

Dominic Smith
Sunnyside
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08/06/2021

Re: 20/2004/FUL

Dear Sir with reference to the above application.

The annex was constructed in August 2017, the building was purchased from a company in England and we were advised that being a caravan within our existing curtilage we didn't need planning permission. This seems to have been misguided information that I accept I should have questioned more. The scale, size and type of building led me to believe that it would be acceptable if we did need planning permission.

We had applied for planning permission for a residential annex in 2016 and those plans were passed without question and we had intended to construct the annex at some point. I then met my partner and we also got planning permission for our first three lodges in 2017. We felt there was a need for me to live onsite to look after the lodges. The building is a modest 3 bedroom lodge, constructed from timber and finished in timber to suit the natural surroundings. I feel it has a low impact on the environment both visually and in its construction and running. Timber was a natural choice for us based on my other work here at Sunnyside as a wood worker.

I then found myself with a partner with 3 children under 18, 2 boys and a girl. I think it would be common in social housing for a girl to need her own bedroom so the 3 bedrooms of the lodge are essential.

It is not difficult to find multiple examples of residential annexes made up of lodge type buildings similar to ours that have been granted planning permission.

I think it has been questioned if there is a need for us to live onsite. We are on call 24 hours a day to service our lodges. We are needed for both emergencies and the security of our guests. We are disabled friendly and I am often asked for help with access. We also are on call in case of medical emergencies, we recently had to help ambulance staff with a guest that had a stroke and needed emergency treatment and rushing to hospital. If we had not been on site there without doubt been a delay in the transfer to hospital.

The main house at Sunnyside although of a reasonable size would not accommodate 7 people and give the children separate bedrooms. We also felt that my parents deserved to be allowed to retire and still live on the farm we have owned since 2004.

The second portable building was added alongside the original lodge. This initially has been used for an extra bedroom for our 18 year who was sent home from university due to Covid and has had to work from home since October 2020. The purpose of the extra building is to be a reception for the lodges. We wanted a separate area away from the family part of the home to deal with guests. Since adding the Blackface wood working to our business it has been growing. We recently won grants from SOSE and Transmit Startups to expand the Blackface and we now make art type woodworking pieces and bespoke furniture. The add on to the house is to be used for showroom space once our son is back at university.

I do not pretend to have done everything correctly and I apologise. But we are making a business work in a deprived area. We bring in guests from all over Scotland and the UK to a beautiful but little known part of Dumfries and Galloway. The holiday lodges and the woodworking company are

making a great impact on the area. Every single guest that arrives at sunnyside spends something in the community, on food, drink, and gifts. I would also point out that Sunnyside stands on ex coal workings and overlooks an industrial brown field site. My lodges and houses are invisible compared to the 300,000 tons of coal that sits 250m away.

The annex will always be attached to the main house at sunnyside and is part of the family home set up. At some point my elderly parents will move into it and be dependant on us as carers. My family will move into the main house at that time. The property should be seen as 1 residential unit and the house and annex be permanently connected as such.

I hope you find this letter useful and an explanation of where we are today

Yours

Dominic smith