

DESIGN / CONSERVATION / HISTORIC INTERIORS

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## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

STRATFIELD FARM, KIDLINGTON, OXFORDSHIRE, OX5 1DL

Rev A



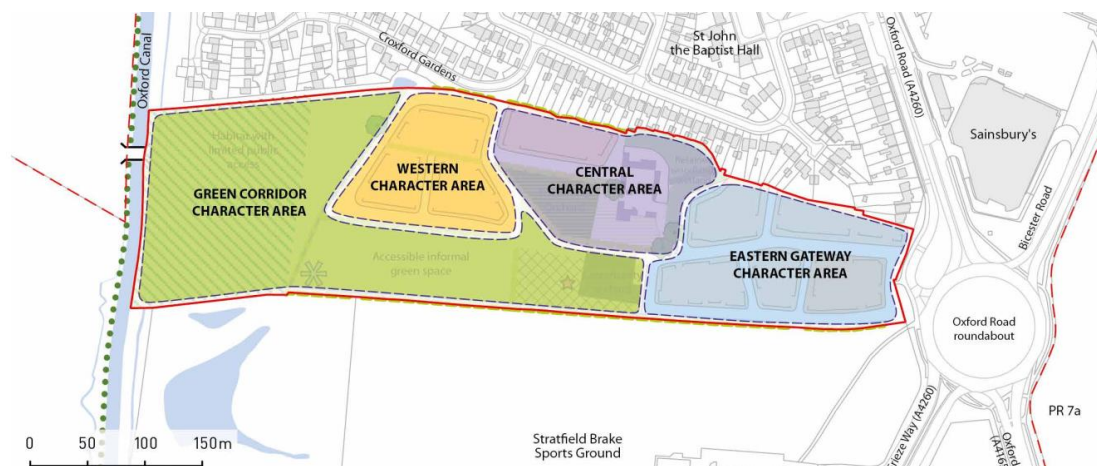
## 1.0 Introduction

This design and access statement has been prepared on behalf of Manor Oak Homes, to support an application for the alterations and repairs to a Grade II Listed Farmhouse and associated annexe, the construction of 2 new dwellings on footprints of existing curtilage listed outbuildings, refurbishment and partial rebuilding of 2 further outbuildings into dwellings and associated car parking and landscaping works.

The statement has been prepared to demonstrate how the proposal has been informed by analysis of the local context and is of appropriate high-quality design. The statement should be read in conjunction with Cherwell Council's Development Brief *'1187-201\_Development Brief PR 7b\_Draft for Consultation'*. This application follows pre-application discussions (ref.21.03477.PREAPP) with the council's Conservation Officer Joyce Christie regarding the proposed development options for the site, as requested within the Development Brief.

## 2.0 Context

The redevelopment of Stratfield Farm farmhouse and outbuildings is part of a larger residential development scheme to provide approx. 120 new homes in the local area. This application focuses solely on the Grade II Listed Farmhouse and surrounding curtilage listed outbuildings, located within the 'Central Character Area' of the Development Plan.



*Extract from Development Plan*

Stratfield farm was once used as a working farm, but that use ceased a number of years ago leaving the farmhouse and outbuildings unused, unoccupied and in partial ruin. The Grade II Listed farmhouse is now on the Heritage at Risk register and is unsafe, with some elements at risk of collapse.

Please refer to the attached Statement of Significance for a detailed historic assessment of Stratfield Farm, and the Structural Inspection Report and Condition Statement for current condition of all existing buildings.

### 3.0 Design brief

Cherwell Council's Development Brief has set out a number of detailed Development principles, which are followed in the proposals:

*The requirements for individual buildings and spaces within the farmhouse complex are as follows (please refer to Fig. 20 for locations) and are subject to the exploration of development options and detailed discussion with CDC Conservation Officer.*

- A. The farmhouse is to be restored for residential or other appropriate use. It is expected that the front garden and traditional orchard to the west, the rear courtyard and garden, and ancillary building a1 will fall within the property ownership boundary. There are small outbuildings attached to the walls between the farmhouse and courtyard which should be retained for use as storage and repaired.*
- B. Curtilage listed barn to the north to be converted into residential use.*
- C. Indicative footprint of a former building. A building could be reinstated following the historic footprint to provide additional accommodation.*
- D. Existing building in this location is a modern structure and is to be removed. A building could be reinstated on the original footprint of the historic barn to provide additional accommodation.*
- E. Modern building E is to be removed.*
- F. Building F is to be retained. The northern section of the building is to be converted to residential. The southern section could be converted to garaging serving the farmhouse, subject to an accurate survey and suitability. Area F1 is the location of a former open shed. The staddle stones remain and a building could be reinstated here, perhaps retaining the open shed form and incorporating the remaining stones with glazed infills between the posts.*
- G. Building G to be retained / reinstated to the original footprint for residential or ancillary use.*

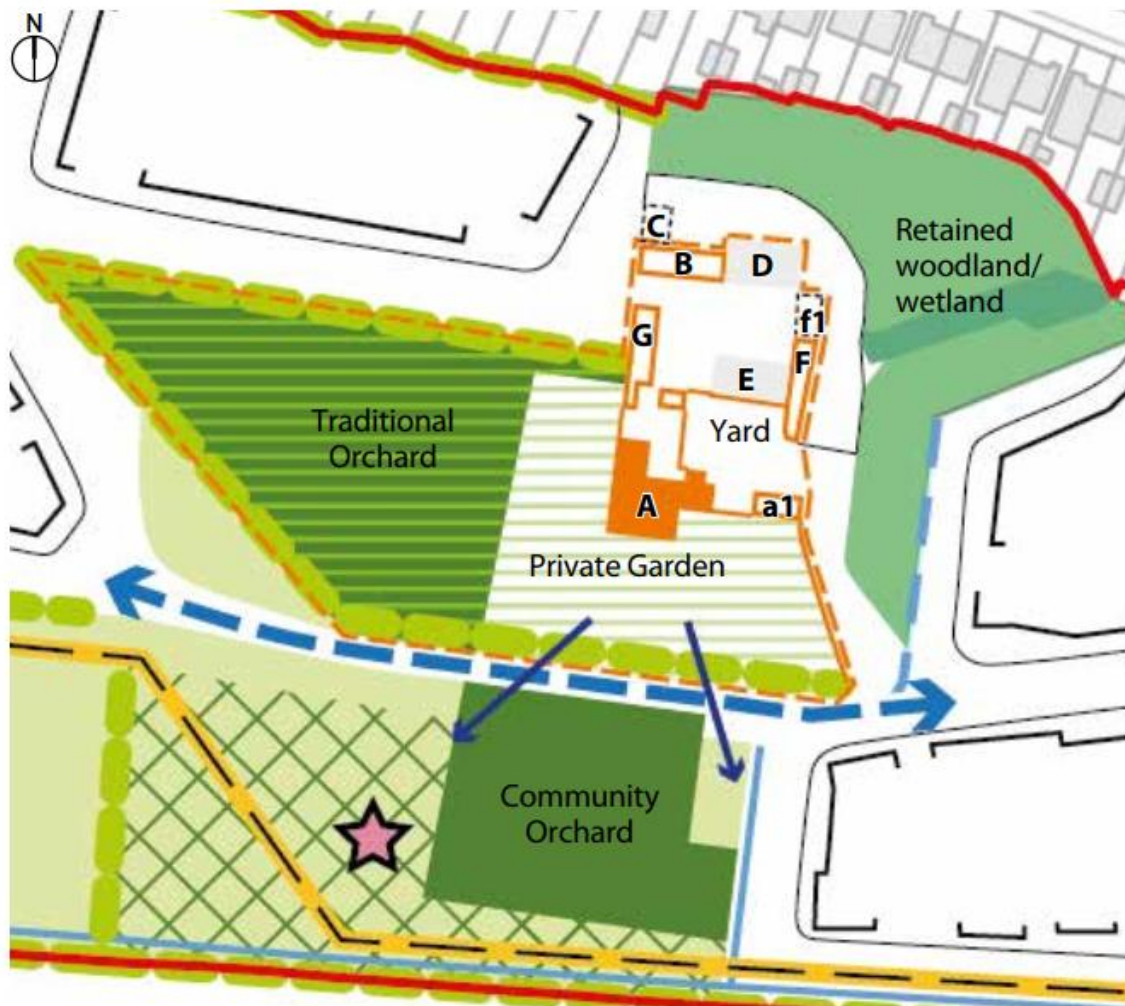


Fig. 20: Heritage key plan

- |                                     |   |  |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Site Boundary                       | Potential reinstatement of building on historic footprint | Retained/new hedgerows                   |
| Listed curtilage boundary           | Modern building to be removed                             | Private garden                           |
| Listed building to retain           |   | Vehicular connection                     |
| Curtilage listed building to retain |   | Retain open aspect to south of farmhouse |

*Extract from Development Plan*

#### **4.0 Pre-application response**

Following the pre-application submission (ref.21.03477.PREAPP), a detailed measured survey and a Condition Survey have been undertaken to inform the detailed planning and Listed Building consent application proposals, please refer to the attached documents.

##### 4.1 Parking.

Parking layout and number of spaces have been altered and reduced as per Conservation Officer's comments. A new car parking shed has been proposed in place of Block E to reduce visual impact of vehicles on the farm yard. Further 2 spaces have been relocated to the rear of Block C. Bin and garden sheds have been incorporated into the proposals to avoid the need for future domestic development.

##### 4.2 Block D.

Initial design proposals for the barn envisaged a large timber clad barn with clay tile roofing entirely filling the footprint of the existing metal shed. Following Conservation Officer's comments, the design has been revised to reduce the width of the proposed building and to construct it out of stone and stone slates to reflect the local vernacular style.

##### 4.3 Additional new dwelling.

An additional dwelling behind Block C was initially proposed to utilise the strip of land behind existing housing and create a sense of a street. This was removed from the proposals to allow retention of the entire 'Wetland/ woodland' area as prescribed by the Development Brief.

#### **5.0 Conservation Approach**

The overarching proposed conservation approach for the site is to preserve and enhance its agricultural setting by retaining the original setting of the farmyard form within the site and by improving the relationship between the old Farmhouse and surrounding outbuildings by removal of modern structures.

The Grade II Listed Farmhouse is proposed to be restored to its original form with minimal alteration as one large single-family dwelling with an Annexe within Block A1, enjoying amenity space of the existing orchard to the front and side, as well as a smaller section of the existing farmyard.

All of the remaining curtilage listed outbuildings are proposed to be reused or rebuilt on existing footprints, using the same materials, subject to their structural condition. Where there is evidence of existing openings, these are proposed to be retained or reinstated as far as reasonable. On the inside of the courtyard, new openings and rooflights will be limited to retain the agricultural feel of the buildings. In order to provide some flexibility for conversion to residential use, greater freedom is assumed outside of the courtyard. Amenity space is proposed on the outside of the barns, and where additional new openings are required for habitable rooms these are proposed on the amenity elevations.

Blocks C, G and F1 have no remaining roof structures. Block D roof is intact, however it has no historical significance. The remaining existing roofs of Blocks A1, B and F, although replaced with modern materials, give a good sense of the original form of the barns with uniform steep roof pitches. The proposals retain the same roof pitches across all of the new buildings, whilst raising the ridge heights of Blocks B and G to allow for sufficient internal accommodation required for viable conversion into residential dwellings.

The modern Block D is proposed to be demolished and replaced with a new building, agricultural in form, taking cues from the form and materials of local vernacular barns. The use of a restrained material palette of course rubble limestone, timber weatherboarding, stone slates, slate and clay tiles will ensure a uniform design language across the whole courtyard, while retaining the eclectic feel of it's setting, which appears to have evolved over time.



*Site plan*

## 6.0 Design Proposals

### 6.1 Grade II Listed Farmhouse and Block A1

The Farmhouse and Block A1 are the best-preserved buildings on site, although with significant structural issues, which are detailed in the attached Structural Report. The Farmhouse requires local repairs of the existing fabric of the building, as well as replacement of the existing concrete tile roof with traditional stone slates, which are assumed to have been the original roof covering.

Both buildings are proposed to be restored to their original form and retained under single ownership as a single large family house with an Annexe, as the restricted size of the existing structure of Block A1 prevents it from being used as garaging for modern vehicles.

Refurbishment of the Farmhouse can be achieved with minimal internal alterations, which are limited to making one new opening in an existing wall between the kitchen and dining room, as well as the addition of reversible timber stud partitions to create additional sanitary provisions, as expected in a house of this scale. On the ground floor, 2 historic coppers are proposed to be retained within the new boot room. A more recent brick extension to the north of the house is proposed to be demolished, to return the exterior of the house to its original form.

Conversion of Block A1 into an Annexe requires construction of a new staircase, allowing access to a new bedroom upstairs. This will require the removal of floor joists in the central bay to create a new opening. Additionally, 2 new door openings are proposed on the ground floor to connect all 3 bays internally, creating a single dwelling. The existing roof covering, which has corroded and does not have sufficient flashings is proposed to be replaced with clay tiles, utilising existing timber roof structure.

Existing access point to the Farmhouse will remain unchanged, while a section of the courtyard will be designated as private amenity space of the Farmhouse.

### 6.2 Block B and Block C

Existing Block B has well preserved stone walls and internal first floor timber structure, although these have suffered significant damage due to long term lack of maintenance and vegetation growth. The roof has been re-covered with modern corrugated sheeting. A side extension built out of timber and clay roof tiles is in very poor condition and has largely collapsed. Block C to the rear has also collapsed almost entirely and is overgrown, with only partial remains of 2 stone walls, which have had significant root growth and water damage.

In order to provide satisfactory 3 bedroom residential accommodation within the constraints of the existing narrow footprint, the proposal is to raise the existing eaves and ridge height of Block B by 700mm to a storey and a half, while maintaining the same roof pitch, to allow for sufficient space within the roof structure for a bedroom and family bathroom. The new roof is proposed to be covered with traditional

stone slates, while the extension of the existing stone walls is proposed to be finished with weathered timber cladding, clearly showing the distinction between the old and the new. An existing dormer window on the north elevation of Block B is proposed to be rebuilt in lead in matching proportions. Two new window openings are proposed to be created in the north wall, as well as a new door opening in the western wall internally to connect the stone cottage to the side extension. These openings have been designed to be minimal, matching the existing window proportions on the front elevation.

The east side extension is proposed to remain subservient to the host building, retaining existing lower ridge height and use of timber posts and cladding, emphasising the existing relationship. To the rear, the side extension continues over the original footprint of Block C, to provide adequate living accommodation and parking space for 2 vehicles. Existing boundary wall, running along the west side of Block C is proposed to be rebuilt using limestone reclaimed from site due to extensive structural damage caused by long term root growth.

New conservation style rooflights are proposed to the west and north elevations, away from the farmyard, to provide daylighting to first floor rooms and additional evening light in the main living space.

### 6.3 Block D

Block D is a well preserved, substantial metal shed, enclosing the farmyard on the north-east corner. The existing 20<sup>th</sup>C steel structure has neutral significance, as per the attached Statement of Significance, and is therefore proposed to be demolished to allow for the construction of a new residential dwelling.

The proposed new dwelling is proposed to be a 2 storey building, large enough for a generously sized 4 bedroom dwelling.

The proposed design is agricultural in nature, resembling a stone barn conversion with a steeply pitched stone slate roof, which requires the existing ridge height to be raised by 1.85m. The proposed glazing has been designed to resemble openings found on a traditional barn, with ventilation slot windows on the south and east elevations and a suggestion of a large central opening, typical of a threshing barn, on the south elevation facing the farmyard. The proposed first floor layout was designed to minimise the requirement for rooflights, which have been kept to 2 conservation style rooflights per elevation, reducing their impact on the setting of the farmyard.

The proposed private amenity is located behind the building to the north, facing the less important boundary with existing buildings to the rear.

### 6.4 Block E

The existing Block E is a tired 20<sup>th</sup>C steel structure, which is proposed to be taken down.

The proposal is a new timber cart shed with a clay tile roof and open bays, with a ridge height 660mm higher than the existing barn to accommodate sufficient headroom for vehicles. The new shed is proposed



to sit on a narrower, but longer footprint than the existing metal shed, in order to house 6 car parking spaces for Blocks D, F and G, as well as incorporating bins and bike/garden storage.

The new structure is proposed to be constructed out of oak posts, timber weatherboarding and brick piers, taking cues from the appearance of existing Block A1 behind.

The proposed cart shed will sit against an existing dry stone wall to the rear, which requires rebuilding due to previous badly carried out repairs and cracking. An existing gate opening is proposed to be retained with a new timber gate fixed permanently shut.

### 6.5 Block F and F1

Currently, Blocks F and F1 are overgrown, with the north side of the range almost entirely collapsed, with only a few staddle stones remaining. The eastern stone boundary wall, running along the entire length of these blocks is in poor condition, with areas of complete collapse, major cracks and missing sections. A central section of the existing timber roof structure is in satisfactory condition, albeit the entire remaining structure appears to be leaning east.

The proposals seek to utilise the entire footprint of Blocks F and F1 to create a 3-bedroom, single storey dwelling, retaining the existing ridge height of Block F, while raising the ridge height of Block F1 by 350mm to accommodate a wider footprint. The existing remaining roof structure of Block F is proposed to be retained, following jacking up to remove the existing lean.

The western elevation proposes to replace existing oak posts on staddle stones in existing locations, as the posts have suffered prolonged water damage and any repairs are likely to fail. To emphasise the rhythm of the regular bays, the openings are proposed to be infilled with glazing, with sections of vertical hit and miss timber boarding added for privacy. The eastern elevation is proposed to be retained as a mostly solid rubble limestone wall, constructed out of stones reclaimed from the site, with minimal openings in the same locations as existing openings.

### 6.6 Block G

Block G has now substantially collapsed, with the existing ruins comprising of a partial stone gable wall and the original footprint, giving an idea of the scale of what once stood in its place. The remaining historic fabric of the building allows to determine its footprint and the construction material, which is stone. There is no further evidence available to ascertain the original use, height of the structure or the location of former openings.

The shallow depth of the existing footprint prevents it from being successfully converted into garaging suitable for modern vehicles.

As such, the proposal is to construct an entirely new 1 and a half storey residential stone cottage within the existing footprint with a new roof to match Block B's pitch. Block G ridge height is proposed to be 300mm

higher than proposed Block B due to adjacent structure (Block E). Private amenity space is proposed to be located to the west, enclosed with a low dry stone wall and agricultural fencing, allowing the front façade facing the courtyard to remain agricultural in appearance.

The best preserved gable wall has been damaged by long term vegetation growth and is proposed to be rebuilt and extended in height using existing limestone. The remaining walls are proposed to be rubble limestone cavity walls to match the gable wall, with majority of proposed openings, rooflights and 2 new lead dormers located to face west, away from the farmyard.

The stone boundary wall enclosing the proposed utility room will be repaired and repointed, with a new slate roof added to the extension.

#### 6.7 Block H

Existing Block H has substantially collapsed and is proposed to be recorded and taken down.

#### 6.8 Landscaping

The existing landscaping is overgrown, with remnants of agricultural machinery and ruins scattered around the former farmyard. The Farmhouse itself is adjacent to a large mature orchard, which retention forms part of the wider masterplan.

The overriding design principle for the landscaping proposal for the site is the retention of existing dry stone walling, surrounded by buildings of agricultural character in a restrained material palette.

Private amenity spaces for the new residential dwellings are proposed to be provided to the rear of the buildings, facing the less important boundary with the existing estate and away from the farmyard.

The amenity space for the Farmhouse will largely consist of the retained orchard, as well as a smaller area within the farmyard. The farmyard side is proposed to be mostly covered in gravel, with a small lawn area, reminiscent of a working yard.

The majority of the required parking provision (6no) is proposed to be located within a timber cart shed behind the existing low stone wall running through the centre of the farmyard, allowing for a defined boundary to the Farmhouse's private amenity space. Further 2 spaces are proposed within the footprint of Block C, as well as another 2 spaces for the Farmhouse are proposed to be located in a smaller cart shed, hidden by a stone boundary wall. The above provision is deemed adequate due to the proximity of the site to major transport links into Oxford and beyond.

The surface of the courtyard is proposed to be constructed with cobble setts, evocative of traditional working farmyards, demarcated in 2 colour tones, which differentiate between pedestrian and vehicular areas.

### 6.9 Access

Existing vehicular access from a main dirt track to the farmhouse will be retained and upgraded. Existing pedestrian access to the Farmhouse via steps on the front façade will be retained, albeit it will no longer be the principal access point, which will now be moved to the rear, accessible directly from the driveway.

The current access between the Farmhouse and the outbuildings will be blocked with the extension of the existing low dry stone wall to enclose private amenity space. A new private vehicular access point will be created to the northwest corner of the site, between Blocks B and G (5m wide) for residents of the proposed 4 new dwellings. An adoptable turning area has been incorporated within the masterplan providing a safe point of access for fire and services.

### **7.0 Conclusion**

The proposed scheme involves minimal changes to the listed Farmhouse, which is proposed to be restored as a single residential dwelling, and a conservation-based strategy for the curtilage listed outbuildings, many of which are in ruinous condition and beyond repair. Key elements of the existing buildings, which have been assessed to be in a good enough condition are proposed to be retained and have been incorporated into the proposals.

The proposed scheme follows the detailed advice of Cherwell District Council's Development Brief as well as a pre-application process and aims to retain the special character of the Grade II Listed Farmhouse and courtyard to create unique residential development, bringing this Building at Risk back into viable use.