

GEORGE F. WHITE

RESIDENTIAL . COMMERCIAL . RURAL . DEVELOPMENT

Planning Statement

Women's Institute Building
High Newton-by-the-Sea
Northumberland

August 2023

Prepared by

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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 George F. White (Planning, Architecture and Development) have been instructed by Mr J Sutherland (the 'Applicant') to submit a full planning application for the demolition of the Women's Institute Building, and erection of 2no. dwellings.
- 1.2 Having regard to section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this planning statement considers the application's conformity with the Development Plan, relevant national planning policy and other material considerations.
- 1.3 In addition to this statement, the application also comprises the following;
 - Site Location Plan;
 - Existing and Proposed Plans;
 - Ecology Checklist;
 - Ecology Survey;
 - Transport Note and ATC Survey;
 - Drainage Strategy;
 - Contamination Screening Assessment Form.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site ('the Site') is located east of the settlement of High Newton-by-the-Sea, NE66 3ED. The application site comprises of an existing redundant building previously used by the Women's Institute and some surrounding vegetation and trees.
- 2.2 The site is detailed on the submitted Location Plan.
- 2.3 The site is bound by:
- Trees, vegetation and residential dwellings to the north;
 - Vegetation, grassland and a pumping station located to the east;
 - Vegetation to the south with an access track beyond;
 - C Class Road (ID 14533) to the west, which is bound by a 30mph speed limit.
- 2.4 The Northumberland PROW map shows the closest footpath to the site is 135 metres to the south of the site.
- 2.5 The Environment Agency Flood Map illustrates the site is located in Flood Zone 1, meaning it is of low vulnerability to flooding. There is also no vulnerability shown to surface water flooding. A culverted watercourse is also located a close by to the south of the site.
- 2.6 The Coal Authority interactive map shows that the site is located in;
- A Coal Mining Reporting Area – An area for the known extent of coal mining activity.
 - A Surface Coal Resource Area – where coal resources capable of being extracted by surface mining methods were located.
- 2.7 The Historic England map shows that the closest listed building to the site is;
- 'Newton House', a Grade II Listed Building (List Entry Number 1303795), 168 metres to the north west.
 - 'Entrance Screen to Newton House' a Grade II Listed Building (List Entry Number 1041749), 213 metres to the north west.
 - 'Newton Hall', a Grade II* Listed Building (List Entry Number 1041747), 549 metres to the south west.
 - 'Watch House', a Grade II Listed Building (List Entry Number 1371215), 478 metres to the south east.
- 2.8 The Northumberland County Council Policies Map shows that the site is located in:
- The Coastal Mitigation Service Area – A developer-funded wardening service that provides a presence within the designated sites to educate and advise recreational users such as dog walkers, joggers, horse riders and sea anglers as to how they can enjoy the coast without causing excessive disturbance to important bird populations. In specific circumstances, developments may be warranted to make a contribution towards this service.
 - Mineral Safeguarding Area – Carboniferous Limestone

- The site is also located in the North Northumberland Heritage Coast, and the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

2.9 DEFRA's online MAGIC map facility has identified no other known statutory environmental designations within the site.

PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 Review of Northumberland County Council's Public Planning Portal has revealed no previous planning history on the site.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 This planning application is in full and includes all necessary supporting information.
- 4.2 The proposed development comprises of the demolition of the existing Women's Institute Building and the erection of 2no. residential dwellings.
- 4.3 Appropriate car parking, visitor parking and cycle storage will be provided on site in accordance with NCC highways standards.
- 4.4 Access to the site will be achieved via the existing access point connecting onto the adopted, unnamed road to the west (ID14533), located to the south west of the application site.

PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 Planning law (section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government released the new National Planning Policy Framework in July 2018 (The Framework), with further alterations in February 2019 and July 2021. The Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.
- 5.3 The Government have confirmed that the Framework is a material planning consideration and should be taken account of when making decisions. It is therefore anticipated that the planning application will be considered against the statutory development plan, with regard being had, where relevant to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Statutory Development Plan

- 5.4 The statutory development plan for the site consists of the Northumberland County Council Local Plan (adopted March 2022). It is anticipated that the following policies would be considered in the determination of this application:
 - Policy STP 1: Spatial Strategy
 - Policy HOU 1: Making the Best Use of Existing Buildings
 - Policy HOU 2: Provision of New Residential Development
 - Policy HOU 9: Residential Development Management
 - Policy ENV 2: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - Policy ENV 3: Landscape
 - Policy ENV 5: Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Beauty
 - Policy QOP 2: Good Design and Amenity
 - Policy QOP 4: Landscaping and Trees
 - Policy TRA 2: The Effects of Development on the Transport Network
 - Policy MIN 4: Safeguarding Mineral Resources
- 5.5 The site does not fall within a designated neighbourhood plan area and is not subject to policies of an adopted or emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 Based upon an assessment of the planning policy and material considerations, this section will assess the following key issues:
- Principle of Development;
 - Ecological Considerations;
 - Design and Amenity;
 - Highways Considerations.

Principle of Development

- 6.2 The site is located to the East of High Newton by-the-Sea and comprises of an existing redundant building previously used by the Women's Institute, along with existing vegetation, and trees.
- 6.3 The site is located within the settlement boundary of High-Newton-by-the-Sea, a Small Village listed in Appendix A of the Northumberland Local Plan, it is important to consider Policy STP 1 (d). Within this policy it highlights how Small Villages in Appendix A will support a proportionate level of development subject to Green Belt Policy considerations where relevant. The scale of the development will be proportionate and involve replacing an existing building to provide no.2 new residential dwellings.
- 6.4 Policy HOU 1 supports best use of existing buildings and supports the taking into consideration, in consultation with local communities, any demolition and redevelopment schemes in areas of low demand or where the existing housing stock does not meet existing needs. Additionally, Policy HOU 2 highlights that the provision of new open market dwellings should be consistent with the best and most efficient use of land and buildings, with the redevelopment of suitable previously developed 'brownfield' sites being used where possible. Para 120. (c) of the NPPF additionally highlights that substantial weight should be given to using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes.
- 6.5 The proposed development complies with both local policies and the NPPF as it involves the demolition of a redundant and disused building on a brownfield site within the settlement boundary, to be redeveloped to provide 2no. residential dwellings, avoiding the need to use any greenfield sites. The existing building, previously used by the Women's Institute, is currently in a redundant state. The proposed development in this location will involve the best and most efficient use of the land, providing high-quality and attractive residential units to contribute to the local housing stock within High Newton by Sea. It is therefore considered the proposed development is consistent with Policies STP1, HOU 1 and HOU 2 of the Local Plan.
- 6.6 As previously stated, the site is located within the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Beauty and the North Northumberland Heritage Coast. It is therefore important to consider Policies ENV3 and ENV 5 of the Local Plan. Policy ENV3 highlights that great weight will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the special qualities and the statutory purposes of the Northumberland AONB. Consideration is also to be given to parts of the North Northumberland Heritage Coast, which are not part of the Northumberland Coast AONB, with consideration given to the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. The importance of conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the AONB is also highlighted in Policy ENV 5, which states that particular consideration will be given to developments which consider the sensitivity of local landscapes and their capacity to accommodate new development. Further, part 6 of Policy ENV 5 states how new buildings and engineering works proposed will require the submission of detailed plans to allow the impact of the proposed development on the special qualities of the AONB, to be judged.

- 6.7 The proposed development is considered to have negligible impact on the Northumberland Coast AONB and the North Northumberland Heritage Coast. Whilst the proposed development is to consist of a new build for 2no. dwellings, as indicated by the submitted existing and proposed site plans with the application, the footprint of the proposed dwellings is to be slightly reduced in comparison to the footprint of the current building, meaning the proposed development is to be smaller in massing than the existing building on site.
- 6.8 It is considered the proposed development is to be a visual improvement to the site and the surrounding area, compared to the existing redundant and disused building on site. High quality design and materials will be implemented as part of the development, in addition to the decrease in massing of the overall built form of the site. The materials used in the dwellings design will be sensitive to the surrounding landscape and stay consistent with the design of the surrounding residential area. Furthermore, consideration will also be given to the Northumberland Coastal AONB Management plan preventing any negative impact visual appearance on the AONB, particularly when compared with the existing redundant building. The impact of the design of the proposed development, and potential visual impact on the AONB is to be considered in later sub-section of this planning statement in more detail.
- 6.9 Further, a clear distinction between the settlement and open countryside will be sustained due to the development being located in the built-up area of High Newton-by-the-Sea, with neighbouring land uses consisting of existing residential dwellings. There are no heritage assets within very close proximity to the proposed development site and therefore the setting of heritage assets are not to be impacted by the proposals. The proposed development is also to have no impact towards the natural functioning of the coastline, wildness and open views and dark skies of the AONB.
- 6.10 Regarding the information above, it is considered the development is acceptable in principle.

Ecological Consideration

- 6.11 It is both national and local requirement that development proposals consider the potential impact on protected species of their habitats. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF clarifies the requirement for planning decisions to minimise impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. Policy QOP 4 of the local plan highlights that development proposals should ensure there is no loss of existing trees which are valuable in terms of amenity, biodiversity or the landscape. The importance of ensuring biodiversity conditions are not negatively affected by development proposals is outlined in Policy ENV 2. Policy ENV2 says that developments must minimise their biodiversity impact wherever possible through their location and/or design, as well as securing appropriate mitigation where necessary.
- 6.12 Existing trees have been identified to the north of the site, with vegetation being located around the existing building. Where possible, any trees located on the site will be retained. Any negative impacts to biodiversity in the area will be minimised. An Ecological Impact Assessment and a Bat Survey have been submitted with the Planning Statement in accordance with Northumberland's Validation Checklist.
- 6.13 As part of the findings from the Ecological Impact Assessment and Bat Survey, the following enhancements were recommended as part of the development. Landscape planting is to be included within the site including plant-bearing flowers, nectar and fruits which are attractive to invertebrates, thereby helping to maintain food resources for wildlife in general. Native scrub and trees which are species rich are also to be planted. Two bird boxes for species such as swift are to be installed, in addition to bird nesting opportunities also being provided. Habitat Piles will also be created for hedgehogs, reptiles, and amphibian.

- 6.14 Whilst confirmation is sought from NCC on this matter, the proposed development will likely contribute towards the Coastal Mitigation Service as it involves a net increase in dwellings located within 10 kilometres of the coast. Additionally, no further disturbance will be created towards wildlife, or an inadvertent introduction of non-native species, reduction of water quality or any further adverse impact from pollution on wildlife. With the enhancements implemented as part of the proposed development, maximising opportunities to protect and incorporate biodiversity it is considered the proposed development will not adversely impact on wildlife and biodiversity conditions of the site.
- 6.15 It is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with both local and national policy with regards to ecology, and is not to generate any adverse impact on biodiversity of the site.

Design and Amenity

- 6.16 Policy QOP 1 highlights that planning applications will be assessed against the design principles provided in this policy as well as having regard to the Northumberland Design Guide (yet to be published). Policy QOP2 concerns securing a high standard of amenity for all current and future users and residents of development and surrounding land uses. The designs of the proposed dwellings are to take into account the visual impact upon the Northumberland Coast AONB. Further, in compliance with Policy ENV 5, the proposed development will conserve and enhance the AONB, having regard to the current AONB Management Plan.
- 6.17 The proposed dwellings will make use of similar materials to the existing dwellings within the settlement; including a natural slate roof finish and outer leaf, timber windows, stone cills and lintels, timber balcony with glazed guarding on the southern elevations. North elevations are to appear similar aside from vertical timber cladding also incorporated as a feature.
- 6.18 Additionally, the proposed dwellings will achieve appropriate separation distances from the other surrounding residential properties, therefore minimising any potential impact on residential amenity. The positioned windows of the proposed dwellings will ensure sufficient natural lighting is provided as part of the development. The design of the proposed development also ensures there will be no overlooking, overshadowing, or intrusive impact on the adjacent residential properties.
- 6.19 It is considered that the proposed development therefore complies with Policies QOP1 and QOP2 ensuring the proposals are of good design and provides or retains levels of amenity for current and future users of the development and adjacent land uses.

Highways Considerations

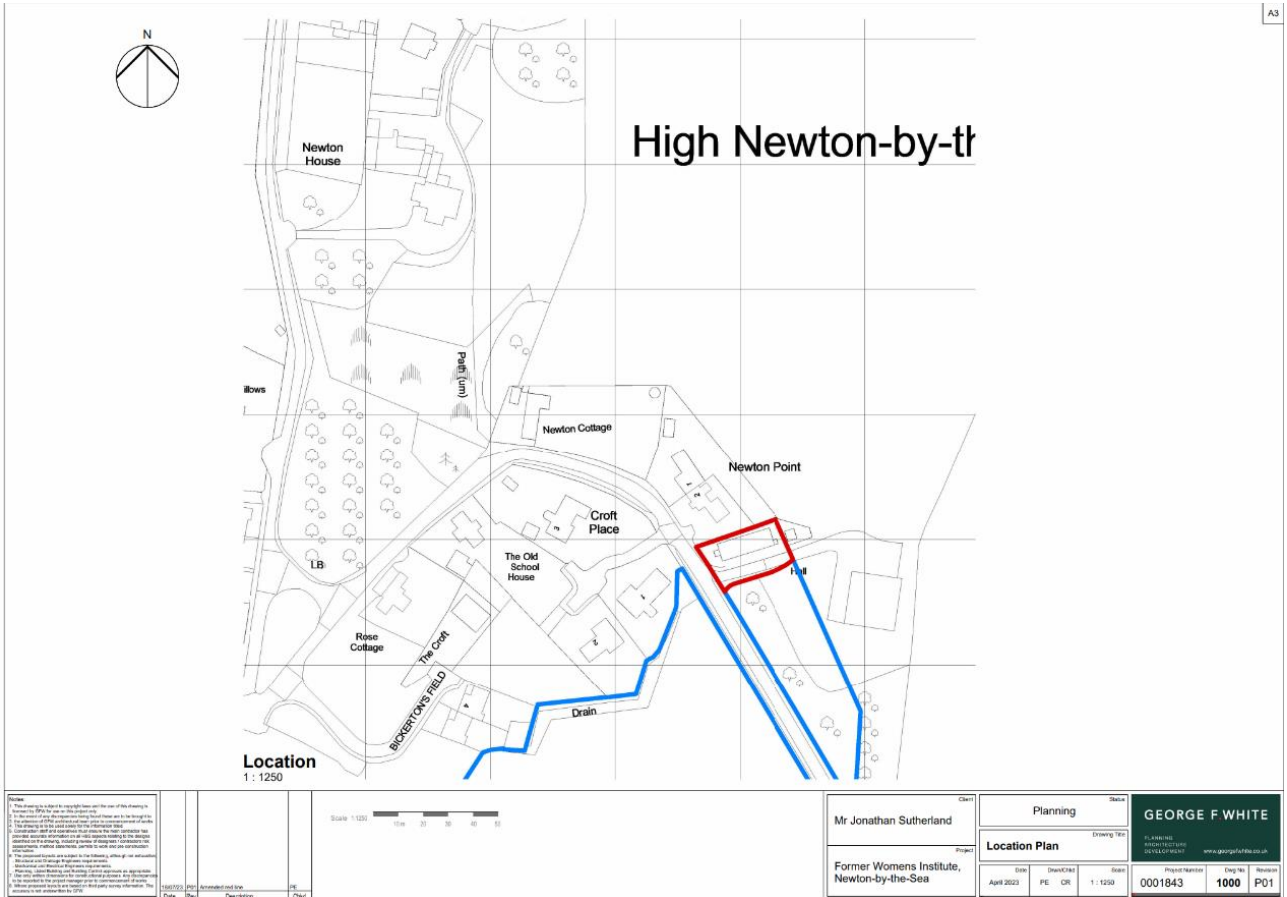
- 6.20 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on the highways safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the highways network would be severe. In addition to national policy, Policy TRA 2 considers the effects of development on the transport networks to ensure the safe access and egress to and from the development site, and to avoid any significant negative impacts on the surrounding highway network.
- 6.21 The site benefits from an existing access to the south west which connects to the unnamed, classified road to the west (ID14533), which is subject to a 30mph speed limit. The existing access to the site provides a good level of visibility in both directions before accessing the classified road. Neighbouring dwellings also use this road regularly and the proposed development will not result in a significant increase in vehicular movements.
- 6.22 A Transport Statement by S.A.J Transport Consultants in July 2023 has been submitted along with the planning application. It was concluded that the proposed development would not result in any unacceptable or severe impacts and that it is acceptable and should be supported from a highways and transport perspective.

- 6.23 There are 2no. parking spaces to be provided for each 3no. bedroom dwelling, in compliance with NCC Parking Standards.
- 6.24 It is therefore considered the proposed development complies with Policy TRA 2 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and will not result in a significant or unacceptable impact on the local highways network.

CONCLUSION

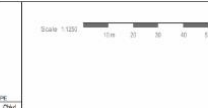
- 7.1 The planning application documentation demonstrates that the proposed development is an acceptable form of development and is in accordance with the development plan.
- 7.2 The proposed development comprises of the demolition of the former Women's Institute Building, and the erection of 2no. residential dwellings. The proposed development comprises of the re-use of a redundant, previously developed site to create development commensurate to the size of the settlement in compliance with strategic policy STP1(d) of Northumberland's Local Plan. It is further considered that the proposed development is not to have any further impact upon the Northumberland Coast AONB and North Northumberland Heritage Coast than the existing building, and is to deliver a visually improved and enhanced scheme which is to benefit the local area and contribute towards the available local housing stock.
- 7.3 On this basis, it is considered that the proposed development complies with both national and local planning policy and this application should therefore be found to be acceptable in principle.

APPENDIX A – Location Plan



Location
 1 : 1250

Date	18/07/23	Prepared by	AK
Date		Checked by	AK
Date		Approved by	AK
Date		Discussed by	AK



Client	Mr Jonathan Sutherland
Project	Former Women's Institute, Newton-by-the-Sea

Discipline	Planning
Drawing No	Location Plan
Date	April 2023
Drawn/CR	PE
Scale	1 : 1250

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Project Number	0001843	Drawing No	1000	Revision	PD1
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