

7. LISTED BUILDING CONSENT – WORKS IN ASSOCIATION WITH CHANGE OF USE FROM RESIDENTIAL (USE CLASS C3) TO A WELCOME AND VISITOR RECEPTION HUB (USE CLASS F1) AND ASSOCIATED WORKS AT ILAM HALL COTTAGE, ILAM MOOR LANE, ILAM (NP/SM/1225/1295) ALN

APPLICANT: MRS LIZ BOWN – NATIONAL TRUST

Summary

1. The proposals are for works in association with the change of use of a single C3 dwelling to a visitor welcome and reception hub in association with Ilam Hall.
2. The minor impacts on the grade II* listed building and its setting and ecology are outweighed by the substantial benefits of improving the management of visitors to the site, improving the visitor experience and allowing a better understanding of the National Park.

Site and Surroundings

3. Ilam Hall and Ilam Hall Cottage (also known as Gardeners Cottage) are grade II* listed buildings located close to the southern boundary of the National Park.
4. The site is owned and managed by the National Trust (although the Hall itself is let to the Youth Hostel Association) and is a significant tourist attraction in this part of the National Park.
5. The Coach House and Stable Block is also grade II listed, and is the tower known as The Pepperpot. The Hall and Gardens are within the Ilam Conservation Area.
6. Ilam Hall Cottage is an open market dwelling, and is currently tenanted. It is attached to the northernmost wing of the Hall, and sits between the Hall and the main visitor car park. The property currently has enclosed gardens to the north and east of the house. It has three bedrooms.

Proposal

7. Listed building consent is sought for works in association with the change of use of the dwellinghouse (use class C3) to a visitor welcome and reception hub (use class F1).
8. Minor alterations to the listed building are proposed including fire upgrading of internal doors, the laying of new vinyl flooring, new smoke detectors, alterations for the provision of wireless data and a new external light.
9. On the ground floor would be a welcome room, meeting room, second-hand bookshop and staff toilet and storage facilities. On the first floor would be a staff office and a staff welfare room, along with additional storage.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. **Statutory time limit**
2. **In accordance with amended plans**

3. **The recommendations set out in the letter by Skyline Ecology dated 18th December 2025 shall be strictly adhered to.**
4. **Bathroom door at ground floor to be retained and repaired unless otherwise approved in writing by the National Park Authority.**

Key Issues

- Impact upon listed building
- Ecological considerations

Relevant Planning History

Ilam Hall has a detailed planning history. Relevant to the current proposals are:

- February 2025 – pre-application advice sought with regard to proposals for an interlinked masterplan for Ilan Hall and Dovedale (including proposals for a visitor reception hub) – Enq ref 51266.
- June 2020 – planning permission granted for installation of temporary visitor welcome hut for 18 months (NP/SM/0420/0311). Temporary permission has been re-issued several times, with the latest permission granted in January 2026 for a further period of 1 year (NP/SM/1225/1239).
- June 2018 – planning permission granted for redesign of existing car park layout, plus re-alignment of car park approach road; Change of use from caravan site to car park; Change of use of part of Hall Cottage Garden from garden to car park (NP/SM/0318/0223).
- March 1987 – listed building consent granted for alterations of listed building at Ilan Hall Cottage (NP/SM/0187/002).

Consultations

10. **Highway Authority:** no objections. The site is remote from the highway and will have no impact on the highway.
11. **District Council:** no issues to raise.
12. **Parish Council:** strongly objects. *‘At a time when our community is experiencing a significant shortage of homes available for both rent and purchase, the loss of a residential dwelling to a commercial or visitor-focused use would further exacerbate an already acute housing issue. Residential properties are essential for supporting local families, key workers, and the long-term sustainability of our community.*

The removal of a home from the local housing stock for non-residential purposes is, in our view, unacceptable. While there is a shared desire to protect our area from inappropriate development, this proposal represents a permanent loss of a residential property and cannot be overlooked. The cumulative impact of such changes poses a serious risk to the balance and vitality of rural communities.

We acknowledge and respect the important role the National Trust plays in conserving heritage and supporting tourism. However, this must be carefully balanced against the fundamental need to retain existing homes for local residents. In this case, the Parish Council considers that the balance weighs firmly against the proposed change of use.

For these reasons, the Parish Council unanimously objects to this application and urges the planning authority to refuse permission.'

13. **Authority's Conservation Officer:** *'The proposals seek to adapt the building to enable its use as a welcome visitor and reception hub. On balance, the works are considered to be acceptable and enable the conversion without any significant intervention to historic fabric. The proposal will open up the garden to the north of Hall Cottage, reestablishing its visual connection to and relationship with the land the north, and provide greater opportunity for an appreciation of the cottage itself as well as the remnant features of the kitchen gardens in its grounds. The removal of the existing timber feather board fence will improve the general environs of the listed building. A new path connecting the car park with the visitor centre and the Hall to the south will aid wayfinding and accessibility through the site. The proposals therefore align with the requirements of PDNPA Policy DMC10.'*

A small degree of harm has been identified from proposed works to upgrade doors within the cottage. In line with PDNPA Policy DMC7 and NPPF paragraphs 212 and 215, the harm should be considered against the public benefits of the proposals, which are significant.

The proposals present an opportunity to deliver a minor beneficial effect to the character and appearance of the Ilam Conservation Area and the landscape as a non-designated heritage asset by restoring the visual connection and sense of openness between the cottage and the landscape to the north and integrating the kitchen garden structural elements into the publicly accessible parts of the estate. The proposals therefore align with the stipulations of PDNPA Policies DMC5 and DMC8.'

14. **Authority's Ecologist:** *'An Ecological Statement (December 2025) for the installation of low-level lighting and removal of small areas of hedgerow at Ilam Hall Cottage by Skyline Ecology has been submitted to support the application.'*

We hold records of bats in the wider site area however, Skyline Ecology consider that the retention and installation of external lighting is unlikely to impact foraging or commuting bats as the proposed lighting will be low level and on timers so they will be turned off during non-operating hours.

There is low potential that the non-native hedgerow on site could be utilised by nesting birds however, the habitat is sub-optimal. The precautionary measures detailed in the ecological statement by Skyline Ecology are welcomed and should be strictly adhered to.'

15. **Historic England:** No response at time of writing (consultation period not yet expired)

Representations

16. None received.

Main Policies

17. Relevant Core Strategy policies: L3
18. Relevant Development Management policies: DMC7, DMC8

National Planning Policy Framework

19. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration. Development plan policies relevant to this application are up-to-date and in accordance with the NPPF and therefore should be given full weight in the determination of this application. As well as the current proposals
20. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states: Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks which have 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, and should be given great weight in National Parks.

Assessment

21. The Parish Council has raised strong objections to this listed building consent application on the basis that the development would lead to the loss of a local dwellinghouse, and that this in turn would exacerbate a perceived shortage of housing in the village. These comments are not relevant to the listed building consent application. The comments are fully addressed in the report on the parallel planning application.

Impact on Heritage Assets

22. Core Strategy policy L3 and Development Management policies DMC7 and DMC8 jointly seek to ensure that that development conserves and where appropriate enhances the significance of heritage assets. Where less than substantial harm occurs, it must be weighed against public benefits. The application is accompanied by a Planning and Heritage Assessment.
23. Externally, the proposals would open up the garden to the north of Hall Cottage, re-establishing its visual connection to and relationship with the land the north, and provide greater opportunity for an appreciation of the cottage itself as well as the remnant features of the kitchen gardens in its grounds. The removal of the existing timber feather board fence would improve the general environs of the listed building.
24. Internally, there would be a small degree of harm through proposals to upgrade internal doors in response to fire safety (i.e. the fitting of free swing closers, back seals and application of intumescent paint). One door between the lobby and bathroom at ground floor is warped and is proposed to be replaced. The Authority's Conservation Officer considers that this door should be repaired rather than replaced and this can be required by condition.
25. The proposals present an opportunity to deliver a minor beneficial effect to the character and appearance of the Ilam Conservation Area and the landscape as a non-designated heritage asset by restoring the connection and sense of openness between the cottage and the landscape to the north and integrating the kitchen garden structural elements into the publicly accessible parts of the estate.
26. In summary, the small degree of harm identified would be greatly outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme, in accordance with adopted policies.

Ecology

27. The Authority holds records of bats in the wider area. The ecology statement concludes that the addition of a single light fitting above one of the doors and the new low level bollard lighting is unlikely to have a negative impact on bats or other species provided

that it has a low lux and is on a timer. The proposed works are unlikely to have any adverse impact upon protected species or their habitat provided that they are carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the submitted survey.

Conclusion

28. The proposed welcome facility, through conversion of an existing heritage asset, would significantly improve way finding and accessibility for visitors to Ilam Park, and would contribute to their appreciation and interpretation of the National Park. The scheme would restore the visual connection and sense of openness between the cottage and the landscape to the north and would allow the remnants of the kitchen garden to be better appreciated. These public benefits would outweigh the minor elements of harm that have been identified above. Consequently, the proposals accord with adopted policies and are recommended for approval

Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil