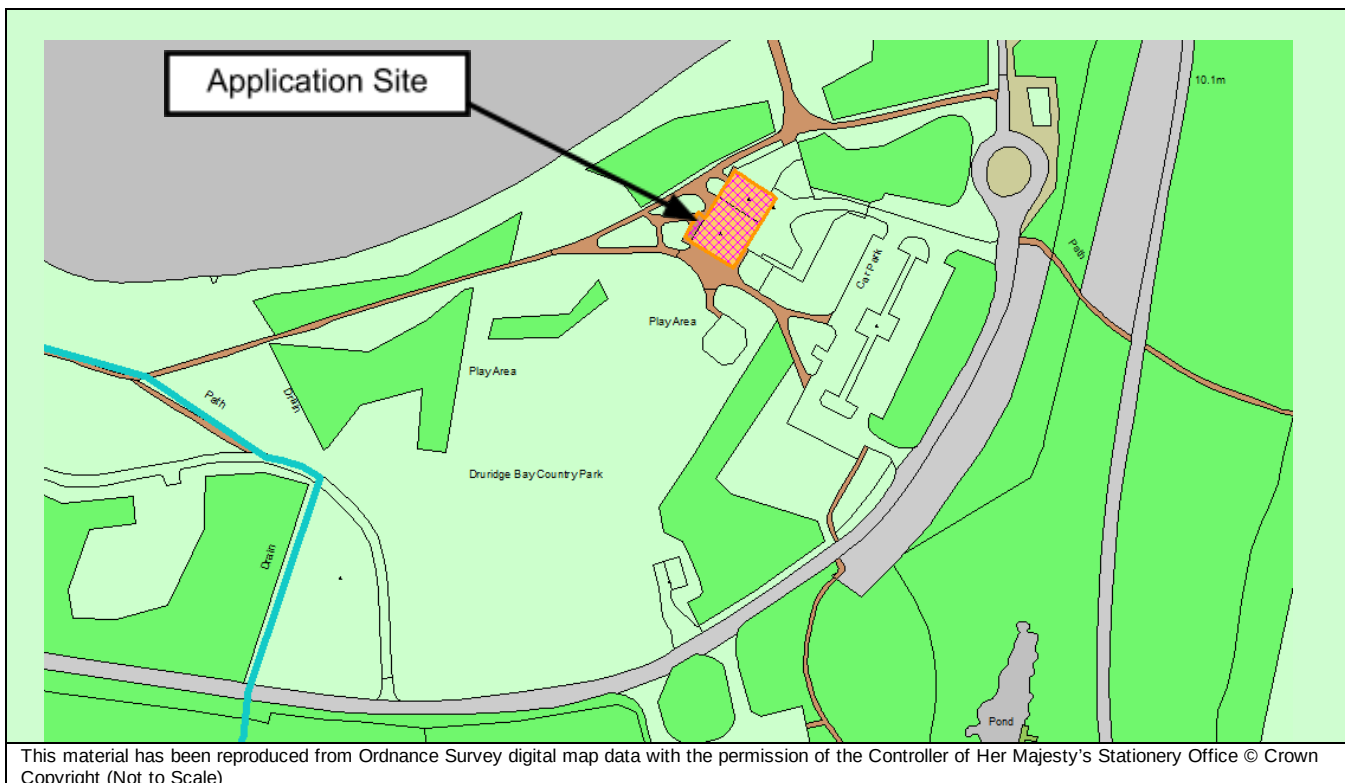




Northumberland County Council

CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL 8TH OCTOBER 2018

Application No:	18/01289/CCD		
Proposal:	Extension to cafe area and internal alterations to form showers within toilet area		
Site Address	Druridge Bay Country Park, Hadston, Northumberland, NE61 5BX		
Applicant:	Mr Lee Anderson County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF	Agent:	None
Ward	Amble	Parish	East Chevington
Valid Date:	4 May 2018	Expiry Date:	29 June 2018
Case Officer Details:	Name: Connor Willis Job Title: Planning Technician Tel No: 01670 622637 Email: Connor.Willis@northumberland.gov.uk		



1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Council's current Scheme of Delegation, this application is being reported to the Local Area Council as it involves a County Council development on Council owned land.

2. Description of the Proposals

- 2.1 Planning permission is sought for an extension to the café area and internal alterations to the Visitors Centre at Druridge Bay Country Park.
- 2.2 The proposed extension would measure 4.075 metres in depth and 10.50 metres in width, projecting Westward from the existing cafe area. The extension would be finished with a brown aluminium sheet roof to match the existing, brown aluminium window frames to match the existing and green exposed steelwork to match the existing.
- 2.3 The plans also show the formation of a new patio area sited directly adjacent to the West elevation of the proposed extension with paving flags to match the existing, and the existing gravel paths leading to and from the patio would be adjusted accordingly. The existing bike racks would be repositioned to the South elevation of the building, and the internal alterations proposed include the provision of additional shower facilities in the South East corner of the building within the existing toilet areas.
- 2.4 Druridge Bay Country Park lies to the East of Hadston and is accessed from the A1068 road to the West of the application site. There is agricultural land to the North, South and West, with the coastline to the East. It is located within a designated Area of High Landscape Value and a Site of Local Conservation Interest. The application site itself comprises the Visitors Centre which is situated to the South West of Ladyburn Lake, with an adjacent car parking area situated to the South East.

3. Planning History

Reference Number: CM/80/D/494

Description: Outline application for Diversion of Chevington Burn Relining & partial infilling of Coldrife Lake Formation of borrow pits Use of land for country park

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: CM/80/D/494/A

Description: Details submitted pursuant to conditions of outline permission 80/D/494

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: CM/80/D/494B

Description: Details of traffic movements submitted pursuant to condition no. 10 of planning permission 80/D/494 in respect of works to remodel country park

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: C/86/D/002

Description: Temporary siting of 'portaloo' unit and steel clad office / secure store / wardens office

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: C/86/D/280

Description: Incorporation of duneland into country park on 46 ha at Hauley, Togston and Hadston Links

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: C/86/D/250

Description: Construction of public car park and boat storage compound, together with storage workshop building on 0.7 ha

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: C/86/D/560

Description: Construction of a park centre building

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: C/89/D/080

Description: Details of landscaping submitted pursuant to condition no. 3 of planning permission 86/D/560 in respect of park centre building

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: C/91/D/513

Description: Development of car and coach park

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: C/91/D/512

Description: Development of car park on C110

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: C/86/A/211

Description: Incorporation of dune land into country park on 46 ha at Hauxley, Togston and Hadston Links

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: C/X/69/054

Description: Use of land as country park

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: C/X/69/054A

Description: Layout plan submitted pursuant to conditions of planning permission X/69/54 in respect of country park

Status: Reply Sent.

Reference Number: C/E/D/111

Description: Park centre building

Status: Reply Sent.

Reference Number: C/E/D/107

Description: Layout of car park and boat compound

Status: Reply Sent.

Reference Number: C/09/00173/CCD

Description: Provision of a new changing and teaching block, storage compound footpath and floating jetty

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: 11/02327/CCD

Description: Installation of photo voltaic panels on the building roof.

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: 12/02620/CCD

Description: New build changing room block with teaching room, new storage area building, new storage compound area with 2no relocated containers. Access track down to lake edge and floating jetty on lake.

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: 12/03645/DISCON

Description: Discharge of conditions 5 and 6 relating to planning permission 12/02620/CCD (New build changing room block with teaching room, new storage area building, new storage compound area with 2 no. relocated containers. Access track down to lake edge and floating jetty on lake)

Status: Permitted.

Reference Number: 14/00048/LIC

Description: New premises licence. Regulation 23, 25 and 26 of the Licensing Act 2003 (Premises licences and club premises certificates)

Status: No Objection.

Reference Number: 15/00031/LIC

Description: Premises Licence.

Status: No Objection.

Reference Number: 16/00084/LIC

Description: Premises Licence.

Status: No Objection.

Reference Number: 17/00058/LIC

Description: Application for a premises license.

Status: No Objection.

Reference Number: 18/00051/LIC

Description: Premises Licence application

Status: No Objection.

Reference Number: 18/02855/CCD

Description: Provision of hardstanding for caravans/camper vans and creation of an area for camping

Status: Pending Consideration.

Reference Number: CM/20070185

Description: Provision of storage container for storing windsurfing equipment and area in front to be covered in stone

Status: Permitted.

4. Consultee Responses

East Chevington Parish Council	After a discussion about the above planning application, the Parish Councillors felt that more showers were required because of the camping and water sports. A number of events held at The Country Park encourage overnight camping. We would like our recommendations to be considered that more showers are requested.
Strategic Estates	No comment.
Countryside Management	No response received.
Countryside/Rights of Way	No comment.
Tourism, Leisure and Culture	<p>Tourism is rapidly elevating in significance within Northumberland and is confirmed as being a critical part of our economic well being and facilitator of goods and services which can be enjoyed by our residents as well as our visitors.</p> <p>Statistical research indicates year on year increases in the performance of the county visitor economy. In 2017, almost £925 million was spent in Northumberland by 10.27 million visitors. This equates to an 8.6% elevation in economic value and 5.7% surge in visitors over 2016 and this trend has been consistent since 2013. The visitor economy now also provides over 14,800 direct and indirect full time jobs across the county.</p> <p>It is our collective mission to not only sustain the employment within the sector, but to develop the visitor economy further through a number of objectives which includes supporting businesses to grow and to provide quality facilities and experiences for visitors. To this end, Northumberland County Council's tourism development section is supportive of this application, subject to it satisfying all statutory planning conditions and being broadly acceptable to the adjacent</p>

	community.
Highways	No objection, subject to condition.
The Coal Authority	<p>The Coal Authority objected to this application in our previous letter to the LPA dated 24 May 2018 as the required Coal Mining Risk Assessment Report, or equivalent, has not been submitted as part of the application.</p> <p>We are pleased to note that this planning application is now accompanied by a Coal Mining Risk Assessment (dated 03.05.2018) prepared for the proposed development by the commercial arm of the Coal Authority which has been informed by an appropriate range of information.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Coal Authority is able to withdraw its objection to the proposed development. However, further more detailed considerations of ground conditions / gas protection measures / foundation design will be required as part of any subsequent building regulations application.</p>
Natural England	<p>Natural England has no comments to make on this application.</p> <p>Natural England has not assessed this application for impacts on protected species. Natural England has published Standing Advice which you can use to assess impacts on protected species or you may wish to consult your own ecology services for advice.</p> <p>The lack of comment from Natural England does not imply that there are no impacts on the natural environment, but only that the application is not likely to result in significant impacts on statutory designated nature conservation sites or landscapes.</p>
County Ecologist	<p>The proposals will affect both the roof and the walls of the existing building and the habitats that surround the building include woodland, open water and grasslands. These are noted, from ecological records, to support foraging and roost bat species. Furthermore, it is noted that in addition to a number of Species of Principal Importance, that there are records of great crested newt within 100m off the development site. The site lies adjacent to a number of protected sites, including the Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar site.</p> <p>The County Ecologist's initial response therefore requested the submission of a Bat Risk Assessment and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal before full comments could be made with regard to the impact of the proposed development on protected species and any necessary ecological mitigation measures. The applicant has since submitted further information as requested, however, at the time of writing this report the Local</p>

	Planning Authority has not yet received updated comments from the County Ecologist.
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5. Public Responses

Neighbour Notification

Number of Neighbours Notified	0
Number of Objections	0
Number of Support	0
Number of General Comments	0

Notices

General Site Notice, posted 18th May 2018;

No Press Notice Required.

Summary of Responses:

None received.

The above is a summary of the comments. The full written text is available on our website at:

<http://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/online-applications//applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=P6Z536QS0J400>

6. Planning Policy

6.1 Development Plan Policy

Castle Morpeth District Local Plan (2003):
 C1 – Settlement Boundaries;
 C3, HDC2 – Areas of High Landscape Value;
 C10, HDC3 – Sites of Local Conservation Interest;
 C11 – Protected Species.

6.2 National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2018) (NPPF);
 National Planning Practice Guidance (2014, as updated) (NPPG).

7. Appraisal

7.1 The main issues for consideration relating to this application are as follows:

- Principle of the development;
- Design;
- Highways;

- Landscape impact;
- Ecology;
- Parish Council response.

Principle of the development

- 7.2 Planning law stipulates that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration. The development plan and starting point for determining applications in accordance with Paragraph 12 of the NPPF remains the saved policies of the Castle Morpeth District Local Plan (2003) (CMDLP). However, Paragraph 213 of the NPPF advises that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are only to afford existing Local Plans material weight insofar as they are consistent with the provisions of the NPPF itself.
- 7.3 The CMDLP uses boundaries, as defined on the Proposals Maps, to identify the limits to settlements. Policy C1 of the CMDLP states that development in the open countryside beyond settlement boundaries will not be permitted unless the proposal can be justified as essential to the needs of agriculture or forestry or are permitted by other relevant development plan policy.
- 7.4 Officers acknowledge that the application site does not fall within any defined settlement boundary, with the nearby settlement of Hadston lying approximately 1.35 kilometres to the West. However, it must be noted that the proposed extension and alterations relate to an existing building and facility, and the scale of the works proposed are considered minor relative to that of the existing building.
- 7.5 Furthermore, in the interests of sustainable development and supporting a prosperous rural economy, Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states how planning decisions should enable:
- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural area, 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;*
 - 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.*
- 7.6 Paragraph 84 of the NPPF elaborates on the above, outlining how planning decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business or community needs in rural areas may have to be found outside of existing settlements, and that the use of previously developed land should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.
- 7.7 The consultation response received from Northumberland County Council's Tourism, Leisure & Culture team highlighted the growing visitor economy of

the County and the consistent upward trend in visitor numbers since 2013. Subsequently, the County Council's tourism development section is supportive of the application as it reflects their aims to continue developing the visitor economy further and to sustain employment within the sector. As such, the proposal to extend the Visitor Centre at Druridge Bay Country Park accords with the County Council's wider economic objectives and should be situated in the context of rural tourism and leisure development which the NPPF supports where sustainable.

- 7.8 Accordingly, notwithstanding that the application site falls in the open countryside beyond any defined settlement boundary, Officers consider that the proposal accords with the principles of the NPPF as outlined above. Firstly, the nature and function of the host building as a Visitor Centre for Druridge Bay Country Park means that the enhancement of this facility can not be accommodated within any defined settlement boundary. Secondly, it has been considered that the proposal would serve to support and enhance an existing rural tourism and leisure facility without detriment to the openness or character of its surroundings in the Country Park and the wider open countryside. Finally, the works proposed relate to an existing building which accords with the NPPF's definition of previously developed land as being that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including its curtilage and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.
- 7.9 Overall, Officers consider the principle of the development to be acceptable in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF, as outlined above.

Design

- 7.10 Paragraph 124 of the NPPF outlines how the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve, with good design considered to be a key aspect of sustainable development. Paragraph 127 specifies that planning decisions should ensure that the design of developments:
- a) *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - b) *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - c) *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
 - d) *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
 - e) *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
 - f) *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*

- 7.11 The design of the proposed extension to the café area would be in keeping with the existing building, with brown aluminium sheet metal, brown aluminium windows, brown UPVC rainwater goods, and green exposed steelwork all to match the existing. New concealed security shutters would be installed to all elevations coloured green to match the existing steelwork. The new patio area to the West side of the building, which would be sited directly adjacent to the proposed extension, would be formed with paving flags to match the existing.
- 7.12 In terms of scale and mass, the extension would remain subordinate to that of the existing building, with a projection of 4.075 metres from the existing West elevation, across the 10.50 metre width of the café area in the Western section of the building. The general layout and form of the extension would reflect that of the existing building in visual terms, while in terms of function, the proposed extension would facilitate a larger seating area for the café alongside internal alterations to form a new kitchen area as indicated by the proposed floor plans.
- 7.13 Given the scale and form of the proposal, and the incorporation of materials to match the existing building, Officers consider that the design of the development would be sympathetic to the host building and its surroundings while maintaining the established sense of place and helping to create an attractive and welcoming place to work and visit. As such, the proposed development can be considered acceptable in design terms in accordance with the provisions laid out in Chapter 12 of the NPPF, summarised above.

Highways

- 7.14 The consultation response received from Highways Development Management (HDM) has confirmed that the proposal would not generate any road safety issues. The existing car parking arrangements would not be affected by the proposed development, while refuse storage and servicing would remain in place as existing, and the proposed relocation of cycle parking facilities from the side (West) of the building to the front (South) has been considered acceptable.
- 7.15 However, HDM have considered that the proposal would only be acceptable subject to the imposition of a condition to secure the submission to and approval by the Local Planning Authority of a Construction Method Statement prior to the commencement of development. The Construction Method Statement would, where applicable, provide details of vehicle cleaning facilities, the parking of vehicles and site operatives and visitors, the loading and unloading of plant and materials, and the storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development. Given the public access to the site and the adjacent car parking area, Officers consider the requirement for a Construction Method Statement to be reasonable in the interests of the amenity of the site and the safety of the highway network.

Landscape impact

- 7.16 Druridge Bay Country Park forms an important part of the Druridge Bay Coastal Area of High Landscape Value. Policies C3 and HDC2 of the CMDLP state that proposals which would have a detrimental effect on an Area of High

Landscape Value should not be permitted. In the NPPF, Paragraph 170 states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, and by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

- 7.17 As discussed previously in Paragraphs 7.10-7.13 of this report, the proposed development would be modest in scale and design and in keeping with the general appearance and character of the existing building at the site. As such it is not considered that the development would cause any detrimental effect on the surrounding landscape, and would therefore protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the Country Park and wider the Druridge Bay Coastal Area of High Landscape Value. Accordingly, Officers consider the proposed development acceptable with regard to CMDLP Policies C3 and HDC2 and the provisions of the NPPF.

Ecology

- 7.18 The application site lies within the Impact Risk Zone for the coastal Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Protection Area (SPA), with the Hadston Links SSSI in close proximity to the East. Accordingly, Natural England were consulted on the application, but have provided no comments.
- 7.19 The site also falls within a Site of Local Conservation Interest. CMDLP Policy HDC3 states that in accordance with Policy C10, development which would affect the integrity of Druridge Bay Country Park as a Site of Local Conservation Interest will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the benefits from the proposed development outweigh the need to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the site.
- 7.20 The consultation response received from the County Ecologist has also highlighted that the host building and its surroundings are noted, from ecological records, to support foraging and roost bat species. Furthermore, in addition to a number of Species of Principal Importance, that there are records of great crested newt within 100m off the development site. CMDLP Policy C11 states that permission will not be granted for development which would adversely affect protected species or their habitats unless it can be demonstrated that the reasons for the proposed development outweigh any adverse effect on the species or their habitat.
- 7.21 The application as originally submitted did not include any ecological reports outlining how the proposal will or will not impact upon the protected species or adjacent protected sites. However, since the receipt of consultee comments from the County Ecologist, discussions have taken place between the County Ecologist and the applicant in order to address these concerns. The applicant has subsequently provided ecological reports as requested, and these are under consideration by the County Ecologist at the time of writing. As these discussions remain in process, delegated authority is sought by Officers for the imposition of any necessary conditions as recommended by the County Ecologist in addition to those included as part of the recommendation made in this report, provided that the Ecologist's full comments raise no objection subject to condition. Officers consider that the imposition of any such conditions as suggested by the County Ecologist would be sufficient to ensure

that the development protects the relevant species and sites from significant adverse impacts and thereby conforms with CMDLP Policies C10, C11 and HDC3, and the provisions of the NPPF.

Parish Council response

- 7.22 Although the Parish Council did not object to the application, it was considered that more showers than had been shown on the proposed floor plan were required because of the camping and water sports taking place at the Country Park, and since a number of events held at the Park encourage overnight camping.
- 7.23 The Parish Council's response relates to the internal alterations proposed to the Visitors Centre, which includes the provision of additional shower facilities in the existing lavatories within the building. The existing building includes the provisions of 1 no. shower in the staff area, but no showers provided in public areas. The proposed plans show the provision of 3 no. showers in the public lavatory areas, with one shower facility sited in the male, female and accessible toilet areas respectively.
- 7.24 Officers note the Parish Council's comments and these have been taken into consideration. Following discussion with the applicant, it is understood that additional shower facilities to those proposed would not be feasible due to the limited space within the existing toilet areas. Officers consider that while the provision of additional shower facilities to those proposed may indeed be beneficial, the proposal at hand includes 3 no. showers available to the public where they are currently none, and as such represents a significant improvement to the existing facilities nonetheless.

8. Other Matters

Equality Duty

- 8.1 The County Council has a duty to have regard to the impact of any proposal on those people with characteristics protected by the Equality Act. Officers have had due regard to Sec 149(1) (a) and (b) of the Equality Act 2010 and considered the information provided by the applicant, together with the responses from consultees and other parties, and determined that the proposal would have no material impact on individuals or identifiable groups with protected characteristics. Accordingly, no changes to the proposal were required to make it acceptable in this regard.

Crime and Disorder Act Implications

- 8.2 These proposals have no implications in relation to crime and disorder.

Human Rights Act Implications

- 8.3 The Human Rights Act requires the County Council to take into account the rights of the public under the European Convention on Human Rights and prevents the Council from acting in a manner which is incompatible with those rights. Article 8 of the Convention provides that there shall be respect for an

individual's private life and home save for that interference which is in accordance with the law and necessary in a democratic society in the interests of (inter alia) public safety and the economic wellbeing of the country. Article 1 of protocol 1 provides that an individual's peaceful enjoyment of their property shall not be interfered with save as is necessary in the public interest.

- 8.4 For an interference with these rights to be justifiable the interference (and the means employed) needs to be proportionate to the aims sought to be realised. The main body of this report identifies the extent to which there is any identifiable interference with these rights. The Planning Considerations identified are also relevant in deciding whether any interference is proportionate. Case law has been decided which indicates that certain development does interfere with an individual's rights under Human Rights legislation. This application has been considered in the light of statute and case law and the interference is not considered to be disproportionate.
- 8.5 Officers are also aware of Article 6, the focus of which (for the purpose of this decision) is the determination of an individual's civil rights and obligations. Article 6 provides that in the determination of these rights, an individual is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal. Article 6 has been subject to a great deal of case law. It has been decided that for planning matters the decision making process as a whole, which includes the right of review by the High Court, complied with Article 6.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 The site comprises an existing Visitors Centre in Druridge Bay County Park and the proposed extension and alterations should be understood within the context of development to support rural tourism and leisure in the interests of sustainable development and rural economies. In this respect, Officers consider that the proposal fully accords with the principles of the NPPF.
- 9.2 The proposed extension to the café area, alongside the associated alterations to the external façade and patio of the existing building would be modest in scale and design and in keeping with the appearance and character of the site as existing. It is not considered that there would be any adverse impact on the openness or amenity of the Country Park, the Area of High Landscape Value or the wider surrounding countryside. Accordingly, Officers consider that the proposal adheres to the provisions of CMDLP Policies C3 and HDC2, and the provisions of the NPPF. The development would also be acceptable in highways terms subject to condition, with no adverse impact on the highway network or cycle parking facilities.
- 9.3 At the time of writing, final comments from the County Ecologist are awaited with regard to the proposed development's impact on protected species and sites, and Members will be updated on this matter at Committee.

10. Recommendation

- 10.1 That Members be minded to grant planning permission, subject to further comments from the County Ecologist, and with delegated authority to Officers

sought for the imposition of any other necessary conditions in addition to the following given below:

Conditions

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

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans:

1. Location Plan (received 16th April 2018);
2. Drawing No. 0A181000 A(0)02 – Ground Floor Plans and Elevations as Proposed (received 9th April 2018).

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, in the interests of proper planning.

03. The facing materials and finishes to be used in the construction of the development shall be in accordance with details contained in the application. The development shall not be constructed other than with these approved materials.

Reason: In the interests of the satisfactory appearance of the development upon completion, in accordance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

04. No development shall commence until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Construction Method Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Construction Method Statement shall, where applicable, provide for:

- i. vehicle cleaning facilities;
- ii. the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- iii. the loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- iv. storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development.

Reason: To prevent nuisance in the interests of amenity and highway safety, in accordance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Date of Report: 26th September 2018

Background Papers: Planning application file(s) 18/01289/CCD