



## *Welcome and introduction.*

Welcome to our consultation event outlining the exciting proposals for the transformation of the Rayners Estate. Thank you very much for taking the time to attend.

The Rayners Estate was purchased by a local family in 2021 who have lived in the village for over 25 years. Since then they have been considering proposals to revive the estate.

We are preparing a planning and listed building consent application to submit to Buckinghamshire Council for the conversion of the former Penn School into a prestigious luxury hotel, with fine dining restaurant, bistro, cookery school and wellness spa, known as 'Rayners Penn'.

This consultation follows earlier pre-application discussions with Buckinghamshire Council officers, sets out our emerging plans, and most importantly, seeks your feedback.

We hope you find the event useful and informative. There are members of the project team here to help so please do not hesitate to ask if you have any questions.

*“We aspire to create a world class experience and provide exceptional service for all our guests at Rayners Penn by offering a welcoming atmosphere that makes guests feel at home, and delivering personalised attention to every detail of their stay.*

*Our commitment to excellence will be in every aspect of our operations, from comfortable and stylish rooms to amazing cuisine and quality amenities creating an environment where every guest feels valued and respected, and where they can relax, unwind and enjoy an exceptional experience. In delivering this, we will aim to embed sustainability at the heart of everything we do.”*

Rayners Penn Ltd





# RAYNERS ESTATE, PENN

# CONSULTATION EVENT

## *Background.*

### **The Site**

The site has a longstanding history with the original building (Rayners House) being built in three main phases between 1847 and 1868 as a country estate for Sir Philip Rose, the solicitor to Benjamin Disraeli (1st Earl of Beaconsfield and former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom).

In 1920 the original estate was divided with Rayners House and associated buildings to the north of the original estate sold to the London County Council for use as a school for deaf children.

The estate remained in educational use under a range of ownerships until 2015. It was subsequently considered and rejected as the location for a secondary school. The site has remained vacant since 2015 and the existing buildings have fallen into a poor state of disrepair.



*Historic images of the site*



### **Planning Considerations**

Rayners Penn Ltd is committed to working with the local authority and community to develop its plans.

The whole site is within Buckinghamshire Council and covered by the following designations:

- Green Belt;
- Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
- Penn and Tylers Green Conservation Area;
- Green Infrastructure Area.

In August 2020, Rayners House, Rayners Lodge, The Gardener's Bothy and trellis arches to its east and the Obelisk commemorating Benjamin Disraeli and Queen Victoria's visit to Rayners were Grade II listed.

There is also a blanket Tree Preservation Order across the site.

The rich history and planning considerations have been key to developing the emerging proposals for the site.





## *The emerging scheme.*

We are seeking to transform the former School into 'Rayners Penn', a new prestigious luxury hotel in the heart of Buckinghamshire. We intend to return the Victorian buildings to their former glory with a viable and sympathetic use through offering considerable investment to reverse deterioration and restore the dilapidated listed buildings.

We treasure the outstanding beauty of the Rayners Estate and Penn village. The design of the scheme, in tandem with extensive garden enhancement works across the Rayners Estate, strives to preserve and enhance the historic character and landscape of the area.

### **The proposed scheme includes:**

- Restoration and conversion of Rayners House into a hotel;
- Refurbishment of Rayners Lodge to restore it to a Gatehouse for housing security and administrative support;
- Demolition of 1960s school buildings, replacing them with a fine-dining restaurant and cookery school, to recreate a new setting for Rayners House;
- Demolition of the former 1960s Headmaster's House;
- Construction of a single storey Wellness Spa incorporating the existing former agricultural buildings;
- Re-forming the Boating Lake, restoring the existing island Pavilion and adding a new boathouse as the centrepiece for the historic 'Pleasure Gardens' which are being re-created;
- Conversion of the former Coach House and Stables into a bistro;
- Restoration of the Gardener's Bothy, re-creation of an Orangery and restoration of the greenhouses;
- Restoration of the Screen Arches, Kitchen Garden and Walled Garden, as well as a new 'Parterre for Rayners House';
- New Church Cottages to replace the redundant Water Works building and restoration of Church Walk;
- New Garden Suites to complete the Walled Garden;
- New service access drive off Hammersley Lane with a screened delivery area where goods will be transferred to on-site electric carts;
- New circular entrance drive to Rayners House and new landscaped car parks;
- The historic gate piers are to be reinstated and the adjacent sections of the boundary wall are to be repositioned slightly to improve visibility and traffic safety.



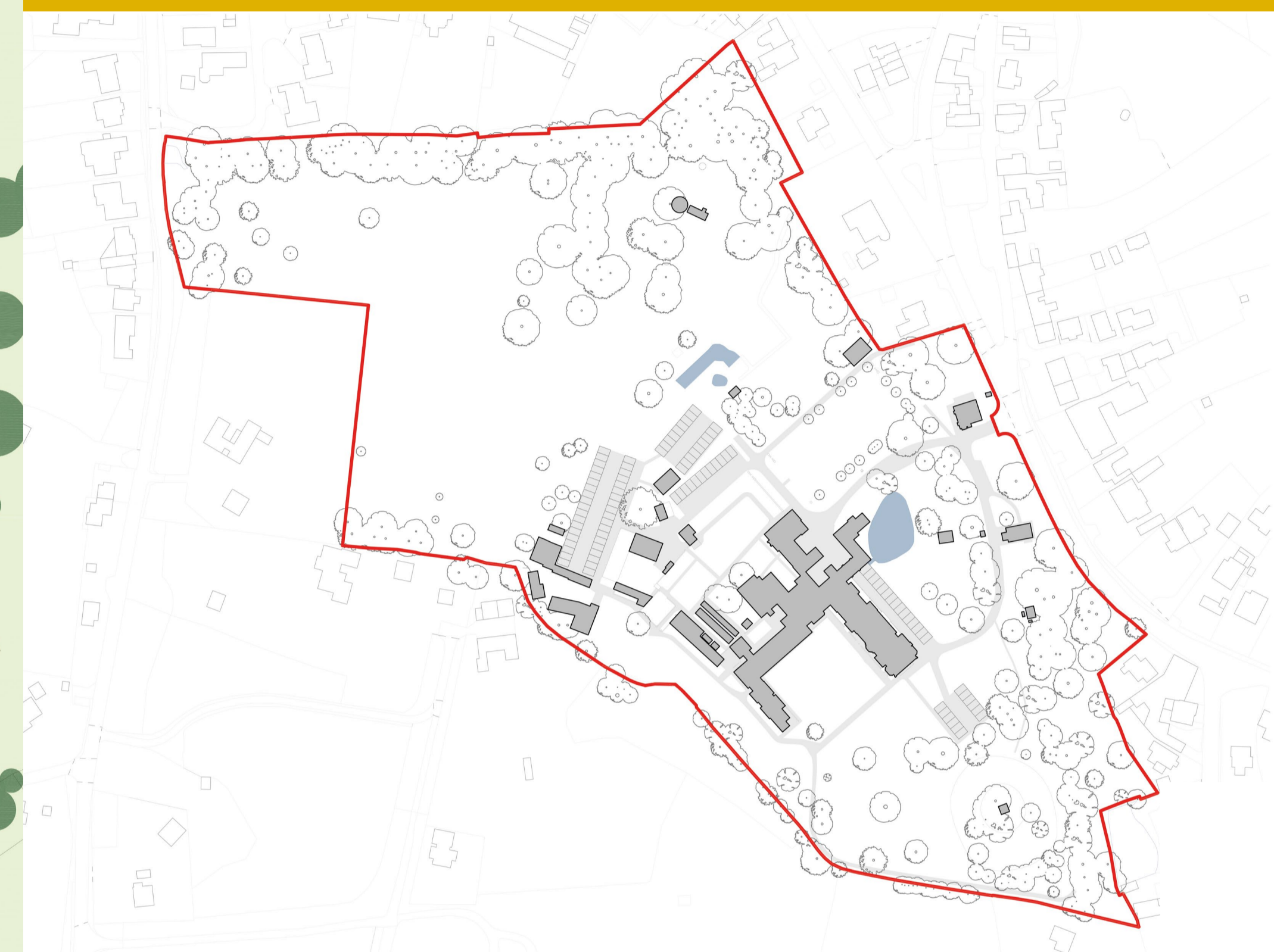
*Emerging masterplan.*



*The masterplan presents our emerging overarching concept and vision for the transformation of the Rayners Estate.*



*Existing site plan (below)*



**Key for the proposed masterplan (left):**

-  Site boundary
-  1 Main entrance and Rayners Lodge
-  2 Rayners House
-  3 Proposed wellness spa and garden suites
-  4 Proposed landscaped car park
-  5 Proposed secondary access and deliveries hub
-  6 Proposed church cottages
-  7 Restored boating lake
-  8 Restored landscape and gardens



# RAYNERS ESTATE, PENN

# CONSULTATION EVENT

## *Elevations.*



*North Elevation, as proposed*



*South Elevation, as proposed*



*North Elevation, as existing*



*South Elevation, as existing*





## *Heritage.*

Heritage is at the heart of the proposals with restoration and adaptation works proposed to the listed buildings in the Rayners Estate to preserve and enhance their heritage values.

### **Rayners House**

We seek to transform the Rayners House, which was built in about 1847 as a country house for Sir Philip Rose, into the main building of the hotel. Comprehensive refurbishment to the House incorporating traditional materials and craftsmanship will be employed to restore the dilapidated House and reverse the negative alterations and damage imposed during its use as a school.

We intend to replace the existing 1960s school buildings, which are incompatible with the architectural style of the House, with a sympathetic and carefully designed extension to the southwestern side of the House to accommodate the fine dining restaurant, cookery school and kitchen. The proposed layouts would see restoration of all of the primary receptions rooms in the House and a return of the first and second floors to bedrooms with en-suites. The proposals follow a thorough assessment of the heritage value and sensitivities of the building which results in avoidance of major interventions.



### **Rayners Lodge**

Rayners Lodge is the gate lodge to the main house. We propose to restore and repurpose it for security control and administrative support for the Rayners Estate, which will sustain the Lodge's original function and design intention.



### **Obelisk commemorating Benjamin Disraeli**

The obelisk in recognition of the friendship between Rose and Disraeli sits on the main driveway of the Rayners Estate. It will be retained to honour the friendship between the two and the visit of Queen Victoria to Rayners so as to respect the history of the estate with improved surrounding hard landscaping.

Heritage consultants were appointed early in the design process to guide and provide advice on the emerging proposals. We have been in discussion with the Heritage Officer at Buckinghamshire Council with a view to deliver a scheme that respects and enhances the unique historic character of the Rayners Estate.

### **The Gardeners' Bothy and trellis arches to its east**

The picturesque and characterful Gardener's Bothy and trellis arches postdate the House and form key elements of its garden. The proposal seeks to convert the Bothy into a hotel suite, which is sympathetic to its domestic origins, in a way that respects its picturesque charm.

We would like to restore the brick trellis arches with the relocation of the collapsed north eastern arch with a view to maintain its historic alignment and enable a discrete and sympathetic new car park access road that would avoid greater impacts if located elsewhere.





## *Landscape and ecology.*

Substantial landscape works are proposed to enhance the natural beauty of the Rayners Estate.

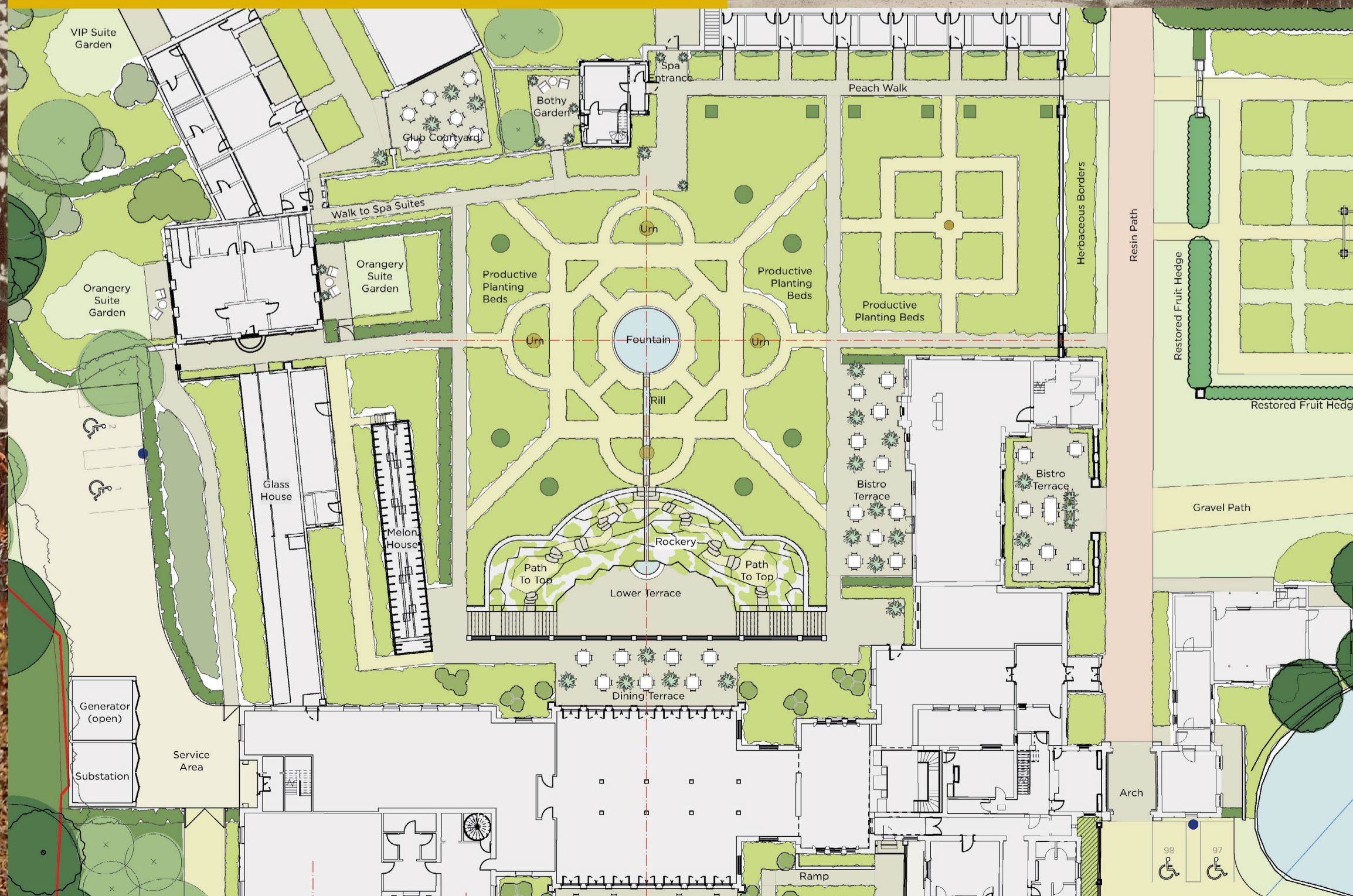
Rayners House was known for its 'Pleasure Gardens' of about a dozen acres in extent. Sheahan, writing in 1862, described them as 'beautifully diversified, and planted with the choicest shrubs and flowers.'

During the time the estate was used as a school, the manicured gardens inevitably gave way to parking and playing surfaces and bland mown grass to serve the functions of the school and keep maintenance costs at a minimum. Tree belts around the periphery were left unmanaged and became overrun by Common Laurel, which smothered out the ground flora. More recently, Ash die-back has further eroded the tree cover within the woodlands around the periphery.

We are excited by the prospect of returning the grounds around Rayners House to their former glory, by designing new pleasure gardens for the guests to enjoy and restoring the peripheral woodlands to a much richer condition that enhances biodiversity and introduces greater robustness against climate change.



*Landscape plan extract*



### **Key landscape proposals:**

- New forecourt garden with circular drive inspired by Hughenden and restored pond;
- Car park discretely placed away from Rayners House and formal garden areas and enclosed with tall hedges;
- Lake restored with new Boathouse for rowing boats;
- Fine lawn for croquet recreated around the lake with majestic retained trees;
- New pleasure grounds (gardens) with circular walk providing surprise and delight for guests wandering about the grounds with views across and within the native parkland landscape and woodland periphery;
- New Cut Flower Garden within retained espalier apple trees and new setting for the Disraeli Obelisk;
- Productive gardens within the walled gardens north of the main house;
- Formal garden and terraces in the south courtyard, looking towards the lake;
- Spa Pool Gardens enclosed by 'crinkle-crankle' walls with views to the meadow landscape;
- Spa treatment room gardens – more private outdoor quiet spaces themed to reflect the Spa;
- Rich flower meadow with retained fine Oak parkland trees north of the Spa;
- Heritage Orchard with apiary to replace historic orchard that was lost to school parking;
- Restoration of woodland periphery to enhance biodiversity and maintain their screening function to minimise any visual impact on neighbouring properties.



## *Transport and sustainability.*

### Transport

Transportation and good access are essential to the successful operation of the future hotel and we are committed to addressing any traffic implications of the proposals.

We envisage that guests will access the hotel via the existing access on Church Road. Another proposed access is via Hammersley Lane, which is intended to be primarily used by staff, for servicing and deliveries and occasional arrivals by guests for special events.

The site is accessible to regular bus services, which provide connections to nearby towns, and public transport interchange facilities, enabling onward travel via sustainable modes.

We strive to promote the use of sustainable modes of travel by both guests and staff members. This may include:



'Green credits' to offer discounts for stays to guests who travel via sustainable modes



Pool bicycles/e-bikes to allow guests to use within the Rayners Estate and to explore the local area



Electric operational vehicles on site



On-site EV charging facilities and cycle parking



Electric vehicle shuttle service to/from the site for staff living locally

Transport consultants have been appointed and have been monitoring traffic flows. We are seeking to minimise any impact of the development on the operational capacity of the surrounding network. The consultants will be preparing a detailed strategy for the site which will accompany any future planning application. This will focus on access, parking, road safety, trip generation and identify mitigation where necessary, including time restricted deliveries with no reversing/white noise only vehicles.

As part of the application a detailed Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will be prepared, which will set out the proposed access strategy for construction traffic, hours of operation and provide mitigation measures to minimise noise.



### Sustainability

We are committed to developing a genuinely sustainable scheme which embraces deep green credentials to future proof against climate change while enhancing the biodiversity on the estate.

The emerging design is seeking to achieve BREEAM Excellent for the existing buildings and BREEAM Outstanding for the new buildings.

The development will be underpinned by Net Zero design principles: drastic reduction of energy demand, use of decarbonised energy sources, maximisation of renewable energy generation and minimisation of the embodied carbon. We are currently exploring a range of sustainable technologies which may include:



Efficient building fabric design



Responsibly sourced low carbon materials



Green procurement (bulk purchases with limited packing) and reuse of existing materials where possible



Elimination of fossil fuel energy sources and use of ground/air source heat pumps



Integration of photovoltaic technologies



Energy efficient services and appliances

In addition to the net zero strategies, rainwater harvesting and efficient appliances will reduce water consumption. Flood risk will be minimised through integration of SuDS and blue roofs, while operational waste will be reduced by on site composting.



## Local investment.



The proposed development will result in a significant multimillion pound investment on site and further enhance the Buckinghamshire tourism sector.



We envisage the proposal will create employment opportunities in the local area supporting up to 149 jobs (full time equivalent), of which a significant proportion will be from within Buckinghamshire. 5-10% of the roles will be filled by apprentices from around local colleges including Buckinghamshire College. The total annual wage bill for staff is estimated at around £4.1 million.



The development proposal will create additional indirect and induced jobs at a regional level driven by the supply chain and through wage spending of workers.



Our aspiration is to establish Rayners Penn as one of the world's top retreat hotel experiences. This will contribute to the visitor economy in Buckinghamshire and the wider area.



## Timescales

1

We will carefully consider the feedback from this event and other consultation meetings.

2

We anticipate the planning and listed building consent applications for the proposals will be submitted to Buckinghamshire Council in September/October 2023.

3

Once the application has been submitted, it will be advertised, and a further consultation will take place with interested parties able to provide further comments directly to the Council.

4

The application will then be determined by Buckinghamshire Council.

5

If approved, the development will take about two and a half years from implementation to complete.

## Next Steps

Thank you for taking the time to attend the consultation event and review the proposals. We have prepared a short comments card and would appreciate your feedback.

If you would prefer to submit your comments via email or have any other questions please contact us at:



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