

Statement for Planning Panel 28th May 2008

Johnson House is run by a group of local volunteers. We are a registered charity and look after 10 elderly residents. We have a waiting list of 25 and this is why we wish to extend.

We are planning to extend onto the very much neglected piece of land adjacent to the house and have endeavoured to minimise the impact on the woodland by employing an Arboriculturalist to conduct a survey of the land to advise us.

His, **Implication and Assessment**, report indicates that the extension will have a negligible effect on the mature woodland and the area of land which we propose to build on as it is very poorly colonised by natural regeneration, much of which is mutilated and diseased.

The, relatively, small number of trees which have been identified as in need of removal will be more than compensated by the planting of 82 hedgerow plants, as recommended by the Council's Landscape Officer.

In addressing the issues raised by the objectors we would comment as follows.-

The area of land, in question, is far from being a local amenity; it is not a green space, but is an overgrown neglected piece of land covered with nettles, brambles and contaminated with dog excrement. Children do not play in this area; they play in the adjoining woods.

The design of the extension has been carefully drawn to blend in with the existing house and will have little impact on the immediate neighbours which are some distance away.

We are very well aware of the drainage issues, relating to none absorbed surface water and sewerage disposal. An, effective, scheme will be designed to accommodate the drainage and preventative measures will be taken to avoid localised flooding problems. All necessary approvals will be obtained, before the development commences.

There is a regularly used muddy footpath which crosses the bottom of the land which will not be affected by the development and will be maintained open at all times

As previously stated there will be little effect on the mature woodland. However, as an aside, but relevant to the objections, communications are taking place with the Woodlands Trust, Cumbria Wildlife Trust and The Environmental Trust with a view to having the whole of the wood taken into environmental care by an appropriate organisation.

Regarding possible disturbance during the construction period a stringent Code of Practice will be drawn up and issued to all contractors ensuring minimal disturbance and impact on the neighbourhood during the building work.

An appointed representative will be available to deal with any problems that may arise.

We are part of the local community and consider ourselves an asset to our community.

This extension will inject over £800,000 into the local economy and will create additional jobs. No one knows what the future holds and as a such any of our neighbours or their relatives may at some time be in need of supported care and companionship, and providing we can accommodate them, what could be better than remaining in their own familiar neighbourhood.