



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT
PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING RESIDENTIAL DWELLING
AT OAK COTTAGE, HIGH STREET, PONTARDAWE, SWANSEA,
SA8 4JN

On behalf of
Mr and Mrs Morgan

Our Ref: 1903.a

Date: July 2026

Prepared by: Rhydian Gore

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Evans Banks Planning Ltd. has been instructed by Mr and Mrs Morgan to prepare a proportionate Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) to accompany a full planning and Listed Building application for the proposed alterations to an existing residential dwelling at Oak Cottage, High Street, Pontardawe.
- 1.2 This proportionate GIS has been prepared with full regard to the guidance as set out in Chapter 6 of *Planning Policy Wales* (Edition 12) and in particular the 'Stepwise Approach' detailed in Paragraph 6.4.21 and Figure 12, which is reproduced below.

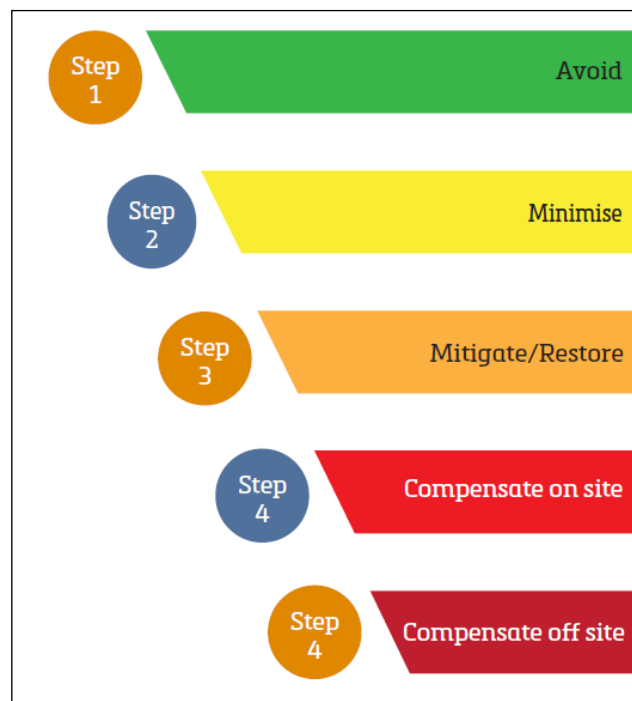


Figure 1

- 1.3 This GIS has also, where relevant, given due consideration to the guidance and standards as set out in the document *Building with Nature - Standards Framework*, which are summarised as follows:

CORE Standards

Standard 1 Optimises Multifunctionality and Connectivity

Standard 2 Positively Responds to the Climate Emergency

Standard 3 Maximises Environmental Gains

Standard 4 Champions a Context Driven Approach

Standard 5 Creates Distinctive Places

Standard 6 Secures Effective Place-keeping

WELLBEING Standards

Standard 7 Brings Nature Closer to People

Standard 8 Supports Equitable and Inclusive Places

WATER Standards

Standard 9 Delivers Climate Resilient Water Management

Standard 10 Brings Water Closer to People

WILDLIFE Standards

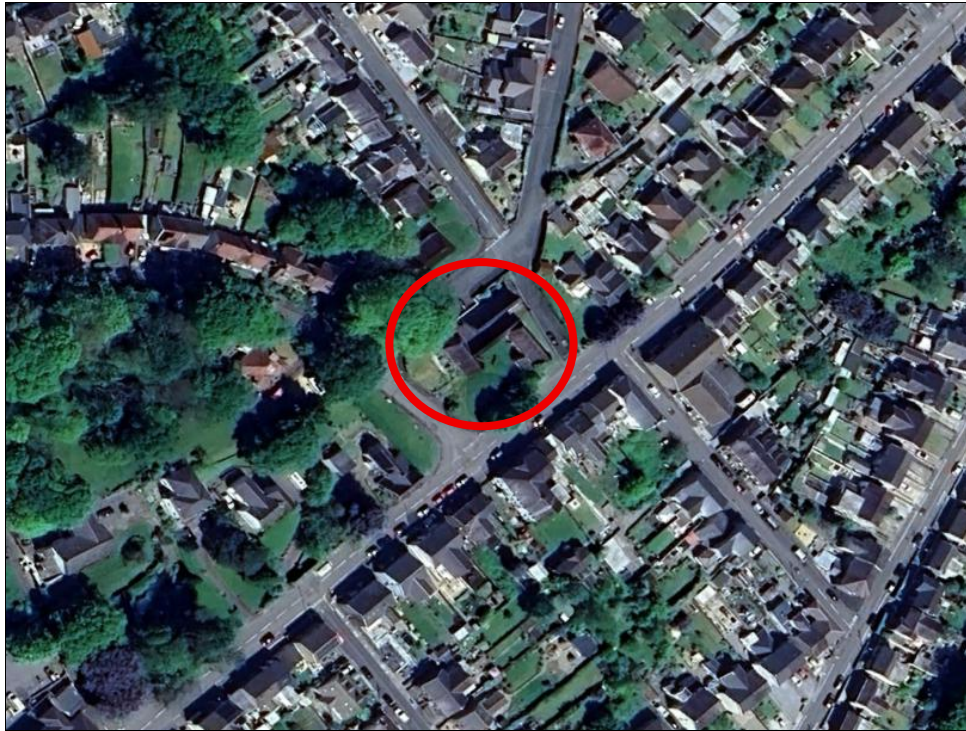
Standard 11 Delivers Wildlife Enhancement

Standard 12 Underpins Nature's Recovery

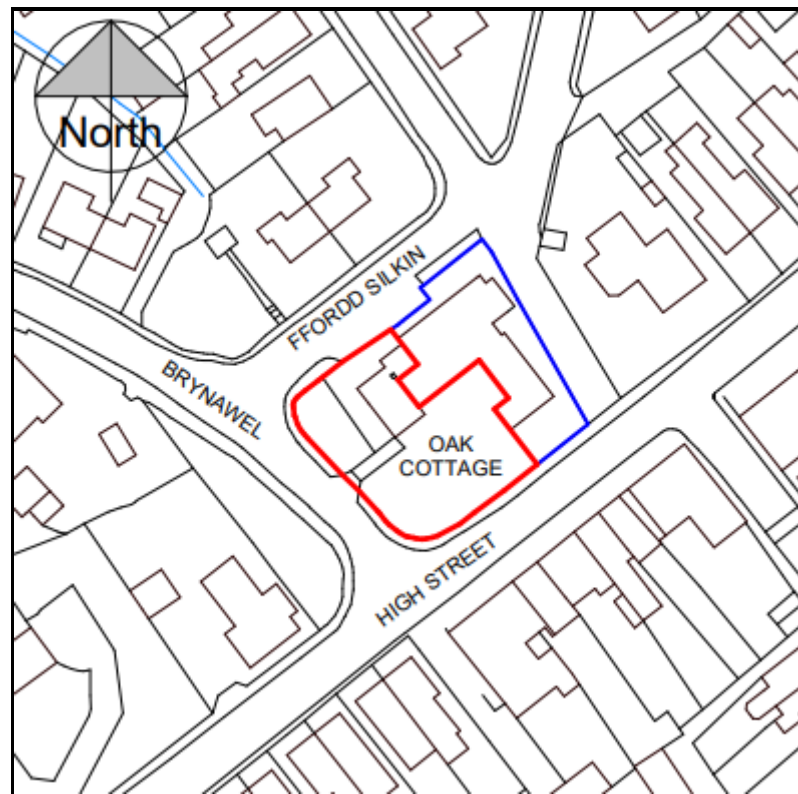
2.0 EXISTING SITE

2.1 THE SITE

- 2.1.1 The application building, Oak Cottage, is a Grade II Listed Building, located on the B-road known as High Street, within the established urban area of Pontardawe. The property is highlighted in red on both Photograph 1 and Plan A below.



Photograph 1 – Google Earth Image (May 2025)



Plan A – Location Plan

2.1.2 Oak Cottage is a substantial former Curate's Cottage and associated National Schoolroom, constructed in 1856 as part of the local church school group. The building is historically significant, having served as a schoolmaster's residence, a home for the curates of Llangiwg Parish, and subsequently as accommodation for individuals supported by the church. In 2017, the property was purchased by Mr and Mrs Morgan (the Applicants), who converted it into a family home while maintaining its historic character.

2.1.3 The building is constructed of course rock-faced sandstone with yellow terracotta dressings and a slate roof, typical of mid-19th century Gothic school architecture. The terracotta, manufactured locally at Ynysmeudwy, is one of the largest surviving examples of this material in the area. Oak Cottage retains several key architectural features, including mullioned windows with terracotta detailing, gabled porches with

cross finials, and pointed traceried windows indicative of its original ecclesiastical and educational function.

2.1.4 The internal arrangement of Oak Cottage is reflective of its dual historic use as a residence and educational facility. The former teacher's cottage comprises multiple rooms over two principal floors, and over time, some structural modifications have occurred, including the removal of chimneys, later insertions of softwood windows and doors, and post-war internal finishes such as cement renders, concrete ground floors, and plasterboard linings. Despite these alterations, the principal fabric of the building remains intact, including roof structures, external walls, and original joinery details in key locations.

2.1.5 Oak Cottage possesses significant heritage value across several categories:

- **Evidential value:** The building retains substantial elements of its original fabric and form, providing a clear understanding of its 19th-century construction techniques and subsequent adaptations.
- **Historical value:** The property represents a fine local example of a Victorian National School and associated teacher's residence, reflecting the growth of formal education for the working population in mid-19th century Pontardawe.
- **Aesthetic value:** The Gothic design, craftsmanship, and use of locally produced terracotta contribute to the building's architectural interest, despite some loss of detail from later modifications.
- **Communal value:** Oak Cottage has long served the local community, initially in education and church-related functions, and later as a residential dwelling. Its association with St Peter's Church, use of local materials, and role in early education reinforce its significance to the community.

2.1.6 The building's history is also tied to local philanthropy and industrial development. Funding for the original construction was provided by a combination of prominent Victorian industrialists, local landowners, and contributions from the general

community, highlighting its role as a communal asset. These associations, combined with its architectural integrity, underpin the rationale for its Grade II listing by Cadw on the 13th of March 2003 (Source ID: 80988).

2.1.7 In summary, Oak Cottage represents a well-preserved example of mid-19th century Gothic school architecture with substantial historic, aesthetic, and communal significance. The proposed domestic alterations seek to maintain the residential function for the applicant's family while respecting the building's heritage significance and ensuring its continued relevance to the local area. Photographs 2 to 11 below highlight the aforementioned features of the Listed Building.



Photograph 2 – Principal Elevation



Photograph 3 – Front and Northern Elevations



Photograph 4 – Western Elevation



Photograph 5 – Eastern (Rear) Elevation



Photograph 6 – Eastern (Rear) Elevation and Proposed Access Point to Community Hub



Photograph 7 – Existing Residential Amenity Space



Photograph 8 – Existing Residential Amenity Space



Photograph 9 – Existing Internal Features



Photograph 10 – Existing Internal Features



Photograph 11 – Existing Internal Features

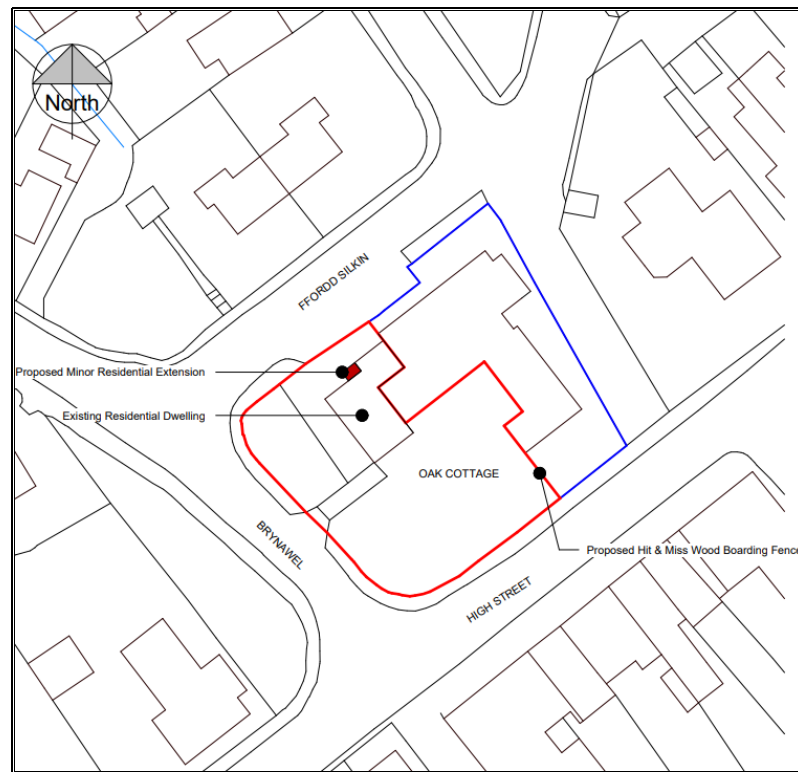
2.2 EXISTING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

- 2.2.1 As can be seen in the Photographs above, the application site currently contains limited green infrastructure assets in the form of existing grassed amenity space and boundary trees, both of which remain unaffected by the proposed development.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Project Rationale

- 3.1 The proposal relates to minor alterations to the existing residential dwelling at Oak Cottage, a Grade II Listed Building on High Street, Pontardawe. The works are intended to improve the functionality of the family home while preserving the established domestic use and respecting the building's historic character.
- 3.2 The scheme has been carefully developed to ensure that the residential function remains fully intact, with modest external and internal alterations designed to enhance the usability of the dwelling for the applicant's family. The layout and design have therefore been tailored to ensure that the domestic function remains wholly self-contained and sympathetic to the building's historic fabric.
- 3.3 Plan B below illustrates the proposed Site Layout for this development.



Plan B – Site Layout Plan

Proposed Uses and Accommodation

- 3.4 The front section of Oak Cottage will continue to serve as a private family residence, accessed via the original front entrance. The proposed works will improve the internal layout and functionality of the dwelling while retaining its historic character and architectural interest.
- 3.5 The adaptation of the building ensures that the residential use continues to complement the building's historic character, maintaining its long-established domestic function and ensuring its continued stewardship.

External Alterations

- 3.6 The proposed external alterations to Oak Cottage are modest in nature and have been sensitively designed to preserve the character and appearance of this historic building. They include the reinstatement of the front porch, which will be carefully designed to

reflect its former traditional form and detailing, reinstating a feature that once contributed to the building's historic character. In addition, a small, discreet extension is proposed on the northern side elevation to subtly round off the existing residential kitchen and dining area, ensuring this element integrates seamlessly with the host building. A new like-for-like window is also proposed at first floor level on the southern side elevation of the retained residential part of the property, designed to match the proportions, materials and detailing of the existing windows.

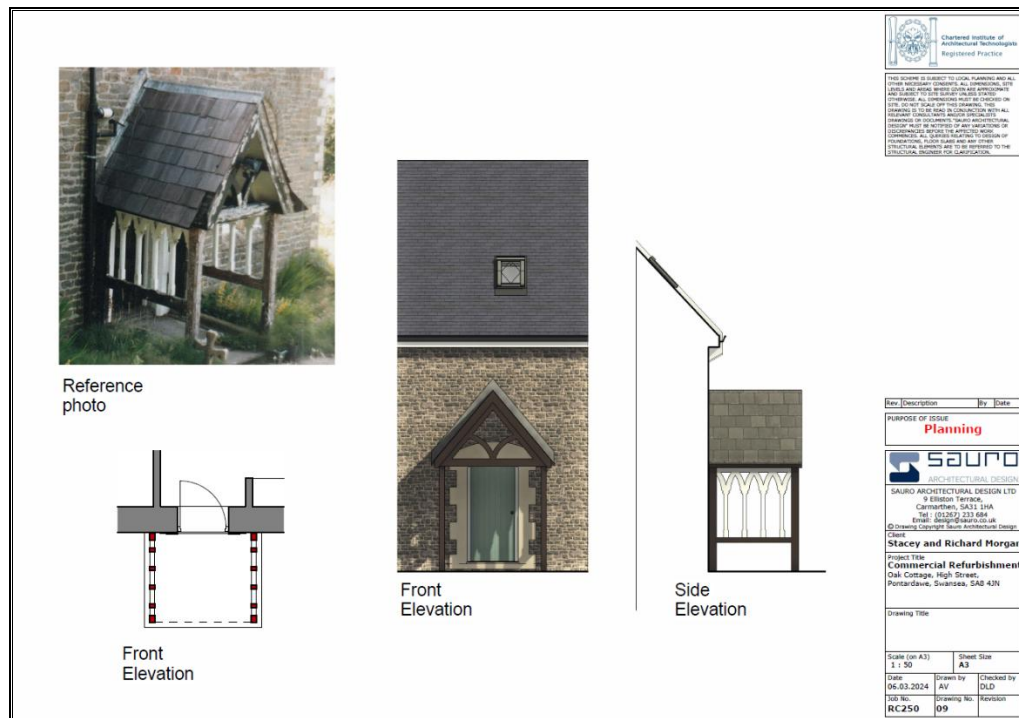
- 3.7 In addition, the existing skylight serving the first-floor bathroom will be replaced with a new conservation-style roof window. This will provide improved natural light and ventilation while ensuring that the external appearance remains sympathetic to the building's historic character
- 3.8 To further enhance the site's ecological value, the scheme also includes the installation of one bat box and one bird box on the suitable external elevations, providing biodiversity enhancements in line with policy expectations. Collectively, these alterations are minimal yet sympathetic, ensuring the external appearance, heritage significance and ecological value of Oak Cottage are preserved and enhanced.
- 3.9 The Existing Elevations are illustrated in Plan C below, while the Proposed Elevations and Porch Details are shown in Plans D and E.



Plan C – Existing Elevations



Plan D – Proposed Elevations



Plan E – Proposed Porch Details

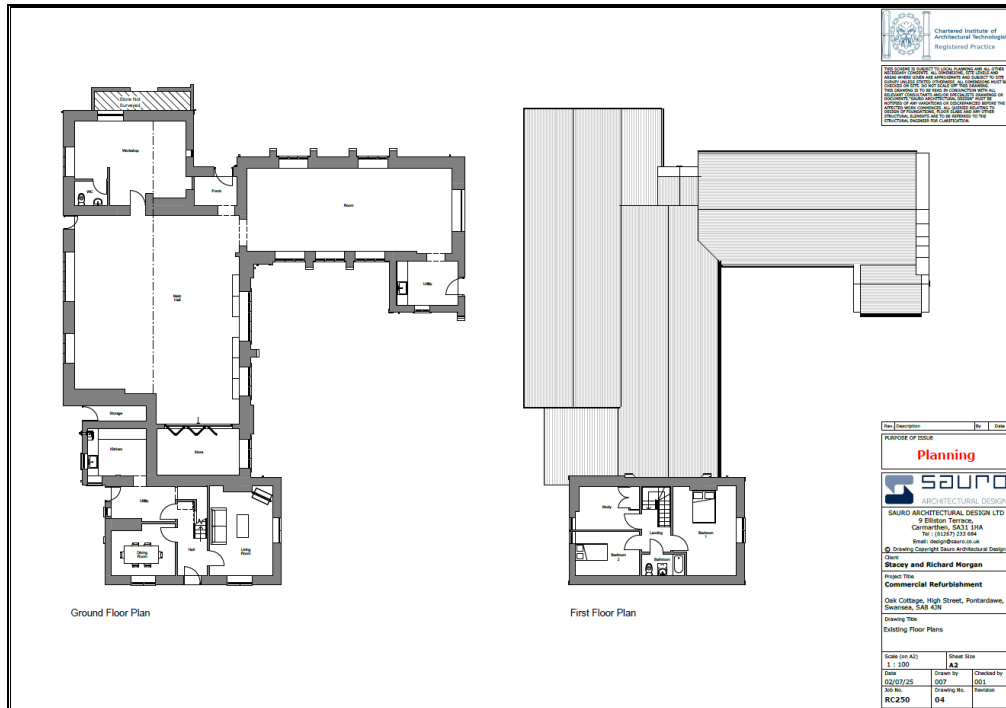
Conservation-led Rationale

- 3.10 The HIA confirms that all proposed external works are modest, reversible and confined to areas of lower historic sensitivity. The reinstatement of the historic porch restores a lost architectural feature that contributes positively to the building's Gothic-influenced composition. The small northern extension is subservient in scale, uses matching materials, and does not affect principal elevations or roof form. Lime repointing replaces harmful cementitious repairs, improving breathability and long-term fabric performance. These interventions collectively enhance the building's condition while preserving its architectural interest.

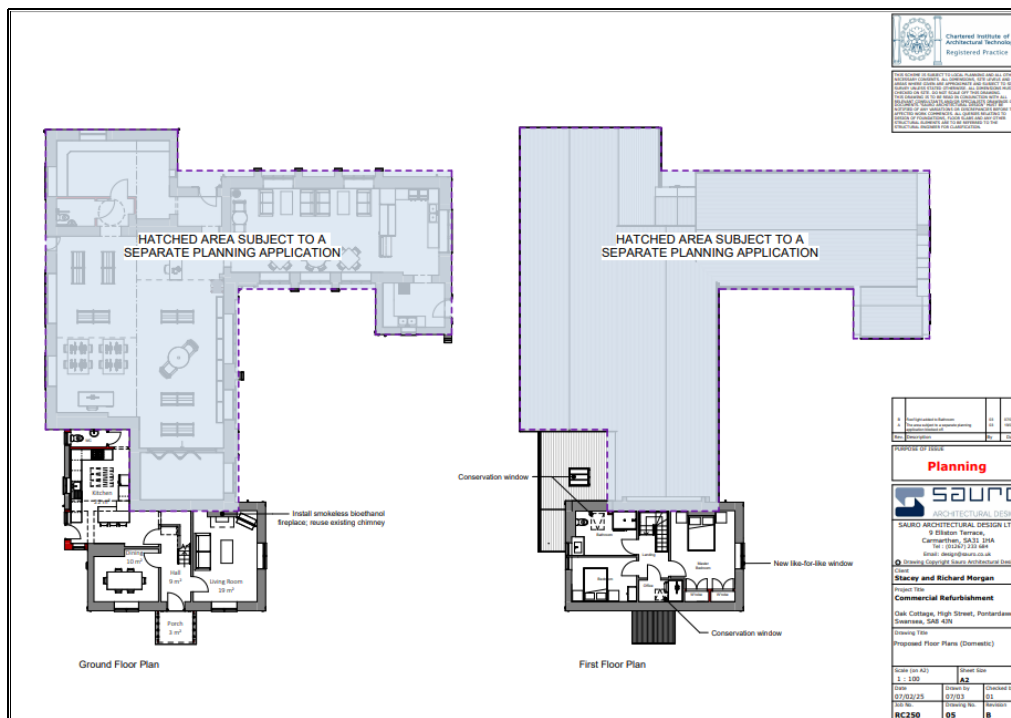
Internal Layout and Adaptations

- 3.11 Internally, the proposal has been developed with a strong focus on retaining the building's historic features and fabric. Original elements, including key ceiling features and walls will be preserved, maintaining the building's special architectural interest.

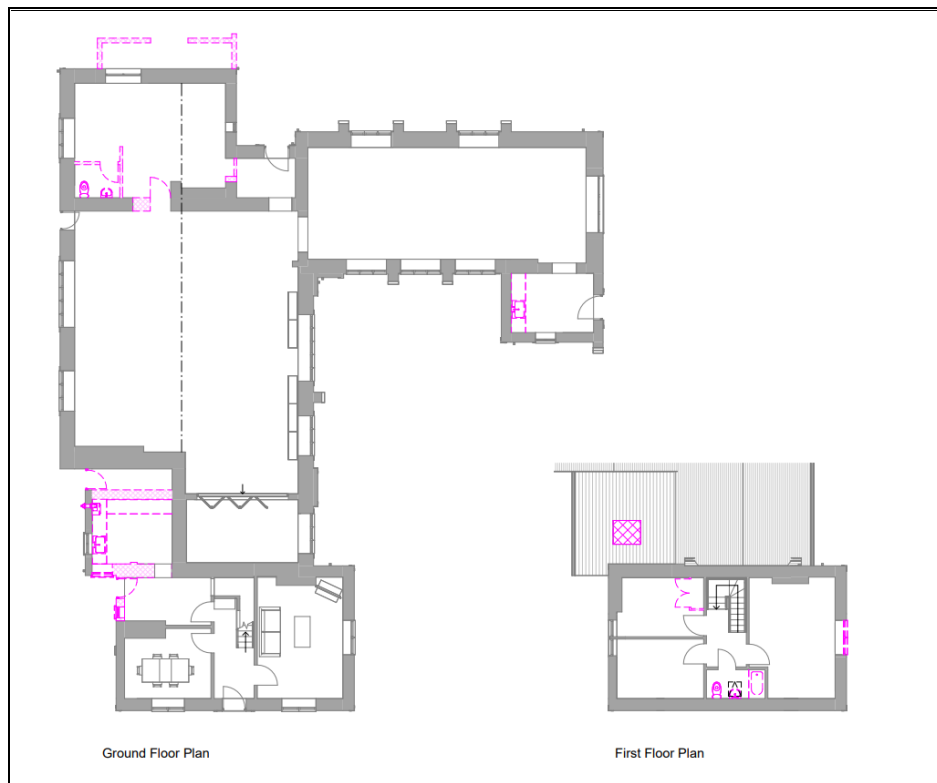
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- 3.12 Therefore, the proposed works to Oak Cottage have been carefully designed to enable its conversion while maintaining the building's character and ensuring the continued use of the residential element by the applicant's family. The existing ground floor currently accommodates a hall, dining room, utility, living room, kitchen, storage areas, store, main hall, workshop, rear porch, an additional utility room, and an unused room. The first floor, which forms part of the residential unit to be retained, currently provides two bedrooms, a study, a landing and a bathroom.
- 3.13 The residential section on the ground floor will remain largely as existing, other than the inclusion of the aforementioned modest extension to round off the existing kitchen and dining area, improving its functionality as a family space.
- 3.14 At first floor level, which will continue to be used as private residential accommodation, only very minor internal changes are proposed. The existing study will be converted into a bathroom to better serve the household, while the current bathroom will be repurposed as a small home office. All other rooms will remain unchanged, and throughout the retained residential and newly created community hub areas, care will be taken to preserve the existing historic fabric and features of the building.
- 3.15 It should be noted that a small number of internal walls will be removed where necessary to facilitate these alterations. This includes the demolition of limited sections to accommodate the minor kitchen/dining extension, and to deliver the first-floor residential alterations.
- 3.16 The Existing Floor Plans are illustrated in Plan F below, while the Proposed Floor and Demolition Plans are shown in Plans G and H.



Plan F – Existing Floor Plans



Plan G – Proposed Floor Plans



Plan H – Proposed Demolition Plans

Fabric Retention and Reversibility

- 3.17 The HIA confirms that all significant historic fabric – including original joinery, ceilings, walls, and roof structure – will be retained. Internal changes are limited to non-historic partitions required to improve domestic functionality. All new works are designed to be reversible where possible and clearly legible as contemporary interventions, ensuring the building's special interest remains unharmed.

Parking, Access, and Sustainability

- 3.18 The location of Oak Cottage within the town centre means that the site is highly accessible by foot and public transport, further reducing reliance on private vehicles and supporting the sustainable operation of the proposed community hub.
- 3.19 Therefore, although there is currently no onsite parking provision, there are an abundance of nearby car parks and on street parking bays that can be utilised if

required, particularly the parking bay situated along the northern perimeter of the site. As such, this provides a level of parking commensurate with the site's sustainable location and use as a community hub within the Town Centre.

- 3.20 Access to the residential dwelling will continue to be taken via the existing front entrance, ensuring safe movement for residents while respecting the building's historic layout.

Drainage

- 3.21 All existing surface and foul water drainage connections will be utilised.

Heritage and Conservation Considerations

- 3.22 The proposed works have been designed to minimise impact on the listed building. Most original openings, windows, doors, and architectural features will remain unchanged, while internal adaptations are carefully planned to avoid permanent loss of significant fabric.

3.2 PROPOSED GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

- 3.2.1 The proposed development will include new green infrastructure assets, which are summarised as follows:

- Bird box (e.g. Woodstone Salamanca) min. 2-4m above from ground
- Bat box (e.g. Vivara Pro Beaumaris Woodstone) min. 5m from ground.



Plan I – Elevation Plan Showing Bat and Bird Boxes

4.0 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

- 4.1.1 This Green Infrastructure Statement identifies existing ecological features on the site, the elements to be retained, and the new assets to be delivered as part of the proposed development.
- 4.1.2 While the site currently contains limited formal Green Infrastructure assets, in the form of existing grassed amenity space and perimeter trees, the proposal will therefore incorporate ecological enhancements, including a bird and bat box. These measures will increase the site's biodiversity value and ensure compliance with Policy 6.
- 4.1.3 In accordance with the Stepwise Approach to Green Infrastructure, the proposal demonstrates full compliance with its principles.

Step 1 – Avoid:

All existing Green Infrastructure assets – namely the grassed amenity areas and the established perimeter trees – are fully retained.

Step 2 – Minimise:

The scheme has been designed to minimise disturbance to retained GI features. Construction activities and external works are confined to areas outside the root protection zones of perimeter trees, and no interventions are proposed that would reduce the functionality of existing amenity space.

Step 3 – Mitigate/Restore:

Where minor operational impacts may arise, these are addressed through sensitive landscaping, protection measures for retained trees, and management practices that support the long-term condition of existing GI. Any temporary disturbance will be restored through appropriate planting and reinstatement.

Step 4 – Compensate/Enhance:

The development delivers new Green Infrastructure assets, including ____, which collectively increase biodiversity value and strengthen ecological connectivity across the site.

-
- 4.1.4 Overall, the proposal avoids ecological harm and delivers a clear net gain in biodiversity through the provision of a bird and bat box. These measures fully align with the Stepwise Approach, the requirements of the PRA, and relevant national and local policy objectives.