

Design:

Please refer to the suite of accompanying drawings when reading the design statement.

The existing stables have a simple form (dual-pitched with a symmetrical roof) are of timber frame construction with external facing of horizontal stained timber cladding. . They are permanently fixed to a substantial concrete base which is extended behind the stables to create a large hardstanding area to the rear.

The proposed houses reflect the simple form of the existing stables, the cladding material, as well as sitting well within the footprint of the current substantial concrete base..

The increase in the height of the proposed houses (compared to the height of the existing stables roof) has been minimised as much as practically possible whilst needing to provide useable habitable space within the roof

The new dwellings are in a compact, terraced configuration. This simplifies the construction, reduces the amount of materials required for the construction and minimises the area of 'thermal envelope' (and therefore heat losses) thereby maximising the potential for energy efficiency.

The long elevation of the houses has a southerly orientation (close to south east) and optimal areas of glazing together with deep window reveals to allow useful passive solar gains in Winter while avoiding Summer overheating.

The south-facing side of the roof also contains high efficiency quadruple glazed rooflights which strongly reference the rooflights in the existing stables. The remainder areas of roof will be completely clad in solar photovoltaic panels.

The requirements for building to the Passivhaus standard are very exacting. The simple form and construction details together with terrace configuration will optimise Passivhaus construction, enabling the construction to achieve the standard while optimising material use and construction costs. For this reason, the ground behind the houses is excavated (and retained with a planted timber retention structure - subject to detailed structural design - in order to lift the rear wall above the finished ground level and avoid any subterranean walls.

The rear (northerly) elevation of the houses will still benefit from increased shelter and protection, which will also result in negligible visible impact to the north).

The roof to the north will reference the existing stable roofing, being clad standing seam metal which is much more durable than corrugated metal roofing but will be similar in character and can be finished in a colour which will blend into the landscape.

To the east of the houses the adjacent field has already been substantially planted with trees and these will eventually provide additional protection and visual screening.

To the west of the houses the excavated earth (which is removed to create the access and parking area) will be used as embankment material (eventually planted-up) to provide substantial visual screening from the most public side of the site.

As the basic 3-D images show, the proposal is proportionate and inconspicuous, particularly as one moves further away from it. In reality, the site will most often be seen from the A62 valley road which is a significant distance away.

This said, and notwithstanding the very stringent environmental standards that the houses will meet, three dwellings was felt to be the minimum number required to make the project socially and economically viable and sustainable. This naturally requires an increase in the volume of the new structure as compared to the existing stables.

This is not a commercial, speculative exercise, but a self-build project in which the prospective occupants will be fully involved, while all sharing the same sustainability ideals.

The dwellings are an integral part of the immediate landscape – which will be given over to community food production, tree planting and rewilding with landscaping which will encourage biodiversity.

Access for elderly and disabled visitors to the houses and the growing space will be provided.