

Design and Access Statement

Project		Conversion of existing barn to form two holiday units
Address		High Stokoe Farm Falstone Hexham Northumberland NE481AG
Ref		19HSF
Date		08/06/2019
Application		Full
Applicant		Mr D Sinclair

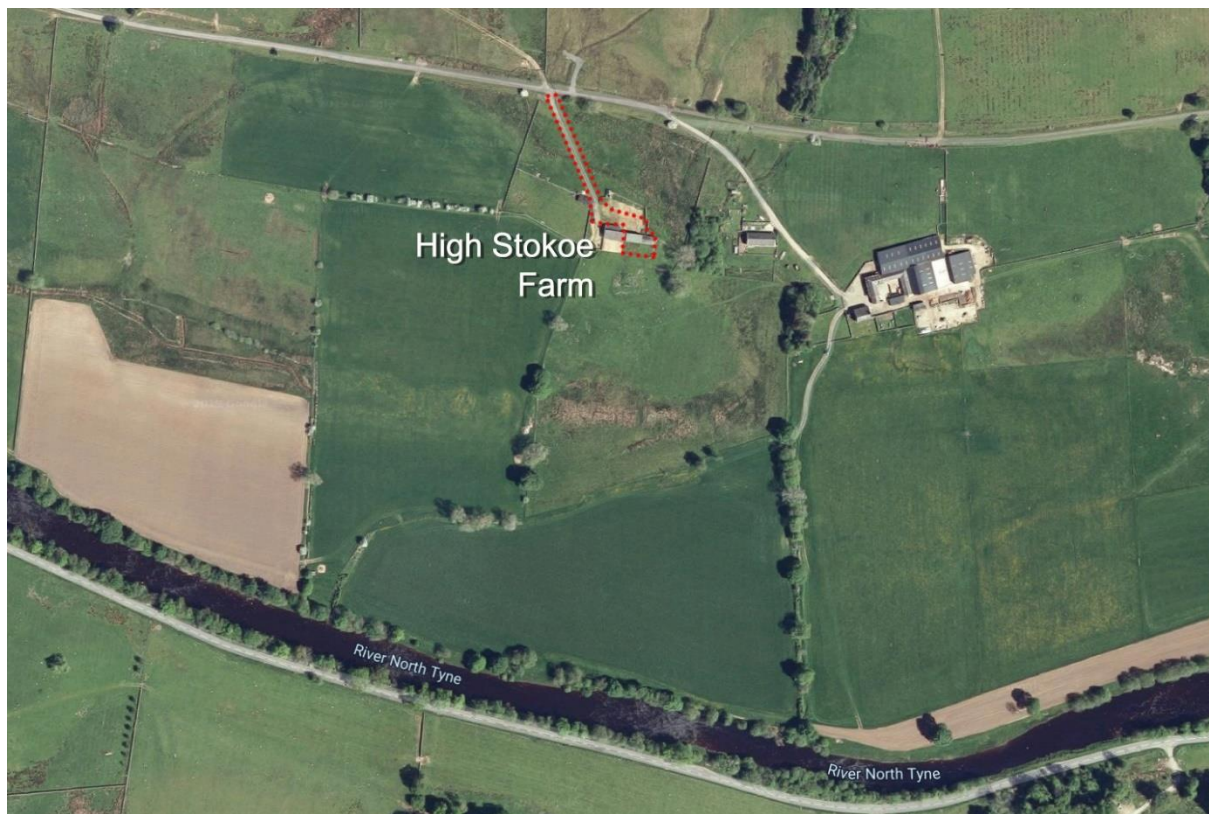
Site Description

The property and associated land which makes up High Stokoe Farm, sit in open countryside, some 1.8Km south east of the village of Falstone. The site sits in the Northumberland National Park. The farm steading includes an existing stone-built dormer bungalow. Alongside the dwelling sits an existing barn and byre.

This application is for the conversion of the exiting barn and byre to form two holiday units. The western section of the existing barn will be retained as a hay store.

Property Grid Reference **NY 73703 86139**

Google Earth View of the application site and setting



Pre-application enquiry

A pre-application enquiry was submitted to the National Park Authority to discuss the proposed scheme prior to formal submission. The reference number for the application was 18/0005. A response was received, on the 15th February 2018, provided by Rebecca Adams. The conclusion of the pre-application enquiry was that a formal application for the conversion of the existing barn and byre could be supported, subject to various items being provided.

Principle of Development

This application is for the conversion of an existing stone and slate built barn and byre, to form two single bedroom holiday units. The principle of development, in the form of the conversion of existing buildings within the open countryside for Tourism use is considered acceptable, both in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Northumberland National Park Core Strategy (NNP)

Northumberland National Park Authority | Core Strategy Spatial Objectives 5.1

- ***Sustainable land use – encouraging people who live and work in the National Park to make a good living from the land: whilst protecting and enhancing the distinctive landscape character; mitigating against, and adapting to the impacts of climate change; and protecting and enhancing sustainable transport and accessibility;***
- *A landscape rich in biodiversity and geodiversity – protecting and enhancing the whole range of distinctive habitats and the species they support, across the National Park;*
- *A rich cultural heritage – conserving, enhancing and celebrating the historical legacy of the National Park and developing it as a part of contemporary culture;*
- *A true sense of tranquillity – the peace and quiet which are increasingly rare and precious in the rest of the country;*
- *Opportunities for all to understand, enjoy and contribute to the special qualities – for the benefit of visitors, residents and businesses; well-informed, enthusiastic people will help support all our other aims;*
- ***A thriving community and economy – for the benefit of residents and visitors, and to underpin all our other aims.***

National Planning Policy Framework | Rural enterprise

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); Paragraph 83 advocates that planning policies and decisions should enable;

a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;

b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;

c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community

facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space,

cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

Northumberland National Park Authority | Policy 7 Conversion of Buildings outside Settlements

The change of use of existing buildings outside identified settlements to employment use (including tourism) will be supported where:

- a. The building is capable of conversion;
- b. The building contributes to the special qualities of the National Park; and
- c. The building is of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed use without the need for significant alterations or extensions which would detract from its character and appearance and that of the wider landscape.

The application site is located within the open countryside where the development looks to convert an existing agricultural building through the change of its use and as such the principal of the development is acceptable. The proposal looks to provide sustainable growth through farm diversification of a rural business, helping to build a strong rural economy.

The proposed conversion is to be undertaken in a manner that is sympathetic and in keeping with the surrounding landscape. Materials, scale and form are all in keeping with the existing farm steading.

The proposed holiday units will also benefit and work in line with, the applicant Alpaca walking business, called Ferny Rigg Alpacas. The business forms part of the farm diversification and adds to building a stronger rural economy.

Design

The design of the scheme has been considered to ensure that the impact on the surrounding open countryside is minimised and the architecture is sympathetic and in keeping with the farm steading as follows:

- Use of existing openings where possible
- Ensure that the barn conversion remains 'agricultural' in form and is not 'residential'. This ensures that the reading of the farm steading from within the landscape remains as a dwelling and attached barn/byre (farm steading)
- Ensure that the treatment of the fenestration differs from the residential form of the dwelling. The proposed windows and doors will be in a 'simple, uncluttered form' that allows both increased light into the living spaces, as well as helping to retain a simple agricultural elevations form
- The proposed off shot to the rear, which will house the entrances and boot stores for each unit, has also been designed to be agricultural in form. The scale and form are modest and

subservient to the main barn. The off shot reads as a lean-too addition to the existing barn. The use of Larch cladding, stained grey on completion, will help to soften the elevation and retain the agricultural scale and form to the barn conversion.

Ecology

As requested in the feedback at pre-application enquiry stage, a further Bat Survey has been undertaken by E3 Ecology. A copy of the report and findings are attached to this report and proposed mitigation in the form of crevice roost sites will be included in the conversion works.

A Natural England Licence (Ref 2018-35873-EPS-MIT) has been granted and is in place until 2024. The licence was granted for the re-roofing and structural renovations of the existing barn and byre. The licence will need to be modified to take into account the change of use.

Structure

As requested, a Structural Report has been undertaken by Crawford Higgins Associates (reference IC/CP/12729/19) and is provided as part of this application. The report concludes the following:

1. The roof structure to all three sections of the build have been previously renewed and are in good standard
2. There is no evidence of structural defects in the external walls, which are in sound condition
3. The ground floor structure is in rough condition and will require some works

The report concludes that the existing barn and byre is suitable for conversion

Residential Amenity

The proposed holiday units will sit directly to the east of the existing dwelling. Provision, through good spatial design, has been made to ensure that the scheme will not result in a detrimental impact on occupiers of the existing dwelling (the applicants) or users of the holiday units. The scheme will also not have a detrimental impact on surrounding dwellings, as they are a considerable distance away.

Highways & Refuse

Highways

The scheme proposes the inclusion of two car parking spaces within the existing north yard. This provides adequate parking for the two holiday units and easy, direct access into the unit. The proposed car parking will not be visible from the prominent south view from over the river on the main road.

Access to the holiday units will be via the private access road, along the former railway line, which is maintained by the applicants and the neighbouring farm. The increase in traffic to and from the proposed holiday units will not adversely affect local traffic or the private access driveway.

Refuse

Bins will be taken by the applicants to the end of the private driveway (to a collection point on the side of the main highway) for weekly refuse collection.

Contamination

The proposed conversion of the existing barn and byre (former agricultural use) to form holiday units, is classified as a sensitive end use and a Land Contamination Assessment is therefore required. A Contamination-Assessment-Screening-Assessment is attached as part of this application, along with a set of photos of the existing floor structure.

Foul Drainage

Foul Drainage Assessment Form (FAD1) is attached to this application. Foul water will be dealt with by the installation of a new package treatment plant, to be located to the east of the existing barn, as indicated on the proposed site plan. The proposed package treatment plant will be a Graf one2clean 7PE Treatment Plant

Solar Panels

An existing solar panel sits on the south facing slope over the existing barn to the west. A further set of panels, to match the existing, is proposed to sit on the lower roof to the east. The panel position is illustrated on the proposed elevations (19HSF (GA) 21-24 Proposed Elevations). Details of the proposed roof integrated Solar PV is attached in the form of a brochure provided by Viridian Solar.

External Lighting

Very simple external lighting is proposed, to be installed inline with the guidance found in 'NNPA Outside Lighting Guide'. The units will be shielded wall mounted bulk heads units. Five units are to be located as illustrated on the attached proposed site plan. The lighting units are shielded by 'eyelids' to provide downward facing lighting. The units are proposed to be Eterna 6W LED Mini Eyelid Amenity Bulkheads in Black (4200K)

Conclusion

The proposed scheme for the conversion of the existing barn and byre at High Stokoe Farm, to form two holiday units, is acceptable in principle. The scheme has been sensitively designed to ensure that it does not have a detrimental impact on the local amenity or the surrounding open countryside. The scheme utilises the existing barn and allows farm diversification to assist in generating a prosperous rural economy. The structural survey submitted with the application confirms that the existing building is suitable for conversion and that there are no contamination issues on site. The building is therefore suitable for the proposed use and will have a positive impact on the local economy and surrounding landscape.

Submitted Documents

1. Site Location Plan
2. Existing and proposed site plans
3. Existing and proposed floor plans
4. Existing and proposed elevations
5. Design and Access Statement
6. Bat Survey | E3 Ecology
7. Clearline Solar Panels Brochure
8. Structural Survey
9. Contamination Screening Assessment
10. Foul drainage assessment
11. One2clean 7PE Sewage Treatment Plant