



Design & Access Statement

Supporting an application for Full Planning Permission for

Headquarters buildings comprising administrative functions, marketing suite, development kitchen, hospitality suite, staff welfare, production/packaging, and warehousing and distribution facilities, together with car parking, servicing area and landscaping..

for

The Maldon Salt Crystal Company Limited

at

Oval Park, Hatfield Road, Langford Maldon Essex

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Fig 1 - Current Wycke Hill Site



Fig 2 - Maldon

1.0 Introduction.

The Maldon Crystal Salt Company is expanding its operation to keep up with demand and to retain its place in the UK's largest sea salt manufacturer infamous in the international market. Recent investment in infrastructure will see the company doubling its production capacity to keep pace with this ever-increasing demand. Once production is fully operational further investment in infrastructure such as storage, packaging and distribution will be required.

The exponential increase in demand for Maldon salt is a relatively recent phenomenon. As culinary tastes become more sophisticated, so the public is more selective about essential commodities. Since the 60's people have become more informed about wine, coffee, beer, butter and many other staples but it was not until the 90's that chefs and food writers became aware of the advantages of naturally produced salt. Naturally produced salt has a more subtle texture and flavouring than industrially produced rock salt which was regarded until recently as the only salt available.

In the 90's food writers such as Delia Smith with her TV series 'How to Cook' and Ruth Rogers, the owner of the Riverside Café, began to recognise the advantages of a more subtle salinity coupled with a softer crystalline structure. The message was taken up by Jamie Oliver who made Maldon Sea Salt Flakes his seasoning of choice in numerous TV appearances and Gwyneth Paltrow who recognised health-giving properties Maldon Salt and publicised it in America.

The enormous demand for this unique product has seen the company expand from a small saltworks in the Downs area of Maldon to an operation distributing Maldon Salt to destinations all over the world.

Maldon Salt has a unique character, taste and texture, the market for specialist artisan salts has expanded to such an extent that the company now finds itself in competition with products sourced from Hawaii, Iceland, USA, Italy and many other locations. The Maldon Salt Company therefore needs to invest in premises and plant to maintain its international competitiveness.

The production of salt must be located at a source of clear saline water which, for Maldon Salt, is the Blackwater River. Salt has been produced on the salt marshes in this area for millennia and so the Company can be seen to be part of the ancient tradition and heritage of the area.

The newly extended plant (Fig. 3) at Goldhanger Creek produces the salt for the artisan business which is currently taken to their plant at Wycke Hill Business Park for packaging and distribution.



Fig 3 - Salt Plant at Goldhanger Creek

The new headquarters will replace the Wycke Hill operation and could be located anywhere, not necessarily within the Maldon area itself.

The Maldon Salt Company is, however, a family-owned business with deep rooted historic connections to the town and the family feels that it is important for this relationship to be maintained. It reinforces the brand for the entire Company to be located within the Maldon District and to be identified with Maldon as a world-famous location for salt production.

Independence is another major factor for the identity of the brand and for this reason Maldon Salt has resisted approaches from much larger conglomerates looking to include it in their marketing offer. The creation of new high-quality headquarters is a clear statement of this independence, signalling the intention of the company to 'go it alone' and providing the means by which it can retain its global profile, whilst residing in the town of Maldon.



Fig 4 - Salt Extraction of the Past



Fig 5 - Salt Extraction at Goldhanger Creek



Fig 6 - Oval Park Location

2.0 Strategic Location.

Having established the importance of remaining in the Maldon District it was necessary for the company to identify a suitable site. The nature of the site itself is a major consideration because although, packaging and distribution are necessary functions, the site will also need to be able to promote the product via networking and hospitality for which an attractive environment and a readily accessible location are important.

The headquarters will also be the administrative centre for the general running of the company, and a suitable working environment must be provided for staff at every level. The accessibility of a site is a factor for staff welfare as is the availability of sufficient space for the building to accommodate all the necessary facilities.

An extensive review of available sites in the Maldon area proved to be fruitless until the opportunity at Oval Park was brought to the Company's attention by the Maldon District Council Economic Development Team.

Oval Park is very well-located both for access from the Company's salt pans in Goldhanger and Maldon and for access to the A12/A14 corridor, the main arterial route to London, Thames Haven, Felixstowe, and the Midlands. The mainline station at Hatfield Peverel is 35 miles, 40 minutes, from London Liverpool Street.

Oval Park is also a short drive from Maldon town centre and is recognisably part of Maldon itself.

For these reasons the Maldon Salt Company has decided to relocate its administrative and production centre to Oval Park.



Fig 7 - Ground View of Oval Park



Fig 8 - Aerial Shot of Oval Park

3.0 Oval Park.

Oval Park, previously the Langford Waterworks, is a 30-acre brownfield site now designated for employment use in the Maldon Local Plan. CML Microsystems was established there in 1999 and occupies a 60,000 sq. ft. research and development facility for microprocessors in the communications industry.

In May 2020, a planning application was submitted by CML Microsystems in partnership with local developer Aquila for 7100 sq. m. of commercial space and 60 residential units. The intention of this application was to enable the development of a site constrained by relatively high infrastructure costs. This application has recently been withdrawn.

The site provides a spacious open parkland setting with level topography and mature planting, ideal for high quality employment. Such a setting demands an attractive landmark building and this accords with the Maldon Salt Company's own aspirations for their headquarters here.

The brief for the new building has been, therefore, to produce a design for a building which can combine arrangement of commercial activities and enhance an area designated for employment.

The following Sections of this document examine the product itself and describe how the Brief for the global headquarters building evolved, finally the massing and design principles of the building are illustrated.

4.0 Sea Salt Flakes.

To arrive at a brief for the new headquarters building it was necessary for the designers to be aware of the process of producing and packaging sea salt flakes.

Sea salt flakes are naturally produced by gently heating sea water in large salt pans. As the sea water evaporates the salt forms into pyramid shaped crystals on the surface which then sink to the bottom of the pan. The crystals can then be gently harvested and extracted from the sea water and dried. Once dry, the crystals, are transferred in to large IBC bags for transportation.

This is a very simplified overview of the process as the sea water needs to be filtered before it is transferred to the salt pans and there is considerable skill in judging at what point the crystals can be harvested. The essence of the process, however, is that the crystals occur naturally. Salt has been produced by similar traditional methods since Roman times on the salt marshes around Maldon.

The Maldon Salt Company carries out this process at its premises in Goldhanger and Maldon using water from the Blackwater River. Once harvested, the salt is taken to their premises at Wycke Hill, where it is stored in a warehouse before being checked and packaged by high-capacity specialised machinery. The packages are stacked onto standard-sized pallets and transferred back into the warehouse. The pallets are then distributed by lorry to destinations all over the country and to its global markets.

The brief for the new building is to incorporate this process into an efficient layout which enables a smooth flow of the product from arrival to distribution.

In parallel with this, the new headquarters must accommodate a series of related functions to administer the operation of the company and to retain the profile of Maldon Salt in competition with other producers world-wide.



Fig 9 - Salt Extraction



Fig 10 - Typical Racking



Fig 11 - Packaging Machinery



Fig 12 - Delivery/Collection

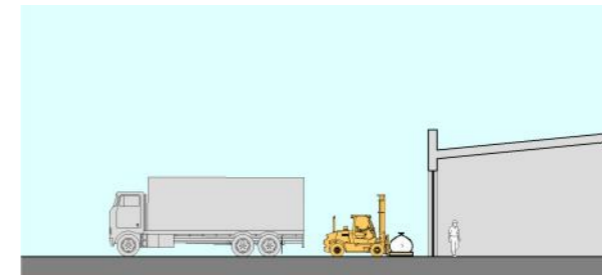
5.0 The Brief.

When considering the requirements of the new headquarters building the design team identified 4 discrete functions:

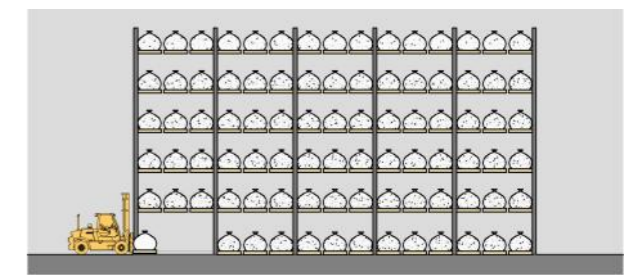
- Salt Processing, Packaging, Collection and Delivery
- Welfare and Canteen Facilities for Warehouse/Packaging Staff
- Administration and Marketing
- Hospitality and Promotion

5.1 Salt Processing, Packaging, Collection and Delivery.

The production element of the new headquarters building is straightforward, reflecting the simple honesty of the product itself.



Salt flakes are delivered in large bags from the salt pans at the Goldhanger premises.



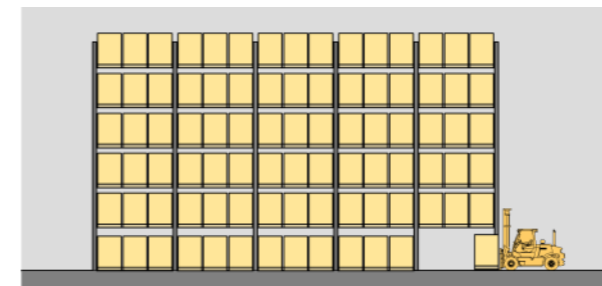
The bags are stored in part of the warehouse.



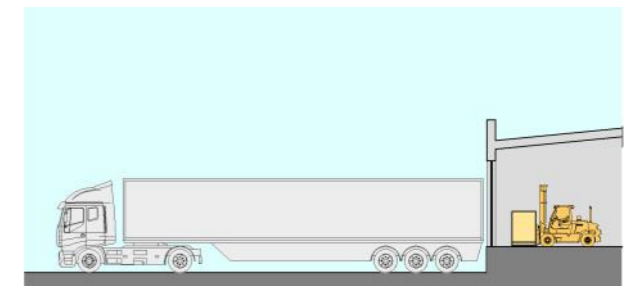
The salt is passed through a monitoring machine which checks for impurities.



The pure sea salt flakes are packaged, and the packages stacked onto pallets.



The pallets are returned to another section of the warehouse.

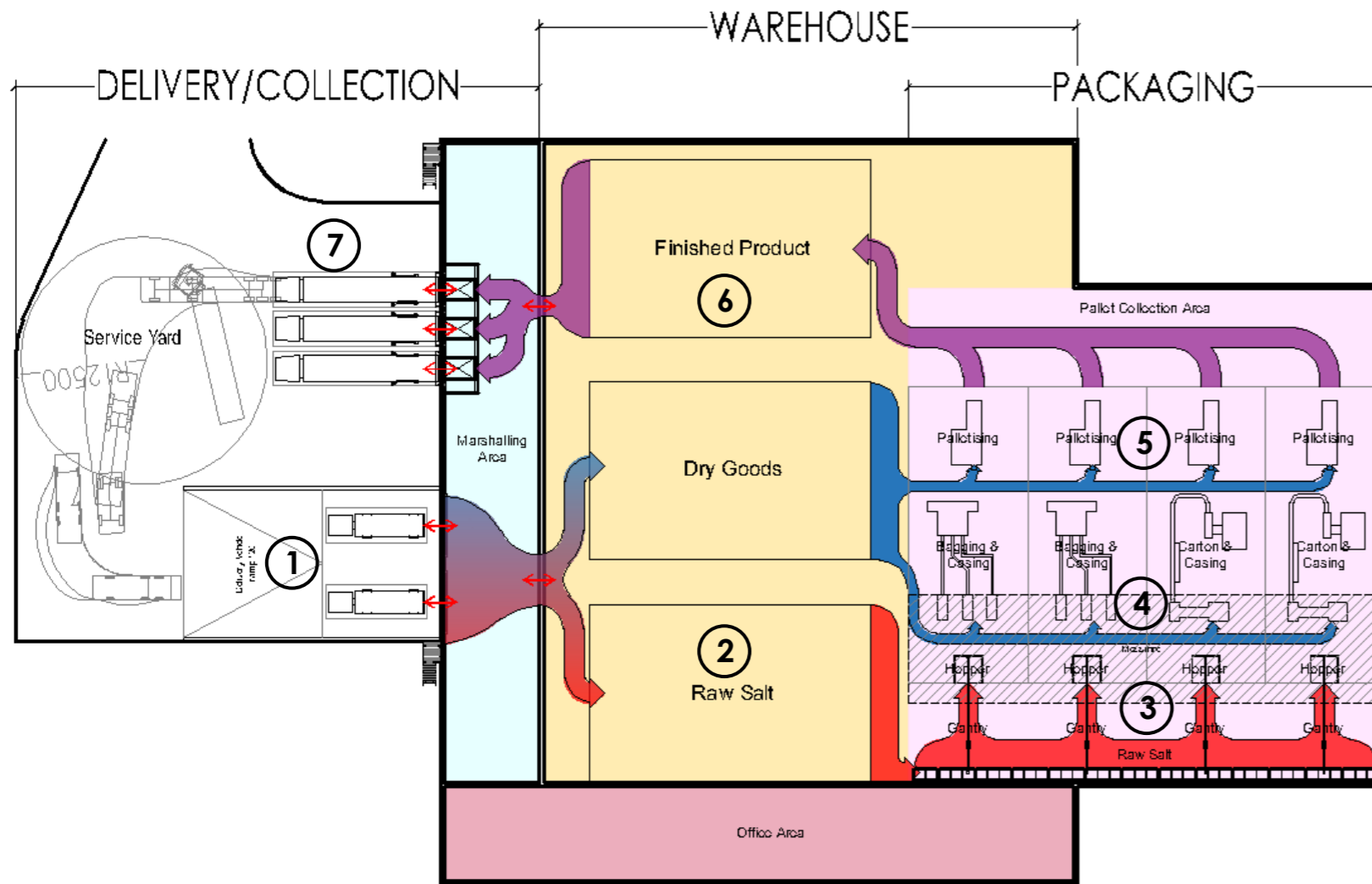


The pallets are collected for distribution worldwide.

Fig 13 - Processing, packing, collection & delivery

The warehouse is to be a simple structure which contains the bags of salt, materials for packaging and the finished product in packets stacked in pallets ready for collection.

Fig. 14. shows the crossflow format of the storage area and the progress of the salt through quality control, packaging, palletising and collection as illustrated in Fig. 13.



1. The salt is delivered from the salt pans at Goldhanger and Maldon.
2. The salt is stored prior to packaging.
3. The salt is transferred to the packaging area which, again is to be a simple structure containing highly specialised machinery.
4. The salt is monitored for purity and becomes finished product.
5. The finished product is packaged and palletised by specialist machinery.
6. Pallets are stored ready for delivery.
7. Pallets are loaded in batches for specific customers and delivered by HGV lorries.

Compliance Issues

As a foodstuff, all areas connected with the storage and processing of salt must conform to the hygiene standards set by the Brand Reputation Compliance Global Standards (BRCGS).

Vehicle access for delivery and collection must comply with the standards set by the Freight Transport Association Guide 'Design for Deliveries'.

Fig 14 - Flow Diagram



Fig 15 - Staff Canteen for illustrative purposes only



Fig 16 - Locker Room for illustrative purposes only



Fig 17 - Break Out Area for illustrative purposes only



Fig 18 - WC/Washroom for illustrative purposes only

5.2 Staff Accommodation for Warehousing and Packaging.

Staff welfare and the hygiene standards which apply to the production of foodstuffs demand highly serviced staff accommodation which must include:

- Staff changing facilities
- Lockers for clothes storage
- Showers
- Staff Room/break out area with coffee point and food prep
- Staff/change facilities for disabled staff
- Warehouse Manager's office

Both warehouse and processing/packaging areas must be controlled environments to ensure that salt is stored in compliance with stringent regulatory standards demand a 'clean room' level of hygiene. For these reasons access from the staff welfare area is strictly controlled to maintain the correct air quality and staff must always wear protective clothing and equipment.

The Maldon Salt Company enjoys excellent staff morale and motivation, and the accommodation provided to both production staff and administrative staff will reflect this.

Placed on the Ground Floor, easy access is provided into the production area from the staff welfare area which will accommodate staff changing facilities, lockers, and showers. Staff will be encouraged to use the break-out and on-site canteen facilities which will be well-equipped and pleasant areas for relaxation. The canteen is located where staff can enjoy a view of the landscaped areas which surround the building.



Fig 19 - Break Out Area for illustrative purposes



Fig 20 - General Office for illustrative purposes only

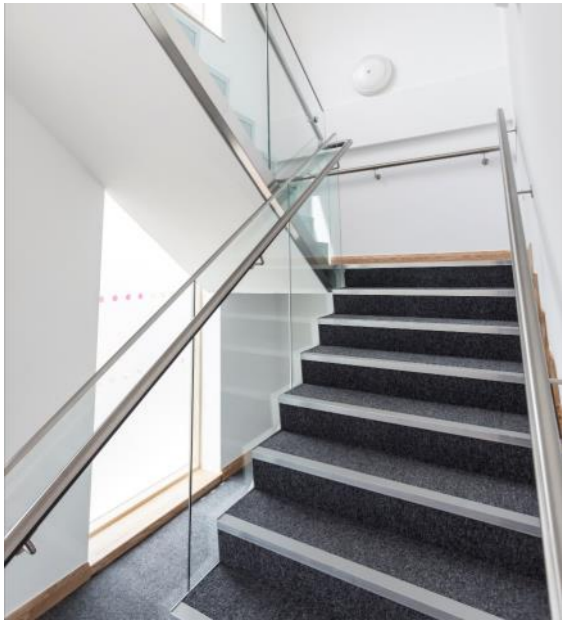


Fig 21 - Stair for illustrative purposes only



Fig 22 - Boardroom for illustrative purposes only



Fig 23 - General Office for illustrative purposes only

5.3 Administration and Marketing.

Administration and promotion of the Maldon Salt Company will take place at Oval Park which will require:

- Marketing Suite – operated in conjunction with the hospitality accommodation
- Executive suite with boardroom
- General administrative office accommodation
- Accounts department

The office areas will be highly serviced open plan accommodation with views across the landscaped Park.

As a family-run business, strategic decisions are made by the family itself and staff representatives. This requires regular board meetings which take place in the Boardroom located at the general office.

The company employs a marketing team to reach international markets and to reinforce the brand both at home and abroad. The new headquarters will be the focal point of this initiative and within the building itself a marketing suite will be dedicated to promotional activities working alongside the hospitality suite.



Fig 24 - Roof garden for illustrative purposes only

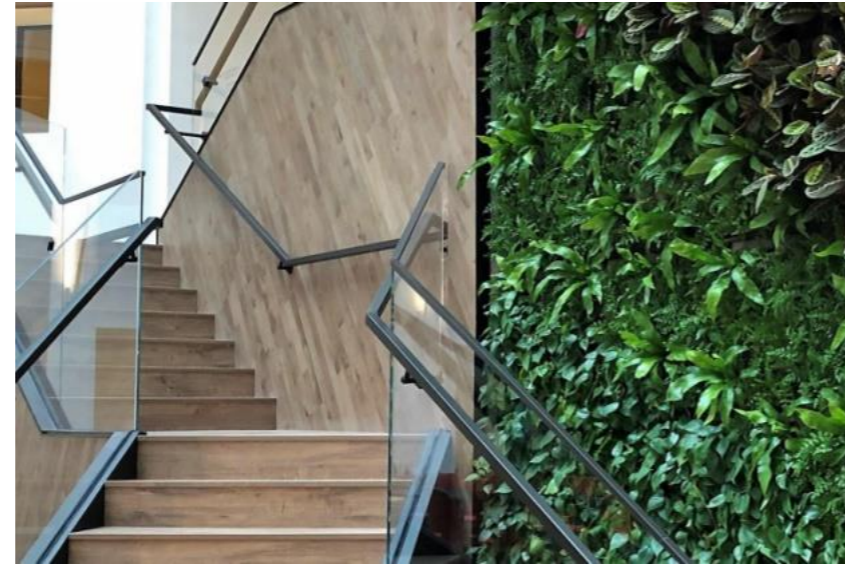


Fig 25 - Main stair for illustrative purposes only



Fig 26 - Kitchen for illustrative purposes only



Fig 27 - Living wall atrium for illustrative purposes only



Fig 28 - Development kitchen for illustrative purposes only

5.4 Hospitality and Promotion.

The new building is to be the focal point of all the Maldon Salt Company's activities and as such will be used to promote the brand to customers world-wide. One aspect of this promotion will be to invite visitors to Oval Park to view salt production and demonstrations of how sea salt flakes can enhance the flavour of a range of dishes.

Hospitality is therefore an important function and the brief is to include:

- A large reception area
- Development kitchen for demonstrations
- Hospitality suite with food prep area

The reception area should be large enough to allow groups of visitors to assemble before being given a tour of the facility. The demonstration kitchen is strategically placed adjacent to the main collection point to allow visitors a glimpse of food preparation before the tour.

The reception area will be a light, airy double-height space and so as to emphasise that sea salt flakes are a simple natural product, a living wall with a variety of natural vegetation will rise to the full height of the atrium and extend into the hospitality suite.

At the completion of the tour, visitors will be able to sample various dishes in the hospitality suite which includes a small food preparation area. Dishes can be brought up in the lift from the demonstration kitchen and set out in the food preparation area before being served in the suite itself.

The living wall will provide a backdrop to the hospitality suite and the suite itself will open out on to a rooftop garden. As the countryside around Oval Park is relatively level the garden will afford visitors a view which will extend across to Maldon and possibly to the sea beyond.

When the hospitality suite is not being used for promotion, it can also be used for staff social occasions which will reinforce the company's policy of encouraging a positive working atmosphere.

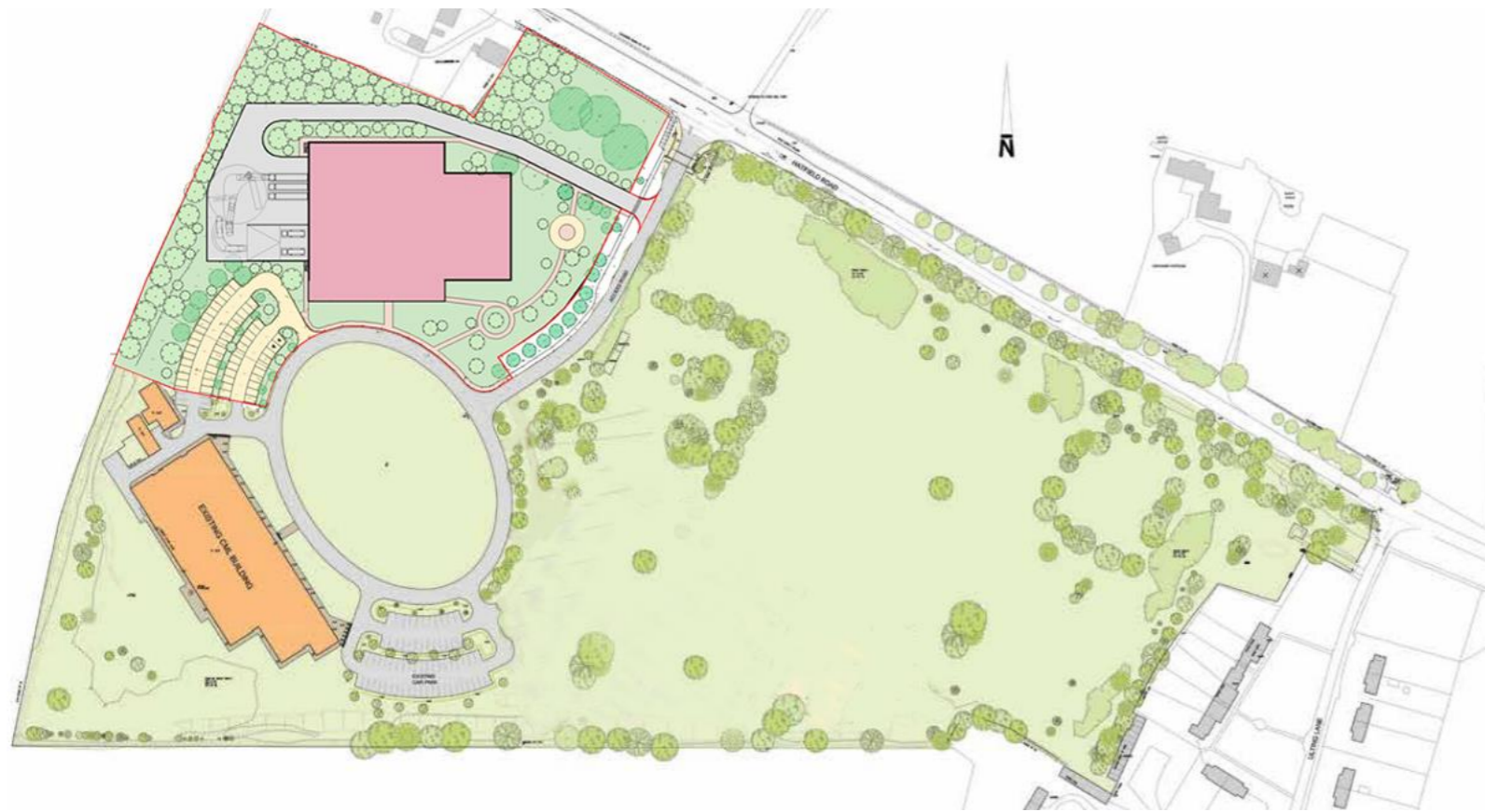


Fig 29 - Proposed Oval Park Site Plan



Fig 30 - Beavis Hall Location



Fig 31 - Landscaping for illustrative purposes only

6.0 The Site and Site-Wide Considerations

The site proposed for the new headquarters is 2.2 Ha, 5.5 acres with level topography and mature trees and vegetation to the North and West boundaries. The East and South boundaries face the main access and circulation roads within the site.

A Listed building to the North of the site, Beavis Hall, is screened by mature trees and will be sensitive to noise and light pollution. Similarly, the employment area to the South and East provides a context which is sensitive to the appearance of the proposed building and will require high quality elevations.

Car parking for 54 cars is provided within the site and the intention is to retain this car parking to serve the new building.

The site available 2.2 Ha, 5.5 acres which allows sufficient space for the following:

- Access roads and Service Yard to enable delivery and collection of salt in accordance with the Freight Transport Association recommendations (see Salt Processing Collection and Delivery above)
- Car parking for 54 cars – the intention is to retain the existing car parking which will be sufficient for staff and visitors
- Retention of mature trees and vegetation to the boundaries so as to preserve the screening that these provide
- Generous areas of new planting to enhance the setting of the new building

Site-Wide Considerations

Sustainability and BREEAM

A BREEAM Pre-Assessment has been completed for the building and the intention is to achieve a 'very good' rating by including the following in the design:

- The design incorporates a 'fabric first' approach to sustainability. This means we have prioritised reduction of energy demand before considering renewable energy technology. Therefore we start with energy saving measures that can be built-in to the building fabric.
- The walls incorporate high levels of insulation to retain heat and will be detailed for high levels of airtightness to prevent unwanted heat loss.

6.0 The Site and Site-Wide Considerations

Site-Wide Considerations

Sustainability and BREEAM Continued

- Heating and cooling will be provided by heat pumps which are backed-up by heat recovery ventilation to further reduce overall energy consumption.
- The building will feature significant solar arrays at roof level .

Landscape Strategy

A landscape strategy has been applied to the site as a whole which essentially comprises 3 strands:

- The retention of screening around the site periphery.
- The creation of additional screening around the site periphery.
- The creation of additional screening, particularly South of Beavis Hall.
- The creation of a 'Linear Arboretum' of high quality specimen trees lining the new and existing access roads. The new tree planting will feature evergreen and coniferous trees to reinforce and enhance the established parkland-like character of the site.

External Lighting

A sensitive lighting design will be produced to minimise adverse impact of light pollution of wildlife, tree canopy cover and the landscape.

The design will implement the following considerations:

- Minimum levels of exterior lighting will be used, along with full cut-off lighting and LED directional light to control spillage and conserve dark skies.
- The design will take into account light spillage onto adjacent areas in order to limit the night-time effect on the open landscape.

7.0 Proposals for the New Headquarters.

7.1 Site Layout.

In response to the brief (Section 5.0) the proposals for the new headquarters take into account the following:

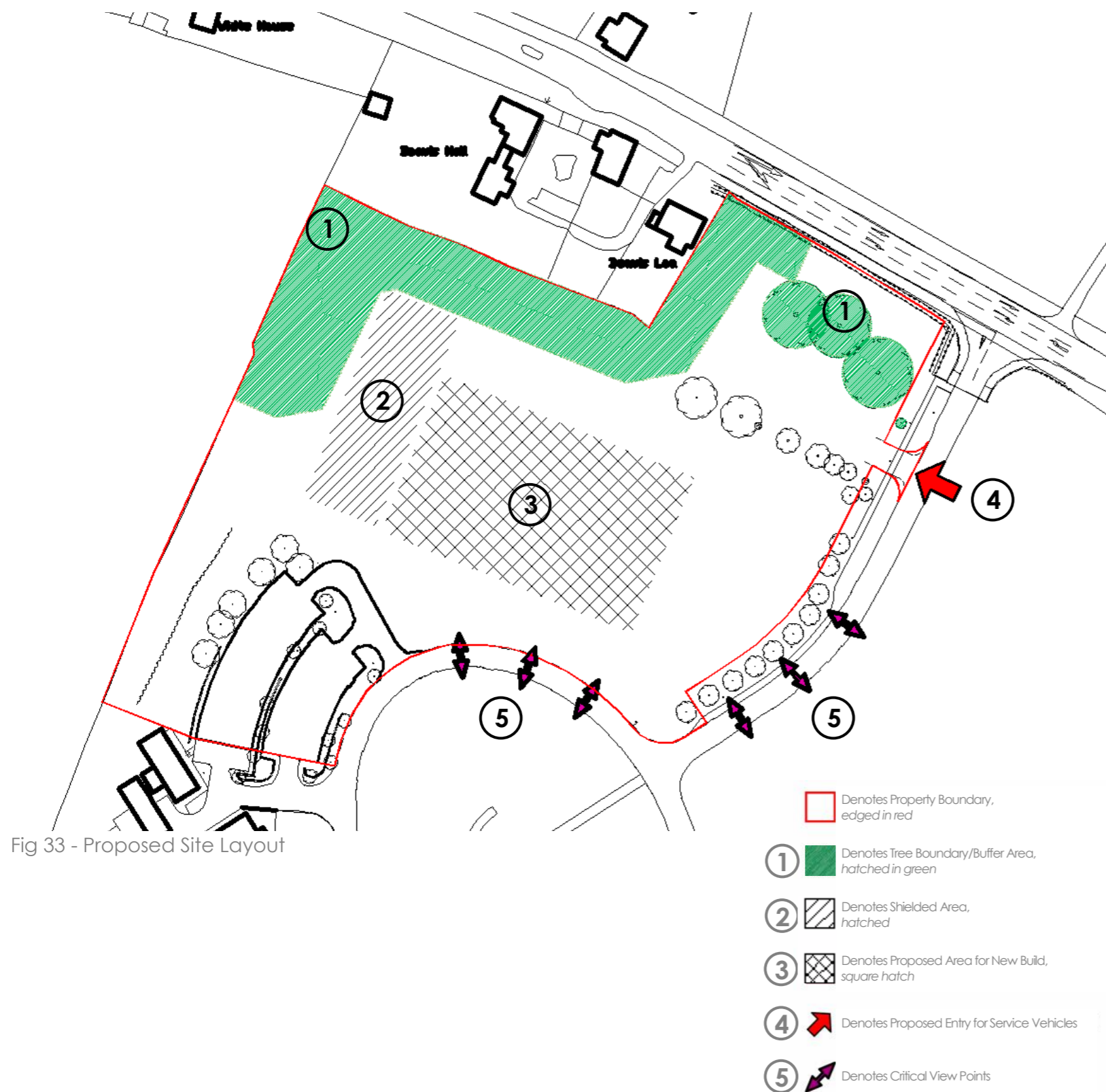
- The service yard should be placed where noise and disturbance can be controlled
- Access road and service yard are to comply with the recommendations of the Freight Transport Association
- External lighting to the service yard to be designed to avoid light pollution
- The height of the warehouse should be restricted to the minimum necessary to operate satisfactorily
- The packaging area should also be restricted to a minimal working height
- Elevations to the South and East should be high quality materials with areas of glazing to present lively and attractive elevations to the Business Park
- Elevations to the North and West can be more utilitarian but should be of good quality industrial materials

The Northern area of the site is heavily wooded with mature trees and vegetation which will provide visual screening from Beavis Hall and the open field to the West. The service yard itself will be set down from the floor level of the warehouse to enable level loading at the docks. This will assist with control of noise from the yard and acoustic fencing placed along the boundary of the service yard will protect the neighbouring buildings to the North.

For these reasons, the service yard is to be located in the North West area of the site where it can be screened from the North and West boundaries.

The flow of the product through the building outlined in Section 5 determines the layout of the warehouse and the packaging area. The floor area allocated to both functions allows sufficient flexibility to accommodate the necessary growth of the company and the likely fluctuations in the market for sea salt flakes.

The East and South elevations face Oval Park itself and should be attractive and vibrant. Administration, hospitality, and warehouse staff accommodation can provide suitably high-quality elevations and therefore this accommodation is placed where it will face into the Park. Similarly, the requirements of the Brand Reputation Compliance Global Standards (BRCGS) are such that very specialised machinery is required the majority of which is stainless steel making for an aesthetically stimulating environment. For this reason, the proposal is to glaze the elevation of the packaging area which faces the access road into the Park so that this machinery can be viewed by visitors to the Park.



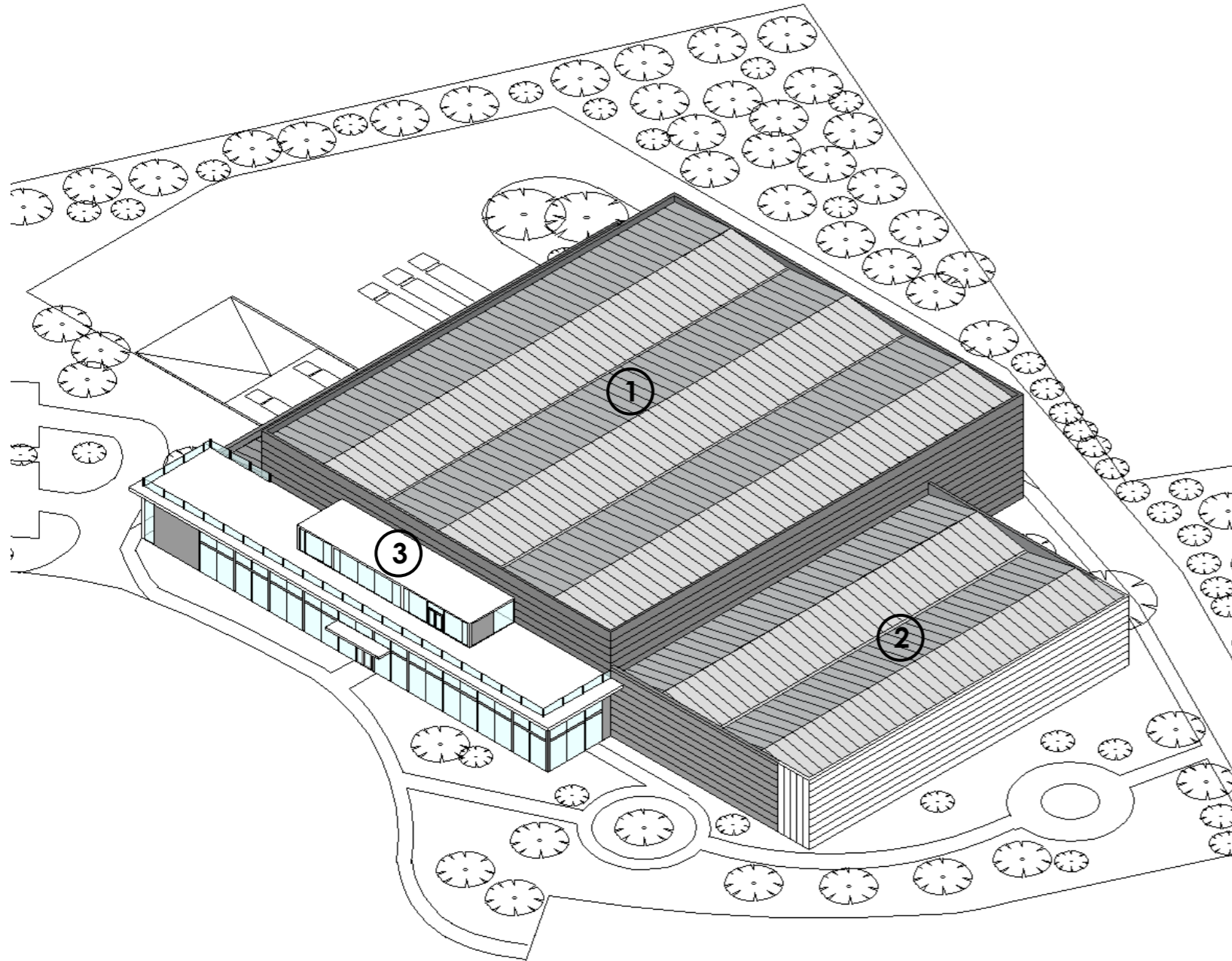


Fig 34 - 3D Proposal

7.2 Massing.

The various functions taking place within the building allow for a varied massing with a series of contrasting volumes contributing to the building's visual interest.

The straightforward function of each of the primary elements can be clearly expressed both in terms of the massing of the building and elevational treatment.

1. The dominant element of the composition is the warehouse itself which requires an eaves height of 14 metres and a floor area of 2,692 sq. m. to provide sufficient storage capacity for bulk salt, finished product and packaging materials.
2. Secondary to the warehouse is the packaging building which requires an extensive floor area similar to that of the warehouse but with a lower eaves height as the machinery itself is unlikely to exceed 4 metres.
3. Accommodation for administration, hospitality and warehouse staff is more conventional and can be limited to a two-storey building arranged to obscure the more utilitarian warehouse and packaging volumes when viewed from Oval Park itself.



Fig 35 - for illustrative purposes only



Fig 36 - for illustrative purposes only



Fig 37 - Proposed Section of Lobby/Reception



Fig 38 - Living Wall Illustration

7.3 Elevations.

The warehouse is essentially industrial and good-quality profiled-metal cladding with careful detailing and choice of colour will produce a volume which is not overly dominant visually.

With a similar external treatment, a lower eaves height and more compact floor plan will allow the packaging building to recede visually.

The administration building will accommodate the various departments necessary for a global operation and will provide light, airy spaces well-serviced for environmental and communal well-being.

Warehouse staff accommodation will include all the necessary serviced spaces for staff changing and welfare facilities. The staff canteen will look out over Oval Park which will benefit staff and add visual interest to the elevation.

The headquarters building is to act as a focus for promotion of the product and the hospitality aspect of the operation, provides the opportunity for considerable visual interest. Central to the main elevation will be a large atrium which will extend to the full height of the building and featuring a 'living wall'. The atrium will be used both for reception and as a gathering place for visitors to tour the building.

Visible from the atrium and from the Park, the development kitchen will demonstrate how sea salt flakes can enhance various dishes and will be used both for developing recipes and as a promotional tool for visitors.

The development kitchen will add activity and visual interest to the building.



Fig 39 - Cladding for illustration only



Fig 40 - Curtain wall for illustration only



Fig 41 - Cladding for illustration only



Fig 42 - Cladding for Illustration only



Fig 43 - Living wall cladding for Illustration only



Fig 44 - Cladding for illustration only

7.4 Materials.

The warehouse and packaging area will be the dominant mass of the building and for this reason a simple and visually lightweight cladding material will be appropriate. Illustrated are flat-plane cladding panels in a neutral colour with expressed joints and matching trims although contrasting trim may add interest (Fig. 39 & 41)

Curtain walling will provide glazing to the packaging area with well-proportioned glazing panels and lightly body-tinted, low emissivity glass. (Fig. 40)

Cladding materials for the administration building should be consistent along the length of the building and yet allow sufficient flexibility to clad both office accommodation and welfare accommodation. A system which creates a harmonious balance of glazed and solid panels will create a restful and attractive façade to Oval Park Fig. 42, 43 & 44)



Fig 45- Atrium for illustration only



Fig 46 - Roof top hospitality for illustration only



Fig 47 - Atrium for illustration only



Fig 48 - Loading Area for illustration only



Fig 49 - Loading Area for illustration only

The reception atrium can be glazed in curtain walling as for the packaging area which will allow the clear internal volume to be seen from the Park. The atrium will include a vertical living wall which will extend vertically into the hospitality suite. (Figs. 45, 46, and 47).

The loading bay will comprise a series of standard loading bay dock levellers and doors. (Fig. 48 & 49)



Fig 51 - Steve Osborne checking the water quality

8.0 Summary.

Oval Park is allocated for employment use in the Local Plan and as such will accommodate a range of building types including offices, specialist production, storage, and distribution. The Park is a high-quality environment, and each developed plot will be expected to respect the setting that it will provide for these activities.

The intention of this document has been to demonstrate that Oval Park is a 'perfect fit' for the new headquarters of a company which gives the town of Maldon global recognition for a unique product which is universally well-regarded.

9.0 Supporting Documentation

As the provision of replacement car parking is part of an overall strategy for Oval Park, the site-wide reports and surveys commissioned to support the planning application for the car park.

- This Design and Access Statement prepared by Barefoot & Gilles Architects
- Air Quality Impact Assessment prepared by Transport Planning Associates
- Archaeological Desk Based Assessment by RPS Group.
- Assessment of Noise Impact prepared by Sharps Acoustics.
- Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategy prepared by Cannon Consulting.
- Health Impact Assessment prepared by JTS Partnership.
- Heritage Statement prepared by Turley Heritage Consultants.
- Land Contamination & Ground Investigation Desk Study Report by GEA Ltd.
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment prepared by David Jarvis Associates.
- Planning Statement/Economic Statement/Statement of Community Involvement prepared by JTS Partnership.
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal prepared by Abrehart Ecology and Supported by:
 - Aerial Inspection for Roosting Bats
 - Badger Survey Report
 - Badger Survey Report Bait Marking
 - Biodiversity Compensation & Enhancement Strategy for Protected Priority Species
 - Botanical Survey Report
 - Dormouse Survey Report
 - Great Crested Newt Survey Report
 - Nightingale Survey Report
 - Reptile Survey Report
 - Reptile Mitigation Strategy
- Transport Statement with Draft Travel Plan prepared by TPA
- Tree Report and Arboricultural Assessment prepared by Haydens.
- BREEAM Pre-Assessment prepared by GWPS Associates.