

Mawles Farm
OX15 5RW

Heritage Statement

11th September 2020
Revision 02



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01

Overview and context



Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany the planning application for the proposed conversion of Mawles Farm in Sibford Gower to create a single dwelling house with associated ancillary buildings. The site is located within the Sibford Gower and Burdrop Conservation Area (SGBCA) and the works involve the proposed conversion of a range of barns which are undesignated heritage assets identified as being of local significance within the Sibford Ferris, Sibford Gower and Burdrop Conservation Area Appraisal (SFSGBCA Appraisal).

The submission is made on behalf of Mr and Mrs Broom [The Applicants] in respect of Mawles Farm, Sibford Gower, OX15 5RW [The Site]. This Heritage Statement presents an overview of the history, character and appearance of the heritage assets and their relationship to other parts of the application site and local surroundings.

This statement then identifies the characteristics of Mawles Farm and its setting, which contribute to the special interest and historical significance of the application buildings. The design proposals are then assessed for potential negative impacts in relation to the special interest of the heritage assets and their setting.

This Heritage Statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings and Design Statement made as part of the same application.

1.2 Structure and content

The Statement is structured as follows:

Section 01 – Background information

An introduction to the location, history of the area and the farm and an analysis of the contextual information and built form.

Section 02 – Significance and impact assessment

Outline of the significance of the heritage asset, overview of the design proposals and an assessment of their impact.

1.3 Records consulted

The following sources have been consulted in the preparation of this Statement:

- **Cherwell District Council**, “SGBCA Appraisal”
- **Cherwell District Council**, “Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031, Part 1”
- **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government**, “National Planning Policy Framework” (February 2019 amendment)
- **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government**, NPPF Practice Guidance
- **Historic England**, National Heritage List for England
- **Oxfordshire County Council**, Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record.
- **The Sibfords**, Sibipedia, <http://thesibfords.org.uk/sibipedia>
- **Historic England**, “Conservation Principles” (2008)

Background information

1.4 Location

Sibford Gower is one of a group of three historic settlements which sprang up around the Sib valley, located in the ironstone hills area to the west of Banbury in northern Oxfordshire (fig. 1). Sibford Gower is conjoined to its neighbour, Burdrop on the northern side of the river valley and the pair is treated as a single conservation area within the SFSGBCA Appraisal.

1.5 History

There is archaeological evidence of human activity in the local area from prehistoric times and Beesley’s History of Banbury (1841) records iron age barrows at Sibford Gower (now lost).

There are several theories, but it is unknown from where the place name Sibford derives. The Domesday Book records three manors at “Sibford” at the end of the 11th century. The village names Sibford Ferris and Sibford Gower derive from the local Norman landholding families de Ferrieres and Goher respectively.

The landscape around the Sib Valley was well suited to sheep grazing and the local area prospered as a result of the lucrative wool trade in the 16th and 17th centuries. The relatively high density of farmsteads throughout the Sibford villages is testament to the importance and pervasiveness of farming at this time. The economic importance of farming continued into the 18th century when the rates book, post Inclosures Act, noted 8 farmsteads in Sibford Gower including Mawles Farm.

From 1870 onwards, the combination of a rise of cheap imports, mechanised farming practices and the economic draw of cities and towns led to the decline of the Sibfords population wherein the villages lost a third of their residents in a one hundred year period.



Fig. 1 - Site location

Site and building layout



Fig. 2 - Mawles Farm and adjacent buildings



Fig. 3 - Stone and brick barn range



Fig. 4 - Piggery



Fig. 5 - Steel pole barn



Fig. 6 - Stone walls on northern boundary

1.5 Site and building layout
 Mawles Farm sits at the heart of Sibford Gower. It is located directly adjacent to the village crossroads at the intersection between Main Street, Pound Lane and Colony Road. The application Site is surrounded on three sides by residential dwellings with pasture land to the north. The topography of the area is undulating with a prevailing north to south gradient. The combination of sloping terrain and homogenous architecture makes the village setting particularly picturesque, a characteristic quality of settlements within the Ironstone Hills landscape character area.

The application Site is located at a strongly defined area of Sibford Gower centred around the crossroads at Mawles Farm. The Site currently contains a collection of redundant farm buildings which date from the 18th - possibly 17th - century onwards. The most prominent of the grouping is the L-shaped stone barn range which follows the south and west perimeter of the Site. Within this succession of adjoining structures is a cart shed and loading bay, milking parlour and a threshing barn. To the north-west of this range is the piggery. This single-storey building abuts a stone retaining wall and was originally part of an opposing L-shaped range forming the northern extremities of an enclosed farm yard. Today the piggery stands alone but retains a close physical relationship with a large twentieth century steel pole barn located immediately to the north.

The modern barn was constructed in the 1990s as a replacement storage shed and has an open-front on the principal elevation facing onto the yard opposite the vehicle access point on Pound Lane. The steel barn is cut into the existing terrain and serves as a retaining structure for higher ground to the north and east.

In addition to the aforementioned buildings, the application Site also contains ironstone walls ubiquitous to the area and used to mediate level changes within the farm yard and the higher level farm land.



Fig. 7 - Site location plan

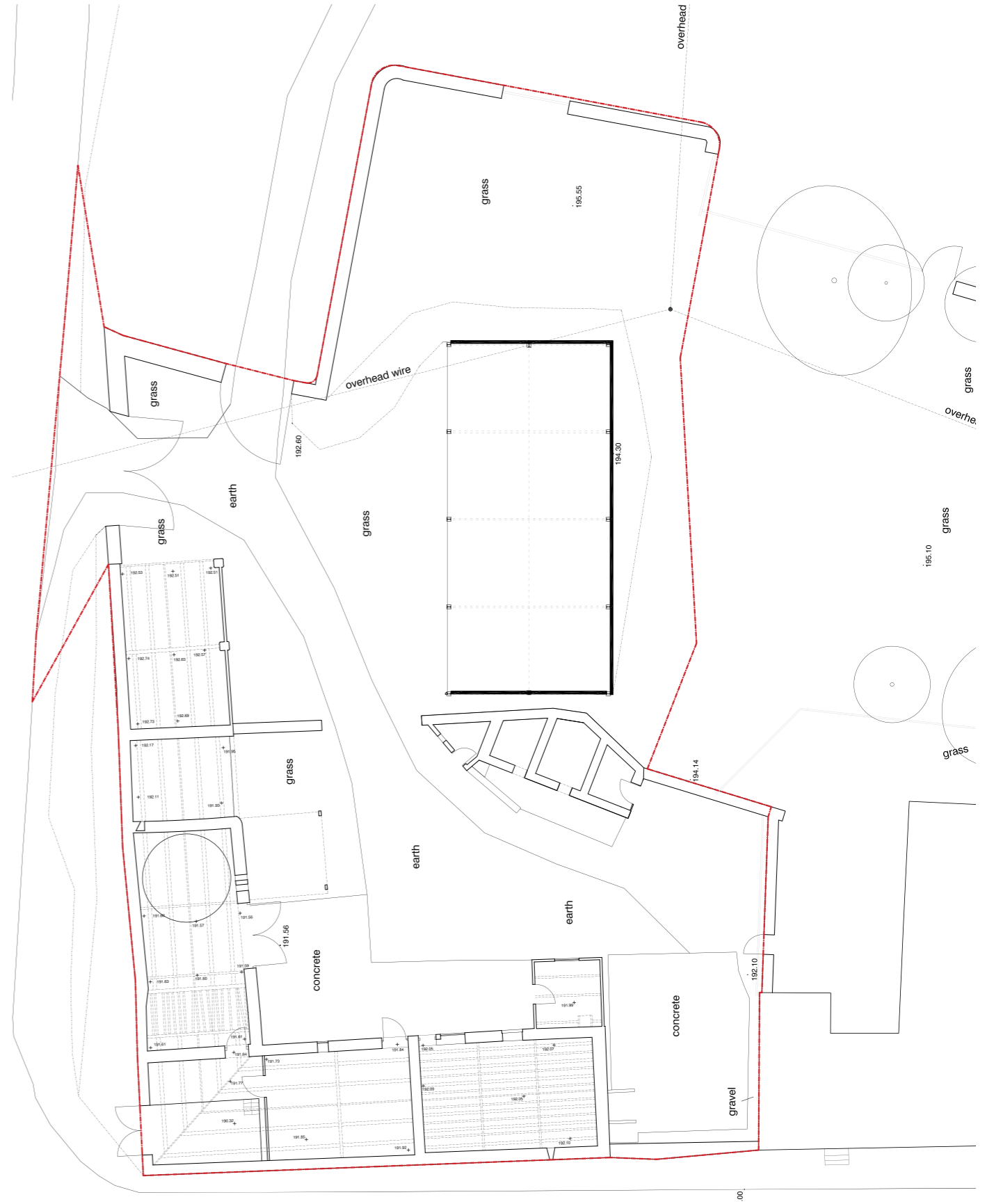


Fig. 8 - Ground floor plan as existing

History, character and appearance

1.6 History

Mawles Farm is one of two remaining agricultural developments in Sibford Gower. Following the death of the previous occupant in 2016, the site is yet to find a sustainable alternative use. All other farms in the village have been converted into dwellings. Mawles Farm's prominent location and history justifies acknowledgement within the SFSGBCA as an undesignated heritage asset which makes a positive contribution to its surroundings.

Historical map regression shows how Mawles Farm has evolved since the 19th century. First evidence of the farm can be seen within the adjacent 1887 map (fig. 9). This shows the farmstead sub-divided into 2 separate yards. The sub-division would have been for functional reasons to separate different farming operations or to allow easier management of the animals between the yard and pasture land. The entrance to the yard is located on Pound Lane in the same location as the present day gate. On Main Street, the southern range of barns extends all the way to the terrace of cottages so that the building roof line runs continuously along the street elevation from the crossroads.

At this time, the buildings are arranged as opposing L-shaped groups with the piggery running diagonally within the southern yard. This basic double-yard arrangement persisted until recent times (fig. 11). Substantial remnants of the stone dividing wall remain on the site and run from east to west between the piggery and the main barn range.

The opposing L-shaped building groupings remained until the late 1990s when the barns on the northern yard were replaced with the steel pole barn that can be seen on site today (fig. 12).

On Main Street, in the 1887 and 1905 maps (figs 9 + 10), a second row of buildings to the north of the cottages runs parallel with the street. These structures were possibly associated with small holdings or ancillary uses for the housing. This pattern is now lost, but can be detected in the present day line of retaining walls to the backs of the gardens. The cottage immediately adjacent to the application site has subsumed the northern building into its footprint and this gives an indication of the position of the second line of buildings.

The connection between the farm barns and the adjacent row of terraced housing was lost by 1922 when a gap appears (fig 11). The present connecting wall dates to more recent times, being constructed of solid concrete blockwork with stone facings to the street side.

1.7 Character and appearance

Despite its central location, the existing site has a private and secluded character. It appears pared back; the internal courtyard has limited access and austere external elevations. Internal views into the yard are only possible from the street when viewed directly adjacent to the access gate and boundary wall on Pound Lane.



Fig. 9 - OS map from 1887



Fig. 10 - OS map from 1905



Fig. 11 - OS map from 1922



Fig. 12 - OS map from present day

Buildings on the site echo this restrained character and have a utilitarian quality and simple spaces. Windows and doors are larger in scale than on residential dwellings and predominantly face into the yard with very few openings found on the outer walls.

The existing barn range and piggery are simply designed single-storey structures, constructed of ironstone rubble with gabled roofs. Areas of brickwork, including around openings and horizontal timber cladding are present in later additions and alterations to the farm buildings. Roofs are covered with a mixture of slate and corrugated iron. The latter has been identified within the SFSGBCA as a key characteristic of the undesigned heritage.

“Most other buildings are roofed in Welsh slate or plain clay tiles and few have more modern materials. Corrugated iron remains on a couple of out buildings, including the prominent Mawles Farm and this is an indication that the village has not been gentrified but retains reminders of its agricultural origins.”

(Sibford Ferris, Sibford Gower and Burdrop Conservation Area Appraisal; Cherwell District Council).

The functional character of the steel pole barn is consistent with its immediate surroundings. Constructed in the late twentieth century, the building reflects modern farming practice and the need for larger footprints. The ridge height is only slightly higher than the main barn ranges and the piggery. The shallow roof pitch, however, allows for a higher eaves to support the use of modern agricultural machinery and to increase storage capacity. This distinction is further reinforced by its component based construction with an exposed steel portal frame structure, concrete panel walls, ventilating timber boarding and profiled fibre-cement sheet roof.



Fig. 13 - External appearance from the crossroads



Fig. 14 - Coursed ironstone rubble and walling stone



Fig. 15 - Brick and timber alterations



Fig. 16 - Steel pole barn

Extent

1.8 Extent of the asset

The Site is located at the Sibford Gower crossroads where Main Street, Pound Lane and Colony Road intersect. The application boundary condition on each elevation is varied with the north and east overlooking pasture land and the south and west facing into the village. Due to the topography and building groupings, the interior of the Site has limited visual connection with the surrounding streets. The L-shaped barn range on the southern and western perimeters of the site shield the interior from the rest of the village. The piggery and steel pole barn can only be seen from the public realm when viewed directly from the site entrance on Pound Lane. Outward facing openings in the L-shaped barn range are confined to three locations, a narrow barn slit on Main Street and two openings along Pound Lane, although there is evidence of at least two further historic openings on the same elevation.

The southern fringe of the site significantly contributes to the character of the village and its crossroads. The L-shaped barn range plays a prominent role in the formation of a strong streetscape along Main Street, with tight building lines and narrow roadways that epitomise a small village setting. This distinctive character is further reinforced by

the presence of Carters Yard and Gower's Close, two Grade II listed designated assets located on the south side of Main Street.

With a limited connection to the village, the application Site retains a strong relationship to the pasture land directly to the north. Like Mawles Farm, this land has been identified in SFSGBCA as making a positive contribution to the wider conservation area, both for its visual character and evidential importance.

“Land north of Mawles Farm, which contributes to the view from the heart of the village retaining the agricultural character and also provides an appropriate setting to the farm group.” (Sibford Ferris, Sibford Gower and Burdrop Conservation Area Appraisal; Cherwell District Council).

1.9 Archaeology

The areas surrounding Sibford Ferris, Sibford Gower and Burdrop have been settled from an early period with evidence of both Iron-Age and Roman settlements nearby. Given its location in the historic core of Sibford Gower, the Site may be considered of archaeological interest.





Fig. 18 - Stone barn elevations as existing

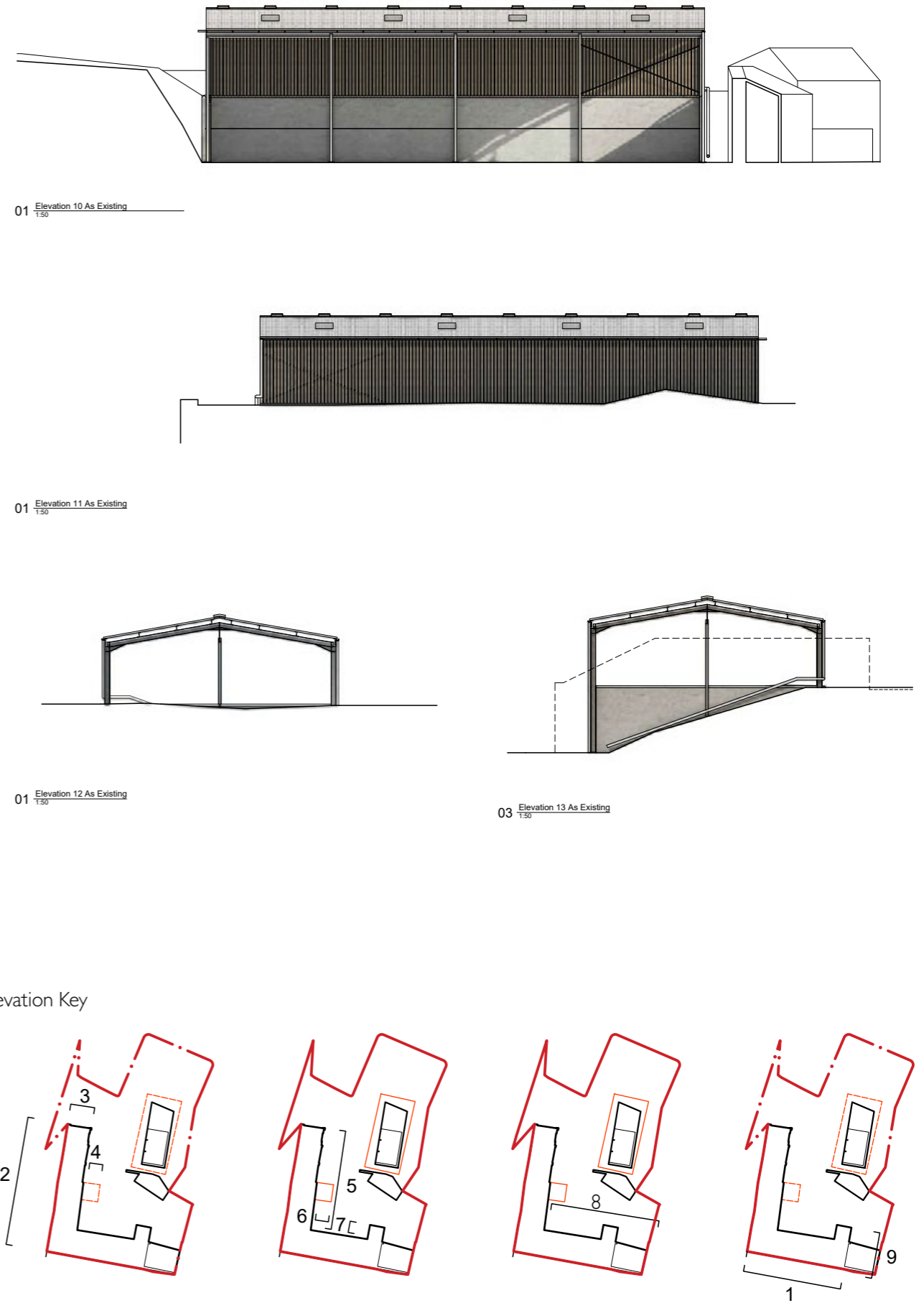


Fig. 19 - Steel barn elevations as existing

Planning parameters

1.9 Sibford Gower and Burdrop were jointly designated as a conservation area in January 1988. Figure 20 below shows the Site in relation to the conservation area and its designated assets.

Sibford Gower is the largest of the three settlements located in the conservation area. The village has a mixture of architectural styles, materials and street patterns. Although the vast proportion of buildings are residential dwellings of varying size, the village does benefit from a school, a Friends' Meeting House, Methodist Chapel and the Wykham Arms public house. Early mapping suggests that the village originated as a small cluster set around a duck pond positioned between Main Street and Colony Road.

Today, the village can be classified into four distinct areas. These are as follows:

- The crossroads including Mawles Farm and Carters Yard
- The cottages along Main Street and Bonds End Lane
- The Glebe farm cluster
- Colony Road

The overall impression of the village and its adjoining counterpart, Burdrop, is one of a quiet rural settlement

nestled on the side of a rolling valley. The village's relationship to the surrounding countryside is critical to its underlying character and atmosphere. Historically, it developed as a farming community with several working farms. Today, its street patterns, building clusters, undulating terrain and views to the surrounding countryside provide clues to these agricultural roots.

1.10 Undesignated heritage asset

The stone barns at Mawles Farm are an undesignated heritage asset. According to Historic England, undesignated Heritage Assets are buildings or sites that make a positive contribution to local character or to a location's sense of place through their heritage value. Although not formally listed as a designated asset, Mawles Farm has been identified by Cherwell District Council to be of sufficient value to warrant the undesignated heritage asset status. The Site has been noted on several occasions in the SFSGBCA as below:

"9.14.1 Traditionally Sibford Gower was a large farming community; however, over recent years a majority of the farms have been converted into dwellings, with the exception of Mawles Farm right on the crossroads at the heart of the village and Home Farm on the outskirts."

"9.15.1 Sibford Gower has a more formal layout than Burdrop and is based on a cross road of Pound Lane/ Colony Road running north south, and Main Street (which leads into Acre Ditch), running east west along the contours of the valley. The crossroads is very tightly defined with a strong building line to the north west and Mawles Farm / Carters Yard abutting the highway."

"9.15.4 Sibford Gower has four distinct areas: the cross roads area with the large barn of Mawles Farm indicating the wealth farming brought to the village and Carters Yard opposite; the cottages which run along Main Street and Bonds End Lane; the Glebe Farm cluster; and finally, Colony Road."

"9.18.5 Most other buildings are roofed in Welsh slate or plain clay tiles and few have more modern materials. Corrugated iron remains on a couple of out buildings, including the prominent Mawles Farm and this is an indication that the village has not been gentrified but retains reminders of its agricultural origins."

"9.19.1 The building line at the cross roads at the centre of the village is tightly defined, particularly at the east where Mawles Farm and Carters Yard provide a strong edge. Further east along Main Street the properties on the north side display a range of metal railings, walls, picket fences and estate style horizontal railings at the back of the footway and this reinforces the linear urban character. The south side of Main Street offers a softer feel with larger plots, so stone walls and vegetation predominate. Further east, beyond the conservation

area boundary, properties of more recent construction are set back from the street behind hedges and this creates a more suburban character."

"9.20.1 Farm land adjacent to the village is important visually and also assists in anchoring the village to its agricultural roots. This includes Land north of Mawles Farm, which contributes to the view from the heart of the village retaining the agricultural character and also provides an appropriate setting to the farm group."

"9.21.4 Mawles Farm is a working farm at the heart of the village. The loss of this activity and the solid masonry walls without significant openings and its corrugated iron roof, which would be hard to retain if the building were ever to be converted to another use, would alter the character of the village."

"9.23.4 ... (T)he farmland around the village, particularly north of Mawles Farm and south of Acre Ditch, is important in ensuring the village retains its connection with its agricultural heritage and that the village and Burdrop retain their separate identities. There is thus very little opportunity within the village for new development that would not harm its established character."

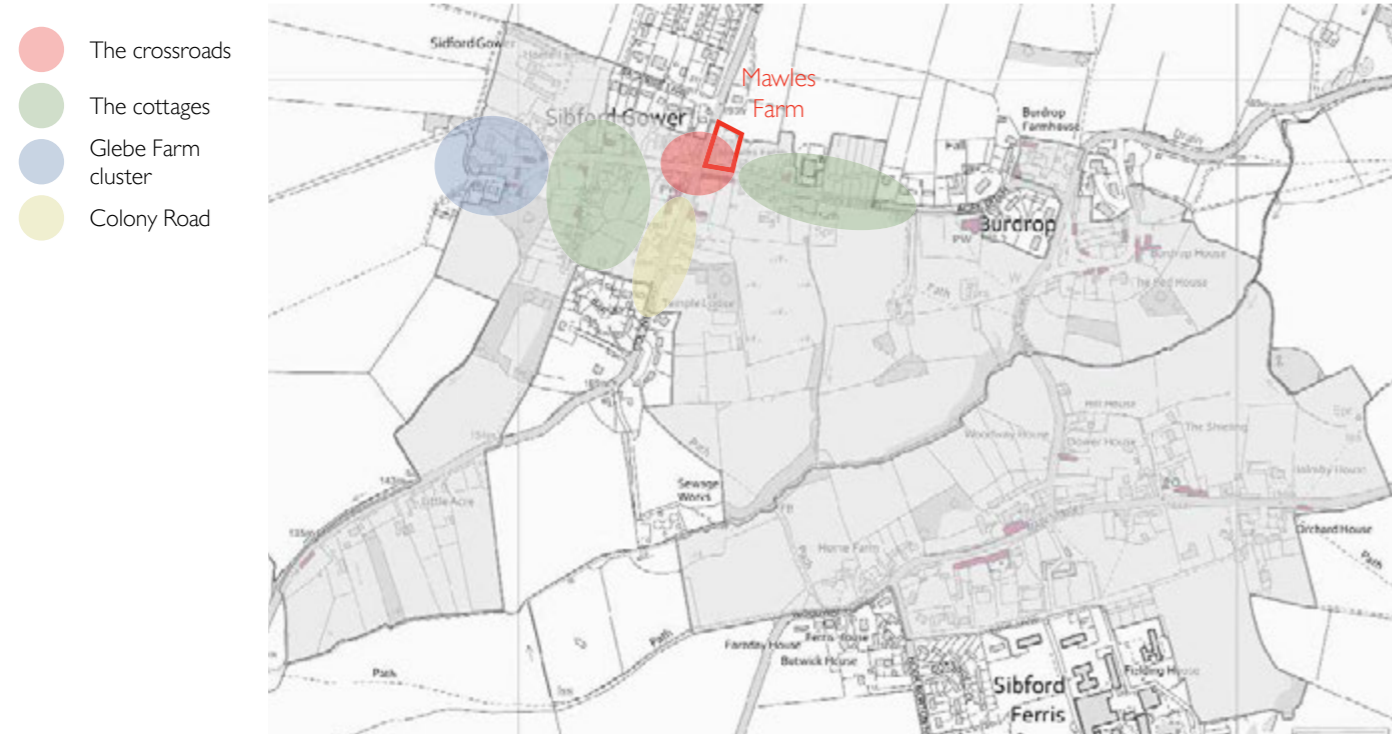


Fig. 20 - Sibford Gower and Burdrop Conservation Area Map - listed buildings and structures in purple



Fig. 21 - Looking East along Main Street



Fig. 22 - View of Mawles Farm from the pasture land

Designated heritage assets

1.11 Designated assets

Mawles Farm is adjacent to two heritage assets: the Grade II listed Carters Yard and Gower's Close. It is also within close proximity to the Manor House and The Wykham Arms Public House.

1.11.1 Carter's Yard

Carter's Yard is a Grade II listed property on the south side of Main Street, adjacent to Mawles Farm. The building was listed as a designated heritage asset in 1988 for its group value and importance to the village crossroads. The listing description is as follows:

*"SIBFORD GOWER BURDROP ROAD SP3436-3536 (South side) 16/173 Crossways 13.6.88
GVII House. c.1600 with C20 alterations.*

Coursed ironstone rubble. Steeply pitched thatched roof. Brick end stack. L-plan. 2 storeys. Ground floor has a 2-light wood mullioned window and C20 windows. Attic has a reset 2-light lancet window. Thatched staircase bulge on left. Entrance in single-storey thatched part on left of main building. Plank door and wood lintel. Small rectangular C20 windows in wood frames. Interior has stud walls, beams, joists and fireplace with bressumer. Photograph in NMR. Important corner site. Once Crossways was known as Tantony. Included for group value."



Fig. 23 - Carter Yard viewed from Main Street

1.11.2 Gower's Close

East of Carter's Yard is Gower's Close. The Grade II listed house also faces towards Mawles Farm from the south side of Main Street. The listing description is as follows:

"House. 2 parts. Left part early to mid C18. Right part C16/C17. Later alterations. Left part. Coursed ironstone rubble. Steeply pitched thatched roof. Brick end stack. 2-unit plan. 2 storeys. 3-window range. Approximately central entrance has C20 thatched porch, flanked by blocked fixed-light windows with c20 pointed arched heads. First floor has a single light and two 2-light wood mullioned and transomed windows with wood lintels. Right part. Single storey plus attic. Ground floor has arched garage entrance on right and 3 small C20 pointed windows and a C20 window. Attic has 3 eyebrow dormers and a large dormer. Interior: wide inglenook fireplace with chamfered bressumer and bread oven. Chamfered spine beam. Partly original roof with principal and common rafters and collars."



Fig. 24 - Gower's Close viewed from Main Street

Relevant planning history

1.12 Relevant planning history

The following planning application has been lodged with Cherwell District Council and is relevant to the application Site:

Address: *Mawles Farm Sibford Gower Banbury Oxon OX15 5RW*

Proposal: *Demolish and replace existing outbuildings for housing of livestock and storage.*

Application validation date: *05th July 1996*

Decision: *Application Permitted*

The above application was made in reference to the steel pole barn constructed on the site at the turn of the twenty-first century.



Fig. 25 - Steel pole barn



Heritage significance

2.1 Heritage significance

In April 2008, English Heritage - now Historic England - published 'Conservation Principles', which provides guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment. The document sets out how to understand the values of a place, how to assess heritage significance, and how to manage change to significant places. According to the document, the value of a place/asset should be assessed according to the evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value of the listed building and its setting to arrive at an understanding of the heritage asset's significance. An assessment of communal value is usually reserved for public buildings. The other aspects of Mawles Farm heritage significance are considered below.

2.1.1 Evidential value

Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. Mawles Farm provides a material record of farming and associated buildings in the heart of the settlement. The building group is the last remaining unconverted village farm in Sibford Gower. Taken together with the context of the fields to the north - which run all the way to the Banbury Road - the Mawles Farm site provides evidence of the physical characteristics of the earlier settlement when it existed as a looser agglomeration of independent farms.

The farm also provides evidential value of limited significance by illustrating the evolution of agricultural practice over time. The steel pole barn to the north

provides evidence of modern farming practice and brings the Site's lineage up to the present day. The steel barn's appearance is consistent with a functional farm unit and the Site's history of development over an extended period. However, replacement of the barn does offer the opportunity for improving the visual impact on the setting of the undesignated heritage assets. In particular by improving the landscape immediately surrounding the barn, which is scarred and poorly integrated. The resultant loose banking and spoil heaps mar the general setting within the application Site.

As well as the existing buildings themselves, evidential value may be stored on the Site in the form of archaeological deposits. The area is identified as having archaeological potential. However, there is presently no known archaeological interest in the Mawles Farm Site.

2.1.2 Historical value

Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. Assets of "illustrative" value create a visual link which directly illustrates the history. Assets of "associative" value are those linked to notable events, people or previous structures or objects.

The farm has significant illustrative value serving to link the modern day settlement to the agricultural origins of Sibford

Gower. This significance is heightened by the relative lack of other examples in the village and the prominent position of Mawles Farm. The farm, of itself, has never been the centre of local, regional or national influence and nothing is known of any notable previous occupants or events that took place here. There is, however, some associative historic value in the links to economic prosperity that farming brought to the Sib valley and its geographical relationship to the pasture land and countryside to the north of the building group.

2.1.3 Aesthetic value and setting

Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. This can be through the effects of conscious design or a fortuitous mix of factors in the creation and evolution of a building or place.

The aesthetic value of the Mawles Farm undesignated assets is found in fortuitous characteristics which derive from the forms, techniques and materials of agricultural buildings of that age. The stone buildings are of local vernacular design and were constructed and subsequently altered, adapted and extended in response to necessity. The construction is similarly pragmatic and robust, eschewing any form of decoration or ornamentation.

Although little consideration would have been given to the composition of the farm or its relationship with the surrounding buildings and streets, the stone barns nonetheless offer a valuable visual counterpoint to the surrounding houses. Austere elevations composed of different roof coverings and simply detailed junctions create a very strong aesthetic quality that stands in distinction to the neighbours. A contrast further reinforced by the limited number of openings along the street perimeter.

Alongside Carter's Yard and Gower's Close, the southern and western aspects of Mawles Farm contribute heavily to the character of the village when observed from the village crossroads and along Main Street. From the public realm, there are very limited views of the interior of the Site. The southern and western elevations of the stone barn range obscure views from the south and roadside field embankments and hedgerows screen views approaching the village from the north. The modern pole barn and interior of the Site are only readily visible from directly in front of the entrance gate on Pound Lane.



Fig. 26 - Steel pole barn and the piggery



Fig. 27 - Inappropriate and substandard repairs

Assessment of proposals

2.2 Summary of significance

In summary, the special significance of Mawles Farm is derived from its:

- Evidential value as a material record of early farm buildings in the heart of Sibford Gower.
- Historical value illustrating the agricultural origins of the settlement and, by association, the development of Sibford Gower and its relationship with local and national agricultural economies.
- Aesthetic contribution to the village setting and character around the crossroads and Main Street.

2.3 Impact assessment

The proposal involves conversion of the existing barns at Mawles Farm to create a single dwelling house and the demolition of the steel pole barn and replacement with a new stone barn serving as ancillary accommodation. The new dwelling proposed is for the conversion of an undesignated heritage asset of local value and buildings within its immediate setting. The proposals also have the potential to impact upon adjacent listed buildings and the conservation area setting. The design has been developed as a three stage strategy articulated as follows:

1. Preserve and repair important historic fabric on the Site;
2. Reintroduce significant lost features; and
3. Enhance the farm's setting through development of a landscape proposal and replacement of the steel barn.

A summary of the key components of the development proposal is presented below with commentary on the impact in each case.

2.3.1 Conversion of existing stone barn range

The undesignated heritage asset, the L-shaped stone barn range, is no longer used for agricultural purposes. To secure the long-term future of the building group, the proposal seeks to convert it into a single dwelling house.

The main changes proposed are to the interior of the barns to form rooms for domestic purposes. The main spaces have, however, been retained without subdivision to allow the original composition to be legible. The slope of the Site means that the south-western corner of the barns has sufficient space to incorporate a second storey of accommodation. Bedrooms are proposed in this area.

In general, existing structural openings have been reused to provide daylight and access. On the external street facades no new openings are proposed and the windows are detailed as large simple openings to retain the agricultural character. Open-sided sheds are proposed to be infilled using oak timber boarding which is sympathetic to the agricultural character while creating a clear distinction between old and new.

Stone walls are proposed to be retained in situ and repaired where necessary using natural stone from local sources. Slate tiles are proposed to be removed and re-

used once the roof is insulated and any structural repairs carried out. Corrugated metal roof sheets are to be replaced with new. The brick lean-to extensions on the internal courtyard south side is proposed to be demolished and rebuilt to the existing footprint. The timber lean-to extension on the western side of the yard is to be demolished.

The design proposal overall has limited impact on the existing building fabric. In relation to the heritage significance of the barns, the sensitivity is in the outward appearance of the barns with the emphasis being on the retention of the overtly agricultural visual character. The design proposal achieves this through the avoidance of new openings on the street facades combined with repair and improvement works such as removing concrete block infills and rebuilding sections of damaged wall. The detailed proposals for the openings retain the existing large scale character and incorporate sympathetic new materials.

Roof lights are not typical for agricultural buildings and have been avoided except in the rooms where there is no alternative source of light and ventilation. The majority of these roof lights have been included on the hidden roof slopes facing the yard. There are, however, 3 that do face the street. Although undesirable, the visual impact of these 3 windows - when considered in the context of the large building range and the preponderance of unaffected roof slopes - will be limited. Roof lights in this location could be required to be "in-line" conservation type metal roof lights to mitigate the visual impact.

The retention of existing stone and roofing materials, as well as the incorporation of corrugated metal roofing sheet is welcomed as a positive enhancement, reinforcing the agricultural character of the buildings as distinct from the neighbouring thatched and slated dwellings.

2.3.2 Reinstatement of the split yard arrangement

The proposals include reinstatement of the historic subdivision of the Site into 2 yards. The removal of the sub-division was perhaps contemporary with the construction of the steel pole barn in the late 1990s. Fragments of the east-west wall remain on site: a full-height portion is incorporated in the brick lean-to next to the piggery; and a lower fragment abuts the stone barn range opposite. It appears from this evidence that the division would have originally been in stone. The use of free-

standing dry stone walling on and around the Site would provide support for that view and we would suggest that any new wall should match that construction type.

The restoration of the Site's historic layout, which has only recently been changed would make a positive impact on the Site and improve the illustrative historic value of the undesignated asset and its setting.

2.3.3 Replacement of the steel barn

The steel barn can be considered as having useful evidential value as part of the development of the farm over time; however, its current unloved appearance and the raw-earth open cuts and banks in the land immediately around detract from the setting. The design proposal, to replace the steel barn with a smaller stone barn harks back to the pre-1990 layout of the farm and, as such, will have relevance both as evidence of continuing development through to the present day and illustration of the historic layout.

The detailed design proposals for the new stone barn are extrapolated from the materials and features found on the main stone barn range. Use of thick, natural stone walling, double-pitched slate roofs echo the colour, texture and hues of the undesignated heritage asset on the Site. The resulting aesthetic is suitable for the agricultural context and would serve to counterbalance any perceived gentrification.

Overall, the replacement stone barn will make a positive contribution to the setting of the undesignated heritage asset and, where visible, to the conservation area. Use of appropriate materials and landscape treatments will improve the overall appearance and have a resultant positive impact on the aesthetic value of the Site.

2.3.4 Reinstatement of roof abutment to terrace

The map regression studies show that the stone barn range once joined the residential terrace row to the east, forming an unbroken building line from the corner of Main Street and Pound Lane. The outer wall of the linking structure on Site today is of relatively recent construction with a concrete blockwork construction to the yard side and a stone facing leaf to the Main Street side. The wall is in a poor state of repair with missing sections of capping and a bow in the middle.

The visual presence of the barn roofs on Main Street is

strong and the continuation of the lowest roof line to the adjoining gable will help visually reinforce the "strong edge" characteristic of Main Street and introduce a welcome visual continuity in the roofscape. The use of corrugated metal roofing for this portion of roof is also to be welcomed as a visual reminder of Mawles Farm's agricultural heritage.

The return to the lost historic building form would thereby have an overall positive impact on the Site and improve the illustrative historic value of the undesignated asset.

2.3.5 Impact on nearby listed buildings

Carter's Yard and Gower's Close face the south elevation of Mawles Farm across Main Street. Carter's Yard is included in the listing for group value with Gower's Close and presumably for its significant contribution to the street scene at this important corner of the village.

Local group value could be taken to extend across the road to incorporate the stone barn range of Mawles Farm which together define the character of Main Street at the crossroads, presenting a delightful contradistinction of domestic vernacular and agricultural building styles in the local stone. The street facades of Mawles Farm are the components that contribute positively to the setting of the local designated heritage assets. The austere facades with the few, large scale openings and simple, robust details bespeak the agricultural heritage of the farm buildings in contrast to Carter's Yard and Gower's Close. The design proposals retain the building fabric and agricultural character of the existing buildings. Window openings on the street elevations are restricted to those already existing and currently blocked up or boarded over. Details are agricultural in character.

It is therefore considered that the proposals do not reduce the significance of the undesignated heritage asset nor do they impact negatively on the setting of the adjacent listed buildings. The restoration work and improvements to the building fabric will improve the general appearance of the Site and help preserve the setting of the designated heritage assets over the longer term.

2.3.6 Retention of the piggery building

The piggery has no heritage status. Nonetheless, it has been identified in the design proposals as worthy of retention for its contribution to the setting and for its group

value in tandem with the main stone barns. The piggery offers evidential value of the type of small-scale mixed farming carried out at Mawles Farm. It is possible that the piggery included a hen house in the loft accessed from the high level opening in the western gable. The proposal to take away the recent lean-to and surrounding brick wall structures is therefore welcomed as it will allow further investigations and a greater legibility of this handsome little building.

2.4 Conclusion

The development proposals at Mawles Farm will result in no harm to the adjacent listed buildings, Carter's Yard and Gower's Close. The design proposals respect the agricultural detail and character of the existing buildings and preserve the Conservation Area setting through a strategy of minimal interventions on the street elevations. There is potential for enhancement of the setting of the designated heritage assets through the proposed restoration of the buildings which are in need of some love and attention.

For similar reasons, the development proposals for the conversion of the locally significant stone barn range will result in no harm to these undesignated heritage assets.

The setting of the locally significant stone barn range will be enhanced by the new stone barn, reinstatement of lost historical features and landscape improvements including the restoration of drystone boundary walls.

Mawles Farm was the last operational farm in the village and incorporates a built history that extends up to the end of the 20th century. Overall, the development proposals will preserve and enhance the setting of the undesignated heritage assets and allow the Site to remain as a visual reminder of its agricultural history and development over hundreds of years.



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