



# Northumberland County Council

## Conservation-Ecology-Archaeology

### MEMORANDUM

**To: Colin Godfrey, Planning Officer**  
**From: Val Robson, Building Conservation Officer**  
**Date: 19/3/2021**  
**Reference: 20NP0011LBC**  
**Proposal: Installation of 2 new doors**  
**Address: Ridge End Bastle House, Falstone**

#### Significance

Ridge End Bastle House is a grade II listed building which dates from the 16th Century, with an extended wing to the left which dates from around 1800. It is constructed from large random rubble stones with a boulder plinth and has a Welsh slate roof.

#### Legislative Framework and Policy

In providing comments on applications Building Conservation has regard to Section 16 (2) and Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which advise that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

In addition, the NPPF is a material Planning consideration in the assessment of the application.

Section 12 of the 2018 NPPF is about achieving well-designed places.

Paragraph 124 of section 12 advises that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 130 of section 12 advises that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.

In addition, Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the 2018 NPPF is a material Planning consideration in the assessment of the application.

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

Paragraph 194 advises that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 195 advises that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply: a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Paragraph 196 advises that 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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets 2015 should also be taken into consideration in the assessment of this proposal.

### **Assessment of Development Proposals**

The proposal is to replace the existing two solid doors with doors which have glazed top halves. The Heritage Statement indicated that both doors were installed in 2006.

The existing door to the original Bastle House is a solid timber door with a tudor arched top. The new door would have the same detail but would have 4 glazed panes to the top

half of the door. This would give a very modern and less solid appearance to this door, out of keeping with the solidity and defensible character of the Bastle house.

The existing middle door, which is currently a vertically panelled timber door is proposed to be replaced with a stable door, which opens into two halves at a central point, and which would be glazed to the upper half and divided into 4 glazing panes. Whilst a stable door does exist on this elevation, this does not mean that a second stable door is acceptable. In addition this door is positioned closer to the junction with the original Bastle House and the main Bastle door and therefore the impact of its alteration upon the significance of the Bastle House would be greater.

It is proposed that both doors be stained oak. The staining of doors is not a traditional finish and any new doors should be timber with a painted finish.

It is considered the proposed replacement of solid doors with half glazed doors would take away the solidity of form and robust appearance which the existing doors have and which is a contributory factor towards the significance and special character of this important 16th century Bastle House. The requirement for additional light into the hallways is not a valid reason for causing harm to the significance of this important heritage asset.

Evidence should be provided of the age of the existing doors and if they are relatively new and are in poor condition, then there would be no objection to their replacement with high quality timber doors of the same style as existing. Such doors should have a painted finish.

### **Conclusion**

The existing proposals are contrary to Section 16 (2) and Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act and would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of this important listed building without any public benefit, as outlined in paragraph 196 of the NPPF, and should therefore be refused.

**Val Robson**  
**Building Conservation Officer**