

24th April 2026
Ref 2026/119 PS

Erection of Extensions and Alterations to Four-Ways, Wolfstones Road, Holmfirth

Introduction

This Statement has been prepared in support of a householder planning application for the erection of extensions and alterations to Four-Ways, Wolfstones Road, Holmfirth, HD9 3UU. The proposal seeks to comprehensively refurbish, extend and reconfigure the existing dwelling to create a high-quality, long-term family home for the applicants.

The application has been brought forward by the new owners of the property, following its recent sale after remaining in the same family ownership since its construction in the 1950s. While the proposals involve substantial extensions, it is important to emphasise that this is not a replacement dwelling scheme. The applicants have made a deliberate and considered decision to retain and adapt the existing building, rather than pursue demolition and redevelopment.

In this regard, the proposed development represents a more sustainable approach, reducing embodied carbon, minimising construction waste, and making efficient use of the existing structure. This approach aligns with the broader objectives of the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which supports the effective use of previously developed land. The proposed re-use and upgrade of the existing fabric alongside extensions would accord with the council's declared climate emergency.

Existing Site Context

The site lies within the Green Belt as defined by the adopted Kirklees Local Plan Policies Map. The site is located to the southern side of the crossroads formed by Wolfstones Road, Moor Lane, Knoll Lane and Wilshaw Road. It lies approximately 1.8km south-east of Holmfirth town centre, 1.4km west of Netherthong, and around 1km east of Wilshaw Hamlet. The site is designated as Green Belt on the adopted Kirklees Policies Map.

The site is currently occupied by a detached red brick dwelling, together with a detached double garage and ancillary outbuilding.

Vehicular access is taken from Wolfstones Road to the north, approximately 50m from the crossroads. A sweeping driveway extends southwards to the dwelling and associated parking area.

The site slopes gently from south to north, as illustrated within the submitted plans and supporting information.

The site benefits from a high degree of enclosure, with mature trees to the southern and western boundaries and open fields beyond. Established boundary vegetation provides effective screening in both immediate and longer-distance views, resulting in a secluded, woodland-like setting.

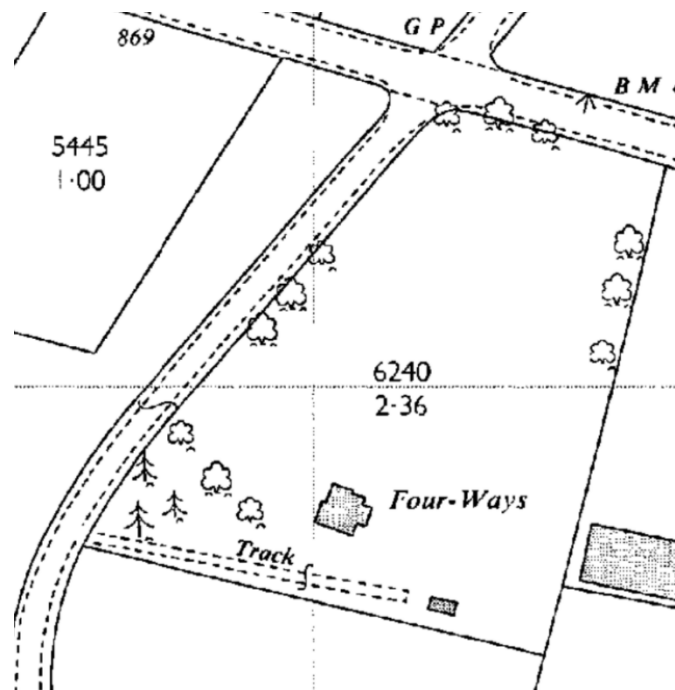
To the north lies the aforementioned crossroads with agricultural land beyond. To the east are open fields and a large, now derelict agricultural building associated with the former owners. Land to the south and west is predominantly agricultural in character, with the latter also including a farmyard and the nearby Home Farm residential development.

The surrounding area is characterised by open countryside interspersed with relatively large properties set within generous plots, comprising a mix of farmsteads, agricultural buildings and individual private dwellings.

The dwelling sits within an extensive domestic curtilage, incorporating areas of patio and hardstanding. A wildflower paddock is located to the north of the site, running alongside the driveway and screened by established ornamental planting.

As the site is in established residential use, including its garden areas, it is considered to constitute previously developed land.

There is no readily available public planning history for the site. However, it is understood that the dwelling was constructed in the 1950s by the parents of the previous owners, with historic mapping (see below from the council mapping system) confirming the building has remained in its current footprint since that time.



The existing dwelling retains its permitted development rights, allowing for a range of alterations and extensions subject to compliance with relevant limitations.

The site is not located within a designated flood risk area, and there are no known protected trees or listed buildings within the immediate vicinity.

Assessment of Proposal

It is a key consideration that, were the existing dwelling to be demolished, a replacement dwelling of greater scale could be brought forward on the site in accordance with national and local policy.

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The current proposal should therefore be viewed as a genuine alternative to a replacement dwelling, rather than an attempt to circumvent policy controls.

Accordingly, whilst the scale of extensions proposed is acknowledged, it is respectfully submitted that the scheme should be assessed on its overall design, site context and planning merits, rather than through a rigid or formulaic application of quantitative guidance delivered within the householder extension and alteration SPD which is more relevant in assessment to typical domestic extension projects of a smaller scale with a more direct impact upon neighbour amenity.

Reference is often made to the Kirklees Householder Extensions SPD, which provides guidance on assessing extensions within the district. However, it is important to recognise that this document is advisory in nature and does not form part of the statutory development plan.

The SPD includes indicative thresholds relating to volume increase. While these can be a useful starting point, they should not be applied as absolute or inflexible limits, particularly in cases such as this where site-specific circumstances justify a more nuanced assessment.

In this instance, the proposal has been carefully designed in response to:

The substantial size of the existing curtilage;

The heavily screened and enclosed nature of the site;

The limited visibility of the dwelling in both immediate and wider views; and

The opportunity to deliver a high-quality, cohesive design through the comprehensive upgrading of the existing structure.

The existing dwelling benefits from a comprehensive suite of permitted development rights under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). These rights represent a realistic and implementable fallback position which is a material consideration in the assessment of this application. In particular, the applicant could, without the need for planning permission, undertake a range of extensions and alterations including:

Side extensions under Class A, which could significantly increase the width and overall massing of the dwelling;

Rear extensions, including two-storey additions, subject to the limitations set out within Class A;

Detached outbuildings under Class E, which could cumulatively result in substantial additional built form within the curtilage; and

Upward extension of the dwelling under Class AA, allowing for the addition of new storeys to the existing structure, subject to prior approval (mainly based on neighbour amenity for which there are none).

When considered cumulatively, these permitted development rights provide the potential for a substantial material increase in both the footprint and volume of built development on the site, and could be implemented in a more fragmented and less coherent manner than the comprehensive approach proposed. The fallback position is therefore not merely theoretical; it represents a credible alternative scenario in which the dwelling could be significantly enlarged through incremental additions, without the benefit of an overarching design strategy.

The Proposal

Scale

The application site measures approximately 0.38 hectares.

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The proposed generally comprises of a 'wrap around' style extension. A double storey extension is proposed to the south and west. The existing double storey projection to the east is to be demolished and a new single storey extension built along this elevation. The existing roof is to be removed, due to it being fitted with spray foam insulation and requiring full removal. This has presented opportunity for a front extension creating a modified gable wall feature to the principal elevation.

The scale of the proposal is compatible with the surrounding properties and leaves a large amount of external amenity space for the dwelling within the boundary. The scale of the proposal has been informed by the topography of the site and the desire of the applicant to retain privacy for the house.

The design offers 4 ensuite bedrooms to the first floor, with an additional ensuite bedroom on the ground floor for an elderly relative who requires time to time care by the applicant. The ground floor then has the main family spaces.

The existing garage is retained and extended to provide another bay offering a home gym. To allow for a simplified roof design which matches the surrounding properties the ridge has been raised slightly (around 1m) to allow for this. The proposed roof is around 0.5m lower than the removed chimneys.

While the applicant acknowledges the scale of the proposal, it is compatible with the site and the wider context.

Layout, Access & Landscaping

There are no proposed changes to the site access or internal vehicle access arrangements. Vehicular access will be taken from the existing driveway, with the existing turning and parking area retained. The garages will also be retained.

The site is expansive and already offers storage for bins. There is sufficient hardstanding retained where bins can be conveniently stored. The bins are currently collected from the kerbside and this arrangement will continue.

The applicant is keen to maintain as much existing mature planting as possible. No planting is to be removed as part of this application.

The existing patio areas are to be slightly enlarged to allow for the new extensions. These will only encroach into areas of existing lawn and not mature planting.

The design of the house has been considered to allow for future adaptation to ensure the owners are able to remain in the house long term by installing chairlifts to travers the levels.

The design of the property has been carefully considered to meet the clients' exact needs. The applicant has been heavily involved in the internal layout design, and several design workshops and sketch layouts have been explored. Each room has been explored and designed to meet the needs of each of its users.

The main entrance is in the same place as the original house front door, however a new extension provides a practical storm porch and cloakroom area. This leads to the retained staircase. From this central hall is access to the main downstairs spaces. To the rear of the property is a study and music room to meet the applicants' requirements. There is also the guest bedroom for the elderly family member. To the west of the property is the utility room with separate access off the driveway for functional entry. There is also a WC. To the front of the property is the main open plan living

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area, which contains a dining area, kitchen and sitting area. Off this space is a more intimate snug room.

Appearance

The applicants have sought to revise the materiality of the dwelling to better reflect the prevailing character of the local area. Red brick is not a common or defining material within the Holme Valley, where natural stone and render are more typically observed.

In order to retain the existing structure whilst delivering improved thermal performance, external wall insulation is proposed to the retained elevations. These will be finished in an off-white render, incorporating ashlar detailing such as articulated window surrounds to provide depth and visual quality.

Newly constructed elements, including the eastern and rear extensions, are proposed to be faced in natural stone, ensuring a clear and appropriate distinction between existing and new fabric while reinforcing the overall vernacular character.

The resulting palette of stone and render is widely characteristic of development across the Holme Valley and is therefore considered significantly more appropriate to the site and its surroundings than the existing red brick construction.

It is acknowledged that such comprehensive alterations to external materials may not typically fall within the scope of permitted development rights or align strictly with the guidance set out in the Kirklees Householder Extensions SPD. However, a balanced and pragmatic approach is warranted in this instance. The proposed material changes represent a clear enhancement in visual terms and better respond to traditional material palettes.

Planning policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The statutory Development Plan for the site comprises the Kirklees Local Plan, supported by the Policies Map which confirms the site lies within the Green Belt designation.

In addition to the Development Plan, material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance, and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents, including the Kirklees Householder Extensions SPD.

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF sets out the Government's overarching planning policy framework, with a presumption in favour of sustainable development at its core (Section 2). Of particular relevance to this proposal are Sections relating to:

- Making effective use of land (Section 11);
- Achieving well-designed places (Section 12);
- Protecting Green Belt land (Section 13); and
- Meeting the challenge of climate change (Section 14).

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The NPPF places clear emphasis on the efficient use of land and the importance of optimising existing development. Whilst the proposal relates to extensions rather than new build development, it nonetheless directly aligns with these objectives through the retention and enhancement of an existing dwelling within a previously developed residential curtilage.

In Green Belt terms, the NPPF confirms that extensions to existing buildings are not inappropriate provided they are not disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Importantly, this assessment should be undertaken in a holistic manner, having regard to site-specific context, design quality, and realistic fallback positions, rather than through rigid numerical interpretation alone.

While the proposed extensions are relatively large, there is a significant reduction in massing and visual impact by the removal of the existing western double storey section of the dwelling with the massing being relocated to the eastern elevation which is visually less sensitive thanks to the dense woodland background.

Housing Land Supply Context (Material Consideration)

At the time of writing, the Kirklees Local Plan area is understood to be unable to demonstrate a fully robust five-year housing land supply, with housing delivery also falling below the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test. Whilst the proposed development does not directly contribute to the delivery of new housing in quantitative terms, this wider context remains a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

In particular, it informs the application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 11), and the weight to be afforded to development proposals where relevant development plan policies may be considered out of date in housing terms.

It is acknowledged that the current proposal relates to the extension and alteration of an existing dwelling rather than the provision of new housing. However, the broader housing delivery position forms part of the overall planning balance within which decisions are made, reinforcing a decision-making framework that is supportive of sustainable, well-designed forms of development where no adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Kirklees Local Plan

The most relevant policies within the Kirklees Local Plan include:

- Policy LP1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy LP2 – Place Shaping
- Policy LP3 – Location of New Development
- Policy LP7 – Efficient and Effective Use of Land and Buildings
- Policy LP24 – Design
- Policy LP25 – Landscape Design
- Policy LP52 – Environmental Quality

Policy LP1 reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development consistent with national policy.

Policy LP7 is particularly relevant, supporting the efficient use of land and buildings, including the retention and adaptation of existing structures. The proposal aligns strongly with this objective through the comprehensive enhancement of the existing dwelling rather than its demolition and replacement.

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Policy LP24 requires high-quality design that responds to local character. The proposed material strategy and architectural approach seek to reinforce the vernacular character of the Holme Valley, improving the appearance of the existing dwelling and strengthening its relationship with the surrounding landscape.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

The Kirklees Householder Extensions SPD provides guidance on assessing domestic extensions, including indicative parameters relating to scale and volume increases. However, it is important to recognise that this document is guidance only and does not form part of the statutory Development Plan.

It is intended to assist decision-making rather than impose rigid or prescriptive thresholds. In particular, it does not fully account for site-specific circumstances such as:

- The extent of existing residential curtilage and built form;
- The strong visual enclosure of the site;
- The availability of permitted development fallback; and
- The sustainability benefits of retaining and upgrading an existing dwelling.

Accordingly, while the SPD provides a useful reference point, the proposal should be assessed on its overall planning merits rather than through a strictly formulaic application of numerical guidance.

Green Belt Policy Context

The site lies within the Green Belt, where national policy within the National Planning Policy Framework seeks to prevent inappropriate development and protect openness. However, the Framework is equally clear that not all development within the Green Belt is inappropriate. In particular, extensions to existing buildings are capable of being appropriate development.

In applying this test, it is important that Green Belt policy is not interpreted in isolation from the wider policy evolution within the NPPF, including the introduction of the “grey belt” concept. The NPPF defines grey belt land as Green Belt land which does not strongly contribute to the purposes of Green Belt and which may include previously developed land.

In this context, the application site comprises an established residential curtilage containing a longstanding dwelling and associated domestic curtilage. It therefore constitutes previously developed land for the purposes of national policy interpretation. This is a material consideration of relevance, as the NPPF continues to attach significant weight to the effective use of previously developed land in sustainable locations.

The introduction of the grey belt concept reinforces the principle that Green Belt policy should be applied in a manner which distinguishes between strongly performing open Green Belt land and more enclosed, previously developed or lower performing areas. Whilst the site remains formally designated as Green Belt, its characteristics as a developed residential plot mean that it does not exhibit the same policy sensitivity as open countryside.

Accordingly, the presence of previously developed land within the site, combined with its enclosed and established residential character, supports a proportionate and less rigid application of Green Belt policy tests. This is particularly relevant where, as here, the proposal represents a comprehensive redevelopment-through-retention approach rather than new built form encroaching into the countryside.

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This approach aligns with the wider objectives of the NPPF, which seeks to promote sustainable development, optimise the use of previously developed land, and support high-quality design outcomes where development can be accommodated without undermining the fundamental purposes of the Green Belt.

In this context, the policy framework should not be applied mechanistically, but instead should recognise that the site's characteristics reduce the sensitivity typically associated with Green Belt designation and support a more balanced planning judgement when assessing the scale and form of the proposed extensions.

Summary

The proposed development comprises a comprehensive series of extensions and alterations to the existing dwelling at Four-Ways. While the scale of the proposals will result in a transformation of the building's appearance, form and spatial arrangement, the scheme is fundamentally based on the retention and adaptation of the existing structure, rather than its demolition and replacement.

This distinction is an important material consideration in the overall planning balance. Although the outcome may be visually comparable to that of a replacement dwelling, the chosen approach delivers a materially different planning and environmental outcome, with clear benefits in terms of sustainability, resource efficiency and embodied carbon reduction.

From a policy perspective, the site comprises an established residential curtilage within the Green Belt and therefore constitutes previously developed land. In this context, the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework are of particular relevance, especially the increasing emphasis on the efficient use of land, the reuse of existing buildings, and the recognition of lower-performing or previously developed areas within the Green Belt ("grey belt" concept).

Whilst the site remains formally designated as Green Belt, its characteristics as a long-established residential plot mean it does not perform strongly against the core purposes of Green Belt designation. The proposal therefore aligns with the broader policy direction which seeks to differentiate between open, undeveloped Green Belt land and more contained, previously developed sites where development can be accommodated without undermining the fundamental objectives of the designation.

In assessing the scale and form of development proposed, it is also important to recognise the significant fallback position afforded by extensive permitted development rights. These rights allow for substantial enlargement of the dwelling through side and rear extensions, detached outbuildings, and upward extensions, which could materially increase the overall volume and massing of built form on the site without the need for planning permission.

This fallback position is therefore not theoretical but represents a realistic alternative scenario against which the current proposal should be assessed. Importantly, such permitted development could result in a more incremental and potentially less coherent pattern of built form than the comprehensive, design-led approach now proposed.

In this case, the proposal represents a more controlled and environmentally responsible alternative to demolition and redevelopment, which could otherwise be a realistic and policy-compliant fallback scenario. The retention of the existing building avoids unnecessary demolition waste and preserves embedded carbon, while still enabling the delivery of a high-quality, comprehensively improved dwelling.

It is also important that the scheme is not assessed in a rigid or formulaic manner against the Kirklees Householder Extensions SPD. Whilst the SPD provides useful guidance, it is not part of

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the statutory development plan and does not account for the full range of site-specific considerations relevant to this proposal. In particular, it does not adequately reflect:

the presence of a credible demolition-and-rebuild fallback scenario;
the sustainability advantages of retention over replacement;
the enclosed and heavily screened nature of the site; and
the comprehensive design-led approach adopted in the proposed scheme.

A strictly numerical or threshold-based application of the SPD and other policy would therefore fail to capture the nuanced planning balance at play. The proposal should instead be assessed on its overall merits, including design quality, environmental performance, and contextual impact, rather than being constrained by guidance that is intended to be advisory rather than determinative.

In summary, whilst the proposals are relatively large in scale, they represent a **highly considered and environmentally preferable approach** to the redevelopment of the site. The scheme delivers a coherent and long-term architectural solution which retains the benefits of the existing building, avoids unnecessary demolition, and responds positively to both national policy objectives and local character.

The application therefore occupies a nuanced middle ground between extension and redevelopment, and should be assessed accordingly within the wider planning balance, rather than being constrained by rigid interpretation of either Green Belt guidance or householder extension thresholds.

Overall, the proposal represents a carefully considered, design-led response to an existing dwelling within a sensitive Green Belt context. It delivers a more sustainable and coherent alternative to demolition and redevelopment, while making efficient use of previously developed land and avoiding unnecessary environmental impact. When assessed in the round, including the realistic fallback position afforded by permitted development rights and the established residential character of the site, the scheme is considered to achieve an appropriate balance between national and local planning objectives. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the proposals should be supported on their planning merits as a proportionate and environmentally responsible form of development.

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Appendix 1 - Existing site photos.

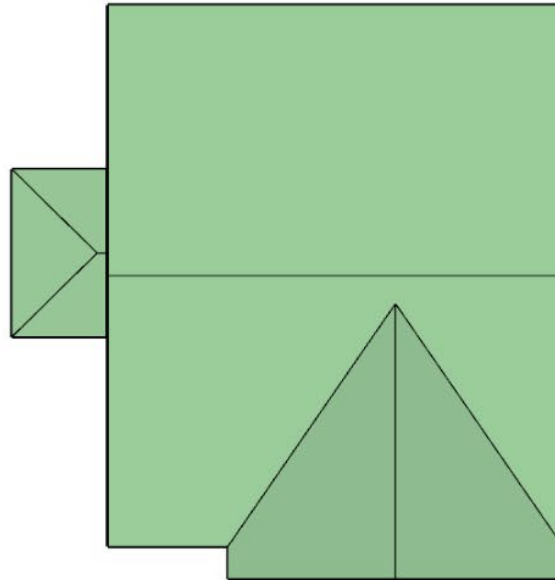


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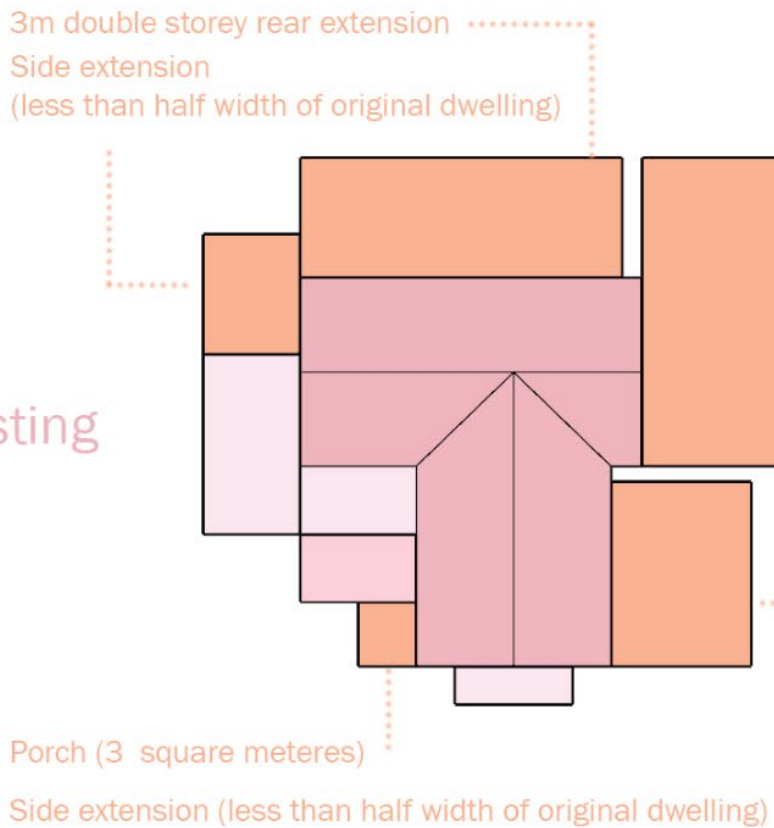
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Appendix 2 - Comparable footprints with permitted development (excluding outbuildings)

Proposed



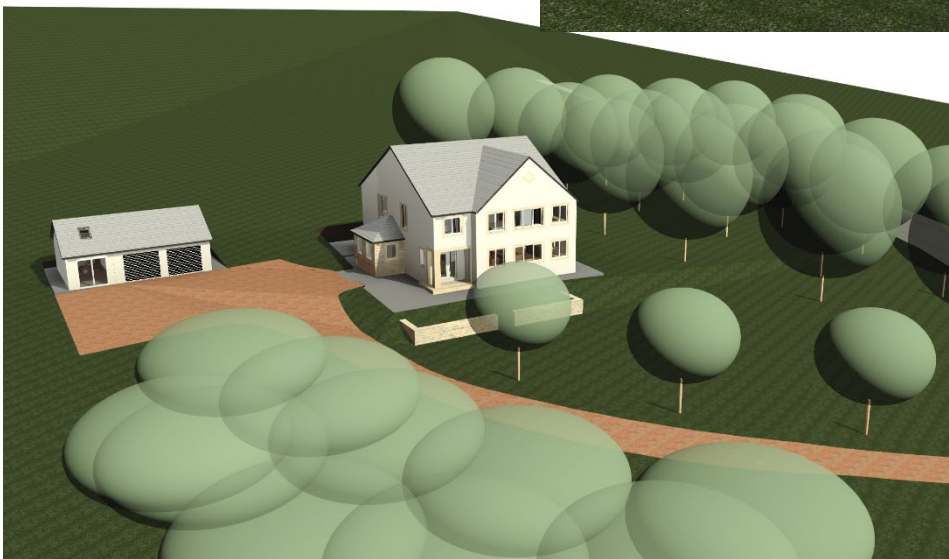
Existing



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Appendix 3 - Indicative 3D views



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Appendix 4 - Front view Montage



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