

Heritage Statement

September 2022



Proposed construction of a timber bin store (retrospective)

At The Black Swan Inn Union Street Seahouses Northumberland NE68 7RT





Heritage Statement

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This application is made by Mr M Dawson who has recently purchased and extensively renovated the property. A Heritage Statement is necessary to accompany the planning application due to the location of the property which is situated within the Seahouses Conservation Area. This document presents the heritage context of the development proposal.

2.0 Description of the heritage asset

2.1 Seahouses is a relatively recent geographic name. Initially the area was known only as North Sunderland, although North Sunderland was in fact a separate settlement in its own right, the urbanisation of North Sunderland spread in the 18th C towards the harbour area known as Sunderland Point as commercial activities expanded to become the working port that it is now referred to as Seahouses.

2.2 The first modern jetty or pier was built by the Lord Crewe trustees, and the first phase of construction began in 1786. The small 18th century port expanded inland in all directions from the distinctive harbour and historic village core until the two settlements converged. The area is a focus for tourist and visitor attractions, particularly in relation to its role as gateway to the Farne Islands. With the exception of the immediate harbour area, which remains a working and functional place, the built environment of Seahouses is described as unexceptional, with significant growth occurring over the mid and late 20th century.

2.3 The Black Swan Inn is part of a group of stone-built dwellings located in on the edge of the Seahouses Conservation Area. The Black Swan Inn itself is of little architectural value and is not listed. However the property stands at the end of a row of 2-storey cottages within the heart of the historic harbour core of Seahouses Village. There are no notable heritage assets within the vicinity of the building. The construction date of The Black Swan Inn is unknown however it is shown (although not as a public house) on the first edition Ordnance Survey of 1860.

3.0 Assessment of significance

3.1 Whilst the property is not listed and is of little architectural value it is located in what is considered to be an historically valuable part of the village, therefore the proposed development needs to be sympathetic within its immediate context.

3.2 Although the significance of the development is considered important within its immediate context it is also important to note that the property is almost entirely dominated in all directions by much later development and it is also in very close proximity to a working harbour in this regard the assessment of significance of the proposed development must be considered low.





4.0 Design concept

4.1 The development seeks to provide a simple timber construction to provide safe storage of the commercial bins associated with the business. Waste collections have grown increasingly more complex and are likely to become more so as the drive for greater separation of waste streams increases. Much of the waste produced by the business is recyclable but the waste streams must be separated if any value is to be derived from them. Presently there are three separate bins contained within the bin store each housing its own waste stream. It is a requirement of the waste collection contract that the bins are accessible on the street. Without the bin store the bins would be lined up together on the street.

4.2 There were two principal aims of the design concept, firstly to ensure that the development did not result in harm to the heritage setting but also to provide a long-term solution to the need for on-street bin placement. Whilst it is a contract requirement that the bins are collected from the street, the waste collection vehicle will pick up from a designated bin store. In order to respect the character of the conservation area it was considered aesthetically prudent to provide a timber shelter. This prevents accidental littering, protects from vermin infestation, particularly seagulls and creates a more aesthetic look to the street scene.

4.3 The bin store is a small building of utilitarian design and is made entirely of seasoned timber. The choice of materials is entirely in keeping with conservation area theme and the bin store is not considered intrusive in the streetscape.

5.0 Development impact

5.1 Development within the setting of heritage assets should be assessed to determine whether, all issues considered, the proposal represents a negative, neutral or positive impact.

5.2 There are no heritage assets within the vicinity of the development. The utilitarian design of the development and the choice of material is considered to be sympathetic to its immediate context, as such it is not considered to affect the settings of the conservation area.

5.3 This heritage statement asserts that the siting of a small unobtrusive timber bin store represents an overall positive impact to the historic core of the village when compared with the storage of three large commercial bins on the street.





6.0 Photographs

6.1 View towards Crewe Street





6.2 Front elevation of the timber bin store



7.0 Conclusion

7.1 This statement has outlined the design concept and the impact of the proposed development on the heritage asset that is Seahouses Conservation Area. It also explains that the proposed development provides an opportunity to create a more aesthetic street scene whilst providing an essential storage building.

7.2 On balance the proposal represents a positive impact to the historic core of the village and as such it is requested that the development is approved.

