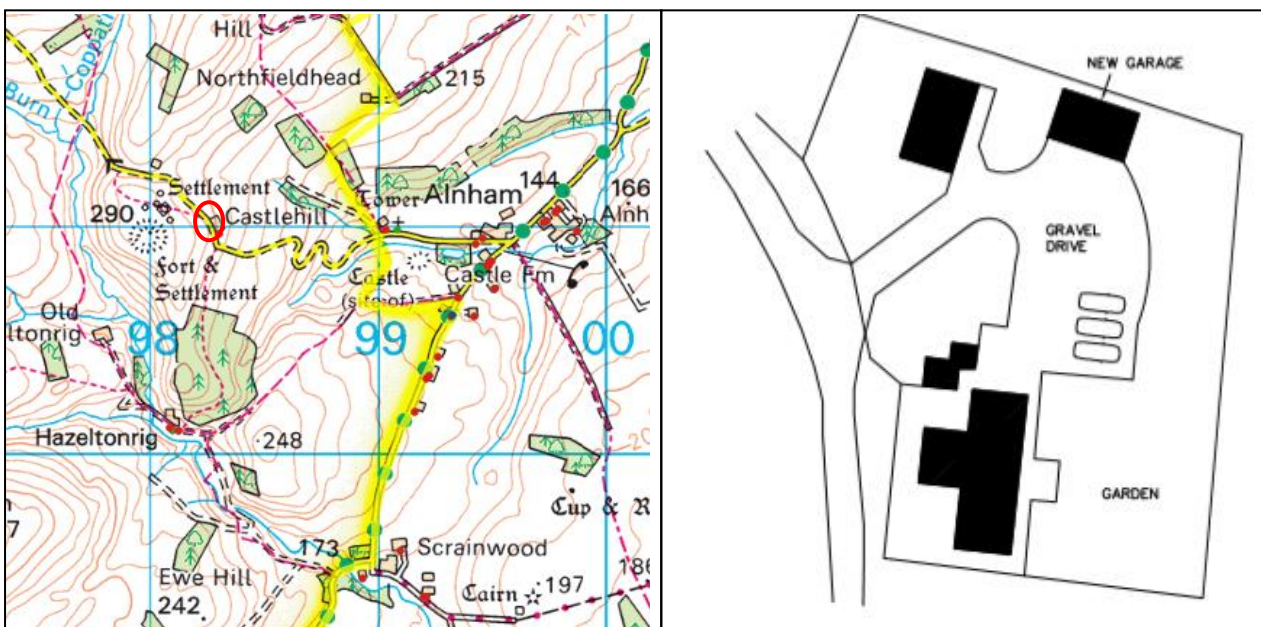




**DELEGATED DECISION REPORT**

<b>Application Reference Number</b>	21NP0052
<b>Description / Site Address</b>	Construction of garage at Castlehill, Alnham, Northumberland, NE66 4UE
<b>Expiry date of publicity / consultations</b>	16 July 2021
<b>Last date for decision</b>	20 August 2021

This application is seeking approval for the erection of a detached garage within the curtilage of Castlehill. Castlehill is a single storey dwelling located within an isolated open countryside location approximately 1.2km west of Alnham. The property is situated to the immediate east of the unclassified road which leads to Alnham and occupies an elevated position with the land rising to the west and falling away to the east. Castle Hill Camp Scheduled Monument is located just over 200m to the west.



**Figure 1: Site Location**

The application is seeking approval for the erection of a three bay, open fronted, detached garage, running parallel to the northern boundary of the dwelling and approximately 5m east of an existing stone outbuilding. The garage would have a footprint of approximately 8.33m x 5.3m. It would sit on a stone plinth and have a catslide roof with a height to eaves of 2.1m and ridge of 3.93m. The garage would be constructed from oak beams with timber weatherboarding and a slate roof.

**Planning Policy & Guidance**

**National Policies**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021)



National Planning Practice Guidance

### **Local Policies**

#### **Northumberland National Park Local Plan**

Policy ST1	<i>Sustainable Development</i>
Policy ST2	<i>General Development Principles</i>
Policy ST4	<i>Spatial Strategy</i>
Policy DM2	<i>Householder Development</i>
Policy DM10	<i>Habitats, Biodiversity and Geodiversity</i>
Policy DM11	<i>Landscape, Tranquillity and Dark Night Skies</i>

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

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

NNPA Landscape Supplementary Planning Document (Landscape SPD)

### **Relevant Planning History**

**16NP0062** Replacement of render on 2no. brick extensions to north and south of property and render brick extension to west of property. Planning permission conditionally granted 16th August 2016.

### **Consultation/Representations**

#### **Alnham Parish Council: No objection**

The application has been advertised by means of a site notice displayed at the site on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021. 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

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

##### **Sustainable Development**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places emphasis on a presumption in favour of sustainable development to guide decision making. Policy ST1 of the Local Plan adopts a similar



assumption in favour of sustainable development and defines the qualities and criteria which are deemed to represent 'sustainable development'. The degree to which the proposals accord with these qualities is discussed throughout the report. Of particular relevance to this application is part c) which requires new development to make a positive contribution to the built environment.

### Location of Development – Householder Development

Strategic policy ST4 seeks to direct new development to a series of settlements named within the policy. As Castlehill is not located within one of the named settlements, it would be considered to fall within the open countryside. In the open countryside, amongst others, policy ST4 states that development will be permitted where it '*is supported by other relevant Local Plan policies.*'.

The most relevant in this instance is DM2 which refers to householder development. This policy recognises that householder development is acceptable throughout the National Park, subject to the proposal taking full account of the '*character of the local area and the special qualities of the National Park*'. Policy DM2 also requires new outbuildings to be for '*purposes incidental to the residential use of the dwelling*'. An application for a detached garage is considered to accord with this requirement. In light of the above, subject to consideration of the impact on local character and the special qualities of the National Park as assessed below, the principle of the development is considered to be acceptable.

## Design and Amenity

### Design

Amongst others, strategic policy ST2 requires proposals to be of a '*high quality design that will make a positive contribution to the National Park's special qualities and the local environment incorporating high quality construction materials and design details that reflect or complement the local vernacular*'.

Policy DM2 which specifically relates to householder development states that new development within the domestic curtilage of a dwelling will be permitted where, amongst others, '*the scale, height, form, position and design of the new development do not detract from the character and form of the original dwelling or its setting in the landscape*' and '*the development does not unacceptably affect the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers or result in inadequate levels of amenity for the existing dwelling*'. Policy DM2 also requires new outbuildings to be '*proportionate in size*' and '*appropriately sited in relation to the existing built development on site*'.

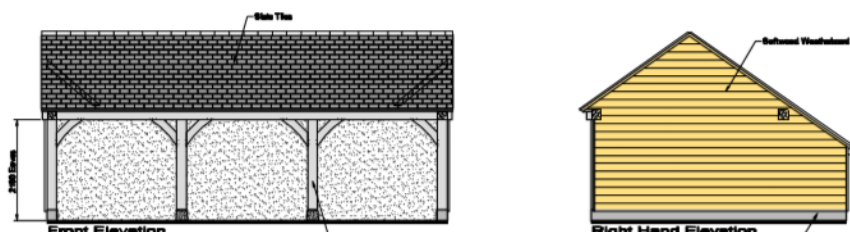


Figure 2: Proposed front and side elevations.



The proposed garage would be constructed from a combination of timber and slate while the existing buildings on site are a combination of stone / render. While the use of timber would introduce a new element within the site, it is considered that the proposed garage is of high-quality design which could be accommodated without harm to the existing character of the site or its setting in the landscape. The garage would also be well related to, without dominating, the existing stone barn located just to the north and is considered to be proportionate in size given its proposed end use.

On the basis of the above, it is considered that the scale and design of the proposed garage is acceptable, and the proposals would accord with the relevant requirements of Local Plan policies ST2 and DM2.

### Amenity

The nearest residential properties are at a distance in excess of 750m from the application site. As the application only relates to the erection of a detached garage, given the distances involved, it is not considered that the proposals would give rise to any detrimental impact on residential amenity. The proposals are therefore considered to accord with the requirements of Local Plan policy DM2 in this respect.

### **Impact upon National Park Special Qualities**

#### *Landscape*

Policy DM11 states that the natural beauty and heritage of the National Park will be conserved and enhanced whilst being responsive landscape change. To achieve this, new development will need to ensure that *'the visual impact of the development in its immediate and wider setting is minimised through high quality design that reflects local landscape character with particular regard to scale, siting, materials and colour'* and *'the cumulative and /or sequential landscape and visual effect of development do not detract from the natural beauty of the National Park.'*

The proposals are for the construction of a three-bay garage within the curtilage of a dwelling. The garage would be well related to, although slightly down slope of, an existing stone barn and would be constructed from materials (see design above) which are considered to be appropriate to its setting. While public rights of way (including the unclassified road, which serves the property) are located to the west, south and east, given the modest nature of the development and its close relationship with existing development on site, from these receptors it would be viewed as part of the wider residential development on site and unlikely to have any material impact on the visual amenity of the users of these footpaths.

In light of the above it is considered that the proposals would have no material impact on landscape character or visual amenity and the proposals are considered to accord with the relevant requirements of Local Plan policy DM11 and the NPPF.



**Figure 3:** View towards proposed garage location showing relationship with existing outbuilding.

#### *Tranquility*

The site is in a sensitive location within the Northumberland International Dark Sky Park. No detail of any external lighting which may be required in connection with the garage has been submitted as part of the application. However, given the sensitive open countryside location, it is considered reasonable to attach a condition requiring details of any external lighting to be installed as part of scheme design to be first submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority to ensure it is appropriate for use in the Dark Sky Park and to protect the tranquility of the area. Subject to the imposition of an appropriate condition relating to external lighting, the proposals are considered to accord with the requirements of Local Plan policy DM11 in respect of tranquility.

By virtue of the scale, nature and location of the proposals, it is not considered that the proposed development would detrimentally impact upon the tranquillity of the surrounding area in terms of noise or traffic.

#### *Biodiversity*

Part h) of Local Plan policy ST2 states that development will be permitted where '*Opportunities are taken to enhance local wildlife and biodiversity, including providing net gain, that are proportionate to the development proposed*' while Policy DM10 states, amongst others, that all development proposals should '*provide a net gain for biodiversity where possible*'.

The footprint of the development would result in the loss of a small area of amenity grassland which is likely to be of negligible value for biodiversity. However, the Design and Access Statement indicates that an owl box and provision for roosting bats is to be provided within the garage (and by virtue of being open-fronted, the garage will also provide opportunities for swallows to nest). This is



welcomed as it will provide a local biodiversity gain in accordance with the above policy. It is considered appropriate to ensure delivery of the owl / bat provision by means of a planning condition.

Subject to an appropriate condition ensuring the delivery of measures to provide a net gain for biodiversity, it is considered that the proposals would accord with the requirements of Local Plan policies ST2, DM10 and the NPPF.

Given the location and nature of the proposals, it is not considered that there would be any impact on the cultural heritage of the National Park.

### **Recommendation & Conditions**

Grant conditional permission subject to the following conditions:

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

**Reason:** To ensure that the development is commenced within a reasonable period of time from the date of this permission, 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 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021;
- Location Plan, received 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021;
- Existing Plans and Elevations, Project No. BCH, Dwg no. 101, received 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021;
- Garage Plans, Dwg no. 2181, Rev A, received 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021;
- Design and Access Statement, BCH D&A AS, received 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

**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 ST1, ST2, ST4, DM2 and DM11 of the Northumberland National Park Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

3. Prior to the fixing of any external lighting associated with the development hereby approved, 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 Local Plan policy DM11 and the NPPF.

4. Prior to first use, provision for bats and barn owls shall be provided in the garage hereby approved as detailed within the Design and Access Statement.

**Reason:** In order to provide a net gain for biodiversity in accordance with Northumberland National Park Local Plan policies ST2 and DM10 and 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.

### **Background Papers**

Application File 21NP0052  
EIA Screening Report



	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Planning Officer</b>	C Godfrey	17 <sup>th</sup> August 2021
<b>Head of Planning and Policy</b>	<i>Susannah Buylla</i>	18/08/2021