
Heath Barn

Sibford Gower

Design, Access and Planning Statement
February 2020

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0.0 Introduction

This statement supports the information submitted for the planning application for the extension of the existing dwelling at Heath Barn, Sibford Gower.

Charlie Luxton Design creates architecture fit for the 21st Century; designs that respond to local materials, traditions and climate. We have been working with our client to develop the proposals submitted as part of the Planning Application pack.

This statement sets out our proposals and is to support the planning application submission and is to be read in conjunction with the Ridge Planning Statement.



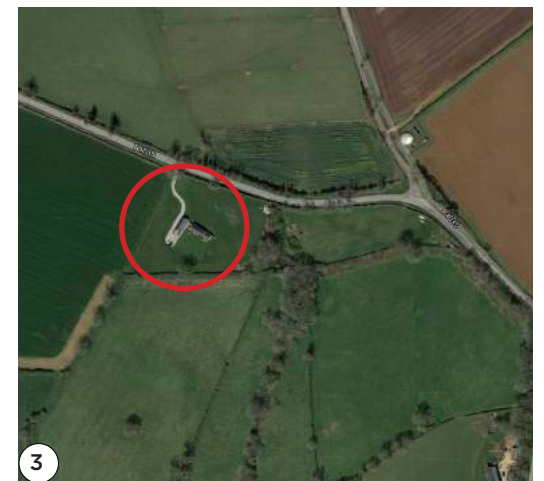
1.0 Site location

The application site comprises of a dwelling and garage located in a field on the B4035.

The site is located 7 miles from Shipton-on-Stour and 8 miles from Banbury.

Heath Barn is set back from the B4035 in open countryside with existing hedgerows along the property boundaries, interspersed with several mature trees.

It is adjacent to the Cotswold AONB but has only limited visibility from this designated landscape.



1) Southern view of Heath Barn

2) OS map

3) Aerial photograph of house

2.0 Relevant Planning History

Heath Barn has had several stages of development.

In Feb 2012 permission was granted to convert an existing barn into a dwelling following which planning permission to build a double garage was approved, designed to appear as a converted cart shed, in 2013.

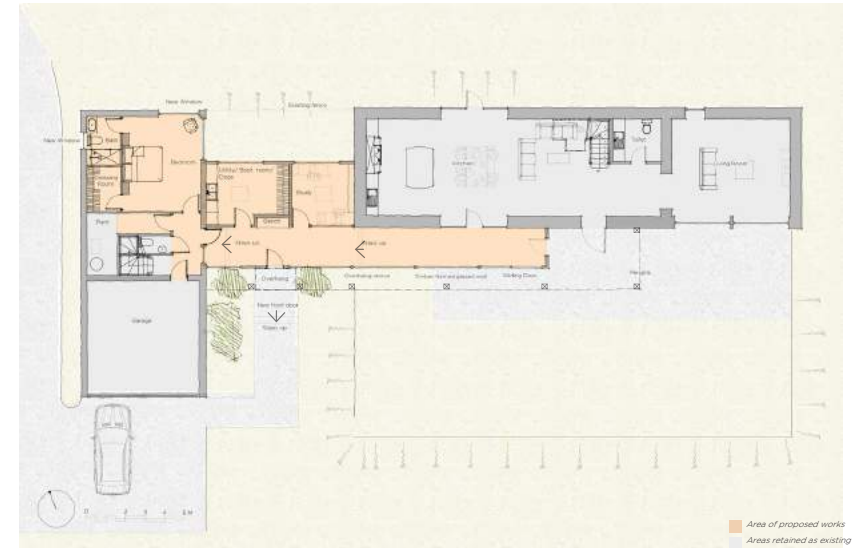
Later, in Feb 2013, permission was given to convert the garage into living accommodation and a plant area.

The surrounding landscape and driveway were also amended accordingly.

The planning history of Heath Barn has been considered when developing these new proposals as in previous applications planners had raised concerns that the barn and garage may be subdivided into two separate properties. This addition of the link ensures that the barn and the garage are tied together as one dwelling.

Application Reference	Validation Date	Description	Status
12/00141/F	Thursday 02 Feb 2012	Conversion of barn to dwelling	Permitted
13/00158/DISC	Wed 05 June 2013	Clearance of conditions 3,4,6,8,13 & 14 of 12/00141/F	Permitted
13/00865/F	Tue 02 Jul 2013	Alterations/extension to approved garage, landscaping and driveway	Application withdrawn
13/01552/F	Wed 09 Oct 2013	Resubmission of 13/00865/F - Alterations/extension to approved garage 12/00141/F	Permitted
14/00892/F	Fri 06 Jun 2014	Retrospective: Variations to approved planning consent 13/01552/F	Permitted

2.1 Design presented for pre-application advice



A design was presented at pre-application stage (reference 18/00122/PREAPP) to which feedback was received in June 2018.

Responding to the feedback 'the development would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the converted barn' the design has been revisited.

The proposed link structure has been significantly reduced in scale and the removed from the southern elevation of the converted barn. This ensures the barn retains its character and primacy on the site and reduces its visibility in the surrounding countryside. The structure will now partially occupy the gap between the converted barn and the garage structure and been sized to 'sit' in a subservient way.

Simple glazing, oak frame and a grass roof with further reduce the visibility of the link.



3.0 Design proposal

The application seeks consent for a single storey, connective link between the garage and the original barn conversion dwelling.

This linking building is conceived as a lightweight glazed link which will allow the barn building to maintain dominance and its character. The proposals seek to achieve a sympathetic and coherent relationship between each element of the property rather than cause any adverse harm to the original agricultural vernacular character and appearance of the buildings.

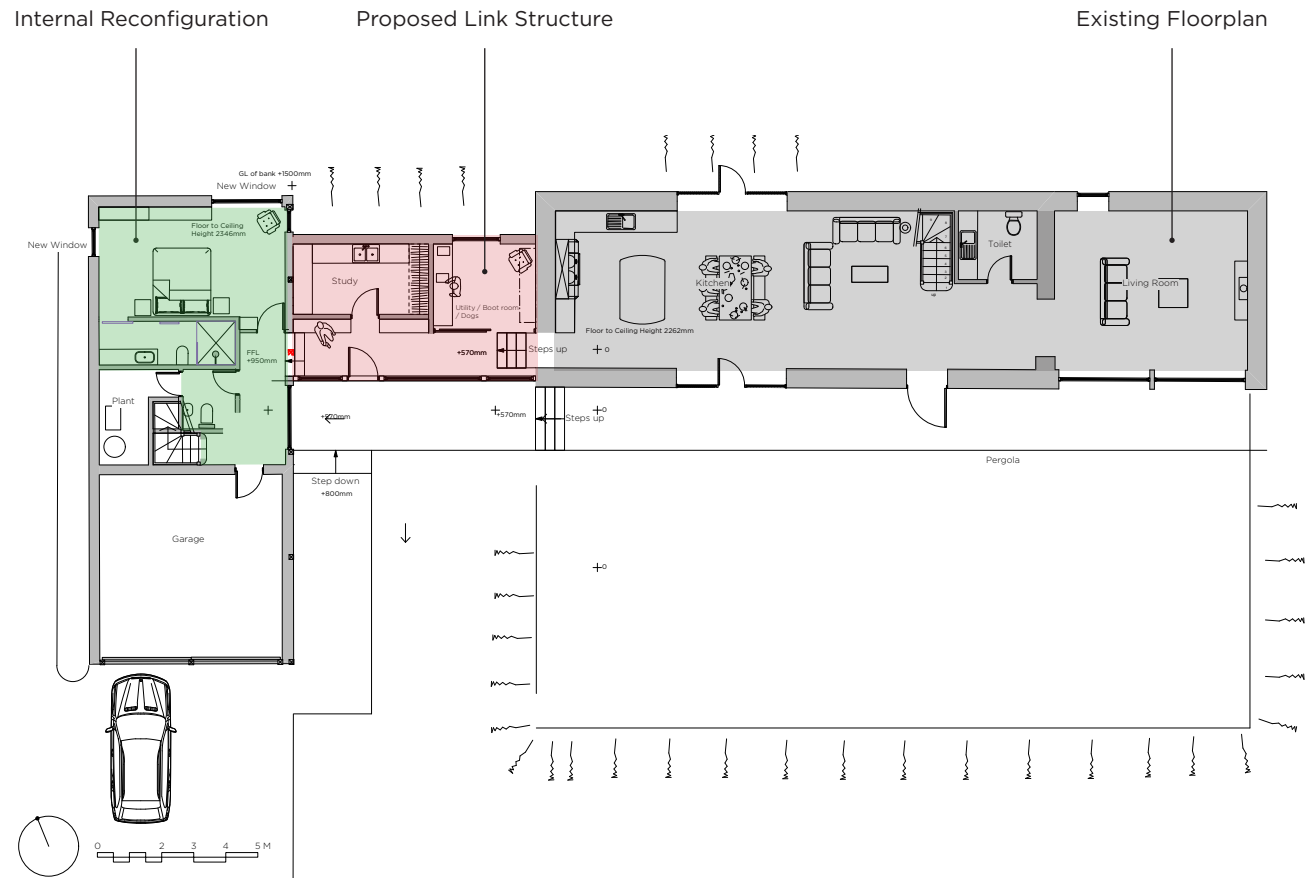
The proposal allows for the creation of a new office space and utility room, with a connective glazed walkway between the two existing buildings. The front door to the dwelling will be relocated in the link to clearly identify the entrance sequence, which is currently confused.

The proposal seeks to convert the current office into a double bedroom with en-suite, and dressing room, thus the insertion of two new windows to the ground floor of the converted garage. The plant space will remain in the same location, with adjustments to the internal walls.

The southern wall of the extension is recessed 250mm from the front wall of the converted barn. It is only visible from Pound Lane (500m away) and as such will have minimal impact as the structure is subservient.

The view from the B4035 of the north side (75m away) is closer and therefore the north facade is indented by around 1m to maintain a clear divide between the buildings.

The property has already been converted to residential use and the proposed development comprises an extension to an existing dwelling. As such the proposed development would not conflict with the Development Plan Policy relating to the conversion of rural buildings.



3.0 Proposed design

View of proposed link structure looking north.

Timber framed structure echoing the construction of the garage barn structure with a sedum green roof.

Proposed link structure



3.0 Proposed design

View of proposed link structure from driveway on B4035 looking south.

Dark timber cladding to be used to reduce visual impact and respond to existing garage barn structure.

The facade is significantly recessed to reduce any visual impact on the built link and maintain the visual separation between the structures.

Green sedum roof to help blend the link into the landscape.



Proposed link structure

4.0 Form, Scale and Materials

The proposal takes a low lying, simple glazed form with a flat grass and zinc roof. It lightly touches both existing structures. Ample glazing will allow extensive views out to the garden and surrounding landscape, whilst minimising the visual impact when looking at the structure from afar. The glazing will also reflect the surrounding landscape and vegetation.

The simple and sensitive aesthetic does not compromise the existing architectural language. Using a light pallet of materials consisting primarily of timber and glazing will allow the existing robust stone and timber structures to remain dominant.

Subtle detailing and human scale will create visual interest, whilst respecting the original forms. All the materials will be chosen for their high quality, longevity and to enhance the existing vernacular architecture.



- 1) Glazing connection to exterior stonework
- 2) Roof light with timber beams
- 3) Crisp intersection between glazing and timber
- 4) Existing Stone wall relationship with glazed link
- 5) Well lit glazed link against stone wall
- 6) Grass roof

5.0 Context and Visual Amenity

The siting and design of the proposed link, has been conceived to be in keeping with the site's agricultural past and its wider farmed setting.

Public views are limited and reveal the existing buildings as minor elements in the landscape. The proposed additional link would appear as subservient to the existing buildings, and largely hidden from public view.

Proposed changes to views and landscape character would not be harmful and certainly not materially greater than those resulting from the current development.



- 1) View of proposal from Epwell Road
- 1a) Current View from Epwell Road
- 2) View of proposal from front gate
- 2a) Current view from front gate
- 3) View of proposal from Handywater Farm
- 3a) Current view from Handywater Farm



6. Landscape Character & Guidelines

6.1 The Site sits within an attractively varied landscape that is typical of the area, and is broadly consistent with the descriptions provided by the two published Landscape Assessments that cover the County and District. These are The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS), and the Cherwell District Landscape Assessment (CDLA).

6.2 OWLS (see Figure 3) categorises this landscape type as Rolling Village Pastures, the key characteristics of which are:

- A strongly undulating landform of rounded hills and small valleys.
- Small to medium-sized fields with mixed land uses, but predominantly pasture.
- Densely scattered hedgerow trees.
- Well defined nucleated villages with little dispersal into the wider countryside.

6.3 The CDLA (see Figure 4) has the site falling within the Ironstone Hills and Valleys Landscape Character Area and describes it as an upland area forming the northern extent of the Cotswold Hills... having an extremely complex topography, with unique ironstone villages and tranquil countryside that is remote and isolated, particularly towards the west of the character area.

6.4 A summary of the district's landscape character and implications for development is provided by the council's Countryside Design Summary (CDS) which has SPG status and has the site falling within the Ironstone Downs Landscape Character Area, which includes the above Ironstone Hills and Valleys.

Landscape Strategy

6.5 OWLS sets out a number of guidelines, the most relevant of which are:

- Protect stone walls from deterioration.
- Conserve all remaining areas of semi-improved and unimproved grassland and encourage conversion of arable to pasture.
- Maintain the sparsely settled rural character of the landscape by concentrating new development in and around existing settlements. The exposed character of the plateau is particularly sensitive to visually intrusive development, large buildings and communication masts.
- Promote the use of local building materials, such as limestone and ironstone, and a scale of development appropriate to landscape type.

6.6 The CDLA identifies the surrounding countryside as a 'conservation' landscape where character and sense of place are particularly strong and representing the most valuable landscape assets of the district, with the caveat however that this does not necessarily mean that they could or should be fossilised. The CDLA recommends that:

Development should only be permitted if it is sensitively sited and the scale, size, materials and character of the scheme are designed to blend in to the area Care needs to be taken that the characteristic spatial structure of villages is not greatly changed.

6.7 In support of the above the Council's Countryside Design Summary makes the following recommendations for the Ironstone Downs character area:

- New development should respect the existing setting of each particular village. Landscape constraints are very important in this part of Cherwell District and most proposals, which would have a prominent visual impact on the wider countryside, will not be acceptable.
- The scale, location and layout of new development should carefully relate to the historic form of each particular village.
- Open space, which forms an important part of the character of the village, should remain undeveloped.

7. Landscape Policies and Designations

Landscape Policies and Designations Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Adopted 2015)

- 7.1 The landscape policy most relevant to this application is Policy ESD 13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement which seeks the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly in urban fringe locations.... Development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they would:
- Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside
 - Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography
 - Be inconsistent with local character Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity
 - Harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features, or Harm the historic value of the landscape.
 - Development proposals should have regard to the information and advice contained in the Council's Countryside Design Summary Supplementary Planning Guidance, and the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS), and be accompanied by a landscape assessment where appropriate.

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.2 As part of its core planning principles Paragraph 17 of the NPPF states that planning should recognise the 'intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside'.
- 7.3 Paragraph 109 of the Framework advises that 'the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environments by 'protecting & enhancing valued landscapes'.

8.0 Landscape Impact Assessment

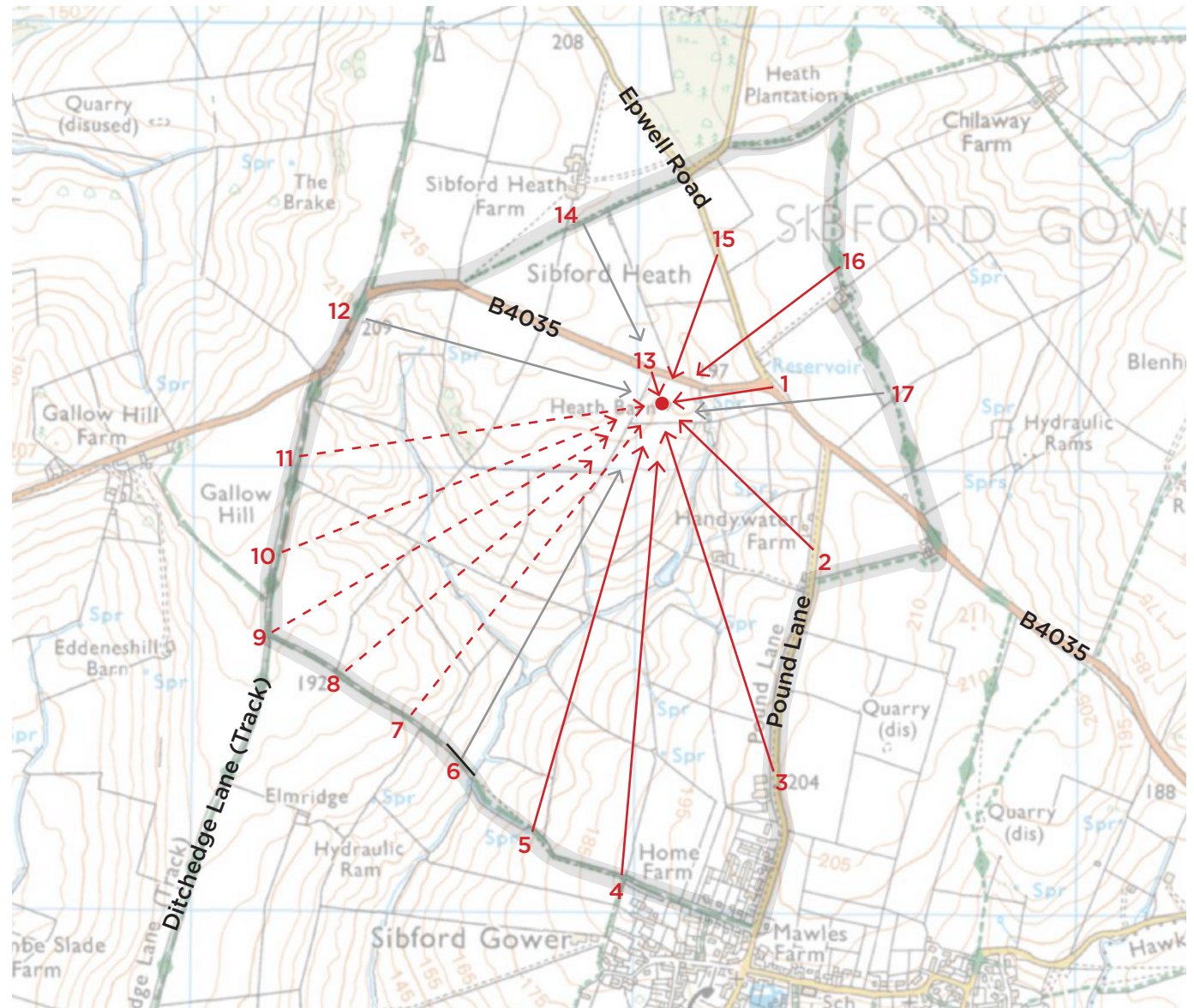
A photographic study of the of Heath Barn in the context of the surrounding landscape.

This study was conducted to establish the key public vantage points of the property and what visual impact any development to the existing property would have on the landscape.

Method:

The key views if the property were identified using key bridleways and foot paths (highlighted in light grey on the map, left). This route was strategically chosen to capture all possible public vantage points of the property and to provide a solid, detailed understanding of the site and the impact of any development on the wider landscape.

On the following page the results of this study are shown and are to be viewed alongside this map.



KEY

Walked route

View →

Partial view →

No view →

● Heath Barn

1



2



3



View from junction of B4035 and Epwell Road.
Eastern & northern elevation visible.

View from Pound Lane at Handywater Farm.
Eastern & southern elevation partially visible.

View from Pound Lane as leaving Sibford Gower.
Southern & eastern elevation visible.

Proposed link structure would be partially visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Negligible.

Proposed link structure would be partially visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Negligible.

Proposed link structure would be partially visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Negligible.

Top image = view towards Heath Barn
Bottom image = same view zoomed in

4



Distant view from bridleway before Home Farm.
Southern elevation of Heath Barn partially visible.

Proposed link structure would be partially visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Negligible.

5



Distant view from bridleway descending into valley.
Southern elevation of Heath Barn partially visible.

Proposed link structure would be partially visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Negligible.

6



No view from bridleway at bottom of valley.

Proposed link structure would not be visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Zero

Top image - view towards Heath Barn
Bottom image - same view zoomed in

7



Distant view from bridleway ascending valley towards Ditchedge Lane (Track).
Southern elevation of Heath Barn partially visible.

Proposed link structure would not be visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Zero

8



Distant view from bridleway ascending valley towards Ditchedge Lane (Track).
Southern elevation of Heath Barn partially visible.

Proposed link structure would not be visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Zero

9



Negligible view from intersection of bridleway and Ditchedge Lane (Track).
Southern elevation of Heath Barn barely visible.

Proposed link structure would not be visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Zero

10



Very distant ridge top view from Ditchedge Lane (Track).
Southern roof top barely visible.

Proposed link structure would not be visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Zero

11



Very distant ridge top and view from Ditchedge Lane (Track).
Southern elevation partially visible.

Proposed link structure would not be visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Zero

12



No view from bend of B4035 looking towards
Heath Barn

Proposed link structure would not be visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Zero

*Top image - view towards Heath Barn
Bottom image - same view zoomed in*

13



View from B4035 at driveway of Heath Barn.
Northern and western elevations visible.

Proposed link structure would be visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Negligible

*Top image = view towards Heath Barn
Bottom image = same view zoomed in*

14



No from Bridleway at the edge of Sibford Heath Farm.
No of view of Heath Barn due to dense hedging.

Proposed link structure would not be visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Zero

15



View from Epwell Road.
Northern roof visible.

Proposed link structure would be visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Negligible



View from footpath that runs parallel to Epwell Road.
Northern elevation partially visible.

No view from point 17 on footpath that runs parallel
to Epwell Road.

Proposed link structure would be visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Negligible

Proposed link structure would not be visible.
Assessed visual impact of proposal: Zero

*Top image - view towards Heath Barn
Bottom image - same view zoomed in*

The sites visibility is very limited and the proposal would only be clearly seen from 2 of 17 key vantage points (1 and 13) and partially visible from 3 of the 17 key vantage points (2, 15 & 16). From the remaining vantage points the proposal would either not be visible or largely undetectable.

Due to the small scale and constrained design of the proposed link structure, its visibility in the landscape is would be negligible, resulting in a negligible level of impact on the landscape and historic character of the property.

Views 9-15 are from the edge of the Cotswolds AONB. This clearly shows that the proposal will have negligible to zero impact on this important national asset.

This assessment asserts that the proposed development would not be harmful to the landscape or the character of the existing dwelling as perceived from the surrounding countryside as raised in the pre-application advice.

9.0 Planning Statement

This section sets out the planning context of the proposed development. Set out below is an overview of relevant policies, guidance and material considerations along with an assessment of the proposed development against those considerations.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This section provides an overview of relevant planning policies and guidance to the proposed development.

The operative Development Plan for the Cherwell District comprises: The adopted Cherwell Local Plan (November 1996) and the adopted Cherwell District Local Plan (part one) 2011-2031 (July 2015).

Other material considerations include;

- The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), updated June 2019;
- Cherwell Home Extensions and Alterations Design Guidance (2007);
- Making Changes to Heritage Assets (Historic England 2015)

Whilst this application is for an extension to a dwelling, the Advice Note: Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings (Historic England 2017) contains information on extensions to buildings of an agricultural character.

Planning Policy Context

Policy ESD 13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement, of the Cherwell District Local Plan 2011-2031, states that Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement Opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape. Development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they would cause undue visual intrusion to the open countryside and/or important natural landscape features. Development must not be inconsistent with the local character,

impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity features or harm the historic value of the landscape.

Policy ESD 15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment, of the Local Plan sets out that new development must complement and enhance the character of its context and must meet high design standards. Where development is in the vicinity of any of the District's distinctive natural or historic assets, delivering high quality design that complements the asset will be essential. Development must conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and ensure new development is sensitively sited and integrated. Proposals for development that affect non-designated heritage assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Policy C28 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan (1996) regarding all development states that control will be exercised over all new development to ensure that the standards of layout, design and external appearance, including the choice of external-finish materials, are sympathetic to the character of the urban or rural context.

Policy C30 of the saved policies (local plan 1996), regarding the design of all development sets out that design control will be exercised to ensure that any proposal to extend an existing dwelling is compatible with the scale of the existing dwelling, its character and the street scene. Any extension must provide acceptable standards of amenity and privacy.

The Framework was updated in June 2019 and sets out national planning policies. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the Framework. Sustainable development is defined at **Paragraph 8** of the Framework, and includes three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways; these being economic, social and environmental factors.

Chapter 12 of the Framework relates to the securing of well-designed places. It highlights that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 127 sets out in that achieving well designed places, planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and landscaping as well as being sympathetic to local character and history without preventing appropriate innovation or change.

Paragraph 189 requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected, including any contribution made by its setting. This should be proportionate to the asset's importance. **Paragraph 192** of the Framework identifies that local planning authorities should sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets.

Paragraph 197 states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The advice note by Historic England (2015): Making Changes to Heritage Assets, provides guidance on the application of policies set out within the Framework in determining applications for heritage buildings. The note contains general advice according to different categories of intervention in heritage assets.

The Home Extensions and Alterations Design Guidance by Cherwell District Council (2007) does not preclude modest extensions to existing dwellings. It states; flat roofed extensions must be well designed, use good quality durable materials and be appropriate in the context of the existing building and the wider area.

Planning Considerations

In 2012, planning permission was granted for the conversion of an agricultural field barn to a dwelling (12/00141/FUL). In addition to the conversion of the agricultural building, permission was granted for the erection of an outbuilding to the north-west of the elevation of the existing agricultural building.

The site now comprises a residential dwelling and habitable outbuilding, which has been in use as such for a number of years. The dwelling is not listed. However, arguably it could be considered to be a non-designated heritage asset. The dwelling is not located within a conservation area and is located outside, but adjacent to the Cotswold AONB.

The development proposal comprises a glazed link to connect the dwelling to the habitable outbuilding. It includes the

creation of an opening within the north western elevation of the dwelling and the addition of widows to the habitable outbuilding.

Comprising a former barn, the dwelling is of an agricultural aesthetic and the habitable outbuilding was designed to complement the character of the dwelling. The design of the glazed link fully considers the existing character of the buildings on site. The scheme presented is simple, lightweight and well detailed. This design approach complements the existing character of the site and sits seamlessly within the landscape.

The juxtaposition between the contemporary glazed link and the existing dwelling is an accepted method of design. This method is successful as creating a replica of existing buildings on a site can be pastiche and results in something which often doesn't look 'right'. The contemporary approach allows the character of the existing dwelling to remain at the forefront, with a paired-back approach for the link being subservient in design, scale and materially.

The design approach proposed complements the existing built form and the aesthetic of the existing buildings on site, due to the simple and well-detailed architecture. The architecture is not domestic, and the approach taken ensures the proposal sits within its rural context.

The dwelling was originally a field barn, these types of barns were typically isolated structures. However, within the Cotswold landscape groupings of agricultural buildings are not unusual. The outbuilding approved as part of the application for the conversion of the barn to the dwelling, demonstrates that the principle of creating a 'grouping' has been accepted by the LPA. The location of the link follows that existing 'L-shape' plan form is by virtue of its relationship with the existing buildings on site.

The link is proposed to have a green roof, this is a low- key approach which ensures the link remains subservient whilst also improving the sustainability of the dwelling and increasing biodiversity on site. The Cherwell Home Extensions and Alterations Design Guidance states that flat roofed extensions must be well designed, appropriate and high quality. It has been demonstrated earlier within this section that this scheme is of high-quality architecture which responds to the character of the site and wider area.

Arguably the dwelling could be considered to be a non-designated heritage asset. Policy ES15 of the Cherwell Local

Plan (2011-2031) supports proposals for development that consider the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. Policy ESD 15 also states that a proportionate approach will be taken in regard to proposals affecting a non-designated heritage asset.

Whilst not listed as a heritage asset, the design approach taken is proportionate and reflects the character of the existing buildings on site. The proposal is light-weight and proposes minimal changes to the existing buildings on site. This scheme ensures that any potential heritage importance of the dwelling is retained. If this scheme was to be considered as a non-designated heritage asset, the proposal is in accordance with Historic England's Guidance for preserving heritage significance.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the Framework. It has been demonstrated that this proposal comprises sustainable development and that no harm to any interest of acknowledged importance is caused by the proposal.

It has been demonstrated by virtue of its design, including scale and materiality, this development proposal is in accordance with Policy ESD 15 of the Cherwell Local Plan (2011-2031), Policy C28 and C30 of the Cherwell Local Plan (1996) and in accordance with provisions under the Framework and other material considerations.

Policy ESD 13 of the local plan (2011-2031) requires proposals to consider the landscape setting. The glazed link is proposed to be situated between the north western elevation of the dwelling and the south western elevation of the habitable outbuilding, completing the accepted 'L-shape' plan form of the two buildings. The location of the extension cannot be considered as encroachment into the open countryside by virtue of its enclosed location. The materiality respects the character of the existing dwelling and habitable outbuilding and does not negatively impact the landscape or the character and appearance of its host buildings. The proposed green roof of the glazed link will not only allow the link to blend seamlessly into the landscape, it will also provide biodiversity enhancements. It has been demonstrated that the development proposal is in accordance with Policy ESD 13.

Highway Safety/Parking

The development proposal would not alter the parking provision, which is adequate. Therefore, there would be no impact on the highway safety of the locality. The development proposal is in accordance with policies within Cherwell Local Plan (2011-2031) and provisions under the Framework.

Conclusion

The development proposals comprise a lightweight glazed link to connect a dwelling with a habitable outbuilding. It has been demonstrated that the proposed design complements the existing agricultural character of the dwelling and habitable outbuilding, comprising high quality architecture of appropriate scale and massing.

It has been demonstrated that the proposal is in accordance with Policy ESD 15 of the Cherwell Local Plan (2011-2031), Policy C28 and C30 of the Cherwell Local Plan (1996) and other material considerations.

The development proposal would not cause harm to the landscape or the setting of the dwelling. The proposal would provide biodiversity enhancements through the green roof on the glazed link. It has been demonstrated that the proposal is in accordance with Policy ESD 13 of the local plan (2011-2031).

In conclusion, it has been demonstrated that the proposal is in accordance with Cherwell District Local Plan (2011-2031), the saved policies of the Cherwell Local Plan (1996) and material considerations. It has also been demonstrated that the proposal comprises sustainable development.

It has been demonstrated that the proposal comprises sustainable development and has no negative demonstrable impact upon interest of acknowledged importance.

It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.