

GEORGE F. WHITE

RESIDENTIAL . COMMERCIAL . RURAL . DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING STATEMENT

Land and Building at Low Town Farm, Longframlington

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Prepared by

Hannah Wafer MRTPI, Planning Consultant
Dean Street Arch, 22 Dean Street, Newcastle, NE1 1PG
hannahwafer@georgefwhite.co.uk

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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 George F. White (Planning, Architecture and Development) have been instructed by Mr M Picton (the 'Client') to prepare a planning statement for the conversion of existing stable building to residential at Low Town Farm, Longframlington, NE65 8BA.
- 1.2 Having regard to section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this planning statement considers the application's conformity with the Development Plan, relevant national planning policy and other material considerations.
- 1.3 In addition to this statement, the application also comprises the following;
 - Site Location Plan;
 - Heritage Statement;
 - Existing and Proposed Floor Plans;
 - Existing and Proposed Site Plan; and
 - Existing and Proposed Elevations.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site ('the Site') is located the northern boundary of Low Town Farmhouse, and comprises an existing stone stable building and associated curtilage.
- 2.2 The site is detailed on the submitted Location Plan.
- 2.3 The site is bound by:
 - Agricultural land to the north;
 - Residential properties to the south and east; and
 - The existing site and residential curtilage to the west, with agricultural land beyond.
- 2.4 Low Town Farm benefits from an existing access to the south which connects onto the adopted highway (unclassified road) which enables connections to the A697, Longframlington and the surrounding settlements.
- 2.5 The site is not considered to be at risk of flooding, as currently identified on the Environment Agency Flood Risk Map.

PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 A/2011/0057 – Change of use and extension to redundant byre to form holiday accommodation – Approved April 2011
- 3.2 A/2011/0051 – Change of use and extension to redundant byre to form holiday accommodation – Approved March 2011
- 3.3 A/2002/0341 – Conversion of former dairy to dwelling – Refused August 2002

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 This application is in full and includes all necessary supporting information.
- 4.2 The proposed development is for the conversion of an existing stable building to residential, with side extension.
- 4.3 The external elevations will remain largely as existing, with the exception of a proposed small extension to the western elevation.
- 4.4 Access and parking will be provided to the south of the main dwelling, with sufficient space for parking and manoeuvring.

PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 Planning law (section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government released the new National Planning Policy Framework in July 2018 (The Framework), with further alterations in February 2019 and July 2021. The Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied
- 5.3 The Government have confirmed that the Framework is a material planning consideration and should be taken into account when making decisions. It is therefore anticipated that the planning application will be considered against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with regard being had, where relevant, to the statutory development plan.

Statutory Development Plan

- 5.4 The Northumberland Local Plan was recently adopted following resolution at full council on the 30th March 2022. The Local Plan therefore forms the statutory development plan for the area. Similarly, the Longframlington Neighbourhood Plan went through a referendum in January 2022 and was subsequently 'made' at a meeting of the council's cabinet on the 8th March 2022. It is anticipated that the following policies would be considered in the determination of this application:

Northumberland Local Plan

- STP1 Spatial Strategy
- STP2 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- HOU1 Making the best use of Existing Buildings
- HOU8 Isolated Residential Development
- QOP2 Good Design and Amenity
- TRA4 Parking Provision in New Development
- ENV7 Historic Environment and Heritage Assets

Longframlington Neighbourhood Plan

- LNP1 Housing Development
- LNP7 High Quality and Sustainable Design

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 Based upon an assessment of the planning policy and material considerations, this section will assess the following key issues:

- Principle of Development
- Heritage Impact
- Ecology
- Highways

Principle of Development

6.2 The site is located to the south of Longframlington and falls outside of any defined settlement boundary. Policy STP1 of the NLP and LNP1 of the Neighbourhood Plan seek to direct residential development to the most sustainable locations. LNP1 in particular states *only exceptional development proposals that satisfy national and strategic planning policy will be supported outside the settlement boundary*. A spatial strategy for development across the county is provided within STP1 of the local plan. It is confirmed within STP1 that service villages such as Longframlington can provide a proportionate level of housing and be the focus for investment in rural areas. The application site is located to the south of Longframlington, outside of the defined settlement boundary and as such is considered to be within the 'open countryside'. In such areas development is to be restricted, allowed only in circumstances where the development accords with those policies listed at STP1 g). As the proposed development is residential local policy reverts to HOU7 and HOU8 for consideration.

6.3 Policy HOU7 of the local plan relates to the development of affordable and entry level exception sites and is therefore not relevant to the proposed development. HOU8 relates to the development of isolated residential development in the open countryside, highlighting this should only be supported where it meets with those exceptional circumstances as listed within the policy. Whilst the applicant does not consider the site to be within an isolated location policy HOU8 is of most relevance to the proposed development. Part c) of HOU8 enables the reuse of redundant or disused buildings in isolated locations where it is considered to enhance its immediate setting. In this instance the proposed development comprises the reuse of a vacant stable building. The applicants recently purchased the property and it is evident upon inspection that the building has been left vacant for some time.

6.4 The application site is within the curtilage of a listed building and a such care should be taken to ensure any existing or proposed buildings do not detract from the setting of the building. It is considered should the stable building be left vacant it is at risk of falling into disrepair which would in turn impact the setting of the surrounding area. The applicant considers the reuse of this building for residential purposes will improve the appearance of the immediate surrounding area. The building is believed to be structurally sound and capable of conversion.

6.5 Based on the above information the provided development can be considered acceptable, in accordance with national and local planning policy. It should however be noted if the LPA consider it necessary the applicant would be willing to accept a condition restricting use of the proposed conversion.

Heritage Impact

6.6 A Heritage Statement has been provided in support of this application. The statement concludes the proposed development is considered to have a less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed building. Whilst it is ultimately the decision of the LPA the applicant considers the public benefits of the scheme outweigh the less than substantial harm of the proposed development.

- 6.7 It is the applicants view the proposed development is acceptable and should not be refused on heritage grounds.

Ecology

- 6.8 It is both a national and local requirement that development proposals consider the potential impact on protected species or their habitats. As the proposal relates to the conversion of an existing building there may be potential habitat for protected species. An ecological appraisal has been prepared by E3 Ecology and is submitted in support of this application.
- 6.9 Where appropriate the report provides recommendations which should be adhered to, should the LPA seek to grant permission for the proposed development.

Highways

- 6.10 Policy TRA2 provides some useful context on how highways considerations will be assessed. TRA2 specifically seeks to ensure all developments will provide effective and safe access to the transport networks, with TRA4 in place to obtain sufficient parking provision for all developments.
- 6.11 The building has formerly been in equestrian use which may have involved regular use by larger vehicles and horse boxes. The existing access will not change as part of the current proposals and parking will be provided in association with the main dwelling. The proposal will enable conversion of the building to residential and it is believed the potential vehicular movements will not be significant or greater than that of the existing use. It is further considered there is sufficient land within the ownership of the application to enable provision of sufficient parking for the intended use.
- 6.12 It should be noted paragraph 111 of the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impact on the road network would be severe.

CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The planning application documentation demonstrates that the proposed development is an acceptable form of development in accordance with the development plan and national policy.
- 7.2 The proposals will reuse an existing building which is considered to be of permanent and substantial construction and will improve the character and appearance of its setting and immediate surrounding area.
- 7.3 On this basis, it is considered that the proposed development complies with both national and local planning policy and this application should therefore be found to be acceptable.

