

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

For amending planning condition 5,

Planning Reference No. 22NP0037



May 2024

Condition 5 (Planning Reference No. 22NP0037) states:

'Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, a tree replanting scheme to include details, including exact locations, species and specifications of all trees, shrubs and other soft landscaping to be implemented on the site shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The soft landscaping shall be carried out in full accordance with the approved details in the first planting season following the commencement of the development. 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 protecting the visual character of the area and the special qualities of the National Park, biodiversity enhancement and in accordance with in accordance with Northumberland National Park Local Plan policies ST2, DM10 and DM11 and the NPPF.'

Reasons for amending this application:

1. The application site is surrounded to the north, west and south by the Schedule Monument: list entry (1010991) 'Carvoran Roman Fort and Hadrian's Wall and vallum between unclassified road to Old Shield and field boundary west of fort in wall miles 45 and 46'.

Because of its proximity to the schedule monument area, any tree planting within the application site would require schedule monument consent. However, tree planting would not normally be permitted as the ground disturbance in physically planting the trees and the on-going effect of growing tree roots can disturb archaeological remains.

2. The existing Roman Army Museum at Greenhead is a world class facility displaying internationally important historical artefacts saved from excavations at Vindolanda and elsewhere. The interpretation material is at the cutting edge of museum display providing in-depth understanding of Roman culture in these frontier lands.

The recently completed approved extension was and is part of a multi million pound archaeology project to be carried out over 5 years. This will include excavations between the Magna Roman Fort and Milecastle 46 on the Roman Wall to the north. Excavations commenced last year starting at the Milecastle and will progress south over the next 5 years.

3. One aspect of the design of this extension is to provide an uninterrupted view of the historic site as a whole and the excavations to the west of the museum. Currently there is no view of the historic site from within the museum or indeed any accessible location for the public externally. The extension will provide a sheltered view of the site from both within the building and beneath the overhanging canopy to the external canopy. The design of the extension permitted under planning ref 22NP0037 provides an uninterrupted view from within the museum to the west taking in:
 - The Magna Roman Fort
 - The Romano/British settlement which developed to the north of the fort

- The excavation site to the north of the Magna Fort.

These views are an essential part of the design to provide a viewing point to the public to better understand the Roman way of life and to see at first hand the archaeological excavations.



Diagram showing views from within the new extension of the historic site and the excavations currently underway.



Photo 1: south west showing the Magna Fort clearly in foreground.

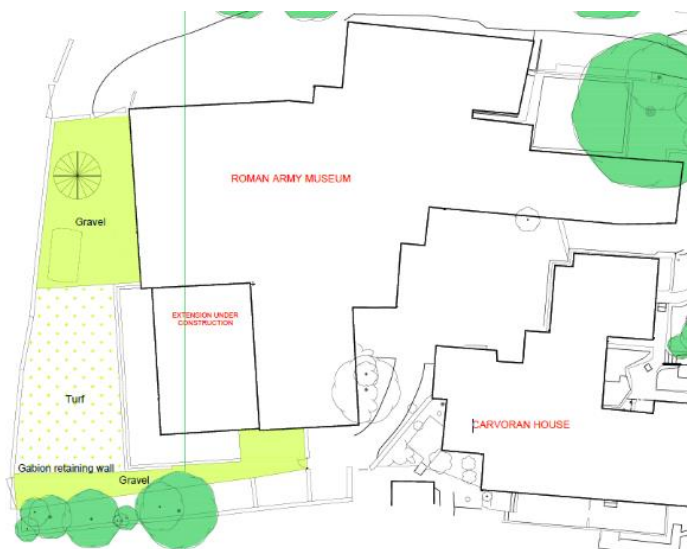


Photo 2: view west, the site of the Romano British settlement associated with the Roman Fort.



Photo 3: North west with archaeologists currently on site at Milecastle 46.

In considering the existing landscaping in an around the museum (see site plan below), it is clear from the pattern of existing tree cover and the photographs above that the exposed western aspect is a more hostile environment. It is noted from the site plan the established tree cover is in the more sheltered lea of the existing building, and is extensive across the site. Any additional trees in the application site would have negligible impact on biodiversity.



It is suggested a simple landscaping scheme of turf and compacted gravel associated with the extension will be more appropriate and will enhance the natural openness to the west of the extension. The turf area will provide an external activity space for the museum:

Therefore, it is proposed the condition should be amended to:

A landscaping scheme to include details of soft and hard landscaping shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The soft landscaping shall be carried out in full accordance with the approved details in the first planting season following the commencement of the development'.