

Conversion of Field Barn to create dwelling

Alder House Farm
Holden Lane
Bolton-by-Bowland
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 4LZ



Heritage Statement

August 2025

Rev:



Heritage Statement

In Respect of

Alder House Farm, Holden Lane, Bolton by Bowland, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 4LZ

For

C. McDermott

Drawing no. D(20)201

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By: RH Checked: LM



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1.0 Introduction and Location

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Trail Architects on behalf of our client as part of the application for Planning and Listed Building Consent for the conversion of the Field Barn to create dwelling at Alder House Farm within the Bolton by Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

This statement provides a description of the site and outlines the proposed adaptive reuse of the unused existing stone barn, converting it into a dwelling. The proposal seek to revive this cluster of unused barns and outbuildings to preserve their presence in the wider landscape whilst conserving the setting of the nearby listed Farmhouse through sensitive interventions that ensure its continued use and relevance as well as its compliance within the context of the Local Development Plan and relevant policies. Allowing these disused buildings to regain a purpose and be occupied, regularly maintained and heated through subtle interventions would help preserve their historical presence in the landscape and prevent dereliction like so many other building clusters in the surrounding area. This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings and accompanying information.

Alder House Farm consists of a series of buildings of varying levels of disrepair located together within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The farm sits just under 2 miles outside the conservation village of Bolton-by-Bowland and approximately 8 miles from the town of Clitheroe. The site is accessed via an existing farm track with an access gate off Tinkler's Lane to the east which approaches the main listed farmhouse and adjacent barns and outbuildings. The existing stone structures are surrounded by a series of fields, agricultural buildings and mature trees. The area is characterised by the wider pastoral Ribble Valley and wooded cloughs of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. To the southwest, the farmland steeply slopes through a densely wooded area of mature trees to the nearby Holden Clough which provides a natural visual screening to the nearby public roads and walkways.

Application Site Area: 6.63Ha



Aerial of Location

2.0 Existing Site and Buildings



Obscured views of the site from within the Alder House Farm and the public realm

Trail Architects were engaged to research and analyse the existing stone barn on site to better understand its history, assess its existing condition, and explore its potential for adaptive reuse. This initial analysis was intended to guide the consideration of appropriate interventions for the ongoing use of the barn, ensuring that important heritage elements were protected and conserved, while allowing for a development to suit modern functionality and improve future viability.

An initial investigative exercise has been undertaken to trace the history and rural development of the cluster of buildings at Alder House Farm through historical records and maps, with assistance from both the Lancashire and West Yorkshire Archives and with particular thanks to the local Slaidburn Archives. The farm and surrounding area were within West Yorkshire before the boundary changes in 1974 and was occupied most recently by the same family from 1928 until its recent sale. The series of buildings have been recorded under several names over the last few hundred years. From dates taken from parish records that highlight the leasing of various portions of grazing and pasture land to tenants, a time line from the first entries in 1623 can be traced, however with help from an archaeology consultants further earlier references have been found as far back as 1616 in the Bradford Archives relating to Alderhouse. The first O.S map extracts dating from the 1840s reinforce these records as it shows the original farmhouse and barn as 'Draw Well'. This then has facilitated a systematic tracing of the evolution of the farm, the addition and omission of barns and access routes over time until arriving at the series of buildings evidenced on the site today.



Original Farm House approx 1600s



1840-1880 Ordnance Survey Map
Addition of porch to main house, and Main Barn
(assumed 1821)



1885-1900 Ordnance Survey Map
Addition of new Field Barns and Cart House, and
rear extension of Main Barn



1888-1913 Ordnance Survey Map
Removal of one field barn and addition of pig sty
to Main Barn



1937-1961 Ordnance Survey Map



Present Day
Addition of new larger agricultural shed

Figure Ground Evolution

Key:

- - Alder House Farm House
- - Main Barn
- - Cart House
- - Field Barn
- - Agricultural Building
- - Portal Steel Frame Barn

From the edge of the western extent of the ownership boundary, the topography of Alder House Wood drops down towards the nearby Beck, which meanders into a series of streams. Along the river, there is evidence of stone quarrying, suggesting that materials used for the construction and maintenance of the farmhouse and the adjacent barns were sourced from this location. It is evident that they have shared resources, such as the same local stone source, proving the hypothesis that this series of buildings were inherently linked. Together, the existing stone structures at Alder House Farm complement one another, forming part of a unified agricultural landscape, and create a cohesive heritage asset.

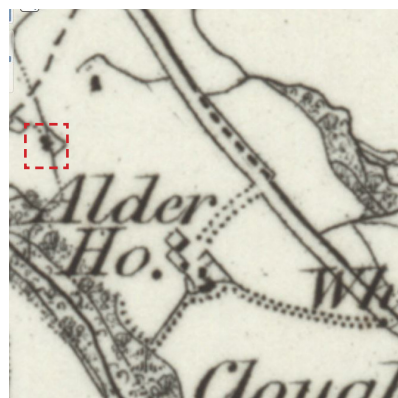


Images of stone quarry evidence at the river

The 'Field Barn' is located to the north of Alder House Farm and first appears on the 1885 - 1900 OS map of the area. The barn is of a traditional stone construction with a slate roof. The building sits nestled within the prevailing topography, with a large barn door accessing its upper level from the brow of the hill, and three smaller doors accessing its ground floor at lower level further down the hill. We note that two of the lintels above these doors are of a more formal ecclesiastical style, and as such may have been reused from an older more high-profile building in the area. This would suggest an element of care and consideration has taken place in its construction so may have historically had more of a significant relationship with the Farmhouse than may appear. The barn's elevated location allows to look across to Pendle Hill as well as down towards the rest of the Alder House Farm development.

There were periods of adaptation and repair over the years, some of which have negatively impacted the original materials and features. The existing barn has been vacant for an extended period of time and has started to fall in disrepair. The overall weather-tightness of the building has also been compromised, which has negatively impacted the original materials and features. Recognising these challenges, Trail Architects commissioned comprehensive building surveys, including a structural condition report by conservation engineers, to develop a well-informed strategy for the repair and reuse of the stone barn, ensuring its historical character is preserved while adapting it for sustainable new uses with as minimal intervention as possible.

The established farmstead pattern has been respected and maintained, with the relationships between the Field Barn, the Farmhouse, and the ancillary buildings subtly formalised in a manner that reinforces their legibility. The surrounding land will continue to remain in agricultural use, maintaining the rural setting and traditional character of the site. The enclosed proposals outline what we trust is a well-considered approach to an adaptive repair with as minimal an impact on the significance of the main heritage asset and its setting as possible whilst allowing the building to be conserved successfully as a functioning family home.



1885- 1900



Field Barn Images

3.0 Statutory Legislation, Local Planning Policy

Below is a series of relevant local policy extracts from the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which have been referred to in the development of the proposal's strategy to ensure the careful consideration for the conversion of the Field Barn at Alder House Farm. Each excerpt has been adapted to omit sections deemed less relevant to the current proposal.

Key Statements EN5: Heritage Assets

There will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings. The Historic Environment and its Heritage Assets and their settings will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance for their heritage value; their important contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place; and to wider social, cultural and environmental benefits.

This will be achieved through:

- Recognising that the best way of ensuring the long term protection of heritage assets is to ensure a viable use that optimises opportunities for sustaining and enhancing its significance.
- Considering any development proposals which may impact on a heritage asset or their setting through seeking benefits that conserve and enhance their significance and avoids any substantial harm to the heritage asset.
- Requiring all development proposals to make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness/sense of place.

Policy DMG1: General Considerations

In determining planning applications, all development must comply with the following six initiatives:

Design

1. Use sustainable construction techniques where possible and provide evidence that energy efficiency, as described within policy DMES, has been incorporated into schemes where possible. 2. The code for sustainable homes and lifetime homes, or any subsequent nationally recognised equivalent standards, should be incorporated into schemes.

Access

Consider the protection and enhancement of public rights of way and access.

Amenity

Consider air quality and mitigate adverse impacts where possible.

Environment

1. Consider the environmental implications such as SSSIS, County Heritage Sites, local nature reserves, biodiversity action plan (BAP) habitats and species, special areas of conservation and special protected areas, protected species, green corridors and other sites of nature conservation.

2. With regards to possible effects upon the natural environment, the council propose that the principles of the mitigation hierarchy be followed. This gives sequential preference to the following:

1) Enhance the environment 2) Avoid the impact 3) Minimise the impact 4) Restore the damage 5) Compensate for the damage 6) Offset the damage

3. All development must protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings.

1. Be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 building in context principles (from the Cabe/English Heritage Building in Context Toolkit)

2. Be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.

3. Consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. Particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the affects of development on existing amenities.

Infrastructure

1. Have regard to the availability to key infrastructure with capacity. Where key infrastructure with capacity is not available it may be necessary to phase development to allow infrastructure enhancements to take place.
2. Consider the potential impact on social infrastructure provision.

Other

1. Not prejudice future development which would provide significant environmental and amenity improvements.

This policy helps deliver the vision for the area and gives an overarching series of considerations that the council will have regard to in achieving quality development.

Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets

In considering development proposals the council will make a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings.

Listed buildings and other buildings of significant heritage interest alterations or extensions to listed buildings or buildings of local heritage interest, or development proposals on sites within their setting which cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset will not be supported. Any proposals involving the demolition or loss of important historic fabric from listed buildings will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist.

Proposals should also give adequate consideration of how the public understanding and appreciation of such sites could be improved.

In line with NPPF, Ribble Valley aims to seek positive improvements in the quality of the historic environment through the following:

- A) Monitoring heritage assets at risk and;
 - i) Supporting development/re-use proposals consistent with their conservation; core strategy adoption version
 - ii) Considering use of legal powers (building preservation notices, urgent works notices) to ensure the proper preservation of listed buildings and buildings within the conservation areas.
- B) Supporting redevelopment proposals which better reveal the significance of heritage assets or their settings.
- C) Production of design guidance.
- D) Keeping conservation area management guidance under review.
- E) Use of legal enforcement powers to address unauthorised works where it is expedient to do so.
- F) Assess the significance and opportunities for enhancement of non designated heritage assets through the development management process.

The protection of heritage assets is recognised in national policy and makes a significant contribution to the character and inherent qualities of the borough. It is important to provide clear guidance on the treatment of these assets through the development management process.

Policy DMH3: Dwellings in The Open Countryside and AONB

10.20 Within areas defined as open countryside or AONB on the proposals map, residential development will be limited to:

The protection of the open countryside and designated landscape areas from sporadic or visually harmful development is seen as a high priority by the council and is necessary to deliver both sustainable patterns of development and the overarching core strategy vision.

Policy DMH4: The conversion of barns and other buildings to dwellings

Planning permission will be granted for the conversion of buildings to dwellings where:

1. The building is not isolated in the landscape is within a defined settlement or forms part of an already group of buildings, and
2. There needs be no unnecessary expenditure by public authorities and utilities on the provision of infrastructure, and
3. There would be no materially damaging effect on the landscape qualities of the area or harm to nature conservations interests, and
4. There would be no detrimental effect on the rural economy.
5. The proposals are consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the area.
6. That any existing nature conservation aspects of the existing structure are properly surveyed and where judged to be significant preserved or, if this is not possible, then any loss adequately mitigated.

The building to be converted must:

1. be structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for extensive building or major alternation, which would adversely affect the character or appearance of the building. The council will require a structural survey to be submitted with all planning application of this nature. this should include plans of any rebuilding that is proposed;
2. be of a sufficient size to provide necessary living accommodation without the need for further extensions which would harm the character or appearance of the building, and
3. the character of the building and its materials are appropriate to its surroundings and the building and its materials are worthy of retention because of its intrinsic interest or potential or its contribution to its setting, and
4. the building has a genuine history of use for agriculture or another rural enterprise

Context

All development, but particularly in the Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area, must respond to its immediate environment, its "context", in terms of scale, density, form, materials and detailing. Scale is the combination of a building's height and bulk when related to its surroundings. The scale of any development should respect the surrounding development.

4.0 Schedule of Works

The proposed schedule of works for the adaptive reuse and repair of the Field Barn has been informed by a comprehensive structural report. These works aim to address identified issues and restore the building without extensive rebuilding while preserving its historical fabric while preparing them for future use.

Repointing

Removal of cementitious mortar and replacement with lime mortar to improve breathability and prevent further stone deterioration.

Repair of Damaged/Rotten Windows

Original windows will be repaired where feasible. Rotten or irreparable elements will be replaced with materials matching the existing profile and character.

Reinstating Buildings Weathertightness and Allowing Appropriate Time to Dry Out

Roof will be repaired with salvaged or new materials where needed, and rainwater goods will be replaced to ensure effective water management.

Roof Repair

Damaged or rotten softwood rafters and purlins will be replaced. Roof slates will be repaired and reinstalled where possible. New lead flashings and rainwater goods to be installed to protect against future water ingress.

Repair of External Walls

Any cracked walls will be repaired to further stabilise the structures.

Proposed Ground Regrading

Preventative works are proposed to regrade the ground and conceal external retaining walls on the North-West and South-East elevations. The earth will be kept away from the building, ensuring that the ground level lies 150mm below the finished floor level to prevent the ingress of rising damp.

Repair Floor Joists

Decayed timber joists will be treated or replaced with DPM-protected joists to ensure stability and longevity.

Minor Internal Layout Alterations

The building conversion will preserve the character and appearance of the structure without requiring major alterations. Adjustments will be made to create functional spaces while respecting the original layout, in align with Policy DMH4.

Insulating Thermal Envelope to Permit Renewable Incentives

The insulation of the roof and walls will be explored where possible, using breathable materials to align with conservation best practices and allow for renewable energy incentives where it is considered appropriate.



Photos of the building's current condition

5.0 Conversion Strategy

The proposed works are as follows and have been developed in discussions through a pre-application process with Ribble Valley Council.

A measured building survey was instructed to gain a better understanding of the property overall, as well as a structural condition survey by a conservation engineer to better understand the building's overall condition. Through these assessments a further considerations were able to be given to how most sensibly prepare the barn's function and energy efficiency for the future with conservation in mind.

The initial studies show that the Field Barn could be repaired and converted to create liveable spaces without significant alterations to its existing fabric or undermining its heritage features. The stone structure and its proportions lend themselves to be sensitively adapted into a dwelling with minimal intervention and no extent, aligning with Policy DMH4. The conversion will retain the original stone construction and its key architectural features, ensuring the barns maintain their impact on the landscape setting and its specific rural character. The barn's original two-level layout will be preserved, with the living space, kitchen, and dining areas located on the upper floor level and accessed via the main barn door entry. Bedrooms will be positioned on the lower ground level. This approach respects the barn's historic functionality while providing a logical and efficient use of the spaces for modern living.

As part of the conversion, a new private estate road will be created that follows the existing line of a previously used farm track, extending from the Farmhouse. This access route respects the historical layout of the site while providing practical connectivity. A parking area is discreetly cut into the contours of the land to ensure it remains invisible when approaching the barn and also completely hidden from the road and the public realm, preserving the barn's presence in the landscape and maintaining the existing link to the cluster.

The immediate outside space around the barn is currently surrounded by existing stone walls, presumed to have been historically used for livestock, some of which now in disrepair. This area will be repaired and reinstalled to create an enclosed garden area, ensuring this feature remains and is maintained while providing a defined and private outdoor amenity space that complements the dwelling.

The conversion strategy aims to sensitively integrate the Field Barn's conversion into its surroundings while preserving and enhancing the barn's historical and architectural significance.



Field Barn Approach Image



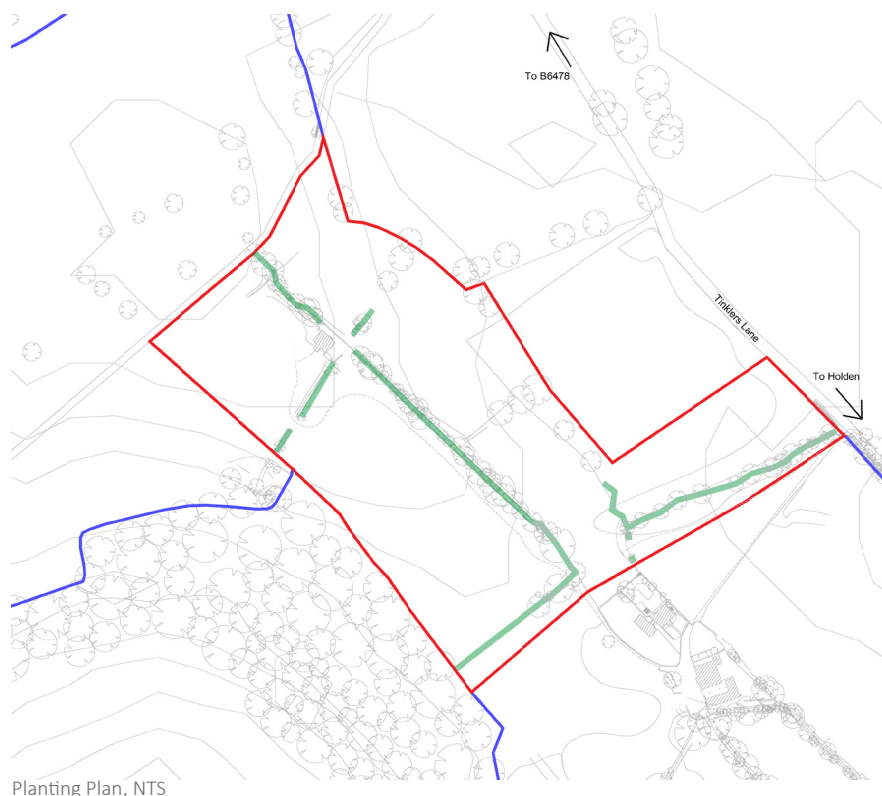
Proposed Visualisation

5.0 Thermal and Planting Enhancements

Alongside a strategy for the essential repairs to the existing building, the project team have explored proposals to reduce carbon emissions and improve the energy efficiency of the historic building, whilst conserving its significance and ensuring it remain a viable place to live. Understanding how the traditional building construction was originally designed to perform was essential in the consideration of the proposal to explore the implication of energy-efficient strategies whilst minimising the risks of condensation or damage to the existing fabric, allowing the building to maintain a level of warmth, improving human comfort and reducing overall energy use.

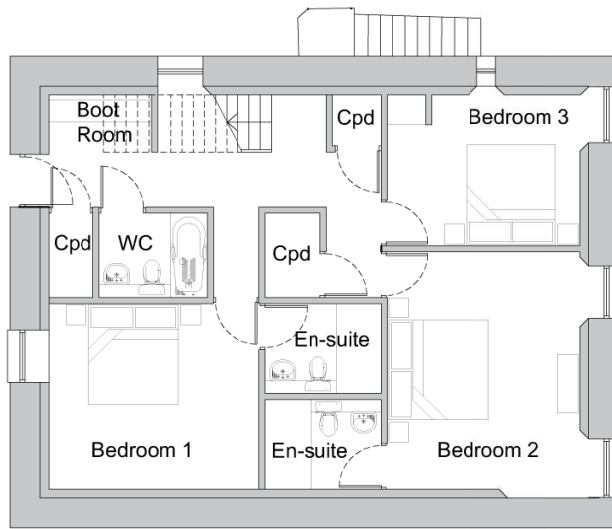
Proposals are being investigated to improve the thermal envelope by insulating the external walls suitable for lining without compromising the proportions of the spaces and the building’s overall heritage character, as well as insulating and lining the existing roof where appropriate. Each insulated lining would be inbound of the structure, creating a continuously ventilated breathable cavity to the existing stonework to ensure the continuous movement of air. Placing the pipework for the heating system outside of the thermal lining and into the new cavity and introducing a steady flow of hot air rising through the cavity would create an efficient air gap that would push the dew point to the outside of the existing stone walls, whilst not compromising their ability to breath through the provision of adequate ventilation. With regards to the upgrades to the thermal linings proposed, the technology around the insulated linings being fully ventilated in heated cavities is a measure that will provide longevity to the building fabric, allowing the building to be more energy efficient and suitable for the needs of an engaged end user.

This application also includes the addition of planting enhancements per the below diagram, adding sensitive additional planting to some of the worn hedgerows where mature trees have previously lined the existing field boundaries, further benefiting the setting of the barn and reducing the wider visual impact.

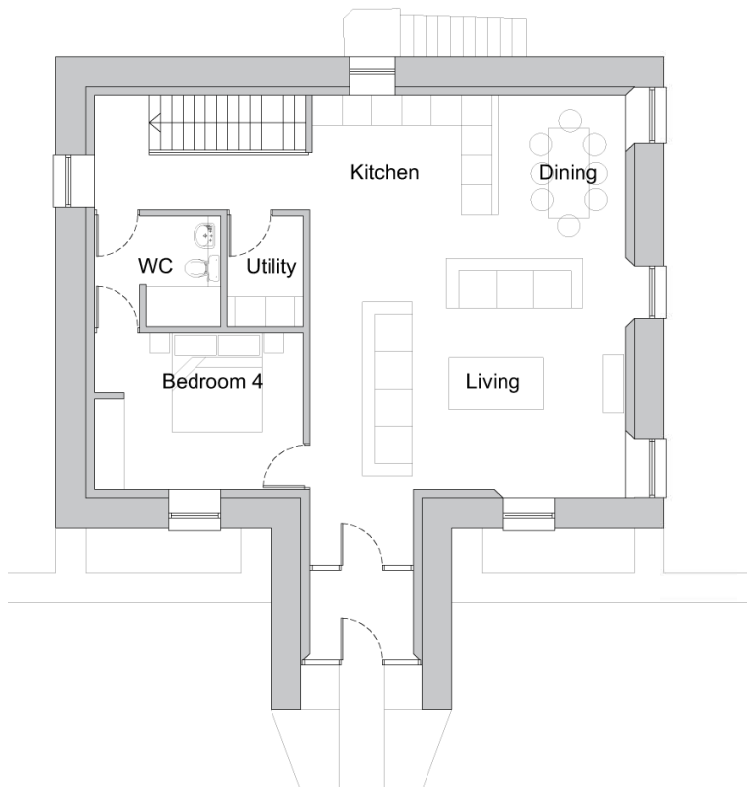


6.0 Proposed Drawings

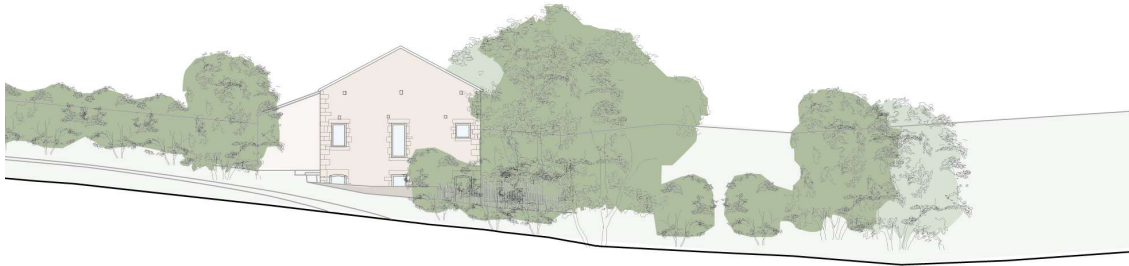
Below are extracts of the proposed drawings that have been submitted as part of this application.



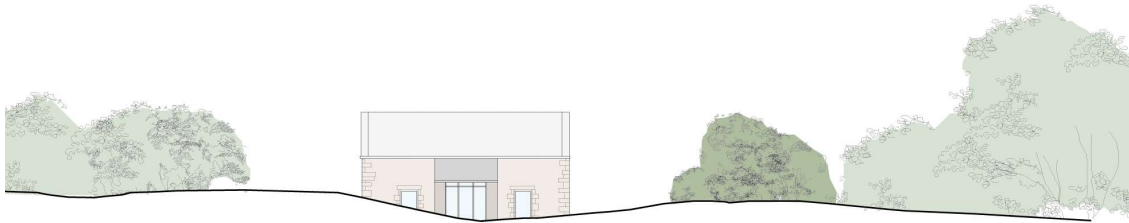
Proposed First Floor



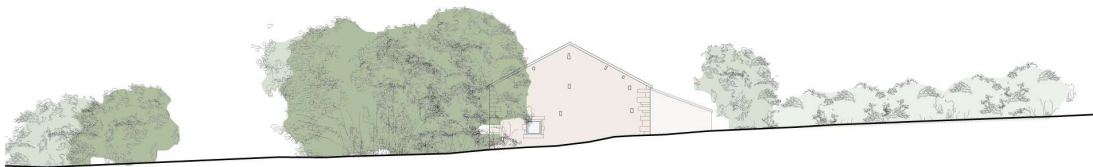
Proposed Ground Floor



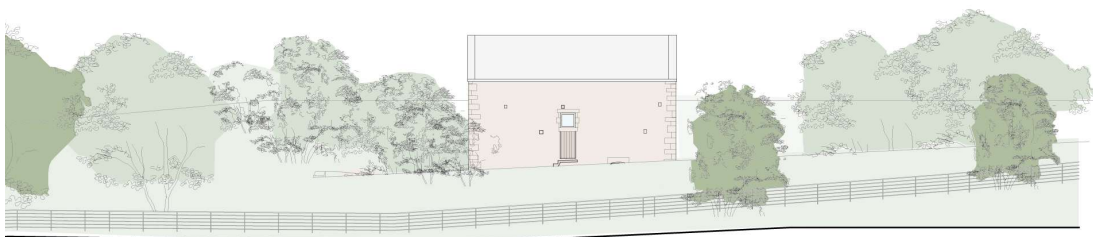
Proposed South Elevation



Proposed West Elevation



Proposed North Elevation



Proposed East Elevation

7.0 Conclusion

This application for the proposed adaptive reuse of the Field Barn at Alder House Farm demonstrates that this historically significant building can be sensitively converted into functional and liveable spaces, ensuring its preservation for future generations. The setting of the cluster of heritage assets has been central to all design decisions, with particular care given to maintaining its character and historical integrity while introducing modern elements to enhance usability, aligned with Policy DMH4.

The overall minor impact on the significance of the enhancement of the barn and surrounding Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is considered to be undertaken in a respectful manner. The principal objective of this application is to adapt and preserve valued heritage assets while securing their functional use within the context of the farmstead. The proposal has been carefully considered in open dialogue and with active input from a variety of industry experts to ensure a considered and respectful approach to the enrichment of the Field Barn.

We remain hopeful that the Ribble LPA can look upon the enhancement favourably as it has been developed to compliment the existing barn to support the future of the farm as a whole.





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