

NORTHUMBERLAND NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING Eastburn, South Park, Hexham NE46 1BS
Wednesday 8 November 2023, 10.00am to 10.56am

Present:

Cllr Julian Morrison-Bell (SoS Parish) (Chair)
Cllr Sue Bolam (SoS Parish)
Ms Marie Fallon (SoS National)
Cllr Val Gibson (SoS Parish)
Cllr Len Glen-Davison (SoS Parish)
Cllr Mark Mather (NCC)
Mr Chris Mullin (SoS National)
Cllr Alan Sharp (NCC)

In attendance:

Susannah Buylla (Head of Planning & Policy)
Tom Jenkins (Legal Representative for NNPA, Ward
Hadaway) Jayne Longlands (Corporate Support Officer)
William McKane (Planning Officer)

PART ONE

DMC2023-21 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr John Riddle.

The Chair welcomed members, officers and members of the public to the meeting.

DMC2023-22 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mark Mather declared an interest, he explained that he knew the Applicant (Mr Colin Martin) as he lived within the Wooler ward. However, Cllr Mather said that his interest was personal non-prejudicial and he had not decided on the outcome prior to the meeting.

DMC2023-23 Minutes of Previous Meeting: Wednesday 13 September 2023

The draft Minutes of the Development Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 13 September 2023 were proposed as a true and correct record by Cllr Alan Sharp, seconded by Ms Marie Fallon, and it was further:

RESOLVED

That the draft Minutes of the Development Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 13 September 2023, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

DMC2023-24 Determination of Application for Planning Permission

23NP0087 Replacement of existing cottage due to collapse of existing residential unit with the addition of rear and west gable extensions and new garage/store adjacent. Change of use of agricultural grounds immediately surrounding building to form landscaping areas and vehicle access at Longback Cottage, West Kirknewton Farm, Kirknewton, Wooler, Northumberland, NE71 6XF

Susannah Buylla (Head of Planning & Policy) provided a detailed overview of her report. She noted the following two recent updates to the original report:-

- 1. After further discussion with NCC Environmental Protection, it was proposed to delete conditions 14 and 15 which related to land contamination.** As the site had been cleared down to natural ground level then the suggested contaminated land conditions requiring site investigation and remediation could be deleted, and the watching brief condition 16 remained, in case contamination was found.
- 2. Condition 11: Amend Package treatment to septic tank.**

The Head of Planning & Policy then presented the application with the support of location maps, photographs, a boundary plan, elevations and proposal plans. She added that no public representations had been received. Consideration of potential harm to the historic environment, as well as the importance of ensuring sustainability of a replacement house, were noted as material considerations in this proposal.

The Committee report was summarised including the impact on NNPA special qualities to the landscape, biodiversity, tranquillity, and cultural heritage. Responses from various external stakeholders were also listed.

The recommendation was to approve conditional planning permission, as noted by the Head of Planning & Policy, for the reasons as stated within her written report.

Public Speaking

Mr Colin Martin (applicant) spoke to the room to present his case. He made the following points:-

- Mr Martin explained that he was present to answer any questions. He had lived in Kirknewton for 45 years and had always wanted to retire to the location of Longback Cottage.
- The applicant explained his reasoning for taking down the cottage, which had been due to the unstable walls, and apologised for the action he had taken.

Board members then raised the following points:-

- Cllr Alan Sharp said that he wanted to be clear on the application and sought clarification that the original planning permission had been granted back in 2020. He queried the dialogue which had taken place with regards to taking down the building.

In response, the Head of Planning & Policy noted that she had received a commencement notice in Sept 2022, stating that works had commenced on site. However, in August 2023 she received a complaint that the cottage, which had been due to be extended, had been taken down. She had then contacted Mr Martin who had responded straight away to explain the situation to her. The Head of Planning & Policy had explained to Mr Martin that this site would require a new planning application and any works would be conducted at his own risk; a new application had then been duly submitted.

It was explained that both the garage and access road had been consented in 2020, as these were included within the original refurbishment of the cottage and extension application.

- The Chair sought clarification and it was confirmed that the rock armour (located to the rear of the site) was part of the 2020 application, although works in the paddock were part of the new application. Mr Martin said that the current soil heaps would be levelled-out and made into a grass paddock.
- In response to Cllr Len Glen-Davison's query, it was clarified that planning permission granted for the garage in 2020 still stood and it was planning permission for the house which was the subject of this application.
- Ms Marie Fallon asked about the garage materials being used to which Mr Martin confirmed that this building was to be rendered.
- In reply to the Chair's query, Mr Martin said that the property would be rebuilt using the original materials of sandstone quoins, pantile roof tiles and natural stone, which had been salvaged from the demolished cottage.
- Cllr Len Glen-Davison queried the hardcore track and asked how far this extended along the eastern side. Mr Martin demonstrated this visually on the maps and explained the path would be a hardcore replacement/upgrade which would soon look like the original track, i.e. with grass growing centrally.
- Cllr Val Gibson noted that the demolition works had resulted in the loss of a heritage asset, she said it was a shame that the old building had been lost and considered that due consideration should be given to this matter.
- Cllr Alan Sharp queried the size of the new dwelling as compared to the original building. The Head of Planning & Policy noted that the original floor area would be doubled, although the height would remain the same. Cllr Sharp then asked whether the original

application had included the extra extensions, to which the Head of Planning & Policy confirmed that it had.

Questions and Debate

The Chair invited members to present questions and general discussions ensued as follows: -

- Cllr Len Glen-Davison said that the garage looked out of character; he considered that the glazed porch and Velux windows did not add anything to the plans and felt that the two extensions on either side detracted from retention of the original features. He suggested the rear extensions could be brought in and considered design plans were not appropriate, he felt that something more sympathetic to the original format should be required.

It was confirmed that the glass extension and skylights had been included within the original application to extend the cottage. The Head of Planning & Policy reminded the meeting that the purpose of the meeting was to focus on whether approval be given rather than changing any design elements.

- Cllr Sue Bolam shared many of Cllr Len Glen-Davison's concerns. She noted that structural surveys had been required in previous applications to show that the buildings are capable of conversion without rebuild and she was uneasy about setting a precedent if the application was approved.

The Head of Planning & Policy said that she had brought the application to the meeting as she had various concerns, however specific circumstances surrounding it meant this was slightly different to others.

- Cllr Mark Mather also had concerns and did not like the ask for forgiveness after the event approach. However, he felt this design was sympathetic to the landscape. In addition, the applicant would be using original materials and this development would mean the provision of housing within the Park for members of the community.
- Mr Chris Mullin had concerns over the garage design. However, he did consider that building houses for Park residents was favourable although this development should remain as a permanent residence.
- Ms Marie Fallon said that the message, about the unlawful demolition scenario, should be relayed to others. She shared members concerns about the garage and asked whether landscape mitigation, dark sky impact, and mitigation of the garage's impact from the public footpath should all be given due consideration.
- Cllr Alan Sharp noted this was a finely balanced application. He said that consultation by the applicant had been poor and felt that the Historic Environment Officer's concerns should be noted. In addition, he queried whether the porch design could be changed, stated there was no evidence of a structural survey report, and suggested that we needed to be consistent.

The Chair said it was difficult to go back on the design as this had already been previously approved, although agreed that the applicants had not gone about this in the right way. He accepted that a permanent residence condition is some mitigation. He added that, the enforcement of ensuring the building works used the original stone and pantiles was critical to this application.

The condition requiring landscaping details to be submitted was noted.

Proposal of, and vote on, the Motion

The motion set out in the report, subject to the deletion of the 2 contamination conditions and the amendment to the wording of condition 11 relating to a septic tank, as noted at the start of the meeting, was proposed by Cllr Mark Mather and seconded by Ms Marie Fallon. Members then voted on the proposal which received the following member responses; five members voted for, three members voted against, and there were no abstentions.

It was **RESOLVED** that conditional planning permission be approved for this application, subject to the two recent updates to the original report, as noted below:-

- 1. After further discussion with NCC Environmental Protection, it was proposed to delete conditions 14 and 15 which related to land contamination.** As the site had been cleared down to natural ground level then the suggested contaminated land conditions requiring site investigation and remediation could be deleted, and the watching brief condition 16 remained, in case contamination was found.
- 2. Condition 11: Amend Package treatment to septic tank.**

DMC2023-25 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.56am.