



Planning, Design & Access Statement

Project	Installation of 4 purpose made Burrows for holiday let use, formation of a new access road, installation of package treatment plant, and associated works.
Site	Land south of Eaton Hill Pontypinna Vowchurch Hereford HR2 0QE Grid Reference: SO 37256 35719
Client	T R & E M Layton
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Date	January 2020

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Introduction

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) is submitted in support of a full planning application for *'Installation of 4 purpose made Burrows for holiday let use, formation of a new access road, installation of package treatment plant and associate works'* At Land south of Eaton Hill, Pontypinna, Vowchurch, Hereford, HR2 0QE.

As the application seeks 'full planning approval', full design details regarding the development are provided. As such, this statement aims to provide details of the principles and concepts relating to 'inclusive design' upon which development proposals have been based to date, and which will be adhered to at subsequent stages in the schemes development.

It should be noted the Herefordshire Council 'Local Plan' (adopted 2015) has been taken into consideration and that the guidance will be reflected in the scheme, as described in the following section.

To assist with the planning application for the proposed development the following Design and Access Statement has been compiled taking into account the DCLG Circular, local planning policies and best practice guidance. This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings.

Site Context

Location

The application site lies just south east of the Peterchurch, off the B4348 road which runs between Dorstone and Kingstone. The site is adjacent to the farmstead of Pontypinna, and to south of Eaton Hill. The site is located within the red outline on the plan below

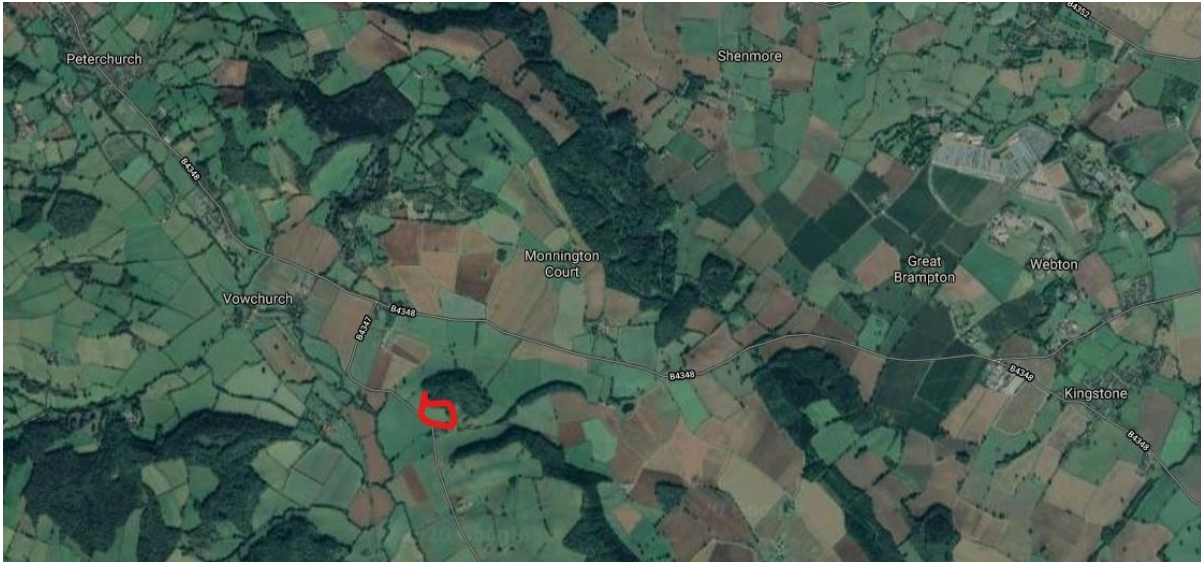


Image 1 – Google Earth extract, showing approximate redline outline of proposed development.

The application site is approximately 0.98hec

Site Features

The development site is currently agricultural land part of Pontypinna farm. The land generally slopes down from north to south. The site is situated below Eaton Hill which is predominately a wooded area made of native species trees. To the south of the development site is the council highway and existing access to Pontypinna which will be utilised for this proposed development. The existing boundaries to the site are a mixture of post and livestock fencing and a native species hedgerow on the south of the site adjacent to the highway and access.

According to Government Development Advice maps, there are no records of historic flooding on the site and the site is outside of the flood zone 3

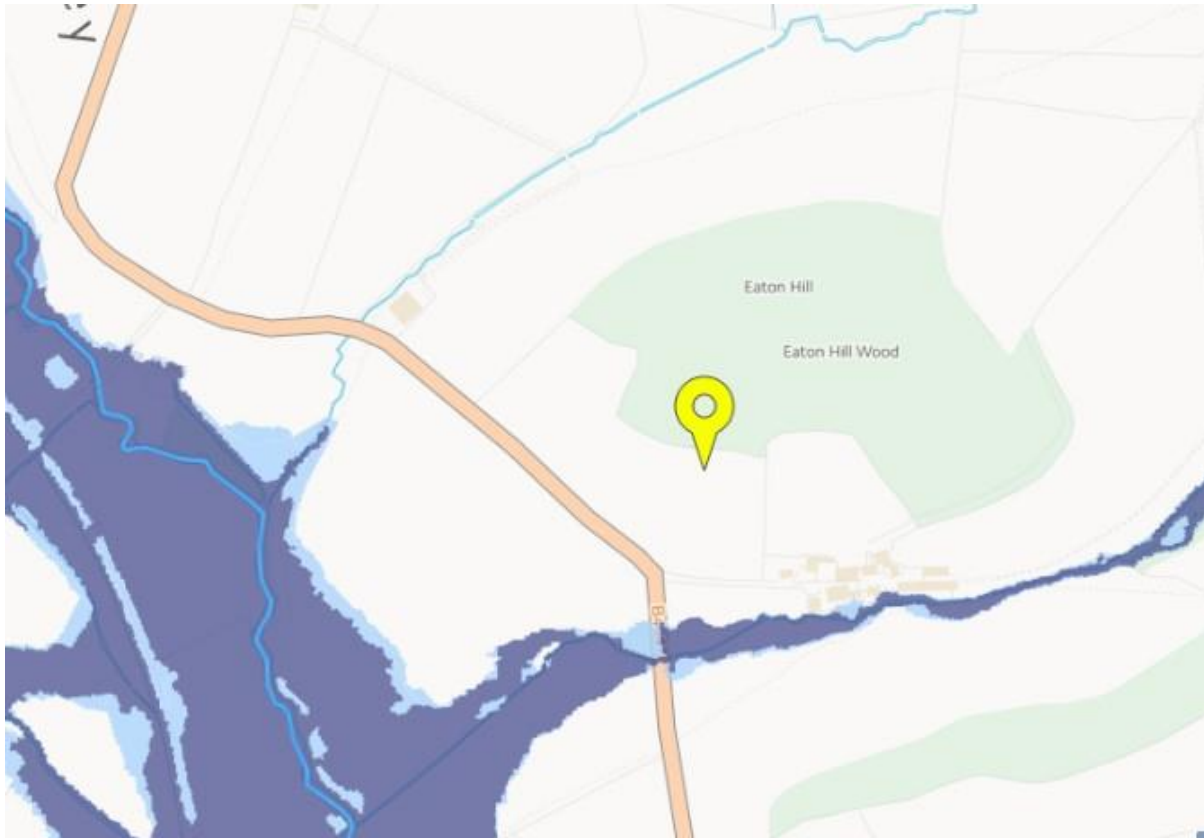


Image 2 – Flood map for planning service extract, showing flood zones

Access

Access to the site is gained off the existing access to Pontypinna which joins the B4347 council road which links to the B4348 Golden Valley road. There is adequate visibility in the north west and south direction from the existing access.

A new access will be created off the existing access to Pontypinna which will include translocating a portion of the hedgerow in order to create the sweep of the road into the development site. 15 metres of hedgerow will be removed and 10 metres of hedgerow will be translocated to create the access. This will be carried out at the appropriate time of year, between October – April. It is proposed to create a hardcored track which will connect to the parking area at the north east of the site.

Public Rights of Way

There are no known public footpaths within the site. However there is a footpath north of Eaton Hill and footpath to the south of Pontypinna which runs east to west joining onto a further network of footpaths to the south east of the site.

The existing footpaths will provide walking routes for the tourists to enjoy which lead directly from the site. There are also several other footpaths in the area which link up to these footpaths named above.



Image 3 – Footpath plan for the locality

Surroundings

The site is located in a rural area, with other rural properties within nearby vicinity. To the south of the site is the main farmstead of Pontypinna. Further to the south is Lowerpark. East of the proposed site is Chanstone Court Farm and Chanstone Mill.

Context Analysis

Movement

Due to being a rural site, it is presumed that most tourists will access the site using a vehicle. A specific car parking area is to be constructed with adequate parking for the four Burrows including over flow parking. The parking area will have provision to allow the cars to turnaround and arrive and leave in a forward gear. It is estimated that there would be 5-6 movements per unit per day.

From the parking area, the majority of the movements will be on foot to access the burrows. A private footpath will be created running behind the Burrows in order to access each unit. The footpath will be finished in bark to be in keeping with the surroundings and cut into the existing topography. There will be freedom of movement around the site for the users, selective planting of shrubs and hedges will be used to denote the curtilage for each of the Burrows.

Access

The site has reasonable road links to the neighbouring towns of Peterchurch and Ewyas Harold. The town of Hay-on-Wye and city of Hereford provide a wider range of facilities. Public transport is relatively poor in the area, however there is a daily bus service which runs through Peterchurch which gives connections to Hereford, Ross-on-Wye and Hay-on-Wye.

The proposed access to the site is off the existing farm access to Pontypinna farm. There is already adequate visibility in both directions onto the B4347 council highway, and the access is already tarmacked on the approach to the site. A new access will be created off the existing lane which will sweep around behind the existing farmhouse, gradually up to the parking area below Eaton Hill. The new track to the parking area will be finished in hardcore which is semi-permeable to allow the surface water to infiltrate.

Access is available onto the walking network within close vicinity of the site, with an adjacent footpath to the south of the site.

Community Safety

The development site is located in a rural situation. There is no impact on community safety. The Burrows have been carefully sited in a location where they do not impact other surrounding properties or significant features.

Character

Landscape design

The existing site is currently semi-improved grassland used for agricultural grazing. The site generally slopes down from north – south (southwest). The site backs onto Eaton Hill and Eaton Hill Wood to the north. The site is located in front of Eaton Hill Wood which acts as a natural boundary to the site.

There are three main elements to the proposed development which have some impact on the existing landscape; the access track, car park area and the four Burrows.

The access track leading to the parking area, sweeps up to the parking area in an 'S' shape. This minimises the appearance on the access track when viewed from the south and south west. There is existing tree planting above Pontypinna farmhouse which will help blend the track into the surroundings

The car parking and turning area will need to be relatively level in order for cars to park and turnaround. This will involve some cutting and filling of the existing ground levels to create a suitable area. It is proposed to plant a native species hedgerow to the south and west of the car park to screen the parking area and cars. There will also be some tree planting to the south of the car park which will further screen the parking area. The hedgerow will be made up of native species such as blackthorn, hazel and holly plants. The native trees will be a mixture of Rowan, Elder, Cherry and Oak.

The Burrows are to be going to be partly buried in the ground, with a grass roof and a small bund in front, they will blend into the surround landscape. On each side of the Burrows, native species trees will be planted. These will give the impression that the Burrows are inside the wood, whereas in fact the edge of the wood is behind the Burrows. In front of the units, a patch of wildflowers will be planted given a further impression of the Burrows being within a woodland. Predominately behind the Burrows is the access footpath which is laid in bark which is in keeping with the surroundings and the environment.

Scale

The scale of the development is in keeping with its surroundings. The proposal is for the erection of 4 Burrows, providing vehicle access to the new car parking area, footpath to each Burrow and installing a new package treatment plant to dispose of the foul drainage.

Each Burrow will be 3.1m wide and 3.1m high to the ridge. The internal floor area is 36m² of each and a decking area will also be provided.

Due to the design and the Burrows being cut into the ground, the scale of the Burrows will appear significantly less than the reality and the Burrows will only be visible from the southern direction.

Due to the spacing, orientation and size of the units there is no impact on privacy, sunlight, microclimate nor existing neighbouring properties. Due to the location of the development there is no impact on public space.

Amount

The proposal is for the installation of 4 Burrows for holiday let use, providing vehicular access along a gravel track to the car parking area, providing pedestrian access path to each of the Burrows and installing an underground package treatment plant which will discharge to the nearby watercourse. Within the four Burrows, a disabled Burrow will be provided which will allow a wider range of people to be able to occupy the holiday lets.

Layout of the development

The position of the Burrows was primarily chosen to have the greatest benefit of the outstanding views from the top of the field over the Golden Valley. It was considered originally to position the Burrows within the existing Eaton Hill Wood. However it was deemed that the effect of the existing wildlife habitat and ecology, as well as the trees and root protection area would be too significant. Instead it was decided to opt for a position in front of the woodland, which still gives the impression the Burrows are within the woodland.

The Burrows are generously spaced out so that the holiday makers are not impacted on by people in adjacent units. The Burrows also have their own individual views which was a consideration when choosing the locations.

The configuration of the track to the site was chosen to try and limit the visual impact of the landscape. Although there a shorter more direction route to the parking area, it was thought that a straight road up would scar the landscape more and be more noticeable.

It was chosen to have a communal car parking due to the position of the Burrows and how spread out they are. If a parking space had been provided at each Burrow it would have meant the access track would have run right across the field which has a greater impact on the landscape and would also impact on the view and tranquillity of the Burrows if vehicles were passing close by. Instead it is proposed to create a pedestrian footpath which runs above each of the Burrows. By being finished in bark, it will be more in keeping than a gravel track, it is smaller, and would have less impact on the people within each of the Burrows.

The topography of the land dictates that the package treatment plant for the foul drainage is to the south of the site. It was decide to discharge the effluent into the nearby watercourse rather than soakaways, as the clay soil type is not very suitable for absorbing water and effluent.

Appearance

Three sides of the Burrows (back and both sides) will not be visible as they will be hidden under the ground. The front elevation will be finished in a stone façade to blend into the surrounding environment. The roof will have a grass covering and there will be a grass bund in front of each of the Burrows. This will mean the lower portion of the Burrow will not be visible and it will appear that the bund will merge into the grass roof of the Burrows.

Review of Relevant Planning Policy

The following local statutory adopted development plans are considered:

Herefordshire Council Local Plan (Adopted October 2015)

Vowchurch and District Group Parish Council Neighbourhood Development Plan

National Planning Policy Framework

Vowchurch and District Group Parish Council Neighbourhood Development Plan

Policy 1 – Protecting and enhancing the local environment

The site has been designed to take into account the local environment and preserve the beauty of the landscape of the Golden Valley. The Eaton Hill Wood has been protected by the location of the site, and the wildlife will be enhanced through additional planting of native species hedgerows, trees and wild meadow flowers. There is minimal impact on existing native species trees and hedgerows, and instead there will be a biodiversity enhancement through the additional planting proposed.

Policy 9 – Applications for new tourist Developments

The proposed development is located in an appropriate location beneath Eaton Hill Wood. The design of the Burrows, access as well as the additional landscaping means that the landscape and environment is respected. The site will provide additional holiday let facilities in the Vowchurch area which was supported during the surveys for the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Herefordshire Council Local Plan

Policy E4 – Tourism

The proposal aims to provide a quality finished product which will encourage tourist to stay at the site and enjoy the unique environment, landscape and attractions that the local area has to offer. The proposal takes advantage of being situated in the Golden Valley allowing visitors to take in the scenery and walks in the local area, as well as being a short distance to Hay-on-Wye which is made famous for its book shops. One of the Burrows will be suitable for disabled access which will encourage a wider range of tourists and families into the area who require these facilities.

Policy LD1 – Landscape and Townscape

The proposal demonstrates that the landscape has been taken into consideration through the scale of the Burrows, the position of the Burrows, the additional landscaping around the Burrows which allows them to blend into Eaton Hill above. The design of the Burrows means there is limited visual impact on the landscape as they will appear to merge into the field, this is assisted by the external materials chosen and the grass bund in front of each unit. The scheme proposes additional tree planting around the Burrows which extends the tree cover and provides new habitats for wildlife.

Policy LD2 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

The proposed scheme complies with point 1 of this policy. There is additional tree planting, hedgerows and a wild meadow proposal as part of the development which will enhance the biodiversity and create new features for wildlife habitats.