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Design and Access Statement

for

**Proposed Residential Development
at
St. Gregory's
Oswaldkirk
York
YO62 5XT**

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Ampleforth Abbey and College in support of a Full Planning Application for a residential development at St. Gregory's, Oswaldkirk.

1.2 This statement, which should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings and forms, describes the site's location, context and existing buildings, it then clarifies the proposals following the format set out in the DCLG Circular 01/2006, that is *use and amount, layout, scale, landscaping, appearance and access*. Where appropriate, reference has also been made to relevant Planning Policy.

2.0 The Proposed Site and Context Appraisal

2.1 The existing site is located within Oswaldkirk, a medium sized village situated approximately 3 miles south of Helmsley and 18 miles north of York.

2.2 The aerial photograph below illustrates the existing site within the context of the immediate surroundings of Oswaldkirk.



Figure 1: Aerial Photograph

2.3 Oswaldkirk is not a comprehensively serviced village. It has two churches and a one public house. Ampleforth Abbey and College and St. Alban's Sports Centre are located approximately a mile to the west, with Ampleforth Village a further mile beyond. Ampleforth Village has a post office and shop, two primary schools, two pubs and a fish and chip shop. It is home to three churches and two primary schools, as well as Ampleforth Abbey and College.

2.4 Bus service No. 31 runs every two hours Monday to Saturday from York to Helmsley, and No. 195 runs the same from Malton to York. The Moors Bus runs every 3 hours from Northallerton to Helmsley and also York to Helmsley.

2.5 The site is situated within the village envelope and it's Conservation Area and extends to an area of 0.12 hectares. The site slopes from north to south, approximately 4m from Main Street down to the grazing fields to the south of the application site.

2.6 The site is bounded to the north by the public footpath and Main Street. The boundary to the east borders the adjoining property of The Red House, who's previously converted outbuildings stand predominantly against the eastern boundary line. To the south lies an open pasture field, which continues to fall away in level down to Holly Tree House. To the west, separated off by a mix of fencing, railings and level changes, is a multi-use small development built in 1988, comprising the Oswaldkirk Village Hall at the south end, a pair of garages part wall along the boundary and a pair semi-detached houses called September and April Cottages.

2.7 St. Gregory's comprises three building elements.

- 2.7.1 The main house, in the north-east corner of the site, is a two storey, double fronted stone house with slate roof. The house is gabled to east and west. The entrance door opens directly onto the pavement, and windows are Yorkshire sliding sashes, with white painted stone lintels and cills. There is no front garden area. Internally the house is currently used as lodgings for staff working at Ampleforth Abbey and College. The accommodation provides individual bedrooms and communal living rooms and kitchen. The house is currently linked internally into the adjoining single storey wing to the west.



Fig. 2: View of site from north east, showing house in foreground

- 2.7.2 To the west of the main house is a single storey "wing". The origins of this building are not known for certain, though it was noted in a conveyancy surveyor's (H. B. Agate of High Petergate, York) appraisal as being possibly being part of a separate dwelling. This single storey building was developed in 1968 to provide further residential accommodation as part of St. Gregory's house. The building is stone built, with pantiled roof. There is a flat roofed stone built extension to the western end, providing bathroom accommodation. Time casement windows and external doors are all the south and west sides. There are no windows to the north elevation facing the road, although there is an old timber lintel to this elevation with evidence of infilled window or door opening.



Fig. 3: View of site from north west, showing west wing in foreground

- 2.7.3 South of the existing residential buildings is a long stone and brick built barn type outbuilding running predominantly north south in orientation, with stepped internal floor levels following the slope of the site. The building comprises two garages and two general storage rooms. To the north end of this barn are a pair of brick built store rooms that are somewhat incongruous to the form and nature of the building. The roof to the barn is pantiled, and windows and doors are timber framed. Immediately to the south of the barn is a small hard standing area, with inset remains of walls, suggesting a previously removed portion of the building; this is also evidenced in patchwork infills to the southern elevation. A 1968 conveyancy plan of the site also shows a further substantial building footprint to the south and in the same alignment as the barn (see figure 5).



Fig. 4: View of site from south west, showing barn in foreground



Fig. 6: Existing "garth" view through site to valley to the south

3.3 The proposed development must fit comfortably within the context and complement the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the village in general; the scale, form, massing and appearance of the any alterations to the existing buildings should be in keeping with its surroundings.

3.4 The relevant policies within the Ryedale Local Plan have been taken into account and this statement will clarify the relevant national and local policies and how the proposal shows compliance.

3.5 The properties proposed within the development will have an appropriate level of amenity space and will be designed so that their location on the site, orientations and main habitable windows are not detrimental to the amenity of the existing adjoining properties.

4.0 Design Solution

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The following text clarifies the specific detail of the submitted scheme and follows the format set out in the DCLG Circular 01/2006, that is, *use and amount, layout, scale, landscaping, appearance and access*.

4.2 Use and Amount

4.2.1 It is proposed to retain the structure of the existing main house and west wing, which currently provides a six bedroom multi-tenancy lodge, and separate back into two individual dwellings. The house will provide a three bedroom dwelling, while the west wing will provide a single bedroom dwelling. The outbuildings, which are ancillary buildings for the use of the house, are proposed for adaptation and conversion to provide a detached three bedroom house.

4.3 Access and Accessibility

4.3.1 The site is in a sustainable location with direct bus services running from the village to Thirsk, Easingwold, York, Malton and Helmsley.

4.3.2 The main line railway station at Thirsk has frequent connections to all over the country, from London to Edinburgh, and more local links to York, Leeds and Middlesbrough.

4.3.3 Thirsk is a well serviced town with good local shopping facilities together with excellent social amenities such as a town hall, primary and secondary school, Churches, public houses and restaurants. Thirsk also has a good range of recreation and leisure facilities, such as a swimming pool, astro turf and various play areas for children of all ages.

4.3.4 The existing access off the main road will remain unaltered with the driveway extending to provide two parking spaces for both the house and the barn conversion. There will be room to manoeuvre vehicles within the site curtilage and thereby allow forward egress from the properties onto the highway.

4.3.5 Currently the majority of the tenants who occupy the property make use of on street parking. The proposals would reduce this demand significantly, with just the single storey, one bedroom west wing requiring use of on street parking.

4.3.6 The designs are fully compliant with the appropriate standards, including the Building Regulation Approved Document M in respect of access to and within the dwelling and the accommodation provided, such as accessible toilets at the principle floor level. Level thresholds will be incorporated into the dwellings to aid accessibility.

4.4 Layout

4.4.1 The proposed scheme for all three properties largely follows the existing footprint of the buildings on site. A two storey rear addition is proposed to the south west corner of the main house, to provide extended living accommodation at ground floor and improved bedroom sizes at first floor. The west wing will retain its current footprint. It is proposed that the barn be extended to the east (ground floor only) and south (two storey), to improve available living accommodation. The southern extension will occupy part of the original footprint of previously demolished buildings, evident by the remaining slabs and foundation walls, and the building indicated on the 1968 Conveyancy Plan (see figure 5 above). The eastern extension is offset by the demolition of the brick built rooms to the north end of the barn.

4.4.2 The proposed internal layout of the main house will provide a living room; an open plan kitchen / dining / family room; a downstairs wc; a principle bedroom with en-suite; two further double bedrooms and a family bathroom.

4.4.3 The west wing will provide an open plan kitchen / living / dining room; a large bedroom and a bathroom. Access to this dwelling is proposed to be taken directly of the footpath to the front, located in the same area as the previously located opening that has since been closed off.

4.4.4 The barn will have a more open plan internal layout to ground floor, with a large linked kitchen, dining and living rooms, with views south across the valley. The entrance hall will have an open vaulted double height space to an open landing area above. Also at ground floor will be bathroom and guest bedroom. There will be a series of split levels at ground floor to accommodate the existing changes in levels. At first floor level, in addition to the open gallery landing area, will be two bedrooms, each with ensuite bathroom.

4.4.5 One of the two existing garages within the barn will be retained for use as a secure garage.

4.4.6 The rear garden areas will be sub-divided as shown and defined by new close boarded timber fencing 1800mm high. The driveway down the west side of the barn will remain visually open, with a low security gate, in order to maintain the "garth" view from the public domain through the site to the grazing land to the south.

4.4.7 The development will sit comfortably within its setting and respect the appearance of the Conservation Area by redeveloping partially unused building fabric and improving quality of architectural detail and material.

4.5 Landscaping

4.5.1 There are no existing trees or hedgerows on the site.

4.5.2 Given the tenanted nature of the existing property, the garden areas to the south of the site are maintained in a tidy fashion, but are of little landscaping interest.

4.5.3 By proposing the subdivision of the site into three separate private dwellings, the gardens will be developed with a more personal approach.

4.5.4 As there is no garden space to the front of the property, the effects of any on site landscaping will have little or no impact on the public domain.

4.6 Scale

4.6.1 The existing scale of the house and single storey west wing that front onto the road will remain as existing, save for the proposed provision of a double pitched roof over the currently flat roofed bathroom extension.

4.6.2 In order to facilitate the first floor accommodation to the barn, it is proposed that the existing roof be raised by 1m. This would raise the eaves line to the same as the existing brick built block to the north end (proposed for demolition) and will still keep the ridge line 500mm lower than that of the existing single storey west wing. The proposed southern extension to the barn is modest and would have

negligible impact on the oblique view down the “garth”, or neighbourly views across the valley. The eastern extension is out of sight from the public domain, and being set lower and further south than the existing brick outbuildings to be demolished, the extension will allow for better and more opened up views from the west wing.

4.6.2 Appropriate separation distances and relationships are maintained to the existing properties around the periphery of the site.



Fig. 7: Developed out-buildings to The Red House on eastern boundary

4.7 Appearance

4.7.1 The replacement of the flat roof to the western extension of the west wing with a pantiled pitched roof will greatly enhance the visual appearance of this end of the property. The north face of the west wing will also benefit from the introduction of entrance door and window, which will break up and articulate the otherwise large expanse of uninterrupted stonework.

4.7.2 In order to reflect the local vernacular, the proposed extension to the house will be formed in stonework, with painted stone cills and lintels as existing. The roof will be hipped and clad with slate to match existing.

4.7.3 Similarly the extended roofs to the barn are pantiled and traditionally detailed with clipped verges and eaves and rise and fall gutter details. Windows to the barn occupy existing openings, with a small number of new windows and doors in similarly sized and proportioned openings, with stone window heads and cills to match existing.

4.7.4 The correct choice of materials is an important factor in a successful development and it is proposed to utilise a good quality, simple palette in order to fit within the surrounding context, comprising natural stone walls slate and pantiled roofs.



Fig. 7: Site as viewed from the south, with rear of village hall on left

5.0 Planning Policy and Compliance

5.1 The Planning Policy Guidance and Statements, PPS & PPG, have recently been replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework. This document has been fully considered and complied with regarding the proposals.

5.2 The NPPF states that to achieve sustainable development, proposals should *'always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings'*. The proposed replacement dwelling is of a high standard with ample amenity for all existing neighbouring properties, by way of maintaining open views, and for the occupants of the new dwellings proposed. The removal of the existing stone outhouses helps to open up the core of the site and better separate the three dwelling demises, providing better amenity to all.

5.3 Section 7 Requiring good design states *'optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development'*, the proposal will make best use of a piece of land currently with a substantial inhabitable building sited on it. The existing slope over the length of the site will be used to minimise the impact of the proposed eastern barn extension on the amenity of the main house and west wing. Section 7 also states *'respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials'*. The proposed development retains the existing and historical footprints and orientation of the buildings and all alterations will be constructed of materials to match existing stone walls, slate and pantiled roofs, timber windows and doors.

5.4 The proposed replacement dwelling complies with section 11 of the NPPF, conserving and enhancing the natural environment, as it is making use of brownfield land.

5.5 The proposals have been carefully prepared taking into consideration the Ryedale Local Plan Policies SP2, SP4, SP12, SP15, SP16 and SP19, to ensure the design of the new development contributes positively to the character, distinctiveness and significance of the conservation area. The proposals respect and utilise locally found design, detailing and use of materials that will respect and maintain the quality of the Oswaldkirk conservation area, thereby conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

5.6 In line with Policy SP2, the development seeks to sub-divide the existing property, together with its ancillary outbuildings, into three separate properties, thus contributing to the required 3000 (net) new homes requirement of SP2, within "other villages" through the "sub-division of existing dwellings).

5.7 In line with Policy SP4, the development will provide increase housing choice and high quality housing, with a varied house size and format, including one bungalow and two family sized units, all through improvements and adaptation to existing home and re-use of empty ancillary buildings to the home. The development will also allow updating of the existing housing stock on the site to provide more modern standards of living.

5.8 In line with Policy SP12, the proposed development seeks to preserve and enhance the quality of the historic fabric of the village. While not individually listed, or noted as being of any specific historic value, the application site does contribute to the overall quality and appearance of the village and so use of appropriate vernacular materials and details is proposed, with extensions that are sited and proportioned to maintain the openness of the site. In relation to the impact on the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the development will blend in with the backdrop of existing buildings in the village and will help to maintain and enhance views from the main road through the "garth" to the open landscape beyond

5.9 In anticipation of likely concerns relating to requirements of Policy SP15, the Applicant has engaged John Drewett to carry out a bat survey of the site, and his report finds that, while a variety of bat species can be found in and around the site, there is no evidence of there being any roosting bats within any of the buildings on site and moreover there is limited likelihood of the buildings having any roosting potential. A copy of his report is included within the application documents.

5.10 The requirements of Policy SP16, have been duly considered and accommodated within the proposals.

- i) the proposal has no adverse visual impact on the openness of the site, including views to the landscape beyond
- ii) the proposal will provide a quality residential environment that reflects the scale, proportions, materials, design and character of the village, as detailed in the sections above

iii) the extension proposed to the barn is proportionally in keeping with similar converted barns in the village set perpendicular to the road. The modest raising of the roof height still maintains a lower pitch line to the existing west wing of the main house. In terms of mass, the footprint of the extension proposed will be less than the previous building known to have historically occupied the site at the southern end of the barn. The materials proposed to extend the barn are in keeping with existing and will therefore be sympathetic to the quality and character of the host building.

iv) the proposal will provide a much improved standard of residential accommodation

v) the proposal will provide a good and varied mix of residential accommodation for the open housing market

5.11 The requirements of Policy SP19

i) to reduce the demand for on street parking have been taken into account and, as noted previously, the proposal will significantly reduce the existing levels of on street parking generated by the site

ii)) the proposal will have no adverse effect on the amenity of adjoining properties

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The principle of at least two separate dwellings on this site is already established.

6.2 The design approach respects the characteristics of the Oswaldkirk Conservation Area and will complement the surrounding built form. The proposed scheme will be a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and improve parts of the site that are currently inhabitable.

6.3 In addition, the guidance of the NPPF is complied with, and the nature of the scheme is such that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be enhanced, most specifically by decreasing on street parking, improving architectural details, removal of incongruous outbuildings and the maintaining of the "garth" view from the public domain.

6.4 Due to the site's location, the proposed development accords with the principles of sustainable development as advocated in the NPPF, and with the guidance of that document in respect of the promotion of high quality new development.

6.5 When all relevant issues are taken into account, it may be concluded that the proposed development will be a positive asset to Oswaldkirk; is consistent with the policy objectives of the Local Development Framework, and will not result in demonstrable harm to any interest of acknowledged importance.