

Proposed Site Plan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This statement is in support of new planning and listed building applications for works to Meadow Larkins. These new applications follow the withdrawal of the planning and listed building applications ref.s **20/02450/FUL** and **20/02455/LBC**. The design statement for those applications remains largely applicable and is appended to this statement for reference.

The new application drawings show proposed amendments to the design. These revisions follow feedback from the council officers in the light of responses from the consultation process and previous applications.

This statement:

- describes the changes to the design and why they have been made,
- provides further information on what is to be demolished and what is to be retained and why,
- provides further detail on the methodology for the deconstruction and reconstruction of defined elements of the cowshed & stables
- and provides further assessment of the character of the site and its immediate context, to explain how the proposed design is sensitive to that character and will cause no harm to it.

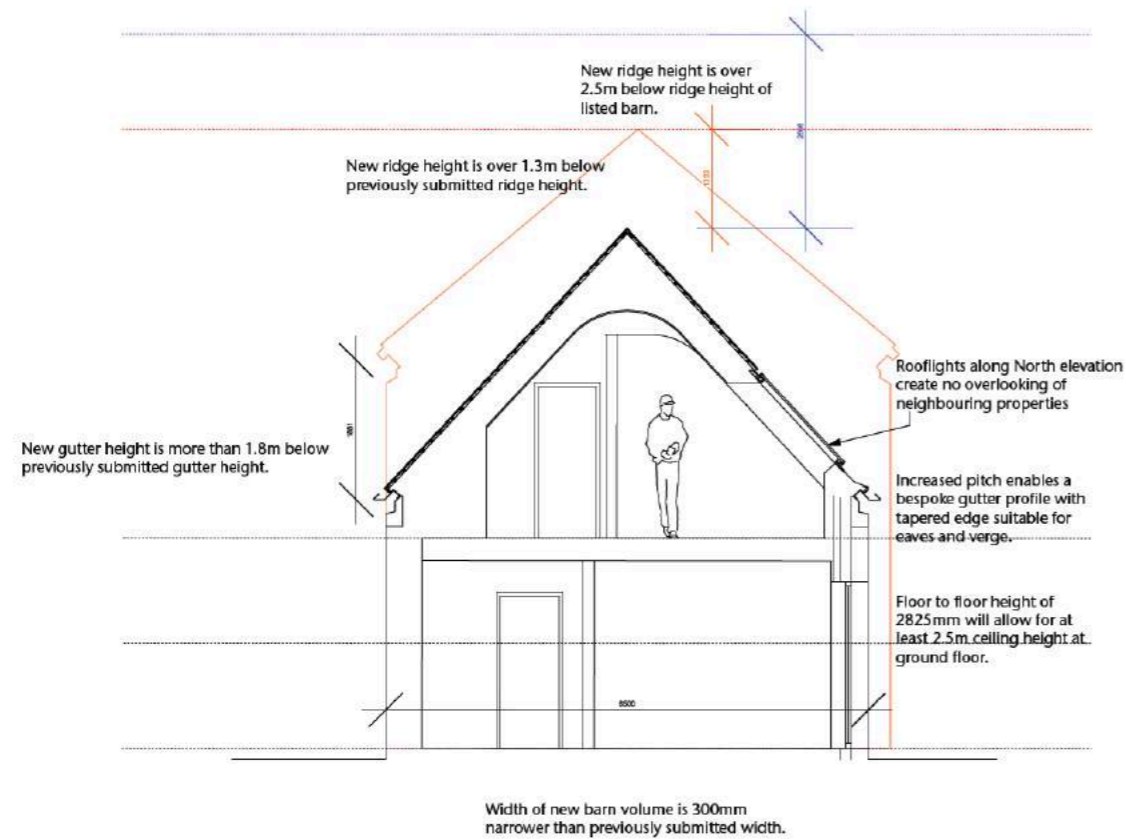
2.0 THE AMENDED DESIGN

The proposed extended house is made of three distinct barn forms:

- the new barn extending out to the east
- the central stable block which is the main element of the existing house running east-west,
- and the cowshed which is currently a ruin that sits beside the listed wall on the street frontage to the west.

Following the initial planning application on 9th October 2020, we received detailed comments from the planning and conservation officers who recommended a number of changes to the design encompassing scale and massing, fenestration, roof pitch and an emphasis on an agricultural aesthetic.

We have amended the designs to respond to these comments as follows:



Proposed Section through the New Barn



Proposed North and South Elevations

2.1

THE NEW BARN

This has been substantially reduced in size to lessen its visual impact, primarily in relation to the listed barn to the south but also in relation to the paddock to the east:

- The width has reduced by 300mm,
- The length has reduced by more than 4m from 23m to 18.5m,
- The height has reduced by 1.3m.

The reduction in length means that the eastern end is now 2.6m from the root protection area of the retained poplar tree, while the western end is now separated from the central stable block with a glazed link. This link highlights the gap between old and new and gives full visibility to the retained gable wall of the stable block.

The reduction in height means the new barn is now over 2.5m – the height of a full domestic storey – below the ridge of the listed barn, so it is clearly subservient and will have a lesser visual impact on the setting of that barn and on the paddock to the east. The increase in roof pitch allows the eaves to be lowered even further and allows for a bespoke gutter profile that will align with the roof slates.

As well as the reduction in size, the built form has become simpler: fewer rooms means fewer windows and no chimney. Now it is just a simple barn form with a single large opening on each side, symmetrical windows in the gables, and a small number of rooflights clustered in groups. The rooflights on the south are located well above head height at the half level so there is no possibility of any overlooking from them.

2.2

THE STABLE BLOCK

The changes to the external form of this central element follow from the revised internal layout: with the reduction in size of the new barn and greater use of the cowshed, the centre of the house shifts westwards and as a result the front entrance into the stable block moves from the east end to the west end. This has the advantage of moving the front door nearer to the site entrance so the forecourt can shrink and the garden area expand. The roof pitch is increased to match the New Barn and is closer to the form of the original stable block roof.

The proposed partial demolition and retention of areas of this building are covered in more detail below.

2.3

THE COWSHED

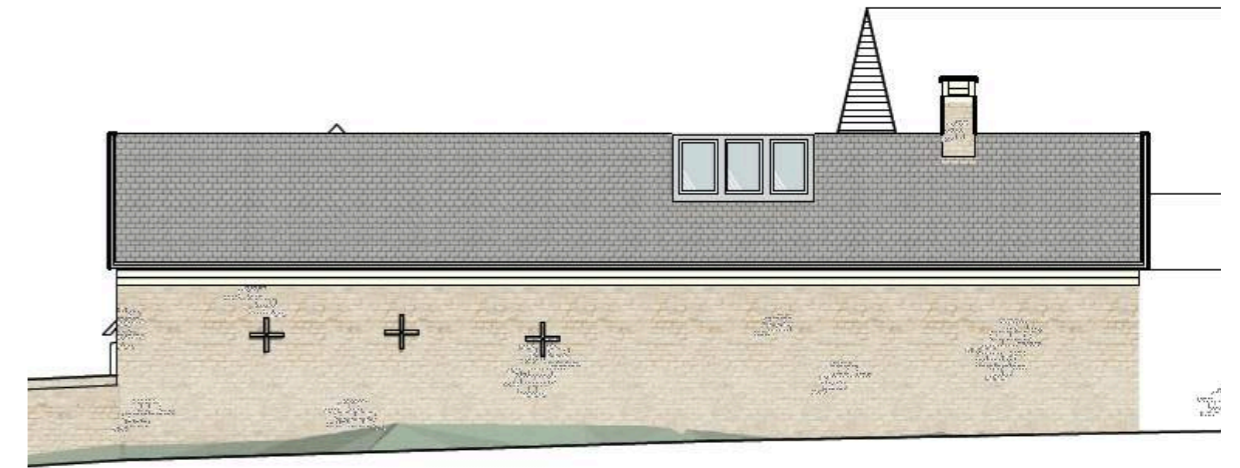
This building is now more populated with habitable rooms to make up for the reduction in size of the new barn. This does not affect the external form apart from the openings within it and the addition of a stone chimney stack on the ridge.

The design of the eaves replaces the existing concrete flagstone coping with a precast stone element which will sit on top of the existing listed boundary wall. This minimises alterations to the boundary wall and ensures enough space internally to house two storeys. The increase in pitch is more reflective of the original cowshed as can be seen in the aerial photograph from 1947 and has added less than 800mm to the ridge height, which is still 2.8m below that of the neighbouring listed barn.

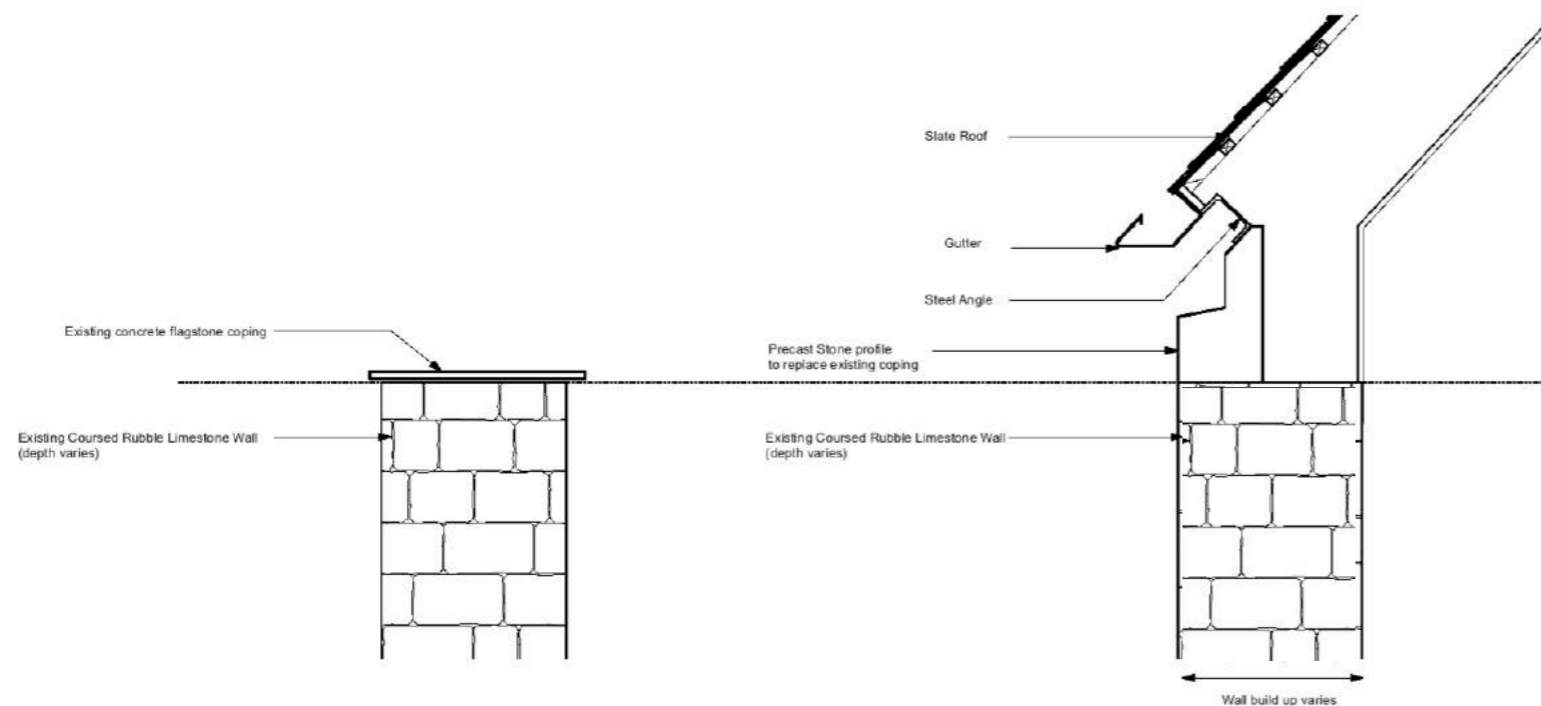
It was proposed during the pre-app meeting on 8th July 2020 that the roof pitch could be increased to provide a more agricultural aesthetic. It was noted at the meeting between AJA and OCC planning and conservation officers to discuss further revised designs on 7th May 2021 that the proposed increase in roof pitch was beneficial to the scheme.

With respect to the fenestration:

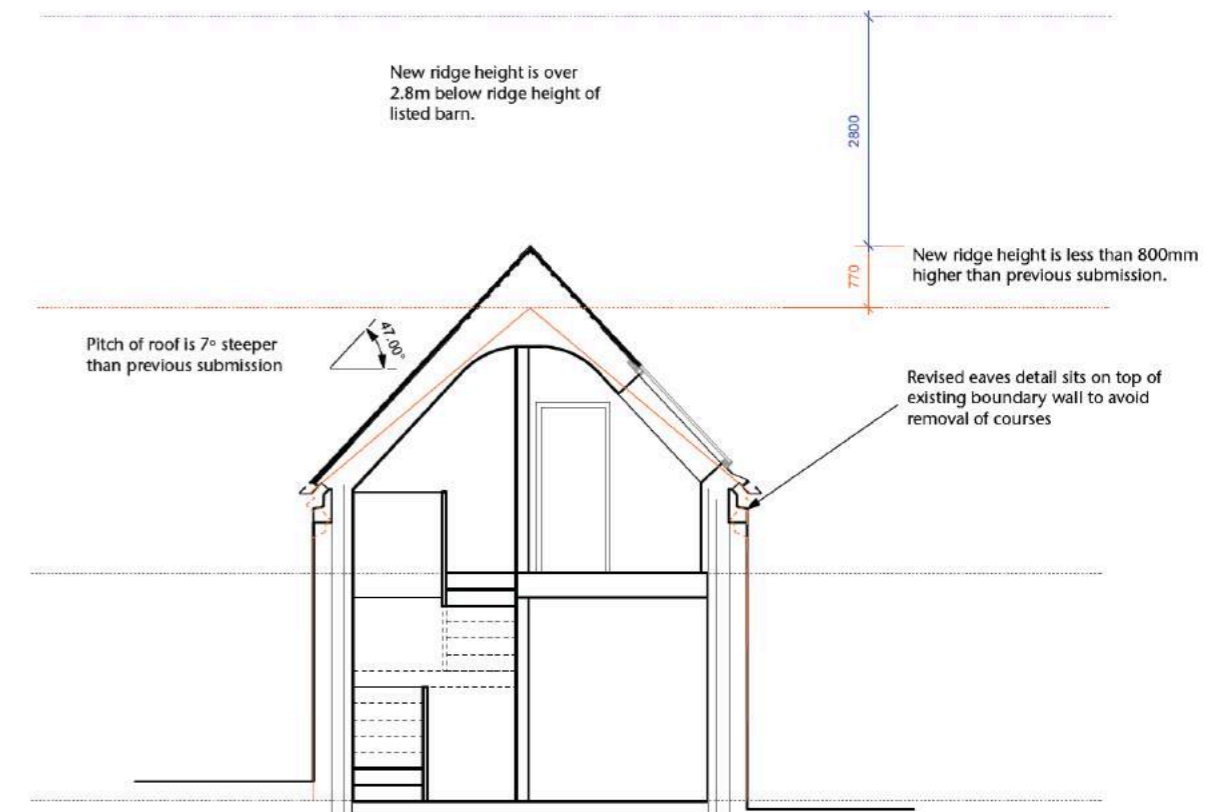
- There is no longer a garage in the building, which means no garage door is needed and the north gable elevation can revert to something closer to the original cowshed. This is just visible in the aerial photograph of 1947; it is hard to discern but it seems there was a gable loft window and possibly loft access steps below it but certainly no large opening.
- The openings in the east façade facing the rear courtyard now more closely match the remnants of openings in the extant ruins of the original east wall.
- For better lighting to the double-height space within, a ridge light is proposed akin to traditional studio lights.



Proposed West Elevation showing the Cowshed



Existing and Proposed boundary wall details



Proposed Section through the Cowshed

2.4 MATERIALS

The materials have been carefully chosen to match or compliment the original materials used on the site.

Limestone walling

The existing coursed rubble limestone walling will be treated with the following hierarchy:

- 1) Wherever possible existing original stonework will be retained in situ as per drawing P.024A.
- 2) Poor quality 1970s additions which feature cement heavy mortar will be remediated where possible and mortar replaced with lime mortar.
- 3) Where remedial works are not possible, poor quality modern coursing to be removed by hand and stones to be reused as below.
- 4) If removed, wherever possible existing stones are to be salvaged and reused.
- 5) Wherever new stone is required, it is to be a limestone to match the original stonework laid in coursing as the original stonework and pointing is to be lime mortar.

Demolition of walls where reclamation of stone is possible is to be done by hand using hand tools with particular attention given to the careful removal of mortar. Stones will be stored on site for reuse.

Precast Stone

Precast stone is proposed for key details such as window heads and sills, copings and chimney cappings. These elements will complement the existing stonework and will be in a colour sympathetic to the colours of the existing stonework.

Natural Slate

Natural slate is proposed for the roof tiles. As noted on page 14 of the heritage statement, the cowshed was originally roofed with slate before the college removed the slates for use on another building elsewhere. Slate is widely used around old Headington and on many neighbouring buildings, most notably on the neighbouring listed barn which would have once formed part of the same group of buildings. Slate will unify the roofscape of the buildings at Meadow Larkins and the adjacent listed barn once again.

Dark Timber

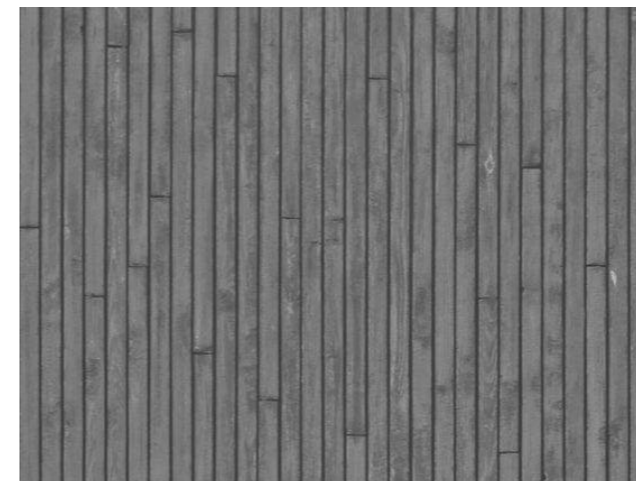
The use of timber helps to tie together windows in the elevations creating the impression of fewer, larger openings more akin to agricultural typology than domestic. The dark timber itself references the gable ends of the neighbouring listed barn.



Roof Slates



Stonework



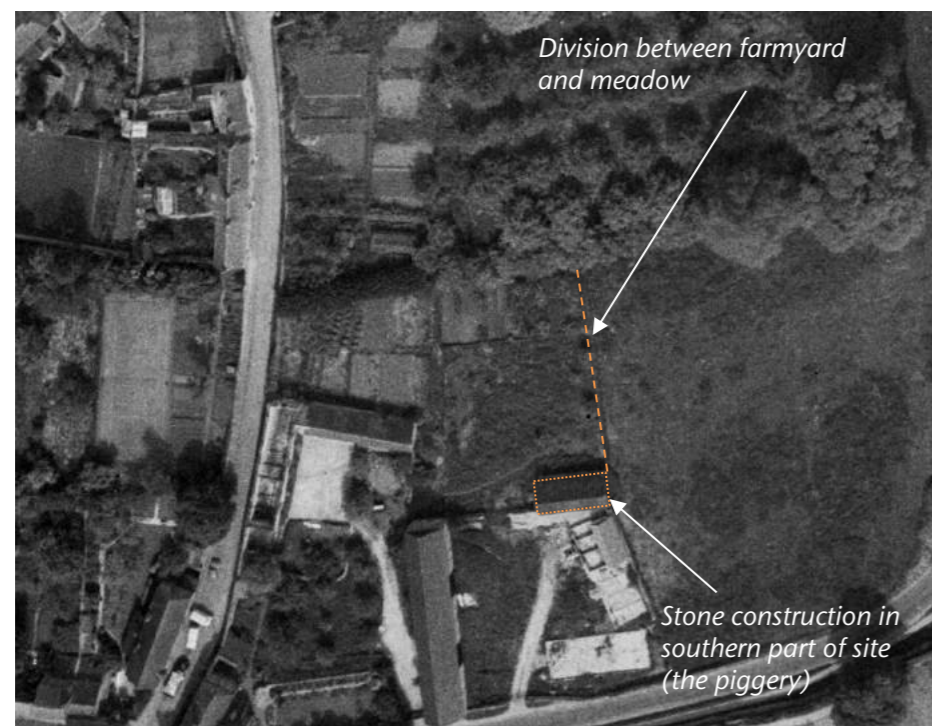
Dark Timber



Precast Stone



Aerial Photograph - 1947



Aerial Photograph - 1961

3.0 DEMOLITION AND RETENTION

The drawings now provide more information on the proposed partial demolition and rebuilding of the existing buildings (Refer to P.024A) to retain all that is original and of value and remove only the poor quality work done as part the original domestic conversion in the 1970's. This does mean that the rear wall and roof of the stable block, none of which is original, will be replaced but the new work will be higher quality and will more closely capture the spirit of the original stables in the columniated and glazed south elevation. Remedial works, removal and replacement will be undertaken according to the methodology outlined on the previous page.

The original form of the cowshed will be reinstated with a new roof which will rest on a new coping atop the listed wall. The proposed works will keep the listed wall stable and protected, and it will be left exposed internally.

Please refer to the Heritage Impact Assessment for a full description and assessment of the historic elements and justification for the proposed works. None of the amendments proposed here go against anything in that report.

4.0 CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

The eastern half of the site was planted with fruit trees subsequent to the conversion of the stable to a house in the 1970's. It is described as an orchard but has never been used commercially as such; it was only for the enjoyment of the occupants of the house. Nonetheless it does have a different character from the western half of the site which is essentially the house and a parking court and a garden court. The view through the gap in the listed wall on Larkins Lane gives a restricted view across the forecourt and the orchard to the paddock beyond, and this view is a positive element in the Conservation Area.

But a greater distinction than that within the site is the difference between the site as a whole and the meadow beyond. This difference predates the domestic conversion: the 1961 aerial photograph shows that there was a farm building in the south-east corner of the site extant at that time. This building is presumed to be the piggery as referenced in the Heritage Impact Assessment. (It can also be seen in the 1947 aerial photograph.) The 1961 photograph also shows that the site was divided off from the meadow to the east where the current site boundary is and was sub-divided in the manner of a working kitchen garden. Since the domestic conversion, for the last 50 years, that eastern site boundary has marked the separation between open meadow/paddock and more enclosed residential and incidental use.

So while the orchard area may be classified as green space, it has a different character to the meadows beyond. It was historically part of the Mathers Farm farmyard with a piggery in the corner and use as a kitchen garden, and then for last half a century it has been an orchard garden associated with the house.



Existing and proposed views through entrance gate from Larkins Lane

4.1 THE IMPACT ON THE ORCHARD CHARACTER

The orchard area is not publicly accessible open space. There is no city planning policy which prevents development of private green space like this, subject to compliance with other policies. So for any development proposal here what matters in policy terms is that the character of the area will not be adversely affected.

1. The proposed development affects only the southern third of the orchard area, which is the least visible part from the site access, being obscured by the listed wall and the existing building. The visualisations show that the proposed extension here will just be visible from Larkins Lane but that is largely because the entrance to the site is to be widened so the view across the site will get bigger. So the fact the building will be seen is a by-product of the positive enlargement of the view.
2. Only poor quality grade C2 trees of small scale are being proposed for removal. The nature of the space as an orchard will remain intact.
3. The location of the proposed extension to the house is close to where the piggery was historically, in the south-east corner of the site, so the historic character of the area as a farmyard with outbuildings will be reinforced.

Although there is no public access to the paddock to the east, the site can be seen from the entrance to it off Barton Lane. From this view the roof of the existing house can just be seen but below the higher roof of the house on the other side of Larkins Lane. The proposed extension will be largely obscured by the retained mature poplar on the boundary. Combined with the fact it is set back by 13.4m from the boundary, this means the extension will be less visible in this view than the small outbuilding in the curtilage of the listed threshing barn which is very clearly visible across the paddock, and it will be seen in the context of the roofscape of Headington village beyond.



Existing and proposed views across neighbouring paddock from layby access

5.0

CONCLUSION

- The changes proposed as a whole make the collection of three buildings more cohesive and less impactful, being of similar modest size and simple barn-like form connected by similar glazed links.
- The substantial shrinkage of the new barn extension will mean it has far lower impact on the setting of the listed threshing barn and the glimpsed views across the paddock.
- All the original parts of the stable and cowshed which are of historic value will be retained and the forms of both buildings reinstated in high quality materials and design.
- The character of the green space as a historic farmyard and then a small orchard will be retained and enhanced by the extension where the piggery once was.

6.0 UNVERIFIED VIEWS METHODOLOGY

Every effort has been made to produce images that provide as accurate a representation as possible, however the views shown are unverified.

To prepare the unverified views, photographs were taken on site with a camera lens focal length of 40mm. The proposal has been modelled three dimensionally in Sketchup. Views were taken from the Sketchup model to match the location and focal length of the real world camera.

The views taken from the model were then overlaid with the site photographs, to align the model in the real world setting. Existing buildings have been used as reference points to help scale and locate the images. Photoshop was used to tidy up the images and give a realistic view of the proposal within the existing landscape.



View taken from 3D model



3D model view overlaid on site photograph



Proposal shown within existing landscape

7.0 VISUALISATIONS



Proposed view from the driveway



Proposed view from inside the Cowshed