

OXFORD CITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

15th February 2022

Application number: 21/02431/FUL

Decision due by 3rd November 2021

Extension of time 21st February 2022

Proposal Refurbishment and extension of existing house to include; partial demolition and reconstruction of existing single storey stable conversion and adjacent remains of cowshed; replacement windows and doors; erection of two storey extension; formation of new boundary wall; alterations to Grade II listed wall including widening the opening. Associated landscaping and provision of bin and cycle stores. Change of use of land described as 'orchard' to be within the residential curtilage (amended plans)

Site address Meadow Larkins , Larkins Lane, Oxford, OX3 9DW – see **Appendix 1** for site plan

Ward Headington Ward

Case officer Stephanie Eldridge

Agent: Adrian James **Applicant:** Mr & Mrs Michael and Megan Dent

Reason at Committee Application has been called in by Cllrs Clarkson, Rowley, Fry, Turner, Munkonge, Cook, Altaf-Khan, Wade, Snowton and Fouweather for the reasons that it proposes the change of use of a historic orchard to form residential curtilage, the erection of a large additional building, the total loss of a heritage asset, the demolition of historic farm buildings in the Old Headington Conservation Area and the impact on a neighbouring listed barn

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1. Oxford City Planning Committee is recommended to:

1.1.1. **approve the application** for the reasons given in the report and subject to the required planning conditions set out in section 12 of this report and grant planning permission.

1.1.2. **agree to delegate authority** to the Head of Planning Services to:

- finalise the recommended conditions as set out in this report including such refinements, amendments, additions and/or deletions as the Head of Planning Services considers reasonably necessary
- Issue the planning permission following the end of the amended consultation period which expires on 18th February 2022 and subject to no new material representations being received that have not already been considered in this report.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. This report considers several elements which relate to the partial demolition, and reconstruction and extension of the existing dwelling known as Meadow Larkins in Old Headington. The proposal also comprises alterations to a Grade II listed wall, the change of use of land described as 'orchard' to residential curtilage and the provision of landscaping across the site.
- 2.2. The site is located within the Old Headington Conservation Area in the St Andrew's Lane and Larkin's Lane character area, and the boundary wall, which runs alongside Larkins Lane, is Grade II listed. Meadow Larkins sits within the setting of the grade II listed threshing barn, The Barn, and the grade II listed farmhouse, Mather's Farm.
- 2.3. In considering the impact of the proposed development, great weight and importance has been given to the desirability of preserving the grade II listed wall, the setting of the grade II listed threshing barn, The Barn, and the grade II listed farmhouse, Mather's Farm, and the special character and appearance of the Old Headington Conservation Area as designated heritage assets. The assessment carried out below concludes that a low level of less than substantial harm would be caused to the significance of the designated heritage assets which is considered sufficiently mitigated by carefully considered and high quality design and justified by the need to ensure the optimum viable use of the site. The heritage benefits of the enhancements to the former farmyard and the continued use and maintenance of the site would constitute public benefits that would outweigh the low level of less than substantial harm caused and subject to conditions.
- 2.4. The report also considers the impact on neighbouring amenity, biodiversity, trees, land quality, highways safety and convenience and drainage, and concludes that the development accords with the requirements of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 as set out in detail below.
- 2.5. Based on the assessment below, officers consider that the proposal would be acceptable in all regards and would be in accordance with the relevant national and local policies and as such is recommended for approval.

3. LEGAL AGREEMENT

- 3.1. This application is not subject to a legal agreement.

4. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

4.1. The proposal is not liable for CIL.

5. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

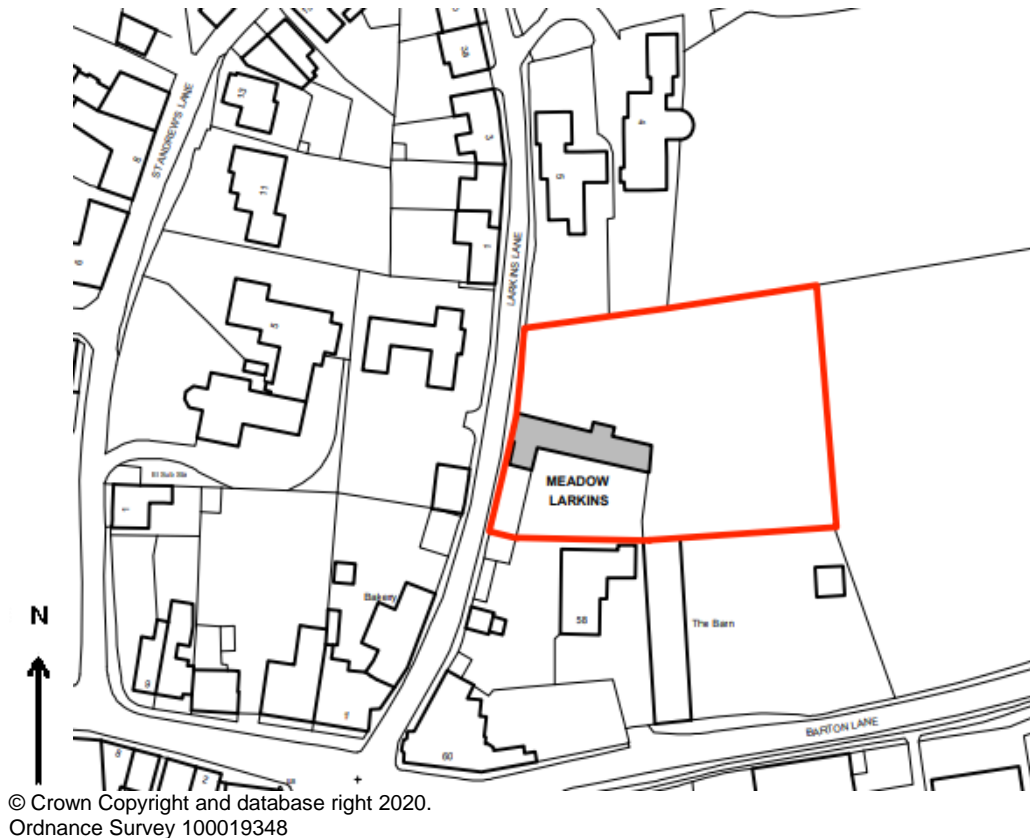
5.1. The site is located within the Old Headington Conservation Area in the St Andrew's Lane and Larkin's Lane character area, just to the north of the village core. Meadow Larkins is a single-storey residential property created from two former agricultural buildings in 1976, although the principle of planning permission was established in 1954 for the creation of a bungalow on the site. The living accommodation is housed in a former stable building which runs perpendicular to Larkins Lane and the garage and utility area is housed in part of a suspected former cattle shed which is constructed onto the listed stone boundary wall which runs alongside the lane.

5.2. The buildings are constructed primarily from rubble Headington limestone, much of it likely to have been re-used from the former agricultural buildings. The southern wall of the former stables is constructed from modern yellow brickwork, although historically this side of the building would have featured structural piers possibly infilled by shiplap timber. Timber framed windows punctuate the northern elevation, although these are suspected to be modern additions inserted as part of the 1970s residential conversion. The roofs, which evidence suggests post-date the limestone walls, are covered with red clay tiles. The majority of the former cow shed lies in ruins to the south of the residential building and alongside the listed boundary wall.

5.3. The former agricultural buildings originally belonged to Mather's Farm (referred to in 1721 as 'the chief farm of Headington'). Mather's Farm House, sited to the south west of Meadow Larkins on the corner of Larkins Lane and Barton Lane, is a grade II listed building dating from the 17th century. Sited to the south east is the grade II listed former threshing barn belonging to the farm, which was converted to a residential property in the 1970s and is now known as The Barn. In 1988 planning permission was granted for the erection of a single storey dwelling (58 Barton Lane) on the historic farm site, located just west of the threshing barn and north east of the farm house.

5.4. The residential curtilage of Meadow Larkins includes the area of land directly to the north of the building which features a gravel driveway and grassed area demarcated by a hedgerow along the eastern boundary, together with the grassed area to the south which is surrounded by cowshed ruins to the west, eastern stone boundary wall and southern boundary fence. To the east of the Meadow Larkins residential curtilage is an area of grassed land which is within the same ownership as Meadow Larkins and marks the extent of the historic farm curtilage, following the eastern boundary line of The Barn's residential curtilage. This area of land contains a mature Poplar tree, a number of orchard trees and a conifer hedge running along the southern boundary. Beyond this piece of land to the east is a green field of land known as the 'Barton Triangle' and owned by Oxford Preservation Trust, which is currently used as pasture fields and sited in the Green Fields character area of the Old Headington Conservation Area.

5.5. See block plan below:



6. PROPOSAL

- 6.1. The application proposals consist of several elements. Firstly, the widening of the existing vehicular opening in the listed boundary wall along Larkins Lane. Secondly, the re-construction of the derelict and dilapidated former cowshed alongside the listed wall and its incorporation into the main dwelling. Thirdly, the alteration and re-construction of the former stable building including the removal of the existing porch, the creation of a glazed link demarcating the former stables from the former cowshed, and the reinstatement of the structural piers on the southern elevation with glazed infills. The application also proposes the construction of a new one-and-a-half storey extension with basement level which would adjoin the eastern end of the former stables via a glazed link and be sited in the southern part of the orchard land, running parallel with the southern boundary of the site.
- 6.2. Further, the planning application includes a change of use of the orchard land to residential curtilage, associated landscaping works across the whole site and the erection of a bin and bicycle store in the north western corner of the site. The landscaping works includes the provision of areas of hardstanding around the perimeter of the buildings, the slight enlargement of the existing gravel driveway, the retention of the majority of the orchard trees and management of the orchard area as meadow, the retention of the existing mature Poplar and Walnut trees and areas of boundary hedging, new specimen trees, the replacement of the existing conifer hedge with a new native species hedge along the southern boundary, and new shrub planting near the driveway.

6.3. An application for listed building consent is also under consideration (ref: 21/02432/LBC).

7. Since the submission of the applications, amended plans have been provided which lower the ridge and eaves heights of the proposed reconstructed stables and cowshed, and proposes the construction of the cowshed roof alongside the wall rather than on top of the wall.

8. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

8.1. The table below sets out the relevant planning history for the application site:

54/00253/D_H - Land at Larkins Lane - Bungalow. (In principle). Approved 23rd March 1954.

75/00351/A_H - Conversion of existing stable block to form dwelling house and integral garage. Approved 20th October 1975.

75/00553/L_H - Adaptation of existing stable block to form dwelling house involving alterations and creating of entrance access through. Approved 20th October 1975.

18/02588/FUL - Erection of 3 x 3-bed dwellings (Use Class C3) and alterations to the width of the existing entrance on the west boundary wall. Provision of shared forecourt, private amenity space, parking and bin and cycle stores. Associated landscaping.. Withdrawn 21st January 2019.

20/02450/FUL - Partial demolition and reconstruction of existing single-storey former stable residential conversion. Demolition of cowshed remains and reconstruction to form single-storey residential accommodation. Erection of two storey extension to former stable. New south boundary wall. Alterations to widen vehicular opening in listed west boundary wall. Associated landscaping and provision of bin stores.. Withdrawn 1st September 2021.

20/02455/LBC - Partial demolition and reconstruction of existing single-storey former stable residential conversion. Demolition of cowshed remains and reconstruction to form single-storey residential accommodation. Erection of two storey extension to former stable. New south boundary wall. Alterations to widen vehicular opening in listed west boundary wall. Associated landscaping and provision of bin stores.. Withdrawn 1st September 2021.

9. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

9.1. The following policies are relevant to the application:

Topic	National Planning Policy	Local Plan	Other planning documents	Headington Neighbourhood Plan:
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	Framework			
Design	117-123, 124-132	DH1, DH7, RE7, RE2, H14		CIP1, CIP2, CIP3, GSP4
Conservation/Heritage	184-202	DH3, DH5	Old Headington Conservation Area Appraisal	CIP4
Natural environment	91-101	G2, G7, G8		GSP3
Transport	117-123	M3, M5	Parking Standards SPD	
Environmental	117-121, 148-165, 170-183	RE2, RE4, RE7, RE8, RE9		
Miscellaneous	7-12	S1		

10. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

10.1. Site notices were displayed around the application site on 15th September 2021 and an advertisement was published in The Oxford Times newspaper on 16th September 2021. Following the recent submission of amended plans, a new site notice has been displayed around the application site advertising the amendments. This will be displayed for 14 days minimum and will expire on 18th February 2022.

Statutory and non-statutory consultees

Oxfordshire County Council (Highways)

10.2. The proposals are in a highly sustainable location with good access to public transport. The proposals are located within a CPZ.

10.3. Cycle Parking- The proposals provide details of a covered and secure cycle store containing 6 cycle spaces. This adheres to policy M5 of the 2036 local plan.

10.4. Off-street parking- The proposals show plans to retain the 2 existing off-street parking spaces without providing any additional spaces, adhering to policy M3 of the 2036 local plan.

10.5. The proposals are unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the local highway network in traffic and safety terms. Oxfordshire County Council do not object to the granting of planning permission subject to an informative.

Public representations

10.6. Nine local people commented on this application from addresses in Dunstan Road, Ingle Road, St Andrews Road, Demesne Furze, The Croft, Old High Street, Barton Lane, Larkins Lane and one with an unknown address but known as Headington Heritage (seven letters of support and two objections). Representations have also been received from the Oxford Preservation Trust and Friends of Old Headington.

10.7. In summary, the main points of the seven letters of support raised by local residents were:

- Need high quality accommodation in Old Headington for young growing families.
- The applicants are seeking to create a sustainable, future proofed family home capable of adapting to the changing needs of a growing family.
- The applicants have listened to, and taken advice from, a variety of experts including Oxford City's planning officers and conservation officer, alongside deep deliberation on the comments made by local people concerning the first application.
- The height of the proposed development has been reduced to lessen any perceived impact on its surroundings.
- The orchard is very old and the owners are very anxious to use the land in a very sustainable way which will hopefully help the local biodiversity.
- The applicants have sought expert advice concerning the trees and have carried out a tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment.
- At last someone is turning this eye sore into an attractive family home and lifting the threat of a developer wanting to build multiple dwellings.
- This proposal appears sympathetic to the heritage of the site and has addressed all previous concerns raised by planning and heritage officers.
- This application conserves the best of the past while updating and extending to provide family accommodation at a modern standard – all on a sensitive site in a much loved area of Oxford.
- The applicants have taken time to converse and consult with local residents about their plans and revisions.
- The use of traditional materials is to be commended as is the care and attention given to the heritage of the site; including the preservation of the large garden and ailing orchard that developers have previously proposed to build over with multiple dwellings.
- Support this application on condition that the change of use of the land described as 'orchard' is limited to that part on which the proposed building (plus surrounding paths, access etc.) will be situated.

10.8. In summary, the main points of the two letters of objection raised by local residents were:

- The application description is incorrect as the proposal would result in substantial, rather than partial, demolition of the existing dwelling, and the erection of a new dwelling, rather than an extension to the existing.
- Fundamental objection to changing the use of the orchard into residential garden land and developing on it. The eastern extension would extend the property into previously undeveloped land, into the sensitive countryside beyond, setting a dangerous precedent.
- The development responds poorly to the 'Barton Triangle' (green field of land directly adjacent and owned by Oxford Preservation Trust) and intrudes into the 'green belt'.
- The buildings will be visible from Barton Lane, the Barton Triangle and Larkin's Lane contrary to HNP policy GSP4. Destroys rare views in and out of the village.
- The application does not address the impact on viewpoint 1 'Old High Street' as identified in the Neighbourhood Plan. The proposed western building would block the view down Larkin's Lane out to the countryside which is experienced in viewpoint 1. The Key Views document is not comprehensive enough.
- The proposed demolition works will destroy most existing building fabric, resulting in total heritage loss.
- The application would result in harm to the significance of designated heritage assets by:
 - Removing the last traces of historic built fabric that provide evidence and last links of this part of the farmstead with its former farming activities,
 - Eroding the historic layout of buildings that currently allows understanding of the historic farm group,
 - Eroding the historic functional links between farm buildings and the farmland adjacent,
 - Eroding the rural and agricultural setting of the farmstead and the village and our experience of it.
- The development will cause considerable harm to the Old Headington Conservation Area and impact on the setting of Mather's Barn and the Barton Triangle, contrary to LP policy DH3.
- The proposals siting, massing, scale, form, layout and external appearance would cumulatively result in a disjointed, incongruous form of development that would be completely out of character with the form and grain of the surrounding area.
- The truncated, angular form would be alien to the traditional character and appearance of the surrounding agricultural buildings and the area. It would fail to respond to and enhance local distinctiveness, and would

suburbanise this part of the conservation area and its setting.

- The proposed increase in the vehicular entrance would be damaging as it would mean more cars, more visibility of the cars and house, the removal of the 5 bar gate, and it would destroy the ambience of the area.
- Concerns that the proposal would pave the way for a further application for 3 dwellings.
- A significant detrimental impact would be caused to neighbour amenity in terms of outlook, loss of daylight, sense of enclosure and overbearingness.

Friends of Old Headington

10.9. The Friends of Old Headington submitted a comment on this application which is summarised below.

10.10. The plans to renovate and restore the existing building on the site are supported.

10.11. The change of the orchard to land within the curtilage of the property is objected to for the following reasons:

- A significant proportion of the orchard would be lost to new development
- The site is an orchard (essentially part of adjacent green fields) rather than a residential garden and there is no local plan policy to support building on this site.
- If approved, this proposal would set a precedent by which other similar green sites in the Conservation Area could be lost to development.
- The site provides an open aspect to the Green Fields Character Area, an area that includes the remnants of the agricultural land on the edges of the historic village, and represents the eastern end of a 'green belt' that protects the Conservation Area.
- The appeal inspector's report of a Ruskin Field development in 2012 is applicable to this application.
- Wish to see the street light attached to the existing western gable retained in the new development.

Oxford Preservation Trust

10.12. Oxford Preservation Trust (OPT) submitted a comment which is detailed in full below.

10.13. 'OPT own the land to the immediate east of the site, which is currently retained as open green fields to help preserve and enhance the character of the surrounding Conservation Area.

10.14. Whilst the Trust have no objections to the proposed building works on site, we do have some concerns with the proposed change of use of the existing orchard area into a residential use.

- 10.15. For at least 50 years this part of the site has been used as an orchard, softening the views from OPT land towards Larkins Lane. We feel that it is regrettable that this could now be lost. A change of use to residential, will inevitably bring with it, the introduction of domestic paraphernalia over time.
- 10.16. Whilst not a public open space, the current orchard area can be glimpsed in certain views, and it helps to maintain the semi-rural character that this part of the city retains.'

Officer response

- 10.17. Where these are material considerations, the above matters are addressed in the report below.

9.22 The site lies within the Larkin's Lane and St Andrew's Lane character area of the Old Headington Conservation Area, not the Green Fields character area as referred to in the Friends of Old Headington comments.9.23 The 'green belt' is referred to in the representations received. For the avoidance of doubt, the site does not fall within the Oxford Green Belt.

11. PLANNING MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1. Officers consider the determining issues to be:

- Principle of development
- Design and Heritage
- Neighbouring amenity
- Trees
- Biodiversity
- Highways
- Land Quality
- Drainage

Principle of Development

- 11.2. Policy RE2 seeks to ensure development makes efficient use of land, and states that development must make best use of site capacity, in a manner compatible with the site itself, the surrounding area and broader considerations of the needs of Oxford. Policy RE2 also requires that proposals address specified criteria, including that the built form and site layout must be appropriate for the capacity of the site.
- 11.3. Officers note the concerns raised over the change of use of the orchard land to residential curtilage, and the comment made by the Friends of Old Headington that there is no local plan policy to support the proposed change of use in principle. However, there are also no specific policies precluding this change of use. As such, this element of the application should be

assessed against the wider local and national policies that are relevant. In this case, the key issue for consideration is the impact the change of use of land to residential curtilage would have on visual amenity, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and setting of other heritage assets. This is assessed in detail below.

- 11.4. The proposals would also involve the extension and development of an existing residential dwelling, which is considered to represent an efficient use of the land would be considered acceptable in principle, subject to its compliance with the other relevant policies as assessed below.

Design and Heritage

Policy considerations

- 11.5. In accordance with Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, local planning authorities when considering whether to grant consent, are required to give special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 11.6. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any conservation area.
- 11.7. In the Court of Appeal, *Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northants District Council, English Heritage and National Trust*, 18th February 2014, Sullivan LJ made clear the nature of the statutory duty is the same under both enactments (s66 and s72). To discharge this responsibility means that decision makers must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving (meaning doing no harm) to the listed building or its setting and the character or appearance of any conservation area. There is a strong presumption against granting planning permission for development that causes harm, and the decision maker should only permit such development where he concludes it carries some advantage or benefit which outweighs the failure to satisfy s66 or s72.
- 11.8. Local Plan policy DH3 requires development to respect and draw inspiration from Oxford's unique historic environment (above and below ground), responding positively to the significance, character and distinctiveness of the heritage asset and locality. Both policy DH3 and paragraph 199 of the NPPF require great weight to be given to the assets conservation.
- 11.9. Local Plan policy DH3 and NPPF paragraph 200 require clear and extensive justification to be demonstrated for any harm caused to heritage assets. Development that would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should be weighed against any public benefits the proposed development may offer, including securing its optimum viable use (policy DH3 and paragraph 202).

- 11.10. Local Plan policy DH5 requires due regard to be given to the impact on, and for the design of a proposed scheme to be informed by, the significance and setting of a local heritage asset. Consideration will be given to the significance of the asset, the extent of impact and any harm or loss shall be balanced against public benefits. The policy requires publicly accessible recording of the asset to be made to advance the understanding of significance of any assets to be lost in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact.
- 11.11. Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 stipulates that permission will only be granted for development of high quality design that creates or enhances local distinctiveness, where the design rationale has been explained in accordance with key design objectives and principles as set out in the Local Plan.
- 11.12. Policy DH7 requires bin and bike storage to be provided in a way that does not detract from the overall design of the scheme, for external servicing features to be designed as an integrated part of the overall design or positioned to minimise their impact, and for high quality detail and materials to be used in the design of servicing elements.
- 11.13. The Headington Neighbourhood Plan contains policies relating to green spaces, and character and identity. Policy GSP4 requires development to respond appropriately to the site and the character of the surrounding area. Policy CIP1 requires new development to respond to and enhance the distinctive local character. Policy CIP2 seeks to protect important identified views within Headington. Innovative and/or contemporary design will be permitted by policy CIP3 where it respects local heritage and enhances distinctive identity character and setting. CIP4 requires proposals to address the conservation and enhancement of the significance, character and special architectural and historic features of a heritage asset.

Heritage significance

- 11.14. The rubble stone boundary wall which runs along the eastern side of Larkins Lane and formerly enclosed the farmyard, dates to the 17th century and is grade II listed. The wall forms part of the fabric of the existing Meadow Larkins building, with west gable end and rear gable projection of the building incorporated into the wall. These elements as well as the vehicular opening to the north were alterations made to the stone wall as part of the 1970s residential conversion of the former stable building.
- 11.15. The Meadow Larkins former stable building is not listed itself, and does not qualify as a curtilage listed building due to its change of use and separation from the main farm house. It is however, a non-designated heritage asset comprising architectural and historic significance of local interest and importance. By virtue of the western end of the building being incorporated into the listed stone boundary wall and the proposed reconstruction of this element as well as the former cowshed alongside the wall, listed building consent is required for the works. The application for listed building consent is being considered under reference 21/02432/LBC.

- 11.16. Evidence that the existing building, or another building, has existed on the same footprint as the former stables first appeared on the 1897 Ordnance survey map. The existing former stables, due to its linear plan form, scale and stone walling, is still recognisable as a former agricultural building, despite substantial parts of it having been rebuilt, part of the former cowshed being incorporated, and other additions made as part of its residential conversion in the 1970s. The brick infill along its southern elevation is particularly unsympathetic and detracts from its interest as a former agricultural building. It plays an important role in conveying the development and layout of the historic farmyard, by defining its northern edge and in its relationship to the listed threshing barn and farm house.
- 11.17. A historic aerial photo suggests the cowshed had a steeply pitched roof with gable ends and was a two-storey building, much taller than the adjacent stable building. The cowshed was suspected to have been de-roofed between the late 1940s and early 1950s, and since then has been left to become ruinous. The ruins are of local heritage interest providing evidence of the construction and form of the former cowshed.
- 11.18. The grade II listed farmhouse, Mather's Farm, comprises high significance as the principal building of the historic farmyard. Historic evidence suggests the farmhouse was separated from its land at the end of the 1940s and the farmyard ceased to be used as such at around the same time. Sited prominently on the corner of Larkin's Lane and Barton Lane, the 17th century stone building is highly visible in key dynamic views from relatively long distances moving along the principal streets of Old High Street, Barton Lane and St Andrew's Road, as well as Larkin's Lane. Meadow Larkins is experienced in the setting of Mather's Farm in the long narrow unfolding view moving southwards up Larkin's Lane. It is also experienced within the farmhouse's setting in the key viewpoint on Old High Street (viewpoint 1 of the Headington Neighbourhood Plan) which looks northwards with the farmhouse in the foreground, the listed stone wall and the roofscape of Meadow Larkins beyond, and the surrounding green hills as the backdrop above. From public views of the site, Meadow Larkins and the boundary wall have an integral visual relationship with the farmhouse and are important to its setting and the understanding of its historic significance.
- 11.19. The grade II listed threshing barn, The Barn, is sited to the east of the farmhouse and Meadow Larkins, running perpendicular to Barton Lane and Meadow Larkins. The converted 18th century barn is 8 bays and substantial in size, with stone walls, weather boarded gable ends and a slate roof. The barn, predominantly its long roof slope, is experienced in views moving westwards up Barton Lane and looking across the pasture fields, with glimpses of Meadow Larkins also experienced in this dynamic view.
- 11.20. From within the Meadow Larkins site only the top of the farmhouses gable walls, roof pitches and chimneys are experienced due to the intervening boundary treatments, vegetation and other surrounding buildings. The northern elevation and long roof slopes of The Barn are much more prominent in views from within the site, from both the residential curtilage and the orchard land, which form part of the barns setting.

- 11.21. The building group as a whole defines the extent of the former farmyard and the village's agricultural origins and has significant architectural and historic interest. However, the former farm has evolved and experienced periods of significant change since its beginnings, not least the subdivision of the site into separate residential curtilages, conversions and developments since the 1940s, which as a result has eroded the historic form of the farmyard and its heritage significance.
- 11.22. The significance of the Old Headington Conservation Area lies in its character and appearance as a rural village dating predominantly from the 17th to the 19th centuries which has been retained despite the surrounding development of suburban housing since the late 19th century. The village's evolution can be understood through the tightly knit urban grain of the historic core, the network of smaller lanes which extend off of the principal streets, and the ring of large detached houses set in mature landscaped grounds and areas of pasture fields which surround the village to the north. The survival of traditional buildings and vernacular materials contribute to the locally distinctive character and historic significance, with the mature green surroundings and visual connections to the countryside reinforcing its historic origins.
- 11.23. The historic farmyard buildings of Mather's Farm contribute positively to the conservation areas special interest, providing evidence of the village's agricultural past. Visible from Larkin's Lane, Meadow Larkins with its limestone walls is identified in the conservation area appraisal as a positive contributor to the character and appearance of the area.
- 11.24. Limestone walls are a locally distinctive feature of the conservation area enclosing many of its streets and lanes, and the listed limestone wall at Mather's Farm is no exception, making a positive contribution to the special character and appearance of the St Andrew's Lane and Larkin's Lane character area and the settings of the surrounding listed buildings.

Impact on significance

Alterations to the wall

- 11.25. The proposed works to the listed stone boundary wall would involve widening the existing vehicular opening by 1.5m, increasing it from 2.7m wide to 4.2m wide, resulting in the loss of the section of stone wall that was impacted and rebuilt when the vehicular opening was created in the 1970s. The gable end that was added on top of the wall as part of the 1970s Meadow Larkins conversion works would be removed and this section of the wall extended sideways to the south to accommodate the new roof pitch of the reconstructed cowshed building.
- 11.26. The widening of the opening would cause a small amount of less than substantial harm to the significance of the wall and the character and appearance of the conservation area. However, the need for the works are

considered clearly and convincingly justified and the re-use of the existing stone within the reconstruction works (to be controlled via condition) would mitigate the low level of harm caused. The works to the wall associated with the reconstruction of the cowshed would not result in any further harm to the significance of the wall or lessen the positive contribution it makes to the setting of Mather's Farm or the special character and appearance of the conservation area.

Reconstruction of former cowshed

11.27. The former cowshed, except the listed boundary wall which forms its western elevation, currently exists only as ruins surrounded and covered by vegetation. The proposal to reconstruct the former cowshed on the same footprint with a simple pitched gable roof design form has been informed by historic photographs and consideration of the key viewpoints. The reconstruction of a linear form pitched roofed building in this location alongside the boundary wall would enhance the significance of the farmyard, the setting of the listed buildings, and the special interest of the conservation area. Although historic evidence suggests the former cowshed was a much higher two-storey building, the scheme proposes a lower single-storey building instead to ensure the views of the green hills as experienced in viewpoint 1 remain unharmed. The materials, natural stone walls and slate roof tiles, and the large fully glazed openings arranged in similar locations to the remnants of the existing openings on the east elevation would ensure the building references the former structure and sits comfortably within the farmyard setting. Whilst the detailing of the eaves and rooflights would result in a high quality but subtle contemporary design aesthetic.

Reconstruction of former stable

11.28. The existing residential former stable building is to be reconstructed with a slightly higher ridge line and slightly wider plan form. The building would be reduced in length where the reconstructed cowshed would be formed and a glazed link inserted between the two, reflecting the former layout and suggested passage that was historically located between the two buildings. The existing porch fenestration arrangement on the northern elevation, which are contemporary with the 1970s conversion work would be lost and replaced with fewer openings. The structural piers on the southern elevation would be revealed as facing stone piers with glazed infills. The changes in the elevation design and fenestration arrangement would better reflect the original stable building design, enhancing its former agricultural character and improving its contribution to the conservation area.

11.29. The reconstruction of the former cowshed and works to the stables would reinstate the former arrangement of farm buildings around a courtyard, and due to their simple linear forms, their agricultural origins would remain identifiable. As such these works would have a positive impact, enhancing the heritage significance of the site and its contribution to the setting of Mather's Farm and the conservation area.

- 11.30. A large extent of the stonework on the north elevation of the former stable building is proposed to be rebuilt as part of the works. The areas identified as being removed and rebuilt are sections of walls reconstructed in the 1970s. This work is considered reasonable and would provide the opportunity for better quality workmanship, therefore enhancing the overall character and appearance of the building and its contribution to the conservation area.
- 11.31. As the proposed conversion and rebuilding works will require demolition of existing stonework of some importance on both the former cowshed and stables, and the listed wall, it is considered reasonable and necessary for the approval of demolition and construction method statements by condition. This is to ensure that all existing stone is retained and re-used wherever practical.
- 11.32. The buildings are of some local heritage interest and would warrant a Level II photographic historic building record prior to conversion. The grade II listed perimeter wall of Mather's Farm fronting onto Larkins Lane (of likely 17th century date) should also be included in the photographic survey. This recording work is to be secured by condition.

New extension

- 11.33. The new extension would adjoin the eastern gable of the stables via a glazed link, with a simple barn-like design aesthetic with contemporary detailing to match the stables and cowshed. The extension would be larger than the stables with a higher eaves and ridge height at one-and-a-half storeys with a basement. Constructed from the same materials as the stables and the cowshed, with limestone walls and a slate roof, the extension would feature a single large opening infilled with glazed and timber panels with two sets of rooflights above on the north elevation, and on the south elevation a single large glazed opening with a single set of rooflights above. The eastern gable end would feature a large glazed window opening, with a smaller glazed window below serving the lower basement accommodation.
- 11.34. Historic maps and photographs show previous buildings and structures existed on the land to the east of The Barn and Meadow Larkins (now the orchard land and the residential curtilage of The Barn), although smaller in footprint and nearer to the eastern boundary than the proposed new extension. Although the new extension is larger in size than the former stables, given its siting further to the east of the site beyond the eastern stone boundary wall which demarcates the former stockyard, the original courtyard layout would remain legible. In key views from within the conservation area the extension would not interrupt the relationship the former stables, cowshed and listed wall have with Mather's Farm and therefore not harm the setting of the farmhouse.
- 11.35. The new extension would be within the setting of The Barn and visible within its setting from public vantage points along Barton Lane (see below). However, as the new extension would be 2.5m lower in height than The Barn, the listed threshing barn would remain as the dominant building in the

views. With the new extension referencing the design form of an agricultural building, it would sit comfortably within the setting of The Barn and the conservation area and not appear an overly prominent or incongruous addition to the context.

- 11.36. As the new extension would not be sited on the exact footprint of the former agricultural buildings in this part of the site, it would cause a degree of interruption to the layout of the historic farmyard and the setting of The Barn by introducing new built form not insubstantial in size into its setting. The resulting impact is assessed as a low level of less than substantial harm as the wider farmyard layout has already been interrupted by late-20th century subdivisions and additions, and the layout of this part of the farmyard would still be appreciated and understood from within and outside of the site.

Change of use of orchard land to residential curtilage

- 11.37. The orchard land to the east of the Meadow Larkin's residential curtilage contains a number of fruit trees which according to the Ecological Appraisal, all appear to be relatively young trees and the orchard, not particularly long-established. The land's eastern boundary is a continuation of the eastern boundary of the threshing barn, and marks the edge of the St Andrew's and Larkin's Lane character area. Historic evidence suggests that this area of land was irregularly planted with trees in the late-19th century with one map showing paths in this area. Photographic and map evidence shows that in the first half of the 20th century, buildings were sited in the south eastern corner of this land with no trees or orchard visible. Following the residential conversion of the stables in the 1970s, evidence suggests the orchard land was used as part of the private curtilage of Meadow Larkins, planted with additional fruit trees and used primarily for growing plants and private domestic activities. Although the exact use and layout of this land has experienced changes in recent centuries and decades, it is likely to have retained a semi-rural character which makes an important contribution to the conservation area today in the transition from the urban character area to the Green Fields character area and the setting of the threshing barn.

- 11.38. The eastern boundary of the orchard sits in line with the far boundary of the private amenity space serving 'The Barn' located to the south of the site. The land is currently enclosed along the eastern boundary with a low timber post and rail fence. Officers are of the opinion that this existing border forms a cohesive, logical and distinctive boundary between the built up, residential edge of Old Headington and the open countryside beyond. It also forms the boundary of the Larkin's Lane and St Andrew's Lane character area of the Old Headington Conservation Area. Indeed it would not encroach onto the open countryside beyond. It would not set a precedent for further changes of use as this is an isolated case with particular characteristics and relationships to surrounding uses and land. Furthermore each case has to be considered on its merits.

- 11.39. Officers note the concerns raised in the representations received that the orchard land provides a 'soft-edge' between the open countryside and the built up extent of Old Headington, and that the introduction of

outbuildings and other associated domestic paraphernalia that would likely come with the change of use would erode this 'soft edge' to the detriment of the semi-rural character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area. In this case, officers have recommended conditions to remove permitted development rights for the erection of any buildings, hardstanding, structures or means of enclosure on the land, and the proposed landscaping condition ensures that, other than those proposed to be removed as part of this application, all existing and proposed trees and hedgerows are retained in perpetuity and reinforced if necessary.

11.40. As it stands a 2m high fence could be erected along this boundary without planning permission under Class A, Part 2, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. Further, works to trees in the Conservation Area only require permission if they have a stem diameter of 75 millimetres measured at 1.5 metres from ground level. Therefore, any trees which do not meet this requirement, or hedgerows, are not protected. The imposition of the recommended conditions would ensure that these elements are brought under the control of the LPA so that proper consideration can be given to the impact of any future proposed works on the heritage assets.

11.41. In light of the proposed conditions, and given that the boundary of this land, which already exists, will not extend any further into the open countryside than the current situation or the neighbours garden to the south, officers are of the opinion that, other than the proposed extension which would occupy a modest proportion of the land and is considered acceptable for the reasons outlined above, the site will retain its current visual appearance and mixed residential/semi-rural character, and will therefore have minimal impact in terms of visual amenity. Officers note the points raised by the Oxford Preservation Trust, who own the land to the immediate east of the site, which they state is currently retained as open green fields to help preserve and enhance the character of the surrounding Conservation Area. Given that this site does not encroach into the area of open green fields beyond the existing site boundary, officers are of the view that the change of use of the land would not impact on the role and significance the open green fields play in the Conservation area. As such, the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area will be preserved.

Impact on key and public views

11.42. Several key views have been assessed as part of the submission. These include viewpoint 1 of the Headington Neighbourhood Plan which looks northwards from Old High Street down Larkins Lane with the farmhouse in the foreground, the listed stone wall and the roofscape of Meadow Larkins beyond, and the surrounding green hills in the background; the view from Larkins Lane in front of the existing vehicular opening looking east and south east into the site; the view from Barton Lane in front of the access to The Barn looking northwards towards the site with The Barn sited to the west; and lastly the view further east on Barton Lane looking north west across the open pasture land towards the site.

- 11.43. The existing tiled roofs and rear gable projection of the former stables is currently visible in viewpoint 1. The proposed reconstruction works would involve the stable roof ridgeline raised no more than 250mm above the existing and the ridgeline of the cowshed roof would be 100mm lower than that of the stables. The view would be altered, in that the slate roof of the reconstructed cowshed running parallel to the stone boundary wall would obscure the replacement roof of the stables, but the green backdrop of the countryside beyond would remain visible, with slightly more of the treed foreground revealed due to the replacement of the existing side gable end with the pitched roof. Therefore, no harm would be caused to this view and the scheme would comply with policy CIP2 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 11.44. The new extension has been positioned so as to maintain the view from Larkins Lane through to the orchard land and mature trees beyond. The new extension will be visible in this view, but due to the positioning of the new extension views through to the orchard land and pastures beyond would be maintained. Due to their materials and design form the new extension and the changes to the former stables and cowshed would not detract from the setting of the listed buildings or character and appearance of the conservation area from this view.
- 11.45. The southern slate roof slope of the new extension would be visible in the view from Barton Lane from The Barn's access. The slate roof would sit relatively comfortably within this view, nestled into the surrounding mature vegetation and trees, obscuring only a small amount of greenery and an area of sky which is currently visible in this view. In the context of the existing stone boundary wall, timber gate and woven fence, The Barn's larger slate roof slope, and mature vegetation in the foreground of this view, the slate roof of the new extension would not appear overly large, incongruous or detract from the setting of The Barn or the character of the conservation area.
- 11.46. The southern roof slope and eastern gable of the new extension and the southern roof slope of the stables would be visible within the view from Barton Lane across the pasture fields and beyond the existing mature trees and vegetation. The new extension would result in the introduction of additional built form into this view, however due to its scale, design form and materials, it would be a subservient addition within the setting of The Barn. The view of the open fields with the mature vegetation and agricultural buildings which demarcate the eastern boundary of the historic farmyard beyond, would not be harmed.

Landscaping

- 11.47. The proposed landscaping scheme for the site which includes the maintenance of the existing orchard and mature trees, the addition of native hedging along the northern and southern boundaries, and some additional planting throughout the site, would maintain and reinforce the existing green character and transitional nature of this site and the positive contribution it makes to the understanding of the farmyards historic development, and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

11.48. The proposed bicycle store would be sited in the north west corner of the site close to the boundary wall and entrance to the site and constructed from vertical timber boarding with a sedum roof. The store would be set back from the wall by approximately 3m with planting and bin storage in between. The planting would screen visibility of the store, which would extend 0.5m higher than the top of the wall, in views from the road. The screening, together with the appropriate external materials would mitigate the visual impact of the store, with it having a neutral impact on the setting of the wall and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Summary of harm and benefits

11.49. A low level of less than substantial harm would be caused to the heritage significance of the listed wall by the slight widening of the existing opening, and to the setting of the listed threshing barn and the historic farmyard layout and the contribution this makes to the understanding of the conservation area as a result of the new extension and change of use of land. The proposed scheme would enable the optimum viable use and the long term maintenance of the site for the foreseeable future, and are considered clearly and convincingly justified in accordance with NPPF paragraph 200 and Local Plan policy DH3. The carefully considered siting, scale and design of the new extension would mitigate the impact on the designated heritage assets in compliance with policies DH1 and DH3.

11.50. The reconstruction of the former stables and cowshed would return this part of the former farmyard closer to its historic form which would be a heritage benefit, enhancing the understanding and appreciation of the former farmyard, the setting of Mather's Farm and the listed wall, and the character and appearance of the conservation area. This heritage benefit of the scheme, together with enabling the optimum viable use of the site would constitute public benefits that would outweigh the low level of less than substantial harm that would be caused in accordance with NPPF paragraph 202 and policy DH3.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

11.51. Policy H14 states that planning permission will only be granted for new development that provides reasonable privacy, daylight and sunlight for occupants of both existing and new homes, and does not have an overbearing effect on existing homes. Appendix 3.7 of the Oxford Local Plan sets out guidelines for assessing the loss of sunlight and daylight using the 45/25 degree code. Policy RE7 states that planning permission will only be granted for development that ensures that the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbours is protected. Policy RE8 states that planning permission will only be granted for development proposals which manage noise to safeguard or improve amenity, health, and quality of life. Planning permission will not be granted for development that will generate unacceptable noise and vibration impacts.

11.52. Meadow Larkins sits adjacent to a number of residential dwellings, including 58 Barton Lane and The Barn, Barton Lane, which are both located

directly to the south of the site. Numbers 4 and 5 Larkins Lane sit to the north of the site.

- 11.53. There is a separation distance between the proposed development and 4 Larkins Lane of 46.8m, and a distance of 37.9m to 5 Larkins Lane. The northern border of the site which bounds the gardens of these adjacent properties is approximately 22m from the proposed built form. Given these separation distances, and the relatively modest height of the development (the ridge height of the one and a half storey extension sitting at 7.5m high) officers do not consider that the proposed development would be overbearing, nor would it result in any undue loss of light or outlook to the detriment of the occupants of 4 and 5 Larkins Lane.
- 11.54. No. 58 and The Barn, Barton Lane both sit directly south of the site and both dwellings are sited adjacent and perpendicular to the shared boundary with Meadow Larkins.
- 11.55. The reconstruction of the former cowshed would extend up to the southern boundary, with the gable end facing the garden serving 58 Barton Lane. This gable end would sit directly adjacent to an existing single storey outbuilding in the garden serving the neighbour. Given this, and by virtue of the single storey height of the proposed extension (eaves height of 2.3m and ridge height of 4.7m), officers do not consider that this element of the proposal would be adversely overbearing, nor would it result in any undue loss of light or outlook due to its position to the north.
- 11.56. The gable end of 58 Barton Lane is located 13m away (at its closest point) and directly opposite from the former stable building. The existing residential former stable building is to be reconstructed with a slightly higher ridge line and slightly wider plan form. Given the existing relationship between the two properties, the modest increase in the ridge height (which remains single storey) and the separation distances, officers do not consider that this element of the proposal will have any adverse impacts on neighbouring amenity.
- 11.57. The gable end of The Barn, which is 2.5m taller than the proposed development, also faces into the application site. The proposed new extension would sit 8.5m away from the shared boundary. By virtue of the separation distance, one and half storey height, and form of the proposed new extension, officers do not consider that this will have an undue overbearing impact, nor would it adversely affect the outlook or light available to the neighbour.
- 11.58. Further, there are no windows proposed in the southern elevation of the development facing either neighbouring property other than at ground floor level. Given the existing boundary wall officers do not consider that this will result in any overlooking. Further, there are four rooflights in the southern roof slope of proposed new extension facing towards The Barn. However, these are located over a stairwell and vaulted roof space above the ground floor bedroom. As such, officers do not consider that these new openings will result in any undue loss of privacy to the detriment of the neighbours.

11.59. With regards to the proposed use of the orchard land as residential curtilage, given the residential context of Meadow Larkins and the neighbouring dwellings, and the nature of the proposed change of use, officers do not consider that the development will result in any adverse impacts to the detriment of neighbours.

11.60. Lastly, given that the development relates to alterations and extensions to an existing residential dwelling, the proposal is not considered to result in any undue noise and disturbance to the detriment of neighbours.

11.61. In light of the above, the proposed development would not result in any adverse impacts on neighbouring amenity and would therefore comply with policies RE7, RE8 and H14 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Trees

11.62. Policy G7 states that planning permission will not be granted for development that results in the loss of green infrastructure features such as hedgerows, trees or woodland where this would have a significant adverse impact upon public amenity or ecological interest. It goes on to state that if lost it must be demonstrated that their retention is not feasible and that their loss will be mitigated.

11.63. In this case, a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment have been submitted in support of the application. The application proposes the removal of some existing trees and boundary hedges on the site. However, these are considered to be of low quality and officers consider that the new planting proposed would adequately mitigate the impact on amenity in the area and tree canopy cover so that the character and appearance of the Old Headington Conservation Area would not be harmed as a result. Outline landscape details are submitted but conditions requiring a detailed landscaping plan and planting schedule are recommended.

11.64. It is noted that there are two high quality and value trees on the site which will be retained (a walnut and poplar) along with other trees on the site. Officers are of the opinion that these should be robustly protected during the construction phase of the development and therefore recommend the submission of a detailed Tree Protection Plan to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the LPA prior to the commencement of development on the site.

11.65. In light of the above, subject to the conditions proposed, officers consider that the development would be acceptable in landscaping and tree terms and would comply with policy G7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Biodiversity

11.66. Policy G2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 states that development that results in a net loss of sites and species of ecological value will not be permitted. Compensation and mitigation measures must offset any loss and achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity. Policy G6 states that residential

development on garden land will only be supported if any loss of biodiversity value on the site will be fully mitigated, and where practicable measures to enhance biodiversity through habitat creation or improvement are incorporated.

11.67. The Local Planning Authority in exercising any of their functions, has a legal duty to have regard to the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended and secure compliance with the Habitats Directive. The Habitats Directive is construed from 31 December 2020 to transfer responsibilities to UK authorities to enable it to function as retained EU law. This applies to European sites (SACs and SPAs) and European Protected Species, both in and out of European sites which identifies 4 main offences for development affecting European Protected Species (EPS).

1. Deliberate capture or killing or injuring of an EPS
2. Deliberate taking or destroying of EPS eggs
3. Deliberate disturbance of an EPS including in particular any disturbance which is likely
 - a) To impair their ability – i) to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
 - b) To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.
4. Damage or destruction of an EPS breeding site or resting place.

11.68. ODPM and Defra Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and geological conservation, paras' 98, 99 provides that the presence of European Protected Species is a material planning consideration in determining planning applications.

11.69. The Council's Ecologist has reviewed the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal submitted to support the application and is satisfied that the potential presence of protected species and habitats has been given due regard, that European Protected Species are unlikely to be harmed as a result of the proposals and that a net gain in biodiversity will be achieved on the site subject to a number of conditions.

11.70. The recommended conditions require the submission of an updated bat survey if the works are not carried out within two years of the date of the original survey, and the submission of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan prior to occupation of the development.

11.71. As no significant impacts on bats are predicted under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, a European Protected Species (bat) licence will not be required for the proposed works to proceed. Since there are no predicted impacts on bats or their habitats, it is not necessary to consider the 'three tests' of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 in this instance.

11.72. As such, subject to the proposed conditions, the development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on biodiversity and would comply with policy G2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Transport

Access and Parking

11.73. The application site is in a highly sustainable location with good access to public transport and falls within the Headington Central Controlled Parking Zone.

11.74. The application proposes the retention of two off-street car parking spaces on the site and the widening of the existing vehicular access.

11.75. Policy RE7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 states that planning permission will only be granted for development that does not have unacceptable transport impacts. Policy M3 states that in Controlled Parking Zone's (CPZ), where development is located within a 400m walk to frequent public transport services and within 800m walk to a local supermarket or equivalent facilities, planning permission will only be granted for residential development that is car-free.

11.76. Given that there are no additional spaces proposed over and above that which already exists, the development is considered to comply with policy M3 of the Local Plan. Further, the Local Highway Authority has advised that the proposed widening of the access is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the local highway network in traffic and safety terms.

11.77. An informative has been recommended by the Local Highway Authority regarding any alterations to the public highway (dropped kerbs).

Cycle Parking

11.78. Policy M5 states that planning permission will only be granted for development that complies with or exceeds the minimum bicycle parking provision as set out in Appendix 7.3. It goes on to state that bicycle parking should be, well designed and well located, convenient, secure, covered (where possible enclosed) and provide level, unobstructed external access to the street.

11.79. In this case, the application proposes a covered and secure cycle store containing six cycle spaces located along the northern boundary of the site adjacent to the access. This is considered to be appropriately located, easily accessible and complies with the requirements set out in policy M5 of the Local Plan and is therefore acceptable.

11.80. In light of the above, the application is considered to be supportable in highways safety and convenience terms and would accord with policies RE7, M3 and M5 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Land Quality

11.81. Policy RE9 sets out the requirements for applications where proposals would be affected by contamination or where contamination may present a risk to the surrounding environment. These include details of investigations carried out to assess the nature and extent of contamination and possible impacts on the development and future users, biodiversity, and the natural and built environment; and detailed mitigation measures.

11.82. In this case, having regard to the contaminated land questionnaire submitted with the application, the plans submitted with this application and historical mapping for the site, it is considered that the risk of significant contamination being present on the site is likely to be low. However, the development involves an extension on former agricultural land which can sometimes contain some contaminants as a result. As such, an informative has been recommended regarding the developer's responsibility for dealing with any unexpected contamination and the development is considered to comply with policy RE9 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Drainage

11.83. Policy RE4 states that all development is required to manage surface water through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) or techniques to limit run-off.

11.84. The application site is not at significant risk of flooding from any sources. However in accordance with Policy RE4, the development should be drained using a sustainable drainage system. A condition has been imposed on the consent to secure this.

12. CONCLUSION

12.1. On the basis of the matters discussed in the report, officers would make members aware that the starting point for the determination of this application is in accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which makes it clear that proposals should be assessed in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

12.2. In the context of all proposals paragraph 11 of the NPPF requires that planning decisions apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means approving development that accords with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless: the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

12.3. Therefore it would be necessary to consider the degree to which the proposal complies with the policies of the development plan as a whole and

whether there are any material considerations, such as the NPPF, which are inconsistent with the result of the application of the development plan as a whole.

12.4. In considering the impact of the proposed development, great weight and importance has been given to the desirability of preserving the grade II listed wall, the setting of the grade II listed threshing barn, The Barn, and the grade II listed farmhouse, Mather's Farm, and the special character and appearance of the Old Headington Conservation Area as designated heritage assets. The low level of less than substantial harm that would be caused to the significance of the designated heritage assets is considered sufficiently mitigated by carefully considered and high quality design and justified by the need to ensure the optimum viable use of the site. The heritage benefits of the enhancements to the former farmyard and the continued use and maintenance of the site would constitute public benefits that would outweigh the low level of less than substantial harm caused and subject to conditions, the scheme would comply with sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, paragraphs 199, 200 and 202 of the NPPF, policies DH1, DH3, DH5 and DH7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036, and policies GSP4, CIP1, CIP2, CIP3 and CIP4 of the Headington Neighbourhood Plan.

12.5. Further, for the reasons set out within this report, the proposed development is considered acceptable in terms of the other materials considerations and would accord with the relevant policies of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

12.6. It is therefore recommended that the Committee resolve to delegate authority to officers to grant planning permission for the development proposed subject to the following conditions and the completion of the amended consultation period.

13. CONDITIONS

Time Limit

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Approved Plans

2. The development permitted shall be constructed in complete accordance with the specifications in the application and approved plans listed below, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To avoid doubt and to ensure an acceptable development as indicated on the submitted drawings in accordance with policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Samples of all exterior materials

3. Samples of all exterior materials proposed to be used for the hereby approved new works shall be made available for inspection on site and details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the start of the relevant works and only the approved materials shall be used. All existing original materials from the dismantled sections of wall shall be re-used in accordance with the requirements of condition 15. The Local Planning Authority shall be notified where the re-use of existing external materials is not possible.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to give further consideration to the external appearance of the approved works, in the interest of visual amenity and the special character of the listed building, in accordance with policies DH1 and DH3 of the Adopted Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Sample panel of stonework

4. Sample panels of stonework demonstrating the colour, texture, face bond, mortar and pointing for the new works shall be erected on site and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the relevant parts of the work are commenced. The approved sample panels shall be constructed with a lime mortar mix, shall represent the minimum standard and any pointing shall at least match the standard of the sample, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved sample panels which shall remain on site for the duration of the development works.

Reason: To ensure a sympathetic appearance for the new work and in the interest of the special character of the listed building, in accordance with policies DH1 and DH3 of the Adopted Oxford Local Plan 2036.

SuDS

5. All impermeable areas of the proposed development, including roofs, driveways, and patio areas shall be drained using Sustainable Drainage measures (SuDS). This may include the use of porous pavements and infiltration, or attenuation storage to decrease the run off rates and volumes to public surface water sewers and thus reduce flooding. Soakage tests shall be carried out in accordance with BRE Digest 365 or similar approved method to prove the feasibility/effectiveness of soakaways or filter trenches. Where infiltration is not feasible, surface water shall be attenuated on site and discharged at a controlled discharge rate no greater than prior to development using appropriate SuDS techniques and in consultation with the sewerage undertaker where required. If the use of SuDS are not reasonably practical, the design of the surface water drainage system shall be carried out in accordance with Approved Document H of the Building Regulations. The drainage system shall be designed and maintained to remain functional, safe, and accessible for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To avoid increasing surface water run-off and volumes to prevent an increase in flood risk in accordance with policy RE4 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Bat Survey

6. The bat survey shall be considered valid for no longer than two years. Should work not commence within two years of the original survey, an updated assessment must be undertaken and the results provided to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Policy G2: Protection of biodiversity and geo-diversity of the adopted Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Landscape and Ecological Management Plan

7. A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation.

The content of the LEMP shall include the following:

- a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed, including orchard enhancement and hedgerow creation;
- b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management;
- c) Aims and objectives of management;
- d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives;
- e) Prescriptions for management actions; and
- f) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the scheme hereby approved.

The plan will also include specifications and locations of landscape planting of known benefit to wildlife and provision of artificial roost features for bats and birds. Any new fencing will include gaps suitable for the safe passage of hedgehogs.

The approved scheme shall only be implemented in accordance with the approved LEMP.

Reason: The prevention of harm to species and habitats within and outside the site during construction in accordance with Policy G2: Protection of biodiversity and geo-diversity of the adopted Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Archaeological and Historic Building Recording (WSI)

8. No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological recording and historic building recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the planning authority. All works shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The development may have a damaging effect on known or suspected elements of the historic environment of the people of Oxford and their visitors, including Late Saxon, medieval and post-medieval remains in accordance with Oxford Local Plan Policy DH4.

Bin and Cycle Storage provision

9. The bin and cycle storage hereby approved shall be provided on site prior to the occupation of the development and shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the area and to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport in line with policies M5, DH1, and DH7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Means of Enclosure

10. A plan showing the means of enclosure for the new development including details of the treatment of all the boundaries of the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of the development. The approved treatment of all of the site boundaries shall be completed prior to first occupation of the approved development and retained as such thereafter unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, protection of heritage assets and to safeguard the privacy of adjoining occupiers in accordance with policies RE7, DH1, DH3 and H14 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Landscape Plan

11. A landscape plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before above ground development starts. The plan shall include a survey of existing trees showing sizes and species, and indicate which (if any) it is requested should be removed, and shall show in detail all proposed tree and shrub planting, treatment of paved areas, and areas to be grassed or finished in a similar manner.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the setting of heritage assets in accordance with policies DH1, DH3 and G7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Landscaping implementation and replanting

12. The landscaping proposals as approved by the Local Planning Authority shall be carried out upon substantial completion of the development and be completed no later than the first planting season after substantial completion. . In the event of any of the planting dying or being seriously damaged or destroyed within 5 years of the completion of the development, new planting of equivalent number and species, shall be planted as a replacement and thereafter properly maintained.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the setting of heritage assets in accordance with policies DH1, DH3 and G7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Tree Protection Plan

13. Detailed measures for the protection of trees to be retained during the development shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) before any works on site begin. Such measures shall include scale plans indicating the positions of barrier fencing and/or ground protection materials to protect Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of retained trees and/or create Construction Exclusion Zones (CEZ) around retained trees. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA the approved measures shall be in accordance with relevant sections of BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction- Recommendations. The approved measures shall be in place before the start of any work on site and shall be retained for the duration of construction unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA. Prior to the commencement of any works on site the LPA shall be informed in writing when the approved measures are in place in order to allow Officers to make an inspection. No works or other activities including storage of materials shall take place within CEZs unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To protect retained trees during construction. In accordance with policy G7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Removal of PD Rights

14. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking or enacting that Order) no development as defined in Classes A, B, C, D, E and F of Schedule 2, Part 1, or Class A of Schedule 2, Part 2 of the Order shall be erected on the application site or undertaken without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority considers that even minor changes in the design or enlargement of the development should be subject of further consideration to safeguard the appearance of the area, setting of heritage assets and the amenities of occupiers in accordance with policies DH1, DH3, DH5 and H14 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Construction Management Plan and Deconstruction and Reconstruction Methods

15. Prior to the commencement of works on site, a construction management plan detailing the adequate protection of the listed boundary wall for the duration of the works and methodologies for the hereby approved deconstruction and reconstruction works to the listed boundary wall, former stables and former cowshed, including details of the re-use of the existing stone and external materials in the reconstruction works, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details only. The stone from the dismantled sections of wall shall be carefully cleaned off, stored safely and securely under cover for re-use in the proposed reconstruction works.

Reason: To ensure the preservation and protection of original, weathered materials and features of historic interest and their reinstatement as part of this contract, and to preserve the special architectural or historic listed building, in accordance with policies DH3 of the Adopted Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Large scale drawings and details

16. Large scale drawings and details showing the abutment of the new cowshed building with the listed wall including the roof junctions and any treatment to the internal (east) face of the wall shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the start of the relevant work and only the approved materials shall be used.

Reason: To safeguard the special interest of the listed building in accordance with policies DH1 and DH3 of the Adopted Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Details of Fixing Methods for New Gates

17. Details including dimensions, design, materials, finished appearance and fixing methods of the proposed new gates for the vehicular entrance in the listed wall shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the relevant parts are installed and the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details only.

Reason: To ensure a sympathetic appearance for the new work and in the interest of the special character of the listed building and conservation area in accordance with policies DH1 and DH3 of the Adopted Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Large scale design details

18. Notwithstanding the hereby approved drawings, large scale drawn design details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the relevant parts are installed and the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details only:

- a) Eaves detail
- b) Junctions of glazed links
- c) Windows and glazed panels
- d) External doors
- e) Rooflights which shall be set flush with the surrounding roof plane

Reason: To ensure a sympathetic appearance for the new work and in the interest of the special character of the listed building and conservation area, in accordance with policies DH1 and DH3 of the Adopted Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Details of External Features

19. Details of the siting, size, design and finished appearance of the following external fixtures, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the relevant parts are installed and the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details only:

- a) New ventilation grilles and extracts
- b) New boiler flues and new soil and vent pipes
- c) CCTV cameras
- d) Lighting fixtures
- e) Alarm boxes
- f) Bird and bat boxes

Reason: To ensure a sympathetic appearance for the new work and in the interest of the special character of the listed building and conservation area in accordance with policies DH1 and DH3 of the Adopted Oxford Local Plan 2036.

14. INFORMATIVES

1. Any alterations to the public highway will be at the applicant's expense and to Oxfordshire County Council's standards and specifications. Written permission must be gained from the Oxfordshire County Council (Contact – 08453101111 or refer to <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/dropped-kerbs> for this action).
2. Removal of any building or vegetation shall be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive). If this is not possible, then a suitability qualified ecologist shall check the areas concerned immediately prior to the commencement of clearance works to ensure no nesting or nest-building birds are present. If any nesting activity is confirmed, no clearance will be permitted within the area until the birds have fledged and the nest is considered inactive.

15. APPENDICES

- **Appendix 1 – Site block plan**

16. HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1998

16.1. Officers have considered the implications of the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to approve this application. They consider that the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8/Article 1 of Protocol 1 is justifiable and proportionate for the protection of the rights and freedom of others or the control of his/her property in this way is in accordance with the general interest.

17. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

17.1. Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community.

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