

Wye College Campus

Illustrative Landscape Proposals



Prepared on behalf of

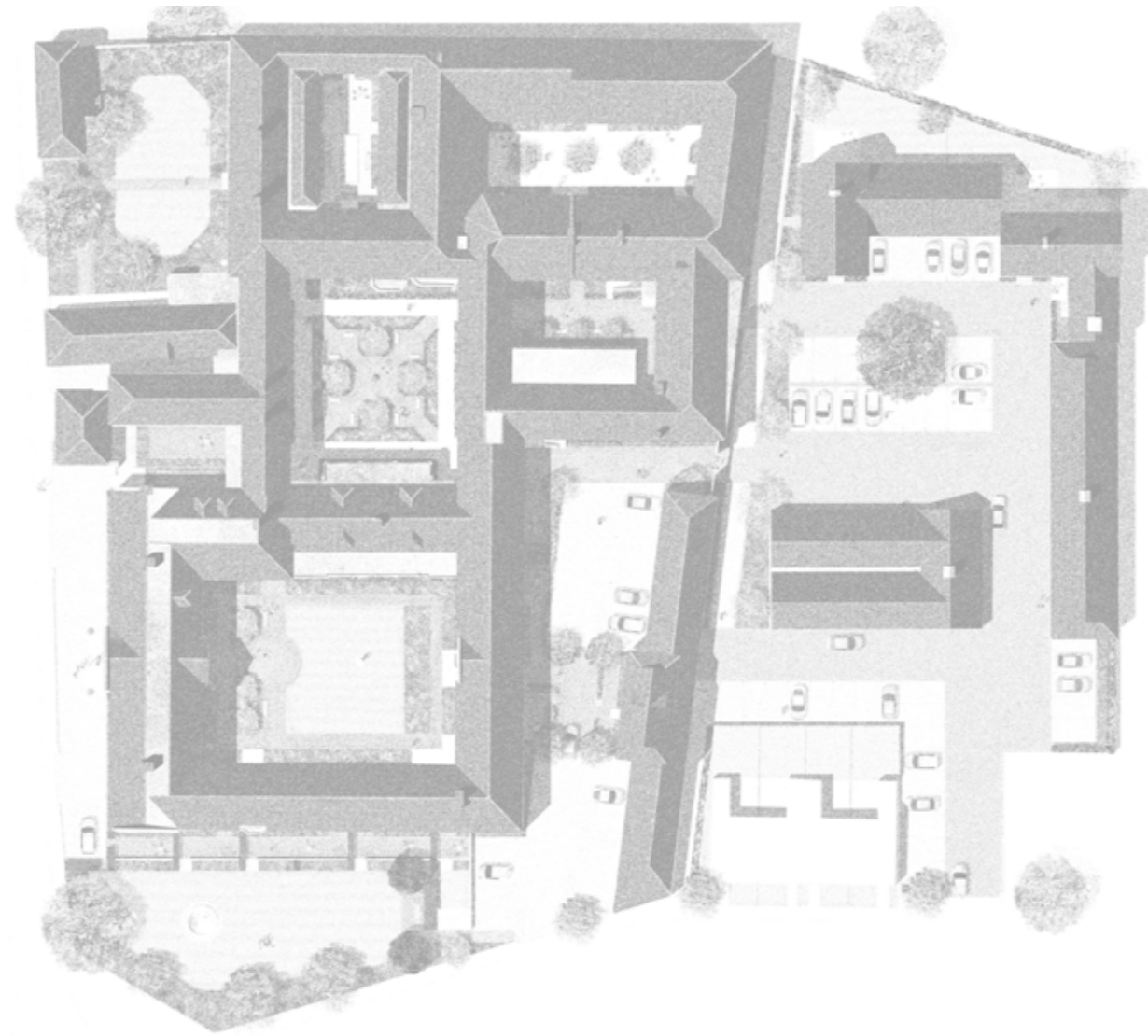


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INTRODUCTION

Growth Industry were appointed by Telereal Trillium in Autumn 2016 to develop landscape proposals for the refurbishment of the historic Wye College Campus.

This report presents illustrative landscape design proposals, that seek to balance an understanding of the historic value, uses and associations of the external landscaped spaces with the demands and new uses brought about by the proposed change in use to create a refurbished residential environment.

The report is submitted as supporting information as part of the planning application for the conversion of existing university buildings. It has been developed in close collaboration with design team members BDB Design (Architecture), Hobbs Parker (Planning) and Transport Planning Practice (Traffic). It is composed of two parts:

Part One outlines the immediate and historic context of the listed campus, exploring the landscape spaces, their hierarchy, character and contribution to this rich and diverse environment.

Part Two presents initial conceptual landscape ideas for the site and its proposed residential use. It presents an illustrative overall masterplan based around an interconnected series of quads, courts, gardens and pedestrian links, establishing an identifiable campus that marries old and new architecture, vehicle movements and new outdoor uses befitting a residential environment.

The initial landscape masterplan formed part of community consultations held in late November 2016 and has evolved following comments received and discussions with the local planning authority.



Aerial photo of College campus within the heart of Wye

CONTEXT

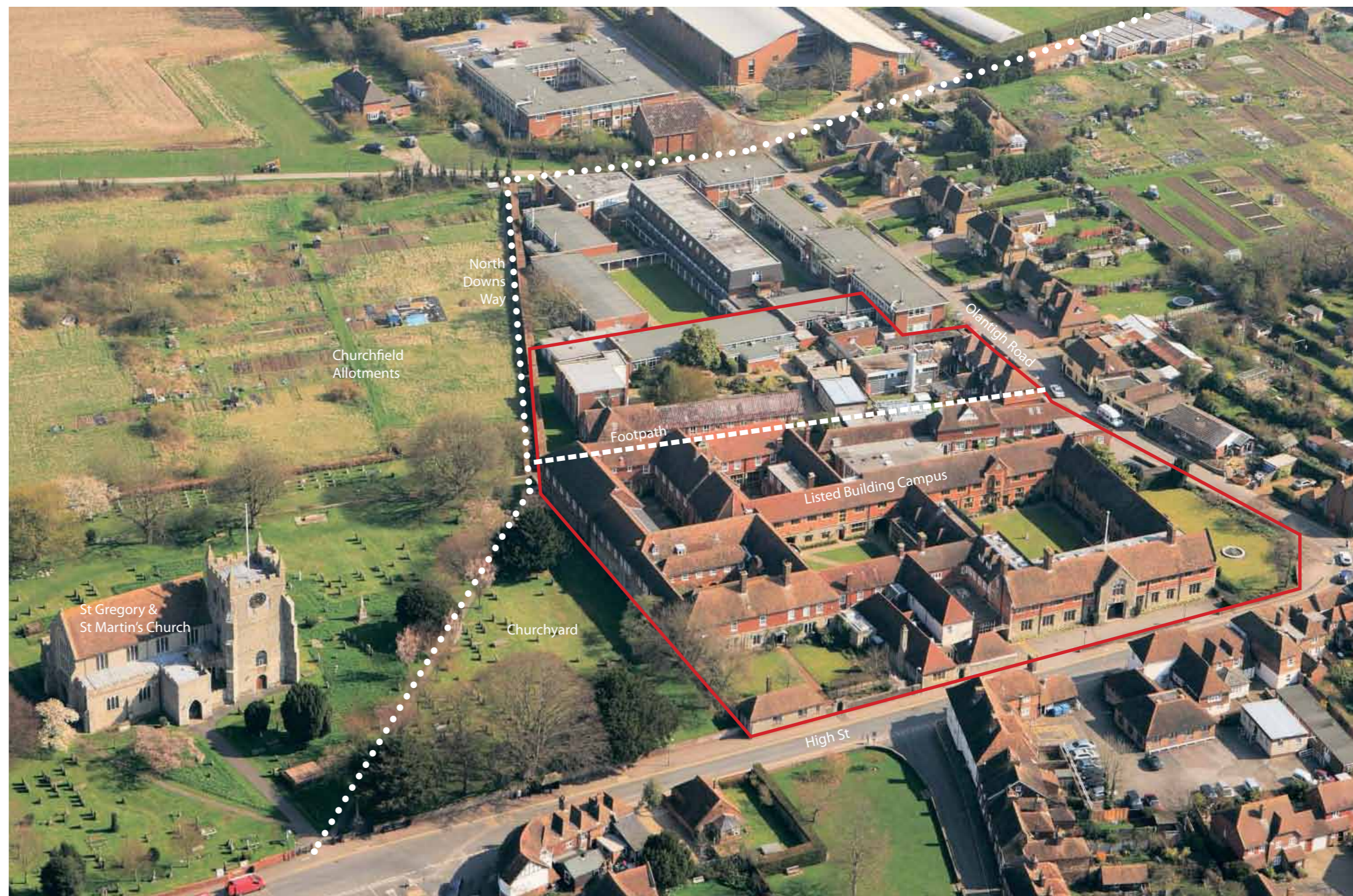
Surrounding context

The complex of Listed Buildings and associated external quadrangles, courts and gardens that comprise the former Wye College campus present an identifiable and lasting townscape contribution within the heart of Wye village. From medieval origins to its expansion as an agricultural education campus, the site creates a strong presence at the corner of the High Street and Olantigh Road. The orthogonal gridded composition of heritage buildings has created a wealth of internalised green quads and courtyards. This rigid geometry, familiar to historic collegiate campuses, has further informed the evolution of the later more recent phases of agricultural college buildings northwards along Olantigh Road, extending the notion of contained green spaces and strong building frontages.

To the west of the campus there is the spacious green setting of the churchyard and allotments, connected by the historic North Downs Way.



Historic aerial photo of College campus in 1950



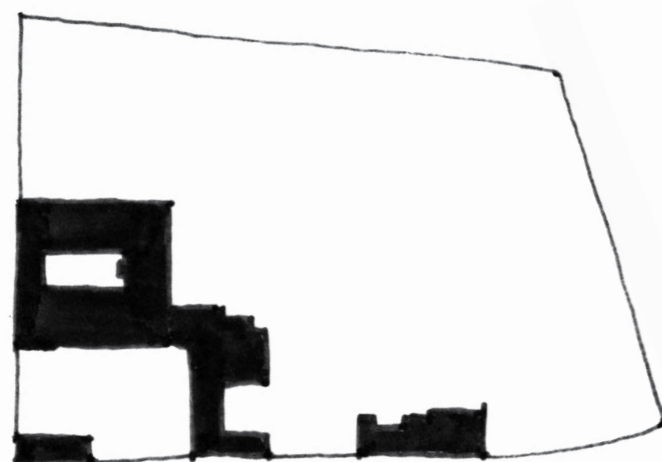
Aerial photo of College campus within the heart of Wye

CONTEXT

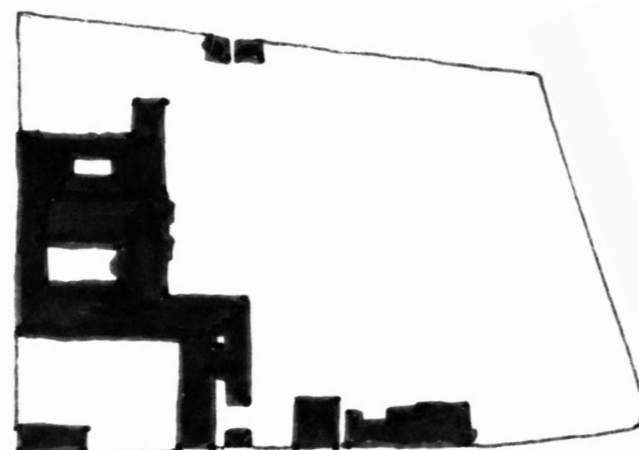
Historic evolution

The early 15th Century origins of the college campus remain in form and geometry to the present day in the form of the Grade I Listed Principal's House and cloistered courtyard. From this time, expansion has occurred gradually northwards and eastwards to meet Olantigh Road, with subsequent building phases extending and adding to the rich architectural composition of courtyards and quads.

The evolution of the campus for agricultural educational purposes from the mid 19th century to late 20th century reveals the creation of some of the key external courtyard spaces, or quads, contained within the historic envelope of the college grounds.

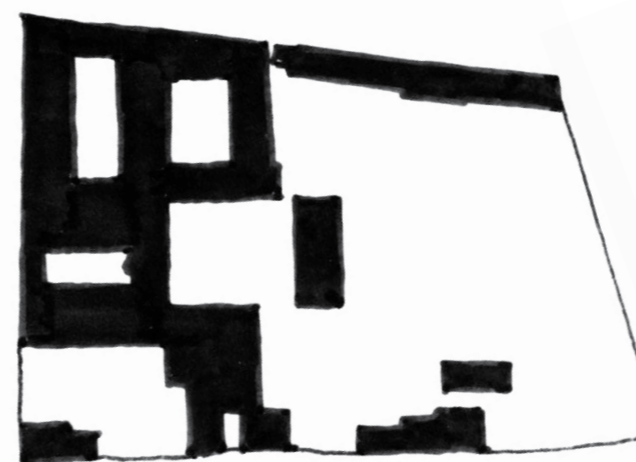


1871



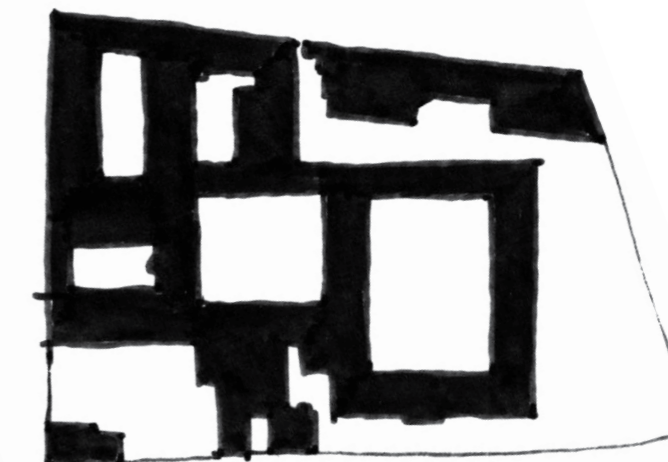
1898

Campus complex extends northwards



1908

North Quad, West Quad, Middle Quad established
Northern site boundary (footpath) defined



1938

Agricola Quad created and middle quad further defined
Northern service area created



The Principal's House and Garden (Grade I Listed)



The Middle Quad (Grade II Listed) 1912



The Agricola Quad (Grade II Listed) - post 1914



High Street entrance range - post 1914

EXISTING CONTEXT

The Campus today

The existing aerial photograph of the Listed campus reveals the arrangement and inter-relationships between external spaces in the form of green quads, hard paved courts and gardens. Intersecting and bounding the site is a Public Right of Way connecting to the regional North Downs Way.

Internal heritage campus spaces:

- 1 Agricola Quad
- 2 Middle Quad
- 3 North Quad
- 4 West Quad
- 5 Cloister Quad

External spaces

- 6 Forecourt
- 7 Principal's Garden
- 8 Fountain Garden
- 9 Service Yard
- 10 Public Right of Way
- 11 Dry Garden (Guinness Labs)



Image courtesy of Google

EXISTING CONTEXT

The Campus today

An inventory of existing external spaces reveals the rich variety and character of the campus environment. There is a strong sense of nature and greenery captured within these spaces, befitting a former agricultural campus, which provides a complementary balance to the warm hues of the surrounding architectural brick, stone, flint and ragstone facades.

Internal heritage campus spaces:

- 1 Agricola Quad
- 2 Middle Quad
- 3 North Quad
- 4 West Quad
- 5 Cloister Quad

External spaces

- 6 Forecourt
- 7 Principal's Garden
- 8 Fountain Garden
- 9 Service Yard
- 10 Public Right of Way



EXISTING CONTEXT

Spatial analysis

The individual quads, courts and garden spaces are organised on the campus as identified on the adjacent diagram. Each space is accessed via a series of interconnecting and covered walkways, providing a characteristic feature and grain to the campus.

Internal heritage campus spaces:

- 1** Agricola Quad
- 2** Middle Quad
- 3** North Quad
- 4** West Quad
- 5** Cloister Quad

External spaces

- 6** Forecourt
- 7** Principal's Garden
- 8** Fountain Garden
- 9** Service Yard
- 10** Public Right of Way
- 11** Dry Garden (Guinness labs)

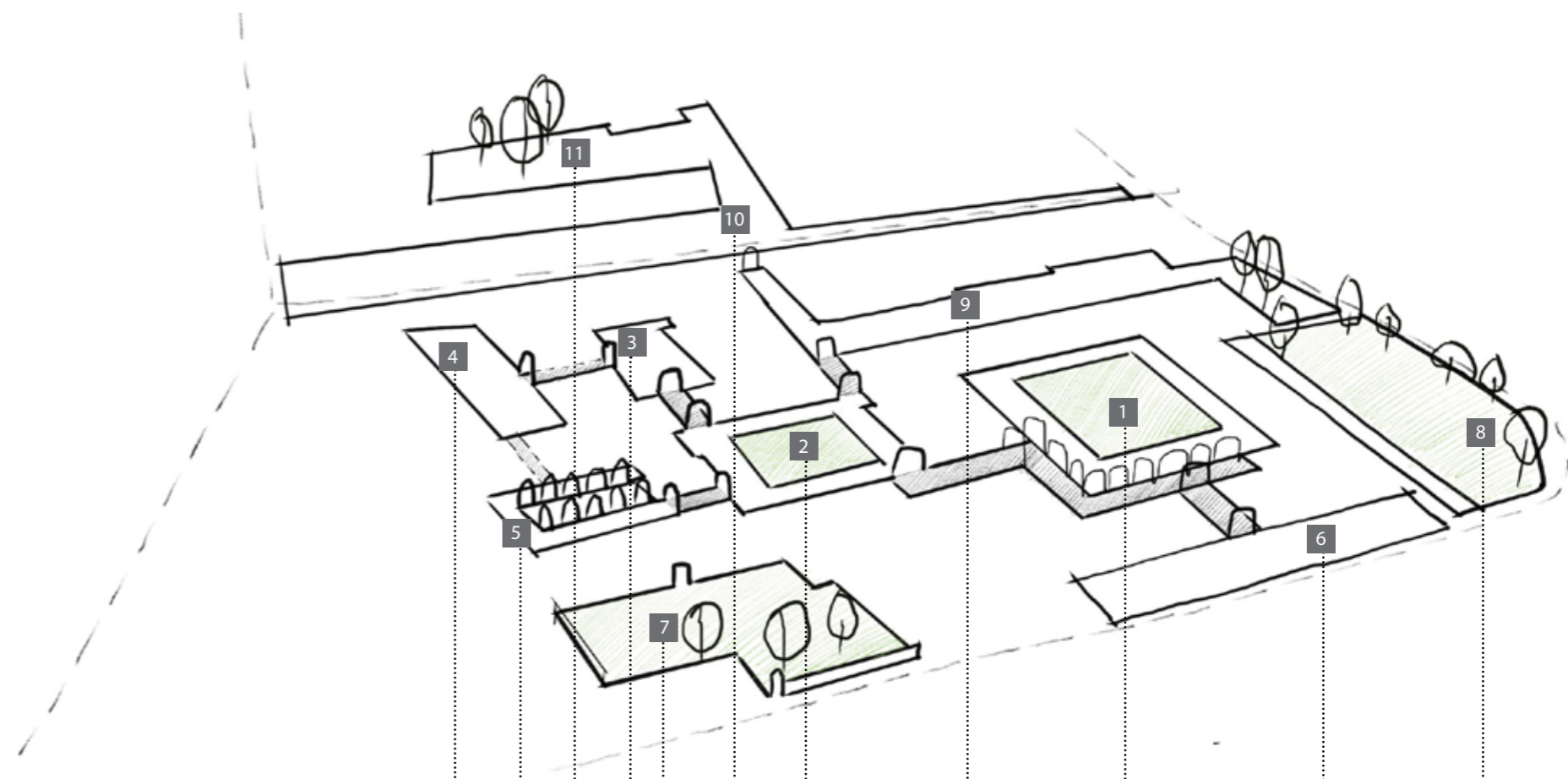


Diagram highlighting interconnected series of courts, quads and covered walkways

EXISTING CONTEXT

Spatial analysis

One of the distinctive features of the external campus is the sense of enclosure and invitation to explore offered by the range of entrance gates, doorways, arched portals, colonnades and covered alleyways that connect between the individual courts and quads. These gateways mark in many cases the historical evolution of the campus, expanding in width, proportion and style from the medieval cloister and gothic archways, creating intimate scaled spaces, through to more generous and wider proportions of the Edwardian portals in the Arts and Crafts style. High quality craftsmanship is exhibited in the use of blackened timber, red brick, sandstone and ironmongery to announce these entrances.



EXISTING CONTEXT

Character

The existing campus is furnished with a range of external materials and feature ornaments, accrued over time and reflecting the more recent educational campus use. A brief description of existing materials with accompanying imagery is outlined below;

Surface materials

The predominant pathway material used is riven York stone of random length and bond throughout the campus. More recent paving to the Agricola Quad covered walkway is of a red concrete textured slab. The medieval cloister is furnished with historic clay brick bond paving. Much of the paving on site suffers from a high degree of algal growth causing slip issues.



Planting and vegetation

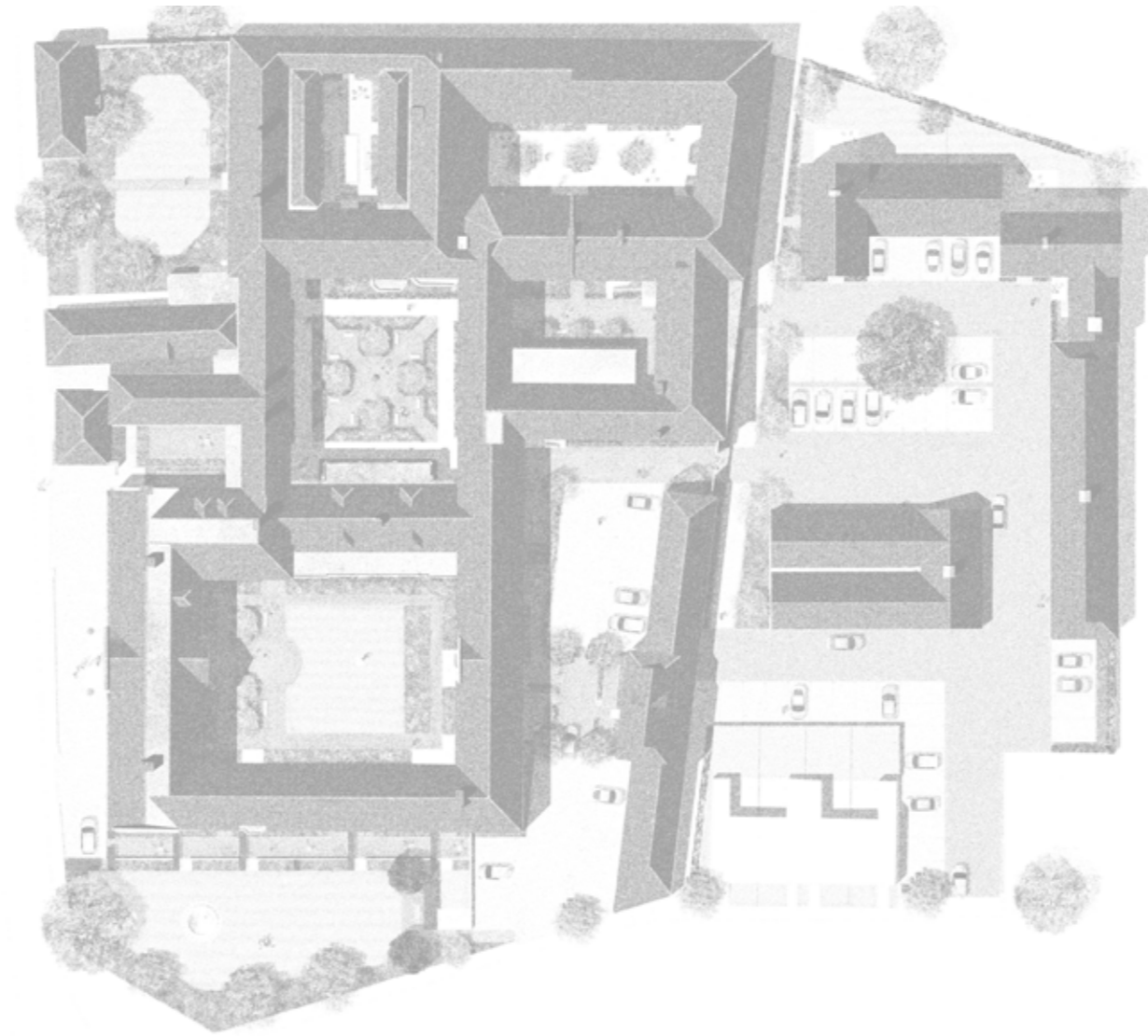
Much of the existing vegetation on campus consists of either open lawn surrounded by clipped shrubs/hedging or perimeter planting beds to building elevations, within which there are a number of feature climbing plants that are trained upon varying facades. Many of these climbers reinforce the distinctive individual character of each courtyard. A number of unusual specimen plants and shrubs form impressive natural features within the courtyards. In addition there are a number of loose planters distributed around the site. The Fountain Garden, in particular, overlooking the junction of the High Street and Olantigh Road, presents a publicly visible and colourful ornamental planting scheme consisting of feature trees and mixed perennial beds. The planting here was designed by renowned plantsman Christopher Lloyd and is typical of his signature juxtapositions of colour and texture.



Features and furniture

There are a number of ornaments and artefacts within the site comprising historic lead planters, concrete and reconstituted stone benches and planters, timber slatted park style benches, a lead fountain (disconnected) and feature sundial. Many of these elements are memorials and have associations with previous college alumni. Of particular architectural note are the range of bracket mounted large lighting lanterns marking doorways and entrances and fine metalwork to gates and down pipes.





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LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Illustrative Landscape Masterplan in context

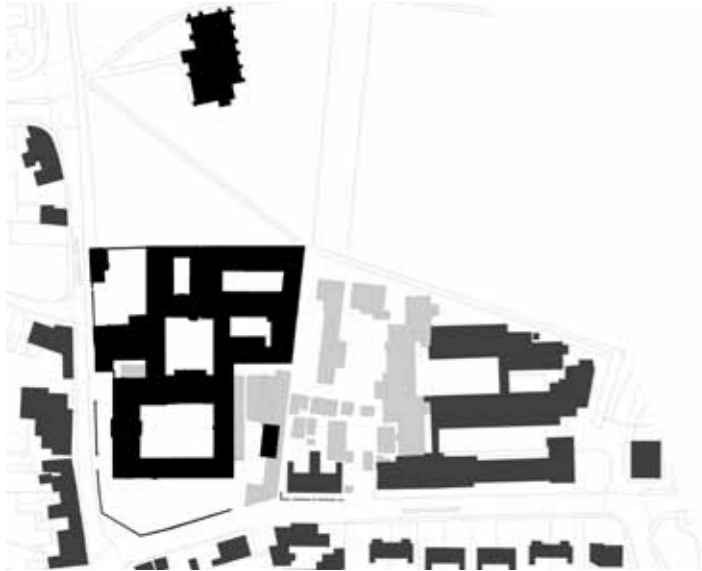


Illustrative landscape masterplan in village context

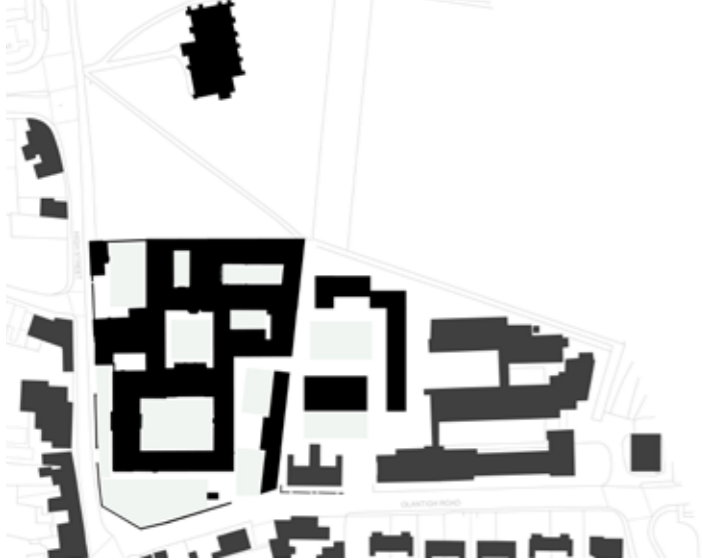
LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (Roofscape)

Architectural proposals seek to demolish incremental 20th century building expansion to the north of the Listed campus (in light grey below) to establish new buildings in the form of houses and car barn structures that respect the underlying orthogonal heritage geometry of the Listed Buildings and reinforce connections into the campus.



Existing buildings to be demolished (in light grey)



New Architectural composition



Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (Roof plan)

LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Illustrative Landscape Masterplan

The new campus landscape will provide a series of external landscaped spaces that will support a range of differing uses and demands associated with the new residences. Whilst all internal landscape courts and quads remain interconnected, maintaining the unique and intriguing network of pathways, covered walkways and open spaces, careful thought has been given to the individual characters attributed to each defined outdoor space. The creation of recognisably different spaces will also serve to help in navigation around the campus and enhance the sense of address for the new residences. Additionally the design and layout of each space is intended to suggest the use and spatial opportunities for such spaces, established through a balance between open accessible paved and lawned areas, planted areas and seating capacity.

Externally, a series of hard paved courts mark arrival spaces and offer vehicle and cycle parking provision for visitors and new residents. The Forecourt on the High Street will provide a simple shared surface design in front of the Grade II Listed facade and newly created Eastern Court and Northern Parking Court will provide a landscaped setting to proposed parking barns.

The masterplan and associated spatial design has been informed by a series of landscape strategies as set out in the following pages.

Key spaces:

- 1** Agricola Quad
- 2** Middle Quad
- 3** North Quad
- 4** West Quad
- 5** Cloister Quad
- 6** Forecourt
- 7** Principals Garden
- 8** Fountain Garden
- 9** East Court
- 10** Enhanced Public Right of Way
- 11** Parking Court














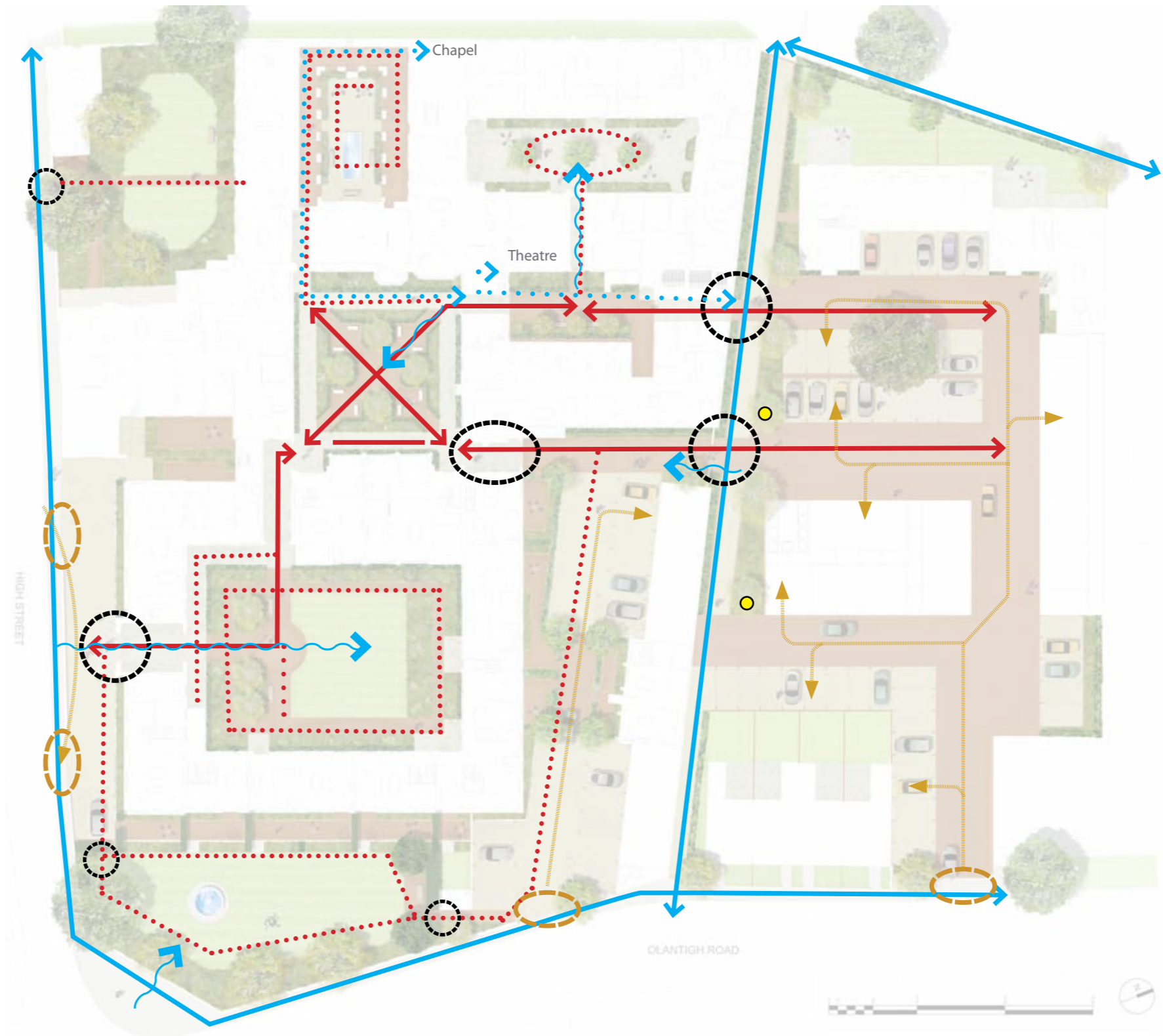
LANDSCAPE STRATEGIES

Access and movement

The access strategy seeks to:

- Create direct and logical access from car to home to minimise travel distances.
- Where possible, pull the principal thoroughfares away from building edges to maximise the privacy of adjacent dwellings and to encourage better interaction with the quads by drawing residents through them rather than around or past them.
- Ensure limited public access routes are direct but that afford glimpses into the principal historic spaces so that visitors can appreciate the historic college without wandering off into private areas.
- Establish secondary circulation routes that allow for casual exploration of the gardens and quads (potential circular walks) and act as individual 'paths to home'
- Vary the surface finishes and proportions of the routes to express this hierarchy.
- Utilise access controls (fob entry gates) to reduce non-resident permeability.

-  Publicly accessible routes
-  Secondary public routes (controlled)
-  Primary pedestrian route (residents)
-  Secondary pedestrian route (residents)
-  Primary pedestrian entry gates (residents)
-  Secondary pedestrian entry gates (residents)
-  Vehicular entrances
-  Vehicular routes to parking barns/bays
-  Visitor parking bays
-  Public cycle parking stands
-  Public glimpsed views



LANDSCAPE STRATEGIES


Public and Private open space

The enhanced residential landscape will provide a range of external open spaces for the benefit of residents and visitors. Careful thought has been given to create a variety of private garden spaces dedicated to a number of residences.




In addition to these defined gardens and paved terraces, the existing quadrangles, courtyards and green space (excluding the Principals garden) are proposed as communal outdoor spaces. These spaces have a greater capacity for groups and gatherings and will form the daily backdrop to the life and animation of the campus. The character of some of these spaces are explored on the following pages and present an interconnected series of outdoor spaces of individual character and appeal.

A series of newly paved courts are also established north of the historic campus to create defined parking areas that benefit from improved and direct connections from new parking barns and spaces directly into the residential campus. The existing footpath running east-west alongside the listed buildings connecting Olantigh Road to Churchyard forms an important route, connecting the old and new site developments and benefitting from an increased width of publicly accessible open space which is supported by lighting, new tree planting, seating and cycle stand provision.

Publicly accessible space:

-  Paved Forecourt
-  Enhanced Footpath (Public Right of Way)
-  Parking courts (residents and visitors)

Residential open space (private):

-  Communal spaces
-  Private garden spaces / terraces
-  Planted privacy thresholds



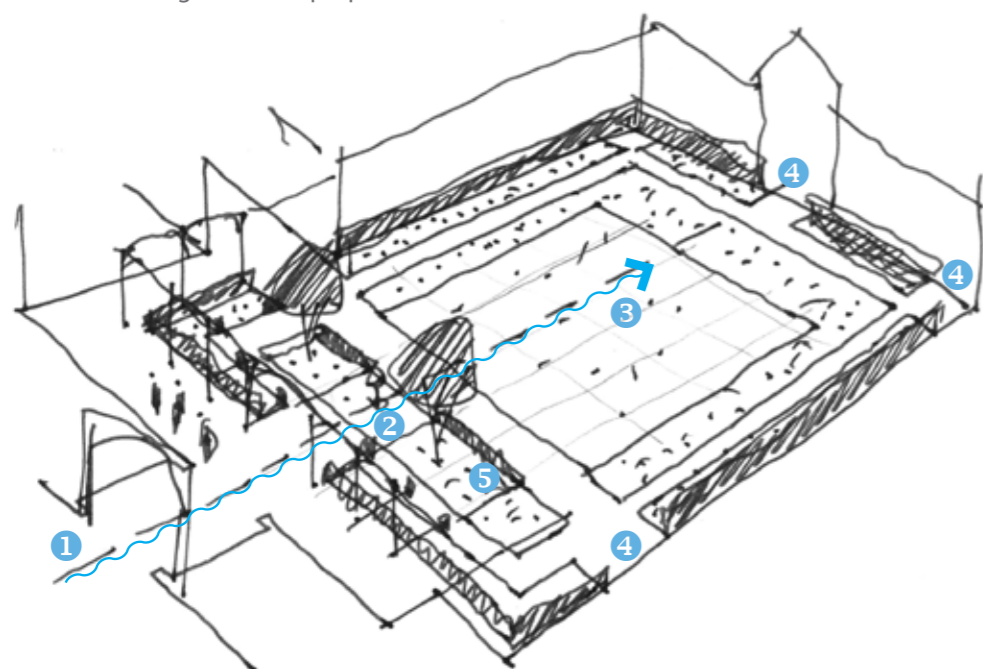
LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Agricola Quad

The Agricola Quad presents the largest green open space within the listed campus and has formed the formal backdrop to the daily life of the campus throughout the 20th century.

The existing simple open lawn is proposed to be retained and be accompanied by enhanced peripheral planted borders and paved routes to create an enclosed garden quad. The space presents both heavily shaded and open sunny aspects and new planting beds to the south will offer shade loving plants, small trees and seating in contrast to the sun loving beds and open lawn to the north. A central circular gathering space will extend movement into the heart of the space and away from new residential entrances around the edge. The memorial sundial will be retained as feature.

1. Maintain key vista.
2. Bring people into heart of space to aid privacy of surrounding properties.
3. Maintain a large, useable lawn for spatial relief
4. Provide dedicated threshold spaces associated with front doors.
5. Enhance the 'green view' from the cloister and create a buffer between seating areas and properties.



Sketch diagram of Agricola Quad



Illustrative plan of Agricola Quad



Planting character



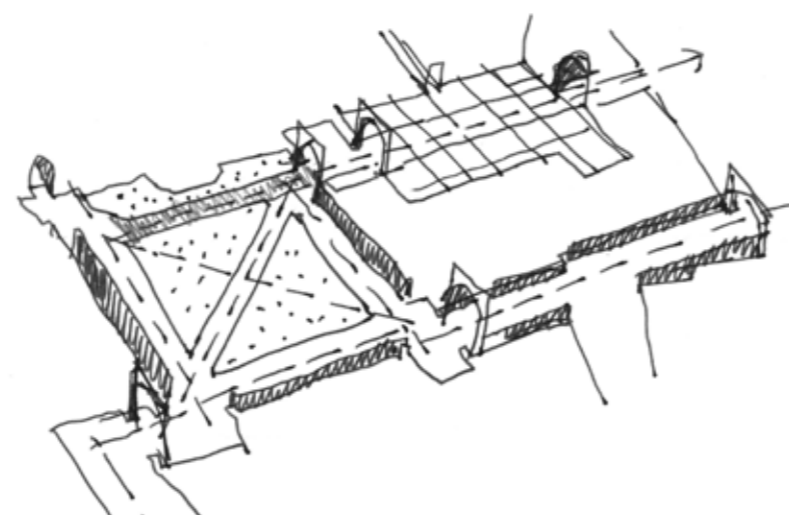
Existing character

LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Middle Quad

The two main routes into the campus from the parking court touch this space so in essence it will be the heart of the development. Aside from the cloister this is the oldest quad and the place where the medieval and 17th Century architecture is most visible. It seems fitting then that this space seeks to capture some of the character of the gardens from these eras. Medieval knot gardens and 17th century parterres share a common language of materials: clipped hedging, formal trees, strong geometry and brickwork paving with the historic crisscross pathway reinstated to support this landscape geometry.

1. Facilitate and prioritise diagonal circulation
2. Create a strong evergreen frame as a privacy buffer
3. Create adoptable 'pause and use' spaces
4. Reuse college stone furniture and lead cistern
5. Use trees to enhance sense of privacy and enclosure of seating areas.



Sketch diagram of Middle Quad and connections north



Planting character opportunities



Illustrative Middle Quad plan



The Middle Quad becomes the heart of the campus, crossed with new and existing routes linking the other courts and quads and offering residents a more inviting and immersive garden route from car to door

LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

North Quad

The opportunity exists to create a statement 'foyer space' which sets the tone for the whole development. The North Quad is one of the few spaces with limited access for the public and will need to serve as a pre-event gathering/meeting space for the theatre.

1. Provide generous paved route from new entrance.
2. Creation of new architectural covered passage connecting to Park Court and footpath.
3. Enhance existing planting beds to rejuvenate mature climbers and enrich the space.
4. Utilise statement planters to allow small tree planting to eastern edge of the quad to create privacy for adjacent properties.
5. Provide seating opportunities.



Illustrative North Quad plan



Existing North Quad



North Quad looking north towards the new opening connecting to footpath and parking court.

LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Communal Garden and Private Sunken Terraces

The communal garden affords views to the eastern facade of the Edwardian Agricola range with sunken private terraces tucked beside the buildings and a restored water fountain and pool (5)

The individual garden spaces need to provide a sense of privacy without creating enclosure that spoils the visual impact of this key facade from the public realm.

1. Provide predominately paved gardens to maximise the useable area for outdoor dining/seating. Pots could be used to personalise.
2. Provide direct stepped access to adjacent communal garden.
3. Utilise evergreen hedging to subdivide between neighbouring terraces and create a rhythm to the border.
4. Use a shared border to create privacy and division whilst maintaining a uniform and well maintained edge to the communal garden and allow glimpse views between the spaces.



Proposed Communal Garden view from corner of Olantigh Road and High Street



Illustrative plan

LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Middle Quad link to Parking Court

The existing pedestrian link connecting the Middle Quad to public footpath will be enhanced to offer a wider route to reinforce the connection between inner quads and newly created external parking courts and car barns.

1. A new feature East gate replaces the existing metal gates with room created to plant a feature tree and associated planting beds to enhance the sense of arrival.
2. A planted privacy strip to new ground floor residential rooms is proposed in keeping with existing planted beds to the heritage buildings
3. A simple parking court with open car barn spaces provides an open space enclosed by private garden terraces.



Illustrative East Court plan



Existing view looking north towards Public Footpath



Proposed view towards public footpath, with new feature East Gate introduced as gateway to Parking Court

LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Parking Court

The expansion of the residential campus northwards to accommodate the required parking numbers and additional dwellings creates an opportunity to reinforce the orthogonal gridded nature of building organisation as well as enhancing the public footpath experience that connects Olantigh Road to the Churchyard.

A series of newly defined parking courts anchored by key existing and proposed residential houses are created, extending the notion of well defined external open spaces. As with the existing campus layout, these new courts create direct and designated pedestrian connections to offer a sense of welcome and gateway into the residential campus. Two new gates, or portals, in keeping with the existing architectural language, are introduced to create a new East and West gate.

The footpath route is increased in width from the existing 1m wide pathway to a generous 2.5m in width. New and retained trees planting along this route will reinforce the linear nature of the route to the churchyard and offer planting, seating and lighting to establish a comfortable and inviting route.



Illustrative material character and scale

- 1 Vehicle entry off Olantigh Road
- 2 Car Barn (open frontage)
- 3 Parking Court with uncovered resident parking spaces
- 4 New resident access gates and direct footpath connections
- 5 Widened public footpath with associated tree planting, lighting, seating
- 6 New residential homes with gardens overlooking Churchyard and allotments to west
- 7 Retained tree as feature in heart of parking court
- 8 Retained tree as feature to East Gate



Illustrative plan showing Parking Court and enhanced footpath connection

LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Parking Court view looking south to the Listed Buildings



Illustrative character of open Parking Court showing revealed heritage facade, retained feature tree in the centre and open car barn surrounds

LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

View of Public Right of Way and Parking Court looking towards new pedestrian gate to Middle Quad



Illustrative character of enhanced footpath route with new gateway connection between Parking Court and Inner Campus

ILLUSTRATIVE HARD MATERIALS AND FURNITURE PALETTE

Material considerations

The approach to be taken to hard material selection and furniture items will reflect the high quality materials and detailing expressed in the colours, scale and lasting character of the heritage architecture and campus generally. As highlighted on the illustrative masterplan, paving material selection will use a subtle contrast in colour and scale to define principal pedestrian and vehicle routes and those areas for pause and gathering. Large flag paving will denote primary routes and walkways with smaller interlocking brick surfacing providing a shared surface design for open courts and secondary pathways.

Street furniture items will promote the use of FSC hardwood timber to create comfortable seating opportunities balanced with potential reuse of existing stone ornaments and furniture redistributed on site. Items such as cycle stands and lighting will be carefully considered to compliment existing architectural ironmongery.



Large flag paving to primary pedestrian pathways



Buff coloured bound gravel to parking courts



Simple hardwood timber benches



Small unit paving as shared surface



Small unit brick paving to reflect warmth and scale of heritage facades



Small unit brick paving to define patios and terraces

ILLUSTRATIVE PLANTING PALETTE

Selection considerations

Planting will play a significant part in establishing an appropriate residential character and extend the rich legacy of horticultural excellence of the former agricultural college. The planted nature of many of the courtyards will be enhanced to provide a series of outdoor spaces defined by their distinctive planted character and expressive of seasonal change.

The approach to planting will be to balance the need to overlay a robust green infrastructure, in the form of new tree planting and peripheral beds and hedges to act as privacy strips, with more expansive and expressive seasonal beds as feature statements within a number of the external spaces. This approach will seek to highlight and celebrate the rich variety of plant form, colour and species selection adopted previously within the campus to create a pleasant, stimulating and naturally biodiverse soft landscape character befitting a unique residential environment in the Garden of England.



Informal planted edges



Planting lining pedestrians routes



Discrete pedestrian gateways through green space



Geometric planting style



Formal planted borders



Formal planted privacy strip to groundfloor residences

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