

## **West Byre, Bowes, Co Durham**

**Proposed Replacement of Windows and Doors, Front Gate, Garden Shed, Fruit Cage and Garage Door (retrospective) and provision of doors to open store barn and creation of hard standing.**

### **Bowes Conservation Area**



### **Heritage Statement.**

## **The Heritage Statement.**

- 1.1 This statement is prepared for Mr and Mrs Cartwright in support of an application for the replacement of the windows and doors to the house, a replacement front gate, garden shed, garage doors (retrospective) and fruit cage with a gazebo and alterations to the existing open fronted shed. West Byre lies at the east end of Bowes village and in the Bowes Conservation Area. A heritage statement is therefore required.
- 1.2 The report is prepared in line with advice given in the Durham County Council guidance on Heritage Statements of May 2014. Also of relevance is the updated NPPF guidance of February 2019, notably section 16, paragraphs 189 to 192 regarding proposals affecting heritage assets, and paragraphs 193 to 202 on consideration of potential impacts on heritage assets. Paragraph 194 states “The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance”. Regard has also been had to Historic England Guidance notably Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 and Advice Note 12 on Analysing Significance.
- 1.3 The report will identify the application site, describe the Bowes Conservation Area within which the proposal lies, detail the character and appearance of the property within the area, and set out the extent of the asset and the context of the site. A general appraisal of the immediate surroundings, important views of the house and its place within the village setting will be discussed in this section.
- 1.4 A statement of the significance of the asset will follow and the proposals will then be described.
- 1.5 Analysis of the impact of the proposal on the conservation area will be provided followed by a final conclusion. .

## The Application Site – Location And Description.

- 2.1 West Byre is one of two remaining former agricultural buildings associated with the neighbouring Bowes Hall. The Hall stands to the west of the site with the other now converted barns at East Byre lying to the east. To the south lies a substantial garden area beyond which lies agricultural land then Low Road, whilst to the north beyond the driveway lie open fields as far as the A66 by-pass. Access is gained from the main road into the village via a long driveway which forms the northern boundary to Bowes Hall and is shared with East Byre.



- 2.2 The house is single storey throughout and constructed in stone with a stone slate pitched roof. It is a converted agricultural building of some age which has been extensively altered both internally and externally although several of the original feature timbers have been retained in the northern end of the building. There is evidence of a previous extension to the north and northeast and of other door arrangements throughout the building. The garage at the southwest of the building is a new structure added to the building as part of the conversion. The windows are all modern and constructed of brown timber in a variety of arrangements and styles.
- 2.3 In the curtilage of the building are a number of incidental domestic garden structures including a three-bay barn and timber gazebo, a small shed, a greenhouse and a substantial fruit cage. The boundary is formed of a tall beach hedge to the east, an evergreen hedge and timber post and rail fence to the north and a stone wall along the boundary to Bowes Hall on the west and south.
- 2.4 West Byre lies within the Bowes conservation area which is a designated heritage asset. It is not listed however the neighbouring Bowes Hall which lies directly to the west is a listed building. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the surrounding area that would be impacted by the proposal, the nearest being the Roman fort of Lavatrae and the medieval Bowes Castle to the west in the centre of the village. The site does however lie close to the former route of the Roman road which runs east to west from Scotch Corner to the Stainmore Pass.

## The Heritage Assets.

- 3.1 The property is a traditionally detailed vernacular building of two phases of construction dating to the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is constructed of local random coursed rubble stone with cut and roughly dressed quoins of irregular heights to the corners. To the west elevation a straight joint in the wall provides evidence of the former limit to the building and defines the position of the extension at the north end of the single range, a feature further supported by the change in form of the stonework. The north elevation extends beyond the limit of the east wall at the northeast corner suggesting a further alteration in this location and the position



of the previous extension now removed. The slit window openings on the west elevation may be recent additions as they have modern sills and the double door opening and adjoining window at the north end of the elevation are also considered modern insertions as they have new lintels and sills and do not have dressed returns to the jambs. The window on the north elevation is also thought to be modern.



- 3.2 Turning to the east elevation the windows and door openings here show evidence of alteration and addition. Most notable is the large opening at the north end of the wall which is set back from the face and appears to be completely infilling a much bigger void. This corresponds to the straight joint on the west elevation and it is thought that the original building stopped short of its current position and a second barn was added across the north end at some point. The chimney and fireplace are positioned on the structural wall which separated the two individual buildings. This second building has been removed, windows added and the east elevation closed up as part of the domestic works. Two openings on the east elevation retain the original surrounds of single large stones forming the jambs to the doors, whilst other openings are later additions. The south elevation is



largely plain masonry although a new window has been inserted with new heads and sills. The garage block is a modern extension built in stone to match the house but of no historic interest.



3.3 The roof is covered in diminished course stone slates with a stone ridge and a single chimney stack at the end of the original building. There is limited opportunity to view the construction of the roof except within the north end of the building where the original timber roof trusses remain as features in the living

room. It is thought that the roof form is substantially as built but the degree to which the original timbers survive is unknown.



3.4 The building was converted in the 1980's along with its neighbour at which time it was separated from the landholding of Bowes Hall and independent dwellings and plots were established. To provide a range of domestic accommodation a small framed barn was constructed and a shed positioned in the rear garden. To the south of the property a greenhouse and fruit cage have been constructed. None of these individual buildings have any historic significance.



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3.5 The building appears on the first edition OS plan of 1854 where it is the only building to the northeast of the Hall. It is of an L shaped plan form at this stage which reflects the on-site evidence of an extension at the north end of the building. East Byre has not been constructed at this time and the paths, boundaries, stream and tree planting around Bowes Hall are clearly shown in their earlier layout. Nothing of these elements remains except for the boundary to Low Road to the south.

OS Plan extract 1854



## The Building in a Statutory Heritage Context.

## **Bowes Conservation Area**

- 4.1. West Byre lies at the eastern end of the identified Bowes Village Conservation Area, a designation made by Teesdale District Council in the 1980's which has not been revised since the initial designation. To date there has been no conservation area appraisal undertaken. The conservation area boundary is tightly drawn to the built up area of Bowes village and includes all buildings and their curtilages except for the modest close of Local Authority housing constructed in the 1950's to the southeast end of the settlement. The boundary extends almost up to the by-pass, leaving only the road junction out of the protected area south of the trunk road. It includes Dotheboys Hall and the barns of West End Farm at its western extremity and Bowes Hall and the 1980's development of Low Road at the east. The application site lies in this area as a former element of the farm holding based at the neighbouring Bowes Hall.
- 4.2. The conservation area boundary map is attached at Appendix 1.

## **Extent of the Asset.**

- 5.1. The property comprises a single detached barn conversion dwelling with a substantial garden area and outbuildings surrounding it. It is accessed from a shared driveway entrance onto the highway along a lengthy drive which falls to the west elevation of the house. As part of the wider Bowes Conservation Area it is positioned at the eastern end of the identified boundary and is a very minor and discretely located element within the designated area.

## Statement of Significance.

- 6.1. West Byre is a typical vernacular agricultural building of the late Georgian or early Victorian period which exhibits a range of extensions and alterations during its working life culminating with its change of use to a dwelling and the conversion of the building to form a house. The building is typical of smaller barns in the dales and is considered to be a general purpose store, possibly a lambing shed or multi-function building incorporating a cart shed. The lack of ventilation slots and the limited scale of openings suggest it was not a hay barn or threshing barn and the openings and number of windows would tend to point away from it being a cattle byre. Cattle may have had part of it but certainly not all. Architecturally the building is of very limited significance but it has a cultural value as part of the farming history of the dale.
- 6.2. In this respect it is a fairly common building type associated with farm groups rather than isolated field barns and here at West Byre its association is with the farming activities at Bowes Hall. Although the group of buildings has changed over the years sufficient remain to indicate the scale of the farming business and its general period of operation. The building therefore also has significance as part of the history of the house and the village and can be seen in the context of other surviving agricultural buildings in Bowes and the surrounding area.
- 6.3. The elements that are subject to this application are all later additions to the building having been added or inserted either during the conversion or afterwards in the late 20<sup>th</sup> or early 21<sup>st</sup> century. These elements are not considered to be of any historic significance in their own right.

## The Proposed Works.

- 7.1. The proposal comprises five minor areas of work and the retention of the new garage door. The new work includes the replacement of the windows and doors to the house with good quality uPVC items, the replacement of the front gate with a revised electrically operated version, the replacement of the garden shed in a new location, the replacement of the existing fruit cage with a gazebo and alterations to the existing open fronted shed. An area of hard standing is proposed to be added to the front of the garage and the front door.
- 7.2. The existing windows and doors appear to be those installed in the original conversion of the building and are all timber stained and painted brown. They have been subject to several repairs and replacement glazing panels, however they are still leaking water significantly and are very draughty. The design of the infill panels is very domestic and considered rather inappropriate for a barn conversion. The proposal is to replace all the items with new uPVC windows and doors to a revised design which reduces the potential for cold spots within the house. This will include converting some doors to windows and forming solid sections to some of the wider doors to create flanking windows rather than full height panels to each side. Externally the openings will appear to remain as doors but the lower portion will be blocked up and insulated. The relevant openings are noted on the drawings.
- 7.3. The existing front gate is a modern two leaf manual timber item set back at an angle 13m from the road. It is not of historic significance and the proposal is to replace this with a single leaf electric gate set back by 1m from the current position to allow a side pedestrian gate to be added. This will improve access as there will be no need to obstruct the neighbours drive when opening the gate and the pedestrian gate will allow access without needing to open the full width electric gate.
- 7.4. The existing garden shed is a modern timber item set in the rear garden. Its replacement in a new position will be slightly larger but still unobtrusive and set back against the tall boundary hedge.
- 7.5. The fruit cage is an open mesh covered structure of low aesthetic value, no historic significance and it is no longer required. Its replacement with a smaller gazebo in the same location will reduce the presence of garden structures and improve the visual quality of the site.
- 7.6. The large open fronted shed is a modern construction with doors to one half and an open front to the other half. Adding appropriate doors to the open half will not significantly impact on its appearance or setting in any way.
- 7.7. At present the gravelled surface of the drive covers most of the surface around the house except for an area of hard standing outside the front door. This does not extend as far as the garage door leaving no sound standing area to the front of the garage and creating issues with loose stones being drawn into the building. It is intended to create an area of concrete hard standing to the front of the garage to address these issues. A 300mm wide strip of gravel will be retained to each side of the slab to allow drainage of the drive.



## **Analysis – The Impact on the Asset**

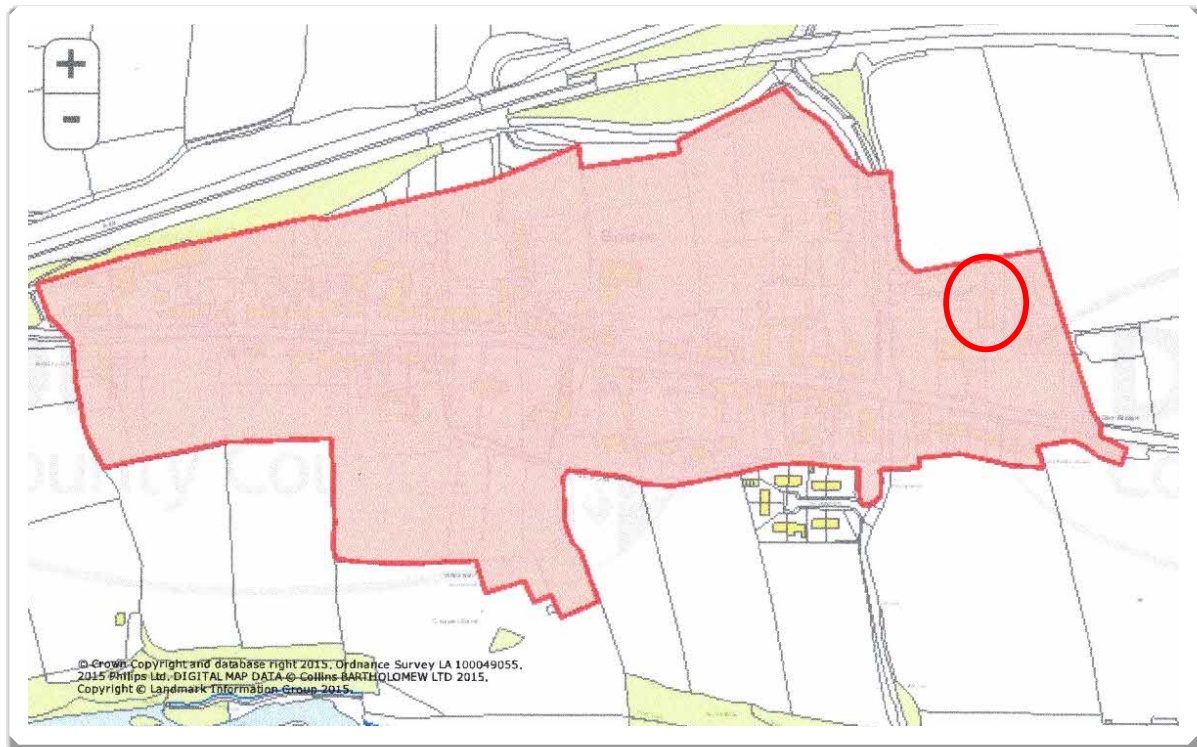
- 8.1. The existing windows are clearly modern insertions and are very domestic in their form and style. The proposal seeks to replace these with something more sympathetic to the previous agricultural design using simplified window arrangements and simple boarded sections rather than the fielded panelled sections currently on the building. The openings will retain their form and scale and no changes to the disposition or arrangement of windows is proposed. It is considered that the replacement uPVC items will be more appropriate to the character of the building and will better reflect its historic agricultural origins as well as providing a better insulated and more weather proof domestic environment.
- 8.2. The other works proposed are very minor in nature and are mostly attached to or in the context of modern outbuildings or structures in the garden. Their small scale and limited prominence reduce to insignificant their impact in the wider context of the conservation area and they will be seen only as incidental garden buildings clearly modern in their construction and form. It is considered that the additions and alterations to the property will have no impact on the heritage asset of the conservation area and their location, attached to or in the setting of the existing converted agricultural building will not impact on the neighbouring listed building of Bowes Hall.

## **Conclusion.**

- 9.1 The proposals seek to address issues of wear, tear and deterioration to the fabric of the building through the replacement of the windows and doors with new items with carefully considered details to better reflect the former use of the building. The simplified detailing reduces the domestic appearance of the openings and the incorporation of an amount of structural closing up of doors etc improve the thermal characteristics and draft proof qualities of the building. This is achieved with no impact on the historic quality or fabric of the structure and an improved appearance more in keeping with the setting and history of the building.
- 9.2 The other elements of the scheme address deficiencies in the existing layout and facilities and the different requirements of the new owners. The replacement shed, garden room, hardstanding and doors to the garage are incidental items which will have no impact on the setting or character of the building in the conservation area and the changes proposed to the gate arrangement will remain entirely in character with their setting.

## Appendices.

### Appendix 1 Bowes Village Conservation Area Map.



Location of site shown in red circle.  
Map extract from Durham County Council website.  
Map not to scale.