



**North
Pennines**
National
Landscape

Planning and Design Guidelines

August 2026



unesco

North Pennines
Global Geopark

North Pennines National Landscape Planning and Design Guidelines

1 Introduction

Scope and purpose.....	3
National Landscapes and their statutory framework.....	4
The Protected Landscapes Duty	4
Natural Beauty.....	5
Special qualities	5
National Planning Policy.....	8
How to use this document.....	10

2 Environmental Resources

Landscape character.....	12
Biodiversity & geodiversity.....	16
Cultural heritage.....	19
Tranquillity: light and noise.....	22
Soil, air and water.....	27

3 Development Guidelines

Minerals and waste.....	31
Telecommunications & services.....	35
Renewable Energy.....	38
Access roads & tracks.....	44
Agriculture & farm diversification.....	49
Equestrian.....	53

Tourism & leisure.....	56
Development outside of the National Landscape.....	59

4 Building Guidelines

Building materials.....	63
Buildings of the North Pennines.....	67
Buildings in the landscape.....	72
Design principles.....	78
Repair and maintenance.....	80
Alterations and extensions.....	88
Conversions.....	102
New building.....	118
New agricultural development.....	126
Sustainable construction.....	135

5 Landscape works and external detail

Groundworks.....	141
New planting.....	143
Grassland, heathland and wetland.....	147
Planting for wildlife.....	148
Boundaries and openings.....	149
Hard surfaces.....	156

6 Resources

Local Planning Authorities.....	159
---------------------------------	-----

Glossary.....	164
---------------	-----

INTRODUCTION

This document forms part of the statutory North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan. Note that this is the legal name for the management plan, as the name of the designation has not changed (to National Landscape) in law. This document however will mainly use the term National Landscape from this point forward but that and AONB should be seen as interchangeable.

As part of the statutory Management Plan, this guidance document helps to ‘formulate the policies of local (planning) authorities’ in relation to the National Landscape (S.85 Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000).

The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (2023) amended S.85 of Crow to place a legal duty on relevant authorities to ‘seek to further the purpose of (National Landscape) designation in the discharging of their functions – this document helps to articulate what that mean in practice, in relation to the planning system.

This document provides guidance on development in or affecting the North Pennines National Landscape. It is aimed primarily at planners, developers, builders and householders.

It is designed to help implement the planning policies contained within the development plans of local authorities, giving locally specific detail to what are often quite broad-brush policies.

The four planning authorities within the North Pennines (Cumberland Council, Westmorland and Furness Council, Durham County Council, Northumberland County Council) have collaborated with the North

Pennines National Landscape team in reviewing and re-publishing these guidelines.

Scope and purpose

The main objectives of the Guidelines are to:

- help promote new development that furthers the purposes of designation of the North Pennines National Landscape while accommodating the needs of its communities
- stimulate the highest standards of design, conservation and development
- support the production and implementation of local planning policy; and
- secure a consistency of approach towards planning matters across the National Landscape.

One of the principal ways in which the natural beauty and special character of the North Pennines can be conserved is through the application of consistent and appropriate planning guidelines that complement the area’s designation as a landscape of national importance and that support local authority policy.

This does not mean placing unnecessary restrictions on development, innovative design or new ideas, but actively promoting essential development that complements the character of the landscape and helps stimulate economic activity whilst increasing the sustainability of communities.

The Guidelines do not deal with the principle of major development proposals in the North Pennines, as these are subject to planning

policies at a national and local level but should be used in considering the details of such proposals and the impact of major development in the vicinity of the National Landscape.

Any proposals that are likely to have significant environmental effects may be subject also to an Environmental Impact Assessment.

However, the principal threat to the character of the area comes less from major development than it does from the piecemeal erosion of distinctiveness that accompanies small-scale change.

This document was prepared using information from a range of background documents, including national and regional guidance and external technical documents. Much of the evidence base is shared with the North Pennines National Landscape Management Plan 2026-2031.

National Landscapes and their statutory framework

The North Pennines National Landscape is one of a family of National landscapes established as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England and Wales under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Along with National Parks, National Landscapes are “protected landscapes” formally recognised in statute as representing the finest countryside in England and Wales, where special policies should apply to safeguard, conserve and manage the countryside for the benefit of this and future generations.

The purposes of their designation were reaffirmed by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act (2000) and are as follows:

- *The primary purpose of designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty;*

- *In pursuing the primary purpose of designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment; and*

- *Recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.”*

The Protected Landscapes Duty

The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (2023) amended S.85 of the CROW Act (2000) to place a new duty on Relevant Authorities to *seek to further the purpose of designation* in National Landscapes, rather than simply having a duty of ‘regard’ as previously. The list of Relevant Authorities includes all public bodies (including local authorities and Arms-Length Bodies) and utilities. Seeking to further the purpose is not a passive duty and is not ‘business as usual’. It goes beyond simply ‘doing no harm’. It actively requires those to whom it applies to take positive action to seek to further the purpose, and to be able to evidence how they have done so. This guidance and the wider National Landscape Management Plan help to articulate what constitutes ‘seeking to further the purpose’.

Natural Beauty

The statutory definition of natural beauty includes “flora, fauna, geological and physiographic features.” This has been interpreted by the Countryside Agency and successor body as follows. “ ‘Natural Beauty’ is not just an aesthetic concept, and ‘Landscape’ means more than just scenery. The natural beauty of AONBs is partly due to nature and is partly the product of many centuries of human modification of ‘natural’ features. Landscape encompasses everything – ‘natural’ and human – that makes an area distinctive: geology, climate, soils, plants, animals, communities, archaeology, buildings, the people who live in it, past and present, and the perceptions of those who visit it.”

Special Qualities.

The special qualities that contribute to the natural beauty of the National Landscape are set out in the Management Plan under Components of Natural Beauty. They include the following.

Diverse and distinctive upland landscape character

The National Landscape covers much of the North Pennines National Character Area (NCA 10) and encompasses a suite of upland landscapes which a strong and distinctive character. Variations in geology and soils, landform, land use and vegetation, field boundaries, settlement patterns and building styles within the National Landscape give rise to a range of different but closely related landscapes, each with its own distinctive character and unique sense of place. More information on the key components of character that

contribute to the natural beauty of the National Landscape can be found in the Landscape Character section of the Management Plan.

A unique geology recognised in international designation as a UNESCO Global Geopark

Much of the North Pennines is made up of the ‘Alston Block’: the fault-bounded structural unit of alternating strata of sedimentary rocks, limestones, sandstones, and shales uplifted by the ‘Weardale Granite,’ which give a strong linear grain, a massive scale, and a stepped form to the topography. The rocks are heavily faulted, with mineral rich veins and igneous intrusions of the Whin Sill which outcrop in striking crags and waterfalls. Higher ground is free of drift with prominent crags, stone bands and occasional limestone pavements. Older igneous rocks form distinctive pikes along the western scarp. The geology of the National Landscape is remarkable for both its intrinsic value and scientific interest, its fundamental influence on landscape character and biodiversity, and the way it has influenced, and been exploited by, generations of farmers, miners, quarrymen, builders and engineers.

A nationally and internationally important assemblage of species and habitats

The North Pennines is notable for its wildlife. At nearly 2000 square kilometres it is England’s second largest National Landscape and around 36% of it is designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. It contains 40% of the UK’s species-rich upland hay meadows, 30% of its upland heathland and 27% of its blanket bog. It contains unique arctic alpine flora, including the rare Teesdale (Spring) Gentian, and

calaminarian grasslands associated with old lead mine workings. It is of particular importance for breeding upland wading birds including golden plover, redshank, curlew, lapwing, and snipe, for both red and black grouse (with over 80% of the English population of the latter) and for species such as short-eared owl, peregrine, merlin and ring ouzel. The area's rivers are important spawning grounds for migratory salmon and brown trout and support otter and white-clawed crayfish. Its woodlands include ancient upland oak, ash and juniper woods and it has many ancient, veteran and notable trees. The North Pennines still supports populations of red squirrel. This rich biodiversity is a cornerstone of the natural beauty of the North Pennines.

Nationally important peatlands

There are around 900 square kilometres of peat in the North Pennines, a substantial proportion of England's peatland, and most of this is blanket bog, a unique habitat found only in cool, wet regions of the world. These peatlands are an important store of carbon and an internationally designated habitat for wildlife. They play an important role in maintaining drinking water quality and reducing downstream flood risk. They contain a record of the historic environment since the last ice age and support local employment associated with farming, grouse moor management, tourism and conservation.

A strong sense of wildness, naturalness, remoteness and tranquillity.

Due to the combination of elevation and an austere climate of short summers, long winters and high rainfall, much of the higher ground of the North Pennines is beyond the limits of settlement and agriculture. This brings a powerful sense of remoteness and isolation to many

areas. The strength of its topography, its expansive skies and extremes of weather, the natural character of its fast-flowing becks and rivers and the prevalence of natural and semi-natural habitats, coupled with the typical absence of man-made structures give the landscape a wild and natural quality in places. While nowhere in England is truly wild or natural, few places exhibit those qualities more strongly than the North Pennines. The sights and sounds of nature, extensive views and the low levels of human activity, artificial noise, movement and light make this a very tranquil place.

Unrivalled dark skies

The remoteness of the North Pennines from major areas of settlement and the relatively low level of light pollution gives the area some of the darkest skies in England and among the best opportunities to observe the stars and planets. 16 sites within the National Landscape have been designated as Dark Sky Discovery Sites, more than anywhere else in the UK. Dark sky tourism has an increasingly important impact on the off-season economy of the area.

Outstanding scenic beauty

The North Pennines is a landscape of great and varied scenic beauty. Its rolling topography of high ridges and summits and steep-sided valleys create many opportunities for rewarding views. On the higher ground deep panoramas take in successive ridges with clean sweeping skylines and expansive skies, punctuated in places by distinctive summits and crags, with few man-made features. In some views from the moors, distant ridges frame the farmed and settled landscapes of the dales. Within the dales a number of factors contribute to their

scenic quality including the simplicity, coherence and harmony of their pastoral farmland, the pattern and rhythm of drystone walls and hedges, the subtle colours of flower rich hay meadows, the variety of tree cover, the uniformity of natural building and walling materials and the general absence of discordant or incongruous elements. There are many individually notable views of dramatic or picturesque features such as crags, gorges and waterfalls. Commanding views out from high ground on the edges of the National Landscape take in neighbouring landscapes. In some cases, the boundary of the National Landscape isn't strongly evident, and adjoining landscapes are 'borrowed' as part of the view. The lower and middle dales outside of the National Landscape are an important component of many views across and from it. There are also notable views of the National Landscape from neighbouring landscapes, particularly from the west, where its imposing topography and simple landcover are important elements of the visual environment.

A rich cultural heritage

From the hunters and gatherers of prehistory to the miner-farmers of the 19th century, successive communities have left their mark on the historic environment of the North Pennines. The absence of extensive development or intensive agricultural improvement in later periods has left a landscape of considerable 'time-depth' and a rich cultural heritage. Prehistoric settlements, stone circles, burial mounds and cultivation terraces and medieval farms, chapels, deer parks and defensive bastle houses, sit alongside later farmsteads and fields systems, and relics of lead and fluorspar mining and quarrying. The vernacular character of buildings and structures and the widespread

use of local stone and local detailing bring a degree of unity and harmony to the character to its settlements. Within the National Landscape today there are 16 Conservation Area, 183 Scheduled Monuments and 968 Listed Buildings of which 15 are Grade I and 36 are Grade II*. Many more sites and features of archaeological and historic interest are recorded on the Historic Environment Records held by local authorities.

A long and distinctive farming heritage

A long tradition of upland livestock farming has shaped a distinctive landscape of enclosed pastures and flower-rich hay meadows within the dales, with strong field patterns defined largely by dry stone walls, with scattered farmsteads and isolated field barns. The small scale of traditional farm buildings, their simple form and vernacular detailing, together with the widespread use of local stone for both buildings and field walls creates a strong sense of unity and visual harmony to the countryside. In Teesdale, the white painted farms of the Raby Estate have a locally distinctive character.

The improved and semi-improved pastures of the dales and the rougher grazing of the moors support hardy upland breeds of sheep and cattle. Notable local breeds include Swaledale and Teeswater sheep, Masham and North of England Mule crosses, and the Blue Grey and Northern Dairy Shorthorn cattle. Isolated sheep folds, bields and stone bothies are distinctive features of the moors. Traditional farming, moorland and land management practices continue to make an important contribution to the character, biodiversity, cultural heritage, and natural beauty of the North Pennines.

A unique mining heritage

The North Pennines is world-famous for its remarkable mineral veins and deposits, known collectively as the Northern Pennine Orefield. Mining for these minerals – particularly lead but also sphalerite (zinc ore), iron ores, fluorite (fluorspar), and barium minerals such as baryte and witherite- has had a profound effect on the landscape and cultural heritage of the area. The remains of mine and processing works – including buildings, hushes, spoil heaps, shafts and levels, washing floors, reservoirs, water leats, smelter flues and chimneys – are widespread and make a significant contribution to the character and identity of the National Landscape. The industry contributed to the area's distinctive settlement pattern of scattered hamlets, wayside clusters of houses and the isolated smallholdings of 'miner-farmers' on the higher dale side. The long tradition of quarrying sandstone, whinstone and limestone has also left its legacy in both the landscape and the buildings and drystone walls of the area.

Exceptional access to nature

The North Pennines is a highly accessible landscape which provides exceptional opportunities for residents and visitors to experience and enjoy its natural beauty. A substantial proportion of the National Landscape is designated as open access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) which gives the public a right of access to land mapped as open country (mountains, moor, heath or down) or registered common land. The dales and parts of the moorland are well-served by networks of Public Rights of Way, including a number of nationally and regionally promoted long-distance routes such as the Pennine Way National Trail, the Coast to

Coast National Trail, Wainwright's Pennine Journey Weardale Way, Teesdale Way and the Roof of England Walk. Quiet country roads and tracks provide opportunities for walking, cycling, horse riding and recreational driving, with some routes forming part of the National Cycle Network.

It is important that when undertaking all new development – from large scale enterprises like mineral working to small scale householder projects – that we take opportunities to strengthen and reinforces those attributes rather than weaken or erode them.

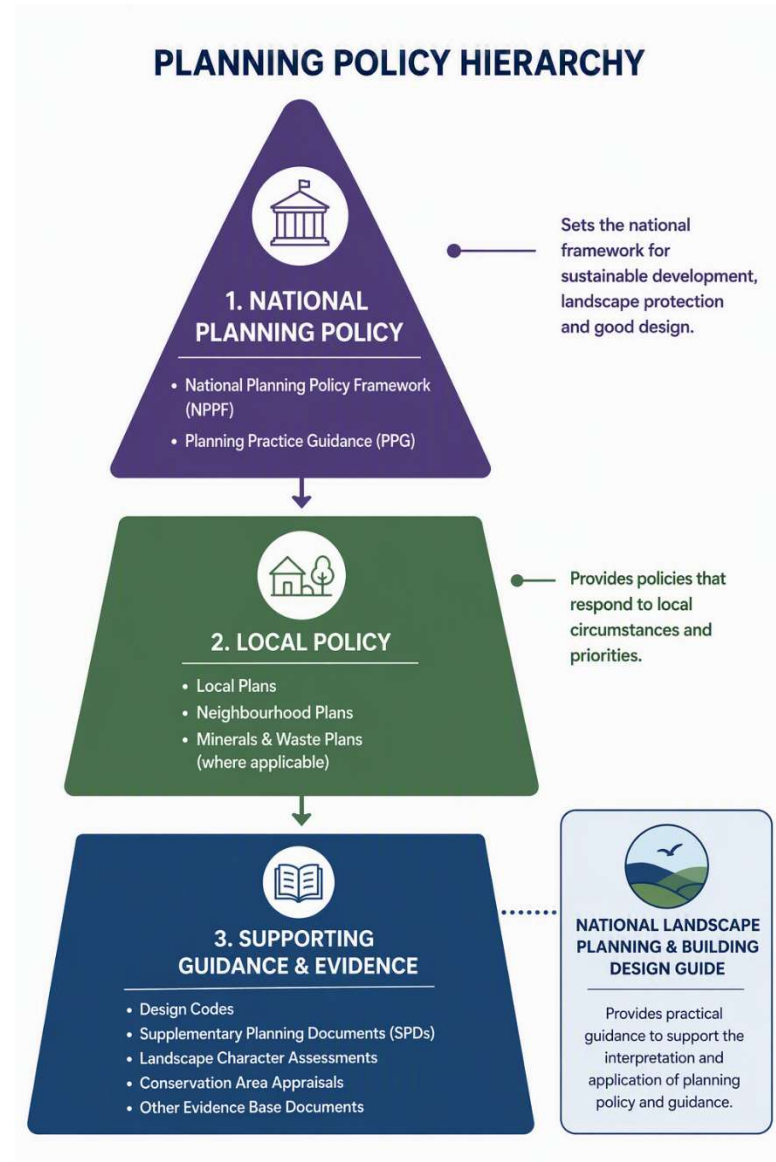
National Planning Policy

National planning policy provides the overarching framework for planning across England. It establishes the Government's priorities for sustainable development, design quality, environmental protection and placemaking, and forms the basis upon which local planning policies are prepared and planning applications are assessed. National policy is primarily set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

The current NPPF was published in 2025, however a significant update is expected in 2026 following consultation by Government. The new NPPF is expected to include National Development Management Policies (NDMPs), which aim to provide a consistent approach to key development management considerations across England.

Of particular note is the emerging NDMP N4: Protected Landscapes; which seeks to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, special qualities and statutory purposes of National Parks, National Landscapes (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and other designated landscapes. This national policy will require development proposals to demonstrate how they have responded to landscape character, visual sensitivities and the objectives of relevant landscape designations. This policy will be central to the determination of planning applications within the North Pennines.

While some change between the draft consultation NPPF and the final publication is to be expected, it is anticipated that the new NPPF will include a national level policy on Protected Landscapes.



Planning Policy Hierarchy

Planning decisions are made within a hierarchy of national and local planning policy. National policy establishes the overall framework for development and landscape protection across England, whilst Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans provide policies that reflect local circumstances. Supporting guidance, such as this Planning and Building Design Guide, helps interpret and apply these policies to specific places and development proposals.

While this guide is not formal policy, it aims to help applicants and decision-makers apply policy consistently across the North Pennines.

How to use this document

Designers, developers, landowners, householders

These guidelines give advice and pointers to good practice on:

- Conserving and enhancing the National Landscape's environmental resources.
- Managing the effects of particular forms of development – such as minerals, telecommunications, renewable energy.
- The design and detailing of buildings from basic repair and maintenance through to new construction.
- The design and detailing of the landscape elements of new development

This document should be read in conjunction with the relevant policies and Supplementary Planning Documents of Local

Development Plans (see RESOURCES below) and the rest of the statutory National Landscape Management Plan.

Some of the guidance in this document relates to works which require planning permission. Some guidance also relates to works that will require building regulations consent or consents under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act [as amended] 1990 etc. In all development there will be a need to consider protected species legislation and requirements. Works affecting public rights of way or public highways may require consents from the highway authority which are separate from the planning system.

Before considering any development in the National Landscape you should contact your Local Planning Authority (LPA) - see RESOURCES below - to confirm whether planning permission or other consents are required.

For works requiring planning permission, seeking formal pre-application advice from your LPA at an early stage in the process will provide you with useful information on issues affecting location and design as well as planning policies and other guidance that may inform your work. They will also advise you on what supporting information will be required to accompany your planning application to meet national and local validation requirements.

Use in the planning process

This document sets out good practice in relation to development and design in the National Landscape. It is expected that development will, where appropriate, reflect that good practice which is considered to be the minimum required to conserve and enhance the natural

beauty, special qualities and statutory purposes of the National Landscape. It is a material consideration when considering development proposals and in the event that the good practice set out is not followed, any planning application should be accompanied by a detailed justification as to why.

2 ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

This section gives general guidance for planners and developers on the conservation and enhancement of environmental resources – landscape character, biodiversity, geodiversity, cultural heritage, tranquillity, soil, air and water.

Landscape Character

The character of the landscape is one of the North Pennines' most valued assets. New development can make a positive contribution to the landscape but can also damage it in a number of ways. Mature landscape features like hedges, walls and mature trees may be lost; new features that are uncharacteristic of the landscape may be introduced; important views may be obstructed. In a landscape of such unique character, the introduction of standard elements that are commonplace and widely accepted elsewhere may erode its local distinctiveness.

When considering any development it is essential to gain as much understanding of the local landscape as possible, using published landscape character assessments, personal observation and analysis of the site, and the guidance of qualified and experienced advisors.

Landscape Character Assessment

Landscape Character Assessments (LCA) include detailed descriptions of landscape types and character areas that can provide useful information on the site and its surroundings and help identify key features or characteristics of the landscape that might be affected by

the development. They will also explain the trends and pressures operating on the landscape, identify priorities for conserving and enhancing landscape character, and provide guidelines for development and land management.

At a national level the landscape is classified into National Character Areas (NCA). The North Pennines National Landscape lies largely within the North Pennines NCA (NCA 10). Information on the character of the NCA, the ecosystem services it provides and its environmental attributes and opportunities can be found on the Natural England Website:

[North Pennines- National Character Area Profiles](#)

Local authorities have carried out more detailed LCA of different parts of the National Landscape. These are likely to be particularly relevant to planning applications. They include:

[County Durham Landscape Character Assessment \(2008\)](#)

[Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment \(2026\)](#)

[Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment \(outside the National Parks\)- Map Book \(2026\)](#)

[Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment Part A Landscape Classification](#)

[Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment Part B the Changing Landscape](#)

The North Pennines National Landscape partnership has produced a Landscape Character Framework (LCF) to set these local authority

LCAs within an overarching typology. Descriptions of Broad Landscape Types can be found in the Landscape Character section of the Management Plan. This also details the measures that will need to be adopted when undertaking land management and development activities to ensure that the special qualities of these landscapes are conserved and enhanced.

Landscape and Visual impact Assessment

Where development has the potential for landscape and visual effects these should be assessed at an early stage to help inform its location and design. For larger developments, and particularly where the LPA has determined that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required, it will generally be necessary to carry out a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) as part of an Environmental Statement (ES). The North Pennines National Landscape is a 'sensitive area' as defined in the EIA Regulations. LVIA is a specialized process best undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced landscape professionals. You can find suitable specialists through the Landscape Institute's directory of Registered Practices.

[F LI Member Directory](#)

Where an LVIA is required it should be carried out in accordance with the latest published guidance, and its scope, methodology, and the selection of viewpoints and visualizations like photomontages should be agreed with the LPA at an early stage.

For development that doesn't require an EIA, but where landscape and visual effects are still likely to be a material planning

consideration, a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) may be required. This is less detailed than an LVIA but following a similar methodology. As with LVIA, its scope, methodology, viewpoints and visualizations should be agreed with the LPA at an early stage.

Landscape Features

Retaining existing features like mature trees, hedges and walls and integrating them into the new development can help reduce landscape impacts. Where features are lost it is sometimes possible to salvage and reuse materials such as walling stone and stone gateposts.

Mature trees and shrubs are always an environmental asset, but particularly so in the North Pennines where growth rates are low and shelter from the elements is at a premium. Rather than being ignored or treated as obstacles on a development site they should be conserved where possible and integrated into the design.

Trees are protected by law in many circumstances. They may be covered by a Tree Preservation Order, a planning condition or a restrictive covenant. In Conservation Areas certain works to trees, including felling, require notification to, and consent from, the LPA. Before planning any work that involves a tree you should consult your LPA.

Protecting trees on a development site takes careful surveying, planning and management. The procedures for doing this are set out in the British Standard BS5837:2005 Trees in Relation to Construction. This sets out the need for a detailed Tree Survey, Arboricultural

Impact Assessment (AIA), Tree Constraints Plan (TCP) and a Tree Protection Plan (TPP). You will need engage an arboricultural consultant to assist in this process.

Local Authority Planning teams can also offer advice on what information is required to accompany a Planning Application. Where there are potential effects on trees within or adjacent to the site, the LPA is likely to require the submission of an AIA so that they can satisfy themselves that all factors have been duly considered in the design process and that the development will not prove detrimental to the retained trees and hedges. The AIA will also address issues such as the long-term effects of changes to surface levels or the future need to prune or remove trees and hedges because they cast shade or encroach upon property. The AIA must be carried out by a suitably qualified arborist with experience of trees on development sites.

Mature trees and shrubs that are to be retained as part of the development will need to be fully protected in the development phase from such factors as physical damage or soil compaction by vehicles or storage of materials. This usually entails creating a Construction Exclusion Zone delineated by robust protective fencing around the area occupied by their roots. This will typically extend to at least the area of the tree canopy or to such larger area as is identified in the tree survey

New buildings should not be sited so close to existing trees that future occupiers are likely to come into conflict with the tree – either because of shading, leaf drop or concerns over safety. The design of the building including its foundations and drainage should take the presence of trees – and their future growth potential- fully into

account. The design of ancillary features such as paving and paths, garden walls, changes in level or drainage should have regard to the rooting area of the tree which should be avoided entirely unless there are no practical alternatives, and then only if the works can be carried out without any adverse effect on tree roots.

It is an offence under the hedgerow Regulations (1997) to remove most types of rural hedgerow without first notifying the relevant local authority. The regulations do not apply to works covered by a planning consent. When in doubt, seek the advice of your Local Planning Officer.

Landscape design

See *Landscape works and external detailing*.

Good practice

- LD1 Seek formal pre-application advice from your LPA.
- LD2 Find out as much as you can about the landscape of the site and its surroundings. Refer to published landscape character assessments for information.
- LD3 Investigate and record the character of the site – produce a photographic record of the site, and important views of it, together with accurate survey drawings of its topography and surface features.
- LD4 Where significant landscape impacts are anticipated, or landscaping works are required, consult a professional Landscape Architect. Where necessary, have them carry out a

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment or Appraisal and use it to inform the design process.

- LD5 Avoid prominent locations and novelty in design or materials- respecting and conserving the character of the landscape should be the main principle informing site selection and design in the National Landscape.
- LD6 Exploit the potential of topography and existing vegetation to screen or assimilate the development into the landscape.
- LD7 Retain and protect mature traditional features like hedges, walls and field trees where possible.
- LD8 Where mature features can't be retained, consider translocation or the salvage and the re-use of materials like walling stone and stone gateposts.
- LD9 Where trees are likely to be affected find out if they are protected by Tree Preservation Orders or by being located within a Conservation Area.
- LD10 Have a Tree Survey carried out at an early stage and use it to inform the design process.
- LD11 Commission an AIA and follow its recommendations for the protection of trees.
- LD12 Look to the local landscape for design inspiration. Pay particular attention to the scale, mass, form and detailing of local buildings, local vegetation patterns and local styles of walls, hedges, fencing, gates and paving materials.

LD13 Use natural materials in construction where possible and particularly local stone and timber.

- LD14 Consider what your development can do to enhance the landscape, and particularly to meet objectives set out in the Management Plan and local authority landscape strategies or guidelines.
- LD15 Look both inside and beyond the site for opportunities to enhance the local landscape or integrate the development within it- for example through the repair or renovation of features like walls and hedges.
- LD16 Plant new trees and woodlands to help screen and assimilate the development where these are characteristic of the local landscape. Avoid planting on sites of existing nature conservation or heritage interest, or those where planting would obscure important views
- LD17 Use native species or species characteristic of the locality (see Appendices) in landscaping works and particularly when planting trees, woodlands or hedgerows.
- LD18 Maintain newly planted trees and hedges to a high standard to ensure that their potential is realised.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Biodiversity means the biological diversity of life. It includes a wide range of living things from flowering plants to mammals, birds, insects and bacteria. It includes common species, those that are under threat, and the habitats that humans, plants and animals depend on.

Geodiversity means the variety of rocks and minerals, landforms, soils and geological process that are a key component of our natural heritage. The North Pennines National Landscape has a particularly rich biodiversity and geodiversity. It contains one of the highest densities of international, national and locally designated sites in England and is home to many protected species. Not only do we have an international and national responsibility to conserve this diversity but it is fundamental to the natural beauty of the landscape on which much of our quality of life and economy depends.

Despite the richness of these resources in the North Pennines they continue to be under pressure from forces such as development, climate change, changes in land management and a legacy of fragmentation and isolation.

New development can bring threats and benefits to biodiversity and geodiversity. Important habitats or features can be destroyed or damaged and protected species disturbed or displaced.

Development can also bring opportunities to create new habitats or improve the management of existing features. It is important for the future of the natural environment of the North Pennines that all development results in positive outcomes for biodiversity or

geodiversity, furthering the purpose of designation, rather than simply 'limited harm', consistent with LPA duties under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, as amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

The most important sites in the North Pennines have statutory protection as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Some of these are also designated as National Nature Reserves or as Special Areas for Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Areas (SPA). The North Pennines also contains a number of Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) and non-statutory Local Sites (formerly known as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance or County Wildlife Sites and sometimes now named Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites). Policies for the protection of these sites are contained in local plans and national policy.

The North Pennines Geodiversity Action Plan identifies a number of important North Pennines Geodiversity Sites. These include sites identified by local authorities as Local Sites and others. The location and boundaries of nationally and internationally designated sites can be found on the Multi Agency GIS for the Countryside (MAGIC) website (www.magic.gov.uk).

More information on these designations can be found on the Natural England website (naturalengland.org.uk). The location and boundaries of local sites are shown on local plans: up-to date and detailed information can be obtained from your LPA. Information on species protection and survey and licence requirement for protected species can be found on the Natural England website (naturalengland.org.uk). Some of the protected species most commonly affected by

development in the North Pennines are Bats and Otter. Other species protected by national legislation (the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 {as amended} and Badgers Act 1992) include Badgers, Red Squirrels, Water Voles, and a large variety of birds.

It is an offence under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to 'intentionally or recklessly' disturb nesting birds. Additional information can be gained from local wildlife trusts and other local and national specialist groups such as bat or badger groups, bird clubs and butterfly conservation groups.

The UK Biodiversity Framework and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan steer national action for biodiversity and locally, the North Pennines Nature Recovery Plan should be considered as part of any development.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

BNG is an approach to development that makes sure that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than they were before the development. In England, BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

Developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. This means a development will result in more or better quality natural habitat than there was before development. There are exemptions from the requirement including for small scale development, householder applications (small projects like home extensions, conservatories or loft

conversions) and smaller self and custom build housebuilding projects.

Biodiversity gains can be achieved on-site, off-site, or through statutory biodiversity credits, and must be secured for a minimum of 30 years through planning conditions or legal agreements. More information on BNG be found on the Government website.

[Understanding biodiversity net gain- GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-biodiversity-net-gain)

Good practice

- BG1 Seek formal pre-application advice from your LPA.
- BG2 Find out as much as possible about the biodiversity and geodiversity of a site and its surroundings.
- BG3 Avoid development in, or adversely affecting, sites designated for their biodiversity or geodiversity value: check with your LPA about designated areas and take specialist advice where necessary.
- BG4 Find out if your proposals would have any impact on protected species. Take specialist advice or contact your local or wildlife trust or specialist groups for advice. Avoid adverse effects (direct or indirect) on protected species and other biodiversity.
- BG5 Undertake surveys at an appropriate time of year and over more than one season where necessary.
- BG6 Avoid development in, or adversely, affecting priority habitats or priority species.

- BG7 Avoid polluting watercourses- either from discharges or run-off from the development or during construction.
- BG8 Retain mature features or wildlife habitats within the development site – trees, hedges, species-rich grassland, wetlands. Protect them from damage during the development phase and integrate them fully into the design of the development.
- BG9 In exceptional circumstances, where retention of wildlife habitats isn't possible, consider translocation or the salvage and re-use of seed, hay crops or other plant material.
- BG10 Retain and maintain access to important geological exposures.
- BG11 Consider the timing of operations carefully: some impacts can be avoided if works are carried out at the right time of year.
- BG12 Look for opportunities to create (or improve the management of) priority habitats or habitats for priority species either within the development site or offsite. Biodiversity Net Gain requirements might be necessary depending on the detail of proposed development.#
- BG13 Incorporate wildlife-friendly features into the layout and design of the development – ponds, green roofs, flowering and fruiting plants, nesting and hibernation structures. Don't overlook common species.
- BG14 Plant species native to the locality (see Tree and shrub planting). Use plants of local or regional provenance where possible.

- BG15 Avoid introducing invasive species either intentionally as ornamental plants or unintentionally through poor quality control on imported soils or plants.
- BG16 Adopt careful working practices detailed in a method statement, including a code of conduct for your workforce and subcontractors, to ensure that they don't inadvertently damage habitats or disturb important species.

Cultural Heritage

The landscape we see today has been shaped over thousands of years by the activities of people. Many of the things they made, like hedges and walls, buildings, roads and paths, are still in use today. Others, like barrows and stone circles or abandoned mines and quarries, survive as relics in the modern countryside or lie buried beneath its surface. This 'time-depth' is for visitors and residents alike an important point of connection with the landscape and an important component of local distinctiveness and a sense of 'place'.

The North Pennines has a rich and complex cultural heritage with features surviving from many periods from the Neolithic to the modern. There is a strong sense of cultural continuity here in which each generation has contributed something to the unique character of the area. New development is part of that process but can bring challenges to the historic fabric of the National Landscape.

Archaeological features are particularly vulnerable as only a fraction of these are known and recorded. Old buildings and structures can be restored and given new life but can equally be damaged by insensitive development. New development which doesn't respect the character of its surroundings can erode the special harmony and unity of the landscape or townscape in which it sits.

Advice of enhancing and conserving the historic environment can be found on the Government website.

[Historic environment- GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/historic-environment)

Designated Heritage Assets

Designated heritage assets are buildings, sites or areas that have been identified as having special interest and are given protection under law or policy. They include Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, registered Parks and Gardens and Registered Battlefields. Policies for the protection of these sites and their settings are contained in local plans.

The location and boundaries of nationally protected historic buildings and sites can be found on the Multi Agency GIS for the Countryside (MAGIC) website.

[MAGIC](#)

The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) is an up-to date register of all nationally protected historic buildings and sites in England. More information can be found on the Historic England website.

[Search the List – Find listed buildings, monuments, battlefields and more | Historic England](#)

Information on individual conservation areas can be found in Conservation Area Appraisals and/or Conservation Area Management Plans. This information is available from your LPA who may also have undertaken Settlement Studies or other assessments of the historic built environment. LPAs in the NPNL have also prepared Historic Landscape Character Assessments which provide useful information on the wider historic environment. More information on conservation areas can be found on the Historic England website.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Non-designated heritage assets (NDHA) are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by LPAs as having a degree of heritage significance which merits consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets or have yet to be formally assessed for designation.

NDHA may be identified in Local Lists compiled and maintained by LPAs but may also be identified in Conservation Area Appraisals and Neighbourhood Plans. Many archaeological sites are recorded on Historic Environment Records (HER) maintained by local authorities. These sources are not comprehensive and in some cases NDHA may be identified as part of the consideration of planning applications, for example following archaeological investigations. More information on conservation areas can be found on the Historic England website.

[Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage – Historic England Advice Note 7](#)

Guidance

Understanding the significance of heritage assets, and the contribution to this of their setting, in advance of developing proposals, helps owners and applicants to receive effective, consistent and timely decisions. Historic England provide guidance on the significance and setting of heritage assets.

[The Setting of Heritage Assets](#)

Seeking formal pre-application advice from your LPA will help identify assets that you might not be aware of and provide guidance on the implications for your proposals and what assessments, if any, you will need to carry out.

In the base of potential archaeological features, pre-application discussions with the County Archaeologist are essential, as where assessment and evaluation work is required this will need to be completed at a pre-application stage. Planning applications will be assessed in terms of both their direct (physical) and indirect (visual) impacts on standing and below-ground archaeological remains. Planning conditions may be used to ensure that mitigation works such as excavation, watching briefs or building recording are carried out as necessary.

Good practice

- CH1 Seek formal pre-application advice from your LPA
- CH2 Find out as much as possible about the history and cultural heritage of the site and its surroundings.
- CH3 Establish whether your proposals are likely to affect the significance of designated or non-designated heritage assets or their setting: seek specialist advice if you need it.

- CH4 Consult the County Archaeologist at an early stage to find out what assessment and evaluation work is required.
- CH5 Where appropriate, involve the local community or local history societies – find out what they know or value about the history of the site.
- CH6 Preserve features of archaeological interest in situ wherever possible and protect them from site operations.
- CH7 Preserve mature landscape features – walls, hedges, trees- and incorporate them into the design.
- CH8 Where disturbance is unavoidable use qualified specialists to record features prior to their removal: consider salvage, re-use or relocation where appropriate.
- CH9 Look out for unexpected finds and report them to the relevant County Archaeologist or similar role.
- CH10 Be respectful of the historical context of the development. Ensure that development doesn't detract from the appreciation and understanding of its wider setting.
- CH11 Take opportunities to better reveal the significance of heritage assets – for example through the removal or reversal of insensitive interventions in the past.
- CH12 Look for opportunities to enhance the historic environment – for example by restoring or renovating features like hedges walls and other structures, or by introducing more favourable management to archaeological sites.

- CH13 Look for opportunities to sympathetically re-use or adapt redundant historic structures to give them a use that will sustain their management in the future. Discuss your ideas early with the local authority.

Tranquillity: light and noise

Tranquillity

Seeking tranquillity is an important reason why many people visit the countryside and the presence of tranquil areas helps boost rural tourism and is an important aspect of the quality of life of local people. Tranquillity is not the absence of all noise, activity, buildings and night-time light. Research has found that many rural activities, such as farming and hiking, and natural noises such as birdsong and flowing water, enhance people's experience of tranquillity.

The tranquillity of the English countryside is being constantly eroded by increasing urbanisation, the growth in air and road traffic, new road building and the expansion of energy infrastructure.

The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) has mapped the factors contributing to or detracting from tranquillity to show the relative tranquillity of different areas. This shows the North Pennines to be one of the few really large areas of tranquillity left in England. The tranquillity of the North Pennines is therefore not only of immense importance to its own communities but is an asset of national importance. While the National Landscape is relatively free of some of the development pressures affecting other areas, its tranquillity is still under threat from piecemeal erosion. Two of the most significant causes are increased light and noise pollution.

Additional information on tranquillity and tranquillity mapping can be found on the CPRE website. www.cpre.org.uk.

Lighting and Dark Night Skies

Artificial lighting, if not properly controlled, can be both wasteful of energy and have a serious impact on the quality of life of people, the tranquillity of the countryside, the darkness of the night sky and biodiversity.

Types of light pollution

- Sky glow. The brightening of the night sky as a result of light pollution. The cumulative effect of lighting on the night sky which loses its darkness, and with it our ability to see stars and planets. White sky glow is increasing due to the increasing use of LED lighting. Unshielded white or blue light results in more sky glow than orange tones.
- Glare – the brightness of intense light that is uncomfortable to look at and creates excessive contrast that can reduce both safety and security; and
- Light trespass – the spilling of light beyond the boundary of a building, structure or site. This can result in householder complaints and also affect surrounding wildlife habitats.

Introducing lighting into unlit areas can be detrimental to nocturnal species such as bats, and disturbance-sensitive species such as otters. These impacts can often be avoided through good lighting design, which will also very often save money and reduce carbon footprint. Dark night skies increasingly contribute to sustainable tourism and offer a wealth of opportunities for education and engagement.

The North Pennines has some of the darkest skies in England and they are one of the area's 'special qualities'. 16 sites within the NPNL have

been designated as Dark Sky Discovery Sites: more than anywhere else in the UK. Sources of artificial light include street lighting, domestic and commercial security and decorative lighting and illumination to advertise commercial premises. For small-scale developments there are a number of simple principles that can be followed to minimise or reduce unnecessary light pollution. For more complex development a detailed assessment of the lighting impacts may be necessary, and a detailed lighting strategy formulated.



Poor lighting design can result in unnecessary light pollution, affecting both dark skies and biodiversity.

Some of the things that can be done to reduce light pollution are physical design solutions, others require active management. As with other environmental effects it is always best to 'design out' the potential for harm and only use active management when that is not possible. All light pollution, however small, contributes to the general

erosion of darkness and tranquillity in the North Pennines and so it should be carefully considered as an issue for all new development.

[DarkSky International](#) promotes five principles for outdoor lighting:

1. **Useful.** Use light only where it is needed – All light should have a clear purpose. Consider how the use of light will impact the area, including wildlife and their habitats.
2. **Targeted.** Direct light so it falls only where it is needed – Use shielding and careful aiming to target the direction of the light beam so that it points downward and does not spill beyond where it is needed.
3. **Low level.** The light should be no brighter than necessary – Use the lowest level required. Be mindful of surface conditions, as some surfaces may reflect more light into the night sky than intended.
4. **Controlled.** Use light only when it is needed – Use controls such as timers or motion detectors to ensure that light is available when it is needed, dimmed when possible, and turned off when not needed.
5. **Warm-coloured.** Use warmer-colour lights where possible – Limit the amount of shorter wavelength (blue-violet) light to the least amount needed.

Planning permission, listed building consent or Advertisement Consent may be required for new lighting. You should check the requirements with your LPA. Whether planning permission is required or not, it is strongly recommended that the best practice identified in this document is followed.

Local Highway Authorities and other statutory undertakers have duties under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 that relate to the need to consider artificial lighting. This is especially the case with street lighting and the Local Authorities covering the North Pennines are actively pursuing dark sky friendly policies including environmental zoning, dimming, removal and appropriate low energy use bulb choice.

Further information

Further advice on reducing light pollution can be found in Lighting in the Countryside: Towards Good Practice (DETR) and Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Light Pollution, published by the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP). The Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) produce lighting guides that give recommended illumination levels for a variety of applications and guidance on good practice.

The ILP have published detailed advice on how to reduce light pollution in guidance note GN01- For the Reduction of Obtrusive Light and, jointly with the Bat Conservation Trust, advice on bats and artificial lighting: in guidance note GN08- Bats and Artificial Lighting. Both of these documents are free to download on the ILP website.

www.theilp.org.uk

The Dark Skies Cumbria project has produced detailed advice in the Cumbria Good Lighting Guide Technical Advice Note which is free to download from the Friends of the Lake District website:

<https://www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk/lighting-policy>

Good practice

- T1 Consider whether lighting is necessary at all, and if it is, where it is needed and why. Use the right light, in the right place, at the right time.
- T2 Avoid any external lighting in 'remote' areas. These are generally 1km or more from a road or property with a postcode and should be considered on an individual basis.
- T3 In non-remote Open Countryside (outside settlements) proposals that involve external lighting should not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the lighting is essential for safety or security reasons and the lighting details meet or exceed those set out in any adopted lighting guidelines.
- T4 Look for opportunities to reduce the need for lighting by, for example, separating vehicles and pedestrians, introducing traffic calming measures, or using CCTV instead of security lighting.
- T5 Floodlights installed for security reasons can cause light spill and excessive glare. They are frequently very powerful and may be installed with a suitable Lighting Control System. This can result in wasted light illuminating large areas around the target, use more energy than necessary and can result in complaints. Less intrusive lighting solutions, based on assessment of lighting requirements, and with advanced control systems will be preferable.
- T6 Adopt limits for the level of illumination appropriate to the wider setting of the development – refer to the Institution of Lighting Engineers Environmental Zones.

- T7 Don't exceed the level of illumination required for any given application – refer to published standards. A maximum of 500 lumens should be applied to residential applications. Warm white light between 2200K-2700K is the preferred standard.
- T8 If proposals for new buildings or structures (including garden rooms and conservatories) contain large areas of glazing, measures may be required to help control external light pollution from internal light sources. This can include a requirement for installation of blinds or shutters or the use of tinted or electrochromic glass. In particularly sensitive locations, or on particularly sensitive building elevations, it may be necessary to ensure that large areas of glazing are excluded at the initial design stage. Don't let interior lighting spill out into the night- use curtains, blinds or shutters at night.
- T9 For large continuous areas of vertical glazing (i.e., more than 5m²), an upper limit for VLT of 0.65 is likely to be required. Where particularly large areas of vertical glazing (i.e., more than 10m²) are proposed, as well as for substantial roof lights and skylights, a lower VLT limit of approximately 0.4 to 0.5 or less is likely to be required.
- T10 Commercial development (including farm buildings). External lighting of commercial premises, including livestock sheds and other farm buildings is necessary for both safety and economic reasons. However, light spill and glare from these installations is a threat to dark sky quality in the National Landscape. The Cumbria Good Lighting Guide Technical Advice Note (see

above) includes illustrations of good/bad farm lighting on pages 27-28.

- T11 Use low intensity lights to reduce glare and dark spots – softer and more uniform light is often better for security and safety.
- T12 Direct light downwards rather than upwards – where up-lighting is essential use shields and baffles to reduce spillage.
- T13 Choose efficient and well-designed options which direct light to where it is needed and reduce spillage and glare. Use lower mounting heights where possible to reduce spill. Install lighting carefully to reduce glare – keep the angle of the main beam below 70 °.
- T14 Only switch lighting on when it is needed – consider a curfew on lighting between certain hours when some can be switched off or overall levels reduced.
- T15 Avoid decorative architectural up-lighting or down-lighting.
- T16 Think about views from the wider countryside and make the best use of the screening effects of topography, buildings and vegetation.
- T17 Use motion sensors to switch lighting on and off – these should be set to the minimum time period and adjusted to avoid tripping by cars, passers-by or animals.
- T18 All outdoor lighting fixtures >500 initial lamp lumens must be fully shielded and appropriate use made of timers and motion sensors. Lighting of < 500 initial lamp lumens may be left

unshielded for special purposes, such as historical preservation.

T19 Keep light away from wildlife – nature needs dark. Avoid introducing external lighting into important foraging areas for bats. Avoid wildlife corridors, particularly watercourses.

Noise

Noise can have a significant effect on the quality of life of a development's immediate neighbours and on the tranquillity of the wider countryside. Noise pollution can arise from both the construction and operational phases of a development, and can include the noise of machinery, site operations, road traffic and reversing alarms. Noise levels may be the subject of planning conditions, and local authorities have additional powers to control it under The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Part III) and the Control of Pollution Act 1974 (Part III).

The background noise levels in most parts of the North Pennines are low, as there is little industry and few main roads. This means that the introduction of new noisy activities, such as quad biking or clay pigeon shooting, is particularly noticeable and can be disruptive to local residents and visitors alike. Noisy uses should be located away from sensitive areas, particularly residential and tourist accommodation, leisure facilities and well-used recreational routes.

If noisy activities are being considered for an area, a detailed assessment of their effect is essential. Practical steps can be taken to reduce both the level and impact of noise, but there also needs to be

an ongoing commitment to monitoring and management. Where possible noise should be brought within acceptable levels by passive means – for example by placing noise sources away from sensitive receptors – rather than by relying on active management and intervention which can easily lapse and be hard to enforce.

As with light, all noise contributes in some degree to the erosion of tranquillity in the National Landscape and these principles should apply to all development and not just conspicuously noisy activities.

Further advice can be found in BS5228 *Code of practice for Noise and vibration control on construction and open Sites* and from the Environmental Health departments of local planning authorities. There is best practice guidance for individual activities such as *Clay Target Shooting: Guidance on the Control of Noise* produced by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and *Code of Practice on Noise from Model Aircraft* (1982) produced by Government.

Good practice

- N1 Maintain adequate distances between noisy operations and noise sensitive areas.
- N2 Make best use of the acoustic screening properties of the natural topography or existing buildings.
- N3 Use the quietest machinery or quietest methods of working available. Make sure plant and machinery are well maintained.
- N4 Contain noise by sound-proofing buildings or using acoustic barriers.

- N5 For unavoidably noisy activities, specify, monitor and enforce acceptable noise limits.
- N6 Control the time when noisy operations take place.
- N7 Use low noise technologies like low noise surfaces on new roads. Look for opportunities to slow the speed of vehicles using traffic management.

Soil, air and water

The quality of our air, water and soils is fundamental to the environmental quality of the North Pennines. All development has the potential to damage these resources in varying degree. While individual impacts may be small they can all contribute to a reduction in the quality of the environment.

Soil

Soils are the basis of our food supply, and much of our biodiversity, as well as helping to regulate the flow of surface and ground waters. Soils often take centuries to develop and are therefore an effectively finite resource. Although the conservation of soil resources is generally handled well by industries like the minerals industry where good practices are well understood and carefully controlled by planning conditions, soils are often an afterthought in other forms of development which can result in unnecessary damage.

The North Pennines contains many heavy clay soils, which are particularly susceptible to poor handling, and highly sensitive peat soils which are important for their carbon storage, their biodiversity, and their water holding characteristics, and which can be irreparably damaged by disturbance, poor handling and storage.

Defra's Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites (2009) gives detailed guidance.

[Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites](#)

Guidance on the management of soils in the reclamation of mineral and waste sites can be found in the Guide to reclaiming mineral extraction and landfill sites to agriculture (2022).

[Guide to reclaiming mineral extraction and landfill sites to agriculture-GOV.UK](#)

Guidance is also provided in British Standard BS 4428: 1989-Code of Practice for general landscape operations (excluding hard surfaces).

Good practice

- S1 Follow the Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils.
- S2 On larger sites, have a soil resources survey carried out by a suitably qualified person at an early stage and use it to develop a strategy for stripping, storage and replacement of soils

- S3 Avoid the disturbance of deep peat soils where possible. Where disturbance is unavoidable take specialist advice on their handling and care
- S4 Prepare a Soil Resource Plan showing the areas and type of topsoil and subsoil to be stripped, haul routes, the methods to be used, and the location, type and management of each soil stockpile.
- S5 When stripping, stockpiling or placing soil, do so in the driest condition possible and use tracked equipment where possible to reduce compaction.
- S6 Confine traffic movement to designated route
- S7 Keep soil storage periods as short as possible.
- S8 Clearly define stockpiles of different soil materials.
- S9 Where soils need to be stored, use low mounds to prevent anaerobic conditions from developing.
- S10 Where soils are stored for any length of time, seed them with native grasses to reduce deterioration. Control invasive weeds and avoid contamination and tracking by vehicles.
- S11 Use loose tipping methods of soil replacement to reduce damage and compaction
- S12 Ensure that the entire soil profile replaced is in a condition to promote sufficient aeration, drainage and root growth.

- S13 Tailor the use of soils to the proposed after-use. Low fertility subsoils are better suited to creating wildlife habitats than higher fertility topsoil.

Air

As a remote rural area, the North Pennines enjoys very high air quality. Airborne pollutants, and particularly dust, can be produced by activities such as mineral extraction and processing, or by the construction phases of other forms of development. Emissions from the site can have localised impacts on the quality of life of nearby residents or on biodiversity but can often be significantly reduced by following the principles below.

Good practice

- A1 Assess the potential impacts of the proposals on air quality and use it to inform the design process.
- A2 Locate operations likely to create dust carefully – in sheltered positions and away from dust-sensitive areas.
- A3 Maintain plant regularly to minimise exhaust emissions. Install and maintain dust suppression equipment where necessary.
- A4 Suppress dust on construction tracks and haul roads through the use of water bowsers or use hard surfacing where appropriate.
- A5 Provide facilities for cleaning vehicles leaving the site to reduce dirt on roads and sheet vehicles carrying dusty loads.
- A6 Keep the site green – seed bare ground and soil storage mounds with native grasses where possible.

A7 Reduce or suspend potentially dust creating operations in windy conditions.

A8 Don't burn waste.

Water

Water plays a very important role in the landscape of the North Pennines, which is a major catchment area for the water supply of both its own communities and those further afield in the lowlands. Our moorlands and farmlands also provide a role in regulating the flow of water through the catchment, helping to both replenish ground waters and reduce the impact of flooding downstream. Water quality throughout the North Pennines is generally very high, although with some localised problems associated with old mineral workings.

Development can have adverse impacts on the water environment in a number of ways. It can damage or impair the function of natural hydrological features – rivers and streams, ponds, springs, blanket bog, flood plains. It can reduce the permeability of the land which increases the volume and rate of water flowing from the site. The site may produce sources of pollution or sediment either during its operational or construction phases. Development also brings opportunities to create new wetland or green infrastructure features that improve the water environment.

The Environment Agency is the principal regulatory body for water and has prepared River Basin Management Plans for each River Basin District. The North Pennines falls within the Northumbria and Solway

Tweed River Basin Districts. The Agency also has statutory responsibility for flood management and defence. LPAs within the North Pennines produce Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRA) of their areas to help make decisions about the design and location of development and flood risk management features and structures. They may also require site-specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) to be carried out by developers and submitted with planning applications in areas of flood risk identified in the SFRA.

The *Building Regulations Approved Document H* provides guidance on drainage and waste disposal. Detailed guidance on the design, construction, operation and maintenance of sustainable urban drainage systems can be found in the *National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) 2025* and in publications produced by the Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA).

Good practice

- W1 Assess the potential impacts of the proposals on hydrology and water quality and use it to inform the design process.
- W2 Avoid activities that will interfere with local watercourses, wetlands, blanket bog, springs and aquifers.
- W3 Avoid inappropriate development in flood risk areas.
- W4 Have regard to the topography of the site and use it to develop layouts that reduce run-off
- W5 Minimise the amount of water leaving the site by using sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS)- porous surfaces,

infiltration strips, swales and balancing ponds. Try to mimic the surface water flows that existed before the site was developed.

- W6 On engineering or construction sites, minimise the amount of water entering the site using interceptor ditches where necessary.
- W7 Identify opportunities for biodiversity through the creation of new permanent or seasonal wetlands.
- W8 Keep an inventory of all potentially hazardous materials on site and have an action plan in place to deal with spillages.
- W9 Locate storage areas for fuels, lubricants and chemicals well away from watercourses, wetlands, lagoons and drainage ditches. Provide bunded enclosures around tanks and storage areas – inspect and maintain regularly.
- W10 Use settlement lagoons, silt and oil interceptors to remove suspended solids and pollutants. Use reed beds where appropriate to condition water leaving the site.
- W11 Monitor the quality of water discharges regularly and suspend any that fail to comply with conditions.

3 DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

This section gives general guidance for planners and developers on the potential effects of particular forms of development.

Minerals and waste

The landscape of the North Pennines has been heavily shaped in places by the extraction of its rich mineral resources. Old, abandoned lead and fluorspar workings, limestone, sandstone and whinstone quarries are intrinsic to its character and part of its heritage. The continued exploitation of its mineral resources can have adverse impacts on its environmental resources, as well as affecting its scenic quality and recreational value, but may be necessary in certain instances as minerals are a finite resource and can only be worked where they naturally occur.

As unitary authorities, all the partner LPAs within the National Landscape now have responsibility for minerals and waste planning within their administrative areas. Local Plans dealing with minerals contain policies on minerals and development and LPAs will determine applications based on those policies, and the principles set out in the NPPF in relation to development in nationally designated landscapes.

Most proposals for minerals extraction would constitute major development and the NPPF (2024) states that LPAs should not permit major developments in National Landscapes other than in exceptional circumstances when they have been demonstrated to be in the public

interest and subject to rigorous examination (para.190). Applications for non-major development also need to be carefully assessed, “great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which has the highest status of protection in relation to these issues”. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas (para.189). Note: NPPF is subject to periodic review (see National Planning Policy above).

The National Landscape contains a number of active mineral sites which are controlled by existing planning conditions or have their planning conditions periodically reviewed. It also contains many dormant mineral planning permissions whose permissions will expire in February 2042 unless new schemes of working and restoration are agreed.

There are also a number of smaller building stone quarries which provide an important source of local stone to match the local architectural style and for conservation and repair of heritage assets. These are often worked on a campaign basis (i.e. to meet demand for specific local projects) and there are conservation value and sustainability benefits in allowing this local resource to be quarried sensitively within the National Landscape. In addition, there are also many former quarries which are identified on Historic England’s Strategic Stone Study which could also provide an important source of

local stone for the conservation and repair of heritage assets. The NPPF requires LPAs to consider how to meet any demand for the extraction of building stone needed for the repair of heritage assets, taking account of the need to protect designated sites; the small-scale nature and impact of building and roofing quarries, and the need for a flexible approach to the duration of planning permissions reflecting the intermittent or low rate of working at many of these sites (para 224 (f) and (g)).

Due to the unique geology of the North Pennines there may be pressure in future for the extraction of lithium by deep drilling into saline brines within the National Landscape. This is likely to be considered major development and subject to National Planning Policy tests.

Local Plans dealing with waste contain policies on waste development and LPAs will determine applications based on those policies. The majority of new waste management facilities such as landfill sites and large transfer stations and materials recycling facilities would be likely to constitute major development and would therefore be subject to the same national planning policies in relation to National Landscapes as set out in the NPPF. Smaller scale development such as new or extended sewage treatment works, household waste recovery centres and recycling facilities will also need to be carefully assessed in terms of their impacts. In addition to the requirements of the NPPF, the locational criteria for waste management facilities set out in the National Planning Policy for Waste (2014) include consideration of the need to protect landscapes or designated areas of national importance. Note: both NPPF and NPPW are subject to periodic

review. The restoration of some mineral sites can involve the importation of waste materials provided for under existing permissions and licences.

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) England (Order) 2015 (Part 6 Class A and C) grants certain agricultural permitted development rights, including for the winning and working of minerals held on land used for agriculture, provided it is reasonably necessary for agricultural purposes within that agricultural unit. It is important that advice is sought from the LPA before proceeding with such works to ensure they do not exceed the limits of agricultural permitted development, in which case planning permission would be required and the assessments outlined above would apply for consideration of minerals extraction within the National Landscape.

Similarly, bringing soil and other inert waste material onto agricultural land for the purposes of levelling or other land improvement may require planning permission and an environmental permit or waste exemption from the Environment Agency. Again, advice should be sought from the relevant LPA before proceeding with such works.

Impacts

Mineral extraction and waste operations can affect the National Landscape in a number of ways.

Negative effects

- Natural topography or important geological exposures can be damaged temporarily or permanently.
- Mature landscape features – hedges, walls, trees – can be lost.

- Important wildlife habitats can be damaged directly or indirectly.
- Protected species can be disturbed.
- Development may have adverse effects on heritage assets or their setting.
- Historic features, including archaeological remains, can be lost.
- Access routes can be closed or diverted.
- The rural character of the landscape can be eroded by the presence of industrial features – extraction faces, stockpiles and screening mounds, buildings and processing plant.
- The tranquillity of the countryside can be weakened by noise and light pollution and by increased levels of lorry traffic on local roads.
- Local distinctiveness can be weakened by insensitive restoration.

Positive effects

- New wildlife habitats can be created, or the management of existing habitats improved
- New features of geological interest can be created
- The appearance of old or existing minerals workings can be improved or their restoration secured; and
- New access routes, and new features of public interest can be created.

Many of these negative effects can be avoided or reduced, and positive effects delivered, by following the guidelines below.

Good practice

- MW1 Avoid damage to locally important topographic features like scarps, scars, stone bands, limestone pavements, spurs, ridgelines and natural watercourses.
- MW2 Avoid the loss of, or damage to, habitats of nature conservation value; retain them where possible and protect and manage them throughout the operation of the site.
- MW3 Avoid adverse impact (direct or indirect) on protected species.
- MW4 Avoid secondary or indirect impacts on species and habitats of nature conservation value in neighbouring areas.
- MW5 Avoid the loss of, or damage to, mature landscape features – hedges, walls and veteran trees; retain them where possible and protect them from site operations.
- MW6 Conserve or enhance the setting of heritage assets. Mitigate harmful effects where this is not possible.
- MW7 Preserve features of archaeological value or historical interest in situ where possible and protect them from site operations.
- MW8 Where preservation of existing features in situ isn't possible, consider translocation to suitable receptor sites or salvage material (walling stone, gateposts, seed, hay or other plant material) for use in restoration.
- MW9 Where preservation of archaeological features by record rather than in situ has been agreed, ensure that recording is carried out to a high standard and that results are published.

MW10 Avoid pollution to watercourses and ground water and aerial pollution in the form of dust or plant emissions.

MW11 Avoid visually prominent extraction areas and orientate working faces to minimise their visibility. Avoid breaching local skylines. Minimise the area disturbed at any one time through phased working and restoration.

MW12 Construct screening and storage mounds with naturalistic profiles and blend them with the surrounding topography. Avoid intrusions into local skylines. Seed visible mounds with native grasses where possible and keep the sward green and short through regular cutting or grazing.

MW13 Locate operational plant to minimise its visibility – where it is visible choose colour carefully to minimise intrusion.

MW14 Locate new buildings where they benefit from screening by topography or vegetation. Look to traditional building forms to inform scale massing and materials.

MW15 Look outside of the site for opportunities to mitigate its impacts through off-site planting where appropriate, field boundary restoration, or enhanced management of wildlife habitats and heritage sites.

MW16 Develop a Biodiversity Action Plan for the site. Monitor its biodiversity systematically and look for the development of new habitats of value, or new species exploiting the site, and manage accordingly.

MW17 Restore the site progressively and look for opportunities to improve biodiversity, geodiversity and landscape throughout its working life.

MW18 Restore the site in a manner which minimises its impacts on the local landscape. Restore to naturalistic landforms where possible; use restoration blasting to replicate natural rock exposures; re-instate smaller scale micro-relief.

MW19 Restore the site in a manner which maximises its biodiversity. Ensure that habitat creation proposals are deliverable and based on sound techniques.

MW20 Create new Priority Habitat and manage for S41 species. Focus on those most relevant to the area. The National Landscape Management Plan identifies a list of North Pennines Champion Species.

MW21 Restore where possible through natural regeneration and particularly on bare rock and scree and low fertility substrates – avoid excessive tidiness and particularly within the less visible parts of the site.

MW22 When planting or seeding is necessary use locally native species (see Tree and Shrub Planting) and make sure plant material is of appropriate local or regional genetic origins.

MW23 Retain important geological exposures in the restoration of the site and provide for access to them.

MW24 Provide for both a high quality of aftercare and the long-term management of habitats and features.

Telecommunications and services

Modern, reliable telecommunications and digital connectivity are essential to the future of the rural economy in the North Pennines National Landscape (NPNL). They support home working, microbusinesses, tourism, and marketing. Telecommunications cover a broad range of technologies, including phone services, internet, broadcasting, and wireless networks.

While high-quality infrastructure is vital for economic and social wellbeing, it's equally important to minimise visual impacts—especially in sensitive areas like National Landscapes. The open character of the NPNL is particularly vulnerable to the effects of telecommunications masts and associated equipment.

Energy infrastructure, such as overhead power lines and pylons, can also detract from landscape character, archaeology, cultural heritage, and visual amenity. Power lines can also pose risks to birdlife. While bird diverters and flappers improve visibility, they may increase visual intrusion. To reduce these effects, organisations like National Grid and UK Power Networks are replacing overhead lines with underground cables in protected areas.

Permitted Development Rights (PDRs) allow certain telecommunications development, such as installing or altering communications equipment without full planning permission, subject to conditions set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (GPDO). In National Landscapes, existing masts can be increased up to 25 metres, and new masts up to 25 metres are allowed subject to prior approval from the LPA, which

assesses siting and appearance. Taller masts require full planning permission.

Telecommunications operators, their agents and contractors must follow the Government's Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development, which provides guidance on minimising visual impacts especially in protected landscapes. This includes mobile masts and cabinets and requires early engagement with relevant authorities including the North Pennines National Landscape Team.

[Code of practice for wireless network development in England-GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612212/code-of-practice-for-wireless-network-development-in-england.pdf)

Local Planning Authorities determine applications in line with development plan policies, national and local design codes, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). While the NPPF supports expanding electronic communications networks, this must be balanced with conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment. The LPAs must also further the purpose designation of the North Pennines National Landscape. In doing so, they will consider guidance from the North Pennines National Landscape Management Plan.

Impacts

Telecommunications and overhead power infrastructure can affect the North Pennines National Landscape (NPNL) in a number of ways:

Negative effects

- The presence of masts, poles, and associated infrastructure can erode the sense of wilderness in the moorland landscapes of the NPNL.
- Vertical structures such as masts and pylons may interrupt clean, sweeping skylines that are otherwise free of built features.
- Telecommunications and energy infrastructure can introduce an industrial character that conflicts with the rural and natural qualities of the landscape.
- Construction activities may negatively affect sensitive habitats, protected species, and archaeological features.
- Development may have adverse effects on heritage assets or their setting.
- Overhead cables and service poles can contribute to visual clutter in both rural and urban settings.
- Guyed structures and overhead lines may pose collision risks to birds, especially if poorly designed or located in sensitive areas.

Positive effects

- Landscape and visual benefits can be achieved through reconfiguration, rationalisation, or undergrounding of existing electricity infrastructure.

Many of these negative effects can be avoided or reduced, and positive effects delivered, through sensitive siting, design, and early engagement with relevant authorities.



Careful siting, simple design, colour and the use of existing landscape features can help reduce the visual impact of telecommunications infrastructure within the NPNL.

Good practice

- TC1 Follow the Code of Practice for wireless network development in England (see further information below).
- TC2 Consider the design of the network as a whole and select options that minimise overall landscape impact.
- TC3 Use networks of smaller, lower-impact structures on enclosed low ground rather than single tall masts or poles on open high ground.
- TC4 Avoid siting infrastructure on moorland ridges, summits, plateaus, or other visually prominent locations.

- TC5 Avoid skyline locations, especially high ridges that interrupt sweeping views.
- TC6 Choose locations where topography, buildings, or vegetation provide a natural backdrop—particularly in views from sensitive or well-used viewpoints.
- TC7 Avoid direct impacts on heritage assets or impacts on their setting
- TC8 Select sites within settlement boundaries where possible to help assimilate vertical structures and reduce the impact of ancillary development such as access tracks and fencing.
- TC9 Where lighting columns are present in urban or roadside locations, match detailing and colour to existing features.
- TC10 Relate development to existing built features or position it within or adjacent to woodland or tree groups to help screen low-level infrastructure.
- TC11 Site overhead lines away from, or parallel to, known bird flight paths to reduce collision risks. Avoid routing lines across these paths.
- TC12 Avoid damage to ancient or semi-natural woodland and areas where sensitive bird species are present.
- TC13 Where tree cover is used to help assimilate development, consider the age and management of the trees—especially if felling is proposed—and ensure long-term management is in place.

- TC14 Avoid damage to sensitive habitats or archaeological features during siting and construction.
- TC15 Use bird diverters or flappers to make overhead lines more visible, balancing safety with visual impact.
- TC16 Use existing buildings and structures to support or contain antennas and equipment, ensuring their architectural character is respected.
- TC17 Take advantage of technological advances and network upgrades to rationalise infrastructure—removing redundant, prominent, or intrusive elements.
- TC18 Share masts or poles where appropriate, unless this leads to excessive clutter or bulky headframes.
- TC19 Share low impact sites but avoid adding further development to already prominent or sensitive locations.
- TC20 Keep designs simple and unobtrusive. Tapered lattice masts are generally less intrusive; slimline poles with shrouded antennas or disguised monopoles (e.g. timber service poles) may also be suitable. Avoid ornate or incongruous designs—honest use of materials is more appropriate in the NPNL.
- TC21 Choose colours for masts, poles, and both mounted and ground-based equipment that blend with the prevailing background. Non-reflective, recessive shades like olive green or brown are typically most appropriate.

TC22 Screen equipment cabinets, compounds, and other ground-based infrastructure using locally characteristic dry-stone walls, landform, vegetation, or a combination of measures, ensuring that screening is consistent with the surrounding landscape character and avoids introducing incongruous features.

Renewable energy

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing both people and nature. Scientists predict warmer wetter winters and hotter, drier summers, along with more frequent and intense extreme weather events such as storms, floods, and heatwaves. These changes threaten wildlife, soil health, food production, and human wellbeing, while placing pressure on the economy and the natural systems that store carbon and regulate the climate. Addressing these risks requires a collective commitment to both mitigating the causes of climate change and adapting to its impacts.

Many communities within the North Pennines National Landscape (NPNL) are 'off the grid' for mains gas and rely on electricity, solid fuel, LPG, or oil for heating. Renewable energy plays a vital role in reducing reliance on fossil fuels and supporting decarbonisation. The NPNL has the potential to contribute to this transition, provided that renewable energy developments are compatible with its designation and special qualities.

Appropriately scaled and sensitively sited renewable energy systems associated with individual household, business, or community developments that do not conflict with the NPNL's character may be encouraged. However, conserving the relative wildness and

remoteness of the North Pennines is fundamental to its designation. The openness of the landscape and high intervisibility across the uplands—where much of the wind resource lies—makes it highly sensitive to commercial-scale wind energy development. Similarly, the naturalness of watercourses and the quality of dale floor landscapes make those areas sensitive to the effects of larger hydro-electric schemes, except where they utilise existing reservoirs and associated infrastructure. The rural character, visual openness, and absence of large-scale industrial features also make the area sensitive to larger biomass plants or photovoltaic arrays.

Government Policy (NPPF N4 and EN-1) is that major renewable energy developments within National Landscapes should only be supported in exceptional circumstances. These planning guidelines do not address large scale renewable energy developments, except where they may affect the NL from outside its boundaries (see Development Outside the NL). They are focussed on small scale development providing for the needs of individual properties and small or medium-scale development providing for community facilities and rural businesses.

Planning permission is typically required for any wind turbine installation within the NL. The area's remoteness, clean skylines, visual openness and high scenic quality give an elevated sensitivity to the effects of turbines and particularly those of small-medium (>25m) and larger scales.

The installation, alteration, or replacement of solar panels on both domestic and non-domestic buildings is generally permitted under Permitted Development Rights (PDRs), with no need to apply for

planning permission. However, important limits and conditions apply regarding location, size, and positioning. Stand-alone solar panels within the curtilage of a dwelling are also permitted, subject to conditions on size, height, and proximity to boundaries. Within the NL, landscape character and traditional buildings may be sensitive to such schemes.

Additional restrictions apply in Conservation Areas, and planning permission may be required for buildings subject to an Article 4 Direction. This means that certain works that would normally not require planning permission may do so, either in relation to a particular area or a particular type of development. Article 4 Directions are used to control works that could potentially harm the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Your LPA can provide information on these areas. Consent is required for installing any type of photovoltaic (PV) installation on a listed building or scheduled monument. Solar development, even when permitted development, must comply with relevant wildlife legislation and regulations.

Ground and water source heat pumps are generally permitted development on domestic premises, although listed building consent may be required for listed properties.

Development plans contain policies relating to renewable energy, and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) will determine applications in accordance with these policies. This includes consideration of relevant local and national design codes, and the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Some LPAs have also

produced evidence papers and Supplementary Planning Documents on renewables and on topics such as the historic environment.

The NPPF encourages LPAs to promote renewable energy development and identify suitable sites to support the transition to a low-carbon future, including community-led initiatives. However, this support must be balanced with other planning considerations, particularly the need to conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment. The LPAs must also further the purpose designation of the North Pennines National Landscape.

Impacts

Negative effects

- Wind turbines and associated power lines can erode the wilderness experience of moorland landscapes.
- Turbines and power lines may detract from clean, sweeping skylines otherwise free of vertical structures.
- Rotor movement and turbine noise can disrupt the tranquillity of the landscape.
- Sensitive habitats, archaeology, and protected species (e.g. wading birds) may be harmed by development or construction activities.
- Turbine and track construction can damage peatland, releasing carbon and reducing future carbon storage capacity.
- Watercourse quality and biodiversity may be affected by artificial river engineering, generating plant infrastructure, or associated works.

- Large structures such as wind turbines, biomass plants, and chimneys may be out of scale with their surroundings.
- Industrial-style buildings and structures may conflict with the rural character of the area.
- Development may have adverse effects on heritage assets or their setting.
- Poorly sited photovoltaic panels or arrays may be visually intrusive.
- In the case of the retrofitting of roof mounted panels on existing properties potential impacts include damage or disturbance to roosting bats and/or nesting birds
- Biomass-related traffic may affect the character, condition, and recreational value of rural roads, and impact air quality.
- Infrastructure such as tracks, substations, fences, overhead cables, and service poles can add visual clutter and affect biodiversity and archaeology.
- Emissions from energy plants, including steam or pollutants, may harm the visual environment or sensitive habitats.
- Biomass demand may pressure sensitive woodland resources or drive land-use change.

Positive effects

- Biomass demand may support local wood fuel markets, encourage woodland management, and promote new woodland planting.
- Onsite renewables can support the reuse and renovation of redundant, off-grid buildings.

- Renewable energy projects have the potential to deliver significant environmental gains through creating and enhancing habitats.

Many negative effects can be avoided or reduced through sensitive siting and design.

Good practice: Small-scale Wind Energy Development

- | | |
|-----|---|
| RE1 | Avoid open or elevated locations; visually associate turbines with existing features such as existing buildings or tree groups, while maintaining appropriate stand-off distances for bats. |
| RE2 | Choose turbine locations that use local topography, buildings, or woodlands to screen views from roads, settlements, and public rights of way |
| RE3 | Avoid placing turbines on moorland ridges, summits, plateau landscapes, or prominent landforms such as ridgelines, hilltops, or knolls. |
| RE4 | Avoid siting turbines where they intrude on clean or locally important skylines. |
| RE5 | Avoid negative impacts on heritage assets and their setting. |
| RE6 | Choose locations with rising ground or vegetation as a backdrop, especially in views from sensitive or well-used areas. |
| RE7 | Select turbine size based on the needs of the primary user and the landscape's capacity, rather than maximising output. |

RE8	Where possible, relate tower height to existing vertical elements such as service poles, trees, or buildings.
RE9	Choose turbine models with a simple, balanced form—three-bladed horizontal axis turbines and some vertical axis models are generally more visually appropriate than twin-bladed types.
RE10	Avoid sites of ecological or archaeological sensitivity.
RE11	Avoid locations that may pose risks to bats or birds—seek specialist advice.
RE12	Avoid sites that affect the setting of sensitive buildings or Conservation Areas.
RE13	Locate turbines near existing roads or access tracks to minimise the need for new infrastructure; design tracks carefully to reduce visual impact (see Roads and Tracks).
RE14	Choose visually recessive colours – such as RAL700 – rather than white which is highly conspicuous against most backdrops.
RE15	House ancillary plant within existing buildings where possible; design any new structures to reflect local vernacular styles and materials.
RE16	Use underground services where feasible.

Good practice: Small-scale Hydro-electric Development

RE17	Consult the Environment Agency, Natural England, and the Local Authority at an early stage.
RE18	Follow the Environment Agency’s guidelines for run-of-river hydropower development (see link below).
RE19	Consider reusing sites where waterpower was previously harnessed, especially where this supports restoration of historic or redundant features.
RE20	Use existing buildings for turbine housing where possible.
RE21	Where new buildings are needed, reflect local vernacular styles and materials, or use innovative approaches (e.g. green roofs, natural materials) to blend with the landscape.
RE22	Avoid sites requiring major alterations to natural watercourses or gill/riverbank topography.
RE23	Avoid hillside sites such as steep gills in open country.
RE24	Avoid negative impacts on heritage assets and their setting.
RE25	Avoid sites of ecological or archaeological sensitivity.
RE26	Avoid designs that significantly alter in-stream flow regimes or reduce biological connectivity, especially for fish and invertebrates.
RE27	Minimise the footprint of engineering works; restore disturbed areas using native grasses, trees, and shrubs where appropriate.

- RE28 Design intakes and tailraces to minimise physical and visual impact; use natural materials where possible.
- RE29 Follow biosecurity protocols to prevent the introduction of invasive species via plant or machinery.
- RE30 Schedule operations to avoid impacts on sensitive species such as spawning fish and nesting birds.
- RE31 Consider mitigation of effects in key views by managing existing landscape features and establishing new ones to help screen and assimilate the development into the landscape. Use species that are native to or characteristic of the locality.

Good practice: Small/Medium-scale Biomass Development

- RE32 Utilise existing buildings for small-scale biomass installations where possible; design any new structures to reflect local vernacular styles and materials.
- RE33 Medium-scale installations may require buildings similar in scale to large agricultural structures; see the Building Design Guide for siting and design advice.
- RE34 Choose locations within settlements or on existing industrial or mineral sites.
- RE35 Greenfield sites should only be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be naturally well-screened by topography or woodland.

- RE36 Avoid locations where chimneys would be visually prominent, especially where they breach local skylines.
- RE37 Avoid negative impacts on heritage assets and their setting.
- RE38 Use colour to break up building mass and reduce the visual impact of chimneys; see the Building Design Guide for guidance.
- RE39 Storage and service areas can be visually intrusive—select well-screened locations and consider underground or partially buried storage pits.
- RE40 Follow environmental guidelines on noise, light, air, and water (see Environmental Resources section).
- RE41 Use underground services where possible. Keep grid connections short and utilise existing service lines where feasible.
- RE42 Manage traffic flows to minimise impacts on local roads.
- RE43 Ensure feedstocks are from sustainable sources. Seek opportunities to use or develop local wood fuel supplies that also enhance biodiversity.
- RE44 Bury pipelines carefully to avoid damage to important vegetation, protected species, and archaeological features; restore routes promptly using existing soil.
- RE45 Where pipelines bypass waterfalls, ensure abstraction rates do not adversely affect them; if necessary, abstract only during less sensitive hours.

RE46 Consider mitigation of effects in key views by managing existing landscape features and establishing new ones to help screen and assimilate the development into the landscape. Use species that are native to or characteristic of the locality.

Good practice: Small / Medium-scale photovoltaic installations

Building-mounted solar panels:

RE47 Where possible, locate panels on outbuildings, extensions, or carports to minimise the impact on the principal building

RE48 Avoid designs that appear disproportionate or imbalanced.

RE49 Consider how panels will appear in combination; they should be symmetrical and evenly spaced. Where practical, roof furniture such as aerials and flues should be relocated to allow for this.

RE50 Select locations that reflect and complement existing features such as windows and roof lights.

RE51 Where relevant, seek to standardise the style and location of panels with nearby properties, provided these are sympathetic to the character of the area.

RE52 Use non-reflective colour treatments for mounting frames that recede against the background. Frameless or black-framed panels should be used where frames would detract from the building.

RE53 Rooftop panels require mounting systems; low-profile systems should be used wherever possible to reduce visual impact.

RE54 Consider integrated technologies such as PV tiles and solar glass, which can be incorporated into the building fabric. Integrated panels should not be used where it would require the removal of traditional materials

Free-standing solar panels:

RE55 Select solar array size based on the needs of the primary user and the landscape's capacity, rather than maximising output.

RE56 Locate panels close to existing buildings and avoid sites remote from the associated residential, community, or commercial properties.

RE57 Choose panels and mounts that are low to the ground and do not project above hedges, fences, or walls.

RE58 Select locations that are naturally well-screened from public vantage points by existing buildings, topography, walls, hedges, or woodland.

RE59 Avoid elevated or sloping sites that are difficult to screen.

RE60 Avoid sites of ecological or archaeological sensitivity.

RE61 Avoid locations that impact the setting of sensitive buildings and Conservation Areas.

RE62 Avoid developments that would detract from the amenity value of public rights of way.

RE63	Avoid sites requiring significant ground modelling or levelling.
RE64	Use low-impact and reversible mountings, such as pile-driven or ground screw anchors.
RE65	Use panels with low potential for glint or glare.
RE66	Use non-reflective colour treatments for mounting frames that recede against the background.
RE67	Avoid the use of security fencing, lighting, and taller pole-mounted CCTV where possible.
RE68	Use underground services where feasible.
RE69	Consider how the land between panels is managed—e.g., through grazing—to avoid it appearing incongruous in the surrounding landscape.
RE70	Consider mitigation of effects in key views by managing existing landscape features and establishing new ones to help screen and assimilate the development into the landscape. Use species that are native to or characteristic of the locality.

Further information

Further information on wind turbines and bats can be found in Natural England Technical Information Notes TIN051 and TIN059, both available from the Natural England website:

www.naturalengland.org.uk

Environment Agency advice on run-of-river hydropower development is available on the Government website.

Guidance for run-of-river hydropower development

Access roads and tracks

This guidance relates specifically to private access roads and tracks, not public highways. They facilitate access to rural properties, agricultural land and grouse moors, and can be vital for fire management. However, the construction, upgrading, or repair of new or existing access roads and tracks can have a significant impact on the species, habitats, and landscape of the North Pennines, despite the often relatively small footprint of individual features. Moorland tracks, access routes to isolated properties, and tracks associated with agriculture, forestry, or telecommunications installations can be visually intrusive and may damage features of biodiversity, geodiversity, or cultural heritage value.

The creation or alteration of any access road or track involving excavation, scraping, laying of a hard surface, or changes such as widening, rerouting, creation of turning circles, passing places, hardstanding, or digging of drainage ditches, unless considered maintenance, constitutes an engineering operation and is regarded as development for planning purposes. Such works will require either prior notification, if for agricultural or forestry purposes, or full planning permission, as outlined below.

Tracks deemed reasonably necessary for agriculture or forestry may benefit from permitted development rights under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order (GPDO), subject to compliance with specified conditions. This includes the requirement for the developer to apply to the LPA for a

determination as to whether prior approval is required for the siting and means of construction of the track. The track must be genuinely required for agricultural or forestry activity.

Permitted development rights (PDRs) do not apply to tracks within 25 metres of a classified road, or to works not considered reasonably necessary for agriculture or forestry. Some exceptions may apply under PDRs, which allows for maintenance or improvement within the boundaries of an unadopted street or private way.

If the track is intended to access a residential property, or its primary purpose is to facilitate or enhance recreational use, such as 4x4 activities, grouse shooting, or fishing, it does not constitute permitted development, and planning permission would be required. Where land is used for multiple purposes, such as agriculture, grouse moor management, and conservation, the primary purpose of the works will determine whether permitted development rights apply.

Temporary plastic mesh tracks may require permission if they are in place for more than a certain period, for example, more than 28 days, or cover a significant area (proposers of such tracks should check with their LPA in each case). Consent from Natural England may also be required depending on the location of the scheme e.g. within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Areas (SPA) or Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) site. A change from a mesh track to a stone track will require planning permission. It should be noted that mesh tracks are not always a suitable alternative to stone tracks, not least because they introduce plastic to the landscape. Such 'temporary' tracks may be damaging and difficult to

remove and research shows that they do have an impact on erosion, desiccation, hydrology and vegetation.

Borrow pits for the construction and maintenance of tracks for agricultural or forestry operations may benefit from permitted development rights, although Natural England and the LPA may need to be consulted depending on the location, scale, and extent of engineering works.

Due to the complexity of planning legislation and the site-specific nature of such developments, it is strongly recommended to consult the relevant LPA and other relevant authorities prior to commencing any works. This helps reduce the risk of damaging important features and avoids the need for remedial action.

Local development plans rarely contain specific policies on tracks. In considering either a prior approval application or a full planning application, LPAs will take into account their local plans, national planning policy, and their statutory duty to further the purpose designation of the North Pennines National Landscape. In doing so, they will consider guidance from the North Pennines National Landscape Management Plan when assessing applications.

On sites designated as Special Protection Areas (SPA) or Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), tracks can only be constructed if it can be ascertained that the development will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site, either alone or in combination. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 also makes prior approval by the LPA a condition of GPDO where operations take place within a European site. This ensures that such

developments are properly assessed and that appropriate measures are taken to protect these areas.



Twin-track construction with a vegetated centre strip helps reduce the visual impact of access routes in open moorland landscapes.

Large areas of upland in the North Pennines are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the 2016 regulations. Where operations could affect a SSSI, developers are required to notify Natural England and obtain consent before proceeding, even if the activity is outside the SSSI boundary but could still impact it.

In assessing any prior approval consultation under the GPDO or a planning application for works within or affecting a SSSI, SAC, or SPA,

the LPA is required to consult Natural England, and their advice will be a material consideration in the decision-making process.

Development may also impact Scheduled Ancient Monuments, which have statutory protection. In such cases, additional consents or licences may be required alongside planning permission. Impacts on these features will also be a material planning consideration.

Impacts

The construction, upgrading, or repair of access roads and tracks can have a range of impacts on the environment of the North Pennines.

Negative effects

- Tracks can be conspicuously artificial elements in moorland landscapes that are otherwise generally lacking in manmade features. This can erode the sense of wildness, remoteness, and naturalness, which are fundamental to the purposes of the designation.
- Tracks and associated cuttings, embankments, and borrow pits can damage natural topography and features of geodiversity interest.
- Tracks can be highly visible linear features in open landscapes that otherwise lack focal points, or contrast in colour and form with their surroundings, detracting from the character and appearance of the wider landscape.
- Upgrading unpaved, often historic routes to isolated farms and cottages can have a significant impact on views and on the way in which buildings fit into the wider landscape.

- Sensitive and important habitats can be lost or damaged either directly through the physical impacts of construction or indirectly through changes to hydrology or biochemistry and through fragmentation.
- Sensitive and important species can be disturbed directly or affected by habitat changes or increased disturbance from vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
- Deep peats can be severely damaged by vehicle tracking, the construction of the track itself, and hydrological changes, which can lead to erosion and dry shadow effect. Research has found that the peat on the downslope side of tracks can be significantly drier than the upslope and this drying effect increases with time.
- Water quality can be affected by runoff from tracks or the erosion of peat.
- Features of cultural heritage value, including buried archaeology, can be physically damaged by the construction of tracks and borrow pits. The setting of important features, such as ancient monuments and listed buildings, can be impaired.

Positive effects

- Tracks can play a vital role in managing wildfire.
- The provision of tracks can facilitate access by walkers on access land to remote locations. This can be a positive benefit in some respects but may increase disturbance to sensitive species or habitats.
- Tracks in some circumstances can prevent erosion and braiding of informal tracks and damage to sensitive habitats

The negative effects of access roads and tracks can be reduced through careful siting and design.

Good practice

- | | |
|-----|--|
| RT1 | Though some new tracks may be required to support land management, and particularly fire management, one should avoid the construction of new tracks in moorland landscapes wherever possible and particularly in areas currently free from surfaced tracks. The building of new tracks on deep peat in particular should be avoided where possible. |
| RT2 | Develop any track proposals in consultation with the relevant LPA, Natural England, and the National Landscape team at an early stage. Natural England consent in relation to protected sites does not constitute a 'green light' for track building as there are wider considerations. |
| RT3 | Rigorously assess the need for any new track or significant upgrading of an existing track. |
| RT4 | Consider alternative means of access, or the use of smaller or lower-impact vehicles. |
| RT5 | Explore options that involve the removal, restoration, or reduction in scale of existing higher-impact tracks |
| RT6 | Seek to avoid track building on deep peat (over 30cm). |
| RT7 | Identify routes and borrow pit locations that avoid direct or indirect impacts on sensitive habitats, species, or important geological features. |

- RT8 Select routes that minimise impacts on topography, avoiding damage to locally important features and reducing the need for conspicuous cuttings, embankments, or deep culverts. Aim to construct tracks at grade.
- RT9 Choose alignments that fit the character of the landscape. Avoid straight lines in open fields and landscapes. Where possible, follow historical routes or existing field boundaries, and align tracks with land contours to reduce visual impact. Use landscaping and tree/shrub planting to minimise the visual impact of tracks, where appropriate to the character of the landscape
- RT10 Choose specifications and construction methods with the lowest environmental impact.
- RT11 Use local materials to ensure compatibility with local ecology, soil characteristics, and landscape character, and to reduce the visual prominence of the track.
- RT12 New or altered tracks should typically take the form of twin trods with grass or heather between the wheelings, using vegetation from the working area to reduce visual impact
- RT13 Use local stone that allows vegetation to grow through and encroach from the edges to minimise landscape impact. In sensitive locations, take measures to encourage tracks to 'green over'.
- RT14 Use like-for-like surfacing to ensure repair work is visually compatible with the existing track.

- RT15 Design all new entrances to be in keeping with their location and sensitive to the character of the National Landscape. New accesses and splays should be bounded with materials that match existing boundaries, such as hedges or dry-stone walls.
- RT16 Minimise the impact of tracks on the site's natural hydrology and design drainage systems to accommodate future climatic changes.
- RT17 Avoid open ditches adjacent to new or altered tracks, as they are unsightly, harmful to biodiversity, and increase the visual impact of the track.
- RT18 Conserve and translocate existing vegetation where possible. Restore disturbed areas using natural regeneration or native species of local provenance.
- RT19 Carefully consider the potential recreational use of the track, including both positive and negative aspects. Where appropriate, consider links to existing rights of way and the potential for dedication of the track as a public right of way, particularly as a bridleway.
- RT20 Refer to NatureScot guidance (formerly SNH) for further detailed design advice.

Further Information

Guidance on SSSI and consent for activities affecting them is provided by Natural England.

[Sites of special scientific interest: managing your land and getting consent for activities- GOV.UK](#)

Comprehensive guidance on upland tracks has been produced by the IUCN UK Peatland Programme (March 2025).

[Tracks and roads on peatlands- March 2025 \(1\).pdf](#)

Agriculture and farm diversification

The North Pennines National Landscape (NPNL) is a lived-in, working landscape shaped by generations of farmers, landowners and land managers. Traditional farmsteads, along with field boundaries and traditionally managed meadows and pastures, give the area a strong sense of visual unity. These features help define the local distinctiveness and cultural heritage of the North Pennines.

Farming continues to play a vital role in maintaining the quality of the countryside. Diversified land uses can contribute to a more sustainable and vibrant rural economy, offering additional facilities and services for both local communities and visitors. However, the need to support rural communities and local businesses must be balanced with the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and built heritage of the NPNL.

Farming is facing increasingly complex and interconnected challenges. These include the impacts of climate change, such as shifting weather patterns and extreme weather events, and rising geopolitical tensions, which are contributing to volatile food prices and increasing input

costs. In response, there is a growing need to adopt sustainable agricultural practices that build resilience to future economic shocks and environmental pressures. This involves integrating food production with the protection and enhancement of ecosystems that underpin sustainable farming—such as soils, freshwater, and natural habitats.

As part of this transition, new buildings and infrastructure will inevitably be required. Modern farm buildings are often large in scale and constructed from materials such as concrete wall panels and profiled sheeting. Without careful attention to siting and design, these structures can become intrusive features within the NPNL.

Diversification of the rural economy is becoming increasingly important. Some proposals will retain an agricultural focus, such as the use of alternative crops or livestock. Others may involve enterprises that are either directly or indirectly related to agriculture (see also Tourism and Recreation), including the re-use of redundant or low-productivity land and buildings for non-agricultural businesses. Examples include farm shops, cafés, wedding venues, holiday lets, camping and glamping sites, dog walking facilities, residential conversions, and renewable energy projects. These developments can present challenges in terms of scale and appropriateness within the landscape.

Smaller parcels of land are increasingly being purchased for non-commercial agricultural purposes. It is also becoming more common to see livestock such as llamas and alpacas kept on a hobby basis. While small-scale hobby farming can bring environmental benefits,

these often-piecemeal developments may alter land use patterns and lead to a less unified and more visually cluttered landscape.

All new farm buildings and structures fall within the scope of the planning system, either through the 'Prior Notification' process for permitted development or via a full planning application.

Where development is deemed 'reasonably necessary', agricultural permitted development rights (PDRs) allow certain types of development on agricultural land without full planning permission, subject to specific conditions and limitations. These rights are set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (GPDO). PDRs cover activities such as the erection and extension of agricultural buildings, certain excavation and engineering operations, and the construction of private ways. In most cases, a 'prior notification' application must be submitted to the LPA.

The LPA will assess the siting, design, and external appearance of the proposed development. It will also determine whether the proposal qualifies for PDRs and complies with the GPDO, while considering landscape, heritage, and nature conservation impacts.

PDRs do not apply to land that is not actively used for agriculture or not associated with an agricultural business—for example, hobby farming. They also exclude dwelling houses and gardens. In such cases, a full planning application will be required. Planning permission may also be necessary for certain new agricultural buildings, depending on their size, location, and nature.



Careful siting and the use of recessive materials can help modern farm buildings integrate successfully into the landscape.

Diversification involving a change of use, whether agricultural or non-agricultural (see also Tourism and Leisure) will generally require planning permission and will be assessed against policies in the relevant local development plan. While recent changes to PDRs have expanded the scope for converting agricultural buildings into dwellings elsewhere these rights have not been extended to National Parks or National Landscape, including the North Pennines. This means that any proposal to convert a barn within these protected areas still requires full planning permission. Early engagement with LPAs can help identify potential issues and streamline the planning process.

Local development plans contain policies on agricultural development. In considering either a prior approval application or a full planning application, LPAs will take into account their local plans, national planning policy, and their statutory duty to further the purposes of designation of the North Pennines National Landscape. In doing so, they will consider guidance from the North Pennines National Landscape Management Plan when assessing applications.

Impacts

Agricultural development, diversification, and non-commercial agricultural activities can have a range of impacts on the environment and character of the North Pennines National Landscape (NL).

Negative effects

- The open nature of the landscape means that new development can be particularly intrusive unless careful attention is paid to siting and design.
- New buildings may be out of scale or character with their surroundings.
- Insensitive conversions of existing buildings can harm their architectural integrity and historic significance.
- Ancillary buildings and structures may introduce visual clutter, detracting from the setting and character of the farmstead.
- Mature landscape features—such as hedges, walls, and trees—may be lost.
- Important wildlife habitats can be damaged directly or indirectly, and protected species may be disturbed.

- Historic features, including archaeological remains, may be damaged or lost.
- Changes in farmland management—such as more intensive uses (e.g. pony paddocks) or more extensive uses (e.g. ranching)—can affect landscape character and biodiversity.
- Farmland may be acquired by new owners or managers who lack the traditional knowledge and expertise of farmers.
- The rural character of the landscape can be eroded by signage and other urbanising features.
- Tranquillity may be weakened by noisy activities, light pollution, or increased traffic on local roads.

Positive effects

- New uses for old buildings can prolong their life and help retain their character.
- Development may generate resources for the management or repair of traditional agricultural features such as walls and hedges.
- New wildlife habitats may be created, or the management of existing habitats improved.

Many of the potential impacts associated with agricultural development and farm diversification stem from the introduction of new buildings and the conversion of existing structures. Detailed guidance on these matters is provided below in the Building Design section. Additional recommendations are outlined below.

Good practice

A1 Retain the majority of farmland and buildings in active agricultural use

- A2 Conserve the agricultural character of the farmstead and its immediate setting by siting new ancillary buildings and structures carefully, in keeping with the traditional layout and form of the farmstead.
- A3 Locate new structures as part of, or adjacent to, an existing farmstead or building group: isolated, free-standing structures within open countryside will rarely be appropriate.
- A4 Use high-quality design that conserves and enhances the character and special qualities of the area, respecting local distinctiveness and the built and natural heritage of the National Landscape. The type, colour, and texture of external materials can significantly influence the visual impact of new buildings. Use the vernacular style of existing buildings as a design reference.
- A5 Encourage the use of natural materials and visually recessive colours to help integrate new buildings into their setting.
- A6 Keep landform changes to a minimum: avoid intrusive mounding.
- A7 Conserve traditional landscape features: walls hedges and mature trees.
- A8 Adopt the low-key design language of existing boundaries, openings, and surface treatments. Avoid the suburbanising effect of elaborate fences, gateways, signage, and similar features.
- A9 Seek opportunities to restore or renovate existing features, such as hedges and walls, particularly around the steading.

- A10 Where novel elements are introduced, make use of existing topography, buildings, or vegetation for screening. Supplement this with the planting of native hedges and trees where appropriate.
- A11 Be aware of the potential presence of protected species, such as barn owls and bats, and follow the necessary procedures to ensure their protection.
- A12 Consider how changes in land management may affect landscape character or biodiversity and mitigate potential impacts where possible.
- A13 Identify opportunities to provide alternative nesting sites for birds that may be affected by renovations or demolitions and incorporate these into submitted proposals.

Equestrian

Horses, particularly Dales ponies, a hardy breed native to the Pennine Dales form an important part of the cultural heritage of the North Pennines National Landscape (NPNL), especially in relation to the area's former lead mining industry. Historically, these ponies were essential for various tasks on farms and in mines prior to the advent of modern machinery. Today, most horses are kept for recreational purposes, and the use of land for equestrian activities is increasing across the NPNL.

While there are few commercial establishments such as livery or equestrian centres, most are smaller-scale businesses and privately owned horses who rely on the support of other local services—such as feed suppliers, farriers, and veterinary practices which contribute to the rural economy.

The way horses are cared for, and the developments associated with their keeping however, can negatively impact the rural character of the NPNL. Individually, such developments may seem minor, but cumulatively, and without due care, they can affect both the quality and character of the landscape, as well as local wildlife and the wider environment.

The use of agricultural land and buildings for equestrian purposes constitutes a material change of use and generally requires planning permission. There is limited scope to keep horses for agricultural purposes such as when they are used to work the land or are grazed without supplementary feed. However, if horses are ridden or exercised, rugged, fed concentrate feed, or kept as part of a

commercial activity (e.g. livery), the use is considered equestrian rather than agricultural.

It is advisable to assume that any equestrian use of agricultural land or buildings will require planning permission. This includes stables, exercise arenas, feed stores, tack rooms, new accesses and gateways, tracks and hard standings, permanent jumps, lighting, and any associated engineering works. Even three-sided, open-fronted field shelters require planning permission if they are fixed in a permanent position, have solid floors, or remain in the same location for an extended period.

If there is any uncertainty about whether planning permission is required, it is always best to consult the LPA before installing any structures or surfaces.



Locating stables alongside existing buildings and mature trees helps minimise landscape and visual impacts

In determining equestrian-related applications, applications will be assessed against policies in the relevant local plan. The LPA also have a statutory duty to further the purpose designation of the North Pennines National Landscape. In doing so, they will consider guidance from the North Pennines National Landscape Management Plan.

Impacts

There are several potential issues associated with the keeping of horses in sensitive landscapes. These impacts can be exacerbated where there is an over-concentration of equine activities or where developments are not appropriately designed or managed.

Negative effects

- Poorly sited and designed stables, field shelters, riding arenas, jumps, fencing, lighting, and other equestrian-related paraphernalia—such as horse boxes, muck heaps, inappropriate tree planting, and vehicle storage—can result in negative landscape and visual impacts.
- The subdivision of agricultural land into smaller paddocks can alter the landscape character of the NPNL.
- Redundant or unsightly equestrian structures left on land after use has ceased, or when land is not actively used for equestrian purposes, can detract from the quality of the landscape.
- The tranquillity of the countryside may be weakened by noisy activities, light pollution, or increased traffic on local roads.
- Poor pasture management including overgrazing, waste storage, and intensive land use—can adversely affect nature conservation.

If not managed sustainably, this can lead to waterlogging, compaction, poaching, soil erosion, changes in water quality, and weed invasion.

Positive effects

- Good land management can benefit both horse health and the wider environment. It can contribute to landscape and wildlife enhancement by preserving and restoring traditional features such as walls and hedges in appropriate locations.

Regardless of the type of development proposed—whether a simple field shelter, stabling, or new access tracks careful attention to siting, scale, design, materials, colour, and landscaping can ensure that equestrian development sits comfortably within this nationally important landscape.

Good practice

- E1 Wherever possible, avoid the need for new development by reusing, reconfiguring, or converting existing buildings, provided this can be done sensitively.
- E2 Where new buildings, shelters, or arenas are necessary, they should be located close to existing farmsteads or building groups and designed to minimise their impact on the landscape.
- E3 Avoid isolated, open, elevated, skyline, or visually prominent sites.
- E4 In open countryside, small structures should be sited in field corners and take advantage of existing screening provided by topography, mature vegetation, or other landscape features.

- E5 Site new development to minimise the need for new access routes.
- E6 Consider slope and drainage when siting gateways and fencing to avoid waterlogging and poaching.
- E7 Stables should be constructed using materials appropriate to the local character. A small, non-permanent timber structure, stained with a dark preservative and finished with a dark grey or green low pitch felt roof, is likely to be most suitable in most locations.
- E8 Arena surfaces should be dark in colour to reduce glare and visibility. Sustainably sourced wood chip is recommended.
- E9 Avoid earth mounding or cut-and-fill operations to create flat surfaces for buildings or arenas.
- E10 Hardstanding areas should be kept to a minimum. Consider using permeable materials where possible or grass paving systems such as cellular pavers or plastic grids for heavily trafficked areas.
- E11 Field subdivision should be avoided or minimised. Where necessary, it should respect historic field patterns and boundary lines, with new boundaries matching the local vernacular
- E12 Where temporary subdivision is needed, use low-visibility, muted-colour materials such as dark green or brown electric tape and stakes. White tape and brightly coloured posts are visually intrusive in this protected landscape.

- E13 Use the low-key design language of existing boundaries, openings, and surface treatments. Avoid the suburbanising effect of elaborate fences, gateways, signage, and similar features.
- E14 Retain existing gates and access points where possible. New gates should match the local vernacular.
- E15 Avoid external lighting. Where lighting is necessary for working or security purposes, use low-level, downward-pointing fixtures on timers or motion sensors (see Lighting guidance).
- E16 Landscape planting should be appropriate in terms of scale, location, and species selection, contributing positively to the character of the NPNL.
- E17 Consider incorporating wildlife features into equine buildings, such as barn owl boxes, swallow or house martin ledges, or bat bricks.
- E18 Protect historic features—including ridge and furrow, stone troughs, and stiles from damage.
- E19 Adopt best practice in pasture management, including appropriate stocking densities, rotational grazing, removal of ragwort and thistles, and minimising fertiliser use.
- E20 Muck heaps should be sited to avoid contamination of watercourses, harm to biodiversity, or nuisance to neighbours and users of public rights of way.

Tourism and leisure

Tourism is an increasingly important part of the economy in the North Pennines National Landscape (NPNL). The character and quality of its environment are fundamental to its appeal to visitors.

Environmentally sustainable tourism can encourage appreciation of the landscape, wildlife, culture, and history of the NL, while also providing opportunities for diversification and employment.

The most sustainable developments are those that reinforce local distinctiveness, showcase local products, crafts, and traditions, and contribute to the conservation of landscape character and the enhancement of natural beauty. While new tourist accommodation and leisure developments can improve the tourism offer, it is essential that they do not detract from the very qualities that make the countryside attractive to both visitors and residents.

Tourism and leisure development is inherently diverse and includes a wide range of uses such as visitor centres, major attractions, catered and self-catering accommodation, camping, chalets (including glamping, yurts, teepees, shepherds' huts, eco-pods), caravan sites, equestrian facilities, cafés, restaurants, and car parks. Most of these developments involve a change of use of land or buildings and will generally require planning permission.

In protected landscapes such as the North Pennines, barn conversions do not benefit from Permitted Development Rights (PDRs) under Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order. While recent changes to PDRs have expanded the scope for converting agricultural buildings into dwellings

elsewhere these rights have not been extended to National Parks or National Landscapes, including the North Pennines. This means that any proposal to convert a barn within these protected areas still requires full planning permission.

To operate a campsite in the UK, planning permission and a campsite licence are typically required. However, Permitted Development Rights (PDRs) allow certain temporary uses of land, including 'pop-up' campsites which applies only to tents, campervans, and motorhomes, without a planning application—provided legal requirements are met. These rights are outlined in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (GPDO) under Temporary Recreational Campsites.

PDRs do not permit permanent works such as the construction or erection of fixed infrastructure (e.g. buildings, tracks, new accesses, or hardstanding). Only moveable structures such as amenity buildings for toilets, showers, or waste disposal that are 'reasonably necessary' for the campsite are allowed, and they must be removed at the end of the 60-day period.

The LPA must be notified in writing each calendar year before development begins. Notification should include a site plan showing toilet and waste disposal facilities, along with the dates the campsite will be in use. If landowners proceed without prior notification or approval, they cannot benefit from the new PDR.

Temporary campsites are not permitted on land within the curtilage of a listed building, or within Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or Scheduled Monuments. Restrictions also apply to land within or

near Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and other protected areas. Some National Landscapes have removed PDRs altogether, so it is important to check with the LPA.

Caravans and motorhomes are subject to different rules. Caravans may only be sited without planning permission if an exemption under Schedule 1 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 applies. In all other cases, using land for caravans or motorhomes requires planning permission.

Development plans include policies relating to tourism and leisure development, and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) will determine planning applications in accordance with these local policies. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) also provides specific guidance for development planning and decision-making in relation to National Landscapes. It states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty and confirms that National Landscapes hold the highest level of protection in this regard. National policy also supports high-quality, environmentally sensitive tourism developments that enhance the range and quality of visitor facilities.

In determining tourism and leisure related applications, these will be assessed against policies in the relevant local plan. The LPA also have a statutory duty to further the purpose designation of the North Pennines National Landscape. In doing so, they will consider guidance from the North Pennines National Landscape Management Plan.

Impacts

New recreational or tourist development and associated activities can affect the environment in a number of ways.

Negative effects

- Development may have an ‘urbanising’ effect on the rural landscape through the introduction of new buildings and land uses.
- The tranquillity of the countryside may be affected by noisy activities, increased traffic levels, lighting, and higher visitor numbers.
- Mature landscapes and landscape features may be damaged or lost.
- Land may be managed without the expertise or resources typically provided by farmers and foresters.
- The conversion of traditional buildings, or the scale and design of new buildings, may be out of keeping with the vernacular character of the locality.
- High visitor numbers can lead to damage to footpaths and fragile habitats, or disturbance to sensitive species.
- The conversion of buildings can disturb protected species such as barn owls and bats.

Positive effects

- Recreational developments may also present opportunities to re-use and maintain traditional buildings, or to support traditional forms of land management.

Many of the potential impacts of new tourism and recreational development arise from new buildings and building conversions. Detailed guidance on these matters is provided below in the Building Design section.

Good practice

- TL1 Development within the countryside must be compatible with its location to protect the area's unique character.
- TL2 Consider the reuse, reconfiguration, or conversion of existing buildings where this can be done sensitively
- TL3 Look for opportunities to restore or renovate existing features such as hedges and walls, and to create new wildlife habitats.
- TL4 Encourage the use of natural materials and dark colours to help integrate buildings and structures—particularly caravans—within rural settings
- TL5 Keep landform changes to a minimum, avoiding intrusive mounding
- TL6 Use the low-key design language of existing boundaries, openings, and surface treatments; avoid the suburbanising effect of elaborate fences, gateways, signage, etc
- TL7 Avoid the introduction of suburban walls and fences, and conifer planting to define boundaries. Instead, use a framework of new hedges, trees, and woodland planting appropriate to local character to integrate the site with the surrounding landscape

- TL8 Proposals for camping and caravan sites located away from existing buildings should be low density, with sufficient separation between units. In rural locations, layouts should reflect the nature of the surroundings and maintain an open, rural character.
- TL9 Ensure new development—particularly sites for chalets, camping, and caravanning have substantial and effective year-round screening from public viewpoints, using topography or mature woodland.
- TL10 Car park sites should be designed to integrate effectively with the surrounding landscape. Layouts should reflect the shape and pattern of their surroundings, with edges tied to natural features or local vernacular architecture to avoid arbitrary or unnatural boundaries
- TL11 Any associated access roads and internal layouts should reflect the character of the area. In rural settings, avoid formal hard surfacing with raised concrete kerbs, which can appear out of place.
- TL12 Locate visitor facilities to avoid substantially increasing traffic levels on quiet roads and lanes
- TL13 Facilities likely to attract significant visitor numbers should be sited where they can be accessed by public transport or sustainable modes of travel such as walking and cycling

- TL14 Avoid locating noisy activities within the National Landscape. Where noise is unavoidable, reduce and manage it appropriately (see Tranquillity)
- TL15 Avoid excessive lighting. Where lighting is required for evening activities, it should be carefully designed and managed (see Tranquillity: Light)
- TL16 Avoid intensive activities or high levels of pedestrian access in sensitive habitats such as native woodland, species-rich grassland, wetland, or moorland.
- TL17 Assess the potential impacts of increased recreational activity on fragile habitats and sensitive species and identify appropriate visitor management measures to minimise harm.

Development outside of the National Landscape

In some circumstances development outside of a National Landscape can have impacts on its special qualities. In those cases the potential impact on the designated area will be a material consideration to be taken into account in determining planning applications.

NPPF (2024) advises that: *the scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.* (189)

While biodiversity and cultural heritage contribute to the special qualities of National Landscapes, impacts on those resources are likely to be dealt with under other policies in development plans. The most significant category of impact from development in neighbouring areas likely to affect the special qualities of National Landscapes is landscape and visual impact.

Natural England commissioned work in 2013 from the Geodata Institute, University of Southampton to inform their understanding of potential visual effects on protected landscapes: [GIS Viewshed Analysis to Identify Zones of Potential Visual Impact on Protected Landscapes – Natural England- Methodology Report v.1 \(2013\).](#)

This provided data on the Height at which Objects become Visible (HOBV) from protected landscapes. The results for the North Pennines National Landscape are shown on Figure 1 which shows HOBV within 20km. This indicates widespread visibility of land or features of modest height (<20m) generally within 20km of the National Landscape but with a more broken pattern to the south and north-east reflecting the grain of the ridge and valley topography in those areas. It should be noted that this provides quantitative evidence of visibility rather than qualitative evidence of impact.

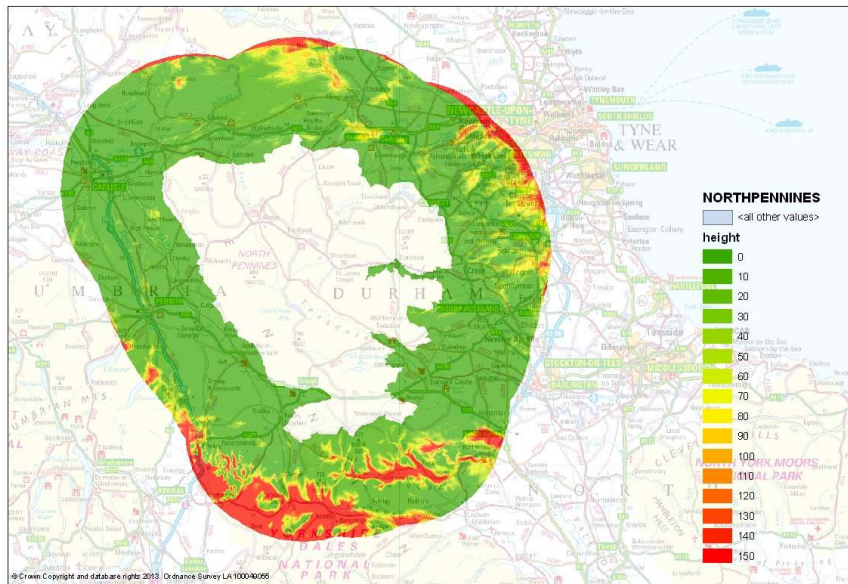


Figure 1: Height at which Objects become Visible (HOBV) from the North Pennines National Landscape

The extent to which the landscape and visual impacts of development affect the special qualities of the National Landscape will depend on the visual characteristics of the development and the visual environment of the receptor. It is useful to distinguish between views which are effectively ‘views out from’ the National Landscape, ‘views within’ the National Landscape, and ‘views of’ the National Landscape.

Views out from the National Landscape are those which are across, or of, a different landscape. There are many vantage points either on elevated ground or on the edges of the National Landscape where

there are commanding panoramic views across adjacent landscapes which are of a clearly different character, and where development would rarely be considered by a typical viewer to affect the landscape of the National Landscape itself. Exceptions might be views of acknowledged importance to other significant landmarks such as, for example, views from the western summits of the National Landscape towards the peaks of the Lake District National Park.

Views within the National Landscape are those which primarily take in the landscape of the National Landscape itself. In some cases other landscapes may be visible as part of that view, although a typical viewer might not be able to discern any differences in character of the distant landscape and it remains functionally part of that interior view of the National Landscape. In some cases development in an adjoining area can detract from such interior views, for example wind turbines on a distant ridge may be visible from well within the National Landscape affecting the character of interior views.

Views of the National Landscape are views from other landscapes in which the National Landscape features in the view. This type of view varies from those where the National Landscape is visible as a muted backdrop but has no special significance to a typical viewer, to those where the visible parts of the National Landscape are an important, even iconic, part of the view. An example of the former is views from parts of the Wear Lowlands where the eastern fringes of the National Landscape are empirically visible but generally indistinguishable in character from the high ridges of the intervening West Durham Coalfield. An example of the latter is views from the Vale of Eden of the great western escarpment of the North Pennines where it could

be argued that it is in views such as these that this part of the National Landscape is particularly appreciated. Development can detract from exterior views at this end of the spectrum, and particularly if it affects individually important viewpoints.

In practice it can be difficult to draw a precise line between these different types of view. The National Landscape boundary is rarely reflected in a sharp change in landscape character or quality on the ground, or one which is readily apparent to the typical viewer. Some views across the National Landscape towards other parts of it take in landscapes outside of the designated area that lie in between, for example views across the lower parts of Weardale and Teesdale, and views across Hamsterley Forest. The distinction does remain, however, a useful way of structuring any assessment of landscape and visual impacts on the National Landscape.

The magnitude of any impact will depend in part on the visual characteristics of the development. The visual effects of mineral extraction and most forms of built development attenuate fairly quickly with distance. Both tend to present at distances of over 3-5km as relatively small, low and horizontal elements of muted colour which are rarely conspicuous in views out from, or within, the National Landscape beyond distances of that order.

Tall structures like telecommunications masts, and particularly wind turbines, can have more significant impacts in these views as they are discernible at considerable distances in favourable weather conditions, typically project above the skyline, and can stand out in their colour in the otherwise muted earth tones of the landscape. In the very simple, open horizontal landscapes of most of the Pennine

moors, where man-made features and vertical elements are rare, wind turbines can have greater impacts at further distance than in more visually complex lowland landscapes. This can have consequences for the perceptions of the landscape as wild and remote which are fundamental to the purposes of the National Landscape designation.

Coming to conclusions on the overall significance of a development's impacts on the special qualities of the National Landscape can be difficult. Ultimately this will be informed by the degree to which the development would have significant impacts on views within the National Landscape, and individually important views of, or from, the National Landscape. The extent of this impact in terms of the scale of the area or number of viewpoints affected will be a consideration, but care should be taken not to express this as a 'proportion' of the National Landscape: all of its landscapes are important.

The cumulative effect of otherwise individually acceptable development is a key issue for the National Landscape. Particular care must be taken to avoid a piecemeal erosion of its special qualities. Development around the National Landscape can lead to the establishment of demarcations in the landscape between the National Landscape and its surroundings that otherwise would not exist. Piecemeal erosion of the sense of remoteness and wildness in the margins of the National Landscape can reduce the extent of the area over which such qualities can be appreciated.

For development requiring an EIA outside of the National Landscape a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is likely to be required. There are circumstances where proximity to the National Landscape

may trigger the need for an EIA for development which in another location might not require one. A key consideration will be whether the development could give rise to significant impacts on the National Landscape. This is something that needs to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Good practice

- S1 Avoid locations for development that would have significant impacts on views within, and important views from or of, the National Landscape.
- S2 Assess the landscape and visual impacts of development on the special qualities of the National Landscape thoroughly.
- S3 For wind development assess impacts from important and representative viewpoints in the National Landscape up to the limits of visibility.
- S4 Assess cumulative impacts on the experience of the National Landscape as a whole and not just in terms of individual and sequential views along linear routes.

4 BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

This section provides information for planners, developers, builders and homeowners on the character of buildings in the North Pennines and guidance on design principles, repair and maintenance, alterations, extensions, conversions and new buildings.

Building materials

Stone

The visitor to the North Pennines can hardly miss the connection between the locally distinctive character of traditional buildings and the underlying geology of the North Pennines from which building material was won. The North Pennines is essentially stone building country; there is very little brick in use until the 20th century and that all brought in from outside the dales. In the past the trouble and cost of transporting stone any great distance was high so local stone was always favoured.

By the mid-19th century there were a great number of quarry enterprises at all levels: estates, individual farms or independent enterprising builders. Often the opening up of a quarry would yield an over-burden of less good quality stone suitable for dry stonewalling before the better building beds were reached. Stone would usually be prepared to order and some quarries would only be active when an order required a supply. Today the vast majority of these historic quarries are closed; the smaller ones perhaps even re-colonised by vegetation and long greened over, the larger ones silent and rather

forbidding voids in the landscape recording where a vital industry once flourished.

The organisation of stone quarrying has changed dramatically. First the demand for building stone declined rapidly in the 20th century and at the same time transport and delivery costs became relatively insignificant. Labour and cutting costs however rose and the capital



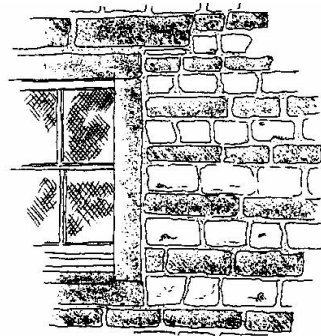
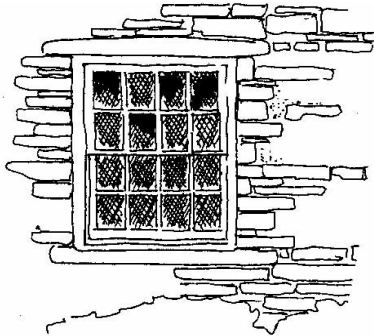
Traditional North Pennines farmstead constructed from locally quarried Carboniferous sandstone, with characteristic sandstone flag roofs.

investment in sophisticated cutting and finishing machinery led to the concentration in a few sites of all the processing and sales as larger quarry companies came to own a portfolio of scattered quarries offering a range of different stones.

The most common building stones are the Carboniferous sandstones, from which are made most of the dry-stone walls and settlements of the North Pennines. Many of the older roofs of the area are made from Carboniferous sandstone flags, especially those buildings which date from before the easy transport of slate from Wales and the Lake District.

Limestone is not a common building material over much of the North Pennines even in areas where there are major limestone outcrops such as around Kirkby Stephen and Stainmore, and in parts of Teesdale and Weardale. However, stone walls do reflect underlying geology, be it limestone, sandstone or clearance stones from glacial deposits

Strong bedded sandstone in Allendale and Tynedale



Red sandstone and limestone in Eden

The younger red sandstones of Permian and Triassic age on the western edge of the North Pennines give a distinctive character to the villages which nestle along the escarpment foot. The Whin Sill, which is particularly dramatically exposed in Upper Teesdale, is made of hard, dark dolerite (locally known as whinstone) which is very durable but is difficult to work. It has therefore only been used in buildings close to its outcrop or as blocks in stone walls.



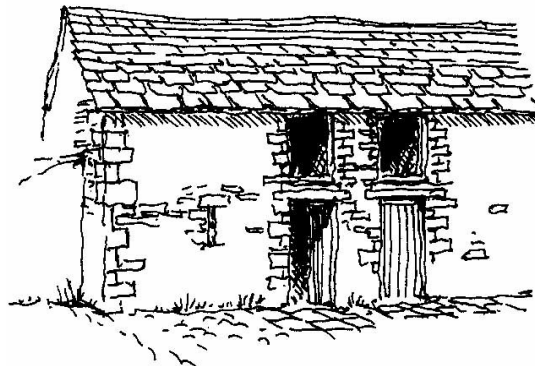
Gamblesby village, where buildings constructed from local red sandstone give a distinctive character to settlements at the foot of the escarpment.

Lime and sand

Accompanying the need for local stone, builders would also need sand and lime for mortars, plastering and renders. Wherever limestone could be quarried there too limekilns were constructed for burning the stone to produce quick lime slaked to lime putty or bagged for agricultural use. Relatively few kilns were run on commercial lines though the bigger estates may have satisfied the need of a number of tenant farmers from a larger kiln. Sand would have been local pit winning from the dale bed where the material would reflect the geological deposits from upstream.

Roofing materials

Little evidence of its use remains today but heather thatch would have been a predominant cheap and renewable material for roofing the humble cottage before 1800 and probably well into the 19th century. However the availability of splitable strong sandstone over much of the North Pennines allowed a much more durable covering for the better-quality buildings from the 17th century onwards and for quite modest and functional



Splitable sandstone roof slates widely used throughout the NPNL.

structures right through to the late 19th century.

Green Westmorland slate was restricted initially to the western fringe where it was quarried and to superior houses in the late 18th century, through to today where it is used further afield. With the advent of the railways the thinner cheaper Welsh slate became everywhere the roof covering of choice and is still dominant on cottage, shop and chapel in the dales villages.



Sandstone flag roof laid in diminishing courses, showing the traditional arrangement of larger slates at the eaves and smaller slates towards the ridge.

Other materials: timber and metals

As a natural material, timber is widely used in vernacular buildings across the area; occasionally, though rarely, as an external cladding

material but generally for internal structures. Much of the timber used would have been local until the arrival of the railways. Historically the larger estates established sawmills to convert home-grown broad-leaf and coniferous trees to joinery quality and structural timbers. Though some sawmills are converting and seasoning estate-grown timber, most woodland felling is done by contractor and the trees transported in the round to sawmills elsewhere to find their way into the general market for wider distribution. Local craftsmen, the blacksmith and joiner, created the metal and timber components of buildings of their day. In the industrial North Pennines where the lead industry required the work of many blacksmiths and other skilled metal workers, their work often survives to this day in the architectural ironmongery of older buildings. This often bears the unmistakeable and often idiosyncratic character of hand-wrought rather than mass-produced work.

In the modern world it has become necessary to consider a wider range and more distant sourcing of building materials and components. The market trend has led to a general dilution of local skills and local distinctiveness across Britain. It is this trend that has spurred a widespread reaction, and a desire to identify criteria for contemporary design in cherished landscapes which will sustain an appropriate response to future needs for development.

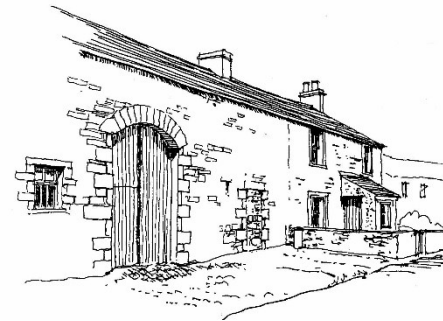
Buildings of the North Pennines

The location of buildings and the form of settlements in the North Pennines is a legacy of the way the land was used and settled in the past. The earliest form of settlement in the area was in the form of isolated, often defensible, farmsteads. The Middle Ages saw an expansion in the number of farms as land was enclosed and improved, and the development of 'nuclear' villages, often with linear burgage plots ('tofts' or 'garths') developed around a central green. In the dales these tend to be found in the lower dale. In the Eden Valley they lie close to the foot of the scarp. As land was enclosed in successive waves of agricultural improvement from the 17th century to the 20th century more isolated farms were developed to work this newly won land. Often the farmsteads and walls in the locality will date from the same period and share common materials and construction methods. The growth of lead mining and stone quarrying on an industrial scale brought new forms of development. Initially this took the form of existing farmlands being subdivided to support larger numbers of 'miner-small holders' creating localised clusters of farmsteads. The need for land led to increased pressure for enclosure and the creation of new farms on high ground – often strung out along the old moor-wall or new enclosure roads. Older villages increased in size with the building of new housing, often in

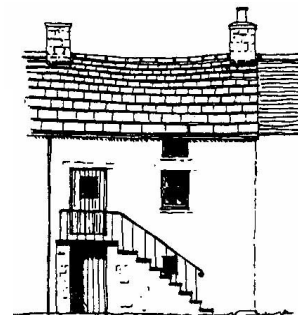
short terrace rows built by mining companies or local entrepreneurs. Linear or 'street' villages grew up, usually along valley bottom transport routes, with houses fronting directly onto the street with only a small cobbled or paved area between the front door and the



Bastle House



Longhouse from the 18th Century, Dufton. The original entrance to the house through the byre has been blocked up and a later door and porch added to the house itself



A tiny cottage at Nenthead retains 'upstairs living'



Another longhouse with its door still in the original position

highway. Most of these new or enlarged villages have an un-planned and idiosyncratic character, having developed in a piecemeal fashion from the merging of smaller isolated groups of houses.

Building types

Houses

Few houses survive from before 1600 in anything like their original form. The few mediaeval buildings of the North Pennines are either churches or associated with the church or defence, many structures now ruinous or greatly altered. The oldest house type to survive in any numbers is the Bastle dating from the late 16th century. These are found mainly in the Allendales and South Tynedale though some are located round the northwestern fringe and the type extends up into Northumberland and the Borders throughout 'Reiver' country. The Bastle is a defensible thick-walled farm building with living accommodation at first floor level over a byre. The idea of upstairs living over livestock was carried on into the 18th and 19th centuries and is reflected still in cottages in Alston and Nenthead where the ground floor may have been a workshop or store.

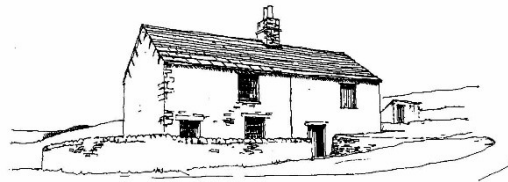
Another house type commonly found in the Eden Valley and in Teesdale and Weardale is the Long House, with house (one room deep) and byre to one side under a single roof. This type is even older going back to the 9th century in archaeological evidence. The house door was often in the near end of the byre, though usually moved later to be direct into the house. This type persisted into the 18th century.

The lead miners' houses of the 18th and early 19th centuries are another significant type, integral to the history and character of the

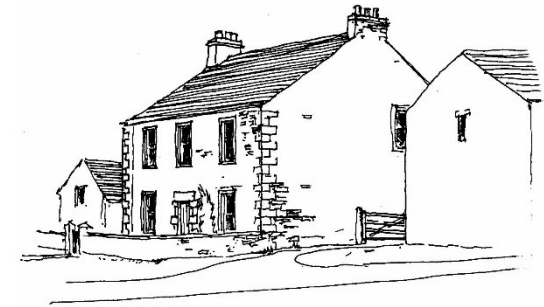
North Pennines. They were built on scattered smallholdings of hay and grazing fields (the allotment) for the most part as tenantry to the large estates amassed by the mine owners. Separated farm buildings were rarely affordable and few remain. Instead, animals were housed alongside or behind the house, under a continuous roof that sometimes almost reached the ground.



Far Cornriggs, Allendales. A typical remote leadminer's smallholding



Another miner's smallholding near Killhope



Blencarn, Eden Valley. A two storey three bay farmhouse, two rooms deep: early 19th Century

The character of these houses is particularly vulnerable to change through conversion, though many on the higher more exposed slopes of the Allen Valleys and the South Tyne Valley are now too ruined and isolated to revive. In the villages terraces of mining cottages,

sometimes single storey on the Scottish pattern, but more commonly two-storey, provided the later 19th century accommodation for the peak period of the lead mining industry's labour needs. The seemingly repetition of the two or three bay unit with simple sash windows and a frontage straight onto the street may have been varied to a stepped response if the street was steep.

Another very common type of larger house emerging everywhere in the North Pennines in the late 18th century was the rectangular plan of two or three bays width but two rooms deep. A central door led to a passage between the front rooms and a stairs between the back two rooms. Fireplaces and chimneys were on the gable walls. More pre-1780s houses of this type survive in Weardale and the Allen Valleys than in Teesdale because of the great re-building of the Raby Estate in the 1750s and 1760s. The Raby buildings are now characterised by that estate's tradition of lime washing external walls. In the 20th century the widespread adoption of design types from sources outside the region gradually diluted the sense of locally distinctive character. However social housing of the 1920s and 1930s, under the influence of architects and planners such as Thomas Sharp, retained the ingredients of type conformity in villages of terraced cottages around greens with gardens behind.

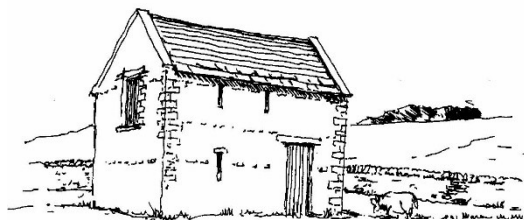
Farm buildings

The typical traditional farm group is small and compact. The ambitious agricultural improvements of the 18th and 19th century along the arable East coast had little impact on this difficult farming terrain where climate and topography prevented an adequate return on investment. Because farming was small scale and predominantly pastoral certain types of buildings, gin gangs and machine sheds were rarely needed. Only in the more prosperous lower dales would larger groups of buildings around foldyards appear.



Compact farm group

There are local characteristics such as the Cumbrian bank barn with the barn accessible from higher ground at the back and the byre and stables below giving onto the farmyard. There are similar dual-purpose buildings in Teesdale with granaries and haylofts with steps and pitching doors over cart shed and stables. Free-standing field barns are found in Teesdale, the Eden Valley and even in Weardale where the steep dale sides prompt a variant of the bank barn.



Teesdale field barn



A whitewashed roadside barn on the Raby Estate

In the 20th century the widespread mass production of farm sheds in standardised materials (with all the advantages of economies of scale) has, as with housing, significantly diluted the traditional farm building type, and the modern shed being much larger tends to dominate the farm group.

Industrial buildings

The remains of the lead and quarrying industries are not of direct concern here except for such building types as

institutes, reading rooms, offices and workshops which sprang up from them. Development by the more successful mining companies, such as the Nenthead complex, included well-constructed vernacular buildings with good quality structural carpentry, masonry, roofing and joinery all worthy of recognition: the fine two storey Barracks at Nenthead housed weekly boarding miners who walked home to their scattered allotments for Sundays.

Churches and chapels

The Church of England generally confined itself to town and established village centres and was perhaps rather complacent about communities that grew up rapidly round industrial sites. It was the non-conformists, especially the Methodists, who went out into the dales of the North Pennines and built chapels for every small community, sited often on isolated roadsides for ease of access for congregations drawn from widely scattered allotments and terraces.

The style of these chapels is unusually plain, nearer the local vernacular with allusions to Gothic or Classical. Many are now redundant and have been converted to houses or offices or hotels.



Converted chapel at Catton. The essential presence of the building is retained although the rooflights are a little conspicuous.

Schools

Privately funded schools are recorded in Weardale in the late 17th century and this was the main source of education for nearly two hundred years. Many new schools were built following the Education Act 1870 and by 1880 there were about 30 schools in Weardale alone, most of which became redundant in the 20th century and have been converted to other uses.

Water mills

As a renewable source of energy water might be staging a come-back today, but historically the water mill was chiefly built for grinding grain for flour and fodder. Many survive in whole or part with traceable watercourses and more rarely with machinery. The style was generally vernacular but could be quite large in scale as, for instance, that at Stanhope Hall in Weardale (right). The large water wheels of lead-mining sites, Nenthead and Killhope were used for crushing the lead-rich ore for smelting and as part of an industrial scene.



Buildings in the landscape

The landscape of the North Pennines is very diverse, but it has a strong underlying unity of character as a remote and rural upland where settlements and buildings have a close relationship with both the underlying geology and topography and the wider agricultural and moorland landscapes.

While some buildings styles and construction materials are found across the North Pennines others are restricted to, or highly characteristic of, particular localities. The way buildings relate to their landscape setting is also heavily influenced by the particularities of 'place': the nature of the local topography, drainage and microclimate, the pattern of local transport networks, and the unique development history of the area.

The character of the North Pennines landscape has been described in detail in a number of published landscape character assessments. More information on these and where they can be obtained is found in the Landscape Character section above. Most built development in the North Pennines is found within the more fertile and sheltered dale and valley landscapes which are described below.

The Allen Valleys

Scattered farmsteads are located at regular intervals particularly in the middle dale area and are emphasised by shelterbelts and adjacent clumps of sycamore and ash. Settlements in the upper dale become less conspicuous with Allenheads village tucked away in a sheltered woodland setting at the narrow valley head.

Both East and West Allendale possess a characteristic profile which is typical of North-South oriented North Pennine valleys. The effects of glaciation have produced an asymmetric cross-section with extensive glacial till on the western slopes creating softer topography and a characteristic drainage pattern; eastern slopes possess thinner soils and convex profiles.



West Allen Valley, Near Ninebanks

The local microclimate also has a significant influence on landscape character with shelter woodland more common on these exposed eastern slopes (where the spread of burn woodland is often more confined by the more sharply incised valleys).

In the late medieval and early post-medieval period the Allen valleys formed part of the unruly 'reiver' country of the borders. The legacy of continuous raiding and unrest can be found in the numerous defensible farmsteads or 'bastle houses' found throughout the valleys – a characteristic shared with the neighbouring Devil's Water valley.

East and West Allendale both supported substantial lead mining industries and this was responsible for many existing landscape features including coniferous plantations (for shoring), reservoirs (for hydraulic power) and above all for the dispersed pattern of smallholdings which were of a sufficient size and density to provide supplementary work and incomes for the miner-farmer population.

In common with some other parts of the North Pennines there is evidence of planning by the estate or landowner with recurring detail in field boundaries and woodland features (as well as the use of commonly occurring building patterns). The area around Whitfield is a typical example of estate planning and design.

Weardale

Weardale comprises a long valley containing a typical range of dales landscapes, rich in geological variety and industrial heritage. The underlying geology of the dale, with its alternating hard and soft rocks, gives a stepped profile to many of the valley sides which are crossed by regular networks of dry-stone walls. Narrow riparian and river terrace woodlands follow the course of the River Wear, and line its deeper tributary valleys. Mining and quarrying have had a major impact on the landscape, and quarries, spoil heaps and lead mining hushes are common features.

The oldest villages, of medieval origins, lie outside the National Landscape on the floor of the lower dale, occupying sites on the north bank of the river to farm the warmer south-facing slopes. In the medieval period the middle dale contained an extensive deer park belonging to the Bishop of Durham which contains several early farm

complexes. The upper dale contains numerous defensible farmsteads or 'bastle houses', a legacy of raiding by border reivers out of Allendale and the South Tyne valley.



Weardale

Many of the buildings in the dale date from the industrial period where the growth of lead mining and quarrying saw initially the subdivision of existing farmsteads and the clustering of buildings into hamlets and then the expansion of some hamlets into villages, usually in short terrace rows. In the middle and upper dale villages occur at frequent intervals, appearing at times to form a ribbon of development winding along the valley floor. The farms and fields of miner-smallholders are scattered across the higher dale-sides and dale-head, sometimes as part of larger tracts of planned enclosure, in other places appearing more haphazard and opportunistic. The overall character of settlement is irregular and idiosyncratic rather

than planned, and most buildings have a vernacular or utilitarian character. In passing through the dale John Wesley commented on the 'innumerable little houses' he observed there.

The Rookhope valley is, in many ways, Weardale in miniature, with the village itself set deep within a narrow valley at the junction between the richly wooded gorge of the lower valley and the open moorland landscape of the upper valley which is scarred by mining. The Waskerley valley is more heavily wooded and sparsely settled and contains some fine stone estate buildings associated with Tunstall reservoir.

Teesdale

Teesdale contains some of the most varied, interesting and attractive countryside in the North Pennines. The middle dale is a long, broad, asymmetrical valley with enclosure and settlement concentrated on the valley floor and warmer northern slopes, and with open fell on steeper ground and prominent whinstone crags to the south. The southern flanks of the lower dale are divided by the major tributary valleys of Lunedale and Baldersdale. The upper dale is a broad and open valley head of rolling glacial topography.

Pastures and meadows are enclosed by a network of dry-stone walls. Older boundaries, often of rounded river cobbles and with mature boundary trees, are found on the valley floor. Extensive networks of planned enclosures with straight walls of quarried stone cover the higher dale-sides and dale-head. Narrow riparian and gill woods follow the watercourses in places and there are scattered softwood plantations on the valley sides.

The oldest villages, of medieval origins, lie outside the National Landscape on the floor of the lower dale. Old farmsteads and hamlets are scattered across the dale floor and lower dale-sides elsewhere. Most farms are contemporary with the field systems around them and date from periods of planned enclosure in the C18th and C19th.

Much of the land has long been in the ownership of large estates and this has had a profound impact on the landscape. North of the Tees the land falls within Raby estate and its white painted farmsteads are distinctive features of the Teesdale landscape. While the dale was heavily affected by lead mining and whinstone quarrying, this, like much else in Teesdale, was more noticeably planned than elsewhere.



Lower Teesdale

In some cases workers were accommodated in planned extensions to settlements like the New Town area of Middleton. Elsewhere, the smallholdings occupied by lead miners are difficult to distinguish from other farms laid out in the planned enclosures of the period.

While the middle dale is rich in field and boundary trees (more so than most other dales) the upper dale is very open and the absence of trees – even small shelter groups of sycamore – is very marked. Large reservoirs dominate the tributary dales to the south, associated in places with fine stone estate buildings.

The Derwent Valley

A low-lying valley surrounded by low moorland ridges. The middle dale is heavily wooded with ancient woodlands and plantations along the incised gorge and floodplain bluffs of the Derwent, large softwood plantations in the moorland fringe, and wooded estate landscapes around Blanchland, Hunstanworth and Ruffside Hall. The large Derwent reservoir dominates the lower reaches of the middle dale, the gentle northern slopes of which merge gradually with the surrounding upland fringes. In the lower dale the winding wooded river gorge is flanked by a mosaic of old pastures bounded by overgrown hedges with locally abundant hedgerow trees. The upper dale is narrow and branching with little access by road.

Parts of the dale, and particularly the Boltshope valley, have been heavily influenced by lead mining. Many industrial relics remain including the chimneys of the Jeffrey's smelt mill and Sikehead mine which form prominent landmarks on the moorland skyline.



The Derwent Valley at Hunstanworth

The valley has a long history of settlement and estate management and much of it has a planned and ordered character. In the village of Blanchland, which developed from a 12th century monastery, some monastic buildings have been reused and many buildings incorporate medieval masonry. The village of Edmundbyers, lying close to the moorland edge, dates from the same period. The gatehouse in Blanchland and scattered bastle houses or peel towers are a legacy of raiding by border reivers.

Later settlements include a mixture of planned development, such as the 19th century estate village of Hunstanworth and the small-holder allotments of Boltshope Park, and the more irregular scattered

farmsteads and building clusters typical of the lead mining industry elsewhere.

South Tyne Valley



The South Tyne Valley, Near Garriqill

The South Tyne valley is long, possessing the asymmetric cross section associated with a north – south orientation and the effects of glacial action. The steep eastern slopes, particularly in the middle dale, are very distinctive with heather and bracken flowing down into the valley itself. Larger scale fields dominate the flatter western slopes. Extensive tree and woodland cover occupies much of the riparian zone, with narrower woodland links flowing up into subsidiary valleys. As one approaches the upper dale the density of farmsteads and smallholdings decreases and rushy allotment land becomes an increasingly common transition at the edge of the moorland.

Lead mining relics such as spoil heaps, adits and mine buildings are a common feature in the upper valley. In the Nent Valley (a major tributary) lead mining features dominate both Nenthead and its immediate environs. Regularly spaced

smallholder's cottages are a key feature – many have been extended far beyond their original modest footprint. Restored riverside spoil heaps are a key feature of the Nent valley and in time the recent woodland planting there will create a richly wooded entrance to Nenthead and the upper valley.

The Eden Valley

An area of the National Landscape which is very different to the other parts of the North Pennines. This is a transitional landscape lying at the foot of the western scarp slopes which possesses a unique climate and distinctive geology.

Much of the Eden Valley was not included in the National Landscape because it lies outside the North Pennines. The valley fringe which is included within the boundary has strong visual and economic links to the scarp slope above. The scarp provides a dominant background for the string of farms and villages which lie along its base and is particularly striking when the sun is in the west.

A western climate and rich soils derived from the underlying red sandstone has encouraged the development of rich vegetation and a patchwork of fields of varying size. A network of hedgerows, scattered trees and narrow lanes plus wooded stream valleys form a setting for



Eden Valley, Near Croglin

the string of fell foot farms and villages. The red sandstone is a key component of drystone walls and traditional buildings which echo the colour of the local soil. The diversity and richness of this landscape offers a total contrast to those who have travelled over the Hartside pass from Alston.

This idyllic image can be deceptive, for the area is famous for its Helm Wind, a severe weather phenomenon, which blows in a north easterly direction down from the fells; this local challenge is reflected in both the sturdiness and orientation of local buildings and the blocks of coniferous shelterbelts which are dotted around the lower slopes of the scarp.

Design

For anyone contemplating development, the first steps should be to:

1. Look at the guidelines in this document, which include pointers to good practice and sources of further information, such as other planning documents within the area covered by the National Landscape.
2. Survey your site or building and its setting to assess what features are worth keeping or protecting, and to identify any opportunities for enhancement measures, and take advice from others with knowledge of design, building conservation, the historic environment, landscape and biodiversity as it relates to your proposals; and
3. Seek formal pre-application advice from your LPA at an early stage in the process: this will provide you with useful information on issues affecting location and design as well as planning policies and other guidance that may inform your work.

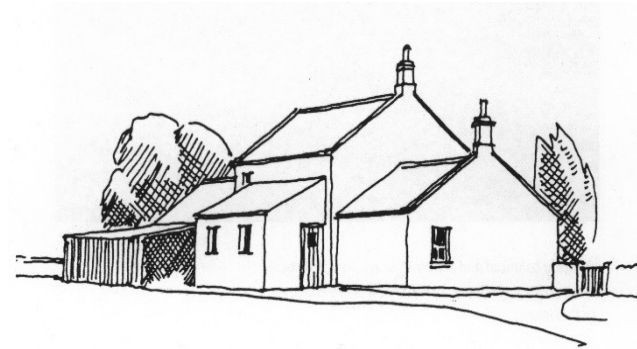
Design principles

Achieving harmony with neighbouring buildings and the landscape by appropriate siting, scale, massing, proportion, rhythm, materials and landscaping calls for some sensitivity. Each project will need to integrate with its setting by considering these qualities.

Siting – How a building fits into the grain of the landscape in terms of position and orientation or how in a small settlement a new building is placed to avoid disrupting existing spatial qualities. There will also

be many practical factors to take into account such as access, orientation, drainage and the function of external spaces.

Scale and massing – The way the different parts of the development are brought together to achieve a balanced composition with a clear visual hierarchy. In more complex buildings this will reflect the ordering of spaces into primary and subsidiary functions.

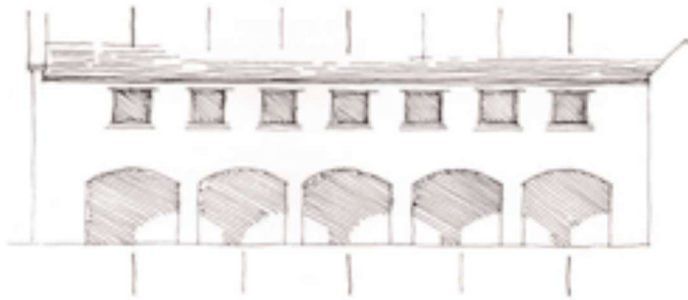


Massing – a visual hierarchy

A house with a history of past extensions, both in line and at the ends and as lean-to at the back including a timber clad log store. All the extensions with the exception of the store are in stone with slate roofs but all remain subsidiary to the original house

Proportion – Closely allied to scale in defining the relationship of parts to whole and to each other, solid to void and the arrangement of components to achieve balance and harmony.

Rhythm – The arrangement of constituent parts - like the satisfactory repetition of a good detail such as the hemmel arch with smaller windows above found in farms across the North Pennines, the buildings gain their character largely from the interplay of openings and wall.



Materials and colour – Our choice of materials and colour is vastly wider than it was for previous generations. Careful selection of materials and finishes that harmonise with those of existing buildings and the natural environment will help reinforce local distinctiveness.

Landscaping and external features – Integrating a building into its landscape setting. The composition of the building in relation to its surroundings is often of primary importance. Even in the tighter confines of the settlements the hierarchy of buildings, garden outhouses and boundary walls or fences, the open green and the street have a major part to play in the way development fits in with its surroundings. The retention of mature landscape features – hedges, walls and trees – and the creation of new ones can help anchor a new building in the landscape.



The farmstead sits comfortably within its landscape setting, enclosed by field boundaries and mature trees. A clear hierarchy between the farmhouse, barns and outbuildings creates a balanced and visually cohesive group.

Repair and maintenance

Repair and maintenance works play an essential role in looking after both the fabric and the character of traditional buildings. Although these works can seem very minor or routine, they can have a substantial effect on a building's character over time. Taking care over the detail of relatively minor works – the re-pointing of stonework, the replacement of windows and doors or rainwater goods and other original features, including boundary treatments – will help conserve the character of the building for future generations. If left unchecked, the cumulative effect of such changes across multiple properties can lead to the erosion of local distinctiveness.

Some 20th-century development in the North Pennines has resulted in buildings that lack a strong connection to their landscape context and could easily be found in any suburban setting. While these buildings may not reflect the area's distinctive character, there is often scope to enhance them through thoughtful maintenance, repair, and small-scale alterations or extensions. Such improvements should be encouraged—not only to enhance visual quality—but also to support sustainability, reinforce local identity, and reflect the simplicity, materials, and colour palette typical of the North Pennines.

Repair and maintenance works do not generally require planning permission, however in the case of listed buildings it may be necessary to obtain Listed Building Consent even for what may seem straight-forward repair or relatively minor alterations. You should consult your LPA to establish whether consent is required.

Repointing and repair of stonework

Since so much of the stock of traditional buildings in the National Landscape is natural stone it is worth understanding how best to repair and re-point walls that have become weakened by weathering and loss of mortar. Re-pointing is only necessary when mortar joints have perished and the mortar is breaking down, losing its structural integrity.

In some older buildings the face of stonework may have been weathered back in a way that leaves flakes of stone only loosely attached to the wall or individual stones so worn away as to threaten the structural integrity of the wall.

Individual stones may need to be cut out and a new matching stone built in or a section of stone neatly cut out and a new piece

indented. This is work better done by a skilled mason and needs precision.



Repointing with an appropriate lime mortar helps protect historic stonework, allowing walls to breathe while preserving the character and appearance of traditional buildings.

It may not be necessary to use new quarry cut stone for the replacement of heavily weathered pieces. Sound stone salvaged from other sources is almost preferable as it will blend in quickly with surrounding surfaces and most local builders will have a stock of stone in their yard. Whatever the work it is important to ensure that the repair is done in a stone of the same type and character and is finished in a way to match adjacent work.

Mortar is not glue: its function is to cushion and fill, not to stick. Some very strong cement-based mortars can be used as adhesive but for most purposes these strong mixes are both unnecessary and can seriously damage the long-term condition of the stone, particularly with the softer sandstones of the Cumbrian Fellside and Northumbrian Coal measures. When walls get wet the moisture they absorb moves if it can to the mortar joints from where it evaporates.

Traditional lime mortars allow maximum breathability and they don't crack as a result of building movement or temperature change. Harder cement or gauged mortars tend to trap moisture which,

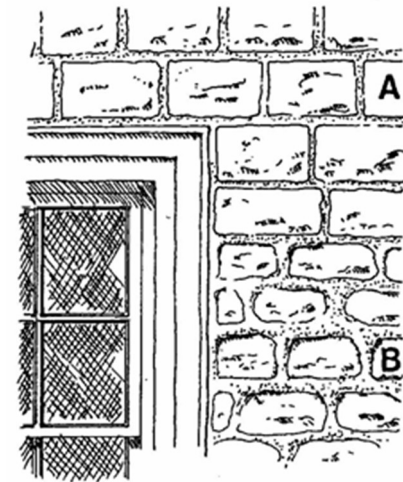


Mortar slightly recessed allows the stones to 'read'

through the action of frost and the concentration of salts, accelerates the decay of the stone. For re-pointing it is equally important to use a

mortar weaker than the stone to ensure that in the process of weathering it is the pointing that is sacrificed, not the stone.

Mortar will normally have a cream or brown colour though in parts of Cumbria the local sand may impart a red/pink colour to the mortar which is entirely appropriate to use with the Red Triassic Sandstones. With the darker impure limestones available in much of the area a pale mortar may set up too much contrast and the careful selection of darker sand mixed with concreting sand may deliver a more muted effect. The preparation of a couple of sample areas using mortar mixes of different sands should help to ensure a good colour and texture to match older work.



A Good pointing finished just behind stone face

B Bad pointing smeared over the face of stones

Good practice

RM1 Ensure that repairs are done in stone of the same type and character and finished in a way that matches adjacent work

- RM2 Loose surface flakes should be brushed or picked off, since they will fall off in due course anyway, and the wall left in sound (if weathered) condition.
- RM3 Choose a mortar mix to suit the walling material and the degree of exposure. Take advice from a specialist or your local authority Conservation Officer.
- RM4 Advice from an architect or building specialist will be helpful in selecting an appropriate mortar mix. For most traditional buildings non-hydraulic lime mortars are preferred. These are slow setting and flexible and therefore suitable for softer stone and brickwork. In particularly exposed areas Natural Hydraulic Lime (NHL) 3.5 may be suitable.
- RM5 Finishing the joints just behind the stone face allows the stones to 'read' and generally produces the best appearance: it is also the least likely to cause long-term damage to the stone. The hard lines of raised 'ribbon' pointing serve no purpose of benefit to the stone and should not be used.
- RM6 On very poor random rubble masonry it is difficult to avoid buttering mortar over some areas of face and in some areas this is a traditional preparation for limewashing to make the wall surface reasonably smooth. For better quality coursed rubble the most pleasing results can be got by pointing the joints flush and then, after the initial set, stippling the surface so that it is slightly recessed and shows some of the coarse aggregate. In very skilled hands a light spray of water after the

initial set is used to expose the clear colour of the sand and course grit.

- RM7 Sometimes a coarser sand or light grit aggregate helps to create a texture to match existing mortar. Generally a simple rule is to seek a local source of sand and aggregates for mortars.
- RM8 Bats and nesting birds often use crevices in buildings and there may be a need to retain some crevices to comply with the relevant protected species legislation. Repointing should be avoided between November and March to prevent entombing bats when they are most vulnerable, and crevices where the bottom cannot be seen should not be re-pointed.

Render

A fair proportion of traditional domestic buildings in the National Landscape have a render coat over the structural walling material usually finished with a renewable lime-based paint. Practical experience of combating damp and decay is the common link behind decisions to



Typical rendered walls and painted window surrounds on this terrace at Castle Carrock,

render a building. Often render is applied to a particularly exposed gable wall leaving other dressed stone walls untouched.

Throughout the National Landscape there was a commonly used detail of rendering random rubble stonework but forming dressed stone window and door surrounds; these surrounds are brought slightly forward so that render runs neatly into their outer edge. It is an attractive detail still widely used today.

Early practice in the application of a shelter coat relied upon a lime and sand mix with a capacity to breathe. This would absorb rainwater to saturation point (any surplus tending to run off outside) and then release it by evaporation outward in an even way. A decorative finish of lime wash (slaked lime stirred to a slurry and applied in quite thick coats) would be refreshed quite frequently: this too was part of the breathing shelter. Occasionally these protective coats have been removed in the interests of showing the stone only to find that dampness becomes a problem again.

There are many proprietary renders on the market with a wide range of 'through' colour and texture. Great care is needed in their selection and use as many are inappropriately strong for the softer stones of traditional buildings

Good practice

Re1 There is a strong case for retaining existing shelter coats and render and avoiding scraping back to the underlying stonework.

Re2 Where renders are to be replaced a slightly stronger mix may be appropriate but, as with pointing, should not be stronger than the stone.

Re3 If a wall is being completely rendered, or all of the render is being replaced, the best option is usually an un-gauged nonhydraulic lime mortar using well-matured lime putty and sharp and well-graded aggregate in a 1:5 ratio.

Re4 Some textured renders are referred to as wet dash or rough cast. This involves the finishing coat mix which contains small pebbles being thrown against the undercoat from a casting or dashing trowel with a flicking action and being padded in for adhesion.

Re5 In vernacular buildings the finish of render at the building's corners should be rounded to reflect softer modelling of traditional lime render. The use of angle beads to form crisp edges should be avoided and corners should be hand-finished to achieve a more traditional appearance.

Roofs

With the large geographical extent of the National Landscape and a long historical period covered by surviving buildings it is not surprising to find a wide range of roofing materials used on traditional buildings.



Westmorland slate: often graded in diminishing courses

Thick natural stone flags have survived on many traditional buildings throughout the National Landscape. The stone roof is an important feature that adds to the solid character of the buildings and their integrity within the landscape. Production of new flags is now very limited and the market in salvaged flags is competitively priced.



Sandstone roofing graded in diminishing courses.

Westmorland or Cumbrian slate, an attractive grey/green very durable material, is expensive and has always been at the top end of the

roofing market. Used for churches, public buildings and grander private houses.

With the advent of the railways in the mid-19th century the distribution of Welsh slate came to dominate the market. It remains much the most widespread roofing material in the National Landscape. Both Welsh slate and Cumbrian slate are still in production and most roofers will have a stock of sound salvaged slates for repair work.



A cottage in Hunstansworth displaying the greater architectural elaboration that became more common in the 19th century, including projecting gables,

With the growing prosperity of the larger settlements such as Allendale Town and Alston in the 19th and early 20th century many buildings show much great elaboration, with projecting gables with ornate barge boards, bay windows with lead covered roofs, turrets with steep slate roofs crowned with decorative iron finials or moulded terracotta hip terminals. Chimney stacks in stone or brick, sometimes

with bold moulded cornices, were finished with a wide range of decorated clay chimneypots, reflecting much wider range of manufactured articles which could be brought in from outside the area.

Farm buildings and smaller community halls and chapels have often been roofed with asbestos cement or corrugated iron. This can be attractive and is part of the character of this inexpensive type of building.

Good practice

- Ro1 Retain and repair existing roof coverings. Any additional flags or slates should be carefully sourced to match the existing in type, finish and size.
- Ro2 Stone flags are very durable. It is usually possible to salvage a large proportion for reuse, making them among the most sustainable roofing materials
- Ro4 Concrete tiles or fibre-cement slates are not suitable for repair work. They are unlikely to match the older natural slates or size or colour initially and the weathering process will affect them in a different way over time which will become increasingly marked.
- Ro5 Many traditional buildings have stone ridge pieces which, if they are sound, should be retained and re-bedded. If these are not available use blue/black clay ridges for slate roofs and half round clay ridges with pantiles.

Ro6 Modern fibre-cement profiled sheeting has superseded asbestos and plastic-coated metal of an appropriate colour provides an acceptable alternative for farm buildings.

Ro7 Chimney stacks and pots are important features and should always be retained or replicated. Their repair and maintenance may require specialist skills and particular materials suitable to the work.

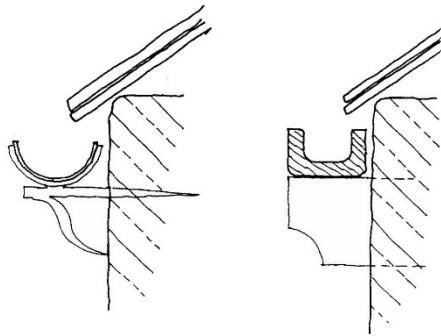
Rainwater goods

Gutters and downpipes on traditional buildings are usually cast iron, half round or ogee shape, though timber gutters were also popular. Plastic rainwater goods are a cheap alternative but are not robust and frequently buckle following a snow slide from a roof or can be damaged by ladders. Cast iron rainwater goods are readily available in a range of profiles that replicate traditional products.

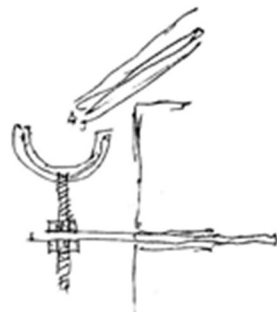
Gutters on older buildings were usually fixed by simple rafter straps or decorative spiked brackets made by local blacksmiths. Some Victorian and Edwardian buildings have gutters supported by elaborate timber fascias. These traditional features should be retained and repaired or reproduced where possible. Modern fascia boards to support gutters are unnecessary, present a continuing maintenance problem and detract from the appearance of a building.

Good practice

- Rw1 Match as far as possible the traditional detailing of rainwater goods on your building and those in the area.
- Rw2 Use cast iron profiles that reflect older features.
- Rw3 Avoid the use of fascia boards: use directly fixed drive-in or adjustable brackets



Cast iron gutters traditionally fixed on drive-in brackets direct to the masonry. Wooden gutters were often supported on projecting stone brackets. Neither detail necessitated timber boards at the eaves



Modern adjustable brackets can be used to provide minimum falls in gutters to outlet

Windows and doors

Careful maintenance and regular attention to the paintwork of the timber in windows and doors are essential to ensure long life. While it is true that these components are the most vulnerable part of the external envelope of any building, many original windows and doors can still be found dating back to the 17th and 18th centuries, the result of good detailing and regular maintenance. For owners considering replacement to windows and doors see Alterations and Extensions.

Good practice

- WD1 Keep on top of maintenance. Repaint timber before the failure of paint exposes the wood to wetting and weakens the bond between the putty and the glazing.
- WD2 Refurbish existing timber windows where possible, replacing any decayed or damaged timber and retrofitting draught seals to improve performance.

Painting

Paint, traditionally lime wash as a finish to rendered masonry, is now more usually an exterior masonry paint with improved bond and colourfast characteristics. These have a wide range of soft colours which weather nicely and do not reveal patchy salt stains too obviously. Strong colours such as ultramarine and crimson lake have more pigment and less body and offer less effective cover.

It is not advisable to paint an old building direct to the stone as a high level of residual salts left by years of evaporation will tend to discolour the paint or contribute to a breakdown in the bond between the paint system and the stone.



Painted timber joinery, typical of the darker colour schemes historically used on farm buildings and outbuildings.

For joinery a distinction seems to be well established between the colours chosen for painting joinery in windows and doors to housing (whites with perhaps bright clean colours for the front door) and the doors and frames of outbuildings, warehouses and farm buildings – usually darker reds, blues and greens, perhaps less likely to show dirt.

Brilliant White can be very harsh and alternative soft whites, creams and soft greys do work well with the honey coloured or red stone of the National Landscape.

Good practice

- P1 Avoid painting masonry other than where it is rendered or where it is a characteristic feature of the area: for example the white painted buildings of upper Teesdale.
- P2 When painting render use soft and visually recessive colours.
- P3 When painting woodwork try to match local styles and colours.
- P4 Use softer whites and creams for glazing rather than brilliant whites.
- P5 Darker colours can work well on traditional farm buildings, reflecting established practices and creating a greater sense of depth to the opening.



Whitewashed Raby Estate cottage with a traditional timber sash window and dark-painted surround.

Alterations and extensions

Many buildings will be altered or extended at some point during their life. If carried out sensitively this can allow old buildings to be adapted to meet changing needs while retaining their character and significance. If done badly it can damage both the character of the building and its wider setting. When dealing with planning applications in the National Landscape, local planning authorities will aim to ensure that alterations and extensions reflect the character and quality of the original structure, surrounding buildings and setting.

Respecting character

Part of the attraction of the traditional buildings of the North Pennines is their use of local materials and the development of local styles; this is what is meant by the word 'vernacular'. Even moving from one dale to the next the differences that contribute to a sense of place are apparent.

Until the development of the railway system there was little choice but to use materials available nearby. Vernacular buildings reflect the skills of local tradesmen working largely with local materials, developing details that worked in response to environmental conditions of the area.

Today there is a far wider choice of materials available to the designer and builder, and local materials are no longer necessarily the cheapest option or even available anymore. As a result the second half of the 20th century has seen a significant erosion of local identity. It is part

of the objective of the National Landscape designation to encourage respect for the locally distinct character of its landscape and built environment. The key guiding principle for extending or altering an existing building is to respect the integrity of the original structure.

Properties with special historic or architectural interest have additional protection. If a building is listed, extra permission will be required for most alterations and works affecting both the exterior and interior. If you're unsure whether a building is listed, check the National Heritage List.

[Search the List – Find listed buildings, monuments, battlefields and more | Historic England](#)



Carefully proportioned extensions sit comfortably alongside the original dwellings, ensuring they remain the dominant element.

Extensions

Extensions should be subordinate to the existing building in terms of scale, massing, and volume. Key characteristics—such as the shape and pitch of the roof, the form of windows and doors, and the ratio of solid wall to openings—should be reflected in any proposed extension to ensure visual consistency with the original building.



Traditional cat-slide roof form providing an extended roof projection while maintaining a simple and sympathetic building profile.

Whilst proposals should respect local character, well-considered, appropriately proportioned, and detailed contemporary additions can enhance both the character of the host building and the wider area. From the outset, consideration should be given to the most appropriate design approach—traditional or contemporary—with both requiring sensitivity to the surrounding context.

Generic or visually incongruous forms are generally inappropriate. Features that are unlikely to be appropriate include extensions that project forward of the house (unless it is a minor addition such as a porch), dormer roof extensions, hipped roofs, single-storey flat-roofed



The massing of these extension remains subsidiary to the original structure



This two-storey extension, partly because of its position and manner, dominates the original house

extensions, wraparound extensions, bay windows, and large picture windows.

In some cases, where it is difficult to integrate an extension, consideration may be given to offsetting the new element from the existing using a linking structure—particularly where the extension adopts a contemporary design and the existing building has a traditional or distinctive character, or where it would be unsuitable to increase the massing of the original structure.



*A light glass link
between two older
buildings*

The juxtaposition of a contemporary extension to the main body of an existing building can best be handled by contrasting an extremely lightweight and transparent structure using high quality materials and detailing either for the extension or as a link to a heavyweight masonry component. The transition from old to new allows the form of the original building to be clearly identified and conserved.

The cumulative effect of numerous extensions over a period of time can prove detrimental to the character of both the building and its surroundings and, as such should be avoided.

Good Practice

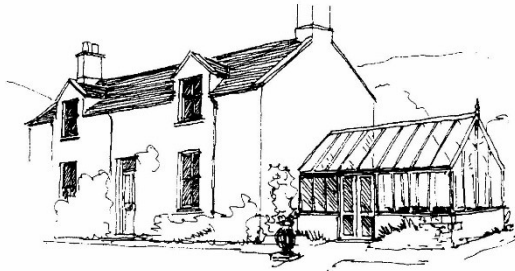
- E1 Extensions should be sensitive to the scale, proportion, material and detailing of the existing building.
- E2 Extensions should remain subordinate to the original building.
- E3 The roof ridge of any extension should sit below that of the original house to maintain a clear visual hierarchy.
- E4 Setting extensions back slightly from the corners of the house helps introduce a visual break, prevents the loss of architectural details such as stone quoins, and ensures the extension remains subordinate to the original structure.

Conservatories and sunrooms

Conservatories and sunrooms can be difficult to add sensitively to some traditional buildings. While attached greenhouses and conservatories might be characteristic of Victorian and Edwardian villa, such as those found in parts of Tynedale, large, glazed conservatories of an elaborate style or uPVC plastic fabrication generally look out of place on many traditional houses within the North Pennines that are typified by their solid, robust appearance and natural local materials.

Conservatories, garden rooms and sunrooms should follow the traditional forms of extension including their position, height, scale, materials and design detailing and, if possible, utilise more robust materials such as thick timbers or steel. A conservatory will have a more sympathetic appearance if timber frames have a natural (not

stained) finish and steel frames are coated in a colour such as greys or muted colours that complements the natural stone of the house.



Dwarf walls for a conservatory should be built in the same material as the main house

In some cases, however a more practical, economic and architecturally appropriate solution would be a more solid garden room extension. This may also offer better all year-round use if it has an insulated slate roof rather than glass. When the roofing material

matches that of the main house and incorporates some solid walling, the extension can be more easily integrated with the smaller and simpler vernacular buildings. This approach also allows the glazing to more clearly reflect the domestic fenestration of the original structure.

Good Practice

CS1 Conservatories and sunrooms should be sensitive to the scale, proportion, material and detailing of the existing building.

CS2 They should proportionate, and subordinate to, the original building.

CS3 Simple and well-proportioned structures are more likely to be appropriate than over-detailed 'period' styles.

CS4 Location to the rear of the existing building helps maintain a clear hierarchy of form.

CS5 Lean-to or apex roofs are easier to assimilate than flat or hipped roofs.

CS6 The use of darker colours for framing and glazing will make the structure more visually recessive.

CS7 The use of uPVC and polycarbonate should generally be avoided.

Loft conversions

Loft conversions can create more space in the home without a need for substantial changes in external form. They can also bring significant improvements to building efficiency due to reduced heat loss through the roof. It is important to retain the original roof form and character. See comments on rooflights and dormer windows below.

Garaging and outbuildings

Whilst older properties often featured a range of small outbuildings, garages are a relatively modern addition and require careful siting and design to avoid detracting from the character or setting of the main dwelling. In recent years, outbuildings have become increasingly popular for uses such as home offices, summer houses, annexes, and hobby workshops, alongside more traditional storage functions.



A simple garage building designed in a utilitarian style, using materials and proportions that complement the main dwelling. Side-hung timber doors and a traditional pitched roof help maintain a vernacular character

Good practice

- G1 Garages and outbuildings should be subservient in scale and form, with proportions that respect the main building.
- G2 Materials and design should complement the main house.
- G3 Designs should be utilitarian in approach. Standardised kit structures and flat-roofed boxes are generally unsuitable.
- G4 Attached garages should be sited discreetly, preferably in the form of a simple lean-to structures at the gable or located at the side or rear of the house. In some cases a freestanding garage or outbuilding elsewhere in the garden may be more suitable to preserve the setting of the dwelling.

G5 Wide double garages particularly with up-and-over metal doors, can appear out of scale. Single-width, side-hung, vertically boarded timber doors set back in reveals are more in keeping with local vernacular.

G6 Particular care should be taken if incorporating an upper floor, such as a workspace. The inclusion can result in the building adopting a residential character and should be avoided.

Porches

Smaller additions such as porches can offer practical benefits but may also affect the character of a building and its surroundings. In the North Pennines, porches are historically rare outside Weardale and often reflect 20th-century additions rather than original features. Where porches are proposed, they should be carefully designed to complement the host building and its setting.

Good practice

- P1 Porches should be simple in form and well-proportioned in relation to the main house, typically featuring a lean-to or gabled roof.
- P2 The size and shape of a porch should respect the height and proportions of the original dwelling and avoid conflict with existing features such as first-floor windows.
- P3 The roof pitch and materials should match those of the main building to ensure visual cohesion

P4 An open porch is often more appropriate than an enclosed one, particularly on smaller properties.

P5 Larger or over-ornate porch structures should be avoided, as they can dominate the host building and detract from its character.



The modest scale, simple form and traditional materials of this porch allow it to sit comfortably alongside the historic building without dominating the main elevation.

Detailing

Equally important as the siting scale and massing of extensions is the articulation of elevations and finer detailing, which can significantly influence the overall quality and character of a development.

The choice of materials, the proportion, positioning, and style of windows and doors, the form, pitch, and finish of the roof, and the detailing of eaves, verges, ridges, and chimneys all contribute to the building's character and its relationship with the wider landscape. This section provides guidance on four key building elements—walls, roofs, windows, and doors—and should be read alongside the background sections above.

Walls

Most traditional buildings in the North Pennines are built from local sandstone, the type of stone reflecting the geology of the area. More than any other component, the use of local stone establishes the character of the building and its relationship to the landscape and the built environment.

The selection of stone for new buildings or extensions must be carefully considered. Key factors include the type of stone, its coursing, dressing or finish, and the method of pointing. Architectural details such as quoins, window and door surrounds—including cills, lintels, and jambs—also play a critical role in achieving a coherent and high-quality appearance. When executed sensitively, these elements contribute to the visual integrity and contextual appropriateness of new development.

Sourcing new or reclaimed stone to achieve a good finish can be a challenge. Matching reclaimed stone is an option where the stonework needs to tie into existing weathered stonework. However, reclaimed stone is not always available. Repair works and extensions can be carried out well in newly quarried stone providing the right

type of stone is sourced and the design allows for a clear visual break between old and new. Choosing the right type, shape and the finish of the stone will be key to achieving a good match. Where practical, stone should be sourced as locally as possible and be of a type and character that closely matches that of the original building.

New stonework for elements such as quoins, cills, and lintels should ideally be textured, sandblasted, or tumbled at the quarry to achieve a weathered appearance. This helps new elements blend in and avoids an overly machined look. Reconstituted stone should be avoided as should imported foreign stone, whose consistency, longevity and performance is unknown and is likely to weather very differently to local stone.

Coursing

When considering alterations or extensions to traditional buildings, the method of stone coursing should be informed by the existing context. The prevailing style, whether random rubble, brought to course, or fully coursed should be respected to ensure visual continuity and maintain the architectural integrity of the original structure.



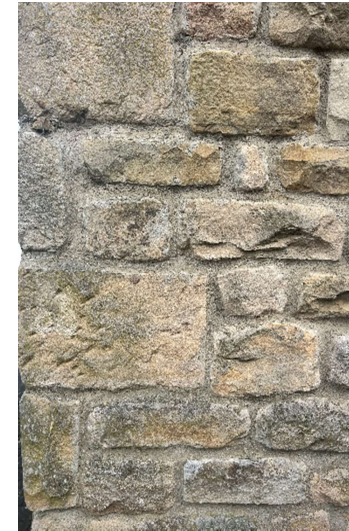
Quoins on a new extension have been textured to achieve a weathered appearance.

Stone walling techniques vary, but can generally be categorised into three main types:

- Random Rubble: Uncoursed walls constructed from irregularly shaped stones.



Random rubble walling



Masonry brought to course

- Brought to Course: Similar to random rubble but roughly levelled into courses, often aligned with the height of quoins.
- Coursed: Stones are laid in continuous horizontal courses, either of uniform or variable height. This technique is typically associated with more formal or Victorian-era architecture.



Coursed masonry

Many of the recommendations made for suitable materials in the previous section 'Repair and Maintenance' are relevant for alterations and extensions.

Roofs

The roof of a building is often a dominant component of its character. Alterations should generally retain the existing roof form and minimise interventions. Roof forms for extensions should be simple and in keeping with the character of the original building. Additions should remain subordinate to the main structure, ensuring they do not dominate the original form. Hip roofs, flat roofs and curved roofs are generally inappropriate and should be avoided unless clearly justified by the local context.

Roofing materials

Many of the recommendations in the previous section on 'Repair and Maintenance' are equally relevant to alterations and extensions.

Achieving a sympathetic relationship between the original building and a new addition is best served by using matching or complimentary materials for the roof finish: typically stone flag or natural slate. The use of diminishing courses – with smaller flags or slates towards the ridge – is a notable characteristic of the roofs of older buildings.

Artificial slates can appear incongruous as can natural slates imported from other countries that are different in character – finish, texture, colour, thickness, reflectivity – to traditional materials.

Growing demand for alternatives to traditional stone flags has led to improvements in the quality of artificial stone products in recent years. They are less successful where close comparison can be made with natural materials which is often the case with extensions and alterations.

Where original roof coverings have been lost, the use of appropriately detailed high quality contemporary sheet materials may be appropriate.

Roof detailing

Traditional roof features in the North Pennines can include stone ridgelines, stone copings (flat stones laid along gable edges), and architectural elements such as shaped kneelers and corbels. These details are commonly found on older buildings in certain settlements and dales, though they are not always replicated in modern extensions.



Traditional roof features including stone ridges, stone copings to gable verges and robust chimney stacks contribute to the distinctive character of buildings across the North Pennines.

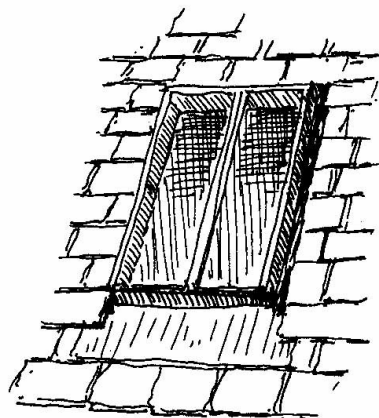
Junctions between walls and roofs are typically treated in a simple and understated manner. Roofs generally have little or no overhang, and bargeboards or fascia boards are rarely used. Although, parts of Allendale, Alston and the Eden Valley can display modest eaves and gable overhangs, sometimes incorporating simple timber bargeboards or fascia boards. Local context should dictate best treatment.



Traditional wall and roof junction with minimal eaves overhang and no prominent bargeboards or fascia boards, creating a simple and understated appearance.

Rooflights

Rooflights can offer a less intrusive way to light roof spaces, but their design must be sensitive to the building's character. They should be positioned on less visible roof slopes and placed within the lower third of the roof with a vertical emphasis. Multiple rooflights should be arranged carefully to avoid breaking up the roof plane and should respect existing openings. Conservation-style rooflights are the most appropriate for traditional buildings.



Conservation Rooflight – this is well suited to older buildings due to its low profile

Chimneys

Chimney stacks in the area vary in shape and size but are typically constructed from the same stone as the building walls. They are almost always positioned either straddling the roof ridge or flush with the gable wall. External chimney stacks are not a traditional feature of the North Pennines and should be avoided. Chimneys

often contribute to the massing and balance of a property, and the removal of redundant stacks or chimney pots should generally be avoided.

Good practice

- RC1 The existing roof form should be retained and interventions minimised.
- RC2 The roof form of extensions should reflect and compliment those of the original building.
- RC3 Hip roofs, flat roofs and curved roofs should be avoided unless clearly justified by the context.
- RC4 Roofing materials should match or complement existing.

- RC5 Ridge, gable and eaves detailing should reflect that of the original building.
- RC6 Rooflights should be used sparingly and limited to less visible roof slopes
- RC7 Their size should be kept to the minimum required and where possible positioned below the centre line of the roof, ideally within the lower third.
- RC8 To avoid excessive symmetry and achieve a more appropriate visual balance, consider varying the size and position of new roof-lights. Frames should have a black matt finish to reduce visual impact and maintain a traditional appearance
- RC9 Existing chimneys should be retained. Where new chimneys are required, external stacks should be avoided.

Openings

Careful consideration should be given to the size, proportion, and detailing of openings within a wall. In the North Pennines, traditional stone buildings typically feature thick walls with recessed windows, reflecting historic construction methods and climatic conditions.

The principle of solid-to-void ratio is key to assessing the appropriateness of openings in relation to their context. This refers to the balance between blank wall space and the number and size of openings, which plays a crucial role in maintaining architectural harmony.

When altering or extending a traditional vernacular building, any new openings should reflect the proportions of existing ones and avoid disrupting the balance and composition of the original structure or the wider character of the area.



Original timber window and a replacement, illustrating how appropriate proportions and detailing can maintain the character of a historic building.

Windows

The insertion or replacement of windows in both new and existing properties requires thoughtful consideration, as windows play a key role in defining a building's character. Inappropriate styles can disrupt the visual balance and diminish the overall aesthetic.

Traditionally, windows within the North Pennines National Landscape were either simple wooden side-hung casements or sliding sash windows.



These uPVC windows (left) are not traditional in style, with top-hung opening lights and applied glazing bars. They are also set too far forward within the window reveal.



These windows are noticeably wider and shorter than traditional vertical sash or casement proportions, altering the balance of the front elevation and giving the building a squat appearance.

Fenestration should be carefully selected to complement both the building's character and its surrounding context. Window designs must respect the proportions of the building, with glazing bars integrated into the frame rather than applied externally. A defining feature of traditional

windows is a recessed frame, which offers protection from the elements and adds depth and interest to the elevation. Generally, a minimum reveal of 100mm is recommended, unless local context suggests otherwise.

Good practice

- Wi1 Ensure windows reflect the overall scale, proportions, and design of the building, with attention to the solid-to-void ratio.
- Wi2 Retain the original dimensions of existing windows—enlarging them can disrupt the building's proportions and visual balance.
- Wi3 Choose window sizes and glazing patterns with a strong vertical emphasis, unless horizontal designs are historically accurate for the property.
- Wi4 Window frames should be set back a minimum of 100mm or match the depth of other windows on the property.
- Wi5 Using high-quality timber door and window frames helps preserve the historic character of traditional buildings.
- Wi6 If uPVC, aluminium or other alternative materials are used, high quality 'heritage' products should be selected. Frame dimensions, glazing bar profiles, opening methods and overall proportions should replicate those of traditional timber windows as closely as possible.
- Wi7 Select window designs that are appropriate to the original period and style of the dwelling.

Wi8 Cills should be separate elements, typically made of stone, to maintain traditional detailing.

Dormer Windows

Dormer windows are not characteristic of traditional architecture in the North Pennines and should generally be avoided. Where they are a feature of existing buildings, new dormers may be appropriate but should typically be small in scale, and closely related to the size, position and glazing pattern of existing windows. Large flat roof box dormers, or dormers incorporating balconies are likely to be incongruous.



Dormers on the Allendale Inn do not break the main roofline

Alterations to loft spaces can affect bats and you will need to comply with the relevant legislation.

Doors

Repositioning door openings can disrupt the rhythm and pattern of the building's exterior, especially on the front elevation. The replacement of original timber panelled or vertically boarded doors with mass-produced, partially glazed hardwood or plastic alternatives poses a significant threat to the character of traditional

buildings in the North Pennines. Historically, doors were solid timber with minimal glazing, typically limited to fanlights above.

The uPVC door (above) attempts to replicate traditional detailing but does not reflect the character of a traditional timber door.

Two different window styles have been used. The lower window is overly wide and incorporates applied ('stick-on') glazing bars, which are out of keeping with the building's traditional character.



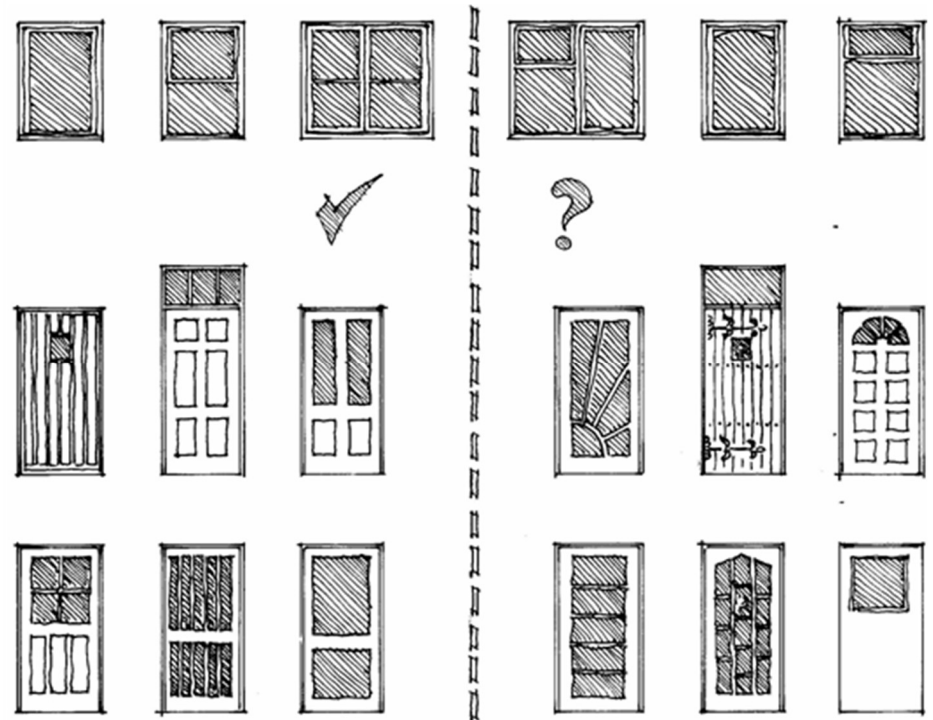
As with windows, door designs should reflect the building's proportions and style and be set within recessed frames to maintain depth and visual interest. A minimum reveal of 100mm is also recommended for doors, unless local context indicates otherwise.

Good practice

- D1 Replacement doors should match the shape of the existing opening and respect the character of the original property.
- D2 Use simple, vertically boarded or panelled timber doors, with or without partial glazing.

D3 Avoid overly elaborate or pastiche designs, particularly on smaller, traditional buildings.

D4 Avoid white or brown uPVC, aluminium, or varnished hardwood reproduction doors, as they can undermine the traditional appearance.



The design of today's doors and windows should draw from the good examples of the past

D5 Large, glazed panels in or beside doors often appear over-elaborate; instead, consider using a simple fanlight above or a small side window.

D6 Choose traditional door furniture and ironmongery—such as appropriate locks, hinges, and knobs—with care to complement the building's character.

Conversions

Many buildings will be converted to a new use at some point during their life. If carried out sensitively this can allow old buildings to be adapted to meet changing needs while retaining their character and significance. When done insensitively it can harm the character of both the building and its wider context.



A simple conversion of a Cumbrian barn using existing openings with little loss of character.

When dealing with planning applications in the National Landscape, LPAs will aim to ensure that conversions are appropriate and respect the character and quality of the original structure and its setting. Seeking formal preapplication advice from your LPA will help inform the design process. For listed buildings, and buildings within

conservation areas, early consultation with the LPA is essential, as additional statutory controls and considerations apply.

Respecting character

Conversion proposals should be guided by the form, function, scale, and character of the original building and its setting. Many of the buildings proposed for conversion will be designated or non-designated heritage assets and proposals will need to be informed by a full understanding of their significance (see Cultural Heritage section above).

The majority of conversions are of traditional farm buildings which are simple and functional structures, typically constructed with local materials and with minimal ornamentation. They often feature long, uninterrupted rooflines (without chimneystacks, dormers, or rooflights), few openings positioned according to function, and a high ratio of blank walling to openings.

Many farm buildings face onto a communal yard, with other elevations remaining blank or sparsely punctuated. Isolated field barns typically sit within open pasture with no hard surfaces or curtilage around the building.

Other traditional non-domestic buildings such as chapels, churches, and mills have distinct architectural characteristics. Chapels and churches often display strong symmetry, tall windows set high on elevations, and large-volume interior spaces, sometimes retaining original features like pews, pulpits, and memorials. Industrial buildings

may feature simple rooflines and rows of identical windows, with some retaining remnants of machinery.



The conversion of the barn on the right of this group has destroyed its character with fussy porch and intrusive windows

The new use proposed for a building needs to be compatible with the principle of conserving its character and significance. Some traditional rural buildings may not be suitable for adaptation to residential use due to their poor condition, limited size, isolated location, or because conversion would harm the character of the building or its landscape setting. In those circumstances other uses should be considered.

The proposed use must also be compatible with its surrounding uses and not generate further development, for instance replacement farm buildings, which would detract from the character of the converted building and its setting. In the case of old farm buildings on an active farm, consideration must also be given to the impact of the continuing farm operation on the amenities of the new conversion.



The conversion of this former Teesdale chapel demonstrates how redundant buildings can be adapted for new uses while respecting their historic character and landscape setting.

Buildings proposed for conversion should be of sufficient size to accommodate the new use without requiring substantial extensions or new ancillary structures. Where extensions are considered appropriate they must be subordinate in scale, form, and position—such as a small, unobtrusive lean-to—and constructed using materials that complement the building's traditional character. See *Alterations and Extensions* above.

Where there are existing outbuildings these can sometimes be used for storage, service spaces, or garages to support the conversion of the principle building while maintaining the original hierarchy within a building complex.

Modern agricultural buildings, typically constructed from steel, concrete, or other industrial materials, lack the architectural quality and historic character of older buildings. Their large scale, utilitarian form, and generic materials contrast with the traditional vernacular. Attempts to convert these structures to a residential use rarely result in a successful aesthetic outcome.

Old buildings are often home to bats, barn owls and other protected species. You will need to comply with the relevant legislation and take them into account in the conversion process.

Good practice

- Co1 Seek formal preapplication advice from your LPA.
- Co2 Understand the significance of the building and use this to inform your proposals.
- Co3 Undertake a structural survey to confirm that the building is sound, of sufficient size, and capable of accommodating the proposed use. Conversions requiring substantial rebuilding will be treated as new builds and additional planning constraints may apply.
- Co4 Retain original form and features. Preserve the building's scale, architectural character, and relationship with nearby structures.
- Co5 Be realistic. The existing layout will impose limits on what can be achieved: designs should work within these constraints.
- Co6 Avoid substantial extensions.
- Co7 Minimise domestic features. Excessive windows, doors, internal subdivisions, and additions like conservatories,

greenhouses, and garages should be avoided to maintain traditional character.

- Co8 Respect internal character. Retain original internal features and surface treatments wherever possible.
- Co9 Preserve the setting. Avoid domesticating the surroundings with gardens or ornamental landscaping that detracts from the building's original context.
- Co10 Ensure that conversion is compatible with surrounding uses and doesn't displace existing functions to less suitable locations with harmful impacts.

Consolidating the fabric

Historic materials and finishes should be retained wherever possible. Any new materials must closely match the original in colour, profile, texture, and scale. Where repairs are needed, such as re-pointing, this should be limited to localised areas and carried out using traditional lime-based mortar of appropriate colour and finish.

Retaining historic features—such as hatches, stable fittings, ventilation slits, dovecotes, floors, and vertically boarded doors—helps maintain the building's character and provides evidence of its former use. These features contribute to the building's significance and should be incorporated into the final conversion wherever possible.

For further guidance on stone repair and repointing, render roofs and rainwater goods see Repair and Maintenance.

Openings

Traditional rural buildings are often characterised by long, uninterrupted elevations of masonry. Where openings exist, they are typically small and functional—ventilation slits, cart or byre doors, ventilation slits, and hayloft or pitching holes — which form an important part of the building’s character. The pattern of openings reflects the building’s historic function, size, and character.

These buildings were built to be economical and practical, with openings and other features included only where essential. As many were used for shelter or storage, openings were generally kept to a minimum, with more exposed elevations having fewer openings than those providing light, ventilation, or access. This can make it challenging to introduce daylight without compromising the building’s integrity.



Historic features such as ventilation slits and former dovecote openings have been retained, helping to preserve the building’s character and reveal its agricultural past.



Traditional ventilation slit opening retained and fitted with a simple new insert, preserving the character of the original feature.



Traditional split timber doors preserve the appearance of the original barn entrance, concealing a glazed internal vestibule behind.

Good practice

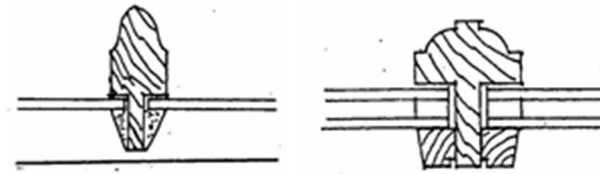
- O1 The interior layout should be dictated by the position of existing openings so that these can be fully utilised, rather than the creation of new ones. Reopening blocked openings may be appropriate to introduce more light, where evidence supports their original form.
- O2 New openings must be clearly justified. Where unavoidable, they should be discreetly located and designed to respect the building's character and historic significance, avoiding prominent public views.
- O3 Historic joinery such as window frames, doors should be retained and repaired wherever possible.
- O4 The use of standard 'off-the-peg' domestic-style doors and windows is often inappropriate for converted buildings. High quality bespoke solutions are often required.
- O5 The historic solid-to-void ratio should be maintained. New openings in blank elevations, or where there is no evidence of previous openings, should be avoided.
- O6 Where openings are blocked, infill should use sympathetic materials and be fully recessed to reflect the original depth. Retain features like lintels, jambs, and straight joints to preserve legibility and character.
- O7 Windows and doors should have deep reveals typical of traditional buildings, creating shadows that add visual interest.

- O8 Where glazing is introduced, any existing shutters or doors could be retained as a feature and fixed back—either tied back to the wall or kept in working order to provide additional security when the building is unoccupied
- O9 External joinery should reflect traditional character, blend with the landscape, and avoid standing out. Matt or eggshell finishes in muted colours that complement the natural stone of the building are often most appropriate. Avoid overly domestic whites.
- O10 A consistent colour palette across buildings or estates reinforces visual unity and helps them relate well to one another.
- O11 Replacing inappropriate modern windows and doors with suitable alternatives is encouraged and will enhance the building's character.

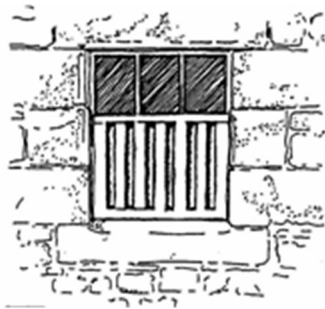
Windows

The considerations set out above in *Alterations and Extensions* above apply. The style of new windows should reflect the character of the existing building. Windows must fit the original openings, not the other way around, so standard or 'off-the-peg units' are rarely appropriate. Many farm buildings feature glazed lights associated with louvred windows, hit-and-miss ventilators or inward-opening hopper lights above fixed glass. Whilst like for like replacements are often required, these can serve as models for new timber windows, with adapted subdivision and scale.

Window proportions should suit the building's original function rather than its new use. While finer detailing is possible with single glazing, the shift toward double glazing may require thicker glazing bars. In some historic buildings, single glazing may be necessary to retain traditional slim glazing bars. Where thermal performance is a concern, secondary glazing may offer an appropriate solution without compromising the building's character.



Traditional single glazing detail on the left with an acceptable solution for double glazing on the right



Left - Traditional single glazing detail. Below - acceptable solutions for double glazing



Dark-coloured frames set back within deep stone reveals create a shadow line that minimises visual impact and helps preserve the character of the original opening.

Good practice

- Wn1 In certain cases, such as hayloft openings, plain, uninterrupted glazing set within a deep reveal may be appropriate. A dark-painted frame can help minimise visual impact and maintain the appearance of the original unglazed opening.
- Wn2 Original cast iron windows, often found on chapels and mill buildings, are usually significant features and should be retained. Where necessary, modern replicas can be produced using casts from the originals by specialist manufacturers.
- Wn3 Darker colours are generally more appropriate for window frames in barn and industrial conversions, reflecting the building's origins. Existing colour schemes should be recorded and considered in any new design.
- Wn4 Features out of keeping with traditional buildings—such as dormer windows, large picture windows, uPVC frames, or overtly domestic designs—will be resisted due to the harm they cause to the building's character, unless there is a compelling justification.

Rooflights

The considerations set out above in *Alterations and Extensions* above apply. Traditional buildings rarely feature glazing in their roofs, though occasional glazed slates or tiles may be present. Introducing modern roof-lights into plain roof slopes can be visually intrusive, disrupting both the building's character and its setting. The reflective quality of



Traditional glazed slate (left) sits discreetly within the roof covering. Where roof-lights are required (right), flush-fitting conservation roof-lights with simple vertical proportions help minimise their impact on the character of traditional roofs.

glass contrasts sharply with the matt, natural texture of stone or slate in wider views.

Good practice

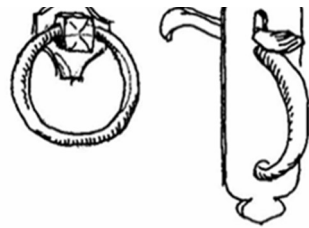
- RI1 Where roof-lights are justified, they should be of the traditional *conservation* type—flush with the roof covering, vertically oriented, and featuring a single vertical divider.

Doors

The considerations set out above in *Alterations and Extensions* above apply. In traditional farm buildings, doors were typically modest in size and constructed from simple vertical timber boards. They were often hung on plain metal strap hinges with hinge pins and fitted with basic metal ring handles or sturdy thumb latches. Most were set directly into a rebate in the stonework rather than within a separate frame. Where doorframes did exist, they were generally of robust construction.

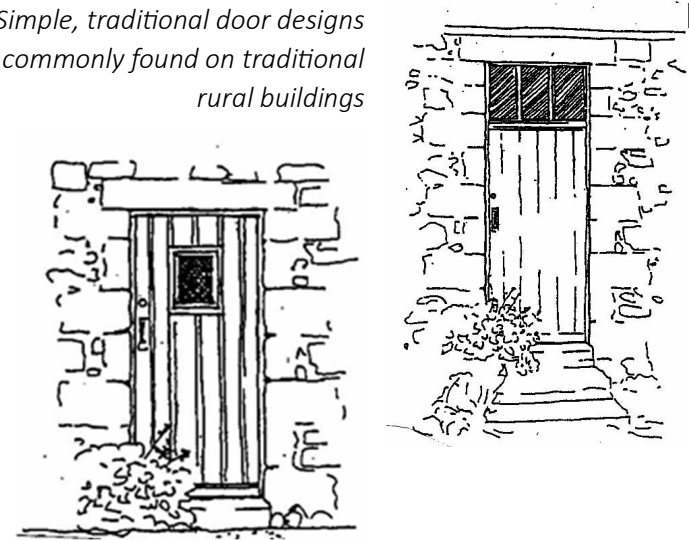


Traditional boarded door with strap hinges and simple iron fittings, illustrating the functional approach to joinery typically found in vernacular farm buildings.



Doors may open inward or outward depending on the use of the internal space and the detailing of the door surround. Many outward-opening doors were designed to fold back against the external wall to avoid obstructing the interior.

Simple, traditional door designs commonly found on traditional rural buildings



Sensitive conversion of a historic barn opening, using recessed glazing and a boarded lower panel to retain the character, scale and simplicity of the original agricultural doorway while allowing natural light into the building.



Good practice

- Cd1 Original doors should be retained and repaired wherever possible.
- Cd2 Where practicable, existing ironmongery detailing such as strap hinges, ring or thumb latches should be retained or replicated.
- Cd3 New doors should ideally be based on surviving originals. For many historic buildings, this will mean boarded plank (ledge and braced) or panelled doors. Door frames should be set well back within the opening.
- Cd4 Although glazing is uncommon in traditional doors, a simple glazed panel occupying around a third of the door leaf, or a glazed over panel, can introduce light while maintaining character
- Cd5 Where a number of doors exist, the glazing of each one should be avoided.
- Cd6 Large openings, such as hemmel arches and barn doors, often present the best opportunity to introduce natural light into a building's interior. Their treatment is a key design consideration in conversion projects and requires careful attention to preserve the character of the original structure
- Cd7 Large door openings should be vertically orientated and simple in detail.

- Cd8 Subdivision of large openings should be minimal. However, dividing into thirds or fifths—rather than halves or quarters—can be more visually balanced, allowing for a central entrance door.
- Cd9 Other treatments, such as part-boarding, can also be effective in maintaining character while introducing glazing.
- Cd10 New glazing or infilling should be set back from the external wall, with the depth of the reveal matching the existing wall where feasible. This helps preserve the building's traditional character, provides weather protection, and creates deep shadow lines.

Roofs

The considerations set out above in *Alterations and Extensions* apply. The roof is often the most prominent feature of a building and plays a key role in defining its character. Traditional farm buildings typically have simple roof forms constructed from stone or slate, though this may have been replaced over time by more modern materials such as corrugated asbestos, fibre cement or metal sheeting.

Occasionally, different materials may be found on opposing roof slopes or in the lower courses of the same roof. Where these variations contribute positively to the building's character, they should be retained rather than replaced with uniform coverings.

Where original roof coverings have been lost, the use of appropriately detailed high quality contemporary sheet materials may be appropriate.

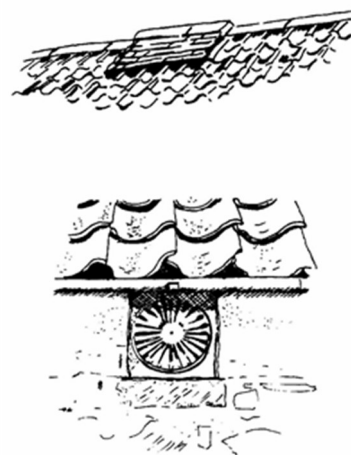


The main barn retains a traditional stone slate roof laid in graduated courses, contrasting with the slate roofs of later additions.

Chimneys

Chimneys are not typical features of traditional non-residential buildings, and their addition can detract from the building's historic character. Where a projecting flue is required it should be carefully designed and discreetly positioned to minimise visual impact.

Modern domestic roof details, such as cupolas and weathervanes, are not generally appropriate. Proposals to add such features must demonstrate a clear historic precedent on the building in question.



Traditional barns and cattle byres were typically designed with effective passive ventilation, often provided at eaves and ridge level. This was frequently achieved through well-crafted features such as cast iron ventilator grilles or decorative ridge tiles. These elements make a positive contribution to the building's character and should be retained wherever possible. As ventilation will remain a functional requirement even following conversion, proposals

should seek to incorporate and utilise these original features rather than replace or obscure them.

The introduction of large or visually intrusive ventilation plant can detract from the building's character. Where craft or light industrial uses necessitate extraction equipment or heat exchange plant, such features must be clearly justified and carefully integrated into the design. Wherever possible, bulky plant should be accommodated within the building envelope or positioned on the least visually prominent elevations.

Eaves and verges

Historic eaves and verge details—such as corbelling or ventilation features—should be retained and repaired. Traditionally, most farm buildings were constructed with closed verges, clipped eaves, and guttering supported by rise-and-fall brackets, without fascia boards. Standard modern box eaves with deep projecting fascia boards, flat soffits, and barge boards are not appropriate for traditional buildings.

Rainwater disposal and waste pipes

Where historic gutters are present, they should be retained and repaired rather than replaced. If replacement is necessary new gutters or downpipes should match the original materials as closely as possible (see sections on repair and maintenance and alterations and extensions above).

Rainwater harvesting systems can contribute to the sustainability of a building. These need to be located with care so that they don't add visual clutter to principal elevations. For larger systems underground



Traditional stone corbelling, coping stones and cast-iron rainwater goods retained, preserving the vernacular character and historic detailing of the building

solutions or locations with outbuildings are likely to be the most appropriate.

Good practice

- Cr1 Retain the existing roof structure and form.
- Cr2 Retain and repair traditional roof coverings.
- Cr3 If replacement is necessary, materials should be appropriate and sympathetic to the building's significance. This will often require a like-for-like approach.
- Cr4 Retain traditional eave, ridge and verge detailing and any ornamental features such as ventilators.
- Cr5 Alternative roof finishes such as appropriately detailed high quality contemporary sheet materials may be appropriate in certain circumstances, particularly where original coverings have been lost.
- Cr6 Avoid introducing masonry chimneys unless there is a clear precedent.
- Cr7 Where flues are needed position them discretely on roof slopes that are not prominent from principal viewpoints and kept below the ridgeline. A painted or powder-coated finish in a dark unobtrusive neutral colour will help reduce their prominence.
- Cr8 Locate bulky extraction or heat exchange plant inside the building or in discrete locations.

Cr9 Retain original rainwater goods or replace with appropriate equivalents.

Cr10 Avoid modern box eave detailing.

Interiors

A key component of the character of many historic agricultural, religious, and industrial buildings is the internal sense of space. Much of the special interest of barns, for example, derives from their long, lofty, and dimly lit interiors. Chapels are often full-height spaces, occasionally featuring an upper mezzanine floor at most. Subdividing these spaces can undermine their character, so it is essential to retain as much openness as possible.

Introducing new walls or floors into open areas—or concealing existing elements such as stone walls, flagged floors, or cobbled surfaces—can significantly diminish a building’s historic character. Where new internal divisions are unavoidable, they should always respect the building’s architectural features and spatial qualities; for example, by aligning with existing bays and roof trusses.

Applying the principle of minimal intervention to interiors can be challenging, as this is typically where the most adaptation is required. However, there is potential to create distinctive and characterful spaces.

Alterations to roof spaces can affect bats and you will need to comply with the relevant legislation.

Good practice

- I1 Retain open floor-to-ceiling spaces, including double-height areas with exposed original roof timbers, to enhance natural light and preserve architectural interest.
- I2 Avoid inserting floors or mezzanine levels that would adversely impact large windows or other significant features.
- I3 Refrain from significantly lowering or raising existing floor levels or internal elements, as this will likely harm the building’s character.
- I4 Preserve historic internal features, such as stone flags or stall divisions, which contribute to the building’s unique identity.
- I5 Ensure new interior interventions are simple, high-quality, and responsive to the existing spatial layout and historic features.

External areas

When converting buildings careful consideration needs to be given to how external areas are treated. The way a building touches the ground, and how spaces are arranged around it are important components of its character.

Many traditional buildings, such as chapels, mills, or farm buildings, lack formal curtilages. Where small yards exist, they are often enclosed by hedges or walls. Isolated field barns stand directly within the meadows and pastures they served without any associated curtilage. Larger buildings or building complexes like farmsteads typically stand in more extensive areas of hard surface – farmyards,

courtyards or service areas – that are commensurate in scale with the building.

The visual clutter and domestic character of private gardens can detract from the historic form and character of non-residential buildings. Private amenity space needs to be provided carefully to avoid this.

The open and undivided nature of farmyards or open curtilages of larger building complexes should be preserved. Where plots are subdivided into multiple ownership, boundary features should be avoided where possible to maintain their scale and character. Consideration should be given to the use of shared spaces.

In the case of isolated buildings like field barns, it can be difficult to accommodate amenity space without detracting from the unique qualities of their setting. Garden and utility areas should be kept to a minimum and located sensitively, avoiding areas prominent from public vantage points.

New outbuildings of a domestic character such as garages, sheds, greenhouses, and garden rooms can detract from the historic character of converted buildings as can other domestic features, such as oil tanks, bin storage, washing lines, lighting pillars and play equipment. This should be considered at an early stage in the design process to ensure that external clutter is minimised, particularly in visually prominent areas, and that storage is incorporated into existing structures where possible. Existing outbuildings should be retained and reused wherever possible. Where new outbuildings are needed, they should be sympathetic to the character of the main building.



Converted field barn retaining its open agricultural setting, with minimal domestic features and no intrusive boundary treatments.

In the case of field barns additional structures and clutter can be particularly harmful. As isolated structures in open landscapes their character relies on their singularity. Any additional structures need to be carefully considered to ensure that they don't erode this quality and the contribution it makes to the character of their wider landscape setting.



Traditional yard surfaces, including cobbles and stone flags, help define the character of the farmstead and should be retained as part of a sensitive conversion.

Historic boundary features, gates and hard surfaces make an important contribution to the setting of traditional buildings, having both historical and aesthetic value. They should be retained and repaired where necessary and integrated into the design. New features should reflect the character of traditional landscape elements of the site or its locality. See *External works and landscape detailing* below.

Good practice

- Ex1 Consider how the spaces around the building contribute to its character and significance and use this to inform design.
- Ex2 Avoid subdivision of historically open spaces around larger buildings and building complexes.

Ex3 Avoid conspicuous curtilages in the setting of isolated buildings such as field barns.

Ex4 Locate amenity spaces carefully to avoid visual clutter in prominent locations.

Ex5 Retain and reuse older outbuildings.

Ex6 Retain and repair traditional boundary features and hard surfaces.

Access and parking

Considerations set out above in *Access Roads and Tracks* apply. Access to traditional farm buildings should be based on existing routes wherever possible. In many cases, access is straightforward—either via an existing farm track or roadside gateway. However, isolated barns often lack suitable access, and creating new tracks can have a substantial impact on the landscape. For most uses, having an existing, appropriate access is key to whether a conversion is acceptable in principle.

Where new tracks can be justified they should follow existing field boundaries and avoid crossing and subdividing agricultural fields. They should use natural materials or surface dressing that blends with local soil or stone; avoiding tarmac, concrete, artificial blocks or kerbing which can give a very urban character. Particular care is needed at the access point at the highway, where excessive bell mouths and urban detailing can be conspicuous.

Original gates, gateposts and railings should be retained in situ and refurbished where necessary. New gates and posts, where required, should be sympathetic to the wider rural environment and rural

character of the site. The addition of large or ornamental metal gates and gate piers is inappropriate in the North Pennines where their suburban appearance detracts from its rural character. The addition of boundary fences and formal tree lines can outline and add unwelcome emphasis to an access track.

Parked cars can introduce a domestic character and visual clutter to the immediate setting of a building. Parking should be discreetly integrated into the design, ideally within existing outbuildings or cart-sheds. If parking is to be accommodated on a hard standing, it is important that the site is well screened, particularly in exposed locations. Stone walls and hedgerows are effective ways of screening parked vehicles. EV charging points should be discreetly located or built into building or boundary walls.

Good practice

- AP1 Ensure access tracks are in scale and character with the surrounding landscape.
- AP2 Follow natural land contours and existing field boundaries: avoid cross-field routes.
- AP3 Avoid removing traditional boundaries or altering roadside walling—reinstate where possible.
- AP4 Use natural materials or surface dressing that blends with local soil or stone; avoid tarmac, concrete, artificial blocks or kerbing.
- AP5 Consider wheel tracks with grass between, rather than full-width hard surfacing.

- AP6 If direct access would harm the area's character, look at alternatives like detached parking areas closer to the road.
- AP7 Avoid outlining with additional fencing of formal planting.
- AP8 Avoid large or ornamental gates and gate piers.
- AP9 Integrate parking areas carefully and screen where necessary from public views

Services

Most conversions will require connections to off-site services like electricity, water, drainage, and telecoms, along with on-site features such as fuel tanks, bin storage, external lighting, and septic systems. These additions—especially overhead cables, meter boxes, aerials, and exposed pipework—can be visually intrusive and detract from the building's character and setting. It's best to plan for these elements early, as some may require separate planning permission.

Solar panels may be harmful to with the character of a converted building or its surroundings (see also Renewable Energy above). In some cases they can be located on hidden elevations or roof valleys. It may be preferable to locate them on the ground, or on a more modern extension or ancillary structure, rather than on the principal building. Air source or ground source heat pump equipment should also be sited discreetly, away from principal elevations and public views.

Good practice.

- Se1 Underground service connections (e.g. electricity and telecoms) should be used where possible, with consideration for archaeological and ecological sensitivity.
- Se2 New pipework required for services, soil vent pipes and all waste connections should be located internally wherever possible and planned for at the design stage. If external location of pipework is unavoidable this should be positioned on hidden elevations.
- Se3 Fuel tanks and bins should be discreetly located and screened, ideally within walled enclosures.
- Se4 Meter boxes, satellite dishes, and aerials should be discreetly located.
- Se5 Locate air source or ground source heat pump equipment discreetly.

Large areas of glazing can also cause significant light spill, especially in remote or dark landscapes, and should be carefully designed to minimise internal light escaping at night—through measures such as low-transmittance glass, internal blinds, and thoughtful lighting. Further detail on lighting can be found in the National Landscape Management Plan under the Dark Skies section

Good practice

- L1 Avoid decorative illumination of façades
- L2 Avoid ‘heritage’ style light fittings unless there is historical evidence for them: use authentic replacements when needed.
- L3 Use plain and contemporary light fittings.
- L4 Design any large areas of glazing to minimise light spill at night.

Lighting

Considerations set out above in *Lighting and Dark Night Skies* apply.

Architectural floodlighting for decorative façade illumination is generally inappropriate and should be avoided. As a general rule, ‘heritage’ style light fittings or column-mounted lights should only be used where there is historical evidence for them—such as over chapel doorways or churchyard entrances—where they were sometimes part of the original design. In such cases, authentic replacements are encouraged. In all other situations, plain and contemporary light fittings are preferred, as they are simple, discreet, practical, and do not detract from the building’s appearance.

New Building

New building in the National Landscape needs to respond to the established character of the area and reinforce its distinctiveness. While this requires engagement with the architectural language of traditional buildings it doesn't imply replication or pastiche.

High-quality, contemporary design can offer creative and innovative responses that are both functional and visually appropriate provided it is rooted in a clear understanding of the local context and landscape character.



Sedum roof on a farm shop near Alston, helping to integrate the development into the landscape while delivering biodiversity and sustainable drainage benefits.

Innovation may be expressed through exceptional architectural quality, the use of sustainable or locally sourced materials, modern construction techniques, or design approaches that enhance the surrounding environment. Innovation often emerges from addressing specific site challenges—such as minimising visual impact, responding to topography, or improving energy performance. It should be contextually sensitive rather than imposed.

Regardless of building type or design approach, proposals must demonstrate a strong relationship with their setting. Key considerations for designers include:

- Context: proposals should respond positively to the character, of the surrounding landscape and built environment.
- Local distinctiveness: designs should draw inspiration from the area's vernacular architecture and building traditions, reflecting local materials, detailing, and construction techniques to reinforce a sense of place.
- Protecting dark skies: developments should be carefully designed to prevent unnecessary light spill to protect the dark skies, rural character and tranquillity of the National Landscape.
- Sustainability: designs should make full use of site-specific opportunities, including orientation, topography, and existing features, to optimise energy efficiency and incorporate low carbon technologies, sustainable drainage systems, and appropriate planting.
- Green infrastructure: proposals should take opportunities enhance the character and biodiversity of the landscape.

- Inclusive and connected communities: new development should be inclusive, safe, and accessible, and designed to integrate well with the existing community, supporting social cohesion and a high quality of life.

New Housing

Opportunities for new residential development within the National Landscape are limited. Most proposals typically involve conversions (see above) or development on infill plots within villages. To integrate successfully with its surroundings, new development must respond to the character of the settlement in which it is located which includes the established scale, pattern and arrangement of buildings and their curtilages together with local building forms, materials and detailing. It also needs to have regard to the character of open spaces within the settlement, and key views of and from the wider landscape setting.

New development should draw inspiration from the best features of locally distinctive properties and aim to reinforce and enhance the overall character of the settlement. Types of development that should be avoided include:

- Generic suburban-style housing lacking in local distinctiveness.
- Poorly executed pastiche designs that mimic historic styles without understanding.
- Standard or poorly designed kit houses and bungalows.
- Designs driven by architectural or sustainability aspirations or that fail to respond to the local context.

The need for development to be sympathetic should not discourage innovative design approaches, provided that they are sensitive to their context.



A contemporary infill dwelling that respects the established building line, scale and materials of the village, demonstrating how new development can be successfully integrated within an existing streetscape.

Plan form and orientation

While there are exceptions, the most consistent characteristic of housing design within the National Landscape is its simple external form—typically robust, solid, and functional, with minimal architectural ornamentation. The plan form reflects reflecting the practical needs of rural life and the constraints of the local climate and topography.

Most traditional houses adopt a narrow, rectangular footprint, often with a single-cell width and minimal projections. This straightforward form is not only characteristic of the area but also highly practical,

allowing for effective daylight penetration- particularly when south-facing- and contributing to the low, shallow-pitched roof profiles typical of the region.

In contrast, deep or square plan forms tend to result in squat, bulky buildings with higher, more dominant roofs that appear out of proportion when compared to the traditional narrow-fronted houses. These deeper layouts also limit the ability of natural light to reach the interior, reducing energy efficiency and visual comfort.



New housing at Melmerby. Simple building forms, locally distinctive red sandstone, slate roofs and traditional boundary walls respond positively to local character.

To achieve equivalent internal floorspace, narrow plan houses may need to be extended in length. This can be managed sensitively by incorporating stepped elements or subservient additions—such as single-storey offshoots—that help to break up the massing and maintain a harmonious relationship with traditional built forms.



Simple massing, natural stone construction and traditional boundary walls allow these dwellings in Edbundbyers to integrate successfully within the established character of the village.

Orientation should follow the established pattern of surrounding development where appropriate, provided this does not result in dwellings turning their backs on the public realm. Active frontages are important in creating welcoming, well-integrated places to live and contribute positively to the character and social fabric of rural settlements.

Roof form

The height and shape of roofs in traditional housing in the North Pennines are largely determined by the span of the building, its construction method, and the limitations of the roofing materials. Most traditional dwellings feature symmetrical double-pitched roofs,

which are a defining characteristic of the local vernacular. Cat-slide roofs are also common and offer a practical way to increase internal space without introducing a larger or more dominant roof form. Roof pitch is influenced by the size and type of roofing material, particularly stone slates. Longer slates require greater overlap, which allows for shallower roof pitches.

- Hipped roofs are uncommon in the North Pennines and generally not characteristic of the area.
- Flat roofs should be avoided, as they are not in keeping with the traditional architectural language.
- Mono-pitched roofs may be appropriate for small, single-storey ancillary buildings, where they reflect historic precedent.
- Curved roofs are rare and limited to occasional prefabricated Dutch barns. New examples tend to look incongruous in a landscape dominated by apex and mono-pitched roof forms.
- Dormer windows are not a typical feature of traditional housing in the North Pennines and should be used with caution, if at all, to avoid disrupting the simplicity and integrity of the roofscape.

Scale, proportion and massing

New housing must be designed with careful consideration of scale, proportion, and massing. The majority of traditional dwellings are of two-storey height with shallow-pitched roofs. While there are exceptions—such as taller buildings in historic town centres—the prevailing character is one of modest, human-scale development.

The scale of new housing must also relate appropriately to the size of the plot and the surrounding landscape. Overly large or bulky

buildings that dominate key views or settlement edges should be avoided. Bungalows with deep and square plan forms can appear incongruous due to their disproportionate roof mass but dwellings with narrow plan forms and shallow double-pitched or mono-pitched roofs can be successful, particularly where arranged in informal courtyard or farmstead-style layouts.



A single-storey dwelling using simple gabled forms, natural stone and slate roofs to create a low-profile development that sits comfortably within its rural setting.

Traditional dwellings typically exhibit balanced proportions, avoiding strong horizontal or vertical emphasis. This balance is achieved through a combination of building height, roof pitch, and eaves, complemented by vertical elements such as gables, chimneys, and vertically proportioned windows. New housing should reflect this balance to ensure visual harmony with existing built form.

Openings on traditional houses are generally arranged symmetrically on principal elevations, contributing to their orderly and robust appearance. Converted barns and other agricultural buildings may have openings positioned for functional reasons, and these patterns should be respected in any adaptation or extension.

A key characteristic of traditional housing in the North Pennines is its high solid-to-void ratio where solid masonry dominates over window and door openings. Designers should aim to replicate this ratio to maintain the simple, robust character of the area. On gable elevations, particularly those facing prevailing weather, openings are less common and a much higher solid-to-void ratio is expected.

Doors and windows are key architectural elements that contribute significantly to the character, functionality, and environmental performance. Common traditional window types include vertically sliding sash windows and side-opening casements, which reflect the simple, robust nature of the North Pennines architecture. Designers should select styles that complement the proportions of the building and reinforce its overall character.

A defining feature of traditional windows is the deep reveal, which protects the frame from prevailing weather and adds depth and interest to the façade. New housing should incorporate a minimum reveal of at least 100mm for both windows and doors to reflect this traditional detailing.

Window placement and orientation should also respond to environmental conditions and the building's relationship with the landscape. In many traditional houses, the main windows are oriented

to the south to take advantage of low winter sun, improving natural light and passive solar gain. West-facing windows benefit from long evening light in summer, enhancing comfort and usability. In contrast, north-facing elevations often feature fewer or smaller openings, reflecting a traditional approach to sheltering from prevailing wind, rain, and cold.

Doors should be simple in design, taking inspiration from traditional forms such as vertically boarded or timber panelled doors, with or without partial glazing. These styles reflect the understated, functional character of Dales buildings and contribute to a coherent architectural approach.

Materials

Natural stone is the dominant construction material for houses in the North Pennines and remains the best choice for many new buildings. See the advice on stonework in *Alterations and Extensions* above. The use of alternative high-quality materials can be an option for new construction particularly in buildings of a contemporary design provided they respond to their context.

Timber

Timber cladding can be a sustainable external walling material for lightweight structures and extensions and particularly where durable local timber such as oak, larch or Douglas fir is used.

As a cladding material, timber can blend well with both traditional and contemporary design depending on how it is incorporated and finished. Treatments that allow for natural weathering are particularly

successful: the tone and patina of weathered wood is visually recessive and complements other natural materials. Highly pigmented stains in brighter or 'hotter' colours (red/orange browns) should be avoided.

Glass

Structural glass can be incorporated into new structures and extensions to give light and airy interiors. Large areas of glazing can create problems with light pollution and particularly from domestic buildings occupied at night. Reflection can also be an issue. This can be reduced in some cases by deeply recessing the glazing and using non-reflective or opaque glass.

Metal

There is a range of metal cladding products available for construction in a variety of materials, profiles and finishes. These including alloys of zinc or copper which weather to an attractive natural patina (blue and light green respectively). These are durable, corrosion-resistant and have the ability to form complex shapes. Weathering steel, such as CORE-TEN, takes on a rust-like appearance that can blend well with the muted tones of natural building materials and the wider landscape.

Other cladding systems may be surfaced with 'weathering' metals or have powder coated finishes in a range of colours. Profiles based on traditional corrugated iron in dark tones can successfully echo its use in older agricultural and industrial buildings in the area and is often preferred to box (trapezoidal) profiles which are more recent.

Roofing materials

Natural slates and flags

The considerations set out above in *Alterations and Extensions* apply. Natural stone flags and slate are the dominant roofing materials in the North Pennines and remain an appropriate choice for new builds.

The supply of local stone flags is limited, with few working quarries remaining. The availability of reclaimed stone slates is also limited and an expensive option for larger developments. Sourcing reclaimed slates in large quantities can be difficult and there is evidence of poaching from disused buildings.

The majority of slate used in the past was imported from Wales and Cumbria and working quarries in those areas still produce roofing slate – although typically at a higher cost than imported slate.

Artificial stone flags

In recent years, concrete and reconstituted stone tiles have been used with varying degrees of success. Pressure for alternatives to the traditional stone flag has improved the range, quality and appearance of the artificial stone flag considerably and several manufacturers have designed products specifically tailored to mimic the typical Pennine upland sandstone flag. These include colouration to give an aged appearance, On larger developments, where sourcing a natural stone flag would be unviable, or in situations where other materials would be inappropriate, these modern imitations may be a practical solution

Sheet materials

The use of corrugated iron or asbestos cement sheets to roof larger agricultural and industrial buildings in the North Pennines was common throughout the late C19th and C20th century and therefore has a relatively long precedent in the landscapes. Sheet materials including fibre cement and powder coated aluminium are also commonly used on agricultural buildings which are widespread in this rural area.

Sheet materials offer a potential alternative to stone and slate for the roofs of new buildings in some situations. They are particularly appropriate for the larger spans of commercial buildings and community facilities, for housing of 'contemporary vernacular' design, or conversions of non-residential buildings. They are most successful when used on roofs that have traditional apex and mono-pitch forms. Eaves and verge detailing needs to be handled with care to avoid clumsy interfaces and particularly at gables.

Pale and mid-tone colours can reflect sunlight and be conspicuous in the landscape. Darker tones – such as anthracite grey – are more visually recessive and help anchor the building in the landscape.

Timber shingles

Timber shingles are available in larch, cedar, Douglas fir, oak and chestnut. There is no historic precedent in the North Pennines for the use of timber shingles but they are a potentially sustainable natural material that weathers to a dull grey which is visually recessive and complements other natural materials and the wider landscape

setting. They are particularly suited to smaller ornamental structures and to high quality contemporary buildings.

Green roofs

Green roofs have become more common in recent years and are a good option where conventional roofs may be problematic, such as sites in open, undeveloped landscapes; where rainwater run-off needs to be attenuated, or as an alternative to large roof expanses on commercial buildings.

Green roofs are generally built from metal sheeting or concrete, which is then covered with soil, and low growing, self-regenerating plants which will produce a organic finish that blends well with natural materials. This finish is only suitable on flat or very low-pitched roofs and can significantly reduce rainwater run-off. Supporting structures need to be strong enough to cope with the increased weight from water and snow in and on the soil covering.

Good practice

- NB1 Seek formal pre-application advice from your LPA
- NB2 Reflect the grain and pattern of existing buildings in plot layout, plan form and orientation.
- NB3 Consider and respect key views of and from the wider landscape.
- NB4 Have regard to the existing pattern of public and private open spaces. Avoid inward looking development. Engage actively with the public realm.

NB5	Give careful consideration to scale, proportion, and massing to ensure new buildings fit sensitively within their context.
NB6	Choose building materials and construction details that reflect or complement those of buildings nearby.

New community facilities and commercial or industrial buildings

The need for larger scale new buildings such as those of community, commercial or industrial facilities is limited within the National Landscape. Where new buildings are proposed their design needs to respond to both their function and context.

Commercial or industrial users often require utilitarian buildings such as single span portal framed structures similar to those required for modern farm buildings and the good practice given below for New Agricultural Buildings generally applies. The more such buildings echo the character and appearance of modern farm buildings the less incongruous they are likely to appear in this rural landscape. Conspicuous brand colours, logos and signage should be avoided. Operational and security lighting needs to be carefully designed (See *Dark Night Skies* above).

The development of some new community and commercial facilities will provide opportunities for high quality, contemporary design of that has the potential to reinforce the character and quality of the National Landscape provided that it responds strongly to the local context (see above).

Good practice	
NB7	Seek formal pre-application advice from your L
NB8	For larger utilitarian buildings follow the good practice given below for <i>New Agricultural Buildings</i> .
NB9	Avoid Conspicuous brand colours, logos and signage.
NB10	Design operational and security lighting carefully to avoid impacts on dark skies.
NB11	Locate external operational areas carefully to avoid visual clutter of materials and product storage, fuel tanks, external plant and vehicles in prominent locations.
NB12	Use structural landscaping to help screen and assimilate buildings in key views.

New agricultural buildings

Over recent decades, changes in farming practices have led to new requirements for agricultural buildings. There is now a greater need for large, single-span structures to accommodate in-wintering livestock, machinery access, and bulk storage of feed, silage, and waste. These modern buildings offer increased flexibility, which many traditional structures can no longer provide. As a result, farmers often need to construct new buildings or storage facilities.

The siting and layout of new agricultural buildings are critical. Even well-designed buildings can have a negative impact if poorly located. While functional requirements are important, they must be balanced with visual and contextual considerations.

In the North Pennines, most farms are typically arranged around a main farmhouse, and new buildings should respect this pattern to maintain the farm's overall appearance within the landscape.

New development may present opportunities to enhance the visual character of the farmstead. This can be achieved through screening unsightly areas, soft landscaping, and careful design that



with

A large shed in open country can have a significant impact

complements the setting. In sensitive locations—such as historic villages, open countryside, conservation areas, or near Listed Buildings—higher design standards are essential to ensure proposals are sympathetic to their surroundings.

Siting and layout



The clustered arrangement of traditional and modern agricultural buildings helps maintain a cohesive farmstead form, while mature trees help anchor the development within the landscape and reduce its visual impact.

Good practice

AB1 Group new buildings within or adjacent to existing farmsteads to reduce visual impact—isolated buildings are rarely appropriate

- AB2 New structures should not dominate or detract from the farmstead's character. Stay within existing boundaries, such as stone-walled enclosures. Locate buildings behind the farmhouse from principle viewpoints.
- AB3 To aid integration, orientate the new building in line with the main alignment of existing buildings. This often reflects the topography and landscape setting and helps reduce visual impact, especially in relation to rooflines
- AB4 Avoid exposed platforms, skylines, ridges or open landscapes: fit buildings into dips or valley bottoms.
- AB5 Use natural slopes to reduce visual impact. Align buildings parallel to contours and use cut-and-fill techniques to minimise the impact of the topography. Where feasible, step buildings down slopes to minimise disturbance to the landform and reduce visual impact.
- AB6 Avoid sites of archaeological, ecological, or geological significance.
- AB7 Use soft landscaping—such as tree and shrub planting—to break up building outlines. However, vegetation should not be relied upon to mask poor design.

Scale, Form and Design

The scale and form of traditional agricultural buildings in the North Pennines were shaped by practical needs, local climate, and available

materials, resulting in distinctive structures that contribute to the area's character. In contrast, modern farm buildings often feature large, single-span forms with shallow-pitched roofs, typically constructed using portal frames. While cost-effective and versatile these buildings can appear out of scale when placed near smaller, traditional structures.



Interior of a typical modern farm building showing shallow roof pitch and portal frame construction



A group of buildings, all of which have parallel roof lines which helps to reduce the



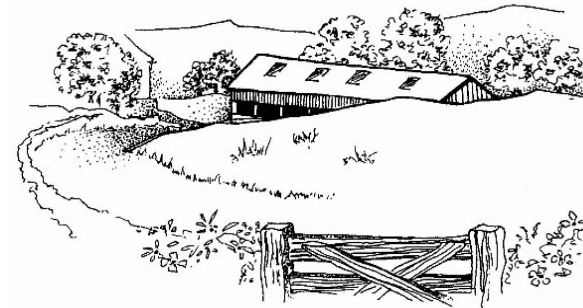
A stepped construction on a sloping site helps break up an otherwise unbroken roof line



Overhanging eaves and recessed elevations create shadow lines that help break up the building's mass and reduce its apparent scale within the landscape.



Modern agricultural buildings are grouped within the existing farmstead, using dark roof and wall colours to reduce their prominence and maintain a compact, cohesive built form.



A new agricultural building well bedded down in the landscape

Good practice

- AB8 New buildings should be sympathetic to the existing pattern and form, considering the cumulative impact of extensions on overall scale and massing.
- AB9 Reduce apparent bulk by dividing large buildings into smaller units—break rooflines, introducing different ridge heights, or separate building elements.
- AB10 Avoid large, rectangular buildings with uninterrupted roof spans; narrower buildings with lower roof heights or double-pitched roofs are preferable.
- AB11 Avoid using a single colour across the entire building, as it can exaggerate its scale. Instead, use a combination of colours and textures to break up massing and support visual integration.
- AB12 Keep the roof pitch similar to existing buildings and ensure ridge and eaves heights are in scale.
- AB13 Flat roofs are not traditional in the North Pennines and should be avoided. Dual-pitched or apex roofs are preferred; mono-pitch roofs may be appropriate for small or lean-to structures.
- AB14 Include overhanging eaves where appropriate to create shadow lines and visual separation.
- AB15 Use roof-lights sparingly and position them carefully to avoid visual clutter; fewer, larger units on less prominent slopes are preferable.

- AB16 Vertical roller-shutter doors have a very industrial appearance. Use suspended sliding sheet doors, swing doors, or timber-boarded doors in a vernacular style where possible.

Materials and Colour

The type, colour, and texture of external materials significantly influence how a new building integrates with the landscape—especially in sensitive areas like the North Pennines National Landscape, where traditional farm buildings are common.

Historically, limited material availability in rural areas led to buildings that harmonised with their surroundings. Modern construction methods offer more options, but careful selection is essential to avoid visual intrusion.



The use of weathered timber boarding, stone-faced plinth walls and dark-coloured roofing materials helps reduce visual impact and enables modern agricultural buildings to integrate more successfully with their rural



Combining vertically boarded timber cladding with a natural stone plinth helps break up the building's scale, adds visual interest, and reflects the materials commonly found in traditional rural buildings.

Good practice

- MC1 Vertically fixed locally sourced timber (Yorkshire boarding) is preferred over metal profile sheet cladding. It provides natural ventilation and light, weathers attractively, and can be stained to suit the specific site context.
- MC2 Fibre cement sheets in dark through-colours are generally preferred for roofing due to its low reflectivity.
- MC3 If metal cladding is necessary, use dark, matt finishes in recessive colours to reduce visual impact.
- MC4 Concrete block or panel plinth walls should be painted, rendered, or clad in natural stone, depending on context. Natural stone cladding is preferred, particularly in publicly

visible or sensitive locations, or where it helps integrate new development with existing buildings.

- MC5 Choose colours that blend with the surrounding landscape and appropriate to the context. Generally dark grey, dark green, dark brown, slate blues and black are the most appropriate. Avoid very light colours and strong, intense hues.
- MC6 Roofs should be darker than walls to reduce visual impact and reflect traditional styles. This helps define the building's form and makes it appear smaller. Dark through-colours (e.g. anthracite grey) are generally the most appropriate for fibre cement roof cladding. Avoid natural grey fibre cement unless specifically required by context, as it often appears too light and does not weather well.
- MC7 Where painting plinths is appropriate, use dark earth tones like brown or grey (except on Raby Estate farmsteads in Teesdale, where white is traditional).
- MC8 Avoid highly pigmented timber stains in 'hotter' tones which are generally inappropriate in traditional rural settings.
- MC9 Use consistent or complementary materials and colours across new and existing structures to unify the appearance of the farmstead.

Ancillary Development

In the North Pennines, the siting and design of ancillary farm structures such as silos, slurry stores, and muck middens must be

carefully considered to minimise their impact on the landscape. These structures can be visually prominent and should be integrated sensitively into their surroundings. They can also affect important habitats or species, landscape or archaeological features. Care should be taken to avoid sensitive sites.

Silos and hoppers

Tall structures that significantly exceed the height of existing buildings within a farm group can be conspicuous features.

Where the need for a silo or hopper is unavoidable, the following principles should be applied:



The visual impact of silos and hoppers can be reduced by locating them within the farmstead and using dark, non-reflective finishes that blend with surrounding buildings and vegetation.

Good practice

SH1 Integrate the structure within an existing group of buildings to reduce its visual prominence.

- SH2 Use existing landscape features—such as trees, slopes, or hills—to help screen and soften the impact.
- SH3 Avoid siting in locations visible from public vantage points, including roads and Public Rights of Way.
- SH4 Use dark, non-reflective finishes. Shiny galvanised steel can be highly conspicuous; painting the structure in a dark colour helps it blend into the landscape.

Silage Clamps, Slurry Stores and Muck Middens

Above-ground muck middens are commonly used on hill farms for manure storage and are typically constructed with reinforced concrete block walls, often incorporating a sloping floor or ramp for access. Designed for functionality, their appearance is difficult to improve. Silage clamps must be designed so that the base and walls are suitable for the conditions of the site and to ensure effluent cannot escape. While material choices are limited by these requirements, design and careful siting can help reduce visual impact.

Good Practice

- SC1 Integrate with existing buildings where possible, especially in prominent locations. Roofing over can also help reduce visibility.
- SC2 Site below or partially below ground or set into rising land to minimise prominence.
- SC3 Use existing features—trees, slopes, buildings, drystone walls, or hedgerows—to screen views.

SC4	Paint above-ground steel slurry stores in dark, recessive colours.
SC5	Clad, paint, or render concrete block walls in prominent locations to soften their appearance.
SC6	Use earth banks or tree planting where appropriate to provide screening.
SC7	Shape earthworks with gentle grading to create unobtrusive slopes that blend with the landscape.

Other structures

Polytunnels are increasingly used as low-cost, temporary lambing shelters. While they may be considered temporary, this depends on factors such as size, permanence, and mobility. In the North Pennines they are visually intrusive and out of character with the landscape. More appropriate alternatives, such as timber-clad pole barns should be considered. If used on a temporary basis, colour choice is important.

Access Tracks

Considerations set out above in *Access Roads and Tracks* apply.

Good practice

FT1	Design new access tracks to follow natural land contours and existing field boundaries, avoiding routes that cut across open fields or disrupt the wider landscape.
-----	---

FT2	Retain traditional boundaries and avoid altering the height or alignment of roadside walls.
FT3	Avoid using light-coloured materials such as limestone or pale hardcore, as these can make tracks more visually prominent.
FT4	Use natural materials or surface dressings that match the colour and texture of local soils or stone. These are generally less intrusive and more in keeping with the surrounding landscape. Non-permeable surfaces like tarmac, concrete, or artificial block paving should be avoided.
FT5	Where possible, use surfaced twin wheel tracks with a central grass strip instead of fully surfacing the entire width of the track.



Access tracks should follow the existing landscape features and use simple, low-key surfacing. Twin-wheel tracks are often less visually intrusive than fully surfaced routes.

Renewable Energy

Considerations set out above in *Renewable Energy* apply.

The expansive roof surfaces of modern farm buildings often offer greater potential for integrating solar panels than traditional structures. Thoughtful siting and design are essential to ensure these technologies complement the surrounding landscape.

Lighting on farms

Considerations set out above in *Lighting and Dark Night Skies* apply.

Good practice.

- FL1 Keep lighting to the minimum required.
- FL2 Rooflights and open-sided cattle buildings are notable sources of night-time light pollution. The number of rooflights on new buildings should be limited, and open sides should be screened where possible using buildings, vegetation, or natural landforms.
- FL3 Light fittings should be downward-facing and fitted with shields to prevent light spill into the surrounding countryside. Floodlighting should be avoided.
- FL5 Avoid using sodium lights for external lighting, as their yellow/orange glow can appear intrusive in rural settings.
- FL6 Lighting should be installed below eaves height to reduce light spill and ideally restricted to doorways and access points.
- FL7 Internally, lights can be suspended to reduce the number needed and to limit light escaping through rooflights.
- FL8 Use motion sensors or timers to limit the duration that lights are on.

Landscaping

See also guidance given below in *Landscape works and external detail*.

Careful consideration should be given to how best to integrate a new building with its immediate surroundings, particularly in the case of large buildings. Elements such as hardstanding, fences, boundary

walls, and planting should be treated as integral parts of the overall design. These features can help link buildings to the landscape, connect structures, reduce their perceived scale, and create enclosures that offer shelter and privacy.



Utilise existing walls wherever possible

The impact of new buildings can be softened through careful landscaping that reflects local landscape character. The aim should not be to hide a building, but rather to soften a hard outline, break up a prominent silhouette, and help 'anchor' a new building to the surrounding landscape. Tree planting and new hedges can help to break up the hard outline of a building and help to blend it into the landscape. However, new planting should not be used to hide a badly sited or designed building and can even draw attention to it.

Good practice

LS1 Retain existing landscape features such as walls and hedges hedgerows wherever possible, and position new buildings to

connect with these features or introduce new features where appropriate to aid integration.

LS2 Avoid non-native species such as Leyland Cypress, which are inappropriate in rural landscapes.

LS3 Avoid perimeter planting that is disconnected from the surrounding landscape character. Often a small pocket of planting can help soften a building and integrate it into the surroundings

LS4 Assess the existing vegetation patterns before designing a planting scheme to ensure it complements the local context.

LS5 Consider offset planting, such as reinforcing nearby hedgerows or planting individual trees at a distance, to reduce landscape impact.

Sustainable construction

Maintaining, altering, extending and converting existing buildings is an essentially sustainable process in which the land, building structure and existing materials are likely to be reused, reducing the volume of new resources to be consumed and the volume of waste material for disposal.

Minimising waste

The design stages of a project are key to reducing the amount of embodied energy within a building. Consideration should be given to using reclaimed or recycled materials in construction projects, and a clear waste disposal plan should be produced for all projects, identifying where waste can be reclaimed, reused or minimised.

Waste can be generated in the arisings from demolitions and refurbishment and new build proposals may generate excavated material. Taking waste off site and sending to landfill sites is undesirable for a number of environmental and economic reasons. A more sustainable response is to design for the use of recycled materials, and to put in place provisions for construction waste to be incorporated in the new development.

Arrangements with suppliers can result in a reduced environmental impact through improved efficiency and a reduction in waste to landfill. The use of reclaimed materials will result in a significant reduction in the embodied energy of the project. This involves minimal processing between demolition of the original building and construction of the new building, as opposed to recycling.

If a building has been detailed in such a way that it can be dismantled and the materials and components reclaimed and recycled or re-used at the end of its lifespan, then this will have a positive effect on the embodied energy of both the original and future buildings. This will also reduce the volume of construction and demolition waste sent to landfill.

A Site Waste Management Plans (SWMP) can be a useful tool for managing waste on construction projects.

Good practice

- | | |
|-----|--|
| SC1 | Minimise volume of excavation through consideration of building footprint and appropriate foundations, and balancing cut and fill. |
| SC2 | Consider use of crushed demolition material in the hardcore for the building. |
| SC3 | Consider separation, storage and re-use of topsoil, turf, seed collected from existing plants, woodchip or compost from existing plant matter. |
| SC4 | Separation of waste streams that could be sold or used again elsewhere. |
| SC5 | Delivering programmes to reduce length of storage time on site with risk of damage and subsequent disposal as waste. |
| SC6 | The delivery of building materials should be planned to allow for inspection of material and return of defective materials and packaging. |

SC7	Consider agreements with plasterboard manufacturer that waste will be collected and re-used.
SC8	Consider timing of delivery to avoid storing materials on site and reducing the risk of damage and waste.
SC9	Use of multi-use pallets, preferably in recycled plastic, for protection and storage of materials, to reduce damage and waste.
SC10	Use of existing markets for refurbishment waste to reuse unwanted materials, including windows, timber, bathroom suites and kitchens.
SC11	Where new materials are being specified, consider the possibility for inclusion of recycled elements, for example, recycled cellulose insulation
SC12	Sustainably managed sources should also be used wherever possible. In terms of timber, for example, the FSC or PEFC logo will ensure that the forests are managed responsibly
SC13	Systems which have been developed to use a reduced volume of materials, such as timber I-beams rather than solid beams, should be considered.
SC14	Design for durability, to reduce the amount of maintenance required and minimise future consumption of resources.

Handling waste responsibly

The Duty of Care regulations for dealing with waste materials are applicable for any offsite movement of wastes. The developer as

producer therefore has a duty of care to ensure all materials removed go to an appropriate licensed disposal site and all relevant documentation is completed and kept in line with regulations.

If any controlled waste is to be removed off site, then the site operator must ensure a registered waste carrier is used to convey the waste material off site to a suitably authorised facility. If any controlled waste is to be used on site, the applicant will be required to obtain the appropriate exemption or authorisation from the Environment Agency.

More advice on waste movement can be found on the Environment Agency's website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Minimise energy consumption in construction and use

For new structures, design is key to a sustainable building. For example, reducing exposed walls, increasing solar gain and relying on natural ventilation all contribute to lowering a building's energy consumption. Environmental sustainability can be achieved through the incorporation of passive energy features in the form of the building. The use of day lighting, natural ventilation and passive heating and cooling will produce a low energy building with reduced environmental impacts, whilst still achieving comfortable internal conditions for occupants.

A standard called Passivhaus has been produced, which designs new buildings to be "net zero ready", and have minimal energy in use. A similar standard, called EnerPhit has been produced for retrofit of buildings. Although full Passivhaus / EnerPhit measures might not be

achievable in all builds, they should be integrated where possible. The microclimate surrounding the building can influence the operational energy consumption, and there are design considerations in orientation and siting of new buildings which can help reduce energy demands in use.

More information can be found on the Energy Savings Trust website.

[Who we are- Energy Saving Trust](#)

Information on adapting historic buildings for energy and carbon efficiency is available from Historic England.

[Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency- Historic England Advice Note 18 | Historic England](#)

Good practice

- EC1 Seek shelter from the natural topography of the site to reduce heat loss from the building.
- EC2 Consider the influence of the building on localised wind patterns.
- EC3 Take advantage of managed solar gain in the arrangement of sheltered south and west facing surfaces and windows.
- EC4 Aim to achieve a balance between the benefit of natural lighting and potential heat loss in the design of windows.
- EC5 The selection of materials will influence the embodied energy of the project, which consists of the energy used for the extraction of raw materials, manufacture of building materials,

transport between stages of manufacture, and to construction site: and- construction/demolition/ destruction.

Embodied energy can contribute up to 50% of the energy use of a building throughout its lifetime. It is important to take a whole life approach when designing new buildings, and to reduce both embodied energy and operational energy wherever possible.

Responsible sourcing of building components, specification of natural materials and limitation of transport distances are key considerations in the reduction of embodied energy.

Traditional building materials used in historic buildings tend to have lower levels of embodied energy, and this highlights the importance of using reclaimed / recycled materials within the build.

Good practice

- EC6 Reduce volume of goods ordered by, for example, organisation of site procedures, re-use or repair of existing materials wherever possible.
- EC7 Specify products from sustainably managed sources, which use minimal volumes of raw materials, and promote fair trade.
- EC8 Consider the whole life cost of products, for example a higher initial capital outlay on a high specification building fabric may save money in the long term through reduced heating bills.
- EC9 Source materials locally where possible to invest in the local economy and reduce transport energy.

EC10	Select products free from ozone depleting substances, solvents, volatile organic compounds, etc, to reduce pollution and provide a healthy indoor environment.
E11	Consider products with the potential for re-use or recycling to avoid landfill.
EC12	Consider use of reclaimed or recycled materials.

Pollution

The widespread availability and use of electricity is a relatively recent phenomenon and would not have influenced the design of older buildings in the area. The modernisation of these buildings is likely to introduce a new rate of energy consumption, and with it an increase in atmospheric pollution. The degree to which the building will cause increased emissions will depend on a number of factors, including the chosen fuel source, the efficiency of the building fabric and systems, the use of passive energy and the activities and behaviour of occupants. The most effective way in which to eliminate pollution is to reduce the energy demand from the building. This can be achieved in a number of ways:

- increasing the insulation levels in the building fabric
- upgrading the specification of the glazing
- maintaining and enhancing the traditional natural light and ventilation strategies
- efficient energy systems, for example heat recovery, use of condensing boilers, etc; and

- siting development near public transport routes to reduce dependency on car travel.

Renewable energy

The focus of public policy on reducing carbon emissions from fossil fuels and encouraging the development of alternative sources of renewable energy has a major impact on the way we think about incorporating this technology in building. New building forms which maximise the efficiency of renewable energy plant can be explored in which the designed impact of these components can be thoroughly integrated with the structure. Suitability of a particular technology would have to be assessed for each individual installation. There is a range of issues to consider, including the available natural resources on site, landscape and visual impacts and impacts on the character and setting of heritage assets, and on biodiversity.

Further guidance on small scale solar PV, wind energy and biomass can be found in *Development Guidelines: renewable energy*. Guidance on the location and design of technologies such as solar PV and heat pumps can be found in *Alterations and Extensions, Conversions and New Building*.

Water and drainage

In order to economise on the use of water and the cost of water bills, new and upgraded bathroom and/or kitchen fixtures and appliances should be selected for low consumption. Rainwater harvesting for applications such as flushing of WCs and irrigation can reduce both consumption and run-off.

The proposed means of foul drainage should be in accordance with Circular 03/99 *Planning requirements in respect of the use of non-mains sewerage incorporating septic tanks in new development*.

The presumption must always be to provide a system of foul drainage discharging into a public sewer. If this is not possible taking into account all the factors in Circular 03/99, a package treatment plant may be considered although there are circumstances where package treatment plants are unsuitable due to sporadic occupation. Only when it is proved that the above two options are not feasible should a septic tank be considered. Some non-mains drainage systems may require an environmental permit from the EA, although certain activities are exempt from the requirements. In order to qualify for an exemption, your discharge or activity must meet certain criteria. If you cannot meet these criteria you will need to apply for a permit. More information on small discharges of domestic sewage effluent, permits and exemptions can be found on the Environment Agency's website.

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

To help you choose the correct sewage disposal option, you can consult *Pollution Prevention Guidelines 4 (PPG4) – Treatment and disposal of sewage where no foul sewer is available*, which includes information about the treatment and disposal methods available, maintenance and legal requirements. This guidance was officially withdrawn in 2015, but its principles may be useful for householders. A copy of this guidance can be found on the gov.uk website in a link to the National Archive.

Solutions such as composting toilets and reed beds can have some environmental benefits but require active maintenance by the users. They should only be considered in situations where conventional sewage solutions are unavailable, and where the end-user has a full understanding of what will be involved. In accordance with Approved Document Part H of the Building Regulations 2000, the first option for surface water disposal should be the use of sustainable drainage methods (SUDS) which limit flows through infiltration – soakaways, swales, ponds, porous paving, etc. You can reduce the volume of external surface water drainage through sensitive arrangement of landscaping, consideration of green roofs, etc.

Economic sustainability and skills

The distinctiveness of the built environment of the North Pennines derives more than anything from the character of local stone and sands carried over short distances because transport was difficult. Transport is today a less significant part of costs but local sources of building materials are still available. Their appropriate use to sustain local character will also contribute to a vibrant local economy. The NPNL wish to encourage the continued use of material produced within the region, recognising their authenticity and functional appropriateness. They also wish to support the continuing transmission of local skills to match the increasing demand for quality development within the National Landscape.

Standards

The Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) is a widely used method for assessing the

environmental performance of building projects. It uses a scoring system across a range of environmental and sustainability parameters. LPAs may use BREEAM to require minimum standards of sustainability for certain types of new development provided for in their policies. You should check this with your LPA.

www.breeam.org

5 LANDSCAPE WORKS AND EXTERNAL DETAILING

The way a building sits within the landscape is often as important as the design of the building itself. In the working landscapes of the North Pennines, buildings are often located to take advantage of variations in slope, sunlight and shelter, to respond to the need for access and water, to allow for the supervision of a tract of land or to enjoy a beautiful view. The relationship of any new building to its surroundings needs to be handled with care, and the detailing of any associated landscaping – from the planting of trees to the selection of paving materials- should be informed by what is present in the locality.

Groundworks

With modern machinery it is easy to reshape the landform of a site to accommodate a new building. Our predecessors didn't have access to such equipment and traditional buildings therefore often pay more respect to the natural contours of the land, with the layout and design of the building adjusted to minimise intervention.

The careful siting and design of buildings in relation to the landform is a particularly significant issue for sites on valley sides. Ignoring the constraints of topography or trying to impose standard floor plans can result in extensive and costly ground modelling which is difficult to blend into its surroundings.



Traditional farmsteads are often closely related to the surrounding landform, with mature trees and drystone walls helping to anchor buildings within the wider landscape.

The siting of a building may well be constrained by factors other than landform but it is as well to consider how to use the contours to obtain the best position for the building with the minimum disturbance to the natural topography of the site. A respect for the topography may also lead to innovative design solutions, creating unique buildings with a very direct relationship with their setting. A detailed survey of the topography of the site and its immediate surroundings is an essential first step in this process.

Sensitive earth modelling can also be used to screen otherwise visually intrusive features. Low earth mounding or more naturalistic 'land-raising' can help screen elements like car parking, service areas, oil tanks or sewerage treatment plant. Small changes in level can

often be highly effective. Slopes facing towards sensitive viewpoints should be created at shallow gradients ($>1:3$). Inward facing slopes can be steeper or retained by walls. The management of vegetation on engineered landforms needs to be given careful consideration as unmanaged grassland can stand out against grazed pasture and draw attention to the feature. Slopes that are shallow enough to graze or to mow will blend in more successfully.



Older buildings respected site topography and were influenced by the landform as in this example near Garrigill

Careful consideration should always be given to the conservation of soils which will need to be stripped, stored and laid separately (see also Environmental Resources: Soil, air and water above).

Good practice

- G1 Aligning buildings parallel with the contours helps reduce the scale of the development platform
- G2 When aligning buildings across the contours, a 'stepped' form will reduce the building's footprint.
- G3 Building into the ground, rather than clearing a platform to build on, will reduce the scale of disturbance.
- G4 Balancing cut and fill will help reduce the scale of cuttings and embankments.
- G5 External spaces like gardens should be used to accommodate changes in level- rather than trying to develop them at the same level as the building.
- G6 Sufficient space should be allowed to blend banks and cuttings into their surroundings at naturalistic slopes, or retaining walls should be used to achieve changes in level quickly. The intermediate solution – steep engineered slopes – is usually the most visually intrusive.
- G7 Battered dry-stone retaining walls can be very effective and are characteristic of the area
- G8 In some cases a large change in level can be disguised more discretely by using more than one solution – a slightly steepened slope in combination with a low retaining wall for example.

G9 Engineered slopes that can't be improved should be disguised.
Planting with native trees and shrubs can help assimilate these in time.

New planting



Groups of mature broadleaved trees often provide shelter for traditional farmsteads, helping to anchor buildings within the landscape

Trees and shrubs can make an enormous contribution to both the quality of new development and the extent to which it is assimilated into its setting. The need or potential for new planting will vary between developments.

Where there is a need to screen large buildings or unsightly operational areas perimeter screening belts may be required. It is important that these are designed appropriately so as not to become alien features in their own right. There is little point trying to hide an ugly building with an ugly or conspicuous shelterbelt. Try to design these as small woodlands that fit into their surroundings rather than planting the minimum area needed for screening. Avoid creating narrow linear features that run against the grain of the topography or geometric blocks that stand out from their surroundings. Pick up any nuances of the landform in drawing the woodland boundary and, where space allows, scallop the woodland edge to break up its outline and create areas of complimentary habitat like rough grassland.

Always take advice on the existing biodiversity or archaeological value of potential planting sites and avoid planting on sensitive areas. Consult your local authority ecologist and archaeologist at an early stage.

New trees should be planted with careful thought to their mature height and spread including a respect for the vigour of the root systems which can cause disturbance to the foundations of boundary walls, to path surfaces and drains if adequate space is not allowed. Well-constructed modern foundations and drains should not be affected but older features may be more vulnerable. Taking specialist advice from a landscape architect, arboriculturist or forester will help you avoid these pitfalls and deliver a well-designed and cost-effective scheme.



Use of larger trees such as staked standards is expensive but can give instant effect in sheltered locations. Planting smaller stock is more cost effective for larger areas

In exposed upland landscapes like the North Pennines trees grow slower than in the lowlands. Robust planting areas give more shelter to the young trees in the short term and to the building in the longer term. Narrow shelter belts that grow into rows of wind-sculpted high canopied trees have little value as screening or shelter in the long term.



An edge mix including fast growing Rowan complements larger, longer lived species in the woodland core



Robust shelter planting in Weardale

Whether planting for shelter or screening it is important to plant species native to, or characteristic of, the locality. Native species already have a strong presence in the landscape and are well adapted to the conditions found here. In addition to simply looking right in the landscape they typically have a higher biodiversity value than

imported species. More information on species native to the North Pennines can be found in Table 1 below.

Woodland types particularly characteristic of the North Pennines include upland oak and oak- birch woodlands on acidic soils and upland ash and alder-ash woodlands on limestones. Many woodlands contain a mixture of these different types due to the rapidly alternating rock strata typical of the North Pennines. Species should be chosen to reflect the composition of native woodland types best suited to the underlying geology, soils and drainage of the site. More information on woodland plant communities is given in Table 2 below.

For larger planting schemes on exposed sites a high proportion of hardy 'nurse' species like downy birch or common alder (on wet ground) can be used and thinned out in later years. On more sheltered or fertile sites planting mixtures should have a high proportion of under-storey shrubs to make them both more visually dense and increase their shelter value. The woodland edge can be particularly rich in smaller native trees and shrubs which can be chosen for the decorative (and wildlife) value of their flowers and berries.

In addition to native species there are a number of imported species with a long association with the area and a strong presence in the landscape. These include:

- non-UK natives (sycamore, larch)
- UK natives not native of the North Pennines (beech, small-leaved lime)

- former natives that have long disappeared from the area and have since been reintroduced (Scots pine); and
- ornamental species often planted in parks and village greens (common lime, horse chestnut).

All of these species have their place in the landscape but some should be used with caution in shelter planting. Beech and sycamore are very wind-hardy but both cast a dense shade which suppresses the shrub layer and ground flora leading in later years to tree belts with little low-level shelter and little biodiversity. A group of wind-swept sycamores beside an isolated farm may be an iconic image of the North Pennines, but they could also represent a mistake our grandfathers made that they never got a chance to learn from and which we are not doomed to repeat. Scots pine and larch can also behave in the same way in narrow belts although both can be a useful nurse crop in a mixed plantation on a poor site.

When planting belts or blocks of trees it is always advisable to use small plants – 2-year-old transplants, undercuts or whips – rather than larger standard trees which will often be slow to establish, particularly in exposed situations. Small plants are much cheaper and will usually overtake larger stock in a very few years. Shelter from the elements and protection from livestock and rabbits are often critical to success in the North Pennines as is weed control in the early years. Information on sources of detailed advice on tree planting techniques can be found at the end of this section.

When planting individual trees close to buildings or in gardens and public spaces there are many smaller native trees and shrubs that are suitable for the task. Planting local natives can help link the

development visually with the wider landscape and express the distinctive upland character of the area.

Selecting the correct site for planting is critical and the following considerations should be taken into account:

- The ultimate size of the tree
- The proximity of buildings, other structures and any underground or over ground services such as telephone and electricity supply cables
- The potential to obscure any road sightlines or road signs. This can prove hazardous to road users and pedestrians
- Some species, such as horse chestnuts, can produce heavy leaf fall. This should be a consideration when planting close to roads and paths or drainage gullies; and
- Trees such as limes and sycamores are affected by sugar secreting aphids which can cause mildew below them. This should be a consideration when planting close to car parks or seating areas.

Trees grow and obstruct daylight. Choose species carefully and do not plant in close proximity to windows. Trees can cause structural damage to buildings if they are blown over, most structural damage being caused by the heavier lower limbs and trunks. As a rule of thumb, larger species should be planted no nearer to a dwelling than two thirds of their expected mature height. This will depend on soil and situation: on many sites in the North Pennines trees will never attain the potential heights quoted for them in national data. Take advice from your local Tree Officer who will have local knowledge.

Most tree roots grow in the top 60cm (2ft) of the ground. The pattern of root development varies greatly between species. As a general rule, roots will spread considerably further than the canopy will extend. Tree root growth is only capable of exerting comparatively small forces, however this may cause small structures with no foundations – drives, paths, patios and garden walls – to be moved or distorted. This is unavoidable in some situations and usually best dealt with through minor repairs to the structures. For many people this is a small price to pay for the pleasure of living with a tree and shouldn't lead to overly conservative planting practices. As a rule of thumb, avoid planting trees within around 2.5x the expected mature diameter of the trunk of inflexible paving and structures as this is the 'structural root zone' where larger roots are likely to occur.

The use of root barriers and root deflectors can control the spread of roots. These should be installed close to the feature being protected rather than close to the tree, in order to leave the tree access to a sufficient volume of soil to support itself through to its ultimate size at maturity. Roots are opportunistic and will grow to exploit moisture and nutrients. Fine roots can penetrate minute cracks and joints in drains. This is not an issue for new buildings where well-designed and properly constructed modern drains and foundations should be impervious to the effects of tree roots but may be a consideration when planting close to older buildings and structures.

Selecting the right species for planting takes some care and will depend on the physical conditions of the site (soil type, drainage, exposure) and the space available for the trees' eventual height, crown size and root spread. Some species are intrinsically unsuitable

for planting close to typical domestic buildings because of the invasive, shallow, or long-reaching characteristics of their root systems. Larger varieties of willow, poplar and coniferous species should be used with caution. As a simple rule, they should be planted no nearer than one and a half times their potential height from drains or walls. Information on sources of detailed advice on tree planting techniques can be found at the end of this section.

Guidance on ornamental planting in gardens and public open space is beyond the scope of this document. It should be noted, however, that the design of ornamental planting can help reinforce the 'natural' and 'upland' character of the North Pennines if it takes its inspiration from the natural vegetation of the area. Schemes using native trees and shrubs, heathers, junipers and hardy ferns for example rarely look out of place.

Good maintenance is essential to the survival and establishment of trees and particularly in the first few years. Newly planted trees need to be protected from grazing with stock and rabbit proof fencing or individual guards or shelters and should be watered regularly in dry weather. An area of at least 1 square metre should be kept free of weed growth in the establishment phase either with mulches or herbicides. Provision should be made to inspect trees regularly and replace any that have died or failed to flourish.

Good Practice

Tr1 Look after existing mature trees and shrubs: protect them through the development period and integrate them into your design.

Tr2 When planting for screening or shelter ensure that areas are robust enough to serve their function.

Tr3 Plant trees native to, or characteristic of, the area.

Tr4 Consider the mature size and characteristics of trees when choosing species and planting sites.

Tr5 Plant trees at smaller stock sizes where possible: they are likely to adapt better to the challenging climate.

Tr6 Ensure trees are maintained to a high standard in the early years paying particular attention to plant protection, watering and weed control.

Tr7 Provide for regular inspection and replace any failures.

Grassland, heathland and wetland

Development can affect species and habitats other than trees and shrubs and these are often overlooked. The open habitats of the North Pennines – heathland, grassland, wetland– are often rich in species. Conserving, restoring or creating these can add to both the character and biodiversity of a development.

Open habitats can be damaged directly through physical disturbance or indirectly through changes in hydrology or changes in management. Sensitive sites should be generally avoided. On some sites a Phase 1 habitat survey carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist may be required to identify areas or features of value.

Habitats such as these should be afforded similar protection to mature trees and shrubs by the use of protective fencing to prevent physical disturbance during the development phase and integrated into the final design.

Where preservation in situ isn't feasible it is often possible to translocate individual plants or turves to retain their botanical interest, to harvest seed or seed-rich hay, or to strip and re-lay areas of topsoil to retain their seed burden.

With open habitats future management is an important consideration as their species composition can rapidly change in response to changes. Re-instating grazing may be an option in some circumstances; in others it may be possible to develop appropriate cutting regimes as part of the landscape design and management scheme for the site.

The creation of open habitats such as species-rich grassland, heathland and wetland is usually a specialist exercise and you should consult your LPA ecologists for advice.

Good Practice

H1 Look after existing open habitats protect them through the development period and integrate them into your design.

H2 Consider the need for long term management.

Planting for wildlife

The creation of features such as ponds, green roofs, nesting and hibernation structures for a wide range of species and the planting of climbing, flowering and fruiting plants can all contribute to the biodiversity of the site. Ponds and wetlands of different shapes and sizes can provide valuable habitat.

Traditional garden ponds, marshy or boggy areas, and temporary swales that flood seasonally or after rain, can provide a range of complimentary habitats and particularly where planted with native species. Avoid stocking ponds with fish as this will reduce their value for invertebrates and amphibians.



Integrated biodiversity enhancements providing nesting habitat for birds and refuge for insects within the building fabric.

Green roofs can be developed on a range of buildings and structures. Planted with, or colonised by, native species which thrive in the extreme conditions found there, green roofs also reduce water run-off and add thermal insulation. An alternative is the 'brown' or rubble roof covered in locally sourced aggregate. These are a cheap to build and maintain, and provide opportunities for mosses and lichens, flowering plants, invertebrates and birds associated with naturally occurring rocky habitats and screes.

Modern or renovated buildings often have few potential nesting or roosting sites for birds or bats. There are a number of ways in which artificial sites can be provided including built in nesting boxes and ledges, special roof tiles or bricks that allow access by bats or swifts, and nesting boxes for a variety of species. They should generally be located on north or east-facing elevations with some protection from the elements. Climbing plants create habitats for birds, insects and small mammals and providing cooling and insulation. Flowering plants provide nectar for invertebrates and seeds or fruit for birds and small mammals in the autumn and winter.

Many ornamental species will provide these functions, but native species can be particularly valuable for some specialist species. Planting locally native species can also bring a distinctive 'sense of place' to a private garden or public space and help bring the wildlife of the wider landscape into the urban realm

Avoid introducing invasive species either intentionally as ornamental plants or unintentionally through poor quality control on imported

soils or plants. Only locally native species and disease-free plants should be planted near watercourses to avoid the spread of invasive species or water-borne pathogens. Care should be taken in buying plants to select stock which is free from diseases such as juniper phytophthora: using local growers can reduce the risk of introducing such diseases into the area.

Good Practice

PI1 Look for opportunities to provide new habitats for wildlife whatever the scale of your development.

PI2 Using plant species native to the locality can help support local biodiversity.

PI3 Create opportunities for nesting birds and bats, building them in where possible.

PI4 Take care to avoid introducing invasive species.

Boundaries and openings

Walls

Stone walls are a key feature of the North Pennines landscape. Often the stone used in their construction comes from the same quarries as the finer dressed stone of the buildings, sometimes coming from the thinner or more weathered strata. The craft of stonewalling is still very much in evidence in the North Pennines and though it is a slow and relatively expensive form of construction, the stone wall proves a

durable investment. Many of our gardens today shelter within walls built in the 18th and early 19th centuries which have required or received almost no subsequent repair.



Traditional drystone walls help define the field pattern and contribute significantly to the distinctive character and sense of place of the North Pennines.

Conserving and repairing existing dry-stone walls in and around the development site, and building new walls of an appropriate character, can help assimilate new development into its surroundings and make a positive contribution to the character of the area. In doing so it is important to use local walling styles and materials where possible.

There is considerable variety in the character of walls in the North Pennines, which may reflect their age, local walling styles, or the different types of stone available for their construction. Older walls, or those built near rivers or in areas of boulder clay, may be built with irregular rounded stone from the riverbed or stone clearance in the adjacent fields. Later walls, or those built in areas with thinly bedded and readily worked stone, may be constructed of more regular material.



Neat roughly rounded capping stone to this drystone field wall

Coarse Carboniferous sandstone is widely used in the North Pennines, as is Carboniferous limestone and red Triassic sandstone where it outcrops along the western scarp. Walls may include other material such as whinstone found in river cobbles or boulders in the glacial clays. In some areas different materials may be combined. For example in the Eden valley earthenware coping stones may be found complimenting red sandstone walls. Closer to Penrith, red sandstone through stones or 'thruffs' can be found reinforcing walls of smaller limestone rubble.

The dimensions of walls vary with the locality as do coping styles which include rough, angular or rounded cope stones stacked vertically, or flat flagstones laid horizontally. Variations of 'buck and doe' coping with alternating larger and smaller or vertical and horizontal stones are common. Coping with turves or sods is found occasionally.

Although it can be difficult today to obtain newly quarried stone from very local sources, there are a number of quarries in the North Pennines supplying material of an appropriate general type. There is also often a ready supply of salvaged material available through builders or wallers in the area. Stone already present on site should be preserved and set aside for re-use. Stone gateposts in particular are expensive to replace and should always be salvaged.

Mortared stone walls should reflect the character, scale, coping detail and bonding pattern of walls in the locality. Coursed or rubble 'brought to course' is more typical of free-standing walls than random rubble. Heavily accentuated random rubble patterns, and particularly in machine cut stone, can look conspicuously out of place.

The detailing of gateways is typically modest in the working 'vernacular' landscapes of the North Pennines and overly elaborate openings, curved wing-walls and elaborate piers and finials should be avoided.

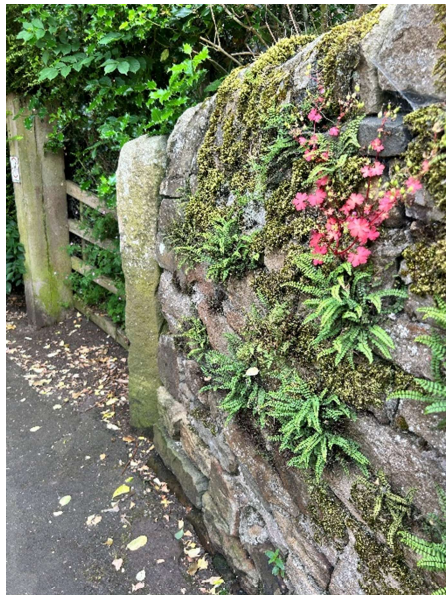
Boundary walls made in pre-cast concrete blocks are not appropriate in the North Pennines. Artificial stone is rarely successful and is usually out of character with local stonework. These and many other obviously engineered or artificial products should generally be excluded from the designer's palette. In some circumstances where retaining walls are required as part of engineering works, gabions filled with local stone, and particularly where the outer face is roughly coursed, can be effective.



Roadside walls conduct the traveller into the village and bind settlement and surrounding fields together

Stone walls, particularly dry-stone walls, can be valuable refuges for wildlife and present opportunities for enhancing the biodiversity of a site. The dry conditions provide an ideal habitat for invertebrates, birds, reptiles and small mammals, and also for a wide variety of

plants. If local stone (and lime mortar) is used, the plants, lichens and mosses that grow on the wall will reflect local geology and flora and reinforce the sense of local distinctiveness. Walls can also provide shelter for hedges and more fragile planting and assist in initial establishment.



Stone walls can provide valuable habitat for a wide range of wildlife.

Good practice

- BW1 Use walls in areas where they are characteristic
- BW2 Source stone of a similar type and character to that used in the area and form as local a source as possible.

- BW3 Try to match locally walling styles paying particular attention to the detailing of through stones and copings
- BW4 Garden walls should match either the construction and bonding style of the building or the detail of local boundary or field walls.
- BW5 At the settlement's edges in particular dry-stone walls reflecting the character of local field walls will rarely look out of place.
- BW6 Closer to the house or in the construction of higher garden walls mortared construction may be appropriate
- BW7 Coursed rubble bonding patterns are generally more in keeping with the surroundings than heavily accentuated random rubble.
- BW8 The coursing of dry-stone walls should generally follow the contours of the ground.
- BW9 Overly elaborate gateways and entrance features should be avoided.

Hedges

Hedges are characteristic boundary features in the more sheltered parts of the North Pennines and particularly the upland fringes and lower dales. Well-maintained hedges can provide screening, shelter and privacy to buildings and gardens as well as valuable wildlife habitat.

Hedges in the North Pennines date from many periods of enclosure including parliamentary enclosures of the C18th and earlier piecemeal enclosures of village fields and wastes from the medieval period onwards. Some of these hedges, and particularly those on ancient parish and township boundaries, may be the oldest continuously used man-made artefacts in the landscape. Protecting hedges on a development site requires the same amount of care as with other forms of vegetation.

Conserving and renovating existing hedges in and around the development site, and planting new hedges of an appropriate character, can help assimilate new buildings into their surroundings and make a positive contribution to the character of the area. In some circumstances hedges can provide a more effective screen than narrow belts of tree planting. It may be much easier to screen a development in views from a road or footpath by planting a hedge alongside the road or track, or allowing an existing hedge to grow taller, than by planting closer to the building itself.

Hedges are living features that need to be managed. In the absence of management they will grow out into a line of leggy bushes and ultimately disappear. Established hedges may need remedial works to bring them back into good condition. This may involve laying, coppicing, or gapping up. This is generally a specialist exercise and advice should be sought from a suitably qualified contractor. Further information on where to get advice on hedgerow management can be found at the end of this section.

In most rural and edge of settlement situations, including larger gardens and development plots, new hedgerows should be made up

of species which are native to the area and characteristic of its field boundaries. A typical species mix for a hedge in the North Pennines is.

- Major species (95%) - Hawthorn 60%, Blackthorn 20-25%, Hazel and Holly 10-15%
- Minor species (5%) - Bird Cherry, Dog Rose, Rowan

The use of non-native or exotic species such as Leyland Cypress should be avoided as they look highly incongruous in this landscape.

The way hedges are planted can vary according to the locality. Sometimes they are planted directly into the ground, at other times they are planted on raised hedge 'cams' or larger 'hedge-banks'. In some cases hedge banks may be faced with dry-stone walling on one or two sides.

Good Practice

- H1 Look after hedges in and around the site: protect them during construction: gap up and/or lay older neglected features.
- H2 Plant new hedges in areas where they are characteristic.
- H3 Use species native to the area and characteristic of local field boundaries.
- H4 Plant hedgerow trees where space allows.
- H5 Allow for long term management.

Fences, Gates and Barriers

Fences are much cheaper to erect than stone walls or hedges. They do not achieve the same visual effect, and are not as durable, but may be particularly appropriate in some situations. Visually light fencing like high tensile wire may be preferred in situations where it is undesirable to draw attention to the line of a new boundary.

The use of fencing on new boundaries may allow older boundaries to continue to read as the dominant pattern- for example when subdividing an existing walled field into smaller paddocks. In some sensitive locations wire fences may need to be marked to reduce the incidence of bird strike, particularly for black grouse and waders. The least visually intrusive method is to use reflective metal plates between the top wires, one between each post.

Various types of fence are common in and around the settlements of the North Pennines ranging from timber post and rail with vertical palings, to timber posts with wire and netting. Fencing associated with gardens tends to be restrained in character rather than being highly ornamental, and decorative detailing tends to be subtle and low-key. Materials normally associated with urban areas such as metal paling, chain link and close-boarded timber fencing should generally be avoided and particularly in prominent frontage locations.

Elaborate, ornate or high railings and gateways have a suburban quality and should be avoided. Openings and driveways should be in scale with their surroundings. Gates in fences should reflect the style of fence. For gates in stone walls there is more freedom, but timber gates are rarely out of place.

For pedestrian gates, there are some well-tried local types – for example timber gates over a close-fitting stone thresh, and with a solid or dense lower panel, which are good for excluding rabbits.



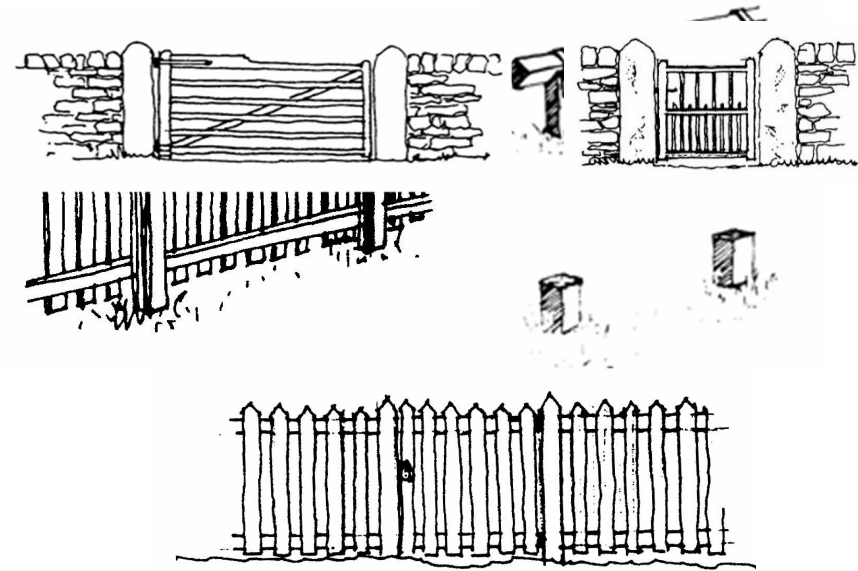
Low stone walls and simple railings can provide enclosure without creating an overly prominent boundary, particularly for historic and civic buildings.



Modest gate openings framed by stone gateposts help maintain the simple and functional character of traditional settlements.

The design and treatment of timber fencing is often an afterthought, but poorly considered timber fences can have a considerable impact and particularly when treated with conspicuous finishes. Highly pigmented wood stains, and particularly the hotter red or orange browns hues, are a contrast to the dark and subdued finishes used in the past. They should generally be avoided, and particularly for larger scale elements such as fencing.

Sometimes when the need is only to prevent vehicles being driven onto grass a single rail with intermediate posts is sufficient deterrent,



or a simple row of stubby posts. Fencing in rural situations fits better with its surroundings if it is functional rather than ornamental. Post and rail fences with horizontal rails are more suitably 'agricultural' in appearance than diamond 'ranch-style' patterns. Plain galvanised netting is preferred over coloured netting which rarely blends with its surroundings even in greens and browns.

Where new fences or gates would affect a public highway or public right of way the Highway Authority should be contacted for advice. Public highways and rights of way are subject to regulatory systems that are independent of the planning [system](#).

Hard surfaces

One of the most satisfying aspects of the fabric of long-established rural settlements is that so few external features appear superfluous or over-elaborate. This characteristic functional simplicity applies to footpath and paved areas, to the forecourts of shops and community buildings, to the edges and trim of roadways and tracks

Paving

Traditional paving materials in the NPFL include natural stone flags, cobbles and setts and these remain the preferred materials for new paving. As with buildings, sourcing new or reclaimed stone to achieve a good match for existing surfaces can be a challenge. It is important to select natural paving materials of a similar type and character. Reconstituted stones and artificial materials mimicking natural stone should be avoided as should imported foreign stone, whose consistency, longevity and performance is unknown and is which is likely to weather very differently to local stone

Driveways and hard standing

A key consideration in selecting surfaces for drives and hard standings is to provide a surface appropriate to the volume of traffic carried. The use of tarmac for high use areas is sometimes essential, but its use for private drives and parking areas can be unnecessary and intrusive in a rural setting where unbound gravel will often be more appropriate.

A thin layer of fine carboniferous limestone chippings on a typical sub-base will create a well-drained hard-wearing surface on level ground.

Other fine gravels can be equally attractive but do not possess the chemical setting properties of carboniferous limestone.

On steeper slopes chemical binders or resins may be necessary in order to avoid erosion but these may still incorporate locally occurring gravel. Porous or permeable surfaces should be used where possible

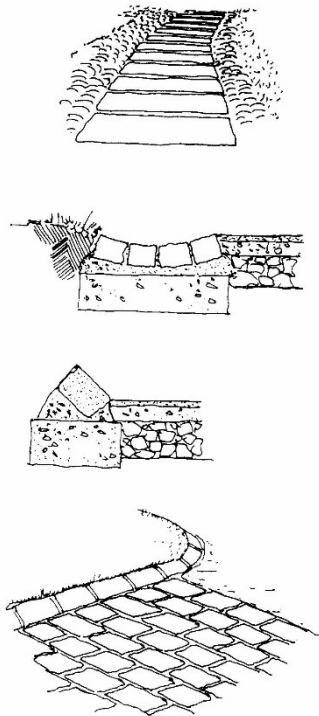


*Traditional stone setts and flags.
The retention and use of natural
stone paving helps preserve local
identity and avoids the visual
impact of artificial or imported
materials.*

to avoid surface run-off to drains. Where run-off is unavoidable, consider directing this to natural soak-aways or swales rather than to surface drains. In rarely used locations surfacing can be kept to a minimum with grass access or wheel track width surfaced access routes.

For a 'greener' finish, consideration might be given to the use of grass reinforcement products. These can range from mesh incorporated into the turf, to rigid blocks with holes for the grass to grow through. Where the level of use is low or seasonal, reinforced grass surfaces can provide a useful intermediate form of surfacing; however their use in over-used or poorly drained locations (for example the heavy clay soils of the North Pennines) can create an unsightly combination of bare compacted soil and plastic or concrete. Perforated block solutions can also create trip hazards which compromise DDA access compliance.

The character of our country lanes is eroded by the use of standard concrete kerbs and gutter blocks. The natural look of grass lying over the edge of the road surface is often preferred. Road verges can be defined with stone or specialised concrete blocks. Small setts can be used to



line run-off channels between road and grass.

Parked vehicles can be very intrusive, particularly around isolated properties and in visually prominent locations.



Appleby: high quality paving complements this listed building

Good practice

- P1 Parking areas and driveways are better located at the side or rear of buildings where cars will be less prominent.
- P2 It helps if garages can also be tucked round the back of a building not directly visible from the public road.
- P3 A slightly raised front wall or hedge can help to screen vehicles from the road.

Porous surfaces – edge details and drainage



Traditional cobbles define the edge of the roadway and enhance the village streetscape in Blanchland.

Both grass and gravel described above reduce the unnecessary use of materials but also have considerable drainage advantages. Their porous structure reduces the need for run-off collection, minimises the need for piped storm water drainage and reduces peak flows in nearby watercourses in times of high rainfall. Hard edging details such

as upstanding kerbs are unnecessary in many situations where porous materials are used or where surface water is encouraged to drain onto adjacent soft verges, swales or ditches. Where possible surface water run-off should be managed through the use of open features such as swales and ditches which can be easily maintained and provide a micro habitat for local wildlife.

Plot edges, trims and borders

One traditional feature of many of the historic settlements in the North Pennines is the maximum use of space in densely built-up village centres, a pattern most clearly illustrated by the use of low plant borders and or cobble trims at the junction of walls and the highway or footpath. This kind of detail provides a valuable demarcation strip, allows for changes in level, and provides an opportunity for a positive contribution to the public realm.

Table 1. Native trees and shrubs typical of the North Pennines

Common name	Scientific name	Common name	Scientific name
Ash	Fraxinus excelsior	Grey Willow, Common Sallow	Salix cineria
Aspen	Populus tremula	Guelder Rose	Viburnum opulus
Bay Willow	Salix pentandra	Hawthorn	Crataegus monogyna
Bird Cherry	Prunus padus	Hazel	Corylus avellana
Blackberry	Rubus fruticosus	Holly	Ilex aquifolium
Blackthorn	Prunus spinosa	Honeysuckle	Lonicera periclymenum
Broom	Cytisus scoparius	Ivy	Hedera helix
Burnet Rose	Rosa pimpinellifolia	Juniper	Juniperis communis
Common Alder	Alnus glutinosa	Osier	Salix viminalis
Common Oak	Quercus robur	Purple Willow, Purple Osier	Salix purpurea
Crab Apple	Malus sylvestris	Raspberry	Rubys idaeus
Crack Willow	Salix fragilis	Rowan	Sorbus aucuparia
Creeping Willow	Salix repens	Sessile Oak	Quercus petraea
Dog Rose	Rosa canina	Silver Birch	Betula pendula
Dogwood	Cornus sanguinea	Small-leaved Lime	Tilia cordata
Downy Birch	Betula pubescens	Spurge Laurel	Daphne laureola
Downy Rose	Rosa mollis	Sweet Briar, Eglantine	Rosa rubiginosa
Eared Sallow, Eared Willow	Salix aurita	White Willow	Salix alba
Elder	Sambucus nigra	Wild Cherry	Prunus avium
Field Maple	Acer campestre	Wild Privet	Ligustrum vulgare
Goat Willow	Salix caprea	Wych Elm	Ulmus glabra
Gooseberry	Ribes uva-crispa	Yew	Taxus baccata
Gorse	Ulex europaeus		

Table X. Native woodland types found in the North Pennines

Description	National Vegetation Classification (NVC)	Principle woody species
Birch Woodland	W4: <i>Betula pubescens</i> - <i>Molina caerulea</i> woodland.	Downy Birch, Goat Willow, Common Alder, Grey Willow, Eared Sallow, Bay Willow, Rowan
Alder Carr Woodland	W5: <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> - <i>Carex paniculata</i> woodland	Alder, Downy Birch, Grey Willow.
Valley Fen Alder Woodland	W6: <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> - <i>Urtica dioica</i> woodland	Alder, Crack Willow, Downy Birch, Grey Willow, Elder.
Alder Ash Woodland	W7: <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> - <i>Fraxinus Excelsior</i> - <i>Lysimachia nemorum</i> woodland	Common Alder, Ash, Downy Birch, Goat Willow, Grey Willow, Hazel, Hawthorn, Rowan, Bird Cherry.
Upland Ash Woodland	W9: <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> – <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> – <i>Mercurialis perennis</i> woodland.	Ash, Wych Elm, Downy Birch, Sessile Oak, Rowan, Hazel, Bird Cherry, Hawthorn, Holly, Aspen, Elder, Grey Willow
Upland Oak Woodland	W11: <i>Quercus petraea</i> – <i>Betula pubescens</i> – <i>Dicranum majus</i> woodland.	Downy Birch, Sessile Oak, Hazel, Rowan, Holly.
Upland Oak Birch Woodland	W17: <i>Quercus petraea</i> – <i>Betula pubescens</i> – <i>Oxalis acetosella</i> woodland.	Downy Birch, Sessile Oak, Rowan, Hazel, Holly.
Juniper Woodland	W19: <i>Juniperus communis</i> - <i>Oxalis acetosella</i> woodland	Juniper, Downy Birch, Rowan, Hawthorn.
Hawthorn Scrub	W21: <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> - <i>Hedera helix</i> scrub	Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Elder, Rose sp., Bramble Honeysuckle, Rowan, Ash, Hazel.
Blackthorn Scrub	W22: <i>Prunus spinosa</i> - <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub	Blackthorn, Hazel, Wild Privet.
Gorse Scrub	W23: <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub	Gorse, Broom, Bramble
Bramble Scrub	W24/25: <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> scrub	Bramble, Rose sp., Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Elder

6 RESOURCES

Local planning authorities

Contact details, development plans, additional information and guidance. This information is correct at the time of publication. You should check with your LPA for any changes or updates.

Cumberland Council

[Planning and building control | Cumberland Council](#)

[Planning pre-application advice | Cumberland Council](#)

[Cumberland Local Plan | Cumberland Council](#)

[Current Local Plans | Cumberland Council](#)

[Get development advice from the Historic Environment service | Cumberland Council](#)

[Conservation areas | Cumberland Council](#)

[Cumbria Wind SPD Part 1](#)

[Cumbria Wind SPD Part 2](#)

[Cumbria Development Design Guide](#)

[Cumbria- Good Lighting TAN v.2 \(3\)-compressed by Friends of the Lake District](#)

[Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit Part 1](#)

[Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit Part 2](#)

[Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit- all Cumbria map](#)

[Search the Historic Environment Record | Cumberland Council](#)

Durham County Council

[Planning advice and Enquiries](#)

[County Durham Plan- Durham County Council](#)

[Durham County Council Design and Conservation Team- Guidance](#)

[Conservation areas- Durham County Council](#)

[County Durham Design Code Supplementary Planning Document and Settlement Character Studies](#)

[Energy Efficiency, Renewables and the Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document](#)

[Non-Designated Heritage Asset Supplementary Planning Document](#)

[Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\)](#)

[County Durham Plan, Solar Energy Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\) August 2024](#)

[Trees, Woodlands and Hedges Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\)](#)

[Durham Landscape Character Assessment, Strategy and Guidelines](#)

[County-Durham-Landscape-Value-Assessmentt.pdf](#)

[Historic Environment Record- Durham County Council](#)

Northumberland County Council

[Planning | Northumberland County Council](#)

[Planning policy and the Local Plan | Northumberland County Council](#)

[Conservation areas | Northumberland County Council](#)

[Studies, evidence, reports and guidance | Northumberland County Council](#)

[Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment Part A.doc](#)

[Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment Part B FINAL.doc](#)

[Archaeology | Northumberland County Council](#)

[Northumberland Historic Landscape Character Assessment](#)

Westmorland and Furness Council

[Planning | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)

[Westmorland and Furness Local Plan | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)

[Legacy Local Plans | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)

[Find a conservation area | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)

[Design code- Westmorland and Furness Council- Citizen Space](#)

[Cumbria Local Heritage List | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)

[Supplementary Planning Documents \(SPDs\) and other guidance | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)

[Cumbria Wind SPD Part 1](#)

[Cumbria Wind SPD Part 2](#)

[Cumbria Development Design Guide](#)

[Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment](#)

[Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment \(outside the National Parks\)- Map Book](#)

[The Historic Environment Record | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)

Glossary

Term	Definition
Agricultural Permitted Development	Development that can be carried out on agricultural land without a full planning application, provided it meets the conditions set out in planning legislation. Some proposals still require prior approval from the Local Planning Authority.
Ancillary Development	Buildings, structures or works that are subordinate to, and support, the main use of a site, such as plant rooms, substations, parking areas or storage compounds.
Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)	A technical assessment identifying how proposed development may affect existing trees and hedgerows and recommending measures to protect them.
Article 4 Direction	A legal direction made by a Local Planning Authority that removes certain permitted development rights in order to protect the special character of an area.

Term	Definition
Biodiversity	The variety of living organisms, including plants, animals, fungi and microorganisms, together with the habitats and ecosystems that support them.
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	A planning requirement that development leaves biodiversity in a measurably better state than before development took place.
Blue Infrastructure	Natural and artificial water features, including rivers, streams, wetlands, ponds, lakes and sustainable drainage systems, that provide environmental, ecological and recreational benefits.
Broad Landscape Type	A landscape classification used within Landscape Character Assessment to group areas sharing similar physical and visual characteristics.
Building Regulations	National regulations that set minimum standards for the design and construction of buildings to ensure they are safe, accessible, energy efficient and fit for purpose. Building Regulations approval is separate from planning permission.

Term	Definition
Climate Adaptation	Measures that help people, infrastructure and the natural environment respond to the current and future effects of climate change, such as increased flooding, drought and extreme weather.
Climate Mitigation	Actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions or increase carbon storage in order to limit climate change. Examples include renewable energy, woodland creation and peatland restoration.
Character	The distinct combination of natural and cultural features that makes one landscape different from another.
Conservation Area	An area designated by a Local Planning Authority because of its special architectural or historic interest, where additional planning controls apply.
Construction Exclusion Zone	An area around trees or other sensitive features that is fenced off during construction to prevent damage from machinery, storage or excavation.
Cultural Heritage	Historic buildings, archaeological remains, historic landscapes and other features that

Term	Definition
	contribute to the area's historic significance and sense of place.
Cumulative Impact	The combined effects of multiple developments or activities, which may be greater than the impact of each individual proposal when considered in isolation.
Curtilage	The land immediately surrounding a building that is closely associated with its use and ownership. Planning legislation often applies different rules within the curtilage of a property.
Dark Skies	Night skies that are largely free from artificial light pollution, allowing natural darkness and visibility of stars.
Designated Heritage Asset	A heritage asset protected through legislation, including Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Areas.
Development Plan	The statutory planning policies adopted by Local Planning Authorities that are used when determining planning applications.

Term	Definition
Ecosystem Services	The benefits that people obtain from nature, including food production, clean water, flood regulation, carbon storage, pollination, recreation and cultural value.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	A formal process used to assess the likely significant environmental effects of major development before planning decisions are made.
Environmental Statement (ES)	The document submitted as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment explaining the likely environmental effects of a proposal and proposed mitigation.
Exception Test	A planning test applied alongside the Sequential Test for certain developments proposed in areas at risk of flooding. It requires demonstration that wider sustainability benefits outweigh flood risk and that the development can be made safe for its lifetime.
Furthering the Purpose	The statutory duty placed on relevant authorities under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act to take

Term	Definition
	positive action to conserve and enhance National Landscapes.
Geodiversity	The variety of rocks, minerals, soils, landforms and geological processes that shape the landscape.
Green Infrastructure	A network of natural and semi-natural features such as woodland, wetlands, grassland and watercourses that provide environmental and social benefits.
Habitat	The natural environment in which a particular species or community of species lives.
Heritage Significance	The value of a heritage asset derived from its archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest. Significance includes both the asset itself and, where relevant, its setting.
Historic Environment Record (HER)	A database maintained by local authorities containing information about archaeological sites, historic buildings and historic landscapes.

Term	Definition
Hydrology	The movement, distribution and quality of water above and below the ground.
Landscape Capacity	The degree to which a landscape can accommodate a particular type or scale of development without unacceptable adverse effects on its character or special qualities.
Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)	A systematic assessment describing and classifying landscapes according to their distinct character and identifying their key characteristics and sensitivities.
Landscape Character Framework (LCF)	The North Pennines framework that brings together local authority Landscape Character Assessments into a consistent landscape classification across the National Landscape.
Landscape-led Design	An approach to design that begins with a thorough understanding of landscape character, natural processes and local distinctiveness, using these to influence the location, layout, scale and appearance of development rather than seeking to mitigate impacts after design decisions have been made.

Term	Definition
Landscape Sensitivity	The susceptibility of a landscape to change arising from a particular type of development, taking account of its character, condition and value.
Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA)	A proportionate assessment of the landscape and visual effects of smaller development proposals that do not require a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)	A detailed professional assessment of the likely effects of development on landscape character and visual amenity.
Listed Building	A building included on the National Heritage List for England because of its special architectural or historic interest and protected by law.
Local Distinctiveness	The unique qualities that make a place recognisable and different from other locations, including its buildings, landscape, materials and cultural heritage.

Term	Definition
Local Planning Authority (LPA)	The local authority responsible for preparing planning policy and determining planning applications.
Major Development	Development of a scale or nature defined in planning legislation or national policy. Within National Landscapes, major development is subject to particularly stringent policy tests because of the importance of conserving and enhancing natural beauty.
Material Planning Consideration	A matter that is relevant to determining a planning application, such as landscape impact, design, heritage, biodiversity, flood risk or highway safety. Matters that are not material cannot normally influence a planning decision.
Mitigation	Measures designed to avoid, reduce or offset the adverse effects of development.
National Character Area (NCA)	A broad landscape classification produced by Natural England describing areas with shared environmental characteristics.
National Landscape	The current public-facing name for an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB),

Term	Definition
	designated to conserve and enhance natural beauty. The legal designation remains AONB.
Natural Beauty	The combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, cultural heritage and perceptual qualities such as tranquillity and dark skies that together define the special qualities and national importance of a National Landscape.
Nature-based Solutions	Actions that protect, restore or manage natural systems to address societal challenges such as climate change, flooding and biodiversity loss while providing benefits for people and wildlife.
Nature Recovery	The restoration, enhancement and better connection of habitats to reverse biodiversity loss and improve ecological resilience at both local and landscape scales.
Net Zero	Achieving a balance between greenhouse gases emitted and those removed from the atmosphere, so that overall emissions are effectively zero.

Term	Definition
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	The Government's national planning policy for England. It sets out the policies that Local Planning Authorities must take into account when preparing development plans and determining planning applications.
Photomontage	A visual representation showing how a proposed development is likely to appear within its landscape setting.
Prior Approval	A procedure under permitted development legislation requiring the Local Planning Authority to consider specified matters, such as siting, design or environmental impacts, before development can proceed.
Priority Habitat	A habitat identified as being of principal importance for biodiversity conservation in England.
Priority Species	A species identified as being of principal importance for biodiversity conservation under national legislation.
Protected Landscape	National Parks and National Landscapes (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty),

Term	Definition
	which receive statutory protection because of their nationally important landscapes.
Protected Landscapes Duty	The statutory duty placed on Relevant Authorities by Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended) to seek to further the purposes of National Parks and National Landscapes when exercising their functions.
Protected Species	Species protected by legislation against disturbance, injury, capture or destruction of their habitats.
Section 85 Duty	The legal duty requiring relevant authorities to seek to further the purposes of National Landscapes when carrying out their functions.
Setting	The surroundings in which a heritage asset or landscape is experienced and which contribute to its significance.
Sequential Test	A planning process used to steer development away from areas at highest risk of flooding by directing proposals

Term	Definition
	towards areas of lower flood risk wherever reasonably available.
Special Qualities	The distinctive natural, cultural and perceptual characteristics that make the North Pennines nationally important.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	An assessment prepared by a Local Planning Authority to identify flood risk and guide future development.
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	Drainage techniques that mimic natural drainage processes to reduce flood risk, improve water quality and provide environmental benefits.
Tranquillity	The experience of peace, naturalness and freedom from intrusive noise, activity and artificial light.
Tree Preservation Order (TPO)	A legal order protecting specific trees or woodlands from unauthorised works.
Vernacular	The traditional style of buildings, materials and construction techniques characteristic of a particular locality.

Term	Definition
Viewshed	The area of land from which a particular feature or development can be seen, or the area visible from a particular viewpoint. Viewshed analysis is commonly used in landscape and visual assessment.
Visual Amenity	The quality of views and the visual experience of a landscape.
Wildness	The perception of remoteness, naturalness and absence of modern development that contributes to the special qualities of the North Pennines.