



STUDIO - SP

DETAILED PLANNING APPLICATION FOR
TWO DETACHED HOUSES ON LAND AT
DUNSTAN HOUSE DUNSTAN.
JULY 2021

PLANNING STATEMENT

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1.0 Introduction.

- 1.1 This planning statement has been produced in support of the detailed planning application for the proposed construction of two detached houses in the grounds of Dunstan House in Dunstan Northumberland NE66 3SY.
- 1.2 The application includes the construction of two houses that would be let as serviced holiday accommodation in addition to the existing accommodation provided by Dunstan House. The existing grounds of the house would be developed as a communal garden for all guests.

2.0 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 Dunstan Village lies within the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) The village is approximately 1 mile from Craster which sits on the Northumberland Coast. The AONB design guide describes Dunstan as

“ Dunstan, inland from Craster, is of quite a different character, really only a street of detached and semi detached houses and bungalows with well established gardens. Dunstan Hall at the North end of the village is a striking mix of mediaeval, 18th century and good 20th century Arts and Crafts happily brought together”.

- 2.2 Craster has developed as a significant tourist destination on the Northumberland coast. Dunstan which is approximately 1 mile from Craster has a pub with a restaurant and a caravan site at the north end of the village. There are shops, cafes and a pub with restaurant in Craster. There are further shops, services and facilities at Embleton, less than 2 miles away and Longhoughton, less than 3 miles whose services include a churches, pubs, a post office, convenience stores and a primary school.
- 2.3 Dunstan village has developed either side of main street which connects Dunstan Hall at the north end of the village and the cottage Inn, a restaurant / pub that is housed in what was a row of traditional cottages, at the south end of the village.
- 2.4 Dunstan House sits half way between Dunstan Hall and the Cottage Inn and was originally built in the 1920's. The house has been extended. It is a two storey detached house set back from the main road and accessed by a curved driveway. The house has the largest garden in the village. The gardens stretch out to the north and east. mature hedges with trees form the boundaries to the north, west, and south.

3.0 Site Planning History.

Reference Number : A/75/A/341

Description: Alterations and extension to dwelling house

Status: Permitted

Reference Number : A/83/A/62

Description: Extension

Status: Permitted

Reference Number : A/86/A/059

Description: Residential development

Status: Refused

Reference Number : A/2002/0032

Description : Extension

Status : Permitted

Reference Number : A/2008/0314

Description : Extension to rear or dwelling to create bedroom / living room with conservatory

Status : Permitted

Reference Number : 20 / 00243/OUT

Description : Outline application (some matters reserved) for erection of three dwelling houses with private gardens and parking. Shared access to be provided via an existing access.

Status : Withdrawn

4.0 **Proposed Development.**

- 4.1 The proposed development includes the construction of two, two storey houses and the remodelling of the existing garden at Dunstan House. The houses are designed using passivhaus principles and will be constructed utilising modern methods of offsite construction.
- 4.2 The houses will be located in the rear garden and will be arranged so as to form two sides of a green space at the heart of the site. The third side of the green space will be the existing Dunstan House.
- 4.3 The green space and the rest of the gardens will be shared space to be used by all guests of the houses.
- 4.4 The barn like structures have been designed so as to appear subservient to the existing Dunstan House, in the way that agricultural barns are subservient to the main farm house.
- 4.5 The new houses will be clad entirely in standing seam zinc. The simple form of the two storey houses will recall the typical terraced houses of rural northumberland, or the single chapel or agricultural barn that can be found littered across the landscape.
- 4.6 The design of the new houses has been heavily influenced by the Northumbrian AONB Design guide. Durable materials such as zinc have been used for the envelope and each house has an extensive open plan kitchen / Dining / lounge space that will promote social interaction.
- 4.7 As part of the holistic approach to the redevelopment of the site, promoting biodiversity will be at the heart of the new landscape remodelling. The landscape scheme will include the introduction of native tree and plant species and a series of landscape features such as a swimming pond and wildlife pond.

5.0 **Relevant Planning Policy**

The relevant planning policies that apply to the application are;

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (2019)

Development Plan Policy

Alnwick LDF Core Strategy (2007)

S1 Location and scale of new development.

S2 The sequential approach to development

S3 Sustainability criteria

S10 Tourism Development.

S11 Locating Development to maximise accessibility and minimise impact from travel.

S12 Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geo diversity

S13 Landscape character

S14 Development in the open countryside
S16 General design principles

Alnwick District Wide Local Plan (1997)

BE8 Design in new residential developments and extensions (and Appendix A and B)
H19 Control over tandem and back land development.
TT5 Controlling car parking provision (and Appendix E)

Emerging Planning Policy

Northumberland Local Plan Publication Draft Plan and proposed minor modifications (Reg 19),
submitted for examination 29th May 2019.

STP 1 Spatial Strategy (Strategic Policy)
STP 2 Presumption in favour of sustainable development (Strategic Policy)
STP 3 Principles of sustainable development (Strategic Policy)
STP 4 Climate change mitigation and adaptation (Strategic Policy)
STP 5 Health and wellbeing (Strategic Policy)
ECN 15 Tourism and visitor development
HOU 2 Provision of new residential development (Strategic Policy)
HOU 8 Residential development in the open countryside
HOU 9 Residential development management
QOP 1 Design Principles (Strategic Policy)
QOP 2 Good Design and Amenity
QOP 4 Landscaping and trees
QOP 5 Sustainable design and construction
QOP 6 Delivering well-designed places
TRA 1 Promoting Sustainable Connections (Strategic Policy)
TRA 2 Effects of Development on the Transport Network
TRA 4 Parking provision in new development
ENV 1 Approaches to assessing the impact of development on the natural, historic and built
environment (Strategic Policy)
ENV 2 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
ENV 3 Landscape

WAT 2 Water supply and sewerage
WAT 4 Sustainable drainage systems
POL 1 Unstable and contaminated land
POL 2 Pollution and air, soil and water quality

Other Documents/Strategies

National Design Guide (2019)
Northumberland Coast AONB Management Plan (2020-2024) Northumberland Coast AONB
Northumberland Coast AONB Design Guide for the Built Environment

Planning Policy - Main considerations.

The main issues for consideration are as follows;

Principle of Development

Emerging Policy

Scale, Design and Visual Impact

Amenity

AONB

Ecology

Coastal Mitigation.

Planning Policy - Principle.

The scale and location of the new proposal is in accordance with S1, S2 and S3 of the Alnwick core strategy. Policy S1 states that Dunstan is a Local Needs centre where development will be restricted to what satisfies local needs. The council have however pointed out that this is a restrictive policy which does not conform to the objectives of Paragraph 55 of the NPPF which states that in rural areas, development should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality or rural communities and that development in one village may support services in a village nearby. Policy STPI (e) of the emerging NLP recognises this and states that, subject to certain criterion, development within or adjacent to the built form of settlements will be supported. Given the proximity of Dunstan to both Craster and Embleton, it can be argued that development in this location would be acceptable.

Emerging Policy

Paragraph 48 of the NPPF states that weight may also be given to the policies in emerging plans, depending on the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent to which emerging policy aligns with the NPPF and the extent of unresolved objections to the emerging plan.

The emerging Northumberland Local Plan - Publication Draft Plan (Reg 19) and proposed minor modifications (NLP) was submitted for examination on 29th May 2019. The policies contained within this document carry some weight in the determination of planning applications at this stage and will gain increasing weight as the plan moves towards adoption.

Policy STP1 of the emerging NLP seeks to ensure that development in the open countryside is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact upon the local road network and uses previously developed land where opportunities exist.

Policy HOU 9 of the emerging plan states that residential developments will be supported where they;

- a. Contribute to a sense of place, which supports community identity and pride - The proposed site layout is specific to this part of Dunstan. It will provide a unique facility not only within Dunstan but Northumberland as a whole.
- b. Provide, where appropriate, multi-functional spaces that support different recreational and social activities, and consider opportunities for community management and stewardship to support long term management of neighbourhoods and community facilities; The communal garden will support wild swimming in the swimming pond, a
- c. Provide functional space and facilities for refuse and recycling storage which is appropriate for the development. The location and design of facilities should provide opportunities to screen or reduce their visual prominence, not impact upon amenity, health or security;
- d. Are constructed to a high quality of design and comply with design guidance for new housing and housing extensions set out within the Northumberland Design Guide; and
- e. Perform positively against 'Build for Life 12' principles, or its successor.

6.0 Scale Design & Visual Impact.

Policy S16 of the ACS states that proposals should take full account of the need to protect and enhance the local environment, having regard to their layout, scale and appearance. Policy S13 of the same document seeks to ensure that all proposals for development and change are considered against the need to protect and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the former district.

The layout of the new houses responds to the layout of the existing village and its unique location in the surrounding landscape.

Paragraph 124 of the NPPF attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities

The two contemporary houses have been designed using Passivhaus design principles. Each house is a bespoke contemporary design, designed specifically for its location.

Policy QOP 1 of the emerging NLP echoes this and seeks to support development which respects its surroundings. Policy ENV 1 of the same document states that the character and significance of Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and built environments, will be conserved, protected and enhanced by taking an ecosystem approach to understanding the significance and sensitivity of the natural resource.

The proposed scheme is site specific in that the design of the houses draws influence from the immediate location of Craster and Dunstan, such as the form of the simple Fishermans cottage or the the fish smoke house in Craster with its distinctive dark timber cladding. The layout of the houses is an attempt to avoid a typical suburban layout. The houses sit perpendicular to each other and the existing house to form a shared green space at the heart of the site.

7.0 Amenity

Policy CD32 of the ALP states that permission will not be granted for development which would cause demonstrable harm to the amenity of residential areas or to the environment generally.

127 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that developments will create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Policy QOP2 of the emerging NLP seeks to ensure that development would not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring land uses. It is considered that the proposal is in general accordance with this, however little weight can currently be given to this policy.

The location and scale of the site is such that the proposed scheme could be developed without having any substantive impact on residential amenity in terms of loss of light, outlook or privacy either for neighbouring property or for future occupiers of the proposed dwellings.

8.0 Highways

Policy S11 of the ACS sets out criteria to assess the extent to which the location of development is likely to maximise accessibility and minimise the impacts of traffic generated. Saved Policy TT5 and Appendix E of the ALP set out car parking standards for new development.

Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

Policy TRA2 of the emerging NLP seeks to ensure that all development will minimise any adverse impacts upon the highways network. The proposal is considered to be in accordance with this, however little weight can currently be given to this policy.

The Local Highway Authority has responded to consultation noting that the principle of the development is acceptable.

9.0 AONB

Policy RE16 of the ALP states that planning permission will not normally be granted for developments which would adversely affect the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Heritage Coast.

Policy S13 of the ACS stipulates the need to protect and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the district. All proposals will be assessed in terms of their impact on landscape features and should respect the prevailing landscape quality, character and sensitivity of each area.

Paragraph 172 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.

The AONB provided comments with respect to our pre application submission. Our initial proposal included a scheme with three houses. Two of the houses were located in the northern rear garden and one was located in the eastern garden adjacent to the main road running through the village.

The houses in the rear garden followed the same layout principles of the houses that currently line main street. The AONB thought that doubling up this standard type of layout could lead to a sense of urbanisation within the village. They also thought that three houses on the site may prove to be over development of the site.

The revised layout for the northern rear garden (the layout that is included in this application) was issued as a response to the AONB concerns. This was well received and considered an improvement in that the layout did not reflect a typical suburban situation. In addition to revising the layout for the rear garden the proposed house for the eastern garden was omitted from the application.

By omitting the the third house the AONB concerns regarding the setting of the existing house and approach via the driveway have been addressed.

Policy S12 of the ACS seeks that all development proposals will be considered against the need to protect and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of the area.

Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity based on detailed principles.

Policy ENV2 of the emerging Local Plan seeks to minimise the impacts of development on biodiversity and geodiversity and to secure net biodiversity gains and /or wider ecological enhancements through new development.

The County Ecologist has responded to consultation raising no objections subject to the submission of further information. An Ecological Impact Assessment has been prepared by E3 Ecology for the site. The report provides a detailed assessment of the ecology of the existing site and suggests mitigation measures to preserve and enhance the ecology, during the construction and post construction periods.

CONCLUSION

The proposal includes the efficient use of land in order to provide high quality rental accommodation for the tourist industry. Tourism in Northumberland has developed into a year round activity. Therefore the new accommodation will help sustain community services and facilities in the local rural area.

The two houses will be rented accommodation aimed at culture and tourism. Policy S10 of the Alnwick Core Strategy seeks to ensure that proposals for new build cultural and tourism development must be in or adjacent to the rural service centres, sustainable village centres and local needs centres and provide a high quality development, which assists rural regeneration. Whilst this would preclude such development in Dunstan, the policy goes on to say that Tourism development in the open countryside will be considered against policy S14. As noted above Policy S14 provides support for countryside based enterprise and activity and developments that promote recreation and support the retention of sustainable communities.

Policy ECN 15 of the emerging Local Plan states that in rural locations outside the settlement boundaries and/or built-up areas of main towns, service centres or service villages, the development of new build, permanent buildings for holiday accommodation of any sort should be small scale and form part of a recognised village or hamlet. New permanent buildings for visitor accommodation will only be supported where they would;

- i. demonstrably improve and diversify the County's tourist offer and/or clearly provide necessary accommodation along an established tourist route; and
- ii. be located as close as is practicable to existing development.

The site has access to shops and services. The village has a bus connection the local public transport network, which includes a 15 minute ride to the nearest major centre of Alnwick.

The two houses represent a small scale development that can be accommodated within the existing village form and infrastructure. The benefits of the development easily outweigh any adverse impacts in terms of highways, flooding, surrounding residential amenity and the setting of the village and its historical assets.

The completed scheme will develop the ecology of the site and be a positive addition to the AONB and Heritage Coast.

The development is in accordance with the NPPF and it is considered that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should apply.