



Northumberland National Park Authority

Walltown Visitor Centre

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Job No: 10101045

Latest Revision: A

Date: 3/09/2014

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Site and Scheme Description	4
3.	Planning History	5
4.	Planning Policy	6
4.1	Introduction	6
4.2	National Planning Policy Framework	6
4.3	Northumberland National Park: Local Development Framework.....	10
4.4	How the proposals meet Local Policy	14
5.	Key Development Issues.....	17
5.1	Ecology	17
5.2	Trees.....	18
6.	Planning Policy Conclusion	19
7.	Statement of Community Involvement	20
8.	Design and Access Statement.....	21
8.1	Amount and use	21
8.2	Scale	21
8.3	Site layout	23
8.4	Materials.....	23
8.5	Landscape.....	24
8.6	Views	24
8.7	Landscape Design Considerations	24
8.8	Parking and Transportation	25
8.9	Conclusion	25

© This report is the copyright of Cundall Johnston & Partners LLP. It has been prepared for the sole and confidential use of the Northumberland National Park Authority and cannot be reproduced in whole or in part or relied upon or used by any third party without the express written authorisation of Cundall Johnston & Partners LLP. If any third party whatsoever comes into possession of this report, they rely on it at their own risk and Cundall accepts no duty or responsibility (including in negligence) to any such third party.

1. Introduction

The Northumberland National Park Authority are proposing to redevelop the existing Visitor facilities in Walltown to provide an improved visitor centre with a café area and outside seating, improved toilet facilities and a temporary Tourist Information Centre. These new facilities are proposed to accommodate the visitors from the existing Tourist Information Centre at Once Brewed during the construction phase of The Sill Landscape Discovery Centre.

This Planning Statement will seek to confirm the appropriateness of the proposals in the context of national and local planning policy. It will also show the strategic fit of the proposals with the goals for the Northumberland National Park and show how, in the context of a number of factors associated with the site, that the site is capable of accommodating the development successfully.

The Design and Access Statement in Section 8 will demonstrate how the key considerations of the site including access arrangements, site layout, materials, landscape and views have been addressed and appropriately integrated within the proposals.

In addition to this the Statement of Community Involvement in Section 7 will detail the communication between the applicant and local residents.

2. Site and Scheme Description

The proposed development site is located near Walltown Crag, within the Northumberland National Park. The site is located on a former Quarry and is currently used as a Country Park and recreational site by visitors to the National Park. There is an existing toilet block on site which also contains a small shop and a covered seating area. Externally there are picnic tables around the pond area and a large tarmac and hard core car park which accommodates around 70 cars.



The general area around the site consists of exposed agricultural land with buildings to the south of the site. Hadrian's Wall, part of the Transnational Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site is located to the northeast and north west of the site.

Plans for The Sill Landscape Discovery Centre at Once Brewed are currently under consideration by the Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA). If these plans are approved, it is the aspiration of the NNPA to improve the existing facilities at Walltown, to incorporate a refreshment provision, a visitor centre area and improved toilet facilities to accommodate the existing visitors to the site at Once Brewed during the construction of the new Landscape Discovery Centre. Once the Landscape Discovery Centre is operational, the visitor centre area at Walltown is proposed to be transformed into a larger café area.

3. Planning History

Before the current use was granted the site was used as an active quarry. All planning applications made to the Northumberland National Park Authority for the Walltown Quarry site since it was proposed to provide for tourists are listed below:

- 04NP0020- Walltown Quarry; Change of use of general purpose visitors' amenity building to provide retail facility and refreshments. Granted conditionally in 2004.
- 03NP0011- Walltown Quarry; Installation of two cycle lockers in visitor car park. Granted conditionally in 2003.
- 91NP0063- Walltown Quarry; Construction of amenity building and car park provision with amended entrance. Granted conditionally in 1991.

These applications show that the site has been actively used to provide visitor facilities for over 12 years and that gradual improvements have been made to the facilities provided. The current application continues that trend.

4. Planning Policy

4.1 Introduction

This section of the Planning Statement sets out the relevant planning policy context within which this planning application should be considered, based on the pre-application advice received from the Local Planning Authority. The Planning policies are analysed at national and local levels and for each of those, the policies considered to be the most relevant are discussed.

The following local and national policy issues which relate to the proposed development site have been considered within this planning statement.

- Development within the National Park
- Landscape
- Good design
- Sustainable development
- Economy
- Public consultation

4.2 National Planning Policy Framework

On the 27th March 2012, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework, a new document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England, and details how they should be applied.

The aim of the National Planning Policy Framework is to create a streamlined, clear and concise planning document that promotes sustainable development and provides a link to allow the community to have their say on development that takes place within their neighbourhood.

NPPF Paragraph 115 states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.

Chapter 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. It encourages local planning authorities to avoid imposing architectural

styles or particular tastes and not to stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It also advises the Local Planning Authority to address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

There is a clear emphasis on a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the National Planning Policy Framework, something which the Government see as at the heart of the planning system, with sustainable development itself being the golden thread which should run through the plan making and decision making process.

The National Planning Policy Framework confirms that the Government has committed itself to the concept of sustainable development and of not sacrificing what future generations will value for the sake of short-term and often illusory gains. This approach is set out in the Sustainable Development: The UK Strategy document, and is reinforced through the document's five guiding principles of sustainable development.

The National Planning Policy Framework identifies that there are three dimensions to securing sustainable development (economic, social and environmental), and promoting the use of previously developed land. The document identifies 12 core planning principles which should underpin the decision making process taken by the Local Authority. These principles include proactively driving and supporting economic development to help deliver homes, businesses, infrastructure and thriving local places. The core principles also state that planning should:

- Be used as a creative exercise to find ways to enhance and improve places
- Objectively aim to meet the needs of an area, including housing, and business development.
- Seek high quality design and amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- Understand the differing roles and characters that areas take, and promote the vitality of our main urban areas; and
- Promote mixed use developments and realise the potential of areas of open land that can perform multiple functions such as wildlife, flood risk management and recreation.

Further to this, the principles also encourage the use of previously developed land, the use and development of renewable energy, and pursuing patterns of growth which make fullest possible use of public transport, cycling and walking.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that the reduction of the impacts of climate change and the provision of renewable and low carbon energy should be one of the main focuses of the local planning authority when considering new development. This includes encouraging new development

in locations which reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Paragraph 98 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should approve planning applications if their impacts are, or can be made acceptable.

As with the National Planning Policy Framework, a fundamental aim of the Northumberland National Park Core Strategy is to ensure that development within the National Park is sustainable. This supports the governments commitments to secure sustainable development.

Chapter 3 of the National Planning Policy Framework relates to supporting a prosperous rural economy and advises Local Planning Authorities to support economic growth in rural areas to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. It advises that in order to promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:

- Support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- Promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- Support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres; and
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

4.2.1 How the proposals meet National Policy

Design and Landscape

The proposed development has been designed to sympathetically renovate the existing building on the site and therefore the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Park will be preserved. The materials used in the project have been carefully considered and blend well with the existing building.

In addition to this the proposals will be developed on Brownfield land, which is heavily promoted in the NPPF.

Therefore the design is in accordance with Chapter 7 and Paragraph 115 as the NPPF.

Sustainable Development

Sustainability has been a core consideration in the redevelopment of these existing facilities. The development is proposed on the site of existing visitor facilities with an established public transport network, so visitors do not have to rely solely on private motorised transport.

Walking and cycling is also encouraged, with many current visitors opting to walk or cycle around the Park as a way of exploring the landscape.

Two electric charging points which are currently provided on site will be retained to provide for those with electric vehicles. Therefore this helps to meet the aims set out in Chapter 7 of the NPPF.

Economy

The development is a key part of the enabling works for the £11 million investment at Once Brewed for the new Landscape Discovery Centre and Youth Hostel, should the project be granted planning permission. The Sill is not just about creating a Landscape Discovery Centre, but also a significant programme of activities that will, over time extend to 30,000 visitor activity days per annum. A number of these activities will be based out of Walltown during the construction period and it is vital that this facility can play a role in the build-up of activity programmes during the interim period.

Notwithstanding this, this project is not just about facilitating The Sill, it is also about creating a sustainable legacy. Therefore the facilities proposed are designed to have a future use after the Sill is open, with the improved café area and shop providing an opportunity for continued local economic activity.

Once the Landscape Discovery Centre is complete, it is predicted that the additional visitors attracted to the National Park will spend the day or potentially longer stays visiting other attractions in the Park, and this will sustain the proposed improved refreshment provision at Walltown. As well as this, by improving the facilities to Walltown it will become a more popular destination for visitors in its own right. Once the Landscape Discovery Centre opens, the visitor centre area at Walltown will be transformed into a formal café area. Therefore it is likely that additional staff will be employed to run the café and the revenue generated will boost the local economy, meeting the requirements of Chapter 3 within the NPPF.

4.3 Northumberland National Park: Local Development Framework

The Northumberland National Park Local Development Framework contains one Development Plan Document; the Core Strategy and Development Policies Document. The Core Strategy was adopted in March 2009 and aims to deliver the overarching strategy for the National Park and set out the overall planning strategy for the Northumberland National Park to 2024.

4.3.1 Northumberland National Park Core Strategy

General Development Principles

Policy 3 of the Core Strategy looks at General Development Principles and states that all new development, activities, and uses of land within Northumberland National Park must uphold and promote the principles of sustainable development. It states that new development will be permitted when;

- a. The special qualities of the National Park will be conserved or enhanced;
- b. The proposal demonstrates high quality sustainable design and construction, which protects and enhances local character and distinctiveness through careful integration with the existing built form.

This includes but is not restricted to ensuring:

- materials are appropriate to the site and its setting;
 - development is sympathetic to existing buildings in terms of scale, height, massing, siting, form, materials and colour; and
 - the protection of open space which contributes to the amenity, character, and setting of a settlement;
- c. The proposal supports the wellbeing of local communities by ensuring:
 - amenity is not adversely affected in terms of visual impact, pollution, noise and waste;
 - the development will not have any detrimental effects on highway safety or the rights of way network;
 - the creation of a safe and secure environment;
 - the provision of appropriate community facilities to meet the needs of the development; and
 - that appropriate services and infrastructure are capable of being provided without compromising the quality of the landscape.

Economy

Core Strategy Policy 14 which aims to create 'A Sustainable Local Economy' advised that in order to create and retain a sustainable local economy, the National Park Authority will support proposals which enable:

- The creation of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses which relate to the special qualities of the National Park but do not negatively impact on them; and

- The expansion of existing employment uses particularly tourism, recreation, farming and other types of diversification which do not negatively impact on the special qualities

Core Strategy Policy 15 which relates to tourism and recreation also supports the expansion of the current visitor centre and hostel as it promotes proposals for sustainable tourism and recreation developments which:

- Maximise opportunities for visitors to increase their understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park whilst not adversely impacting on them;
- Integrate with existing visitor facilities, particularly where they can be accessed by public transport; or
- Reuse buildings to provide: self-catering and/or bunk house/ camping barn accommodation.
- Monitor the take up of land/ buildings for tourism development while assessing the amount of development for the expansion of existing visitor facilities.

Sustainable Development and Climate Change

Policy 3 states that all new development, activities, and uses of land within Northumberland National Park must uphold and promote the principles of sustainable development. The plan also advises that new development will be permitted when the proposals demonstrate high quality sustainable design and construction, which protects and enhances local character and distinctiveness through careful integration with the existing built form. Proposals must also support the wellbeing of local communities by ensuring amenity is not adversely affected in terms of visual impact, pollution, noise and waste.

As well as securing sustainable developments, the Northumberland National Park Authority are also dedicated to mitigating the effects of climate change.

Policy 2 of the Core Strategy states that in order to contribute to mitigating climate change and assisting adaptation to the impacts of climate change the National Park Authority will:

- Facilitate the achievement of regional targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by supporting proposals which:
 - a. Focus development in the most sustainable locations within the National Park;
 - b. Minimise the need to travel especially by private car;
 - c. Include opportunities for home working;
 - d. Promote walking, cycling, and the use of public transport.
 - e. Increase small scale renewable energy generation;
 - f. Minimise energy and water use and waste generation; and
 - g. Attain the highest environmental standards.

- h. Promoting and enhancing the conservation of peat as a carbon store within the National Park.
- Support proposals which allow for the successful adaptation to the impacts of climate change by:
 - locating new development in areas at least risk from flooding and using sustainable drainage systems to control the effect of surface water run-off;
 - i. Enabling wildlife and habitats to adapt to climate change; and
 - j. Maximising positive opportunities resulting from climate change.

Policy 25 of the Core Strategy seeks for developments to minimise energy use and pollution in order to meet national targets set out in the Energy White Paper. The Core Strategy states that in order to achieve the national commitments to cut CO₂ emissions, this will require an increase in the amount of energy generated from renewable sources.

Policy 25 also requires all new developments to minimise the amount of energy used during construction; achieve the highest energy efficiency through the location, orientation, layout, design and insulation of development; and realise the potential for the generation of on-site renewable energy.

Within the Core Strategy the Local Transport Plan seeks to create more opportunities for visitors to travel by sustainable means throughout the County such as the Hadrian's' Wall Bus. Policy 12 aims to maximise accessibility and minimise the environmental impact of traffic by ensuring that the transport and accessibility needs of the whole community and visitors are taken fully into account when planning new a development.

Policy 27 of the Core Strategy relates to water and flood risk and advises that all development within the National Park should make the most efficient use of water and enhance the sustainable use of the water environment by meeting high water efficiency standards, incorporating new technologies to recycle and conserve water resources; and promoting the use of sustainable drainage schemes.

Tranquillity and Landscape

Policy 19 aims to conserve and enhance the tranquillity of the National Park by assessing development proposals for their impact on noise, traffic and light generated, the sense of openness and on the quiet enjoyment.

As the development site is within a Designated Landscape, Policy 20 of the Core Strategy directly relates to the site as it aims to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and heritage of the National Park whilst being responsive to landscape change. It states that all proposals will be assessed in terms of their impact on landscape character and sensitivity as defined in the Landscape Supplementary Planning Document. It advises that any development which would adversely affect the quality and character of the landscape will not be permitted.

Cultural Heritage

Policy 18 of the Northumberland National Park Core Strategy states that the National Park Authority will support proposals which conserve, enhance, and promote the quality and integrity of the cultural heritage of the National Park, particularly those which among other things, recognise the opportunities for education and tourism founded on cultural heritage and promote the role that cultural heritage has in helping to secure social and economic regeneration.

Policy 1 in the Core Strategy states that any development must be able to demonstrate that it will:

- Conserve and enhance the special qualities of the National Park;
- Make efficient use of land, materials and infrastructure;
- Provide opportunities for all to understand and enjoy the special qualities of the National Park;
- Reduce the causes and impacts of climate change particularly by maximising renewable energy generation and energy efficiency in buildings;
- Demonstrate high quality design and sustainable construction.

4.4 How the proposals meet Local Policy

General Development Principles

The proposed development is mainly on the footprint of the existing building and therefore there will be negligible impact on the special qualities of the National Park.

The refurbishment is a high quality and sustainable design with locally sourced materials including oak and stone, which are sympathetic to the existing building and therefore meets the requirement of the General Development Principles.

As the application is for the redevelopment of existing facilities and is mainly on the footprint of the existing building with limited extension representing a 25% increase in the usable floor space which includes the covered canopy areas there will be a negligible impact on the local amenity. The materials used on the outside of the building will be Natural Slate and Oak to match the existing. Therefore it is likely that there will be little change to the visual impact.

Moreover, the existing transport network will support the increase in visitors and there will not be an increase in car parking spaces.

The aim of the proposed development is to improve local facilities. Once the redevelopment is complete, the community will benefit from a temporary tourist information centre which will then be transformed into a seated café area improving the existing refreshment provision. This café area will be operated by an independent business and the staff numbers are likely to increase.

Taking this all into account, it is clear that the proposed development meets the requirements of the General Development Principles set out in Policy 3.

Economy

The proposals are for the small scale expansion of existing tourist facilities and therefore meet the requirements of Policy 14 and 15. By opening up the existing tourism facilities and enlarging the café this will improve the accommodation on offer.

It is proposed that the visitor centre staff from the Once Brewed Visitor Centre will be transferred to the Walltown site while the Sill Landscape Discovery Centre is being constructed. Without this development, these staff could potentially be out of work for the duration of the construction period, or they may have to travel much further away to another location within the National Park.

Once the Landscape Discovery centre is fully operational, the visitor information area at Walltown would be used as an extension of the café, to provide permanent café seating areas. This café will be run by an independent business and it is likely that they will need to employ two more full time equivalent staff members.

As with The Sill Landscape Discovery Centre, the overall aim for the development is to maximise opportunities for visitors to increase their understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park whilst not adversely impacting on them. Relocation and retention of the Visitor Centre provision at Walltown will enable continued information provision for visitors retaining opportunities for visitors to increase their understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park.

Therefore it is clear that the proposals will fully comply with Core Strategy Policy 14 and 15 which encourages expansion to tourism and recreation facilities and boosting the local economy, both are achieved with this proposal.

Sustainable Development

The proposed development is for the improvement of existing facilities and in this case it represents the most sustainable option compared to the existing building being demolished and re-built.

The proposed refurbishment promotes a high quality sustainable design and the materials used are locally sourced where possible, including the oak and stone proposed.

The existing facilities are currently used by walkers and cyclists and in addition to this, there is an established bus route from the site to Carlisle to Haltwhistle. Therefore it is clear that the development will promote sustainable forms of transportation and meets the requirements set out in Policies 1, 2, 12, 25 and 27.

Tranquillity and Landscape

The refurbishment has been designed with careful consideration as to not impact on the tranquillity or the landscape character of the National Park. The materials used are in keeping with the existing building and the additional area which is being created represents a minor addition to the existing building.

There is an existing transport network and car parking and therefore the work required on site will be minimised. This will reduce the construction traffic and disruption.

Therefore the proposed development meets the requirements of policies 19 and 20.

Cultural Heritage

As the proposed development falls within a World Heritage Site, it is important to consider the impact that the development could have on its surroundings. The heritage of the proposed development site and its existing character has been respected throughout the design process, especially with respect to its location within a World Heritage Site.

The proposed development will create the opportunity for visitors to learn about the National Park's unique history by providing a temporary visitor centre.

The proposed redevelopment presents an efficient use of land, with the existing building being reused and the work being undertaken on the footprint of the existing building with limited extension.

Therefore it is clear that the proposed development fully accords with Policy 18 of the Core Strategy which relates to cultural heritage.

5. Key Development Issues

5.1 Ecology

An extended Phase 1 Habitat and Protected Species Survey of Walltown Visitor Centre was conducted on 6 August 2014. A Desk Study also took place.

The Desk Study revealed that there are 2 statutory sites within 2 Km of the site; these are 2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's); a geological site and an acidic grassland site on the Whin Sill, these are both within a 750m distance from the site. There is also one non-statutory site incorporating the site surveyed, this is Walltown Quarry and Crag Local Wildlife Site (LWS). Protected species identified by the data study has revealed the past presence of Red Squirrel, Otter, Adder, Pipistrelle 55kHz and 45kHz, Natterer's and Whiskered/Brandt's species of bat as well as foraging or commuting Noctule bats, all recorded within 1km. No other specially protected habitat or species on or in the immediate vicinity of the site was identified.

Recommendations are made with regards to the likely presence of nearby nesting birds, including swallows using the Visitor Centre.

In addition to this a Bat survey was also undertaken in August 2014. Inspection results revealed the presence of a small number of bat droppings in the loft space over the kitchen and shop consistent with a small number of void-loving bats. Two species of bats have in the past emerged from the centre at dusk in small numbers from two sites on the west gable and north eaves, with the west gable being in use in 2014 and more consistently used. A possible Brown Long-eared bat emerged from the covered area also.

There are some good bat-feeding corridors in the area along the plantation edges, over the lake and below cliffs in sheltered areas.

There are several roosting sites in the building at the eaves and gable walls that have been highlighted and a method statement provided for the development. The occasional bat may also be present in any suitable crevice at any time of the year in small numbers. Timing of the development works affecting the existing roof and eaves to avoid the hibernation period, the retention of the crevices used by bats and a cautionary methodology will ensure that the development has as little negative affect on bat conservation status as possible.

5.2 Trees

There are several species of trees within the red line boundary, however after considering the location of the development in relation to the location of the trees, it is clear that the proposed redevelopment will not impact on the trees on site as the proposals are not located in close proximity to the trees or their roots.

In addition to this no trees will need to be removed or pruned as part of this application, and therefore a Tree Survey is not required.

6. Planning Policy Conclusion

This Planning Application is for a high quality scheme to provide temporary facilities for the existing visitors to the Once Brewed Visitor Centre and then a long term café facility at Walltown Crag, within the Northumberland National Park. The built development will be located on previously developed land and will be a slight intensification of its current use. The use of brownfield land is promoted within national and local planning policy, and the scheme has been designed to respect and complement the heritage and character of the World Heritage Site.

It is considered that the development meets all of the stated requirements of the General Development Principals as prescribed by National and Local Planning Policies.

In terms of planning policy, taking national and local planning policy into consideration it is clear that the proposed development meets the key policy requirements for developing in a rural area which is also a World Heritage Site and within a National Park and that the scheme represents an appropriate form of redevelopment of the existing site in this sensitive location.

Local and National Policy also promotes development which support a prosperous rural economy. This development is required to support the Sill Project which will greatly increase tourism and will have a knock on effect of improving the National Park's economy whilst also increasing employment within the National Park. This application will also increase employment in the long term. The justification for the development has been explained and it is clear that there are many benefits to arise from the proposals.

In overall terms, it is considered that the scheme is fully in accordance with existing Local and National Policy and represents an appropriate form of redevelopment of the this sensitive site. As a result it is respectfully considered that permission should be granted for these proposals.

7. Statement of Community Involvement

It is noted that applicants for planning permission must work alongside local stakeholders and those that would be affected by the application, therefore to involve the community, and incorporate their ideas within the scheme. The National Planning Policy Framework states that any application submitted that can show this level of communication within the proposal should be looked on more favourably.

As part of developing the proposals, the design team met with Parish Council members at the site to explain the proposals and their opinions and views were sought upon these.

It is considered very important to consult local resident on the changes in their area which might affect them. Therefore letters were also sent out to all residents within a mile of the site to inform them of the proposed development. Residents were then given the opportunity to view the plans available to view at the Northumberland National Park offices and encouraged to get in touch with Cundall Planning to discuss any concerns or to request a copy of the plans.

A copy of the letters sent to residents and parish council members is attached in Appendix 1.

At the time of writing this statement, no comments had been received from members of the public.

8. Design and Access Statement

This Design and Access Statement is being submitted to meet the requirements of Section 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which substituted section 62 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and takes account of the advice set out in the DCLG Circular 01/2006, “guidance to changes to the development control system” and DCLG Guidance Document 03/2010 “Guidance on information requirements and validation” . It has also taken into account the CABE publication “Design & Access Statements – How to write, read and use them”.

Section 62 of the DCLG 01/2006 Circular states:

“The level of detail required in a Design & Access Statement will depend on the scale and complexity of the application and the length of statement will vary accordingly. Statements must be proportionate to the complexity of the application but need not be long”.

The issues that need to be assessed have been pointed out within this document and they are the use of development, the amount of development, the scale of development, the landscaping of the development and its appearance. Access to the site is also included.

8.1 Amount and use

The proposed development is for an intensification of its existing use, in addition to a temporary visitor centre area. The existing retail facilities will be improved, as will the toilet facilities. On completion of The Sill development the existing refreshment provision will also be extended to provide a seated cafe area for visitors.

The existing building has a usable floor area of approximately 108m² including the canopy area and once the renovation is complete the usable floor area will only increase to 135m² excluding the canopy. This represents a 25% increase in the usable floor space.

The exiting opening hours for the visitor facilities change throughout the year. During the summer months the facilities are open between 9.30am and 5pm, 7 days a week and from October the centre is closed during the week and open between 10am and 3pm on a weekend. These opening hours are not proposed to be changed once the works have been undertaken.

8.2 Scale

The existing building is single storey and consist of approximately 74m² Gross Internal Area with a covered canopy area accommodating outside seating. The proposals are to incorporate this canopy area into the existing building and create two new covered areas. This is shown in the existing floor plan and the proposed floor plan in Figures 1 and 2 overleaf.

Figure 1: Existing Floor Plan

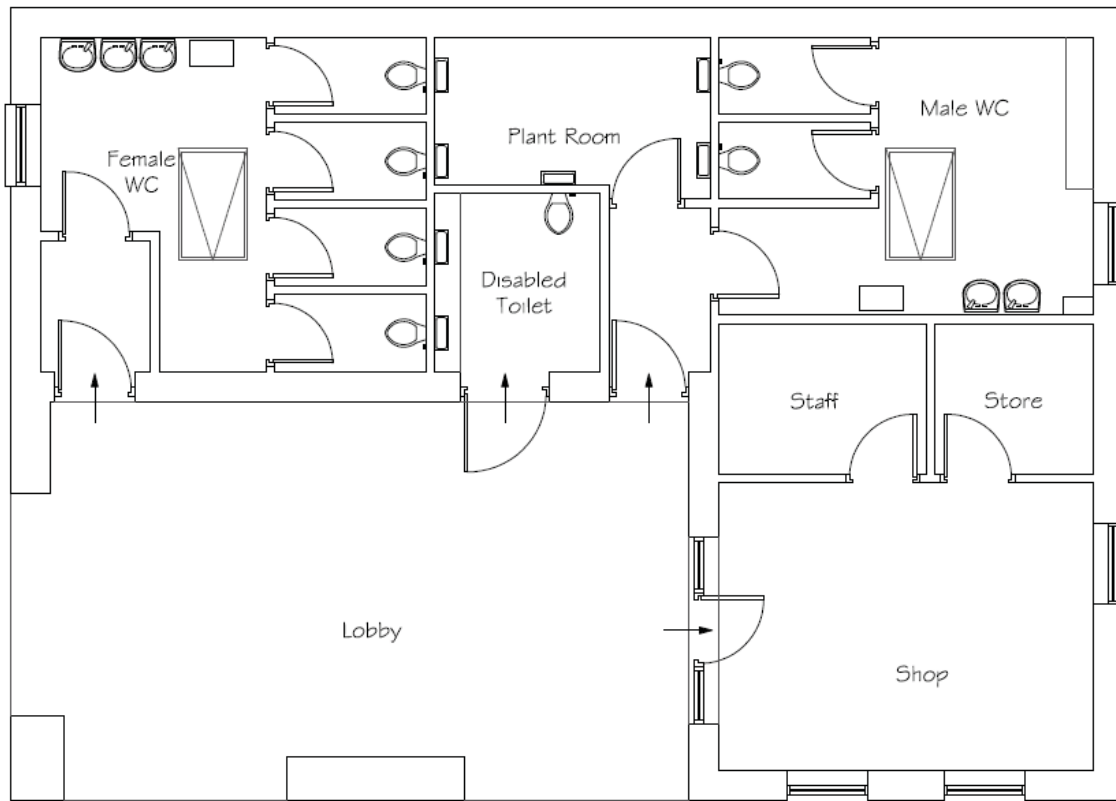
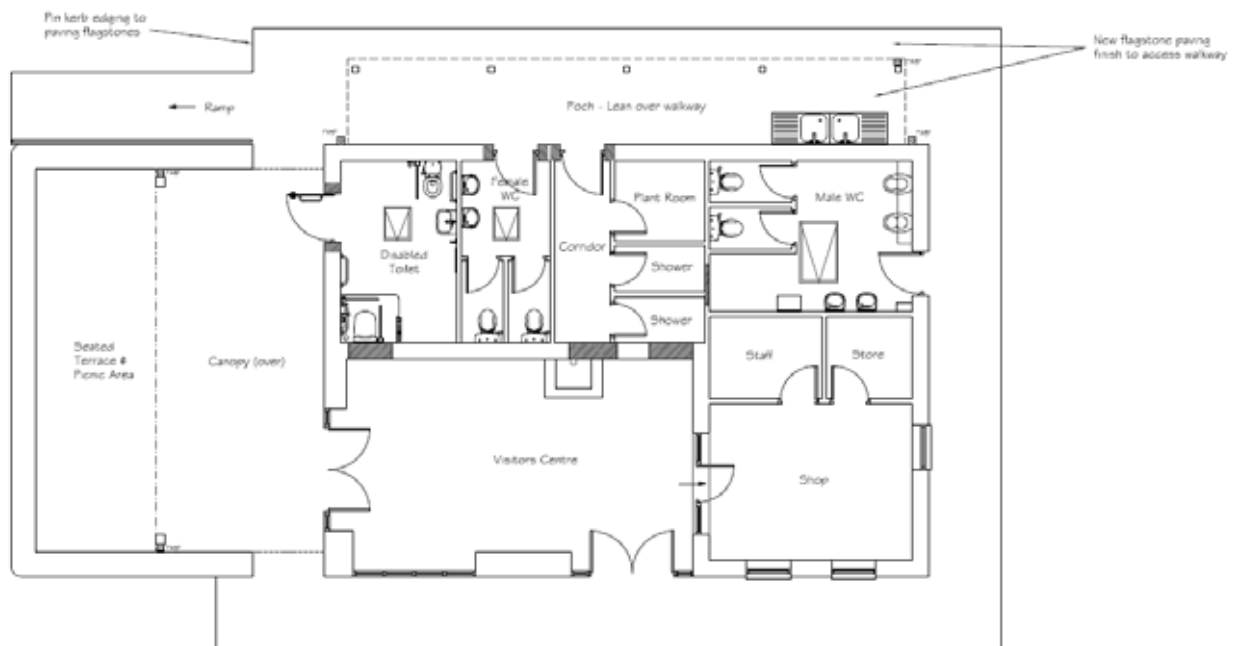


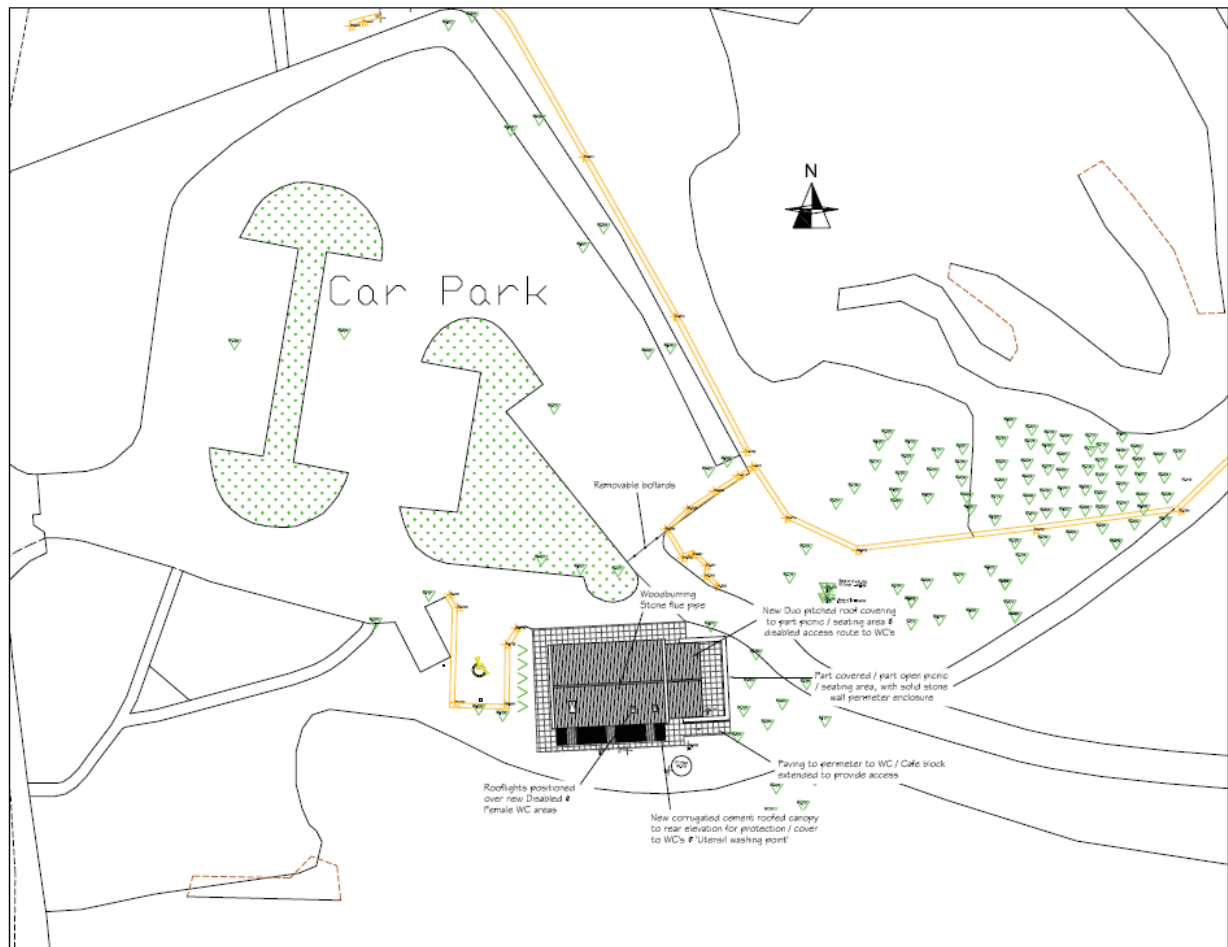
Figure 2: Proposed Floor Plan



8.3 Site layout

The access for the site will remain unchanged and will be accessed off the Military Road B6318. The internal layout of the site will also remain largely unchanged, with the exception of three removable bollards which will be located to the north of the site.

Figure 1: Proposed Site Plan



8.4 Materials

The design demonstrates how the proposals include traditional building materials and techniques. The materials used include the following:

Seating Picnic Canopy

Structure- Oak framed roof/truss and column supports

Roof Covering- Natural Slate and clay ridge tiles to match existing

Drainage- UPVC RWG's to match existing

Perimeter Wall- Wet bedded and pointed natural stone boundary wall with round copings

Rear Covered Porch

Structure- Timber framed oak rafters/ wall plate and column support

Roof covering- corrugated cement roof covering in Anthracite Grey colour with acrylic roof lights

Drainage- UPVC RWG's to match existing

WC/Cafe Block

Doors- Timber T and G finished doors with stain finish to match existing

Windows/ Screens- Timber with stain finish to match existing. Glazing with NNPA logo manifestation

Rooflights- finish to match existing

Flue Pipe- black stobe enamelled finish

Paving- concrete flagstone to match existing

These materials blend well with the existing building and are sympathetic to the World Heritage Site.

8.5 Landscape

The surrounding landscape consists of car parking at the north of the building which leads to the quarry picnic area to the east of the building. The south of the site is an existing woodland with farm buildings located further north. The west of the site is predominately agricultural grazing land.

8.6 Views

The building is currently visible from the car park at the north of the site, however there is a band of tree planting which shields the site from the northern approach. The site is also not visible from the former quarry area due to the topography of the site.

The building is shaded by the woodland to the south of the site and therefore it is not visible from the southern approach. The proposals will only be visible from the North and the East.

8.7 Landscape Design Considerations

The proposed application is for the refurbishment and extension of the existing visitor facilities.

There are no proposed changes to the overall site layout or the overall design of the site as part of this application. The design of the building's extension has been carefully considered and materials have been chosen which blend with the existing building.

Paving is proposed around the visitor building perimeter which will provide access, in particular to the toilets located at the rear of the building.

8.8 Parking and Transportation

There are no proposed changes to the car parking on site as the existing car park can accommodate the visitors to Walltown.

8.9 Conclusion

The application is for the redevelopment of existing facilities at the former Quarry site in Walltown. The proposals have been carefully designed and are sympathetic to the existing building. Care has been taken to avoid any adverse visual impact on the World Heritage Site.