



**Heritage comments on
planning application
12/2568/EIS for the
creation of 11 playing
pitches etc for Yarm
School**

On behalf of

**Egglescliffe Area
Residents' Association**

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PLANNING APPLICATION 12/2568/EIS Revised application for creation of 11 playing pitches for Yarm School together with access for emergency/maintenance vehicles, a new pedestrian footbridge over the River Tees, two river pontoons, enhancement of mature landscape and creation of public greenspace, enhancement of the Teesdale Way and footpath network and provision of a new public car park for Yarm Town Centre. Revised outline application for a small pavilion linked with the playing pitches (all matters reserved except access).

1.0 Archaeo-Environment Limited has been appointed by the Egglecliffe Area Residents' Association (EARA) to examine the information provided as part of the above-mentioned planning application in order to determine whether it is sufficient for the council to make an informed decision on the impacts on the area's heritage assets. Archaeo-Environment (AE) was established in 2003 by Caroline Hardie (the author of this report). The founding philosophy of AE was to provide a holistic specialist service for the historic environment encompassing buried archaeological deposits, upstanding buildings and the characterisation of historic settlements and landscapes through research, planning and public engagement, thus pre-empting a similar approach in national planning policy by seven years. AE's reputation has continued to grow and we now have a broad client base covering national agencies, local authorities, landowners, developers and community groups. Our portfolio of projects across England and Scotland ranges through conservation area appraisals, advising on listed building and scheduled monument consents, preparing estate surveys and conservation management plans and we regularly provide specialist witnesses for public inquiries. AE staff are recognised mentors for the Heritage Lottery Fund and have framework agreements with the North York Moors National Park Authority as archaeological advisers. We have produced Statements of Significance for numerous private and civic buildings, as well as parklands and ancient monuments throughout the UK.

2.0 We have assessed the Environmental Statement chapters on archaeology and the built environment, including their appendices, against the requirements of National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and the Planning Policy Statement 5 Practice Guide which has been retained as a guidance document despite its associated PPS5 being deleted.

- 3.0 The terminology used in this report is derived from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in 2012, hence the use of terms such as *significance* is particular to this report, and should not be confused with terms such as *significant impact* as utilised in EIA regulations. Within the NPPF, the overall approach to making planning decisions requires an understanding of the significance of a heritage asset before decisions are made relating to the future management of that asset. The government's objectives in paragraph 128 of the NPPF state that applicants should be required to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by setting. Significance is defined as the value an asset has because of its heritage interest, while defining heritage interest as architectural, archaeological, historic or artistic interest. The NPPF also clearly identifies that the setting of heritage assets should be conserved for the value it brings to the various aspects of heritage interest. English Heritage (EH), have produced specific guidance on the setting of heritage assets (2011), in which it is made clear that the setting of a heritage assets is not a fixed envelope but should be assessed relating to the potential impacts of individual developments; it is also clear that it should not just be equated with visibility but should also consider a range of other issues such as noise and spatial relationships.
- 4.0 It is therefore important that the Environmental Statement (ES) sets out the nature, extent and level of significance for each heritage asset (para 17 and more specifically para 55-57 of the Practice Guide) so that the applicant and local planning authority both understand the potential impact of the proposal (para 58 of the Practice Guide).
- 5.0 Both chapters K on the built heritage and H on archaeology have important weaknesses in describing the significance of the heritage assets and so it is not clear what the impact will be on their significance. The chapter on the built environment in particular has confused setting with visibility and has failed to address architectural significance for the listed buildings in the surrounding area or artistic significance of the views to and from the heritage assets of Yarm and Egglecliffe. As the impact on the heritage assets has not been adequately addressed, it is no surprise that the photomontage viewpoints have been selected in order to address landscape sensitivity issues, but have avoided addressing heritage issues. Consequently there are no photomontages from The Friarage (a listed building) looking towards the development site, from Round Hill towards the development site and Devil's Hill to

the development site (viewpoint 7 is some distance away); all of which will have views of the proposal according to the ZTV. There are conventional photographs of some of these in Appendix M2, but they are no substitute for photomontages or wireframes.

- 6.0 Below we have outlined some additional omissions which the local planning authority will wish to see remedied before making a decision.

Archaeological interest

- 7.0 The desk based assessment has highlighted that the area of the sports pitches has some potential for below ground archaeological deposits. According to the desk based assessment 'A number of prehistoric implements have been found within the area around the site. Given the undisturbed nature of the site, it is possible that previously unknown prehistoric features could be present within the site.' In the discussion on the impact of the proposal during the construction phase, it is more specific suggesting that the below ground archaeology may be 'Iron Age/Romano-British' (H7.2). It also notes that the school is located on the site of a medieval friarage and that previous work at the school has revealed features associated with the friarage, including substantial riverside revetment'.
- 8.0 As is good practice, this desk based research has been followed up with a geophysical survey which has identified the presence of some anomalies whose origins are unknown, but may be pits. These 'pits' are scattered across the entire area where the sports pitches are proposed. The geophysical survey refers to the results as 'perplexing' (para 1.3). It also picked up the routes of former field boundaries which have since been lost. Further, the area of the proposed sports pitches was covered in ridge and furrow and this has been truncated due to the ploughing. The ploughing will have smoothed out the ridges, but probably left the furrows intact (trial trenching would confirm this). However ridge and furrow also masks earlier archaeological deposits from geophysical survey and so it is especially important that trial trenching takes place in order to determine whether the remains of this ridge and furrow are also masking archaeological deposits.
- 9.0 The riverside revetment previously uncovered also needs further exploration. The river was navigable during medieval times when the Friarage was one of the town's main foci of commercial activity and the revetment may represent wharfing for

loading goods to the friary. The construction of the footbridge may destroy evidence of this revetment and so the footprint of the proposed footbridge should be tested archaeologically so that the planners and the developers are clear what the archaeological implications are.

- 10.0 The proposed car park may also lie within an area of archaeological interest. This site lies in the vicinity of the medieval bridge (HER 485, 629, fig 11 in the DBA) and as such is likely to have attracted occupation from medieval times. The discovery of a burial in this vicinity (HER 4433), plus evidence of the church area being occupied in Anglo-Saxon times (although the topography suggests that this has been an attractive area for human settlement for much longer), all suggest that the car park area may merit additional investigation prior to determination. If the existing area is simply to be resurfaced without any levelling or reduction in ground levels, such an investigation would be unnecessary. However if the area is to be used for coaches or construction vehicles, then additional support will be required along with a reduction in ground levels. If this is the case, then trial trenching would also be appropriate here.
- 11.0 It is clear that the significance of the geophysical anomalies and revetment are not understood and so evaluation in the form of trial trenching is recommended in the practice guide (para 62) as this is 'designed to inform the decision making process'. By its very nature it should therefore be conducted pre-determination because, if the anomalies turn out to be significant, then it will be too late in the development process to either withdraw planning permission, or to ensure that adequate resources and time are given towards its excavation. It will also be impossible for the local planning authority to take the impact on the significance of these potential heritage assets into account, as their significance is not understood and so the application is contrary to the guidance given in NPPF paras 128-9.
- 12.0 The need to carry out evaluation pre-determination is not just to help the local planning authority make an informed decision; it is also to ensure that the developer is clear what resources will be required in order to mitigate against any harm. In this instance, evaluation has been recommended *after* a decision has been made on the planning application. As a result, the developer has no means of knowing what these 'perplexing' anomalies are, if they are archaeological pits how deep are they, how many should be excavated, do they contain well preserved deposits that will require

analysis, and is there additional buried archaeology between the 'pits' or under the ridge and furrow. Similarly, the revetment may have information on its date and nature and in some cases such structures may also have lost loads of medieval produce buried in the riverbank where it has lain since lost in antiquity; such finds can result in expensive post excavation analysis costs where deposits are waterlogged and consequently well preserved. As a result of missing out the pre-determination evaluation phase, significance has not been adequately set out by the developer and so the application should not be processed until adequate information is supplied. Only at that stage will the local planning authority have enough information to judge whether the significance of the archaeological interest is outweighed by the public benefit of the proposal.

- 13.0 The ES also suggest that the evaluation will 'preserve by record information relating to any archaeological remains which would be affected by development and provide the opportunity to improve understanding of potential settlement and landuse during the Iron Age/Romano-British, medieval and post-medieval periods' (H7.2). As a matter of fact, the evaluation will not do this, even if carried out post determination, as it is only designed to inform the decision making/ project planning process; only a mitigation strategy which involved the excavation of the site after the evaluation phase (if planning permission was granted subject to appropriate conditions) could achieve this and that process can only be informed by the evaluation.
- 14.0 Of less importance, but perhaps indicative of the general approach to heritage, the map of the heritage assets in the desk based assessment (figure 11 and p14, appendix H1) does not provide a key to no.27 and so the reader is left in the dark as to what this feature is, which is located on the southern boundary of the proposed development. It is renumbered as 490 in the ES chapter H, but again the map of heritage assets has no key for the numbers provided. Further, the proposed pavilion is being sited within an old quarry. No mention is made of this quarry in the desk based assessment which suggests that the site was not walked over as part of its production. The quarry will be destroyed by the construction of the pavilion, but its use is acceptable because its significance is not especially high, but the lack of any reference to it suggests that the archaeology has not been adequately dealt with in the early DBA stage.

Architectural, artistic interest and setting

- 15.0 The ES chapter on the built environment makes the mistake of equating setting to visibility. Setting is not just about visibility (although that can be a consideration), but also includes factors such as noise, dust and vibration and where there is a spatial, but not necessarily a visual association (English Heritage 2011, 5). Therefore before establishing whether setting is affected, one needs to understand significance first, rather than visibility. This is important at Egglecliffe and Yarm because there are many heritage assets which may have a more complex historic, architectural or artistic relationship with the development site and the ES chapter has failed to explore what these relationships might mean. The definition of setting does not require the setting to be publicly accessible, but there may simply be a potential for that setting to be appreciated in the future. Therefore the implication in Appendix M2, p6 that the views from houses in Egglecliffe Conservation Area are less significant because they are private, is not relevant to the definition of setting (English Heritage 2011, 8). The built heritage chapter and appendix M2 places too much emphasis on the National Heritage Lists which were never designed to set out significance. Without understanding significance, one cannot understand the level of impact on that significance.
- 16.0 The area of the proposed development is surrounded by clusters of listed buildings and two conservation areas. The maps depicting the location of the listed buildings in the ES chapters are contradictory and misleading. The map captioned 'Land North of the Tees, Yarm: heritage assets in the vicinity' in appendix H which covers archaeology, shows only one listed building – the Friarage. Meanwhile, 'figure D3: Designations Plan' in the built environment chapter fails to show the Friarage as a listed building at all and as it is the closest to the development, this is a serious oversight. Only the Design and Access Statement gets it right by lifting the plans straight from the Conservation Area Appraisals.
- 17.0 As a result of this confusion, no-one has assessed the significance of the 18th century Friarage and crucially, its setting. Further, the shaded area designed to represent the dense clusters of listed buildings in D3 fails to take into account curtilage and so stops short of the eastern boundary which is also the closest to the development proposals. Had there been a proper statement of significance which had declared that there was nothing of significance at the eastern end of the listed building plots, one would understand this omission, but without an adequate statement of

significance covering the listed buildings, it again feeds the local perception that the ES downplays the significance of the heritage interest.

- 18.0 It is possible that this has arisen from the rather confusing and outdated (pre-PPS5) approach of dealing with the historic environment over two chapters so that the listed buildings and conservation areas are dealt with in one chapter, while the below ground archaeology, historic landscapes and scheduled monuments are dealt with in another; it is bound to result in either duplication or gaps. The most worrying gap is the lack of statement of significance for the Friarage and how the proposals will impact on the intended views from its eastern elevation. It is clear from looking at the plans and photographs (see plate 1) of the building that the west elevation was designed to impress and welcome visitors, but the east elevation was designed to appreciate the views of the river and what is now the development site. While these views are now restricted by the school's bold and modern building, the principal axis of the Friarage has been retained and is only obscured by one relatively young tree. Wardell (1953, map 3) shows that the Friarage had gardens to its south and these were surrounded and extended by Friarage Woods, now known as The Rookery. There is every likelihood that these grounds had designed views and that these were directed across the river to the proposed development site. The significance of these views needs to be assessed and then the impact predicted.
- 19.0 Further, the proposal to construct a footbridge may also require the placing of a crane and associated infrastructure on this side of the river. As the nearest access point is a narrow lane only 2m wide (Atlas Wynd), and in itself part of the historic street pattern, the crane and bridge parts may have to be brought in from the riverside nearest the school. If this is the case, then there is a risk that trees will be damaged from the grounds in front of the school and so assessment of whether any parts of the formerly designed landscape that once existed around the Friarage has survived and whether these trees have any significance in relation to that is required before a decision can be made.
- 20.0 There is therefore sufficient information readily available to suggest that a statement of significance should explore the architecture of the building and its landscaped grounds in terms of their intended and fortuitous 18th century (and subsequent) views from the east elevation. The ES should have also included viewpoints chosen to assess the impact on the significance of heritage assets, but none have been chosen

with this in mind. The views from the school should have been one such viewpoint with a photomontage and while viewpoint 1 is close by, it faces towards the bridges and away from the sports pitches and from the axis of the Friarage; it therefore contributes little to the understanding of significance of the Friarage or the impact of the development on this designated asset.



Plate 1. The east elevation of the Friarage facing the river from Wardell 1953, pl16. The large bay windows suggest that this elevation was designed to appreciate the views of the river and countryside beyond to where the proposed sports pitches will be located. Such views would be carefully managed, kept clear of trees and would normally face either designed parkland or pasture land in the 18th century



Plate 2. The east elevation can still be discerned through the trees and has been kept clear of new development. The ES should have explored this further as part of the production of a statement of significance for this listed building and its setting.

- 21.0 It is also hardly surprising therefore that using this approach of spreading the heritage interest over two chapters that no-one has looked at the wider artistic interests affected by the development which are not always represented by buildings or buried remains and which are clearly defined as being part of significance as defined in the NPPF.
- 22.0 The 18th century (when the Friarage and many of the houses in Yarm and Egglecliffe were built) was a time when grounds were landscaped and houses built which were designed to appreciate the 'natural' beauties of the landscape. The burgeoning appreciation of the 'naturalistic' landscape also included the creation of Pleasure Walks. These were laid out so that people of 'taste' could walk in the countryside and appreciate fine views. Just like the city of Durham's peninsula, Yarm has one such walk which encircles the peninsula – True Lovers' Walk which breaks in front of the Friarage¹ and starts again as the Long Walk to the south (OS 1897 6 inch map) where it runs through the Rookery Woods. The planting in the Rookery is a plantation shown on the 19th century OS maps and consists of sycamore, lime and beech; species often chosen in designed landscapes. It is possible therefore that the Long Walk was set out as part of a pleasure walk possibly associated with the Friarage in the 18th or 19th centuries and there is an early reference to walks from the Friarage through 'the hanging grounds' which may have been such landscaped walks, possibly set out by Sayer once the Friary fell into secular hands (The Northern Journeys of Bishop Richard Pococke. North Country Diaries Vol 2. Travel from Wear to Guisborough. Surtees Society.) According to Wardell (1957, 3) the banks of the river from Atlas Wynd to the mouth of the Leven were once known as Friarage Wood and were laid out with shady walks and terrace paths to improve the amenities of the Friarage grounds. The walks in the woods were revived to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002, along with a new interpretation panel – all funded by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, the Forestry Commission, The Wildlife Trust and Yarm Town Council. The significance of these walks and the possibility that these are designed plantings associated with the 18th century remodelling of the Friarage needs to be explored. This is particularly important because they are located directly

¹ The break may be significant in itself and relate to the occupancy of the remodelled house in the 1770s when allowing the public to walk in front of the house would spoil the view!

opposite the proposed sports pitches and so their heritage significance and impact needs to be fully assessed.²

- 23.0 True Lovers' walk is referred to twice in the Conservation Area Appraisal for Yarm and so is briefly referred to in the ES:

"The 'True Lovers' Walk', a riverside path that follows the inside arc of the river, allows for tranquil enjoyment of the river for walking and fishing. In addition, on the eastern side of the peninsula there are views of the town that clearly show the inward-facing High Street and the linear Wynds". (page YA12)

"The 'True Lovers' Walk' that follows the inside of the meander around the peninsula affords views of the open countryside in agricultural use beyond Yarm. It is a very open setting to the west with low lying arable fields, and to the east is much more enclosed by the Eggescliffe ridge, which is used for the grazing of sheep.³ The riverbanks are grassed and support many trees and semi-natural shrubs and bushes." (page YA22).

- 24.0 A statement of significance should therefore explore to whether these walks are a product of the 18th and 19th century appreciation of landscape beauty and to what extent the creation of eleven sports pitches will alter the agricultural character of the land that has been identified as a positive quality to Yarm's setting and as a key view from the town out to the countryside around. As a start, both paths are shown in the 1897 map⁴ and True Lovers' Walk (although it may not have been known as such) is on a painting dating to 1843 (see below).
- 25.0 As such, the paths should be considered as heritage assets with a context based on historic perceptions of beauty and landscape appreciation from the 18th or 19th centuries. By understanding what the 18th and 19th century inhabitants and visitors to Yarm and Eggescliffe expected on their pleasure walk along the riverbank, we can then measure the impact of the proposed development on these paths and their intended views. This should include the new footbridge which will block out the tree line of the ridge to the south which includes roof lines and chimney tops when viewed

² Viewpoint 2 in the landscape chapter appears to be taken from the riverbank nearest the proposed pitches, but if heritage impact was being explored, it would take the viewpoint from the pleasure walks on the other side of the river, using is possible original viewing places

³ The use of Eggescliffe bank for grazing appears to have reduced recently and the land is taking on a more scrubby appearance. It is not clear if this is associated with the proposals, but one needs to be aware of the cautionary note in NPPF para 130 relating to the deliberate neglect of heritage assets.

⁴ True Lovers' Walk is not shown on the 1897 map reproduced in the EIS because it is blotted out by the development boundary line

from the walk and views of Rookery Woods with the Long Walk (see photomontage from viewpoint 4).



Plate 3. Egglescliffe Village from Yarm in 1843 by William Carter. This shows True Lovers' Walk and the entire scene is based on picturesque principles

Egglescliffe Conservation Area

26.0 The Conservation Area Appraisals produced by the Council provide a clear steer towards what is significant about Egglescliffe and Yarm Conservation Areas and their settings and this should have been explored further and analysed in the ES. The significance of Egglescliffe lies partly in its hilltop position within the landscape which tells us why these defensible sites were chosen (EG2). The earliest image of the two settlements found thus far dates to the 1720s by Samuel Buck and clearly shows the settlements prior to industrialisation and about fifty years before the Friarage was rebuilt. Their surroundings were clearly agricultural and the hill top position of Egglescliffe and St John's made apparent. The position of Yarm on a peninsula is less clear and little is made of the river in the view.



Plate 4. Buck's sketch of the 1720 focusing on Yarm, but which also includes the picturesque view of Egglecliffe which at that date was not surrounded with orchards. The windmill on the hilltop reinforces the strong agricultural character of the area.

- 27.0 By the 19th century, a key characteristic of Egglecliffe, as seen by contemporaries, was its 'beautiful view of the winding Tees and the Cleveland hills.' (John Marius Wilson's *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales* 1870-72). The Cleveland Hills are to the south east – the same direction as the proposed development.
- 28.0 The Egglecliffe CACA also notes the value of the view today from '*Yarm's riverside, looking up to St John's Church atop the high cliff. The attractive church sitting in its leafy grounds is very pictorial, and is the image many people have of Egglecliffe. Indeed, it has been used in the past on postcards for visiting Yarm and the wider Tees valley.*'
- 29.0 The importance of the panoramas from Egglecliffe is further highlighted in the CACA (EG5):
- "The main part of Egglecliffe Conservation Area and arguably the most attractive part is the old village with its traditional Yorkshire Green and idyllic location on the rock escarpment with views across the Tees in almost every direction".*
- 30.0 Many of the historic postcards views are of the river and the church at Egglecliffe taken through the arches of the viaduct and bridge which frame the view and the ZTV suggests that parts of the proposed development site may be visible from here (figure D4). Other views are of Egglecliffe from Yarm with the river intervening.

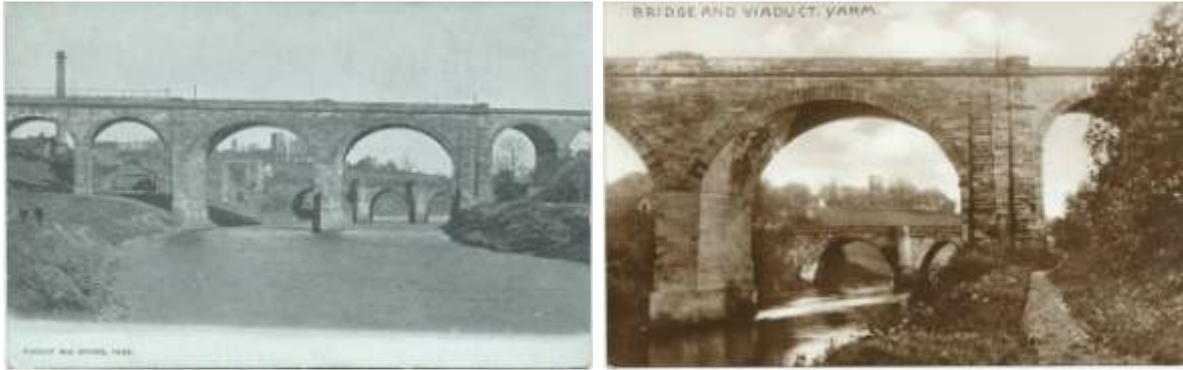


Plate 5. Two typical examples of postcards which use the view along the river from the bridges with St John's on Eggescliffe's hilltop.

31.0 Another favoured post card image is of Stoney Bank which leads up to the church from the proposed car parking and site access area and which affords views along the river towards Yarm and according to the ZTV may also see parts of the development. An interpretation panel has been placed at this viewpoint, although it points away from the proposed development.

32.0 It is therefore clear that part of Eggescliffe's Conservation Area significance is its artistic interest and that this could have been more widely explored in the ES so that the level of this interest could be determined and the impact measured. This is supported by English Heritage's guidance on setting which states that 'The setting of any heritage asset is likely to include a variety of views of, across, or including that asset, and views of the surroundings from or through the asset' (English Heritage 2011, 6).

33.0 According to the CACA, another one of the main characteristics of Eggescliffe Conservation Area, is the fact that it has not 'been swallowed up by large-scale suburbanisation' (EG3) and is surrounded by farmland :-

'Surrounded by open farmland, the village has a certain 'lost in time' feel which adds greatly to its sense of place within the conurbation.' (page EG5).

34.0 Traditionally the land around Eggescliffe would have been productive agricultural land, varying between arable and pasture depending on market prices. The extensive ridge and furrow on the land around the village is still testament to this land use and while the field pattern will have altered over time, the main historic landscape character remains an enclosure field pattern on the site of the proposed sports

pitches and pasture land with relict field boundaries and patterns on the west banks below the village. Closer to the village, in the 19th century, the fields were filled with orchards (OS 1st ed 6 inch).

- 35.0 The role of the agricultural (pasture and arable) land around the village is key therefore an important part of the conservation area's significance and therefore of its setting. This theme of needing to avoid suburbanisation is returned to again in the CACA:

'The undeveloped riverside which gives a degree of separation between Yarm and Eggescliffe functions extremely effectively as an attractive landscaped strip. The river meander, imposing church on the cliff, the bridges and the wild swans complete the picturesque landscape in an almost too-good-to-be-true chocolate-box way. It is essential that this land remains natural and is never 'manicured', otherwise the idyllic character will be lost.' (EG7-8) [my emphasis]

- 36.0 The built heritage chapter of the ES never really attempts to grapple with how the creation of eleven sports pitches will affect this key quality of the conservation area's setting, but it is hard to avoid the conclusion that 11 new sports pitches with no hedges between them to break up the space and a plethora of white painted lines, are a 'manicured' use of the land which will also result in a change of character from rural/agricultural to sporting use with a suburban character. Further, there is a danger that the formalisation of footpaths so that they become 2m wide surfaced adoptable routes and the DDA compliant ramps on the approach to the footbridge, will create fingers of suburbanisation which will creep into this rural landscape. The ES specifically states that the track from Eggescliffe village will not be altered to accommodate construction traffic, but in its current form it is unlikely to be able to support the weight of heavy machinery. It is therefore not clear that the track could be retained in its current form and so it is similarly not clear if it will need to be rebuilt and consequently introduce additional changes to the character of the area. A transport study commissioned by the Eggescliffe Area Residents Association has suggested that the track would need to be a minimum of 3.5m wide with passing places and alterations to its gradient and route in order to safely accommodate the necessary construction traffic (SK Transport Planning Ltd, letter from Michael Kitching dated 19.11.12). Some clarification on the nature of these paths and tracks is therefore necessary so that impact on significance can be properly assessed.

- 37.0 The very fact that the village has been recognised for its views outwards over the Tees and for its agricultural surroundings for so long, surely establishes that this is a landscape sensitive to change. The extent of setting as set out by English Heritage (2011, 4) allows for that setting to be extended by specific changes in surroundings which might include noise generated by a development. At the moment, the bank on which Eggescliffe sits within a loop in the river, is a quiet area that contrasts sharply with the bustle around it and which, as the Eggescliffe Conservation Area Appraisal points out, affords a degree of separation which is a significant aspect of the two settlements. However, once the area is being used for several rugby matches (or other sports) on the eleven sports pitches, with cheering parents, shouted commands from coaches, pedestrians approaching the pitches from the school with its footbridge and the new car park, possibly even the village, this tranquillity will be shattered. This is important, because English Heritage's guidance on setting states that a 'proper evaluation of the effect of change within the setting of a heritage asset will usually need to consider the implications, if any, for public appreciation of its significance.' It should also consider the importance of quiet and tranquillity as an attribute of setting...' (English Heritage 2011, 8).
- 38.0 Appendix M2 (also referred to as K2), the 'Above Ground Heritage Assessment' concludes that the 'character and appearance and setting of the conservation area would be preserved' and is therefore compliant with planning policy. In fact, NPPF 2012, has now moved from simple preservation of heritage assets towards the 'desirability of sustaining and *enhancing* [my emphasis] the significance of heritage assets' as well as new development making a '*positive* [my emphasis] contribution to local character and distinctiveness' (NPPF paras 126, 131). There are elements of this proposal that do make a positive contribution, such as the restoration of hedgerows and the demolition of the shed, but the overall balance is towards disbenefit because of the construction of the pitches and their subsequent use.
- 39.0 This raises another issue which is curiously lacking from the proposals. No planning permission has been sought for any form of lighting. The proposed sports pitches are multi-use but will clearly be used for rugby and presumably other winter sports. In winter, the pitches will start to be shrouded in darkness from 3pm. Further, if the paths from Eggescliffe to the playing field area are to be DDA/Equalities Act compliant, not only will they add to the manicured and suburban effect that should be

avoided, according to the council's own CACA, but they may also require some lighting on match days. If planning permission was to be granted for this proposal, any future applications for lighting along this area and on the sports pitches should be refused in order to protect the very qualities outlined in the CACA. It is also important that any future path networks, whether as a result of development or improvements by the Tees Heritage Park, should respect the character of this area and avoid suburbanisation.

- 40.0 The proposed development area was originally part of Egglecliffe's Conservation Area and was removed in the early 1990s, according to the Conservation Area Appraisal, because it was felt that it did not share characteristics with the conservation area. It has not been returned to the conservation area in subsequent reviews because it was considered to have adequate protection from unsympathetic development from its status in the Green Wedge (EG6). It is clear that the green areas to the east of the village including the development site, should be considered as setting; indeed the conservation area appraisal refers to it as 'green setting' (EG5), but there is some debate over whether the local community has ever been consulted over these boundary review changes. English Heritage published guidance on 'The Management of Conservation Areas' in 2006 and they strongly recommend that local communities should be involved in the preparation of their management plans, which includes a review of the boundaries (EH 2006, 3.8-3.10). It is therefore open to question whether this 'green setting' is adequately protected by being in the Green Wedge and whether the exclusion of this area from the conservation area should have taken place without community support.

Yarm Conservation Area

- 41.0 The Conservation Area Appraisal does not specifically define the setting of Yarm Conservation Area, but it is clear from its wording that the river and land between it and Egglecliffe are part of its setting where it suggests that the 'river, by its very nature, ensures that the setting of the Conservation Area will not be damaged by unsympathetic development. The north and east boundaries are given further protection from insensitive development that may affect its setting, by the additional controls in force from Egglecliffe Conservation Area ...where it abuts Yarm Conservation Area, and Local Plan Policy EN14: 'Green Wedge' that covers the floodplain and the river banks all around the meander. The lack of any discussion in

the ES regarding what is significant about the setting of Yarm's Conservation Area means that there is no adequate description of the impact on it.

42.0 The Yarm CACA identifies the view from the north bank of the river towards Eggescliffe as a key view which according to the ZTV has a view of parts of the proposed development site. Its significance lies in its appreciation of 'many scenic views of the historic form and the intrinsic charm of Yarm. The riverside, open countryside of Eggescliffe, wildlife, historic form and architecture, viaduct and bridge, create an extremely varied and pleasant impression of Yarm.'(YA10-11).

43.0 Yarm and Eggescliffe have traditionally appeared in tourist guides since the 19th century and so the ES should also consider the impact of the development on these historical perceptions of landscape, because these are key to what is significant, even today, about the two conservation areas. When Daniel Defoe visited between 1724-6 he thought Yarm was of 'no great note' (Letter 9), but with the growing appreciation of the natural beauties of the English landscape, values changed:

"We drop back to the Tees again, and admire the green waving woods of the Friarage. Turning the last bend is a small wooden hut on the Durham side, where the fisherman watches the approach of salmon through the shallow water....On the elevated ground on the Durham side of the river is Eggescliffe Church, grandly situated amid leafy foliage, and near to is the secluded and almost forgotten village of that name. The short walk up to the church on the hill is worth making, if only to see Yarm and its interesting environs from new coigns of vantage." (Rambles by the River Tees by M. Heavisides 1905, 104-5)

Impacts during the construction phase

44.0 The built environment chapter of the ES has suggested that the impacts of the proposal during the construction phase are substantial adverse, but temporary (Chapter K, p17). Eggescliffe is renowned for its 'chocolate-box central green' (CACA EG2) and one of the negative features of the conservation area, according to the council, is the 'The poor repair and maintenance of the grass-crete around the edge of the green [which] conspires with the quantity of parked cars that litter it. Together, they are unsightly, and mutually destructive. It detracts from an otherwise attractive townscape.'

45.0 The proposed development will bring traffic in through the village which at its core is made up of narrow streets with bends and sharp corners lined with designated boundary walls and listed buildings. The street pattern is based on pedestrian and horse drawn traffic and has struggled to adapt to the modern car. In the words of the Conservation Area Appraisal 'The biggest threat to the integrity of the conservation area comes from the increasing dominance of private cars parked in the green...' (EG2) It is evidently not suited to heavy vehicles associated with construction.

46.0 Access for the construction works will be along Butts Lane which as it joins the village green is lined with an early to mid 19th century tall brick wall which is listed and associated with the Hall (Pevsner 1990, 263). There is no pavement adjacent to this historic wall along Butts Lane, but around the corner a pedestrian route is marked out with scoria blocks – themselves of historic interest and a much diminished historic asset in the borough. This wall leans slightly in places towards the road and already has a substantial crack on the corner where a tie rod has been inserted in the past to help support the wall. This listed wall is clearly not able to withstand any contact, no matter how minor, with heavy construction vehicles.



Plate 6. The listed wall which forms the boundary to Butts Lane. It already presents structural cracks and leans slightly towards the road. There is no buffer to protect it from damage caused by heavy vehicles.

47.0 On the approach, the construction vehicles will then turn right on to the small lane which skirts the north side of the village green, adjacent to a listed 18th century cottage. At this point the road is about 3.2m wide and cannot accommodate two cars

in width, but Church Road joins it at the end on a blind corner. Inevitably, cars tend to mount the village green if the road is narrowed by another passing or parked car (which reduces the width of the road by 2m) and this leads to the damage referred to in the conservation area appraisal.

- 48.0 The construction traffic will then use a small gap measuring 3.37m wide. On the west side it is bounded by the listed 18th century village farm, its listed stables, the former village pound and a listed K6 telephone kiosk which sits on the edge of the road, unprotected from heavy vehicles. The gable end of the stable has some stonework in poor condition exacerbated by cementitious repointing which will be further damaged if any gritting takes place on this track in winter months, or if it is scuffed by passing construction traffic. The remains of a low lying brick wall form the east side of this track and is the boundary to the listed Ivy Dene St. Anne's; the remains of the wall should also therefore be considered as listed. The bricks of this relict wall appear to be late 18th or early 19th century and the original wall was apparently knocked down by a large vehicle using the farm. The proposal appears to assume that the remains of this wall could be removed to allow a wider access, but it is a listed, albeit fragmentary relict of a wall, which represents an historic property boundary and should therefore be retained and ideally restored to its former height.



Plate 7. Left: Construction traffic will compete for space on this short stretch of village green road with a listed 18th century cottage adjacent. Additional damage to the green is inevitable as traffic mounts it to allow passing space. Right: the K6 telephone kiosk: designed in 1935 to commemorate the silver jubilee of King George V, although this particular example may be 1950s



Plate 8. Right: Construction traffic will have to pass between the foundations of the former 19th century wall (which is apparently due to be rebuilt) and the listed gable wall (on the right) which is already in poor condition.

49.0 The traffic will then pass through the farm area and down the track which is overlooked by modernist houses designed by the architect John Poulson (1910-1993) in a style that is clearly intended to appreciate views out of the village.

50.0 The ES already acknowledges the level of impact on Egglecliffe Conservation Area is substantial adverse, but it is not clear that it is temporary; the ES suggests that construction will be over two years. In that two years damage will certainly occur to the village green and it also seems likely that damage will occur to the listed wall on Butts Lane, the telephone kiosk, the listed farmhouse gable end and the village pound adjacent and the unlisted remains of an 19th century wall foundations. This damage will not be temporary and is likely to have long term consequences on the fabric of the buildings.

51.0 Beyond the construction phase, it is also worth considering the longer term impact on the village green if the village is used for car parking or dropping off by parents or others visiting the pitches during matches. There is clearly already a conflict between the significance of the conservation area and the requirements of parking resulting in damage to the village green and this has been flagged up as a negative aspect in the conservation area appraisal (EG8). The creation of a car park at the foot of Stoney Bank is intended to ameliorate this and the school will hope that the school grounds will also be used, but these are unlikely to meet the needs of all spectators associated with eleven pitches, plus the more casual use by the public.

Planning Balance

- 52.0 Key to the NPPF is the balance between impact on significance and public benefit. The heritage interest of this area (with the exception of the buried archaeology on the site of the proposed sports pitches) is currently publicly available to be appreciated. Whether it is the picturesque views down the river from the scheduled bridge, the views across the river between Yarm and Egglecliffe and the 'chocolate box' village green, or the views of the Friarage across the river – all are accessible. The development site itself is largely accessible already, although the informal path network is not manicured and so not DDA compliant.
- 53.0 The proposed use of the sports pitches is private; the school have made the decision that the pitches should not be used by the wider community. The NPPF seeks benefit that is public, not private (NPPF paras 133-4). The creation of car parking and the footbridge may benefit some members of the community and may be seen as a disbenefit by others. In order to weigh up this difficult planning balance, the local planning authority needs a well thought out, fully explored statement of significance against which impact can be assessed and this has not been made available.

Conclusion

1. The NPPF does not simply seek to preserve heritage assets, but sees as desirable the need to sustain and *enhance* their significance. The Built Heritage chapter and its appendix M2 (also variously referred to as K2) suggest only that significance will be preserved. The introduction of suburban sports pitches and associated infra-structure into an area that has specifically been flagged up by the local planning authority as one which should be protected from suburbanisation and manicuring, cannot be said to enhance or sustain significance and is therefore contrary to NPPF para 131.
2. There is inadequate information on the significance of the archaeology due to the lack of any trial trenching which could provide information on the nature, level and extent of significance. On the currently available information it is therefore impossible to state whether there will be substantial harm or not to archaeological deposits of possible designatable value.
3. The submitted built heritage assessment is inadequate in its understanding of setting as defined by the NPPF and additional English heritage guidance. Therefore the significance of the listed buildings and conservation areas has not been adequately explored, in particular the nature and significance of the views towards the riverbank and beyond in the 18th century design of the Friarage and its grounds. As a result the

impact of the development on the Friarage and the historic pleasure walks cannot be fully understood.

4. The impact of the construction phase on the listed buildings and village green in Eggescliffe will be substantial and adverse and is also highly likely to have long term negative impacts on the setting and fabric of listed buildings and the conservation area. The longer term impact on the village green needs to be better assessed as the village is likely to be used for parking by visitors to the pitches and thus exacerbate the problems of damage to the green already raised in the conservation area appraisal.
5. The impact of the construction phase on the Friarage is also not understood as it is not clear how the footbridge parts and heavy machinery will be transported to the west side of the river.
6. It is not clear what form the access track for the heavy vehicles and machinery will take from Eggescliffe village or what form the footpaths will take from the car park to the sports pitches and therefore the impact on the conservation area cannot be determined.

Caroline Hardie 17.11.12