



Parsonage Farm
Church Street
Ribchester

Barn Conversions

DESIGN & ACCESS
STATEMENT



June 2023

1 INTRODUCTION

PGB Architectural Services are retained by Mr & Mrs Wright ('the applicant') to prepare drawings and documents sufficient for a planning application for:

- The demolition of 20th Century farm buildings, and brick lean-to to the existing brick and block-built barn – demolitions identified in yellow on the image below.
- Conversion of remaining barn into 2No Dwellings
- Retention of agricultural outbuilding for residential annexe
- Provision of detached double garages
- Provision of 2No passing places along the farm track



Parsonage Farm is at the end of a long farm track off Church Street Ribchester.

During the pre-app process it has been acknowledged that the building has heritage significance for the township of Ribchester and is recognised as the site of a former tithe barn and is therefore worthy of retention. In particular the interior of the original handmade brick-built barn is the most interesting. Unusually, for Lancashire, this comprises triangular brick piers supporting king post trusses. The original barn appears to have had various incarnations – see Heritage Report.



Externally the barn has previously been rendered with pebble dash. This was due to the poor condition of the outer face of the handmade bricks. A sample area of render has proved difficult to remove and damaging to the original bricks.

There is foundation evidence to demonstrate that the barn probably had a further two bays to the right of the cart door entry. To the rear further foundation evidence illustrates a former shippon attached to the rear of the barn – highlighted in red below and further identified on the existing drawings.



The remainder of this statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2 - Site Description
- Section 3 - Access
- Section 4 – Design External
- Section 5 – Design Internal
- Section 6 – Landscaping

- Section 7 – Conclusion

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The property comprises the remains of a redundant farm including a brick-built and pebble dashed barn and 20th century steel framed agricultural buildings as well as a single storey modern bull pens and feed store building clad in split faced coursed stone.

The 20th Century Farmhouse to the North is now an independently owned property and separated from the farm. The original farmhouse was Parsonage Cottage 100m down the track to the North of the farm.

The remainder of the site is concrete hard-standing and steel framed agricultural buildings. The site has a fall from North-West to South-East varying from approx. 1.5m to 2.5m

The intention is to retain the brick-built barn, the stone clad outbuilding, and the two storey rendered block-work milking parlour and provide two new-build double garages with plant room.

3 ACCESS

The site is accessed from Church Street along a private road past the children's play area and football fields turning into a single-track road up to the farm and 3 other properties.

The conversion of the barn into two residential properties includes one with full accessibility for the applicants' purposes. This includes level access, a platform lift and an assisted accessible toilet and shower area.

4 DESIGN EXTERNAL

Analysis of the retained elements of the barn (refer to the Heritage Statement (HS) for further detail) recognises the brick-built barn with triangular piers as being unusual for Lancashire. There are reclaimed timbers and handmade bricks which pre-date the current building and may be from an historic tithe barn on the same site. The tithe barn has local significance and has been included in a study by Ribchester Historic Society. The proposed design therefore puts greater emphasis on the recognition of the internal features, where externally the original identity of the barn is destroyed by render and brick cladding, its about retaining the massing and simplicity of the original built form and cladding with hand made bricks to re-emphasise it's original status.

Externally the North-East elevation has been pebble dashed (we are informed by a previous owner that this was done many years ago because the bricks where in such a poor state of repair). The cement render is very damaging to the hand made bricks. The gable to the South-East has been clad in an Accrington brick. The existing brick walls to the South-West Elevation, currently concealed by the 20th century portal framed sheds, are littered with blocked up or adapted/new openings, particularly at ground level. The HS refers to these as openings for access to the previously demolished shippon, probably for feed.

The Northwest elevation is believed to have had two further bays (discussed in the HS). Currently it comprises a 'doctored' truss over a concrete block wall with metal cladding above. The 2-storey concrete block replacement (former milking parlour) for the 'lost bays' has a mono pitched asbestos clad roof and single storey lean-to. The massing of the two storey milking parlour emulates that of the lost bays. The existing cart door opening, with

cat-slide roof projection over is sited next to this. The proposed design looks to remove the lean-to and retain the two storey milking parlour as a mass which reflects the 'lost bays' helping to re-balance the cart door opening within the overall length of the former barn.

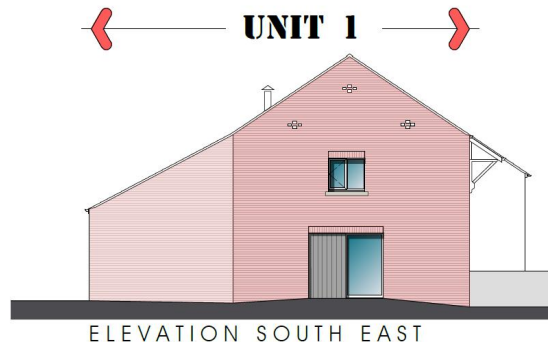
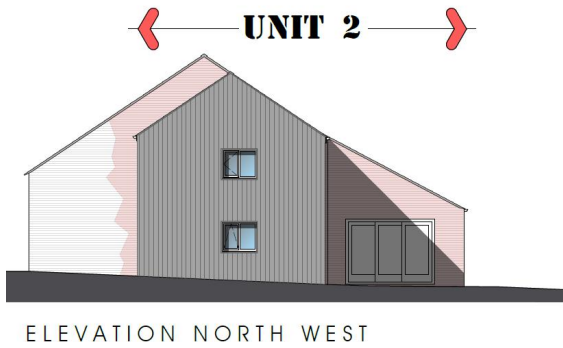
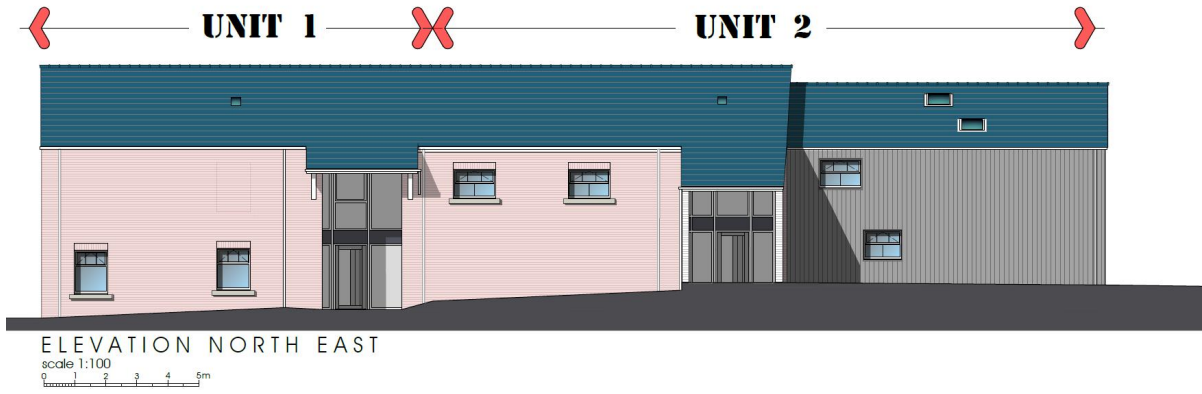
A 19th century lean-to extension to the Northeast along with pebble dashed render conceal another former cart door opening which again, if reinstated, would balance this elevation up. There is no evidence of a former cat-slide roof over this door yet. But the proposal adds a cat-slide roof in a slightly different form to aid the balance of this building.

No new openings are proposed. All openings are existing/reopened.

The pebble dashed rendered North-East Elevation is particularly out of keeping. It is also damaging to the original fabric by creating an impermeable layer restricting the breathability of the wall and encouraging rising damp. However, removal to expose the original brick in a suitable form would be impossible without further damage to the handmade bricks. It is proposed to 'scabble' off as much of the render off as possible to improve permeability. This will clearly not be a suitable surface to then act as a rain-screen or to be visually acceptable. It has therefore been felt, by the design and heritage team, that it would be better to retain the internal features than hide them with the normal insulated blockwork lining. This would have the effect of losing the triangular brick piers, the timber wall plates for the king post trusses, and the handmade bricks. Doing an 'as close to matching' brick cladding with breathable insulation in the cavity seems the best solution. This returns the barn to its original character without loss of form and ensures the internal heritage can be retained. The alternative is to re-render but doing this will mean it will be difficult to ensure breath-ability for the handmade bricks and provide adequate thermal insulation.

The retained two storey milking parlour emulates the 'lost bays' as a retained mass. Materials are purposely contrasted by using a burnt timber cladding over external insulation to emphasise this later element of the farm.

In any barn conversion it is important to maintain the double height space to aid the understanding of its original purposes. This impacts on the available floor area. The cat-slide extension to the rear helps to compensate for this loss of floor space. It also enables the retention of as much of the original brickwork on the South-West Elevation as possible. There is clear evidence that a shippon once existed at the rear of the barn. The depth of the proposed rear extension therefore uses the depth of the former shippon as a template for the design which is typical in form and mass of many agricultural buildings of this period.

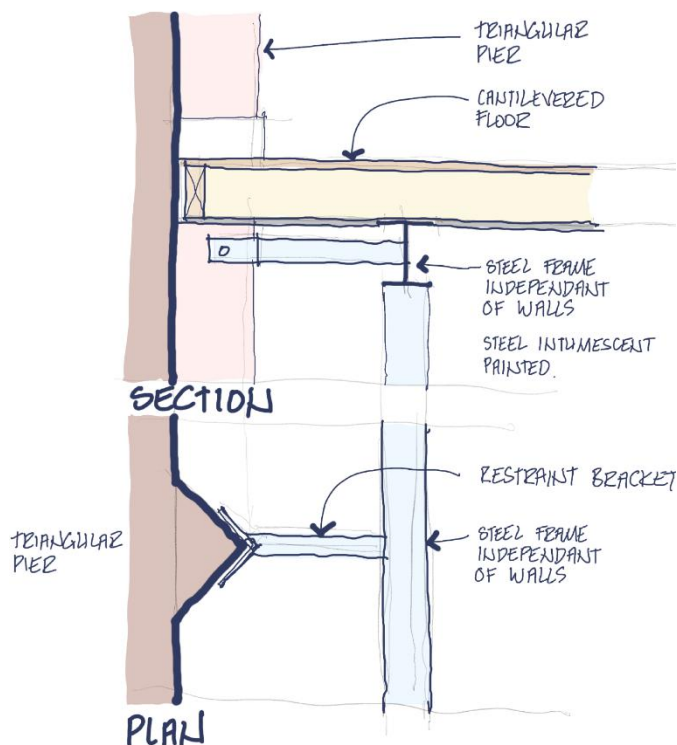


5 DESIGN INTERNAL

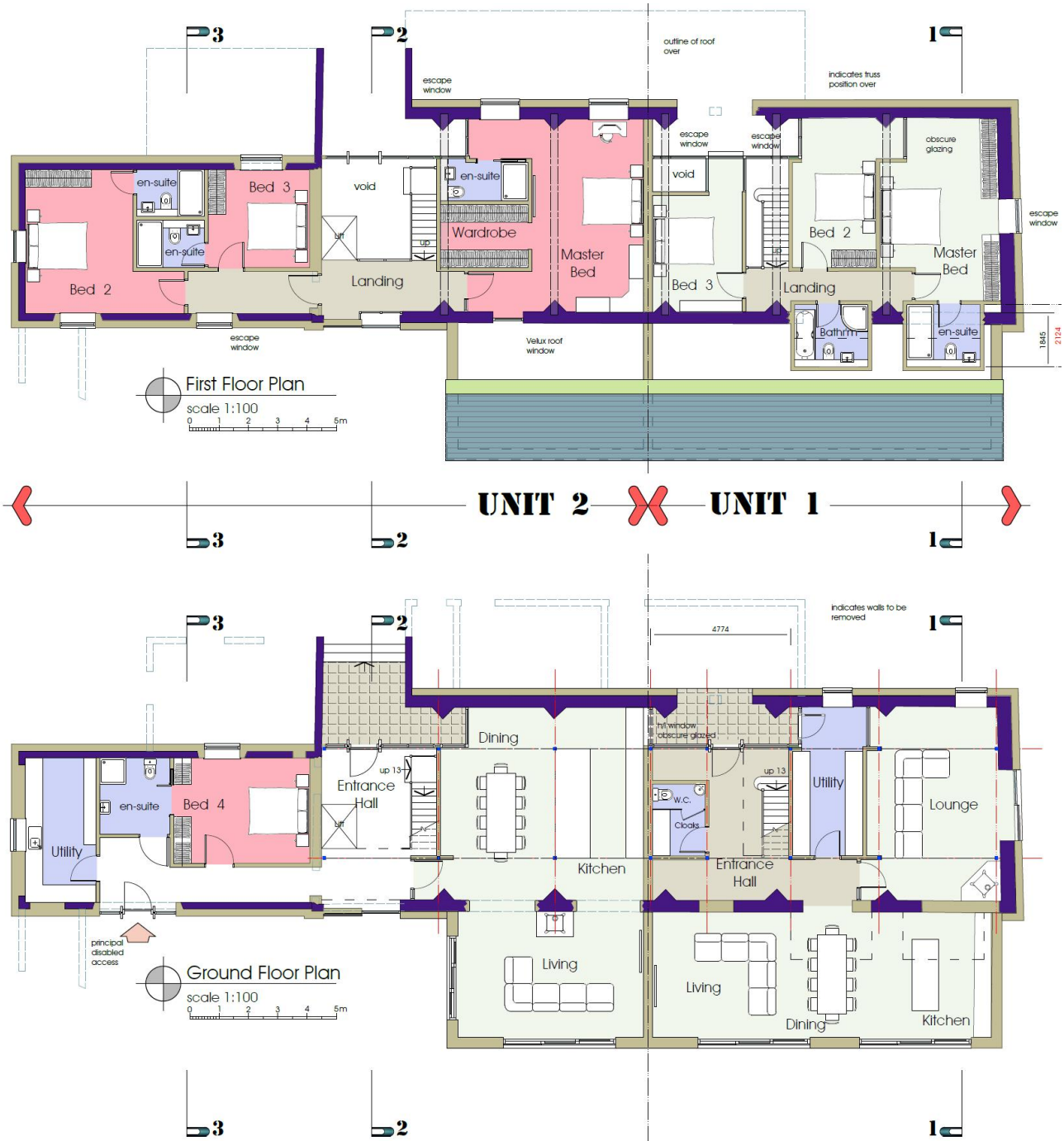
The internal layout has been designed to emphasize the triangular piers, leave the brickwork exposed (cleaned and pointed with lime mortar), retain double height spaces where possible and; leave the trusses and existing rafters exposed (The whole existing first floor has vaulted ceilings). Like the external insulation and brick cladding the roof will be insulated and clad from above. This, like the walls, is a very slight increase in height and width (by the depth of insulation) but means the interior retains all its original heritage in a far greater way than many modern barn conversions do. I.e. the existing original rafters will be retained and visible.

The triangular piers are further emphasised by avoiding contact with internal walls and installation of internal glazed panels to maintain a view of as many of the piers as possible. Recessed entrances at the cart door openings help with this feature but also allow escape windows without the need to introduce new openings into the external walls.

Where internal block-work linings would normally carry the first floor; this is solved by the installation of a steel frame (left exposed where possible) which will only contact the piers (to provide stability) at first floor level (NOTE the external brick cladding will also help to stabilise the existing handmade brick external walls).



The original rear elevation (South-West) of the barn is littered with adhoc openings of all shapes and sizes. Many of these are filled in and have rotting timber lintels. The internal design removes some of these structurally challenged openings but also tries to retain much of the original wall and all the triangular piers. Some wall panels are re-built to help with this and openings at first floor are limited to the contemporary en-suite and bathroom pods that project through existing large exposed hand made brick openings.



6 LANDSCAPING

Externally the front of the property will remain hard surfaced to facilitate the movement of vehicles. The existing dry stone boundary walls will be retained. The property ownership will be fenced in timber post and rails whilst the rear party boundary will be solid, for privacy, as far as the residential curtilage.

All remaining hard-standing is to be removed. This area and the areas of those buildings identified above for demolition will be returned to soft landscaping. Residential curtilage has been identified on the plans with areas beyond fenced off and designated for agricultural purposes..

A double garage is provided for each property and are sited within the footprint of the

demolished 20th Century Buildings. These will be clad in burnt timber to match that on the barn conversion with slates roofs.

The former bull housing is to be converted into an Annexe with only one new opening on the gable created in the style of an agricultural loading bay. Openings on the rear will have their cills lowered to ensure an escape window and adequate lighting.

7 CONCLUSIONS

PGB Architectural Services is retained by the applicant to consider this building of historic and architectural merit. The purpose of this design has been to respect the unusual interior of the original property but also to re-create a setting in form, scale and location which befits its original status. We believe this statement has demonstrated how we have achieved this and how a ram shackle series of ad hoc extensions and modifications over many generations can be sympathetically returned to a status which respects the historic nature and simple form of the original barn.

The applicant and future occupier is an exceptional local builder. This building could not have a better guardian to take it forwards for future generations.