



1.1 Following referral via the virtual delegation scheme, this application is deemed appropriate for consideration at North Northumberland Local Area Council.

## 2. Description of the Site and the Proposal.

2.1 The site to which the application relates consists of a parcel of land located in Seahouses which contains the Bamburgh Castle Inn and Coble Cottage. The site lies in a central location within Seahouses. The site is bound by existing development to the east, south and west. The harbour lies to the north of the site.

2.2 The proposal to which the application relates is to extend the current pub/hotel site at Seahouses to create further pub space/restaurant covers and additional guest bedrooms. The extension will create approximately 120 square metres of pub floor space plus a further 18 en-suite bedrooms. The proposal if approved would bring the total number of rooms on site to 49 rooms and would result in the loss of 1 dwelling.

## **3. Planning History**

**Reference Number:** 13/01992/DISCON

**Description:** Discharge of condition 4 of 10/B/0316

**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** 14/01714/VARYCO

**Description:** Variation of condition 3 relating to planning permission N/10/B/0316 (Garden landscaping and boundary railings) - Variation relates to reduced area of seating and change of materials from coloured paving slabs to driftwood millboard decking

**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** 15/00047/LIC

**Description:** Variation of premises licence

**Status:** NOOBJ

**Reference Number:** 15/01986/FUL

**Description:** Installation of 1no. dormer window to roof at rear of property to match existing dormers. Alterations to sun room window arrangement to include new access doors and replacement of existing double doors with single door.

**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** 17/00135/LIC

**Description:** Application for a premises license.

**Status:** NOOBJ

**Reference Number:** N/84/B/14

**Description:** Proposed Illuminated fascia sign. Amended letter received 5.3.84

**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/87/B/194

**Description:** Erection of 2 illuminated signs. Location Plan received 26.8.87.  
**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/88/B/305

**Description:** Additional bedrooms in roof space dormer construction.  
**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/88/B/0358/P

**Description:** Changes of use from redundant stables and garages to dwellings.  
**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/90/B/0040/P

**Description:** Erection of conservatory between 2 buildings & conversion of outbuildings to 3 additional bedroom un  
**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/10/B/0316

**Description:** Garden landscaping and boundary railings.  
**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/08/B/0293/B

**Description:** Erection of new signage.  
**Status:** REF

**Reference Number:** N/08/B/0293/A

**Description:** Erection of new signage.  
**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/08/B/0094

**Description:** Proposed 12 bedroom extension to existing building.  
**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/08/B/0093

**Description:** Alteration of existing hotel to include new entrance and extensions, also change of use of part of building from c3 dwelling to c1 hotel on ground floor.  
**Status:** WDN

**Reference Number:** N/06/B/0653

**Description:** Change of use from bar area (a4) to bedroom/living area (c1).  
**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/04/B/1113

**Description:** Extension to provide 12 additional bedrooms and swimming pool.  
**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/03/B/0894

**Description:** Installation of replacement windows.

**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/02/B/0801

**Description:** Installation of replacement windows.

**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/91/B/0092/P

**Description:** Erection of frozen food preparation & storage building.

**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** N/90/B/0860/P

**Description:** Conversion of first floor to flat.

**Status:** PER

## **4. Planning Policy**

### 4.1 Development Plan Policy

Berwick upon Tweed Local Plan 1999 (Saved Policies 2007) (BLP)

F1 Environmental Wealth

F2 Coastal Zone

F9 Wildlife

F30 Planning Obligations

F31 Social and Economic Welfare

R12 Holiday Accommodation, Coastal Zone

M14 Car Parking Standards

North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan 'Made' Version 2018 (NNCNP)

Policy 1 (Sustainable Development)

Policy 2 (Landscape and Seascapes)

Policy 3 (Habitat and Species)

Policy 5 (Design in New Development)

Policy 8 (Sustainable Development within the Settlements)

Policy 10 (Seahouses and North Sunderland)

Policy 16 (Change of Use from Residential (C3) to Holiday Let and Provision of New Holiday Accommodation).

### 4.2 National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (2014, as updated) (PPG)

### 4.3 Other Documents/Strategies

National Design Guide 2019 (NDG)

### 4.4 Emerging Policy

Northumberland Local Plan - Publication Draft Plan (Regulation 19) (Jan 2019) as amended by proposed Main Modifications (June 2021) (NLP)

STP1, STP2, STP3, STP4, STP5, STP6, ECN1, ECN15 QOP1, QOP2, QOP4, QOP5, QOP6, TRA1, TRA2, TRA4, ENV1, ENV2, ENV3, ENV4, ENV5, ENV7, ENV9, WAT1, WAT2, WAT3, WAT4, WAT5, POL1, POL2, INF1, INF6.

## 5. Consultee Responses

County Ecologist	No objection subject to contribution to Coastal Mitigation Service
Northumberland Coast AONB	In summary, the AONB Partnership has concerns over elements of the design and the lack of onsite parking and whilst the provision of additional serviced accommodation would be welcome in Seahouses, the current proposal will not conserve or enhance the special qualities of landscape, built and historic environment, and tranquillity of the Northumberland Coast AONB.
Natural England	No objection subject to contribution to Coastal Mitigation Service
Building Conservation	<p>Position</p> <p>We will raise no objection to the proposal if the materials palette is amended in line with our comments. Existing traditional timber fenestration in Coquet Cottage must be maintained. Clarification on the structures associated with the decking terracing must be obtained.</p> <p>Should amendments and clarification not be forthcoming we consider the application in its current form would give rise to less than substantial harm within the terms of paragraph 196 of the Framework resulting in our objection to the proposals.</p>
Waste Management - North	No response received.
Fire & Rescue Service	<p>Further to your request the Fire Service have no objection in principle to the above proposals.</p> <p>More detailed comment can be given once plans of the development have been finalised.</p>
Northumbria Ambulance Service	No response received.
Tourism, Leisure & Culture	Northumberland County Council's tourism development section is prepared to be supportive of this application. This position is subject to the application satisfying all statutory planning conditions and their consideration of the policies of the Northumberland Coast AONB management plan.
County Archaeologist	<p>No archaeological features are recorded within the proposed development site. The risk of significant unrecorded archaeological remains being disturbed by the proposed development is low.</p> <p>The buildings have already been subject to alteration. A programme of historic building recording is therefore not recommended in this instance.</p> <p>There are no objections to the proposed development on archaeological grounds. No archaeological work is recommended.</p>
Highways	No objection, subject to conditions.
Northumbrian Water Ltd	No comments to make on this application.

Public Protection	Public Protection have no comments/objections on this consultation.
North Sunderland And Seahouses PC	North Sunderland and Seahouses PC are strongly opposed to this application. The Council feels this is an over development of the property and the car parking arrangements at present are inadequate for the number of vehicles using the premises. The additional vehicles that will inevitably arrive with additional bedrooms and extended dining facilities will have a hugely negative impact on the surrounding area. This will have a huge impact on the already stretched on street parking and cause great disturbance to the residents of the Crumstones area.

## 6. Public Responses

### Neighbour Notification

Number of Neighbours Notified	43
Number of Objections	9
Number of Support	1
Number of General Comments	0

### Notices

Conservation & affect LB, 6th January 2021

Berwick Advertiser 7th January 2021

### Summary of Responses:

10 Representation has been submitted in relation to this application. The 9 objections received relate to the following matters:

- Parking Issues in the locality of the site and the potential exacerbation of these.
- Potential Emergency Services Access Issues
- Overdevelopment of a Congested Site
- Alleged vehicle damage from users of the premises.

1 supporting representation has been received. This relates to the following matters:

- Impact the proposal would have on tourism and the local economy
- Enable a greater range of accommodation options to be provided.

## 7. Appraisal

7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration and states that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the relevant development plan for this application is the North Northumberland Neighbourhood plan (2017) and the Berwick-upon-Tweed Local plan (1999) the proposed works shall be considered in the light of the saved policies of these documents.

7.2 Paragraph 48 of the NPPF states that weight may also be given to the policies in emerging plans, depending on the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent to which emerging policy aligns with the NPPF and the extent of unresolved objections to the emerging plan. The emerging Northumberland Local Plan - Publication Draft Plan (Reg 19) and minor modifications (NLP) was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 29th May 2019. The policies contained within this document carry some weight in the determination of planning applications at this stage.

7.3 The emerging Northumberland Local Plan, together with its up to date evidence, is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Paragraph 48 of the NPPF states that weight can be given to policies contained in emerging plans dependent upon three criteria: the stage of preparation of the plan; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to policies within the plan; and the degree of consistency with the NPPF. The Northumberland Local Plan - Publication Draft Plan (Regulation 19) (NLP) was submitted to the Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 29 May 2019, and is currently going through the examination process.

7.4 On 9 June 2021, the Council published for consultation, a Schedule of proposed Main Modifications to the draft Local Plan which the independent Inspectors examining the plan consider are necessary to make the plan 'sound'. As such the plan is at an advanced stage of preparation, and the policies in the NLP - Publication Draft Plan (Regulation 19) (Jan 2019) as amended by proposed Main Modifications (June 2021), are considered to be consistent with the NPPF. The NLP is a material consideration in determining this application, with the amount of weight that can be given to specific policies (and parts thereof) is dependent upon whether Main Modifications are proposed, and the extent and significance of unresolved objections.

7.4 The application has been assessed against national planning policy and guidance, development plan policies, other material planning considerations and the advice of statutory consultees. The main considerations in assessing this proposal are:

- Principle of the Development;
- Design and Visual Impact (including impact on the AONB);
- Amenity Impact;
- Heritage Assets;
- Highways and Transport Matters; and,
- Ecological Matters;

#### Principle of the Development

7.5 Policy F1 of the BLP seeks to ensure that "*primary importance will be given to sustaining and enhancing the Borough's environmental wealth*". Policy F2 of the same document seeks to ensure that any development, within the Coastal Zone, accords with its surroundings, in terms of scale, mass, materials etc. and sets out locational requirements for development. Meanwhile Policy F31 seeks to ensure that, in applying Framework policies, appropriate 'weight' is given to the degree to which proposals enhance the quality of life of communities or complement the range of their social and economic functions.

7.6 Policy 5 NNCNP states that all new development in the plan area, including extensions and conversions, should incorporate high quality design and demonstrate how local context and character is respected in terms of scale, density, height, massing, layout, materials, hard and soft landscaping, means of enclosure and access; and features including windows, doors, roof lights, chimneys, flues, roofs, and boundary treatments have regard to surrounding character and materials.

7.7 Policy 20 of the NNCNP states that proposals that will enhance the viability and/or the community value of community facilities and community assets, (whether registered as Assets of Community Value or not registered), will be supported.

7.8 The site is located within Seahouses, which is a sustainable location. The proposed extension would provide a positive contribution to the economy of Seahouses and provide local job opportunities. On this basis, having regard to local and national policy, the principle of the proposal as an extension to an existing hotel/inn in Seahouses is considered to be acceptable, in principle.

7.9 Comments in support of the proposal have been submitted adding that the proposal would have a positive impact on tourism and the local economy, as well as enabling a greater range of accommodation options to be provided.

#### Design and Visual Impact

7.10 This section seeks to appraise the design and visual of the proposal against the impact this may have on the character and appearance of the local area.

7.11 Policy F2 of the BLP and Policy 5 of the NNCNP set out the criteria against which new development shall be assessed. This includes the impact on adjacent land uses in terms of scale, massing, materials, etc and sets out locational requirements for development.

7.12 Policy 10 of the NNCNP states that within the Seahouses Conservation Areas development proposals will be required to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.

7.13 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Northumberland County Council's Building Conservation team have assessed the proposals and advised that they support the development subject to amendments to the use of materials that will be more in keeping with the conservation area, further detailed comments are provided in the Heritage Assets section of this report. These amendments have been undertaken, with amended plans submitted and considered as part of this application.

7.14 As mentioned above, the proposal has been assessed and after submission of amended plans to alter to the use of materials the development is considered acceptable. The proposed building extension and alterations would be seen in the context of the existing Hotel/Inn and surrounding Conservation Area. Furthermore the scale is considered to appropriate for its proposed function. On this basis the proposal is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policy F2 of the BLP, Policy 5 and 10 of the NNCNP and the NPPF in this respect.

7.15 Policy ENV1 of the emerging NLP states that the character and significance of Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and built environments, will be conserved, protected and enhanced by taking an ecosystem approach to understanding the significance and sensitivity of the natural resource. Meanwhile Policy ENV3 states that proposals affecting the character of the landscape will be expected to conserve and enhance important elements of that character. It is considered that the proposal is in accordance with this, however little weight can currently be applied to these policies at this stage.

7.16 Comments from the Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership have been received, and to summarise these *“the AONB Partnership has concerns over elements of the design and the lack of onsite parking and whilst the provision of additional serviced accommodation would be welcome in Seahouses, the current proposal will not conserve or enhance the special qualities of landscape, built and historic environment, and tranquillity of the Northumberland Coast AONB.”* The parking aspect of these comments will be addressed in the Highways and Transport Section of this report, with the visual impact on the AONB being considered in this section.

7.17 As mentioned above, a number of amendments have been made by the applicant following the receipt of the comments of the Building Conservation Officer. The materials have been amended as follows: Bedroom windows in Coble Cottage to be timber, painted white; revised material choice for the first floor extension to Coble Cottage to a render finish Shopfront to carpark side of extension to be timber, painted white; Shopfront to main road side of extension to be stained hardwood timber; Roof light to extension should be dark grey aluminium. This is not visible from the street scene and given the coastal location, the Applicant would be nervous of using timber which may rot and cause a leak; and, in terms of the new terrace, the Applicant will only be placing loose tables and chairs on the terrace and the balustrade to the perimeter will be clear glass. Therefore, it is considered that the following these amendments the Building Conservation Team would no longer hold an objection to the proposal. These amendments have been made to reduce the impact of the proposal, which have been deemed to have overcome the objections of the Building Conservation Officer as presented, with the proposal now being deemed to be of a standard where the proposal is viewed as Conserving and Enhancing the Conservation Area in which it sits. In turn, it is deemed that the proposal in its current form, will not have a visually detrimental effect on the Northumberland Coast AONB, with the amendments going some way to address the concerns of the AONB partnership, as raised. The proposal following amendments, in visual terms, will be viewed in the context of the Bamburgh Castle Inn itself, the Harbour, the Conservation Area, and the settlement of Seahouses, and therefore the impact the proposal may visually have on the AONB are not deemed sufficient as to warrant refusal on these grounds.

7.18 Subject to the above, the proposal is deemed to be in compliance with the relevant development plan policies and material considerations e.g. NPPF, emerging plan and the National Design Guide, when considering the

#### Amenity Impact

7.19 The proposal site is an existing Hotel/Inn, proposing an expansion of its 'offer' within the built-up area of Seahouses. Seahouses is a location where tourism accommodation such as this would reasonably be expected to be located. The

amenity impacts (and considerations) from tourism accommodation such as this are largely similar to those experienced from flatted/apartment dwellings.

7.20 Policy 8 of the NNCANP states that proposals will be supported within the defined settlement boundary for Seahouses where they ensure that where extensions are proposed, they do not result in substantial loss of amenity space or loss of parking space which could result in an adverse impact on residential amenity from on-street parking on nearby streets.

7.21 Paragraph 130 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that developments will create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. It is considered that the proposed conservatory would not cause any substantive amenity issues as it is a replacement of an existing building which is to be located in an existing beer garden. On this basis it is considered that the proposal is acceptable and in accordance with paragraph 130 of the NPPF.

7.22 The hotel rooms as located would seem to have a limited impact in terms of their impact on the amenity of nearby occupiers, in terms of loss of outlook, light and privacy. Transport and highway amenity impacts are to be covered under the highways and transport section of this report. It is considered that the separation distances to nearby occupiers are acceptable and should not form a reason to withhold planning permission in this instance.

7.23 Policy QOP2 of the emerging NLP seeks to ensure that development would not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring land uses. It is considered that the proposal is in general accordance with this, however little weight can currently be given to this policy.

7.24 Subject to the above, the proposal is deemed to be in compliance with the relevant development plan policies and material considerations e.g. NPPF, emerging plan and the National Design Guide, when assessed in relation to amenity matters.

### Heritage Assets

7.25 This section seeks to appraise the proposal against the impact this may have on nearby heritage assets, both designated and non-designated assets.

7.26 The site is within the Seahouses Conservation Area. The proposed decking terracing is in the setting of the C18 lime kilns which are grade II listed. The Old Ship Inn which faces Coble Cottage across Main Street is on the Historic Environment Record. The Bamburgh Castle Inn dates in part to the early C19 but has been extensively altered through C20 alterations

7.27 The legislative framework has regard to Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (PLBCCA) which imposes a duty on the local planning authority to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

7.28 Policy 10 of the NNCNP states: *'Within the Seahouses and North Sunderland Conservation Areas development proposals will be required to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area Development proposals, including extensions and alterations to existing buildings and structures, will be required to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. In particular,*

assessment of proposals should take into account their impact on the following specific elements identified in the North Sunderland and Seahouses Conservation Area Character Appraisals:

- a) key buildings or landmarks in the Conservation Area and the impact of the proposal on them;
- b) significant view-points into and out of the Conservation Area as defined in the Conservation Area Character Appraisals;
- c) open space which contributes positively to the public realm; and
- d) how the proposal relates to the 'group value' of buildings where these are defined in the North Sunderland and Seahouses Conservation Area Character Appraisals Maps."

7.29 Development of poor design that fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the Conservation Area and the way it functions will be refused.'

7.30 Chapter 16 of the NPPF sets out the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

7.31 The Council's Building Conservation Officer was consulted on the proposal and made the following comments:

*We are in broad agreement with the Solstace Heritage Impact Assessment insofar as successive alterations to the Bamburgh Castle Inn have limited its potential to contribute positively to the character or appearance of the Seahouses Conservation Area. The widespread presence of upvc windows across most elevations combined with ad hoc flat roofed extensions are not alterations that have respected the character of the traditional and vernacular buildings from which the Inn developed.*

*We were encouraged therefore to read in the application form that proposed materials would include stone, timber and slate. However, looking at the proposed plans the materials differ considerably from those stated on the application form. In place of high quality natural materials further upvc windows, synthetic "Cedral" boarding and ppc aluminium are proposed. At 4.2.1 the HIA states: The principal aspects of significance of the conservation area to which the proposed development area contributes are the use of traditional materials and style of Coble Cottage..."*

*We therefore urge that the materials palette be realigned with that stated in the application form. Coble Cottage retains some elements of traditional fenestration. We consider it important this is retained as a now comparatively rare survival in the conservation area.*

*The flat roofed link extension between the Inn and Coble Cottage fronts Main Street with a design to mimic the wide cart arch to the south but with an infill. If this is to be an in keeping addition to the vernacular style of the existing elevation on Main Street the window/door set should be in timber painted white, not grey ppc aluminium.*

*With regard to the decking terracing, we note that large parts of the grass mound within the mapped limits of the listed building are already occupied*

*with outdoor seating. The paraphernalia of outdoor recreation has the potential to detract from the simplicity of the listed structure. However, we accept this proposed addition would be to the side and below the main terrace such that further impact on the setting of the listed lime kilns would be marginal. However, we are concerned by notes on the proposed block plans that refer to “low pergola with motorized fabric cover” and “plexiglass screens”. As these notes are partly obscured by a large label it's not clear if they are part of the current proposals. If they are, full details should be supplied prior to determination so their impact of the listed limekilns can be properly assessed.*

7.31 In terms of their position the Building Conservation Team have commented *“We will raise no objection to the proposal if the materials palette is amended in line with our comments above. Existing traditional timber fenestration in Coquet Cottage must be maintained. Clarification on the structures associated with the decking terracing must be obtained. Should amendments and clarification not be forthcoming we consider the application in its current form would give rise to less than substantial harm within the terms of paragraph 196 of the Framework resulting in our objection to the proposals.”*

7.32 Following comments from Conservation, the applicant has agreed to amend the proposed materials and has submitted amended plans. The materials have been amended as follows: Bedroom windows in Coble Cottage to be timber, painted white; revised material choice for the first floor extension to Coble Cottage to a render finish Shopfront to carpark side of extension to be timber, painted white; Shopfront to main road side of extension to be stained hardwood timber; Roof light to extension should be dark grey aluminium. This is not visible from the street scene and given the coastal location, the Applicant would be nervous of using timber which may rot and cause a leak; and, in terms of the new terrace, the Applicant will only be placing loose tables and chairs on the terrace and the balustrade to the perimeter will be clear glass. Therefore, it is considered that following these amendments the Building Conservation Team would no longer hold an objection to the proposal.

7.33 It is considered that the proposal in its current form, following these amendments, Conserves and Enhances the Conservation Area in which it sits, by virtue of its form and character. Therefore, following the comments above, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in relation to the impact this will have on heritage assets, and this would therefore not form a suitable reason for refusal in relation to this scheme.

7.34 With specific reference to the policies of the emerging Northumberland Local Plan, policy ENV7 are relevant to this application with respect to the historic environment, it is considered that this proposal, subject to conditions, is compliant with these policies.

7.35 Subject to the above, the proposal is deemed to be in compliance with the relevant development plan policies and material considerations e.g. NPPF, emerging plan and the National Design Guide.

### Highways and Transport Matters

7.36 This section seeks to appraise the impacts that the proposal may have on the surrounding Highways and Transport Network. Typically, the key issues around

Highways and Transport matters in relation to Tourism Developments and Hotels in Town Centres, such as this, are Car Parking and Sustainable Transport options. Consultation has been undertaken with the Highways Development Management Team and their comments are considered below.

7.37 When assessing this application, the Highway Authority assesses that the proposal will not result in an adverse impact on the safety of all users of the highway, the highway network or highway assets.

7.38 Policy M14 from the Berwick Local Plan is relevant to Highways and Transport considerations in relation to this application.

7.39 Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states *“In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that: a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location; b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.”*

7.40 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that *“development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.”*

7.41 Paragraph 112 of the NPPF adds to this and states *“Within this context, applications for development should: a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second - so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use; b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport; c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive - which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards; d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and, e) be designed to enable charging of plug in and other ultra low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.”*

7.42 The North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan does not include specific a specific policy in relation to Highways and Transport Matters, however policy 8 does require *“sufficient car parking space is provided within the curtilage of the proposed development to ensure no additional on-street parking on nearby streets”*

7.43 The proposed development is town centre located and benefits from existing pedestrian and public transport links. There are 2 bus stops located within approximately 230 metres of the site providing links to Berwick, Belford, Alnwick, Alnmouth and Newcastle. The surrounding roads can be utilised by cyclists. The proposed development will not impact on these existing links.

7.44 The applicant proposes to utilise the existing access into the site, visibility from the site access is considered acceptable. The site currently has 22 car parking

spaces and there is nearby town centre car parking available when the car park reaches its capacity. The site also benefits from nearby public transport links, which is considered acceptable for a town centre located development.

7.45 No details of cycle parking have been submitted as part of this planning application. To help promote cycle use the amount of good quality cycle parking needs to be increased, it is important therefore that secure cycle parking is provided as an integral part of new development. This should be secure, covered and overlooked. A block plan giving details of this is required which can be dealt with by way of planning condition imposed on any planning permission granted.

7.46 The applicant proposes to increase the bedroom capacity of the site from 32 rooms to 49 rooms and proposes to increase the floor space of the pub/restaurant by 120sqm. The applicant proposes to utilise the existing access into the site and there are no proposed changes to this, visibility from the site access is considered acceptable. As mentioned earlier, the site currently has 22 car parking spaces and there is nearby town centre car parking available when the car park reaches its capacity, this is considered acceptable for a town centre located development. The traffic expected to be generated from the proposed development is not considered to have a harmful impact on the highway network.

7.47 Subject to conditions and following receipt of the further information, the Highways Development Management Team have not raised any concerns in relation to this planning application that cannot be dealt with via planning conditions. Although this may appear contrary to policy 8 of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Highways Development Team consider that nearby car parks are sufficient to cater for any excess parking that may overflow from the proposal. It is understood, that on the basis of this assumption the proposal is compliant with policy 8 of the Neighbourhood Plan. The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable in highway terms with the development plan and relevant policy and material considerations, subject to conditions. Therefore, the proposed development can be suitably conditioned to ensure acceptability on behalf of the Highway Authority.

7.48 It is therefore deemed that the proposal is considered to be compliant with NPPF Paragraph 110, 111 and 112.

7.49 Comments have been received from nearby occupiers in relation to local parking issues which are either in relation to the existing users of the premises or which would potentially be caused by the expansion of the business. North Sunderland and Seahouses Parish Council have also commented and *“are strongly opposed to this application. The Council feels this is an over development of the property and the car parking arrangements at present are inadequate for the number of vehicles using the premises. The additional vehicles that will inevitably arrive with additional bedrooms and extended dining facilities will have a hugely negative impact on the surrounding area. This will have a huge impact on the already stretched on street parking and cause great disturbance to the residents of the Crumstones area.”*

7.50 Further to this the Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership have commented that *“problems with parking in the villages of the AONB is one of the most significant issues within the designated landscape and faced by communities living within the AONB. The increase of 18 bedrooms and pub / restaurant floor space with no additional dedicated parking is of concern as this is very likely to have*

*knock-on effects on the parking problems experienced in Seahouses. Whilst there is a large public car park near the hotel, in the holiday season this car park is regularly full, and parking inevitably spills over into the village. The Conservation Area appraisal, written in the early 2000s, notes how the increasing vehicular traffic has "resulted in the erosion of the quality of the streets and open spaces in Seahouses by the intrusion of parked cars". This situation has amplified rather than abated since the appraisal was written and the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan responds to this concern specifically in that Policy 8, section C requires sufficient car parking space to be provided within the curtilage of a development to ensure no additional on-street parking."*

7.51 As can be seen from the commentary above, and the consultation response provided by NCC Highways Development Management, it is considered that this can either be dealt with via on-site parking provision, or the use of nearby Town Centre Car Parks. It is therefore considered that, in this location, a lack of parking provision, would not form a suitable reason for refusal in this instance.

7.50 Further to this, comments have also been received commenting on the potential difficulties the emergency services may have in accessing the site or properties in the vicinity as a result of the proposal being implemented. The comments of the Fire and Rescue Service, and the Northumbria Police Service have been sought in relation to this application, and they have confirmed that they have no comments/objections to the proposal. It is therefore not deemed that this matter would form a reasonable reason for the refusal of the application.

7.51 In relation to matters relating to the Emergency Services, comment has been received in relation to potential vehicular damage that has been potentially caused by users of the Bamburgh Castle Inn to vehicles belonging to (or used by) nearby occupiers. Northumbria Police have not raised an objection to the proposal, nor have NCC Highways Development Management raised issues in relation to road safety, and it is therefore not deemed that this should be a suitable reason for withholding planning permission for the proposal.

7.52 Further to the above, and following consultation with the Highways Development Management Team, the proposal is deemed to be in compliance with the relevant local and national policy from a highways and transport perspective, in particular paragraphs 110-112 of the NPPF and policy M14 of the BLP, and those of the emerging Northumberland Local Plan, where these can be given weight in the decision-making process.

### Ecological Matters

7.53 NPPF, Chapter 15, Paragraph 174 requires the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Paragraph 180 requires Local Planning Authorities to encourage opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments.

7.54 Policy 3 of the NNCNP is the relevant local policy in relation to Ecology. The County Ecologist advises that the site is located within the Impact Risk Zone for the protected coastal sites and will require mitigation for impacts. This has been discussed with the agent and it has been agreed that mitigation will be in the form of a financial contribution to the Council's Coastal Mitigation Service. The contribution

will be secured via a S106 Unilateral Undertaking along with the principle occupancy requirement.

7.55 Further to the above, the proposal has been submitted with appropriate ecology surveys, the County Ecologist and Natural England have been consulted

7.56 Therefore, the on-site ecological impacts arising from the proposal can be suitably mitigated in accordance with Policy 3 of the NNCP and the NPPF.

7.57 The appropriate policy in the emerging NLP in relation to this matter is Policies ENV1 and ENV2 weight has been apportioned with regards to these policies in line with paragraph 48 of the NPPF.

7.58 Subject to the above, the proposal is deemed to be in compliance with the relevant development plan policies and material considerations e.g. NPPF, emerging plan and the National Design Guide.

#### *Off Site Ecological Matters*

7.59 The site lies within 10km of Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) /Ramsar sites, Northumberland Marine SPA, North Northumberland Dunes SAC and Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC which are internationally designated sites as well as further nationally designated sites which are; Northumberland Shore SSSI, Howick to Seaton Point SSSI, Alnmouth Saltmarsh and Dunes SSSI, Warkworth Dunes & Saltmarsh SSSI, Castle Point to Cullernoise Point SSSI.

7.60 When developers apply for planning permission for new residential or tourism development within the coastal zone of influence, the local planning authority, as competent authority, is required to fulfil its obligations under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (for SSSIs) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (for SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites), by ensuring that the development will not have adverse impacts on designated sites, either alone or in combination with other projects.

7.61 The NPPF sets out that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where development requiring appropriate assessment under the Birds or Habitats Directives is being considered, planned or determined.

7.62 There is consideration of increasing levels of recreational disturbance such as off-lead dog-walking affecting bird species which are the interest features of the range of sites on the coast which are protected under national and international legislation. Recreational pressure is also adversely affected dune grasslands which are also protected under national and international legislation, especially through the spread of the non-native pirri-pirri bur. The Local Planning Authority has legal duties to ensure that the capacity of these protected areas to support features for which they were designated is not compromised.

7.63 The impact from new development cumulatively across the stretch of the Northumberland Coast is considered significant. To address this, developments within 10km of protected sites along the coastal zone are required to demonstrate that adequate mitigation for increasing recreational pressure can be provided, either

through their own schemes or by funding relevant coastal wardening activity by the Council.

7.64 Contribution to the Coastal Mitigation Service enables a conclusion of no adverse effect on site integrity to be reached when a planning application is subject to appropriate assessment, without the developer having to commission any survey or mitigation work. Similarly, it enables a conclusion of no adverse effect on the interest features of coastal SSSIs. The contribution for major developments (10 or more units) is set at £615 per unit within 7km of the coast. However, to calculate the contribution of hotels the number of rooms is converted into an equivalent number of dwellings by taking a standard 2 guests per hotel room and dividing the total number of guests by 2.4, which is the ONS figure for the average size of a household. A discount is then applied to reflect hotel occupancy, based on a running mean of Northumberland Tourism's average occupancy data for the past 3 years (currently 56%) - so a household equivalent in a hotel pays 56% of the amount that is paid for a dwelling house. Therefore, for this development of 18 additional hotel rooms a contribution of £5,166 is required.

7.65 From this, the off-site ecological impacts of the development on designated sites can be suitably addressed. The needs of the Habitats Regulations can therefore be deemed to be satisfied.

#### Equality Duty

7.66 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

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

#### Human Rights Act Implications

7.68 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.

7.69 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.

7.70 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.

## **8. Conclusion**

8.1 The main planning considerations in determining this application have been set out and considered above stating accordance with the 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 It is therefore considered that the proposal will result in an acceptable form of development that will be consistent with the appearance and character of the existing host property and surrounding area, without causing unacceptable detriment on amenity or on the appearance of the surrounding area. As such the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and policies of the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan and saved policies Berwick upon Tweed Borough Local Plan

## **9. Recommendation**

That this application be GRANTED subject to the following conditions and a legal agreement for £5,166:

### Conditions/Reason

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. Except where modified by the conditions attached to this planning permission, the development hereby approved relates to and shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Combined Proposed Layout and Elevations Dwg No. 712-(P)-02 Date November 2020 Rev B Dated 05/07/21

Proposed Elevations Dwg No. 712-(P)-09 Date November 2020 Rev A Dated 05/07/21

Proposed Overall Roof Plan Dwg No. 712-(P)-11 Dated November 2020

Proposed Block Plan Dwg No. 712-(P)-13 Dated November 2020

Site Location Plan "The Bamburgh Castle Inn & Coble Cottage Seahouses"  
[uploaded to DMS 16th December 2020]

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

03. The development shall not be brought into use until details of cycle parking have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved cycle parking shall be implemented before the development is occupied. Thereafter, the cycle parking shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and shall be kept available for the parking of cycles at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and sustainable development, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

04. Development shall not commence until a Construction Method Statement , together with a supporting plan 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 and plan shall, where applicable, provide for:

- i. details of temporary traffic management measures, temporary access, routes and vehicles;
- ii. vehicle cleaning facilities;
- iii. the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- iv. the loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- v. storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development

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

05. Notwithstanding any description of the materials in the application, no installation of materials shall occur until precise details, to include samples, of the materials to be used in the construction of the external walls and / or roof(s) of the building(s), windows and their frames, and balustrade have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. All roofing and / or external facing materials, windows and their frames, and balustrades used in the construction of the development shall conform to the materials thereby approved.

Reason: To retain control over the external appearance of the development and in accordance with the provisions of NPPF.

### **Informatives**

1. Building materials or equipment shall not be stored on the highway unless otherwise agreed. You are advised to contact the Streetworks team on 0345 600 6400 for Skips and Containers licences.
2. In accordance with the Highways Act 1980 mud, debris or rubbish shall not be deposited on the highway.

3. 'All species of bat and their roosts (whether occupied or not) are strictly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Similarly, all wild birds and their nests are protected whilst in use and it is an offence to recklessly or intentionally destroy nests or dependent young when on or near the nest, or to kill or take them.

Applicants and contractors should note that the protected species legislation operates independently of the planning system, planning consent does not override the legislation relating to protected species and that they should be aware that there is a small chance of encountering protected species during works.

If protected species such as bats or nesting birds are encountered during development, then works should cease immediately and professional advice should be sought straight away.

Applicants and contractors can obtain advice on bats by telephoning Natural England's bat advice line on 0345 1300 228.'

**Date of Report:**

**Background Papers:** Planning application file(s) 20/03697/FUL