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**MEMORANDUM  
RYEDALE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
FORWARD PLANNING & CONSERVATION**

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**TO:** ALAN GOFORTH  
**FROM:** EMMA WOODLAND- SENOIR HERITAGE AND BUILDING CONSERVATION OFFICER  
**SUBJECT:** 19/00688/FUL- THE GREAT BARN COTTAGE, VILLAGE ST, HOWSHAM  
**DATE:** 29<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2019

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**Objection**

The Great Barn Cottage lies within the Howsham conservation area and as such, Ryedale District Council has a statutory duty to have special regard for the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the conservation area. Due to the distance of the development site from listed buildings, it is considered that the application will not have an impact on the setting of listed buildings however it will have an impact on the conservation area. Due to the age and historic interest of the property and its associations with Howsham Hall, the barn and wider site including the vestigial remains of the walls, can be regarded to be a non- designated heritage asset. According to the NPPF, the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The village and surroundings have an extremely high environmental quality being a conservation area, Registered Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the vast majority of the village being listed buildings. The village is inextricably linked with Howsham Hall, the Grade I listed country house set within a Grade II registered park.

Howsham sits on a no through road with properties on the eastern side of the road only, the western side being the parkland to the front of Howsham Hall. The village road has a visual end stop in the gate piers and gates of Howsham Hall and the former stable block to Howsham Hall, now residential. The Great Barn is located to the east of the Grade II listed stable block c. 130m distant and once formed part of the Howsham estate as Home Farm. The gate piers form a transitional point in the village between the village street to the south and the rural landscape setting of the wider parkland and agricultural estate of the hall. It is clear that the character of the conservation area is different at this point being more closely related to the landscape park and hall than the village.

According to the entry in the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, the landscape park is of mid-late 18<sup>th</sup> century in date for an earlier house built in 1610. The late 18<sup>th</sup> century landscape improvements completed by 1776 included the creation of a landscape park to the south of the hall the remodelling of the watermill and The Holms to the west. They also included the building of a stable block with adjacent kitchen garden and barns which is in the vicinity of the proposed development. The kitchen garden walls to the north of the stable block were demolished however, according to the Register entry, part of

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**FORWARD PLANNING & CONSERVATION**

Manager – Jill Thompson

the west wall and the east wall attached to Home Farm (the Great Barn) still stand. The estate was subdivided in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century resulting in fragmented ownership of the land within the Registered park.

The development site is atypical of the residential linear village and has more of a character relating to the farm and kitchen garden use which is green, loose and informal. The submitted Design and Access makes reference to 'historic garden walls' and it is clear from my site visit that there is vestigial remains of the historic walled garden in the vicinity. With possibly the eastern and northern walls of the garden room being built off one of the historic garden walls. Due to fragmented ownership and demolition, the integrity of the wider kitchen gardens has been lost to some extent in terms of upstanding remains and clear form in the landscape. Historic mapping however clearly shows the former layout of the area.

The existing garden room is accessed down a private drive leading to the Great Barn and a farmyard beyond. The garden rooms stand within the residential curtilage of The Great Barn and overlook a garden courtyard and tennis court to the west. A modest late 20<sup>th</sup> century bungalow is located to the west of the tennis court. Due to the secluded position of the development site down a private drive there are no clear and close public views of the garden room. Distant views are however possible looking east from the village street, looking north from an elevated Public Right of Way and looking north from the elevated position within the churchyard.

The garden rooms are located on the southern boundary of the property and are constructed tight up against the eastern wall which features as its back wall. The rooms serve as an ancillary structure now related to the domestic garden use of the land. They are generally linear in plan following the line of the wall with a pitched roof. A central bay projects with a part hexagonal roof which is a distinctive and dominant feature and slightly anomalous in this semi agricultural semi kitchen garden setting. The rooms are enclosed by garden walls to the south and north with an open aspect to the west.

The application seeks to extend the garden rooms to form residential accommodation related to the Great Barn and associated carer's accommodation. The proposal seeks to extend the building to the north, east and south-west extending beyond the historic garden wall boundary to the east and north. The south-west extension utilises the existing boundary wall as its rear wall and creates an additional wing which wraps around the existing walled enclosure. The south western wing proposes an additional and larger semi hexagonal roof as an end stop to the building. It also proposes 4 sliding sash windows punctured through the currently blank southern garden wall and a new window created through the historic garden wall to the west serving the northern bedroom. The northern and eastern extensions result in the demolition of the corner of the historic garden walls and the pushing out of the building in 2 directions.

My principle concern with this application is the impact of the additional mass of building and additional domestication of the site. This is of particular concern with regard to the new hexagonal roof and new windows puncturing through previously blank gardens walls. These will be visible from public areas within the conservation area as due to the topography, elevated views of the site are possible from the Public Right of Way to the south. At present, the rooms present as a modest ancillary structure albeit with a semi-hexagonal roof. In my opinion the application is harmful to the character of the conservation area by virtue of the impact it will have on the semi-rural, relatively undeveloped part of the property as a garden at this point. The substantial increase in mass of building, the complicated and anomalous roof forms and the creation of 4 window openings in a garden boundary wall will alter the character of this part of the conservation area. It will create undue emphasis on a previously subservient and quiet part of the conservation area. In my opinion it is over development and the roof forms and new windows are anomalous to a walled garden which historically are inward looking structures with simple roof forms. Due to the lack of close and clear views however, in my opinion, the degree of harm to the conservation area is less than substantial. According to the NPPF however, great weight should be given to an assets conservation. Paragraph 193 states 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective

of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.'

I also have concern with the impact that the proposal has on the form of the historic garden walls as a non designated heritage asset. The proposal seeks to demolish the corner of the existing wall which is a strong built feature within the site. By demolishing the corner and extending out in 2 directions the proposal loses the boundaries of the historic form of the site and pushes development into previously undeveloped areas. Due to the relatively small section of wall proposed for alteration, in my opinion this has a less than substantial harmful impact on the non designated heritage assets of Home farm.

The NPPF at paragraph 196 requires that 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.' In my opinion there are no heritage benefits that form part of this proposal.

I have no objection in principle to a modest inward looking lean-to type extension to the building in the re-entrant area to the north of the current building. This could retain the current corner of the building and overcome my concerns regarding new window openings in garden walls, excessive mass of new extension and complicated roof forms. On site discussions indicate that there was previously a building in this location.