

Thank you Chair and Members for allowing us the opportunity to provide written representations in support of our client's application which is before Members today due to the Officer's recommendation to refuse planning permission being contrary to the views of the Parish Council who support it.

The description of the development is summarised in the Committee Report as comprising of a new pitched roof to the existing extension and a new first floor extension to the north elevation of the property. Parking would be retained underneath the extension, preventing additional cars being parked along the narrow road serving the property. The sole purpose of this application, which is not referred to in the report before Members today, is to facilitate homeworking as a permanent solution in response to the impact that the ongoing Covid pandemic has had on the applicant's current and future working arrangements.

The report makes no reference or gives any weight to the merits of home-working and no assessment against Policy ANDP 6 of the Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken by Officers.

For reference, Policy ANDP 6 indicates that planning permission will be granted for the use of part of a dwelling for office use to facilitate homeworking, and for extensions supporting this use. Paragraph 7.6 of the Neighbourhood Plan makes clear that the Parish Council and community's strong support for people looking to temporarily or permanently work from home. Paragraph 7.14 of the Plan makes clear that the intention of Policy ANDP 6 is to encourage the creation of opportunities for home-ran enterprises to be created and supported in the long term in the Parish. This type of proposal is something the community wants and needs.

However, no mention of this has been put forward as part of the recommendation to Members today. Instead, the recommendation focuses on the size and design of the extension with the proposed reason for refusal stating that it would be disproportionate to the original building.

The NPPF defines the original building as being the building as it existed on 1st July 1948. Dene Croft has clearly been extended, however historic maps and local knowledge indicate that this was done sometime between 1880 to 1920. The lack of any planning history and evidence on the ground supports this conclusion.

The suggestion that the works would result in a 101% increase in volume is based on the incorrect assumption that, for planning purposes, the flat roof addition at the rear of the property constitutes an extension after 1st July 1948. The correct position is that the building in its current form should be treated as the original building for the purposes of assessing this application in which case the additional 25 sqm of floorspace would represent a 29.7% increase.

The extension is to be constructed of stone reclaimed from the original house and slate to match the original building. The new pitched roofs would be set down from one another and from the main roof, and the extension would be set back from the west elevations of the house. The new extension is small in scale compared to the original building and these measures would all ensure that the extension would appear subservient to it. The position of the property, location of the extension and change in land levels are factors which will always mean that the original property remains dominant. The site's surroundings will also largely obscure the extension from most public views. The suggestion that the design differences would be more prominent is in our view unfounded and must be considered in context with the location of the site opposite the modern development at Allen Garden and proximity to Hopedene - a modern new-build property. Any views of the property are fleeting and mostly from drivers passing the front of the property on route into or from Allendale. There will therefore be no adverse impact on the character of the property, the street scene or the wider AONB.

In summary, there have been no objections to this application from consultees or members of the public. The nearest neighbours have written in full support to the proposals and the Parish Council have expressed their support too. No weight has been given to the policy compliant benefits of homeworking which this application would provide. We therefore respectfully ask that Members recognise the merits of the application by supporting a proposal which this community wants and needs, and which we feel is fully compliant with the Neighbourhood Plan.