

Outline Application for a New Foodstore Ruabon Road

Design and Access Statement

February 2012



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Introduction

The Design and Access Statement is a communication tool explaining how the objectives of good design (which include the principles of inclusive design) have been considered from the outset of the development process.

TAN 12, Paragraph 6.9

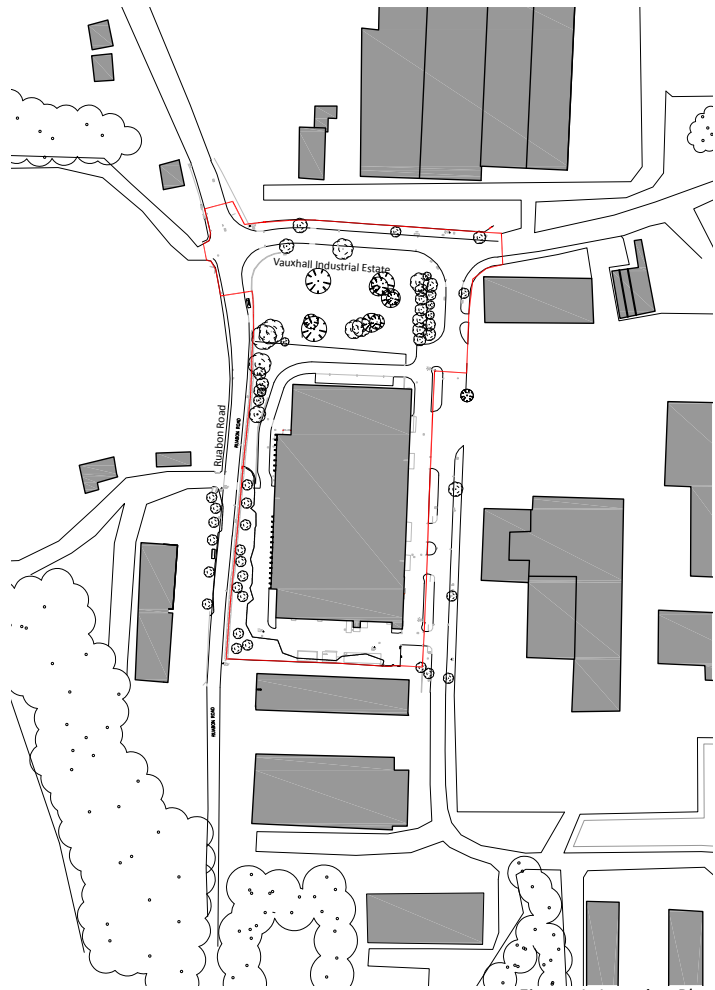


Figure 1: Location Plan



Figure 2: Aerial of Application Site

The Application

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by AEW Architects on behalf of Capital and Centric Plc to support an application for a new foodstore at Vauxhall Industrial Estate, Ruabon Road, Ruabon.

The Outline application seeks permission for a 45,000sqft foodstore with 316no. car parking spaces, associated landscaping and access.

The Outline application is also supported by a range of other documents including:

- Planning Statement
- Retail Statement
- Transport Assessment
- BREEAM Pre-Assessment

Capital and Centric Plc

Capital and Centric Plc is a commercial property investment and development company whose management team has developed many award winning schemes throughout the UK, including offices, industrial units, shops and hotels.

They are currently on site with around 250,000sqft and are one of the most active developers in the region.

Their management team have worked in partnership with many of the UK's local authorities, public sector bodies and local residents groups and all of their schemes currently under construction are 'BREEAM Excellent', embracing sustainable building methods.

The Design and Access Statement

This Design and Access Statement has been written in accordance with the guidance provided within *Technical Advice Note 12: Design* under the *Planning Policy for Wales*. It is set out in nine further sections as follows:

1. Context
2. Design Principles and Concepts
3. Planning Policy Overview
4. Environmental Sustainability
5. Movement to, from and within the Development
6. Character (including amount, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping)
7. Community Safety
8. Accessibility Policy and Inclusive Design
9. Conclusion

The statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings prepared by AEW including:

- B3851_P01 Rev C Existing Location Plan
- B3851_P02 Rev C Existing Site Plan
- B3851_P03 Rev C Existing Sections
- B3851_P103 Rev C Proposed Block Plan
- B3851_P104 Rev B Proposed Sections
- B3851_P105 Rev C Indicative Site Plan

Context

Understanding the site and its immediate and wider context is the basis for a meaningful and sustainable design response...

TAN 12, Paragraph 4.3



Strategic Context

Redeveloping the Brownfield Site

The application site is occupied by an existing industrial building which has been vacant since around 1999. Despite continued marketing attempts over the years the building has consistently failed to attract occupiers and it is now uneconomic to bring the building back into its former use due to its dilapidated state, the need for the removal of deleterious materials such as asbestos and its poor configuration in relation to service yards and access.

The application site provides a poor gateway to one of the area's most important employment generating estates, Vauxhall Industrial Estate. It is also hindering employment prospects for local people by virtue of its failure to meet the needs of businesses looking to locate here.

The Need for a New Retail Development

In the autumn of 2011 Capital and Centric Plc employed an independent research company to carry out a large number of telephone surveys, to establish where local residents of Rhos, Ruabon, Johnstown and surrounding areas currently undertake their main food shopping. The main findings of the survey are summarised as follows:

- Only 2.4% of local residents do their main food shop within Rhos, Ruabon, Johnstown or Penycae
- The overwhelming majority carry out their main food shop in Wrexham
- 90% of residents travel by car to carry out their main food shop
- Only 6% of residents travel by bus and an even smaller percentage walk

These proposals seek to provide the residents of Rhos, Ruabon, Johnstown with a local, more convenient alternative to Wrexham which will save 3.14 million car journeys per and reduce CO² emission by 640 tonnes per year.

Employment Opportunities

Unemployment claimant figures for November 2011 identify that up to 328 individuals within the immediate area are claiming Job Seekers Allowance.

It is estimated that between 250 and 275 permanent jobs will be created as a direct result of this development. These jobs will range from full time and part time positions, many with flexible working patterns. A variety of new jobs will be provided, including:

- Store Manager
- Deputy Manager
- Section Leaders
- Customer Assistants
- Cleaning Assistants

Most food retailers are committed to employing members of the local community, and are willing to commit to sign up to a 'Local Employment Partnership', which will involve the retailer working alongside Wrexham Council and Jobcentre Plus. This would ensure effective collaborative working aimed at maximising the number of jobs created in the store which would be filled by local people. This will maximise the local benefits of the proposed development.

The proposed development will also provide a significant boost to the local economy, and could provide spin off benefits to other services within the local area.

In addition to the jobs created by the retailer, construction jobs will also be created during the development period and associated industries will benefit from the ongoing servicing and maintenance of the buildings. There will also be a knock on benefits for the local supply chain networks.

Figure 3: Distance from Application Site to other Retail Stores



Physical Context

The Application Site

The application site is positioned between the village centres of Ruabon and Johnstown on Ruabon Road. It occupies a corner plot at the entrance to the Vauxhall Industrial Estate.

The application site houses an empty industrial building, formerly occupied by Griflex Fluid Handling, which occupies approximately two-thirds of the plot. The building provides no clear frontage to the public realm and is in a poor state of repair.

Within the northern portion of the site is a landscaped verge with grass and trees and houses the 'Vauxhall Industrial Estate' estate signage (2).

The existing building, service yard and circulation roads through the are set at a lower level than Ruabon Road and the landscaped verge, which reduces the visibility of the site from the public realm. Trees are planted along the boundary of the site with Ruabon Road, further reducing its visibility and prominence.

Vauxhall Industrial Estate is accessed from Ruabon Road, and from here vehicles have access to the plots within the estate by the estates access roads.



There are several vehicle access points into the application site via the estates internal access road. Once within the site a road skirts around the periphery of the building. There is an informally laid out car park and service yard at the rear of the site. Pedestrians can also access the site from this estate road.

There is no vehicle or pedestrian access into the site from Ruabon Road.

The Surrounding Area

The Vauxhall Industrial Estate provides a mix of commercial and industrial units which extends between Ruabon Road to the west and the railway line to the east.

Beyond Ruabon Road to the west is generally open countryside. However a few residential properties are sited on Afon Terrace which backs onto Ruabon Road close to the application site.

To the south, beyond the Vauxhall Industrial Estate is the settlement of Ruabon and to the north is the settlement of Johnstown.

The site is well located within the strategic road network with good links to the A483 to the east and excellent public transport links being adjacent to a bus stop serving the 2, 5, 6, X94 and J50 buses.



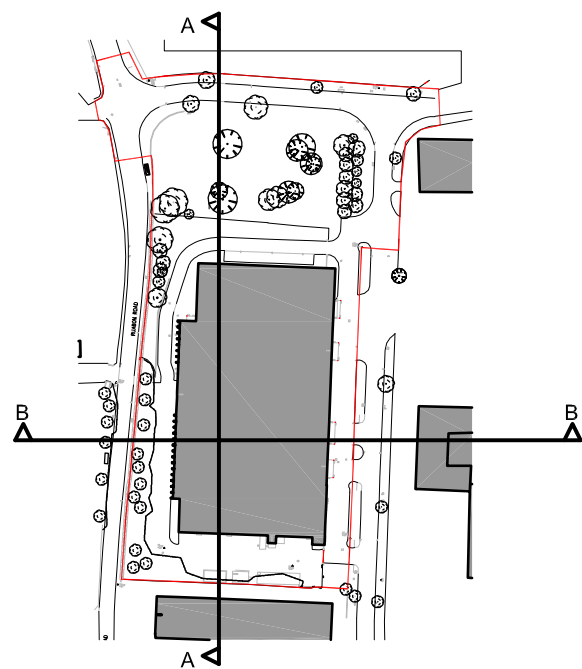
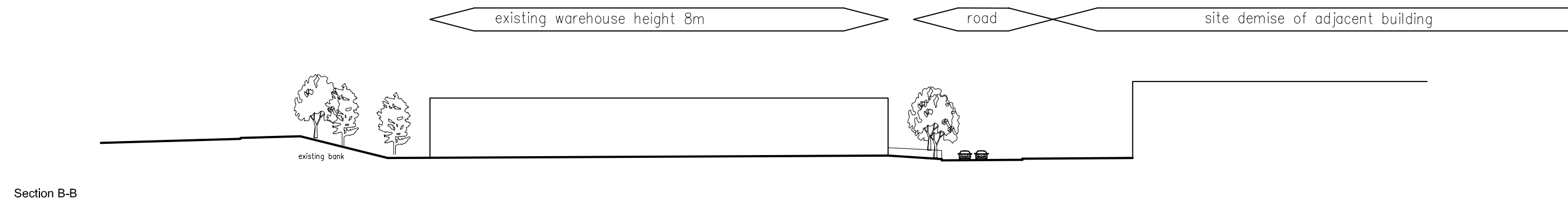
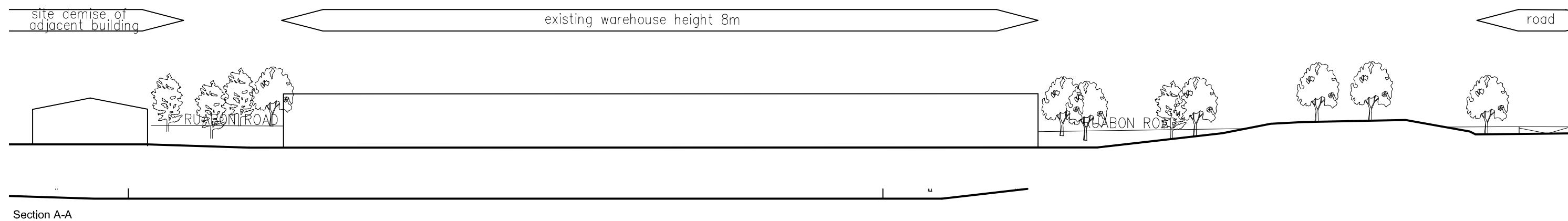


Figure 4: Existing Site Sections

Design Principles and Concepts

Where a design and access statement is required, the applicants must demonstrate how they have appraised the physical, social, economic and policy context of the development, and how their choice of design principles and concepts takes that context into account.

TAN 12, Paragraph 4.4

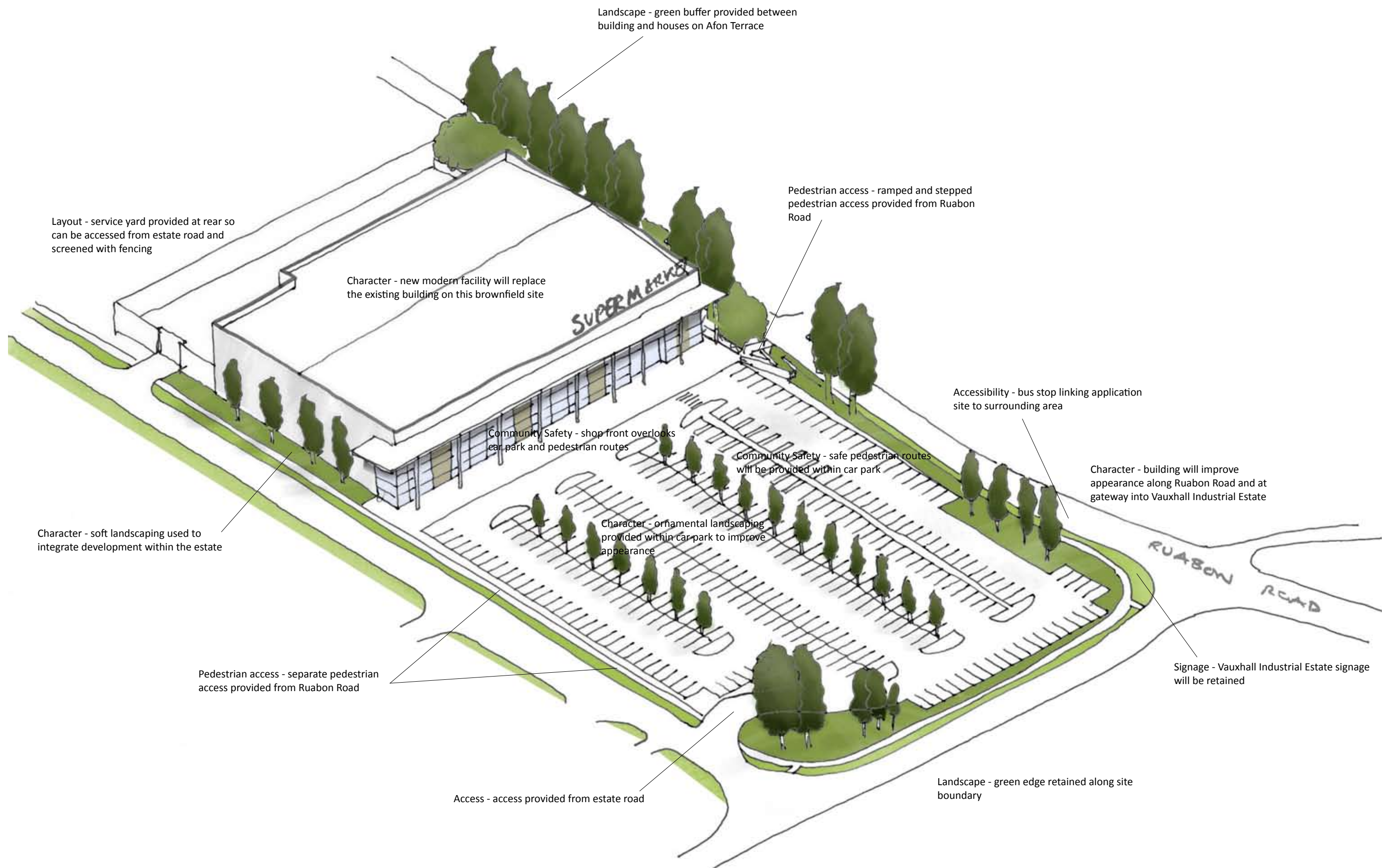


Figure 5: Indicative Visualisation, Design Principles

Planning Policy Overview

...development plans and supplementary planning guidance (SPG) should provide a clear context for design requirements in the local area.

TAN 12, Paragraph 4.4

Environmental Sustainability

To effectively mitigate the causes of climate change in the design of a development a clear approach to reducing carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions associated with the development should be taken.

TAN 12, Paragraph 5.4.3

Sustainable Location

These proposals seek to provide the residents of Rhos, Ruabon and Johnstown with a local, more convenient alternative foodstore than that provided within Wrexham. This will save 3.14 million km of car journeys per year and reduce CO² emission by 640 tonnes per year.

The location of the proposed development is highly sustainable in terms of its links with public transport. In summary, the use of the land as a foodstore reinforces the desire to create a sustainable development in the wider context, reducing transport emissions and benefitting the local economy.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development incorporates environmentally sound methods of construction, has low or zero carbon emissions and employs passive design techniques.

A keystone of the design concept for the redevelopment proposals is to create diversity in the requirement of energy supplies and in particular reliance on mains grid supplied electricity. The design aspiration is to incorporate such technologies that meet and exceed local authority requirement for renewable technology, and create diversity in demand that provides a shift in maximum energy requirements.

As such the following technologies may be considered for the proposed development:

- Combined Heat and Power (trigeneration)
- Air Source Heat Pumps
- Biomass Energy
- Solar Photovoltaic
- Solar Thermal Collection
- Water Source Heat Pump
- Passive Ventilation
- Passive or Low Energy Cooling
- Surface water Cooling
- Green Roof/Walls
- Grey/Rainwater Harvesting
- Passive Measures to Enhance Thermal Performance of the Building

Other renewable energy systems may be appraised and these include photovoltaic, wind turbines, biomass, and green roofs. When reviewing these systems against the lengthy payback periods, the prohibitive installation and maintenance costs, and the possible limited renewable energy usage provided, these technologies may become unsuitable for the project.

BREEAM

A BREEAM pre-assessment has been undertaken for this proposal and is submitted in support of the Outline planning application.

It is anticipated that the development as a whole, shall strive to achieve a BREEAM assessment result of at least 'Very Good' and the sustainable approach to the design and arrangement of the systems will aspire to meet these requirements. The development may call heavily on low or zero carbon technology and/or renewable fuel systems and could be constructed to maximise passive methods to condition the buildings thermal and visual environment.

Construction Management

Minimal construction waste can be achieved by:

- Selecting standard component sizes
- Encouraging modular/off site construction of elements within controlled factory conditions
- Material selection and specification
- Providing clear and concise drawing and specification information to contractors
- Considering the work sequences on site, involving the contractor / subcontractor early in the process and ensuring buildings can be constructed efficiently

Environmental Preferable Products

When undertaking the specification of construction materials preference should be given to environmentally preferable products, materials and services; wherever possible and economically feasible. Materials with a higher recycled content could be utilised where suitable for purpose and commercially viable. Consideration should also be given to the future demolition and recycling of the building envelope and structure.

Movement to, from and within the Development

Movement and ease of access for all to and from development should be appraised at the strategic and local level, with a view to supporting a shift from car use to walking, cycling and public transport and recognising the need for better connectivity within areas and with the surrounding areas.

TAN 12, Paragraph 4.13

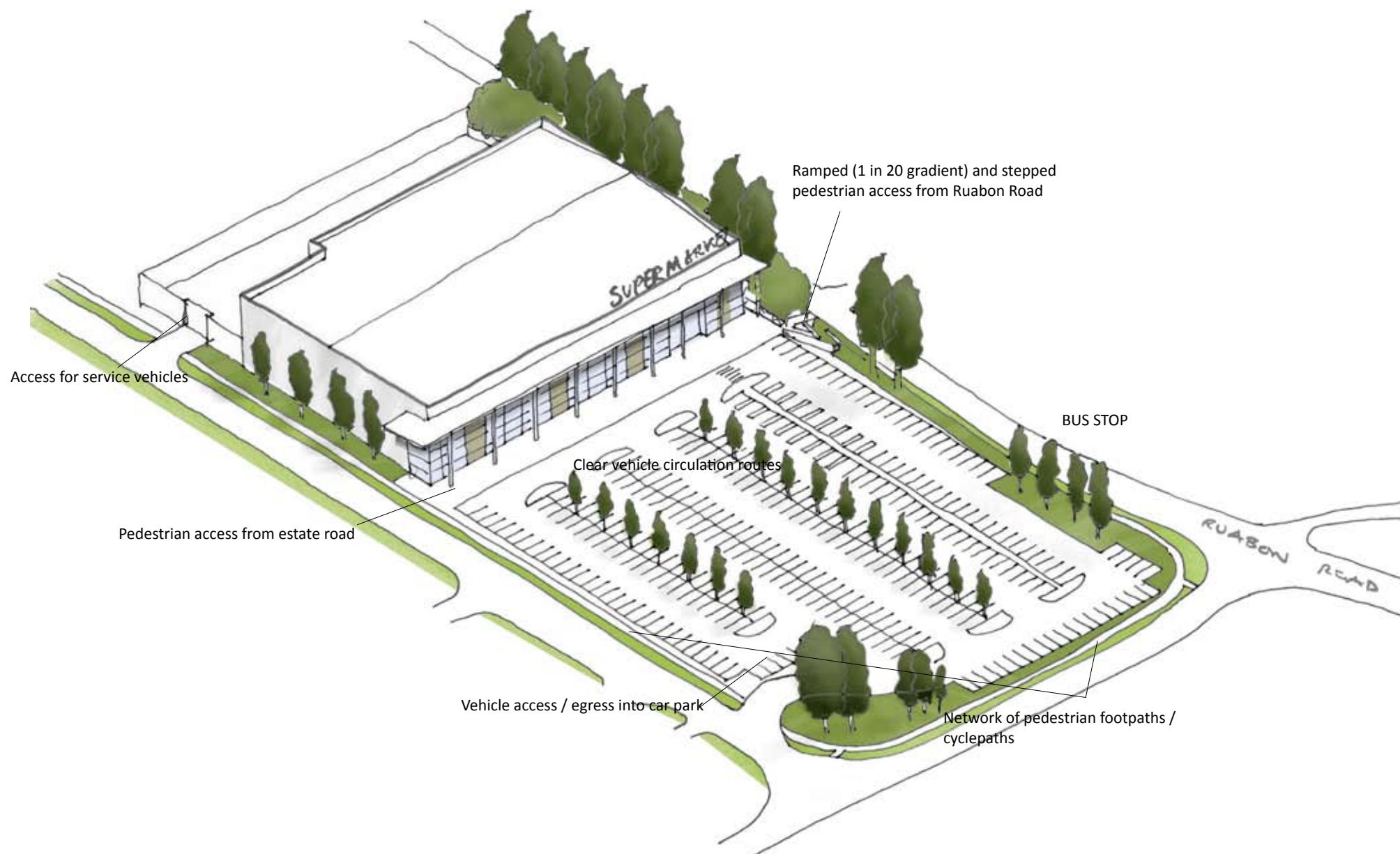


Figure 7: Indicative Visualisation, Movement Principles

Movement from the Wider Areas

The proposed foodstore is conveniently located between the villages of Ruabon, Johnstown, Rhosllanerchrugog and Penycae.

The villages and wider area are generally underserved by foodstore provision with many local residents having to take long trips by car to other towns such as Wrexham, which has its own problems associated with traffic jams and congestion. This proposal will offer a real alternative for residents having to travel to Wrexham to undertake their main food shopping.

The store will be medium sized, so providing a much better range of goods than is available locally at the moment, but without taking trade from the various existing village stores.

Since the proposal seeks to provide a local facility it is envisaged that many of the customers will walk, cycle or take public transport to the foodstore. Footpaths are provided from the immediate area alongside Ruabon Road, and along and through Vauxhall Industrial Estate. The proposals seek to improve the perception of safety within this part of the estate therefore encouraging the movement of people on foot or cycle.

Immediately adjacent to the application site on Ruabon Road are north-bound and south-bound bus stop serving the number 2, 5, 6, X94 and J50 buses. These bus stops connect the site to Ruabon, Johnstown, Rhosllanerchrugog, Penycae, Owsestry, Wrexham and Llangollen.

Vehicle Access

Vehicles will enter Vauxhall Industrial Estate from Ruabon Road and approach a new mini-roundabout proposed at the junction of the estate roads. Vehicles will enter the site via a new access which has been re-positioned to provide sufficient distance from the new roundabout. It is not suitable to utilise the existing vehicle access point into the site since it is too close to the junction.

The car park will be laid out to provide clear circulation routes.

The existing vehicle access into the service area will be retained.

Pedestrian and Cycle Access

Pedestrians and cyclists can access the site from Ruabon Road or the estate road.

The change in level between Ruabon Road and the application site requires ramped and stepped access.

Cycle parking provision is provided close to the access from the estate road at the front of the foodstore to offer maximum surveillance.

Character

Those involved in the design process need to recognise existing urban qualities and find ways of ensuring that new development strengthen or complement these.

TAN 12, Paragraph 5.7.2

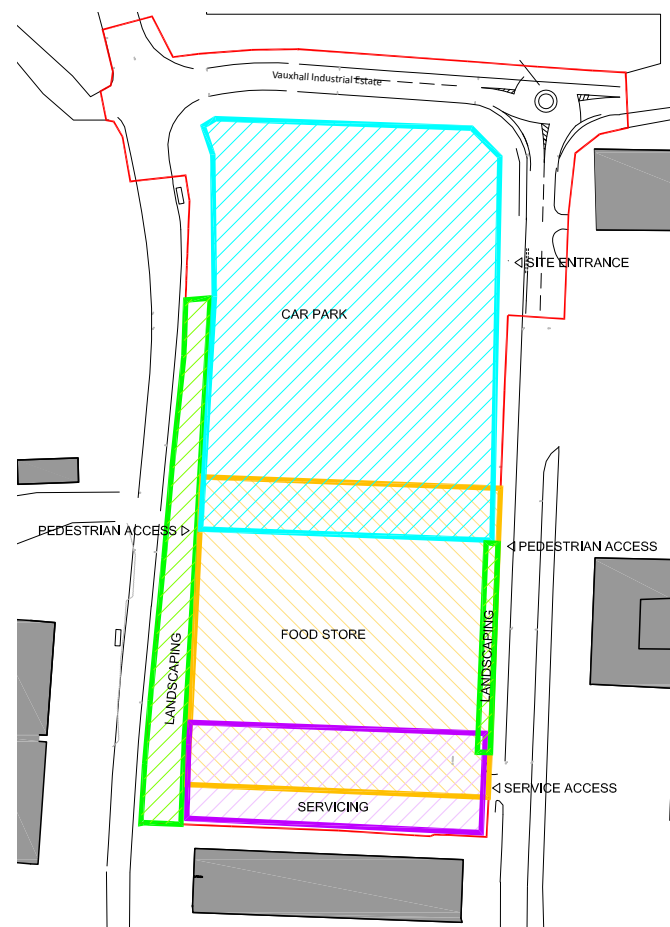


Figure 8: Development Zones

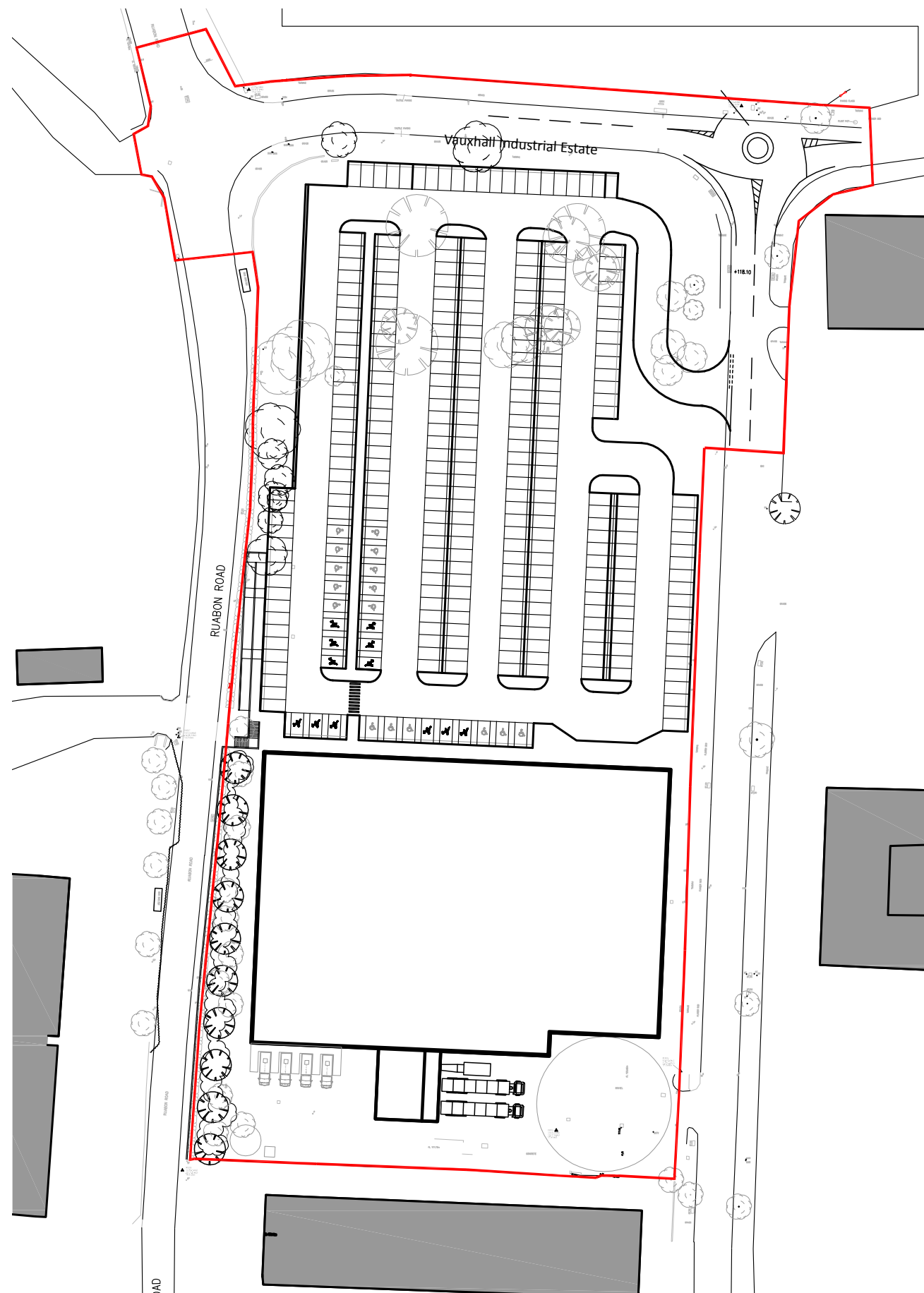


Figure 9: Indicative Layout

Amount

These proposal seeks approval for a 45,000sqft foodstore with associated parking, landscape and access. Approximately one third of the development plot will be occupied by the foodstore with the remaining areas being utilised as a car park, service area and landscape.

Layout

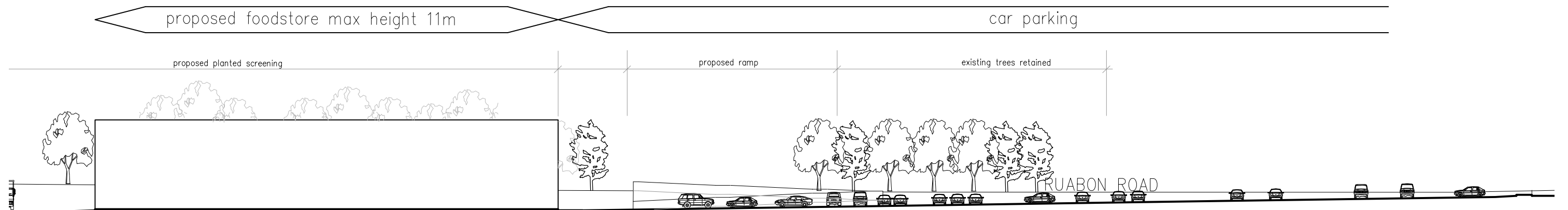
The foodstore is positioned between the car park and service area and extends the width of the site. The positioning of the car park and foodstore allow unimpeded views of the store when approaching from the north, marking the arrival to not only the foodstore but also the Vauxhall Industrial Estate.

New pedestrian access points will be provided into the site from Ruabon Road and the estate road which will lead directly to the front of the foodstore and building entrance.

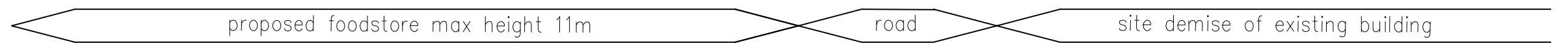
Vehicle access is shown leading directly into the surface level car park which occupies the corner location of the plot at the junction of Ruabon Road and the estate road. The car park extends to approximately half of the site to provide the sufficient level of parking. Accessible parking bays are positioned closest to the foodstore entrance.

The foodstore service area access is shown in the position of the existing service area at the rear of site. This area has been positioned to allow the existing access point to the retained, but also allows the service area to be enclosed and screened by the adjacent unit. The refuse / recycling store is shown within the service area.

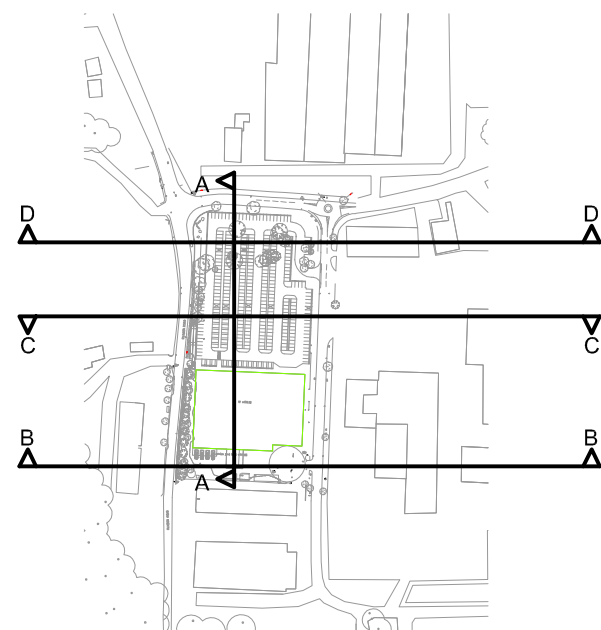
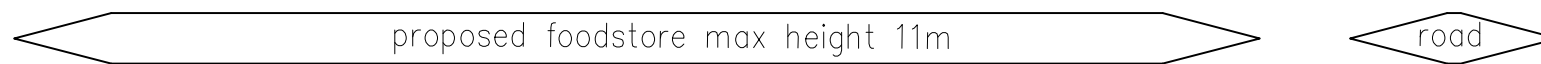
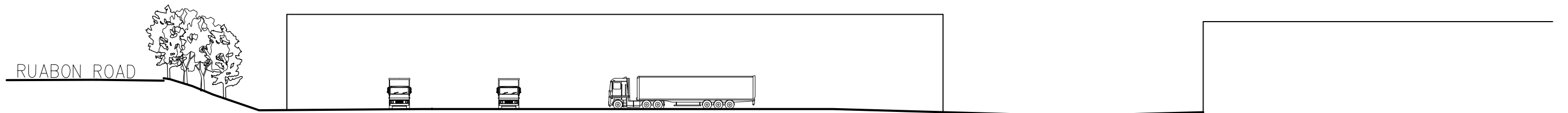
Refuse and recycling facilities are shown within the service area.



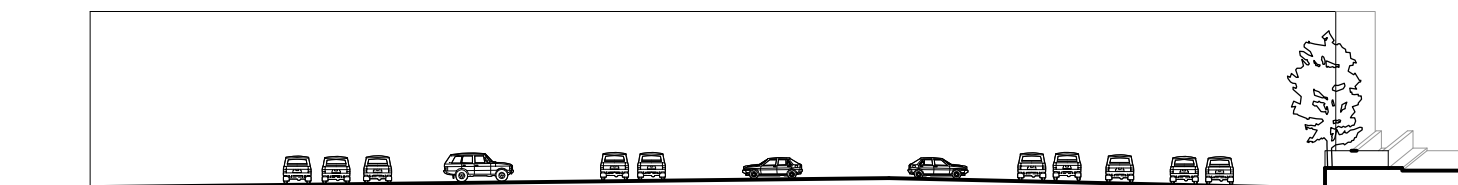
Section A-A



Section B-B



Section C-C



Section D-D

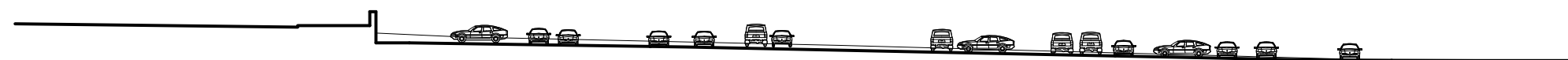


Figure 10: Proposed Site Sections



Scale and Appearance

The application site is posited at an important strategic location at the entrance into the Vauxhall Industrial Estate. However, it is the application of high quality building materials which will ensure that the building acts as a strategic marker for the estate, as opposed to an over-dominant building scale and mass. The scale of the proposed development, in terms of footprint and height, relates to the industrial context provided by the units within Vauxhall Industrial Estate.

The foodstore will be of medium size and has a smaller footprint than the existing building which occupies the site. The footprint of the foodstore is consistent with the other industrial units within the estate.

The exact building height for the proposed foodstore has not been established at this Outline stage, however it is to be no higher than 11m in order to be consistent with the building heights of the adjacent industrial units. The impact of the height of the proposed foodstore, when viewed from Ruabon Road is reduced by utilising the existing change in levels from the highway and proposed screen planting.

The foodstore frontage will be predominantly glazed and face the surface level car park. At the rear the building will be brick where it is hidden from view by the service area and boundary treatment.



Landscaping

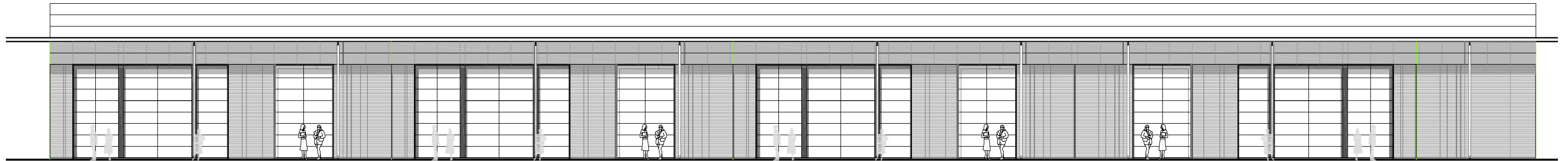
The main landscape buffer is shown along the site's boundary to Ruabon Road, especially where the houses are positioned on the west side of the road. Tall tree planting will be utilised in this location to screen views towards the building, and especially to the service area. Vegetation planting wraps around this corner of the site to further screen the service area.

The eastern elevation of the building, to the estate road, is also screened with planting to add interest to this facade.

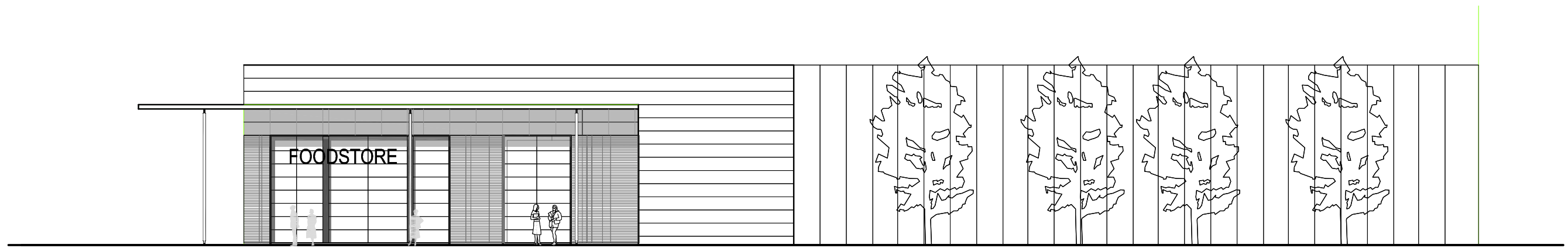
Structured, ornamental planting is provided within the car park, and sporadically elsewhere around the boundary to green the site but prevent hiding places.

Careful consideration will be given to the level of planting at the vehicle and pedestrian access points to allow visibility plays and clear views.





Elevation A-A



Elevation B-B

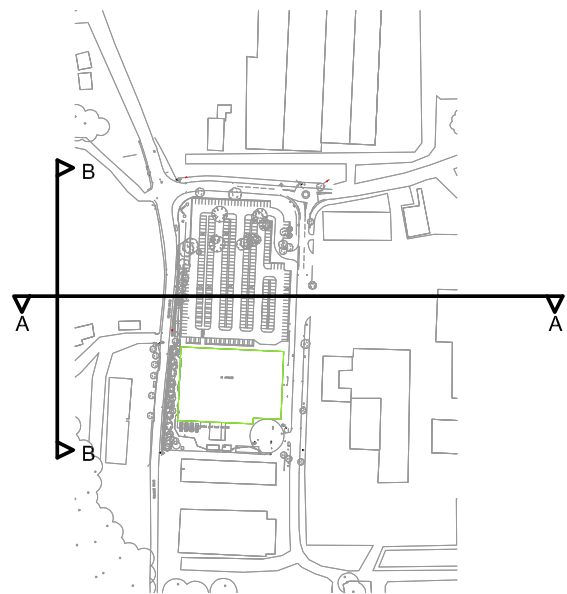


Figure 11: Indicative Elevations

Community Safety

The concept of 'designing out crime' requires full consideration by everyone involved in the design of development. The design of physical features such as the arrangement of infrastructure and buildings also impact on incidence of crime.

TAN 12, Paragraph 5.17.5

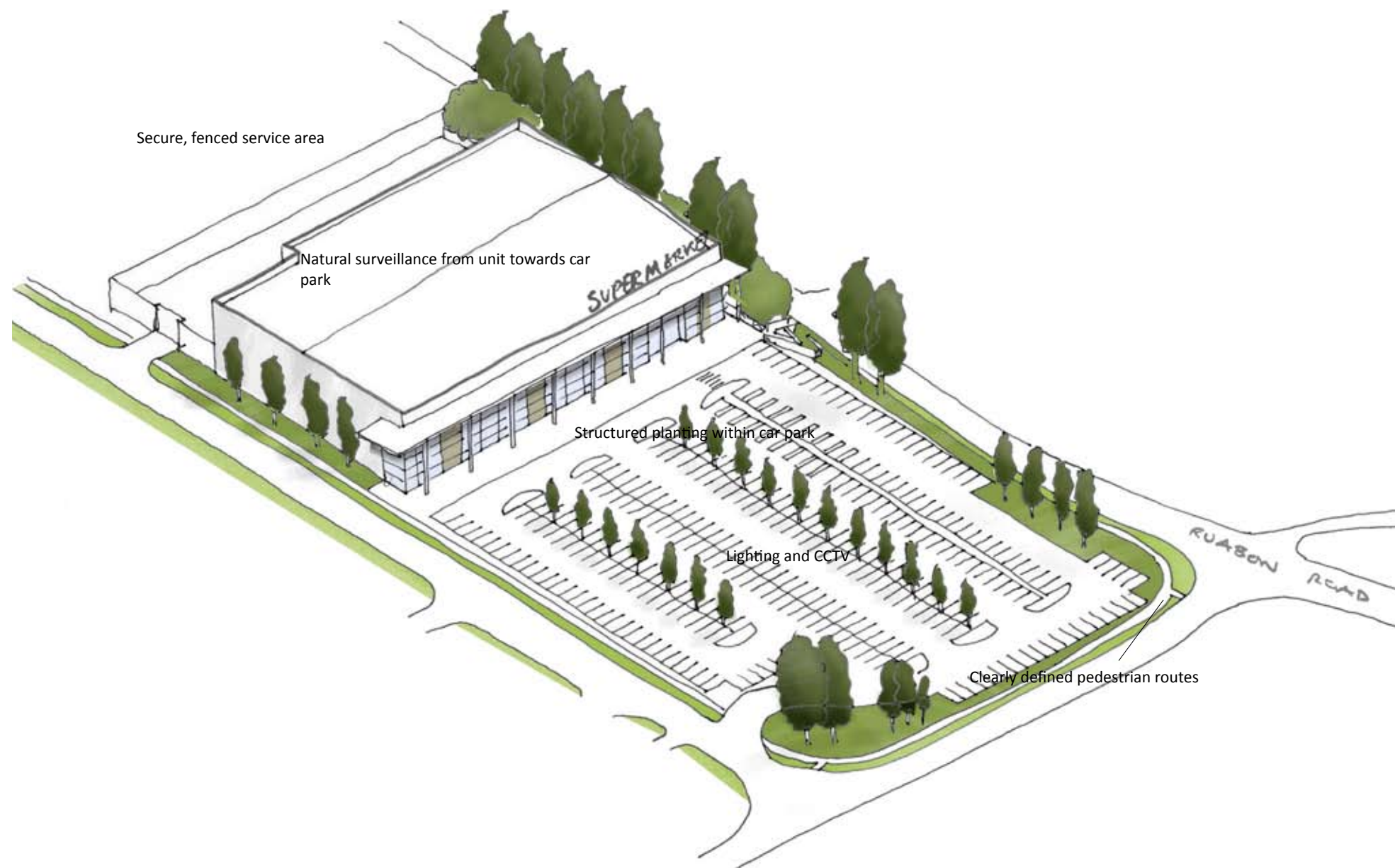


Figure 12: Indicative Visualisation, Safety Principles

The Outline design and indicative layout of the proposed foodstore has been developed to reduce the risk, and perceived risk, of crime in the area and afford a safe environment for the community.

Accordingly, the following standards and features have been considered at the Outline stage to demonstrate a level of physical security acceptable to the local authority:

- Reducing the planting along the Ruabon Road frontage allows the main facade and entrance of the building to be highly visible from the highway and footpath network
- The reduction in soft landscaping and the introduction of ornamental planting within the car park means that there are no obscured area or potential hiding places
- The car park is provided in a highly visible location with appropriate surveillance and will be well lit, in accordance with BS 5489, and monitored by CCTV
- Whilst only a single storey building, it is sufficiently high to deter access to the roof
- The building is regularly shaped with no hidden recesses
- Cycle parking will be provided in a highly visible location at the front of the foodstore
- Pedestrian access from the surrounding footpath network is provided directly to the entrance of the foodstore, negating the need to walk through the car park
- Parking bays and directional markings will be clearly demarcated, with pedestrian routes/directions clearly signed

Appropriate measures will also be taken to secure their site during construction, and control pedestrian and vehicular access in to and out of the site curtilage.

Further matters for consideration at the detailed design stage include:

- Specification of boundary enclosures and gate to service yard
- The positions and enclosures of the refuse stores
- Window and door specifications and the potential inclusion of roller shutters

Accessibility Policy and Inclusivity

The Assembly Government expects all those involved in the design process to foster a culture of inclusion, whereby design solutions provide access to the widest possible range of people.

TAN 12, Paragraph 5.3.1



Guidance and Consultations

The following guidance documents have been referenced to in the development of the outline proposals and will continue to be consulted throughout the detailed design stage:

- Approved Document M of the Building Regulations, The Stationery Office, 2004
- BS 5588 Part 12:2004 Fire Precautions in the Design and Construction of Buildings: Managing Fire Safety, British Standards Institution
- BS 5588 Part 8 Fire Precautions in the Design and Construction of Buildings: Means of Escape for Disabled People, British Standards Institution, 1999
- BS 8300:2009 (incorporating Amendment no 1) Design of Buildings and their Approaches to Meet the Needs of Disabled People – Code of Practice, British Standards Institution, 2001
- Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them, The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABI), 2006
- Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 including the relevant Codes of Practice
- The Principles of Inclusive Design, CABI, 2006
- Human Rights Act 1988, which came into force in 2000

Inclusive Access

The design team are committed to a policy of equality, inclusion and accessibility in the delivery of all buildings. We fully recognise the individual abilities of future users of the foodstore and have been active in ensuring that any potential sources of discrimination are addressed. Against that background, this section of the document will set out the measures that have been employed in order to ensure inclusive access throughout the proposed development.

Site Access

The change in level between Ruabon Road and the application site requires ramped (1 in 20 gradient) and stepped access.

Once within the site a level threshold will be provided to all building entrances.

Accessible parking bays are provided closest to the foodstore entrance.

Internal Circulation: Horizontal

All doors offer an effective clear width of 860mm, ensuring all doors are usable by disabled visitors and staff members alike. All single leaf doors have the required 300mm leading edge and will have accessible easy to use ironmongery.

1800mm minimum wide corridors allow easy access for general use and emergency egress. The corridors will have good visual contrast between the walls, floors, ceiling and door areas. The lighting in all corridors will also provide a good environment for both employee functions and visitor activities.

Internal Circulation: Vertical

All stairs will have visually contrasted nosings on the riser and going of each tread and will have tactile indicators at the top of each flight the stair is not within a core. Lighting and finishes on the stairs will be non-reflective to assist people with visual impairments.

Lift access will also be provided, if required.

Signage and Communication

All signage will be designed with reference to current good practice guidance and will form part of an integrated communication scheme that gives clear directions, information and instructions for the use of the building.

Summary

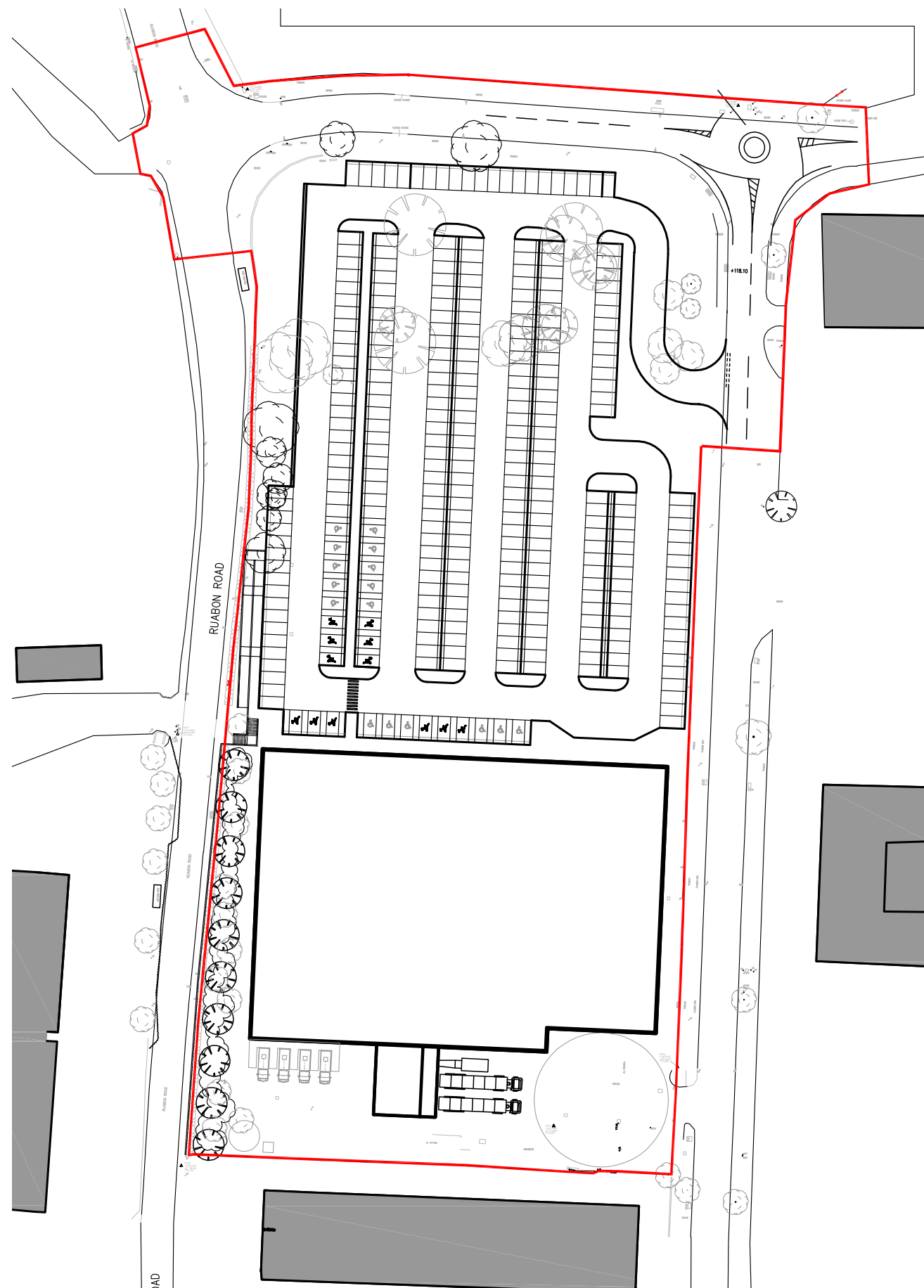


Figure 13: Indicative Layout

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by AEW Architects on behalf of Capital and Centric Plc to support an application for a new foodstore at Vauxhall Industrial Estate, Ruabon Road, Ruabon.

The Outline application seeks permission for a 45,000sqft foodstore with 316no. car parking spaces, associated landscaping and access.

The existing, dilapidated building will be replaced by a modern foodstore and the site opened up to afford views from Ruabon Road when approaching Vauxhall Industrial Estate.

The location of the proposed development is highly sustainable in terms of its links with public transport. In summary, the use of the land as a foodstore reinforces the desire to create a sustainable development in the wider context, reducing transport emissions and benefitting the local economy.

This Design and Access Statement shows how the design of the proposal responds to its context and enhances the appearance of the area. The other documents submitted to support this application show how the proposal accords with policy and does not have an impact on the highway.