



Planning Support Statement incorporating DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT AND HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Date: April 2023

Project: Works to Reap Hirst House
Reap Hirst Road
Fixby
Huddersfield

Project No.: 046



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This document is intended to be read as supplementary support information to the planning application forms and accompanying drawings. Any illustrations within this and other supporting documents are intended for illustrative purposes and do not take precedence over the formal application drawings.

1.00 Introduction and Background

1.01 This document has been prepared to support applications for planning approval and Listed Building Consent (LBC) for works to Reap Hirst House, a private dwelling in the Fixby/Birkby area north-west of the town centre. The property is Listed Grade II. It is within Green Belt.

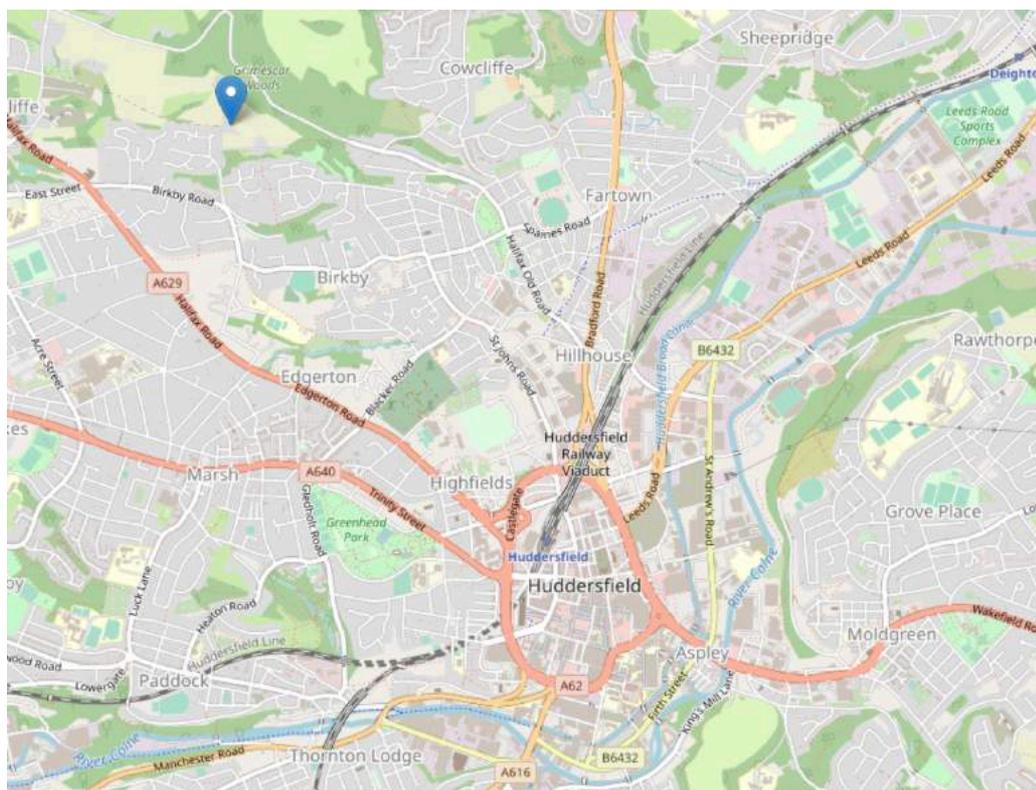


Fig 1.0 Site location relative to Huddersfield Town Centre

1.02 Reap Hirst House is believed to date from the 18thC (see the official list entry Number 1277421 appended) and is representative of numerous West Yorkshire farmhouses or similar of the period. The building fabric has been

generally well-maintained, meaning that the house is not in need of work to save or stabilise the structure.



Fig 2.0 Photographs of Existing Building

1.03 Instead it has suffered from well-intentioned but misguided ‘maintenance’ resulting, for example, in the replacement of original windows and the removal of stone mullions, plus the addition of a distinctly contemporary conservatory; these being some of the most evident works. This has undoubtedly diminished the special architectural and historic interest for which it will have first earned the attention of the listing authorities.



Fig 3.0 Existing contemporary uPVC conservatory

- 1.04 A number of historical photographs of the property exist and provide evidence of how the architectural character has changed. The works for which approval is now sought aim to ameliorate some of the cruder changes that have been made and to do so with a very light touch. The window openings remain largely as existing for example, but with mullions replaced and more sympathetic frames reintroduced.



Fig 4.0 Historical Photographs

- 1.05 The footprint and volume of the property remain effectively unchanged and the hope is that, whilst accepting that work will be new, it can be agreed that the completed scheme will connect more directly with the architectural character of the original building. It should also appear more in harmony with its context.
- 1.06 Internally, vertical circulation is simplified to permit small alterations only to internal accommodation to provide an arrangement more suited to a contemporary family home. The present first floor layout and existing stair have been created in modern lightweight construction that does not follow original room arrangements.

2.00 Policy

2.01 With regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the Kirklees Local Plan (the Plan) there appears to be no conflict created by the proposals.

2.02 The site sits within Green Belt but the very small scale of the proposed works complies with paragraphs 134 and 145 c of the Framework. For these reasons it also complies with Green Belt policies of the LPA.

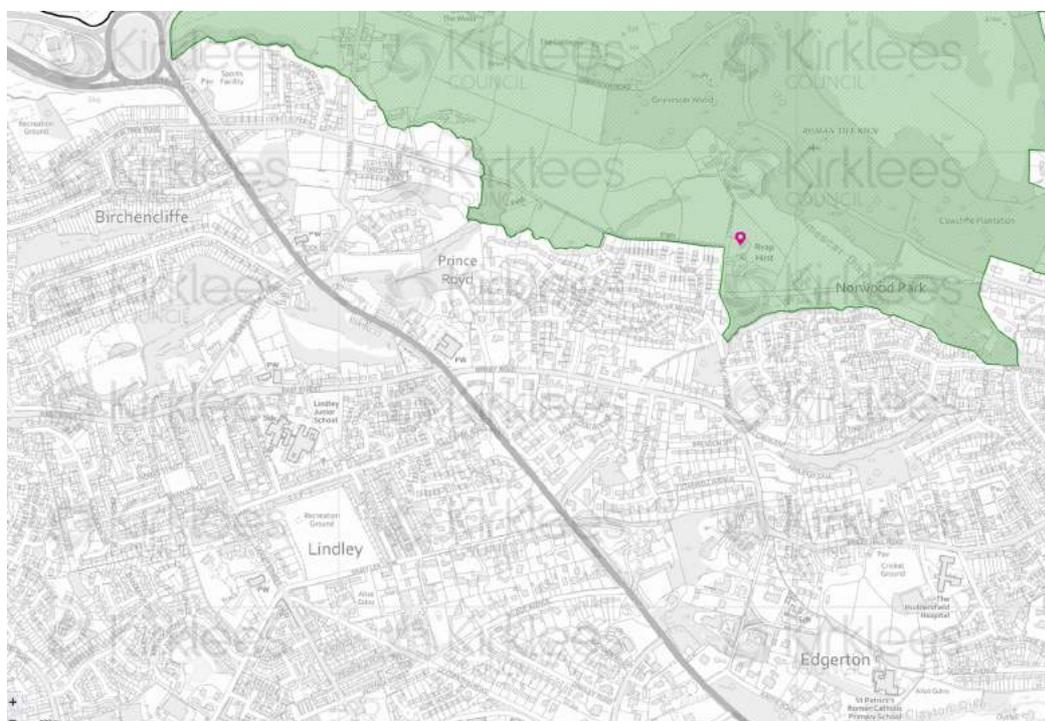


Fig 5.0 Extract from Local Plan with Green Belt filter shown

2.03 Policy LP35 of the Plan emphasises the importance of heritage assets and stresses the need to retain, conserve and enhance those assets wherever possible. Reap Hirst House is Listed Grade II and is a valuable heritage asset.

2.04 The proposals retain, conserve and enhance specific features of the heritage asset and secure its future by minimal interventions that seek to reverse

earlier unsympathetic changes without downgrading its function as a family home.

3.00 Amount, Scale, Layout, Design and Landscaping

3.01 With exception of the addition of a canopy outside the rear entrance to the property, and a slight change in the footprint of the modern conservatory (which is to be replaced by solid construction) there is no new area created. The solid construction of the replaced conservatory is in the manner of the original house. The existing gross ground floor area of Reap Hirst House is 103.6 sq.m. The extra ground (incl. canopy area) is 7.8 sq.m. The first and attic floors (gross area 116 sq.m.) remain the same. The building volume is effectively unchanged.

3.02 It should be noted that the offshoot wing to the rear of the property is believed to date from the 1970s. It is of relatively poor construction but does contain the doorway that is used as the principal (i.e. most frequently used) entrance to the property. Prevailing weather is from the south-west, impacting on this doorway.



Fig 6.0 Perspective of rear entrance canopy offering weather protection

- 3.03 The proposed small canopy therefore provides much-needed protection to this principal entrance whilst at the same time reducing the visual bulk of the extension wing and tying the old and new parts of the construction together.



Fig 7.0 South Elevation of rear entrance canopy show at left hand side

- 3.04 The addition of ashlar verge detailing and a ball finial to the gable of the rear wing further integrate it into the overall composition.



Fig 8.0 West Elevation showing works to gable



Fig 9.0 Photograph of later addition West gable

3.05 Reap Hirst House is a detached property within a sizeable domestic curtilage (2055 sq.m.) which itself is surrounded by Green Belt land.



Fig 10.0 Photograph showing woodland to North East



Fig 11.0 Photograph showing view to South East

3.06 The proposed works do not alter the scale of the existing property.

3.07 The layout of the property within the site is to all intents and purposes unchanged. Internally, the modern stair to the first floor is to be removed and replaced with a more sympathetic design. Modern lightweight partitions at this upper level are affected but the new layout respects the floor plate of the original farmhouse and retains the major part of the existing window openings. See Appendix for evidence of modern interventions to be remediated by the current proposals.

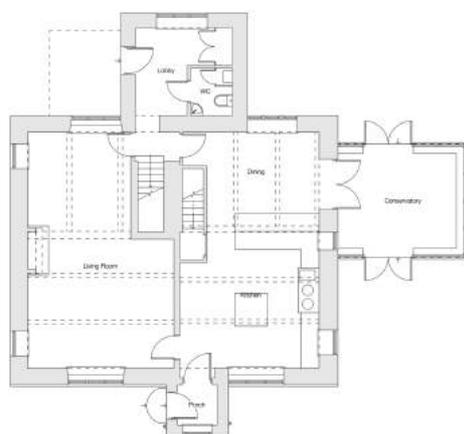


Fig 12.1 Existing GF Plan

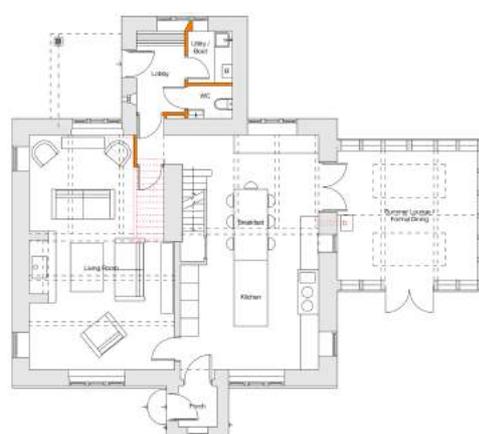


Fig 12.2 Proposed GF Plan

3.08 In design terms, as noted in the Introduction, the intention is to reverse many of the more unfortunate ‘improvements’ inflicted on the building in recent times and to reintroduce features, materials and proportions that will return the house stylistically closer to its original. Ashlar detailing in local natural stone will play a large part in this exercise.



Fig 13.1 Existing East Elevation



Fig 13.2 Proposed East Elevation

3.09 The present landscape of Reap Hirst House is completely unaffected by the proposals.

3.10 It is worth noting that the applicants intend to improve the sustainability of the property when the works are undertaken, through measures such as improved insulation, as long as this is not in conflict with the values of the heritage asset. It will be noted , for example, that a new chimney is proposed to match that on the opposite gable to the original farmhouse. There is good reason to believe that this is in fact reintroducing an original feature previously removed – see photograph below.

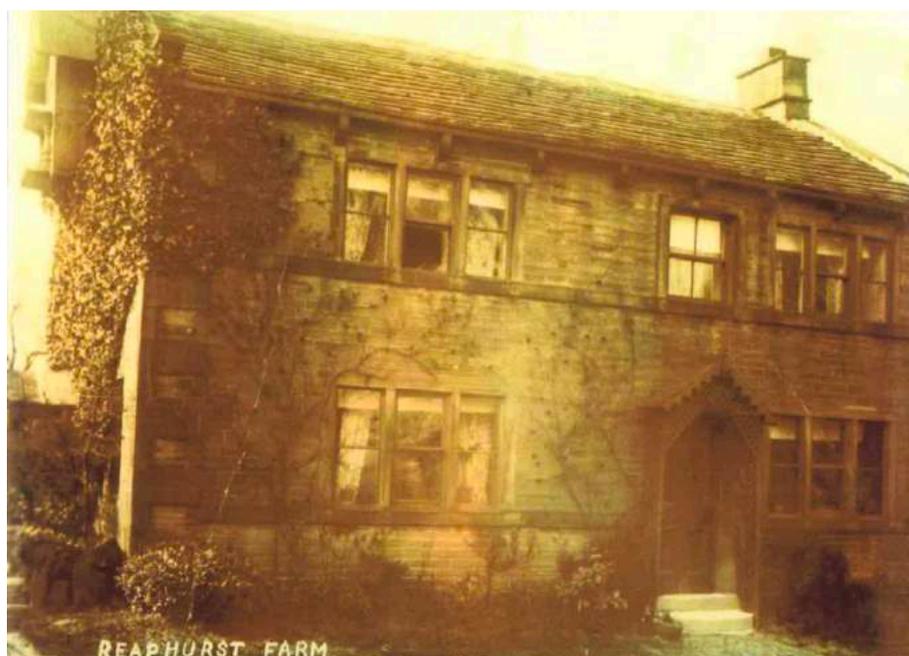


Fig 14.0 Historical Photograph showing original features including sash windows, stone mullions and chimney to North Gable

4.00 Access

4.01 Vehicular access is totally unaffected by the proposals and remains as existing. Access is good with no excessive gradients; sightlines are good and there is ample on-site provision for vehicles.



Fig 15.0 Proposed Site Plan

5.00 Heritage Impact

5.01 Reap Hirst House stands just within Green Belt land in an area of landscape value. New housing development has been allowed to encroach close to the south of the property but generally open land to the other three sides of the dwelling provides a tranquil and relatively timeless setting for the Heritage Asset. Its sometime function as a farmhouse dwelling remains discernable in its relation to the landscape.



Fig 16.0 Elevated Photograph showing nearby housing estate

5.02 As a heritage asset within the Kirklees area Reap Hirst House comes within the purview of Policy LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan. This policy emphasises the need for proposed development to preserve and enhance the significance of that heritage asset. We believe the scheme drawings demonstrate clear adherence to this policy.

5.03 The proposals enhance the asset and are in no way harmful to its setting. As such we see no reason why LBC cannot be granted. Work that should ensure the retention of the asset as a family home is an ideal way to preserve its long-term future.

Appendix 1



Typical brown coloured uPVC windows to be replaced with traditional sash windows



Typical first floor plans built around downstand beams showing modern Torus mould architraves and six panel pine doors.



Modern 900 wide staircase and partition walls. Large steel beam clad in wood. Steel beam spans onto central spine wall. Note illogical structure as a consequence of inserting a modern staircase into northern bay of floor construction.



Modern half landing stair with turned pine spindles typical of modern construction and plan configuration.