



## Introduction

This supporting statement has been written to accompany a full planning application for a Change of Use from a hotel/conference centre 'C1' use (related to the primary business at Otterburn Hall) to independent 'C1' use as a hotel/guest house. The application also includes the provision of a septic tank, as the existing sewage facility on the wider site is not operational, and the use cannot commence or continue until a septic tank has been installed. The use as a hotel/guest house may have ancillary restaurant for provision of breakfasts and evening meals, which may also be open to non-guests, as there are many lodges in the vicinity, as well as a caravan park who could benefit from a restaurant facility on the site.

The Coach House is Grade II listed, and some repairs and alterations have been carried out, including some internal alterations, in consultation with Northumberland National Park Authority's Conservation Officer. No further works are proposed to the building itself at this stage. If any further work is undertaken that does require Listed Building Consent, this will be carried out in a separate LBC application.

No elevation or floor plans are included in this application; a site plan and location plan are included and provide details with regard to the location of the proposed septic tank. As this application is for a change of use only, and is a change of use within the same use class, with the only change being a change from 'ancillary' to 'primary' use there are no changes proposed to the external fabric of the building. Some internal changes have taken place but are not part of this application which is for change of use only (including the installation of the septic tank).

Under the previous use, there were 14 en-suite bedrooms, and there remain 14 en-suite bedrooms. There is also a kitchen preparation area, a function room, a staff room, and toilets all of which existed previously, although there has been an element of upgrading. There have been some minor internal alterations carried out in consultation with the LPA, including the installation of a kitchen in the 'modern' wing of the building.

There is an informal parking area to the east of the Coach House, which has been used as parking area for many years. There is also space for parking to the rear of the coach house, with access around the back. No changes are proposed to the parking areas, and no formal delineation of parking areas are proposed.

This Design and Access statement includes a Planning Statement, Heritage Statement and Sustainability Statement as required in Policy 1 of the Northumberland National Park Core Strategy (2009).

## Planning History

Planning and listed building consent applications were submitted in 1987 (reference 87NP0039LBC and 87NP0030) for 'alterations and extensions to annex north of main building to form conference centre with bedrooms'. Prior to this application being submitted, the building had been used as an annex to the main hall, with a number of bedrooms on the first floor, and with the ground floor being used for workshops and garaging.

Both applications were approved, and there have been no further applications on the site itself since that time, although there have been a number of applications within the estate as a whole which has seen considerable tourism related development over the years, in the form of holiday lodges, a caravan park and various hotel related developments associated with Otterburn Hall.

The site as a whole has been bought and sold off in 'lots', with the Coach House and adjacent parking areas being sold as a 'lot'.

### Heritage Statement

Otterburn Coach House, originally stables associated with Otterburn Hall, is located to the north east of the hall itself.

The hall was built in 1870 and is grade II listed. The coach house was built at the same time, as a stable block to serve the hall. T

The site lies within the Northumberland National Park, and is within walking distance of Otterburn village which lies to the south of the hall and grounds, and much of Otterburn village will have evolved around the hall and its use initially as a country estate home, and subsequently as a conference/hotel/leisure facility.

Two 'wings' and other extensions (including dormer windows) have been added to the Coach House, probably in the 70s (and certainly prior to listing), which detract significantly from the original character of the building, with modern brick and uPVC windows. Although listed, much of the character as a stable/coach house has been lost, due to the subsequent (and current) use as a conference centre, and the previous use as an annex to the hall with bedrooms, garages and workshop space being created (prior to listing).



*Modern extensions to coach house (east gable and rear)*

The listing in Appendix A provides an account of the features that are of historic interest. These refer to the original parts of the building, that relate to its original use as a stable block. As there are relatively few remaining original elements to the building, these are particularly special, and worthy



of protection. The proposal does not impact on any of the original features of the building, and internal changes that have taken place have not been in the historic parts of the building (and these changes have been done in close communication with the Local Planning Authority). So far, none of the changes have required Listed Building Consent, but should the applicant propose any measures requiring LBC, these will be submitted as separate applications.

The main hall (Otterburn Hall) is also grade II listed, and has also had unsympathetic extensions added. The listing has also been included at the end of this statement.

In terms of impact on the historic environment, the septic tank is not likely to have an impact. It is proposed to be installed in an open area of woodland at the far eastern corner of the car park, as shown on the site plan. The photographs below show the location (the photo on the right is a close-up of the area proposed). The site will be easily accessible for construction and other vehicles. Although the Hall is opposite, the impact of a 450mm man-hole cover is unlikely to be significant, and would in any event be screened by existing trees and undergrowth.



*Proposed location of septic tank to far end of car park*

### Car Parking

As can be seen above, there is a large area for gravel parking. Half of this area would be 'communal' and half is within the applicant's ownership. There is sufficient space for at least 17 cars within the applicant's ownership area, with space for another 10 or more in the rest of the communal area. This more than provides the amount required as set out in the Northumberland County Council's Highways min/max standards for hotel/guest house development.

There is additional space to the rear of the coach house, which will provide parking for staff (at least 4 spaces are available).

None of the spaces are proposed to be marked. It is felt that this would detract from the informal character of the area, so the space will be left as it is. Marking shown on the site plan is indicative only.

The parking area will essentially remain the same as when the facility was used as an ancillary C1 use. The impact of parked vehicles on the setting of both buildings will not materially change.

### Historic Environment and National Planning Policy

Chapter 12 of the NPPF provides guidance on how applications should be considered in historically sensitive areas, and of course the statutory tests as outlined in Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 apply as the site is within a Conservation Area.

Paragraph 126 in the NPPF supports positive strategies for conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. Planning authorities are encouraged to take into account the *'desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'* and *'the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;'*

This approach is further emphasised in paragraph 134, which states: *Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.*

As this application involves no material change to the building (apart from some changes that have already been carried out in consultation with the LPA), it is considered that no harm would be caused.

The installation of the septic tank would have no impact on the setting of any buildings, or any features of acknowledged importance. The location is within an opening of the woodland area, and once installed, the only visible evidence would effectively be a man-hole cover.

Paragraph 128 of the NPPF provides guidance on assessing significance of heritage assets. As a minimum, the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted. In this case, the listing descriptions for the Hall and the Coach House would be relevant. These are appended to this statement.

It is clear that none of the features identified as interesting within either listing would be affected by the installation of the septic tank or the change of use application (which would have no material impact).

The parkland around the hall is not registered, and the site is not within a Conservation Area. It is considered that this statement has fully addressed any implications with respect to the Historic Environment.

### Other Planning Policy considerations

The application is considered against relevant local and national planning policy, and the following section provides an assessment of this proposal against those policies.

The use of the building will essentially remain the same as the previous use. There is a large parking area, which provides sufficient parking for the number of bedrooms at the Coach House. The proposal includes a restaurant facility, which could be open to non-guests. However, the vast majority of visitors are likely to be walking to the facility from the nearby holiday lodges and caravan parks so parking is unlikely to be an issue. The scale of the venture is not such that it is likely to attract visitors from a distance, given the remoteness of the location, and the size of the facility itself.

The planning policy implications for the proposal are minimal, as there will be little material change to the way the building is used now.

Local policies in the Northumberland National Park Core Strategy (2009) and are read in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

#### Northumberland National Park Core Strategy (2009)

The main policies considered relevant to this scheme are as follows:

Policy 1 (General Development) requires all proposals to be considered in accordance with a Sustainability Statement to demonstrate the extent to which the proposal delivers sustainable development.

The proposal is assessed against the criteria outlined in Policy 1:

#### Sustainability Statement

- a) The proposal conserves the special qualities of the National Park.
- b) The proposal is continuing the existing use of a building, and therefore does make efficient use of land, materials and infrastructure (although a new septic tank will be required in order for the use to become operational).
- c) The hotel/guest house is located in the National Park and will therefore provide accommodation for people who are seeking to enjoy the special qualities of the area. No doubt, as is common with facilities of this kind, leaflets which advertise the various events that take place in the National Park will be available for guests.
- d) The proposal will employ staff from the local area, offering part-time and full time employment opportunities. It will therefore benefit the local economy, and will also provide a restaurant facility which will enable guests to enjoy their stay, and others in the immediate proximity to another listed building. This offers a significant restraint on seeking to incorporate energy generation. The refurbishment of the building has, over time, sought to ensure that the building is better insulated.
- f) High quality design is not a consideration in this scheme, as the building is already there, and no changes are proposed.
- g) Information will be available to guests about public transport, and there is a bus service at Otterburn village. The site is close to a National Cycle Trail, and the country around is good cycling country. However, the site is relatively isolated, and it is inevitable that many guests will arrive by car.

- h) Conserves scarce resources, including air and soils: There will be limited impact on resources, as the proposal is for the continuing use of a building. There will be a very minor impact on soils as a result of the installation of the septic tank, but soils will remain on site, and will not be lost.
- j) Reduces the amount of waste produced and increases the amount of waste recycled. The business is not one that produces significant quantities of waste. It is not anticipated that there is scope for reduction of waste or recycling over and above existing practices.
- k) The proposal is not in an area prone to flooding.

Policy 14 (A Sustainable Local Economy) and Policy 15, (Sustainable Tourism and Recreation Development) are also relevant to this scheme. These policies support proposals for sustainable tourism and recreation development which maximise opportunities for visitors to increase their understanding and enjoyment of the National Park whilst not adversely impacting on them. Policy 15 particularly seeks to ensure that proposals 'integrate with existing visitor facilities'.

The scheme is felt to be aligned with Policies 14 and 15 as the site is already a tourism facility and there would be essentially no change, and be broadly aligned to other relevant policies in the Northumberland National Park Core Strategy.

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

The NPPF provides a positive approach to rural developments where they help to diversify the local economy. In particular, paragraph 28 states that planning policies should '*support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity.*' It further states that, '*in order to promote a strong rural economy, local plans should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings.*'

The approval of this application would ensure the continued use of this building as a hotel, which would benefit the local economy, provide local employment, and assist in maintaining a historic building.

Paragraph 28 also states that '*sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside should be supported, and in particular where the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres.*'

It is interesting to note that there is currently no restaurant facility within the Otterburn Hall estate area, and so it could be argued that there is a need for this development, as it will benefit existing tourism at the site (for example those using holiday lodges and the caravan park).

When the Coach House is in operation, it will inevitably bring knock-on benefits elsewhere on the estate, which is currently in need of a 'lift'.

### Septic Tank

Detail has already been given with regard to the proposed location of the septic tank. However, it should be noted that discussions have already taken place between the applicant's septic tank agent and Mr Paul Fairhurst from the Environment Agency, and a scheme and size of septic tank has been agreed: A Klargestor BH Bio Disc 75 population equivalent Vessel with 1100mm invert to site is proposed.

This size is considered appropriate to the 14 bed hotel with the potential for 28 residents running at 80% occupancy, 5 full time staff and a restaurant serving up to 50 meals per day. It is assumed that the Environment Agency will issue a permit for discharge of the treated effluent to a 20:30:20 effluent standard and the discharge point will be to a drainage field in the wooded area with a high level overflow to the brook.

The installers indicate that the only evidence of the septic tank once installed, would be a manhole cover of 450mm diameter.

The scheme has been designed in accordance with the Environment Agency's PPG4: 'Treatment and Disposal of Sewage where no foul sewer is available', (2006). A Foul Drainage Assessment form submitted with the application has further detail.

### Lighting

There is no further lighting proposed.

### Conclusion

This statement provides supporting information to demonstrate that the proposed change of use from ancillary to primary C1 hotel/guest house use would comply with local and national planning policy, and provide an overall benefit to the area.

The heritage statement included in the report makes it clear that there are no negative impacts likely on any of the heritage assets at the site, or any other impacts, as the use of the building will essentially remain the same as the existing use. The installation of the septic tank would have no impact on any of the adjacent buildings, once in place.

It is therefore hoped that this application can be approved.



## Appendix A

### List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

**Name:** STABLE BLOCK TO NORTH-WEST OF OTTERBURN HALL

**List entry Number:** 1044867

**Location**

STABLE BLOCK TO NORTH-WEST OF OTTERBURN HALL

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

**County:**

**District:** Northumberland

**District Type:** Unitary Authority

**Parish:** Otterburn

**National Park:** NORTHUMBERLAND

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 18-Feb-1987

**Date of most recent amendment:** Not applicable to this List entry.

**Legacy System Information**

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

**Legacy System:** LBS

**UID:** 239706

**Asset Groupings**

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

**List entry Description**

**Summary of Building**

**Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.**

**Reasons for Designation**

**Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.**

**History**

**Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.**

**Details**

OTTERBURN OTTERBURN HALL NY 89 SE 25/46 Stable Block to 18.2.87 north-west of Otterburn Hall GV II

Stable block, now garages, storage and staff accommodation. c.1870 for Lord James Douglas. Brick in Flemish bond with ashlar dressings, Welsh slate roof.

In 4 sections:-

2-storey former coach house to right. On ground floor 4 bays with round-headed doorway in second bay, 2-light window to left and 2 segmental carriage arches to right. On 1st floor three 12-pane sashes in raised alternating-block surrounds. Single-storey, 4-bay centre section has boarded double doors; continuous C20 dormer in roof. Higher section to right has high segmental carriage arch to through passage. 3 hipped half dormers above.

Gabled roof. Outer sections have elaborate decorative bargeboards. 4 tall ridge stacks. Lower addition on right with hipped roof.

Included for group value.

Listing NGR: NY8832694367

Selected Sources

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details

National Grid Reference: NY 88326 94367

OTTERBURN HALL

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: OTTERBURN HALL

List entry Number: 1156287

Location

OTTERBURN HALL

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:

District: Northumberland

District Type: Unitary Authority

Parish: Otterburn

National Park: NORTHUMBERLAND

Grade: II

Date first listed: 18-Feb-1987

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 239705

Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

OTTERBURN OTTERBURN HALL NY 89 SE 25/45 Otterburn Hall 18.2.87 GV II

Country house, now hotel. 1870 for Lord James Douglas. Porch added and entrance front altered 1905 for Sir Charles Morrison-Bell. Billiard room added, and remodelled internally after a fire in 1930. Brick in Flemish bond with ashlar dressings, Welsh slate roof. Tudor style, irregular plan.

Entrance front 2 storeys, 5 bays and projecting 3-storey gabled right bay. In 2nd bay large 2-storey porch with pointed-arched doorway flanked by diagonal buttresses with offsets. Above a crest with a bird in a high-relief Baroque wreath, above that a face and swags. On 1st floor 4-light mullioned window, cornice with grotesque carvings and Tudor roses, gargoyles at the angles. Irregular centre 3 bays have large mullioned-and-transomed windows of 3, 4 and 8 lights, the latter an extruded bay. Cross-gabled right bay has mullioned-and-transomed cross windows and a 4-light window on 2nd floor. Decorative Baroque-style rainwater heads. Parapet front to main part. Elsewhere gabled roofs and tall brick stacks with stone cornices.

Large conservatory to rear with lean-to roofs around a taller, rectangular central section with hipped roof.

Late C20 extension to rear not of special interest.

Listing NGR: NY8838094333

Selected Sources

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details

National Grid Reference: NY 88380 94333