



## **Heritage, Design and Access Statement.**

### **Battisford Hall Barns**

Please find below a general summary of the approach to the conversion and alterations proposed within this scheme with sections relating to individual buildings later within this report.

#### **General approach**

Our approach to the conversion of these buildings is to enable future generations to understand the historic value and narrative of the site. This will be ensured by respecting the existing structures and the surrounding site, taking the concepts for their conversion from the individual architectural features, form, character and development of the buildings themselves.

#### **Fabric**

Our proposals seek to retain and repair the existing fabric using matching materials and construction techniques. Where there are existing openings we would seek to retain these, where new openings are present we have designed these with the historic fabric and the impact on the site in mind and have explained our justification within the individual sections for the various buildings. Where we have proposed replacement structures due to condition, namely to the Grain Barn and Mill, these elements are prescribed by the existing building form and so do not dominate or subvert the nature of the buildings or site.

#### **Condition & Justification**

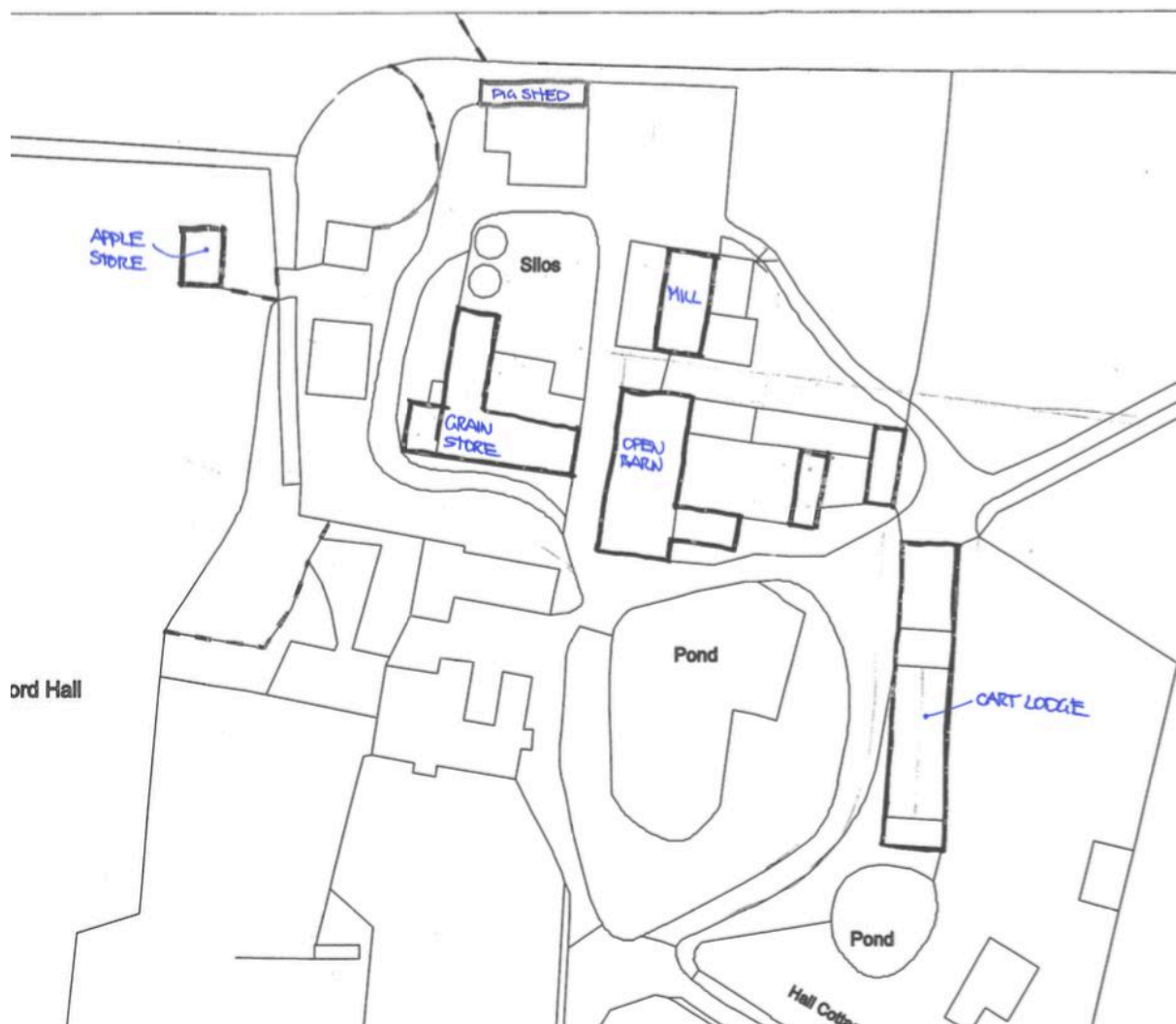
The roof coverings to all the barns are starting to fail in places and this is one of the root causes to their deterioration, however the majority of the barns are still in a structurally good condition whilst sitting unused and at significant risk if they do not receive some attention in the near future. The timber frames, brick and flintwork to many of the structures is substantial and is of importance to the history and general setting of the site, therefore it would be unfortunate to see any further loss to this group of buildings or any significant further deterioration. There are a number of repairs that will need to be addressed to stabilise the structures of the buildings and it should be noted that due to neglect in the past, elements of the west of the mill, the open barn and a covered area to the grain barn have collapsed. Due to the cost to fully repair the barns, the associated cost of continued maintenance, and the inappropriateness for modern agricultural uses the barns have been vacant for many years and the only economically viable way of retaining these structures is in their conversion to create new dwelling houses. As such it is proposed to convert the buildings that are in a condition suitable for conversion. The intention is that all existing fabric that is capable of being retained and repaired will be retained. Where elements have collapsed but there are still traces of fabric, we would look to reinstate parts of these elements in order to form garden structures, courtyards and the like, this will enable these historic sections to be read as a part of the historic narrative. The garden boundaries have been kept relatively tight to the barns in order to maintain the agricultural outlook of the site and not to disrupt surrounding views from the landscape and Battisford Hall.

## Consultation

The design proposals have been carefully developed in conjunction with Mid-Suffolk District Council. The Planning Officer, Lisa Evans and the Conservation Officer, Ian Ward were met on the site twice while developing the proposals, these consultations have led to the drawings as enclosed within this application.

## Layout & History

These buildings form part of a cluster of agricultural buildings that have been in development from the C16 through to the C21st. Many of the outbuildings have since fallen into dilapidation and a number have been lost from the site altogether. The Open Barn and Grain Barn are the oldest structures of the complex, the southerly end of the Grain Barn potentially dating to the C14 and the Open Barn is thought to have been first constructed circa 1600, although both seeing many modifications since. The mill is the next structure of importance followed by the cartlodge and main structure of the piggery. A detailed assessment of the history of the site and its architectural and historic significance is outlined in Tony Redman's report dated March 2017, and submitted with this application for the conversion of the site.



Current layout of buildings and landscaping.

## Landscaping

The landscaping to the scheme will be key to its success and to ensure that the development of the barns can still be read in its agricultural setting. As such fixed fencing shall be kept to a minimum. A low level 1.4m high brick wall shall be created between the Old Mill, the Open Barn and the Grain Barn as indicated on the layout plan. This will be made from soft red bricks laid in Flemish bond and capped with terracotta angle ridge tiles with lime mortar as found on the existing boundary wall and highlighted within the heritage report. There will be a proposed hedge of native species between the garden of the open barn and the old mill whereby the low level brick wall will terminate. There is no other new fencing or hedging proposed on the site. Brick on edge kerbing with a shingle-finished drive will set out the road, in order to maintain views and the agricultural feel. The new road will follow the path of the existing drive.



Proposed site plan and landscaping layout.

## Location

Battisford is small village in the heart of the Mid-Suffolk district of Suffolk. The village whilst small has a good amount of local amenities and excellent connections. These being a Parish Church, a Free Church, a Community Centre and a village pub which is a Community Inn led by and serving the needs of the local community. Battisford has good connections to the local area being located only 4 miles from the market town of Stowmarket and 2.5 miles from the A14 and Needham Market where all necessary amenities can be found. There are also good bus links to Stowmarket with the 405 bus travelling twice daily through the heart of the village and an additional bus that passes through, the 462, on Thursdays and Fridays. With a 1.9 mile walk you can get to Barking Tye which has multiple daily bus connections, via the 111, between Hitchin and Ipswich. The local roads are relatively quiet, being minor country roads and so lend themselves well to cycling: The heart of Needham Market is only a distance of 22 minutes away, and Stowmarket 23 minutes, which are of a close proximity for potential regular commuters. Once in Stowmarket and Needham Market there are railway

connections directly to, Ipswich, London and upto Norwich, providing excellent connective services in a sustainable location.

## The Grain Barn



View from the North West.

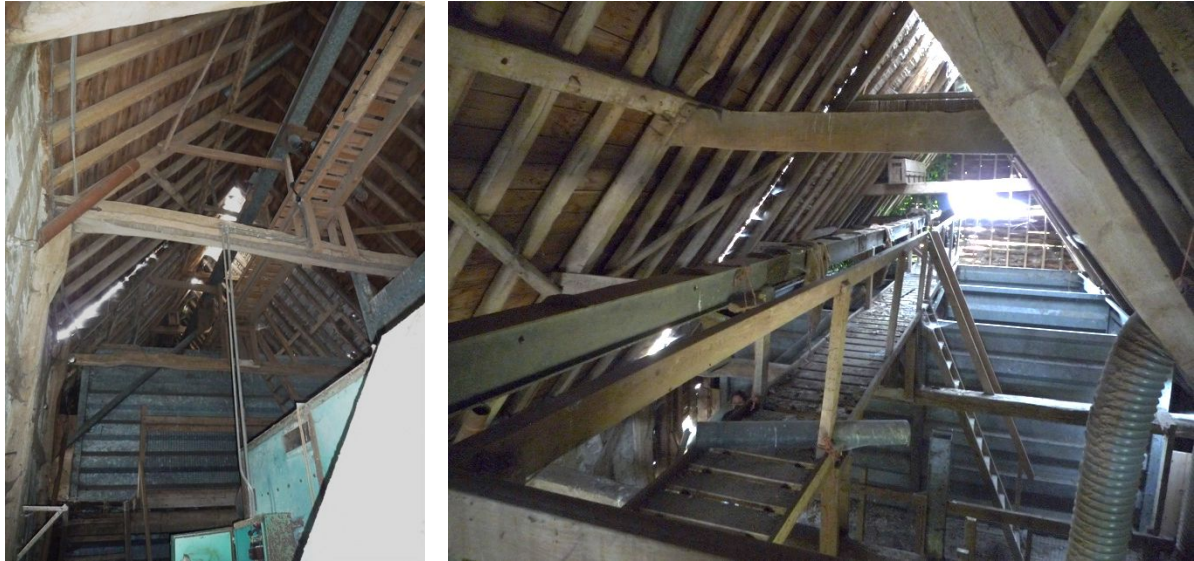
### **Form, materials & layout**

The main structure of the existing barn is to be retained in its entirety with matching or sympathetic materials, including clay pantiles, soft red handmade bricks, flint, and timber weatherboarding, with use of lime mortar throughout. The asbestos cladding to the roof will be removed and replaced with red clay pantiles to match the existing. The existing timber frame will either be repaired on a like-for-like basis using the same species of wood spliced in with traditional repair techniques or depending on the strength needed and the situation we will use steel straps/fixings that will contrast to the existing fabric, highlighting what is of heritage and what is new, keeping most true to the structure and highlighting its original features. Where possible existing ironmongery and joinery is to be retained and repaired as necessary, and where replacement is necessary items will be replaced on a like for like basis. Where new openings are formed and new elements of construction inserted they will be modern and contrasting in character so that they can be clearly identified as separate from the original structure. Where the weatherboarding is set in from the external face of the brick by a minimum of 100mm new insulation will be externally clad to the timber frame sections in order to highlight the structure. This will allow the structure internally to be appreciated whilst not creating an awkward junction with the plinth. Where the external face of the plinth sits within 100mm or flush with the existing weatherboarding then the insulation will be placed between the studwork, when placed between the studs the insulation will be breathable such as a dense wood fibre board with lime plaster directly over. To solid masonry and flintwork, this will be internally lined and again breathable. Where modern studwork (to easterly wing) we will insulate between the studs and clad over in plasterboard, hiding the structure where internal to the house, where external to the house this will be left un-insulated with the timber frame exposed internally.

Where existing brick noggin are present these will be retained and remain exposed internally to fully understand the development of the timber frame.

The existing internal and external grain storage silos, grain drying, distribution machinery and external water tank will all be removed which are all modern insertions. The design ethos for this barn takes its concept from the existing 'skywalk' that the users have to navigate in order to view & maintain the existing grain silos. This new high-level walkway will enable the upstairs of the barn to be used for

bedrooms, bathrooms and office space. Whilst the lower level of the barn will be kept open with views across the whole barn and up to the rafters with the existing structure exposed internally. This will enable the space to be read as a whole with the double height space opened up compared with the existing scenario with the large steel grain silos being removed.



Images depicting high level walkway.

A new oak framed glazed structure will replace the westerly lean-to which is in a poor condition. The design ethos for this element will be new and contrasting to the existing structure while it will use traditional materials, including an oak frame with traditional detailing (such as pegged mortise and tenon joints, etc) to link well with the existing barn. This structure will enable the more historic section (potentially C14) of brick and flint work to be repaired and exposed within this space allowing it to be highlighted internally as a feature. This element will be glazed and have a large overhang to provide natural solar shading and also create a partially covered section, again emanating the current barns which had many areas for the covering of machinery etc. This section will look out to the west and so will not overlook any of the neighbouring buildings, or have any impact on Battisford Hall. To the west is a small section of woodland and so this will be obscured from view from the neighbouring countryside.



Older section of the gran barn, to be repaired and exposed inside new garden room.

The existing easterly wing of the barn will remain a secondary element to the barn, providing amenity provisions and enclosed garages and workshops, which again stems from the existing use. The roof has a corrugated steel finish of very shallow pitch, in order to be most true to the buildings development and highlight this area as a secondary amenity space we proposed to replace the corrugated steel with corrugated steel, which will replicate the existing material found on the barn and assist with the reading of its historical development.



View from south of easterly wing, depicting shallow corrugated steel roof and large brick buttresses to southerly gable.

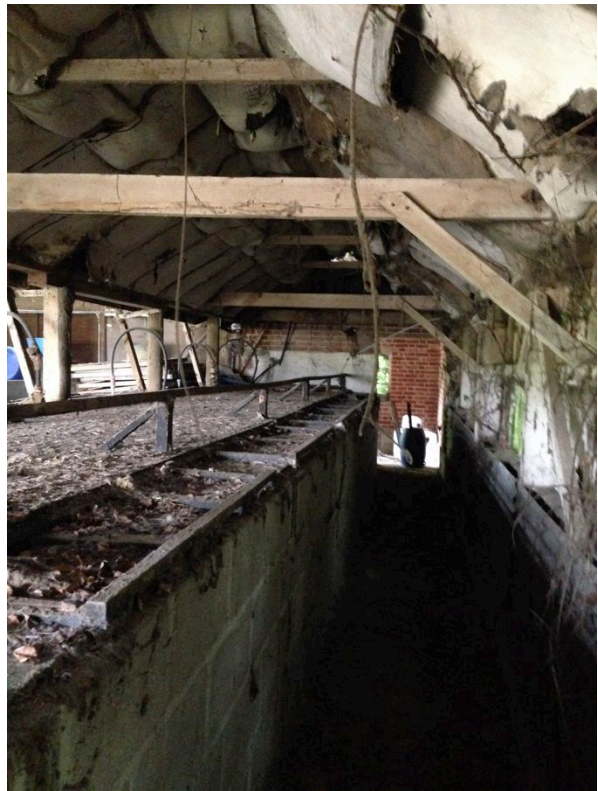
All of the new glazed elements to the barn will be 'slot' glazed elements replacing slices of the weatherboarding. These elements will not be domestic in appearance and the form of the existing horizontal weatherboarding, highlighting what is current, informs the proportions. These new glazed elements will be set externally of the existing timber frame of the barn and so will not materially affect the historic structure. The existing openings of the barn will be glazed to highlight the existing openings, similarly existing windows will be retained and repaired or replaced like for like basis if beyond repair. The material of these proposed elements will be black, double glazed, powder coated aluminium, providing longevity, good quality windows and doors which will read apart from the existing barn whilst serving it well.

A new 'hanging' wood burner will be installed internally, with a new stainless steel flue visible from the exterior, this will be left as stainless steel to highlight the agricultural nature of the buildings. Roof perforations are kept to a minimum and majority of which are on the westerly face of the building away from all other buildings. Similarly glazing to the gable will be kept to a minimum, the two existing windows being retained to provide light to the kitchen and master bedroom. There will be no additional glazing to the southerly aspect to eliminate overlooking to Battisford Hall and the two roof lights to the east will be opaque glazed eliminating and potential overlooking to the neighbouring barns.

To the north of the site is the existing piggery. This structure will be retained for use by the grain barn; however, the modern elements of this building will be removed. This includes the flat roofed corrugated steel animal storage area to the front and the metal animal feed trays to the front of the cart lodge style building. The existing building will then be sympathetically repaired and decorated.



View of the piggyery and large corrugated steel flat roof section which is to be removed.



View internally of the piggyery with machinery to be removed, note the cast iron profiled guttering which will be repaired and redecorated.



## The Open Barn



View internally from the south of the barn.

### **Form, materials & layout**

The main structure of the existing barn, similarly to the grain barn, is to be retained in its entirety with matching or sympathetic materials, including clay pantiles, soft red handmade bricks, flint, and timber weatherboarding, with use of lime mortar throughout. The existing timber frame will either be repaired on a like-for-like basis using the same species of wood spliced in with traditional repair techniques or depending on the strength needed and the situation we will use steel straps/fixings that will contrast to the existing fabric, highlighting what is of heritage and what is new, keeping most true to the structure and highlighting its original features. Where possible existing ironmongery and joinery is to be retained and repaired as necessary, and where replacement is necessary items will be replaced on a like for like basis. Where new openings are formed and new elements of construction inserted they will be modern and contrasting in character so that they can be clearly identified as separate from the original structure. The existing walls have been plastered internally, as such our new insulation will be fixed to the insides of the studwork and lined internally.

The design ethos for this barn takes its concept from the use of the barn itself. The barn primarily is used to house machinery, produce and animals. The proposal is to retain the open nature of the barn, with views up to the exposed ceiling and across the barn itself. In order to create this, the new living accommodation will be provided within a self-enclosed and self-supporting 'pod'. The pod will help to provide delineation to the open plan spaces, combined with surface treatments such as changes in flooring materials and wall decoration will outline various areas; such as the entrance hall, kitchen area, utility, dining room and living space. The pod itself will house access upto a first floor area, providing a generous master suite and also an office space. The end wall of the pod will be glazed to create a private office separate from the living accommodation. The new structure will be of a steel and timber frame construction, which will have a plaster finish, in order to contrast with the existing structure and not detract from the complex and elegant timber frame. A series of curved arch braces will support the cantilevered pod and will be located in-line with the existing bays of the structure. This will enable the whole of the barn to be kept open with views up to the rafters of the barn and with the existing structure exposed internally.

The main difficulty in this barn is providing ample light within the large open plan space, which is in danger, once repaired and sealed of being extremely dark, and consequently making it difficult to

appreciate the structure. To alleviate this the proposal incorporates a glazed clerestory to the upper section of roof. Currently this area is thought to have been lowered and a new lightweight sawn timber structure with asbestos cladding installed sometime in the C20th. The proposal is to remove this poorly detailed addition and replace it with a glazed clerestory to the east and west, allowing the building to be punctuated by plenty of light whilst not affecting any of the historic fabric. The proposal is to then install a new zinc roof with standing seam construction. This will have similar detailing to historic leadwork, and will have an agricultural feel to it, providing a good replacement to the corrugated asbestos and plastic sheeting currently on the roof. The clerestory will be within the roofspace of the barn and so will not create any overlooking issues.



Image depicting the lowered central asbestos section of roof to be raised and the easterly wing.

The existing easterly wing of the barn will remain a secondary element, providing living accommodation for guests and friends.

The existing window openings will be reused, and repairing or replacing, existing timber frames. All of the new glazed elements to the barn will be narrow profiled, large windows and as such will not be domestic in appearance. These new glazed elements will be set externally of the existing timber frame of the barn and so will not materially affect the historic structure. The existing large openings to the barn will be glazed to highlight the existing openings. The doorway to the west will retain its timber boarded doors as shutters. The large main opening to the south will be glazed with fixed glass and to the exterior this will have new timber louvers to create solar shading and also to prevent overlooking to Batisford Hall. The material of these proposed elements will be black, double glazed, powder coated aluminium, providing longevity, good quality windows and doors which will read apart from the existing barn whilst serving it well.

There are a number of areas of the brick plinth which have been poorly repaired with post war common bricks. It is proposed to replace these with a more appropriate brick to match the originals.

A new 'hanging' wood burner will be installed internally, with a new stainless steel flue visible from the exterior, this will be left as stainless steel to highlight the agricultural nature of the buildings. Roof perforations are kept to a minimum and all of which are on the easterly face of the building away from all other buildings. Similarly there will be no glazing to the northern gable in order to eliminate any overlooking to The Mill.

To the front of the barn there are a number of structures that have since collapsed. Where there are elements of these, they will be partially rebuilt to form enclosed garden spaces, terraces and walkways. This will highlight the historical development of the structures on the site and the historical narrative that the site conveys. Without these elements the history of the site would go unknown or unnoticed to prospective users and visitors. To the east of the outbuildings a new ancillary lean-to garden store and greenhouse will be created for garden use, highlighting the nature of the buildings. The existing garage building will be repaired and also used to serve this new dwelling.



Images from the heritage statement depicting the north easterly wing, of which a skeleton is to be created to show the previous development.

## The Old Mill



View from the north of the Mill.

### **Form, materials & layout**

This barn has a slightly more substantial structure to that of the other two barns, the ground floor being of Flemish bond brickwork with large section oak beamed first floor structure. Above this sits a timber framed first floor with a pitched hipped roof. A number of wings to the east have since collapsed and the existing structure has had temporary repair works and roof covering in order to stabilise it. The main structure of the existing barn, as with the other structures, is to be retained in its entirety with matching or sympathetic materials, including clay pantiles, soft red handmade bricks, flint, and timber weatherboarding, with use of lime mortar throughout. The existing timber frame will either be repaired on a like-for-like basis using the same species of wood spliced in with traditional repair techniques or depending on the strength needed and the situation we will use steel straps/fixings that will contrast to the existing fabric highlighting what is of heritage and what is new, keeping most true to the structure and highlighting its original features. Where possible existing ironmongery and joinery is to be retained and repaired as necessary, and where replacement is necessary items will be replaced on a like for like basis. Where new openings are formed and new elements of construction inserted they will be modern and contrasting in character so that they can be clearly identified as separate from the original structure. New insulation will be externally clad to the timber frame sections in order to highlight the structure internally, to solid masonry and flint work this will be internally lined.

Where existing brick nogginns are present these will be retained and remain exposed internally to fully understand the development of the timber frame.



View of the exposed timber frame upstairs.



View of the oak floor structure with brick walls to the ground floor.

The design for this barn is slightly different from that of the other large barns. The form of the existing barn is of a more cellular nature to the ground floor and an open larger area to the first floor, the proposals seek to retain and enhance this character: Retaining the open plan nature of the barn upstairs to create the living accommodation and using the enclosed ground floor for bedrooms and bathrooms. This will also provide the best views from the most used rooms. Upstairs the weatherboarding to the timber frame has deteriorated significantly and in many sections it is missing altogether. This is most apparent to the north and east, and south elevations, the proposals will utilise these missing sections of cladding and proposes to glaze these elements. This will provide ample light to enter the large open plan living areas, and also will ensure that the proposal doesn't overlook any of the other barns. Internally, the new staircase and perforations through the floor structure are already created by the removal of the existing hoppers and machinery for the mill (see image above). On the ground floor there will only be 1 new opening to form a window to bedroom 3, all of the others will be existing openings. Where timber boarded doors exist these will be repaired and retained as external shutters.

To the west of the existing mill is a large low pitch lean-to corrugated steel shelter, this was to cover farm machinery from the elements. This structure whilst not of great historical value is still an interesting development of the barns and so it is proposed to rebuild this element on a smaller scale to provide open shelter for cars and vehicles. This section to highlight its secondary value is proposed to be clad in corrugated steel, similar to the amenity wing on the Grain Barn.



View of the covered overhang.

All of the new glazed elements to the barn will be narrow profiled, large windows and as such will not be domestic in appearance. These new glazed elements will be set externally of the existing timber frame of the barn and so will not materially affect the historic structure. The existing large openings to the barn will be glazed to highlight the existing openings. The external doorways will be timber framed glazed doors and the front door will be an oak timber boarded door. The material of these proposed elements will be black, double glazed, powder coated aluminium providing a longevity, good quality windows and doors which will read apart from the existing barn whilst serving it well.

To the east of the barn there are a number of structures that have since collapsed. Where there are elements of these, they will be partially rebuilt and repaired to form enclosed garden spaces, terraces and walkways. This will highlight the historical development of the structures on the site and the historical narrative that the site conveys. Without these elements the history of the site would go unknown or unnoticed to prospective users and visitors. To the south east the walls of a lower section to the mill remain, the proposals are to repair these elements to form a small walled garden accessible from the rear garden and also via a new stairway down from the upstairs kitchen and dining room. This not only creates a secondary access upstairs, but also creates a feature of the remaining historic structure.



View of the easterly elements (from left to right, existing now and previously (taken from the heritage statement)) which have since collapsed, where remnants of these remain they will form new external garden wall features in order to convey the historical narrative of the site.

The new weatherboarding as highlighted within the heritage statement will be stained red ochre to match the colour scheme that still has traces of the pigment. This will add to the narrative of the site overall, highlighting the different characteristics and development of each building.



Section of easterly wall previously protected from the elements indicating traces of red ochre

### **Contaminated Land**

It has been noted with the contamination report (Part 1 of 4, page 36) there is a section of contaminated soil to the south and west of the Mill. In order to remedy this the concrete hard standing area to the Mill will be retained and the soil to this area will remain undisturbed. This will then be covered with a hi-vis contamination geosynthetic sheet, which will have hard landscaping over with a series of raised beds (recommended in Part 1 of 4, page 37). A maintenance and contamination information pack will be provided with the house to new and future occupants regarding the contamination. During construction health and safety risks will need to be carried out and provide suitable protective measures throughout construction.

## **The Cart Lodge**



Front elevation of the cartlodge and the existing accessway.

### **Form, materials & layout**

The cartlodge has seen many alterations over the years and the rear (east) section to the southerly wing is of a poor construction; our proposals have been developed with this in mind. Due to the large floor space of the cartlodge, larger than all of the other barns, the proposal is to split this into two reasonable sized independent units. This works well with the current building, which has a solid brick wall to the centre and naturally creates delineation.

The first unit that sits to the south as mentioned above and within the heritage statement the construction to the easterly section of this unit is poor. As such the proposal is to remove this lower pitch section and reinstate the original equal pitch roof. This will create an area to the east for a private courtyard garden and area for bedrooms. To the southerly end, the existing brick office space will be used for living accommodation with the existing chimney lined and woodburner inserted into the living room. The timber frame will be repaired and reinstated with matching materials, including clay pantiles, soft red handmade bricks, flint, and timber weatherboarding, with use of lime mortar throughout.



View internally of the southern unit and southerly brick section.

The second, northern unit is of a better construction and the form of which will be retained as it sits currently. The living space will be open plan with a small private courtyard garden formed within the heart of the dwelling. This will allow all of the bedrooms to have natural light and ventilation whilst also creating a feature within the proposal.





View internally of the northern unit.

Due to the cartlodge affronting the existing access way to the west and neighbouring property to the east gaining sufficient light and external access could be the largest danger of this development. However the proposals have been developed with the historic structure and this in mind. The proposed garden spaces remedy this potential issue well, creating intimate spaces within the development whilst respecting the historic elements of the structure.

The open nature of the cartlodge will be retained by use of large scale curtain glazing to the front aspect. To the rear there are no new glazed openings which will eliminate any overlooking into next doors house.

All of the new glazed elements to the barn will be narrow profiled, aluminium, double glazed units and as such will not be domestic in appearance. These new glazed elements will be set internally of the existing timber frame of the barn and so will not materially affect the historic structure.

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