

Design & Access Statement



ERECTION OF A REPLACEMENT FARMHOUSE, CONVERSION OF TWO EXISTING AGRICULTURAL BARNS TO FORM TWO DWELLINGS, AND ERECTION OF TWO NEW DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, PARKING, AND LANDSCAPING

Red House Farm, 39 Main Road, Ratcliffe Culey, Atherstone, Leicestershire CV9 3NY

15/10/2025

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application submitted to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council for the erection of a replacement farmhouse, conversion of two existing agricultural barns to form two dwellings, and erection of two new dwellings with associated access, parking, and landscaping at Red House Farm, 39 Main Street, Ratcliffe Culey, Atherstone, Leicestershire, CV9 3NY.

1.2 The proposal involves the demolition of three existing agricultural buildings, the restoration and conversion of two existing barns, and the construction of three high-quality new-build residential dwellings including the replacement farmhouse which benefits from outline planning consent. The development aims to deliver a sensitively designed and visually cohesive residential scheme that replaces the existing cluster of derelict and deteriorating agricultural structures, currently detracting from the local character, with a scheme that enhances both the site and its surroundings.

1.3 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Portfolio Architects and outlines the design, layout, and access principles of the proposed development, providing an overview of its compliance with local planning policies and design guidance.



Image 1: Site Location Plan

2.0 The Site & Use

2.1 The application site comprises of land at Red House Farm, 39 Main Street, Ratcliffe Culey, located on the northern side of Main Street, directly opposite the junction with Ormes Lane. The site contains a collection of disused farm buildings that some have fallen into a state of disrepair and are now considered visually detrimental to the village's character, particularly when approaching from the northeast along Main Street (see Images 1, 2, and 3). The surrounding context is predominantly residential, featuring a mix of traditional two-storey detached houses and single-storey detached bungalows. An operational public house is located to the south of Main Street, adjacent to the site, contributing to the local village character.



Image 2: Existing Site Google Maps View from Main Road



Image 3: Existing Site Google Maps View from Main Road as you come into the village.



Image 4: Existing Site Google Maps View from Ormes Lane.

2.2 The application site lies outside the defined settlement boundary of Ratcliffe Culey however the site forms part of the established settlement pattern and reads as a natural continuation of the village's built form.

2.3 There are no listed buildings located on the application site or within its immediate setting. Furthermore, the site does not lie within a designated conservation area, nor does it contribute to the setting of any heritage assets. As such, there are no direct or indirect heritage constraints associated with the proposed development.

2.4 As illustrated on the accompanying existing site plan below, the site comprises of a number of agricultural buildings, along with the remnants of a previously demolished farmhouse. This farmhouse benefits from outline planning permission for a replacement dwelling, located fronting Main Road. In addition, and as detailed further within the accompanying Planning Statement, Buildings 3 and 4 benefit from prior approval under Class Q of the General Permitted Development Order for a further three residential dwellings. As such, the site already benefits from planning consent for a total of four residential units.



Image 5: Existing Site Plan. Not to scale.

3.0 Existing Consented Class Q Scheme Review

3.1 The proposed site plan below illustrates the previously approved Class Q scheme. Under this consent:

- **Building 3** — a large, modern agricultural shed of no architectural merit — is retained converted into 2No residential dwellings.
- **Building 4**, a traditional brick-built barn, is also retained and converted into a dwelling.
- **Building 5**, another large agricultural shed of limited architectural value, is proposed for demolition creating a large gap in the existing courtyard.
- **Building 6**, a derelict brick barn with local vernacular character, was excluded from the original scheme and remains outside the scope of the Class Q approvals. This building condition continues to deteriorate and is an eyesore to the village and to the proposed development.
- **The replacement farmhouse** is excluded from the development.

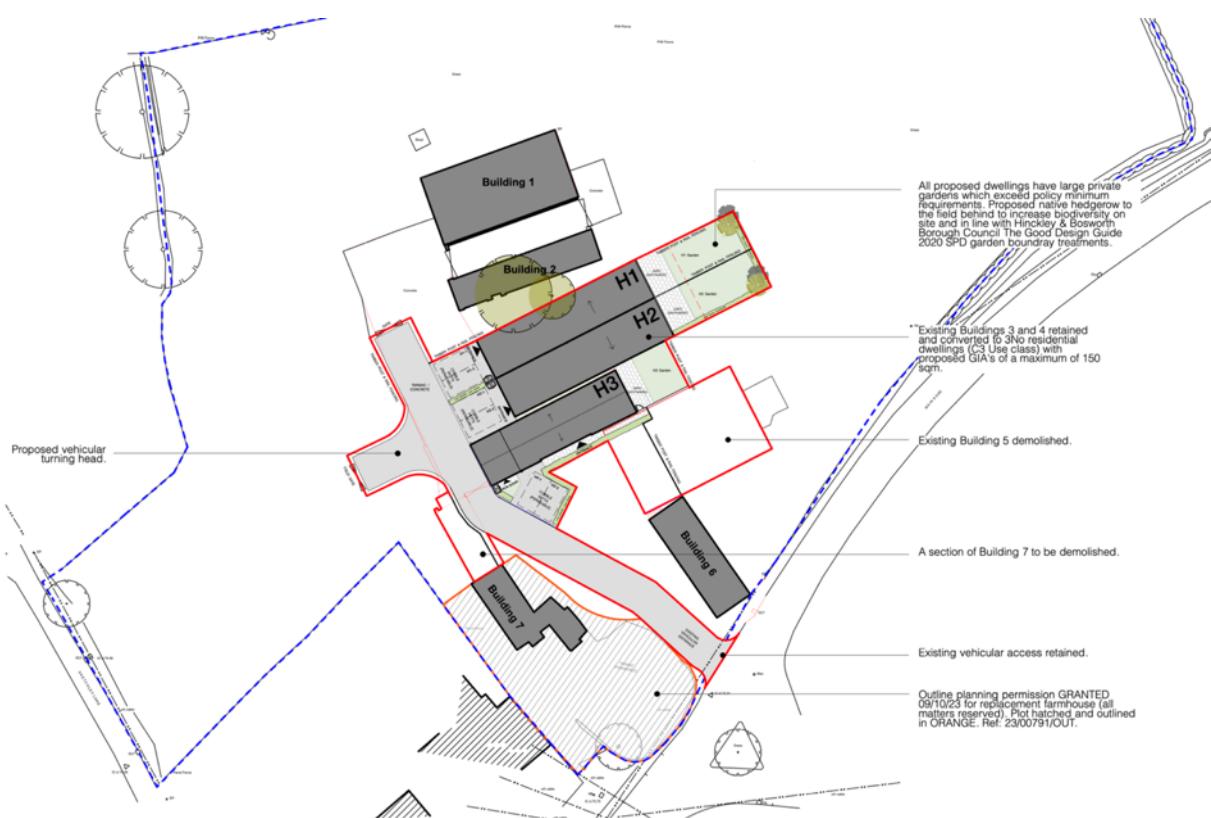


Image 6: Approved Class Q Proposed Site Plan. Not to scale.

3.2 While the consented scheme was developed to be as high-quality as possible within the limitations of Class Q legislation, it remains restricted by the prescriptive parameters of permitted development. Through this full planning application, the applicant seeks to deliver a scheme of higher architectural merit and stronger integration with the character and setting of the village.

3.3 The proposals within this full planning application includes the following enhancements to the Class Q scheme:

- **Demolition of Buildings 3 and 5**, both of which are modern agricultural sheds of no architectural or historic merit, and their replacement with two bespoke, high-quality new-build dwellings designed to reflect local character and rural vernacular;
- **Increased plot and garden sizes**, allowing for more appropriate and spacious residential layouts, no longer constrained by the fixed building footprints of the Class Q scheme;
- **Inclusion of Building 6 within the development**. This derelict brick barn, currently an eyesore, will be repaired and sensitively converted, significantly enhancing the overall appearance and cohesion of the scheme;
- **Integration of the replacement farmhouse** (approved under a separate outline consent) into a unified layout, contributing to a coherent and well-considered overall development;
- **Removal of Class Q design constraints**, allowing for a masterplan that better reflects the agricultural history and architectural language of the site. Notably, the proposal introduces a sensitively designed new-build dwelling between the retained brick barns (Buildings 4 and 6), reinforcing the traditional farmstead layout as can be shown in the historic aerial photo of the site below.



Image 7: Historic aerial photograph of the site showing the farmhouse and courtyard buildings. Date unknown.

3.4 This planning application therefore presents an opportunity to deliver a more contextual, coherent, and higher-quality residential development than that achievable under the limitations of the fallback Class Q approvals. The proposed scheme offers significant improvements in layout, design, and integration with the local character, while also addressing site constraints in a more holistic manner. For a full review of the site's planning history and relevant planning policy considerations, please refer to the accompanying Planning Statement.

4.0 Proposed Site Layout & Built Form

4.1 The proposed site layout and positioning of the five residential properties (C3 use class), as shown on the proposed site plan below, have been carefully considered to reflect and retain the natural flow and arrangement of the existing buildings on site, while referencing the historic massing of the former farmstead. Importantly, the proposals result in an overall reduction in built footprint and volume when compared to the existing agricultural structures, contributing to a more proportionate and visually appropriate form of development.



Image 8: Proposed Site Plan. Not to Scale.

4.2 Buildings 4 and 6 — the existing traditional brick-built barns — are to be retained, carefully restored, and sensitively converted into high-quality residential dwellings. These structures hold clear architectural and historic value, and their retention will help to preserve the site's agricultural character and contribute to a distinctive sense of place.

4.3 Conversely, Buildings 3 and 5 — large modern agricultural sheds of no architectural merit — are proposed to be demolished. These will be replaced with two bespoke new-build dwellings. One of the new homes will be positioned between the retained barns (Buildings 4 and 6), reinstating a courtyard-style arrangement and referencing the historic massing and farmstead layout previously present on the site.

4.4 A further new-build dwelling (replacement farmhouse) is proposed in the southern portion of the site, broadly replicating the footprint, appearance and siting of the former farmhouse that historically fronted onto Main Road.

4.5 All proposed new dwellings have been carefully designed to complement the site's rural context and agricultural heritage, drawing upon local vernacular materials and building forms. The result is a cohesive and respectful redevelopment that reflects the character and evolution of the site while delivering high-quality residential accommodation.

5.0 Access & Parking

5.1 Vehicular access to the site will be taken from the existing vehicular access point off Main Street, which will be retained and upgraded to serve the proposed development. A single access road will extend northwards through the site, providing safe and convenient access to all five dwellings.

5.2 As shown on the proposed site plan, the existing low to mid-height boundary wall along Main Road will be set back to accommodate a new pedestrian footpath. This footpath will connect the development to the existing village footpath network, significantly improving pedestrian safety and permeability.

5.3 A turning head is provided at the northern end of the access road to allow safe and efficient vehicle manoeuvring, including refuse and emergency vehicles. This also provides access to retained Buildings 1 and 2, as well as the retained field entrance beyond the developed area.

5.4 Each dwelling benefits from its own private driveway, providing off-street parking for a minimum of two or three vehicles per unit, in line with local parking standards and ensuring no reliance on on-street parking.

5.5 Pedestrian access to private rear garden areas is provided via side pathways to each dwelling, as indicated on the application drawings. In addition, each property will be equipped with a secure, covered timber cycle store capable of accommodating 3–4 bicycles, thereby promoting and facilitating sustainable modes of transport in line with national and local planning policy.

5.6 The existing public right of way along the southwestern boundary of the site will be retained in its current alignment. It will be sensitively enclosed and protected by a 1.8m high close-boarded timber fence forming the side boundary to House A, ensuring a clear distinction between public and private space while preserving the amenity and function of the public footpath.

6.0 Overall Layout, Scale & Appearance

6.1 The proposed dwellings will provide high-quality living and sleeping accommodation in a range of sizes and layouts, catering to a mix of household types and future occupants. Each dwelling has been carefully designed to ensure compliance with national space standards and to provide a comfortable and functional internal layout with good levels of natural light and outlook.

Dwelling	Bedrooms	No. of bedspaces	GIA (sqm)
House A (replacement farmhouse)	5 Bed	8p	196.8
House B (barn conversion)	3 Bed	6p	126.7
House C (new build)	3 Bed	4p	85.2
House D (barn conversion)	4 Bed	8p	168.4
House E (new build)	4 Bed	8p	133.7

6.2 The proposed mix contributes to the creation of a balanced and sustainable residential community, offering a variety of family homes with ample internal space, generous private gardens, and convenient off-street parking.

6.3 In terms of scale and massing the proposals seek to retain the existing character of the existing layout of buildings however reduce the size of various buildings to be demolished creating a more visually appealing and subservient street scape in keeping with the general principles of a high-quality residential development. As can be seen in the application drawings, demolition of buildings 3 & 5 makes way for two considerably smaller residential dwellings whilst retaining the existing widths of the buildings for each plot. Furthermore, ridge heights of the proposed new build dwellings are lower than the existing agricultural buildings they will be replacing meaning there is no adverse impact on the street scape from the site entrance.

6.4 Reinstatement of the farmhouse to the frontage of the site aims to restore the street scape and bring back the character once lost by this prominent property as you enter the village. This new build dwelling has been designed in accordance with the former farmhouses scale and appearance restoring the original massing of the site.

6.5 Proposed restoration and conversion of existing buildings 4 & 6 into residential dwellings aims to retain some of the existing positive character and appearance of the site creating a lasting link to the developments previous agricultural use. The new build dwellings have been sensitively designed to create balance and cohesion, replacing deteriorated agricultural buildings with little positive visual impact.

6.6 The proposed design of the new build dwellings incorporates similar design features to that of the existing buildings to be retained in order to create cohesion with similar fenestration proposed, feature barn style 'full height' glazed openings and tiled front porches in accordance with rural and local property design.

6.7 The village currently features a mix of traditional and post-war architectural styles, as illustrated in the images below. The proposed development has been carefully designed to integrate seamlessly into this varied streetscape, with a strong emphasis on reflecting the traditional and rural character of the village. Architectural detailing, materials, and building forms have been selected to ensure the new dwellings are sympathetic to the local vernacular while contributing positively to the overall village setting.



Images 9-14: Photos of nearby properties within Ratcliffe Culey.

7.0 Individual Plot Designs

House A - Replacement Farmhouse

7.1 The proposed dwelling occupying the southern frontage of the site is a replacement for the former farmhouse and has been carefully designed to reflect the scale, footprint, and proportions of the original building that once stood in this location (see Image 7). This new home adopts a traditional form and massing, referencing local vernacular architecture while incorporating high-quality detailing and materials that respond sensitively to the site's rural context.

7.2 The ground floor will accommodate a spacious open-plan kitchen, dining, and living area that forms the heart of the home, together with a utility/boot room, WC, and an additional reception room offering flexibility for home working or family use.

7.3 The first floor will provide four well-proportioned bedrooms, including a generous master suite with an en-suite bathroom and dressing area, along with a centrally located family bathroom. A fifth bedroom with an en-suite will be located within the second-floor roof space, providing further flexibility for growing or large families.

7.4 Externally, the dwelling features traditional architectural elements inspired by the former farmhouse, including symmetrical window arrangements, a gabled roof form, and the use of locally appropriate materials. These elements help anchor the home within its village setting, while the internal layout has been designed to deliver a contemporary and functional family environment of high quality.



Image 15: House A Proposed Elevations. Not to Scale.

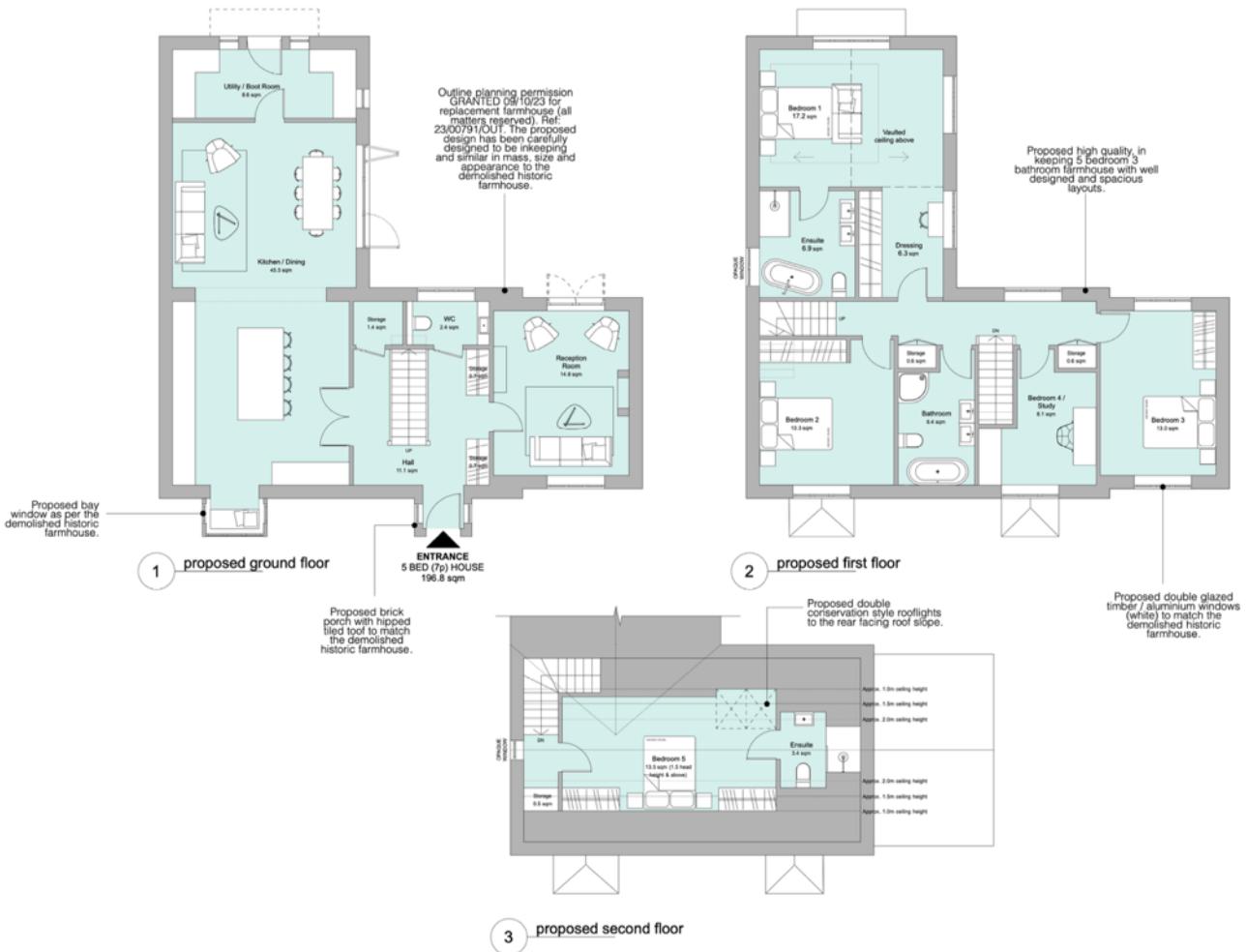


Image 16: House A Proposed Plans. Not to Scale.

House B - Barn Conversion Adjacent to Main Road

7.5 House B comprises an existing agricultural barn located towards the southern frontage of the site. The proposal seeks to retain, sensitively restore, and convert the building into a high-quality single-family dwelling. While the barn retains elements of its original character, it is currently in a poor and deteriorating condition and now presents a visual detractor within the wider site. Without intervention, the structure is at risk of further decay and eventual loss.

7.6 The proposed redevelopment offers an opportunity to safeguard the building's future through sensitive restoration and repurposing. Structural repairs will be undertaken as required, preserving as much of the original historic fabric and form as possible. Externally, the barn's traditional agricultural character will be retained with only minimal and sympathetic alterations.

7.7 Internally, the layout includes a spacious open-plan kitchen and dining area, a separate living room, utility room, and WC at ground floor level. The first floor will provide three double bedrooms, including a master bedroom with en-suite, alongside a family bathroom.

7.8 This conversion reflects a sustainable and contextually appropriate approach, combining traditional rural character with high-quality, modern living accommodation. In doing so, it removes a current eyesore and prevents the continued decline of a heritage asset of local value.

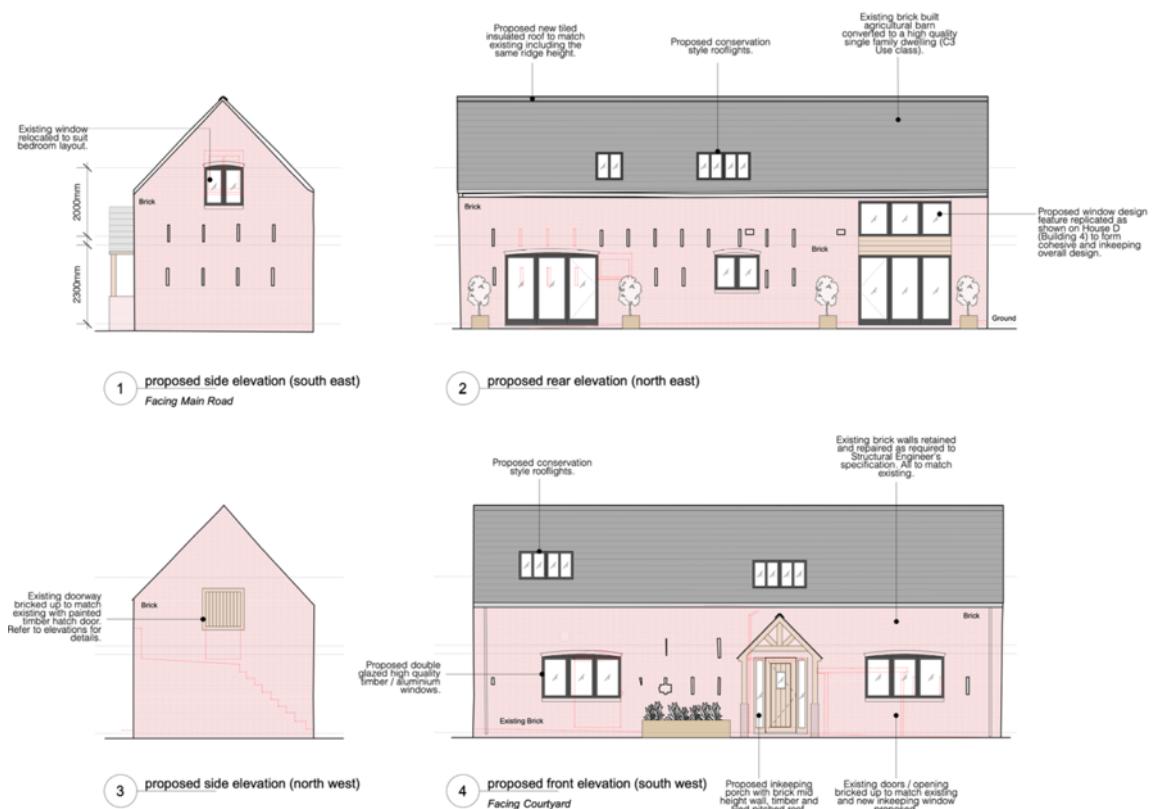


Image 17: House B Proposed Elevations. Not to Scale.

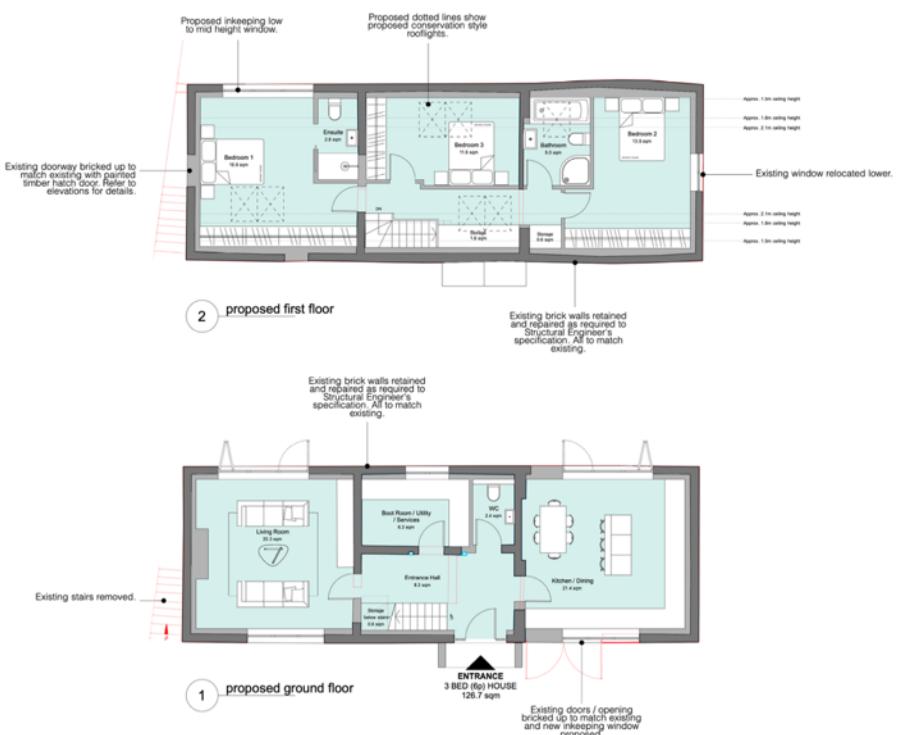


Image 18: House B Proposed Plans. Not to Scale.

House C – New Build Dwelling

7.9 House C is a proposed new-build dwelling located on the footprint of existing agricultural Building 5, which is to be demolished as part of the redevelopment. The building currently on site has no architectural merit and its removal will enable a more contextually appropriate and visually coherent form of development.

7.10 The proposed new dwelling has been carefully designed to respect the established building line and rhythm of development within the site. It will maintain the existing plot width and align in depth with House B to the south, ensuring a strong sense of enclosure and continuity within the courtyard arrangement. The dwelling has been sensitively scaled, with a ridge height slightly lower than that of the adjacent retained barn (Building 6 / House B), reinforcing the hierarchy of built form while preserving important views across the site.

7.11 Internally, the ground floor will provide a spacious open-plan kitchen, dining, and living area – forming the heart of the home – alongside a utility room and WC. The first floor will comprise one double bedroom, two single bedrooms, and a centrally located family bathroom.

7.12 House C has been designed to offer a high-quality modern living environment that integrates seamlessly with its rural surroundings, using sympathetic materials and a simple, traditional form that draws on the site's agricultural heritage.

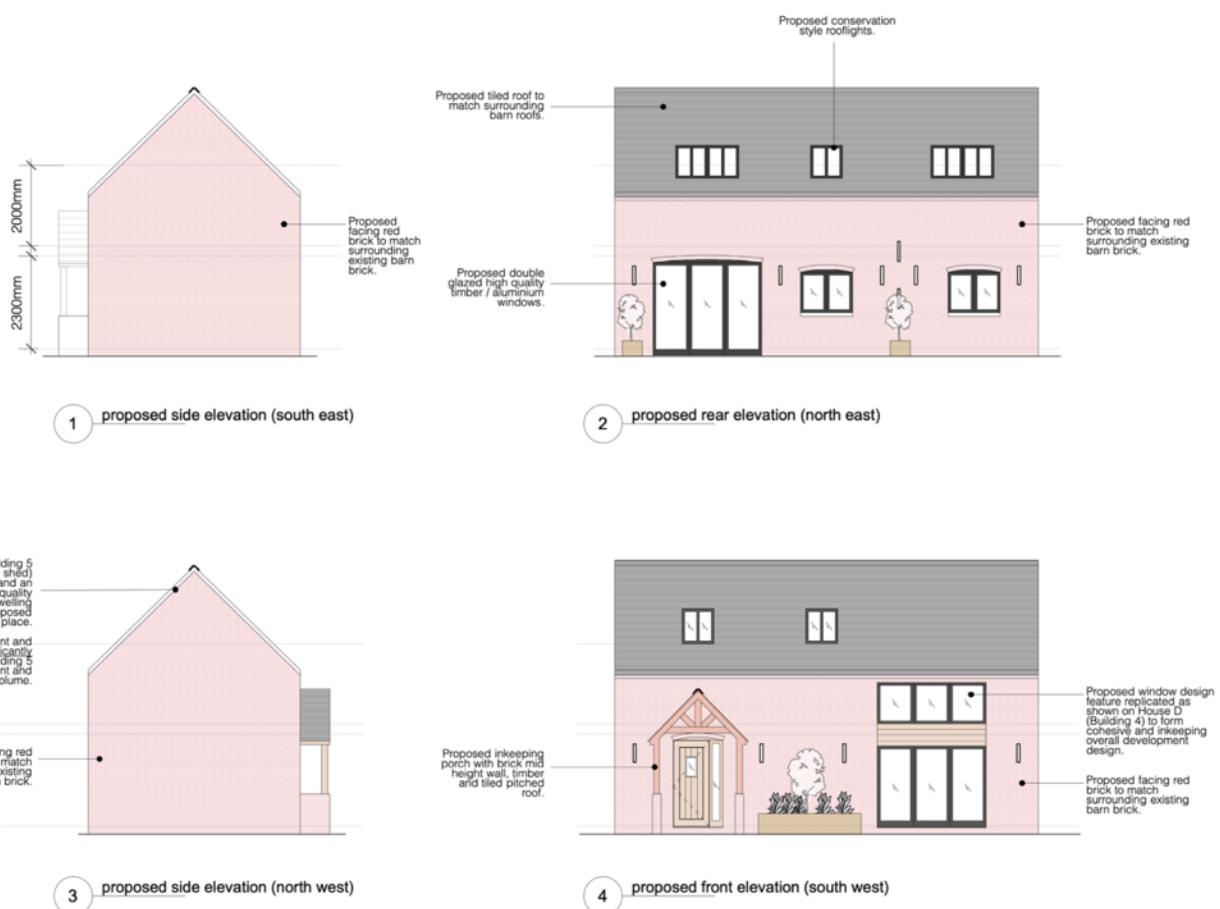


Image 19: House C Proposed Elevations. Not to Scale.

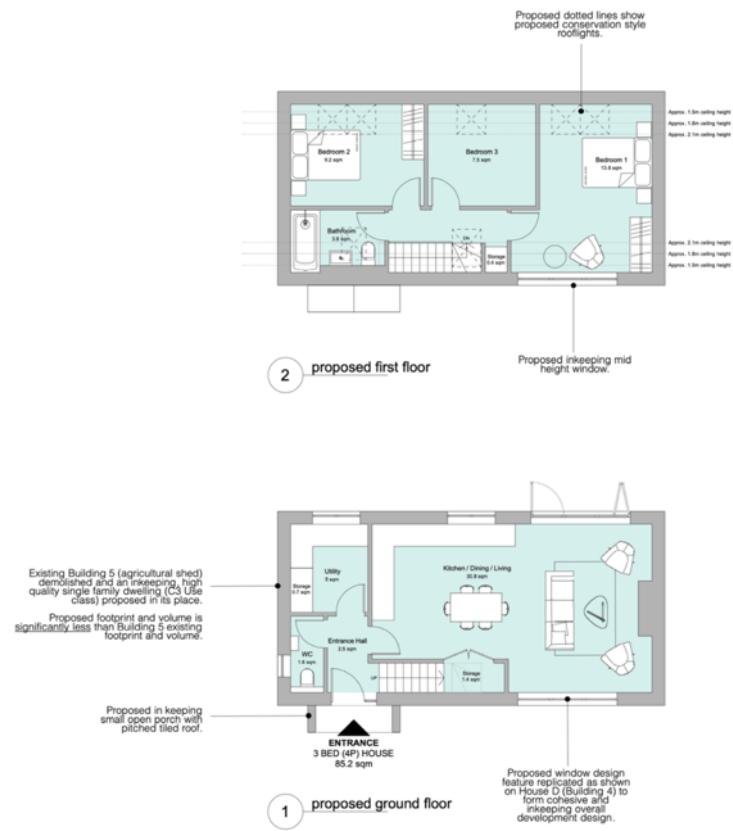


Image 20: House C Proposed Plans. Not to Scale.

House D – Barn Conversion

7.13 House D comprises an existing agricultural barn located toward the northern rear of the site. Although set back from the road, the building remains prominently visible from the site entrance and plays a key role in the overall composition of the development. The proposal seeks to retain and sensitively convert this barn into a high-quality single-family dwelling, preserving its rural character and enhancing its contribution to the site's setting.

7.14 Importantly, this barn already benefits from prior approval under Class Q of the General Permitted Development Order for its conversion to a single residential dwelling, establishing the principle of residential use on this part of the site.

7.15 Internally, the layout has been carefully designed to maximise light, volume, and usability. The ground floor will feature an impressive entrance hallway with a feature staircase leading to a galleried first-floor landing, creating a strong focal point and sense of arrival. This central space connects to a separate kitchen and dining area, a large living room, utility/boot room, WC, and plant room.

7.16 On the first floor, the barn will accommodate four bedrooms, including a spacious master suite with an en-suite bathroom and dressing area, ensuite 4th bedroom in addition to a good sized family bathroom.

7.17 The conversion of House D provides a sustainable and contextually appropriate reuse of a traditional rural building. It delivers a dwelling of considerable character and quality, while enhancing the overall appearance and functionality of the wider site.



Image 21: House D Proposed Elevations. Not to Scale.

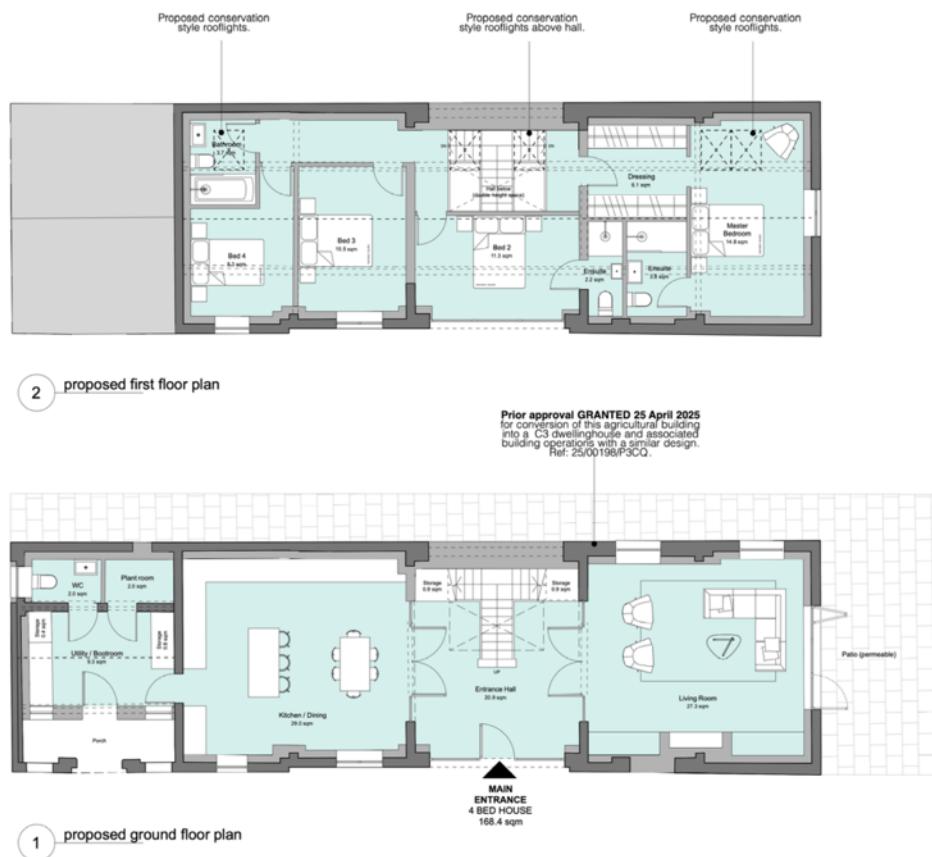


Image 22: House D Proposed Plans. Not to Scale.

House E – New Build Dwelling

7.18 House E is a proposed new-build dwelling located toward the northern rear of the site, on land formerly occupied by a large agricultural shed (Building 3) with no architectural or visual merit. The design and siting has been carefully considered to ensure appropriate spacing, legibility, and continuity with the neighbouring converted barns.

7.19 The dwelling has been designed in a traditional rural style, reflecting the proportions, form, and materiality of surrounding development. Its pitched roof, simple massing, and carefully selected materials allow it to sit comfortably within the wider site context and echo the area's agricultural heritage.

7.20 Internally, the ground floor offers a spacious open-plan kitchen, dining, and living area that forms the central hub of the home. This is complemented by a separate snug or home office, a WC, and a combined pantry/utility room providing practical flexibility for modern family living. A staircase from the entrance hallway leads to the first floor, where four bedrooms are located, including a master suite with an en-suite bathroom and a well-appointed family bathroom.



8.0 Landscaping & Refuse

8.1 A comprehensive landscaping scheme is illustrated on the submitted site layout plan. The design incorporates both soft and hard landscaping elements to ensure the development integrates sensitively into its rural context while enhancing visual amenity and biodiversity.

8.2 Soft landscaping includes the introduction of new native hedgerows, trees, and shrub planting to complement the front and rear gardens of each plot. Species will be selected to reflect the local landscape character and to provide seasonal interest, ecological value, and a softened edge to the built form.

8.3 Hard landscaping comprises of permeable driveways and parking areas to support sustainable drainage, alongside modest permeable patio areas within each garden. The use of permeable materials aligns with current best practice in surface water management.

8.4 Boundary treatments across the site adopt a contextually appropriate mix of materials. To the front of House A (the replacement farmhouse), the boundary will include reclaimed stone from the existing site wall, forming a low-level wall that visually anchors the property and reinforces the rural character of the street scene. This is complemented by a proposed extension of the pedestrian footpath linking the development to the existing village footpath network, improving connectivity.

8.5 Elsewhere within the development, front boundaries between plots will be defined by low-level hedging and planting providing soft definition without undermining the openness of the layout. Rear gardens will be enclosed with 1.8m high close-boarded timber fencing to ensure privacy and security for future residents between plots with native hedgerow planted to the boundary to the surrounding field.

8.6 Each dwelling will benefit from a generous private garden, significantly exceeding the minimum standards set out in the Council's Good Design Guide for dwellings of this size. Gardens will generally comprise of a small permeable patio area with the remainder laid to mown grass, providing usable and low-maintenance outdoor amenity space.

8.7 To support effective waste management and visual quality, each property will be provided with a discreet, timber-clad covered bin store, positioned conveniently to the front or side of each dwelling. These stores have been designed to blend into the rural character of the development while ensuring compliance with waste storage guidance.

9.0 Conclusion

9.1 As demonstrated within this Design and Access Statement, the proposed development has been carefully and sensitively designed to respect and reflect the surrounding built form and vernacular architecture. The scheme responds positively to its rural village context and makes effective use of previously developed land, transforming a dilapidated and underutilised site into a coherent and well-integrated residential environment.

9.2 The development delivers five high-quality family homes through a considered balance of barn conversions and new-build dwellings. It achieves a strong sense of place while enhancing the character and visual quality of

the site. The layout, scale, and materials have been directly informed by the site's historic massing, architectural context, and the aspiration for sustainable and attractive rural living.

9.3 The proposals fully accord with relevant local and national planning policy objectives, including those relating to good design, accessibility, amenity, and sustainability. Importantly, the development represents a significant enhancement over the fallback Class Q permissions, offering a more contextual, legible, and high-quality built form.

9.4 In summary, this scheme presents a valuable opportunity to deliver a sustainable, well-designed residential development that preserves the site's heritage, contributes positively to local housing need, and enhances the wider character of the village for the long term.

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