

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL DELEGATED PLANNING DECISION

1.	Reference No:	4/25/2141/0F1
2.	Proposed Development:	EXTENSION AND RECONFIGURATION OF EXISTING CAR PARK, ERECTION OF MEMORIAL GARDEN, AND ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS
3.	Location:	LAND TO SOUTH EAST OF SELLAFIELD COMPLEX, FROM THE A595T TO THE B5344, SEASCALE
4.	Parish:	Ponsonby
5.	Constraints:	ASC;Adverts - ASC;Adverts, Safeguard Zone - Safeguard Zone, Coal - Off Coalfield - Data Subject To Change, DEPZ Zone - DEPZ Zone, Preferred Route Corridor - Within Preferred Route Corridor, Outer Consultation Zone - Sellafield 10KM
6.	Publicity Representations & Policy	See Report
7.	Report: Site and Location The Civil Nuclear Constabulary Tactical Training Facility is located at Griffin Park, Seascale, CA20 1DW. The training centre opened in 2021 and is operated by CNC, a specialist armed police force afforded the responsibility of the protection of civil nuclear sites and nuclear materials across England and Scotland. The application relates to an existing staff car park and an area of maintained grassland to the north east of the existing car park. The application boundary is approximately 250m north of the Sellafield nuclear site. The site is bound to the north by an area of grassland, with trees and the River Calder beyond. To the West lies the Griffin Park training facility. To the east, an area of grassland;	

and to the south, an additional car park and a small service road that connects the training facilities with a public highway.

Vehicular access to the site is from the unnamed road between Calder Bridge and Sellafield. A priority-controlled T-junction provides the access to both Griffin Park and the CNC dog training facility.

Relevant Planning History

4/24/2368/0F1 – Prior Approval for the installation of solar panels on a roof area

4/23/2290/0F1 – change of use of land from landscaped area to memorial gardens

4/23/2022/0F1 – change of use of land from landscaped area to dog training facility

4/15/2251/0F1 – construction of training facility comprising three indoor firing ranges, advanced skills and hub building and outdoor training and landscaped area, car parking and associated infrastructure.

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the extension and reconfiguration of the existing car park and the erection of memorial gardens with associated landscaping improvements.

The reconfiguration of the existing car park will include the addition of 9 spaces, formed by extending the existing rows. An extension to the car park will also provide an additional 27 car parking spaces to the north. The proposed memorial garden will be constructed to the north of the extended car park.

The additional car parking facilities are to provide additional capacity to serve the site.

The following information has been submitted in support of the application:-

Application form

Drawings and Plans

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report (DWS) and Transport Statement.

Consultation Responses

Seascale Parish Council

No objections

Beckermest with Thornhill Parish Council

No comments

Ponsonby Parish Council

No objections

Highway Authority/LLFA

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) can confirm that we have no objection to the proposed development as it is considered that it will not have a material effect on existing highway conditions nor will it increase the flood risk on the site or elsewhere.

United Utilities

We strongly encourage all developments to include sustainable drainage systems to help manage surface water and to offer new opportunities for wildlife to flourish. We request that Local Planning Authorities and applicants do all they can to avoid surface water entering the public sewer. The flows that come from this surface water are very large when compared with the foul water that comes from toilets, showers, baths, washing machines, etc. It is the surface water that uses up a lot of capacity in our sewers and results in the unnecessary pumping and treatment of surface water at our pumping stations and treatment works. If new developments can manage flows through sustainable drainage systems that discharge to an alternative to the public sewer, it will help to minimise the likelihood of sewers spilling into watercourses and the flooding of homes and businesses. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) advise that surface water from new developments should be investigated and delivered in the following order of priority:

1. into the ground (infiltration);
2. to a surface water body;
3. to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system;
4. to a combined sewer.

The applicant should consider their drainage plans in accordance with the drainage hierarchy outlined above.

Environmental Health

No objections

Arboricultural Officer

From Google aerial images, the site does appear to have any trees currently growing on it, or that are likely to be affected by the proposed development. Due to the high security, we were unable to access the property for a site visit. The applicant has submitted a landscape plan

for a memorial garden area as part of the development. The plan does not list any tree or shrub planting.

Ecologist

Suggested Planning Conditions:-

Small Mammals

All development work should be carried out with care to avoid small mammals such as hedgehogs. Contractors should be briefed about the potential presence of hedgehogs and Works should be supervised during initial clearance of the Site to avoid injury to any disturbed individuals.

Any trenches or excavations that are left open overnight should have a means of escape for mammals i.e. a scaffold board to act as a ramp. This is especially important as hedgehogs have been recorded on site.

Sensitive Lighting Scheme

A sensitive construction and operational lighting scheme must be designed and submitted to the council for approval prior to the commencement of construction. In order for this lighting scheme to benefit all local wildlife in the area, it must be in line with the Bat Conservation Trust's Guidance Note 8 for Bats and Artificial Lighting, found here:

<https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificiallighting/>

Biodiversity Net Gain

No development hereby permitted shall commence until:

- a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority demonstrating a 10% net gain,
- b) the planning authority has approved the plan in writing,
- c) the onsite habitat provision is accompanied by a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan in place for 30 years as the gains here constitute 'Significant On-site Gains', this monitoring plan is to be accepted by the council and,
- d) Monitoring results are to be programmed to be submitted to the council. These should include evidence demonstrating how BNG is progressing towards achieving its objectives, evidence of arrangements and any rectifying measures needed. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

Neighbour Responses

The development has been advertised by way of a planning application site notice.

No responses were received in response to this publicity.

Planning Policy

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan:

On 1st April 2023, Copeland Borough Council ceased to exist and was replaced by Cumberland Council as part of the Local Government Reorganisation of Cumbria.

Cumberland Council inherited the local development plan documents of each of the sovereign Councils including Copeland Borough Council, which combine to form a Consolidated Planning Policy Framework for Cumberland.

The inherited local development plan documents continue to apply to the geographic area of their sovereign Councils only.

The Consolidated Planning Policy Framework for Cumberland comprises the Development Plan for Cumberland Council until replaced by a new Cumberland Local Plan.

Copeland Local Plan 2021 - 2039 (LP):

Cumberland Council continued the preparation of the LP as commenced by Copeland Borough Council.

The LP was adopted by Cumberland Council on the 5th of November 2024 replacing the Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028 and the saved policies of the Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016.

Strategic Policy DS2: Settlement Boundaries

Policy DS4: Design and Development Standards

Policy DS5: Hard and Soft Landscaping

Strategic Policy DS6: Reducing Flood Risk

Policy DS7: Sustainable Drainage

Policy DS8: Soils, Contamination and Land Stability

Policy DS9: Protecting Air Quality

Strategic Policy NU1: Supporting Development of the Nuclear Sector

Strategic Policy NU3: General Nuclear Energy and Associated Development and Infrastructure

Strategic Policy SC1: Health and Wellbeing

Strategic Policy N1: Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Strategic Policy N3: Biodiversity Net Gain

Strategic Policy N6: Landscape Protection

Strategic Policy N9: Green Infrastructure

Strategic Policy N11: Provision of Open Space in New Development

Policy N14: Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows

Strategic Policy BE1: Heritage Assets

Policy BE2: Designated Heritage Assets

Policy BE3: Archaeology

Policy CO7: Parking Standards

Other Material Planning Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

National Design Guide (NDG).

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (CHSR).

Cumbria Development Design Guide (CDDG)

Assessment

Principle of Development

The proposed development comprises the extension of the existing staff and visitor car park for the Griffin Park CNC training facility. The Parking Survey undertaken by SAJ Transport Consultants to inform the supporting Transport Statement concluded that the existing car park is over capacity Monday to Fridays with excess vehicles parking along the access road to the facility and within disabled parking bays. The survey determined that the current parking demand at the facility equates to 138 vehicles.

Adopted Local Plan Policy CO7 states that “Proposals for new development will be required to provide adequate parking provision, including cycle parking and accessible parking bays, in accordance with the Cumbria Development Design Guide (or any document that replaces it) where appropriate.”

Furthermore, by introducing three Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging spaces to the car park, the development complies with Policy CO4 of the LP which affirms that “proposals for the integration of electric vehicle charging infrastructure into new developments” will be supported in principle.

The principle of developing a Memorial Garden at the training facility is also supported in policy terms. The mitigation hierarchy set out in Strategic Policy N1 has been considered and the requirements to provide an uplift of 10% BNG has been incorporated into the proposed plans.

As such the principle of development of the site is considered to be acceptable in terms of its location and proposed use. The material planning considerations are set out below.

Access and Transport

The applicant has submitted details of a recent parking survey undertaken by Transport Consultants in support of the application. This demonstrates that the existing car parking facilities are over capacity for most of each day.

The development proposes to increase the volume of parking spaces in Griffin Park to 142 – an increase of 39 spaces. This will be achieved by reconfiguring the existing car park, extending the car park to the north, and providing three new EV charging spaces within the existing hardstanding area to the north of the main building. The two existing designated Autonomous Police Vehicle spaces will also be relocated to the hardstanding area. A small access road will be provided between the extended car park and hardstanding area (currently utilised by APV vehicles).

The relocation of the refuse collection point outside of the security barriers will provide a more readily accessible location. The swept path analysis demonstrates that there is adequate space for refuse trucks to access the new refuse collection point.

Considering all the above, it is considered that the proposed car park extension, access to hardstanding area and refuse collection point relocation are acceptable from a highways and transportation perspective in accordance with Local Plan policies CO4 and CO7 and Chapter 9 of the NPPF.

Ecology and Landscaping

Policy N1 of the LP seeks to ensure that new development will protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity and defines a mitigation hierarchy.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment have been submitted in support of this application.

Three main habitat land categories were identified on site under the UKHab system of habitat classification. The site is a developed car park with both sealed and unsealed surface present, with modified grassland to the north.

The grassland on Site provides some poor opportunities for species such as birds and small mammals to forage. The site is largely unsuitable to support protected species given its location and poor habitats within the surveyed area.

As the works on site will be localised to the area of modified grassland, it is unlikely that impacts will occur on designated sites. The nearby designated sites do not feature similar habitats to those on site and the grassland to be lost is unlikely to support the same species with no indirect effects are expected.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Policy N3 of the LP requires that all development, with the exception of that listed in the Environment Act must provide a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain over and above existing site levels, following the application of the mitigation hierarchy set out in Policy N1. This is in addition to any compensatory habitat provided under Policy N1. It is stated net gain should be delivered on site where possible and where on-site provision is not appropriate, provision must be made elsewhere in accordance with a defined order of preference.

As this Full Planning Application was submitted after the 12th February 2024, the development is the subject of mandatory biodiversity net gain and is required to provide a minimum of ten percent biodiversity net gain over and above existing site levels as required by the Environment Act 2021.

A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been prepared in support of this Full Planning Application.

The Biodiversity Metric calculation submitted found that the Site contains 0.76 habitat units, 0 hedgerow units, and 0 watercourse units. The development will result in 0.84 habitat units, 0 hedgerow units, and 0 watercourse units. This results in a 10.86% gain of biodiversity on site.

A total of 23 trees are due to be planted on Site. This includes 6 ornamental trees within the garden and 17 native species to be planted along the northern boundary of the Site.

The landscape proposals ensure that the application complies with The Environment Act 2021 Legislation on Biodiversity Net Gain. Furthermore, the application acts in accordance with Local Plan Policies N3, N6, and N9.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Policy DS6 seeks that development will not be permitted where: there is an unacceptable risk of flooding and or, the development would increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

Policy DS7 requires that surface water is managed in accordance with the national drainage hierarchy and includes Sustainable Drainage Systems where appropriate.

The proposed extension is located in Flood Zone 1 and is not identified as at risk of surface water flooding. The proposals comprise a less vulnerable use, which is acceptable in Flood Zone 1.

The car park incorporates porous paving. Due to the landscaping of the Site, only porous paving that is either failing away or situated away from the embankments will be considered for infiltration. The remaining surface water is tanked, with pipe outfalls and flow controls (orifice plates) to infiltration type paving areas.

With regard to the proposed Memorial Garden, the garden will comprise significant areas of planting which will assist in managing drainage and preventing flooding and waterlogging. The Garden will mainly incorporate porous paving, with small sections of impermeable paving across the northern section of the garden. Any surface water will run off into surrounding areas of planting and vegetation, and permeable paving.

The LLFA and United Utilities have raised no objections to the proposals.

Heritage Assets

There are no designated heritage assets within the application site boundary.

A Grade II* and eight Grade II Listed Buildings are located to the north of the site. The closest Listed Building is that of Sella Park (Grade II) which is approximately 100 m to the north of the site. All the Listed Buildings, with the exception of Sella Park House, are located sufficiently far away from the site so that no impact upon their settings or significance is expected as a result of development proposals at Griffin Park.

The extension of the existing car park and accommodation of a memorial garden at Griffin Park will not require significant ground works. In consideration of these factors, it is considered that the site boundary does not hold archaeological value and the development should not raise concerns from an archaeological perspective.

The proposed development is unlikely to have a significant impact on known heritage assets in accordance with Policies BE2 and BE3 of the Local Plan.

Land Contamination

Policy DS6 and Policy DS10 includes provisions requiring that development addresses land contamination and land stability issues with appropriate remediation measures.

The application Site has remained untouched by previous development across the wider CNC site to accommodate a training facility at Griffin Park. As such, the likelihood of significant ground contamination sources being present across the area of maintained grassland is considered to be very low.

The proposed development does not require significant excavation of the existing area of maintained grass. The development will require the removal of the grass and shallow excavation to enable suitable layers of paving to be installed across the area.

Planning Balance and Conclusions

The proposal will increase capacity for the parking of vehicles within the site. Evidence has been provided to demonstrate a current under provision of parking available to serve the CNC building.

The provision of a Memorial Garden and additional landscaping will improve the appearance of the site.

The development is acceptable in respect of ecology, flood risk, drainage and ground conditions subject to the imposition of suitably worded planning conditions.

A biodiversity net gain of ten percent is demonstrated as deliverable in compliance with the requirements of Policy N3 of the LP.

On balance, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in policy terms.

8.	Recommendation: Approve (commence within 3 years)
9.	Conditions: <u>Standard Conditions</u> 1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision. Reason To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. 2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans/details: - Planning Application Form, received 11th April 2025 Site Location Plan. Drawing number CNC-001, received on 19th February 2025 Proposed Site Location Plan, Drawing Number AY-CNC-007 Setting, received on 19th February 2025 Proposed Car Park Layout Plan, drawing number JN2826- 0006C, received on 05th June 2025 Proposed Elevations, drawing number AY-CNC-009, received on 19th February 2025 Topographical Survey Sheets 1 and 2, drawing numbers 141214/001 and 002 Transport Statement, reference JN2826- Rep-0001.2, prepared by SAJ Transport Consultants, dated October 2024 Design and Access Statement, prepared by Avison Young, dated 03 April 2025 Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain Report, prepared by DWS Ecology, dated July 2025 Reason For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Pre Commencement Conditions

Landscaping

3. No development shall commence until a detailed scheme of soft landscape works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

These shall include planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers / densities; an implementation programme and a five-year maintenance plan.

The agreed scheme shall be carried out as approved to the agreed timetable.

Any trees / shrubs which are removed, die, become severely damaged or diseased within five years of their planting shall be replaced in the next planting season with trees / shrubs of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

Reason

To safeguard and enhance the character of the area and secure high quality landscaping in accordance with the provisions of Policy DS5 of the Copeland Local Plan 2021-2039.

Access

4. No development shall commence until details of the proposed access, including details of a specification, construction, materials, finishes, colours including a block / detailed layout plan (to scale) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Any works so approved shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details before the development is complete.

Reason

To ensure a minimum standard of construction in the interests of highway safety in accordance with the provisions of Policy CO4 of the Copeland Local Plan 2021-2039.

Lighting

5. Before development commences details of a sensitive construction and operational lighting scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This lighting scheme shall be in line with the Bat Conservation Trust's Guidance Note 8 for Bats and Artificial Lighting:
<https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

Reason

To safeguard local wildlife in the area.

Biodiversity Net Gain

6. Prior to the commencement of development, a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan shall include the following:

- i. A detailed scheme of habitat creation and habitat enhancement works that demonstrate the delivery of a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity value post development over a minimum period of 30 years.
- ii. Planned management activities including details of site-wide aims and objectives.
- iii. Details of the persons and organisation(s) responsible for delivery of the habitat creation and habitat enhancement works.
- iv. The habitat condition targets that form the basis of what the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan is setting out to achieve.
- v. Details of monitoring methods and a monitoring reporting schedule.
- vi. Details of adaptive management approaches.

Reason

In the interests of ensuring measurable net gains to biodiversity and in accordance with the provision of Strategic Policy N3 of the Copeland Local Plan 2021-2039, the National Planning Policy Framework and The Environment Act 2021.

7. The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the habitat creation and habitat enhancement works detailed in the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan secured by Planning Condition 6 have been completed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason

In the interests of ensuring measurable net gains to biodiversity and in accordance with the provision of Strategic Policy N3 of the Copeland Local Plan 2021-2039, the National Planning Policy Framework and The Environment Act 2021.

8. Within 3 months of the completion of the habitat creation and habitat enhancement works detailed in Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan secured by Planning Condition 6, a completion report, evidencing the completed habitat creation and habitat enhancements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason

In the interests of ensuring measurable net gains to biodiversity and in accordance with the provision of Strategic Policy N3 of the Copeland Local Plan 2021-2039, the National Planning Policy Framework and The Environment Act 2021.

9. The habitat creation and habitat enhancement works detailed in the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan secured by Planning Condition 6 shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the provisions of approved Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan secured by Planning Condition 6 for a minimum period of 30 years post completion of the habitat creation and habitat enhancement works.

Reason

In the interests of ensuring measurable net gains to biodiversity and in accordance with the provision of Strategic Policy N3 of the Copeland Local Plan 2021-2039, the National Planning Policy Framework and The Environment Act 2021.

10. Monitoring reports demonstrating how the habitat creation and habitat enhancement works detailed in Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan secured by Planning Condition 6 is delivering on its site-wide aims and objectives and habitat condition targets

Monitoring reports shall be submitted to the Council during years 2, 5, 7, 10, 20 and 25 posts completion of the habitat creation and habitat enhancement works detailed in the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan secured by Planning Condition 6 unless otherwise stated in the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan secured by Planning Condition 6.

Reason

In the interests of ensuring measurable net gains to biodiversity and in accordance with the provision of Strategic Policy N3 of the Copeland Local Plan 2021-2039, the National Planning Policy Framework and The Environment Act 2021.

Informatives

Biodiversity Net Gain - Applicable

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be Cumberland Council.

There are statutory exemptions which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one of the statutory exemptions is considered to apply.

Ecology small mammals

All development work should be carried out with care to avoid small mammals such as hedgehogs. Contractors should be briefed about the potential presence of hedgehogs and Works should be supervised during initial clearance of the Site to avoid injury to any disturbed individuals.

Any trenches or excavations that are left open overnight should have a means of escape for mammals i.e. a scaffold board to act as a ramp. This is especially important as hedgehogs have been recorded on site.

Drainage United Utilities

United Utilities encourage all developments to include sustainable drainage systems to help manage surface water and to offer new opportunities for wildlife to flourish. Request that applicants/ developers do all they can to avoid surface water entering the public sewer. It is the surface water that uses up a lot of capacity in our sewers and results in the unnecessary pumping and treatment of surface water at our pumping stations and treatment works. If new developments can manage flows through sustainable drainage systems that discharge to an alternative to the public sewer, it will help to minimise the likelihood of sewers spilling into watercourses and the flooding of homes and businesses.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) advise that surface water from new developments should be investigated and delivered in the following order of priority:

1. into the ground (infiltration);
2. to a surface water body;
3. to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system;
4. to a combined sewer.

The applicant/ developer should consider their drainage plans in accordance with the drainage hierarchy outlined above.

In the event that the applicant, or any subsequent developer, approaches United Utilities regarding a connection for surface water to the public sewer, it is likely that UU will request evidence that the drainage hierarchy has been fully investigated and why more sustainable

	options are not achievable. This will be managed through either our 'S106 Sewer Connections' or 'S104 Adoptions' processes. When considering their drainage proposal, the applicant/ developer should investigate the existence of any pipelines and/or apparatus that might impact their detailed design. It is the applicant's / developer's responsibility to ensure that any detailed drainage plans comply with our 'Standard Conditions for Works Adjacent to Pipelines' which can be found on the UU website: Working near our pipes - United Utilities. Failure to consider existing pipelines may result in the redesign of pro Statement The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received, and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
Case Officer: H.S. Morrison	Date : 10/10/2025
Authorising Officer: N.J. Hayhurst	Date : 10/10/2025
Dedicated responses to:- N/A	