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Initial Assessment – Landscape and Visual Impacts

Reference –

Erection of two detached dwellings.

At: Lowood, Whins Lane Read BB12 7RB

Limits of this document – initial comments upon the proposal for a detached dwelling in the grounds of the above property which is currently being prepared for a planning application with regards to landscape character and visual impacts.

1: Background

We have been engaged by JWPC Ltd to comment upon the likely landscape and visual impacts of a potential detached residential dwelling located in the grounds of the existing dwelling 'Lowood'.

This document is composed by Antony Wood, Director at Yew Tree NW Ltd. He has been providing landscape design services since the foundation of Yew Tree and Gardens in 2005 following 15 years within the graphic design industry and during this period has worked extensively in the landscape sector with an increasing focus on arboricultural aspects, to this end he attended Myerscough College and obtained the RFS Cert Arb qualification in June 2008. Subsequent to this period of providing arboricultural and landscape consultancy services for numerous commercial and domestic clients since November 2013 he has been engaged by clients to provide Landscape and Visual impact Assessments (LVIA). These LVIA projects have been conducted to the framework and working practices contained within Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Third edition, Routledge 2013. Over this period he has produced LVIA assessments for a number of projects in the residential, commercial and leisure sectors, with many of these being within the landscapes of National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

At the time of drafting this document we have undertaken an initial site visit allied to our undertaking of an arboricultural survey (15/05/17). During this visit we identified a number of potential areas of likely receptor points – see Appendix1 for receptor point locations.

Due to the weather at the time of our initial site visit we were unable to obtain receptor point images. We subsequently returned to these locations to capture images on 22/05/17. Whilst this document is not a detailed LVIA, these images are taken at the standard specification recommended in GVLIA guidance being captured with a Sony DSC4000 at 50mm lens equivalent and a height of 1.5m.

In the following sections of this initial assessment we will consider the relative visual and landscape impact of a development in relation to the surrounding landscape, existing structures and the design of the proposed dwellings.

2:Landscape and visual impacts

See Appendix 1 and 2:

With regards to Landscape Character, the site is located within the Industrial Foothills and Valleys character type and the 6a Calder Valley sub-character type within the Lancashire County Council Landscape Character local subtype. The site is outside of the Forest of Bowland AONB boundaries but is included within the Sabden Undulating Lowland with Parkland AONB character type.

The landscape to the immediate South of the site is comprised of two fields of enclosed agricultural grazing land associated with Houlker's Farm. This area of agricultural land contains a number of scattered mature aged deciduous trees, these trees are likely to be the surviving elements of former hedges as they are grouped in a linear manner further trees are located in groups towards the South West with these groups being more associated with a possible planned landscape planting.

This area of grazing land is bounded to the East by the continuous development of dwellings within George Lane with these dwellings forming the Western edge of Read village and being visually significant when approaching Read from the West. The dwellings to the North of the junction with Church Lane are predominantly 20th century detached dwellings set within larger areas of maintained gardens. Dwellings to the South of Church Lane are of 20th century construction and are arranged in a higher density.

The grazing land is also bounded by Straits Lane to the East and Church Lane to the South with Whins Lane forming its Northern boundary. A significant number of mid to late 20th century dwellings form the Eastern edge of Straits Lane and lead to the residential streets of Windsor Close / Buckingham Drive etc. These areas of dwellings and the previously mentioned dwellings around George Lane represent the enlargement of Read Village from its original core in the second half of the 20th century

The existing dwellings along Whins Lane to the West of the site are more scattered in nature and are of traditional / vernacular styles with a grouping of traditional and more modern agricultural buildings immediately to the West of the site. Occasional, detached 20th century dwellings are located towards the junction with George Lane with a more significant number of detached dwellings to the West of this junction along Hammond Drive.

The existing dwelling 'Lowood' is of a 20th century construction with a number of roof lines / pitches and a white painted render exterior, its rooflines and dormer window openings are visually significant from landscape the South and East.

As can be seen from Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 and as detailed above, the land to the South of the site is largely enclosed by existing dwellings most notably to the East and West. Church Lane is bounded to the South by dwellings but there is the church / churchyard and an area of amenity land to the North of the lane and footpath. These areas form a buffer between the open agricultural grazing land and the existing more densely developed areas of Read village to the South.

The character of Whins Lane is different from the public highways which run to the South from it towards the centre of Read Village (Straits Lane and George Lane) being less intensively developed during the mid / late 20th century expansion of Read Village. We noted that these areas of dwellings are visible when traversing Whins Lane from a West to East direction, this significantly influences the character of the area around Whins Lane with views towards larger numbers of 20th century dwellings i.e. those along Straits Lane and the rear of dwellings along George Lane.

With regards to Visual Impacts; as previously stated, we have not undertaken a detailed survey of individual receptor points but have sampled a limited number of localised receptor points in order to assess likely levels of impacts.

Due to the nature and location of the site, surrounding vegetation / structures and topography, views of the site from Whins Lane to the East and West are not readily achievable, we would therefore judge that the impact throughout the lifetime of the development would be negligible to none. Similarly, the landscape to the North of the site rises relatively steeply and has dense tree cover, this screens the site from potential receptors to the North of Read village.

The current site boundary with Whins Lane consists of a retaining wall and close boarded fence, with the proposed development requiring the formation of a new vehicle access point. The proposed layout contains an element of planting along this boundary and the construction of a stone wall. Visual impacts from transient pedestrian and vehicle occupant receptors will be either glimpsed or partial with a likely magnitude of impact being moderate to minor adverse at development reducing to minor/negligible adverse at 15 years post development with the impact of any screening boundary planting.

Impacts to the South East of the site are confined to a section of Straits Lane, due to the orientation of dwellings to the East of the highway and the presence of intervening vegetation views of the site are not readily achieved until a distance of more than approximately 150m from the site. We note that dwellings in Straits Lane are not directly orientated towards the site meaning that impacts will largely be confined to transient receptors travelling in a South to North direction along Straits Lane. As illustrated in Appendix 2: Location D, the existing dwelling Lowood is visible from this receptor location. The reduction of the existing hedge height combined with the estimated ridge height of the proposed dwellings gives an indication of the visibility of the proposed development from this location. The presence of an existing dwelling combined with existing off site vegetation within the field will serve to partly reduce the impact of the proposed development. We would estimate that this would be moderate adverse at development and that this magnitude is not likely to significantly reduce at 15 years post construction. We note that transient receptors using Straits Lane currently experience a significant degree of visual impact from the 20th century dwellings on the Eastern side of the highway. This existing impact serves to give a greater ‘suburban’ character to this area of Read Village.

Receptor points to the South of the site are located in excess of 350 m from the boundary with dwellings to the South of Church Lane having both intervening vegetation and the church obscuring views towards the site. Receptor points within the public realm are transient and located along Church Lane /public footpath, again, these receptor points have significant volumes of intervening vegetation (mature trees) partially obscuring the site. We would judge that impacts would be in the order of negligible adverse based upon glimpsed and partial views and the distance from the site boundary.

Receptor points within George Lane are difficult to assess due to the continuous dwellings along the eastern side of the highway. We estimate that site views are not achievable for users of the highway. The relative orientation of the dwellings in George Lane combined with the distance to the site leads us to estimate that the highest order of impact upon dwellings is likely to be in the magnitude of negligible adverse to none based upon a likelihood of glimpsed views from a limited number of first floor windows.

Conclusions.

Based upon the information available and the supplied development layout/design for the current proposals we are of the opinion that the development of would have a minor impact upon the landscape character of the area surrounding the site. We have formed this opinion due to the presence of an existing detached 20th century dwelling within the site, the relatively contained nature of the site, the limited scale of the development (two dwellings) and the influence of existing densities of late 20th century dwellings in Straits Lane 150m to the South East of the site.

Whilst we have only undertaken a limited survey of individual receptor points it is evident from the information gathered that receptor points with significant views of the site are likely to be relatively small in number and are mainly comprised of transient receptors with partial or glimpsed views of the site.

The increase in mass and prominence of structures within the site would be visually significant for transient receptors using Straits Lane. Due to the influence of continuous late 20th century dwellings to the East of the highway we are of the opinion that the magnitude of impact would be partially reduced to moderate adverse. Given the relative ridge heights and location of the proposed dwellings it may be possible to achieve some limited mitigation by planting within the landscaping scheme, however, given the potential pressure for the maintenance of open views by any future residents of the proposed dwellings such planting may not be appropriate and we have not therefore factored it into our initial assessment.

Receptor points to the South and East of the site are located at in excess of 350 m from the site boundary and significant volumes of existing mature vegetation are present within and adjacent to the boundaries of the agricultural grazing land. Our initial estimation is that receptors will have partial or glimpsed views of the site and that consequently the levels of impact will be in the ‘minor adverse to negligible’ category.

We are of the opinion that overall landscape impacts would be likely to be in the ‘minor adverse to negligible’ category and that the visual impacts would be in a similar range for the majority of receptor points with an opportunity to reduce both landscape and visual impacts by 15 years post development for receptors adjacent to the site entrance in Whins Lane with a planting of screening vegetation.

A limited area of receptors in Straits Lane will experience more significant levels of adverse visual impact due to the scale and relative elevation of the proposed dwellings. This level of impact will be confined to a relatively small area and will be most notable for transient receptors.

Antony Wood

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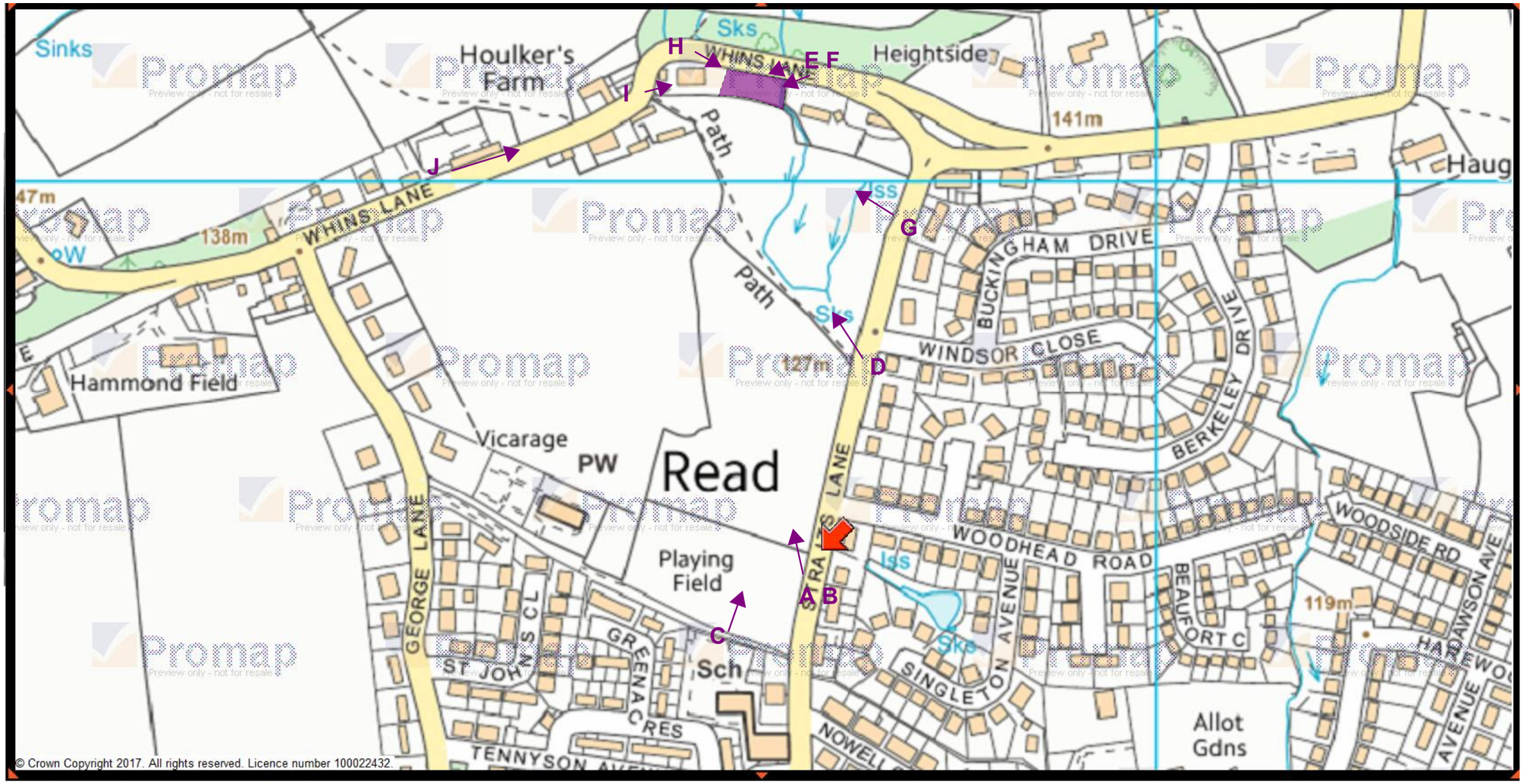
Directors A. Wood Cert Arb RFS - A. Wood, MA (Hons), Dip LE, MRICS


Sinks
Houlker's Farm
Sks
H
WHINS LANE
E F
Heightside
I
J
Path
141m
Haug
47m
138m
WHINS LANE
oW
Hammond Field
Path
Sks
C
D
BUCKINGHAM DRIVE
WINDSOR CLOSE
BERKELEY DRIVE
127m
Vicarage
PW
Read
GEORGE LANE
Playing Field
A B
C
WOODHEAD ROAD
WOODSIDE RD
BEAUFORT C
119m
ST JOHN'S CL
GREENACRES
Sch
SINGLETON AVENUE
Sks
Allot Gdns
TENNYSON AVE
AVENUE
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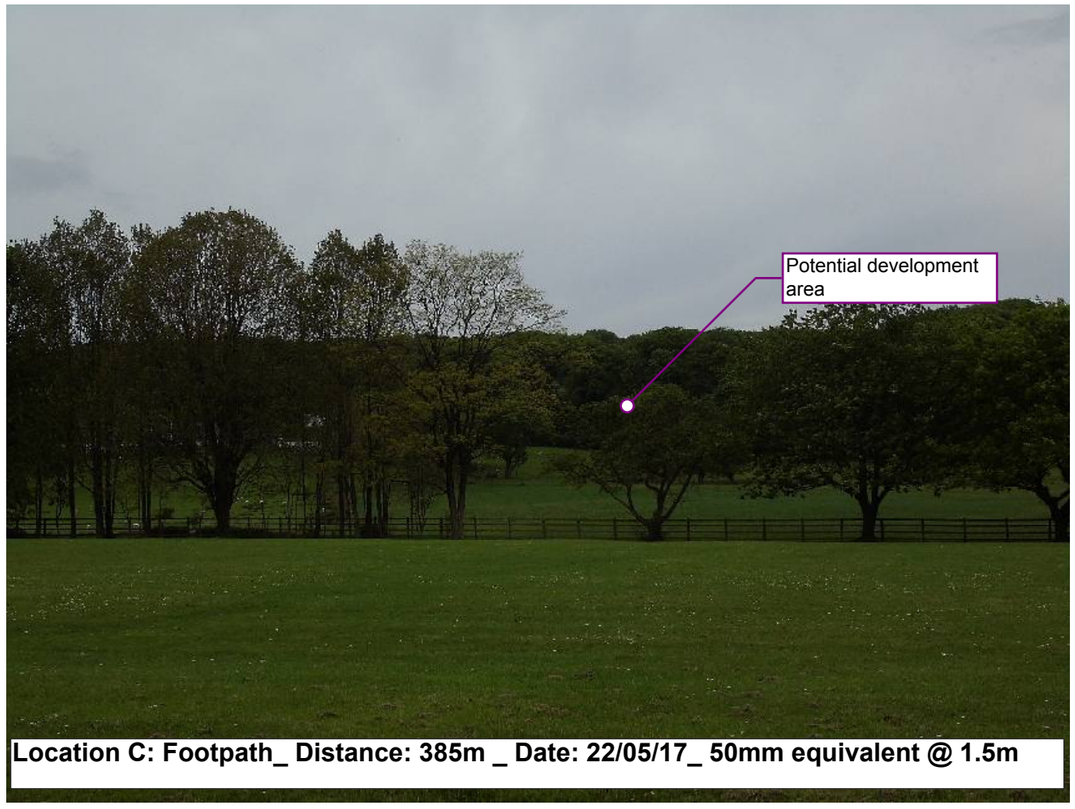
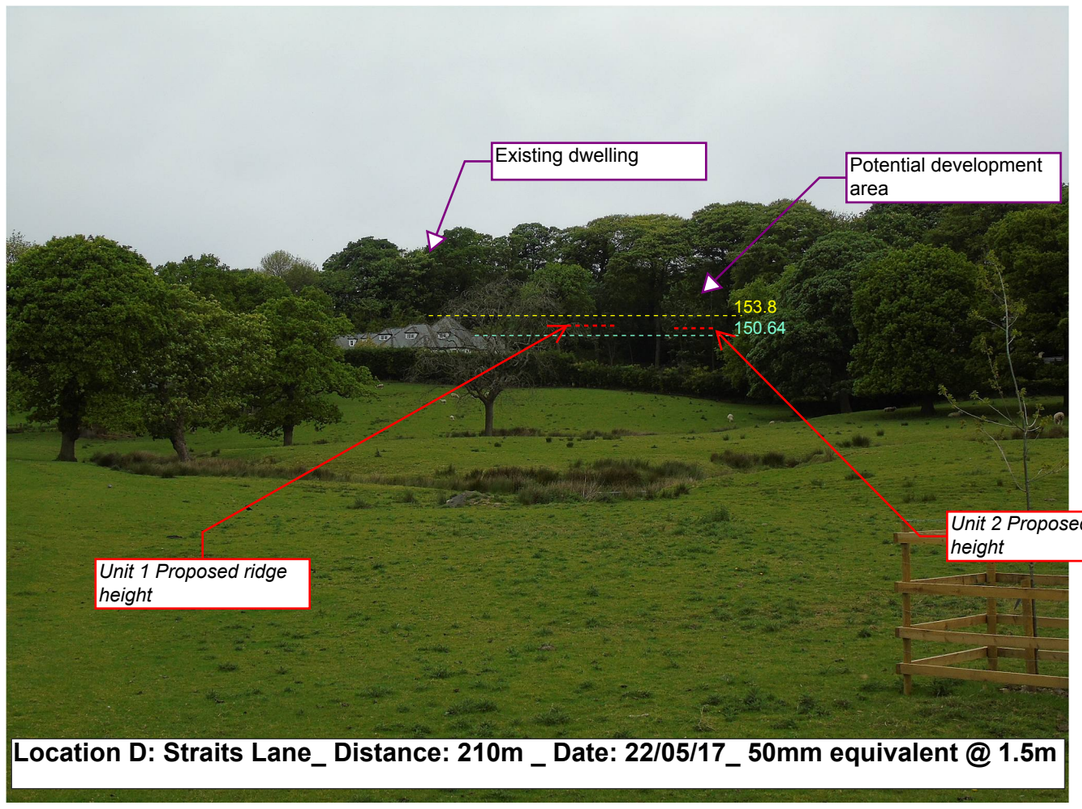
Location A: Straits Lane_ Distance: 330m _ Date: 22/05/17_ 50mm equivalent @ 1.5m

Location B: Straits Lane_ Distance: 340m _ Date: 22/05/17_ 50mm equivalent @ 1.5m



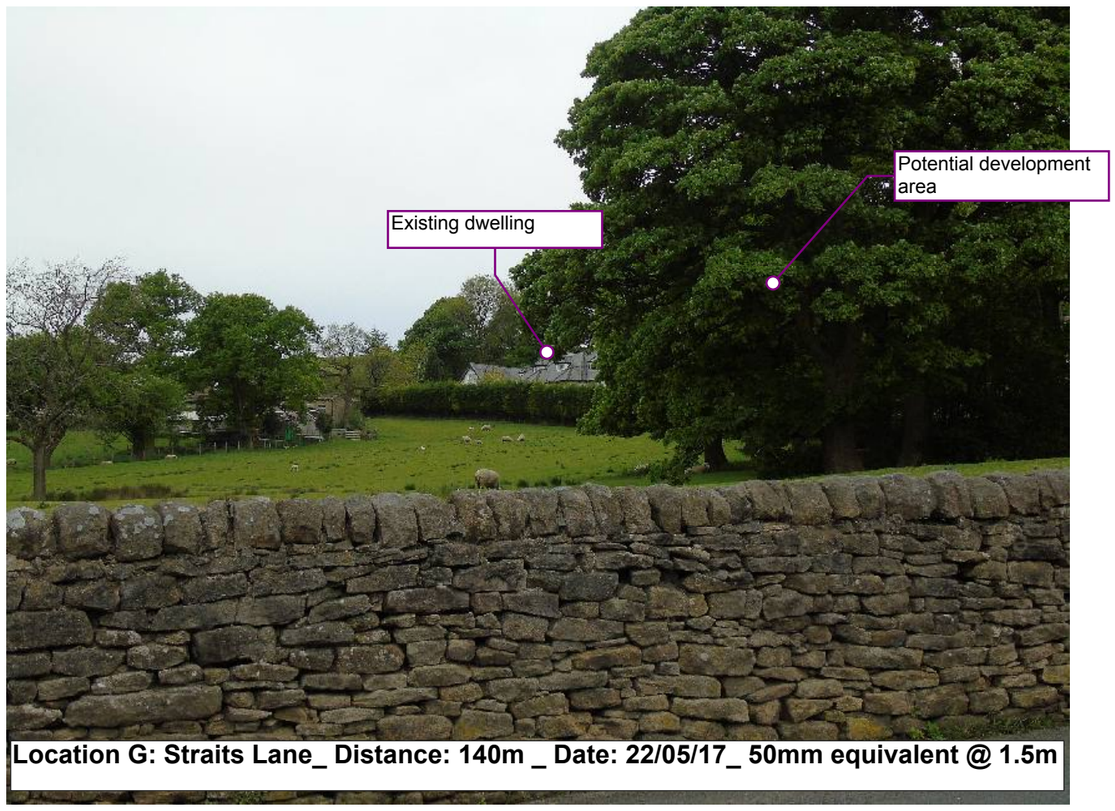
Location C: Footpath_ Distance: 385m _ Date: 22/05/17_ 50mm equivalent @ 1.5m



Location D: Straits Lane_ Distance: 210m _ Date: 22/05/17_ 50mm equivalent @ 1.5m

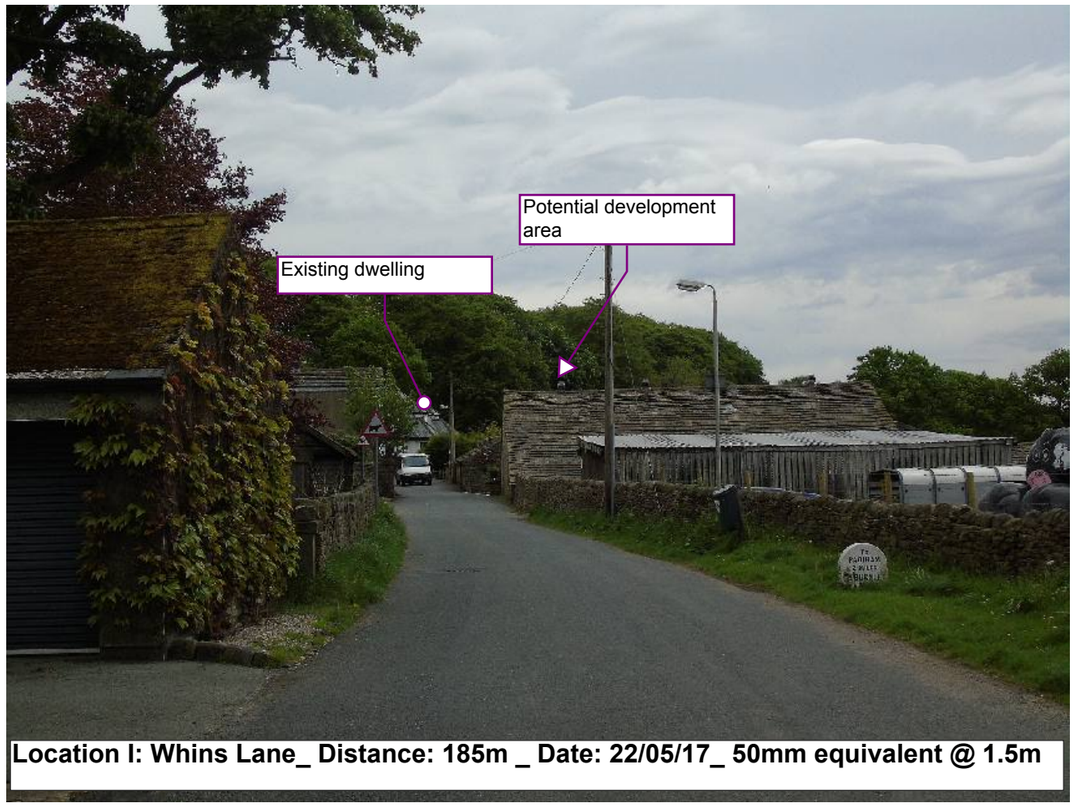
Location E: Whins Lane_ Distance: 30m _ Date: 22/05/17_ 50mm equivalent @ 1.5m

Location F: Whins Lane_ Distance: 30m _ Date: 22/05/17_ 50mm equivalent @ 1.5m



Location G: Straits Lane_ Distance: 140m _ Date: 22/05/17_ 50mm equivalent @ 1.5m

Location H: Whins Lane_ Distance: 40m _ Date: 22/05/17_ 50mm equivalent @ 1.5m



Location I: Whins Lane_ Distance: 185m _ Date: 22/05/17_ 50mm equivalent @ 1.5m

Location J: Whins Lane_ Distance: 10m _ Date: 22/05/17_ 50mm equivalent @ 1.5m

0 2 4 6m

1:100 SCALE

N

ABBREVIATIONS

CL	Cover Level
EH	Eves Height
GU	Gully
MH	Man Hole
RH	Ridge/Roof Height
SP	Sign Post
TF	Top of Fence
TW	Top of Wall

NOTE

All levels and coordinates relate to OSGB36(15) using GNSS data.

Levels defining edge of carriageway are observed at channel (bottom of kerb).

Stone Wall
143.00m
GU
TW143.98
TARMAC
142.00m
Fence
W H I N S L A N E
TF145.25
GU
TW142.82
Stone Wall
43.0M
SP
PROPOSED VISIBILITY SPLAYS
PROPOSED NEW LOW LEVEL STONE WALL
TARMAC
MH CL141.14
GU
141.00m
TW142.15
+ 141.45
PROPOSED NEW VEHICLE ACCESS
3.4M
Stone Flags
GU
EH148.23
EH148.25
RH150.64
+145.80
ASSUMED RPA LINE
+ 142.00
HARDSTANDING
GU
43.0M
TW142.16
Stone Wall
140.00m
14.0M
PROPOSED DWELLING UNIT 1
+ FFL142.15
+ 141.50
ACCESSED MAINTAINED TO BROOK
+RIDGE 152.25
+FFL 141.65
PROPOSED DWELLING UNIT 2
139.00m
PROPOSED EDGE OF DRIVEWAY
138.90
PROPOSED 6M BOUNDARY FROM REVISED BANK LINE AS PER FRA MITIGATION. FFL TO BE NO LESS THAN 150MM ABOVE EXISTING GROUND LEVEL OF BROOK
+RIDGE 151.75
+ 140.00
Dense Shurbs
Stone Flags
Soil and Shrubs
Stone Wall
12.5M
+ 141.00
GARDEN
2.5M
+ 139.00
142.00m
+ 140.00
12.5M
GARDEN
PROPOSED NEW LOW LEVEL STONE WALL
141.00m
140.00m
139.00m

FOR DESIGN TEAM REVIEW ONLY, NOT PLANNING ISSUE DRAWING

no.	by	revision	date
A	RBM	Design update following comments.	17.07.2017

Client
Mr R Edmond

Job Title
Proposed Development to Land at
Lowood
Whins Lane
Read

Drawing Title
Proposed Site Plan

Scale	Date	Drawn
1:100 @ A1	June 17	RBM

spa ARCHITECTS
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