



Planning and Design and Access Statement

Underhill, Blue Bank, Sleights

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This document has been produced to illustrate considerations behind a proposed extension with a recessed glazed gable at Underhill, Blue Bank, Sleights. It aims to explain how the proposed changes have been designed to preserve the character of the host property, the immediate area and more distant aspects across the valley by taking a sympathetic approach that combines modern design style with local vernacular building techniques and materials.

2.0 Character Assessment

2.1 Underhill

Underhill, also known historically as Blue Bank Farm, forms a historic farmstead situated upon and built into the western side of the valley at the bottom of which sits Littlebeck. Owing to the topography, it is hidden from view from the nearest main road (the A169) and is clearly visible only from the far side of the valley.

- 2.2 The historic building is in the traditional “longhouse” type layout, the adjoining former barns possibly representing an earlier iteration of the building with the house potentially being enlarged and raised since its initial construction, with a contrast between the earlier “rubble” stone and square coursed blocks seen at first floor level. The masonry has rough coarse diagonal “pick-faced” dressing indicating 17th century origins (RCHME, 206) or possibly earlier. The house itself is very much of the local vernacular with no affectations of “polite” architecture. The upper right window opening does however show signs of enlargement.

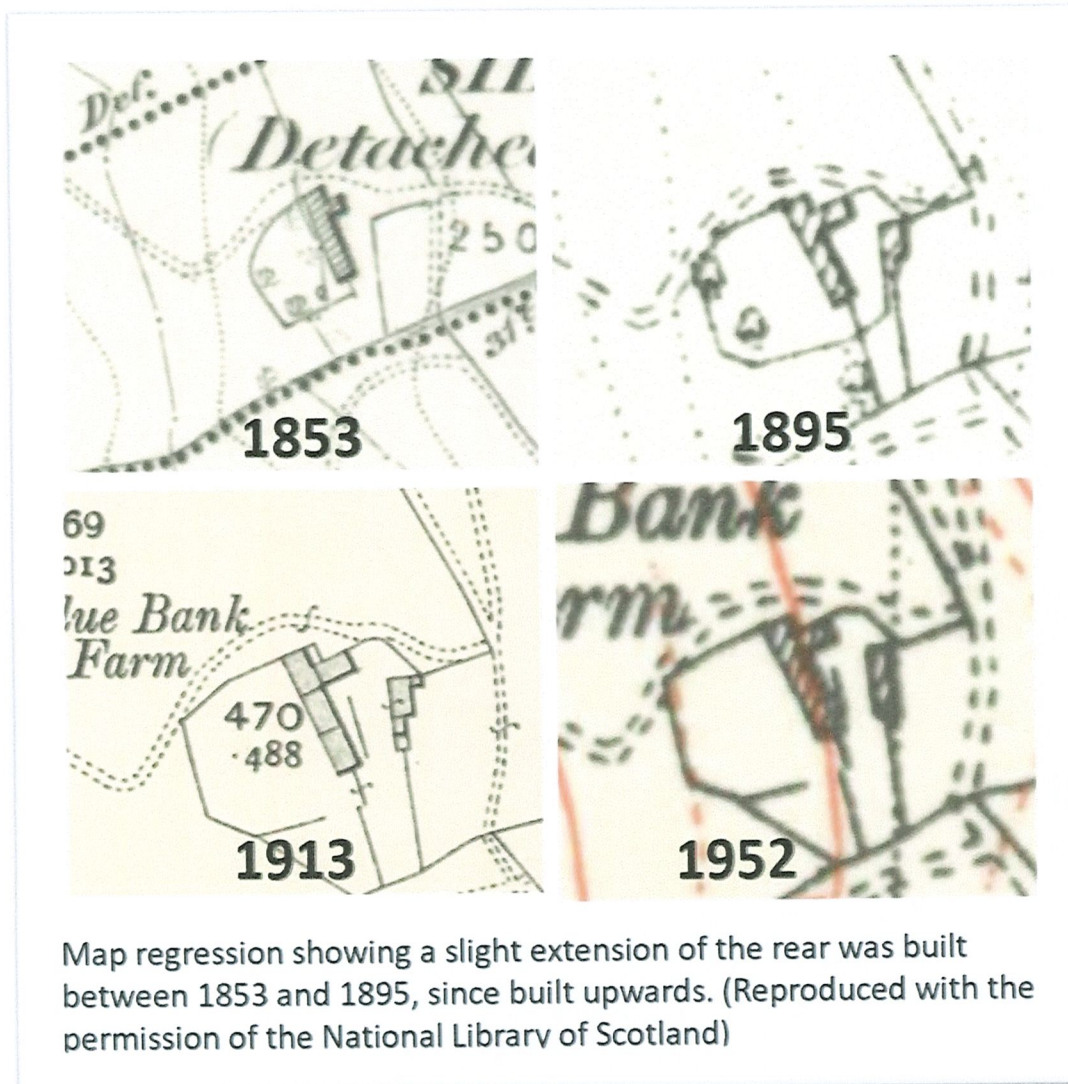


Lower rubble courses with more regular blocks above



2.2 The agricultural roots of the property are clearly evident from historic mapping, being known as Blue Bank Farm at least until the 1950's, as evidenced on the 1952 OS Map. The long-house planform is clear though the rear offshoot proposed to be altered was extant by the mid 19th century, which was subsequently extended as shown on the 1895 OS map.

2.3 Owing to the apparent presence of feeding troughs at the eastern extremity, it is likely this further extension was a pigsty in common with the local habit of keeping pigs (RCHME, 184). Whilst the upper storey of this extent of the building is believed to be of modern origin, it is possible there may have historically been more than one storey, such an arrangement being noted by the RCHME at Stormy Hall, Danby, where a pigsty forms the lower storey of a barn built into the hillside (RCHME, 1987, 184). By the time of the publication of the 1895 OS Map the stone cart shed is apparent, the planform of the property apparently unchanged since then.



Pig feeding troughs circled in blue

3.0 Planning History

3.1 A search of North York Moors National Park records indicate no planning history relating to physical alterations to the building.

4.0 Planning Policy

4.1 It has been established via pre-application discussion (NYM\2023\ENQ\19483) that proposals for an extension must be clearly subservient to the main house, that initial proposals did not reflect the local vernacular and also posed a light pollution risk, conflicting with the "Dark Night Skies" designation. As confirmed in the pre-application response, this proposal will be assessed against Policy C017 of the North York Moors National Park Local Plan and guidance within *Design Guide Part 2: Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document* (NYMNP, 2008). However, due to the line-of-sight views to the GII listed Public Drinking Fountain on the opposing valley side at Hemsyke, it is suggested that Strategic Policy I may also be relevant.

3.2 Both policies are reproduced below:

"Policy C017 - Householder Development

Development within the domestic curtilage of dwellings should take full account of the character of the local area, the special qualities of the National Park and will only be permitted where:

- 1. The scale, height, form, position and design of the new development do not detract from the character and form of the original dwelling or its setting in the landscape;*
- 2. The development does not adversely affect the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers or result in inadequate levels of amenity for the existing dwelling; and*

3. The development reflects the principles outlined in the Authority's Design Guide.

In the case of extensions and alterations to the existing dwelling, the following criteria must also be met:

- a) Any extension should be clearly subservient to the main part of the building and should not increase the total habitable floorspace by more than 30% unless there are compelling planning considerations in favour of a larger extension; and*
- b) The design and detailing should complement the architectural form and character of the original dwelling and any new roofline should respect the form and symmetry of the original dwelling.*

Where permission is granted, future extensions may be controlled by the removal of permitted development rights. In the case of existing outbuildings and the development of new outbuildings, the following criteria must also be met:

- i. The outbuilding should be required for purposes incidental to the residential use of the main dwelling;*
- ii. Any new or extended outbuilding should be proportionate in size and clearly subservient to the main dwelling;*
- iii. New outbuildings should be located in close proximity to existing buildings;*
- iv. If the proposal involves works to improve or extend an existing outbuilding, the original structure must be worthy of retention and capable of improvement; and*



v. It should be demonstrated that any change of use of existing outbuildings is not likely to lead to future proposals for additional outbuildings to replace the existing use.

All proposals for residential annexes should also meet the requirements of Policy CO18 Residential Annexes.”

“Strategic Policy I - The Historic Environment

All developments affecting the historic environment should make a positive contribution to the cultural heritage and local distinctiveness of the National Park through the conservation and, where appropriate, enhancement of the historic environment. Development should conserve heritage assets and their setting in a manner appropriate to their significance, especially those assets which contribute most to the distinctive character of the area, including:

1. Features that contribute to the wider historic landscape character of the North York Moors National Park such as the legacy of features associated with the area’s industrial, farming, fishing and monastic past;
2. Archaeological sites and monuments, comprising both upstanding and below-ground assets, including Scheduled Monuments and regionally or locally important non-designated monuments such as the Neolithic barrows and Bronze Age cairns, tumuli and stone circles;
3. The vernacular building styles, materials and the form and layout of the historic built environment including Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and regionally or locally important non-designated structures and buildings.

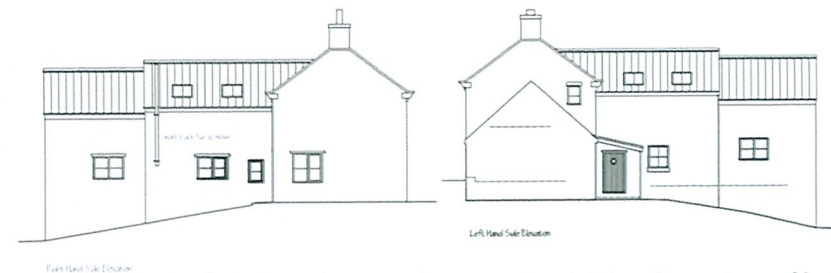
Applicants will be required to provide a Heritage Statement of sufficient detail to allow an informed assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage asset(s).

Harm to an element which contributes to the significance of a designated heritage asset (or to non-designated archaeology of national importance) will require clear and convincing justification and will only be permitted where this is outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. Substantial harm will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would bring substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or there are other exceptional circumstances.

Where non-designated heritage assets are affected, a balanced judgement will be taken having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset and other material considerations.”

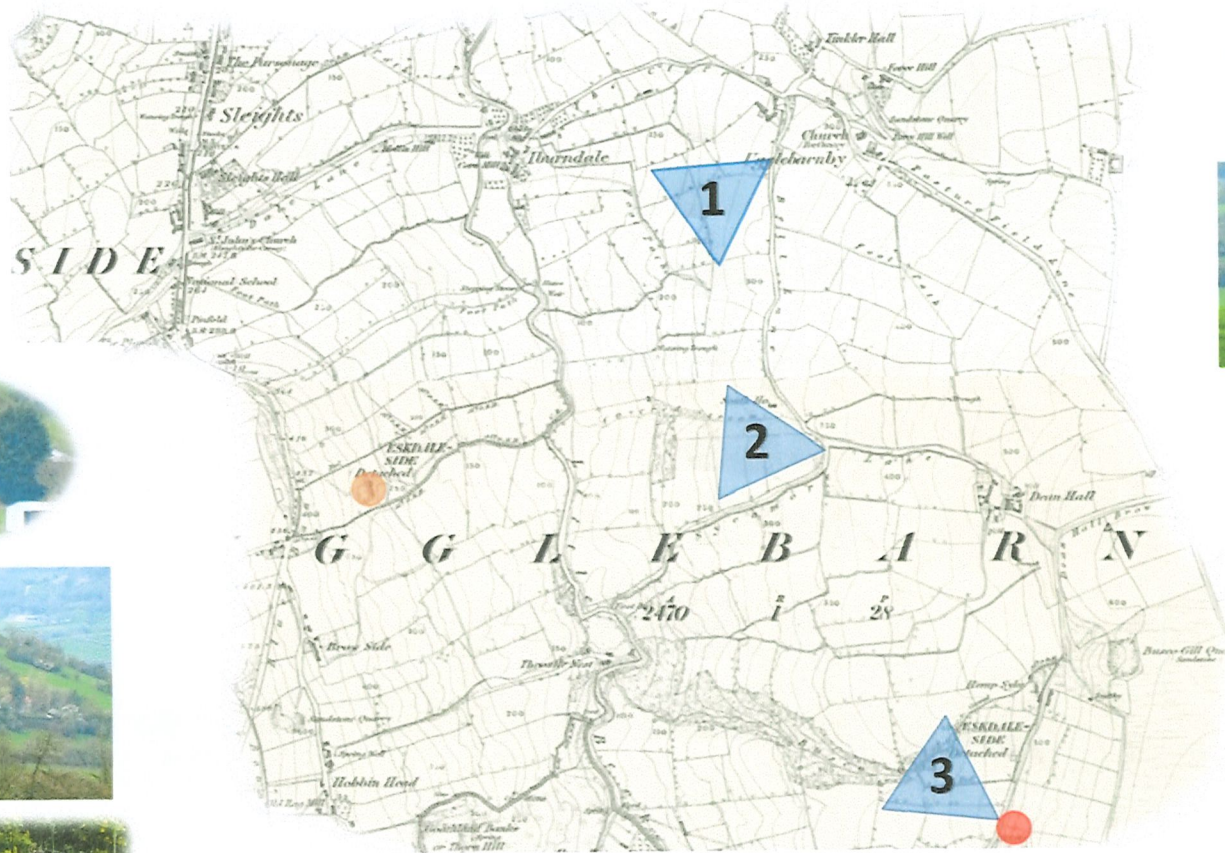
5.0 Proposal and Assessment

- 5.1 The initial pre-application feedback has been acted upon to evolve the design to ensure it will be unintrusive and will preserve and even enhance the vernacular character seen in the building. The proposed extension will tie in below the ridge of the of the house roof, retaining the subservient proportions on that plane as required by the North York Moors National Park Design Guide Part 2: Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings, Supplementary Planning Document. Due to topography, the height to eaves is higher than would be seen on a flat plot but this is minimised by stepping the roofs of the extension and using locally sourced sandstone and traditional materials to mitigate visual impacts when the development is viewed from across the valley side.

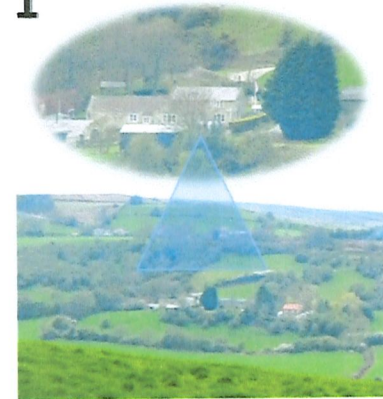


Proposed side elevations showing the extension joining the main roof below the ridge and stepped further down to minimise height

5.2 The impact of the development has been assessed from prime visual receptors on the far valley slope, mainly Tom Bell Lane linking Ugglebarnby to Hemsyke and its junction with Seggymire Lane which runs down the eastern slope of the valley to Throstle Nest, both popular with walkers and riders. Potential visual impacts on setting have similarly been considered from the GII listed roadside Public Drinking Fountain near Hemsyke.



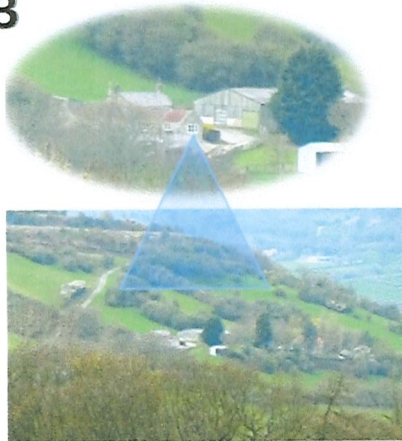
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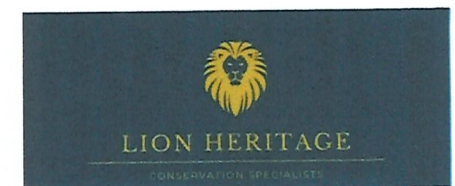


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GII listed public drinking fountain, location marked in red

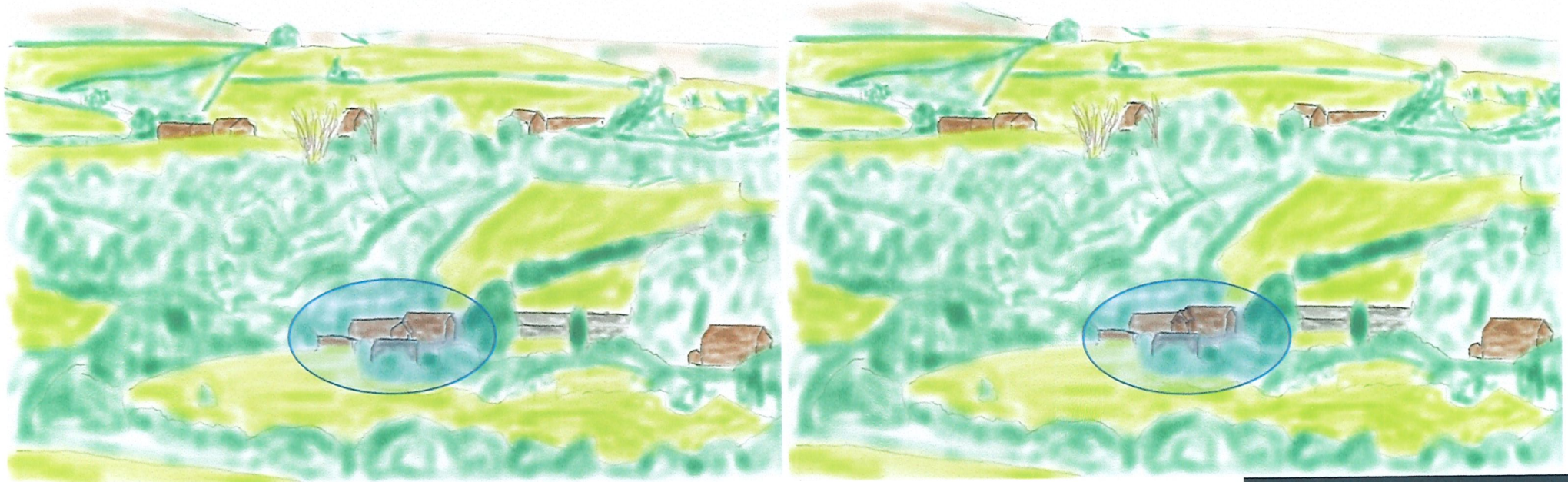
Viewpoints superimposed on 1853 OS Map (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)



5.3 As alluded to in the National Park response letter, it is understood that the glazed gable is a contentious element of the proposal. This has been addressed by deeply rebating the glazing into the gable which will be formed by the re-introduction of vernacular building techniques, the gable itself being formed by a traditional timber collared truss. Such an approach is of course representative of local character (RCHME, 1987,204) but also strengthens the character still retained in the roof of the original part of the building. Roof trusses are suspected to have been replaced in the 1980's but the purlins were preserved and an entirely traditional peg and tenon fastens to the new trusses, inspiring the approach taken to this proposal.

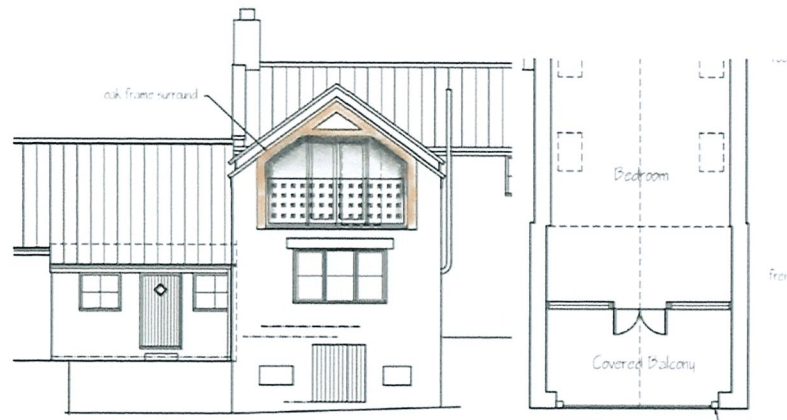


Historic purlin traditionally joined into modern truss, present in the earliest barn



The valley side with Underhill highlighted, approximating the change to scale and massing entailed by the proposal

5.4 It is conceded that in many cases glazed gables facilitate light pollution, though in this instance a deep rebate has been designed to provide a balcony area covered by the eaves of the roof. This results in a hooded balcony and is effective in screening upwards light spill, whilst the property will still benefit from solar gain in the morning sun, though not to such an extent that the extension will be overly hot. The deep rebate will also provide a sense of articulation, effectively avoiding a monolithic appearance to the raised rear gable with the resulting shading acting to break up the impression of mass.



Gable formed by timber collared truss, showing the deeply rebated glazed section

6.0 Access

6.1 Access arrangements are unchanged.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 The overall scheme aims to increase living space in the house in a manner that adheres to NYMNPA residential design guidance and is compliant with relevant policies. The extension will capitalise on natural energy sources but avoid skywards light pollution. Considerate design means the visual impression of size will be minimised, resulting in an unintrusive development that complies with guidance with the *Design Guide Part 2: Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document*, with Policy CO17 and Strategic Policy I of the North York Moors National Park Local Plan and with "Dark Skies" aims.

References:

NYMNPA (2008) *Design Guide Part 2: Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document*. NYMNPA.

RCHME (1987) *House of the North York Moors*. HMSO.

T Brown (AssocIHC)

