Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

Title of Report:	**Planning Committee Report - LA01/2023/1276/F**
Committee Report Submitted To:	**Planning Committee**
Date of Meeting:	**26th August 2026**
For Decision or **For Information**	**For Decision – Referred Application by Councillor Brenda Chivers and Councillor Steven Callaghan**

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership
Outcome	Council has agreed policies and procedures and decision making is consistent with them
Lead Officer	Development Management and Enforcement Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Nil
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:

	EQIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	N/A	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:

No: LA01/2023/1276/F **Ward:** Dundooan

App Type: Full

Address: Lands 300m SE of 41 Dogleap Road, Limavady

Proposal: Proposed Retention, Refurbishment, change of use and extension of existing unlisted Mill Buildings to provide a new Mens Shed Community Facility and ground mounted solar panel array for on-site energy generation, and all associated works

Con Area: N/A **Valid Date:** 30.01.2024

Listed Building Grade: N/A

Agent: Bell Architects, 65 Main Street, Ballymoney, BT53 6AN

Applicant: Catherine Taylor, 110 Roemill Road, Limavady, BT49 9BE

Objections: 2 **Petitions of Objection: 0**

Support: 0 **Petitions of Support: 8**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Full planning permission is sought for the retention, refurbishment, change of use and extension of existing unlisted Mill Buildings to provide a new Men's Shed Community Facility and ground mounted solar panel array for on-site energy generation, and all associated works
- The site is located within the countryside in Roe Valley Country Park, a designated LLPA.
- The site comprises a derelict dwelling and the subject buildings
- The principle of development is not acceptable in this location.
- The proposal is contrary to policies of the Northern Area Plan, SPPS, PPS2, PPS3, PPS15, PPS16 and PPS21.
- The main issues include the proposed use in this location, car parking, flooding, impact upon European and Nationally designated sites, impact to landscape character, road safety and impact to an existing tourist asset.
- There is a land ownership dispute between NIEA and the applicant relating to the proposed access.
- NIEA state they exclusively own and manage the disputed access to which members of the public have pedestrian access.
- The applicant states that the location is preferable to the existing location of the facility as it would be less sensitive to out of hours activity. NIEA, who control access to the Country Park and subject access lane, have stated that the site is secured outside park opening hours and therefore out of hours vehicular access would not be feasible.
- 2 objections and 8 letters of support have been received in response to the application.

- Refusal is recommended.

Drawings and additional information are available to view on the Planning Portal- https://planningregister.planningsystemni.gov.uk/simple-search

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 That the Committee has taken into consideration and agrees with the reasons for the recommendation set out in section 9 and the policies and guidance in sections 7 and 8 and resolves to **REFUSE** outline planning permission subject to the reasons set out in section 10.

2 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

2.1 The application site is located on lands 300m SE of 41 Dogleap Road, Limavady. The application site is located on agricultural lands, which are immediately adjacent to the Roe Valley Country Park with vehicular access to the site proposed via the existing internal tracks and pedestrian pathways within the Roe Valley Country Park.

2.2 The application site is located within the rural area as defined in the Northern Area Plan 2016, sited approximately 1.3km south of Limavady Town and 0.4km west of the hamlet of Ardgarvan. The application site is located within the designated Roe Valley Country Park Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA) and is immediately adjacent to the River Roe, which is a designated SAC/ASSI site and the Roe Valley Country Park which is a significant visitor attraction.

2.3 The application site contains three buildings, one of which is a derelict former dwelling which is the subject of planning application LA01/2024/0137/F. The two buildings subject to this application comprise a larger single storey predominately stone building with a corrugated tin roof and a much smaller attached building. The larger building has a linear floor plan, and a number of openings are evident although have been blocked up. The smaller building is attached to thew northwestern corner of the stone building. This building is

constructed from a mix of stone and red brick. It has a mono-pitch roof form although the roof has been removed. A red brick arch is present on the western gable.

2.4 There are a number of built and industrial heritage features within the vicinity of the application site associated with the historic linen and flax industry and hydroelectric generation.

3 RELEVANT HISTORY

3.1 LA01/2024/0137/F - Lands 300m SE of 41 Dogleap Road Limavady - Refurbishment of existing cottage to provide a caretakers cottage as adjacent accommodation support to the proposed Mens Shed community facility, and all associated works – Current Application

4 THE APPLICATION

4.1 This is a full application for the retention, refurbishment, change of use and extension of existing unlisted Mill Buildings to provide a new Men's Shed Community Facility and ground mounted solar panel array for on-site energy generation, and all associated works

5 PUBLICITY & CONSULTATIONS

5.1 **External**

8 Letters of support have been received. The points raised in support of the project include

• Buildings are integrally linked to the linen industry which one flourish in the Roe Valley and wish to see the buildings preserved and development of the site to be used for the betterment of men's mental health, well-being and reducing isolation.
• Restoration of the buildings will complement the areas cultural and historic past.
• The design and planning process focuses on environmental preservation and sustainability.
• The project will offer a permanent and secure place to meet and a creative space to repair and restore artefacts and grow crops for the benefit of the users of the facility.

• The new location will provide the local community with easier access to the Men's Shed, as well as offering members the therapeutic benefits offered by the Roe Valley Country Park area.
• Men's shed is a valuable community service.
• NHS services are dependent on the charity and voluntary sectors to provide assistance for lower level problems or as a stop gap while awaiting higher level services
• Limavady has suffered from a lack of resources, especially for men. There are many barriers to men accessing services as it is usually in Derry. For people with social and mental health problems, barriers such as transport, finance, motivation and the ability to plan can prevent them from benefitting from the help they need.
• Community, friendship, routine, education, helping others and doing something to give themselves a sense of worth and esteem is important for long term recovery.

2 Letters of objection have been received. The issues raised within the objection letters include

• Development would have a detrimental impact on an area of outstanding natural beauty/open space used by locals and visitors
• Road is unsuitable for constant traffic and upgrading it would detract from the ambience of the area
• Proposed development would not enhance the area of the Country Park
• Development would negatively impact the environment including bird and other animal habitats
• The location will not suit many who use the facility which may prevent them from using the facility
• The proposal may lead to further development/expansion in the future

5.2 **Internal**

DFI Roads: No objections.
Rivers Agency: FRA Requested. Not submitted.
NI Water: Refusal.
NIEA NED: Further information required. Not submitted.
HED: No objections.
Environmental Health: No objections.
NIEA WMU: No objections.
NIEA Regulation Unit: No objections.
Loughs Agency: CEMP Requested. Not submitted.
Shared Environmental Services: Further information required.
Council's Local Development Plan Team: Objection.

6 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Section 45(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that all applications must have regard to the local plan, so far as material to the application, and all other material considerations. Section 6(4) states that in making any determination where regard is to be had to the local development plan, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.2 The development plan is:

- The Northern Area Plan 2016 (NAP)

6.3 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is a material consideration.

6.4 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) is a material consideration. As set out in the SPPS, until such times as a new local plan strategy is adopted, councils will apply specified retained operational policies.

6.5 Due weight should be given to the relevant policies in the development plan.

6.6 All material considerations and any policy conflicts are identified in the "Considerations and Assessment" section of the report.

7 RELEVANT POLICIES & GUIDANCE

<u>The Northern Area Plan 2016</u>

<u>The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)</u>

<u>Planning Policy Statement 2 – Natural Heritage</u>

<u>Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS 3) – Access, Movement and Parking</u>

<u>Planning Policy Statement 6 – Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage</u>

Planning Policy Statement 15 – Planning and Flood Risk

Planning Policy Statement 16 (PPS 16) – Tourism

Planning Policy Statement 21 – Sustainable Development in the Countryside

8 CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT

8.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application relate to the principle of development within the countryside and designated landscape, the appropriateness of the proposed use and location, impact on protected sites, species, tourism and landscape character, as well as parking provision and flood risk.

Northern Area Plan 2016

8.2 The Northern Area Plan 2016 was adopted on 22nd September 2015. Section 45 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011. states that where a planning application is made for planning permission the council, in dealing with the application, must have regard to the Local Development Plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.

8.3 The application site is located within the Roe Valley Country Park LLPA (LYL01) as designated in the Northern Area Plan. Policy ENV1, Local Landscape Policy Areas, within the Northern Area Plan states that Planning permission will not be granted for development proposals that would be liable to adversely affect those features, or combination of features, that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of a designated LLPA.

8.4 Zoning LYL 01 sets out the features or combination of features that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of the LLPA.

1. This LLPA is of considerable visual significance and includes the northern part of the Roe Valley Country Park, adjoining countryside, and an area of parkland with significant tree groups between the existing urban edge and the Country Park.

2. It also incorporates the River Roe and Tributaries SAC and ASSI and the Deer Park, and Ballykelly Moraine SLNCI.

8.5 The LLPA's supporting text focuses on the protection of the country park and the open landscape, with a presumption against development other than that essential to the operation of agriculture and for the operation of the country park. The proposal does not relate to either the operation of agriculture or the country park.

8.6 Therefore, with regard to the Plan designation LYL 01, this proposal does not meet requirements, contrary to the Designation LYL 01 and associated policy ENV 1 of the NAP.

PPS 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside

8.7 Both the SPPS and Policy CTY 4 of PPS21 make provision for the conversion and reuse of existing buildings. The SPPS provides a stricter test of eligibility for buildings in that it requires buildings to be a suitable locally important building of special character or interest. Paragraph 1.12 of the SPPS clarifies that any conflict between the SPPS and retained policy will be resolved in favour of the SPPS. As such the SPPS is the appropriate policy under which to consider the scheme.

8.8 The subject buildings are identified on the Historic Buildings Database (HB02/03/012/A), although they are not listed.

8.9 The database record identifies the buildings as comprising a former wash mill and nearby workers cottage on edge of an old bleach green (Roe Green). Both buildings appear on the 1831 map. On the 1848 map the building referred to as the wash mill is labelled 'Old Wash Mill'. By 1857 the valuation recorded 'no works of any kind doing business in these premises for some time past. The database notes that while the buildings are of little architectural value, they are of importance because of their connection to the wider complicated history of the mills of the Roe Valley. The smaller mono-pitched building appears to be a late addition to the larger building as it neither appear on the 1831 or 1848 maps, appearing for the first time on the 1907 map.

8.10 Given the main buildings historic links to the milling industry in Roe Valley, it is considered the building falls within the definition of a locally important building and would be eligible for conversion to an appropriate use for the rural location.

8.11 The SPPS requires that the proposed nature and scale of any non-residential use are appropriate to the rural area. The proposed use of the site for a Men's Shed is classified as a community use which, as clarified on page 100 of the SPPS, is regarded as a town centre type use and is therefore subject to Paragraph 6.273 which outlines that a town centre first approach must be adopted for retail and town centre uses.

8.12 The applicant has not provided any information to demonstrate how they have assessed this policy requirement, providing no evidence of attempts to secure suitable premises within the town centre or in any other sequentially preferable location within Limavady Town. The only comment provided in respect to the siting is that this location is better as it's less sensitive than the current location if out of hours activities are carried out. However, as will be discussed below in further detail, this would be problematic in the proposed location. The Department for Communities Town Centre Database indicated that there were 45 vacant premises within Limavady Town centre on 31st October 2023 which suggests that there is the potential to secure a suitable premises within the town centre or elsewhere within the town.

8.13 The proposed siting of the facility is approximately 1.3km south of Limavady and access would be heavily dependent upon private car, especially for those who may have a disability. The application site is remote and accessed via narrow country roads, without adequate street lighting which would be cause for concern for those who would be required to walk/cycle to the site. For the reasons above the application site is considered inappropriate for the location of a community facility. No overriding reasons have been provided to justify the proposed location. The proposal fails to meet with Paragraph 6.73 of the SPPS in that the proposal would not result in the conversion of an existing building to an appropriate use and also Paragraph 6.273, 6.280 and 6.281 of the SPPS in that the proposed use is a town centre use and it has not been demonstrated that there is no suitable town centre or sequentially preferable location within Limavady Town.

PPS16: Tourism

8.14 Policy TSM 8 of PPS16 – Safeguarding of Tourism Assets states that planning permission will not be granted for development that would in itself or in combination with existing and approved development in the

locality have an adverse impact on a tourism asset such as to significantly compromise its tourism value. PPS 16 defines a tourism asset as any feature associated with the built or natural environment which is of intrinsic interest to tourists.

8.15 The Roe Valley Country Park is regarded as a tourism asset by virtue of its riverside and woodland walks and other recreational value such as fishing, and with over 350,000 visits annually it is a significant tourist attraction. The ecological value of the river and its associated woodland is recognised by its designation as an SAC.

8.16 The access to the proposed site would cross through land contained within Roe Valley Country Park. The proposed access route is an area that is heavily used by members of the public on a pedestrianised basis along with park staff (who also require access by vehicle for site management requirements). The proposed access route uses part of the popular riverside pedestrian path used by members of the public while visiting Roe Valley Country Park. It is the only pathway along the western riverbank.

8.17 The Roe Valley Country Park is owned and managed by DAERA Natural Environment Division (NED) on behalf of the Department for Infrastructure into which members of the public have pedestrian access. NED Regional Operations advise that for safety reasons access could not be accommodated under any circumstance through the main car park given its comparative capacity restraints and the potential of the adverse impacts on both visiting members of the public and site management staff using this area. The use of vehicles across this land is something that would be completely untenable in terms of the safe management of the park and is considered to present an unacceptable risk to both public and staff safety.

8.18 The proposal indicates that there may be a requirement for out of hours use of the premises. NED Regional Operations advises that the Roe Valley Country Park is secured outside of its seasonal opening hours. This presents a risk to security of Departmental assets during time periods where access is currently not provided. Security measures onsite outside of opening hours may also interfere with emergency service access should this become necessary, further compromising safety of visitors.

8.19 NED Regional Operations considers that the proposal as currently designed would have a significant and ongoing adverse effect on the

ability of DAERA (NIEA) to continue to facilitate safe public access through extremely popular and busy areas of Roe Valley Country Park, as affected by the proposal.

8.20 The agent indicates the parking arrangement is informal, and there is no indication of the number of cars it may accommodate. Question 33 of the P1 Form indicates there will be 10 vehicles, and a total of 16 attendees to the site. The potential for conflict between pedestrians and users of the Men's Shed is high, particularly as the pathway is narrow and insufficient to accommodate both vehicles and pedestrians. A key aspect of the country park is that it is a normally vehicle-free environment where users are able to explore the riverside environment unincumbered by concerns regarding their safety due to potential vehicle conflict.

8.21 The Country Park is an important tourism asset, and the proposed use has the potential to adversely impact on it with regard to public safety resulting in an adverse impact on the route, character, function or recreational value of the Country Park. The proposal is considered to be incompatible with the tourism/recreational use of the Country Park and would have an adverse impact on its character, quality and function by creating conflict and risk to its users. The proposed scheme is contrary to Policy TSM8 of PPS16.

8.22 The issue of land ownership has been raised within the consultation response form DAERA, outlining that they own the lands within the Country Park. Given this assertion the applicant/agent was asked to amend the P1 form to identify all relevant third parties and to serve notice on them. The agent advised that they do not agree with this assertion by DAERA. The applicant has been asked to demonstrate that they own/control the relevant lands within the red line boundary of the application site and establish that the current P1 form is correct however, to date no further information has been submitted by the applicant to verify their ownership/control of the lands.

Design, Integration and Character

8.23 The proposal seeks to refurbish the existing mill building and smaller building at its North Western corner, while also provided two new extensions, one to the north western gable and one to the south western corner of the building. The proposal seeks to retain the existing scale and form of the mill building, largely utilising existing door and window openings, maintaining the existing brick and stone facades, repointing and using reclaimed brick where necessary to

maintain the historic fabric and character of the building. The proposal seeks to replace the existing tin roof with a natural slate roof.

8.24 The proposed extension to the Northwestern gable of the mill building extends to 6.55m with a small overhang over the entrance doors which will bring it in line with the gable of the smaller attached red brick building. The extension is gable ended with a pitched roof at a height of 5.2m above finished floor level. The extension is stepped in from the side walls and set down from the ridge line of the mill building, appearing subordinate in scale, while maintaining the form, roof pitch etc of the mill building. The extension will be finished in a slate roof to match the mill building with the external walls finished in timber cladding.

8.25 The extension to the Southwestern corner of the mill building has a linear floorplan with a footprint measuring 10m by 6m. The extension comprises a mono-pitch roof which runs to just above the eaves of the existing mill and is to be finished in a PPC corrugated roofing. The external walls are finished in timber cladding.

8.26 The proposed refurbishment will largely retain the original character of the buildings on site by retaining much of the existing finishes and apertures. The extensions proposed are subordinate in scale to the existing buildings and are sited to ensure the existing buildings remain the dominant visual entity when viewed from the adjacent riverside walk. The site curtilage contains a number of mature trees which provide screening and enclosure for the development. The mature vegetation would ensure that the development would have no significant visual impact and would satisfactorily integrate with surroundings.

8.27 Views of the site/development will be largely limited to within the Country Park with no views readily attainable from the surrounding road network. It is considered the scale and design of the proposal is appropriate for thew rural area and will not have an unacceptable impact on the surrounding landscape and is in accordance with Paragraph 6.70 of the SPPS and Policies CTY13 and CTY14 of PPS21.

Solar Array

8.28 The applicant advises that following consultation with NI Electricity the cost of grid connection would be unfeasible although no specific

details have been provided in regard to costing for such a connection relative to the proposed solar array.

8.29 The proposed development includes the provision of a large solar array to the Southwest of the existing buildings. The proposed array consists of 64 panels and extends to a length of 32m. The array is to be sited on top of an earth bund with the highest part of the extending to 2.19m above the top of the earth bund which is approximately 0.6m above the adjacent land.

8.30 As above the lands are sited within the Roe Valley Country Park LLPA where there is a presumption against development other than that essential to the operation of agriculture and for the operation of the country park. The array is ancillary development to the Men's shed which is not a suitable type of development within the LLPA. Therefore, the solar array to is contrary to paragraph 6.224 of the SPPS and Policy ENV1 of the Northern Area Plan.

Access and Parking

8.31 Access to the application site is proposed via the use of an existing access track onto Dogleap Rd located to the southwest of the main public car park entrance. The entrance is currently utilised by DAERA staff in the maintenance of the county park. DFI Roads have been consulted on the application and have no objections.

8.32 Policy AMP7 of PPS3 outlines that development proposals are required to provide adequate provision for car parking and appropriate servicing arrangements, with the precise amount of car parking to be determined having regard to published standards (Parking Standards) and according to the specific characteristics and location of the development.

8.33 The Council considers this proposal to fall under Category D1: Community and Cultural Uses, in particular Further Education. Which requires 1 space per teaching staff, 1 space per 2 ancillary staff, 1 space per 4 students over age 17 and one third of total staff provision for visitors. Q33 of the P1 form indicate that there will be 16 people attending the site daily, although the level of accommodation on the plans suggests that there is the potential/capability for approximately 25-30 people at any one time.

8.34 The proposed site plan design and access statement outline an informal parking area to be sited to the northwest of the existing

buildings immediately adjacent to the pedestrian pathway. The P1 form indicates that there will be on average a daily number of 10 vehicles at the site. The site plan shows an area which is capable of accommodate 8 or 9 vehicles at any 1 time. This figure does not account for staff which is shown as zero despite indicating the presence of 2 staff vehicles per day.

8.35 Clarification was sought from the Council's Leisure and Development team who state that there is no public right of way at that location and that the route illustrated starts at Dogleap Road and continues to a privately owned site

8.36 Given the rural location and the dependency on private transport for accessibility there is concern that the 8/9 spaces shown on the site plan would provide inadequate parking in line with Policy AMP7. As the principle of development is unacceptable and given that DAERA have indicated that access will not be permitted through the Country Park, it is considered the proposed parking falls below what is required.

Natural Heritage

8.37 A Preliminary Ecological Assessment was submitted by the applicant as part of the application. The PEA assessed the ecological value of the site and assed the potential impact on designated sites and protected and priority species and habitats. The assessment found that while the site/surrounding environs suitable for badger and otters no evidence was found within the survey area, while the habitat on site was deemed unsuitable for newts and lizards. A number of bird species were observed within the site, although no evidence of Pine Martin was found. The existing buildings and mature trees within the site were surveys for bat roost potential with Building 1 (subject building) was found to have a high roost potential, while a number of trees within the site were found to have a range of low, moderate and high roost potential. The report advised that a bat activity survey be carried out to determine if bats were roosting in the building/trees within the site in order to determine the potential impact on local population and provide any necessary mitigation. Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam were detected outside the application site along the riverbank. The report advises that biosecurity measures should be implemented to prevent the spread of these species.

8.38 A Bat Survey was also submitted with the application. The survey was conducted over three separate dates between 8th July and 30th August comprising a mix of dusk and dawn surveys. The survey noted that bat activity on the site was high with 7 species recorded during the 3 surveys. Building 1 (subject building) hosted a Natterers bat night roost and was also used for foraging by Natterers. The Mature trees were used by a small number of pipistrelles and Leisler's Bats as night roosts and are an important foraging source for many bat species.

8.39 The bat survey provides advice in terms of the retention of existing trees used for roosting and foraging and advises against the use of inappropriate lighting within the site. The report provides mitigation options in the form of retention of roosting structures or the construction of purpose built alternative roosting buildings.

8.40 DAERA Natural Environment Division (NED) were consulted on the content of the reports. They note the Bat Survey offers several options for mitigation and require further information on which option is proposed. A Bat Mitigation Plan was submitted on September 2025 and NIEA reconsulted. They reviewed the information available to them and NED would highlight that no works should occur on site until a wildlife licence has been obtained from NIEA. Given the presence of bats, NED support the ecologist's recommendation that artificial lighting is avoided completely, however, still consider that clarification regarding the intentions for lighting remains outstanding.

8.41 Further information regarding the positioning of a bat loft and bat boxes and details of a lighting scheme was requested in December 2025 and has not been forthcoming. Given this information was not submitted, the proposal fails paragraph 6.180 of the SPPS and Policy NH2 of PPS2.

8.42 The Proposal is adjacent to River Roe and Tributaries ASSI and SAC. River Roe and Tributaries qualifies as an ASSI for the physical features of the river and its associated riverine flora and fauna, including the population of Atlantic Salmon, which is of international importance, Otter and the extent of Upland Oakwood present. Impacts to the designated site features may arise through degradation of the adjacent aquatic environment from contaminated runoff during construction and operational works. DAERA NED have considered the impact of the development and advise that there is the potential to impact the designated sites. Advice has been provided in regard to

prohibiting discharge to the watercourse and ensuring an appropriate buffer is in place between construction works and the River Roe.

8.43 Loughs Agency have provided advice on the potential impacts of the proposal on the River Roe and request that a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan be provided, this should include methods of control of run-off from working areas, and mitigating measures to prevent pollution of watercourses.

8.44 This planning application is being considered in light of the assessment requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) by Shared Environmental Service (SES) on behalf of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council which is the competent authority responsible for authorising the project and any assessment of it required by the Regulations.

8.45 SES note that the submitted PEA states “there is potential for the development to impact the designated site features, including the Atlantic salmon, otters and ‘old sessile woods with Ilex and Blechnum” and that measures are required to protect the integrity of the habitat and reduce pollution risk. SES also note that a small portion of the application area in the vicinity of the site access and the boundary with the River Roe is affected by the Q100 (strategic) flood plain. SES advises that a HRA Appropriate Assessment is required and that further information in the form of an outline Construction Method Statement (CMS) is required to inform the assessment.

8.46 To date no further information has been submitted by the applicant to address these issues, and therefore it has not been suitably demonstrated that it would not have an unacceptable impact on the designated site and is therefore contrary to Paragraphs 6.176 and 6.183 of the SPPS and Policies NH1 and NH3 of PPS2.

PPS15: Planning and Flood Risk

8.47 The application site is identified as being located partially within the fluvial floodplain of the River Roe as identified on the strategic flood map. Paragraph 6.107 of the SPPS and Policy FLD1 of 15 are applicable in this instance and advise that development will be permitted within the fluvial floodplain unless it meets with one of the permitted exceptions as outlined. When considered against the list of exceptions outlined within the SPPS and Policy FLD1 the proposal is

considered to fall under ‘Minor Development’ as the additional floorspace is less than 150m2.

8.48 The submitted plans indicate that there is no built development proposed within the floodplain, although the proposed siting of the septic tank immediately abuts the floodplain. DFI Rivers have confirmed that an FRA would be required for this site due to the proximity of the site in relation to the River Roe and a mill race which is currently leaking out onto the field located to the west of the site in question. A river model for the mill race and the River Roe would help determine the true extent of the fluvial flood plain in relation to this site. Given that the proposed development will result in the intensification of use on the site and result in additional built development adjacent to the River Roe a Flood Risk Assessment is required to accompany the application. The agent was advised on the matter and advised of a deadline for the submission of the information. To date no Flood Risk Assessment has been received.

8.49 In the absence of a Flood Risk Assessment or similar report it cannot be satisfactorily determined if there are any development works proposed within the floodplain. In adopting a precautionary approach of flooding as set out in PPS15 as it has not been demonstrated that the proposal does not propose development within a floodplain and is not a permitted exception the proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.107 of the SPPS and Policy FLD1 of 15.

Odour Assessment

8.50 Within the consultation response NI Water advised that the application site is located wholly or partially within the Wastewater Treatment Work’s odour consultation zone boundary an Odour Encroachment Assessment is required to determine the compatibility of these proposals with the existing operation of the Wastewater Treatment Works.

8.51 The opening hours of the existing Men’s Shed facility are noted to be limited to Tuesday and Thursday 10am – 4pm. No details regarding the proposed opening hours of the proposed facility have been provided. NI Water were asked if based on the continuation of current operating hours would NI Water still require an Odour Encroachment Assessment for the proposed development.

8.52 NI Water advised that they are willing to waive the requirement for an odour assessment on this occasion as long as the applicant is aware that the site is within an odour boundary and that they can still submit a development encroachment – odour assessment application to NI Water should they have any concerns relating to odour.

8.53 It is considered that an odour assessment is not required for this proposal given the potential for future engagement with NI Water to address any concerns regarding odour. Therefore, there would not be any unacceptable impact on the amenity of the users of the facility.

Consideration of representations

8.54 Many of the issues raised within the letters of objection have been addressed within the report above. While acknowledging the benefits and value of the Men's Shed organisation the proposed use is one which is considered to be a town centre type use and therefore is not appropriate for the location. No evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the applicant has carried out sufficient enquiry for suitable premises within Limavady Town Centre or other sequentially preferable location within the town and that no suitable sites exist. The rural location may impact upon the ability of some members or potential members from being able to easily access the facility given the lack of public transport to the Country Park. This coupled with the ownership/access issues highlighted by DAERA would further exacerbate these issues in that access to the site from the main car park may be difficult for those with disabilities.

8.55 The scale and design of the development is acceptable in that the proposal seeks to retain the existing buildings with the extensions and alteration proposed being subordinate to and in sympathetic to the character of the building. views of the development will only be readily attainable from within close proximity to the site by those using the riverside walks. The scale and design of the proposal will allow it to visually integrate within the site without any significant adverse visual impacts.

8.56 There is the potential for the proposal to have an unacceptable impact on bats, a protected species. In the absence of further information to advise on appropriate mitigation it has not been demonstrated that there would not be an unacceptable impact on protected species. Additional information and mitigation is required to demonstrate that

the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the adjacent River Roe which is an internationally designated site.

8.57 In terms of the application setting a precedence for further development at the site any future development at this location would be required to be in line with the requirements of the Northern Area Plan which is restrictive in terms of the type of development permitted in this location, unless other exceptional planning reasons were provided to merit deviation from the Plan policies.

8.58 In conclusion refusal is recommended. The proposal is located within the Roe Valley Country Park LLPA which outlines a presumption against development other than that essential to the operation of agriculture and for the operation of the country park, neither of which relate to the proposed development. The proposal seeks to utilise the existing pedestrian pathway within the Roe Valley Country Park to facilitate vehicular access to the site. This arrangement has the potential to cause conflict between vehicles and pedestrians and is considered to be incompatible with the tourism/recreational use of the Country Park and would have an adverse impact on its character, quality and function. Additionally, it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposed development is not located within a floodplain and that the proposed development would not have an unacceptable impact on designated sites, protected species and habitats.

Habitats Regulation Assessment

8.59 The potential impact this proposal on Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites has been assessed in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended). Based on the information provided, the proposal would require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), including Appropriate Assessment, due to its proximity to the River Roe and Tributaries SAC and the potential pathways for impacts on the qualifying interests of the European site.

8.60 Following consultation with Shared Environmental Service (SES), it was concluded that the proposal, subject to the proposed mitigation measures and recommended planning conditions, would not be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the integrity, features,

conservation objectives or conservation status of the River Roe and Tributaries SAC, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

8.61 However, SES advises that a HRA Appropriate Assessment is required and that further information is necessary to inform the assessment. An Outline Construction Method Statement (CMS) is required for the proposed development, associated sewage treatment plant and any widening of the site access. The CMS should identify potential risks to the aquatic environment and riparian habitat of the adjacent SAC, potential pollution pathways, and detail the mitigation measures required to prevent pollution during construction and operation. As a CMS was not submitted to the Council for further consultation with NIEA or SES, it has not been demonstrated that the proposed development would not adversely affect the River Roe and Tributaries SAC, including through potential pollution pathways to the qualifying interests of the European site.

9 CONCLUSION

9.1 The proposal is considered unacceptable in this location having regard to the Northern Area Plan 2016 and other material considerations including the SPPS. The proposal fails to comply with the Northern Area Plan and relevant planning policies contained within the SPPS, PPS2, PPS3, PPS15, PPS 16 and PPS21.

9.2 The proposal fails to demonstrate that the development is appropriate in principle within the countryside and within this Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA), while also failing to satisfactorily address issues relating to protected sites and species, landscape and tourism impact, parking provision and flood risk.

10 Reasons for Refusal

1. The proposal is contrary to the Northern Area Plan 2016, Policy ENV1, Designation LYL02 (Roe Park LLPA) in that the proposal is not considered to be an appropriate form of development in this location, being development which is not essential to the operation of agriculture or for the operation of the Country Park.

2. The proposal is contrary to Paragraphs 6.73 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland 2 and Policy CTY1 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside in that

there are no overriding reasons why this development is essential in this rural location and could not be located within a settlement.

3. The proposal is contrary to Paragraphs 6.73 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland 2 in that the proposed conversion and re-use of the existing building would result in a non-residential use which would not be appropriate to its countryside location.

4. The proposal is contrary to Paragraphs 6.273, 6.280 and 6.281 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland 2, in that, the proposal relates to a town centre use and is not located with Limavady Town Centre as defined in the Northern Area Pan 2016, and it has not been demonstrated through the submission of a sequential test that there are no suitable town centre or other sequentially preferably sites available within the catchment.

5. The proposal is contrary to Paragraphs 6.176 and 6.183 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland 2 and Policies NH1, NH3 and NH3 of PPS2 in that it has not demonstrated that the proposal would have an unacceptable adverse effect on European and Nationally designated sites and species protected by law.

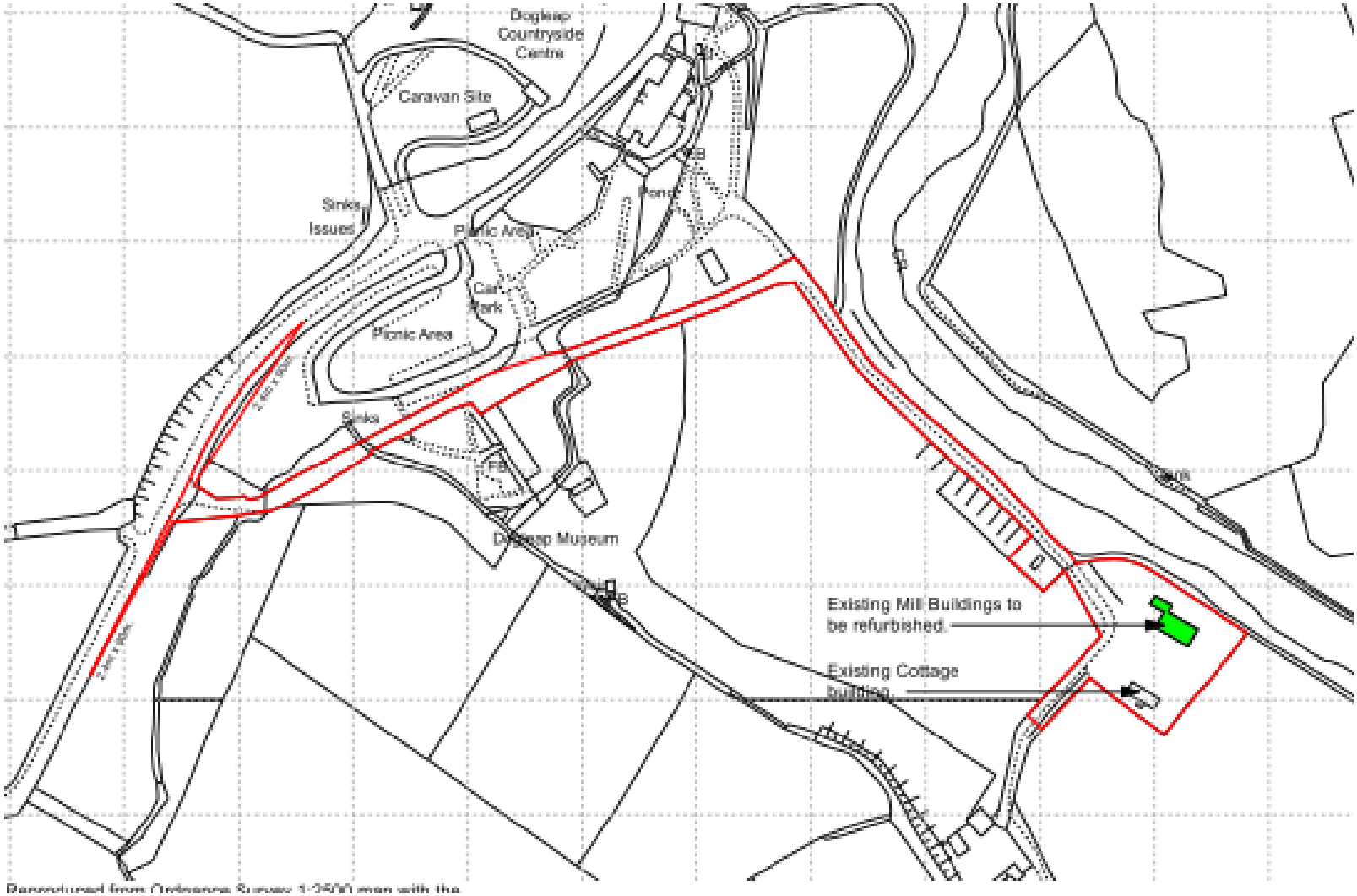
6. The proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.304 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland 2 Policy AMP7 of PPS3 in that it has not be satisfactorily demonstrated that an appropriate level of car parking has been provided.

7. The proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.107 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland 2 and Policy FLD1 of 15 in that it has not been demonstrated that the proposed development is not within the fluvial floodplain and measures to manage and mitigate against the associated flood risks have not been identified.

8. The proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.107 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland 2 and Policy TSM8 of PPS16 in that it would have an adverse impact on a tourism asset which would significantly compromise its tourism value.

9. The proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.224 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland in that the proposal would have an unacceptable adverse impact on landscape character.

Site location Map



Referral Request

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

Development Management Information Note 07

January 2024

Annex 1

Template for Requesting Referral of a Contentious Delegated Decision to Issue' List Planning Application to Planning Committee for Determination

The Protocol for the Operation of the Planning Committee provides for an Elected Member to request a planning application listed on the weekly list of 'contentious delegated decisions ready' to be referred to Planning Committee for determination. This request must be received by the Planning Department no later than 10am on the Monday following the issuing of the contentious list and submitted via email to planning@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk.

Planning Reference	**LA01/2024.0137.F, and LA01.2023.1276.F**
Elected Member Name	Councillor Steven Callaghan
Contact Details	Tel: 07824365219 Email:Steven.Callaghan@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk

Refusal Reasons

1. The proposal is contrary to the Northern Area Plan 2016, Policy ENV1, Designation LYL02 (Roe Park LLPA) in that the proposal is not considered to be an appropriate form of development in this location, being development which is not essential to the operation of agriculture or for the operation of the Country Park.

Rebuttal 01

This proposal does not represent 'further development', this is the sensitive restoration and re-use of existing buildings which have heritage importance and which are worth saving. It is much more responsible to save these buildings than abandon them and the planning authority appears to have no plan for preserving the buildings.

2. The proposal is contrary to Paragraphs 6.73 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland and Policy CTY1 of Planning Policy Statement 21, Sustainable Development in the Countryside in that there are no overriding reasons why this development is essential in this rural location and could not be located within a settlement.

Rebuttal 02

This ignores the fact that the buildings are located here already. CCG Planning have already agreed to a similar proposal for CAN (Compass Advocacy Network) at Lislagan Farm in Ballymoney, and similarly and initially attempted to stop the charity from relocating out into the countryside.

LA01/2021/1409/F

3. The proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.107 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland and Policy FLD1 of 15 in that it has not been demonstrated that the proposed development is not within the fluvial floodplain and measures to manage and mitigate against the associated flood risks have not been identified.

Rebuttal 03

All matters in relation to this have been resolved in the planning submissions, there is no evidence that flooding will be of risk, rather it is NIEA that have caused the localised issues of flooding due to their mismanagement and unsuccessful partial removal of the Layde systems, however no flooding has ever threatened the buildings.

Ill 02 Above aerial shows the scars and flood damage on the fields from the old Layde structures.

In a similar situation in Cloughmills – CCG Planning approved the sensitive restoration of the Mill buildings even though there was a defined flood risk in that case and the charity allowed for reasonable measures to defend against any flooding.
LA01/2017/0964/F

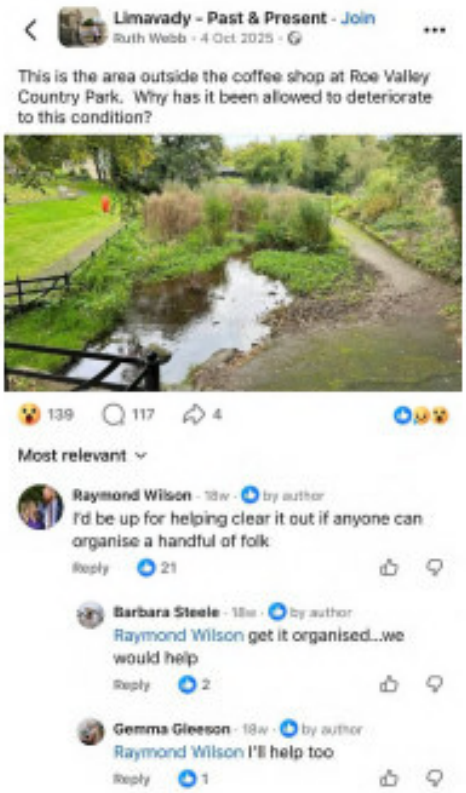
Ill 03 Cloughmills Old Mill building with flooding mitigation built in to the building.

4. The proposal is contrary to Paragraph 6.107 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland and Policy TSM8 of PPS16 in that it would have an adverse impact on a tourism asset which would significantly compromise its tourism value.

Rebuttal 04

There is simply no evidence for this suggestion.
In many countryside parks in the UK and NI, there would be the expectation that any community activity within a park will increase its connection and resonance with community and place.

This proposal could assist with assistance with improving the current condition and offering of Roe Valley Country Park.



A sympathetic re-use would actively support tourism, heritage conservation, rural sustainability, and prevent further deterioration of heritage structures. Northern Ireland's planning framework strongly favours the re-use of existing rural buildings where it secures their retention, maintains character, and brings sustainable benefits.

PPS 21 aims to strike a balance between protecting the rural environment and sustaining vibrant rural communities through appropriate development.

1. **Strong Policy Support for Re-Use and Conversion of Existing Rural Buildings.**

PPS 21 explicitly encourages the sympathetic conversion and re-use of suitable existing non-residential buildings (such as old mills, barns, or agricultural structures) to secure their long-term upkeep and retention.

Policy CTY 4 (Conversion and Reuse of Existing Buildings) states that planning permission will be granted where proposals:
- Retain and maintain the form, character, architectural features, and setting of the building.
- Do not adversely affect the character or appearance of the locality.

The buildings are of permanent stone construction and, while not listed, contribute to local rural character and heritage. Their deteriorating state risks total loss, which would be a greater detriment to the landscape and tourism appeal than a community-led re-use. Re-using them prevents dereliction, aligns with sustainable development principles, and avoids the visual impact of further decay or demolition in a scenic country park.

PPS 21 and related guidance (e.g., A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside) highlight the potential to bring new life to former mills and other rural buildings through sympathetic adaptation for economic, recreational, tourism, or community uses.

2. **Community Use as Complimentary to the Country Park and Tourism**

A community use (e.g., heritage interpretation, meeting space, local events venue, café, or educational facility) would enhance rather than harm tourism. The Causeway Coast and Glens region builds on its natural beauty, heritage, and sustainable tourism, as reflected in the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust strategies and the area's AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) Action Plans.

- This complements the country park by adding cultural depth and year-round activity, rather than seasonal or high-impact tourism. Derelict buildings detract from visitor experience; restored ones become assets.

3. **Heritage Value and Prevention of Loss**

These stone mill buildings are vernacular heritage elements that contribute to local distinctiveness and landscape character. NI guidance on traditional/vernacular buildings (from Department for Communities and heritage bodies) stresses their importance in rural settings and encourages supportive policies for re-use. Loss through deterioration would erode the area's unique identity, which underpins tourism (e.g., the Causeway Coast's blend of natural and built heritage).

Refusal risks irreversible harm, whereas approval aligns with broader objectives to protect and enhance rural assets.

4. **Exemplars of Successful Re-Use**

Importantly, if the green lane museum had not been used or repurposed, would it have been saved?

The country park itself is a tourism asset in the Causeway Coast and Glens area, valued for its natural beauty, recreational opportunities, and rural heritage. TSM 8 requires protection of such assets, including their scenic quality, environmental integrity, and visitor appeal.

Allowing the old stone mill buildings to deteriorate further would itself constitute an adverse impact under TSM 8, as derelict structures could blight the landscape, deter visitors, and erode

the park's overall attractiveness. A sympathetic community re-use would prevent this decay, thereby safeguarding the asset's long-term viability.

PPS 16's justification for TSM 8 stresses that tourism assets must be protected from incompatible development, but also recognises that appropriate enhancements can sustain them. Here, the re-use aligns with this by integrating heritage conservation with tourism, avoiding any significant compromise to the park's core values.

Community-focused adaptations could directly support tourism by adding interpretive elements about the area's industrial past (e.g., milling history), creating educational or event spaces that enrich visitor experiences without overwhelming the rural character. This is consistent with PPS 16's broader aim to promote sustainable tourism that benefits local communities and economies.

TSM 8 explicitly allows for developments that do not undermine tourism assets, and in this case, the proposal could enhance the park's draw by providing year-round, weather-independent facilities. For instance, it could link to walking trails or serve as a base for eco-tourism activities, aligning with the Causeway Coast's sustainable tourism strategies.

TSM 8 should be read alongside other PPS 16 policies, such as TSM 1 (Tourism Development in Settlements) and TSM 7 (General Criteria for Tourism Development), which favour proposals that respect environmental sensitivity and contribute to rural vitality.

The re-use meets these by being low-impact, heritage-led, and community-oriented.
- This approach echoes the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS, Edition 2, 2025), which consolidates and is consistent with PPS 16's tourism policies, promoting sustainable development that protects assets while allowing appropriate rural diversification.

In Causeway Coast and Glens, where tourism is an economic pillar, TSM 8 supports retaining built heritage as part of the tourism offer.

The regeneration of historic sites like the Patterson's Spade Mill into a National Trust visitor attraction shows how industrial heritage the rural countryside can be safeguarded and enhanced for tourism without compromise.

Erratum

LA01/2023/1276F

1.0 Update

1.1 Replace paragraphs 8.20, 8.32, 8.34 and 8.36 with the following revised paragraphs below:

8.20 No in-curtilage parking will be provided for the caretakers dwelling or associated Men's Shed facility. It is proposed that parking for the ancillary accommodation and Men's Shed will be provided using the country park's existing parking facilities. As per Parking Standards, the caretaker's dwelling requires 1.5 in-curtilage parking spaces. The associated Men's Shed facility is anticipated to generate 10 vehicles per day. Given the nearest existing car park is 385m from the site via narrow lanes, the potential for conflict between pedestrians and users of the Men's Shed and ancillary accommodation is high. The access route is insufficient to safely accommodate both vehicles and pedestrians. A key aspect of the country park is that it is a normally vehicle-free environment where users are able to explore the riverside environment unincumbered by concerns regarding their safety due to potential vehicle conflict.

8.32 Policy AMP7 of PPS3 outlines that development proposals are required to provide adequate provision for car parking and appropriate servicing arrangements. It goes onto state that a reduced level of carparking may be acceptable in certain circumstances:

- Where through a Transport Assessment it forms part of a package of measures to provide alternative transport modes.

- The site is in a highly accessible location well served by public transport.

- The development would benefit from spare capacity in nearby public carparks or adjacent on street parking.

- Where shared parking is a viable option.

- Where an exercise in flexibility would assist in conservation of the built or natural heritage, would aid rural regeneration, facilitate a better quality of development or the beneficial reuse of an existing building.

8.34 In this case no parking within the curtilage of the facility or ancillary caretaker's dwelling is proposed. The site layout states that parking is to be provided using the Country Park's existing parking facilities. It goes onto state that this is to minimise parking demand and that alternative arrangements to site/ car park include cycling. Given that the nearest Country Park parking spaces are approximately 385m via paths/ narrow laneway to the site, and that access to the car park in question is limited and controlled entirely by NIEA, the proposed parking arrangement is inadequate. The proposal is contrary to Policy AMP 7 as no viable parking solution is proposed or demonstrated via Transport Assessment.

8.36 As the principle of development is unacceptable and given that DAERA have indicated that access will not be permitted through the Country Park, it is considered that the parking requirement has not been met.

Erratum 2

LA01/2023/1276F

1.0 Update

1.1 In the Planning Committee Report refusal reason 1 is ‘The proposal is contrary to the Northern Area Plan 2016, Policy ENV1, Designation LYL02 (Roe Park LLPA) in that the proposal is not considered to be an appropriate form of development in this location, being development which is not essential to the operation of agriculture or for the operation of the Country Park.’

1.2 This should be amended to state, ‘The proposal is contrary to the Northern Area Plan 2016, Policy ENV1, Designation LYL01 (Roe Valley Country Park LLPA) in that the proposal is not considered to be an appropriate form of development in this location, being development which is not essential to the operation of agriculture or for the operation of the Country Park.’

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 That the Committee note the contents of this Erratum and agree with the recommendation to refuse the application.

Addendum

LA01/2023/1276/F

1.0 Update

1.1 An amended block plan was submitted on 19th August to address comments made by NIEA's NED.

2.0 Assessment

2.1 The details of the block plan include mitigation measures such as bat lofts and bat boxes, as well as confirmation that there will be no external lighting. This amended plan therefore addresses the comments made by NED and the proposal now complies with paragraph 6.180 of the SPPS and Policy NH2 of PPS2.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the content of this addendum and amend refusal reason No. 5 to read:

The proposal is contrary to Paragraphs 6.176 and 6.183 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland 2 and Policies NH1 and NH3 of PPS2 in that it has not demonstrated that the proposal would have an unacceptable adverse effect on European and Nationally designated sites.

3.2 While this reason has been amended, it is still recommended to refuse planning permission as set out in the Planning Committee Report.

Addendum 2

LA01/2023/1276/F

1.0 Update

1.1 Photos and videos were submitted on 25th August 2026 which the Agent says shows unmanaged waters escaping from laydes onto the applicant's site.

1.2 The agent has submitted a rebuttal to the refusal reasons.

2.1 In reference to the photos and videos; A photograph is annotated to state that that the water shown was not flood waters. One photo shows an overgrown area with the annotation *unmanaged duck pond and unmaintained environment*. Another photo shows a stream, with surrounding vegetation and the annotation *unmanaged and unmaintained environment*. A video shows a view from within the site with some broken trees in the background. Another video shows water flowing into a field. Another video shows a person walking in a flooded field.

2.2 The rebuttal to the refusal reasons is as follows:

1. The agent disputes conflict with ENV1, noting the report's reference to LYL02 rather than LYL01. The agent highlights the report's conclusion that the scale and design are acceptable and would integrate into the landscape, and considers the heritage, educational and community use complementary to Roe Valley Country Park. The agent considers that the mill buildings should be conserved and reused.

2. The agent considers there is an overriding reason for the rural location, as the proposal seeks to conserve and reuse the

existing mill buildings, whose heritage significance is intrinsically linked to their location beside the River Roe and Country Park. The agent considers securing a viable long-term use for the locally important buildings to be a material consideration supporting the rural location.

3. The agent considers the proposed community use to be modest and directly related to the heritage buildings and their setting. Education, traditional skills, environmental learning and community activities would support the occupation, maintenance and interpretation of the buildings. The agent considers the use could be controlled by planning conditions.

4. The agent acknowledges that a sequential assessment has not been provided but considers ordinary vacant premises in Limavady are not necessarily comparable with the site-specific heritage and educational use proposed. The agent considers the assessment should consider the essential elements of the proposal, flexibility in scale and format, and sequentially preferable premises.

5. The agent notes that the ecological concerns have now been addressed through updated consultations and drawings.

6. The agent notes that DfI Roads raises no objection and considers parking and vehicle/pedestrian movements can be managed through arrangements between the landowner and Country Park management.

7. The agent notes that no built development is proposed within the mapped floodplain and considers the additional floorspace to constitute minor development. While acknowledging the site's proximity to the River Roe, mill race and floodplain, the agent considers a Flood Risk Assessment unnecessary given the existing buildings.

8. The agent considers the proposal would enhance rather than undermine the Country Park's tourism value through restoration and interpretation of the mill buildings. The concerns regarding vehicle/pedestrian conflict, access, security and land control are considered operational matters capable of being addressed through management arrangements.

9. The agent considers this refusal to be inconsistent with the report's conclusion that the buildings would integrate without significant visual impact. The agent considers the main landscape concern relates to the 64-panel solar array, which could be amended or screened without affecting the proposed heritage restoration.

3.0 Assessment

3.1 In reference to the photos and videos, it is unclear what the submission is attempting to demonstrate however it provides evidence of surface water flooding in and around the site.

3.2 In reference to the rebuttal of refusal reasons:

3.3 The reference to LYL02 is an administrative discrepancy, as the site is identified elsewhere in the report as being within LYL01. This does not affect the substantive policy assessment. While the Committee Report considers the scale and design of the buildings acceptable, this does not in itself demonstrate compliance with ENV1. The policy requires consideration of the development's impact on the environmental quality, integrity and character of the LLPA as a whole. The proposed use, including associated access, parking, external activity and infrastructure, must therefore also be considered.

3.4 The heritage value of the buildings does not demonstrate that the proposed use requires a rural location, or the proposed use is the only viable means of securing the buildings long-term reuse.

3.5 The community and educational use would generate associated visitor activity, vehicle movements and parking within the rural setting. The relationship with the heritage buildings and Country Park is acknowledged but does not establish that this proposal is appropriate in the countryside. The potential to control elements of the use through planning conditions does not address the unacceptable countryside location.

3.6 The heritage characteristics of the site do not override the requirement to demonstrate that no suitable town centre or sequentially preferable premises are available. Given the availability of vacant premises within Limavady Town Centre, and the absence of evidence that alternative premises have been investigated, the policy requirement has not been met.

3.7 A Bat Mitigation report and amended block plan was submitted on 11th September 2026. While this may address Policy NH2 of PP2, there is still further information required to address Policies NH1 and NH3 of PPS2. In a previous addendum, this refusal reason has been updated.

3.8 The proposal provides no in-curtilage parking for either the caretaker's dwelling or Men's Shed, relying instead on the Country Park's existing car park approximately 385m away via narrow lanes/paths. This arrangement is inadequate due to the potential for vehicle/pedestrian conflict, particularly within a normally vehicle-free Country Park. As access to the car park is also controlled by NIEA and DAERA has indicated that access through the Country Park will not be permitted, no viable parking solution has been demonstrated.

3.9 The absence of built development within the mapped floodplain does not demonstrate that the development would be safe from flood risk. Given the site's proximity to the River Roe and mill race, and the photographic evidence submitted by the agent within their

Rebuttal showing the land flooding, it has not been demonstrated that the associated flood risks can be adequately managed or mitigated. A Flood Risk Assessment is required.

3.10 The proposal would introduce additional vehicular activity within the Country Park, with potential conflict with its pedestrian and recreational function. The agent has not demonstrated that these impacts can be adequately managed without compromising the recreational and tourism value of the Country Park. No other information has been submitted to suggest that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on a tourism asset.

3.11 While the report considers the scale and design of the buildings appropriate and their visual impact acceptable, this does not overcome the policy presumption against development within the LLPA other than that essential to agriculture or the operation of the Country Park. The solar array is ancillary to the proposed Men's Shed use, which has not been established as an acceptable use within the LLPA

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 That the Committee note the contents of this Addendum and agree with the recommendation to **Refuse** the planning application as set out in Section 9 and 10 of the Planning Committee Report.

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

SITE VISIT REPORT: Monday 21st September 2026

Committee Members: Alderman, Boyle, Callan, Coyle, Hunter, Scott, S McKillop (Chair) and Stewart (Vice-Chair); Councillors Anderson, C Archibald, Kennedy, McGurk, McMullan, McQuillan, Nicholl, Storey and Watton

LA01/2023/1276/F - Lands 300m SE of 41 Dogleap Road, Limavady

App Type: **Full**

Proposal: **Proposed Retention, Refurbishment, change of use and extension of existing unlisted Mill Buildings to provide a new Men's Shed Community Facility and ground mounted solar panel array for on-site energy generation, and all associated works**

Present: None

Apologies: Ald Boyle

Officials: Richard Heaney

Comments: The site visit began at approximately 10:30am. The official left the site at approximately 11:20am. There were no other attendees.

Richard Heaney

21.09.26