

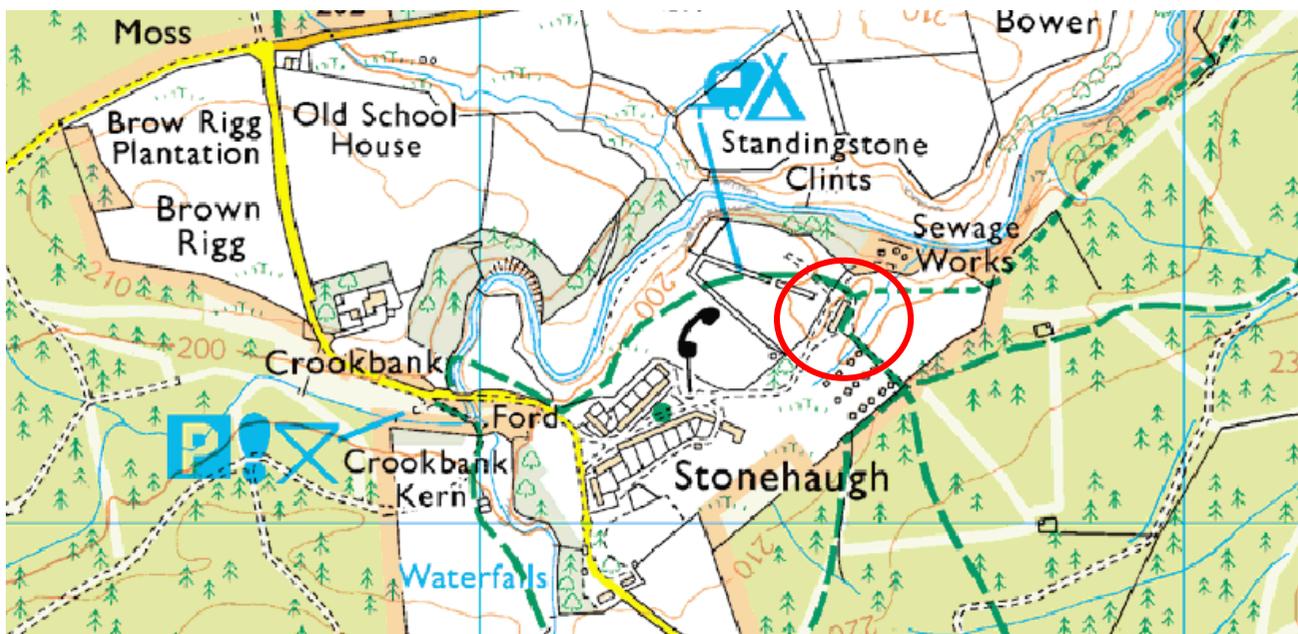


## DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

<b>Application Reference Number</b>	16NP0059
<b>Description / Site Address</b>	Conversion of 4 existing barns to holiday accommodation at The Old Farmhouse, Stonehaugh Shields, Kern Green, Stonehaugh, Northumberland, NE48 3BU
<b>Expiry date of publicity / consultations</b>	18 July 2016
<b>Last date for decision</b>	10 August 2016

### Details of Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the change of use of 4no. barns adjacent to The Old Farmhouse, Stonehaugh Shields to form 3no. units of holiday accommodation.



*Aerial map view of application site (circled in red) showing proximity to Stonehaugh*

The Old Farmhouse is a residential property located to the north eastern end of Stonehaugh within Stonehaugh Camping and Caravan site, which is owned and operated by the applicants (April-September). The property adjoins a two storey former hayloft and 4no. single storey barns presently used for domestic storage purposes, which are arranged in a linear fashion with a dilapidated lean-to to the eastern side. The buildings are positioned approx. 200m away from the main village encircled by a private access road which connects the site to Stonehaugh and branches at the property towards the campsite (to the north west of the site), sewage works (to the north) and Stonehaugh Chalets (approx. 50m to the south).

Historical evidence alludes to the presence of a farm at Stonehaugh Shields since around 1700, with the present farmhouse thought to date from around 1812. The property and land holding were later acquired by the Forestry Commission in around 1950 for use as an office, rest area and store coinciding with the construction of Stonehaugh village pertinent to the Kielder forestry plantation. The use of the site in this way is understood to have ceased in around 1970 subsequent to which planning permission was granted for the use of the land as a campsite together with the adjacent



Stonehaugh Chalets site. The site was later acquired by the applicants in around 1990 for use as a domestic residence, ancillary storage and camping and caravan site.

The proposal seeks the re-use of the 4no. single storey barns to form 2no. 1 bed units and 1no. 2 bed unit incorporating the installation and alteration of door and window openings, solar PV panels and flues and the replacement of the existing dilapidated lean-to with a larger extension. The units would be served by car parking to the front (west) with paved areas to the front and rear, and would be connected to the mains sewer.



*View of property facing north west. R-L: main property; adjoining two storey former hayloft; and 4no. barns with dilapidated lean-to visible to far right*

Planning permission was previously sought for the change of use of the barns under application 16NP0001 however this was withdrawn following concerns raised by NCC Environmental Protection surrounding land contamination. A Land Contamination Desktop Study has since been prepared and submitted in support of this application.

It is noted that both planning permission 16NP0001 and this application as originally submitted stated to seek the change of use of 3no. barns; this description is however incorrect as the plans and information submitted in support of both applications clearly show the conversion of 4no. barns and has therefore been amended.

### **Planning Policy & Guidance**

#### **National Policies**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

National Planning Practice Guidance (2015)



### **Local Policies**

#### **Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy and Development Policies Document (Core Strategy) (2009)**

Policy 1	<i>Delivering Sustainable Development</i>
Policy 2	<i>Climate Change</i>
Policy 3	<i>General Development Principles</i>
Policy 5	<i>General Location of New Development</i>
Policy 7	<i>Conversion of Buildings outside Settlements</i>
Policy 12	<i>Transport and Accessibility</i>
Policy 14	<i>A Sustainable Local Economy</i>
Policy 15	<i>Sustainable Tourism &amp; Recreation Development</i>
Policy 17	<i>Biodiversity and Geodiversity</i>
Policy 18	<i>Cultural Heritage</i>
Policy 19	<i>Tranquillity</i>
Policy 20	<i>Landscape Quality and Character</i>
Policy 25	<i>Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency</i>

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

NNPA Building Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (Design Guide SPD)

### **Relevant Planning History**

**16NP0001** Conversion of 3 existing barns to holiday accommodation. *Application withdrawn 14.03.2016.*

### **Consultation/Representations**

**Wark Parish Council: No response received.**

**NCC Environmental Health: No objection, subject to conditions**

*No objections are raised to the proposed development. Should members be minded to grant planning permission the following conditions are recommended:-*

- *Any contamination not previously identified be detailed within an additional Method Statement which should then be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority;*
- *During the construction period no noisy activity should take place outside of reasonable hours; and*
- *No deliveries or collections should take place outside of reasonable hours*

**NCC Highways Authority: No objection, subject to conditions**

*The proposed development would not impact detrimentally upon the wider highway network subject to the following conditions:-*

- *The proposed car parking spaces and refuse areas should be implemented prior to occupation of the development; and*



- *Details of cycle parking should be submitted and approved prior to occupation of the development*

**NNPA Access and Recreation Officer: No objection**

*No objections are raised on the condition that the nearby Public Rights of Way are protected throughout. The works must have no effect on accessing these routes. No work should be undertaken to disturb the surface of the paths, obstruct the paths or in any way prevent or deter public use of the paths without the necessary legal diversion or closure order having been made.*

**NNPA Ecologist: No objection, subject to conditions**

*The Ecological Survey submitted indicates that several species of bat are using the buildings at several locations. A Natural England protected species licence will be required in order to undertake the proposed work, which following consideration of the development is likely to be granted. No objections are therefore raised subject to the recommendations made within the Survey being conditioned as part of any planning approval. An informative should also be attached reminding the applicant of the need to obtain a Natural England licence.*

**No responses received** following the display of a notice at the site entrance on 27.06.2016 and letters issued to neighbouring properties on 21.06.2016.

**Assessment**

The main issues to be taken into consideration in the assessment of this application are:-

- The Principle of the Development;
- Design, Landscape and Visual Impact;
- Tranquillity and Amenity;
- Ecological Considerations;
- Foul Drainage and Waste;
- Land Contamination;
- Highways and Rights of Way; and
- Renewable Energy Provision

**The Principle of the Development**

The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of decision making.

Policy 1 of the NNPA Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development proposals will conserve or enhance the special qualities of the National Park (landscape character, tranquillity, cultural heritage, geodiversity and biodiversity), demonstrating high quality design and sustainable construction. The effects of the proposed development on these qualities are discussed in more detail later in this report.



The application site is located within the open countryside adjacent to the village of Stonehaugh whereby development is limited to the re-use of existing buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that this cannot take place in an identified settlement and would not impact detrimentally upon the special qualities of the National Park. As the development would in the main comprise the re-use of an existing building, the proposal would accord with policy 5 in this respect, and the addition of a small extension in place of an existing dilapidated extension is considered to be acceptable in this location.

Core Strategy Policy 7 provides support for the conversion of existing buildings within the open countryside to employment use (including tourism) where the building is capable of conversion without the need for significant alterations or extensions and contributes to the special qualities of the National Park. It is considered that the proposed change of use would accord with Policy 7.

Core Strategy policies 14 and 15 provide support for the creation and expansion of sustainable employment and tourism uses which maximise opportunities for visitors to understand and enjoy the National Park, without negatively impacting upon its special qualities. It is considered that the proposed conversion of the buildings to provide visitor accommodation would accord with Policies 14 and 15 in principle.

It is noted that the proposed conversion relates solely to the use of the units as visitor accommodation rather than permanent residential accommodation. It is therefore considered appropriate to include a condition restricting the occupancy of the units to holiday use only, as permanent residential accommodation in this location would conflict with policy 7 and require a local needs restriction in line with policy 10.

### **Design, Landscape and Visual Impact**

The NPPF states that “*good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning*”, and that development should be responsive to local character and distinctiveness. Core Strategy policy 3 provides support for development proposals that conserve and enhance local character and the Park’s special qualities through design that:

- Utilises materials appropriate to the site and setting;
- Is sympathetic in terms of scale, height, massing, siting, form, materials and colour; and
- Protects open space which contributes to amenity, character and setting of a settlement.

The NNPA Building Design Guide SPD elaborates further on the above, advising that conversion schemes are best achieved through the retention of the original character of the building, utilising existing openings and taking a simple approach to alterations by making as few changes as possible in order to maintain form.

A relatively simplistic approach has been adopted in the design of the proposed conversion, which is considered to respect the character and appearance of the building and would have minimal impacts upon the landscape character or views of the surrounding area. The proposed retention and re-use of existing (including blocked up) door and window openings is supported and the installation of 3no. conservation-style rooflight windows is considered acceptable. Other changes



required to facilitate the proposed conversion including the creation of an internal doorway to connect barns 3 and 4, the re-roofing of the building with existing slates and landscaping to create a pathway and extended car parking area are considered to be acceptable.

Although slightly larger than the existing lean-to in terms of height and footprint, the proposed extension to the eastern side has been sympathetically designed in terms of form and position (matching that of the existing dilapidated structure) in order to remain subservient to the building and is therefore acceptable. The use of 'Bardoline' dark grey mineral felt tiles is considered on balance to be an acceptable roofing material for the proposed extension in this case given its small surface area relative to the host building and matching dark grey colour. The proposed cream coloured uPVC doors and windows are additionally, on balance, considered to be acceptable in this case (rather than timber openings which are preferable) when viewed in the context of the adjoining property which already benefits from such doors and windows.



**Left:** North west facing elevation of building; blocked up doorway visible to centre (lighter colour stone)

**Right:** Example of existing ventilation slot to be utilised and glazed to form a window

The solar panels proposed to the east facing roofslope would be visible from outside of the site although any such views would be limited to users of the adjacent Public Right of Way and Stonehaugh Chalets, with wider views from the east screened by the existing forest plantation. Notwithstanding the visibility of this roofslope, the proposed panels would appear as a fairly low-key addition to the building in any case by virtue of their dark colour and recessed position which would not be unduly prominent within the surrounding area, and are therefore acceptable.

The scheme additionally incorporates the installation of 3no. flues to the roof of the building, 2no. of which would project approx. 50cm beyond roof ridge height with the remaining flue terminating below roof ridge height to the western side; however their small scale and views of these within the context of the adjoining two storey property would ensure that the appearance of the building would



not be adversely affected. The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of design and impact upon landscape and thus accords with policies 1, 3 and 20 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

## **Tranquillity and Amenity**

### *Tranquillity*

The proposal incorporates the installation of solar lighting to the edges of the pathway surrounding the barns, the specifications for which have not been provided as part of this application. The information submitted shows no further proposed external lighting although it is anticipated that additional lighting may be required due to the external doors and outdoor/ parking areas proposed.

It is acknowledged that the adjoining property benefits from existing external lighting and that further lighting may be installed to this and other buildings surrounding the site without the need for approval to first be sought from NNPA. Notwithstanding this, in order to protect the tranquillity and dark skies of the National Park through the impact of inappropriately designed external lighting it is considered appropriate to include a condition requiring that details of both the external lighting shown on the proposed plans and any further external lighting required in connection with the development be submitted to and approved in writing by NNPA prior to installation. Subject to the inclusion of an appropriately worded condition to the effect of the above, the application is considered to be in accordance with Core Strategy policies 1 and 19 and NPPF Paragraph 125.

### *Impact upon Residential Amenity*

The application site is located approx. 200m north east of Stonehaugh village and approx. 50m north of the Stonehaugh Chalets site which comprises 8no. properties authorised for use as holiday lets, although it is understood that a number of these are in permanent residential use.

Due to the separation distance of the units from these surrounding residential uses and nature of the development as a conversion, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any significant detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy or overshadowing/overbearing impact.

Whilst the units may increase the number of visitors to the site, given the small scale of these which would limit the number of additional occupiers at any one time and the context of the site as a campsite it is considered unlikely that there would be any significant impact upon residential amenity in terms of noise. In this regard, the amenity of neighbouring uses during the construction phase of the development has also been considered by NCC Environmental Protection who have requested conditions in order to ensure that the working hours required to fulfil the development would not result in unreasonable disturbance to neighbouring uses, which is considered to be reasonable. NCC Environmental Protection have additionally recommended a condition to restrict deliveries and collections from the premises outside of reasonable hours, however this is not considered reasonable in this case as that no such restriction applies to any existing property surrounding the site.



Given the relationship between the proposed units and the adjoining dwellinghouse it is not considered that the proposed conversion would impact unreasonably upon the amenity of the occupiers.

### **Ecological Considerations**

The biodiversity of Northumberland National Park is defined as one of its special qualities in both the National Park Management Plan and Core Strategy, particularly Core Strategy policy 17. This is further supported by the NPPF, in particular, Paragraph 118.

A Bat and Barn Owl Survey has been submitted alongside the application. Following consideration of the survey the NNPA Ecologist considers that the proposed works would not adversely impact upon protected species subject to the works being undertaken in accordance with the recommendations made within the report. This request is considered to be reasonable and would be secured by condition. The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact upon ecology, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 17 and the NPPF.

### **Foul Drainage and Waste**

#### *Foul Drainage*

The Environment Agency is the statutory consultee advising the LPA, however a proposal of this scale falls outside of the proposals that the Environment Agency wishes to be consulted on and therefore the aspect of Foul Drainage is to be considered by the LPA. The method of foul drainage proposed is through the existing mains sewage system which is the most preferable option set out within Planning Practice Guidance and is therefore considered to be acceptable.

#### *Waste*

The information submitted provides details of the existing arrangements for the storage and collection of domestic and commercial waste from the farmhouse and campsite respectively. The scheme proposes that the storage and collection of waste from the 3no. new units of accommodation would be integrated within these existing arrangements and includes the location of refuse bins to serve the development on the plans submitted. The proposed refuse arrangements are considered to be acceptable subject to the inclusion of a condition (as recommended by NCC Highways) to secure the retention of a suitable waste storage area, as shown on the proposed plans.

### **Land Contamination**

An objection was received from NCC Environmental Protection in response to application 16NP0001 on the grounds of contaminated land. This objection was raised due to the previous use of the site as a Forestry Commission rest depot and prior to this in connection with sheep and cattle hill farming and the proposed use of the buildings as residential units, classed as a vulnerable end user, without the submission of supporting information regarding the potential for contamination



present on the site. This application was subsequently withdrawn; a Land Contamination Desktop Study has since been prepared and submitted in support of this application.

Following consideration of the information submitted NCC Environmental Protection have raised no objections to the proposed development subject to conditions being attached to any planning approval in order to deal with any other unexpected contamination found; this is considered to be reasonable.

### **Highways and Rights of Way**

The proposed development would be served by designated vehicular parking to the front (north west) of the units, which is considered by NCC Highways Authority to be of sufficient capacity to facilitate adequate parking for the units without detrimental impact upon highway safety. In order to secure the implementation and retention of this car parking area NCC Highways Authority have requested the inclusion of a condition to this effect; this is considered to be reasonable however the wording of the recommended condition is to be adapted to suit to circumstances of this site. The development is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of impact upon highway safety and the wider highway network, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 3 and the NPPF.

NCC Highways have additionally recommended a condition in order to secure the creation and retention of cycle parking prior to the occupation of the development; however such a condition is not considered to be reasonable in this instance as the NNPA Core Strategy does not set a requirement for cycle parking to be provided as part of development schemes.

The NNPA Access and Recreation Officer has identified a number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the immediate vicinity of the application site (Wark Bridleway 26 and Wark Footpath 28), however has raised no objection to the development on the basis that the PRoW are protected throughout and are not impacted upon without the necessary diversion or closure order first been made. As no impacts upon the PRoW are proposed, it is considered that the development would accord with Core Strategy policies 3 and 12 and the NPPF.

### **Renewable Energy Provision**

Policy 25 requires all new developments, including conversions, to minimise the amount of energy used during construction, achieve high energy efficiency, and utilise renewable energy sources in order to offset at least 10% of the predicted energy requirements of the development.

The proposed conversion scheme incorporates the installation of 3no. solar panels to each unit (9no. total) which would be located to the main south east facing roofslope. In this regard the application has been accompanied by specification details of the proposed panels and a photographic example of these panels in situ on another building.

The information submitted does not detail the percentage of future energy which would be offset as a result of these solar panels, however given the small scale of the units, the use of these as holiday accommodation which would likely have lower energy requirements than a permanent dwellinghouse and proportionately high level of solar panels proposed, it is considered reasonably likely that this would result in at least 10% of the predicted energy requirements of the proposed



conversion being offset, and therefore the submission of further information is not required. It is however considered appropriate to include a condition requiring the installation of the proposed panels prior to first occupation of the units in order to ensure that these are implemented, subject to which the development is considered to accord with Core Strategy policy 25 and the NPPF.

### **Recommendation & Conditions**

It is recommended that conditional planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To ensure that the development is commenced within a reasonable period of time from the date of this permission and to comply with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Application form, dated 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016
- Location plan, dated 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016
- Proposed site layout (Dwg. No. D 02), dated 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016
- Proposed roof and floor plans (Dwg. No. Stone Units DO 1 Rev. B), dated 18<sup>th</sup> July 2016
- Proposed elevations and sections (Dwg. No. Stone Units DO 3 Rev. C), dated 18<sup>th</sup> July 2016
- Solar Panel technical details (PV20/330 & PV30/500) and photographic example, dated 15<sup>th</sup> July 2016
- Land Contamination Desktop Study and Walkover Survey Report June 2016, dated 8<sup>th</sup> July 2016
- Heritage, Design and Access Statement, dated 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016
- Structural Report, dated 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016
- Bat and Barn Owl Survey October 2015, dated 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development accords with policies 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 25 of the NNPA Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the working practices and mitigation requirements set out in the document 'Bat and Barn Owl Survey, The Old Farmhouse, Stonehaugh' dated October 2015 and received on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016. In particular, attention is drawn to the need to undertake the development in accordance with the recommendations in respect of:

- The provision of 10no. bat boxes on site prior to the commencement of works;
- The facilitation of a site induction meeting attended by the project ecologist and lead contractors prior to the commencement of works;
- Timing restrictions to avoid hibernating bats and maternity roosts;
- Undertaking works by hand; and
- Incorporating bat slates and creating/retaining crevice roosts sites.



Reason: To ensure the development poses no risk to protected species and to ensure the development is in accordance with NNPA Core Strategy policy 17.

4. Prior to the installation of any external lighting required in connection with the development hereby approved, details of the external lighting shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details should include:
  - The specific location of all external lighting units;
  - Design details of all lighting units;
  - Details of beam orientation and lux levels; and
  - Any proposed measures such as motion sensors and timers that will be used on lighting units.

The approved lighting scheme shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and shall be maintained as such thereafter, unless removed entirely.

Reason: In order to ensure that there is no harmful effect upon the tranquillity and intrinsically dark character of the area, including the Northumberland Dark Sky Park through excessive light pollution, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 19 and the NPPF

5. The development hereby approved relates to the provision of short-term accommodation only and shall not be used at any time as permanent residential accommodation. Occupiers of the approved accommodation must occupy this as short-term accommodation only. For the avoidance of doubt, this type of Occupier must not be occupying the building as their sole or main place of residence. In order to facilitate the enforcement of the foregoing, a register of occupiers of the premises to which this planning permission relates shall be made available to the officers of local planning authority upon request, following 24 hours notice.

Reason: To ensure that the development hereby permitted is used for holiday accommodation only and to control the occupancy in accordance with policies 5 and 10 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy and Development Policies Document.

6. If during construction of the development hereby approved contamination not previously discovered is identified, then an additional Method Statement regarding this material shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No part of the development shall be occupied until the Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and measures proposed to deal with the contamination have been carried out.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and accommodation are minimised and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to any future occupiers, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 3 and the NPPF.

7. Unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, during the construction period there shall be no noisy activity (i.e. audible at the site boundary) on Sundays or Bank Holidays or outside of the hours: Monday to Friday 0800 to 1800; Saturday 0800 to 1300.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity of the occupiers of existing neighbouring properties and to accord with policy 3 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

8. The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until the car parking area indicated on the site plan hereby approved has been implemented. Thereafter the car parking area shall be



retained in accordance with the approved plans and shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles associated with the development.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 3 and the NPPF.

9. The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until the refuse area hereby approved has been created in accordance with the approved plans. The approved refuse storage area shall thereafter be retained for the storage of refuse.

Reason: In order to ensure that sufficient measures are implemented within the site for the storage of refuse in connection with the development hereby approved and in the interests of highway safety, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 3 and the NPPF.

10. The solar panels hereby approved to the development shall be implemented in full before the first occupation of the units and shall remain operational for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that appropriate renewable energy and/or low carbon energy measures are included to in line with NNPA Core Strategy policies 1, 2 and 25 and Chapter 10 of the NPPF.

11. The 3no. rooflights permitted to the development hereby approved shall be of a traditional conservation style and shall be retained in such a style in perpetuity unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard the character and appearance of the building, in accordance with Core Strategy policies 1, 3 and 20 and the NPPF.

12. The roughly coursed random stone and 'Bardonline' dark grey mineral felt tiles to be used in the construction of the extension hereby approved to the eastern elevation of the building shall match the colour and appearance of those of the existing building as closely as possible. All stone to be used shall be natural and not reconstituted stone.

Reason: In the interests of the satisfactory appearance of the development, to conform with Policies 1 and 3 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

### **Informative Notes**

1. This planning permission is granted in strict accordance with the approved plans. It should be noted however that:
  - a) Any variation from the approved plans following commencement of development, irrespective of the degree of variation, will constitute unauthorized development and may be liable to enforcement action.
  - b) You or your agent or any other person responsible for implementing this permission should inform the Northumberland National Park Authority's Development Management team immediately of any variation from the approved plans and ask to be advised as to the best method to resolve the matter. Most proposals for variation to the approved plans will require the submission of a new application.
2. This planning permission is granted subject to conditions and it is the owner and the person responsible for the implementation of the development who will be fully responsible for their compliance throughout the development and beyond. If there is a condition that requires work to



be approved prior to the commencement this is called a 'condition precedent'. The following should be noted with regards to conditions precedent:

- a) If a condition precedent is not complied with, the whole of the development will be unauthorized and you may be liable to enforcement action.
  - b) In addition if a condition precedent is breached, the development is unauthorized and the only way to rectify the development is the submission of a new application. If any other type of condition is breached then you will be liable to a breach of condition notice.
3. The applicant is reminded of the need to obtain a Natural England EPS development license prior to commencement of development.

**Background Papers**

Application file 16NP0059  
EIA Screening Opinion

	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Planning Officer</b>		
<b>Head of Development Management or Chief Executive</b>		