



DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

Application Reference Number	16NP0123
Description / Site Address	Change of use of land to the rear of Dovecote Cottage to create garden area. Erection of fence and erection of oil tank (retrospective) at Dovecote Cottage, Otterburn Hall Estate, Otterburn, NE19 1HE
Expiry date of publicity / consultations	30 January 2017
Last date for decision	9 February 2017

Details of Proposal

Retrospective planning permission is sought for the change of use of an area of land to the rear of Dovecote Cottage, Otterburn Hall, in order to create an enclosed garden area, alongside the erection of fencing and an oil tank.



North-facing (rear) elevation of Dovecote Cottage

Dovecote Cottage is a Grade II listed building which adjoins the Grade II listed Coach House, both of which form part of the Otterburn Hall Estate. Whilst not listed in its own right, Dovecote Cottage, which dates from around 1890, is listed by virtue of being joined to the Coach House and is considered to be of significance due to both its historic role as part of a traditional country house estate and also its construction from brick – a rarity in an area where the use of stone is commonplace.

It is understood that the Cottage was latterly used for storage and ancillary accommodation for staff members at the former Otterburn Hall hotel; the hotel has since closed and estate parcelled up and sold in lots. Subsequent to the sale of the property and associated land, the Local Planning Authority understands that this is now being used as proprietor accommodation in association with the operation of the adjoining Coach House hotel.



Map showing location of application site within Otterburn Hall Estate

The enclosed area of land measures approximately 13.9m x 4.7m, surrounded by a 1.8m high 3-bar fence, and extends into land presently occupied by chalets, known informally as the Otterburn Hall top site. The oil tank and associated enclosure are located at the north eastern corner of the newly enclosed garden and measure approximately 3.3m x 1.6m to a height of 1.8m.



View facing north towards oil tank and fence, showing Otterburn Hall top site chalets to rear

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 3	<i>General Development Principles</i>
Policy 5	<i>General Location of New Development</i>
Policy 18	<i>Cultural Heritage</i>
Policy 19	<i>Tranquillity</i>
Policy 20	<i>Landscape Quality and Character</i>

Supplementary Planning Guidance

NNPA Landscape Supplementary Planning Document (Landscape SPD)

Relevant Planning History

16NP0124LBC Listed Building Consent - Erection of fence (retrospective). *Pending consideration*

Consultation/Representations

Otterburn Parish Council: No response received

Historic England: No comments to make. *The application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice.*

NNPA Historic Environment Officer: No response received.

NNPA Historic Buildings Advisor: No objections. *No objections are raised to the proposed change of use of land. Whilst the post and rail fence is not ideal, it is not considered that this causes harm to the heritage assets as defined within the NPPF and Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The fence is attached via stainless steel fixings to the brickwork of an extension to Dovecote Cottage as opposed to within the mortar joints; however as this extension is a later addition to the property its physical fabric is not considered to be of historic significance and therefore no objections are raised to the fence subject to a condition requiring the making good of the brickwork should this ever be removed.*

No representations received in response to a notice displayed at the site on 09.01.2017.

Assessment

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

- The Principle of the Development;
- Design, Visual and Cultural Heritage Impact and Amenity; and
- Impact upon Landscape Character and Tranquillity



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, 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 whereby Core Strategy policy 5 limits new development to the reuse of existing buildings, with new buildings only permitted where these cannot be located within an identified settlement and would not be detrimental to the special qualities of the National Park.

The enclosure of non-domestic land to create new/enlarged residential gardens is generally resisted by NNPA in order to prevent the encroachment of residential premises into the open countryside, so as to protect the character of the landscape. The proposed change of use and associated fencing are however considered to be acceptable in principle in this instance due to the relatively small area of the site; that the property did not previously benefit from a garden area and thus the creation of such an area is considered to be a reasonable requirement; that the new enclosure would infill land perpendicular to the western side boundary of Dovecote Cottage and the rear (north) of the Coach House thus following an established pattern of development and restricting its overall spread; and that the land was formerly viewed as part of the surrounding chalet site, and is therefore not considered to be detrimental to the character or openness of the open countryside. The proposed development is therefore considered to accord in principle with Core Strategy policy 5.

It is not considered that the oil tank and associated screening fence would be contrary to the aims and objectives of Core Strategy policy 5, being reasonable requirements of the property, and are therefore acceptable in principle.

Design, Visual and Cultural Heritage Impact and Amenity

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.

Dovecote Cottage is considered by NNPA as the Local Planning Authority to be Grade II listed by virtue of its relationship with the adjoining Grade II listed Coach House. There are a number of Grade II Listed buildings which surround the site including Otterburn Hall itself and the farm buildings to the south west. The site also lies within a Registered Battlefield.



The NNPA Historic Buildings Advisor has provided a response on the application stating that the proposed change of use and retrospective installation of the post and rail fence, oil tank and screening are acceptable in principle and do not cause harm to the heritage assets. The Historic Buildings Advisor has additionally noted that the fence has been attached to the building itself (albeit to a later extension) and has therefore recommended the inclusion of a condition requiring the making good of the brickwork should the fence be removed in the future. Such a condition is considered to be acceptable in the interests of the amenity and historic interest of the building and would therefore be included as part of any planning approval.

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of design and the use of screening around the oil tank is supported. A condition requiring the retention of the fence of the lifetime of the oil tank is however not considered to be reasonable in this case due to the presence of existing, unscreened structures to the rear of the Coach House and Dovecote Cottage and the distance of the tank from the much-altered rear of the buildings, ensuring that these are visually separate.

Due to the location of the site within a Registered Battlefield, Historic England has been consulted on the application, and have responded with no comments, advising that the application should be determined in accordance with National and Local policy guidance and on the basis of the Authority's specialist conservation advice. The NNPA Historic Environment Officer has therefore also been consulted, however has provided no response. Based on the nature of the proposed development it is not considered that the Registered Battlefield would be detrimentally impacted upon.

Due to the nature and location of the development it is not considered that this would detrimentally impact upon the amenity of surrounding sites.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of impact upon design, visual amenity, residential amenity and cultural heritage, in accordance with Core Strategy policies 1, 3 and 18 and the NPPF.

Impact upon Landscape Character and Tranquillity

The proposed development would not impact detrimentally upon the tranquillity of the National Park and does not incorporate the installation of additional external lighting. The application is therefore considered to accord with Core Strategy policy 19 in this regard.

Due to the nature of the surrounding site as land comprising part of the Otterburn Hall chalet site, which is populated with buildings and fencing and bordered from the wider countryside by trees, it is not considered that the proposed development would be detrimental to the surrounding landscape, in accordance with Core Strategy policies 3 and 20 and the NPPF.

Recommendation & Conditions

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



1. The development hereby permitted shall be maintained in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Application form, received 14th December 2016
- Location Plan, received 14th December 2016
- Design and Access Statement, received 14th December 2016
- Proposed Floor Plan and Elevation (Drwg No. 160069-30), received 14th December 2016
- Proposed Site Plan (Drwg No. 160069-20), received 14th December 2016

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

2. Should the post and rail fence hereby permitted be removed in the future, any damage sustained to the brickwork or mortar joins in conjunction with the fixing of the fence shall be repaired with materials which suitably match those of the existing building.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity and historic interest of the building, in accordance with Core Strategy policies 3 and 18 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

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 Application 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.



Background Papers

Application file 16NP0123

EIA Screening Opinion

	Signature	Date
Planning Officer		
Head of Development Management or Chief Executive		