

Design and Access Statement - Heritage Impact Assessment and Justification for the Stables at Gunby Hall, Bubwith

Conversion of existing and rebuilding of demolished areas of the Stables to
create a residential unit

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1. Introduction

1.1 This document has been prepared as a statement of heritage significance for the Stables at Gunby Manor, Bubwith, considered to be a curtilage listed building to Gunby Manor, a grade II listed building. It will be an assessment of the impact on that significance by the proposed rebuild and conversion of the disused stables to form a residential following their partial unauthorised demolition. Any impact on the significance of the adjacent listed buildings caused by the proposed works within their setting will also be evaluated. This report has been prepared on behalf of the owners of the Stables, Mr and Mrs Tesseyman. This report has been written following a site visit to the application site.

2. Heritage Impact Assessment requirement

2.1 Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Framework requires that any application affecting a heritage asset should describe the significance of the heritage asset affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

2.2 This Heritage Impact Assessment will consider the impact of the conversion and partial rebuild of the Stables at Gunby Manor to form a residential unit. These proposed works will have an impact on the following designated heritage assets:

- Gunby Hall, grade II (UID 1310705)
- Stables with dovecote over at Gunby Hall, grade II (UID 1346721)
- Implement shed with hayloft over at Gunby Hall, grade II (UID 1160157)

2.3 This statement also identifies relevant planning policy both at a national and local level as well as statutory duties and assesses the proposed works and development in the context of such policies.

3. Site description

3.1 The stables are within the curtilage of Gunby Hall, Bubwith, listed grade II. Set within open countryside, the hall is located a short distance from the eastern bank of the river Derwent within open countryside, 0.4 miles from the village of Bubwith, 17 miles south east from York and 6 miles north east from Selby. The principal aspect and pleasure grounds of the hall are to the east and south.

3.2 Located to the north west of the hall, and separated by a close boarded fence, the stables, prior to partial demolition, were arranged in a typical 'T' shaped arrangement. Post partial demolition, 3 bays are retained, 2 to the south elevation and the end bay to south of the site.

3.3 Immediately to the north is a large 2 storey modern cattle shed, with further modern farm buildings beyond and to the west, beyond a post and rail fence and field, are a pair of farm cottages currently used as holiday lets. Views to the east are over open land and a tree screen beyond which is a road.

3.4 Gunby Hall, in addition to the stable blocks also includes as part of the immediate estate two further farm buildings immediately to the west of the hall and in closer proximity than the application site. These comprise Stables with a Dovecote over and an Implement

Shed with Hayloft over, both listed grade II.

3.5 The application site comprised a range of buildings which were no longer required for their original functions. This is typical of many traditional farm buildings which have been constructed in a particular way to accommodate particular activities which have either changed in their requirements or ceased to exist altogether due to different technologies, land use and farming practices, economic and social changes. The buildings benefitted from listed building and planning permission to convert to a residential unit. They have now suffered from unauthorised partial demolition and the remaining elements are in a state of disrepair with investment now crucial to prevent complete dereliction and loss of the buildings

4. Statutory requirements and the Planning Policy guidance context

4.1 All policies relating to listed buildings need to be understood in the context of the statutory requirements. The desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building is enshrined within section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) which states, in part:

“In considering whether to grant permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting”

4.2 National Planning Policy for cultural heritage is provided within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) published first in March 2012 and updated July

2021. The opening remarks in chapter 2 of the Framework set out the primary objectives to achieve sustainable development, a principle that all development should accord with.

4.3 The Framework identifies three dimensions to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. Paragraph 189 states that heritage assets,

“are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations”

4.4 Heritage assets include both designated and undesignated heritage assets and are defined in annex 2: Glossary as, ‘a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of heritage interest’.

4.5 A designated heritage asset is defined as a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield and Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation

4.6 A heritage asset has a setting which is defined in the Framework Annex 2: Glossary as, ‘The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surrounding areas evolve. Elements of the setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of the asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.’

4.7 Elsewhere within the Framework, it is considered that the most relevant paragraphs are 126 and 130

- Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development
- Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments...are sympathetic
local character and history

And paragraphs 197, 199, 206 conserving and enhancing the historic environment;

- In determining applications, local authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, the positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 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, the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
- Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and within the setting of a heritage asset to enhance and better reveal significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution or better reveal significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

4.8 The East Riding Local Plan 212 – 2029 was adopted in April 2016. It is considered that the most relevant policies are ENV 1: Integrating high quality design and ENV 3:

Valuing our local heritage.

- ENV 1- Requires that all development proposals will contribute to the safeguarding and respecting of the diverse character and appearance of the area. Development will

be supported where it achieves high quality design and contributes to a sense of place. Finally, it requires that new development should have regard to the specific characteristics of the sites wider context and have an appropriate scale, height and materials whilst paying attention to the use of local materials, architectural styles and features with particular attention to heritage assets.

- ENV 3 – Requires that where possible heritage assets should be used to reinforce local distinctiveness and promotes a viable and sustainable use for them. Significance, views, setting, appearance and context of heritage assets both designated and undesignated should be conserved including elements which contribute to the special interest of a conservation area and listed buildings

4.9 'The Adaptive Reuse of Traditional Farm Buildings', Historic England Advice Note 9 2017 and the 'Farmstead Assessment Framework: informing sustainable development and the conservation of traditional farmsteads' by Historic England 2015, have also been used in the preparation of this document.

5. Historic context and heritage assets

Designated heritage assets and assessment of significance

5.1 Gunby Hall, listed grade II

Whilst set within the open countryside is within the parish of Bubwith. The Gunby Hall estate includes 12 acres and the hall itself dates from the mid 18th century with mid 19th century alterations. Constructed in Flemish bonded red brick the residential property is 2 storeys and arranged across 3 bays with 2 cross wings to the rear.

The 18th century origins are evident on the raised and tumbled gables and 3 course plat band to the first floor. The good quality detailing and construction, including the impressive 16 pane sliding sash windows have high architectural and historic value and indicate the evident status of the property, communicating the socio-economic aspirations of the owner and/or builder. It is interesting to note that the current hall replaced an earlier mansion, occupied at one point by the De Gunby family, which had fallen into disrepair and was demolished in the 18th century.

5.2 Stables with dovecote over at Gunby Hall, listed grade II

Dating from the late 18th century or early 19th, the building is constructed in English bond red brick. It has 2 storeys and arranged over 3 bays with 3 stable doors. Detailing includes segmental arch over the central door and timber lintels over the others and distinctive pointed openings at first floor the central one retaining pigeon openings. Dovecotes historically were maintained by wealthy establishments and symbolised high social status and aspirations. The birds were kept for eggs, as food; squabs, or baby pigeons, being a particular delicacy and also manure. Laws determined who was allowed to keep pigeons but

by the late 18th century they were beginning to decline as features due to changes in agriculture and being seen as uneconomical. They were, however, retained by gentleman farmers and it is reasonable to suggest that this is the case at Gunby. Typically, as in this case, the dovecote was positioned over another building use at first floor level to try and deter rats. Therefore, the building has architectural and historical interest, representing a form of farming which was being phased out but still representing the elevated social status of the hall and its agrarian traditions.

5.3 Implement Shed with Hayloft over, listed grade II

Early 19th century in red brick laid in English garden wall bond with a pantile roof, the Implement Shed is a 2-storey building with 4 bays. It has 4 tall elliptical arches at ground floor and at first floor slatted openings below cambered arches including a pitching door to serve the hayloft. An external stone staircase accesses the loft and the roof is ornamented with gable copings and shaped kneelers. Whilst less significant in terms of social aspirations the structure is an attractive piece of architecture and tells of the former use of the estate and the activities required to service the estate and running of the hall.

5.4 *Contribution of setting of designated heritage assets to significance*

The setting of the Hall includes the designated heritage assets within this assessment, in addition to the application site and the open countryside context. It has already been discussed that the Implement Shed and Stables with Dovecote contribute to the story of Gunby Hall as a gentleman's estate requiring these ancillary buildings to serve the needs of the Hall and its farming activities. The high-quality architecture and very nature of the uses within the buildings reveal that the hall was of relatively high status and the owners aware

of the requisite trappings to establish their position on society. Another important aspect is the fact that traditionally the setting of was one of activity. Numerous people would have been working within the yard in addition to the presence of livestock, in contrast to the somewhat quiet and underused site today in comparison. It is with this in mind that the aspect of the hall is relevant in that it essentially turns its back on its farmyard and the principal elevation and gardens look away from the 'business' end of the complex. The wider setting of the open countryside is essential to understand the hall as the epicentre of the wider rural estate, the very nature of Gunby Hall as a small country house relies on this very context and the legibility of the relationship of the designated assets both to each other and to the environment which they responded to and served.

Heritage values of the application site

5.5 Map regression suggests that the application site comprising stables and cartsheds in the existing 'T' plan was constructed before 1851.

5.6 Constructed in red brick with a pantile roof, the building has this in common with the common with the listed farm buildings on the site, although it has been constructed further away from the older enclave of structures perhaps suggesting an expansion of the farming activities and an increased desire for privacy and greater sense of a domestic curtilage for the hall.

5.7 Typical of the use of the building, the architecture of the stables was very simple both in terms of materials, detailing and form. A single storey structure, the traditional plan form consisted of a series of stables and an open cartshed. On the run of stables, now lost on the west elevation, the features included regular spacing of doors and windows, responding to each stable bay. The different bricks employed on the façade and use of

concrete lintels suggest that the infills were of a later date and constitute a rebuild or re-design. Given their proximity to the open cartshed element, these may also have been cartsheds formerly.

5.8 Perpendicular to the stable block are the remaining pair of cartsheds with a solid section beyond. Roughly constructed, the supporting piers are no more than timber struts set directly on the ground. Of particular interest though is the small dovecote set within the tympanum of the gable wall and evocative of the higher status older listed stable and dovecote across the yard

5.9 Elsewhere on the building there are a number of alterations which had not been sympathetic to the age or nature of the building. Windows, whilst in timber were of a modern construction although there was a general nod to an agrarian style. The west elevation had suffered the most harm with large areas of breezeblock inserted into the façade and there were areas of harmful cementitious pointing. Internally, the roofs had been thoroughly replaced with sawn timber rafters and modern partitions in breezeblock have been introduced in addition to concrete floors

5.10 In light of the above assessment, the application site prior to partial demolition was considered to be of low architectural significance. However, it is valuable as part of a collection of buildings forming the farmstead, each making an important contribution to the group value of the site, telling the story of the development of Gunby Hall, and has the potential to make a more positive contribution to the setting of the nearby listed buildings. It also makes a positive contribution to the wider rural context and local distinctiveness.

6. Assessment and justification of proposed development and works

6.1 This report supports an application to rebuild areas of the stables which have suffered unauthorised demolition and convert these area and the remaining structure into a residential unit.

6.2 The demolition was caused by a miscommunication with the builder. The builder appears to have not been fully aware of the requirements of the planning permission, grasped the complexities of the planning drawings or the significance of the building and consequently approached it as a standard job whereby the very poor condition of the stables meant that it was easier in terms of construction to 'start again'.

6.3 The loss of the historic fabric is very unfortunate and has been dealt with, quite correctly, by the council's enforcement team. Moving forward it is the desire of the owners to retain the existing standing bays of the stable block. Whilst this will present challenges in terms of marrying the new elements with the existing structure the presumption in favour of retaining the remaining historic fabric is now paramount.

6.4 Although a great deal of significance is represented by original fabric, it is by no means limited to it, particularly where, as in this case, the building is one element of a larger group. The group value of such a collection of buildings can be pivotal in understanding them as heritage assets, and in these circumstances the reinstatement of a demolished element of the group will allow for the retrieval of lost significance by allowing an appreciation of the former uses and form of the site

6.5 The proposed conversion utilises the traditional plan form and single storey design as all the required accommodation has been achieved within the existing envelope.

6.6 Key development decisions have been taken to reintroduce an appropriate level of integrity given the loss of some of the authenticity. The rebuild, in some locations, does offer some opportunity for enhancement. Areas of the original stables had been poorly modified employing unsympathetic materials including breezeblock but also modern casement windows. For example, large areas of walling on the west elevation of the stables had been constructed in breeze block, which was harmful to significance both in terms of traditional construction techniques and the poor aesthetic qualities

6.7 The design of the replacement areas of building have responded positively to the most authentic characteristics of the original structure and has respected the essential character of the original building by retaining a strong mass to void ratio and limiting new openings. Because the demolished building had been extensively altered overtime, the new design has been able to reference the original design without repeating the less sympathetic alterations. For example the three full length openings on the east elevation respond to original openings in terms of their pattern and proportions but has omitted the concrete lintels and modern windows.

6.8 The south elevation has taken advantage of the pattern of large openings and provided large glazed openings which retain the existing mass to void ratio, and in pleasant contrast to the stable block arrangement. The north elevation has simply blocked up the albeit modern windows in reveal, again to retain legibility.

6.9 Typical agrarian style windows in timber and ledged timber doors both under soldier lintels which were a feature of the original design will further enhance the overall appearance. Rooflights, within the reinstated clay pantile roof, have been limited to the

roofscape facing away from the listed buildings to minimise visual intrusion and preserve the authenticity of the roofscape.

6.10 Lime mortar will be used throughout. This is a traditional material, commensurate with the historic period of construction and is evident in the remaining areas of the building. Furthermore, it will achieve a softer and weaker bond which will allow for flexibility and movement.

6.11 The brick bond is another important decision. 19th century farm buildings were very often constructed in English Garden Wall Bond, three row of stretches to one row of headers, and there was evidence of this bond being used on the stables. English Garden bond is appropriate as it avoids the inappropriate monotonous stretcher bond synonymous with modern construction. It also represents the status of the buildings, being a cheaper alternative to English bond or Flemish bond as it was designed to reduce the number of headers which consequently made it less labour intensive and cheaper to construct.

6.12 Overall, in terms of scale, massing and plan form the proposal responds to traditional building, preserving the single storey form and simple geometry and important mass to void ratios which are important characteristic of this type of farmbuilding and which will ensure the successful integration of the proposal into the sensitive context

Impact on setting of nearby listed buildings

6.13 With regards to the outlook of the listed buildings on the site, there will be no material change. The site is already screened by boundary treatments and given that this will stay in place and there are no extensions proposed, the spatial and contextual relationship will be unchanged.

6.14 The proposal recognises the positive contribution the site can make to the setting of the listed buildings identified in this report and also the fact that currently, the application site due to its vacancy and subsequent demolition and overall poor state of repair is not enhancing that setting. By responding to the key design cues of the original building, influencing the scale, form, design and materials, it is considered that the proposal has taken a best practice approach to developing in such a sensitive area, to preserve and enhance the setting of the relevant designated heritage assets and secure sustainable development.

7. Conclusion

7.1 By repurposing the existing buildings and rebuilding the lost elements the visual harm caused by the existing site will be resolved. Thus, creating an opportunity to better enhance the setting of the adjacent listed buildings.

7.2 Stables were a common element in farmyards and small holdings; horsepower was, until the post war period, an essential aspect of the agricultural economy, so the loss of such stabling would undermine our ability to 'read' how Gunby Hall worked. Reinstatement would thereby enhance the significance of the other listed buildings and the significance of the farm complex by illustrating the large volume of accommodation for horses to sustain such an establishment and reinforce the social status.

7.3 In a wider sense, farmsteads, of which the application site is part, make an essential contribution to the historic landscape. And local distinctiveness. Their historical and architectural interest is significant, telling the story of how people in the past lived, worked, the technologies of the time, social and economic aspirations and realities. Traditional

farmsteads are vulnerable to redundancy, lack of maintenance and eventual loss, and their reuse is a valuable opportunity to enhance their historic character and significance both individually and as part of a mutually reinforcing group, as is the case at Gunby Hall

7.4 The sensitive conversion of the stables to a new residential unit will be a complimentary addition, one which responds positively to the design and material cues of the historic built context and will fulfil the requirements of ENV1 in requiring appropriate regards to the specific characteristics of the site's wider context and paying attention to the use of local materials and architectural styles and features that have a strong association with the area's built forms, with particular attention to heritage assets.

7.5 If granted permission, the application site will enhance the special historic and architectural values of the wider site, sustaining and improving an example of the traditional architecture which embodies many of the heritage values of the Gunby Hall site. This proposal will reinforce local distinctiveness, as required by ENV3

7.6 Therefore, it is submitted that this proposal is in accordance with the policy guidance provided in the East Riding Local Plan. It is also considered to be in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and the duty of the Local Authority as stated in section 16 (2) and 66 (1) of the planning (listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (The Act) which states that:

“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

and

“In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”. It is also considered to be in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and the duty of the Local Authority as stated in section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act