Crow Nest Park Public Toilets, Dewsbury

Design, Access & Heritage Statement

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Kirklees COUNCIL

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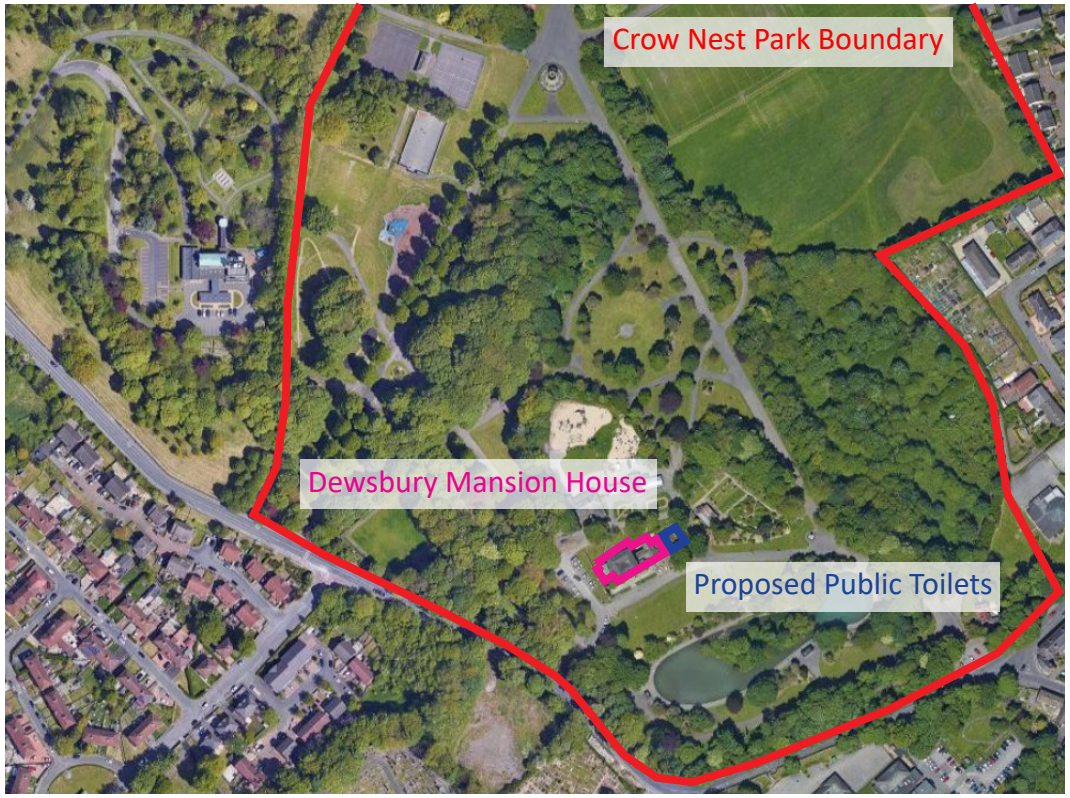
1 Introduction

This Design & Access Statement accompanies a Listed Building Consent Application for various elements of work to the existing public toilets and adjacent former cafe toilets at Crow Nest Park, Dewsbury. The existing 'gender neutral' toilets are inadequate, in need of renovation and considered to be a security / safety concern for the users given the concealed entrance area. Furthermore, there is currently no accessible toilet available for park users. It is therefore proposed that the existing cafe / public toilets building, (adjoined to the Grade II listed Dewsbury Mansion House), will be modified in various ways to provide much needed improved facilities for users of the park.

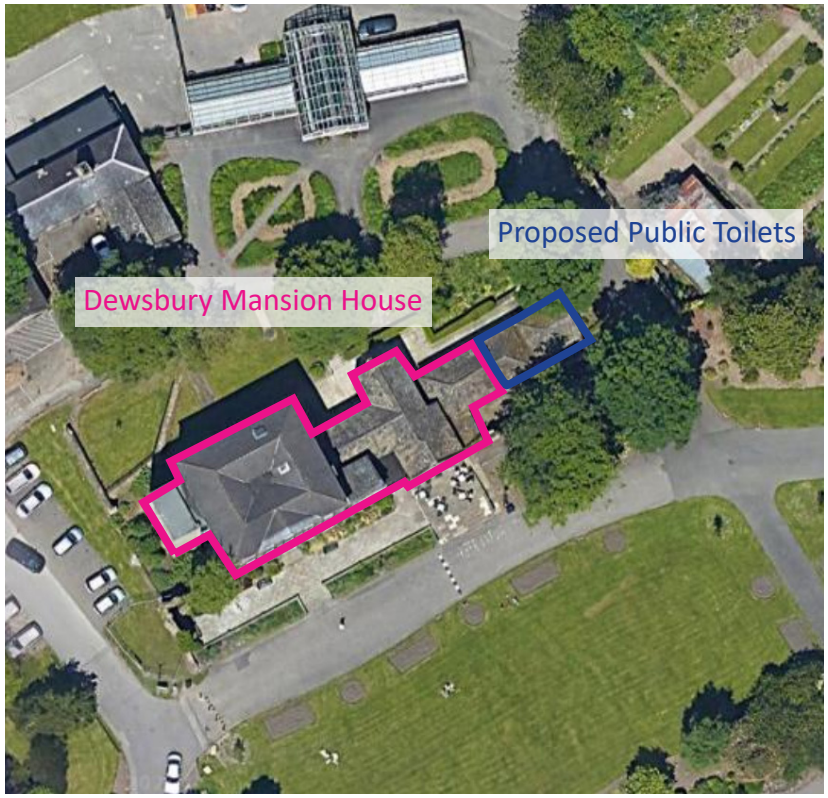
The proposed works include creating a new entrance to a proposed Female Toilets, (in place of an existing high level window), re-establishing a former entrance to a proposed Male / Accessible Toilets, internal remodelling, replacement windows and doors, replacement of existing external stone flooring with a natural stone effect resin bonded aggregate surfacing material, modifications to existing external planting bed and stone wall to allow for accessible level access to the area and replacement of existing anti-climb spiked barrier with non-aggressive deterrent such as 'roller barrier'.

Existing site photos of the building to be renovated

1 Introduction



Crow Nest Park - Aerial Photograph



Dewsbury Mansion House - Aerial Photograph

2 Proposals & Design

In order to improve the public toilets at Crow Nest Park the following elements of works will be required...

Doors and windows
All existing doors, windows and frames to the proposed public toilets building are to be removed and replaced with new powder coated aluminium framed doors and windows with obscure double glazed windows and insulated infill panels as indicated on associated drawings. Proposed doors are to be positioned on the internal face of the opening to ensure 'leading edge' building regulation compliance for improved accessibility. The proposed aluminium framed door and window frames will closely replicate the appearance of the existing timber-framed units while providing enhanced security, reduced maintenance requirements, and a significantly longer service life.

A former doorway opening is to be reinstated to form entrance to Accessible / Male Toilets and a new doorway opening with glazed screen over is to be formed where an existing high level window is currently in place to access the proposed Female Toilets. An existing high level window opening is to be enlarged and a new complementary stone faced lintel is to be introduced to allow the new doorway to be widened to the point of the existing wall pier. Proposed lintel is to be positioned in line with the existing adjacent window lintels for continuity with the existing building design.

Landscaping & external surface materials
In order to provide a level access to the proposed toilets and a surface suitable for the use of wheelchairs it is proposed that a new level access footpath to the gable end boundary of the building is to be formed and that the existing stone flooring in the area be replaced with a natural stone effect resin bonded aggregate surfacing material, (graded to provide level access to Accessible Toilet). The proposed footpath will be positioned in a portion of an existing planting bed against the building, largely concealing this minor alteration to the landscaping. The footpath will be surfaced in natural stone effect resin bonded aggregate surfacing material and will be finished with stone copings to the planting bed perimeter as per existing. In order to provide an appropriately wide access route from the main park to the area immediately outside the proposed toilets entrance it is necessary to widen an existing stone garden wall opening. The wall will need to be partly disassembled, reduced in width and re-instated using the same stones and coping stones in the same stepped / sloping arrangement as before.

2 Proposals & Design

Internal fit out

Internally the two existing toilets that are to be extensively renovated are to be stripped out and new facilities are to be installed. The existing toilets interiors are of no architectural merit and are in a very poor condition. The proposed design will include suitably robust 'solid grade' cubicle units and accessories as well as new hard-wearing vinyl floor finish and hygienic wall cladding. All electrical and mechanical items will be replaced with new.

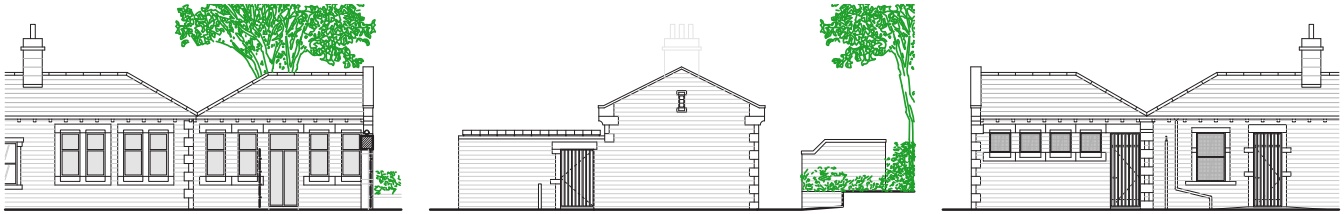
Security and gates

The existing over-door security gate and window cage to what will become the Male WC and Accessible WC access point are to be retained and redecorated. The proposed door and windows to what will become the Female WC access point are to have an over-door gate and cages to windows installed to match existing.

The existing toilets access gate and stopping post conflict with the proposed position of the new access footpath. To overcome this it is proposed that the existing gate be removed, modified and repositioned to open the other way round, as well as repositioning the stopping post to suit. Current there is a spiked / barbed anti-climb barrier to the end portion of the yard area retaining wall. Whist a security measure is required in this position the existing deterrent is considered inappropriate and it is proposed to replace this with a new non-aggressive deterrent such as 'roller barrier'.

Design

All the proposed alterations to the building will be done using complimentary / sympathetic materials and the design of the new windows will be as close as possible to the existing, (albeit in a new, more secure and robust material). All efforts will be made to reduce the visual impact of the development and the aesthetic of the building proposals will be in-keeping with the existing and remainder of Dewsbury Mansion House.



Proposed external elevations

3 Site Information

The proposed public toilets are situated in a building that connects to the adjacent Dewsbury Mansion House and have been public toilets, (either park or cafe), for a considerable amount of time. The section that is to become Male and Accessible Toilets is currently closed to the public but has most recently been used as a toilet to a now closed down cafe. The section of the building that is to become the Female Toilets has always been used as a public toilet as far as records go back.

Dewsbury Mansion House is situated within Crow Nest Park and is the most prominent building / landmark on the site. Located approximately one mile West of Dewsbury Town Centre, the park is easily accessible by car, is in walking distance for a large catchment of local residence and is situated adjacent to a frequent bus service stop, making it a well used public park.

Within the park, the Mansion House is situated adjacent to the car park and is one of a cluster of buildings that includes the Adventure Playground facility, making it an area of relative high footfall within the park, a good location for the public toilets. A main footpath to the side of the toilets position ensures the building receives high levels of exposure to park users.

The building being developed in this application is of local stone construction with pitched stone tiled roofs, cast rainwater goods and timber framed windows and doors, all typical of the area and matching the main adjacent Mansion House and other buildings in the vicinity. All design features that are proposed to be aesthetically maintained in the proposals in this application.

4 Access & Inclusion

Kirklees Council always aims to make it's buildings fully accessible and easy to navigate for people of all abilities and strives to go over and above the statutory regulations that relate to mobility issues, visual impairments and dementia type conditions. Despite the fact that this building is historic in nature and that the building is listed the proposals are to make the public toilets accessible to all and to comply with all current regulations and standards.

Currently there are no Accessible Toilets open to the public in the park and a key aim of the proposed works is to deliver a public toilet facility that caters for users of all abilities. Currently the toilets have a stepped access and there is no ambulant or accessible toilet facilities provided. Furthermore, the area of the site that is proposed to become the access point to the public toilets currently has no level access or compliant ramp access and has a very uneven stone floor finish. In order to rectify this the proposals are to form a new level access footpath around the building as well as a resurfaced natural stone effect resin bonded aggregate floor finish to the external area immediately outside of the toilets.

All other site wide pedestrian and vehicular circulation and access routes are to remain as exiting.

5 Further Information

Highways / Parking
The existing parking area within the site is to be retained as existing and it is not considered that any of the proposed works will effect any vehicular access routes around the site.

Site Drainage
All proposals requiring surface water / foul drainage will be directed towards existing drainage routes, manholes and gullies.

Environment
Trees / Soft Surfacing & Ecological Impact
Given that the site is within Crow Nest Park there are a large number of trees, vegetation and areas of planting immediately outside of the site boundary. However, other than a small strip of planting bed to be removed to form a level access footpath, it is not proposed that any trees or significant areas of vegetation are to be removed and all the existing natural environment will be retained as existing. The proposals will not effect any endangered species and it is considered that the proposals will not have any negative impact on any local wildlife.

Flooding / Drainage
The site does not appear in a flood risk zone and there will be no increase in built footprint following the proposed works. All existing below ground drainage will remain as existing.

Contamination / Pollution
The proposed areas of development to the site are not known to be contaminated and it is not considered that the proposals will have any detrimental effect on the surrounding environment.

6 Heritage

Historic Context
Dewsbury Mansion House was originally built early C18. as a large dwelling and was purchased by the Dewsbury Corporation in 1893, along with the estate grounds. In 1896 the building was opened to the public as a museum and the grounds became a public park. Originally exhibiting artefacts and natural history specimens, the museum received various exhibit changes and refurbishments over the years until its closure in 2016, the building has remained closed to the public since. The area of the building that this application relates to is labelled as pubic toilets on historic maps as early as 1933.

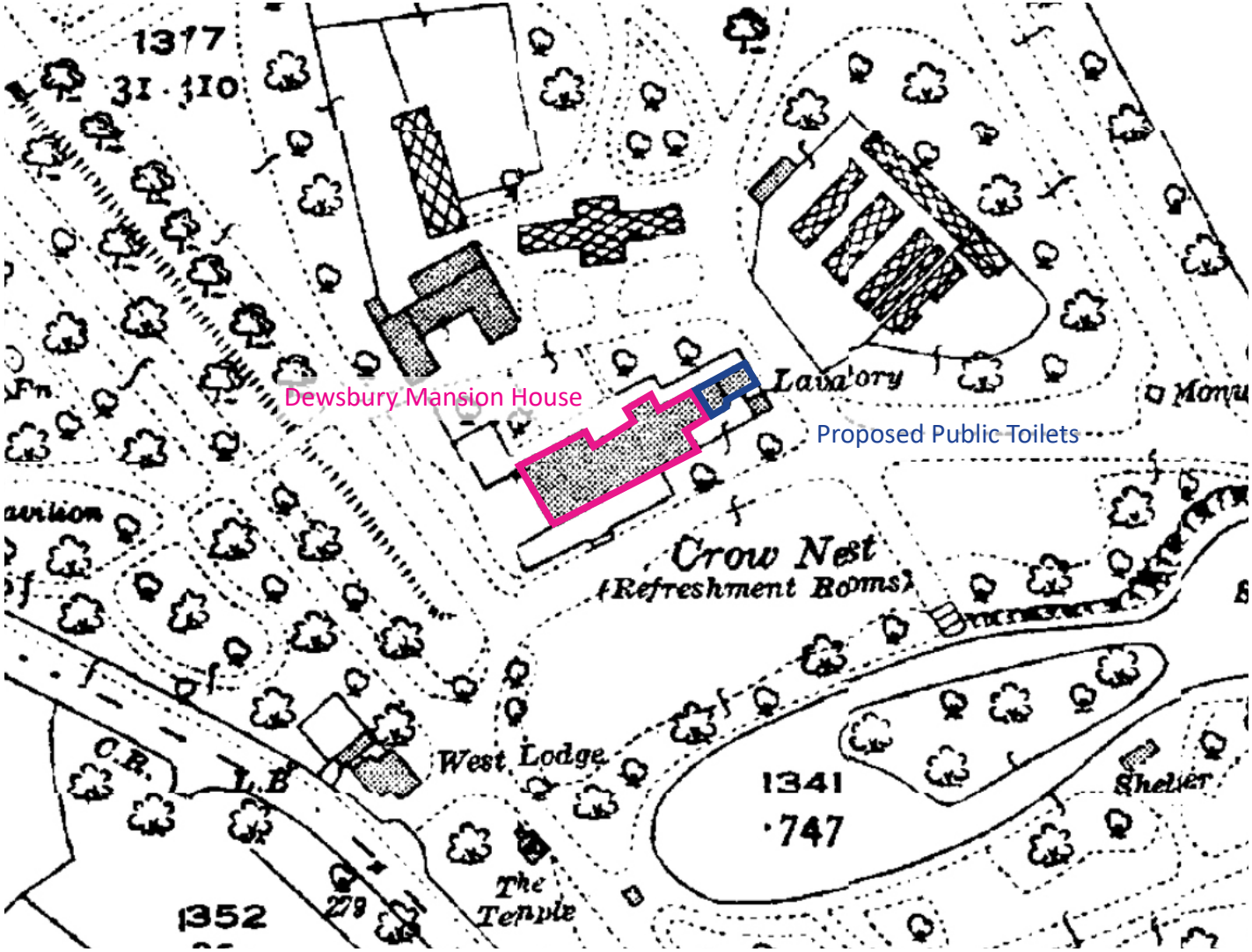
Planning
The most significant planning approval granted in relation to Dewsbury Mansion House was for the 'Erection of three storey extension containing toilets and passenger lift', (planning reference 2008/62/92763/E2), granted 24th April 2009.

Listings
Crow Nest Park itself and the Mansion House are both listed by Historic England as well as many other structures of significance in and around the site.

Crow Nest Park, Grade II, Listing Entry Number: 1001516
Crow Nest House, (Dewsbury Mansion House), Grade II, Listing Entry Number: 1300609

Additional Listings Within Crow Nest Park
Gatepiers and gates at Boothroyd Gate to crow nest park, Grade II, Listing Entry Number: 1134717
Coach House to Crow Nest House in Crow Nest Park, Grade II, Listing Entry Number: 1134724
First and Second World War Memorial in Crow Nest Park, Grade II, Listing Entry Number: 1134725
Gatepiers and Gates at West Town Gate to Crow Nest Park, Grade II, Listing Entry Number: 1134726
The Temple in Crow Nest Park, Grade II, Listing Entry Number: 1200735
South African War Memorial in Crow Nest Park, Grade II, Listing Entry Number: 1200743
Gatepiers and Gates at Burgh Lane Gate to Crow Nest Park, Grade II, Listing Entry Number: 1313640

6 Heritage



Historic 1933 site plan showing 'Lavatory' labelled in the same position as in this application

6 Heritage

Historical Development

The following text is taken from the "Historic England" website and details the Grade II listed building status of Dewsbury Mansion House, (entry number 1300609).

Large house. Early C18. Ashlar with rusticated quoins. Hipped, bitumen covered roof with ashlar stacks. Three storeys, 5 bays, the centre 3 crowned by pediment. Sash windows in architraves. Central door with deep rectangular fanlight, architrave, pulvinated frieze and cornice. Band over ground floor. To the left and right is a single bay addition, facade only, of 2 storeys, with cornice and blocking course. The one to right has been built behind. (Later additions further to right, not included in the item.) Later 5-light canted bay to left side, and recent extension. Rear elevation has central door with staircase window over. To right, one 8-light mullioned and transomed window with king mullion, and to left a later canted bay. To 1st floor two 10-light mullioned and transomed window, all double chamfered and with hood mould. Three sashes to 2nd floor.

Interior: central staircase in fourflights, with corniced treads, ramped, deep-moulded wooden rail, turned and carved balusters with gadrooning typical of work of 'York School of carvers'. Slightly simpler detailing to upper flights. Panelled, ramped staircase dado. Original panelling to two 1st floor rooms consisting of tall single, moulded raised panels above a dado. In one room the over- mantel breaks into the ceiling cornice consisting of a cyma moulding with leaf enrichment. The fireplace is marble of early C19 date. In the other room the fireplace is C19 set at an angle. 6-panel doors, one in walnut, though many are C19 replacements. Downstairs decoration appears to be mainly C19 with pedimented doorcases, panelled shutters, and panelled main ceiling. N. Pevsner, The Buildings of England, 1967.

Heritage Conclusion

From reading the above listing entry it would appear that the single storey toilets block of the building are not included in the listing specifically. However, given the proximity of the buildings in relation to the Mansion House and the context of being located within the listed park itself, extra care will have to be taken to ensure that the modifications to the building are done in a sympathetic manor and are in-keeping with the architecture and landscaping of the whole site.

Given that the works in this development are minor and that the design solutions proposed are visually consistent with the existing building it is considered that there will not be any detrimental effect to the historic nature of the site in any way. Furthermore the structures of historic importance located in the nearby area and the landscaping of the park itself will not be adversely effected in any way.

7 Conclusion

This Design, Access & Heritage Statement concludes that the proposed development to the public toilets in Crow Nest Park would have no adverse effect on any aspect of the immediate site, Dewsbury Mansion House, Crow Nest Park or the wider surrounding area. Because the alterations to the existing public toilets are minimal and that the only new opening proposed is to be done using in-keeping materials the visual impact on the area will be minimal.

Given that the existing public toilets are in a poor condition the proposed works will not only provide much needed enhanced facilities for the park users, they will also ensure that this historically important building receives much needed modifications and conditions works, safeguarding the building for the foreseeable future.

Furthermore, the access and accessibility to the public toilets and to this overall area of Dewsbury Mansion House will be vastly improved. There will be newly formed Accessible Toilet accommodation formed, opening the park facilities up to people of all abilities, something that is currently lacking.

Finally, the proposed toilet facilities will be built to contemporary building standards and will vastly increase the quality of the facilities available to the park users and it is therefore considered that the proposals outlined in this application would have only a positive impact on the site, Crow Nest Park and the wider surrounding areas.

Supporting drawings

P1 - Existing Floor Plans & Location Plan
P2 - Proposed Floor Plans
P3 - Existing & Proposed Elevations
P4 - Proposed Landscaping Details

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