

16. PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO REVISED SCHEME - DEVELOPMENT OF 507 DWELLINGS, 2800m² COMMERCIAL FLOORSPACE (CLASS B1), SHOP AND CAFE, WITH ASSOCIATED VEHICLE, CYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE (OUTLINE) AT CAWDOR QUARRY, PERMANITE WORKS AND PART OF SNITTERTON FIELDS, MATLOCK SPA ROAD MATLOCK – DDC REF: 16/00923/OUT (TS)

Purpose of the report

To obtain Member support for a consultation response on behalf of the Authority to the proposals currently being considered by Derbyshire Dales District Council (Ref: 16/00923/OUT). If these recommendations are carried, officers will draft a consultation response letter to Derbyshire Dales District Council based upon the report below.

Recommendations:

- 1. That the Authority does not object to the application ref.no. 16/00923/OUT as amended.**

How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

Under the Environment Act 1995, the two main purposes of National Parks in England and Wales are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of National Parks by the public

When National Parks carry out these purposes, they also have a duty to:

- Seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Parks.

If these purposes or duty come into conflict, then the Sandford Principle dictates that the first purpose of conservation should take priority.

Paragraph 115 of the NPPF states that ‘great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, which have the highest level of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty’. In terms of heritage assets, paragraph 132 states that ‘great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting’. As the proposed development would be outside the boundaries of the National Park it will not be assessed against Core Strategy policies. However, it is considered to be appropriate to make reference to paragraph 11.27 of the Peak District National Park Authority Core Strategy, which states that:

“The valued characteristics [of the landscape] include the flow of landscape character across and beyond the National Park boundary, which provides a continuity of landscape and valued setting for the National Park”.

The requirements of the 1995 Environment Act are not only carried through into the planning policies of the National Park Authorities but also into those of constituent Local Planning Authorities or those who border the National Parks. To this effect, there is an obligation upon planning decisions within Derbyshire Dales to take account of National Park purposes in determining applications that have the potential to impact upon the Park and its setting. It is noted that this requirement is reflected within the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan policies, including policy SP3.

Policy SP3 of the current Derbyshire Dales DC Local Plan (2005) states that:

Planning permission will not be granted for development that may adversely affect the purposes of the National Park or be harmful to its valued characteristics.

The supporting text states that 'if the special qualities of the National Park are to be protected, careful control needs to be exercised over harmful development, be this within or outside the National Park. The pre-submission draft of the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan (August 2016) takes a more comprehensive position with regard to landscape character in policy PD5 requiring that development proposals protect or enhance the character, appearance and local distinctiveness of the landscape and landscape setting of the Peak District National Park. .

Officers believe that an approval of the amended application would be compliant with the 1995 Environment Act as it would not fail to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park. It would therefore not be contrary to the NPPF and Derbyshire District Dales Council's adopted and emerging planning policies.

The Application

The proposal involves a mixed use development of major scale on the site of the Cawdor Quarry, Permanite Works and also part of an area of the undeveloped agricultural land immediately to the west of the Quarry that is known as Snitterton Fields.

The application is in outline form with details of access, appearance, layout and scale under consideration at this stage. The landscape details are saved as a reserved matter.

In March 2017 the Authority objected to an application for 586 dwellings as it was considered to have a significant adverse landscape and visual impact and would harm the setting of the National Park. The development would have the potential to adversely affect the ability of visitors and residents to enjoy its special landscape qualities. Furthermore, it was considered that the proposal would adversely affect the setting of several Scheduled Ancient Monuments and designated heritage assets, including the Grade I Listed Snitterton Hall.

It was agreed that this Authority had no objection to elements of the proposed development that were limited to the site of Cawdor Quarry and Permanite Works areas. However, it was considered that the element of the proposed development that would be sited on Snitterton Fields was not acceptable. It was noted that if this element of the scheme was to be removed from the proposed development, the Authority would consider that the grounds for objection would be overcome.

Amended plans have been submitted which reduce the number of dwellings to 507. The majority of the dwellings within Snitterton Fields have been omitted and the development is now mostly constrained to the previously developed site of Permanite

Works and Cawdor Quarry. The development does, however, still encompass approximately 1.2 hectares of greenfield land within Snitterton fields.

Landscape Impact

The site is partially within and partially adjacent to the Derwent Valley Landscape Character Assessment Area. The Authority's Landscape Character Assessment (2009) notes that:

“The Derwent Valley character area separates the limestones of the White Peak from the prominent gritstone edges of the Eastern Moors to the east and high moorland of the Dark Peak to the north.”

More specifically, Snitterton Fields is a typical open pasture set against the back drop of the limestone slopes of Wensley Dale and wooded slopes of Oaker Hill. This creates an attractive landscape with the higher land within the park flowing into the Snitterton Fields pastures.

The western boundary of the application site as proposed is still approximately 200 metres away from the boundary of the National Park. It is noted that there is no obvious boundary, in terms of physical markers or changes in landscape character, between the National Park and the adjacent land outside of the park. Snitterton Fields form part of an attractive, predominantly undeveloped rolling landscape that flows seamlessly to and from the National Park. As such, Snitterton Fields makes an important contribution to the setting of the National Park and it contributes to the flow of landscape character across and beyond the National Park boundary, which provides a continuity of landscape and valued setting for the National Park.

Furthermore, the site provides an important buffer between the National Park boundary and the town of Matlock, which is approximately 600 metres to the east of the park boundary.

The previous scheme, to which this Authority objected, would have resulted in the loss of a large swath of Snitterton Fields being lost to development. Whilst the amended scheme still extends from the Permanite Works site into the undeveloped fields, the extent of this has been significantly reduced. It is considered that the important contribution that Snitterton Fields makes to the setting of the National Park would be retained and the flow of landscape between the National Park and the outlying land would not be lost.

The amended development would also be less prominent in views from the east looking back towards the National Park and also in views enjoyed from within the National Park, including from Snitterton Village and the higher land towards Oaker and Wensley. Whilst the development would still be visible from some vantage points within the National Park, the visual impact is no longer considered to be significant.

It is now considered that the amended scheme would not have a detrimental effect on the experience of the people within the National Park.

It is considered that the amended scheme would not be harmful to the sense of tranquillity and remoteness that is enjoyed from areas within the National Park around Snitterton.

Impact on Heritage Assets

It is noted that Historic England have raised no objections to the amended scheme, It is considered that the previous concerns in respect of the impact on the setting and significance of heritage assets, including archaeological heritage assets, has been overcome.

Cooperation with Derbyshire Dales in respect of Housing Delivery

The close working and consultation on this case with Derbyshire Dales District Council reflects the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding jointly signed with The Peak District National Park Authority in respect of cross boundary planning issues such as housing delivery. Derbyshire Dales experience particular pressure in delivering housing because a large area of the district is within the National Park.

Officers would not object to an application for housing development outside of the National Park unless it was considered that there would be clear unacceptable harm to the special qualities of the National Park, as was considered to be the case with the original submission. It is considered that the amended scheme would not result in unacceptable harm.

Conclusions

Officers recommend that the National Park Authority should raise no objections to the amended scheme pursuant to application 16/00923/OUT. The proposed development as amended would no longer have a significant adverse landscape and visual impact and would not harm the setting of the National Park. The development would not adversely affect the ability of visitors and residents to enjoy its special landscape qualities. Furthermore, the development would now not adversely affect the setting of the nearby Scheduled Ancient Monuments and designated heritage assets.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

Financial: No direct financial implication for the Authority.

Risk Management: The financial risk is covered above.

Sustainability: No implications.

Consultees: None

Background papers (not previously published): None

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date:

Tom Shiels, Area Team Manager (South), 3 August 2017.