly influenced by the layout of the Priory. The proposed plan on the next plan explains the rationale behind the design decisions that were made.



3.4.2 Plan Development

Following the appraisal of a number of design options a more complete proposal was developed. The plan on this page attempted to draw the positives from the previous design developments with some further design concepts as described below:

The numbers **01** on the drawing relate to the points below.

01 - New glazed extension follows the line of the existing 13th Century Priory Plan to help visitors understand visually the existing layout of Merton Priory.

02 - Entrance path in line with original Priory infirmary cloister, it is the intention that the original circulation routes of the Priory are reinstated using a new paving design to follow the original plan. The main entrance has been located an axis with the original cloister walkway. (This is proposed in a latter phase of the project and not part of this planning application)

03 - The infirmary garden will be reinstated and acts as an external garden area for visitors and local residents to enjoy. Is there a potential to mark the extents of the garden beyond the site boundary using another material? (This is proposed in a latter phase of the project and not part of this planning application)

04 - The internal accommodation has been located in the original position of the cloister garth, the intention is to align any new walls with the original priory plan; albeit without impacting upon the archaeology.

05 - There is the potential to take the same approach as No. 4 and construct a wall to the southern transept of the priory, this could be used for a separate exhibition area to the rest of the chamber.

06 - It is proposed to install a raised floor over the chapter house floor to allow for visitors to see any archaeological and burial remains that are in this location. Sections of the raised floor could be glazed and lighting could be including underneath the raised floor. (This is proposed in a latter phase of the project and not part of this planning application)



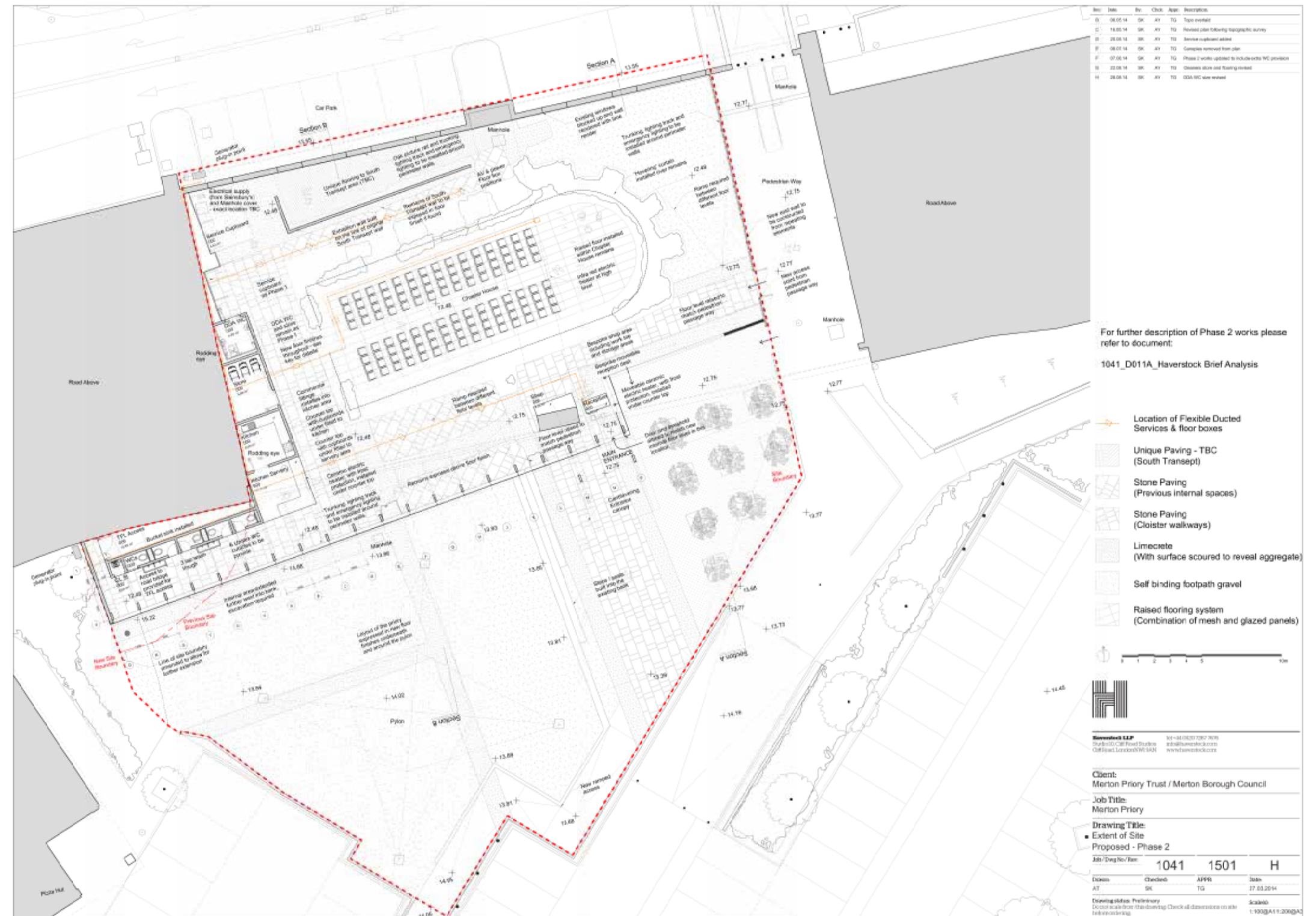
3.5 Stage 4: Phasing

3.5.1 Overall Master Plan for the Site

Having developed a master plan design for the building and site it was a requirement of the project funding that the scheme was split into phases.

The drawing on the right of this page indicates the ultimate desired completed scheme.

It should be noted that this planning application is not for the entirety of this design but only for Phase 1 of the works which is described over the page.



This Planning Submission and Design and Access Statement document is only concerned with the proposed works to Phase 1 of the design. The plan on the right indicates the work which is proposed as part of this application. This is supported by the additional drawings and the remainder of this document which serve to describe these proposed works.



3.6 Stage 5: Design Review Panel (DRP)

The scheme was presented to a DRP on the 25th September 2014, more information about this presentation can be found in Appendix A. The boards presented at the DRP are shown on the right.

3.6.1 DRP comments

Following the presentation a number of points were made by the panel, these are summarised below:

The Panel welcomed the proposal and noted the significant challenges to the project posed by the very hostile surrounding environment. Overall they felt that some of the key elements of the proposal were the right things to do, but that further work was required.

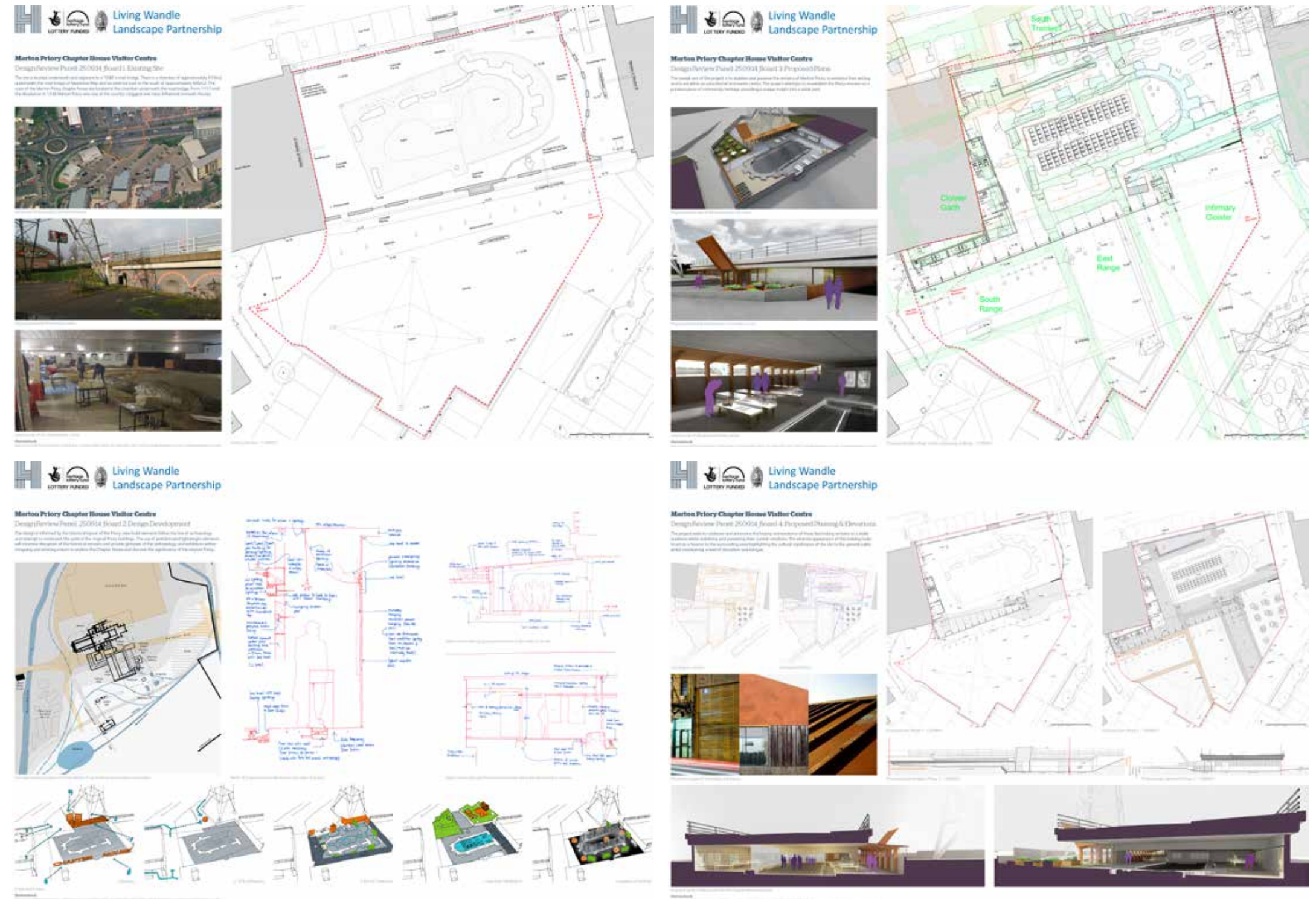
The Panel particularly supported the ideas of exposing the remains further, opening out the southern aspect to more daylight, aligning facilities with the archaeology and utilising the space for a range of uses – including performance. They also liked the improved entrance but it was not clear from the drawings on what this would actually look like.

The Panel felt that the proposals did not look sufficiently beyond the somewhat arbitrary site boundary. This was evidenced by the access improvements not being as fully resolved as might be possible and, further afield, how the site connected with other local attractions.

It was felt that the route to the entrance needed improving, as did the route under Merantun Way, and that the raised planters did not relate well to the history and should be re-thought. The applicant was encouraged to have a full plan for all they would like to achieve for the Chapter House and present it as a series of phases that could be implemented as funds allowed. They were encouraged to go to local land owners for funding.

It was felt that more work was needed on studying how people would arrive at the site – for example there was no cycle parking provision. It was suggested the existing crash barriers on the road above could be made solid to screen noise.

VERDICT: AMBER



3.6.2 Design Response to DRP comments

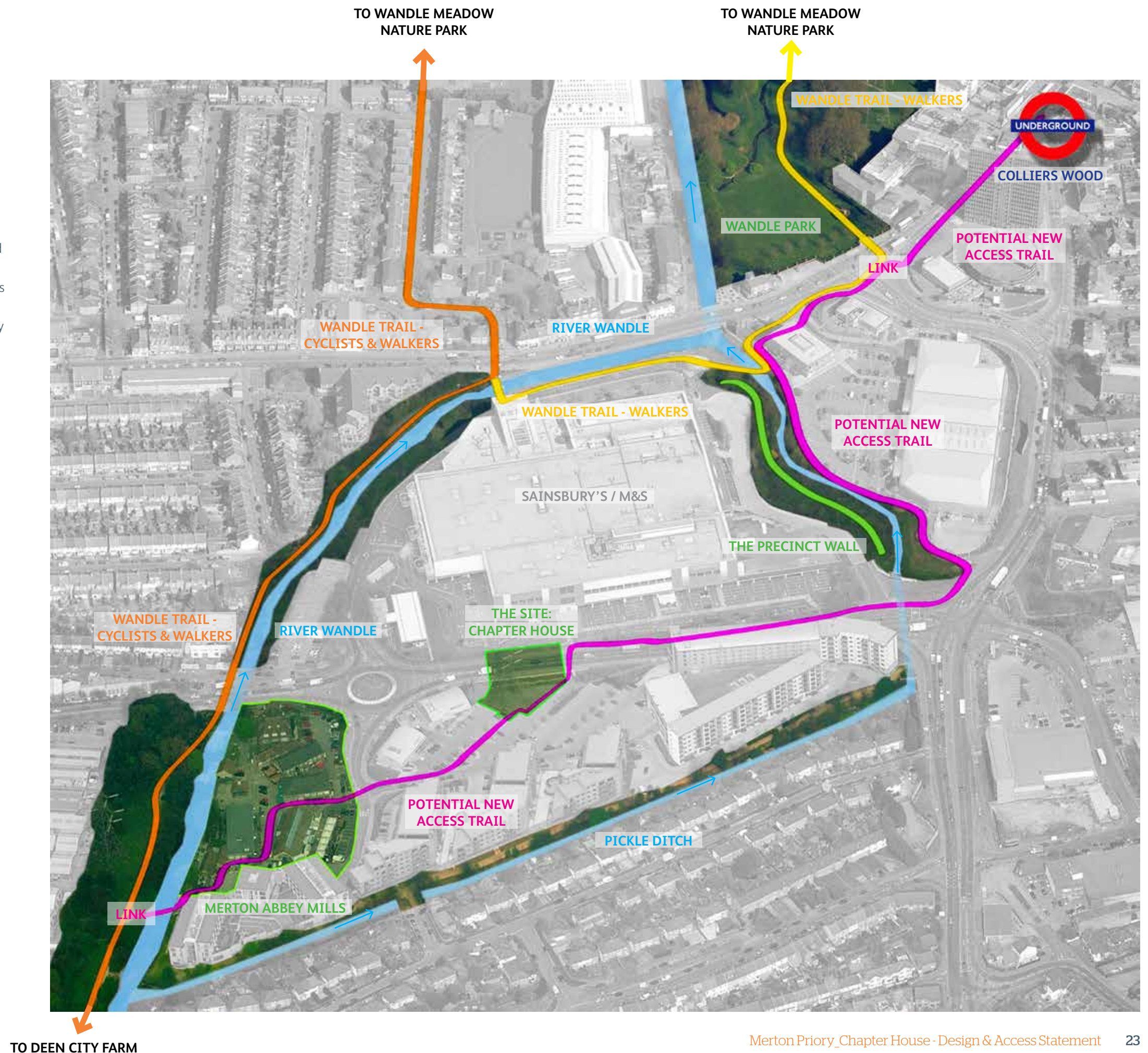
Time was spent carefully reviewing the comments made by the DRP. It is an important part of the design process to encourage visitor interactions with the proposal therefore how it links with local attractions is of high importance.

This map aims to highlight how a new access trail could link Colliers Wood underground station with the priory Precinct Wall, the Chapter House and the Merton Abbey Mills. The route would start at Colliers Wood underground station and head south west from the station along Colliers Wood High Street. The route takes a left at the 'Kiss Me Hardy' pub on the corner and follows the Priory Precinct Wall (which historically enclosed the Merton Priory site), then heads west along Merantun Way. A pedestrian ramp off Merantun Way leads the visitor to the underpass which then connects to the Merton Priory Chapter House site. The route could continue along Chapter Way and connect with Merton Abbey Mills and the Wandle Trail cycle route.

Not only would this route provide clear access for users of the underground it could also create a 'loop' with the two existing Wandle Trails for cyclists and walkers. The Chapter House remains could therefore be a critical local amenity for cyclists, walkers and the users of public transportation.

For visitors of the site in vehicles, whilst there are no car parking spaces on the site there is currently a car park to the north of the site boundary, however this is owned by Sainsbury's and currently for customers only.


It is hoped that the design will further respond to the comments made by the DRP in the following phases of the project.




3.7.2 Material Testing

A number of different material treatments were considered for the proposed extension to building. It was important to the team that a simple palette of materials was chosen to ensure the building did not detract from the archaeological remains within the building.


Therefore contemporary materials were chosen in order to clearly differentiate the proposed interventions to the site from the archaeology. Materials throughout have also been selected to minimise maintenance for the Merton Priory Trust.




- Alternative treatments can produce reflective surface or Matt finish
- Strong material, good impact resistance
- No need to protectively treat the material
- Lightweight structure




- Strong material, good impact resistance
- No need to protectively treat the material
- Lightweight structure
- Varied pattern on the surface




- Structurally strong
- Tactile warmth of timber
- Steel component reduces timber required, however not as lightweight as steel structure




- Strong material, good impact resistance
- The finish will have to be maintained, albeit after a very long period of time
- Lightweight structure
- Vast variety in colours
- Concern over durability - external oxidation of steel substrate



- Having discussed this option with the structural engineer they felt it was unfeasible to use concrete due to length of the cantilevers and the weight of the material
- The foundations required would have impacted on the remains in the ground

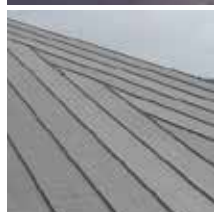


- Following discussion with the structural engineer it was felt that the required structural depth of a glulam proposal would impact too negatively on the space of the extension
- This option has therefore not been developed further




- Inexpensive material
- Vulnerable to impact and puncture
- Likely to "bubble"
- We feel it is not befitting for the calibre of the project


NOTE: Unless over-clad with option 2, 4, 5 or 6




- Vulnerable to impact
- Potential for vandalism
- Lightweight
- Variety of finished available
- No need to protectively treat the material




- Strong material, good impact resistance
- No need to protectively treat the material
- Lightweight structure
- Varied pattern on the surface



- Reflective surface
- Strong material, good impact resistance
- No need to protectively treat the material
- Lightweight structure



- Strong material, good impact resistance
- Protects roof membrane
- Potential for vandalism
- Natural weathering
- It has previously been agreed by the trust that this is not an acceptable approach, therefore has not been developed



- Vulnerable to impact (depending on thickness)
- Lightweight
- Variety of finished available
- No need to protectively treat the material



Existing Materials

The existing materials of the building consist of blue engineering brick with red brick arches over the window openings. The windows are constructed with metal frames, and are covered with a protective mesh cladding. The concrete frame construction of the road bridge completes the enclosure. The surrounding areas are largely tarmacadam or gravel.



Proposed Materials

Materials for the proposed extension were chosen to express the contemporary nature of the extension and contrast with the archaeological remains within. The external wall of the extension will consist of a concrete retaining wall at low level with glazing above, to maximise natural light entering the space. The roof of the extension will be constructed with a standing seam zinc system, in contrast to the concrete construction of the road bridge.



Zinc standing seam roof



Painted steel structure and glazing

The highlighted plan on the right of page describes the extent of the proposal which is existing building to be refurbished, the area of the proposed extension and the proposed landscape works. The areas are described in the key below:

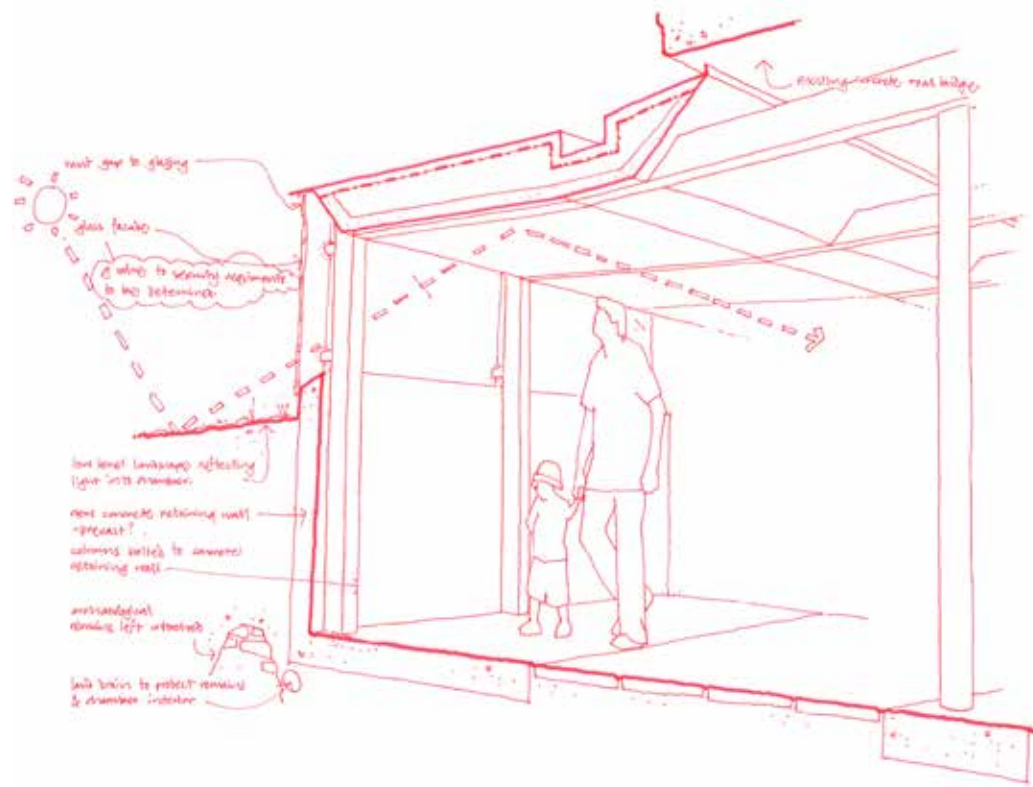
Area of Existing Building to retain / be refurbished:
GIFA: 617m²

Overall GIFA Existing and Proposed:
Total Proposed GIFA: 703m²

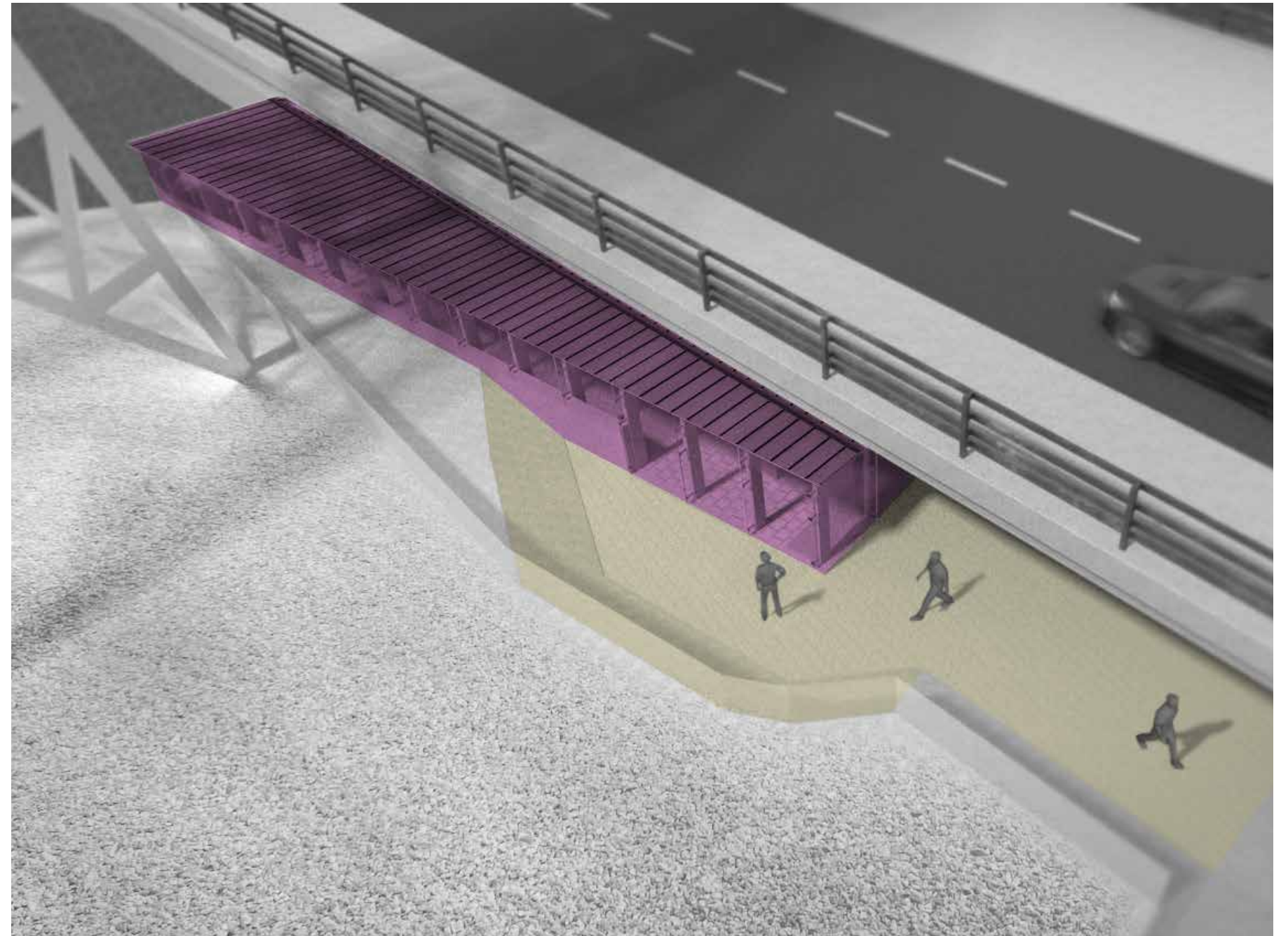
4.2 Scale: Massing

The existing building is located underneath the Merantun Way road bridge, with the external brick walls recessed underneath either side of the bridge by approximately 600mm. The existing structure of the road bridge is depicted in black and white in this diagram.

The proposed extension is shown in purple and runs along the south elevation of the existing building. The intention behind the design was to extend the building beyond the line of the road bridge to increase the internal accommodation and also to announce the existence of the museum to the public. The extension is positioned to the south of the road bridge and follows the line of the archaeology below. The existing ground level is approximately 1.2m below the surrounding ground to the south, therefore a small amount of landscape work (highlighted in yellow) is required to allow access to the new entrance. The landscape design is further discussed in section 4.4.



Sketch section of proposed extension



3D Massing image of the proposal

4.3 Layout: Proposed Plan

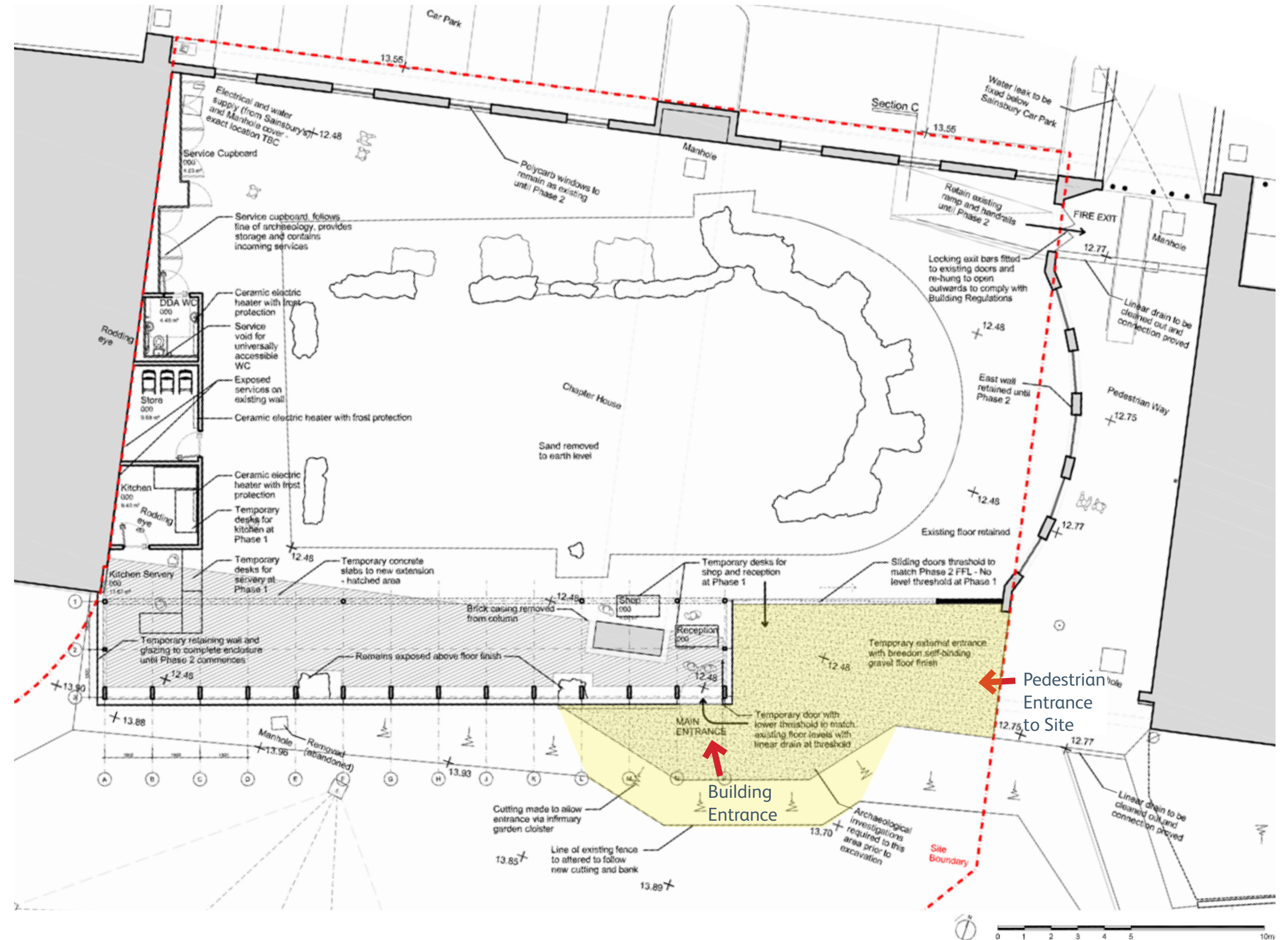
This drawing illustrates the agreed layout of the proposal. Please refer to drawings submitted separately with the application for accurately scaled information.

4.4 Layout: Landscape

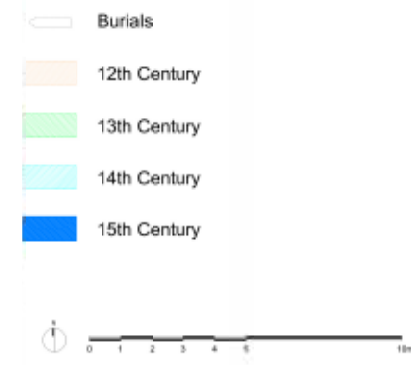
This drawing also illustrates the agreed landscape works of the proposal. Please refer to drawings submitted separately with the application for accurately scaled information.

The site is proposed to remain in its current arrangement with the exception of the area to the east of the proposed extension, highlighted in yellow on drawing on the right hand side. In order to provide level access to the new building entrance a cutting is required from the existing grass bank. This cutting provides a temporary level access route for visitors from the pedestrian underpass to access the building. This new entrance will be fully universally accessible.

The remainder of the proposed landscape works will occur during the next construction phase of the project and do not form part of this planning application.



The proposed plan for the chapter house chamber is informed by the historical layout of the Priory; new build elements follow the line of archaeology and attempt to reinterpret the spirit of the original Priory buildings. This plan overlays the historic layout of Merton Priory with the proposed works to the building.

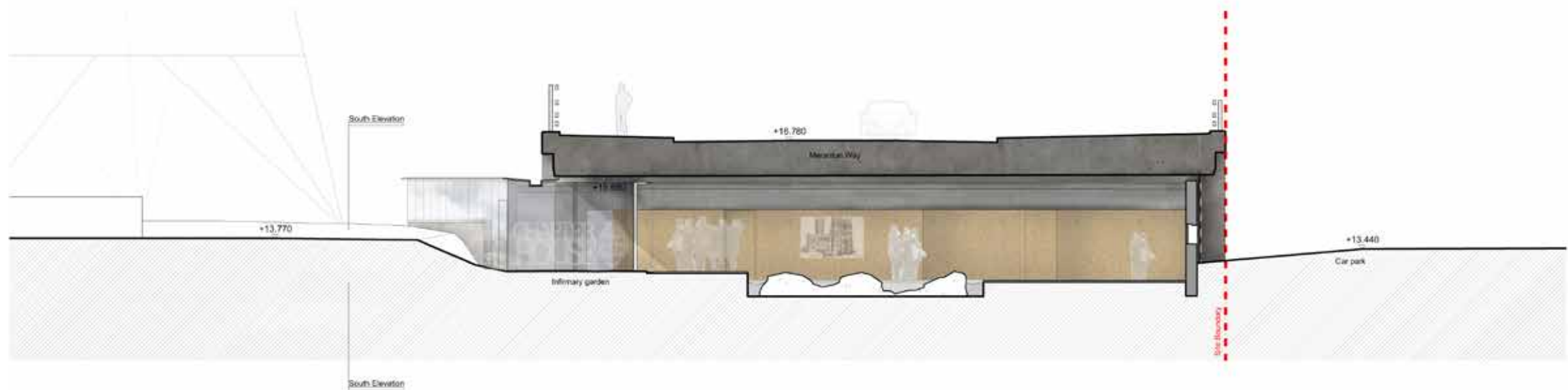


4.6 Appearance: Elevations

These drawings illustrate the agreed elevations of the proposal. Please refer to drawings submitted separately with the application for accurately scaled information.



Proposed South Elevation of the Chapter House Chamber



Proposed East Elevation of the Chapter House Chamber

0 1 2 3 4 5 10m

4.7 Appearance: Visualisations

This image illustrates the agreed appearance of the proposal. Please refer to drawings submitted separately with the application for accurately scaled information.



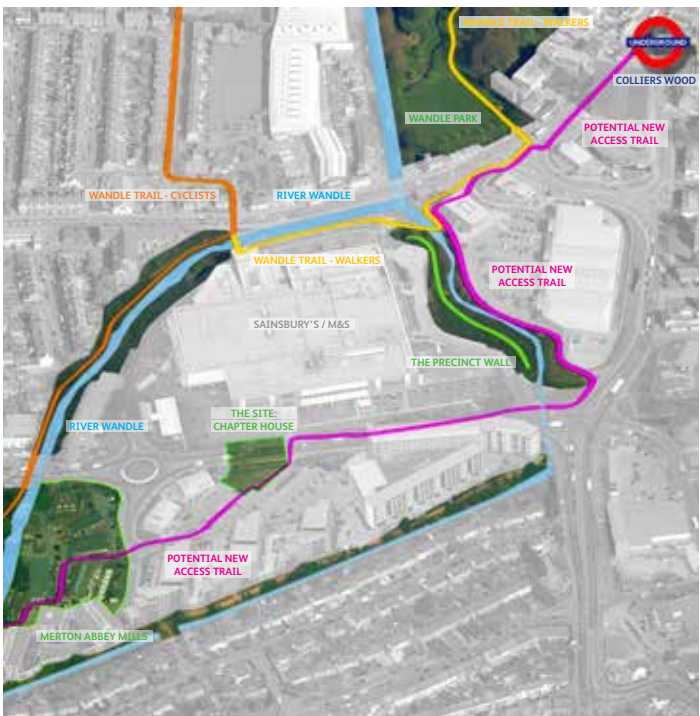
5.1 Access

Following the comments from the Design Review Panel, from both the Panel Members and LBM and MPT, it was highlighted that access to the site and the surrounding area were critical to the success of the design. The sketch map below begins to analysis the various existing, cycle and walking, routes around the site and how visitors may access the site in the future.

Proposed access to the site and surround area is described in section 3.6.2.

5.1.1 Universal Access

In accordance with Building Regulations Part M, accessibility was considered throughout the design and from an early stage. The existing building finished floor level (FFL) is below the surrounding ground level, therefore works are proposed to landscape surrounding the entrance to improve accessibility for visitors.



Access Diagram

5.2 Arboricultural

There are no trees on the site and there are no trees within the surrounding area that will be affected by the proposal. Landscaping will be considered as part of Phase 2 of the project.

5.3 Heritage and Conservation

The buildings on site are not listed, the Chapter House remains are however situated within a conservation area and recognised as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM). Therefore alongside this planning application an application for Scheduled Monument Consent is being made to English Heritage regarding the proposed works.

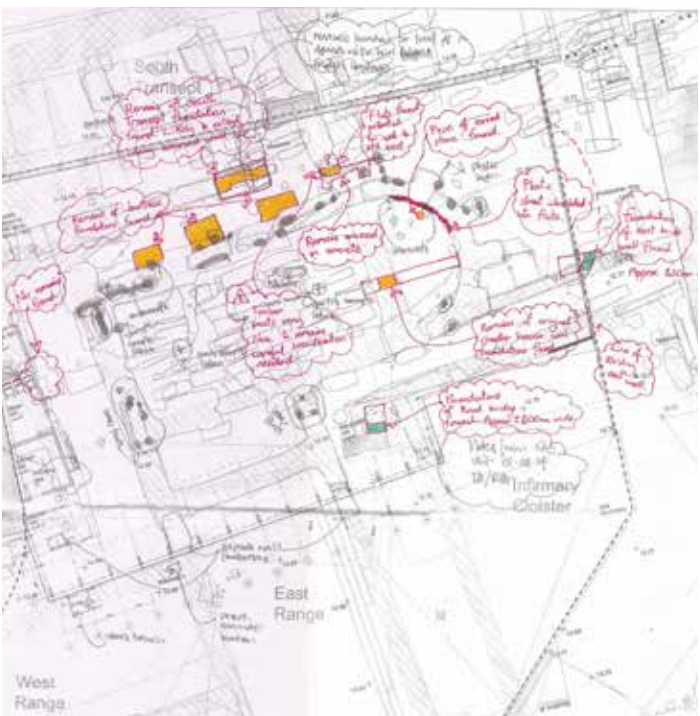
The historical significance of the site has been an important and critical factor in the design process. The proposed extension has been designed to respond to the archaeological remains and be sympathetic to the historical significance of the site.



Archive photo of Merton Priory archaeological dig

The proposed plan for the chapter house chamber is informed by the historical layout of the Priory; new build elements follow the line of archaeology and attempt to reinterpret the spirit of the original Priory buildings.

During the design process further archaeological digs were undertaken to discover how much of the original Priory remained. The findings include evidence of the South Transept of the Church, the east wall of the Chapter House and the buttresses to the north of the Chapter House. This was a very exciting part of the project and has continued to inform the layout of the design. Further information about this archaeological work can be found in Appendix C.



Findings from Trial pits

5.4 Sustainability

As the building is not a fully enclosed space it has been a challenge to improve the sustainable performance of the space. It is also important that any alterations to the design have no negative impacts on the archaeological remains. Therefore a Environmental Survey of the space was commissioned to ascertain whether the design would have any negative impact on the remains.

The introduction of the glazed wall to the south of the enclosure will encourage passive heating through solar gain and the space will be naturally ventilated, which the exception of the kitchen and WC.

5.7 Existing Drainage

A drawing displaying the existing drainage layout on the site can be found in Appendix B, please see below for an extract of the existing drainage drawing.

The existing drainage will be revised as part of the works. A negligible increase in hard-standing is likely from the development.



Existing Drainage Extract

5.5 Lighting

We are currently in the process of developing the external lighting for the building in more detail.

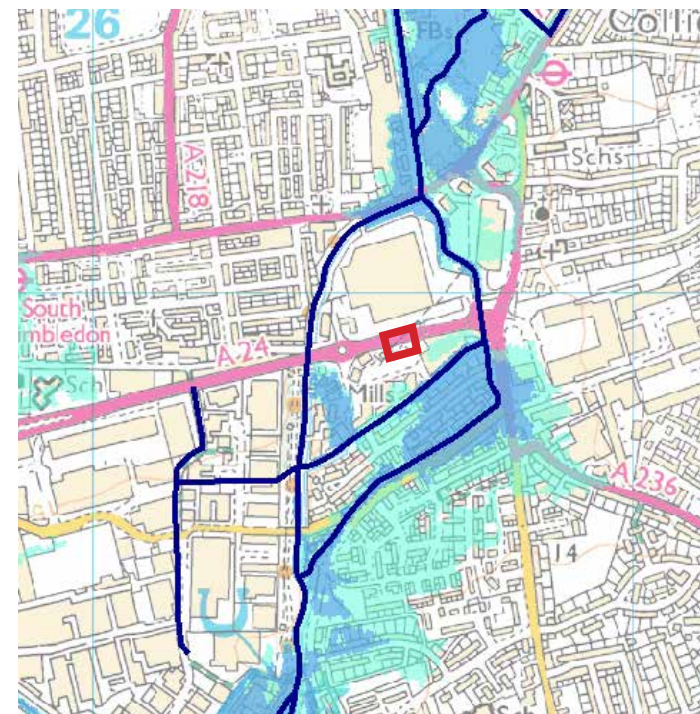
The site currently contains no external lighting. It is proposed that a security light should be located adjacent to the new entrance of the extension and front elevation.

All external lighting shall be designed to reduce light pollution by limiting the percentage sky glow and light trespass beyond the site boundary. It will be designed to meet the requirements of all relevant statutes and regulations.

5.8 Flood Risk Assessment

The site area is less than 1 hectare and in flood zone 1, therefore a flood risk assessment is not required.

See diagram below for details of the site's location to the nearest floodplain.



Flood Risk Map

5.6 Security

In order to improve the current security provisions on site a number of steps have been taken within the proposal to address site access and site monitoring.

As mentioned a security light is proposed over the new entrance area. Consultation has also taken place with the Museum of London Archaeology department who have commented on the design of the proposed scheme and made suggestions in order to improve the security of the design. This will be implemented in a future phase.

5.9 Ecology and Biodiversity

A concern with any development is the impact on the surrounding environment, particularly the site ecology. Care has been taken with the proposal to locate the extension in close proximity to the existing buildings and hard landscaping to minimise the impact to the surrounding natural landscape.

6.1 Stakeholder Consultation

Various stakeholder consultations concerning the design and the scope of the work have been carried out. Rigorous testing and consultation has taken place with different parties to ensure that the most successful and appropriate design is developed for the site and for the brief.

These meetings were attended by representatives of The Merton Priory Trust and The London Borough of Merton. As mentioned previously a presentation of the scheme was also made to a Design Review Panel on 25th September 2014.

After the planning process and during the next stage of design, the team will continue to engage and consult with these parties.

6.2 Public Consultations

The design of the proposed extension to the Merton Priory Chapter House museum has been made public by the Merton Priory Trust in the museum and on their website. The design of the scheme was also exhibited at a public open day on site on the 20th and 21st September 2014, held by the Merton Priory Trust. This event was held as part of the London Open House event. It is estimated that over 1000 visitors attended the event and the proposed developments to the museum were well received.

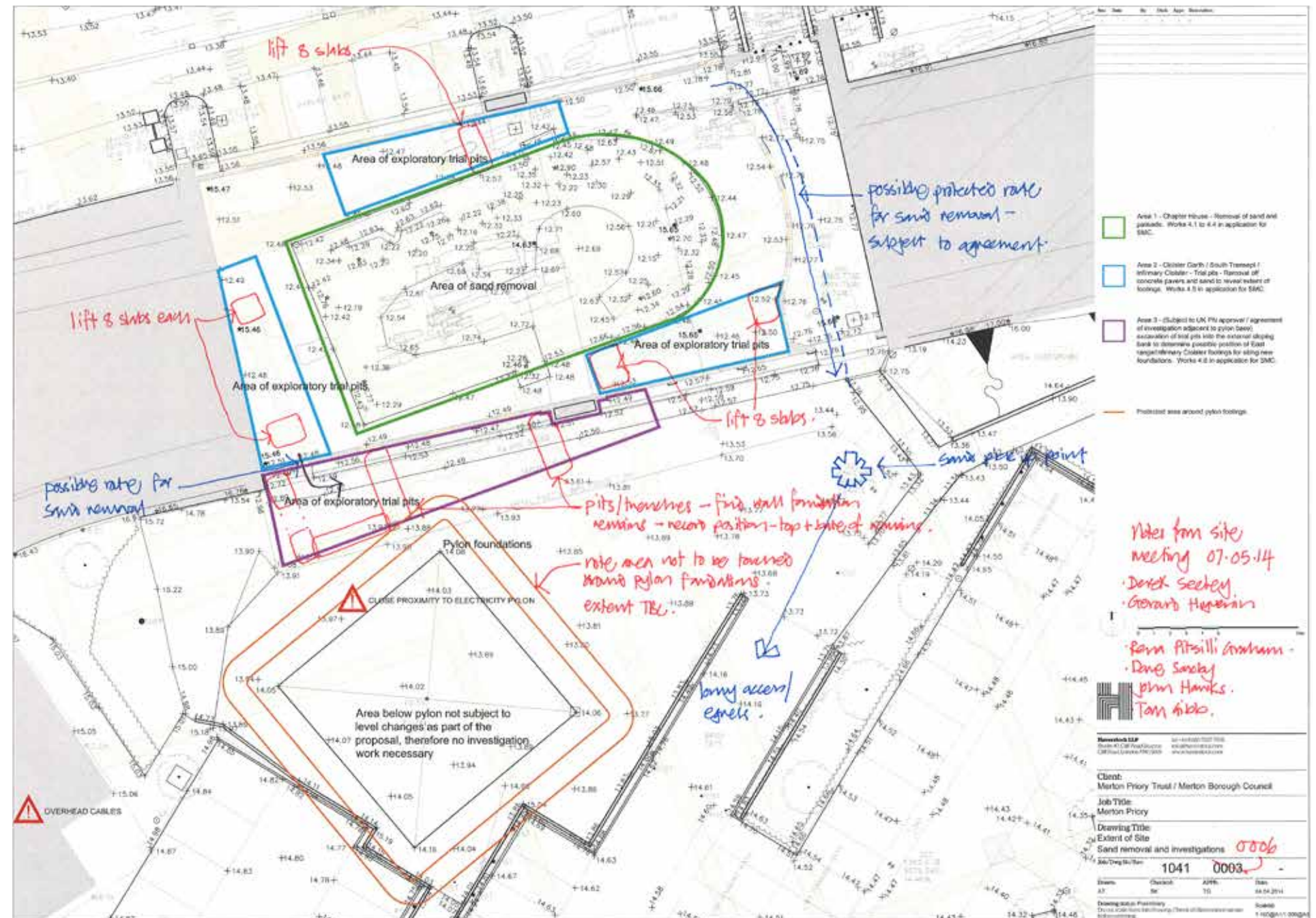
The design was also exhibited at the Museum of Wimbledon on the 900th anniversary of the Priory. The exhibition was open to the public and ran from the 12th July 2014 to the 31st August 2014. A lunch was also held on site on the 27th September 2014 for people involved with the Chapter House at which the designs were displayed and explained. The attendees were pleased with the design and excited by the vision for the museums future.

A presentation was made by the London Borough of Merton and Haverstock to the Heritage Lottery Fund (who are funding part of the project) on site on the 5th September. They were very impressed by the proposed project and were excited to see how the project would develop.

6.3 English Heritage

A meeting was had with Jane Sidell and Iain Bright from English Heritage with Dave Saxby and John Hawks from Merton Priory Trust, Rena Pittsilli-Graham and Tom Gibb attended from Haverstock. At the meeting the initial design and the Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) application for the archaeological investigations was discussed.

EH backed the scheme and encouraged the submission of the SMC for the trial pits, which was submitted in early May 2014. SMC approval for the works was granted by English Heritage on 24th June 2014.



SMC Submission for archaeological explorations

6.4 Transport for London (TfL)

TfL own and maintain the road bridge over the remains of the Chapter House. As the road bridge forms part of the enclosure it was essential to get their approval prior to any works commencing. A meeting was held with Jafar Haider from TfL, John Hawks of MPT, Richard Lancaster of LBM and Tom Gibb of Haverstock were also in attendance. The design of the proposed extension was discussed and TfL’s requirements for the project were also incorporated within the proposal.

TfL have approved the proposal in principle.

Sam Kane

From:

Sent:

To:

Cc:

Subject:

English Richard <RichardEnglish@tfl.gov.uk>

05 January 2015 14:47

Sam Kane

Jafar Haider (ST); Tom Gibb

RE: 1041_Visitors Centre under A24/06.50/0 Merantum Way (Merton Abbey) Bridge

Sam,

Thanks – all is now clear.

In general terms the proposal appears ok in principle, subject to one final query. The drawings appear to show an air gap between top of the roof structure and underside of the bridge deck. Is this correct and, if so, what is the dimension of the gap? We would prefer a gap adequate in size to allow access to the underside of the bridge (say 150mm).

Regards,

Richard

Richard English

Technical Approvals Manager

Transport for London | Tunnels and Structures |
Palestra (8th Floor - Zone Y5) | 197 Blackfriars Road | London SE1 8NJ
Tel: 020 3054 2799
Mob: 07540 643 070

From:

Sent:

To:

Cc:

Subject:

Sam Kane [mailto:sam.kane@haverstock.com]

05 January 2015 13:14

English Richard

Jafar Haider (ST); Tom Gibb

RE: 1041_Visitors Centre under A24/06.50/0 Merantum Way (Merton Abbey) Bridge

Hi Richard,

Thank you for your response.
Yes that is correct, only the primary steel structure will be located underneath the road bridge.

I've attached a few rough 3D images which hopefully explain the proposal more clearly. The proposed primary steel structure is highlighted in orange and the proposed roof cladding highlighted in pale orange.

Please let me know if there's any further information you require.

Kind regards,
Sam

Samuel Kane

Architectural Assistant

Haverstock

1

Approval from TfL

Construction of the Road Bridge & Structural review

36 Haverstock

6.5 National Grid (Electricity Pylon)

There is an electricity pylon located on the site and in close proximity to the proposed extension, therefore it was important to consult with National Grid, who own the Pylon, to ensure the design would satisfy their requirements. A meeting was held with Darren Gibbons from National Grid, Jack Lloyd from Conisbee and Sam Kane from Haverstock. Following discussions with National Grid and the submission of initial proposal drawings and details a letter was received confirming that the National Grid has no objections to the proposal which is in close proximity to the pylon.



Jack Lloyd
Conisbee Consulting
1-5 Offord St
London
N1 1DH

National Grid House
Warwick Technology Park
Gallows Hill, Warwick
CV34 6DA

Wayne Smith
Asset Protection Assistant
Business & Operation Support
Gas Transmission Asset Management
National Grid
Warwick
Direct Tel: 01926 656102
Email: wayne.smith@nationalgrid.com

Planning Work?
Contact us on 0800 688 588*
Mon-Fri 8am-4pm
(*Calls may be recorded and monitored)
E-mail: Plantprotection@nationalgrid.com

Electricity Emergency Number:
0800 40 40 90*
National Gas Emergency Number:
0800 111 999*

*Available 24 hours, 7 days/week.
Calls may be recorded and monitored.
www.nationalgrid.com

Date : 10th April 2014
Our Reference: XX_TE_Z5_3SW_071603
Your Reference: MERTON PRIORY

Dear Mr Lloyd,

Ref: REDEVELOPMENT OF MERTON PRIORY SW19 2RD.merton priory.off merantun way.london

National Grid has no objections to the above proposal which is in close proximity to a High Voltage Transmission Overhead Line – YYU.

I have enclosed a location map to show the location of National Grid's Overhead Lines within the vicinity of your proposal and associated information below.

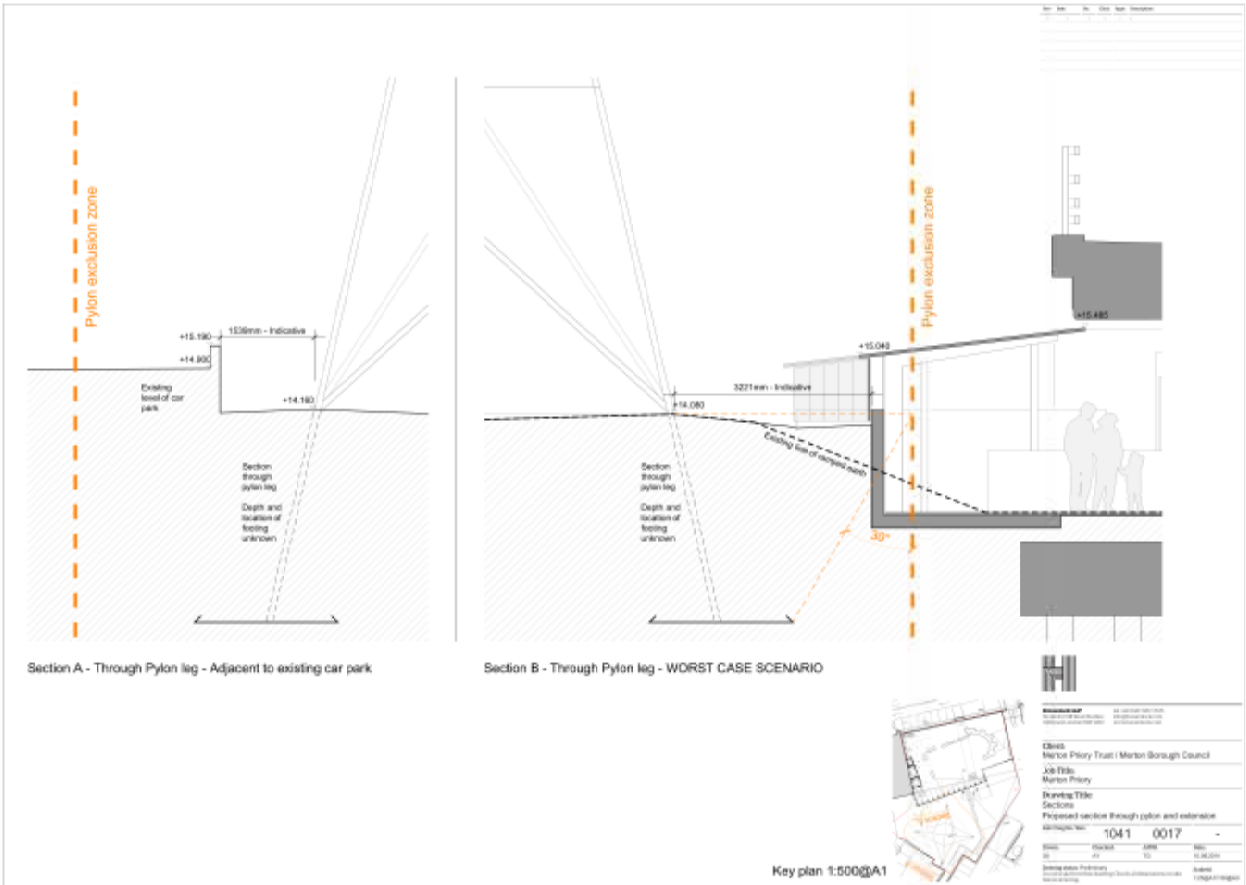
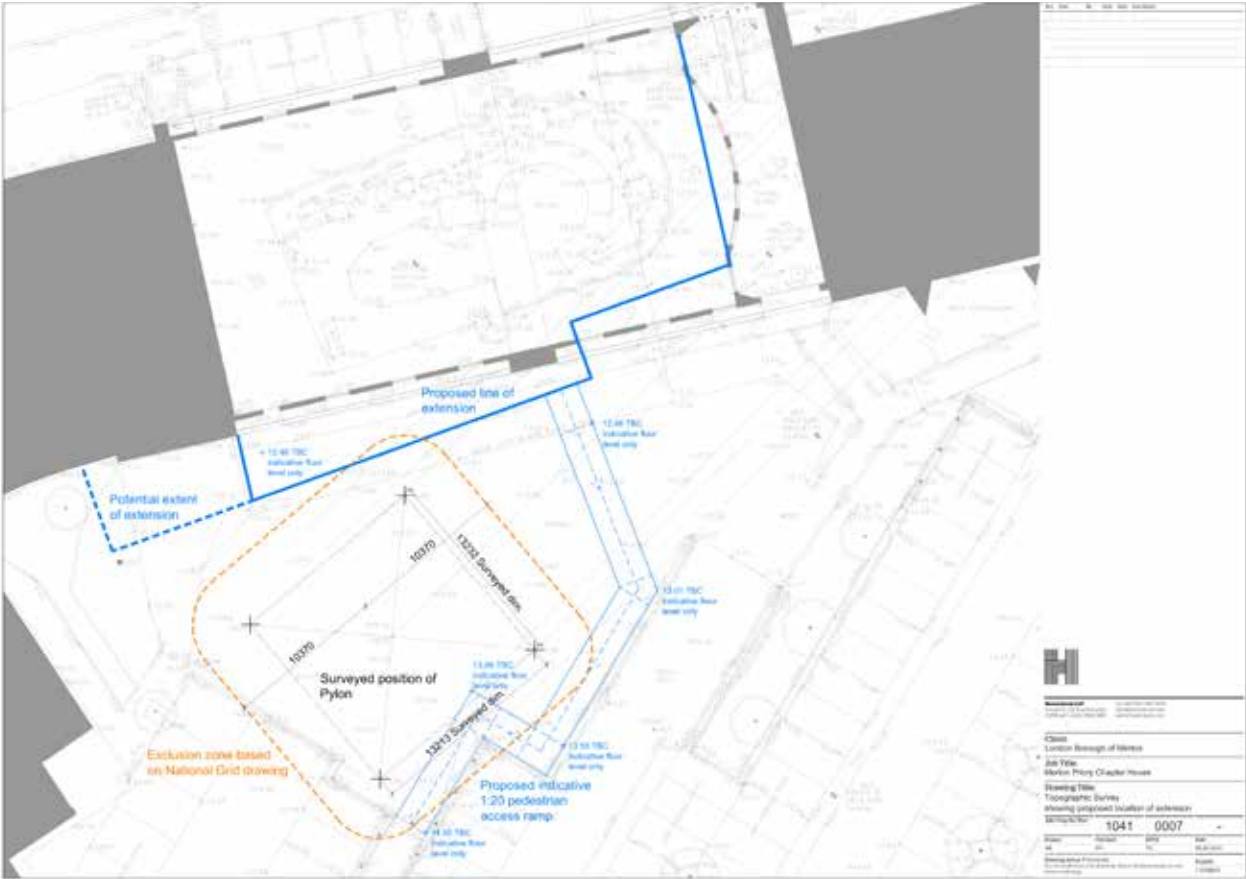
Yours sincerely

Wayne Smith

Asset Protection Assistant
EAGLES (Electricity And Gas Location Enquiry System)

Is now available to use simply click on the link to register www.beforeyoudig.nationalgrid.com, submit details of your proposed works and receive instant guidance and if appropriate maps showing the location of National Grid gas and electric apparatus.

National Grid is a trading name for:
National Grid Electricity Transmission plc
Registered Office: 1-3 Strand, London WC2N 5EH
Registered in England and Wales, No 2366977





7.0 Merton Priory Chapter House_Appendices



7.0 Appendices

Merton Priory_Design and Access Statement

- A. Design Review Panel Presentation and Comments
- B Existing Drainage Survey
- C. Archaeological Trial Excavations

NOTE: Please note that some reports were produced at early stages of the design. Please appreciate that building design develops and moves on and that the drawings to support this application over-ride any building design proposals referred to in the Appendix documents.

Appendix: A Design Review Panel Presentation and Comments

The following boards were presented to the Merton Design Review Panel on 25th September 2014, the following comments were received on the 2nd October 2014:



Merton Priory Chapter House Visitor Centre

Design Review Panel: 25.09.14 Board 1: Existing Site

The site is located underneath and adjacent to a 1980's road bridge. There is a chamber of approximately 610m² underneath the road bridge of Meriton Way and an external area to the south of approximately 900m². The ruins of the Merton Priory chapter house are located in the chamber underneath the road bridge. From 1117 until the dissolution in 1538 Merton Priory was one of the country's biggest and most influential monastic houses.



Aerial view of the existing site from the south

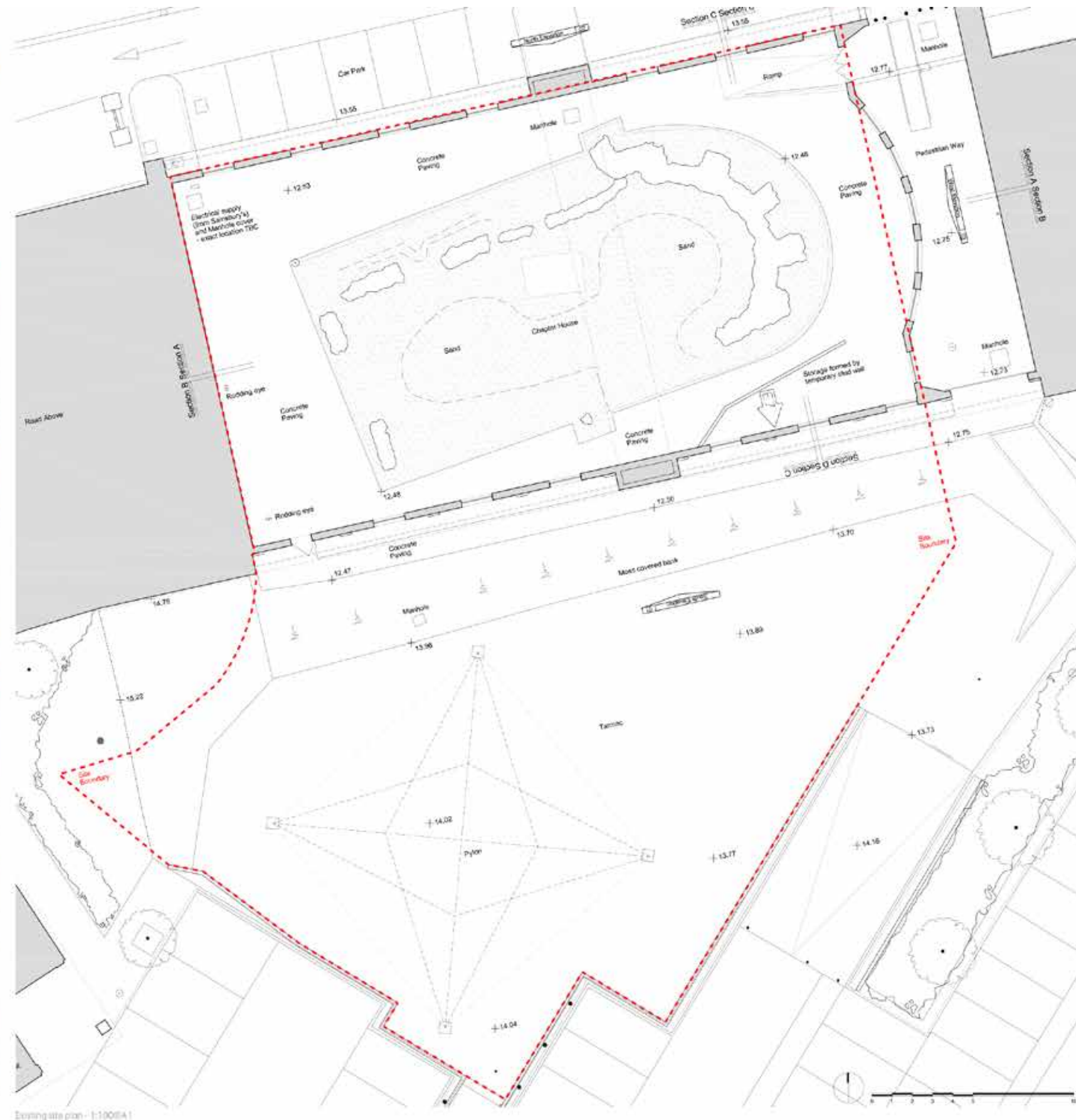


Exterior south wall of the visitor centre



Interior view of the current visitor centre

Haverstock
Studio 10, 100 Broad Street, London NW1 1AN, tel: +44 (0)20 7267 9000, info@haverstock.com, www.haverstock.com





Merton Priory Chapter House Visitor Centre

Design Review Panel: 25.09.14 Board 3: Proposed Plans

The overall aim of the project is to stabilise and preserve the remains of Merton Priory, to enhance their setting and to establish an educational and events centre. The project attempts to re-establish the Priory remains as a priceless piece of community heritage; providing a unique insight into a noble past.



Proposed aerial view of the scheme from the north

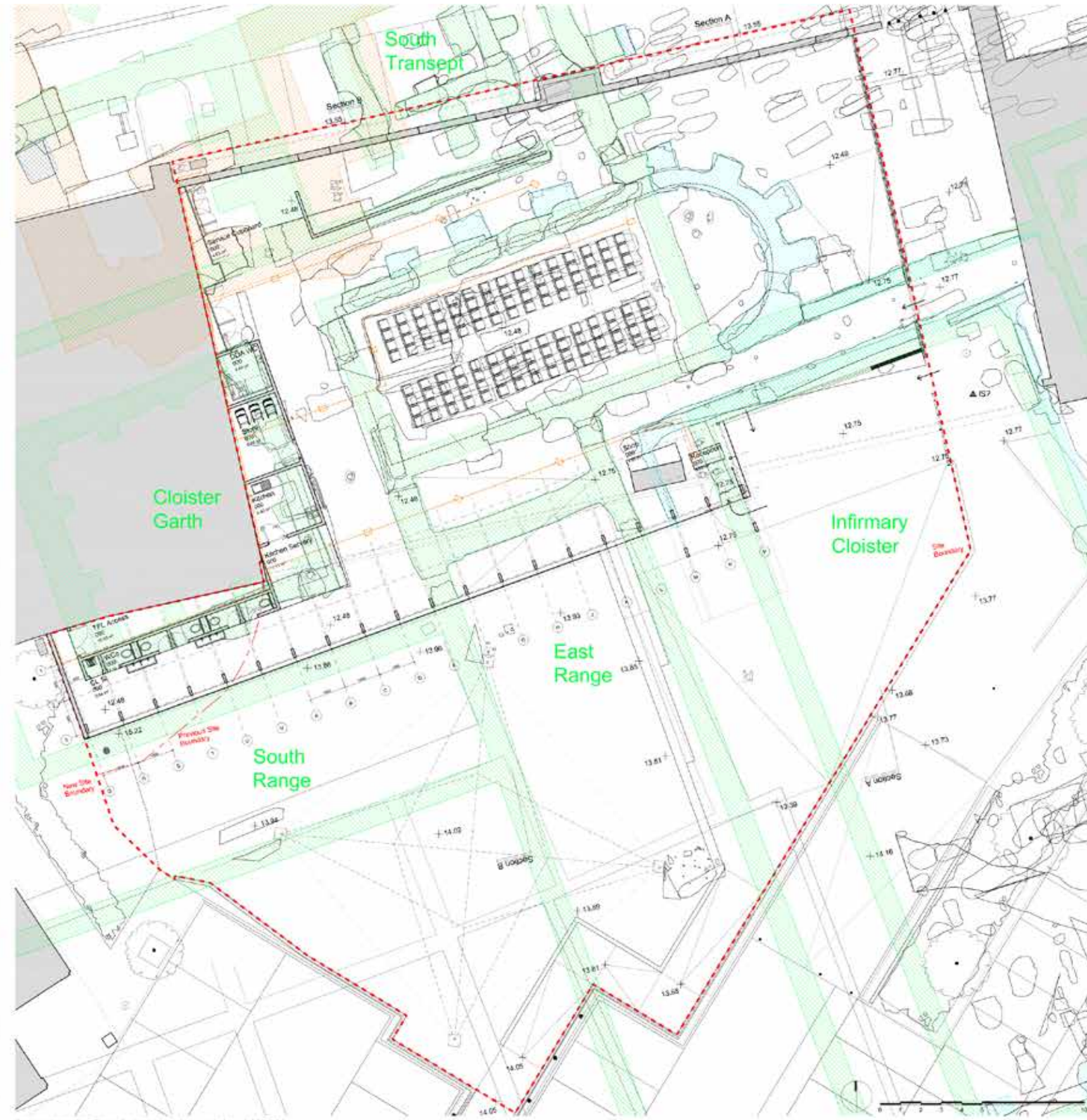


Proposed south wall and entrance to the visitor centre



Interior view of the proposed visitor centre

Haverstock
Studio 10, Cliff Road Studios (3rd Floor), London W14 3AN. Tel: +44(0)20 7297 7675. info@haverstock.com, www.haverstock.com



Proposed site plan: Phase 2 with archaeology underlay - 1:100@A1

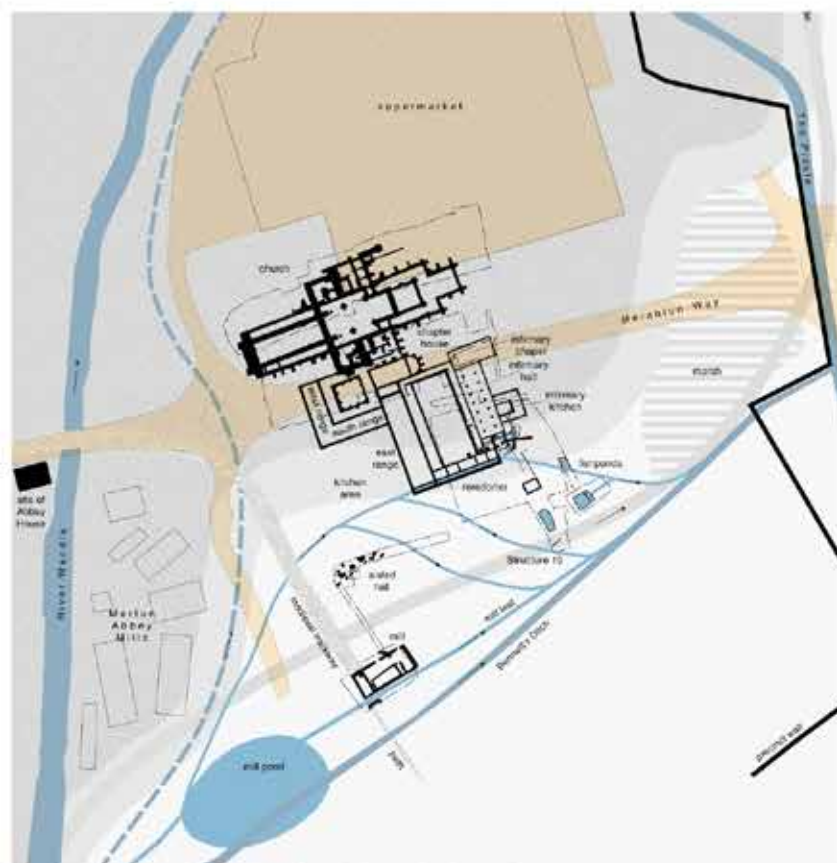


Living Wandle
Landscape Partnership

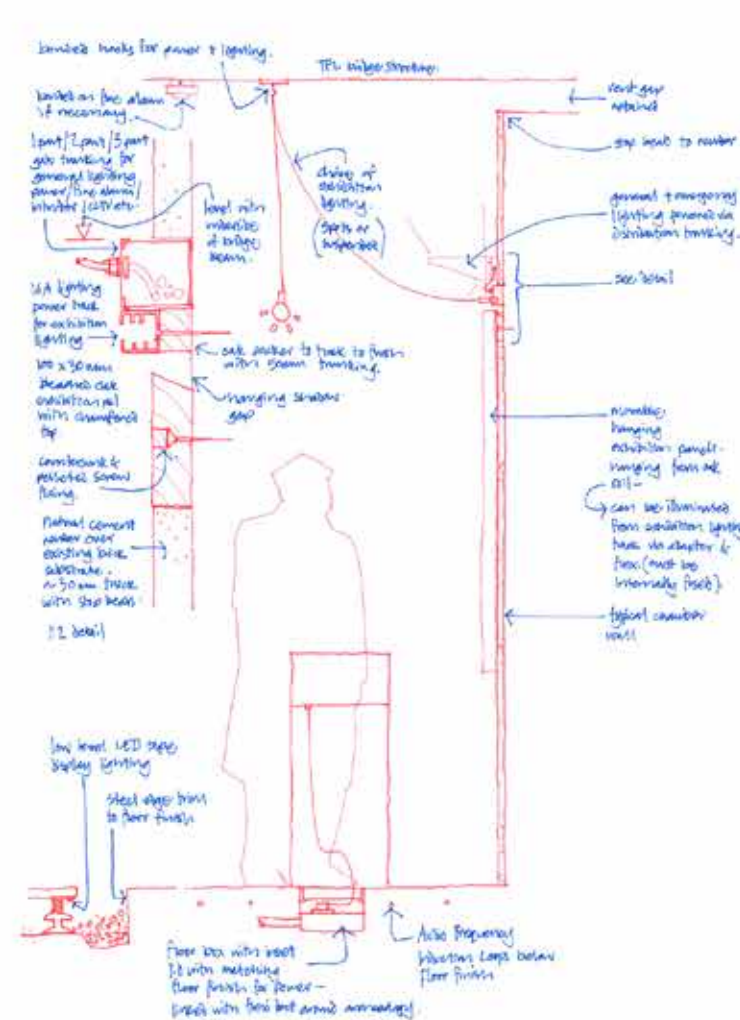
Merton Priory Chapter House Visitor Centre

Design Review Panel: 25.09.14 Board 2: Design Development

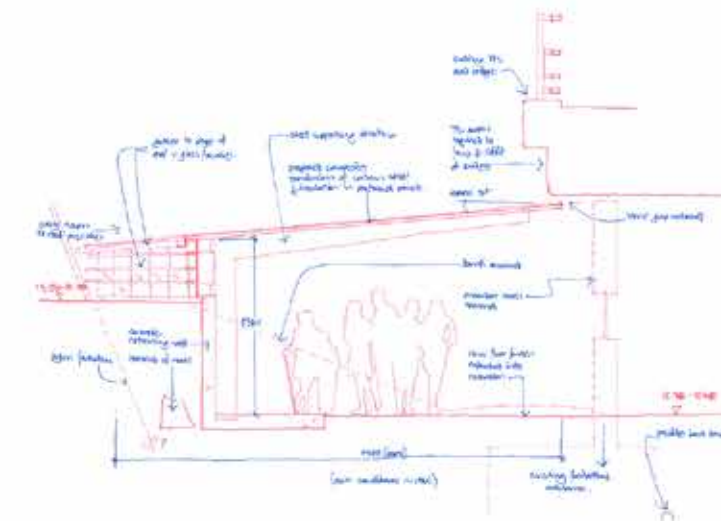
The design is informed by the historical layout of the Priory; new build elements follow the line of archaeology and attempt to reinterpret the spirit of the original Priory buildings. The use of prefabricated lightweight elements will minimise disruption of the historical remains and provide glimpses of the archaeology and exhibition within, intriguing and enticing visitors to explore the Chapter House and discover the significance of the original Priory.



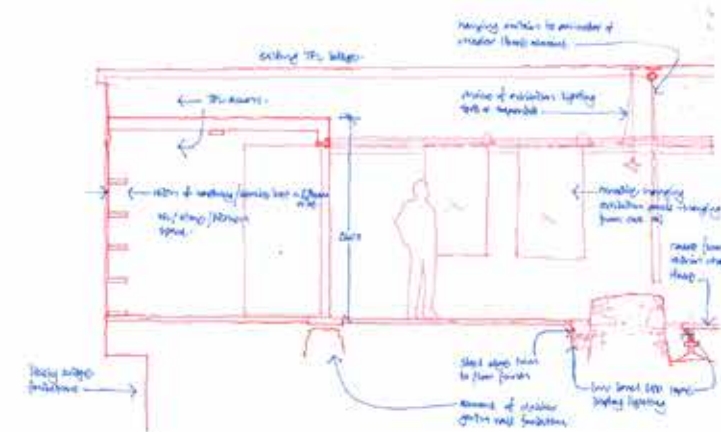
Site map showing location of former Mertonillery buildings and modern road system.



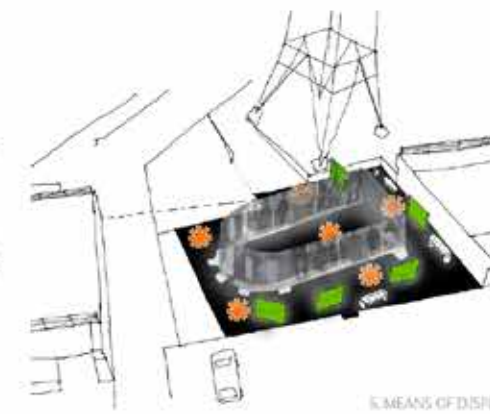
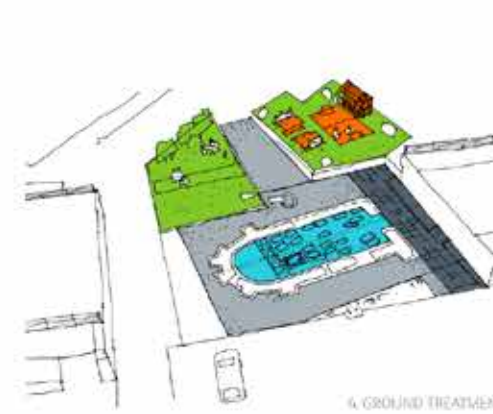
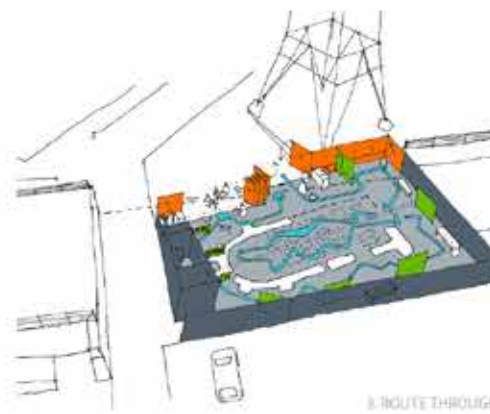
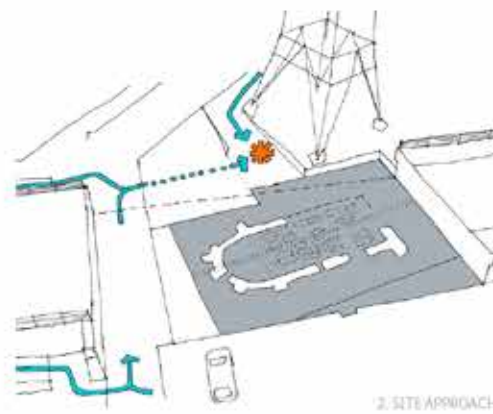
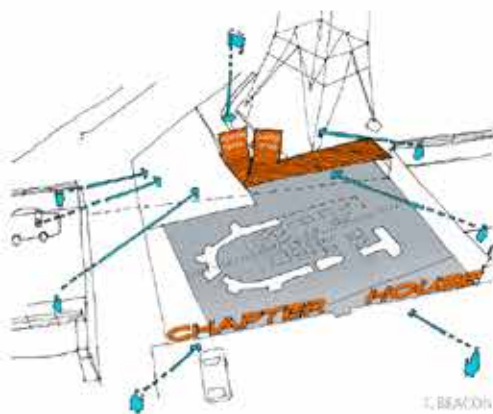
Sketch of proposed service distribution and means of display



Sketch section through proposed extension to the south of the site



Sketch section through the proposed ancillary space and relationship to remains

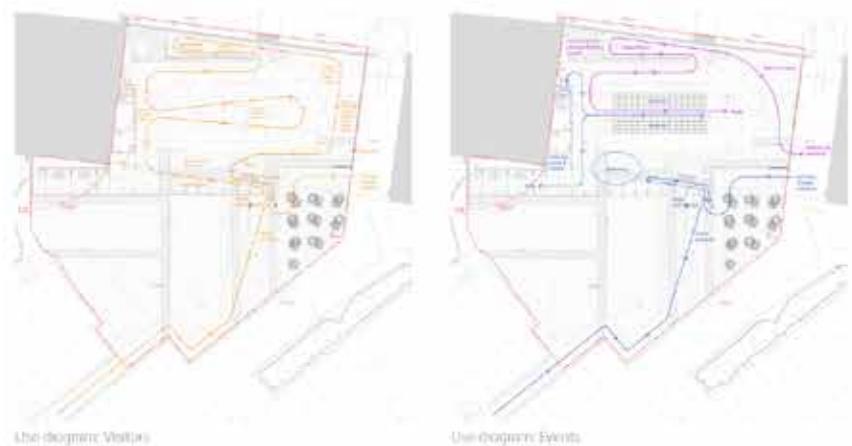


Flaverstock
Studio 10, 13 Hill Road, Studio, Croydon, Surrey, London, NW19 9AN, UK +44(0)20 7257 7676 info@flaverstock.com www.flaverstock.com



Merton Priory Chapter House Visitor Centre
Design Review Panel: 25.09.14 Board 4: Proposed Phasing & Elevations

The project seeks to celebrate and announce the history and existence of these fascinating remains to a wider audience whilst stabilising and preserving their current condition. The external appearance of the building looks to act as a beacon to the surrounding area highlighting the cultural significance of the site to the general public whilst maintaining a level of discretion and intrigue.



Precedent images of materiality and texture



Proposed section looking west from the Chapter House enclosure

Baverstock
Studio 10, Cliff Road Studios, Cliff Road, London NW9 5AX Tel: +44 (0)20 7267 7575 info@baverstock.com, www.baverstock.com



DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

NOTES OF MEETING Thursday 25th September 2014

Agenda and notes (where appropriate) can be viewed at the Council's website at:

<http://www.merton.gov.uk/living/designandconservation/designreviewpanel.htm>

Panel Members Present:

- Councillor John Bowcott
- Marcus Beale
- Tony Edwards
- Alistair Huggett
- Tony Michael
- Andre Sutherland
- Richard Walker
- Sally Warren

Apologies

- Paul Dodd

Council Officers Present:

- Paul Garrett
- Richard Lancaster
- Councillor Daniel Holden

Conflicts of Interest:

1. Marcus Beale sat as an observer for Item 1 as he had advised the architect on this proposal.
2. It was noted that Sally Warren lived in Haydon's Park Road, a street adjacent to the site in Item 2.
3. It was noted that Marcus Beale was working on a site adjacent to the site in Item 3.

No objections were raised regarding the points 1 to 3 above.

Notes:

Item 1: Pre-Application, No number Yet, **Merton Priory Chapter House Visitor Centre**,

The Panel welcomed the proposal and noted the significant challenges to the project posed by the very hostile surrounding environment. Overall they felt that some of the key elements of the proposal were the right things to do, but that further work was required in a number of areas to reach a proposal that was effective and coherent.

The Panel particularly supported the ideas of exposing the remains further, opening out the southern aspect to more daylight, aligning facilities with the archaeology and utilising the space for a range of uses – including performance. They also liked the improved entrance but it was not clear from the drawings on what this would actually look like.

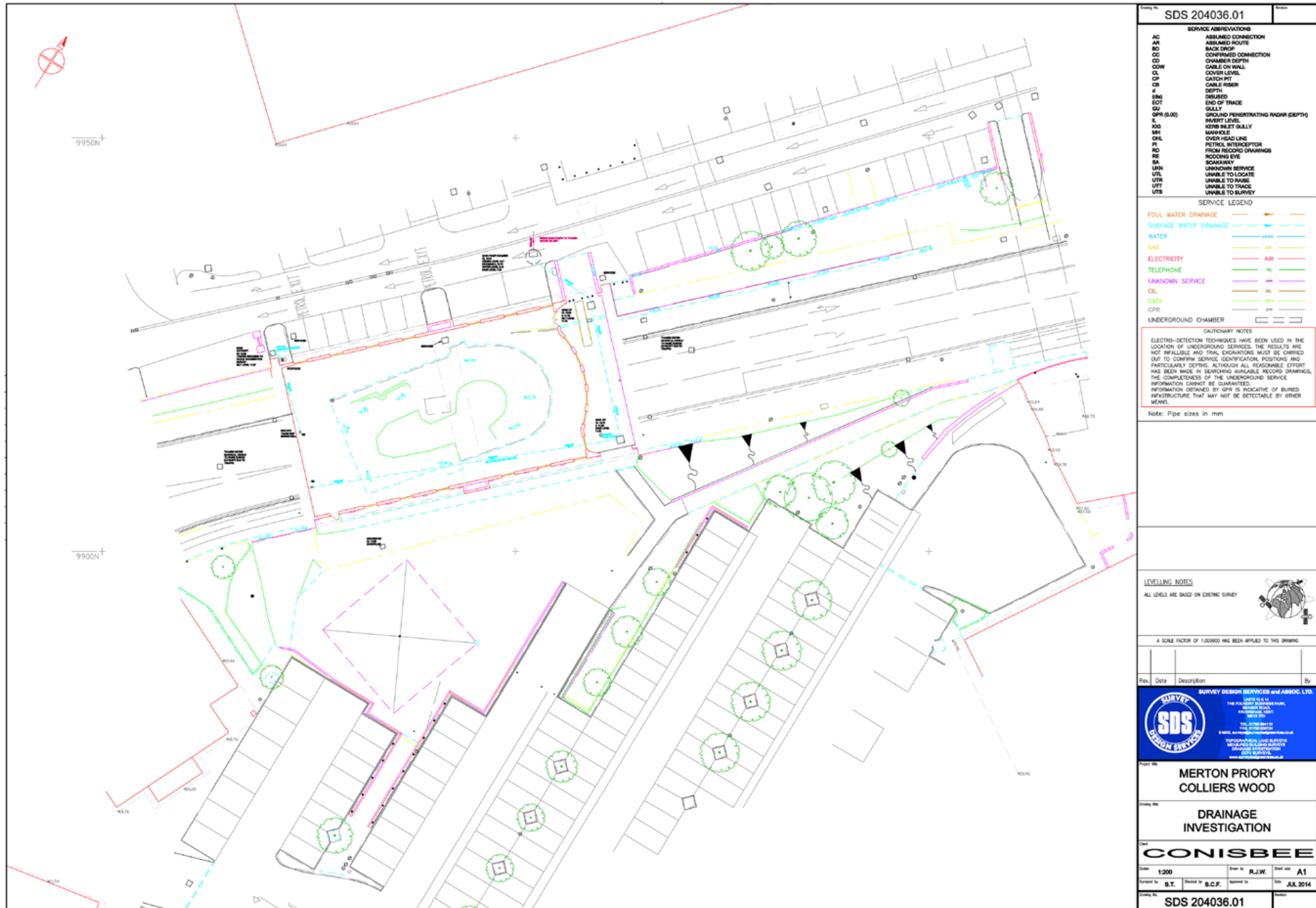
The Panel felt that the proposals did not look sufficiently beyond the somewhat arbitrary site boundary. This was evidenced by the access improvements not being as fully resolved as might be possible and, further afield, how the site connected with other local attractions such as the River Wandle, Merton Abbey Mills and Deen City Farm – as well as links into Colliers Wood.

It was felt that the route to the entrance needed improving, as did the route under Merantun Way, and that the raised planters did not relate well to the history and should be re-thought. It was suggested that a 'story-boarding' exercise should be undertaken to inform solutions and tell the story of what they were ultimately trying to achieve. This was not clear to the Panel – the applicant was encouraged to have a full plan for all they would like to achieve for the Chapter House and present it as a series of phases that could be implemented as funds allowed. They were encouraged to go to local land owners for funding.

It was felt that more work was needed on studying how people would arrive at the site – for example there was no cycle parking provision. It was suggested the existing crash barriers on the road above could be made solid to screen noise.

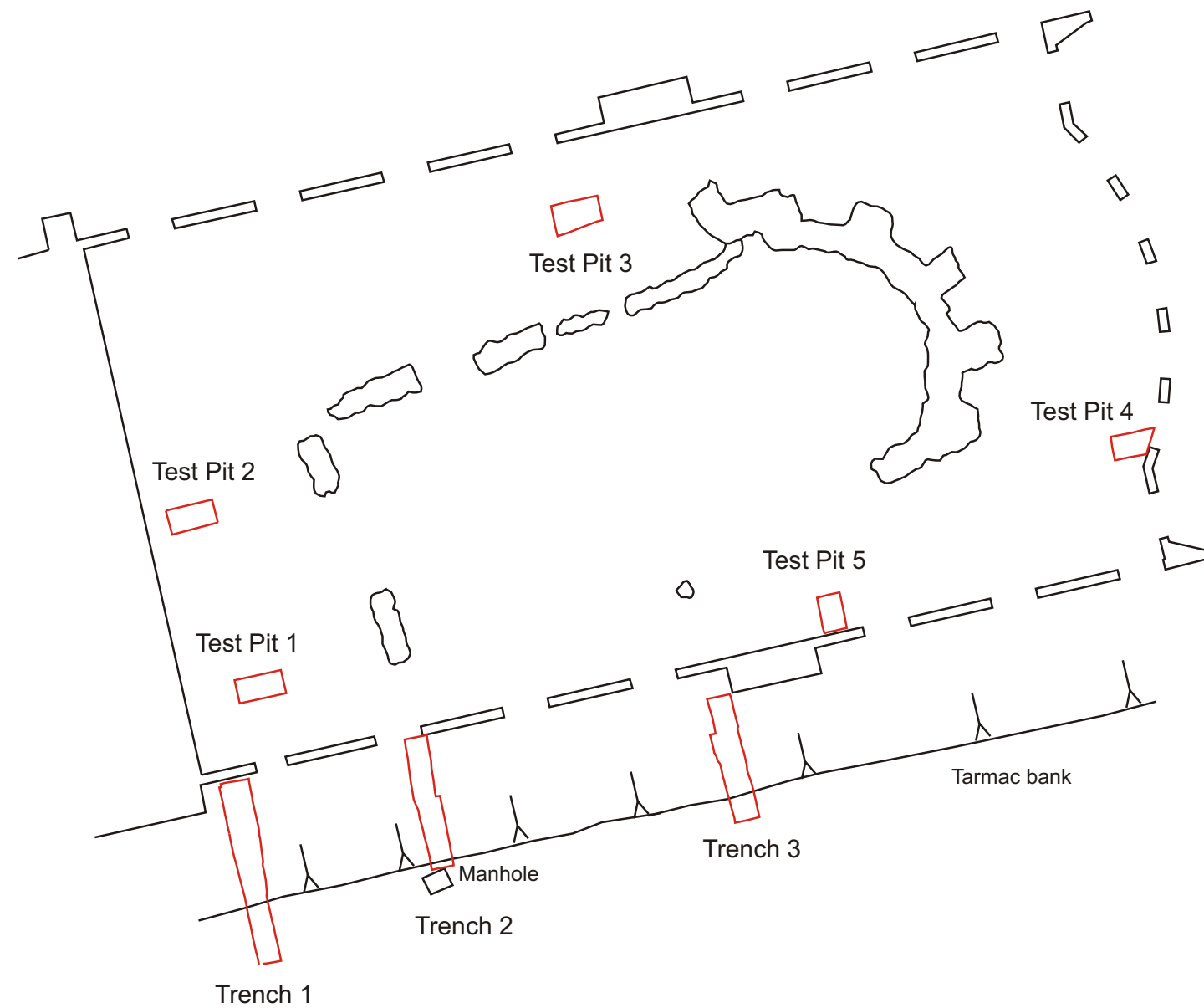
VERDICT: **AMBER**

Appendix: B Existing Drainage Survey



Archaeology Report

Dave Saxby from the Museum of London Archaeology department issued the archaeology report for the investigations at the Chapter House at Merton Priory on 23rd October 2014. The report documents the findings from the trial pits shown on the plan below.



**Merton Priory Chapter House,
Merantun Way, Colliers Wood,
SW19**

NGR 526540 169912

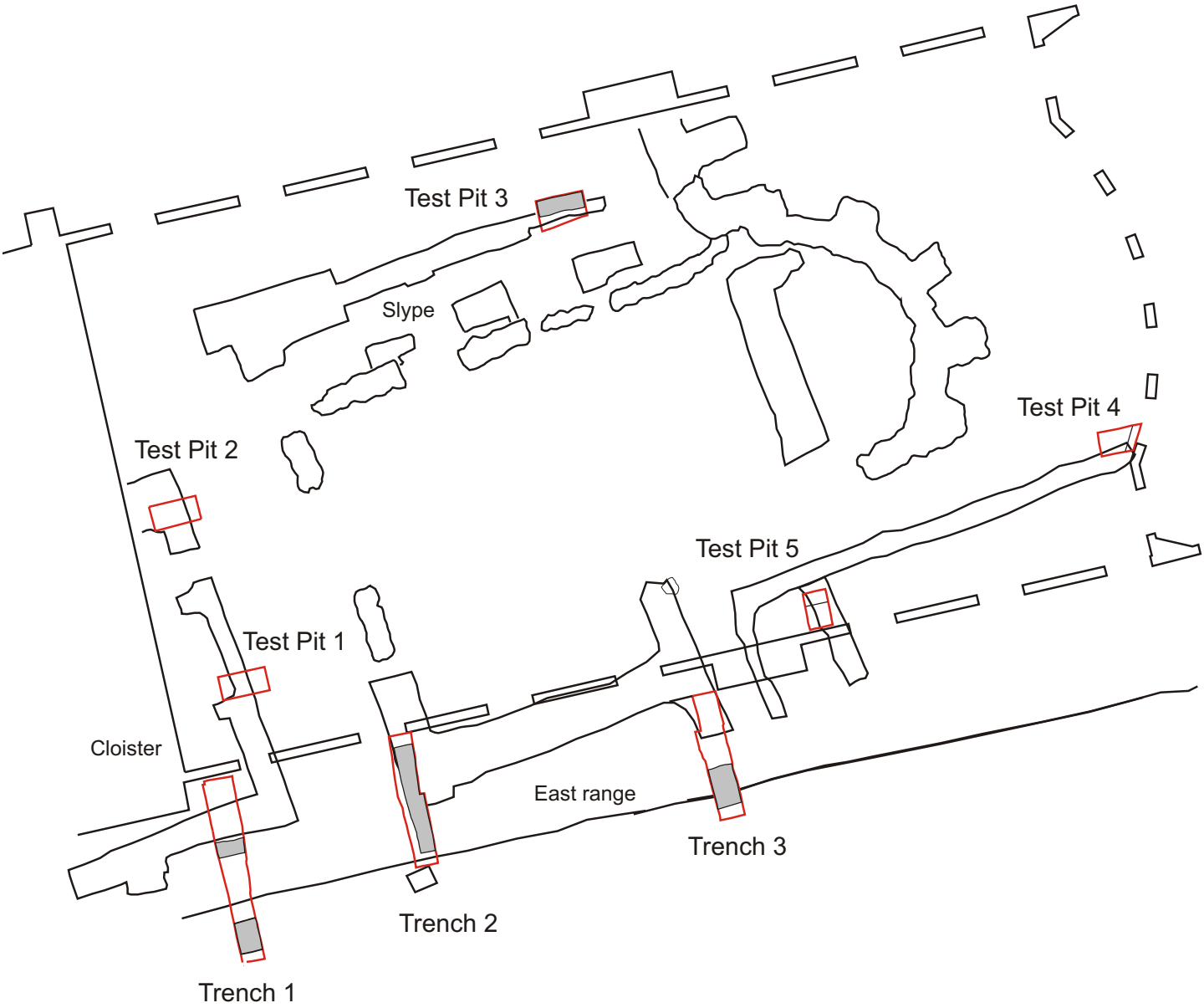
An evaluation report of the archaeological
Investigations at the Chapter House

David Saxby

23rd October 2014

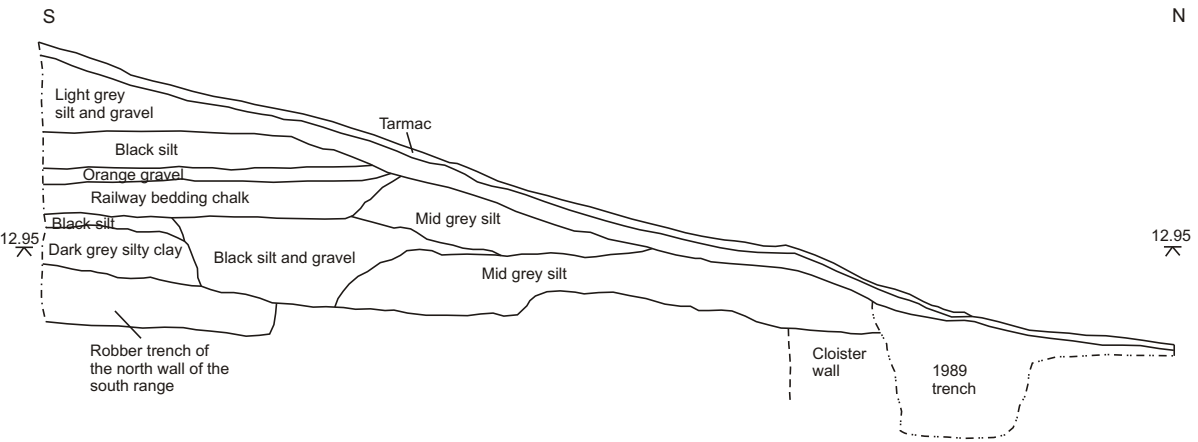
Archaeology Findings

The following pages show extracts from the Archaeology Report and the findings from the Trenches and Test Pits.



Trench 1 - Cloister Wall Foundation

Photograph of Trench 1, looking north showing the robbed wall of the south range (foreground) and the cloister wall foundation at the top of the photograph



Archaeology Findings



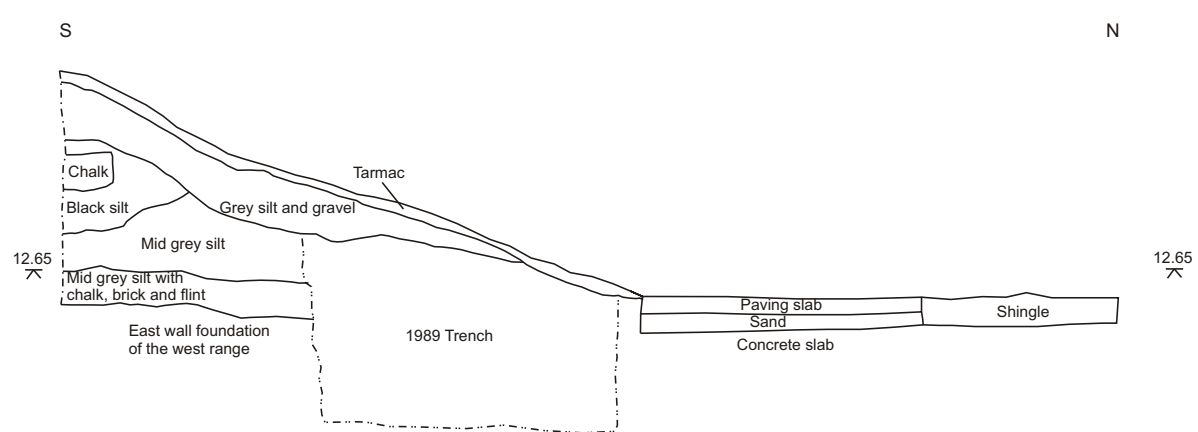
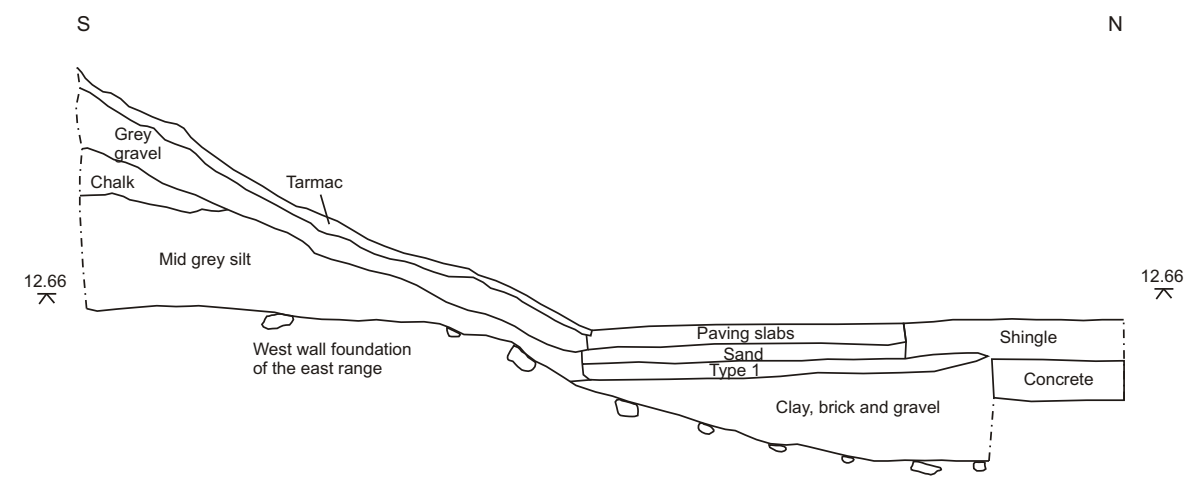
Trench 2 - East Range, West Wall Foundation

Photograph of Trench 2, looking south-east showing the flint wall foundation of the west wall of the east range



Trench 3 - East Range, East Wall Foundation

Photograph of Trench 3, looking south showing the flint wall foundation of the east wall of the east range



Archaeology Findings



Pit 3 - Slype Wall Foundation

Photograph of Test Pit 3, looking east



Further Findings

Further investigations have revealed the archaeological remains of the foundation of the original east wall of the Chapter House and the foundations of the buttresses along the north wall of the Chapter House.