

**Case Officer:** Andrew Thompson

**Applicant:** Manor Oak Homes/ G B Bishop Fruedling & C A Parson

**Proposal:** Alterations and repairs to listed farmhouse and annexe; refurbishment and partial rebuilding of existing outbuildings to provide 2 no. dwellings; erection of 2 no. new dwellings; provision of car parking, bin and cycle stores; and access

**Ward:** Kidlington East

**Councillors:** Councillor Billington, Councillor Mawson and Councillor Middleton

**Reason for Referral:** Referred by Assistant Director for Planning and Development for the following reasons: The inclusion of the application site within the wider PR7b - Land at Stratfield Farm Allocation.

**Expiry Date:** 13 October 2023

**Committee Date:** 5 October 2023

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**SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION: GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS**

**1. APPLICATION SITE AND LOCALITY**

- 1.1 The application site relates to listed building consent for the Grade II Listed Farmhouse and surrounding curtilage listed outbuildings.
- 1.2 Stratfield Farmhouse is Grade II listed, with the surrounding outbuildings being curtilage listed. The Farmhouse is constructed from coursed limestone rubble with a hipped concrete tile roof. A group of farm outbuildings, which stand around two linked yards are located north of the Farmhouse. The majority of these pre-date 1948 and are considered listed by curtilage to the Farmhouse.
- 1.3 The application site includes the Orchard land to the south and west of the application site and to the south the former Farmhouse garden. The former Farmhouse and its ancillary farmstead buildings are located to the Northeast of the application site. The Farmhouse (identified as Building A with an ancillary building a1) is on the southwestern edge of the group of buildings, to the north of the Farmhouse on the western edge is a curtilage listed barn (Building B) and on the eastern edge of the buildings a more modern ancillary building (Building E). Further to the north and on the eastern edge is a former open shed (Building F and F1). Opposite Building F is a further open store (Building G). On the north western side of the site is a cluster of ancillary buildings – a barn (Building B), the remnants of an outbuilding (Building C) and a modern barn (Building D)
- 1.4 Generally, the Farmhouse and surrounding outbuildings are in various stages of disrepair, with a number of blocks (identified in supporting documents as B1, C, F1, G and H) in ruinous condition. The buildings and surroundings have not been used for farming for a number of years, which is clear to see due to the extensive, long-term vegetation growth and partial collapse of roofs and walls.
- 1.5 The redevelopment of Stratfield Farm farmhouse and outbuildings is part of a larger residential development scheme to provide approx. 120 new homes in the local area.

## **2. CONSTRAINTS**

2.1. The application site is within the Local Plan Partial Review as site PR7b, land at Stratfield Farm. This removed the site from the Green Belt. There are potential habitats identified in terms of the Orchard and Grassland.

2.2. The List Description identifies the Farmhouse as follows:

*Farmhouse. Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Coursed-limestone rubble; hipped concrete tile roof; brick end stacks. L-plan with rear left wing. 2 storeys; symmetrical 3-window range. Semi-circular arch over 4-panelled door with fanlight. Keyed stone lintels over early C19 sashes with glazing bars. Rear outshut and rear left wing have early C19 beaded 4-panelled door and plank doors. Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century two-storey range to right with 3-light leaded casement to rear.*

2.3. The list description identifies that the internal of the farmhouse has not been surveyed as part of the list but is thought to be of interest.

2.4. In terms of a reference Historic Maps show the progression of the site. The 1st Edition OS map (1875-1887) shows a narrow track to the north east of the farmhouse running north through the approximate location of 29-31 South Avenue, this no longer exists. The track would have run along the north of the pond and was tree-lined.

2.5. The 2nd Edition OS map (1899-1905) still shows the track but not the trees as a range of open sheds has been built in the north-east corner, only part of this survives on the 3rd edition OS map. The map shows a building (C) running north from (B) which disappears by the map, and a yard to the west of the west range of farm buildings. This map also shows additional yards within the farm courtyard, we usually see these as fenced runs for cattle/a bull pen/ sheep pens during lambing. There is a smaller enclosure to the west range, it is not known if pigs or poultry were kept on the farm or were just for personal use.

2.6. The 3rd Edition OS map (1913-1923) shows a reduced open shed to the north-east corner, the building (C) north of (B) is drawn as an open shed to the east. The runs/divisions within the courtyard have disappeared suggesting they were of a temporary nature. The two staddle stones are shown on the east of building (F1).

2.7. The 4th Edition OS map (1936-1939) shows a deeper plan of building to the south of the west range of farm outbuildings, and a building on part of the corner between D and F1. There is also a small building in the yard to the farmhouse.

2.8. The 5th Edition OS map (1956-1976) shows the corner building has disappeared and the larger depth of buildings are now shown as completely open sheds. There is an additional building located to the north. This map also suggests the area between the 2-storey barn and the house as built structure.

## **3. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

3.1. The application proposals are for listed building consent for the proposed works to convert the building and associated buildings to residential development. The works are set out in detail below.

3.2. Building A and a1 – The farmhouse is to be restored for residential and ancillary use. It is expected that the front garden and traditional orchard together with the ancillary store building (Building a1) will fall within new property ownership boundary. There are small outbuildings (not numbered) which are attached to the walls between the

farmhouse and courtyard which would be retained for use as storage and repaired. The Farmhouse requires local repairs of the existing fabric of the building, as well as replacement of the existing concrete tile roof with traditional stone slates, which are assumed to have been the original roof covering.

- 3.3. Refurbishment of the Farmhouse can be achieved with minimal internal alterations, which are limited to making one new opening in an existing wall between the kitchen and dining room, as well as the addition of reversible timber stud partitions to create additional sanitary provisions, as expected in a house of this scale. On the ground floor, 2 historic coppers are proposed to be retained within the new boot room. A more recent brick extension to the north of the house is proposed to be demolished, to return the exterior of the house to its original form. Conversion of Block A1 into an Annexe requires construction of a new staircase, allowing access to a new bedroom upstairs. This will require the removal of floor joists in the central bay to create a new opening. Additionally, 2 new door openings are proposed on the ground floor to connect all 3 bays internally, creating a single dwelling. The existing roof covering, which has corroded and does not have sufficient flashings is proposed to be replaced with clay tiles, utilising existing timber roof structure. Existing access point to the Farmhouse will remain unchanged, while a section of the courtyard will be designated as private amenity space of the Farmhouse.
- 3.4. Building B and C – Existing Block B has well preserved stone walls and internal first floor timber structure, although these have suffered significant damage due to long term lack of maintenance and vegetation growth. The roof has been re-covered with modern corrugated sheeting. A side extension built out of timber and clay roof tiles is in very poor condition and has largely collapsed. Block C to the rear has also collapsed almost entirely and is overgrown, with only partial remains of 2 stone walls, which have had significant root growth and water damage. In order to provide satisfactory 3 bedroom residential accommodation within the constraints of the existing narrow footprint, the proposal is to raise the existing eaves and ridge height of Block B by 700mm to a storey and a half, while maintaining the same roof pitch, to allow for sufficient space within the roof structure for a bedroom and family bathroom.
- 3.5. The new roof is proposed to be covered with traditional stone slates, while the extension of the existing stone walls is proposed to be finished with weathered timber cladding, clearly showing the distinction between the old and the new. An existing dormer window on the north elevation of Block B is proposed to be rebuilt in lead in matching proportions. Two new window openings are proposed to be created in the north wall, as well as a new door opening in the western wall internally to connect the stone cottage to the side extension. These openings have been designed to be minimal, matching the existing window proportions on the front elevation.
- 3.6. The east side extension is proposed to remain subservient to the host building, retaining existing lower ridge height and use of timber posts and cladding, emphasising the existing relationship. To the rear, the side extension continues over the original footprint of Block C, to provide adequate living accommodation and parking space for 2 vehicles. Existing boundary wall, running along the west side of Block C is proposed to be rebuilt using limestone reclaimed from site due to extensive structural damage caused by long term root growth. New conservation style rooflights are proposed to the west and north elevations, away from the farmyard, to provide daylighting to first floor rooms and additional evening light in the main living space.
- 3.7. Building D as an existing modern steel structure (from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century) is proposed to be demolished to allow for the construction of a new residential dwelling.
- 3.8. Building E is a tired 20<sup>th</sup> Century steel structure, which is proposed to be taken down.

- 3.9. Building F and F1 are overgrown, with the north side of the range almost entirely collapsed, with only a few staddle stones remaining. The eastern stone boundary wall, running along the entire length of these blocks is in poor condition, with areas of complete collapse, major cracks and missing sections.
- 3.10. A central section of the existing timber roof structure is in satisfactory condition, albeit the entire remaining structure appears to be leaning east. The proposals seek to utilise the entire footprint of Blocks F and F1 to create a 3-bedroom, single storey dwelling, retaining the existing ridge height of Block F, while raising the ridge height of Block F1 by 350mm to accommodate a wider footprint. The existing remaining roof structure of Block F is proposed to be retained, following jacking up to remove the existing lean. The western elevation proposes to replace existing oak posts on staddle stones in existing locations, as the posts have suffered prolonged water damage and any repairs are likely to fail.
- 3.11. To provide a rhythm of the regular bays, the openings are proposed to be infilled with glazing, with sections of vertical hit and miss timber boarding added for privacy. The eastern elevation is proposed to be retained as a mostly solid rubble limestone wall, constructed out of stones reclaimed from the site, with minimal openings in the same locations as existing openings.
- 3.12. Building G has now substantially collapsed, with the existing ruins comprising of a partial stone gable wall and the original footprint, giving an idea of the scale of what once stood in it's place.
- 3.13. The remaining historic fabric of the building allows to determine it's footprint and the construction material, which is stone. There is no further evidence available to ascertain the original use, height of the structure or the location of former openings. The shallow depth of the existing footprint prevents it from being successfully converted into garaging suitable for modern vehicles. As such, the proposal is to construct an entirely new 1 and a half storey residential stone cottage within the existing footprint with a new roof to match Building B's pitch. Building G ridge height is proposed to be 300mm higher than proposed Building B due to adjacent structure (Building E). Private amenity space is proposed to be located to the west, enclosed with a low dry stone wall and agricultural fencing, allowing the front façade facing the courtyard to remain agricultural in appearance.
- 3.14. The best preserved gable wall has been damaged by long term vegetation growth and is proposed to be rebuilt and extended in height using existing limestone. The remaining walls are proposed to be rubble limestone cavity walls to match the gable wall, with majority of proposed openings, rooflights and 2 new lead dormers located to face west, away from the farmyard.
- 3.15. The stone boundary wall enclosing the proposed utility room will be repaired and repointed, with a new slate roof added to the extension.
- 3.16. Building H has substantially collapsed and is proposed to be recorded and taken down.

#### **4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1. There is no planning history directly relevant to the proposal. The concurrent planning application under reference 22/01756/F and the application for the wider PR7b site under reference 22/01611/OUT should be noted.

## 5. PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

- 5.1. The following pre-application discussions have taken place with regard to this proposal under reference 21/03477/PREAPP:
- 5.2. The pre-app indicates conversion of the listed farmhouse (building A) to a single dwelling, consistent with the principle of converting to residential use contained within the Council's Development Brief.
- 5.3. Detailed comments were made by the Council's Conservation Team as to the detail of the Listed Building, the requirements for future submissions and the detailed layout of the proposed scheme including matters relating to car parking and ancillary structures.

## 6. RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY

- 6.1. This application has been publicised by way of a site notice displayed near the site and by advertisement in the local newspaper. The final date for comments was **20 July 2022**, although additional consultation with statutory heritage consultees was carried out on the amended plans and information received in June 2023 with a consultation deadline of **15 August 2023**. Comments received after this date and before finalising this report have also been taken into account.
- 6.2. No comments have been raised by third parties.

## 7. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

- 7.1. Below is a summary of the consultation responses received at the time of writing this report. Responses are available to view in full on the Council's website, via the online Planning Register.

### PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS

- 7.2. **KIDLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL:** Accepts the principle of development on this site as it is an allocation site in the adopted Local Plan, although the overall number of dwellings applied for exceeds the allocation. Kidlington Parish Council is concerned about the one vehicular access to the site onto the slip road of the Oxford Road as it is close to the Kidlington roundabout at the bend in the road which is considered hazardous. Therefore, Kidlington Parish Council objects to the means of access to Oxford Road. Additionally, Kidlington Parish Council is not satisfied that the traffic generated by this development within the overall context of all the other developments proposed in adopted Local Plan to address Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs has been taken into account. This application needs to be considered within that context holistically and objects on that basis.

### CONSULTEES

- 7.3. **HISTORIC ENGLAND:** No comment – the advice of local conservation advisors should be sought.
- 7.4. **GEORGIAN GROUP:** Following discussion and the provision of further information in relation to the designation of the building on the risk register, the Georgian Group are satisfied that the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 202 of the NPPF has been carried out and have no further comments.

The original comments of the Group were as follows:

The replacement of concrete tiles with stone slates and the removal of the 1920s brick lean to represent clear heritage benefits and overall the internal alterations proposed are relatively modest. However, we suggest your authority needs to seek further information and justification from the applicant in respect of the proposal to form a new opening between the western front reception room (G3) and the kitchen (G7).

The applicant suggests there may formerly have been communication between these two rooms but at the moment this is only conjecture as no investigation of the fabric has been undertaken. Unhelpfully, no photographs of the two rooms affected have been provided with the application. It is clear from the documentation, however, that this new opening would entail loss of original fabric and disrupt the historic planform and so in all likelihood cause a degree of harm to the special significance of the building.

Furthermore, the structural report enclosed with the application indicates the farmhouse is in a very poor state of repair and yet the Design and Access statement does not explain the impact of the proposed new opening – in the building's spine wall - on the overall structure. Again, this information and evidence should be provided before any consent is granted.

We draw your attention to the “great weight” paragraph (199) of the NPPF (2021): “When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation” and to paragraph 200 which states that “any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification”. In our view, the proposal to form a new opening within the listed farmhouse has not yet met those key policy tests and we urge you to seek further information and justification from the applicant before determining the application.

## **8. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

- 8.1. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 8.2. The development plan in Cherwell comprises the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1, the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review 2011-2031 (Part 1) – Oxford’s Unmet Housing Need and the saved policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996.
- 8.3. The site forms part of the allocation under Site PR7b - Land at Stratfield Farm. The wider site was allocated as part of the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review (Adopted 7 September 2020).

### CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 2011 - 2031 (PART1) PARTIAL REVIEW - OXFORD'S UNMET HOUSING NEED

- PR1: Achieving Sustainable Development for Oxford’s Needs
- PR2: Housing Mix, Tenure and Size
- PR7b - Land at Stratfield Farm
- PR11 - Infrastructure Delivery
- PR12a - Delivering Sites and Maintaining Housing Supply

### CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 2011 - 2031 PART 1 (CLP 2031 Part 1)

- PSD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- ESD1: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change

- ESD2: Energy Hierarchy and Allowable Solutions
- ESD3: Sustainable Construction
- ESD4: Decentralised Energy Systems
- ESD5: Renewable Energy
- ESD6: Sustainable Flood Risk Management
- ESD15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment
- Kidlington 2: Strengthening Kidlington Village Centre
- INF1: Infrastructure

#### CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN 1996 SAVED POLICIES (CLP 1996)

- C18 – Development proposals affecting listed buildings
- C21 – Proposals for re-use of a listed building
- C28 – Layout, design and external appearance of new development
- C30 – Design control

#### Other Material Planning Considerations

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- National Model Design Code
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Kidlington Masterplan SPD
- PR7b Development Brief

## **9. APPRAISAL**

9.1. The key issues for consideration in this case are:

- Principle of development
- Design, and impact on the character of the area
- Heritage impact

#### Principle of Development

- 9.2. The application forms part of the wider allocation to PR7b (Land at Stratfield Farm) which allocated the wider site for the construction of 120 homes (net) on 5 hectares of land (the residential area).
- 9.3. The policy identifies that the character and appearance of the Grade II Listed Stratfield Farmhouse and its setting is to be enhanced through appropriate building restoration and landscaping.
- 9.4. Further saved policy C21 of the CLP1996 states that sympathetic consideration will be given to proposals for the re-use of an unused listed building provided the use is compatible with its character, architectural integrity and setting and does not conflict with other policies in this plan. The development is a part of the wider allocation.
- 9.5. As such the principle of works to allow the conversion of the listed building is supported by the wider allocation for housing and the conversion is supported in principle subject to consideration of the detailed listed building aspects.

#### Design, and impact on the character of the area

- 9.6. The Development Brief for PR7b stats at 6.0 *'The 'gardens' and orchard landscape around the farmhouse and the farm courtyard should retain the historic character. Garden sheds/greenhouses and other overtly domestic paraphernalia and boundary*

*treatments are not allowed. Garden storage is to be integrated within the building/outbuildings footprint and protected from future conversion to additional living accommodation. Any amenity space outside of the courtyard will need subtle demarcation.’ and ‘The depths of the new built structures are to be shallow, allowing traditional roof pitches so that the farmhouse remains the dominant building on the site.’*

- 9.7. *And 6.3.2 ‘Land to the north of the barns is to be used for private gardens or parking, creating a secure boundary to the existing properties on Croxford Gardens and retaining the existing woodland. Innovative design solutions will be required to avoid changing the character of the farm court or its setting. For example, overtly residential division such as fencing/sheds and greenhouses are to be restricted.’*
- 9.8. *‘Existing gated vehicular access from a main dirt track to the farmhouse will be retained and upgraded. Existing pedestrian access to the Farmhouse via steps on the front façade will be retained, albeit it will no longer be the principal access point, which will now be moved to the rear, accessible directly from the driveway. The current access between the Farmhouse and the outbuildings will be blocked with the extension of the existing low dry stone wall to enclose private amenity space. A new private vehicular access point will be created to the northwest corner of the site, between Blocks B and G (5m wide) for residents of the proposed 4 new dwellings. An adoptable turning area has been incorporated within the masterplan providing a safe point of access for fire and services.’*
- 9.9. Development Brief for Local Plan Partial Review Site PR7b - Land at Stratfield Farm sets out at Section 2 item iii: that proposals should be of exemplar design which responds distinctively and sensitively to the local built, historic and environmental context. Further the Brief guides that historic farmhouse and barns at the site’s centre will be retained and sensitively integrated as a local landmark within a corridor of green space to retain the open setting of the farmhouse within the new development.’ and ‘appropriate building restoration and landscaping to enhance the character and appearance of the Grade II listed Stratfield Farmhouse and its setting.’
- 9.10. With Stratfield Farmhouse a building at risk there is a need to ensure that the proposals are followed with a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy as set out in the NPPF (Paragraph 190) should take into account: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.
- 9.11. The NPPF sets out at paragraph 126 that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 9.12. At paragraph 130 the NPPF also sets out to ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.
- 9.13. The re-use of Stratfield Farmhouse, the alterations to outbuildings and the removal of modern structures would in design terms improve the overall environment of the



heritage asset. The proposals to reuse the building and bring forward the historic character at the core of the allocation is considered to be a positive element to the proposal.

- 9.14. Buildings D and E detract from the character of the area and whilst these were perhaps legitimate modern agricultural buildings their continued presence and poor repair are detrimental to the character of the area. Therefore the removal of modern buildings in particular are a positive design outcome of this scheme.
- 9.15. The proposals for the reuse, extension and alteration to the outbuildings would also re-instate a traditional style farmstead. The use of courtyard areas for car parking is noted and whilst there would need to be control of areas through permitted development restrictions as part of the planning application, if approved, to ensure residential paraphernalia and other features do not diminish the quality of the area.
- 9.16. Overall it is considered the proposals would be an enhancement to the area and the reuse of the buildings would assist in creating a sense of place and enhance the character of the area, subject to ensuring that the impact on the heritage asset itself is appropriately managed.

#### Heritage Impact

- 9.17. The application proposals are for works to Stratfield Farmhouse and curtilage listed buildings which are Grade II listed buildings. The building is also present on the Heritage Risk Register.
- 9.18. Section 16(2) of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) states that: *In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.* Therefore significant weight must be given to these matters in the assessment of this planning application.
- 9.19. Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are designated heritage assets, and Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states that: *when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.* Policy ESD15 of the CLP 2031 Part 1 echoes this guidance.
- 9.20. Policy C18 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 states that *in determining an application for listed building consent, the Council will have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. The Council will normally only approve internal or external alterations or extensions to a listed building which are minor and sympathetic to the architectural and historic character of the building.*
- 9.21. Within the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review, the pre-wording to Policy PR7b states at Paragraph 5.94 'The farmhouse and its out-buildings are generally in a poor state of repair and the allocation of this site will ensure the renovation of these buildings and their long term future.'
- 9.22. Paragraph 5.96 states that 'We consider that only limited areas of the site should be developed to ensure that the following is achieved:...5. Retention and renovation of the Grade II Listed Stratfield Farmhouse and the protection of its historic setting'

9.23. Within the Development Brief, Section 3.2.3 states

'The site comprises a number of fields along with the two storey Grade II listed Stratfield Farmhouse, an early 19th century house and courtyard with a number of outbuildings to the north, some of which are in poor condition.'

'The farmhouse is bounded by two orchards: a modern orchard to the south and a historic orchard to the west, both of which form an important part of its setting and both of which are NERC Act S41 Habitat.'

The private garden to Stratfield Farmhouse includes the gardens to the south and west of the house, including the Traditional Orchard.

Figures 9 and 20 of the Development Brief also shows a 'Curtilage listed buildings and spaces'.

9.24. Section 4.1 of the Development Brief includes 'Stratfield farmhouse and its outbuildings are unused and in poor condition. Significant work will be required to the buildings to bring them back into use.

9.25. The farmhouse is Grade II listed and there are outbuildings and structures which are curtilage listed. The traditional orchard to the west is within the curtilage of the building and the modern orchard to the south contributes to its setting.'

9.26. Section 4.2.2 of the Development Brief (Heritage and Townscape Character) includes: 'Opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the farmhouse and its setting through building restoration and landscaping. There is potential to reuse these buildings and sensitively incorporate them into the overall development. There are also opportunities to enhance the setting of the Farmhouse. The orchards around the Farmhouse should be retained and made a positive feature of the development contributing further towards wider community benefits.' and 'Opportunity to reflect the traditional character of Cherwell's vernacular building typologies and settlement pattern, in line with the Cherwell Residential Design Guide SPD. Development should draw inspiration from the character and materials of the existing Farmhouse and its outbuildings.'

9.27. Section 6.3.2 of the Development Brief 'The Grade II listed Stratfield Farmhouse is the focal point of the site but is currently in poor condition and on the Heritage at Risk register. The adjacent traditional orchard to the west and several outbuildings and structures form the historic setting of this farmhouse. Buildings in the curtilage of a listed building, even though not listed in their own right, are nevertheless protected by the listing of the main building and works that affect the character of such buildings need to be authorised by a grant of listed building consent, just as works to the main building would need consent.

9.28. The NPPF sets out that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

9.29. The NPPF also guides that Local Planning Authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or

minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

- 9.30. The applicant has submitted a Statement of Significance and this document is not disputed in terms of its assessment and conclusions. Stratfield Farmhouse is covered by a Grade II statutory listing and, as such, its significance in heritage terms is effectively beyond dispute.
- 9.31. The building's significance primarily derives from its early 19th -century date and the survival of historic fabric from that time. The relative lack of change to the building (both internally and externally) throughout much of the 20th century means it has survived in a form probably not dissimilar to the original, without much modification of plan form, extension, significant change of use to individual spaces, or significant disruptions for the updating of bathrooms, kitchens and associated services such as heating and plumbing.
- 9.32. Building a1 may be a later 19th -century addition to the yard. It is of rather flimsy construction, built against the boundary wall, and is not of great intrinsic significance. It does however take a recognisable agricultural form as a cart shed with probable grain store over but, like other buildings in the group, as an example of its type it is not of the highest quality.
- 9.33. Building B has survived relatively well and has a characteristic form which, with the evidence of surviving fittings, enables its probable identification (at least in its last use) as a cow house rather than a stable. It is likely to be contemporary with the farmhouse and, being of the same materials, has an obvious visual relationship with the farmhouse.
- 9.34. Building C is a probable former cart shed, this partially ruined structure has no intrinsic interest.
- 9.35. Buildings D and E are both 20th century steel-framed agricultural barns and have no heritage interest or significance.
- 9.36. Little survives of the north range of Building F except for the stone boundary walls that it was built off. Despite incursion by trees and other vegetation, the southern range still stands, built around a timber frame, with stone-built sections at either end, and with a largely intact roof structure. However, as with the other farm buildings (and probably also the farmhouse) which may originally have had stone slate roofs, the roof covering is corrugated sheet metal. Both parts of the range seem to appear in their present form on the 1899 OS map, although the southern element may have been present in 1876. While the northern range was probably an animal shelter of some kind, the use of the southern range is not known.
- 9.37. Building G, a series of ranges present in 1876 and possibly contemporary with the farmhouse, is largely a ruin, its original function unknown. Its stone-built western wall forms part of the main enclosing wall to the service and farm yards, which is ultimately attached to the listed building at the southern end. The significance of these buildings is considered to be at best limited.
- 9.38. Other small ancillary buildings are considered of no significance to the heritage asset.
- 9.39. Whilst the comments of the Georgian Group are noted, the overall works to the listed building are considered proportionate and essential to the conversion of the listed building and are a matter which has been the subject of detailed discussion between officers and heritage expertise in the Council and the works are considered to cause less than substantial harm to the heritage asset.

- 9.40. Further justification and background information regarding the inclusion of the building on the Risk Register and the investigation that took place. This includes site photographs and survey work.
- 9.41. The area of concern relates to a door opening into the kitchen (G7) from here appears rather crudely formed through the stonemasonry; this may simply be because this is at the service end of the house or may be that the opening was made through the wall after it had been built rather than contemporary with the original construction – if the outshut is a later addition, it may have been formed when that was constructed (there is evidence in G7 of a former connecting door opening between G7 and G3 providing access between the front and rear wings otherwise)
- 9.42. Many listed buildings can sustain some degree of sensitive alteration or extension to accommodate continuing or new uses. Indeed, cumulative changes reflecting the history of use and ownership are themselves an aspect of the special interest of some buildings, and the merit of some new alterations or additions, especially where they are generated within a secure and committed long-term ownership, should not be discounted.
- 9.43. Where the fabric has clearly failed, for whatever reason, or the layout constricts beneficial, compatible, use today, it will need to be repaired, and may need to be replaced or altered, but those repairs and/or alterations need to be carried out in a way which matches or complements the fabric and design of the listed building, thus following the policy in the NPPF. Retention of as much historic fabric with its evidential layers of history, layout and features as possible, together with the use of appropriate materials and methods of repair, is likely to fulfil the NPPF policy to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their special interest.
- 9.44. The submitted information argues for this change against the benefit of repairing the building and getting it back into use. As a compromise they look to retain the sense of enclosure and room proportion by adding shutter style doors within architraves to tuck into the recess when open; these would close towards the proposed dining room.
- 9.45. Overall it is considered that the proposal and the concerns of the Georgian Society cannot be sustained as a reason for refusal. The proposals would cause less than substantial harm to the asset and this is considered in terms of bringing the building back into use and the resultant removal of the building from the Risk Register.

## **10. PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION**

- 10.1. The proposal complies with the relevant Development Plan policies and guidance listed at section 8 of this report, and so is considered to be sustainable development. In accordance with Paragraph 11 of the NPPF, permission should therefore be granted
- 10.2. At paragraph 199 of the NPPF, it is stated that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 10.3. Paragraph 202 further advises that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

- 10.4. The positive benefits of the building being brought back into use and with appropriate demolition of modern structures, the proposals would also enhance the setting. The significance of the buildings would be enhanced by the proposals.
- 10.5. It is considered that the proposals are therefore acceptable and in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, Policies PSD1 and ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2015 and saved Policies C18, C21, C28 and C30 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996.

## **11. RECOMMENDATION**

### **DELEGATE TO THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT TO GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT, SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS SET OUT BELOW (AND ANY AMENDMENTS TO THOSE CONDITIONS AS DEEMED NECESSARY)**

#### **Time Limit**

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

Reason - To comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

#### **Compliance with Plans**

2. Except where otherwise stipulated by conditions attached to this permission, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and documents:

##### Plans:

- 219-100 – Site Location Plan
- 219-100 Rev B – Existing Site Plan
- 219-101 Rev B – Farmhouse Existing Ground Floor Plan
- 219-102 Rev B - Farmhouse Existing First Floor Plan
- 219-103 Rev A - Farmhouse Existing Elevations
- 219-104 Rev A – Farmhouse Existing Elevations
- 219-105 Rev A – Existing Elevations A1 Annexe
- 219-106 Rev A – Existing Plans A1 Annexe
- 219-108 Rev A – Existing Plans Block B and C
- 219-109 Rev A – Existing Elevations Block B and C
- 219-110 Rev A – Existing Plans Block D
- 219-111 Rev A – Existing Elevations Block D
- 219-112 Rev A – Existing Plans Block E
- 219-113 Rev A – Existing Elevations Block E
- 219-114 Rev A – Existing Plans Block F
- 219-115 Rev A – Existing Elevations Block F
- 219-116 Rev A – Existing Plans Block G and H
- 219-117 Rev A – Existing Elevations and Section Block G
- 219-118 Rev A – Existing Elevations Block H
- 219-200 Rev B – Proposed Site Plan
- 219-201 Rev A – Farmhouse Proposed Ground Floor Plan
- 219-202 Rev A - Farmhouse Proposed First Floor Plan
- 219-203 Rev A - Farmhouse Proposed Elevations
- 219-204 Rev A – Farmhouse Proposed Elevations
- 219-205 Rev A – Proposed Elevations A1 Annexe
- 219-206 Rev A – Proposed Plans A1 Annexe
- 219-207 Rev A – Proposed Plans Block B and C

219-208 Rev A – Proposed Plans Block B and C  
219-209 Rev A – Proposed Elevations Block B and C  
219-210 Rev A – Proposed Ground Floor Plans Block D  
219-211 Rev B – Proposed First Floor Plans Block D  
219-212 Rev A – Proposed Elevations Block D  
219-213 Rev A – Proposed Plans Block E  
219-214 Rev A – Proposed Elevations Block E  
219-215 Rev A – Proposed Plans Block F  
219-216 Rev A – Proposed Elevations Block F  
219-217 Rev A – Proposed Ground Floor Plan Block G  
219-218 Rev A – Proposed First Floor Plan Block G  
219-219 Rev A – Proposed Elevations Block G  
219-220 Rev A – Proposed Sections (Outbuildings)  
219-222 – Proposed Site Section  
219-224 – Proposed Car Port

**Documents:**

Statement of Community Involvement produced by Carter Jonas LLP;  
Planning Statement by Carter Jonas LLP;  
Design & Access Statement produced by RG&P Architects;  
Archaeological Evaluation by Thames Valley Services;  
Heritage Impact Assessment by Asset Heritage Consulting;  
Stratfield Farmhouse - Method statement for Repairs by James MacKintosh Architects

Reason – For the avoidance of doubt, to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority and comply with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Further heritage detail**

3. Notwithstanding the approved plans, no development shall take place until the following details have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved plans. The details shall include the following:
  - a) A method statement to record of areas to be retained and how these will be supported during the rebuilding and alteration work including thermal upgrade, lighting installation, ventilation detail and installation of fire and smoke detection measures.
  - b) In relation to Stratfield Farmhouse:
    - i) Details at a scale of 1:10 and 1:2 or alternative agreed scale for the proposed works including the new opening in the Kitchen, footings, floor repairs, fitted furniture and kitchen units and a condition survey and schedule of window, floors and doors to be repaired and refurbished including specialist joinery information.
    - ii) Decoration detail (which should be breathable in nature)
    - iii) Method statement in relation to roof repairs and new rooflight details
  - c) In relation to outbuildings and other curtilage buildings
    - i) Details at a scale of 1:10 and 1:2 or alternative agreed scale relating to joinery details for all doors, windows and glazed

- screens, including recess lintels and cills including high level windows and rooflights
- ii) Samples of new cladding and roofing materials to used as part of new or refurbished buildings
  - iii) Drainage details to be painted cast iron, or heritage aluminium with dimpled paint finish and brackets.

Reason: In order to ensure appropriate detail for the repair and long term future of the historic farmhouse and heritage assets on the site in accordance with saved Policy C28 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996, Historic England guidance and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.