

Heritage Impact Assessment

Broadband Antenna and Fan housing at Wentworth Castle for Barnsley College.

1.0 Introduction

The assessment relates to two proposed alterations to the Wentworth Castle campus of the Barnsley College. The first proposal is to provide a broadband antenna to allow CAT6 connectivity with other college sites. The second proposal is to increase the height of a fan housing to allow replacement of kitchen plant. The proposals are detailed below and in drawings prepared by Storah Architecture Ltd.

The Heritage Impact Assessment has been produced for the client to meet the requirements of paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and inform them, their agents and the planning authority of the historical significance of the site, together with the impact of proposals on its heritage value and significance.

This statement has been prepared by Richard Storah of Storah Architecture.

Wentworth Castle is listed, grade I. It sits within a listed parkland. Listing descriptions are attached as an appendix.

22.0 History & Significance

2.1 Description

Wentworth Castle is the former seat of the Earls of Strafford. It is sited in a landscaped parkland at Stainborough, near Barnsley

2.1.1 Cutler House and Stainborough

In 1602, Thomas Cutler purchased Stainborough Hall and its estates from Francis Everingham. His son, Gervase Cutler was a lawyer at the Inner Temple in London. He became associated with the future King Charles I and was granted a knighthood. His son, also Sir Gervase was born in 1641. He inherited Stainborough in 1664 and instigated the rebuilding of the house in 1670. This house is now described as Cutler House and is now enclosed on three sides by later additions.

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2.1.2 Purchase by Thomas Wentworth

The house was purchased by Thomas Wentworth, Baron Raby (1672–1739) for £14,000. In 1708. The Strafford fortune had passed from William Wentworth to his wife's nephew, Thomas Watson and only the barony of Raby had gone to a blood-relation. It has been suggested that this motivated Wentworth's purchase of Stainborough Castle only 6 miles from Watson's home at Wentworth Woodhouse, and that his efforts to surpass the Watsons at Wentworth Woodhouse in splendour and taste motivated Thomas Wentworth whom Jonathan Swift called "proud as Hell".

Wentworth was sent by Queen Anne as ambassador to Prussia in 1705–11. On his return to Britain, the earldom was revived when he was created Viscount Wentworth and 1st Earl of Strafford (second creation) in the Peerage of Great Britain. He was then sent as a representative in the negotiations that led to the Treaty of Utrecht. The Treaty which ended the War of the Spanish Succession also gained Britain both Gibraltar and the 'Asiento' - the monopoly to supply enslaved people from African countries to the Spanish colonies in the Americas. Thomas then made profit from the trade via shares and links to the East India Company and the Royal African Company.

2.1.3 The First Campaign

The first building campaign to upgrade the hall was initiated c. 1711. This campaign included the building of the Baroque wing to the designs of Johann von Bodt a military architect who had spent some years in England. James Gibbs a Scottish Architect designed parts of the interior. During this period the house was still called Stainborough in Jan Kip's engraved bird's-eye view of parterres and avenues, 1714, and in the first edition of Vitruvius Britannicus, 1715. The First Campaign, including the long gallery has been described as "a remarkable and almost unique example of Franco-Prussian architecture in Georgian England".

This period of building very much represents Thomas Wentworth in politics and belief. The Baroque style identifies both Tory and European diplomatic influence. Palladianism at the time being associated with the Whigs. The landscape also symbolises political allegiance, the maze-like garden was fashionable has been laid out to combine the crosses of St George and St Andrew, celebrating the union of Scotland and England in 1707. This union was a proud moment in Queen Anne's reign, and demonstrates his loyalty to her.

With the death of Queen Anne in 1714, the crown passed from the Stuart royal line to the Hanoverians. This promoted a change in the political landscape as the Tories were removed from power. A staunch Tory, Strafford remained in political obscurity for the remainder of his life, but required a grand house to reflect his fortunes and spent his retirement completing it and its landscape. This included the creation of Stainborough Castle, a folly ruin to preserve the name and history, when the house was renamed Wentworth Castle in 1731. He also continued to demonstrate his political views, a sitting room in the house was named "Queen Anne's Sitting Room", this remains as the Queen Anne Suite. A 1734 monument is also dedicated to Queen Anne, the last Stuart monarch. This is unique in an English garden, an almost treasonable statement which hints at what he thought of the regime change.

2.1.4 The Second Earl and the Second Campaign

The first earl died in 1739 and was succeeded by his son, William Wentworth, 2nd Earl of Strafford (1722-1791). William is acknowledged as the designer of the second Campaign, a neo-Palladian range, built in 1759–64. Whilst he employed John Platt as master mason and Charles Ross to draft the final drawings and act as “superintendent”, it was generally understood, as Lord Verulam remarked in 1768, “Lord Strafford himself is his own architect and contriver in everything.”

The Second Campaign resulted in the Palladian wing, the style having now overtaken Baroque in fashionable British architecture.

During this period the gardens were substantially remodelled to more naturalistic forms in the style of the English Landscape Movement. Horace Walpole singled out Wentworth Castle as a paragon for the perfect integration of the site, the landscape, even the harmony of the stone “If a model is sought of the most perfect taste in architecture... the new front of Wentworth-castle...distributed so many beauties over that domain and called from wood, water, hills, prospects, and buildings, a compendium of picturesque nature, improved by the chastity of art.”

Unlike the first Earl, William’s architecture at the castle is not an expression of his political views. The exception may be the Argyll Column of 1744, dedicated to his late father in law, the 2nd Duke of Argyll, the column is topped with a statue of Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom and war. She faces south to Londo, the Duke had been punished for opposing the government's harsh anti-Jacobite policies in Scotland.

2.1.4 Later Generations

With the extinction of the earldom following the death of third earl in 1799, the estates were divided. Wentworth Castle was left in trust for Frederick Vernon of Hilton Hall, Staffordshire. He added Wentworth to his surname and took charge of the estate in 1816. Between 1820 and 1840, the windows of the Baroque Wing were lowered on either side of the entrance hall. Frederick Vernon Wentworth also amalgamated two ground floor rooms to make what is now the blue room.

Frederick Vernon Wentworth was succeeded by his son Thomas in 1885 who added the iron framed Conservatory and electric lighting by March of the following year. The Victorian Wing also dates from this decade and its construction allowed the Vernon-Wentworths to entertain the young Duke of Clarence and his entourage during the winters of 1887 and 1889. The estate was inherited by Thomas' eldest son, Captain Bruce Vernon-Wentworth, MP for Brighton, in 1902. He had no direct heirs and sold the house and its gardens to Barnsley Corporation in 1948

2.1.5 Education

Barnsley Corporation brought the hall into use as a teacher training college, the Wentworth Castle College of Education until 1978. In 1978 Northern College was founded. Based at the Castle, the college was for the education and training of people without formal qualifications seeking to return to learning. In 2026 the College merged with Barnsley College.

2.1.6 The Gardens

The great landscape that Walpole praised in 1780 was described in 1986 as "disturbed and ruinous". Wentworth Castle Heritage Trust was formed in 2002 as a charity and the gardens were opened to the public and underwent £20m worth of investment from 2002 to 2017. Despite this, the castle gardens were closed to the public in 2017 amidst a funding crisis. The gardens and parkland reopened to the public on 8 June 2019 following a partnership agreement. In September 2018 it was announced that the National Trust planned to enter into a new partnership with the National Trust, Northern College and Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.

2.2 Significance

This section assesses the relative significance of the Building and its key significance values. Significance is a concept for measuring the cultural value of a place, using judgement to assess the place and its different aspects in a hierarchy. The concept was first developed in Australia, but is further described for a UK context in 'Conservation Principles' (English Heritage, 2008).

The established levels of significance are:

- Exceptional – important at national to international levels, reflected in statutory designations, such as Grade I listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments.
- High – important at regional or sometimes a higher level, e.g. Grade II listed buildings
- Medium – important at a local level, and possibly at a regional level, for example for group value
- Low – of no more than local value
- Negative or intrusive features – features which in their present form detract from the value of the site.

2.2.1 The Significance of Wentworth Castle

Wentworth Castle is a high status house in the north of England. The house is important for its high quality, high status, contrasting architectural styles and its links with the Earls of Strafford, in particular the first earl, Thomas Wentworth, who instigated the First Campaign to create the Baroque wing and the second earl, who added the Palladian wing and redesigned the surrounding landscape in the style of the English Garden Movement.

Cutler House has significance as the original building 'Stainborough' rebuilt by in 1670, which gives identity to the area. The house has been extensively remodelled and the roof raised, presumably during the construction the Baroque range from 1711.

The Baroque range has particular interest. It is featured in Vitruvius Britannicus and is described as "a remarkable and almost unique example of Franco-Prussian architecture in Georgian England" and by Nicholas Pevsner as "of a palatial splendour uncommon in England." The range is an almost unique example of Baroque architecture in Britain.

The Palladian south front is also a demonstration of country house architecture on a massive scale, and has associative links with the remodelling of the landscape and the gardens of the English Landscape Movement.

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The house is listed, grade 1 and the gardens also at grade 1. It is considered of **exceptional significance** owing to its architectural and aesthetic value. Some areas, including the Victorian range have a lesser status, but remain of **high significance**. Occasional later alterations, including the mid C20 additions within the courtyard “windy ridge’ have negative value and are considered to detract from significance, though remain a part of the buildings history.

The house has further significance as the seat of Thomas Wentworth, Viscount Wentworth and Earl of Strafford. Queen Anne’s representative in negotiations for the Treaty of Utrecht and the ‘Asiento’. His political affiliations are expressed in the design of the house and in planning and monuments in the wider landscape. His impact has had profound impacts on the way society and the UK economy developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is considered of **exceptional significance** owing to its associated historic value.

The house has societal and communal value, as The Northern College and its predecessor the Wentworth Castle College of Education. It also has societal and communal value within the Wentworth Castle Gardens. It is considered to have **high significance** owing to its communal value.

Owing to the rivalries between Thomas Wentworth and Thomas Watson of Wentworth Woodhouse, the house is considered to have associative value with Wentworth Woodhouse.

3.0 The Projects

The application relates to two proposals:

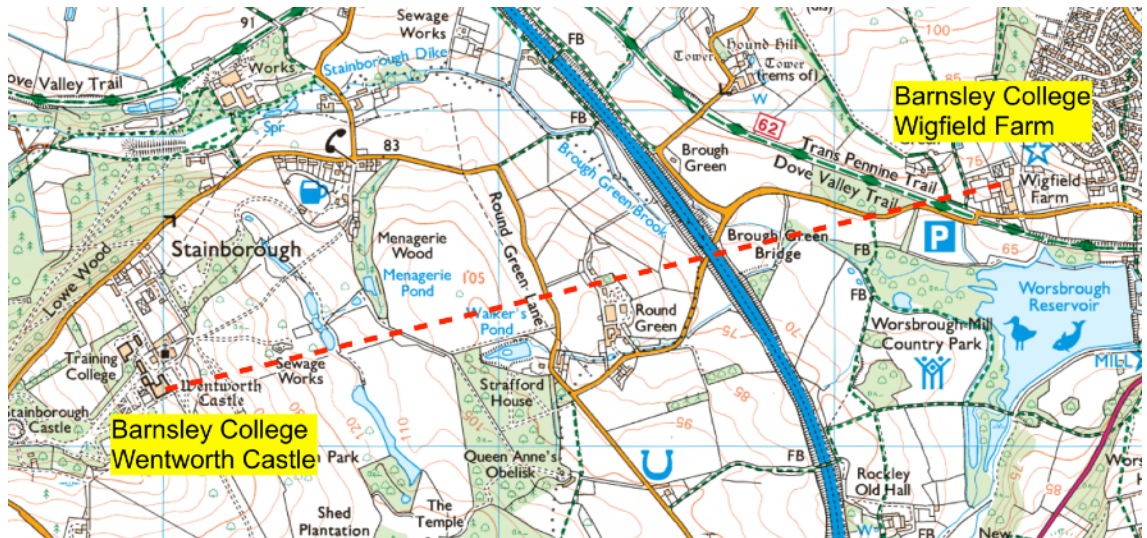
1. The installation of a Wi-fi6 antenna on a rooftop stand for wireless network communication between the college and the main Barnsley College site.
2. The replacement of a kitchen extract fan, with alterations to allow for future maintenance.

3.1 The Telecoms Mast

3.1.1 The Need for the Works

The mast is required to provide internal network communication within the college, linking the main town centre campus with the former Northern College campus at Wentworth Castle.

The mast requires direct line of site for data transfer, this is only achievable from the roof of the Baroque wing which will link with a mast on the college’s Wigfield farm campus.



Direct line of sight from Wentworth Castle to Wigfield Farm..

3.1.2 Proposals

It is proposed to mount a Microtik LHG 5 ax antenna on a frame on the roof of the baroque wing. The mast will sit low on the roof, with its base ballasted by flag stones. It will not be attached to the structure, It will be located on the flat roof adjacent a chimney and will not impact on the skyline or silhouette off the building when viewed from the gardens or nearby. Do to its small size it is not considered to be visible from a distance without the use of binoculars or other visual aids. Details of the dish are attached as an appendix.



The stand will be ballasted by 4no. 600x600 concrete flags.



The 391x222mm dish will be mounted on the stand at c.750mm above the lead flat roof to allow line of sight over the parapet, but minimise visibility from the ground.

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From the mast, network and power cables will be routed over the slates to enter the roof void via an existing launder (rainwater drain), cables will, then run with others through existing ducting to a server cabinet on the top floor of the Baroque wing.



The mast will be mounted adjacent a chimney the cable (red) will enter via the rainwater launder.

3.1.3 Impact of the mast

The mast should not be visible from the parkland. The mast should not be visible from the wider landscape without visual aids. The mast will be visible to observers stood on the roof of the main Wentworth Castle building.

Neither the mast nor the cabling will be physically attached to the building, although cables may be bundled with others. The only physical connection being plugging of wires in the the server cabinet.

The proposals will have no physical impact on the building. They are fully reversible simply by disconnecting cables and carrying equipment away.

As illustrated in the photos below, the proposals have a very limited impact on the appearance of the building, being only visible from on the roof, where there is no public access, or if using a telescope or other visual aid.

It is considered that the proposal has benefit in providing greater connectivity to the college, with no significant harm to the heritage asset.



From the rear the chimney will screen the antenna.



The base of the chimneys and the antenna are screened by the parapet walls.



Close by chimneys are not readily visible.

3.2 The Fan Housing

3.2.1 The Need for the Works

The fan is an extract from the kitchen of the college. It is required to extract cooking smells and gas exhaust fumes from cooking into the open air. The existing fan is broken and requires replacement. The fan was installed with or prior to the lift installation. It is located at low level between the lift and the kitchen. Due to its location, whilst the broken fan can be removed in pieces, an intact replacement fan can not be reinstalled in the same location without dismantling of the lift or the historic building. It is proposed to raise the fan housing to allow the fan to be installed in a more accessible location.

3.1.2 Proposals

It is proposed to remove the roof of the fan housing, and to raise this by 600mm in the same location, renewing the cladding below to match. This will allow room for the ducting to be extended to an accessible position above where the new fan can be installed. The new housing will provide the space to renew the fan in the future without the need to later the building again.



Existing fan housing with exhaust housing and duct opened behind.



Proposed addition to fan casing. This will be flashed below window and line with lift framing.

3.1.3 Impact of the proposal

The fan housing is in a discrete location off the service access to the kitchen. Raising the plant housing will have a minor visual impact (as shown in the sketch above), within the service zone alongside the lift.

The proposals have a very limited impact on the appearance of the building. There is no loss of historic fabric. The existing ducts can be reused reducing further works or the requirement for new openings or terminals at high level.

It is considered that the proposal has benefit in allowing the servicing of plant to be carried out in the future, with no significant harm to the heritage asset.

4.0 Conclusion

The proposals respect the significance of the existing building, its setting, and its historic features. There are no physical changes to historic fabric and the works proposed are fully reversible. The aerial is not attached to the building but sits as. Essentially loose furniture on the roof, although it does have a physical presence and this should be considered. Views from the historic parkland and the wider landscape have been assessed and are unaffected.

The proposals should be considered in the context of national guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Paragraph 210 of the NPPF states that 'In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The impact on the heritage asset (the listed building and curtilage) are minimal as has been demonstrated. There are benefits in the proposal in terms of digital connectivity required for the functioning of the college, considered the optimum viable use, and in providing adequate servicing for the kitchen.

The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of the NPPF, as there is no negative impact on the significance of the heritage assets (listed building and its curtilage).

It is considered the proposals meet the requirements of the NPPF and Local Plan Policies.

Report prepared by

Richard Stora
for Stora Architecture