

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

HERITAGE STATEMENT

FORMATION OF TWO DWELLINGS FROM AN EXISTING DWELLING

17 Town Gate

Upperthong

Holmfirth

HD9 3UX

May 2025

Background

The application site relates to 17 Town Gate, Upperthong, which is an unlisted two-storey extended dwelling situated in the Upperthong Conservation Area and fronting on to Town Gate.

Town Gate is narrow and surrounded on both sides by vernacular stone buildings, which are typically cottages and farm buildings dating back to at least the 18th Century.

The Royal Oak Inn is situated directly to the west of the site, to the further west is a historic footpath (HOL/72/20) which runs in a north / south direction. Grade II listed buildings are 30m to the west and 65m to the east of the site with intervening buildings between.

The southern part of the site is a large undeveloped area of land which is part of the ownership of the applicant, with the host dwelling being the northerly and eastern part of this area of open land.

The south facing rear elevations of the historic buildings along Town Gate are vernacular in style, with mullioned windows, stone elevations and mostly linear stone slate pitched roofs, which all contribute to the character of the settlement.

Proposed development

The proposed development consists of the formation of two dwellings from the single dwelling. Each dwelling will have two bedrooms and two dedicated parking spaces.

Planning history

A planning application (2022/92799) for the erection of extensions, conversion of existing attached barn to living accommodation, and associated works was approved, subject to conditions, in October 2023.

A planning application (2024/93073) for a part first floor and a two-storey extension to the rear was approved, subject to conditions, in February 2025.

Local planning policy

Kirklees Local Plan (2019)

LP1 Achieving Sustainable Development

LP2 Place Shaping

LP24 Design

LP35 Historic Environment

Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan

Policy 1 – Protecting and Enhancing the Landscape Character of Holme Valley.

Policy 2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Built Character of the Holme Valley and Promoting High Quality Design.

Policy 12 – Promoting Sustainability.

National Planning Policy

National planning policy and guidance is set out in National Policy Statements, primarily the National Planning Policy Framework 2025 (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance Suite (PPGS), together with Circulars, Ministerial Statements and associated technical guidance. The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and is a material consideration in determining applications.

- Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development - The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development... achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent. These are economic, social and environmental objectives.
- Section 4 - Decision-making – paragraph 11 of the NPPF advises that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It adds, within the same paragraph, that where the policies in the Development Plan, deemed most relevant to the consideration of the proposal in question are out-of-date, the default position is that planning permission should be granted unless:-
 - a) policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or
 - b) any adverse impacts of so doing would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

- Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes - Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. Local planning authorities should support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes
- Section 11 – Making effective use of land - Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions
- Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places - The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.
- Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change - the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future.

Principle of development

The site is without notation in the Local Plan but the surrounding uses are predominantly residential.

The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year land supply for housing, so even a modest addition of one unit should be assessed as making a contribution to housing totals. It would also make a more effective use of the land by increasing housing density. As the proposed

scheme will not introduce any new build elements other than those already approved, there will be little impact on the character and appearance of the area, and the existing dwelling is in a sustainable location.

Heritage Statement

Legislation

The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

The Town & Country Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Assessment

As set out above, 17 Town Gate is an unlisted two-storey dwelling and attached barn situated within the Upperthong Conservation Area and facing directly onto Town Gate.

The narrow street is surrounded on both sides by vernacular stone buildings and drystone walls and is characteristic of the type of linear settlement found in the Holme Valley. Most of the buildings are cottages and farm buildings, with some dating back to at least the 18th century.

The historic Royal Oak Inn is situated directly to the west, and to the west of this is a historic footpath which leads south. Most of the rural landscape to the south of the historic settlement was built on during the late 20th and early 21st centuries, with housing developments constructed on the south facing hillside. A small area of green space,

which is within the Conservation Area, survives to the south within the curtilage of the property and is in the same ownership. This area of land is held to make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area by retaining views of the historic settlement from the south, including a clear view from the adjacent public right of way.

The south facing rear elevations of the historic buildings along Town Gate are vernacular in style, with mullioned windows, stone elevations, and mostly linear stone slate pitched roofs, which all contribute to the character of the settlement. The historic character and function of the buildings along Town Gate can still be understood, with their simple roof forms and vernacular materials and detailing surviving.

The proposed scheme shows vehicular access and two parking spaces that have already been approved for Plot 1 by virtue of a previous permission and two parking spaces on an existing access to the east of Plot 2.

As such, there will be no changes to either the external appearance of the building or to the outside space of the building over and above those already approved by reason of previous permissions. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the Conservation Area.

Chapter 16 of the NPPF requires great weight to be given to a heritage asset's conservation, with any harm requiring clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 208 of the NPPF requires any harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. As it can be reasonably concluded, for the reasons set out above, that the proposed scheme causes less than substantial harm to the significance of the

Conservation Area, any less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

It is considered that the public benefits of the scheme exist by the addition of an extra unit to the housing stock and this outweighs any less than substantial harm to the significance of the Conservation Area. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in accordance with the NPPF, the Local Plan, and all relevant legislation, subject to any reasonable and necessary conditions.

Design

Amount

There will be no alteration to the external appearance of the building nor to its curtilage boundaries over and above those already approved. A boundary will be created within the existing garden area to form two separate garden areas.

The existing house has five bedrooms. The proposed split will create one unit (Plot 1) with two bedrooms (one existing bedroom will be used as a study) and one unit (Plot 2) will also have two bedrooms.

Parking areas will be to the rear of Plot 1 and to the east of Plot 2.

Layout

The proposed dwellings will retain the existing internal layouts, save for the blocking of several existing openings at ground floor and first floor which currently connect both sides of the building. This is necessary to form two separate dwellings.

Car parking will be formalised to ensure that each property has its own car parking spaces.

The proposed development will not significantly affect the privacy, daylight, or amenity space of existing and prospective residents and other occupants. In this regard, the proposed development represents a conversion of an existing dwelling and due to the footprints of the two units, the orientation of habitable room windows, and through the use of appropriate boundary treatments, the respective residential amenity of the occupiers of each unit will be maintained.

Scale

There will be no change to the scale of development, save for two dwellings being created from one dwelling.

Landscaping

No further landscaping is proposed, as mature curtilage garden areas currently exist.

Appearance

There will be no changes to the exterior of the building or its curtilage over and above those already approved (save for a boundary demarcation to split the garden area).

Use

The building will remain in a residential use.

Access

Vehicular access to Plot 1 will be as that previously approved and vehicular access to Plot 2 will be as existing.

Other matters

It is considered that the proposed development is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain, as the proposed development is the conversion of an existing building, which is held to be a de minimis exemption as the development does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat.