

## Design and Access Statement for Communal Polytunnel at Barton Upon Humber Allotments

### Proposal

The Barton Upon Humber Allotment Society site is on the outskirts of the town, away from any public facilities, power or mains water supply.

The proposal is to install a commercial-grade polytunnel on one of the plots on the site. This will be a communal plot, which will be access friendly and adjacent to the recently installed accessible waterless toilet and a number of other communal resources.

The primary purpose of the polytunnel will be to enable a team of local people to propagate vegetable, fruit and flowers plants. When mature, the plants will either be sold to allotment plot holders, planted in a communal growing area or sold at occasional local community garden events. Any income will be re-invested into this community growing proposal.

A number of plot holders are retired engineers and groundworkers who have the skill and capability to construct and instal the polytunnel.

### Rationale for the development

Barton upon Humber Allotment Society was established in 1933 and it owns the rural development site overlooking the Humber Bridge. The Society's sole object is **'the promotion of horticulture in Barton Upon Humber'**.

The allotments provide opportunities for recreation, wellbeing, and social connection. Many members benefit from physical activity, outdoor engagement, and community interaction.

The site is divided into approximately 100 plots, cultivated by individuals or jointly with friends or family. Each plot holder is a member of the Allotment Society. Communal facilities are available in the centre of the site on Plots 46 and 47. The facilities include a main shed with tools and equipment, bore hole with linked water tanks, defibrillator and a grassed area for summer events.

In the spring of 2023, a Kazuba Waterless Toilet was erected on the eastern end of Plot 47 to further enhance these communal facilities.

During the summer of 2025 consideration was given to further broadening the communal facilities to include a commercial-grade polytunnel, which could be used to propagate vegetable, fruit and flower plants. The proposal developed throughout the autumn and in early 2026 the following vision was approved:

***to create a welcoming space, where people, some of whom may feel isolated, lonely, or just want to get out, can come together and enjoy being outdoors, growing plants and friendships side by side.***

The aims of the proposal being to:

- promote horticulture,

- improve wellbeing,
- reduce isolation,
- support social connection,
- encourage gentle, physical activity and
- strengthen community cohesion within Barton Upon Humber.

The detail of the proposal was developed in partnership with the Living Later Life Well Project, a community project based at Trinity Methodist Church, Barton Upon Humber, aimed at reducing social isolation and improving wellbeing in people aged 60+. The details are:

#### ***The 'place' Plot 47***

- Plot 47 and the adjacent communal area (formerly Plot 46A) will be enhanced through installation of the polytunnel, outdoor growing area including raised beds and a quiet space incorporating the existing memorial bench,
- The area will be fully accessible, with a parking space adjacent to the toilet,
- The plot is close to existing communal facilities, including main shed with gardening tools, borehole and water tanks, defibrillator and grassed area.

#### ***The 'people'***

- A group of 12 – 18 like-minded people known as **Plot 47 growers**, including current and retired plot holders and 'Living Later Life Well' participants, will join together to grow vegetables, fruits and flowers from seed to plants and onto harvest,
- On a daily basis all plot holders will access this communal area for informal social interaction and refreshments.

#### ***The 'process'***

- In late winter and early spring, **Plot 47 growers** will sow vegetables, fruit and flower seeds in professional propagation equipment inside the polytunnel,
- During the spring, the plants will be nurtured and potted on,
- In late spring and early summer, the '**Plot 47 Growers**' will set the mature plants in the raised beds on Plot 47 or elsewhere on the site, or sell them either to plot holders or at occasional community garden events,
- The **Plot 47 Growers** will create hanging baskets and planters and support Barton Upon Humber garden initiatives,
- The process is intended to be self-funding and non-profit making.

### **Site location and description**

The allotments are located on the south side Dam Road West. The site is approximately 90 metres wide (east to west) and 200 metres deep (north to south). The site has farmland to the East, South and Western sides with a 2 metre high hedge as the boundary. The northern side is Dam Road West with verge parking area adjacent to a water filled ditch running parallel to the road. A public footpath runs alongside the western boundary.

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the allotments is gained over a small brick bridge onto a track, which leads along the centre of the site running north to south. Either side of the central track are allotment plots, some of which have wooden shelters or sheds.



Figure 1: Aerial photograph.  
Copyright Google Maps

The society has a 5 metre by 3 metre shed situated on the west side of the central track, approximately 100 metres from the entrance on Plot 46. It contains an automated external defibrillator along with tools and equipment for general use. Behind this shed is a communal grassed area approximately 6 metres wide by 30 metres deep, which is used for social events for both plot holders and public open days. At the rear is a series of water tanks, which are fed from an adjacent borehole.



Figure 2: Aerial maps showing location of main shed and communal area.  
Copyright Google Maps

On Plot 47 immediately to the North of the Main Shed, is a Kazuba Waterless Toilet. Full Planning Permission was granted for this facility in September 2022 (PA/2022/1420). The intention is that Plot 47 will be enhanced by erecting the Poly tunnel and adjacent to it will be an outdoor growing space and quite area.

Figure 3: Photo of Plot 47, looking west from the central drive, showing the Kazuba Toilet at it's eastern end.



Figure 4: Photo of Plot 47, looking west along the plot.

### Layout, scale and appearance of the proposed development

The final make and model of the polytunnel has not yet been selected. However, a commercial-grade single span polytunnel will be procured following grant funding. The principles to be used to select the most appropriate polytunnel will be:

- Something which will stand the test of time and regular use,
- Environmentally 'friendly',
- Easy to use,
- Easy to maintain,

- Accessible for all members and visitors,
- Visually in keeping with the site.

The Polytunnel will have maximum dimensions of:

- Length: 12.8 metres,
- Width: 5 metres wide
- Height: 2.94 metres.

It will be constructed using galvanised steel hoops and diffused polythene covering. The hoops will be attached to 1m-long foundation tubes made from high-strength steel, the bottom half of which will be set into concrete bases measuring 50 x 50 x 50cm.

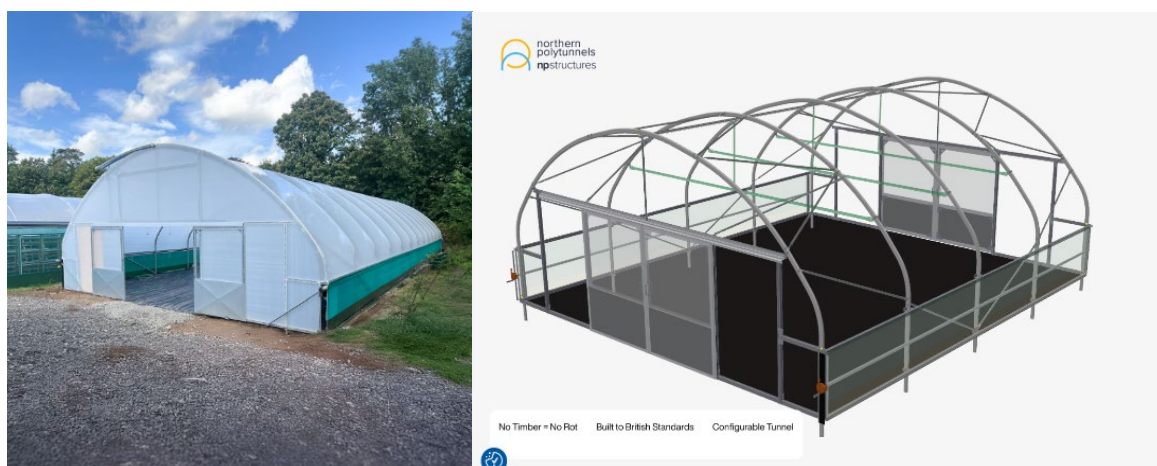


Figure 5; Northern Polytunnel Enviropro Single span. Copyright Northern Polytunnel

Each end of the Polytunnel will include heavy duty double sided doors. Along each side, net vents will improve internal circulation and when necessary a protective curtain can temporarily cover the net to shield crops from direct wind and rain.

The floor of the Polytunnel will be soil, covered in a protective weed suppressant membrane and wood chippings.

### Siting

The location is currently known as Plot 47 and is a traditional full sized allotment plot. However, at the eastern end of the plot is the Kazuba Waterless Toilet referred to above. Immediately to the south of the Plot, close to the hedgerow is Plot 46B, which is a half sized plot. To the east of that half plot is a grassed area which is for communal use, especially at summer garden parties (See Appendix 3 Existing Block plan).

It is proposed that the polytunnel will be positioned at the western end of Plot 47, immediately to the north of Plot 46B (see Appendix 3 Proposed Block plan). It will be positioned approximately 4.2metres east of the hedgerow, so as to allow for the development of a Wildlife Garden and Composting area, which is intended to be an enhanced Bio Diversity area (see below for more detail).

## **Visual Impact**

The polytunnel will be located within the established communal area of the allotment site and will be screened by an existing boundary hedgerow and surrounding plots.

Its modest height, translucent covering, and agricultural appearance will ensure it does not appear visually dominant and it will integrate well with the rural character of the site.

## **Biodiversity Net Gain**

A Small Sites Biodiversity Metric has been completed and demonstrates a net gain of +33.89% for area habitats, exceeding the statutory minimum requirement of 10%. The net gain will be delivered through the creation of a biodiversity enhanced area of approximately 25 m<sup>2</sup>, which will be developed between the rear of the Polytunnel and the hedgerow, at the western end of Plot 47. (see Appendix 3 Proposed Block plan). This enhanced area will be a Wildlife Garden and Composting area, measuring 6m by 4.2m. The Bio Diversity Net Gain Statement at Appendix 5 sets out more detail.

## **Accessibility**

Honeycomb matting will be installed within the walkways and cultivation areas. Clear accessible routes will link the polytunnel to the Kazuba Toilet, parking place and growing areas. The sliding doors at each end of the polytunnel will enable access for all users of the polytunnel.

## **Conclusion**

The proposed development supports community wellbeing, sustainable growing, bio diversity and social inclusion and fits perfectly with the core object of the Barton Upon Humber Allotment Society, namely **'the promotion of horticulture in Barton Upon Humber'**.

It represents a modest, well-managed enhancement to existing communal facilities and will not harm the character or appearance of the site, neighbouring users, or the wider environment.

**Kevin Sharp**

**President**

**Barton Upon Humber Allotment Society**