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## **Partridge Hill - Heritage Statement**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 It is proposed to convert an existing modern barn to holiday accommodation (2x two bedroom units) at Partridge Hill, Foston.

1.2 The proposal will affect the historic environment but sensitive design has ensured that there will be no harm to any heritage assets.

1.3 The barn proposed for conversion is adjacent to, but not within, the boundary of the scheduled monument of Foston medieval settlement and moated monastic grange (List Entry Number: 1019388). It is part of the setting of the scheduled monument.

1.4 A second, smaller agricultural building is situated between the large modern barn and the scheduled monument. This is an historic (pre-1856), stone built, two-celled animal shelter. It is outside the scheduled monument boundary. The building lacks a sufficient level of heritage significance to be identified as a non-designated heritage asset but plays a role in the historic environment due to being part of the setting of the scheduled monument. It is proposed to convert the building for use as a bin store and bicycle storage with no alteration to the existing building apart from repair as necessary.

1.5 Access to the holiday lets will be via an existing track that runs through the scheduled monument via an existing field entrance on Partridge Hill roadside. Parking for the holiday lets will be on a triangular area of gravel (a mixture of tarmac planings and gravel) and concrete hardstanding within the boundary of the scheduled monument that currently forms a working area outside the entrance to the modern barn. Both the existing hardcore track and the gravel part of the parking area will require re-surfacing and because these areas are within the boundary of the scheduled monument Scheduled Monument Consent is required.

1.6 A narrow footway composed of gravel is proposed to run along the existing fence line, just inside the scheduled monument. This will be simple in construction and will require only the removal of the very top of the turf layer.

1.7 Pre-application discussion has taken place with Historic England and their pre-application advice has indicated that the proposals are acceptable and therefore likely to gain Scheduled Monument Consent, subject to certain conditions (see Appendix 1, pre-application advice letter from Keith Emerick, Ancient Monuments Inspector dated 20 March 2020). Those conditions are addressed within this document. The only element that was not part of the pre-application discussion is the narrow east-west gravel foot path proposed to run adjacent to the existing fence, just inside the scheduled monument.

1.8 This Heritage Statement is intended to be submitted to accompany both the planning application and the application for Scheduled Monument Consent, both of which will be submitted simultaneously. It therefore addresses both planning issues related to the historic environment and the requirements for obtaining Scheduled Monument Consent.



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## **2. National planning law and guidance**

2.1 Scheduled Monuments are protected in law by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979. Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) is required for any intrusive or invasive works to a scheduled monument. The application process is separate from planning permission and is administered by Historic England who will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State as to whether SMC should be granted.

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires in the case of all heritage assets, designated or otherwise, that local planning authorities should take into account *'the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of such heritage assets and of putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'* (NPPF 2019 paragraph 185a and 192a).

2.3 In the case of designated heritage assets (such as the scheduled monument), the NPPF requires that *'great weight'* is given to the conservation of the asset, and *'the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be'* (NPPF 2019, paragraph 193). Harm to heritage significance can either be *'substantial'* or *'less than substantial'*. Substantial harm is rare, but if the development leads to *'less than substantial harm'* to the significance of a designated heritage asset, paragraph 196 indicates that this harm still needs to be assessed against the public benefit of the scheme and whether or not the viability of the site is being optimised.

2.4 In the National Planning Policy Framework Scheduled Monuments are classed as *'assets of the highest significance'* (paragraph 194b).

2.5 In the case of non-designated heritage assets, the planning authority needs to apply a *'balanced judgement'* when weighing heritage harm against public benefits. This means the bar is set a little lower than with designated heritage assets, but it is still the case that an application could be refused due to harm to a non-designated heritage asset.

2.6 The government's Planning Policy Guidance states that there are a number of ways that non-designated heritage assets can be identified:

*'There are a number of processes through which non-designated heritage assets may be identified, including the local and neighbourhood plan-making processes and conservation area appraisals and reviews'. (PPG Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 18a-040-20190723).*

2.7 It also makes clear that *'In some cases, local planning authorities may also identify non-designated heritage assets as part of the decision-making process on planning applications...'*. It further states that: *'Irrespective of how they are identified, it is important that the decisions to identify them as non-designated heritage assets are based on sound evidence.'*

2.8 The Planning Practice Guidance states the basic principle to guide the identification of non-designated heritage assets:



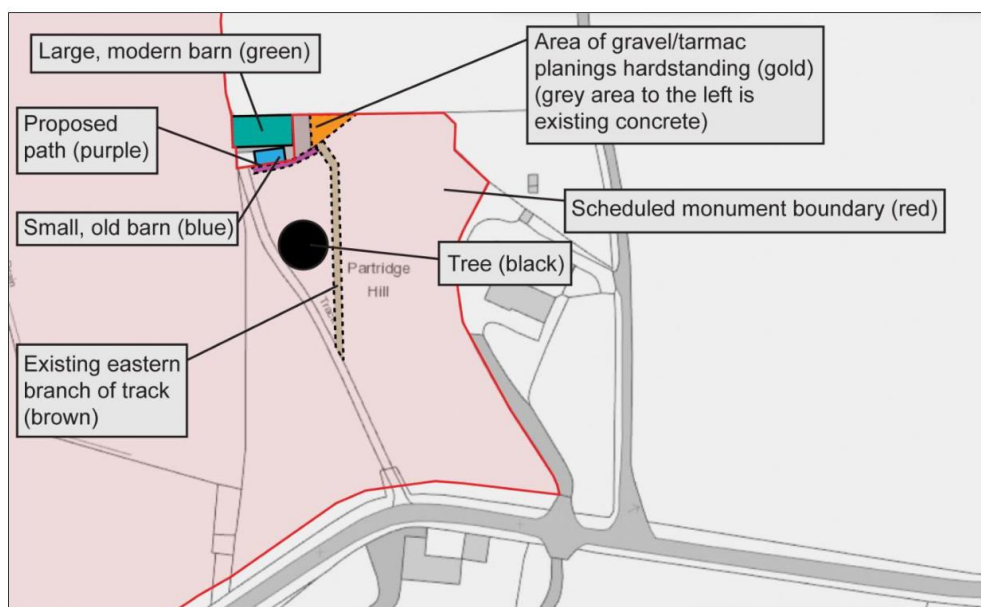
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*'A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets.'* (PPG Paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723).

2.9 Therefore to be identified as a non-designated heritage asset, an historic building (in this case, the small stone-built barn) must be judged to have a sufficient level of heritage significance, and this must be more than *'little or no heritage significance'*.

### **3. Assessment of significance**



*Plan showing extent of scheduled monument and location of elements mentioned in the text*

*Scheduled monument of Foston medieval settlement and moated monastic grange (List Entry Number: 1019388)*

3.1 The monument itself encompasses much of the present-day village of Foston. It includes buried and earthwork remains of the medieval settlement of Foston, which includes a moated monastic grange, along with parts of the village's medieval openfield system

3.2 The part of the monument at the application site includes intact earthworks of ridge and furrow but no platforms, hollow ways, tracks or other signs of habitation and was presumably part of the village's open field system rather than an inhabited part of the village.





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3.3 An existing hardcore track runs diagonally across the ridge and furrow in the southern half of the field and splits in two at the location of a large tree, with the eastern branch running parallel with the ridge and furrow, leading to the area to the east of the barns (this is the branch that will be utilised for the proposed application). The second branch continues the track's diagonal alignment, runs to the western end of the two barns and includes a visible causeway crossing a slight furrow between two ridges.

3.4 The excavation of three shallow 1mx1m test pits was undertaken to demonstrate the presence of hardcore below the present thin grass surface. The results of these test pits are shown in photographic form in Appendix 2 together with the approximate locations of the test pits shown on a site plan.

3.5 The ridge and furrow is not particularly well-preserved in this part of the field and is marked by slight, difficult to interpret earthworks. It is notably better defined to the east of the proposed track.

3.6 The use of the hardcore track for agricultural purposes is well-established, and likely to be historical (providing access to the pre-1856 barn), but the surface of the track is no longer readily visible having been overgrown by grass. The depth of hardcore that makes up the track is not known, but is likely to be 300mm or more.

3.7 The track is part of the history of the agricultural hinterland of the village of Foston and provides evidence of the continuing agricultural use of the land that previously formed part of the open fields of the medieval village. It is probable that the track is of at least early nineteenth century origin (serving the small, pre-1856 barn). As such the presence of a track is not an alien feature in this part of the scheduled monument and its presence does not harm the ability of a visitor to appreciate the historical importance of, and historical evolution of the medieval village remains. Because of the low visual impact of the existing track, it is entirely appropriate in an agricultural context.

3.8 There is the possibility of buried archaeological remains beneath the existing hardcore that makes up the track, although based upon what can be observed from the earthworks here, any remains are likely to be related only to the agricultural use of the fields. However, this may include stray artefacts imported accidentally into the fields by the practice of '*manuring*', i.e. the use of domestic rubbish as a fertiliser in the fields.

3.9 The area of tarmac and hardcore outside the eastern doorway to the large barn is within the boundary of the scheduled monument. It is a modern agricultural feature and its presence, though visually intrusive, is not out of context in this position. Its construction has levelled any apparent earthworks that may have extended into this area. There is the possibility of buried archaeological remains below the concrete and hardcore, as per the track.

3.10 A narrow pedestrian path is proposed to run east west along the existing fence line, just inside the scheduled monument. The location of this may be previously unused ground, though being adjacent to the fence it is likely to have been previously disturbed to some extent. Being adjacent to the fence and very narrow, this piece of land makes relatively little contribution to the visual aspects of the scheduled monument. There is the potential for archaeological remains here, subject to the same limitations mentioned above.



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3.11 Both the large, modern barn and the small, historic barn are parts of the setting of the scheduled monument. Insofar as both are agricultural structures, they are both appropriate features in this context. However the large, modern barn is relatively visually unattractive and utilitarian in appearance and detracts somewhat from the setting of the monument in purely aesthetic terms. The small, historic barn by contrast is an attractive stone-built structure, utilitarian in origin but its aged appearance, rubble stone walls and pantile roof give it a pleasing appearance. It also contributes to a visitor's understanding of the later historic use of the former medieval agricultural land.

#### *The small, historic barn*

3.12 The small barn is shown on the 1856 first edition Ordnance Survey map and therefore pre-dates that map in origin. Its function is uncertain and no internal features are present apart from a blocked internal doorway that once connected the two cells. The more detailed 1:2500 map published in 1893 shows that two small animal enclosures were attached to the barn, served by the two external doorways. Whether this was for horses or pigs or other stock is unknown.

3.13 While the barn is of early Victorian date or earlier its level of heritage significance is unlikely to be sufficient to be identified as a non-designated heritage asset without evidence of a significantly earlier origin or important historic association. It has a little heritage significance, but this is not sufficient to constitute a heritage asset. Nonetheless it plays a role in the historic environment due to being part of the setting of the scheduled monument.

#### **4. Impact assessment**

##### *Conversion of large barn*

4.1 As part of the setting of the scheduled monument, the conversion of the large, modern barn needs to be sensitively designed and avoid an overly domestic appearance, particularly the south-facing elevation that faces the scheduled monument and the public road. This is made somewhat less sensitive because much of the southern elevation is visually screened by the small, historic barn which stands between the monument and the large barn.

4.2 The glazing proposed on the south elevation is back from the main facade and detailed with vertical timber screens on the upper storey. This will largely prevent any obtrusive reflection and will minimise the visual impact of the glazing. A raised terrace is proposed at the western end of the southern elevation, which will be surrounded by raised planters to its perimeter. Together with a short section of mixed native hedge proposed to be planted in front of the eastern end of the south elevation, this will serve to minimise the visual impact of the glazing at ground floor level.

4.3 Further glazing is proposed for the east and west elevations. That on the west elevation will also be broken up with a vertical timber screen, while that on the ground floor of the eastern elevation will be screened by a similar terrace with raised planting as is proposed for the south elevation.

4.4 The present green painted metal cladding of the upper storey of the barn will be replaced by timber cladding, which it is considered will improve the appearance of the building and will give an appropriate rural feel to the proposed conversion. The retention of some form of upper storey cladding,



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albeit in a more sympathetic material, will assist the retention of an agricultural appearance to the overall building and avoid an overly domestic form.

It is understood that no additional services will be required for the conversion.

4.5 The proposed conversion will improve the aesthetic appearance of the building and the steps taken to screen and break up the appearance of the proposed glazing will maintain a suitably agricultural appearance. Overall there will be a neutral impact on the setting of the scheduled monument and no harm will be caused.

#### Small, historic barn

4.6 No intervention will be required apart from necessary repair to ensure that the building can be safely used as a bicycle store and bin store. The maintenance and ongoing use of this presently unused building will ensure that the historic building will avoid the danger of dereliction, and the restoration of an historic building will be beneficial to the setting of the scheduled monument and will result in enhancement of its heritage significance.

#### Track

4.7 It is proposed to add a surface of gravel to the existing hardcore track. This is necessary because the current grass-covered hardcore surface is likely to be unsuitable for the use of visitors' cars. It is not considered necessary to re-excavate or re-lay the existing hardcore and a gravel surface will be simply laid over the existing hardcore following stripping of the the shallow turf that has taken root here.

4.8 This proposal is in line with the pre-application advice from Historic England, who advised that:

*'I have no objection to the hardcore being revealed and the track reused. My only concern is that I would not want to see the track become 'suburban' in character, and therefore I would prefer that it was not given a tarmac top coat. I would have thought that people using the holiday accommodation would come for the rural character and a tarmac track might be somewhat alien. A gravel topping would be acceptable but gravel can migrate.'*

4.9 Tarmac is not proposed and a suitably neutral coloured rural gravel dressing will be used. Under its current agricultural use, it would be possible to resurface the track under Scheduled Monument Class Consent for Agriculture without requiring Scheduled Monument Consent. What is being proposed is no different than what would be carried out as part of the agricultural maintenance of the track under Class Consent.

4.10 There will not be a fundamental change to the scheduled monument, with no intrusive work required other than the stripping of grass to reveal the existing hardcore. The effect on the scheduled monument will be neutral and no harm will be caused. The opening up of what was previously private farmland to visitors that will result from the use of the track will increase opportunities for public appreciation of this part of the scheduled monument and will thus enhance its heritage significance.

#### Parking area





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4.11 The present gravel/tarmac planings covering part of the parking area is visually unattractive and will be replaced by a new surface of gravel that is more visually attractive. The concrete part of the parking area will remain as it is. It is uncertain whether there is a hardcore foundation below the gravel/tarmac planings and it may be necessary to excavate slightly in order to make a hardcore foundation. No excavation will be below 300mm.

4.12 It is understood that Historic England will wish to condition the depth of any excavation, in line with their pre-application comments:

*'I am content that this re-dressing can be undertaken, but should it be necessary to be more invasive the work will need Scheduled Monument Consent so that we could condition the depth of any disturbance.'*

4.13 The re-surfacing of the existing gravel/tarmac planings working surface outside the large barn will improve the setting of the scheduled monument and enhance its heritage significance.

#### Gravel footpath

4.14 The foot path will be positioned adjacent to the existing fence and will be narrow in dimensions. It will be lightly surfaced with gravel of neutral colour. No true foundations will be necessary, only the removal of the very top of the existing turf layer. Its visual impact on the scheduled monument will be minimal and will not harm the ability of a visitor to appreciate the monument. Given its shallow nature, the possibility of disturbing any in situ archaeological remains is minimal and its limited scale will also limit its impact. It is light touch and will be fully reversible. The footpath will not cause any harm to the scheduled monument.

### **5. Conclusion**

5.1 No harm will be caused to the scheduled monument of Foston medieval settlement and moated monastic grange. There will in fact be greater opportunities for the public to appreciate the monument, resulting in an enhancement of its heritage significance.

5.2 The proposed development will be in accord with the historic environment provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and the legal requirements of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979.

Dave Pinnock (BA (hons.), MA) – July 2020  
Director  
Humble Heritage Ltd.

*The Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) recognises Humble Heritage as a professional Historic Environment Service Provider. I and my colleague Liz Humble (MA Cantab., MA Distinction, IHBC, MCIfA) have over 30 years combined professional post-qualification experience, during which time we have prepared a large number of heritage reports as part of the documentation required for planning permission, listed building consent and so forth. Liz is also a full professional member of both the IHBC and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA).*



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**Appendix 1: pre-application advice letter, Keith Emerick, Ancient Monument Inspector, Historic England**

Mr Dave Pinnock  
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14 Ashbourne Way  
York  
North Yorkshire  
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Direct Dial: 01904 601988

Our ref: PA01103267

20 March 2020

Dear Mr Pinnock

**Pre-application Advice**

**PARTRIDGE HILL, FOSTON , RYEDALE, NORTH YORKSHIRE, YO60 7QG**

Thank you for your enquiry concerning the the adaptive reuse of farm buildings at the nationally important scheduled monument of 'Foston Medieval Settlement and moated monastic grange' (NHLE 1019388).

To answer your specific questions:

a) The existing hardcore track: First of all I would like to see it demonstrated that this is a hardcore track. Second, I have no objection to the hardcore being revealed and the track reused. My only concern is that I would not want to see the track become 'suburban' in character, and therefore I would prefer that it was not given a tarmac top coat. I would have thought that people using the holiday accommodation would come for the rural character and a tarmac track might be somewhat alien. A gravel topping would be acceptable but gravel can migrate; is there a particular reason why your client does not want a green, contextual track?

If the works are of the limited amount/complexity as suggested by revealing the hardcore and then adding a top coat of gravel, you will still need Scheduled Monument Consent.

If the hardcore needed excavating and a new hardcore surface installed you will need Scheduled Monument Consent for this, as we would wish to condition the depth of disturbance and the manner in which the work was carried out.

b) I am content that this re-dressing can be undertaken, but should it be necessary to be more invasive the work will need Scheduled Monument Consent so that we could condition the depth of any disturbance. If you need only to top dress the hardstanding then this might be undertaken without consent, but we would need to see a method statement.

c) The small historic agricultural building is not within the boundary of the Scheduled Monument.





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**Next Steps**

I hope the above has answered your questions.

Please contact me to discuss any of the above if it is not clear, but let me know if there any changes of plan.

Yours sincerely

Keith Emerick  
Ancient Monuments Inspector  
E-mail: [Keith.Emerick@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:Keith.Emerick@HistoricEngland.org.uk)

cc:

PARTRIDGE HILL, FOSTON , RYEDALE, NORTH YORKSHIRE, YO60 7QG  
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Information Provided

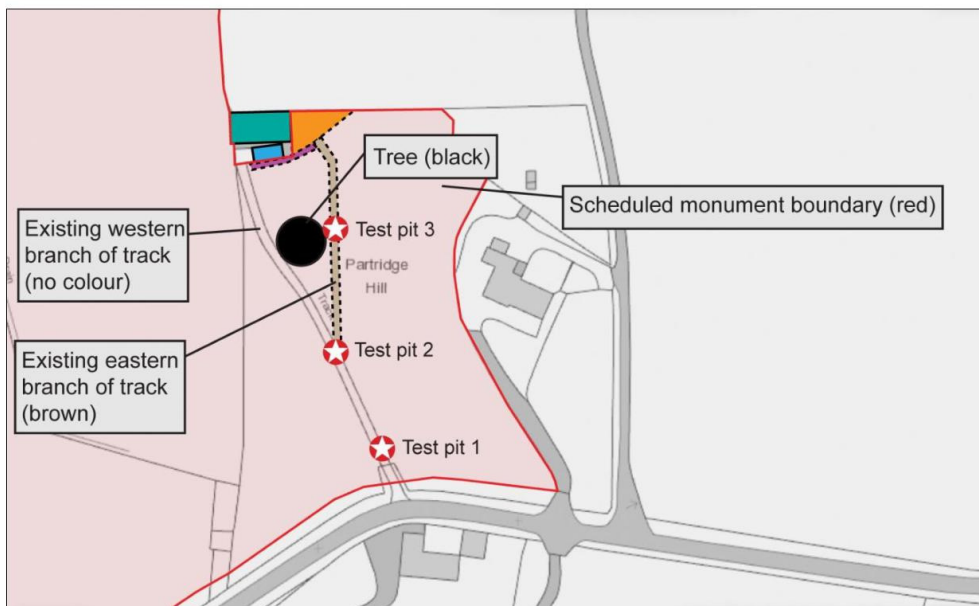


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## Appendix 2: Results of test pits to expose existing hardcore surface of track through scheduled monument

Three test pits were excavated through the grass surface of the existing track to demonstrate the presence of gravel hardcore. All three test pits showed the presence of gravel and this will form a suitable base for the creation of a fresh gravel surface to the track as proposed. The plan and photographs below show the results.



*Plan showing location of test pits*



*Location of test pit 1, looking south*



*Test pit 1*



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*Test pit 2 location, looking north towards tree. Divergence of east and west branches of the track clearly visible*



*Test pit 2*



*Test pit 3 location with tree on left of shot*



*Test pit 3*