

AJA

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Sycamore Lodge

Revision (A)
AJA Project Ref: 3966

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SECTION 01
Site Analysis

INTRODUCTION

This document supports our design approach for the proposed re-use and adaption of redundant rural buildings and a replacement dwelling at;

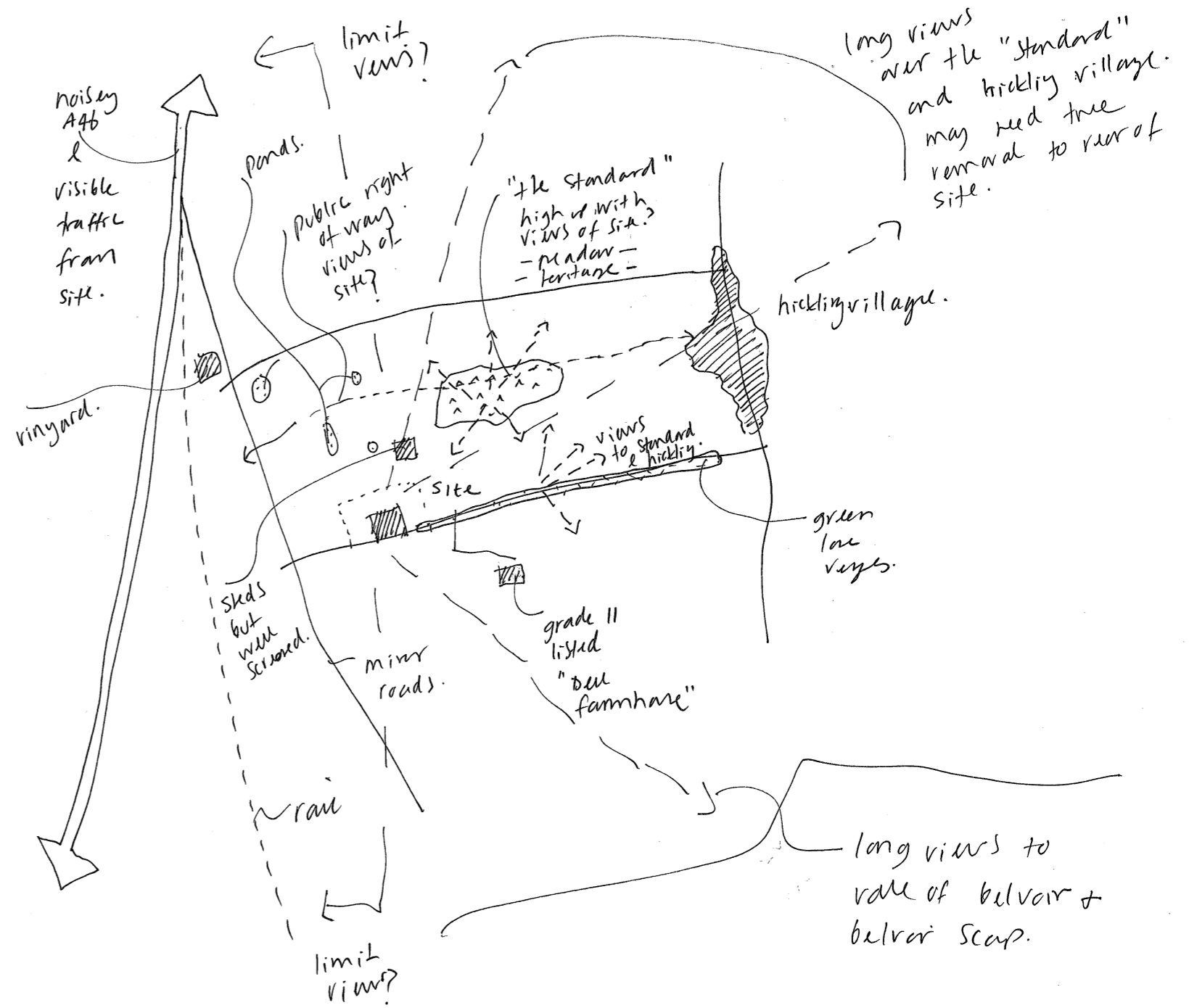
Sycamore Lodge
Green Lanes
Hickling Pastures
LE14 3QF



SITE CONTEXT

The application site is located in Hickling Pastures, within the borough of Rushcliffe and the county of Nottinghamshire. Hickling Pastures is in the western half of the parish of Hickling which contains two settlements. The larger of the two is Hickling; a linear village of approximately 200 homes and several working farms. The smaller Hickling Pastures contains approximately 50 homes which are mostly large, detached properties. The majority of these are located along the A606. The remainder, which includes the application site, are scattered across the rural landscape which has eight farms and a vineyard. The area in general has very strong farming connections.

Dell Farmhouse is a Grade 2 Listed Building which is located on the opposite side of Green Lane to the South-East of the site. There is no intervisibility between the two sites. There are no other Listed Buildings nearby and the site is not in a Conservation Area.



SITE CONTEXT

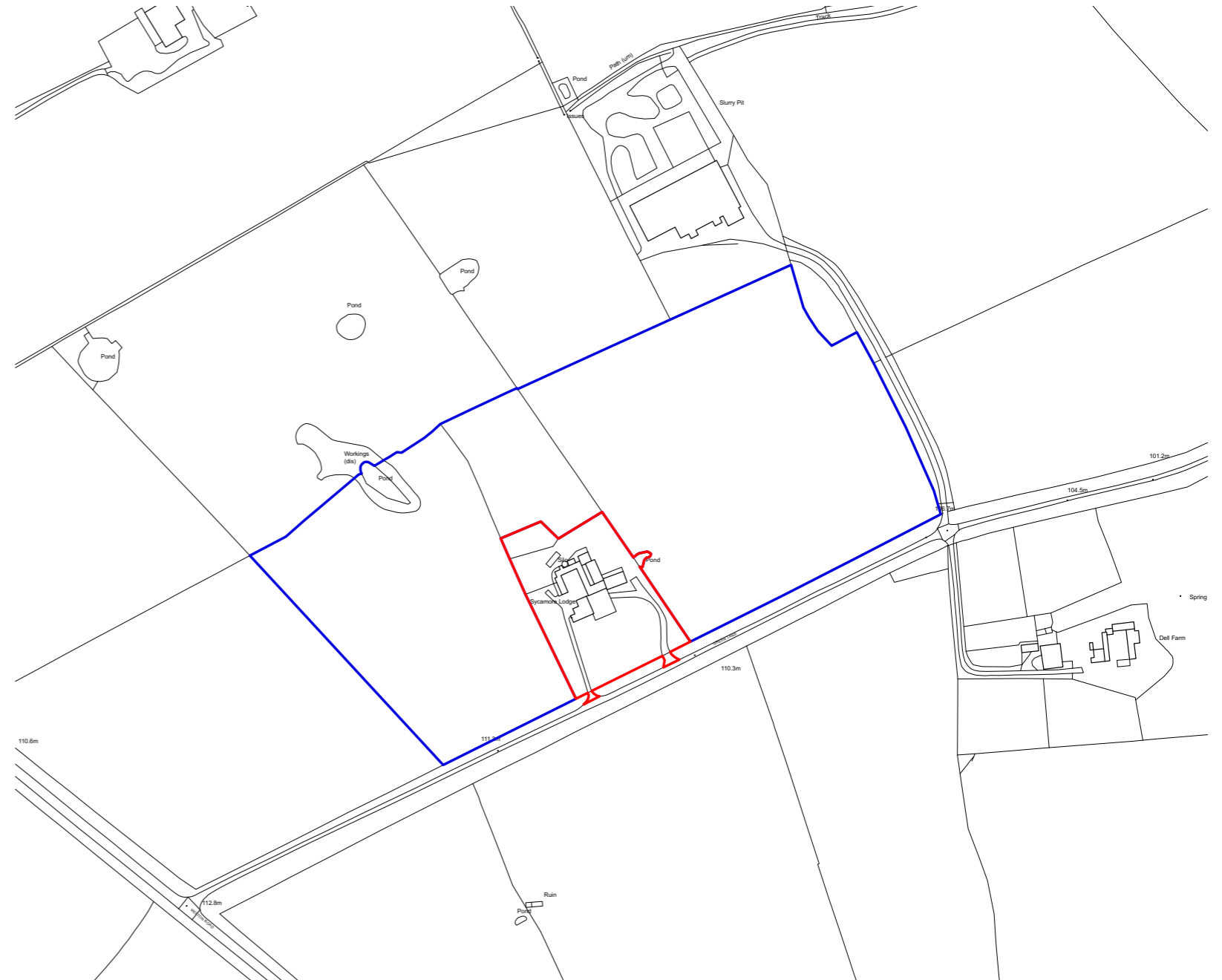
The land within the applicants ownership extends to approximately 8.5 hectares (21 acres). It is located within open countryside, outside of a defined settlement boundary but not within the Green Belt.

The application site comprises an existing former farmhouse, known as 'Sycamore Lodge', and several outbuildings. The site itself is bound by mature trees and surrounded by open fields. Those immediately to the north, east and west are within the applicant's ownership.

The existing dwelling and outbuildings sit within a large defined plot of approximately 2 acres. The total existing floor area is approximately 906m².

The site is accessed off Green Lane from the south via a gravelled and tarmac driveway.

With regards to flood risk, the site is neither within a fluvial flood risk zone nor a surface water flood area.

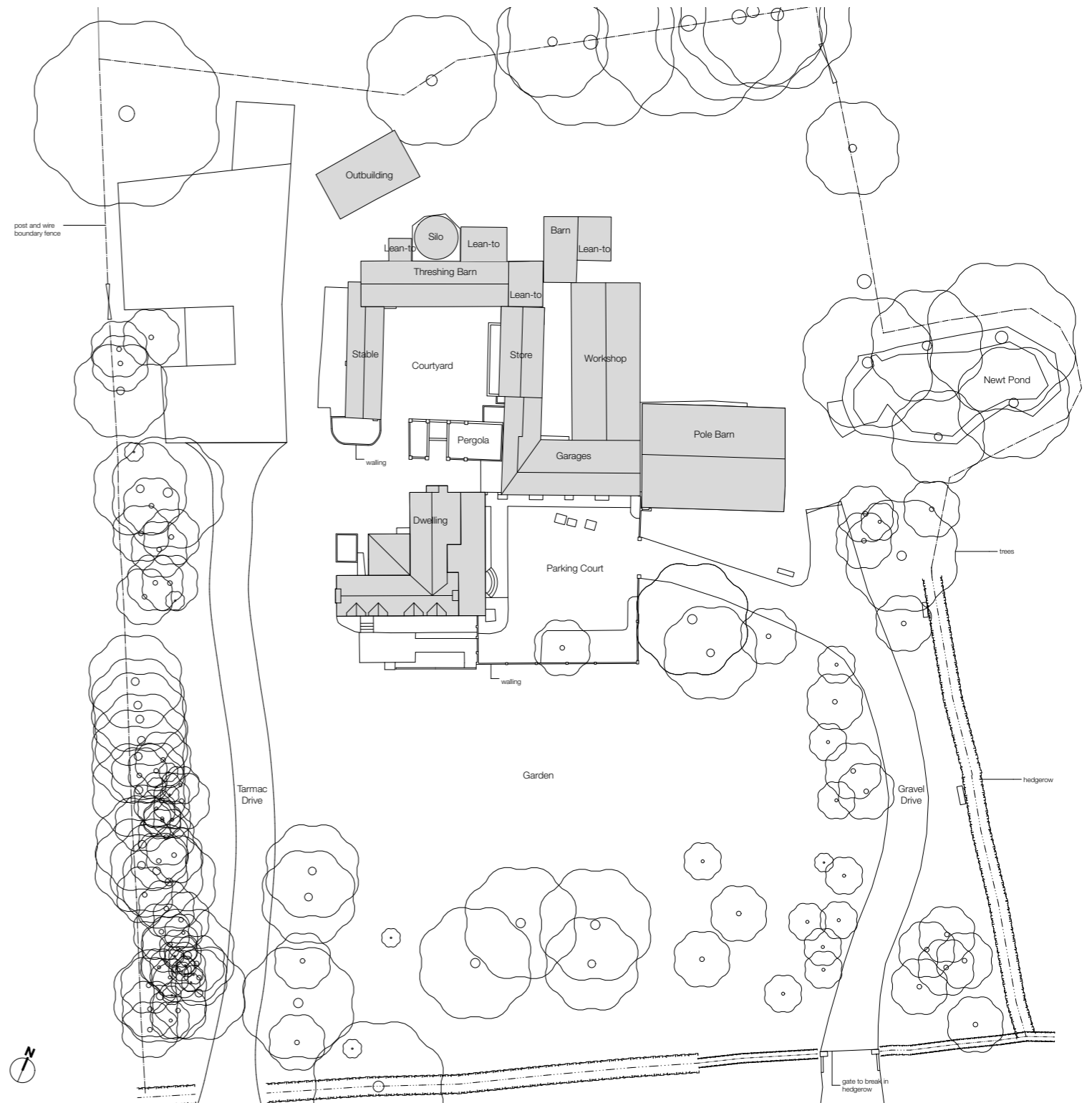
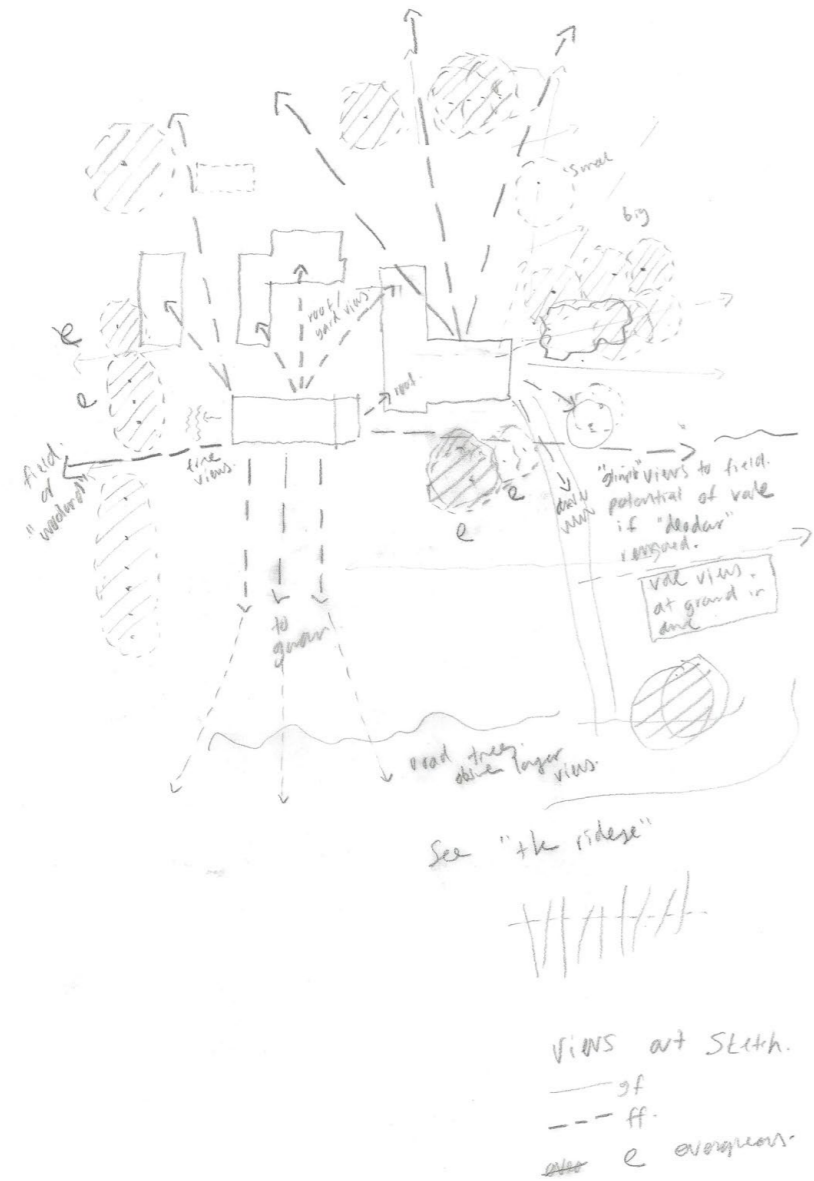


SITE CONTEXT



EXISTING SITE

The outbuildings are situated to the side and rear of the main dwelling, which itself is set back approximately 48 metres from Green Lane. During the planning pre-application process, it was suggested by the Planning Officer that this existing arrangement suggests a clear residential curtilage to the front of the site and an agricultural one to the rear, despite their being no physical boundaries on site. A drawing is included as part of the application which shows this.



EXISTING BUILDINGS

Sycamore Lodge

Dating to c.1820, Sycamore Lodge appears to originally have been a pair of cottages, most likely farm workers dwellings. The building has been extended over the years in an adhoc way which is typical of this typology. Walls are in brick; some red and others painted yellow. The roof is slate. Windows and doors are of varying style and size, are UPVC and unlikely to be original on the main house. Windows and doors to the conservatory are stained timber.

Threshing Barn

The Threshing barn is a two-storey red brick structure, with a corrugated cementitious roof.

Stables

The Stable is a single storey red brick structure with a corrugated cementitious roof.

Workshop 1 & 2

The Workshops are a single storey red brick structure with a corrugated cementitious roof. Openings have precast concrete lintels above.

Garages 1 & 2

The existing garages are more recent (1990's). They are single storey in red brick with a slate roof. Openings have arched brick lintels above.

Pole Barn

The barn is open on all sides with a corrugated roof supported on timber telegraph poles.



BRIEF

The applicants are part of a large family. They have experienced the need for family members to have 24-hour care as they age and to be assisted with convalescence. Looking to the future, their ambition is to provide an ensemble of buildings that will meet both the current and future needs of their multigenerational family.

The applicants extended family of 30+ enjoying meeting and eating together several times a year, so internal and external spaces to enable this are critical parts of the project.

The proposal will be fully wheelchair accessible, providing spaces for full-time carers to live on site. It will enhance the existing ecology and biodiversity of the site. The buildings themselves will be designed to be very low-energy.

CONTEMPORARY RURAL ARCHITECTURE

The applicants wish for their home to be of a contemporary architectural design which will better suit their specific needs and be reflective of its time, just as the existing farmhouse and outbuildings reflect a moment in time.

Well considered contemporary design is suited to sites such as this because it can be respectful of the surrounding area, draw on local influences and also utilise a fabric first approach to construction, improving beyond doubt, the inherent sustainability credentials of the existing buildings. The latter is becoming more and more critical in our warming climate.

It is also recognised that well-conceived contemporary design can contribute to, and elevate, the quality of architecture generally within the wider borough.

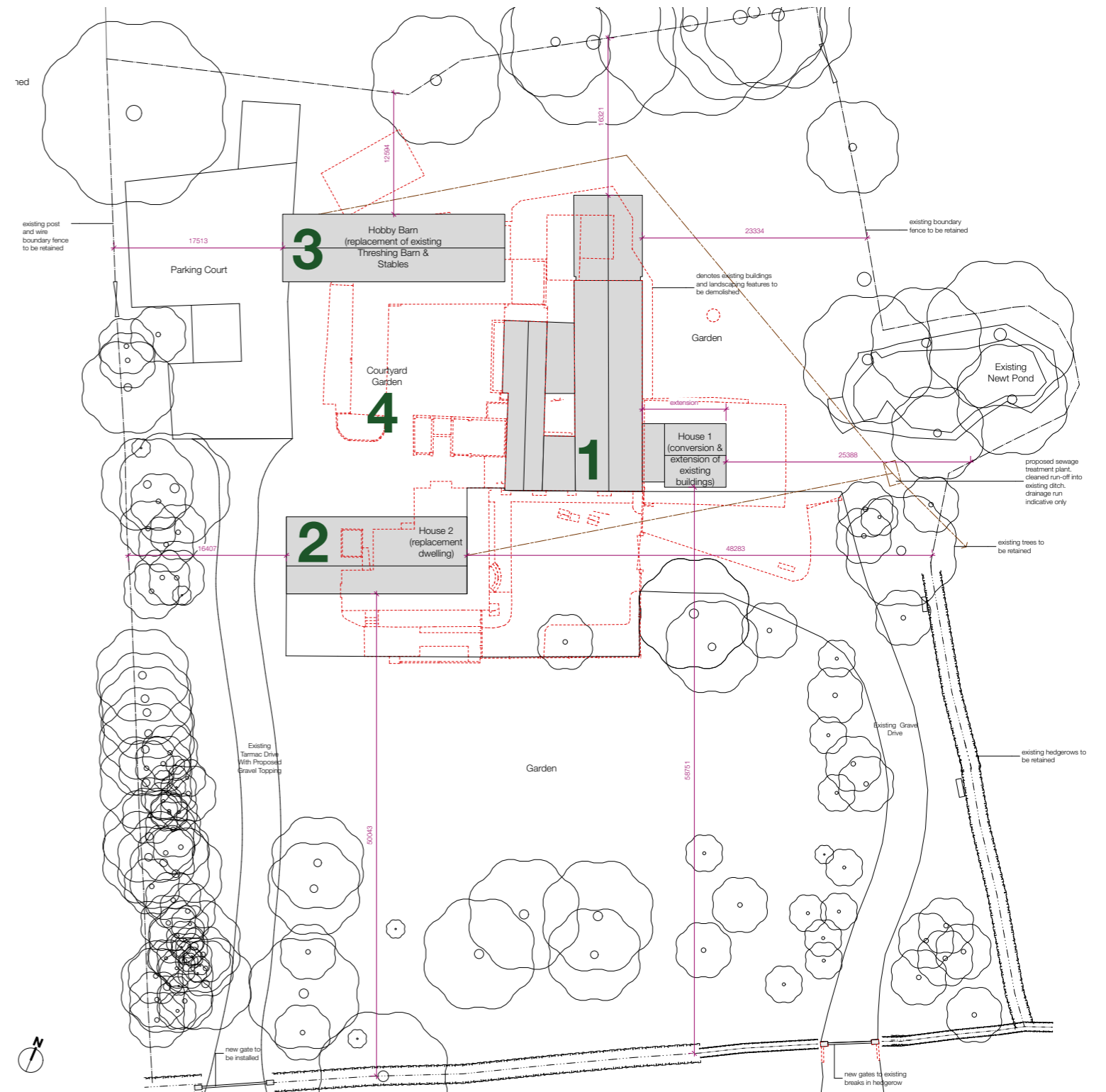


DESIGN CONCEPT

The proposals consist of three components:

1. Re-use and extension of former agricultural buildings to create 1 no. dwelling house (referred to as House 1 in this document)
2. Replacement dwelling (referred to as House 2)
3. Replacement of formal agricultural buildings to form an ancillary building (referred to as the Hobby Barn)
4. Retention of the existing courtyard

There will be a degree of visual congruency between all the buildings through the careful choice of materials. There will also be a clear visual distinction between new domestic elements, and both new and existing re-used agricultural buildings, to maintain the existing hierarchy of the site.



PLANNING PRE-APPLICATION

The proposal has been subject to two rounds of formal planning pre-application advice under 23/00503/ADVICE, in April and August 2023. Various informal email exchanges have also taken place between AJA and the Planning Department.

The submitted proposal is a development of the advice received in April and a response to that received in August. The main changes since the design was presented in April and additional information provided are:

1. Type of application

- The proposal is submitted as a single scheme to include the agricultural store.

2. Accompanying reports for validation

- Arboricultural, Structural, Contamination, Asbestos and Protected Species reports accompany the application

3. Scale and built form

- The overall scale of the proposal has been reduced to accord with advice that it was considered excessive

4. The conversion, alteration and extension of former agricultural buildings to form 1 no. dwelling

- A full structural report confirms the existing buildings are suitable for re-use

- The side extension has been set-back to make it more subservient

- Details are provided on the proposed elevation drawings regarding which existing openings are retained/re-used

- Recessed main entrance added

- Some existing openings highlighted as being overlooked have been reviewed and are noted accordingly on the proposed floor plans

- Second storey removed

- Gym removed

5. Replacement dwelling

- Further visual interest to the front elevation has been added to the dwelling; for example the area of cladding at first floor has been broken up and the cladding itself amended

- Hidden gutter detail re-instated

- General revisions to window size/detailing

- Incorporation of additional brickwork at ground floor

6. Hobby Barn and Garages – Replacement of former agricultural buildings to form ancillary buildings

- The Structural Survey from 2022 accompanies the application

- The Garages have been removed from the proposal, considerably reducing the increased footprint of the proposed Hobby Barn in relation to both the replacement dwelling and the existing Threshing Barn and Stables

SUPPORTING REPORTS

1. Arboricultural

The site is large and contain a significant number of trees. A Tree Survey was undertaken in October 2022, revised in September 2023 and is submitted as part of this application.

Since the new build-elements of the proposal will be in similar locations to the existing, there will be no impact to the trees on site. Due to the setting of the site in open countryside, all existing boundary trees will be maintained in the proposals.

For more information please refer to the Tree Survey by AT2 Tree Surveys.

2. Structural

A structural report was commissioned in March 2022 which investigated the potential re-use of the existing Threshing Barn and Stables. The report concluded that the repairs and remedial works necessary to bring the buildings in question up to current standards would be prohibitive. It also noted there would be little opportunity to retain any of the existing structure and the stables in particular were concluded to require full demolition and re-building. It is on this basis that we propose the demolition of these buildings.

A second report was commissioned in September 2023 to investigate the potential re-use of the existing workshops, stores and garages. It concluded that the buildings were suitable for re-use and adaption with regards to retaining all walls but replacing the roofs. It also recommended that all floor slabs be replaced.

It is on this basis we proposed to re-use and extend these buildings with new roofs and floor slabs.

For more information please refer to the Structural Reports by Price and Myers.

3. Ecology

A Protected Species Report was commissioned in November 2022 and revised in September 2023. It concluded there were constraints to the proposed redevelopment of the site due to nearby sites of conservation importance for bats or redevelopment already licensed by Natural England. The Threshing Barn provides a satellite roost site for a breeding colony of at least eight brown long-eared bats. Five other lower conservation status bat roosts were also found on the site. Bird nesting was also found at various places across the site.

For more information please refer to the Protected Species Report by B.A.T Ecological.

4. Contamination

A Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study Report was undertaken in July 2022. It concluded that the historical use of the site may have had some limited impact upon the environmental quality of it. Asbestos containing material was found in the existing outbuildings. Overall it is considered the site represents a Very Low / Low risk of significant cost or liability to the owner or occupier of the site in relation to land contamination issues. A Phase II ground investigation was subsequently commissioned to investigate further and concludes that 'based on the general absence of contamination encountered during the ground investigation works at the site there are no specific remediation requirements'.

For full and detailed information please refer to the Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study and Phase 2 Ground Investigation Reports by Castle Rock Geotech

5. Asbestos Report

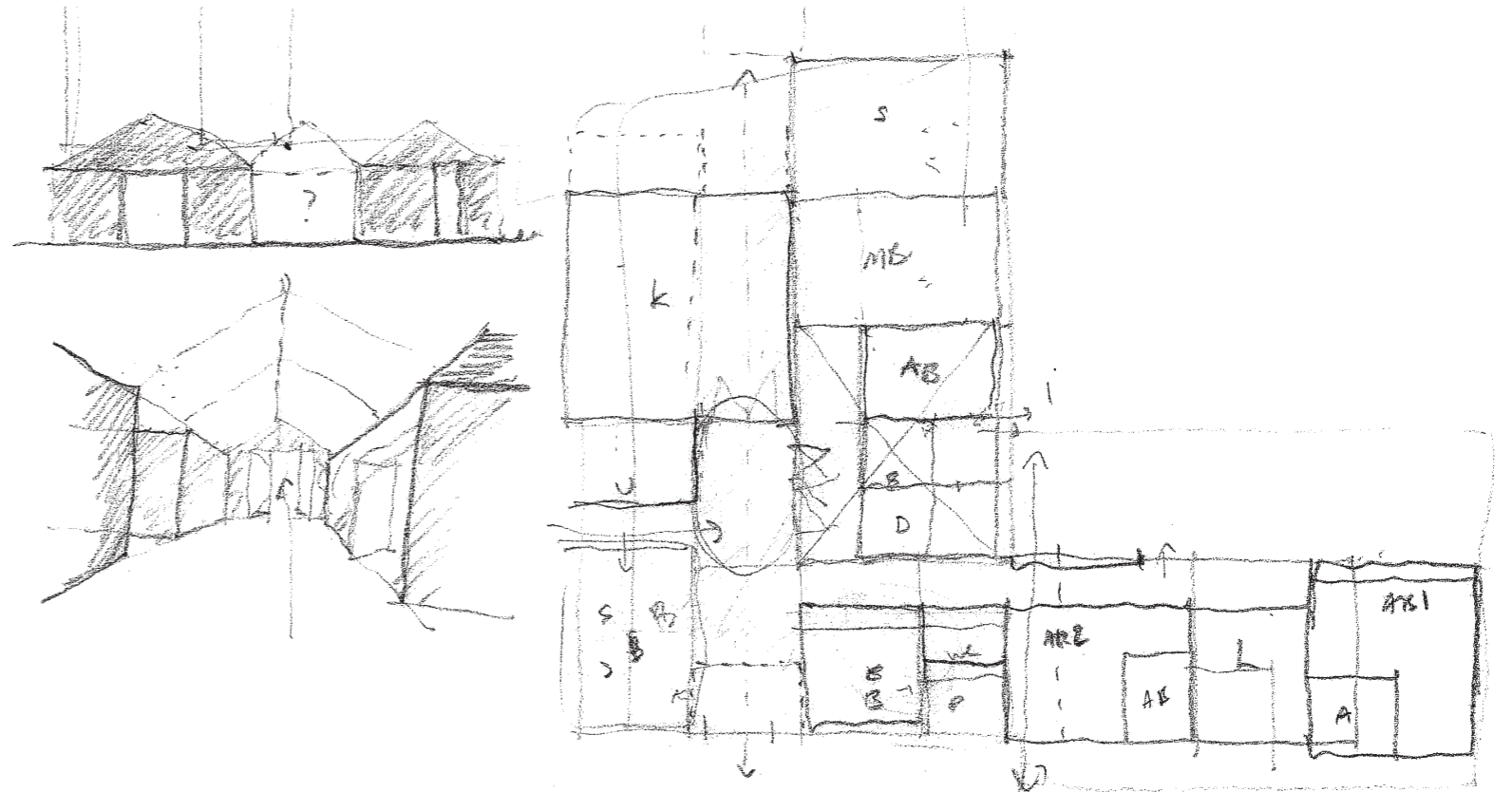
A full 'Refurbishment and Demolition' type asbestos survey was carried out by M&G Services Ltd for both the barns & outbuildings as well as for the main house. This found asbestos of both licensable and non-licensable types - with a large proportion of roofing across the whole site found to contain asbestos. Full details and locations of asbestos containing materials within the reports.

HOUSE 1 CONCEPT

The existing Workshop, Store and Garages will be adapted and extended to create a new dwelling. All accommodation will be at ground floor level and be wheelchair accessible. The vast majority of internal and external walls will be retained. Existing openings will be utilised as much as possible and new ones sized so that they are in proportion to the existing. Detailed information regarding opening re-use is included in the submitted drawings.

As existing, an open-air courtyard separates the Store and Workshop. An opening in the garage frames a view into this space and to the garden beyond, creating a strong visual axis. In the proposals, this feature is retained and enhanced, becoming a focal point for the home.

The existing Pole Barn, which is open on all sides, will be demolished.



HOUSE 1 LAYOUT & ACCESS

The existing courtyard will be partially infilled but an open-air section will remain. Openings with views into and across this central space will draw natural daylight deep into the floor plan whilst creating a feeling of openness as one moves between the various spaces.

The existing visual axis will be maintained to provide a sense of arrival, with views from the Entrance Hall, across the Courtyard and Kitchen and out to the new landscaped garden beyond.

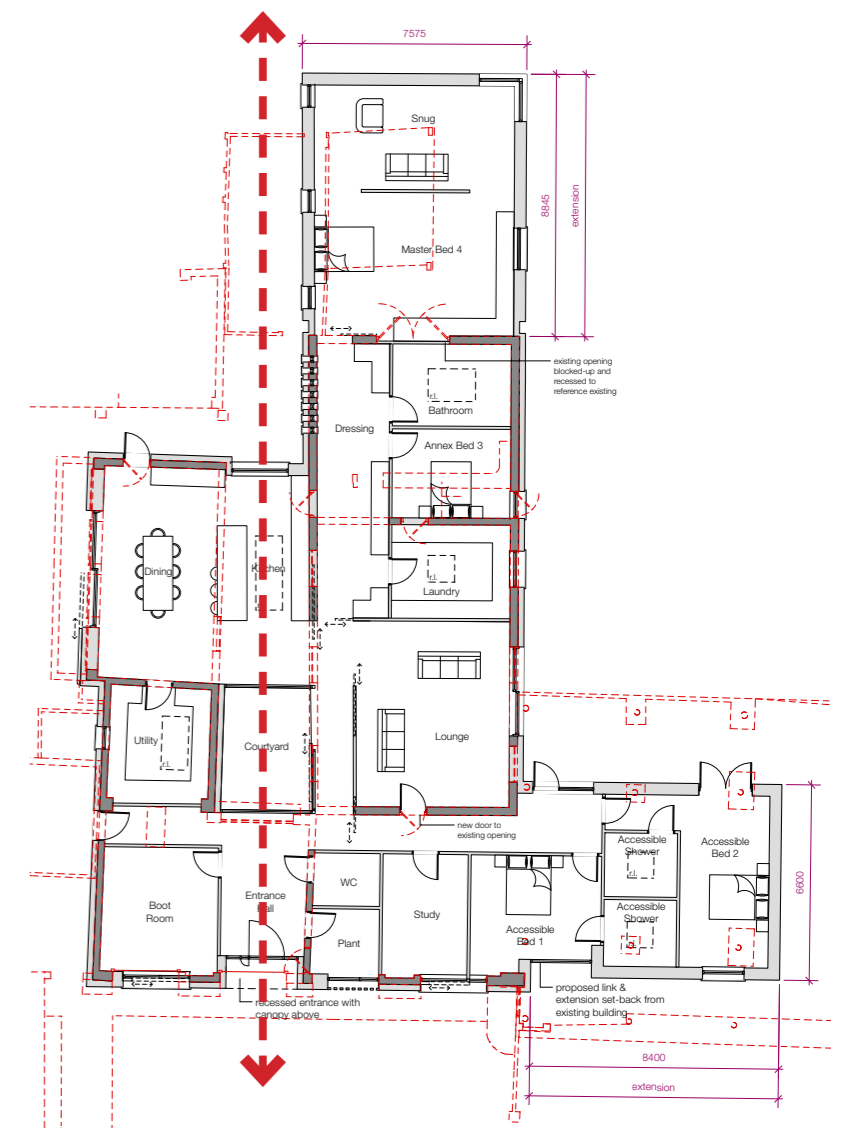
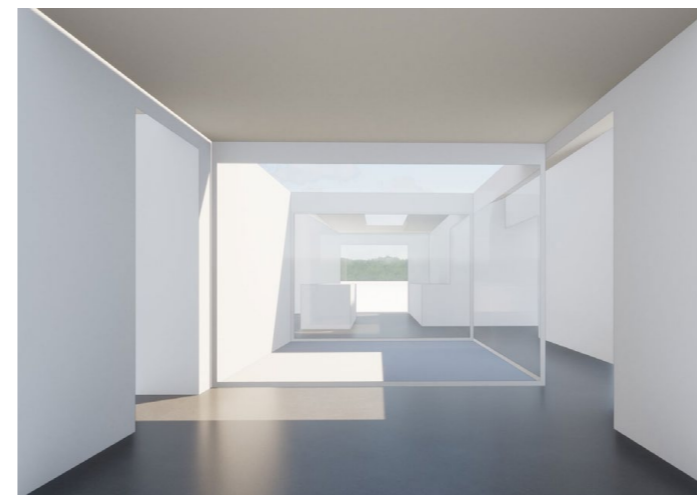
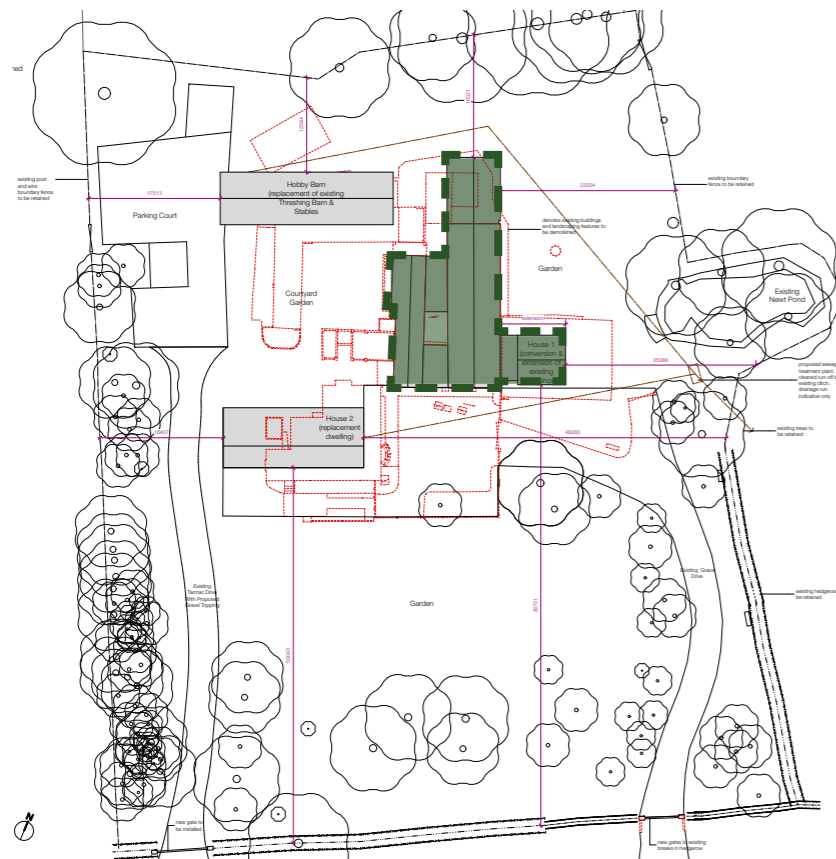
Generally, the main living spaces and their associated ancillary rooms will be located within the footprint of the existing buildings. Two new extensions will house a master suite and wheelchair accessible bedrooms with associated shower rooms.

A Kitchen & Dining space is located such that in the warmer months, large sliding doors can be opened out onto the existing courtyard. This will be the focal point of the site in the warmer months when 30+ members of the applicants extended family gather to meet and eat. A connection to this space, both physically and visually is therefore key.

The Lounge and ancillary spaces are located to offer a variety of views out of the various external spaces (entrance courtyard and main garden to the south, the second garden to the north and pond to the east).

A proposed easterly extension within the footprint of the existing Pole Barn will be set-back from the existing buildings so that it appears subservient. It will contain wheelchair accessible Bedrooms and Shower Rooms.

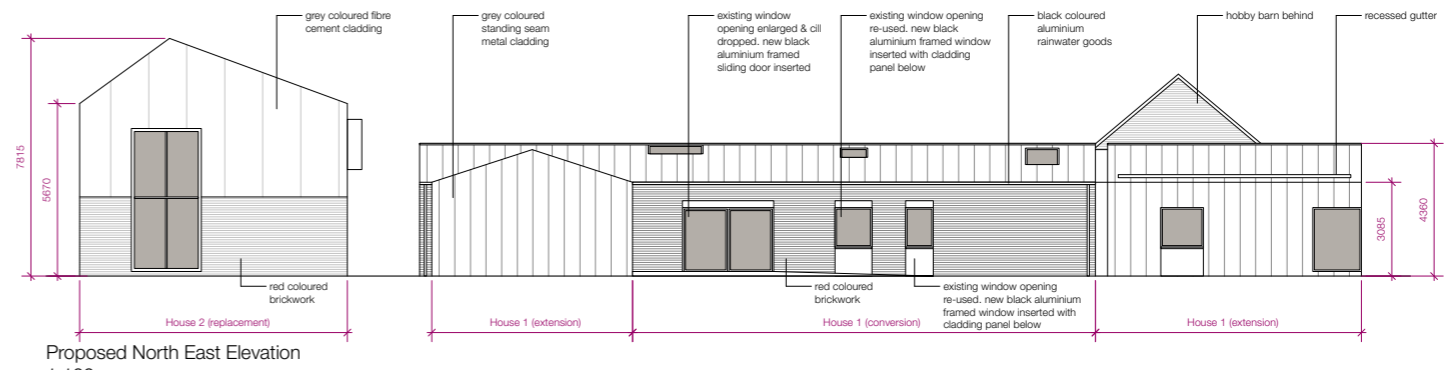
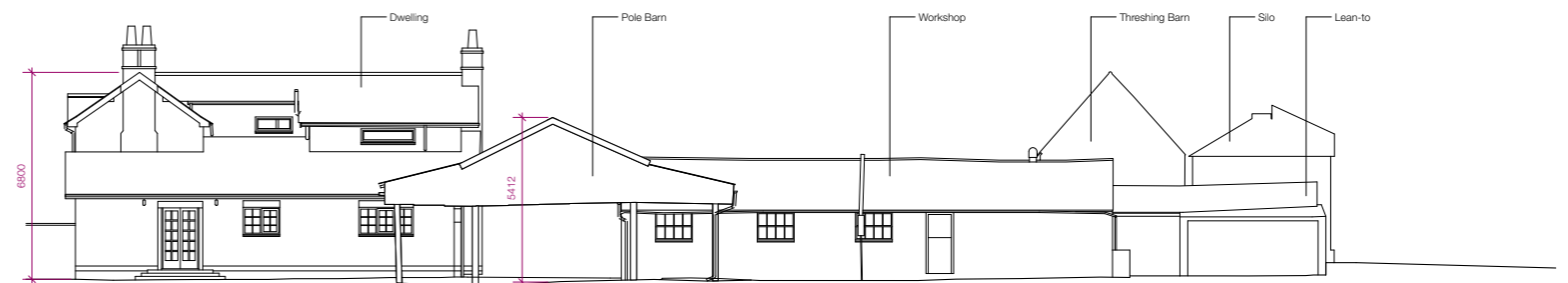
A northerly extension at the rear will be within the footprint of an existing Barn and Lean-to and be of a similar width to the existing Workshop. This will contain the 'master suite'



HOUSE 1 SIZE & AMOUNT

When viewed from the front of the site (South East Elevation) and from a distance along Green Lane (North East Elevation), the proposed visual mass of House 1 will be significantly less than existing due to the following reasons:

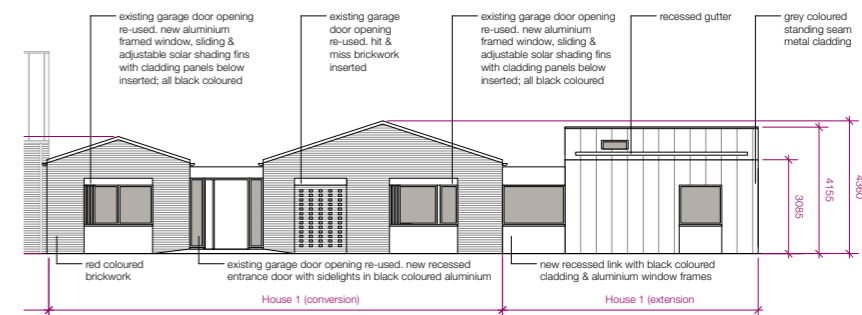
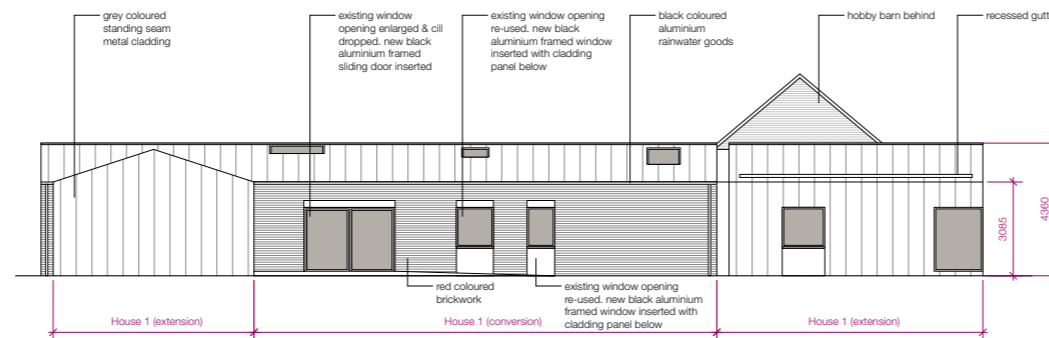
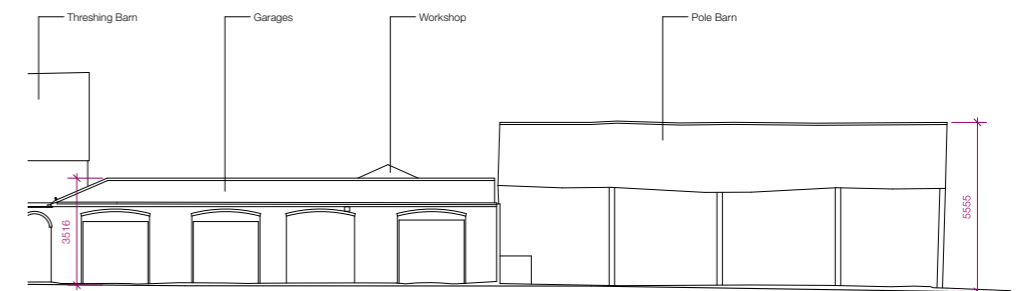
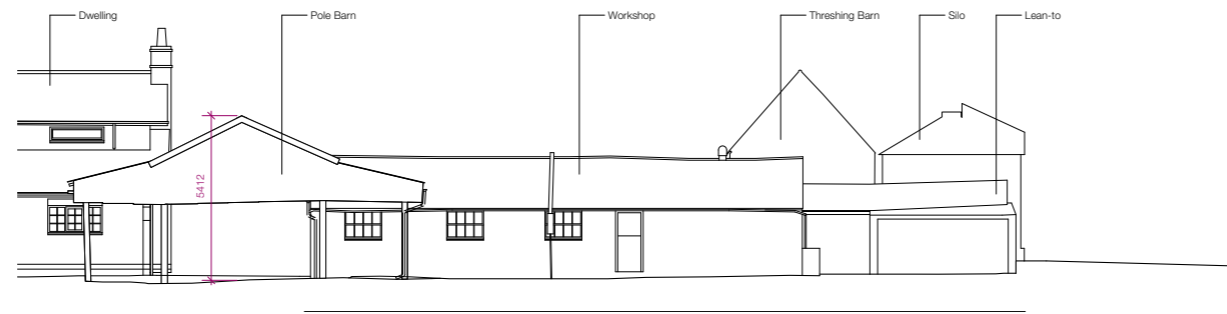
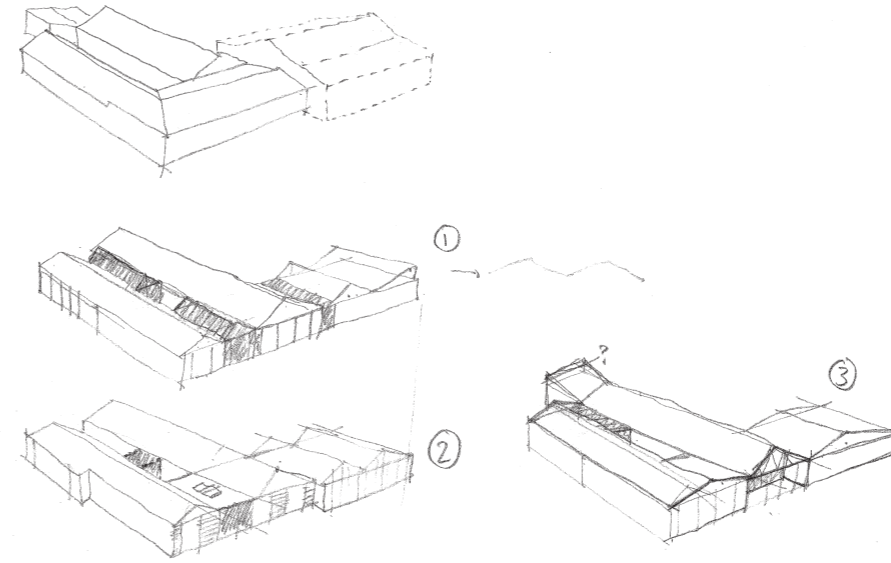
1. The proposed demolition of the Pole Barn
2. Proposed extensions will be located where built form currently exists. Their massing will be less or similar when compared to existing



HOUSE 1 SIZE & AMOUNT

3. The existing hipped-roof of the Garage (which mostly hides the pitched-roofs of the Store and Workshop buildings behind), will be removed. From reviewing historic mapping, this is a later addition to the other buildings and is more 'domestic' in appearance. The two pitched roofs of the outbuildings will be 'pulled over' the Garage so that the simple form of the buildings will be more legible from the front elevation. This will be reinforced by a new flat roof section between the two buildings being clearly identifiable as a 'link'. This same detail will be used elsewhere to form a visual break between the existing building and new easterly extension.

During the planning pre-application process it was suggested that a 50% increase in built form for House 1 would be considered acceptable in relation to Policy H12 of the HNP. When viewed against the massing of the Pole Barn and lean-to, as well as the more permanent structures of the Workshop and Garages the overall arrangement is proportionate to the size, scale, mass and footprint of the original buildings.



HOUSE 1 MATERIALS & DETAILING

Across the existing Workshop, Store and Garage, three different types of red brick are present as existing. Some of this is of very poor quality structurally and visually.

We propose to retain the existing walls as loadbearing elements to support a new roof. Externally they will be overclad with a single red brick type to visually link the buildings together and improve their visual appearance.

Existing external openings will be re-used wherever possible. Dark coloured metal 'linings' will be inserted to 'frame' these openings. New lintels and panels below cills (where required) will also be inserted. Door and window frames will be in the same material and colour. On the south-eastern and south-western elevations, adjustable and sliding 'fins' will provide solar shading to prevent overheating.

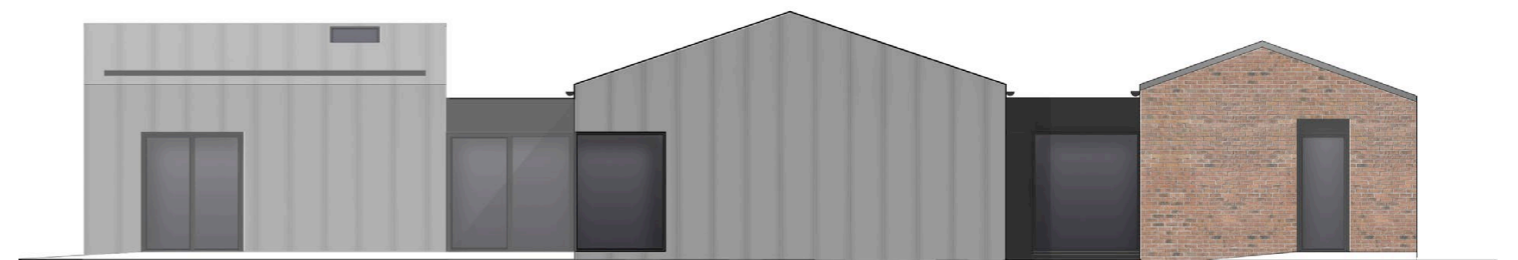


HOUSE 1 MATERIALS & DETAILING

New insulated roofs in a standing seam metal, which reference profiled sheet material of the existing Pole Barn and Workshop are proposed. Eaves heights will be slightly increased compared to existing to achieve adequate internal ceiling heights due to the levels of insulation required in the floors and roofs to meet the Building Regulations. Rainwater goods will be visible, as is the case currently.

The new extensions will be externally clad in a standing seam metal to match the new roofs of the existing buildings. This will provide a clear visual distinction between new and existing on the one hand, whilst providing an element of congruency on the other.

On the northern Master Bedroom extension, textured fibre cement cladding (a material commonly used in agricultural buildings) is proposed between window openings. To sharpen the visual appearance of the extensions and provide a further contrast between new and existing, rainwater goods will be hidden.



HOUSE 2 CONCEPT

The existing former farmhouse will be demolished and replaced with a new dwelling.

It has been altered and adapted over the years and its fabric and energy performance do not meet the requirements of modern standards. The existing house is neither Listed nor included as a 'Feature of Local Heritage Interest' in the Hickling Neighbourhood Plan, though it is noted it was included in the draft version. It is for these reasons we propose to demolish and replace the house with a new dwelling that will address its multiple shortcomings.

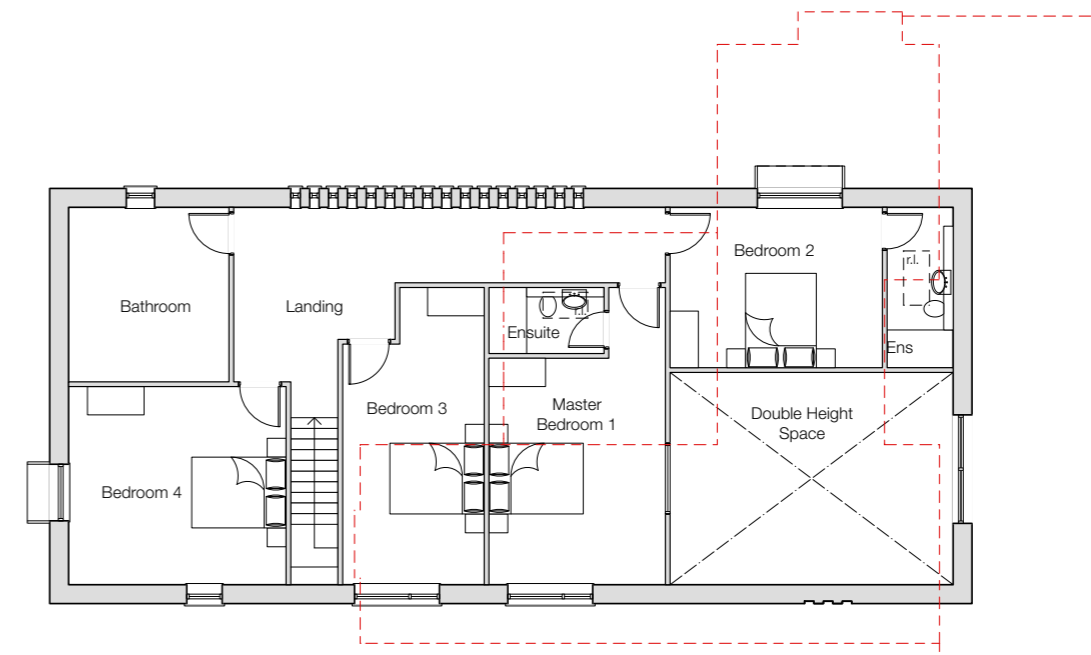
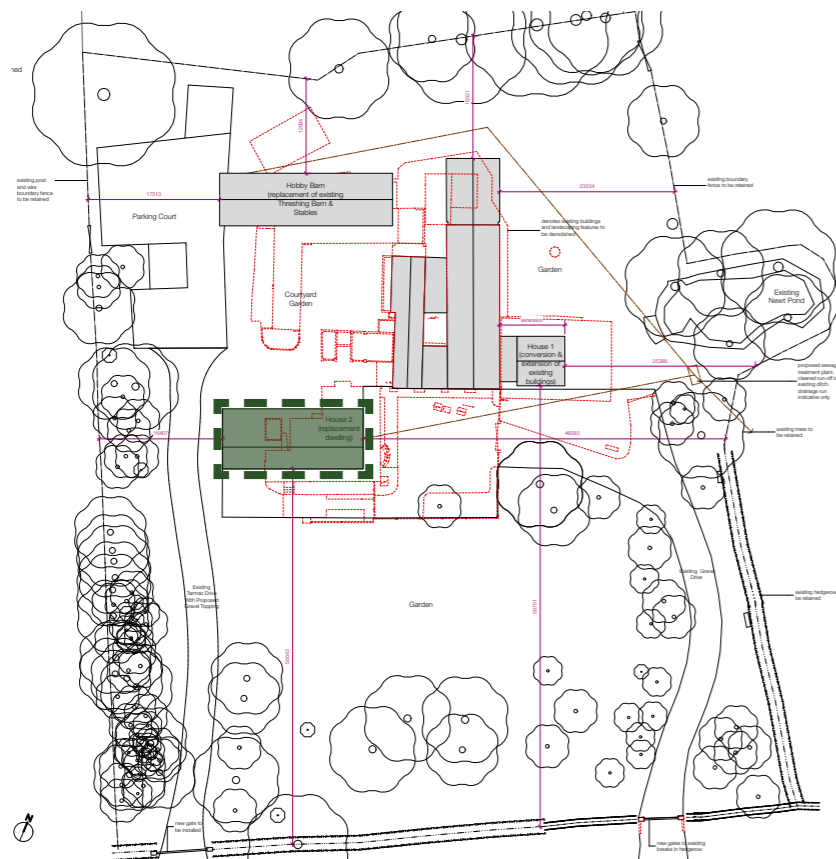
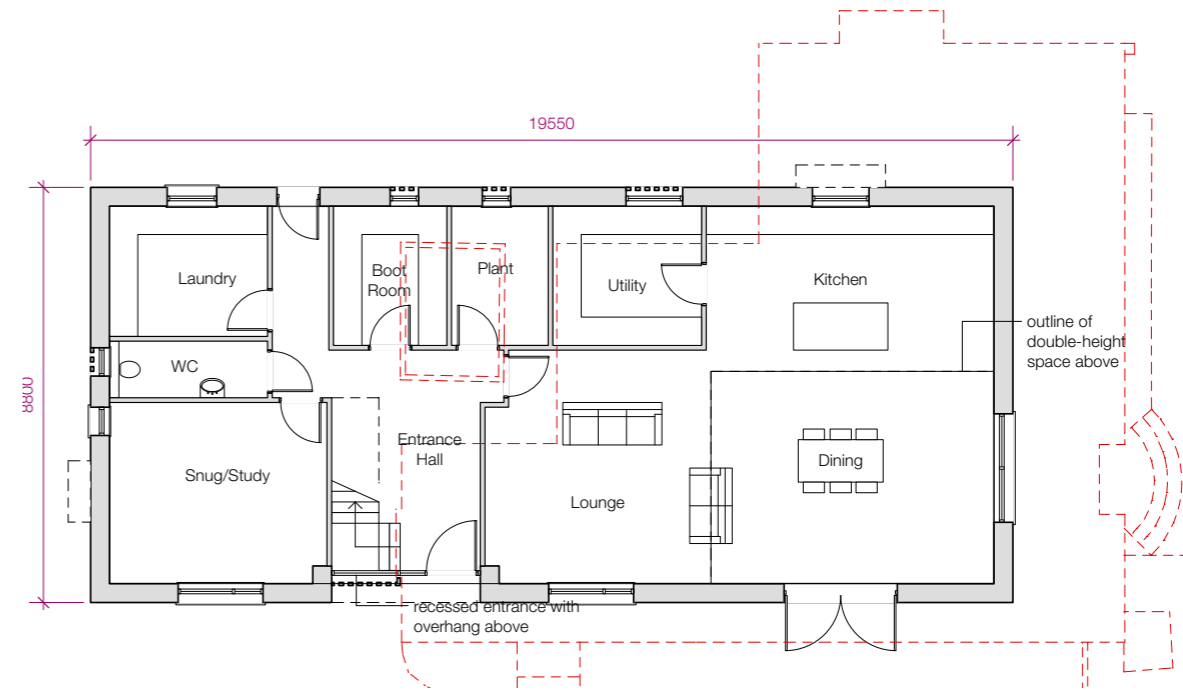
To maintain the hierarchy of the site, a farmhouse and associated outbuildings, the replacement dwelling will be of a clearly domestic design and the outbuildings agricultural in appearance.

HOUSE 2 LAYOUT & ACCESS

House 2 will be located partially within the footprint of the existing dwelling.

The main living spaces will be located on the ground floor and will feature a dramatic double-height space. They will be located on the southern side of the floor plan to take advantage of passive solar gain and views of the garden. Ancillary spaces such as the Utility, will be on the northern side.

The first floor will provide four bedrooms (two with ensuites), and a family bathroom. The bedrooms will be mostly located on the southern side of the plan to take advantage of long views to open countryside and of the garden.

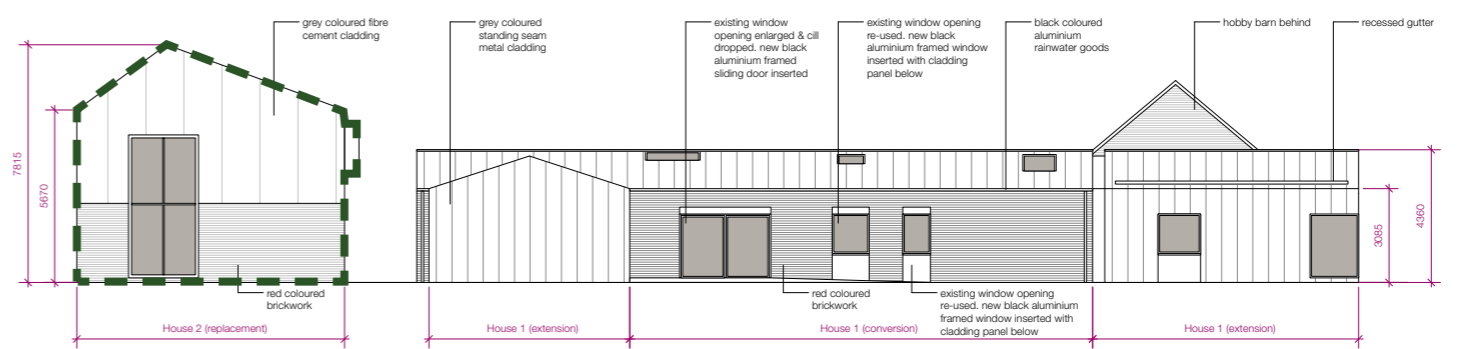
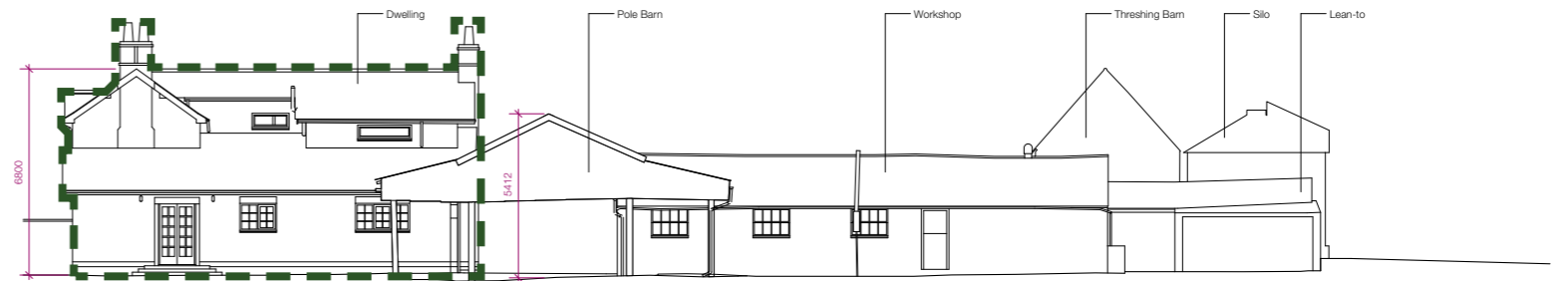
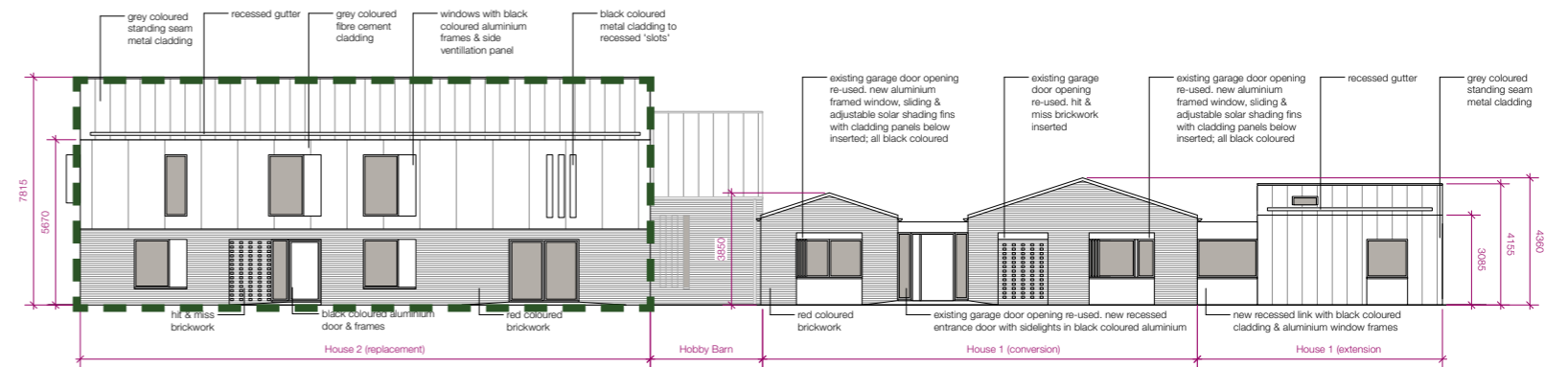
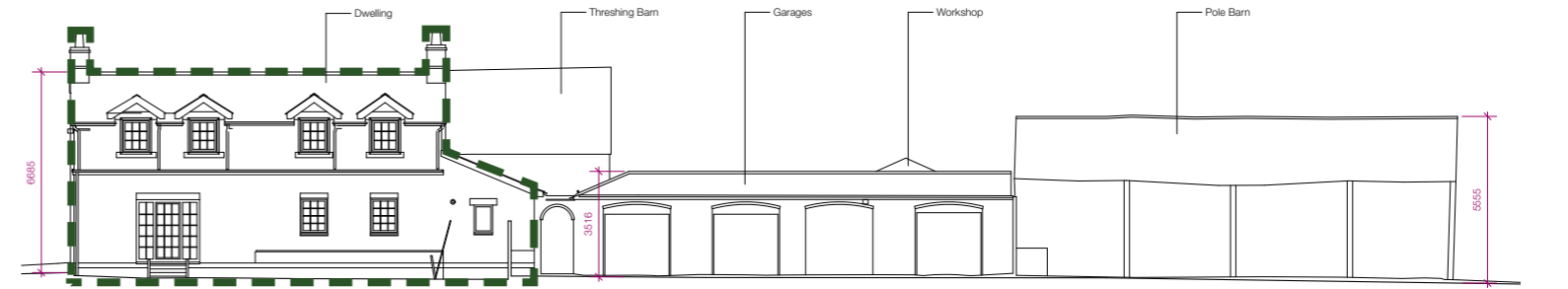
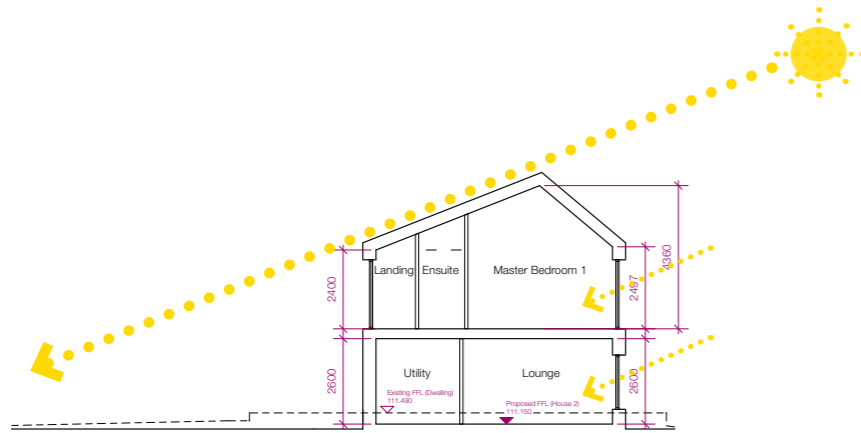


HOUSE 2 SIZE & AMOUNT

It was agreed during the planning pre-application process that an acceptable % increase of floor area for House 2 and the Hobby Barn when viewed together will be 50%. The proposed GIA of House 2 will be 274m².

In terms of the visual mass, the proposal will be longer than the existing when viewed from the front (south east elevation). However due to the simplified form when compared to the existing, in long views from Green Lane (north east elevation), the mass will be reduced significantly. This is due in part to referencing a more traditional plan depth in terms of rural farmhouses and also by simplifying the form from an the L-shape to a rectilinear one.

The proposed ridge and eaves height will be similar to the existing. The asymmetrical gable will ensure sunlight is maximised to the courtyard.

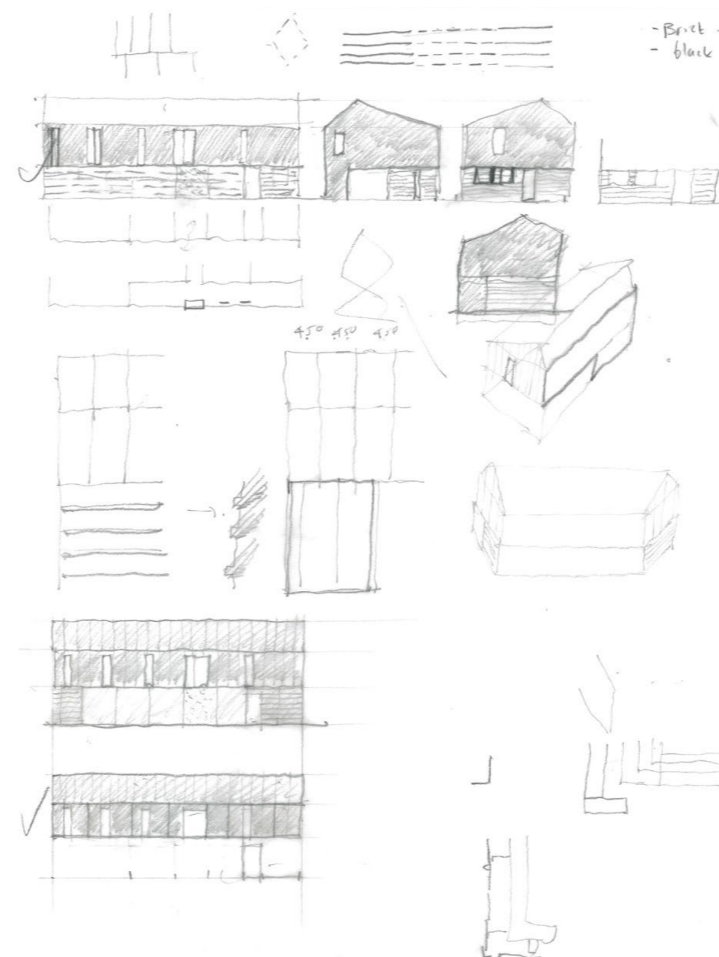


HOUSE 2 MATERIALS & DETAILING

Each elevation is fine-tuned to the site to capture specific views whilst addressing the various outbuildings and external spaces.

The existing dwelling is clearly residential through the use of openings at ground, first floor and in the roof. The fact some of these openings are mis-aligned, are of various size and positioned loosely across the various elevations, signifies it is a farmhouse. The yellow painted brick, whilst consistent in terms of the actual material, visually separates the house from the other buildings. These are all qualities which we have utilised in the proposal.

By virtue of the various extensions and alterations over the years, it is not immediately apparent which side of the house is the front. This is addressed in the proposals.



HOUSE 2 MATERIALS & DETAILING

A band of red-coloured brickwork will wrap around the ground floor with grey coloured fibre cement cladding at first floor. The roof will be a grey coloured standing seam metal with hidden rainwater goods. The bricks and metal will also be used on House 1 and the Hobby Barn. The fibre cement cladding and hidden rainwater goods will feature only on the new-build domestic elements of the scheme. The cladding itself is only used across all elevations on House 2, as is the case with the yellow painted brick as existing.

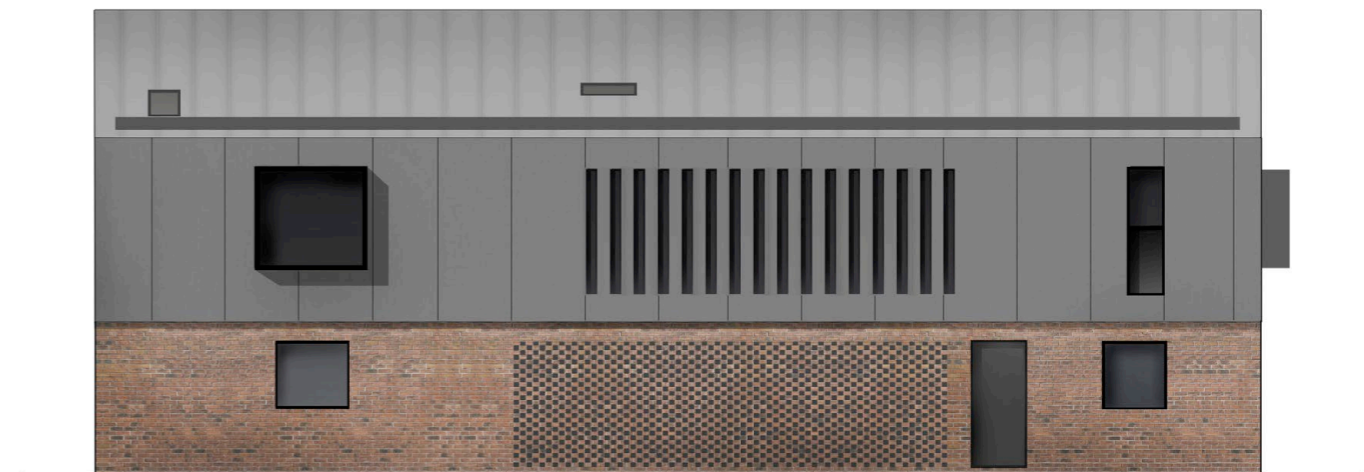
Openings generally will be of varying size and proportion and be located on both floors and rooflights within the roof, as is the case as existing. Windows will utilise modern aluminium framed-triple glazed windows. They will be set within deep reveals to assist with solar shading whilst expressing the depth of the modern construction.

The Entrance is located on the front elevation to address the main garden. It is recessed with an area of decorative brickwork which will draw dappled light into the Entrance Hall.

The front south east elevation will be more glazed than the rear north west façade. This will allow the house take advantage of passive solar gain whilst minimising heat loss.

Windows to the south will not have mullions so that the view out over the garden and to open countryside is uninterrupted. An opening panel for ventilation in a black coloured metal cladding will add visual interest. Recessed vertical slots to the double-height living space will help break-up the cladding at first floor whilst referencing a detail common to all the buildings. First floor windows will be generally taller than at ground floor and this together with the entrance detail and the lining-up of openings, will result in a more formal elevation which is clearly the front of the house. The variety of opening sizes will maintain the less formal appearance overall of the existing dwelling.

The rear north west façade will be less formal than the front. A series of vertical slot windows to the landing will allow natural light in and views out, whilst providing a degree of privacy as this area overlooks the courtyard. A 'pop-out' window to the rear bedroom will frame a specific view out of the courtyard. An area of perforated hit & miss brickwork at ground floor level will permit natural light and ventilation to the more ancillary spaces; a detail common to the other buildings.



HOUSE 2 MATERIALS & DETAILING

The side elevations are loosely arranged, as is the case as existing. The north east side elevation will have a full-height window to express the double-height living space externally on the one hand, whilst creating a focal point to the entrance courtyard on the other. This will be a vast improvement over the existing where an adhoc extension is currently located.

A second 'pop-out' window to the south west bedroom will frame a view of the neighbouring field in the applicants ownership.

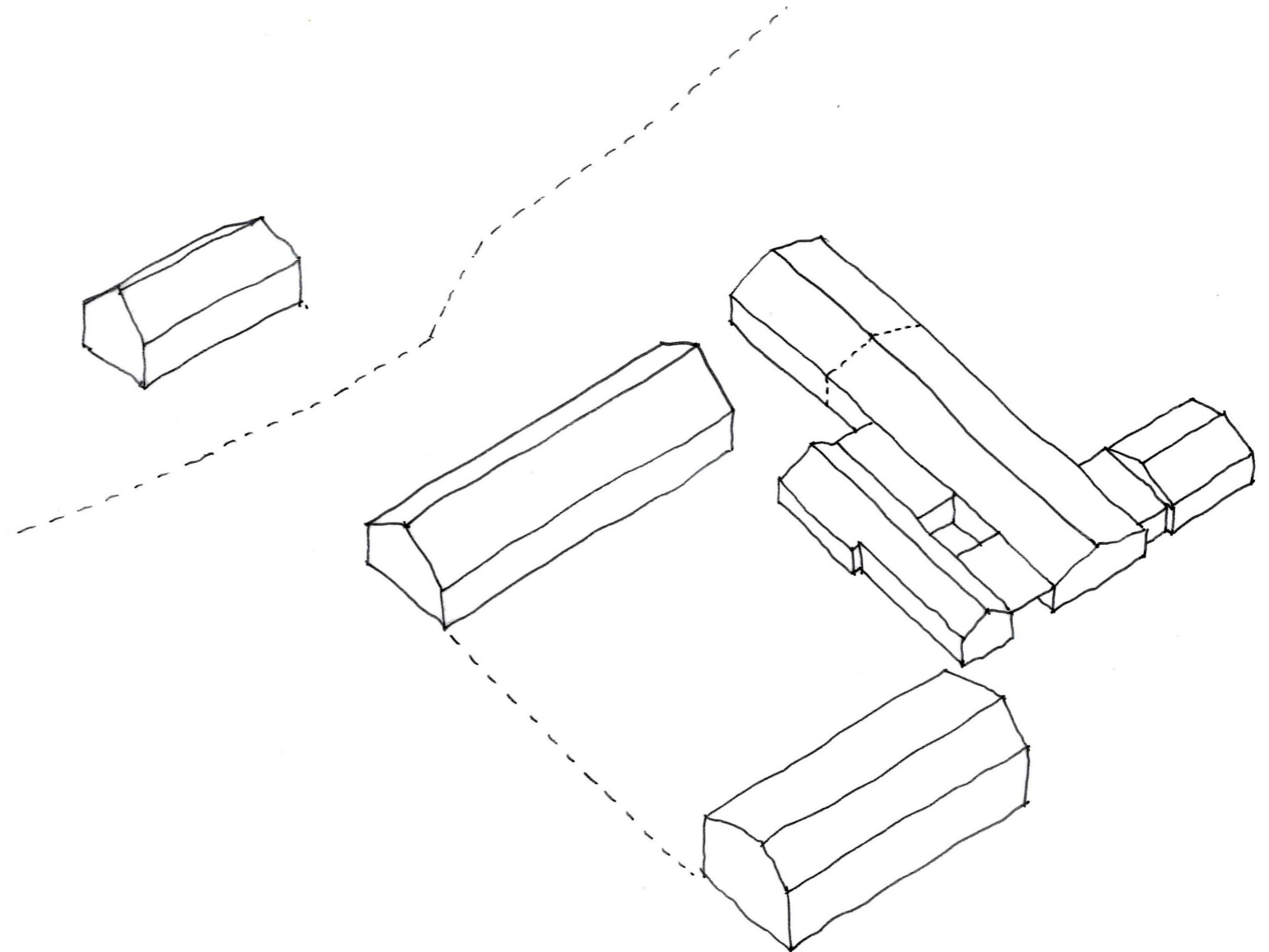


HOBBY BARN CONCEPT

The proposed Hobby Barn will replace the existing Threshing Barn and Stables.

The structural report carried out in March 2022 concluded that the repairs and remedial works necessary to bring the existing buildings up to current standards would be prohibitive. It also noted there would be little opportunity to retain any of the existing structure and the stables in particular were concluded to require full demolition and re-building. It is on this basis we propose demolition.

To maintain the hierarchy of the site; a house with associated outbuildings, the Hobby Barn dwelling will be of a clearly agricultural design, albeit a contemporary interpretation.

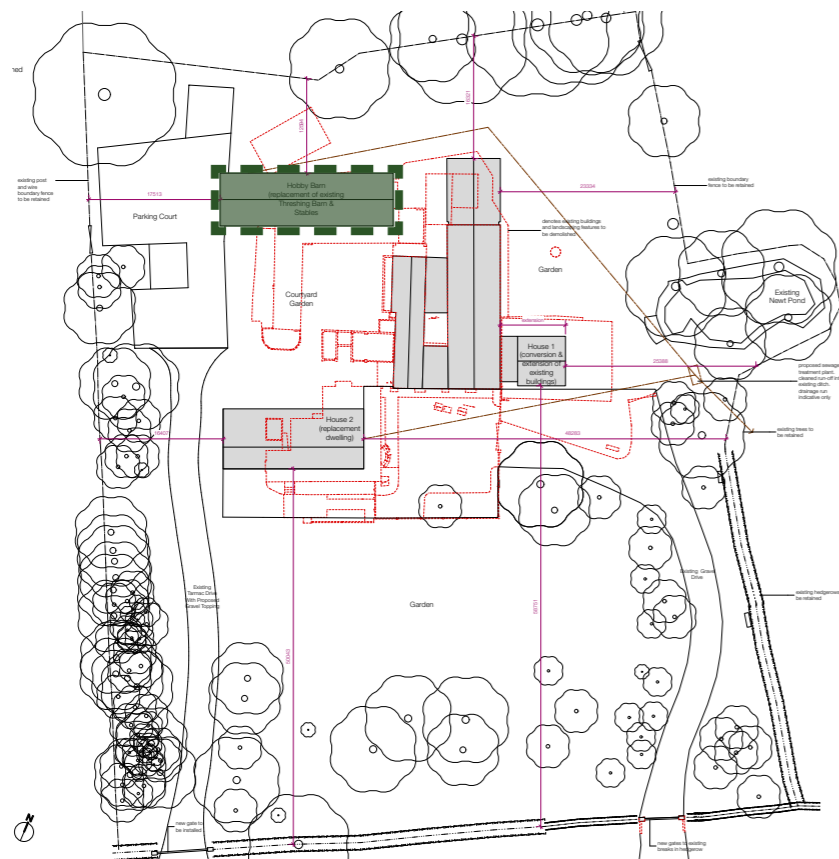
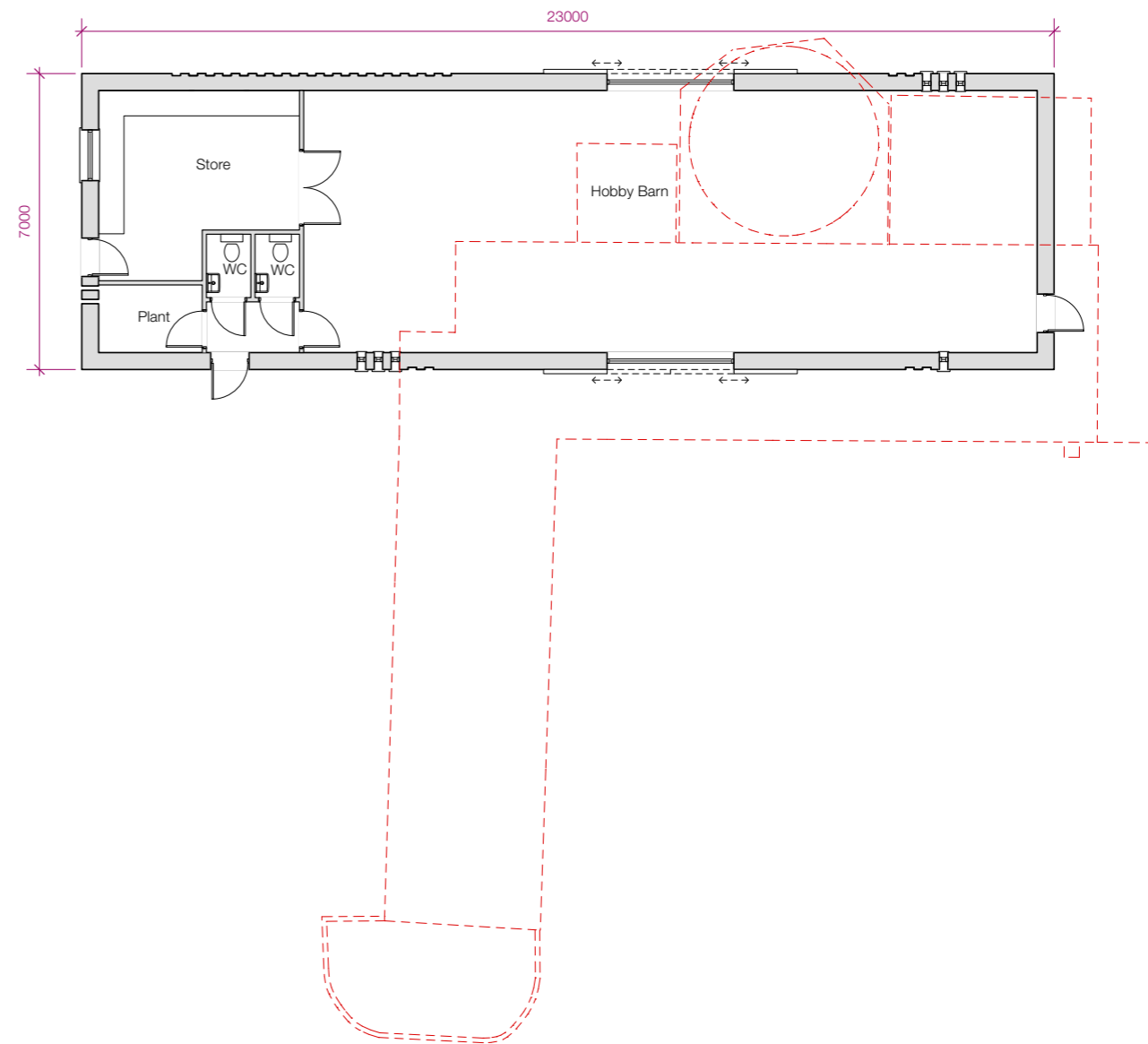


HOBBY BARN LAYOUT & ACCESS

The Hobby Barn will be positioned partially on the footprint of the demolished Threshing Barn, retaining the sense of enclosure to the courtyard as existing.

The footprint will mostly be a large vaulted double-height space. This will be a large space for family gatherings, appropriate for the 30+ members of the applicants multi-generational family.

Two large full-height openings, similar in proportion to the existing opening on the north-west of the Threshing Barn, will allow this space to open up to both the central courtyard and garden in the warmer months. As mentioned previously, the courtyard will become the heart of the scheme in the warmer months for outdoor entertaining so access out into this space is key.



HOBBY BARN SIZE & AMOUNT

The Hobby Barn will be used for occasional large family entertaining and as agreed in the pre-app discussions is considered ancillary to the replacement dwelling, House 2.

Following pre-application advice to reduce the overall size of the building in relation to the host dwelling, the garaging has been removed from the scheme, leaving just the Hobby Barn itself. The revised Hobby Barn therefore addresses the concerns raised by the Planning Officers in terms of size and scale.

In terms of generally massing, the eaves and ridge height will be lower than existing. Viewed in the context of House 2, it will clearly be an ancillary building thus maintaining the existing hierarchy.



HOBBY BARN MATERIALS & DETAILING

The building will appear agricultural, albeit detailed in a contemporary way.

Sliding shutters to the two openings with adjustable 'fins' will provide solar shading to the south eastern elevation and help reduce heat loss on the north west. A series of tall 'slots' are proposed as windows and recessed panels of brickwork; a contemporary interpretation of the existing 'breather slots'. Walls will be of red brick and the roof will be a grey coloured standing seam metal. This will reference the existing corrugated roof in terms of its vertical lines, provide a more durable finish and create a degree of congruency between all the buildings. Exposed rainwater goods will ensure that the Hobby Barn and existing re-used agricultural buildings of House 1 will share a common agricultural detail.



AGRICULTURAL STORE & BAT ROOST

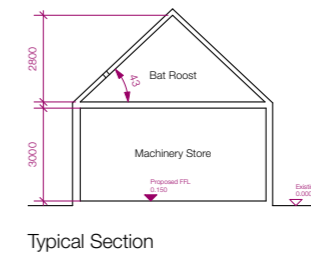
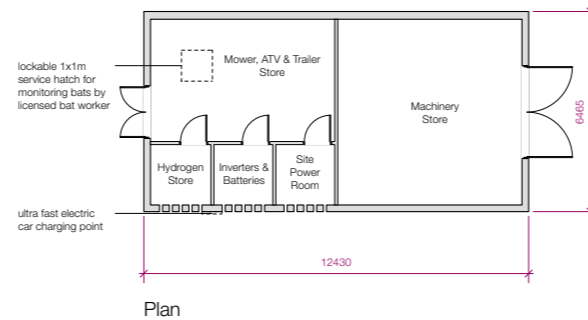
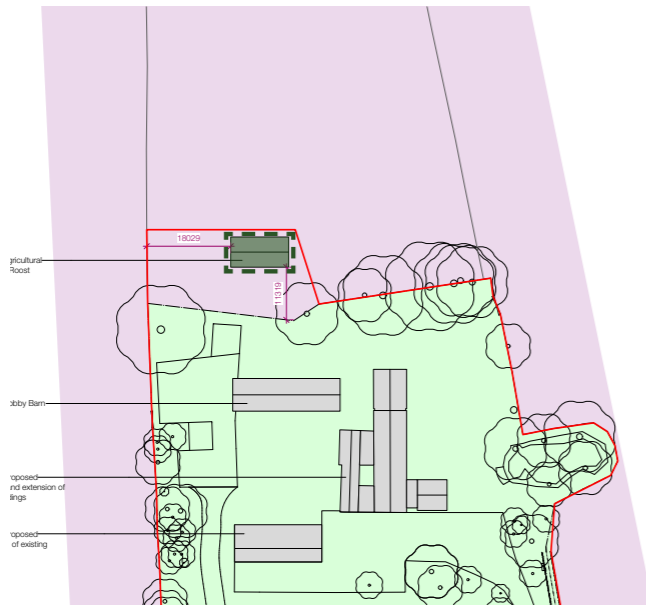
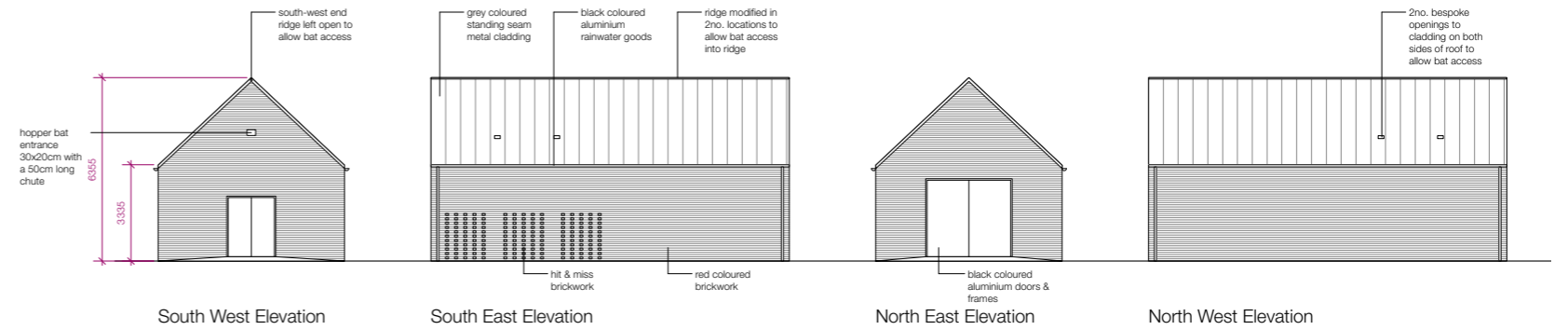
To mitigate the loss of the Brown Long-Eared roost in the Threshing Barn, a bespoke 'bat loft' is proposed above a new Agricultural Store. Included as part of the proposed agricultural curtilage to the rear of the main development, the new building will replace the existing tractor stores situated in the Pole Barn and corrugated shed. Both of these are in poor condition structurally and lacking any form of secure storage.

The scale of the new agricultural building is appropriate for the applicants needs to house the machinery for maintenance of their land and to accommodate equipment rooms to enable efficient energy generation, storage and use. The height of the building's roof is dictated by the official requirements for the specification of a replacement Bat loft.

In terms of scale, in the context of the overall scheme this building will be subservient due to its relatively small size. Existing mature trees and hedgerows will mean visibility from any publicly accessible viewpoint will be limited, if possible at all.

Materials will match those elsewhere; walls will be red brick and the roof a grey coloured standing seam metal.

Please refer to the accompanying Protected Species Report which details the various requirements which the design must achieve for the Bats.



APPROPRIATE MATERIALS

The proposed materials have been carefully selected to provide a degree of congruency across the various buildings on the site. There will also be a clear visual distinction between the domestic and agricultural.

The materials chosen are either more sustainable or lower maintenance than existing whilst at the same time, enhancing the existing rural and agricultural character of the site.

Grey coloured standing seam

- Relates to rural & agricultural buildings generally
- Low maintenance and durable
- Sustainable as it is made either from Zinc (which has an inherently low environmental impact with regards to energy expenditure, especially if re-covered Zinc is used, and it is 100% recyclable itself) or, steel (which is manufactured in the UK, contains at least 25% recycled content and is infinitely recyclable itself).



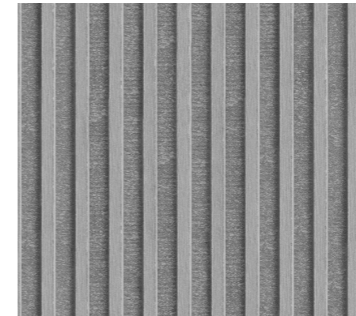
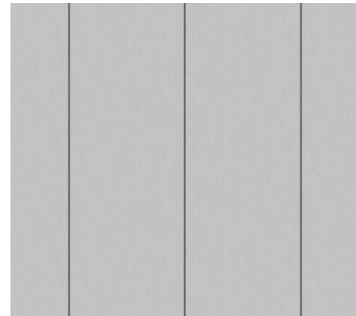
Red coloured brickwork

- References the most dominant material as existing, both in terms of the material itself and colour
- Low maintenance and durable
- 100% recyclable
- Can be sourced from UK manufacturers



Grey coloured fibre cement

- Commonly used in agricultural settings
- Low maintenance and durable
- 100% recyclable



Black coloured frames and triple-glazed windows

- High performing triple glazed windows and doors are more efficient thermally than double glazing and will significantly reduce traffic noise from the A46 / A606
- Dark frame colour will provide a contrast to the lighter coloured roof and wall claddings



Black-coloured metal cladding

- Dark colour will provide a visual contrast to the lighter coloured roof and wall claddings
- Low maintenance and durable
- Sustainable as it will be made either from Zinc or steel

SUSTAINABILITY - ECOLOGY & BIODIVERSITY

Since the applicants took ownership of the site, they have carried out substantial work which demonstrates their commitment to enhancing the ecology and biodiversity of the site:

- Existing Ponds

EMEC Ecology (East Midlands Environment Consultants) have renovated the garden pond under the Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing Ponds initiative. A Hibernaculum has been created measuring 10m long x 3m wide x 2m high to house the GCN and other mammals and birds. There are also tunnels and pipes for hedgehogs with an open access fence to other fields in the applicants ownership

- Bats

6 bat boxes have been erected around the site. 2 x small hollow bat boxes for Brown Long Eared, Noctule and Myotis species; 2 single crevice bat boxes for Common and Soprano Pipistrelles; and 2 half and half bat boxes for a wider range of species. The boxes are made of ecostyrocete (recycled polystyrene and concrete) are durable, insulated and draught proof

- Birds

6 boxes have been installed; 2 x 28mm for Blue, Coal & Crested Tits and Tree Sparrows; 2 x 32mm for Great Tits, House Sparrows and Nuthatches; 2 x open nest boxes for Robins. A Tawny Owl box has also been installed as one has been spotted several times at the site

- Proposed Bat Roost

As compensation for the loss of the Brown Long-Eared roost in the Threshing Barn, a bespoke 'bat loft' is included as part of this application as part of the Agricultural Store building.

With regard to policies 16 (Green Infrastructure) and 17 (Biodiversity) of the Local Plan Part 1 2014; policies 1 (Sustainable Development), 22 (Development in the Countryside) and 37 (Trees and Woodlands) of the Local Plan Part 2 2019; and Policy H5 (Ecology and Biodiversity) of the Neighbourhood Plan 2022, the proposals will ensure that there are no significant adverse effects on landscape character or any adverse effects on important wildlife interests. There will be a net gain in biodiversity.



SUSTAINABILITY - MODERN METHODS OF CONSTRUCTION & LOW-ENERGY STRATEGY

The proposal will utilise technologies such as Ground Source Heat Pumps, MVHR and rainwater harvesting.

Policy 1 (Sustainable Development) of the Local Plan Part 2 (2019) promotes the use of renewable technologies to achieve a high degree of energy efficiency.

The existing single-leaf brick that will be re-used to form the majority of House 1 is generally plumb, in good condition and suitable to support new roofs (as detailed in the accompanying Structural Reports). For these reasons we propose to insulate these walls externally. A new brick outer-leaf will provide a rainscreen to this whilst improving the overall visual appearance of the buildings in question.

All new construction is likely to be in Structurally Insulated Panels (SIPs) or highly-insulated timber frame and clad externally.

The overarching objective for the buildings is that they will exceed the standards of the English Building Regulations and function close to PassivHaus Standards. The objective for the overall scheme is whilst acknowledging it will be a large construction project, utilising off-site construction techniques such as SIPs, will reduce the impact of the building work on existing wildlife.

SECTION 03

Conclusion & Planning Policy

PLANNING POLICY

The following information relates to the relevant sections of the adopted Hickling Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2011-2028 (HNP).

Policy H2: Locally Important Views

Development should safeguard and, where possible, enhance the following important views and vistas (as shown on the Policies Map and Map 3 and set out in Appendix 1):

1. Views from The Standard
2. Along the canal from Main Street, Hickling
3. The canal basin from Main Street, Hickling
4. From the top of Green Lane, Hickling Pastures looking towards Hickling and The Standard
5. From Bridegate Lane, Hickling looking south
6. From the top of Bridegate Lane, Hickling Pastures looking north-eastwards towards Colston Bassett
7. View from Clawson Lane, Hickling Pastures looking west

None of the above views will be altered by the proposals in any way, therefore safeguarding these important vistas.

Policy H5: Ecology and Biodiversity

Development should not harm the network of local ecological features and habitats which include (as shown on the Policies Map):

1. Crossroads Meadow
2. Broughton Wolds Grasslands
3. Folly Hall Lane Meadows
4. Green Lane verges
5. Standard Meadow
6. Bridegate Lane verges
7. Track and bank
8. Grantham Canal

Item 4, Green Lane Verges, are located along Green Lane which is where the application site is accessed from. Policy Map 4 'Biodiversity' shows the green line depicting the verges stopping short of the application site. In any case, the existing verges along Green Lanes and those directly adjacent to the application site, will not be altered in any way by the proposals. Therefore these important features will be safeguarded.

As mentioned earlier in this document, several bat and bird boxes have already been installed by the applicants along with tunnels and pipes for hedgehogs and a new Hibernaculum for Great Crested Newts. The latter

formed part of a renovation project by EMEC Ecology which involved upgrading the garden pond under the Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing Ponds initiative.

All existing hedgerows and boundary trees will be retained in the proposals.

The application included a proposal for a new bat roost that will compensate for the loss of the Brown Long-Eared roost in the Threshing Barn, enhancing the existing bat boxes.

Taking the above into consideration, the applicants have already increased the biodiversity of the site since taking ownership. The proposals will neither harm the Green Lane Verges or reduce in any way, the current ecology and biodiversity value of the site.

The application site is included in the following Biodiversity Opportunity Maps, Appendix 2, of the HNP:

- Wetland 005 – long term 50 years, 'better' and included in the Focal Area of South Rushcliffe Pondscape. With regards to this, the existing pond has already been enhanced.

- Grassland 034 – long term 50 years, 'existing'. With regards to this, the proposal will be subject to a detailed landscaping scheme that will seek to enhance the existing grasslands

- It is outside zone 04 (long term woodland, 50 years)

Policy H9: Local Design

All new developments should reflect the distinctive character of Hickling or Hickling Pastures as appropriate. Development in Hickling village should reflect the guidance set out in the Hickling Design Guide (Appendix 5).

Development must also:

A Be in keeping with the scale, form and character of its surroundings;
B Protect important features such as traditional walls, hedgerows and trees;

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C Protect spaces between buildings that allow for views of the surrounding countryside from within the built-up areas of Hickling and Hickling Pastures;

D Not result in the loss of residential garden space to the detriment of the character of Hickling or Hickling Pastures;

E Not significantly adversely affect the amenities of residents in the area, including daylight/sunlight, privacy, air quality, noise and light pollution;

PLANNING POLICY

F Not significantly increase the volume of traffic through the Parish's settlements; and
G Have safe and suitable access.

In terms of scale, the proposals are appropriate for the site. The overall visual mass of the site as existing will be reduced as a result of the proposals, namely due to the demolition of the Pole Barn. The extensions of House 1 will be in-keeping with the scale of the host buildings. The replacement dwelling and new Hobby Barn will have similar eaves and ridge heights to the existing. Existing hedgerows, trees, residential garden space and access will all be retained in the proposals.

Policy H10: Housing Provision

Housing development within the Hickling Limits to Development, as defined on the Policies Map, will be supported.

Outside the Hickling Limits to Development, permission for housing development will be limited to:

- A. The development of previously used (brownfield) land that is well-related to the settlement of Hickling Pastures, in principle, having regard to the other policies in the neighbourhood plan;*
- B. The re-use and adaptation of redundant rural buildings in accordance with Policy H12 (Residential Conversion of Rural Buildings);*
- C. The subdivision of an existing dwelling;*
- D. A dwelling that, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, is of exceptional design quality, in that it:*
 - i. is truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and*
 - ii. would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area;*
- E. Replacement dwellings in accordance with Policy H13 (Replacement Dwellings);*

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- F. Rural worker accommodation in accordance with Policy H17 (Rural Worker Accommodation); and*
- G. Rural exception site development where need has been demonstrated through an up-to-date housing needs survey.*

The application site is located outside the Hickling limits to development, as per map 8 of HNP.

Sections B and E of this policy are relevant to the proposals and are

covered in later sections.

Policy H12: Residential Conversion of Existing Rural Buildings Situated Beyond the Limits to Development

Where planning permission is required for the re-use and adaptation of redundant or disused rural buildings for residential use, this will be supported where:

- A. The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without significant rebuild or alteration;*
- B. The development will maintain the character of the building, including the retention of important features;*
- C. The use of the building by protected species is surveyed and mitigation measures are approved where necessary; and*
- D. Any proposed extension(s) or alterations are proportionate to the size, scale, mass and footprint of the original building and situated within the original curtilage.*

The proposal to convert the existing rural buildings on site (House 1) is supported by an up-to-date Structural Survey which confirms extensive works will not be required to make the buildings habitable. The existing character of these buildings will be retained and enhanced and this is explained in more detail in section 02 of this report. The proposed extensions will be within the footprint of existing buildings and be proportionate in terms of mass and scale.

With regards to the demolition of the existing Threshing Barn and Stables, this is supported by a separate Structural Survey which confirms the works necessary to make these buildings habitable would be prohibitive. As mentioned previously, a new bat roost will mitigate for that lost in the Threshing Barn.

Policy H13: Replacement of Existing Dwellings Situated Beyond the Limits to Development

Proposals for the demolition and rebuild of an existing dwelling will be supported where:

- A. It does not lead to a reduction in the stock of smaller or single-storey dwellings;*
- B. The new dwelling is proportionate to the size, scale, mass and footprint of the original dwelling and situated within the original curtilage.*

The existing farmhouse will be replaced by a new dwelling utilising modern methods of construction and with improved energy efficiency.

The external appearance of the new house will be sympathetic to the

PLANNING POLICY

original and be of a clear domestic design so that the existing hierarchy of the site is maintained. It will have an increased footprint of approximately 15% compared to existing which was identified as being acceptable during the planning pre-application process. Please refer to section 02 of this report for more detailed information.

Appendix 5: Design Guide.

The guide states that Hickling Pastures has a different character from the village of Hickling. Buildings are mostly agricultural or residential and located in generous plots. The buildings are set back from the street/road with well-defined mature boundary treatments. They are mainly of red brick with tile roofs and are glimpsed through the trees and hedges.

The proposals will maintain the above characteristics. The existing roofs of the application site are a mix of tiles, corrugated metal and cement board. The proposed roofs will be a contemporary interpretation of these materials and be in a standing seam metal.

House 2 specifically is a modern interpretation of a traditional linear farmhouse form, with a similar plan depth and width. Its materials will match those of the rest of the site except for the use of fibre cement cladding at first floor; a material commonly used in agricultural and rural settings. Like the yellow painted brick of the existing house, this will allow House 2 to be subtly different to the other buildings whilst still appearing as part of overall ensemble.

CONCLUSION

The applicants have enhanced the existing biodiversity and ecology of the site since taking ownership. Neither will be impacted on by proposals and the loss of the existing bat roost will be mitigated and enhanced in the scheme.

The existing rural buildings of House 1 will be sensitively adapted and converted to retain their existing character. New extensions will be proportionate in scale and use appropriate materials. Overall, the existing energy efficiency of these buildings will be enhanced.

The replacement dwelling will be an appropriate replacement in terms of its scale and massing. Its materials will relate to the other buildings on the site with subtle variations, as is the case as existing. The new house will be built using modern methods of construction and will represent a considerable improvement in terms of energy efficiency when compared to existing.

The new Hobby Barn which will replace the existing Threshing Barn and Stable will be proportionate to its host building (House 2) in terms of scale. This will ensure that the existing character of the site, farmhouse and associated outbuildings, will be retained in the proposals. It will have an agricultural appearance externally which will reference some of the traditional details of the existing Threshing Barn and agricultural buildings more widely.

The new Agricultural Store will provide a new Bat Roost to mitigate that lost in the Threshing Barn. It will also provide essential secure storage for the applicants to be able to maintain land in their ownership.

In conclusion, the proposal is for a careful, sensitive and sustainable interpretation of the existing traditional farmstead. It will make it suitable for modern day living standards and provide a suite of exemplar, low energy buildings for the applicants and their extended family to enjoy for generations to come.



