

Design and Access Statement

The Library – Tasset and Greystead



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been written to accompany a part-retrospective planning application for the sub-division of a single dwelling house into a dwelling house with a first-floor holiday-let flat, retention of external stair to access the flat, and the installation of timber cladding to part of the exterior on the front, side and part of the rear elevations as well as the creation of a small balcony over an existing single storey garage at The Library in Tarset.

2.0 The Site

2.1 The Library is shown on the accompanying site and location plans. It is situated to the north of Greenhaugh village. It has a property directly adjoining (West Burnbank), and both properties are situated off the main road, down a long drive. As such, the property is not visible from the road, and occupies a secluded area sloping down towards the valley floor.

2.2 The area to the front of the property is not in the applicant's ownership, and a Certificate B form has therefore been completed. The applicant does have a right of access to her property, and a right to use the land to the front of the property for parking. For the purposes of the application, the access and land to the front has been included in the application site.

2.3 The Library is not a listed building, and is not in a conservation area. It is within the Northumberland National Park.

3.0 The Proposal

3.1 This planning application seeks consent (retrospectively) for the sub-division of the dwelling to provide a one bedroom, self-contained holiday-let flat within the existing dwelling house. It also seeks consent for the retention of an external staircase that was provided to access the holiday let. In addition, small scale material works to the exterior of the building, consisting of the provision of timber cladding and render are proposed, and this includes works for the creation of a balcony area to serve the holiday let flat.

3.2 Material Works

3.3 The proposal is to improve the appearance of the building from its front elevation by installing larch cladding, and rendering parts of the property.

3.4 The proposal is also to create a balcony above the single garage to the eastern end of the house. This balcony would have a glass enclosure to the north and east, allowing uninterrupted views of the countryside, and a parapet wall to the south (to be created by building up the height of the existing wall on the garage). The glass enclosure to the north and east would allow the occupants to appreciate the surrounding view, whilst the parapet wall to the south would maintain the privacy of neighbours and people using the terrace.

3.5 There are no issues related to overlooking, or privacy, as there are no dwellings visible from the balcony in this direction. The construction of a solid parapet wall to the south will ensure there are no privacy or amenity impacts on West Burnbank, the adjacent property.

3.6 Change of Use

3.7 The proposal includes the sub-division of the house to provide a self-contained holiday-let flat on the first floor. This is a small-scale venture, with the holiday flat containing one bedroom, and therefore only being suitable for couples. The flat is marketed as a 'stargazing' opportunity, and the creation of a balcony will allow visitors to view the night sky.

3.8 The site plan shows the provision of three parking spaces, one of which would be to serve the proposed holiday let. It is not proposed to formally mark out the spaces.

4.0 Planning History

4.1 There is no planning history on this site, although a pre-application enquiry was submitted by the applicant, in July 2017 (reference 17/0046) which indicated that officers would be likely to support all aspects of the application.

5.0 Local Planning Policy

5.1 Planning decisions are determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Northumberland National Park Authority is in the process of producing a new Local Plan for the National Park. This Plan is in the very early stages of preparation, and does not at this stage form part of the Development Plan.

5.2 The Development Plan in this case, is therefore the Northumberland National Park Core Strategy (2009), the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance.

5.3 Policy 3 relates to General Development Principles in the National Park. It is considered that the material elements of this scheme accord with the provisions set out in Policy 3. It conserves the special qualities of the National Park, and will enhance the external appearance of the dwelling. The materials are appropriate to the National Park, and to the existing building, and there are no impacts on amenity. The scheme complies with all other elements of that policy.

5.4 The sub-division of the house to provide small-scale tourism accommodation accords with planning policies set out in the Core Strategy, and in particular Policy 14 which seeks to support a sustainable local economy. This policy states:

In order to create and retain a sustainable local economy the National Park Authority will support proposals which enable:

- a) *The creation of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses which relate to the special qualities of the National Park but do not negatively impact on them;*
- b) *The expansion of existing employment uses particularly tourism, recreation, farming and other types of diversification which do not negatively impact on the special qualities; and*
- c) *Home-based employment activities which do not adversely affect neighbours or neighbouring land uses.*

5.5 This proposal is for a small-scale tourism facility, which is based on the special qualities of the National Park, and in particular related to the Dark Sky National Park. The balcony proposed will enable visitors to view the night sky in this area that is world renowned for its dark skies. There are no negative impacts anticipated in association with this use. The flat has been used for holiday accommodation for over a year, with no negative effects reported.

5.6 The other works to the exterior are designed to enhance the appearance of the property, and improve the design externally, and are not considered to be in conflict with planning policy.

6.0 National Planning Policy Framework

6.1 The NPPF supports high quality design and chapter 7 provides detailed guidance on this subject. It is considered that this scheme introduces an innovative design, which re-enforces local distinctiveness. The applicant has worked with the Local Planning Authority, through pre-application discussions, to ensure that the proposal has been designed in accordance with principles set out in the Northumberland National Park Authority's design guidance.

- 6.2 Paragraph 28 supports economic growth in rural areas, and promotes a strong rural economy, including supporting tourism in rural areas.

7.0 Sustainable Development

- 7.1 Policy 1 of the Northumberland National Park Core Strategy requires all applications to submit a 'Sustainability Statement' to demonstrate the sustainability of all proposals. It is considered that this proposal would have no negative impact on sustainability. The use of natural materials, and contemporary design will enhance the visual appearance of the building.
- 7.2 The tourism facility is compatible with the purposes of the National Park, and would have no negative impact on the amenity of nearby residents.
- 7.3 The Library is located in Greenhaugh, a settlement that has some services and facilities, including a local pub (The Hollybush Inn).

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 It is hoped that this proposal will be approved as it complies with local and national planning policy, and constitutes sustainable development within the context of the NPPF.