
14. FULL APPLICATION – ERECTION OF AN ALL-PURPOSE AGRICULTURAL BUILDING AT LANE HEAD ROAD, LITTLE HAYFIELD (NP/HPK/1016/0977 403106 / 389087 P3448 SPW 05/10/2016)

APPLICANT: MRS HANNAH LAXTON

Site and Surroundings

The site is located off Lane Head Road in Little Hayfield. The site is in an isolated location in the open countryside. There is a single field here in the ownership of the applicant. During the site visit there was a small number of livestock including a few sheep and two cattle. On site there is already a small and dilapidated agricultural building which the proposed building would replace. The field has had some post and wire fencing recently installed and there is post and rail fencing close to the access. Much of the land in ownership is sloping land, although the site for the building generally levels out.

During the site visit there was a trampoline on the land, a picnic table and a rope swing attached to a large ash tree. There was also a livestock transport trailer.

The eastern field boundary is lined with mature trees, these are on land outside the applicants control, there is also a water course running to the east of the site, outside the site area. The site is not within a flood risk zone.

Proposal

The proposal is for an all purposes agricultural building which is 9.1m wide and 18.2m long. It has concrete panels up 1.8m with tanalised Yorkshire boarding above, with one side open. The roof would be clad with unfinished fibre cement sheets which would appear grey; the application forms explain this could be dark green if required.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

- 1. Standard time limit.**
- 2. Development in complete accordance with the submitted plans '16-45174', 'Block/site Plan' and specifications, subject to the following conditions or modifications.**
- 3. Sheeting for the roof shall be factory finished dark green 12B29 and permanently so maintained.**
- 4. Shall be used for agricultural purposes only, and for no other purposes (remove permitted development rights for change of use).**
- 5. The building hereby approved shall be removed when no longer required for the purposes of agriculture and the land shall be restored to its former condition.**

Key Issues

- Is the landscape impact of the proposal acceptable?
- Is the agricultural justification accepted?
- Are there any amenity issues?

History

None relevant on file.

Consultations

Highway Authority – No objections subject to all use remaining ancillary to the site.

Borough Council – No response to date.

Parish Council – No response to date.

Representations

Six representations have been received all in objection to the proposal.

The objections are raised on the following grounds:

- The size of the building is disproportionate to the size of the site area of 2.3 hectares
- The building due to its size and location will spoil the visual amenity of the location and be an intrusion into open countryside.
- No agricultural justification has been submitted with the application, the scale of the building is far greater than the amount of land.
- The building is not in any way dependant on the applicants income, agriculture is not their source of income purely a hobby therefore not a justified agricultural operation.
- Children's trampoline has been on the site for several months and garden seating, there has also been a caravan.
- Small plot of land, farmed solely on a hobby basis. The land does necessitate such a huge structure. The applicants intention is that he barn be used for a few domestic animals, something that could not justify a barn of these dimensions.
- Only 2 cows and 6 sheep are owned.
- There is no valid existing footprint for the proposed building, just a small concrete base which was part of a chalet demolished in the 1950s.
- Farmer does not live in the immediate area.
- Would impact on the tourism of the area.
- Large vehicles traveling to the site.
- The building will damage the quality of life for residents and visitors to the park.

Main Policies

Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, GSP4, DS1, L1.

Relevant Local Plan policies: LC3, LC4, LC13.

Relevant Core Strategy (CS) policies include GSP1, amongst other things, GSP1 requires that all development is consistent with the National Parks legal purpose and duty to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Parks and promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities(of the National Parks) by the public.

CS Policy GSP2 explains that opportunities for enhancing the valued characteristics of the National Park will be identified and acted upon. Opportunities will be taken to enhance the National Park by the treatment or removal of undesirable features or buildings.

CS Policy GSP3 explains that all development must conform to the following principles: Development must respect, conserve and enhance all valued characteristics of the site and buildings that are subject to the development proposal. Amongst other things particular attention will be paid to: Impact on the character and setting of buildings; scale of development appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park; siting, landscaping and building materials; design in accordance with the National Park Authority Design Guide; impact on living conditions of communities.

CS Policy L1 requires that development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character, as identified in the Landscape Strategy and Action Plan, and other valued characteristics. Valued characteristics specifically identified in the preamble to L1 include, amongst other things, trees, woodlands, hedgerows, stone walls, field barns and other landscape features.

Local Plan Policy (LPP) LC4 requires that the detailed treatments of development is of a high standard that respects, conserves and where possible enhances the landscape, built environment and other valued characteristics of the area. Particular attention is paid to: scale, form, mass and orientation in relation to existing buildings, settlement form and character, landscape features and the wider landscape setting; the degree to which design detail, materials, and finishes reflect or compliment the style and traditions of local buildings; the use and maintenance of landscaping to enhance new development, and the degree to which this makes use of local features and an appropriate mix of species suited to both the landscape and wildlife interests of the locality; the amenity, privacy and security of the development and of nearby properties.

LPP LC13 deals specifically with agricultural developments and it is permissive provided they are close to the main group of buildings wherever possible and it relates well to them. It must avoid harm to the areas valued characteristics including local views, making use of the least obtrusive or otherwise damaging location and must not require obtrusive access tracks, roads or services. These need to be designed with particular respect for the landscape and its historic patterns of land use and movement, and any landscape change likely to result from agricultural or forestry practices.

The Authority has produced an SPG for agricultural buildings. This explains at paragraph 2.17 that farm development must be fully explained and justified and at paragraph 2.18 that failure to supply adequate information may lead to refusal. The SPG explains the basic requirements for an application. Paragraph 3.1 explains that because of the natural beauty of the National Park, new agricultural buildings can have a very damaging impact on their surroundings without careful thought to siting, design and appearance. Paragraph 3.4.5 this explains that it is best to keep new agricultural buildings close to the existing ones, relate well to them and make the best use of trees, walls and other landscape features. Paragraph 3.6.3 explains the use of dark tones will help to reduce a buildings impact. Paragraph 3.6.5 explains that painting, rendering or cladding the concrete base of the building can help reduce the impact of the base.

The relationship between the Core Strategy and the National Planning Framework has also been considered and it is concluded that they are consistent because the NPPF recognises the special status of National Parks and promotes sustainable development sensitive to the locally distinctive character of its setting.

Assessment

Considering the above, the Development Plan and other material considerations are generally supportive of agricultural development where it is necessary and would not harm the amenities or valued characteristics of the area. Appropriate design, siting and landscaping are required.

As submitted there was no agricultural justification submitted with the building. Following officer's requests one has been undertaken by Bagshaws, agricultural specialists. This explains that the holding currently farms 9 acres in total, 6 at this site and another 3 acres of rented land at Park Road. The applicant has intentions to rent additional fields as her stocking levels increase.

At present the livestock comprise a mix of Dexter cattle, Herdwick and Derbyshire Gritstone sheep and there is an intention to purchase a small number of chickens this spring. The stated intentions for the livestock are as follows:

1. To produce their own supply of meat and produce for their own consumption and to sell to friends and family.
2. To raise awareness and understanding of the food chain for their young family.
3. For enjoyment and education for the applicants.
4. To provide additional income and part time work for the family.

The proposal replaces an existing building which officers consider is not fit for purpose. The proposed building is considerably larger, but within the range of standard agricultural buildings.

The intentions for the building are to provide for the needs of the small holding including their planned uplift in stocking number. The agricultural justification that has been submitted quantifies the space required for the existing agricultural operation and also with the planned increase in stock for year 2. The calculations justify the size of the building, showing that the year 2 requirement is for 173m² and the size of the building proposed is 160m². The justification also makes it clear that the livestock are for agricultural purposes and not pets as suggested by some of the representations.

The siting of the building is isolated, in the open countryside away from established groups of farm buildings. Because of the topography and also the tree cover to eastern field boundary, officers consider the site to be relatively discreet and not requiring any further landscaping. The building replaces an existing building. The roof is proposed in untreated fibre cement sheets (described as natural grey); this is not in accordance with Authority's guidance. Officers consider that provided the roof is finished in a dark green colour (12B29) then the impact of the building is relatively low and therefore acceptable given there is an agricultural justification for the building. It is noted that the intentions for agriculture on this parcel of land are limited primarily to production for friends and family, and have been described by objectors as hobby farming. Farming on this scale is an acceptable rural pursuit and given the limited impact of the building the submitted justification is considered demonstrate that the proposal is necessary, acceptable and proportionate for the needs of the holding.

The proposal is not considered to raise any amenity issues because of the intervening distances between the application site and the nearest neighbouring residential properties. Objectors have raised concerns with regard to agricultural traffic, but this concern is not reflected in the Highway Authority's response which raises no objections. Officers do not consider that the traffic movements to and from the site could be considered to harm the amenity of nearby residents. Furthermore these would presumably continue with or without the proposed building, and any limited intensification in traffic movements to and from the site because of the proposed building is not considered to warrant refusal of the application.

This type of development is one which is only permitted with an agricultural justification which outweighs any harm the use of non-traditional building style and materials may cause, provided that harm is mitigated. It is therefore considered reasonable and necessary to impose conditions which ensure that the building is retained for the purposes of agriculture throughout its lifetime and also require the building to be removed if it is no longer required for the purposes of agriculture. This is in accordance with Core Strategy Policies GSP2 and GSP4.

All the points raised in the representations are noted. Most have been addressed in the body of this report. With the exception of the impact on tourism and the presence of play equipment on the site. With regard to impact on tourism, officers do not consider that the limited impact of the building would have any tangible impact on tourism. The impact of play equipment and picnic benches is a genuine concern in relation to the land uses occurring on the site. The play equipment including trampoline and rope swing as well as a picnic bench suggests that the land may also be being used as amenity land. That is a separate issue that the Authority's Monitoring and Enforcement team are aware of and are considering. The current application needs to be determined on its individual merits.

Subject to the conditions suggested, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the policies of the development plan.

Conclusion

The submitted agricultural justification is considered to justify the limited impact of the building on the National Park landscape provided its roof is finished dark green and that the building is only used for agriculture.

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