

North York Moors National Park Authority

Scarborough Borough Council (South) Parish: Darncombe-Cum-Langdale End	App Num. NYM/2014/0842/FL
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Proposal: construction of two storey extension to provide 8 self-contained units for trainee monks and associated living space together with construction of boiler/storage building (revised scheme to NYM/2013/0639/FL)

Location: St. Athanasius Monastery, Langdale End

Applicant: Christian Coptic Orthodox Church, 40 Kingston Drive, Whitley Bay, NE26 1J

Agent: Simon Ward (Scarborough) Ltd, 3 Coldyhill Lane, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO12 6SF

Date for Decision: 09 March 2015

Grid Ref: SE493396 491578

Director of Planning's Recommendation

Approval subject to the following conditions:

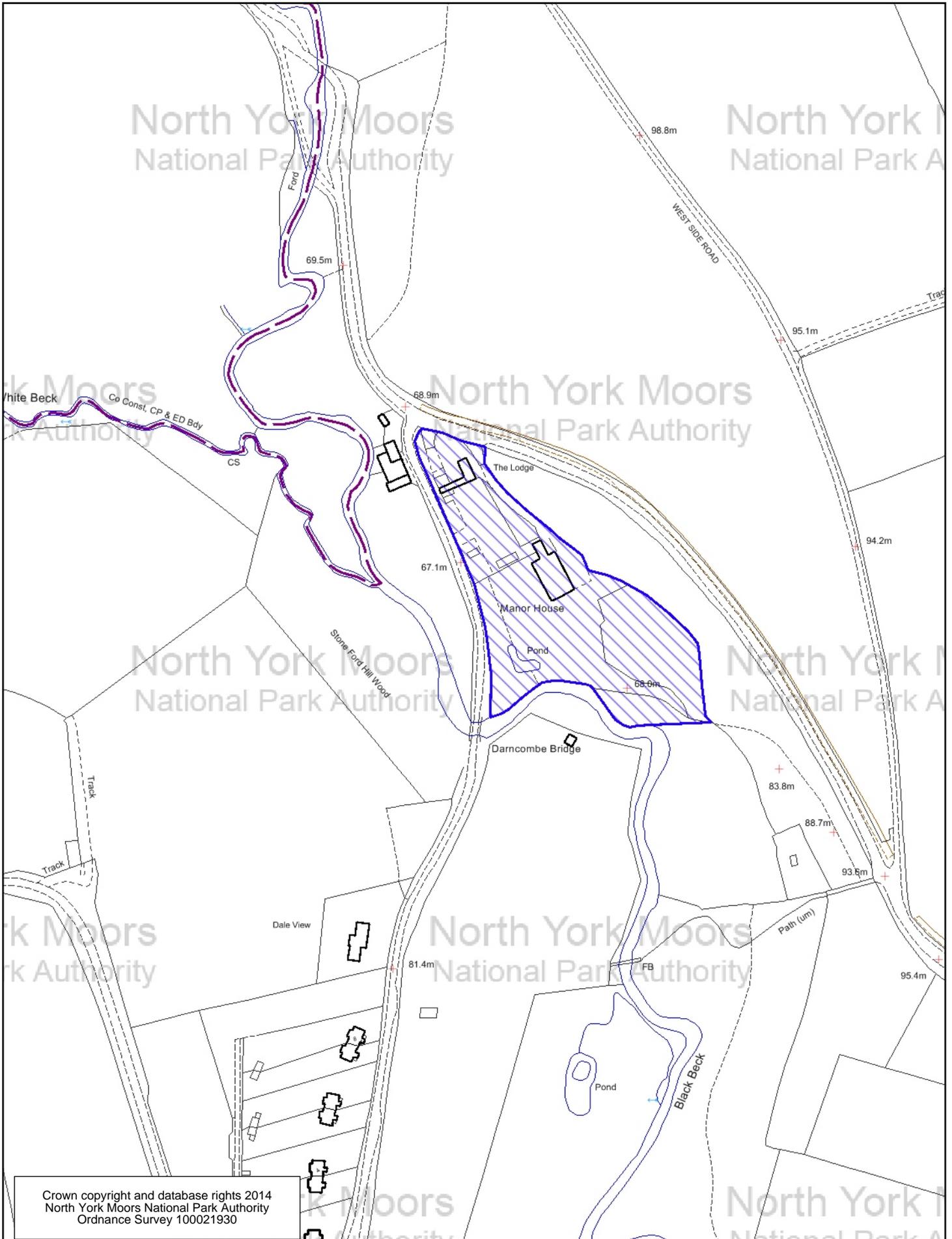
1. TIME01 Standard Three Year Commencement Date
2. PLAN01 Strict Accordance With the Documentation Submitted or Minor Variations
3. RSUO00 The premises shall not be used other than as a monastery and the various rooms shall only be used for the uses as specified on the approved plans and shall not be used for any other purpose (including any other purpose in Class C2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 2010, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order.
4. GACS07 External Lighting - Submit Details
5. MATS06 Stone Panel
6. MATS13 Roof Tiles to Match Existing
7. MATS41 Windows - Match Existing
8. MATS46 Window Frames in Reveals to Match Existing
9. MATS70 Guttering Fixed by Gutter Spikes
10. MATS72 Black Coloured Rainwater Goods
11. DRGE12 Foul Drainage to Private Treatment Plant
12. HWAY09 No part of the development shall be brought into use until the existing western access serving the rear of the existing cottage on to Langdale End Road has been permanently closed off and the highway restored. These works shall be in accordance with details which have been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. No new access shall be created without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority.



North York Moors National Park
 Authority
 The Old Vicarage
 Bondgate
 Helmsley YO62 5BP
 01439 772700

Application Number: NYM/2014/0842/FL

Scale: 1:2500



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Conditions (continued)

13. HWAY10 There shall be no access or egress by any vehicles between the highway and the application site (except for the purposes of constructing the initial site access) until splays are provided giving clear visibility of 45 metres measured along both channel lines of the major road Darncombe Road from a point measured 2.4 metres down the centre line of the access road. The eye height will be 1.05 metres and the object height shall be 0.6 metres. Once created, these visibility areas shall be maintained clear of any obstruction and retained for their intended purpose at all times
14. HWAY10 There shall be no access or egress by any vehicles between the highway and the application site (except for the purposes of constructing the initial site access) until splays are provided giving clear visibility of 70 metres east and 50 metres west measured along both channel lines of the major road Langdale End Road from a point measured 2.4 metres down the centre line of the access road. The eye height will be 1.05 metres the object height shall be 0.6 metres. Once created, these visibility areas shall be maintained clear of any obstruction and retained for their intended purpose at all times.
15. HWAY10 There shall be no access or egress by any vehicles between the highway and the application site (except for the purposes of constructing the initial site access) until splays are provided giving clear visibility of 70 metres east and 60 metres west measured along both channel lines of the major road Langdale End Road from a point measured 2.4 metres down the centre line of the access road. The eye height will be 1.05 metres and the object height shall be 0.6 metres. Once created, these visibility areas shall be maintained clear of any obstruction and retained for their intended purpose at all times.
16. HWAY18A There shall be no access or egress by any vehicles between the highway and the application site until details of the precautions to be taken to prevent the deposit of mud, grit and dirt on public highways by vehicles travelling to and from the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. These facilities shall include the provision of wheel washing facilities where considered necessary by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. These precautions shall be made available before any excavation or depositing of material in connection with the construction commences on the site and be kept available and in full working order and used until such time as the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority agrees in writing to their withdrawal
17. HWAY24 Unless approved otherwise in writing by the Local Planning Authority there shall be no establishment of a site compound, site clearance, demolition, excavation or depositing of material in connection with the construction on the site until proposals have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for the provision of:
- a. on-site parking capable of accommodating all staff and sub-contractors vehicles clear of the public highway
 - b. on-site materials storage area capable of accommodating all materials required for the operation of the site.
 - c. The approved areas shall be kept available for their intended use at all times that construction works are in operation.

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Informatives

1. In relation to condition 12 these works shall include, where appropriate, replacing kerbs, footways, cycleways and verges to the proper line and level.
2. You are advised that a separate licence will be required from the Highway Authority in order to allow any works in the adopted highway to be carried out. The 'Specification for Housing and Industrial Estate Roads and Private Street Works' published by North Yorkshire County Council, the Highway Authority, is available at the County Council's offices. The local office of the Highway Authority will also be pleased to provide the detailed constructional specification referred to in this condition.
3. In relation to conditions 13 - 15 an explanation of the terms used above is available from the Highway Authority.

Consultations

Parish – Strongly objects to this application as submitted.

The proposals will result in a considerable over-intensification of use on the site and the tranquillity of the area will be irrevocably altered. The increased amount of traffic during construction and in servicing the development on completion will be considerable - the access roads are only just above single vehicle width and passing places are very limited. There is also the potential that the proposals will further reduce the sustainability and self-sufficiency of the complex. The infrastructure of the area cannot cope with the increase in size of the existing property. The ostensibly self-supporting lifestyle has already resulted in several other planning application for agricultural buildings - the amount of remaining land available is increasingly limited, yet an increase in occupants will result in yet more intensification.

Council therefore **objects** to the application as proposed on the grounds:-

- that the scale of this development and level of activity of this development will have an unacceptable impact on the wider landscape, the quiet enjoyment of the park and the quality of life of the local residents. As such, the proposal is therefore contrary to Core Policy A of the NYM Local Development Framework.
- that due to its size, scale, design and massing the proposed development would entirely dominate the site and existing property having a detrimental impact on the character of the host dwelling and the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Development Policy 3 of the NYM Local Development Framework.
- that the proposal seeks permission for a substantial new build training/residential facility in the open countryside - this is contrary to Development Policy 10 of the NYM Local Development Framework which only permits such facilities to be provided through the conversion of existing buildings.
- that the proposed access to the development and the width of the adjoining public highway would give rise to additional large vehicles waiting in the carriageway which would cause interference with the free flow of traffic and consequent danger to highway users, detrimental to Development Policy 23 of the NYM Local Development Framework.

Highways - In assessing the submitted proposals and reaching its recommendation the Local Highway Authority has taken into account the following matters:

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Consultations (continued)

The existing monastery building is situated in a converted domestic dwelling, with a large carpark accessed from Darncombe Road. There are two further accesses which serve the existing buildings both have large hedges which have an impact on the available visibility. The previously recommended visibility splays have been attached to this application in order to maintain the maximum achievable for highway safety. As the large main carpark serves the cottages, the static caravan and the existing monastery building, the western access from Langdale End Road to the rear of the cottage should be closed to improve the highway safety, as the visibility does not meet the required standard. Consequently the Local Highway Authority recommends that the highway conditions be attached to any permission granted.

Yorkshire Water – Water supply - It is the developer's responsibility to ensure that an adequate supply of water can be made available and the development will not interfere with Yorkshire Water's rights of access to apparatus.

Waste Water - This area is not served by the public sewerage network and the proposal should be referred to the Environment Agency and Environmental Health for comment on private treatment facilities.

Environmental Health Officer - No objections on housing grounds.

Site Notice Expiry Date - 10 February 2015

Environment Agency – We are aware that the applicant intends on replacing the septic tank with a treatment plant. As stated in the planning application, this should offer an environmental improvement according to the foul drainage hierarchy. We therefore have no objections to this development.

Others - Brian E Richardson & Barbara J Carter, 4 Darncombe Bungalows, Langdale End, Scarborough

This application is smaller than the previously submitted application in 2013 and will be more in keeping with the existing structure but there were six reasons for refusal and I believe that four of those reasons have not and cannot be addressed by the applicant given the road system etc.

Flooding is also an issue and as a resident of Darncombe, I am very reluctant to see further development within our vicinity, or any other part of the NYMNP for that matter unless it is to replace an existing building.

Robert E J Howes – Darncombe Farm, Langdale End, Scarborough –

I wish to draw your attention to a number of points which outline my opposition to the above application:

- This will lead to severe damage to the existing road system, which will be to the detriment to local residents and visitors alike, especially near the Hackness Grange area.
- The road leading to Darncombe Village, Backleys Farm, Deepdale East and West is a single carriageway with a road width of 2.7m (9ft) to 3m (10ft). The current practice of lorries making deliveries to Athanasius Monastery is to park on this road and not move until offloading is completed. This has resulted in residents being late for work or for appointments and it has the same effect on people with appointments coming into the village. This situation is going to exasperate this situation if this development is allowed to happen with the amount of building material which would be delivered.

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Others (continued)

- With regard to the proposed site of the original development reference NYM/2013/0639/FL – please refer to the photographs showing the severed following in this area from the Black Beck. Surely after looking back at these photographs this area must be classed as a floodplain therefore unsuitable for development.

Background

St. Athanasius Monastery is located in substantial grounds in a relatively isolated location at the junction of the Langdale End Road and the hamlet of Darncombe. The monastery buildings are set at the bottom of a steep slope from the road that leads from Langdale End to Bickley and is only partially visible from public viewpoints.

The Monastery has been operating in a former domestic property for decades, and in 2008, a retrospective planning application was submitted and approved for the continued use of the building as a Monastery. Since then various applications have been submitted for various relatively minor works and improvements to the site.

Planning permission was refused in 2012 for the erection of a substantial two storey 'hotel style' extension with solar panels on the roof, to provide 25 self-contained units for trainee monks.

The proposed extension was to be located on the eastern side of the existing building and be linked to the eastern side of the existing building, providing the accommodation over two floors with dining room, kitchen, and lounge and laundry room incorporated into the ground floor.

A revised planning application was submitted which attempted to overcome the previous refusal reasons. The design of the proposal was improved with a reduction in the overall height, but the number of units was only been reduced by 3 to 22.

That application was refused due to the impact of the size and scale of the development on both the host dwelling and the local area, a lack over overriding circumstances to outweigh these impacts, and concerns about traffic generation and inadequate public highway network.

This current application seeks consent for a further revised scheme which has now been significantly reduced in scale and seeks consent for an extension on the northern end of the building to provide eight self-contained first flats for trainee monks. The accommodation proposed would provide accommodation on ground, 1st and attic floor level. It will create a fully self-contained section of the monastery comprising a communal kitchen, dining room and four cells at ground floor, a communal lounge and four cells at first floor level and a library, and a wc and storage area at attic floor level.

The proposed extension would reflect and follow the character of the host building in design, scale and materials. The first part of the extension would have the same ridge height as the existing building and would mirror the front gable details and rear dormer details, but would have a significantly lower eaves height. This element would extend 11.25m wide. The extension would then step down with the ridge measuring 1.8m lower than the existing building and would measure 9.5m wide. It is also proposed to install an array of solar panels on the roof slopes of the front gable.

In terms of foul and surface water drainage, it is proposed to install a new treatment plant in the form of an underground chamber which will discharge direct into Black Beck.

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Background (continued)

In terms of renewable energy, in addition to the solar panels, it is proposed to incorporate a bio-mass boiler to meet heating and hot water requirements for both the existing and proposed building. This will result in the removal of the existing oil fired boiler.

The site has Black Beck, a tributary of the River Derwent, running along its western and southern boundaries and the Beck has been subject to flooding in the past and Flood Zones do cross the site. The car park and some of the existing outbuildings are in Flood Zone 3, and the remainder of the site including the existing monastery building and the proposed extension are in Flood Zone 1. The floor level of the proposed extension runs through at the same level as the existing building which is well over a metre higher than the bank top of the beck, which gives reasonable level protection above initial flood plain level.

In support of the application, the applicant's agent states that:

The Monastery's first aim is to provide a quiet retreat for many monks who work in and around the Coptic dioceses of Great Britain. It is the place where the monks can meet their Bishop or where monks can gather for the general development of their spiritual care. The Monastery is virtually self-sufficient as a variety of produce and animals are kept by the monks.

The Monastery acts as a residence for a small number of monks, as a training centre for people who wish to become monks (novices) and as a short term retreat. Once on site, monks, novices and short term visitors are not allowed to leave, other than for special circumstances, during their stay. This Monastery is the only one serving the church in Great Britain and consequently, demand for accommodation is high.

There are currently 15 monks that serve the UK and three novices but the accommodation can't cater for them. The monastery currently has living accommodation for five resident monks but not in the form of proper cells. The cottages on the site provide short stay accommodation for six people and the static caravan can accommodate a further three. All share a chapel, a lounge, a dining room and a library. This does not fulfil the normal requirements of the church. The cells are of the size proposed because no one else is allowed to enter a private bedroom so separate reception space is required to receive other monks.

Main Issues

Policy Context

There are no specific Central Government or Local Development Framework Policies relating to monastic development. This proposal is, like most other sizable development proposals in this National Park, one where the broad aims and objectives of the Authority's policy documents as well as our statutory purposes, must be the main considerations in assessing its impact and acceptability or otherwise, together with the merits of the proposal and its impact on planning interests. As there are no policies in the Local Development Framework that are directly relevant to the expansion of this type of facility in open countryside, the application therefore has to be assessed against the most relevant policies from the Local Development Framework

Core Policy A of the NYM Local Development Framework seeks to ensure that new development conserves and enhances the Park's special qualities; with priority being given to ensuring development is of a scale and level of activity that will not have an adverse impact on the wider

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Main Issues (continued)

landscape or the quiet enjoyment of the Park, does not detract from the quality of life of local residents and supports the character of a settlement. It also states within the text of this policy that the Park is not expected to be a location for major development schemes.

Core Policy B allows for certain types of new development in open countryside although they are generally those where there is an essential need to locate in the countryside. Although this is not the case with a Monastery and associated training facilities, given that the Monastery is already in situ and appears to be a thriving community, it would be reasonable to support an extension to the operation in principle.

Core Policy D of the NYM Local Development Framework seeks to address the cause of climate change and contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in a number of ways, including generating energy from renewable sources where they are a scale and design appropriate to the locality, and which contribute towards meeting domestic, community or business energy needs within the National Park. This includes requiring commercial development of over 200sqm to generate energy on-site from renewable sources to displace at least 10% of predicted CO² emissions.

Development Policy 1 seeks to ensure that the special qualities of the National Park are conserved and enhanced, and consequently seeks to only permit development where, amongst other criteria, it will not have an unacceptable impact on surface and ground water.

Development Policy 3 supports proposals where the scale and massing are compatible with surrounding buildings and will not have an adverse effect upon the amenities of adjoining occupiers.

Development Policy 10 of the NYM Local Development Framework seeks to restrict the expansion of existing training facilities, including new buildings, to within the main built up areas of the villages within the National Park. Within the open countryside, only the re-use of existing buildings of sound construction are considered.

Development Policy 23 seeks to effectively minimise the overall need for journeys and reduce the environmental impacts of traffic on the National Park by permitting development where its location is capable of being accessed by public transport, walking or cycling, where there are existing public rights of way, and it is of a scale where the adjacent road network has the capacity to serve without detriment to highway safety.

Design and Materials

The existing Monastery, whilst once a large family property, has a simple and modest 'arts and crafts' style and is set within a quiet and secluded part of the Park with relatively low levels of activity. The revised plans to extend the property although large (with a footprint of 240.87m²) are considered to be subservient to the scale of the original building. The bulk and mass of the proposed extension has been further mitigated through the use of the roof space and dormer windows. The property is situated on a large plot of land in an isolated location and therefore the proposed extensions will not be visible from wider views. Consequently, although significant in scale the proposals are not considered to conflict with the requirements set out in Development Policy 3

Access and parking

The provision of eight self-contained units will allow the accommodation to be used by trainees who will remain on site for long periods of time and as such traffic generation is likely to be limited. The

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Main Issues (continued)

proposed extensions are not considered to have an adverse impact on the special qualities of this part of the National Park and therefore comply with Core Policy A.

New Training Development

Whilst this proposal seeks permission for a new build development in the open countryside to provide training facilities and does not strictly accord with Development Policy 10, it does relate to an expansion of an existing facility which would not be visually intrusive in the immediate or wider landscape and therefore is considered to be with the spirit of the policy.

Renewable Energy

In terms of criteria set out in Core Policy D in relation to renewable energy, the proposal would include the provision of solar panels and a biomass boiler which will contribute significantly to the energy requirements of the new building without having a detrimental impact on the wider landscape and would therefore be in accordance with Core Policy D.

Management Plan

Approval would support and maintain the monastic culture and traditions of the Park in accordance with the objections Core Policy 4.

Recommendation

In view of the above considerations it is considered that the reason for refusal of the previous scheme has been overcome and approval is recommended.

Explanation of how the Authority has Worked Positively with the Applicant/Agent

The Authority's Officers have appraised the scheme against the Development Plan and other material considerations and confirmed to the applicant/agent that the development is likely to maintain the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.