

We are pleased to enclose our latest update recording some of our more interesting projects undertaken over the previous year.

Beaufort Park

Set within 56 acres of protected heathland and woodland, Beaufort Park near Bracknell represents both a fine headquarters development and a good example of environmental improvement. With Grade A eco-friendly credentials the new 4,250m² building has been created on the former met office social club site by Fenchurch Estates Ltd.

DA working with PRC architects has won detailed planning approval at a very sensitive location coordinating specialist environmental input including demolition and arboricultural method statements, soil studies, ecological restoration and new landscape design.

The heathland restoration involved procuring selected acidic soils, monitored backfilling and heather brushing to successfully reinstate lost habitat and comply with Section 106 legal requirements. The new building has been designed as a pavilion within the enhanced parkland setting with a strong emphasis on natural materials both in architectural and landscape terms.

Completion and occupation is anticipated in late summer 2009. DA have also worked with Fenchurch Estates on projects at Reading and the south of England.



A secret coastal corner

Providing clients with a good 'environmental fit' remains the key issue for many projects. On an elevated AONB site near the Seven Sisters Country Park and Heritage Coastline DA is assisting Koru Architects and Prospective Planning on a replacement private house planning application.

Initial landscape, arboricultural and ecological studies were undertaken to assess site constraints. Surrounded by open access NT land on the East Sussex chalk downs an inspired ground hugging design is proposed to integrate the proposal with its special context. Indigenous materials including flint walling and native broadleaf windbreak planting will be incorporated in the split level floor plans that exploit the far reaching views of Beachy Head and the English Channel. Green roofs and grey water recycling will be included to reduce energy consumption.



With support from the local Parish and NT, DA has provided a detailed landscape impact assessment to present a robust 'special' case to Wealden District Council. DA is working with the same design team on a similar exacting design brief near Stowe, Buckinghamshire.

Greening a Reading gateway

TA Fisher have recently completed and sold all homes at Symeon Place, Caversham. On a 'Green Route' into Reading this prominent site frontage was designed to address public concerns on visual appearance while giving new resident privacy.

DA advised on the landscape design, tree protection and management working with The Harris Partnership. Other Berkshire projects with T A Fisher

include mixed development at Newbury and a hillside scheme along the River Thames.



Draffin Associates Services

- Expert Witness at Planning Appeals
- Pre-Planning Surveys
- Landscape Impact Assessments
- Planning Reports
- Landscape & Urban Design Masterplans
- Arboriculture Method Statements
- Ecology
- Landscape Project Management
- 3D CAD Visualisation/ Photomontage

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Projects Update – 2008

The edge of Amersham

The Rural Housing Trust (RHT) has remained a loyal client for over ten years and their latest project within the Chilterns AONB provides a significant environmental challenge. The proposal for 42 mixed tenure affordable homes utilises rough grassland severed by the recently constructed A413 Amersham bypass route immediately south of the built up area. Uneconomic agricultural land will be reused, retaining badger setts and wildlife corridors in a terraced scheme contained by a strong landscape framework.

Following our landscape impact assessment, key public views have been identified and enhanced across the Misbourne valley setting. The proposed roofscape and layout has been prepared to echo the local development pattern reinforcing the mature tree canopy. The proposed street scene (illustrated) includes a hierarchy of external spaces and landscape enclosure that informs the landscape strategy.

DA is actively involved in other schemes for RHT Developments Ltd extending across the south east from Buckinghamshire to Kent.



Illustration – Earth Productions

Frequently these include village and edge of settlement locations within a protected landscape planning context. Adopting a sensitive design approach to the existing landscape character has been key to many successful projects now valued by the local community.



Illustration – Earth Productions



CAD Visualisation – Photomontage

Photomontage and 3D computer graphic representation is a very helpful tool for public presentation. DA has used this format at many planning appeals to give the inspector a clearer image of how the proposal will sit within the existing landscape.

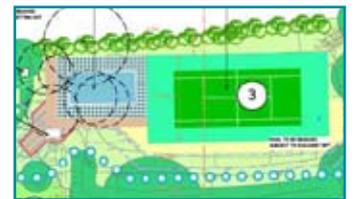
The 'before and after' illustration shows how a new residential development will fit into the Surrey North Downs context. The appeal decision recognised the suitability of the proposed landscape treatment to accommodate residential development and the clients Village Developments Plc are now negotiating a detailed application.

Our specialists work from the detailed architectural and engineering proposals creating an accurate 3D digital model on the topographic survey. Landscape contouring, enclosure and surfacing are then added to integrate with the setting. Verified views can also be prepared upon request.

Listed Building enhancement

DA frequently advises owners of listed properties on grounds improvements. This will include sympathetic restoration or adaptation of historic features subject to English Heritage approval. At a Listed Grade 2 former manor house in Berkshire an inappropriate 1960s building and associated hardstanding are to be removed. The proposal includes the restoration of the walled garden and appropriate landscape features to the setting of the main house that is now used as offices.

Another project involves converting a Listed Grade 2 former gamekeeper's cottage into a private family residence in a rural hollow in The Chilterns AONB in Oxfordshire. Garden improvements include a replacement stableblock, new swimming pool and tennis court. The latter features will replace a disused manège cut into the sloping site. Sensitive ground engineering and enabling treeworks are required to protect the important valley setting. A bat relocation scheme and replacement wildlife pond has been proposed subject to English Nature biodiversity requirements within the overall landscape management plan.



Forthcoming Projects

New outdoor sports masterplan for a specialist school in Surrey Hills AONB.

Major grounds improvements to the setting of Grade 2 Listed Building in Berkshire.

Leisure club extension within Metropolitan Open Land.

Our aim is to address the landscape constraints, exploit the design opportunities and produce commercially successful, attractive results. Visit our website for more details.