

Pre Planning Application
Design and Access Statement
with Heritage Statement

MICHAEL HUSTON



Proposed Single Storey Extension to Existing Dwelling

No.1 The Square
Lesbury
Alnwick
Northumberland
NE66 3PW



First Issue August 2022

HUB381

Our client, Mrs A Haywood, appointed Hub Architecture Ltd to prepare and submit a Pre-Planning Submission for the addition of a single storey Garden Room Extension to the existing dwelling.

1 The Square is on the fringe of the Lesbury Conservation area.

A portion of the site is outside the Conservation Area.

The proposed extension is entirely within the existing curtilage of the property.

The property is not listed. Construction date circa 1886.

1 The Square is presently occupied as a single bedroom holiday let and owned by the applicant.

The proposed works are for the construction of a single storey, low level extension to the East of the dwelling.

The ambition of the extension is to allow a reasonable living space, to allow purposeful and fulfilling habitation of a dimensionally constrained dwelling within a curiously large plot for the immediate area. The principle elevation is the only elevation which can possibly be considered due to the site layout.

All and any proposed works are to reflect and be sympathetic to the existing dwelling. The historic nature of the site and setting to be respected and considered at all stages.

The site is within a complex of existing and similarly dated stone buildings. This courtyard of buildings were originally purposed to be accommodation for the staff of nearby listed Lesbury House (across the lane from The Square). They have a strong historic link with Lesbury House which affords the properties rightly so protection from overdevelopment and damage to the fabric/history of the site.

No1 The Square is an irregular floor plan single storey stone built dwelling with an asymmetric hipped slate roof cottage with chimney.



The curtilage of the property consists of an existing driveway, contorted as certainly not designed for cars at that time, yet accessible as existing for vehicles. This driveway is of gravel finish and level.

The garden area, which is the only area linked to the property is bounded by a stone wall, modern timber fencing, a courtyard stone wall of good height and the gable of 2 The Square. Within the site there is a well-kept lawn area, raised from the driveway access and a concrete single garage.



1 The Square was converted to a single bedroom holiday around twenty years past.

The Lesbury Village conservation area is aligned along the gently undulating road, which with its pavements, wide verges and stone boundary walls provides a directional but open and informal setting to the small-scale buildings scattered along it. The road is broken by sharp bends at the bridge, by the church and on the hill leading up to Townfoot, which slows progress and gives a sense of expectation and interest. Variety and a sense of place is provided by constrictions and contrasts, such as the opposition of the churchyard with its curved wall and Vicarage Cottage (the old Poorhouse) with the open spaces on each side. In a few places there are panoramic views over the river valley to the south, but the general character is enclosed.

Small groups of buildings create localised areas of closer texture, either organic as at the The Square and the outbuildings to Lesbury House, or more formal at Alnside Court and Townfoot Steading (the latter outside the conservation area). For much of its history the village (apart from Garden Terrace) has been part of the Duke of Northumberland's estate, and in the mid 19th century, many cottages were rebuilt in the Estate style.

Despite past efforts to secure Northumberland County Council agreement for the future of the tiny home, our client has failed to secure a scheme that would allow a sound future for the property within Lesbury. The diminutive nature, size and limited internal accommodation restricts the practical living in the present day for families or contemporary inhabitation.

We believe past offerings to NCC have been too dominant for the principle elevation to accept.

With this in mind we have worked tightly to NCC recommendations on recent feedback from failed pre-planning submissions and have developed the scheme as submitted.

Bearing this in mind, the following NCC bullet points were recommended to be considered for a resubmission:

“If you wish to consider a resubmission then you may wish to consider the following points: “

1/ Move the extension away from the party boundary - move it forwards so it sits along side the east elevation and subservient to No.1

This has been achieved in full.

2/ It is expected that any extension would be of traditional materials to match the host with a pitched / hipped roof

We have proposed a lead roll effect roll finish on a lean to pitched roof. The pitch of the roof has been modelled so as not to affect right to light of neighbouring properties (given they are a mixture of single and two storey dwellings) and also to achieve subservient massing. The walls are a combination of random rubble stone to match existing, larch cladding/tumbled brick to identify the new build works so the principle elevation can easily be read by an observer.

3/ Any extension should not project beyond the existing rear building line and should be proportional and subservient to the main dwelling

This advice is unclear regarding what the ‘existing rear building line’ actually is as referred to above. However by utilising the volume of the existing garage (and its removal) into the volume calculations for the proposed garden room and it’s distance from the principal elevation, we consider this proportional and unquestionably acquiescent.

4 / Consideration could be given to low level dormer windows to the extension / existing building to provide room in the roof space

Sadly due to the physical and dimensional restrictions of the existing design of the roof and stone to square below, a roof or loft conversion would be impossible. Otherwise this would very much have been considered. The circulation heights within the loft space are not within living space guidelines and cannot be marketed as such either, making a loft conversion or use senseless development.

5/ Consideration of how an extension to the east elevation will affect parking arrangements

The proposed development leaves the existing vehicular access and parking arrangements unaffected.

Northumberland County Council Considerations

Following a successful referendum Lesbury Neighbourhood Development Plan 13th (LNDP) was formally ‘made’ at a meeting of the council’s cabinet on July 2021.

It is now part of the formal development plan and as such decisions on whether to grant planning permission or not in the Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan area will need to be made in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The main issues for consideration for this pre-application include:

- Principle of development
- Design
- Conservation Area
- Amenity
- Ecology
- Highway Safety Appraisal
- Principal of development

The application proposes works that are domestic in nature within residential curtilage. The principle of



development is acceptable and in accordance with Policies S16 of the Alnwick LDF Core Strategy and the NPPF.

Existing Materials:

Random sandstone walls
Timber double glazed windows
Slate roof finish

Proposed Materials:

Random sandstone walls
Larch cladding
Tumbled brick panel
Metal framed double glazed windows. Grey
Lead roll effect single ply roof finish. Lead grey.

The submitted plans show an extension that would project 1.4m from the front elevation of the dwelling in close proximity. Away from the principle elevation and on the footprint of the existing concrete garage it is similar in projection to the garage at 4.284m .

It would be single storey and would be constructed in materials similar to those present on the existing dwelling and its neighbours.

The palette of materials and proposed roof type are considered to be in keeping with the host and its setting and no concerns are expected to be raised in relation to these elements of the proposal.

An extension of the size proposed located on the front elevation is considered to be subservient.

1 The Square is a modest dwelling located in a constrained site. The proposed extension makes use of the exterior space and re-uses the volume of the existing (unsightly garage). This layout would result in the extension not dominating the principle elevation of the building.

Guidance within Appendix B of BE8 states that front extensions should not normally exceed 1.4m projection to the principle elevation.

The plans submitted show relevant elevations of the extension for this stage and type of pre-planning submission. Any concern that the proposal would alter the reading of the principal elevation as due to the layout of openings, combined with size and scale of extension it would remain clear as to which was the front elevation of the property.

Overall, the materials and roof type are considered to be in keeping with the host and its setting, the size, scale and position of the extension are considered to respect the host in terms of size, scale massing and layout. This is not contrary to the guidance held within Policy 3 of the LNDP and Policy S16 of the Alnwick LDF Core Strategy.

Conservation Area

The Square is listed as a non-designated heritage asset within Appendix 2 of the LNDP. It is also referenced in the Lesbury Conservation Area Appraisal.

Policy 8 of the LNDP requires that applications within the Lesbury Conservation Area are expected to preserve or enhance the character or appearance and quality of the Conservation Area through careful use of materials and design.

Policy 9 links with Policy 8 in that both require developments to give special consideration to the impact of development on non-designated heritage assets, such as The Square through sensitive design.

As outlined above the size and position of the extension are considered to be appropriate for the host dwelling and therefore there is no harm caused to the character and distinctiveness of the host or the group of buildings as a whole. This in turn will not impact on the Conservation Area.

Amenity

Further consideration would of course be given to this aspect on receipt of a full application, however we believe there are no significant concerns regarding adverse impact to the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties.

Ecology

As the proposal does not involve work to the dwelling's roof space, we believe it is not necessary to consult with the County Ecologist at application stage.

Highway Safety

The existing access arrangements are unaffected by the proposals.

As mentioned above, the primary purpose of the development as proposed is to provide permanent accommodation to suit modern living. The principle motivation for this development for the applicant is simply so a local person can afford to move into Lesbury, given the housing stock prices locally due to second homes and holiday cottages, it would otherwise be impossible. The garden amenity area is larger than the footprint of the house itself (even as extended) and the existing garage is an eyesore in the closely knit fabric of this conservation area.

The proposed extension has been carefully considered to accommodate the proposed extended living area and to negate any possible impact on neighbours.

There will be no changes to pedestrian or vehicle access

This proposal will provide No1 The Square with additional family space making a comfortable home in the Lesbury, which would otherwise be impossible to sustain due to it's diminutive current scale.