JSA Architects

# Design & Access Statement

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| **PROJECT TITLE:** | Wallstones Old Farmhouse, Rood Lane, Idridgehay, DE56 2SS |
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# 01 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 WHO ARE JSA ARCHITECTS?

JSA Architects is a RIBA Chartered Practice operating from studios in Derby, Nottingham, Lichfield and Solihull. The practice has an established specialism in heritage-constrained and planning-sensitive design across Derbyshire and the wider East Midlands, and regularly acts as both architect and planning agent on works to listed buildings and within designated historic environments.

## 1.2 ABOUT THE APPLICANT

The applicants are the owners of the Wallstones Old Farmhouse and have lived at the property for around a year. They seek to sensitively adapt their home to improve its usability and daylighting while conserving the special interest of the listed building.

## 1.3 PURPOSE OF THE PRE-APPLICATION SUBMISSION

This statement supports a pre-application enquiry to Amber Valley Borough Council for Listed Building Consent. It sets out the proposal for a single-storey rear extension, new conservation rooflights, and a subterranean garage at Wallstones Old Farmhouse, a Grade II listed farmhouse (List Entry 1109056). The purpose of the enquiry is to test the acceptability of the design approach in principle and in detail before a formal application is prepared, and to secure the Council's guidance on the extent of supporting information and the consents required — anticipated to comprise Listed Building Consent together with householder planning permission for the extension and planning permission for the garage (a new curtilage building affecting the setting). The submission is accompanied by a Heritage Statement prepared by Maxwell Craven, a local historian, which provides the detailed assessment of significance on which this statement's design response is founded.




**Fig. 1:** Photograph of the host building

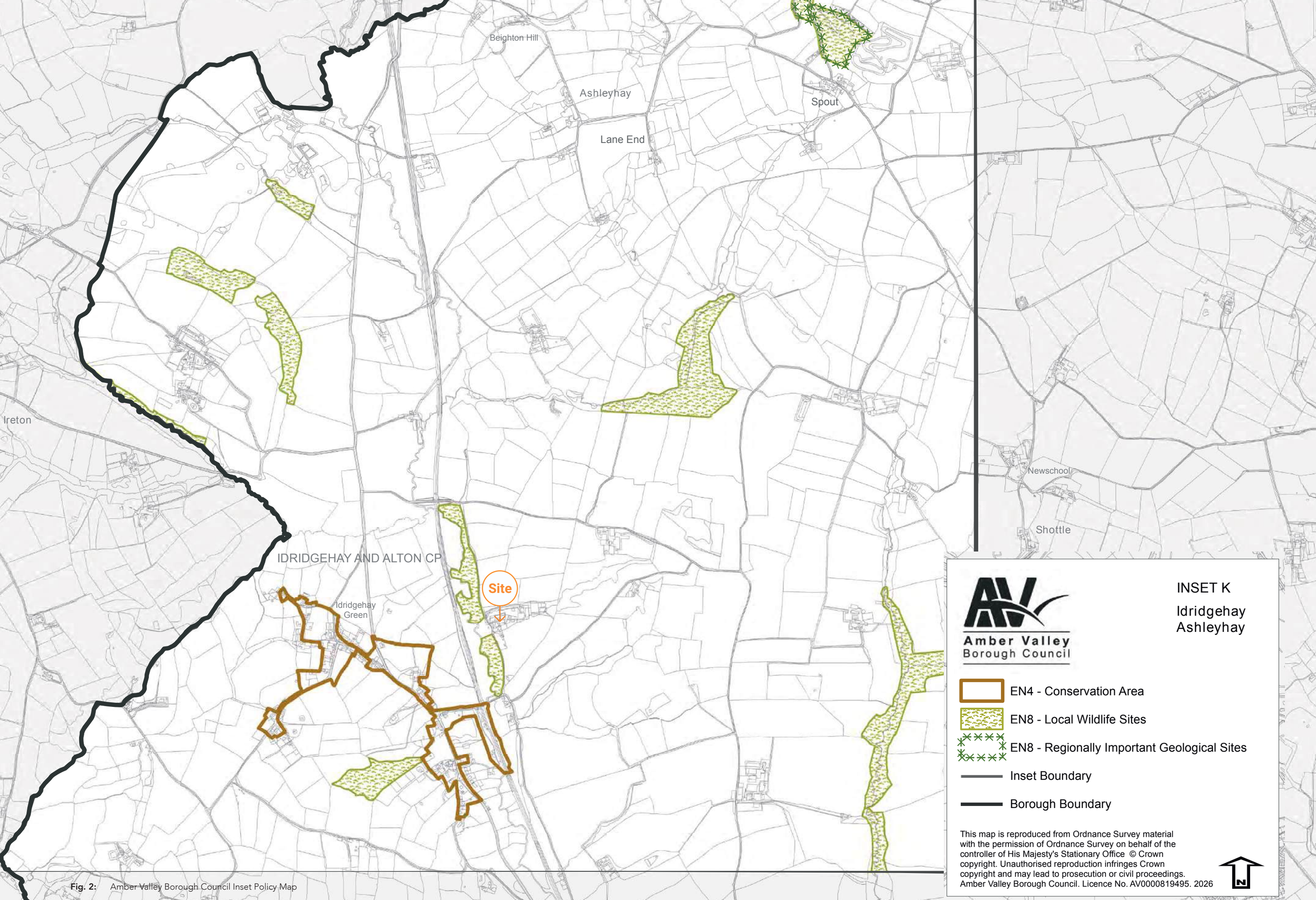


**Fig. 2:** Amber Valley Borough Council Inset Policy Map

# SITE & CONTEXT ANALYSIS

# 02

## 2.1 STRATEGIC LOCATION

Wallstones Old Farmhouse stands on Rood Lane in the village of Idridgehay, within the civil parish of Idridgehay and Alton, in the rural north-western part of the Amber Valley borough. The village lies in the valley of the River Ecclesbourne, south of Wirksworth and west of Belper. The setting is strongly rural, characterised by dispersed farmsteads, stone cottages and open agricultural land, and the wider parish is recognised for the quality of its landscape. Local vehicular connections run via the A517 corridor linking Belper and Ashbourne, and the Ecclesbourne Valley heritage railway passes through the village.

## 2.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site comprises Wallstones Old Farmhouse and its curtilage. The farmhouse is an early eighteenth-century, L-plan building of coursed squared gritstone with ashlar dressings, quoins, moulded copings and kneelers, beneath a plain tiled roof with end ridge stacks. It rises to two storeys and attics, with brick additions to the rear. The building remains in use as a single dwellinghouse (Use Class C3). To the rear of the house is an existing raised patio, set approximately one metre above the adjoining internal floor level, which forms the footprint for the proposed extension.

## 2.3 SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The immediate context is defined by the farmhouse's relationship to the adjacent property, Ferrers Barn, a barn conversion which has itself been the subject of recent, successful heritage-led alterations including an approved contemporary glazed link. Beyond the residential curtilages the site is bounded by the rural lane and open agricultural land. Boundary treatments are predominantly natural stone walling and established planting, consistent with the local vernacular.

## 2.4 TOWNSCAPE & LOCAL CHARACTER

The prevailing architectural language of the area is a cohesive gritstone vernacular: coursed and squared stone walling, ashlar dressings and quoins, flush stone-mullioned windows, plain clay tile roofs and stone boundary walls. Building heights are modest, typically ranging from single-storey outbuildings to two-storey-and-attic farmhouses. The grain is loose and rural, with buildings reading as individual farmsteads within a generous landscape setting rather than as a formal street frontage. Principal elevations are typically formal and symmetrical, while service and rear elevations are more varied and have historically absorbed later, secondary additions.



**Fig. 3:** Areal View of the Application Site

# SITE & CONTEXT ANALYSIS

02

## 2.5 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The following summarises the significance of the asset to frame the design response at Section 04. The full assessment is provided in the accompanying Heritage Statement by Maxwell Craven; technical heritage analysis is not reproduced here.

The significance of Wallstones Old Farmhouse is principally architectural and historic, deriving from its survival as a legible early-eighteenth-century gritstone farmhouse. Its architectural interest is concentrated in the formal, symmetrical five-window west (principal) elevation - arranged 2:1:2 with advanced quoins, window surrounds to former two-light flush mullioned windows, a central moulded doorcase and a massive flat lintel over the ground-floor sashes. This principal frontage is the primary contributor to the building's special interest.

The rear wing carries lesser but genuine interest, retaining two- and three-light flush mullioned windows and a quoined doorway surround bearing an inscribed lintel reading "SHD(?) 1822(?)", which evidences the building's continued evolution. Notably, the list description itself records that the rear has already absorbed brick additions, confirming that the rear elevation is the secondary, more altered part of the asset and has historically accommodated change. The existing raised patio is a modern intervention of no heritage value.

The building's setting contributes positively to significance, but that contribution is experienced principally from the approach and the public realm to the front and side, not from the enclosed rear.

## 2.6 VISUAL ANALYSIS

The proposals include a garage set into the rising ground beyond the lawn (Section 04), so the key views of that part of the curtilage are assessed here. Two viewpoints are material:

**Viewpoint 1** — from the principal (west) elevation and front curtilage, looking east/north-east toward the garage location. Because the garage is offset to the side of the house rather than directly behind it, a sightline exists past the flank of the building. In the existing condition this view reads as rising lawn and banked planting against the backdrop of the host building.

**Viewpoint 2** — from the private driveway approach, looking toward the garage location. The existing driveway rises before the ground falls gently back toward the garage position. In the existing condition the garage location is largely concealed by the intervening high point in the topography.

## 2.6 SITE CONSTRAINTS

- Grade II listed building — all works affecting character require Listed Building Consent.
- Special interest concentrated in the principal (west) elevation and its formal composition.
- Existing rear brick additions and modern raised patio present a mixed, altered rear condition to be respected.
- Level change of approximately one metre between the raised rear patio and the adjoining internal floor, and a further rise through the banked planting bed to the lawn.
- Rural / Special Landscape Area context requiring a high quality of design and materials.
- Second-floor (attic) bedrooms and the formal dining room are currently poorly daylit.
- The garage requires excavation within the curtilage of the listed building, raising structural and drainage considerations to be resolved at application stage.
- The garage's only visible element - its stone-clad front and sectional door - sits on a sightline offset from the principal elevation (Viewpoint 1).

## 2.7 SITE OPPORTUNITIES

- The secondary, previously altered rear elevation offers a logical location for sensitive contemporary intervention with minimal loss of significant historic fabric.
- An existing arched alcove in the kitchen provides a ready-made, legible point of connection to a new room without forming a new structural opening in historic walling.
- A strong and directly comparable local precedent exists at adjacent Ferrers Barn for contemporary glazed additions to a heritage asset.
- Conservation rooflights offer a low-impact means of substantially improving internal daylight and amenity.
- The rising topography and banked lawn allow a garage to be concealed almost entirely below ground, minimising its visual presence.
- The principle of ancillary garage/store accommodation on the site is already established by the approved scheme AVA/2015/0142.

# SITE & CONTEXT ANALYSIS

# 02



**Fig. 4:** Photograph of the existing arched alcove



**Fig. 5:** Photograph of the existing rear/side elevation



**Fig. 6:** Photograph of the existing rear elevation and raised patio



**Fig. 7:** Photograph of the existing raised lawn



**Fig. 8:** Photograph of the existing rear elevation

# PLANNING HISTORY

03

The application site and its immediate neighbour have a consistent and instructive planning history, demonstrating a settled pattern of Amber Valley Borough Council supporting well-designed, heritage-led change at these assets. There are no refusals or dismissed appeals on the site.

**Ref:** **AVA/2021/0489**
Proposal: Replacement of some existing casement windows
Dec Date: 29 Jul 2021
Decision: Approved

**Ref:** **AVA/2015/0142**
Proposal: Re-submission of garage/store/office space
Dec Date: 14 May 2015
Decision: Approved

**Ref:** **AVA/2014/0872**
Proposal: Proposed replacement garage/store to listed building
Dec Date: 18 Dec 2014
Decision: Withdrawn

**Ref:** **AVA/2013/0860**
Proposal: Proposed orangery, side porch and rose pergola
Dec Date: 18 Nov 2013
Decision: Approved

**Ref:** **AVA/2012/0455**
Proposal: LBC: Replacement windows (incl. reinstatement of 1st-floor front elevation windows and stone mullions), front door step and drive gates
Dec Date: 26 Jun 2012
Decision: Approved

The withdrawn 2014 application (AVA/2014/0872) was superseded by the approved 2015 scheme (AVA/2015/0142) and does not represent a refusal on planning or heritage grounds. The record as a whole shows the Council accepting both sensitive restoration (the 2012 reinstatement of historic mullions) and appropriate new additions (the 2013 orangery) at this asset.

Ferrers Barn (adjacent) — material precedent:

**Ref:** **AVA/2022/0650**
Proposal: Proposed glazed link and alterations at Ferrers Barn
Dec Date: 3 Mar 2023
Decision: Approved

**Ref:** **AVA/2022/0667**
Proposal: Listed Building Consent for proposed glazed link and alterations at Ferrers Barn
Dec Date: 3 Mar 2023
Decision: Approved

The Ferrers Barn approvals are directly material to the present enquiry. The consented scheme introduced contemporary interventions in two distinct positions: a discreet addition to the concealed rear, and - more tellingly - a prominent modern glazed link on the principal frontage, in full public view. In this immediate setting the Council has therefore already accepted, in both planning and listed building terms, not only concealed contemporary change but a visible, frankly modern glazed addition read directly against a historic stone building. That establishes strong local acceptance of the design principle now proposed, and provides a sound precedent for the approach set out at Section 04.

# PROPOSAL

# 04

## 4.1 PROJECT BRIEF

The applicant wishes to create a light-filled, informal living and dining space that connects the working kitchen to the rear garden, and to substantially improve daylight to two currently dark areas of the house - the second-floor (attic) bedrooms and the formal dining room. The overriding design objective agreed with the applicant is that these improvements must be delivered while conserving, and clearly distinguishing themselves from, the special interest of the listed building.

## 4.2 PROPOSED WORKS

Three elements are proposed:

(a) **Single-storey rear extension.** A single-storey extension is proposed to the rear of the house, occupying the footprint of the existing raised patio (which sits approximately one metre above the adjoining internal floor level). The extension houses an informal living and dining area, entered from the kitchen via a small step up. It is contemporary in expression, with a flat living (green) roof and standing-seam zinc cladding to the fascias. The enclosing walls comprise stone pillars matched to the existing building, with expansive glazed windows and doors set between them, giving an approximate 70% glazed to 30% stone ratio. A gentle curve is introduced to the corner of the extension, expressed in both the glazed panel and the zinc roof fascia. The extension measures approximately 2.6 metres in height from external ground level to the top of the roof.

Access into the new room is taken through an existing arched alcove in the kitchen that straddles the Aga, so that the new opening reads clearly as a new opening in a logical location while retaining the original building's features. The existing stone-paver steps between the patio and the lawn will be adapted to suit the new extension, but the general arrangement of the rear garden landscaping - the dwarf retaining wall, banked planting bed and lawn is retained.

**(b) New rooflights**. Conservation-style rooflights are proposed within the existing pitched roof, serving the second-floor bedrooms and the formal dining room. These are specified as FAKRO conservation rooflights with a recessed flashing kit, sitting on the same plane as the surrounding plain tiles.

**(c) Subterranean garage**. A single-width garage is proposed to the rear of the host building, detached and offset to the side, buried beneath the level lawn and cut into the existing topography. Only its front elevation is exposed: this is clad in stone matched to the adjoining garden walls, with a pale cream/grey sectional garage door as the principal visible feature. The garage front is set back approximately 25 metres from the sensitive principal elevation. The rise of the existing driveway and the gentle fall back down to the garage mean it is virtually invisible from the private highway.

## 4.3 DESIGN RESPONSE

**Location on the secondary elevation.** The extension is confined to the rear, the part of the asset already identified as secondary and previously altered, and stands on the footprint of a modern raised patio of no heritage value. The formal five-window principal elevation, the primary carrier of significance, is entirely unaffected, and its composition and setting are preserved in full.

**A legible new opening with minimal fabric loss**. Connection is made through the existing arched kitchen alcove rather than by forming a new opening in historic walling. This minimises the loss of historic fabric, respects the plan-form legibility of the original rooms, and ensures the new intervention is honestly and clearly read as new — consistent with good conservation practice that new work should be distinguishable from, yet sympathetic to, the old.



**Fig. 9:** Artistic impression of the proposed rear extension

# PROPOSAL

04

**A subordinate, well-mannered form**. The 2.6-metre height is deliberately selected so that the new flat roof tucks neatly beneath the existing gutter line, wrapping around the building corner below that line and butting into the building above the gutter line only where the elevation requires. This avoids the appearance of a box “bolted on” and ensures the addition remains visually subordinate to the host building. The low, flat green roof and the curved corner further soften the form and reduce its visual presence.

**A contemporary addition rooted in the local palette.** The stone pillars matched to the existing building tie the addition materially to the host and the wider gritstone vernacular, while the expansive glazing and standing-seam zinc make the addition unmistakably of its own time. The result is a clear, confident distinction between the historic and the new - the same principle the Council has already endorsed next door at Ferrers Barn (Section 03).

**Low-impact daylighting.** The conservation rooflights, recessed and flush with the tile plane, deliver a significant amenity benefit to the poorly daylit attic bedrooms and formal dining room with negligible impact on the historic roofscape. Their form and detailing follow the established, accepted approach to rooflights on listed roofs.

**A concealed, topography-integrated garage.** The garage is buried beneath the lawn and cut into the rising ground, so that it reads not as a building in the round but as a single stone-faced opening in the landscape. Its exposed front is faced in stone matched to the adjoining garden wall, and at roughly 25 metres from the principal elevation, and screened by the topographic high point on the approach, it is virtually invisible from the private highway (Viewpoint 2). The principle of ancillary garage accommodation here is already established: the Council previously approved a garage/store with office accommodation over, sited above ground at the side (AVA/2015/0142). The current proposal is a deliberate departure from that consented arrangement - burying the garage with no room above removes a bulky above-ground structure from the setting of the historically important frontage, and is a materially more sensitive solution than the scheme already found acceptable.




**Fig. 10:** Artistic impression of the proposed garage

Taken together, the works are designed to conserve the significance of the listed building. On the assessment above, their effect is properly characterised as no harm, with a positive effecton the rear elevation through removal of the incongruous patio and, in the event the Council identifies any harm, it would fall well short of substantial harm and would be clearly and convincingly outweighed by the heritage and public benefits of the scheme.

# PROPOSAL

# 04

## 4.4 RESPONSE TO CONSTRAINTS

The proposal resolves each constraint identified at Section 2.7: significant fabric and the principal elevation are untouched; the existing one-metre level change is accommodated by a modest internal step rather than external re-grading; the rural / SLA setting is respected through a low, high-quality, largely transparent form on the enclosed rear; and the daylighting deficiencies are corrected by minimally intrusive conservation rooflights.

The garage exploits the rising topography to conceal all but its stone-faced front; the excavation adjacent to the listed building will be supported at application stage by a structural method statement demonstrating no harm to the historic fabric or foundations, together with a drainage strategy for the below-ground structure. The visibility of the sectional door from the principal elevation is the single residual matter, addressed through material treatment and put to the Council at Section 06.



**Fig. 11:** Artistic impression of the proposed interior



**Fig. 12:** Artistic impression of the proposed interior

# PLANNING POLICY

# 05

## 5.1 STATUTORY DUTY - PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990, S.16(2)

Section 16(2) of the Act states: “In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

The proposal satisfies this duty. As established at Section 4, the works preserve the building and its features of special interest: the principal elevation and its setting are unaffected; historic fabric loss is avoided by using the existing arched alcove; and the subordinate, clearly contemporary form preserves the legibility and primacy of the historic house.

Due to the sites lication within the Idridgehay Conservation Area (designated 1994 — see Section 1.4), the s.72(1) duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area also applies. The proposal would meet that duty: the works are confined to the enclosed rear and would not be read from the wider conservation area, and the enhancement of a secondary elevation and removal of the incongruous raised patio would, if anything, improve the setting.

## 5.2 NPPF (AUGUST 2026) - SECTION 20: CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

The August 2026 NPPF sets out its historic-environment decision-making policies as Policies HE4–HE7. The following are engaged.

**Policy HE4** (Securing the conservation of heritage assets) provides at HE4(1) that “Heritage assets, as an irreplaceable resource, should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance”, and that development proposals affecting significance should “Avoid (or if that is not possible, minimise) harm to the significance of heritage assets, and instead conserve this significance.” HE4(2) requires that “Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting) should have a clear and convincing justification…”

Compliance: the scheme is conserved in a manner appropriate to significance (Section 4). Harm is first avoided - the principal elevation, the primary carrier of significance, is untouched, and connection is made through an existing opening rather than by cutting new openings in historic fabric, and, so far as any residual effect arises, it is minimised by confining the works to the secondary rear elevation and the footprint of a modern patio of no heritage value. The clear and convincing justification required by HE4(2) is provided by the accompanying Heritage Statement together with the design and amenity benefits set out below.

**Policy HE5** (Assessing effects on heritage assets) requires a proportionate significance assessment and, at HE5(2), that the assessment identify whether a proposal would “Have a positive effect… or… Have no effect… or… Result in harm…”, with substantial harm arising only “where the development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset’s significance.”

Compliance: the significance assessment is provided in the accompanying Heritage Statement. The proposal would not seriously affect any key element of significance; on the analysis at Section 4 its effect is properly characterised as no harm and potentially a positive effect on the rear elevation - and in no circumstances substantial harm.

**Policy HE6** (Proposals affecting designated heritage assets) provides at HE6(1) that “substantial weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be)”, and at HE6(4) that “Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal.”

Compliance: substantial weight has been given to the asset’s conservation throughout the design process. Should the Council identify any harm, HE6(4) is satisfied: the limited effect on this Grade II asset would be clearly outweighed by the public and heritage benefits of securing the building’s continued optimum use as a family home, markedly improving daylight and amenity, replacing an incongruous raised patio, and delivering an exemplary contemporary addition. The substantial-harm test at HE6(5)–(6) is not engaged.

## 5.3 NPPF (AUGUST 2026) - SECTION 14: ACHIEVEING WELL-DESIGNED PLACES

Policy DP3 (Key principles for well-designed places) provides at DP3(1) that “Development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets. This should not preclude innovation or change where appropriate…” DP3(2)(g) seeks “visually attractive, distinctive and characterful development… including through the use of a coherent palette of materials, design features and planting”, and DP3(5) provides that “Substantial weight should also be given to outstanding or

innovative designs which… help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they are consistent with the overall form and layout of their surroundings."

Compliance: the design responds directly to context (Section 4) - matched stone pillars integrate the addition with the host building and the gritstone vernacular, while the glazing and zinc make it legibly of its own time. DP3(1) expressly does not preclude such innovation, and the coherent, high-quality material palette meets DP3(2)(g). The subordinate form remains consistent with the overall form and layout of its surroundings, consistent with DP3(5), and follows the contemporary approach the Council has already endorsed at Ferrers Barn.

## 5.4 AMBER VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN 2022-2040

**Policy EN4** (Heritage Assets) provides that "The Borough Council will support development proposals which preserve or enhance the significance of the Borough's heritage assets and will assess them in accordance with case law, legislation, and the National Planning Policy Framework in a manner that is appropriate to the significance of the heritage asset." It requires that proposals which may affect significance or setting be accompanied by "a heritage assessment" identifying the level of harm and demonstrating "what measures have been taken through the design process to avoid or mitigate the harm", and provides that "Proposals that would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset will be refused unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant that there are clear and justified public benefits, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use, that outweigh the harm." The policy supports proposals that "make a positive contribution to the character, distinctiveness and appearance of heritage assets having regard to the elements which make up their special interest, including character, appearance, materials, design, original or long-established plan-form, historic fabric and detailing" and that "retain important views where appropriate."

Compliance: the proposal is supported by the accompanying Heritage Statement, which sets out significance and the design measures taken to avoid and mitigate harm. The scheme preserves significance and makes a positive contribution to the asset's character — matched stone and considered detailing respond to materials, plan-form and historic fabric, and the reuse of the existing arched alcove retains the original plan-form. Should the Council identify any less than substantial harm, EN4's test is met: clear and justified public benefits - securing the optimum viable use of the building as a family home, markedly improved daylight and amenity, and the removal of the incongruous raised patio - outweigh that limited harm. Important views have been considered in the siting and treatment of the garage (Section 2.6). EN4 assesses harm by reference to the NPPF's "less than substantial harm" formulation (as expressed in the NPPF at the plan's examination); the proposal also complies with the current NPPF's degrees-of-harm framework at Policies HE4–HE6 (Section 5.2), so the outcome is the same on either formulation.

**Policy EN7** (Landscape Character & Features) provides that "Development will be permitted where it would protect or enhance the character, quality and the local distinctiveness of the landscape, including the contribution the landscape makes to the character of individual settlements or hamlets and would protect or enhance existing landscape features that make a positive contribution to landscape character." Development is expected to "conserve local distinctiveness by using landscape character type to inform its design", to "retain features which contribute to the landscape character of the area", and to "respect the character of developed areas and rural landscapes that are of historic importance."

Compliance: the scheme protects landscape character. The extension is a low, single-storey addition screened by the host building; the garage is set into the rising ground so that only a stone face is exposed; and the existing garden structure - the dwarf retaining wall, banked planting bed and lawn - is retained. Matched stone conserves local distinctiveness, and the works respect a rural landscape of historic importance. As a householder proposal this is not major development, so the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment that EN7 requires for major development is not triggered.

## 5.5 IDRIDGEHAY & ALTON & ASHLEYHAY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Neighbourhood Plan was formally made on 18 November 2015 and forms part of the statutory development plan for the parish (2014–2028), carrying full weight.

**VIA Housing Policy H3** (Alterations and Extensions) states: "Where planning permission is required, applications for extensions and alterations to existing dwellings will be supported if a) the extension is in scale and proportion to the existing building; b) it only results in an increase clearly subordinate to the existing building; c) the design complements or enhances the character of the original building; and d) it has no significant adverse impact on the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties."

Compliance: the proposal meets each limb. It is a single-storey addition in scale and proportion to the house (a); its low height, tucked beneath the existing gutter line, is clearly subordinate (b); the matched stone and considered contemporary detailing complement and enhance the character of the original building (c); and, sited to the enclosed rear, it has no adverse impact on neighbouring amenity (d).

# PLANNING POLICY



**VIA Housing Policy H1** (Idridgehay and Hillclifflane) confirms the plan's positive stance toward contemporary design in the village, providing that "Developments… featuring a contemporary design and/or innovative response to their context will be looked on favourably", while requiring that development "within and affecting the setting of Idridgehay should preserve and enhance the Conservation Area."

Compliance: although H1 is directed principally at new residential development (with H3 the policy directly applicable to extensions), it evidences a development-plan expectation that a contemporary, context-driven response will be viewed favourably in Idridgehay. The scheme also preserves the character of the conservation area for the reasons given at Section 5.1.

**VIA Landscape Policy L1** requires, among other things, that development "reflect the character of surrounding buildings" (L1(e)) and "be not unduly prominent in the landscape" (L1(f)).

Compliance: the addition reflects the character of the host and neighbouring gritstone buildings through its matched stone pillars, and is not unduly prominent - it is low, single-storey and located on the enclosed rear.

## 5.6 SPD: LISTED BUILDINGS AND BUILDINGS IN CONSERVATION AREAS (APRIL 2007)

The Council's 2007 SPD provides detailed practical guidance on works to listed buildings. It was prepared to support the (now superseded) 2006 Local Plan heritage policies, so its formal retained status under the adopted 2022–2040 Local Plan should be confirmed with the Council. As supplementary guidance predating the current NPPF it carries limited weight, and where its wording is more restrictive than Policy EN4 or the NPPF's balanced approach at Policy HE6, the latter prevail. In any event its substantive guidance reflects established good conservation practice, and the proposal accords with it.

On extensions, the SPD states that "Where a contemporary approach is considered more appropriate, only a high quality design which incorporates the use of materials appropriate to the locality will be acceptable", and that "The extension should be clearly subordinate to the original building." The scheme is exactly such a high-quality contemporary design, using stone matched to the host building, and is clearly subordinate.

The SPD also states that "The extension of listed buildings will only be permitted if an essential need can be demonstrated" and that "extensions on prominent elevations will rarely be acceptable." These do not weigh against the proposal: the extension is located on the secondary, non-prominent rear elevation, not a prominent one; the functional need for improved, better-lit family living space is set out at Section 4.1; and, in any event, the SPD's "essential need" gateway is a 2007 formulation that is not reflected in the NPPF's current heritage-balance approach and attracts limited weight accordingly.

On rooflights, the SPD accepts "the use of traditional conservation type rooflights which are sited on roof slopes which are not prominent", provided they are "fitted between rafters so as not to project above the roofline." The proposed FAKRO conservation rooflights with recessed flashing, sitting flush with the tile plane, accord with this guidance.

On new buildings within the curtilage, the SPD states that such buildings "will only be acceptable where they do not adversely affect the setting of the listed building and complement the principal building", and that "Good quality materials will also be required." The proposed garage accords with this guidance: its buried form and 25-metre setback ensure it does not adversely affect the setting, its stone facing matched to the host complements the principal building, and the use of matching natural stone meets the materials requirement.

# CONCLUSION

06

The proposal is a carefully considered, heritage-led scheme to adapt Wallstones Old Farmhouse for continued family living. It concentrates all intervention on the secondary, previously altered rear elevation and the footprint of a modern patio, leaves the principal elevation and setting untouched, and takes its connection through an existing opening to avoid loss of historic fabric. Its subordinate scale, matched stone and clearly contemporary glazed expression follow the very approach the Council has recently endorsed at the adjacent Ferrers Barn, while conservation rooflights deliver a meaningful amenity gain with negligible roofscape impact. The proposed garage is drawn into the rising topography so that it reads as a discreet stone face in the landscape rather than a building in the round, remaining virtually invisible from the private highway. In deliberately setting the garage below ground with no accommodation over, the scheme is a marked improvement on the above-ground garage previously approved here, removing built form that would otherwise have affected the setting of this historically important frontage.



**Fig. 13:** Artistic impression of the proposed interior

JSA Architects