

# LYWOOD BARN

DESIGN REPORT

STUDIO  MANGO

## 1.0 Introduction

Studio Mango have been appointed by our client to develop proposals for the renovation and extension of Lywood Barn. These proposals involve alterations to both the main barn and the existing garage on site.

The following report outlines the context and reasoning for the proposed works. The existing property is a large converted barn which was purchased by our clients in 2024. It is their intention to update and modernise the property to better suit their needs. This will include updating the environmental performance of the property, which will be outlined within this report.

The property falls within the curtilage listing of Great Lywood Farmhouse, a Grade II listed 16th Century timber framed building to the north of the application site.

We are seeking planning permission regarding the following proposals:

- Internal alterations to the main barn
- The reinstatement of a previous window of the main barn
- The addition of a sensitively designed new entrance porch
- Recladding both the main barn and associated garage building
- The replacement of the existing windows of the main barn
- The minor update of two existing windows in the main barn
- The conversion of an existing garage on site to a part garage part home office
- The replacement of an existing conservatory to the garage with an updated rear extension
- The overall improvement of the environmental performance of the property



## 2.0 Existing Property

### 2.1 History

Lywood Barn is a large detached barn constructed in the 16th century. It has undergone several transformations over its history, including the change from a three bay barn in to the larger structure that exists today that occurred in the 19th century.

It was converted in to a family home in the 1980s, during which substantial works took place. The lower plinth was entirely replaced with modern materials, the current black painted timber cladding was applied to the barn and several internal partitions were added including two mezzanine floors.

The property also includes a separate garage building and loggia. These were constructed in the late 20th century in block masonry construction. A small conservatory was added either at this time or slightly later, which is heavily glazed.

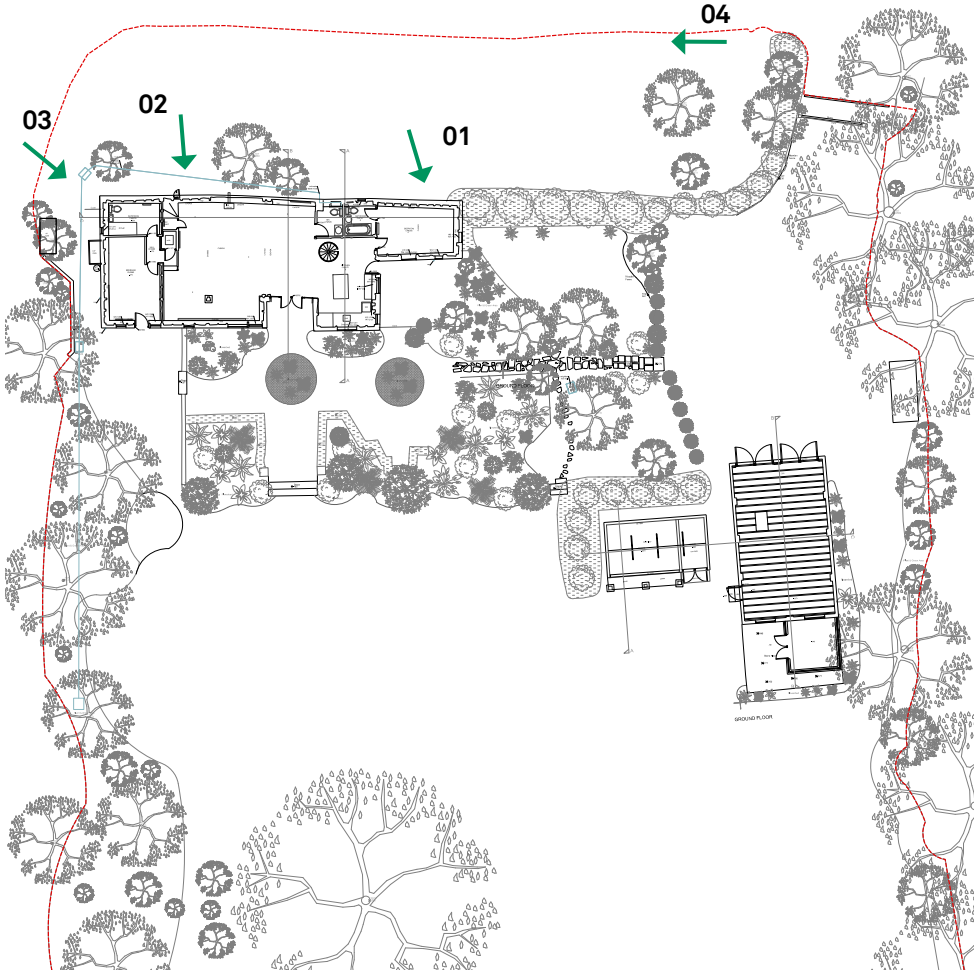
Further information on the history and heritage aspects of the site can be found in the Heritage Report attached to this planning application.

The main barn is visible from a private road and public footpath that run along the northern boundary of the property. The boundary of the property is heavily planted, so visibility of the three structures on the site is limited. The southern facade of the main barn is not visible from a public right of way.

The property is situated within the High Weald AONB.



2.2 Existing Condition



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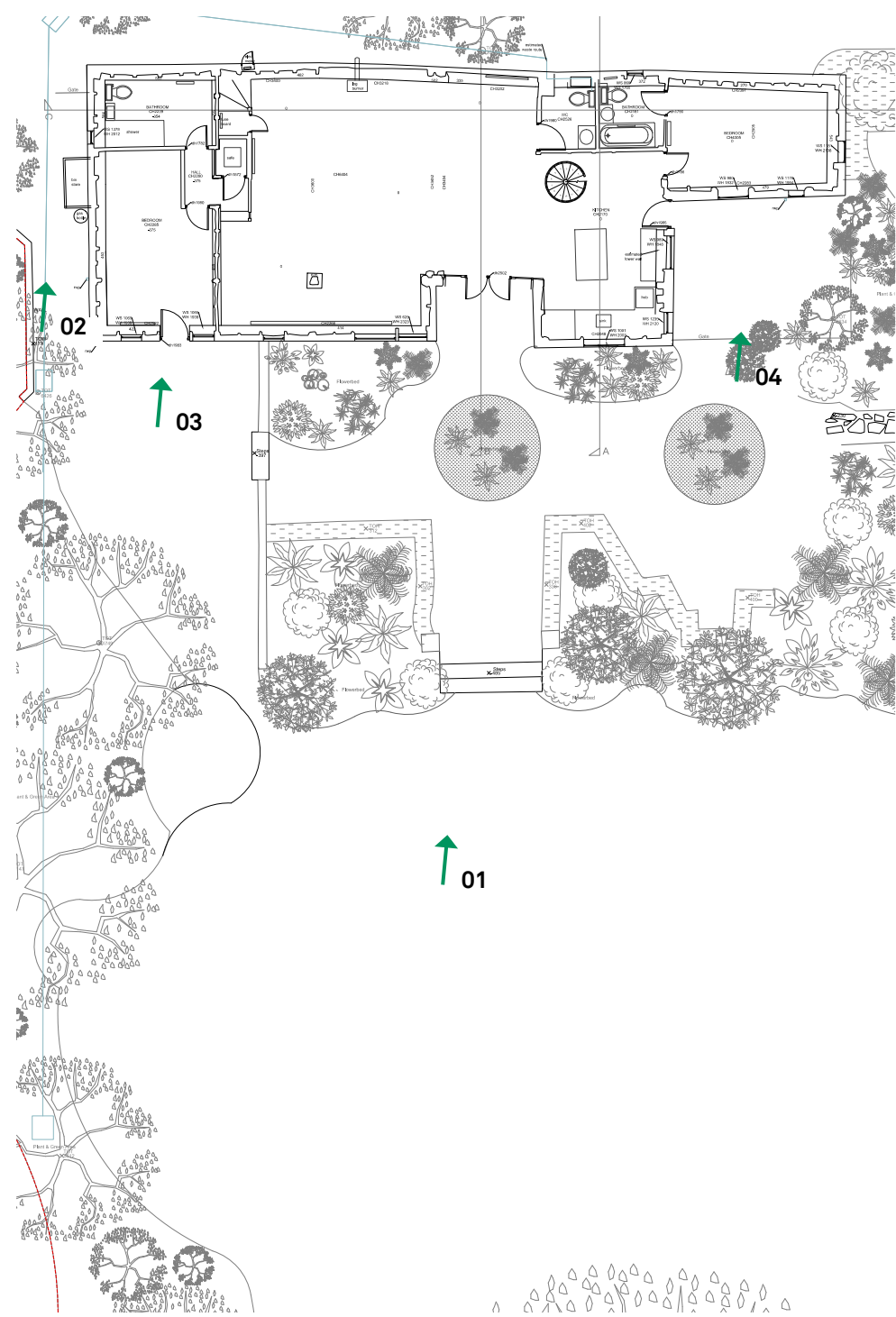


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Main Barn - External



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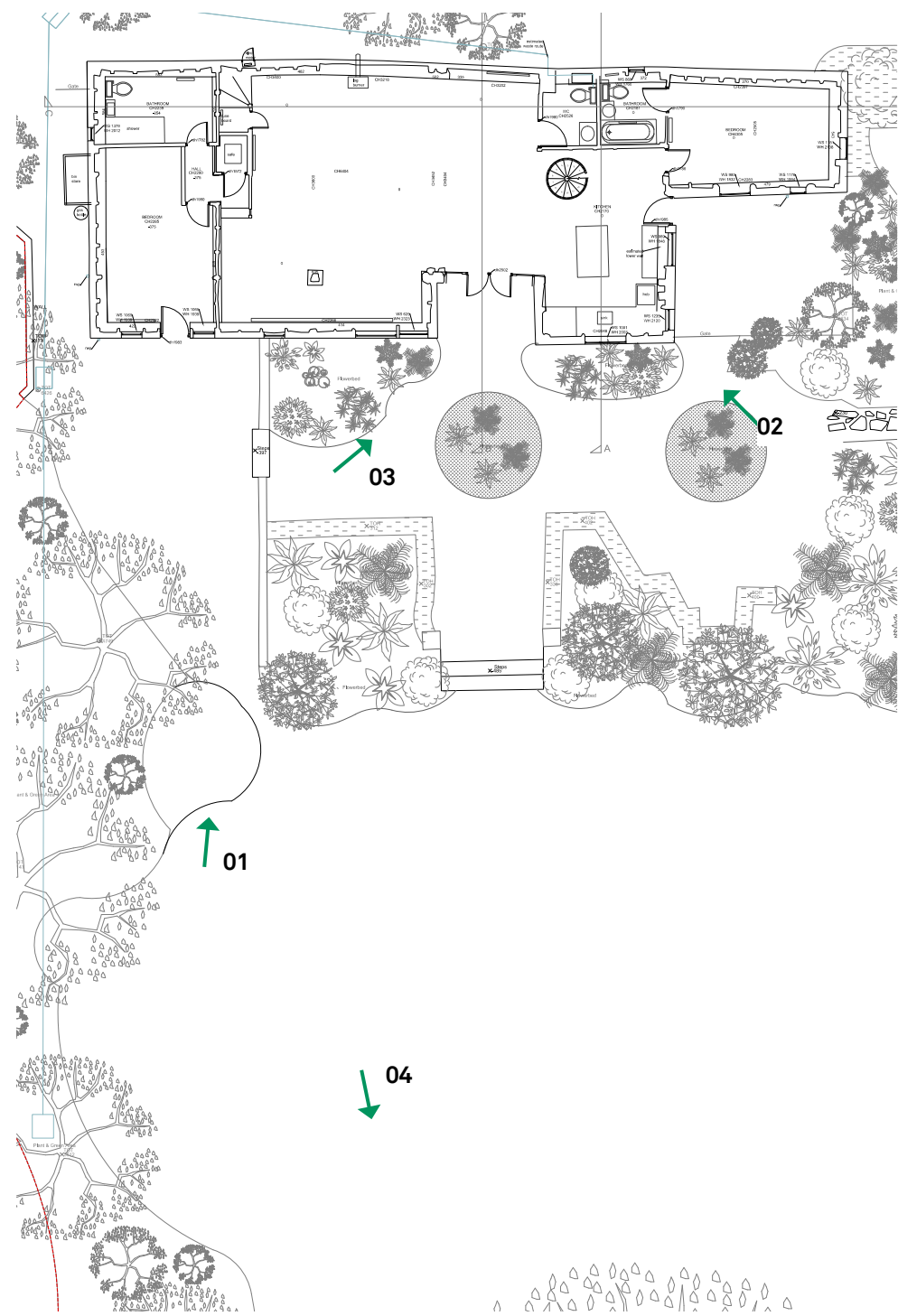


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Main Barn - External



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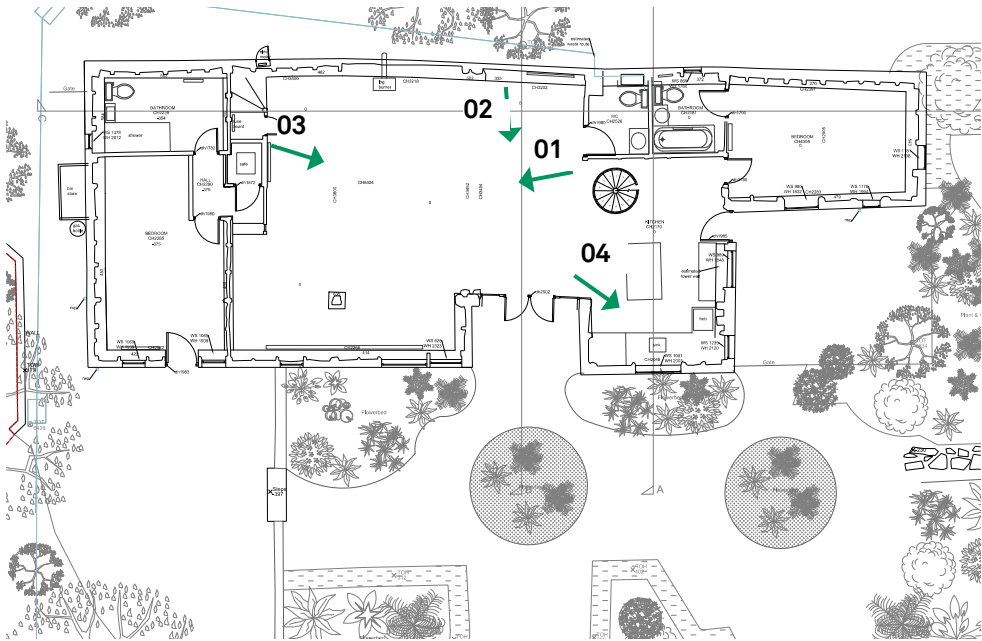


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Main Barn - Ground Floor



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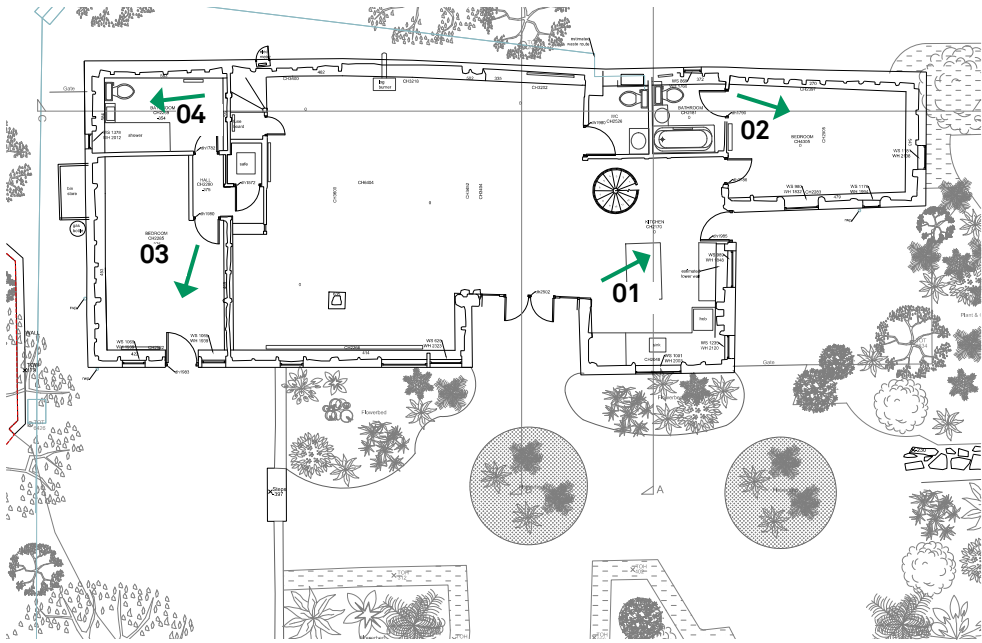


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Main Barn - Ground Floor



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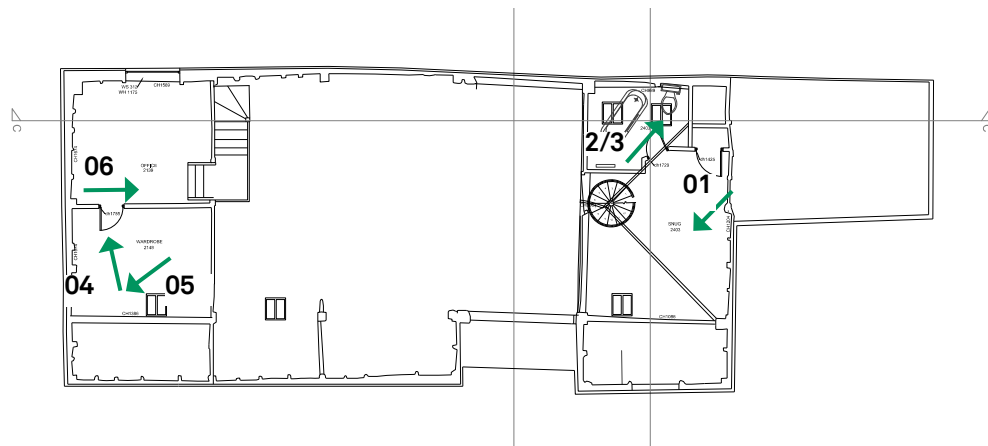


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Main Barn - First Floor



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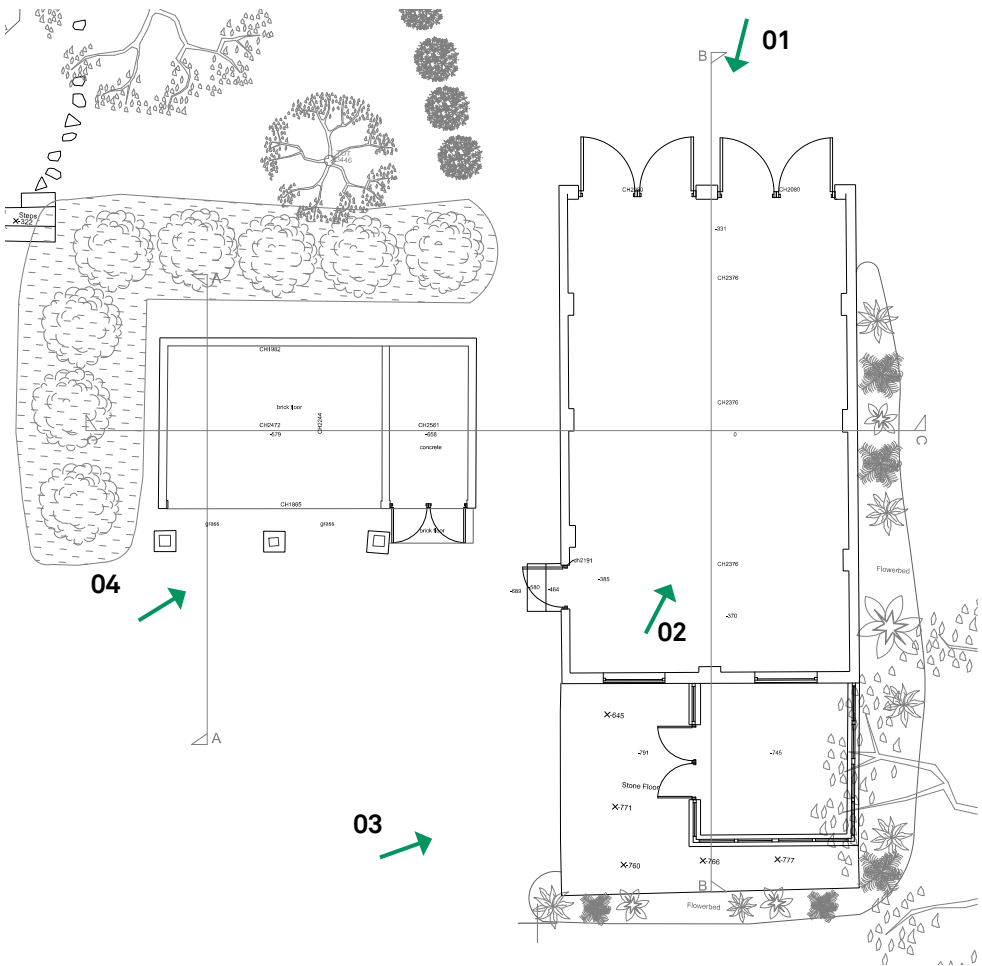


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Garage



## 3.0 Previous Application

A planning application was submitted previously for both changes to the main barn as well as the garage (reference numbers: DM/24/2953 & DM/24/2954). These applications were made prior to the information that Lywood Barn falls within curtilage listing of Great Lywood Farmhouse.

The case officer Caroline Grist along with the conservation officer Emily Wade made a number of comments prior to those applications being withdrawn. These concerned the external alterations to the property only.

These comments have been taken on board and changes made accordingly. The comments from the conservation officer are listed below. Our response to each point is listed in green.

### MAIN BARN

#### Proposed Entrance Porch

The proposed entrance porch sits over the principle doors to the south elevation which would appear likely to be in the position of the original cart doors to this side of the building, opposite the retained cart doors to the north elevation, as is typical in barns of this type. Although it is difficult to comment definitively on this aspect of the proposal in the absence of the above mentioned historic building survey and heritage statement, in my opinion the principle of enclosing this opening behind a porch is likely to prove contentious, partly due to the impact on the footprint of the building and the legibility of its original form, but also because the proposed drawings appear to indicate an increase in the size of the opening with associated loss of fabric. This aspect of the proposal therefore requires further information and/or reconsideration.

The proposed porch has been significantly reduced in order to remain subservient to the existing structure. The proposal allows the legibility of the original form of the barn. The proposed porch sits beneath the existing roof to minimise any loss of historic fabric.

#### Enlargement of existing windows

The existing north elevation has a number of windows which are of a relatively domestic appearance. The proposed enlarged windows would increase their adverse, domesticating impact, and would also potentially result in a loss of historic fabric. This aspect of the proposal is considered contentious, and should be omitted.

The majority of the existing windows will retain the existing opening. It is proposed that one window and one roof window on the south elevation are slightly increased in size. The scale and location of these enlargements are considered of minimal impact to the overall impression of the barn.

#### Addition of roof windows

There are already a number of rooflights to the southern roof slope of the building. In my opinion, additional, or enlarged rooflights will detract from the surviving original character of the building – as is noted in the relevant Historic England guidance ‘Adapting traditional farm buildings- Best practice guidance for adaptive reuse’: ‘One of the most sensitive issues with any farm building adaptation is the insertion of roof lights. Farm buildings rarely had any form of glazing at roof level, though sometimes glazed tiles or slates were used. Numerous new roof lights poorly positioned can have an intrusive impact, particularly where the roof is the dominant characteristic and is steeply pitched.’ In addition, subject to confirmation on the basis of an appropriately detailed historic building assessment, this aspect of the proposal may result in loss of historic fabric from the roof structure of the building.

Additional roof windows removed from this application.

#### Addition of chimney flue

The proposed new stove flue pipe to the southern roof slope will add an element of clutter at roof level, but is a fairly minor alteration, and is likely in my opinion to be regarded as acceptable, subject to detail. This aspect of the proposal will affect the appearance of the building from the north, and should be added to the proposed north elevation.

A chimney flue is proposed.

#### New door to the western elevation

The proposed new door to the western elevation will result in a loss of fabric which may, subject to the findings of the above mentioned historic building survey and impact assessment be regarded as harmful. The stone plinth to this elevation is particularly characterful, and its partial loss would be potentially regrettable. More information is required to allow a fully informed assessment of this aspect of the proposal.

Proposed door removed from this application.

#### Air Source Heat Pump

The proposed ASHP would replace (it is assumed) the existing bin store (although this requires confirmation). Subject to further details, including of any associated impact on historic fabric arising from new pipework etc, and of an appropriate screening enclosure, this aspect of the proposal is not considered contentious in heritage terms.

ASHP is proposed and more information provided within this report.

### 3.0 Previous Application

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The case officer Caroline Grist along with the conservation officer Emily Wade made a number of comments prior to those applications being withdrawn. These concerned the external alterations to the property only.

These comments have been taken on board and changes made accordingly. The comments from the conservation officer are listed below. Our response to each point is listed in green.

#### GARAGE

##### Replacement rear extension

The existing conservatory is not of any particular architectural quality, and its demolition is therefore not considered contentious. The replacement structure is in a flat-roofed contemporary style, which given the existing standard domestic conservatory design is not considered unacceptable in principle. However I do consider that the proposed facing material (grey render) is not appropriate- I understand the applicant's rationale in terms of a material of an 'industrial' character, but a flat roofed 'concrete' structure would not be sympathetic to the rural/agricultural context or the more traditional buildings already present. This aspect of the proposal requires reconsideration.

The proposed extension has been redesigned as a pitch roofed, corten clad extension to align closer with the existing agricultural context.

##### Glazed Door

Although the new and altered glazed door openings to the side elevation may be acceptable in principle, I would suggest external timber doors are retained/included- these could be fixed open if preferred.

The proposed new door to the workshop will be timber clad. The glazed door to the office will retain its timber door externally.

##### Additional Window

The scale and form of the proposed new window opening above the replacement extension require reconsideration to reflect the character of the building- a smaller opening with vertical proportions may be considered more appropriate.

The proposed window has been adjusted to a vertical proportion.

##### Proposed Terrace

The proposed terrace to the south of the building is not considered contentious in principle, but the grey stone cladding should be amended to a material more sympathetic to the vernacular materials within the context- sandstone as is present in the adjacent buildings and walling would be more appropriate.

The proposed terrace has been lowered in height. It is proposed to clad the terrace in sandstone.

# 4.0 Proposed Works - Main Barn

## 4.1 Porch

The current house lacks a clear and obvious main entrance. The current access used is to the east of the house directly into the kitchen space.

As part of these works, it is proposed to introduce a new dedicated entrance porch to the south elevation of the property which will greatly improve the liveability of the home. A new porch will create a sealed arrival space, improving the functional and environmental performance of the house.

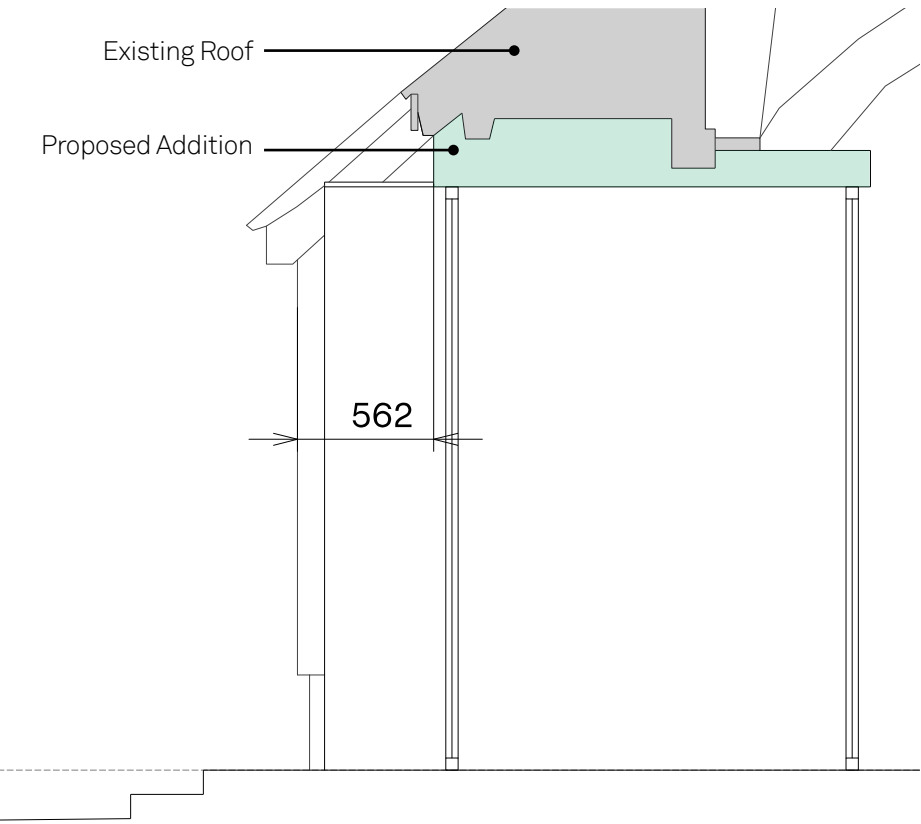
In order to align with the comments received from the conservation officer previously, efforts have been made to minimise the impact on both the appearance and historic fabric of the barn.

The line of the porch is determined by its section. The proposed door is set back from the underside of the existing roof. As a result the additional walls will be built entirely below the existing roof. This means the existing roof can remain unchanged, with simply a new infill porch built across the existing set back. This porch will then be predominately glazed in order to retain legibility of the existing setback of the barn.

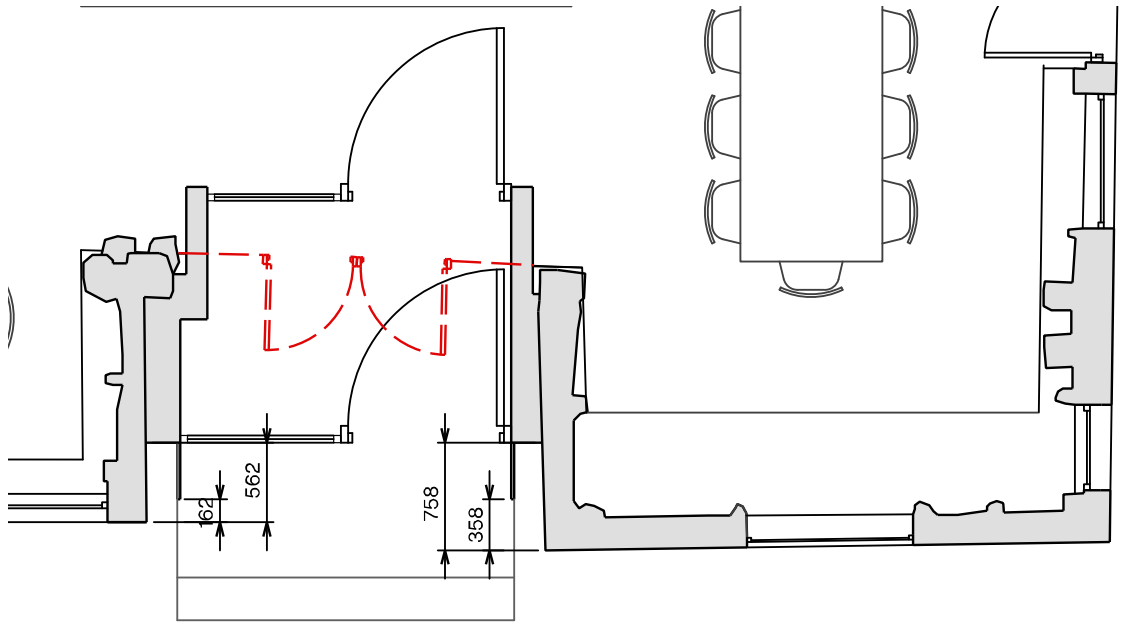
A minimal corten steel door surround is proposed. This will not only shade the proposed entrance but will also clearly delineate the porch as a contemporary addition while remaining subservient to the host property.

The proposed porch seeks to greatly improve the liveability of the home while still respecting the existing property. The overall legibility of the recessed opening will be preserved, both by the set back nature of the proposal as well as its primarily glazed appearance.

The southern elevation of the property is not visible from the road to the north of the property.



Proposed Section of Porch



Proposed Plan of Porch



External visualisation of rear elevation

**4.2 Reinstated Window**

At some point in the recent history of Lywood Barn, a large section of glazing on the north facade of the property was infilled and covered up.

As part of this planning application we are proposing to reinstate the upper section of this glazing. This additional window would bring more light in to the property without the need to propose additional windows.

As can be seen in the historic photos to the right, a large section of glazing existed up until recently. The timber doors on the north elevation were originally fixed open with floor to ceiling glazing allowing views to the north.

It is proposed that the section of glass above the existing horizontal timber is reinstated. This will allow additional light for the house without compromising the privacy of the occupants. The external timber doors would be split so that they can be fixed open where the proposed window would be, and below they would be fixed closed as per the current condition.

A neighbouring farm is a good precedent for the desired aesthetic of this proposed opening. The barn doors would be built in a style to match the existing.

**4.3 Replacement Windows**

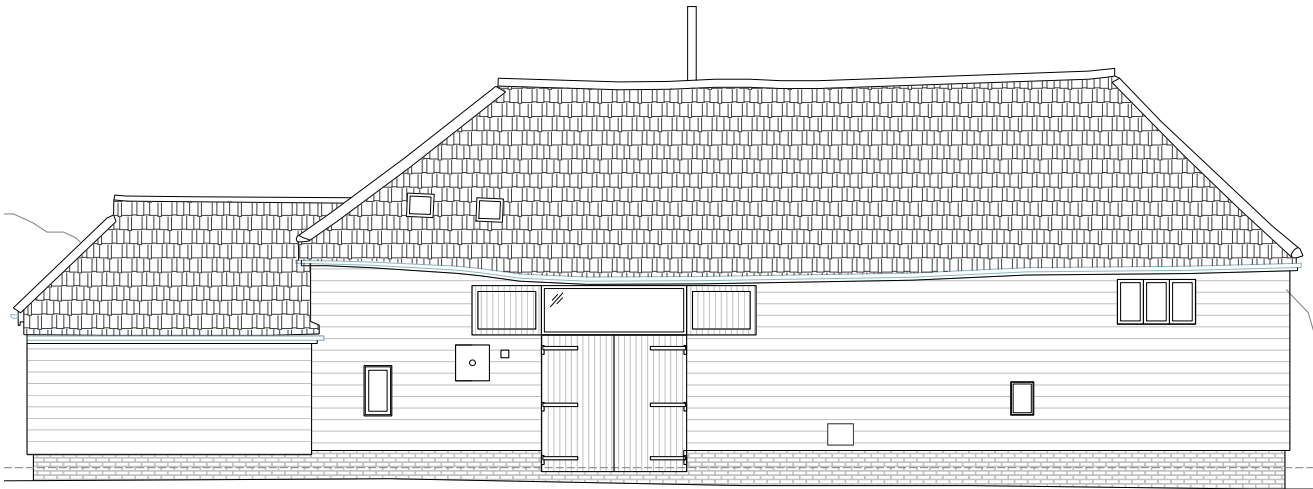
As part of this application it is also proposed to replace the existing windows throughout the property. The existing timber windows are ill fitting and poorly performing. These will be replaced with high performing timber windows to match the cladding of the barn. It is also proposed to replace the existing roof windows.



Old photos of Lywood Barn (exact date unknown)



Current view of northern elevation



Proposed North Elevation



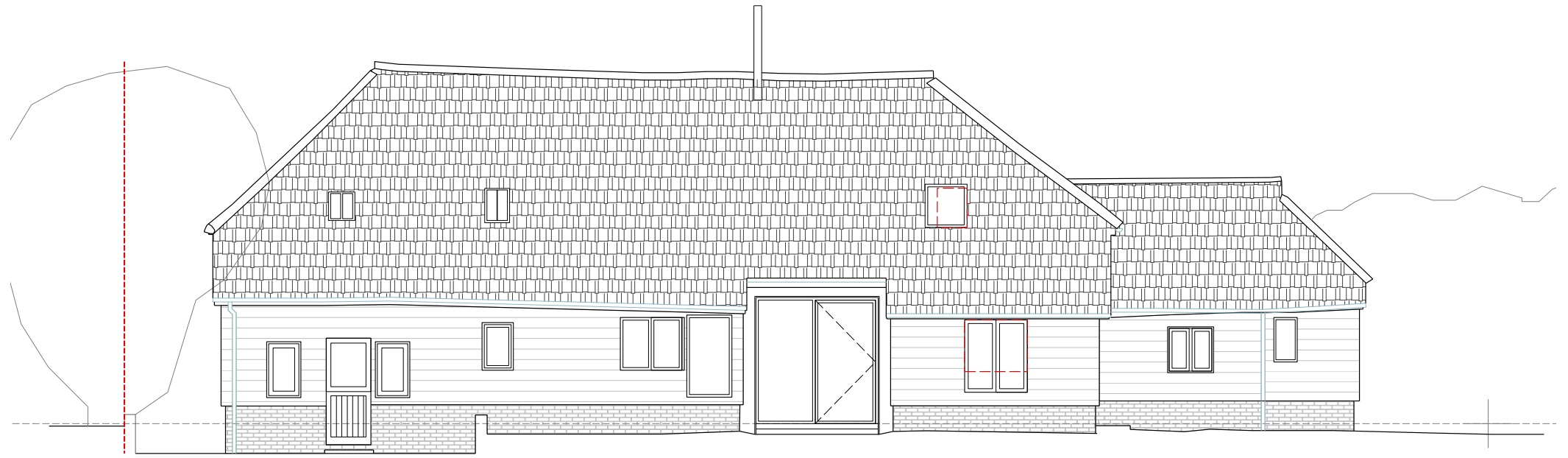
Part fixed, part open style doors on a neighbouring barn

#### 4.5 Enlarged Windows

As part of this application it is also proposed to slightly increase the size of two existing windows. Both of these windows are located on the south elevation and are not visible from the road.

It is proposed to increase the size of an existing roof window in what would be the first floor bathroom. It is considered that this increase does not provide any significant detrimental impact. The increase would greatly improve the outlook and amount of light for the proposed bathroom area.

It is also proposed to lower the cill height of the window in what would be the dining room. The existing window in this location is set at a higher level to accommodate the kitchen counter behind. It is proposed to relocate the kitchen and instead have a reading nook in this area. Lowering this window by approximately 395mm will greatly increase the visibility to the garden from this proposed window seat.



Proposed updated rear elevation

#### 4.6 Recladding the Barn

The current black stained/painted timber cladding is modern and was installed during the conversion of the barn in to a home in the 20th century. As a result it is highly unlikely that there is any heritage value to either the timber itself or the appearance overall of the barn. The existing timber cladding is in poor condition in multiple places and needs to be replaced.

The neighbouring barn is clad in what appears to be a silvered oak. It is proposed to reclad Lywood Barn in a grey hardwood to closer match the neighbouring barns. The updated cladding would be more weather resilient, ensuring the appearance of the barn can be preserved long in to the future.



Neighbouring Barn clad in grey/silver timber

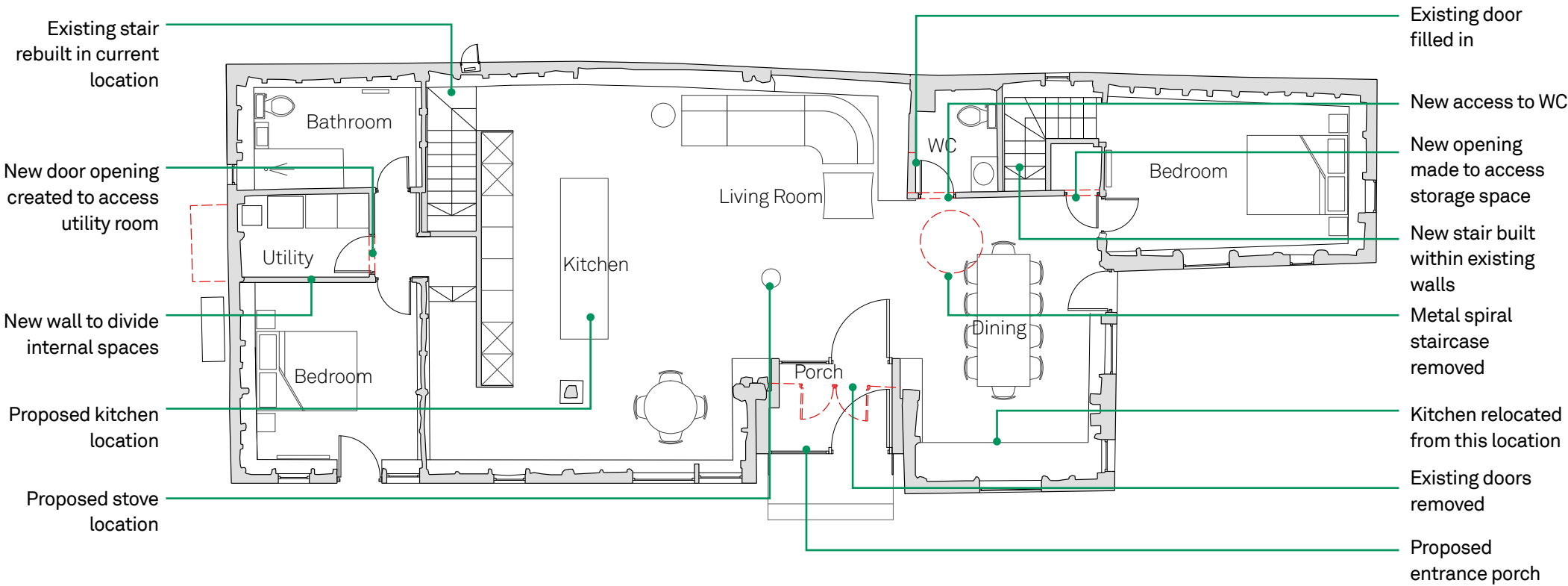


Lywood Barn (left) adjacent to neighbouring barn

4.7 Internal Alterations - Ground Floor

The internal walls of the property are primarily those installed during the conversion to a home undertaken in the 1980s. As a result there seems to be little heritage value to the internal configuration of the barn.

Regardless of this, the proposed changes to the interior of the barn are relatively minor and no changes are proposed to the main timber elements that define the interior of the barn.



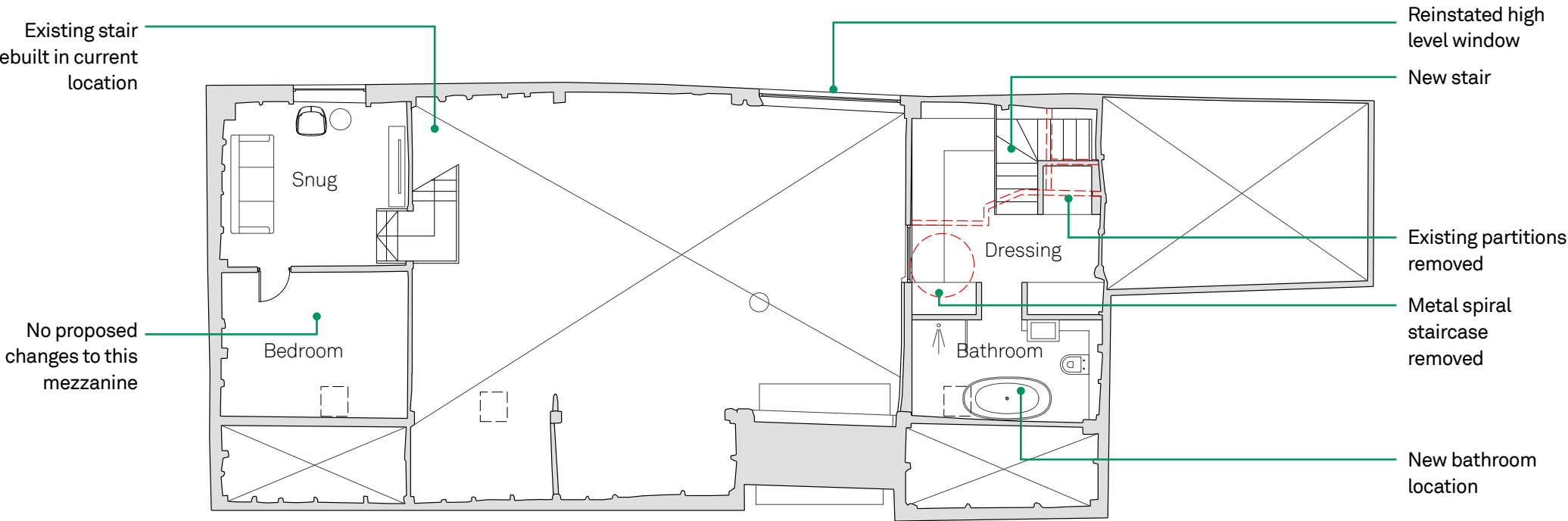
Proposed Ground Floor Plan

4.8 Internal Alterations - First Floor

The internal alterations to the first floor of the barn are also relatively minor and avoid disrupting the existing timber beams within the space.

On the western side of the barn the mezzanine is retained as existing.

The existing spiral stair to the eastern mezzanine is removed. Instead a new stair is proposed that is accessed from the western wing of the property. A new bathroom and dressing room layout is proposed on the first floor above.



Proposed First Floor Plan

## 5.0 Proposed Works - Garage

An existing garage and loggia sit to the south east of the main barn. Both were constructed in the late 20th century and are deemed to have no heritage significance in their own right. Any heritage value to the buildings is tied to the overall curtilage listing of the greater site. The points raised in this report therefore relate to the external appearance of the garage.

### 5.1 Updated Cladding

The garage is currently clad in the same black stained/painted timber as the main barn. It is proposed that the cladding would be replaced with silver/grey hardwood cladding to match the proposed updated cladding of the main barn.

### 5.2 Proposed Extension

An existing conservatory extends out of the southern elevation of the garage. This is a predominately glazed structure of very little architectural merit. It is proposed to demolish this conservatory and replace it with a contemporary extension that, along with the internal updates, transform the garage in to a modern home office. This will provide space for our clients to work from home in a purpose specific, thermally efficient space.

The proposed extension will be pitched in form. The scale is such that it will remain subservient to the existing building. It will have a smaller area than the existing conservatory. The pitch on the eastern elevation will match the angle of the slope of the existing garage roof. The south and west elevations will be predominately glass, opening up views to the mature surrounding garden. This will dramatically increase the amount of light entering the existing structure.

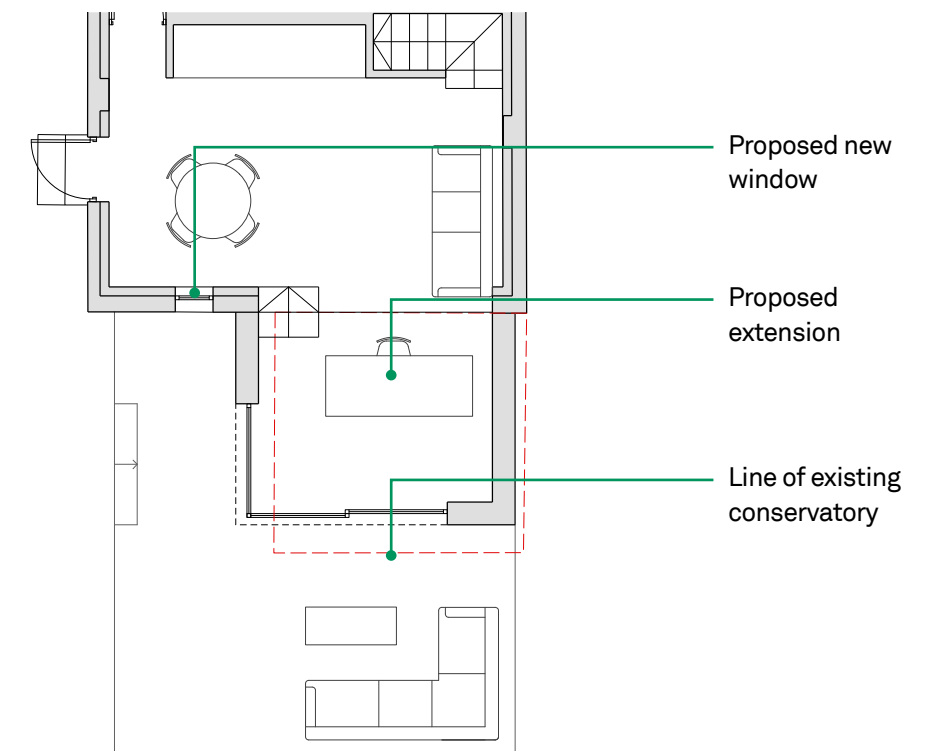
The proposed extension will be accessed from within the garage. A level change means the overall height of both the extension and the external patio are reduced.

Corten metal is proposed to clad the extension. This will create a clear delineation between the existing barn and the contemporary addition. The corten metal is also a contemporary reference to the common steel cladding found within the farming vernacular. The proposed porch of the main barn would also include a subtle use of corten steel, creating a synthesis between the two contemporary additions to the site. The proposed terrace would be clad in sandstone.

A new window is proposed to the side of the extension. This is vertically proportioned to reflect the agricultural character of the host building. While a new glazed door is proposed as the main entrance to the office space, the existing timber door will be retained externally.



Existing Garage



Proposed ground floor plan of home office



External visualisation of garage



Corten Metal

6.0 Sustainability

The proposed works to the main barn will improve the thermal performance of the existing property.

The new additions will be constructed in accordance with Part L of the building regulations and air leakage will be minimised by high quality detailing of all new junctions.

The existing windows will be replaced with high performance, timber windows. The proposed internal works will also look to improve the thermal performance of the property. The eastern wing of the property is currently uninsulated. As part of the works additional insulation will be added in this area. Under floor heating will be added to the ground floor.

As part of the works, it is proposed to install an air source heat pump. This will be installed to the west of the main barn. The existing bin store will be removed and rebuilt in an area currently occupied by an oil tank. This oil tank will be made redundant by the move to the ASHP and so will be removed as part of the works.

The proposed location for the ASHP is more than 1.3m from the nearest boundary. The proposed model is a quiet performing option with an expected sound pressure of 51.3dB. Between the proposed location and the boundary is an existing brick wall and substantial planting. Together these should mean no noise impact on the neighbouring property. A driveway also separates the neighbouring house from the relevant boundary line.

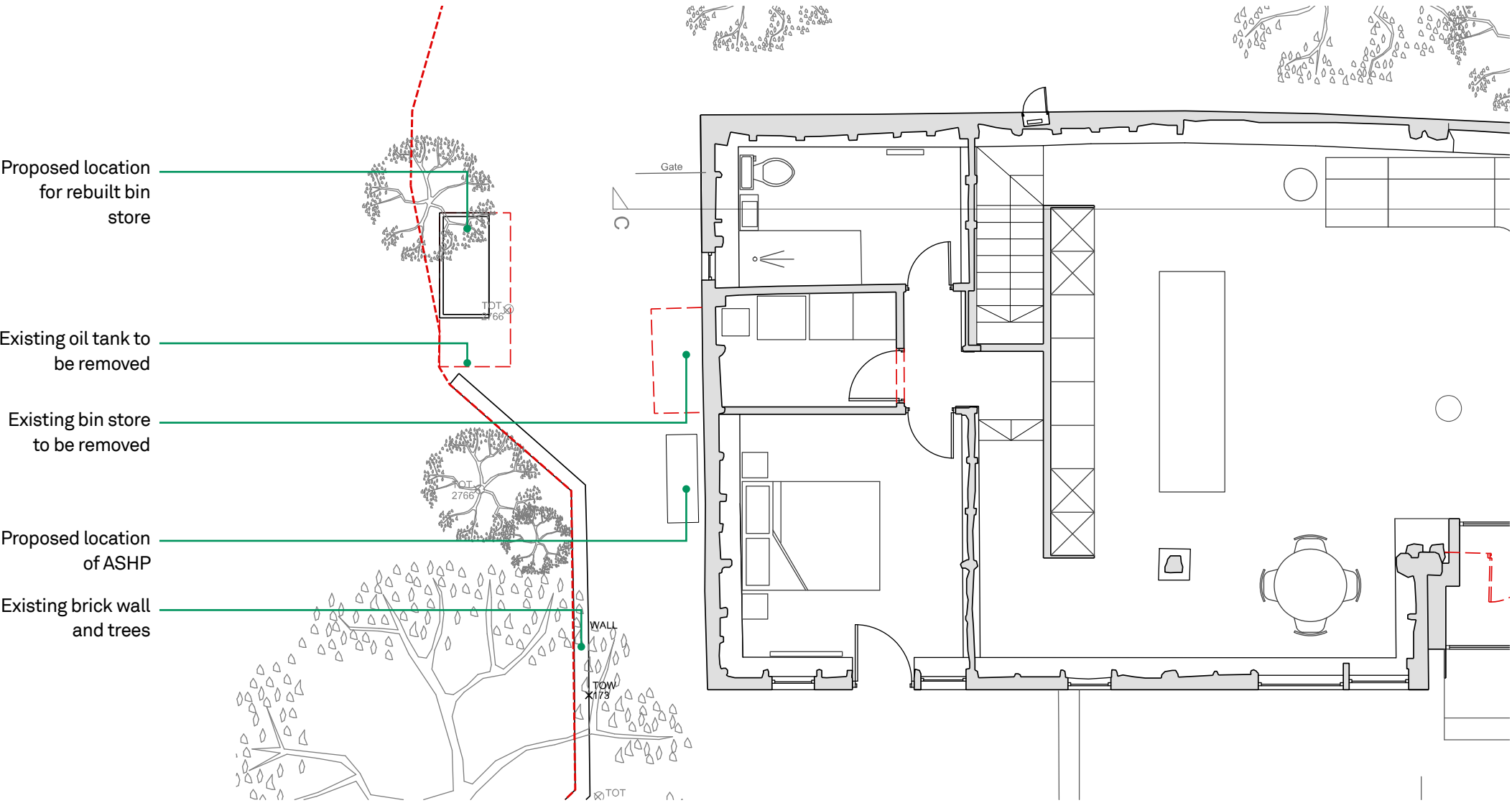
7.0 High Weald AONB

Lywood Barn is situated within the High Weald AONB.

AONB’s are designated for their natural beauty, which includes considerations such as wildlife, geological features and cultural heritage, but is not limited to them.

It is considered that the proposals will not have a negative impact on any of these features due to the scale and location of the proposed work. The proposed new entrance porch will not increase the visible area of the existing home, nor is it visible from any public right of way. The proposed extension to the garage is smaller in area than the existing conservatory. The south elevation of the garage is not visible from any public right of way.

The proposed works will not reduce the amount of planting or vegetation of the site.



Proposed ground floor plan showing ASHP location

## 8.0 Conclusion

The proposed works are designed to improve the layout and performance of Lywood Barn.

The internal works to the main barn will create a much more usable space for our clients. The proposed new porch is designed to be subservient to the main house, retaining the legibility of the existing barn structure, while creating a much needed dedicated entrance space. Updating the cladding will not only replace timber that is in poor condition, but will also align Lywood Barn closer to its immediate neighbours, improving the overall aesthetic of the cluster of buildings.

The proposed works to the garage are designed to turn a rarely used existing building into a functional and important part of the property's use. Instead of building a new structure to house a home office, it was decided to reconfigure the existing garage for this purpose. As a result, the massing of the house will not be increased unnecessarily.

The scale of the different interventions are considered to be of an appropriate scale and design such that they remain subservient to the host buildings. The choice of materials for the proposed additions and the simple, crisp design are intended to create a clear delineation between the existing structures and the new interventions.

The proposed ASHP will dramatically improve the sustainable credentials of the barn, replacing the existing oil based system. Its proposed location will not be visible to any neighbours and the sound level is not considered to be a problem.



External visualisation of rear elevation



External visualisation of garage