

**Additional Statement to support S.73 application to
vary Condition 2 on planning approval reference
16NP0025 at Otterburn Coach House, Otterburn**



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Introduction

This additional statement has been written to accompany an application made under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary or remove conditions associated with a planning permission. The permission in this case is planning approval reference 16NP0025 and the condition sought to be varied is Condition 2, which limits the approval to specific plans. Due to changes in the scheme implemented, a variation to this condition is sought, and revised plans have been submitted.

Although a Design and Access Statement is not required for S.73 applications, it was felt important to address particular issues arising from the application to vary the condition, and to explain the reasons for requiring this variation to the approved plans.

Planning History

Planning consent was granted on 21st April 2016 for the change of use of the Coach House to a 14 bed hotel/guest house including restaurant and installation of septic tank.

Subsequent to the approval, the applicant had the septic tank installed. Due to the size of septic tank required, and the drainage issues specific to the site, the tank had to be moved from the approved location, to a more central location in the car park. Site plans have been submitted to show the new location of the septic tank. Due to a misunderstanding with the installers (R A Dalton Ltd.), the system installed is not the same as that which was envisaged by the applicant. Copies of correspondence is available if needed.

This septic tank is now in situ, and has been operating since the 8th of August, when it was installed. The septic tank is not entirely underground, and servicing hatches protrude above ground, meaning that a fence was required to screen the tank from the surrounding area. This fence is also shown on the submitted plans.

On the 13th October the applicant received a letter from Northumberland National Park Authority, advising her that the development had not been built in accordance with the approved plans.

The application is therefore to vary Condition 2, and tie in a revised set of plans in to the approval, to regularise the change in location of the septic tank.

Site and Context

Clearly there are issues with the septic tank having been re-located, and these are addressed in turn:

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1. Change to parking layout

It is important to note that the area outside the red line boundary (the applicant's ownership) is part of the car park for the Coach House, and has been used as such since the Coach House was converted for use as an ancillary part of the Conference Centre at Otterburn Hall. There is therefore significantly more car parking available on site, than that shown on the plans. In reality, the car park is a large informal gravelled area, where there is sufficient parking for at least 30 cars. The photograph below shows the space available for car parking. Notwithstanding this, the site plans included in the application show that there is nevertheless sufficient space within the applicant's ownership boundary to accommodate 16 spaces despite the re-located septic tank.



Photo 1: Parking area at the Coach House



Photo 2: Parking area at the Coach House

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Photo 3: Extent of parking area to rear of Coach House

It seems clear therefore, that despite the change of location of the septic tank, there is still sufficient room for car parking at the Coach House.

2. Impact on historic buildings nearby

The Coach House and Otterburn Hall itself (opposite the car park) are grade II listed. The impact on the setting of these listed buildings therefore needs to be considered.

The original septic tank was proposed to be located within the wooded area to the side of the car park, and therefore be well screened. It was also assumed that there would only be a manhole cover visible, which of course would have resulted in no impact on the setting of the listed buildings.

The septic tank installed clearly has more of an impact, due to the visibility of the inspection chamber area.

The fencing around the septic tank does screen it well from the surrounding buildings, and it is considered that the overall impact on the setting of the buildings is therefore low, when considered in the wider context.

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Photo 4: Septic tank as seen from the rear of Otterburn Hall (other side of the road)

The fence will weather down over time, and the applicant has indicated that she would be willing to incorporate planting/hedgerow to soften the impact further if that were considered necessary.

The section of Otterburn Hall (currently being refurbished) which 'overlooks' the site is a 'wing' of the Hall, and not the main entrance. The septic tank is now located where the parked cars are shown on the photograph below (taken prior to installation of septic tank).



Photo 5: Otterburn Hall from car park

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So, although there is some impact on the setting of the Hall and to some extent, the Coach House, it is not considered to be significant, and the use of the area as a car park means that there is already an impact on the setting of these buildings, and an impact that is inevitable to maintain the commercial viability of the listed buildings.

It is therefore hoped that this application to vary the original approval to incorporate a revised siting of the septic tank, can therefore be approved.