

## Policy Area 2 - Conversion of redundant buildings (Delivering Objectives 1,2,3 and 4)

**Policy Intention:** The intention is to make good use of redundant buildings and so allow conversion to residential use on an equal footing to tourism/economic use and in addition provide design guidance within the policy to ensure sympathetic conversion schemes

### NPPF

There is no requirement in the NPPF to provide an economic use prior to a residential use for redundant buildings. It is felt therefore, that the policies in the Tynedale Local Plan, and the NNPA Core Strategy are superceded by national policy (in terms of priority for economic/tourism over residential use).

Paragraph 51 states:

*Local planning authorities should identify and bring back into residential use empty housing and buildings in line with local housing and empty homes strategies...*

Paragraph 55 states:

*To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby. Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as:*

- *the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside; or*
- *where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets; or*
- *where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting; or*
- *the exceptional quality or innovative nature of the design of the dwelling [criteria follow]*

<p><b>Local Planning Policy:</b></p> <p><b>NNPA Core Strategy 2009</b></p> <p><b>NNPA Core Strategy cont...</b></p>	<p>EXISTING POLICY:</p> <p><b><u>Core Strategy Northumberland National Park (2009)</u></b></p> <p><u>Policy 5: General Location of New Development</u>  <i>In the Open Countryside development will be limited to the reuse of existing buildings.</i></p> <p><u>Policy 7: Conversion of Buildings outside Settlements</u>  <i>The change of use of existing buildings outside identified settlements to employment use (including tourism) will be supported where:</i></p> <p><i>a) The building is capable of conversion;</i>  <i>b) The building contributes to the special qualities of the National Park; and</i>  <i>c) The building is of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed use without the need for significant alterations or extensions which would detract from its character and appearance and that of the wider landscape.</i>  <i>Change of use of existing buildings outside settlements to affordable housing will be permitted where a proven need exists. Housing provided in pursuit of this policy must be available to people in local housing need at an affordable cost for the life of the property.</i></p> <p><i>Change of use to new open market local needs residential development will only be permitted where the applicant has demonstrated that the building cannot be developed for an employment or tourism use and where it meets the criteria above.</i></p> <p><u>Policy 15: Sustainable Tourism and Recreation Development</u></p> <p><i>The NPA will support proposals for sustainable tourism and recreation developments which ... [Criteria c] Reuse buildings to provide: self catering and/or bunk house/camping barn accommodation.</i></p> <p><b>DEFINITION OF LOCAL NEED IS ON P.32 - TARSET AND GREYSTEAD INTENDS TO HAVE ITS OWN DEFINITION OF LOCAL NEED</b></p> <p><b><u>Tynedale Local Plan (saved policies)</u></b></p> <p><u>BE11 and BE15</u></p>
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**Tynedale Local Plan (April 2000)**

Policy BE11

*The change of use or conversion of existing buildings in the open countryside will be permitted for the following uses:*

- (i) small scale employment uses (Class B1, B2);*
- (ii) holiday accommodation;*
- (iii) recreational uses, including camping barns and bunk houses;*
- (iv) tourist facilities;*
- (v) new rural enterprises, including farm diversification.*

*All proposals for the change of use or conversion of existing buildings in the open countryside will be required to fulfill the following criteria:*

- (a) the building is of a permanent and substantial construction and its form, bulk and general design is in keeping with its surroundings or, where the building currently detracts from the rural character, its impact is acceptably improved by the proposal; and*
- (b) the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction or extensions; and*
- (c) the new use would not cause adverse effects on rural amenities, nearby residents or other land-uses; and*
- (d) the conversion respects the form, character, architectural features, design and setting of the building; and*
- (e) the conversion does not adversely affect the character or appearance of the countryside; and*
- (f) access and other necessary services are provided without adverse impact on the character or appearance of the area or other occupiers of land and buildings; and*
- (g) the conversion does not adversely affect nature conservation interests.*

*Conditions withdrawing agricultural permitted development rights may be attached to permissions for the conversion of existing agricultural buildings to non-agricultural uses where additional*

Policy BE15

*The re-construction of buildings within the open countryside will be permitted provided all of the following criteria are met:*

- (a) the new building is not materially larger than the building it replaces;*
- (b) the design and materials conform with the criteria set out in Policy GD2; and*
- (c) if it is to be re-built for residential use then evidence is provided that residential was the lawful use of the building immediately prior to its destruction; and*
- (d) the building was of a type where rebuilding is not specifically excluded by other policies in this Local Plan.*

**Tynedale Core Strategy (Oct 2007)**

Tynedale LDF Core Strategy - Adopted October 2007

**No specific policies related to conversion of existing buildings except as a bullet point at the end of GD1, which states that in the open countryside, development will be restricted to the re-use of existing buildings. No other policy content on this specific matter.**

**Northumberland National Park Design Guide SPD - section on Conversions**

**6.2 Conversions**

**6.2.1 Principles**

Almost all conversion schemes in the National Park involve a building previously used in agriculture. As agricultural practices change and farms are merged, traditional buildings are often no longer required for their original use. The appearance and character of these buildings is best preserved by retaining the original use or a closely related function, however this is often not financially viable. The change of use of such buildings can ensure they do not fall into disrepair. Policies contained within the Core Strategy provide guidance on what uses might be appropriate in a particular location. The guiding principle in any conversion is to retain as much of the original character as possible : it is, therefore, best to take a simple approach to alterations by making as few changes as possible in order to maintain form. In most cases, applications for the conversion of former agricultural buildings within the National Park may require relevant protected species surveys as part of the planning application.

**6.2.2 Introducing Daylight**

Agricultural buildings usually have simple door and window openings, often associated as much with ventilation and access as with light.

Design Considerations:

- Where possible existing openings, including those previously blocked up, should be used first to avoid creating new openings
- New openings should try to reflect the pattern and style of existing openings;
- Where small roof lights exist, consideration should be given to their reuse;
- Light tubes which reflect light down a slim tube projecting though the roof space, enhancing its intensity in the process, may help to introduce daylight to areas where a window is not suitable.

**6.2.3 Windows and Doors**

The design, appearance, colour and materials of windows and doors are particularly important in conversion schemes.

Design Considerations – *Windows*

- They should reflect the nature of the building and its previous use. Windows should be made to fit the existing openings, rather than change the shape or size of the opening;
- If original windows remain, where appropriate consideration should be given to their conservation and repair rather than replacement;
- The colour of windows is particularly important : it is often best to follow the colour of windows in the existing building or nearby buildings (typically white);
- Ventilation slits often found in old barns can be glazed by fixing glass direct to the stone just behind the outer wall plane or on the internal wall. Attempting to fit a frame to a ventilation slit would waste light and detract from the traditional character.

Design Considerations – *Doors*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the original doors remain, they are unlikely to be weather-tight and hence usually need replacing : their style and detail should be copied as closely as possible and any ironmongery could be retained and re-used;</li> <li>• Large hemmel arches are a common feature in the National Park, their shape and form should be retained and they serve as a useful source of light and access;</li> <li>• Frames within a hemmel arch could be set back from the outer plane so that from a distance the arch remains the dominant shape; and</li> <li>• Subdivision of a frame is best achieved in thirds or fifths, with a vertical emphasis.</li> </ul> <p><b>6.2.4 Chimney / Flues</b></p> <p>Depending on their previous use, buildings for conversion may or may not have existing chimneys or flues. Many heating systems will require some form of extraction and careful consideration should be given to its impact on the character of the building.</p> <p>Design Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing chimneys or flues should be used where possible;</li> <li>• If there is no chimney stack, this could be incorporated internally so as not to detract from the gable, or a simple insulated flue painted black may be more appropriate;</li> <li>• If the conversion is to a use which requires plant or machinery, this should be accommodated internally or in a position which causes the least possible visual impact such as in a modest extension to the existing building or free-standing outhouse.</li> </ul>
<b>Engagement:</b>	<p><b>Community Questionnaire:</b> Respondents were asked to gauge how important they felt differing types of housing to be in the area. Of highest importance was the conversion of redundant buildings in settlements, and second highest importance was the conversion of redundant buildings elsewhere. [Ref to report]</p> <p><b>Literal responses questionnaire</b> - 11th November 2013</p> <p><b>Consultation on 'Emerging Themes'</b> - any feedback?</p>
<b>Evidence:</b>	<p>Village Atlas</p> <p>Evidence on redundant buildings in the parish</p> <p>Site assessment exercise?</p> <p>Number of redundant buildings in the parish?</p> <p>Redundant buildings in the National Park and redundant buildings in NCC area</p>