

**Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society (FFH)**  
**Statement on the 2020 'Midway' Design Proposals for the**  
**Redevelopment of Ordnance Lane – Nov. 2020**

**Overview**

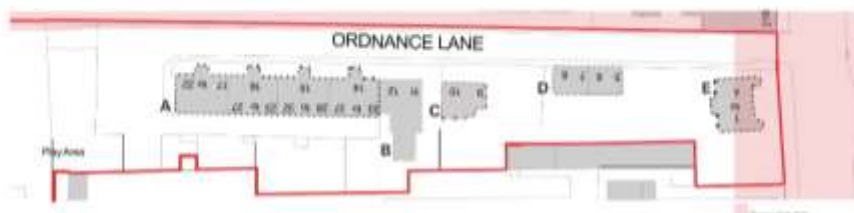
City of York Council and Mikhail Riches have issued their 'midway' design proposal for public consultation. Unfortunately, despite careful argument from FFH and others, the proposals include demolition of all the houses along Ordnance Lane, retaining and adapting only the larger block at the western end.

FFH considers the demolition of these houses to be a severe loss to York's military heritage and a missed opportunity to demonstrate how progressive designs can adapt and retain existing buildings, rather than sweep them away. The Society is very concerned that this approach may be adopted in the forthcoming redevelopment of Imphal Barracks, which would be an even greater loss of heritage.

In the spirit of compromise and cooperation, FFH has *very* reluctantly accepted that the majority of the houses are of moderate architectural value and could be demolished if *absolutely* necessary for the overall scheme. However, there is one house, No. 9-10, built in an Arts and Crafts style, which *does* have significant architectural value and FFH calls for the proposals to be modified to allow its retention.



**Heritage**  
**Existing Buildings on Ordnance Lane**



Above:  
 No. 9-10 Ordnance Lane, which FFH wish to preserve

Left:  
 Slide from Mikhail Riches presentation on the heritage buildings in Ordnance Lane

City of York Council justify demolition of the arts and crafts building, saying

‘despite detailed modelling and feasibility work to see how we could retain the cottage it has not been feasible and so isn’t included in the developed design.’

The proposed scheme has a long 3 storey block of town houses replacing the existing separate buildings. The easternmost one of these units is described as a ‘Community’ but no further explanation of this is given. However, if the new 3 storey block was shorter, the arts and crafts house could be adapted for ‘community’ use, or modernised to provide a comfortable family home. Retaining this building will also provide some relief to the starkly modern plain architectural style of the adjacent new buildings.



View of the Arts and Crafts House from Ordnance Lane

#### **Other Buildings of Value on Ordnance Lane**



Above left: No. 1-4, early 20<sup>th</sup> C. which backs on to Fulford Road

Above right: 5,6,7 & 8, 1930s?

Left: part of the large block at the western end, which is being retained and adapted. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century.



## Site Plans and Design Drawings



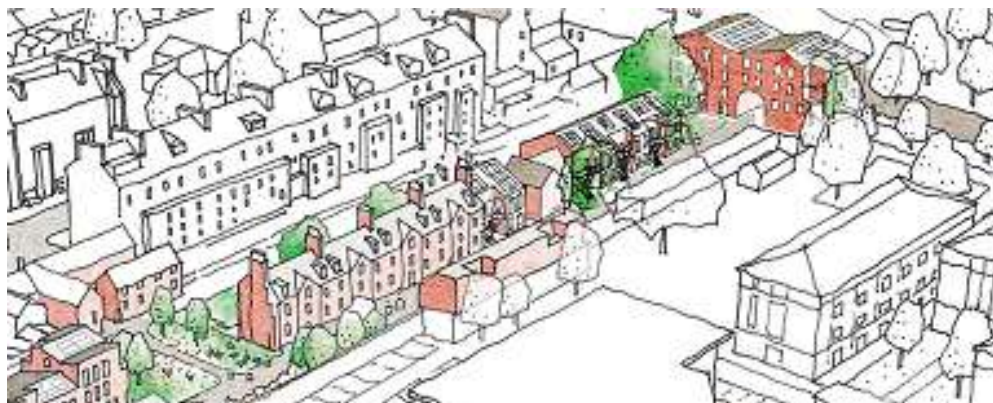
**The proposed 3 Storey Block Replacing the Existing Houses on Ordnance Lane**



**Proposed Frontage to Fulford Road**



**Plan Showing Proposed Uses of the New Buildings**



**Aerial View of Ordnance Lane with the Proposed New Buildings**

## Proposal Site plan and Access

### KEY NUMBERS

**Total number of new homes**  
89

**Density**  
68 unit/ha

**Parking and Cycles**  
28 spaces on-site  
14 spaces along Hospital Field's Road  
282 cycle spaces

Car club space  
EV Charging point  
EV parking spaces

### ACCESS

↔ Vehicular access  
↔ Pedestrian and cycle route



Ordnance Lane, City of York | Midway Design Review

Illustrations reflective of design work to date, October 2020

## Proposal Intergenerational Living

**Intergenerational Pocket Park:**  
A landscaped area with places to sit around two existing trees.

**New Ordnance Lane:** A pedestrian and cycle route forming the main axis of the site.

**The Married Quarters,** refurbished.

**The Urban Orchard:** A space for children's natural play and raised growing beds.



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## The Development in the Context of the Fulford Road Conservation Area

The following extracts from the 2009 Conservation Area Appraisal describe the importance of the Ordnance Lane area thus: -

*“This section of the Conservation Area is of considerable architectural and social interest, with high military associations.”*

*“Just before the new office development Ordnance Lane runs off to the west, originally leading to the Royal Army Ordnance Depot established behind the hospital in 1890. The Lane itself is utilitarian but it includes an interesting and robust terrace of flats and maisonettes built in 1903 for married hospital staff, and a later 1920’s house (No 9) presumably for higher ranking personnel.”*

*“The buildings.... Have some quality and architectural interest, as well as some social interest. The area would not justify conservation area status in isolation but in association with the Wenlock Terrace housing it is considered to add further interest and diversity, and to justify inclusion.”*

The Conservation Area Appraisal proposed that the whole of Ordnance Lane should be included in the expansion of the Conservation Area, and although only the roadside strip was eventually added, the appraisal’s description of its significance remains undiminished.

A report on the proposal by the City Archaeologist on the previous proposals, issued on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2016, it states that the *“residential buildings have a significant association with the military presence in the area.”*

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Historic Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to designate as conservation areas any ‘*areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*’.

The same Act requires that *a local authority, in exercising its planning powers, must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area* (Section 72 of the Act).

The military hospital has already been demolished, so these former homes for its staff are the last physical memory of an important element in York’s association with the large military establishment in the Fulford Road area.

### Summary of Our View

1. The site is partly within and immediately adjacent to the Fulford Road Conservation Area, key features of which are the remaining military buildings and their environs.
2. These are the only remaining domestic buildings associated with the former military hospital and ordnance depot and are of an interesting and unique design. Their demolition would be a significant loss.



3. The setting of this group of buildings is parallel to those of Wenlock Terrace, which is within the Conservation Area, and together they form an interesting grouping reflecting the long association with the military and this area of York.
4. Demolition will set an extremely bad precedent for the retention of the wide range of military buildings during redevelopment of the adjacent barracks site
5. We call for CYC to promote a scheme for the sympathetic renovation, adaptation and enhancement of these historically significant and architecturally interesting buildings.



The Existing Layout of Buildings along Ordnance Lane



Aerial View of all the Proposed Development

Christopher Rainger, Chairman of Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society  
November 2020