

- 1.2 The building would be located to the north-west of the site and orientated so that its short edge would run approximately parallel with the existing western site boundary. It would be within approximately 35m of the nearest residential properties located along the A68 to the south / south-west and 50m from the nearest properties on Bremenium Way to the east. The location and orientation of the building has been amended following comments received from the Parish Council and a local resident.
- 1.3 The building would have a footprint of 28m x 18m with an approximate eaves height of 3m and ridge height of 5m. It would be constructed from pre-cast concrete panels with Yorkshire boarding above and a double apex fibre cement sheet roof with Perspex roof lights.



Figure 2: Proposed site plan

- 1.4 The applicant has advised that the building will be used for the winter housing of sheep which would be bedded on straw. The building would then be used for sheep management during the spring and summer before being used to store winter fodder (hay) and bedding (straw) from the summer / autumn onwards until the sheep move back into the building in December / January in preparation for lambing.

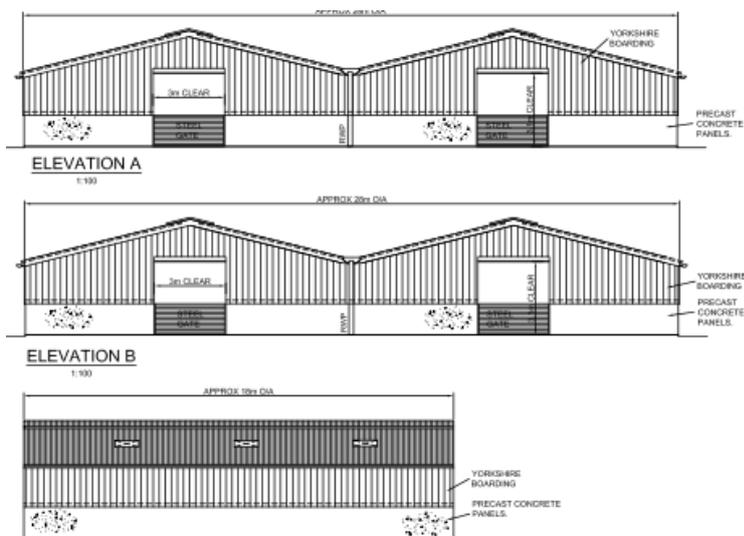


Figure 3: Proposed elevations

2. **Planning Policy & Guidance**

2.1 **National Policies**

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)(2018)
- National Planning Practice Guidance

2.2 **Local Policies**

- **Northumberland National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Policies (Core Strategy)(2009)**

Policy 1	Delivering Sustainable Development
Policy 3	General Development Principles
Policy 5	General Location of New Development
Policy 14	A Sustainable Local Economy
Policy 17	Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy 18	Cultural Heritage
Policy 19	Tranquillity
Policy 20	Landscape Quality and Character
Policy 21	Farming



2.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance

- NNPA Building Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (Design Guide SPD)
- NNPA Landscape Supplementary Planning Document (Landscape SPD)

3. Relevant Planning History

13NP0027 Change of Use of agricultural land to equestrian gallop and construction of new equestrian building, two farm buildings, horse walker and lunging pen. *Planning permission conditionally granted 16th July 2013.*

13NP0056 Approval of details reserved by condition No. 3 of planning permission 13NP0027 in respect of Change of Use of agricultural land to equestrian gallop and construction of new equestrian building, two farm buildings, horse walker and lunging pen. *Approved 5th August 2013.*

13NP0065 Creation of two residential units to provide staff accommodation for workers associated with Rochester House Farm or for holiday accommodation. *Planning permission conditionally granted 29th September 2015*

4. Consultee and Public Responses

4.1 Consultation originally took place on the 28th August 2018. Following receipt of revised plans changing the location and orientation of the building, re-consultation took place on the 26th September 2018. This expires on the 10th October 2018 and any updates will be reported orally at DMC.

4.2 **Rochester Parish Council: Objection (to the original consultation):** The Parish Council has decided to object to the application in its present format as the building would appear to:

- Have an adverse impact on the natural light of residents living nearby;
- Cause overshadowing and loss of outlook for the residents living within the site line;
- Potential impact on drainage and sewage system;
- Bring livestock into a shelter area in very close proximity to residential dwellings;

- Increased risk of odour issues for neighbouring properties arising from housing livestock in a barn for several weeks / months given the location and prevailing winds;
- Increased noise from agricultural vehicles servicing the livestock as well as the livestock itself.
- Concern over the smell is increased should the building be used for cattle and the Council would like to see this controlled should the application be approved in its current or revised format;

The main concern expressed is the proposed location of the building within the plot of land. The Council would welcome the chance to comment should a revised application be submitted with possibly a:

- Proposed alternative location that is further away from residential property;
- Plan to turn the buildings 90 degrees, thus reducing the line of sight to local residents.

As of 2nd October 2018, **comments are awaited** on the revised application. These are due by 10th October and will be reported orally at the meeting.

- 4.3 **Public Protection: No objection:** Subject to the inclusion of a suitably worded condition requiring the submission of an Odour Management Plan prior to first use of the building approved;
- 4.4 **NNPA Ecologist: No objection:** The shed is proposed on a very short grazed/poached field so there would be no loss of important habitat. There are no watercourses nearby and it is proposed to be used for sheep on straw bedding so there are unlikely to be issues with any run-off. Given the lack of vegetation on the site currently and the distance from surrounding trees, shrubs and buildings it is unlikely that there will be any adverse impacts on bats or other protected species.
- 4.5 **NNPA Historic Environment Officer: No objection:** Although the proposal lies within an area of possible archaeological sensitivity as set out in the Rochester Historic Village Atlas, on closer any analysis the proposal is unlikely to cause harm to significant heritage assets or their setting as the proposals is
- Some distance from known heritage assets;
 - Site in an area of little inter-visibility between heritage assets of high significance;
 - Situated within the broad envelope of the farmstead;



- Construction proposals are localised and limited with limited ground disturbance.

4.6 **NNPA Access & Recreation Officer: No objection** (to initial and revised consultation)

4.7 The application has been advertised by a site notice displayed on the 30th August 2018 and notification letters sent to 22 neighbouring properties. In response, one letter of objection has been received which can be summarised as follows:

- The application is on an elevated site and would tower over the nearest neighbouring properties;
- The building is too near residential properties, especially those to the rear;
- the storage of hay is a fire risk;
- It will affect the quality of life of pensioners in the Housing Association Bungalows as their view will be an enormous shed;
- It will cast a shadow and restrict the amount of light in houses;
- As it is located in the centre of the village, it will affect the whole village and will be visible on the skyline from the A68;
- The prevailing wind will blow odour into neighbouring houses;
- No means of draining effluent is shown on the plans;
- Existing trees shown on the plan are only 18 inches high and will not provide cover;
- Other better sites are available further away from residential dwellings and nearer the farmstead;
- An expert should check that bat flight paths won't be disturbed;
- The decision makers should visit the site before making a decision;
- The floor levels of the building should be lowered;
- A restriction should be placed saying it can't be used for horses or cattle;

4.8 One representation has also been received in support of the application which is summarised below:

- I fully support this application. The applicant has worked very hard to refurbish the farm and has proved to be a very good neighbour.



5. Assessment

Introduction

5.1 The key material planning considerations are:

- The principle of the development;
- Design;
- Residential amenity
- Impact upon National Park special qualities;
- Highways;
- Drainage.

The Principle of the development

- 5.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places emphasis on a presumption in favour of sustainable development to guide decision making. Policy 1 of the NNPA Core Strategy Local Development Framework (Core Strategy) seeks to ensure that development proposals will conserve or enhance the special qualities of the National Park. The effects of the proposed scheme on these qualities are discussed in more detail later in this report.
- 5.3 The application is located within Rochester which is identified within Core Strategy policy 5 as one of the smaller villages and hamlets where new development will be allowed where it contributes to the provision or protection of village services. Although not directly contributing to the protection or provision of village services, the proposal will help to maintain the ongoing viability of a business operating within the settlement. On balance, it is therefore considered that the proposals would accord with the requirements of policy 5.
- 5.4 Policy 14 states that the National Park Authority will support proposals which enable 'the expansion of existing employment uses particularly tourism, recreation, farming and other types of diversification which do not negatively impact on the special qualities. Core Strategy Policy 21 is supportive of proposals which enable farmers and farming to *'become more competitive and sustainable, to diversify and to demonstrate good environmental and farming practices'*. As the proposal relates to the provision of an agricultural building within an existing farmstead for which there is an identified need it is considered that the proposals are in accord with the requirements of Core Strategy policies 14 and 21.

Design

- 5.5 Core Strategy policy 3 seeks to ensure that new development is sympathetic to its setting both in terms of choice of materials and its relationship with existing buildings. The proposed building is of traditional agricultural design, being constructed from a combination of pre-cast concrete panels with Yorkshire boarding above and a fibre cement sheet roof and would have a modest ridge height of 5m. It is considered that the design of the building is appropriate to its setting and would complement the existing buildings within the wider farmstead. The proposals are considered to accord with the requirements of policy 3 in this regard.

Residential amenity

- 5.6 The application is to be located within an agricultural field. While the farmhouse and other agricultural / equine related buildings are located to the north, residential properties are located to the east, north-east, south-east and south / south-west of the proposed building. The closest residential properties are a row of houses which run parallel with the A68 to the south / south-west of the proposed building, the closest being at a distance of approximately 35m. This row of houses is at a lower elevation than the application site with their outlook towards the existing field bank. Existing woodland provides a degree of screening between the closest of these properties and the proposed building. On this basis, and given the distances involved, it is considered that any loss of light or overshadowing arising as a result of the proposals in relation to these buildings would not be of sufficient magnitude to warrant refusal of the application. Although the residents of these properties would experience a change of outlook, this would not in itself be a material planning consideration.
- 5.7 The Parish Council and a local resident objected to the originally proposed location of the building in part on the grounds of its proximity to properties on Bremenium Way and the potential for loss of light, overshadowing and loss of outlook. Concerns particularly related to numbers 3 and 4, the rear elevations of which would have faced directly towards the building. In its response, the Parish Council recommended that the location and orientation of the building be changed to move the building further from the dwellings on Bremenium Way and reduce its visual impact when viewed from these properties.



Figure 4: Original (left) and revised (right) site plan

- 5.8 While loss of a view / change of outlook is not in itself a material planning consideration, the applicant has responded to the concerns raised by changing both the location and orientation of the building, meaning that it would now be further from the properties on Bremenium Way (approximately 50m at its closest point) with views now towards it short rather than long edge. In addition, given the topography of the site with the western side lower than the eastern, the actual ridge height of 5m would now appear lower when viewed from the properties to the east.
- 5.9 In light of the above, it is again considered that any loss of light / overshadowing would be minimal and not of a sufficient magnitude to warrant refusal of the application. Similarly as the application relates to the provision of an agricultural building, it is not considered that there are any considerations in relation to overlooking / loss of privacy. While revised comments are awaited from the Parish Council and local residents, in light of the above assessment, it is considered that any harm to the residential amenity of neighbouring properties from loss of light / overshadowing would be insufficient to warrant refusal of the application.
- 5.10 The field in which the building is to be located is currently grazed by horses. The Design and Access Statement indicates that the building would be used to house sheep from the winter through to the end of lambing and also for sheep management activities during the spring and summer. Concerns have been raised over potential odours arising from the building. The applicant has advised that the use of extensive straw bedding will largely prevent odours from occurring. After lambing, the building will be cleared of straw and muck which will be carted directly out onto adjoining



farmland. The application indicates that an existing muck midden is to be utilised which is located along the track to Petty Knowes. The Design and Access Statement indicates that clearing the building will take less than a day a year.



Figure 4: View from site towards Bremenium Way

- 5.11 Public Protection have been consulted on the proposals and raised no objection. They have however recommended that a condition be attached to the permission requiring the submission of an Odour Management Plan prior to the building being brought in to use. On this basis, and subject to the imposition of a suitably worded condition, it is considered that there would not be grounds to refuse the application in relation to odour. This is in the context where other buildings within the farmstead are currently being used for livestock without complaint. However, should issues arise in the future, Northumberland County Council have powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to deal with odours (including those from agricultural buildings) where they are considered to be creating a statutory nuisance.
- 5.12 Concerns have also been raised should the building be used for livestock other than sheep i.e. cattle. However, in the absence of information to suggest that the shed would be used for livestock other than sheep, or that an alternative use would be more harmful, it is not considered proportionate to attach a condition restricting the use to sheep. Again, it is considered that the submission of an Odour Management Plan should ensure odour issues are adequately addressed, although, as noted above, should odour become an issue in the future, NCC would have powers to address this through the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Impact upon National Park special qualities

Cultural Heritage

- 5.13 Core Strategy policy 18 is supportive of proposals which will 'conserve, enhance and promote the quality and integrity of the cultural heritage of the National Park'. As the application site is located in area of archaeological sensitivity, identified within the Historic Village Atlas for Rochester, the NNPA Historic Environment Officer has been consulted on the proposals.
- 5.14 The Historic Environment Officer has raised no objection to the proposals. While recognising that the application is located within an area of possible archaeological sensitivity, closer analysis indicates that the proposal is unlikely to cause harm to significant heritage assets or their setting. This view has been taken on the basis that the application is located some distance away from known heritage assets of high significance so as to avoid direct harm. It is situated in an area where there is little inter-visibility between heritage assets of high significance and the proposals are within the broad envelope of the farmstead. In addition, the construction proposals are localised with limited ground disturbance. As such the proposals are considered to accord with the requirement of Core Strategy policy 18.

Biodiversity

- 5.15 The proposals relate to development within a heavily grazed agricultural field surrounded by existing development. However, as an objection has been received on the grounds that the building could affect bat flight lines, the NNPA ecologist has been consulted. The Ecologist has raised no objection, highlighting the lack of important habitat to be affected and the low potential for any run-off given that the sheep are to be housed on straw bedding. Given the lack of vegetation on the site currently and the distance from surrounding trees, shrubs and buildings, the Ecologist has advised that it is unlikely that there will be any adverse impacts on bats or other protected species. The proposals are therefore considered to be consistent with the requirements of Core Strategy policy 17.

Landscape

- 5.16 Core Strategy policy 20 states that '*The natural beauty and heritage of the National Park will be conserved and enhanced whilst being responsive to landscape change*'.

A concern has been raised in relation to the potential impact of the building on the character of the settlement.

- 5.17 In this instance the proposals relate to development within a largely enclosed site. As such, views of the development, other than from neighbouring residential properties the impact of which is considered in relation to amenity (above), would largely be restricted to the immediate vicinity of the proposal, including a small section of the A68 to the immediate south. While, it is likely that upper part of the building could be viewed from this section of the A68, the building would be lower than the two storey dwellings on Bremenium Way which are already visible and would be seen as an agricultural building within an agricultural setting. On this basis it is considered that any impact on landscape would be of an insufficient magnitude to warrant refusal of the application. The proposals are therefore considered to accord with the requirements of Core Strategy policy 20.



Figure 5: View from the A68 showing properties on Bremenium Way – the building would be located behind the visible area

Tranquility

Dark Skies

- 5.18 While the submitted plans do not indicate that there would be any external lighting required as part of the proposal, as the site is within the Dark Sky Park, it is considered appropriate to attach a condition to restrict the installation of any external lighting required in association with the proposed development without approval first

being sought from the Authority. Subject to a suitably worded condition, it is considered that the proposals would accord with the requirements of Core Strategy Policy 19.

Noise

The proposals relate to the provision of an agricultural building within an agricultural field which is currently grazed by horses and livestock. While the proposals may result in some intensification of use, it is not considered that noise levels would be increased by a magnitude sufficient to warrant refusal of the application with any additional noise being at least partly mitigated by virtue of the livestock being housed within a building.

Highways

- 5.19 Access to the building will be via the existing farm access from the A68. Given the nature of the building it is not considered that the proposals will generate significantly more vehicle movements to or from the public highway than under the present arrangements. It is therefore considered that the proposals will not have a detrimental effect on highway safety in accordance with the requirements of Core Strategy policy 3.

Drainage

- 5.20 Concerns have been raised over the potential impact on the foul and surface water drainage systems. However, the application form indicates that the building won't be connected to the existing foul drainage system. Instead, livestock are to be bedded on deep straw, with the bedding and waste removed and spread on adjacent agricultural land once lambing has finished. It is not considered that this method would produce any significant run off. Similarly, given the size of the building, it is not considered that the proposals would generate significant surface water run-off. However, the revised location of the building is adjacent to the existing surface water drainage arrangements located within the farmyard.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The development is considered to be acceptable in principle as, on balance, the development is considered to accord with the requirements of policies 5, 14 and 21. It is also considered to meet the requirements of Policy 3 and 20 in respect of the quality of design, impacts on residential amenity and local landscape character. The scheme also accords with Core Strategy Policies 17, 18 and 19 as it will not have a

detrimental impact upon the special qualities of the National Park. Subject to the inclusion of a number of planning conditions it is considered that the scheme would accord with the Core Strategy policies, SPD Guidance and national planning policies.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 Members are recommended to delegate Authority to the Head of Development Management to grant conditional planning permission subject to no new material planning considerations being received within the consultation period and subject to the following planning conditions and informatives.

Conditions

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, as required by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004)

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Planning application form received 22nd August 2018;
- Proposed plans and elevations, Dwg no 001, Rev D, received 22nd August 2018
- Existing site plan Dwg no 002, Rev A, received 22nd August 2018;
- Proposed site plan, Dwg no 003, Rev D, received 25th September 2018;
- Design and Access Statement including Heritage Statement, received 26th September 2018;

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt, to enable the Local Planning Authority to adequately manage the development and to ensure the proposal accords with policies 1, 3, 5, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy & Development Policies Document (Core Strategy) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)



3. Prior to the fixing of any external lighting associated with the development hereby approved, details of the external lighting shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Details should include:

- The specific location of all external lighting units;
- Design of all lighting units;
- Details of beam orientation and lux levels; and
- Any proposed measures such as motion sensors and timers that will be used on lighting units.

The approved lighting scheme shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and shall be maintained as such during the operation of the development, unless removed.

Reason: In order to ensure that there is no harmful impact upon the tranquility and intrinsically dark character of Northumberland National Park and the Northumberland International Dark Sky Park through excessive light pollution, in accordance with Policies 1 and 19 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 180 of the NPPF.

4. The development shall not be brought in to use until the applicant has provided an Odour Management Plan to the Local Planning Authority for written approval, with the approved plan implemented in full.

Reason: To protect residential amenity in accordance with Core Strategy policy 3 and the NPPF.

Informative Notes

1. This planning permission is granted in strict accordance with the approved plans. It should be noted however that:
 - (a) Any variation from the approved plans following commencement of the development, irrespective of the degree of variation, may constitute unauthorised development and may be liable to enforcement action.
 - (b) You, your agent, or any other person responsible for implementing this permission should inform the Local Planning Authority immediately of any proposed variation from the approved plans and ask to be advised as to the best method to resolve the matter. Most proposals for variation to the approved plans will require the submission of a new application.

2. This consent is granted subject to conditions and it is the owner and the person responsible for the implementation of the development who will be fully responsible for their compliance throughout the development and beyond. Some conditions may require work to be carried out, or details to be approved prior to the commencement of the development.

Where pre-commencement conditions are not complied with, the whole of the development could be unauthorised, and you may be liable to enforcement action. In some circumstances, the only way to rectify the situation may be through the submission of a new application. If any other type of condition is breached then you may be liable to a breach of condition notice.

3. For the avoidance of doubt, the building hereby approved relates to the provision of an agricultural building only, which excludes equine use.

Contact Officer:

For further information contact Colin Godfrey Planning Officer Development Management on 01434 611577 or e-mail: planning@nnpa.org.uk

Background Papers:

Planning Application File: 18NP0077

EIA Screening Opinion: 18NP0077



18NP0077 Rochester House, Rochester

Northumberland National Park Authority

