

Lowtown Sustainability, Design and Access Statement

Introduction

This project will involve the alteration and extension of a residential building at Lowtown near Greenhead. The building is Listed and has not been occupied for some time.

| Ref | Item | Comments |
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| a) | Conserves and enhances the special qualities of the National Park.(The special qualities are identified as: a landscape rich in biodiversity and geodiversity; a rich cultural heritage; a true sense of tranquillity; a distinctive landscape character) | |
| | Consultation and scoping studies - Demonstrate that you have carried out the appropriate consultation with the Authority and relevant nature conservation organisations, as to the presence of important species and habitats on site. | Pre application discussions were held a number of years ago. Generally, comments were supportive of bringing the building back into use. The final scheme has been developed to meet the requirements of the various involved. |
| | Detailed surveys and impact assessments - Demonstrate that you have detailed surveys and impact assessments, if required following consultation/scoping above. | An ecological survey of the building has been carried out and initial discussions have taken place with Historic England. Part of the site including part of the building are located on a Scheduled Monument. |
| | Design measures that encourage Biodiversity and Geodiversity - List the design features that you will incorporate in your development in order to encourage biodiversity, for example: green roofs. Outline how the development may provide opportunities for others to enjoy Biological and Geological diversity. | The proposal overall is intended to have minimal impact upon the landscape and ecology of the areas involved. Mitigation has been included within the scheme to protect the presence of bats. |
| | Rich cultural heritage - Explain how the proposed development will conserve and enhance sites such as Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. | The proposal will involve the reuse of an existing building. The new extension will replace a former extension and will not impact upon the existing structure as it will be seen to be totally subordinate and contemporary in its construction. The proposals will not impact upon Scheduled Monuments and excavations within the areas which are Scheduled will all be subject to a watching brief. Bringing the building back into use as visitor accommodation will also allow visitors to stay and enjoy an area with rich cultural heritage. |
| | True sense of tranquillity - Explain how the proposed development will conserve and enhance the tranquillity of the park (for example freedom from noise and visual disturbance). | The proposal will not impact significantly upon the tranquillity of the National Park. There will be no significant increase in the amount of traffic in the Park. The proposals uses an existing building which is quite well screened in the landscape and this existing screening will reduce any visual impact of the proposal (public highway is a dead end road). Car parking has been located close to the building to ensure it is seen as part of the overall developed area and not in an isolated location. Long distance views of the property are apparent from the Military Road to the East (Twice Brewed). |
| | Distinctive landscape character - Outline how the proposed development will have a minimum impact on landscape character and sensitivity; including details of any proposed hard or soft landscaping. | The proposal involves the conversion of an existing building in the landscape. The works to the existing building will use traditional materials which will also assist in integrating the scheme into the environment and mirror features found on the existing building. The proposed extension to the West will replace an existing smaller extension and will be completely contemporary in approach using modern materials. There is an existing track from the highway including a section of track down to the building on a diagonal from the main track. The track has generally "greened" over and the proposal is to overhaul the track to get back to a stone surface for two wheel tracks and to reduce the "hump" in the middle of the track. |

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| b) | Makes efficient use of land, materials, and infrastructure. | |
| | Land - Describe how the proposed development makes efficient use of the land (for example using the topography of the land to provide shelter from prevailing winds). Also consider the amount of development being proposed and how that is suitable for the site and surrounding area. | This proposal utilise an existing building and land previously in residential use. The amount of development proposed has been based on the minimum amount to provide suitable visitor accommodation. The area of curtilage to be fenced has been kept to a minimum. |
| | Materials - Describe how the proposed development aims to make the most efficient use of materials by sourcing them locally, using recycled material and using sustainable timber which is FSC-certified for example. | The proposal will utilise existing materials wherever possible including the existing structure. Timber specified for the project will be FSC and insulation will be zero ozone depleting insulation. All stone will be locally sourced. The proposed extension will use a highly insulated structural insulated panel for the frame. Wherever possible materials internally will be reused but there are some ACM's to be removed. |
| | Infrastructure - Explain how the development makes efficient use of the existing infrastructure, for example connection to roads, water supplies, power grids and communications. | The proposal will make use of all the main existing services. The building was previously connected to mains electricity and the overhead cables are located close by including the original poles serving the property. A new foul water treatment plant will be installed which will treat foul water to the stage where it is entirely clean. |
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| c) | Provides opportunities for all to understand and enjoy the special qualities of the National Park. | |
| | Interpretation / Education - Explain how the information discovered through scoping studies and detailed surveys under section 'a' will be used to facilitate interpretation and education, including any specific measures taken i.e. sharing of information with specialist protection groups etc. Tourism related development may also provide opportunities for people to enjoy the special qualities. | This proposal which is for visitor accommodation will allow many visitors to stay in the Park and enjoy its very special qualities. |
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| d) | Promotes the local communities economic and social well being and their ability to access services. | |
| | New business and business expansion - Provide details of how the proposed development creates or expands business i.e. number of jobs created, sourcing local produce. | The applicants hope that this project will form the first phase of a diversification strategy for the Estate. It is expected that the day to day running of the scheme will be carried out by tenants of the nearby farm. The project will also create further employment during the construction phase and part time employment when in use. |
| | Community facilities - Provide details of how the proposed development provides or protects community facilities. | N/A |

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| | <p>Tourism and recreational development - Describe how the proposed development will maximize opportunities for visitors to increase their understanding of the National Park and its special qualities. Explain how the proposed development will integrate with existing visitor facilities. For tourist accommodation development please state the number of new additional bed spaces provided and whether these are serviced (e.g. B&B) or non serviced (e.g. Self Catering).</p> | <p>This proposal will create visitor accommodation in the Park itself. This will allow visitors to stay in the Park and visit its many attractions including the various visitor centres such as the Sill. The development will create five or six bed spaces in self catering accommodation. However it is also possible that this property could be run as B & B accommodation by nearby tenants.</p> |
| | <p>Transport and Accessibility - Describe how the proposed development meets the accessibility needs of the whole community and visitors (for example: dropped kerbs, ramps and automatic doors).</p> | <p>The proposal will not significantly increase traffic within the Park.</p> |
| | <p>Designing out Crime - Describe how the proposed layout and design measures help to reduce the likelihood of crime.</p> | <p>The proposal will incorporate the necessary levels of security for developments of this type with multi point locking systems to doors / windows etc. Due to the isolated nature of the property and the large areas of glazing to the new extensions, sliding shutters are proposed to the extension.</p> |
| e) | <p>Reduces the causes and impacts of climate change, particularly by maximizing renewable energy generation and energy efficiency in buildings.</p> | |
| | <p>Renewable energy generation - Does the proposed development comply with Policy 26 Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency of the Core Strategy, which requires all new units of residential, employment, community and tourism development to include renewable energy in order to offset at least 10% of the developments predicted energy needs? Please indicate the types of renewable energy technologies used and their predicted output in Kw/h.</p> | <p>It is not possible to include significant embedded generation within this project due to the nature of the building. However, central heating will be supplemented by means of a wood burning stoves. The project will also outperform Building Regulations with up to date insulation standards throughout (subject to agreement with Conservation Officer and Building Control).</p> |
| | <p>Energy efficiency - Describe how the proposed development will maximize energy efficiency.</p> | <p>The project will maximize energy efficiency through use of the renewable heat sources (wood burning stoves) and also through the heavily insulated building.</p> |
| f) | <p>Demonstrates high quality design and sustainable construction.</p> | |
| | <p>High quality design - Explain how the proposed development will be of a high quality design, which is appropriate to the setting of the National Park.</p> | <p>The proposal has developed from its initial concept into a purpose designed space with flexibility to cater for visitors to the Park. The project uses a pallet of high quality natural traditional materials which compliment the existing building whilst the extension takes a contemporary approach using Corten steel as a cladding material. This will have a natural weathered appearance and appear as a complete contrast to the traditional Listed Building. It is considered that the proposal is appropriate in terms of its setting in the Northumberland National Park</p> |
| | <p>Sustainable construction - Explain how the proposed development will be constructed in a sustainable manner.</p> | <p>The use of materials such as recycled stone and the use of an existing building will assist in the overall sustainable construction proposal for the building. Other materials used will be sustainably sourced and the project will make use of all existing infrastructure.</p> |

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| | Scale - Consider the size of buildings and spaces and show how they are right for the site and surroundings. | The scale of the proposal is considered to be the minimum to provide the necessary usable space for visitors. The scale of the extension has been minimised so it appears as subordinate to the existing building. The location of the extension in the same location as the previous extension and in a location not in public view also assists in reducing any impact upon the site and the surroundings. |
| | Appearance - Describe how you would like the place to look following completion of the development. This involves considering the use of materials, architectural style, lighting, texture etc. | The proposal when complete will sit comfortably in the landscape. The contemporary approach to the extension will retain the primacy of the original building. The use of different height for the extension also assists in breaking up the mass of the building |
| g) | Promotes accessibility via public transport, cycling, or walking. | |
| | Distance from public transport - What is the walking distance from the proposed development to the nearest form of access to public transport? | There is little public transport within the vicinity (although there is a bus service at Walltown) |
| | Distance from designated cycle routes - What is the distance from the proposed development to the nearest designated cycle route. | 1-2 km |
| | Vehicular movement - Please give details of expected vehicular movements generated by the site, with reference to daily totals and distribution, throughout the day. | There will be no significant increase in vehicular movements |
| | Parking - How many parking spaces will the proposed development provide - including spaces for disabled access and parking for bicycles? | Two parking spaces have been provided and the parking / turning area kept to a minimum. Cycle parking is possible in the store |
| | Access - Outline your approach to access with particular reference to the inclusion of disabled people. | The building will have level access |
| h) | Conserves scarce resources. | |
| | Scarce resources - Explain how the proposed development will ensure that the use of scarce resources, such as gas and electricity, is kept to a minimum. | The use of the highest possible levels of insulation and wood burning stove will assist in the reduction of the use of scarce resources. Energy efficient light fittings will also be used throughout. |
| i) | Conserves water resources, air, and soils. | |
| | Water usage - Describe how the proposed development meets high water efficiency standards, incorporates the use of new technologies to recycle and conserve water resources and promotes the use of sustainable drainage schemes (for example: grey-water recycling or rainwater collection systems). | The proposal will use the existing water supply if suitable. The sanitary fittings chosen will be appropriate to minimise water usage including dual flush WC's. Surface water drainage will use sustainable methods such as permeable surfaces and soakaways |
| | Soils - Describe how the proposed development aims to protect soil resources and ensure they are able to fulfil as many of their functions as possible, particularly the storing, transporting and filtering of water. | This proposal will not impact significantly on soil resources. |
| j) | Reduces the amount of waste produced and increases the amount recycled. | |

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| | <p>For major development (as defined in the Core Strategy) - Site Waste Management Plan: please provide a copy of the Site Waste Management Plan, using the methodology as recommended by the Department of Trade and Industry. Demolition protocol: Using the Institute of Civil Engineers Demolition Protocol methodology, provide a target for reclaiming materials from the demolition site for re-use and recycling.</p> | N/A |
| | <p>For small scale development - Describe how during the construction stage, waste materials will be reduced, reused or recycled. Demonstrate how the proposed development aims to promote the recycling of waste.</p> | <p>The project will not lead to the generation of large quantities of waste materials. Existing stone will be reused where removed.</p> |
| k) | <p>Prevents inappropriate development in areas which are at risk of flooding or which contribute to the risk of flooding.</p> | |
| | <p>Potential flooding - Consult the Environment Agency as to the likelihood of flooding. Identify what measures have been taken to reduce the possibility of flooding and mitigate the effects.</p> | <p>The proposal lies in FZ1 and the project will not lead to increases in flooding elsewhere.</p> |