
The Red House Oxford Road Gomersal Planning, Design and Access Statement

CONTENTS	PAGE
1.0 Introduction	2
2.0 Application Site and Surroundings.....	3
3.0 Proposed Development	5
4.0 Planning Policy Context.....	10
5.0 Compliance with Planning Policy	13
6.0 Technical Considerations	16
7.0 Conclusions.....	18

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Kingscrow Developments Ltd (the Agent), on behalf of BP Land Limited (the Applicant) in a support of a full planning application for the change of use of the existing museum, cart shed and barns to residential housing (Class C3), as well as landscaping and car parking ('the Proposed Development') on the site of the former Red House Museum, 281 Oxford Road, Gomersal BD19 4JP ('the Application Site').
- 1.2 The application is driven by the desire to utilise, develop and refurbish a historically significant yet dilapidated site within a predominantly residential area for housing and to retain and convert the derelict listed buildings to help to retain the assets for future generations and diversify the local housing stock with properties of real character.
- 1.3 All initial dialogue and consultations with the Heritage Officers at Kirklees Council and Heritage England have been constructive and productive, resulting in support and constructive feedback for the proposed scheme and density.
- 1.4 This Planning Statement provides a background to the Proposed Development, covering the Application Site and its surroundings, the policy context and the technical assessments. These assessments have considered the potential effects of the Proposed Development upon the Application Site and its surroundings.
- 1.5 The Planning Statement has been prepared to assist Kirklees Council (the Local Planning Authority) in its determination of the application and should be read in conjunction with the suite of supporting material.
- 1.6 The structure of the Planning Statement is as follows:
- Introduction;
 - Application Site and Surroundings;
 - Proposed Development;
 - Planning Policy Context;
 - Compliance with Planning Policy;
 - Technical Considerations; and
 - Conclusions.
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2.0 Application Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The Application Site covers an area of approximately 1.3 acres and is located off Oxford Road in Gomersal.
- 2.2 The Site comprises the buildings and grounds within the former Red House Museum, which is a Grade II* listed house which has connections to the Bronte family and is understood to predominantly date to around the mid-18th century with elements dating to 1660. This two-storey house is constructed primarily from red brick with coursed stone to the rear, and a double pile stone slate roof. It has undergone quite significant alterations over the years, including a 1920's extension and the rebuilding of the rear elevation in the late 20th century.
- 2.3 A detached single-storey stone-built cart shed is situated to the west of the house and is within the extensive grounds and is curtilage listed; alterations to this are included within this application. Also within the curtilage of the listed building is a large stone barn which is also curtilage listed.
- 2.4 The entire site is located within the Gomersal Conservation Area. The site is bound by dwellings to the south, the highway to the east, a car park to the north and open land to the west.
- 2.5 The wider area is characterised by period properties with substantive character, which is varied. The uses are also mixed, with residential and commercial properties found within the vicinity.
- 2.6 In terms of topography, the existing land profile is generally level although there is a slight fall west to east and north to south.
- 2.7 There are a number of mature trees along Oxford Road and within the site itself.
- 2.8 The site sits within a sustainable location with good access to public transport facilities and the wider highway network via Oxford Road to the east.
- 2.9 Oxford Road is a major bus route into Leeds, Bradford and Heckmondwike, as well as most of the adjacent smaller towns and villages.
- 2.10 Leeds Railway Station is the closest major railway station to the Application Site. Leeds Station is the terminus of the Leeds branch of the East Coast Main Line (on which London North Eastern Railway provides high speed inter-city services to London King's Cross every half hour from the station) and is an important stop on the Cross Country Route between Scotland, the Midlands and South West England connecting to major cities such as Birmingham, Edinburgh and Bristol. There are also regular services to major destinations throughout Northern-England including Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle and Sheffield.
- 2.11 Other than the listed building status and the sites containment within a Conservation Area the site contains no other statutory environmental, ecological or landscape designations.
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- 2.12 Vehicular and pedestrian access is currently taken from a private access point off Oxford Road.
- 2.13 The Application Site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1.
- 2.14 The Application Site has a limited relevant planning history:
- (i) Ref. 2021/62/94366/E - Change of use of existing museum and cart shed to commercial short term residential accommodation for holiday letting (Listed Building within a Conservation Area) – GRANTED
 - (ii) Ref. 2021/65/94324/E - Listed Building Consent for change of use of existing museum and cart shed to commercial short term residential accommodation for holiday letting (within a Conservation Area) - GRANTED
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3.0 Proposed Development

3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the for the conversion of the Grade II* listed former Red House Museum and the adjoining barns and coach house into residential housing, with associated landscaping and vehicular access.

3.2 The Proposed Development consists of the following:

- The renovation and subdivision of 'Red House' into two x three-bedroom residential houses;
- The renovation of the 'Barns' into one x four-bedroom residential dwelling and the extension of part of the ground floor; and
- The renovation and enhancement of the Coach House into ancillary accommodation for the Barns.

3.3 The Site Plan (Ref. (SK)01) and proposed Floor plans (Ref. (SK)02 – 06) have been provided to show the layout of the Proposed Development within the Application Site.

3.4 The layout, scale, design and massing has been developed in response to the surrounding context. A thorough assessment of the site and its benefits has allowed a design which will maximise the sites opportunities and characteristics.

3.5 The following headings provide further information on the proposed development and should be read in conjunction with the Heritage Statement and supporting planning application drawings:

- Numbers and Density.
- Access and Parking.
- Landscaping
- Trees

Numbers and Density

3.6 The Site Plan, floor plans and supporting visuals detail how the Red House, coach house and barns will be converted into three dwellings (Class C3). The proposed scheme has been developed in accordance with Policy LP24 and the aspiration of the Council to provide a suitable design and layout for housing that contribute to creating an attractive and sustainable place to live.

Red House

- 3.7 Red House will be subdivided into two dwellings, as per the submitted floor plans. The only external amendments proposed are the creation of a new entrance to Dwelling 2 on the western elevation. This is proposed in the area which at present contains a rotten wooden window frame, which is need of replacement. This wooden frame and elevation is a more recent addition to the property and was added in the 1980s, see Figure 1 below for evidence that it was not an original feature. Therefore we deem the creation of a subservient access, with reclaimed brick and handmade wooden window frames to be an enhancement upon what exists at present. No other external amendments are proposed except potential soil pipes.



Figure 1

- 3.8 The internal works consist largely of restoration and enhancement measures to the existing building fabric. Few material changes are proposed to the internal structure and layout of the building, as the dwelling in its current state is fit for modern purposes and occupation. Although some doors will be blocked up to restore the internal layout of the original house, openings and hallways, which were clearly widened for public access when the house was in use as a museum by the council post 1970. Bathrooms will be created on the first floor of each dwelling to make them suitable and habitable for modern occupation. The living room for Dwelling 2 will be restored to its original dimensions as evidenced by the layout and positioning of the internal alcoves and Figure 2 below. All the original windows will be restored where possible and secondary glazing will be used with suitable means of escape to be considered.
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Figure 2

- 3.9 Minimal planned disturbance is proposed for the required M&E routes, and where possible we will use the areas which are blocked up as service voids. The original coving will be restored in the main hallway to replace poor quality reproductions that were installed in the last century. The existing landscaped garden will largely remain as it exists at present, and as it did in the 19th and early 20th century, as per Figure 3 below. The garden will however be divided between the two demised properties, albeit with local impact reduced estate style fencing.



Figure 3

The Barns

- 3.10 The Barns will be converted and refurbished into one x four-bedroom dwelling, as per the submitted floor plans.
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3.11 Both externally and internally more renovation works are required to the barns than the other two existing buildings within the site. This is because the building is in a worst state of disrepair and is ill suited in its current condition, layout and dimensions for residential occupation. As such a single storey lean to extension is proposed to the rear of the barns. This will be constructed in natural stone to match the existing blockwork. Black aluminium framed screens and doors are proposed under the pitched metal roof.

The Coach House

3.12 The Coach House will be converted and refurbished into ancillary accommodation for the Barns, with a separate bedroom, gym and kitchen, as per the submitted floor plans.

3.13 Due to the former use of the building it contains few suitable openings and/or windows for residential habitation. As such the shutters will be removed and the existing arched openings will be infilled with new double glazed aluminium windows.

3.14 New openings are proposed on the front elevation on the south western corner, as well as upon the eastern side of the building. The new arched opening in the eastern gable is proposed to be similar to the elevation and design of that on the front elevation.

3.15 New window openings are proposed at the rear of the property and within the roofscape to provide suitable lighting. Internally some partition walling is proposed, as well as the removal of some of the existing internal dividing walls.

3.16 It is considered the supporting package of drawings demonstrate a high-quality design and one which accords with the prevailing development plan, which requires a development to deliver high quality design and of a scale that is consistent with the character of the settlement.

3.17 Please see the submitted drawing pack for further details on the proposed floor plans, elevations and the design layout of the residential dwellings.

Access and parking

3.18 Vehicular access to the proposed development will be taken from Oxford Road, utilising the existing vehicular access on the eastern boundary of the Application Site.

3.19 The proposed access arrangement is detailed on the Site Plan and within the submitted Access Plans and advice notes (Ref. 25-06-30; 25-05-08; and 25-05-08)

3.20 Car parking spaces are proposed within the courtyard for the barns and within a designated area by the gardens for the two dwellings in Red House.

Landscaping

- 3.21 The Site Plan demonstrates the proposed landscape enhancements and areas of private amenity across the developed and undeveloped parts of the Application Site. This includes areas of soft and hard landscaping, such as the creation of a parking area for Red House, which is naturally surfaced in grass with grid reinforcement, alongside native hedgerow planting, such as hornbeam in the gardens of the Barn and the Coach House, to provide appropriate screening from any neighbouring views to the north and west.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

Introduction

- 4.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') and Planning Practice Guidance are material considerations in the determination of this planning application.

Adopted Development Plan

- 4.3 The Development Plan for Kirklees Council consists of the following documentation:
- Kirklees Local Plan – Strategy and Policies (2019); and
 - Kirklees Local Plan – Allocations and Designations (2019).
- 4.4 Kirklees Councils Local Plan covers the period 2013 - 2031 and was adopted by the Council in February 2019. The Local Plan sets out the vision and spatial strategy for the district during the plan period.
- 4.5 The Site Allocations and Designations Plan Policy Document was adopted by Kirklees Council alongside the Local Plan in February 2019. The documents identifies sites for development that will deliver the aims, vision and objectives of the Local Plan.
- 4.6 Table 1 identifies the key policies from the Local Plan that the development will be assessed against.

Table 1- Relevant Local Plan Policies

Policy	Description
Local Plan – Strategy and Policies	
Policy LP1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy LP2	Place Shaping
Policy LP3	Location of new development
Policy LP24	Design
Policy LP25	The Historic Environment

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.7 The National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') sets out the Government's definition of sustainable development and identifies how planning policies for England are expected to be applied. The Framework is a significant material consideration.
- 4.8 The Framework is purposefully positive, opportunity focused and pro-growth in seeking to facilitate development which will contribute to meeting the wider Government objectives.
- 4.9 Paragraph 7 of the Framework explains that 'the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development' which can be summarised as 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'
- 4.10 Paragraph 8 of the Framework states that 'achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):
- a) economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
 - b) social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*
 - c) environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy'.*
- 4.11 The NPPF does not affect the statutory status of the Local Plan as the starting point for decision making. Developments which accord with an 'up-to-date' Local Plan should be approved 'without delay.' Where there are no relevant Local Plan policies, local authorities should grant permission unless:
- (i) The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
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(ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

4.12 Section 5 of the NPPF sets out the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. Paragraph 59 states that it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

4.13 Section 15 of the Framework sets out the Government's policies for conserving and enhancing the natural environment. The aim is to ensure that natural habitats are protected and enhanced, so as to contribute to wider patterns of sustainable development.

Planning Practice Guidance

4.14 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It was launched in March 2014 and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning. It is important to note that the guidance is guidance and does not provide additional policy. Notwithstanding this, it does provide a useful resource on interpreting policy.

4.15 Paragraph: 009 (Reference ID: 21b-009-20140306) states that it is for the decision maker to decide what weight is to be given to the material considerations in each case, and (subject to the test of reasonableness) the courts will not get involved in the question of weight.

5.0 Compliance with Planning Policy

Principle of Development

- 5.1 **Policy LP1** (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) states that when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. Planning applications that accord with policies in the Local Plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The following policy analysis demonstrates how the Proposed Development complies with the relevant Local Plan policies and it should be considered sustainable development.
- 5.3 **Policy LP2** (Place Shaping) states that all development proposals should seek to protect and enhance the qualities which contribute to the character of a place.
- 5.4 The Application Site is occupied by a number of disused and/or derelict buildings, which could be improved and retained in good order in perpetuity by the resulting change of use, helping to improve the sense of place and of the area.
- 5.5 The proposals would result in a general improvement from a visual perspective through the tidying up of the site. It is therefore considered that the proposals would improve the character and quality of the site and surrounding areas.
- 5.6 **Policy LP3** (Location of new development) states that development should reflect:
- the settlement's size and function; and
 - spatial priorities for urban renaissance and regeneration.
- 5.7 The Proposed Development is helping to regenerate a previously developed, culturally significant and at present unused site. Thus its redevelopment for housing will help to meet the spatial priorities for urban renaissance within the District.
- 5.8 The Application Site is also suitable in size to comply with the design, scale and massing requirements for a residential dwelling, without appearing overbearing or imposing upon the townscape.
- 5.9 **Policy LP11** (Housing Mix and Affordable Housing) states that all proposals for housing will be of high quality and good design and contribute to creating mixed and balanced communities in line with the latest evidence of housing needs.
- 5.10 This Application is for only two dwellings and has been designed to a high standard and specification, in keeping with the local character and aesthetic. The plot is large for 2 dwellings, but the setting and Green Belt designation restricts development to a limited footprint within the site. Further development and/or additional housing may also be considered over development, within what is a sensitive rural environment. Therefore, two large dwellings represent the most suitable, sustainable and viable development option.
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Design and Layout

- 5.11 **Policy LP24** (Design) states that good design should be at the core of all proposals by ensuring the form, scale, layout and details of all development respects and enhances the character of the townscape, heritage assets and landscape.
- 5.12 The submitted package of drawings demonstrates the strong emphasis on a design which is in keeping with the local form, scale and layout of the immediate surrounding development, complementing yet no detracting from the overall character and aesthetic of the locality.
- 5.13 In terms of residential amenity the dwellings have been designed so that they would respect the privacy of the future occupants by way of maintaining adequate space about buildings between the proposed and existing surrounding dwellings, and being of an appropriate scale to prevent overlooking into adjacent social and amenity spaces.

Heritage and Conservation

- 5.14 **Policy LP25** (Historic Environment) states that development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset (or an archaeological site of national importance) should preserve or enhance the significance of the asset. In cases likely to result in substantial harm or loss, development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposals would bring substantial public benefits that clearly outweigh the harm.
- 5.15 The Heritage Assessment undertaken by Urban Glow found that despite its historic and cultural significance the 'Red House' itself has seen huge changes, some of them rather heavy handed, over its long history. Only part of its original form still remains.
- 5.16 The Proposed Development seeks to retain, restore and enhance the original features within the house and outbuildings, as detailed in the Design and Access Statement and Heritage Assessment. The Proposed Development thereby will result in no material harm to the listed building or its setting. The Proposed Development should enhance the existing setting of the listed building and ensure the buildings remain in good condition in perpetuity.
- 5.17 The Applicant has undertaken engagement with Alexander Harrison at Heritage England, through the pre application advice service they offer.
- 5.18 Advice received on the 21/07/2025 confirmed that overall, Historic England is supportive of the principle of the development at Red House and its associated buildings. There are some concerns highlighted that they requested further clarity and justification upon, and for which I detail below:
1. Removal of one of the walls to accommodate the gallery bathroom within Redhouse:
 - This is the most suitable location within Redhouse to accommodate the first-floor bathroom.
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- The wall adjoining the bedroom is at least in part a modern stud wall and not deemed to have been part of the original historic structure.
 - This location within the house has already experienced many changes since the house was first built. It is adjudged that this location may once have contained a grand fireplace, which was subsequently removed and made into the space we see today.
 - Old pictures demonstrate that the wider arch was not originally there, and the open landing was widened to accommodate the volume of people looking around the museum.
 - This proposed amendment to the internal layout is fundamentally required for the longevity of the house and the requirement of modern living and for a functional bathroom.
2. Replacement of windows within the barns:
- The current windows are not the originals from the time of construction; they are believed to have installed in the 1960s.
 - The overall benefits include but are not limited to:
 - i. Improved energy efficiency
 - ii. Noise attenuation
 - iii. Enhances the visual appearance of the barns.
 - iv. More consistency and regularity in the form, as the existing building contains a mismatch of different window types.
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6.0 Technical Considerations

Heritage

- 6.1 The Urban Glow produced a Heritage Assessment in support of the Application to assess the significance of the former red house museum in reference to the proposed works.
- 6.2 The report finds that the former Red House Museum in Gomersal has a plethora of historical associations and is a key part of the history of the Heavy Woollen District to which it belongs. The house epitomises the history of the Taylor's and of the Yorkes who Charlotte Bronte wrote so descriptively of in her novel Shirley. The house therefore has strong tangible and intangible connections. The history that we know of dates from around 1550 when the site was bought by the Taylors, but the site has always evolved and changed, not least Red House itself which has seen huge changes, some of them rather heavy handed, over its long history. Despite this, the site and building are still of high local and national significance but equally has a fair capacity for change and high potential for Positive Enhancement.
- 6.3 Humble Heritage also produced a Heritage Impact Assessment in support of the Application to assess the heritage impact of the proposed scheme and to assist the Heritage Officers at Kirklees Borough Council and within Heritage England to better assess the Proposed Development
- 6.4 This report concludes that overall, when assessed as a holistic scheme, the proposal will enhance the significance of the Red House, barn and coach house and improve the contribution that they and their landscape setting makes to the character and appearance of the Gomersal Conservation Area. This assessment respectfully recommends approval on the basis that this investment into the long-term future of the site is key to securing its sustainable future. A range of environmental, economic and social public benefits have also been identified. The proposal accords with the objectives of Sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* and chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and local planning policy that relates to heritage assets and the historic environment, in particular Local Plan Policy LP35.

Ecology

- 6.5 Whitcher Wildlife have undertaken a preliminary roost assessment of the buildings on site, in support of the Application, to establish whether are any issues that may affect the proposed works in reference to Bats.
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- 6.6 Building 1, 2 are assessed as having low potential and building 4 is assessed as having moderate potential for roosting bats according to the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Good Practice Guidelines'. Therefore, it is recommended that one dusk emergence survey is carried out on building 1 and 2 and two dusk emergence surveys carried out on building 4 during the bat activity season, which extends from May to August inclusive, to determine whether bats are using the building to roost. The surveys need to be carried out at least three weeks apart.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared for BP Land Limited Ltd (the Applicant) in a support of a full planning application for the change of use of the existing museum, cart shed and barns to residential housing (Class C3), with supporting landscaping and car parking ('the Proposed Development') on 1.3 acres of land off Oxford Road in Gomersal ('the Application Site').
- 7.2 The application is supported by a suite of reports and drawings which detail how the Proposed Development could be achieved on the Application Site in consideration of Kirklees Council's relevant policies alongside national legislation, guidance and standards.
- 7.3 Sections 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions on planning applications must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This Planning Statement has been demonstrated through the policy analysis that the Proposed Development is acceptable, compliant with planning policy and all technical assessments and should therefore be supported.
- 7.4 The Proposed Development will help to bring forward and protect in perpetuity a culturally significant regional asset, which at present is derelict and in need of repair and refurbishment. The scheme will also help bring forward housing and to increase the provision of housing within the locality, bringing with it the associated economic, social and environmental benefits.
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