

# GRAYTHWAITE

PLANNING PARAMETERS

Prepared for

Sydney Church of England  
Grammar School

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Issue E

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# Foreword

The land containing Graythwaite house and outbuildings is a rare survivor of a late Victorian estate. The park-like setting, of expansive lawns and large fig trees, and the large Victorian-era house, built in several stages, conveys something of the wealth and stature of the Dibbs family. Sir Thomas Dibbs, a key figure in Australian banking, gave the house and grounds for use as a convalescent hospital towards the end of World War I. This gesture effectively preserved the entity for the next 90 years. However by the 20th century the site no longer satisfactorily served a public health role and fell into disrepair and after a Community Presentation process was offered for sale with proceeds to be applied for aged care in the spirit of the original gift.

Through a tender process it was purchased by the major adjoining and historic landowner, the Shore School, in 2009. The School intends to use Graythwaite house for an administration role and occasional gatherings which complement the formal rooms of the house. The School also intends to maintain the majority of the land as an open parkland, as it was originally. Schools are among the few enterprises which can use landscaped open space as a resource for educational enhancement and informal forms of recreation. It is Graythwaite's good fortune that the contiguous location of Graythwaite with the School has enabled Shore to justify the purchase of the site for future enhancement of the school in a highly satisfactory way at its central North Sydney site, and as a result justify the considerable costs of conservation, restoration and maintenance of this property.

Traditionally the School turned its back on the convalescent hospital, and it now proposes to face and link its buildings across the boundary to integrate the whole site as one collegiate entity. New buildings are proposed to the east, north and west of Graythwaite house, all positioned with consideration of height, scale,

and built form and retention of the park-like landscape.

This document illustrates the principles and approaches that have been applied to the design process to achieve the School's aims while simultaneously respecting the heritage of the site as encapsulated within the new Conservation Management Plan. The long term well-being of both Graythwaite and of the Shore School is at the heart of these proposals.

# Introduction

This report accompanies a Part 3A application to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure for proposed works at Graythwaite, North Sydney. Originally developed as a grand residential estate in the late nineteenth century, and subsequently converted for use as a hospital for returned soldiers in the early twentieth century, Graythwaite was purchased by the adjacent Sydney Church of England Grammar School (Shore School) in 2009.

In addition to the School's proposed works for the conservation and adaptive use of the historic buildings – Graythwaite House, the former coach house and stables – a number of new buildings are proposed for the site to accommodate its use for school purposes.

This document provides detailed guidelines that have guided the preparation of the Part 3A application documents for the scale, materials, expression and form of new buildings, their relationship with the retained historic buildings, and the preferred treatment of the various areas of the site.

The report should be read in conjunction with the endorsed 2011 'Graythwaite Conservation Management Plan' (CMP) prepared by Tanner Architects, which provides a heritage assessment of the site and its components, provides conservation policies for its future management and identifies the key constraints and opportunities. The 2011 CMP, while a new document, has been informed by the earlier 2000 CMP prepared by Graham Edds and Associates. The report should also be read in conjunction with the 2011 'Graythwaite Statement of Heritage Impact' which accompanies the Part 3A application.

# Site History

Graythwaite is a place of exceptional heritage significance. Located at 20 Union Street, North Sydney, and originally known as Euroka, the site comprises expansive park-like grounds which provide a landscaped setting for the nineteenth century house and its associated outbuildings.

The history of the development of the property commences in 1832 when the land was first granted to Thomas Walker. Walker erected a sandstone cottage ('Euroka') and terraced the site for vineyards and an orchard. Subsequent owners in the following decades continued to develop the property and enlarge the house before its sale to Thomas Dibbs, a prominent banker, in 1873. The earlier sandstone buildings were substantially remodelled and extended and the house had largely reached its present form by 1875.

As a concerned response to World War I, Dibbs bequeathed the house and property to the State for use as a convalescent home for returned soldiers, to be managed by the Red Cross, later becoming a hospital. It continued to operate as a hospital until its sale to the Sydney Church of England Grammar School in 2009.

Significant buildings on the site include the house (1850s – 1890s), the former stables (1830s) and the coach house (1890s). Major hospital-era buildings remaining on the site include the Ward Building (1918) and the Tom O'Neill Centre (1919).

# 01 Gates / Union Street Frontage

## Development Parameters / Goals

- > Note development of Union Street Frontage endorsed in earlier (2000) CMP by Graham Edds.
- > Note preference to leave as open ground, enabling traditional visual link between Union Street and Graythwaite House. With the proposal to retain as open ground, site drainage improvements are required which may also involve some minor grading and levelling.
- > Historic evidence of Union Street Gates and fencing to guide provision of new fences and gates. Refer to historic photos at Figure 1 and Figure 2 and drawing at Figure 3 for detail of proposed new fencing and gates.
- > Visual permeability through the gates and fence is to be provided, to ensure public visibility of the site and Graythwaite House is maintained.

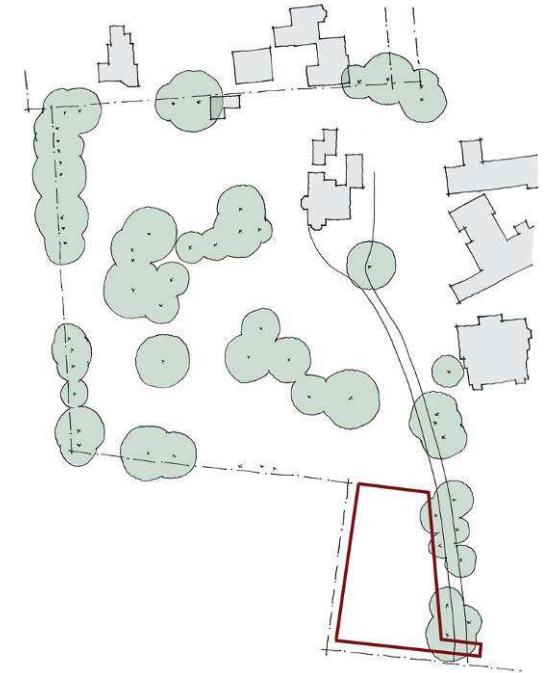


Figure 1 Detail view of the entry gates and piers.  
Source: National Library of Australia



Figure 2 Mid 1870s photograph of the driveway, front fence and gates, viewed from Graythwaite House. Source: National Library of Australia.

## 01 Gates / Union Street Frontage

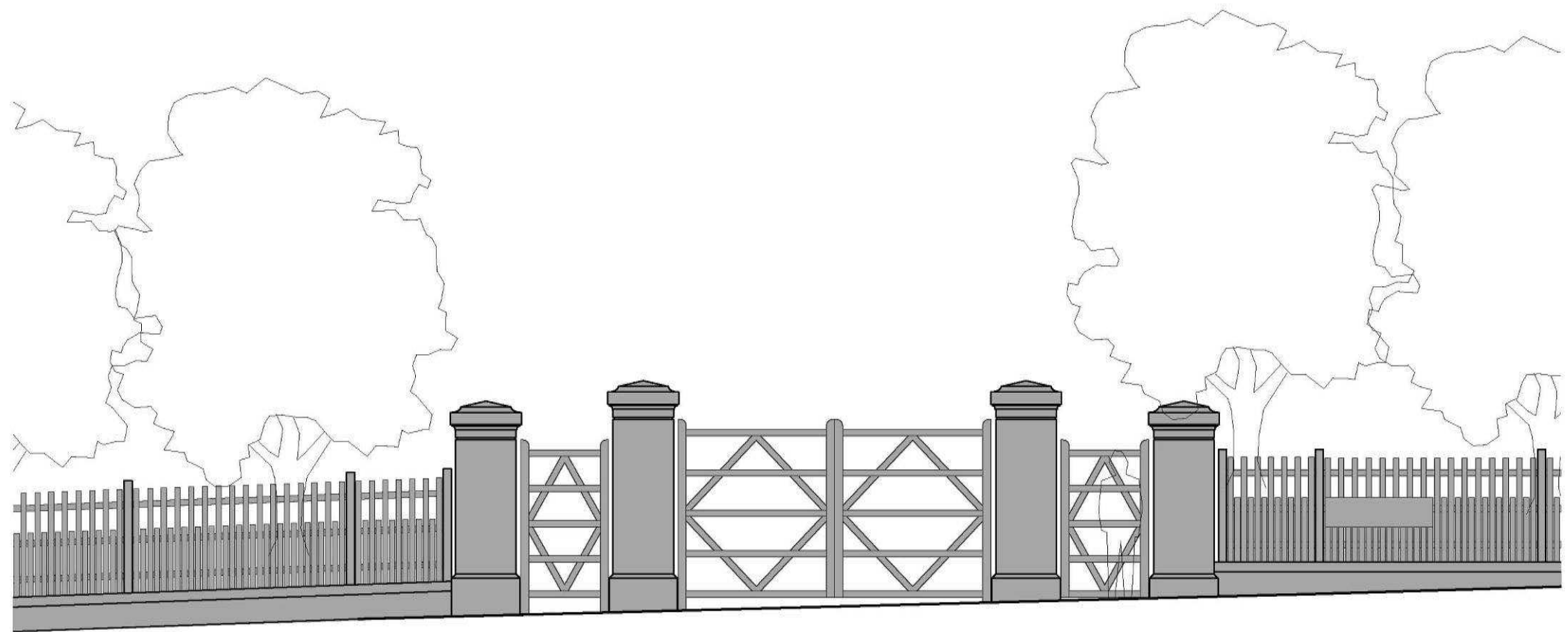


Figure 3 Architect's drawing of the proposed new gates and fence along Union Street frontage



## 02 Driveway

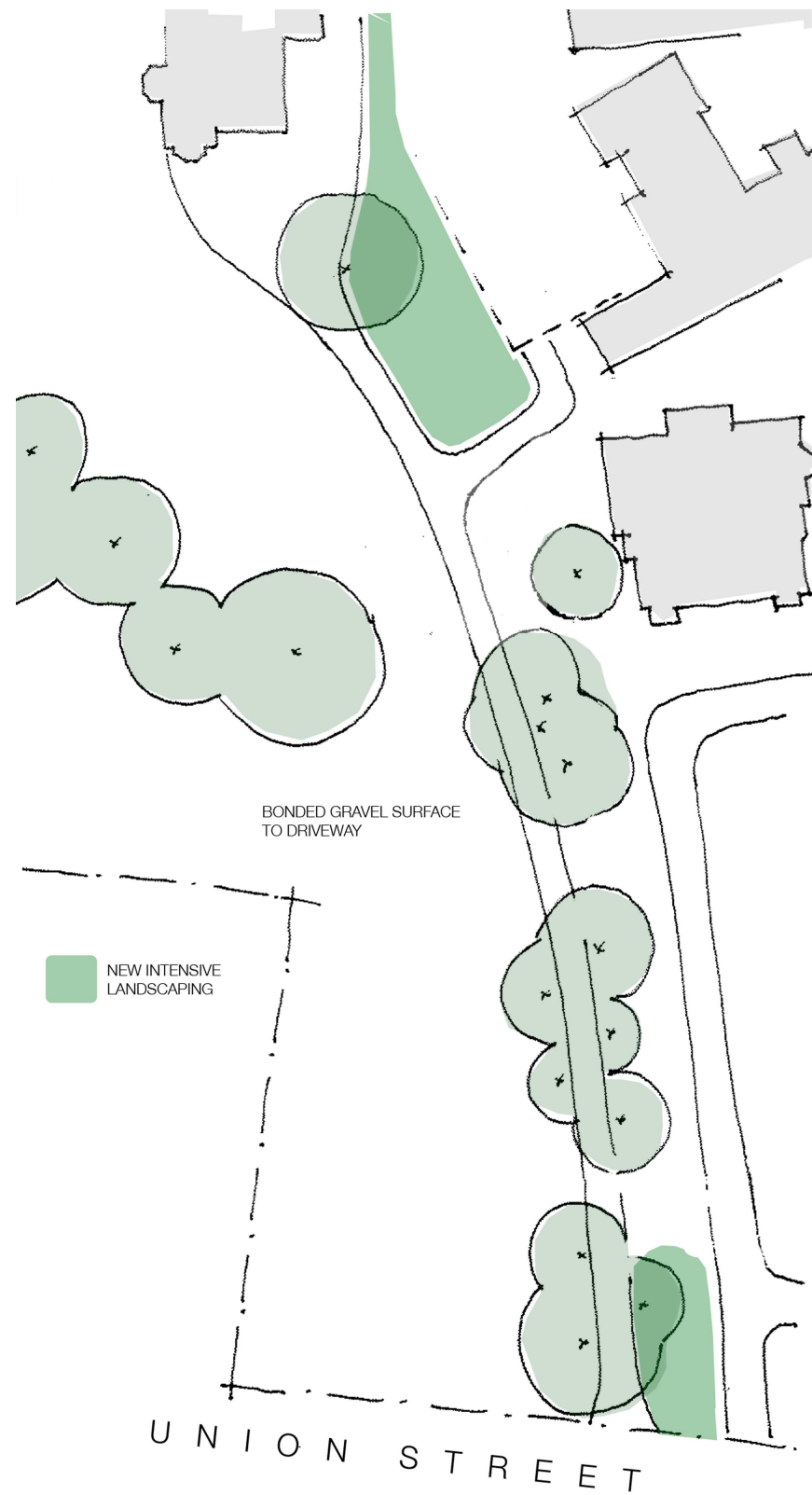


Figure 4 Diagram outlining extent of upgraded planting

### Development Parameters / Goals

- > Existing character to be maintained with upgraded planting
- > Driveway to be bonded gravel
- > Western side of driveway to include reinforced grass areas for two-way traffic passing bays

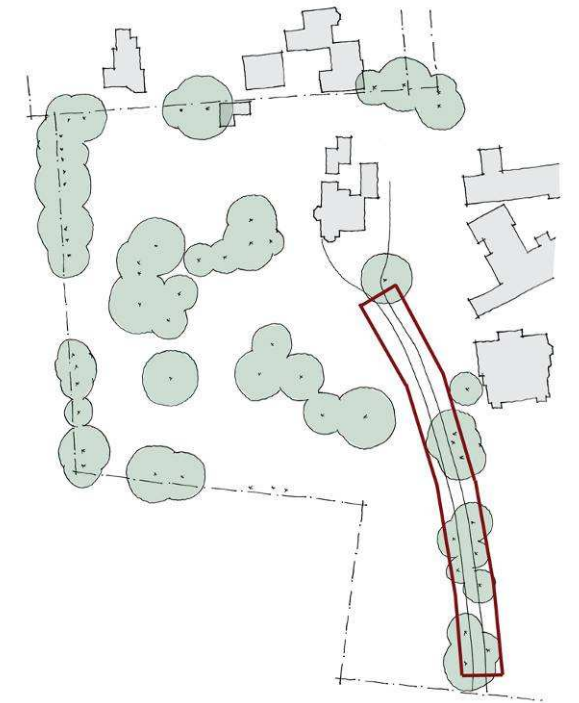


Figure 5 c1870s view of the driveway. Source: National Library

## 03 Tennis Court Terrace

### *Development Parameters / Goals*

- > Important levelled terrace with vista to brush box tree and bamboo clump
- > Planting to be amended to regain original parklike garden formation

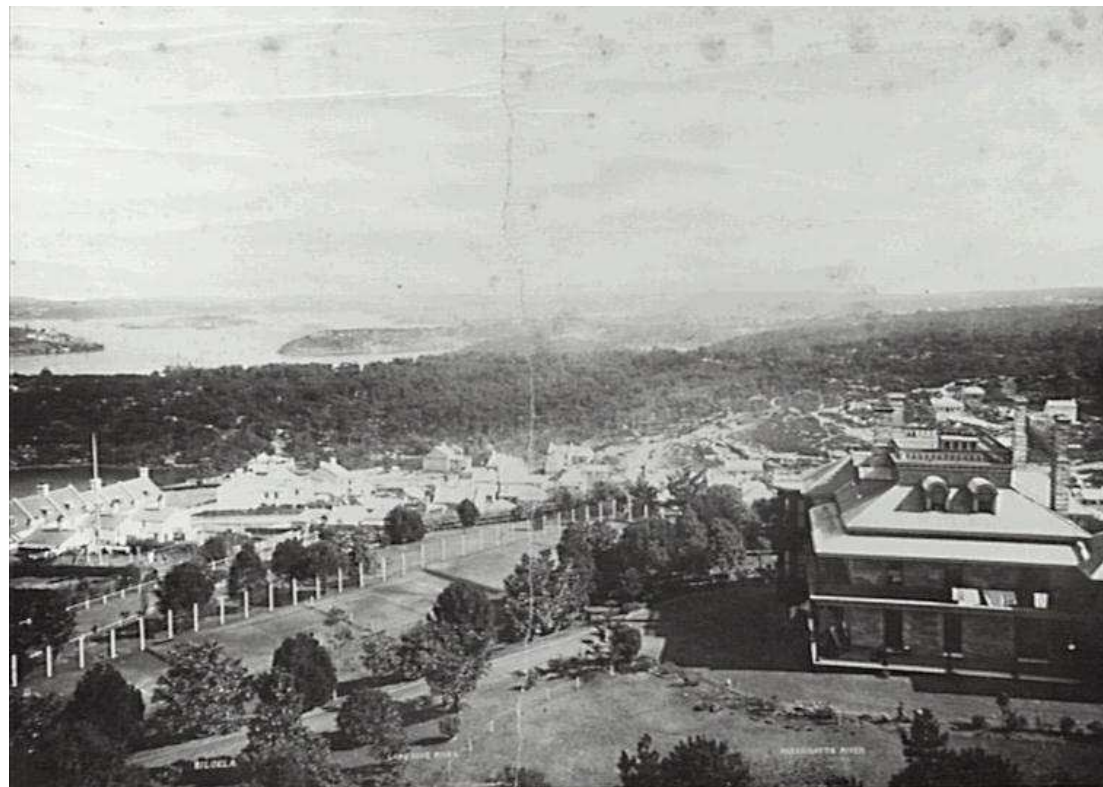
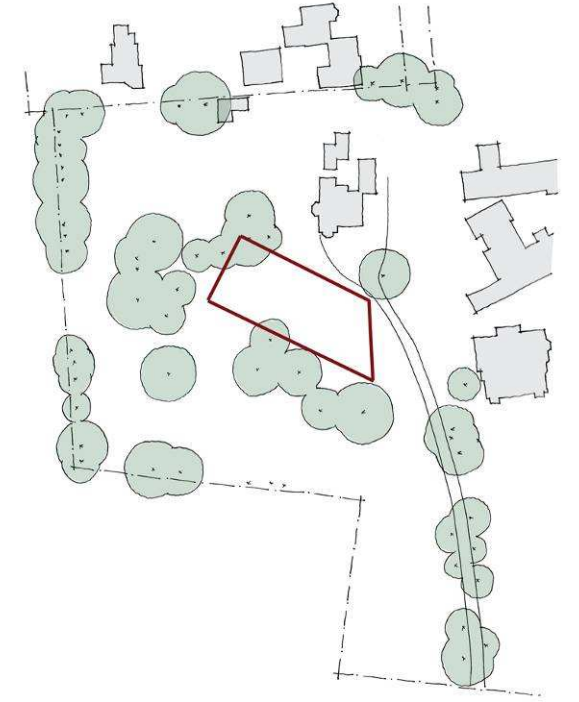


Figure 6 Undated view of the tennis court terrace and Graythwaite House.  
Source: State Library of NSW.



Figure 7 Current Image of Tennis Court Terrace



## 04 Lower garden

### *Development Parameters / Goals*

- > General landscape rehabilitation proposed
- > Area capable of being used for botanical field studies and similar educational roles

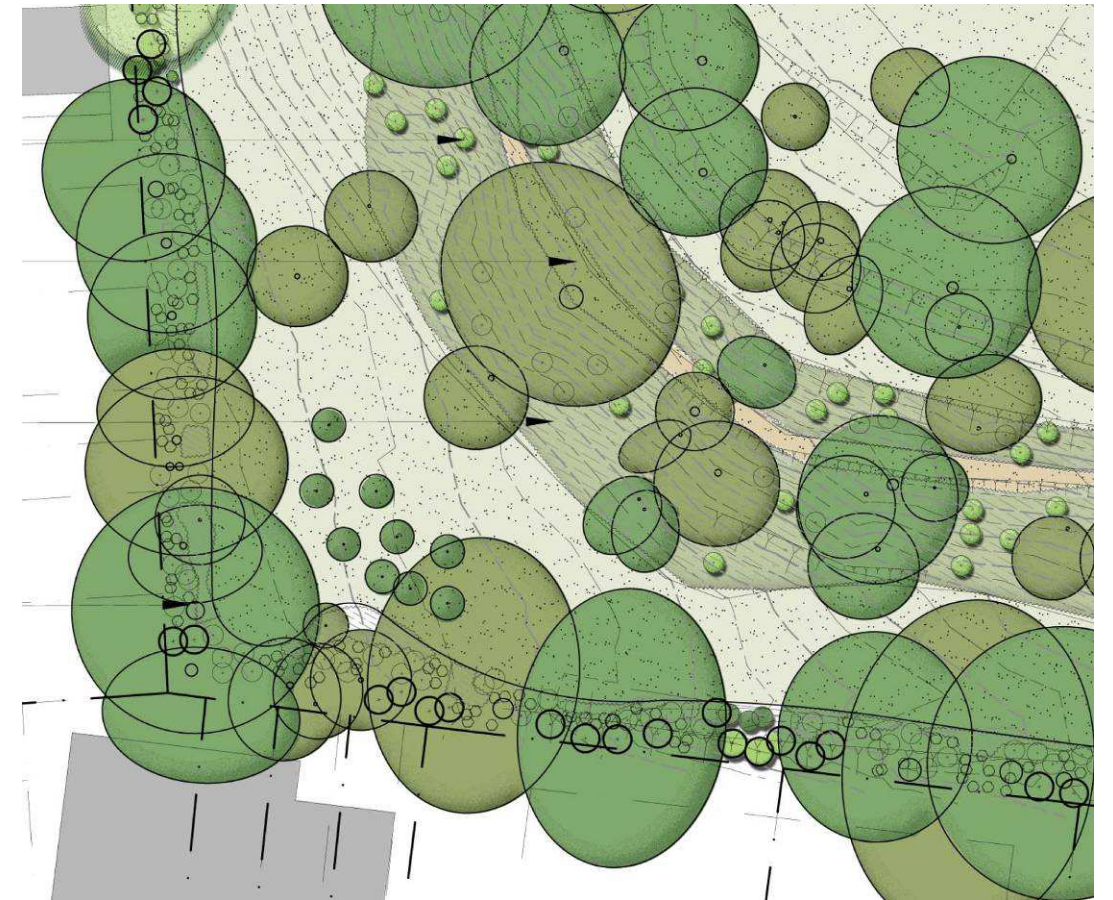
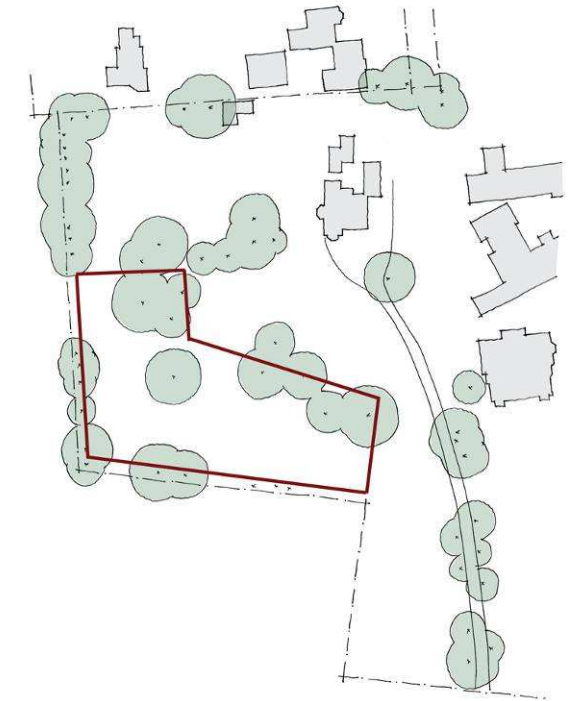


Figure 8 Proposed landscape rehabilitation plan



## 05 Graythwaite House

### Development Parameters / Goals

- > The sandstone house with its verandah, mansard roof and widows walk is to retain its strong individuality in the landscape and its ability to be seen in the round
- > Shore School Reception, Administration and cultural role is proposed for the house. These uses have been selected as they can be introduced into Graythwaite House with minimum impact on the conserved fabric.
- > The house is in poor condition as issues of stormwater management, roof condition and rising damp have not been addressed. The services throughout the house are in poor condition and require replacement.
- > There is no permanent parking available, 6 visitor car spaces are to be provided to the south of the House.
- > Key conservation initiatives include:
  - Measures to reduce ground damp
  - Repair of roof structure and restoration of original slate and metal roofing, including provision of new rooftop balustrade and new stormwater systems.
  - Restoration and conservation of external stonework and pointing
  - Repair and upgrading of all external joinery, especially window and doors, verandahs and eaves
  - Insertion of new lift, and subtle amended planning to enable disabled access.
  - Structural verification of stability and condition of all chimneys
  - Verification of timber structures and flooring, and related repairs
  - Reconstruction of entry hall tiled floor
  - Extensive repair of historic plasterwork

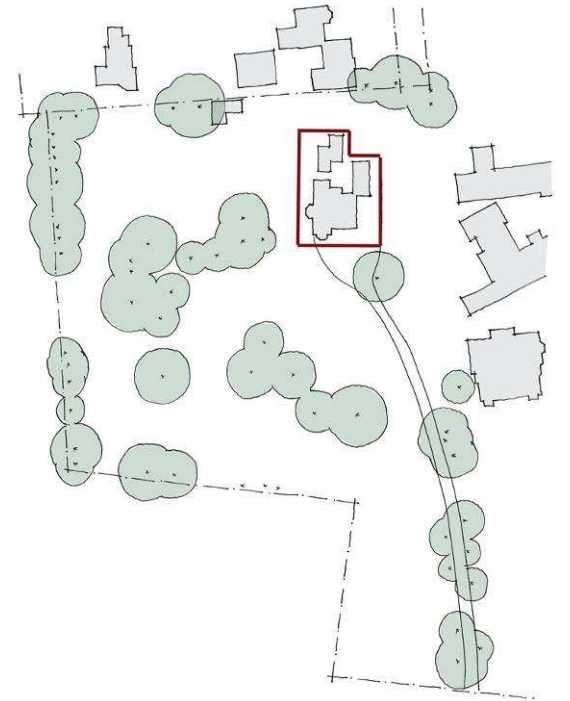


Figure 10 Graythwaite House, 1875. Source: National Library.



Figure 9 Graythwaite House, existing conditions

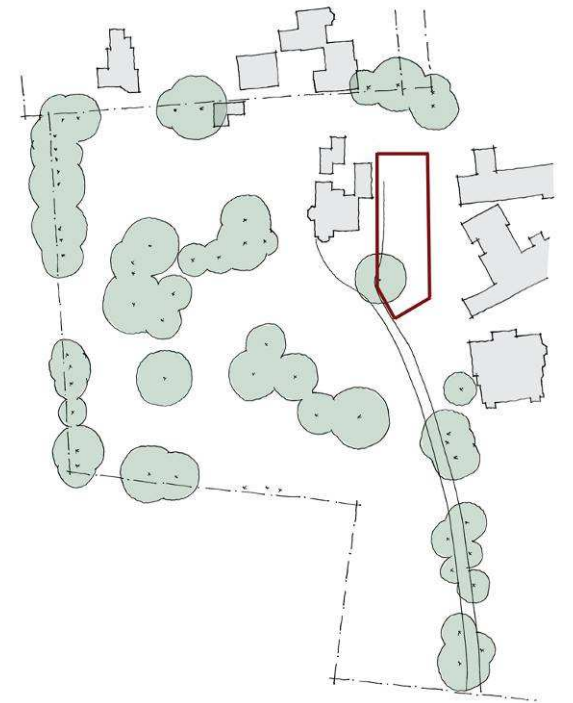
## 06 Landscape East



Figure 11 Diagram showing location of new intensive planting adjacent to new buildings

### Development Parameters / Goals

- > Forecourt to house and side driveway to be in bonded gravel. The Eastern planting to the drive to feature a grass verge and intensive shrub planting and several large trees to establish a garden belt between the drive and the main school buildings
- > Limited Vehicular access to this area only – cars directed under proposed East Building (south). Refer to Figure 11 and Section 07 East Building (south).
- > This landscape provides a setting from Graythwaite House and a foreground to new East Buildings for the Shore School. The new buildings are to be partly on the site of the former Ward Building (which by this stage is demolished) and partly on the established Shore School grounds. The use of the existing school grounds enables the new construction to be set back further to the east, away from Graythwaite House, and opens up new sightlines from the driveway to the House.
- > The present Shore School buildings on the Graythwaite frontage turn their backs on Graythwaite. New buildings and related landscaping are to provide a suitable interface between the school and Graythwaite.
- > The proposed planting will have a Victorian/Edwardian character appropriate for Graythwaite House environs.
- > The bonded gravel surface will be suitable for intensive pedestrian traffic, yet also be capable of handling occasional use by vehicular service traffic.





## 07 East Building (south)

### Development Parameters

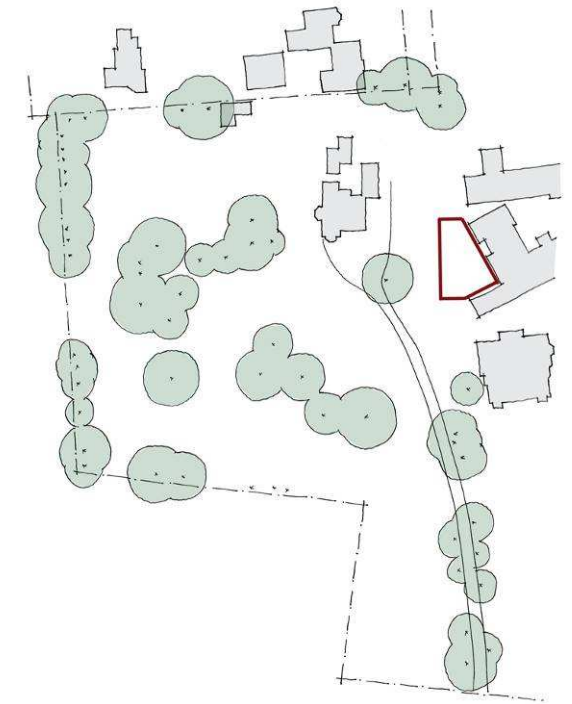
- > The present Ward Building has a substantial and unsatisfactory presence at its south west corner adjoining the entry drive: it is recommended that any new building not occur in this exact vicinity; this will allow the drive to focus on views to Graythwaite House. It is noted that the previous endorsed CMP allowed for the demolition and replacement of the Ward Building
- > The set-out of the new Eastern Buildings is to enable
  - : views from the upper drive to see both the south and east facades of Graythwaite House
  - : a minimum distance of 12 metres between Graythwaite House and new Eastern Building forms
- > The new Eastern Building(s) to have a specific relationship with Graythwaite House scale and massing with Graythwaite House remaining freestanding and prominent
- > Parking is proposed under East Building (south). Any entrance to car parking is to be discrete and not prominent when viewed from Drive
- > Between the two East Buildings, there is a pedestrian circulation route linking the Chapel quadrangle and the present administrative school offices with Graythwaite House. In the vicinity of East Building (south), it widens to a fan shaped area enabling a direct view of Graythwaite House and its verandah. This is a key circulation node for new and existing buildings; it is likely that a key access stair will be located in this vicinity. It is likely that the East Buildings be linked on Levels 1 and 2 in this vicinity.
- > The maximum roof RL for the 2 storey building element as viewed from the West is not to exceed RL 77.67 which is the RL of Level 2 of Graythwaite

### High Level Design Objectives

- > By following the alignment of the Existing School House (behind), East Building (south) aims to open up views of Graythwaite and to keep the central focus on Graythwaite upon entry to the site.
- > The Building aims to relate to Graythwaite through careful use of building materials and the considered design of structure and balconies in a modern expression.
- > The ground floor of this building is proposed as a generous multipurpose space to maximise the outlook over the Graythwaite lands. A sheltered western terrace offers a transition to the adjoining landscape embankment.
- > This two and three storey building aims to create transition in scale from the four storey School House building to the east, to Graythwaite located to the West of this Building which is predominantly two storeys.

### Building Description

- > East Building (south) is located to the South East of Graythwaite House.
- > The East Building has main floor levels visible above ground, with a third floor level set back against the Existing School House.
- > A two level car park is located underneath the building footprint, which is entered via a driveway to the South.
- > The alignment of this building corresponds with the alignment of School House and as such, its South Western corner skews back towards the East, away from Graythwaite House.



- > The East buildings are separated by a pedestrian link connecting the main school with Graythwaite and framing eastern views of Graythwaite. On the upper floors, this link could be used as an outdoor covered learning area.

### Building Materials

- > This building is characterised by a west facing colonnade that is designed to relate to the verandah structures around Graythwaite. Beyond this, the facades will have extensive glazing. The colonnade columns should relate to Graythwaite in diameter size and probably be of steel.
- > Large format glazing is envisaged to the west and east facade generally within solid wall panels.
- > Building colours used should avoid tones found on Graythwaite House and provide a link to the red brick and rendered facades of the existing Shore School buildings. Muted greys and neutral colours are suggested.



## 07 East Building (south)

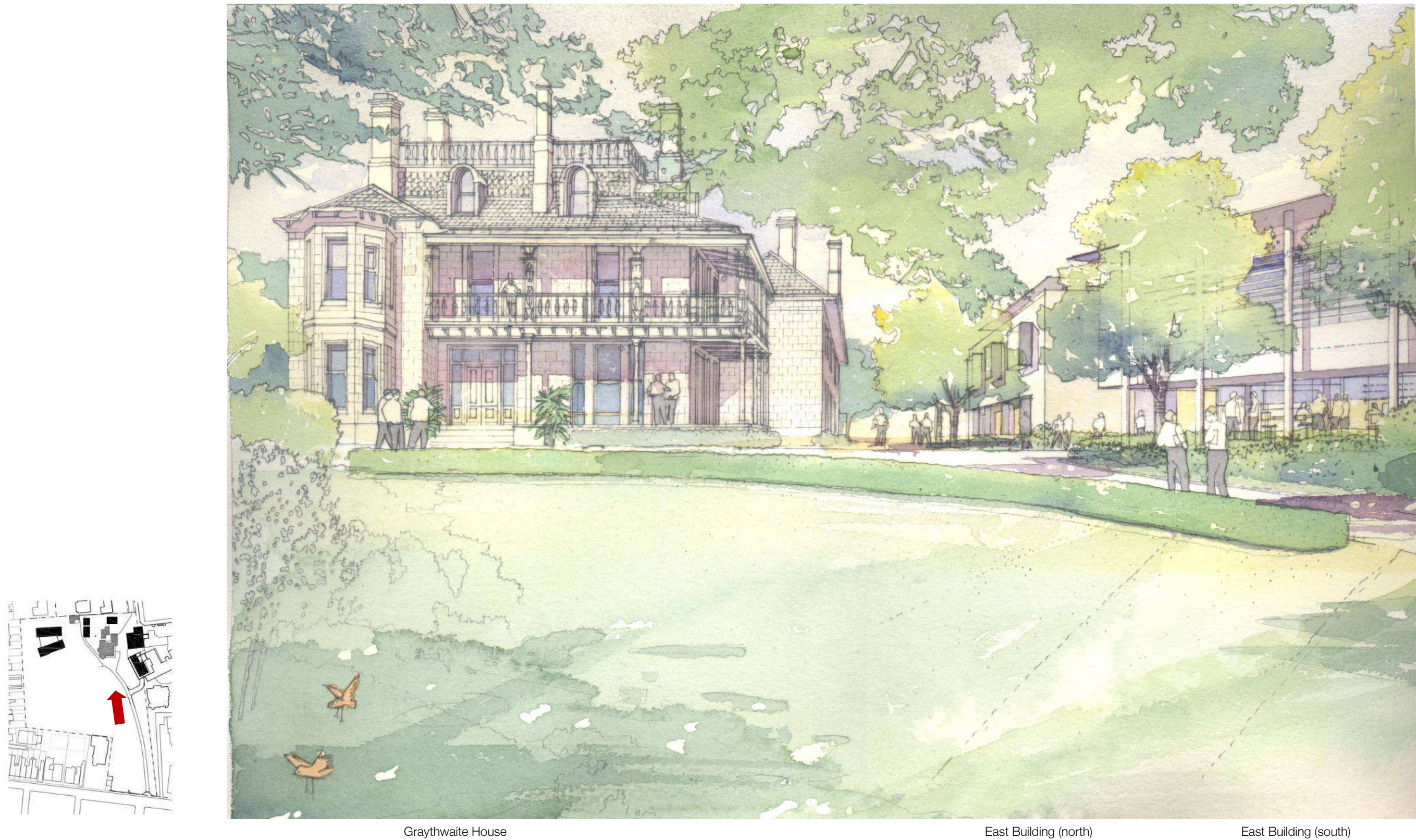
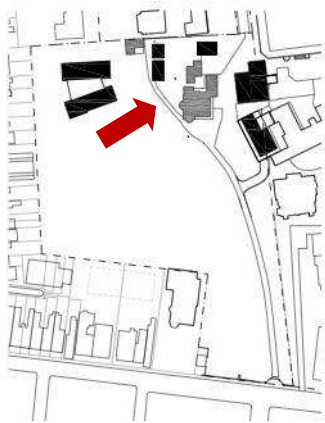


Figure 12 Perspective from Driveway showing new buildings in relation to Graythwaite



07 East Building (south)



Graythwaite House                      East Building (north)                      East Building (south)                      School House

Figure 13 View from west of proposed East Buildings in relation to Graythwaite.



## 07 East Building (north)

### Development Parameters

- > The present Ward Building has a substantial and unsatisfactory presence at its south west corner adjoining the entry drive: it is recommended that any new building not occur in this exact vicinity; this will allow the drive to focus on views to Graythwaite House. It is noted that the previous endorsed CMP allowed for the demolition and replacement of the Ward Building
- > The set-out of the new Eastern Buildings is to enable
  - : views from the upper drive to see both the south and east facades of Graythwaite House
  - : a minimum distance of 12 metres between Graythwaite House and new Eastern Building forms
- > A minimum depth of planting bed fronting the East building (north) of 6 metres.
- > The new Eastern Building(s) to have a specific relationship with Graythwaite House scale and massing with Graythwaite House remaining freestanding and prominent
- > The building will be integrated with the existing building known as West Wing
- > A potential basement under East Building (north) has been identified for potential use as a Drama Theatre. The facility will require 2 means of egress.
- > The building's north elevation will be an important element in completing the West Wing building when viewed from the northern playing field. The pictorial qualities of the new construction from this view point will be important

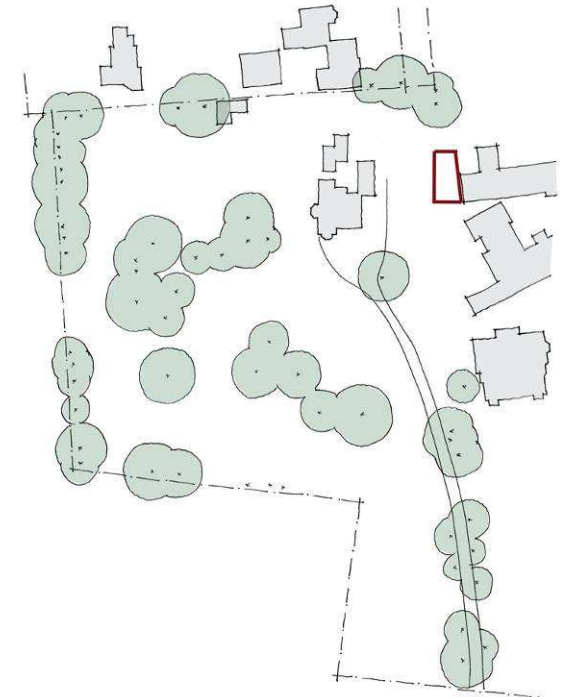
### Building Description

- > The East Building (north) is a two and three storey building located to the North East of Graythwaite House. The building is proposed as 2 levels adjoining Graythwaite and 3 levels adjoining the existing West Wing
- > A two level car park is located underneath the building footprint accessed from the south building.
- > The East Building (north) forms a physical link between the Existing 'West Wing' of the Senior School and the new East Buildings.
- > The East buildings are separated by an important pedestrian link connecting the main school with Graythwaite and framing eastern views of Graythwaite
- > The buildings sunny northern edge is proposed to have a deep sheltered undercroft facing the oval

### High Level Design Objectives

- > The East Building (north) has been designed to have regard to the existing Senior School Buildings as viewed from the North, and to Graythwaite which is located to the West of the new building.
- > The East Building (north) forms an extension to the Existing 'West Wing' of the Senior School as viewed from the North, and provides an opportunity to introduce a modern building form in this location, while integrating with the existing buildings.
- > The Building aims to 'anchor' the north western corner of the building through the provision of a solid building form with no balconies to the 2 storey element.

- > The proposed three storey element of the building aims to relate to the proportion of the existing brick parapet on the 'West Wing' of the Senior School.
- > A large area of glazing on the North façade of the three storey element aims to frame views towards the existing trees.



### Building Materials

- > Deep set large format glazing is envisaged to the North facade generally, with punched windows in rendered masonry walls on the 2 level building facing Graythwaite. Steel or aluminium screens and architectural detail should complement window frame colour
- > Building colours used should relate to the red brick facade of the West Wing and transition to muted greys and neutrals on the 2 level building facing Graythwaite House



## 08 East Building (north)



Senior school classroom building (West Wing)

East Building (north)

Graythwaite House

North Building

Shore Preparatory School: Upton Grange

Figure 14 Perspective of the East Building (north) showing its relationship with Graythwaite and Existing West Wing Building



## 09 Service Yard

### Development Parameters / Goals

- > Restore screen fencing and historic planting bed.
- > Provide traditional paving to yard
- > The conserved stables, which may be amongst the earliest structures in North Sydney could be used for archival / museum purposes.

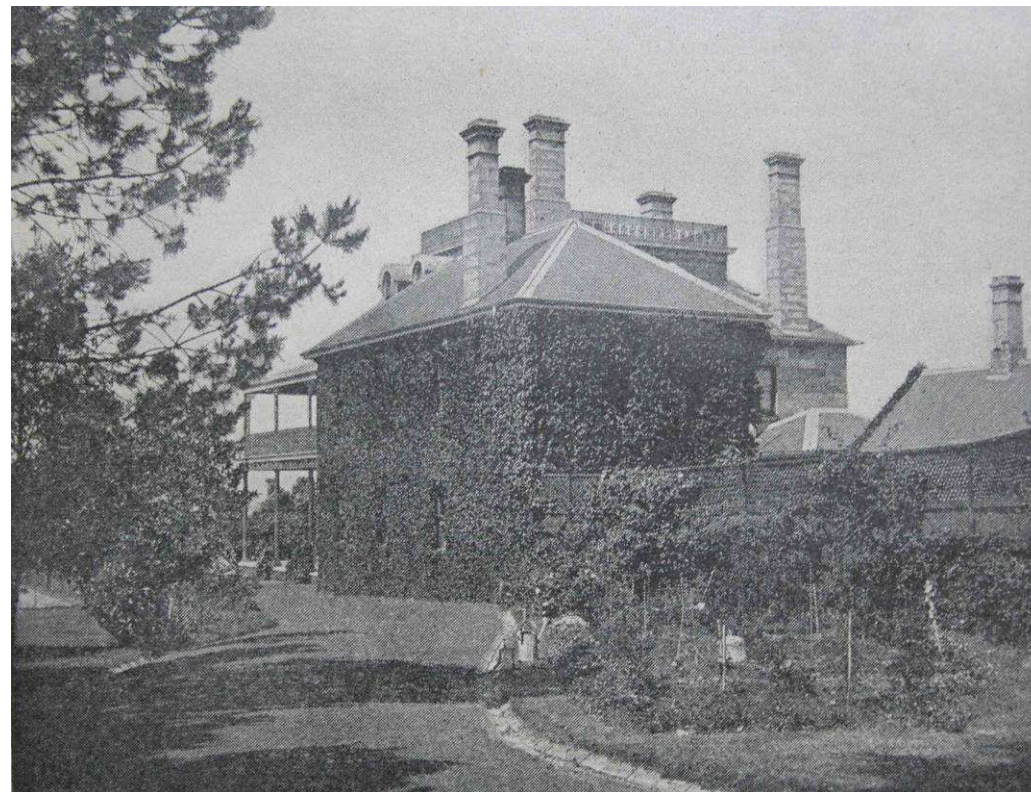
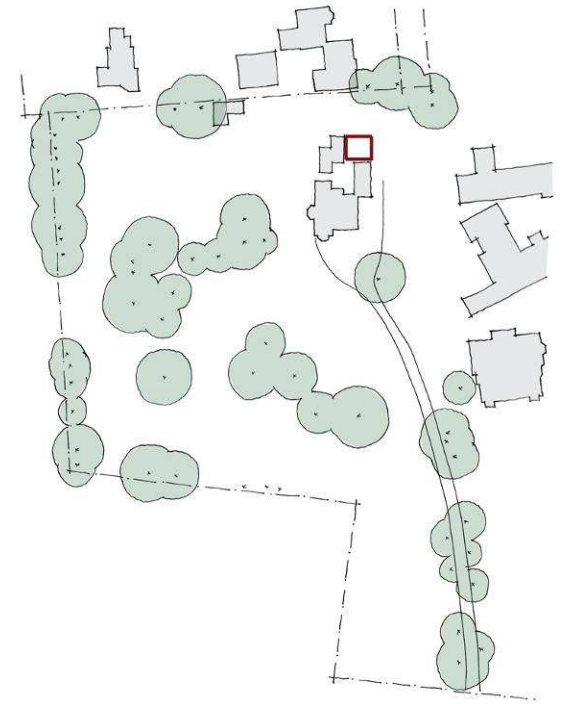


Figure 15 1897 view of the rear of Graythwaite House, showing the garden bed screening the service yard. Source: *The Sydney Mail*, 1897.



Figure 16 View of the service yard to the rear of Graythwaite House, existing conditions.



# 10 North Building



Figure 17 Plan of proposed new outbuilding and historic garden wall in relation to Graythwaite



Figure 18 Indicative Section of proposed new outbuilding and historic garden wall in relation to Graythwaite

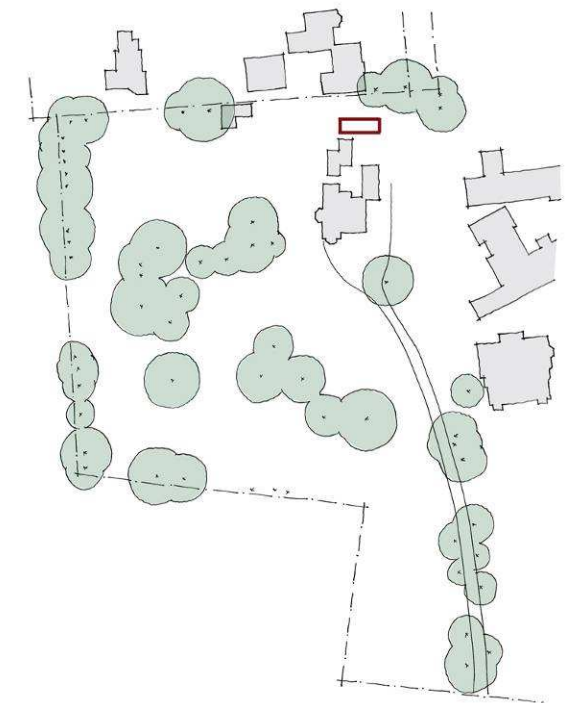
## Development Parameters

- > New north building to be complementary to the general Graythwaite group and ideally have a function integrated with Graythwaite
- > Historic garden wall to the west of this building to be conserved
- > Scale of building to be subservient to Graythwaite House and effectively be a new outbuilding to Graythwaite House
- > A minimum distance of 4.4m has been established between the North Building and the existing Preparatory Building to facilitate comfortable vehicular and pedestrian access.
- > It is preferable for the Eastern facade of the North building to align with the eastern façade of Graythwaite.
- > To keep this building of modest scale, it is proposed as a single storey building. Incorporation of a new basement level, perhaps for record storage, could give it a more versatile role.

## High Level Design Objectives

- > The North Building has been designed to be modest in scale, in order to be subservient to Graythwaite House.
- > The building materials and construction detailing will relate to the new construction in and around Graythwaite eg. New glazed walkway and lift, in order to create a synergy between the two new elements that are in such close proximity.
- > The setback of the building to the existing Historic garden wall to the west along with possible full height glazing on the South and West façades aims to focus attention on the heritage wall and the

newly restored Northern façade of Graythwaite House.



## Building Description

- > The North Building is located to the North of Graythwaite House, and is set back a minimum of 2m from the existing historic garden wall to the west. It defines the Northern edge of the 'Service Yard' precinct.
- > The North Building is one storey above ground and one storey below ground. The two levels are linked via an internal stair. A second egress stair from the basement level may be required.
- > A secondary pedestrian link passes between the South façade of the North Building and the North façade of Graythwaite (Stables), leading to the Formal Garden.

# 11 Formal Garden

## Development Parameters / Goals

- > General retention of original layout and square beds is proposed with brick paving and curbs. The squared beds to be edged in planting and filled with flowering shrubs or plants allied with an educational role. Refer to Figure 21.
- > Historic photos provide additional detail (Figure 19 and Figure 20).
- > An opening in the historic wall will enable linkage with the service yard

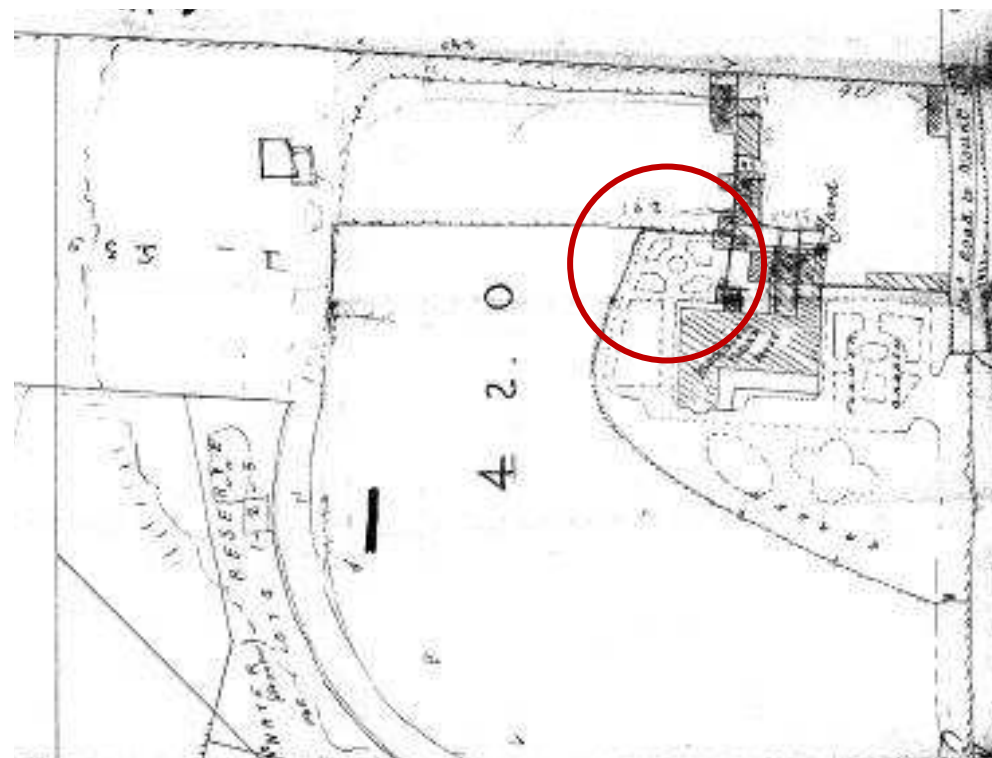
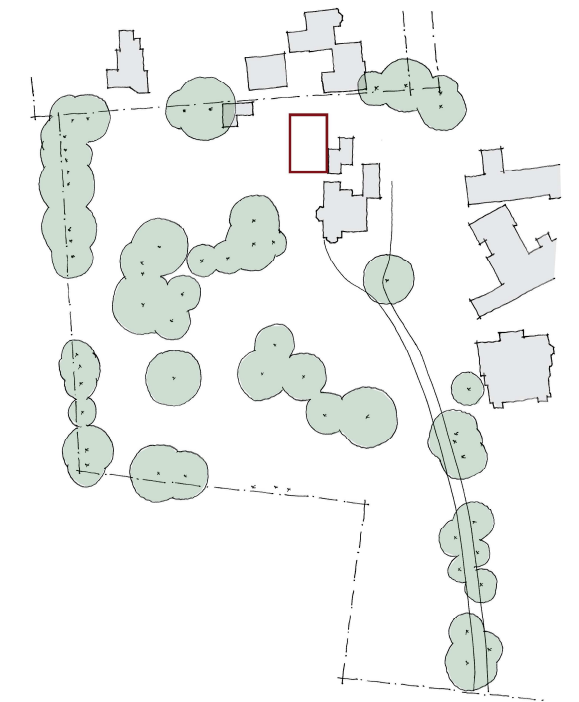


Figure 19 Detail of the 1867 subdivision plan of Graythwaite, showing the formal garden to the west of Graythwaite House (circled). Source: Mitchell Library.



Figure 20 1919 photograph of the formal garden, looking south. Source: Repatriation, Vol 1, No. 1, March 1919.



# 11 Formal Garden

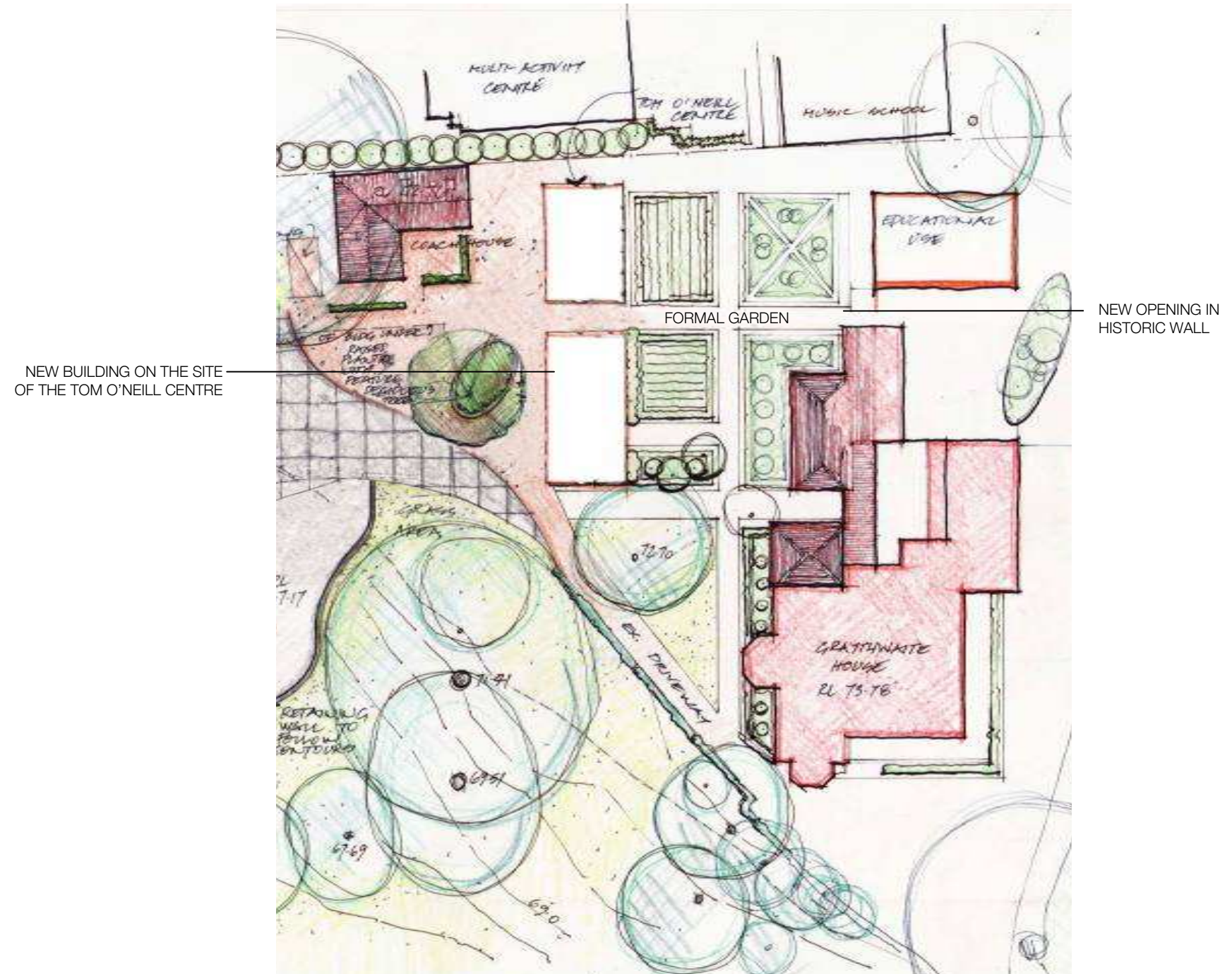


Figure 21 Plan of proposed renewed Formal Garden (Taylor Brammer Landscape Architects)

# 12 Tom O'Neill Centre

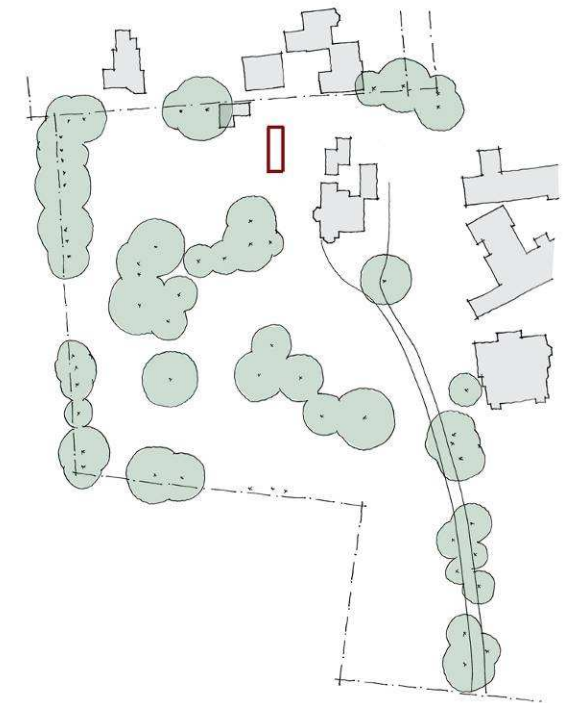
The existing Tom O'Neill Centre is proposed to be refurbished in Stage 1 of the development but later demolished. The description below relates to the new Tom O'Neill Centre which would be constructed in Stage 3 of the Development.

## Development Parameters

- > The existing Tom O' Neill Centre defines the western edge of the Formal Garden and any replacement building is to be of similar mass and scale to help define a surviving feature of the immediate landscape for Graythwaite House. As long as the flower garden is suitably edged and the vista from the drive to the Coach House is maintained, there is some flexibility in planning a new building on this site.
- > The alignment of the Northern edge of this building is to maintain vehicle access along the Northern boundary to the Coach House.

## High Level Design Objectives

- > The building aims to be a background element in the Graythwaite landscape, maintaining the prominence of Graythwaite as viewed from the entry driveway.
- > The building may be used for educational purposes or used as a small gathering space.



## Building Description

- > The new Tom O' Neill Centre is located to the North West of Graythwaite, and defines the western edge of the Formal Garden Area.
- > The building will have a similar footprint to the existing Tom O' Neill Centre, but extend further to the North to align with the Northern edge of the proposed North building.
- > The building is single-storey with a gabled roof form.
- > An east-west link through the building provides access from the formal flower garden to the western part of the Upper Terrace.



Figure 22 Diagram indicating planning parameters



# 13 Coach House and Forecourt

## *Development Parameters*

- > Coach House conserved for administration and caretaker use.
- > Wide verandah is not original and may be varied.
- > Vista from Graythwaite House forecourt to Coach House gable to be maintained.
- > With appropriate landscaping, the forecourt can be a general gathering area.
- > New landscaping in this area should respect the historic visual relationship between the Coach House and Graythwaite House and the open spatial quality of the Upper Terrace.

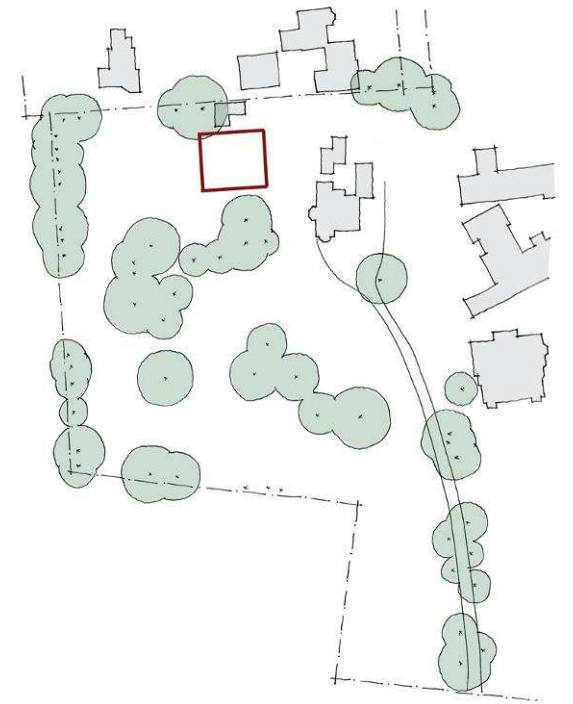


Figure 23 Coach House and forecourt, existing conditions



# 14 West Building



Figure 24 Example of green screen – refer Figure 26.



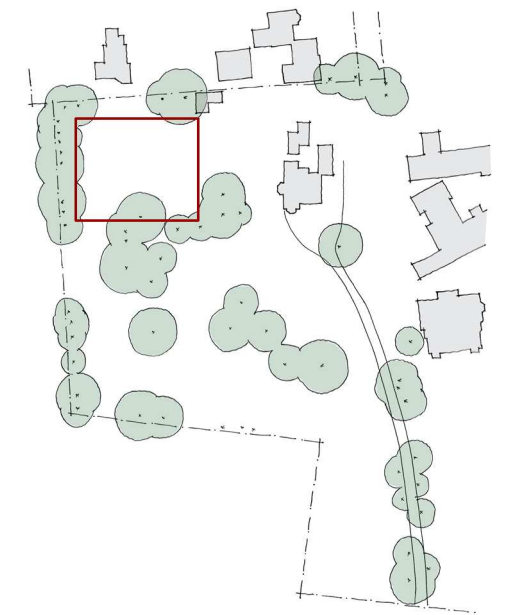
Figure 25 Example of green screen – refer Figure 26.

## Development Parameters

- > The maximum height of the 2 main building elements (North and South) of the west building has been defined as RL 77.67 which aligns with the string course moulding which demarcates the ground and first floors of Graythwaite House. This is to ensure the new building is not a dominant element in the Graythwaite landscape. (Refer Figure 26 and Figure 27).
- > The minimum setback of the North Western Corner of the building to the western site boundary is to be 20.8m. The minimum setback of the South Western corner of the building to the western site boundary is to be 24m.
- > Retain the existing mature trees to the west, north and south.
- > Substantial new planting is to be provided between the new building and western neighbours, to supplement the existing large trees.
- > Windows or openings facing west should incorporate privacy protection measures to minimise overlooking of the adjoining Bank Street properties. Measures to be provided should include raised sill heights and/or fixed louvres/screens and/or obscure glazing.
- > The height of the building in closest proximity to the western boundary should not exceed 8.5 metres.

## High Level Design Objectives

- > The building aims to be a background element in the Graythwaite landscape, maintaining the prominence of Graythwaite as viewed from the entry driveway.
- > The building is located to minimise potential impact on the existing trees to the North, West, South and South East.
- > The educational use areas have been located to the north and south to minimise potential impact on privacy of the western neighbours.



The building form is stepped to relate to the sloping site.

- > In concept, the building is to have external frames for shading and plant. Substantial new planting is to be provided between the new building and western neighbours, to supplement existing large trees.
- > Trellises are to integrate with the parklike landscape.

## Building Description

- > The West Building is located in the North Western area of the site, and is surrounded on the North, West, South and South East by large existing trees. The natural ground levels in this area fall steeply from the North East to the South West.
- > The building form steps down the site predominantly two storeys with some areas of the building located below grade.
- > The West Building is comprised of two main building forms, orientated East-West and linked via an atrium and circulation area.
- > The building is accessed from the East, on Levels two (on grade) and three (via an external stair). A lift provides vertical access throughout the building.

# 14 West Building

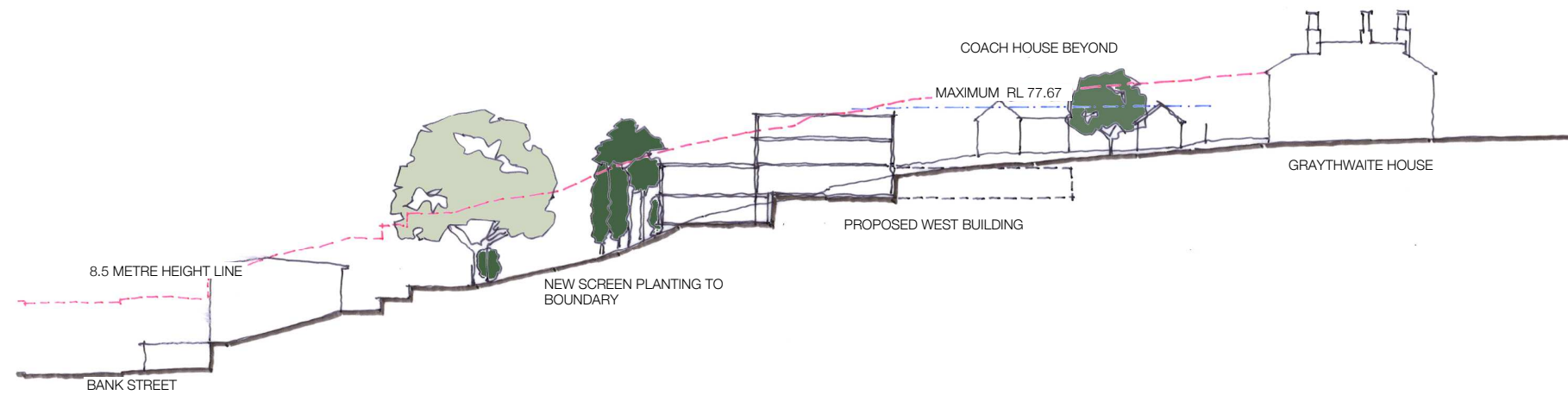


Figure 27 Indicative section of West Building

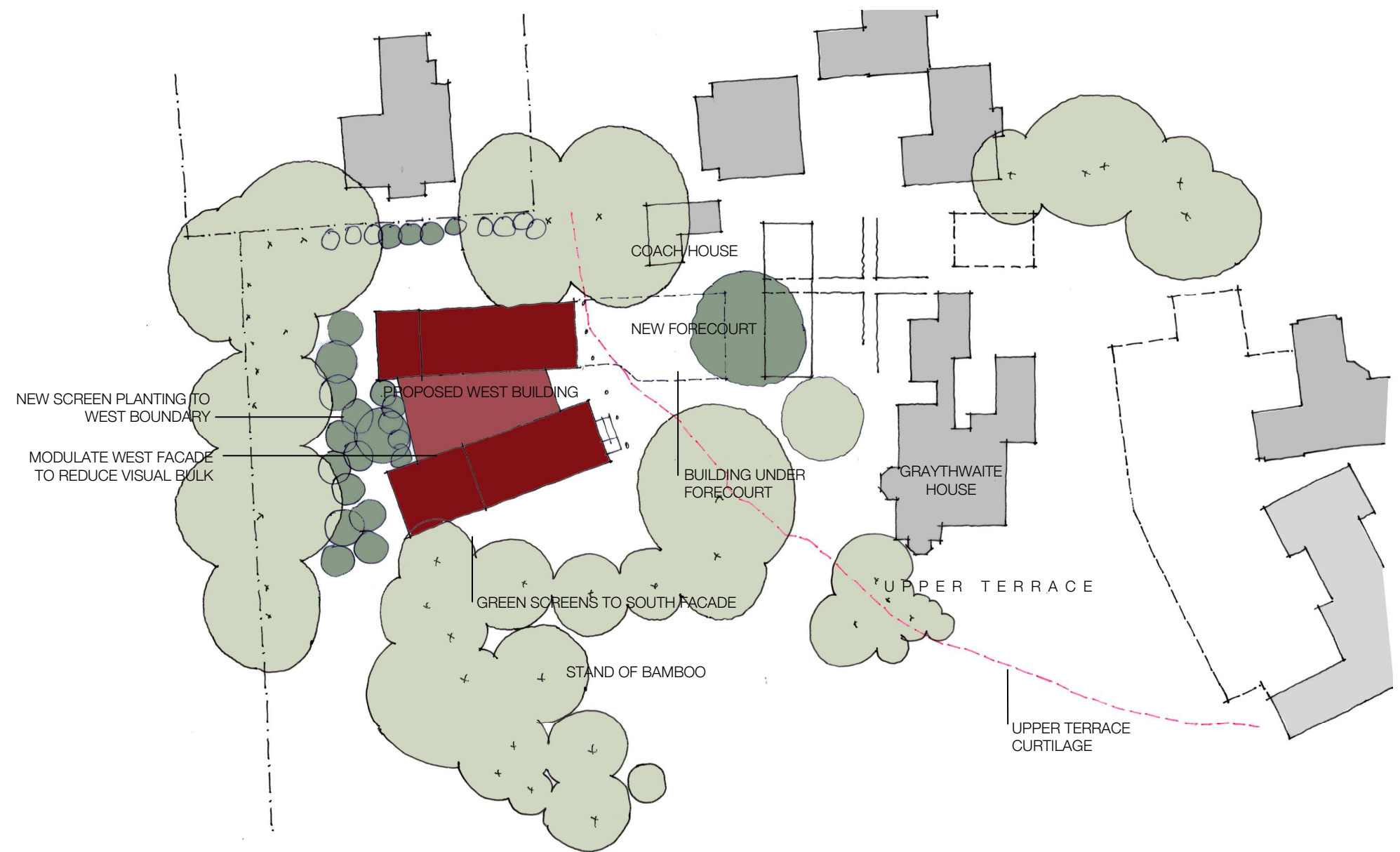
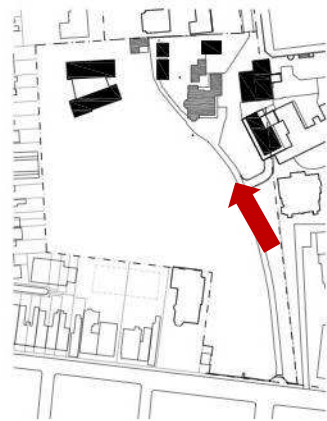


Figure 26 Diagram indicating planning parameters



## 14 West Building



Proposed West Building

Coach House

Graythwaite House

Proposed East Building

Figure 28 View of West Building and Graythwaite from colonnade fronting the East Building



# 14 West Building



Figure 30 Images of the proposed West Building model from the west



Figure 31 Images of the proposed West Building model from the west

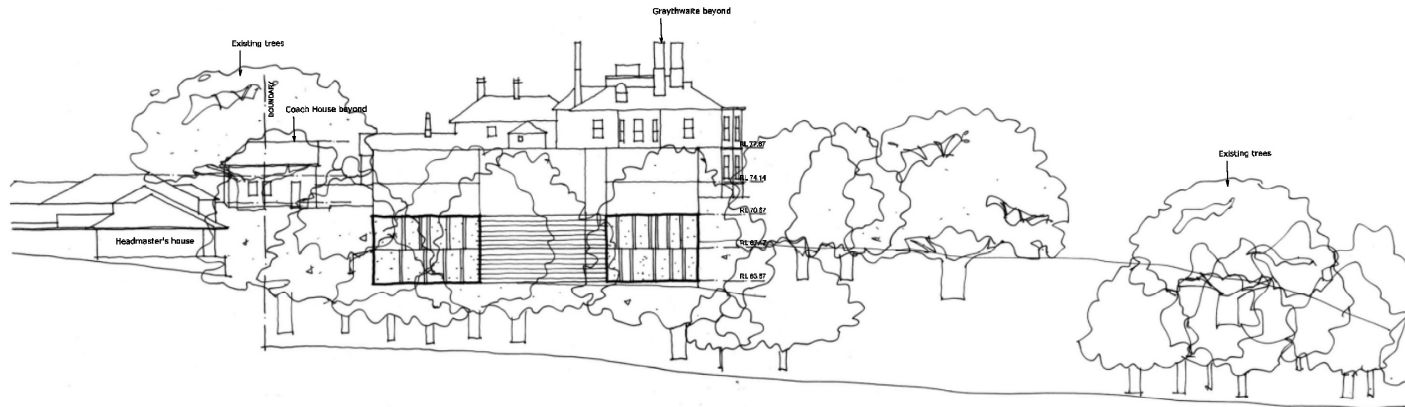
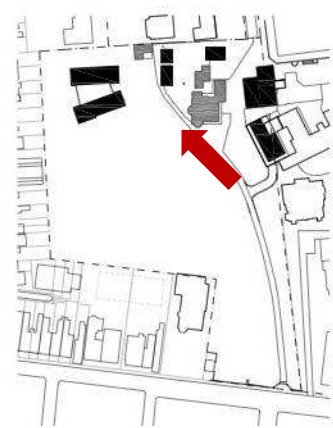


Figure 29 Indicative proposed west elevation, not to scale



# 14 West Building



Proposed West Building

Coach House

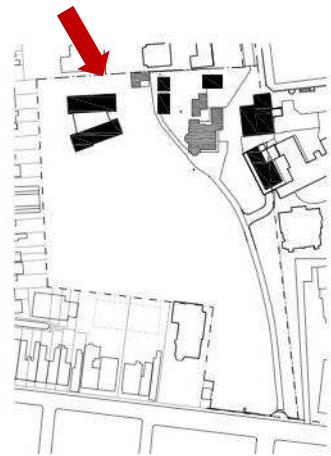
Proposed replacement Tom O'Neill Centre

Graythwaite House

Figure 32 View of West Building and the Tom O'Neill Centre, from the south-east.



# 14 West Building



Coach House

New Tom O'Neill Centre

Graythwaite House

Proposed West Building

Figure 33 View of West Building, Coach House, Tom O'Neill Centre and Graythwaite house from the north-west.



# 15 Edward Street Frontage

## *Development Parameters*

Retention of the major existing trees is proposed with improved paving and landscaping including a new fence and gate, restoring the original impression of Graythwaite House from this position. The East Building (north) is to be integrated with the School West Wing concluding the views from the existing playing field and Edward Street as a resolved entity.

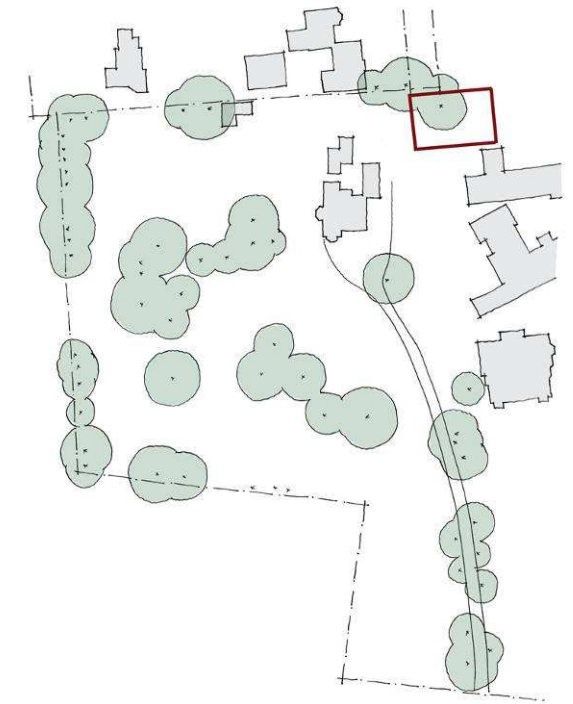


Figure 34 View of the Edward Street entrance to the site, existing conditions.