

## **PLANNING APPLICATION**

**Proposal for a replacement 2 storey house with basement,  
landscaping and ancillary building renovation  
at Slates Farm, Blacksholm Road, Kilmacolm, PA13 4SX**

**On behalf of Mr and Mrs A. White**

## **DESIGN STATEMENT**

**By Graeme Gerard Quigley**  
ARB RIAS RIBA Chartered Architect

**January 2024**

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**1968 ARCHITECTS**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

I studied architecture at the Universities of Strathclyde, Florence and Barcelona gaining a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Architectural Studies and a Master of Architecture in Advanced Architectural Design. I am a fully qualified Architect, an Associate of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) as well as a member of the Architects Registration Board (ARB).

- 1.2 In 2000 I took over my father's architectural practice, Quigley Architects, and have been the sole principal since. My particular area of expertise is in building conservation, with many commissions in conservation areas and on A, B & C listed buildings throughout the Central Belt of Scotland.

## 1.3 APPOINTMENT

Quigley Architects made an initial site appraisal in October 2022 and were instructed in November 2022 to design an exemplar sustainable home as well as upgrade and intensify the use of the site as an equestrian centre and livery stables.

## 1.4 SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

Our Clients, Mr. & Mrs. A White, are submitting an application for planning consent to address all the concerns expressed in connection with the "Refusal of Planning Permission" decision notice (23/0123/IC) issued by Inverclyde Council for which states;

*"The proposal represents an unacceptable departure from the Development Plan as no specific locational requirement for the proposed house, visitor accommodation and parking has been provided. Furthermore, the proposed house is not considered to be appropriately scaled or designed to be in keeping with the character of this rural area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies 8, 9, 14, 17 and 29 of National Planning Framework 4; Policies 1 and 14 of the adopted Inverclyde LDP and Policies 1, 15 and 19 of the proposed LDP. It is also not supported by the design principles of both adopted and draft PAAN 8."*

- 1.5 This document will demonstrate that our revised development proposals to replace the existing permanent home on a one-for-one basis, re-use of the associated ancillary buildings and intensifying the use of the existing equestrian centre at Slates Farm, Blacksholm Road, Kilmacolm all complies with the relevant policies of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), Inverclyde Council's Adopted 2019 Inverclyde Local Development Plan (LDP), Proposed 2021 Inverclyde Local Development Plan (LDP) and Planning Application Advice Notes (PAANs).

## 1.6. BACKGROUND

Slates Farm is one of the original buildings of the local area, with maps dating back to 1850s. There are several others along Blacksholm Road, B786 and the B788 that date as far back but with the function of the countryside in this area shifting from agriculture and livestock farming to equestrian and residential, many of these traditional farm steadings have been repurposed accordingly. The majority having been significantly extended, refurbished and altered as a result.

- 1.7 Slates Farm was purchased by our Clients in 2022 for the purposes of creating an exemplar sustainable and energy efficient home for themselves as well as upgrading, refurbishing and modernising the existing equestrian centre to provide outstanding facilities for the local equine community.



*Slates Farm residential house*

- 1.8** The previous owners redeveloped Slates Farm as a private residential property with adjacent equestrian centre, but having maintained the properties and associated commercial operations for several decades, have been unable to sustain the sheer scale of upkeep required. All properties have therefore fallen into disrepair and require complete modernisation.
- 1.9** In order to provide equestrian facilities of the highest level our Clients intend to completely refurbish the existing dilapidated ancillary buildings to provide modern stable facilities as well as refurbish, extend and gate the existing courtyard to provide a secure environment for horse and rider.
- 1.10** To the north the existing derelict barn and wood stores will be demolished to create space for an outdoor equestrian arena with adjacent refurbished and enlarged parking for visitors and horsebox/trailers.
- 1.11** The existing permanent home has been significantly altered and extended on several occasions to provide additional accommodation more conducive to domestic habitation.
  - 1.11.1** The fabric of this property now displays multiple environmental and structural issues which make redevelopment uneconomic and at odds with NFFP4 Policy 1 so the Clients wish to demolish and erect a replacement permanent home on the existing footprint that is fit for purpose, sustainable, energy efficient and fully accessible.
- 1.12** We started by conducting a historic desktop study of the area and measured survey of the existing site. The fabric of the existing buildings was identified as significantly problematic with the section containing the existing permanent house being the most cause for concern.



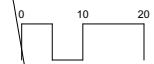


*The ancillary buildings*

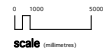
- 1.12.1** With our conservation background, Quigley Architects initial approach was still to reuse all the existing buildings including altering and extending the section containing the permanent house to provide the additional accommodation required by the Clients.
- 1.12.2** We proposed demolishing incongruous extensions facing the courtyard and replace with single story subservient extensions to the north and east as well as forming a new basement level to preserve the scale and mass of the original grouping of buildings.
- 1.12.3** Our proposals were fully assessed by the Clients but was ruled out as being uneconomic to achieve the aims of sustainable development required, namely;

*“When looking at the various options for Slates we spoke with a few surveyors regarding the renovation costs for Slates whilst extending the existing house and making it up to the same wind & water proofing as the new build only proposal.*

*We have been quoted on average £4,000/m2 to carry out these works which at 290m2 makes a budget cost of £1,160,000 exclusive of VAT (£1,392,000 gross). You also need to factor in the excavation of the existing structure to make the basement and factor in the under pinning and all associated works. This will push the cost up to over £1,200,000.00 exclusive of VAT (£1,440,000) which is some £440,000 more than the budget costs we have to build the new house/building. Please note that within these costs, given the condition of the existing house it is possible the costs to renovate the existing part of the house could significantly increase. The costs to underpin the house & carry out excavation works are likely on the light side.*

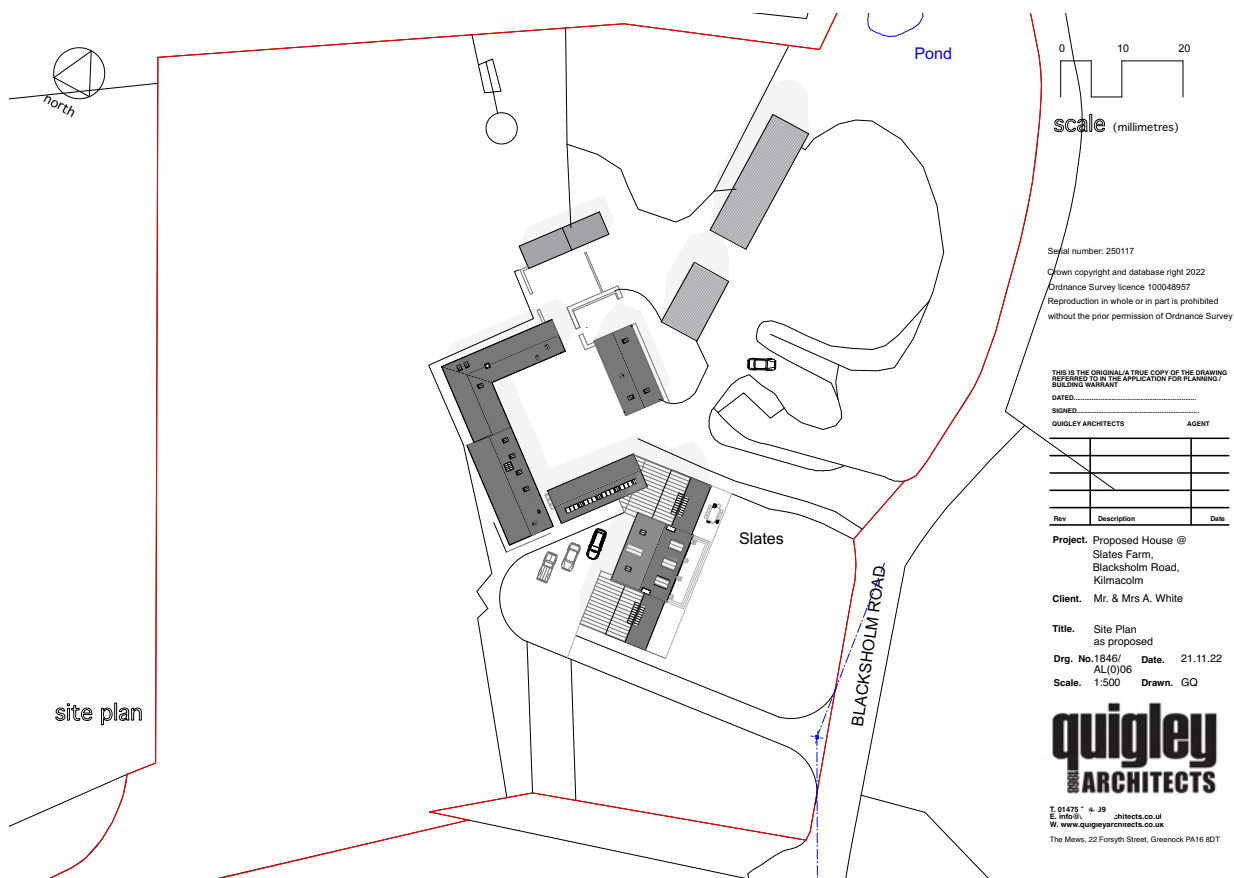


BLACKSHOLM ROAD



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- 1.13** The structural and material condition of the existing fabric as well as the amount of work associated with altering and extending to achieve the level of improved thermal performance and air tightness required all impacted negatively on re-use of the existing permanent house.
- 1.13.1** Please see Appendix 1. (John Fulton Plumbers roof condition survey).
- 1.13.2** Please see Appendix 2 (CBC Stone condition survey)
- 1.13.3** Please see Appendix 3 (Design Engineering Workshop structural condition survey)
- 1.14** Having fully explored retaining the existing house we revised our approach to design a replacement home constructed on the southern terrace with new office accommodation required for intensifying the commercial operations of the equestrian centre built on the footprint of the existing permanent home. This would mean there was a clear distinction between public and private uses of the site.



*Quigley Architect's 'initial design' drawings to replace existing buildings*

- 1.15** While the scheme had merit, the connection with the existing ancillary buildings was weakened meaning the visual impact of the replacement home was more significant.
- 1.16** Over the next few months, we developed several proposals which incorporated the requirements of the private house with the commercial operations of the equestrian centre and eventually settled on one replacement building located on the footprint of the existing permanent home to;
- 1.16.1** minimise the visual impact of the replacement by re-establishing the existing grouping of buildings,
- 1.16.2** maintain the connection with the existing ancillary buildings around the central courtyard.
- 1.16.3** incorporate distinction between public and private uses of the site via separate entrances.



- 1.17** These development proposals formed the basis of our application for planning consent having been rigorously designed to meet all of the Clients' needs as well as being sympathetic to its surrounding built environment, the existing topography and associated landscape.
- 1.18** An application for planning consent incorporating our Design Statement was submitted to Inverclyde Council and registered on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023 as 23/0123/IC. The application was determined and refused under Delegated Powers on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- 1.19** Taking cognisance of the reasons for refusal as well as comments within the Report on Handling accompanying the decision notice, the design of the replacement house was significantly revised to reduce scale and mass as well as simplifying the detailing and materials proposed.
- 1.20** Pre-application discussions with Inverclyde Council on the merits of our revised scheme designs for redeveloping the site were held between November and December 2023.
- 1.21** In addition to our revised development proposals and expanded design statement, our application for planning consent also includes various condition reports of the existing buildings from structural engineers and specialist building contractors as well as economic and environmental assessments of our development proposals to provide further justification requested by Planning Officers.

## **2.0 PLANNING POLICY**

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### **2.1 THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021**

### **2.2 POLICY 1 – CREATING SUCCESSFUL PLACES**

*'Inverclyde Council requires all development to have regard to the six qualities of successful places. In preparing development proposals, consideration has been given to the factors set out in Figure 3. Where relevant, applications will also be assessed against the Planning Application Advice Notes Supplementary Guidance.'*

**2.2.1 Distinctive:** The replacement house has been specifically designed for the site with the Client's in-depth knowledge of the Kilmacolm area, making sure it is distinctive within its location yet also sympathetic to the overall area. The Client's wish for a traditional, 'Georgian style' manor house, perfectly reflects the surrounding historical built environment. The design is subtly restrained and conservative in its approach yet modern and sustainable in its construction techniques setting a valuable precedent for the area.

**2.2.2 Safe and pleasant:** The replacement house would be positioned in the middle of a private site serviced by the existing access off Blacksholm Road. The existing topography of the elevated site means privacy for the owners is maintained. Privacy and security are further reinforced by existing and proposed landscaping.

The existing driveway will also be used by the public for accessing the equestrian centre and its facilities. There is a separate car park proposed that can be seen and controlled from the replacement house and the existing courtyard can also be monitored and accessed directly from the replacement house's home office.

There are no neighbours in close vicinity to worry about overlooking. Even with the new large scale housing development now approved to the south at Balrossie and new house to the north, the replacement house and equestrian centre will still remain secluded when hidden behind existing and proposed landscaping.

**2.2.3 Easy to move around:** Designed from the outset to be fully compliant with current building standards for accessibility and caters for all mobility needs. The design mirrors the scale and refined elegance of adjacent country manors such as Netherwood with generous proportions, a central staircase and hallways providing symmetry and orderly manoeuvring spaces and paths.

The external access around the new house and ancillary buildings will also be redeveloped and renovated sympathetically.

- 2.2.4 Welcoming:** The proposal has been designed to be symmetric as per the client's wishes, with beautiful columned porches, a sculpted driveway with soft landscaping and large windows. Internally, the spaces are comfortable and bright, with every room having its own fireplace, dual aspect and intricate design details, such as elaborate coving and balustrade. The layout is designed to be specifically well balanced and proportional with the existing ancillary buildings maintaining their subordinate nature and separate function.

The replacement house also acts as a focal point for the equestrian centre, welcoming visitors.

- 2.2.5 Adaptable:** The proposal is fully adaptable, with bathrooms on the ground floor, and adjacent rooms easily convertible into accessible bedrooms, if required. All the spaces have been designed to be flexible, allowing for simple manipulation to suit many needs. On site there are also barns and stables that can be utilised for many purposes, and extended if required.

- 2.2.6 Resource efficient:** Sustainability has been at the fore-front of the design process throughout by the incorporation of renewal technologies and green design principles. The south orientation of the building provides opportunities for solar gain and optimum placement for PV arrays. There is plenty of land to install ground source heat pumps. There are fire places in all primary spaces and rooms which will provide carbon neutral source of heat, and built to modern standards to make sure minimum heat escapes the flues.

### **2.3 POLICY 6 – LOW AND ZERO CARBON GENERATING TECHNOLOGY**

*'Support will be given to all new buildings designed to ensure that at least 15% of the carbon dioxide emissions reduction standard set by Scottish Building Standards is met through the installation and operation of low and zero carbon generating technologies. This percentage will increase to at least 20% by the end of 2022.'*

- 2.3.1** The development proposals aim to achieve a much higher standard by ensuring at least a 50% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions through use of zero and low carbon generating technology such as solar P.V. panels, ground source heat pumps, efficient oil boiler, advanced glazing, added insulation, alternative solid fuel heating, solar gain and mechanical ventilation and heat recovery system.

### **2.4 POLICY 8 – MANAGING FLOOD RISK**

- 2.4.1** The development proposals have been assessed and do not; offer significant risk of flooding (i.e. with the 1 in 200 year design envelope); increase the level of flood risk elsewhere. The development proposals actually reduce the flood risk elsewhere by capturing water on-site that does not presently exist; and reduce the water conveyance and storage capacity of a functional flood plain in any way.

### **2.5 POLICY 9 – SURFACE AND WASTE WATER DRAINAGE**

*"New build development proposals which require surface water to be drained should demonstrate that this will be achieved during construction and once completed through a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS), unless the proposal is for a single dwelling or the discharge is directly to coastal waters.*

*The provision of SuDS should be compliant with the principles set out in the SuDS Manual C753 and Sewers for Scotland 3rd edition, or any successor documents.*

*Where waste water drainage is required, it must be demonstrated that the development can connect to the existing public sewerage system. Where a public connection is not feasible at present, a temporary waste water drainage system can be supported if:*

- i. a public connection will be available in future, either through committed sewerage infrastructure or pro-rata developer contributions; and*
- ii. the design of, and maintenance arrangements for, the temporary system meet the requirements of*



*SEPA, Scottish Water and Inverclyde Council, as appropriate.*

*Private sustainable sewerage systems within the countryside can be supported if it is demonstrated that they pose no amenity, health or environmental risks, either individually or cumulatively.*

*Developments including SuDS are required to have an acceptable maintenance plan in place."*

**2.5.1** While there are historical septic tanks on-site and ample opportunity for soakaways, the adjacent Balrossie development offers the possibility for mains connections of surface and waste water drainage. The practicality of which has yet to be explored but, if possible, all applications to the regulatory bodies (for new mains connections) will be submitted and approved accordingly.

**2.5.2** The development proposals will implement a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) which is compliant with the principles set out in the SuDS Manual C753 and Sewers for Scotland 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, or any successor documents.

## **2.6** POLICY 11 – MANAGING IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE TRANSPORT NETWORK

**2.6.1** The development proposals have a positive impact of the efficient operation of the transport and active travel network by increase in parking provision on-site to promote reduction in car usage locally. Development will comply with the Council's roads development guidelines and parking standards.

## **2.7** POLICY 14 – GREEN BELT AND COUNTRYSIDE

*"Development in the Green Belt and Countryside will only be permitted if it is appropriately designed, located and landscaped, and is associated with:*

- b) a tourism or recreational use that requires a countryside location;*
- c) the equestrian centre requires infrastructure with a specific locational need*
- d) includes the appropriate re-use of a redundant stone building, the retention of which is desirable for its historic interest and architectural character, subject to that interest or character being retained and*
- e) intensification (including outbuildings) of an existing use, with is within the curtilage of the associated use and is of an appropriate scale and form.*

**2.7.1** The development proposals are for an existing farm with equestrian centre set within a historic environment with mature landscaping.

## **2.8** POLICY 19 – INDIVIDUAL AND SMALL-SCALE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREEN BELT AND COUNTRYSIDE

*"Proposals for individual and small-scale housing development (up to 3 houses) in the Green Belt and Countryside will only be supported in the following circumstances:*

- a) where the dwelling(s) is justified by the operational needs of a farm or other viable business which is inherently rural in nature and has been in operation for at least 5 years;*
  - b) where the dwelling(s) is an ancillary and integral part of a development that would bring significant economic benefits to Inverclyde;*
  - c) demolition and replacement of a habitable dwelling which cannot otherwise be brought up to current building standards, and where the proposed dwelling is similar in scale to the existing dwelling;*
  - d) sub-division of an existing dwelling to create one or more additional dwellings, but only where any extensions are clearly ancillary to the existing building; or*
  - e) conversion of redundant stone or brick built non-residential buildings, where the proposal is supported by proof that the existing building is no longer needed for its original purpose, and a structural survey indicates that the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without substantial alteration, extension or rebuilding, with any new build element clearly ancillary to the existing building.*
- In all instances, dwellings are required to be designed and located to respect and complement their Green Belt/Countryside location and their landscape setting. Any new development should positively*

*contribute to the established character of the local landscape in terms of siting, scale, design, form and materials.”*

- 2.8.1** The replacement house is justified as the existing house having been professionally assessed is no longer suitable in today’s standards without significant reinvestment, which is uneconomic.
- 2.8.2** The replacement house is congruous with the existing local built environment as it is of a similar scale, mass and proportion to the other existing and proposed residential properties in the area.
- 2.8.3** The replacement house will also integrate office accommodation and storage for maintaining the business side of this venture.

## **2.9 INVERCLYDE PLANNING APPLICATION ADVICE NOTES (PAANs)**

### **2.10 PAAN 2 - SINGLE PLOT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

- *The plot size should reflect those in the immediate locality.*
- *The proportion of the built ground to garden should reflect the immediate locality.*
- *The distance between building to garden boundaries should reflect that in the immediate locality.*
- *The established street from building line should be followed.*
- *The proposed building height, roof design, use of materials and colours should reflect those in the immediate locality.*
- *Ground level window should comply with intervisibility guidance. Windows on side elevations should be avoided where they offer a direct view of neighbouring rear/private gardens, but bathroom windows fitted with obscure glazing will be acceptable. Boundary screening of appropriate height may be considered where the design and impact on neighbouring residential amenity is deemed acceptable.*
- *Windows of habitable rooms above ground level should comply with the window intervisibility guidance. Windows on side elevations will only be permitted if the distance to the nearest boundary exceeds 9.0m, if there is no direct view of neighbouring rear/private gardens or if it is a bathroom window fitted with obscure glazing.*
- *The level of on-site car parking should be comparable with the established pattern in the street and be capable of being implemented without detriment to road safety.*

- 2.10.1** The site is currently a converted farm house with associated ancillary buildings surrounded by private amenity space as well as equine grazing and exercise areas. The existing house is no longer sustainable or accessible by today’s standards and is not in proportion with other homes in the area. The replacement house aims to reflect the scale and design of the larger homes in the near vicinity and become an environmentally sustainable option.

## **2.11 NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 4**

### **2.12 POLICY 1 – TACKLING THE CLIMATE AND NATURE CRISES.**

*“When considering all development proposals significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises.”*

- 2.12.1** The development proposals seek to replace an existing permanent home with an energy rating of G with a one-for-one replacement permanent home with an energy rating of A.
- 2.12.2** If the existing permanent home is altered, extended and refurbished to achieve the level of accommodation required and to comply with current building standards the energy rating would only be C.
- 2.12.3** To achieve the same energy rating of A as the replacement house, the existing home would have to be extensively altered, extended and refurbished to such an extent that the project is uneconomical.

**2.12.4** The development proposals seek to ensure that sustainability is central and the Clients have engaged Econekt Specialist Building Contractors to achieve this from the outset.

**2.12.5** Please see Appendix 4 (Econekt sustainability statement)

## **2.13 POLICY 2 – CLIMATE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION**

**2.13.1** Development proposals will be sited and designed to minimise lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible.

**2.13.2** Development proposals are located within the existing grouping of buildings sited in the 1800s, are out with any flooding zone and are protected by the natural topography of the site against current and future risks of climate change.

**2.13.3** Development proposals include retrofit measures to the existing ancillary buildings that will reduce emissions and support adaption to climate change.

## **2.14 POLICY 8 – GREEN BELTS**

**2.14.1** The development proposals are located within a green belt designated with the LDP and should be supported as they are for the replacement residential accommodation is required and designed for a key worker in a primary industry within the immediate vicinity of their place of employment where the presence of a worker is essential to the operation of the enterprise.

**2.14.2** In addition, the development proposals are for outdoor recreation, play and sport as well as leisure and tourism uses; and will provide opportunities for access to the open countryside being immediately adjacent to existing routes of active travel and core paths.

**2.14.3** Finally, the development proposals are an intensification of an established (equestrian) use, include works to existing ancillary buildings, include their reuse, rehabilitation and conservation as well as replacing an existing permanent home one-for-one.

**2.14.4** And the following requirements are met, namely; the equestrian centre is an existing enterprise and the nature of the business requires a green belt location for horses to graze, exercise and be housed safely and securely.

**2.14.5** The purpose of the green belt at this location is not undermined and is compatible with the surrounding established countryside and landscaping character with new equestrian facilities recently granted by Inverclyde Council immediately to the north of the application site.

**2.14.6** The development proposals have been designed to ensure it is of an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance, and uses materials that minimise visual impact on the greenbelt as far as possible; and there will be no significant long-term impacts on the environmental quality of the green belt.

## **2.15 POLICY 9 – BROWNFIELD, VACANT AND DERELICT LAND AND EMPTY BUILDINGS**

**2.15.1** The development proposals will result in the sustainable reuse of brownfield land including vacant and derelict land and buildings.

**2.15.2** The development proposals are supported by policies in the LDP.

**2.15.3** The land is not known or suspected to be unstable or contaminated.

**2.15.4** The development proposals include reuse of existing buildings suitable for conversion to other uses. To conserve embodied energy, demolition will be minimised to areas where it is uneconomic and unsustainable to convert.

## **2.16 POLICY 14 – DESIGN, QUALITY AND PLACE**

**2.16.1** The development proposals are designed to significantly improve the quality of this location.

**2.16.2** The development proposals are consistent with the six qualities of successful places, namely;

**Healthy:** The development proposals specifically support women's safety due to the nature of the predominately female activities as well as improving physical and mental health of all users through regular exercise and equine interaction.

**Pleasant:** The development proposals have been carefully designed to preserve and enhance the existing natural and built spaces by a thorough understanding of the site, its topography, landscaping and the local built environment as existing and proposed.

**Connected:** The development proposals are a betterment of the existing equestrian centre and as such will support the existing well-connected networks that make moving around easy and reduce car dependency still further.

**Distinctive:** The development proposals support attention to detail by a thorough understanding of local architectural styles and their natural landscapes, the locations of which are numerous throughout the local area. The result when twinned with historical context are designs which have interpreted, literally and creatively, to reinforce this identity.

**Sustainable:** The development proposals support the efficient use of resources by reusing existing buildings, only replacing the existing permanent house one-for-one with an energy efficient, highly insulated alternative in order to allow people to live, play, work and stay in the immediate area. Thus ensuring climate resilience and integrating nature positive biodiversity solutions such as growing their own animal feed on-site, reducing car use, generating green energy solutions and offering local services to the immediate community.

**Adaptable:** The development proposals support commitment to investing in the long-term value of the buildings, driveways and spaces by allowing for flexibility so that they can be changed quickly to accommodate different uses as well as maintained over time.

**2.16.3** The development proposals have been carefully designed, will preserve and enhance the amenity of the surrounding area and are fully consistent with the six qualities of success places so should be supported.

## **2.17** POLICY 16 – QUALITY HOMES

**2.17.1** Policy 16 deals with the provision of new homes, whereas the development proposals incorporate replacing an existing permanent home on a one-for-one basis.

## **2.18** POLICY 17 – RURAL HOMES

**2.18.1** Policy 17 deals primarily with the provision of new homes in rural areas.

*“The development proposals for a replacement home in a rural area should be supported as the development is suitably scaled with its adjacent neighbours and has been sited and designed to be in keeping with the character of the area.”*

**2.18.2** The development proposals reuse brownfield land where a return to a natural state has not or will not happen without intervention.

**2.18.3** The development proposals are necessary to support the sustainable management of a viable rural business, and there is an essential need for a worker (including those taking majority control of a farm business) to live permanently at or near their place of work;

**2.18.4** The development proposals is a one-for-one replacement of an existing permanent house.

**2.18.5** The development proposals are designed to a high standard;



**2.18.6** The development proposals respond to its rural location; and

**2.18.7** The development proposals are designed to minimise greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible.

## **2.19 POLICY 26 – CONTAMINATED LAND**

**2.19.1** The development proposals are not on contaminated land as the site was originally used as a dairy/livestock farm for the production of food and more recently as an equestrian centre.

## **2.20 POLICY 33 – BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY**

**2.20.1** The siting and design of the development proposals will ensure there are no adverse effect to the integrity of the site either by significant adverse landscape and/or visual impact.

**2.20.2** They will actually protect and enhance the quality of the local landscape character by tree planting along the southern boundary to lessen the impact of the Balrossie housing development as well as introducing further tree planting throughout the site generally.

**2.20.3** Neglected drystone boundary walls will be repaired and reinstated.

**2.20.4** Incongruous buildings such as the metal barns will be demolished and the existing soft landscaping enhanced throughout to encourage biodiversity.

## **2.21 POLICY 38 – PATH NETWORK**

*“The development proposals do not result in the loss of a core path, right of way or any other important outdoor access route.”*

**2.21.1** Indeed the opposite applies. The development proposals strengthen access to and use of the existing adjacent core path network by encouraging active travel and connectivity to the green network through it's the expansion of its current use as an equestrian centre.

PLANNING APPLICATION ADVICE NOTE (PAAN) 8 on “Siting and Design of New houses in the Countryside” does not apply as there is already an existing permanent home on the site. The development proposals are for a replacement on a one-for-one basis only.

## **THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021**

### **2.22 POLICY 1 – CREATING SUCCESSFUL PLACES**

*‘Inverclyde Council requires all development to have regard to the six qualities of successful places. In preparing development proposals, consideration has been given to the factors set out in Figure 2 and demonstrated in a design-led approach. Where relevant, applications will also be assessed against the Planning Application Advice Notes and Design Guidance for New Residential Development Supplementary Guidance. When assessing proposals for the development opportunities identified by this Plan, regard will also be had to the mitigation and enhancement measures set out in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report.’*

### **2.23 POLICY 6 – LOW AND ZERO CARBON GENERATING TECHNOLOGY**

*‘Support will be given to all new buildings designed to ensure that at least 20% of the carbon dioxide emissions reduction standard set by Scottish Building Standards is met through the installation and operation of low and zero carbon generating technologies. This percentage will increase to at least 25% by the end of 2025.’*

**2.23.1** The development proposals aims to achieve a much higher standard by ensuring at least a 50% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions through use of zero and low carbon generating technology such as solar P.V. arrays with battery storage solutions, ground source heat

pumps, efficient oil boiler, advanced glazing, added insulation, alternative solid fuel heating, solar gain, mechanical ventilation and heat recovery system and air tightness throughout.

## **2.24 POLICY 9 – MANAGING FLOOD RISK**

**2.24.1** The development proposals have been assessed against the Flood Risk Framework set out in Scottish Planning Policy and do not; offer significant risk of flooding (i.e. within the 1 in 200 year design envelope); increase the level of flood risk elsewhere.

**2.24.2** The development proposals actually reduce the flood risk elsewhere by capturing water on-site that does not presently exist; and reduce the water conveyance and storage capacity of a functional flood plain in any way.

**2.24.3** Nature based solutions to flood management are preferred so the development proposals incorporate the reinstated and management of existing historical drainage within the site.

## **2.25 POLICY 10 – SURFACE AND WASTE WATER DRAINAGE**

*'New build development proposals which require surface water to be drained should demonstrate that this will be achieved during construction and once completed through a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS), unless the proposal is for a single dwelling or the discharge is directly to coastal waters.'*

**2.25.1** The development proposals are for a replacement single dwelling and will include for the provision of SuDS compliant with the principles set out in the SuDS Manual C753 and Sewers for Scotland 3rd edition, or any successor documents.

**2.25.2** While there are historical septic tanks on-site and ample opportunity for soakaways, the adjacent Balrossie development offers the possibility for mains connections of surface and waste water drainage. The practicality of which has yet to be explored but if possible, all applications to the regulatory bodies (for new mains connections) will be submitted and approved accordingly.

## **2.26 POLICY 12 – MANAGING IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE TRANSPORT NETWORK**

*"Development proposals should not have an adverse impact on the efficient operation of the transport and active travel network."*

*Development should comply with the Council's roads development guidelines and parking standards, including cycle parking standards.*

*Developers are required to provide or financially contribute to improvements to the transport network that are necessary as a result of the proposed development."*

**2.26.1** The development proposals have a positive impact of the efficient operation of the transport and active travel network by promoting reduction in local car usage through its activities and associated facilities offered.

**2.26.2** The development proposals include improvements to existing driveways and parking provision on-site all of which comply with the Council's roads development guidelines and parking standards.

**2.26.3** The development proposals are simply a betterment of the existing site use which do not require improvement to the transport network.

## **2.27 POLICY 15 – GREEN BELT AND COUNTRYSIDE**

*"Development in the Green Belt and Countryside will only be permitted if it is appropriately designed, located and landscaped, and is associated with:*

- a) Agriculture, horticulture, woodland or forestry;*

- b) *A tourism or recreational use that requires a countryside location;*
- c) *Infrastructure with a specific locational need;*
- d) *The appropriate re-use of a redundant stone or brick building, the retention of which is desirable for its historic interest or architectural character, subject to that interest or character being retained; or*
- e) *Intensification (including extensions and outbuildings) within the curtilage of an existing use, which is of an appropriate scale and form”.*

**2.27.1** The development proposals are for improvements to the existing site use.

**2.27.2** B applies as the existing use of the site is for a recreational use that requires a countryside location i.e. an equestrian centre and stables.

**2.27.3** C applies as the equestrian centre requires infrastructure with a specific locational need.

**2.27.4** E applies as it is an intensification (including outbuildings) of an existing use, with is within the curtilage of the associated use and is of an appropriate scale and form.

**2.27.5** It is an established recreational use and established location (equestrian centre), which includes the one-for-one replacement of an existing permanent home. The scale and form of which is appropriate as it mirrors the existing local built environment (Netherwood) as well as the proposed local built environment (Balrossie housing development to the south and house development to the north).

## **2.28** POLICY 16 – SOILS

*“Development on prime agricultural land will only be supported if:*

- a) *It is on land allocated for development in this Local Development Plan or meets a need identified in the Strategic Development Plan;*
- b) *B) there is a specific locational need for the development;*
- c) *C) it is for small scale development directly linked to a rural business; or*
- d) *D) it is for renewable energy generation or mineral extraction, and the proposals include provision for the site to be returned to its former status.”*

**2.28.1** The development proposals apply to b) and c). The existing equestrian centre is ideal for an intensification of the site to include provision for tourism on-site and a betterment to the existing facilities of livery stables.

**2.28.2** The development proposals minimise disturbance of all soil on-site with best practice adopted at all times regarding the movement, storage, management and reinstatement of said soil on-site.

**2.28.3** There is no peat on-site, adverse impacts on the soil resource during the construction and operational phases of the development will be minimised and the development will not result in a net increase in CO2 emissions over its lifetime.

## **2.29** POLICY 19 – INDIVIDUAL AND SMALL-SCALE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREEN BELT AND COUNTRYSIDE

*“Proposals for individual and small-scale housing development (up to 3 houses) in the Green Belt and Countryside will only be supported in the following circumstances:*

- a) *where the dwelling(s) is justified by the operational needs of a farm or other viable business which is inherently rural in nature and has been in operation for at least 5 years;*
- b) *where the dwelling(s) is an ancillary and integral part of a development that would bring significant economic benefits to Inverclyde;*
- c) *demolition and replacement of a habitable dwelling which cannot otherwise be brought up to current building standards, and where the proposed dwelling is similar in scale to the existing dwelling;*

- d) *sub-division of an existing dwelling to create one or more additional dwellings, but only where any extensions are clearly ancillary to the existing building; or*
- e) *conversion of redundant stone or brick built non-residential buildings, where the proposal is supported by proof that the existing building is no longer needed for its original purpose, and a structural survey indicates that the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without substantial alteration, extension or rebuilding, with any new build element clearly ancillary to the existing building.*

*In all instances, dwellings are required to be designed and located to respect and complement their Green Belt/Countryside location and their landscape setting. Any new development should positively contribute to the established character of the local landscape in terms of siting, scale, design, form and materials.”*

**2.29.1** The development proposals apply to a), b), c), d) and e) apply. The replacement house is justified as the existing house is no longer suitable in today’s standards without significant reinvestment, which is uneconomic. The replacement house is congruous with the existing local built environment as it is of a similar scale, mass and proportion to the other residential properties in the area. The replacement house will also integrate office accommodation and storage for maintaining the business side of this venture.

## **2.30** POLICY 27 – DELIVERING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT

**2.30.1** The development proposals include reinstating the section of existing bridle path within the Clients ownership that links Blacksholm Road to Lochwinnoch Road to facilitate unrestricted access for pedestrians, cyclists and riders to and from Slates Farm while avoiding vehicular traffic on the busy B786 and B788 roads.

## **2.31** POLICY 29 – RURAL DEVELOPMENT

**2.31.1** The development proposals will contribute positively to the viability, sustainability and diversity of Kilmacolm and the local rural economy so should be supported.

**2.31.2** The development proposals encompass an existing farm used as an equestrian centre where use of good quality land for development is minimised and business viability is not adversely affected.

**2.31.3** The development proposals include the diversification of the existing business to cater for equine tourism.

**2.31.4** The equestrian centre offers an essential service for rural communities.

**2.31.5** The development proposals reuse redundant and unused buildings

**2.31.6.** The development proposals reuse brownfield land.

**2.31.7** The development proposals are a small-scale development that will support new ways of working such as remote working, home working and community hubs.

**2.31.8** The development proposals are an improvement as well as restoration of the natural environment.

**2.31.9** The development proposals for a replacement home in a rural area is suitably scaled with its adjacent neighbours and has been sited and designed to be in keeping with the character of the area.

**2.31.10** The development proposals will support local employment, will support and sustain the existing community of Kilmacolm by offering exemplar services locally and is a betterment to an existing situation so is suitable in terms of location, access, siting, design and environmental impact.

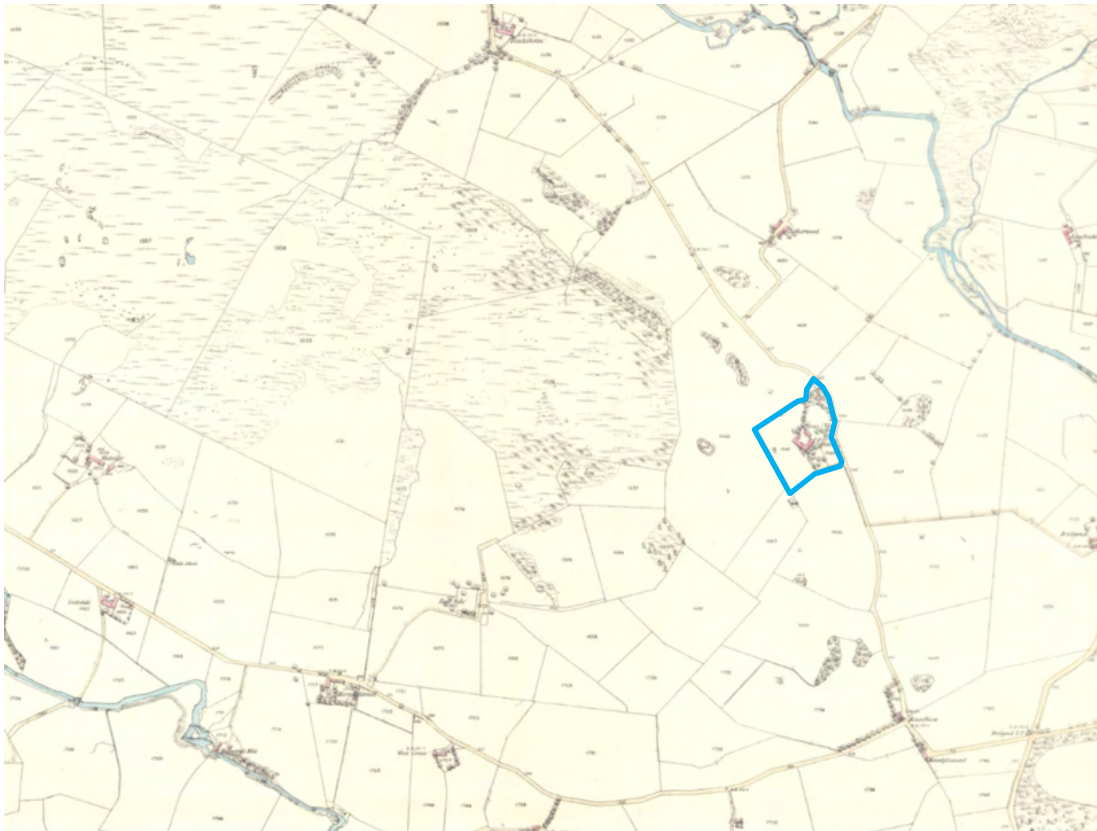


## 3.0 APPLICATION SITE AND CONTEXT

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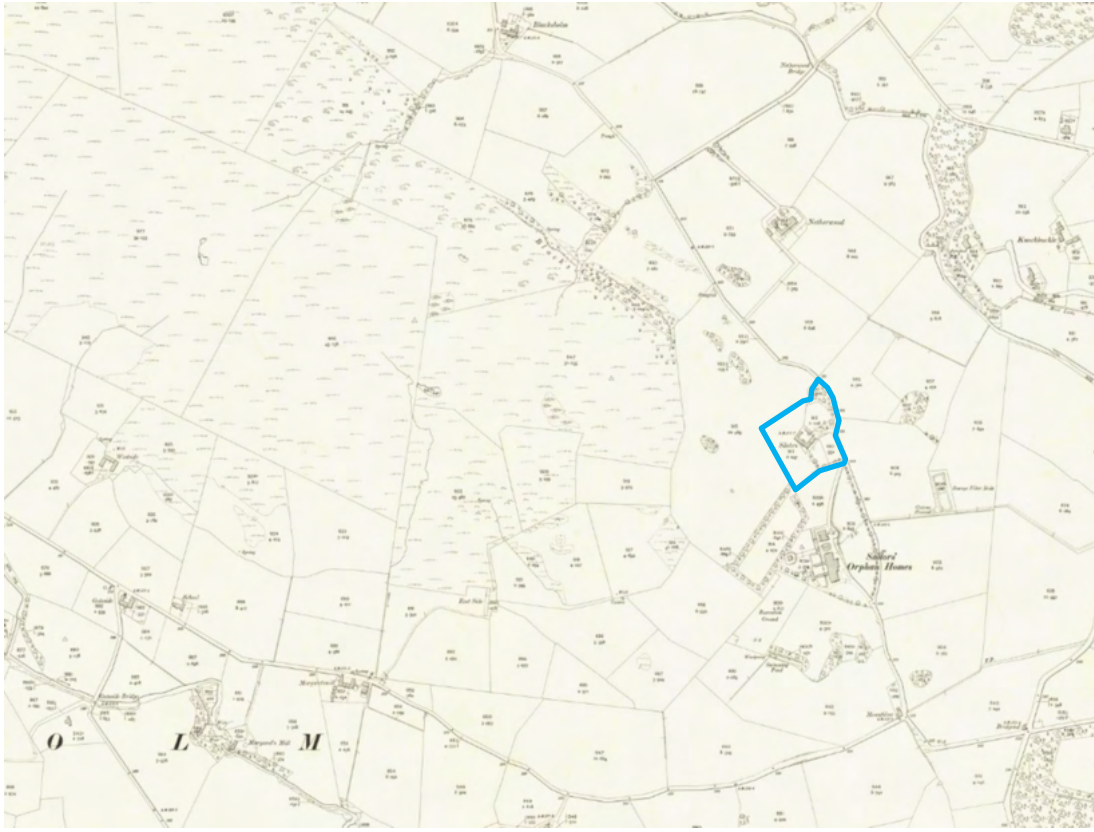
### 3.1 CONTEXT

- 3.1.1** Slates Farm is on Blacksholm Road on the outskirts of Kilmacolm consisting of an existing 1 & ½ storey permanent home and various ancillary buildings including a byre, stables, storage outhouses, barn and wood store all in states of various disrepair. There is a driveway leading to a courtyard via a private entrance.
- 3.1.2** The site including adjacent fields to the east extends to 35 acres and is designated under farm number 90/734/0009.
- 3.1.3** Until recently, the local area has remained low density with very little new development, therefore the diversity of housing types has not had much growth over the decades. There have, however, been several recent planning applications in order to improve existing dwellinghouses, in particular significantly increasing their footprint.
- 3.1.4** The local vicinity contains primarily private housing in a myriad of architectural styles, housing types and sizes. The most prominent is the abandoned B Listed Balrossie School to the south (which has been given planning permission for a 64 new-build house development). There is also Balrossie Drive with semi-detached and terraced homes. Other new build and older farmhouses populate Blacksholm Drive. Further down the B786, the houses are large, with their scale dwarfing the existing Slates Farm.
- 3.1.5** Other buildings in the vicinity of Kilmacolm that share a number of similar characteristics include Kirkton Farm, Shovelboard and Lawfield, which all date from circa 1750. All were once livestock/dairy farms, however today they are now large residential dwellings incorporating commercial operations located harmoniously in the Green Belt.



*Map 1 from National Library of Scotland (1858)*

- 3.1.6** One of the earliest maps shows Slates farm as one of the original developments in the area, along with other farm houses (most of which are still there today).



*Map 2 from National Library of Scotland (1913) The first major changes are seen in 1913, with the construction of the School. It can also be seen that the other farmed areas have grown and were altered.*

## 3.2 SITE

- 3.2.1** The 35 acre site incorporates the existing house 194sqm, the stables 446sqm and other outhouses 214sqm. The replacement house will take up a footprint of 290sqm and consists of 2 storeys with a basement incorporated into the design due to the sloping nature of the site.
- 3.2.2** With the existing levels of the site there is an opportunity to set the replacement house into the landscape so as not to dominate with this the house can step down into the slope allowing the main living areas to take advantage of the spectacular views without building up to achieve this.
- 3.2.3** A great benefit will come from reclaiming the original footprint of the courtyard from unsympathetic extensions and gazebos, to provide private vehicle parking and pedestrian access to stables.
- 3.2.4** The neighbouring estates of Netherwood, Newton Stables and Killochries, are all of the scale and style that we propose consisting of large houses with adjacent subordinate ancillary buildings. The nearby Duchal House is a Georgian precedent that the design concept acknowledges.
- 3.2.5** Planning permission has also been granted for a large housing development of various housing types at Balrossie with substantial 4-5 bedroom homes proposed along Slate Farm's southern boundary of similar scale and mass as our replacement permanent house.
- 3.2.6** Two new houses have also been built on Lochwinnoch Road at the old ARP Station site, which almost matches the footprint and height of our proposal.





Netherwood House



Corner of Blacksholm Road and B788



Auchenfoyle



Killochries House



South Newton Farm



Lochwinnoch Road



Newton Stables



## **4.0 DESIGN**

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### **4.1 CONTEXT**

- 4.1.1** Our design process was informed by our Clients brief and business plan as well as being influenced by historic and photographic research.
- 4.1.2** Please see Appendix 5 (Clients business plan)
- 4.1.3** Our development proposals comply with Inverclyde Council's policies. They both preserve and enhance the area while making sure to be as future thinking as possible. The development is designed to incorporate all the modern amenities with focuses on sustainability and energy efficiency.
- 4.1.4** The height, footprint, materials and visual style have all been inspired by the surrounding buildings. A thorough understanding of the area allowed us to create a design that is cohesive and respectful but can positively benefit and inform any future developments also.

### **4.2 DESIGN AND MATERIALS**

- 4.2.1** The design reflects the architectural style of the grander homes in the area, such as Netherwood, Duchal and Killochries estates, with more modern features to comply with current standards.
- 4.2.2** The 2 main elevations are south facing, with the family room being offset toward the back, utilizing the footprint of the existing house, with direct views out into the courtyard and the terrace garden area. The family room will replicate the existing house extension footprint and height, but with new materials and improved insulation.
- 4.2.3** The proposed fenestration consists of vertically proportioned windows and doors to compliment the existing ancillary buildings as well as the local baseline. The traditional sash and case window style is in keeping with the overall design aesthetic, keeping the façade clean and coherent.
- 4.2.4** Columned porticos formalise the entrances and give depth to the elevations. The main entrance is a wide double door leading to a main foyer, while the side entrance is a fully accessible single door version taking you to the service side of the house from where the Clients can maintain the commercial operations of the equestrian centre and livery stables.
- 4.2.5** External white render walls are in keeping with the local vernacular including the existing buildings on site.
- 4.2.6** The replacement home's roof finish and pitch of 36 degrees mirrors that of the existing permanent home and is also consistent with the local baseline. It will be a hip-end roof in natural slate set back with a parapet gutter to keep the elevations reserved.
- 4.2.7** A cobbled driveway, to match the existing courtyard, will be laid, to replace the current gravel on site which will link the two main external areas together.
- 4.2.8** Soft landscaping will be strategically planted around the new house and terrace area to soften the views, however, as the site is set in existing mature landscaping, it is already hidden by extensive tree cover.
- 4.2.9** The materials and design elements chosen compliment and give the building an association with the local character of the area. The replacement home displays restrained detailing throughout and materials are limited to slate and render in order to remain harmonious with the existing ancillary buildings and consistent with the local built environment.

### **4.3 SCALE AND POSITION**

- 4.3.1** The scale of the replacement house is in proportion to the composition of the existing permanent



home. It remains dominant as the main house, however its height has been controlled in order to be respectful to the scale of the original house. The replacement house also sits on the footprint of the existing house and the principal elevation faces south-east toward Kilmacolm village.

**4.3.2** The principal elevation is approximately 8m high, which is in keeping with the proposed elevation heights of the houses at the Balrossie development (and much smaller than the Balrossie school building which is also to be refurbished), meaning our proposal will be consistent with the scale of the wider area.

**4.3.3** The overall ridgeline of the replacement home is similar in height to that of the existing permanent home thus avoiding 'skyline development' from the important eastern viewpoints as it is set against the existing topography and also the proposed tree-belt when mature, which forms part of the application.

**4.3.4** The replacement home is also sensitive to the scale of the local baseline through its simplicity of form, proportion and limited use of materials.

#### **4.4 PRIVACY AND OVERLOOKING**

**4.4.1** The site is fairly isolated without any neighbours therefore there will be no problems with overlooking. There is an existing stone wall and hedge along Blacksholm Road, that provides a barrier between the site and the road. Additional soft landscaping has been proposed around the new house and a more extensive tree line will be planted along the southern boundary to screen the Balrossie development.

**4.4.2** The trees will also be planted in a way to separate the horse pen, parking and public areas of the stables from the house. However, the main house will also contain an office and facilities to monitor the public areas and maintain the business side of the venture.

#### **4.5 DAYLIGHT AND OVERSHADOWING**

**4.5.1** The orientation of the site means half the windows are south-west and south-east facing, therefore the primary ground floor spaces and the bedrooms all have south lighting. The light reaches the rest of the house at different times of the day, such as the kitchen and patio area. The kitchen area also has roof lights to maximise the benefit of natural light.

#### **4.6 SUSTAINABILITY**

**4.6.1** The overall sustainability of the replacement house is vital and this is incorporated into the design to allow people to easily adapt their home as their needs change with time.

**4.6.2** We propose to use reclaimed materials where appropriate, such as cobbles, brick and stone from any demolition work with any disturbed soil from site clearance retained on-site.

**4.6.3** Energy efficiency is achieved through the use of high specification double-glazing throughout and floor, wall & roof insulation (using the Econekt structural system with Izodom ICF) ensuring the new-build replacement house has low running costs. With a large area of south facing roof space the ancillary buildings will be fitted with solar PV arrays.

**4.6.4** Log burning fireplaces throughout the new house allow for a carbon neutral approach to heating.

**4.6.5** In addition, adjacent land means a ground source heat pump can be incorporated into the design.

#### **4.7 ACCESSIBILITY, SAFETY & SECURITY**

**4.7.1** There is an existing private access to the property from Blacksholm Road which is visible from the property. This access that will be upgraded so that it is no less than 4.8 metres wide to ensure that vehicles can pull off of Blacksholm Road when a vehicle is exiting the access.

**4.7.2** The drystone walls and hedgerow boundaries around the site will also be reinstated. The

replacement house will also allow for all the security standards as per the latest building regulations.

**4.7.3** The secondary entrance from the northwest elevation will be made fully accessible due to the natural topography of the site where flexibility in the design can accommodate any future accessibility issues.

**4.7.4** There will be a gate to get into the courtyard with 3 no. vehicular parking spaces with electric charging points for the residents and there will be a separate public vehicular parking area for the equine related amenities such as the arena, livery stables and tourism byre and again with electric charging points.

**4.7.5** Finally, with the new housing development proposal at Balrossie there is opportunity for Blacksholm Road to be improved in the future, as it will be a primary access road.

## **4.8 MAINTENANCE**

**4.8.1** The quality of materials specified will stand up well to the West of Scotland climate as they are traditional to the Scottish style and have been tested over the centuries, as is proven by the surrounding Kilmacolm neighbourhood. All the modern construction techniques will be employed to make sure the property is fully weatherproof and requires the least amount of repair and upkeep.

**4.8.2** As this is also a private property, the clients are responsible for all maintenance privately, and it is their vested interest to keep their house and stables in good condition. Once they also begin bringing the stables back to use, the Clients themselves, as well as those who rent the stables, will make sure the horses are in the best environment, and therefore take care of their surroundings.



*Views from private driveway towards Kilmacolm*

## **4.9 CONCLUSION**

- 4.9.1** We believe that it is vitally important to construct environmentally responsible buildings for the current and future generations, but also to create sustainable homes that people love and want to take care of.
- 4.9.2** It is also important to make sure all new proposals fit within the setting that they are, in scale, design and usability. The large site is perfect for the development proposals including the replacement house and re-use of ancillary buildings; it is harmonious with its surroundings and justifiable in terms of scale for the Clients and their vision for their long-term plans.
- 4.9.3** It is hoped that by providing this carefully considered design solution that both preserves and enhances the area, our proposal can be viewed as a worthy addition to Kilmacolm and its rich history of exemplar buildings. With its sustainable credentials it proves it can last and remain relevant to future generations much like its immediate neighbour Netherwood House.
- 4.9.4** We therefore respectfully request that our thoroughly researched and considered design for replacing the existing permanent home on a one-for-one basis, re-using the associated ancillary buildings and intensifying the use of the existing equestrian centre at Slates Farm all complies with the relevant policies of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), Inverclyde Council's Adopted 2019 Inverclyde Local Development Plan (LDP), Proposed 2021 Inverclyde Local Development Plan (LDP) and Planning Application Advice Notes (PAANs) and as such is supported by Inverclyde Council Planning Department and granted accordingly.

## **5.0 JUSTIFICATION**

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- 5.1** The development proposals comply with National Planning Framework 4 Policies 1, 2, 8, 9, 14, 16, 17 and 29 as they address head-on the global climate emergency and nature crises by proposing a development which;
1. Preserves and enhances this part of the Green Belt by reinstating and maintaining the landscaping and wildlife of the site, modernizing and repurposing existing buildings as well as constructing a replacement home so that the development proposals are fully sustainable.
  2. Replaces with an energy efficient, carbon neutral replacement home.
  3. Incorporates sustainable green technologies sympathetically within an existing countryside setting.
  4. Repurposing and modernizing existing buildings to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change.
  5. It should be noted that the 64 new-build house Balrossie development located on the hill south of Slates Farm will entirely change the views and rural density of this part of Kilmacolm.
  6. It should also be noted that the new-build house and equine development located on the hill north of Slates Farm will impact the views and rural density of this part of Kilmacolm.
- 5.1.1** Please see Appendix 6 (Quigley Architects existing aerial image)
- 5.1.2** Please see Appendix 7 (Quigley Architects proposed aerial image)
- 5.2** The development proposals comply with Inverclyde Council's Road and Transportation Department advice and the National Roads Development Guidelines by;
1. Providing 3 no. parking spaces for the proposed replacement 4 bedroom house.
  2. Providing 2 no. parking spaces for the proposed 2 bedroom guest accommodation.

3. Providing an access of at least 4.8 metres wide for the first 10 metres off Blacksholm Road.
4. Providing the access off Blacksholm Road is fully paved for a minimum of 10 metres and of a gradient not exceeding 10%.
5. Providing parking spaces at least 3.0 metres wide by 6.0 metres long with a path at least 0.9 metres wide past these parking spaces where the driveway forms part of the pedestrian access to the property.
6. Providing a visibility splay looking south at the access of a minimum 2.4m x 120m x 1.05m and kept clear in perpetuity. The existing topography precludes this level of visibility splay looking north and the existing road layout negates its requirement.
7. Providing public parking spaces for the livery stables of at least 2.5m wide x 5.0m long.
8. Providing roadside and roadway drainage channels so all surface water is managed within the site to ensure flooding to surrounding properties and the public road network is prevented.

**5.3** The development proposals comply with Inverclyde Council's Environmental Health Department advice by;

1. No Japanese knotweed exists on-site.
2. Containers to store waste will be located securely on-site,
3. External lighting will be designed appropriately and controlled accordingly,
4. Sound insulation in line with BS regulations to minimize noise disruption is incorporated.
5. Site drainage, surface water and onsite sewage treatment in compliance with Building Standard requirements is incorporated in the development proposals.
6. Detering gulls is incorporated in the development proposals.
7. Electric charging points are provided in the development proposals.

**5.4** The development proposals comply with Scottish Water's advice by;

1. Ensuring that a formal connection application is made to SW when planning consent is granted. Please note SW have carried out a Capacity Review and there is currently sufficient capacity in the Greenock Water Treatment Works to service the development.
2. Ensuring that a private treatment system is designed and constructed with their approval.
3. Ensuring that no surface water connections are made into their combined sewer system.

**5.5** To avoid continued urbanisation of the countryside and stop any contagion north from the Balrossie development supported by Inverclyde Council, it is imperative the sympathetic renovation and redevelopment of Slates Farm proposed by our Clients is supported.

**5.6** The whole project has been driven by informed Clients who already live and work in Kilmacolm and wish to see the area continue to prosper sustainably. They aim to deliver exemplar residential and equine facilities, employ locally, develop respectfully and maintain the site for the benefit of future generations.