



## **PROPOSED TRENCHING WORKS AND GREASE TRAP INSTALLATION AT WENTWORTH CASTLE GARDENS**

### **DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

#### **BACKGROUND**

Wentworth Castle Gardens is a Grade I Registered landscape, the only one of its kind in South Yorkshire. There are over 26 individually listed buildings and structures in the grounds and parkland. The site consists of over 60 acres of formal gardens and 500 acres of wider parkland. The main house and some of the surrounding buildings are owned by Northern College, which provides residential and community education for adults.

The gardens, which were previously run by the Wentworth Castle and Stainborough Park Heritage Trust, closed in 2017 as they were unable to make the business financially viable. The National Trust are entering into a lease agreement with Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council to run the site from summer 2019. In order to do this successfully a number of pre-opening works have been identified.

This application seeks Planning and Listed Building Consent for Trenching works within Wentworth Castle Gardens to supply WAN Fibre network and connection into Long Barn with provision of LAN network and provision of services to existing car park [site of proposed visitor reception building]. The application includes the provision of underground tank and associated works for provision of grease trap to café at Long Barn. Three trees are to be removed as part of the proposals.

This application is one of a series of applications due to be submitted for pre-opening works. These include:

Planning application:

- Construction of Visitor Reception building within existing car park at Wentworth Castle Gardens, including provision of access ramp and associated landscaping.

Listed building consent:

- Internal alterations to Long Barn (ground floor), rebuilding of play area garden wall (junction of north east/south wall). Stone repairs to Serpentine Bridge

Advertising consent:

- Alterations and additions to site signage

This application is supported by the following documents;  
Proposed trenching route, grease trap and Long Barn drawings  
Inc. construction and section details, tree removal drawing  
Heritage Impact Assessment  
Topographical Survey  
Arboricultural Report

## **PROPOSAL**

### **Service Trenching Works**

The trenching work is to install IT infrastructure between existing BT services and key visitor touchpoints in the car park and the Long Barn, as well as National Trust offices in the Coach House and Garden house.

The planned reintroduction of visitor access to the site will necessitate installation of some new modern, effective, infrastructure. This includes new fibre optic broadband which will require trenching from the existing BT cable off Lowe Lane, into the car park in Coronation Wood, then along Shed Lane, past the south side of the Long Barn and upslope to outside the north range of the quadrangular block. From here ducting will be installed inside existing Northern College culverting, except for a short length, around 25m, to the north-west of the mansion, where further trenching may be needed.

The trenches total around 450m in length and will be approximately 350mm wide and between 450mm – 600mm deep, enlarging slightly at six points to install 2.no junction boxes (600 x 450mm). One point of entry will be required at the Long Barn, which will involve core drilling through the gable wall for 100mm conduit.

### **Grease Trap**

The present grease management system is located external to the kitchen of the Long Barn. The unit is of a domestic type designed for low flows with low fats, oils and grease content. Management of this grease trap would appear to be fairly poor historically. The poor management combined with the under capacity of the system has impacted on the drainage system, causing pipes to be blocked with grease.

It is proposed to de-commission the existing grease trap and a new larger unit installed in a suitable location to allow the incoming flow to cool and congeal. The proposed tank is a 2,000 litre unit designed for up to 200 covers per day which is the expected usage of the Wentworth site.

## **DESIGN**

### **Service Trenching Works**

The route of the trenching has been proposed taking into account the ecology, archaeology, history and use of the site, as explained later in this document and supporting reports. The proposed route has minimal impact on these features, whilst also ensuring all elements of the National Trust offer can operate effectively.

### Grease Trap

The size of the vessel has been calculated based on our operating forecast and designed by a competent drainage specialist. The location of the grease trap takes into account the ecology and archaeology of the site whilst also ensuring best functionality for the drainage.

### **SITE ACCESS**

Once these items of work are completed the ground surface will be made good, only the manhole covers will be visible. Once construction is completed site access will be returned to usual.

### **SETTING**

There will be little to no impact on the visual setting of the property within its Registered Park and Garden. The works are all below ground with only the manhole covers visible. Manhole covers set within grassed areas will be grassed over. Manhole covers within the roadways will be visible but will have little impact on the setting.

There are 3 trees that will need to be felled in order to facilitate these works. One large sycamore tree adjacent to the bin store of the Long Barn has been very badly damaged by a recent fire, so its life expectancy has been severely affected and will need to be felled. Two younger trees growing from under the garden wall running along Shed Lane will also need to be felled to facilitate the trenching works. These are self-seeding trees and have no historic value. Their loss is not considered to have a negative impact on the setting.

### **PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **National policy**

The site lies within designated green belt. The green belt test contained in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 146 requires that development must preserve its openness and not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. The works will be below ground and once the ground is reinstated there will be no impact on the green belt in this location. The proposed development is therefore considered to be entirely consistent with green belt policy.

Further there is no impact on the visual aspects of the Registered Park and Garden.

In respect of other aspects of the proposals, it is relevant that the NPPF supports a prosperous rural economy. In particular, paragraph 83 states that planning decisions should enable;

*The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas both through conversion of existing buildings and well -designed new buildings'.*

In addition there is support for sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments *'which respect the character of the countryside'*.

The proposals are supported by this guidance.

The NPPF recognises the importance of the historic environment in Section 16 *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment* which sets out a clear strategy to ensure that heritage assets are conserved and enjoyed. As part of this where proposals affect heritage assets, it requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting. (**para 189**). The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

In addition, there is a statutory requirement under Sections 71 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – which requires the local planning authority to have *'special regard'* to the need to *'preserve or enhance'* the character, appearance and setting of conservation areas. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities, as decision makers, in considering whether to grant Planning Permission for development, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses

The impact of a proposed development on the significance of designated heritage assets is to be considered in line with advice through NPPF at Paras 193-196. This reinforces that *'great weight'* should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset *'the greater the weight should be'*. The paragraphs also confirm that significance can be harmed or lost from development *'within its setting'*. As heritage assets are irreplaceable *'any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification'*.

The accompanying heritage statement has undertaken a detailed assessment of the significance of the heritage assets in the proposals and an assessment of the impact of the components of the proposals on that significance are outlined in detail, so they are not repeated here.

The Heritage Statement outlines that the impacts from the proposal are largely related to archaeological impacts which are of varying degrees. The potential for previously undiscovered archaeological resources is present throughout the impacted area.

No other impacts have been identified in the Heritage Impact Assessment to the setting of heritage assets.

Overall, the assessment is that the planned works do represent a number of small impacts on specific aspects of heritage value that can be identified. However, it is felt that all of these are measured and proportionate, more than compensated for by the broader public benefits of facilitating reopening of the site, which cannot be achieved without these interventions.

Taking all of the above into account, it is the National Trust's assessment (in response to the test contained in NPPF paragraph 196) that no element of the proposed development constitutes Substantial harm to a recognised heritage asset. An assessment of 'less than substantial harm' is outweighed by the public benefits of the proposals.

### **Local policy**

The relevant policies of the LDF Core Strategy (2011) and saved policies of the Barnsley UDP (2000) have been consulted together with policies in the emerging Local Plan, which is nearing adoption.

The proposals at Wentworth Castle Gardens comply with **Policy CSP 20** in that they promote tourism and will support the growth and development of cultural provision in the District.

In accordance with **Policy CSP21**, the proposals at Wentworth Castle Gardens seek to support a viable rural economy and the proposed development will support the growth of the business and is related to tourism and recreation.

The site is located within the Wentworth Castle and Stainborough Park Conservation Area, there are a number of listed buildings on site including Wentworth Castle itself which is Grade I listed and it is within the Grade I listed registered park and garden. In accordance with **Policy CSP 30**, the proposals seek to achieve the management, conservation and enjoyment of this heritage environment.

Part of the site shares its boundary with the Stainborough Park Local Wildlife Site (LWS) which comprises a large part of the historical parkland and ornamental gardens of the Wentworth Castle estate. The LWS contains a number of important species and as such an Ecology Statement is included with the application which demonstrates there is no conflict with **policy CSP 36** on biodiversity. Further the proposals cause no damage to Nature Conservation Sites identified in saved **policy WR13**. Nor to the qualities of Stainborough Park identified in WR14/2.

Whilst the emerging Local Plan is not yet adopted, the Plan does recognise the significance of Wentworth Castle parkland being the only grade I Registered Park and Garden in South Yorkshire (**Policy HE1** The Historic Environment). The draft policy seeks to support proposals which conserve and enhance the significance of the borough's heritage assets.

The proposals support the business functions of running the property and in turn this supports the heritage assets.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

The new grease trap will ensure that the drainage system from the Long Barn runs efficiently and prevents any pollution further downstream. If this work was not carried out prior to opening the impact on the drainage would be extremely detrimental and cause pollution issues.

The new IT infrastructure will ensure that the site can be run as an effective visitor attraction long into the future. The fibre optic broadband allows the National Trust to run the site as all our others and link Wentworth into the wider Trust facilities.

## **ECOLOGY**

This application is supported by a full ecology assessment report. This report concludes that the proposed route of the trenching and location of the grease trap are in areas of low ecological value and are species poor. Therefore the impact is considered low and acceptable.

Also included in this application is an arboricultural report to assess the impact of these proposals on any trees in the area. The proposed trenching does affect 3 trees which will need to be felled. Permission for the felling of these trees is included in this application, as the site is a conservation area. One tree is fire damaged and the two others are growing from under the garden wall and are causing structural issues; the report concludes these should be removed.

The report also identifies where the trenching will need to be hand dug to reduce impact on any tree routes and outlines further additional tree protection measures. This will be incorporated into the contractors' specification. The report concludes that the proposals will have minimal impact on trees.

## **ARCHAEOLOGY**

This application is supported by a full archaeological impact assessment covering all the pre-opening works. This concludes that there is little to moderate impact on areas that could have archaeological relevance in the trenching and grease trap proposal. Therefore a full watching brief will be carried out during the works, and any findings documented fully. Overall this work is considered low impact.

## **CONCLUSION**

The proposed works will help the National Trust to open Wentworth Castle Gardens to visitors and allow it to run as a successful venture. This will in turn allow the Trust to invest in the repair and maintenance of all the various listed and historic building, structures, monuments and gardens of

the site. Opening up Wentworth Castle Gardens including the wider estate will ensure it is preserved and enjoyed by future generations.

The pre-opening works identified in this document are considered to have minimal impact on the significance of the site. The trenching and grease trap will have little to no impact, mitigation will be in place and further protection measures to ensure no damage occurs during the construction phase.

Overall it is considered that these pre-opening works will have little impact on the site overall. These proposals will allow its future to be secured by once again opening it up to the public, for it to be enjoyed by visitors for generations to come.