

EDGARS

Planning Statement

Location: Asterleigh Farm, Kiddington Estate OX20 1BQ
Proposal: Conversion and extension of agricultural barns to provide 3 dwellings with associated access, landscaping and demolition works
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Council





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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Juxon Ltd (the 'applicant'), in support of an application seeking full planning permission and listed building consent for the *conversion and extension of agricultural barns to provide 3 dwellings with associated access, landscaping and demolition works* at Asterleigh Farm, Kiddington Estate OX20 1BQ (the 'site').
- 1.2 Please note, the application for listed building consent has been made on the basis that some of the traditional agricultural barns satisfy the provision of section 1.5(b) of the Act and thus are considered as part of the extent of the listed building. This is ultimately a matter for decision-maker to determine but we acknowledge the historic interest of the buildings and their interrelationship with the grade II listed farmhouse as part of a coherent group.

Rationale

- 1.3 Asterleigh Farm is an attractive farmstead comprising the grade II listed Asterleigh Farmhouse and several traditional and modern agricultural barns. However, these buildings are no longer suitable for modern agricultural purposes due to their restrictive proportions, declining conditions and the upscaled storage, operational and infrastructure needs of modern agriculture. Thus, over the past few years the applicant has relocated the site farming operations to the new farming hub at Grimsdyke Farm. As such, the agricultural function of the farmstead is now redundant.
- 1.4 In addition, the traditional barns are in a poor state of repair (with the roof of one barn collapsed, another barn supported with structural bracing and several barns no longer wind and water tight, leaving significant elements of the historic fabric at risk) and there is no active use to support their upkeep and enhancement.
- 1.5 Accordingly, there is a need to revitalise Asterleigh Farm with a new use and sensitive design solution that secures the long-term conservation and enhancement of the farmstead in a manner that respects its rural character.
- 1.6 To this end, a masterplan was formulated which comprehensively considers and responds positively to the constraints and opportunities of Asterleigh Farm with a scheme for the conversion and redevelopment of the traditional and modern barns to provide up to 8 dwellings.
- 1.7 The masterplan proposals were presented to Officers under pre-application 22/02578/PREAPP. Officers expressed broad support for the proposals and encouraged the submission of detailed designs for further consideration.
- 1.8 Detailed designs relating to the conversion of the traditional barns were subsequently submitted under 23/01901/PREAPP. Officers expressed support for the proposed design approach and made a series of recommendations that have been integrated into this application.
- 1.9 Overall, this application, together with the future submission for the redevelopment of the modern barns (which is intended to follow the determination of application 23/02478/PN56), seeks to realise the aspirations of the masterplan which will breathe new life into Asterleigh Farm, establish a positive and viable vision for the future of the farmstead and deliver significant heritage and wider public benefits (these are listed at the conclusion, see paragraph 8.3).



Document Structure

1.10 The document is structured as follows:

- Section 2 introduces the site context (in relation to the constraints and character of the site and its surroundings);
- Section 3 describes the proposed development;
- Section 4 establishes the relevant planning history;
- Section 5 details the pre-application engagement process;
- Section 6 lists the relevant planning policy;
- Section 7 assesses the key planning matters; and
- Section 8 concludes the statement and demonstrates how the proposals accord with the development plan and national policy.



2 Site Context

Site Location

2.1 Asterleigh Farm is situated west of the A44 and is 600m west of Over Kiddington and over 1km west of Kiddington. The site is approximately 10km southeast of Chipping Norton and 7.5km northwest of Woodstock. The site location is illustrated at **figure 1**.

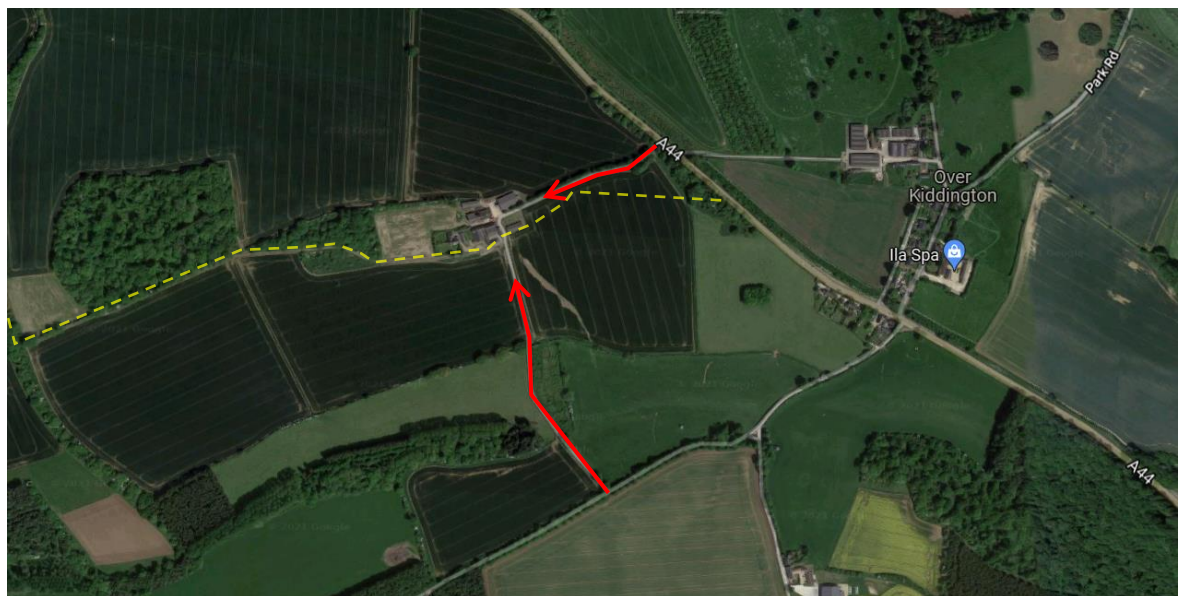
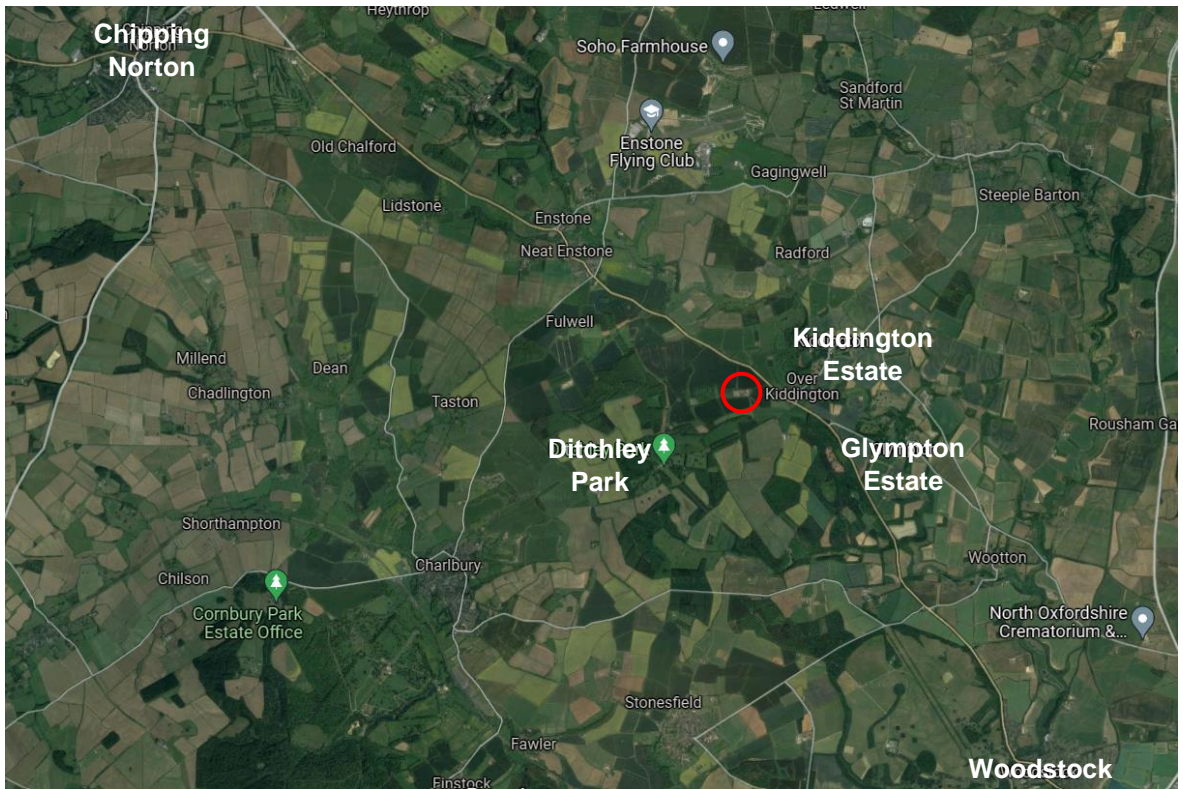


Figure 1: Site location at district scale (upper image) and local scale (lower image). The lower image shows the vehicular access (red arrows) and public footpath (yellow dotted line).



Wider Area Context

2.2 As shown at **figure 1**, Asterleigh Farm sits between the estates of Ditchley Park to the southwest and the Kiddington and Glympton Estates to the east. The farm was previously owned and associated with the Kiddington Estate until it was sold in 2010.

The site lies within the Limestone Wolds character area (as defined in the West Oxfordshire Design Guide) and comprises open land undulating between the Evenlode, Glyme and Windrush valleys (as defined in the West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment). The farm sits atop a ridge above patches of ancient woodland which forms part of the Glyme valley.

Site and Immediate Surroundings

2.3 The site covers under 0.1-hectares and comprises the traditional barns and stables (buildings 1-4 and 6-7 labelled at **figure 2**), modern pole barn (building 5) and their associated curtilage and access.



- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Old stables yard | 2. Two-storey threshing barns |
| 3. Adapted barn range | 4. Covered yard |
| 5. Modern pole barn | 6. Stables (rebuilt) |
| 7. Two-storey barn | 8. Modern open-sided barn |
| 9. Modern barn | 10. Modern grain store and barn |
| 11. Modern open-sided barn | Asterleigh Farmhouse |

Figure 2: Asterleigh Farm with all buildings labelled.



- 2.4 Asterleigh Farmhouse is a traditional two-storey residence of late C17 or early C18 origin with a C19 addition. It is subject to some later alterations including its subdivision into two dwellings.
- 2.5 The historic farm yard built form comprises buildings 1-4, 6 and 7 which are described below:
- Building 1 comprises two small, linear-plan and low-scale stables which enclose the western courtyard.
 - Building 2 comprises two historic linear-plan threshing barns of two-storey scale.
 - Building 3 is a single storey barn range that has been internally adapted to accommodate pigsties. It has been extended, re-roofed and otherwise altered. Its roof has partially collapsed and the building features modern blockwork walling.
 - Building 4 is a large open barn with lower aisles forming its east and west elements and its south elevation features an infilled arched entrance.
 - Building 6 is a more modern stables, significant portions of which have been rebuilt.
 - Building 7 is a simple plan two-storey building with hay loft doors.
- 2.6 As shown by the historical map analysis in the Design and Access Statement and Heritage Statement accompanying this submission, the stables yard (building 1), threshing barns (2), adapted barn (3) and two-storey barn (7) pre-date 1880. The maps also show that the adapted barn (3) was extended to the south and the covered yard (4) was introduced between 1880-1900. The eastern courtyard stables (6) appear to have been reintroduced between the 1920s-1970s.
- 2.7 The architectural character of the historic built form is typical of the Limestone Wolds and reflects the function of each building. In broad terms, the buildings are linear and simple-plan with steep pitched roofing. The historic walling is generally formed of coursed rubble limestone with some edges and opening surrounds denoted with dressed stone. Brickwork has been applied in places and this mostly appears to be for repairs and infilling. Most of the roofing is covered with Welsh slate.
- 2.8 These buildings are not in active use albeit some spaces are used for ad-hoc storage.
- 2.9 The modern built form comprises building 5 which lies within the application site and buildings 8-11 to the north and west:
- Building 5 is an open-sided steel pole barn with corrugated metal roofing.
 - Building 8 is a large, linear modern agricultural barn formed of blockwork and metal sheeting.
 - Building 9 is a large modern agricultural barn (indeed the largest building of the farmstead) and is formed of blockwork and metal sheeting.
 - Building 10 comprises the grain store and immediately adjoining barn. They are large modern agricultural buildings which range from a single to three-storey scale.
 - Building 11 is large, linear modern agricultural barn formed of blockwork and metal sheeting.



- 2.10 As shown by historic maps, buildings 8 and 10 pre-date 1970 and buildings 9 and 11 were introduced after 1970 (with satellite imaging confirming these buildings were introduced before 2004).
- 2.11 The barns were previously used for the storage of farm machinery. Some barns currently contain redundant machinery and are otherwise used for ad-hoc storage purposes.
- 2.12 In terms of layout, the historical map analysis also demonstrates that the original farmstead was formed of three staggered south-facing courtyards. Currently, the western stables yard largely reflects the historic layout. The central courtyard is entirely infilled by building 4 and the eastern courtyard is partially infilled with the modern pole barn structure.

Access

- 2.13 Asterleigh Farm benefits from direct access to the A44 via a private drive. There is also a secondary farm access from Kiddington Drive which approaches the farm from the south.
- 2.14 There is also a public footpath that runs from the A44 to the east, along the south of the farmstead and continues west past Asterleigh wood. The vehicular accesses and the public footpath are illustrated at **figure 1**.
- 2.15 In terms of public transport, there are two bus stops on the A44 at Over Kiddington. These bus stops are 0.8km (a 10-minute walk) from the site and are frequently served by the S3, NS3 and 7 gold services in addition to the V26 villager bus.

Immediate Surroundings

- 2.16 The farmstead is surrounded by arable fields which are interspersed by patches of woodland to the south and west (notably Asterleigh Wood lies to the west).

Planning Designations and Features

- 2.17 **Heritage:** Asterleigh Farmhouse is a grade II listed building and the listing is as follows:
- 2.18 *Farmhouse, now divided. Late C17 or early C18, with C19 addition. Squared and coursed limestone with slate roof. L-plan. Two storeys and gable-lit attic, with 2-storey addition. Chamfered plinth and integral stone-end stacks with weatherings. Two-window front; late C20 wooden casements with flat stone arches and stone cills. Central C20 half-glazed door with rectangular 3-part overlight. C19 two-storey addition to right with stone end stack and C20 two-light wooden casement to each floor, that to ground floor with wooden lintel. Interior: left-hand ground-floor room with chamfered spine beam and partly-blocked fireplace to left with wooden lintel. Chamfered beams in first floor of rear wing.*
- 2.19 The traditional barns and stables (buildings 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7) are of heritage interest and form the setting of the farmhouse. The buildings themselves derive interest from their historic nature and vernacular form and materials. It is considered that they may qualify for curtilage listed status.
- 2.20 A Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) is located immediately west of Asterleigh Farmhouse and comprises the remains of the medieval settlement and church of Asterleigh. Other SAMs in the wider include Pump Copse and Grims Ditch to the south along part of Kiddington Drive.



- 2.21 The site is also within reasonable proximity of two Registered Parks and Gardens; Kiggington Hall (grade II) to the east Ditchley Park (grade II*) to the southwest.
- 2.22 The designated heritage assets are indicated at **figure 3**.

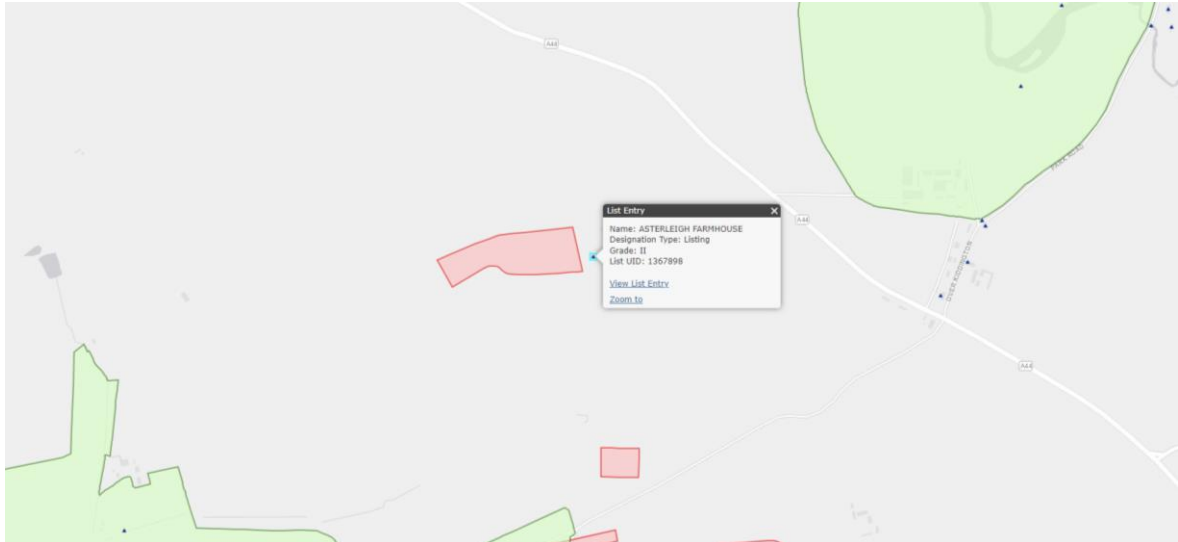


Figure 3: The designated heritage assets including listed buildings (blue triangles), SAMs (shaded red) and Registered Parks and Gardens (shaded green).

- 2.23 **Landscape:** The site and its surroundings fall within the Eastern Parks and Valleys landscape character area and specifically forms part of the semi-enclosed limestone wolds landscape type (as defined by the 1998 West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment). This landscape is described as large-scale, smoothly rolling farmland occupying the limestone plateau and dipslope. The landscape features a semi-enclosed character with views contained by hedgerow structure and woodland, resulting in moderate levels of intervisibility.
- 2.24 **Ecology:** The modest copse just over 130m to the west is Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat. Several areas of ancient woodland are within reasonable distance of the site, most notably Pump Copse 300m to the south and Asterleigh Wood approximately 400m to the west – both of these woodlands are also Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat. The Out Wood SSSI is located approximately 1.25km south of the site and the site and wider area falls within the Blenheim and Ditchley Conservation Target Area (CTA).
- 2.25 **Flooding:** The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore not at risk of flooding.



3 Proposed Development

3.1 The proposed development involves the *conversion and extension of agricultural barns to provide 3 dwellings with associated access, landscaping and demolition works*. The proposed 3D concept model is shown at **figure 4**.

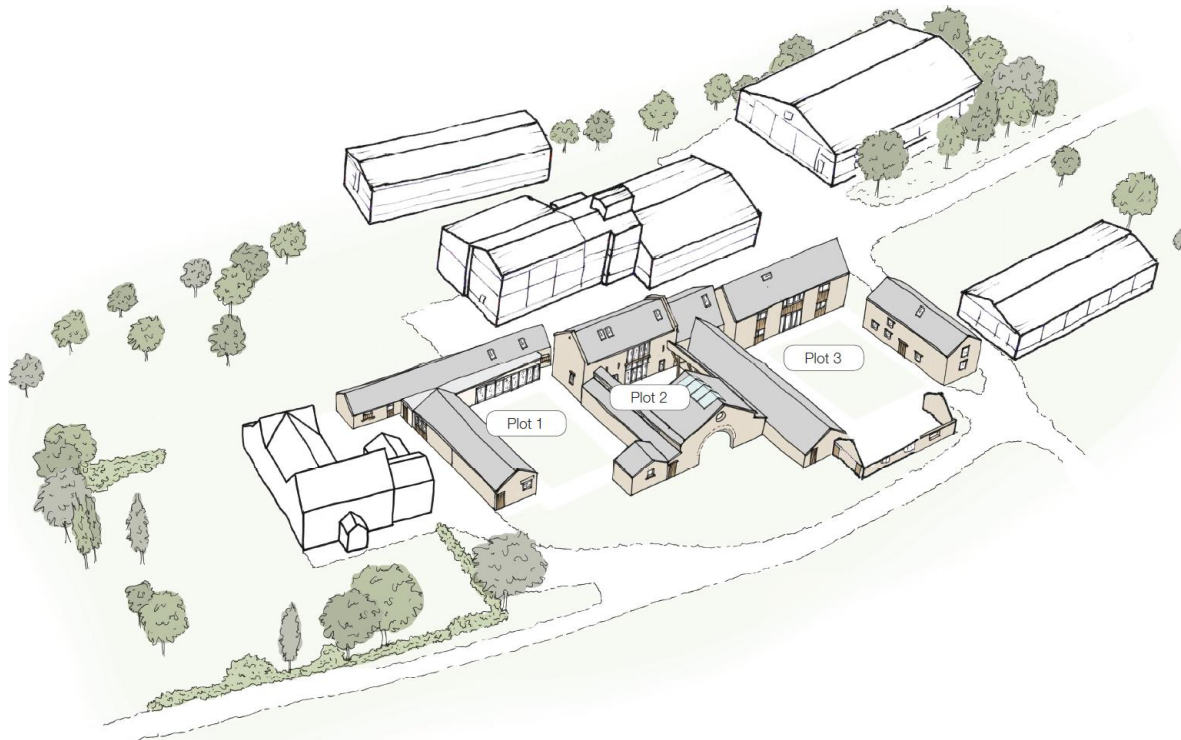


Figure 4: Extract showing the 3D concept model.

- 3.2 The accompanying Design and Access Statement (DAS) prepared by Woldon Architects describes the proposal in terms of its use, amount, layout, scale, appearance, sustainability, landscape and access. This section summarises the DAS and should be read in conjunction with it.
- 3.3 As set out in the introduction section, this proposal forms a component of the masterplan approach which seeks to revitalise the farmstead by responding positively to the constraints and opportunities of Asterleigh Farm with a new use and a sensitive design solution that secures the long-term conservation and future enhancement of the farmstead in a manner that respects its rural character.
- 3.4 In specific terms, the proposal involves converting and extending the historic stables (building 1) to form a 3-bed dwelling (plot 1) and converting and, where necessary, restoring the barns (buildings 2, 3 and 7) to form 2no. 3-bed dwellings (plots 2 and 3), plus a 1-bed annexe for plot 3.
- 3.5 The stables enclosure forms the amenity space for plot 1. The covered yard (building 4) is to be partially demolished and its floorspace repurposed as a partially covered amenity space for plot 2. The modern pole barn (building 5) is to be demolished and the north walling and roofing of the stables (building 6) removed to provide amenity space for plot 3.
- 3.6 **Table 1** provides the proposed housing schedule, floor areas and private amenity space.



Table 1: Proposed development schedule.			
Existing development	Proposed development	Proposed floorspace (GIA)	Proposed amenity space
<i>Building 1</i>	<i>Plot 1: 3-bed dwelling and garden store</i>	213sqm and 11sqm	~320sqm
<i>Buildings 2 and 4</i>	<i>Plot 2: 3-bed dwelling</i>	211sqm	~270sqm
<i>Buildings 2, 3, 6 and 7</i>	<i>Plot 3: 3-bed dwelling and 1-bed annexe</i>	354sqm and 88sqm	~540sqm

- 3.7 For the purposes of this application, the access and parking arrangements are to remain as existing (with parking located in the farmstead forecourt). It is however intended for the existing hardstanding to be upgraded and enhanced with soft landscaping as part of the future submission for the redevelopment of the modern barns. This would be illustrated in the form of a landscape masterplan as recommended by Officers.
- 3.8 The design has been informed by a detailed contextual analysis of the site and its surroundings (set out in the DAS) and guided by development plan policies, West Oxfordshire Design Guide and the extensive pre-application engagement (summarised at section 5). This process has resulted in a scheme which sensitively restores and repurposes the existing barns.
- 3.9 The proposal respects the vernacular character of the barns with a traditional rural agricultural aesthetic. Existing openings are repurposed (including the threshing barn doors) and where new openings are required to provide sufficient natural lighting and outlook, they have been designed to reflect existing openings (for example, the small triangular windows and standard rectangular windows on the rear elevations of plots 2 and 3). A limited number of conservation style rooflights are also proposed – this design approach is illustrated at **figure 5**.



Figure 5: Extracts showing the proposed north and south elevations of plots 2 and 3.



- 3.10 A low-scale single storey extension is proposed to link the stables and provide internal circulation space necessary to form plot 1 (illustrated at **figure 6**). It is a contemporary and visually lightweight structure comprising a pitched roof aspect connecting the stables and a thin flat roof aspect along part of the southern elevation of the northern structure – it is set in from the adjoining threshing barn as per Officer advice.



Figure 6: Extracts showing the proposed south elevation of plot 1.

- 3.11 As a conversion, the proposal largely utilises the existing on-site materials including the Cotswolds natural stone and Welsh slates. Where repairs and repointing is necessary, these will be made using materials to match those existing. Timber framed glazed openings are proposed, in addition to metal framed crittal style windows to match those existing.
- 3.12 The proposed stables link extension is formed of stonework on its western aspect and timber and glazing on its eastern and southern aspects. It has a standing seam zinc roof and this modern and lightweight materials palette ensures that it does not compete with the traditional materials of the existing building.

Design Evolution

- 3.13 The proposal has evolved in accordance with the recommendations of Officer's pre-application advice and the key changes made as a result of this process are as follows:
- **Plot 1 (building 1):** The proposed single storey extension has been pulled away from the threshing barn and now represents the minimum space necessary in order to link the stables and provide adequate circulation space.
 - **Plot 2 (building 2):** The existing stonework and redbrick building connecting the threshing barns is to be retained and repaired.
 - **Plot 2 (building 4):** The southern gable, alcoves and two roof spans of the covered yard are now retained in order to conserve the unique character of the building while providing sufficient natural lighting for the southern aspect of plot 2 and its amenity space.
 - **Plot 3 (building 7):** The existing openings on the south elevation are now retained.
 - **All:** The level of new openings has been reduced, particularly in relation to the stables and the rooflights and have been revised to a more traditional design.



4 Planning History

- 4.1 The planning records of relevance to this application include those relating to the farmstead. The relevant planning records are listed at **table 2**.

Table 2: Site Planning History			
Reference	Description of Development	Decision	Date
W81/0525	Erection of grain store.	Approved	1981
23/01026/PN56	Notification for prior approval for the proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to 5 dwellings (Class C3) and for building operations reasonably necessary for the conversion.	Refused	31/05/2023
23/02478/PN56	Notification for prior approval for the proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to 5 dwellings (Class C3) and for building operations reasonably necessary for the conversion.	Pending	

- 4.2 The prior notification applications relate to two of the modern barns (buildings 8 and 10). The initial application was refused on the grounds that, in the absence of sufficient evidence, the proposal was considered to involve building operations that went beyond those reasonably necessary. The required evidence and design amendments were subsequently submitted as part of pre-application 23/01901/PREAPP (see section 5 for more information) where Officers noted that the evidence was sufficient to support the conversion of the buildings and recommended the number of openings on building 10 be further reduced. The application was then resubmitted with the design of building 10 amended in accordance with officer recommendations.



5 Pre-application Engagement

5.1 **22/02578/PREAPP:** A pre-application enquiry for the *conversion and redevelopment of agricultural buildings to provide 6-8 dwellings with associated access, landscape and demolition works* was submitted on the 13th September 2022. The enquiry sought advice in respect of the conversion of the traditional barns, the Class Q conversion of the modern barns and their subsequent replacement with better quality new build homes. A site meeting was held and written advice was issued on the 17th November. The masterplan concept model is shown at **figure 7**.

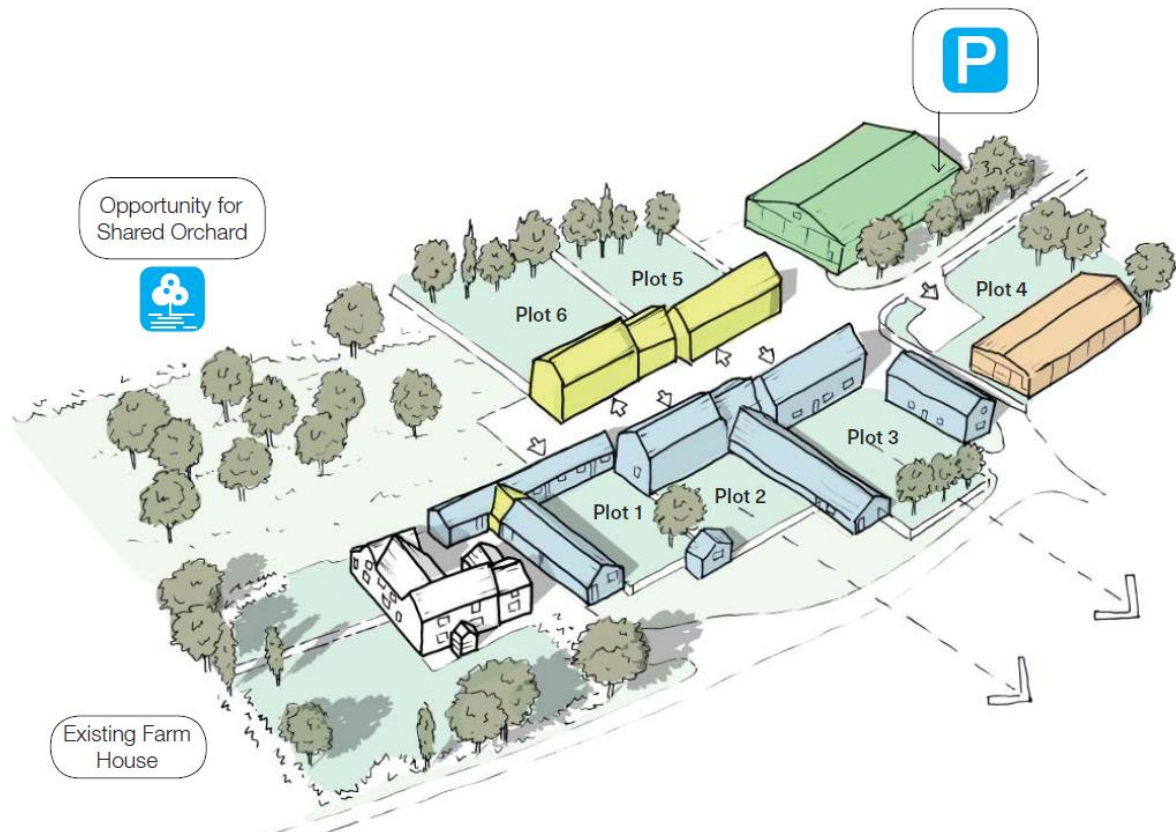


Figure 7: Masterplan 3D concept model (Option B – New Build).

5.2 The key comments of the written advice in relation to the conversion of the traditional barns is summarised below and commentary is added where necessary:

- **Principle of development:** “*The conversion of the existing agricultural units to dwellings may therefore be acceptable in principle if it could be demonstrated that the development would meet one or more of the criteria set out in policy H2... meet the requirements of policies H3 and EH12... and meet the general principles of policy OS2.*” – It is understood Officers were referring to E3 based upon the preceding text, however as this proposal is for residential development, policy E3 is not of relevance.
- “*Officers consider that the provision of housing in this countryside location to meet an identified need, in the absence of a five year housing land supply, carries some (albeit limited) weight.*”



- **Landscape:** *“There should be no impact on the ancient woodland close by. It is too far away to be affected.”*
- *“If the existing farm footprint is retained, together with no increase in building heights, the visual impact on the surrounding landscape should be low.”*
- *“If design details are good and sympathetic to the agricultural context, the impact on the PROW should be low.”*
- **Ecology:** *“The results [of an initial assessment and bat surveys as necessary] and subsequent mitigation and compensation strategy regarding bats will need to be submitted to the LPA as an ecological impact assessment. This report should include a preliminary ecological appraisal of the site and any phase 2 surveys required to ascertain presence/absence of protected species.”* – Ecology reporting is submitted with this application.
- **Transport:** *“The 2 access tracks should be included in the red edged area and will require passing bays. Bays should be 6.0m long with additional tapers to give an overall width of 5.0m.”*
- *“Parking (both car and cycle) should comply with OCC Parking Standards and should include visitor parking.”*
- *“If the refuse vehicle is going to access the site I’d like to see tracking and turning for an 11.3m vehicle. If not then turning for a delivery vehicle should be available.”* – This feedback has been addressed in the transport reporting submitted in respect of the Prior Notification applications and its findings are relevant to this application.
- **Heritage:** *“It is important that new uses are found for this group, which includes some interesting traditional agricultural buildings. Without new uses, the traditional buildings will eventually be lost, as they don’t generally suit modern agricultural practices.”*
- *“Removal of building 5 is unproblematic- it is a fairly ephemeral steel-framed addition, colliding somewhat with the early buildings.”*
- *“Removal of building 4 is problematic. Whilst it does collide with the early buildings, it is of considerable interest in its own right. In my view, a significant part of this should be retained, including the south gable, and some of the roof structure.”* – The southern gable, alcoves and two spans of the roof are now retained.
- **Residential amenity:** *“Internal and external living standards should meet the nationally prescribed technical housing standards, where possible, although this will be balanced against the need to retain the original form and mass of the buildings.”*
- **Other matters:** Officers recommended the submission of a Landscape Plan and Drainage Strategy for the whole scheme. However, as this application only relates to the conversion of the traditional barns (i.e. no/minimal change in terms of building footprint and landscaping), it is proposed that this information be provided as part of the subsequent application relating to the redevelopment of the modern barns.



5.3 **23/01901/PREAPP:** A subsequent pre-application enquiry for the *conversion and redevelopment of agricultural buildings to provide 6-8 dwellings with associated access, landscape and demolition works* was submitted on the 14th July 2023. The enquiry sought detailed design advice in respect of the conversion of the traditional barns and clarification over the additional evidence and amendments of the Class Q conversion. A site meeting was held on 10th August and written advice was issued on the 23rd August. The revised masterplan concept model is shown at **figure 8**.

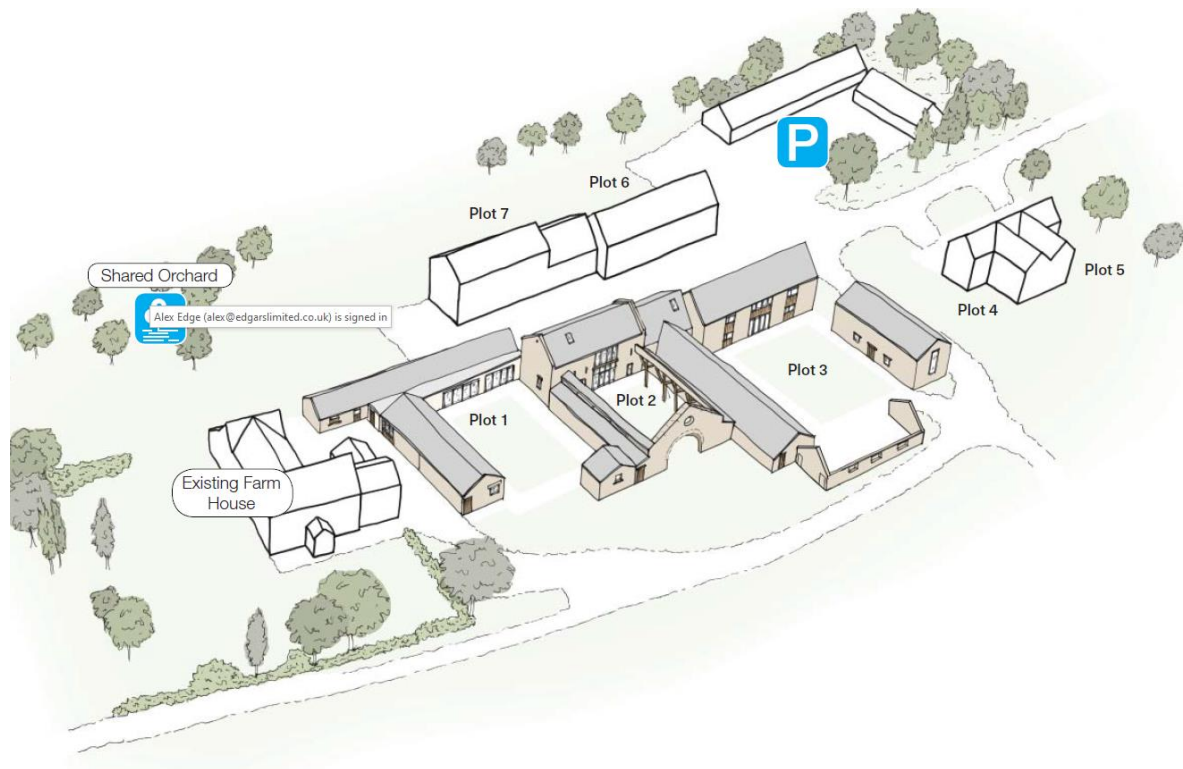


Figure 8: Revised masterplan 3D concept model which shows the southern gable and alcoves of barn 4 and the eastern, southern and western walls of barn 6 retained.

5.4 The key comments of the written advice in relation to the conversion of the traditional barns is summarised below and commentary is added where necessary:

- *“It is now proposed to retain barn 2 and 4, which Officers support. The existing structure of building 4 should be retained as much as possible in accordance with policy E3 of the Local Plan. Officers have concerns regarding the loss of the Covered Yard roof. The two spans and the alcoves should be retained and the spans should be covered/protected in order to limit exposure to the elements. Partially glazing the roof (the area between the upper principal purlins) may be a suitable solution.”* – The roof is now partially retained and glazed as recommended.
- *“The form and scale of building 1 should reflect the principles in the West Oxfordshire Design Guide. The single storey flat roof addition to the south elevation is not supportable and moving the extension at least 1m away from the threshing barns should be considered.”* – The proposed extension has been pulled away from the threshing barns as recommended.



- “*More of building 6 should be retained as it is considered to be a traditional stable building.*” – Further investigation of this building has revealed much of its historic fabric has been lost and the remaining building is not of significant architectural or historic merit. It is therefore proposed for partial demolition.
- “*Building 7 – the existing openings on the south elevation should be maintained.*” – The existing openings have been maintained as recommended.



6 Planning Policy

6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.2 The relevant documents of the development plan are identified as follows:

- West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031

6.3 The following documents are identified as being material considerations:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021
- West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2015

6.4 The policies of these documents relevant to the consideration of this application are listed below and are set out as necessary in the planning assessment section of this statement.

National Planning Policy Framework

- Section 2 (Achieving sustainable development)
- Section 5 (Delivering a sufficient supply of homes)
- Section 6 (Building a strong, competitive economy)
- Section 9 (Promoting sustainable transport)
- Section 11 (Making effective use of land)
- Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places)
- Section 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment)
- Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031

- Policy OS1 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development)
- Policy OS2 (Locating development in the right places)
- Policy OS3 (Prudent use of natural resources)
- Policy OS4 (High quality design)
- Policy H2 (Delivery of new homes)
- Policy H4 (Type and mix of new homes)
- Policy T1 (Sustainable transport)
- Policy T2 (Highway improvement schemes)
- Policy T3 (Public transport, walking and cycling)
- Policy T4 (Parking provision)
- Policy EH2 (Landscape character)
- Policy EH3 (Biodiversity and geodiversity)
- Policy EH8 (Environmental protection)
- Policy EH9 (Historic environment)
- Policy EH11 (Listed buildings)
- Policy EH12 (Traditional buildings)



- Policy EH15 (Scheduled monuments and other nationally important archaeological remains)
- Policy CN2 (Chipping Norton sub-area strategy)

West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2015

- Section 3 (Geology and Landscape)
- Section 4 (Local Character)
- Section 7 (Listed Buildings, Registered Parks & Scheduled Monuments)
- Section 8 (Stonework)
- Section 9 (Roofs and Roofing Materials)
- Section 10 (Windows and Doors)
- Section 11 (New Development)
- Section 14 (Extensions and Alterations)
- Section 15 (Conversion of Agricultural Buildings)



7 Planning Assessment

7.1 Having regard to the established planning context and the nature of the proposed development, the following key matters are of relevance to the planning assessment and are addressed in turn:

- Principle of development
- Housing mix
- Design
- Heritage (including archaeology)
- Landscape
- Natural resources
- Residential amenity
- Transport
- Ecology
- Other matters (including noise, land contamination and flooding)

Principle of Development

7.2 Policy OS2 states that development in the open countryside will be limited to that which requires and is appropriate for a rural location and which respects the intrinsic character of the area. This policy also requires that development complies with a series of general principles (which are separately addressed in the related subsections below).

7.3 Policy H2 permits new dwellings in the open countryside in several circumstances, including where residential development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would secure the future of a heritage asset(s) – This reflects paragraph 80(b) of the NPPF.

7.4 Policy CN2 (Chipping Norton sub-area strategy) states that new development outside of Chipping Norton will be limited to meeting local community and business needs. Proposals for development should be consistent with the strategy, the requirements of which relate to several of the above listed planning matters and are therefore addressed in the relevant subsections.

7.5 Asterleigh Farmhouse is a grade II listed building and several of the barns (notably buildings 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7) are attractive vernacular structures which are considered to potentially qualify for curtilage listing. Although of historic origin, building 3 shows signs of significant modern alterations, but it nonetheless reflects the typical footprint, form and proportions of the adjoining historic barns and is physically integrated with them. Due to its apparent reconstruction and modern interventions, it is not considered that building 6 is curtilage listed.

7.6 As evidenced by the Structural Reports and Heritage Statement accompanying this submission, the condition of several traditional barns and the wider farmstead is declining (with some structures falling into a poor state of repair). There is no active use to support the upkeep and enhancement of these buildings and the decline of the farmstead is affecting the setting of the farmhouse and the architectural and historic interest of the buildings – this will worsen over time.

7.7 The proposed development will halt and reverse this decline with a sensitive design solution that puts the stables and traditional barns to an active residential function consistent with their



conservation. The proposed residential function is therefore considered to represent the optimal viable use of the heritage assets in that it will:

- Improve the appearance and condition of the assets in a manner that respects the rural character of the farmstead;
- Enhance the immediate setting of the barns and farmhouse, as well as the wider setting of the farmstead; and
- Generate the income and occupant ownership necessary to support the present and long-term future conservation and enhancement of the assets.

- 7.8 Accordingly, the proposed development represents the optimal viable use of the traditional barns, secures their future conservation and enhances their setting in accordance with Policy H2.
- 7.9 In the pre-application feedback, Officers expressed that *“the existing structure of building 4 should be retained as much as possible in accordance with policy E3”* and that *“an application would need to meet the requirements of policy OS2, H2, E3 and E2... It should be explained in detail and robustly why the buildings cannot be re-used for employment, tourism and community uses and careful consideration given to impact on the significance of the adjacent designated heritage assets and their settings”*
- 7.10 Given that the proposal is for residential development, policies E2 and E3 are not applicable. Notwithstanding this and with regard to building 4, the proposal now retains a significantly greater proportion of the existing structure in accordance with Officer recommendations; this includes the walling, alcoves and two spans of the main roof.
- 7.11 Turning to the re-use of the buildings for non-residential uses, another circumstance in which policy H2 supports residential development is the re-use of appropriate existing buildings where it would lead to an enhancement of their immediate setting (which reflects NPPF paragraph 80(c)) and where it has been demonstrated that the building is not capable of re-use for business, recreational, community or tourist uses or where the proposal addresses a specific local housing need which would otherwise not be met.
- 7.12 However, it is not necessary to demonstrate compliance with more than one of the circumstances listed under policy H2. Given the sensitive historic context of the barns and their setting, it is considered that the above-assessed circumstance relating to the optimal viable re-use and future conservation of the heritage asset takes precedent in this instance. Notwithstanding this, the submitted application package provides information that satisfies several of the policy tests set out at paragraph 7.11.
- 7.13 In terms of the appropriateness of the existing buildings for conversion, this application is supported by structural reporting which evaluates the condition of the buildings and their capability for conversion. Buildings 1, 2 (excluding the redbrick building connecting the threshing barns), 6 and 7 are reported to be in reasonable condition, albeit they require some localised replacement and repairs. The redbrick structure of building 2, plus buildings 3 and 4 are reported to be in poor condition and require more significant repairs. Subject to the recommended repair works, buildings 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7 are considered suitable for conversion in accordance with Policies OS2 and H2 and building 4 is considered suitable for re-use as a shelter partially covering the amenity space of plot 2.



- 7.14 In terms of enhancing the immediate setting of the barns and with regard to the following subsections relating to design, heritage and landscaping, the proposed restoration and conversion of the barns is considered to significantly enhance the barns, their immediate setting and the overall character and appearance of the farmstead.
- 7.15 In summary, the proposed development involves the conversion of the traditional barns with a sensitive design solution, putting them to an active residential use that represents their optimal viable use, secures their future conservation and enhances their immediate setting in accordance with policy H2. The principle of residential development is therefore considered acceptable in accordance with policy H2 – subject to the proposal complying with the general principles of policy OS2 and all other relevant policies, which are addressed in turn in the subsequent sections.
- 7.16 **Presumption in favour of sustainable development:** At the current time, the adopted Local Plan is now understood to be out of date as the Council are currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply. This position was confirmed in the recent Appeal Decision Notice relating to Land north of Cote Road, Aston (appeal APP/D3125/W/23/3317512) which states:
- “...it was agreed between the Council and the appellant that the Council could demonstrate and housing land supply of between 2.56 – 3.14 years and that this represents a serious and significant shortfall against the five-year requirement.”*
- 7.17 For the avoidance of doubt, this submission seeks to justify that the proposed development is policy compliant and therefore the so-called ‘tilted balance’ is not applied. Nonetheless, in light of the serious and significant housing land supply shortfall, there is a clear need to boost the housing supply in the District. In this context, the proposal would help to address the shortfall by adding 3 family-sized dwellings in a well-connected location.
- 7.18 In the initial pre-application response, Officers noted that the provision of dwellings in the context of the shortfall in November 2022 (reported to be 4.1-years) attracted “*some (albeit limited) weight*”. Given the significant decline in housing land supply from 4.1-years to possibly as low as 2.56-years in less than a year, it is considered that the provision of any housing now attracts greater weight.

Housing Mix

- 7.19 Policy H4 requires all residential developments to provide or contribute towards the provision of a good, balanced mix of property types and sizes. Supporting paragraph 5.76 states that the main focus should be the provision of 2 and 3-bed properties and to a lesser extent 4-bed and larger.
- 7.20 The proposal provides 3no. 3-bed dwellings (ranging from 213-354sqm), plus 1no. 1-bed annexe (88sqm). Given the modest level of development proposed and its location in the open countryside (where there is a greater demand for family-sized dwellings of 3+ bedrooms), it is considered that this housing mix is appropriate. The housing mix and internal space standards are a product of the dwellings being designed to retain the original form and fabric of the existing buildings – this was acknowledged by Officers in the initial pre-application to be an important consideration against which the proposed housing mix would need to be balanced.
- 7.21 Accordingly, the proposed development is considered to provide a good, balanced mix of property types and sizes in accordance with policy H4.



Design

- 7.22 Policy OS2 states that development should be appropriate for a rural location and should respect the character of the area. The general principles require that development be proportionate and form a logical complement to the scale, pattern of development and character of the area.
- 7.23 Policy OS4 requires that development delivers high-quality design which respects the historic, architectural and landscape character of the area, contributes to local distinctiveness and, where possible, enhances the character and quality of the environment. Policy OS4 further requires development to have specific regard to the West Oxfordshire Design Guide.
- 7.24 The overarching design approach is to revitalise Asterleigh Farm with an optimal viable use and a sensitive design solution that secures its long-term conservation and future enhancement in a manner that respects its rural character. In broad terms, the proposal deliver a series of significant improvements including:
- Converting the traditional barns (buildings 1, 2, 3 and 7) and re-using the covered yard (building 4) as amenity space, thereby putting the historic buildings to an active residential use consistent with their conservation;
 - Better revealing the historic nature of the grade II listed Asterleigh Farmhouse and the legibility of its historic buildings;
 - Reintroducing the historic south-facing courtyards; and
 - Restoring the historic fabric and improving the appearance of the traditional barns, thereby enhancing the farmstead and thus the setting of the farmhouse.
- 7.25 The proposal achieves this through the series of sensitive design interventions set out in the DAS, paragraphs 5.2 and 5.18 of the Heritage Statement and summarised in section 3, paragraphs 3.8-3.13.
- 7.26 In particular, the proposal involves the careful restoration of the historic barns through localised repairs and replacements, from the minor repointing of the stables to the structural reinforcement of the redbrick barn (central/link element of building 2) and roof repair of barn 3.
- 7.27 The design solution seeks to retain and celebrate as much of the historic fabric as possible and this is best demonstrated by the carefully considered design of the Covered Yard (building 4), a substantial portion of which is now retained in accordance with Officer advice. Elsewhere, the key external and internal features of interest are preserved and restored, including portions of the existing timbers which are left exposed and legible.
- 7.28 The only extension proposed is the very modest, low-scale and contemporary single storey link extension connecting the western stables to form plot 1. The footprint of this structure has been minimised to only provide the internal space absolutely necessary to link the stables and provide circulation space to the notably thinner northern stables (which, due to its thin footprint, does not offer sufficient space for rooms and a corridor). Owing to its low scale, minimal footprint and contemporary appearance and materials palette, the proposed extension in no way competes with the historic barn aesthetic.



- 7.29 Where openings are required in order to facilitate sufficient natural lighting and outlook, the design solution prioritises the re-use of existing openings in accordance with the West Oxfordshire Design Guide. Notable examples of such openings includes the re-use of the stable bays and threshing barn doors which, in the case of the eastern threshing barn, involves the reopening the blocked up north and southern barn doors – a clear heritage benefit.
- 7.30 Where new windows are proposed, they have been designed to reflect those already present on the barns. Examples include the small triangular threshing barn windows, the under-eaves stable openings and the modest rectangular windows on the eastern threshing barns (buildings 2 and 7). Where necessary, conservation style rooflights are proposed and they have been reduced in number as the scheme has evolved.
- 7.31 While some aspects of existing built form are proposed for removal, including part of the covered yard main range, plus the roof and part of the walling of the modern stables (building 6), the works to the covered yard have been minimised and, in the case of building 6, relates to a structure of little historic integrity. At the same time, these works enable the three historic south-facing courtyards to be sensitively re-purposed as amenity space while enhancing the legibility of the courtyards and the older historic built forms from the public realm.
- 7.32 Overall, the proposed development has sensitively evolved as the design has advanced and in accordance with the recommendations of Officers (with the key design changes over the course of the iterative design process listed at paragraph 3.13). Resultantly, the proposal is considered to deliver high-quality design which respects the historic, architectural and landscape character of the area, promoting its local distinctiveness in accordance with policies OS2 and OS4.

Heritage

- 7.33 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 requires that special regard must be paid to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest.
- 7.34 Policies OS2, OS4 and EH9 and the West Oxfordshire Design Guide seek to conserve and/or enhance the special character, appearance and distinctiveness of the historic environment and its associated heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- 7.35 Policy EH11 supports proposals that conserve and/or enhance the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building, its fabric, features, appearance, character and setting.
- 7.36 Policy EH12 supports the conversion, extension and alteration of traditional buildings where proposals avoid extensive structural alterations, the removal of features of interest or includes extensions or alterations which would obscure or compromise the character of the original building.
- 7.37 Policy EH15 supports proposals where they conserve or enhance the significance and setting of scheduled monuments and important archaeological remains.
- 7.38 This application is supported by a Heritage Statement prepared by HCUK Group. The statement identifies the relevant heritage assets, provides a statement of significance for these assets and assesses the impact of the proposed development upon the relevant assets.



- 7.39 The statement identifies that the heritage assets of relevance to the consideration of this application include the grade II listed Asterleigh Farmhouse and its setting, which includes the farmstead buildings. The traditional stables and barns are considered to be heritage assets in their own right and, subject to confirmation of the decision-maker, may be considered as part of the extent of the listed building (i.e. curtilage listed buildings).
- 7.40 The statement of significance explains that the farmhouse primarily derives its significance from its architectural and historic values. The rural setting of the farmhouse is identified as an intrinsic part of its heritage interest as an isolated farmhouse and farmstead. The traditional barns are of varying degrees of interest in relation to the setting of the listed building. In particular, the historic farm buildings of the later 18th-19th century are considered to form a positive element of the farmhouse setting, in addition to having heritage value in their own capacity.
- 7.41 The traditional barns illustrate the evolution of the historic farming operations at Asterleigh Farm. The late 18th-19th century barns (buildings 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7) are considered to have the greatest degree of integrity with the early history of the farmstead. The late 19th century covered yard (building 4) is noted to be of architectural and historic interest.
- 7.42 The mid-late 20th century structures (buildings 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11) are of limited interest, they make a negligible contribution to the setting of the farmhouse and are considered to visually dominate the traditional built form.
- 7.43 Turning to the impact assessment of the proposed development, the Heritage Statement explains that the proposal is informed by an understanding of the historic development and seeks to preserve and enhance the interest and setting of the farmhouse and the traditional farmstead structure. The key findings of the impact assessment are summarised below:
- The conversion/re-use of the stables (building 1) and the western yard preserves the historic yard and principal external forms and materials. In so doing, the proposal will preserve the way the adjacent listed building and stables are experienced and understood.
 - A substantial portion of the covered yard (building 4) is retained in accordance with pre-application advice and, in this capacity, the layout, form and materials of the building will remain understandable. Its re-use as amenity space would restore a degree of legibility to its earlier historic function as an open yard while enhancing the legibility of the earlier threshing barn.
 - The conversion of the western threshing barn and central redbrick building (building 2) would restore the structures, utilise the existing openings as fenestration, introduce a very limited amount of openings and would retain much of the internal and external features of interest (including the central openness of the threshing barn interior and exposing its timbers). In this respect, the conversion preserves the rural agricultural architectural and historic features while securing the legibility of said features.
 - The conversion of the eastern threshing barn (building 2) involves reopening the blocked threshing barn doors, internal interventions similar to those of the western threshing barn and the insertion of first floor windows on the south elevation which reflect those on the



ground floor. The reopening of the threshing barn door is considered to be a heritage benefit and the other interventions are considered to be appropriately sensitive.

- The proposed restoration of the partially collapsed single storey (building 3) will restore its historic scale, appearance and relationship with the surrounding traditional structures.
- The removal of the modern pole barn (building 5) will better reveal the historic farm layout.
- While Officers recommended the retention of the southern range (building 6), this recommendation was predicated on a brief external inspection only. However, following the pre-application site meeting, HCUK conducted a closer inspection of the range (including its interior) which revealed significant modern fabric including concrete blockwork and a modern damp proof course. This, combined with the historic maps (dating 1925 and 1955) which do not show the range, suggest that it is not a historic structure nor likely to qualify for curtilage listing. As such, the proposed retention of its gables and lowered rear wall is considered to appropriately reference the footprint of the building while enhancing views to the threshing barn behind.
- The conversion of the eastern two-storey barn (building 7) involves similar design interventions to those proposed for the threshing barns. The proposal now re-uses the existing openings on the south elevation in accordance with Officer recommendations.
- Overall, the statement concludes that the proposal does not result in any harm to the historic environment and instead delivers a series of heritage benefits (set out at section 8), particularly securing a viable future use for the traditional buildings which would halt and reverse the decline of the structures and safeguard their future conservation.

7.44 Having regard to the above, the proposed development is considered to conserve and enhance the setting of the grade II listed Asterleigh Farmhouse and the traditional farmstead stables and barns by restoring the historic structures, putting them to an optimal viable use consistent with their conservation and thereby enhancing the wider farmstead. As such, the proposals comply with policies OS2, OS4, EH9, EH11 and EH12.

7.45 **Archaeology:** This application is supported by an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment prepared by RPS Consulting. It identifies the presence of the Deserted Medieval Settlement of Asterleigh scheduled monument immediately west of the site as well as six further scheduled monuments to the south and south west. The assessment concludes that the area has high archaeological potential. Subject to the completion of the required archaeological investigation at the formal application and detailed design stages, the proposed development complies with policy EH15.

Landscape

7.46 The relevant general principles of Policy OS2 collectively seek to preserve the local landscape and setting of settlements and conserve and enhance the natural, historic and built environment.

7.47 Policy EH2 states that development should conserve and, where possible, enhance the intrinsic character, quality and distinctive local landscape features.



7.48 As set out in section 2, the site is not subject to any statutory landscape designations. It lies within the Eastern Parks and Valleys landscape character area and specifically forms part of the Semi-Enclosed Limestone Wolds landscape type (as defined in the West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment). This landscape character is semi-enclosed with moderate levels of intervisibility.

7.49 The initial pre-application was informed by a review of the landscape opportunities and constraints, as presented in the plan prepared by Nicholsons Lockhart Garratt (shown at **figure 7**). The findings of this review are of relevance to this application.

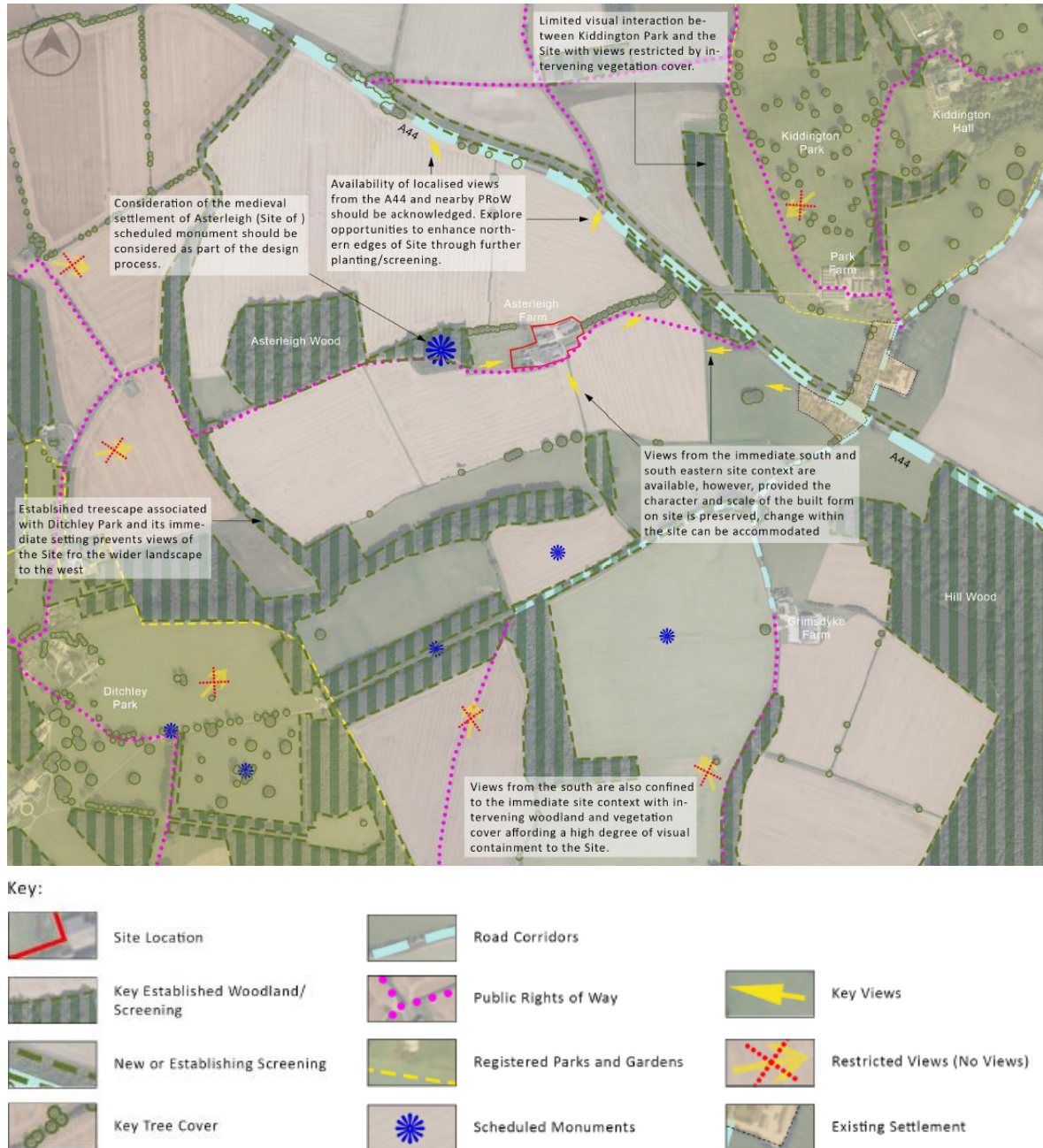


Figure 7: Extract of the Landscape Opportunities and Constrains Plan.

7.50 This plan demonstrates that, due to the presence of woodland blocks and tree belts, views of the site are restricted to the public footpath that immediately adjoins the southern boundary of the farmstead



and the localised views that can be glimpsed from the A44 and Kiddington Drive. The review also confirms that there is limited visual interaction between the site and the nearby Kiggington Hall and Ditchley Park RPGs.

- 7.51 As stated in the above sections, the scheme has been carefully designed in order to maintain an appropriately rural farmstead aesthetic through its vernacular design interventions, fenestration and materials palette. Due to its low-scale and use of light weight modern materials, the contemporary single storey extension to the stables would not have any notable impact in landscape terms. In this respect, the proposal harmonises with the local traditional built form and therefore the wider landscape character of the Limestone Wolds.
- 7.52 The partial demolition of the covered yard (building 3) and more modern stables (building 6), plus the complete removal of the modern pole barn (building 5) is likely to have a minor positive landscape impact by reducing the level of built form and enabling the original three staggered south-facing courtyards to be better appreciated from the public footpath.
- 7.53 The above assessment broadly reflects the Landscape Officer's pre-application comments where they noted that the masterplan proposals would not impact the proximate ancient woodland and the overall landscape and visual impact would be low provided there is no increase in building heights and the design details are sympathetic to the agricultural context – indeed no increase in building heights is proposed and, as demonstrated above, the design interventions are sympathetic to the agricultural context.
- 7.54 Having regard to the sensitive and low-key nature of the proposed development and given that views of the site are highly localised, it is considered that the proposal conserves and, through the repair and restoration of the barns, enhances the intrinsic character, quality and distinctive local landscape features. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with policies OS2 and EH2.

Natural Resources

- 7.55 Policy OS3 requires development proposals to show consideration of the efficient and prudent use and management of natural resources, with particular regard to land use efficiency, transport, renewable energy generation, energy efficiency, passive design, sustainable materials, water efficiency, waste and flooding and drainage.
- 7.56 West Oxfordshire now require developments to submit Sustainability Statements which have due regard to the Sustainable Standards Checklist. This statement meets the requirements of the Sustainability Statement and a completed version of the checklist is submitted with this application.
- 7.57 Section 2.5 of the DAS outlines the various sustainable construction and design measures proposed. With regard to the above-listed criteria, the sustainable measures are as summarised as follows:
- **Land use efficiency:** The site comprises the under-utilised built form of a redundant farmstead. In this capacity, the sensitive re-use of the existing traditional barns to provide 3 dwellings will enhance the land use efficiency significantly.
 - **Transport:** The proposal is located within a walkable distance of bus services. In addition, the provision of secured cycle storage and electric vehicle charging helps to promote sustainable transport modes.



- **Renewable energy:** Low carbon technologies and on-site renewables such as air source heating are proposed.
- **Energy efficiency, passive design and materials:** As a conversion, the proposal is inherently energy efficient through its re-use of existing built form. It will be designed to exceed the Part L Building Regulations 2021 as a minimum. The existing building fabric will be enhanced with breathable insulation. In addition, the fenestration is designed to optimise solar gain while conserving the traditional barn character. Furthermore, smart meters and home user guides will be provided to inform occupants on how to achieve sustainable living.
- **Water efficiency:** The proposal facilitates water efficient fittings and appliances, plus grey water harvesting where appropriate, in order to achieve the building regulations requirement for water efficiency of no more than 110 litres/person/day.
- **Waste:** Adequate storage provision is made for the re-use and recycling of waste.
- **Flooding and drainage:** The site is not at risk of flooding and, as a conversion, would not increase the risk of flooding to people or property either on-site or elsewhere.

7.58 Having regard to the above, the proposed development embodies the efficient and prudent use and management of natural resources in accordance with Policy OS3. Please refer to the submitted checklist for more information/sign-posting to the relevant documents where necessary.

Residential Amenity

- 7.59 Policy OS2 expects development to be compatible with adjoining uses and not have a harmful impact on the amenity of existing occupants.
- 7.60 The only existing residence in notably proximity of the site is Asterleigh Farmhouse. Plot 1 forms the eastern boundary of the farmhouse curtilage and the proposed dwelling lies 4-6m from the house. Owing to its subservient scale, the link extension proposed to connect the two stables to form plot 1 will not have any notable impact upon the natural lighting, privacy and outlook of the farmhouse.
- 7.61 The proposed fenestration on the west elevation of plot 1 includes the replacement of the garage door with lower level timber panelling and glazing above and the timber frame glazed front door at the centre of the link extension. These openings are situated 12-13m from the east elevation of the farmhouse where its rear courtyard entrance is located. The proposed fenestration is also notably offset from those of the farmhouse.
- 7.62 The layout, fenestration and internals of plots 1-3 have been designed to ensure that the new dwellings are compatible with each other and protect the amenity of all future occupants. All plots achieve acceptable levels of privacy, natural lighting and outlook.
- 7.63 The proposed dwellings have sufficient levels of internal and external amenity space in accordance with the national space standards and the amenity space standards of the West Oxfordshire Design Guide. Secured communal bin and visitor cycle storage is provided in the farmstead forecourt.
- 7.64 Accordingly, the proposed development provides a high standard of amenity for existing and future users of the site and its surroundings in accordance with Policy OS2.



Transport

- 7.65 Policies OS2, T1, T2, T3 and T4 collectively require development to promote sustainable transport, provide safe and suitable access and have an acceptable impact upon the highway network.
- 7.66 Due to the limited scale of development proposed (3no. 3-bed dwellings), it is not considered that the application would have significant transport implications (this being the trigger condition on the Full Application Validation Checklist). As such, no Transport Statement / Assessment is provided.
- 7.67 With that said, the Prior Notification for the conversion of the modern buildings to 5 dwellings was supported by a Transport Technical Note prepared by Motion transport consultants. The findings of the Technical Note and assessment of local highways authority set out in the Delegated Report of application (23/01026/PN56) are of relevance to this application. As such, this note is submitted for information purposes and this section summarises the findings of the note and LHA assessment insofar as they are relevant to the proposed development.
- 7.68 **Sustainable transport (location and transport modes):** The site benefits from direct access to the A44 which provides connections to Chipping Norton to the north and Woodstock, Kidlington and Oxford to the south. The site is within a 10-minute walk of the bus stops at Over Kiddington. These stops are frequently served by the S3, NS3 and 7 gold and V26 villager buses which link to these settlements. The proposed dwellings would help support these public transport services.
- 7.69 **Safe and suitable access:** The proposal utilises the existing access to the A44 (which is subject to a 50mph speed limit). This access has visibility splays of 2.4m by 170-190m which meets the desirable minimum requirements for the speed limit and speed survey results (2.4m by 120-160m). With regard to the comments of LHA, adequate forward visibility is provided for right turning vehicles.
- 7.70 The internal access lane which connects the A44 access point and the farmstead is 3.7-4.5m wide and is therefore able to accommodate two-way car movements. The LHA recommended that passing bays of 6m plus additional tapers to give an overall width of 5m should be provided. It was also requested that vehicle tracking to the farmstead be provided for an 11.3m vehicle.
- 7.71 The Technical Note submitted in respect of application 23/01026/PN56 provides the requested vehicle tracking and also shows that there is an existing passing bay close to the A44 junction which is sufficient for two-way vehicle movement including an 11.3m vehicle and a car. When considering this information under application 23/01026/PN56, the LHA deemed this arrangement appropriate for the 5 dwellings proposed with the Delegated Report stating that: *“The site benefits from an existing access and there are no proposed changes or alterations to the existing access. The Highways Officer has been consulted and they have not raised an objection to the proposal.”*
- 7.72 Given the above, it is considered that the existing access arrangements provide safe and suitable access to the public highway that is adequate to support the 3no. 3-bed dwellings proposed.
- 7.73 **Parking:** For the purposes of this application, the parking arrangements are to remain as existing with cars parking in the farmstead forecourt between the traditional and modern barns. This space is sufficient to provide the 6 parking spaces as required by Table 4(b) of the LHA Parking Standards for New Developments. The Parking Standards document does not recommend dimensions for open parking spaces and as such, the default 5.5m long by 2.5m wide spaces are provided.



- 7.74 **Impact on the local highway network:** At the time the farm was in an active use, it was subject to multiple daily vehicular movements associated with the agricultural function. Comparatively, the proposed dwellings are likely to generate a modest increase of vehicle movements.
- 7.75 Table 6.3 of the Technical Note provided trip generation data for 6 dwellings (including Asterleigh Farm plus the 5 Class Q dwellings proposed). It demonstrated that 6 dwellings would generate 7 trips during the weekday morning peak hour, of which 5 would be vehicular, and 6 trips during the weekday evening peak hour, of which 4 would be vehicular. In addition to the vehicular trips, it is anticipated that some of the remaining total person trips could be made using more sustainable modes, most likely by public transport.
- 7.76 Given the proposed development is for 3 dwellings, it can be inferred the proposal would likely generate 4-5 trips during the weekday morning peak hour, of which 3-4 would be vehicular and ~4 during the evening peak hour of which 2-3 would be vehicular. Given the low level of movements estimated, particularly when considered in the context of the existing use and floorspace, it is considered that the level of movements associated with 3 dwellings would not represent a significant impact upon the local highway network.
- 7.77 **Summary:** Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed development promotes sustainable transport, achieves safe and suitable access, provides adequate parking and would have an acceptable impact upon the local highway network. Furthermore, the information provided in the accompanying Technical Note satisfactorily addresses the pre-application comments made by the LHA. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies OS2, T1, T2, T3 and T4.

Ecology

- 7.78 Policy EH3 states that development should protect and enhance biodiversity to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity.
- 7.79 As the proposal involves the conversion of several traditional barns and the demolition of the modern pole barn, this application is supported by an Ecological Assessment prepared by Ecology Solutions. The key findings of this document are summarised below.
- 7.80 Having regard to the separation of the site from the ecological designations in the vicinity (including those mentioned at paragraph 2.24) and given the modest nature of the conversion proposed, it is considered that there would not be any adverse impacts on these designations.
- 7.81 The reporting confirms that the traditional barns have moderate to high potential for roosting bats. The other buildings are considered to have low potential for roosting bats and the areas of hardstanding and modified species poor grassland are considered to be of low ecological value.
- 7.82 Specific surveys were undertaken in respect of bats and badgers. The surveys confirmed the presence of bat roosts in the western threshing barn, single storey barn range, covered yard and two-storey barn (buildings 2-4 and 7). This included summer day roosts for low numbers of Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle and Brown Long-eared bats. Badger foraging activity was recorded but no setts were identified on site. A suspected Barn Owl nest and roosting site was detected in the eastern threshing barn and further roost site in the redbrick building between both threshing barns.



- 7.83 The reporting sets out avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures based on the anticipated loss of bat roosting and bird nesting features. These recommendations include:
- Applying for a European Protected Species (EPS) Licence;
 - Precautionary construction procedures (for example, tool-box briefings for site personnel, pre-commencement checks by a qualified ecologist, soft strip / exclusion exercise when removing walling and roofing and undertaking nest clearance outside of breeding season);
 - 15 bat roost features including raised bat access tiles and integrated roosting features in the walls (NB: It is proposed that a further 15 features would be delivered part of the subsequent application relating to the redevelopment of the modern barns);
 - 2 Barn Owl nest boxes during the construction phase and 2 integrated Barn Owl nesting features;
 - 10 integrated bird nesting features for Swallows, House Marting and House Sparrows; and
 - Sensitive controls for artificial external lighting (which can be secured by condition).

7.84 Subject to compliance with all recommended ecology protection and enhancement measures above, the proposed development is considered to adequately safeguard protected species and habitats and provides the opportunity to deliver a net gain in biodiversity through the provision of the habitat features proposed. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with policy EH3.

Other Matters

- 7.85 **Noise:** There are no uses in the vicinity that would have a harmful impact on the future occupants of the proposed dwellings and the dwellings would not restrict the operation of the surrounding land. Accordingly, there is no reason to suggest that the proposed development would have an unacceptable impact in terms of noise.
- 7.86 **Land contamination:** The site has previously been used for storage of agricultural machinery and equipment. No contamination has previously been reported on site and the likelihood of contamination is therefore deemed low. However, due to its previous use, a precautionary planning condition can be applied to any permission as necessary – this same approach was applied by the Council's ERS team in respect of 23/01026/PN56.
- 7.87 **Flooding:** The property is within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at the lowest risk of flooding (having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding). Due to this context and the size of the site (falling below the 1-hectare threshold), no Flood Risk Assessment is required.
- 7.88 As mentioned by the District Consenting and Enforcement Engineer in the first pre-application response, a full surface water drainage strategy is only required where the proposal would involve the replacement of the existing buildings. As the proposal is for the conversion of the traditional barns, it is understood that a drainage strategy is not required in this instance.



8 Conclusion

- 8.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Juxon Ltd in support of an application seeking full planning permission and listed building consent for the *conversion and extension of agricultural barns to provide 3 dwellings with associated access, landscaping and demolition works* at Asterleigh Farm, Kiddington Estate OX20 1BQ.
- 8.2 Asterleigh Farm is an attractive farmstead comprising the grade II listed farmhouse and multiple historic and modern farm buildings (which form its setting). However, the agricultural function of the farm is redundant; the existing buildings are no longer suitable for modern agricultural purposes and the farming operations have been relocated elsewhere. The condition of the traditional barns is declining and there is no active use to support their upkeep and enhancement.
- 8.3 The proposed development forms part of the wider masterplan approach to reverse this decline with a comprehensive and carefully considered design solution that seeks to breathe new life into Asterleigh Farm, establish a positive and viable vision for the future of the farmstead and deliver significant heritage and wider public benefits, including:
- Putting the traditional barns to an active optimal viable use consistent with their character, thereby safeguarding their future conservation and removing the risk of further decline;
 - Restoring the collapsing and deteriorating historic structures, notably the central stonework and redbrick structure between the threshing barns (part of building 2), the adapted range (building 3) and the covered yard (building 4);
 - Better revealing the historic nature of the farmhouse and the legibility of its oldest historic buildings and its traditional south-facing courtyard arrangement;
 - Removing the modern pole barn (building 5);
 - Reopening the eastern threshing barn doors (part of building 2);
 - General restoration, repair and improvement works to the historic fabric, resulting in an overall enhancement to the appearance of the traditional barns;
 - As a result of the above, enhancing the setting of the grade II listed farmhouse;
 - Providing 3no. 3-bed homes in a well-connected location, meeting an identified need for high-quality family-sized dwellings and helping to address the current serious and significant housing land supply shortfall;
 - Providing short-term property development, construction and associated supply chain jobs;
 - Providing a modest population increase that would help support the vitality of the local community, services and the wider rural economy; and
 - Achieving an inherent environmental sustainability enhancement by re-using existing built form and introducing low-carbon technologies.



8.4 The proposal also positively responds to the Officer advice of pre-applications 22/02578/PREAPP and 23/01901/PREAPP with a series of key design changes, including:

- Down-sizing the proposed contemporary link extension connecting the stables (building 1);
- Retaining and repairing the existing stonework and redbrick building connecting the threshing barns (part of building 2);
- Retaining the southern gable, alcoves and two roof spans of the covered yard (building 4);
- Retaining the existing openings on the south elevation of the eastern barn (building 7); and
- Reducing the overall level of new openings and applying a traditional design aesthetic.

8.5 Overall, this statement demonstrates that:

- **Principle of development:** The proposed development would put the traditional barns to an active residential use that represents their optimal viable use, secures their future conservation and enhances their immediate setting in accordance with policies OS2 and H2. The proposal meets a local housing need in accordance with the Chipping Norton sub-area strategy (policy CN2) and, in this capacity, would help to address the current serious and significant housing land supply shortfall by providing 3 family-sized dwellings.
- **Design:** By reason of its sensitive re-use of the existing historic barns, positive restoration and repair works and appropriately characteristic design interventions, the proposal is considered to be of a high-quality design which respects the character of the area, promoting its local distinctiveness in accordance with policies OS2 and OS4.
- **Heritage:** For the same reasons as outlined above, the proposal is considered to conserve and enhance the setting of the grade II listed Asterleigh Farmhouse and the significance of the traditional stables and barns (which are heritage assets in their own right), putting them to an optimal viable use consistent with their conservation and enhancing the wider farmstead in accordance with policies OS2, OS4, EH9, EH11 and EH12.
- **Landscape:** The proposals are sensitive and low-key in landscape terms and therefore would only be perceived from highly localised views, they will conserve and enhance the intrinsic character, quality and distinctive local landscape features in accordance with policies OS2 and EH2.
- **Other matters:** The proposal is considered to comply with all other relevant development plan policies in relation to housing mix, residential amenity, transport, ecology and other technical matters.

8.6 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed development accords with the development plan and the other relevant material considerations. It is therefore respectfully requested that the application be considered favourably.