

1. Introduction

This Statement has been prepared to support an application for planning permission and one for listed building consent at Moresby Hall, Whitehaven.

The planning application is a hybrid that is seeking full permission for the conversion of a barn and staff cottage to three holiday lets; and outline permission for demolition of former agricultural structures and erection of five dwellings including the associated infrastructure and reinstatement of an access.

The listed building consent application relates to alterations to the top floor accommodation and the selective installation of secondary glazing at the Hall; and the conversion of a barn and staff cottage to three holiday lets.

This Statement assesses the proposals with reference to relevant planning policies and legislation.

2. Site Description

Moresby Hall and associated outbuildings are located on the eastern side of the C4001 road leading to Parton and Lowca, circa 200m to the north of the junction with the A595.

The site lies within a historic landscape that includes the Church of St Bridget, a remnant chancel arch, and the site of the Roman fort of Gabrosentum.

The northern part of the Hall's curtilage contains former agricultural ranges and later structures, several of which are in a poor condition. A former barn provides a workshop/laundry on the ground floor with storage above ancillary to the use of the Hall as a boutique hotel. The building adjoining the barn (referred to as the "staff cottage") provides staff accommodation on the ground floor and storage on the first floor. There is also an attached two-storey barn in a ruinous condition without a roof and relatively large sections of walling. Retaining walls run broadly north-south along the western edge of the yard. Ground levels within the yard are lower than the public road to the west.

A row of cottages situated to the west of the Hall and a converted barn to the east are in separate ownership.

The designated heritage assets comprise: Moresby Hall (grade I); the entrance walls and gate piers to Moresby Hall (grade II); and the single storey former farm outbuilding to the north of the farmhouse (grade II).

Within the vicinity of the site, heritage assets also include: the Church of St Bridget (grade II); the Chancel Arch south of the Church of St Bridget (grade II); Britton's Tomb to the south of the Chancel (Grade II); the site of the Roman Fort of Gabrosentum; and part of the designated Hadrian's Wall World Heritage site/Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Lowca Beck flows parallel to the eastern boundary of Moresby Hall. According to the current Environment Agency Flood Map, Moresby Hall falls within Flood Zone 1 (i.e. low probability of flooding).

Under the Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit 2011 (CLCG), the Moresby Hall falls within landscape character sub-type 05d – Urban Fringe.

The C4001 is subject to a 30mph speed limit.

3. Planning History

There is a relatively extensive planning history for the Hall. Since 2007 the history is as follows:

In August 2007, applications 4/07/2476/0 and 4/07/2477/0, planning permission and listed building consent were given to remove an existing greenhouse/store and erect a conservatory.

In November 2007, application numbers 4/07/2625/0 and 4/07/2626/0, planning permission and listed building consent were granted to replace the existing waste water treatment plant.

In 2019, under application numbers 4/18/2242/0F1 and 4/18/2243/0L1, planning permission and listed building consent were issued for the repair and reconfiguration of existing structures to provide additional accommodation; erection of an extension on the site of the former Dutch barn to provide 10 letting rooms, and associated facilities/parking.

4. Background Information

The current owners of the Hall acquired the property in July 2023 and carried out improvements including short-term repairs to the roof. After 16 months in operation, it became clear that in order to make Moresby Hall a viable business and thereby conserve this historical asset, there was a need to not only invest in the maintenance and repair of the property but to bring use to the current dilapidated and unusable parts of the buildings as additional lettable rooms. Specifically, this involves further investment in the property comprising:

- the need for more comprehensive roof repairs involving the matching replacement of damaged slates, battens and associated membranes with the roof laid to match the existing;
- the need to insulate the roof using wood wool or sheep's wool;
- the need for refurbishment of the existing windows;
- the need for repairs to the stone window surrounds caused by "rust jacking" including localised stone replacement;
- the need for repairs to the external mortar where stone has receded and left a gap;
- the need for repairs/stabilisation to internal crumbling stonework;
- the need to remove the existing display kitchen and replacement with new commercial kitchen fittings and upgrade to orangery;
- the need for remedial repairs and refurbishment of the attic guest rooms to make suitable for family accommodation;
- the need for remedial repairs and conversion of the outbuildings (barn and staff cottage) to provide guest accommodation;
- the need to install partial and selective secondary glazing to windows.

In addition to the above, phased repairs were identified regarding the replacement of the existing cement render using hand tools and a lime based render.

Collectively, by carrying out the works the intention is to ensure the long-term future of the Hall.

Planning, Design and Access Statement

As a result, the owners have looked into the two available options, namely subsidised/grant funding, or the creation of additional value to cover the deficit. In the case of the former, the owners (through their membership of the listed Buildings Owners Club) have investigated additional heritage funding but without success.

In 2024, they pursued funding from the Rural England Prosperity Fund (a business development fund aimed at job creation as part of the last Government's Levelling Up agenda) . The project – phase 1 of the Moresby Hall Strategy - to develop the top floor into family bedrooms – was shortlisted for approval in a competitive process but the owners were subsequently notified that there were insufficient funds to approve it.

In the absence of any external funding in the foreseeable future to support the proposed investment, the owners are looking at the creation of additional value by the disposal of land previously the subject of application numbers 4/18/2242/OF1 and 4/18/2243/OL1 but with the benefit of a planning permission for an alternative scheme involving enabling development in the form of the erection of five dwellings.

5. Proposal

The hybrid planning application comprises two parts:

- a) a full planning application for the conversion of the barn and staff cottage to provide three holiday let units to revise the scheme previously approved under application numbers 4/18/2242/OF1 and 4/18/2243/OL1; and
- b) an outline application for enabling development comprising the demolition and clearance of dilapidated former agricultural structures and the erection of five dwellings including associated infrastructure and reinstatement of a vehicular access.

In relation to a), the scheme approved under 4/18/2242/OF1 and 4/18/2243/OL1 involved the retention of the existing laundry; conversion of the ground floor of the barn from a workshop to a holiday let unit; the conversion of the first floor store above the workshop to a let unit; the retention of the ground floor of the “staff cottage”; and two let bedrooms on the first floor of the staff cottage.

By way of comparison, the current proposal involves retaining the workshop and laundry but with three self-contained holiday let units utilising the first floor store and both floors of the staff cottage.

In relation to b), the proposed five new build dwellings are located on the land immediately to the north of the existing barns and the site of the 12 new build holiday lets previously approved under 4/18/2242/OF1 and 4/18/2243/OL1. The proposal involves the reinstatement of the vehicular access that served the agricultural buildings. The dwellings have been split into two semi-detached units and a terrace of three units.

The application for listed building consent concerns the installation of quality internal secondary glazing to some windows, alterations to the second floor to provide family suitable accommodation, and the conversion of the barn and staff cottage to provide three holiday lets for the hotel.

6. Planning Policy

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that any application for planning permission is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan comprises the Copeland Local Plan (CLP) 2021-2039 the relevant policies of which comprise: Strategic Policy DS1 (Settlement Hierarchy); Strategic Policy DS2 (Settlement Boundaries); Policy DS4 (Design and Development Standards); Policy DS5 (Hard and Soft Landscaping); Strategic Policy DS6 (Reducing Flood Risk); Policy DS7 (Sustainable Drainage); Policy DS8 (Soils, Contamination and Land Stability); T1 (Tourism Development); Policy T2 (Tourism Development along the Developed Coast); Policy H13 (Conversion and sub-division of buildings to residential uses); Policy H17 (Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use); Strategic Policy N1 (Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity); Strategic Policy N3 (Biodiversity Net Gain); Policy N5 (Protection of Water Resources); Strategic Policy N6 (Landscape Protection); Strategic Policy BE1 (Heritage Assets); Policy BE2 (Designated Heritage Assets); Policy BE3 (Archaeology); Policy BE4 (Non-Designated Heritage Assets); Strategic Policy CO4 (Sustainable Travel); and Policy CO7 (Parking Standards and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure).

At a local level there is also the Cumbria Development Design Guide and the Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit.

At a national level, other material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework/NPPF), Planning Practice Guidance, Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Historic England's Good Practice Advice Notes.

The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework/NPPF) highlights the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 84b of the NPPF indicates that enabling development may be an acceptable exception to the restriction on isolated homes in the countryside.

Paragraph 88 of the NPPF supports the rural economy stating that planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all businesses in rural areas through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings as well as diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses and sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

The NPPF goes on to explain where a development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use (para. 215).

In addition, paragraph 221 of the NPPF states that:

“Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.”

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 highlights the statutory duties of Local Planning Authorities whilst exercising of their powers in respect of listed buildings. The section states that:

"In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".

The key points from Historic England's Good Practice Advice Note 4 include:

- The case for enabling development rests on there being a "conservation deficit". Simply put, this is the amount by which the cost of repair (and conversion to optimum viable use if appropriate) of a heritage asset exceeds its market value on completion of repair or conversion, allowing for appropriate development costs.
- The sums of money generated through enabling development are provided to directly solve the conservation needs of the place, not to solve the financial needs of the present owner, to support/finance a business or to compensate for the purchase price paid for the site. The amount of enabling development that can be justified will be the minimum amount necessary in order to address the conservation deficit and to secure the long-term future of the assets.
- The defining characteristic of enabling development is that it would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset if other reasonable efforts have failed, and the balance articulated in NPPF paragraph 208 is met, i.e. the future conservation of the asset is secured and the disbenefits of departing from conflicting planning policies are outweighed by the benefits.
- Repairing existing defects is an obvious part of securing the future conservation of the asset. Providing for the asset's maintenance thereafter and for the foreseeable future is a different but equally important concern, which may be achieved through finding the optimum viable and therefore sustainable use of the asset.

The "Conservation Deficit" is defined by Historic England as:

"The amount by which the cost of repair (and conversion to optimum viable use if appropriate) of a heritage asset exceeds its market value on completion of repair and conversion, allowing for all appropriate development costs."

Assessment

In this context, it is considered that the key issues revolve around:

- the principle of residential development;
- enabling development – new dwellings;
- impact on heritage assets (including archaeology);
- visual impact;
- living conditions;
- Biodiversity Net Gain;
- drainage and flood risk;
- highway safety; and
- the planning balance.

Hybrid Application Seeking Full Permission For Conversion Of Barn And Staff Cottage To 3 No. Holiday Lets; And Outline Permission For Demolition Of Former Agricultural Structures And Erection Of 5 No. Dwellings Including Infrastructure/Reinstated Access At Moresby Hall, Moresby, Whitehaven. CA28 6PJ



Planning, Design and Access Statement

Principle

Paragraph 84 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should avoid isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker;
- b) the development would represent the optimum viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development;
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
- e) the design is of exceptional quality.

Paragraph 221 of the NPPF goes on to say that local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

Under Strategic Policy T1 (Tourism Development), the authority will support proposals for tourism development that involves the change of use of an existing building to provide overnight or longer stay visitor accommodation.

Policy H1 of the CLP 2021-2039 explains that the authority will approve housing development on appropriate windfall sites within the settlement boundaries where it accords with the Development Plan.

When applied to the current proposal, it is evident that the principle of the conversion of the barn and staff cottage to visitor accommodation has already been accepted in 2019 under application numbers 4/18/2242/OF1 and 4/18/2243/OL1. The conversion of the structures is also consistent with Policy T1 of the CLP 2021-2039.

The proposed five new build dwellings do not, however, comply with the underlying objectives of Policy H1 of the CLP 2021-2039 but are consistent with the principle as identified under paragraph 84 b) of the NPPF.

On this basis, it is considered that both the conversion and the new build elements are acceptable in principle.

Enabling Development

Historic England in its Good Practice Advice Note 4 “Enabling Development and Heritage Assets” (GPA4) defines enabling development as being “*development that would not be in compliance with local and/or national planning policies, and not normally be given planning permission, except for the fact that it would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset.*”

It is recognised that the viability appraisal process is not an exact science. In reality, the level of return will be influenced by a wide range of factors including prevailing market conditions. The accompanying “Development Appraisal and Investment Plan” (DAIP) confirms:

- a) the existing value of the building(s) as £00.00
- b) the total development costs (Phase 1 and Phase 2 works and any associated costs such as professional fees/site works) as circa £536,935;
- c) the market value of the Hall/outbuildings once the works have been completed as circa £318,500;
- d) the resultant conservation deficit being circa £218,488; and
- e) the revenue derived from the sale of the land as circa £217,500.

Hybrid Application Seeking Full Permission For Conversion Of Barn And Staff Cottage To 3 No. Holiday Lets; And Outline Permission For Demolition Of Former Agricultural Structures And Erection Of 5 No. Dwellings Including Infrastructure/Reinstated Access At Moresby Hall, Moresby, Whitehaven. CA28 6PJ



Planning, Design and Access Statement

On this basis, the DAIP concludes that the proposed conservation deficit is offset by the proposed enabling development (identified as Option 1) in compliance with the tests set out in GPA4, as follows:

- The new build dwellings would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset – Moresby Hall is a grade I listed building and the associated outbuildings, grade II.
- There is a conservation deficit – this has been demonstrated through the submitted DAIP.
- The sums of money generated through enabling development are provided to directly solve the conservation needs of the place – the DAIP demonstrates that five dwellings are required to enable the works to take place.
- Other reasonable efforts have failed – the applicant has pursued grant funding to no avail. In the context of the holiday let accommodation and hotel use, the proposed new build dwellings are considered to be the most appropriate.
- Repairing defects – the Hall, Barn and staff cottage are in need of repairs and upgrading work to secure their future.
- The heritage and any other public benefits it would secure would outweigh the disbenefits of departing from planning policy – without providing the funding through enabling development and securing the continued use for providing holiday accommodation, it is not clear how the heritage assets could be effectively maintained in the future. It is likely that the Hall and outbuildings will fall into disrepair and the heritage asset eventually lost.

The proposal is therefore in accordance with the advice in GPA4 and the need for enabling development is genuinely necessary.

Heritage (including Archaeology)

Strategic Policy BE1 (Heritage Assets) of the CLP 2021-2039 requires heritage assets and their settings to be preserved and enhanced and this, amongst other things, is to be achieved by:

- ensuring that new development is sympathetic to local character and history; and
- supporting proposals for the appropriate reuse of vacant historic buildings, recognising that putting buildings into viable uses consistent with their conservation can help sustain and enhance their significance.

Under Policy BE2 (Designated Heritage Assets) development should preserve or enhance designated heritage assets (or an archaeological site of national importance) and their setting. Where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Policy BE3 (Archaeology) requires proposals affecting archaeological sites of less than national importance/local significance to preserve those elements which contribute to their significance in line with the importance of the remains.

At the time of processing applications 4/18/2242/0F1 and 4/18/2243/0L1, Historic England described Moresby Hall as being one of the most notable and distinctive early classical houses in the North West. The available records indicate that the associated walled gardens date from the 17th century and the grade II listed outbuilding date from the late 18th and 19th century. The gardens may also contain archaeology from earlier settlements.

The application includes a Heritage Statement, a Watching Brief, and an Archaeology Assessment Summary that references the findings and recommendations of the Archaeological Assessment that accompanied the previous applications 4/18/2242/0F1 and 4/18/2243/0L1.

Hybrid Application Seeking Full Permission For Conversion Of Barn And Staff Cottage To 3 No. Holiday Lets; And Outline Permission For Demolition Of Former Agricultural Structures And Erection Of 5 No. Dwellings Including Infrastructure/Reinstated Access At Moresby Hall, Moresby, Whitehaven. CA28 6PJ



Planning, Design and Access Statement

When assessing the effects of the proposed development with reference to Tables 1 and 2 of the “*Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*” issued by ICOMOS (2011), it is considered that the impact of the proposed work to the second floor and installation of secondary glazing to the Hall to fall within the “negligible/minor” extent of less than substantial harm.

In relation to the conversion of the outbuildings (barn and staff cottage), this element of the proposal will lead to slight changes to historic building elements or the setting that hardly affect those assets. On the basis that Moresby Hall has a very high value, such a negligible change can be considered to lead to a “slight” effect on its significance within the less than substantial spectrum of harm.

In relation to the new build dwellings, inclusive of the works to the derelict barn, the impact on the Hall is considered to be “moderate” within the less than substantial category of harm.

For St. Bridget’s Church and the Chancel Arch, the main issue revolves around the impact of the proposed dwellings on the existing rural setting. This impact is considered to also fall within the moderate scale of less than substantial harm.

It is recognised that the site has potential buried archaeological assets concerning the Roman fort of Gabrosentum and its associated civilian settlement which could be disturbed. As per the previous permission granted under application 4/18/2242/Of1, this can be addressed by the imposition of a pre-commencement condition requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological works and recording where necessary.

Views of the proposed residential development from the site of the Roman Fort of Gabrosentum; and part of the designated Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage site/Scheduled Ancient Monument would be restricted because of the presence of St. Bridget’s Church. It is considered that the proposed residential development would not materially harm the ability to appreciate and understand Roman military planning.

Character & Appearance

Policy N6 (Landscape Protection) of the CLP 2021-2039 requires development to conserve and enhance the distinctive characteristics of a particular area in a manner commensurate with their statutory status and value.

Moresby Hall falls within landscape character sub-type 05d – Urban Fringe as identified in the Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit 2011 (CLCG), the key characteristics of which consist of: long term influences on agricultural land; recreation, large scale buildings and industrial estates are common; mining and opencast coal workings are found around Keeble and Moor Row; and wooded valleys, restored woodland and some semi-urbanised woodland provide some interest.

The guidelines for development in the CLCG for a sub-type 05d landscape include taking opportunities to enhance and strengthen green infrastructure; protect the countryside from sporadic and peripheral development; the careful siting of any new development in non-prominent locations; and to conserve and maintain traditional farm buildings within their own setting.

In relation the conversion of the barn and staff cottage, the buildings will remain as part of the existing courtyard.

The proposed dwellings will visually lead to development where there has been in the past but where this is currently not the case. Although views of the proposed residential development would be relatively localised, it would be clearly visible from public vantage points and, as such contrast with its rural character.

Hybrid Application Seeking Full Permission For Conversion Of Barn And Staff Cottage To 3 No. Holiday Lets; And Outline Permission For Demolition Of Former Agricultural Structures And Erection Of 5 No. Dwellings Including Infrastructure/Reinstated Access At Moresby Hall, Moresby, Whitehaven. CA28 6PJ



Planning, Design and Access Statement

This is, however, in the backdrop that, as enabling development, the proposed new build dwellings are consistent with the principle as identified under paragraph 84 b) of the NPPF.

Living Conditions

When considering living conditions, the main issues revolve around whether any element of the proposal could be considered to be oppressive; cause overshadowing/losses in light (daylight/visible sky and sunlight); and/or be detrimental to the privacy of the occupiers of any neighbouring property.

Based on the separation distances, the respective levels and heights of the existing and proposed units, it is considered that the scheme will neither lead to any oppressive features nor cause overshadowing/losses in light such as to warrant the refusal of permission.

It is recognised that the proposal will introduce development that interacts with existing dwellings in terms of its proximity and the presence of buildings and domestic settings but based on the compatibility of the end use and the limited scale, it also considered that any increase of activity does not merit the refusal of permission..

Biodiversity Net Gain

The application is accompanied by a completed metric and letter explaining that the intention is to purchase units for off-site mitigation and provide a net gain by at least 10% in biodiversity in compliance with Policy N3 of the CLP 2021-2039.

Drainage & Flood Risk

Policy DS7 (Sustainable Drainage) of the CLP 2021-2039 states that new development must incorporate sustainable drainage systems. Under Policy DS7 surface water is to be discharged in the following order of priority:

1. To a suitable soakaway or some other form of infiltration system
2. An attenuated discharge to a surface water body such as a watercourse giving full consideration to the catchment and sub-catchments
3. An attenuated discharge to a public surface water sewer, highway drain or another discharge system where there is clear evidence, to the satisfaction of the Council, that alternative preferred options are not available
4. An attenuated discharge to a public combined sewer where there is clear evidence, to the satisfaction of the Council, that alternative preferred options are not available

Foul drainage from the proposed new dwellings is to connect into the existing UU network (combined sewer) with the surface water drainage using permeable paving and below ground infiltration soakaways/crates in accordance with Policy DS7.

There are no issues in relation to flood risk.

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Highway Safety

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that:

“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”

Criterion f) of Policy DS4 (Design and Development Standards) of the CLP 2021-2039 requires development not to give rise to severe impacts on highway safety and/or severe impact on the capacity of the highway network; and allow for the safe access and manoeuvring of refuse/recycling vehicles.

The application site falls within a 30mph speed limit with the accompanying plans showing the reinstated access to have visibility splays in compliance with the standards in the Cumbria Development Design Guide.

In summary, the reinstated access provides safe access to the highway and the cumulative impacts on the road network of 5 extra dwellings would not be material in this location. The indicative layout demonstrates that there is sufficient space for parking and turning within the site.

7. Planning Balance/Conclusion

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that any application for planning permission is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Paragraph 81 of Historic England’s GPA4 states:

“To meet the policy in NPPF paragraph 202 [now 221], an enabling development proposal can only be considered for approval if it provides benefits that outweigh the disbenefits, and where the decision-maker is confident that the scheme would secure the conservation of the heritage asset(s) – this involves assessing the position now and considering the asset’s future. Whether the complete solution deals with the conservation of the totality of the heritage asset(s), or with a core group (as in paragraph 17 above), it is good practice to take the decision in the light of a realistic view of the consequences of refusal.”

Moresby Hall is an important local landmark but the condition of the building and associated running costs mean that it is unaffordable to carry out the necessary works. In order to justify the required expenditure, which cannot be justified if judged in a purely commercial context, the owners need to create an equivalent amount of value.

In such circumstances, the owners have not been able to subsidise the works through grant funding and, therefore, are seeking enabling development. The principle being that the additional value is created by the grant of planning permission for development that would normally be contrary to policy but is allowable in circumstances where the value that it generates is equivalent to the loss on the heritage conservation.

With reference to paragraphs 213 and 214 of the Framework, in finding harm to the significance of designated heritage assets, the magnitude of that harm should be assessed.

Hybrid Application Seeking Full Permission For Conversion Of Barn And Staff Cottage To 3 No. Holiday Lets; And Outline Permission For Demolition Of Former Agricultural Structures And Erection Of 5 No. Dwellings Including Infrastructure/Reinstated Access At Moresby Hall, Moresby, Whitehaven. CA28 6PJ



Planning, Design and Access Statement

Given the extent of the works relative to the recognised heritage assets, it is considered that harm will arise to the setting of Moresby Hall and St. Bridget's Church. This is, in particular, because the height of the proposed dwellings will be perceptible when seen in the context of the neighbouring buildings and the associated impact on the rural setting.

This harm is mitigated to a degree because the proposal should not result in visual dominance i.e. overwhelm either the Hall or Church; will retain historical approaches to and from the Church; and not encroach into the curtilage of either the Hall or Church.

On this basis, it is considered that the harm is 'less than substantial' in this instance but, nevertheless, of considerable importance and weight. Under such circumstances, paragraph 215 advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the development, which includes securing the asset's optimum viable use.

In this case, the development would result in heritage related public benefits including assisting in maintaining a grade I listed building in an optimal viable use and delivering wider economic benefits to the local economy.

When weighing up the planning balance, it is considered that the gains would outweigh the harm.

Consequently, the proposed development is considered to be consistent with the requirements of section 66(1) of the Act, the relevant provisions of the Framework, and Policies BE1 and BE2 of the CLP 2021-2039.