

North York Moors National Park Authority

Scarborough Borough Council (South)	App No. NYM/2018/0653/FL
Parish: Darncombe-Cum-Langdale End	
Proposal: construction of Church with associated vehicular access and landscaping works	
Location: St Athanasius Monastery, Langdale End	
Applicant: Coptic Orthodox Monastery, fao: Rev Arsenius, St Athanasius Monastery, Langdale End, Scarborough, YO13 0LH	
Agent: BHD Partnership, fao: Mr N Duffield, Airy Hill Manor, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO21 1QB	
Date for Decision: 10 December 2018	Grid Ref: 493397 491587

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 – Document No's Specified
3. RSUO01 Use Restricted to That Specifically Proposed
4. RSUO00 The church facility hereby approved shall only be used in conjunction with the existing building on the site known as St. Athanasius Monastery and shall remain ancillary to that monastery, and shall not be sold or leased separately without a further grant of planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.
5. GACS07 External Lighting – Submit Details
6. GACO00 No bells (either electronic or manual) shall be operated from the site without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.
7. GACS17 Levels – Development – Submit
8. MATS02 Stone and Tiles to be Approved
9. MATS00 No work shall commence on the construction of the external elevations of the building hereby approved until a one metre square freestanding panel of stonework showing the type of stone and stonework to be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted has been constructed on site and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All new stonework shall match that of the approved panel both in terms of the stone used and the coursing, jointing and mortar mix and finish exhibited in the panel unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The stone panel constructed shall be retained on the development site until the development hereby approved has been completed.
10. MATS19 Roof Colouring
11. MATS60 Windows and Doors – Timber
12. DRGE01 Surface Water and Foul Drainage Details
13. HWAY07 Private Access/Verge Crossings: Construction Requirements
14. HWAY14A Details of Access, Turning and Parking
15. HWAY15 Parking Spaces to Remain Available for Vehicle Parking
16. LNDS04 Trees/Hedging Retained in Accordance With Plans

Application No: NYM/2018/0653/FL

Continued conditions

- | | | |
|-----|--------|---|
| 17. | LNDS08 | Arboricultural Method Statement |
| 18. | LNDS11 | Details of Access Surfacing to be Submitted |
| 19. | MISC00 | The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the mitigation measures set out in Section 6 of the submitted Bat Survey dated August 2018 prepared by Astute Ecology. |
| 20. | MISC13 | CO ₂ Details to be Submitted proposed methods |

Informatives

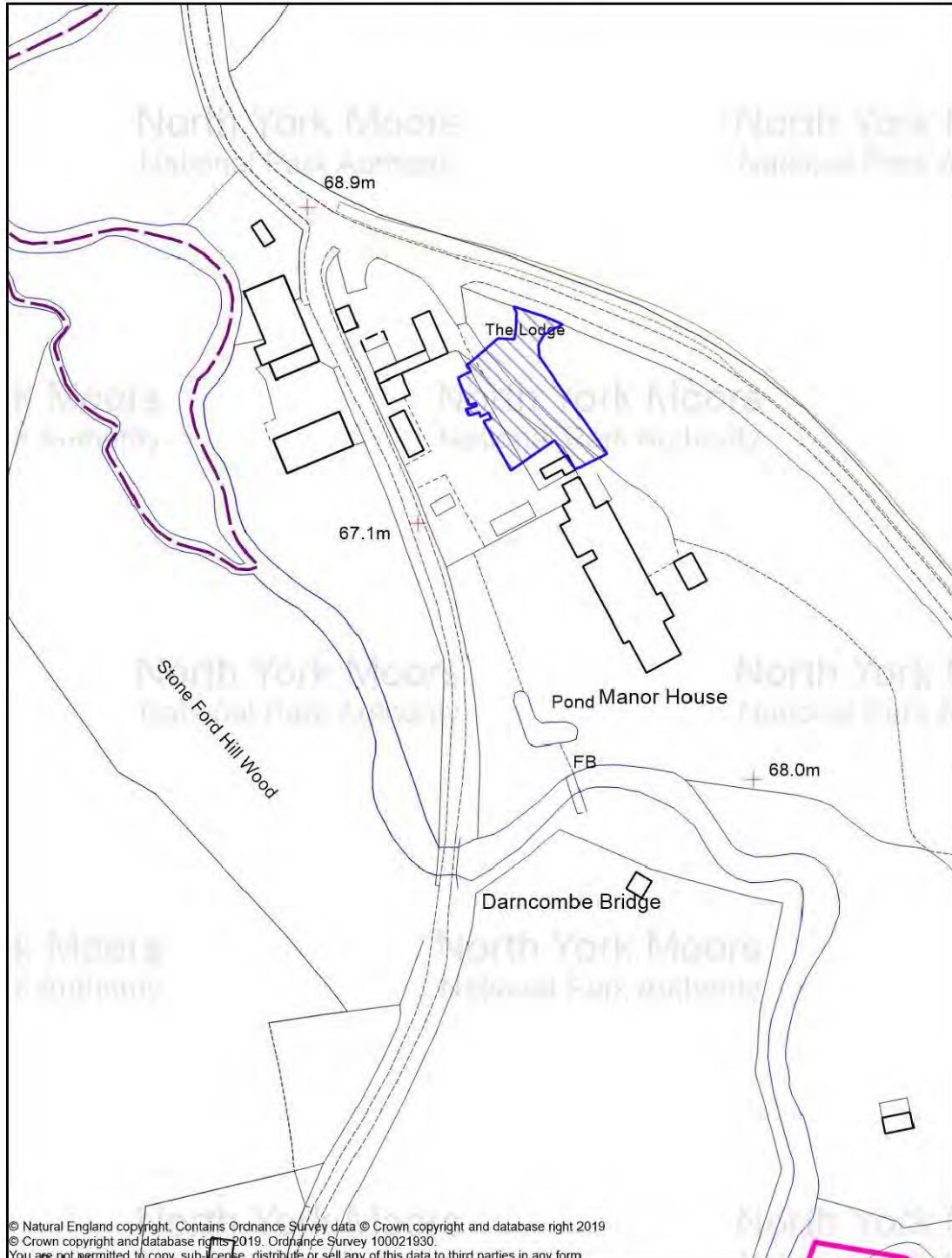
- | | | |
|----|-----------|--|
| 1. | HWAYINFO4 | Permanent Site Construction Access |
| 2. | HWAYINF10 | Details of Access, Turning and Parking |



North York Moors
National Park
Authority

Application Number: NYM/2018/0653/FL

Scale: 1:1250



© Natural England copyright. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2019
© Crown copyright and database rights 2019. Ordnance Survey 100021930.
You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.



Application No: NYM/2018/0653/FL

Consultations

12/11/2019 - Parish - Object - While Councillors can appreciate the Monastery's need for a Church, the design is completely out of keeping for the area and will result in a building which looks totally alien in the landscape. It will be contrary to Core Policy A points 1, 2 and 4, Core Policy B points 5c and 5d, Core Policy G, and Development Policy 3 (Design) points 1, 2 and 6 of the Local Development Framework.

16/12/2019 - Revised plans - doesn't overcome objections.

19/11/2019 - Highways - During consultations with the applicant regarding the number of worshippers and their method of transport to the site, the applicant has stated there could be approximately 100 external visitors to the Church, who are not resident at the Monastery. These visitors have been, and would be travelling by coach, along narrow winding rural lanes. Although this is not ideal, the alternative would be for visitors to travel by individual vehicles which would result in congestion along the route to the site. The application form states that the carpark size would be increased from 28 spaces currently to 30 spaces but no drawings have been provided to show this. The drawings submitted show the carpark will be reducing to 20 spaces which includes a disabled space. This would result in visitor's vehicles parking outside of the site, restricting the width of the already narrow roads and damaging verges in the vicinity. The applicants are proposing to construct a new access to the rear of the Church, which is now proposed to extend around the monastery building to access the carpark. This would create an entrance via the new access and an exit via the existing carpark, a solution which is preferred by the local highway authority, although the design does not show whether the coaches could negotiate the route around the Monastery building. The applicant should demonstrate that coaches can negotiate the proposed new access, the route around the Monastery into the carpark and the exit before the proposed new Church building is given consent.

Consequently, conditions are recommended regarding access details and turning and manoeuvring details.

5/11/2018 - Environmental Health Officer - Commercial Regulation - No objections.

7/12/2019 - Revised plans - no objections

9/11/2018 - Environment Agency - No objection on flood risk grounds. In terms of foul drainage, if connection to the mains is not feasible, then information regarding alternative drainage should be submitted for approval.

4/2/2019 - Revised plans - no further comments.

26/10/2018 - Forestry Commission - standing advice in relation to Ancient Woodland and veteran trees.

Police – Traffic -

Site Notice Expiry Date - 4 December 2018

Application No: NYM/2018/0653/FL

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 this former domestic property for many years, 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 granted in 2014 for the construction of an extension on the northern end of the building to provide eight self-contained first floor flats for trainee Monks. This has been built and provides accommodation on ground, 1st and attic floor level, creating 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 w.c. and storage area at attic floor level.

This current application seeks full planning permission to construct a Church to serve the Monastery. The Church would be sited at the north-western end of the site, adjacent to the existing car park. It is also proposed to improve an existing access into the site and create a driveway around the building to create an in and out vehicular entrance to the site.

The Church building would measure 38m long x 22.5m wide with a height of 5.5m with two domed towers at the northern end measuring 8.4m high. The interior of the Church would comprise ground floor and basement. With the congregation area and baptism area at ground floor and refectory and community hall, kitchen and meeting rooms at basement level.

The building would be designed to reflect the Egyptian Coptic Orthodox traditional Churches, but would be constructed of stone to match the local vernacular with a curved dark grey grp roof.

The Church would be constructed into rising land and a number of trees would need to be removed, however, the boundary tree planting would remain in place.

In support of the application the applicant and agent have provided the following information regarding the proposal:

- The Church will provide service space for congregation of up to 100 people.
- The congregation requires space during the service for prostrating themselves.
- The additional congregation arrives in three buses. This occurs now but the existing facilities are far from adequate. In terms of traffic the expectation is for the current levels to remain. They will use the existing car park.
- Primary use of the Function Room is for part of the Service. The congregation fast for 9 hrs, pray and then eat, all as part of the Service.
- Other use of the function room will be ad-hoc and relatively minor. The Monastery offers such assets to the local community who will use it but not in large numbers.
- A large treatment plant was installed as part of the recent extension to the Monastery; this will accept the additional waste water.
- The car park will operate as it does now and is underused.
- On days of services there won't be more cars just the buses.

Application No: NYM/2018/0653/FL

Background continued

- The drawings show how buses maneuver in the car park which is exactly what happens now and we don't use the main road for parking or even maneuvering the buses.
- Car parking is always managed by us and people give us notice before they come. They don't come to the Monastery without having a booking so we always manage this according to the space that we have in parking, Church & dining. We never have overcrowded car park.
- We don't accept three buses as well as so many cars on the same day and we have only had three buses at the same time about three times on the past ten years.
- The new Church will not allow more people to come but only to let same number of people who are already coming to pray and eat comfortably.
- As Monks we prefer to have our monastery quieter but if it people would like to visit, we would make them feel comfortable to park their cars, pray and eat.

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 locally. 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 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 National 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.

Core Policy CPI of the Local Development Plan supports the provision of new health, sport, education and other community facilities, where they are in the main built up areas of Service Villages and Local Service Villages, in other locations where there are no suitable sites in the local service villages or where they provide an essential facility to support the local community.

Application No: NYM/2018/0653/FL

Main Issues continued

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 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, Materials and Landscape Impact

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 proposed church, although large in footprint, would not be overbearing in terms of scale and height. It would be situated in the context of the existing Monastery building and whilst the design would not be of the local vernacular, it is proposed to be constructed of stone to match existing development in the area. The design and materials have been chosen to reflect the traditions of the Coptic Church, but also to reflect the location in which it would be sited.

Furthermore, the proposed church would be situated on a large plot of land, well screened from wider views by existing boundary tree planting and therefore the proposed building would not be visible from wider views. The site would not be visible from public footpaths 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 proposed Church will provide an improved rather than a new facility on this site, as currently services are undertaken within the main monastery building, but in very cramped conditions. It is therefore not anticipated that the proposal would result in increased traffic generation. However, the existing parking and access would be improved with a new in/out system.

The 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 and Development Policy 23..

New Community Facility

Whilst this proposal seeks permission for a new build development in the open countryside to provide such a facility does not strictly accord with Core Policy I, it does relate to an expansion of an existing facility (which can be considered to be serving an element of the local community) which would not be visually intrusive in the immediate or wider landscape and therefore is considered to be with the spirit of the policy.

Application No: NYM/2018/0653/FL

Woodland and Trees

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been provided and this has identified which trees need to be removed if the development is to be carried out. As well as the tree losses themselves consideration needs to be given to the likely impact on the retained trees.

There will be some loss of screening to views of the existing buildings, parking areas and consequently it is considered necessary to submit an Arboricultural Method Statement incorporating a Tree Protection Plan to ensure that impacts on trees is restricted to those scheduled for removal.

Management Plan

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

Conclusion

Whilst this proposal would comprise a new building in the open countryside, it is considered that development would cause no undue harm to planning interests and does in fact represent one of the special qualities of the National Park (Strong religious past and present) and reflects the monastic traditions found in the North York Moors. Consequently approval is recommended.

Draft Local Plan

Strategic Policy L – Community Facilities seeks to support the provision of new community facilities in the open countryside where it is demonstrated that the facility can't be located within one of the larger villages or towns. However, only little weight can be given this draft Policy.

Pre-commencement Conditions

Condition(s) 14, 15, 18, and 21 are pre-commencement conditions and have been agreed in writing with the applicant/agent.

Contribution to Management Plan Objectives

Approval is considered likely to help meet Policy C4 of the Management Plan which seeks to support local communities in maintaining their heritage and traditions.

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 recommended changes to the proposal including amendments to the external materials, so as to deliver sustainable development.