

## Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement in respect of

### Proposed Change of Use from eight bedroom dwelling to four guest bedroom Bed and Breakfast with four bedroom owners accommodation

#### Yearle House, Wooler, Northumberland, NE71 6RB

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Yearle House is a substantial detached property within generous grounds located to the south of the small hamlet of Earle. The property is within the National Park with the boundary being located directly to the north of the property.
- 1.2 The original property dates from 1759 and has been substantially altered and extended over time to give the current arrangements.
- 1.3 The main property currently comprises six bedrooms (one en-suite) at first floor level with a further two bedrooms at second floor level.
- 1.4 This proposal is to form four bed and breakfast guest rooms at first floor level each of which would have en-suite of private facilities, with a further four bedrooms at second floor level for owner's accommodation.
- 1.5 While the total number of bedrooms within the property does not increase, it is recognised that the proposal does represent an intensification of use in comparison to how the house has been used for a number of years.

#### 2.0 Justification for the Change of Use

- 2.1 The proposed change of use allows this fantastic building to be retained as a single house and will still be a permanent family home for the owners and their children. This accords with policy ST4 which states that development will be permitted in the open countryside *"where development reuses a building in a way that supports an economic use"*. The proposed change of use will provide an income stream for Yearle House which will help to safeguard the property moving forwards.
- 2.2 Policy DM6 requires the building to *"be of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed use without the need for significant alterations, extensions or other new buildings"*. The proposed change of use certainly satisfies policy DM6 as there are no additions proposed to the building and no alterations to the external appearance of the building. The internal alterations to the building are minimal.
- 2.3 Policy DM7 states that proposals must *"provide and protect opportunities for people to increase their awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the national park"*.

The proposed change of use will allow visitors to stay in high quality accommodation within the National Park which will provide opportunities to experience the special qualities of the park.

By staying in a Bed and Breakfast with owners who live and work in the area, guests will benefit from the knowledge and awareness of the area that the owners will be able to provide to allow them to get the maximum possible benefit from staying within the boundaries of the park.

### **3.0 Amount of Development**

- 3.1 Alterations to be undertaken to the building to accommodate the proposed change of use are minimal. There will be no work undertaken which either extends the building or alters the external appearance of the building. No additional external lighting will be fitted to the building.
- 3.2 Internally, there is a requirement for the construction of non load bearing partitions at first floor level adjacent to the landing to provide guest bedrooms two and three with en-suite bathroom accommodation.
- 3.3 This is in preference to forming permanent openings in existing load bearing walls of the property.
- 3.4 Elsewhere, a new kitchen will be fitted and other rooms will have re-allocated names and uses to provide guests with country house accommodation while providing some private space for the owners and their family.
- 3.5 No works are proposed within existing roof spaces that could affect protected species.

### **4.0 Access, Car Parking and Cycle Parking**

- 4.1 At present, existing car parking for the house and for the adjoining Stable Cottage and Garden Flat are located in the gravel area to the front of the house. There is currently comfortable parking for five or six cars.
- 4.2 It is proposed to provide additional parking for eight cars on permeable gravel surfaces to the north west of the site as indicated on the proposed site plan.  
  
This will give parking for up to thirteen cars to serve the bed and breakfast guest rooms, owners and two holiday cottages.
- 4.3 The proposed new car parking areas are located to be away from the nearest adjacent properties to minimise noise and disturbance to nearby properties. The proposed parking areas are screened from nearby properties by mature hedging and will not be visible.
- 4.4 The location of the additional parking is away from the main house so as not to detract from the setting of Yearle House in its current setting.
- 4.5 All guests will be required to use the main drive to the east of the house to ensure that there is no increased traffic using the access to the north which runs close to existing nearby dwellings. This will be achieved by way of discreet signage and information provided to guests prior to arrival.  
  
There is ample space on site for all cars to be able to turn around and exit the site in a forwards direction.
- 4.6 In accordance with pre-applications recommendations from NCC highways, cycle parking will be provided at Yearle House. As shown on the proposed site plan it is proposed to install "sheffield" type cycle stands to allow the secure parking of 6No bicycles.

## **5.0 Foul Drainage Assessment**

- 5.1 At the present time, there is a septic tank discharging to a filter bed system that serves Yearle House and seven other properties within the hamlet.
- 5.2 Prices are currently being sought from specialist contractors to replace the existing system with a new packaged sewage treatment system which will have the capacity to serve the proposed arrangements at Yearle House along with the other existing properties that are served by the current arrangements.
- 5.3 The proposed new installation will be by a specialist contractor including obtaining all necessary permits and consents from The Environment Agency

## **6.0 Noise Management**

- 6.1 It is anticipated that the only increased noise relating to this application will be the increased number of cars entering and exiting Yearle House. Given that the maximum number of guest rooms under this application is four, there will be no more than four additional cars on site in comparison to the current arrangements.
- 6.2 It is proposed that guests will be required to use the drive to the east of the site which will minimise traffic noise close to the nearby properties.
- 6.3 Check in time for guests under this proposal will be between 4.00pm and 7.00pm. It is not anticipated that guests will be arriving at Yearle House or leaving late at night that could cause a loss of amenity to neighbouring properties.
- 6.4 The owners will be permanent residents at Yearle House and will obviously ensure that guests are not making excessive noise at any time. This is for their own amenity as well as that of the neighbouring properties.

## **7.0 Utility Supplies**

- 7.1 Yearle House now benefits from a Biomass heating system to ensure that the property is run in an environmentally conscious way.
- 7.2 The incoming electricity supply to the property is more than adequate for the loads placed on it under these proposals.
- 7.3 The private water supply serving Yearle House comes from a borehole located in the gardens to the north east of the property. The installation is regularly serviced and the supply of water is more than adequate for the demand that will occur under these proposals.

## **8.0 Refuse Storage**

- 8.1 A refuse storage area for general waste and recycling is provided to the north east of the site. The area is sufficient for ten wheelie bins within the dedicated area and is screened to ensure that the amenity of the house and the neighbouring properties is not affected.

## 9.0 Conclusion

9.1 The proposed change of use will ensure that Yearle House can remain as a single family dwelling to be enjoyed by a family living and working in the National Park. The Bed and Breakfast element of the property will provide an income stream and accords with planning policies ST4, DM6 and DM7.

9.2 The proposals do not require any alterations to the external appearance of the building while internal alterations are minimal.

9.3 While the proposal will result in some increased traffic movements and an intensification of use in terms of services, it is considered that the impact will be negligible when managed correctly.

The use of the east drive by guests, the location of the additional parking and the management of noise by the owners will ensure that there is no loss of amenity to the surrounding properties.

9.4 In addition to the income stream provided to Yearle House, guests of Yearle House will make a significant contribution to the local economy with their spend in the local area, while the bed and breakfast business will provide work to other local businesses.

9.5 High quality visitor accommodation such as that proposed at Yearle House is needed by both the National Park and the wider Northumberland area and will have a positive impact on the local economy.

9.6 We would consider that the proposal is of benefit to Yearle House and the wider area and we would ask officers and members to consider the application for approval.

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