



Oakwell Hall – Building Fabric Repair Works

Design and Access and Statement

BC.HUD.2024.00049.010

January 2026

1.00 INTRODUCTION & STATEMENT OF INTENT

This statement has been written to support the information submitted as part of a Listed Building Consent application in relation to the proposed building fabric repairs to Oakwell Hall, Birstall on behalf of the applicant Kirklees Council.

Oakwell Hall is an Elizabethan manor house dating back to 1583 (the date 1583 is carved into a stone within the building) and is set within period gardens within a 110-acre country park.

Oakwell Hall is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historical interest at Grade 1.

The rationale behind the proposals is to undertake repairs to the building fabric to ensure the longevity of the existing building is retained. Works include external wall stone repairs, repairs to the existing roof including the installation of new roofing membrane (re-roofing), replacement gutters and downpipes, repairs to the existing external glazing (where damaged or panes are broken) and repairs to defective areas of the underground drainage system.

This statement also includes proposals to construct and install a new DDA accessible toilet facility to the ground floor level of the building. The new toilet will be located to the rear of the building within a back of house staff area (accessible to visitors to the building). New drainage connections will be made into the existing systems. A new internal ventilation unit will be included to the new toilet. This will be routed through the existing basement plantroom area to an existing external ventilation grille.

The toilet will be constructed using metal stud framed walls with plasterboard and painted finishes. The new walls will be positioned to limit the impact on the existing historical structure allowing removal if required in the future without damage to the existing building fabric.

The existing male and female toilets at first floor level will be removed as part for these works. The existing toilets are a later addition to the building and will be fully removed from each room (all sanitary-ware including toilets, urinals and wash basins, and internal cubicle walls and doors, including associated domestic water services and above ground drainage pipes).

The drawings and information to accompany this statement are as follows:

- Application forms
- AHR-OH-DR-A-10-001 – Site & Location Plan
- AHR-OH-DR-A-20-001 – Existing Floor Plans
- AHR-OH-DR-A-20-002 – Demolition Plan – First Floor
- AHR-OH-DR-A-20-010 – Proposed Basement Floor Plan
- AHR-OH-DR-A-20-011 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan
- AHR-OH-DR-A-20-012 – Proposed First Floor Plan
- AHR-OH-DR-A-20-013 – Proposed Roof Plan
- AHR-OH-DR-A-21-001 – Existing Elevations
- AHR-OH-DR-A-21-010 – Proposed Elevation – South West
- AHR-OH-DR-A-21-011 – Proposed Elevation – North West
- AHR-OH-DR-A-21-012 – Proposed Elevation – North East
- AHR-OH-DR-A-21-013 – Proposed Elevation – South East
- Design & Access Statement – (NB. this document)
- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Heritage Statement of Significance
- Specialist Leaded Light / Glass Report

- Drainage Defects Report
- Structural Engineers Drawings

2.00 OAKWELL HALL

Oakwell Hall is located within the 110-acre Oakwell Hall Country Park and situated Northwest to the town of Birstall.



Image 1 – Front façade view Oakwell Hall

The building is currently Grade I listed and was first listed in 1963 (29th March). Below is the description of the listing taken from Historic England's website.

Extremely fine hall house, now museum. Probably 1583, built for John Batt, incorporating timber framed house of the mid C.15, with considerable C.17 refurbishment. Ashlar. Stone slate roof with chamfered gable copings. 2 storeys. An H-plan with central hall with 2 storey gabled porch to centre right, and gabled wing to left elevation. Windows are double chamfered and ovolo moulded, mainly with throated hood moulds some of which continue as string courses. 5 projecting chimney breasts, with ashlar stacks, to sides and rear, one to the right side being particularly broad. The central hall window is of 30 lights with king mullion and 2 transoms, and it is thought to be of C.17 date. Arched entrance to open porch to right with recut inscription I.B. 1583. 3-light window to 1st floor. The wings to left and right have 12-light mullioned and transomed windows to ground floor and 12 and 10-light similar windows to 1st floor left and right respectively. The left wing also has inward looking 12-light window with transom to ground floor and 6-light to 1st floor. Rear fenestration includes 12, 14 and 16-light mullioned and transomed windows. Lights are leaded, many with early glazing. Hall window has diamond pattern glazing.

The internal arrangement comprises through screened passage with open hall to left, beyond which is the great parlour or drawing room to front, and buttery, pantry, dairy and servants hall to rear. To right is a smaller parlour or dining room, with kitchen to rear. At 1st floor level the principal bedroom is above the great parlour.

The great hall is galleried on 2 sides with vertically symmetrical turned balusters, and with C.17 plasterwork on underside. Oak panelling to screen with 2 round arched openings with 3 pairs of Tuscan columns, thought to be C.17. Gallery is reached by open-well stairs with flat balusters and openwork dog-gates. The fireplace is thought to be C.17. The window jambs in the great parlour have plaster grotesques, possibly early C.17, in the form of lions' heads, caryatids and female figures the latter representing the Celtic goddess of fecundity. The arched fireplace in this room may be original. The passage ceiling has C.17 plasterwork in patterns of 3, 5, 6 and 8 sided figures. Plasterwork to the porch ceiling thought to be C.16.

The stone boundary wall has roll-top coping and large ball finials to opening in front of entrance and returns to building to right.

There is also associated car parking, visitor centres and 110 acres of public accessed countryside.

3.00 BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

AHR Building Consultancy have been appointed by Kirklees Council to undertake the building fabric repairs noted within the application drawing and specification packages. We are aware of the historic status of Oakwell Hall and the interest in protecting it.

The proposed works include repairs to external stone walling, re-roofing, structural repairs, removal of existing first floor toilets and installation of an accessible toilet to the ground floor. Works to the existing drainage system will also be undertaken to repair and replace damaged and collapsed sections of the underground system.

The enclosed application documents detail the proposed works in full detail.

4.00 DESIGN STATEMENT

The proposals detailed in this statement has been developed to minimise the continuing deterioration of the building and to provide restorative repairs to ensure the upkeep of the building is retained.

Our proposals have been developed with a core aim to protect the existing building in character and appearance and with the aim of restorative repairs to the roof and external walls whilst also improving the facilities for visitors through the provision of an accessible toilet at ground floor level.

The works are confined to the building and will therefore have no impact on the wider building's environment and external grounds.

Prior to preparing this Design & Access Statement, we have discussed and communicated with Kirklees Council to ensure that any proposals were understood and supported.

5.00 ACCESS STATEMENT

To improve the accessibility of the building, the works include proposals to install a DDA accessible toilet to the rear staff area at ground floor level.

The proposed works will not affect or cause changes to the existing buildings access arrangements.

6.00 SUMMARY

The proposed works consists of building fabric repairs to restore damaged and age-related issues reported to Oakwell Hall. The proposed works and designs ensure the existing building remains open to visiting public and any perceived harm to the heritage of the building is minimised.

In terms of the potential adverse impacts and any perceived harms on the heritage asset, the proposed works have been designed to retain the historic features of Oakwell Hall and not to cause any significant harm where new or minor changes are planned.