



DMC2018-013

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Application No:

18NP0007

Proposed Development:

Proposed bunkhouse accommodation with associated parking and cycle store on land east of the Rose and Thistle, Alwinton, Northumberland, NE65 7BQ

Applicant Name:

Mr G Latcham

Reason for Committee Decision:

An objection has been received from Alwinton Parish Council contrary to the recommendation that Members approve the application

Recommendation:

That Members are minded to approve the application subject to the conditions set out in the report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission for the proposed construction of a bunkhouse with associated vehicular parking and cycle storage.
- 1.2 The site is located to the eastern side of Alwinton approximately 70m south east of the Rose and Thistle Inn (approx. 100m by road). The site benefits from existing gated access from the adjacent unclassified road and comprises a portion of a previously undeveloped grassed field, currently in agricultural use as grazing land.

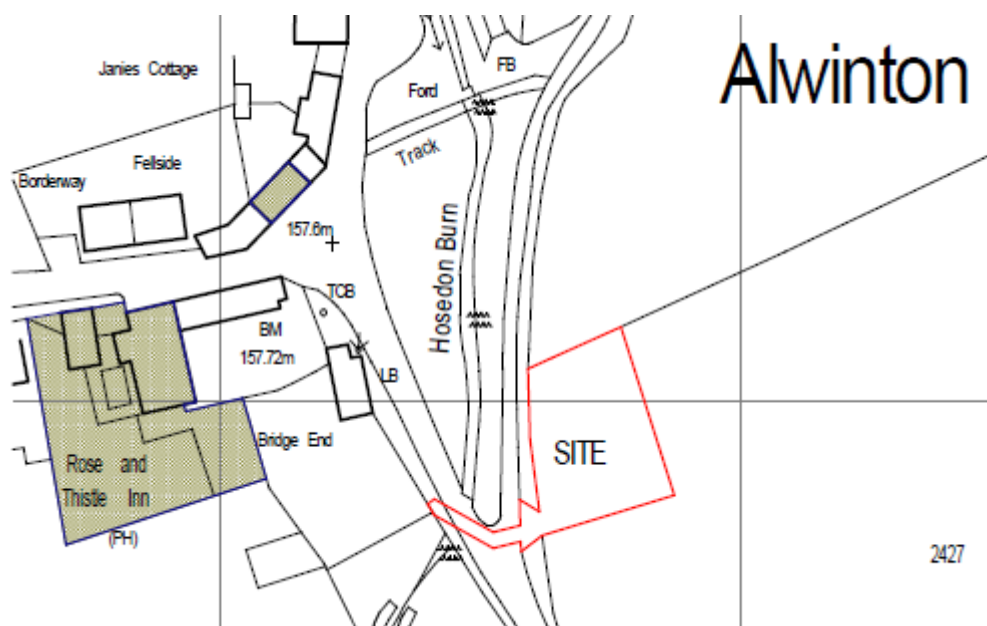


Fig. 1: Location of application site



- 1.3 The proposed development would comprise a bunkhouse located to the northern end of the site with six vehicular parking spaces created along the eastern boundary, as illustrated at Fig. 2. The scheme also proposes the creation of a refuse storage area; the construction of a cedar-clad cycle store; the excavation/regrading of the site; hard and soft landscaping measures; the formation of a new gated access into the adjacent field; upgrading of the existing vehicular access; and the connection of the development to the mains sewer system.

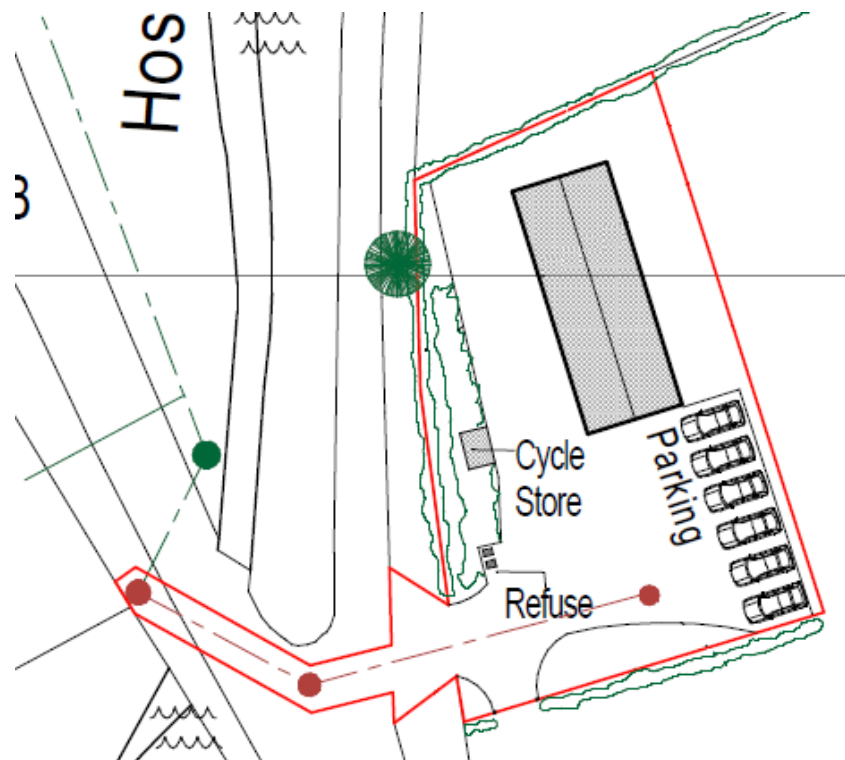


Fig. 2: Extract from proposed site plan

- 1.4 The footprint of the proposed bunkhouse would measure 16m x 6.3m, with proposed ridge and eaves heights of 4.5m and 2.6m respectively, as annotated on the plans submitted. The building would be finished with vertical cedar cladding with horizontal sections around window and door openings and a natural slate roof (as amended from slate shingles with a nature stone base course), with dark grey aluminium windows, doors and rainwater goods. The building would provide 4 twin bedrooms alongside 2 shower rooms, a utility area and a communal living room.
- 1.5 The proposed cycle store would measure 2.4m x 2m to a height of 2.2m falling to 1.9m, incorporating a mono-pitch grey felt shingle roof and cedar cladded sides.
- 1.6 It is proposed that the bunkhouse would operate in conjunction with the nearby Rose and Thistle Inn, providing additional and alternative accommodation to that already provided by the pub in order to sustain the business and encourage tourism and trade within the local area.



- 1.7 The application has been amended a number of times during in course including in respect of the red line site boundary (in order to include the proposed sewage connection route) and proposed materials.



Fig. 3: Proposed bunkhouse west elevation and floor plan



Fig. 4: View facing north towards application site from within field



2. Planning Policy & Guidance

2.1 National Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

National Planning Policy Framework Consultation Draft (March 2018)

National Planning Practice Guidance

2.2 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 6	<i>The Sequential Approach</i>
Policy 9	<i>Managing Housing Supply</i>
Policy 10	<i>New Housing Development</i>
Policy 12	<i>Transport and Accessibility</i>
Policy 14	<i>A Sustainable Local Economy</i>
Policy 15	<i>Sustainable Tourism & 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>

2.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance

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

NNPA Landscape Supplementary Planning Document (Landscape SPD)

3 Relevant Planning History

None relevant to this application

4 Consultation/Representations

- 4.1 **Alwinton Parish Council: Objection.** *No objections are raised in principle to a bunkhouse however the plans submitted lack confirmed details which raises issues e.g. final roof height; optional roof and base level materials; no emergency exit from*



bedrooms; no access to rest of field from the road; incompatible external lighting; sewage pipe crossing the Burn.

The Parish Council wishes to make a positive suggestion that any temporary tourist accommodation be located in the adjacent caravan field (within the ownership of the applicants) which benefits from an existing water supply, access to the road and mature vegetation which would mitigate the visual impact on the landscape of the proposed site.

- 4.2 **NNPA Ecologist: No objections**, *subject to conditions. The features of interests that occur on the site are hedges and hedgerow trees that should be retained and protected; the use of protective fencing during construction is good practice and should be conditioned. A new native hedge should be planted around the site to offset the loss of any hedges and the permanent loss of improved grassland.*

The proposed connection to mains sewer is good however the sewerage connection is on the other side of the Hosedon Burn, which flows into the River Coquet SSSI. It should be confirmed that this work can be undertaken without impact upon the burn, as this work has potential to result in pollution or siltation if excavation is required. A pollution prevention strategy should therefore be developed prior to commencement and made a condition.

The proposed provision of bat and bird boxes is supported; it is best practice for these to be shown on the plans. If permission is granted, at least 2no. bird and 4no. bat (1no. on each elevation) should be provided, which would not be disproportionate given the permanent loss of improve grassland. Other recommendations in Section 7 of the Ecological report should be made conditions of the application, including lighting, construction methodology, permeable hardstanding and tree protection.

- 4.3 **NCC Highways: No objections**. *The development will not have a severe impact upon highway safety, subject to the imposition of conditions and informatives relating to cycle and refuse storage, car parking, access upgrading works, advertisements and impacts during the construction phase of works.*
- 4.4 **NCC Environmental Protection: No objections**, *subject to the proposed development being implemented in accordance with the information submitted and the recommendation of an Informative relating to Statutory Nuisance enforcement.*
- 4.5 **Northumbrian Water: No comments offered**



4.6 Seven neighbour notification letters were issued in association with the application on 08.03.2018, in addition to notices displayed at the site entrance and the adjacent Hosedon Burn road bridge on 19.03.2018. Two letters of objection have been received, raising the following matters:

- There are no objections in principle of the construction of a bunkhouse;
- Development on the proposed site would be visually intrusive beyond the existing built up area of Alwinton;
- The proposed building would adversely affect the setting of this important settlement;
- The Planning Statement does not accurately reflect the applicants' land ownership as it does not include the field behind the Rose and Thistle which is also within their control. As this has previously been used for camping this would be more suitable and would be more ancillary to the pub, unlike the proposed site which could become severed and lead to pressure for alternative uses;
- The plans submitted do not include details of land levels, the amount of excavation required, building dimensions or distance from boundaries. Given the planning history of Hosedon House, should NNPA grant planning permission, any plans should include dimensions. Details of proposed levels should also be sought;
- The proposed installation of heras fencing is alien to the character of the Park and is therefore unsuitable;
- The proposed use of felt shingle roofing is inappropriate within this area;
- The alternative site suggested by the Parish Council would be more suitable;
- Any grant of planning permission should be subject to a condition limiting the use of the bunkhouse to ancillary to the Rose and Thistle;
- In addition to conditioning materials, NNPA should condition the submission of large scale details in order to ensure that good quality design is delivered

4.7 A representation was received from the applicant on 10th April 2018, responding to some of the points at paragraph 4.6.

4.8 One letter of support has been received, raising the following matters:

- There are a large number of people who enjoy walking in the countryside who need accommodation;
- Cycle tourism is growing in popularity and also requires accommodation of all types. Alwinton sites on a number of open and planned cycle routes;
- The area is already popular with mountain bikers and general visitors, and the supply of accommodation during local events often fails to meet demand



5 Assessment

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The key material planning considerations are:

- The principle of the development;
- Design, appearance and impact upon visual amenity;
- Impact upon residential amenity;
- Impact upon National Park special qualities;
- Highway safety, parking and access;
- Foul drainage and utilities;
- Energy efficiency and renewable energy provision; and
- Any other matters

5.2 **The principle of the development**

Location of new development

5.2.1 The application site is located to the eastern side of Alwinton, which is identified by Core Strategy policy 5 as one of the Local Centres in which new local needs development is to be focussed. The proposed scheme does not constitute “local needs development” as this relates to new tourism development; this is however considered to be acceptable in principle in terms of nature and location, comprising tourist accommodation within an identified settlement, and would not conflict with the aims and objectives of policy 5 or the NPPF.

Sequential approach

5.2.2 Core Strategy policy 6 advocates a sequential approach to the identification of development sites within settlements in order to meet their development needs and optimise the re-use of previously developed land and buildings. Under policy 6, sites are prioritised in the following order (‘types 1-4’):

1. Previously developed land and buildings within the identified settlement;
2. Other suitable sites within the identified settlement;
3. Previously developed land and buildings adjacent to the built up area of the identified settlement;
4. Other suitable sites adjacent to the built up area of the identified settlement.

5.2.3 The application site comprises an area of previously undeveloped land located to the eastern edge of the built up area of Alwinton. This is considered to constitute a ‘type



4' site as listed above (*"4. Other suitable sites adjacent to the built up area of the identified settlement"*).

5.2.4 The supporting text to policy 6 advises that its sequential approach is to be followed when considering development proposals *"unless they [the proposals] are specifically covered by other Core Strategy policies, particularly those linked to the need to ensure the delivery of the National Park statutory purposes"*. The two statutory purposes of English National Parks are set out in Section 61 of the Environment Act (1995) and are:

1. *To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and*
2. *To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.*

5.2.5 Core Strategy policy 15 relates specifically to proposals for sustainable tourism and recreational developments, in line with the second statutory purpose of the Authority. This policy provides support for tourism/recreation schemes which maximise opportunities for visitors to increase their understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park whilst not adversely impacting upon them, and which integrate with existing visitor facilities, particularly where these are accessible by public transport or re-use buildings to provide holiday accommodation. The supporting text to policy 15 reiterates the support given in principle to small scale tourist accommodation within identified settlements by policy 5, further highlighting that policy 6, through its sequential approach, recognises that it may not always be possible for development to be located within settlements.

5.2.6 In accordance with the supporting text to policy 6 it is considered that the proposed development is specifically covered by policy 15; accordingly, the sequential test requirements of Core Strategy policy 6 therefore do not carry full weight in the assessment of this application. The approach taken by policy 6 is however considered sensible, in the interests of making the best use of other available land and buildings; it is therefore considered prudent that this is given some weight in this assessment.

5.2.7 The supporting Design and Access Statement sets out that, following research, the applicants have found no previously developed land available for use by the proposed scheme. The Statement additionally explains that consideration has been given to re-using a building owned by the applicants to the north of the pub, however that due to its lack of amenity and parking space, its design, and its current use for storage in conjunction with the pub, this has been discounted; this assessment is considered to be reasonable. A recent internet search has also indicated that there are currently no further previously developed buildings being marketed for sale



within or adjacent to Alwinton. Accordingly, it is considered that site types 1 and 3 have been explored and discounted.

5.2.8 Due to the relatively compact built form of Alwinton, any areas of land that are currently undeveloped and may be suitable in accommodating the proposed development are located to the periphery of the tight core of buildings and associated amenity areas that make up Alwinton; in this respect, it is considered that these sites would be viewed as type 4 sites (*“other suitable sites adjacent to the built up area of the identified settlement”*), with little to no availability of type 2 sites.

5.2.9 In line with the above and within the context of this application it is considered that sites of types 1-3, which policy 6 advocates are prioritised above type 4 sites, have been reasonably discounted. It is however prudent to ensure that due consideration is given to any other available type 4 sites, in the interests of making the best use of other suitable sites adjacent to the village.

5.2.10 The Design and Access Statement sets out that there are no suitable type 4 sites other than land currently within the ownership of the applicants, with further land either in agricultural or private amenity use which is not for sale. The chosen site is within relatively close proximity to the pub, to which it would be directly associated, benefits from existing vehicular access and would enable the proposed bunkhouse to be set slightly apart from existing residential uses, thus limiting any impact upon neighbouring occupiers. For these reasons, the chosen site is considered to be acceptable in principle.

5.2.11 One objection received to the application argues that the field to the south of the Rose and Thistle (which also falls within the ownership of the applicants and is alleged to have previously been used as a camping field) would be considerably more suitable than the proposed site as this would be *“truly ancillary to the Rose and Thistle”*, whereas the proposed site *“could become severed from the Rose and Thistle and lead to pressures for alternative uses”*. The applicant has responded, explaining that this site was discounted as unsuitable due to its shared field access and likely disruption to adjacent neighbouring properties, and has only been used for camping on a sporadic basis for specific events. The reasons given by the applicant for this site having been discounted are considered to be reasonable in the interests of residential amenity, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 3 and the NPPF.

5.2.12 The objection received from Alwinton Parish Council suggests that the proposed development is relocated to an area of land understood to also fall within the ownership of the applicants some way south of the application site, which benefits from vehicular access, an existing water supply and mature vegetation for the purposes of screening. This suggestion is also echoed by a letter of representation made in response to the application. The applicant has responded to this suggestion



explaining that this site is too far out of the village (approximately 150m south of the application site) and is therefore unsuitable for patrons (in particular, cyclists) to walk to the pub. The justification given by the applicant is considered to be reasonable; in addition, this site would fall within the open countryside and would be contrary to Core Strategy policy 5 and therefore could not be supported in principle.

5.2.13 Based on the above assessment and giving regard to the due weight to be afforded to Core Strategy policy 6, it is considered that the application and proposed site are in accordance with this policy.

Sustainable tourism and recreation development

5.2.14 In addition to Core Strategy policy 15, policy 14 aims to create and retain a sustainable local economy and in respect of this application provides support for the expansion of existing employment uses, particularly tourism and recreation development, which do not negatively impact on the special qualities of the Park.

5.2.15 NPPF Paragraph 28 highlights the need for planning policy to support sustainable economic growth and the expansion of business in rural areas through both the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings. Para. 28 also provides support for sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, including the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities. Revisions to the NPPF are currently out for consultation, para. 84 of which echoes the current stance of para. 28.

5.2.16 The proposed provision of tourism accommodation which would operate in conjunction with the existing Rose and Thistle Inn and provide additional and alternative accommodation to that already provided by the pub is considered to accord with NPPF para. 28 and Core Strategy policies 14 and 15 in principle. It is also considered that the proposed development would accord with the draft NPPF.

5.2.17 The development proposes the use of the building as tourist accommodation. It is therefore considered appropriate that any approval be subject to a condition restricting occupancy of the unit to holiday accommodation only as the application is not accompanied by a local need restriction secured through a Section 106 legal Agreement, in accordance with the requirements of Core Strategy policy 10.

Other matters

5.2.18 As discussed at paragraphs 5.2.11 and 5.2.12, both an objector to the application and Alwinton Parish Council have undertaken to suggest alternative sites for the



proposed development. Whilst it is acknowledged that the Parish Council wished to make this suggestion in a positive manner, it is not reasonable to suggest different sites as part of the assessment of this application: the matter to be determined by this application is acceptability of the site proposed, as assessed above.

5.2.19 The proposed development would operate in conjunction with and would be ancillary to the Rose and Thistle Inn in respect of the provision of meals and day-to-day running by virtue of the design and facilities proposed to be provided within the building. It is however considered unreasonable to include a condition requiring the development to remain ancillary to pub because the principle of tourist accommodation, including a stand-alone operation, would be acceptable in principle within an identified settlement. The use of such a condition in the interests of preventing speculative future development on the site would also be unreasonable; in any case, planning permission would be required for any change of use of the building or further development of this site, an application for which would need to be submitted to and considered by the Authority. It is unreasonable to refuse planning permission for a scheme on the basis of speculative concerns about further development that may occur in the future.

5.3 Design, appearance and impact upon visual amenity

5.3.1 NPPF Chapter 7 para. 56 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, reinforced by the NNPA’s Design Guide SPD.

5.3.2 The proposed structures would be of a relatively small scale and would not detract from the visual amenity of the site or its setting within the village. Whilst it is acknowledged that the site would be located adjacent to the settlement (see section 5.2) and that the proposed bunkhouse would be visible from within the nearby area, the development would not be unduly prominent or visually intrusive on approach to or from within the village by virtue of its simple materials (of which the proposed slate roof of the bunkhouse would predominantly be visible, which would be in keeping with surrounding buildings), surrounding vegetation and proposed re-grading of the site (see 5.3.6).

5.3.3 The proposed bunkhouse building would be constructed from vertically fixed cedar boarding with horizontal sections adjacent to window and door openings, finished with a natural slate roof (as amended from felt shingle), with dark grey windows, doors and rainwater goods. The proposed cycle store would similarly be clad with cedar boarding, however would be finished with a dark grey felt shingle roof.



- 5.3.4 It is acknowledged that the proposed materials do not directly reflect the local vernacular, with the majority of buildings within Alwinton being constructed from stone. The proposed timber clad structures would however be simple in form and design, including attractive horizontal detailing around the bunkhouse windows and doors, and would not detract from the character and appearance of the site or its surroundings. The proposed choice of materials is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to the inclusion of a condition requiring the submission of samples/details in order to ensure that these are appropriate.
- 5.3.5 The application includes a photographic example of a contemporary building (understood to be Coll Bunkhouse in the Inner Hebrides) that the proposed development seeks to replicate. One representation received in response to the application requests that a condition is included requiring the submission of large-scale details of the proposed bunkhouse in order to ensure that this replicates the detailing of the building shown in the photographic example submitted (flush eaves, recessed cladding etc.). The design of the proposed bunkhouse is shown on the plans submitted to support the application and is considered to be acceptable without the submission of further details. As the photograph submitted is merely an example of a similar building, it is considered that such a condition is not necessary.
- 5.3.6 The site gently rises from west to east, as shown in Fig. 5 below. The application proposes to excavate part of the site in order to position the building on a level plateau at a slightly lower level than existing (max. 1m, as shown on Dwg. No. 79/19 'Site Section'), with the excavated ground then proposed to be used to regrade the area of the site to the west of the bunkhouse. As set out within the application, this would also reduce the visibility of the development from within the surrounding area, allowing this to be as unobtrusive as possible.
- 5.3.7 This aspect of the proposed scheme is considered to be acceptable in principle, however as only minimal details of the existing and proposed site levels have been provided, a condition is recommended to be attached to any planning approval requiring the submission of details of the proposed finished floor levels of the development, together with existing and proposed site levels, prior to the commencement of the development, in order to ensure that these are acceptable.
- 5.3.8 The proposed hard and soft landscaping measures, including hardstanding/vehicular parking, the upgrading of the site entrance, the creation of a new gated access and new areas of hedging and planting, are considered to be acceptable in terms of impact upon the visual amenity of the site and surrounding area, subject to the inclusion of conditions requiring the submission of samples/details of materials to be used and final layout.



- 5.3.9 The proposed connection of the development to the main sewer system raises no issues in respect of visual amenity as this work, once completed, would be located below ground level.
- 5.3.10 The scheme as a whole is considered to be acceptable in terms of impact upon the visual amenity of the site and surrounding area, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 3 and the NPPF.



Fig. 5: View facing north towards application site

5.4 Impact upon residential amenity

- 5.4.1 The proposed bunkhouse would be located approximately 40m from the closest neighbouring residential property, known as Bridge End Cottage (understood to currently be in use as a holiday/second home), with the proposed car parking area located approximately 50m from this property. Further residential properties within Alwinton are then located a minimum of around 70m from the site. The site is separated from these properties by the existing boundary hedge, proposed to be grown to a height of 1.8m, roads and area of village green dissected by the Hosedon Burn.
- 5.4.2 Whilst the application site would be subject to increased levels of use and vehicular movements as a result of the operation of the development, in addition to a potential increase in noise levels, due to the relatively small scale of the development and its proximity to neighbouring properties, it is considered that this would not give rise to any significant loss upon the amenity of the surrounding properties.
- 5.4.3 In order to ensure that there is no detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbouring residential properties during the construction phase of the development, a condition is recommended which limits noisy activity (i.e. audible at the site boundary) to between 8am-6pm Mondays to Fridays and 8am-1pm on Saturdays, with no works on Sundays, Bank holidays or public holidays.



5.4.4 The Design and Access Statement indicates that it is envisaged visitors would be able to check-in from 5pm, with check-out by 2pm the following day, operational 7 days a week. The proposed development would provide overnight accommodation and a communal area only alongside vehicular and cycle parking facilities, with other facilities (e.g. bar, meals and day to day running) provided at the adjacent, already-established Rose and Thistle Inn. Due to the nature of the development, in that it would provide sleeping accommodation and parking facilities only, with other functions provided by the existing pub, there is considered to be no requirement for a planning condition to restrict opening hours of the development, as it is considered that the proposed use of the building in itself would not have a detrimental impact upon neighbouring uses.

5.4.5 Subject to the condition recommended above, the proposed development is considered to be in accordance with Core Strategy policy 3 and the NPPF.

5.5 Impact upon National Park special qualities

5.5.1 No implications surrounding cultural heritage have been identified in respect of this application.

Ecology and Biodiversity

5.5.2 Core Strategy policy 17 seeks to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the National Park. NPPF Chapter 11 '*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*' advocates that the planning system should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity, minimising impacts and providing net gains where possible (paras. 109 and 118).

5.5.3 The application site does not fall within any ecological sites of international, national or local importance. The site is however located approximately 110m north east of the River Coquet & Coquet Valley Woodlands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), into which the nearby Hosedon Burn flows.

5.5.4 The application has been accompanied by an Ecological Assessment which provides an appraisal of the site, an assessment of the impact of the proposed scheme and recommendations for mitigation and enhancement. The NNPA Ecologist has reviewed the report and raises no objections, subject to the mitigation described within the report being made a condition of any planning approval. This is considered to be reasonable and separate conditions would be formulated as appropriate, including the need to submit a pollution prevention strategy.

5.5.5 The Ecological Assessment recommends that the proposed bunkhouse should include 2no. built in or wall mounted bat and/or bird boxes. Following review of the



Assessment, the Ecologist has suggested that at least 2no. bird *and* 4no. bat (1no. to each elevation) boxes should be provided, in the light of the permanent loss of improved grassland. The Ecologist's recommendation is considered to be reasonable, taking into consideration the above loss of grassland and the need to secure environmental gains as advocated by the NPPF, and would therefore be secured by condition.

- 5.5.6 The existing trees and hedges along the north and western site boundaries would be retained and protected during the course of works, in addition to new hedge and screen planting along the southern and western boundaries respectively; this is considered to meet with the Ecologist's recommendation for new planting in order to offset the permanent loss of grassland, taking into account that there would be no loss of any existing hedges. The application does not include details of the treatment along the new western boundary, which would therefore be secured by condition.
- 5.5.7 Subject to the conditions recommended above, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of impact upon ecology and biodiversity, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 17 and the NPPF.
- 5.5.8 Comments received in response to the application raise concerns regarding the proposed introduction of heras fencing in that the use of this as a permanent solution would not be in keeping with the character and appearance of the site and its setting. This fencing is proposed to be temporarily erected during the construction phase of the development in order to protect existing hedges and trees and would subsequently be removed following completion of the works, thus raising no long-term issues in respect of visual amenity.

Tranquillity

- 5.5.9 Core Strategy policy 19 provides support for development proposals which conserve the tranquillity of Northumberland National Park.
- 5.5.10 The application does not include details of any new external lighting required to be installed as part of the scheme. Whilst the site is located adjacent to an existing settlement, due to the scale and nature of the proposed development and therefore the likely requirement for a number of external lighting units to be installed, a condition is recommended requiring that details of any such new lights be submitted to and approved in writing by NNPA prior to installation. This measure would therefore protect the tranquillity and dark skies of the National Park through the installation of any inappropriately designed and positioned external lighting, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 19 and the NPPF; furthermore this would meet with the recommendations of the Ecological Assessment and Core Strategy policy



17 in respect of ensuring that any external lighting be designed so as not to result in harm to protected species.

5.5.11 Due to the relatively small scale of the scheme and its siting within close proximity to existing development within Alwinton, it is considered that the proposals would not have a detrimental impact upon tranquillity in terms of noise and traffic generated by the development, or upon the openness of the landscape, in accordance with policy 19.

Landscape character

5.5.12 Core Strategy policy 20 seeks to protect the landscape quality and character of Northumberland National Park through the assessment of all proposals in terms of their impact upon landscape character and sensitivity and accordingly its support for appropriate development types.

5.5.13 The application site falls within the Foothills and Fringe Valleys Landscape Character Area as defined within the NNPA Landscape SPD. Within this area, the Landscape SPD's guidelines for development advise that linear expansion along roads which extends an urban effect into the countryside and disrupts nucleated settlement patterns should be avoided, and that tourism development should avoid visually prominent locations, especially when viewed from surrounding higher land and where this extends an urbanising influence into the open countryside. When taking into account the relatively small scale and low key nature of the development, its location adjacent to the village and the materials and landscaping proposed in order to reduce its visibility, it is considered that the proposed development would be acceptable in terms of its impact upon the landscape, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 20.

5.6 Highway safety, parking and access

5.6.1 The application site benefits from existing pedestrian and vehicular gated accesses from the unclassified road which leads north towards The Creel, which forms a junction with the U-class main road from Harbottle to Alwinton close to the site entrance.

5.6.2 The application proposes to utilise the existing accesses for the development, removing the gates to create a single entrance alongside the upgrading of the access to Northumberland County Council (NCC) Highways specification Type A and the creation of an additional gated vehicular access point within the site in order to provide access into the adjacent field. The development also proposes the creation of 6no. vehicular parking spaces to the southern end of the site in addition to the provision of cycle and refuse storage facilities.



5.6.3 NCC Highways have been consulted on the proposed scheme and have raised no objections, subject to the inclusion of conditions relating to the implementation and retention of car and cycle parking, refuse storage and the upgrading of vehicular access point and informatives including the need to apply for advertisement consent (where applicable) and alterations to the vehicular crossing point. The conditions and informatives recommended by NCC Highways are considered to be appropriate in order to ensure that the development would be acceptable in terms of impact upon highway safety, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 3 and the NPPF. The condition recommended in respect of cycle parking is however unreasonable in this instance as, whilst supported, the NNPA Core Strategy does not include a requirement for cycle parking to be provided as part of development schemes.

5.6.4 Core Strategy policy 12 provides encouragement for small scale developments which contribute to the use of the right of way network and seek to maximise the proportion of journeys made by public transport, bicycle or walking, in order to maximise accessibility and minimise the environmental impact of traffic. Whilst the proposed development would include the provision of vehicular parking, this would also offer cycle storage for patrons and has been designed as accommodation that would complement the facilities already provided by the Rose and Thistle that would be suitable for/attractive to walkers and cyclists. In this respect, it is considered that the scheme would accord with the aims and objectives of Core Strategy policy 12.

5.7 Foul drainage and utilities

Foul drainage

5.7.1 The Environment Agency is the statutory consultee advising the LPA with regards to foul drainage. A proposal of this scale however falls outside of the proposals that the Environment Agency wishes to be consulted on. The matter of foul drainage is therefore to be considered by the LPA, with observations also sought from Northumbrian Water, who have responded with no comments.

5.7.2 The proposed method of foul drainage for the development is through a connection to the public sewer. A map has been provided from Northumbrian Water which shows the existing mains sewer route (which at present runs parallel to the north side of the Hosedon Burn, 20m north west of the application site), alongside the proposed site plan for the development which shows the new sewer connection (which would travel within the public road from the site across the Hosedon Burn road bridge to meet the existing connection).

5.7.3 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that a connection to a public sewer is the most preferable foul drainage option, followed by a Package Treatment



Plant. The proposed connection to the mains sewer is therefore acceptable in principle in accordance with Core Strategy policy 3, the NPPF and NPPG.

- 5.7.4 The representation received from Alwinton Parish Council raises concerns regarding the proposed sewage pipe crossing the Hosedon Burn. This matter has also been raised by the NNPA Ecologist, who has recommended that a pollution prevention strategy is developed prior to commencement of the works in order to ensure that there is no adverse impact upon the River Coquet SSSI; the submission of such a document is also recommended by the Ecological Assessment submitted. Whilst the route of the new sewage pipe would travel across the Burn and there is nothing within the application to suggest that its installation within the road would have any impact upon this watercourse, in the interests of ecology and biodiversity such a condition is considered to be reasonable and would therefore form part of any planning approval.
- 5.7.5 Should, during the implementation of the proposed development, it be found that the proposed method of foul drainage is unfeasible and is therefore required to be amended, an application for planning permission would be required to facilitate this.
- 5.7.6 The application site is located within an area supplied by mains water and other services. The connection of the proposed development to these services is considered to be a reasonable requirement of the scheme and would accord in principle in accordance with Core Strategy policy 3.
- 5.7.7 The application has been accompanied by a completed Contamination Assessment form which does not indicate the presence of contamination within the site. NCC Environmental Protection have been consulted on the application however have not raised any issues in respect of land contamination. The development is therefore considered to be acceptable in respect of land contamination.

5.8 Energy efficiency and renewable energy provision

- 5.8.1 Core Strategy policy 25 requires all new developments to minimise the amount of energy used during construction, achieve the highest energy efficiency through the location, orientation, layout, design and insulation of development, and for all new units of residential, employment, community and tourism development to utilise renewable energy sources in order to offset at least 10% of the predicted energy requirements of the development. Core Strategy policy 2 also aims to reduce emissions and energy during construction and help adaptation to climate change.
- 5.8.2 NPPF Paragraph 96 (Chapter 10) advises that local plan targets for decentralised energy supply should be met unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having



regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable, also taking into account landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.

5.8.3 The application does not include information to demonstrate how the proposed development would meet with Core Strategy policies 2 and 25 and NPPF Chapter 10, both in terms of the incorporation of renewable energy technologies or justification to demonstrate why the requirements of policy 25 could not be achieved. Whilst the Design and Access Statement makes reference to the installation of solar panels or air source heating, no specific details of these have been provided. It is therefore considered reasonable that a planning condition be included to allow these measures to be put forward, or for justification why they are not viable to be provided.

5.9 Other matters

5.9.1 The representation received from Alwinton Parish Council raises concerns that there are no emergency exits from the bedrooms within the proposed bunkhouse. This matter would be dealt with by Building Control under separate regulations (the Building Act 1984) and is therefore not a planning matter to be considered by this application.

5.9.2 Representations received in response to the application make reference to a previous application submitted by the applicants at Hosedon House, Alwinton. This matter, as well as the past actions of applicants is not relevant to the determination of this application.

6 Conclusion

6.1 The proposed scheme would constitute sustainable tourism development that would make a positive contribution to the rural economy and help to sustain the Rose and Thistle Inn through the provision of additional tourist accommodation. The development would provide opportunities for visitors to experience, enjoy and understand the special qualities of Northumberland National Park without detrimental impact upon these qualities, in accordance with the Park's second statutory purpose. Having regard for the objections received to the scheme it is not considered that these would warrant refusal of the scheme; it is therefore considered that, subject to the inclusion of a number of planning conditions, the proposed scheme would accord with the Core Strategy policies, SPD guidance and national planning policy listed within the report.



7 Recommendation

- 7.1 Following consideration of the information submitted it is recommended that the proposal should be granted planning permission, subject to the conditions and informatives set out below.

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, as required by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by 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, received 5th April 2018
- Location plan (as amended), received 30th April 2018
- Floor Plans and Elevations (Dwg. No. 79/17 Rev. 1), received 26th April 2018
- Site Plan and Cycle Store (Dwg. No. 79/17 Rev. 2), received 24th April 2018
- Site Section (Dwg. No. 79/17), received 6th February 2018
- Design and Access Statement, received 5th April 2018
- Sustainability, Design and Access Statement, received 9th April 2018
- Budhaig Environmental Ecological Assessment January 2018, received 6th February 2018
- Contamination Assessment: Screening Assessment Form (Version 8.2), received 6th February 2018
- Northumbrian Water 'foul drainage map' (Map Sheet: NT9206SW), received 6th February 2018
- Email correspondence '*Subject: Bunkhouse.*', received 10th April 2018

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt, to enable the Local Planning Authority to adequately manage the development and to ensure the proposal accords with Core Strategy policies 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 25 and the NPPF

3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations described within Section 7 '*Mitigation and Enhancement*' of the *Budhaig Environmental Ecological Assessment January 2018*, received 6th February 2018, including:



- Tree and hedge protection measures;
- The implementation of a 5m buffer to the ditch; and
- Timing of works to avoid nesting season

but excluding the inclusion of 2no. built in or wall mounted bat and/or bird boxes within the bunkhouse hereby permitted, which is set out at Condition 5.

Reason: To ensure the development poses no risk of unacceptable harm to protected species and to ensure the development is in accordance with Core Strategy Policy 17 and Chapter 11 of the NPPF and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010

4. Prior to the commencement of works required to connect the development hereby permitted to the mains sewer system, a Construction Method Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Construction Method Statement shall include details of proposed pollution control and prevention measures designed to prevent contamination of the Hosedon Burn, River Coquet and River Coquet & Coquet Valley Woodlands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) during construction of the development. The approved Construction Method Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period.

Reason: To ensure the development poses no risk of unacceptable harm to protected habitats and species and to ensure the development is in accordance with Core Strategy Policy 17 and Chapter 11 of the NPPF and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010

5. The bunkhouse hereby permitted shall incorporate 2no. built in or wall mounted bird boxes and 4no. built in or wall mounted bat boxes. The boxes shall be retained in perpetuity unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development makes provision for the protection and enhancement of habitats and protected species, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy 17 and Chapter 11 of the NPPF and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010

6. The development hereby permitted shall be occupied for holiday purposes only and shall not be occupied as a person's sole or main place of residence, or as a second home. The operators shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all occupiers of the holiday accommodation hereby approved and of their main home addresses and shall make this information available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority.



Reason: To ensure that the development hereby permitted is used for holiday accommodation only and to control the occupancy, and because local needs housing is not being provided as part of this development as would otherwise be required for proposals for residential development, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 10

7. Prior to the commencement of the construction of the bunk house and cycle store hereby permitted, samples and/or details of the following external facing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- Natural slate
- Felt shingles
- Cedar cladding
- Powder coated aluminium window and door frames
- Aluminium rainwater goods

The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained as such in perpetuity unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to preserve the visual appearance, character and amenity of the area and the special qualities of the National Park, in accordance with Core Strategy policies 1 and 3 and Chapter 6 of the NPPF

8. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, details of the proposed finished floor levels of the development, together with existing and proposed site levels, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and the special qualities of the National Park, in accordance with Core Strategy policies 1, 3 and 20 and the NPPF

9. Notwithstanding the plans and information submitted making reference to hard landscaping measures, prior to the implementation of any such landscaping measures including the creation of hardstanding areas as indicated on the *Site Plan and Cycle Store (Dwg. No. 79/17 Rev. 2)*, received 24th April 2018, details and/or samples of the hard landscaping measures proposed including:

- A plan showing the extent and type of any areas of hard surfacing;



- Any gabions or supporting structures required in connection with the regrading of the site;
- Any fencing or gates; and
- Details of the proposed eastern site boundary

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and samples.

Reason: To ensure that the development is appropriate within the context of the site and the surrounding area and for the development to accord with Core Strategy policies 1, 3 and 20 and the NPPF.

10. Notwithstanding the plans and information submitted making reference to soft landscaping measures, prior to the implementation of any such landscaping measures including the installation of hedges and planting as indicated on the *Site Plan and Cycle Store (Dwg. No. 79/17 Rev. 2)*, received 24th April 2018, details of the proposed landscaping scheme for the site including layout, species and maintenance shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The landscaping measures shall be implemented in full accordance with the approved details in the first planting season following the approval of the details. Any trees, shrubs or plants which die, or are otherwise removed, within a period of five years of the completion of the development shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the site and surrounding area, in accordance with Core Strategy policies 3 and 18 and the NPPF.

11. Prior to the fixing of any external lighting within the site in association with the development hereby permitted 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 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, and protected species, in accordance with Core Strategy policies 17 and 19 and the NPPF

12. Unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, during the construction period of the development hereby permitted there shall be no noisy activity (i.e. audible at the site boundary) outside the hours of 0800 hours to 1800 hours Mondays to Fridays and 0900 hours to 1300 hours on Saturdays. Construction works shall not take place on Sundays, Public Holidays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of affording adequate protection to the residential amenity of the occupiers of existing neighbouring properties during the construction phase, in accordance with Policies 3 and 19 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

13. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into first use until the car parking area indicated on the approved plans has been implemented in accordance with the approved plans. 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

14. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into first use until the access has been upgraded to Northumberland County Council Type A specification, as shown on the *Site Plan and Cycle Store (Dwg. No. 79/17 Rev. 2)*, received 24th April 2018, and shall be retained as such in perpetuity unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

15. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into first use until the refuse storage location as indicated on the *Site Plan and Cycle Store (Dwg. No. 79/17 Rev. 2)*, received 24th April 2018, has been formed. The refuse storage area shall be retained in perpetuity for the storage of refuse associated with the development. No external refuse or refuse container shall be stored outside the refuse storage area indicated on the approved plans except on the day of collection.



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

16. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, details of renewable energy measures for generating energy from decentralised renewable and/or low carbon sources (as defined in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework), or justification why it is not feasible or viable to provide these, shall be submitted to and formally approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The information submitted should establish accurate details of the predicted energy requirements for the development and demonstrate how the proposals will maximise the embedding of renewable and low carbon energy sources within the development. Any approved renewable energy measures required shall be implemented in full before the first occupation of the development.

Reason: To ensure that appropriate renewable energy and/or low carbon energy measures are included, in line with NNPA Core Strategy policies 1, 2 and 25 and Chapter 10 of the 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 the development, irrespective of the degree of variation, may constitute unauthorised development and may be liable to enforcement action.
 - (b) You, your agent, or any other person responsible for implementing this permission should inform the Local Planning Authority immediately of any proposed 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 consent 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. Some conditions may require work to be carried out, or details to be approved prior to the commencement of the development.

Where pre-commencement conditions are not complied with, the whole of the development could be unauthorised, and you may be liable to enforcement action. In some circumstances, the only way to rectify the situation may be through the



submission of a new application. If any other type of condition is breached then you may be liable to a breach of condition notice.

3. The applicant is advised that failure to address issues of noise and light at the development stage does not preclude action by Northumberland County Council under Section 79 of the Environment protection Act 1990 in respect of statutory nuisance.
4. This permission does not grant advertisement consent for any advertisement(s) intended to be displayed on the site for which separate Express Consent may be necessary under the Town and County Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended or revoked).
5. Alterations to the existing vehicle crossing point are required. These works should be carried out before first use of the development. To arrange alterations to the existing vehicle crossing point (and to make good any damage or other works to the existing footpath or verge) you should contact Highways Area Office at Tynedale at northernareahighways@northumberland.gov.uk.
6. The applicant should ensure that no construction materials are stored on the public highway which would cause obstruction and danger to users of the highway and is advised to contact the Streetworks team on 0345 600 6400 for skips and containers licenses.
7. In accordance with the Highways Act 1980 mud, debris or rubbish shall not be deposited on the highway.

Contact Officer:

For further information contact Rebecca Adams, Planning Officer on 01434 611552 or e-mail: planning@nnpa.org.uk

Background Papers

Application file 17NP0005
EIA Screening Opinion



18NP0007 Rose & Thistle, Alwinton

Northumberland National Park Authority

