

The Westonbirt Wood Project

the friends
of Westonbirt
Arboretum

This project sets out to promote a better understanding of the huge range of possibilities that trees, and their amazing products, have to offer.

It will showcase the lifecycle of trees at Westonbirt - from tiny seed, to magnificent specimen, to bespoke craft and construction material.

Once a cattle shed and holding pen, Westonbirt's Wood Centre is a prominent heritage feature within the arboretum landscape. This project will revitalise this space, creating a central point for all timber-related activities.

Gazing out from the Treetop Walkway, the viewer will see this area transformed into a hub of activity.

These new facilities will be of great benefit to Westonbirt, allowing us to mill, store and sell wood.

The public will also be able to buy unique pieces of quality Westonbirt timber and furniture in the shop, take part in pre-booked wood craft workshops and learn about traditional crafts at the demonstration area.

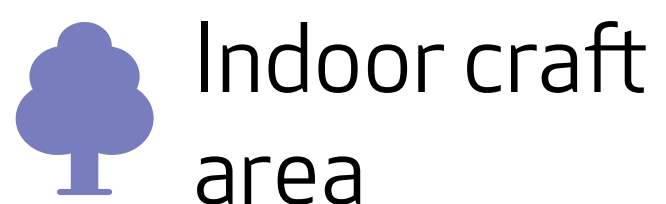


View from the Walkway

The below plan shows where each area sits within the overall space.



Shop



Indoor craft area



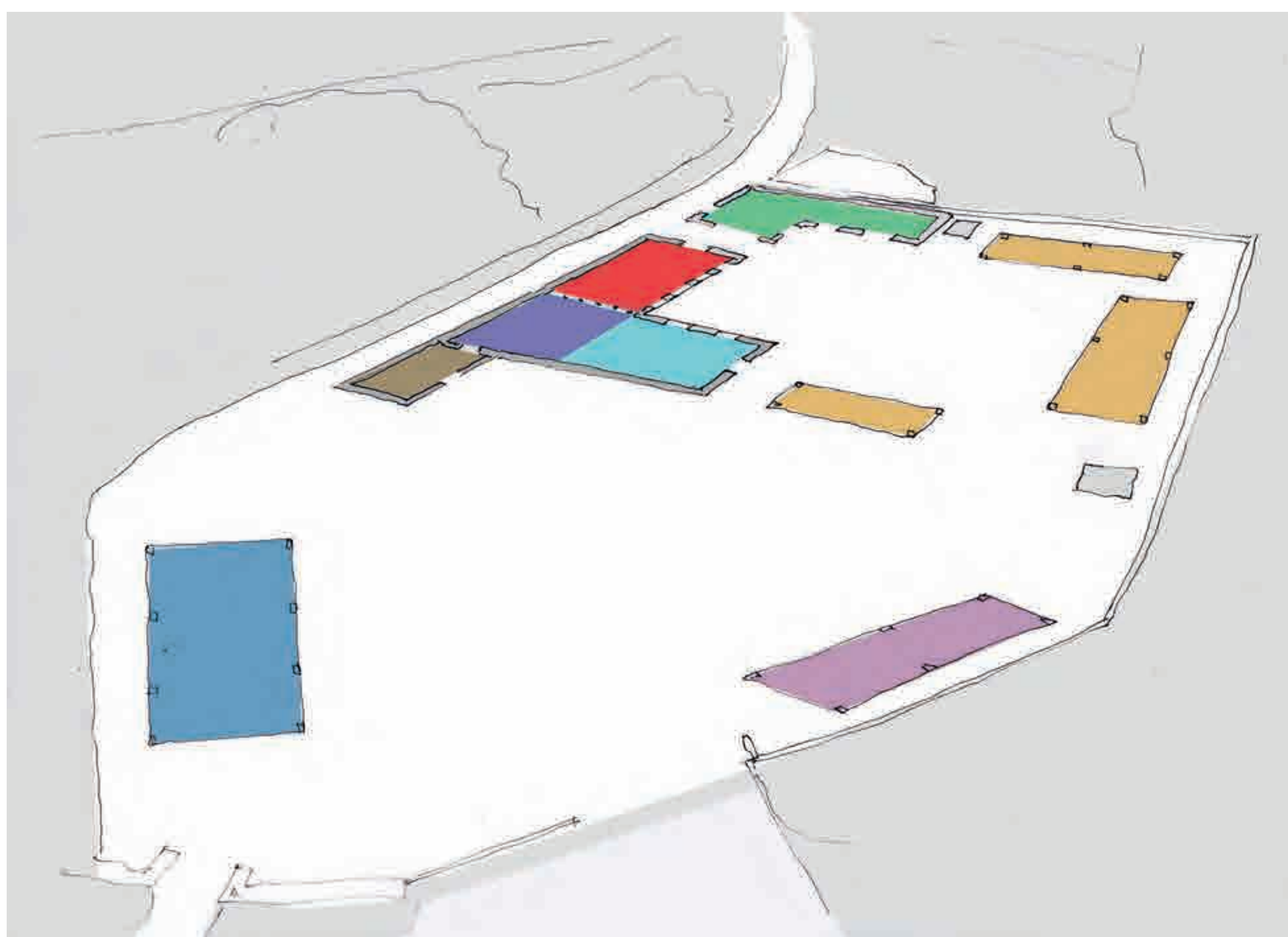
Workshop



Office



Timber drying store



Craft demo area



Craft shelters



Compost toilets



Timber milling shelter

The facilities out in the yard

The covered demo space and viewing area

Engaging with visitors about timber and its uses is an essential part of this project.

This space will allow traditional craftspeople to demonstrate their skills 'in-action'.

Visitors will also witness the active craft yard in use, showcasing the amazing things that can be made from timber.



The milling and timber storage barns

Two new structures will be made from Westonbirt wood, allowing timber to be milled and stored onsite.

The smaller of the two buildings will house a mobile sawmill, which can cut trunks into useable planks of timber.

Freshly felled and sawn timber will be seasoned before it can be used, so the larger barn will be a place where it can be dried and stored.



The craft yard

The open shelters contain pole lathes, shave horses and other traditional bodging tools.

This area is currently used for chair-making courses, a few of which are run each year. Expanded facilities will allow for this programme of traditional timber-craft workshops to be expanded and diversified.

An open fire for tea, sausages and baked potatoes is of course an essential, not to mention a further necessity - compost toilets.



Showcasing woodcraft skills

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The shop

A retail and gallery space to exhibit the pieces produced by a range of skilled craftspeople.

Not only will handcrafted items be on sale, but the public will be able to place orders for specific pieces of timber for use in their own projects.

The ability to buy genuine Westonbirt timber is expected to attract specialist woodworkers. Woodturners, cabinet makers and artisans will have the opportunity to create bespoke pieces from beautiful wood.



The workshop...

Fitted out with all the essential woodcraft tools and machinery, the workshop will allow craftspeople and those taking part in courses to handcraft all sorts of items.

Specialist tools and traditional techniques will increase the scope of the items that can be crafted.

...and indoor craft area

This flexible indoor craft space can be used either in conjunction with the adjacent workshop or as a teaching area for small groups.

An adaptable indoor space will make year-round working possible, without worrying about the weather conditions.

The glazed screen at the back of the shop ensures visitors can engage with the work taking place and they will hopefully be inspired to try out woodcraft for themselves.

