



HERTFORDSHIRE DESIGN REVIEW SERVICE  
Northaw House: 24/08/16

Tim Murphy – Waterman Group

Sarah Smith,  
Welwyn Hatfield Borough  
Council,  
The Campus,  
Welwyn Garden City,  
Hertfordshire,  
AL8 6AE

9<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Dear Ms Smith,

### **Hertfordshire Design Review Service: Northaw House, Potters Bar**

The information below is based on documents provided as part of the pre-application submission. For ease of reference I have separated the response relating to separate areas/elements of the application.

It is not yet understood whether the new buildings are proposed as Enabling Development.

The site contains two statutory designated heritage assets in the form of two Grade II Listed buildings; Northaw House (List Entry:1100970) and the Stable Block at Northaw House (List Entry Number: 1100971). Northaw House is also located in an Area of Archaeological Significance (AAS42).

#### **Northaw House:**

The retention of the service wing to the building will lessen the impact upon the building, which was previously considered in earlier design. No details have been submitted regarding the conversion and conservation of the house for comment.

#### **Car Park:**

The proposed cut and cover car park has the potential to retain views away from the house. Further details will be required to show that views towards the house from the north are not detracted from, by the new car park. Any harm to the setting of Northaw House may be mitigated through appropriate landscape design to the north of the proposed car park access.

#### **Stable Block:**

The stable block, which is listed in its own right, is recognised as being in a very poor state of repair and it is accepted that intervention is needed in the near future to secure the building. Detailed proposals will need to be reviewed for further comment. The images provided, as part of the pre-application, suggest that the existing cart store will be removed and rebuilt. Further details will need to be provided regarding the form of this rebuild, the impact upon historic fabric and the understanding of this structure. The design will need to consider the heritage values which contribute to this building's significance and retain and enhance these values through sympathetic intervention. The proposals will need to consider the impact of interventions on both the fabric of the building and its setting.

### **Walled Garden**

The construction of a large single dwelling within the walled garden is considered to detract from the setting and understanding of the feature. The large dwelling will make the garden wall a secondary feature (as a boundary wall) to a large dwelling, which is not in keeping with the wider landscape context. This space will also be separated from the rest of the Site to the east and detract from the understanding of the holistic composition. Efforts, through design, should be made to retain a relationship between the walled garden and the rest of the property to the east, as division of the site will cause some harm to its setting.

The walled garden has always been an ancillary area and subservient to the main house. The proposals should seek to retain this understanding in the wider setting, which is not considered to be the case in the current design.

### **Land at West (Between House and Walled Garden)**

The latest designs of new buildings in this area are improved, relative to earlier design iterations. Further consideration is needed with regard to the specific individual building designs and the spaces between buildings (a courtyard design was discussed). This area of the site forms a junction between the existing main house and walled garden. The design will need to reflect this area's relationship with the adjacent assets as to preserve or enhance the setting. Further consideration should be given to regional character defining features of agricultural buildings and types, which may enhance the quality of the buildings in this area. In order to retain relationships, it would be beneficial to create linkages between this space and the walled garden.

The retention and conservation, subject to detailed designs, of the gardener's cottage is considered to be beneficial.

### **Dwellings on Eastern and Western Drives**

The proposed dwellings to the east of the main house form part of the setting (although no direct visual relationship) of the designated heritage asset (Northaw House) and this will need to be considered. The proposed buildings are influenced by historic building typology and it is therefore recommended that research be undertaken into estate type houses (if this is the approach the applicant wants to adopt), to identify character defining features which would be appropriate to influence the design here. The scale of the buildings will be a main consideration.

Subject to further details, the construction of the two new gate lodges is not considered to detract from the heritage value of the site if they are of appropriate scale, siting and design.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the information provided, it is considered that an appropriate proposal has the potential to sustainably conserve, and in some regards enhance, the significance of the heritage assets within this site. This will be subject to sympathetic intervention to the heritage assets as well as new build proposals of appropriate scale, siting, design and character. All interventions should consider the significance of heritage assets and their setting.

It is suggested that viewpoints are agreed with the local planning authority prior to submission of a planning and listed building consent application. This can be used to produce accurate visual representations which are likely to be required to demonstrate the impact of the proposal upon the setting of the heritage asset and surrounding landscape.

Detailed proposals are also required pertaining to Northaw House and Stables to comment on the impact of the scheme on these designated heritage assets.

Future proposals should consider Policy R27 and R29 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 that have been 'Saved', as well as relevant policies in Chapter 12 of the NPPF.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Murphy  
on behalf of the Hertfordshire Design Review Service