

Design and Access Statement

The Farmhouse, Kiln Pit Hill, Northumberland



Listed Building Consent to regularize the works already carried out the property

January 2022

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr and Mrs Clark (the applicants) to accompany a Listed Building Consent application to regularize the works already carried out the property at The Farmhouse, Kiln Pit Hill, Northumberland.

1.2 The Design and Access Statement has been produced on in accordance with the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team's 'Heritage Statement Guidance – Information requirements for applications affecting Heritage Assets'.

2.0 Site Description/Setting

2.1 The farmhouse is located to the south of the steading, with a principal, south-facing elevation giving views over surrounding farmland, whilst the agricultural buildings were developed into connecting ranges to the north and west.

2.2 On approach to the steading, a single lane access track leads westward from the A68 towards the farm. This track runs through the agricultural landscape with enclosed fields to both north and south.

2.3 Views from the house, to the south and south-east take in further uninterrupted vistas of the surrounding agricultural fields, providing a strong appreciation of the historic and current surroundings of the farmhouse, as well as an experience linked to its historic use. Views from these two situations are considered to contribute strongly and positively to the significance of the building.

3.0 National Planning Policy Framework

3.1 Within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) document, it is stated that in addition to describing the significance of the heritage asset that might be affected, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of new unauthorised developments making positive contributions to local character and distinctiveness.

3.2 In addition, where a unauthorised development proposal will lead to a "less than substantial harm" to the designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including securing its optimum viable use.

4.0 Unauthorised Works and Reasoning

4.1 The completed works comprise a number of physical alterations to the building which are explored in more detail below.

Alteration to Garage Ridge Height and Creation of a Window

4.2 The unauthorised development has raised the approved height of the new-build garage extension at the northern side of the farmhouse range and has altered the north elevation to create a glazed window opening in the peak of the garage gable, as opposed to a smaller 'vent' opening, which was approved here. The raising of the ridge height of the garage extension has brought it above the eave height of the principal range, which does create an overly dominant extension in relation to the host range to the south, but not one which has disrupted the farmhouse's spatial or visual relationships to the other historic buildings within its wider farmstead, or the agricultural land beyond the farm itself. It is not considered that the window, being relatively traditional in style if not in location, impacts

upon the significance of the host building. With regard to the raised ridge height, it is considered that this change has a minor negative impact to the significance of the host farmhouse through reducing the clarity with which it can be appreciated as the principal domestic building within the farmstead.

Increase in Size of Approved Rooflight

4.3 The unauthorised development has installed a large glass rooflight, larger than a proposed rooflight approved in this location, within the northern pitch of the rear lean-to at the northern side of the farmhouse range. Although this has resulted in the addition of a feature somewhat out of scale with any historic precedent for such an opening, it is considered that the relatively low significance of views of the building from this side, as well as the fact that it does not disrupt the wider appreciation of the architecture of the building, evidence of its structural unauthorised development, or the appreciation of its principal southern elevation, mean that the addition of the rooflight has resulted in a negligible impact to the significance of the listed building.

Change to Agreed Layout of Window in Garage

4.4 The unauthorised development has altered an approved window within the east-facing elevation of the garage extension from a louvered opening to a 4-pane casement. Given that this part of the building is a new-build without historical precedent, and the existing window is relatively traditional in form and materials, it is considered that the change of window style will result in a neutral impact to the significance of the listed building, particularly given the relatively low level of interest within views of this elevation of the building as a whole.

Creation of a Doorway in Place of a Window

4.5 The unauthorised development has opened a former window opening on the principal elevation of the building, creating a further ground-floor doorway. The creation of this doorway opening has altered the form of this historical opening and resulted in the alteration of the former layout of this principal elevation. Given the loss of structural evidence involved in this change, and the minor resultant change to the former layout of the principal elevation of the building, it is considered that this change has resulted in a minor negative impact to the significance of the listed building through the commensurate loss of evidential value and architectural interest.

Alterations to Windows on South Elevation

4.6 The unauthorised development has inserted new windows within the south elevation of the stable range set in new block and start surrounds and set lower in the elevation, as well as a door design which is not as approved and an overlight over the new central door. It is considered that the small changes to the doors result in a neutral impact to the significance of the listed building, given that the doors themselves reflect the traditional architecture of the host building, and are complimentary in terms of preserving the architectural interest of this elevation. The alterations to the windows present a much more damaging change, which has more greatly affected the originality, evidential value, architectural interest and aesthetic value of this elevation, inserting poorer quality and poorly matching materials in a revised pattern which does not reflect the pattern formerly present. The changes to the windows are considered to result in a moderate negative impact to the significance of the listed building, both in terms of its evidential and aesthetic values, and its originality.

Alteration to Internal Hallway Layout

4.7 The unauthorised development has created a new layout within the rear hallway of the farmhouse, opening a large vestibule and creating a small study and galleried landing within the rear part of the house, all accessed from the door on its northern elevation. It would seem that this work has removed a part of the original rear wall of the farmhouse range in order to open the landing and the central hallway, as well as moving an internal partition within the rear lean-to extension to the farmhouse, in order to create a small study. The loss of original fabric here, including original walling from the rear wall of the farmhouse range is considered to result in a moderate negative impact to the significance of the listed building, through the physical loss of historic fabric, as well as the corresponding difficulty in understanding the historic structural development of the building.

Chimney Stack and Roof Vents

4.8 The unauthorised development has introduced a cement rendered chimney stack and roof vents along the ridge line of the main farmhouse range. Both of these elements have had the effect of altering the traditional look, as well as the former appearance of the farmhouse's roof, most obvious in views of its principal southern elevation. Although the central chimney stack has been constructed to match the pattern of the original end-stack to the east, in combination with the roof vents it provides an incongruously modern addition to the farmhouse, which negatively impacts upon its aesthetic value and architectural interest, particularly so given their prominence in views of the building's southern elevation.

Creation of Faux Fireplace at First Floor

4.9 The unauthorised development has introduced a faux, brick-built fireplace, including a re-used Victorian or Edwardian cast-iron insert into the eastern gable end of the first floor of the farmhouse. Brickwork for a flue within the exposed masonry of the gable end would suggest that a fireplace was historically present here but clearly not in this form. The creation of the fireplace, which uses reclaimed brick, slightly confuses an appreciation of the historical layout of this first-floor space but does not sit overly at odds with the period feel of the property as a whole. As such, it is considered that the creation of the fireplace represents a negligible or slight negative impact to the significance of the listed building.

Change to Agreed Fenestration of North Elevation

4.10 The unauthorised development has inserted new windows and doors within existing openings within the north elevation of the rear lean-to at the north side of the farmhouse range. The opening pattern and partial replacement of these windows and doors does not match the approved plans, although, notably, an historic Yorkshire sash is retained here. The alterations to the windows present a change, which has affected the originality, evidential value and architectural interest of this elevation, inserting replacement fixtures in a revised pattern which does not necessarily reflect the pattern formerly present. The changes to the windows are considered to result in a minor negative impact to the significance of the listed building, both in terms of its evidential value and architectural interest.

Green Belt

4.11 The site is located within the Green Belt. The works to the building itself would not impact the openness of the Green Belt, and would therefore not be inappropriate development, in accordance with Policy NE7 of the Tynedale District Local Plan and the NPPF.

Visual impact on surrounding landscape

4.12 The site is located within the open countryside and an Area of High Landscape Value, and the property is prominent from prevailing views to the south and east, though is viewed within the context of the remaining stone buildings which make up the rest of the farmstead. The works to the property do not have an impact on the visual quality of the surrounding landscape, and are in accordance with Policies NE1 of the Tynedale Core Strategy and GD2 of the Tynedale District Local Plan.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 In submitting these proposals, regard has been given to Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, the NPPF, and local plan policies.

5.2 The scale and massing of the unauthorised development, together with its design and use of materials fits in sympathetically with the listed building, and the street scene.

5.3 The accompanying Historic Impact Assessment finds that many elements of the enacted, non-approved works have resulted in negligible/neutral impacts to the significance of the listed building. A small number, including the chimney and roof vents, changes to the windows of the southern elevation, the creation of a door in the south elevation, the raising of the permissioned height of the garage ridgeline and the creation of a rear vestibule area, have all caused more notable negative impacts to the significance of the listed building. Unfortunately, in most of these cases, the form of development cannot be reversed without causing further impacts to the historic fabric.

5.4 In the pre-application response received from the LPA, it was concluded that:

- Listed Building Consent would be required to regularize the works already carried out the property, and would likely be looked upon favourably;
- Planning consent or a Certificate of Lawful Development would be required to regularize the works already carried out to the property, and would likely be looked upon favourably;
- Planning consent or a Certificate of Lawful Development would be required to regularize the outbuilding to the south of the property, and would likely be looked upon favourably;

5.5 Separate applications, either for retrospective planning permission or a certificate of lawfulness will be submitted in due course.

5.6 The Council is therefore invited to support these proposals and grant listed building consent.