

## Planning Statement

Quarry House, Tows Bank, Coanwood, Haltwhistle, NE49 0QP.

September 2023.

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### 1. Introduction and Background.

Planning permission is sought for retrospective planning permission for minor level changes to north of the property Quarry House, creation of a gravelled area and changes to access and the retention of a storage container for garden storage to west of property and level changes and the change of use of the southern area of the property to domestic use.

The applicant carried out minor works to the residential curtilledge of their property Quarry House between January and June 2023, these minor works included the creation of a gravelled area for parking, a wider access to allow vehicles to access and egress from the highway onto his property. Placing a container within the site to store garden equipment and minor level changes to the north of the main dwelling to create a seating area, it also includes a change of use of an area of land to the south to from open countryside to residential use.

The applicant has since been contacted by the Council and requested to make a planning application to regularise these works.

The application is submitted to regularise and propose the following:

- The gravelled area to the west has been reduced in size to allow for access to the proposed double garage and parking of domestic vehicles within the site.
- The retention of the container to the west of the site.
- Additional planting of native species to the west.
- Change of use of land to the south of the main property to residential use.
- Minor level changes to north and south of main property.

### 2. Description of Site and Location.

The domestic curtilledge of the property is separated by Tows Bank Road and is in a relatively elevated isolated location in the open countryside providing views to the north and west. The site is residential garden that serves as curtilage for the detached property with access and parking provision. The site is isolated and boarded by telecommunication equipment to the east and agricultural land. The property is situated on a slope and therefore the garden curtilage immediately associated with the property is steeply sloping in places

and not useable for parking or seating out which is typically available and enjoyed within domestic curtilages.

To the north of the property google images from 2011 clearly show a fence line that delineates the properties curtilage from the adjacent fields. The applicant has made minor level changes to the area within the fence line and re-erected the fence stop stock entering the domestic curtilage.

To the west of the property is a large area enclosed by stone walling this area is generally level with a shallow slope east to west. This area is separated from the main dwelling by Tow Bank and has previously been used for domestic purpose, including vegetable planting and parking as well as the gas supply for the property and the waste water tank.

To the south, the area of land is separated from the adjacent fields to the east by a stone wall, to the west of that wall the land did not have a formal boundary and had over time grown over with weeds. This area of land forms part of the properties title and its informal curtilage as well as being included within the sale of the property however its exact use is unclear and therefore it is proposed to formalise the domestic use and change the use of this area to residential.

### **3. Planning Policy.**

Development Plan Policy

Northumberland Local Plan - 2016 - 2036 (Adopted March 2022)

QOP 1 - Design Principles (Strategic Policy)

QOP 2 - Good Design and Amenity

STP 1 – Spatial Strategy (Strategic Policy)

HOU 9 - Residential Development Management

TRA 1 – Promoting sustainable connections (Strategic Policy)

TRA 2 – The effects of development on the transport network

TRA 4 – Parking Provision

National Planning Policy National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

### **4. Consideration of the Development.**

#### Principle of Development.

Planning law makes clear that applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are, according to the document, material considerations which local planning authorities should take into account. In line with advice given in the NPPF due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing development plans according to their degree of consistency with the policies in the Framework. The principle of sustainable development which is a golden thread through the NPPF as the key principle running through decision making.

As a means of achieving sustainable development and alongside the presumption in favour of sustainable development proposals that met the twelve core planning principle set out in the NPPF, the following specific sections of the document are relevant in considering the proposal.

#### Assessment of Proposal.

## Change of Use.

It is proposed to change the use of the area of land to the south of the property to residential use from open countryside. The area of land proposed to change to domestic use is very narrow and measures approximately 60 sq. The extent of the extended curtilage of the property is acceptable in this particular instance; its extent is considered a not unreasonable requirement for the occupants of the dwelling house, whilst the change of use of land and the new boundary treatment would not lead to an adverse impact on the amenity of the wider landscape. The proposed change of use of land to form an extended garden with its associated boundary treatments would not lead to an amenity impact on neighbouring properties or other neighbouring land uses.

The land proposed to become domestic had no obvious previous use. It was surplus land that had no purpose. Its change of use to domestic use associated with the property would have no adverse impact visually or in regard to landscape or residential amenity.

## Retention of Storage Container.

A wider access has been created in the same location as the existing access point that previously provided a single parking place for a domestic vehicle. The access leads to a gravelled parking area that is permeable in addition to a container for use as a garden/cycle store.

The application property is detached and constructed of stone and slate. The property has no safe secure formal off street parking area or domestic storage, other than a small stone building that is set above the main property. The property has extensive curtilledge that requires managing and therefore requires equipment to maintain the land. The proposed retention of the container would be located at the south western corner and is proposed to be imber clad to reduce its visual impact.

In terms of scale and massing, the proposal is required to be of the size proposed to provide space for storage of cycles, garden machinery and equipment. The container is located close to the boundary adjacent to the gravelled area and is to be clad in timber to reduce its impact and to reflect the traditional approach to detached buildings within the area.

The container is located to the west as due to the gradients of the domestic curtilledge and proximity of the property to the highway to the east side of Tow Bank it is not possible to build storage or create a secure offsite parking area close to the main property. The application site is located within the Open Countryside and its closest neighbour is to the west, with open fields to the east and north. The proposed works would not be considered to impact upon any neighbours in respect of amenity.

In respect of the above, the proposal is considered to be of an appropriate design relative the host property, and would conserve the character of the area and would not cause harm. Overall, the scale, massing and overall design of the proposed development are sympathetic and in keeping with the character of Quarry House, and would accord with Policies QOP1, QOP 2 and HOU 9 of the Northumberland Local Plan and the NPPF.

## Levels

This area is within the curtilage of the property previusley enclosed by a fence. The fence had fallen into disrepair and due to the levels the land could not be used for sitting out or for normal domestic uses that typically a garden would allow for.

The applicant has cut and filled into the bank and moved materials back to create a small level usable garden area that has been seeded back to grass. The applicant has also repaired the boundary and planted several trees.

The changes to the levels to the north and south of the property are minor and would have no adverse impact on the landscape or visual appearance of the area. The changes were seeded and now that they have become vegetated and matured over the summer are imperceptible and have no adverse impact on visual amenity.

The minor changes to the site levels would accord with Policies QOP1, QOP 2 and HOU 9 of the Northumberland Local Plan and the NPPF

## Highways

The existing property benefits from a single bay driveway with an access onto the adopted highway, this required the vehicle to reverse either from the highway into the parking area or from the parking area into the highway. The proposal allows for the access and egress of vehicles in a forward gear. The height of the wall to each side of the access has been retained at 1 metre to retain visibility for drivers accessing the highway.

The proposal seeks to upgrade and widen this existing access, and an access arrangement drawing has been submitted which annotates that no loose material shall be used within the proximity of the adopted highway.

The proposal garage, gravelled parking area and access would be acceptable in Highways and would accord with Local Plan Policies TRA1, TRA2, and TRA4, and the NPPF.

## **5. Conclusion.**

The retrospective change of use of land to be used as a garden extension and construction, level changes and retention of the garden storage should be considered to be acceptable as it is in accordance with Policies HOU 9 and STP 1 of the Northumberland Local Plan and the NPPF.

The proposed works would not have an adverse impact on the appearance of the host dwelling or the character of the area, would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties, and would not have an adverse impact on highway safety. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in accordance with relevant policies in the development plan and the NPPF.