

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS COMMITTEE

25 MARCH 2024

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

ITEM: **REFERENCE NUMBER:** 23/01682/PPP

OFFICER: Paul Duncan
WARD: East Berwickshire
PROPOSAL: Caravan Park comprising of static caravans, landscaping, formation of new access and associated work
SITE: Land South-East Of The Beeches, Howpark, Grantshouse, Duns, Scottish Borders
APPLICANT: Grantshouse Limited
AGENT: Ironside Farrar

PLANNING PROCESSING AGREEMENT

A Planning Processing Agreement (PPA) is in place until Monday 25 March, or Monday 22 April if a site visit is required.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located at the Harelawside hamlet around half a mile east of Grantshouse in Berwickshire. It is situated to the east of the "Old A1", which is now a minor public road forming a loop which connects with the "New" A1 trunk road at junctions to the west and south of the site.

An old stone wall bounds the site to the north-west where the Howpark Road and the Old A1 meet. The Cedar Café and two detached dwellinghouses lie on the opposite side of Howpark Road. The Howpark Burn flows in a south-westerly direction beyond, joining the Eye Water at a confluence on the far side of the New A1.

The site can be broken down into fairly distinct compartments. A native woodland park area with picnic benches and semi-mature trees is situated in the north-west corner, to the south of the old stone wall. A pyramidal roofed toilet block separates this area from a conifer plantation (predominantly Scots Pine) to its south. The toilet block is owned by the applicant and managed by the cafe. The conifer plantation extends outwith the application site boundary and is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Vehicular access would be taken from the Old A1 to the south of the TPO.

To the east of these compartments is a larger, vacant area of greenfield land that lies at the foot of steeply sloping hillside. The flatter area is within the application site and features a gentle fall from north to south. The steeper hillside lies outwith the site.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks planning permission in principle (PPP) for a new static caravan park, a new vehicular access and associated infrastructure.

The application contains an indicative proposed site plan which illustrates one approach to site design. As the application is for PPP only, the proposed layout could change at the detailed application (AMC) stage.

The indicative site plan shows the proposed new vehicular access connecting with the old A1 Road at the southern end of the site. Internally, the access serves a reception building and small number of caravan pitches before splitting into two internal roads each with static caravan pitches laid out along with either side and both terminating with turning circles to the north-west. Two large SUDS basins are shown fairly centrally to the east of the toilet block.

PLANNING HISTORY

There is a lengthy planning history at this site. Relevant planning history is summarised below. Of particular significance is the 2015 permission (reference 14/01187/PPP) for a chalet development and associated works.

- 96/00610/FUL - Change of use to holiday park; site layout; reception block and toilet facilities. Refused on grounds of road safety.
- 10/00194/FUL – Formation of lorry park and access. This proposal was to be located on the opposite side of the public road. Withdrawn.
- 10/00200/FUL – Erection of seven dwellinghouses. This was proposed on the north-western side of the site. Refused against housing in the countryside policies as an inappropriate addition to the building group and due to loss of public open space.
- 11/00728/FUL - Change of use of woodland/agricultural land to form amenity area and associated parking. This application for a replacement amenity area to compensate for the potential loss of an existing amenity area. The application was approved but the consent appears to have lapsed.
- 12/00085/FUL - Erection of four dwellinghouses. This application sought to address the reasons for refusal of 10/00200/FUL however the department viewed that this site remained inappropriate for residential development. The application was subsequently withdrawn.
- 14/01187/PPP - Chalet development and associated works. An indicative site plan illustrated the proposals which included access tracks, parking areas, reception and toilet blocks, picnic tables, play space and landscaping. Planning Permission in Principle was granted in 2015 but the development was not delivered, and the consent has lapsed. The permission is a significant material consideration for this current application.
- 23/01173/SCR – Screening Request for a static caravan development. This Screening Request was submitted in advance of the current application to establish whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was required. The applicant was advised that an EIA was not required.

REPRESENTATION SUMMARY

16 objections from 12 separate households have been received in response to the application. All are available to view in full on *Public Access*. Key issues raised were:

- Proposal is out of scale with the local area
- Oversupply of caravan parks
- LDP does not allocate Harelawside and Howpark for tourism development
- No community benefits
- Few local amenities/ safe walks
- Noise, litter and lorries will not make this an attractive location for visitors
- Sustainability/ climate impacts
- Increased traffic/ road safety concerns on A1/ Howpark Road/ Harelawside
- Lack of public transport/ nearest bus stop is in Grantshouse village
- The footway to Grantshouse is dangerous/ narrow and runs parallel to the A1 with no safety barriers
- Road/ footway/ infrastructure at Harelawside is inadequate/ too busy and traffic speeds are high/ no streetlighting
- HGVs will park in visibility splays of new junction
- The site and old A1 Road flood
- The drainage assessment is based on a different layout and lower unit numbers
- The flood risk assessment does not reflect the actual flow of groundwater
- Surface water drainage proposals unclear
- Noise
- Light pollution
- Privacy impacts
- Litter
- Conflict with working farm and livestock
- Impacts on wildlife (including hedgehogs, buzzards, bats, owls and heron)
- Pollution
- Impacts to infrastructure Council services
- Increased crime/ bringing strangers to the area
- Neighbour notification process concerns
- Application provided incorrect applicant company name
- Impact on property values [not a material planning consideration]

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Design and Access Statement (Including Planning Statement)
- Drainage Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Tree Survey
- Transport Statement
- Business Case
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

At the time of writing the development comprises National Planning Framework 4 and the Council's Local Development Plan 2016.

National Planning Framework 4

Policy 1: Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises

Policy 2: Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

Policy 3: Biodiversity

Policy 4: Natural Places

Policy 5: Soils

Policy 6: Forestry, Woodland and Trees

Policy 7: Historic Assets and Places

Policy 9: Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings

Policy 13: Sustainable Transport

Policy 14: Design, Quality and Place

Policy 22: Flood Risk and Water Management

Policy 23: Health and Safety

Policy 29: Rural Development

Policy 30: Tourism

Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan 2016

PMD1: Sustainability

PMD2: Quality Standards

ED7: Business, Tourism and Leisure Development in the Countryside

ED8: Caravan and Camping Sites

HD3: Protection of Residential Amenity

EP1: International Nature Conservation Sites and Protected Species

EP2: National Nature Conservation Sites and Protected Species

EP3: Local Biodiversity

EP5: Special Landscape Areas

EP7: Listed Buildings

EP8: Archaeology

EP13: Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

EP15: Development Affecting the Water Environment

EP16: Air Quality

IS7: Parking Provision and Standards

IS8: Flooding

IS9: Wastewater Treatment and Sustainable Urban Drainage

OTHER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance 2005

Placemaking and Design Supplementary Planning Guidance 2010

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Supplementary Planning Guidance 2020

Trees and Development Supplementary Planning Guidance 2008

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Scottish Borders Council Consultees

Archaeology: No objection, subject to conditions to secure a developer funded watching brief.

There are no sites recorded in the Historic Environment Record for this area, but a row of houses is shown by the older editions of the Ordnance Survey mapping. The row may have been demolished in road-widening work. If anything remains of this row, any impact could be suitably covered with an appropriate planning condition.

Therefore, a watching brief is recommended to briefly examine and record any survival, and for recovery and recording.

Ecology Section: No objection and content with the ecological report submitted but recommends planning conditions to secure the recommendations made in the report.

Economic Development: Endorse the proposed development and the foreseeable contribution it can make towards the visitor economy. The Regional Economic Strategy Delivery Plan included a commitment to “Develop a South of Scotland Responsible Tourism destination and Marketing Plan”. Tourism is a key area for the region and the strategy translates the National Shared Vision, Outlook 2030, recognising the visitor economy is a huge area of opportunity for the Scottish Borders and can contribute to the successful delivery of the National Strategy for Economic Transformation. The strategy has been developed with significant consultation and with an ambitious vision to inspire visitors, develop the visitor experience, support business and encourage responsible practices.

Environmental Health: No objection in principle. Due to the close proximity of residential dwellings some concern exists over the potential for existing amenity to be adversely impacted. Whilst not enough detail is provided on this application in principle, the applicant should be aware that any outdoor decking or external amenity areas attached to the individual pitches in any subsequent full application (outdoor spas, for example) may not be supported by this team. This may also be the case for any social space(s) proposed. It is also likely that a condition would be recommended to control the noise output of any pump-house that may be included in a full application.

Flood Risk: No objection, subject to a condition relating to drainage and surface water management. SEPA’s flood risk mapping indicates that the site is at risk from a flood event with a return period of 1 in 200 years. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) was submitted and concludes that only a small southern section of the site is at risk from flooding, although there are surface water flow paths through the site. Generally, content with the proposed development, given the contents of the FRA.

Landscape: No response.

Roads Planning Service: On balance and particularly due to the planning history at this location, the Service does not object to this proposal, but does note some concerns. The site is somewhat detached from local service provision but benefits from convenient access to the A1, the existing café, and Reston Station is around 6 miles away. Overall, however, there is a lack of sustainable transport links and local service provision resulting in general car/vehicle reliance. The existing footpath link to Grantshouse/ the nearest bus stop is narrow with only a small verge separating pedestrians from the A1. It does not fully continue through Harelawside to the proposed site. There are also some concerns with the potential for increased vehicular traffic on the Howpark road, as this appears narrow along its extent. Furthermore, Transport Scotland have not requested conditions on junction and signage improvements on the A1 as they have in previous proposals.

Although the reliance on cars is not ideal, customers will likely travel to other settlements within NE Berwickshire and make use of the amenities there which may help them remain sustainable. Although this proposal appears somewhat at odds with local living policies the site can act as a base for visiting local settlements and passenger transport provision is available in relatively close proximity via the main road network for trips further afield. Conditions covering the new vehicular access and internal road, parking, and the proposed new footpath to Howpark Road requested.

Statutory Consultees

GrantsHouse Community Council: Noted observations from the local community including those summarised below, none of which were in favour of the proposal:

- Lack of local amenities/ services to support the development
- Road and pedestrian safety
- Environmental impact
- Detrimental impact on local inhabitants
- The proposed location is totally dependent on access by road. This could mean walkers will either use the Howpark road or venture into adjacent farmland.
- The alternative will be to use cars to visit other facilities. This will put pressure on the two junctions with the A1 trunk road – there have been several serious accidents at these junctions. Additional pressure will also be put on the Howpark road – this is a single-track road with passing places, several blind corners, and hidden dips. This coupled with likely additional pedestrian use will present a serious risk.
- Due to the lack of amenities, it is felt the amount of predicted vehicular journeys is understated in the supporting documents.
- None of the properties in Harelawside are connected to the main sewer system – the facility that serves the main village is already undersized.
- The transport analysis suggests the site is served by a bus route – the nearest bus stop is in the main village over 800m from the site and accessed via a path adjacent to the A1 trunk road. This path has already been identified as a high risk to walkers and cyclists and has no lighting anywhere along its length.
- A bat survey should be carried out and the introduction of lighting will be detrimental to wider bat activity.
- Residents recently voted overwhelmingly in favour of measures to enhance the environment; this will do the opposite removing a wild area from the area.
- Police coverage is too thin locally to prevent incidents or react should they occur. Local residents may experience the sharp end of visitors not necessarily staying to enjoy the view of a lorry park and the A1. Many local households are remote, isolated, and vulnerable.

Scottish Water: No response.

SEPA: No objection. Note that parts of the site are shown at risk of flooding on SEPA Future Flood Maps from the Howpark Burn and the Eye Water. Welcome the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) which is based on appropriate methods and state that its representation of flood risk is in line with all other evidence that is currently available.

Note that the FRA indicates that the majority of the site is out with the 1 in 200 year plus climate change floodplain. A small southern portion is within the flood plain however no development is proposed in this area. SEPA recommend that a minimum 600 mm freeboard allowance is used to account for uncertainties in the modelling. All flood modelling has an inherent degree of uncertainty, and it is essential that appropriate freeboard is allowed above all modelled flood levels to account for that.

SEPA are satisfied that safe access and egress for persons on foot, or with assistance, is achievable in an emergency and therefore have no objection on this basis. The vehicular access and egress route is likely to be at risk of flooding. SEPA consider vehicular emergency access and egress to largely be the remit of local authorities. In non-flooding matters, SEPA refer to standing advice.

Transport Scotland: No objection and no conditions requested. The response made additional comments, including the following:

- The Transport Statement includes an assessment of accident history within the study area. A total of 1 'Fatal', 1 'Serious' and 4 'Slight' accidents have been identified on the trunk road during the assessment period (2017 to 2021). The report concludes given the low trip generation rates associated with the proposed development that no increased risk in accidents is expected. The information presented reflects that held on Transport Scotland's system.
- Appendix C of the Transport Statement includes the location type "Edge of Town Centre". The proposed development site location cannot be described as such; however the anticipated peak periods reflect the proposed land-use, and are insignificant when compared with the traffic volumes on the A1(T).
- The Transport Statement confirms that the existing footway adjacent to the A1(T) is narrow. No proposals are presented to improve the provision.
- The village is served by public transport services with 5 services in each direction. The bus stops are around 800m from the site, exceeding the generally accepted acceptable walking distance of 400m.
- Noted that there is no existing count data available. Nevertheless, the existing junctions are appropriate to accommodate the anticipated "modest" increase in traffic volumes using these junctions.

Other Consultees

Visit Scotland: No response.

ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION:

Principle

Policy Principle

The Local Development Plan (LDP) does not allocate land within the Scottish Borders specifically for tourism. Proposals for tourism development must be considered be assessed against relevant development plan policies as set out within the LDP and National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4).

LDP 2016 policy ED8 (Caravan and Camping Sites) is particularly relevant and sets out criteria for assessing caravan park proposals. NPF4 policy 30 (Tourism) provides additional criteria for all types of tourism development. Finally, because the Grantshouse settlement boundary does not extend to Harelawside LDP policy ED7 (Business, Tourism and Leisure Development in the Countryside) and NPF4 policy 29 (Rural development) are also applicable.

Policy ED8 states that the Council will support proposals for new caravan sites in locations that can support the local economy and regenerate towns, and which accord with the Scottish Borders Tourism Strategy. Developments on appropriate sites within or immediately outwith the development boundary of settlements that can support local shops and services will be favoured over countryside locations.

The criteria provided by NPF4 policy 30 b) include: the contribution made to the local economy; compatibility with the surrounding area; impacts on communities, for example by hindering the provision of homes and services for local people; and sustainability considerations, including sustainable travel opportunities.

The application site is distant from the nearest town and is not immediately outwith the development boundary of a settlement. However, it is located on the edge of a built-up area peripheral to Grantshouse. There are no remaining shops or services within the village that this development could support, but the local café is actually outwith the settlement and directly opposite the site. The proposed development could also support the wider local rural economy however sustainable travel opportunities at the site are limited (see 'Economic Benefits' and 'Climate & Sustainability' sections below).

The development would be used directly for tourism appropriate to a rural location. The Council's Economic Development team are supportive of the application and confirm it aligns with current tourism strategies. The development is therefore considered to satisfy the relevant criterion b) of LDP policy ED7 (Business, Tourism and Leisure in the Countryside).

NPF4 policy 29 (Rural development) encourages rural economic activity, innovation and diversification whilst ensuring that the distinctive character of the rural area and the service function of small towns, natural assets and cultural heritage are safeguarded and enhanced. The proposals would not conflict with these aims, which are considered further elsewhere in this report.

In summary, the proposed development is considered to broadly satisfy policies ED7, ED8, 29 and 30. However, it does not gain the stronger support from ED8 and NPF4 that a more connected proposal on the edge of a town may secure.

Planning History

Planning history is a significant material consideration. Planning permission was previously granted for a similar tourism development at this location in 2015 (planning reference 14/01187/PPP). Since then, the Council's Local Development Plan 2016 and National Planning Framework 4 have come into force and together now form the development plan. The previous application was assessed against policies including D1 of the Consolidated Local Plan 2011 which contained similar provisions to the current LDP 2016 policy ED7. This history is relevant to the assessment of this new application, though it should also be acknowledged that the proposals and planning policy context have shifted in certain respects since the previous approval.

Compatibility With Neighbouring Uses

The Old A1 is used by lorry drivers as an informal rest stop. Objectors question the compatibility of this with what is proposed. Road safety implications are considered further below, but in amenity terms, the development would be screened and separated from the informal lorry parking area by mature trees. Whilst the informal rest stop and associated issues identified by objectors (including litter and noise) may make the development less attractive to potential visitors, there is not considered to be a fundamental conflict of uses in planning terms.

Objectors have also identified the potential for disturbance to neighbouring farmland and livestock. However, it is not uncommon for caravan developments to be located adjacent to arable or pastoral farmland and there is no known reason to believe such uses should be inherently incompatible.

Scale of Development

The scale of the proposed caravan park is significant in proportion to the small hamlet of Harelawside and even in the context of the wider settlement of Grantshouse. The

character of the surrounding area is partly defined in part by busy the A1 trunk road. Overall, it is not considered that the proposal would be out of keeping with the character of the area. Impacts to amenity are considered elsewhere in this report.

Existing Toilet Block

The existing toilet block is located within the application site boundary and is available for the public to use. The application supporting statement describes it as a Visitor Toilet Facility. It states that the toilet will be maintained as a public facility, open and available to the public through the duration of works. It further states that flooding and other studies will allow consideration of further improvements to and/or provision of an upgraded/ renewed Toilet Facility. These would be matters for future applications if they were brought forward.

Climate and Sustainability

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) states at Policy 1 that significant weight should be given to the global climate when considering all development proposals. NPF4 promotes sustainable forms of transport at policies including 13 (Sustainable transport), 14 (Design, quality and place) and 30 (Tourism).

The application supporting statement acknowledges that the vast majority of visitors would arrive by car. This is likely to be the case for most rural caravan site developments. In the East Berwickshire area, most visitors are likely to arrive via the A1 trunk road. The proximity of the A1 trunk road to the site provides the development with strategic positioning to benefit from easy access to attractions and facilities throughout the Eastern Borders. Whilst many Berwickshire attractions are coastal, there are significant inland visitor destinations (for example the Lammermuir Hills, Paxton House and Ayton Castle) which could be accessed easily via the A1 trunk road. The proposed development would also be located around 6 miles from the new Reston Station. This would provide good sustainable connectivity to visitor attractions at Edinburgh, Berwick and Newcastle but is unlikely to serve as the primary method of transportation for visitors to the proposed development.

The nearest bus stop is at Grantshouse around 800m from the site. As objectors have noted, pedestrian access to the bus stop is along a narrow footway to the side of the busy A1 trunk road and there is no safety barrier or streetlighting in place. Bus travel is therefore unlikely to be used to any great extent. Furthermore, as the response on behalf of Transport Scotland notes, there are also few opportunities to walk, wheel, or cycle for leisure purposes. With only one café within walking distance, it must be concluded that the development would be largely car dependent.

In summary, therefore, the proposed development would not generate significant support from NPF4 in respect of policies promoting sustainable forms of transport.

Regarding other lifecycle sustainability considerations, the Supporting Statement notes that caravans are exempt from the Scottish Building Standards.

Economic Impacts

Economic impacts, including economic benefits, are a significant material consideration. A Business Case was submitted in support of the application setting out the economic and business aims and rationale for the development. It identifies the Scottish Borders and A1 Corridor is an important tourism gateway and states that the development would offer high-quality year-round experiences for visitors,

supporting existing tourism and leisure operators and associated local businesses. It further states that the proposal supports VisitScotland's encouragement for exploration away from major 'hotspots' that are at peak capacity. It also notes that the development would be well placed for access to the Lammermuir Hills and Southern Uplands (including southern Upland Way), as well as the coast.

It is agreed that the proposed development has the potential to support the Berwickshire economy by increasing visitor numbers to local attractions and by supporting shops and services, though it is acknowledged these are generally found within the wider local area. The Council's Economic Development team was consulted and support the application. The team consider that the development would contribute towards the visitor economy, aligning with relevant tourism strategies.

As the proposal is for holiday accommodation, a standard condition is recommended to secure control over the use of the development. The condition wording attached includes similar restrictions on duration of stay as the condition attached to the 2015 permission (reference 14/01187/PPP). In this regard, it is considered that greater economic benefits would be accrued by the occupation of the development by short-stay holidaymakers rather than as holiday homes, though the condition wording could be adapted as Members see fit.

No significant economic disbenefits have been identified.

Vehicular Access, Road Safety and Parking

LDP policy PMD2 requires developments to have no adverse impact on road safety and adequate vehicular access.

NPF4 policy 13 (Sustainable transport) sets out various policy aspirations and requirements with a particular focus on sustainable forms of transport. At g) the policy sets out requirements in respect of the Strategic Transport Network, which includes the trunk road network.

Trunk Road Impacts

There would be no direct access between the application site and trunk road. Vehicular access to the site would be taken from the "Old" A1 Road, which has long been "de-trunked" and is now part of the local road network (see comments on local road network below). The "Old" A1 Road connects to the "New" A1 trunk road around 150m to the south and 300m to the west of the application site.

Transport Scotland are the relevant authority for the assessment of trunk road impacts. The Transport Statement submitted with the application has been reviewed on behalf of Transport Scotland and detailed comments have been provided in response. Ultimately Transport Scotland do not object to the application, nor do they require any form of upgrade works to facilitate the development or to cater for the additional traffic demand it would generate.

At the time of the previous application (reference 14/01187/PPP) Transport Scotland had required the construction of a right-hand turning lane at the southerly access from the A1. The subsequent change in stance has been queried and Transport Scotland has explained that the previous response considered the aggregate impact from a range of developments including the lorry park application, which was still live at the time of the consultation response. Considering this current application in isolation,

Transport Scotland consider the type and scale of development to be a modest generator of traffic in relation to traffic on the A1, and not a peak hour generator.

Transport Scotland acknowledge that the footway to Grantshouse is narrow. Objectors note that it is not separated from the A1 by any form of barrier. Transport Scotland does not raise any road safety concerns regarding its potentially increased usage.

Based on Transport Scotland's assessment, the development satisfies NPF4 policy 13 g) and LDP policy PMD2 in respect of trunk road impacts.

Local Road Network Impacts

The Roads Planning Service (RPS) has assessed impacts to the existing local road network, including the effect of the additional traffic demand that would be generated.

In road safety terms, the RPS is satisfied with the principle of the proposed vehicular access arrangements between the Old A1 minor road and the site. Further details of the proposed access, internal road layout, parking and footpath to Howpark Road would be required at the detailed application stage.

Objectors expressed concerns regarding the prospect of increased traffic, particularly during the tourist season, along the Howpark Road and at Harelawside. They noted the latter has no streetlights, pavements or bus stop. They are also concerned that the lorry park may conflict with the proposed usage, for example should lorries block visibility splays. The RPS has also expressed reservations regarding the potential for increased vehicular traffic on the Howpark Road but ultimately has not objected to the application.

Parking

Policy IS7 of the Local Development Plan requires that car parking should be provided in accordance with the Council's adopted standards.

The indicative site plan identifies one parking place per caravan with further parking bays shown towards the vehicular access to the site. The Roads Planning Service has not raised any concerns with these indicative arrangements at this time. It should be noted that some parking appears to be located close to protected trees and further information would be needed to establish the acceptability of this. This also applies to the proposed new vehicular access. Ultimately the final arrangements for parking would be a matter for the detailed application (AMC) stage.

Flood Risk and SUDS

SEPA's flood risk maps identify part of the site as being at risk of flooding from the Howpark Burn. The Howpark Burn flows in a south-west direction on the far side of the Howpark Road before joining the Eye Water at a confluence to the west of the application site beyond the A1 trunk Road. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) was submitted with the application and the Council's Flood Team were consulted at the outset of the application as well as SEPA. Neither object to the application.

Policy IS8 of the Local Development Plan states that development will not be permitted if at significant risk of flooding or if it would materially increase the probability of flooding elsewhere. The policy requires developers to submit an FRA to allow the acceptability of development to be assessed.

National Planning Framework 4 policy 22 (Flood risk and water management) states that development proposals at risk of flooding or in a flood risk area will only be supported in certain circumstances. The NPF4's glossary definition for "flood risk area or at risk of flooding" explains that the risk of flooding is indicated on SEPA's future flood maps or may need to be assessed in a flood risk assessment.

NPF4 states that for planning purposes, at risk of flooding or in a flood risk area means land or built form with an annual probability of being flooded of greater than 1 in 200 years and must include an appropriate allowance for future climate change. The FRA indicates that the majority of the site is out with the 1 in 200 year plus climate change floodplain. SEPA has confirmed that the FRA is based on appropriate methods and its representation of flood risk is in line with all other evidence that is currently available.

The FRA identifies a small portion of the site within the flood plain at the southern boundary where the vehicular access is proposed. The Flood Risk Officer has verbally confirmed that they would not object to the proposed vehicular access at this location. Whilst vehicular access may be affected during a flood event, NPF4's glossary confirms that safe egress refers to the movement of people (not vehicles) between the development and a place of safety. The Flood Risk Officer recommends a planning condition to secure an evacuation plan to ensure appropriate measures were put in place in the event of any flood. The indicative site plan shows a footpath link to Howpark Road which the FRA does not identify to be at risk of flooding. This could form part of such a plan. SEPA is also satisfied that safe access and egress for persons on foot, or with assistance, is achievable in an emergency.

SEPA recommend a minimum 600mm freeboard allowance is used to account for the inherent degree of uncertainty involved in all flood modelling. This can be relayed by means of an applicant informative for consideration at the detailed application stage.

The application supporting statement confirms that the development will comply with relevant SUDS requirements and a Drainage Assessment outlines a strategy for handling surface water drainage at the site though it varies from the indicative site plan drawing. It shows a single SUDS pond to the southern corner of the site whereas the indicative site plan shows two SUDS ponds to the east of the toilet block. The Flood Risk Officer recommends a condition relating to drainage and surface water management covering layout details, specifications and calculations. Ultimately, this issue can be covered off at the detailed application stage.

Landscape and Visual Impacts

The application site is out with any area designated for special landscape protection. The development would also not be visible from any such area, including the Berwickshire Coast Special Landscape Area (SLA). The SLA extends across the coastal side of the Coldingham tourism road, with which the Howpark Road connects, several miles from the application site. The development would therefore provide additional tourist accommodation in good proximity to the SLA and its visitor attractions, without affecting its landscape qualities.

In visual terms, the site is well contained to the north-east by landform, and to the north-west and south-west by mature trees. The site is seen clearly from the north access to Renton House.

The Council's Landscape section has not provided formal comments on this occasion but did comment on the previously approved development and did not object. The section noted that the sloping ground to the north-east provides screening and a

backdrop to views. In combination with the woodlands these were assessed as provided very good visual containment and a good degree of amenity benefit for visitors. The section concluded that there was no landscape or visual reason in principle why the site could not be developed for visitor accommodation. However, the layout shown on the indicative site plan is particularly dense and further consideration would be needed at the detailed application stage as to the suitability of this, in conjunction with details of soft and hard landscaping.

Trees

A tree report was submitted with the application. The report confirms that no tree felling is required to enable the development. All trees within the conifer plantation (protected by Tree Preservation Order), the native woodland park and the boundary hedging and trees along Howpark Road would be retained. The report also makes recommendations for the construction phase of development.

The tree report is useful and informative but does not identify an author or their professional qualifications and it is considered that a detailed tree survey (to the appropriate British Standards) would be required at the detailed application stage to establish with certainty the root protection areas of trees that may be impacted by the development. This can be secured by condition and would inform the ultimate capacity of the development. However, there is no reason to believe that the development could not be carried out within a minimal impact on the tree resource and, if necessary, compensatory planting and mitigation could be secured in the event of any unavoidable minor adverse impacts arising.

The tree report recommends woodland enhancement and management including restocking and removal of invasive species. Given the significant screening function the woodlands would serve, a planning condition securing woodland management is considered appropriate. This could also contribute to the requirement for biodiversity enhancement.

Listed Building Impacts

LDP policy EP7 (Listed Buildings) states that the Council will support development proposals that conserve, protect and enhance the setting of Listed Buildings. NPF4 policy 7 (Historic assets and places) states at c) that Development proposals affecting the setting of a listed building should preserve its character, and its special architectural or historic interest.

There are no listed buildings within the proposed site therefore no listed buildings would be directly affected by the proposed development.

A number of Listed Buildings are located within the wider surroundings of the site including the Category 'A' listed Renton House, located to the south-west. Harelawside Farmhouse sits on the hillside to the north of Harelawside and is listed at Category 'C'. Owing to distance and intervening screening, the proposed development have a neutral impact on the setting of these listed buildings, ensuring compliance with the relevant provisions of LDP policy EP7 and NPF4 policy 7.

Archaeology

Policy EP8 (Archaeology) states that development proposals which will adversely affect local archaeological assets will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that

the benefits of the proposal outweigh the heritage value of the asset. All proposals that adversely affect such an asset must include an acceptable mitigation strategy.

NPF4 policy 7 (Historic assets and places) states at o) that where there is potential for non-designated buried archaeological remains to exist below a site, developers will provide an evaluation of the archaeological resource at an early stage so that planning authorities can assess impacts.

The Archaeology Officer was consulted at the outset of this application and has drawn attention to a row of buildings, thought to be dwellinghouses, identified on historic mapping for the area. These were shown in the southern corner of the site where the proposed new vehicular access would be located.

The Archaeology Officer is satisfied that the significance of such remains should be capable of being addressed with a watching brief. This would allow any remains to be examined and recorded.

Subject to a planning condition to secure a watching brief the proposed development is considered to satisfy relevant planning policies 7 and Policy EP8 in respect of archaeological impacts.

Residential Amenity

The nearest dwellinghouses to the site are Riverside House and The Beeches, both located on the far side of the site on Howpark Road.

Policy HD3 (Residential Amenity) of the LDP states that development that is judged to have an adverse impact on the amenity of residential areas will not be permitted. A broad range of impacts can be considered and assessed against Policy HD3, including light and noise. NPF4 contains further provisions.

Noise

Unwanted noise can have a significant impact upon environmental quality, public health and amenity. Noise impacts can be assessed against Local Development Plan policies HD3 (Residential Amenity) and NPF4 policy 23 (Health and safety). Policy HD3 lists noise as a general residential amenity consideration; NPF4 policy 23 states at e) that proposals likely to raise unacceptable noise issues will not be supported.

The development would have the potential to impact the amenity of dwellinghouses in the surrounding area through increased noise and traffic. However, the surrounding area can be busy and the proximity of the A1 and East Coast Main Line already generate local noise. The proposed vehicular access is away from neighbouring dwellings. The separation distances involved suggest the development could, in principle, be carried out without giving rise to inherent noise issues. The Environmental Health Service has reviewed the application and does not raise any objections. The Service would need to review any detailed proposals in further detail and note that certain features such as outdoor decking or social spaces may not be supported.

Visual Impact

The private visual receptors most affected by the proposed development would be the occupants of Riverside House and The Beeches on Howpark Road. Given the intervening screening and separation from the development there are no significant visual impact concerns.

Light Pollution

Ecological requirements in respect of bats should ensure external lighting is low level. This can be controlled by suitably worded condition and considered further at the detailed application stage.

Privacy/ Loss of Light and Sunlight

The proposed development should not give rise to significant overlooking or loss of light/ sunlight impacts given the separation distances involved however this would be considered further at the detailed application stage

Other Amenity Impacts

It is acknowledged that there is a risk of short time impacts arising from the construction process. These effects are largely unavoidable but would normally be short-lived.

Objector concerns regarding existing litter issues in the area are noted. There is no reason to believe the proposed development should give rise to further litter issues. Communal bin storage is shown on the indicative site layout plan and can be considered further at detailed application stage.

Designated Sites

There are no designated sites within 2km of the site. No connectivity to designated sites has been identified. There would be no likely significant impacts to designated sites.

Protected Species

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report was submitted with the application. The report covers the findings of a desk study and an extended Phase 1 habitat survey including a walkover survey of the site. The report covers findings in respect of protected species including bat, badger, otter, water vole, birds and red squirrel.

Bat roosting potential was identified within the site at the toilet block and trees however no works are proposed at either. Further surveys would be required should this change at the detailed application stage.

The Council's Ecology Officer has reviewed the PEA report and is satisfied with its findings and recommendations, and requests these be secured by planning condition. The recommendations include the requirement for a low impact lighting scheme for bats, a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and species protection for potentially impacted protected species.

NPF4 policy 3 requires the provision of biodiversity enhancement. The tree report suggests this could be delivered within or alongside the existing woodlands. The requirement for enhancement can be secured by planning condition.

Subject to the mitigation and enhancement measures attached, the proposed development is considered to satisfy relevant ecology and biodiversity policies EP1-3 of the Local Development Plan and Policy 3 of National Planning Framework 4.

Soils

LDP policy ED10 (Protection of Prime Quality Agricultural Land and Carbon Rich Soils) seeks to ensure finite agricultural land is retained for farming and food production.

The application site comprises vacant, undeveloped, greenfield land however it is not categorised as Prime Quality Agricultural Land by the James Hutton Institute. There is therefore no conflict with LDP policy ED10.

NPF4 policy 5 (Soils) introduces further protections for soils on undeveloped land. These include considerations relating to the manner of design and construction. It is considered that the requirements of this policy could be considered at the detailed application stage.

Foul Waste

The supporting statement, supported by a Drainage Assessment, indicate that the development would connect to the existing public foul sewer, which discharges to the Grantshouse Wastewater Treatment Works with final outfall to the Eye Water. The Drainage Assessment envisages an on-site pumping station would be required.

Scottish Water was consulted but did not respond. Objector comments suggest that properties at Harelawside are not connected to the public foul sewer, and it is noted that private foul drainage arrangements were required and accepted at the time of the 2015 permission (reference 14/01187/PPP). It is considered that a fully suspensive planning condition can again be applied to secure control over foul waste arrangements.

Water Supply

The application supporting statement advises that the development would connect to the public mains water supply, as was proposed under the previous application (reference 14/01187/PPP). Scottish Water has not responded however a fully suspensive planning condition can be applied to secure control over water supply.

Contaminated Land

The Contaminated Land Officer reviewed the application as part of his application screening process. No land contamination issues were identified.

Other Matters

Objectors note that certain documents submitted with the application provided the incorrect name of the application. Other documents correctly identified the applicant as 'Grantshouse Limited'. The cause of this error is not known however it was addressed promptly and appropriately when identified.

The planning system does not currently seek to regulate the supply of holiday accommodation. Any oversupply of tourist and visitor accommodation is a commercial decision for the applicant/ developer, and for the market to resolve.

There is no reason to believe the proposed development would lead to increased crime in the surrounding area and this would ultimately be a matter for Police Scotland.

The application was advertised in the Berwickshire News and was subject to standard neighbour notification and consultation processes. Neighbour notification is carried out by the Council in accordance with clear guidelines.

CONCLUSION

Subject to compliance with the schedule of conditions, the development will accord with the relevant provisions of the development plan and there are no material considerations that would justify a departure from these provisions.

RECOMMENDATION BY CHIEF PLANNING AND HOUSING OFFICER:

I recommend the application is approved subject to the following conditions:

1. No development shall commence until the precise details of the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority:
 - a) the siting, design and external materials of caravans and building(s):
 - b) the means of pedestrian and vehicular accesses to the site:
 - c) the internal road network and parking arrangements:
 - d) surface water drainage arrangements, including precise details of site drainage and surface water management (covering layout details, specifications and calculations), which shall utilise SUDS techniques and shall include details of landscaping (including planting to provide additional habitat):
 - e) external lighting (which shall be low level and bat friendly and shall incorporate the measures set out in Section 4.4.1 of the Direct Ecology V1.2 report dated 8.11.23); and
 - f) hard and soft landscaping of the site (which shall incorporate the measures set out in Section 4 of the Direct Ecology V1.2 report dated 8.11.23).

Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the agreed details and shall not become operational until the agreed pedestrian and vehicular accesses, internal road and path networks, parking, and surface water drainage arrangements are completed and operational. Further, no external lighting shall be installed within the development except that so approved. All unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To achieve a satisfactory form of development, and to comply with the requirements of Section 59 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended.

2. Application for approval of matters specified in the conditions set out in this decision shall be made to the Planning Authority before whichever is the latest of the following:
 - (a) the expiration of three years from the date of this permission, or
 - (b) the expiration of six months from the date on which an earlier application for approval of matters specified in the conditions set out in this decision notice was refused or dismissed following an appeal.

Only one application may be submitted under paragraph (b) of this condition, where such an application is made later than three years after the date of this consent.

Reason: To achieve a satisfactory form of development, and to comply with the requirements of Section 59 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended.

3. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of two years from the date of approval of the last of the matters specified in the conditions set out in this decision.

Reason: To achieve a satisfactory form of development, and to comply with the requirements of Section 59 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended.

4. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved scheme of soft landscaping under condition 1 shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation or completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and shall be maintained thereafter and replaced as may be necessary for a period of five years from the date of completion of planting, seeding or turfing.
Reason: To enable the proper form and layout of the development and the effective assimilation of the development into its wider surroundings.

5. No development shall take place until the applicant has secured a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation outlining a Watching Brief. This will be formulated by a contracted archaeologist and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Access should be afforded to allow investigation by a contracted archaeologist(s) nominated by the developer and agreed to by the Planning Authority. The developer shall allow the archaeologist(s) to observe relevant below ground excavation during development, investigate and record features of interest and recover finds and samples if necessary. Results will be submitted to the Planning Authority for review in the form of a Data Structure Report. If significant archaeology is discovered below ground excavation should cease pending further consultation with the Planning Authority. The developer will ensure that any significant data and finds undergo post-excavation analysis, the results of which will be submitted to the Planning Authority
Reason: The site is within an area where ground works may interfere with, or result in the destruction of, archaeological remains, and it is therefore desirable to afford a reasonable opportunity to record the history of the site. out the prior written consent of the Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard a site of archaeological interest.

6. No development shall commence until a Scheme for Woodland Management and Tree Protection has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The Scheme shall include:
 - a. proposals for Woodland Management, including the retention, maintenance, and regeneration of the trees and hedges within the site and all trees protected by the Tree Preservation Order BCC4 and proposals for the removal of invasive species;
 - b. a detailed drawing, showing the position, species and root protection area of trees and hedging within and adjacent to the site, those to be retained, those to be felled, tree protection measures for the construction phase and the routes of all services. The drawing shall be based on an Arboricultural Impact Assessment which covers all trees within and adjacent to the site in accordance with the most up to date British Standards.

Once approved, a) the agreed Woodland Management measures shall be carried out in perpetuity and b) the agreed tree protection measures shall be put in place prior to and throughout the construction process. All unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the existing woodland and tree resource, to secure visual containment of the development, to ensure adequate protection or replanting of trees and hedging is secured and for visual amenity of the area.

7. No development shall commence until the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority:

- a. scheme of post-construction ecological enhancements, including a timescale for implementation. The scheme shall incorporate the measures set out in Section 4 of the Direct Ecology V1.2 report dated 8.11.23;
- b. A Species Protection Plan for breeding birds and badgers which shall incorporate provision for a pre-development supplementary survey and a mitigation plan and shall demonstrate how the recommendations set out within Section 4.5.1 of the Direct Ecology V1.2 report dated 8.11.23 have been and will be addressed.
- c. A Construction and Environmental Management Plan, which shall incorporate the measures specified in sections 4.2.1 and 4.10 of the Direct Ecology V1.2 report dated 8.11.23.

Thereafter no development shall be carried out except in strict accordance with the agreed measures and the approved scheme of post-construction ecological enhancements shall be implemented within the approved timescale. All unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: For the protection of protected species and to provide a reasonable level of ecological enhancement relative to the environmental impact of the development in accordance with the statutory development plan.

8. No development shall commence until a detailed foul drainage scheme has been submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority. Thereafter the scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the development hereby approved becoming operational and shall remain operational throughout its occupancy. There shall be no variation to the approved scheme unless such variation has been approved in writing by the Planning Authority.
Reason: To ensure the development is adequately serviced.

9. No development shall commence until written evidence is provided on behalf of Scottish Water that a mains water connection shall be made available to serve the development, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter, the approved water supply shall be operational prior to occupancy of the development and no alternative water supply shall be used without the prior written agreement of the Planning Authority.
Reason: To ensure the development can be adequately serviced.

10. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved, a flood event evacuation plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be operated in strict accordance with the agreed evacuation plan.
Reason: to reduce the impact of flooding during flood events.

11. The development hereby approved shall be occupied for holiday use only and shall not be used as a person's sole or main residence or as temporary or permanent residential accommodation. The occupation of the caravans shall be restricted to genuine holidaymakers and shall not be let to the same individual, and/or to different individuals within the same family, group and/or party, for any period of time in excess of 4 weeks in total within any consecutive period of 13 weeks. The operator shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all holiday makers staying in the caravans and their main home addresses. This information shall be made available for inspection at all reasonable times by an authorised officer of the Planning Authority.
Reason: To ensure compliance with the adopted development contributions policy, to retain effective control over the development and to ensure that the caravans, in line with the details presented in support of the planning application, are only used

as holiday accommodation and are not used as private dwellinghouses by any long term or permanent residents.

Informatives

1. Bat roosting potential was identified within the site at the toilet block and trees however no works are proposed at either. Further surveys would be required should this change at the Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions (AMC) stage.
2. SEPA recommend a minimum 600mm freeboard allowance is used to account for the inherent degree of uncertainty involved in all flood modelling. Detailed proposals at the Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions (AMC) stage. should reflect this requirement.
3. In respect of condition 7, the applicant is advised that approval under the planning condition by the Planning Authority will not purport to grant technical approval of the scheme on behalf of the Council as regards Building Regulations under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003. It is for the applicant to secure compliance with the Building Regulations separately (regulated by the Council's Building Standards Authority), and to also comply with registration/licensing requirements in the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) Regulations as implemented by SEPA. The applicant should therefore ensure that any scheme is first designed to comply with the Building Regulations and CAR requirements before making any submissions seeking compliance with the planning condition. Submission of the following is recommended:
 - A basic scaled site plan showing the location and layout of the treatment tank and discharge system (e.g. soakaway), and any connection to (and details of) any watercourse outfall. If the soakaway is to be mounded, basic sectional drawings should be provided. The discharge system should be sized in accordance with the Building Regulations and the applicant should confirm that is the case. Not doing so risks the need for subsequent changes that will need to be subject to a revised condition submission
 - If the scheme has a Building Warrant and/or CAR Registration/License from SEPA, then confirmation to that effect should be included with your submission.

DRAWING NUMBERS

Location Plan – 13 November 2023

Approved by

Name	Designation	Signature
Ian Aikman	Chief Planning and Housing Officer	

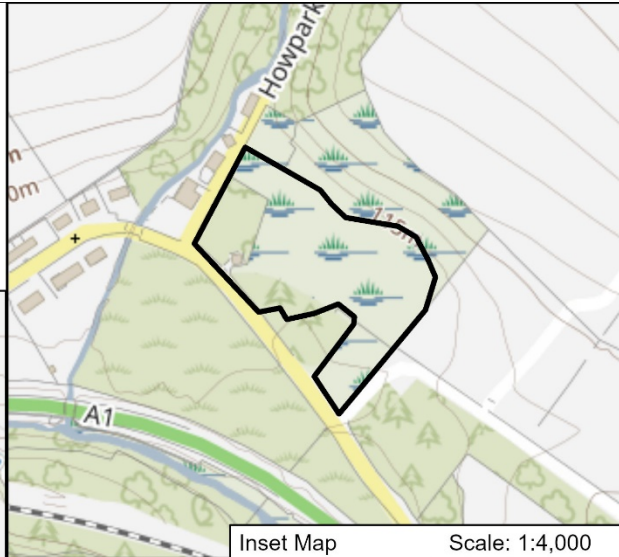
The original version of this report has been signed by the Chief Planning and Housing Officer and the signed copy has been retained by the Council.

Author(s)

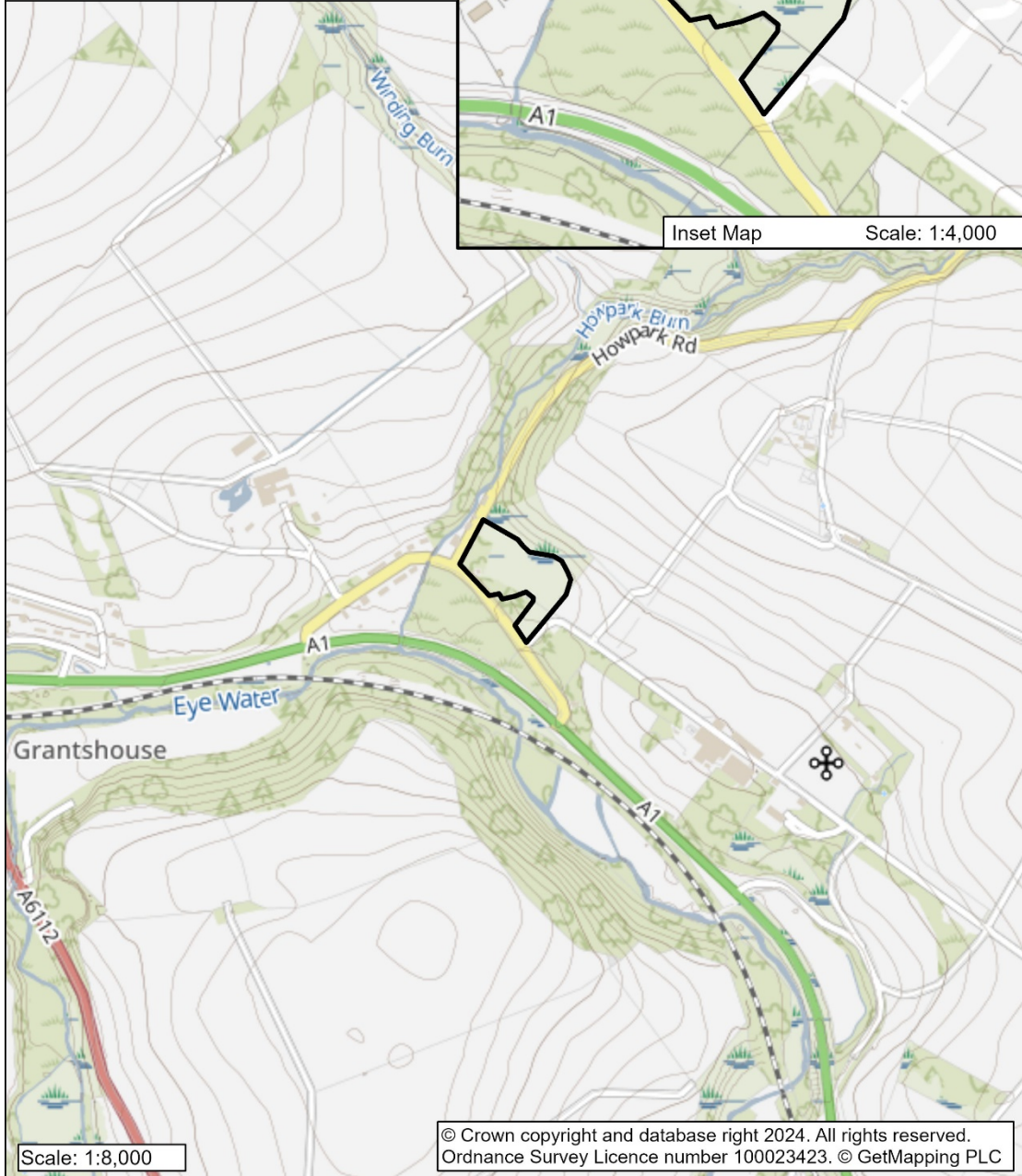
Name	Designation
Paul Duncan	Planning Officer



23/01682/PPP
Grantshouse Caravan Park



Inset Map Scale: 1:4,000



Scale: 1:8,000