



# **Yearle House Wooler Northumberland**

**Provision of Biomass Boiler  
and Associated Building**

## **PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

January 2021

Client:

Myles Mahon  
Tip Top Hospitality  
Yearle House  
Wooler  
Northumberland  
NE71 6RB

## Provision of Biomass Boiler and Associated Building

Address:

Yearle House  
Wooler  
Northumberland  
NE71 6RB

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A planning statement prepared by:

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## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This planning, design and access statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr Myles Mahon of Tip Top Hospitality (the applicant) to accompany a full planning application for the provision of a Biomass Boiler and associated building at Yearle House, Wooler, Northumberland NE71 6RB.

1.2 The purpose of this statement is to assess the development proposals against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and the Northumberland National Park Local Plan. It also sets out the applicant's approach to the principle of the development; design and amenity; and the impact on National Park special qualities.

### **Proposed Development**

1.4 This full planning application seeks permission for:

'Provision of Biomass Boiler and Associated Building'

### **Accompanying Submission**

1.5 The planning application was/is submitted, and accompanied by the following documentation:

- Application Forms and Certificates;
- Site Location Plan and Site Plan as Existing;
- Site Location Plan and Site Plan as Proposed;
- Existing and Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations;
- Photographs of the site and surrounding area;
- Planning Design and Access Statement (this document);

1.6 The above submissions were prepared having regard to the Northumberland National Park's (NNP) Validation Checklist in relation to the application proposals.

### **Structure**

1.7 The remainder of this statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2: Site Surroundings
- Section 3: Planning History
- Section 4: Planning Policy Context
- Section 5: Principle of Development
- Section 6: Delivering Sustainable Development
- Section 7: Conclusions

## 2.0 Site Surroundings

2.1 Yearle House is located within the small hamlet of Earle, approximately two miles south of Wooler, within the Northumberland National Park. Built in 1759 Yearle House occupies a commanding position on the edge of the hamlet, with outstanding views into the hills.

2.2 The dwelling has, from its relatively humble start, evolved into a significant family home with expansion into the ancillary quarters and the adjoining outbuildings and cottages. The main family accommodation is on the ground and first floors. The property also has other accommodation and vast gardens associated with it, including the following;

### *Garden Flat*

2.3 Adjoining the rear of the house are the old garages, with a mechanics pit, and over which is a separate flat with sitting room, kitchen, bathroom and two bedrooms. This flat is currently let on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy.

### *The Stable Cottage*

2.4 A self-contained cottage on two floors which has been partly refurbished. It has a large hall, sitting room with door out into a private garden area; two bedrooms and a bathroom are on the first floor. This cottage is currently vacant.

### *Bothy Cottage*

2.5 Tucked away at the end of the garden is the Bothy Cottage. It has ground floor accommodation comprising 2 bedrooms, sitting room/kitchen and bathroom. This cottage is let as holiday accommodation.

### *Garden and Grounds*

2.6 The gardens are a special feature. There are two distinct parts with a simple lawn and borders around the house, woodland garden beyond and below a walled garden. The main drive sweeps up to the back of the house, flanked by Rhododendrons, and the back drive runs through the old Yearle Estate steading.

## 3.0 Planning History

3.1 The identified planning history of the site dates back to 1988 and is detailed below:

- Application Reference: C/85/B/059  
Description: Detailed application for siting of static caravan.  
Decision: Permitted (27/06/1985)
- Application Reference: C/91/B/701  
Description: Renewal of planning permission 85/B/059 for siting of static caravan.  
Decision: Permitted (10/03/1992)

## **4.0 Planning Policy Context**

4.1 This section identifies the key national and local planning policies which are of relevance to the application proposals.

4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that if regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### **Adopted Development Plan**

4.3 At the time of writing, the Development Plan for the area comprises of the:

- Saved policies of the Northumberland National Park Local Plan
- NNPA Building Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (Design Guide SPD)
- NNPA Landscape Supplementary Planning Document (Landscape SPD)

4.4 The relevant Development Management policies are outlined below and are referred to in more detail later in this planning statement.

### **Northumberland National Park Local Plan**

4.5 Those saved Northumberland National Park Local Plan Policies considered to be of relevance to this application are as follows:

- Policy ST1 Sustainable Development
- Policy ST2 General Development Principles
- Policy ST4 Spatial Strategy
- Policy DM2 Householder Development
- Policy DM11 Landscape, Tranquillity and Dark Night Skies
- Policy DM13 Renewable Energy

### **NNPA Building Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (Design Guide SPD)**

### **NNPA Landscape Supplementary Planning Document (Landscape SPD)**

### **National Planning Policy**

4.6 In terms of Government policy, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) are also material considerations in determining this application.

4.7 The NPPF provides advice regarding the weight that should be given by Local Planning Authorities to adopted and emerging Development Plan Policy in decision taking.

4.8 With regard to adopted Development Plan policies, the NPPF states at paragraph 48 states that decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

4.9 In terms of overall approach, Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The policies, taken as a whole, constitute the Government’s view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system. Paragraph 8 continues by stating that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

4.10 The NPPF introduces a presumption in favour of sustainable development and advises at Paragraph 11 in respect of decision-taking that this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.

4.11 Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole or specific policy in the NPPF indicates that development should be restricted.

## **5.0 Principle of Development**

5.1 The NPPF maintains that the starting point for the determination of planning applications remains with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Policies within the Northumberland National Park Local Plan (NNPLP) provide the basis against which to assess this application, with the NPPF forming a material consideration during this process.

5.2 The NPPF supports a presumption in favour of sustainable development with regard to decision making. Policy ST4 of the NNPLP directs new development to a series of settlements named within the policy. Earle is not located within one of the named settlements, therefore it is considered to fall within the open countryside. The NNPLP Policy STP4 states that, in the open countryside (amongst other policies), development will be permitted where it *‘is supported by other relevant Local Plan policies’*. With regard to other policies, Policies DM2 and DM13 of the NNPLP is considered to be relevant.

5.3 It is recognised in Policy DM2 of the NNPLP that development proposals within the domestic curtilage of a property is considered acceptable throughout the National Park, subject to taking full account of the character of the local area and the special qualities of the National Park, and that the scale, height, form, position and design of the new development do not detract from the character and form of the original dwelling or its setting in the landscape. With regard to criteria 3 of NNPLP Policy DM2, as the proposals relate to the replacement of a now collapsed outbuilding within the residential curtilage, the outbuilding should be required for purposes incidental to the residential use of the main dwelling; any new or extended outbuilding should be proportionate in size; and new outbuildings should be appropriately sited in relation to the existing built development on site.

5.4 Policy DM13 of the NNPLP focuses on supporting take up of small-scale renewable energy schemes that will reduce costs and generate revenue for local communities and businesses. The supporting text to the policy also suggests that the National Park has the potential to contribute to the reduction in energy demand, and the supply of renewable energy at a household or community level. Support is given within the Policy DM13 that are of a scale and design appropriate to their locality; respect the existing landscape

character type as defined in the Northumberland National Park Landscape Character Assessment; do not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the special qualities of the National Park; and do not unacceptably impact natural resources.

5.5 On the basis of the above, it is considered that the principle of the provision of an enclosed Biomass Boiler, within a building of similar dimensions to the now collapsed outbuilding, should be considered acceptable in this location. Therefore, having regard to the relevant policies in the Development Plan and also, in giving weight to national policy, it is considered that the principle of this proposal in the Northumberland National Park would accord with the NPPF, notwithstanding the sites location out with any settlement boundary.

### **Design and Amenity**

5.6 NNPLP Strategic Policy ST1 supports development proposals which *‘Protects or enhances the landscape character of the National Park through use of high quality design, appropriate landscaping and removal of unsightly development’*. NNPLP Strategic Policy ST2 advises that proposals are to be of a *‘high quality design that will make a positive contribution to the National Park’s special qualities and the local environment incorporating high quality construction materials and design details that reflect or complement the local vernacular’*.

5.7 With regard to these proposals, the building proposed to house the Biomass boiler will be on the existing footprint on the now collapsed outbuilding. As the proposed new building would still be of a modest scale, and located to the side of the property, it can be accommodated with minimal impact on the character of the property and the surrounding environment.

5.8 NNPLP Policy ST2 states that development will be permitted where *‘The proposal will not have an unacceptable adverse impact upon the amenities of occupiers’*. In support of this, NNPLP Policy DM2 seeks to ensure that new householder development *‘does not unacceptably affect the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers or result in adequate levels of amenity for the existing dwelling’*. The nearest residential property is located 25m to the North East of the proposed building, separated by mature vegetation, trees and hedges. It is therefore not considered that the proposals would have any material impact on the residential amenity of the occupiers of any neighbouring properties. other property. The proposals are therefore considered to accord with the requirements of Local Plan policies ST2 and DM2 in relation to residential amenity.

5.9 On the basis of the above, it is considered that the proposals can be accommodated without an unacceptable impact on neighbouring properties, the character of the property, or the surrounding area, according with NNPLP Policies ST1, ST2 and DM2 with regard to design and amenity.

### **Landscape, Tranquillity and Dark Skies**

5.10 Policy DM11 of the NNPLP states that the natural beauty and heritage of the Northumberland National Park will be conserved and enhanced, whilst being responsive landscape change. Part 5 of Policy DM11 seeks to ensure that *‘the visual impact of the development in its immediate and wider setting is minimised through high quality design that reflects local landscape character with particular regard to scale, siting, materials and colour’* and *‘the cumulative and/or sequential landscape and visual effect of development do not detract from the natural beauty of the National Park and the experience of tranquillity’*. The proposed works will not extend the footprint of built development on site to accommodate the new Biomass boiler. It is therefore considered that any impact on landscape character and visual amenity outside of those discussed in relation to design are negligible.

5.11 Policy DM11 of the NNPLP also states that *‘The level of noise, traffic and light generated as a result of the development during construction and thereafter is minimised and dark night skies maintained’* and *‘All development proposals should avoid external lighting where possible. Where external lighting is necessary its design should avoid all*



*unacceptable adverse impacts, or as a last resort mitigate them to the greatest possible extent in order to avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on tranquillity, dark skies, biodiversity, visual amenity, landscape character and heritage significance’.*

5.12 No new external lighting is proposed. It is therefore considered that the proposals would be in accordance with the requirements of Local Plan policy in relation to dark skies. Further, the proposed development simply relates to the replacement of a now collapsed outbuilding to house the Biomass boiler, to provide renewable energy to the house. Notwithstanding the construction phase, the proposals will not generate additional vehicle movements/traffic or noise which would have any material impact on the tranquillity of the National Park. The proposals are therefore considered to accord with the requirements of Local Plan policy DM11 in relation to Landscape, Tranquillity and Dark Skies.

## **6.0 Delivering Sustainable Development**

6.1 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means (unless material considerations indicate otherwise) approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay, and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless:

- Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
- Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

6.2 Paragraph 8 provides the key starting point against which the sustainability of a development proposal should be assessed. This identifies three dimensions to sustainable development, an economic role, a social role and an environmental role.

6.3 Proposals should contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.

6.4 Proposals should also support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being and contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

6.5 Sustainable development is therefore about change for the better and positive growth which makes economic, environmental and social progress. The planning system is about helping to make this happen. As a result, and in order to fulfil its purpose of helping achieve sustainable development, planning must not simply be about scrutiny but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which we live our lives.

6.6 The proposals entirely relate to the provision of renewable energy for the building. Sustainable development is the key priority of the NPPF. Therefore, this application fully accords with the core principals as well as Paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

6.7 Moreover, when assessing the proposals against the sustainability criteria set out in the NPPF, it is clear that there are no environmental constraints that cannot be resolved; that there would be no adverse impact on the natural environment; that the proposals contribute to building a sustainable community; and that the development will reflect the principles of efficiency.

6.8 It has been demonstrated that, overall, the development proposals meet the NPPF and Development Plan environmental sustainability objectives. There are no significant environment effects generated by the proposals. Given the nature of the site, the drawings submitted show the scheme proposed is proportionate to the existing range of buildings, and will be no different in built form, with the exception of raising the roof height marginally, than the existing (now collapsed), ensuring that there will be no detrimental impact on the area or any impact on the landscape, tranquillity and dark skies.

6.9 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF goes on to advise how the three roles of sustainable development are mutually dependant and should not be undertaken in isolation. It makes clear that to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

6.10 It is therefore considered that the proposed development of the site is sustainable in terms of its economic, social and environmental roles. Overall, the principle of development on the site is considered to be acceptable and the site would be a suitable location for this type of development.

## **7.0 Conclusions**

7.1 The proposals represent an honest form of sustainable development and fully comply with the core aims set out in Paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

7.2 The changes proposed would be in keeping with the form and style of the properties in the vicinity and would be sympathetic to the surrounding area and would not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity.

7.3 The principle of the increase in the ridge height of this single storey structure to provide a better functioning space for the Biomass boiler, is considered acceptable and in accordance with the development plan for the area.

7.4 Landscaping would remain as existing, and no encroachment into the surrounding land would occur.

7.5 There would be no amenity issues raised by any part of the application. The proposals are therefore considered to accord with the NPPF, and Local Plan Policies. There would be sufficient parking facilities and so the development would accord with Local Plan Policies in this respect.

7.6 This statement has assessed the proposals against national and local planning policy objectives as set out in the NPPF and Development Plans and the assessment of the policies and application proposals have concluded that this planning application should be approved.

7.7 The Applicant has comprehensively demonstrated that the granting of planning permission and future development of the site would not bring about impact which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of granting planning permission or have an adverse impact on the landscape, tranquillity and dark skies.

7.8 The Local Planning Authority are therefore invited to support these proposals.