



**Application No:** 08NP0018

**Proposed Development:** Retrospective application for change of use from agricultural land to domestic garden at The Badger, Swindon, Sharperton, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 7AP.

**Applicant Name:** Dr. W.G. Pickering

**Agent Name:** N/A

### 1. Proposal and Site

- 1.1 The application seeks retrospective Planning Permission for change of use of approximately 0.167 hectares of agricultural land to domestic garden at The Badger, Swindon, Sharperton, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 7AP.
- 1.2 The proposed site is currently being used as a domestic garden having been fenced and maintained for an unknown number of years, however some of the planting is now semi mature.
- 1.3 The Badger, Swindon is located adjacent to the B6431 road from Rothbury to Elsdon. It is the most easterly property in the hamlet of Swindon, which comprises of four properties in total. The hamlet is situated approximately 1km west of Hepple, at the junction of the B6431 road and the C180 road to Holystone village. The application site falls within Site AL12 Coquetdale and Holystone SNCI.

### 2. Planning Policy

- 2.1 Joint Structure Plan: Not applicable
- 2.2 Northumberland National Park Local Plan  
C1  
C6  
CD1.

### 3. Planning History

85/A/227 Construction of rear extension. Approved with conditions 26/07/85  
86/A/269 Construction of domestic garage. Approved with conditions 11/07/86  
90/A/291 Erection of 2 detached bungalows on land adjacent to Grasslees Cottage, Swindon. Refused 17/07/90  
T/APP/T95001/A/91/174858/P7 Appeal in respect of 90/A/291 Dismissed 25/04/91  
98/NP/20 Construction of storage building. Refused 21/07/98  
07NP0011 Construction of garden shed. Refused 15/05/07

### 4. Consultations/Representations

- 4.1 Hepple Parish Council: No Objections
- 4.2 Alnwick District Council (Planning): No Objections
- 4.3 Alnwick District Council (Environmental Health): No Objections
- 4.4 NNPA Archaeologist: No Objections



#### 4.5 NNPA Ecologist: No Objections

From an ecological point of view I have no objections to this. The field in which the garden is now located is unlikely to be of high ecological value and not worth re-instating. Since the garden is at the W side of the field adjacent to the burn and a small area of semi-natural woodland it is not very intrusive unlike if it had been further into the field with grass on either side. It is not particularly intrusive from the road and the photo from the top of Harehaugh hill does not alter my perception. This is however due to the type of planting and garden it is; if the garden were to be decked or very formally laid out it may look more intrusive. Overall I feel that it would be harsh to object on landscape grounds.

#### 4.5 Neighbours:

- Objection on the grounds of adverse impact on the visual amenity and landscape character;
- Reference to LCA and guidelines for development in this character area; and
- The proposal will have an adverse visual impact in an area of great natural beauty which is clearly visible from many vantage points.
- Detracts from the visual amenity of the adjoining properties at Swindon and Grasslees Cottages;
- Forms a clearly visible projection into the field; incongruous intrusion; and
- The proposal would be contrary to the LCA.
- The footprint together with access would have a large footprint on this farm land;
- To acquiesce to these current applications, will set a dangerous precedent, that will most certainly lead to another planning application for a full blown housing development;
- Detrimental visual impact;
- Domestic urban sprawl when viewed from Harehaugh Hill; and
- Concern over future conversion to a residential home.

### 5. Assessment

#### 5.1 The main issues are:

Principle of development;  
Impact on landscape;  
Impact on amenity; and  
Impact on nature conservation.

#### 5.2 Principle of development

There is no Local Plan policy, which expressly allows or disallows the change of use from agricultural land to domestic garden in a particular situation within the National Park. This application should therefore be assessed with regard to its Impact on landscape; impact on amenity; and impact on nature conservation.

#### 5.3 Impact on landscape

The site is classified as Sandstone Upland Valleys (9) in the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) produced by Julie Martin dated June 2007. Whilst not adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document, this report is a material planning consideration. NSH9b Grasslees Valley character area comprises the Grasslees and Penchford Burn valleys and their minor tributaries and its key features and qualities are identified as



high scenic quality and a high degree of tranquility and intimacy. The overall strategy for this character area should be to conserve and restore the landscape. The LCA provides guidelines for housing and economic development stating;

*“The valley sides and open valley floor are visually sensitive to new development and care should be taken to ensure new development does not extend into these areas in a way which is visual intrusive, resulting in abrupt urban edges or altering the character of existing settlements.”*

As the proposed change of use relates to an area of land which is at the West side of the existing agricultural field, adjacent to the burn and a small area of semi-natural woodland and is closely associated with the adjacent dwellings, it is not considered to be very intrusive. The garden that has been created does not contain urban features and it relates well to the surrounding semi natural woodland. A condition is recommended to remove permitted development rights to control the addition of structures in this area which may urbanise its appearance in accordance with Local Plan Policies C1 and CD1. It would therefore not be contrary to Northumberland National Park Local Plan Policy C1 and Policy CD1 (Para a.).

#### 5.4 Impact on amenity

The proposed change of use is considered to have minimal impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents as it would increase the domestic garden associated with one dwelling house. A condition is recommended to remove permitted development rights to protect the future amenity of neighbouring residents and as such the proposed change of use would accord with Local Plan Policy CD1.

#### 5.5 Impact on nature conservation

The proposed development would be within Site AL12 Coquetdale and Holystone SNCI. The NNPA Ecologist states that the existing field is unlikely to be of high ecological value and not worth re-instating on ecological grounds. Thus the proposed change of use would not conflict with Policy C6 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.

### 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed change of use from agricultural land to garden land is not considered to be intrusive in this location. It would therefore not conflict with Northumberland National Park Local Plan Policy C1 and Policy CD1 (Para a.). A condition is recommended to remove permitted development rights to control the addition of structures in this area which may urbanise its appearance and to protect the future amenity of neighbouring residents and as such the proposed change of use would accord with Local Plan Policy CD1. There would be no adverse impact on nature conservation thus the proposed change of use would accord with Local Plan Policy C6.



**RECOMMENDATION**

**Grant conditional permission:**

Condition:

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

Reason: To ensure that the development is commenced within a reasonable period of time from the date of this permission.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the plans and specifications approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details in accordance with Policy CD1 of the Northumberland National Park Local Plan.

3. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order), the following works shall not be carried out to the dwelling(s) hereby approved without the prior permission of the Local Planning Authority:

The construction of any building within the land hereby granted planning permission for use as garden land.

Reason: To ensure the open and rural character of the landscape is maintained and to protect neighbours amenity in accordance with Northumberland National Park Local Plan Policies C1 and CD1.

**Contact Officer:**

For further information contact Mr D Coverdale, Planning Officer, on 01434 611564 or e-mail: [planning@nnpa.org.uk](mailto:planning@nnpa.org.uk)

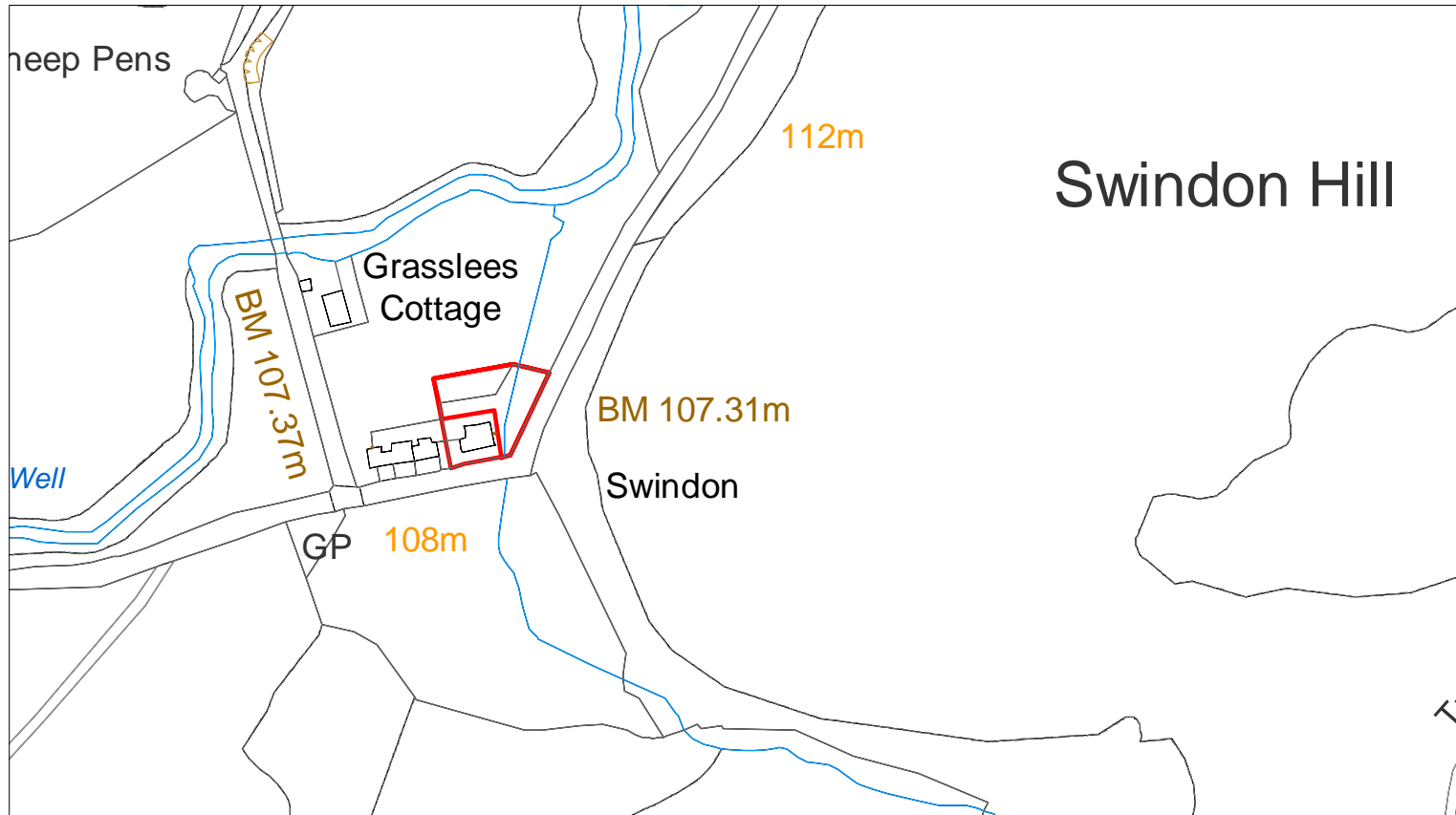
**Background Papers:**

Planning Application File: 08NP18

**08NP0018/9 The Badger**

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