

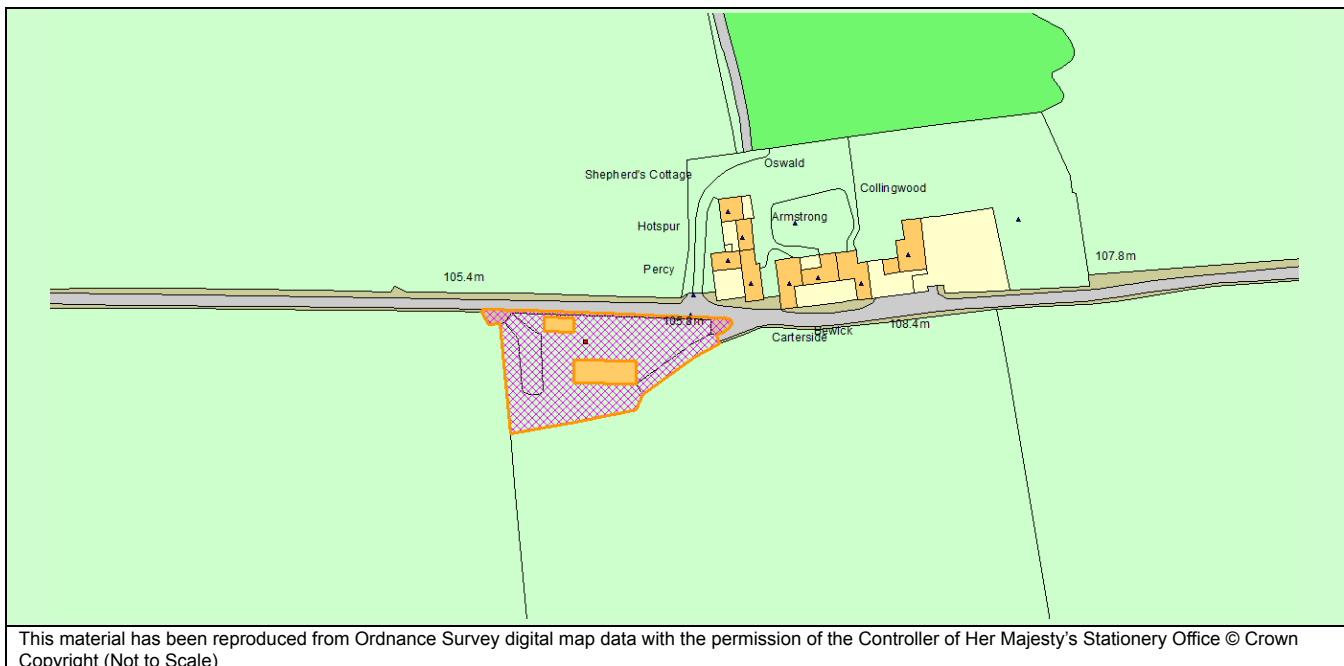
NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

North Northumberland Local Area Council

21st December 2017

Application No:	17/03704/FUL		
Proposal:	Demolition of redundant agricultural sheds and storage bay, with development of 5no. holiday cottages including access road, car parking, private garden areas, and other ancillary works.		
Site Address	Land South West Of Carterside, Whitton, Northumberland,		
Applicant:	Mr Guy Munden Northumberland Estates, Quayside House, 110 Quayside, Newcastle NE1 3DX	Agent:	None
Ward	Rothbury	Parish	Whitton And Tosson
Valid Date:	13 October 2017	Expiry Date:	22 December 2017
Case Officer Details:	Name: Mr Ragu Sittambalam Job Title: Planning Officer Tel No: 01670 622704 Email: Ragu.Sittambalam@northumberland.gov.uk		



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Under the provisions of the Council's current Scheme of Delegation, this application is to be recommended for refusal contrary to a valid representation of support from Whitton and Tosson Parish Council. The application has been reviewed by the Head of Service and the Planning Chair of the North Northumberland Local Area Council for consideration to be given as to whether the application should be referred to Planning Committee for determination.

The proposal was duly considered under these provisions, confirming that the matter should be dealt with at Committee.

1.2 Of relevance are applications to the north of the application site;

- A/2006/0064 - Conversion of farm buildings to 6 no. holiday units and demolition of 3 no. agricultural buildings: Approved 07/04/06
- 14/00956/VARYCO - Removal of holiday occupation restriction: Approved 19/05/14
- 16/00594/FUL - Erection of 4no. holiday units (to land east of the above): Approved 12/05/16

2. Description of the Proposals

2.1 The application site is located in an open countryside location, 0.9 miles south-west of Rothbury Village Centre. The land sits to the south side of Carterside Road at an elevated level accessed from a junction to the east of the site. On site are redundant agricultural buildings with an area of hardstanding in a dilapidated/poor state of repair. There is a boundary hedge/vegetation toward Carterside Road with clearly defined field boundaries onto the open countryside which surrounds the site. To the north side of Carterside Road immediately adjacent the application site is a range of converted stone built former agricultural buildings with slate covered gable roofs arranged in a typical agricultural plan form originally approved for holiday accommodation but subsequently de-restricted to allow permanent residential accommodation with a further consented site to the east for new built holiday units (as set out in 1.2).

2.2 The application seeks planning permission to erect 5 no. holiday cottages consisting of the following;

- 2 no. stone built two storey semi-detached structures with two units each (l:7.0m x w: 19.5m) with a slate covered gable roof and stone water tables, the buildings would be of a traditional aesthetic characterised by regular openings with arched detailing handed in facade treatment to either side. Due to the change in topography across the site the structures would appear single storey to the south elevation and two storeys to the north. The buildings would sit to the west and central of the site. Each unit would benefit from curtilage to the front and rear.
- 1 no. stone built single storey structure (l:7.1m x w:17.0m) with a slate covered gable roof and stone water tables of an appearance in line with the above mentioned buildings located to the east of the site.
- Block up the existing access and form a new entry point to the west of the site onto a parking/turning area set toward the highway.

2.4 The site is subject to the following environmental constraints;

- Coquet SSSI - 500m north of site
- Impact Risk Zone: SSSI

3. Planning History

4. Consultee Responses

Environment Agency	No response received.
Whitton And Tosson Parish Council	<p>Supports Application;</p> <p>Whitton and Tosson Parish Council are supportive this application and would like to make the following comments:</p> <p>The proposals fit with our policy of supporting developments within the curtilage of existing farm sites. The existing farm buildings on this site are run down, somewhat of an eyesore and no longer paying their way. Their condition can only continue to deteriorate as there is no economic reason to maintain them.</p> <p>The proposals from Northumberland Estates are in harmony with the other buildings at Carterside Farm. The materials to be used in construction (i.e. salvaged sandstone for the walls and slate for the roofs) are traditional local building materials. The layout of the development and the design of the buildings will suit the rural nature of the site. The two story units are set into the hillside to minimise the ridge height and visibility of the cottages from across the valley.</p> <p>The proposal to create a bund at the redundant access to the east of the site and lay a land drain to minimise surface water run-off onto the highway is welcomed.</p> <p>It is requested that the lighting of the development is considered to protect against unnecessary light pollution and that it is not street-lit to preserve the dark skies the Parish enjoys.</p>
Highways	<p>No Objection; Amendments Required</p> <p>Before planning permission is granted three amendments to the scheme are required which are as follows:</p> <p>Set back the boundary wall of property number 2 to ensure 6.0m reversing distance is available from all parking bays</p> <p>Whilst the gravel parking area can be accepted, the spaces need to be delineated in order to ensure the best use of space and maintain maneuverability. Wooden strips for example could be used to delineate the bays.</p> <p>The verge between property number 5 and the concrete setts shall be of suitable construction to allow for occasional parking. Details of the materials shall be provided</p>
County Ecologist	<p>Objects; Further Information Required</p> <p>The principle is acceptable subject to further details.</p> <p>The applicant has provided conflicting/not enough information regarding foul and surface water treatment. The development site is 340m from the River Coquet and Coquet Valley Woodlands SSSI at its nearest point. Where any development is likely to impact on the water quality of the River Coquet the applicant must provide sufficient detail on the methods of foul and surface water.</p>

	<p>The PEA submitted with the report identifies a low risk to protected species on the site itself.</p> <p>I look forward to receiving more information prior to determination.</p>
Natural England	<p>Objects; Further Information Required</p> <p>The application form states that a package treatment plant will be used. It is not entirely clear where the plant will discharge. The foul drainage assessment form states that it discharges to both a soakaway (which is located on the site plan) and directly into the watercourse. The foul drainage form also has no further details on the ground conditions for the soakaway (section 5).</p> <p>Could you please clarify with the applicant whether the package treatment plant will indeed discharge into a soakaway? The reason being that if it directly discharges into a watercourse that is connected to the River Coquet (which is part of a SSSI), then there would need to be further assessment of water quality impacts.</p>
Public Protection	<p>No Comment;</p> <p>Falls below the remit of Public Protection</p>
Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)	<p>Objects; Further Information Required</p> <p>The principle is acceptable subject to further details.</p> <p>This planning application is classed as a minor development and as such we are not a statutory consultee. However, due to the flood risk immediately downhill and adjacent to the development site we wish to be consulted and we make the following comments:</p> <p>After reviewing the submitted documents, we object to the development on flood risk grounds. No drainage strategy has been submitted with the application and there is no discussion as to how the development will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.</p> <p>No plans or strategy have been submitted with the planning application.</p> <p>Due to the known flood risk north of the development, it needs to be ensured that this development does not increase this risk of flooding. Furthermore paragraph 100 of the NPPF look at how new developments can use opportunities offered by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding. The development itself may be on a flow path for surface water, therefore analysis into any surface water flood risk to the lodges in question needs to be looked at.</p> <p>Overall, an assessment into this existing flood risk and any impact from the development needs to be given.</p>
Northumbrian Water Ltd	<p>No Comment;</p> <p>Having assessed the proposed development against the context outlined above I can confirm that at this stage we would have no comments to make.</p>

5. Public Responses

Neighbour Notification

Number of Neighbours Notified	8
Number of Objections	2
Number of Support	0
Number of General Comments	0

Notices

General site notice, 20th October 2017

No Press Notice Required.

Summary of Responses:

During the consultation period, two objections were received on the following grounds;

- Flood risk from surface water.
- Highway safety.
- Proposal not in keeping with the character of the area.

Further issues relating to potential future development was also raised but is not a material planning consideration and has not been appraised further.

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=OXPFVWQSJWP00>

6. Planning Policy

6.1 Development Plan Policy

ACS - Alnwick Core Strategy (2007)

- S1 Location and Scale of New Development
- S2 The Sequential Approach to Development
- S3 Sustainability Criteria
- S10 Tourism Development
- S11 Locating Development to Maximise Accessibility and Minimise Impact from Travel
- S12 Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- S13 Landscape Character
- S14 Development in the Open Countryside
- S16 General Design Principles

ALP - Alnwick District Wide Local Plan (1997)

- TT5 Controlling Car Parking Provision (and Appendix E)
- Appendix E Car Parking Standards for Development
- CD32 Controlling Development that is Detrimental to the Environment and Residential Amenity

6.2 National Planning Policy

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

NPPG - National Planning Practice Guidance (updated 2014)

6.3 Other Documents/Strategies

Alnwick Landscape Character Assessment (2010)

7. Appraisal

7.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF operates under a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states that development proposals, which accord with the development plan, should be approved without delay. The adopted Development Plan where the site is located comprises the saved policies of the Alnwick District Wide Local Plan (1997) and the Alnwick LDF Core Strategy (2007).

7.2 The main issues in the consideration of this application are;

- Principle of Development
- Landscape
- Design
- Amenity
- Ecology
- Highway Safety
- Water Management
- Other Matters

Principle of Development

7.3 *S1 of the ACS sets out the hierarchy of settlements to inform the location and scale of development in the former Alnwick District.*

7.4 The site is located outside of a recognised settlement and therefore is considered as 'The Countryside' where development is generally limited to the reuse of existing buildings. Notwithstanding this, the site is within 0.9 miles of Rothbury classed as a 'Secondary Rural Service Centre' considered as a focus for development consistent with maintaining and enhancing its role as a rural service centre for Coquetdale.

7.5 *S2 of the ACS sets out a sequential approach for development where weight is given to previously developed land or buildings before other suitable sites within the built up area of settlements.*

7.6 Limited weight can be attached to this policy as the NPPF does not require a sequential test in for this development type.

7.7 *S3 of the ACS sets out sustainability criteria stipulating that development must satisfy the criteria with exceptions to compensate for sustainability*

shortcomings through condition/legal agreement but also states that it may be necessary to allow development which does not meet one or more of the criteria.

- 7.8 The site would not be connected via a footpath, however given the limited distance to Rothbury, it is reasonable to assume that services could be accessed using modes other than private car.
- 7.9 *S10 of the ACS states that new built cultural and tourism development must be in or adjacent to the rural service centres, sustainable village centres and local needs centres. Tourism development in the open countryside will be considered against Policy S14.*

S14 of the ACS permits development in the open countryside where proposals are sustainable in line with S3 and where the development is essential to support farming and other countryside-based enterprise and activity, promote recreation and support the retention of sustainable communities or supports the conservation and enhancement of the countryside.

- 7.10 *Paragraph 28 of the NPPF promotes a strong rural economy, whereby local and neighbourhood plans should;*
- *support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses and enterprise in rural areas.*
 - *promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.*
- 7.11 The site is considered to be within the open countryside but in reasonable proximity to a Secondary Rural Service Centre, whilst not wholly sustainable in line with S3, it is acknowledged that the site can access services within the nearby settlement. Taking this alongside the proposed use as holiday accommodation that would promote countryside-based enterprise to benefit Rothbury as a service hub; there is in-principle policy support for the proposal.
- 7.13 *The NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development with paragraph 7 providing the starting point against which the sustainability of a development proposal should be assessed. This identifies three dimensions to sustainable development - an economic element, a social element and an environmental element.*

Paragraph 14 of the NPPF then establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means (unless material considerations indicate otherwise); approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.

- 7.14 It is considered that the proposed location and scale of development would be sustainable in relation to economic and social considerations. It would deliver

economic benefits through new holiday accommodation and in social terms would support accessible services, which would help to sustain the existing community and associated services, as well as being able to contribute to improvements to existing services. The policy framework would be accepting of a scheme such as this in-principle according with S1 and S3, and S16 of the ACS.

- 7.15 In terms of its environmental role there are considered to be significant impacts on the site and wider area from the proposed the development and its ability to be assimilated into this location as set out below.

Landscape

- 7.16 *S13 of the ACS seeks for all proposals for development and change to be considered against the need to protect and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the district.*

S16 of the ACS sets out that all development will be expected to achieve a high standard of design reflecting local character or distinctiveness as well as taking into full account the need to protect and enhance the local environment.

- 7.17 *Paragraph 17 of the NPPF sets out its core planning principles to be applied in plan-making and decision-taking, taking account of the different roles and character of different areas, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it.*
- 7.18 The site is an area of former agricultural land presumed to be associated with the now converted steading buildings to the opposite side of the highway. The distinction in appearance, type of built form and association with historic use is evident in the functional appearance and construction of the portal frame buildings within the application site versus the more substantial stone built structures with slate covered gable roofs. The clear dividing feature is the highway with permanent built form to one side and open countryside on the other. Where there is subjective interpretation is whether the replacement of the agricultural buildings themselves is considered to be in-character with the open countryside surrounding the site.
- 7.19 *Paragraph 17 of the NPPF sets out it's core planning principles whereby the reuse of previously developed land should be encouraged.*
- Annex A of the NPPF sets out the definition of 'previously developed land' as land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed). The definition goes onto set out the exclusions explicitly mentioning agricultural or forestry buildings.*
- 7.20 Whilst the case put forward is not on the basis of previously developed land, the NPPF recognises the differentiation in land uses and where it is accepted to allow for redevelopment. Having regard to the provisions of S13 and S16, the application proposes to introduce three buildings of a substantial nature, two storeys in height that has limited regard to the wider area and setting other than material palette and form. The introduction of permanent built form

to the application site in this way would significantly change the character of the site and indeed its wider area sprawling from the former steading in an inorganic manner across a hard boundary, failing to have regard to its setting, context and landscape quality.

- 7.21 Therefore the impact on landscape character is considered unacceptable and in conflict with S13 and S16 of the ACS and the NPPF.

Design

- 7.22 *BE8 of the ALP specifies the relevant appendix to assess proposals for new dwellings and extensions (in this case Appendix A). Appendix A covers criteria relating to layout, access, car parking, design, materials and landscaping.*
- 7.23 *S16 of ACS sets out that all development will be expected to achieve a high standard of design reflecting local character and distinctiveness in traditional or contemporary design and materials.*
- 7.24 *Paragraph 58 of the NPPF sets out the principles of design that planning policies and decisions should seek to ensure in new developments.*
- 7.25 The dwellings would be constructed from natural stone with a slate roof covering and of a design that is typical of a rural backdrop, the pairs of semi-detached units would be handed providing some variation when read across the site. Due to the rise in levels, the dwellings would appear single storey to the rear. The form of the buildings would in part reflect the character of rural buildings through their simple gable forms, however the elevation treatments although monotonous and rhythmic, would not pose a significant adverse visual impact in design terms to warrant refusal in its own right. The visual impact is therefore considered acceptable and in accordance with S16 of the ACS and the NPPF.

Amenity

- 7.26 *Policy CD32 of the ALP states that permission will not be granted for development which would cause demonstrable harm to the amenity of residential areas or to the environment generally.*
- 7.26 *Paragraph 17 of the NPPF sets out its core planning principles, to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. One of these principles is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.*
- 7.27 Given the relative separation of the proposed cottages to dwellings to the opposite side of the road there are not considered to be substantive impacts in terms of massing or appearing overbearing. There would inevitably be some degree of overlooking afforded from windows at first floor; however this would be to the fronts of the properties which are already heavily overlooked from the roadside. On balance there is acknowledged to be an impact on amenity, however it is not substantial in this application and is considered acceptable and in accordance with CD32 of the ALP and the NPPF.

Highway Safety

- 7.28 *S11 of the ACS sets out criteria to which the location of development is likely to maximise accessibility and minimise the impacts of traffic generated.*
- 7.29 *Paragraph 32 of the NPPF sets out the considerations of decisions with regard to highways issues, stating that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.*
- 7.30 Access would be relocated to the west of the site onto a formalised parking/turning area providing a single parking area to serve the development. Highways Development Management (HDM) has raised no objection subject to conditions. Overall the impact on highway safety is therefore considered acceptable and in accordance with S11 of the ACS and the NPPF.

Ecology

- 7.31 *S12 of the ACS stipulates that all development proposals will be considered against the need to protect and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of the district.*
- 7.32 *Paragraph 118 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity based on detailed principles.*
- 7.33 The application was subject to consultation with Natural England who along with the County Ecologist have requested additional information regarding foul and surface water treatment due to the development's proximity to the River Coquet and Coquet Valley Woodlands SSSI. Whilst this forms a reason for refusal, the scope of the issue is limited in terms of technicality and could be overcome prior to determination. It is recognised that this is not an in-principle issue but in the absence of this information the proposal has potential to conflict with S12 of the ACS and the NPPF forming a reason for refusal.

Water Management

- 7.34 *Paragraph 94 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk, coastal change and water supply demand considerations.*
- 7.35 The Lead Local Flood Authority has objected requesting a drainage strategy be submitted due to the immanent risk of flooding downhill from the site. Whilst not a statutory consultee on an application of this size, the objection is valid due to known flooding issues in the area. It is acknowledged however that this is not an in-principle issue but forms a reason for refusal in its own right but can be overcome through the submission of additional information but at present would conflict with the NPPF.

Other Matters

- 7.36 In response to issues raised over the consultation period;

- Proposal not in keeping with the character of the area. This has been addressed in Landscape (7.16-7.21).
- Flood risk from surface water. See Water Management (7.34-7.35).
- Highway safety. See Highway Safety (7.28-7.30).

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The main planning considerations in determining this application have been set out and considered above stating accordance with relevant Development Plan Policy. The application has also been considered against the relevant sections within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and there is not considered to be any conflict between the local policies and the NPPF on the matters of relevance in this case.
- 8.2 There are outstanding technical issues which form refusal reasons individually but could be overcome with the requisite information. Should Members be minded to approve the application, further information in respect of;
- Water Management
 - Ecology
- Would need to be submitted to address outstanding concerns raised by the LLFA, County Ecologist and Natural England. These issues are not considered to compromise the principle of development in this location.
- 8.3 Notwithstanding the above and the sustainability of the site; the application proposes an inappropriate form of development that would deviate from the agricultural/rural character of the area and therefore is not considered compatible with the site context, conflicting with development plan and national policy. The proposal is therefore recommended for refusal.

9. Recommendation

That this application be REFUSED subject to the following:

Reasons

01. The proposal would introduce development into the open countryside which would compromise the spatial constraint of existing development and adversely affect the rural setting of the area. The landscape and character impact of the proposal is therefore considered unacceptable, contrary to Policies S13 and S16 of the Alnwick LDF Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.
02. There is insufficient detail contained within the application relating to foul and surface water to determine the impact on the River Coquet and Coquet Valley Woodlands Sites of Special Scientific Interest and/or any mitigation that may

be required. The application therefore conflicts with Policy S12 of the Alnwick LDF Core Strategy and Paragraph 118 of the NPPF.

03. No drainage strategy has been submitted to address how the development will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, due to the flood risk immediately downhill and adjacent to the development site. On this basis the application has failed to address the potential impact of the development on flood risk and conflicts with Paragraph 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Date of Report: 08.12.2017

Background Papers: Planning application file(s) 17/03704/FUL