



Groundschool, Irongate Farm (255)

Planning application
April 2025

Applicants: Weston Park Farms

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1. Summary

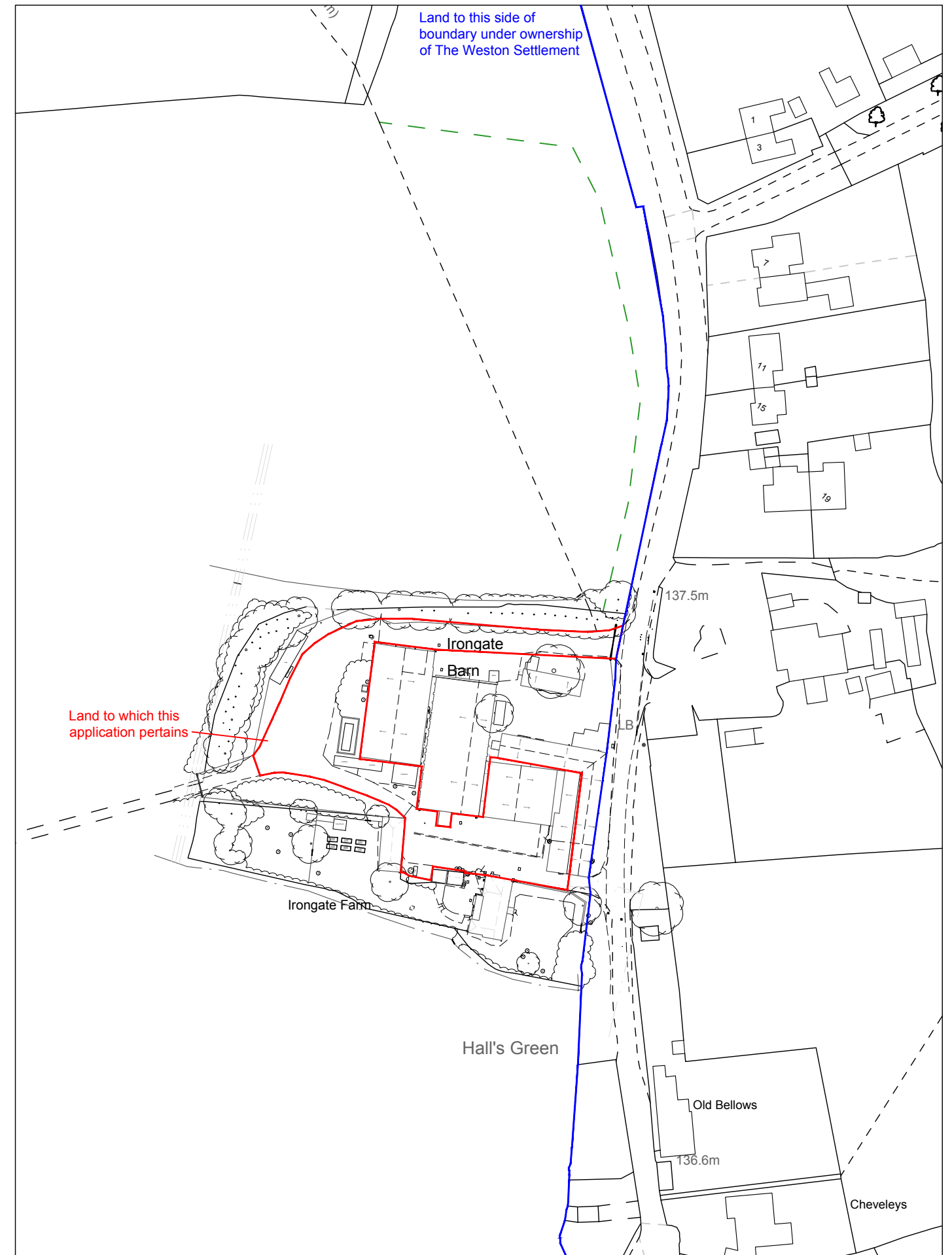
1.1 Summary - Phase 1: The Catalyst

The following is a description of the proposal:

Change of use of existing barn from storage and distribution (Use Class B8) to use as a community events and learning centre for agriculture, cookery and related rural based activities (Use Class F1). Single storey extension to barn following demolition of existing lean-to. Installation of solar panels to roof of converted barn and plant to the roof of the proposed extension including six cycle spaces.



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1.2 Groundschool vision

Groundschool is a place where people can learn about whole sustainable food and farming. They want to create a future where everyone works together to produce food in a way that is good for the environment.

Groundschool will provide agricultural education and learning, through the shared wisdom of teachers and practitioners, to develop knowledge and skills and evolve a better way of farming, eating and living.

Groundschool is part of an agroecological movement spreading like a web of mycelia, with every collaboration, knowledge exchange, and inspired individual contributing to its spread.

Groundschool will provide comprehensive learning experiences in agroecology whilst developing a community of diverse enterprises with whom it will collaborate. Situated on a working farm, it will serve as a dynamic centre of learning, bridging the gap between theory and practice.

Groundschool's mission is to empower agricultural students, farmers transitioning to regenerative practices, and companies seeking sustainable solutions. We achieve this through hands-on learning experiences, innovative projects, and community collaboration. By creating a unique environment where education meets real-world application, Groundschool will play a crucial role in shaping the future of sustainable agriculture in the UK.

The project translates ideas of good food and ecology as advocated by the **Groundswell Festival**, a regenerative agriculture festival to be held in Hertfordshire every summer from 2026.



1.2 Groundschool vision

Groundschool and regenerative agriculture

Groundswell Festival provides a forum for farmers, growers, or anyone interested in food production and the environment to learn about the theory and practical applications of regenerative farming systems.

Groundswell is a practical show aimed at anyone who wants to understand the farmer’s core asset, the soil, and make better informed decisions. It is a two-day event featuring talks, forums and discussions from leading international soil health experts, experienced arable and livestock farmers, agricultural policy experts, direct-drill demonstrations and AgTech innovators.

Groundswell was founded by the Cherry family on their mixed farm in Hertfordshire. John and Paul Cherry have farmed for over thirty five years, converting to a no-till system in 2010.

In 2024 Groundswell welcomed nearly 8,000 delegates. This growth reflects the snowballing of interest in Regenerative Agriculture, not only from farmers but also from policy makers attracted by the ‘public benefits’ of such systems such as carbon sequestration and flood/drought prevention. And then there are the Foodies who come to find new and better ways to join the conversation about how and what we might grow in the future; they don’t need to be told that food tastes better when it grows in healthy soil.



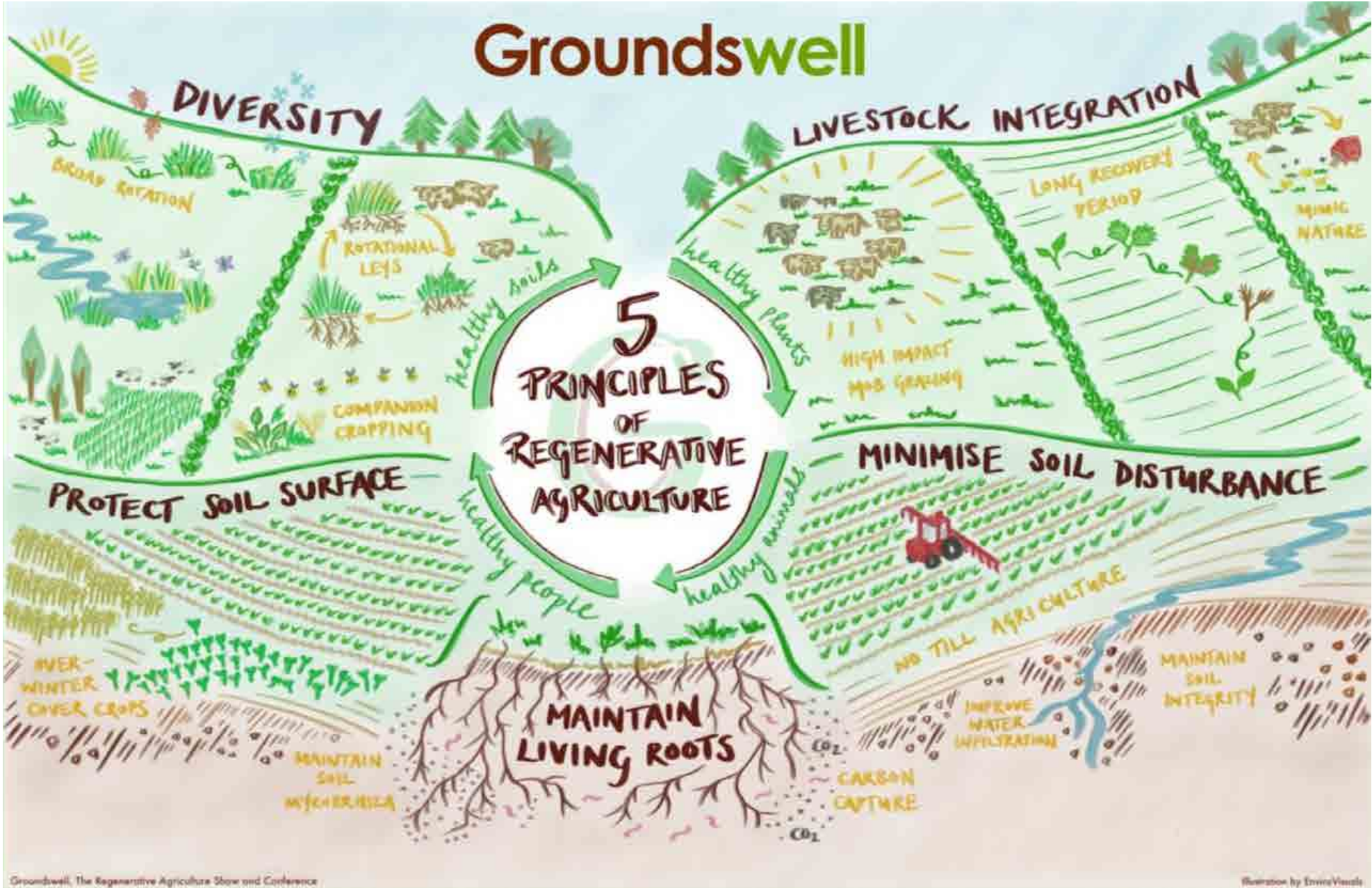
SESSION APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN FOR GROUNDWELL 2025
Do you have an idea for a session at Groundswell 2025? (and 8.)

agvisuall

GROUNDWELL FESTIVAL HELPS DRIVES PROGRESSIVE CHANGE IN AGRICULTURE

The UK's only two-day on-farm regenerative agriculture conference. Groundswell, sold out for another year...

agvisuall



Despite these other interest groups, Groundswell remains a show ‘for farmers, by farmers’; the festival aims to explore ways of working with nature to grow food in a profitable way, embodying the saying ‘Resilience is Fertile’ as profitability is a key factors that makes an operation resilient.

Closely linked to Groundswell, the Groundschool initiative is designed to reach a wider audience. It aims to increase knowledge of produce and cooking skills, and to see the food cycle as a whole.

Source:
<https://groundswellag.com/>

1.2 Groundschool vision

Groundschool and community-focused food projects

Groundschool considers the implementation of a variety of initiatives, including but not limited to: collaboration with **Granville Community Kitchen (GCK)**, the organisation of culinary education programmes, and analogous educational sessions.

Granville Community Kitchen empowers the community through food related activities enabling the South Kilburn community to access nutritious, affordable and sustainable food. GCK reaches out to marginalised people in the community such as those with long term health conditions, learning disabled adults and those experiencing hunger and food insecurity. It builds food literacy, skills and confidence. This is achieved through cookery classes, volunteering opportunities, and organic food growing. GCK reduces isolation and strengthens community cohesion through regular group activities including community meals, film nights and community events.

Groundschool will offers the opportunity to learn, exchange knowledge and ideas with short courses that provide information to enable and understand how we can create a resilient food system that is kind to the planet and builds profitable businesses.



Source:
<https://granvillecommunitykitchen.org.uk/>

1.3 Building description and land use

The site presents a compelling opportunity to enhance the relationship between the barns and the immediate vicinity by integrating regenerative agricultural methods and products, which will serve as an educational vehicle that will benefit the local community.

The site currently consists of a series of agricultural barns that have been used for various purposes and were built during different time periods. The barn addressed in this application is a concrete structure constructed in the 1960s, showcasing distinctive features of agricultural architecture from that time period.

The site is actively engaged in agricultural activities and commercial use. Behind a dense wall of vegetation, there is a greenhouse and various crops. These activities will continue and coexist with the new land use plan.

Focusing on the concrete barn, this building is next to an existing addition that is in poor condition and already contains some services, including toilets.

The “L”-shaped barn wraps around the concrete barn and is located within the curtilage of a grade II* listed farmhouse. The proposed project outlined in this planning application will ensure that there is no interference with these listed buildings. This aspect is developed in more detail in section 3.3.



1.2 Building description and land use

The scope of the project is highlighted in white on the aerial view on this page.

The concrete barn is relatively in good condition. The photographic survey in the following section of the report illustrates the robustness of the structure, which is made up of concrete arches (see pictures 1 to 6). The brick walls beside the corrugated fibro-cement are typical material in agricultural buildings (see picture 6).

However, the cladding is in poor condition and its state is not suitable for use as a learning space that requires thermal efficiency. This cladding will be replaced with a more elegant and high-performance material, exposed in section 3., 4., and 5. Additionally, the project will incorporate repaired or new rainwater pipes within the new cladding (picture 9).

The south elevation is facing the grade II* listed farmhouse on a courtyard where currently vehicles can park (see picture 10 and 11).

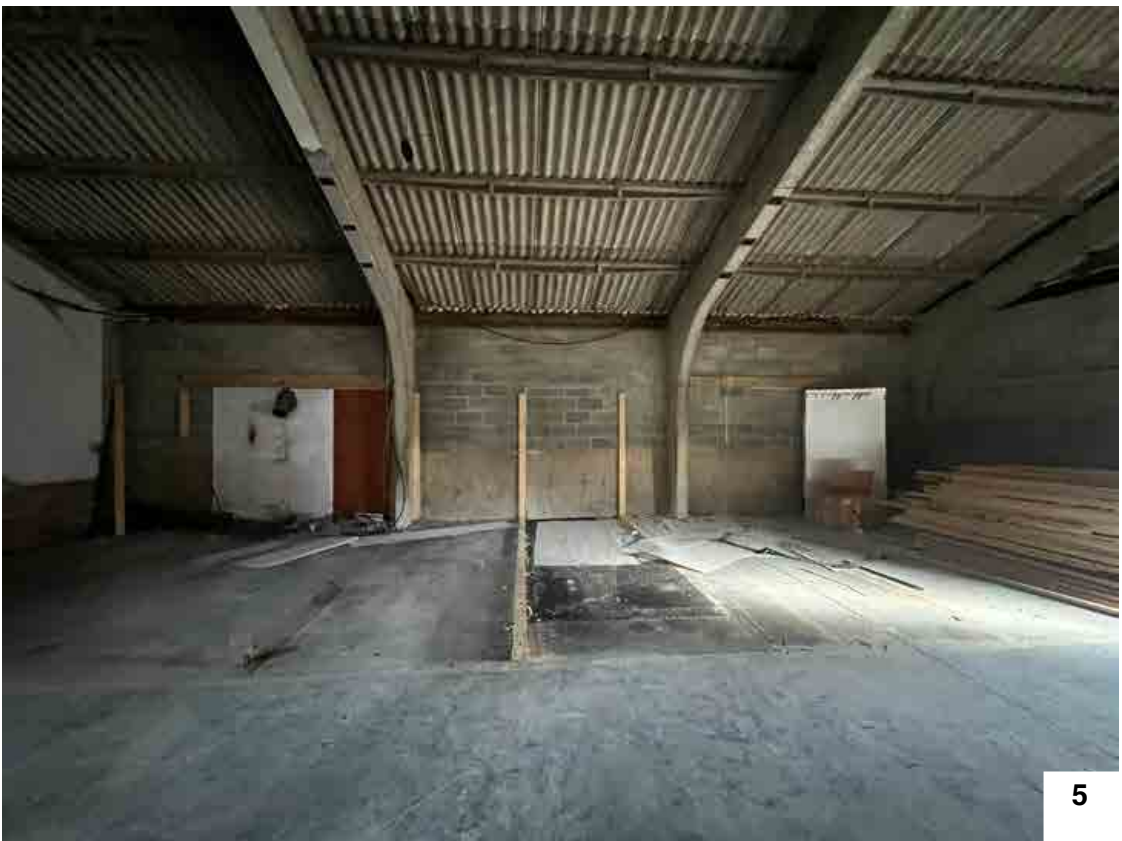
The north elevation connects directly to the historic barn via a build-up building, made of aggregated plasterboard, blockwork, and wood sheets (see picture 7 and 13). This building situated between the concrete barn and the L-shaped historic barn lacks both construction and historic value. It is currently in a state of disrepair and is unlikely to be reused, as it does not seem fit for purpose (see picture 13 to 18).

The historic barn, not within the scope of the project for this application (see picture 19 to 24), will not be altered in terms of fabric or use.



1.4 Photographic survey of the condition of the buildings

Concrete barn - interior



1.4 Photographic survey of the condition of the buildings

Concrete barn - exterior



1.4 Photographic survey of the condition of the buildings

Existing in-fill building interior



1.4 Photographic survey of the condition of the buildings

Historic barn - outside of the scope of the project



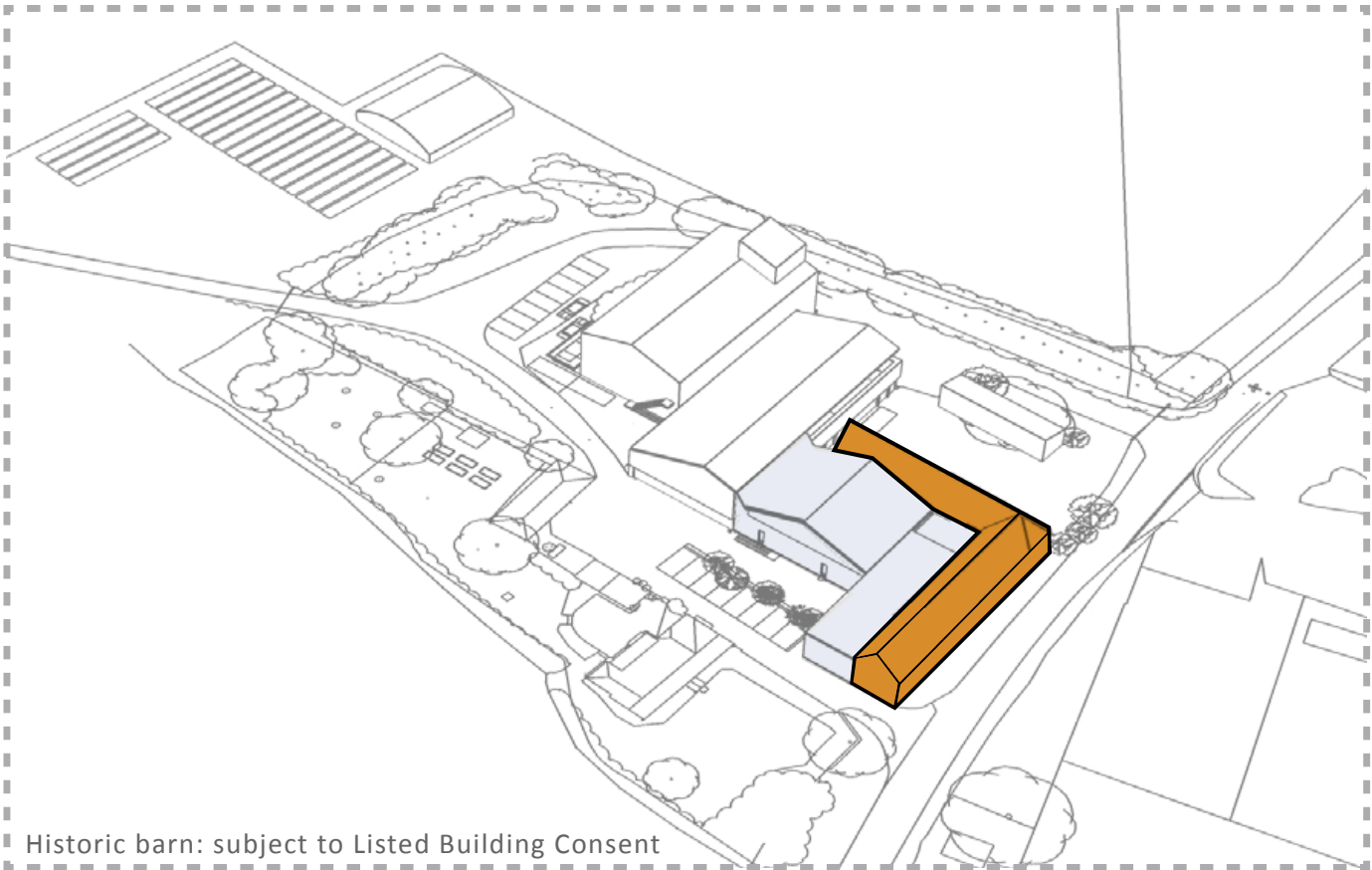
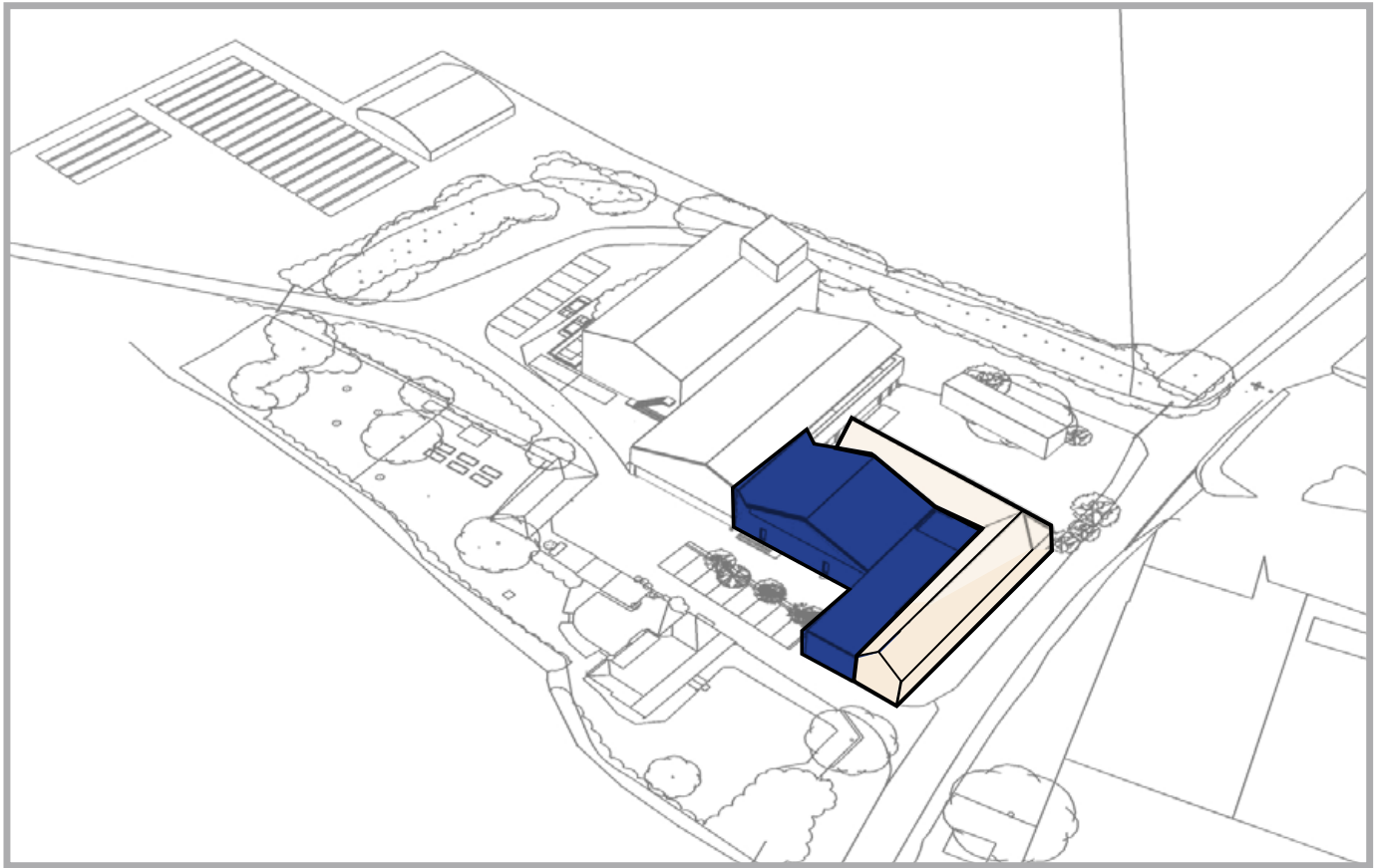
1.5 Phasing the project

The scheme only comprises the concrete barn on the site and although the barn is adjacent to an older barn with notable carpentry and timber features, the scope for this application will not affect the historic barn.

The historic barn is likely to be within the curtilage of the Grade II* listed farmhouse as it was built prior to 1948 and is likely to date from the 17th or 18th century, as documented through the mapping collection in section 3.3.

If the historic barn were to be converted and used as an extension to the Groundschool, a Listed Building Consent would be required.

However, the concrete barn is unlikely to fall within the curtilage of the farmhouse. These specific issues are further developed in section 3.3 of this report.



LEGEND

- Concrete barn subject this planning application
- Historic barn subject to Listed Building Consent in a later stage to be confirmed

Historic barn: subject to Listed Building Consent

2. Existing

2.1 Existing site plans



Notes:

- a.

Existing timber frame barn
- b.

Existing concrete frame barn
- c.

Existing steel frame barn
- d.

Existing grade I listed farmhouse
- e.

Existing farmhouse garden
- f.

Existing infill structure, in poor condition
- g.

Existing barn with black timber weatherboarding and tiled roof
- h.

Existing outbuildings/lean to structure with black timber weatherboarding and corrugated roof
- i.

Existing concrete slab hardstanding
- j.

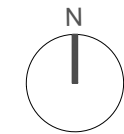
Existing hoggin surface
- k.

Existing storage containers
- l.

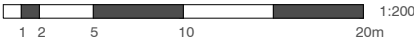
Existing tank (defunct)
- m.

Laneway with 30mph limit
- n.

Access and parking for neighboring public house



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Note: This drawing is copyright.
Note: These layouts are preliminary until further surveys are undertaken.
Note: Scale and boundaries are indicative.
Note: Ownership boundary indicative based on OS data.
Note: Red dotted line is shown as site boundary.
Note: Elevation key plan not to scale.

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Groundschool, Irongate Farm

Job No. 255 Existing Site Plan - Roof Plan

Stage: Stage 3
Status: Planning

002

REVISION: Scale 1:200 @:A1



- Existing timber frame barn - shown indicatively
- Existing concrete frame barn
- Existing infill structure, in poor condition - extents shown only, not surveyed due to condition
- Existing concrete slab floor

- e. Existing timber door
- f. Existing open doorway
- g. Exposed concrete structure
- h. Exposed brickwork piers
- i. Existing opening to infill, blocked up
- j. Existing metal roller door
- k. Opening



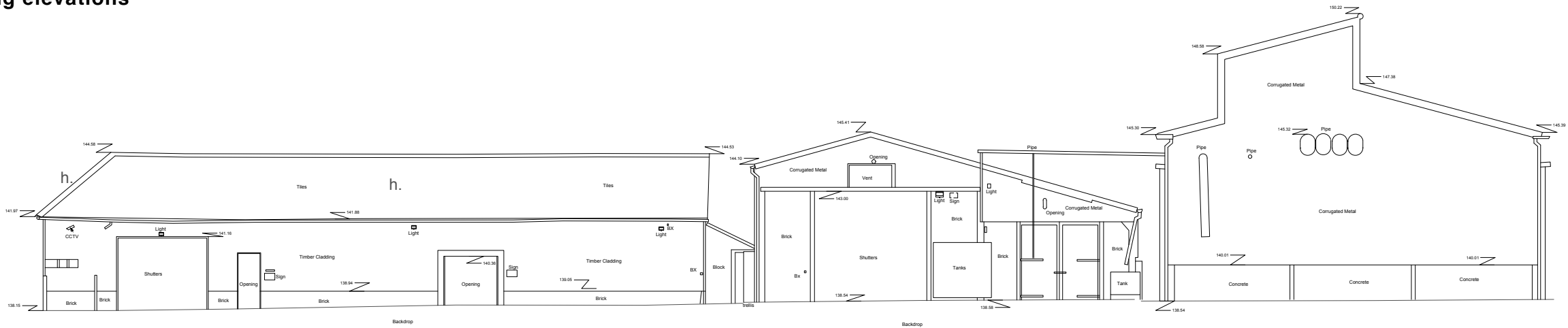
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Job No. **255** Existing GF Plan

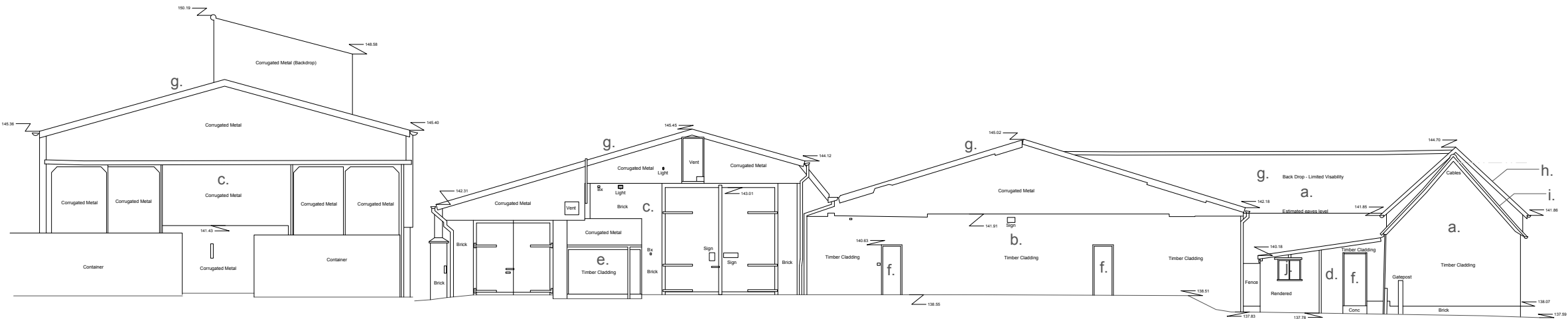
003

REVISION: Scale
1:100 @:A1

2.3 Existing elevations

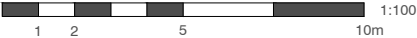


Elevation One (North)



Elevation Three (South)

- Notes:
- a. Existing timber frame barn
 - b. Existing concrete frame barn
 - c. Existing steel frame barn
 - d. Existing infill structure, in poor condition
 - e. Existing outbuildings/lean to structure with black timber weatherboarding and corrugated roof
 - f. Existing timber door
 - g. Existing corrugated roof - metal or fiber cement
 - h. Existing fibre cement slate tiles
 - i. Existing red clay tiles
 - j. Existing timber framed window



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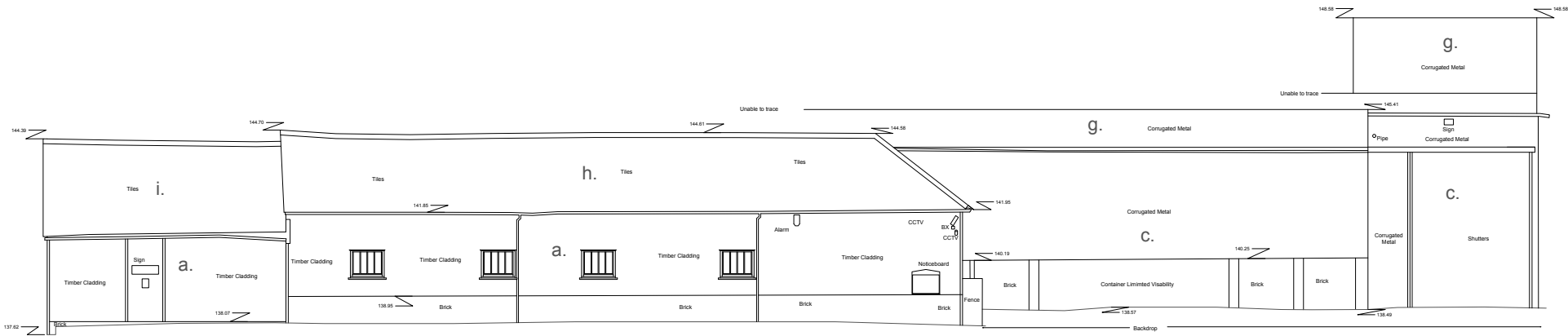
Note: This drawing is copyright.
Note: These layouts are preliminary until further surveys are undertaken.
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Note: Ownership boundary indicative based on OS data.
Note: Red dotted line is shown as site boundary.
Note: Elevation key plan not to scale.

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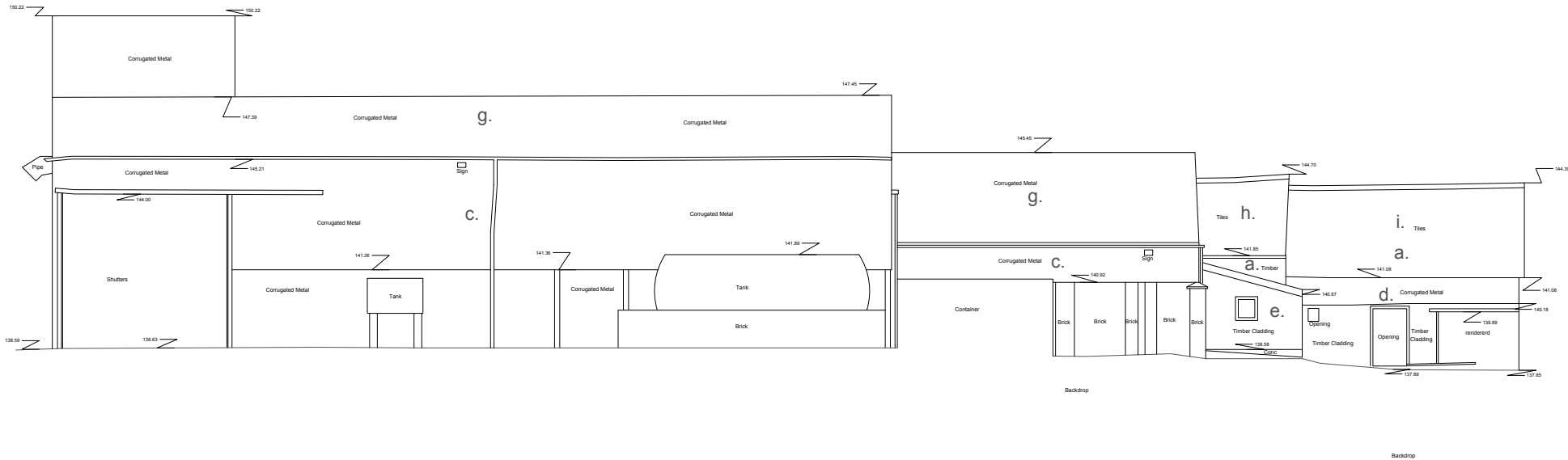
Groundschool, Irongate Farm
Job No. 255 Existing Elevations
Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

004
REVISION: Scale 1:100 @:A1

2.3 Existing elevations



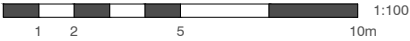
Elevation Two (East)



Elevation Four (West)

Notes:

- a. Existing timber frame barn
- b. Existing concrete frame barn
- c. Existing steel frame barn
- d. Existing infill structure, in poor condition
- e. Existing outbuildings/lean to structure with black timber weatherboarding and corrugated roof
- f. Existing timber door
- g. Existing corrugated roof - metal or fiber cement
- h. Existing fibre cement slate effect tiles
- i. Existing red clay tiles
- j. Existing timber framed window



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Note: Red dotted line is shown as site boundary.
Note: Elevation key plan not to scale.

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Groundschool, Irongate Farm
Job No. 255 Existing Elevations Two

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

005
REVISION: Scale 1:100 @:A1

2.4 Aerial Views

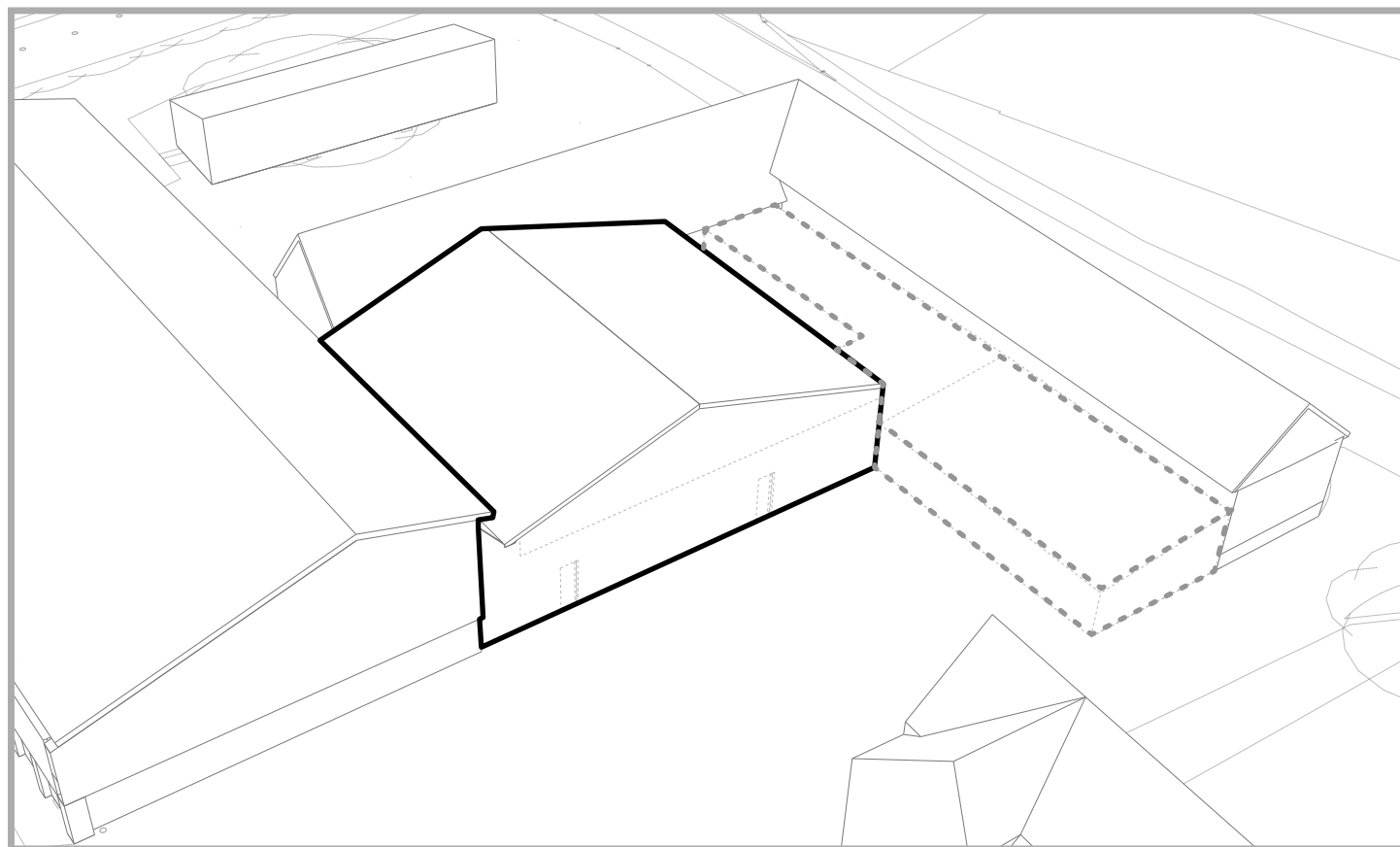


2.4 Aerial Views



3. Relevant Matters

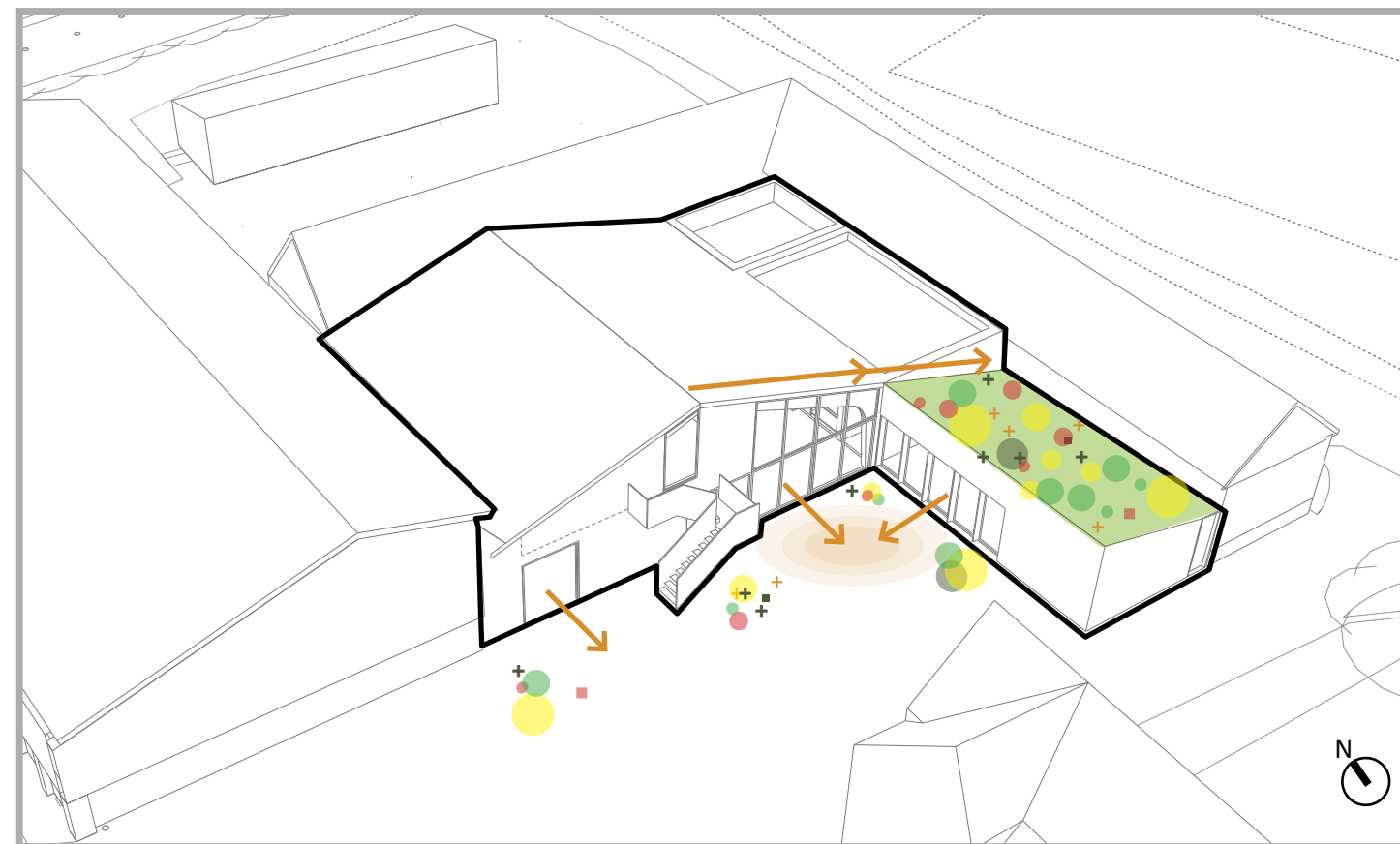
3.1 Design Principles



The project under consideration, as outlined in this application, aims to enhance the structural integrity of the building and promote greater architectural cohesion.

The existing structure between the concrete barn and the historic barn is of substandard quality and constitutes an accumulation of buildings. The proposal entails the utilisation of this area for the construction of a new in-fill building, which is intended to serve the concrete barn in the future. The new building will not lean on the historic barn.

The roof of this new addition follows the slope of the concrete barn, ensuring visual unity, as depicted in the elevation drawing on page 43 of this report. The roof of the new building will be covered with wildflowers, creating a natural aesthetic and providing a distinctive feature. The portion of the roof of this new building that is situated at a distance from the sight will be flat and will serve the purpose of accommodating technical services, as explained on page 32.



The juxtaposition of the concrete barn and the new building will follow the same slope, but also a central area for visitors, thereby enhancing the connection between the building and its dual functionality, both internally and externally. The windows will be low-emission and will block the sun, while the south side of the building will open onto the existing courtyard, which faces the farmhouse, and will have extra planters and raised garden beds.

The insulation of the concrete barn will raise the ridges and eaves by +/- 35cm, while lower than the historic barn and maintaining its seamless integration, thereby ensuring an unobtrusive presence from the street and inconspicuous to the naked eye. A new ground bearing slab will intergrate all the services throught the overall project subject to the application.

In addition, the concrete barn will be fully recladded with three materials: corrugated hemp, corrugated polycarbonate and charred timber, also featured int he visualistions on page 57. The specifications of the materials in question are also outlined on page 53.

3.1 Design Principles



The Groundschool aims to be a learning centre with the overall aim of spreading knowledge about sustainable food production and healthy eating. As a result, the space is designed to be as adaptable as possible. The use of local food products, combined with the promotion of agro-ecological and sustainable food production principles, is a key feature of the proposed use paradigm.

The spatial configuration of the facility will include two kitchen areas: a professional kitchen located in the extension building, and a series of domestic appliances strategically mounted on wheels for optimal mobility. The domestic appliances will be positioned in the primary teaching space for use by a maximum of 12 students, supervised by one or two instructors (see page 25, Scenario 2).



The primary space in the ground-floor centre is connected to a professional kitchen and an additional area with a movable partition, which can be used to organise cooking demonstrations, masterclasses, gatherings, and other events.

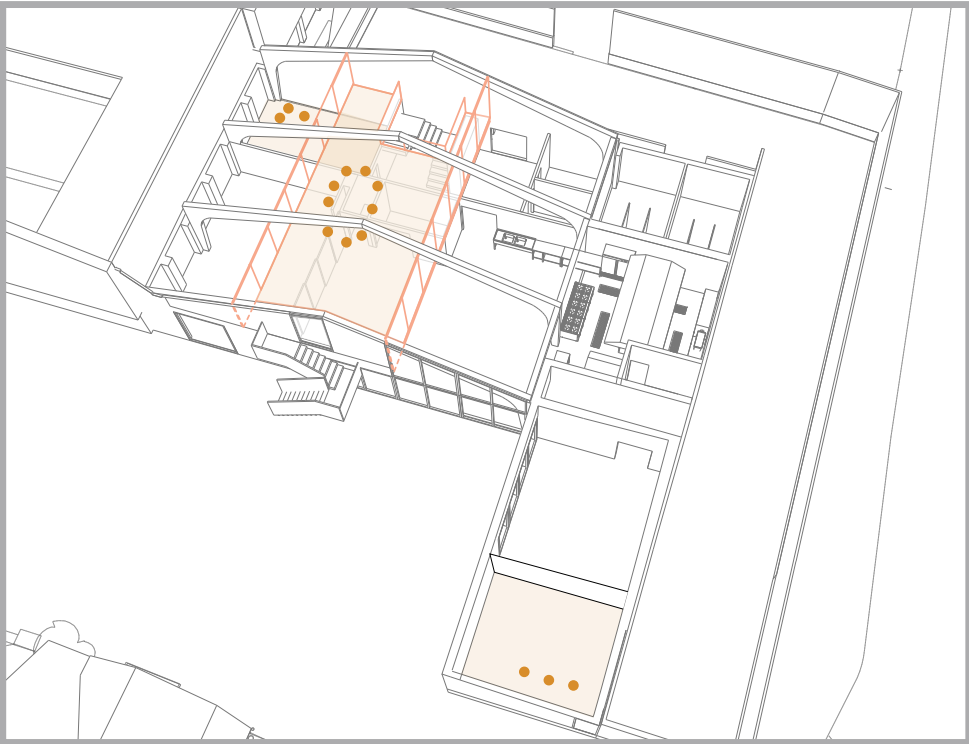
Groundschool offices will also in one of the corner of the concrete barn or the extension building. The project scope encompasses the construction of a mezzanine level, equipped with a good lift at teh centre of the internal staircase, and an emergency exit leading to an external staircase to the sourtyard. The barn also includes facilities, such as accessible toilets, cold rooms, versatile meeting rooms.

The versatility of Groundschool is characterised with different scenario of use of the building on the next page, which features example of different activities and uses of the facility.

3.1 Design Principles

Scenario 01
MONDAY MORNING

Offices
&
rented rooms occupied



Scenario 03
SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Demonstration



Scenario 02
THURSDAY AFTERNOON

Cookery teaching session
+
School workshop



Scenario 04
SATURDAY EVENING

Cocktail - Supper club



LEGEND

- 1 person
- space / room in use

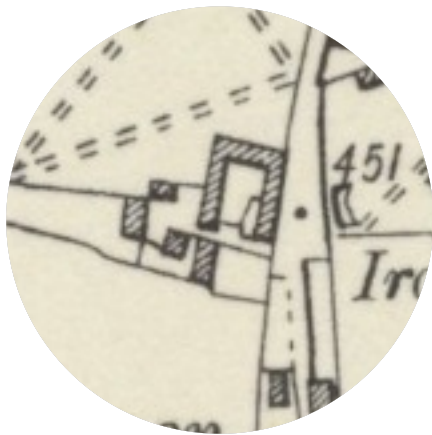


3.2 Heritage and land use evolution

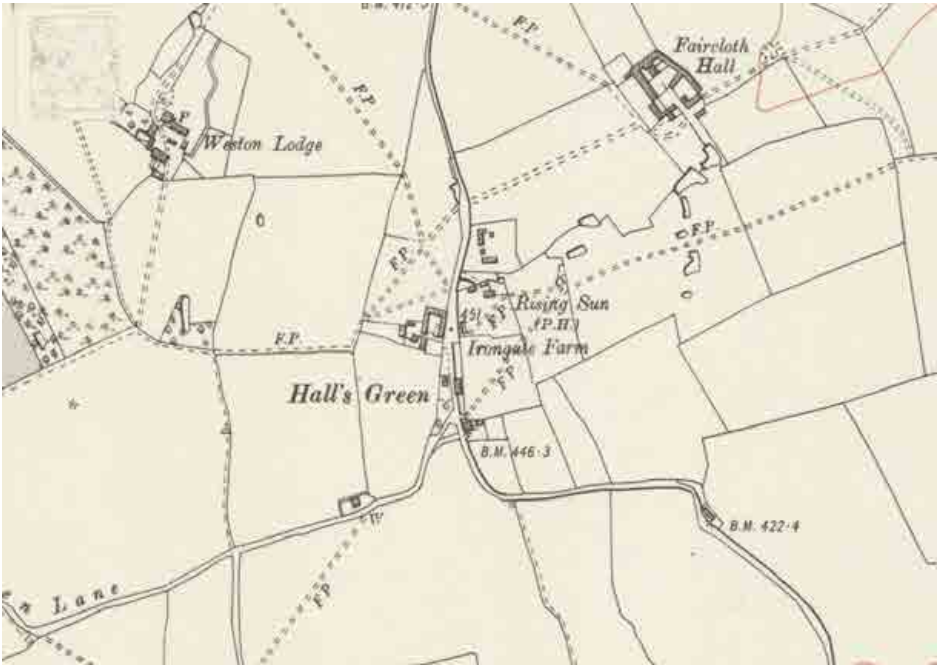
The barn associated with this planning application forms part of the Irongate Farm site, which includes several barns as described in section one of this report.

An examination of archive maps indicates that the forms of the barns date from the late 19th century (see illustration on the right). The site has historically functioned as a farm and includes the Irongate Farmhouse, listed grade II* since 1987 under reference number 1347439.

The farmhouse is thought to date from the late 16th or early 17th century. It has a 17th-century rear staircase and stair tower, and the front elevation was altered in the early 18th century, with further alterations to the windows in the 19th century. Notable features of the farmhouse include a timber frame resting on brick sills, a plain-edged roughcast front, and a steep old red tile roof extending to the front and rear. The building also has a half-hipped rear wing, an intricate roof structure and a distinctive chimney stack.



1884



1924



1950



3.2 Heritage and land use evolution

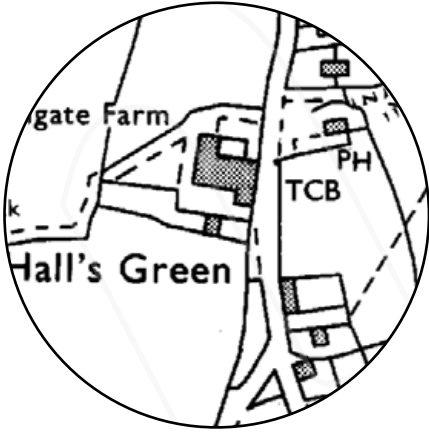
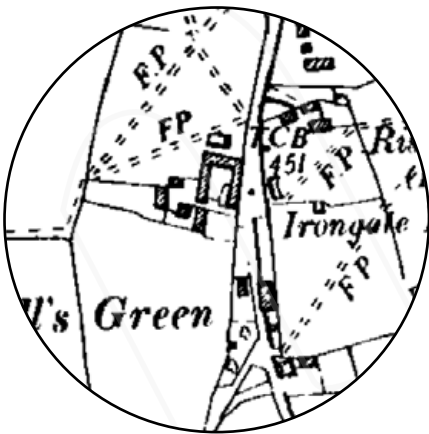
The pedestrian paths have been in place for many years, as indicated on the 1884 map, and they remain in use today.

The historic barn, illustrated in maps from 1884 to 1960, has a horseshoe shape and was likely the primary barn associated with the farmhouse for many years. Between 1884 and 1950, there was very little change in terms of buildings and land use, as suggested on the following page.

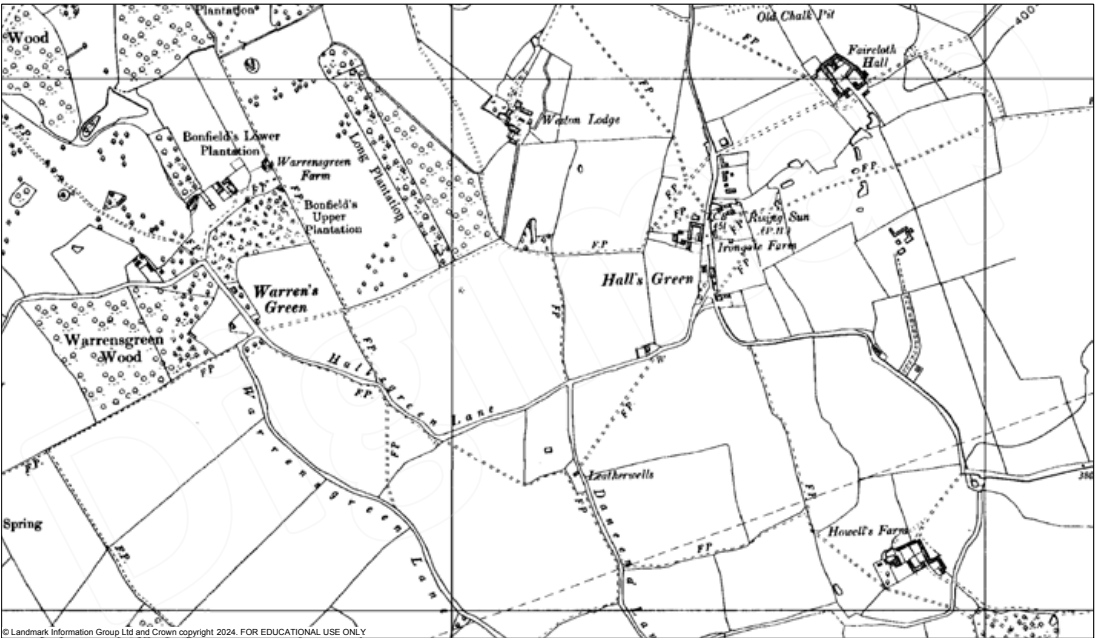
In 1960, the U-shaped barn was still present and was associated with another barn depicted on the 1979 map. The overall configuration suggests the presence of a concrete barn alongside a new barn, although the latter is not included in this planning application.

All of the barns were originally used for agricultural purposes and the current lawful use of the barns is in accordance with the application for change of use of the barns to B8, a use class that designates property for storage or distribution purposes, including warehouses, logistics centres and outdoor storage, which was approved in 2021.

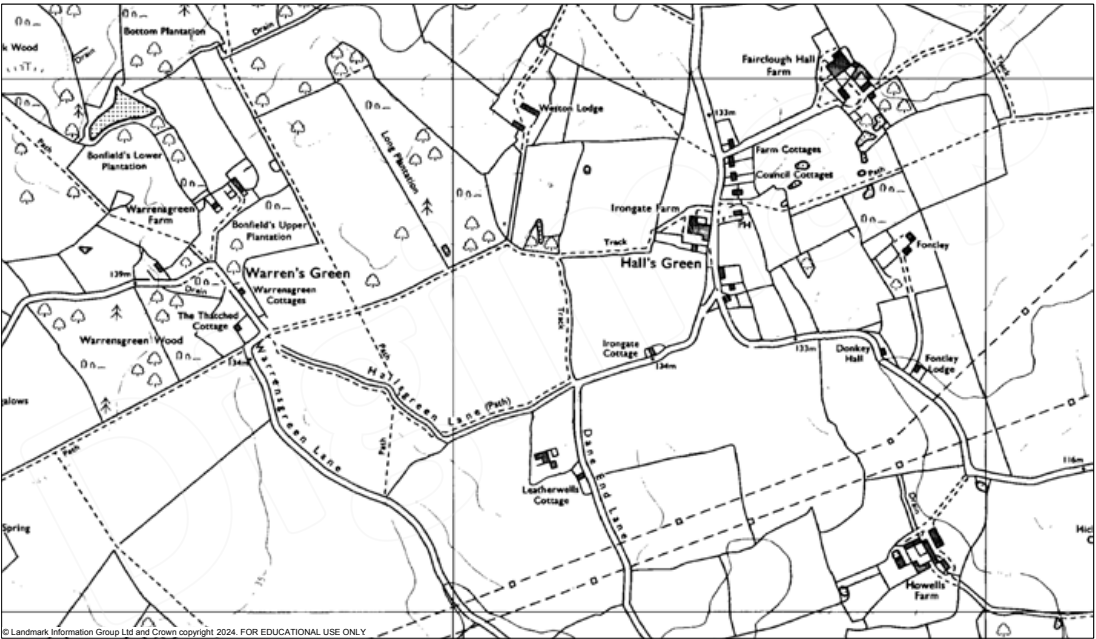
This indicates that the barn in question is currently in use as B8. The current planning application proposes a change of use to Class F1, which includes educational and non-residential uses such as schools, libraries, museums, places of worship and exhibition halls.



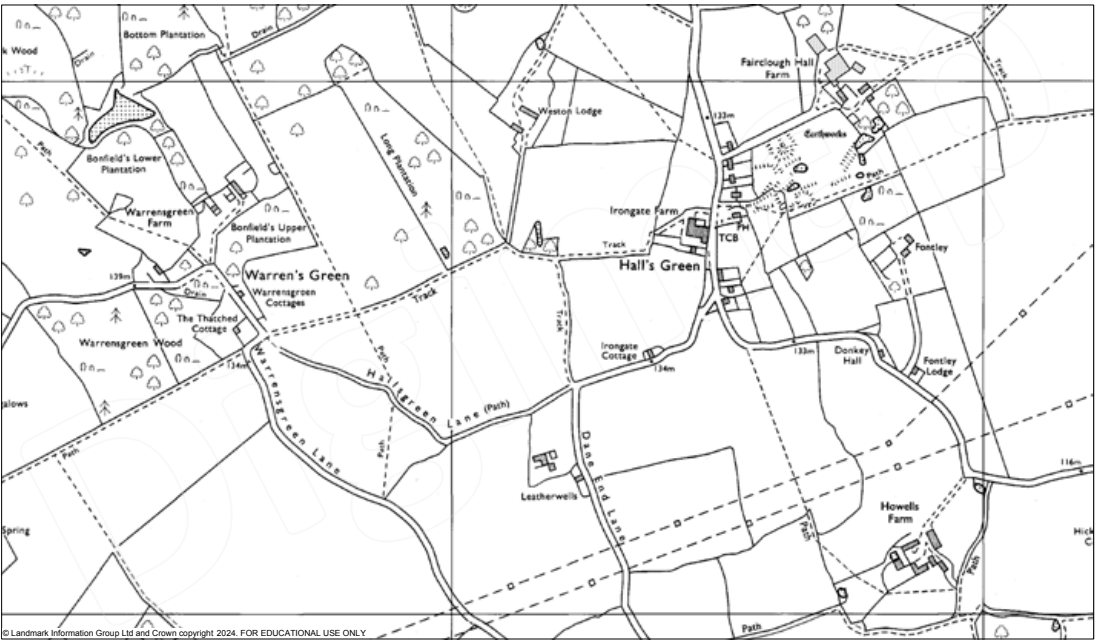
1960



1979



1994



3.3 Curtilage structure

Listed building. As noted in section 3.2, the farmhouse is a Grade II* listed building. The curtilage of a building (the principal listed building) is generally any area of land and other buildings around and connected to that principal building. The courts have said that there are three key factors to be taken into account in assessing whether a structure or object is within the curtilage of a listed building:

- i. the physical layout of the listed building and the structure;
- ii. their ownership, both historically and at the date of listing;
- iii. the use or function of the relevant buildings, again both historically and at the date of listing.

Curtilage and farmhouse. Irongate Farmhouse, listed grade II* in 1987, stands in its own garden with a series of barns nearby. The main farmyard lies to the north, separated from the farmhouse by a farm track, with a series of barns built in different periods.

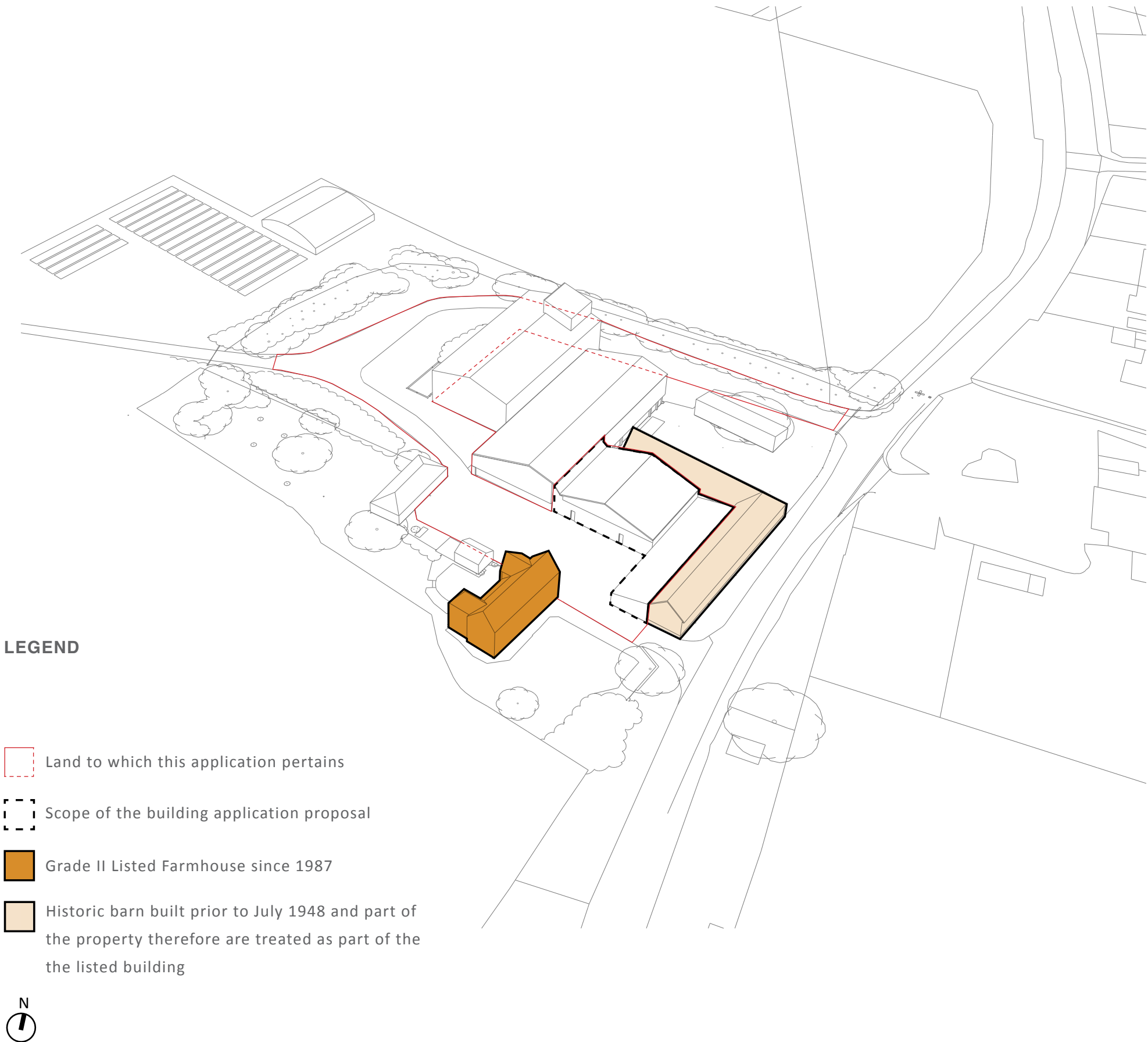
The question therefore arises as to whether the farm buildings fall within the curtilage of the listed building and, if so, whether they should be regarded as part of the listed building.

As demonstrated in the maps presented in the preceding section, the L-shaped barn was originally associated with the farmhouse and is likely to be within the curtilage of the designated listed building.

Nevertheless, in consideration of the period during which the concrete barn under consideration in this planning application was constructed, it is improbable that it falls within the curtilage of the farmhouse.

Source:
HEAG125 Listed available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/listed-buildings-and-curtilage-advice-note-10/>

Buildings and Curtilage Historic England Heritage Protection Guide under Listing, at [Historic England.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/listed-buildings/](https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/listed-buildings/)



3.4 Parking

The most relevant category that reflects the future attendance of Groundschool is F1, which includes two spaces and an additional space per 30 square metres of public floor space. The project also provides cycle standards, with one space allocated for every four members of staff, in addition to spaces on an individual basis. The project is designed to accommodate a minimum of 10 bicycle spaces. This proposal ensures that there is sufficient space for the school’s typical usage based on two scenarios:

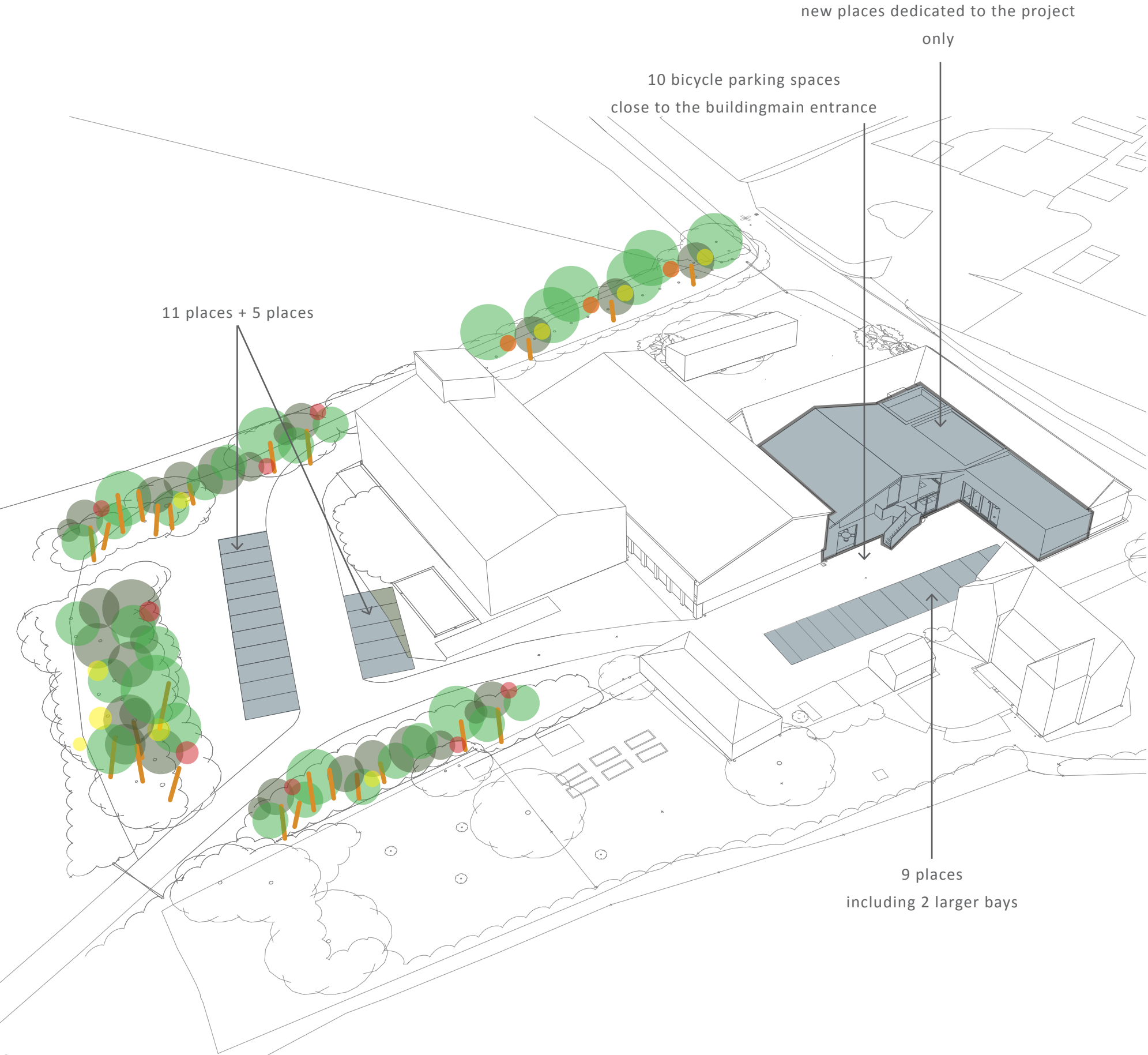
Max use scenario one: two full-capacity classes are operational simultaneously. The configuration of 2x12 students and 2x1 teachers results in a total of 26 spaces. Should additional staff members be present, the total number of car spaces is estimated to be 31.

Max use scenario two: A lecture/dining event is taking place. In this scenario, the Places of Assembly metric is employed, with the GIFA associated with the assembly (as previously outlined) being utilised. This results in a total of 29 car spaces being available.

In light of the aforementioned scenarios, a reduction to 25 places is proposed due to the following:

- > The site is located on a working farm, as well as Groundschool activities, so they may not be counted as full-time. Besides, there is provision elsewhere on site for staff to park in relation to agricultural activities.
- > Furthermore, Groundschool promotes sustainable principles. For all events on site, car sharing is encouraged and attendees are encouraged to reduce car demand.
- > Stevenage/Baldock stations are 10-15 minutes away by car, which is a 30-minute bike ride away, so bicycle parking is also provided.

If the cost of installation is less than 7% of the total cost of a major renovation, the project will include 1 space with an EV charger and 1/5th of the total remaining spaces to have a cable route, for future charger installation, so 1 EV charger and 4 additional cable routes.



Source:
North Hertfordshire Local Development Framework - Vehicle Parking at New Development SPD - 2011
North Hertfordshire District Council Operational Guidelines
Approved Document S



3.5 BNG exemption

In accordance with Regulation 4, the project is subject to the De Minimis Exemption, which stipulates that the applicant’s impact on non-zero distinctiveness habitat must be less than 25 square metres and on hedgerow habitat less than 5 square metres. Furthermore, the project is required to avoid any impact on priority habitat.

The overarching objectives of the project is to minimise habitat damage and loss, and to compensate for the unavoidable loss of biodiversity. This will be achieved through the following measures: The project will be subject to the following measures:

- The avoidance and reduction of clearance of very high, high and medium distinctiveness habitats will be implemented. The parking arrangements will be facilitated within a permeable area.
- The enhancement of existing on-site habitats, by the working farm and sustainable farming methods on site, will be encouraged.

Source:
Regulation 4 De minimis Exemption: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2024/47/regulation/4/made>

[https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/biodiversity-net-gain#:~:text=gains%20for%20biodiversity.-,Requirements%20and%20exemptions,\(known%20as%20householder%20applications\)](https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/biodiversity-net-gain#:~:text=gains%20for%20biodiversity.-,Requirements%20and%20exemptions,(known%20as%20householder%20applications))

<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/submit-planning-application#validation>



3.6 Ecology / environmental strategy

Access

The proposal does not affect the overall accessibility of the site and the property; it allows level access to the concrete and parking areas. In addition, the proposal includes the introduction of a one-way system to facilitate efficient entry and exit.

Waste

The proposal involves some changes to the overarching volume and nature of waste, being a cookery school. However, Groundschool is committed to a very limited waste venue, including segregation of waste, recycling, organic waste and limited main waste. The storage strategy will include a large bin, which will be incorporated into a shed to the side of the barn, ensuring it remains out of sight from the street.

Environment

This report includes an ecological survey, which suggests that no protected species were found on site, but confirmed for roosting bats after a few droppings were found. For more detail, please refer to the report by the ecological consultant.

Habitat

Groundschool project’s goal is to make the most of the green and outdoor space and leave the surrounding area as it is or with more flower beds and plantings. The local authority is to advise if further habitat studies are required after the ecologists’ report.

Contamination

The local authority is to advise if further contamination surveys are required based on council land datasets. Historic cartographic analysis does not indicate that the existing land had a former industrial or extraction use, or the storage of fuels.

Source:
Envrionment and bat survey attached



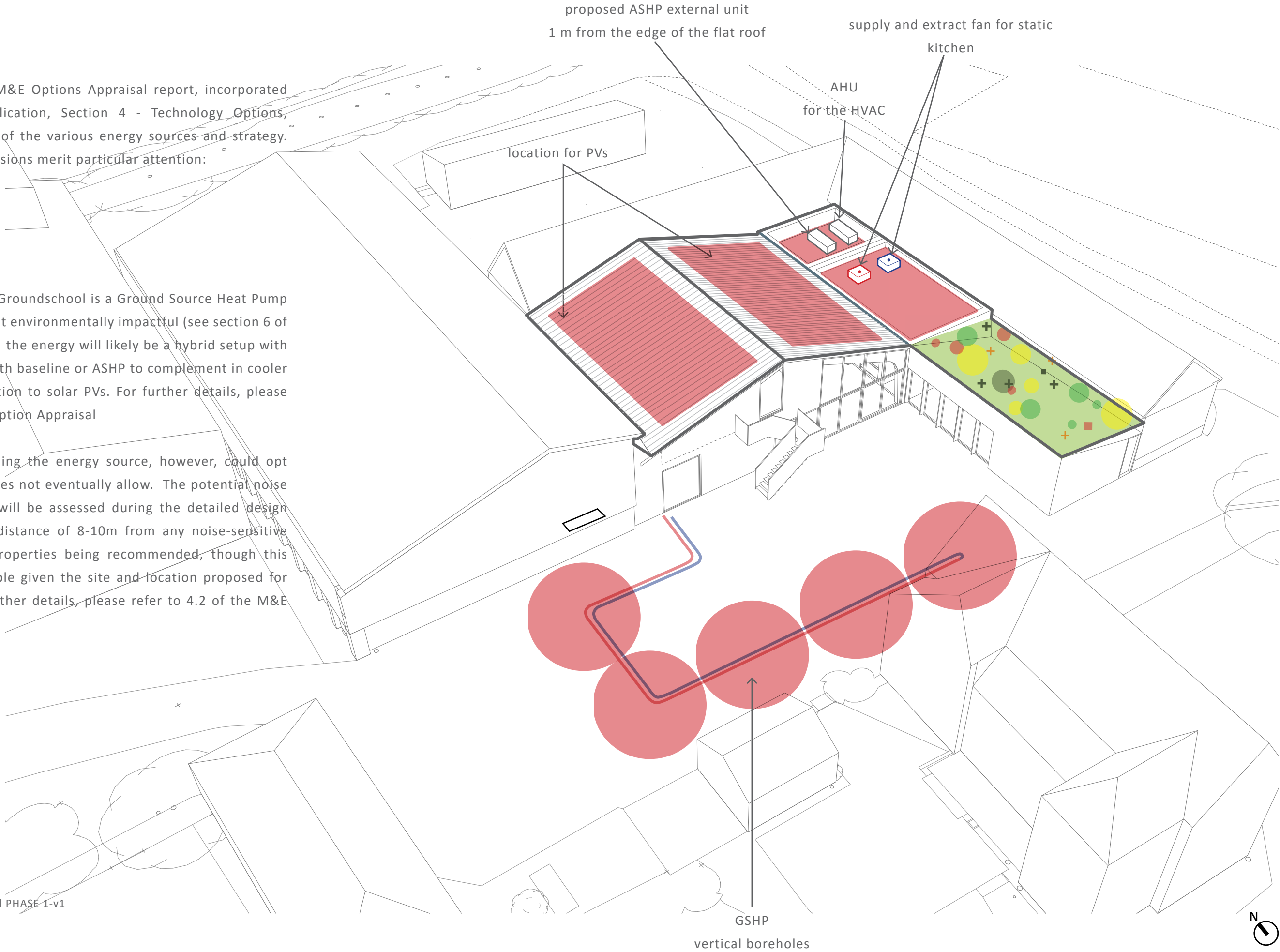
3.7 Energy strategy

In accordance with the M&E Options Appraisal report, incorporated within the present application, Section 4 - Technology Options, provides an examination of the various energy sources and strategy. Three energy-related decisions merit particular attention:

- i. general ventilation;
- ii. heating/cooling; and
- iii. kitchen extraction.

The preferred option for Groundschool is a Ground Source Heat Pump (GSHP). This option is least environmentally impactful (see section 6 of the report). Nevertheless, the energy will likely be a hybrid setup with a GSHP complemented with baseline or ASHP to complement in cooler days for heating, in addition to solar PVs. For further details, please refer to 4.3 of the M&E Option Appraisal

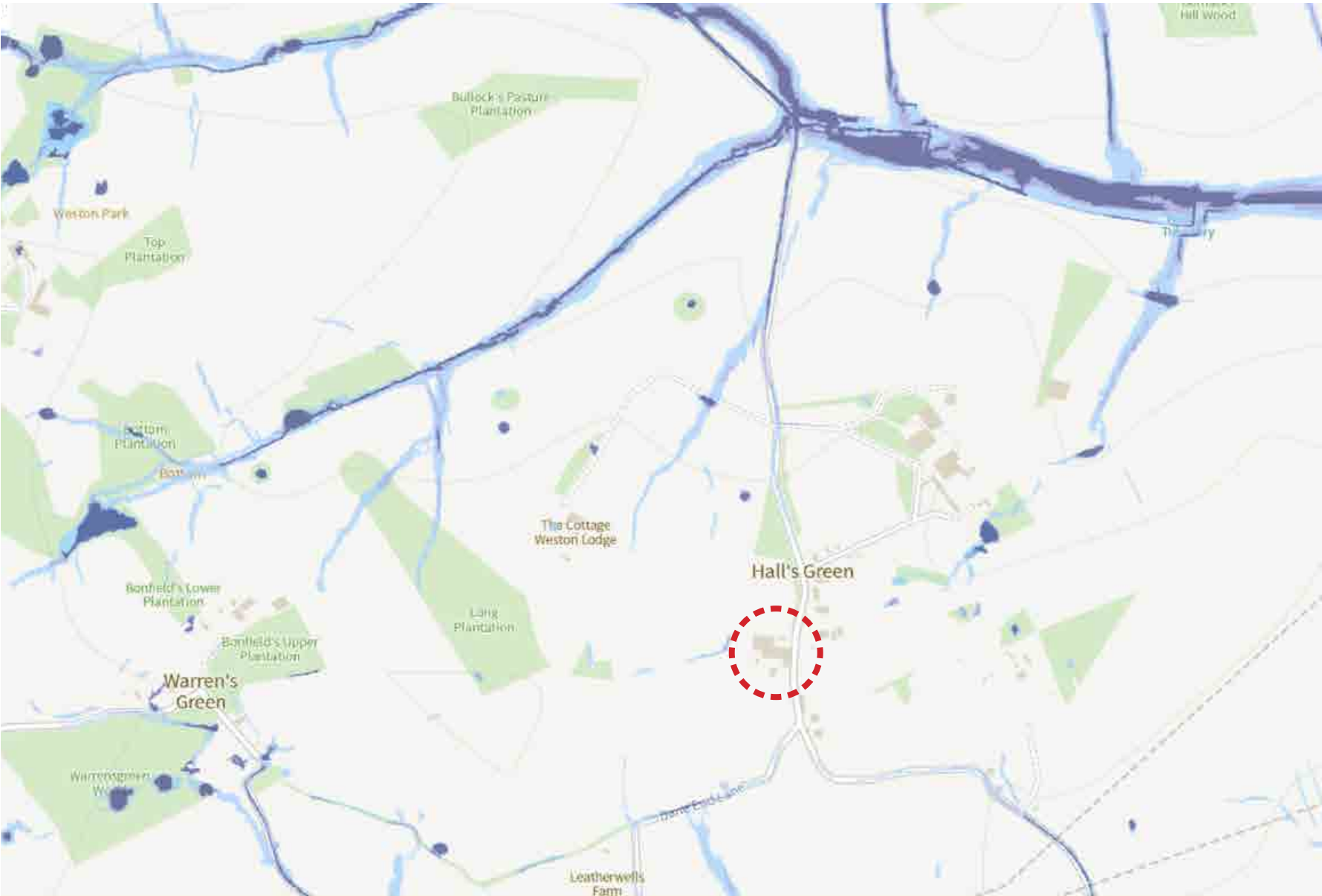
The final decision regarding the energy source, however, could opt for ASHP if the budget does not eventually allow. The potential noise generation of the ASHP will be assessed during the detailed design stage, with a minimum distance of 8-10m from any noise-sensitive areas or neighbouring properties being recommended, though this should be easily achievable given the site and location proposed for the external unit. For further details, please refer to 4.2 of the M&E Option Appraisal.



Source:
LSL-F04-E0864-Options Appraisal PHASE 1-v1
M&E reprot attached

3.8 Flood risk

The site is situated within Flood Zone 1 from rivers and other waterways (see adjacent map). The site is not identified as being in close proximity to an area with a high risk of damage to surface flooring. The local authority will provide guidance on the necessity for further flood risk assessments.



Key

Surface water

Extent

High

More than 3.3% chance each year

Medium

Between 1% and 3.3% chance each year

Low

Between 0.1% and 1% chance each year

Irongate farm site

Irongate Barn, Halls Green, Weston, Hitchin, SG4 7DR

This information tells you the flood risk of an area, not a specific property.

We have [paused updates to information about flood risk](#) from rivers and the sea and surface water while we get ready for new data.

► [How we assess an area's flood risk](#)

Surface water

[More about your surface water flood risk](#)

Yearly chance of flooding

Very low

Low

Medium

High

What surface water is

Surface water flooding is sometimes known as flash flooding. It happens when rainwater cannot drain away through normal drainage systems.

► [Why surface water flooding is a problem](#)

Rivers and the sea

[More about your rivers and sea flood risk](#)

Yearly chance of flooding

Very low

Low

Medium

High

What makes rivers and sea flooding more likely

Low-lying areas that are close to rivers or the sea are more likely to flood when water levels rise.

This information takes into account any flood defences.

► [Why flood defences cannot completely prevent flooding](#)

Other flood risks

[More about groundwater and reservoirs](#)

Groundwater

Flooding from groundwater is unlikely in this area.

Reservoirs

Flooding from reservoirs is unlikely in this area.

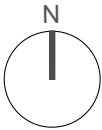
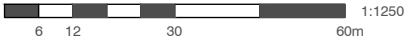
4. Proposed Plans

4.1 Location plan as proposed



Notes:

- a. Existing timber frame barn
- b. Developed barns
- c. Parking
- d. Grade II* listed farmhouse
- e. Land for agricultural activities



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Note: Red dotted line is shown as site boundary.
Note: Elevation key plan not to scale.

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Groundschool, Irongate Farm

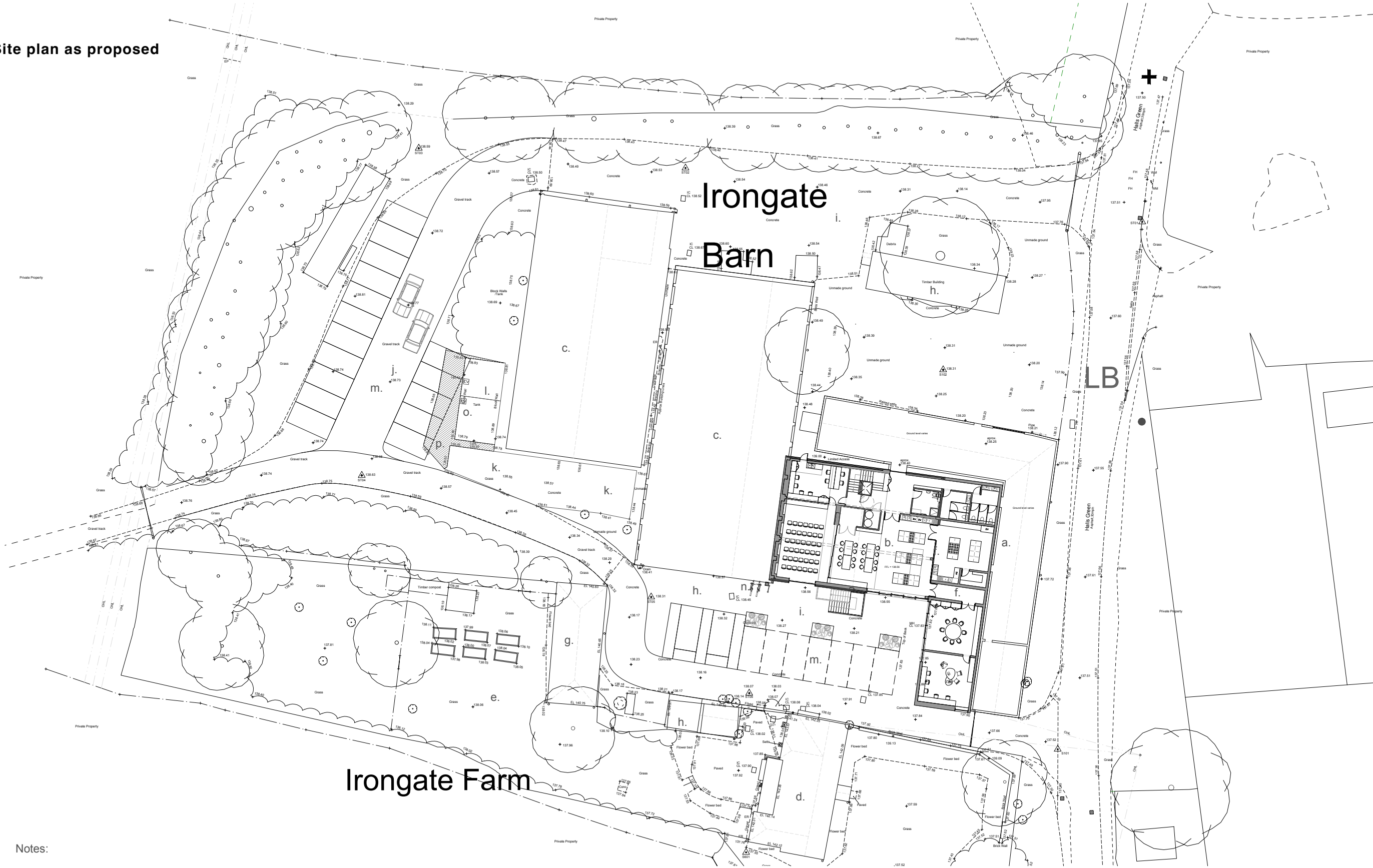
Job No. 255 Location Plan - as proposed

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

021

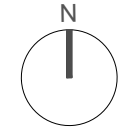
REVISION: Scale 1:1250 @:A3

4.2 Site plan as proposed

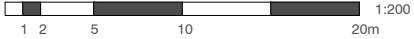


Notes:

- a. Existing timber frame barn
- b. Refurbished concrete frame barn
- c. Existing steel frame barn
- d. Existing grade I listed farmhouse
- e. Existing farmhouse garden
- f. New construction infill building
- g. Existing barn with black timber weatherboarding and tiled roof
- h. Existing outbuildings/lean to structure with black timber weatherboarding and corrugated roof
- i. Existing concrete slab hardstanding
- j. Existing hoggin surface
- k. Hardstanding beneath containers retained
- l. Hardstanding beneath tank retained
- m. Proposed parking
- n. Proposed cycle parking
- o. Proposed opportunity for EV chargers
- p. Area of grass removed to accomodate parking is less than 25m2



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Groundschool, Irongate Farm
Job No. 255 Proposed Site Plan

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

022

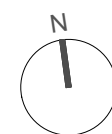
REVISION: Scale 1:200 @:A1

Notes:

- a. Existing timber frame barn
- b. Flexible kitchen/teaching area
- c. Proposed teaching/breakout area
- d. Sliding glazed partition
- e. Office (for Groundschool & partners)
- f. Storage room
- g. Closed commercial grade prep kitchen
- h. Conditioned storage room

- i. Flexible office/enterprise/teaching space
- j. Vestibule
- k. Stairs to mezzanine
- l. Platform lift
- m. Flexible gallery/teaching space
- n. Water tank/plant
- o. Accessible WC & washroom
- p. WC's
- q. Timber/Aluminium sliding glazed doors
- r. Glazed internal doors

- s. External doors
- t. South courtyard
- u. Fire escape stair
- v. Bicycle parking
- w. Accommodation parking (flexible courtyard use)
- x. Accommodation for accessible parking
- y. Electric charging point



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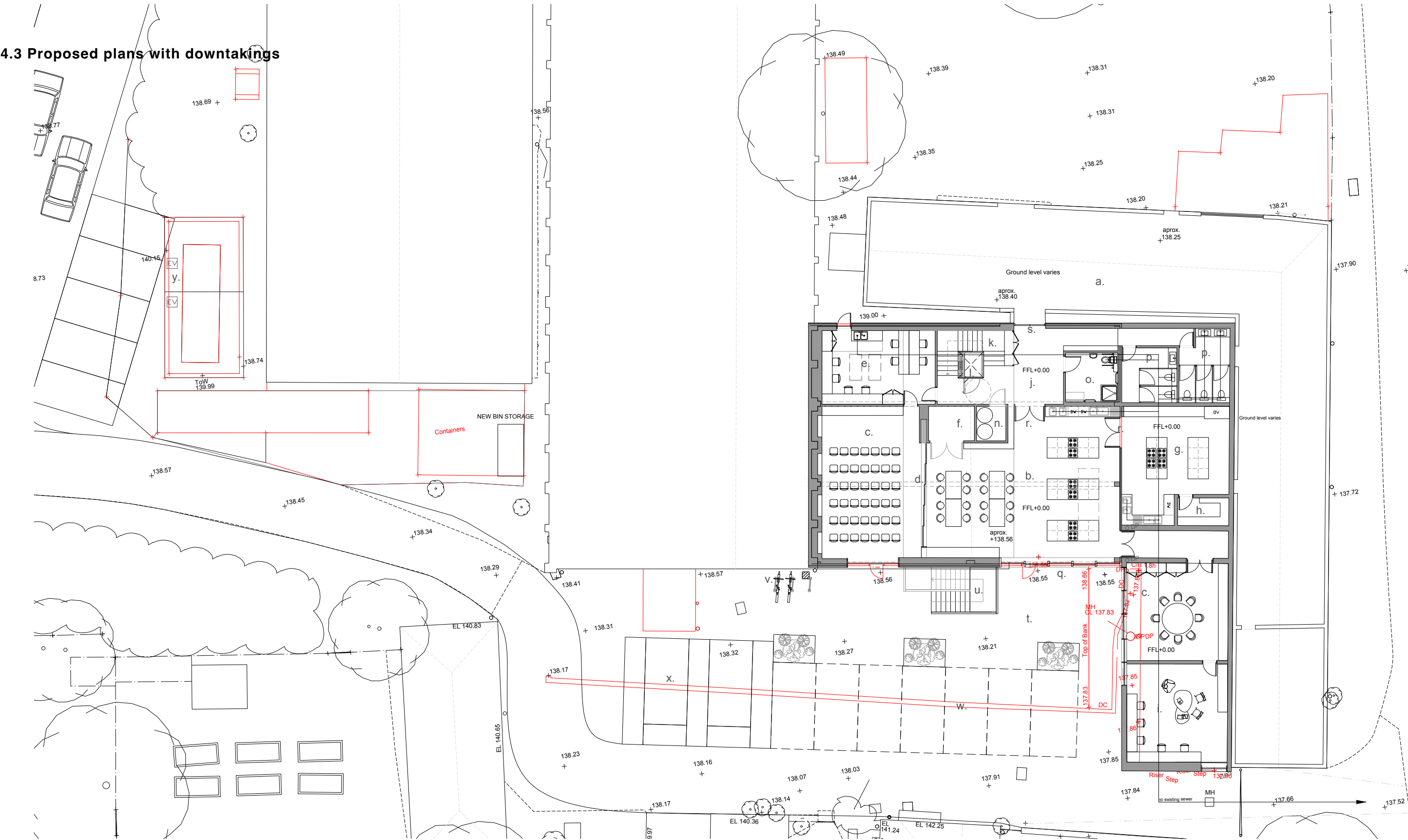
Job No. **255** Proposed GF Plan

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

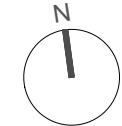
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REVISION: Scale
1:100 @:A1

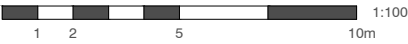
4.3 Proposed plans with downtakings



- Notes:
- a. Existing timber frame barn
 - b. Flexible kitchen/teaching area
 - c. Proposed teaching/breakout area
 - d. Sliding glazed partition
 - e. Office (for Groundschool & partners)
 - f. Storage room
 - g. Closed commercial grade prep kitchen
 - h. Conditioned storage room
 - i. Flexible office/enterprise/teaching space
 - j. Vestibule
 - k. Stairs to mezzanine
 - l. Platform lift
 - m. Flexible gallery/teaching space
 - n. Water tank/plant
 - o. Accessible WC & washroom
 - p. WC's
 - q. Timber/Aluminium sliding glazed doors
 - r. Glazed internal doors
 - s. External doors
 - t. South courtyard
 - u. Fire escape stair
 - v. Bicycle parking
 - w. Accommodation parking (flexible courtyard use)
 - x. Accommodation for accessible parking
 - y. Electric charging point



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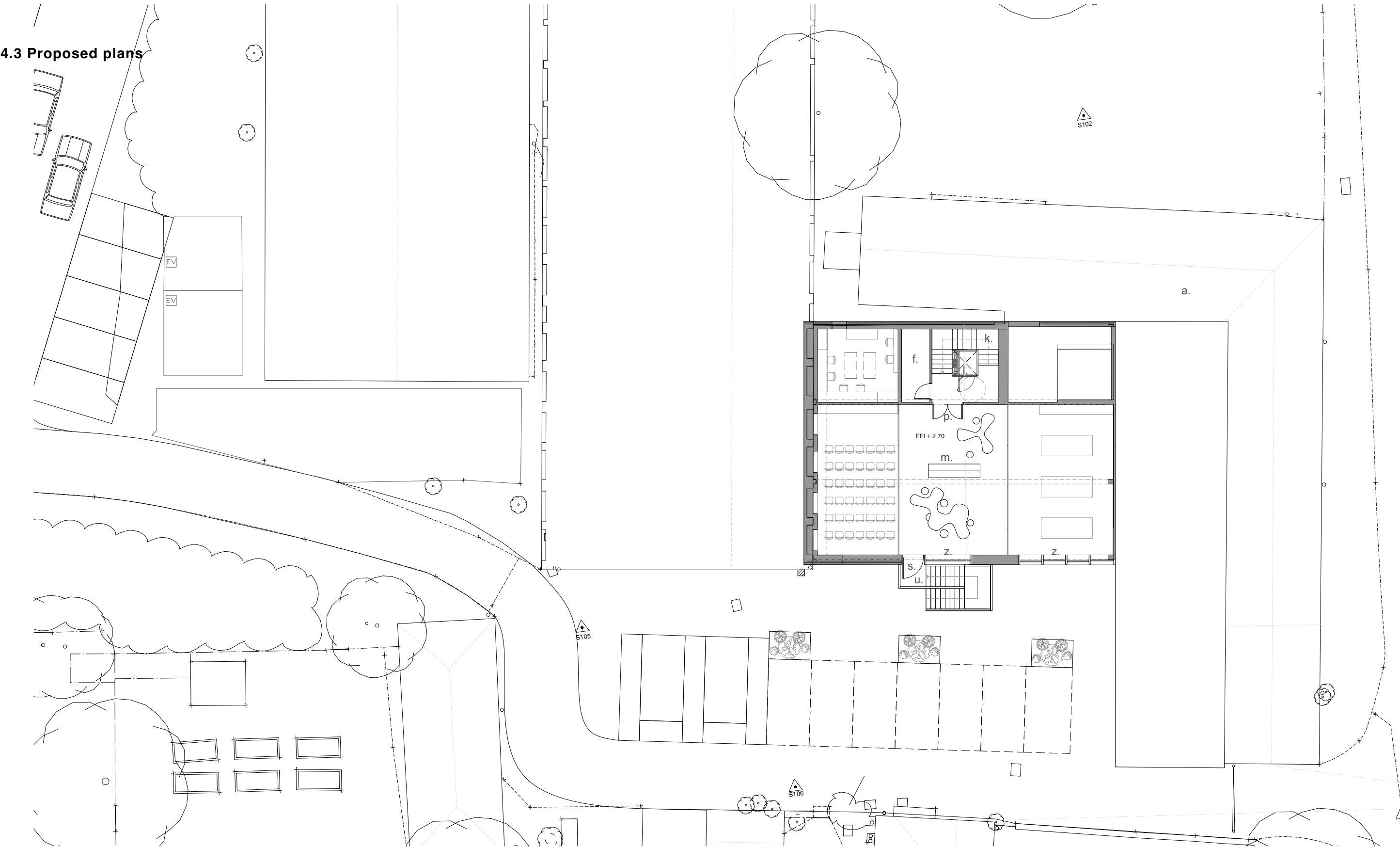
Groundschool, Irongate Farm
Job No. 255 Proposed GF Plan

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

023

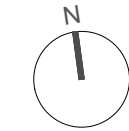
REVISION: Scale 1:100 @:A1

4.3 Proposed plans



Notes:

- a. Existing timber frame barn
- b. Flexible kitchen/teaching area
- c. Proposed teaching/breakout area
- d. Sliding glazed partition
- e. Office (for Groundschool & partners)
- f. Storage room
- g. Closed commercial grade prep kitchen
- h. Conditioned storage room
- i. Flexible office/enterprise/teaching space
- j. Vestibule
- k. Stairs to mezzanine
- l. Platform lift
- m. Flexible gallery/teaching space
- n. Water tank/plant
- o. Accessible WC & washroom
- p. WC's
- q. Timber/Aluminium sliding glazed doors
- r. Glazed internal doors
- s. External doors (with panic latch for escape)
- t. South courtyard
- u. Fire escape stair
- v. Bicycle parking
- w. Accommodation parking (flexible courtyard use)
- x. Accommodation for accessible parking
- y. Electric charging point
- z. Fixed glazing



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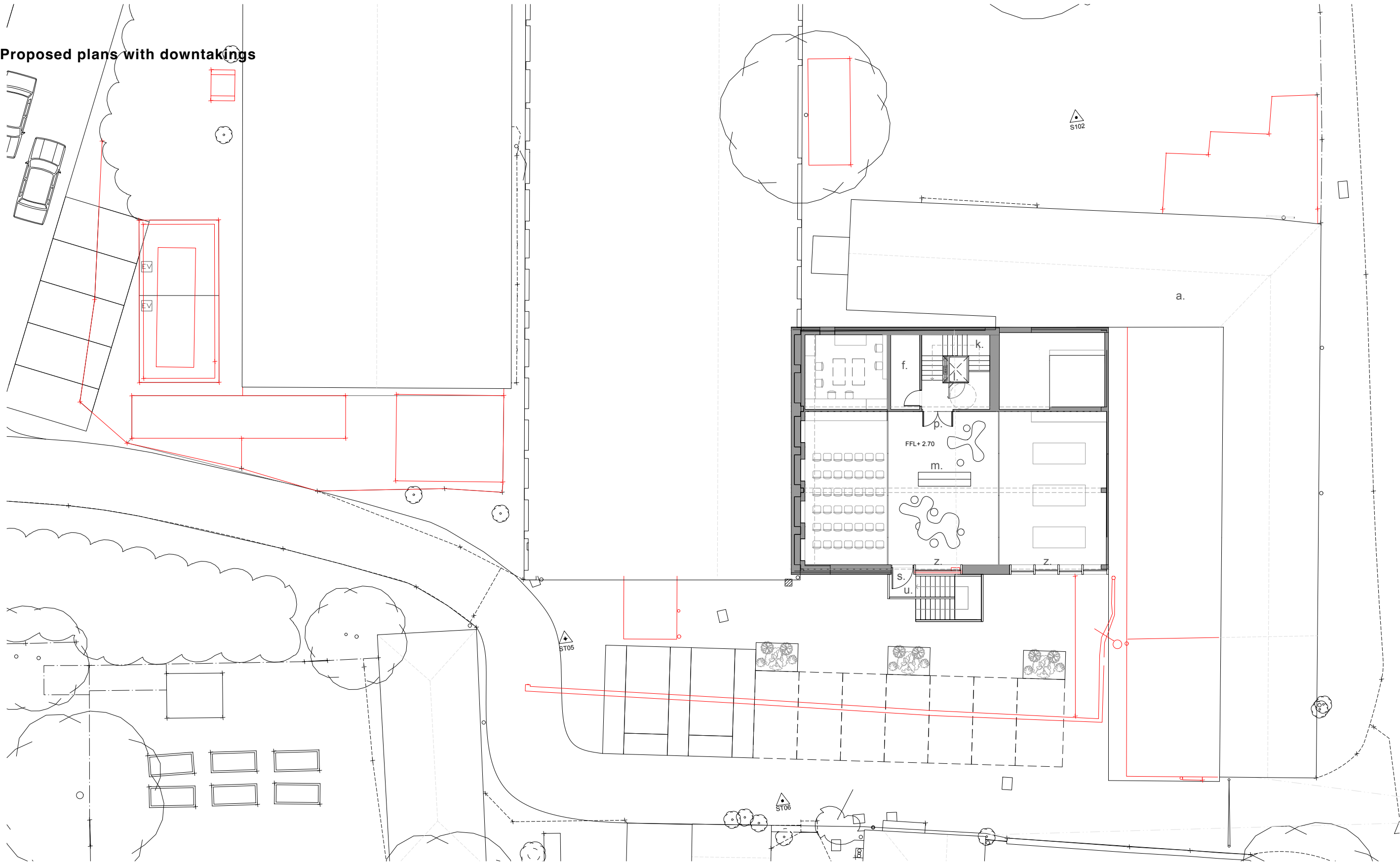
Groundschool, Irongate Farm
Job No: 227 Proposed Mezzanine Plan

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

024

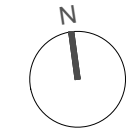
REVISION: Scale 1:100 @:A1

4.3 Proposed plans with downtakings



Notes:

- a. Existing timber frame barn
- b. Flexible kitchen/teaching area
- c. Proposed teaching/breakout area
- d. Sliding glazed partition
- e. Office (for Groundschool & partners)
- f. Storage room
- g. Closed commercial grade prep kitchen
- h. Conditioned storage room
- i. Flexible office/enterprise/teaching space
- j. Vestibule
- k. Stairs to mezzanine
- l. Platform lift
- m. Flexible gallery/teaching space
- n. Water tank/plant
- o. Accessible WC & washroom
- p. WC's
- q. Timber/Aluminium sliding glazed doors
- r. Glazed internal doors
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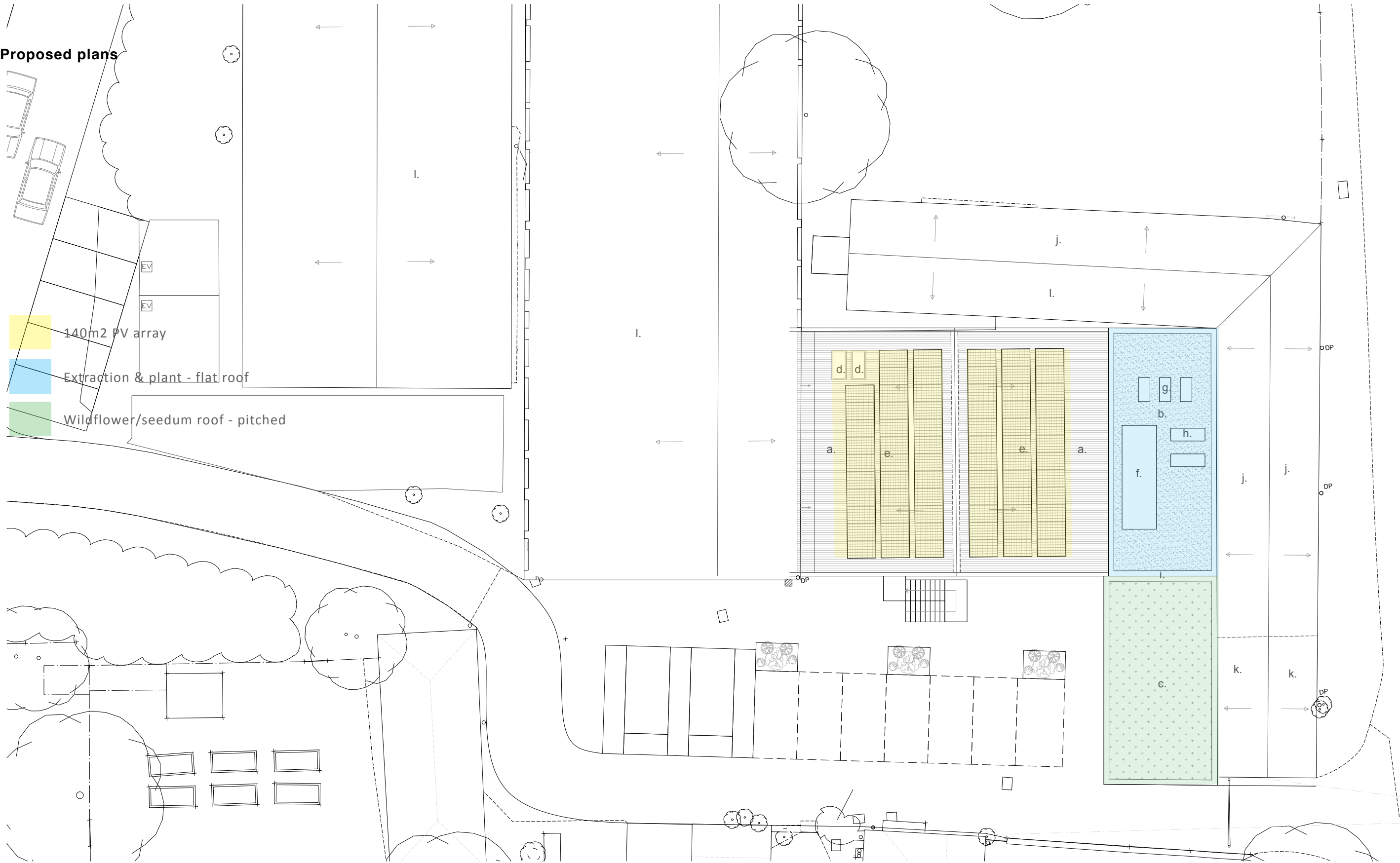
Groundschool, Irongate Farm
Job No. 227 Proposed Mezzanine Plan

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

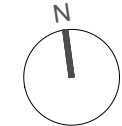
024

REVISION: Scale 1:100 @:A1

4.3 Proposed plans



- Notes:
- a. Corrugated roof
 - b. Flat roof, EPDM
 - c. Wildflower low-pitched roof
 - d. Roof light
 - e. Solar cells array
 - f. Extraction plant
 - g. Air source heat pumps
 - h. Air cooling/conditioning units
 - i. Parapet wall
 - j. Existing fibre cement slate tiles
 - k. Existing red clay tiles
 - l. Existing corrugated roof - metal or fibre cement



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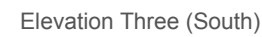
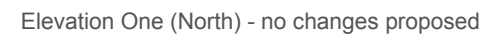
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Groundschool, Irongate Farm
Job No. 227 Proposed Roof Plan
Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

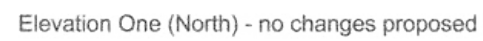
025

REVISION: Scale 1:100 @:A1



a.	Existing timber frame barn	k.	New charred timber cladding
b.	Existing concrete frame barn	l.	New corrugated cladding (hemp or fibre cement)
c.	Existing steel frame barn	m.	New sliding timber/aluminium glazing
d.	Existing infill structure, in poor condition	n.	New fixed timber/aluminium glazing
e.	Existing outbuildings/lean to structure with black timber weatherboarding and corrugated roof	o.	New polycarbonate cladding
f.	Existing timber door	p.	New corrugated metal/fibre cement roof
g.	Existing corrugated roof - metal or fiber cement	q.	New aluminium cappings
h.	Existing fibre cement slate tiles	r.	New timber and metal escape stair
i.	Existing red clay tiles	s.	New parapet wall
j.	Existing timber framed window	t.	New wildflower roof
		u.	New fire escape door

REVISION: Scale
1:100 @:A1



Notes:

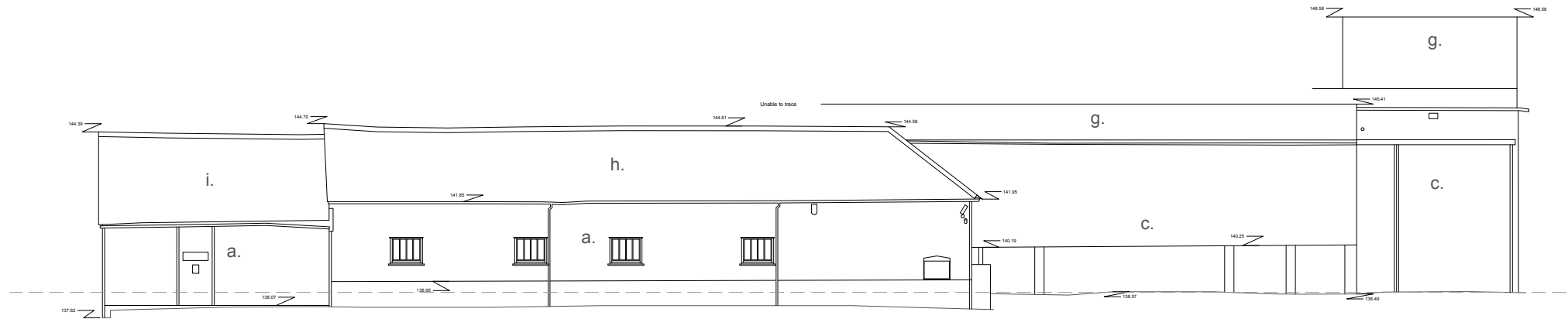
- | | | | |
|----|---|----|--|
| a. | Existing timber frame barn | k. | New charred timber cladding |
| b. | Existing concrete frame barn | l. | New corrugated cladding (hemp or fibre cement) |
| c. | Existing steel frame barn | m. | New sliding timber/aluminium glazing |
| d. | Existing infill structure, in poor condition | n. | New fixed timber/aluminium glazing |
| e. | Existing outbuildings/lean to structure with black timber weatherboarding and corrugated roof | o. | New polycarbonate cladding |
| f. | Existing timber door | p. | New corrugated metal/fibre cement roof |
| g. | Existing corrugated roof - metal or fiber cement | q. | New aluminium cappings |
| h. | Existing fibre cement slate tiles | r. | New timber and metal escape stair |
| i. | Existing red clay tiles | s. | New parapet wall |
| j. | Existing timber framed window | t. | New wildflower roof |
| | | u. | New fire escape door |



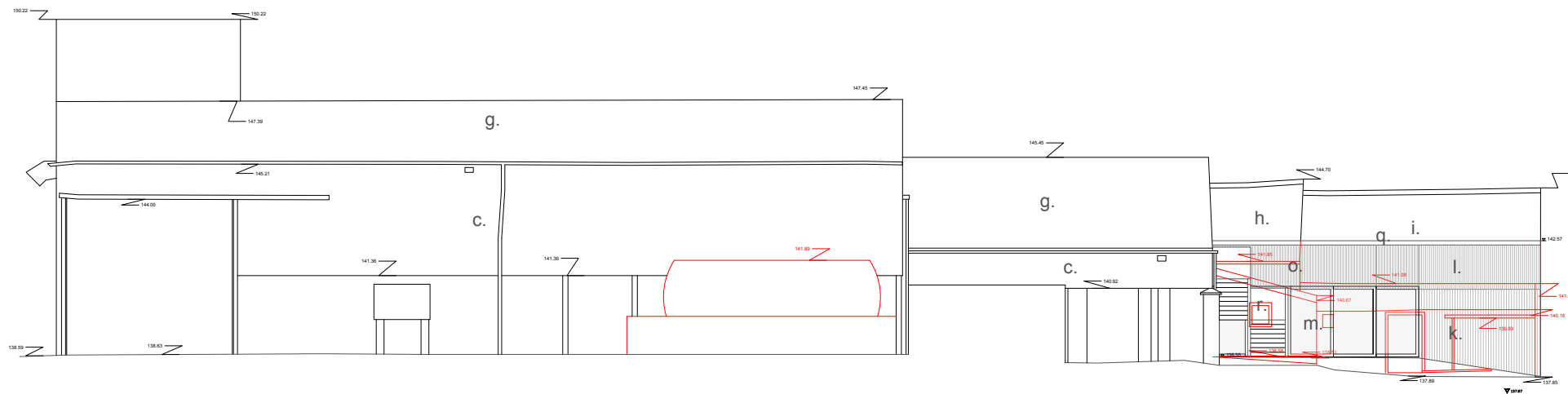
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 Note: Elevation key plan not to scale.

REVISION: Scale
1:100 @:A1

4.4 Elevations with downtakings



Elevation Two (East) - no proposed changes



Elevation Four (West)

Notes:

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|--|
| a. | Existing timber frame barn | k. | New charred timber cladding |
| b. | Existing concrete frame barn | l. | New corrugated cladding (hemp or fibre cement) |
| c. | Existing steel frame barn | m. | New sliding timber/aluminium glazing |
| d. | Existing infill structure, in poor condition | n. | New fixed timber/aluminium glazing |
| e. | Existing outbuildings/lean to structure with black timber weatherboarding and corrugated roof | o. | New polycarbonate cladding |
| f. | Existing timber door | p. | New corrugated metal/fibre cement roof |
| g. | Existing corrugated roof - metal or fiber cement | q. | New aluminium cappings |
| h. | Existing fibre cement slate tiles | r. | New timber and metal escape stair |
| i. | Existing red clay tiles | s. | New parapet wall |
| j. | Existing timber framed window | t. | New wildflower roof |
| | | u. | New fire escape door |



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Groundschool, Irongate Farm

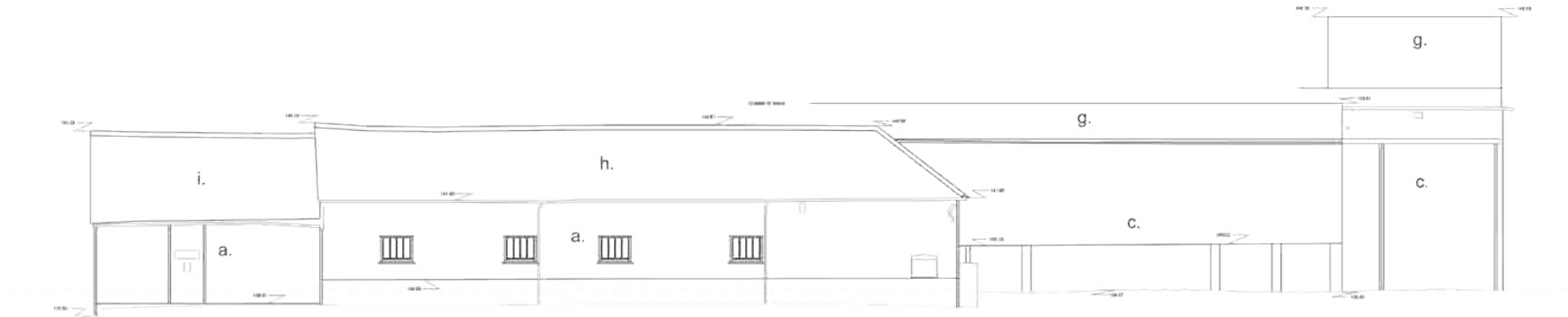
Job No.
255 Proposed Elevations
Two

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

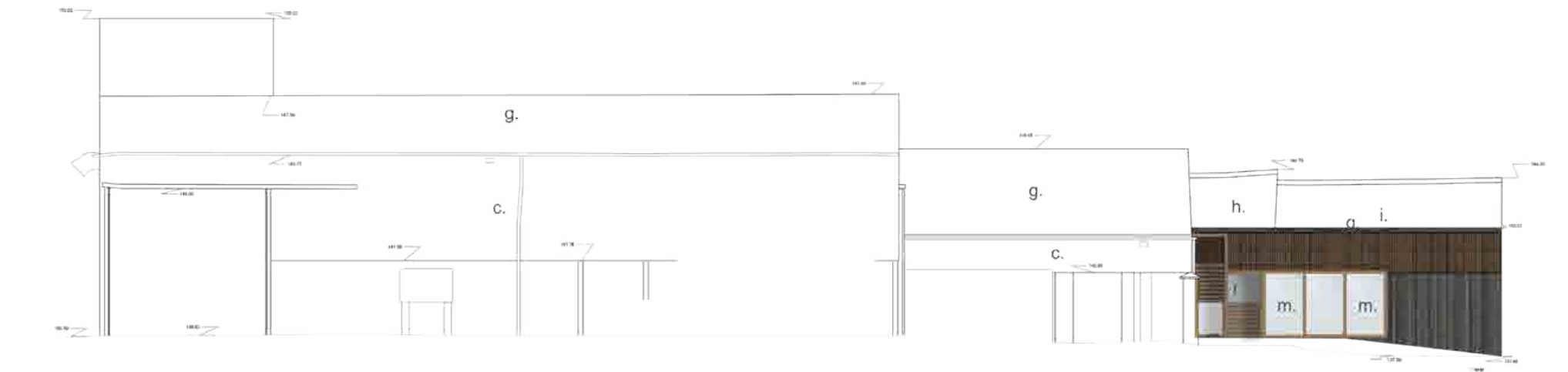
031

REVISION: Scale
1:100 @:A1

4.4 Elevations



Elevation Two (East) - no proposed changes



Elevation Four (West)

Notes:

- | | |
|--|---|
| a. Existing timber frame barn | k. New charred timber cladding |
| b. Existing concrete frame barn | l. New corrugated cladding (hemp or fibre cement) |
| c. Existing steel frame barn | m. New sliding timber/aluminium glazing |
| d. Existing infill structure, in poor condition | n. New fixed timber/aluminium glazing |
| e. Existing outbuildings/lean to structure with black timber weatherboarding and corrugated roof | o. New polycarbonate cladding |
| f. Existing timber door | p. New corrugated metal/fibre cement roof |
| g. Existing corrugated roof - metal or fiber cement | q. New aluminium cappings |
| h. Existing fibre cement slate tiles | r. New timber and metal escape stair |
| i. Existing red clay tiles | s. New parapet wall |
| j. Existing timber framed window | t. New wildflower roof |
| | u. New fire escape door |



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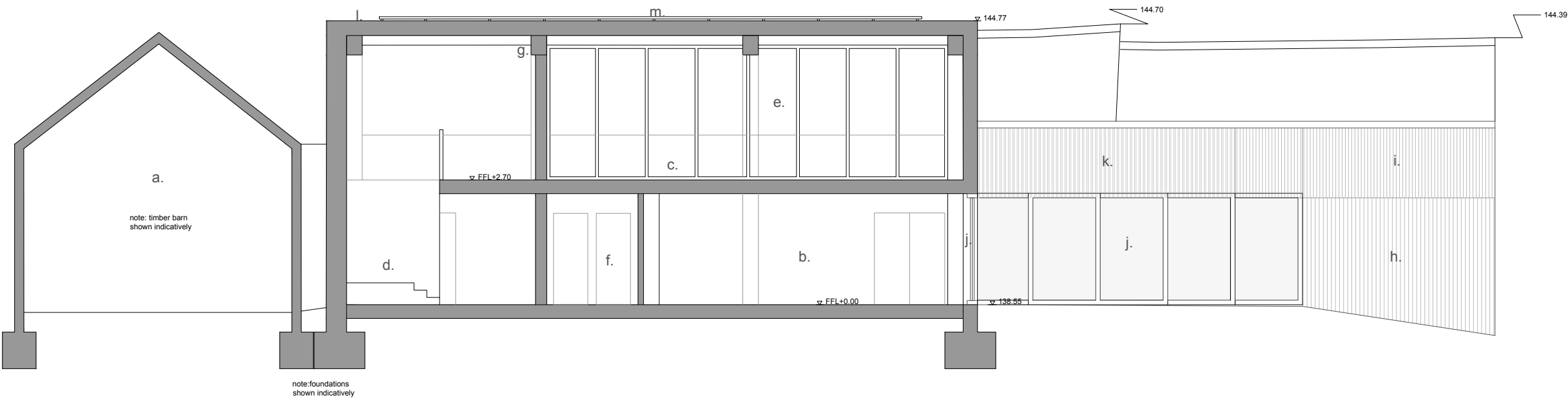
Groundschool, Irongate Farm
Job No: 255 Proposed Elevations Two

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

031

REVISION Scale 1:100 @A1

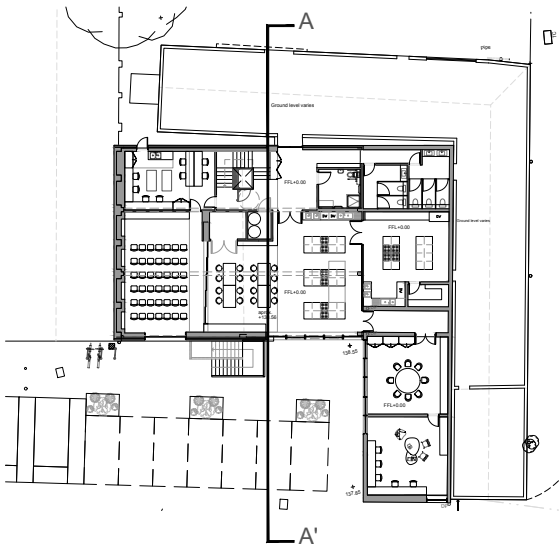
4.5 Proposed section



Section A-A'

Notes:

- a. Existing timber frame barn
- b. Proposed flexible kitchen/teaching area
- c. Proposed mezzanine level
- d. Proposed staircase
- e. Proposed internal glazing
- f. Proposed tank storage
- g. Existing concrete frame structure exposed
- h. New charred timber cladding
- i. New corrugated cladding (hemp or fibre cement)
- j. New timber/aluminium glazing
- k. New polycarbonate cladding
- l. New corrugated metal/fibre cement roof
- m. New solar cells



Key plan (NTS)

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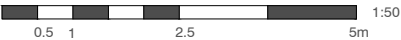
Groundschool, Irongate Farm

Job No. 255 Proposed Section

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

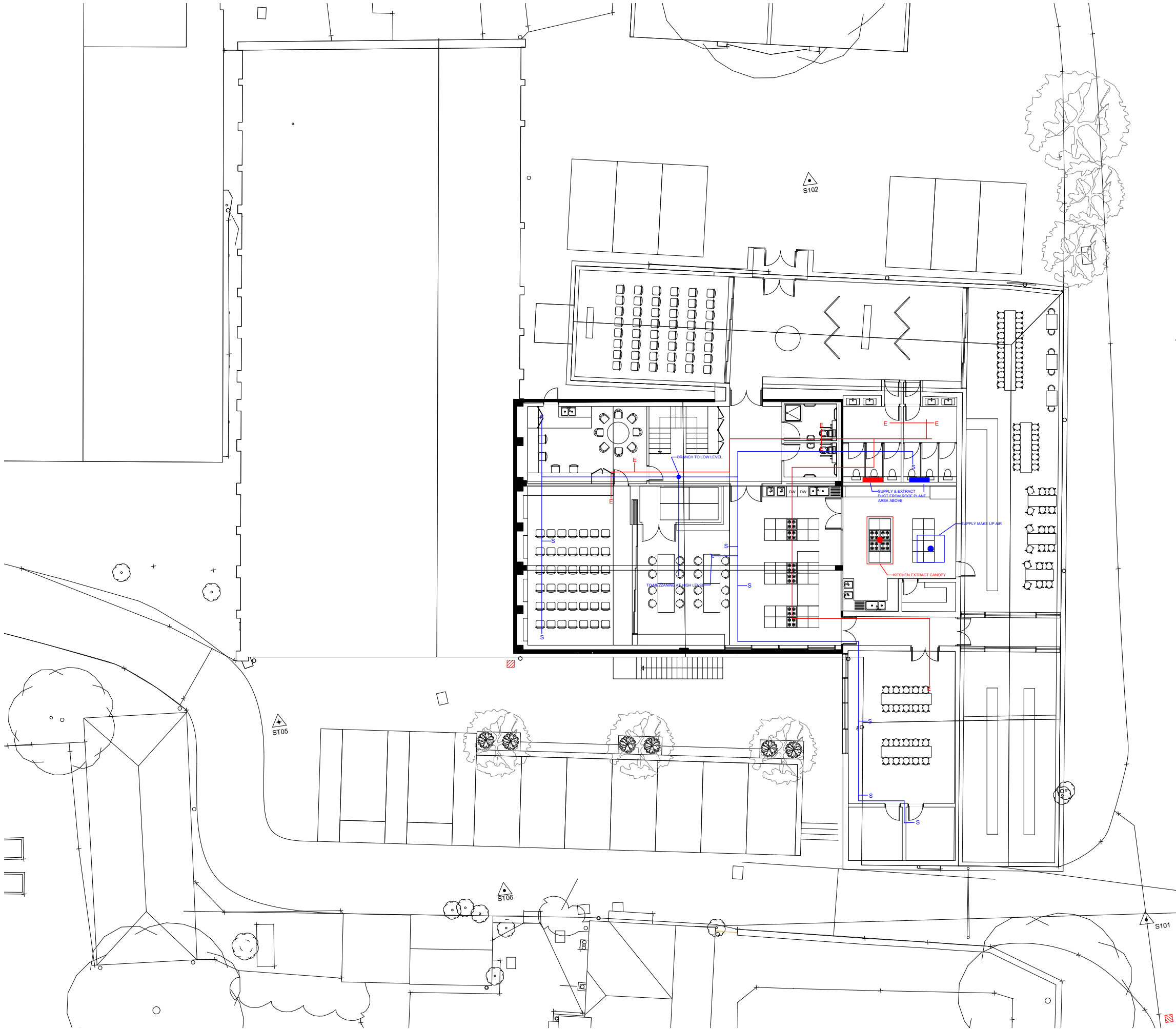
032

REVISION: Scale 1:50 @:A1



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Note: Elevation key plan not to scale.



LEGEND KEY :

REV	DATE	DRAWN BY	CHECKED BY	COMMENTS
-	-	-	-	-

Project:
GROUNDSCHOOL, IRON FARM

Drawing Title:
DRAFT VENTILATION GFL LAYOUT

Client:
MICHEAL COLLINS ARCHITECTS LLP

Stage:
FOR COMMENT

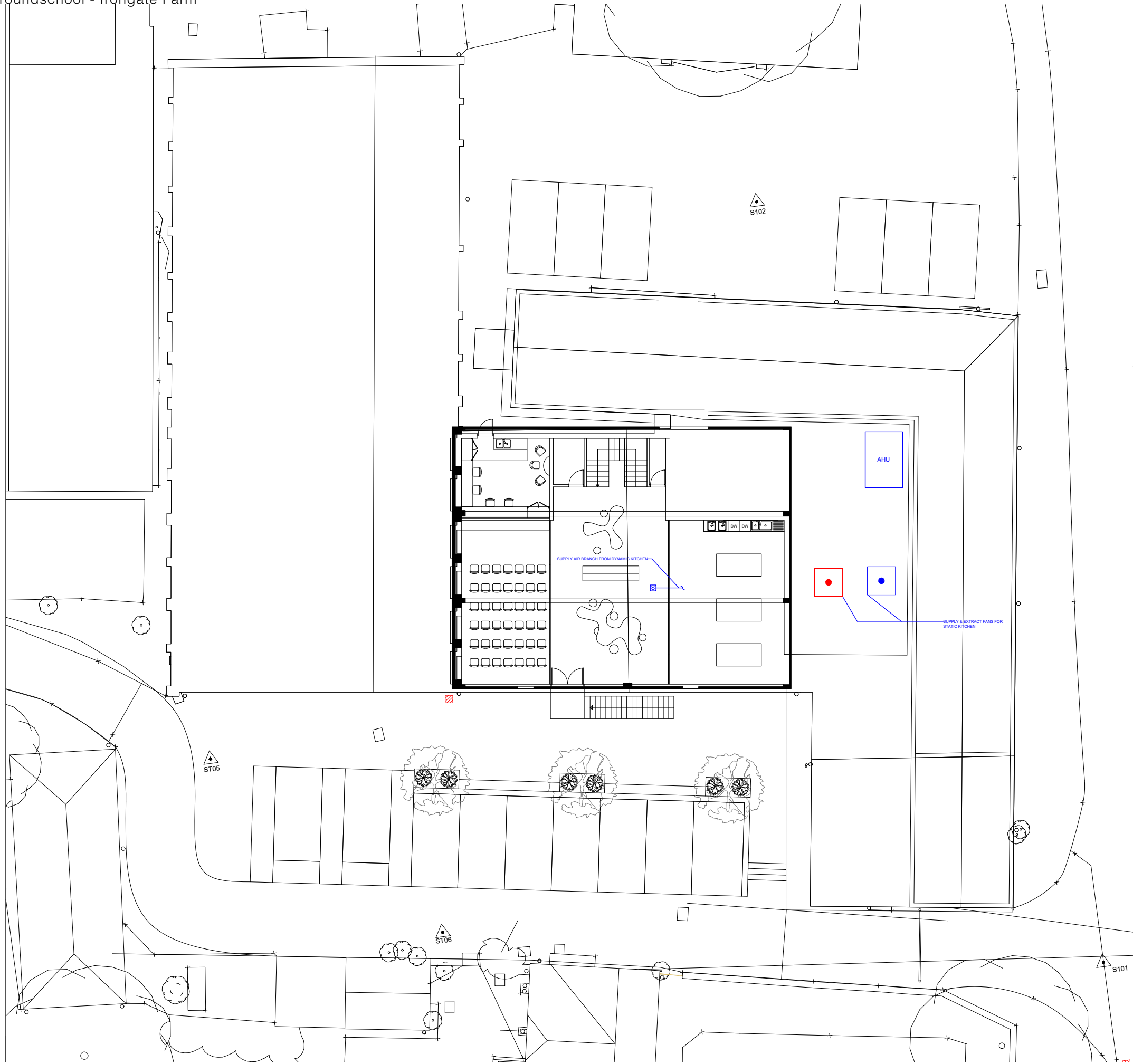
Dwg. No. LSL-E0864-001	Date: 04.04.25	Rev. V1	Scale: 1:100 @A1
Purpose of Issue: FIRST ISSUE	Checked by: DG	Drawn by: KHC	

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LEGEND KEY :

REV	DATE	DRAWN BY	CHECKED BY	COMMENTS
-	-	-	-	-

Project:
GROUNDSCHOOL, IRON FARM

Drawing Title:
DRAFT VENTILATION LAYOUT MEZZANINE

Client:
MICHEAL COLLINS ARCHITECTS LLP

Stage:
FOR COMMENT

Dwg. No. LSL-E0864-001	Date: 04.04.25	Rev. V1	Scale: 1:100 @A1
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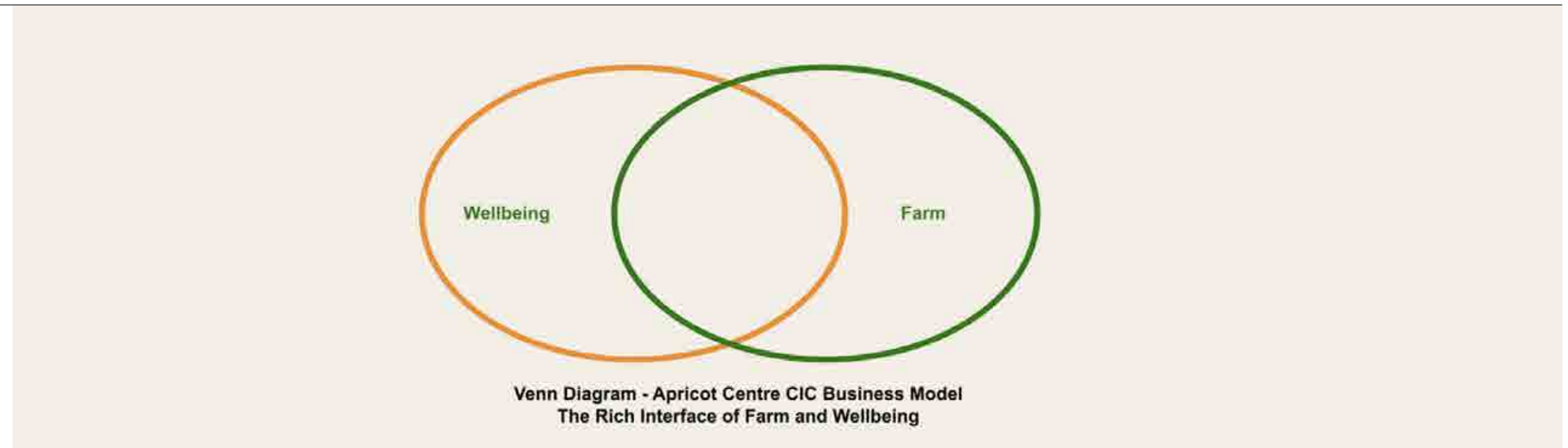
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5. Precedents

5.1 Similar project precedents

Apricot Centre & Henbant is another farm-based education centres that the Groundschool initiative is looking to collaborate with and draw inspiration from. Apricot Centre & Henbant are also involved in permaculture, which is an interesting approach to land design that we may look to establish in the fields immediately around the buildings at Irongate. You talked about having a focal point other than the buildings, which seems like a nice idea, so this design system could help with that vision.

<https://www.apricotcentre.co.uk/vision-values>
<https://www.henbant.org>



Wakelyns is a small demonstration farm focusing on agroforestry, something that could be established near Irongate. It boasts an excellent indoor and outdoor kitchen facility, that utilises produce sourced from the farm, including flour milled on site, fresh fruit and vegetables, among other ingredients, to operate its bakery. The farm's aesthetic exudes a charming, field-to-fork ambience, characterised by the display of grains in jars and the use of blackboards that meticulously outline the origins of each product.

<https://wakelyns.co.uk>



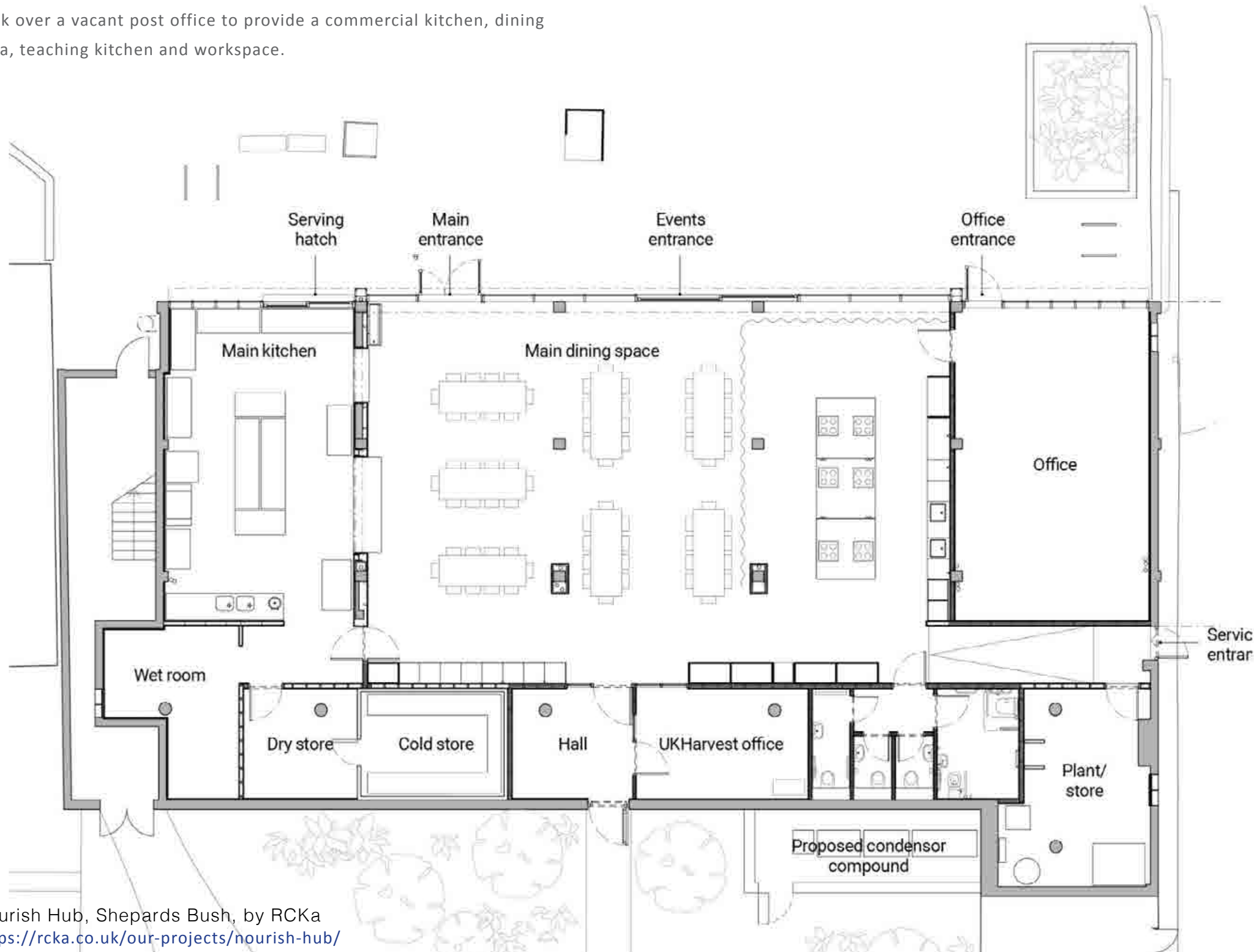
Balcaskie Estate, located in Scotland, comprises multiple farms and has diversified into various enterprises, notably Bowhouse, which hosts numerous enterprises. It functions as an indoor market, comprising food stalls and retail enterprises, which may not be the primary focus if we are to showcase the more practical aspects of working enterprises. However, it also features a butchery and hosts events.

<https://www.balcaskie.com/>



5.2 Spatial precedents and community use

The structure of the barn will be divided into smaller rooms dedicated to the different activities organised by the Groundschool. This will reinforce the successful regeneration of a building that is no longer in use. This strategy will result in a stronger sense of community around food and activity, as demonstrated by the Nourish Hub project, which took over a vacant post office to provide a commercial kitchen, dining area, teaching kitchen and workspace.



Nourish Hub, Shepards Bush, by RCKa
<https://rcka.co.uk/our-projects/nourish-hub/>



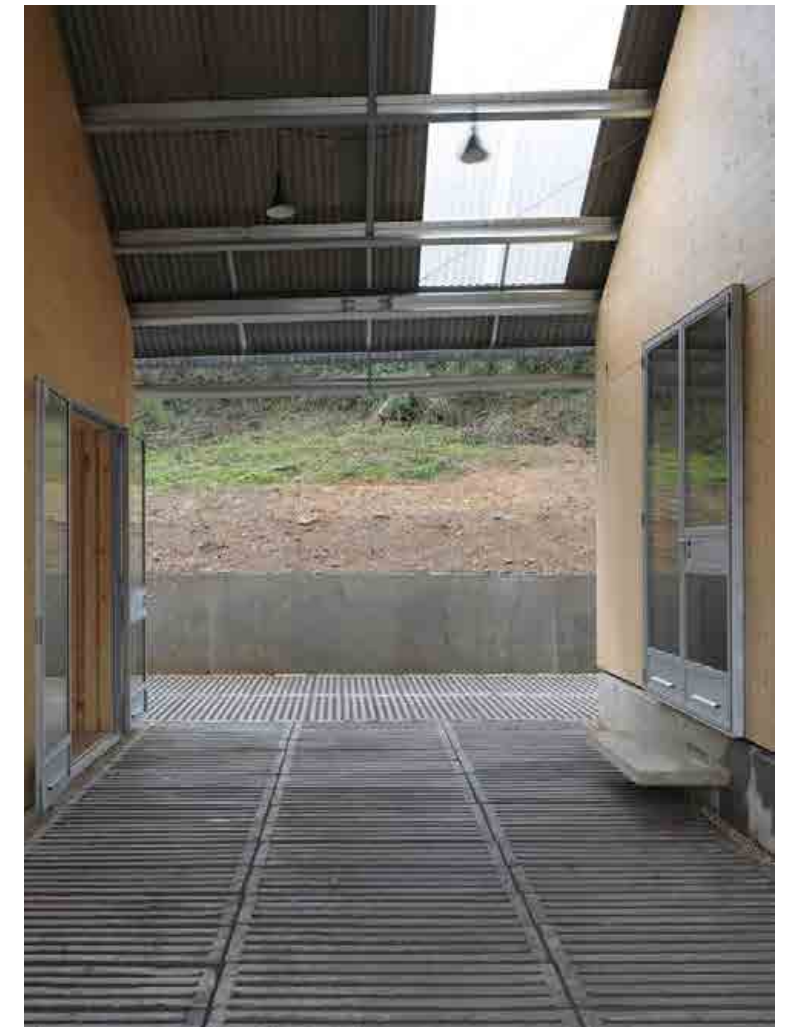
Source: Francisco Ibáñez Hantke

5.3 Building precedents

The project is in line with established precedents in the field of building retrofitting that involves a change of use of the building. The aim of the Groundschool is to celebrate the agricultural heritage of the site through a building envelope that resonates with its future use.



Drawing Matter Archive, Somerset, Hugh Strangeby
<https://www.hughstrange.com/drawing-matter-archive.html>



5.4 Material precedents

The re-cladding of the concrete barn is consistent with the materials typically employed in the construction of agricultural buildings. The utilisation of disparate materials, yet within the same chromatic range, acknowledges the typology and evolution of the edifice on the site. The materials selected are in harmony with the agricultural heritage of the site and are relevant with the future use and activity that will take place.

CLADDING

Charred Kebony cladding is proposed to recladding of the lower part of the barn.

Corrugated HEMP cladding is proposed to recladding of the upper elevation of the barn

Corrugated polycarbonate around the glazings to create and link between the existing refurbished barn and the new infill building.

OTHER

Wood: oak to windows and surrounding and wood frame to the external sairs

Chain wire to stairs chain link metal fencing to stair handrail / balustrade



5.4 Material precedents

Charred Kebony cladding is proposed to recladding of the lower part of the barn.

This material incorporates an ancient Japanese technique to seal timber against the high levels of humidity prevalent in the country’s climate. The colour created by the burning process is UV stable, ensuring it will not fade in daylight. Over time, the timber will age underneath the finish, which is evident when the surface carbon has been removed.

Both Oak and Larch are highly resistant to the elements, and treated ‘Kebony’ enhances this resistance even further. The proposed timber finish ‘Kebony Cladding’ incorporates a liquid impregnation process that improves the weathering resistance and performance of the timber. This process involves charring the timber in the Sho Sugi Ban factory.

Timber cladding Manufacturers technical advice:
<https://kebony.com/technology/the-dually-modified-process/>



What is Shou Sugi Ban, with specifying tips for burnt timber cladding and sidings.

Shou Sugi Ban is the term for burning timber for cladding is an ancient Japanese technique to enhance the beauty of the timber and add to the longevity of it. It increases the resistance to insects and decay; it can also protect against further fire, it can also be Class 1 and 0 fire certified.

There is proven expertise, over the last 7 years, with this unique process to supply unique and one off projects. The manufacturing process is detailed, accurate and dangerous; one that we use safely

There are many finishes and textures that can provided for interior and exterior projects. From the traditional highly burnt fragile looking to the sleek and contemporary brushed finish

Beautiful products can be made with many different species of timber, Cedar, Siberian Larch, Oak and modified timbers.

Hardness and Durability

The harder the timber the more durable, the longer it will withstand the weather and keep its finish and colour.

Cedar is predominantly used because the translation of Shou Sugi Ban is Burnt Cedar Plate, this is due to the Japanese timber Cypress being called Cedar. Western Red cedar is the softest of all our materials and is best brushed; use a harder timber if you require a more durable finish.

Softest – Cedar – Larch – Douglass Fir – Modified Timber – Siberian Larch – Oak - Hardest

1: ACTIVE MODIFICATION

The biobased liquid reacts with OH-groups present in wood and reduces the water sensitivity significantly. This reaction increases the durability of the wood.

2: PASSIVE MODIFICATION

The biobased liquid forms a polymer that is reinforcing the wood which contributes directly to the strength and hardness of the wood and gives the brown colour.

Thanks to this unique dually modified™ process Kebony is able to replicate nature and produce wood with equal or superior performance of tropical hardwood, in a fast and sustainable way.

5.4 Material precedents

Corrugated HEMP cladding is proposed to recladding of the upper elevation of the barn. Hemp captures carbon as it grows, absorbing it from our atmosphere and converting it to biomass. Using that 'locked-in' carbon for product prototypes we hope to inspire a low impact circular economy. However, this material reflects the usual corrugated materials, such as fibrociment or metals that are commonly used in agricultural buildings.

Polycarbonate cladding was selected for a limited section of the façade due to its cost-effectiveness. This choice was influenced by its resemblance to the agricultural building design, with a focus on enhancing the general elevation composition through the addition of a lighter tone at the exterior angle connecting the concrete barn and the new adjacent structure.

Source:

<https://www.margentfarm.com/>

<https://divisare.com/projects/321526-hhf-architects-tom-bisig-house-c>

Margent Farm, Cambridgeshire, by Material Cultures



House C, by HHF Architects,



6. Visualisations

6.1 External View



6.2 Internal View





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