



## DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

<b>Application Reference Number</b>	19NP0034
<b>Description / Site Address</b>	Installation of package treatment plant at Brown Rigg Caravan and Camping Park, Bellingham, Northumberland, NE48 2JY
<b>Expiry date of publicity / consultations</b>	29 May 2019
<b>Last date for decision</b>	25 June 2019

### Details of Proposal

Planning permission is sought for a proposed package treatment plant on land at Bellingham Camping and Caravanning Club Site, Brown Rigg, Bellingham.

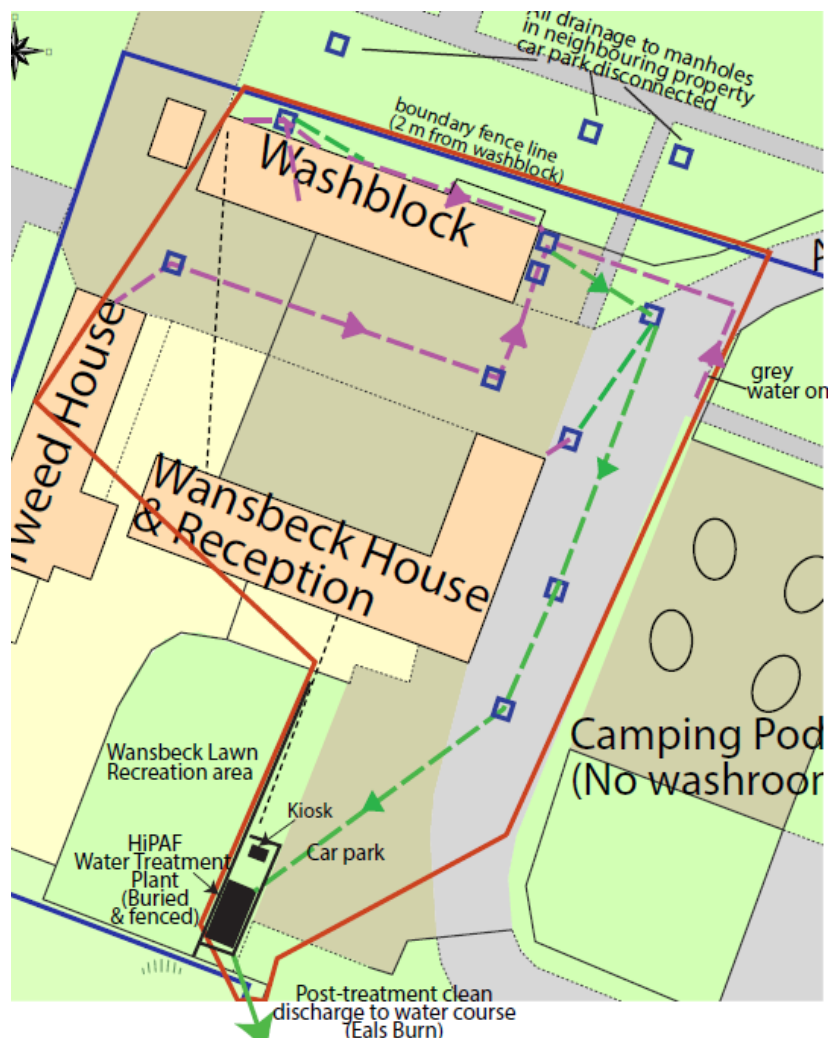


Figure 1 – location of proposed treatment plant.

Technically in open countryside, the site lies 600m south west of Bellingham village.

The development proposes to move its foul drainage needs from a shared, off-site filter treatment plant with an on-site package treatment plant because the existing provision is in



shared use causing accessibility issues with its new landowner. This prevents regular checks and maintenance from being carried out. The existing plant is decades old (circa 1930's – 1940's) the applicant is therefore seeking to install a modern and far more efficient system that would be located within their own land.

It is proposed to locate the plant at the south west end of the site, 20m south of the reception building on raised grassland. The proposed siting of the plant sees it located as far from neighbouring properties and the caravan/ camping area as possible. To the south of the site lies an agricultural field, a grassed area to the west and north of the site and an area of hardstand, currently used for parking.

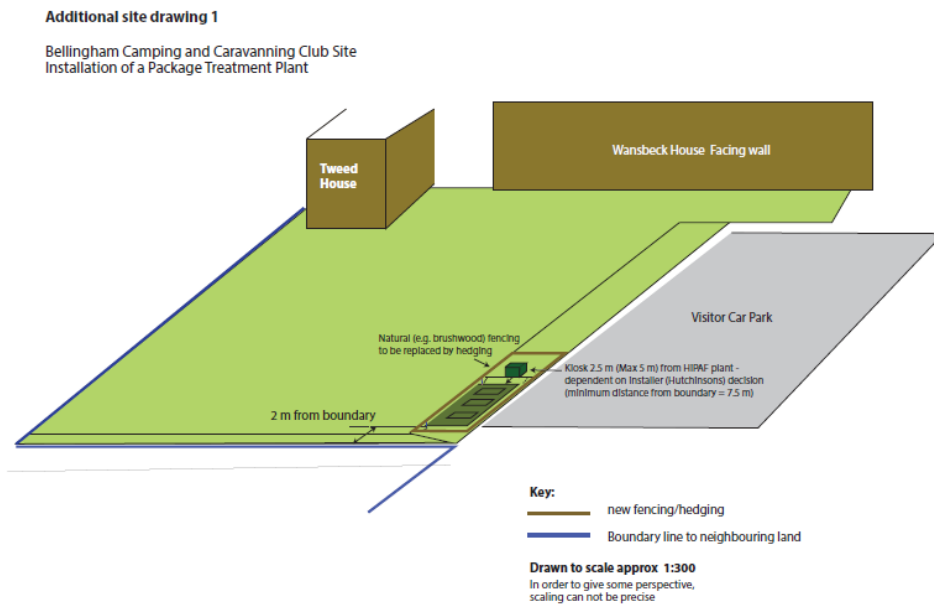


Figure 2. Indicative plan showing the proposal's location and surroundings.



Figure 3 looking north to the reception block



Figure 4 looking at the proposed site



The treatment plant itself will be located below ground level, hatches and a small kiosk measuring 1m h x 1.4w x 1m L will be located above ground. Within the planning statement, it is mentioned that pedestrian access over the plant will be prevented initially by installing a temporary low fence comprised of natural material (e.g., brushwood), with signage, ultimately to be completely replaced by hedgerow as plants become established (wildlife attracting mixed hawthorn, hazel, blackthorn, crab apple, dogwood and acer), matching the hedgerow planted on the borders of the adjacent recreation area.



Figure 5 Example demonstrating visible portion of the plant.

## **Planning Policy & Guidance**

### **National Policies**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)

National Planning Practice Guidance

### **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 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 22	<i>Trees, Woodlands and Forests</i>
Policy 25	<i>Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency</i>
Policy 28	<i>Utilities and Infrastructure</i>

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

NNPA Landscape Supplementary Planning Document (Landscape SPD)

### **Relevant Planning History**

- 15NP0106 Demolition of existing garage/store and construction of replacement with double carriage house, workshop and log store – Approved 5/1/15
- 17NP0021 Installation of land drain and landscaping works (retrospective) – Approved 4/4/17

### **Consultation/Representations**

**NNPA Ecologist** – No objections or comments

**Bellingham Parish Council** – no comments received

The application has been advertised by a site notice displayed on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and notification letters sent to 4 neighbouring properties. No representations have been received in response.

### **Assessment**

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

- The principle of the development;
- Design and amenity;
- Impact upon National Park special qualities;
- Foul Drainage

#### **The principle of the development**

##### *Location of new development*

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

The application site is located within the open countryside whereby Core Strategy policy 5 limits development to the reuse of existing buildings, with new buildings only permitted where it can be demonstrated that these could not be located elsewhere and would not detrimentally impact upon the special qualities of the National Park.



The proposed scheme, by virtue of its nature as replacement infrastructure for an existing treatment plant which relates to an existing development within the open countryside is such that it could not be located elsewhere else. As assessed below, the development would not result in harm to the National Park's identified special qualities. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would accord with the aims and objectives of Core Strategy policy 5 and the NPPF.

#### *Utilities and infrastructure development*

Core Strategy policy 28 advises that the development of utilities and infrastructure projects, including sewage disposal, which serve local community and business needs will be supported where the following criteria can be met, as assessed in turn below.

- a) *The proposal does not have an unacceptable impact upon the landscape quality or character, either individually or in combination with other proposals;*

The proposed development would not have a detrimental impact upon landscape character or views of this part of the National Park, as assessed in detail within the subsequent section of this report. The requirements of policy 28 part a) are therefore met by the proposed scheme.

- b) The siting and appearance of the proposed development seeks to minimise impact upon the special qualities of the National Park;

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of impacts upon the special qualities of the National Park by virtue of its siting and appearance. It is therefore considered that the scheme would meet with the requirements of policy 28 part b).

- c) Where electricity distribution lines are required they are undergrounded or, where the Authority is satisfied that this is not feasible, they follow a route of least impact;

Electrical distribution lines are not required as part of the proposed scheme. The development therefore meets with the requirements of policy 28 part c).

#### *Sustainable local economy*

Core Strategy policies 14 and 15 provide support for the creation and retention of a sustainable local economy and recreational development within the National Park which relates to the special qualities of the National Park without detrimentally impacting upon them. Whilst not directly proposing tourism or recreational development, the proposed development would replace existing infrastructure which supports client accessible buildings, the majority of which are for tourism/recreational use, enabling their safe use in accordance with environmental guidance. In this respect, it is considered that the proposed development would meet within the aims and objectives of Core Strategy policies 14 and 15 and NPPF Chapter 5.

#### **Design and amenity**



Very little of the proposal can be seen above ground level and that which is visible, is proposed to be green in colour. As discussed above, it is proposed to fence off the equipment and plant a hedgerow which would act as a barrier to pedestrians and also as a screen, shielding the plant from view. Details of the fencing and hedgerow have not been submitted as part of the application and as such, three conditions would be included as part of any permission, one ensuring the colour of the plant be restricted to brown or dark green. Another, requiring the proposed hedgerow be included as part of the permission in order to ensure to reduce the prominence of the plant and one requesting details of the location, design and height of the boundary fencing to be submitted. Subject to these conditions, the scheme would accord with Core Strategy policy 3 and the NPPF.

Due to the relatively inert nature of package treatment plants and the proposed location, away from nearby properties, it is considered that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact upon the residential amenity of surrounding properties, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 3 and the NPPF.

### **Impact upon National Park special qualities**

#### *Ecology, biodiversity and trees*

No implications surrounding ecology and biodiversity have been identified in relation to the application and the NPAA Ecologist has no objections or comments to make on the proposal. The proposed development therefore is considered to accord with Core Strategy policies 18 and 22 and the NPPF.

#### *Cultural Heritage*

No implications surrounding cultural heritage have been identified in relation to the application. The proposed development therefore is considered to be acceptable in terms of impact upon cultural heritage, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 18 and the NPPF.

#### *Tranquillity*

The information submitted does not mention if there is to be any lighting installed in conjunction with the development.

Due to the open countryside location of the application site and in order to protect the tranquillity and dark skies of the National Park through the installation of any inappropriately designed external lighting that may be required in the future in conjunction with the development, a condition would be attached to this approval requiring that details of any such external lighting be submitted to and approved in writing by NNPA prior to installation.

Subject to the inclusion of such a condition the proposed development accords with Core Strategy policy 19 and NPPF paragraph 180 c).

#### *Landscape*





Given most of the plant would be underground, and the area planted with hedgerow, the development would not be readily visible from within the surrounding area and would not have a detrimental impact upon the landscape character and quality of the National Park, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 20 and the NPPF.

### **Foul Drainage**

The Foul Drainage Report and Planning Statement submitted as part of the application mentions that foul drainage will be transferred from an existing off-site filter treatment plant in shared ownership to a proposed package treatment plant, on-site, being owned and managed by the applicant in its entirety. The existing filter treatment plant dates from the 1930's-1940's period and is of a large but unknown capacity. Planning Practice Guidance states that connection to a public sewer is the favoured option, followed by a package treatment plant and then a septic tank. The applicant has advised within their FDA1 (foul drainage form) that connection to the mains sewer is not possible as there are no mains sewer channels to this treatment works from the south west of the river North Tyne. The nearest sewage treatment plant is approximately 0.5 km away in Bellingham. Given the distances between the site and the nearest sewage and treatment plant, the Authority accepts that requiring a connection to the public sewer would be both unfeasible and unreasonable in this instance.

In the absence of a feasible connection to the public sewer, a connection to the proposed package treatment plant is the preferred option. The applicant advises that the proposed treatment plant is a WPL HiPAF 150PE (150 Person Equivalent) system which is intended to be operated at well below capacity for most of the year. Current water usage is 75PE with the British Water Authority recommending a per person flow and load of 75-100L per person for campsites, such as this one. The system size ensures the site can cater for the proposed flow numbers. The system is modular, should it need to be increased in the future.

On the basis of the information provided by the applicant, the Authority is satisfied that the package treatment plant would have sufficient capacity to deal with the needs of the caravan and campsite.

The development is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of foul drainage, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 28 and the NPPF.



### **Recommendation & Conditions**

Grant conditional permission subject to the following conditions for the following reasons:

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 30th April 2019
- Planning statement, received 30th April 2019
- Elevations with supporting info, received 30th April 2019
- Installation manual, received 30th April 2019
- WPL HiPAF brochure, received 30th April 2019
- Scope of supply, received 30th April 2019
- Location Plan, received 30th April 2019
- Site Plan, received 30th April 2019
- Additional site drawing 1, received 30th April 2019
- Additional site drawing 2, received 30th April 2019
- Foul Drainage Assessment, received 30th April 2019
- Drainage and Water report received, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019
- Environmental Report received, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt, to enable the Local Planning Authority to adequately manage the development and to ensure the proposal accords with policies 1, 3, 5, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25 and 28 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy & Development Policies Document (Core Strategy) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

3. Prior to the fixing of any external lighting associated with the development, details of the external lighting shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with 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 during the operation of the development, unless removed.





Reason: In order to ensure that there is no harmful impact upon the tranquility and intrinsically dark character of Northumberland National Park and the Northumberland International Dark Sky Park through excessive light pollution, in accordance with Policies 1 and 19 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 180 c) of the NPPF.

4. Prior to the first use of the package treatment plant hereby approved, details of a 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 1 and 3 and the NPPF.

5. The package treatment plant hereby permitted shall be dark green or dark brown, unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

6. Prior to first use of the package treatment plant hereby permitted details of the location, design and height of the boundary fencing shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The fencing shall be installed in accordance with the approved details.

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

### **Informative Notes**

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.

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.

### **Background Papers**

19NP0034

	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Planning Officer</b>	Jay Smith	19/06/19
<b>Head of Development Management</b>	<i>Susannah Buylle</i>	<i>20<sup>th</sup> June 2019</i>