

13. FULL APPLICATION – ADDITION OF TWO EXTENSIONS TO THE PROPERTY, EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS INCLUDING SURFACING OF CAR PARK. CHANGE OF USE OF PART OF THE CENTRE TO OFFICE ACCOMMODATION AT FIELD HEAD INFORMATION CENTRE, EDALE (NP/HPK/1215/1178, P.6351, 412404 / 385639, 22/01/2016/AM)

APPLICANT: PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Site and Surroundings

The Field Head Information Centre is located within the centre of Edale, approximately 120m to the south east of the Holy Trinity Church and within the designated Edale Conservation Area.

The property is owned and occupied by the National Park Authority as a ranger centre and visitor centre which is open to the public. Moors for the Future also occupy part of the buildings to the rear of the visitor centre as offices and storage. Land around the buildings is in use as a campsite and part of the buildings provides toilets and other facilities for campers.

The replacement visitor centre was built following the grant of planning permission in 2005 and is of a circular contemporary design. The buildings to the rear include a former vernacular farmstead arranged in an 'L' shape plan for around a yard which is used for parking. The car park to the front of the centre is occupied as part of the campsite and is not open to members of the public visiting the centre.

Access to the site is via the adjacent highway. The nearest neighbouring properties are Buckley Bed Cottage which is located approximately 50m to the north west and a dwelling known as Barnfield located approximately 65m to the south west.

Proposal

This application seeks planning permission for alterations and extensions to the existing buildings along with an extension and re-surfacing of the existing car parks to facilitate internal changes to provide enhanced office and laboratory facilities for Moors for the Future and facilities for the campsite.

The submitted plans show a single storey extension in the 'L' shape of the existing buildings to provide level access to the proposed laboratory along with storage. This extension would be of a contemporary design, glazed under a zinc standing-seam roof. A single storey extension is also proposed to the rear of the building to provide a pot wash for the campsite. This extension would be built from traditional stone and slate materials to match the main building.

The existing yard adjacent to the traditional buildings would be extended to provide an additional seven parking spaces. To the rear of this parking area a replacement timber shed is proposed to provide storage. An air source heat pump is proposed to be sited to the rear of the shed.

The plans also show that the existing campsite car park to the front of the site would be re-surfaced with gravel bound macadam. New timber posts would be erected to delineate the campsite car park from the access. A new parking space for a disabled visitors would be provided adjacent to the centre.

Finally, the plans show that the existing overhanging water feature to the front of the visitor centre would be removed and replaced with a new fascia flush with the building. Two planting beds would be created either side of the entrance into the centre.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions or modifications:

1. **Statutory three year time limit for implementation.**
2. **Development to be carried out in complete accordance with specified approved plans.**
3. **Prior to the erection of the shed, full elevation drawings of the shed and proposed finish for the timberwork shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the National Park Authority.**
4. **The additional parking area shall be provided prior to the occupation of the offices and laboratory hereby approved. The parking areas shall thereafter be maintained throughout the lifetime of the development hereby approved.**
5. **Conditions to secure architectural specifications and design details of window and door details, stone work, roof materials, fencing, timber bollards and surfacing.**

Key Issues

- The impact of the proposed development upon the character and appearance and amenity of the existing centre, its setting within the Conservation Area and that of neighbouring properties.

History

2004: Planning permission granted conditionally for redevelopment from house into office accommodation and research suite for the moors for the future project, community I.T. and meeting room facilities.

2005: Planning permission granted conditionally for the demolition of existing visitors centre and construction of a new moorlands centre.

Consultations

Highway Authority – No objections subject to additional parking provided prior to occupation and maintained thereafter free from impediment to its designated use.

Borough Council – No response to date.

Parish Council – No objections.

Representations

No representations have been at the time this report was written. If any representations are received they will be verbally updated at the meeting.

Main Policies

Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP3, DS1, L3, E1, RT1 and RT3

Relevant Local Plan policies: LC4, LC5, LT10 and LT18

The Authority's development strategy (DS1) encourages appropriate recreation and employment development within Edale and other named settlements. RT1 says that the Authority will support facilities which enable recreation, environmental education and interpretation, any new provision should be focused in the named settlements and wherever possible development must reuse existing traditional buildings of historic or vernacular merit and enhance any existing facilities. Development must not prejudice or disadvantage peoples' enjoyment of other existing and

appropriate facilities or activities including the informal quiet enjoyment of the National Park.

RT3 D says that development that would improve the quality of existing caravan and camping sites including improvements to upgrade facilities, access, landscaping or the appearance of existing caravans will be encouraged.

E1 says that business development will be permitted within Edale and other names settlements. Proposals must be of a scale that is consistent with the needs of the local population and wherever possible proposals must re-use existing traditional buildings of historic or vernacular merit and take up opportunities for enhancement.

The application site is located within the designated Edale Conservation Area and therefore L3 and LC5 are relevant. These policies say that development must conserve or where possible enhance the significance of the Conservation Area and that development which would have a harmful impact will not be permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances. GSP3 and LC4 together require a high standard of design and landscaping in accordance with the design guide and also state that development must not harm the amenity, privacy or security of any neighbouring property or land use.

LT10 and LT18 say require adequate parking and say that the provision of a safe access is a pre-requisite for any development.

The Edale Conservation Area appraisal is also a material consideration in the determination of this application. The Authority has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving the Conservation Area in the determination of this application.

The relevant policies in the development plan are considered to be up-to-date and in accordance with the Framework because both documents seek to promote appropriate recreation and employment development which conserves the valued characteristics of the National Park.

Assessment

This application proposes various internal alterations and extensions to the Field Head Information Centre (the Centre) to provide the existing occupants, Moors for the Future, with additional office, laboratory and storage space while retaining toilets and facilities for the existing campsite. The proposals would also allow the internal layout of the building to be optimised and level access provided through the ground floor of the building.

Part of the existing public exhibition area to the front of the building which would be given over to provide additional office space and meeting rooms with the remainder retained and open to the public. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle and in accordance with RT1, RT3 and E1 because the development would provide enhanced facilities at the centre for the existing occupants while retaining the majority of exhibition space which is open to the public.

The key issue in this case therefore is whether the proposed development would conserve the character, appearance and amenity of the existing building, its setting within the Conservation Area and that of neighbouring properties.

Two extensions are proposed both are modest single storey 'lean-to' extensions. An infill extension in the range of traditional buildings to the rear of the centre is proposed to provide a level access to the laboratory and offices in the rear of the building. Officers were concerned about the impact of infilling the 'L' shape plan form of this part of the building and therefore have advised that a simple glazed contemporary design would be appropriate to allow the original form of the building to be read behind. The proposed design has followed this design approach and is considered to be an appropriate solution.

The second extension would be to the rear of the building and has been designed to reflect the materials of the original building. This extension would therefore be in-keeping with the design, form and materials of the existing building and would be read alongside an existing 'lean-to' element of the building. It is therefore considered that both extensions would be clearly subordinate and would conserve the character and appearance of the buildings.

The remaining external alterations to the building include the provision of new window and door frames to existing openings for the proposed laboratory and office accommodation and alterations to the water feature and fascia to the front of the contemporary part of the building. Externally, the new window and door frames would be designed to reflect the existing door frames and therefore would conserve the existing character and appearance of the building.

While the removal of the projecting water feature and central pool would be unfortunate the proposed fascia and planting areas would reflect the overall contemporary design approach of the building and would not undermine or harm its character or appearance. The proposed planting areas would retain a clear feature to the front of the building which identifies the entrance to the public areas within the centre.

There are no objections to the extended parking area or the replacement timber shed to the rear of the building because these would be sited adjacent to the existing yard and parking area and would not be prominent from public vantage points. The proposed shed would provide additional storage space for equipment which is currently stored around the building in an untidy manner.

The proposed parking surface would be surfaced with gritstone gravel held within a mesh which is an appropriate surface in this landscape character type. There are also no objections to re-surfacing the existing campsite car park with resin bound gravel or the installation of new timber posts to define the separate parking areas provided that the works do not harm the mature trees along the boundary of the car park.

The proposed air source heat pump is welcomed as it would contribute to providing on-site renewable energy and would be effectively hidden behind the proposed shed. The proposal to renew and re-instate the ecological area which was an original feature around part of the contemporary extension is also welcomed.

It is therefore considered that subject to conditions to secure appropriate architectural specifications and design details that the proposed development would conserve the existing character and appearance of the buildings and their setting within the designated Edale Conservation Area.

Given the distance from the proposed alterations, extensions and new car parking area to the nearest neighbouring property there are no concerns that the development would harm the amenity of any neighbouring property. Officers agree with the Highway Authority that subject to the provision and retention of the extended parking area that the development would be unlikely to have any harmful impact upon highway safety.

Conclusion

The proposed development is acceptable in principle because it would provide enhanced facilities for the existing occupants of the centre and the adjacent campsite. Subject to conditions the proposed development would conserve the building, its setting within the Conservation Area and the amenity of neighbouring properties. The proposed development would not harm highway safety.

The proposed development would also provide a modest but important contribution to reducing our vulnerability to climate change by installing an air source heat pump and would also restore the moorland ecological and interpretation area around the building.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development is in accordance with the development plan. In the absence of any further material considerations, the proposal is therefore recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

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