

## 6.0 Castle Toward

### Phase 1.

It is proposed to repair the fabric of Castle Toward, upgrade its building services infrastructure and make various alterations that allow it to be used as a house and as a venue for a range of events including weddings, location filming, exhibitions and as support for outdoor events.

A Spa and treatment area is planned for a second phase of development which will be supplementary to events. Spa facilities are increasingly important for corporate and wedding events. The facilities will have treatment rooms, a gym, a pool, and a sauna, steam room and therapy pods. A Listed Building Consent Application has been submitted to Argyll and Bute Council to cover these proposed alterations.

A planning application for a “change of use” in relation to Castle Toward and its immediate grounds from Class 8 Residential Institution to a Class 9 house with ancillary housekeeper accommodation and Sui Generis commercial and leisure uses is also currently lodged with Argyll and Bute Council.

To allow the house to function under the Sui Generis use class and offer accommodation that reflects today's standards, certain internal alterations will be carried out to meet these expectations.

The first and second floors contain bedrooms but lack bathroom provision, therefore the inclusion of en-suite accommodation to all bedrooms is vital. Also within a number of the suites, separate tea prep areas will be included.

The Principal Rooms will be restored and sympathetically altered to suit their new uses. Ad hoc utilitarian alterations carried out in the past will be removed.

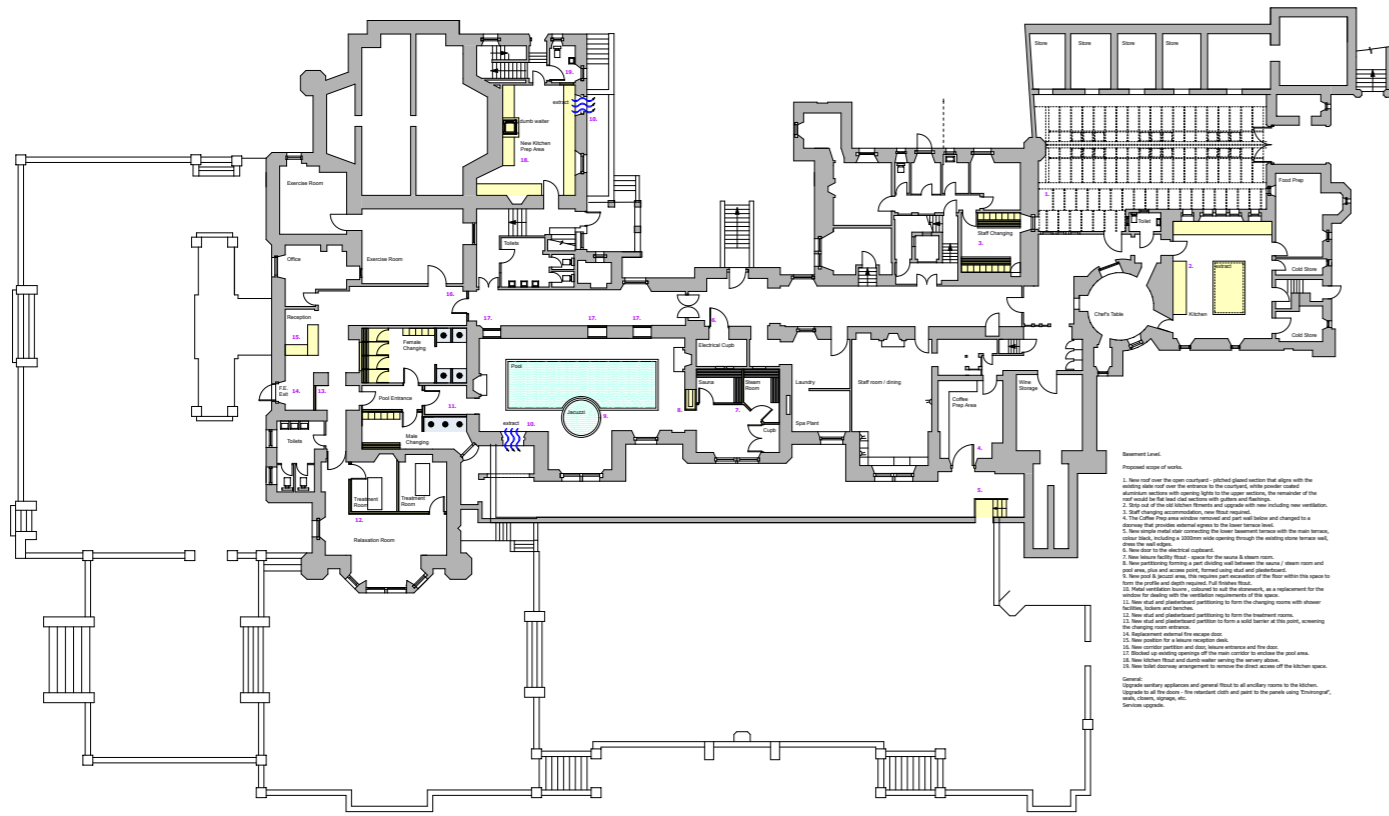
The basement level will be altered to form new kitchens and leisure facilities.

Both fire escape staircases, one exposed metal staircase on the west elevation and one enclosed by concrete block to the north elevation are no longer required and will be removed. When removed, the elevations will be again fully exposed.

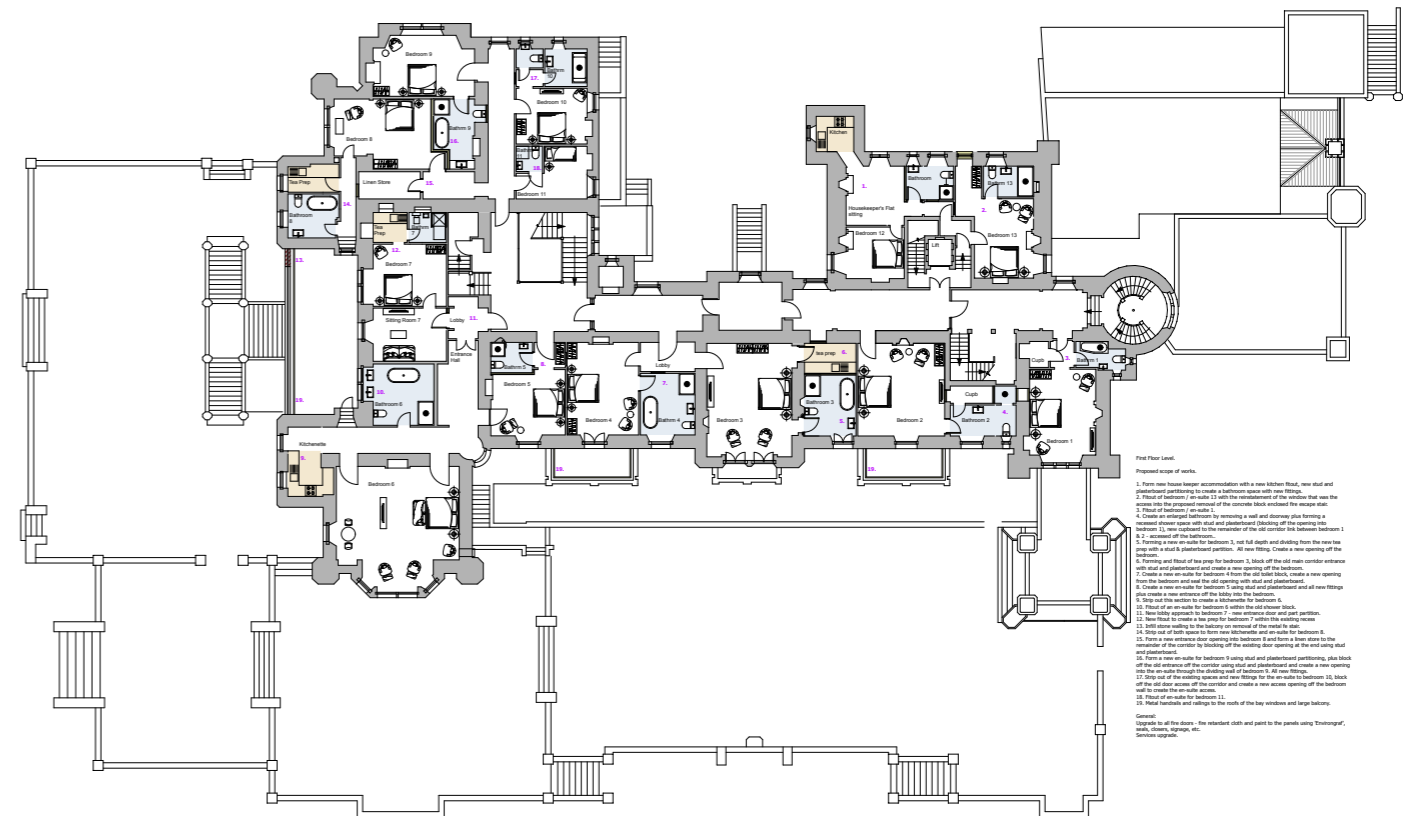
Open doors and windows lead to standing platforms and balconies on the first and second floor, whilst the windows within the principal rooms on the ground floor start at skirting height. To ensure health and safety compliance, metal railings are proposed for the balconies and across the external face of the windows to the principal rooms. The design is sympathetic and be coloured out with the stonework to lessen any impact.



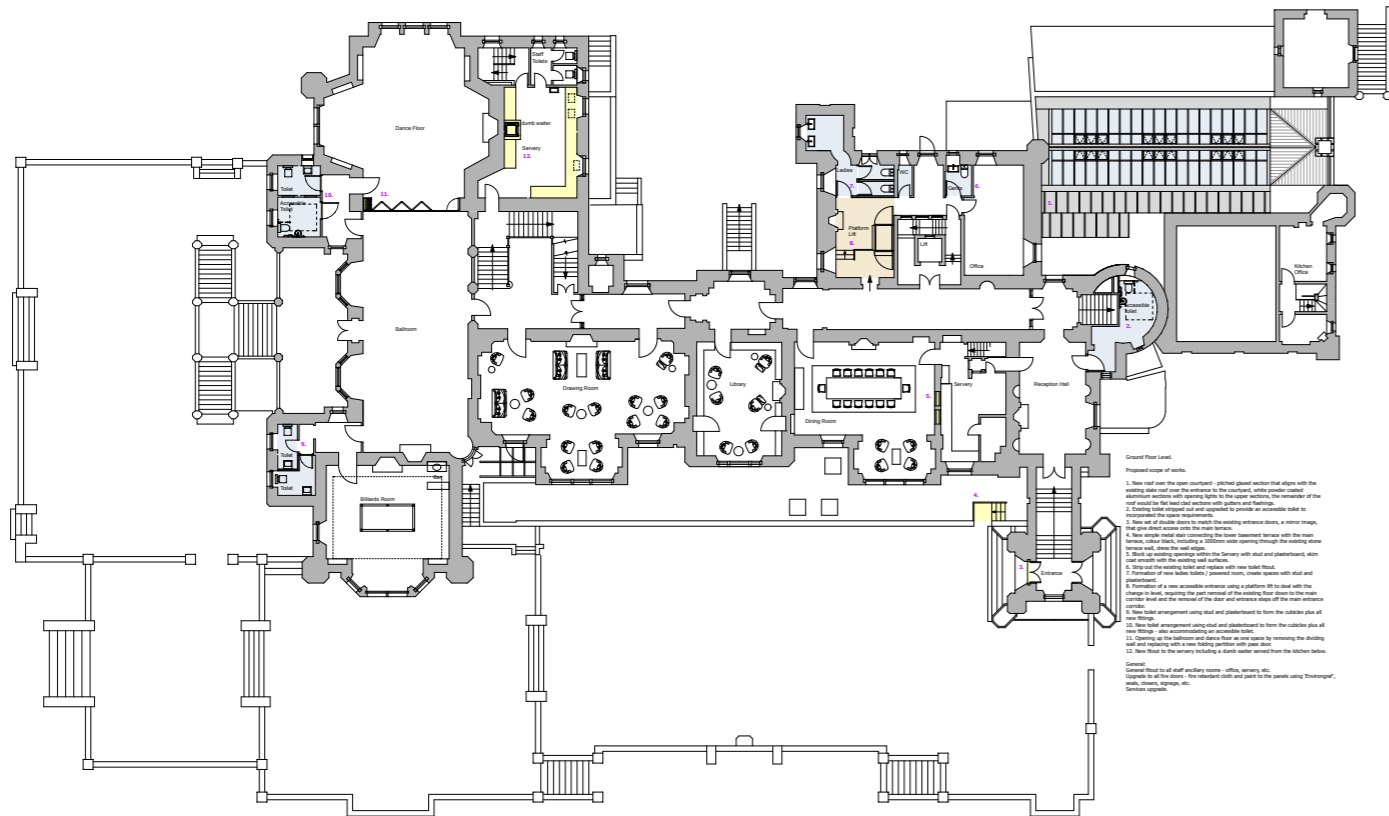
Note: The drawings shown are an indication within this report, please refer to the full scale A1 drawing attached for descriptive text



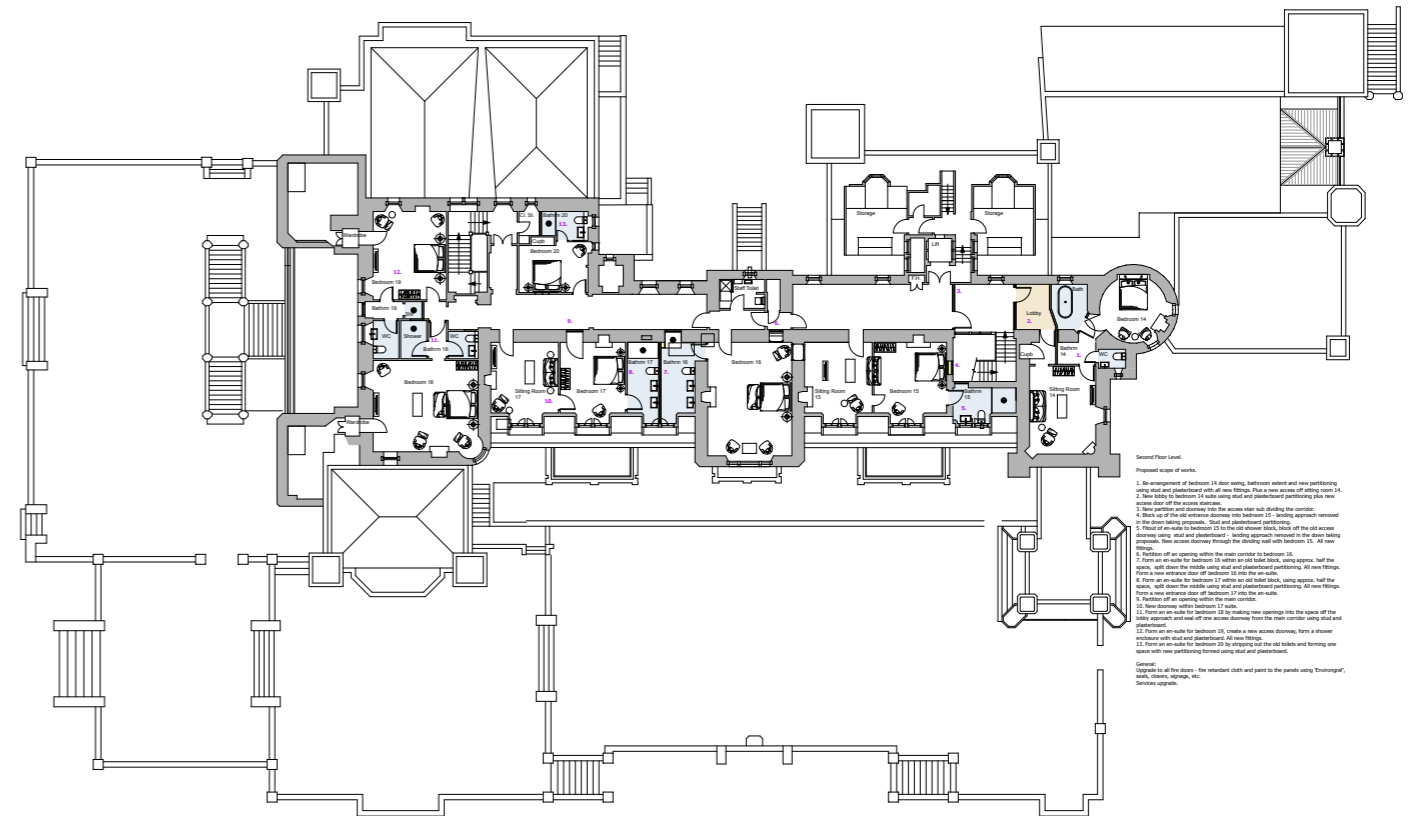
Basement Floor



First Floor



Ground Floor



Second Floor



Dining Room



BallRoom



Basement Kitchen



Library



Billiard Room



Covered west access from the Ballroom



Drawing Room



Tower Staircase



First Floor West Balcony

## Eastern Driveway and Gatehouse Entrance

It is the intention to reinstate the eastern driveway, accessed off the A815 from the south / east corner of the estate boundary as a 'horseshoe' shaped turn off. It will follow the original route that skirts past the ruins of the 15th century Toward Castle and arrives at Castle Toward's main entrance courtyard on the South / West corner of the house. The original designed approach presents the Castle's main elevations to all visitors and is typical of its time. Upgrading this driveway will also provide and promote public footpath access around the east side of the estate taking in the ruins of Toward Castle, which currently is accessed via an overgrown dirt track.

The reinstatement would negate the need to use the current western driveway which delivers visitors to the rear of the Castle, a less than impressive arrival given the splendour and richness of the main elevations. This will also lessen / ease the traffic to the western driveway and entrance, where the existing core path runs.

Plans also exist to rebuild the east driveway gatehouses and entrance gates. The foundations of both gatehouses are evident where they were incorporated into the boundary wall and images exist showing as they originally were.

The potential for re-building the gatehouses and gates, in addition to providing more estate accommodation, would re-establish a proper entrance to the estate with the visual importance and grandeur of what lies beyond.



Image of the original gatehouses and entrance gates



Recent image of the current condition to the eastern driveway



Design views of Toward Castle along the drive will be opened up

Note: The drawing is shown as an indication within this report, please refer to the full scale A1 drawing attached for descriptive text

## 7.0 Designed Landscape

The historical importance of the designed landscape is well recorded and key to the overall restoration of the estate. Many features exist that are either buried, overrun or dilapidated and require sensitive and considered approaches to their rescued and restoration.

The ha-ha walling running east to west is presently buried within the south lawns. The intention is to fully expose the wall and carry out restoration works including the steps that deal with the change in level.

The line of the original estate fencing has been determined and noted on plans, plus part sections of the fence found. Full reinstatement and part restoration of those sections that remain, following the established route west, south and east of the house, terminating high up on the East boundary on the north / east corner of the kitchen garden will be carried out. This fence line defines the boundary of the private gardens associated with the house.

Restoration of the viaduct bridge with its gothic stonework with a new gate at the eastern driveway will be carried out.

The Japanese Water Garden south of the Walled Flower Garden has suffered from lack of maintenance. The Lily pond is overgrown, needs drained and cleaned and the fountain no longer operates. The surrounding flagstones, walling and steps are likewise overgrown with grass and weeds. Those elements that have fallen into disrepair will be restored.

The Himalayan gardens are currently overgrown and require careful clearing of overgrown vegetation and thinning out of re-seeded trees. They will be restored as part of the designed landscape making them once again an important element of the gardens.

Perimeter vegetation to the Walled Flower Garden and within the ground of the garden has been left unchecked and has taken root in the stone walling. The south entrance gate appears intact, but some repairs required. The Loggia and attached greenhouse require repair to restore them properly. The ambition for the Flower garden is to host events that could include the erection of a marquee within the enclosure.

The old Achoucilin House ruins and 'hermits' cave on the North / East corner of the Walled Flower Garden could be carefully restored and put to use under the Sui Generis consent. This restoration could form a likely Chapel for weddings, using the Flower Garden with marquee for the reception.

Estate perimeter access points along the estate boundary leading to the network of pathways within the grounds will be enhanced. The network of estate footpaths and informal woodland walks that thread through the estate masterplan area that is open to public access will also be upgraded.

General thinning of re-seeding vegetation due to the neglect of the landscaping will enhance the mature specimens throughout the estate.

The creation of formal gardens within the South lawns of the house will provide grandeur to the setting of the Castle. This would also include reinstatement of the tennis court to its original location and a helipad, both associated and linked to the intended use of house owners and guests.

The creation of an informal fishing lake south of the new formal gardens is also proposed. This will be accessed from the estate footpaths out with the private grounds and open to public access.



*Flower Garden and Loggia*



*Hermit's Cave*

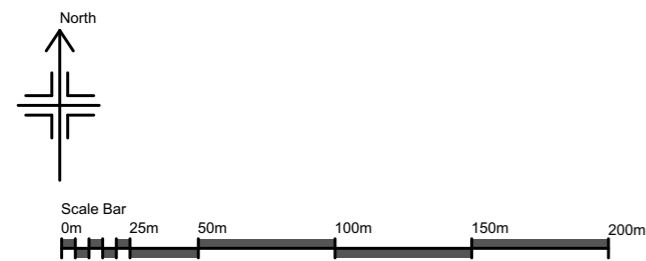


*Flower Garden and Greenhouse*

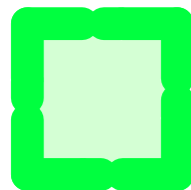


*Japanese Water Garden*

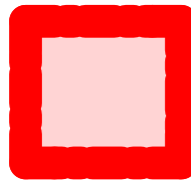
The adjacent estate plan shows the extent of ground around the castle required to support the Sui Generis use of the castle and surrounding gardens as well as the extent of unrestricted public access around the rest of the estate.



Legend



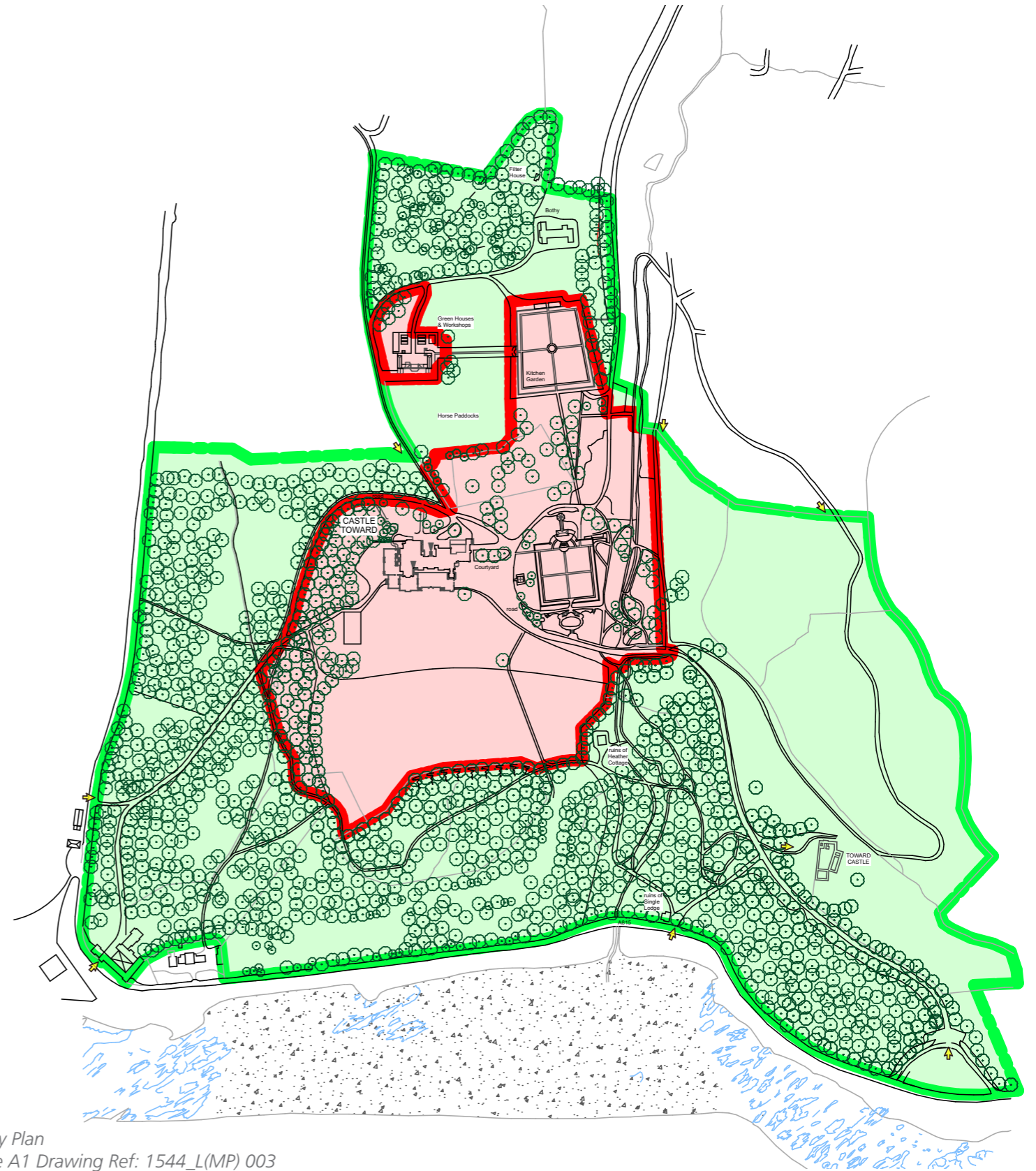
denotes the Estate boundary and area outwith the designated private grounds attributed to Castle Toward



denotes the boundary of the private grounds attributed to Castle Toward



promotion of public footpath access points into the estate outwith the designated boundary of the private grounds



Boundary Plan  
Full Scale A1 Drawing Ref: 1544\_L(MP) 003

## 8.0 Accommodation

### Phase 1

Within the grounds of the estate a number of opportunities present themselves for the provision of additional accommodation. This will be achieved through restoration, rebuild and new build developments.

Heather Cottage, the Single Lodge and the Eastern driveway gatehouses no longer stand but there is an ambition to rebuild on these sites. The scale of the buildings can be almost replicated as the footprints of most of these buildings is still evident and the style of the gatehouses known from old photographic records.

To the North of the estate lies a disused lodge and within the Gate House exist 4 disused residential flats. All properties have suffered from neglect and lack of maintenance. The upgrade and restoration of these buildings would provide additional accommodation, with the owners / tenants providing the much needed maintenance and security.

### Phase 2.

Four distinct sites to the West and South boundaries have been identified for developing new dwellings. The chosen sites take advantage of the spectacular open views from both boundaries. The impact of these development will be minimal and not affect the setting of Castle Toward.

The West boundary developments would be accessed from the existing western estate entrance. This would be enlarged and enhanced providing a more formal traditional approach with much need space for vehicle and safe pedestrian access to the new housing sites and the western driveway into the estate and core footpath.

The building forms on either side of the entrance are envisaged as a formal courtyard layout with traditional style estate cottage housing using traditional materials, reflective of the Smithy on the south boundary adjacent to the Gate House and sample image. The proposed formal entrance off the A815 provides a strong linkage to the use of traditional materials to these dwellings.

Such a development will greatly enhance the west entrance to the Estate.

The South boundary developments would accommodate larger detached houses set into their own gardens with open sea views, typical to that found along the A815 from Dunoon.

Access for both site would be off the A815, one utilizing the existing entrance to the Single Lodge that would required widening and upgrading to accommodate the highways standards, the other would be a new access point on a straight section of the road to maximize the sight lines for access / egress.

The adopted design language to the south boundary would engage a more contemporary architecture approach to the house design and use of materials that would compliment and sit comfortably within the surrounding landscaping.



North Lodge accommodation upgrade Phase 1



Gate House residential flats Phase 1



Sample image of the Estate Cottage Housing proposed to the west boundary developments



Eastern driveway gatehouses and entrance gates



Archerfield Estate sample image



Proposed new housing development around the West South corner of the Estate Boundaries



Proposed new housing development on the Estate South Boundary adjacent to the Eastern Driveway



## 9.0 Commercial Opportunities.

### Phase 3.

The Gate House complex offers the opportunity to create a tourist centre which will attract visitors and provide local employment to local artisans and crafts people. Areas not developed as residential accommodation will be converted to café, retail, craft manufacture and visitor centre accommodation. A new carpark and childrens playpark will also be formed.

Elsewhere in the Estate, it is intended to develop the Greenhouses and Workshop west of the Walled Kitchen Garden as a market garden and shop selling produce grown in the Kitchen Garden and from other local producers.

The hillside at the north of the estate adjacent to the North Lodge has magnificent views across the Firth of Clyde to Bute. It is intended to develop a complex of sympathetically sited prestige holiday lodges there. These lodges will be constructed of local materials and be of high quality contemporary design and will attract tourism and income to the area as well as generating local employment.



*Gate House main elevation*



*Greenhouse and workshop*



*Gate House rear elevation*



*Sample image of prestige holiday lodge*



*Gate House covered yard*



*Sample image of prestige holiday lodge*