

HERITAGE, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

ADDITION OF A REPLACEMENT BESPOKE GARDEN ROOM TO:

BEECHTHORPE
WADDINGTON
CLITHEROE
LANCASHIRE
BB7 3HY

AUGUST 2023



VALE
GARDEN
HOUSES

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Beechthorpe is a grade II listed house located in the Waddington Conservation Area and the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, within the boundary of the Ribble Valley Borough Council. It is our clients' wish to remove their existing conservatory and add a bespoke timber and double-glazed garden room.
- 1.2 This report has been prepared to support both a householder planning application and listed building consent following Pre-Application Advice ref: RV/2023/ENQ/00042 and is set out to provide a brief history of Beechthorpe and the wider Conservation Area and AONB, assessing the key characteristics and how these contribute to the significance of the house and its setting, and then to assess the impact of the proposed development. Against this background, this statement will go on to conclude that the proposed development makes a positive response to the pre-application feedback and accords with all material planning considerations, and that this justifies the approval of planning permission for this scheme.

2.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 2.1 Section 66 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act provides a statutory duty in respect of Listed Buildings for the decision maker to *"have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses"*.
- 2.2 Section 69 (1)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that *"every local planning authority shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance"*.
- 2.3 Section 72 of the same Act states that in exercise of planning functions "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".
- 2.4 Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), most recently updated in July 2021, has replaced all previous Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS) in respect of the consideration and determination of planning applications. The heart of the NPPF is set out within Paragraph 11, which stresses the presumption in favour of sustainable development. In decision making, this means:
- Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are more important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

- 2.6 Paragraph 8 sets out the three key dimensions to the delivery of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – and it is stressed that these fundamental roles cannot be undertaken in isolation, owing to their mutual dependency. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.
- 2.7 Paragraph 10 stresses that plans and decisions need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas and to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
- 2.8 Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places – This section of the NPPF is applicable to all development proposals, to ensure that high quality buildings and places are created. It is also stressed that “good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.” (Paragraph 126).
- 2.9 Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment – This section of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Of particular relevance to this application is paragraph 176; *“great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas”*.
- 2.10 Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment – This section of the NPPF seeks to ensure that heritage assets are appropriately considered to ensure that they are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

3.0 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

All new development within the boundary of Ribble Valley Borough Council must give consideration to the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy 2008 – 2028. This document states that the Authority are keen to promote high quality design in order to conserve and enhance the environment, especially in relation to heritage assets. In this case, the following policies are most relevant:

KEY STATEMENT EN2: LANDSCAPE

KEY STATEMENT EN5: HERITAGE ASSETS

POLICY DMG1: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

POLICY DME4: PROTECTING HERITAGE ASSETS

Key statement EN2: Landscape – states that the landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area.

The landscape and character of those areas that contribute to the setting and character of the Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected and conserved and wherever possible enhanced.

As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials.

Key statement EN5: Heritage Assets – states there will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings. The Historic Environment and its Heritage Assets and their settings will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance for their heritage value; their important contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place; and to wider social, cultural and environmental benefits.

This will be achieved through:

- Recognising that the best way of ensuring the long term protection of heritage assets is to ensure a viable use that optimises opportunities for sustaining and enhancing its significance.
- Keeping Conservation Area Appraisals under review to ensure that any development proposals respect and safeguard the character, appearance and significance of the area.
- Considering any development proposals which may impact on a heritage asset or their setting through seeking benefits that conserve and enhance their significance and avoids any substantial harm to the heritage asset.
- Requiring all development proposals to make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness/sense of place.
- The consideration of Article 4 Directions to restrict permitted development rights where the exercise of such rights would harm the historic environment.

Policy DMG1: General Considerations – says that in determining planning applications, all development must consider: Design; Access; Amenity; Environment; Infrastructure.

Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets - in considering development proposals the council will make a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings.

1. Conservation Areas

Proposals within, or affecting views into and out of, or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area will be required to conserve and where appropriate enhance its character and appearance and those elements which contribute towards its significance. This should include considerations as to whether it conserves and enhances the special architectural and historic character of the area as set out in the relevant Conservation Area appraisal. Development which makes a positive contribution and conserves and enhances the character, appearance and significance of the area in terms of its location, scale, size, design and materials and existing buildings, structures, trees and open spaces will be supported.

In the Conservation Areas there will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of elements that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

2. Listed Buildings and other buildings of significant heritage interest

Alterations or extensions to listed buildings or buildings of local heritage interest, or development proposals on sites within their setting which cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset will not be supported. Any proposals involving the demolition or loss of important historic fabric from listed buildings will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist.

4.0 CONTEXT AND HISTORY OF BEECHTHORPE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 4.1 Beechthorpe, known historically as Belle Vue, is an 18th century, grade II listed former school building situated in the small village of Waddington, Lancashire and lies in the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The house also falls within the Waddington Conservation Area, which was designated in October 1974.
- 4.2 The application site sits to the north side of Belle Vue Lane, north-west of the village centre. The village itself lies 2 miles north-west of Clitheroe.
- 4.3 Beechthorpe is set within a large residential curtilage and private gardens and is separated from the driveway, over which is a right of way, by a high stone boundary wall to the west. The property is approached from Belle Vue Lane to the north via the driveway which runs parallel with the principal west elevation and leads to the rear (north) of the property giving access to a gated courtyard. Situated to the west of the driveway is The Roost and Bonny Bar Gate Barn. To the east of the site is Beechthorpe Avenue; a cul-de-sac making up a large group of modern properties dating from 1930-1960. To the south lies Beechthorpe Barn which is separated by an area of land also owned by the Applicants. The closest heritage property, which is situated a distance away in a north-easterly direction, is St Helen's Church, a grade II* listed building. The remaining boundaries are visually dominated by large, mature trees and hedgerow planting, offering no public viewpoint.
- 4.4 Constructed of rendered roughcast rubble with a hipped stone slate roof, Beechthorpe was built originally as a school by public subscription in 1812 on the site of the old tithe barn.
- 4.5 Although little is documented about Beechthorpe, an assessment of photographs and some planning history supplied by The Applicant, establishes that minor alterations have been made to the property over the years. In 1989 planning for a double garage was approved followed in 1990 by the addition of a pediment above the main west elevation door along with the faceted conservatory we see today. In addition to the included photographs, historic maps and satellite imagery give a good understanding of the evolution of the property as well as establishing a helpful timeline.
- 4.6 It is to the south elevation that the existing C20 conservatory sits (*fig. 15*), and, as covered in Section 1.0 – Introduction, permission is sought to replace it with a bespoke timber and double-glazed garden room to create a more insulated and usable space.
- 4.7 Waddington is located on the banks of a tributary of the Ribble – the Waddington Brook, which flows down the western side of the main street. The village has a typical composite 'village plan', centred around a large open triangle, called The Square, but with secondary linear developments along the roads that lead into and out of the village. The Conservation Area takes in about half of the village, excluding areas of recent development (from the 1930s) in the southern half of the village and the houses, farms and school that are located along the West Bradford Road, most of which are, again, 1930s or later in date. There are 13 listed buildings within the Conservation Area.

- 4.8 The architectural and historic character of Beechthorpe was recognized in 1984 when it was added to the statutory list as a grade II listed building as shown in *Appendix A*. An understanding of the evolution of the property can be gained from a combined assessment of surviving historic maps and records as well as a visual appraisal of the building itself.
- 4.9 Unquestionably, Beechthorpe has a degree of architectural and historical significance as was demonstrated by its initial addition to the statutory list. However, the extent and focus of this significance needs to be further considered in the context of the building as a whole and its environs – especially when considering work to such a building.
- 4.10 It can be fairly summarised that with respect to Beechthorpe, the principal areas of significance are its statutory listing and its setting and location within the Conservation Area and the wider AONB. This is a clear example of how a building has had, over the years, appropriate development, showing that Beechthorpe can successfully accommodate appropriate and considered change as it continues to evolve.



Fig. 1 – Beechthorpe; principal west elevation.



Fig. 2 – North-west view of principal elevation.

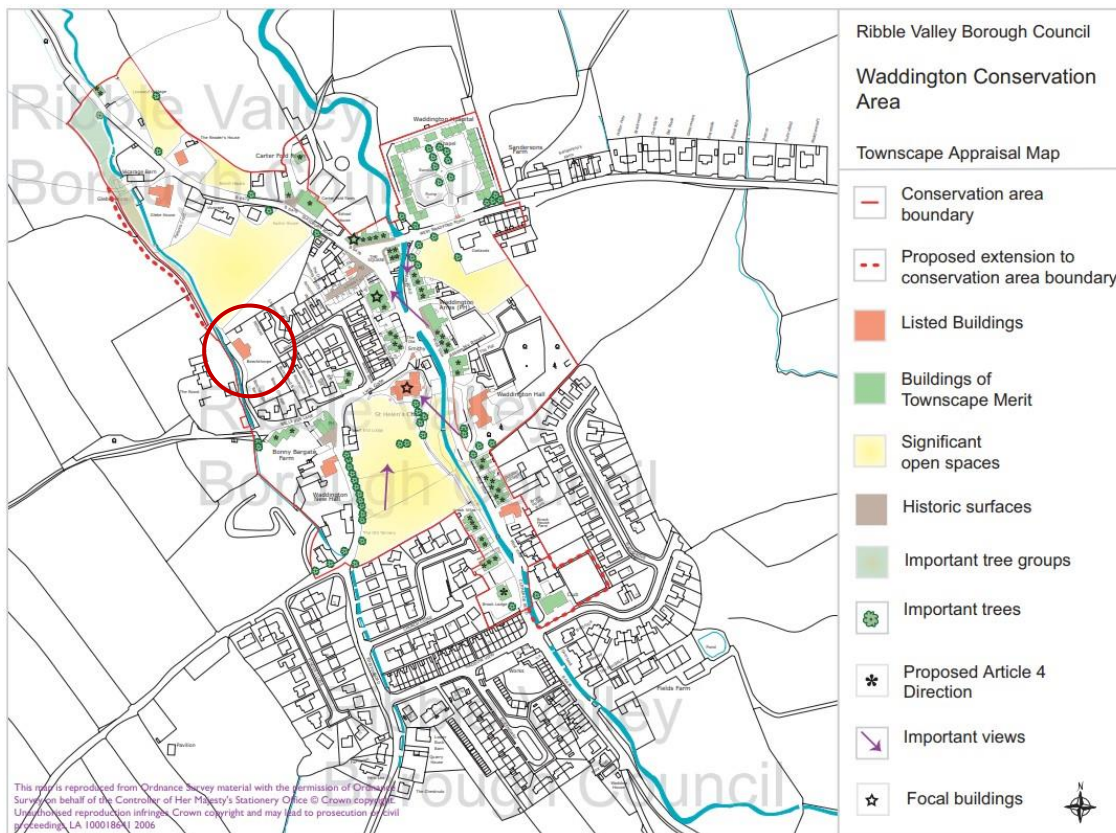


Fig. 3 – Waddington Conservation Area map.

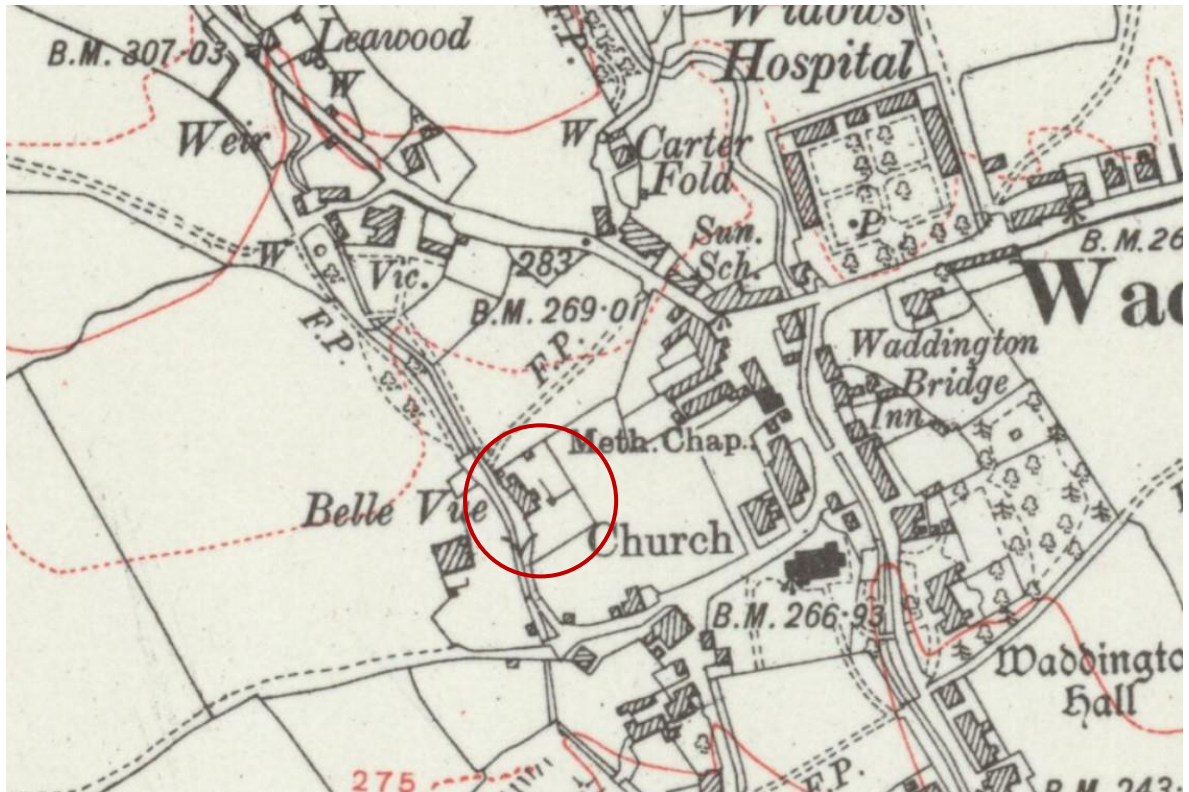


Fig. 6 – 1930 OS map.



Fig. 7 – 2002 satellite imagery showing the earliest evidence of the conservatory (courtesy of Google).



Fig. 8 – 2023 satellite imagery (courtesy of Google).

IMPACT OF PROPOSED GARDEN ROOM

- 5.2 It is proposed to remove the existing conservatory to allow for the addition of a bespoke, timber, and double-glazed garden room on the same elevation. The existing late C20 structure has noticeably decreased in overall quality since its' erection. There are numerous areas of water ingress that have led to rotting within the timber frames and roof which are having a negative impact on the structure and more importantly being detrimental to the preservation of the host building.
- 5.3 The existing conservatory is in a very poor state of repair making it unusable and unviable for any remedial works. It was initially designed to support a polycarbonate roof surface rather than the weight of a glass roof construction. The unsatisfactory construction, inadequate glazing specification and outdated thermal properties makes the room uncomfortable in the colder months but also, in combination with the polycarbonate roof, causes the room to become too hot in the summer.
- 5.4 It is the owner's intention to improve the aesthetical impact on the property and create a new garden room which is more technically advanced with improved thermal efficiency by way of 14mm 'Argon' gas filled cavities in all double-glazed side units. Along with a double-glazed roof system, this will add significantly to the usability and protection of this part of the property for many years to come and combat light pollution in the wider historic landscape.

- 5.5 Following pre-application feedback, the proposal has been given careful consideration and revised to take account of concerns from the authority's conservation team. We feel that the resulting design offers a suitable and considered alternative and satisfies the concerns relating to impact on both the heritage asset and the public viewpoint.
- 5.6 The Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy *Key Statement EN2 and EN5*, along with Section 12 of the NPPF, jointly seek to ensure that new development proposals do not have a negative impact on the character of the location or its landscape setting, and in all cases, should deliver a high quality of design. In these respects, the proposal has considered the requirements of these policies to ensure that the proposed garden room will reflect the rich local distinctiveness of the local landscape and character through scale, form, mass, layout, design, materials, and detailing.
- 5.7 Within the context of the Conservation Area, Beechthorpe makes a broadly positive contribution to its character and appearance, and its overall significance. The site is already developed and has an established residential character, with the land accommodating a notable dwelling, which has been modestly altered and extended over the years, and which, therefore, has elements of historic or architectural value, viewed alongside more modern additions.
- 5.8 As already established, public footpath FP15 has right of way over the driveway to the western side boundary and affords public viewpoints into the site albeit this is argued as being limited. The existing and proposed drawings accompanying this application prove a less than substantial increase to visual bulk or effect on the public viewpoint when calculating an average eyeline and the resulting viewing range into account. Being set back behind the existing high stone boundary wall and designed to sit positively within the constraints of the plot, and to not be intrusive or dominant in its' appearance, the proposal would not have a negative visual impact upon the public realm or neighbourhood. We are confident that such a proposal would both enhance and enrich the property and the wider Conservation Area for many years to come, whilst also substantially boosting the functionality of the house. Furthermore, the proposal respects the existing layout and site coverage and as such maintains the relationship between it and the parent building.
- 5.9 The proposed garden room will be accessed via existing doors from the adjoining lounge. An area of high wall has been designed to mask the garden wall to the west which separates the garden from the driveway. The remaining framework is glazed to retain transparency and make the most of the views of the garden, and the proposal has been designed to retain all existing internal and external features, without exception. Section A-A on drawing *P2 – Proposed* establishes preservation and enhancement of the original fabric of the host building.
- 5.10 The garden room's glazed roof ridge, when viewed from the east and west, is a little over 2.1m away from the middle first floor window and sits entirely independently from the host building, therefore resulting in no additional harm to the heritage asset. This middle window will still be visible in its' entirety when viewed from different external angles (V1 in particular) throughout the surrounding gardens and due to the lightweight nature of the glazed roof construction, this window will also be visible within the garden room itself. It is also worth noting that the aluminium box gutters which allow the glazed roof to sit independently also create a useful platform for access and maintenance to the middle first floor window which at present is not easily accessed due to the abutment of the pitched roof of the existing conservatory.
- 5.11 In terms of the impact on the surrounding landscape and ecology, the proposal would not be deemed to have any detrimental impact as the proposed garden room would be located on an area housing an existing conservatory.



Figs. 9 & 10 – Photographs taken at eye level, approaching the site from points on the driveway, of which there is a right of way. Increase of viewable extension only marginal due to the substantial boundary wall.



Fig. 11 – Photograph taken at eyeline with back to the hedge-line on the western side of the driveway (to be viewed in conjunction with the block plan – Ref: V1.)

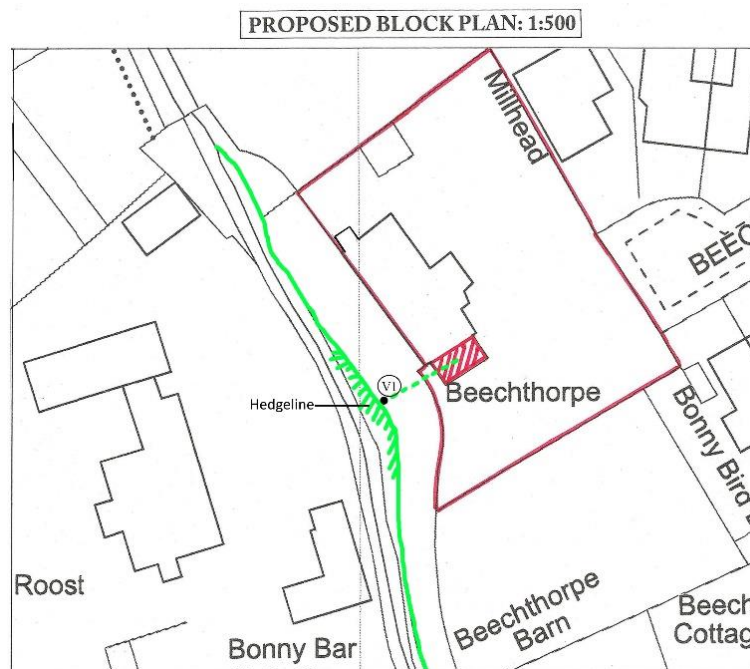
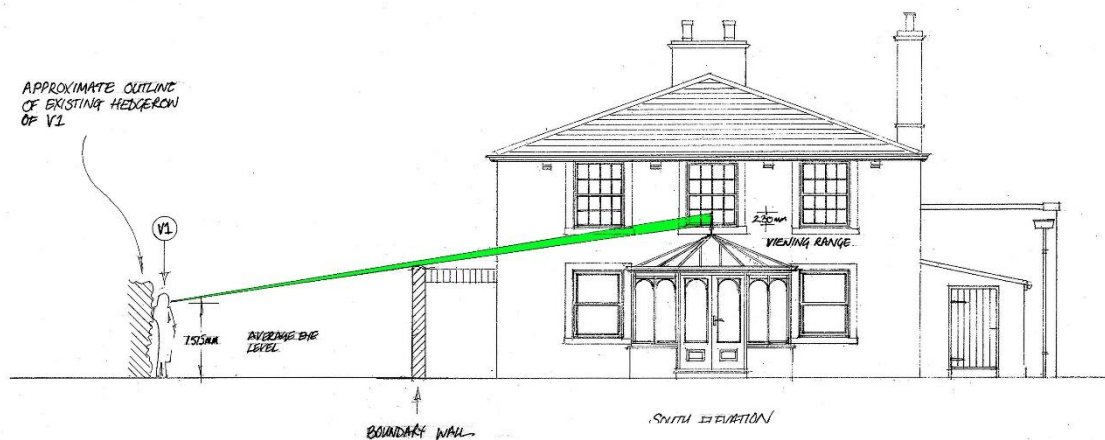
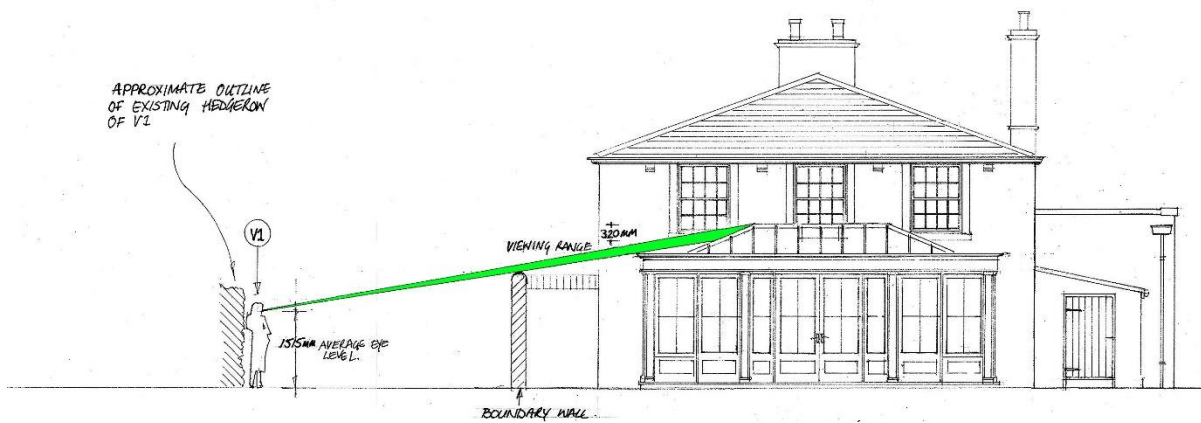


Fig. 12, 13 & 14 – Demonstrating visual impact on the public realm. Limited impact increase from existing conservatory is demonstrated in visuals. Location of V1 positioned at furthest parallel point away from garden room location.



Fig. 15 – South facing elevation of existing conservatory to be replaced.



Fig. 16 – East facing elevation of existing conservatory to be replaced.



Fig. 17 – Internal view showing existing double doors to be utilised.



Fig. 18 – Wider east elevation view.

6.0 DESIGN COMPONENTS

Use

- 6.1 The proposed garden room is designed to be used as a year-round room and will provide the owners with a well-insulated and usable space in which they can enjoy their private gardens.

Scale

- 6.2 The proposed garden room projects 4048mm from the south elevation and will be 7114mm wide. Such a proposed scale is in keeping with pre-existing room dimensions of the home's other living spaces and would therefore not provide a room proportion that is incongruous to the scale of the pre-existing home.

Appearance

- 6.3 The proposed garden room has a traditional inset glazed roof. The proposed window casement design remains subservient to the property's heavily fenestrated windows and looks to complement the current design narrative of the site and property's architectural character. The main structure will be a painted finish and will sit on rendered low walls - this also applies to the high wall elements. Traditional joinery methods are used throughout the construction of the proposed garden room from a combination of Douglas fir and Sapele mahogany all set on hardwood cills. These materials and finishes remain consistent with the historic materials used at the site without the introduction of incompatible materials to the site. The proposal will be clearly distinguishable as an evolution of the site's architecture sooner than a replication due to its subtle design variations and methods of design subservience – offering a cohesive appearance on the listed building façade.

Access

- 6.4 Vehicular access to Beechthorpe remains as existing and is unaffected by the proposed works. Pedestrian access to the proposed garden room would be via an existing set of double doors leading from the adjoining lounge room (*fig. 17*). Access from the garden room to the outside will be via a set of double doors in the south facing framework.

Landscaping

- 6.5 The garden room would be sited on a hard standing area that houses an existing conservatory, within the owner's private garden, and would retain the existing site levels, internally and externally. Other than the extension of the existing patio to suit the new garden room footprint, there are no other proposed changes to the landscaping or levels of the site.

Manufacture and installation

- 6.6 Vale Garden Houses adopt a unique manufacturing approach, in that every project is assembled entirely as a dry-fit in the factory before painting and delivery for Installation. This process ensures great accuracy of fit, and eliminates unnecessary work on site, which in turn minimises stress or damage to the fabric of the host building.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 In conclusion, the proposal, which is of high architectural design, has qualities that not only benefit the current occupants but also contribute to the public benefit through its sustainment and enhancement of both the use and significance of the heritage asset. Although the work would amount to some change, this would not harm the overall special interest and character of the building nor the wider Conservation Area or AONB. The Applicants are also keen to enhance the property to secure its use for modern living and provide meaningful benefits for future generations of inhabitants.
- 7.2 The focus for the Applicants is very much about maintaining the character of the pre-existing site whilst enabling a level of modern but functional living for their family home, with minimal impact to the existing fabric. It is important to highlight that everything proposed in this application is reversible, if required.
- 7.3 The deeper eaves the proposal suggests, when compared to the existing conservatory, is essential to achieve a level of compliance with modern building regulations and basic thermal requirements. The use of an aluminum roof chassis achieves an incredibly slim configuration, something our business has carefully developed with listed properties in mind. A careful and considered use of detailing will further mask any visual bulking and provide an elegant design solution for what is a historically valued property. The chosen roof configuration is essential to provide an extension that will not only boost the overall usability of the heritage asset, forming a public benefit in doing so, but also protects this elevation of the property so that original detailing can be preserved internally for future generations to enjoy and value.
- 7.4 This proposal is intended to conserve and enhance the heritage asset and the surrounding area, taking account of local building traditions and materials. Being single storey and predominately self-supporting; the scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout and access of the proposal have been considered to ensure that the development blends well with the site and its surroundings, contributing positively to the overall character and quality of Beechthorpe and the wider historic area.
- 7.5 The design further complements the architectural form and character of Beechthorpe; offering a cohesive appearance on the listed building façade and respecting the existing context, form, and symmetry in both the building and the existing rooflines, which is felt to be a huge improvement aesthetically over the existing structure, which represents an incongruous extension to the property, with joinery detailing that is not promoting the quality of the site.
- 7.6 The proposal would not impact on any neighboring properties due to its' location and the separation distances between the properties.
- 7.7 It is considered that the level of impact to Beechthorpe is less than substantial, for the reasons covered in this statement, and the proposals' impact on the wider Conservation Area and AONB constitute no harm for the purposes of the NPPF and Local Plan Policies.
- 7.8 Lastly, Vale Garden Houses have a reputation for designing and building the finest bespoke conservatories and orangeries on heritage buildings across the United Kingdom. All materials and workmanship throughout the structure will be of the highest quality with the intention not to compromise any aspect of the infrastructure or finish in any way.

Appendix A:

Statutory Listed Building description

Building name: BEECHTHORPE
District: Ribble Valley (District Authority)
List Entry Number: 1163675

LBS Number: 183298
Grade: II
Date Listed: 20/02/1984
NGR: SD 72707 43862

Listing Text:

SD 727 438 WADDINGTON

SD 74 SW

10/126 Beechthorpe - - II House, late C18th. Roughcast rubble with hipped stone slate roof. 2 storeys, 4 bays. Windows sashed with glazing bars and plain stone surrounds, except for the right-hand ground-floor window which is fixed with glazing bars in a modern cement surround. The door, between bays 2 and 3, has a plain stone surround. A second similar surround, now blocked, is visible to the left of the 2nd bay. The chimney caps are of sandstone ashlar and have cyma cornices. There are 3 on the ridge, one above the front wall to the right of the right-hand bay, and another in the corresponding position on the rear wall. The right-hand return wall (facing south-east) is of 3 bays having sashed windows with glazing bars and plain stone surrounds on the 1st floor and sashed windows with similar surrounds but no glazing bars on the ground floor. The door, in the middle bay, has a plain stone surround with semi-circular head, projecting keystone and imposts, and a fanlight with radiating glazing bars.