
Planning Support and Design & Access Statement incl. Heritage Impact Assessment

Date: February 2024

Project: New Dwelling, Lumb Lane Nurseries
Almondbury
Huddersfield HD4 6SZ

Project No.: 049

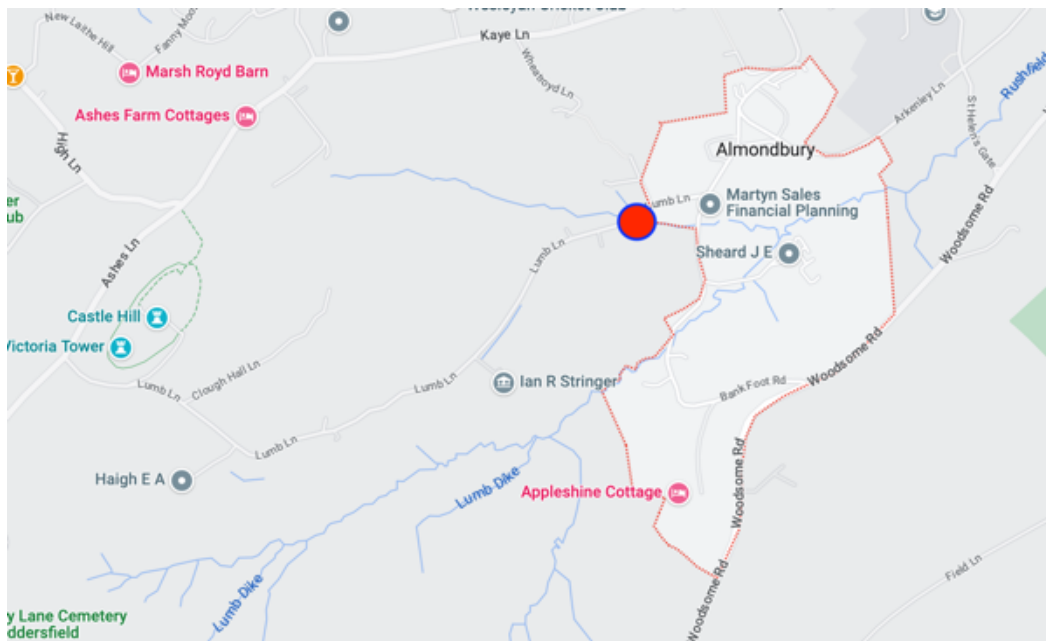


This Statement forms part of the supporting documentation to the planning application forms and accompanying drawings. Any illustrations within this and other supporting documents are intended for illustrative purposes and do not take precedence over the formal application drawings.

1.00 Introduction and Background

- 1.01 This document has been prepared to support an application for planning approval for a new dwelling on the site of Lumb Lane Nurseries on the north side of Lumb Lane, Almondbury. The site sits within Green Belt on the Local Plan.

Figure 1: Lumb Lane, Almondbury. Site location shown by red dot.



- 1.02 The application site is presently occupied by densely packed commercial greenhouses etc related to a former plant nursery business, plus a flat-roofed, timber-clad sales building together with an area for car parking. The greenhouses sit on concrete substructures sterilising the soil. See Figs.2, 3 and 4.

Figure 2: aerial view of site as existing



Figure 3: View of eastern end of site with listed cottages to the right.



Figure 4: Site as existing.



- 1.03 All neighbouring buildings around the site are dwellings, including a terrace of cottages to the east and large private dwellings to the west and south. There is an existing vehicular access to the site.
- 1.04 These neighbouring dwellings are either listed or regarded as non-designated heritage assets. More detail can be found about the impact of the proposed scheme on heritage assets in Section 6: Heritage Impact Assessment.
- 1.05 Lumb Lane runs from Sharp Lane in Almondbury to meet Castle Hill Side below Castle Hill. It runs for a length of one mile with the only turnings off it being to serve private properties over that entire length.
- 1.06 Over much of the frontage of the application site, the walls of the property opposite rise directly from the edge of the highway. From the application site westwards, Lumb Lane has no footway on either side.
- 1.07 The application scheme seeks to:
- Remove a large area of undistinguished incongruous buildings from the Green Belt and substitute a dwelling more in keeping with neighbouring properties and occupying only a fraction of the existing building footprints

- Return a large part of the site to non-domestic landscape, opening up the Green Belt and increasing biodiversity
- Create a footway and verge across the frontage of the property, improving road safety
- Reduce vehicle movements associated with business use including commercial vehicles, thus improving road safety

2.00 Policy

2.01 With regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the Kirklees Local Plan (the Plan) the most pertinent policies relate to the location of the application site within Green Belt and potential impact on listed buildings. The fundamental aim of Green Belts is to “*prevent urban sprawl*”¹ and their essential characteristics are openness and permanence. Consequently, strict limitations are imposed on development within Green Belt.

2.02 With respect to Green Belt policy, whilst the Framework and the Plan both attempt to put some detail on the broad policy objectives, it is impracticable for these documents to anticipate every scenario that may be presented for consideration. In such cases the fundamental intent of legislation must remain the primary determinant. At root, one must hope that the aim of all planning policy is to make better places and to make places better.

2.03 Standing beside the formal Green Belt designation of the application site is the self-evident fact that it is within some of the finest landscape to be found within Kirklees. The quality of this landscape has proved attractive to those

¹ NPPF July 2021 para.137

seeking to build homes over many centuries, and it is no surprise that there are several listed dwellings and non-designated dwellings regarded as heritage assets in the locality. When considering the application, whether or not it will improve the broader location i.e. make a better place AND make that place better, should be a primary consideration. Chapter 3 of the July 2021 revision to the Framework (NPPF) places emphasis on the need to consider the design quality of places, rather individual development in isolation.

Figure 5: Green Belt landscape immediately to the north of the application site



- 2.04 Local and national legislation stress presumption against inappropriate development (and by extension redevelopment) because inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. By any coherent criteria, the application scheme is not only not harmful to the Green Belt, it makes a positive improvement. The way this improvement is achieved is elaborated in the following sections.

Figure 6: existing office building viewed from Lumb Lane, looking towards open countryside beyond



- 2.05 One important example of improvement concerns biodiversity net gain (BNG) which the government tells us is a way to contribute to the recovery of nature while developing (or in this case redeveloping) land. It is making sure the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development.
- 2.06 The applicant has taken this aspect of the scheme very seriously and commissioned a separate ecological study and report from Messrs Quants Environmental. This includes reference to BNG. Please refer to this report for details of the outcome of the study. For the purposes of this statement the report notes at para.4.2.1.3 that *“it is considered feasible to achieve 10% BNG for area-based habitats within the site boundary”*

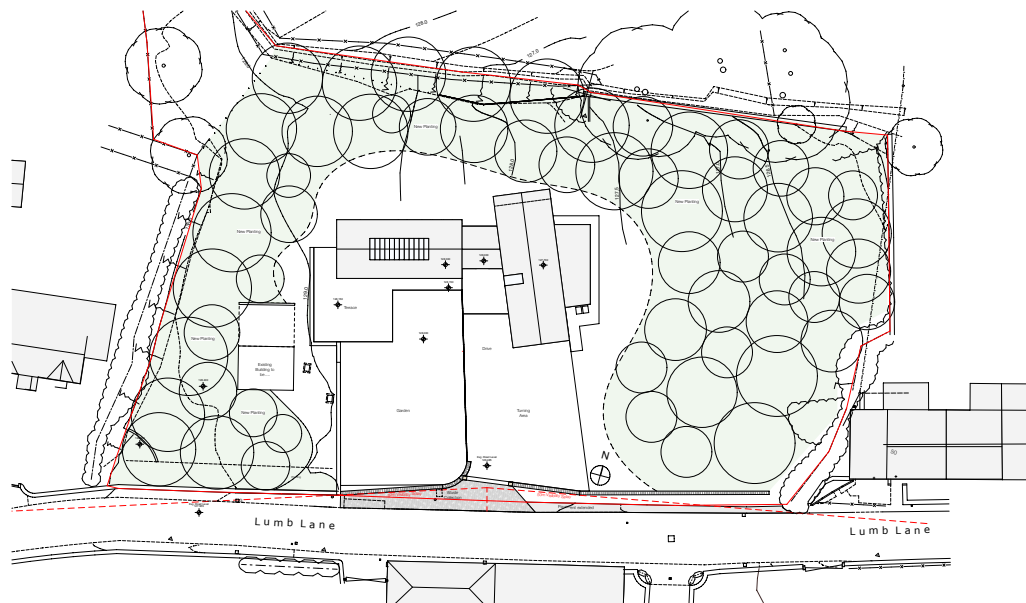
Figure 7: opportunity for biodiversity gain



3.00 Amount, Scale, Design & Layout

3.01 The gross area of the site presently covered by buildings, hardstanding and parking areas is 2,830 sq.m. This represents 88% of the total site area of 3,200 sq.m. The proposed domestic curtilage of the proposal is 1,050 sq.m. This represents 33% of the total site area. Within this, the house has a footprint of 205 sq.m. See Fig.8.

Figure 8: Site plan as proposed. Land hatched green reverts to open Green Belt



- 3.02 1,780 sq.m. or 55% of the site would therefore be returned to open land within the Green Belt.
- 3.03 The scale of the proposed dwelling is in keeping with neighbouring detached dwellings, being composed of single and two storey elements. As the application site sits between a terrace of two-storey cottages and a larger detached dwelling (Clough Ings) and also opposite another large single dwelling (Yew Croft) a key challenge has been to design the scheme to reconcile these different elements.
- 3.04 This has been done by breaking down the scheme into a series of connected 'parts' rather than creating a single homogeneous mass. The parts are also articulated so as to break down the scale of the building. There is a gentle fall from east to west of the site and open land rises to the north.

Figure 9: View east along Lumb Lane showing separate elements of new scheme. The adjacent terrace is seen beyond the application site. Note also the new verge across the site frontage. Landscaping omitted for clarity.

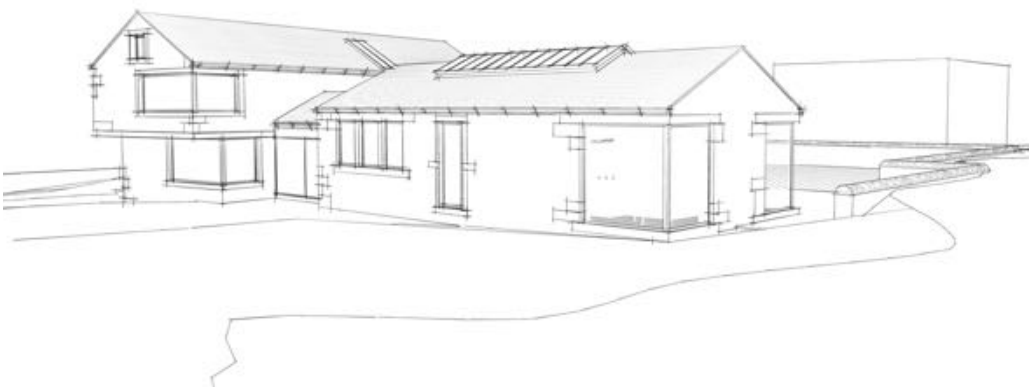


- 3.05 The new building, through massing and siting, aims to reconcile the surrounding existing developments.
- 3.06 Private external space is clustered around the building, with the principal garden area to the south of the plot, leaving the majority of the eastern and western ends and the rear (north) side of the site, where contours rise, to be returned to open landscape blending into open Green Belt.
- 3.07 The form and materials of the building combine vernacular West Yorkshire residential (orthogonal forms, natural coursed local walling stone with ashlar details, pitched roofs) with a mixture of traditional door and window treatments enhanced by a few contemporary elements. These all declare the building to be a new example of a continuing vernacular tradition, respecting and enhancing the setting.

Figure 10: Reconstructed site entrance with improved visibility. Landscaping not shown



Figure 11: Rear view of the dwelling. Landscaping not shown. This view would only be available from within the property



- 3.08 The present scheme has been developed from an earlier proposal following discussion and consultation with officers of the LPA.

Figure 12: view looking north-east from Lumb Lane



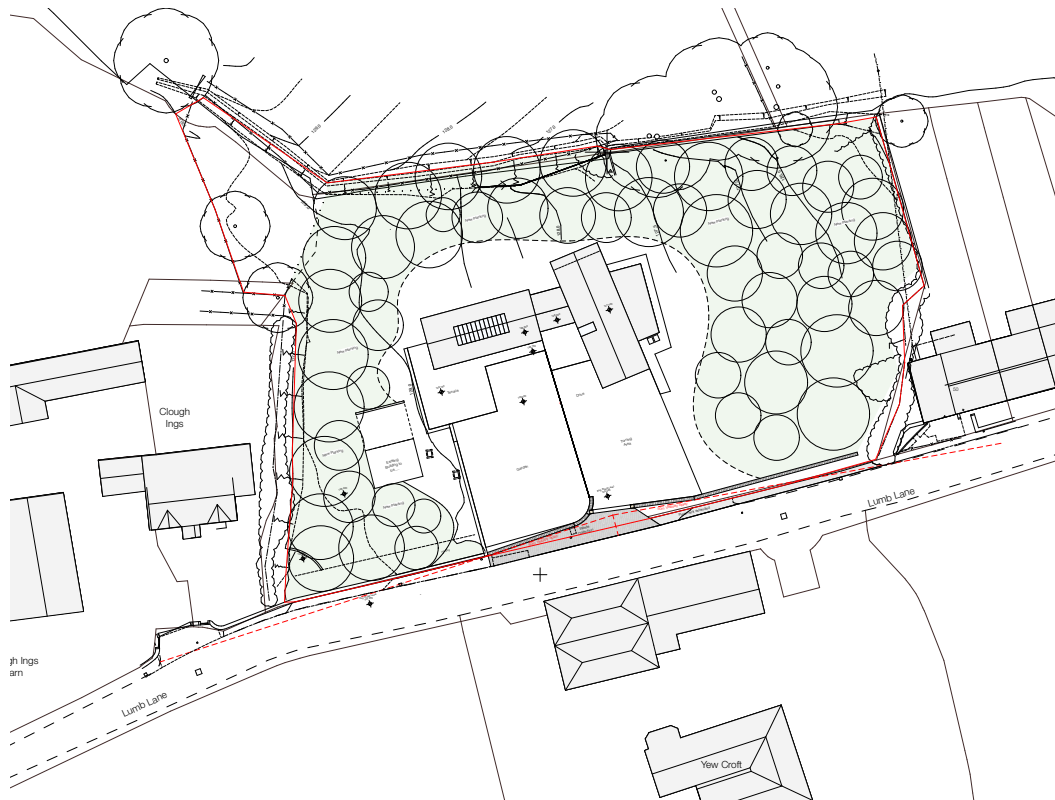
4.00 Access

- 4.01 The site has an existing vehicle access from the highway. The access will be rebuilt to the same width but resited on the frontage to benefit from improved visibility. In view of the reduction in vehicle movements and scale of vehicles that the change in use of the site would mean, the scheme would greatly improve highway safety.
- 4.02 It has already been noted that Lumb Lane, particularly at its western end, is narrow and without benefit of a footway. The scheme proposes a new verge and footway to be created across the site frontage. Combined with the reduction in traffic movement, this would constitute a notable improvement in road safety.
- 4.03 There is ample off-road parking included with the scheme together with turning space to ensure all vehicles exiting the site can do so in forward gear.

Figure 13: existing site entrance shown bottom left



Figure 14: site plan as proposed



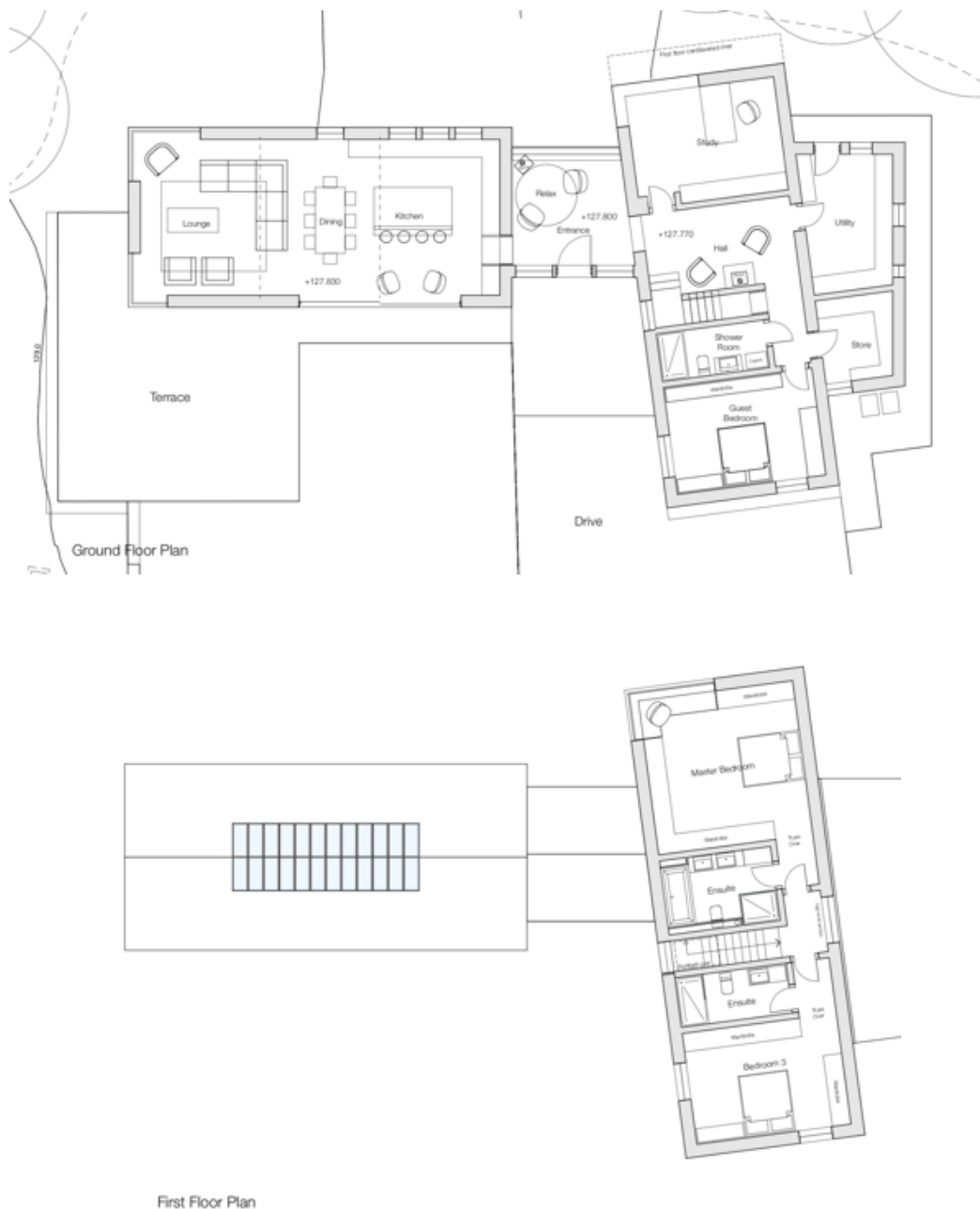
5.00 Landscaping

5.01 The improvement in the openness of the Green Belt and the return of a large part of the site to open landscape is a major benefit of the scheme. The decrease in developed land (land reverting to wildlife habitat) permits an improvement in BNG of 10% - see para 2.06 above. The separate ecological report from Messrs Quants Environmental that forms part of the application document suite shows this BNG to be a valuable benefit of the scheme. Please refer to the Quants report for further detail.

5.02 The applicant is happy to negotiate how the newly cleared land is treated, in landscaping terms, with the Local Planning Authority. The essential feature of the hard and soft landscaping immediately around the building is simplicity and the use of materials and finishes appropriate to the rural setting.

- 5.03 Suburban or fussy landscape treatment would be completely inappropriate in such a location. The aim is to retain and enhance the landscape quality of the Green Belt as far as possible.
- 5.04 Through all the techniques and details enumerated above, the scheme aims to be a 'good neighbour' and should, in visual, noise, environmental and highways respects, improve amenity for adjacent homes.

Figure 15: Floor Plans as proposed



6.00 Heritage Impact Assessment

6.01 There are several listed buildings within the locality of the site (all dwellings) as well as two further dwellings considered to be of merit as non-designated heritage assets as referred to in paragraph 203 of the NPPF. See figure 15. The locations of non-designated assets are immediately to the south and west of the application site.

6.02 The dwelling to the immediate south is Yew Croft House whilst the dwelling to the west is known as Clough lngs. Whilst the majority of the listed assets are individual detached dwellings, the cottage terrace to the east of the application site is an exception, although each cottage is recognised and listed individually.

6.03 **Figure 16: Listed buildings around the application site. Application site shown in light brown. Read in conjunction with Figure 17.**

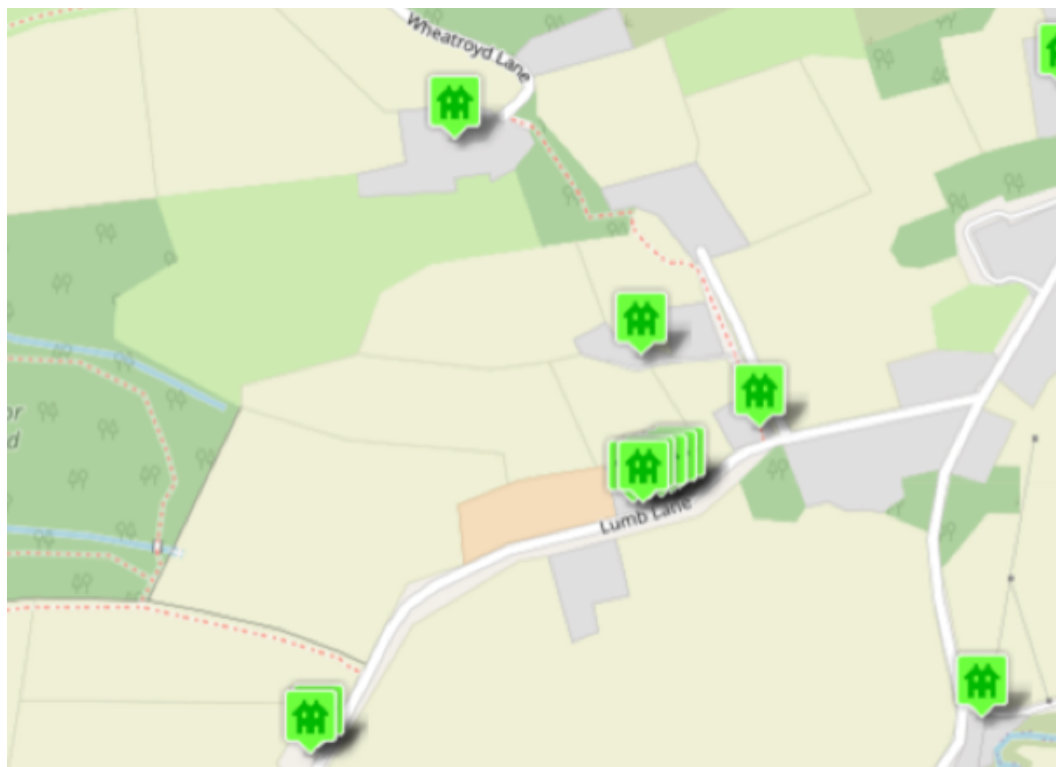


Figure 17: Aerial view of the setting of the site. Comparison with figure 16 will identify the listed buildings and non-designated assets.



- 6.04 The anomalous built element in the landscape at present is the collection of structures on the application site – see Figure 6.
- 6.05 The listed and non-designated dwellings date from various periods and vary in character as can be seen from Figures 18, 19, 20 and 21 following.

Figure 18: Clough Ings to the immediate west of the application site



Figure 19: Bottoms terrace of listed cottages to the immediate east of the application site



Figure 20: 54 and 56 Lumb Lane, west of the application site



Figure 21: Looking east along Lumb Lane with the application site on the left and Yew Croft House to the right. It is very difficult to obtain views of the main Yew Croft House from public roads or footpaths



6.06 Only a short distance east along Lumb Lane from the application site, suburban development has taken place which has impacted adversely on the setting of the listed and non-designated assets.

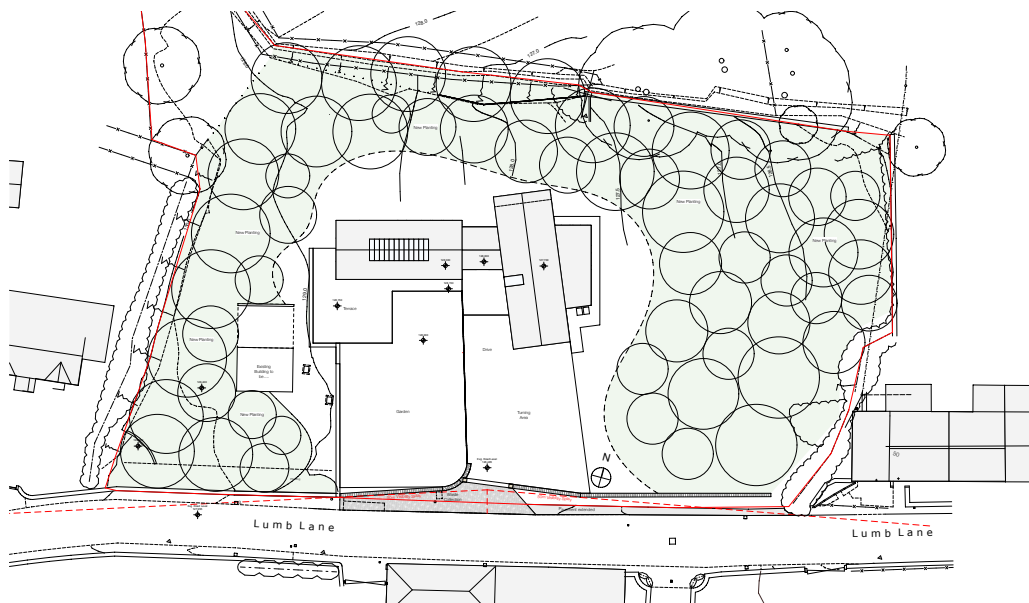
Figure 22: Suburban development east along Lumb Lane from the application site



6.07 Regarding impact on the setting of nearby heritage assets, the proposal scheme would see the removal of existing incongruous development and the new scheme would respect much more the character of the area by replacing that development with a single dwelling of a scale and siting much more in keeping with neighbouring properties.

6.08 The frontage of the site, dominated by Yew Croft House's perimeter wall rising directly from the edge of the highway, would be opened up with the new dwelling set back into the site. The return of much of the site to landscaping is also more sympathetic to the character of the surrounding area.

Figure 23: Proposed site plan with heritage assets on three sides



6.09 The siting of the dwelling towards the centre of the plot, together with the new landscaping, will enable the listed cottages to the east of the site to be better appreciated as a discrete group.

6.010 By the use of traditional forms with pitched roofs, orthogonal components and a grouped arrangement of one and two stories, the scheme respects and enhances the setting of the heritage assets. This is reinforced by the use

of local natural reclaimed stone with ashlar details in a building which continues the vernacular tradition but in a contemporary manner.

Figure 24: traditional forms and materials in a contemporary scheme

