
Heritage, Design and Access Statement

No.15 The Square, Blanchland

Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	The heritage asset and its setting	1
3.0	Previous Planning History	2
4.0	Planning Policy and Guidance	2
5.0	Significance	3
6.0	Use	4
7.0	Design	4
8.0	Layout	6
9.0	Impact	6
10.0	Access	7
11.0	Conclusion	7
12.0	Annotated Photographs	8

1.0 Introduction

1.1. We have been instructed by our client, Lord Crewe's Charity, to submit a Planning and Listed Building Application for the change of use and conversion of No.15 The Square, Blanchland formerly known as Gowland's Cottage. This Heritage, Design and Access Statement has been written in accordance with Northumberland County Council's, Heritage Statement Guidance and forms part of the Listed Building Application. The statement should be read in conjunction with the report "15 The Square, Blanchland: An Historic Building Assessment by Peter Ryder dated November 2019" and also the accompanying drawings:

- 440132_01 Location Plan
- 440132_02 Existing Site Plan
- 440132_03 Existing Floor Plan
- 440132_04 Existing Roof Plan and Elevations
- 440132_05 Proposed Floor Plans
- 440132_06 Proposed Elevations
- 440132_07 Proposed Site Plan

2.0 The heritage asset and its setting



Blanchland Conservation Area



NORTHUMBERLAND
Northumberland County Council

Scale @ A3: 1:1,400
Date: 02/12/2015

2.1 Blanchland Conservation Area Map

- 2.2. No.15 The Square is situated within the village of Blanchland, a conservation village largely built in the 18th century from stone collected from the ruins of the 12th century Blanchland Abbey. The village is located in Northumberland just north of the County Durham boundary. The front elevation of the cottage faces west and overlooks the village square.
- 2.3. The building is a linked semi-detached two storey property with a large garden to the rear with two stone outbuildings. It is constructed from roughly coursed stonework with a stone slate roof covering laid to diminishing courses. Three plain chimney stacks with thin flagstone bands sit atop the roof.
- 2.4. The neighbouring properties are of a similar age and construction and together they form the L-shaped village square.
- 2.5. The Blanchland conservation area map created by Northumberland County Council (see previous page) places the cottage inside the designated conservation area.
- 2.6. *"BLANCHLAND THE SQUARE Blanchland NY 9650 24/44 Gowland's Cottage*

GV II

House, formerly monastic building. C15 remodelled mid-C18. Rubble with dressings; stone slate roof. Front elevation 2 storeys, 4 bays, irregular. Vertical-panelled door in bay 2 and between bays 3 and 4, the latter in chamfered surround with depressed rounded head. Late C19 sashes in C18 stone surrounds (except for ground floor bay 3 C20 window in earlier chamfered surround). Stone end and ridge stacks. Rear elevation: varied fenestration including former 2-light window in chamfered surround on 1st floor and blocked, chamfered single-light window on ground floor. Interior: central ground floor room has C15 ceiling with heavy transverse beam and joists, all chamfered with broach stops. A much-altered building which appears to be the southern part of the monastic east range, presumably the dorter at 1st floor level.

Listing NGR: NY9663650350"

Please refer to the historic buildings assessment by Peter Ryder for further detailed description of the house and the structural history of the property with schematic drawings.

3.0 Previous Planning History

- 3.1. There are no planning history records available for 15 The Square / Gowland's cottage, however a number of records do exist for a similar application (12/03203/LBC) which relates to the cottages that adjoin onto 15 The Square. The application seeks permission for the change of use from residential dwellings to hotel accommodation.

4.0 Planning Policy and Guidance

- 4.1. 15 The Square is a residential dwelling and sits within the C3 Use Class.
- 4.2. The use proposed is considered to fall within the C1 Use Class as the application seeks to obtain consent to remodel the residential dwelling to form an enlargement of the hotel, the Lord Crewe Arms. As such the change of use that will take place is one of a change of use from C3 to C1.
- 4.3. **Tynedale Local Plan and Core Strategy** - Within the Local Plan there are limited policies which are relevant to the application. Policy BE21 considers proposals for alterations or extensions to listed buildings and states that they will be granted consent where the essential character of the building is retained, its features of special interest remain intact and unimpaired, where the works proposed make use of traditional and sympathetic building materials and techniques in keeping with those found in the listed building where the architectural details match those within the listed building and where the proposal meets the requirements of general development Policy GD2. It is considered that the proposals that have been put forward on behalf of this application meet with these requirements.
- 4.4. **NPPF** - In relation to the rural economy, paragraph 28 of the NPPF stresses the need for planning to support economic development in rural areas in order to create jobs and wealth by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. The growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas through conversion of existing buildings is required to be encouraged along with rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit business in rural areas and communities in a form which respects the character of the countryside. This includes supporting the expansion of tourism and visitor facilities in appropriate locations. These elements of the NPPF are considered to be key considerations in relation to the uses proposed within this application and their direct link to an existing rural tourism facility i.e. The Lord Crewe Arms.
- 4.5. In relation to the listed building works, section 12 within the NPPF states the need to conserve and enhance the historic environment. Any applications relating to listed buildings require the applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected and where appropriate the contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. The NPPF advises that as a minimum the relevant historic environment records should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary

5.0 Significance

- 5.1. The significance of the building is detailed within the assessment provided by Peter Ryder. In summary the building is a large two storey property constructed in the 15th century and then remodelled into its current layout in the 18th century. Unusually it offers two external front doors to the west elevation, which suggests that the property was in fact two separate cottages at some stage. The northern end of the cottage is believed to have been single storey before being remodelled into a two storey property. Like many properties in Blanchland, much of the remodelling was carried out in the 18th century when Lord Crewe's Charity took ownership of the estate.

- 5.2. There are a variety of timber single glazed windows fitted to the property, the front elevation windows have been replaced with modern timber frames which incorporate double glazed units whereas the windows at the rear of the property appear to be traditional single glazed sashes and their position is less regular in comparison with the front elevation.
- 5.3. Internally, the building offers quite a simple interior with little in the way of historic features. Exposed ceiling joists and floor boards are visible from some ground floor rooms with others having been boarded in between. Rounded edge skirtings and architraves are present to most rooms with traditional four panel timber doors. The tie beams of the roof trusses sit below the lath and plaster ceilings of the three bedrooms and in each case have been painted white.
- 5.4. The stone cladding surround to the fireplace in the lounge has likely been added in the 1970's and it currently covers the original inglenook fireplace which has been hidden. The kitchen fireplace place has also been altered and now incorporates a modern opening in which the boiler is positioned. A traditional cast iron fireplace insert is present to the southern end bedroom and the fireplace in the bedroom of the northern end of the property has been boarded over with the original fireplace opening only faintly visible.
- 5.5. More significantly the roof trusses visible from within the roof space are believed to be of greater importance and are shown and described in detail in the report by Peter Ryder.
- 5.6. To the rear of the property are two small 18th century Privies which are separately listed (grade II) constructed from stone with stone slate roof coverings and timber boarded doors. They were previously used as general storage and solid fuel stores by the former tenants.

6.0 Use

- 6.1. The property was let as a 3 bedroom residential property which had been occupied by the same tenants for a number of years until recently becoming vacant.
- 6.2. Like the former cottages to the north of the village square, this application seeks permission to change the buildings use from a residential dwelling to hotel accommodation (Class C1 Hotels) to support the growth of the hotel and to meet with the current demand. It is proposed that 15 The Square is converted and its use class is also changed to Class C1 Hotels as part of this application.
- 6.3. The two Privies at the rear of the property have not been allocated a use as of yet, therefore they will remain as storage until a suitable use for them can be agreed on which a separate application will be made.

7.0 Design

- 7.1. Please refer to the accompanying drawings for full details and extent of the proposed works.
- 7.2. The property will be remodelled in a sympathetic and sustainable manner with the proposed scheme seeking to achieve five en-suite bedrooms to form an enlargement to the Lord Crewe Arms hotel.

- 7.3. No new extensions are proposed to the buildings footprint, only the conversion and sub-division of its internal space.
- 7.4. The design of the proposed bedrooms has been carefully considered to minimise the alterations to the layout of the property and to try to retain as many of the properties original features as possible.
- 7.5. Externally the front elevation will remain largely unchanged with the exception of two new wall lights to be positioned either side of each doorway. The light fittings will be black metal, four sided wall lanterns to match with the existing hotel accommodation external lights.
- 7.6. The front door to the northern section of the property is currently not utilised and is boarded over internally. This application seeks to reinstate the door so that it is functional again as well as introducing an additional door to the rear elevation. The new rear door will utilise an existing window opening and will be constructed from hardwood and will match the style of the existing rear door. The new door will enable guests and staff to access the rear gardens and hotel car park.
- 7.7. Stonework will be repaired as required, with any necessary replacements being made in materials to match closely with the existing. Repointing will also be carried out as required, using a traditional hydraulic lime mortar which shall match closely with the existing mortar in terms of its colour and size of aggregate.
- 7.8. To help preserve the historical layout of the property a spiral staircase has been introduced to provide access to the first floor of the northern part of the building. The new staircase will enable the existing landing area to be utilised as a space for an en-suite bathroom and it would also return the building back to its original layout, being two separate buildings.
- 7.9. It is proposed that all of the fireplaces will be restored to reveal their original inglenook recesses which would involve the removal of all modern claddings and boarding. Alcoves either side of the chimney breasts would also be reinstated with any necessary repairs carried out to the newly exposed plastered surfaces.
- 7.10. The existing boarding between the ground floor ceiling joists is proposed to be removed to facilitate the new cables and pipework which are to be installed as part of the conversion. The void between the joists and the underside of the first floor provides a means of hiding the services to the property which would otherwise be surface fixed in appropriate trunking. Sound insulation quilt and fire rated boarding would be installed between the joists to provide the necessary fire compartmentation and compliance with Building Regulations.
- 7.11. A complete new electrical wiring scheme is to be installed to serve the property which shall be carried out to current regulations and will use existing service routes where possible to minimise damage to existing finishes. Where cables are to be laid within the floor, previously disturbed floorboards will be taken up and existing routes followed as far as possible.

- 7.12. A complete new heating and hot water system is to be installed which will connect to the existing biomass system which is currently supplying the hotel. Please refer to the proposed site plan for the connection details and proposed route of the trenches. Two hot water cylinders will be required to store sufficient hot water for the guests, it is proposed that the cylinders along with the water pumps will be positioned in the existing Laundry room which adjoins No.15 The Square. The Laundry room is currently used by the hotel and provides a suitable space that can be easily accessed by maintenance staff. Insulated pipework will be installed underground within a trench which shall connect the hot water from the new cylinders to the new hotel rooms.
- 7.13. To help reduce the amount of excavation and disturbance below ground, it is proposed that the back-up electricity supply from the Biomass shed will utilise the same trenches as the mains heating pipes and foul drainage.
- 7.14. Existing doors on escape routes will be upgraded and will include intumescent strips and smoke seals which would be rebated into the top and sides of the doors and then fitted with overhead door closers.
- 7.15. At present the hotel uses a wireless fire alarm system and it is proposed that the system will be extended to include the proposed new bedrooms.
- 7.16. A CCTV system would be installed to cover areas in and around the property. Camera locations are located on the enclosed drawings and the cameras that would be installed would be discreet dome shaped cameras leading back to the control panel in the main hotel. External doors will be fitted with discrete alarm contacts which will be included as part of the intruder alarm system.
- 7.17. Works will focus on these key requirements and be kept within respectful limitations of the existing building.

8.0 Layout

- 8.1. Please refer to the enclosed drawings which show the full extent of the alterations to the layout of the property.
- 8.2. The proposed layout remains similar to the existing layout with only minor alterations proposed to utilise the space more efficiently and to enable en-suite bathrooms to be formed. This has resulted in some of the internal doors being blocked off to allow for compliance with fire compartmentation and to achieve the most suitable bedroom layout. If possible, existing door architraves will be preserved within the entrance lobby to help display the evolution of the building.
- 8.3. The timber balustrade to the first floor landing is proposed to be replaced to form two new doorways for the new first floor bedrooms and to also provide a protected stairwell to comply with Building Regulations.
- 8.4. The installation of the new recessed wardrobe built into the wall of bedroom 4 reinstates what is understood to have been an original feature when the properties were formerly two separate buildings.

9.0 Impact

- 9.1. In terms of impact, it is considered that the provision of additional hotel accommodation to serve the existing hotel is welcomed given the positive impact it has as a local employer and economic generator.
- 9.2. The proposals for which this application seeks approval for aim to achieve a very high standard of accommodation but with a pragmatic approach taking into careful consideration the buildings historic fabric and its associated limitations.
- 9.3. On the basis of the above, we believe the visual impact of the proposed alterations will be minimal as a large proportion of the work focusses on the remodelling of the internal layout and retaining as many of the properties original features as possible.

10.0 Access

- 10.1. Vehicular and pedestrian access to and from the public highway at the site will remain as existing. Guests will use the existing hotel car park which is easily accessible from the rear of the property and is large enough to cope with the additional bedrooms.
- 10.2. Pedestrian access into the building will be altered by restoring the existing external door which is not currently used and forming a new door at the rear of the property to provide through access. All door openings will be made accessible as is reasonably practicable for persons with disabilities.
- 10.3. New electrical socket and new electrical switch installations will comply with the guidance in Part M of the Building Regulations.

11.0 Conclusion

- 11.1. The information submitted as part of this Listed Building Consent, of which this Heritage Design and Access Statement forms an important part, clearly sets out the case for the proposed remodelling and change of use of No.15, The Square, Blanchland.
- 11.2. It is clear that the proposals are necessary to create comfortable, high quality hotel accommodation to meet with existing high standards that currently set by the hotel. They also seek to reinstate the original design features and intentions of the property and the proposed alterations are considered to achieve this without affecting the historic and architectural significance of the building. Works have been approached with due consideration to the historic significance of the building and to its surrounding area.

12.0 Annotated Photographs



An image taken from 'Blanchland, A Short History. By G.W.O Addleshaw dated 1951' showing the former cottages to the north of the village square before they were converted to hotel accommodation in 2013.

15 The Square can be seen on the right hand side of the image.



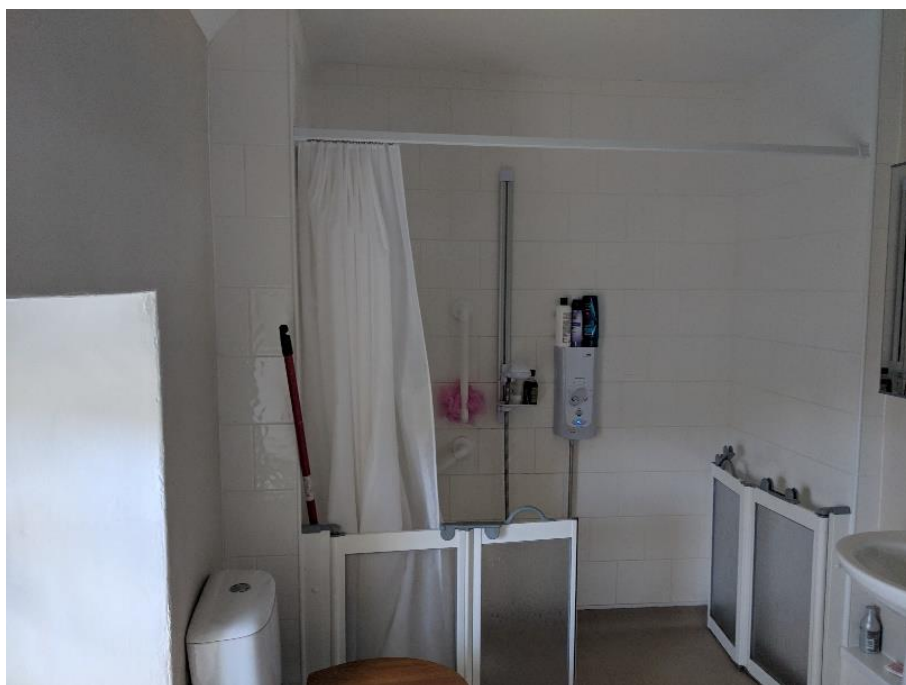
Existing rear elevation facing east.



Existing front elevation facing west.



Existing Kitchen / Dining Area



Existing Bathroom



Existing front elevation – external door currently boarded over internally and not used. The small lean-to structure between the two properties is the Laundry Room for the hotel.



Existing Privies at rear of the property.



View from rear of the property, looking east, with biomass shed to the left hand side.