

**Proposed House beside
Beechlawn, Kilakee Road,
Rathfarnham, Dublin 16.**

Architectural Design Statement
September 2022



James

Proposed House beside Beechlawn, Kilakee Road Rathfarnham, Dublin 16

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1.0 Introduction:

James Mitchell Architect Ltd., have been engaged by Danielle O'Kelly to develop a proposal for a new house beside her parents' home Beechlawn, associated with Timbertrove, Kilakee Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin D16 R257. Timbertrove is an established local employer, assembling and retailing timber products for house and garden. Established in the early eighties, this award-winning local business continues to develop. As a family run and owned local economic driver, succession and sustainability are critical to its continued activity. This is the context in which this application has been generated.

The applicant is a director of Timbertrove and the daughter of the owners. Danielle's role is defined as director for marketing and business development. As Timbertrove is a family business Danielle has progressed through the company structure and regularly takes over the management of the business. This requires her to be on site seven days a week to oversee sales, materials delivery, component manufacture, product assembly and sales. Beyond this the business includes a café which again is managed by the applicant. Her parents and she wish to demolish an earlier annexe to the family home and replace this with a new home for her, allied to the business. The extended family own a patch work of lands including the site for Timbertrove, the access lane to the existing house Beechlawn and abounding sites. The family have been consulted to agree and grant permission to the applicant to apply for permission.

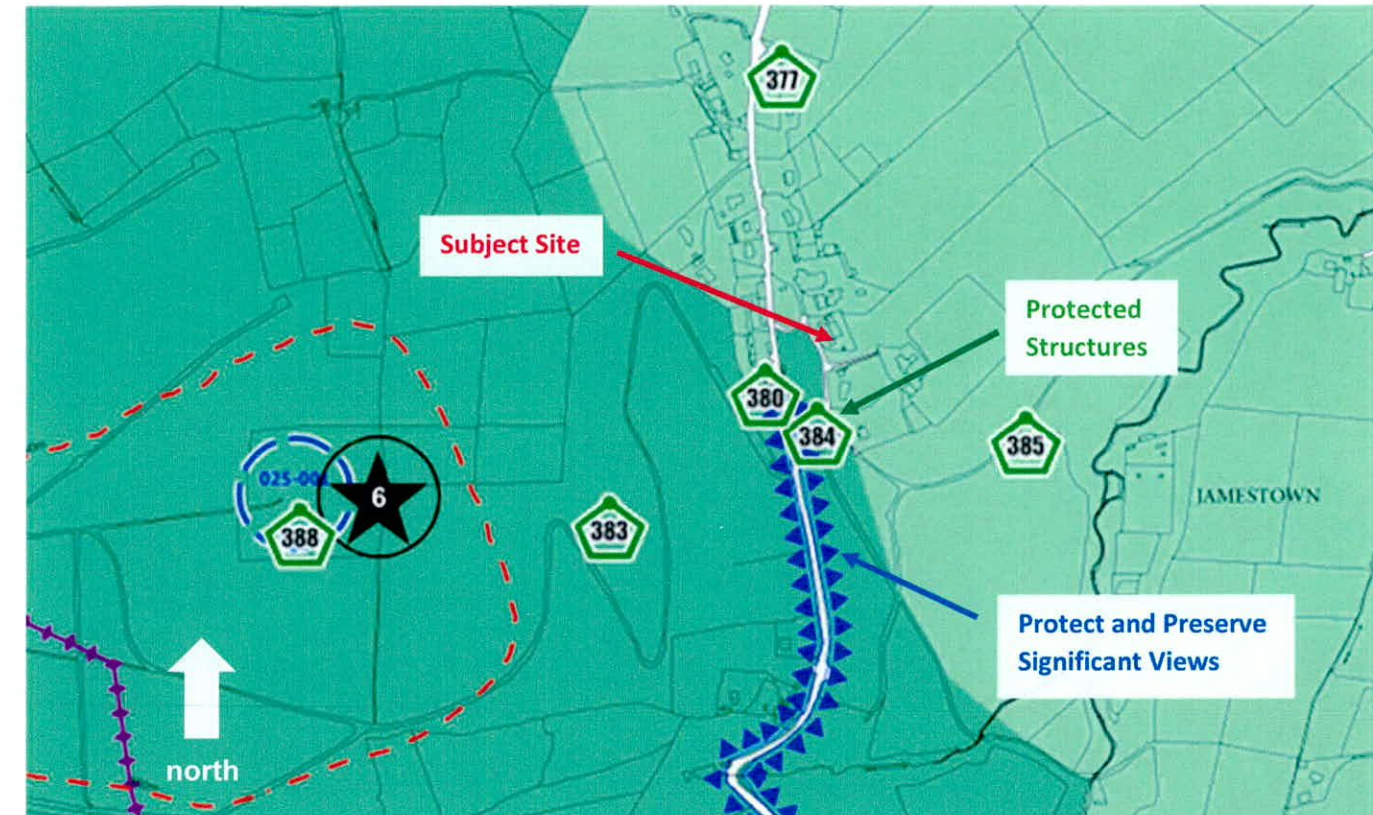
Beechlawn, the existing house, is predominantly a single storey timber clad building atop a storey height blockwork retaining structure. In 2005 planning (reference SD05B/0144) was granted for a bedroom annexe to the south extremity of the house. This consists of a rendered dressing and en suite with timber bedroom and deck. The timber structure has begun to deteriorate, and the deck is wholly unstable and had to be demolished.

This Design Statement sets the development of the proposals design development within the requirements of:

- o The South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016- 2022.
- o Sustainable Rural Housing – Guidelines for Planning Authorities

2.00 South Dublin Development Plan 2016 -2022

Fig: 01. Extract of Map 11 South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022



The subject site is Zoned "RU - To protect and improve rural amenity and to provide for the development of agriculture". Residential development is open for consideration subject to note "c - In accordance with Council policy for residential development in rural areas".

The policy sets out in Chapter 2 the following criteria shall be met for residential development to be considered.

"2.5.3 RURAL HOUSING IN RU ZONE

HOUSING (H) Policy 22 Rural Housing in RU Zone

It is the policy of the Council that within areas designated with Zoning Objective 'RU' (to protect and improve rural amenity and to provide for the development of agriculture) new or replacement dwellings will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

H22 Objective 1: To consider new or replacement dwellings within areas designated with Zoning Objective "RU" (to protect and improve rural amenity and to provide for the development of agriculture) where:

The applicant can establish a genuine need to reside in proximity to their employment (such employment being related to the rural community) OR

The applicant has close family ties with the rural community"

“2.5.8 RURAL HOUSE & EXTENSION DESIGN

The design of all new dwellings and extensions (including family flat extensions) in rural areas should respond appropriately and sensitively to its surrounding rural, mountain and/or river valley context. Dwellings should be designed to be inconspicuous and compact in design particularly in areas of high visual amenity and with a steep topography. In designing individual proposals within a rural area, regard should also be had in relation to the combined and accumulated visual impact of a proposed development when taken together with existing nearby structures.

Further to the policy and objectives set out below, standards in relation to the design and siting of residential development are detailed under Section 11.3.4 of this Plan.

HOUSING (H) Policy 27 Rural House & Extension Design

It is policy of the Council to ensure that any new residential development in rural and high amenity areas, including houses and extensions are designed and sited to minimise visual impact on the character and visual setting of the surrounding landscape.

H27 Objective 1:

Ensure that all new rural housing and extensions within areas designated with Zoning Objective 'RU' (to protect and improve Rural Amenity and to provide for the development of Agriculture), Zoning Objective 'HA-DM' (to protect and enhance the outstanding natural character of the Dublin Mountains Area), Zoning Objective 'HA-LV' (to protect and enhance the outstanding character and amenity of the Liffey Valley) and Zoning Objective 'HA-DV' (to protect and enhance the outstanding character and amenity of the Dodder Valley):

Is designed and sited to minimise impact on the landscape including views and prospects of natural beauty or interest or on the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest including natural and built heritage features; and

Will not have a negative impact on the environment including flora, fauna, soil, water (including ground water) and human beings; and

Is designed and sited to minimise impact on the site's natural contours and natural drainage features; and

Retains and reinstates traditional roadside and field boundaries; and

Is designed and sited to circumvent the need for intrusive engineered solutions such as cut and filled platforms, embankments or retaining walls; and

Would comply with Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment Systems Serving Single Houses, EPA (2009) or other superseding standards; and

Would not create or exacerbate ribbon or haphazard forms of development”

Further requirements for the siting and design of rural housing are detailed in Section 11.3.4

“11.3.4 RURAL HOUSING

(i) Housing Need

The Rural Settlement Strategy outlined in Chapter 2 Housing sets out the requirements to meet housing need that will be considered for housing on lands that are designated with Zoning Objective 'RU', 'HA-DM', 'HA-LV' and 'HA-DV'. For the purpose of assessing local rural housing needs criteria, the division between the High Amenity Dublin Mountain 'HA-DM' Zone and the High Amenity Dodder Valley 'HA-DV' Zone occurs at Fort Bridge, Bohernabreena with the 'HA-DM' Zone occurring to the south of the bridge and the 'HA-DV' Zone occurring to the north of the bridge.

(ii) Rural Housing Design

A comprehensive site analysis and character appraisal should be submitted with all applications for houses and extensions in rural and high amenity zones (see also Section 11.5.5 (i) Ecological Protection and (ii) High Amenity and Sensitive Landscapes). The analysis and appraisal should provide a rationale for the design and siting of the proposed development including form, building finishes, height, and massing based on the local and natural context. Such development should generally be low rise. The shape and form of residential development in rural and high amenity areas, including roof structures, should be compact and simple with external building finishes that reflect the local character of the area including vernacular buildings and traditional building materials. Dormer extensions should be minimised and should not obscure the main features of a roof.

A minimum road frontage of 60 metres should be provided for all new dwelling sites in rural areas and a proliferation of housing along stretches of road in a manner that creates ribbon development should be avoided.

Dwellings and extensions should not be located on a ridgeline or in an elevated position in the landscape. The natural slope and landcover of sites should be retained, with an appropriate tree and hedgerow planting scheme that utilises and augments indigenous planting. Traditional field and roadside boundaries, including old stone boundary walls and hedgerows, should be retained or reinstated as much as possible. Sustainable Urban Drainage measures should also be incorporated. IMPLEMENTATION SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016 - 2022 208

Driveway and parking areas should be minimised and should follow the natural slope and contours of the site with appropriate permeable materials. Modern gateways, piers and boundary walls should be avoided with the exception of the retention and reinstatement of traditional stone boundary walls.

(iii) Wastewater Treatment Domestic effluent treatment plants and percolation areas serving rural houses or extensions shall comply with the requirements of the Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment Systems Serving Single Houses, EPA (2009) or other superseding standards. Such details should be included with applications for new or replacement houses and extensions to existing dwellings where there would be an increase in demand on the treatment capacity of any existing wastewater treatment system.”

3.00 A Brief Description of the proposal:

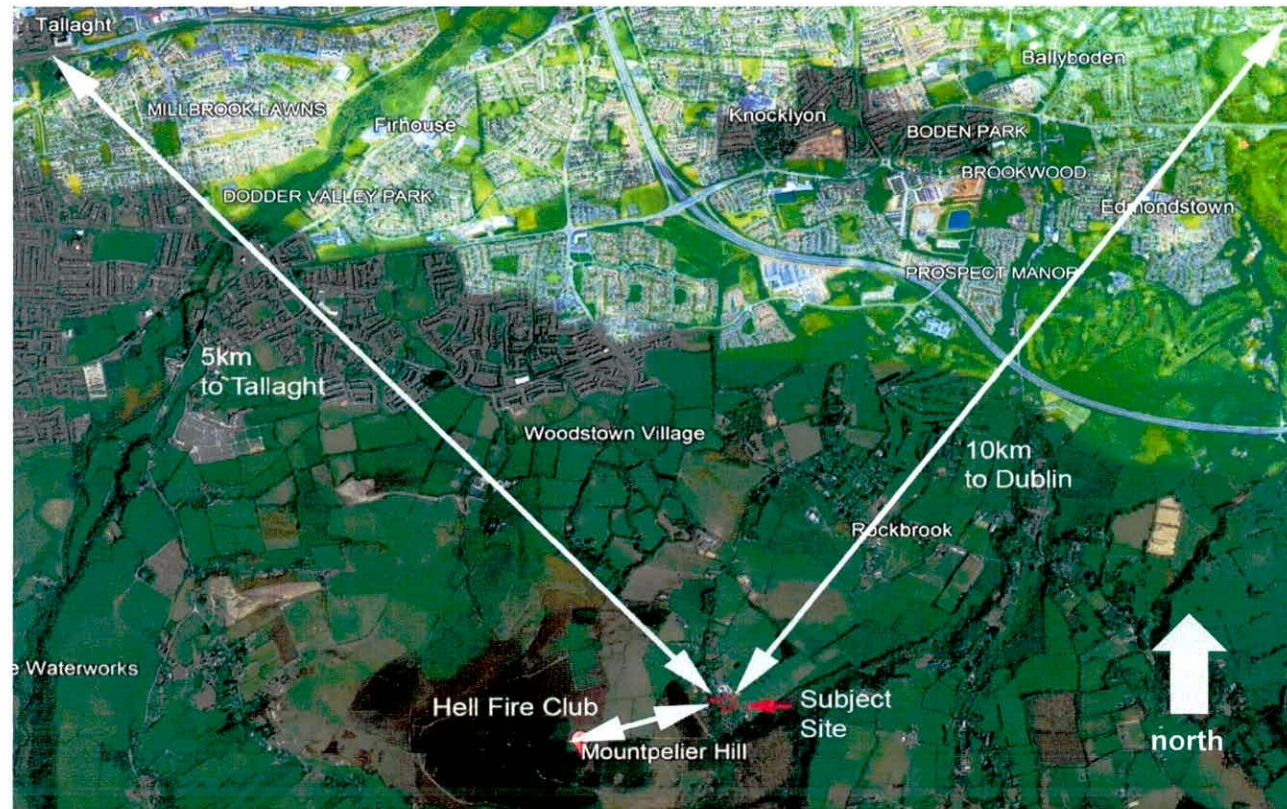
The proposed development creates a new 2 storey four-bedroom contemporary house that is positioned to the south of the existing Beechlawn house. The proposal shall replace the existing bedroom and en suite annexe.

The design has been developed in accordance with the Rural Design guidelines.

- The proposed house nestles into site and follows the existing slope presenting gable elevations west to the access lane and east to the open aspect towards the coast to minimise visual impact to the surrounding landscape.
- Retains and enhances the sylvan character of the existing location. Is traditionally proportioned in elevation and treatment but in a contemporary manner.
- Draws directly on its context of the mixture of one-off housing that characterise this location for its selected palate of traditional materials from the brick, render and timber cladding.
- Addresses existing and future drainage and water supply needs
- Demonstrates that the applicant is from the local community by links to family who have occupied the site since 1931 and attendance at local schools. The client appends a letter to demonstrate need and confirmation from a local school demonstrating her lifelong tie to this locale and this site. Furthermore, the applicant confirms and can demonstrate her integral role within the family business and that she is key to its sustained economic development.

4.00 Location:

Fig: 02. Subject Site Location relative to Tallaght and the Hell Fire Club.



The subject site is just 5km from Tallaght and 10km from Dublin City Centre. The site is accessed from Kilakee Road and is on the eastern slope of Montpelier with the Hell Fire Club just 700 meters away. The site is characterised by its sylvan character between the access from Kilakee Road and the open fields to the lower slopes to the east.

Fig: 03. Subject Site Location and its immediate Context.

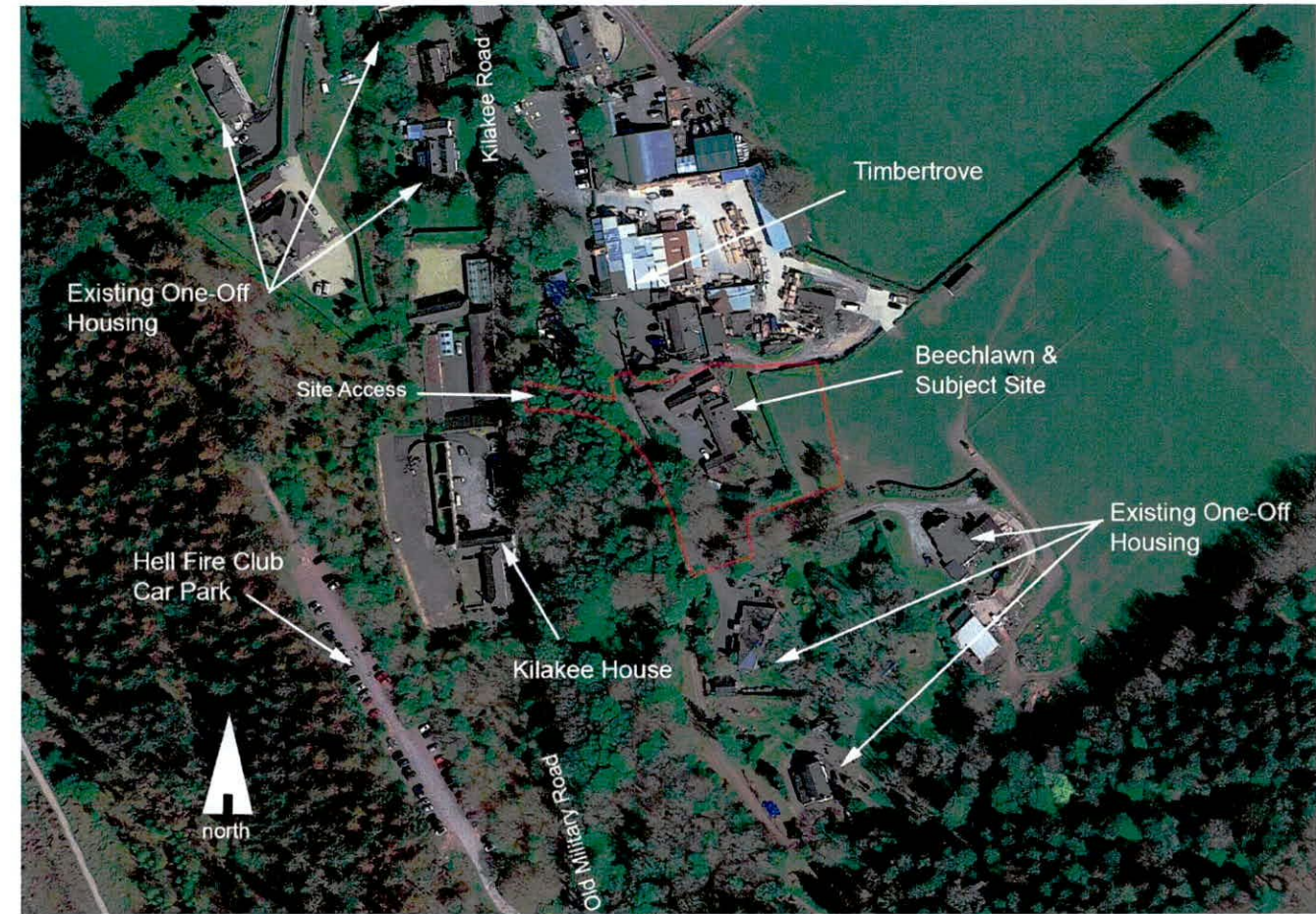
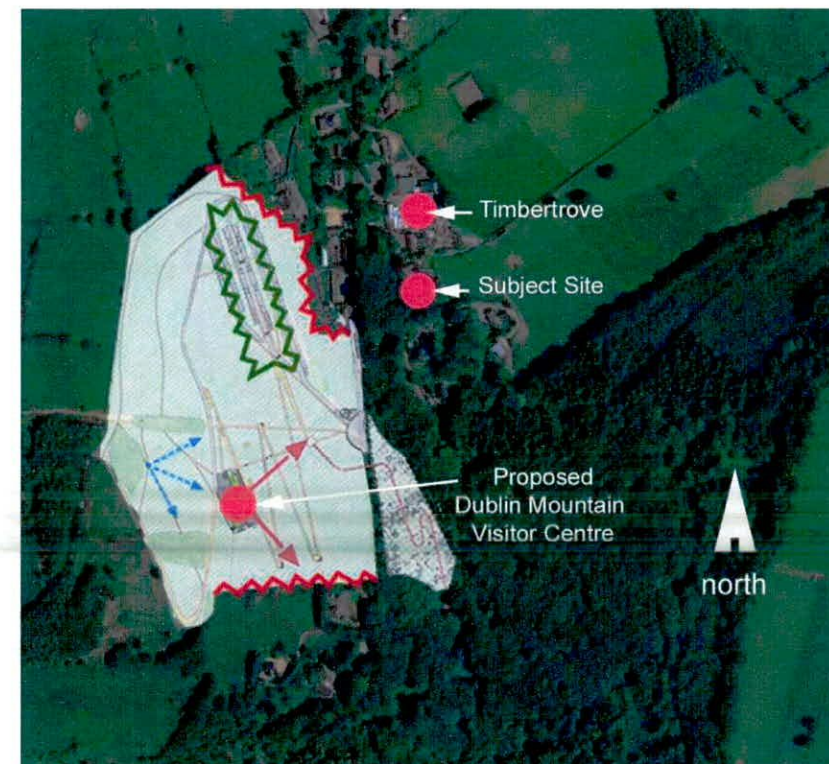


Fig: 04. Subject Site Location and its immediate Context.

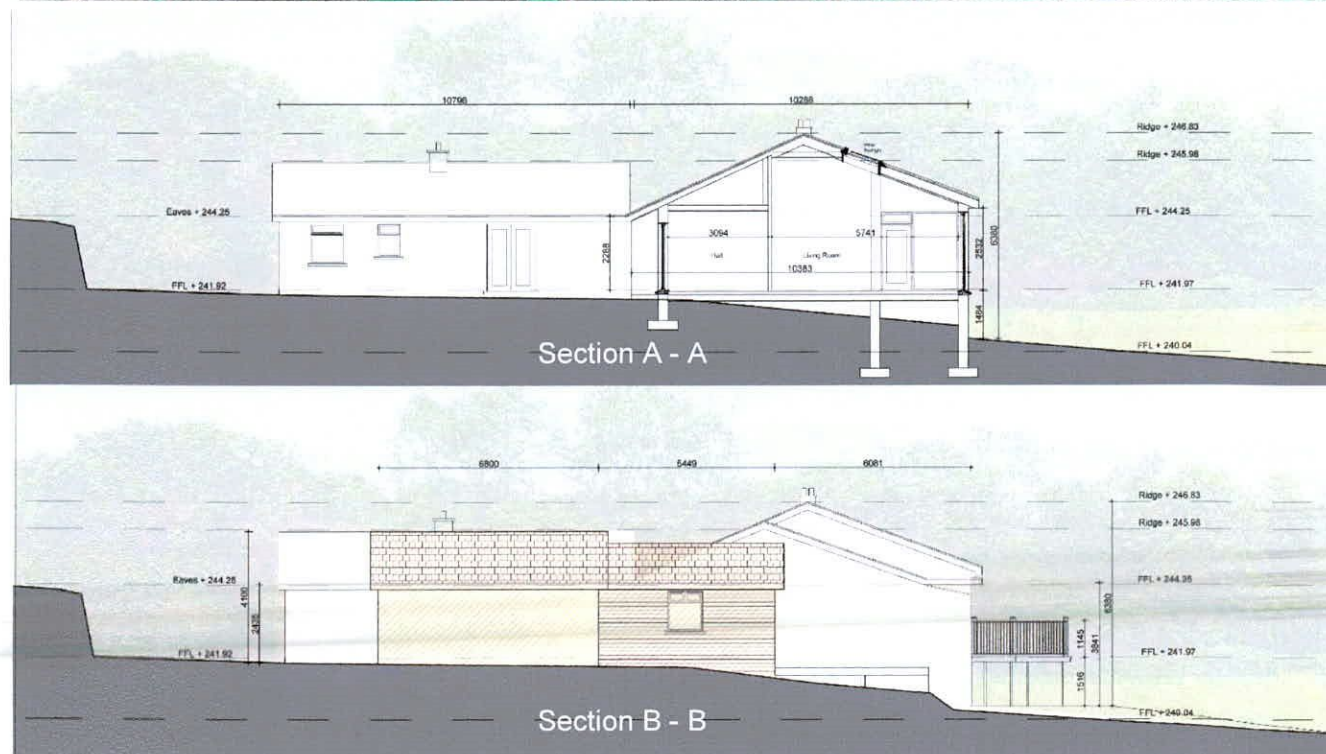
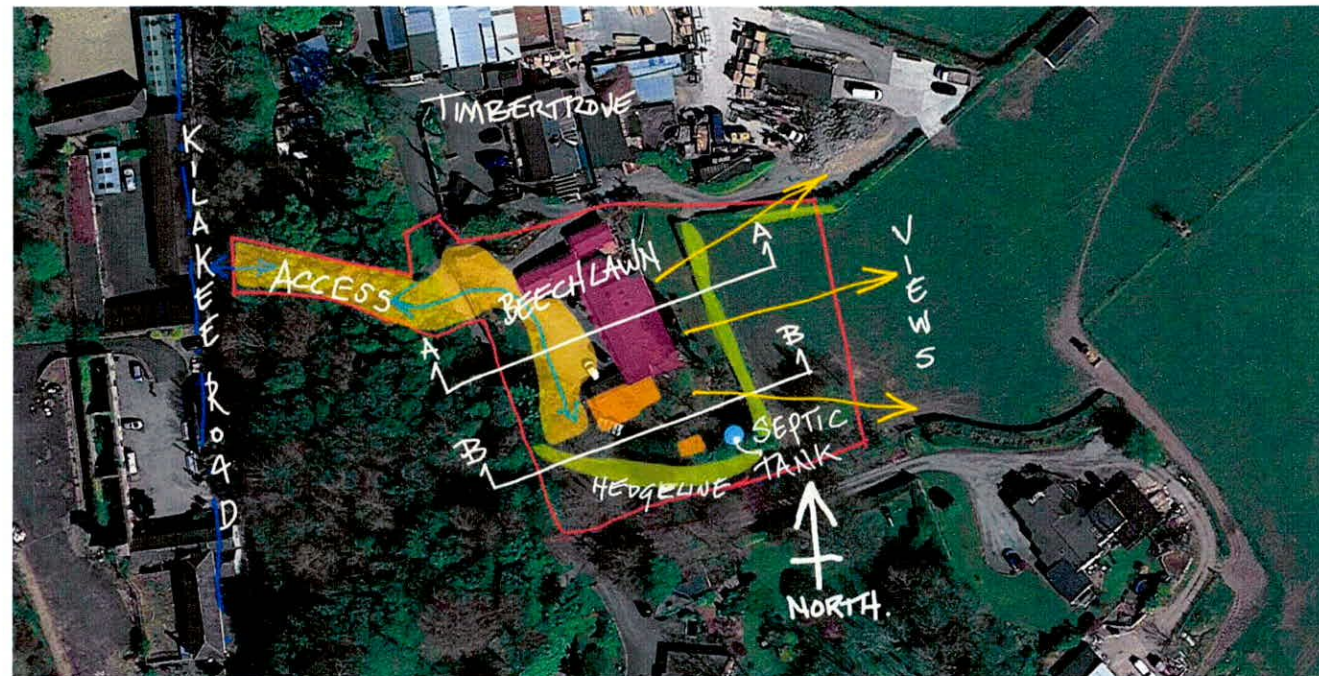


The subject site is set within an established rural residential cluster, which is under pinned by the economic activity driven by the attraction of the Hell Fire Club, associated amenities, café, farming and Timbertrove. The new Dublin Mountain Visitor Centre is proposed just south of the Hell Fire Club car park some 400m from the subject site on an elevated position. Both locations benefit from the surrounding dense woodland and topography to mitigate any intrusive visual impact. The Visitors centre shall add to the suite of facilities at this locale.

5.00 Subject Site Analysis:

The subject site is accessed from Kilakee Road a down tree lined lane with dense shrub growth either side. The laneway serves as a right of way to Beechlawn and three other houses as well as forming a private controlled access to Timbertrove.

Fig: 05. Site Analysis



The existing Beechlawn house is built on a plateau and retaining structure 2.5 meters below the access laneway. To the east the garden level is a further 2 meters below the ground floor level of the house. There are several timber decks along the eastern façade. These are 1.8 - 2.2 meters above the lower garden. The extent of the garden is defined by an existing Griselinia hedgerow. From the hedge line the topography slopes down a further 3 meters into the neighbouring field, which is owned by a family member. The site benefits from views eastwards towards the coast but is not visible from Cruagh Road or Lane as it is masked by trees.

The existing house is of masonry construction with outer cladding of stained timber brick and render. The house dates from the 1970's and has a general floor to ceiling height of approximately 2.25m which is expressed externally by the low eave's heights. The main lounge benefits from utilising the full height of the roof structure to and rooflights to create space and light. The lounge faces east and from its elevated position commands views over the lower slopes of Montpelier out across the city to the coast.

In defining where to position any new house the following issues consideration –

- Location - Beechlawn is noted in red, and the structures denoted in orange are the former garage and its timber framed extension which provide a bedroom bathroom suite at present and a small external store. It is proposed to demolish these structures to make site available for the proposed house. The proposed house shall become part of the rural cluster of buildings. Being set within the existing site the proposal shall benefit from being nestled unobtrusively into the slope of Montpelier and screened from the road and to the east by level changes and tree lined roads and hedgerows.
- Access – the new house shall be accessed through Beechlawn.
- Water Supply – the existing house is supplied from the aquifer supplying Timbertrove. Analysis by an appropriate consultant advised that a new independent supply should be provided.
- Drainage - On the site is an existing septic tank tucked in the south-eastern corner of the site as denote by the blue dot. The septic tank is close to the existing hedge line, trees and at the top of the change in level. The existing and proposed drainage needs have been analysed and it is proposed to provide new bio cycles, for both houses, with associated percolation areas. Reports detailing ground testing and details of the proposed systems are appended to this design statement.
- Title – Timbertrove, Beechlawn and the lands immediately abutting the plot are within the ownership of Henry O'Kelly (the applicant's father) and Joan O'Kelly (the applicant's grandmother) both individually and jointly. The distance requirements for a new septic tank required more land than was available within the existing boundary of Beechlawn. It has been agreed with other family members to provide lands in the lower field to accommodate a news septic tank for Beechlawn and the proposed house.

The character of the site, access, boundary treatments and relationships between the various buildings and site features are recorded in a photographic survey of the site below.

Fig: 06. Photographic Site Survey.



1. Site Access, 2. Lane, 3. Private Access to Timbertrove, 4. Inside the gates to Beechlawn, 5. Beechlawn drive, 6. Beechlawn office, 7. Beechlawn main entrance courtyard,
8. Beechlawn raised on retaining structure, 9. Southern annexe showing rotting deck and timber extension, 10. Southeast corner where existing septic tank is located,
- 11 & 12. Existing southern boundary hedging, 13. View east down over open countryside, 14. Lower field showing trial pits for drainage, 15. View from lane back towards Beechlawn,
16. Gateways to neighbouring houses, 17. Access lane showing Beechlawn boundary fencing, 18. Recessed gateway to Beechlawn from lane.

The existing annexe, is a composite structure including a rendered hollow block former garage that was upgraded to make a bathroom, dressing room, and wardrobe with a timber framed bedroom and deck. The existing structures condition has deteriorated markedly over recent years. The former rendered garage roof's ridge line is sagging as the roof structure has started to fail. The timber deck has had to be removed very recently as it had become unsafe. The following photographs also indicate the level of deterioration in structure and cladding. These significant structural flaws render the space redundant and in need of demolition.

Fig: 07. Existing Bedroom Annexe Roof.

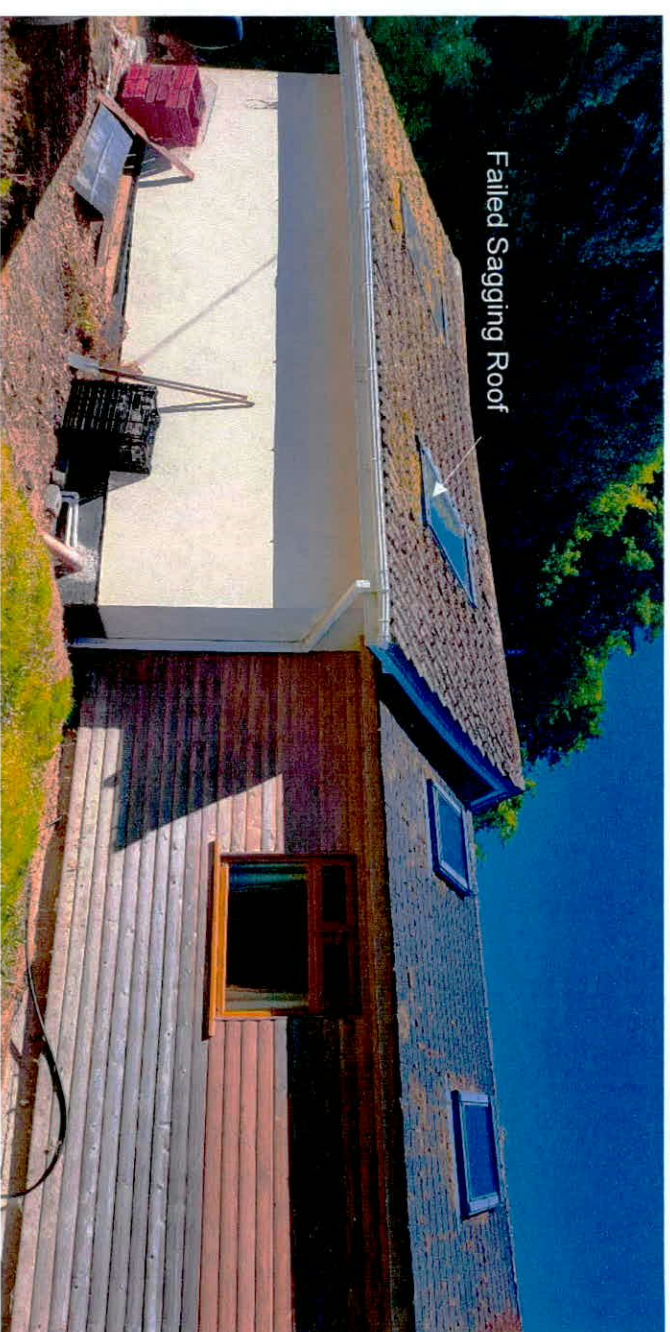
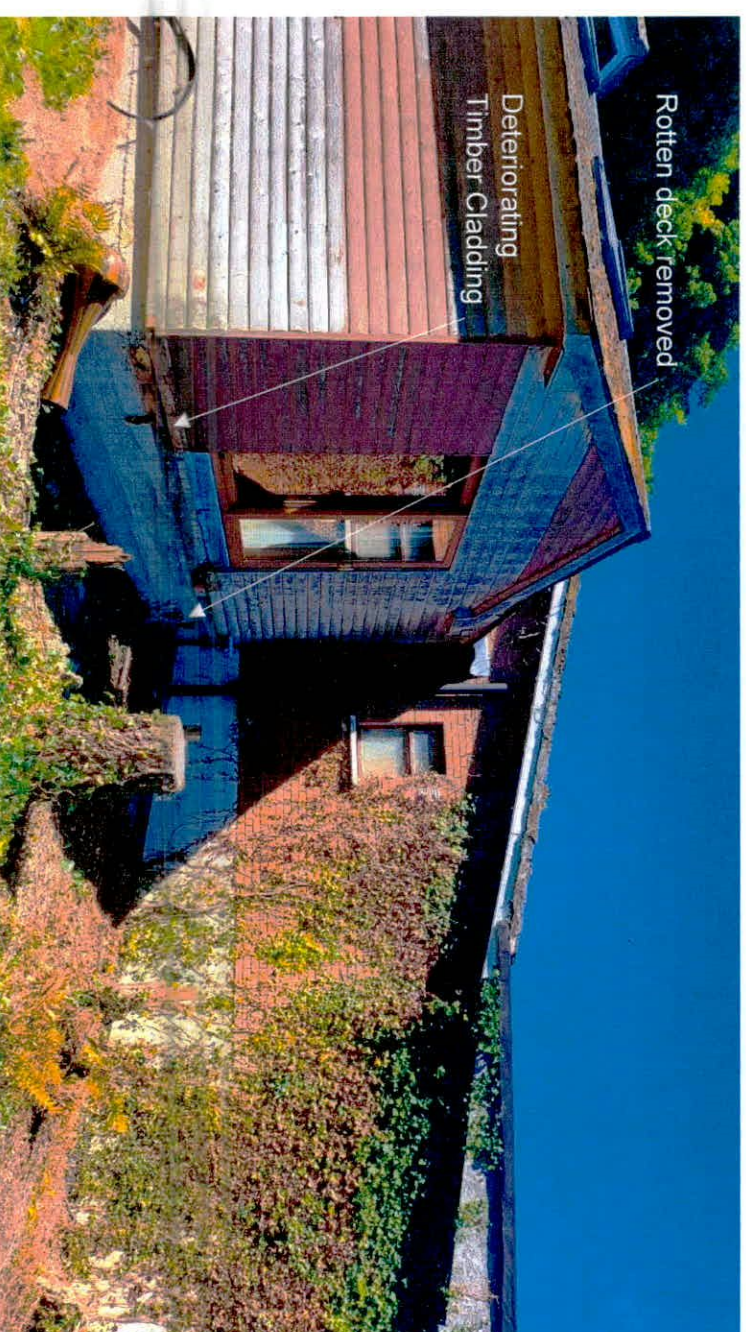


Fig: 08. Existing Bedroom Annexe Roof.



The height difference between the existing access laneway and the subject site varies from 2.4 to 2.7m as illustrated in figure 09. An existing gateway can be seen behind the fence line of the lane. However forming an access into the subject site at this location is impracticable as it would involve extensive retaining structures and an extensive ramp to make the transition. For these reasons it is therefore proposed that access shall be through the existing courtyard of Beechlawn.

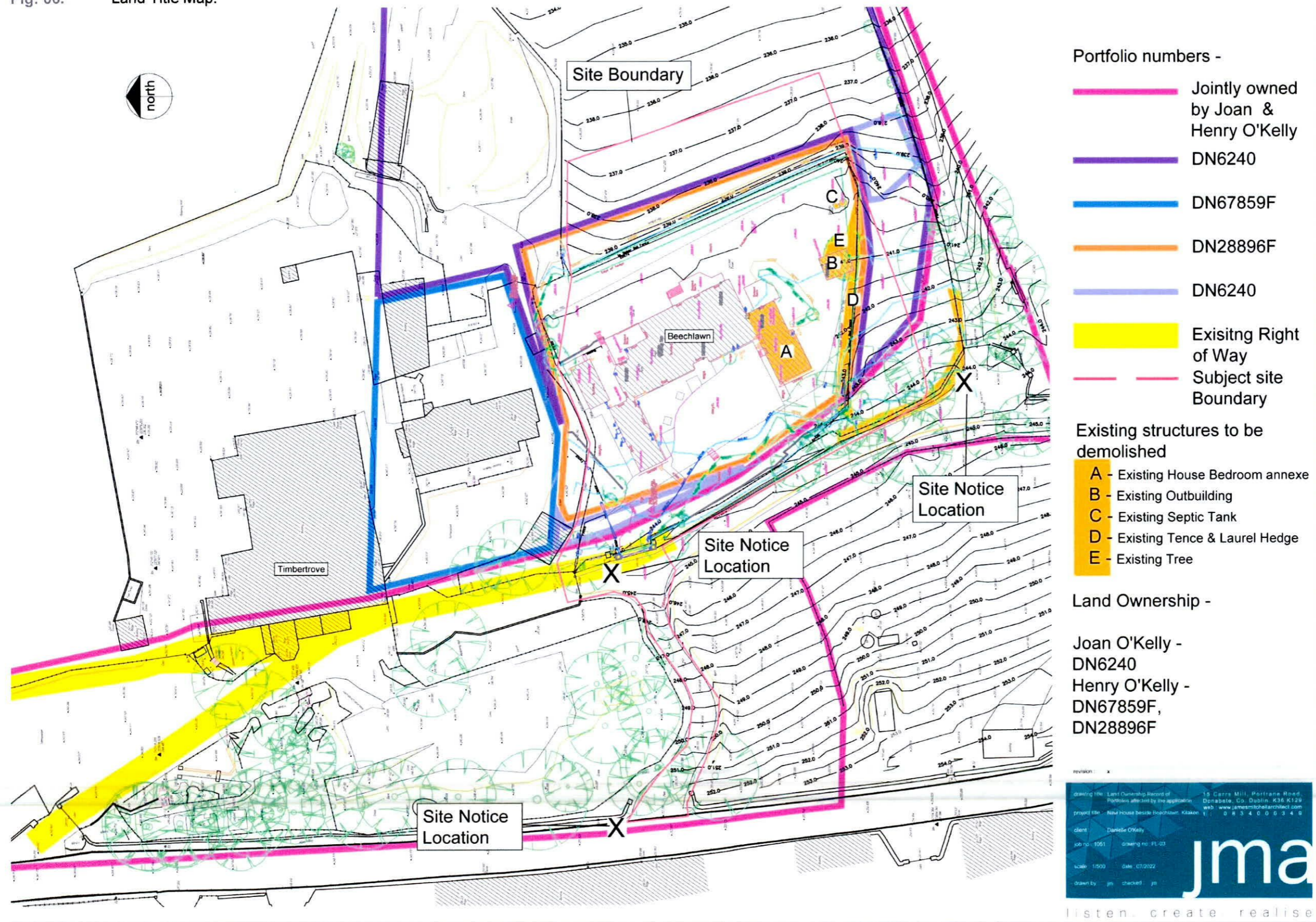
Fig: 09. Level difference between upper level of site and access lane above.



6.00 Title

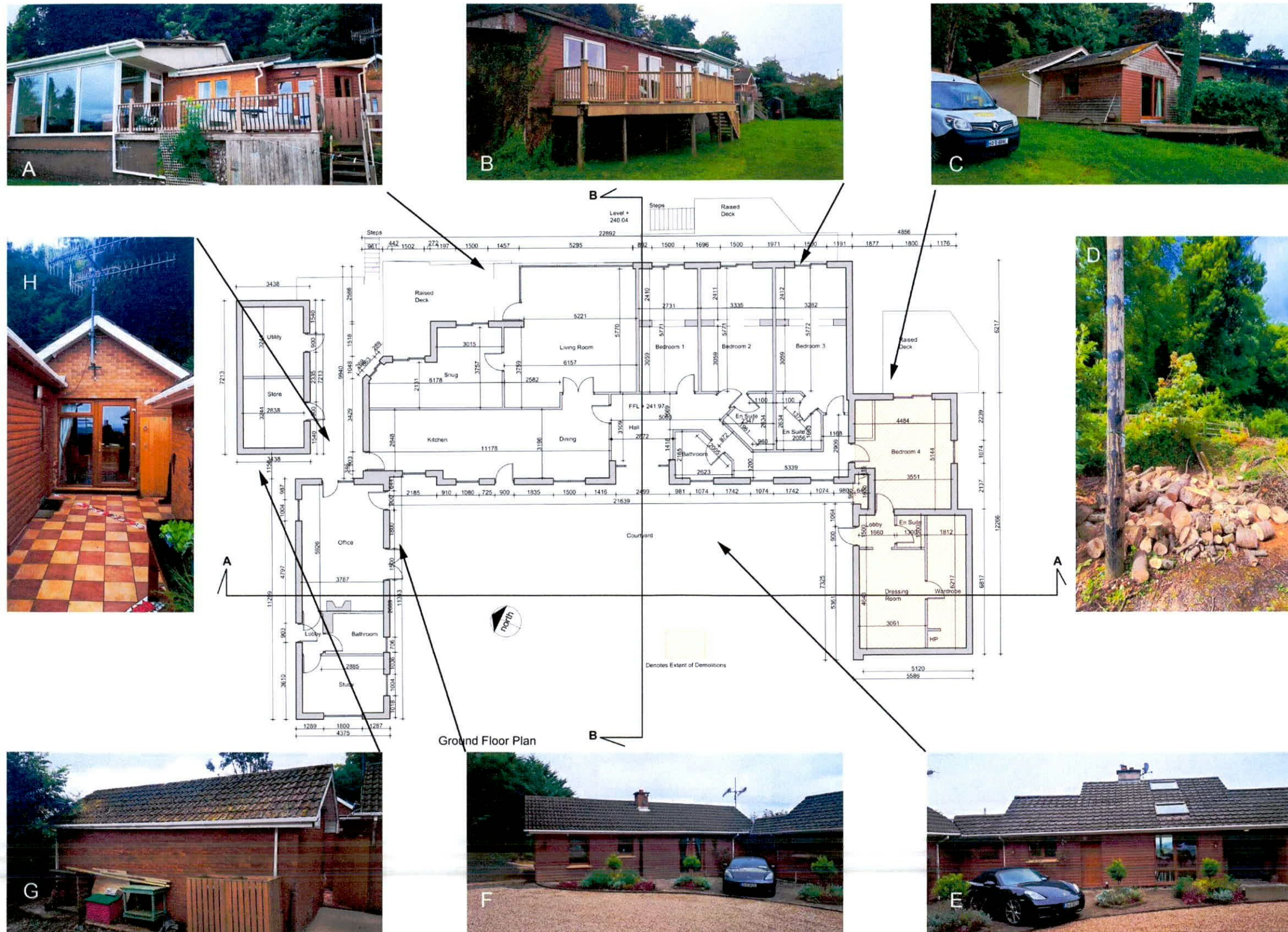
The ownership of the lands on the subject site are defined on the drawing below.

Fig: 06. Land Title Map.



7.00 The Existing House.

Fig: 07. Plan and photographic survey of the existing house.



Beechlawn is a single storey four bedroom house. The central portion of the house sits on top of a 2 meter tall retaining wall to compensate for the existing topography. The 2005 bedroom four annexe forms the southern enclosure to courtyard driveway. To the north another annexe provides office space for the management of the business.

The photographic survey of the house shows –

- A. The east facing main lounge and later snug extension. The drop from main living space to lower garden can be seen.
- B. The three bedrooms face eastward and benefit from a raised timber deck with access steps to the garden.
- C. The 2005 bedroom suite annexe with deteriorating timber deck and cladding. The dressing and wardrobe spaces are house in a former garage.
- D. Telegraph pole with overhead electrical supply in south west corner.
- E. Beechlawn front entrance, low eaves and timber cladding.
- F. Office annexe.
- G. Utility and storage building.
- H. View between snug toward office.

8.00 The Proposal:

8.01 Siting –

The South Dublin County Council Development Plan gives clear direction when siting a new proposed rural dwelling. In the siting the house careful consideration has been given to ensure to minimise impact on the landscape and views, to not have a negative impact on the environment including flora, fauna, soil, water (including ground water) and human beings; minimise impact on the site's natural contours and natural drainage features; minimise the need for cut and filled platforms, embankments or retaining walls.

The proposed site is nestled behind a 2.5 meters drop from the access lane with a boundary treatment of 1.8 meter tall fencing and hedgerow. This minimises the visual impact to the access laneway. Being east west orientated the proposal also presents a gable elevation to the open aspect east. The field system, layers of hedgerows and treelined lanes obscure the site and the proposal from Cruagh Road and Lane. The siting and orientation of the proposed new dwelling are compliant with the directions of the development plan.

The proposed house is three meters from the southern gable of Beechlaw. The demolition and replacement of the existing bedroom / en suite annexe releases a narrow east west orientated plot free from existing mature trees and within the garden of Beechlaw. Negative impact to flora, fauna, soil and water are avoided by placing the proposal within the context of an existing residential cluster and the gardens of Beechlaw. This mitigates against clearing lands to create a site. The existing Griselinia and Laurel hedges will be removed in sections to form a way through to the lower field where it is proposed to place the new septic tanks.

Surface water and foul sewerage treatment on the site are improved with new installations for both houses. In the southeast corner of the site is the original septic tank. The septic tank is nearing its serviceable lifespan and is close to hedge lines and trees abutting the site. The required set-back distances for a new bio-cycle from house, hedge and treelines mean that any replacement or new installation should be located in the lower field which is owned by the applicant's grandmother. Permission of apply for planning has been obtained in writing from the applicant's parents and grandmother. A replacement Biocycle for Beechlaw is proposed as part of this application. Surface water shall be directed to a BRE365 compliant soakaway within the proposed house's gardens. Additionally, a new ground source water supply is placed adjacent to the proposed site entrance. The proposed aquifer has been designed and sited in compliance with the regulations as set out in the appended report.

The proposed house is orientated to present its front façade southward with the long axis running east-west at 90 degrees to the slope. The house has been designed to step down the slope in three levels. to bookend the applicant's parents' house and complete the enclosure of the driveway/ upper courtyard. The building proposal follows the natural slope and gives access from ground floor accommodation onto stepped gardens. This connects the interior to the exterior and mitigates the need for extensive retaining structures.

Road frontage is effectively nil as the site is accessed from a private laneway within the family's demesne. The laneway is not visible from Kilakee Road as it is some 7m below the road in level and obscured by a 55 meter deep wooded enclosure. The frontage onto the laneway is 20 meters and behind the existing 1800mm high fence and established hedge line. 1.8m high timber fencing and hedging shall redefine the boundary up to the existing gate to the applicant's grandmother's house.

Beyond this the boundary between properties is create using hedging and 1100mm high cleft chestnut pale fence. This maintains the character to the location by continuing the boundary treatments already established.

Fig: 08. Sketch Development Strategy.



A – New boundary between properties. B – New house location. C – Parking & Bins. D – Tiered gardens. E – New Biocycles. F – Views downhill east toward coast. G – Proposed well. H – Proposed Access.

8.02 Building Form

The proposed house has been designed after thorough analysis of the site and sketch designs utilising geolocated 3d modelling. The existing contours were generated and a block model of Beechlawm formed in location to facilitate assessment.

Fig: 09. Terrain and mass modelling of the existing site.



The development plan advises that extension or dwellings should not be located on a ridgeline or elevated position. From the inception of the brief development there has been an appreciation of the site, and its location just under Montpelier. This residential node is above the 120 meter contour and therefore has the potential to be highly visible. The Beechlawm site backs into mountain and its tree filled mid slopes. The proposed house has been designed to nestle in against this green foil, replace an existing annexe and thus adheres to the established development pattern and shall not be visually obtrusive.

Fig: 10. Existing & proposed contiguous elevations to access laneway

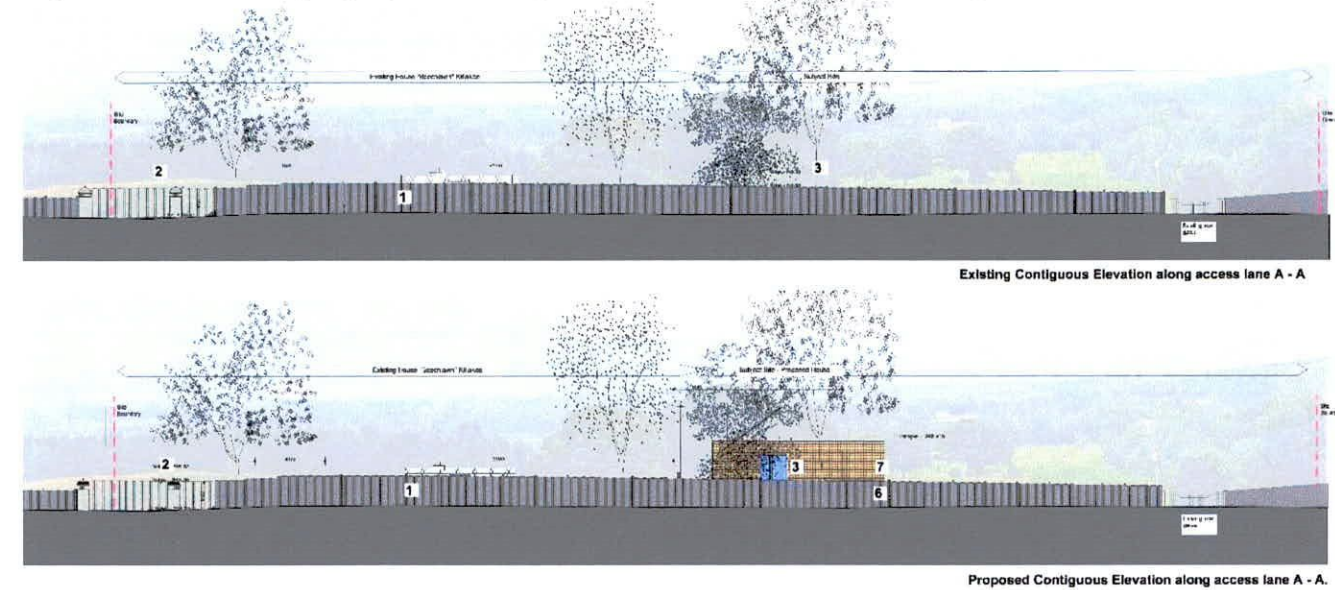


Fig: 11. Existing & proposed east contiguous elevations.



The eastern & western contiguous elevations demonstrate how the siting, orientation, proportions, and sectional heights, of the proposed 2 storey house, are appropriate to the location.

Fig: 12. Proposed concept model site layout.



The site layout form three tiers on the site rationalising the natural slope providing –
A- Upper terrace, B – Mid-level with kitchen & dining, C – Private Garden off lower lounge.

Fig: 13. Proposed site cross section.



The two storey house steps down the slope following the existing contours. The first-floor accommodation is split level between family bedrooms and master bedroom suite.

Fig: 14. Proposed concept model ground floor plan.

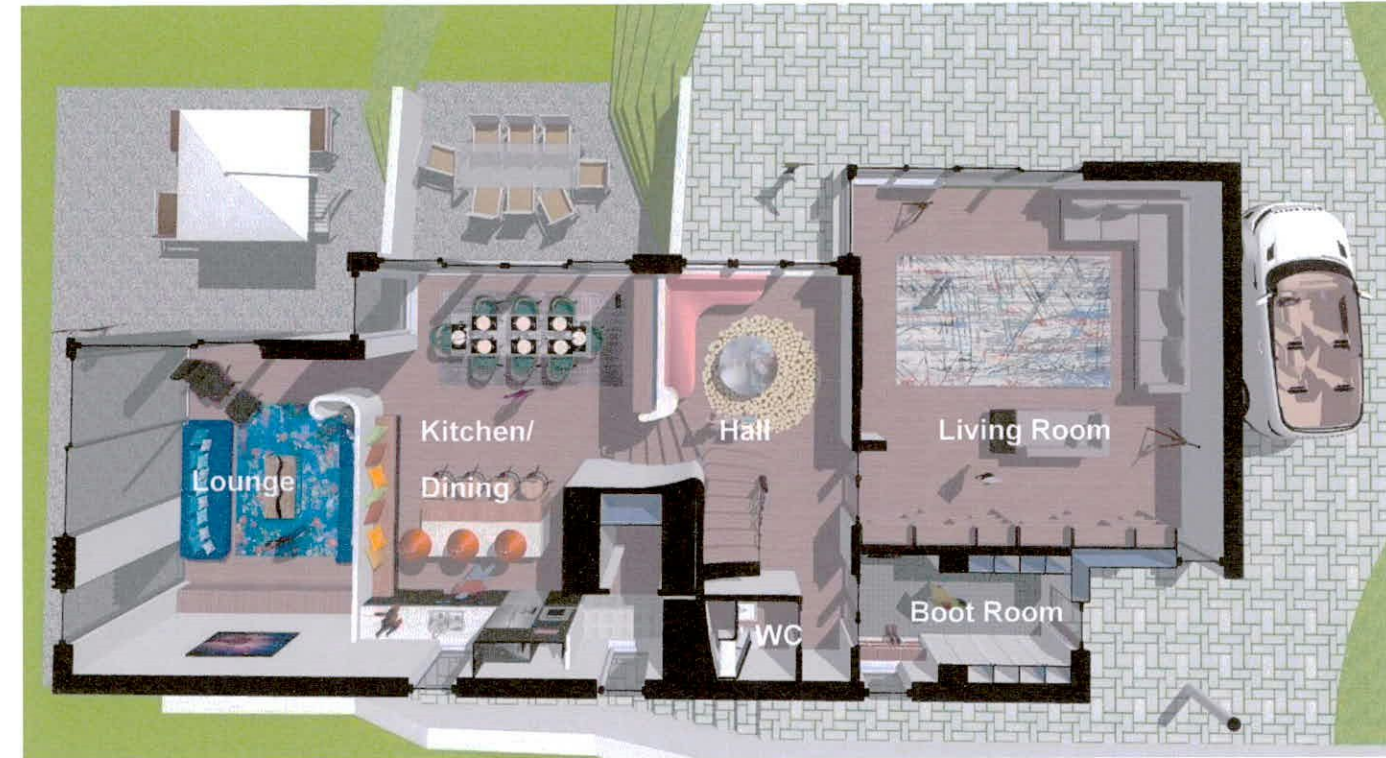


Fig: 15. Proposed concept model ground floor plan

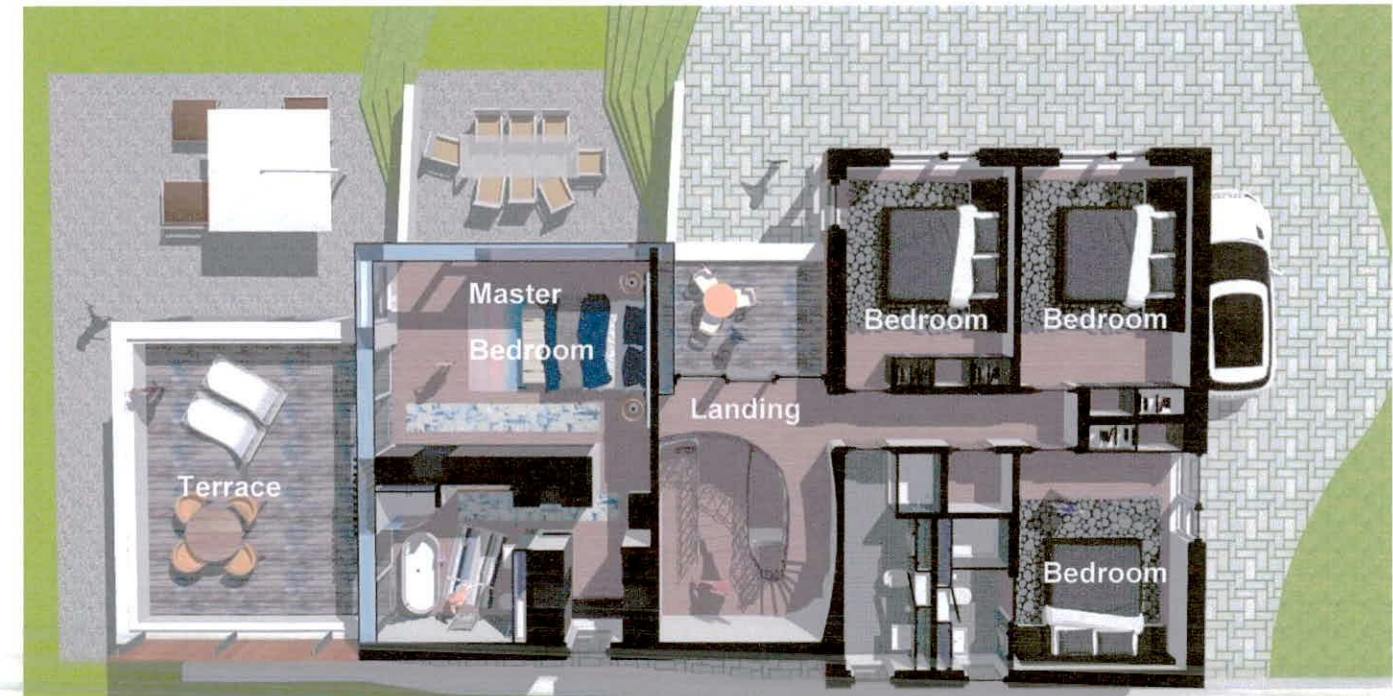
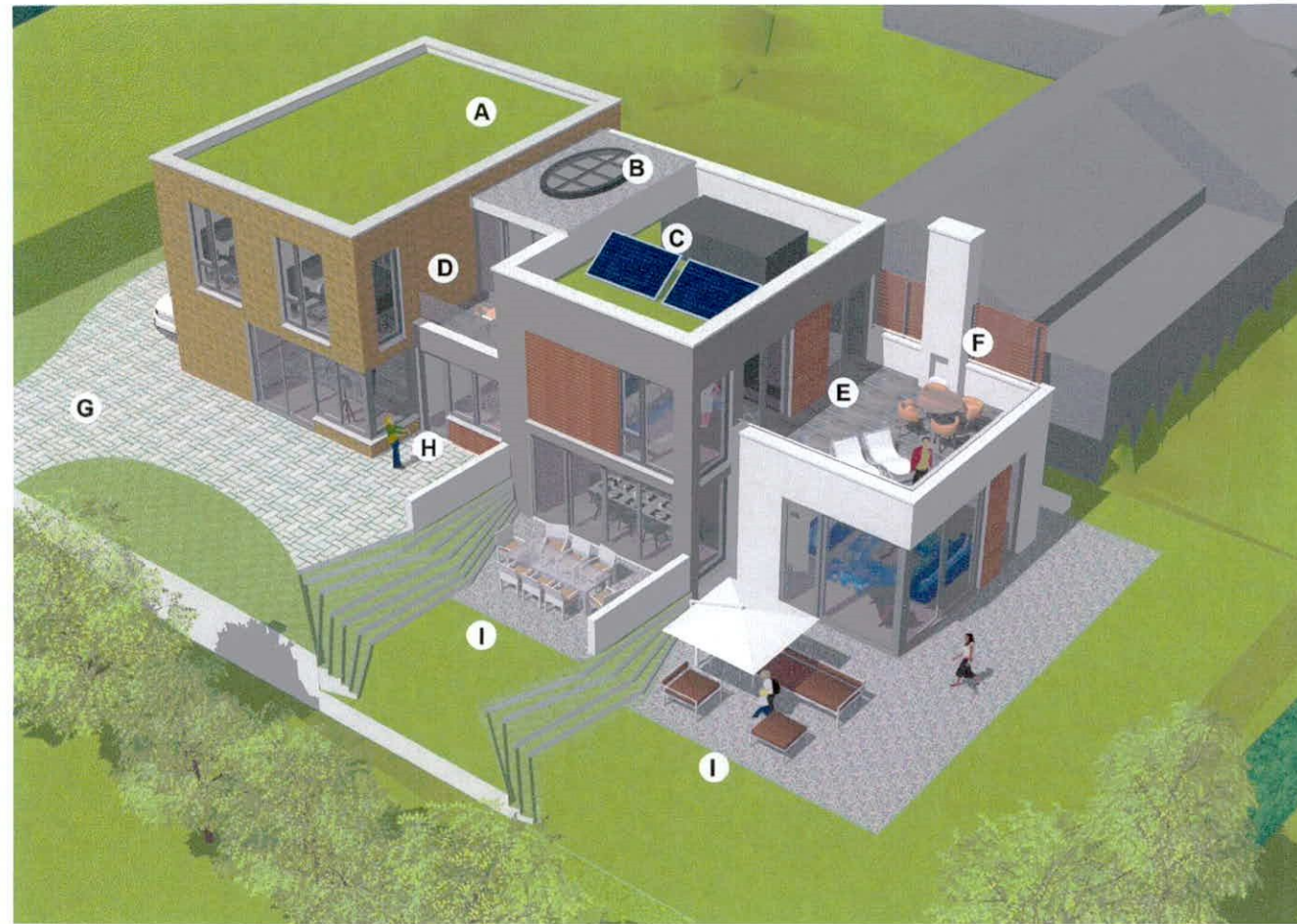


Fig: 16. Aerial view of geo-located massing model.



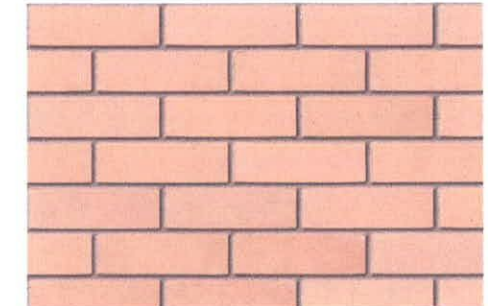
The building is arranged in a series of volumes that are expressed through their geometry and by employing a restricted palette of traditional materials. A. – First floor bedrooms with associated bathroom and en suite over boot and living rooms. The roof shall be a biodiverse green roof. B. – central stair with elliptical rooflight, first floor terrace. C. – Master bedroom suite with kitchen dining below with access to an external terrace (D). Photo-voltaic panels and water tank are on the roof hidden behind a parapet wall. E. – First floor master bedroom terrace with hardwood horizontal timber screening (F) to provide privacy and prevent overlooking to Beechlawn’s lower garden. G. – Terrace. H. – Hall. I. – Terraced Garden with land steps to minimise retaining walls.

The proposed house is organised into three main elements with each expressed through materials. The materials chosen are drawn directly from the location being –

Materials -

Walls - Smooth faced buff clay brick

Fig: 17 Brick sample image



Render - painted in a Colour trend external masonry paint from the historic range.

Fig: 18 Suggested colours –

Willow White

Gris Verte



Windows, Doors & Screens

Individual windows doors with side screens under 2.4m tall to be triple glazed Aluclad hardwood frames nominally if a grey finish external RAL 7016. Sliding double glazed aluminium screens and tall windows



Fig: 19 Windows sample image



Fig: 20 Screens sample image

Fig: 21 Hardwood batten hardwood cladding sample image



Fig: 22 Hardwood horizontal privacy screening sample image

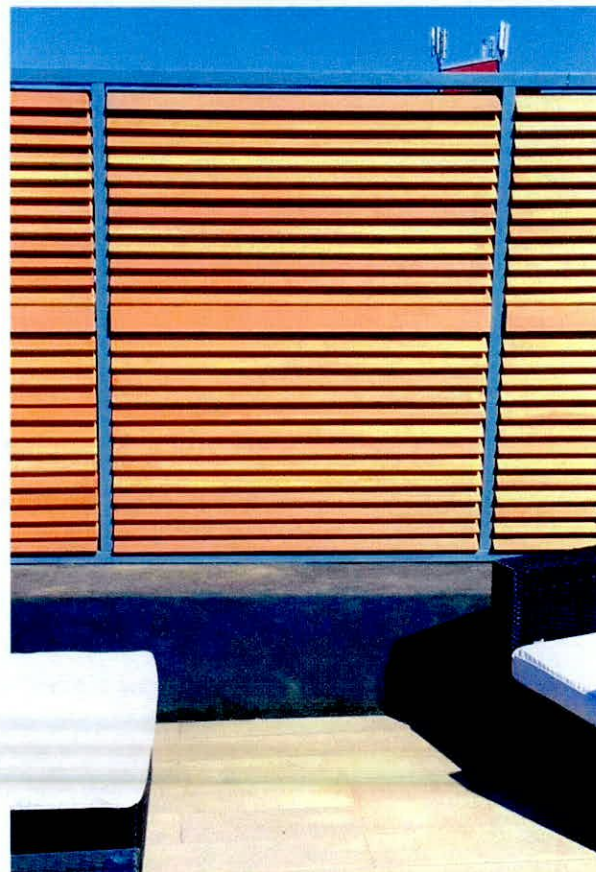


Fig: 23 Chestnut cleft pale fencing in hedge line.



Fig: 24 Riven face Yorkshire stone flag paving to terraces



Fig: 25 Compact pea gravel permeable driveway



8.00 Summary

The applicant has demonstrated their close ties to locale from childhood. This is supported by letters from local schools. The client's family have provided written permission for our client to apply for planning permission for a house on family lands. The applicant is an integral part to the current management and future development of an established award-winning family business and employer. As the business is not only a sales outlet but manufactures and assembles timber products, it is necessary for that staff and management are represented on-site seven days a week. The applicant lives with her parents on site and has now reached a point where an independent home is required.

The site is within an established cluster of one-off houses and the proposal shall replace an earlier bedroom, dressing, bathroom and wardrobe annexe. Siting the proposal within the established housing mitigates against clearing site of flora or fauna to create a developable area. Great care has been taken in shaping the proposal to follow the natural slope of the terrain and nestle in against an existing step in the site. Extensive alteration of the existing terrain with cut and fill or retaining structures is unnecessary. The siting and careful consideration of the design ensures the proposal is visually unobtrusive from local roads and vista from the open landscape to the east.

The materials proposed are traditional drawn from the immediate context and applied to a two-storey contemporary design. The building is proportioned into three main elements, and these are expressed through the selected materials to provide proportion, interest, spatial legibility and avoid any potential overbearing on the landscape, location or neighbours. Windows, doors and screens have traditional vertical proportions and mullions to make a sympathetic and appropriate contribution to the group of buildings on and around the site.

The client has engaged appropriate professionals to assess the existing drainage and water supply arrangements and propose new bio-cycle installations for both houses and a new aquifer to supply water to the new house. The driveway and terraces are permeable and semi-permeable to prevent runoff and rainwater is drained to a BRE365 soakway. The requisite reports and supporting documentation are submitted with this application.

We are of the opinion that the client amply demonstrates need for the proposed house. The proposal is justified and complies with the requirements of the South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022 and the rural housing design guidelines. The proposal underpins the future economic development of this local employer by supporting the intergenerational continuity within the family that founded Timbertrove.

Regards,

James Mitchell
Architect / Director

Fig: 26 Concept model image

