



## design, access & heritage statement

application: Proposed redevelopment of Town Hall Farm and Kexbrough Hall Farm, Kexbrough Farms, Churchfield Lane, Kexbrough, Barnsley, S75 5DU, to provide private housing.

client: Mr R Mellor and Miss S Mellor – Kexbrough Farms

job nr: 19001

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### Introduction

This design, access and heritage impact assessment has been prepared by **ADP Architecture and Design Ltd** on the instructions of Mr R Mellor and Miss S Mellor of Kexbrough Farms and provides sufficient information to accompany a planning application for the redevelopment of Kexbrough farms to provide 25 private houses.

The principle of the proposed redevelopment was considered by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council in a pre-application enquiry (Ref: 2019ENQ00417) in July 2019. The outcome of the pre-application enquiry was that there was no 'in principle' objection to the proposed change in use / redevelopment in accordance with Local Plan Policies.

The application now submitted is for a development of 25 houses (two less than at pre-application stage). This consists of 14 new build properties and 11 houses created from conversion of the existing buildings, across the two farms, including the conversion of the listed buildings at Kexbrough Hall Farm.

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### Assessment of Context - Site and Surroundings:

#### Use

The existing farms; Town Hall Farm and Kexbrough Hall Farm, are cattle farms which have been in the applicant's family for a long number of years. The farms are no longer viable to run. Over the years, the circumstances have changed and the successful farming of these two farms has become ever more difficult, due to reasons noted in the following sections. The area around the farms is very predominantly residential use.

#### Buildings/Character

Town Farm is primarily made up of portal and modern framed sheds, which offer little in terms of character and significance. There is a stone-built farmhouse located to the north west of the site, previously converted from two properties to form a single dwelling and constructed in a sneck and jump wall pattern. The farmhouse is of no real architectural merit, it provides a home to one of the applicants. The cattle holding barn, located to the east of the site on the corner of Cawthorne Lane, is the only traditional building on the site, which has some significance, and which has farmyard fragments of an earlier building. It appears to be built, in-part, from stone with some original elements still in place.

Kexbrough Hall Farm includes the listed long barn range, its opposing courtyard range to the north and the Farmhouse, which is considered by the Barnsley MBC Conservation Officer as either directly or indirectly (curtilage) listed. The barn is clearly of most interest and its timber box frame, believed to be 16<sup>th</sup> Century or earlier, large opposing cart openings and in situ threshing floors being of substantial heritage value. However, the buildings are completely out of date for modern farming and modern farming machines don't really fit into most of the buildings, making working in these extremely difficult and labour intensive.

The residential properties around the farms are a mixture of styles and materials, consisting of stone, red brick and render, bungalows, houses, detached, semi-detached, terraces and courtyards. All fairly traditional in style but ranging from different periods of construction.

#### Spaces/Roads/Footpaths

The separation of the two farms does not assist with the day to day running of them. The increased traffic on the roads has made the farming very difficult, with parked cars causing a problem for manoeuvring large machinery in and out of the yards. The level of traffic makes taking large vehicles from one farm to the other very time consuming and awkward. Town Farm has one vehicular access from Churchfield Lane which serves the farm and the farmhouse, whereas Kexbrough Hall Farm has one access serving the farm itself and a separate access to the farmhouse.

The public footpaths which pass through the farm fields cause a real nuisance to the running of the farm business, for the following reasons:

- People let dogs off leads, which worries livestock (sheep are no longer kept for this reason).
- People don't pick up dog dirt, which causes abortion in cattle.
- Limousin cattle, which are bred at the farm, are very dangerous when they have young calves with them, due to the footpaths passing through the fields, in the summer months these animals have to be removed from the fields early in the morning and returned at the edge of dark, so that no-one gets hurt.

Over the years the farms have become increasingly hemmed in, with residential developments being constructed all around them, therefore there is nowhere for them to expand and provide the space they need for more modern-day farming. This makes the development and long-term viability of the farm business virtually impossible. Being surrounded by residential properties also results in the applicants receiving a lot of complaints from local residents about noise and smells.

The farms are both located to the south of Churchfield Lane, which is the main access road to both sites. This is a single carriageway road of variable width, with sections of footway and verge alongside. It has street lighting and overhead and underground utility services. Cawthorne Lane separates the farms and runs south from Churchfield Lane, leading to a handful of larger detached residential properties, before carrying on reaching Cawthorne. Cawthorne Lane junction with Churchfield Lane has a poor line of site, especially towards Town Farm, it has a 7.5t weight restriction and 30mph speed limit. To the north side of Churchfield Lane, opposite the farms, there is a predominance of residential houses forming a street frontage, with a couple of small cul-de-sac developments coming off this.

#### **Access to local services and transportation and special designation**

As noted above the site is very predominately a residential area. The vast majority of the site is located in an area allocated as Urban Fabric in the Barnsley MBC Local Plan, where there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It is also located in Urban Barnsley with good public transport links and access to a range of shops and services. The site is considered to be relatively accessible with local services and facilities within walking distance, although car based travel is expected to be necessary for some employment, school and leisure trips. The footway provision is not well-defined with limited sections and of those provided many are of narrow widths. On road cycling is available.

#### **Topography and natural features**

The site is fairly flat with the land starting to fall away to the south as it reaches the fields. To the south-east in the distance there is the M1 motorway. There are mature, prominent trees located both on and off the site. A detailed tree survey accompanies this planning application. The site is partly located in a Coal Authority Planning Referral Area and as such this application is supported by a Coal Mining Risk Assessment.

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#### **Assessment of Context - Social Context:**

##### **Affect from the loss of the existing land**

There will be a positive effect from the development as a result of removing the current conflict that exists between the farms and the surrounding houses, all as noted and described above. The land is built up in its current form, with large scale sheds and large areas of concrete hard standing. The proposed development will break down this mass and replace the areas of bear concrete with private amenity spaces and gardens.

##### **Potential overlooking/overshadowing from the site**

The positioning of the dwellings and setting out of the development, by the forming of courtyard style clusters, will not give rise to any potential overlooking or overshadowing of neighbouring dwellings. The breaking down of the existing mass and removal of the large farm buildings should serve to open up aspects over open fields previously now visible.

##### **Impact upon local services**

The impact on local services will be positive, by increased usage.

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#### **Assessment of Context - Economic Context:**

##### **Any business supported**

Permitting this development would support the local building trade and associated suppliers. The increase in local residents would also support the local businesses (shops, takeaways etc) by ongoing increased demand.

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#### **Planning Policies**

The new Barnsley MBC Local Plan was adopted on 03 January 2019, meaning that this now takes full weight for decision making process in planning law terms as the development plan for the Borough, superseding the remaining saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan and the Core Strategy.

During the Pre-application enquiry it was established that there was no "in principle" objection to the location of the site for a residential development, in accordance with the Local Plan Policies SD1 -

Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development, GD1 - General Development and H5 - Residential Development on Large Non-allocated Sites. Policy H6 - Housing Mix and Efficient Use of Land, is considered relevant in terms of the density of the development, however, it is considered that lower densities can be supported where they are necessary for character and appearance, need, viability or sustainability reasons.

Other relevant policies are as follows:

- LG2: The Location of Growth
- H1: The Number of New Homes to be Built
- H2: Distribution of New Homes
- H7: Affordable Housing
- T3: New Development and Sustainable Travel
- T4: New development and Transport Safety
- D1: High Quality Design and Place Making
- HE2: Heritage Statements and general application procedures
- HE3: Developments affecting Historic Buildings
- GB3: Changes of use in the Green Belt
- CC4: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
- I1: Infrastructure and Planning Obligations

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### **Involvement of the community**

Neighbour consultation will be carried out by the Council in processing the application. We have carried out a pre-application enquiry with Barnsley MBC and as part of this process had a site meeting with case officer Hannah Andrew and the Conservation Officer.

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### **Evaluation**

The farms are no longer viable to run and the applicants themselves are reaching the stage of wanting to retire from farming, the applicant's sons are not interested in taking on the farms. Therefore, there is no future generation within the Mellor Family to continue the farm business.

Residential development is the most appropriate and obvious choice for the redevelopment of this site and the use of this land. The location is sustainable and is surrounded by other residential development.

The proposals replace the modern portal frame sheds with traditional style properties, makes use of the existing stone-built structures to provide conversion units and provides a good mix of house types to cater for current day living. The scheme retains the existing access points from Churchfield Lane, so avoids any major road changes and provides public benefits by providing additional footways and improved visibility at these junctions.

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### **Design of the Scheme:**

#### **Proposed Use**

The proposed use is residential development.

#### **Site and surroundings**

The visual impact of the site will be of no detriment to the surroundings and will in fact be more appropriate to the setting, within the existing residential area, providing a mixture of house types and sizes. Some detached properties, semi-detached and small terraces, with courtyard style layouts maintaining the farmyard feel of the site whilst providing the new use.

The detailed design of the houses is in keeping with the character of the surrounding area, the design also allows the development to echo its former farm use by the feel and character created by the layout. The use of natural stone walling allows the new properties to tie in with the retained existing buildings on the sites. The mixture of pitched roofs, catslide roofs and lean-to roofs, with the variety of property styles, yet all kept very simple with expanses of stone and carefully positioned, yet random, windows provide barnlike qualities to the new build houses. The proposals will have a positive impact on the visual appearance and character of the area.

#### **Amount**

The proposed development consists of 25 houses, made up of 14 new build properties and 11 houses being within the converted buildings. There is a good mix of houses types with four 2-bed units, seven 3-bed units and fourteen 4-bed units, with guidance obtained from an estate agent as to an appropriate mix of house sizes/number of bedrooms suitable for sale in this area. The proposals do not meet the required density levels noted within Barnsley MB Council's Local Plan policy H6, achieving just over 19 houses per hectare. However, we feel that this need for reduced density can be justified by the desire to maintain the character of the farm setting, the style of properties required to make the development succeed and be viable, the need to maintain space about buildings, working with and in close proximity to listed buildings, giving regard to retaining trees within and adjacent to the site, the highways requirements for parking and turning, providing footways and visibility at junctions.

### **Layout and Scale**

The scale of development is appropriate for the site and the established built-up form of the surrounding area. The development has been carefully considered, to not only provide a good mix of house sizes but also house types, there are six detached houses, five pairs of semi-detached houses (10 houses) and three terraces/blocks of three houses (9 houses). This creates a good balance of the size, scale and mass of buildings, versus open spaces between.

The layout recreates a sense of the larger barn structures, from the existing farm setting, with smaller structures between set around an open courtyard with spaces between providing views out to the open countryside. Wherever possible the required space about buildings has been maintained with a minimum of 21m between habitable room windows and minimum of 12m between a habitable room window and a blank gable. This is fully achievable at Town Farm but is more difficult at Kexbrough Hall Farm due to the layout and position of the existing listed buildings and the strong desire to create courtyard spaces between these and the location of new structures, also working with the green belt boundaries. Where distances are less than desirable it is proposed that these will be secondary windows into rooms and that the window will have obscured glass where appropriate and/or screened by walled and planted boundaries. Distances to any surrounding properties have been respected.

The scale and mass of the proposed houses themselves are all appropriate for the current standards of family living requirements. Each property has an area of private garden space, some are larger than others, with units 2 and 3 of Kexbrough Hall Farm being the smallest, most restricted areas. However, these two properties are also the smallest properties within the development, and it is felt that these small outdoor spaces are sometimes desirable. The courtyard setting provides a sense and feeling of openness and each of these properties has 2 designated parking spaces. All other garden spaces are appropriate for the size of dwelling they serve.

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### **Appearance**

The appearance of the proposed dwellings has been designed to be traditional and have a farm-like and barn-like character, using traditional materials, with natural coursed stone walling (laid with flush pointing), ashlar heads and cills, stone slate roofs and timber window frames and doors. The materials used will be good quality and the appearance of the scheme will be that of a high standard development, sympathetic to the surroundings and most importantly to the listed building within the site.

The conversion of the retained buildings within the site will be carried out sympathetically with very few alterations to the fabric of the building and all new openings kept to a minimum. The existing metal sheet roof covering of the long range listed barn is not deemed to be original, the applicants recall it having a stone slate roof which was stripped and replaced with the metal sheeting at some point in the past. This will be restored as part of the proposed development and recovered using stone slates. The lower single storey element of this building will be retained as a single storey property, retaining its blue slate roof.

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### **Access**

There is no new access required from Churchfield Lane, the existing accesses to both Town Farm and Kexbrough Hall Farm are to be utilised and improved. A new footway will be provided along the frontage of Town Farm and visibility improved at both junctions as much as possible within the fixed constraints of the site. The new roads leading into the two parts of the development are both designed on the basis of a mews court style arrangement with a 600mm service margin running around the adoptable area of road. Each then have private drives coming off the mews court, serving the cluster of houses to each small courtyard. Each private drive serves a maximum of five houses.

Although Town Farm development has a central access road with the properties having their main access and approach from within the development, the houses have been designed to not turn their backs onto Churchfield Lane, and units 4 and 5 in particular have been designed to also have a pedestrian access from Churchfield Lane.

The new houses will have a level threshold at the main entrance and will meet with the requirements for new dwellings within Part M of the building regulations. The conversion units will be made to meet with these requirements as much as possible, whilst not being detrimental to the listed building elements, where there may be a conflict the important listed building features will prevail.

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### **Significance of the Heritage Asset**

The main cluster of historic, listed and curtilage buildings are located in the eastern part of the site around Kexbrough Hall Farmhouse and the long barn. The long barn range is Grade II Listed (List number 1192776), first listed in 1987 and by definition this building is therefore a Heritage Asset. This part of the site contributes most in terms of heritage significance due to the listed building but also due to a number of curtilage buildings which appear to be ancillary to the historic farm operation. The opposing courtyard range to the north and the farmhouse to the west are also considered listed by the Conservation Officer, either directly or indirectly (curtilage listed) and are therefore worthy of careful conservation lead approach to redevelopment.

The roadside barn (opposite the listed long barn) is a simple two storey structure with only two first floor openings to the roadside, and several ground floor door openings and wider cart openings, some part walled up, to the courtyard side. At first floor level, courtyard side, it has a series of fairly evening positioned square window openings. It is of coursed stone construction with a stone slate hipped roof.

The Kexbrough Hall Farmhouse is an "L" shaped two storey building, currently providing 2 dwellings. It is partly built from coursed stone and partly rendered. The stone element of the building is a later addition and includes a gable fronted extension to the north side. The building has sash windows of fairly typical proportions at ground floor and tall narrow window to the first floor, it also has three chimneys. The south facing elevation is a flat façade with no protrusions. There is a small single storey entrance structure to the east side of the original part of the building.

The listed long barn at Kexbrough Hall Farm is clearly of most significance and interest from a heritage aspect, believed to be 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> Century, with a timber box frame interior thought to be 16<sup>th</sup> Century or earlier. The later, much altered, cladding of this frame is coursed stone rubble and it currently has a sheet metal roof covering. It has seven internal bays, with square headed cart entrances to bays 3 and 5, with the latter being partly blocked. Later additions to the barn to the north and south elevations are of no special interest and do not add anything to the character of the original building. The building has several post and truss frames with fling post trusses with struts, jewelled posts straight braced to tie beams, although it is noted that some are missing. The left frame is against the gable wall and has chevron pattern studding. It also has an in-situ stone flagged threshing floor.

The western half of the site at Town Farm is dominated by large portal and modern framed buildings that offer little in terms of any heritage significance. However, it was identified by the Barnsley MBC Conservation Officer that the existing building on the corner of Cawthorne Lane at the junction, is a large cattle holding building, which has roadside and farmyard fragments of an earlier building. This appears in part to be built from stone with some original elements still in place. It was requested that this building be retained/incorporated into a new build.

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#### **Impact of the proposed development upon significance of the Heritage Asset**

The proposed development has been very carefully considered to conserve, protect and enhance the heritage asset and the surrounding buildings. The development will be a high-quality development which will have a positive impact upon the significance of the heritage asset. The proposed new build houses will enhance the existing buildings and have a much more positive impact than the current farm sheds which surround them now. The existing farm use has meant that these buildings have been added to and adapted in a very ad-hoc manner to enable the farm to function. The conversion to residential use will provide the buildings with a sustained use and mean that they are looked after and preserved.

The long, listed barn will have the later additions to the north and south elevations removed, so as to reveal the original form of the building. Some existing openings, currently walled up will be re-opened, including the large cart entrances, but no new window openings are to be created, this will enhance the building bringing it back to its original form. The two-storey main barn structure will be converted to form two dwellings and the attached single storey building will form a separate dwelling. The roof of the two storey barn will be re-surfaced in stone slates, with the east gable end built up slightly to suit, taking the roof back to what its original material covering was. The internal timber frame will be retained and carefully repaired where necessary. Care has been taken in the design to not have any divisions to the building along the lines of the trusses and frame, in order to maintain the appearance of these structural elements without the need for any in-filling to them. The stone threshing floor will be carefully lifted in order to insulate and dampproof the floor and then re-laid to form the ground floor to the new dwellings. The first floor structure will be carefully inserted around the timber frame but not secured to this, allowing the frame to retain its integrity and run through the full height of the building. The areas to the front of the large cart openings have been left as two storey spaces so as not to divide these openings.

The roadside building and the Kexbrough Hall Farmhouse have both been carefully divided to form three dwellings in each building. Again, with minimal alterations to windows and doors in order to retain the character and history of these buildings.

The full details for each property can be seen in the application drawings.

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#### **Conclusion**

The proposed development will provide a high-quality, traditional development, which will serve to enhance and protect the heritage asset and provide a very appropriate use for the site of a family farming business which is no longer viable. The properties will meet current space standards and the needs of modern life; sustainable, attractive, efficient and well designed. The proposed development has been carefully considered and we trust that this is sufficient detail to accompany this application, however, should you require any further details please do not hesitate to contact A+DP.