



PLOT 3 - BOSWELLS FARM, RUCKMANS LANE, DORKING, SURREY, RH5 5NE
DESIGN + ACCESS STATEMENT / HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

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PREPARED ON BEHALF OF PAUL + DANIELLE RODGER

BY

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

This Design + Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr and Mrs Rodger to support planning and listed building applications for the renovation of Boswells farmhouse and the conversion of adjacent barns to create a total of three new dwellings. The purpose of this statement is to explain why the proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting, and to demonstrate how it can be adequately accessed by prospective users.

The revised proposals for development at Boswells Farm divide the site into three plots: this statement covers Plot 3. Separate statements are provided for Plots 1 and 2, which both contain designated heritage assets. A brief Heritage Statement is included in Section 3 to explain how changes to the existing buildings on Plot 3 will provide an improved setting for the listed buildings and how the proposed new building takes into account the setting of the listed buildings.

This design + access / heritage statement complies with the Planning Practice Guidance requirements published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2014) and steps 1- 5 in the guidance issued by Historic England Good Practice in Planning Note 3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (2017).

Separate reports describing measures taken to conserve the local habitat, to protect endangered wildlife and significant trees, and structural condition reports of the existing barns are submitted with the planning and listed building applications. This statement should be read in conjunction with these reports and the separate design + access statements and heritage statements for Plots 1 and 2.

The author of this statement is Tim Lloyd MA(Cantab), RIBA, MIAM, RICS. Copyright of this statement is the property of Consilian Ltd.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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1.0 KEY POINTS

- The condition of the farmhouse and adjacent barns has deteriorated significantly since planning and listed building applications for developing the site were approved in 2017, so that costs for renovating the threatened heritage assets now far exceed the likely revenue from their development.
- To address this concern, we have prepared a new design proposal that improves the commercial viability of the original scheme, and the quality of its design, so that it is more closely aligned to national and local planning policies. The main aspects of the revised scheme are to reduce the number of dwellings from four to three, and to intensify development on Plot 3.
- Plot 3 is currently lightly developed with a plot ratio of 0.058, compared to adjacent ratios between 0.133 to 0.273. A new 2-storey family house (B19) is proposed on this plot in place of the existing proposal to convert the Victorian stable block (B7) into a single bed bungalow. Our proposal increases the density of Plot 3 to 0.246, consistent with the adjacent plots.
- B7 will be retained as a stable block. An earlier approved proposal to convert the stable block to a new dwelling would have harmed its historical character and appearance: our proposals leave it in its exact original form
- A modern single storey building (B5) fronting Ruckmans Lane next to the stable block will be retained as ancillary accommodation to the new dwelling instead of being demolished. Retaining B5 has no effect on the setting of the statutory listed buildings B11 and B12 elsewhere on the site
- B19 measures 1,598 sq. ft. / 149 sqm. GIA. Accommodation includes 3 bedrooms on the first floor and open-plan living space on the ground floor.
- The scale and appearance of B19 matches the adjacent barns B4 and B11 in terms of their shape, overall dimensions, roof pitch, structure, layout, plan-type, and external materials. The building is oriented East-West across the site to take advantage of the sun and views to the south, and to fit in with the dominant planning grain of adjacent two-storey buildings.
- The new building has a green oak frame with structural insulated wall and roof panels clad with traditional timber weatherboarding and clay roof tiles. Grey joinery and glass balustrades add a contemporary feel to the exterior.
- Plot 3 is screened from the Surrey Union Hunt accommodation by a belt of tall trees lining a pond, so that the development will not overlook their land.
- There are no changes to access arrangements consented in the previous application.
- Planning polices allow isolated new houses to be built in rural contexts in suitable situations where they enable the future of at-risk heritage assets.



Section through entrance hall
[the double height hall and stove refers to the open plan historical configuration of the farmhouse B12]

SECTION 1: DESIGN+ACCESS STATEMENT

2.0 SITE ANALYSIS + CONTEXT

Plot 3 is shown hatched in the diagram opposite. Our analysis of the site and local context is described below under the following headings:

2.1 Physical Assessment

- Plot 3 measures 1,144 sqm or 0.28 acres. The ground is flat.
- The west boundary borders a pond and is screened from neighbouring land by a line of mature trees; the north boundary fronts Ruckmans Lane; the east boundary will be defined by a new access road; the south boundary aligns with a mature hedgerow, which encloses the site from open fields.
- The principal building on the site is a Victorian stable block. A single storey modern building situated close to the road and screened by a tall hedge once provided groom's living quarters but is now disused. The rest of the plot was previously used as kennel runs. Stabling and kennelling have now been transferred to new accommodation on an adjacent site.
- The previous consent established a residential use on the site. The stable block was extended and converted into a one-bedroom bungalow with a proposed floor area of 67.5 sqm. The groom's quarters were demolished.
- The plot ratio of the site in the previous scheme is 0.058. This is far less than plots 1 and 2, which have plot ratios of 0.133 and 0.203 respectively.

2.2 Social Assessment

- There is less demand for a 1B-2P house in rural areas than towns. We consider a larger family home is more appropriate for this size of plot, and better able to meet local market needs and foster a sense of community.

2.3 Economic Assessment

- A principle of development set out in the previous planning consent (2017) was that revenue from new development could be used to enable the preservation of the listed barn B11 and farmhouse B12
- We consider the previous enabling proposal didn't adequately take into account the full scope of work and cost of repairs necessary to renovate the listed buildings in a way that meets modern living standards and complies with the requirements of the Building Regulations
- Furthermore, costs of repairs to the farmhouse and barns have risen significantly since 2017 due to their deterioration during the previous ownership.
- Intensifying the density of development on Plot 3 will not alter the principle of enabling development that has already been established; however, it will create an uplift in value that could cancel the conservation deficit incurred by the increased dilapidation of the listed buildings and subsidise a higher quality specification of alterations and repairs.



Site analysis



View of site - east boundary



View of site - west boundary

2.0 SITE ANALYSIS + CONTEXT (continued)

2.4 Planning Policies

A full analysis of relevant planning policies is made in a separate Planning Statement, but the most critical issues affecting Plot 3 are considered to be:

Respecting the distinctive character of the local context

- Policy ENV 3 states that ‘open countryside should be protected for its own sake, and development that adversely affects its open character will not be permitted.’ The revised application retains building B5 and adds a new dwelling B19 on Plot 3, but both applications consolidate existing ad-hoc development on the site by removing the clutter of modern sheds and reducing overall footprint to promote the development’s open character.
- Policy ENV 22 requires a design and layout that is ‘appropriate to the site in terms of its scale, form and appearance and external building materials’ - the proposals use traditional materials in keeping with the local context.
- Policy ENV 22 states new development should not harm the amenity of neighbouring properties - B19 is screened from SUH land by a belt of trees.
- Policy ENV 23 states ‘development will normally be permitted where it respects its setting, taking account of the scale, character, bulk, proportions and materials of the surrounding built environment’ - the proposals for B19 respect the setting of the adjacent barns, using a green oak timber frame, timber cladding, and clay roof tiles on a matching roof pitch.

Appropriate enabling development to secure the future of at-risk heritage assets

- NPPF paragraph 79 resists building isolated new homes in the countryside but makes an exception for enabling development which secures the future of threatened heritage assets. The principle of enabling development (Paragraphs 79 and 202 NPPF) was established in the previous scheme but the optimum amount of development needs to be negotiated and agreed.

Providing new dwellings

- Mole Valley Policy CS 3 states: ‘The Council will particularly seek the provision of two and three bedroom dwellings suitable for occupation for all sectors of the community including newly forming households, young couples and expanding families.’ The proposed 3B-6P family house in our design is better aligned with this policy than the previous 1B-2P bungalow.

Impact on heritage buildings

- Policy ENV 42 permits change of use to heritage buildings where continuing an original use is impractical. This application is more closely aligned to this policy than the approved application by keeping the stable block B7 in its existing ancillary role instead of conversion to residential use

2.5 Community involvement

A presentation is scheduled for the next meeting of the Ockley Parish Council.

3.0 DESIGN STATEMENT

NPPF paragraph 125 requires design proposals to 'be grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics.' The information collected in Stage 2.0 was used to identify potential opportunities and constraints that influenced the design of the new development and other changes proposed on the site.

3.1 Design opportunities

- The current design for Plot 3 is lightly developed, having a plot ratio of 0.058 compared to 0.133 and 0.273 for the remaining plots in the approved planning scheme. This imbalance suggests the current amount of development could be increased so as to be consistent with the other plots.
- The location, size, shape, and orientation of Plot 3 are perfectly suited to providing a family dwelling and garden with good views of the countryside.
- Existing buildings on the plot can convert well to ancillary accommodation.
- Large trees along the neighbour's boundary will screen new development.
- There is demand for family dwellings with gardens in this area (Policy CS3).

3.2 Design constraints

- New development on Plot 3 has the potential to harm (as well enhance) the setting of the listed barn B11 and farmhouse B12
- There is a presumption against development in open countryside unless special circumstances apply, including development that enables the future of threatened heritage assets. The principle of enabling development (Paragraphs 79 and 202 NPPF) was established in the previous scheme but the optimum amount of development needs to be negotiated and agreed.
- A belt of mature trees on the site has been assessed by an arboriculturist. The new building will not harm these trees but building activities and soft landscaping will need to be controlled during construction.

3.3 Design Proposal - Use, Amount, Layout

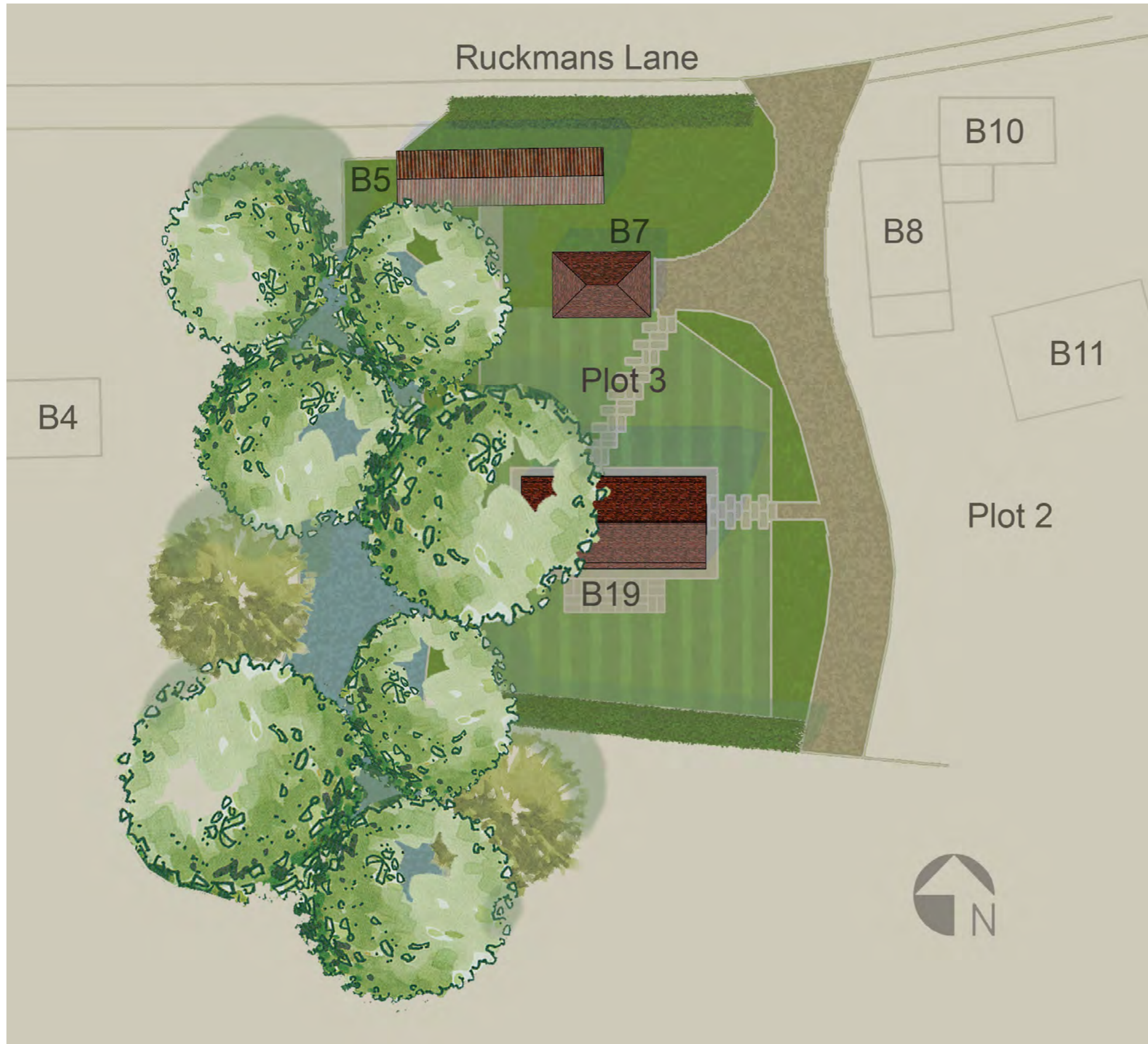
- A new 2-storey family house (B19) and garden is proposed on the plot.
- The area of the proposed dwelling is 1,598 sq ft / 149 sqm GIA.
- Living accommodation is arranged on the ground floor in an open-plan layout. The main entrance to the north faces the old stable block, and a side entrance is provided to the east. Three double bedrooms on the first floor and a flexible mezzanine overlook the double-height entrance hall.
- The living accommodation faces south onto a landscaped garden that extends to an existing hedgerow. The Victorian stable block will be repaired but otherwise left in its current use and configuration. The existing groom's accommodation will be retained as ancillary storage
- The layout of the new house exceeds nationally described space standards



Aerial view - Barns B4 and B11 shown in context of proposed dwelling B19



Street level view - Barns B4 and B11 shown in context of proposed dwelling B19



3.0 DESIGN STATEMENT (continued)

3.4 Design Proposal - Scale, Appearance

The new dwelling is designed to match the scale and appearance of the listed barn B11 and adjacent barn B4 - refer aerial view and street scene opposite.

- B11 measures 6.55m x 12.80m on plan, which will increase to ~ 7.0m x 13.3m after thermal insulation and finishes are applied to the outside face of the structural frame. The external dimensions of B19 are 6.4m x 13.3m.
- The ridgeline of B11 is approximately 8.1 above ground level, which will increase after insulation is added - B19 ridge is a similar height at 9.0m above ground level
- B4 and B11 comprise 3 bays with a central opening facing south; the proposals for B19 provide an additional bay but retain the same plan form.
- Roof coverings will be plain clay tiles with a pitch of 47.5 degrees
- External cladding will be black timber - species of timber, profile and finish will match the new cladding to Barn B11.

3.5 Design Proposal - Landscaping

The principal hard and soft landscaping elements are shown in the diagram 'Proposed Site Layout' on page 7. An arboricultural report relating to the existing trees is submitted separately to this statement

- The private garden to B19 is separated from the semi-public access road and verges by a short wooden fence approximately 1.1m height with gates to the footpaths leading to the north and east entrances
- The remainder of the garden is enclosed by the existing hedges to the north and south and by the existing mature trees and pond to the west
- Semi-public areas of landscaping are planted with shrubs and ground cover
- The private garden is laid out as a lawn with a patio area to the south in front of the French doors

4.0 ACCESS STATEMENT

The proposed scheme makes use of an existing drive and junction to Ruckmans Lane. This junction will be adapted to provide adequate visibility zones.

The new application drawing 32 L(-) 10 Proposed Site Plan / Block Plan shows the proposed locations for car parking and turning areas.

Provision for car parking and bicycle storage meets the requirements of Vehicle and Cyclists Parking Guidance (2018) produced by Surrey County Council.

The design of the new house conforms to the requirements of Approved Document M of the Building Regulations class M4(1) Visitable Dwelling.

4.1 Car parking / bicycle storage

- Hard paved areas will provide sufficient space for at least two cars; a fast charge EV socket will be installed.
- The converted stable block provides adequate space for secure bicycle storage.

4.2 Approach

- The path to the principal entrance door will be at least 900mm wide, level without steps, and have a maximum cross-fall of 1:40
- The main entrance door is on the North elevation and provides a clear opening width greater than 775mm
- The main entrance doorway will be provided with an accessible threshold

4.3 Internal access

- The principal floor is at ground level with no steps or changes in level
- A visitors' WC is provided on the ground floor
- The route to the WC passes through the kitchen and boot room, including a separating door, which has a clear width of 750mm
- The door to the visitors' WC opens outwards with a clear width of 750mm
- The layout of the WC conforms to diagram 1.5 in Approved Document M



First Floor



Ground Floor

5.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

This section explains how changes to the treatment of the existing buildings on Plot 3 will provide an improved setting for the listed buildings on Plots 1 and 2.

An explanation how the proposed new building takes into account the setting of the listed buildings on the adjacent plots is given in Section 4.4 on page 8.

The disused grooms's accommodation (B5) is a low building screened by a hedge close to the road: it has no impact on the setting of B11 and B12.

5.1 Relevant heritage assets and their settings

The stable block (B7) is not a designated heritage asset in its own right, and the building is not particularly significant historically; however, we consider the stables form an important part of the setting of the listed hay barn (B11) and farmhouse (B12), so that our design takes a different approach to this building compared to the approved planning scheme, as explained below.

5.2 Contribution of the existing setting

The existing setting contributes to the significance of the heritage assets and allows their significance to be appreciated in a number of ways:

- Aesthetic value - the form, materials, and vernacular of the stable block belong to and reinforce a local tradition of building in the countryside
- Integrity - the building is intact and unaltered since it was built.
- Functional / historical - the stable block reminds us of the agricultural history of Boswell Farm and sport associations with the Surrey Union Hunt
- Experience - the noises and smells of horses are part of the experience of Boswells Farm that has remained unchanged over its history

5.3 Impact of the previous design

We consider the previous proposal would detract from the significance of the relevant heritage assets:

- The partial demolition and extension of the stable block would result in a building that was unrecognisable as an historical stable block.
- A small bungalow, with a blank wall facing a south-facing garden, would look out of place in the residential context of the developed listed buildings

5.4 Impact of the current proposal

The best use for a historical buildings tends to be its original use. New uses often incur loss of fabric or harm to its character and appearance. Re-using redundant historical buildings for ancillary functions is often a better solution

- Our revised design conserves the stable block in its historical form and use.



Barn B11



Stable Block B7



Barn B4 viewed from site



North Elevation



Section / East Interior Elevation



East Elevation



South Elevation



Section / West Interior Elevation



West Elevation