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PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE OF THE MOORCOCK PUBLIC HOUSE @ SLAIDBURN ROAD, WADDINGTON

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

AND

PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES

RYCROFT ASSOCIATES

June 10th 2016

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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Rycroft Associates Landscape Architects were commissioned in June 2016 & June 2014 to review and update the Visual Impact Assessment document which was commissioned in August 2012 to support earlier proposals for the redevelopment of the former Moorcock Public House at Slaidburn Road, Waddington, this earlier scheme was withdrawn.

The current proposals are for the demolition of the existing building and its replacement with four stone built residential dwellings and work from home studio space which will be located on the site of the former hotel building and the adjacent car park area to the West of the site. The original pub gardens which are sited to the south of the Moorcock are not included within this application.

The purpose of this report is an assessment of the Landscape and Visual Impact on the surrounding landscape of both the existing large building and the proposed new build development on the surrounding environment, having regard for landform, landscape character and setting. This report has been prepared by Sarah Rycroft Dip LA who is a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute with 35 years professional experience.

2.0 LANDSCAPE SETTING

The Moorcock Hotel site is located 2.5 kilometres to the North of Waddington Village and 5.0k from Clitheroe within the Forest of Bowland, this locality was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1964. The scenery of this region is an attractive mixture of hill and fell, moorland, woods, rivers and pasture land

The proposed development site is sited beside the B6478 road between Waddington and Slaidburn and was formerly a public house and restaurant, with some residential rooms and conference facilities and associated car parking. The pub has long been a well known local landmark and the white painted Tudor style building is immediately adjacent to the roadside at the foot of Waddington Fell with a South facing aspect offering extensive views overlooking the Ribble Valley and Pendle Hill.

The lower slopes of the hillside leading down towards the River Ribble at Clitheroe are predominantly agricultural, made up of a network of small fields with deciduous woodland and narrow lanes bordered with trees, but as the Slaidburn Road approaches the public house site the landscape character changes to more open moorland and is at the edge of the designated Open Access land.

The existing building is set into the base of the fellside with the ground rising steeply beyond the boundary from 250m up to a high point of 383m on the top of Waddington Fell.

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3.0 SITE APPEARANCE

We understand that the original use of the Moorcock Inn was as a farmstead with records of its use dating back to at least 1847. By 1925 the building had become a pub with rendered elevations and stone quoins, possibly it was rendered to make it visible for potential customers or to disguise the use of non local materials. By the 1930's the mock Tudor additions had been incorporated and the buildings were extended and adapted further in the 1970's all of these actions progressively increased the visual impact of the buildings within the landscape so that it is very prominent when approached along Slaidburn Road from the South and to a lesser extent when descending towards the site along the road from the North.

The existing building has a large car park to the West accessed by a wide roadway which also forms the access route to the driveway leading up to a large detached residential property known as Moorcock House which appears to have been built in the early to mid 20th Century, this is set at a higher level than the hotel buildings but is also white rendered. The grounds of Moorcock House have extensive tree planting and are substantially screened from the pub site with trees and an evergreen hedge. It is not possible to see Moorcock House from local public rights of way as a result of this well vegetated setting despite its higher position.

To the front of the Moorcock public house there are gardens which have been neglected since the closure of the business but still contains areas of ornamental tree and shrub planting broken up with lawns, paths and paved areas which would have provided attractive seating areas to complement the public house and would have been well used by customers taking advantage of the beautiful views. Although there are some trees planted along the outer boundary of these gardens they are mainly bordered with lower shrubs and light foliaged trees, presumably to prevent the pub from being hidden from the view of potential customers driving up the road from Waddington.
The pub car park was also landscaped in the past with several island beds planted with shrubs and Birch trees, the majority of these are in a poor condition due to neglect and are of negligible retention value. To the front of the car park is a more densely enclosed lawned garden area which possibly was a private garden for the landlord. The Southern boundary of the property is very well treed providing a dense screen which precludes any views of the car park area and the adjacent property Moorcock House from outside the site.

To the North of the site where the ground rises steeply up towards Waddington Fell, there is a belt of mixed deciduous trees sited along the stone boundary wall along with a copse of birch trees beyond on the slope leading up to the open fellside these block any views from the hillside immediately behind into the site. As the building and its surroundings are nestled into the base of the slope they cannot be viewed from the North and the building only comes into view when travelling South down the B6478 as the gradient begins to level out as it approaches the public house.

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4.0 VISIBLITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT SITE WITHIN THE LOCAL LANDSCAPE

The existing Moorcock Inn building is large, brightly painted and very prominent when approaching it northbound along Slaidburn Road and as the ground levels out when descending the road from the North. The road further South is tree lined and the landscape undulating so that the building is actually only visible for approximately 1.0 kilometre as the site is approached. It cannot be seen from any other highways with the exception of a short section of the minor trackway Browsholme Road which serves 4 residential properties namely Mitchells, New o Nook, Highfield and Summit House which are set within 500-750 metres from the existing Moorcock building. It is possible that the pub building can be seen from some upper floor windows of Mitchells and from the upper windows of the side elevations of New o Nook and Highfield, but there are certainly no significant views from these properties located to the West & South West of the planned development site.

To the South and East it would appear that none of the farms and houses in the vicinity have any view of the site as they are either enclosed with trees or set below any sight line.

There area number of public footpaths and bridleways in the vicinity of the site with one pathway cutting diagonally across the field to the South East running from Cuttock Clough Farm, where there is a clear view of the existing pub building along the route of the footpath for approximately 350metres.

Public Rights of Way running across Bradford Fell would initially appear from the Ordnance Survey Map to afford clear views of the site, however when the routes are walked there is only one 200m section of the path running North West from Moor Lane and a 300m section of the spur pathway heading East West where there is any view of the existing building. The undulating land form and strong network of dry stone walls prevent more than very fleeting views of the pub building, despite the fact that the building is painted white and is a large single mass. It is also possible that there will be a more distant fleeting view of the building from the highest point on the bridleway which runs along the edge of the plantation on the top of Grindleton Fell but this is at a considerable distance from the building and set below the horizon.

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4.1 POTENTIAL VISIBILITY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed redevelopment of the site consists of the construction of 4 detached stone dwellings, which will be positioned on the footprint of the original Moorcock building and its adjacent car park. The area of gardens below the access drive will not be developed and these will provide a good landscape buffer to the South of the development.

The new buildings will be constructed of local materials, stone and slate with stone boundary walls to their perimeters which will be softened with native mixed hedgerows. Additional tree planting will be implemented to supplement the existing shelterbelt of trees along the northern boundary and within the gardens to the planned properties.

All the planned houses are set within large plots which allows the opportunity for planting groups of native trees to the South of the new buildings. This planting will be positioned to break up the silhouettes of the buildings and also be a useful windbreak on this exposed hillside location, but care will be taken to ensure that important views through the site to the surrounding AONB landscape are not restricted.

New ornamental shrub and herbaceous planting will be sited around the new houses and their amenity areas to complement the new buildings.

Hard materials i.e. the driveway, footpaths and courtyard etc. will be surfaced with local paving stone setts and gravels in to complement the locally sourced construction materials which are planned to be used on the buildings.

Further details of the proposed landscape treatment will be included within a landscape scheme which will be submitted to satisfy any conditions.

4.2 CONCLUSION

Although the existing building on the site is a large structure it is not seen on the skyline from any viewpoint and it is well enclosed by the surrounding landforms and vegetation which screens it from the majority of viewpoints. Careful siting and design of the proposed new buildings will ensure that they are significantly less visible than the existing building and any views of the site will be of a sympathetic group of buildings in which blend into the local scene and complement views through the site to the landscape beyond.

The proposed new houses will be significantly smaller than the original Moorcock building. They will be traditionally styled and stone built using locally sourced building materials which will be more appropriate to the local vernacular than their predecessor. The grouping of the houses has been designed so that they blend into the landscape when viewed from the surrounding area. The new houses will be set into extensive gardens with new tree and shrub planting and enclosed with local gritstone walls backed by mixed native hedges which will ensure that they are well integrated and will have very limited visible impact within the landscape.

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5.0 LANDSCAPE MITIGATION MEASURES TO FURTHER REDUCE ANY IMPACT OF THE PLANNED DEVELOPMENT AND TO ENHANCE THE SCHEME

The following mitigation measures have been considered when preparing the designs for the setting to the proposed scheme to reduce the impact of the development and to ensure its sensitive integration into the natural landscape. Details of the landscape proposals will conditioned:

- Plant additional trees within site to reduce impact of buildings and reinforce the existing shelter belt
- Ensure that existing tree planting to the boundary of the site is retained.
- Define external plot boundaries with local stone walls backed with mixed native hedges, internal boundaries between plots to be a combination of stone walls, fences and hedges.
- Create informal grass verge along Slaidburn Road where possible to reflect local roadside character and form green corridor.
- Plant native hedgerow trees and shrubs along the Slaidburn Road roadside boundaries to soften the impact of the boundary walls and integrate the scheme into the landscape within the AONB.
- Plant locally sourced native trees and shrubs wherever possible within site.
- Use local stone for building works and paving to site.
- Design the landscape setting in simple style using local materials to avoid creating suburban effect.
- Carry out native tree and shrub planting along plot boundaries to soften boundaries and provide screening between properties whilst framing views into the wider landscape beyond.

Report prepared by Sarah Rycroft principal of Rycroft Associates - 3rd September 2012 and updated 19th June 2014 and 10th June 2016.

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PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOORCOCK INN SITE, SLAIDBURN ROAD, WADDINGTON

APPENDIX 1 : PROPOSED PLANT SPECIES & SPECIFICATION NOTES

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PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOORCOCK INN SITE, WADDINGTON - GUIDELINE PLANTING PROPOSALS

Code	Species	Specification		Support
	TREES			
BP	**Betula pendula- Birch**	3.5-4.0m, 12 – 14cm stem, Heavy Standard	O.G.	Short stake
BJ	**Betula jaquemontii-Himalayan Birch**	4.0-4.5m,16- 18cm stem, Extra Heavy Standard	RB	3 short stakes
SA	**Sorbus aucuparia - Rowan**	3.5-4.0m, 12 – 14cm stem, Heavy Standard	O.G.	Short stake
CP	**Cratagegus prunifolia - Thorn**	3.5-4.0m, 12 – 14cm stem, Heavy Standard	O.G.	Short stake
PAP	**Prunus avium Plena - Wild Cherry**	4.0-4.5m, 14 – 16cm stem, Extra Heavy Standard	O.G.	Short stake
QR	**Quercus robur - Oak**	5.5-6.0m,25-30cm,Semi Mature	R.B.	Underground guyed with 3 short stakes
QRO	**Quercus robur - Oak**	3.5-4.0m, 12 – 14cm stem, Heavy Standard	R.B.	3 short stakes
FS	**Fagus sylvatica - Beech**	3.5-4.0m, 12 – 14cm stem, Heavy Standard	R.B.	3 short stakes

% Mix	WOODLAND SHELTER BELT		**Spacing**	**Support**
10	**Acer campestre- Field maple**	Feathered, 1.5-1.75m	1.0m centres	Bamboo cane & cable tie with rabbit guard
25	**Betula pendula- Birch**	Feathered, 1.5-1.75m		As above
10	**Corylus avellana - Hazel**	Transplant 1u2 600-800mm		As above
15	**Crataegus monogyna - Hawthorn**	Transplant 1+1 600-800mm		As above
5	**Fagus sylvatica - Beech**	Feathered, 1.5-1.75m		As above
5	**Pinus sylvestris - Scots Pine**	400-600mm 2 litre container		As above
10	**Prunus padus- wild cherry**	Transplant 1+2, 1200-1500mm		As above
10	**Sorbus aucuparia - Rowan**	Transplant 1+1, 1200-1500mm		As above
10	**Quercus robur - Oak**	Transplant 1+2, 1200-1500mm		As above

% Mix	NATIVE HEDGE	Planted in double staggered row	300mm	
50	**Crataegus monogyna - Hawthorn**	Transplant 1+1 600-800mm		As above
10	**Corylus avellana - Hazel**	Transplant 1u2 600-800mm		As above
5	**Ilex aquifolium- Holly**	2 litre CG, 400-600mm		As above
10	**Prunus spinosa – Blackthorn**	Transplant 1+1 400-600mm		As above
10	**Rosa canina- Dog Rose**	Transplant 1+1 600-800mm		As above
10	**Sambucus Nigra- Elder**	Transplant 0+1 600-900mm		As above
5	**Viburnum opulus - Guelder Rose**	Transplant 1+1 600-800mm		As above

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SHRUBS & HERBACEOUS

COTTAGE GARDEN STYLE PLANTING

Guideline list of species to be detailed later

			Density per m2
Amelanchier canadensis	1200-1500mm	10L	2
Anemone Honorine Joubert	Strong plant	3L	5
Achillea Walther Funcke	Strong clump	3L	6
Crocosmia Lucifer	150 - 200mm	2L	5
Euphorbia wulfenii	Strong clump	2L	5
Geranium Rozanne	200 - 300mm	2L	7
Geranium Russell Pritchard	200 - 300mm	2L	7
Hakonechloa macra Aureola	Strong clump	5L	5
Hebe Red Edge	150 - 200mm	2L	5
Hebe Marjorie	300-400mm planted	5L	4
Hydrangea macrophylla Lanarth White	450 - 600mm	5L	3
Iris sibirica	Strong clump	2L	7
Lavandula Hidcote	150 - 200mm	2L	7
Nepeta faassenii Six Hills Giant	Strong clump	2L	6
Oenothera macrocarpa	Strong clump	2L	
Pennisetum alopecuroides Hamelyn	Strong clump	3L	5
Philadelphus Manteau d'Hermine	600-800mm	5L	3
Persicaria Donald Lowndes	Strong clump	2L	6
Phlox paniculata	Strong clump	2L	5
Potentilla fruticosa Sunset	250-300mm	2L	5
Rosa Harlow Carr	400-600mm	3L	3
Rosa Roseraie de l'Hay	400-600mm	3L	3
Rosa rugosa Alba	400-600mm	3L	3
Rosa Surrey	400-600mm	3L	4
Rosmarinus Severn Sea	250-300mm	3L	5
Rhododendron yak. Surrey Heath	450-600mm	5L	3
Sambucus racemosa Sutherland Gold	400-600mm	5L	3
Sambucus nigra Black Lace	400-600mm	5L	3
Sedum Autumn Joy	Strong clump	2L	5
Scabiosa Double Blue	Strong plant	1L	6
Spiraea Goldmound	200-300mm	2L	5
Spiraea arguta	600-800mm	5L	3
Stachys lanata	200-300mm	2L	5
Syringa Charles Joly	1200-1500mm	10L	3
Tiarella cordifolia Spring Symphony	200-300mm	2L	6
Verbena bonariensis	strong clump	3L	5

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MOORCOCK SITE - PLANTING NOTES

GENERAL

Areas defined as planting or grassed areas to be broken up to remove existing surfacing and base course to full depth of construction, which should be removed from site. Base of excavations to be ripped/broken up prior to backfilling with subsoil and topsoil, to remove any compaction and ensure free drainage. Ground to be backfilled with subsoil and topsoil ensuring a minimum depth of 750mm of approved quality clean subsoil and a layer of topsoil as described below. Any stones rubbish, weed growth or non-organic material arising over 75mm diameter to be removed off site.

TOPSOILING

Topsoil whether existing on site or imported shall comply with BS 3882:2007 and be of premium grade, free draining, friable, top spit, medium loam. Topsoil containing excess sand or clay will not be accepted. The topsoil shall be free from pernicious weeds, straw, stones, wood, clay lumps and foreign matter exceeding 50 mm in size. It shall have a PH value of between 6.0 and 7.5 and a humus content of not less than 50% on a dry weight basis. All topsoil shall be obtained from the top 150 mm of ground. Stone content shall not be in excess of 5%. Pc content shall be salt free not more than 2 mm hos/cm at 25o centigrade. Nutrient status shall be medium to very high - Min of Ag ADAS definition.

Topsoil to be spread over prepared level subsoil base to ensure a minimum depth of 300mm to all shrub planted areas and 150mm depth to grassed areas. Spread over prepared subsoil in layers not exceeding 150mm and gently firm before spreading the next. Finished soil level to be 10mm above adjoining paving or kerbs, but unchanged within the root spread of existing trees. Levels shall finish not less than 150mm below dpc of any adjoining building.

Existing topsoiled areas to be prepared for planting by stripping off and rotovating any existing scrub, grass and weed growth.

Spread an approved peat free soil improver as a surface dressing to all planting areas prior to cultivation. Cultivate existing and newly soiled areas prior to planting or seeding to 300mm depth to incorporate dressing, ensure even smooth flowing levels and to achieve friable tilth. Any stones rubbish, weed growth or non organic material arising over 50mm diameter to be removed off site.

STANDARDS

All plant material to comply with BS 3936-1:1992. Planting operation to comply with BS4428:1989general landscape operations.

PLANTING

Set out planting to ensure even spread throughout beds, not in straight lines.

Excavate holes of sufficient size so that roots can be fully spread.

Free roots from surface of root balls, cut away damaged roots. Dispose of any plants with signs of pests or disease.

Position plants in holes with best side to front and at correct level. Plant as soon as possible after delivery to site.

Backfill plants to half depth, firm by treading, complete backfilling and firm again.

Plant hedge species in double staggered rows and protected with rabbit guards supported by a cane.

Woodland/Thicket areas to be set out in a grid at the spacing identified, siting the forest tree species within the centre of the bed and the shrubs and smaller trees around the perimeter, support transplants with a cane and rabbit guard and the feathered trees with a short stake 1200mm long 100mm diameter projecting a minimum of 450mm above the ground.

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Set climbing plants against base of walls and fences, fix climbers against wall with canes supplied or wires fixed to vine eyes. Spread out and train stems to allow climbers to be trained during maintenance period.
Free standing trees are to be planted into pits 1000mm x 1000mm or as required if larger rootballs apply and backfilled as follows: base of the pit to be backfilled with clean sand to depth of 500mm and upper layer of pit filled with a 500mm deep layer mix comprising 2 parts approved topsoil and 1part approved peat free tree planting compost.
Trees to be staked and fixed with ties appropriate to size of stock. Root balled trees will require underground guying along with a framework of 3 stakes and ties set around the rootball to support the tree and prevent rotation of the rootball in windy conditions.

MULCHING

Following planting the completed areas must be inspected and approved by the Landscape/Supervising officer to ensure soil levels, planting operations and bed cultivation/tidying has been carried out to a suitable standard prior to spreading a 50mm settled depth of a good quality ornamental bark mulch such as Melcourt ornamental bark nuggets with a nominal Particle Size range15 - 65 mm. Failure to have the beds inspected prior to mulching may result in the mulch being required to be lifted to enable inspection. Sample of the proposed mulch to be submitted for approval prior to delivery.

SEEDING

Apply approved pre seed fertiliser to manufacturers rates 3 days prior to seeding.
Spread general areas to be seeded with British Seed Houses All Purpose Landscaping mix A19@50grammes per m^2. Informal grassland/wildflower areas should be seeded with BSH WFG20 species rich lawn mix @10grammes per m^2. Lightly rake the seeded areas working from left to right & then front to back to partially cover the seed to a depth of 0.5cm.

TURFING optional

The British Standard recommendations for turf are in B.S 3969 : 1965 recommendations for turfing are contained in B.S.4428 : 1969 or most recent version. Turf mixture shall be Rolawn's Medallion or similar approved of fine/medium texture composed of the following grass seed mixture: Perennial Ryegrass 40%,Slender Creeping Red Fescue 40% & Chewings Fescue 20%.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance of all new planting to be carried out by the landscape contractor responsible for the planting for a minimum of 12 months to ensure healthy growth. Any trees which die within 5years of planting must be replaced with the same species.
Apply approved slow release fertiliser at recommended rates in the Spring following planting, all newly planted areas to be maintained by cultivating, forking over to remove compaction, raking level, hand weeding and keeping free of rubbish. Refirm and set upright any loose or uprooted plants and trees as necessary. Check condition of stakes and ties and fix as required.
Plants and trees to be to be watered thoroughly as necessary to maintain healthy growth.
Any plants damaged as a result of maintenance operations to be replaced at contractors own expense. Should any plants or trees be damaged as a result of vandalism the contractor shall notify the site agent and await instruction as to whether stock shall be replaced.
During the September following planting the contractor is required to replace any dead dying or defective plant and tree stock of at his own expense, to the size that they would have been expected to achieve with healthy growth. Replacement plants shall be guaranteed not to die within 6 months of that planting date.

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Maintenance continued:

General grassland to cut regularly down to 20mm to maintain a robust sward with the exception of the low maintenance areas and any bare grassland areas to be overseeded in Spring & Autumn. The informal grassland/wild flower areas a rule to follow can be to cut the sward once the height exceeds10cm (late March/early April) reducing the height to between 4-7cm according to evenness of the ground. The lower the cutting height, the slower the re-growth of grasses a second cut could be required if re-growth exceeds 10cm by the end of April/early May. This will be very much influenced by local growing conditions such as rainfall and ground temperatures. The greatest influence will be soil fertility a fertile site, which may need 3-4 cuts during the first year.

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