

# **ALNBANK HOUSE, ALNWICK**

## **HERITAGE ASSET STATEMENT /DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

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TO SUPPORT APPLICATION FOR REMOVAL OF CONDITION 2 OF CONSENT 19/00582/VARYCO FOR" ANCILLARY ACCOMMODATION – THE DEVELOPMENT HEREBY PERMITTED SHALL BE USED IN ACCORDANCE WITH AND ANCILLARY TO THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS ALNBANK HOUSE AT ALL TIMES AND SHALL NOT BE USED AS SEPARATE INDEPENDENT ACCMODATION"

**9<sup>th</sup> JULY 2021**

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Planning | Regeneration  
Green Infrastructure

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CHECKING:

Type	<b>HERITAGE ASSET STATEMENT/DESIGN &amp; ACCESS STATEMENT</b>
Client	Mr. M Rodgerson
Client Reference	Alnbank House
Our Reference	MD2_864
Produced by	G. McGill
Checked by	P. Davies
Submitted	9 <sup>th</sup> July 2021

Report checked: Mr. Paul Davies

Report Author: Mr. Glenn McGill

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Post: The Dene, 36 Nevilledale Terrace, Durham, DH1 4QG  
Email: glenn.mcgill@md2.org.uk  
Mobile: 07966 066205

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# 1. INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE OF STATEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Alnbank House is a Grade II Listed Building situated in Alnmouth Road (A1086) in Alnwick NE66 2PR.
- 1.2 This statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr. M. Rodgerson, the applicant and owner of Alnbank House. The application approved on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021 was for "*Non-material amendment: Variation of condition 2 of consent 16/01958/FUL to enable the Council to proceed with determination of application 19/00582/VARYCO in order to utilise roof space as living accommodation*" at this property.
- 1.3 This application precipitated the imposition of a planning condition to restrict residential occupancy leading to a further planning application for Removal of Condition 2 of Consent 19/00582/VARYCO for "*Ancillary Accommodation - the development hereby permitted shall be used in accordance with and ancillary to the property known as Alnbank House at all times and shall not be used as separate independent accommodation*".
- 1.4 The Local Planning Authority requires a further statement for purposes of validation, even though this application proposes very few amendments to the approved layout.
- 1.5 This combined Heritage Asset Statement/Design and Access Statement replaces previous statements linked to previously approved applications. The main focus of the statement relates to the historic environment and the impact of the design upon it, but reference is also made to design and access issues, as required.

## THE PURPOSE OF A HERITAGE STATEMENT

- 1.6 Heritage Statements are essential, critical and informative documents used to support any application which impacts upon a heritage asset. This includes Listed Building applications, proposals for development in Conservation Areas and proposals which affect a heritage asset of any kind, including both designated and non-designated heritage assets. Where appropriate, these statements are required for purposes of validation of an application, thereby allowing an application to be formally assessed, considered and suitably determined.
- 1.7 A Heritage Statement records the heritage that we have around us through a process that involves research, site investigation and recording to produce a document that will ensure that a Local Planning Authority is fully informed about how specific proposals will impact upon the heritage environment. In turn, this allows the Local Planning Authority to assess the merits of a given proposal, thereby facilitating an informed judgement leading to a decision on whether proposals that affect a heritage asset should be approved or else refused.

## THE POLICY BASIS OF A HERITAGE STATEMENT

- 1.8 Statements of significance, referred to in this guidance as Heritage Statements, became compulsory in March 2010 when PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment was published. This requirement was re-affirmed following the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012 and more recently with the replacement NPPF (July 2018) with subsequent updates in February 2019. Section 16 of the new document is most relevant to the application, notably paragraphs 189-192 regarding proposals affecting heritage assets and paragraphs 193 -196 on consideration of potential impacts on heritage assets.
- 1.9 The NPPF requires, amongst other things, that local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of such heritage assets and of putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. They are also obliged to consider the positive contribution that conserving such heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality. Furthermore, in this case, where proposed development may affect a heritage asset or its setting, an assessment is required in order to ascertain the potential impact of prospective proposals.
- 1.10 The Heritage Asset needs to be considered with reference the National Heritage List produced by English Heritage which covers, amongst other things, Listed Buildings and Ancient Monuments.
- 1.11 In addition to national guidance, this statement has been prepared in accordance with "Heritage Statement Guidance" and "Listed Building Guidance" issued by Northumberland County Council which are both available via the following links:
  - <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Planning-and-Building/Conservation/Heritage-Statement-Guidance.pdf>
  - <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Planning/Conservation>Listed.aspx>
- 1.12 Finally, relevant development plan policies must be considered at local level and where appropriate, any available Conservation Area Character Appraisals and locally listed buildings.

## THE CONTENT OF A HERITAGE STATEMENT

- 1.13 What might be needed in a Heritage Statement depends on the nature of the asset and the level of intervention proposed and may require specialist inputs, contributions or advice. However, as the NPPF states, "the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance".

- 1.14 A Heritage Statement should set out details of the '*history and development*' of the asset, using available photographic, map, archival and fabric evidence. It should be accompanied by a '*photographic record*', showing the site context and spaces and features which might be affected by the proposal, wherever possible cross-referenced to '*survey drawings*'. It should include an assessment of the archaeological, architectural, historical or other '*significance*' of the asset. It will also normally be necessary to include an assessment of the '*impact*' of the proposed works on the significance of the asset and how this will affect its enjoyment by current and future generations, and a statement of '*justification*' for those works, together with details of any '*mitigation*' measures proposed.
- 1.15 The Heritage Statement can be a freestanding report or else can form part of another supporting document, such as a Design and Access Statement or Planning Statement. In this case, we have provided joint statements (for Heritage/Design and Access).
- 1.16 The preparation of different but related statements enables not only the specific impacts and their significance to be evaluated, but judgements to be made about the way that proposed changes can impact upon the setting of an area and its sense of place which can evolve over time. Elements of a setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may even be neutral.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING

- 1.17 It is a well-established principle of good conservation practice that 'understanding' should inform the management of change in the historic environment. One of English Heritage's Conservation Principles is that "*understanding the significance of places is vital... in order to identify the significance of a place, it is necessary first to understand its fabric and how and why it has changed over time*". This is both common sense and good practice. Gaining understanding is a necessary part of the responsible management of change. It should help to avoid negative impacts and be aimed towards achieving creative and sensitive solutions.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THIS STATEMENT

- 1.18 The statement identifies the application site within its context and its heritage status and describes the heritage asset within the context of the development undertaken subject to the submitted application, as set out in this statement and the associated plans and information submitted with it. It further details the history, character, appearance and extent of the asset and its local context. A comment on the statutory heritage protection of the properties has been included. A general appraisal of the immediate surroundings and associated impacts will similarly be addressed and considered.

- 1.19 A statement of the significance of the asset will follow to include an assessment of the impact of the amendments to the approved design, including elements 'as built'.
- 1.20 Analysis of the impact of the proposal on the designated buildings will be provided, followed by a final conclusion. Appendices provide details of the heritage asset listing.
- 1.20 The submission lodged reflects discussions our client has had with several different case officers and other officers in the past, who have variously dealt with his recent proposals taking into account the advice they have given.

## 2. APPLICATION SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

### LOCAL CONTEXT

- 2.1 The property is situated towards the outskirts of the town, to the south east of Alnwick town centre close to the junction between the B6346, Springfield Park, South Road and Alnmouth Road (A1068) linking Alnwick with Alnmouth. The site of the property, immediately east of the junction, is shown edged red on Figure 1.
- 2.2 It should be noted that although Alnbank House is a Listed Building, it is not within the Alnwick Conservation Area.

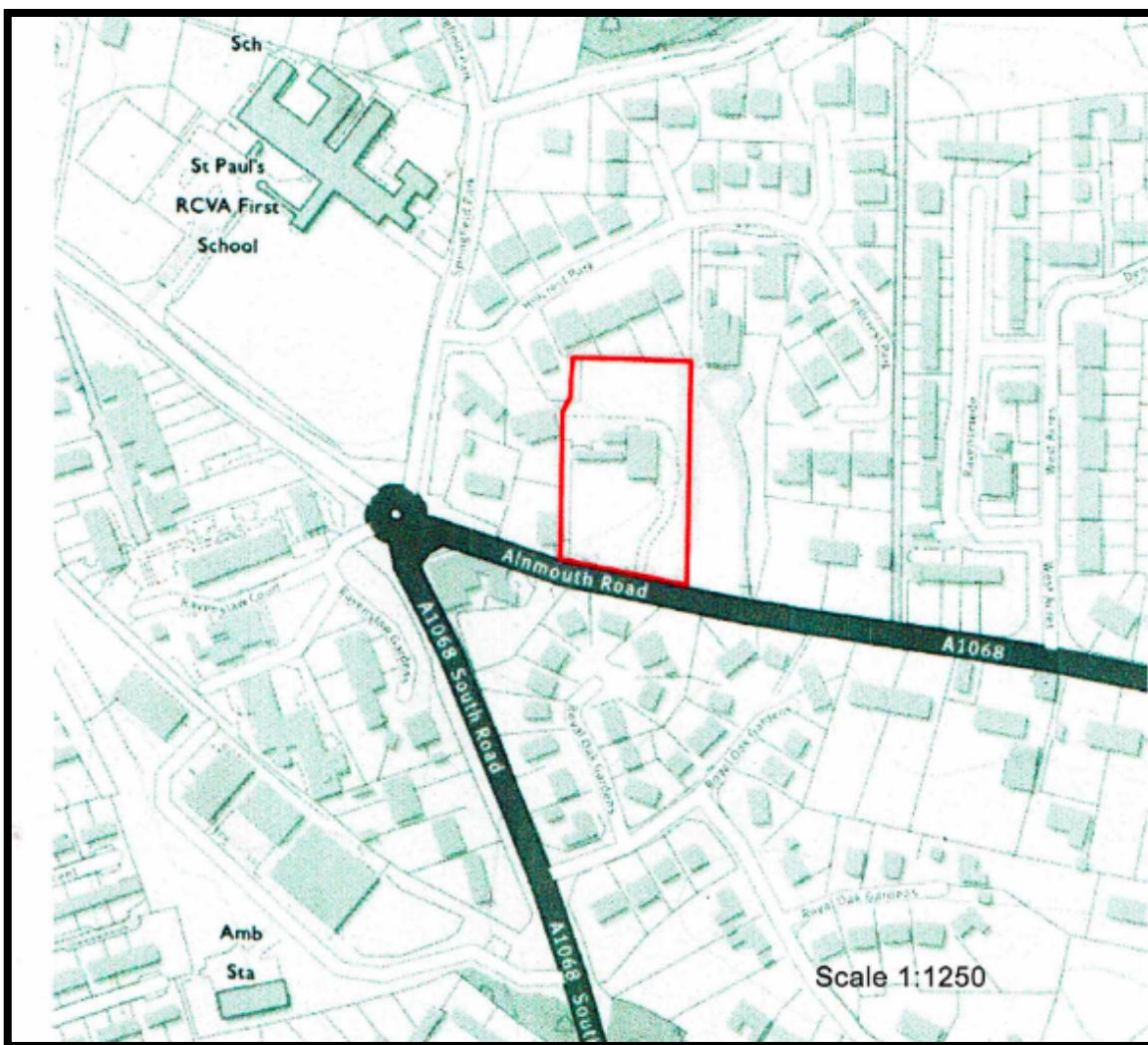


Figure 1: Site Delineated by Red Edge

- 2.3 Figure 2 below shows that the locality is characterised by a motley collection of buildings, mainly comprising residential properties in a variety of different types and styles. Most of the surrounding properties are relatively modern, post-war dwellings built after the 1970's punctuated by occasional older properties, the most notable of which is

“Freelands”, a large detached property of similar age and style, which lies adjacent to the application site to the north east. This particular property has been extended extensively in more recent times on its northern side towards Hillcrest Park.

- 2.4 Figure 2 also shows the newly constructed garage block and the reinstated walled garden to the north.

*Figure 2: Aerial Showing the Site in Context*



### **ALNBANK HOUSE – PROPERTY LISTING**

- 2.5 This Grade II listed property is described in the official listing available on the English Heritage site as follows: *“Approached by a drive. Early-mid C19. Two storeys and 3 windows to south. Ashlar built with side piers. Paired cut brackets to eaves, double pitched hipped slate roof. Moulded plinth course. Glazing bar sash windows. Entrance on east side recessed and flanked by piers and with moulded entablature on corner piers. Three windows on this front and a smart rubblework 2 window extension. The interior has a fine fireplace and several rich mouldings. A late C19th conservatory to west”*.
- 2.6 The listing, which may be viewed by the following link and which is also set out at Appendix 1, provides additional details:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1041542>

- 2.7 The List entry number is given as 1041542 and the property was first listed on the 25<sup>th</sup> August 1977. As well as describing the asset the listing also mentions a late 19th conservatory to the west side of the house and a grand fireplace neither of which are now present.

#### **ALNBANK HOUSE – CURRENT PROPERTY DESCRIPTION**

- 2.8 Alnbank House is a substantial stone built detached house, with outbuildings, set within extensive mature gardens and grounds occupying a plot which is approximately 1.32 acres in size.
- 2.9 The property to Alnmouth Road is bounded by a coursed stone wall topped by a hedge along the length of the site frontage. A matching pair of stone piers gives way to a recessed entrance from Alnmouth Road which is recessed and flanked by a second pair of stone piers, constructed of solid stone sections and therefore not identical to the aforementioned piers. The recessed piers giving way to central the access road once a gate, no longer present.
- 2.10 A private hard surface drive leads from the front entrance to the main house.



*Above: Front Entrance showing Recessed Walling and Piers*

- 2.11 The front garden and eastern boundary with "Freelands" are extensively planted with various species of trees and shrubs, most of which are mature and combine to provide good screening and privacy. Nearer the house are well maintained side and front lawns. The hardwood species are subject to a Tree Protection Order.
- 2.12 The house itself, which was built in the mid to early 19<sup>th</sup> century, is distinctly Georgian in style. It is constructed in ashlar stone with side piers. The front elevation facing the

highway has three pairs of symmetric Georgian windows with sliding sashes, as shown below.



*Above: Front Elevation of Alnbank House*

- 2.13 The west facing side elevation is split by high ashlar coursed stone wall, to the rear of which are a series of outbuildings. The wall is stepped directionally and increases in height further away from the house.



*Above: Side Elevation & Stepped Wall in Front Garden*

- 2.14 The east facing elevation, adjacent to the private drive, similarly has symmetrical Georgian windows and has a wooden front door, which is recessed and flanked by piers.
- 2.15 The house has double hipped slate roofs with central chimneys, the largest of which is situated on the western side of the dwelling. The eaves have impressive paired, regularly spaced cut brackets with a projecting moulded plinth course immediately below and there are horizontal mouldings on the corner piers known technically as "moulded entablature". All of these architectural features add to the local distinctiveness, historic value and attractiveness of the main property.
- 2.16 At the rear of the property, to the north, there is a later mid 19<sup>th</sup> century extension constructed in coursed "smart rubble". This extension is subservient to the main house physically and architecturally and is characterised by less uniform fenestration.
- 2.17 At the rear of the stepped wall, there are also number of coursed stone-built outhouses, and a former carriage house, variously used as garages and materials stores. One of these outbuildings, the old boiler house, also once used as accommodation for care house staff, was given approval to be demolished, but this has not been actioned and will not now be actioned by the current owner.

*Below: The Rear Extension & Outbuildings, Including Old Boiler House (photo immediately below) & Carriage House (bottom photo).*







Former Carriage House (above)

2.18 To the rear of the property is the former walled garden and fruit orchard, which was removed by Northumberland County Council during the time of its ownership (see photographs below taken prior to the approved reinstatement of removed historic structures by the current owner). The outline of the former walled garden is illustrated by the photographs below showing Leyland cypress hedges planted by the County Council in lieu of the dismantled Listed Walls. Please note that these photographs pre-date the partial implementation of works taken under the application for "extension to dwelling; alterations to outbuildings; erection of garage block and reinstatement of greenhouse" which was granted consent in 2016 under reference 16/01958/FUL.





*Above: The Former Walled Garden Area (where greenhouse and potting shed once were - buff Coloured Area of walling is where potting shed once was on the south face of the North wall of the walled garden.*

- 2.19 Application 16/01958/FUL was granted planning permission and Listed Building Consent in the same year.
- 2.20 The grant of consent is described on the Council's website as being "Listed Building Consent for extension to property; erection of new garage block; demolition of existing boiler house and reinstatement of greenhouses and garden walls".
- 2.21 The garage block is a 1.5 storey linear building which occupies space between the extension to the main house and the neighbouring outbuildings to the south and the reinstated walled garden to the north.

2.22 The south facing elevation has four arched bays flanked by two end wooden doors at either end of the building and a central apex feature with a pitched roof at 90 to the main elevation. The central apex has a through access from the front to the rear of the building at ground floor level via an arch. Over this access is a pair of wooden doors with balcony at first floor level, enclosed by steel railings. The roof is punctuated by two hipped dormer windows which are located centrally between both ground floor arches. There are also four symmetrical solar displays within the roof.



*Above: The Garage showing The Central Apex, Open Bays and Garret Window Feature*

2.23 The rear elevation, facing the reinstated walled garden has an elevated landing at ground floor level, since the ground floor is slightly higher on this side due to site topography. The landing is accessed from the south through the central pedestrian arched described above. There are two sets of steps leading down each side into the garden itself. At ground floor level, there are four windows under each of the four garret windows directly above. Wooden bench seating has been provided facing the reinstated walled garden.

2.24 At the eastern end of the building is a small single storey garden shed, which projects slightly past the side elevation. This has a side door facing west and has a monopitch roof.



*Above: Both sides of the North Facing Elevation, Showing Elevated Landing and Garden Shed (left photo)*

- 2.25 At the south western corner of the building, accessed by a side access, is a very small compost store no more than a metre in height, built of facing brick, with a painted wooden panel roof and two painted wooden access hatches. This was built in place of a larger potting shed on the property boundary, which was not constructed, as approved, in order to appease a neighbour.



*Above: The Compost Store at the Side of the Walled Garden*

- 2.26 Materials used in the garage block are facing brick, stone and slate with artstone quoins and edge detailing.
- 2.27 The walled garden comprises four rectangular bays, slightly raised, with paths between. The greenhouse, previously approved, has not yet been constructed, but some of the preparatory work has been commenced, nevertheless. Side walls have been reinstated in the same facing brick as the garage block and stone/artstone copings.





*Above, left and below: The Reinstated Walled Garden including Replacement Garden Wall (bottom photo below)*



### 3. SITE HISTORY AND PLANNING HISTORY

#### **ALNBANK HOUSE – PROPERTY OWNERSHIP HISTORY**

- 3.1 The history of the site has been reviewed by way of reference to title deeds, deed plans, local records office search, internet search and physical examination of the site.
- 3.2 The house was built around 1850 by a man called Luke Hindmarsh, reportedly a successful timber merchant and ship owner. Mr Hindmarsh had bought the land ten years earlier in 1840 from the most Noble Algernon 4<sup>th</sup> Duke and Earl of Northumberland.
- 3.3 Alnbank house has been sold only seven times since it was built. Owners of the house are as follows:
  - Luke Hindmarsh 09/09/1840 - 25/11/1881
  - Thomas Adam Hogg 25/11/1881 – 01/05/1935
  - Cuthbert Maurice Ropner 01/05/1935 - 15/04/1946
  - Algernon Smart 15/04/1946 - 25/03/1958
  - Walter Roche Lee 25/03/1958 – 23/06/60
  - Reginald Michael Pratt 23/06/60 – 15/06/1972
  - Northumberland County Council 15/06/1972 – 09/01/2015
  - Michael George Rogerson 09/01/2015 – present
- 3.4 The kitchen garden within the walled garden was itself laid to grass during the ownership of Mr Reginald Pratt.
- 3.5 The title deeds at each change of ownership revealed that the site has remained largely unchanged until the ownership of Northumberland County Council in 1972. The council bought the house initially for the purpose of providing residential hostel accommodation for students attending Alnwick College of Education (a teacher training college).
- 3.6 In later years of County Council ownership, the hostel was to become more a home for people with learning difficulties. At some point during the council ownership, the conservatory and greenhouses were removed when three walls of the walled garden were replaced with Leyland cypress hedging. We are not aware of any records granting consent for these works.
- 3.7 Deed plans and maps throughout the years show the main house and buildings much as they appear today apart from the aforesaid missing walled garden, greenhouse and conservatory. Figure 3 dating from 1960/1961 is shown below.
- 3.8 We are advised that part of the heritage asset to the north of the walled garden, was sold off by the Council for residential development land in the 1970's and this is now modern housing. This was purchased and developed by J sample and Sons of Alnwick.

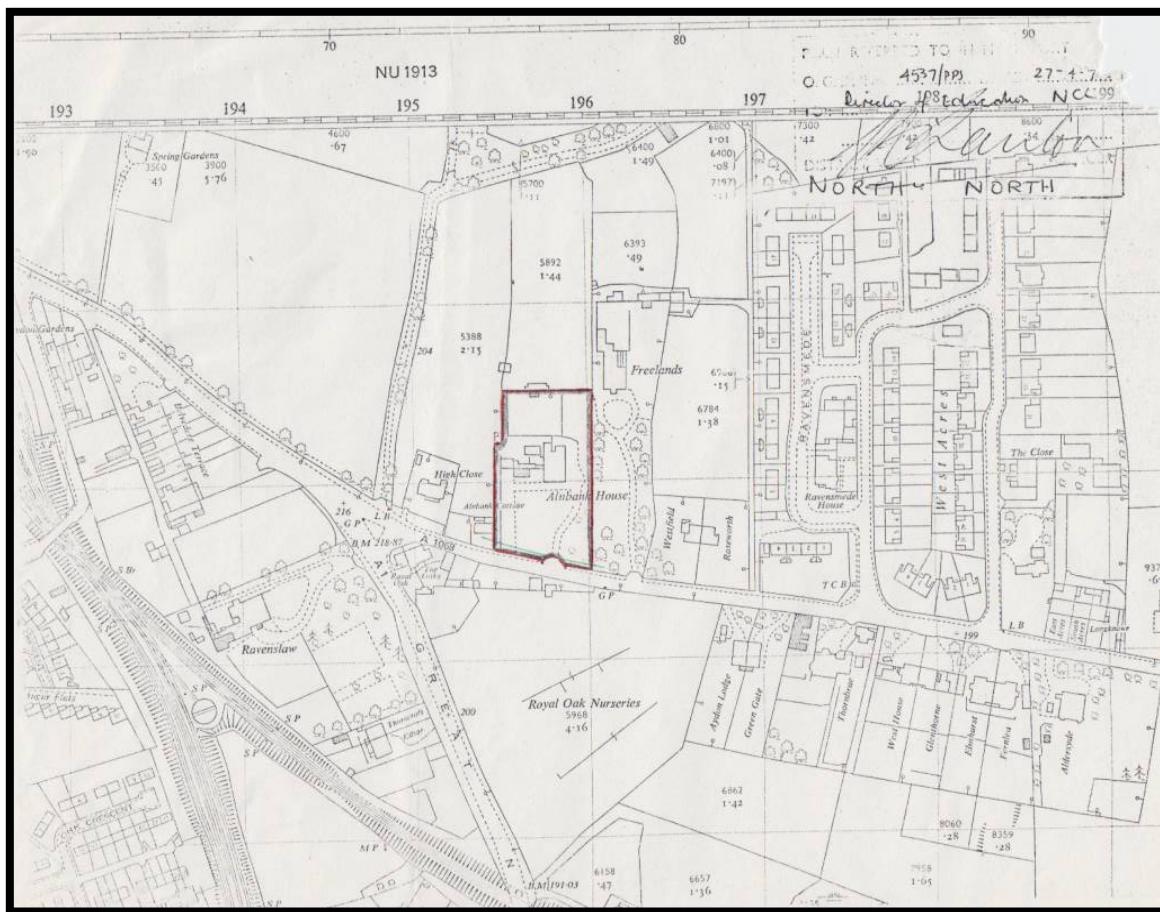


Figure 3: Historic Map from 1960/61 Showing the Buildings and Layout at the Time

### ALNBANK HOUSE – PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

3.9 A review of historical plans has been undertaken and the following development changes have been noted over a protracted timescale as illustrated by Figure 4 below:

OS Map Edition	Site	Immediate surroundings
1851	Main house is evident as we see today with gardens and tree lined access and walled garden	Directly north is the property 'Freelands'. The immediate surrounding area is greenfield with sectioned areas of land – West Acre Ends, East Acre Ends, Low Freelands
1866 - 1895	Main house still evident with more definitive landscaped gardens	No other built development in the immediate vicinity

1867	No apparent change	No apparent change
1895	An extension to the Main House appears on the western side – within walled garden is a structure (possible greenhouse)	Larger developments surrounding the property are noted as large individual properties
1899	No apparent change	No apparent change
1923	No apparent change to Main House, access and walled garden	No apparent change
1926	No apparent change	No apparent change
1932	No apparent change	No apparent change
1938	No apparent change	No apparent change
1957	No apparent change	No apparent change
1960-1961	The walled garden appears subdivided by a wall.	East of Frelands is major residential estate
1972	No apparent change	Increase in surrounding residential development
1977	No apparent change	No apparent change
1983	No apparent change	Further residential development directly north and west
1977 - 1991	No apparent change	No apparent change

Figure 4: The Property Development History of Alnbank House in Context

#### ALNBANK HOUSE – PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION HISTORY

3.10 The Planning and Listed Building history of Alnbank House is provided on the Council's website under the following link and as shown by Figure 5 below:

<https://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

- Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) on approved planning application 16/01958/FUL in order to utilise roof space as living accommodation. 
- Alnbank House Alnmouth Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2PR
- Ref. No: 19/00582/VARYCO | Received: Mon 18 Feb 2019 | Validated: Wed 03 Apr 2019 | Status: Approved 26 February 2021
- Listed Building Consent - Erection of garage block with accommodation above and greenhouse including solar panels to both
- Alnbank House Alnmouth Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2PR
- Ref. No: | Received: Mon 18 Feb 2019 | Validated: Tue 02 Apr 2019 | Status: Registered
- Discharge of condition 3 (materials) and condition 5 (samples of proposed rainwater goods) in relation to planning permission 15/03541/LBC - (Listed Building Consent - extension to existing property; erection of new garage block; demolition of existing boiler house, reinstatement of greenhouses and garden walls)
- Alnbank House Care Home Alnmouth Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2PR
- Ref. No: 16/02138/DISCON | Received: Mon 20 Jun 2016 | Validated: Mon 20 Jun 2016 | Status: Permitted
- Proposed extension to dwelling; alterations to outbuildings; erection of garage block and reinstatement of greenhouse
- Alnbank House Care Home Alnmouth Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2PR
- Ref. No: 16/01958/FUL | Received: Mon 06 Jun 2016 | Validated: Wed 22 Jun 2016 | Status: Permitted
- Discharge of condition 4 relating to planning permission 15/03541/LBC (Listed Building Consent - extension to existing property; erection of new garage block; demolition of existing boiler house, reinstatement of greenhouses and garden walls)
- Alnbank House Care Home Alnmouth Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2PR
- Ref. No: 16/00142/DISCON | Received: Tue 19 Jan 2016 | Validated: Tue 19 Jan 2016 | Status: Permitted
- Listed Building Consent - extension to existing property; erection of new garage block; demolition of existing boiler house, reinstatement of greenhouses and garden walls
- Alnbank House Care Home Alnmouth Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2PR
- Ref. No: 15/03541/LBC | Received: Thu 22 Oct 2015 | Validated: Tue 27 Oct 2015 | Status: Permitted
- Change of use from former residential home to dwelling

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Alnbank House Care Home Alnmouth Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2PR</li> <li>○ Ref. No: 14/03600/COU   Received: Mon 27 Oct 2014   Validated: Mon 27 Oct 2014   Status: Permitted</li> </ul>
• Erection of satellite dish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Alnbank House Alnmouth Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2PR</li> <li>○ Ref. No: A/2004/0501   Received: Fri 23 Jul 2004   Validated: Wed 28 Jul 2004   Status: Permitted</li> </ul>
• Removal of epicormic growth to prevent damage to boundary wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Alnbank House Alnmouth Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2PR</li> <li>○ Ref. No: C/01/00096/TPO   Received: Thu 19 Apr 2001   Validated: Thu 19 Apr 2001   Status: Unknown</li> </ul>
• Listed Building Consent for the provision of steel emergency escape stairs to the first floor and the alteration of a window to create a escape door	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Alnbank House Alnmouth Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2PR</li> <li>○ Ref. No: C/92/A/340 LBC   Received: Thu 20 Aug 1992   Validated: Thu 20 Aug 1992   Status: Unknown</li> </ul>
• Change of use from students hostel accommodation for Alnwick College of Education to a hostel for the mentally handicapped on 0.51 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Alnbank House Care Home Alnmouth Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2PR</li> <li>○ Ref. No: C/76/A/299   Received: Tue 24 Aug 1976   Validated: Tue 24 Aug 1976   Status: Permitted</li> </ul>

Figure 5 above: The Planning and Listed Building History of Alnbank House (credit Northumberland County Council)

## DESCRIPTION & INTERPRETATION OF PLANNING & LISTED BUILDING HISTORY

- 3.11 We would comment that application 15/03541/LBC (Listed Building Consent) and 16/0158/FUL (planning) were effectively the "parent consents" for further submitted applications.
- 3.12 Proposals to provide a replacement garden room at the front have not been progressed at this stage. Plans to reinstate the greenhouses on the south facing wall facing north towards the garage block across the reinstated walled garden have not been completed but have been amended by follow on applications, nevertheless.
- 3.13 Application 16/0158/FUL is described by the Council as being a planning application on its website, but this appears to be for both planning permission and Listed Building Consent. It permitted an amended design for the garden room and extended roof finish

for a timber framed outbuilding with timber lined wall. Changes were also approved to the garage block to include four no. rear dormers and a central apex feature as well as reinstatement of greenhouses.

- 3.14 An application was approved under reference 16/02138/DISCONT for discharge of conditions. The plans submitted with the application approved materials for the greenhouses with proposed use of rustic brick and cast-iron guttering to match the approved garage block.
- 3.15 Application 19/00583/LBC was approved for Listed Building Consent "for erection of garage block with accommodation above and greenhouse including solar panels to both". It permitted several amendments to the garage blocks, 'as built' as well as a number of other amendments.
- 3.16 Application 19/00582/VARYCO for variation of condition 2 (approved plans) on approved planning application 16/01958/FUL to utilise roof space as living accommodation was approved on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021.
- 3.17 However, as mentioned above, this application precipitated the imposition of a planning condition to restrict residential occupancy leading to this further planning application for Removal of Condition 2 of Consent 19/00582/VARYCO for "*Ancillary Accommodation - the development hereby permitted shall be used in accordance with and ancillary to the property known as Alnbank House at all times and shall not be used as separate independent accommodation*".

# 4 THE POLICY BACKGROUND FOR HERITAGE MATTERS

## INTRODUCTION AND POLICY BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The planning policy position relating specifically to the heritage asset is addressed in this section in terms of the relevant legislation, national planning policy guidance and local planning policy. It considers policies most relevant to the heritage environment and how proposals that affect or may affect heritage assets are considered and assessed.

## NATIONAL LEGISLATION

- 4.2 The relevant legislation is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66 is particularly relevant as it refers to a general duty as respects listed buildings in the exercise of planning functions. It states that:

*"In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State 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".*

## NPPF (FEBRUARY 2019)

- 4.3 NPPF Part 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment is the key part of the NPPF that deals with heritage. It states that the planning system seeks to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations. Relevant guidance is set out in paragraphs 184 – 202, the content of which is summarised below in terms of its relevance to the application under consideration.
- 4.4 Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations (paragraph 184).
- 4.5 Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats (paragraph 185).
- 4.6 Paragraph 189 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected, including any contribution made by their setting in a manner proportionate to the asset's significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and

no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

- 4.7 Paragraph 189 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities Paragraph 190 advises that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
- 4.8 Paragraph 192 advises that in determining applications, local planning authorities should, *inter alia*, take account of the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 4.9 Paragraph 193 states 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 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 4.10 Paragraph 194 states 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.
- 4.11 Paragraph 195 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.
- 4.12 Paragraph 196 states 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.
- 4.13 Paragraph 197 states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 4.14 Paragraph 200 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within *inter alia*, the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

4.15 Part 12 of the Framework deals with design badged under the remit of "Achieving Well designed Places": The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, with good design a key aspect of sustainable development, indivisible from good planning.

### **THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN: THE NORTHUMBERLAND CONSOLIDATED PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK & DRAFT NORTHUMBERLAND PLAN**

4.16 Until the Council's new Local Plan is adopted, local planning policy in Northumberland is set out in the Northumberland Consolidated Planning Policy Framework, which may be accessed via the following link:

[\*\*Click here to view the Northumberland Consolidated Planning Policy Framework\*\*](#)

4.17 In Alnwick, saved heritage policies in the Alnwick Core Strategy (2007) still apply, though these are expected to be replaced by new planning policy following prospective adoption of the new draft plan in due course, should it be approved.

4.18 Saved Policy BE8 of the Alnwick District Wide Local Plan states that proposals for new dwellings and extensions will be considered against the design criteria set out in Appendix A and B of the same plan (Appendix B – extensions to existing drawings).

4.19 Appendix B of the Alnwick District Wide Local Plan provides guidance on extensions, front extensions and extensions to roof space.

4.20 S16 of the Alnwick Core Strategy (General Design Principles) states that "all development will be expected to achieve a high standard of design, reflecting local character and distinctiveness in traditional or contemporary design and materials. Proposals should take full account of the need to protect and enhance the local environment having regard to their layout, scale, appearance, access and landscaping and apply the principles" ... as stated on page 46 of the plan.

4.20 References to heritage within the draft development plan are:

- Policy S15 (Protecting the Built and Historic Environment);
- Policy S16 (General Design Principles: Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Pre-Submission Draft (2015));
- Policy 1 (Sustainable Development);
- Policy 2 (High Quality Sustainable Design); and
- Policy 33 Historic Environment & Heritage Assets.

4.21 There are extensive references to design policies in the development plan. These are saved Policies BE7, BE8, BE14 of the Alnwick District Local Plan; saved Policy S16 of

the Alnwick District Local Development Framework, as well as draft Policies HOU 9, Policy QOP 1, Policy QOP 2 and QOP6 are particularly relevant to design, as well as the draft Design Guide in the draft Northumberland Local Plan.

## 5 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HERITAGE ASSET

- 5.1 There is no doubt that the property of Alnbank House is an important heritage asset, even if its value has been compromised by previous owners, including the removal of listed garden walls and the walled garden before their reinstatement by the current owner.
- 5.2 The main Georgian building is the key asset within the hereditament and that is what the listing text focuses upon. The house remains ostensibly intact and is generally unaffected by alterations rather modestly over the years, at least in terms of amendments to its external appearance. That said, the garden room at the front was removed and the current owner has permission to replace it. However, the later extension, outbuildings and other features combine to add value to the overall site context with Alnbank House as its centrepiece.
- 5.3 The significance relates to the quality of the building, its general design, detailed design features and high-grade materials used in its construction. These categories are described in the listing text and need not be repeated here.
- 5.4 The later extension at the rear of the main building and the adjacent outbuildings form important features within the context of the site and add value to the hereditament to address devaluation as a result of previous neglect and inappropriate demolition and alteration. Furthermore, the reinstated boundary walls and the walled garden they enclose, add value to the setting of the main building, Alnbank House itself.
- 5.5 The current owner has, *inter alia*, reinstated the demolished walls and walled garden and provided a new garage block to replace grass and cypress trees. All of these buildings and features have now been approved previously in accordance with the submitted plans which accompanied the submitted applications, although not all of them have been implemented to date.
- 5.6 Many of the approved proposals will replace structures that were previously damaged or were removed by previous owners of the property, to benefit the heritage asset.
- 5.7 It is important therefore, that any proposals under consideration, do not impact adversely upon the character and appearance of the heritage asset.
- 5.8 We have undertaken an assessment of the potential impacts of development proposals in section 7 of this report, in the light of relevant policy in Section 6 below.

## 6. ASSESSMENT OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORKS PROPOSED UPON THE HERITAGE ASSET

### PROPOSED WORKS

- 6.1 As requested by the Council's Case Officer, we have made only some minor changes to the plans previously approved, to facilitate dedicated parking and garden space, as these are the only visible impacts of the application.
- 6.5 We propose to focus upon these various matters, outlined above, within the context of their significance upon the heritage issues, considering design and access issues (see below).

### DESIGN OF DEVELOPMENT & ASSOCIATED ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.7 Section 66 (1) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act (1990) advises 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.
- 6.8 The legislation, as well as national and local planning policy cumulatively provides the framework for decision making, but decisions nevertheless involve a strong element of personal interpretation and individual opinion.

### AMENDMENTS PROPOSED TO GARAGE BLOCK

- 6.9 This application principally affects the garage block since the main building, which is the focus of the Listing, is located some distance away, a matter set out and discussed in greater detail previous applications and associated supporting statements.
- 6.10 As stated above, the garage block, situated to the side and rear of the Listed Building, was constructed to provide a link between the parking area and walled garden to the North of the site, which was allowed originally, in principle, by the parent consents. The access road from the front of the property continues round the main building to the garage block at the back of the site, affording safe and relatively generous access for cars using it.
- 6.11 There are two proposed changes to the approved development to facilitate the application for two self-contained flats to be used as separate, independent accommodation. These relate to vehicle parking and use of the existing walled garden.

- 6.12 The parking area proposed is located on the western side of the garage block off the current access road within part of the existing tarmacked area. There are four parking bays shown, and these may be marked formally, with 2 spaces allocated to each flat.
- 6.13 The second proposal is for the rear garden space to the north of the garage block, to be divided between both residential units. This is shown on the drawing supplied and the garden boundary is naturally separated by the existing path leading northwards towards the greenhouse.
- 6.14 Arrangements will be formalised by the owner/applicant about the management of future proposed occupancy, which are separate from the planning and heritage requirements.

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (CURRENT APPLICATION)**

- 6.15 Taking all of the proposals into consideration, including those approved by previous permissions, it is apparent that the current owner has invested a significant sum in the reinstatement of historic features on the property, removed by the previous owner, which, in itself is both positive and commendable as it re-establishes and preserves the integrity of the heritage asset to benefit both presently and for future generations.
- 6.38 In addition, the historic building itself now benefits from a 'maintenance overhaul' when its previous condition was badly neglected and in rapidly deteriorating condition.
- 6.39 Previous approvals have established that amenity impacts of the new application have only a "de minimus" and very limited impact, in real terms (i.e., the marking of four parking bays on a small area of existing tarmac) such that proposals most certainly accord with Policy 2 of the draft Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy.
- 6.40 As stated previously, some of the approved development works remain to be implemented, but the reinstatement of the walled garden has been completed and is undoubtedly a triumph of restoration, adding overall value to the significance of the heritage asset. The provision of a "modern retro" garage block also provides significant investment in the built fabric of the site.
- 6.41 Notwithstanding the fact that amendments have been undertaken to the approved design of the garage block, these were approved previously and were judged at the time by officers as being "*not in prominent locations in an enclosed part of the site*".
- 6.43 As before, the proposal hardly affects the heritage asset, if at all, and is therefore in accordance with S15 of the Alnwick Core Strategy, Policy 33 of the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy (Pre-Submission Draft) and relevant paragraphs of the NPPF alluded to in section 4 above.



## 7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This statement has set out the background to the proposals which comprise very minor impacts upon the heritage asset i.e., the allocation of a small area of existing tarmac for dedicated visitor parking and the division of responsibility of the existing, reinstated walled garden in the approved garage block, which is not proposed to be formally delineated.
- 7.2 The changes are in connection with an application to remove condition 2 of Consent 19/00582/VARYCO for *"Ancillary Accommodation - the development hereby permitted shall be used in accordance with and ancillary to the property known as Alnbank House at all times and shall not be used as separate independent accommodation"*.
- 7.3 We have addressed the proposed changes, in terms of their impact upon the Listed Building relative to legislation and planning policy at national and local levels.
- 7.3 We believe that the significant investment in the property, all previously approved, has addressed problems precipitated by previous owners of the Listed Building, which undoubtedly compromised its value and significance. The new application proposes changes which are considered "de minimus" and do not in any way impact upon the heritage asset.
- 7.4 The detailed changes will not compromise the value of the heritage asset because the buildings and structures subject to the application are not only very minor, but they *"not in prominent locations in an enclosed part of the site"* as stated by officers in reports previously issued, which may be accessed on the Council's website portal. By implication, the impact upon the heritage asset is deemed minor and not in conflict with the relevant legislation or material planning policy.

# APPENDIX 1: ALNBANK HOUSE

Overview

Heritage Category:

Listed Building

Grade:

II

List Entry Number:

1041542

Date first listed:

25-Aug-1977

Statutory Address:

ALNBANK HOUSE, ALNMOUTH ROAD

Map

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The above map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - [1041542.pdf](#)(opens in a new window)

The PDF will be generated from our live systems and may take a few minutes to download depending on how busy our servers are. We apologise for this delay.

This copy shows the entry on 13-Aug-2020 at 15:28:58.

Location

Statutory Address:

ALNBANK HOUSE, ALNMOUTH ROAD

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District:

Northumberland (Unitary Authority)

Parish:

Alnwick

National Grid Reference:

NU 19580 12808

## DETAILS

ALNMOUTH ROAD 1. 5330 (North Side) Alnbank House NU 1912 6/121 II 2. Approached by a drive. Early-mid C19. Two storeys and 3 windows to south. Ashlar built with side piers. Paired cut brackets to eaves, double pitched hipped slate roof. Moulded plinth course. Glazing bar sash windows. Entrance on east side recessed and flanked by piers and with

moulded entablature on corner piers. Three windows on this front and a smart rubblework 2 window extension. The interior has a fine fireplace and several rich mouldings. A late C19 conservatory to west.

Listing NGR: NU1958112807

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number:

235593

Legacy System:

LBS

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

End of official listing

Images of England

Images of England was a photographic record of every listed building in England, created as a snapshot of listed buildings at the turn of the millennium. These photographs of the exterior of listed buildings were taken by volunteers between 1999 and 2008. The project was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Date: 14 Apr 2003

Reference: IOE01/10377/15

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MD2 Consulting Ltd  
The Dene  
36 Nevilledale Terrace  
City of Durham  
DH1 4QG

[www.md2.org.uk](http://www.md2.org.uk)

Company registration number: 08263372