

4 Redsteads Cottages Christon Bank Alnwick Northumberland

Renovation and extension of the existing dwelling, to include parking to rear and to convert the old stable building to an outbuilding associated with the dwelling and conversion of the dilapidated joiners' workshop and associated yard to provide one additional dwelling on the site, complete with parking and garden areas

PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

September 2022

Our Ref: CSP/JY/RC/0809/A

Date: 8th September 2022

Client:

Mr John Young
4 Redsteads Cottages
Christon Bank
ALNWICK
Northumberland
NE66 3EU

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Address:

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A planning statement prepared by:



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr John Young (the applicant) to accompany a planning application for the renovation and extension of the existing dwelling, to include parking to rear, convert the old stable building to an outbuilding associated with the dwelling, and conversion of the dilapidated joiners' workshop and associated yard to provide one additional dwelling on the site, complete with parking and garden areas at 4 Redsteads Cottages, Christon Bank, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 3EU.

1.2 The purpose of this statement is to assess the development proposals against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Development Plan policies. It also sets out the applicant's approach to the extent to which the proposals represent sustainable development.

Accompanying Submission

1.3 The application is accompanied by the following documentation:

- Application Form;
- Location Plan;
- Existing Site Plan;
- Proposed Site Plan;
- Existing Ground Floor Plan;
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan;
- Existing First Floor Plan;
- Proposed First Floor Plan;
- Existing Roof Plan;
- Proposed Roof Plan;
- Existing West and South Elevations;
- Proposed West and South Elevations;
- Existing East and North Elevations;
- Proposed East and North Elevations;
- Ecology Checklist;
- Bat Survey Report;
- Draft Unilateral Undertaking – Coastal Mitigation Contribution;
- Planning Design and Access Statement (this document);

1.4 The above submissions were prepared having regard to the Northumberland County Council's (NCC) Validation Checklist (July 2022) in relation to the application proposals.

2.0 Site/Access

2.1 The application site is an existing residential site to the eastern side of the B1340 on the southern side of Christon Bank. The nearest footways, which are street lit within this section of Christon Bank. To the south of the site is an access road which serves a private residential development to the east. Further south is Pippins Park Caravan site.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

3.1 This section identifies the key national and local planning policies which are of relevance to the application proposals.

3.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that if regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.3 In this case the development plan comprises of the Northumberland Local Plan (NLP). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) are material considerations in determining this application

Adopted Development Plans

Northumberland Local Plan – March 2022

3.4 Policies within the Northumberland Local Plan relevant to this application.

3.5 It is considered that the following policies are relevant:

- STP 1 Spatial strategy
- STP 2 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- STP 3 Principles of sustainable development
- STP 6 Green Infrastructure
- HOU 2 Provision of new residential development
- HOU 5 Housing types and mix
- HOU 9 Residential development management
- QOP 1 Design principles
- QOP 2 Good design and amenity
- QOP 4 Landscaping and trees
- QOP 5 Sustainable design and construction
- QOP 6 Delivering well-designed places
- ICT 2 New Developments
- TRA 4 Parking provision in new development
- ENV 2 Biodiversity and geodiversity
- WAT 3 Flooding
- WAT 4 Sustainable Drainage Systems
- INF 6 Planning Obligations

Embleton Neighbourhood Plan - July 2021

3.6 Policies within the Embleton Neighbourhood Plan relevant to this application.

3.7 It is considered that the following policies are relevant:

- Policy 1 - Sustainable Development
- Policy 2 - Landscapes and Seascapes in the NP area
- Policy 3 - Habitats and Species

- Policy 4 - Design in New Development
- Policy 5 - Settlement Boundaries for Christon Bank and Embleton Village
- Policy 10 - Principal Residence Housing
- Policy 15 - Provision and Improvement of Pedestrian and Cycle Routes

National Planning Policy Framework

3.8 In terms of Government policy, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) are also material considerations in the determination of this application.

3.9 The NPPF provides advice regarding the weight that should be given by Local Planning Authorities to adopted and emerging Development Plan policy in decision taking.

3.10 In terms of overall approach, the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The policies, taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system. It continues by stating that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

4.0 Principle of Development

4.1 The principle of development of new residential dwellings within Christon Bank is considered to be clearly established. Policy STP 1 of the Northumberland Local Plan (NLP), read in conjunction with the Policies Map which accompanies the Plan, identifies small villages (Appendix A of the NLP) across the county where a proportionate level of sustainable development can be located. Sustainable development is also supported by Policy STP 1 within settlement boundaries defined in neighbourhood plans. Christon Bank is identified as a small village; and the application site is located within the defined settlement boundary therefore, the site is considered sustainable in accordance with the NLP.

4.2 The proposed development is located within Embleton Neighbourhood Plan area. Policy 1 of the Embleton Neighbourhood Plan gives an overview of the types of development that will be supported in the Neighbourhood Area in order to deliver sustainable development. Embleton Neighbourhood plan states:

'Development within the settlement boundaries will be supported provided no significant adverse impact arises to residential amenity and highway safety; and subject to compliance with relevant policies elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Plan and other relevant policies in the development plan.'

4.3 Policy 1 of the Embleton Neighbourhood Plan also allows for additional windfall housing development within both settlements should opportunities arise. The policy therefore supports sustainable development and the definition of settlement boundaries would not stifle development which could still make a positive contribution towards the maintenance of sustainable communities in the Neighbourhood Area.

4.4 The application site is located within the defined settlement boundary therefore; the site is considered sustainable in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.5 Policy STP 2 advises that when considering development proposals that accord with Policy STP 1, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the NLP should be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.6 Policy STP 3 encourages, in applying the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the provision of a type and mix of homes to meet local housing need, and increase choice in the local housing market; making efficient use of land including achieving higher densities in more accessible locations where appropriate; demonstrating high quality sustainable design which is accessible to all, and which respects and enhances the local distinctiveness of the natural, historic and built environment; helps promote a sense of place; reduces the need for energy, and facilitates flexible and adaptable buildings and environments; be accessible by, or be able to be made accessible by public transport, walking or cycling where feasible, thereby reducing the need to travel for both people and goods, and the dependence on travel by private car.

4.7 It is therefore considered that the principle of this proposal would accord with Policies STP 1, STP 2, and STP 3 of the NLP. It is also considered the proposal accords with Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Design, Landscape, Scale and Layout

4.8 The NPPF, the National Design Guide (NDG), Local Plan Policies QOP 1 and 2 and HOU 9, and Embleton Neighbourhood Plan Policy 4 seek high quality design that respects its context. Policy ENV 1 of the NLP 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.

4.9 Details of access, appearance, layout, scale, and landscaping are shown on the submitted plans. These show materials to be the same as that of the existing dwelling, i.e., natural stone walls, red pantile roof, and wood doors and windows. The design, scale and layout of the new dwelling has also taken cues from the existing vernacular to ensure the proposals are consistent with the residential design theme of this part of Christon Bank. It is therefore considered that the proposed dwelling could be accommodated on the site and achieve an acceptable amount of amenity area and privacy distances with the neighbouring dwellings.

4.10 In terms of landscaping, the proposed site plan shows areas of grass on the undeveloped areas of the site and native hedge planting to the boundaries. Native trees are also shown within the boundary of the site. It is therefore considered that these proposals show Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) through the incorporation of features to secure and enhance the biodiversity of the site, and that there is no biodiversity loss across the site.

4.11 It is also considered that this scheme would ensure that the proposed dwelling would not adversely impact upon the residential amenity currently enjoyed by the occupiers of any neighbouring properties or the proposed property in terms of loss of light, outlook and privacy.

4.12 It is considered that the proposed dwelling would be of a traditional form with traditional features, using traditional materials. The scale and size of the proposed dwelling would be in keeping with those already in existence in the local vernacular and would be a good addition to the street scene and area. The dwelling will be landscaped to the street front to provide a tidy and a formal approach. The trees and hedge in the front garden will also be retained and enhanced for natural screening.

4.13 It is therefore considered that the proposals would be in accordance with NPPF, the National Design Guide (NDG), Local Plan Policies QOP 1, QOP 2, ENV 1, and HOU 9, and Embleton Neighbourhood Plan Policy 4.

Neighbour Amenity

4.14 Policy QOP2 of the NLP seeks to ensure that development would not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring land uses. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that developments will create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

4.15 It is considered that the proposal would not have a substantive impact on neighbouring amenity. Due to the site location, it is considered that there would not be any substantive impacts on amenity resulting from the proposal in terms of loss of light, outlook or privacy. The proposals are considered to be acceptable in this regard in accordance with the Policy QOP2 of the NLP and the NPPF.

Foul and Surface Water Drainage

4.16 On inspection of the governments flood maps, the site has not been identified at risk from surface water or fluvial flooding. Both foul and surface water are to be discharged to mains, however there is ample opportunities within the site to accommodate SuDs features.

Ecological Matters

4.17 Policy ENV2 of the NLP relates to ecology and seeks to ensure that development proposals will minimise their impact upon and secure net gains for biodiversity. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment based on detailed principles.

4.18 It has been identified that the site is within the 7km buffer for recreational disturbance impacts on coastal designated sites and therefore the Council will request a contribution towards the Coastal Mitigation Scheme (CMS). Details of the up-to-date land registry tile and plan have been submitted to the Council, along with a draft Unilateral Undertaking to secure a Coastal Mitigation contribution.

4.19 The proposed development may impact on protected or notable species, designated nature conservation sites or priority habitat in the absence of mitigation.

4.20 To fulfil the NPPF requirements, which includes biodiversity net gain into proposed developments, two integrated bat boxes are integrated into the east aspect walls as shown in the submitted drawings. Additionally, two integrated bird boxes will be installed into the east aspect wall. The proposed locations of the integrated bird boxes are shown in the submitted drawings.

4.21 Subject to securing the above, through an appropriately worded condition, the proposal should be acceptable in terms of its impact upon protected species in accordance with the natural environment section of the NPPF and Local Plan Policy ENV 2.

Highway Safety/Access

4.22 A site plan, including details of the access, shows the use of the existing access point off the B1340. This access has sufficient visibility splays, and the traffic generated by the proposal. It is considered that there is sufficient space within the development site to accommodate car parking and that the specific requirements for parking arrangements, internal road layout and refuse storage facilities and cycle parking are acceptable.

4.23 It is therefore considered that the proposals are in accordance with Local Plan Policies HOU 9, TRA 2 and TRA 4 which look at the effects of the development on the transport network and parking provision in new development.

Climate Change

4.24 The NPPF seeks to achieve sustainable development through overarching objectives including environmental objectives. The environmental objective seeks a contribution towards protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

4.25 Policy QOP 1 of the NLP sets out a number of design principles and advises that proposals will be supported where design makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, creates or contributes a strong sense of place, incorporates high quality materials, respects and enhances the natural and built environment, including heritage, ensures that buildings are functional for future uses, supports health and wellbeing and enhances quality of life, protect general amenity, supports positive social interaction, incorporates where possible green infrastructure, mitigates climate change and ensures the longevity of the buildings and spaces.

4.26 Policy QOP 5 of the NLP relates to sustainable design and construction. In order to minimise resource use, mitigate climate change, and ensure development proposals are adaptable to a changing climate, proposals will be supported where they incorporate passive design measures which respond to existing and anticipated climatic conditions and improve the efficiency of heating, cooling, ventilation and lighting amongst other matters.

4.27 The proposals will use reclaimed materials where possible to ensure the development assimilates into the surrounding built environment. The dwelling will achieve a Code Level 6 in accordance with the requirements of the Code for Sustainable Homes: Technical Guide (or such national measure of sustainability for house design that replaces that scheme).

4.28 Prior to the occupation of the dwelling, a Final Code Certificate will be issued for it certifying that Code Level 6 has been achieved. It is therefore considered that the proposal will be constructed in accordance the requirements of Local Plan Policies QOP1 and QOP5.

Broadband

4.29 Policy ICT 2 of the NLP requires provision of full fibre broadband connections in new developments. Where this cannot be provided, alternative solutions may be appropriate where justified. The Policy states that where no broadband provision is included, developers will be required to demonstrate, including through consultation with broadband providers, that connections are not deliverable, and/or viable.

4.30 Full Fibre Broadband is available in the area and will be connected on first occupation of the dwelling. It is therefore considered that the proposal will be constructed in accordance the requirements of Policy ICT 2 of the NLP and Paragraph 114 of the NPPF.

5.0 Delivering Sustainable Development

5.1 The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means (unless material considerations indicate otherwise) approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay, and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless:

- Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
- Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

5.2 Proposals should contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.

5.3 Proposals should also support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by creating a high-quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being and contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

5.4 Sustainable development is therefore about change for the better and positive growth which makes economic, environmental and social progress. The planning system is about helping to make this happen. As a result, and in order to fulfil its purpose of helping achieve sustainable development, planning must not simply be about scrutiny but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which we live our lives.

5.5 Overall it is considered that the development proposals would meet the NPPF, Development Plan, and Neighbourhood Plan environmental sustainability objectives. There would be no significant environment effects generated by the development. Given the nature of the site, the submitted plans demonstrate that the layout and design parameters are influenced by the characteristics of the site.

5.6 The NPPF goes on to advise how the three roles of sustainable development are mutually dependant and should not be undertaken in isolation.

5.7 It makes clear that to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. It is therefore considered that the proposed development of the site is sustainable in terms of its economic, social and environmental roles.

5.8 Overall, the principle of development on the site should be considered acceptable and the site would be a suitable location for this type of development.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The applicant has identified the main planning considerations to be taken into account in determining this application.

6.2 The applicant has set out and considered the relevant Development Plan Policies, Neighbourhood Plan Policies and national policies. The proposals have also been considered against the relevant sections within the NPPF and there is not considered to be any conflict between the local policies and the NPPF.

6.3 There would be no amenity issues raised by any part of the application. There would be sufficient parking facilities within the curtilage and so the development would accord with Local Plan Policies in this respect.

6.4 The applicant has comprehensively demonstrated that the granting of planning permission and future development of the site would not bring about impact which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of granting planning permission.

6.5 The Local Planning Authority is therefore invited to support the proposals and grant planning permission.