

## HERITAGE STATEMENT

**Outline planning permission for residential development (up to 5 dwellings) including access with all other matters reserved for later approval**

**at**

**Land to the east of The Old Vicarage, Main Road, Wigtoft**



**Project Ref. 19049-001-02**

**Client Mr G Scrupps**

**February 2021**

**Rev.001**

**Planning • Architecture • Design**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Sensus Architecture Ltd has been commissioned by Mr Scrupps to carry out a Built Heritage Assessment of the proposed planning application at land to the east of The Old Vicarage, on the south side of Main Road as shown on the Site Location Plan below:



Figure 1: Proposed Site Plan.



Figure 2: Google Aerial image of site.

- 1.2 The application site is located in between existing residential development, namely Ashby House to the west and The Old Post Office to the east. The site is an area mainly laid to grass which forms part of land in ownership of The Old Vicarage but due to the siting of outbuildings buildings and hedging that demarcate the curtilage and garden to this property, and its tennis court to the south, it an unused area that has become separated from the rest of the site.
- 1.3 This application seeks planning permission for outline planning permission for the residential development of up to 5 dwellings with all matters reserved for latter approval. This application is a re-submission of B/20/0123 to address the 3 reasons for refusal:

- 1. The proposed development of up to five dwellings will, as a result of the number of dwellings proposed, the size of the site and the characteristics of the surrounding environment, pose as an incongruous and alien form of development which will be incompatible with the nature and pattern of the surrounding built environment and will appear cramped, awkward and over-developed. This proposal is therefore contrary to the objectives of Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2011-2036).*
- 2. Insufficient evidence has been submitted which demonstrates that this development will preserve the setting of The Old Vicarage, which is a grade II listed building or its curtilage buildings which are also protected listed buildings, in accordance with the requirements of section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Furthermore, the proposal fails to meet the objectives of Policy 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2011-2036) or the objectives of section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment of the NPPF (2019).*
- 3. Insufficient evidence has been submitted which demonstrates that this development will preserve the character and appearance of the Wigtoft Conservation Area in accordance with the requirements of section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Furthermore, the proposal fails to meet the objectives of policy 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2011-2036) or the objectives of section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment of the NPPF (2019).*

- 1.4 It is a well-established principle of good conservation practice that ‘understanding’ should inform the management of change in the historic environment. One of Historic England’s Conservation Principles is that *‘understanding the significance of places is vital... in order to identify the significance of a place, it is necessary first to understand its fabric and how and why it has changed over time’*. Gaining understanding should not be seen as burdensome, but as a necessary part of the responsible management of change. It should help to avoid negative impacts and be aimed towards achieving creative and sensitive solutions.
- 1.5 This Built Heritage Statement provides information with regards to the significance of the historic environment to fulfil the requirement given in paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF<sup>1</sup>) which requires an applicant to:
- “describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting”*
- 1.6 In order to meet this requirement, local authorities normally now require a Heritage Statement to be prepared to inform and accompany proposals affecting heritage assets. As required by paragraph 189 of the NPPF, the detail and assessment in this report is considered to be:
- ‘proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance’.*
- 1.7 Heritage assets can include a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including any local listing).
- 1.8 A Heritage Statement should therefore provide the Local Planning Authority with enough information to adequately understand the impact of the proposals on the significance of any heritage assets affected.
- 1.9 The following sections of this Heritage Statement set out details of the nearby heritage assets, using photographic and documentary evidence. It includes an assessment of the architectural, and historical significance of the asset, including an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the asset, together with justification for the design and layout of the development and details of any mitigation measures proposed.
- 1.10 This Heritage Statement should be read in conjunction with the planning application and the supporting indicative plans and documents.

## **2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION**

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<sup>1</sup> NPPF Revised February 2019

- 2.1 The application site is land within the ownership of The Old Vicarage, a Grade II listed building. The site is an area mainly laid to grass with a hedge forming the front boundary to Main Road. A telegraph pole is also sited at the frontage. There is a row of leylandii trees along the western part of the site.
- 2.2 The site is located within the Wigtoft village settlement limits (as identified within the South East Lincolnshire local Plan [SELLP]). The site is also located within the Wigtoft Village Conservation Area [CA] and lies opposite the Grade I listed Church of St Peter and St Paul.

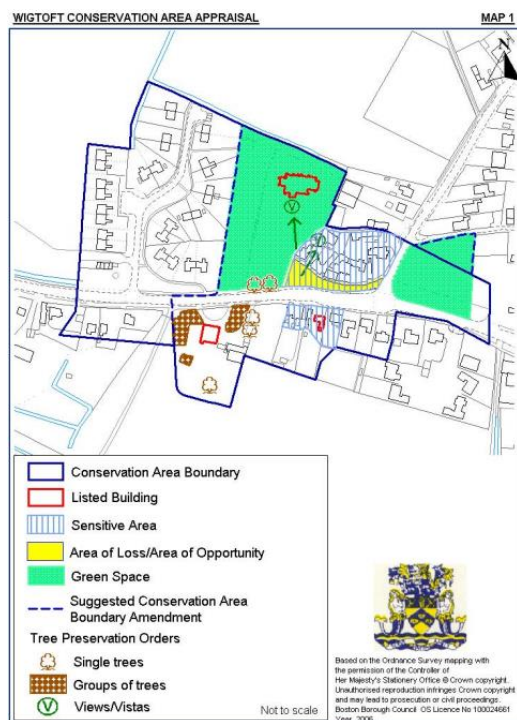


Figure 3: Extract from Conservation Area Appraisal.

## Site Development

- 2.3 Wigtoft is typical of many settlements that grew up along main routes in and out of villages. It has a linear character with buildings strung out along its main spine road. There are distinctive historic buildings of two storeys, but the townscape is by no means homogenous. The evolution of the area is set out in the Wigtoft Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 2.4 For the purpose of this heritage assessment the buildings and streetscape along Asperton Road and part of Main Road within the Conservation Area are included.
- 2.5 The village has a rural character and along the Main Road, development is mixed in character, with some development set back from the road and others sited close to the pavement edge.





Fig.4: Existing street scene looking west towards the site



Fig.5: Site from Main Road, looking across the Old Post Office.



Fig.6: Site from Main Road showing existing hedge and telegraph pole



Fig.7: Site from Main Road looking towards The Old Vicarage (white building)



Fig.8: Site from Main Road looking the secondary access serving The Old Vicarage.

### 3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 This application seeks outline planning permission for residential development of the site for up to 5 plots. Indicative drawings have been provided in the Design and Access Statement showing how the site could be developed.
- 3.2 Section 7 of this Report presents an analysis of the harm or benefits of the proposed development on the identified heritage assets discussed at Section 2.

### 4.0 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The aims of this Built Heritage Statement are to assess the contribution that the Site makes to the heritage significance of the surrounding designated heritage asset, and to identify any harm or benefit to them which may result from the implementation of the proposals, along with any level of harm caused, if relevant.



## **Site Visit**

- 4.2 A Site Visit was undertaken by Sensus Architecture during October 2019, during which the surrounds were assessed. The visibility on this day was clear.

## **Sources**

- 4.3 The following key sources have been consulted as part of this assessment:

- The National Heritage List for England
- Boston Borough Council (Wigtoft) City Council Conservation Area Appraisal
- Aerial photographs and satellite imagery
- Historic Environment Department at Lincolnshire County Council

- 4.4 In the NPPF, a Heritage asset is defined as:

*‘A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)’.*

- 4.5 In the NPPF, Heritage significance is defined as:

*‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance’.*

- 4.6 Historic England’s Historic Environment Good Practice advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment (henceforth referred to as ‘GPA 2: Managing Significance’) gives advice on the assessment of the significance as part of the application process. It advises understanding the nature, extend, level of significance of a heritage asset. In order to do this, GPA2: Managing Significance also advocates considering the four types of heritage value an asset may hold, as identified in Historic England’s Conservation Principles<sup>2</sup>; *aesthetic, communal, historic* and *evidential*. These essentially cover the heritage ‘interests’ given in the glossary of the NPPF, which comprise *archaeological, artistic* and *historic*.

- Evidential value: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- Historical value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present – it tends to be illustrative or associative.
- Aesthetic value: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

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<sup>2</sup> English Heritage 2008 *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*

- Communal value: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

4.7 Significance results from the combination of any, some or all of the values described above.

### ***Setting and Significance***

4.8 As defined in the NPPF:

*‘Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting’.*

4.9 Setting is defined as:

*‘The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral’.*

4.10 Therefore, setting can contribute to, affect an appreciation of the significance or be neutral with regards to heritage views.

4.11 It is also important to note that whilst physical or visual connection between a heritage asset and its setting will often exist, it is not essential or determinative. This was recently considered in a High Court Judgement<sup>3</sup> where it was concluded that:

*‘The term setting is not defined in purely visual terms in the NPPF which refers to the “surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced”. The word “experienced” has a broad meaning, which is capable of extending beyond the purely visual’.*

### ***Assessing change though alteration to setting***

4.12 How setting might contribute to these values has been assessed within this report with reference to Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (henceforth referred to as GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets), particularly the checklist given on page 9. This advocates the clear articulation of *‘what matters and why’*

4.13 In GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets, a stepped approach is recommended, of which Step 1 is to identify the heritage assets affected and their setting. Step 2 is to assess *‘whether, how and to what degree settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s)’*. The guidance includes a (non-exhaustive) check-list of elements of the physical surroundings of an asset that might be considered when undertaking the assessment, including, among other things: topography, other heritage assets, land use, green space, functional relationships, degree of change over time and integrity. It also lists points associated with the experience of the asset which might be

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<sup>3</sup> EWHC 1456, Steer v. Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Catesby Estates Limited, Amber Valley Borough Council, 2017.



considered, including views, intentional indivisibility, tranquillity, sense of enclosure, accessibility rarity and associative relationships.

- 4.14 Step 3 is to assess the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the asset(s), Step 4 is '*maximising enhancement and minimising harm*'. Step 5 is '*making and documenting the decision monitoring outcomes*'.
- 4.15 Descriptions of significance will naturally anticipate the ways in which impacts will be considered. Hence descriptions of the listed building will make reference to any special historic or architectural features it possesses.

### ***Levels of significance***

- 4.16 Two levels of significance are identified in the NPPF and the National Planning Guidance:
- Designated Heritage Asset: '*A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation*'
  - Non-Designated Heritage Asset: '*These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated heritage assets. In some areas, local authorities identify some non-designated heritage assets as 'locally listed'*<sup>4</sup>

### ***Why is significance important?***

- 4.17 As set out in the National Planning Guidance:
- 'Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals'*<sup>5</sup>

### ***Assessment of Harm***

- 4.18 Assessment of any harm will be articulated in terms of the policy and the law that the proposed development will be assessed against, such as whether the proposed development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of a Conservation Area or preserves the architectural and historic interest of a listed building, and articulating the scale of any harm in order to inform a balanced judgement/weighing exercise as required by the NPPF.
- 4.19 In order to relate key policy, the following levels of harm may be potentially identified:

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<sup>4</sup> National Planning Guidance: Paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20140306

<sup>5</sup> Paragraph 009 Reference ID: 18a-009-2014306

- *Substantial harm or total loss.* It has been clarified in the High Court Judgement of 2013<sup>6</sup> that this would be harm that would 'have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated although or very much reduced.
- *Less than substantial harm.* Harm of a lesser level than that identified above.

- 4.20 It is also possible that a development will cause no harm or preserve the significance of heritage assets. A High Court Judgement of 2014<sup>7</sup> is relevant to this. This concluded that with regards to preserving the setting of a Listed Building or preserving the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, '*preserving*' means '*doing no harm*'.
- 4.21 Preservation does not mean no change: it specifically means no harm. GPA 2: Managing Significance states that '*Change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged*'. Thus, change is accepted in Historic England's guidance as part of the evolution of the landscape and the environment. It is whether such change is neutral, harmful or beneficial to the significance of an asset that matters.
- 4.22 As part of this, setting may be a key consideration. For an evaluation of any harm to significance though changes to the setting, this assessment follows the methodology given in GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets, described above. Again, fundamental to the methodology of this document is stating '*what matters and why*'. Of relevance is the checklist given on page 11 of GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets.
- 4.23 It should be noted that this key document states that:  
  
*'setting is not a heritage asset, not a heritage designation'*.
- 4.24 Hence any impacts are described in terms of how they affect the significance of a heritage asset, and heritage values that contribute to significance, though changes to setting,
- 4.25 With regards to changes in setting GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets states that '*protection of the setting of heritage assets need not prevent change*'.
- 4.26 Additionally, it is also important to note that, as clarified in the Court of Appeal<sup>8</sup>, whilst the statutory duty requires that special regard should be paid to the desirability of not harming the setting of a Listed Building, that cannot mean that any harm, however minor, would necessarily require planning permission to be refused.

### **Benefits**

- 4.27 Proposed development may also result in benefits to heritage assets, and these are articulated in terms of how they enhance the heritage values and hence significance of the assets concerned.

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<sup>6</sup> EWHC 2847, R DCLG and Nuon UK Ltd v. Bedford Borough Council.

<sup>7</sup> EWHC 1895, R (Forge Field Society, Barraud and Rees) v. Sevenoaks DC, West Kent Housing Association and Viscount De L'Isle.

<sup>8</sup> Palmer v Herefordshire Council & Anor [2016] EWCA CIV 1061 (04 November 2016).

## **5.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 This section of the statement sets out the legislation and planning policy considerations and guidance contained within both national and local guidance which specifically relates to the application site, with a focus on those policies relating to the protection of the historic environment.

### ***Legislation***

- 5.2 Legislation relating to the Built Historic Environment is primarily set out within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 5.3 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:
- In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.*
- 5.4 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:
- ‘In considering whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] 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’*
- 5.5 *In the 2014 Court of Appeal judgement<sup>9</sup> in relation to the Barnwell Manor case, Sullivan LJ held that:*
- ‘Parliament in enacting section 66(1) did intend that the desirability of preserving the settings of listed buildings should not simply be careful consideration by the decision-maker for the purpose of deciding whether there would be some harm but should be given “considerable importance and weight” when the decision-maker carries out the balancing exercise’.*
- 5.6 Recent judgement in the Court of Appeal (Mordue) has clarified that, with regards to the setting of listed buildings, where principles of the NPPF are applied, this is in keeping with the requirement of the 1990 Act.
- 5.7 Notwithstanding the statutory presumption set out within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### ***National Policy Guidance***

- 5.8 National policy guidance is set out in the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) revised February 2019.

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<sup>9</sup> East Northamptonshire District Council c SSCLG (2015) EWCA Civ 137

- 5.9 Overall, the NPPF confirms that the primary objective of development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable development, not to hinder or prevent it. Local Authorities should approach development management decisions positively, looking for solutions rather than problems so that applications can be approved wherever it is practical to do so. Additionally, securing the optimum viable use of sites to achieving public benefits are also key material considerations for application proposal.
- 5.10 Section 16 of the NPPF set out the National Policy with regards to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 5.11 *As set out later in this statement, it can be demonstrated that the proposals would not harm and serve to enhance the setting of the nearby listed buildings and character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Thus, planning permission should be granted.*

### **National Planning Guidance**

- 5.12 The Department for Communities and Local Government launched the planning practice web-based resource in March 2014 (the PPG). The PPG has a section on the subject of 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' which confirms that the consideration of 'significance' in decision making is important.
- 5.13 In terms of assessment of harm, the PPG confirms that whether a proposal causes harm, be it substantial, less than substantial or no harm at all, will be a judgement for the individual decision maker having regard to the individual circumstances of the proposal.

### **Local Planning Policy**

- 5.14 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that "where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise".
- 5.15 The development plan consists of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2011-2036)
- 5.16 The following LP Planning Policies apply to this site and to the objectives of the development:
- Policy 1 – Spatial Strategy
  - Policy 2 – Development Management
  - Policy 3 – Design of New Development
  - Policy 4 – Approach to Flood Risk
  - Policy 10 – Meeting Assessed Housing Requirements
  - Policy 11 – Distribution of New Housing
  - Policy 17 – Providing a Mix of Housing
  - Policy 25 – The Historic Environment
  - Policy 31 – Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy



- Policy 33 – Delivering a More Sustainable Transport Network
- Policy 36 – Vehicle and Cycle Parking

### ***Supplementary Planning Documents***

#### 5.17 Wigtoft Conservation Area Appraisal

## **6.0 THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT**

6.1 As set out above, the sits within the Wigtoft Conservation Area and within the setting of grade II listed buildings. The historic area can be summarised as:

### **Conservation Area**

6.1 The site lies within the Wigtoft Conservation Area.

6.3 The *Special Interest* of the Wigtoft Conservation Area is summarised as follows in the WCA:

‘Wigtoft is a small rural settlement in the fens which is centred around the fine limestone church with its large green churchyard. It has a variety of traditional dwellings around the core area which form the nucleus of the Conservation Area’ (WCA: 3.1)

6.4 In terms of its *Historic development* the following is also reported within the WCA:

‘The Wigtoft name was known variously as Wigetoft, Wichetoft and Wiketoft in the 1180s. It is thought to possibly be derived from the Old Norse ‘vik’ meaning small creek, inlet or bay. Toft is a well-known second part of a place name, meaning a ‘messuage or curtilage’. This name may relate to its location near the Bicker Haven, which was in earlier times a haven from the wash. The place name suggests a foundation after the 9th century’. (WCA: 5.1)

‘The medieval church of SS. Peter and Paul has its origins in the 12th century and was first mentioned in the Pipe Rolls of 1180. The parish includes three outlying late eighteenth/early nineteenth century farm groups, which are not part of the conservation area. One of these, Easthorpe Court, which is to the north of the village, was the site of the Manorial centre for Wigtoft. It would have had a chapel or chantry at the parish church. It was the seat of the Howson family. The present farmhouse dates to 1804’ (WCA: 5.2)

6.5 In respect of its *landscape, setting and relationship*, the WCA reports as follows:

‘The focal point of the Conservation Area is the space at the centre of the village defined by the former post office group on the south side of the main road and Church House, the Golden Fleece Inn and the two properties adjacent. This group is set back at an angle to the main road and thus leads the eye to the churchyard entrance gate’ (WCA: 8.1)

'Beyond the focal area to the east is Asperton Road, leading north to Easthorpe Court. The Conservation Area includes Dewsbury House and its associated outbuildings that make up the group on the corner of this road with the Main Road and also part of the open space on the opposite corner. Adjacent to these edges of the Conservation Area are small works buildings that are not part of the character of the area' (WCA: 8.4).

6.6 In terms of *key views and vistas*, the WCA reports as follows:

'Leading into the village from both directions the former main road is wide and grass verged with trees lining the road. The tower and short spire of the parish church features in views of the village from outside, although the church is partially masked by the bungalows to its west and the village generally from the east side' (WCA: 9.1).

'Within the village centre there are views across the large churchyard and a pleasing one of the church from the churchyard gate adjacent to Church House. In the churchyard there is a path which skirts its south eastern edge and then turns east to meet Asperton Road. Here the path is fully enclosed as it now goes around the rear garden of the former schoolhouse. Even glimpse views here are limited and the containment makes it an unappealing path to use' (WCA 9.2).

6.7 In terms of the character of buildings, the WCA reports as follows:

'The buildings in the Conservation Area are no higher than two storey. In the core area they are grouped quite tightly together and at the back of pavement or set slightly back. These buildings are all eaves onto the street. They are aligned to form a potentially interesting space at the heart of the village. Their details vary and the eaves lines and the use of gable chimney stacks gives interesting profiles to the roofs. As with most traditional buildings the roofs are narrow gutted' (WCA: 10.2.1).

The predominant dates of the buildings are late eighteenth century and nineteenth century with buildings on the edge of the Area being twentieth century' (WCA: 10.2.2)

6.8 The WCA identifies a number of *Sensitive Areas*. Specific to the site is the designated *Sensitive Area* on the south side of Main Road, south west of its junction with Asperton Road:

'The group of houses on the Main Road at the site of the former post office makes an important contribution to the Area. It has strong vertical emphasis and the projecting canted bays provide good modelling. Although there are minor alterations to the fenestration these do not significantly detract from the value of this group. The terrace is set at a very slight angle to the street, which helps in the part that it plays in defining the central space' (WCA: 11.1)



(View of Former Post Office Site)

'Adjacent to the terrace is a small two storey brick cottage of nineteenth century date. This is set back slightly from the terrace but is in front of the listed Stanhope Cottage. Beyond this is a two-storey house which is in a similar position to the brick cottage. These changes in relationship to the street frontage create interest in this group of traditional village buildings' (WCA: 11.2)



Fig.12: Google image showing the second Sensitive Area on Main Road.

"On the opposite side of the Main Road the buildings fan away towards the churchyard gate. These buildings are two storey, but with differing eaves and ridge heights. Although they have been altered, particularly the fenestration, these are all key traditional buildings in the Conservation Area. Of particular interest is the red brick former school building, now converted to a house. It still retains characteristic details of a mid nineteenth century village school with a touch of the Tudor in its styling" (WCA: 11.3)

"On the corner of Asperton Road is an outbuilding to Dewsbury House. This single storey gabled building marks the corner and is thus in a prominent position acting as a fulcrum between the two roads" (WCA: 11.4).

6.9 *Local details* are set out at section 12 and are cited to include:

*Windows are generally vertically proportioned although most have lost their original sashes. Some have brick cambered arches, other have flat stone lintels. Many lintels are covered in render (WCA:12.1)*

*12.2 The houses have chimney stacks and these are generally located at the ends of the roofs, at ridge level. They are contained within the plan of the building except where the roof has a hipped end, when they are external to the plan. The stacks are important features in the Conservation Area.(WCA:12.2)*

*There a number of iron railings in the area. The finest of these are outside the former vicarage, which are cast iron with shaped terminals and the gate piers are formed from open ironwork. Along the footway beside the area in front of the Central House, is a section of bow topped railing. The same railing type is found on the footpath near the church. The emphasis on ironwork has been followed through in the new village sign which has been erected at the end of the central space.(WCA: 12.3)*

6.10 *Building materials* are set out at section 13 and are cited to include:

‘The main walls are built in an orange red brickwork, the earlier bricks being handmade and the later Victorian ones are machine made, smoother and more orange. Quite a number of buildings in the village are either rendered or painted bricks. The colour used is generally white. Roofing materials are Welsh slate and clay pantile. Some roofs have been replaced in concrete tiling. The parish church is exceptional in that it is built in Lincolnshire limestone that would have been brought here by river and then carrier probably from quarries in the Stamford Area’.

6.11 *Problems, pressures and capacity for change* are included at section 18:

The de-trunking of the road and the bypass do mean that some changes could be considered to the design and appearance of the Main Road. The central space deserves a facelift in terms of the layout of the area, the street furniture and the hard surfacing. A well-designed treatment could significantly enhance this core area.

### **Listed Buildings**

6.12 As set out above, and detailed on Fig.3, as well as being within the Conservation Area, there are 3 listed buildings within immediate proximity to the application site:

Grade II - The former early nineteenth century vicarage on the Main Road, is in stucco with a hipped slate roof. It is thought that this may have been designed by Jephtha Pacey, architect from Boston, who also designed the town’s Assembly Rooms.





Fig 13: The frontage to the Vicarage.

**This application site is located on land within the ownership of this listed building and was likely to have been curtilage land at the time of listing.**

Grade I: The Parish Church of St. Peter and Paul stands 80 metres north of Main Road. The distinguished medieval church has work of all periods dating from late Norman period through to the perpendicular style. It is built in limestone ashlar and coursed rubble, with lead roofs and has a west tower, nave with clerestory, south porch and chancel. The Church is originally C12 with C13, C14 and C15 additions and it was restored in 1891 by the architect C. Hodgson Fowler.



Fig 12: The Parish Church of St. Peter and Paul

Grade II - Stanhope Cottage, Main Road. This small cottage was originally mud and stud, the local Lincolnshire vernacular form of architecture. It was encased in brick in the early nineteenth century and has a clay pantiled roof.



Fig 14: Google image of Stanhope Cottage

- 6.13 There are no scheduled monuments within the parish. There is no evidence of archaeology.
- 6.14 Given that these buildings have a key role in the character and appearance of the streetscene and the Conservation Area it is considered proportionate that they are considered as part of the wider discussions on the wider streetscene and the Conservation Area, rather than specific individual assessment.

## **7.0 ASSESSMENT OF HARMS OR BENEFITS**

- 7.1 This section addresses the heritage planning issues that warrant consideration in the determination of the application for Planning Permission, in line with the proposals set out at Section 3 of this report.
- 7.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.3 The Statutory requirement set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, at Section 66(1) considerable weight should be given to the preservation of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building and its setting and Section 72(1) to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 7.4 The policy guidance set out in the NPPF is a material consideration that attracts significant weight in the decision-making process.

- 7.5 The key factors in the consideration of the application is the impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and upon the significance and setting of heritage assets identified.
- 7.6 The NPPF states that development proposals should preserve or enhance the significance of a heritage asset such as a Conservation Area and Listed Buildings, and therefore this needs to be a primary consideration in the determination of the application.
- 7.7 As part of conducting a Heritage Assessment it is important to assess and consider the value of each 'heritage asset', including buildings (whether Listed or not) as well as other historic assets in Conservation Areas. This is achieved through the provision of appropriate information to inform the planning making process.
- 7.8 The NPPF states that local planning authorities should require applicants:
- '...to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposals on their significance'
- 7.9 It is also important to consider whether the proposals cause harm. If they do, then one must consider whether any such harm represents 'substantial harm' or 'less than substantial harm' to the designated heritage asset and subsequently any public benefit that may arise as a result of the proposal.
- 7.10 As set out above, the guidance within the PPG states that substantial harm is a very high test, and that it may not arise in most cases. It also states that it is the degree of harm to the significance of the asset rather than the scale of the development which is to be assessed.
- 7.11 The sites proximity to nearby listed buildings mean that the proposals have the potential to impact on the historic significance of listed buildings as well as the Conservation Area in which they sit.
- 7.12 The special character of any Conservation Area is made up of many contributing factors including historical and architectural formation; the building materials, grouping and heights; the streets and spaces; the community and its facilities.
- 7.13 The site in its present form lies within the curtilage of the listed building 'The Old Vicarage', albeit an area which is not used as garden and presently has no function due to its physical separation from the site by a combination of buildings, tennis court and a significant leylandii tree line. The site has a frontage onto Main Road and lies adjacent to the Old Post Office to the east. The site also lies opposite the Grade I listed Church of St Peter and St Paul. The site at present appears open and has a substantial hedge along its frontage with a telegraph pole central. In this regard it contributes to the rural open character of the village.
- 7.14 As the appraisal conducted for this site identifies, the main public views that would be affected are from the wider conservation area, specifically Main Road travelling east or west towards the site.



- 7.15 Indicative plans have been provided in the Design and Access Statement which illustrate the type of development that could be accommodated at this site. The proposed development has been designed to accommodate up to 5 dwellings, and the indicative siting, design and detail has closely followed the recommendations in the WCA.
- 7.16 The indicative drawings indicate that this proposal could infill a gap in the road and provide some traditional high-quality housing that would assist in reinforcing the village character as set out in the WCA. This has been undermined by some later development to the east of the site further along Main Road. The development is therefore seen as an opportunity. Whilst there would be some harm through the loss of the leylandii trees, replacement planting has been recommended as part of the application and therefore the site could continue to provide landscape amenity value.
- 7.17 In terms of The Old Vicarage curtilage sub-division, the existing grounds serving the Old Vicarage very much turn their back on this site. There is an existing outbuilding along a significant part of the boundary which provides a significant screen as can be seen below:



Fig.15: Images of existing buildings from within the site



Fig.16 View of existing buildings at The Old Vicarage from the site.





Fig.17 and 18: View of existing leylandii treeline taken from the Old Vicarage Curtilage and from within the application site.

- 7.18 The application site in both physicality and distance has good separation from the listed building and therefore it is not considered to cause any harm. Nor is the proposed development considered to cause harm to the curtilage listed structures. Whilst the application is presented in outline, the proposals show how the development could be designed while maintaining a spatial separation from the remaining Old Vicarage curtilage, as well as follow the scale, form and pattern of development at Main Road.
- 7.19 The site also lies opposite the grade I listed Church. The Church is set back far into the site with the churchyard at the frontage providing greenery to the Main Road. The historic significance of the Church is largely experienced from within the Churchyard. The setting of the Church is its rural village context and it is therefore considered that a well-designed development that takes into consideration the requirements of the WCA would ensure there would be no harm to the Church or its setting.

### **Wider Public Benefits of the Proposal**

- Facilitate the regeneration and reuse of a vacant area of land within the Wigtoft Village which presently does not contribute to the setting of The Old Vicarage
- Provide housing additional housing to meet the village requirements
- Provide a high quality and well-designed new buildings to reinforce the quality of place and local vernacular.
- Provide an active and attractive frontage.
- Enhance the character and appearance of both the Village and also the Conservation Area.

## **8.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 This Assessment examines the heritage attributes located within the vicinity of the application site.
- 8.2 As shown in the range of layouts set out in the Design and Access statement, there are a range of layout options for this site which would respond positively to the site and would enhance to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and setting of the nearby listed buildings. The proposed at reserved matter stage have the potential, subject to appropriate conditions, to offer a development that provides a high standard of design which would reinforce the quality of place and contribute positively to the street scene and public domain.
- 8.3 It is considered that the range of layout options now provide in support of this outline application offer sufficient information to address the Council's previous reasons for refusal.
- 8.4 As such, the proposed development of the site, in the context of the existing appearance and significance of the site, would accord with the duty set out within s66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as well as the policy guidance set out within the NPPF, PPG and local planning policy.

Date: February 2021 V1.00