

PLANNING, DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

TWICE BREWED INN

- 1.1 This application is for the construction of an extension to the public bar and lounge at the Twice Brewed Inn at Bardon Mill.

THE SCHEME

- 2.1 The extension will be built into the north east corner of the paved beer garden and be accessed via the existing double doors from the bar area. The existing bar itself will be continued into the space through an existing window opening. The external south and west elevations of the extension will be fully glazed with full height openable aluminium framed glazing under an overhanging flat roof incorporating rooflights.

PLANNING POLICY

- 3.1 The site is directly adjacent to the Roman Vallum, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (“SAM”) which encompasses the verge, highway and land north of the road, but does not include any of the application site. This land is designated for its historical value and interest as a Roman feature dating from around AD160 and is also a World Heritage Site.
- 3.2 The adopted development plan is the NNPA Core Strategy and Development Policies (2009).
- 3.3 The NNPA vision is set out in the Core Strategy in the following terms –

“Northumberland National Park Authority will be proactive, innovative and forward-looking, working towards a National Park with thriving communities and a sustainable local economy grounded in its special qualities, including a richness of cultural heritage and biodiversity, a true sense of tranquillity and a distinct character associated with a living, working landscape, in which everyone has an opportunity to understand, enjoy and contribute to those special qualities.”
- 3.4 It is important to note that the Authority’s vision recognises the importance of sustainable local economies and thriving communities within the Park.
- 3.5 Policy 14 the Authority supports the local economy and proposals which enable local businesses which cater for tourists to expand and diversify.
- 3.6 Policy 15 also supports developments which maximise opportunities for visitors to increase their understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park whilst not adversely impacting on them.
- 3.7 The NPPF is another material consideration and its policies carryweight depending on the status of the development plan.

THE APPLICANTS CASE

- 4.1 The Twice Brewed is a well established facility in the national park which is a pub to both locals and visitors from all over the world and an important food and accommodation facility on the route of Hadrians Wall. The location is crucial to walkers and visitors as there is no public transport along the wall from late September through to Easter and the nearest hotels are some distance away at Haydon Bridge and Haltwhistle. The Twice Brewed is a vital facility to many people enjoying the special qualities of the Park and Hadrians Wall in particular.
- 4.2 The Twice Brewed was purchased by the applicant in June 2015 and substantial money has been invested in its refurbishment. It now provides 18 letting rooms, and in the region of 140 covers for food in the bar and restaurant. The occupancy rates are maintained at over 90% in the summer season but in winter can go as low as 10%. The majority of people who stay over are walking in the area, mostly on the Wall.
- 4.3 The business is an important local employer of 47 staff in the summer all from the Haydon Bridge / Haltwhistle area. The weekly running costs are in the region of £10,000 which is a significant local investment. Since the refurbishment it is estimated that the business has grown by about 32%.
- 4.4 In 2017 a microbrewery and tap room bar were added to the premises. This has proved successful in diversifying and expanding the business as well as providing an additional attraction to the Twice Brewed. It has also created an additional 3 full time jobs.
- 4.5 The popularity of the Twice Brewed means that the bar and restaurant/function room are often full to capacity several days of the week. During the summer customers can spill out into the beer garden area which is a popular feature of the pub but the weather-dependent season during which this area can be used comfortably is relatively short. However, a glazed sunroom would make part of this area habitable all year round whilst still providing the benefit of the expansive views to the south that can only be glimpsed from the current bar. It will also increase the capacity when the premises would otherwise be full and allows the serving bar to be extended to cater for the additional numbers.
- 4.6 In planning policy terms this scheme will support the existing tourist facilities on site and as a business the Twice Brewed caters predominantly for people enjoying the special qualities of the Park. According to the Core Strategy tourism and accommodation account for 49% of business on the national park. If people are walking in the area, visiting Hadrians Wall or other attractions and they enjoy food and accommodation at the Twice Brewed then that brings money into the local economy both directly and indirectly. Diversification of the applicant's business into brewing/hospitality will have a positive impact on investment and expenditure and will not in any way impact negatively on the special qualities of the park. For those reasons I see no conflict with Policy 14.
- 4.7 The site is in a sensitive location but the extension is within the beer garden enclosed on three sides by the existing building and a 3m high sheltering wall to the west side. It will only be visible from the south which is open countryside. Despite having fully glazed sides any light spillage at night will be mitigated by the solid and overhanging roof. Given the amount of built development in the immediate vicinity of the site I do not consider this extension will harm either the landscape

or the special qualities of the Park.

- 4.8 The site has an existing drainage system which was installed in 2008 and comprises a main sewage line and three 11,000 litre tanks feeding into reed beds.

HERITAGE ASSETS

- 4.9 The site is inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site as a frontier of the Roman Empire. According to the Statement of Universal Outstanding Value¹ the series of frontiers reflect Roman military architecture and the power of the Roman Empire. If this scheme goes ahead the location and setting of the frontier will remain clear in the landscape and there will be no impact on the authenticity of this feature.
- 4.10 One of the Attributes of the WHS is that the setting of the frontier should offer the opportunity to understand and appreciate Roman military planning and one of the Objectives in the Management Plan is to raise awareness of World Heritage. I do not see this scheme in any way harming those.
- 4.11 The WHS is a designated heritage asset and significant weight should be attached to its significance. However, I consider the harm arising from this scheme, if any, to be less than substantial.
- 4.12 There is a listed building directly west of the site at West Twice Brewed which is a late 18th century farmhouse and barn. The setting of this building is its curtilage and the open space directly around it. The proposed extension will have no direct physical relationship to the listed building or its setting being hidden behind the west wall of the beer garden. I therefore see no harm arising from this scheme. As there would be no harm, there is no conflict with the NPPF.

PARKING

- 5.01 The existing capacity of the Twice Brewed car park is 46 cars. In addition there is a footpath link from the car park into The Sill visitor centre situated next door which has a total parking capacity for cars of 191 spaces. This is a total of 237 spaces that are available to visitors of The Sill and the Twice Brewed and often patrons of the pub have first parked at and visited The Sill before walking to the pub. In addition it must be noted that very many of the pubs daytime visitors and overnight guests are walking or occasionally cycling along Hadrians Wall and therefore do not arrive by car at all. Given this, and the amount of parking available on site and at The Sill, it is considered that the existing provision is sufficient to serve the increased capacity of the bar area by a maximum of approximately 20 people.

¹21 July 2015