

Design Access & Heritage Impact Statement

Project No. 3944
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document accompanies the application for planning permission to convert an existing stable barn and adjoining agricultural outhouse to a new single dwelling. The stable is part of a complex of buildings, including grade II listed farmhouse, stableyard and barns. This document explains the history of the site with heritage significance and assess impact of proposals.

2.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE SITE

2.1 Location

The existing stable barn and adjoining agricultural outhouse are located within the grounds of Abbeyfields Farm, Newstead Abbey Park, Nottingham, NG15 8GE (Figure 01).



Figure 01 – Aerial Photo

Abbeyfields Farm is located midway along Station Avenue between the village of Newstead and the historic property, Newstead Abbey. Access to the site is via a lane south from Station Avenue, that leads to Abbeyfields Farm (Figure 02). The site sits outside the boundary of Newstead Abbey listed parkland. Access along Station Avenue is restricted to residents and select visitor vehicles. The Local Plan identifies the site as being in the Green Belt and Station Avenue as being a part of the National Cycle Network, Route 6.



Figure 02 – Site Location

2.2 Surrounding Property

The proposed site sits northwest within the curtilage of Abbeyfields Farmhouse, a grade II listed renaissance revival farmhouse build circa 1831 (Figure 03 and 04). The following details of the listing are provided on https://hi_storicengland.org.uk/:

“Farmhouse. C.1831. Brick with double gabled C20 pantile roof. Ashlar dressings. Renaissance Revival style. Cogged plinth, first floor band and eaves. Stepped coped gables with obelisk finials. 2 ridge stacks, one of them with 4 stalks set diagonally. Windows are cross and mullioned casements mostly with hood moulds. South front has central gabled porch with basket arched opening and four centred arched door. Flanked by single casements. Above, central mullioned casement flanked by single cross casements. East side has a single casement on each floor. North gable has 2 casements on each floor and off-centre Tudor arched blocked opening. West side has to left, Tudor arched door and to its right, 2 casements. Above, 2 casements.”

The listed building is located to the south / southeast of the application site with the principal elevation towards the south. Access to the farmhouse is via the driveway to the east adjacent the garage / carport building.

To the west and outside of the ownership of the proposed site is a stableyard and coach house that has been converted to residential use and farm buildings (Figures 05 and 06).

Whilst the buildings associated with application are not officially designated with a curtilage listing, it is recognised the historic context of the site should be acknowledged in this document.



Figure 03 – Abbeyfields Farmhouse (Photo taken from rear backyard near stable barn)



Figure 04 – Listed Building <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1265331>



Figure 05 – Looking towards The Stables and converted Coach House (Photo taken from proposed north elevation looking west)



Figure 06 – Looking towards The Stables and converted Coach House (Photo taken from proposed north elevation looking south)

2.3 Planning Policies and Previous Planning Applications

Following a review of The Adopted Local Plan 2018, relevant planning policies have been consulted:

- Policies LPD 12-15 - Green Belt
- Policy LPD 58 - National Cycle Route

The site is outside the boundary of Newstead Abbey listed parkland.

The following are past granted planning applications in close proximity to this application site:

Reference: 2008/0697
2011/0320
2012/0169
2012/0865NMA
2015/0289
2015/0288

2.4 Description of the Existing Building and Site

The building associated with the application consists of two attached sections, B1 and B2 (see Figures 07-10).

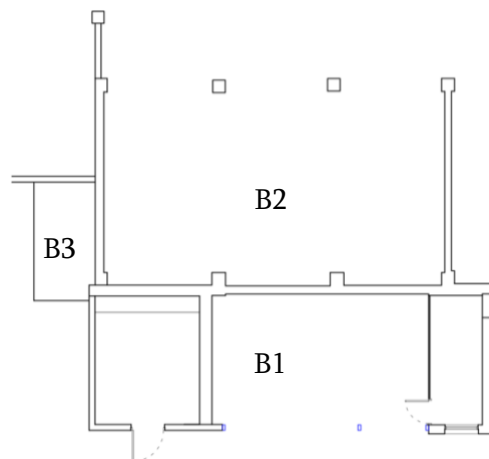


Figure 07 – Existing Plan



Figure 08 – Photo from access road, northeast corner of site

B1 is a traditional stable barn building which is constructed from stone and brick and is covered with a pantile pitched roof. Please refer to the Structural Inspection Report by Lois Plaistow Structural Engineers Ltd, submitted with this application, which outlines in extensive detail the condition of B1 and viability to carry out the proposed works.

In summary, from the observations made, the structural report outlines that the building is structurally suitable to be converted into a dwelling if the recommendations listed are implemented. It is our intention to retain existing features and materials where feasible.

B2 is an open plan outhouse utilised for storage and garages and is constructed from brick with a mono pitch roof covered with corrugated steel sheets.

B3 is a small lean-to log storage area and is not owned by the applicant. There is an agreement between the applicant and the owner that this log store will be relocated or reconstructed following the proposed works.



Figure 09 – Photo from southeast corner of site



Figure 10 – Photo from northwest corner of site

Access with the neighbouring property exists along the north elevation. Whilst this neighbouring property has additional access points to its site, this access (to which the neighbour only has a right of access) also exists to give through access for refuse and emergency vehicles without the need for turning areas for both properties. It will be unimpacted by the proposed scheme.



Figure 11 – Photograph taken from neighbouring site looking east. Neighbour only has right of access. The applicant is sole owner of this access along the north elevation of the application site.

The existing buildings of the site are situated in an idyllic setting with impressive, picturesque views to the east.

In order to assess the existing stable barn, adjoining outhouse and surroundings the following surveys were carried out and are attached to this application:

Measured Survey

Drawing 3944-10 shows the architect's measured survey drawings of the existing fabric.

Structural Survey

As noted previously, a structural survey was carried out by Lois Plaistow Structural Engineers Ltd. The report identifies a number of aspects that need to be remedied but notwithstanding these, the building is considered structurally suitable to be converted into a dwelling if the recommendations listed are implemented.

Ecological Survey

An initial protected species survey by BJ Collins – Protected Species Surveyors Ltd., was carried out to discover evidence of bats at the site. In summary, the initial survey identified evidence of

bats within the structure and triggered the requirement for additional surveys over the active season. These additional surveys have been undertaken and the results, conclusions and recommendations are outlined in the attached application report.

The applicant intends to follow the advice of the ecology reports and apply for an EPS license to carry out the works. They also intend to implement the recommendations for safeguarding of roosting bats from harm during construction and providing permanent roosting provision. They also respect there will be restrictions to when the works can commence.

3.0 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

As has been noted earlier in this document, the proposed site sits north / northwest within the curtilage of Abbeyfields Farmhouse, a grade II listed renaissance revival farmhouse built circa 1831. Figures 12-15 taken from the OS Maps ranging from 1879 - 1967 indicate that there have been minimal changes in the overall form of the farmstead over the last 143 years.

When reviewing the National Farmsteads Character Statement by Historic England, the arrangement of the buildings in a courtyard layout was very common in 19th century farmsteads and this is also evident in the OS Maps.

What we can deduce from this historic information is that the general layout of the site remains but where change has occurred it has been contained within the existing footprint of the farmstead and has been relatively minimal and only relating to the outhouses, stables and/or barns. The footprint of the listed farmhouse has remained unchanged throughout.

It would appear where the most notable change in layout to the farmstead has occurred is in the neighbouring stable yard and coach house. When focused on the areas where alterations have occurred within the proposed application site over the years, it has primarily been to the north of the rear elevation of the farmhouse. A long narrow stable or outhouse to the northwest corner of the farmhouse was removed to open up and create a larger yard. This transition appears to have occurred between 1917 and 1948 and is similar to the layout in which the buildings are orientated today.

The stone barn featuring in this application is likely to have been constructed in the 18th or 19th century, and the adjoining section was in existence but likely rebuilt as a lean-to in 20th century.

It also appears access points to the farmstead and its landscape remain relatively unchanged as well. What is evident is that the existing access from Station Avenue used in this application would not have been used to approach the house originally. This is a notable aspect for the proposed scheme. Primary access to the farmhouse has been altered from the south to the east when reviewing what exists today versus the historical maps shown below.

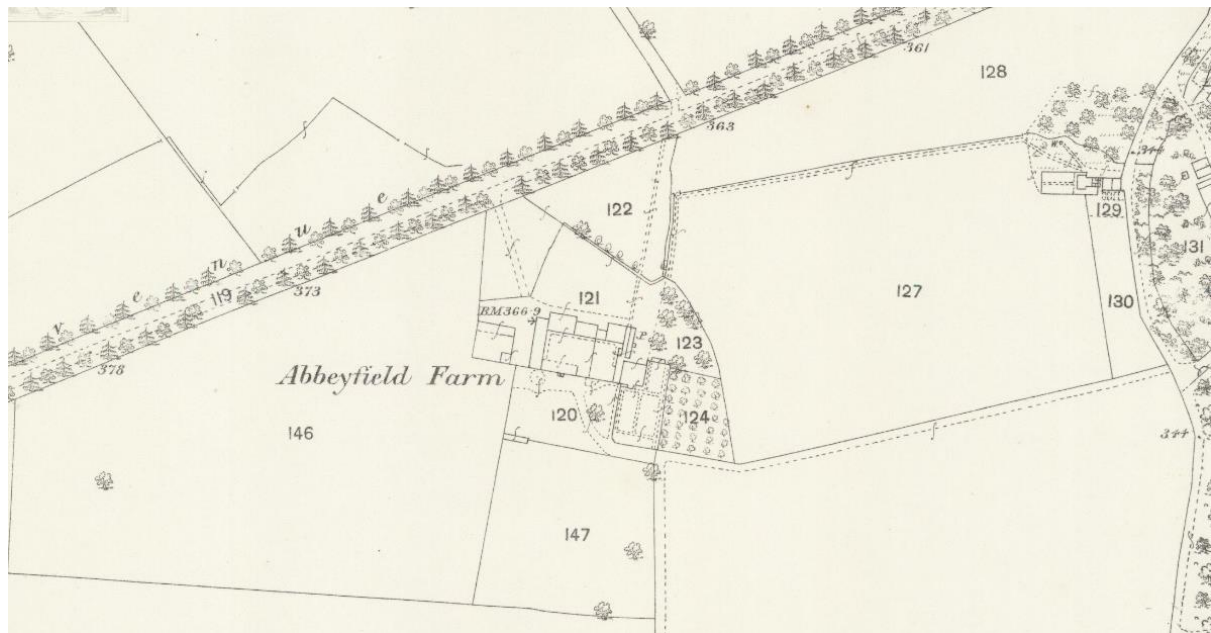


Figure 12 – Abbeyfield Farm taken from OS Map published 1879

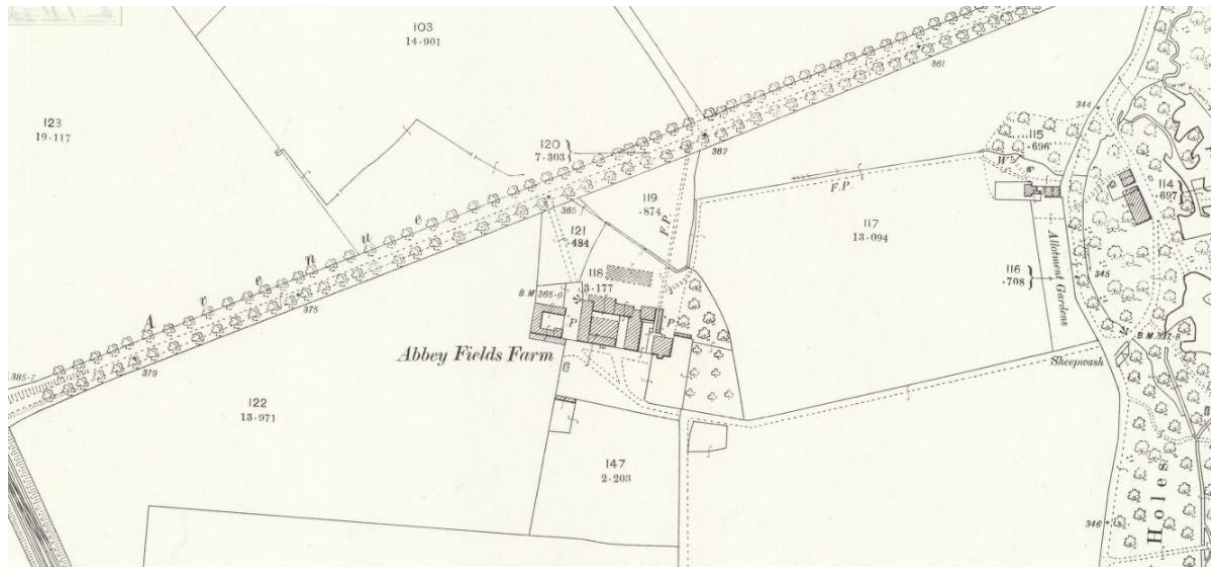


Figure 13 – Abbeyfield Farm taken from OS Map published 1900



Figure 13 – Abbeyfield Farm taken from OS Map published 1917

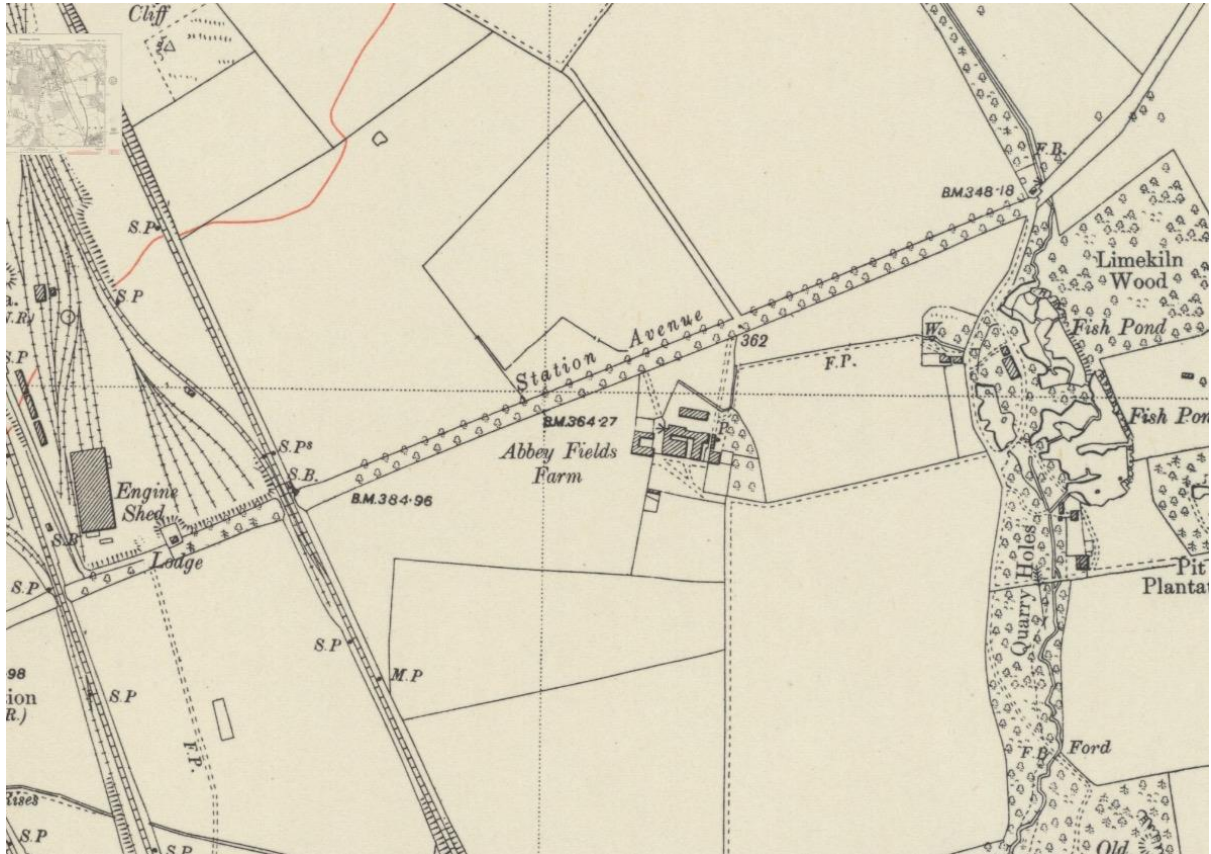


Figure 14 – Abbeyfields Farm taken from OS Map published ca.1948



Figure 15 – Abbeyfields Farm taken from OS Map published ca.1967

Historic England sets out categories of heritage values that contribute to the significance of places. To assess the level of heritage values and subsequent significance we must first consider who values the place and why. As a relatively isolated private dwelling, the listed farmhouse and associated stable barn and outbuildings are likely to be primarily valued by the owner of the site. The adjacent owners and occupants of the stableyard and coach house to the west are also likely to value the wider complex of the buildings. In addition to visitors to the site there may also be wider community interest in the buildings as a designated listed building and farmstead visible within the local landscape.

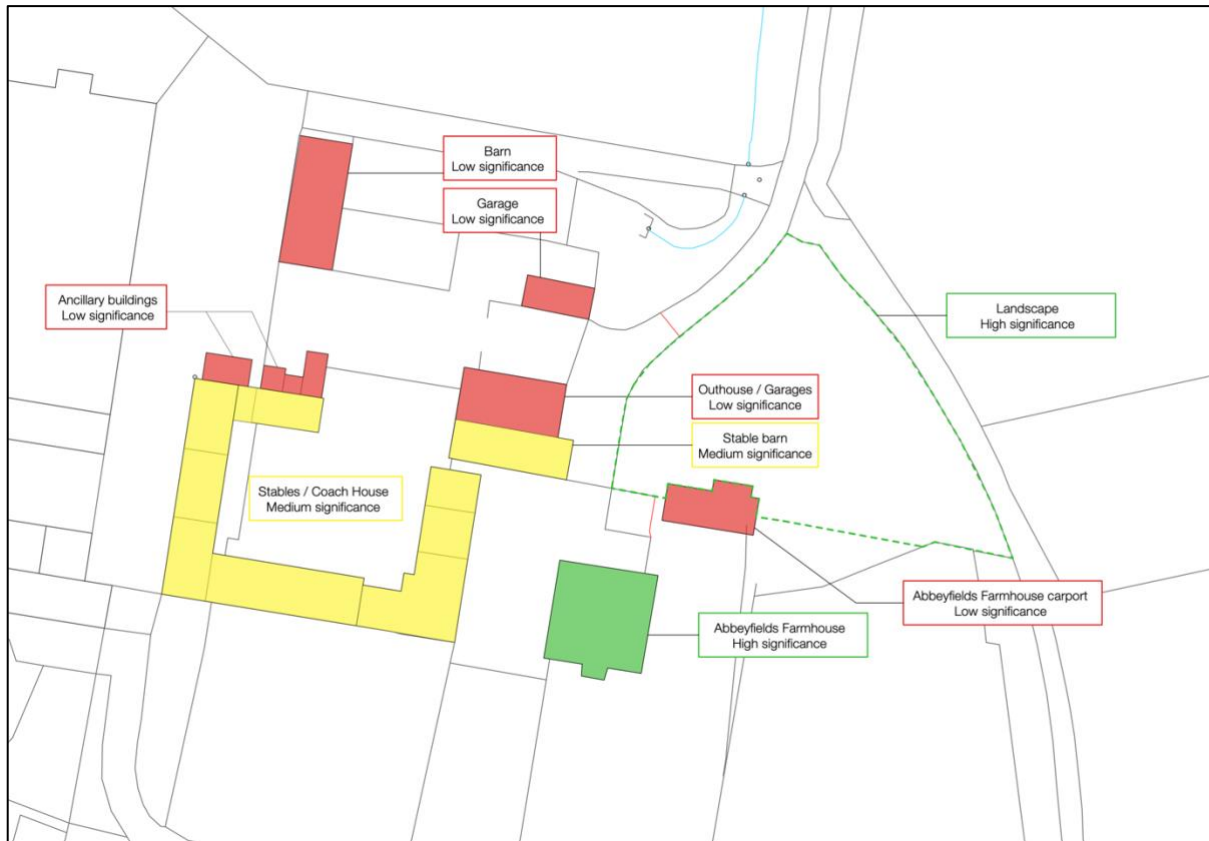


Figure 16 – illustrated heritage significance of the site

The above diagram has been produced to illustrate the heritage significance of the site. Note that the level of significance should be considered in proportion with one another rather than a national scale. There are no elements considered of exceptional significance or of special rarity in terms of archaeology, workmanship, historic features, building type or technique.

Abbeyfields farmhouse is the key element of the farmstead in which the surrounding buildings and resulting setting out were originally arranged. As the oldest building upon the site with grade II listed building status, it has a high significance to the users of the site.

The stable barn included within the proposed scheme has a medium heritage significance as it has appeared to make strong contributions to the character within the setting of the farmhouse but it has suffered damage or unsympathetic alterations over the years where other alterations, reductions or additions have been made.

The lean-to outbuilding is considered to be of low significance due to evidence of modern intervention where once another outhouse or extension to the stable barn may have existed. If

this element where to be removed and/or improved it would likely increase the significance of the adjoining buildings, i.e., the stone stable barn.

Whilst not included within the application site, acknowledgment is given to the heritage significance of the neighbouring stable and coach house. They are only considered to be of medium significance. Whilst the buildings provide strong evidential and historical values that illustrate the prominence and status of the farm, the existing architectural detailing is mixed. In some areas the aesthetic value adds to the historical setting but in other areas it has been diminished by modern intervention in a way which does not enhance or integrate sympathetically with the historical context.

With regards to the landscape in the east of the application site, like the farmstead, it has remained a constant in its setting therefore would be defined as having high significance.

4.0 PROPOSED SCHEME

4.1 Description

Conversion of an existing stable barn and adjoining agricultural outhouse to a new single dwelling.

4.2 Use

The application is for a domestic property, Use Class C3, comprising of four bedrooms, two ensembles, a family bathroom, utility and open plan kitchen, living and dining area.

4.3 Scale and Form

As notated earlier in this Design, Access and Heritage Impact Statement, the existing stable barn and adjoining agricultural outhouse were referenced as separate buildings, B1 and B2 respectively.

For the remaining sections of this document, we will use the same notation for the proposed dwelling as two distinctive, yet similar forms are proposed, with a discrete linking element.

B1 will retain as much of the existing structure as possible, including internal structural walls, to preserve its overall scale and form. Where it will differ from its current form will be the south elevation. Currently where a large void exists for stables, it is proposed to be infilled with stonework to match the existing. It is also proposed for continuity that the existing poor-quality brickwork along this elevation be exchanged for stonework to match the existing.

In line with the structural report, it is recommended the brickwork of the west elevation be rebuilt. It is proposed the new replacement brickwork will match the existing and complement the brickwork of the neighbouring buildings. Careful detailing will be considered to tie new brickwork with existing and new stonework.

As noted in the structural report the roof will need to be reconstructed. This will be done in such a way as to retain existing details and the existing eaves and ridge levels. The existing pantiles will be retained for reuse.

As can be seen when comparing the existing and proposed drawings, B2 as existing is demolished to make way for a new contemporary barn style building with a matching form and

mass to B1. By matching the width, eave level and ridge level of B1, this new built form will reflect and complement the historic fabric and enhance the surroundings. The integration to its agricultural setting will also be achieved through the material choices for B2. A high-quality metal cladding is proposed for both the roof and external walls to create a uniform appearance. Detailing will be considered carefully to ensure a refined, premium finish.

Internally the use of portal frames will facilitate the opportunity to create a dramatic full height void over the dining and living areas, thereby creating the opportunity to optimise the glazing to capture the picturesque views looking east.

The new B2 will sit parallel with B1 and within the existing footprint of the demolished agricultural outhouse. A linking element with a flat roof is proposed between B1 and B2 which will act as the central circulation between both barns and provide shelter to the principal entrance of the dwelling.

The fenestration of both B1 and B2 aims to replicate that of traditional stables so do not dilute the context of its agricultural setting.

4.4 Layout

By renovating B1, the historic form of the building will be reinstated and through utilising the same scale and form. B2 will compliment and integrate within its historical agricultural context.

As identified above, the modest dimensions of B1 determined the scale of not only B2, but the new dwelling as a whole, which in turn has generated its identity and influenced its layout.

The layout of the proposed dwelling will take advantage of picturesque views towards the east but also utilise the distinctive environments created by the existing and new built forms to organise the habitable accommodation.

Through the design development B1 has been naturally allocated as the 'bedroom and utility wing' of the dwelling. Several factors influenced this decision, including: an aim to limit the number of proposed new openings in the existing stonework; to retain as many existing elements as possible of the existing construction; and maintain an agricultural aesthetic externally. There was also careful consideration given to limit aspects such as overlooking on the backyard of the adjacent listed farmhouse and neighbouring stable yard and converted coach house.

All sleeping accommodation and ensembles are located within the footprint of the stone barn. A rear entrance to the dwelling also allows provision for a utility space – a critical element for this agricultural setting to allow the occupiers to access their property without bringing everything through the primary entrance.

Through the proposed adjustment to the external and internal ground floor levels, and the generous ridge height of B1, it is proposed to accommodate a master bedroom suite at first floor level.

A family bathroom terminates the hallway – the linking circulation area between B1 and B2. This is proposed to be used by the bedrooms which do not have an ensuite and any visitors to the dwelling. Rooflights along this corridor will allow natural daylight to reach further into the building. Exposed stonework of B1 will be visible internally, creating a feature to further unify the circulation of the dwelling between B1 and B2.

Due to the proposed use of contemporary construction methods, B2 will have an exciting and dramatic open plan space for the kitchen, dining and living areas. The opportunities generated by a full height area over the dining and living areas are capitalized by the proposal of a large, glazed opening on the East elevation to capture the picturesque views.

Similar to B1, with the height available, a mezzanine floor is proposed over the kitchen. Rooflights on the southern roof pitch of B2 will facilitate additional natural lighting to this open plan space as only north facing windows are possible along the length of the building. This section of roof will also accommodate solar / water heating panels to increase the sustainability credentials of this proposed scheme.

Overall, the proposed layout of the dwelling complements the rhythms of daily family life with details that should allow for adaptability, if required.

4.5 Access

On approaching the dwelling, the existing driveway and proposed landscaping directs any visitor to the main entrance. This principal entrance will be recessed along the East elevation, away from the access route running along the north elevation and provide shelter. An adjustment to the external existing ground levels is proposed to ensure the dwelling will have level access threshold and an accessible WC to the principal storey as per the building regulations for new dwellings.

The existing refuse and emergency vehicular access will remain unaffected by the proposed works.

Provision for 2 car parking spaces is also indicated and should not adversely impact the setting for both the occupiers of the proposed dwelling or neighbouring properties.

4.6 Sustainability and Energy Efficiency

Where possible in the design and sustainability has been considered through the proposed use of local, natural materials and construction with low embodied energy, utilising energy efficient systems, as well as technology and services e.g. solar and water heating panels and package sewage treatment tank.

These principles, coupled with a contemporary yet measured design, forms a scheme that creates a distinctive sense of place for its occupiers, yet sensitively links the proposed dwelling to its context, thereby enhancing the current agricultural setting.

The large opening on the east gable of the new barn in combination with the strategic locations of rooflights and other windows will allow natural daylight to emanate throughout the building reducing the occupants' need to use artificial lighting. In addition, the windows and stone walls will enable passive solar heating as warmth from the sun heats the thermal mass throughout the day to be released into the home in the evening. In addition to high levels of insulation this will reduce the space heating demand and overall energy use.

4.7 Heritage Impact

As has been reference to previously, careful consideration has been given the heritage setting of the proposed scheme.

Views towards the listed building have been minimised and the principal views – in particular from the recessed glazed east gable of B2 - do not overlook the Grade II listed farmhouse but instead look to enhance and draw more attention to the landscape setting of the farmstead to the east which has a high heritage significance.

With the proposed removal and replacement of dilapidated structural elements – in particular along the west elevation - the proposed elevation treatments of both B1 and B2 will dramatically improve the current views from within the courtyards of the neighbouring properties. Having also reviewed alterations made to adjacent buildings, this proposed scheme goes significantly further in its intent to demonstrate a premium level of quality and detail to not only preserve and enhance the original form of the building, but also enrich the setting of the Grade II listed farmhouse and neighbouring stable and coach house.

When analysing the historical footprint of the site and how it has adapted over the years, a conscientious decision was made for the proposed scheme to be contained within this boundary and not exceed the height or mass of its adjoining buildings, thereby sensitively integrating into the historical context.

With regards to access, as has been noted previously in this document, the existing route to the rear of the listed farmhouse, the access that is included within this application was never the primary access to the farmhouse, thereby the proposed scheme does not adversely impact this arrangement.

Careful consideration will be given to the detailing of the boundary treatment between the listed farmhouse and proposed scheme. It is considered an agricultural post and fence with planting screen is more sympathetic in its style and proximity towards the heritage listed property.

5.0 SUMMARY

The proposed scheme provides an appropriate and viable use to the site and its existing buildings. The renovation of the former stable barn reuses and revitalises a traditional agricultural building that will preserve historic fabric and enhance the surroundings. This is further reinforced by the proposed sensitive integration of a new barn with matching scale and form. The proposed scheme is an enhancement and improves the heritage setting of the listed building.