

m b Heritage

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Mr Matthew Brooke  
Bankhead Group Limited  
2 Airport West  
Lancaster Way  
Yeadon  
Leeds, LS19 7ZA

Ref: BAN/01/13

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2024

Dear Matthew,

Proposed Addition of 1 no. Apartment (Amended Scheme) at Robin Hill, Clifford Road, Ilkley, LS29 0AX.

With reference to the above site, you have asked that I provide opinion in respect to heritage matters relevant to the consideration of proposals for the amendment of an approved application for the demolition of an existing dwelling and erection of a new building providing 6 no. apartments. The development was approved by the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (the 'LPA') in August 2023 (LPA Ref: 22/04364/FUL). The proposed amendment relates to the incorporation an additional apartment at lower ground floor with no changes proposed to the approved materials, footprint, scale or massing of the building.

To inform the review I visited the site and its surroundings on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024. I have also reviewed the planning history of the site, the consultation responses made to the approved application as they relate to heritage matters and the Officer Report to the Keighley and Shipley Planning Panel (2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023). You have also kindly forward copies of the submission plans and particulars for the revised application.

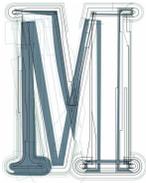
By way of background, m.b. Heritage was established in 2009 and specialises in the field of built heritage and archaeology. Operating nationwide, the Company has extensive experience working with residential, commercial and public sector clients.

#### Background

With respect to currently recorded designated and non-designated heritage assets, no records held on the National Heritage List for England fall within the site or in proximity

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to it such that any development impacts will arise. Similarly, no records held by the West Yorkshire Historic Environment Record relate to the site or its setting.

The site falls within the Middleton Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset, which was designated by the LPA in 2005. The LPA has published a Conservation Area Assessment (April 2005) and Appraisal (2009) which describe the special architectural or historic interest of the Area and those built and landscape elements which contribute to its character or appearance or, in the language of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), its significance.

The Conservation Area Appraisal (2009) summarises the key characteristics of the Area as including large houses, wide roads, generous landscaped gardens and mature trees and hedgerows that create a spacious, leafy and salubrious sub-urban character. A range of building styles is present, including the 17<sup>th</sup> century Low Hall, early 20<sup>th</sup> century Arts and Crafts and Vernacular Revival houses, 1930s modernist architecture and more recent dwellings of varying quality built between the 1960s and present day. A mixture of natural and “man-made” materials reflects the age and architectural styles of different buildings.

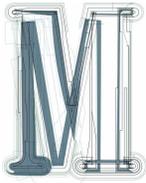
The Appraisal identifies the site, comprising Robin Hill and its curtilage, as a neutral contributor to the character of the Conservation Area. It identifies important in-curtilage trees to the south and east boundaries of the house garden and a key view of vista orientated to the south-west include, or are facilitated by the site.

Historically the site formed part of the Middleton Estate and the manorial house, Low Hall, which was built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century but contains medieval stonework evidencing earlier foundation, and was the only building within the Conservation Area prior to 1899. The sale of the area to the Wharfedale Estate Company in that year allowed for the master planning of the area to create an exclusive residential housing estate along with open spaces, the lido, sports ground and street furniture. The 1909 Ordnance Survey (OS) map indicates that the early work on the estate comprised the laying out the principal road network, including Clifford Road and Rupert Road and initial plot development to south of St. Nicholas Road and along Gill Bank, including Oak Ghyll House. Plot development proceeded at a relatively slow pace, typically characterised by large detached and semi-detached dwellings set back from the roads within large garden grounds.

The site remained undeveloped through much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is shown as open land on 1950s OS mapping. The existing Robin Hill dwelling was constructed in the 1960s or early 1970s as a detached house on elevated ground comparative to garden

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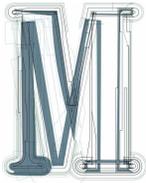
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land to the south onto the Rupert Road frontage. The house was extended to the west and east in the 1990s. It is constructed in two-storeys with terrace to the south and built in stone with red pantile roof covering. The building holds no significant architectural or historic interest given its late dating and limited architectural quality.

Consideration of the Approved Planning Application (22/04364/FUL).

The approved development comprised the demolition of the existing dwelling and construction of six apartments. The Council's Design and Conservation Team provided an assessment of the proposals, as revised, dated 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023 and a short summary of this is set out below:

- § The existing house is not of special architectural interest and is not readily apparent within the streetscene. Demolition would not impact harmfully on conservation area character and is not opposed in principle.
- § In terms of massing, the design of the building to appear as three separate structures provides mitigation and it would have a comparable ridge height to neighbouring houses. The spatial relationship with neighbouring properties would be within an acceptable range.
- § The proposed plot coverage is not out of keeping with the overall range of building to plot ratios in this part of the conservation area.
- § The retention of trees to the Rupert Road boundary and the south part of the Clifford Road boundary will assist significantly in filtering views of the proposed building.
- § Whilst the proposed new building will bring forward the building line towards Rupert Road it would still maintain an adequate set-back and would not be overly intrusive within the streetscene.
- § The plot coverage, scale and massing of the built form on the plot is within an acceptable range and with careful control of details/design, it would result in less than substantial harm (at the lower end of the scale) to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- § In terms of design, appearance and materials the creation of three separate 'chalet' elements has some merit in breaking up the mass of building. Subject to detailing and control of materials, the design can achieve subservience within the plot. The use of stone is appropriate as facing material and glazing can



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alleviate the massing of the building. These are matters which can be controlled through conditions.

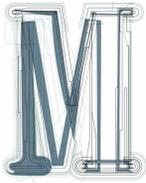
The Officer Committee Report to the Keighley and Shipley Planning Panel (2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023) broadly concurred with the assessment made by the Conservation Team in terms of the principle of demolition, the scale and massing of the new building, the plot/development ratio and its design and material treatment. The Report states that the “scale and design would now appear in keeping with the landscape-dominated variety of development which typifies this suburban conservation area.” The new building is regarded as appropriate to the conservation area and in accordance with Policies DS1, DS3 and EN3 of the Core Strategy (page 53).

The Report to Committee also notes that the scale and form of the building works successfully due to significant set-back and use of levels, enabling a higher yield of housing whilst preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area. This accords with Policy EN3 of the Core Strategy and Policy IDNP9 of the Ilkley Neighbourhood Plan (page 62).

In the consideration of potential harm to the conservation area, the Report assesses that the development can be accommodated without harm to the character or appearance of the Middleton Conservation Area. As such, Core Strategy DPD design policies, Policy EN3 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy INDP9 are all considered to be satisfied (page 69).

The assessment within the Report that no harm would arise to the significance of the Middleton Conservation Area differs from that set out by the Conservation Team which assessed less than substantial harm, albeit at the lower end of that scale. In my view the conclusion of no harm is consistent with the assessment set out by the Conservation Team which, subject to consideration of design detail and material treatment (matters which are controlled by condition), assessed no areas of harm arising from the development in terms of the proposed demolition or the massing, scale, set-back, plot/building ratio of the new building

Even were less than substantial harm, of the low degree indicated, to be assessed (and I do not agree that harm would arise), it is clear that the acknowledged benefits of housing delivery as set out in the Report to Committee (page 69), would outweigh that low degree of harm. This would be consistent with guidance set out at paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework.



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### The Revised Proposals

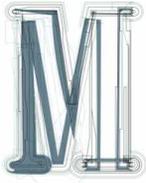
The revised proposals have emerged following the post-planning consideration of detailed design and the construction of the sub and super structure of the new building. The approved scheme creates a substantial void between the ground floor level and ground floor/reaching foundations reflecting the lower ground towards the south of the site. In order to avoid a stilted construction where the building is elevated above surrounding ground levels it is proposed to utilise the void to provide an additional apartment. This will remove the need for a stilt construction and would visually ground the building to the south elevation.

The revision proposed would involve the infilling of the void area below the southern building with walling comprising stone and full height glazing panels in keeping with the design of the approved scheme. No changes would be made to the overall footprint of the approved building or its scale, massing, design and material treatment. No changes to the extent of retained garden land or trees within the site would arise.

Having reviewed the proposed revisions and assessments undertaken in respect of the approved application, I consider that they would not materially alter the heritage impact of the original (approved) development. The use of a stilted construction or deep retaining wall to the south elevation of the building would be atypical of the character of the conservation area and the latter would tend to increase visual massing and be inconsistent with the design approach adopted for the building. The use of full height glazing will serve to reduce massing and will maintain the design concept in bringing the building to ground. Whilst there will be a change to the visual presentation of the elevation, this will have no impact upon the streetscene given the retained set back of the new building and the screening/filtering provided by curtilage trees to the south and east boundaries.

Importantly, the proposed scheme amendment will not alter the elements of the approved scheme important to the assessment of impacts upon the significance of the Middleton Conservation Area. The overall scale, massing, design and material treatment is considered to be in keeping with the character and appearance of the Area. Indeed, the architectural composition provides an uplift on the existing dwelling. Important trees within the curtilage will be maintained and no significant changes to the streetscene in views along Clifford Road and Rupert Road will arise.

In conclusion I am of the opinion that the proposed revisions to the approved scheme do not materially alter the previous assessment that no harm will arise to the Middleton Conservation Area. It can, therefore, be brought forward without harm to the built



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historic environment in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework guidance and Development Plan Policy.

Yours Sincerely,



Mike Bottomley BA (Hons) MSc  
Managing Director on behalf of m.b. Heritage