Marsden Cottage

Design and Access Statement

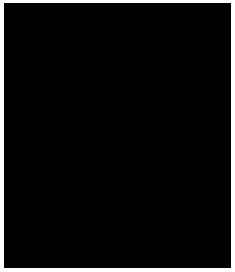
Client:
Private

Date:
26/11/2025

Address:
Marsden Cottage, Lizard Lane, South Shields, NE34 7AD

Building Design Northern

X



0.0 Contents

Building Design Northern

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Design Brief

This project involves the demolition of the existing building, which is currently in a poor structural and aesthetic condition, and the construction of a new, sustainable, and contemporary dwelling designed to complement and enhance the surrounding environment. The proposal includes a flat-roof design incorporating a living roof that will provide ecological benefits, support local biodiversity, and visually integrate the building into the landscape. Generous areas of glazing are proposed to maximise natural daylight and to take full advantage of the exceptional panoramic views across the north-east coastline, creating a strong visual connection between the interior spaces and the natural setting.

The new dwelling is intended to serve as a long-term family home, carefully designed to meet the needs of modern living. The layout and functionality of the spaces will support everyday family life while also embracing the unique characteristics and opportunities offered by the site. The overall aim is to create a high-quality, environmentally responsible home that sits sensitively within its context and makes the most of its remarkable coastal location.

The Development Team

Architect	Fitz Architects Ltd
Planning Consultant	Lichfields
Heritage Consultant	Lichfields
Drainage Consultant	Building Design Northern Ltd
Arboricultural Consultant	Andrew Burden Arboricultural
Ecologist	BioDiverse Consulting
Ground Investigation	Tellus Geoconsult

2.0 Site information

2.1 Site information

Site Description

Marsden Cottage is a two-storey detached dwelling of low architectural quality, featuring a mix of render, cladding, and stonework to the external walls, along with a concrete tiled roof.

The property sits to the west of Lizard Lane and is accessed via a private road, which also provides access to the neighbouring property, Swallow Ridge, situated further west. Swallow Ridge screens Marsden Cottage from view when approaching from the west. To the east lies Marsden Hall, a large two-storey detached property set within an extensive plot, which in turn obscures views of Marsden Cottage from Lizards Lane. To the south, Whitburn Golf Course forms the boundary, with dense, mature trees preventing views of the cottage from the course.

The elevated position of the site affords expansive views to the north across South Tyneside, North Tyneside, and toward Northumberland, as well as views to the north-east over the sea and coastline. The ground floor level of the cottage sits approximately 2.3m above the adjacent road, and the property includes raised decking areas along the principal north elevation, as well as to the east and south, the latter incorporating a first-floor balcony.

From the raised eastern decking, there are views toward the rear elevation of the neighbouring dwelling, Marsden Hall. A detached, flat-roofed single garage lies to the east of the site at a lower level than the main house and also accommodates an LPG tank serving the property. The rear garden contains a large single-storey outbuilding and an area of hard landscaping.

The South Tyneside Local Development Framework Site Specific Allocations development plan identifies the site and its surroundings as part of the designated Green Belt (LDF Policy EA1), as well as within the Great North Forest and an Area of High Landscape Value. Immediately to the north of the site lies a Local Nature Reserve, a Local Geodiversity Site, and a further Area of High Landscape Value.

The application site is situated on Lizard Lane in South Shields, approximately 3.9 miles from South Shields town centre and 4.8 miles from Sunderland City Centre. The A19, a major strategic route, is located around 4.2 miles away, providing convenient access to the wider North East region in all directions.

The development site covers an area of 0.3 hectares and is accessed via a private driveway leading directly from Lizard Lane.

2.2 Site analysis

Site Conditions

The site forms part of a small cluster of residential properties situated within a semi-rural coastal setting on the edge of South Shields. The plot is positioned immediately north of Whitburn Golf Course, which borders the site with expanses of open fairway and managed green space. Mature tree planting and established vegetation enclose much of the site, providing a natural buffer between the dwelling and the adjacent golf course.

To the east and northeast, the landscape opens toward the coastline, with uninterrupted views toward the North Sea. Beyond the coastal edge sits a caravan park and, further inland, a larger residential estate characterised by suburban housing. These areas are visually separated from the site by a combination of topography, tree cover, and open grassland.

To the north and north-west of the circled plot are areas of open countryside forming part of the Marsden Old Hall Quarry Local Nature Reserve. This landscape largely consists of grassed areas, contributing to the wider ecological and recreational value of the locality. The natural environment helps create a sense of openness and separation from the denser residential areas further north.

Directly surrounding the site are a handful of sizeable detached properties set within generous plots. The site is screened on most sides by mature trees, giving it a private, enclosed character despite its elevated position. This elevation provides long-range views across South Tyneside and toward the coastline.

Green Belt

The circled site lies within a South Tyneside green belt zone, where the priority is to protect the openness of the landscape. It forms part of a small group of dwellings surrounded by open coastal land, the nearby nature reserve, and Whitburn Golf Course, all contributing to the area's rural and open character.

Any development in this location must demonstrate that it will not harm green belt openness or conflict with its purposes. In response to the green belt policy requirements, the new house proposed for this site has been designed sensitively, with careful consideration of the relevant policies, ensuring the form, scale, and appearance respect the openness and landscape character of the area.

Trees

The arboricultural reports submitted as part of this planning application provide a comprehensive assessment of the trees on the site. Based on these reports, it is proposed that most trees on site, particularly those of high quality, will be carefully managed and maintained throughout the development process.

Appropriate measures will be implemented to ensure their long-term health, protection, and contribution to the site's overall landscape and ecological value.

3.0 Historical analysis

3.1 Historical mapping

Site Conditions

An initial search conducted by Tyne and Wear Archives confirmed that there are no historic building records available for Marsden Cottage or Marsden Hall. In the absence of such records, this assessment has drawn upon historic Ordnance Survey maps, tithe maps, historic photographs, and newspaper articles to provide an overview of the historic development of both Marsden Cottage and Marsden Hall.

The naming of the site has evolved over time, with the same names being applied to different parts of the property at different periods. In the 1830s, the main house was referred to as Marsden Cottage, while by the 1850s it was commonly called Marsden (or Marsdon) Hall. In more recent times, the principal house has continued to be known as Marsden Hall, whereas the smaller dwelling to the north-west is now identified as Marsden Cottage.

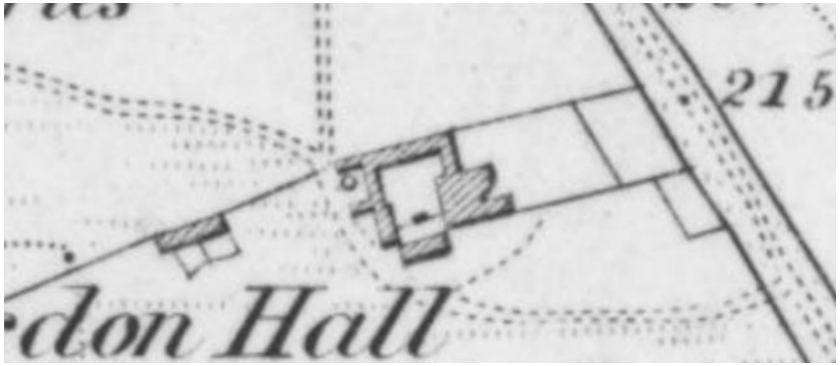
1830

On 22 May 1830, the Durham Chronicle published an advertisement for the auction of Marsden Cottage. At that time, the property was set within 27 acres of farmland, with the entrance marked by a lodge. The house itself included an entrance hall, dining room, library, breakfast rooms, bathrooms, a butler's pantry, two kitchens, dairies, pantries, cellars, a drawing room, five lodging rooms, a dressing room, and attic servants' quarters. The grounds also featured a detached double coach house, two stables, a cow house, piggery, and dog kennel. The property had been occupied by William Barras, who had carried out significant improvements.

3.2 Historical mapping

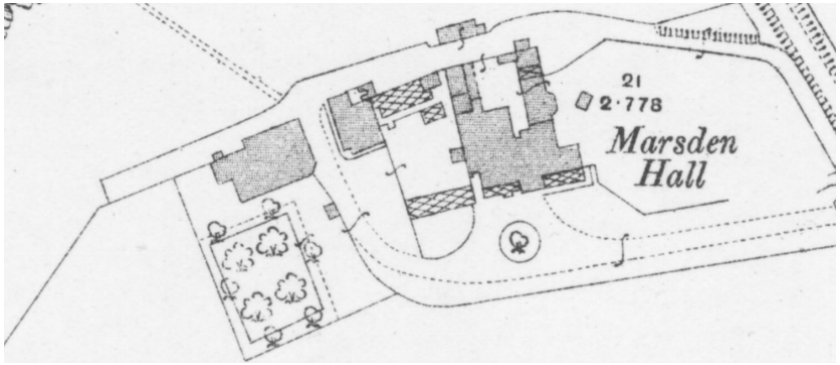
1840

The tithe mapping produced in January 1840 shows that the site, which included the mansion house and associated farm buildings arranged around a courtyard with the house to the south and a gin-gang to the east. At this time, the house was occupied by the Henderson family.



1855

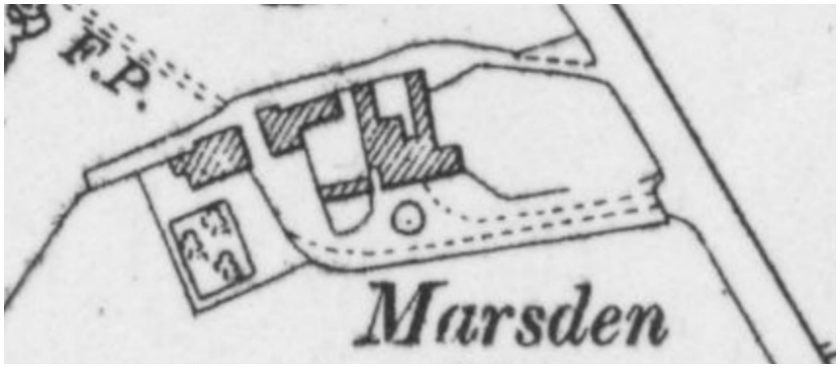
The first edition 6-inch OS map, surveyed in 1855, indicates that the plan of the farmstead had changed. Although the courtyard plan is still evident, the south-east range of buildings appears to have been significantly enlarged and the gin-gang appears to have been lost as part of this phase of development. At this time, the site is identified as 'Marsden Hall'.



1912

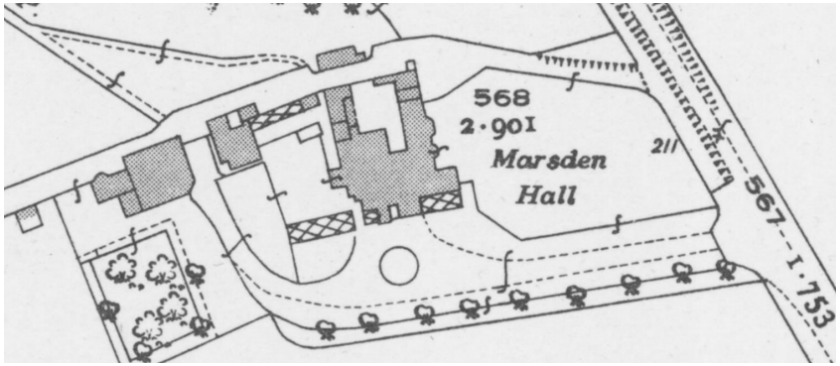
Marsden Cottage is indicated with attached outbuildings and glasshouses which were likely connected to Marsden Hall by boundary walls. Further glasshouses are indicated to the south of Marsden Hall and the detached building to the west is shown to have been significantly enlarged with a formal garden arranged to the south.

3.3 Historical mapping



1938

The 6-inch OS map revision of 1938 suggests that the layout of the buildings had remained unchanged since 1912.



1946

The 25-inch map revision of 1942 suggests that the glasshouse attached to the east of Marsden Cottage had been slightly reduced in scale compared with what was surveyed in 1912, but the overall arrangement of buildings remained much the same.

At the time of the 1942 survey, the Hall was in use by the army.

1954-67

Marsden Cottage continued to be physically linked to Marsden Hall, possibly by the earlier glasshouse structure or by a subsequent infill structure, but it is not possible to confirm this using the available mapping from this period due to the limited detail.

In 1959 the National Coal Board completed a new office block in Whitburn and in the late 1960s the Hall was sold and converted back into residential use.

3.4 Historical mapping

Later Developments

Aerial photographs from 2001 indicate that the buildings on the site had undergone substantial alterations. The west wing at the rear of Marsden Hall had been removed, and the structures formerly attached to the east of Marsden Cottage had also been demolished, leaving the cottage more isolated than in its historic configuration.

Since that time, extensions have been added to the east elevation of the cottage; however, these additions have not replicated the former extent of development that once filled the space between the cottage and Marsden Hall.

Conclusion

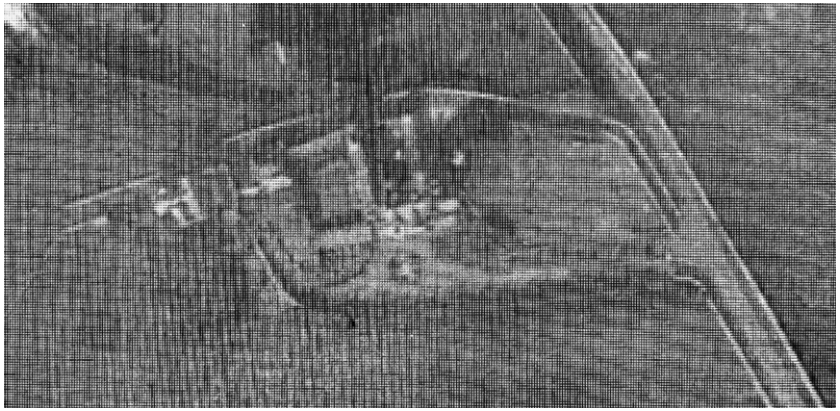
Historic maps and contemporary descriptions show that, at the time the planning system was introduced in 1948, Marsden Cottage included buildings extending further east than the current house. Extending the building eastwards today would therefore be consistent with historic views of the site from the north, maintaining the historic visual relationship with Marsden Hall and partially obscuring long-range sight lines through the property.

With careful consideration of layout, height, and materials, an eastern extension is considered to constitute appropriate development that respects the historic character of the site.

3.5 Historical photographs

1902

Marsden Hall was unoccupied between 1900 and 1904 and there were various short term lets until the First World War when it used by the Durham Light Infantry.



1946

RAF aerial imagery taken in February 1946 shows Marsden Cottage and a linked range to the east, likely to be the glasshouse structure indicated on mapping since 1912. There do not appear to be any changes to the general layout of the buildings at Marsden Hall.

At the time of the aerial imagery being taken, Marsden Hall was vacant following the end of the building's military use in 1944. The building remained vacant until 1947 when the building was taken over by the National Coal Board. In 1948, the National Coal Board were granted permission to convert the Hall into offices.

3.6 Historical photographs

1946

In relation to the historic footprint of the site, the image to the left has been identified from February 1946 which confirms the historic mapping evidence of there being a building/extension to the side of the property historically.

4.0 Constraints & opportunities

4.1 Opportunities & constraints

Opportunities

- Maximise views
- Sustainable materials
- Green roofs and walls
- Natural daylighting
- Rainwater management
- Habitat creation
- Coastal vistas
- Connection to nature
- Sound and wind integration

Constraints

- Planning designations
- Topography
- Utilities
- Maintenance challenges

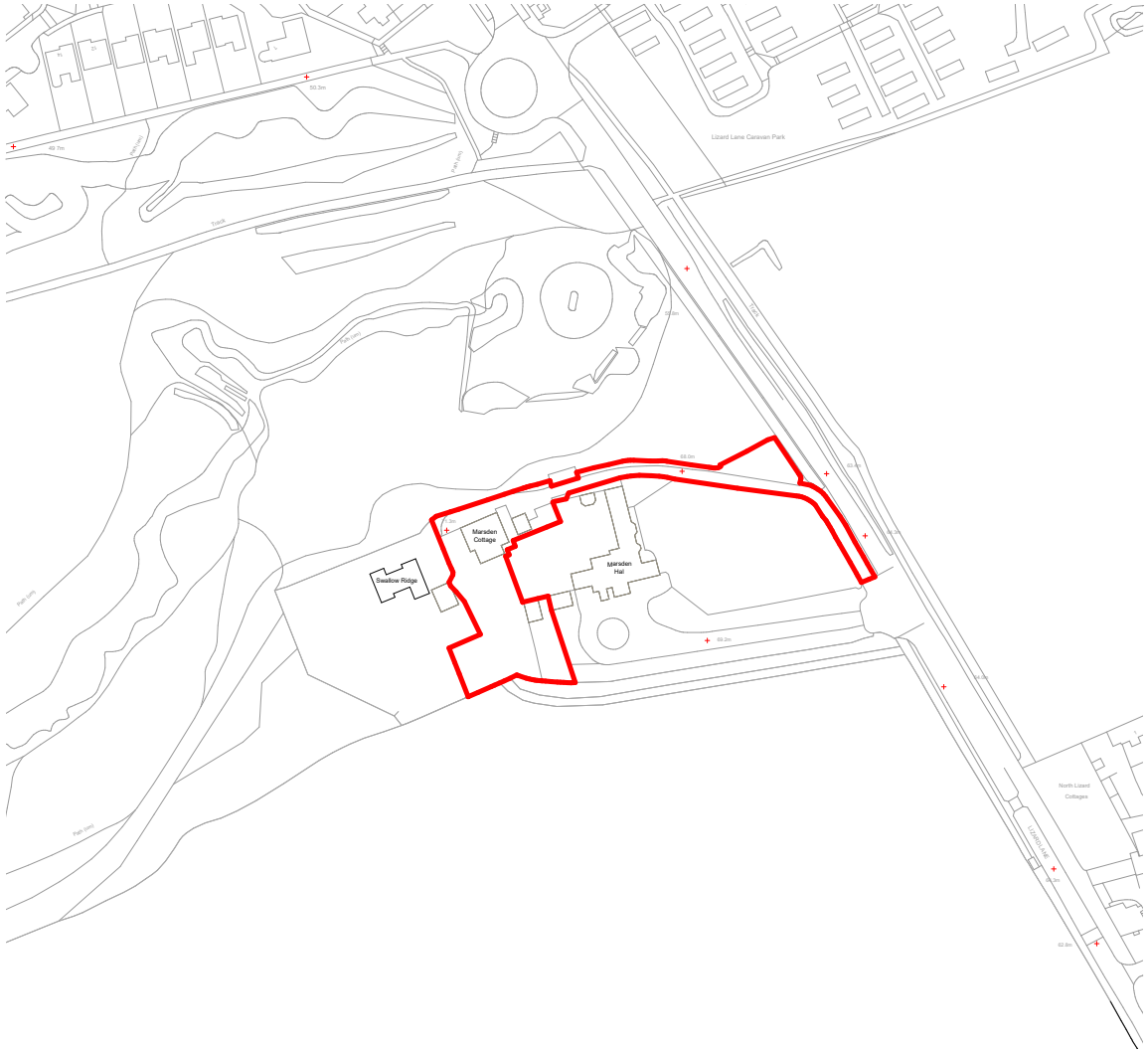
Response

The opportunities and constraints of the site will guide a sensitive and considered design approach. Coastal and ecological features will be celebrated through building orientation, landscaping, and the use of natural materials, creating spaces that maximise views while enhancing biodiversity. Constraints such as protected habitats and topography, will be addressed through careful design consideration, and a sensitive proposal which will contribute to the surrounding environment.

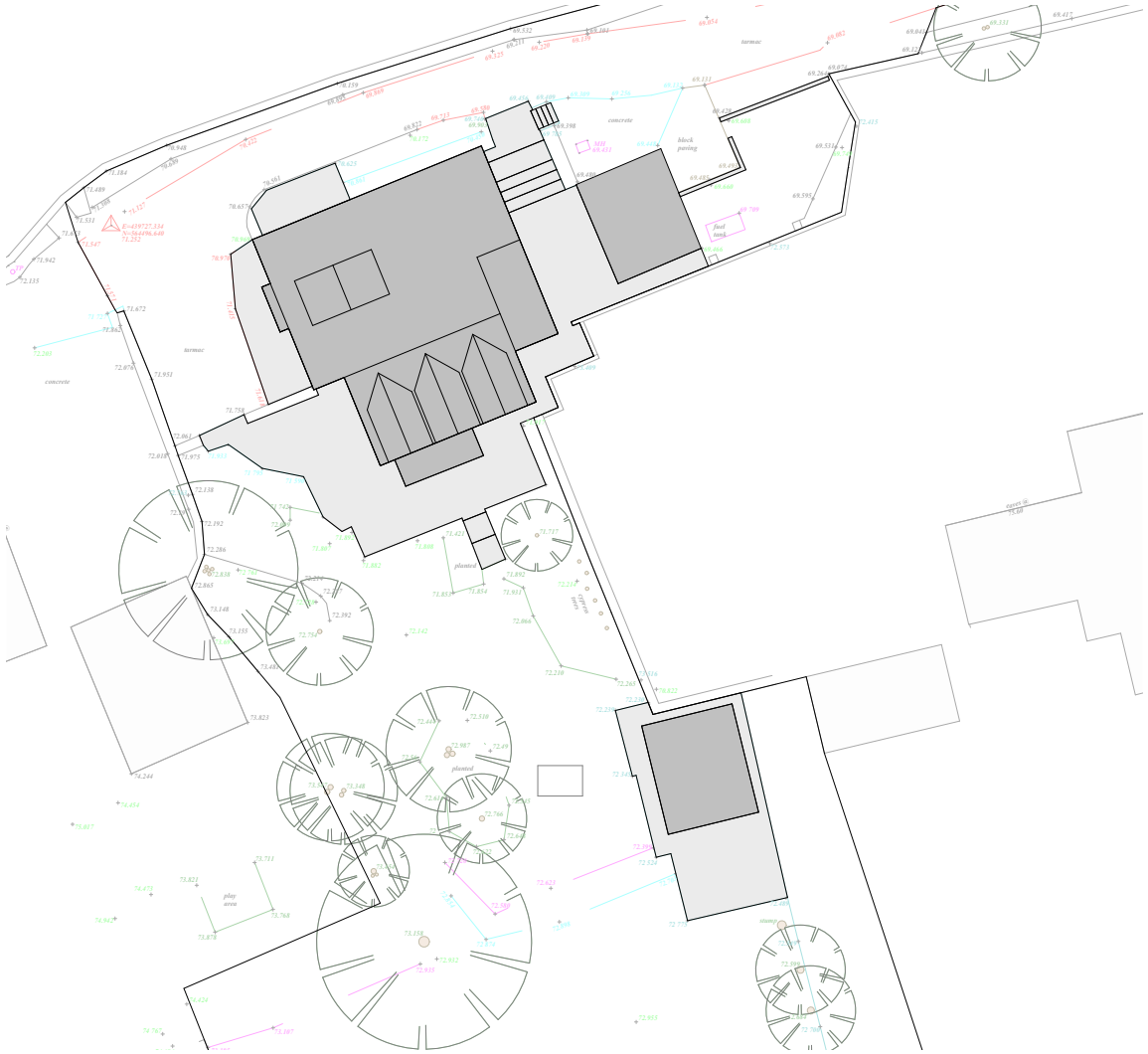
The development will be designed to minimise disturbance to wildlife, maintain views, and integrate with the natural and historic character of the site. By responding pro-actively to these factors, the proposal will achieve a balanced outcome that respects the environment, maximises the site's unique qualities, and delivers a functional and visually appealing dwelling.

5.0 Existing information

5.1 Location plan



5.2 Existing site plan



5.3 Aerial views

View looking south

View looking north

5.4 Existing property photographs

5.5 Existing property photographs

5.6 Existing property analysis

From a design perspective, the existing property does not fully capitalise on the site's exceptional panoramic views.

We are proposing to demolish the existing dwelling and replace it with a purpose-built, contemporary home to better meet the family's spatial requirements. This approach allows for a design that fully responds to the site, rather than simply extending the existing building which would be achievable without having to gain planning permission using permitted development guidelines.

The proposal involves the removal of the current house, and raised structures, to create an opportunity to deliver a home with enhanced sustainability, modern design characteristics, and a layout that maximises the site's outlook.

The new proposal would be smaller in footprint than the existing built form on site, reducing the footprint from 320 sq/m (existing built form), to 273.5 sq/m (proposed dwelling footprint). Furthermore, the first floor will sit lower than the existing property. This will subsequently improve the openness of the immediate context, respecting the setting of neighbouring houses, and preserving the wider landscape character.

Green Belt Considerations

Paragraph 149 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt but lists several exceptions which are:

- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, or

- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.

- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.

6.0 Pre-application considerations

6.1 Pre-application advice

A planning application for the proposal would be assessed against the following adopted South Tyneside Local Development Framework (LDF) Development Plan policies and associated Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs):

- DM1 (A) Management of Development-Design (LDF Development Management Policies)
- DM1 (B) Management of Development-Residential Amenity (LDF Development Management Policies)
- SPD9 Householder Developments
- EA1 Local Character and Distinctiveness (LDF Core Strategy)
- EA3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity (LDF Core Strategy)
- EA5 Environmental Protection (LDF Core Strategy)
- DM7 Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sites (LDF Development Management Policies)
- DM1 (G) Management of Development-Highways and Access (LDF Development Management Policies)
- SPD6 Parking Standards

6.2 Pre-application advice

Following pre-application advice, the information required to validate this planning application included the below:

- Completed planning application form
- Site location plan
- Existing & proposed elevations, floor plans, and site plans
- The correct fee
- Appropriate bat surveys
- Visual impact assessment
- Tree survey / arboricultural reports
- Phase 1 land contamination assessment

6.3 Pre-application advice

Statements from pre-application advice and responses

Comment

- "In terms of rebuilding the existing dwelling with a larger building, the Spatial Policy Team have responded to this enquiry and note that the proposed development has an enlarged footprint of 45m² (an addition of 14%) in comparison with the existing property. Therefore this would be materially larger than the building being replaced"

- "The proposal states that the height of the roof line would be reduced and therefore the openness and visual impact of the property on the Green Belt would not be made greater in this respect. However the dwelling would be significantly wider which would have a clear visual and spatial impact on openness"

Response

The proposed design has been carefully and thoughtfully developed to ensure that a conservative and sympathetic approach is applied throughout the project. In shaping the proposal, particular attention has been given to the inherent openness and character of the green belt.

The new proposal would be smaller in footprint than the existing built form on site, reducing the footprint from 320 sq/m (existing built form), to 273.5 sq/m (proposed dwelling footprint). Furthermore, the proposed dwelling has been sunken into the ground in order to ensure that the building will sit below the ridge line of the existing property. This will subsequently improve the openness of the immediate context, respecting the setting of neighbouring houses, and preserving the wider landscape character.

The proposed design not only minimises visual and spatial impact but also actively contributes to the ongoing protection of the green belt's essential qualities.

Comment

- "However the isolated nature of the site is noted, along with the historic footprint of outbuildings, and the design may be acceptable in visual amenity terms (again not withstanding the Green Belt issues) subject to the use of appropriate facing materials"

Response

The proposed building has been carefully designed to incorporate a sympathetic and context-appropriate material palette. The selection of materials has been guided by a desire to ensure that the building integrates seamlessly with its surroundings, both in colour and texture. By drawing inspiration from the natural environment, the proposal aims to soften its visual presence and reinforce the character of the area. This considered approach ensures that the development will sit comfortably within its setting and make a positive, unobtrusive contribution to the green belt.

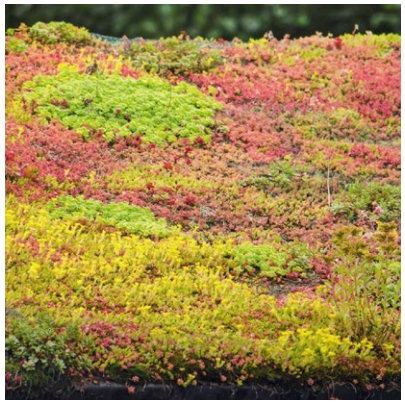
The proposed material pallete consists of timber cladding, natural stone, living roofs, dark grey cladding and glazing, which are considered in more detail overleaf and illustrated in the elevations and rendered visuals in sections 7 and 8 respectively.

6.4 Pre-application advice

Material palette in relation to pre-app advice

Timber cladding

Timber cladding provides advantages for buildings in green belt areas. As a natural, renewable material, it integrates effortlessly with rural landscapes, helping developments remain discreet and unobtrusive. Overall, timber cladding offers an environmentally considerate, visually sympathetic, and sustainable solution for green belt settings.



Living roof

Living roofs offer several advantages for green belt areas. They help preserve nature by adding vegetation to buildings without using extra land. In green belt regions, they support sustainable development by integrating built structures more harmoniously with the surrounding environment while maintaining ecological balance.

Natural stone

Natural stone offers several advantages for green belt areas. It is a durable, environmentally friendly material that blends naturally into landscapes, supporting a more harmonious visual environment. Its porous structure supports biodiversity by creating micro-habitats for small organisms.

Aluminium glazing

Aluminium glazing offers several advantages that make it an excellent choice for design in green belt areas. Its strength and slim sightlines allow for larger expanses of glass, maximizing natural light and creating unobtrusive views that blend sensitively with the surrounding landscape, as well as being highly durable and weather-resistant.

6.5 Pre-application advice

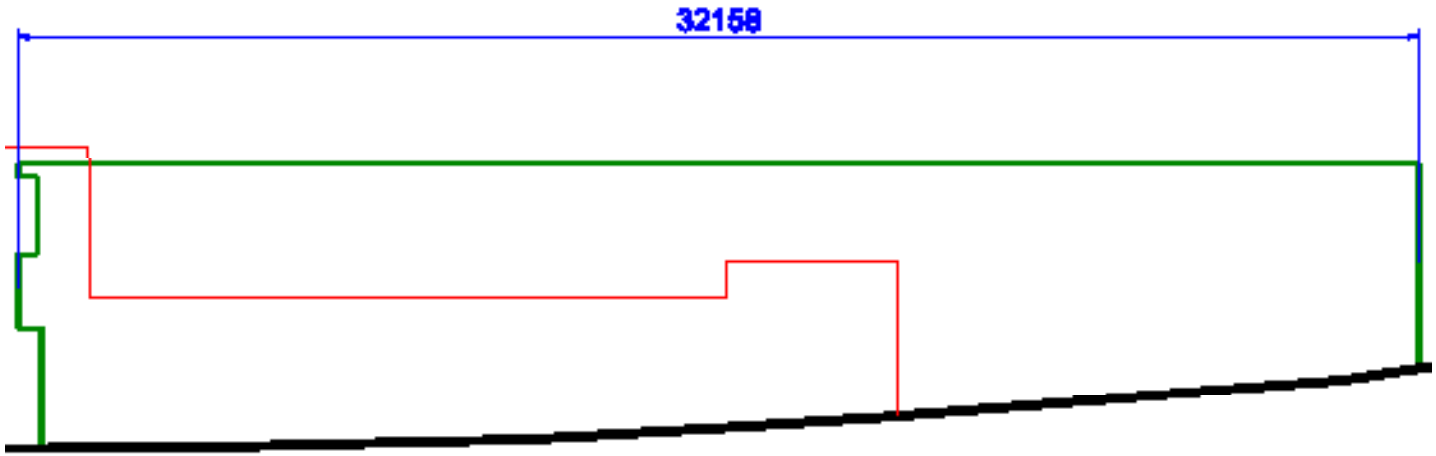
A key consideration in the design, in relation to preserving the openness of the Green Belt, has been to reduce the width of the principal north elevation in order to minimise its impact on the surrounding setting.

As a result of this design process, the width of the north elevation has been significantly reduced from that submitted at the pre-application stage. The comparative dimensions are set out below:

Pre-application design width: **32.1m**
Proposed dwelling width: **26.1m**

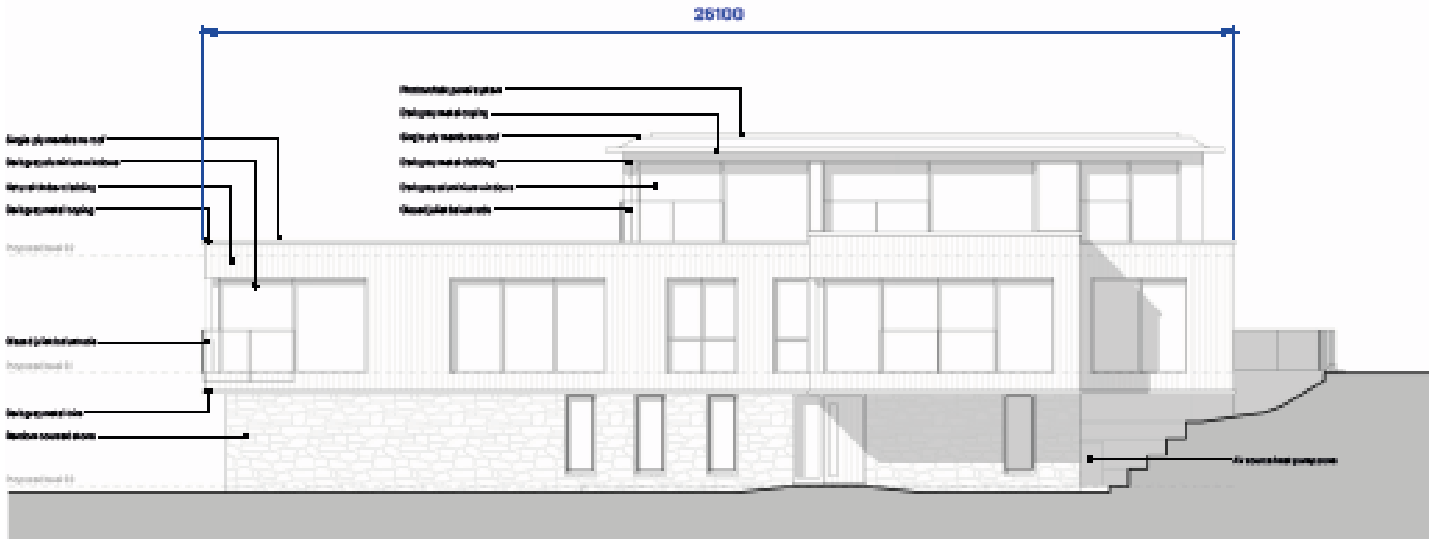
This represents a reduction of 6.0m, which will result in a substantial and positive improvement to the openness of the Green Belt setting.

6.6 Pre-application advice



Green = Outline of pre-application proposal

Elevation width = 32.1m

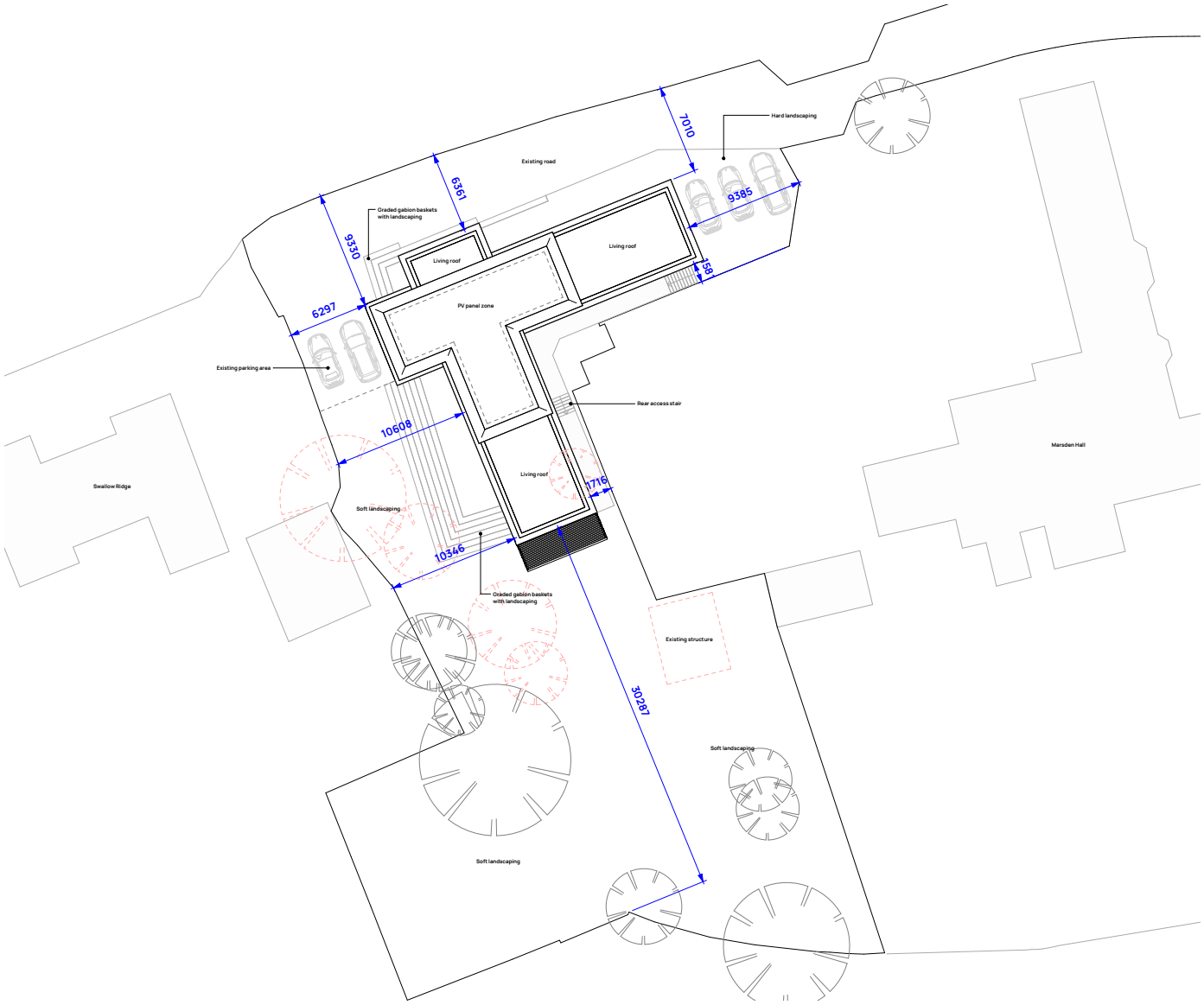


Elevation of current proposal

Elevation width = 26.1m

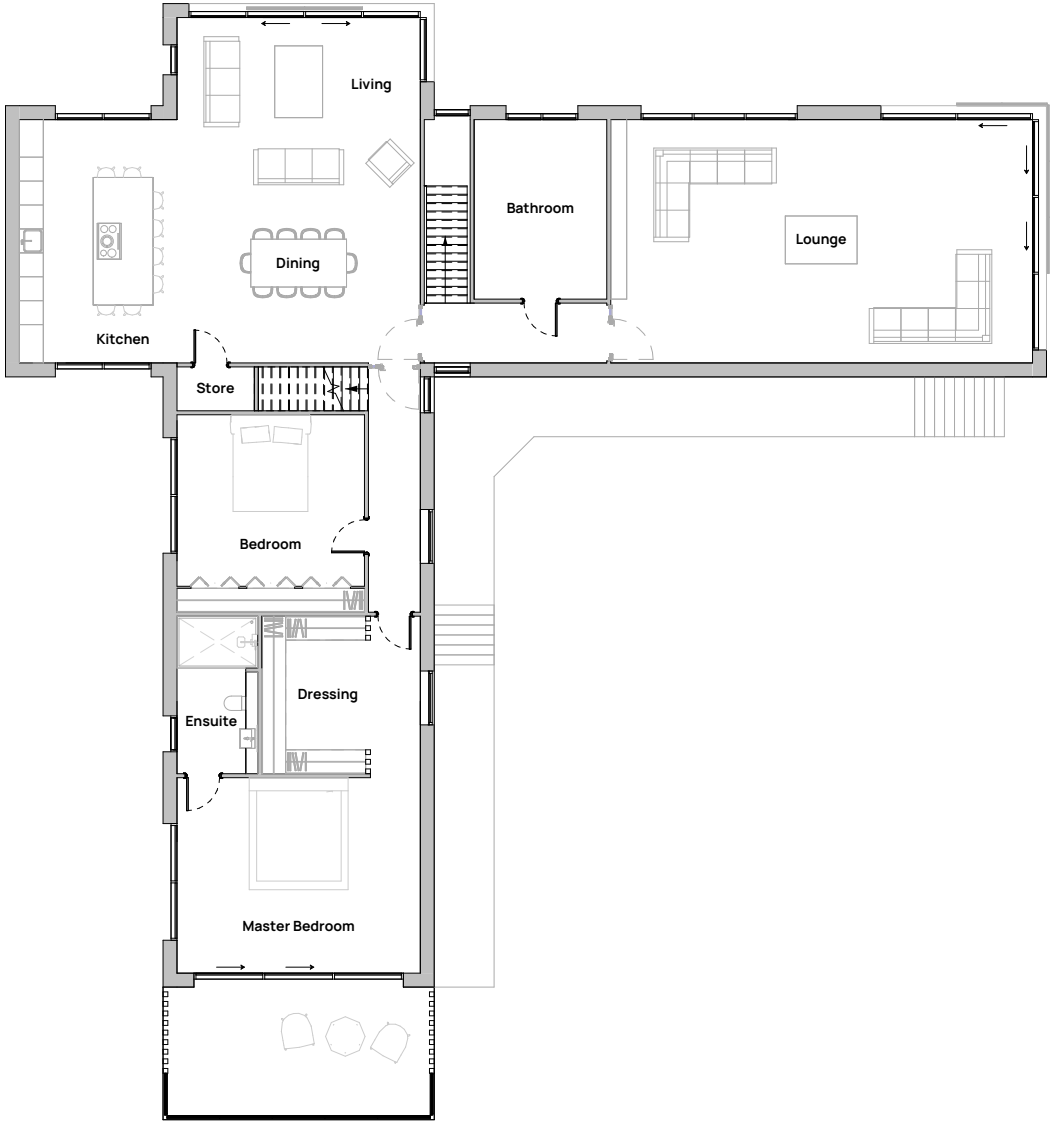
7.0 Design proposal

7.1 Proposed site plan

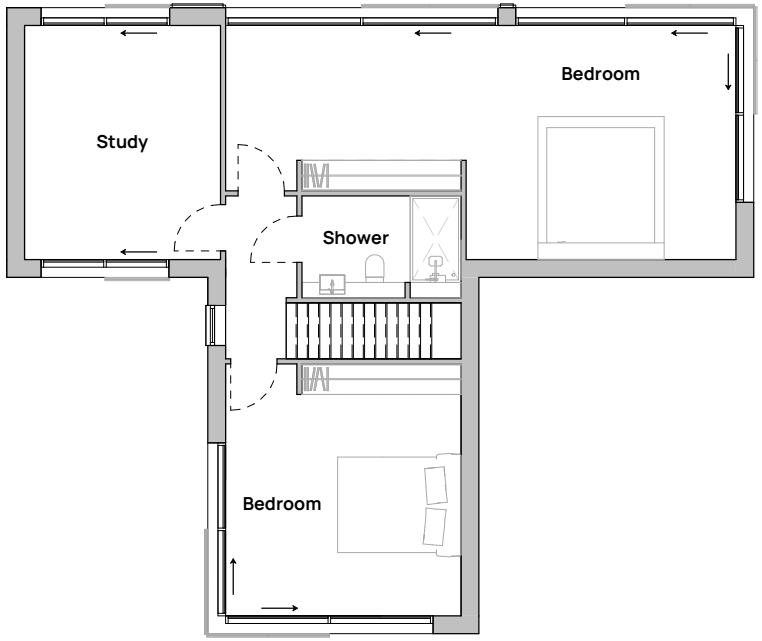


7.2 Proposed ground floor plan

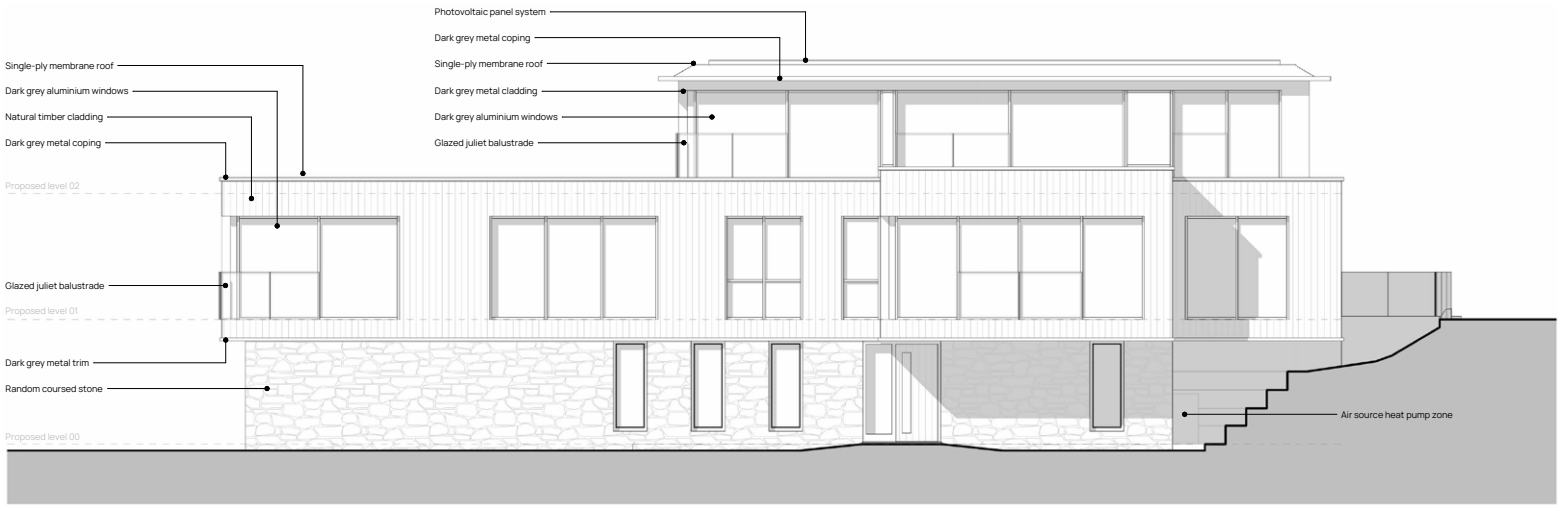
7.3 Proposed first floor plan



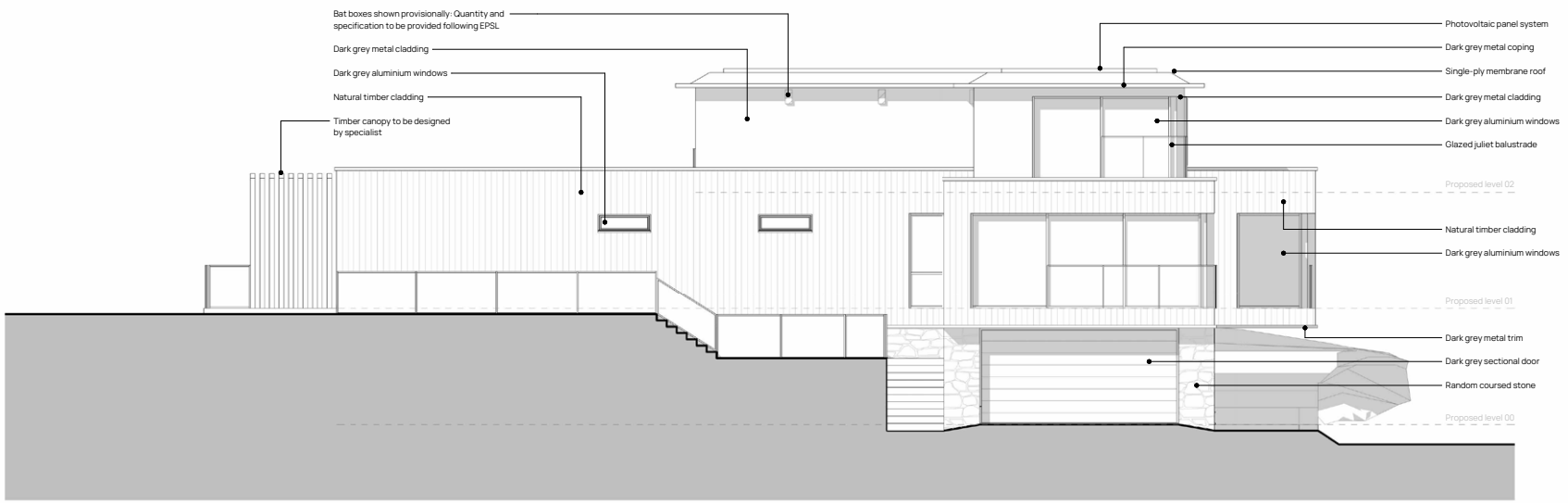
7.4 Proposed second floor plan



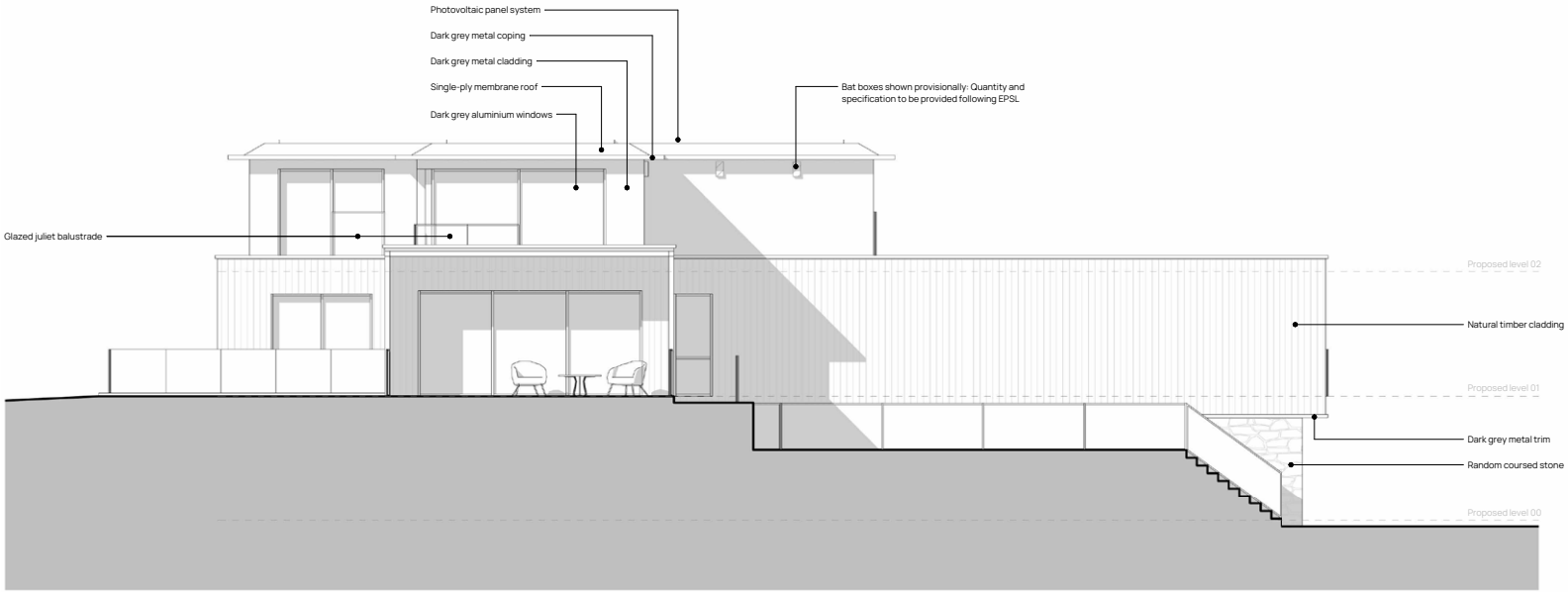
7.5 Proposed north elevation



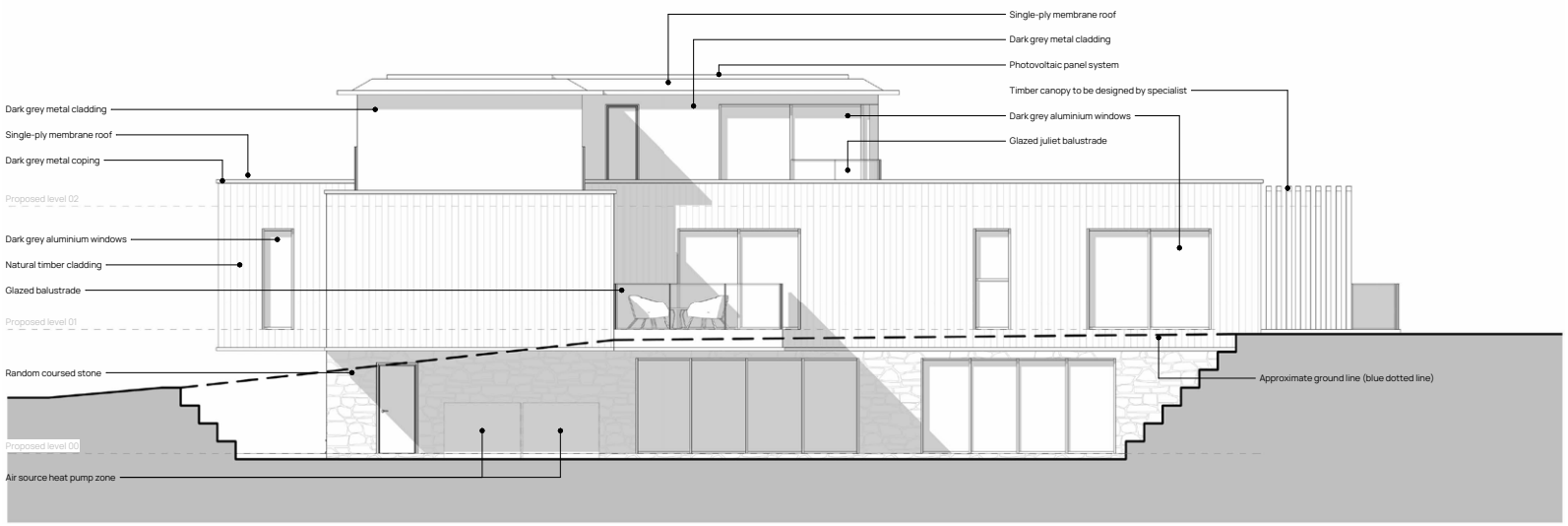
7.6 Proposed east elevation



7.7 Proposed south elevation



7.8 Proposed west elevation



8.0 Rendered visuals

8.1

8.2

8.3

8.4

8.5

8.6

8.7

8.8

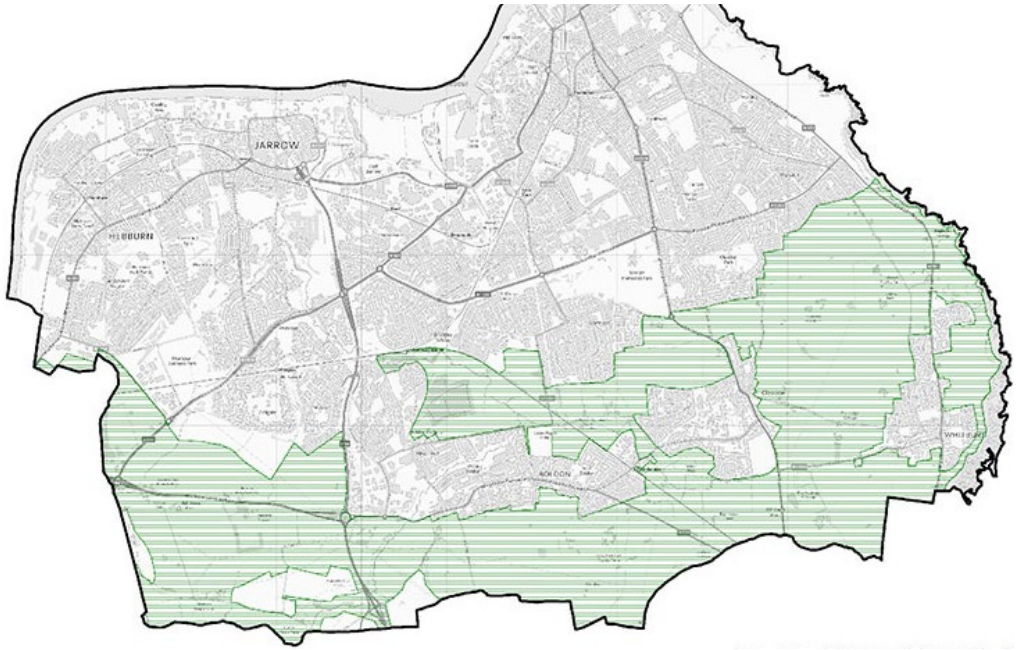
9.0 Further considerations

9.1 Green belt considerations

The proposal seeks permission for the demolition of an existing dwelling that is visually intrusive, poorly integrated with its natural surroundings, and of limited architectural or environmental value. Its replacement with a high-quality, sustainably designed family home offers a clear opportunity to enhance both the built form and the environmental character of this part of the South Tyneside Green Belt.

National planning guidance recognises that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. A replacement building is not inappropriate development where it remains within the definitional allowances of Green Belt policy and does not result in a materially larger impact on openness. The proposed dwelling has been carefully designed to respect this principle: its massing, siting, and footprint have been limited to ensure no greater effect on openness than the structure it replaces. In fact, by removing an unsightly building and introducing a form more sympathetic to the landscape, the proposal will improve the visual quality of the area.

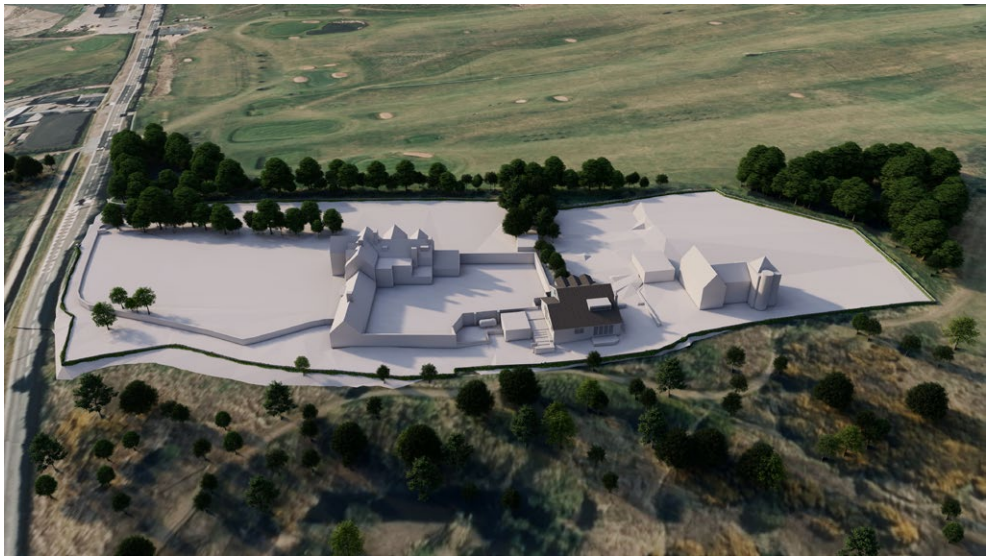
Consistent with the NPPF's commitment to sustainable development, the new home employs a robust suite of environmental features. The inclusion of a living green roof will increase biodiversity, support local ecology, and soften the building's profile within its rural setting. The design utilises sustainable materials, high energy-efficiency standards, and sensitive landscaping to further embed the dwelling into its natural context.



Taken together, the proposal represents an enhancement to the character and appearance of the Green Belt, aligns with national guidance supporting the replacement of buildings where openness is preserved, and delivers meaningful environmental benefits. The development therefore complies with the NPPF and relevant Green Belt policies and should be supported as a sustainable, visually appropriate, and ecologically positive improvement to the site.

10.0 Visual impact assessment

10.1



Existing view (looking south towards Whitburn Golf Course)

Proposed view (looking south towards Whitburn Golf Course)

10.2

Existing view (looking south-west)

Proposed view (looking south-west)

10.3

Existing view (looking east towards the North Sea)

Proposed view (looking east towards the North Sea)

10.4

Existing view (looking west)

Proposed view (looking west)

11.0 Sustainability

11.1 Sustainability measures

The home will be designed with a strong focus on sustainability and energy performance, incorporating innovative, environmentally responsible construction methods, including the below:

Sustainability

- Reduced energy use and lower CO_2 emissions
- Aim for high SAP rating
- Exceptional insulation and airtightness
- Optimised passive solar gain supported by thermal mass
- Maximised natural daylight throughout the house
- Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR)
- Low-energy lighting solutions
- Zoned time and temperature heating controls
- High rated energy-efficient appliances
- Efficiently planned services to minimise pipework lengths

Materials

- Preference for durable, sustainable materials
- Measures to minimise waste and increase recycling
- Locally sourced materials wherever possible

Water & Surface Water

- Incorporation of water appliances to reduce overall consumption
- Use of a living roof to support water retention and slow run-off
- Rainwater harvesting system
- All external hard surfaces designed to be permeable

Waste

- Space for recycling storage and collection
- Adequate space for on-site composting

Sustainable Transport

- Secure storage provided for bicycles
- Bus stops located immediately adjacent to the site

Pollution

- Primary heating supplied by an air/ground-source heat pump
- Log-burning stove included as a secondary heat source
- Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery to maintain air quality, manage humidity, enhance comfort, and reduce energy use

Ecology

- Measures integrated to enhance biodiversity across site

12.0 Conclusion

12.1 Conclusion

The demolition of the existing poor-quality dwelling and the construction of a new sustainable, high-quality modern home within the green belt is fully justified. The current structure fails to meet modern standards in terms of energy efficiency, durability, and design, offering limited functionality and a negative visual impact on the surrounding landscape. Replacing it with a thoughtfully designed, sustainable dwelling allows for the use of high-quality materials, such as natural stone and timber cladding, which will also aim to enhance energy efficiency, reduce maintenance, and integrate seamlessly with the natural environment.

Throughout the design process, all relevant legislation and guidance relating to green belt, planning policy, and sustainable building practices have been carefully considered and adhered to, ensuring the proposal aims to be both compliant and sensitive to its context. This approach not only improves the visual and environmental quality of the site but also delivers a long-term, low-impact development that respects the character of the green belt while providing a modern, functional home.

Building Design Northern

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