

Appendix 3: Options for Helmsley based buildings – Summary of Pros and Cons¹

Potential solution: Refurbishment of the Old Vicarage (in one major project or a series of shorter projects).

Pros

- The NPA's association with this landmark building is continued;
- Opportunity to develop an exemplar project on how to reduce carbon emissions from a listed building;
- By working over a longer period of time, initial capital investment can be reduced.
- By undertaking a single major project, all work could be completed with 12 months of the start date.

Cons

- The building will still be here with all of its idiosyncrasies and its use as an office may continue to be unsympathetic with its original use as a residence;
- Carbon neutrality will not be achieved without offsetting;
- The retrofitting of lower carbon items is more expensive than designing them in from the outset;
- The listed status of the building limits the work that can be done to change the internal configuration to make it suitable for blended working methods;
- Long term, the staffing, running and maintenance costs will continue to rise e.g. cleaning, heating/lighting two Helmsley sites, laying in cabling for 2 sets of EV points, ongoing maintenance and rates;
- If a 'do the essential' works option followed by gradual renovation is followed, this will lead to long term disruption and reduced operational efficiency;
- No opportunity to realise the capital contained within the building for use elsewhere;
- Sawmill Lane site would need to be retained and renovated.

¹ Taken from Appendix 3 to Private item 18 – Property Review, NPA 13 December 2021

Potential solution: Relocation of HQ to Sutton Bank

Pros

- Bringing together Visitor Centre and HQ provides the opportunity for a 'statement' development on the site.
- The Authority owns the site, so no issues with land purchase.
- The site does provide opportunities that fall short of a full relocation of HQ. For example, part of redeveloping the visitor facilities could include a meeting/conferencing venue to be used by the Authority as well as generating some income.

Cons

- Danger that a major office development would detract from the excellent visitor facility.
- Digital connectivity is a major problem which will be very expensive to resolve.
- The HQ would be remote from the southern Ranger base which would need to be retained for operational efficiency. Costs for replacing the garage will still need to be found.
- Compulsory transfer of base for many staff to negotiate and pay for.
- Operational efficiency may be compromised due to greater travelling distances to most of the park.

Potential solution: Relocation of HQ to existing local authority building

Pros

- Opportunity to work in partnership with the new North Yorkshire Authority;
- Buildings already exist, so no significant project management of a new build or renovation;
- Provides an opportunity for the Old Vicarage to be sympathetically renovated and returned to being a residence.
- Likely to be on a medium to long term lease, so no requirement for large initial capital investment.

Cons

- Uncertain when, where and how much office accommodation might become available.
- Potential sites include Scarborough, Malton, Northallerton and Guisborough – all are less favourably sited for ease of road access across the Park than the current base in Helmsley.
- Operational efficiency may be compromised due to greater travelling distances to most of the park.
- Compulsory transfer of base for many staff to negotiate and pay for.
- Quality of accommodation and carbon efficiency is uncertain as are potential arrangements for who would make the capital investment to improve this position.
- Long term lease will need to be paid for from existing revenue budgets.

Potential solution: New build in Helmsley

Pros

- Green field site and likely that planning permission will be relatively straightforward outside the Park boundary.
- Carbon neutrality built in at the design stage.
- Modest building, fit for blended working, developed from design stage.
- Strong potential to incorporate southern Ranger base on the same site.
- Land is available for purchase and is included in the Helmsley plan as employment development land.
- Long term efficiencies in reducing the number of buildings that the Authority is responsible for looking after.
- Long term reduction in operating costs.
- Minimal disruption to staff while the building is being constructed.
- IT connectivity is sufficient for the Authority's needs.
- Provides an opportunity for the Old Vicarage to be sympathetically renovated and returned to being a residence.

Cons

- Land needs to be purchased and planning permission sought.
- Significant capital investment required.
- Project management of the build will divert some senior staff time even if expertise is brought in.

Potential solution: New build elsewhere

Pros

- Green field site and likely that planning permission will be relatively straightforward outside the Park boundary.
- Carbon neutrality built in at the design stage.
- Modest building, fit for blended working, developed from design stage.
- Potential to incorporate southern Ranger base on the same site.
- Potential for long term reduction in operating costs.
- Minimal disruption to staff while the building is being constructed. IT connectivity is likely to be sufficient for the Authority's needs.
- Provides an opportunity for the Old Vicarage to be sympathetically renovated and returned to being a residence.

Cons

- No land currently available in target areas around the periphery of the Park.
- Land will need to be purchased.
- Significantly capital investment required.
- Project management of the build will divert some senior staff time even if expertise is brought in.
- Compulsory transfer of base for many staff to negotiate and pay for.
- The opportunity for operational efficiency by grouping all Helmsley staff on the same site might be lost resulting in higher long term running costs e.g. cleaning, heating/lighting two sites, laying in cabling for 2 sets of EV points, ongoing maintenance and rates.

Potential solution: Rebuild of the Sawmill Lane Garage in situ

Pros

- The Authority owns the site on which the garage and office block currently sit.
- By not being part of a wider project, the garage replacement could be progressed quickly subject to the allocation of funds.
- The garage would be built to a modern specification and include a modest workshop, but improved machinery maintenance, drying and storage facilities.

Cons

- Temporary accommodation will need to be found during the demolition/build period
- Being able to operate from the site is still dependent upon being able to lease the storage compound/parking area. Only 7 years left to run on the lease.
- The site is small and will continue to be sub optimal for frequent vehicle movements.
- The opportunity for operational efficiency by grouping all Helmsley staff on the same site would be lost resulting in higher long term running costs e.g. cleaning, heating/lighting two sites, laying in cabling for 2 sets of EV points, ongoing maintenance and rates.