

Good Afternoon Members.

The Councils Covid Route Map 2021 identifies that the Covid Pandemic has had a profound impact on individuals, families, communities, and business. The number one economic challenge identified is the impact on tourism and hospitality and the effect this will have on increased unemployment and wage growth. It is currently illegal for my business to operate meaning staff are without work, suppliers without orders and supporting and surrounding businesses without customers.

The Councils five point plan to economic recovery is for investment into our places, culture, and tourism. The aim is to recover and return the tourism sector so that it is stronger than ever. I want my business to survive, I want my staff to come back to work and I want my suppliers and surrounding businesses to be successful. To do this a business, even if forced to close, cannot stand still and therefore a decision has been made to make further investment into the business even at a time of great uncertainty.

There are three reasons for refusal. Reason three can be addressed by the signing of a UU if members approve this application and officers are aware of my agreement to do this. Reasons two and three are about scale, form, character and more generally visually impact. Some members may remember the original site back in 2006 which had several dangerous access points, no bus stop or walking link to the village, redundant WWII huts, largescale modern agricultural buildings, and a collection of static caravans of varying age, condition, and rust. This has all gone, bringing significant benefits to the character and appearance of the site and the wider visual impact within the AONB.

This proposal will not destroy that progress but provide accommodation which is complimentary to the existing site. The buildings will be single storey, built of stone under slate and will be the same standard as the existing accommodation. Roadside views are limited with the speed limit set at 60mph and no footpath running along the B1339. Longer range views, limited from Christon Bank on approach to Embleton, will see a slate roofs appearing over the existing boundary wall.

The AONB Management Plan supports tourism development, noting that it is very important for the economy of Northumberland and is the major employer and economic driver within the AONB. The design is reflective of the local area and is in accordance with the Management Plan. This development whilst in the AONB forms part of an existing business, is contained within the existing site and will complement the design and appearance of the existing development. With the development in accordance with the AONB Management Plan both in terms of design and economic benefits members are asked to support this development.

It is understood that new development will occur, but new development is not immediately bad development. Officers have confirmed that this decision is an on-balance decision. The balance being whether a development which will infill 35 metres meters of roadside in the AONB is unacceptable in landscape terms. The application has received over 30 letters of support with only a single objection from a third party and comments from the AONB. It is my view that this scheme has public support, and a significant amount of support has been expressed directly for the scheme following the article within the Northumberland Gazette this week.

At a time of great uncertainty, I have decided to grow my business to recover just like what is advocated in the Councils Covid Route Map. I want to make sure there are jobs for my staff to return to and a business for my suppliers to serve. I want to offer employment to local trades who have helped to create the existing North Farm and I want to be able to attract customers so that they can spend their money in Low Newton, Embleton, Christon Bank, and the wider settlements at a time

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when so many businesses have been forced to close and when so many people and businesses are struggling.

I therefore ask members to support this application, my business, the people, and places that surround it. If approved this development can be successful, and I ask members to make these benefits happen by approving this application.

Thank you.

Richard Manners