

## Design Review Report

YDRS 205 Musley Bank, Malton  
Design Review 3



### Design Review Service for Yorkshire and the Humber

**Status of report:** CONFIDENTIAL

**Date of Review:** 16.03.2018

**Location of Review:** Ryedale House, Malton, North Yorkshire, YO17 7HH

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<b>Scheme Description:</b>	Single dwelling within the grounds of Musley Bank House and the Howardian Hills AONB.
<b>Stage of Planning:</b>	Full planning application
<b>Background:</b>	This is a follow-up review, the first review took place in August 2016 and the second in April 2017.
<b>Proposals submitted for Review:</b>	A1 mounted board with plans, elevations, sections, site layout and visualisations. A printed copy of the D&A statement.
<b>Scheme Representatives:</b>	Rosemary Mitchell, The Landscape Agency Stuart Turton, Architectural Technologist Dave Hickling, Planning Consultant
<b>Panel Members:</b>	Tom Lonsdale, Vice-Chair, Landscape Architect Colin Haylock, Panel Member, Architect, Urban Designer, Planner
<b>Local Authority</b>	Alan Hunter, Ryedale District Council
<b>Observers:</b>	Mrs J Brisby, Client
<b>YDRS Staff:</b>	Jamie Wilde, Design Review Manager

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**Summary of panel comments:**

The Panel thanks the Project Team for returning to Design Review following two previous Reviews, the first in April 2017 and second in August 2016.

The project team are commended for their professionalism and willingness to proactively engage with Design Review on this sensitive proposal which is has progressed well following each Review.

Key issues and concerns raised by the Panel in previous reviews have been reasonably addressed, namely:

- A deeper investigation of sightlines and a demonstration of the visual impact a new dwelling would have in the grounds of Musley Bank House and the Howardian Hills AONB; and,
- A clear and rational strategy for boundary treatments and the division of land between Musley Bank House and the proposed dwelling.

The report is structured around the key criteria for assessing schemes which are considered to be in the open countryside to assist both the Local Planning Authority in making a decision regarding the planning application and for the Design Team to resolve any issues relating to each criteria.

In summary, these are:

- **Outstanding or innovative, helping to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas**
- **Reflect the highest standards in architecture**
- **Significantly enhance its immediate setting**
- **Be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area**

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Panel comments:

**Outstanding or innovative, helping to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas:**

The Panel are satisfied that the scheme represents exceptional innovation through the use of unique technology. The design expresses innovation but not in a visually dominant or challenging way and strikes a careful balance in engagement of innovative technology, whilst remaining respectful of Musley Bank House and the local area. The proposal has the capacity to raise design and performance standards more generally, both in rural areas and in more mainstream developments if the learning from this project can be transferred. To that end the team gave assurances that they would be open to visits and dialogue with others interested to learn about the technology.

A particularly valuable aspect of the design in this context is that it delivers very high performance levels in a design format which is 'comfortable' to conservation design tastes.

**Reflect the highest standards in architecture:**

The Panel feel the scheme currently falls somewhat short of the quality expected to be deemed the highest standards in architecture but has the capability and potential to achieve this level. To be considered to reflect the highest standards in architecture the design needs very careful detailing. The Design Team are encouraged to give further consideration to details such as the ashlar stone panels. At present they appear too bright in the visualisations and the size and verticality is more consistent with large civic or commercial buildings in a more urban setting.

At present the design appears quite modular, a suggestion from the Panel is to explore whether the link between the two main elements of the house being recessed might mitigate the apparent monolithic scale of what the team acknowledge reads as a big building. This would more strongly express the building as two linked pavilions.

Overall, the house is competently composed with very little else to fault in objective terms and the Panel feel that there is a sound case for an honest contemporary neighbour to Musley Bank House.

**Significantly enhance its immediate setting:**

The proposals do not erode the quality of the landscape and have been handled carefully resulting in modest positives and no negative impacts. In assessing whether enhancement is significant it is important to be clear about the merits of the existing setting and the scheme does not start out with the advantage that many Paragraph 55 schemes have, in that one cannot describe the overall landscape as seriously degraded. It is equally true to say that the parkland has not been expertly designed to a standard worthy of stifling conservation but there is merit in the parkland style and the views of Musley Bank House afforded to the nearby public right of way.

The proposed improvements to the pond area however are a significant enhancement to its present state. Currently the pond is an enigma within the overall composition, so the proposal

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to wrap the feature with planting and the presence of boundary railings help to tie it in and relate the pond more clearly to Musley Bank house.

Although providing a clear context to the side of Musley Bank House, the plan looks weak to the rear of the property in the two-dimensional representation, where it is squeezed in between immovables. The space left over is meagre but has a significant role to play in the functioning of the life of the house, so detailing probably needs further work and three-dimensional study at a larger scale. Perhaps it would be more successful if it worked with the building to create a more practical and user-friendly space. As the house is the key piece of the proposal the Design Team should be careful not to crowd the house and give it space to breathe, although it is recognised the siting is constrained by the laudable intention to protect and afford space to the existing mature trees.

The Design Team may wish to focus on how best to demonstrate the proposal will be beneficial to the landscape – making the argument that the immediate setting needs balancing and that the local area has been degraded by what they consider to be inappropriate development. The Design & Access Statement is a good opportunity to make these arguments, supported by images and diagrams. At present it is very text heavy and many of the points it addresses could be better conveyed through visual aids. The suggested order of the D&A Statement is: wider landscape, local landscape, architecture and then innovative technology with a clear setting out of arguments against each of the NPPF paragraph 55 criteria.

**Be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area:**

The Panel does consider this proposal to be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area but with scope for more work on the detail and explanation of the design principles adopted. A deeper investigation of sightlines and visual impact has informed a more considered location for the new house which respects the existing mature trees and proposes new planting to the south of the site to clearly separate the new dwelling from Musley Bank House.

There is clarity on how the building sits in the landscape, which is helped by the use of topography and levels to hide elements of the dwelling from Musley Bank House, giving a clearer and more sensitive relationship between the two buildings.

The scheme reflects and responds well to local clusters of development and gives some balance to the landscape when viewed from the southern edge of the site, countering the more developed western edge.

The revised design of the boundary treatment using estate railings is respectful of Musley Bank House and is a rational, well-considered solution, which follows a strong local tradition. It results in a clear division of ownership and distinction between the two boundaries stemming from historic land division to the north.

As mentioned previously a more sensitive tone and handling of the ashlar masonry should contribute to a more harmonious relationship with the local area and convey more clearly the residential nature of the development. The two houses will share a single parkland landscape that can accommodate two curtilages.

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**Please note:**

- As the subject of this review is a scheme that has been submitted for planning consent, the review findings will be published on the Yorkshire Design Review Service/Integreat Plus website and made available to the relevant Planning Committee..
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Report drafted by Jamie Wilde, Yorkshire Design Review Service Manager

Checked and approved by Tom Lonsdale, Vice-Chair, Landscape Architect

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