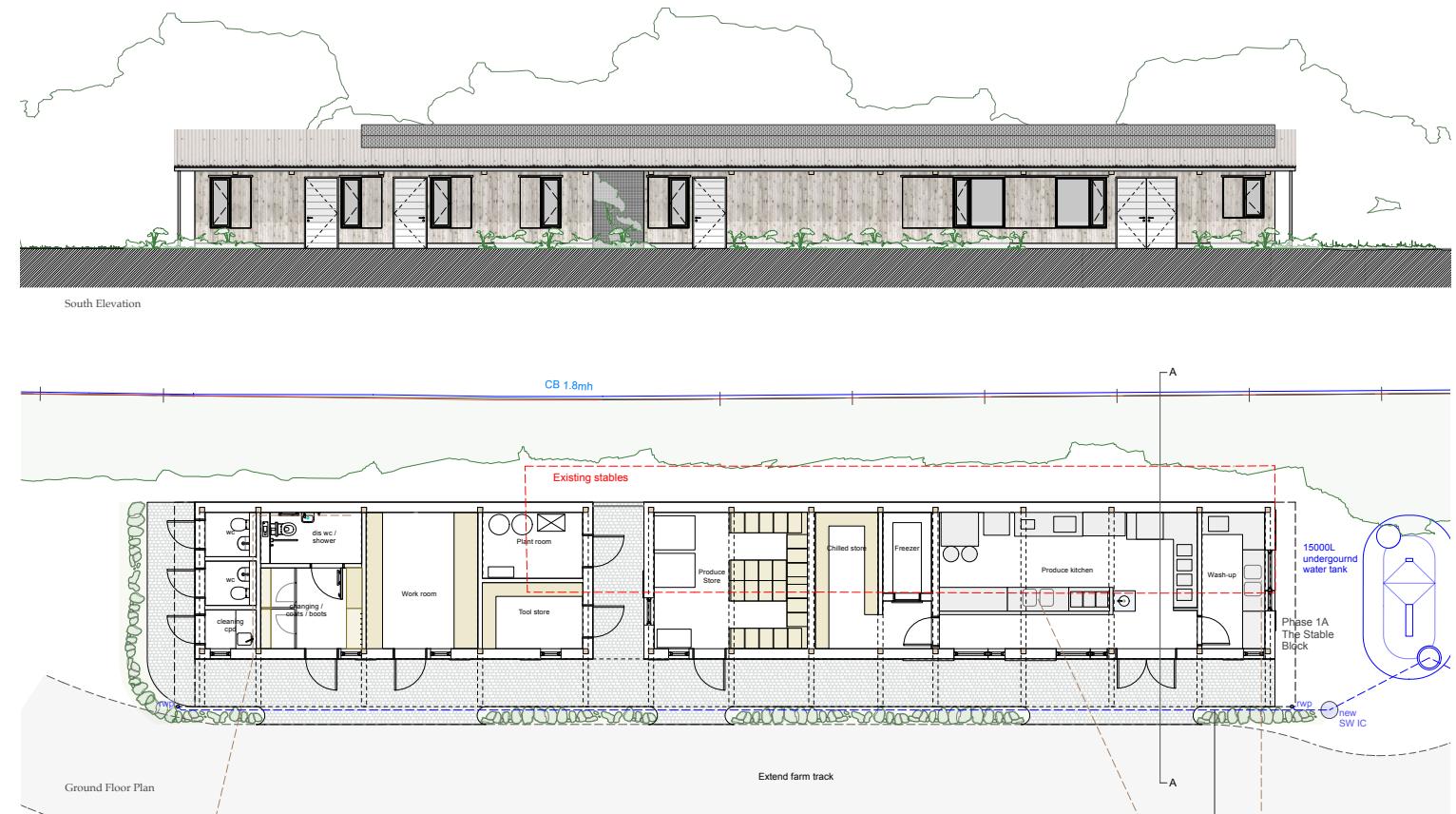


## Phase 1A – The Stable Block

Phase 1A involves the replacement of the existing stable block, which has deteriorated significantly and is now unsafe for use. The proposed new structure retains the linear form of the original building, with a shallow mono-pitched roof that keeps the eaves height to a minimum. This orientation is ideal for accommodating a south-facing photovoltaic array, enabling the generation of on-site renewable energy.

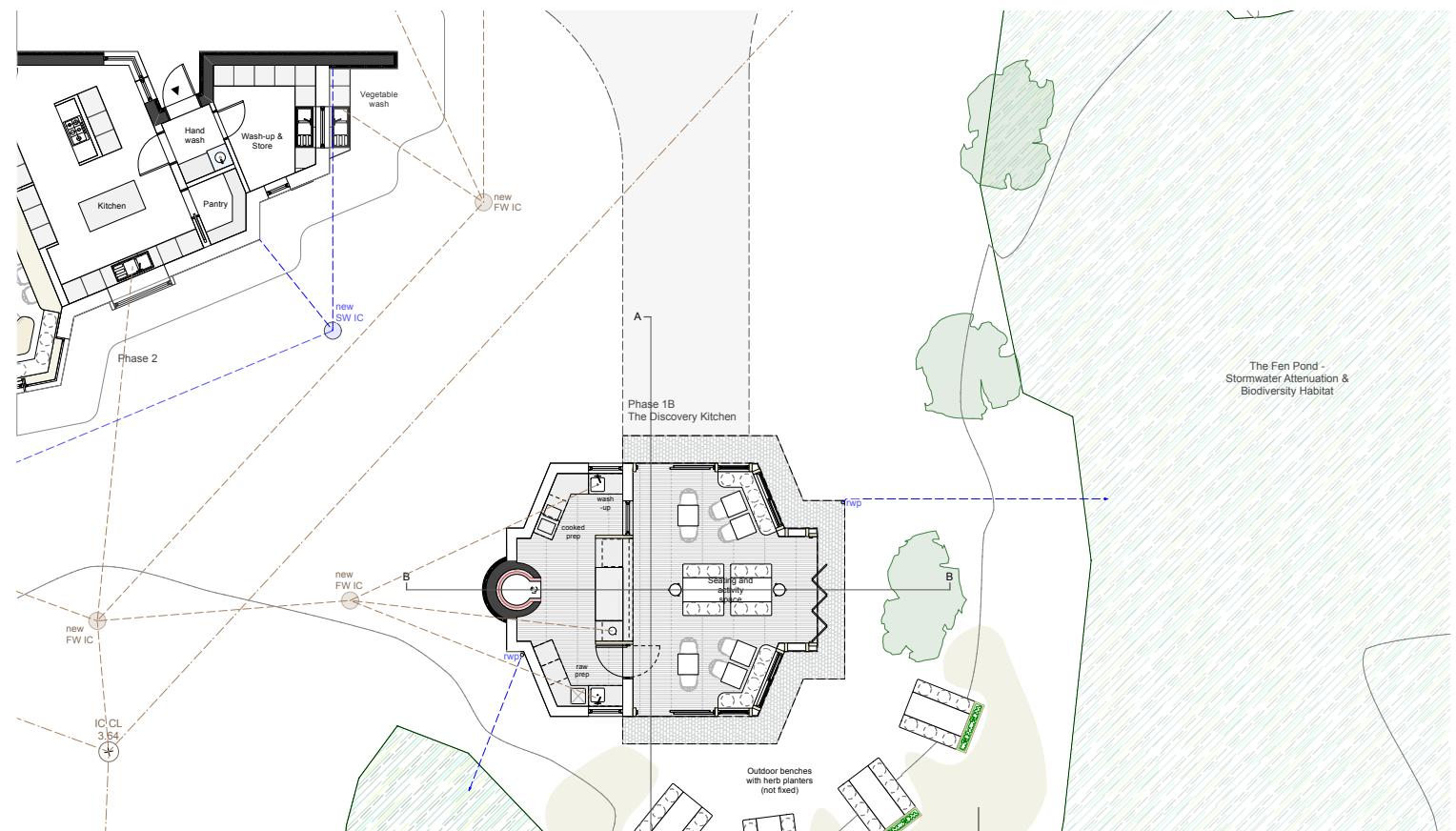
The north elevation is to be clad in the same durable material as the roof, creating a robust façade facing the northern site boundary. The remaining elevations will be clad in vertical larch timber, also in keeping with the rural context. Internally, the building is purpose-designed to meet the specific spatial and functional requirements of a produce kitchen. Ancillary spaces include dedicated areas for storage, a work room, and service spaces, including a fully accessible WC.



## Phase 1B – The Discovery Kitchen

Phase 1B is a small structure built of the same construction as phase 1B for the kitchen half, with a flat green roof. The other half is more lightweight with a fibre cement corrugated room and timber structure infilled with glazing and opening doors to connect the inside to the outside.

This is a key part of the education of learning where food comes from and the connection with nature. The shape of the structure is inspired by geometry found in nature, with references to bee hives in the angled walls.

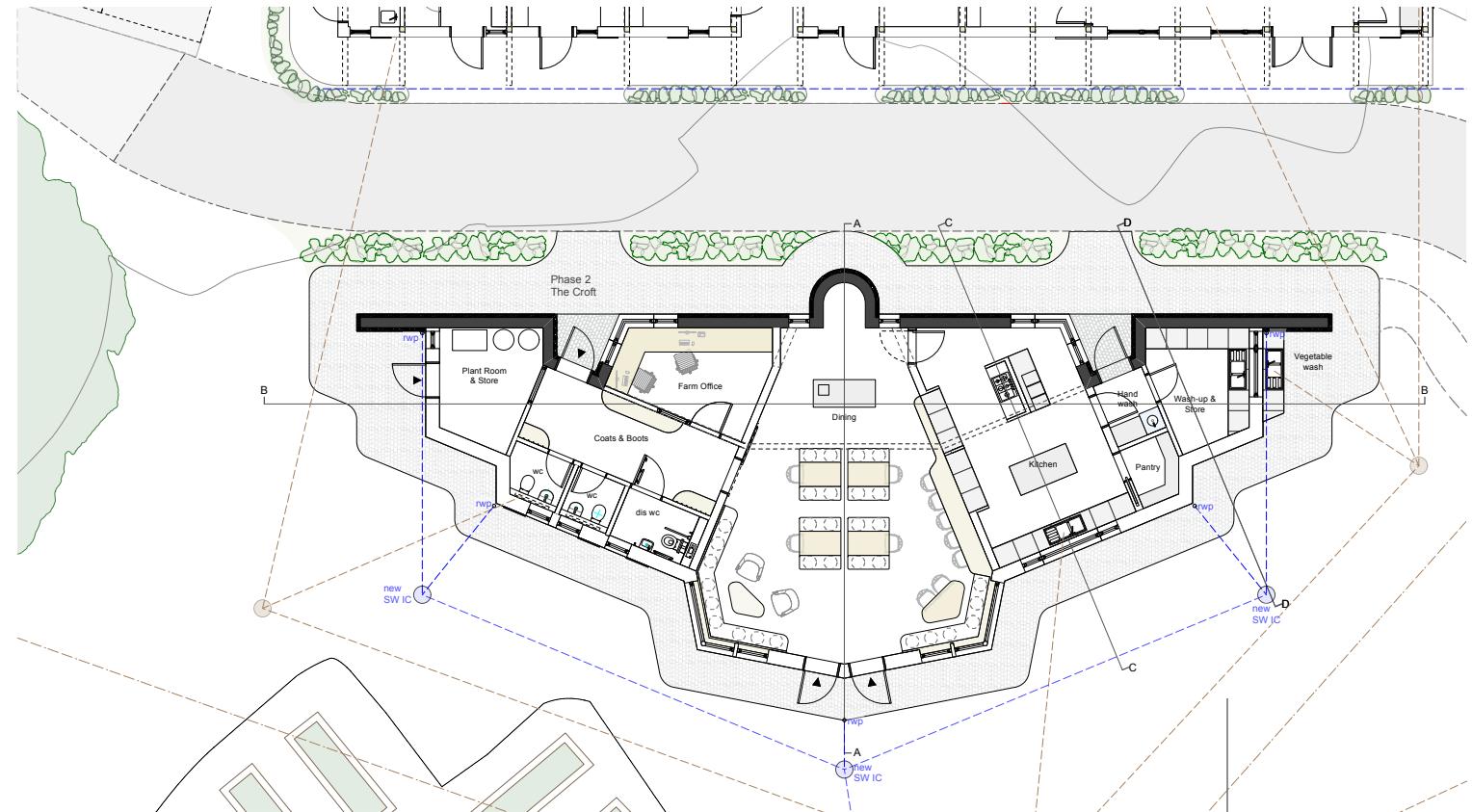


34 Extract of drawing no.  
372/25

## Phase 2 – The Croft

The geometry of Phase 1B can be seen on a larger scale in this final building. The crescent shaped plan avoids overlooking nearby houses and takes advantage of the best views down the open part of the site that also happens to face due south. Again the, pitched roof would be fibre cement corrugated sheeting, and the ancillary would be in sedum. The external surface would be a combination of larch and flint and this aesthetic is seen as carefully detailed 'agricultural'.

Full plan, section and elevation drawings of each phase have been provided with this application.



# MATERIALS & SUSTAINABILITY

All three buildings use the same pallet of external materials that offer durability, require minimal maintenance and can be sourced locally. These choices are in keeping with the agricultural characteristic, and the structures present themselves as a cluster of buildings as seen on most farms in the UK. The primary construction materials will be timber, which has the advantage of being a renewable and sustainable resource, and a major contributor to carbon sequestration.

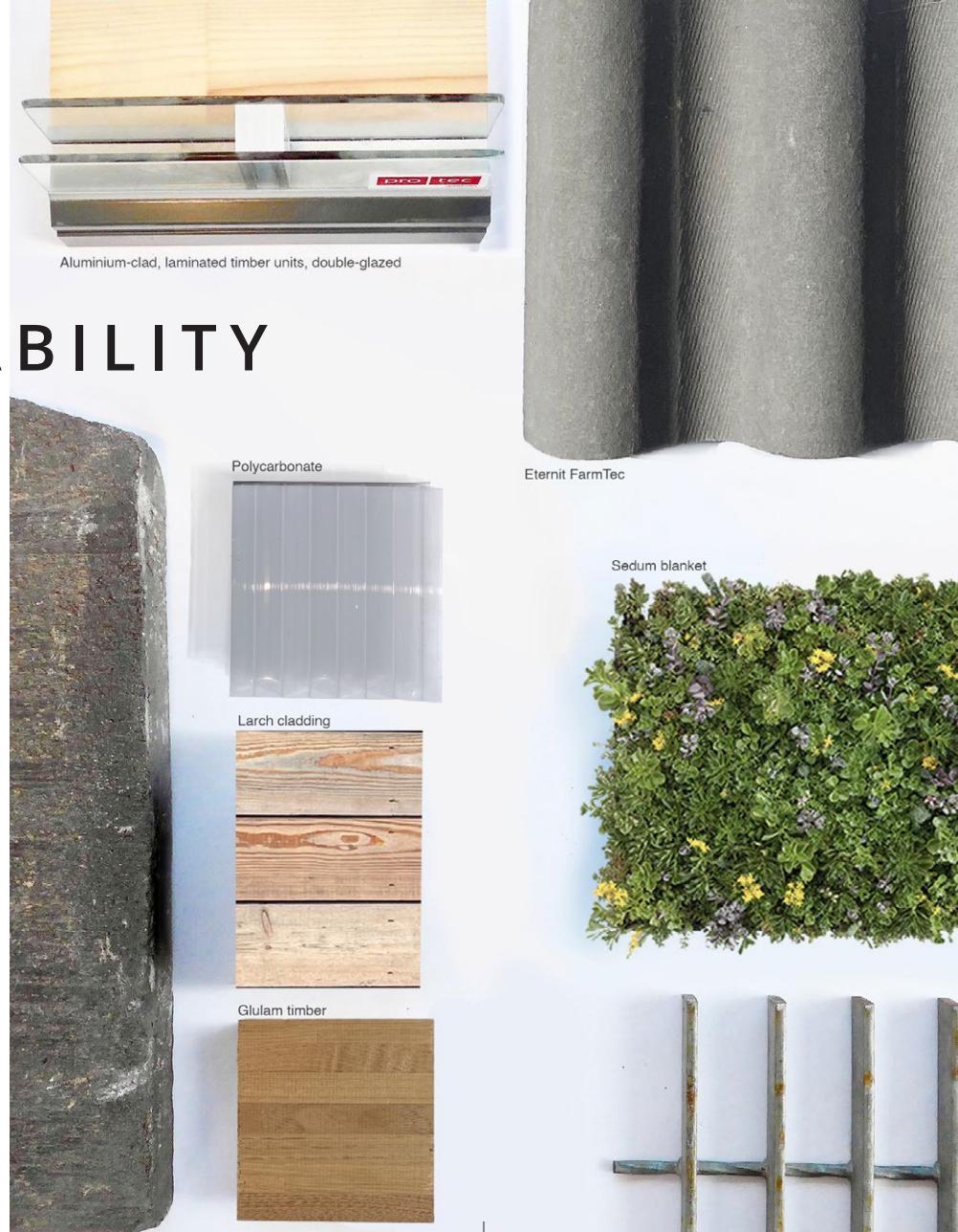
The glulam timber structural elements can be manufactured in Sussex, using local timber. Pre-fabricating primary structural elements offsite will reduce some of the construction impact on site.

The pitched roof elements would be fibre cement corrugated sheeting, FarmTec by Eternit (or similar), a product created specifically for British farmers. This material provides long-term protection against all

weather conditions and provides a fire classification of A2-s1-d0. While flat roof areas will be covered with a sedum blanket to reduce rainwater run-off, aid cooling in summer and contribute to biodiversity credentials.

The majority of walls would be clad in larch, which is very durable due to its natural rot and insect resistance. It has a long lifespan and performs well when exposed to the variable British weather. There will be some feature walls clad in flint, a material that is recognisable and present on numerous agricultural buildings across the South Downs and the Sussex coastline. This is also a way showcasing a heritage craft to visitors of the site.

The doors and windows will be aluminium-clad, laminated timber units, double-glazed for thermal efficiency. The position and size of the openings have been designed to maximise natural light and ventilation.



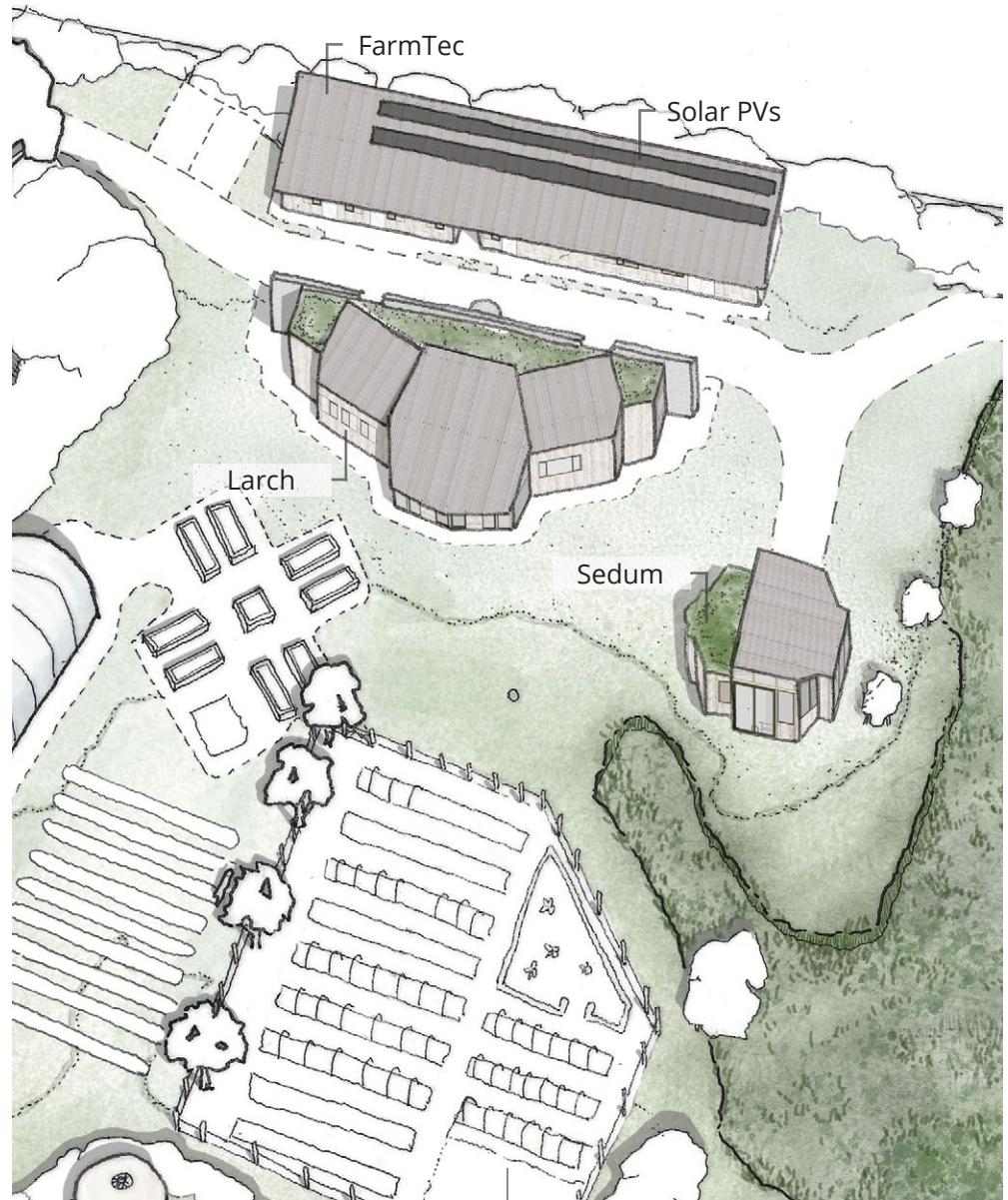
In addition to the sustainability and minimised environmental impact of the construction materials. A site wide energy strategy of using heat pumps will provide sustainable heating and servicing to the buildings. The long linear south-facing roof of Phase 1A will feature a 54m<sup>2</sup> horizontal array of photovoltaic (PV) panels, to support the sites' energy needs.

High levels of insulation in the floors, walls and roof elements of each building will meet or exceed the thermal performance requirements set out in the Building Regulations, ensuring that the buildings are energy-efficient and sustainable in their use.

The scheme will be developed along with specialists to enhance the existing land with a Nature

Trail, further growing areas and a Community Orchard. The Fen Farm staff and volunteers also manage conservation grazing of Beggars Bush chalk grassland flower meadow in the South Downs National Park. The animals are an important part of the therapeutic process, so these will be a key part of the landscape-led approach to the design. Returning the land to an agricultural based use is in keeping with the site's history.

The Sompting Estate Trustees have decided to transfer ownership of Fen Farm land into a charity which will hold the land and buildings for the benefit of Sustainable Sussex and its successors for charitable purposes.



# ECOLOGY

The Ecology Partnership was commissioned by Nicolas Pople Architects to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment in support of this application.

The ecological impact of the proposed development is considered to be very minimal. Any potential effects will be appropriately mitigated through the site-wide masterplan. Ecological enhancement measures, as set out in the Ecology Partnership's recommendations, will be fully incorporated into the development.

These measures include:

- Installation of recommended bird nesting boxes. These will be located on the northern elevation of the P1A building,

which provides a sheltered area protected from human disturbance.

- External lighting design will follow best practice guidance as outlined in paragraph 4.11 of the Ecology Partnership's report, to avoid disturbance to nocturnal wildlife.
- All recommended mitigation measures to minimise ecological impacts during construction will be followed.

In terms of biodiversity net gain, the report concludes that the proposal would achieve a +21.41% net gain in habitat units and a +35.97% net gain in hedgerow units, in full compliance with the BNG trading rules.

# FLOOD RISK & SUDS

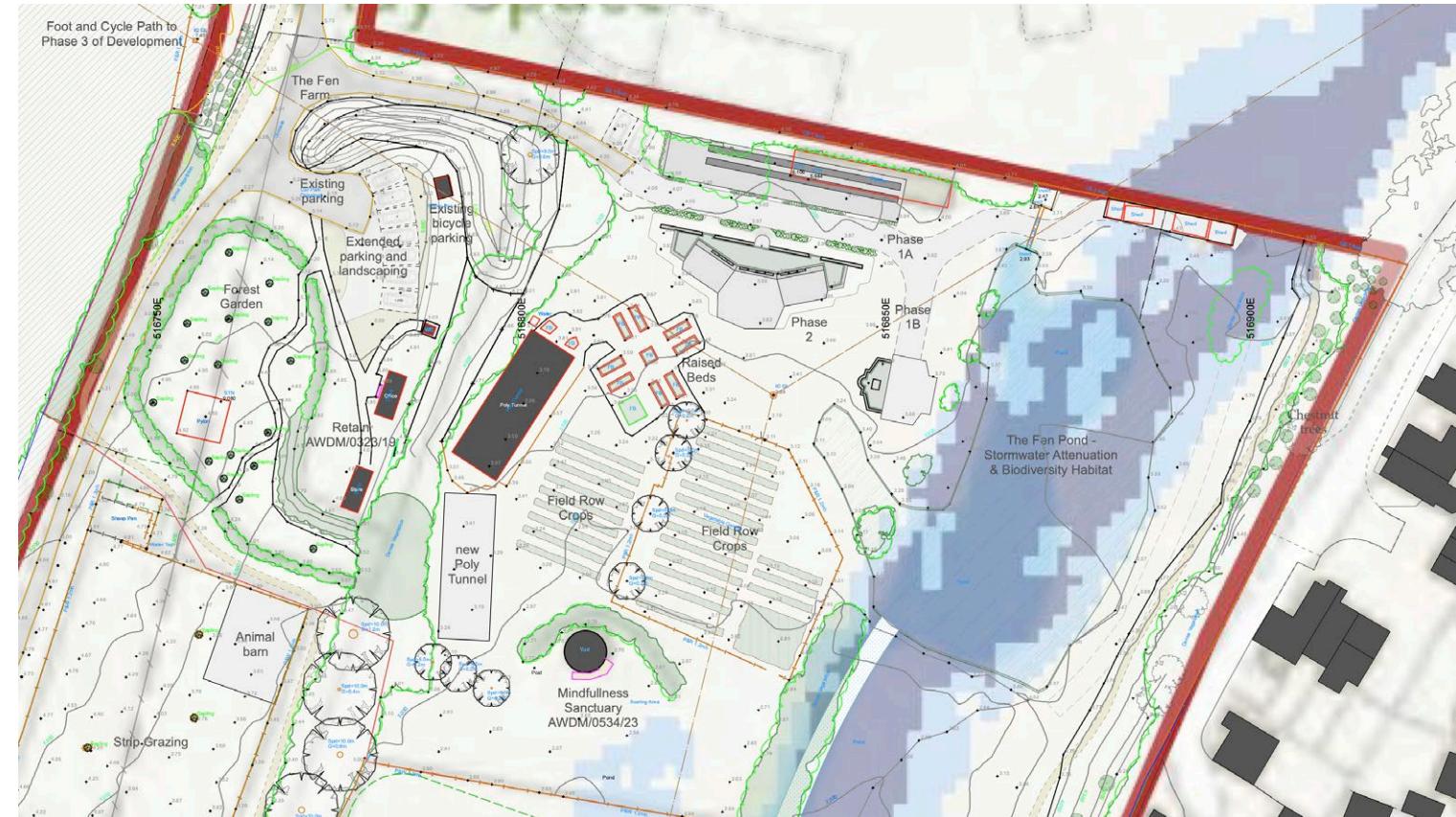
Monson Engineering Ltd have been commissioned to prepare a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to support this application. The assessment confirms that the proposed buildings are located outside the Environment Agency's Flood Zones 2 and 3, as illustrated on the accompanying plan overlaying the site layout, topographic survey, and EA Flood Map for Planning.

As Phase 1B lies in close proximity to these zones, the finished floor level will be set at least 300mm above the design flood level to ensure a suitable margin of safety against potential flooding. Any required access ramps or steps will be designed to maintain inclusive and level access to all buildings.

38

Overlay of site plan, topographical survey and Environment Agency Flood Risk Map for Planning

Your reference	Unspecified
Location (easting/northing)	516811/104609
Scale	1:2,500
Created	22 Oct 2025 11:02
Selected area	■
Flood zone 3	■
Flood zone 2	■
Flood zone 1	■
Flood defence	—
Main river	—
Water storage area	■



# HOURS OF OPENING

Due to the seasonal nature of food growing and the varied programme of activities delivered on site, operational hours naturally fluctuate throughout the year. Flexibility in opening times is essential to ensure the effective and safe running of the community farm. We therefore respectfully request that specific hours of opening are not conditioned.

The following outlines the site's typical operating hours for reference:

**Existing hours of opening:**

General farm opening to beneficiaries (sessional supported volunteering roles):  
10:00 – 16:00, Tuesday to Sunday

Early harvesting:

From 08:00 as required

**Proposed hours of opening:**

General farm opening to beneficiaries (including The Stable Block, Discovery Kitchen and The Croft, sessional supported volunteering roles):  
10:00 – 16:00, Tuesday to Sunday

Early harvesting:

From 08:00 as required

Nature Trail (Public access):

9:00 – 17:00, Monday to Sunday

Limited public opening of The Croft:

To be confirmed (anticipated Saturday or Sunday)

# CONCLUSION

This application represents a sustainable and socially valuable rural development that builds on existing investment by the community. The permanent retention of existing facilities, combined with the phased introduction of new buildings, will provide the essential infrastructure required to support the long-term operation of the Fen Farm Community Farm.

The scheme has been designed to minimise visual and environmental impact, using appropriate scale, form, and materials that reflect the rural setting while enhancing biodiversity and landscape character. It directly aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework and supports key objectives of the Adur and Worthing Local Plan, including the promotion of healthy, inclusive communities,

the strengthening of local resilience, and the delivery of sustainable rural development.

The supporting documents requested in the pre-application feedback, including a Flood Risk Assessment, Transport Statement, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment, and Ecology Report, are submitted alongside this application to ensure all relevant planning considerations are comprehensively addressed. We respectfully request that a Noise Assessment, as well as detailed specifications for the proposed solar PV panels and heat pumps, be conditioned as these elements will be dependent on available of future charity funding.

In conclusion, the proposals will enable Sustainable Sussex and its partners to secure the farm's future as a valued community asset, while contributing positively to local planning objectives, climate action commitments, and the enhancement of the wider environment.

# REFERENCES

01 Sustainable Sussex (2024) *Produce from the Fen Farm Polytunnel*.

02 Sustainable Sussex (2023) *Volunteers harvesting 20kg of fresh produce*.

03 Sustainable Sussex (2023) *All hands on deck to lay wood chip for the polytunnel*.

04 Sustainable Sussex (2025) *Volunteers building bee hives*.

05 Sustainable Sussex (2023) *Ram lamb with one of the volunteers*.

06 Sustainable Sussex (2024) *Field row crops at the Fen Farm*.

07 Sustainable Sussex (2023) *Produce from Sussex Chilli Farm at the Fen Farm*.

08 Sourced by Mike Tristam.

09 Sourced by Mike Tristam.

10 Sourced by Mike Tristam.

11 Sourced by Mike Tristam.

12 Sourced by Mike Tristam.

13 Sourced by Mike Tristam.

14 Sourced by Mike Tristam.

15 Sourced by Mike Tristam.

16 Sourced by Mike Tristam.

17 Sourced by Mike Tristam.

18 Geodime (2024) *Drone Survey*.

19 Author (2025) *Entrance gate to The Fen Farm, with new hedging planted*.

20 Author (2025) *Proposed site of project*.

21 Author (2025) *View from the east boundary of the site looking west*.

22 Author (2025) *Existing car and bicycle parking*.

23 Turley (2019) *Drawing no. 1101*.

24 Author (2025) *Shipping containers and compost loo granted under AWDM/2022/20*.

25 Author (2025) *WDM/0435/22 Bicycle Parking Spaces*.

26 Author (2025) *NOTICE/0035/22 Polytunnel*.

27 Author (2025) *AWDM/0534/23 Yurt*.

28 Author (2025) *1:500 site model*.

29 Author (2025) *Site masterplan drawing no. 372/18*.

30 Author (2023) *Drawing no. 372/07 sketch scheme submitted for pre-application*.

31 Author (2023) *Submitted site plan and section*.

32 Author (2025) *Proposed site 3D*.

33 Author (2025) *Extract of drawing no. 372/22*.

34 Author (2025) *Extract of drawing no. 372/25*.

35 Author (2025) *Extract of drawing no. 372/28*.

36 Author (2025) *Material Palette*.

37 Author (2025) *Extract of site 3D showing the materials of the three proposed buildings*.

38 Author (2025) *Overlay of site plan, topographical survey and Environment Agency Flood Risk Map for Planning*

October 2025

# The Fen Farm

## Sompting Community Farm

Planning Application

Design, Planning & Access  
Statement