

# Grow Wilder Engagement Hub

Proposed Plans for Consultation

March 2021



# Agenda

1. Grow Wilder Purpose and Strategy
2. Requirements for an Engagement Hub
3. Detailed Plans for the new Engagement Hub
  1. Location map
  2. Floor plan
  3. Construction Details
  4. Impact to Soil
  5. Car Parking
4. Next Steps







# Grow Wilder Purpose and Strategy



# Who are we?

## Avon Wildlife Trust

- Founded in 1980
- Our works extend to urban and rural areas across the West of England
- We champion urban wildlife, promote landscape-scale conservation, manage 30 nature reserves, stand up for wildlife against inappropriate development and other threats, work to influence decision-makers locally and nationally to put nature and wildlife at the heart of policy and we inspire people of all ages to connect with nature in their everyday lives.



## Grow Wilder

- In 2012 Avon Wildlife Trust (AWT) took on an unused smallholding in the Stapleton area of Bristol, and volunteers and local groups transformed it into a community and food growing hub rich in wildlife, where people can reconnect with nature, learn new skills and improve their health & wellbeing.

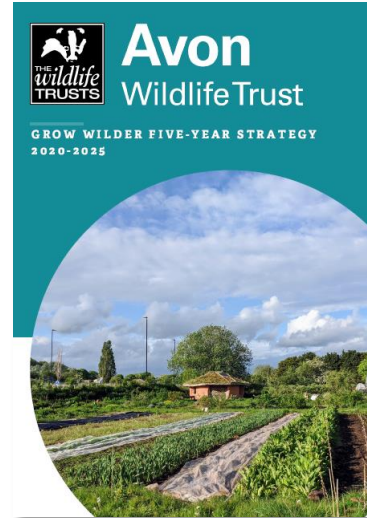


**Grow  
Wilder**

# Grow Wilder 5-Year Strategy

**“Our mission** is to bring about urgent action for the restoration of wildlife by educating, upskilling and empowering people, communities and businesses to bring about positive change through wildlife-friendly gardening and sustainable food growing.”

**“Our vision** is to establish Grow Wilder as a place to engage and inspire people, communities and businesses to actively support nature’s recovery. Through demonstration, learning and events, Grow Wilder will be a hub from which we will seek to connect people with nature, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to restore and conserve natural habitats of all sizes across the Bristol area and further afield.”





# Site Activities

Wildflower  
Nursery

Site  
Hire



Cafe

Volunteers



Living  
Seed Bank



Learning  
Courses

Food  
Growing  
and Land  
Based  
Business



Well  
being

Events

Wildlife



An aerial photograph of a rural farm setting. Two large, long, arched greenhouses with translucent plastic covers are the central focus. To their left is a large, dark brown, tilled field. Above the greenhouses is a small, simple wooden shed with a brown roof. To the right of the greenhouses are several long, narrow garden beds covered with dark blue or black plastic mulch, with rows of small green plants visible. The entire farm area is surrounded by lush green grass and a dense forest of tall trees on the right side. The text "What is An Engagement Hub?" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

**What is An Engagement Hub?**



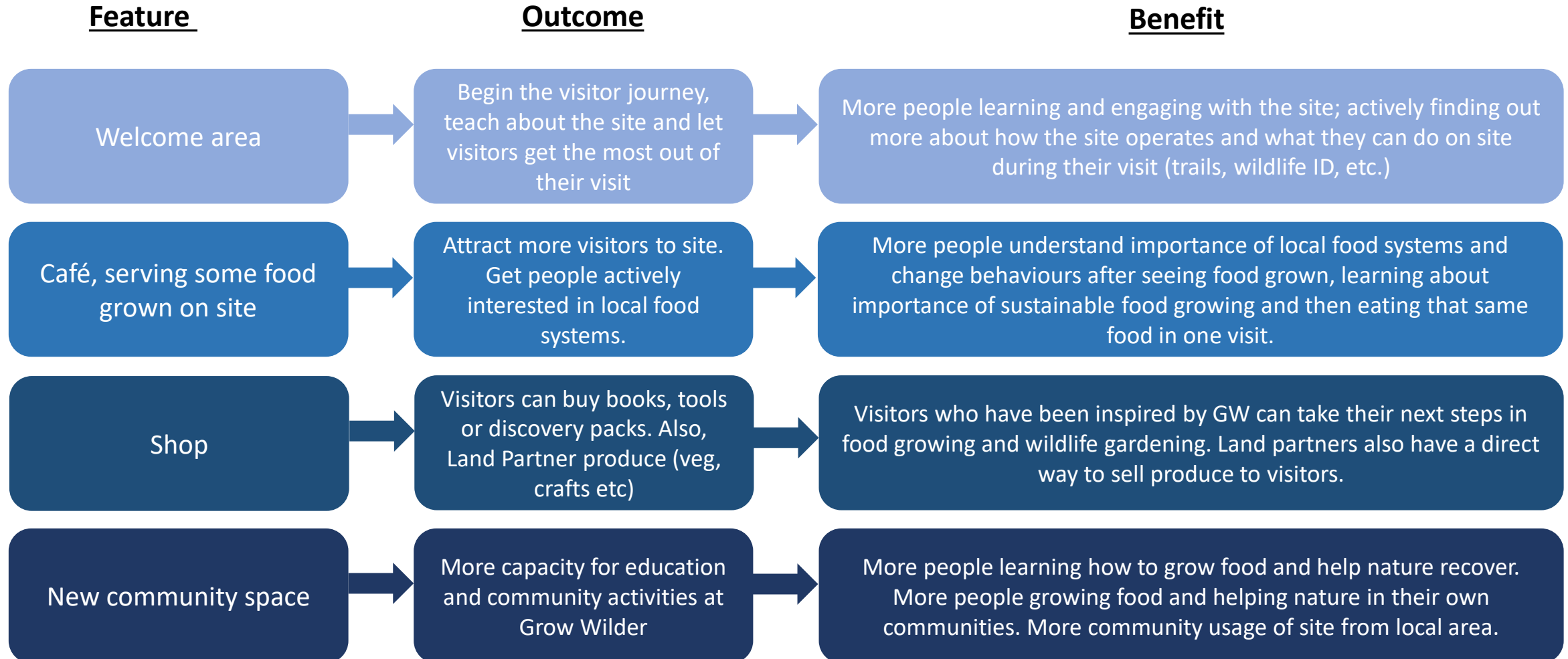
# Limitations with Current Site For Achieving Strategy

- × Inadequate space to deliver education capabilities (1 small indoor classroom, poorly insulated and little natural light)
- × No focussed area for new visitors to the site
- × Lack of interpretation and self-learning opportunities
- × Inadequate toilet facilities
- × Inadequate kitchen facilities for providing cooked food offerings
- × Insufficient offerings to give a good visitor experience





# Benefits of a New Engagement Hub





# Principles For New Engagement Hub

- **A new community amenity** – a new building should provide a new meeting space and café for community use
- **A hub for sustainable food growing** – the new engagement hub should promote the benefits of sustainable food growing
- **Promoting green travel** – a new engagement hub should encourage sustainable travel, focusing on bike, pedestrian and public transport to come to site.
- **Sustainable building** – any new building should showcase state of the art designs for sustainability in both construction and use.
- **Low Impact** – visually, the new building should blend in with the site through a nature-inspired design. Impact to soil should also be minimized where possible.
- **Accessible for all** – Everyone is welcome to come visit, explore and enjoy the site.





An aerial photograph of a rural farmstead. In the center, there is a large, rectangular vegetable garden with several distinct rows of green plants. To the right of the garden is a house with a brown, gabled roof and a smaller structure with a tan roof. A dirt path winds through the property. The surrounding area is lush with green trees and vegetation. The text "Proposed Plans for a Grow Wilder Engagement Hub" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

# Proposed Plans for a Grow Wilder Engagement Hub



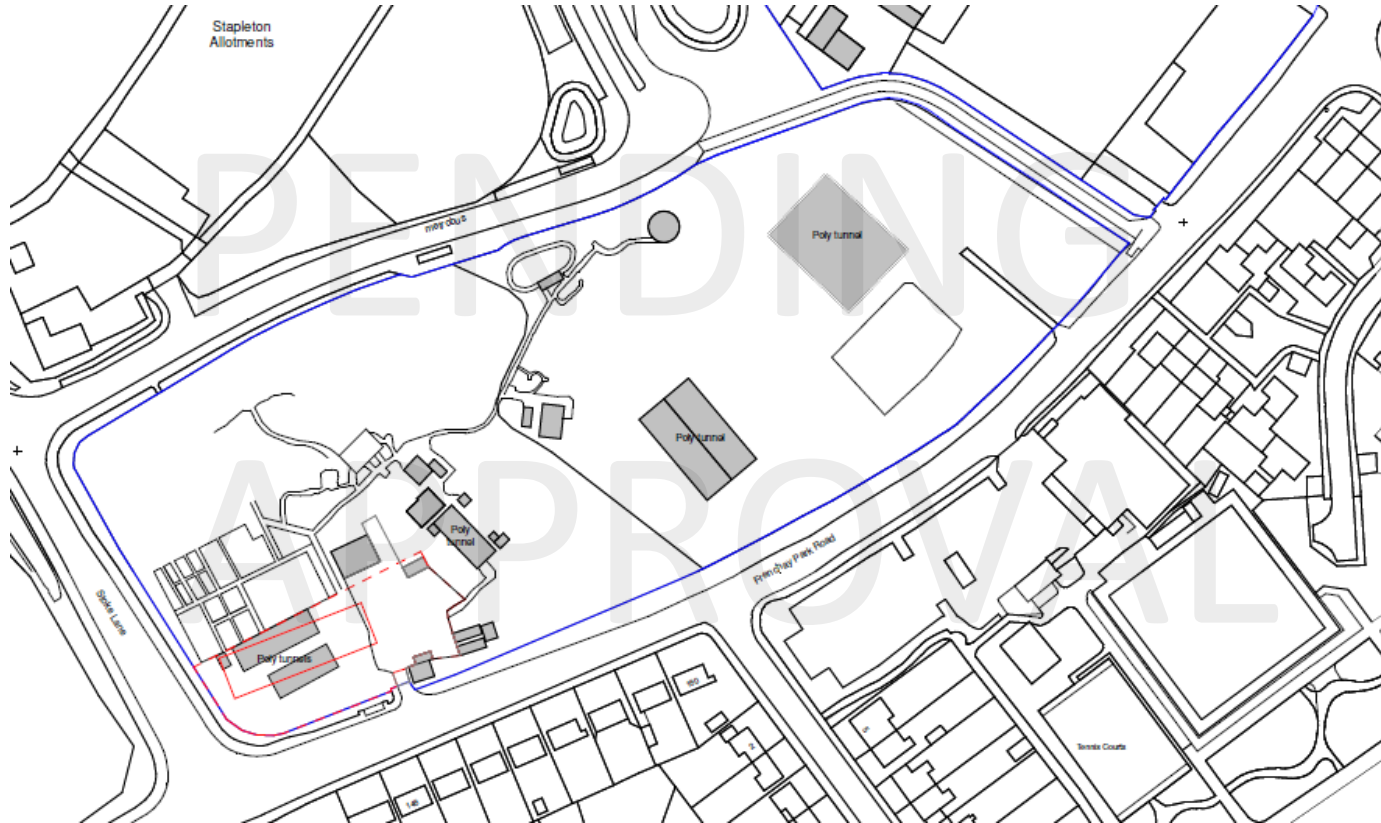
# Choosing the Right Building



## Building Details

- The proposed Engagement Hub is an offsite prefabricated unit from Green Unit 'Arc II'
- It has been chosen due to its highly sustainable and low impact design.
- Further benefits include:
  - Bespoke modular design
  - Cost effective, quick to install and low impact site enabling works
  - Light and inspiring space
  - Sustainable materials
  - Low running costs
  - Ultra-low carbon
- The building is single storey and 3.1m tall meaning very low visible impact for those outside the site.
- Total building footprint would be 300m<sup>2</sup>

# Engagement Hub Planned Location

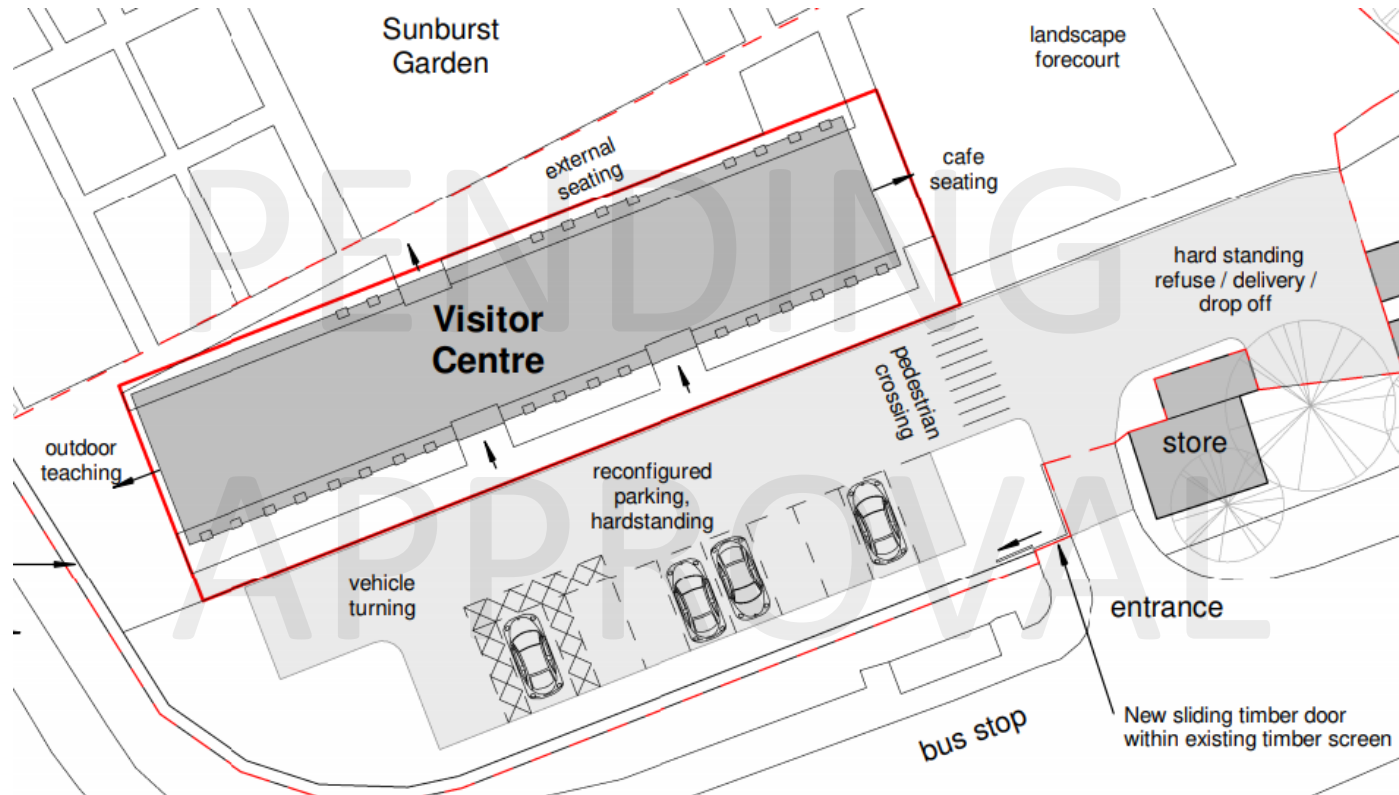


## Location Details

- Full site view of proposal



# Engagement Hub Planned Location

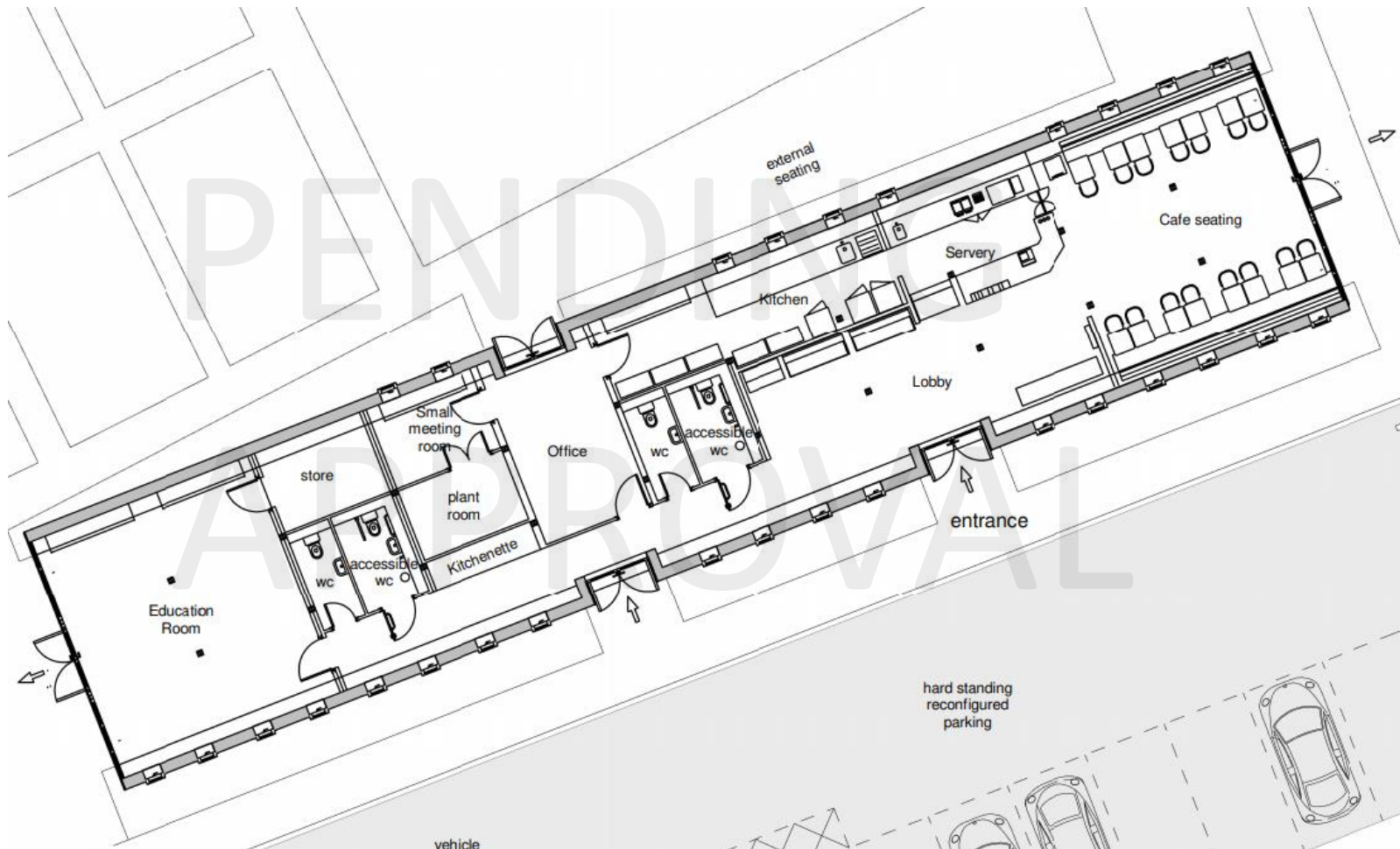


## Location Details

- The new building is planned to be located in the South West corner of the site, next to the Wildflower Nursery and other pre-existing visitor buildings
- The building would sit at the front of the Grow Wilder site, making it highly accessible to the local community, including Frenchay, Broomhill and Lockleaze.
- It would be the natural first touch point for anyone arriving at site
- The back of the building would face over the sunburst garden, giving a wonderful vista over the food growing demonstration area.

\*Note, final design may have some differences in doorway locations, floor plan and landscaping.

# Engagement Hub Floor Plan



## Floor Plan Details

- Reception foyer area
  - Staff/volunteer welcome
  - Helpful information about the site
  - Shop selling discovery packs, site produce etc.
- Café seating area:
  - 32 seats
  - Multi functional space
- Café kitchenette, preparation and storage.
  - Hot and cold food
  - Beverages
  - Some site grown food offerings
- Toilet facilities
  - 2 x single cubicles
  - 2 x accessible cubicles
- Education/Community Space
  - 40 seat room
- Office space
  - For AWT staff and volunteer use

\*Note, final design may have some differences in doorway locations, floor plan and landscaping.



# Details of Construction

## Building Construction

- 95% of building put together offsite
- Building arrives in slices (pods) that are constructed on site
- Average building time is therefore days rather than weeks or months

## Utilities

- Some road disruption may be expected from connecting to the sewer located the opposite side of Frenchay Park Road to Grow Wilder

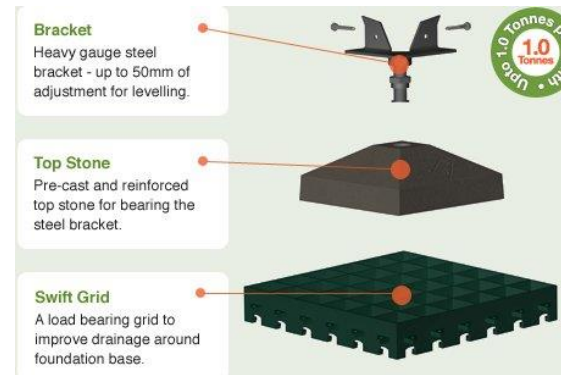
## Ground Works

- Some work is required to prepare the foundations and install utilities however this is not expected to be noisy or extensive.



# Aiming for Low Impact to Soil

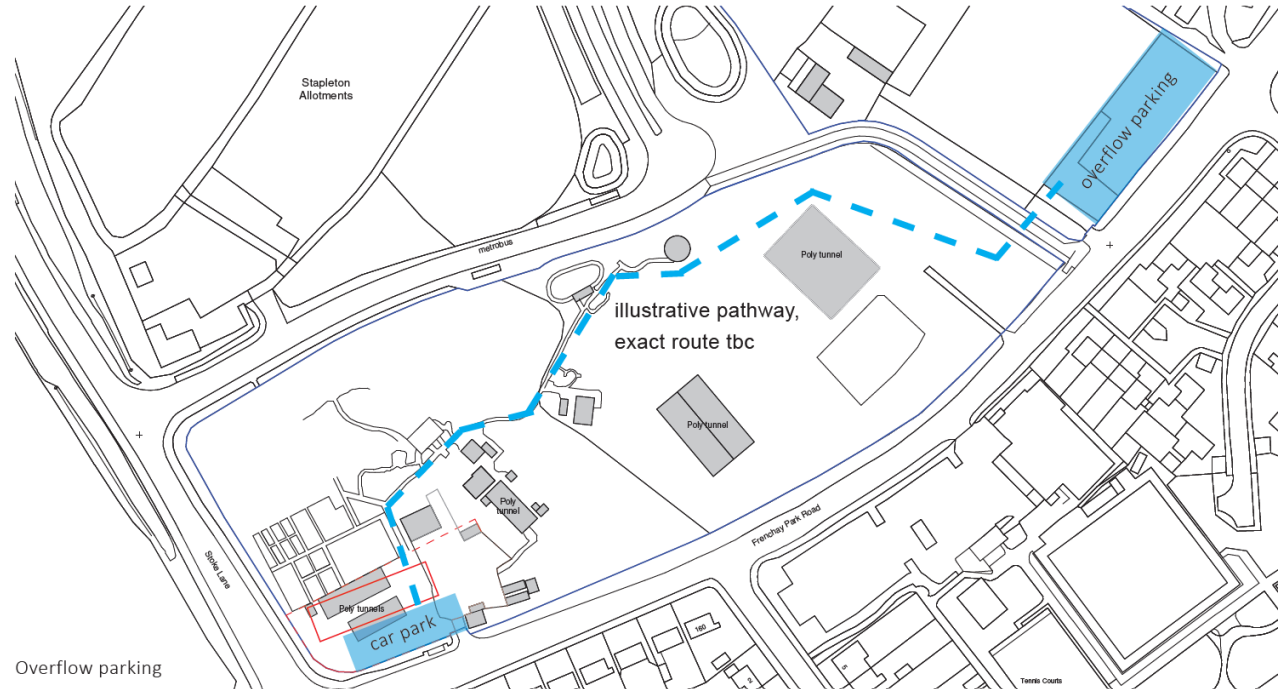
- Project will be focussed on minimal soil impact
- **Building Foundations**
  - 2 options being reviewed:
    - Plinths – Low Impact
      - 84 x Base grid 500 x 500 x 65mm
    - Screw Piles – Very Low Impact
      - 84 x 60mm screws. Less than 1 square metre of potential soil compaction.
- **Car Park**
  - Ground currently compacted and covered by gravel. Aim will be to rehabilitate soil. Consider mesh and or grid system to spread weight, with high drainage medium. Fit channel drains to reduce run off.





# Travel to Site and Car Parking

- Parking spaces at main entrance will remain at 10 spaces (the same as is currently available)
- Engagement hub will be actively encouraging and incentivising visitors to come by sustainable transport such as by bus, bike and by foot
- The engagement hub will provide links, information and downloads for sustainable transport
- Site will provide well located, secure and promoted cycle shelter
- Grow Wilder benefits from being on the Metrobus route
- During any particularly busy event, an overflow carpark will be utilised on the new Grow Wilder plot to ensure no parking ends up on residential streets





# Protecting Our Heritage

- Grow Wilder forms what was once part of Bristol's historic market gardens, once providing food for much of the local area
- In 2012, AWT took on a unused smallholding that had long fallen to dilapidation
- Since taking it on they have brought food growing and local businesses back to the land
- In doing so, they we have helped protect much of the land from development and urbanisation
- The new Engagement Hub will help champion sustainable local food growing and communicate to visitors the importance of this land (known as the "Blue Finger") for Bristol's food system; helping protect it for generations to come





An aerial photograph of a rural farmstead. In the center is a large, rectangular vegetable garden with several long, straight rows of green plants. To the right of the garden is a house with a brown, gabled roof and orange walls. A dirt road runs along the right side of the property. The surrounding area is lush with green trees and vegetation. The text "Next Steps" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font in the center of the image.

# Next Steps



# Next Steps

- Current plans are still provisional and require both planning permission and funding
- If planning permission granted, AWT intend to apply for the Biffa Partnership Grants Scheme to fund majority of project
- The remaining funding will be sought through a crowd funding campaign, soon to be launched
- Milestones:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021 - Expression of Interest submitted
  - 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021 – Final Deadline
- If the project is successful, the new building would be completed by **January 2023**



# Your Feedback and Support

- We are aiming to create a building that serves the community therefore we are keen to hear your thoughts and feedback about our plans.
- If you support these plans then we'd really like to know. Your input will help allow the project to go ahead and become a reality.
- Please email [GWengagementhub@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:GWengagementhub@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk) and leave your comments
- Alternatively, follow [this link](#) to leave your feedback in a webform. We will also provide some suggested words of support if desired.

**Many thanks for your time!**

