

Statement of support for planning application ref:20/00776/FUL Land West of Chapel Lane, The Chare, Wall, NE46 4DU

The village of wall is attractive, well located and popular for both residential and tourism uses.

Clearly the site is an infill development one. Currently is split into two, the north of the site benefiting from planning permission for a four bedroomed detached dwellinghouse, leaving the south of the site in an unused state. This proposal provides a commercial addition, enhancing the diversity of the predominantly residential village.

Having not been used for over 20 years this proposal provides an opportunity to develop the unkempt site for economic benefit to the area, supporting initiatives such as the Borderlands Growth Deal, which Northumberland County Council proactively support. Such programmes encourage growth in sectors to improve the offer of the borders region through initiatives including good quality tourism accommodation provision. Additionally local businesses are investing in tourism infrastructure on a large, modest and small scale – examples including the creation of The Sill; the development of Walwick Hall Hotel and Chesters Stables; the change of use of the former Errington Arms into the Errington Coffee House; and the refurbishment and extension of The Hadrian Hotel which is sited opposite the proposal. All are local proposals which improve a different offer of the area to tourists.

The obvious benefits of this proposal include bringing economic gains to the village through supporting The Hadrian Hotel with its food and drinks sales, whilst creating additional employment opportunities to service the three self-contained holiday accommodation units. Northumberland Tourism's STEAM report shows the importance that tourism has on the County with tourist numbers increasing in Northumberland, with 2018 figures reaching 10.48 million visitors, an increase of almost 7% since 2009 representing 11.8% of the County's economy – 2.7% higher than the national average and creating more than 15,000 full time equivalent posts.

Hadrian's Wall National Trail runs less than ½ mile north from the site, with the area being a popular overnight stop off point for those completing the coast to coast and sectional routes of the walk. The applicant has been approached by providers of accommodation who are keen to develop this proposal, reinforcing its strength and confidence in the tourism economy of this part of Northumberland.

There have been a number of objections (45 objections from 25 properties during two rounds of public consultation on this application – representing 12% of households in Wall parish) to this application which all raise similar, if not identical issues and wording. It appears these are more akin to an active petition rather than individual personal concerns and representations. The issues raised have been resolved through the sites planning history, some can be controlled through planning conditions (for example by restricting the occupancy of the units to holiday accommodation) others are not matters for consideration of a planning application (e.g lack of services in the village). The Planning Officer recognises that the proposal is in accordance with the aims of NCCs planning policies, and that of the NPPF, referencing that the Building

Conservation Officer does consider the proposal as acceptable in terms of its impact upon the Conservation Area, with the Building Conservation Officer commenting that 'The site has been subject to a number of applications over recent years. Over the course of these applications, it has become established that the principle of development on the site would not be unacceptable from a historic environment point of view' and 'the proposed approach to scale is acceptable.' The Planning Officer notes that neighbouring amenity space would not be detrimentally impacted by the proposed development, recognising the efforts made to minimise the impact of any proposal, which was exacerbated when a neighbouring property removed a tall mature hedge following the submission of an application in 2017; additionally the occupiers of the holiday accommodation would also have sufficient amenity space. Highways Officers are satisfied that the highway network is capable of coping with the small number of additional vehicular journeys which may be created, and a Tree Officer has been consulted who considers the proposed loss of one tree is acceptable to this proposal.

To summarise this application:

- The proposal is in accordance with the planning policy framework
- Is an improvement to a site which is overgrown, in the centre of a village and has not been in use for over 20 years
- Supports local businesses, including The Hadrian Hotel in the village
- Provides employment opportunities for local people
- Meets the aims of initiatives which Northumberland County Council are committed to deliver with its partners

(745 words)