



Northumberland National Park Authority

Walltown New Temporary Office Accommodation

Planning, Design and Access Statement

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1. Introduction

The Northumberland National Park Authority are proposing to provide temporary office accommodation to the south of existing visitor facilities in Walltown, Northumberland National Park. These new office facilities are proposed to accommodate the existing staff at the existing Tourist Information Centre at Once Brewed during the construction phase while it is being redeveloped.

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 it is capable of accommodating the development successfully.

The Design and Access Statement in Section 7 will demonstrate how the key considerations of the site including, 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 will detail the communication between the applicant and local residents.

2. Site and Scheme Description

The proposed development site is Located near Walltown Crags, within the Northumberland National Park. The site is located on a former Quarry and is currently used as a Picnic Site by visitors to the National Park.

There is a toilet block building on site, to the north of the proposed temporary office accommodation which also contains a small shop and a covered seating area. Externally there are picnic tables around the pond area and a large tarmac car park which accommodates around 70 cars.



The general area around the site consists of exposed agricultural land with farm 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 of the site.

Plans for the 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 provide temporary office accommodation for the 7 staff who currently use the office facilities at Once Brewed.

An application for improved visitor facilities at the site to provide for the visitors at Once Brewed has also been submitted and is being considered by the Local Planning Authority.

Once the Landscape Discovery Centre is operational, the temporary cabins will be removed and recycled by their manufacturer Elliott.

3. Planning History

The site is currently used as a Tourist facility with toilets, a small shop and a covered seating area. Before that 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:

- 14NP0080- Walltown Quarry; Application for the improvement of existing visitor facilities in Walltown to provide an improved visitor centre with a cafe area and outside seating, improved toilet facilities and a Tourist Information Centre. Valid Awaiting Assessment in September 2014.
- 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 had an active use for over 12 years and that gradual improvements have been made to the facilities provided. The current application continues to utilise the site and compliments fits existing facilities.

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
- 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 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
- 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.

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

Landscape

The proposed development has been located in a position which reduces the visual impact on the landscape. As the cabins are located south of the existing building, they are largely screened from view by the trees from the south and the existing building from the north.

The proposals are also temporary and therefore any adverse impacts are reversible.

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

Therefore the design is in accordance with the main principles set out in Chapter 7 and Paragraph 115 as the NPPF.

Sustainable Development

Sustainability has been a core consideration when selecting the type of temporary cabin. After assessing the options available, Elliott Eco-Cabins were chosen as the preferred supplier in the event that permission is granted for this development as they actively promote sustainable development by:

- Supporting initiatives that benefit the environment;
Reducing the consumption of raw materials in all operations through recycling and reuse.
- Taking into account ISO 14001 environment requirements in the manufacturing of its products and where possible, procuring materials from sustainable sources;
- Meeting and exceeding all relevant environment legislation and introducing standards where legislation does not exist.
- Periodically reviewing environmental objectives and targets.

The development is proposed on the site of existing visitor facilities with an established public transport network, so staff do not have to rely solely on private motorised transport.

Two electric charging points which are currently provided on site will be retained to provide for those with electric vehicles.

Therefore it is considered that this development will 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 that project be granted planning permission. There are currently 7 staff who use the offices at the Once Brewed site, and therefore this application is essential to accommodate them for a period of two years.

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.

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:
 - 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.

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 temporary and will therefore have no long-term impact on the special qualities of the National Park.

The cabins are proposed to be located behind the existing visitor facilities and it is anticipated that the temporary cabins will be largely screened by the existing building, as a result, there will be minimum visual impact from the proposals. Furthermore, given the temporary nature of the proposals, the impact will be of a short-term and temporary nature. In addition the minimal foundations and the ease of restoring the site after removal of the cabins mean that any change is reversible.

Taking this all into account, it is clear that the proposed development will not have a negative impact on the special qualities of the National Park and therefore accords with the General Development Principles set out in Policy 3.

Economy

It is proposed that the staff from the Once Brewed Visitor Centre building will be transferred to the Walltown site while the Sill Landscape Discovery Centre is being constructed. There are currently 7 staff who use the office facilities at Once Brewed and without this development, some 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.

The overall aim for the development is to support the Sill Landscape Discovery Centre proposals which aim to maximise opportunities for visitors to increase their understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park. Therefore it is clear that the proposals enable the expansion of tourist facilities by temporarily accommodating its staff.

Therefore this development complies with Core Strategy Policy 14 which encourages expansion to tourism and recreation facilities and boosting the local economy, both are enabled with this proposal.

Sustainable Development

The proposed temporary development fully upholds and promotes the principles of sustainable development by the use of eco-cabins which use a high quality sustainable design and materials. Timber is used in the construction of the cabins and it achieves high levels of thermal efficiency. In addition to this Timber by-products can be recycled into other products, eliminating waste.

It is anticipated that once the Sill Landscape Discovery Centre is operational, the Eco-cabins will be recycled by their manufacturer.

The temporary offices are located in a sustainable location next to a visitor facilities building which has existing transport links. By locating the offices next to the existing building this will also allow the staff from the visitor centre to use the offices on site without having to travel to another location.

Therefore it is clear that the development is sustainable and meets the requirements set out in Policies 1, 2, 12 and 25.

Tranquillity and Landscape

As the proposals are temporary, they will not have a lasting impact on the tranquillity of the National Park. Moreover the cabins are located behind the existing building to mitigate against any temporary visual impact.

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 when considering the location of the eco-cabins.

The proposed redevelopment presents an efficient use of land, with the cabins located on the hard standing area behind the existing building.

Therefore it is clear that the proposed development 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 undertaken 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 Whin Sill and are both 750m distant 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, 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 Bat Surveys were also undertaken in August 2014 and again in September 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 locations 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 has been 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

A Survey was undertaken on the 3rd September 2014 and comprised a thorough inspection of the trees within the site to inform the Pre-Development Tree Constraints Assessment.

The survey identified that ten of the semi-mature to mature trees within the site boundary were surveyed separately and individually reference tagged with a numbered aluminium disc.

All trees to be retained should have a Construction Exclusion Zone (CEZ) implemented around them as specified in an Arboricultural Implications Assessment (AIA)/Tree Protection Plan (TPP) following production of detailed scale development plans.

Consultation with the Northumberland National Park Forestry and Landscapes officer, highlighted that the trees are not within a Conservation Area and that currently no specific tree preservation orders have been served on any of the trees within the site.

In summary the survey identified that three trees were category 'B' and seven were category 'C', the trees to be lost are category 'U'. Overall, within the context of the surrounding area, the trees within the site are currently assessed as being of low to moderate landscape, amenity and ecological value. This is in terms of providing screening from the surrounding areas, and providing important wildlife linkages and nesting and foraging habitat for any wildlife that would be found within the site.

One characteristic group of trees of low to moderate ecological and landscape value were assessed as a whole, across the site.

The Tree Survey outlines the potential impacts of the proposed development without appropriate mitigation, which are:

- Loss of a group of young to semi-mature trees that as a whole are ecological, amenity and landscape assets of moderate to high value to the site and surroundings.
- Serious damage to the roots and crowns of trees being retained during the ground work and construction phase of the development.
- Works to or removal of semi-mature trees with a high risk of supporting nesting birds.
- Harm or disturbance to tree nesting birds during pruning works and vegetation removal should this take place during the bird breeding season (March to August inclusive).

These potential impacts can all be mitigated against. The key mitigation and enhancement measures are likely to include:

- The retention of 10 trees on site where possible which include category 'B' and 'C' trees.
- Where trees are retained, all works on site are to be undertaken in accordance with a TPP with working methods.
- All works to trees to be carried out to the prescriptions specified in an arboricultural method statement.
- All tree works are to be undertaken outside the bird breeding season (March-August inclusive) unless a checking survey is undertaken by an appropriately qualified ecologist and active nests are found to be absent.
- Spacing between the planted trees within the copse of woodland to the rear of the building are already tight. This area would benefit from a systematic thinning and coppicing regime to encourage natural regeneration and the development of the ground flora.
- No further tree planting is recommended to mitigate for the loss of the trees for the development at this stage.
- Adequate measures should be taken to protect the roots of trees within the root plate areas and the crowns of trees from the movement of high clearance site plant machinery.
- Barriers must prohibit construction works in the areas between the barriers and tree trunks. Barriers are to be installed prior to any preliminary construction or preparation works.
- The adoption of horticultural good practice. If necessary, the stumps should be physically removed or decimated with a stump grinder.

Overall there are three trees of low value (category 'U') will be lost to the development to allow for placement of the temporary cabin. These trees can easily be replaced around the site is necessary.

6. 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, so as 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 residents 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 temporary 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.

One comment was received from a resident of Greenhead via email on the 23rd September 2014. The following concerns were raised:

- Does not feel it is suitable for a development the size that you will be needing to take the volume of visitors that would normally go to Once Brewed Visitor Centre;
- Detrimental to the site and to the surrounding roads, farm and residents;
- It will spoil an otherwise lovely site;
- Would like to know the reasons why another site, such as Housesteads was not chosen.

Arrangements are being made to meet with this resident to discuss their concerns. Any feedback following this, or any alterations which are needed to the proposals will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority as soon as possible.

7. 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.

7.1 Amount and use

The proposed development is for temporary office accommodation to the north of an visitor centre.

This accommodation is required during the construction phase of the Sill Landscape Discovery centre at Once Brewed, which is anticipated to be for up to two years.

7.2 Scale

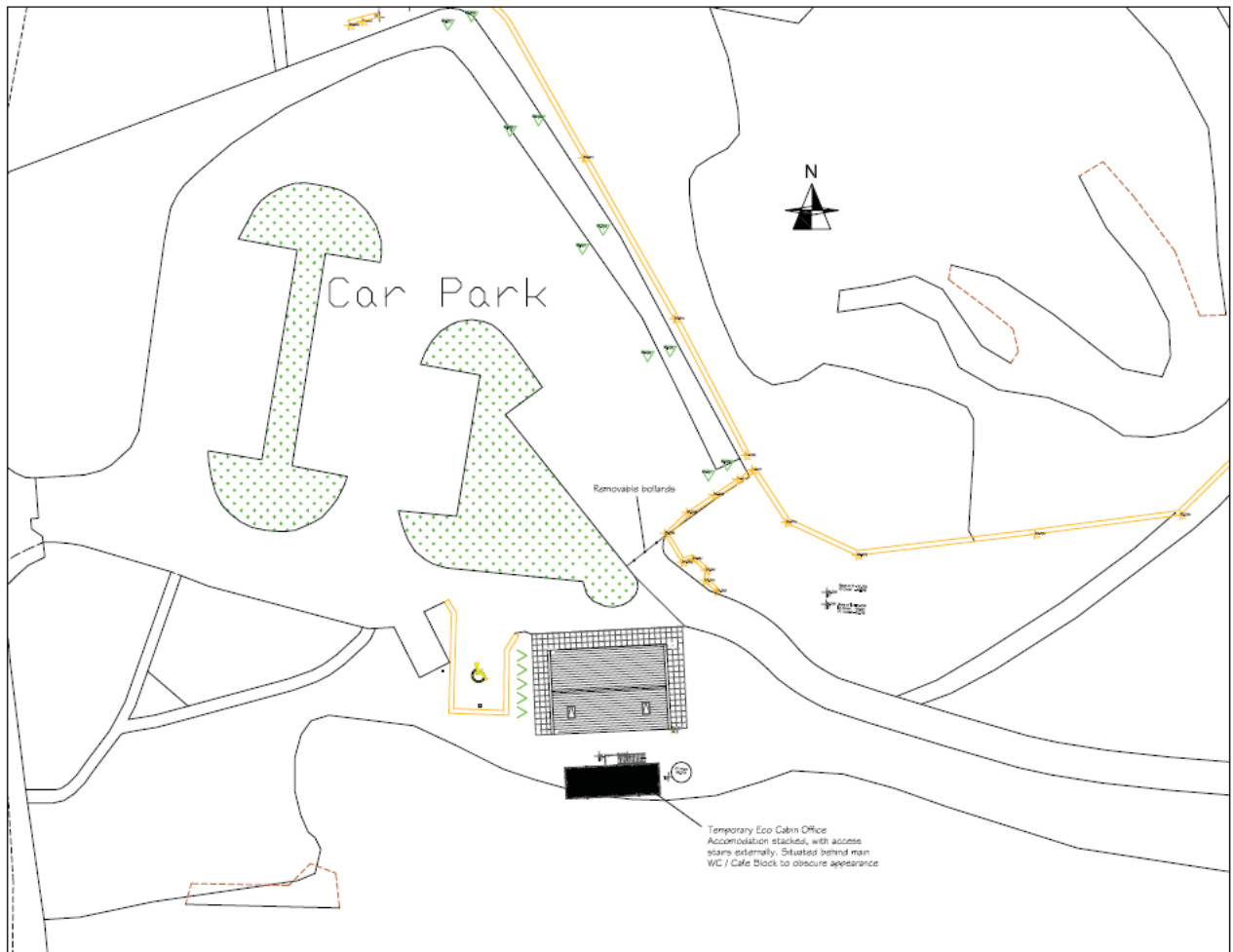
Two storey Eco-cabins will be used to accommodate the 7 staff members who currently used the offices at Once Brewed. In total approximately 54m² of floor space will be provided.

7.3 Site layout

The access for the site will remain unchanged and will be accessed off the Military Road B6318.

The temporary cabins will be located south of the existing building and these will be accessible on foot from the east of the site. The remaining internal site layout will 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



7.4 Materials

The proposed temporary Eco-cabins will consist of white finish timber in a stacked arrangement with a black painted steel staircase and finish.

7.5 Landscape

The surrounding landscape consists the existing visitor centre building directly to the north with car parking further north leading 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 south. The west of the site is predominately agricultural grazing land.

7.6 Views

Part of the temporary cabin is currently visible from the car park at the north of the site, as the high of the cabins is approximately 4m higher than the existing building.

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.

7.7 Landscape Design Considerations

The proposed application is for the temporary office accommodation. There are no proposed changes to the overall site layout or the overall design of the site as part of this application.

7.8 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 and the staff temporarily transferred from Once Brewed.

7.9 Conclusion

This Planning Application is for temporary office accommodation using high quality Eco-cabins to allow for the existing relocation of staff members to Walltown from Once Brewed during the construction of The Sill Landscape Discovery Centre.

The scheme has been designed to respect and complement the heritage and character of the World Heritage Site by locating the cabins behind the existing visitor centre building.

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

Taking National and Local Planning Policy into consideration it is clear that the proposed temporary 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 temporary and reversible development on a site with existing development in this sensitive location.

Local and National Policy also promotes development which supports a prosperous rural economy. This development is required to enable the Sill Project which will greatly increase tourism and will have a knock on effect, generally improving the National Park's economy whilst also increasing employment within the National Park.

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

8. Appendix 1



29th August 2014

Northumberland National Park Authority,
Eastburn, South Park, Hexham,
Northumberland NE46 1BS
T: 01434 605555 F: 01434 611675

Chief Executive (National Park Officer): Tony Gates

Dear Resident

Public Consultation- Improvements to Walltown Tourist Facilities and Temporary Office Accommodation for National Park Services

We are writing to let you know about our plans to make improvements to the existing tourist facilities at Walltown Quarry. The improvements will allow us to temporarily relocate our Tourist Information Centre and staff from our Once Brewed site while building works take place.

You may be aware that we have submitted a planning application for The Sill Landscape Discovery Centre at Once Brewed. If these plans are approved, there will be a need for the existing Tourist Information Centre to be temporarily located elsewhere during the construction period. We also wish to relocate our rangers, engagement officers, farming advisers and community based staff who currently work from Once Brewed to a location close by. We are, therefore, proposing to make improvements to the facilities at Walltown and install temporary office accommodation at the site.

The proposal is to enclose the existing covered area providing provision for the visitor centre alongside adding a new covered area to provide a sheltered outside seating area on the eastern elevation. In addition temporary offices are planned to be located to the rear of the current building. These will remain on site while building work takes place at Once Brewed and will be removed once The Sill Landscape Discovery Centre is functional.

We are hoping that planning applications for these works will be submitted in September. We have made the parish council aware of the plans and will receive their comments through the usual planning procedures. However we are keen to receive any views on the proposals from residents prior to submission.

If you would like to view the plans, these are being made available at the Northumberland National Park Authority Offices, at Eastburn in Hexham during normal opening hours. Alternatively, these can be provided by getting in touch with our Planning Consultants (Cundall) on either 0191 2134511 or by e-mail at planning@cundall.com . Our Planning Consultants are also available for any queries you may have.

Yours faithfully

Stuart Evans
Project Director, The Sill

