

Design, Access & Planning Statement

Eden House, Ridley Mill



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This Planning Statement is written to support the application for planning consent at Eden House, New Ridley for the extension and alteration of the existing private dwelling. It is to be read in conjunction with drawings and reports attached to this application.

1.2 The Nature of the Proposal

The existing three-bedroom detached family home has been lived in for a number of years by its owners. Extensions and alterations are proposed to the existing dwelling to adapt it to the owners' changing needs and form a four-bedroom home. The house is in an elevated position within extensive grounds, including a large area of woodland (existing house shown in Figures 1-3). A proposal to extend the house to ensure a sustainable future use of this site for the existing family was refused planning permission in June 2023 (ref: 21/03933/FUL). The reasons for refusal included the size and design of the proposals, and the impact upon the surrounding woodland, the proposals in this application have been developed to address these issues.



Figure 1: Eden House in its elevated position viewed from the road



Figure 2: Existing outbuildings to be incorporated into the proposals



Figure 3: Existing garage (inaccessible by vehicles) to be demolished and replaced with a new garage in an accessible location

1.3 Planning History

In the context of the current application, there is the following relevant planning history for the site:

Application description	Application reference	Decision
Proposed construction of one single storey dwelling house	T/960842	Application refused
North east extension, demolition of existing garage to create a two storey rear extension with single storey link to main house and roof terrace over. Relocation of garage to west of house.	21/03933/FUL	Application refused

1.4 Painshawfield Estate Committee

The Painshawfield Estate Committee is a locally elected body who consider proposals for the estate with the objective to 'preserve the character and amenity of the Estate'. For 90 years the Mutual Covenant of Painshawfield, Batt House, and Birches Nook area allows the present committee to decide whether a dwelling house or other building shall be erected without the plans first being submitted to and approved by the majority committee.

The original proposal had been considered by the Painshawfield Estate Committee (ref: #0060) and no issues arose from the committee's decision. This revision will also be presented to the Committee for their comments.

2.0 DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

2.1 Design Approach

The existing house sits on an artificially flattened section of the steep wooded sloping site. An area around the house is also flattened as access and garden space. It is proposed that parts of this flat area are used to construct extensions to the house to better suit its owners' needs, providing more space, light and views to the hillside opposite.

North west extension

At ground floor level a single storey Garden Room will be created at the north west corner of the house, which links to the infill extension to the north.

North extension

The main extension is proposed to the north of the existing house. It is a two-storey structure of similar construction to the main house which contains an additional bedroom at first floor level.

At ground floor level the existing kitchen will be extended with a single storey utility area infilling the rear of the host building. The kitchen and utility area extensions will include for a single storey element which will ensure that natural light can penetrate these areas.

The extension incorporates the existing outbuildings which will be converted into use as a pantry, home office and a store. These existing outbuildings form the rear line of the proposed extension. By retaining these buildings, the steep slope is not undermined by new construction and there is a reduction in new construction required for the extension.

The form and internal layout of the extensions is a more traditional with many elements of the main house reflected in the construction, including using materials such as brickwork and slate. They are also set back from the principal elevation of the main house. This approach ensures that the extensions are subservient to the original house, allowing the existing house to retain its symmetry and prominence on the site.

Garage

The existing garage is inaccessible by vehicles due its location at the rear of the site making it not fit for purpose. A new garage is proposed by the roadside to be directly accessible at the driveway entrance.

The previous planning application included for the removal of a number of trees, with the positioning of the garage within ancient woodland. These proposals retain the majority of trees with minimal tree removal being proposed (T3, Sycamore as part of site management reasons for removal including having a low contribution and it being in a poor condition; and a group of low quality grouped shrubs).

2.2 Use

The current house is a private dwelling with the remaining site forming the garden. This use will not change.

2.3 Amount

Houses on the Painshawfield Estate typically sit in large plots. The existing house and outbuildings footprint sit within a very large plot. The proposals have been reduced in scale to fulfil the clients brief whilst retaining the relationship of the house with the site, therefore the proposals are appropriate and retain the relationship between the two.

2.4 Layout

The existing house form and layout is largely retained, with the two formal reception rooms to the front at ground floor level and two bedrooms to the front at first floor level. The existing main central entrance and hallway is retained.

The rear extension sits within the L-shape of the existing house to contain an extended kitchen, utility space and additional bedroom above (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Location of proposed two-storey rear extension

The relationship of the building with the woodland and its vistas are retained.

2.5 Scale

The proposed extensions are a mixture of single- and two-storey structures which are no higher than the existing house eaves. The extensions have rooms of a similar size to the existing ensuring the proposals are in proportion to the existing. The location of the extensions to the rear of the original house allows the main house to be read as it is currently and are subservient in relation to the principal elevation.

2.6 Landscape

The existing house sits on an artificial plateau in the middle of a steep wooded hillside. No additional cutting into the steep hill is required for the proposals (and would be difficult due to the potentially unstable nature of the hill). The shallower section of hillside by the road will be cut into to form a garage with retaining walls, in line with the existing slope of the land.

The woodland and hillside will be retained with no trees proposed to be removed for the development (refer to the tree report). The area around the new extension will be laid with stone paving and gravel, lawn will be laid to the west.

2.7 Appearance

The existing house is constructed of red brick with white-painted stone quoins, sills, lintels and corncicing. The house has a double pitch slate roof. The extensions have been conceived as traditional additions which mirror features of the existing house.

Windows are to be white-painted timber.

The garage is to be red brick to match the existing with stone lintels and sills, a slate roof, and green-painted windows and doors.

Rainwater goods are to be black-painted PVC throughout.

2.8 Access

The site is currently accessed by a private gravel driveway through narrow stone gateposts from the road. The existing garage is not accessible by vehicles due to its location behind the house. The existing access point will be widened and a new tarmac parking area formed in front of the proposed garage, improving the access (Figures 5 and 6).



Figure 5: Location of proposed garage



Figure 6: Gateposts to be widened for improved access

3.0 SUMMARY

The proposed extensions and garage construction will provide a practical four-bedroom family home for the current owners. By setting back the extensions from the principal elevation of the existing house, the prominence and symmetry of the original house is retained. The large site is capable of accommodating the proposals without compromising the steeply sloping site and woodland. The proposals provide a sustainable use for the site, with the family able to continue to live in the place they love for many years to come.

4.0 Planning Policy

Principle of the Development

The proposal is domestic in nature within the residential curtilage of an existing dwellinghouse. The principle of development is therefore acceptable and in accordance with Policy HOU 9 of the Northumberland Local Plan and the NPPF.

Design and Visual Impact

The host property is a traditional, detached red brick and slate dwelling situated within Guessburn Wood in Stocksfield.

The proposal is for a two storey rear extension to be attached to the host dwelling, including a single extension to the north west of the dwelling. A new replacement detached garage is also proposed to the east of Eden House, the garage will be accessible to cars from the highway.

Policy QOP 1 of the Northumberland Local Plan sets out design principles for all types of development to follow including to ensure that development proposals make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and contribute to a positive relationship between built and natural features, including landform and topography. Furthermore development should seek to ensure that proposals create or contribute towards a strong sense of place and integrate the built form of the development with the site overall, and the wider local area, having regard to several matters such as form/scale/massing, building heights and distinctive local architectural styles and materials.

Policy QOP 2 relates specifically to good design and amenity, it sets out that the physical presence and design of development should preserve the character of the area, and also that trees of amenity value should be retained, where appropriate.

Policy HOU 9 sets out that householder developments must be 'well-related and subordinate in size and massing to the existing dwelling' and 'respects, complements and does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the style and character of the existing dwelling and its setting in terms of design and use of materials, or on the character of the surrounding area'.

The proposal overall has a design, projection, scale and massing that is well-related, subordinate in size and proportionate to the original dwelling. The layout of the extensions have taken account of the topography and landform of the site by utilising the rear of the property, with a modest single storey extension to the north west of the host building, the extensions are subordinate to the host building, respect the traditional form, mass and scale of the host property and do not have an adverse impact on the character of the original dwelling.

The materials proposed for the extensions match the existing on the main dwelling with the use of red brick and white painted timber openings which is in keeping with the original building.

The overall design, scale and form and the proposed extensions and detached garage is in keeping with the character of the existing property and would not harm the visual appearance of the property and the surrounding area.

The trees within the application site form part of a larger woodland which is protected by The District of Tynedale (Ridley Mill Road, Stocksfield) Tree Preservation Order 1985 and therefore are considered to be of amenity value.

The proposals include the demolition of the existing single garage and erection of a replacement garage which would be positioned on land adjacent within the woodland. The accompanying drawings illustrate that the garage can be sited upon pile foundations which do not impact upon any trees on the site. The arborological report identifies that there is a small group of shrubs which are required to be removed, which have a low contribution to the woodland.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would be in accordance with Policies QOP 1, QOP 2 and HOU 9 of the Northumberland Local Plan and the NPPF and would have a minimal visual impact, the proposals provide a positive contribution to Eden House through the design and improved layout including a garage which can be utilised by the residents of the dwelling.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The host dwelling is a detached dwelling situated within Guessburn Wood in Stocksfield.

Policy QOP 2 of the Northumberland Local Plan states that development can only be permitted if it 'does not have a visually obtrusive or overbearing impact on neighbouring uses'. Policy HOU 9 of the Northumberland Local Plan sets out that householder proposals for the extension of existing dwellings will only be supported whereby development does not have an 'unacceptable loss of daylight/sunlight, privacy and visual outlook'.

This application has responded to the concerns raised by neighbours with the previous proposal, particularly with the proposed extension to the side of the house being reduced in scale, mass, style, orientation, potential for overlooking and design. This proposal reduces the potential to be perceived as overbearing to neighbouring properties through a single storey traditional garden room approach with reduced openings.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would be in accordance with Policy QOP 2 and HOU 9 of the Northumberland Local Plan and the NPPF and would not have an adverse impact upon the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties to the north west.

Ecology

The proposed extensions and replacement detached garage have taken into account of the previous decision notice and the proposed tree removal would be reduced to one which is in poor condition and its removal would aid site management purposes, furthermore the report highlights that the tree has a low value to the site. A group of shrubs is also recommended for removal to accommodate the garage, the shrubs are typical garden shrubs and have a low quality contribution to the woodland.

Accompanying this report is a tree report, setting out the proposed management of trees in the proposed development.