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**BLOXHAM SCHOOL  
PROPOSED EXTENSION TO STONEHILL HOUSE**

**DESIGN STATEMENT**

TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FULL APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the architectural design philosophy and approach to the proposal to extend and adapt the existing ancillary buildings to the rear of Stonehill House. This will assist in the rationalisation and modernisation of the existing boarding accommodation provided at Stonehill.

The proposals form part of a wider masterplan strategy for Bloxham school to ensure that it continues to operate and provide high quality education and pastoral care to its pupils, as well as recognise the sensitive and historic environment within which it operates.

The proposals within this submission have been developed by the following DesignTeam. This document should be read in conjunction with their supporting information and specialist reports.

### PROFESSIONAL DESIGN TEAM DETAILS

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Figure 01: Aerial Photograph of the Stonehill House Site





# Stonehill House - Existing Site Photographs



View from Public Highway to Entrance of Courtyard



View from Public Highway of Coach House Building



View from Courtyard to Coach House



View of Raised Garden Area within Courtyard



View of Proposed Site for New Building



View of Stonehill House From Public Highway



# Stonehill House - Existing Site



View of Garage & Stores  
(Demolished Under Proposals)



View of Garden to North (Remaining Unaffected)



View of Boundary Wall to West



Coach House Walls  
(Building Reinstated  
as Part of Proposals)



Public Frontage - Stonehill



# Stonehill House - Site Layout and Proposals

pedestrian access to Stonehill House itself and to the west is vehicular hardstanding, a modern timber clad building used for storage, a stone faced garage structure and the partially demolished structure to the original coach house, which also forms the street frontage to the south.

The western boundary is defined largely by an existing, stone retaining wall with a modern, steel step access that leads to the Old Park Farm site, that is at a substantially higher level than Stonehill. The Old Park Farm site forms part of the school's curtilage.

The site is therefore relatively well contained by its boundaries but also constrained by the historic / heritage sensitivities of the surrounding buildings and the visual impact any proposals may have. The significant change in level also restricts the viability of any development located centrally within the courtyard.

Whilst the modern timber structures could be easily removed it is noted that any development needs to retain the partially demolished fabric of the existing ancillary buildings as these are significant in the context of the original house and its historic use.

## 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

### SITE LAYOUT

The design proposals effectively split into three elements:

1. A new 2 storey, self contained boarding facility.
2. Refurbishment of the existing / partially demolished buildings
3. A single storey, secure link between the new accommodation and Stonehill House.

The largest element of these is clearly the boarding and communal accommodation itself, floor areas being defined by Dfe Design Guides and legislation for boarding accommodation. Figures opposite illustrate initial thoughts on massing and footprints based on extending straight out from the rear of Stonehill House.

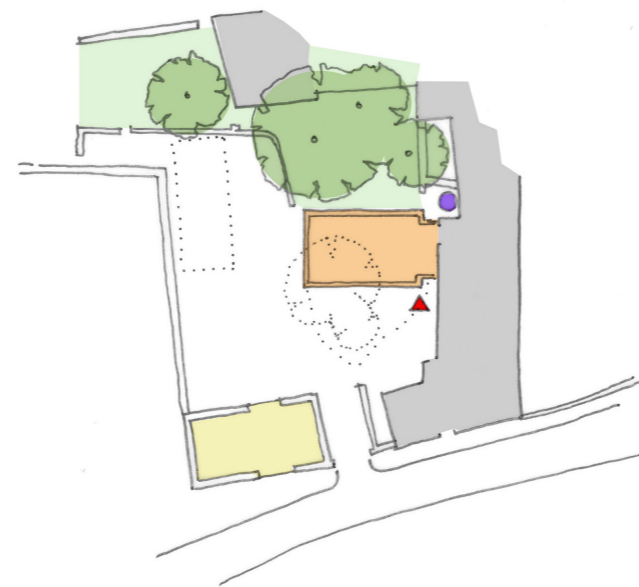
A direct extension would provide the most secure link between accommodation and allow direct access from boarding rooms to the proposed common rooms and ancillary accommodation. Any extension would have to appear subservient to the existing house and therefore restricted to a 2.5 storey design.

However, an extension directly from the rear of Stonehill would impact on the raised level of landscape within the courtyard area, as well as have a potential visual impact on the original house.

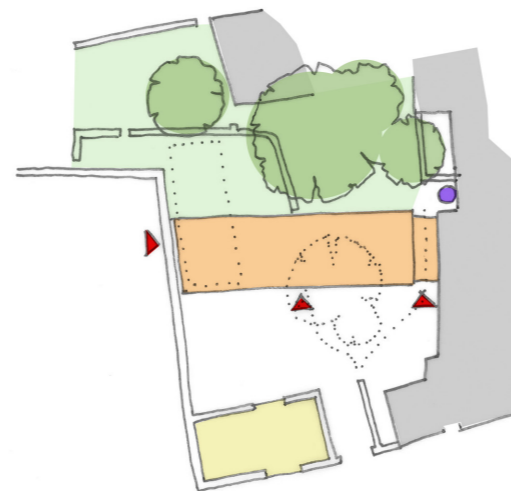
Further options were therefore considered within the area to the west of the site, historically where there appears evidence of ancillary buildings that would have served the main house.

Advantages of siting the accommodation here are :

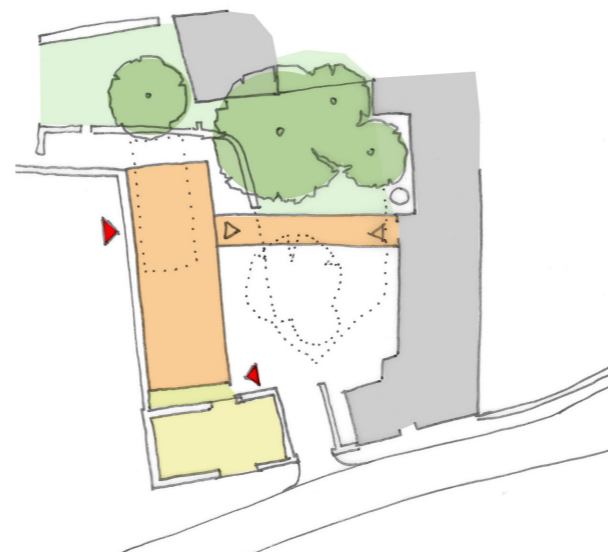
- Reduce the visual impact on the existing courtyard and main house
- Bring back into use the partially demolished coach house and provide link
- Rationalise an unused area and remove existing storage building
- Follow historic precedent of previous stable buildings.



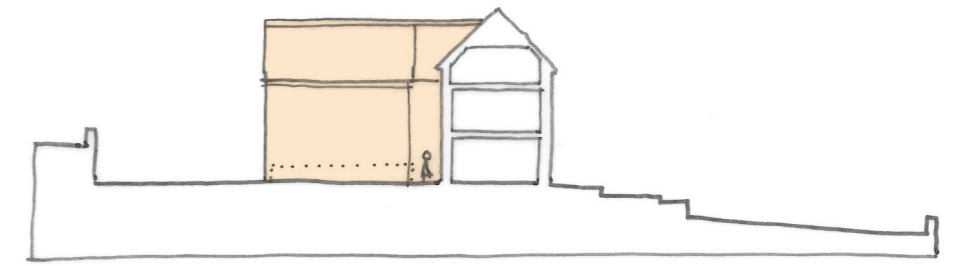
Option 01 - Proposed Block Plan



Option 02 - Proposed Block Plan



Option 03 Proposed Block Plan



Option 01 - 2.5 Storey Extension to Rear.

Footprint : Approx 205m2 GIA over 3 floors  
Advantages :  
Direct link with existing accommodation.  
Possible removal of external escape stair.  
Massing is subservient to Listed House.

Disadvantages :

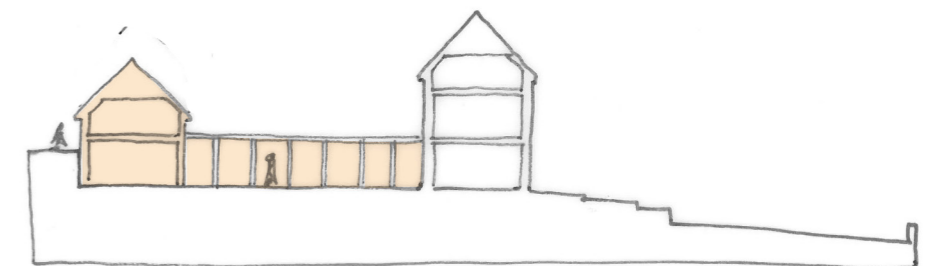
Does not maximise site development potential.  
Potential external works costs.  
Removal of existing trees within Conservation Area.  
Does not "enhance" courtyard or street elevation.



Option 02 - 2.5 Storey Extension to Rear (Full Length)

Footprint : Approx 400m2 GIA over 3 floors  
Advantages :  
Direct link with existing accommodation.  
Possible removal of external escape stair.  
Maximises development potential of site.  
Links to Old Park Farm.

Disadvantages :  
Overdevelopment of site in terms of impact on Listed Building  
Potential external works costs.  
Removal of existing trees within Conservation Area.



Option 03 - 1.5-2.5 Storey New Build

Footprint : Approx 252m2 - 378m2 GIA  
+60m2 Refurbishment of existing footprint  
Advantages :  
Maximises development of site.  
More sympathetic approach to Listed Building.  
Develops existing footprint on street elevation.  
Links to Old Park Farm.

Disadvantages :  
Create single storey link to rear of existing building  
Potential external works costs.  
Removal of existing trees within Conservation Area.  
Existing external stair would remain.

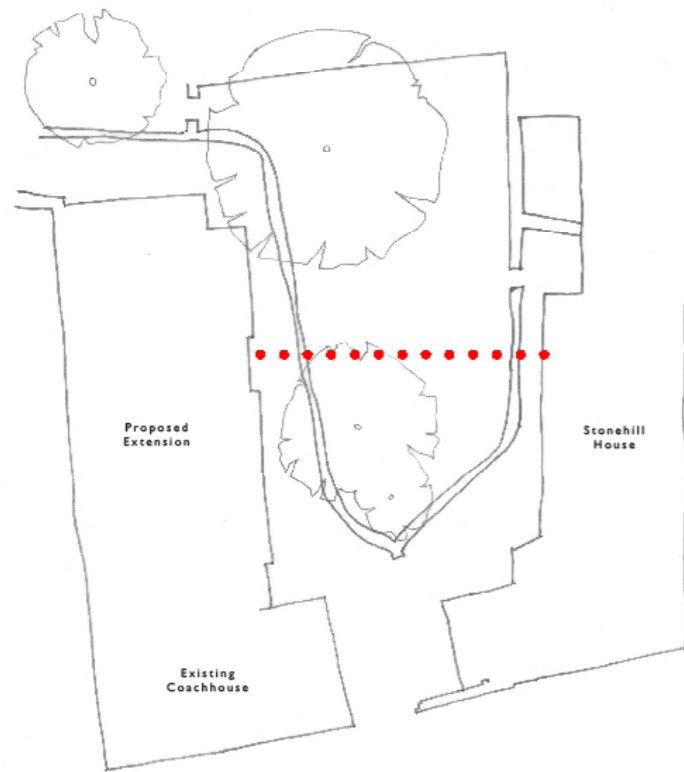


# Stonehill House - Site Layout and Proposals

Consideration needs to be given to providing a safe and secure link between the the proposals and the existing boarding accomodation, as the common room facilities are shared areas for all pupils.

There are 3 possible locations considered for the Link and these are outlined below,along with a summary of advantages / disadvantages.

Originally Option one was developed as the preferred route but on further consultation with the Conservation Officer, during Pre-App it was agreed to develop option 03, as this was felt to be the least visually intrusive solution. There is also some evidence from early maps, to suggest that there was an enclosed link between the buildings in this position.



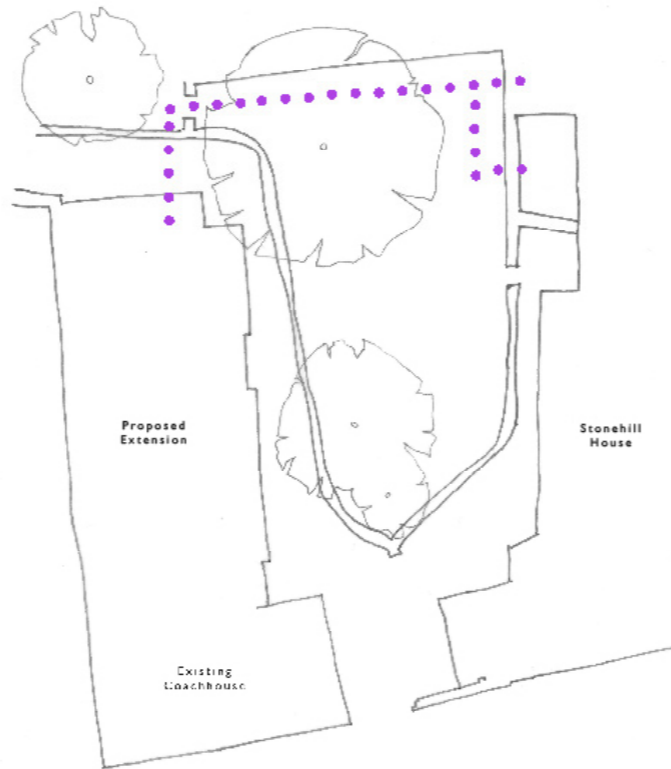
## Option 01

### PROS

- Direct route from Dormitory accommodation to Communal spaces.
- Allows direct route to Houseparent study (Safeguarding)
- Avoids requirement for extensive lengths of underpinning to existing structures.
- Uses existing, historic door opening within Stonehill.

### CONS

- Require some excavation to reduce levels and provide level access
- Partial removal of historic garden wall.
- Overall visual impact on courtyard and historic context,
- Removes approx. 1/3 of garden area.



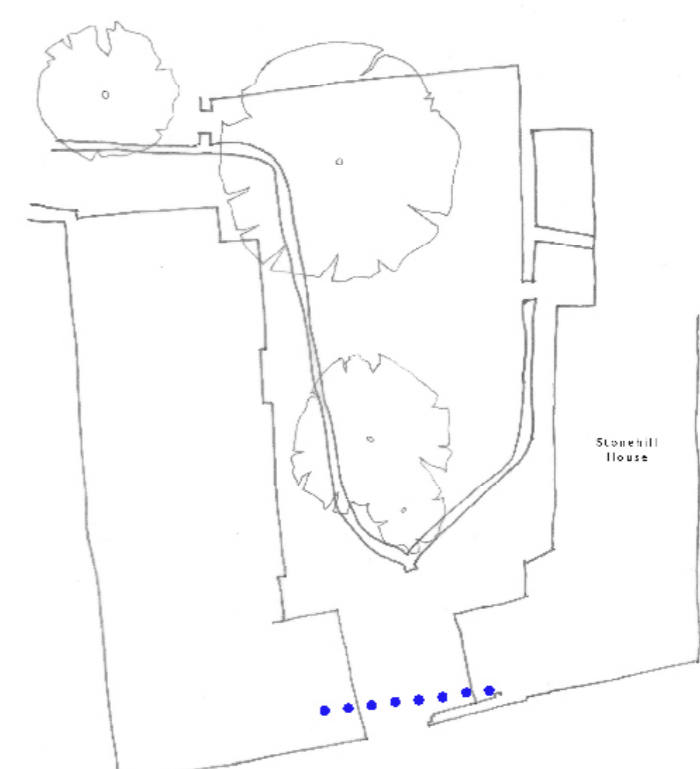
## Option 02

### PROS

- Location reduces visual impact on site and courtyard
- Retains more of the existing garden and historic wall.

### CONS

- Approx 1.4m level change to be accommodated at each end, reducing accessibility for all.
- Greater excavation required than option 01, in order to achieve level access
- Underpinning required to wall and adjacent property (not owned by school)
- Longer link required than Option 01.
- Link terminates within Houseparents bathroom which is remote from student dorms.



## Option 03

### PROS

- Provides direct link between communal and dormitory spaces.
- Shortest link of all options
- Courtyard area and historic walls remain intact.
- Provides more secure site on public edge.
- Less impact on rear elevation of Stonehill House.
- Historic maps show precedent for a link between buildings.

### CONS

- Reduces vehicular access to the courtyard and site beyond.
- Impacts on visual appearance from public highway.



# Stonehill House - Site Layout and Proposals

## 6.0 INTERNAL ARRANGEMENT

The internal layout of the building has been developed through continued discussion with the school, based on the site philosophy agreed above.

The sequence of internal spaces is formed around the school's ethos for pastoral care and the format of other boarding accommodation within the school.

Logically (and for visual legibility) the main entrance would be via the existing stone arch that leads into the courtyard from the public street, this would give access into the main corridor link, which in turn would lead to the controlled "Matrons" area (located in the coach house building) where pupils can be monitored as they enter and exit. The Matrons area would also act as a pastoral hub with an adjacent Tutors Room.

A single storey glazed link from the Coach House building would then lead into the ground floor of the proposed extension and the student common room areas with ancillary accommodation beyond. This area will be open plan for flexibility and open out onto the landscaped courtyard.

The first floor plan accommodates the more private boarding rooms which have been split into 2 and 3 bed rooms with shower and wc facilities adjacent the communal stair.

The width of the overall building footprint has been set to reflect the width of the plan form of Stonehill House, but has meant limitations on the number of boarders being accommodated. In addition given the other site constraints the building plan is relatively linear, resulting in reasonably long lengths of corridor, which exceed the maximum travel distances for single means of escape, in the event of fire. To accommodate this we have provided alternative means of escape directly from the habitable first floor rooms, that exit into the grounds of Old Park Farm, at the higher level.

## 7.0 VISUAL APPEARANCE AND MASSING

Early massing diagrams demonstrated that the best location for the proposals were along the western boundary, where there is evidence of previous, ancillary buildings that would have served the 18th Century House.

The proposals have been developed to reflect this and their scale reduced by lowering the eaves and ridge lines of the roof, so that the first floor is partially within the roofspace. The width of the building footprint has been reduced to reflect the plan of Stonehill House and to further reduce the visual impact within the courtyard itself.

Following further consultation with the Conservation Officer, the massing of the building was further reduced by staggering the height of the ridge line and creating set backs within the external wall. This breaks up the elevation line with a sense that the building form had emerged more organically, a reflection of many ancillary and stable buildings built at that time.

The level change on the western boundary effectively means that from the west elevation, the proposals are seen as a single storey.

Where new development links into the existing historic fabric, single storey, glazed links have been created to create a visual break between old and new and to respect the scale of the existing buildings.

The proposals include the re-construction of the original Coach House structure, which would include the reinstatement of a pitched roof. Internally, the space will be open to the roof line, with feature, timber trusses, again with reference to the original building form. The two, large openings on the north and south elevation of this building will be infilled with glazed screens and the single storey link to the new accommodation has been set back to allow visual reference, from the courtyard.



Early Sketch Layouts indicating Internal Arrangement



Early Elevational Sketches Showing Development Through Consultation.



# Stonehill House - *Massing and External Appearance*

## 8.0 LEGIBILITY

The proposals in terms of siting, mass and form are intended to respect the historic context of the site and the adjacent, listed fabric and reduce the visual impact on the site as a whole, wherever possible.

The choice of materials noted below, including extensive use of timber cladding reinforces the subsidiary nature of the proposals against the stone walls of the surrounding buildings. Early sketches showed the intention was to use a facing brick skin, but detailed site and ground investigations have meant that a lightweight cladding needed to be considered.

Our approach is to use traditional materials and form but with contemporary detailing, avoiding a pastiche aesthetic and enhancing the visual legibility between new and historic. As noted above, the use of glazed links to separate new and existing also strengthens the legibility of the site and its context.

## 9.0 MATERIALS

External materials proposed are:

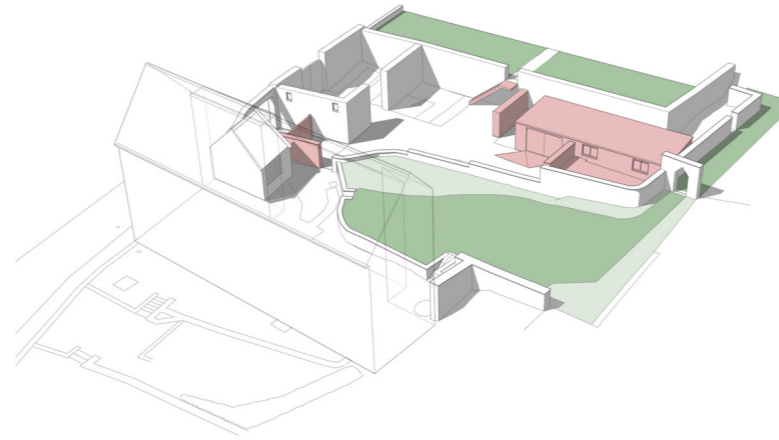
- Walls – Vertical and Horizontal Timber Cladding with contrasting colour stain.
- Flat Roof Links – Dark Grey single ply membrane.
- Pitched Roofs - Aluzinc standing seam zinc roofing sheet.
- Windows and Doors – Powder coated aluminium double glazed system.
- Rainwater goods – Cast Aluminium downpipes and hoppers.

## 10.0 INCLUSIVE ACCESS

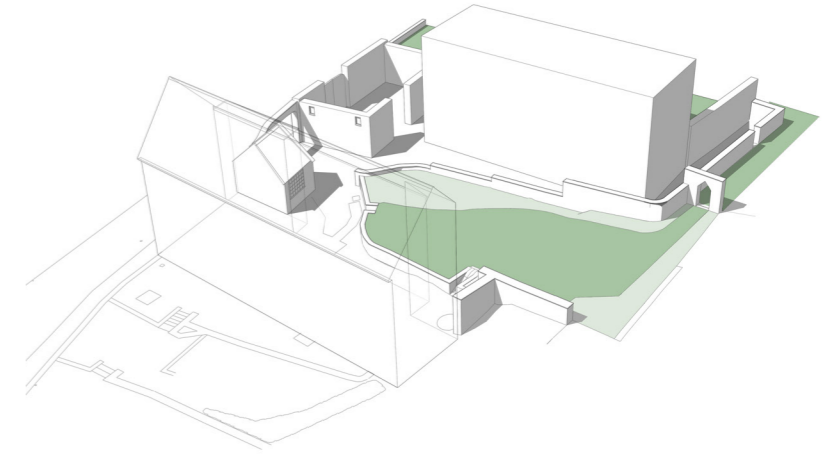
All external door and access points into the new building will have level thresholds, allowing smooth transition from the immediate hard landscaped areas into the building. The proposals put forward are to link several existing, listed building across a a sloping site and therefore it has not been possible to achieve a level access through every area. There are short flights of steps going into and out of the existing Coach House building from the circulation areas. These will be designed in accordance with Part M documentation as will the main access stair leading to the first floor.

The proposals will incorporate the school's DDA policy for its existing buildings and as part of the proposals additional dormitory space is being created on the ground floor of Stonehill House.

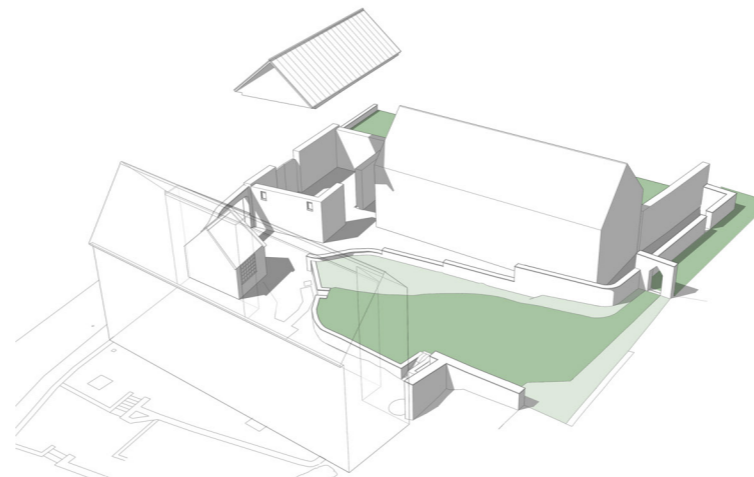
Consideration will be given at the detail design stage to define corridor routes and circulation space visually by the use of colour and texture.



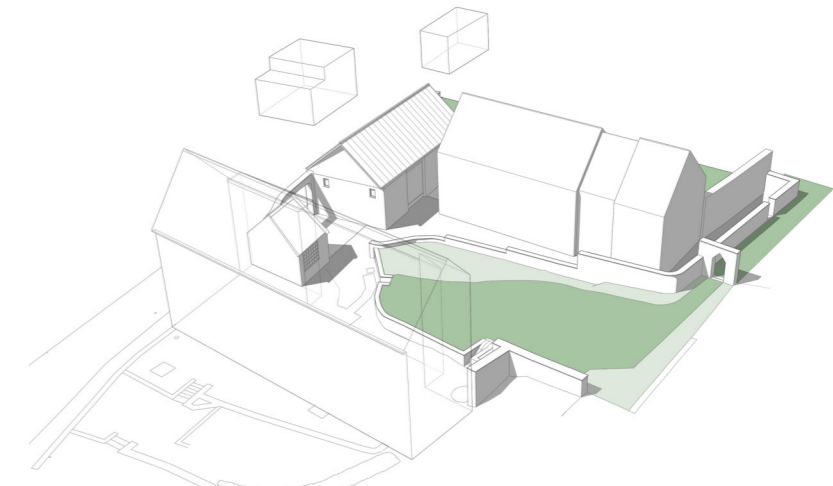
Design Development - Demolitions



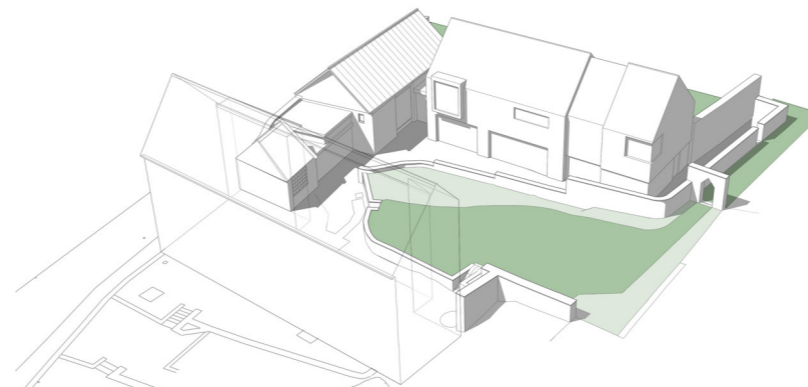
Design Development - Development Massing



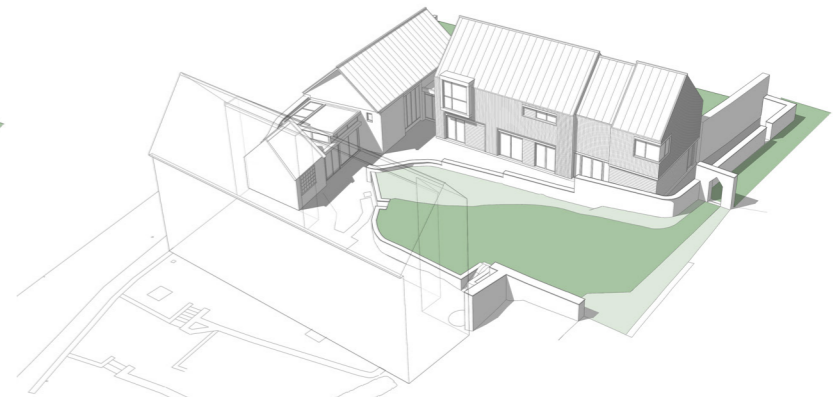
Design Development - Pitched Roofs



Design Development - Glazed Links



Design Development - Fenestration



Design Development - Proposed Design



# Stonehill House - *Massing and External Appearance*

## 11.0 CONCLUSION

The proposals put forward in this document have been developed taking into account the School's educational and pastoral needs, both now and in the future.

The design has developed since its initial concept, through consultation with the Local Authority, School and Consultant Team and the final siting, layout and external appearance have all been shaped by this input.

It is hoped that the scheme is seen as a high quality design that respects the historic sensitivities of the site, meets the functional requirements of the school but that also stands as a sensitive and high quality modern insertion.



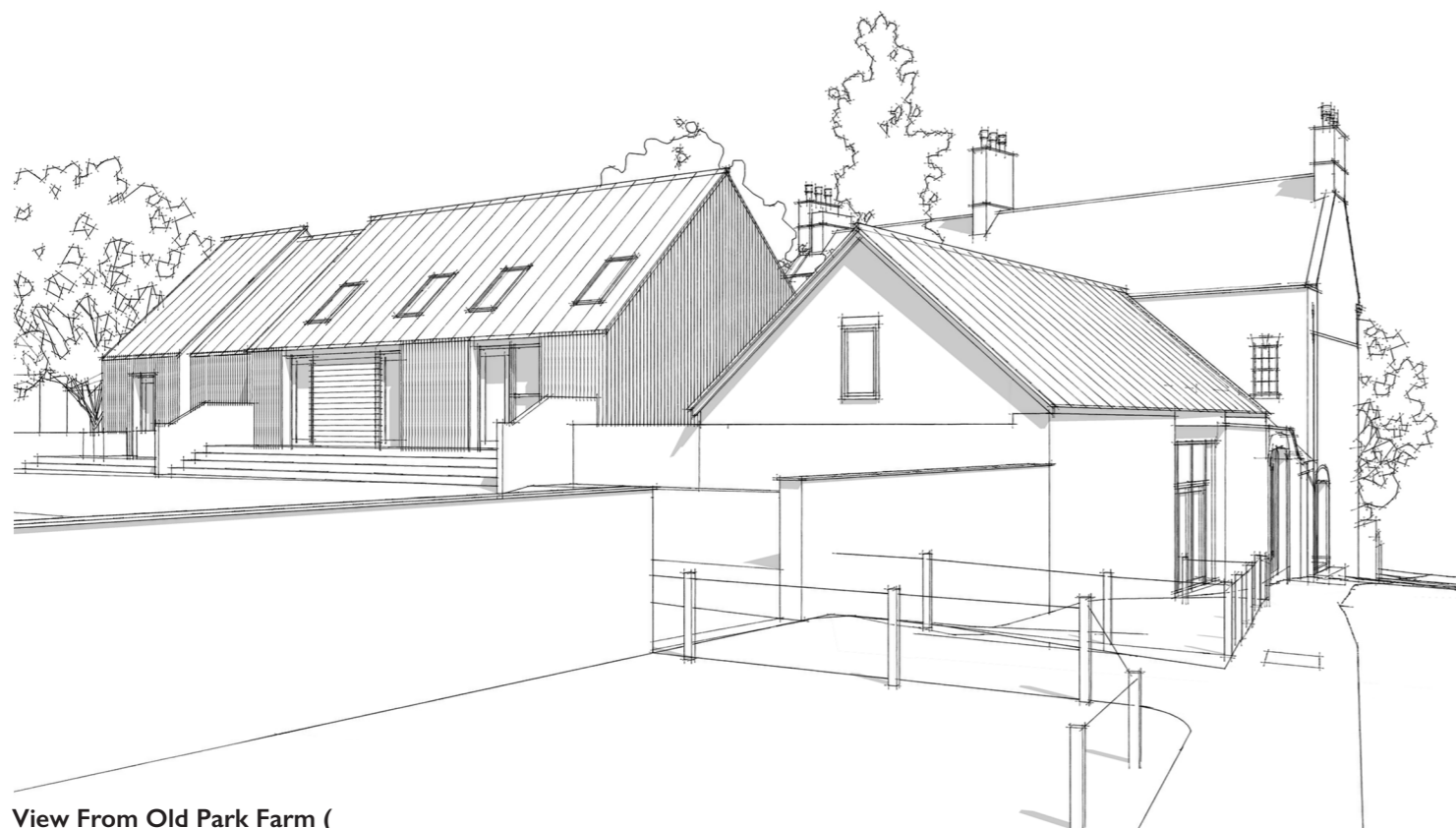
View From Courtyard Entrance



View From Stonehill Street



View From Stonehill House



View From Old Park Farm (

