

COMMITTEE REPORT

APPLICATION DETAILS

APPLICATION NO: 3/2011/0506
FULL APPLICATION DESCRIPTION: **ERECTION OF A TIMBER CHALET FOR HOLIDAY USE**
NAME OF APPLICANT: **Ms I PAGE**
ADDRESS: LAND TO THE WEST OF CRAWLEYSIDE, STANHOPE, BISHOP AUCKLAND, DL13 2DU
ELECTORAL DIVISION: WEARDALE
CASE OFFICER: **Chris Baxter**
(Senior) Planning Officer
03000 263944
chris.baxter@durham.gov.uk

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND PROPOSALS

The Site

1. The application site comprises a small paddock located on land to the west of Crawleyside in Stanhope. The site is situated within open countryside and within the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. An existing private road which leads to the disused Lane Head Quarry passes the southern perimeter of the site and is also a public right of way. Residential properties of Kiln Cottage, Stanhope Grange and Lane Head lie to the north east and the land to the south has planning permission for touring caravans. Conifer planting has recently taken place along the site perimeter and there are mature trees immediately to the north.

The proposal

2. Planning permission is sought for the erection of a timber chalet for holiday use. The footprint of the proposed timber chalet would measure 12.5 metres by 8.9 metres and it would have a height of 5 metres to the ridge. The chalet incorporates living accommodation over two floors comprising four bedrooms, a kitchen and living area, with a veranda and balcony area. A new vehicular access is proposed from the adjacent lane to the south of the site.
3. This application has been reported to committee at the request of Stanhope Parish Council because of a number of concerns raised.

PLANNING HISTORY

4. There is no planning history in relation to this site.

PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL POLICY

5. *Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1)* sets out the overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system.
6. *Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Growth (PPS4)* sets out the Government's comprehensive policy framework for planning for sustainable economic development in urban and rural areas.
7. *Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (PPS7)* sets out the Government's planning policies for rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas.
8. *Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (PPS9)* sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity and geological conservation through the planning system.
9. *Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism* provides guidance on the importance of tourism and to work effectively to facilitate, promote and deliver new tourism development in a sustainable way.

REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY

10. The North East of England Plan - Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (RSS) July 2008, sets out the broad spatial development strategy for the North East region for the period of 2004 to 2021. The RSS sets out the region's housing provision and the priorities in economic development, retail growth, transport investment, the environment, minerals and waste treatment and disposal. Some policies have an end date of 2021 but the overall vision, strategy, and general policies will guide development over a longer timescale. The overall objective for minerals policy in the Region, as set out in RSS, is to ensure the prudent use of the Region's indigenous natural resources in line with sustainable development objectives.
11. In July 2010, however, the Local Government Secretary signalled his intention to revoke Regional Spatial Strategies with immediate effect, and that this was to be treated as a material consideration in subsequent planning decisions. This was successfully challenged in the High Court in November 2010, thus for the moment reinstating the RSS. However, it remains the Government's intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies when Orders have been made under section 109 of the Localism Act 2011, and weight can be attached to this intention. The following policies are considered relevant:
 12. *Policy 8 – Protecting and Enhancing the Environment* states that planning proposals should seek to maintain and enhance the quality, diversity and local distinctiveness of the environment.
 13. *Policy 16 – Culture and Tourism* states that planning proposals should promote culture and tourism.
 14. *Policy 31 – Landscape Character* states that planning proposals should promote development appropriate to the special qualities of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

LOCAL PLAN POLICY:

15. The following policies of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007 are relevant in the determination of this application:
16. *Policy GD1 (General Development Criteria)*: All new development and redevelopment within the District should be designed and built to a high standard and should contribute to the quality and built environment of the surrounding area.

17. *Policy ENV1 (Protection of the Countryside)*: The District Council will seek to protect and enhance the countryside of Wear Valley.
18. *Policy ENV2 (The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)*: Priority will be given to the protection and enhancement of the landscape qualities of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Development which adversely affects the special scenic quality and the nature conservation interest of the AONB will not be permitted.
19. *Policy TM1 (Criteria for Tourist Proposals)*: The Council will give encouragement to schemes which provide tourism facilities in the District provided they accord with criteria set out in the local plan.
20. *Policy TM2 (Tourism within the AONB)*: Tourism development proposals within the AONB will be allowed only if they fulfil the criteria set out in the local plan.

The above represents a summary of those policies considered most relevant in the Development Plan the full text, criteria, and justifications of each may be accessed at <http://www.cartoplus.co.uk/durham/text/00cont.htm>.

CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY RESPONSES

STATUTORY RESPONSES:

21. *Stanhope Parish Council* object to the proposal for the following reasons:
 - Weardale is adequately supplied with holiday lets;
 - Concerns that this may become a permanent dwelling;
 - The access is not suitable;
 - The design is not in keeping with the surroundings; and
 - This application would give precedence for other applications.
22. *Northumbrian Water* raises no objections.
23. *County Highways Authority* has stated that the proposed access arrangements affords virtually zero sight visibility of approaching traffic therefore it is recommended that the existing landscaping on the boundary is set back to provide adequate visibility.

INTERNAL CONSULTEE RESPONSES:

24. *Public Rights of Way Team* offers no objections to the proposals. An informative is recommended should permission be granted.
25. *Ecology Team* has no objections to the proposals. An informative to address any residual risk of impact on ground nesting birds is recommended should permission be granted.
26. *Design and Conservation Officer* has raised concerns with regards to the scale, massing and over complicated external detailing.
27. *Spatial Planning Policy Team* accept that in principle a tourist development in this location would be acceptable, however concerns are raised with regards to the scale of the proposed chalet.

PUBLIC RESPONSES:

28. A site notice was posted and the application was advertised in the local press. One letter of representation has been received which mainly raises the issue of poor access to the site.

APPLICANTS STATEMENT:

29. Whilst it is recognised the application site is located in open countryside, there are policies contained within the Local Plan that provide for new chalet sites in disused quarries or other locations which are well screened all year round.
30. The site is located at the entrance to an existing disused quarry (Lanehead Quarry) and is well screened by trees and topography to the north as well as some newly planted coniferous trees to the south. The application is therefore compliant with planning policy which does not make reference to any limitation on scale. Nevertheless, the scale of the development has taken into account the capacity of the site and its surrounding and as such is not harmful on either the landscape or any other nature conservation issues.

The above represents a summary of the comments received on this application. The full written text is available for inspection on the application file which can be viewed at <http://82.113.161.89/WAM/showCaseFile.do?action=show&appType=planning&appNumber=10/00955/FPA>

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

31. Having regard to the requirements of section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 relevant guidance, development plan policies and all material planning considerations, including representations received, it is considered that the main planning issues in this instance relate to principle of development, impact on North Pennines AONB and surrounding area and highway issues.

Principle of development

32. Policies TM1 and TM2 of the Local Plan state that the development of holiday chalets as tourist accommodation is acceptable providing the proposals do not detract from the landscape quality of the area; do not generate large volumes of traffic; do not disturb the tranquil nature of the area; and do not have an adverse impact on nature conservation. The acceptability of the proposal in relation to these issues is discussed below.
33. It is noted that proposals for new tourist accommodation are also generally supported through national guidance in PPS7 and Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism, subject to having an acceptable impact on the environment and other material issues.
34. Whilst not of overriding justification because the proposal is only for a single holiday unit, it is recognised that there could be minor economic spin off to the local economy of the surrounding area from associated tourist activity and therefore this carries some weight in the consideration.

Impact on North Pennines AONB and surrounding area

35. The site is located within the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and therefore any development should not adversely impact on the special scenic qualities of this area. The proposed timber chalet would be located in a relatively isolated location which is not highly visible on approach from Crawleyside Bank. In terms of the wider setting of the AONB, it is considered that the proposed chalet would not adversely impact the character of the AONB as it would not be highly visible from any main vantage points because of existing tree cover. It is accepted that the site is located adjacent to a public right of way and the chalet would be partly visible to walkers. However, given that the chalet would be constructed from timber and proposed landscape treatment, it is considered that the chalet would adequately integrate into its surroundings and would not appear overly dominant. Some regard should also be given to the potential siting of a large number of touring caravans on the land opposite, which would further minimise the impact of the single timber chalet. The views from the right of way would therefore be localised and minimal.
36. The Council's Planning Policy and Design and Conservation sections have raised some concerns about the size and specific detailing of the proposed chalet. For the reasons indicated above and in the context of the development opposite it is not considered that the

chalet would be highly visible and adversely impact on the character and appearance of the special scenic qualities of the North Pennines AONB. In addition, the building would sit comfortably within a large site and the height of 5m is not considered excessive. Whilst the chalet would have four bedrooms, this is not unusually large for holiday accommodation and would cater for family and group demand. Because of the minimal harm to the character and appearance of the area, it is felt that a reduction in the size of the building is not justified.

37. The Planning Policy Team has also raised concerns that the chalet may become a residential unit. It is agreed that a residential unit in this location would not be acceptable but in line with general good practice it is considered that planning conditions can be used to ensure that holiday accommodation does not become permanent residential accommodation. Specific advice on this is given in the Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism. Conditions are therefore recommended to ensure that the holiday chalet does not become a permanent residential dwelling.
38. It is noted that the Public Rights of Way and Ecology Team have raised no objections to the proposal. The nature of the use and distance to surrounding residential properties means the proposal is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the living conditions of neighbours.
39. It is considered on balance that the proposed chalet would not have an adverse impact on the special scenic qualities of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and would not compromise the appearance of the open countryside and surrounding area. Specific conditions controlling the use of the chalet as holiday accommodation would provide some comfort that the chalet would not become a permanent residential use. The proposal would be in accordance with policies GD1, ENV1, ENV2, TM1 and TM2 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

Highway issues

40. The scale of development proposed is unlikely to create unacceptable volumes of traffic. A new vehicular entrance is proposed into the site from the adjacent lane. The Highways Officer has raised concerns with regards to existing visibility from this proposed entrance due to landscaping which is currently on the south boundary of the site. It is recommended that some of this landscaping is removed to achieve adequate visibility. Subject to this, the access would be considered acceptable. A condition is therefore proposed which would ensure that adequate visibility splays could be achieved, in the interests of highway safety. Given that some existing landscaping would have to be removed in order to facilitate a new entrance, it is considered reasonable to ask for new planting and landscaping to be planted elsewhere in the site which would help screen the proposed chalet. A landscaping condition is therefore recommended.
41. Given the above it is considered that the proposal would not compromise highway safety and would be in accordance with policies GD1 and T1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

Other matters

42. Stanhope Parish Council has raised a number of concerns with the proposed development. Issues relating to design, access and a permanent dwelling have been discussed in the sections above. The Parish Council also state that they feel there is an adequate supply of existing holiday lets within the Weardale area, however, there is no planning policy which restricts the number of holiday lets allowed in the Weardale area. Further comments also suggest that by approving this application it would create a precedent for future development. Any future development proposals would however, have to be determined on their own merits.
43. The letter of objection from a local resident raises concerns with the proposed access lane. This issue has been considered in the section above and the Highways Officer has confirmed that no objections are raised from a highways perspective subject to planning conditions seeking improvements to visibility.

CONCLUSION

44. The principle of a holiday chalet in the open countryside is considered acceptable and in line with local and national planning policies.
45. On balance, given the building would be well screened from any main vantage point and would be well integrated within its surroundings, it is not considered that the proposed timber holiday chalet would have a detrimental impact on the special scenic qualities of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
46. Standard planning conditions can be imposed to ensure that the proposed holiday chalet would not become permanent residential accommodation.
47. Adequate parking provision would be provided within the site and subject to improvements to the entrance, which can be sought through planning conditions, the proposed entrance into the site is considered acceptable and would not compromise highway safety.
48. The proposed timber holiday chalet would add to the range of tourist accommodation in the area and would make a minor contribution to the local economy of Stanhope and the wider Weardale area.
49. There would be no adverse impacts on neighbour amenity, ecology and the adjacent public right of way.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following **conditions and reasons**.

Conditions:

1. The development should not be begun later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the following approved plans:

Plan Ref No.	Description	Date Received
	Site Location Plan	13/12/2012
2257/001	Ground Floor Plan	13/12/2012
2257/002	First Floor Plan	13/12/2012
2257/003	North Elevation	13/12/2012
2257/004	South Elevation	13/12/2012
2257/005	East Elevation	13/12/2012
2257/006	West Elevation	13/12/2012
2257/008	Proposed Site/Block Plan	13/12/2012
2257/009	Roof Plan	13/12/2012

3. Before the development hereby approved commences, details of the colour finish of the external walls and roof shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.

4. Prior to the commencement of the development details of the surface treatment and construction of all hardsurfaced areas shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local planning authority. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.
5. Before the development hereby approved is commenced a scheme of landscaping shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development).
6. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first available planting season following the practical completion of the development (or occupation of buildings or commencement of use) and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the substantial completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.
7. Notwithstanding the information shown on the submitted plans, no development shall be commenced until details of the means of access, including the layout, construction and sight lines to be provided have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, and the chalet hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the approved access has been constructed in accordance with the approved details.
8. The timber chalet hereby approved shall be occupied for holiday purposes only and not as a person's sole or main place of residence. The operator of the timber chalet shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all occupiers of the timber chalet and of their main home addresses, and shall make such information available at all reasonable times to the local planning authority, upon request.

Reasons:

1. Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. To define the consent and ensure that a satisfactory form of development is obtained.
3. In the interest of the appearance of the area and to comply with policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
4. In the interest of the appearance of the area and to comply with policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
5. In the interest of the visual amenity of the area and to comply with policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
6. In the interest of the visual amenity of the area and to comply with policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
7. In the interests of highway safety and to comply with policies GD1 and T1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
8. In order to prevent permanent residential occupancy in accordance with PPS7.

REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

1. The proposal is considered acceptable having regard to policies GD1, ENV1, ENV2, TM1 and TM2 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
2. The special scenic qualities of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty would not be adversely compromised and the character and appearance of the open countryside and surrounding area would not be adversely affected.
3. The proposals would not compromise highway safety.
4. There would be no adverse impacts on neighbour amenity, ecology and the adjacent public right of way.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Submitted Application Forms and Plans
- North East of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (RSS)
- Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007
- Planning Policy Statements/Guidance
- Consultation Responses



Planning Services

ERECTION OF A TIMBER CHALET FOR HOLIDAY USE AT LAND TO THE WEST OF CRAWLEYSIDE, STANHOPE, BISHOP AUCKLAND, DL13 2DU

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