

DMC2019-028

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Application No:

19NP0014

Proposed Development:

Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and the construction of a replacement dwelling and replacement outbuildings, including change of use from agricultural land to residential curtilage at Evistones Cottage Rochester Newcastle Upon Tyne NE19 1RY

Applicant Name:

Mr. James Pritchard

Reason for DMC Decision:

The Head of Development Management believes the matter should be considered by Development Management Committee as the proposal is recommended for approval despite the proposal being a departure from adopted policies.

Recommendation:

Grant conditional planning permission subject to the planning conditions and informatives detailed within the report.

1. Introduction



Figure 1. Location of proposal.

Description

- 1.1 The site known as Evistones is located within open countryside approximately 1 mile south of Rochester village. The site comprises two dwellings - Evistones House and Evistones Cottage, including its adjoining outbuildings and a modern detached garage and modern 3-bay detached garage/store/kennels which are set around an irregularly shaped courtyard area and access track which passes through the site south east to north west. The site is surrounded by established woodland to the west and south and ancient woodland to the north and east. Views from the public domain are very limited.
- 1.2 The cottage is an irregular designed two story sandstone building with a Welsh slate roof. The outbuildings are made of similar materials. The cottage dates from the 19th century and is believed to have been a Keeper's cottage associated with Evistones House, originally a hunting lodge. Whilst there are no listed buildings within the site or its immediate surroundings, Evistones estate is regarded as being a non-designated heritage asset. In the Historic Buildings of the National Park report by John Grundy, Evistones House is listed as being Grade iii, there is however no mention of Evistones Cottage. The remains of the medieval village of Evistones to the north-west of the site is a Scheduled Monument.



Figure 2. Evistones Cottage looking NW



Figure 3. Evistones Cottage looking SW



Figure 4. Evistones House and outbuildings facing SE Figure 5. Evistones facing NW

Proposal

- 2.0 The proposal seeks the removal and replacement of Evistones Cottage and outbuildings with a detached 2 bed dwelling; and the removal and replacement of the detached single garage and 3-bay garage with an 'L shaped' building containing a timber store and workshop, 5- bay garage, quad store, kennels, vehicle wash bay and fuel store. The application also seeks the change of use of agricultural land to residential curtilage.

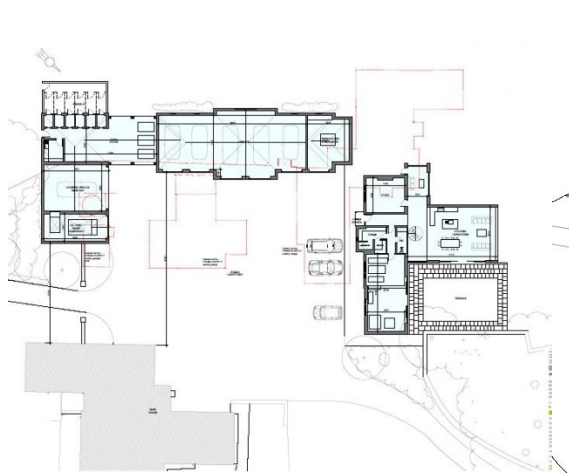


Figure 6 proposed site plan.

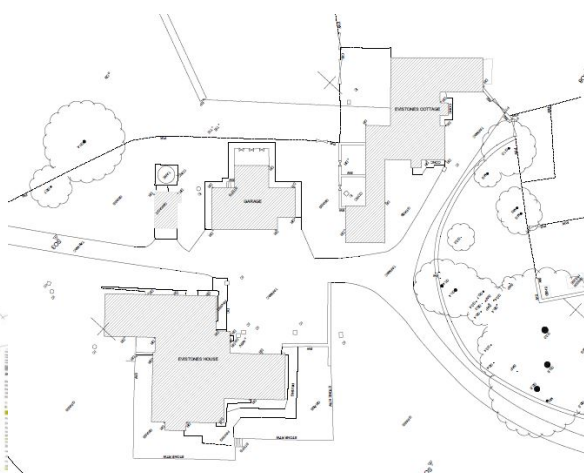


Figure 7 existing site plan.



Figure 8 Looking south at proposal in context



Figure 9 Looking North at proposal in context

- 2.1 The proposed dwelling would be located approximately on the same footprint of Evistones Cottage and outbuildings with its principal elevation facing south east. To the west of the site, the proposed outbuildings would be located in approximately the same location as the existing garage and kennels, facing Evistones House.
- 2.2 The proposed replacement dwelling has been designed to be broadly in the same scale and form as the existing house. It would be built of stone with stone quoins and a slate roof, matching Evistones house. It is also proposed that where feasible, existing materials will be used. It is proposed that windows and doors would be of hardwood with aluminum gutters and pipework. To the rear of the house a glazed link and gable end is proposed, linking the main part of the house with a living/ kitchen area. The proposed replacement would comprise two bedrooms but also would include two en-suite bathrooms, study, bathroom, kitchen/living area and gym/shower/change room to be shared with the occupiers of Evistones House.

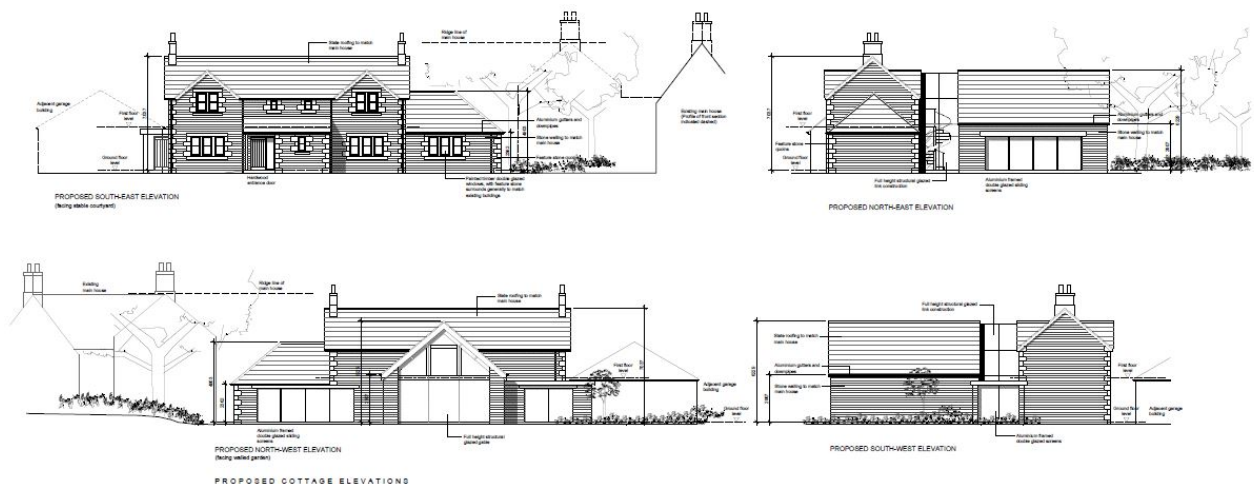


Figure 10 Proposed elevations of new dwelling in context with Evistones House.



2.3 The proposed L- shaped outbuilding would be constructed of the same materials as intended for the new dwelling and existing materials would be used where possible. The principal elevation would face south towards Evistones House with the shorter kick of the L-shape would face east towards the proposed dwelling. It is intended for the northern roof plane to be fitted with Tesla Solar roof slates. The proposed outbuilding is required to serve both Evistones House and the proposed new dwelling alongside farming operations. This would include a garage area for storage of agricultural and private vehicles, kenneling/ utility for working dogs, log store, vehicle wash bay, quad bike store and oil tank/diesel compound.

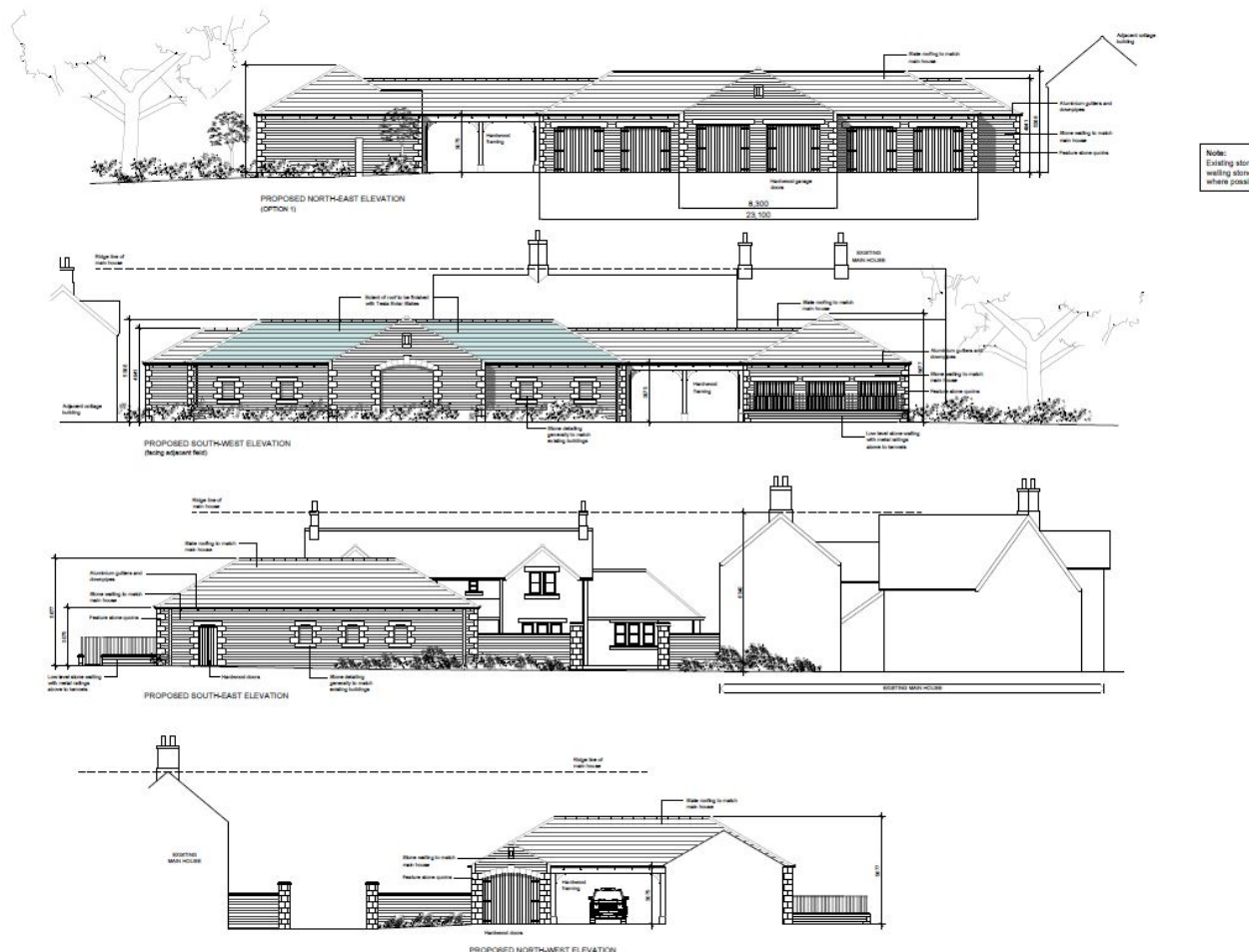


Figure 11 Proposed elevations of new outbuildings in context with Evistones House and proposed dwelling. Solar roof slates highlighted in blue.

3. Planning Policy & Guidance

3.1 National Policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)
- National Planning Practice Guidance

3.2 Local Policies

- **Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy and Development Policies Document (Core Strategy) (2009)**

Policy 1 Delivering Sustainable Development

Policy 2 Climate Change

Policy 3 General Development Principles

Policy 5 General Location of New Development

Policy 9 Managing housing supply

Policy 10 New housing development

Policy 12 Transport and accessibility

Policy 14 A Sustainable Local Economy

Policy 17 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy 18 Cultural Heritage

Policy 19 Tranquillity

Policy 20 Landscape Quality and Character

Policy 21 Farming

Policy 25 Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

Policy 27 Water and Flood Risk

Policy 28 Utilities and Infrastructure

3.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance

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

4. Relevant Planning History

11NP0036 – Construction of three-bay garage with associated storage, dog kennels and solar panels – Granted 26/8/11

5. Consultee Responses

- 5.1 **NCC Development Management** – No objections.
- 5.2 **Historic England** – Do not consider the proposal falls under their guidelines for consultation. No comments made.
- 5.3 **Environment Agency** – On the basis that the proposal will utilise an existing treatment works, no objections were raised.
- 5.4 **NCC Public Protection** – No comments received.
- 5.5 **NCC Highways Department** – No observations.
- 5.6 **Historic Environment Officer** – Having reviewed the proposal, the officer has no objection on heritage grounds. It was stated that whilst it was a shame that the cottage would be lost, it was not of such historic significance that the proposal should be refused. The officer requests a level 2 record be completed.
- 5.7 **Access and Recreation Officer** – No objections on the basis that the proposal would not likely impact upon existing public access within the area.
- 5.8 **Ecologist** – The Ecologist has stated that should the proposed mitigation methods be conditioned then no objections would be made on the application.
- 5.9 **Rochester Parish Council** – The Council support the application.
- 5.10 **Historic Buildings Advisor** – The Historic Buildings Advisor would prefer the reuse and internal modernization of the cottage and outbuildings, rather than its complete loss.
- 5.11 **Northumbrian Water** – No comments received.
- 5.12 **Public Responses** - The application has been advertised by a site notice displayed on the 6th March 2019 and notification letters sent to 2 neighbouring properties. No representations have been received.

6. Assessment

Introduction

6.1 The key material planning considerations are:

- The principle of the development;
- Design, Visual Impact and Residential Amenity
- Impact upon National Park special qualities (landscape ecology cultural heritage and tranquillity)
- Other - Flood risk, Highways, landcontamination, renewable energy, package treatment, surface water and foul drainage

The principle of the development

6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is clear that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of decision making. Policy 1 of the NNPA Core Strategy seeks to deliver sustainable development, aiming to ensure that development proposals will conserve and enhance the special qualities of the National Park. The four categories that make up these special qualities are as follows; landscape, ecology, cultural heritage and tranquillity. The impact of the proposal on these categories is assessed below.

Location of New Development

6.3 The application site is located approximately 1 mile south of Rochester Village which is within the open countryside. With regards to development within the open countryside, Core Strategy policy 5 limits development to the reuse of existing buildings, with new buildings only permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

- a) *The development cannot take place within an identified Local Centre, Smaller Village or through the reuse of an existing building; and*
 - i. *It will conserve or enhance the special qualities of the National Park; and*
 - ii. *It will provide opportunities for the public to understand and enjoy the special qualities whilst not negatively impacting upon them; or*
- b) *It is replacing an existing building and the new building is not materially larger than the building it replaces*

6.4 Having regard to the proposal, part b) of Policy 5 is the relevant matter that needs consideration. The details of the two aspects that development would be replacing an existing building and that the new building is not materially larger is discussed in more detail below.

Replacement Dwelling

- 6.5 As the proposed new dwelling would replace an existing dwelling and would not result in a net increase in the number of permanent residential dwellings on the site, its occupation would not be required to be restricted in perpetuity through a Section 106 legal agreement (normally attached as part of any grant of planning permission for new dwellings) to persons meeting the Authority's defined local need criteria, which are set out within the supporting text to Core Strategy policy 10. Any grant of planning permission for a new replacement dwelling on the site would also not be required to be subject to an agricultural occupancy condition, owing to the replacement nature of the dwelling, which is not tied in this way.
- 6.6 As outlined above, policy 5 part b) requires there to be an existing building. It is accepted that Evistones Cottage is an existing dwelling (albeit in poor condition). Attached to the cottage are a number of outbuildings including former kennels and outbuildings which are currently in agricultural use.
- 6.7 Part b) of Policy 5 of the Core Strategy requires that any new building within the open countryside is not materially larger than the existing building that it replaces. Evistones House has a height of 7.9m; Evistones Cottage has a height of 6.1m. The proposed dwelling has a height of 6.9m and the outbuildings 5.4m. In terms of the floor area, the existing complex of buildings that make up Evistones Cottage and the outbuildings is 224sqm. The dwelling that is intended to replace these buildings is 222sqm.

	Existing floor area	Proposed floor area
Cottage	92sqm	222sqm
Outbuildings	132sqm	390sqm
Total	224	612

Figure 12 showing area of existing and proposed

- 6.8 The floor areas alone cannot be used to consider the issue of "materially larger" and therefore consideration of the overall scale of the buildings is necessary. Evistones Cottage has the appearance of a one and a half storey dwelling with a ridge height of 6.1 m, whilst the proposed replacement dwelling would be 6.9 metres in height, giving an increase of 0.8m in height. The volume of the existing cottage 424m³ and the proposed volume is 1052m³ giving an increased volume of 628m³.
- 6.9 The agent suggests that in terms of its broad scale and design, being modest in scale in order *"to reflect the existing cottage and its subordinate form to Evistones House"*. The applicant argues that the replacement dwelling would not be materially larger than

Evistones Cottage together with the adjoining outbuildings. The proposed dwelling is 2sqm smaller than the existing Evistones Cottage with adjoining outbuildings.

- 6.10 Whilst the agent argues that consideration should be made to the replacement buildings as a whole, Policy 5 refers to the replacement of an existing building. Taking the residential dwelling alone, it is clear that the replacement dwelling (with a volume of 1052m³) is materially larger than the current Evistones Cottage (with a volume of 424m³). Therefore officers consider that the proposal does not accord with Core Strategy Policy 5.
- 6.11 Nevertheless consideration needs to be made as to the harm of the proposal being materially larger than the existing residential dwelling.
- 6.12 Although the proposed new dwelling will be materially larger than the existing dwelling, it would be smaller and shorter than the nearby Evistones House with a ridge height 1m lower than the main house. The new house would be seen in the context of the existing development already on the site. Given the proposal would result in a sympathetic and subordinate development that mirrors the existing relationship between Evistones House and Evistones Cottage. The proposed replacement building would not cause harm to the immediate area.
- 6.13 Evistones is a self-contained farmstead with clearly defined boundaries with few public viewpoints. The site is accessed via a private road and there are no rights of way in the vicinity. Dense woodland screens the site immediately to the northwest, through to the south of the site. To east and north east of the site lies more woodland which screen the site looking from the nearest public road. In ecological terms, the principle of a larger dwelling on the site would cause no more harm than the existing dwelling, subject to suitable mitigation as discussed later in the report.
- 6.14 Although Evistones is a remote location, the site is an established agricultural built environment. The Planning Statement accompanying the application explains that *'the scale of the proposed development reflects the functional needs of the house and the farm occupiers (both Evistones Cottage and Evistones). The whole site is under single family ownership and it is envisaged that the next generation of the family will occupy Evistones Cottage. The overarching aim of the proposal is to allow for succession planning for management of the farm. The gym room is a shared gym between the main house and the replacement dwelling – the main house does not have this facility. The design scheme allows for modern living needs, the existing dwelling is not designed in such a way that is conducive to modern living; and the proposal still remains a two-bed cottage, subordinate to the main Evistones House'*. Given the replacement dwelling is considered acceptable in its setting and there are strong functional reasons for its size, it

is considered the proposal would not result in harm to justify refusal of the proposal. To ensure the intended subordinate nature of the scheme is achieved and to ensure the impact of the proposal is kept to a minimum, the proposed ridge height of the new dwelling will be conditioned. Furthermore, for the reasons stated above, it is considered appropriate to remove Class A,B,C,E Permitted Development rights [of Class 1] of the The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

- 6.15 Core Strategy policy 5 part b) requires that any planning application for a replacement dwelling is accompanied by evidence to demonstrate that residential use of the existing building was lawful immediately prior to its demolition. Having visited the site, the Officer is in agreement with the supporting statement that the use of Evistones Cottage as residential, whilst currently unoccupied, is lawful.

Replacement outbuildings

- 6.16 As well as replacing the existing dwelling it is also proposed to replace existing outbuildings. The principle of the construction of new replacement outbuildings within the open countryside is also addressed within Core Strategy policy 5 part b). NPPF Paragraph 83 and Core Strategy policies 14 and 21 are also relevant considerations here as the building is in part proposed to support existing farming operations and these policies aim to support the development of rural businesses, including through the construction of new buildings (NPPF Para. 83).
- 6.17 The proposal seeks to replace the existing single detached garage, modern three-bay detached garage / store / kennels and outbuildings attached to Evistones Cottage and replace them with a modern and consolidated L-shaped outbuilding. The proposed building, comprises a workshop, 5 bay garage, quad bike store, kennel/utility, vehicle wash and oil tank diesel compound. The applicant had provided justification for the need for the replacement outbuildings, stating that *'the existing outbuildings do not meet with the current needs of the occupiers'* and it is intended that the proposed building would be used for both agricultural purposes and in association with both dwellings on the site. It goes on to say that *'the proposed outbuilding will allow the occupants of both dwellings to store machinery and vehicles securely and provide suitable facilities for the farm dogs within the purpose-built kennels, without the necessity to erect further agricultural barns / buildings'*.
- 6.18 Policy 21 of the Core Strategy states *'In order to recognise the varied roles of agriculture which include the maintenance and management of the countryside the National Park Authority will support appropriate development proposals that will enable farming and*

farmers to become more competitive and sustainable, to diversify and to demonstrate good environmental and farming practices’.

- 6.19 As outlined above Core Strategy policy 5 part b) requires that any new replacement building within the open countryside would not be materially larger than the building it replaces. The existing outbuildings total 132sqm and the proposed total 390sqm, giving a difference of 258sqm. The proposed single story outbuilding has a height of 5.4m, whilst the existing outbuildings are a mix of heights ranging from 3.2m high to 6.1m high. The most comparable existing outbuildings to the proposal would be the detached garages and kennels with a height of 5.1m. Having consideration for the scale and design of the existing outbuildings on the site (as viewed collectively) that would be removed and replaced, the proposed outbuildings *would* be materially larger than these.
- 6.20 Taking into account Policy 21 and that the proposed outbuilding is required to serve both Evistones House and the proposed new dwelling alongside farming operations based out of this site, it is accepted that the owner needs to replace the existing outbuildings. However officers need to consider the overall impact of the new outbuildings including any harm that would result from them being materially larger.
- 6.21 The proposed outbuildings raise the same issues as the proposed dwelling and these issues have already been discussed in paragraph 6.12 and 6.15. Together with the proposed dwelling, the general layout and spacing of the proposed buildings, together with Evistones House create a more functional and aesthetically pleasing courtyard. The proposed replacement outbuildings would therefore be considered acceptable despite the conflict with Policy 5.

Change of use

- 6.22 An extension of residential curtilage behind Evistones cottage is proposed as part of the application. It is proposed that the existing garden be adjoined to a large area of agricultural land to its northwest. The existing area of garden and the agricultural land it sits next to is not clearly demarcated and seems to be in shared use. Sheep are allowed to freely graze the area. The area is well shielded by woodland on its north and west side. Given the proposal upholds the principles of sustainable development and the extension of garden would not harm the immediate or wider setting, it is considered to accord with Policy 3.



Figure 13 showing proposed landscaped garden



Figure 14 Existing garden, looking North from Evistones



Figure 15 Proposed area of garden, looking NW from Evistones

Design, Visual Impact and Residential Amenity

Design

- 6.23 The NPPF states that “good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning” and that development should be responsive to local character and distinctiveness. Core Strategy policy 3 provides support for development proposals that conserve and enhance local character and the Park’s special qualities through appropriate and sympathetic design that contributes to the amenity of the area. Core Strategy policy 18 would also be a primary consideration in this instance, as this seeks to ensure that protection is afforded to the National Park’s cultural asset sites.
- 6.24 The application proposes a modern dwelling with the appearance of a large family dwelling house and outbuildings with a high quality, considered design. A mix of traditional and modern materials is proposed which results in an uncluttered and sympathetic scheme. The main frontage of the outbuildings benefit from a staggered roof

line and a timber frame carport area where it is proposed to store quad bikes. This helps to break up the bulk of the building and adds interest to the scheme. The proposed new dwelling comprises two main parts, linked by a glazed structure in the centre; the principal element of the house, facing the courtyard would house the bedrooms at first floor level and a gym and study to the ground floor. The full height glazed link with spiral staircase attaches the kitchen and living area to the rear. These features and layout as a whole are considered to contribute to the scheme's high quality design.

- 6.25 The placing of the proposed new dwelling away from Evistones House, along with the outbuildings, create a much larger and more congruous farmyard area, more so than the smaller and existing, convoluted hardstand area. The facades of the buildings would be of stone with stone quoins and a slate roof to match Evistones house. Where feasible, existing materials are to be used. Doors and windows are to be of painted hardwood with aluminium gutters and downpipes. Tesla solar roof slates are proposed on the south west roof plane of the proposed outbuildings. To ensure the appropriate appearance of the development and a high standard of design is achieved, a condition requiring the submission of details of the solar panels and a condition ensuring natural stone and natural slate is used is considered appropriate in this instance.
- 6.26 Officers consider the proposed materials appropriate and of a high quality design whilst remaining in context with Evistones House. The Historic Buildings Advisor mentions that *'A more modern glazed link and gable end is also proposed and this is considered to be acceptable in design terms, particularly as this contemporary glazing is limited to elevations facing away from the main cottage'*. Taking into account the above points, the design of the proposal is considered appropriate and sympathetic to the main house and its surroundings thus complying with Policy 3 of the Core Strategy.

Visual Impact

- 6.27 The remoteness of the site is such that it is very difficult to view the site from the public domain. The two nearest properties are over 550m away, both completely screened by woodland. The nearest public road is just less than 1 mile away and the closest public right of way is 585m away from the site and not visible from this point by virtue of the lay of the land. The nearest settlement is 1 mile away, the village from Rochester.
- 6.28 As outlined above, the proposal includes a change of use of land to the north west of Evistones Cottage from agricultural to domestic curtilage. It is proposed that the area would be landscaped and absorbed into the curtilage of the dwelling. Currently, the cottage has an area of walled garden to the north. The area spills into a stretch of grassland being used for grazing sheep. It is proposed to landscape this area of grass

and create lawn and a meadow area. Although a large area of land, the proposed garden is well screened and would not be visible from the public domain.

- 6.29 The visual impact of the proposal from the immediate vicinity has been recorded in a visual study. Below (figure 16 and 17) is a photograph and 3D render showing the existing site and the site including the proposal. From a visual impact perspective, the officer considers the proposed changes would have little detrimental impact on the site and the wider area.
- 6.30 Taking into account the above points, it is considered the proposal's visual impact will be minimal, thus safeguarding the wellbeing of local communities and therefore complying with Policy 3 of the LDF.



Figure 16 Existing Site from Southern access



Figure 17 Proposal from Southern access to demonstrate visual impact

Residential amenity

- 6.31 Evistones House is the only property within half a mile of the proposal and as such any effects on residential amenity will be exclusively considered for Evistones House. The proposed dwelling would be located 19.5m from the nearest part of Evistones House and the outbuildings, 14.5m. These distances exceed those of the existing distances, 9.9m from garage to House and 18.8m from house to cottage. Taking into consideration the increased separation distances, the principal elevation of the proposal dwelling does not directly face Evistones House. The proposed dwelling, although 0.8m higher than the existing Evistones Cottage, would be 0.8m lower than Evistones House. Taking into account the above points, it is considered the proposal will cause no significant loss of light, loss of privacy or direct overlooking, thus complying with Policy 3 of the Core Strategy.

Impact upon National Park special qualities

Cultural heritage

- 6.32 Policy 18 states that the National Park will support proposals which conserve enhance and promote the quality and integrity of the cultural heritage of the National Park, Particularly those which preserve the special architectural or historical interests of the locally listed buildings.
- 6.33 Evistones is listed as Grade iii within The Historic Buildings of the National Park report – by John Grundy as a shooting lodge with a highly irregular plan. It describes in detail Evistones House as *‘not an attractive house but a most distinctive one’*. It goes on to briefly explain the architecture merits of the House. The report does not make any reference to Evistones Cottage but given the Cottage’s relationship to the shooting lodge it is assumed that it is a part of the entry. The lack of reference to the Cottage in the J Grundy report implies the Officer (Grundy) did not consider it to be of significant value enough to mention it.
- 6.34 As it forms part of J Grundy’s report, it is classed as a non-designated heritage asset. Section 12 of the 2019 NPPF is about achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 197 advises that ‘the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset’.
- 6.35 Evistones farm, in modern times has and is being operated as an agricultural holding, its original purpose as a shooting lodge has long since been abandoned and the agent

explains its owners are looking to expand its operations as a farmstead. The applicant considers that to allow them to achieve this, the cottage should be replaced with a more suitable and more functional building.

- 6.36 The Historic Buildings Advisor, whilst commenting positively on aspects of the proposed design of the replacement dwelling, would prefer the reuse and internal modernization of the cottage and outbuildings, rather than its complete loss. The agent discusses the opportunity to renovate the existing buildings but dismisses this opportunity as being too costly and that it would result in a scheme that would not suit the needs of the applicant. The Historic Buildings Advisor goes on to say that the plan-form of the current farmstead, which includes both Evistones House and Evistones Cottage, is irregular, perhaps reflecting the specialized nature of the origins as a hunting lodge and keepers cottage rather than a traditional farmstead. There are no listed buildings within the application site or its immediate setting but there are a number of listed buildings in the wider area. However the proposal is not considered to impact upon the setting of any of these heritage assets.
- 6.37 The buildings are to be arranged around a courtyard which is considered by the applicant to be more efficient operationally and is more in keeping with courtyard plans seen elsewhere in the region. However this was not an intact historical farmstead and indeed was never designed as such. The proposed demolition of the cottage and its associated traditional outbuildings will result in the loss of a non-designated heritage asset, as the cottage was a Game Keeper's cottage associated with Evistones House, which was a shooting/hunting lodge. These late 19th century buildings are of local significance given their traditional design, materials and character, historical usage and association with the overall estate, whose significance is as one of a number of such estates, many of which are now lost. The Historic Buildings Advisor states that the demolition of the cottage will disrupt the overall historical connection and group value of the estate, removing the association of the Keepers Cottage and its outbuildings, which were part of the working estate, with the main Hunting/Shooting Lodge. The loss of the stables, which illustrate the importance of horses in supporting farming operations and a rural lifestyle with hunting, is also unfortunate.
- 6.38 The National Park's Historic Environment Officer has reviewed the proposal and has no objection to the proposal on heritage grounds. He states that whilst it was a shame that the cottage would be lost, it was not, in his view, of such historic significance that the proposal should be refused. The officer requests a level 2 record be completed (This is a descriptive historic building record detailing the interior and exterior of a building). The building will be viewed, described and photographed. A condition requesting the carrying out of such a record will be attached to this recommendation.

- 6.39 Currently there is the Historic Building's Advisor who wishes to resist the complete loss of Evistones Cottage, whereas the Historic Environment Officer is more relaxed. Taking into consideration the above comments by the National Park's Historic Environment Officer, the ancillary nature of the cottage to the main house and the lack of mention of the cottage within the J Grundy report, it is considered that the significance of the cottage in heritage terms is low. Furthermore, it is considered that the benefits that flow from the development outweigh the harm and loss caused by the proposed replacement of the cottage with a new dwelling and outbuildings.
- 6.40 Paragraph 197 of the NPPF requires a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. It is considered therefore, having carefully balanced the application against the loss of a non-designated heritage asset, the proposal whilst not complying with Policy 18 of the Core Strategy, does comply with Section 12 of the 2019 NPPF, Paragraph 197.

Tranquillity

- 6.41 Policy 19 states that "*development proposals which conserve or enhance the tranquillity of the National Park will be supported.*" In order to determine the extent to which tranquillity is affected there will be an assessment of the impact of the proposal upon noise, traffic and level of light generated as a result of the proposal.
- 6.42 As the proposal intends to facilitate and help enhance an already existing farming operation, it is not considered any additional noise created by the proposal would be significant enough to negatively on impact the tranquillity of the National Park. Particularly so given its remote location. The scheme proposes the replacement of outbuildings and the existing dwelling with similar buildings/ facilities, it is considered unlikely that there would be any significant increase in traffic.
- 6.43 The application site is located within the Northumberland International Dark Sky Park and as such, consideration must be given to proposed lighting. No details of external lighting that may be required in connection with the proposed development have been submitted as part of this application. A condition restricting the installation of external lighting to the site is considered appropriate in this instance.
- 6.44 Given the proposal is believed to conserve and enhance the tranquillity of the National Park, it is considered that the proposal satisfies Core Strategy Policy 19.

Ecology

- 6.45 Core Strategy policy 17 states that the National Park will ‘*protect, enhance, and restore biodiversity and geological conservation interests across the National Park*’. The application has been supported by an Ecological Survey and Bat Report. The National Park ecologist has been consulted who notes in their consultation response that roosts of four species of bat will be lost if the building is demolished.
- 6.46 In this instance, the Ecologist believes that the 12 bat boxes proposed should be sufficient to ensure suitable boxes are available prior to demolition/ work commencing. In addition to bats the other species of interest found using the buildings were swallows and house martins. The Ecologist states that there would be a loss of nest sites for these species and the mitigation suggests incorporation of artificial nests together with demolition outside the bird nesting season and requests that this is made a condition together with the provision of a barn owl box to ensure no loss of biodiversity and possibly a net gain. Other mitigation and working methods relating to reptiles and invasive species should be undertaken as outlined in the report.
- 6.47 Subject to a condition ensuring the works are undertaken in accordance with the recommendations and method statement detailed within Section G of the ‘*E3 Ecology Ltd Ecological Appraisal and Bat Survey, Evistones Cottage, Rochester – February 2019 Final*’, the proposals are in accord with the requirements of Core Strategy policy 17.

Landscape

- 6.48 Policy 20 of the LDF states that “*the natural beauty and heritage of the National Park will be conserved and enhanced whilst being responsive to landscape change. All proposals will be assessed in terms of their impact on landscape character and sensitivity*”. Consideration for the impact caused by the proposal on the quality and character of the landscape will therefore be made.
- 6.49 Whilst the development proposes additional and replacement structures on the site, their sheltered, proportionate and subservient nature and location adjacent to woodland contribute to a scheme that has little negative impact on the immediate surrounding landscape. The scheme’s broadly like for like nature, it’s remoteness from nearby properties and the public realm all contribute to a scheme whose impact on landscape character and sensitivity of the National Park as a whole is not adversely affected.
- 6.50 Furthermore, Figure 18-21 below demonstrate four key views of the site from the public domain, giving insight into the effects of the development in Landscape terms. As is demonstrated, it is clear that the proposal site is remote and its scale such that the proposal would have minimal effect on the wider landscape.



Figure 18. View of site north west from A69 at Elishaw



Figure 19. View of site north east from Brownrigg Head

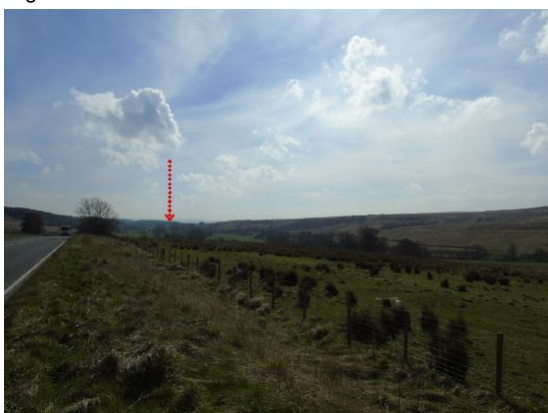


Figure 20. View from A696 SE at Bellshiel Bridge



Figure 21. View from A696 west from Redesdale Arms

6.51 The Access Officer was consulted on the application and raised no objections on the basis that the proposal would not likely impact upon existing public access within the area.



Figure 22 showing nearest right of way access to site

- 6.52 Having regard for the above, in addition to the guidelines set out within the Landscape SPD, it is considered that the proposal would have a limited impact upon the landscape character of the area, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 20 and the NPPF.

Other matters

Flood Risk

- 6.53 Policy 27 states that *'The National Park Authority will require that new development is directed away from areas at the highest risk of flooding'*. The site as a whole covers a large area by virtue of a long access track which crosses the River Rede. Part of the access track enters into a Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3. The location of the Farmstead itself is over 500 metres from the flood zone and is itself not affected by the risks of flooding. It is therefore considered that proposal would not experience flooding and is not likely to result in any additional flooding elsewhere and therefore to be in accordance with Core Strategy Policy 27.

Utilities

- 6.54 Policy 28 states that *'utilities and infrastructure are an important part of daily life for residents...however; such development can have implications for the special qualities of the National Park'*. It is proposed that the existing septic tank for Evistones Cottage will be used for the proposal. Given the proposal does not increase the number of houses on site and the new outbuildings remain in agricultural use then the proposal should not result in any further demand on the existing system. Water is provided by mains supply.
- 6.55 The Environment Agency was consulted on the application and considered the proposed drainage plan and sewage treatment provision and raised no objections. It is therefore considered to be in accordance with Core Strategy Policy 28.

Highways

- 6.56 Part c of Policy 3 states that *'All new development, activities, and uses of land within Northumberland National Park must uphold and promote the principles of sustainable development; new development will be permitted when: the development will not have any detrimental effects on highway safety or the rights of way network'*. The NNPA Access and Recreation Officer has no objections to the proposal on the basis that the scheme would not likely impact upon existing public access within the area. NCC Highways department were consulted and raised no objections to the proposal. It is therefore considered to be in accordance with Part c of Core Strategy Policy 3.

Renewable Energy

- 6.57 Policy 25 states 'The National Park Authority will require all new development, including conversions to:
- a. minimise the amount of energy used during construction;
 - b. achieve the highest energy efficiency through the location, orientation, layout, design and insulation of development; and
 - c. realise the potential for the generation of on-site renewable energy. As a minimum all new units of residential development will be required to embed renewable energy within the development to offset at least 10% of the predicted energy requirements of the development.
- 6.58 As discussed previously in the report it is proposed that Tesla solar roof slates be located on the south west roof plane of the proposed outbuildings. Within the application it is stated that the proposal will work towards a zero-carbon self-sustaining off-grid solution which would incorporate renewable and low-carbon technologies. It is considered that the degree to which the applicant had gone to ensure accordance with the requirements of Policy 1, 2 and 25 is sufficient.

- 6.59 To ensure the applicants desires to achieve this level of renewable energy, a condition has been attached to ensure the Tesla Solar roof tiles are made a part of the development.

Land Contamination

- 6.60 The agent has submitted a Contamination Assessment (Screening Assessment Form) and demonstrated that site has not been subjected to any harmful risks, nor does it meet the requirement for consultation with Northumberland County Council Public protection.

Conclusion

- 7.0 The proposed replacement dwelling and outbuildings are considered a departure from Core Strategy Policy 5, as the proposals are materially larger than the buildings they replace. However it is not considered that there would be any additional harm to the immediate and wider surround area for the following reasons:
- The site is remote and contained.
 - There are limited views of the site from the public domain.
 - The size of the proposal would cause no more harm than the existing buildings.
 - The primary concern is the loss of an asset not the size of its replacement.
 - The proposal is similar to what it replaces.
 - The buildings are to be located sufficiently far from Evistones House reducing their impact on their immediate surroundings.
- 7.1 There are material planning reasons that are considered to justify this departure from the policy. The agent states that the existing dwelling is in very poor condition, as are the existing outbuildings. The agent discusses the opportunity to renovate the existing buildings but dismisses this opportunity as being too costly and that it would result in a scheme that would not suit the needs of the applicant.
- 7.2 The planning application states that the whole site is under single family ownership and the scale of the proposed development reflects the functional needs of the house and the farm occupiers (both Evistones Cottage and Evistones). The overarching aim of the proposal is to allow for succession planning for management of the farm. The gym room is a shared gym between the main house and the replacement dwelling – the main house does not have this facility. The design scheme allows for modern living needs, the existing dwelling is not designed in such a way that is conducive to modern living; and the proposal still remains a two-bed cottage, subordinate to the main Evistones House. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposal is a functional and aesthetically coherent

scheme, with accommodation and facilities suited to modern domestic and agricultural needs that will better support the growing farming business.

- 7.3 The development is also considered to be acceptable in principle, despite the conflict with Core Strategy Policy 5, as the detail of the proposals in their context are material planning considerations that are considered to outweigh the harm caused by the departures from Policy 5.
- 7.4 Although the Historic Buildings Advisor is concerned about the loss of a heritage asset, it is demonstrated in the Historic Buildings of the National Park report that no consideration for the cottage was given in John Grundy's report, suggesting the cottage's significance is low. Furthermore, the Historic Building's Advisor reviewed the application and whilst show concern for the loss of the cottage, had no objections to the proposal, siting that the Cottage and Outbuildings were not of such historic significance that the application should be refused. It was concluded that a level 2 historic building record should be carried out.
- 7.5 It is also considered that, subject to the inclusion of a number of planning conditions, the proposals would accord with the remaining Core Strategy policies, SPD guidance and national planning policy listed within the report.

Recommendation

Following consideration of the information submitted it is recommended that Members grant planning permission, subject to the conditions and informatives set out below.

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 forms received 20th February 2019
 - Heritage Statement received 12th February 2019
 - Planning Statement received 12th February 2019
 - Ecological Appraisal and Bat Survey received 12th February 2019

- Drainage Philosophy received 20th February 2019
- Contamination Assessment received 20th February 2019
- Foul Drainage Assessment Form received 28th February 2019
- Location Plan received 4th March 2019
- Ownership Plan received 4th March 2019
- Visual Study received 24th April 2019
- 3D model perspective drawings received 24th April 2019
- Schedule of Area received 24th April 2019
- Landscape Master Plan received 20th February 2019
- Proposed Drainage Plan, Drawing number 18T1690-130 Rev. P1 received 12th February 2019
- Proposed site layout, Drawing number 012 Rev. C received 12th February 2019
- Proposed overall site layout, Drawing number 013 Rev. C received 12th February 2019
- Existing site layout, Drawing number 017 Rev. -- received 20th February 2019
- Proposed roof plan, Drawing number 017 Rev. -- received 20th February 2019
- Proposed layout Stable Courtyard Scheme, drawing number 010 rev D received 12 February 2019
- Proposed elevations, Drawing number 014 Rev. e received 24th April 2019
- Elevational Survey, Drawing number 17J204 Rev. 001 received 12th February 2019
- Topographical survey of land, Drawing number 17J097 Rev. 001 received 12th February 2019
- Proposed replacement cottage elevations, Drawing number 015 Rev. B received 12th February 2019
- Proposed replacement cottage elevations, Drawing number 015 Rev. C received 24th April 2019
- Proposed Ecological mitigation plan, Drawing number 020 Rev. -- received 25th April 2019
- Proposed elevations, Drawing number 014 Rev. D received 12th February 2019
- Email from agent including landscape Visual Study with justifications received 24th April 2019
- Email from agent with assessment of scale of the proposal received 24th 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, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 27 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 125 of the NPPF.

- 4 The development hereby approved should be carried out in strict accordance with the avoidance and mitigation strategy detailed in Section G of the *'E3 Ecology Ltd Ecological Appraisal and Bat Survey, Evistones Cottage, Rochester – February 2019 Final 'and drawing 'Proposed Ecological Mitigation Plan', Plan No. 020*. In particular, attention is drawn to the need to undertake the development in accordance with the requirements in respect of:
- Timing
 - Bat boxes
 - Bat crevices
 - Barn Owl box
 - Artificial nest sites for swallows

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

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, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (as amended).

5. Prior to the commencement of the construction of the outbuildings hereby approved, samples and details of the following external facing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority:

- Solar roof panels

The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to preserve the visual appearance and amenity of the area, and the special qualities of the National Park, in accordance with Core Strategy policies 1 and 3 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

6. The development hereby approved shall be constructed using only natural stone and natural slate.

Reason: In order to preserve the proposed high quality design of the buildings in accordance with Core Strategy policies 1 and 3 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

7. The outbuildings hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the proposed solar roof tiles are installed in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: To ensure an appropriate level of renewable energy is achieved in accordance with the requirements of Policy 25.

8. The ridge height of the cottage hereby approved shall be no higher than 6.9m from existing ground level.

Reason: In order to preserve the visual appearance and amenity of the area, and the special qualities of the National Park, in accordance with Core Strategy policies 1 and 3 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

9. Prior to demolition of the Cottage and associated historic outbuildings, a Level 2 Historic Building Record shall be carried out. On completion of the Historic Building record it should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for it's records.

Reason: To ensure the historic significance of Evistones Cottage is recorded by virtue of it being a non-designated heritage asset in accordance with Core Strategy Policy 18.

10. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) (or any other Order revoking or re-enacting the Order), no development permitted by Classes A,B,C,E, of Schedule 2 Part 1 of the Order shall be carried out without the approval of a formal application to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent subsequent development from resulting in an overdevelopment of the site, or causing harm in terms of neighbouring residential amenity, visual amenity or from impacting upon 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.

The application site is located within the Northumberland International Dark Sky Park. The 'Good Practice Guide for Outside Lighting in Northumberland International Dark Sky Park' and an additional guide to unacceptable / acceptable lighting is attached. It is

recommended that any external lighting required in connection with the development is undertaken in accordance with the Guidance.

Contact Officer:

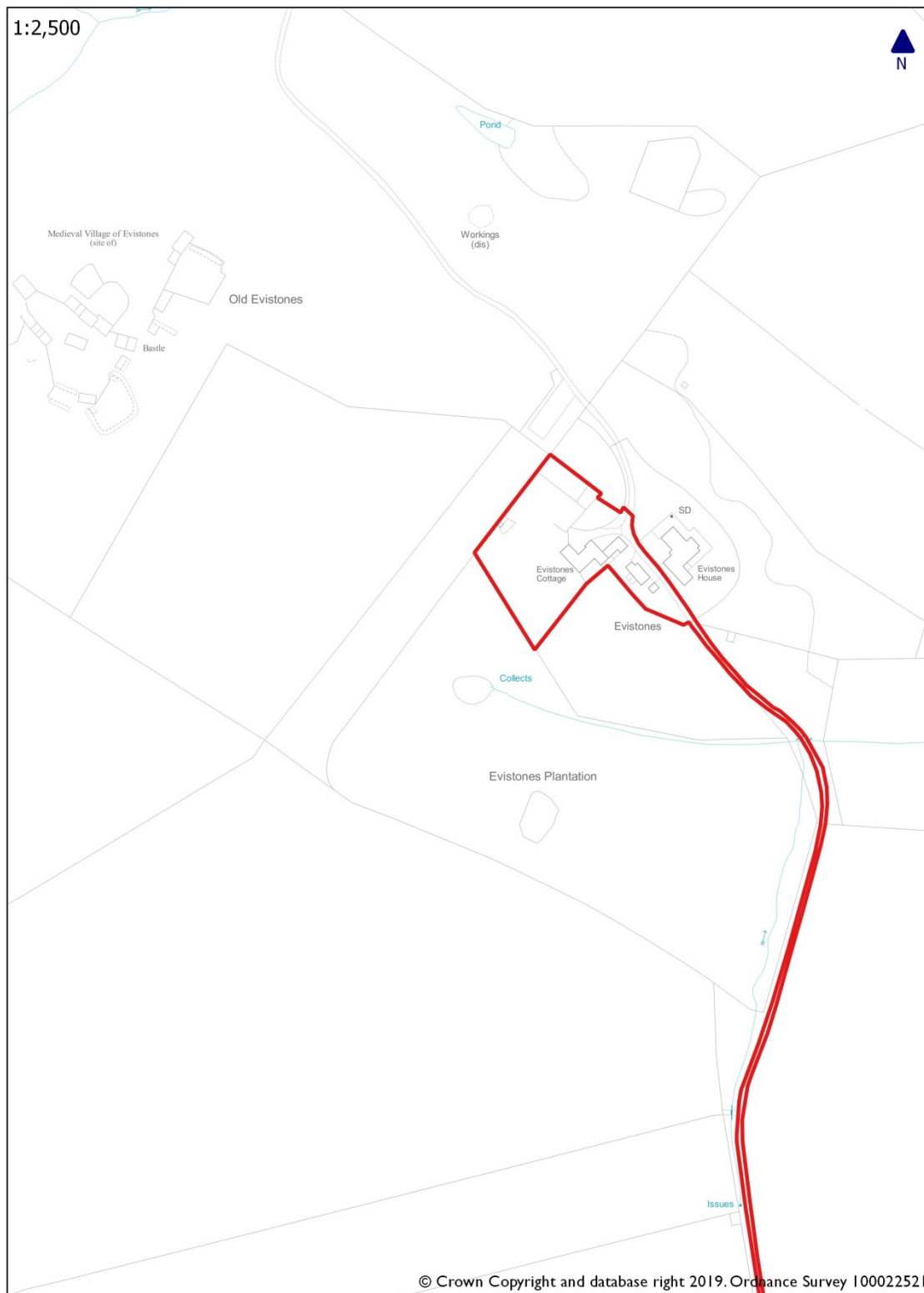
For further information contact Jay Smith Planning Officer Development Management on 01434 611552 or e-mail: planning@nnpa.org.uk

Application Files: 19NP0014



19NP0014 Evistones Cottage, Rochester

Northumberland National Park Authority



19NP0014 Evistones Cottage, (overview)

Northumberland National Park Authority 

