



EAGLES RETREAT, ALL HALLOWS, HIGH HOYLAND

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT REV D

November 2022



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Contents	Page
1.0	Introduction and Project Vision	3
2.0	Site Context and Heritage	4&5
3.0	Greenbelt Policy	6
4.0	Use	7
5.0	Amount	7
6.0	Layout	7
7.0	Scale	8
8.0	Appearance	8
9.0	Access	9
10.0	Conclusion	9



Above: Church of All Hallows as viewed from the north



1. INTRODUCTION AND VISION

Eagles Retreat at All Hallows'

Eagles Retreat is a converted former Church of England church (now deconsecrated) in the hamlet of High Hoyland near Barnsley, where Christians have worshipped since the 6th century. It offers unique accommodation for individuals and small groups (exclusively or communally) for rest, refreshment and restoration in a place of immense peace and beauty.

Since coming here 5 years ago after a combined total of 40 years in parish ministry, former Anglican priests Reverend Tina and Jasper Hodges have created a safe, spiritually refreshing space/retreat in a welcoming, secure environment for those who need it the most.

They have been running the centre as a place of Retreat, from the beginning, for those who have been damaged through life. They offer hospitality and prayer as requested for those who need it.

They also pray for and support the wider local community and region offering both daily and monthly prayer and holistic wellbeing support. Tina and Jasper have been breathing life back into the building and they hold at least one event annually for the local community.

Guests have included:

- Those experiencing sudden & multiple bereavements
- Those experiencing terminal illness
- Those experiencing family tragedy, grief and loss
- Ordained ministers needing 'refuelling' to tend their 'flocks'
- Business leaders who have become burnt out
- Those suddenly made redundant
- Survivors of physical, sexual, emotional or spiritual abuse
- Those going through family separations in need of a place of safety
- Keyworkers during Covid and those suffering from long Covid
- Those struggling with depression and breakdowns
- Those experiencing marriage troubles

Tina and Jasper Hodges are fully trained in safeguarding and operate with DBS enhanced disclosure with a team of well trained and qualified helpers/advisors. These have enhanced their ministry and include:

- a social worker;
- a specialist teacher;
- a counsellor and spiritual director;
- an award-winning life coach & human behaviour consultant;
- an integrative health coach;
- healing and bereavement Walk leader; a couple to lead Marriage Workshops etc.

The team also has working relationships with other well established therapeutic communities. E.g. Rapha Therapeutic Community in Kent.

For the next stage of development, Tina and Jasper want to create **a charitable trust (or similar) which will last beyond their lifetime**. That being so, they need to create increased space for guests within the retreat centre. This will require that they no longer live in the church building they have been upgrading over the last five years and instead recreate the Sexton's cottage so they have somewhere to live (and those who lead this work in future can do likewise).

All Hallows also is a building which requires much attention (e.g. shallow drains, ongoing limestone mortar replacement, roof care, garden trees and cemetery maintenance etc) and it demands that the owners be onsite and able to oversee the ongoing daily running of the building, and be near to minister to those on-site who are on retreat.

The owners have been an active part of the local neighbourhood crime safety group and their being here also offers passive surveillance of the church, its grounds, the car park and woodlands with their regular patrols.

The Sexton's cottage (once called Church House) and associated outbuildings on the proposed development site, enabled the ministry of the church to flourish in the last century. Once the church went into decline, the Sexton's cottage did likewise and was demolished in c. 1960s. The cottage as separate living accommodation is essential to enable Tina and Jasper to operate the ministry in this location and facilitate creation of the Trust.

The greenbelt and beautiful location where All Hallows' resides provides beautiful nature and walks which helps people particularly find healing and peace, as they walk through their challenges. The aim is to expand on this with a Wellbeing Garden with Sacred Space in the church grounds in due course and steps have already been taken - contact made to Barnsley CVS for local partnership working. (Not part of this planning application)

Tina and Jasper have been advised there are a dozen members of the local community in full support (outside of the parish council).

They see their role as enabling other people's well-being, families, and ministries to flourish. Hence, these 'very special circumstances' should be taken into consideration when assessing the wider planning balance.

So far, the Airbnb platform (and latterly cottages.com) has helped the owners to organise people's stay without the additional administrative burden of a booking website. This has also meant they have welcomed guests from every kind of ethnicity and background. Once a Trust, the owners plan to manage bookings primarily themselves as they will be able to employ people to run such.

This project will safeguard the future of the listed church and monuments, the former was in a poor and deteriorating state of repair prior to it becoming used for residential purposes. By re-constructing a sensitively designed cottage on the site of the former cottage, the historically important listed church buildings and grounds can be maintained by the owners whilst the church operates as a retreat, creating a sustainable long-term use for the previously vacant church.



2. SITE AND CONTEXT

Location

The project site is in the High Hoyland area of Barnsley. The site sits adjacent to 'Church Lane/Litherop Road', connecting Wakefield Road (A636) to High Hoyland from North to South. The site sits within a rural landscape surrounded by farmland and woodland, close to the nearby hamlet of High Hoyland. The site is well screened by existing trees and offers glimpses of far-reaching views of the surrounding landscape.

There is a public right of way footpath that divides the church site from the development site - the latter was previously used as a car park. The development site is understood to have been previously occupied by two back-to-back cottages, including the former Sexton's cottage and associated outbuildings. To the south of the development site is the church and graveyard, surrounded by trees and fields.



Above: Views to the East of the site

Below: Site of the proposed cottage



2. SITE AND CONTEXT

Heritage

The site contains a former (now deconsecrated) Church of England church building, 'The Church of All Hallows'. It was Grade II listed by Historic England in March 1968. The graveyard to the south also includes several Grade II listed raised gravestone and tomb slabs. The Church Tower dates to 1679, while the rest of the church is understood to have been added in 1904-8.

Heritage and Archaeological consultants *HPS* have been appointed to conduct a detailed initial assessment of the site's history and significance and to assess the heritage impact of the proposals. (Please refer to accompanying Heritage Statement for further detail.)

The proposals have been sensitively designed to respect the church and its setting thus preserving and enhancing the heritage value of the site. By reintroducing accommodation that was historically and intrinsically part of the site, the proposals pay homage to the past whilst enabling sustainable future use of the site, establishing a more practical arrangement for the long-term maintenance of the buildings and grounds.



The site contains stone and brick remnants understood to belong to the historic buildings previously on the site



3. GREENBELT POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The site is within Green Belt, located on the boundary of ‘Biodiversity or Geological interest sites’ and has ‘Green ways’ running to the East and West. Whilst the proposed development is within Green Belt, there are exceptional circumstances where Green Belt development is appropriate, such as where the land has been previously developed, openness is unaffected and where ‘very special circumstances’ exist (para. 148, NPPF.)

‘A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would: – not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.’ (NPPF para. 149)

Barnsley Local Plan 18.5, Policy GB2 Replacement, extension and alteration of existing buildings in the Green Belt. states: *‘Provided it will not have harmful impact on the appearance, or character and will preserve the openness of the Green Belt, we will allow the following development in the green belt:*

...Replacement buildings where the new building is in the same use and is not materially larger than which it replaces.’

Whilst the historical cottages and out-buildings have not been present since c.1960s, for a significant time in the site’s history, it contained dwellings. Construction of a new cottage of lesser footprint and narrower frontage on a well screened site **does not have a significant impact on the openness of the Greenbelt compared to the historical arrangement.** The proposed new footprint offers a greater sense of openness by virtue of its reduced road frontage and reduced footprint compared to the previous buildings (93m2 compared to c. 107m2).

Barnsley Local Plan (Adopted January 2019) Policy HE1 The Historic Environment states: *‘We will positively encourage developments which will help in the management, conservation, understanding and enjoyment of Barnsley’s historic environment, especially for those assets which are at risk.’*

Without suitable accommodation for those responsible for the site’s upkeep and management of the retreat, the listed church and heritage site are at risk of being left vacant and falling back into disrepair.

Furthermore, the NPPF states: *‘145. Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as ...to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.’*

In this instance the ‘openness’ of the Greenbelt would not genuinely be affected. There are ‘very special circumstances’ with public and heritage benefits that outweigh any harm, and the proposals ‘enhance beneficial use’ of Greenbelt.

This application would fit with para. 145 as the proposed dwelling facilitates the sustainable re-use and upkeep of a deconsecrated Grade II church and former carpark which, prior to the current owners moving to site, was considered by some to be an overgrown eyesore, and was used by fly tippers. The applicant’s intention is to set up a trust whereby the refurbished Grade II listed church is used as a retreat with significant public benefit for many years to come. Previously the site was falling into disrepair. The proposal for the cottage therefore needs to be viewed in the context of its significant public benefits, and *‘opportunities to retain and enhance landscapes and visual amenity...to improve damaged and derelict land, all of which constitute **Very Special Circumstances.***



Site plan comparing site ‘openness’ – proposed cottage (blue) and previous buildings (orange)



Diagram of green belt, green ways and Biodiversity or Geological interest sites, with Green Belt hatched green and green ways denoted as dotted green lines.



4. USE

The proposed development is a new cottage to replace the historical sexton's cottage to the north of the church. (Historically a sexton would maintain church buildings and the graveyard. It is proposed to reintroduce this historical arrangement.)

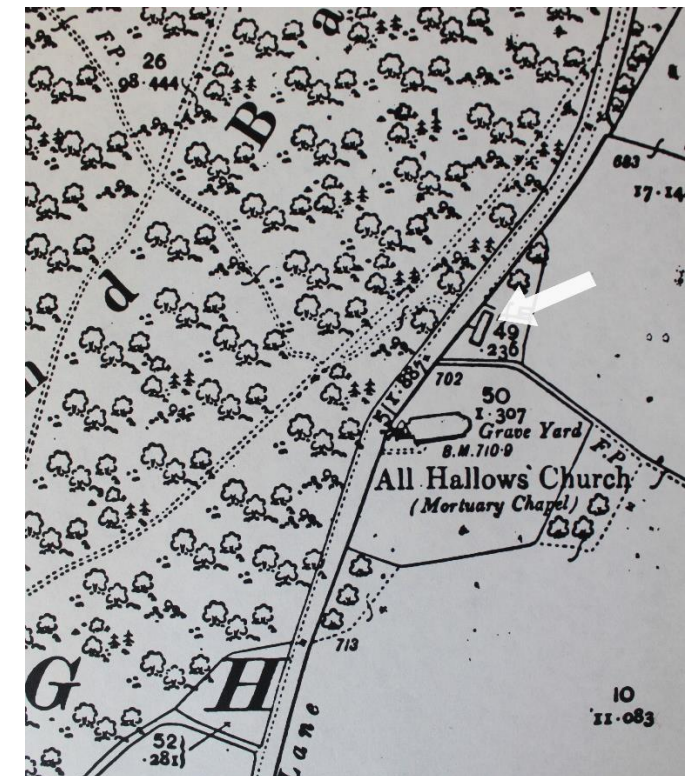
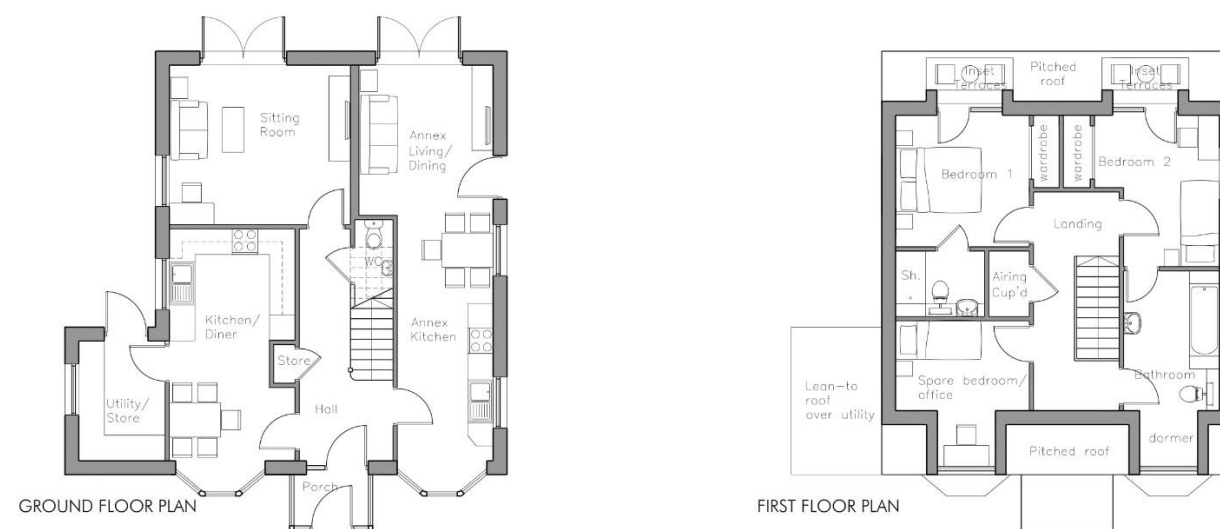
5. AMOUNT

One 3-bedroom detached cottage is proposed, of a smaller footprint compared to the historical buildings (93m² compared to c. 107m²). A narrower plan form is proposed, to minimise visual impact as seen from the road and increase the sense of openness compared to the historical arrangement. The cottage will provide space for the whole family to live, with annex accommodation to enable independent but supported living for the couple's mother. The proposed floor area of the cottage is 129m² arranged over two floors, with the first floor accommodation being within the roof space.

6. LAYOUT

The building plan (see below) is compact as the site contains several high-quality mature trees that are to be preserved. The location of the cottage has been agreed with the tree consultant so as not to have a detrimental impact on the two closest mature trees. Some tree pruning is required and described in the accompanying method statement.

The proposals make use of an existing vehicular gated access which has been historically used to access a former paddock, which was also more recently used as a car park (under previous use). This access will serve a new driveway which includes a turning area so that vehicles can enter and leave the site in forward gear. The new pedestrian gated access is proposed through the stone boundary wall. The cottage addresses the road but it is of narrower width (but greater depth) compared to the historical cottage so as to reduce visual impact and increase openness as seen from the road. Back gardens are located to the southeast of the cottage, as was the historical site layout.



Above: Historic map showing the previous location of the cottage

Below: Proposed site plan extract showing footprint of historical buildings (dashed blue) to be replaced





7. SCALE

The new cottage will be two storeys high but the first floor is set within the roof space, with dormer windows, to keep the building height as low as possible and to reflect the scale of the historical buildings. The proposed cottage features a lean-to roof over a single-story element, to reflect the design and massing of the original cottage as shown in the painting opposite. The original cottage featured bay window features which have been emulated on the new designs.

8. APPEARANCE

The proposed external materials are sensitive to the setting of the grade II listed church. Stone is proposed as a material for external walling to match the existing church. Slate roof with lead features are also proposed, along with a brick chimney, closely reflecting the design of the historical cottage(s).

Below: Precedent examples for materials proposed for the new cottage.



Above: Painting of the Sexton's Cottage with the Church in the background



Above: Proposed road facing elevation of the new cottage with architectural references to bay features (see above) and smaller lean-to structure to



9. ACCESS

Proposed access arrangements remain similar to existing. Vehicles will utilise the existing vehicular gated access. A new pedestrian gated access is proposed to the stone wall, as was the historical arrangement for the previous cottage. The site can also be accessed from the church, across the public right of way footpath, as per existing arrangements. The cottage has been designed to comply with modern accessibility legislation and requirements such as the Equality Act and Part M of the Building Regulations.

10. CONCLUSION

Eagles Retreat is a converted former Church of England church. The proposed development is for a sensitively designed new cottage to replace the historical 'sexton's cottage' to the north of the church, in broadly the same location and of a lesser footprint to the previous buildings. The proposals preserve and enhance the heritage value of the site and reintroduce historical accommodation that has been an intrinsic part of the site history.

This project will safeguard the future of the listed church and monuments - the former was in a poor and deteriorating state of repair prior to its residential use in recent years – and creates a sustainable long-term use for the previously vacant church.

The 'openness' of the Greenbelt would not genuinely be affected – the site is extremely well screened by mature trees - and there are 'very special circumstances' with public and heritage benefits that outweigh any perceived harm. The proposals 'enhance beneficial use' of Greenbelt in line with planning policy.

The submitted heritage statement and impact assessment states:

'The proposal seeks to write a new chapter in the history of the site through the reintroduction of a dwelling associated with the historic church building. This will make a positive contribution to the ongoing appreciation of the site within its modern context.'

'The reintroduction of the domestic setting is in keeping with the historic character of the site and as such any harm to the adjacent heritage asset is considered to be less than substantial, at the lower end of the scale and is judged to be acceptable in heritage terms.'