

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

FORMER NETHERTON
NORTHSIDE FIRST SCHOOL

CHANGE OF USE TO TWO DWELLINGS

17th May 2023



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Applicant:	Matthew Stock
Proposed Development:	Change of use of former school building to two dwellings, including selected demolition and alterations.
Site Address:	Former Netherton Northside First School Netherton, Morpeth NE65 7HD



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared and submitted in support of our planning application.
- 1.2 It must be read in conjunction with our submitted drawings and any other documents submitted for approval as part of our application.
- 1.3 Any illustrations within this document do not take precedence over the formal application scheme drawings and are intended primarily to illustrate points made in the text.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 Planning permission is sought for: -
 - **Change of use to two dwellings**
 - **Use of the existing access to serve the proposed new dwellings.**
 - **Demolition of a flat-roof extension to the rear of the school building**
 - **External alterations**
 - **Erection of boundary fences and walls**
 - **Creation of garden/ amenity area to serve the two dwellings.**
 - **Parking and turning within the site.**

3 Background & Purpose of Development

- 3.1 Netherton Northside First School closed in 2018. The school is surplus to requirements and currently lies vacant. The buildings are deteriorating, and a beneficial use is urgently required to prevent further neglect and risk of demolition. Conversion to two homes is considered to be the most appropriate use for the site.

4 Site Description

- 4.1 The former school lies on the edge of the village abutting the main road through the village. The site extends to some 0.4 ha. Part of the site has been retained by Northumberland Council for use as a children's play area (0.3ha) with the remainder sold off for re-development. The development site (0.1ha) contains the main school building, the school yard/ hard surfaced playground and outbuildings.



Figure 1: Aerial photo of site location and its context (courtesy of Google Earth Pro)

- 4.2 The original school is a typical High Victorian building by design, with steep roof, high gables and tall windows, constructed of stone under a natural slate roof. Although not listed, it is a building of local interest and a local landmark. Over the years the building has been extended. Firstly, a rather incongruous render and flat roof extension to the rear, and secondly a more successful extension at the front in natural stone which is more in-keeping and more sympathetic to the original design.
- 4.2 The existing school access from the adopted highway will be retained and used to serve the new dwellings. Land to the north of the school (i.e., the former playing fields) are to be retained by Northumberland Council as a public play area along with a strip of land along the frontage to provide access for maintenance purposes.
- 4.3 The School site is enclosed by a 1m high stone boundary wall. This will be retained, as will the additional timber fences that enclose the site.



Figure 2: Aerial photo close-up of site (courtesy of Google Earth Pro)

4.3 Site Details

Post Code: NE65 7HD

Grid Reference: SE 23942609

Easting: 423941

Northing: 426090

5 Design & Access Statement

Use

- 5.1 The site will be used as private dwelling houses (C3).

Amount

- 5.2 Two dwellings are proposed. Dwelling 1 with a floor area of 124 sqm and Dwelling 2 with a floor area of 134 sqm

Layout

- 5.3 The school building will be converted to form two new dwellings. The outdoor space will be divided into 2 plots creating private gardens and parking spaces for each dwelling. Access and turning will be shared. The existing single storey flat roof extension at the rear will be demolished. Outbuildings at the rear will be demolished to provide additional garden space.

Scale

- 5.4 There will be no increase in scale.

Appearance

- 5.5 The appearance of the building will remain much the same. There will be repairs to the external stonework as required, and gutters and downpipes will be replaced. Existing windows will be retained and repaired with some minor alterations and additions to meet fire regulations. Part of the tarmacked schoolyard will be removed to create private garden space, the remainder will be retained to provide off-street parking and turning.

Amenity Space

- 5.6 Gardens are proposed for both dwellings. These will be enclosed by existing walls and fences to provide privacy. The garden for Dwelling 1 is 185 sqm and for Dwelling 2 is 368 sqm.

Foul Water Drainage

- 5.7 As existing. New connections will be made to fit the new internal floor plan layout.

Surface Water Drainage

- 5.8 As existing. New connections will be made to fit the new internal floor plan layout.

Vehicular access & parking

- 5.9 The scheme will be served by an existing access onto the adopted highway. This will be shared by both dwellings. Previously, this access received all deliveries to the school and served the staff car park. Vehicle movements in and out of the site will be greatly reduced as a result of the proposed change of use to residential. One parking space will be provided for each dwelling.
- 5.10 A new stone wall will be constructed along the frontage to match the existing and separate the site access and turning area from the strip of land retain by Northumberland Council for access to the new play area.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

- 5.11 An electric vehicle charging point will be provide for each dwelling. These are shown on the proposed block plan (465-P05)

Waste Disposal

- 5.12 Refuse bin stores are proposed for both dwellings. These are timber enclosures capable of accommodating a general waste bin and a mixed recycling bin. A collection point is located adjacent to the entrance to the site. (See proposed block plan 465-P05)

Pedestrian access

- 5.13 None affected.

Footpaths

- 5.14 None affected.