



# NINETTE EDWARDS - ARCHITECT

12 Alnside . Whittingham . Northumberland . NE66 4SJ

Tel. 07843 587476

Ninette@AlnsideAssociates.co.uk

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## DESIGN, HERITAGE & ACCESS STATEMENT

### HIGHLANDER



**TO SUPPORT AN LBC APPLICATION FOR AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMPS,  
EXTERIOR PAINTING AND NEW SIGNAGE**

#### **Location**

The Highlander Public House

Belsay

Northumberland

NE20 0DN

Rev. B

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## Existing Building and its Setting

The Highlander Inn is situated on the west side of the A696, the main road from Newcastle upon Tyne to Otterburn, connecting with the A68 that continues to Edinburgh.

It is 12 miles from Newcastle, 4 miles from Ponteland, and 2 miles from Belsay.

The inn last closed in 2018 and is opened on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023 under new ownership.

The present building dates from the early 19th century, and was formerly a farmhouse.



**A696 frontage prior to re-opening**



**View heading south on A696 prior to re-opening**

The Inn facing the road is partly stone, and partly rendered and painted with painted ashlar dressings and a stone slate roof.

Former barns wrapping around the courtyard are of stone and brick construction with a slate roof over part, asbestos over the remainder. A single storey kitchen sits in the centre of the courtyard with rendered walls and a flat roof.

## Proposals for Solar Panels and Air Source Heat Pumps

It is proposed to provide an array of 33 Trina Solar Vertex S panels (model TSM-DEM09R.05) rail mounted on the south facing roof slope within the courtyard, with new two new 22kW Dream air source heat pumps. (The proposal for the solar panels is part of 23/02785/LBC.)

The long-term plans of the Highlander are to well insulate the pub and make it as close to off grid as possible by generating all of their own solar and wind power (using the Ridgeblade system).



**Entrance to pub from side road prior to re-opening.**



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## History

The Highlander Inn was constructed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and according to the listing it was previously a farmhouse.

It is reported that there has been an inn here since around 1700, and that it was visited by Bonnie Prince Charlie, son of England's exiled Stuart King James II who apparently bathed on the site in 1746.

The building is Grade II listed, and its only planning history is for signage, the erection of free standing 3 metre x 4 metre wooden pavilion outside of the public house, new patio doors and windows to the north, patio heaters and screens.

A flat roofed kitchen was constructed following planning consent in 1984 in the centre of the courtyard, with fire escape from the first floor accommodation during its life as a public house.

## Heating and Electricity

The building is heated using two modern and highly efficient 22kW air source heat pumps on the flat kitchen extension.

The proposed solar panel solution (23/02785/LBC) will provide 44kW of heat from around 10kW of electrical power. The heat pumps will run from the solar, batteries and inverters rather than the grid mains. It is intended to use off-peak load shifting if the solar power is not sufficient during poor weather. This will allow the business to take advantage of cheaper overnight electricity to store in a 100kWhrs battery bank.

This will provide twice the capacity required, giving some redundancy in case one of the inverters fails and will also give plenty of expansion capability for EV charging as more solar panels are added (subject to demand by clients for charging). As the county heads towards net zero and the sale of ICE cars will be banned in 2030, this strategy will assist in meeting targets.

It is proposed to initially fit 4 EV charging points in the car park which will be provisioned primarily using solar power when available and batteries or, worst case, grid power when there is insufficient solar power.

During the mid-part of the year, it is predicted that there will be a surplus of energy which can be sold back to the grid. Studying the performance of these proposed panels will inform the next phase of solar.

As a potential phase 3, the Highlander are investigating the use of a number of Enapter hydrolysers to liberate hydrogen using solar power to run the kitchen cookers to remove the dependency on propane. (There is no mains gas). The cost of these units are predicted to fall in price, so that they will become an economic solution.

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The business intends on running the heating at a higher temperature during the day to heat up the underfloor heating slab and warm the pub. The temperature will then be dropped in the evening, meaning that the floor can be used as a thermal store and the heat pumps can shut down, saving battery power. In the summer, the underfloor heating coils have been successfully used with cool water to cool the building by 3 degrees in 10 hours. The owners have been conducting tests, controlling the system remotely. The more sun, the more power for heating and cooling. If global temperatures do indeed continue to rise, then this dual heating/cooling effect would be a good model for all buildings.

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## Proposed Exterior Painting and Signage

The Highlander pub has seen many changes in appearance over its history, and the painting of the two storey elements on the corner are no exception. There is photographic evidence of two previous schemes, both with in off-white, with the window surrounds in red and more recently in green.

‘THE HIGHLANDER’ sign by the front door, and the hanging signs have also seen changes over the years, but the name has remained the same.





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The new owners of the Highlander have many years of experience in the hospitality industry, and have re-branded the pub, and are keen to get the locals back inside as well as use the function rooms for events.

The exterior walls remain off-white with a contrasting Pale Walnut colour to the window surrounds. This has been chosen to respect the history of the building, whilst giving it a fresh, new approach.



The fascia signs are black acrylic, and replace the existing lettering.

The hanging sign, with illumination was existing. The inner board has replaced the old one, with new branding. The logo is gold, lettering white, and background black.

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## Proposed developments and their impact

Due to the narrow entrance to the courtyard, and the fencing between the buildings the proposed solar panels and ASHPs are not very visible when viewing the main building. Part of the roof is behind the flat roofed kitchen with fire escape from the first floor.



The building was been vacant from 2018 until its reopening in September 2023, and the new owners would like to make sure that the business is as financially sustainable as possible long term, as well as making minimum impact on the environment to help with the County's net carbon zero targets.



The long term aims are for this building to be off grid, which will give the business future resilience in case of power outage, which would be of great support to local residents.



*Previous array of ventilation units on roof*



*New array of ventilation units & ASHPs*

The impact of the new exterior painting and signage is minimal and in line with the fresh new approach of the business, creating a smart and inviting building on the side of the main road and attracting new customers, as well as regaining the support of the locals to have frequented the pub for many years.



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## LISTING

Heritage Category: Listed Building  
Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1370662  
Date first listed: 22-Aug-1986  
Statutory Address 1: THE HIGHLANDER PUBLIC HOUSE, A696

BELSAY A696 NZ 17 NW (West side)

11/3 The Highlander Public House

GV II

Public house, formerly a farmhouse. Early C19. Rendered and painted with painted ashlar dressings. Stone slate roof. 2.storeys, 3 bays with lower addition to left. Central vertical-panelled door in architrave with pediment on brackets. Original 12-pane sashes in architraves; 1st floor right window is a renewed 4-pane sash. Gabled roof with flat coping and end stacks.

Lower section to left has 1930's door and windows.

Flat-roofed extension to rear not of special interest.

Listing NGR: NZ1227876673

### Access Statement

This application has no impact on access to the property, but will facilitate EV chargers and ensure that the building is more financially and environmentally sustainable and has comfortable temperatures inside.

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