

Heritage Statement

in connection with a

**Proposed barn conversion
New Hall Barn,
Blackburn Road,
Ribchester,
Lancashire**

Prepared by

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Contents

1.0 Introduction

2.0 General Description

3.0 Building Assessment and Statement of Significance

4.0 Analysis of the Proposed Works

5.0 Summary and Conclusion

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Format

This heritage statement has been prepared to assess and inform proposals to convert a detached barn, known as New Hall Barn, which is located on land adjacent to the C17th grade II* New Hall. In essence the Heritage Statement assesses the heritage significance of the site and guides proposals for change in a manner that conserves significance. This approach adheres to the principle of intelligently managing change, which lies at the heart of national planning policy for conservation of the historic built environment.

The Statement has been prepared in accordance with the general guidelines set out in the English Heritage publications 'Informed Conservation'¹ and 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance'² and in particular responds to heritage policies outlined in Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG, 2012). The legal context is set by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990. The local policy context is set out in the Ribble Valley Borough Council Adopted Core Strategy (2014).

1.2 The Author

Chris O'Flaherty, the author, is a Chartered Building Surveyor and professional member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (MRICS). With a background in the recording, analysis and conservation of historic buildings, the author holds a Masters Degree in Building Heritage and Conservation and specialises in heritage planning matters.

1.3 Methods of Research and Investigation

Inspections of the site were carried out in November 2014 to assess its physical nature. Background research has also been conducted to ascertain all relevant contextual matters appertaining to the proposals. The scope of this research has, in accordance with the NPPF, been proportionate to the nature of the proposed works, with particular emphasis placed upon the special architectural and historic interest of the site and those planning policies that affect/control change.

¹ Clarke, K, *Informed Conservation*, English Heritage 2003

² English Heritage, *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance: Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*, 2008

2.0 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

2.1 Site Location

The barn is situated on the west side of Blackburn Road (B6245) to the east of Ribchester in the parish of Clayton-le-Dale. A location map is given below in figure 1.

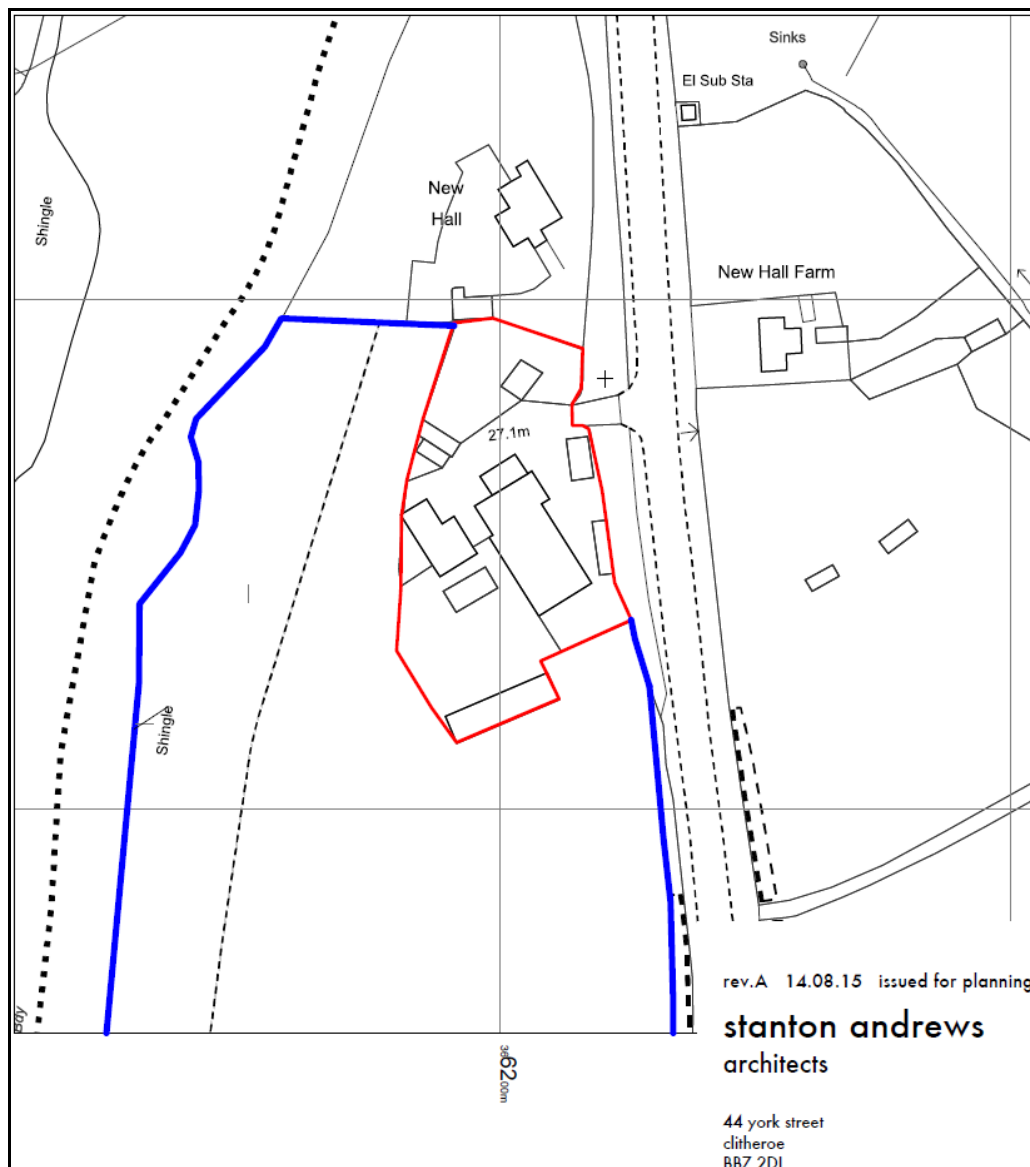


Figure 1. Site Location Plan (Stanton Andrews)

2.2 Site Description & Brief History

Site Description

The barn occupies a roadside plot adjacent to New Hall and amidst rural fields with the River Ribble a short distance to the west. The barn is an extended detached structure surrounded by smaller ancillary buildings of more recent date, all being accessible via an entry driveway off the road passing through a perimeter stone boundary wall. The original two storey part of the barn is six bays in length, adjoining which is a long

single storey shippon extension to the rear (west) which abuts an original rear projection to the northern end. There is also a single storey lean-to extension to the northern end. The barn is of rendered rubble construction beneath a slated truss, purlin and rafter roof. Sample photographs of the building with descriptive captions are shown below.



Figure 2. Roadside front elevation (east facing)



Figure 3. Southerly elevation showing added brick shippon and rendered original part



Figure 4. View along front elevation from the south



Figure 5. Right hand end of front elevation with lean-to addition



Figure 6. Northern lean-to rear elevation (original)



Figure 7. Interior of rear shippon addition showing enclosed original rear projection



Figure 8. Interior view of brick shippon addition against rear wall of original barn



Figure 9. Interior of original barn showing blocked former northern gable doors



Figure 10. Interior of original barn looking south showing inserted loft floor and original trusses with trenced purlins, struts and upper ties



Figure 11. view into ground floor space under inserted loft

Site History

Situated to the north of New Hall Barn, New Hall (grade II*) was an important domestic residence built in 1665, which later became a farmhouse known as New Hall Farm. The barn was built to serve this farming function and physical evidence suggests it may date from the C18th. Historic mapping, given in extract below in figures 12 and 13, shows the barn in the mid and late C19th, prior to the building of a new farmhouse for New Hall Farm on the eastern side of Barker Brow in the C20th. The new house was built at a time when New Hall had fallen into a state of serious disrepair before benefitting from major renovation in the later C20th.

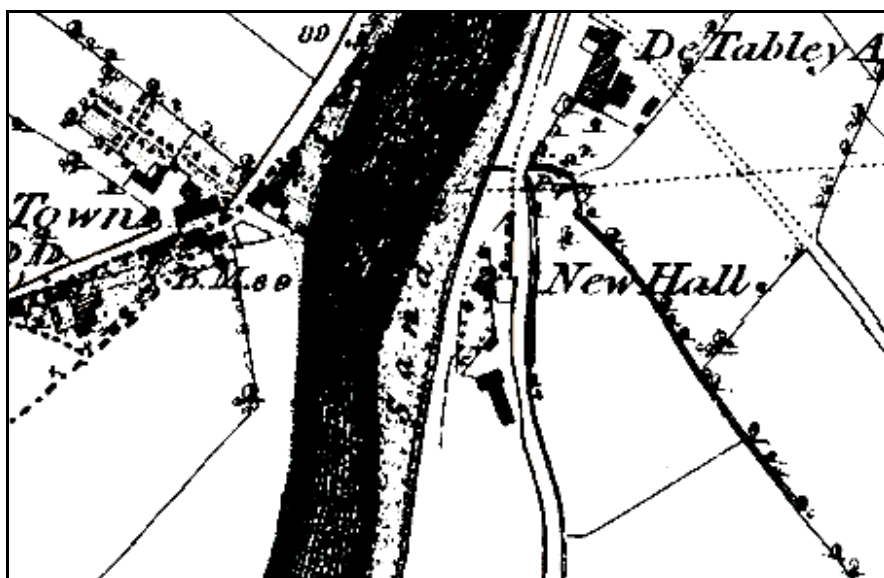


Figure 12. Extract of 1840's first edition Ordnance Survey map (six inch scale) showing the barn south of 'New Hall'.

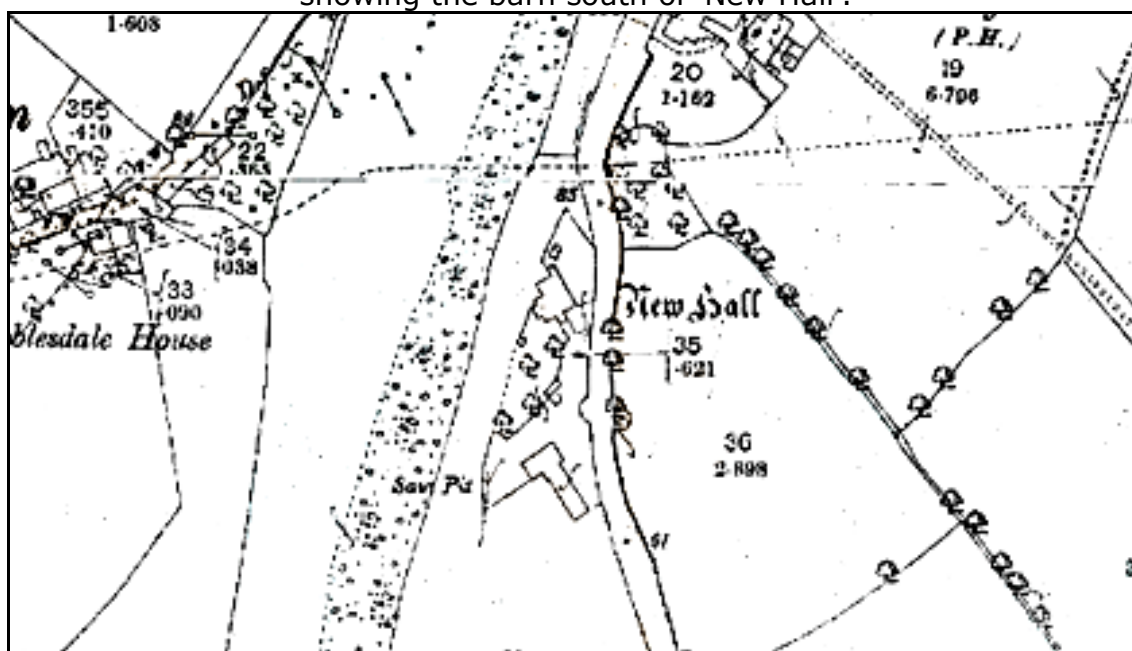


Figure 13. Extract of 1880's Ordnance Survey map (twenty five inch scale).

The original two storey part of the barn, which was extended by the addition of a long rear shippon and small northern lean-to in the C20th, appears to have comprised a double bay shippon with loft above to the north, a central cart entry bay and a triple bay storage area to the south, and a small rear northern lean-to projection against the rear elevation which may have been a stable. This configuration was later changed with the insertion of a new interior shippon and loft to the southern end, re-ordering of the northern shippon and the building of the aforementioned extensions. In essence the barn, which is now disused, served as a dual cattle housing and feed storage facility which was extended and altered to accommodate an enlarged dairy herd. Throughout the C19th and early C20th it was common practise in Lancashire for this to happen, with farmers concentrating on dairy production to satisfy the rapidly growing industrial population in nearby towns.

2.3 Heritage Asset Designations

New Hall is a grade II* listed building. The listing description for the building is given below.

CLAYTON-LE-DALE SD 63 NE 1/16 New Hall 27-8-1952 - II House, 1665. Sandstone rubble with stone slate roof now largely missing. L-plan. A symmetrical composition of 3 storeys, with one gabled bay on each side of 3-storey gabled porch. Windows double-chamfered with mullions and hoods. Those to the outer bays are of 4 lights except for the left-hand one on the ground floor which is of 5. The porch has a window of 3 lights on the 1st floor and 2 on the 2nd floor. Above the 1st floor window is a stone panel carved with a dog. The outer porch doorway has a chamfered surround with 'GT [George Talbot] 1665' inscribed on the lintel. The inner door surround is chamfered with a cambered head. Gables coped with kneelers. Chimney, with brick cap, on ridge in line with right-hand side of porch. Central part of left-hand gable wall now collapsed (June 1985). The rear wall of this south-west part of the house has a 2-light window on the ground and 1st floors. At the left, viewed from the rear, is a gabled wing which has a C19 ground-floor window with plain stone surround and flat-faced mullion. On each of the other floors there is a 4-light and a 2-light C17 window, the right-hand one on the 1st floor blocked. At the left is a C19 single-storey gabled porch. The outer doorway has a chamfered stone surround with Tudor arch. The north-east gable wall of the house has 3 ground-floor windows with plain reveals, a blocked C17 window on the 1st floor and a 2-light 2nd floor window. Interior not fully accessible at time of survey.*

Front door opens into a corridor between 2 solid walls. At the rear of this is a C19 dog-leg stair with stick balusters. To the right of the corridor are 2 rooms, a smaller one at the front, and a larger one at the rear which has boxed beams and a fireplace with C19 grate. To the left of the corridor the main room is largely filled by debris and has a collapsed boxed beam.

Whereas New Hall Barn, when built, appears to have been part of a farmstead established at New Hall, it is not now considered as a curtilage building to the listed building, but does exist within the setting of the listed building. On account of its age, the barn possesses a degree of heritage significance in its own right, although this is not formally recognised through national or local listing.

3.0 HERITAGE APPRAISAL

3.1 Introduction

The following appraisal adheres to guidance published by English Heritage (2008)³ and relates specifically to the requirement contained in clause 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), given in extract below:

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary."

(Clause 128. NPPF, 2012)

The appraisal begins by identifying the potential range of heritage values attributed to the building, before evaluating these and expressing them concisely within a 'statement of significance'. This statement is then used as a basis for developing the design of new proposals, making sure to prioritise conservation of significance where possible and appropriate.

3.2 Heritage Values

The following appraisal of the heritage values devotes particular interest to how these values might be affected by emerging proposals for development. The values are distilled under the following headings: evidential value; historic value; communal value; aesthetic value.

3.2.1 Evidential Value

English Heritage (2008) suggests that "Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity"⁴.

The barn provides physical evidence of an altered and extended C18th structure, however the evidential value of the building has been eroded by past alterations. These

³ English Heritage, *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance: Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*, 2008

⁴ Ibid

alterations include the re-ordering of the internal space, the insertion of new lofts, the blocking of former doorways, the application of exterior render and the C20th extensions. Of most evidential value are the original enclosing walls and the original roof trusses, albeit the former have suffered through the application of hard cement render which encourages moisture retention within the walls. The space enclosed by the walls and the interpretation of historical spatial usage, including usage of doors and other openings, is also of some evidential value, albeit barns of this era in a more authentic condition are relatively plentiful in the area. The evidential value of the barn in relation to New Hall relates to the later conversion of the Hall into a farm many years after it was first built. This conversion is not deemed a primary significance of the Hall and the barn is incidental to the more important significances associated with the Hall's original function.

3.2.2 Historical Value

English Heritage (2008) suggests that - "Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be *illustrative or associative*".

The barn possesses historical value in a number of related respects. Its relationship to New Hall is a part of the grade II* building's history, and in particular the shift to farming which appears to have occurred in the C18th. Herein the barn possesses associative value, albeit this value is much lower than the historical values associated with the Hall's C17th origins. In terms of illustrative value, the barn helps us to understand farming practises of old and appreciate better the lives of those who farmed the land from the C18th on. Alterations have eroded the level and authenticity of this value.

3.2.3 Communal Value

English Heritage (2008) suggests that: "Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory".

The barn makes a limited contribution to a rich and varied historic environment in the Ribble Valley characterised by scattered farmsteads and villages such as nearby Ribchester. The quality of the historic environment provides rich communal value and its conservation is therefore a priority, albeit New Hall Barn is not itself a particularly fine example of the vernacular built form. Owing to its former agricultural usage, the

barn does not contribute in any significant way to the shared collective experience and memory of those living in the area.

3.2.4 Aesthetic Value

English Heritage (2008) suggests that: "Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place".

The barn was built to vernacular traditions which, in the context of an agricultural building, were rooted in the need for functionality rather than aesthetic pleasure. This being said, through the use of commonly available local materials the barn, when built, would have helped characterise the local area and to this day stone built barns and farmhouses remain an important feature of the Ribble Valley. Unfortunately the rendering applied to the barn's enclosing walls, presumably done to improve the weather tightness and structural integrity, has significantly diminished the potential aesthetic qualities of the building to a point whereby the barn could be said to possess very little or even negative aesthetic value, which impacts upon the setting of New Hall. The barn's elongated plan form, front cart entry door and rather squat nature do signify it as being a barn of reasonable age, but these features relate more to evidential value than any aesthetic value worthy of note.

3.3 **Statement of Significance**

Having assessed the heritage values associated with the site, it is possible to take a more informed approach to the assessment of site significance, which turn allows specific consideration of plans to implement change. In this context a statement of significance is given below.

New Hall Barn is an altered and extended agricultural building with presumed C18th origins. It was initially built to facilitate the switch to farming at the adjacent New Hall, which was a historically important domestic residence built (and later altered) in 1665 and now grade II* listed. The barn possesses a range of heritage values, but its overall heritage significance has been diminished by past alterations changing both the appearance and spatial composition of the building. Such changes include the blocking of original openings, the re-ordering of interior space the application of surface render to the original rubble stone walls. Of most significance are the largely authentic roof structure and the original walls which enclose an interpretable six bay structure with front cart entry door. These features define part of the barn's evidential value. The

barn retains its agricultural character in terms of overall scale and composition, but it is an unattractive building, without aesthetic value. It does however feature in the history of the adjacent New Hall and therefore possesses a degree of historical value associated with the grade II* listed building, albeit the barn was designed to local vernacular traditions for purely functional reasons without any attempt to compliment the architectural qualities of the Hall. The barn is therefore not a planned element of the Hall's setting, but merely an incidental addition borne out of the need to satisfy a new function for the Hall.

In terms of conserving significance, it is important to note that any changes to New Hall Barn could impact upon the setting of New Hall therefore conserving the setting of the grade II* listed building is a priority for the barn site. This being said, inter-visibility of the buildings is limited due to dense tree growth around the Hall's boundaries therefore visual impacts on setting are unlikely to accrue so long as the barn is not over developed. Of lesser importance in terms of conservation is retaining the original roof structure and the enclosing walls of the original six bay barn. This will help conserve the evidential value of the barn and allow interpretation of its historic use. Likewise, retaining the agricultural scale of the building, characterised by the elongated plan form and comparatively squat nature, would help conserve significance, whilst retaining the extant openings and opening up former blocked openings offers sympathetic scope for making the building more practicably useable. In terms of the non-original parts of the building, most notably the shippon extension to the rear and the lean-to extension to the northern end, these could be removed without harming significance, as could the series of ancillary structures which encircle the barn.

4.0 ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSALS

4.1 General Principles

General guidance on assessing proposed changes to heritage assets is given in chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). The NPPF establishes that conserving significance should be a guiding principle when developing proposals for any new scheme. In order to satisfactorily do this, it is first necessary to conduct an appraisal of heritage values and identify the significance(s) of heritage assets before commencing with design work. Part 3 of this appraisal fulfils this need, and the findings of part 3 have informed the design of the new scheme. There follows, here in section 4, an objective review of the finalised scheme to verify to what extent conservation of significance has either been secured or compromised.

4.2 Summary of the Proposals

The proposals generally comprise the conversion of the barn into a new dwelling, including the following works:

- Demolition of the rear (western) shippon structure
- Replacement of the shippon with a new lean-to structure
- Demolition of lean-to addition against the northern gable
- Re-opening blocked former openings to the original building in various location
- Removal of render to original building and repair/repointing of exposed stone facades
- Repair and recovering of roof with reclaimed slates on insulated felted substrate
- Interior upgrading of wall, floor and roof/ceiling fabric to meet residential standards
- Insertion of new window and doors in prepared openings
- Minor interior alteration of existing spaces
- Retention of full height open bays to the northern end of the barn
- Demolition of derelict structure in front of the barn and shed to the north
- Erection of new stone built garage to the north
- Repairs to perimeter stone walls and gateways
- Soft and hard landscaping

Representative drawings of the proposals are shown below.

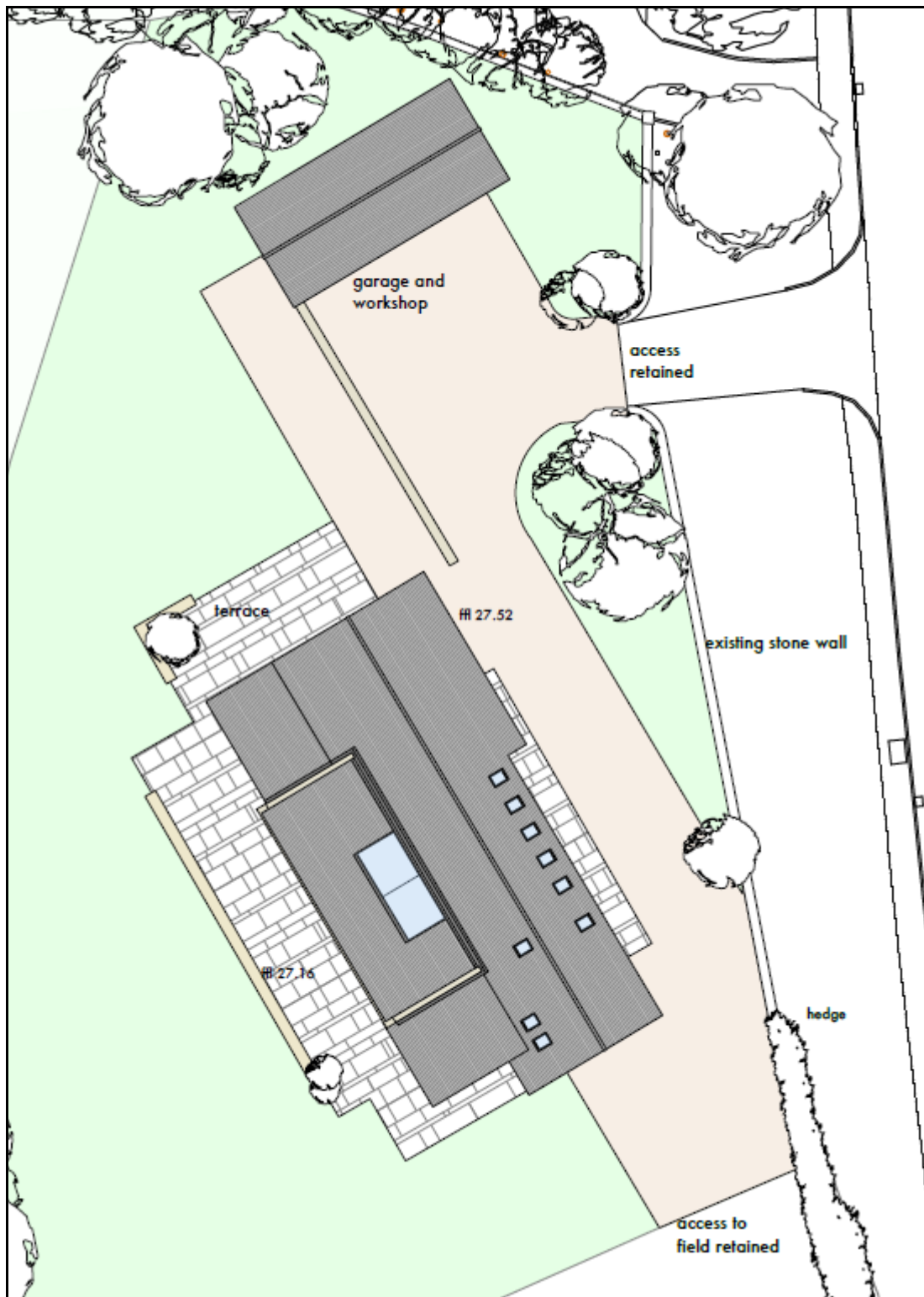


Figure 14. Proposed site plan

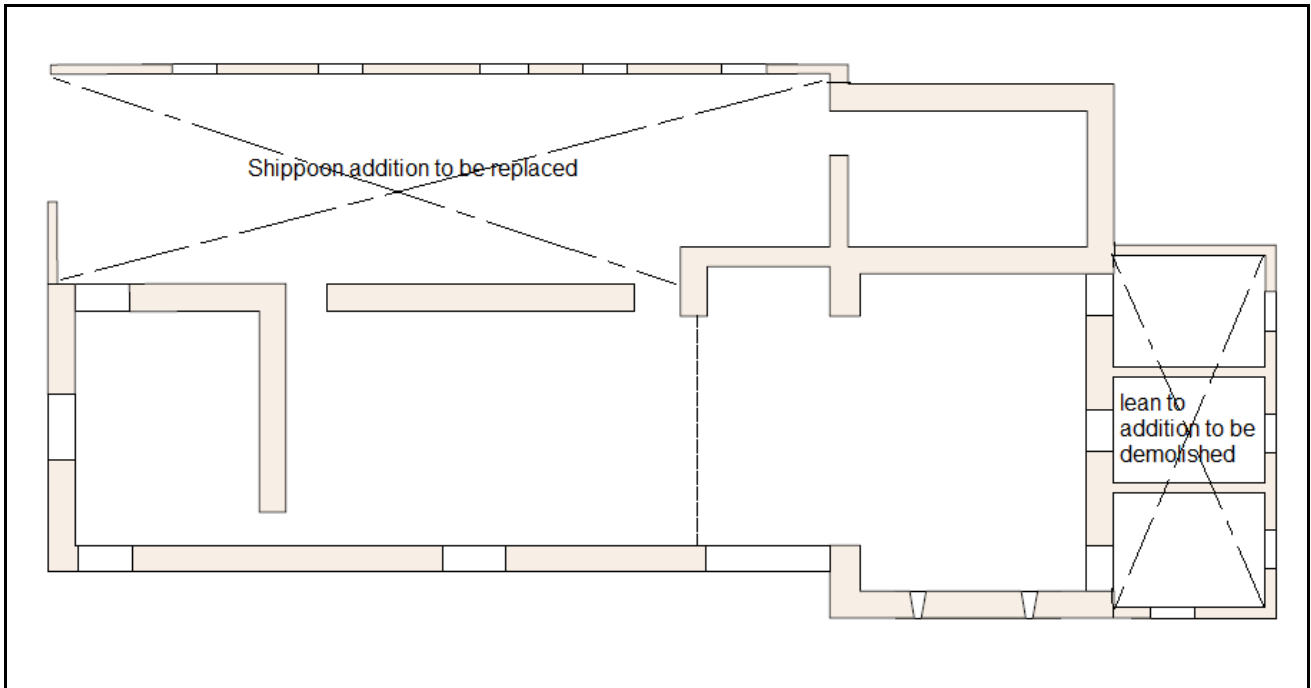


Figure 15. Existing building plan showing later additions to be demolished/replaced

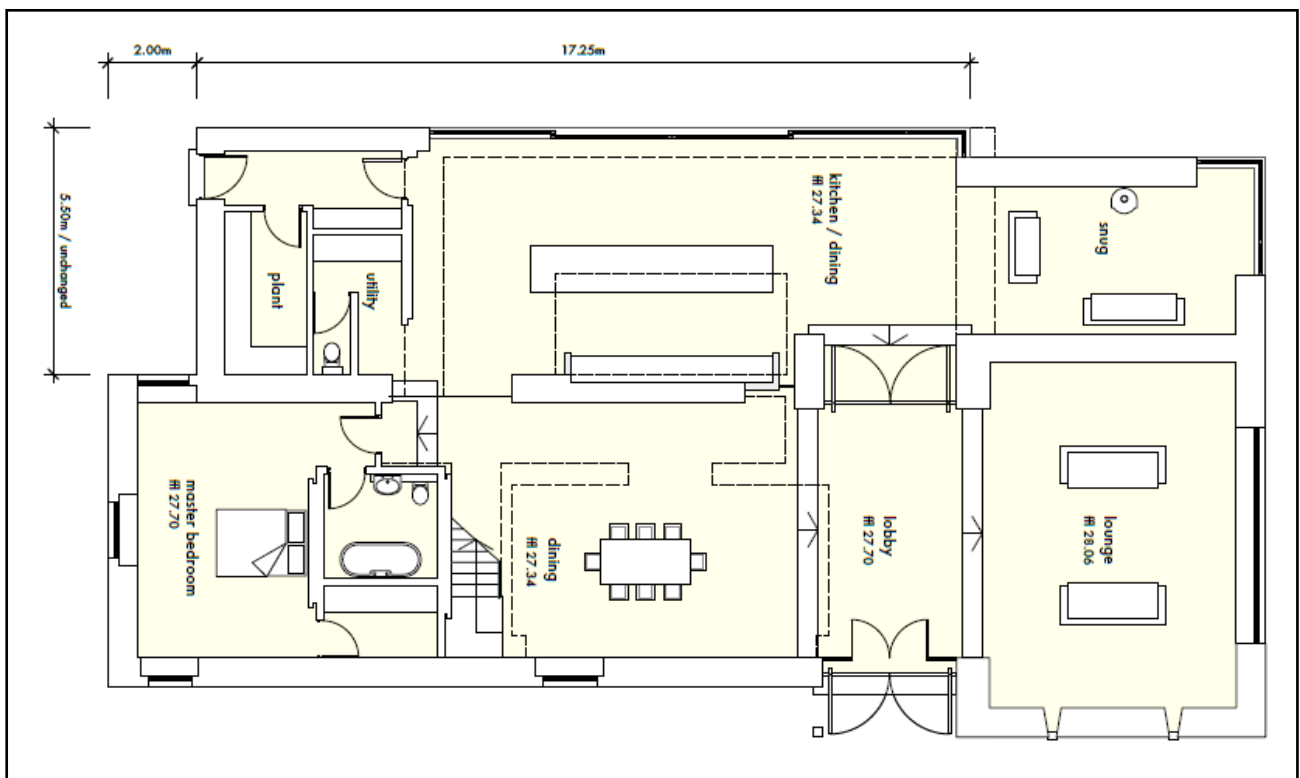


Figure 16. Proposed ground floor plan with replaced rear shippoon to the top centre/left

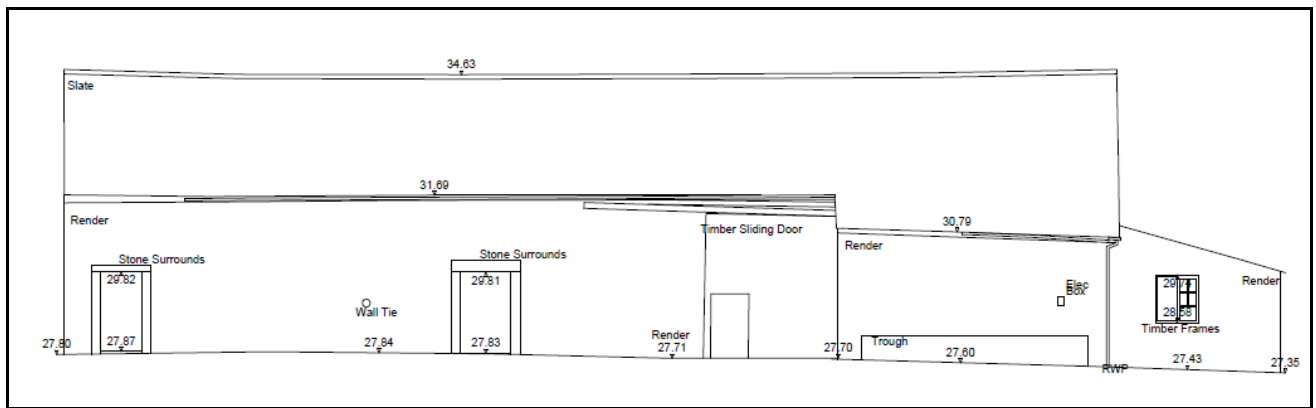


Figure 17. Existing eastern elevation



Figure 18. Proposed eastern elevation with narrow inserted windows and rooflights

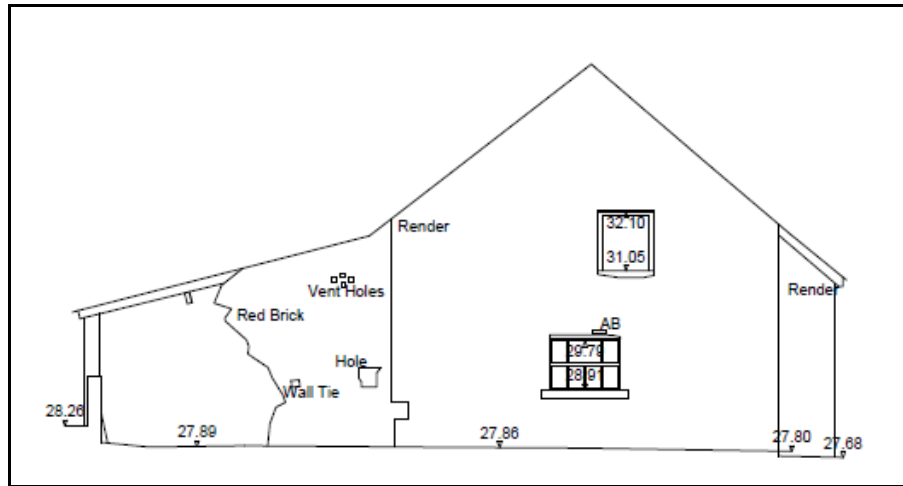


Figure 19. Existing southern elevation with shippon (left) to be replaced

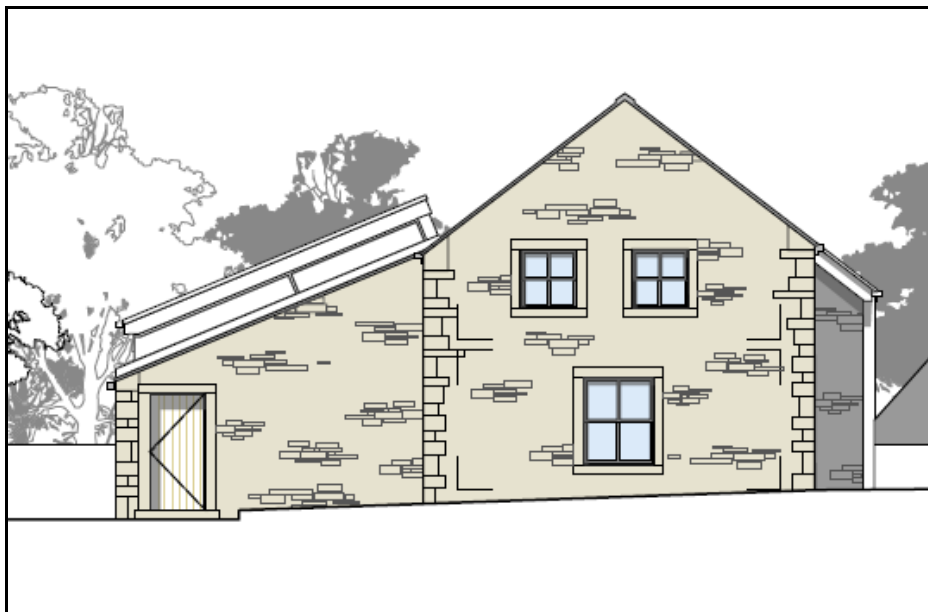


Figure 20. Proposed southern elevation with replacement structure to the left

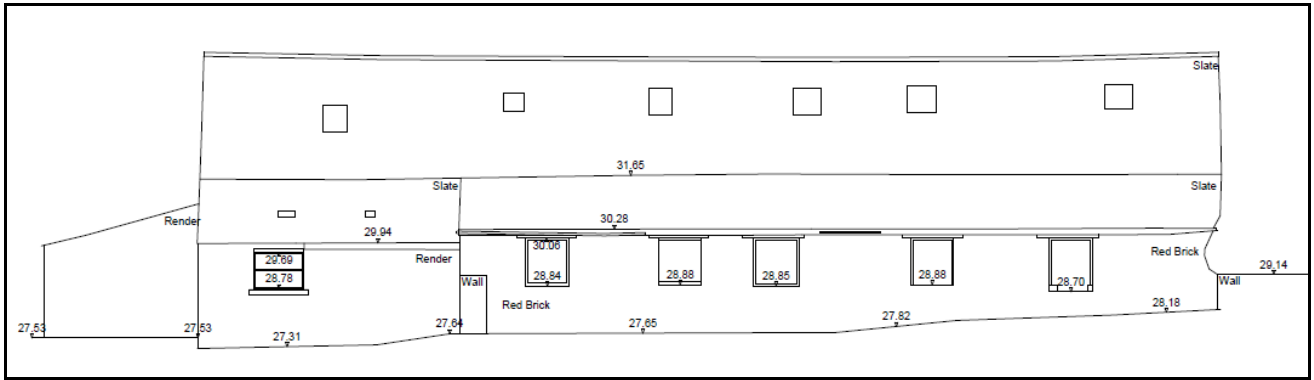


Figure 21. Existing western elevation with long shippon addition to be replaced

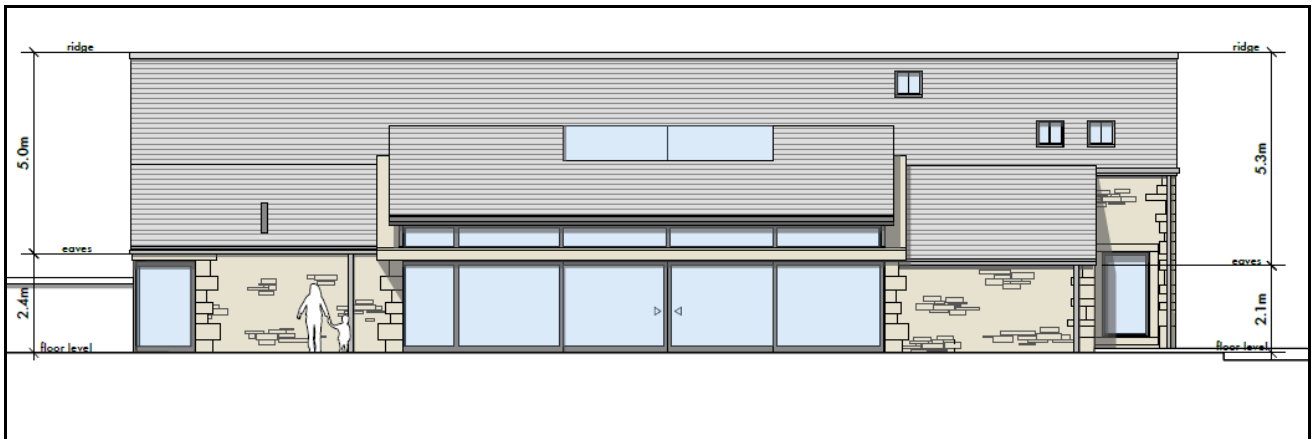


Figure 22. Proposed western elevation with replacement structure

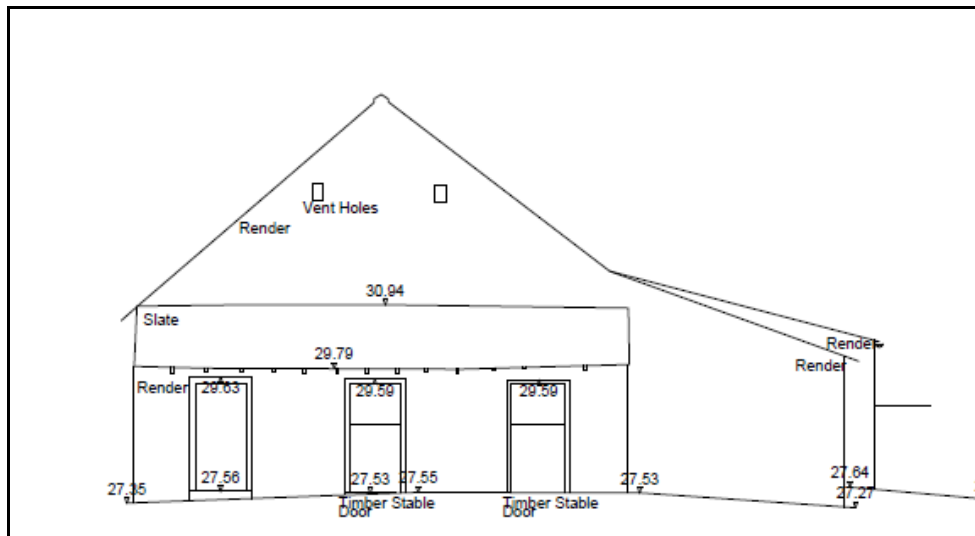


Figure 23. Existing northern elevation

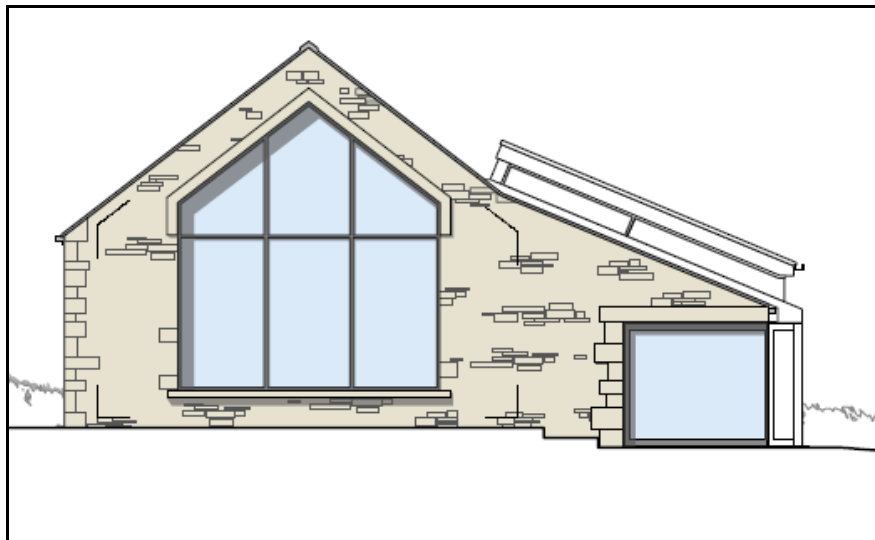


Figure 24. Proposed northern elevation

4.3 **Analysis of the Proposals: National Planning Policy Framework**

As discussed earlier, section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the NPPF (2012) considers heritage planning and identifies the following key drivers in the decision making process:

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- *opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.*

In essence the NPPF unifies the overall approach to planning in a way that previous guidance, such as PPS's and PPG's, did not. This ensures that deliberations over decisions relating to heritage assets are made in the full planning context, where factors other than heritage conservation play a crucial role. Securing sustainable development is the primary driver, and in the heritage context this relies on maintaining active use (long term) in a manner that seeks to limit potential harm to significance.

In order to establish a clearer, objective assessment of the proposals in the context of the NPPF, the following commentary considers how the proposed scheme aligns itself to the four principle NPPF heritage policy drivers listed above.

4.3.1 ***The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation (NPPF)***

The barn conversion secures a sustainable future for a building which has otherwise become obsolete. Conversion, thus, is an acceptable compromise in order to save the building, mindful that retaining original use is a primary aim of modern conservation philosophy only where that use can be sustained. The method of conversion includes the removal of non-original additions to the barn and the repair and renovation of its enclosing fabric, including urgently needed works to the roof and walls. Removal of non-original render will enhance the appearance of a building which, as outlined earlier, possesses very limited aesthetic value. This will be beneficial both to the barn and also the setting of the neighbouring grade II* listed building. The render removal

and associated repairs will conserve the physical wellbeing of the building, allowing it to breathe and eliminating problems with moisture ingress/retention and decay. Herein the change to domestic use is beneficial in that it elevates the status of use to a level where decay and deterioration processes need to be arrested in order to sustain safe and healthy human life.

4.3.2 *The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring (NPPF)*

Renovation and conversion of the barn will help bring to the fore what is currently a somewhat neglected and unattractive historic building. Past changes, including most significantly the application of cement render, have somewhat obscured the true historic nature of the building and the proposals seek to re-assert the building's character thus facilitating the beneficial outcomes outlined within the policy driver. In essence the historic building will once more assert a positive visual impact on the local environment, including the setting of the adjacent listed building, and once more possess an economically viable and sustainable use.

4.3.3 *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (NPPF)*

The design of the conversion carefully targets non-original elements of the building which detract from its aesthetic value and also, in the case of the applied render, the physical well-being of the solid wall structures which are suffering on account of the impermeability of the applied material. If carried out appropriately, removal of the render will help ensure the breathability of the stone enclosing walls through repointing and repair with lime mortar. In respect to other interventions, the proposals include minor changes to those elevations most visible from the public realm, namely the front and south, with more extensive change to the more private facing rear (western) elevation and northern gable. The minor interventions, such as new window and rooflight insertions, are necessary to allow interior illumination of spaces not previously needing high levels of daylight. They have been designed as subtle yet interpretable modern interventions thereby conserving the agricultural character of the building which, particularly to the principal front elevation, will still display the common physical characteristics of the local barn vernacular. This is important both in terms of conserving the evidential and aesthetic values of the building and conserving the historical setting of the neighbouring listed building.

The more radical interventions to the rear involve replacement of a dilapidated brick shippon addition which possesses no intrinsic heritage value. The replacement building will utilise a palette of materials that harmonise with the original stone and slate covered barn and introduce subtle yet distinct contemporary elements of design most specifically in respect to the vertical projection of the central lean-to roof with narrow perimeter eaves level windows. This allows natural light into the building whilst retaining the visual characteristics of a lean-to slated roof, thereby echoing the agricultural nature of the structure being replaced. It is a clever solution which demonstrates the sensitive integration of new with old. The large gable window to the northern elevation occupies a position currently obscured by a lean-to addition which will be demolished. The large window replicates the outline of the gable and will be clearly read as a modern intervention on a wall which at present is mostly obscured. Whereas opening up of the original three doors to this elevation was an option, ground floor levels at this end of the building need raising to avoid the need for underpinning, thereby cutting across the door levels. The large window also provides an opportunity to view the interior of the barn from outside and appreciate the open nature of this end of the building, where conservation of the full height space is main theme of the interior design.

In terms of the New Hall's setting, the proposals represent a positive enhancement of what currently exists, with changes which will not subvert the overall agricultural character of the barn. This enhancement is a key benefit of the scheme.

4.3.4 *Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place (NPPF)*

The barn as it currently exists asserts a negative impact upon the visual qualities of the place. Through the application of cement render and other ad-hoc changes, it is no longer read externally as a historic building and therefore fails to contribute positively to the historical and evidential values of the neighbouring listed building. The proposals will seek to promote the historic characteristics of the building whilst bringing a new sustainable use. This will reverse the negative impacts referred to above.

4.3.5 *NPPF Policy*

Policy 132 of the NPPF states:

"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation."

The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional”*

The proposals have no physical impact upon the neighbouring listed building but do have the potential to play a role in establishing the setting of New Hall. As stated within policy 132, it is important to note that the setting of a listed building contributes to its significance and therefore should be conserved. The proposals seek to ensure the conservation of New Hall’s setting by bringing the barn back into active use in a manner which retains the overall agricultural character of the building. In this regard it should be stressed that at present the barn is asserting a negative aesthetic contribution to the setting of the listed building, albeit the distance between the two buildings and tree coverage limits the extent of visual impact. In truth shared views of both buildings are minimal and generally limited to a view when heading north up Blackburn Road as shown figure in 25. It is for this reason that the proposed changes to the visible eastern and southern elevations as shown in figure 25 are minimal in nature.

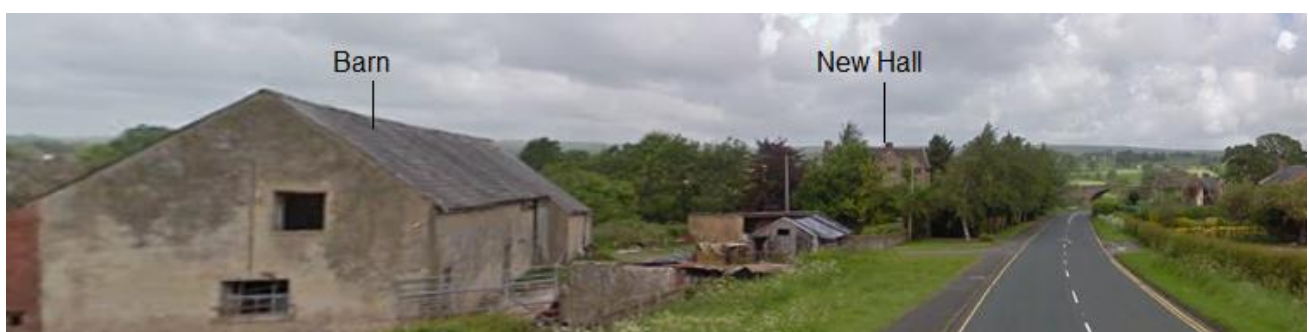


Figure 25. Shared views of barn and New Hall from the south

As discussed earlier, the conversion is a compromise which will result in the loss of some evidential and historic value. But the compromise is acceptable since it secures active use of the building and thereby eliminates the risk of loss and conserves the barn’s own intrinsic significance. This represents the major justification for the

proposed changes as required by policy 132, mindful that enhancement of the setting of the listed building is also achieved. In all respects the policy appears satisfied.

5.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

This Heritage Statement provides an overview of a design process guided by a detailed understanding of heritage significance and the need to conserve and where possible enhance significance through the intelligent management of change. The designers of the proposed scheme have ensured that, through an initial analysis of extant heritage values, their design choices respect the context of the place and accord with law and policy.

New Hall Barn is an obsolete building in need of a new use. It is situated adjacent to the grade II* listed C17th New Hall and forms part of that building's setting, albeit the barn is a much later addition built when the Hall converted to farming in the late C18th. The barn is not itself listed, but possesses heritage values worthy of conservation.

Proposals to convert the barn to residential use secure a sustainable future for the building. They also succeed in conserving and enhancing the setting of New Hall, whilst simultaneously conserving and enhancing the heritage values of the barn. This is achieved by improving the visual appearance of the barn through the removal of render applied to enclosing stone walls, the demolition of unsightly additions and ancillary buildings and the building of a replacement extension to the rear of the barn which demonstrates what can be achieved through intelligent and sensitive modern intervention. Careful repair and renovation of the building will also reverse the deterioration caused by previous inappropriate interventions and the inevitable decline associated with disuse.

In essence the proposals will enhance the setting of the grade II* listed building by reversing the negative visual impact currently asserted by the vacant barn. When viewed from the public realm the barn will remain clearly interpretable as a historic agricultural building, therein conserving the historical usage relationship with the neighbouring listed building. In all respects this satisfies the requirements of planning law and policy aimed at conserving the historic built environment.