

PLANNING STATEMENT



PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING BUNGALOW AND REPLACEMENT WITH NEW DWELLING ON THE SITE

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an application for the replacement of an existing dwelling at Nethertown called Rangamaria, within the former Copeland area of Cumberland.

The proposal seeks the demolition of the existing, substantially dilapidated bungalow and its replacement with a new, high-quality dwelling designed to respond positively to the character of Nethertown and its immediate surroundings.

The existing dwelling is in a poor condition and provides a limited form of accommodation and a visual eye sore within Nethertown. The proposed dwelling would provide a significantly improved standard of accommodation, together with a more appropriate and considered relationship with the site and surrounding properties.

The application site is already established as a residential plot and contains a lawful dwelling. The proposal therefore represents the redevelopment of an existing residential site rather than the creation of a new isolated dwelling in the countryside.

The design has been developed having regard to the character of the village, the established pattern of development, the scale and form of neighbouring properties and the palette of materials found within Nethertown.

2. Planning Policy Context

The Government introduced a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) document in August 2026, which came into effect immediately. This sets out the government's policies for plan making and for making decisions on development proposals and is stated to be a material consideration of critical importance in both contexts. The national decision-making policies set out in the NPPF are therefore material considerations in making planning decisions and need to be read alongside local development plan policies. National Decision-Making Policy (NDMP) DM3 requires local planning authorities to, *inter alia*, "take a proportionate approach to the consideration of the planning matters raised by the proposals, in a way that reflects their scale, complexity and potential impact".

Of particular relevance to this application for the demolition and replacement of the property known as Rangamaria is **NDMP S5: Principle of development outside settlements**. This policy states that certain specified applications should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against other policies within the NPPF. One such "specified application" (**S5.1.c**) is the replacement of an existing lawful building, as long as it is for "the same use and not disproportionately larger than the one it replaces". i.e. a replacement can be larger than the existing building as long as there are no substantial adverse effects.

Locally, the application falls within the area covered by the Copeland Local Plan 2021–2039, which was adopted by Cumberland Council on 5 November 2024. The adopted Local Plan replaced the former Copeland Local Plan 2013–2028 and provides the current development plan framework for the former Copeland area outside the Lake District National Park.

The principal policy relevant to the proposal is **Policy H18 – Replacement Dwellings outside Settlement Boundaries**.

Policy H18 establishes that the erection of a replacement dwelling outside an identified settlement boundary will be permitted where:

- the replacement dwelling is located on, or directly adjacent to, the footprint of the existing dwelling, unless there are clear and demonstrable reasons why an alternative siting or footprint would deliver a more appropriate scheme;
- the replacement dwelling, including curtilage development, is no larger in scale, size or massing than the existing dwelling, with a design appropriate to the location which enhances its immediate setting and does not result in unacceptable impacts upon landscape character or unacceptable visual harm; and
- appropriate access and adequate vehicle parking can be achieved.

Policy H18 also recognises the importance of ensuring that replacement dwellings are appropriately designed and sited and that protected species considerations are addressed where necessary.

The proposal should also be considered against **Policy DS4 – Design and Development Standards**, which requires new development to create and enhance locally distinctive places, respond sympathetically to the surrounding built, historic and natural environment and use good quality materials which reflect local character and vernacular.

The National Planning Policy Framework similarly places considerable importance on good design, requiring development to be sympathetic to local character and history whilst allowing appropriate innovation and change.

3. The Existing Site and Dwelling

The existing property is a modest bungalow which is now substantially dilapidated and in a poor state of repair.

The dwelling is not considered to make a positive contribution to the character of Nethertown. Its replacement on the other hand provides an opportunity to remove a visually degraded and under-utilised building and introduce a family home of substantially improved architectural quality and environmental performance.

The existing building is characterised by a relatively simple palette of materials, including roof tiles, sandstone and painted brickwork.

The site itself is well established as a residential plot and benefits from a substantial area of existing residential curtilage. There is therefore no requirement for the proposal to extend residential development into the wider countryside.

4. Principle of Replacement

The principle of replacing an existing dwelling is supported by Policy H18, subject to the detailed criteria of the policy being satisfied.

The proposal would retain the established residential use of the site and would provide a modern dwelling in place of an existing derelict property. The development would therefore make effective use of an existing residential site and would contribute to the regeneration and visual improvement of the immediate surroundings.

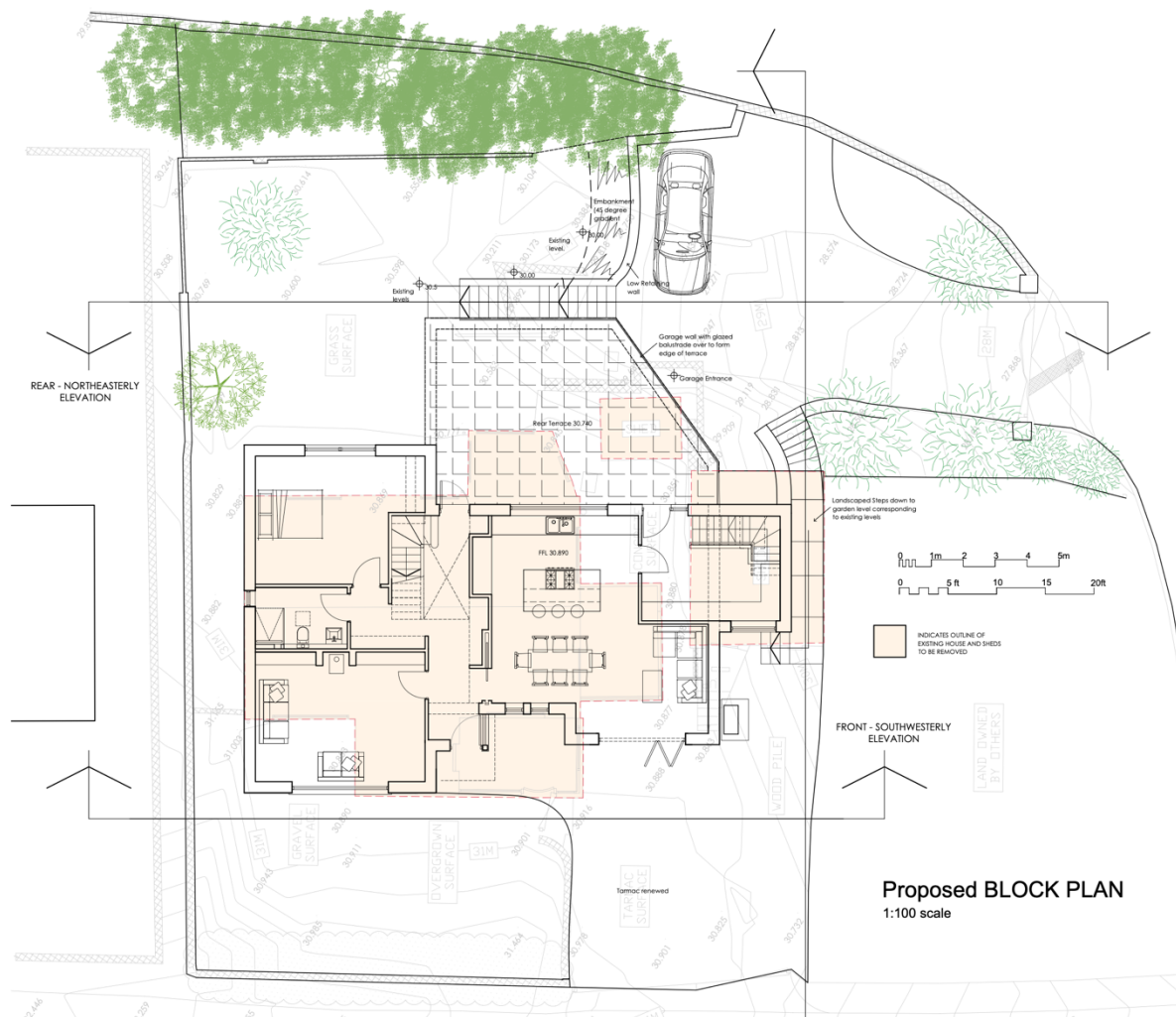
The replacement of the existing dwelling is considered preferable to allowing the property to remain derelict and deteriorate further.

The proposal also provides an opportunity to create a dwelling which is capable of meeting contemporary standards of energy efficiency, accessibility, comfort and residential amenity, whilst responding appropriately to the character of its surroundings.

5. Scale, Form and Siting

The proposed dwelling provides a larger ground floor footprint than the existing bungalow, but the difference is relatively modest when considered in relation to the overall site and the form of the development. The existing footprint of the main bungalow is approximately 107m², excluding the associated sheds. The proposed ground floor footprint is approximately 139m², representing an increase of approximately 32m² (around 30%).

It is important to recognise, however, that the existing site contains approximately 134.5m² of built footprint when the bungalow and sheds are considered together. The proposed ground floor footprint is therefore only approximately 4.5m² greater than the total footprint of the existing built development. The proposal consequently does not represent a substantial expansion of the developed area of the site at ground level.



The above shows the existing bungalow and sheds in beige in relationship to the proposal.

The proposal does, however, provide additional accommodation at first floor level, with approximately 85m² contained within the roof structure with 1.5m headroom and above. The design has deliberately sought to accommodate this additional floor area within the roof form rather than through the creation of a visually dominant additional storey. The accommodation is therefore contained within a roof structure which reduces the apparent bulk, respects the

ridgeline of the adjacent neighbour and allows the building to maintain an appropriate domestic scale when viewed from the surrounding area.

In addition, approximately 50m² of lower ground floor accommodation is provided beneath the upper part of the dwelling. This element makes use of the natural contours of the site, with the sides and rear of the garage effectively buried into the existing landform. An upper ground floor terrace is formed over this lower level. As a consequence, this additional floor area has very limited external visual impact and does not present as an additional storey when viewed from the surrounding land.

The overall approach is therefore one of using the site's natural topography and the roof volume intelligently to provide improved accommodation without creating a building whose apparent mass is disproportionate to its setting.

The proposed dwelling remains firmly within the established residential envelope of the site and is positioned in relation to the existing built form and neighbouring property.

Of particular relevance is the relationship between the proposed ridge height and the adjoining dwelling. The ridge of the existing bungalow currently aligns with the ridge of the adjacent property. The proposed dwelling has been designed having regard to this established relationship, ensuring that the development sits comfortably within the existing group of buildings rather than introducing an isolated or visually prominent form.



Above shows the existing bungalow (red dashed line) and the relationship of the ridge height of the neighbour immediately adjacent. The site is also sufficiently generous to accommodate the proposed dwelling without creating an overdeveloped appearance. A substantial proportion of the existing curtilage will remain available for garden and amenity purposes, together with sufficient space for parking and vehicle manoeuvring.

Consequently, the proposal will retain the spacious character of the residential plot and will not result in an urbanising form of development.

The increase in accommodation is therefore considered in the context of the **overall form, siting, massing and visual relationship of the building to its surroundings**, rather than simply its internal floor area.

This distinction is particularly important in assessing the scale of the proposal. The comparison with the existing dwelling should recognise not only numerical floor areas but also how the additional accommodation manifests itself externally. Although the proposed ground floor footprint is larger than that of the existing bungalow considered in isolation, it is only marginally greater than the existing combined footprint of the bungalow and sheds. Furthermore, a

substantial proportion of the additional accommodation is contained within the roof space or integrated into the natural slope of the site. The resulting visual mass is therefore considerably less than might be suggested by a simple comparison of total floorspace.

6. Character and Appearance

Nethertown contains a variety of building types and materials. Whilst red sandstone is an established traditional material within the village, it is not the sole material characteristic of the settlement.

Traditional buildings and agricultural structures within the village are commonly constructed in sandstone. However, a number of other residential properties have been rendered, including buildings which were originally constructed in sandstone and subsequently rendered over.

The village therefore exhibits a degree of material variation, with rendered buildings forming an established part of the local built character.

The proposed material palette of **Westdash render, artificial slate roofing and powder-coated aluminium windows/doors** has been selected to provide a simple and restrained contemporary interpretation of the established character of the village.

The use of render is considered appropriate given the presence of rendered properties within the immediate and wider village. It will provide a visually recessive finish and will avoid introducing an overly heavy or monolithic sandstone building into the site.

The artificial slate roof will provide a dark, simple roofscape which relates to the traditional slate roofs found within the wider Cumbrian context, whilst the powder-coated aluminium elements will provide a crisp and durable contemporary detailing.

The proposed materials are therefore considered to reflect the varied character of Nethertown whilst allowing the replacement dwelling to have its own architectural identity.

This approach is consistent with Policy DS4, which seeks development that is sympathetic to its surroundings and requires good quality materials that reflect local character and vernacular.

7. Relationship with the Existing Village

The proposal should be viewed in the context of the existing settlement rather than as a new dwelling within an undeveloped countryside setting.

Nethertown contains a mixture of traditional sandstone buildings and more simply detailed rendered dwellings. The proposed development responds to this established diversity.

Importantly, the replacement dwelling will not introduce a new pattern of development into the village. It will occupy an established residential site and will remain within the existing built-up context.

The retention of substantial areas of garden and residential curtilage will ensure that the development continues to read as a single dwelling within a spacious plot.

The proposed building will also sit comfortably in relation to the neighbouring dwelling, with the ridge relationship providing a clear visual connection between the two properties.

8. Landscape and Visual Considerations

The existing dwelling is already a component of the built environment and the proposal does not involve the introduction of development onto previously undeveloped countryside.

The replacement dwelling will occupy an established residential site and will remain closely associated with the existing settlement.

The generous size of the plot means that the proposed building can be accommodated without the need for extensive hardstanding or additional outbuildings.

The retention of garden areas around the dwelling will help maintain the existing landscaped character of the site.

The proposal is therefore not considered to result in unacceptable landscape or visual harm. Instead, the removal of the existing dilapidated dwelling and its replacement with a carefully designed and appropriately detailed building represents an opportunity to improve the appearance and condition of this part of the village.

9. Residential Amenity

The proposed dwelling has been designed having regard to the relationship with neighbouring properties.

Its scale, position and orientation have been considered to ensure that it does not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy, outlook or amenity to neighbouring residents.

The substantial remaining curtilage also means that the dwelling can be accommodated without an excessive degree of enclosure or an overdevelopment of the plot.

The proposal will therefore provide an appropriate level of amenity for both existing and future residents.

10. Access and Parking

The site already benefits from an established residential access.

The size of the plot provides ample space to accommodate appropriate off-street parking and vehicle manoeuvring without compromising the character of the site.

The proposal will therefore satisfy the requirements of Policy H18 in relation to access and parking.

11. Sustainability and Energy Efficiency

The replacement dwelling will provide a significantly improved opportunity to incorporate contemporary standards of energy efficiency and sustainable construction.

The existing derelict bungalow is inherently limited in terms of its ability to provide modern levels of thermal performance and energy efficiency.

The replacement dwelling can incorporate improved insulation, efficient building services, high-performance glazing and other measures appropriate to the final detailed design.

The proposal therefore provides an opportunity to substantially improve the environmental performance of the site whilst securing the long-term residential use of the property.

12. Overall Planning Balance

The proposal would result in the replacement of a substantially derelict dwelling with a high-quality modern home on an established residential site.

The key benefits of the proposal include:

- removal of a visually poor-quality dwelling;
- retention of the established residential use of the site;
- provision of a high-quality replacement dwelling;
- substantial retention of residential curtilage for garden and amenity purposes;
- provision of adequate off-street parking;
- a design which responds to the established character and varied material palette of Nethertown;
- a scale and form which has been carefully designed in relation to the neighbouring property;
- retention of the established relationship between the site and surrounding development; and
- the opportunity to provide a significantly more energy-efficient dwelling.

Whilst the proposed dwelling provides greater accommodation than the existing bungalow, the additional accommodation has been carefully integrated into the design and site layout. The resulting building will not appear as an isolated or disproportionately dominant form of development within the village.

The proposal should therefore be considered in the context of the **quality of the resulting development and its relationship with the site and surrounding settlement**, rather than the numerical increase in floor area alone.

13. Conclusion

The proposed development represents the comprehensive renewal of an established residential site containing a substantially derelict bungalow.

The replacement dwelling has been carefully designed to respond to the character of Nethertown and its immediate surroundings. The proposed use of render, artificial slate and powder-coated aluminium reflects the varied material character of the village, where traditional sandstone buildings sit alongside rendered properties.

The proposed dwelling will retain a strong relationship with the neighbouring built form, including the established ridge relationship, whilst the generous site will retain ample garden, parking and residential amenity space.

The proposal will remove a derelict building and replace it with a high-quality, energy-efficient and appropriately designed dwelling which will make a positive contribution to the appearance and residential quality of the site.

The proposed replacement dwelling is not disproportionately larger than the one it replaces and no adverse effects have been identified. Consequently the "Default Yes" principle set out in NDMP S5 applies, and outweighs the more restrictive elements of Local Plan Policy H18. We also consider the development to comply with the design objectives of the Copeland Local Plan and with the National Planning Policy Framework's emphasis on high-quality design, local character and the creation of attractive and sustainable places.

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